



Québec's 2020-2027

**WHITE-TAILED DEER  
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Summary Document

A close-up photograph of a deer's head, showing its eye, ear, and part of its antler. The image is heavily overlaid with a bright yellow color, creating a monochromatic effect. The deer is looking slightly to the right.

## **Legal deposit**

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Ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs

# Introduction

## Context

The process of preparing and implementing a management plan provides an opportunity to review the situation of the species concerned and, where necessary, redefine what must be done to ensure that both it and its habitat are managed in the best possible way, and that its development is encouraged for the benefit of all Quebecers. Management plans present wildlife-related goals, identify species-related issues and propose actions and harvest methods that are adjusted to the prevailing situation in Québec's regions. A management plan is prepared in conjunction with provincial and regional stakeholders involved in or affected by the management of the species concerned.

The 2020-2027 White-Tailed Deer Management Plan, implemented in 2020 for an eight-year period, takes into account a number of new elements, including the decline in the number of hunters and, in some regions, growing deer populations with all the associated consequences and the risk of chronic wasting disease (CWD).

The plan preparation process was driven by the desire to provide an attractive hunting product and to simplify the regulatory framework. Hunters of all ages now have more possibilities within the harvest potential, and this will have a positive impact on regional economic spinoffs.

The proposed new management rules are also designed to optimize deer and habitat conservation and development, prevent the spread of diseases that are harmful to deer, and facilitate the coexistence of species with citizens in urban, semi-urban, agricultural and forested areas.



## White-tailed deer

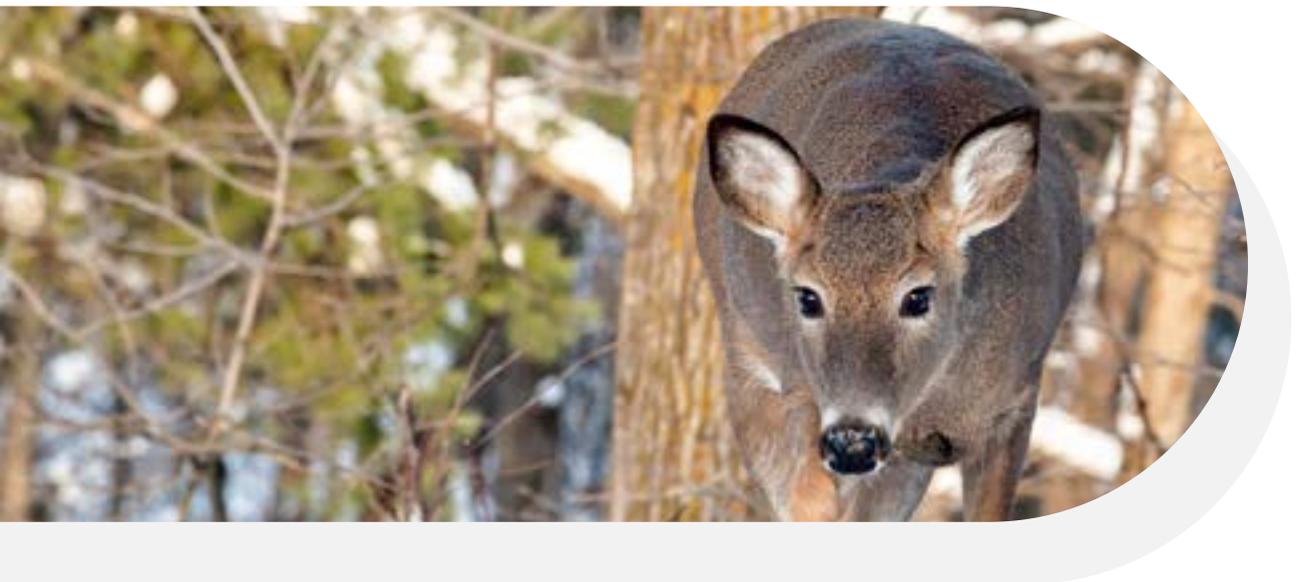
- Québec lies at the northern limit of the white-tailed deer range in eastern North America. The province's deer populations are larger south of the fleuve Saint-Laurent and on île d'Anticosti (Figure 1).
- At our latitudes, harsh winters are considered to be the factor with the greatest impact on deer survival. Harsh winters can cause population numbers to decline quickly, while successive mild winters can lead to strong population growth.
- Deer harvests fluctuate from one year to the next, mainly due to winter weather and pressure from hunting (Figure 2).
- The white-tailed deer is a very productive species. Males mate with several females, and females can give birth to between one and three fawns per year (usually two) throughout their lives.
- High productivity combined with favourable circumstances (e.g. the prevalence of mild winters) have enabled deer populations to grow significantly in some regions, and especially in southern Québec.



