

NY Big Game,

DEC continues to refine strategies and recommendations in development of a 5-year deer management plan for New York State. We anticipate that the plan will be available for public review and comment by late May or early June. This time frame will also allow us to conclude a summary assessment of the pilot antler restriction program in the southern Catskills and address the future of mandatory antler restrictions in the pilot area and elsewhere in the deer management plan. Recently, several erroneous claims have circulated in some New York hunting blogs, online forums and news articles, implying that DEC intends to shut down the pilot antler restriction program regardless of hunter interests. These claims have no base. DEC does not have pre-determined intentions for the pilot antler restriction program but will use results of the summary assessment to help determine the future of the program. Preliminary information about the deer management plan is available at www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7211.html, and a description of the antler restriction issue in New York is available at www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/27663.html.

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