



## Standard 1: Commitment to QDMA, Ethics and Conservation

### *Landowner/manager shall:*

#### Performance Measure a.

Be a current QDMA member, agree to remain a member during the duration of their property designation under this program, and encourage all property hunters to become members.

#### Performance Measure b.

Agree to support QDMA's mission: "To ensure the future of white-tailed deer, wildlife habitat and our hunting heritage."

#### Performance Measure c.

Affirm that hunting on the property is conducted in accordance with Fair Chase standards as defined by the QDMA (*see Glossary for definition*).

#### Performance Measure d.

Affirm that management and hunting activities on the property are in accordance with QDMA's Code of Conduct (*see Glossary for definition*).

#### Performance Measure e.

Support QDMA Position Statements on 1) Canned Hunts, 2) Controlled Breeding and Artificial Insemination, and 3) Cervid Importation and Translocation (*see Glossary for definitions and position statements*).

## Standard 2: Compliance with Laws

#### Performance Measure a.

Comply with all relevant Game Laws and Regulations (*see Glossary for definition*), and commit to correct any conditions that could, or will, lead to adverse regulatory actions.

#### Performance Measure b.

Affirm that all hunters who hunt on designated lands are properly licensed and agree to obey all relevant laws and regulations, and that any hunter who habitually violates game or fish statutes, or other property damage offenses, will not be allowed to hunt on designated lands.

## Standard 3: Commitment to Safety

#### Performance Measure a.

Ensure all hunters who are required to complete a hunter education course will have completed such course before being allowed to hunt on the property.

#### Performance Measure b.

Have a written policy that outlines safety rules for all hunters, with specific rules for youth, first-time hunters, and guests.

#### Performance Measure c.

Have a procedure to determine the location of all hunters at any given time, including hunting, scouting, conducting deer management activities or during general recreational activities.

#### Performance Measure d.

Inspect all hunting stands both prior to and during the hunting season to ensure they are safe, and require the use of safety harnesses while hunting from elevated stands, with the exception of fully enclosed box-type stands.

#### Performance Measure e.

Mark all gates, bridges, and any other hazards and notify all hunters of such areas.



## Performance Measure f.

Establish guidelines for the use of vehicles, (including ATVs and UTVs), tractors, watercraft and other modes of transportation. **NOTE:** Several states have recently enacted All Terrain Vehicle Acts – otherwise known as Chandler Laws – which requires persons under age 16 to complete a safety certification course before being allowed to drive an ATV. In these states parents or guardians are liable for uncertified minors.

## Performance Measure g.

Have a written emergency plan containing emergency contact numbers and route maps to medical treatment facilities.

## Performance Measure h.

If applicant property has designated archery and/or firearm practice areas with safe backstop, be sure to provide eye and ear protection at all times and adhere to safe weapon handling techniques as outlined by the International Hunter Education Association (IHEA).

## **Standard 4: Commitment to Four Cornerstones of QDM**

### Performance Measure a.

Commit to apply herd management strategies under QDM, such as passing young bucks and harvesting the biologically appropriate number of antlerless deer, in order to achieve a balanced adult age structure and sex ratio within the white-tailed deer herd found on the property.

### Performance Measure b.

Commit to apply habitat management strategies under QDM, including ones that address forest, field and water resources, in order to create a property with quality food and cover for all wildlife species, a diversity of vegetative communities, and a deer herd in balance with the carrying capacity of the surrounding landscape.

### Performance Measure c.

Commit to apply hunter management strategies under QDM, such as host or attend educational events and maintain written policies on hunter efforts, in order to address overall hunter knowledge about property goals and hunting pressure.

### Performance Measure d.

Commit to monitor the success of the QDM program on the property, such as the herd quality and hunting quality, through ongoing data collection and analysis.

**STOP STOP HERE IF YOU ARE ONLY APPLYING FOR QDMA PLEDGED LANDS**

## **Standard 5: Herd Management Activities**

### Performance Measure a.

Develop an Adaptive Deer Management Plan (*see Glossary for definitions*) that incorporates realistic objectives, is appropriate for the land designated, and reflects the current state of knowledge about QDM and natural resource management. Template(s) will be available from QDMA.

### Performance Measure b.

Complete an on-site interview with an approved property inspector under QDMA's Land Certification Program guidelines to confirm herd management practices are conducted in accordance with the management plan.

### Performance Measure c.

Utilize all legal and available tools to meet deer harvest goals (i.e. regulated hunting licenses, DMAP system, etc.).

