

**MEMORANDUM**

February 26, 2013

TO: Public Safety Committee

FROM: Linda McMillan, Senior Legislative Analyst 

SUBJECT: **Update: FY 2013 (July 2012) Report of the Deer Management Work Group;**

***Those expected for this session:***

- Mary Bradford, Director, Montgomery County Parks, M-NCPPC
- John Hench, Montgomery County Parks, M-NCPPC
- Rob Gibbs, M-NCPPC Parks staff and Chair of the Deer Management Work Group
- Jeremy Criss, Agricultural Services Manager, Department of Economic Development

**1. Background on Deer Management Work Group**

In 1993, the County Council established a White-tailed Deer Task Force charged with developing a range of ways to deal with this growing problem. The Deer Management Program has been in place since 1995. Since that time, Park and Planning has continued to staff the Deer Management Work Group (DMWG) and has issued annual reports identifying problems and making recommendations for the upcoming year.

The objectives of the Deer Management Program are:

1. Reduce deer-vehicle collisions on a county-wide basis.
2. Reduce depredation on agricultural crops and home landscapes to levels acceptable to county residents.
3. Reduce the negative impacts of deer on natural communities to preserve plant and animal diversity.
4. Continue a county-wide education program to provide residents with information on deer, deer problems, and how to minimize or prevent deer-human conflicts.

**2. FY 2013 Annual Report**

The FY 2013 Annual Report and Recommendations of the Deer Management Work Group is attached at ©1-17. The report highlights the following FY12 accomplishments.

- In response to requests and complaints from the local community, the DMWG recommended and M-NCPPC Department of Parks implemented deer population management in the Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park. The program was conducted by specially trained Park Police sharpshooters along with Parks Department wildlife staff at the Sligo Golf Course with the cooperation of the Montgomery County Revenue Authority which operates the golf course. Though challenging, the program was very successful and significantly reduced deer numbers in the area.
- M-NCPPC continued its deer population management program in 20 parks adding one new location (Sligo Golf Course) covering 15,000 acres.
- M-NCPPC and other DMWG members participated in educational workshops and other deer management related efforts including the writing of a deer management Plan for the City of Rockville.
- Staff from the City of Rockville Parks and Facilities Division joined the DMWG.

The report notes (© 9-10) that in FY12 deer management was conducted on 28 parcels of public land totaling about 28,000 acres. The parcels include 20 County parks, 3 State parks and wildlife management areas, one Federal facility, WSSC property, and one non-park County property.

### **3. Deer Management in Sligo Creek Park and Rock Creek Park**

At last year's session, the Committee discussed the Parks Department's planned sharpshooting effort in Sligo Creek Park. As noted in the report, the Sligo Creek Golf Course effort was successfully undertaken and the site was included again for 2012-2013 (see ©19-21 for the full listing).

As a part of budget actions, funds (\$26,955) were provided to expand the sharpshooting effort and the Rock Creek Stream Valley Park was identified as the expected location. The Parks Department reports that the location was successfully added to the deer management program this year. The program at Rock Creek Stream Valley Unit 2 in Chevy Chase was proposed in early Fall (©22-23). Public feedback received during the month of October indicated that 70% of responding citizens approved of the proposal and it was approved by the Director of Parks in December and implemented in mid-February. Parks says the effort was extremely successful and a big step in continuing its efforts to bring deer management to the more down-county parks. These parks are generally smaller, more narrow with more dense development surrounding them and it is therefore more difficult to implement deer management in them.

The Parks Department further reports that the deer population management program for all but one park for this past season was complete this past Thursday, February 21<sup>st</sup>. The last park will be completed this week. All harvest goals were reached. A complete tally of the deer harvest and pounds of meat donated to charity will be completed in the next couple weeks.

#### 4. DNR Data on Deer Harvest by Bowhunting, Firearm, and Muzzleloader

For the 2012-2013 hunting season, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources reports that 87,541 deer were harvested statewide. This is a decrease of about 11% from the 2011-2012 season when 98,029 deer were harvested.

In Montgomery County, 5,598 deer were harvested in the 2012-2013 hunting season. This is a 0.5% increase from the 2011-2012 season when 5,571 deer were harvested. Interestingly, Montgomery County is the only county where the number of deer taken during the hunting season did not decrease. Montgomery County had the fourth highest number of deer harvested following Frederick County (7,634), Baltimore County (5,991), and Washington County (5,762). Carroll County was very close to Montgomery with 5,579.

The following table shows the breakdown by the type of hunting weapon used. The breakdown by weapon for 2012-2013 is not yet available on the DNR website.

##### Montgomery County Deer Harvest

Season	Bow	Firearm	Muzzleloader	Total
2012-2013				5,598
2011-2012	2,063	2,499	1,009	5,571
2010-2011	2,228	2,730	1,011	5,969
2009-2010	2,100	2,572	927	5,599
2008-2009	1,963	2,202	998	5,163
2007-2008	1,753	2,277	779	4,809
2006-2007	1,783	2,396	937	5,116

Source: Maryland DNR Annual Deer Reports

The FY12 County DMWG Report (©13) shows that in addition to the deer counted in the DNR report (5,571), 489 were harvested through sharpshooting and 426 through DNR Deer Management Permits. **The total deer harvested in the 2011-12 season in Montgomery County was 6,476. The DMWG reports that about 21% of the total deer harvested in the County are from programs on public land, including managed hunts and sharpshooting.** As previously noted, the total count for the current 2012-2103 season will be available in the next couple of weeks.

#### 5. Deer Vehicle Collisions

The County DMWG report contains information about deer vehicle collisions reported to the County Police (© 4-5). The map at © 5 shows that collisions occur throughout the County. The high point for the number of reported collisions was 2002 and there was a decrease until 2009 when the number increased by about 100 (see summary table on the next page). The number of reported collisions is now over 2,000 with a slight decrease from 2011 to 2012. These numbers do not include collision where the Police are not notified.

The DMWG reports that the number of collisions in the upper county, where most deer management is taking place, remain steady to slightly declining. Other areas of the county,

particularly the down-county areas are continuing to see some increases where deer management is less widespread.

### Reported Deer-Vehicle Collisions

Year	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
MC Police Dept Rpts	1,705	1,774	1,891	2,033	2,003	2,127	2,047	1,997	1,969
Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012		
MC Police Dept Rpts	1,951	1,876	1,841	1,945	1,930	2,038	2,019		

## 6. Deer Donation Program

The Department of Economic Development (DED) continues to assist with the deer management program by providing cold boxes so that hunters may donate deer to be processed and given to area food banks, shelters, or other non-profit organizations. The following table provides data on the number of deer donated.

