

Guide to Using the DMAP Locator Maps

The DMAP unit locator maps are designed to help hunters clearly identify DMAP area boundaries, key habitat and management features within DMAP areas and surrounding vicinity, and to aid them in better utilizing the District's Public Use maps to plan access and hunting strategies on state forest lands.

Please remember:

These mapping resources are intended to provide an informational service for all hunters. You need to be in possession of a Wildlife Management Unit antlerless tag to legally harvest an antlerless deer on state forest land outside a designated DMAP area. DMAP tags are *only* legally used to tag antlerless deer harvested *within* the DMAP area boundary the tag is specified for. Please know your game laws and follow them!

The DMAP Legend symbols:

State Forest Roads and Major Roads

Major Roads are state or township level roads that hunters identify their travel routes to and from DMAP areas on state forestlands. Major Roads indicated on the locator maps also help hunters identify the location of DMAP areas on the more detailed Public Use Maps, and frequently are used to delineate boundaries of DMAP areas.

State Forest Roads are a network of roads maintained by DCNR Bureau of forestry and open year round to all state forest users. These roads are not plowed or salted during the winter months, but are un-gated and open for hunter access at all times. State forest roads are named on the locator map to aid hunters in further refining access strategies through the use of the Public Use Map; where they can identify additional access points available in the form of administrative roads, haul roads, and trails available to them depending on weather conditions. Hunters are encouraged to consult the DCNR website advisory on road openings and closures prior to hunting to find out what access strategies will be available to them on the day they plan to hunt.

Trails

State Forest **Trails** identified on the locator map indicate where foot travel access provides access into the interior of DCNR's DMAP areas. They are useful for on-the ground reconnaissance of the DMAP area during scouting trips, as well as for still hunting or quietly moving into or out of stand locations. Some of the trails indicated on the locator map can be identified on the Public Use Map, but others are not. Trail conditions in terms of difficulty and maintenance status may be widely variable, and hunters are encouraged to assess trail conditions through scouting or by querying their local district office.

Wildlife Openings

Wildlife Openings identified on the DMAP locator map show areas actively maintained in an open herbaceous state primarily to benefit generalist game species such as whitetail deer and wild turkey. Some of these openings may be planted with trees such as apples that provide alternative soft-mast sources in the fall, or contain clover and other browse species that are actively maintained. These openings provide good morning and evening observation areas during summer and early fall scouting. Hunters can also use them to zero in on deer trails and travel corridors leading into the less accessible, dense-cover areas where deer head as hunting pressure increases.

Proposed Timber Sales, Overstory Removal, and Shelterwoods

DMAp locator maps identify timber management activity areas that hunters should be aware of within and around DMAp areas. There are three distinct stages of timber management delineated. Depending on the exact status of the timber management activity indicated on the map, hunters may encounter sale boundary markers, tree paint, road building activity, deer exclosure fences, or other signs associated with proposed, current, or past timber sale administration. For information on hunting around deer exclosure fences, please refer to that section below. If you have questions about what you encounter while hunting in or around a timber management area, please call your [local district office](#), or [contact DCNR](#).

Proposed Timber Sales in the DMAp unit and surrounding vicinity alert hunters to areas with imminent timber management activities planned. Foresters often target areas for timber sales where there is adequate advanced tree seedling regeneration already in place, or where the over-story trees are showing signs of declining health. Often, proposed timber sales represent some of the best existing browsing areas for deer, or areas where foresters most need hunters to reduce local deer numbers enough to get a healthy mix of trees, shrubs, and wildflowers to get established to replace a forest canopy in decline. Sometimes, in areas where regeneration of the existing forest is extremely difficult, these sites may be pre-fenced to protect what seedlings are present from any additional stress from deer browsing, so hunters are advised to prescout the area to establish a hunting plan. For tips on hunting around DCNR's deer exclosure fences, please see the exclosure fencing information below.