### Performance Measure d.

Annually record information on antlerless deer management, antlered buck management, adult sex ratio, deer density and fawn management and report all data collected during the Land Certification inspection and/or renewal process.



## Standard 6: Habitat Management Activities

### Performance Measure a.

Adhere to all national, state, and local laws and regulations applicable to forest management and timber harvesting and assure that all timber operations are performed through sound silvicultural prescriptions, on sustainable basis, and with the guidance of a Trained Forestry Professional (*see Glossary for definition*). **NOTE:** Fifteen states currently have some form of forester credentialing (AL, AR, CA, CT, GA, MA, MD, ME, MI, MS, NC, NH, OK, SC, WV); including licensing and registration statutes. Please note that the LCP may supplement or complement state programs to register or license foresters; however, a LCP inspector is **not** a substitute for such programs.

### Performance Measure b.

Demonstrate commitment to produce a diversity of stand types and age classes interspersed across the landscape.

### Performance Measure c.

Demonstrate commitment to provide deer with appropriate vegetative communities within property management objectives, including those that satisfy food, cover and sanctuary requirements relative to QDM. Said commitment shall consider needs on an annual, seasonal and geographical basis, and consider management practices on adjacent lands.

### Performance Measure d.

Affirm that if prescribed fire is used, it is conducted in accordance with state and local laws and regulations. If required, a prescribed fire plan must be filed with the relevant state forestry or wildlife agency prior to conducting the burn. On-site visit confirms prescribed fires, if used, were conducted in accordance with the management plan and applicable laws and regulations.

### Performance Measure e.

Annually record information about the current property composition, as well as the latest habitat management practices performed on the property, including those under forest management, food plot management, early succession/NWSG/old field management, tree/shrub plantings, and water/pond/wetland management. Report all data collected during the Land Certification inspection and/or renewal process.

## Standard 7: Hunter Management Activities

### Performance Measure a.

Have written harvest guidelines which specify the number, size and/or age of bucks to be harvested; antlerless harvest guidelines, as well as penalties, if any, for hunters harvesting any deer that do not meet such guidelines. Such guidelines also should clearly define youth and guest harvest guidelines, if different.

### Performance Measure b.

Have written guidelines which specify any other species which can be hunted on the property, when such species can be hunted, guest policies, and any harvest restrictions (e.g., no jake turkeys).

### Performance Measure c.

Attempt to minimize or distribute hunting pressure where necessary, by maintaining written guidelines governing any areas off-limits to hunting, such as “safe-zones” or Sanctuaries (*see Glossary for definition*).

### Performance Measure d.

Have written guidelines which detail protocols for property access, security, gates, parking areas, structures, and others as necessary.

### Performance Measure e.

Require all property hunters to be covered under a comprehensive hunter liability insurance policy, a release of liability, or other similar protective measure.

### Performance Measure f.

Annually record information about hunter education efforts, whitetail and other game species harvest guidelines, sanctuaries, and property access and report all data collected during the Land Certification inspection and/or renewal process.



## Standard 8: Herd Monitoring Activities

### Performance Measure a.

Conduct a monitoring program which evaluates herd condition through collection of age, sex, weight, lactation status and antler data from at least 75% of deer harvested on the property. Data should be summarized annually and management strategies altered as necessary to meet management goals. Consultation with a Qualified Wildlife Biologist (*see Glossary for definition*) is highly recommended.

### Performance Measure b.

Collect hunter observation data, at least during the hunting season.

### Performance Measure c.

Conduct a pre and/or post-hunting season population estimate at least every two years.

### Performance Measure d.

Monitor habitat on regular, systematic basis for evidence of deer overabundance.

### Performance Measure e.

Monitor predator abundance and impacts, and implement control measures as legal, appropriate and consistent with management objectives.

### Performance Measure f.

Annually record information on herd condition, hunter observations, deer population estimates and impacts, and predator abundance and impacts and report all data collected during the Land Certification inspection and/or renewal process.



**STOP HERE IF YOU ARE ONLY APPLYING FOR QDMA CERTIFIED LANDS**

## Standard 9: Commitment to Excellence and Continued Improvement

### Performance Measure a.

Complete a minimum of 20 hours of recognized educational activities during a 5-year period as a condition of LCP Legacy Lands renewal. Participation in QDMA educational events, National Convention and Deer Steward courses, or equivalent educational programs will satisfy this requirement. Submit list of most recent completed educational activities, and duration of each, with application.