2004-2005 Season	39 deer	1,560 pounds
2005-2006 Season	51 deer	2,040 pounds
2006-2007 Season	85 deer	3,400 pounds
2007-2008 Season	197 deer	7,880 pounds
2008-2009 Season	150 deer	6,000 pounds
2009-2010 Season	304 deer	12,160 pounds
2010-2011 Season	403 deer	16,120 pounds
2011-2012 Season	222 deer	8,880 pounds
2012-2013 Season	163 deer	6,520 pounds
Total 9 Seasons	1,614 deer	64,560 pounds

DED reports that the Deer Donation Program has invested \$180,000 over nine years. The value of the program is calculated to be \$707,515.00. This is based on the value of the meat collected (**64,560** lbs at \$2/lb) and the value of the commodity grain in the farmers' fields not consumed by these deer. **1,614** deer harvested, 2,000 lbs of grain saved for each deer harvested, average value of all commodity grain estimated at \$10.50/bushel).

DED is also involved with two new initiatives that are helping farmers overcome the problems caused by white-tailed deer. Deer Management Workshops are designed to educate farmers and hunters about effective deer management on private property. The Deer Donation Program encourages farmers and hunters to harvest more deer in a responsible manner by providing a local, minimum-hassle deer collection site. It is administered in partnership with William F. Willard Farm, LLC and Patriot Wildlife Management Services, to coordinate the collection, processing and donation of venison to local area food banks. The flyer for the Poolsville deer donation program is attached at ©24.

## **7. State Legislation being considered that would Impact Bow Hunting in Montgomery County**

At last year's session, the Committee discussed the concerns from residents about the growing problem from deer damage and the potential for some residents to address the problem by employing bow hunting and that the use of bow hunting on private property, with property owners' permission, could be expanded if the current requirement for a 150 yard safety zone was reduced to 50 yards, as it is in Frederick and Carroll Counties.

There are four bills currently under consideration by the General Assembly that could impact bow hunting in Montgomery County:

### **HB671 (MC 2-13) Montgomery County – Archery Hunting – Safety Zone**

This bill as introduced would reduce the safety zone for archery hunting from 150 yards to 50 yards in Montgomery County. The Council supports the bill as introduced. Council staff understands some amendments may be under consideration. The bill has had a first reading but has not been scheduled for a hearing as of February 26, 2013.

### **HB366 Archery Hunting – Safety Zone (Delegates Glass, Dwyer, and Otto)**

This bill would reduce the safety zone for archery hunting from 150 yards to 50 yards statewide. The bill was heard on February 20, 2013 by Environmental Matters.

### **HB499 Natural Resources – Deer Bow Hunting Season – End Date (Delegates Glass, Afzali, Dwyer, Hogan, Hough, Parrott, and Szeliga)**

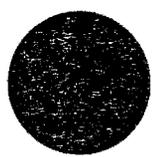
This bill would require that the deer bow hunting season established through regulations by the Department of Natural Resources must remain open through the Saturday following January 30. The bill was heard on February 20, 2013 by Environmental Matters.

### **SB754 Hunting – Schools – Expanded Safety Zone (Senator Miller)**

This bill would prohibit a person, while hunting for a wild bird or mammal, from shooting or discharging a firearm or other deadly weapon within 500 yards of a public or non-public school. It had a first reading on February 1, 2013.

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# Montgomery County Deer Management Program



## Annual Report and Recommendations Fiscal Year 2013

Prepared by  
Montgomery County Deer Management Work Group  
Rob Gibbs, Chair  
September 2012

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
GOVERNMENT

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### The Montgomery County Deer Management Work Group

Maryland Department of Natural Resources Wildlife and Heritage Service,  
M-NCPPC, Department of Parks Montgomery County  
Montgomery Soil Conservation District  
Montgomery County Police Department  
U. S. National Park Service  
Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission

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## Montgomery County Deer Management Program Annual Report and Recommendations Fiscal Year 2013

### Introduction

The Comprehensive Management Plan For White-tailed Deer in Montgomery County, MD, (Montgomery County Deer Management Work Group, 1995) calls for the Montgomery County Deer Management Work Group (DMWG), on an annual basis, to review deer-impact data and present a list of recommendations for the upcoming year. Recommendations are submitted to and implemented by County, State and Federal agencies and private landowners as appropriate.

This report briefly reviews the current status of the County's Deer Management Program, makes recommendations for Fiscal Year (FY) 2013 (July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013) and describes the rationale upon which these recommendations are based.

Information on all aspects of the County's Deer Management Program is available on the Internet at [www.ParksDeerManagement.org/](http://www.ParksDeerManagement.org/). The website includes data from the past 17 years on deer-vehicle collisions, impacts to natural ecosystems, damage to agricultural crops, local deer populations and other pertinent information about the program including locations and application procedures for managed hunts on M-NCPPC Parkland. Comments and specific questions regarding this report can be addressed to Rob Gibbs at [rob.gibbs@montgomeryparks.org](mailto:rob.gibbs@montgomeryparks.org) or 301-962-1341.

### Citizen Notification and Comment Periods for Proposed Managed Hunts on County Parkland

Public input is solicited prior to the implementation of any new population management on M-NCPPC Parkland. M-NCPPC will publicize information on any new proposals through press releases to local newspapers, planning board agendas, and the Internet. Following these public announcements there will be a comment period during which citizens can submit comments through the mail, or e-mail. While some public meetings may be held in areas where management is expected to be very controversial, it is felt that use of the internet and public media provides greater and more convenient opportunities for citizens to learn about and comment on deer population management actions that are proposed on parkland throughout the county. Information will be provided at [www.ParksDeerManagement.org/](http://www.ParksDeerManagement.org/).

### Goal and Objectives

The goal of Montgomery County's deer management program is to reduce deer-human conflicts to a level that is compatible with human priorities and land uses. The deer management plan lists four objectives for attaining this goal.

1. Reduce deer-vehicle collisions (DVCs) on a countywide basis.
2. Reduce depredation on agricultural crops and home landscapes to levels acceptable to county residents.
3. Reduce negative impacts of deer on natural communities to preserve native plant and animal diversity.
4. Continue a countywide education program to provide residents with information on deer, deer problems and how to minimize or prevent deer-human conflicts.

### Overview of Deer Management Program

The Deer Management Program has been in operation since 1995. During the past 17 years many deer management actions have been implemented and progress has been made in addressing many of the negative impacts associated with high deer populations. The following sections outline the actions and accomplishments of the program to date and the current status of the various deer impacts including problems that still need attention. For those interested in additional data related to the program visit [www.ParksDeerManagement.org](http://www.ParksDeerManagement.org) and click on "Deer Plans & reports" and then "Deer Data 1996-2011"

## Deer Program Accomplishments

### FY2012

- In response to requests and complaints from the local community the DMWG recommended and M-NCPPC Department of Parks implemented deer population management in Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park. The program was conducted by specially train Park Police sharpshooters along with Park wildlife staff at the Sligo Golf Course with the cooperation of the Montgomery County Revenue Authority (MCRA) who operates the golf course. Though challenging, the program was very successful and significantly reduced deer numbers in the area.
- The M-NCPPC continued its deer population management program in 20 parks adding the one new location mentioned above and covering over 15,000 acres.
- M-NCPPC and other DMWG members participated in educational workshops and other deer management related efforts including the writing of a deer management Plan for the City of Rockville.
- Staff from the City of Rockville Parks and Facilities Division joined the DMWG.

