

Michigan Department of Natural Resources – Wildlife Division
2021 Upper Peninsula
Deer Habitat Improvement Partnership Initiative
Executive Summary Handout

The Deer Habitat Improvement Partnership Initiative (DHIPI) is a competitive grant program offered by Wildlife Division, and focuses on cooperative projects enhancing deer habitat on private lands in the Upper Peninsula. Now in its' thirteenth year, over \$750,000.00 of license dollars have been invested into Upper Peninsula deer habitat through the DHIPI program, with an additional half a million dollars of matching funds contributed through partners in over 93 projects; enhancing thousands of acres of deer habitat in nearly all Upper Peninsula counties.

The request for grant proposals opens on January 28th, 2021, with a total of \$100,000.00 available to award as grants through the DHIPI program. Grants awarded in 2021 will range from a minimum of \$2,000.00 to a maximum of \$15,000.00 and require a 25% project match of partners.

There are three primary Initiative goals that all project proposals must include: (1) to produce tangible, on-the-ground deer habitat improvements, (2) to build and promote partnerships between the DNR and sportsperson organizations/other partners, and (3) to showcase these cooperative projects throughout the community.

Applications can be submitted from conservation organizations, sportsperson groups, non-governmental organizations, local conservation districts, or other eligible landowners. Given the limited amount of DHIPI funding available, individual private landowners are not eligible to apply directly at this time unless they are enrollees in the Qualified Forest Program, or the Commercial Forest Act.

City, municipal, township, county, Tribal, Federal, or other state government entities and agencies are not eligible to apply directly for funding. Such interested groups can serve as third party cooperators to approved projects (i.e. as cooperating landowners where projects can occur, or as contributing partners).

Projects can be proposed to occur on industrial forests, Commercial Forest Act or Qualified Forest Program enrolled lands, privately owned, or federal lands. Public accessibility is an important consideration and project lands which allow legal public access (foot traffic at a minimum) will benefit in the competitive evaluation process. State-owned lands are not eligible for DHIPI funding.

Examples of project proposals include, but are not limited to: wildlife shrub plantings, tree plantings (such as long-lived conifers, oak or other hard mast species, fruit/soft mast producers), scarification for regeneration of tree species, non-commercial timber stand improvement activities, direct mechanical habitat manipulation, wildlife opening creation or maintenance, warm or cool season herbaceous plantings and native prairie plantings.

Specific proposed activities that will not be considered: creation or maintenance of annual plant species such as corn and root crops, plantings of exotics, invasive, or non-DNR approved species, commercial timber sale preparation, and construction of ponds. Proposals that increase undesired habitat conditions, have human safety implications, are contrary to DNR policy, state or federal law, or have adverse impacts on state or federally listed Threatened and Endangered species will not be considered.

Organizations considering participation in this Initiative are encouraged to contact their local wildlife biologist to develop suitable project proposals. It is the responsibility of the partner organization to undertake the primary role in the implementation of the project. The proposal should indicate specific plans on how the partner intends to accomplish the project including the required project cost share.

Proposed projects will be evaluated by a selection committee on the following five criteria: production of deer habitat benefits; feasibility of the proposal; public accessibility and or proximity to public lands; partner cost share and project implementation; and communications strategy.

Successful applicants will need to register with the State of Michigan to facilitate grant funding. A partner organization must name a project contact person/representative and include appropriate contact information on the application. Additionally, the sponsor organization will be required to sign a contract agreement and liability release which specifies deliverables, timelines, and partner responsibilities.

Implementation of approved projects will be at the discretion of the DNR and funding availability. Failure to meet project obligations or noncompliance may result in a partner's future ineligibility.

Complete grant materials are available online at [DNR Wildlife Grants page](#) or type www.michigan.gov/dnr-grants then follow the *Deer Habitat Improvement Partnership Initiative* link. Contact Bill Scullon at: phone 906-563-9247, fax 906-563-5820, email scullonh@michigan.gov with further questions or to request an application packet.

Completed applications must be sent to; Bill Scullon, Field Operations Manager, Norway DNR Field Office, 520 West US Hwy 2, Norway MI 49870 by close of business on Friday March 12, 2021. Final notification of project selection process will occur by April 1, 2021.