

**Meeting Date:** January 26, 2023

**Agenda Item No. 8**

**Agenda Item:** Deer & Elk Status Update and Big Game Season Setting Preview

**Bureau Chief Approval:** JR

**Prepared by:** Toby Boudreau, Deer and Elk Program Coordinator and Rick Ward, State Wildlife Manager

**Background:**

Staff will present a statewide overview of the status of deer and elk populations. Staff will review final harvest estimates from 2021, results of aerial surveys from winter 2022, overwinter fawn survival from 2022, fall 2022 check station results, and December 2022 aerial composition survey data. Staff will also review deer and elk surveys planned for this winter, deer and elk survival monitoring, and update the Commission on the status of the elk plan process.

Staff will preview the upcoming big game season setting process and discuss public outreach plans and timelines leading up to the March commission meeting.

**Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:**

N/A

**Public Involvement Process:**

Information on status of deer and elk and other big game species will be made available to the public during regional scoping in February 2023. The Department will collect public input on season proposals at that time.

**Justification:**

Information will aid Commissioners as they respond to requests, recommendations, or other input from the public.

**Staff Recommendation:**

None. This agenda item is for Commission information.

**Action Requested:**

None.