

CITY OF PEWAUKEE
URBAN DEER MANAGEMENT PLAN
TO BE CONDUCTED BY CITY STAFF AND OFFICIALS

BACKGROUND

Residents have been and are intent on monitoring and managing the whitetail deer population within the City of Pewaukee. Deer presence in Pewaukee has contributed to complaints of nuisance, health, safety concerns, property damage, and plant species eradication. The increasing population of deer in the City as well as the neighboring communities of the City of Brookfield, Town of Brookfield, and Village of Elm Grove raises concerns as to increased deer-traffic collisions and further destruction of property in the future. Due to the abundance of complaints expressed to the City by residents, the City seeks to monitor and manage the deer population.

To address resident concerns of nuisance, safety, and plant species eradication, the City is looking to partner with the City of Brookfield, Town of Brookfield and Village of Elm Grove to conduct periodic deer population surveys. The DNR has an urban wildlife grant to assist with funding a helicopter deer survey in December or January of each year.

There is a history of high deer population in our neighboring communities. In the 36 square mile township that includes the City of Brookfield, the Town of Brookfield, and Village of Elm Grove the total deer counted were: 387 in 2008, 378 in 2009, 447 in 2010, 355 in 2011, 450 in 2012, and 406 in 2013 (21-Elm Grove, 27-Town of Brookfield, 358-City of Brookfield). For the past five years, the City of Brookfield has culled on average 133 deer per year. Due to the City's close proximity to Brookfield and its high-density deer population, the City will continue to monitor the deer populations, weather permitting, to locate the herd, identify population trends, and identify herd population changes over time.

The deer population reduction is anticipated to focus on certain zones within the City which are yet to be determined based on the helicopter survey. The zones will be established based on the deer numbers that may exceed the recommended number of deer per square mile of habitat area.

The overwinter goal population for deer within City of Pewaukee borders is 30 deer per square mile of habitat. The Village of Elm Grove currently has a goal of 25 deer per square mile of habitat and the City of Brookfield has a goal of 20-30 deer per square mile of habitat area. Their population goals were established by referencing the Milwaukee Metro Unit (77M) whose deer population had been similarly established (Southeastern Wisconsin Urban Deer Taskforce Final Report 1994).

Due to the scope and impact of issues related to excessive deer populations, the City should assume the prime responsibility to implement and sustain Citywide deer control methods rather than individual neighborhoods or areas of the City.

PROPOSED PLAN METHOD AND PROCEDURE

The City of Pewaukee includes an area of 21 square miles with approximately 2,844 acres of deer habitat. In order to determine the quantity of deer in the City, an aerial deer count survey should be established in conjunction with the City of Brookfield, Town of Brookfield and Village of Elm Grove each winter. City staff should then review the aerial survey findings to determine if active deer management is needed.

To actively manage deer, the City should obtain a permit from the DNR. Once the City has the permit, professional, experienced sharp shooters or bow hunters will be hired to control deer in safe locations. The Lieutenant (or WSD designee) will work with the City Administrator to evaluate the contractor that is hired. Sharp shooters will sit on elevated platforms and fire virtually straight down at deer which are attracted to bait at the sites. Firearms and ammunition will provide for humane kills and a safety plan will be developed for each site to ensure public safety.

Field dressed deer will be taken to an approved meat processing facility with all useable venison donated to a recognized charitable organization (i.e. food pantry) as per DNR permit conditions.

The City will continue to advocate the use of repellents and barriers, such as fencing, to protect residential plantings from deer damage, as there will always be deer in the City. However, these methods cannot be used as the sole means of longer term control because of the continued immigration of deer into the City and because of the rapid reproduction rate. Therefore, long term control of deer will involve continued, additional removal of deer using sharpshooting as the means to maintain the population.

Staff will establish goals and budgets based on the results of the preceding year and the population count from additional helicopter surveys. Depending on survey results, any removal will begin in January and continue through March. Removal may resume again in November and December in order to reach the annual goals established.

The discovery of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in Wisconsin's deer herd, including recent discoveries in Waukesha County, has had ramifications for urban deer management programs that utilize sharpshooters. Related issues that will continually need to be addressed include:

Baiting – The baiting and feeding of deer has been prohibited in 24 Wisconsin counties (including Waukesha County) due to concerns about its role in promoting disease transmission among deer. However, the value of bait when used by sharpshooters in urban areas is acknowledged and has been allowed in limited situations by permit and with certain restrictions.

Utilization of Meat – Permits have required that the meat from deer taken in urban deer management programs must be utilized in some manner for human consumption (i.e. donated to a food pantry or given to residents). Food safety concerns have been raised by some food pantries which in past years have made it difficult to utilize meat resulting

from deer control programs. In 2013/14, the DNR will pay for CWD testing of all adult deer removed through this program.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND SELECTION

The site(s) selected will be within the limits of the City of Pewaukee. Generally, the site(s) will be chosen for their proximity to areas of deer browsing damage, resident complaints, high population concentration as shown in the helicopter survey, and willingness of residents to volunteer the use of their property. Final locations will be recommended by the contractor with the assistance of the DNR for approval from the City Administrator and Lieutenant (or WSD designee) when deer management is necessary.

Residents living adjacent to these areas are notified in advance when operations are to occur and the procedures the City will be following. In addition, warning signage is placed in the management zones and maintained throughout operations.

The sites that are chosen may or may not be used in subsequent years based on removal experience and the willingness of the owners to continue to volunteer their land.

EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAM

The Common Council will continue to assess the success of the urban deer management program in the following ways:

1. Survey City residents for opinions
2. Conduct cost analyses
3. Monitor deer/auto accidents
4. Conduct helicopter surveys

The results of the program will be communicated to the City residents. The urban deer management program outlined in this plan is ongoing and will continue to be revised and modified in the future to achieve the objectives as outlined above, utilizing the most appropriate available methods. Any significant changes to the urban deer management program will require the approval of the Common Council.

PROGRAM COSTS

In 2013, the Common Council approved \$5,000 for deer removal in the Rocky Point subdivision, which on October 7, 2013 was carried forward to 2014.

No funding was approved in the 2014 budget for a Helicopter Survey of the Deer Population or Removal of additional deer, other than the \$5,000 that had previously been approved.