### Performance Measure b.

Commit to achieve the listed property recommendations (on the most recent inspection form) prior to re-inspection.

### Performance Measure c.

Review and consider local, state, federal and other cost-share opportunities for habitat enhancement projects.

### Performance Measure d.

Provide access to the property for research, field days or other instructional purposes and/or host new hunter recruitment opportunities (i.e. youth hunts, wounded warrior hunts, etc.).

## Standard 10: Conservation of Biodiversity

### Performance Measure a.

Confer with natural resource agencies, state natural resource heritage programs, or other knowledgeable sources about rare or threatened/endangered plant and animal species that may occur on the property in an effort to:

- Identify and map (if appropriate) such species and/or communities, and
- Implement measures to protect and enhance such species or communities, and
- Incorporate any special needs within current and future management activities.

### Performance Measure b.

Identify, map and make reasonable efforts to control or, preferably, eradicate invasive plant and animal species on property.



## Standard 11: Aesthetics

### Performance Measure a.

Consider visual impacts in a manner consistent with size and scale of their operations including, but not limited to, roadside buffers, access entry “dog-legs,” limited timber harvesting in certain areas, and adaptation of other visual management techniques.

### Performance Measure b.

Maintain a clean, well-kept property entryway (i.e., gates, driveway, etc.), as well as properly display the QDMA Land Certification Program sign.

### Performance Measure c.

Dispose of waste from harvested deer and other wildlife in a designated location (typically an excavated depression) which prevents run-off into water sources and is not visible from public roads.

### Performance Measure d.

Demonstrate a commitment to achieving and maintaining a trash-free property.

### Performance Measure e.

Ensure that all aesthetic management practices are completed with consideration to landscape and/or property habitat diversity, and not performed at the expense of wildlife food or cover.

## Standard 12: Special Sites Identification and Conservation

### Performance Measure a.

Identify historical, biological, archaeological, cultural, and geological sites of special interest. Management operations should consider special sites within existing laws and regulations, landowner objectives, unique features of the site, and property size and scale.

## Standard 13: Air, Water and Soil Protection

### Performance Measure a.

Adhere to state or provincial forestry Best Management Practices (BMPs-*see Glossary for definition*) and comply with all relevant forest practices, act(s) and ordinances and remedy any conditions that may result in adverse regulatory actions. On-site visit shall confirm that management activities are in compliance with such practices and ordinances.

### Performance Measure b.

Agree to minimize off-road vehicles, ATVs, horses, livestock, etc. in sensitive areas to protect soil and water quality.

### Performance Measure c.

Agree to make responsible decisions regarding, as well as become educated and engaged on issues related to, all oil, gas and mineral (OGM) resource development on the applicant property. Support and ensure that responsible practices are used during all phases of OGM extraction and reclamation, and adequately protect the available natural resources, including clean water and valuable habitat for fish and wildlife.

## Standard 14: Long-term Habitat Protection and Conservation

### Performance Measure a.

Restrict property from real estate development, commercial or industrial use, or activities such as subdivision that would negatively impact wildlife conservation values during the 5-year Legacy Lands designation. Property owner shall include a statement of intent with Legacy Lands application, or documentation of a legally-binding Conservation Easement (*see Glossary for definition*) already in place. Other long-term land protection methods include: current use tax assessment, estate planning, development restrictions in deed, across boundary management agreements, or town forest designation.



## Glossary of Terms

**Adaptive Management** - A dynamic approach to deer management in which the effects of treatments and decisions are continually monitored and used to modify management on a continuing basis to ensure that objectives are being met.

**Best Management Practice(s) (BMP)** - A practice, or usually a combination of practices, that are determined by a state or a designated planning agency to be the most effective and practicable means (including technological, economic, and institutional considerations) of controlling point and non-point source pollutants at levels compatible with environmental quality goals (source: SAF)

**Biodiversity** - The variety and abundance of life forms, processes, functions, and structures of plants, animals, and other living organisms, including the relative complexity of species, communities, gene pools, and ecosystems at spatial scales that range from local through regional to global (source: SAF)

**Canned Hunt** - The term “canned” hunt generally refers to the practice of providing a hunting opportunity under controlled conditions in which deer do not have a reasonable opportunity to avoid the hunter. This may include situations that approach and include put-and-take hunting in which animals are raised in pens and “hunted” after being released. Important issues include privatization of wildlife, transmission of diseases, genetic impacts, and fair chase and other social issues.

