

**Deer Management Plan
Hillsboro Hunting Club
7,000 Acres, Union County**

After discussing management options, Hillsboro Hunting Club and their AGFC biologist chose DMAP Level 2 (Quality Bucks Management) as the goal to guide management efforts. Habitat is mostly commercial pine forest land in the southeast part of Union County, at the Hillsboro community. The club (Barry Pratt in particular) is very skilled at aging deer jaws, and we will accept the club's ages. Objectives for this level are to:

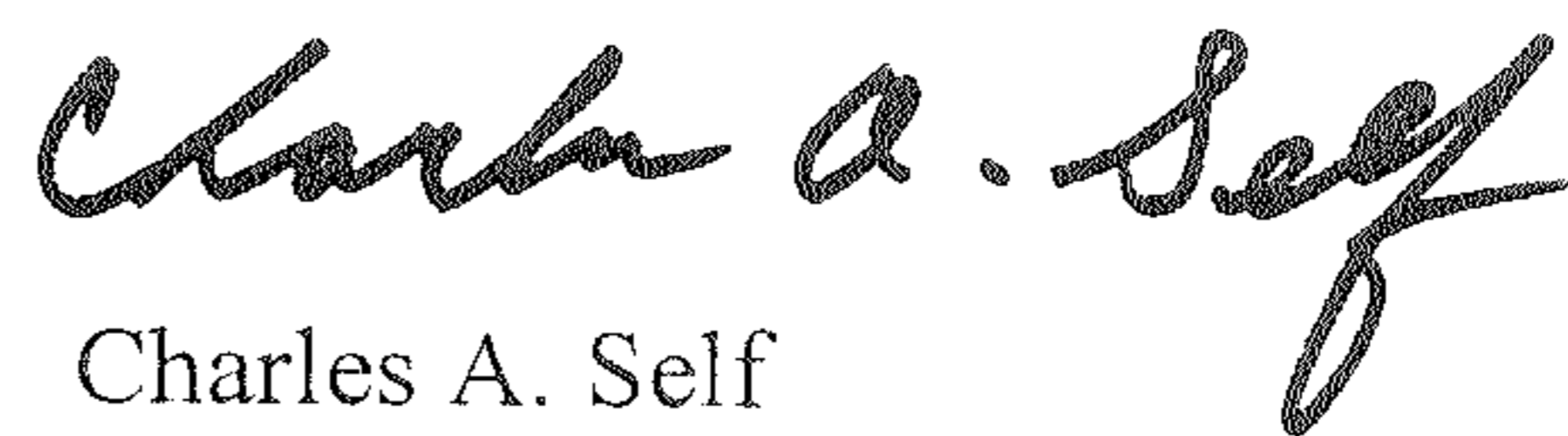
- Achieve and maintain a healthy herd,
- Maintain fairly balanced sex ratios in the herd (one – two does per buck), and
- Concentrate the buck harvest on the 3.5-4.5 year old age class (at least 60% of the buck harvest should be 3.5 years or older; the club prefers 4.5 or older). Reaching this goal will probably depend on how committed the club's hunters are to following the biologists recommendations. Progress usually evolves as hunters become comfortable.

Allowing bucks to grow old enough for antlers to score 105 or more Gross Boone & Crockett, or 14" inside spread or beam length is the primary focus. A few may become trophies, but that is not the focus. Buck age alone is not the answer; enough deer (males and females) need to be taken to have healthy deer for each age class. Good habitat can be characterized by diverse mixtures of forest ages, tree species, and some open ground (as much as 10-20%) to produce sustainable, high-quality forage. Managing the forest canopy via forest thinnings and other methods is a vital part of this program.

Minimum antler sizes may be used to help protect 1.5 year and smaller 2.5 year old males. This must be set based on actual data obtained by hunters on this area. Your biologist will recommend an annual deer harvest plan that will usually fit within the following numbers:

- Take 64-100 does (one per 100-70 acres) and
- Take 23-47 males (one per 300-150 acres, including any button bucks taken by mistake). Specific harvest recommendations may be adjusted by the biologist annually after considering biological data, recent harvest history, and perhaps known trends on adjacent land. Try to take most does before December.

It is essential for the club to provide accurate, complete data, and a labeled jaw (for aging) for every deer taken, even for bucks to be mounted. Taxidermists will usually save the jaw if asked. We will age the jaws, summarize the data, and provide written deer harvest recommendations each year.



Charles A. Self
Private Lands Biologist
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Please post this in a conspicuous place for all members to see.