



East Goshen Township Deer Management Program

Bow Hunting Proposal



Background

- 1995 – Deer count using overhead thermographic imaging counts 157 deer in township.
- 2005 – Township conducts “pilot” deer hunt involving 15 hunters at residents’ request. 12 Deer harvested.
- 2006 – Board of Supervisors decides to terminate deer hunting program due to residents’ concerns and unanswered questions.
- 2007 – Deer Management Committee formed to determine if township has a deer problem, define the problem, and make recommendations to address it.
- 2008 – Program enters its “action” phase.



Deer Management Committee Findings

East Goshen does have a deer problem. A thermographic overhead deer count finds ~300 deer in the township March 25, 2007.

The high density of deer (30 per square mile) leads to an unacceptable risk of:

- Lyme Disease
- Traffic Accidents
- Loss of understory in woodlands
- Loss of expensive private plantings



Recommendations

1. Educate residents about deer in the community.
- 2. Initiate a bow hunting program executed by deer management groups to reduce deer herd density.**
3. Develop a tick program to reduce risk of Lyme disease.
4. Study deer-vehicle accident patterns and determine if mitigations are feasible.



Goal

Reduce the township's deer density from 30 per square mile to 15 over 10 years by harvesting an average of 36 deer from our open spaces each year if all other assumptions and data are correct.

Considerations

- The deer population grew by approximately 7% per year from 1995 to 2007 (157 to 300) including the impact of private hunting and traffic accidents. Arrest the growth by harvesting 21 deer per year.
- Reduce population from 300 to 150 over 10 years by harvesting 15 deer per year.



Land

The following township open spaces are proposed for bow hunting through this program:

- Bow Tree/Clocktower: 55 acres
- Grand Oak/Mill Creek: 17 acres
- Supplee Valley East: 17 acres
- Supplee Valley West: 26 acres
- Wentworth: 20 acres

Ashbridge (55 acres) and Applebrook are bow hunted privately today, as well as several smaller private parcels.

150 Foot setback required from any occupied dwelling.

Expand to interested private landowners after establishing open space program.



Deer Management Groups

Organizations dedicated specifically to reducing deer herd size, versus recreational hunting. Key benefits:

- Deep expertise in how to harvest deer
- Certified marksmanship and knowledge
- Extremely safe & committed to ethical hunting
- Self-organized and managed, subject to township's restrictions
- No cost to township
- Venison often contributed to charities to feed the needy
- Group members insured to \$1M/\$2M in aggregate
- Volunteer activities likely to benefit township residents



Group Selection Considerations

The program considers many factors. See the full program for details. Some significant factors are:

- No PA Game Commission violations for members **ever**
- Charter, mission, and overall application strength
- Commitment to bow hunting and deer management best practices
- Experience, references, and 2007 hunting statistics
- Commitment to East Goshen program and membership of East Goshen residents
- Proposed volunteerism
- 1 Group assigned per hunting area.



Schedule

The program will follow the PA Game Commission schedule for archery deer hunting.

- September 20, 2008 – January 24, 2009, except Sunday and December 24-25.
- Schedule varies for antlerless and all deer throughout season.
- Most productive timeframe is September 20, 2008 through November 15, 2008 due to increased daylight, warmer temperatures, and the rut.
- Daily schedule is dawn to dusk

Groups will not be bow hunting every day. Groups are self-scheduling and will keep township informed of activities.



Hunting Procedures

Many details – see the full program. Some highlights:

- Archery hunting from tree stands only. No bow hunting while walking in/out of open spaces.
- Tree stands may remain through the season, but must be removed at the end of the season. They must be secured when not in use.
- Archers must enter/exit at specific locations and carry authorization with them while hunting.
- Groups must harvest 3:1 doe-to-buck ratio.
- All deer must be retrieved and removed. Field dressing is permitted with concealment or removal of the remains, if concealment is not possible.
- Contact the township, police, or PA Game Commission for any observed violations.



Reporting

Groups to the Township

- Daily hunting activity and any contact with residents
- Suspected instances of poaching and any potentially unsafe conditions (call 911!)
- Litter or other issues that require the township's attention
- Volunteerism

Township to the Residents

- All group reported data above is available.
- Township will summarize program results for residents.
- Lessons learned and recommendations for next year.



Complaints

Residents should report all issues to the township, police, 911, and/or PA Game Commission.

All complaints will be investigated by the appropriate body and a report issued.

The Board of Supervisors, or their assignee, will be the ultimate arbiter of disputes within the township program rules.