Overstory Removal areas identified on your DMAp area locator map are areas of early successional habitat where a young forest has become established and most of the older canopy trees have been removed. Depending on the exact status of these areas, they provide either high levels of browse and forage in the form of rapidly growing tree seedlings, shrubs, and other plants (including preferred browse species such as black berry) or dense escape and bedding cover. Retired haul roads, log landings, and skid roads are usually limed and seeded with a blend of grasses and legumes, affording both an additional food source and hunter foot travel access into the interior of these areas, depending on how long ago the timber sale occurred. Depending on the local deer impact pressure and the growth stage of these young forests, Overstory Removal areas may still be contained within a deer exclosure fence, so do your scouting and refer to LINK to get some pointers on hunting in and around deer exclosure fences on state forest lands. **Shelterwoods** are often used as an initial step in the process of replacing a maturing forest canopy with a dense layer of younger tree seedlings. In Shelterwoods, foresters mark a portion of the existing canopy trees for removal in order to increase the amount of sunlight that reaches the forest floor. They often preferentially retain the biggest and best seed producing trees from a diversity of species in the stand. Releasing these soft and hard mast producing trees from canopy competition increases the amount of sunlight and soil nutrients available to them, and increases their seed production capacity during the following years. Thus, Shelterwoods often provide deer with both bedding cover (tops and slashing from the Shelterwood harvest), browse (existing tree seedlings, shrubs, and plants on the forest floor), and mast. They are also areas where foresters rely on hunters to help keep deer impacts in balance with both the productive capacity of the mature, seed producing trees and the newly developing forest in the understory.

Counties

County lines are depicted on the DMAp area locator maps to help hunters better identify them on the Public Use Maps.

Wild and Natural Areas

Wild and Natural Areas are specially designated areas of the State Forest . Natural Areas are designated because they contain unique natural features or scenic beauty; where as Wild Areas are designated because they represent some of the most remote, unfragmented wilderness areas within the State Forest system. Wild and Natural Areas are open to public hunting, and are sometimes included in DMAp areas by some districts, but not always. They are included in the locator maps to help hunters more easily locate the DMAp area on the district wide Public Use Maps.

DMAP Area

DMAP Area delineation on the map is designed to help hunters clearly identify the boundaries of the DMAP area within the state forest. Often, using both the DMAP locator map and the Public Use Map together will be most useful in understanding the limits of the DMAP boundaries. **Please Remember:** You need to be in possession of a Wildlife Management Unit antlerless tag to legally harvest an antlerless deer on state forest land outside a designated DMAP area. DMAP tags are *only* legally used to tag antlerless deer harvested *within* the DMAP area boundary the tag is specified for. Please know your game laws and follow them!

State Game Lands

State Game Lands are publicly owned lands managed by the Pennsylvania Game Commission primarily for wildlife habitat management and hunting. State Game Lands are delineated on the locator maps to make them easier to use in correlation with the Public Use Maps and other mapping resources available to hunters from the [Pennsylvania Game Commission](#)

State Parks

State Parks are public lands owned by DCNR and managed by the [Bureau of State Parks](#) for public outdoor recreation. Many state parks adjoining state forest lands are also participants in the DMAP program. Parks are included as additional identifying features on all of the Bureau of Forestry's DMAP area locator maps.

State Forest

State Forest boundaries on the DMAP area locator maps help hunters identify DMAP areas on the larger scale Public Use Maps. They also help hunters with both a DMAP tag and a general Wildlife Management Unit tag for the area identify additional hunting opportunities on the state forest land in the vicinity. **Please Remember:** These mapping resources are intended to provide an informational service for all hunters. You need to be in possession of a Wildlife Management Unit antlerless tag for the area to legally harvest an antlerless deer on state forest land *outside* a designated DMAP area. DMAP tags are *only* legally used to tag antlerless deer harvested *within* the DMAP area boundary the tag is specified for. Please know your game laws and follow them!

Hunting around DCNR's Deer Exclosure Fences

Deer exclosure fences are used to protect forest understory vegetation from deer in areas where deer browsing pressure could negatively impact the species composition and habitat value of the future forest being established. A primary goal of DCNR's use of the DMAP program is to use hunter impacts to minimize the cost of sustainable forest management, and already, declining trends in our dependence on deer exclosure fencing suggests that current changes to Pennsylvania 's deer management regulations and the efforts of DMAP participating hunters on state forest lands are having a positive effect.

