Texas Deer Management Continuum

A 50 Year Look

Slippery Slopes and Diminishing Returns?

Presented by:
Greg Simons
Wildlife Systems, Inc.
Wildlife Consultants, LLC
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Space-Time Continuum

- Muy Grande Deer Contest (1965)
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Space-Time Continuum

- Muy Grande Deer Contest (1965)
- Producing Quality Whitetails (1975)
- Texas Trophy Hunters (1975)
- Big Rack (1976)
- Hunting Trophy Deer (1977)
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Space-Time Continuum

- Muy Grande Deer Contest (1965)
- Producing Quality Whitetails (1975)
- Texas Trophy Hunters (1975)
- Big Rack (1976)
- Hunting Trophy Deer (1977)
- Emphasis on herd harvest management (~1980)
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Space-Time Continuum

- Muy Grande Deer Contest (1965)
- Producing Quality Whitetails (1975)
- Texas Trophy Hunters (1975)
- Big Rack (1976)
- Hunting Trophy Deer (1977)
- Emphasis on herd harvest management (~1980)
- Emphasis on deer habitat management (~1980)
50 Years of Texas Deer Management

Space-Time Continuum

- Muy Grande Deer Contest (1965)
- Producing Quality Whitetails (1975)
- Texas Trophy Hunters (1975)
- Big Rack (1976)
- Hunting Trophy Deer (1977)
- Emphasis on herd harvest management (~1980)
- Emphasis on deer habitat management (~1980)
- Emphasis on high fences (~late 1980’s)
50 Years of Texas Deer Management

Space-Time Continuum

- Muy Grande Deer Contest (1965)
- Producing Quality Whitetails (1975)
- Texas Trophy Hunters (1975)
- Big Rack (1976)
- Hunting Trophy Deer (1977)
- Emphasis on herd harvest management (~1980)
- Emphasis on deer habitat management (~1980)
- Emphasis on high fences (~late 1980’s)
- Emphasis on supplemental feeding (~early 1990’s)
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Space-Time Continuum

- Muy Grande Deer Contest (1965)
- Producing Quality Whitetails (1975)
- Texas Trophy Hunters (1975)
- Big Rack (1976)
- Hunting Trophy Deer (1977)
- Emphasis on herd harvest management (~1980)
- Emphasis on deer habitat management (~1980)
- Emphasis on high fences (~late 1980’s)
- Emphasis on supplemental feeding (~early 1990’s)
- Deer Genetics Symposium (1998)
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Space-Time Continuum

- Muy Grande Deer Contest (1965)
- Producing Quality Whitetails (1975)
- Texas Trophy Hunters (1975)
- Big Rack (1976)
- Hunting Trophy Deer (1977)
- Emphasis on herd harvest management (~1980)
- Emphasis on deer habitat management (~1980)
- Emphasis on high fences (~late 1980’s)
- Emphasis on supplemental feeding (~early 1990’s)
- Deer Genetics Symposium (1998)
- Texas Deer Association (1999)
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Space-Time Continuum

- Muy Grande Deer Contest (1965)
- Producing Quality Whitetails (1975)
- Texas Trophy Hunters (1975)
- Big Rack (1976)
- Hunting Trophy Deer (1977)
- Emphasis on herd harvest management (~1980)
- Emphasis on deer habitat management (~1980)
- Emphasis on high fences (~late 1980’s)
- Emphasis on supplemental feeding (~early 1990’s)
- Deer Genetics Symposium (1998)
- Texas Deer Association (1999)
- Breeding for genetic enhancement (~2000’s)

- Muy Grande Deer Contest (1965)
- Producing Quality Whitetails (1975)
- Texas Trophy Hunters (1975)
- Big Rack (1976)
- Hunting Trophy Deer (1977)
- Emphasis on herd harvest management (~1980)
- Emphasis on deer habitat management (~1980)
- Emphasis on high fences (~late 1980’s)
- Emphasis on supplemental feeding (~early 1990’s)
- Deer Genetics Symposium (1998)
- Texas Deer Association (1999)
- Breeding for genetic enhancement (~2000’s)
- Breeding for “put and take” (2009)
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Space-Time Continuum

- Muy Grande Deer Contest (1965)
- Producing Quality Whitetails (1975)
- Texas Trophy Hunters (1975)
- Big Rack (1976)
- Hunting Trophy Deer (1977)
- Emphasis on herd harvest management (~1980)
- Emphasis on deer habitat management (~1980)
- Emphasis on high fences (~late 1980’s)
- Emphasis on supplemental feeding (~early 1990’s)
- Deer Genetics Symposium (1998)
- Texas Deer Association (1999)
- Breeding for genetic enhancement (~2000’s)
- Breeding for “put and take” (2009)
- Legislative chaos (2011)
• Muy Grande Deer Contest (1965)
• Producing Quality Whitetails (1975)
• Texas Trophy Hunters (1975)
• Big Rack (1976)
• Hunting Trophy Deer (1977)
• Emphasis on herd harvest management (~1980)
• Emphasis on deer habitat management (~1980)
• Emphasis on high fences (~late 1980’s)
• Emphasis on supplemental feeding (~early 1990’s)
• Deer Genetics Symposium (1998)
• Texas Deer Association (1999)
• Breeding for genetic enhancement (~2000’s)
• Breeding for “put and take” (2009)
• Legislative chaos (2011)
• CWD in Texas (2012).
• Passive
50 Years of Texas Deer Management