Figure 1: Distribution of deer harvest in 2018



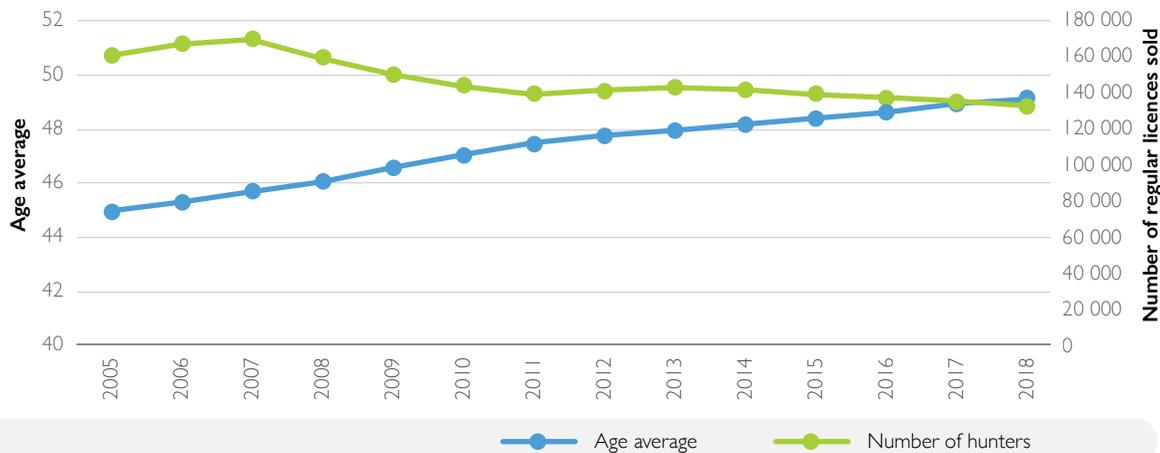
**Figure 2: Annual harvest report and number of licences sold**