### Other Deer Management Actions Implemented to Date

- A comprehensive educational program on deer, their impacts and remedial methods including: informational brochures and publications, library materials, phone numbers for help, the seasonal use of Public Service Announcements about deer-vehicle collisions, local Cable TV Programs on deer management in the county, programs on deer through County nature centers.
- The DMWG working with other local government agencies through the Council of Governments (COG) completed and released an educational video on preventing Deer-vehicle collisions. This program began being aired on Montgomery Cable TV during the peak seasons for deer vehicle collisions and is available for use in local government and private driver education programs.
- County deer information Internet web page ([www.ParksDeerManagement.org](http://www.ParksDeerManagement.org)) with educational and program information.
- An extremely successful program of workshops for homeowners on protecting their property from deer damage. Well over 1600 county residents and landscape professionals have attended. Community groups can schedule a program by calling 301-962-1341.
- Wildlife reflector systems and experimental warning signs were tested at eight locations along County roads identified as having high numbers of deer-vehicle collisions. These signs have proven to have no effect in reducing DVCs and are no longer being employed.
- Improved data collection for deer-vehicle collisions and other impacts using GIS system mapping.
- Program to identify and monitor impacts to natural vegetation on M-NCPPC Parkland.
- Cooperative effort with County and State road agencies to better address deer-vehicle collisions through roadway design.
- Cooperative effort with M-NCPPC Transportation Planning Office to review projects that include bridges that cross wildlife corridors in order to allow for safe passage of wildlife under roadways.
- Cooperative effort with Washington area Council of Governments (COG) to reduce DVCs regionally.
- Cooperative effort with County and State park officials to initiate deer population management in parks where high deer populations were contributing to high numbers of DVCs, and other impacts.
- Cooperative effort with MD Department of Natural Resources to adjust hunting regulations to help increase antlerless deer harvest in order to reduce deer populations in areas open to hunting.

- Changes were made to County Code in early 2003 to allow for use of 8-foot deer fencing in residential side and backyards and all types of fencing on agricultural properties.
- The Department of Economic Development (DED), working closely with the DMWG, conducted a successful workshop for Agricultural growers in 2004 on implementing effective deer population management program. DED continues to work with farmers to reduce deer damage to crops
- The DED, working closely with area farmers, has established two refrigerated storage facilities – one in Poolesville and the other near Laytonsville - to facilitate the ability of farmers to better manage deer on their property and donate the meat to charity. This program is paid for by DED.
- M-NCPPC initiated a workshop in 2007 of local and regional government agencies and wildlife experts, who are currently conducting deer population management in this and other regions, to assess the state of the art of this work and develop new strategies for addressing non-traditional deer population management in suburban settings.
- In late 2007 changes were made to County Code firearms regulations related to hunting to better match state regulations and facilitate deer management on private land.
- A Lyme Disease Awareness Task Force in 2008 developed a citizen awareness program to promote better understand of the disease, its causes and prevention. The effort included new educational materials, a website, and educational signage in park areas. The effort continued in 2009 and included two episodes of the County Cable TV show, “Rural Montgomery County,” on Lyme Disease, providing important educational information to the public on this important topic.

**Deer-vehicle Collisions**

The number of Deer-vehicle Collisions (DVCs) countywide as reported by the Montgomery County Police Department for 2011 was 1,930 (see table 1 and Map 1). This is a 5% increase from the count for 2010 (1,930). Overall, DVC numbers still remain below the highest accident rates that occurred in 2002 despite the fact that total vehicle miles traveled in the County increased by approximately 10% between 2000 and 2010 ([www.marylandroads.com/open/Vehicle\\_Miles\\_of\\_Travel.pdf](http://www.marylandroads.com/open/Vehicle_Miles_of_Travel.pdf)). The County’s human population increased 11 % and the number of households increased 10% displacing deer habitat and concentrating deer.

While the number of DVCs increased in 2011 the number of accidents involving personal injury declined from 5 to 0. Further data analysis indicates that while the overall number has increased, some areas decreased while others increased. In general, the areas where active deer management has been employed showed a decline or steady level of DVCs while areas where no management has yet been implemented, especially in the more developed areas of the county, showed increases. This would indicate that it is important to continue to expand the deer management program into areas of the County that are not currently covered. Many of these areas, however, do not contain county parkland on which to conduct deer management and will require new and innovative approaches to deer population reduction.

**Table 1. Deer-vehicle Collision Data 1994 - 2011**

1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
1,343	1,244	1,776	1,705	1,774	1,891	2,033	2,003	2,127	2,047	1,997	1,969	1,951	1,867	1,841	1,945	1,930	2,038

Data on DVCs are collected and maintained by the Montgomery County Police Department.

Several approaches have been taken to reduce DVCs countywide including education, use of signage, structural design (e.g. designing bridges and fencing where possible to keep deer off roadways; see “Deer Program Accomplishments” above) and Deer Population Management (see that section below).