Management Intensity Continuum

Least Artificial/Intensive  Most Artificial/Intensive

- Passive
- Basic habitat management
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Management Intensity Continuum

• Passive
• Basic habitat management
• Spotlight or Hahn surveys
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Management Intensity Continuum

- Passive
- Basic habitat management
- Spotlight or Hahn surveys
- Aerial surveys
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Management Intensity Continuum

- Passive
- Basic habitat management
- Spotlight or Hahn surveys
- Aerial surveys
- Traditional harvest management
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Management Intensity Continuum

Least Artificial/Intensive

• Passive
• Basic habitat management
• Spotlight or Hahn surveys
• Aerial surveys
• Traditional harvest management
• Supplemental feeding

Most Artificial/Intensive
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Management Intensity Continuum

- Passive
- Basic habitat management
- Spotlight or Hahn surveys
- Aerial surveys
- Traditional harvest management
- Supplemental feeding
- Camera scouting
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Management Intensity Continuum

- Passive
- Basic habitat management
- Spotlight or Hahn surveys
- Aerial surveys
- Traditional harvest management
- Supplemental feeding
- Camera scouting
- High fencing
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Management Intensity Continuum

- Passive
- Basic habitat management
- Spotlight or Hahn surveys
- Aerial surveys
- Traditional harvest management
- Supplemental feeding
- Camera scouting
- High fencing
- Aggressive genetic culling
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Management Intensity Continuum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Least Artificial/Intensive</th>
<th>Most Artificial/Intensive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Passive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic habitat management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spotlight or Hahn surveys</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aerial surveys</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional harvest management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplemental feeding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camera scouting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High fencing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggressive genetic culling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TTTT Permit (wild deer)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Management Intensity Continuum

- Passive
- Basic habitat management
- Spotlight or Hahn surveys
- Aerial surveys
- Traditional harvest management
- Supplemental feeding
- Camera scouting
- High fencing
- Aggressive genetic culling
- TTT Permit (wild deer)
- DMP Permit (wild deer)
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Management Intensity Continuum

Least Artificial/Intensive

• Passive
• Basic habitat management
• Spotlight or Hahn surveys
• Aerial surveys
• Traditional harvest management
• Supplemental feeding
• Camera scouting
• High fencing
• Aggressive genetic culling
• TTT Permit (wild deer)
• DMP Permit (wild deer)

Most Artificial/Intensive

• Breeder Permit with live cover (registered deer)
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Management Intensity Continuum

Least Artificial/Intensive

- Passive
- Basic habitat management
- Spotlight or Hahn surveys
- Aerial surveys
- Traditional harvest management
- Supplemental feeding
- Camera scouting
- High fencing
- Aggressive genetic culling
- TTT Permit (wild deer)
- DMP Permit (wild deer)

Most Artificial/Intensive

- Breeder Permit with live cover (registered deer)
- Feedlot feeding
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Management Intensity Continuum

Least Artificial/Intensive
- Passive
- Basic habitat management
- Spotlight or Hahn surveys
- Aerial surveys
- Traditional harvest management
- Supplemental feeding
- Camera scouting
- High fencing
- Aggressive genetic culling
- TTT Permit (wild deer)
- DMP Permit (wild deer)

Most Artificial/Intensive
- Breeder Permit with live cover (registered deer)
- Feedlot feeding
- Pharmaceutical enhancers
50 Years of Texas Deer Management Management Intensity Continuum

Least Artificial/Intensive

• Passive
• Basic habitat management
• Spotlight or Hahn surveys
• Aerial surveys
• Traditional harvest management
• Supplemental feeding
• Camera scouting
• High fencing
• Aggressive genetic culling
• TTT Permit (wild deer)
• DMP Permit (wild deer)

Most Artificial/Intensive

• Breeder Permit with live cover (registered deer)
• Feedlot feeding
• Pharmaceutical enhancers
• TTP Permit (euthanization)
50 Years of Texas Deer Management

Management Intensity Continuum

Least Artificial/Intensive
- Passive
- Basic habitat management
- Spotlight or Hahn surveys
- Aerial surveys
- Traditional harvest management
- Supplemental feeding
- Camera scouting
- High fencing
- Aggressive genetic culling
- TTT Permit (wild deer)
- DMP Permit (wild deer)

Most Artificial/Intensive
- Breeder Permit with live cover (registered deer)
- Feedlot feeding
- Pharmaceutical enhancers
- TTP Permit (euthanization)
- Artificial insemination
50 Years of Texas Deer Management Management Intensity Continuum

