



***DEER SEASON MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL-2009***  
***Minnesota Bowhunters, Inc. (MBI)***  
***and the***  
***Greater Bowhunting Community***

**OBJECTIVES**

Protecting bowhunting interests, ensuring the future generations of bowhunters have opportunities to hunt with archery equipment (*as it is currently defined-not to include crossbows except by special permit*) and manage wildlife with this harvest method. The objective would be measured by a stabilization or increase in archery licenses sold, a stable or increased deer harvest, and greater public understanding of the nature of bowhunting as a wildlife management tool and its significant recreational value.

**APPROACHES**

MBI and the greater bowhunting community is a mix of organizations which can be varied in scope as much as their members. The associations, clubs, sporting and conservation groups within the bowhunting community will continue to educate the general public and government officials, departments, legislators, county and city governments on the benefits of allowing archery as a wildlife management tool in their community and abroad. To assist with a uniform approach it's desired to have an advocate within the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources *specific to archery*. As part of this advocacy, we would also like the opportunity to have access to state parks, SNAs and other areas/special hunts currently closed to bowhunting due to a perception it is not a reliable management tool. We would also like to be included in and defined as a specific group for any future studies regarding hunter satisfaction, wildlife management, regulation changes, QDM, earn a buck, etc. In addition, we would like consideration when other weapons groups encroach upon the traditional archery season, whether it be for a perceived increase in harvest, protection of adult bucks, or any other reason (e.g. October antlerless season). Archery only areas are few and it's believed their establishment has significant management research and recreational value.

**GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE**

Archery has traditionally been a statewide activity, without limits on licenses geographically, no changes are desired to limit the opportunities to hunt via archery (special permits per zone, etc.). The bowhunting community would desire increased access to additional lands both public and private statewide to increase bowhunter opportunities and assist with meeting the state harvest goals.

**HUNTER IMPLICATIONS**

With an increased understanding of the nature of bowhunting as a management tool it is expected that additional opportunities will arise. Especially in an urban environment where there are either perceived or real safety concerns for firearms and the deer populations are high. With the support of a DNR archery advocate, opportunities for access to additional public lands will be easier thus increasing the number of bowhunters satisfied with access issues. An increased understanding will also make it easier for continued presence of school programs involving archery (e.g. NASP) and development of shooting ranges as the next hunting generation develops. The increased number of archers in the field should be offset by the increased accessibility thus keeping hunter satisfaction at a high level. More archers in more lands will certainly impact the harvest, presumably in a positive way. Hunters who currently hunt pre-dominantly with firearms may take up archery (*especially if the season did not conflict with firearms or reduce their opportunities*) thus adding to the overall numbers and support for the harvest method. With an increased harvest there is a greater chance that excess deer (*lead-free*) will be donated to food shelves, etc. either individually by hunters or as part of a government managed program.