- **POSITION STATEMENT:** The Quality Deer Management Association opposes the practice of canned hunts for white-tailed deer.

**Cervid Importation and Translocation** - Translocation of white-tailed deer for restoration purposes has been a successful strategy in North America that has gained widespread public approval. However, the need for restoration has passed and most agency restoration programs have been abandoned. The current trapping and translocation of deer to increase populations for hunting, provide trophy bucks for canned hunts, or to alter the genetic characteristics of a herd raises ethical questions. There is increased pressure from the public to handle deer overabundance problems with trapping and translocation rather than hunting or other lethal means. Important issues include a need for understanding the historical role of trapping and translocation of deer, potential disease transmission (especially CWD), conservation and genetic issues, and legal issues.

- **POSITION STATEMENT:** The Quality Deer Management Association opposes importation and translocation of deer as means to manage white-tailed deer populations

**Conservation Easement** - A conservation easement is a voluntary agreement that allows a landowner to limit the type or amount of development on their property while retaining private ownership of the land.

**Controlled Breeding and Artificial Insemination** - Controlled breeding is the practice of controlling the reproductive process of white-tailed deer within a confined facility using controlled access by specific males/females or using semen inserted via artificial insemination. Controlled breeding is practiced to assemble or sell breeding stock of known lineage and to alter the normal frequency of certain phenotypes (e.g., antler characteristics). Important issues include privatization of wildlife and other social issues, transmission of diseases, and genetic impacts.

- **POSITION STATEMENT:** The Quality Deer Management Association opposes the practices of controlled breeding and artificial insemination as a means to manage wild white-tailed deer populations.

**desirable species** - Those species of trees designated in the landowners' management plan and not known to cause negative impacts on the local environment

**EPA** - Environmental Protection Agency

**Fair chase** - is defined by the Quality Deer Management Association as the ethical, sportsmanlike and lawful pursuit and harvest of white-tailed deer in a manner that does not give the hunter an improper or unfair advantage. Properties enclosed by natural barriers (e.g., islands) and those enclosed by human barriers (e.g., high fences) will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.





**Game Laws and Regulations** - federal, state and local laws and regulations addressing wildlife, forest management, and access to real property

**Management Plan** - A working instrument that guides actions and that changes in response to feedback and changed conditions, goals, objectives, and policies (source: SAF)

**NWSG** - native warm season grass

**Performance Measure** - Requirement against which conformity assessment is made

**QDMA** - The Quality Deer Management Association

**QDMA Code of Conduct:**

- Hunters/land manager should know and obey all hunting rules and regulations. Any conviction for the willful violation of a game law will result in expulsion from the QDMA.
- Hunters/land manager should learn as much as possible about wildlife management, recreational hunting, and hunting ethics.
- Hunters/land manager should act in a manner which brings credit to deer hunting and the QDMA.
- Hunters/land manager should present a positive image to the public by setting examples as responsible hunters.
- Hunters/land manager should participate in hunter education and safety courses and encourage other hunters to do the same.
- Hunters/land manager should respect the activities and beliefs of other hunters, landowners, and the public.
- Hunters/land manager should support the objectives of the QDMA.
- Hunters/land manager should adopt this Code of Conduct.

**qualified property inspector**- A natural resource professional or other person who has completed QDMA's required training for designating Certified or Legacy Lands and is eligible to inspect properties on behalf of QDMA

**Qualified Wildlife Biologist**- Professional biologist that is a Certified Wildlife Biologist (CWB) through The Wildlife Society (TWS), or has a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree in Wildlife Biology or Management from an accredited college or university with at least two years of field experience post-graduation.

**rare species** -A plant or animal or community that is very vulnerable to extinction or elimination

**Special Sites** - Those areas offering unique archaeological, cultural, ecological, or historical value

**Standard** - A document established by consensus and approved by QDMA, that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines, or characteristics for activities or their results, aimed at the achievement of the QDM philosophy

**Sanctuary** - An area that is excluded from all hunting and managed specifically to provide hiding cover with the goal of holding bucks on the property.

**target species** - Designated species of plants and animals specially managed for by the landowner

**Trained Forestry Professional** - Professional forester that is either Licensed (LF) or Registered (RF) in their state or province, a Certified forester (CF) through the Society of American Foresters (SAF), or is a member of a professional forestry association, such as the Association of Consulting Foresters (ACF), SAF, etc., that also adheres to minimum academic preparation, professional experience, continuing education, and professional standards