# Deer-vehicle Collisions Montgomery County, MD 2011

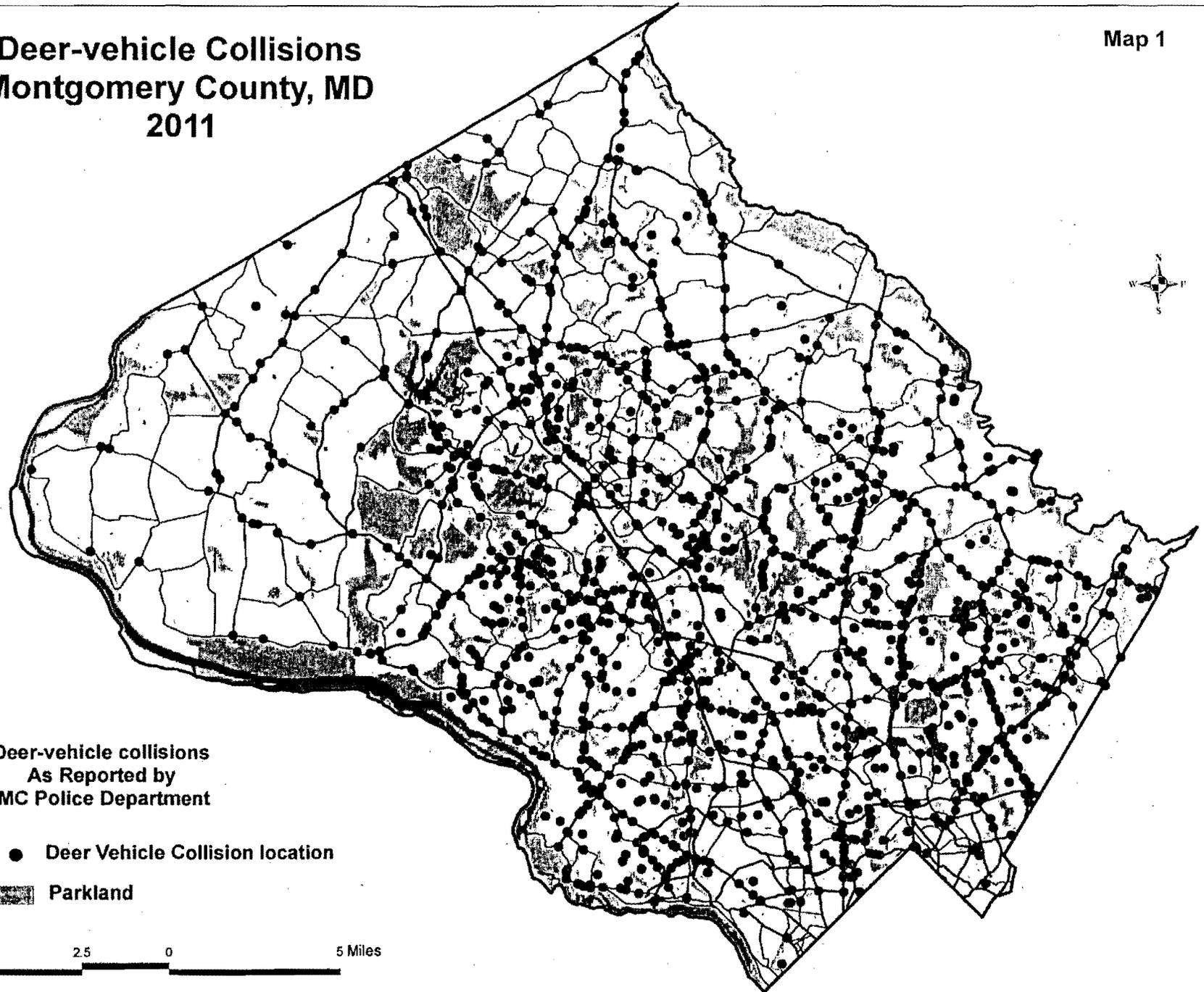


Deer-vehicle collisions  
As Reported by  
MC Police Department

● Deer Vehicle Collision location

▨ Parkland

5 2.5 0 5 Miles



5

Between 1996 and 2002, Montgomery County Police analyzed DVC data on roads surrounding several parks where deer population management was conducted. In each case, data showed a significant and sometimes dramatic decline in DVCs as deer populations were reduced. More recent DVC data suggest that this is the case at most deer population management sites.

While accidents have declined around parks where deer management has been employed, other areas have seen an increase as deer continue to expand into more developed portions of the county. These are mostly more urban/suburban areas where conducting deer population management is more problematic and limited. See the sections below titled "Deer Population Management" and "Education" for more discussion on how these efforts impact DVCs.

### **Agricultural Damage**

In 2004 the County's agricultural community declared that deer overpopulation was the number-one threat to farming in the County. Consequently, agricultural damage has been a particular focus of the DMWG's recommendations for the past several years and continues to be an important concern. The nationally acclaimed Agricultural Preserve is an important component of the County's General Plan. It helps maintain open space and contributes significantly to the county's character and quality of life. The existence of the Agricultural Preserve depends on the continued viability of agriculture.

A 2004 survey of County farmers indicated significant losses to agricultural crops due to deer browse. Thirty-six (36) farmers reported losses on corn, soybeans, wheat and hay. Thirty-four (34) producers reported losses on tree fruit, small fruit or vegetables. Twenty-seven (27) producers suffered losses on nursery, Christmas trees, grapes and other agricultural crops. In all, over 2000 acres of agricultural land has been removed from production due to deer crop damage and 2/3 of survey respondents believed crop damage from deer was on the increase.

Farmers are using a variety of strategies to attempt to minimize damage to their crops. Thirty-seven (37) have used fencing and/or cages around tree trunks to prevent rubbing damage. The farmers generally report that fencing as being effective in limiting damage to crops but at a significant cost to the individual farmer. Thirty-two (32) reported using deer repellents with very limited success. Nine (9) farmers were using scare tactics other than having dogs (i.e. noisemaking devises, motion activated lights, etc.). Forty-seven (47) have used dogs as deterrent with most indicating some success with this method. Deer control methods that rely on live dogs or noise making devices can be bothersome to neighbors. Possible effects on neighboring properties must be considered when considering options for deer management.

Over 100 landowners allowed hunting and/or used crop damage permits in an effort to control deer populations. Many feel higher deer harvest will help limit crop damage.

The 2011 Wildlife Damage Survey conducted by Maryland Agricultural Statistics Service indicated central Maryland farmers had sustained estimated losses of over \$4.3 million due to deer browse. The central Maryland area includes Montgomery, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Harford, Howard and Washington Counties. Damage in the central Maryland region is reported to be much higher than in other areas. It should be noted that higher crop prices can result in increased economic losses even if actual amount of crop damage remains unchanged. Crop damage losses on corn and soybeans exceeded \$800,000 in 2009 with just a 5% crop loss across the entire crop. Field losses can range as high as 50 % in some areas. Some deer damage occurs in almost every field and on almost every crop. Overall, deer damage does not appear to have declined significantly despite more aggressive population control measures on both public and private land.

### Deer Donation Program

The County's Deer Donation Program has expanded dramatically since it was initiated in 2004 (table 2).

Administered through the Department of Economic Development – Agricultural Services Division and operated by members of the local agricultural community, this program enables farmers and hunters to harvest additional deer beyond what they need for personal use and donate the extra meat to a good cause. The number of deer donated climbed steeply from 2004 to 2011. Last year the number of deer being donated dropped significantly. One likely cause is that the recession is causing hunters to keep more deer for their own use and to share with neighbors and family leaving less to be donated. The 222 deer donated last year provided nearly 9,000 pounds of meat donated to the Capital Area Food Bank in Washington, D.C.

By accepting extra or unwanted deer, the Deer Donation program has allowed some farmers to develop much more focused and effective hunting operations. Members of the agricultural community are now working more closely with their hunters to insure that more deer are being harvested. Some property owners have initiated organized one or two day hunts using groups of hunters to increase the harvest success and reduce deer numbers on their farms. The Deer Donation program facilitates these practices by providing an outlet for a large number of deer harvested at one time.

Table 2. Number of Deer and Pounds of Meat donated through the Deer Donation Program 2004 - 2012

<i>Deer Donation Program - Deer Collected and Pounds of Venison Donated</i>		
2004-2005 Season	39 deer	1,560 pounds
2005-2006 Season	51 deer	2,040 pounds
2006-2007 Season	85 deer	3,400 pounds
2007-2008 Season	197 deer	7,880 pounds
2008-2009 Season	150 deer	6,000 pounds
2009-2010 Season	304 deer	12,160 pounds
2010-2011 Season	403 deer	16,120 pounds
<b>2011-2012 Season</b>	<b>222 deer</b>	<b>8,880 pounds</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,451 deer</b>	<b>58,040 pounds of meat</b>

More information on the Deer Donation program is available on the County website at: [http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/ded/agsservices/pdf/files/2010-2011\\_deer\\_donation\\_program\\_summary-updated-2-22-2011.pdf](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/ded/agsservices/pdf/files/2010-2011_deer_donation_program_summary-updated-2-22-2011.pdf)

Many changes have been made to State and local regulations and educational programs have been offered to citizens and communities in recent years aimed at helping the agricultural community reduce deer damage to their products. These efforts have made an impact but crop damage by deer remains a problem for local farmers.