# Profile of White-Tailed Deer Harvesting in Québec

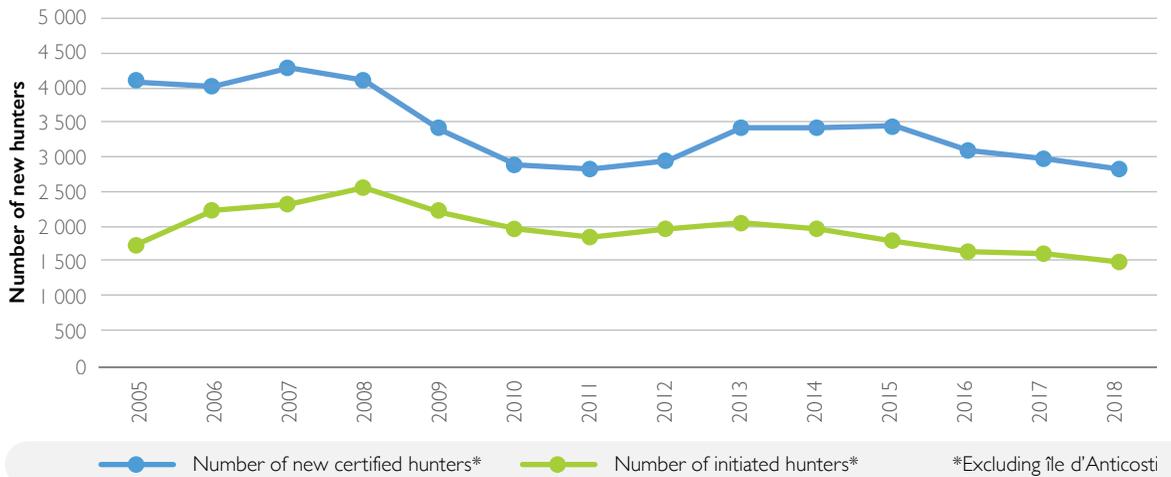
## Hunters

- Almost 140,000 people hunt deer.
- The number of hunters has declined steadily since 2007, and their average age has increased (Figure 3).
- Most white-tailed deer hunters are men (88%) and 25% have practised the activity for more than 40 years.
- Roughly 3,000 new certified hunters and 1,500 new recruits purchased deer hunting licences in 2018 (Figure 4). The average age of the new hunters was 28, and the percentage of women (34%) was greater than for hunters in general.
- Deer hunting produces some significant economic spinoffs for Québec, generating GDP and tax revenues of nearly \$100 million for the Government, as well as roughly 1,000 jobs.<sup>1</sup>



**Figure 3: Evolution of the number and average age of white-tailed deer hunters**

<sup>1</sup> Écoressources (2014), L'industrie faunique comme moteur économique régional. Une étude ventillant par espèce et par région les retombées économiques engendrées par les chasseurs, les pêcheurs et les piégeurs québécois en 2012, report prepared for the ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs, Écoressources, Québec, 71 p.



**Figure 4: Evolution of the number of white-tailed deer hunters holding a hunter's certificate for less than 12 months or an initiation licence**





## Highlights: Hunting habits in 2017<sup>2</sup>

- 86% of hunters hunt on private land.
- 90% of hunters hunt in only one zone.
- 66% of hunters are satisfied with their overall hunting experience.
- 85% of hunters use a hunting blind and bait.
- 88% use organic bait (e.g. apples, carrots, corn, feed, etc.) and 60% use mineral substances (e.g. salt blocks, sulphur, etc.).
- A small percentage use synthetic (30%) or natural (28%) deer urine.
- 64% of hunters would like to share a special antlerless deer hunting licence if this type of product was available.

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2 Survey conducted by the ministère des Forêts, de la Faune et des Parcs as part of the development of the 2020-2027 White-tailed deer Management Plan.

## Coexisting with deer

Problems associated with coexistence (e.g. collisions with vehicles, damage to crops and forests, damage to ornamental plants) may occur in sectors with high-density deer populations.

Management must aim to achieve a balance between the development of wildlife resources and the concerns of the general public and the owners or users of forests and farmland. Certain indicators are monitored with a view to adapting management methods where necessary.



# Issues, orientations and objectives of the 2020-2027 White-Tailed Deer Management Plan

Issues	Orientations	Objectives
<b>Habitat</b>	Ensure the availability of good quality essential deer habitats.	Protect and improve white-tailed deer winter yards in collaboration with the stakeholders concerned.
<b>Balanced populations</b>	Monitor deer population trends using effective indicators.	Modernize the deer population monitoring system by applying a robust, standardized approach.
<b>Coexistence</b>	Aim for better coexistence between white-tailed deer populations and communities.	Encourage the introduction of coexistence measures for deer in urban, semi-urban, agricultural and forest areas.
<b>Healthy herds</b>	Prevent, monitor and control diseases that are potentially very harmful to deer.	Prevention: Equip Québec with the means to reduce the risk of introducing diseases.
		Monitoring: Consolidate the detection network and involve user groups in the monitoring and surveillance of wildlife diseases.
		Control: Adopt effective control measures following the emergence of serious diseases affecting deer.
<b>Management through sport hunting</b>	Develop an innovative approach to exploit the species' potential.	Introduce effective harvest methods to ensure full development of game.
		Ensure the sustainability of hunting by offering an attractive product and encouraging new hunters.



