The Nebraska Game and Parks Commissioners approved staff recommendations to reduce 2012 antlerless deer hunting permits at their Oct. 26 meeting in North Platte.

The action was taken to reduce harvest pressure in areas with substantial losses from epizootic hemorrhagic disease (EHD).

Permit reductions of 20 to 50 percent were approved for 18 antlerless-only units. The River Antlerless permit quota also changed from “unlimited” to 4,500 permits. Changes became effective immediately following the meeting.

EHD is a viral disease spread by biting midges and usually does not persist much beyond the first frost. The total effect of the disease on the deer population will be known following the deer seasons.

The board also:

—Approved a recommendation to not authorize any bighorn sheep hunting permits for 2013. A bighorn status report revealed that too few mature rams were available to allow hunting.

—Amended a fee schedule for visitor services at state park areas.

—Created three- and five-year hunt, fish and hunt-fish combination licenses, as well as three- and five-year habitat and Nebraska migratory waterfowl stamps.

—Amended boating regulations to reclassify waters, remove redundancies and consolidate language. All waters in Nebraska are considered open; however, only the ones with restrictions now are listed in the regulations. That includes Branched Oak Lake, which now has a 5 mph/no wake restriction from sundown to sunrise.

—Approved sport fishing regulations for 2013-2014.

—Amended wildlife regulation language for “body-gripping” traps used for fur harvesting.

—Amended wildlife regulations to allow more flexibility on how turkey carcasses may be cleaned before transport.

—Amended wildlife regulations regarding keeping wild animals in captivity to remove redundancies from language.

—Amended wildlife regulations to allow dog training and dog trials on controlled shooting areas (CSA) provided the CSA operator obtains a captive wildlife permit.

—Amended wildlife regulations for the use and construction of waterfowl and hunting blinds.

Karie Decker, Nebraska Invasive Species Project Coordinator, gave a presentation on the invasive Chinese mystery snail, which has been found in some Nebraska waters. The snail can host parasites and diseases that can infect humans, obstruct intake pipes and compete with native snails for food.