

From: FORESTcoalition@aol.com
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Sender: owner-pabiodiv@webmail.upb.pitt.edu
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Public Comments at the PGC Meeting, Sunday 1/23/05

Many hunters sacrificed watching the Eagles-Falcons game in order to participate in the 5-1/2 hour long Public Comment period on Sunday.

There were 73 people who signed up to speak at the PGC meeting. Twenty-six hunters spoke of seeing too few deer; Fifteen (primarily farmers) report up to seeing 100 deer at a time and were concerned about crop damage. The cable restraint style traps were a concern of six speakers and the Fort Indiantown Gap takeover of land in SGL 211 (Stoney Valley) had four people speak out against it.

The Forest Coalition was the 50th speaker.

Here is our statement:

President Schleiden, members of the Commission . . .

My comment is regarding your goals in deer management and the new study on Managing White-tailed Deer in Forest Habitat.

1. How many here have read the full 300 page report?
2. How many (like me) needed help with the 'big words'?

The Coalition sent out an e-mail last week, asking everyone not to just read the ten page summary, looking for red flags, but find time to read the entire report, "as if you're looking for ideas to steal". I believe the basic idea of the report, Adaptive Resource Management, is sound. Everyone in the audience should spring for \$ 5.00 and buy the book. It would be foolish to ignore the free advice from experts, just because our feelings were hurt by their blunt criticism of some Commission policies. On the other hand, I am very pleased that Jerry Hassinger and Dr. Diffenbach did not endorse Chapter 13 of the report. They voiced strong disapproval of comments that would have been more appropriate or this forum, rather than a scientific report. I'm still following up on the technical stuff in the report. I'm trying right now to get a copy of the 1987 study* by PGC Biologist Jerry Wunz (I hope you have a library or archives section in this building). There are a lot of good, workable ideas in this report. Today I am simply asking you to study it and find a way to make it work – while retaining the Commission as a strong, independent, effective Agency.

Thank you very much for your time

footnote: *-Wildlife Habitat Management In Overbrowsed Forests ata symposium, June 15-17, 1987, Warren, PA. His paper was published on pages 99-106.

R. Martin
Coordinator
Forest Coalition

The full report is available free, on-line, in pdf format at:
http://pa.audubon.org/deer_forum_report_main.htm