### **Impacts to Home Gardens and Landscaping**

Many residents are experiencing impacts to home gardens and landscaping. Though much work remains to be done, many citizens are taking advantage of the educational materials, workshops, and regulation changes that have been made to help reduce impacts to home landscapes.

Complaint calls remained steady in the past couple of years coming mostly from more urban areas in the County including: lower Rock Creek Stream Valley, Sligo Creek Stream Valley, the Paint Branch - Colesville area, Potomac, Rockville and Olney. Most come from fairly densely populated areas surrounding narrow strips of parkland or in some cases areas with few parks but where well forested housing lots provide habitat for deer herds. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, these areas pose a challenge to safe deer population management. A new population management effort in Sligo Stream

Valley Park was successfully implemented in February of 2012 and methods of addressing other highly developed areas continue to be explored.

Homeowners experiencing deer damage can call for information and to register their complaint at 301-962-1341/1342. Homeowner or Community Associations that would like a free workshop on controlling deer damage around the home can call 301-590-9650 or 301-962-1341. The Maryland DNR webpage lists various deer management options available to homeowners and communities at [http://www.dnr.state.md.us/wildlife/Hunt\\_Trap/deer/deer\\_damage/ddmtintro.asp](http://www.dnr.state.md.us/wildlife/Hunt_Trap/deer/deer_damage/ddmtintro.asp). Links to additional information specific to deer management in Montgomery County (e.g., County fencing regulations, firearms restriction regulations, the county's cool box program for farmers, and other relevant information can be found at [www.ParksDeerManagement.org](http://www.ParksDeerManagement.org).

### **Impacts to Natural Communities**

An overabundance of deer can have a profound impact on native vegetation and habitat for other wildlife. Park studies and observations have shown that where deer populations are high forest trees are not reproducing, the park understory of shrubs and wildflowers is severely reduced and rare plants are declining and in many parks have disappeared due to deer feeding habits. Other studies have shown that these impacts to the plant community also impacts other species, especially forest birds and small mammals both of which decline as both food and cover is heavily impacted by deer browsing. The only way to reduce damage to natural communities is to reduce deer populations within park areas. The Department has undertaken an aggressive program of deer population management – see section below titled “Deer population Management” for more details on this effort.

Even after deer populations have been reduced, recovery of vegetation may occur slowly over many years. Current staffing and funding has not permitted detailed studies to quantify the extent of vegetative recovery in parks where management is taking place. However, general observation by long-time naturalists and other qualitative information strongly suggest that understory vegetation and tree survival is increasing where deer populations have been reduced. A number of species, including some orchids and lilies that had not been seen for years are now blooming again as well, though in limited numbers. As discussed below under “Deer Population Management,” deer reductions are fairly local and new management techniques will be required to address impacts to the smaller, more urban park areas in the County.

### **Educational Program**

Education is a cornerstone of the Countywide Deer Management Program. In order to achieve the deer plan's goal of reducing deer impacts to acceptable levels, two things must happen, 1) Deer populations must be managed – see more on this throughout this report and 2) just as importantly, County residents must become educated in how to live with deer and how to minimize the negative impacts associated with deer. A long list of educational efforts is described under “Deer Program Accomplishments” and includes: homeowner workshops, brochures, educational programs at Nature Centers and on County Cable Television, a new DVD on avoiding deer-vehicle collisions, regular public service announcements and talks for local citizen groups. As citizens become more educated on ways to reduce deer impacts and begin to put this education into practice (e.g. adopt driving habits that help avoid deer-vehicle collisions, or use different methods to protect their home landscaping or farm crops) they will lower deer impacts and raise their tolerance for deer in the landscape. A good place to begin learning about this issue is to visit our website at [www.ParksDeerManagement.org](http://www.ParksDeerManagement.org).

### **Lyme Disease**

Lyme disease is a bacterial illness transmitted through the bite of the Black-legged tick. Early symptoms range from flu-like headache, fever, and general fatigue to joint and muscle pain. A circular rash may occur in 70-90% of individuals. If left untreated, the disease can become chronic and

debilitating. Lyme disease continues to be a growing concern in the county.

While Lyme disease is often linked to deer management in the mind of the public because it is transferred through the bite of the so-called deer tick (the new accepted name is the black-legged tick), it is widely accepted that reducing deer numbers cannot effectively control the spread of the disease. Black-legged ticks feed on many species of mammals and birds and most often pick up the disease by feeding on infected mice and chipmunks, not deer. For these reasons, Lyme disease is best viewed as a public health issue.

The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) tracks cases of Lyme disease and provides education for the public and health professionals. In 2010, medical providers and labs reported 1125 positive lab slips. The number of cases of Lyme disease reported was 298 (confirmed and probable), and 136 "suspect". In 2011, there were 1476 lab reports and the number of cases was 297 (confirmed and probable) and 87 "suspect". The number of positive labs reports for Lyme disease sent to MCDHHS Disease Control Program continues to increase. The increase in lab tests being done is an indication that the medical community is more aware of the symptoms of Lyme disease and labs are being ordered more often to assist in diagnosis. Due to budget cuts, we are unable to investigate all positive lab slips that are reported to Disease Control.

Education to the medical community is key to increasing diagnosis and early treatment for Lyme disease. When caught early, Lyme disease is usually easily treated with antibiotics. The disease, however, can be difficult to diagnose because many tests are unreliable and the symptoms resemble those of other ailments including the flu and arthritis. Some in the medical community feel that when left untreated, Lyme disease can become chronic resulting in long-lasting and debilitating health problems. This most often results when it is not diagnosed and treatment is delayed for an extended period of time. The increased education efforts directed at the public and doctors should help ensure that the disease is detected and treated more quickly.

Additional efforts by the Department of Health and Human Services to address Lyme disease include:

- Presentations in the community
- Distribution of literature on Lyme Disease prevention
- Counseling of individual patients on prevention
- Surveillance on positive lab slips to identify true cases
- Referrals to physicians for diagnosis and treatment
- Education of community physicians on Lyme Disease diagnosis and treatment

Montgomery County promotes personal protection from ticks and awareness of the symptoms of the illness as the best defense against Lyme disease. General information is available at:

- The Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services - [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/lymedisease](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/lymedisease) or 240-777-1755
- The Centers for Disease Control - [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).
- The Lyme Disease Foundation - [www.lyme.org](http://www.lyme.org); 24 hour information line at 800-886-5963.
- The National Capital Lyme and Tick-Borne Disease Association has information and offers local support groups - [www.natcaplyme.org](http://www.natcaplyme.org) or (703) 821-8833.
- The American Lyme Disease Foundation, [www.aldf.com/fourPoster.shtml](http://www.aldf.com/fourPoster.shtml) - has information on a product to help reduce the number of ticks in an area called the four poster feeder.