# Harvesting rules – White-tailed deer

## New hunting rules in force in 2020 (except on île d'Anticosti)<sup>3</sup>

### LICENCE

- Possibility of harvesting two deer/hunter/year (two licences required)
- Possibility of purchasing two hunting licences:
  - > the second licence is available at a lower cost;
  - > each deer hunting licence is associated with a specific hunting zone;
  - > the two licences must be for different zones, except in the case of hunting zones 5 west, 8 east and 8 south, where the regular licence and additional licence may be associated with the same zone.
- The 1<sup>st</sup> killing licence and the licence associated with the antler restriction pilot project have been abolished
- Possibility of using deer hunting licences in any wildlife reserve or outfitter with exclusive rights
- **Sharing of an antlerless deer hunting licence with immediate family members:**
  - > A hunter who has an antlerless deer hunting licence issued by means of a random draw may share the licence with his or her grandparents, parents, brothers, sisters, spouse, children or grandchildren, and with the children and grandchildren of his or her spouse.

<sup>3</sup> Deer hunting rules on île d'Anticosti are unchanged, except for the introduction of a ban on the use of natural deer urine.



## **CALENDAR**

- New hunting calendar and new authorized gear
- Introduction of a weekend of hunting intended for new hunters (activities and conditions to be established)
- Opening of new hunting zones (15 east and 26 west)
- Changes to three hunting zones (1, 2 and 27 west):
  - > Zone 1: Subdivided into 1 north and 1 south;
  - > Zone 2: Moved to the west of the boundary between zones 2 east and 2 west;
  - > Zone 27 west: Antlerless deer hunting licence issued by random draw applicable to the entire zone.

## **SOUND PRACTICES**

### **TO PROTECT HERDS**

- Baiting authorized from September 1<sup>st</sup> to November 30:
  - > Baiting for hunting is permitted from September 1<sup>st</sup> to November 30 only, for all types of bait other than mineral substances (e.g. salt blocks), which may be used year-round.
- Ban on the use of natural deer urine (including on île d'Anticosti):
  - > The use of natural cervid urine for hunting is prohibited at all times, regardless of origin. However, moose urine may be used.
  - > The ban also applies to all other natural olfactory lures taken from cervids (e.g. tarsal glands).

Various other actions have also been planned for the period covered by the management plan, to address herd health and coexistence issues. They include regulation of winter feeding and sales of natural cervid urine.

# Calendar of white-tailed deer hunting seasons in the

Hunting zones	OCTOBER	
	14 days	
1 north	BOW-CB	
1 south	BOW-CB	
2 east	BOW-CB	
2 west	BOW-CB	
3 east	BOW-CB	5 days
3 west	BOW-CB	MLF-SG
4	BOW-CB	MLF-SG
5 east	BOW-CB	MLF-SG
5 west	BOW-CB	MLF-SG
6 north	BOW-CB	MLF-SG
6 south	BOW-CB	MLF-SG
7 north	BOW-CB	MLF-SG
7 south	BOW-CB	MLF-SG
8 east	BOW-CB	MLF-SG
8 north	BOW-CB	MLF-SG
8 south	BOW-CB	MLF-SG
9 east	BOW-CB	
9 west	BOW-CB	
10 east	BOW-CB	MLF-SG
10 west	BOW-CB	MLF-SG
11 east	BOW-CB	
11 west	BOW-CB	
12	BOW-CB	
13 south-west	BOW-CB	
15 east		
15 west	BOW-CB	
26 east		
26 west		
27 east		
27 west		
28		
Îles du Saint-Laurent, aval du pont Pierre-Laporte		

## Légende

	Deer with antlers only	BOW-CB	Bow and crossbow
	Deer with antlers or antlerless	FA	Firearms, bow and crossbow
	Antlerless deer only	MLF-SG	Muzzle loading firearms, shotguns, bow and crossbow
	Antler restriction (ARPP)		





For further information on new rules for  
white-tailed deer hunting:  
[mffp.gouv.qc.ca/la-faune/plans-de-gestion](http://mffp.gouv.qc.ca/la-faune/plans-de-gestion)

For further information on general big game hunting:  
[mffp.gouv.qc.ca/english/publications/online/wildlife/  
hunting-regulations](http://mffp.gouv.qc.ca/english/publications/online/wildlife/hunting-regulations)

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