Least Artificial/Intensive
- Passive
- Basic habitat management
- Spotlight or Hahn surveys
- Aerial surveys
- Traditional harvest management
- Supplemental feeding
- Camera scouting
- High fencing
- Aggressive genetic culling
- TTT Permit (wild deer)
- DMP Permit (wild deer)

Most Artificial/Intensive
- Breeder Permit with live cover (registered deer)
- Feedlot feeding
- Pharmaceutical enhancers
- TTP Permit (euthanization)
- Artificial insemination
- Sexing of semen
50 Years of Texas Deer Management Management Intensity Continuum

Least Artificial/Intensive
- Passive
- Basic habitat management
- Spotlight or Hahn surveys
- Aerial surveys
- Traditional harvest management
- Supplemental feeding
- Camera scouting
- High fencing
- Aggressive genetic culling
- TTT Permit (wild deer)
- DMP Permit (wild deer)

Most Artificial/Intensive
- Breeder Permit with live cover (registered deer)
- Feedlot feeding
- Pharmaceutical enhancers
- TTP Permit (euthanization)
- Artificial insemination
- Sexing of semen
- Soft antler scarification
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Management Intensity Continuum

Least Artificial/Intensive
• Passive
• Basic habitat management
• Spotlight or Hahn surveys
• Aerial surveys
• Traditional harvest management
• Supplemental feeding
• Camera scouting
• High fencing
• Aggressive genetic culling
• TTT Permit (wild deer)
• DMP Permit (wild deer)

Most Artificial/Intensive
• Breeder Permit with live cover (registered deer)
• Feedlot feeding
• Pharmaceutical enhancers
• TTP Permit (euthanization)
• Artificial insemination
• Sexing of semen
• Soft antler scarification
• Embryo transfer
50 Years of Texas Deer Management
Management Intensity Continuum

Least Artificial/Intensive

• Passive
• Basic habitat management
• Spotlight or Hahn surveys
• Aerial surveys
• Traditional harvest management
• Supplemental feeding
• Camera scouting
• High fencing
• Aggressive genetic culling
• TTT Permit (wild deer)
• DMP Permit (wild deer)

Most Artificial/Intensive

• Breeder Permit with live cover (registered deer)
• Feedlot feeding
• Pharmaceutical enhancers
• TTP Permit (euthanization)
• Artificial insemination
• Sexing of semen
• Soft antler scarification
• Embryo transfer
• Cloning.
So What Does All This Mean?

Are there unintended consequences?

If so, what might they be?
So What Does All This Mean?

Least Artificial/Intensive  Most Artificial/Intensive

What are the long-term biological and ecological consequences?
So What Does All This Mean?

Least Artificial/Intensive  Most Artificial/Intensive

Are we converting unique wildlife resources into livestock products?

If so, are we allowing the unique values that are tied to livestock to usurp or erase the unique values that are tied to wildlife?
So What Does All This Mean?

Least Artificial/Intensive | Most Artificial/Intensive

Are all of these practices defensible to our hunting community?

Are they defensible to the non-hunting public?

What are the consequences of negative public perceptions?
So What Does All This Mean?

Should there be more regulatory and statutory lines drawn in the sand? If so, where should they be drawn? Who will champion such public policy efforts?
Closing Comments
My Personal Observations/Opinions

- We have gone too far with white-tailed deer.
Closing Comments
My Personal Observations/Opinions

- We have gone too far with white-tailed deer.
- Self-induced an erosion of our broad whitetail hunting market.
Closing Comments
My Personal Observations/Opinions

- We have gone too far with white-tailed deer.
- Self-induced an erosion of our broad whitetail hunting market.
- Reduced whitetail interest = reduced license sales = reduced conservation funding.
Closing Comments
My Personal Observations/Opinions

- We have gone too far with white-tailed deer.
- Self-induced an erosion of our broad whitetail hunting market.
- Reduced whitetail interest = reduced license sales = reduced conservation funding.
- Putting the Genie back in the bottle.
Closing Comments
My Personal Observations/Opinions

- We have gone too far with white-tailed deer.
- Self-induced an erosion of our broad whitetail hunting market.
- Reduced whitetail interest = reduced license sales = reduced conservation funding.
- Putting the Genie back in the bottle.
Closing Comments
My Personal Observations/Opinions

- We have gone too far with white-tailed deer.
- Self-induced an erosion of our broad whitetail hunting market.
- Reduced whitetail interest = reduced license sales = reduced conservation funding.
- Putting the Genie back in the bottle.
- This is one of the greatest threats facing hunting and sustainable conservation funding in the U.S.
Closing Comments
My Personal Observations/Opinions

- We have gone too far with white-tailed deer.
- Self-induced an erosion of our broad whitetail hunting market.
- Reduced whitetail interest = reduced license sales = reduced conservation funding.
- Putting the Genie back in the bottle.
- This is one of the greatest threats facing hunting and sustainable conservation funding in the U.S.
- We need more NGOs to step up and get involved at the state level.