### **Deer Population Management**

Management of deer populations depends largely on managing the number of reproducing females in the population. DNR has significantly liberalized the harvest or bag limits for antlerless deer over the past decade to promote the harvest of female deer in an effort to limit population growth. Based on trends in

deer hunting harvest data for the county, DNR believes that deer populations are stabilizing within areas of the county where hunting occurs. However, much of the county has only limited hunting opportunities due to development density and weapons discharge restrictions. Deer populations in these areas are likely increasing. DNR notes that as urbanization of the county continues, regulating the deer population will become even more difficult, as lethal management via hunting often is not an option in urban and suburban settings.

Several strategies have been taken over the past 16 years to help reduce deer populations in areas where traditional hunting is limited, including parkland and suburban/urban areas. These include managed hunts on State and County parkland, property managed by the Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC), and property managed by Montgomery County Department of Solid Waste. Sharpshooting (shooting of deer at night by specially trained marksman under very safe conditions) is being employed in some county parks where hunting is not possible. Regulation changes to facilitate population management on private properties include, changes to County weapons laws as well as State hunting regulations.

Deer population management was conducted on 28 parcels of public land in FY12 totaling approximately 28,000 acres. These included 20 County parks, 3 state park and wildlife management areas, 1 federal facility, WSSC property and one parcel of non-park County property. Population management efforts are now in place on most large parcels of public parkland in the county (see Map 2 and table 3). Populations are being reduced and associated deer impacts are declining. However, due to the small home range of deer, the effects of these efforts may remain localized. Outside of these areas deer populations likely remain high or are increasing due to lack of population controls and continued development that restricts deer into smaller and smaller areas. In many cases deer are adapting to living completely within suburban landscapes.

Many acres of parkland in narrow stream valleys, small local parks, and in highly populated areas are not currently being managed. Effective deer population management in these smaller urban areas can be very difficult, costly, and in some cases not feasible at all. Efforts to explore new methods to address these locations continue.

Table 4 illustrates how much the County's Deer Management Program contributed to the overall management of deer populations in the county last year. Over 20 % of the total deer harvest in the county is directly associated with management efforts initiated or recommended by the County's program. Because managing female or antlerless deer is so critical to reducing populations, the county program focuses on antlerless harvest and as a result over 22% of the countywide antlerless harvest comes from hunts associated with the program.

Deer population management on private properties continues to be an important part of countywide management efforts. However, despite liberalized bag limits and regulations that have increased the hunting of antlerless deer, the DMWG believes that many parcels of privately owned land are not being hunted efficiently enough to significantly reduce deer numbers. Educational efforts targeting both landowners and hunters in more effective management techniques will be continued. As already mentioned, population management becomes more difficult as you move from rural to more suburban and urban parts of the county. Nevertheless, there are opportunities for some communities to manage deer populations within their neighborhoods where the community can reach agreement on the methods.

**Public Land\* with Active and Recommended  
Deer Population Management  
Montgomery County, MD  
Fall/Winter 2011/2012**

Map 2

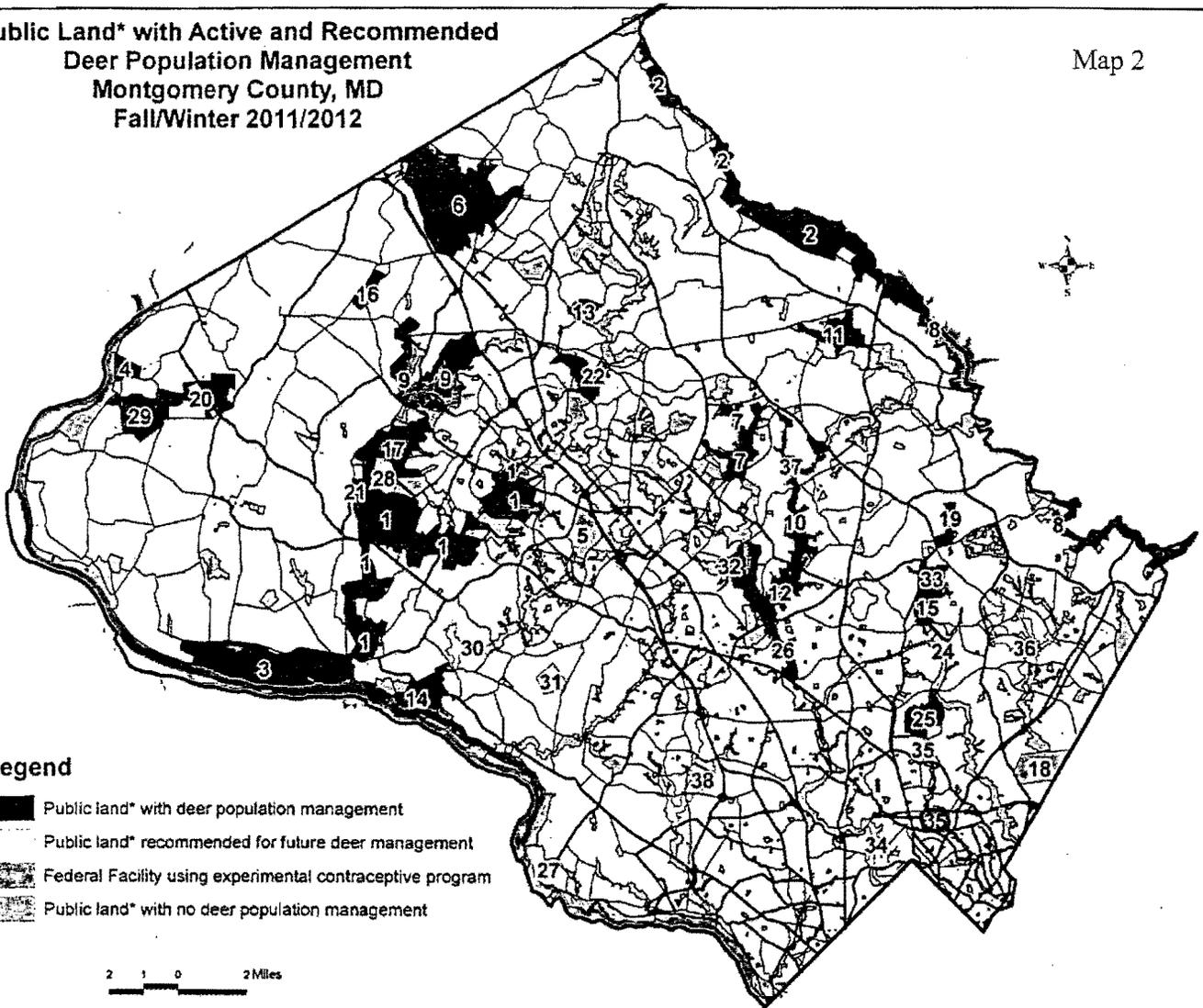


Table 3. Public Land with current and proposed deer population management programs – See Map 2