As dependence on deer exclosure fencing continues to decline, both deer and deer hunters have ready access to the high quality forage and bedding habitats created by healthy, diverse, early successional forests.

In areas where fences are still present, antlerless hunters, and particularly DMAP hunters, are critical to helping us reach our sustainability goal. We recognize that the ongoing presence of deer fences on state forestland represents an inconvenience or even aggravation for some hunters. We offer the following tips in the hope that they will allow help provide deer hunters with the highest quality hunting experience possible on state forest lands.

What deer hunters should know about deer exclosure fences

General Information about BOF Deer Exclosure Fences:

- Most common fence type is eight foot high woven wire, non-electrified fence
- Some remaining eight or more strand high-tensile electrified fences are still in use
- All fenced areas provide at least two gates for hunter and personnel access.
- Most fenced areas are seventy acres or less in size, as this is the acreage limit suggested by BOF timbersale guidelines. However there are some exceptions.
- If you encounter fence maintenance issues while hunting (including the presence of deer *inside* the fence!), please notify our district office. We appreciate any information we receive from hunters on problems with our fences.

Other things Hunters should know. . .

Foresters don't like fences either!

Foresters collect many sample plots of data on the understory vegetation within a prospective timber sale area before determining whether or not to put up a fence. If these data plots indicate that deer browsing is likely to lead to long-term undesirable effects on the future forest stand, the forester may decide that a fence, along with any number of other silvicultural tools, is necessary to ensure sustainable forests for the future. But fences add a lot of hassle and work for foresters, and a tremendous cost to the taxpayer, so they are not used unless there is pretty strong evidence that the deer present in the area will negatively impact the regeneration process.

Fences Make Good Focal Points for Pre-Season Scouting

First, deer exclosure fences can help hunters scout an area more efficiently by providing a relatively easily identified and accessible area for hunters to reconnaissance during scouting. Fence-line perimeters are often good areas to pick up deer sign including trails, rub-lines, and scrapes during prescouting because a hunter can move around them rather quickly and quietly while scouting and easily relocate areas of interest during a return visit to hunt. Deer are also less easily spooked out of the area by such scouting activity, as they are accustomed to a certain level of human intrusion into these areas due to repeated fence inspections by maintenance staff.

Deer Exclosure Fences Impact Deer Movement and Travel Corridors

Deer exclosure fences often intersect with or obstruct existing deer trails and travel corridors. While the presence of fences at the scale used by the Bureau of Forestry does not represent a survival impediment to a large, highly mobile species like the whitetail, they will redirect deer movement patterns in ways that an alert and observant hunter can take advantage of. Studying a topographical map and aerial photos can help a hunter predict likely deer travel corridors in the vicinity of a deer fence and suggest potentially productive stand locations. On the ground scouting around exclosures may also help hunters identify evidence of heavily used trails where the local deer population skirts around the fence during their regular movement patterns to and from bedding and feeding areas. And groups of hunters cooperating together while still-hunting or driving can often find ways to strategically use deer exclosure fences to their advantage in predicting deer movement.

Deer Get Inside Fences!

Some deer seem to recognize that the best forest habitat often grows inside a fence! While scouting around a fence, hunters should take a quick look for deer sign *inside* the fence as well. Hunters in possession of an appropriate license can legally take deer inside a fence. However, wild deer that have

taken up residence inside a fence usually become extremely secretive and elusive of human presence, so do not expect this to be an easy task. **Caution:** While you may legally solicit additional hunters to help drive deer that you suspect are within a fenced timber sale, please exercise extreme caution in doing so. In the constrained environment of a deer fence, deer quickly become very adept at hanging very tightly in any available cover, and then quickly doubling back between drivers. This can lead to extremely dangerous shooting situations with multiple hunters. Please always exercise extreme caution and hunt ethically and humanely under all circumstances on the state forest, but especially when pursuing deer within a fenced timber sale.