	<b>Park Area</b>	<b>FY initiated</b>	<b>Recommended Action/Comment</b>
1	Seneca Creek State Park	1997	Continue population mgt
2	Patuxent River State Park	Prior to 1994	Continue population mgt
3	McKee-beshers Wildlife Mgt Area	Prior to 1994	Continue population mgt
4	Dickerson Conservation Park	Prior to 1994	Continue population mgt
5	Nat Institute of Standards and Tech.	1994	Continue population mgt
6	Little Bennett Reg. Park	1997	Continue population mgt
7	Ag/History Farm Park	1997	Continue population mgt
8	WSSC Reservoirs	1999	Continue population mgt
9	Black Hill Regional Park	2001	Continue population mgt
10	Northbranch SVP	2001	Continue population mgt
11	Rachel Carson Cons. Park	2002	Continue population mgt
12	Rock Creek Regional Park	2002	Continue population mgt
13	Goshen Recreational Park	2002	Continue population mgt
14	Blockhouse Point Cons. Park	2003	Continue population mgt
15	NW Branch Recreation Park	2004	Continue population mgt
16	Bucklodge Forest Cons Park	2004	Continue population mgt
17	Hoyles Mill Cons. Park	2004	Continue population mgt
18	White Oak Federal Facility	2004	Continue lethal population mgt/ monitor contraceptive results.
19	Woodlawn Special Park	2004	Continue population mgt
20	Woodstock Special Park	2005	Continue population mgt
21	Little Seneca SVP unit 1	2005	Continue population mgt
22	North Germantown Greenway Park	2006	Continue population mgt
23	Great Seneca Stream Valley Unit 2	2006	Continue population mgt
25	Wheaton Regional Park	2006	Continue population mgt
26	Rock Creek Stream Valley Unit 7	2008	Continue population mgt
27	C&O Canal NP Goldmine Tract	Future	Investigate deer population management/ NPS currently has no plans to manage deer
28	SHA purchase future Hoyles Mill CP	Future	Investigate mgt for FY12
29	DSWS Property in Dickerson	2011	Continue population mgt
30	Muddy Branch Stream Valley Park	Future	Investigate mgt for future mgt
31	Serpentine Barrens Conservation Park	Future	Investigate mgt for future mgt
32	Rock Creek Golf Course	2002 to 2006; 2011	Continue population mgt
33	Northwest Branch Golf Course	2004 to 2006; 2011	Continue population mgt
34	Rock Creek Stream Valley Unit 2	2013	Initiate population mgt
35	Sligo Creek Stream Valley Unit 4,5	2012	Continue population mgt
36	Upper Paint Branch Stream Valley Pk	Future	Investigate mgt for future mgt
37	North Branch Stream Valley Unit 4	2011	Continue population mgt
38	Cabin John Regional and SV parks	Future	Investigate future mgt

**Table 4. Numbers and Percentages of Deer Harvested in Montgomery County Programs Compared to Countywide Deer Harvest.**

	totals	Antlerless	% antlerless
County Hunting harvest (DNR)	5,571	3,895	69.92%
Sharpshooting (M-NCPPC Parks)	479	236	49.27%
DNR Deer Management Permits (Mont. Co.)	426	378	88.73%
<b>total harvest for County</b>	<b>6,476</b>	<b>4,509</b>	<b>49.27%</b>
Mont Co Park program total	858	588	68.53%
Dickerson -MC-DSW	95	94	98.95%
Seneca managed hunts (all)	317	238	75.08%
WSSC managed hunts (Mont Co only)	122	84	68.85%
<b>Total Harvest from Mont Co Deer Program hunts</b>	<b>1,392</b>	<b>1,004</b>	<b>72.13%</b>
Percentage of total county harvest	21.49%	22.27%	

Deer Population Management by Communities

A number of communities have embarked on their own management efforts. Where large lots exist or neighbors can reach agreement, and state distance requirements can be met, archery hunting has been implemented on private property to reduce deer numbers. Archery hunters must be a minimum of 150 yards from any occupied dwelling or have permission from the homeowner to hunt. Several hunting organizations offer hunting services free of charge. Due to the 150 yard requirement, however, the ability to implement such a program is limited in the more densely populated sections of the County.

As deer impacts continue to expand into areas that are not accessible for County sponsored management, other options, such as community based management may need to be explored more fully. For the time being, these programs are very limited in application.

For assistance in developing community deer management plans contact the Maryland Department of Natural Resources at 301-432-4307.

Deer Population Management using Contraception

Contraception has the potential to be a useful tool in helping to address high deer populations in urban/suburban locations and other areas where the use of lethal methods is limited. Studies and testing of contraceptives for deer have been ongoing for many years. However, the development of effective drugs and cost effective methods of administering them to wild, free roaming deer have proven extremely difficult. In 2009 the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved a product called GonaCon™, for use in free ranging white-tailed deer. GonaCon™ is an immunocontraceptive vaccine that limits the release of sex hormones causing deer to remain in a non-reproductive state as long as a sufficient vaccine level is present in the body. While this long awaited approval represents a step forward in deer contraceptives, GonaCon™ has significant limitations to its wide-scale use in free-roaming deer populations. It must be hand-injected requiring that each animal to be captured, and it must be re-administered every 2 to 5 years. For more information on this product and its potential applications see: [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife\\_damage/nwrc/about/pdfs/faq\\_bc4deer.pdf](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/wildlife_damage/nwrc/about/pdfs/faq_bc4deer.pdf)

## Deer Management Recommendations for FY 2013

In accordance with the Comprehensive Management Plan for White-tailed deer in Montgomery County, Maryland, the DMWG recommends the following actions for FY 2013. Agencies that should take lead responsibility for each recommendation are listed in parenthesis after that action. The final decision to proceed with any recommendation is up to the lead agency or agencies and it is expected that appropriate public input will be considered.

Many recommendations are on-going or require multiple-years to be fully implemented thus there is considerable overlap in recommendations from year to year. It is expected that all actions will be done in cooperation with the DMWG.

1. **Continue public education efforts.** This includes educating the public about deer issues, particularly on available non-lethal methods to reduce deer damage to personal property.
  - a. Continue the successful Homeowner Workshop Program. Update program and publicize better to increase number of programs. Coordinate workshops with DNR education efforts. (MNCPPC, Montgomery County Master Gardeners)
  - b. Continue efforts to educate the public about deer, deer impacts and remedies via the Internet, Educational DVDs, the County Fair and County Cable TV. (Montgomery Soil Conservation District (MSCD), County Cable Montgomery [CCM], M-NCPPC)
  - c. Update the M-NCPPC deer website to include more detailed information regarding the County's fencing regulations and recommendations for fencing to reduce deer damage and consult with County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) to be sure this information is readily available to the public through their website and staff. (M-NCPPC)
  - d. The County Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) should continue their efforts to educate the public and doctors on the prevention, early detection and treatment of Lyme Disease. A concerted effort to get educational materials to all doctors should continue to be a priority. (HHS)
2. **Continue efforts to improve road fencing, signage and design to reduce deer-vehicle collisions.**
  - a. The Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD), Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) and Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA), in coordination with the DMWG, should continue to evaluate roadway DVCs and examine accident mitigation methods. (DMWG, MCDOT, SHA)
  - b. MCPD and MCDOT should continue to utilize variable message boards, when they are available, as a way to remind drivers about watching out for deer during Fall when the highest number of DVCs usually occur.
  - c. A greater effort should be made to have SHA implement a program to inspect and repair the wildlife fencing along the entire length of 270, 495, the newly opened Inter-County Connector (ICC) and other fenced State roads, at least once per year. Fences with holes can create a situation where deer that happen to wander through the hole become trapped on the road. (SHA)
  - d. SHA should monitor DVCs along the new ICC and make adjustments as necessary to fencing, underpasses, access ramps, etc. to minimize DVCs. (SHA)
  - e. Keep current and, where possible, cooperate with other studies that investigate methods of reducing deer-vehicle collisions. (MCDOT, M-NCPPC, SHA, DNR,)

- f. Continue to work with appropriate agencies on new and retrofit road projects to better design roadways and especially bridges for wildlife passage (MCDOT, SHA, M-NCPPC)

**3. Continue to monitor progress in the development and use of fertility control methods to regulate deer populations.**

- a. Continue to monitor on-going efforts at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) being conducted by The Humane Society of the U.S. as well as other study sites around the country. (DNR, DMWG)
- b. Continue to monitor progress and approval of other deer fertility control methods. (DNR, DMWG, USDA)

**4. Continue to encourage more community involvement in deer management efforts.**

In many cases it is incumbent upon a community to work together and address neighborhood concerns regarding deer. Several approaches to reducing deer damage to home landscaping and gardens may have a greater effect when applied on a community level. Neighbors or communities can work together in their use of fencing, vegetation management, and repellents. Adjustments to community covenants that reduce fencing restrictions or enactment of "no deer feeding" policies are examples of cooperative efforts. Communities, in many cases, may be better able than County or State agencies to fund and/or implement other local management efforts such as installation of fencing, localized efforts to reduce tick populations to prevent Lyme disease, a community based managed hunting program on private lands to reduce local deer populations. Any of these efforts will involve a high level of cooperation, organization and communication within the community as well as coordination with appropriate County or State agencies.

- a. The County and State should continue to provide information and assistance to communities that express a desire to address local deer impacts. These might include local public meetings, educational workshops, literature and recommendations on specific management efforts that could be undertaken by the community. DNR provides technical advice for communities on deer management issues. (M-NCPPC, DNR, Maryland Cooperative Extension (MCE))
- b. Continue to promote the DNR website for available community-based deer management options at [http://www.dnr.state.md.us/wildlife/Hunt\\_Trap/deer/deer\\_damage/ddmtintro.asp](http://www.dnr.state.md.us/wildlife/Hunt_Trap/deer/deer_damage/ddmtintro.asp) especially the publication **An Evaluation of Deer Management Options** by The Northeast Deer Technical Committee available on the website. (MCE, M-NCPPC, DNR)

**5. Continue to encourage effective deer population management on private properties.**

The vast majority of land in the County is private (>80%) and any effort to manage deer populations on these lands can only be undertaken by the landowners. Managing deer impacts countywide requires the cooperation of county agencies and private landowners. Parcels of land that are forested, in agriculture or slated for development all need to be managed.

Many landowners that do allow hunting on their property are not doing it effectively and would benefit greatly from reviewing the DNR publication, "Deer Hunting - a Valuable Deer Management Tool for Private Landowners".

- a. The Department of Economic Development (DED) should continue to make improvements to their successful cooperative cooler box program to assist farmers in storing, transporting, processing and donating to charity, deer harvested from agricultural lands. Efforts should be made to increase publicity, access, and hours of operation. (DED)

- b. Promote Quality Deer Management (QDM) as a philosophy and information source to encourage landowners and hunters to better manage deer herds on private property. More information is available at [www.qdma.com](http://www.qdma.com) and [www.marylandqdma.com](http://www.marylandqdma.com). (DNR, DMWG)
- c. MCPD and the Firearms Safety Committee (FSC) should continue to publicize the changes to the County Weapons Law that were completed in 2007. DED should inform county farmers of new opportunities that the changes allow. M-NCPPC should include this information on their deer website and in deer program press releases. Information can be found at: [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/ded/ag/services/pdf/files/weapons\\_web.pdf](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/content/ded/ag/services/pdf/files/weapons_web.pdf) (MCPD, FSC, DED, M-NCPPC)
- d. M-NCPPC should continue to work with farmers growing crops on private land adjacent to parkland deer management sites, to coordinate their management efforts. Landowners should contact M-NCPPC at 301-962-1342 for this program. (M-NCPPC)
- e. Monitor feedback regarding changes made in Frederick and Carroll Counties to reduce hunting distance requirements for archery hunting. Review literature on this issue and use GIS to map how it might change areas available for hunting. Evaluate potential advantages and disadvantages of such a change in Montgomery County given different development patterns and demographics. Explore support for this change. (DMWG, Montgomery County Council (MCC))
- f. Publicize regulations on use of crossbows which offer potentially more effective deer management in areas not open to firearm hunting. FY11 data suggests an increase in the use of this weapon but mostly as a replacement to other bow types as bow harvest remained about the same. (DNR)

**6. Continue and expand population reduction programs on select State and County, and Federal lands.**

Table 1 lists public land on which deer population management is currently being conducted and land on which the DMWG recommends deer management in the future. Decisions as to the type of population management implemented, the duration of the operation, and annual harvest goals should be decided by the appropriate agencies and DNR. The timing of implementation is subject to the resources and budget of the agency managing the property. Tight budgets for FY12 will most likely limit which of the following recommendations can be implemented in the upcoming year. Budgets are expected to remain limited for the next 1 to 2 years.

- a. The Montgomery County Council has formally requested that the National Park Service (NPS) begin steps as soon as possible to address deer management in the Goldmine Tract of the C&O Canal Historic Park in Potomac, MD (Map 2 and Table 3, #27). The Goldmine tract is reported to be the largest contiguous forest in the County and the adjacent Potomac River Gorge is one of the most biologically diverse areas in the State. Both areas are being negatively impacted by deer overpopulation. Neighboring communities have been complaining about deer impacts to property and deer-vehicle collisions for more than a decade. The County recognizes that initiating deer management on NPS land is a long and costly process but feels strongly that because the National Park is providing the largest refuge for deer in the area it is imperative that management begin as soon as possible.
- b. The Montgomery County Division of Solid Waste Services (DSWS) should continue their successful deer population management efforts begun in 2011 on the 800 acre property they manage in the Dickerson area to help reduce impacts to agriculture in the area. See Map 2 and Table 3, #29 (DSWS)

- c. M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks should continue ongoing deer population management programs adjusting methods and harvest goals as needed; and continue to expand these efforts, as budgets and staffing allow, into new areas in order to reduce deer impacts to park resources and adjacent property. Explore opportunities to work cooperatively with adjacent property owners or communities where joint efforts can benefit both the community and park resources. Refer to Map 2 and Table 3 for proposed management locations. (M-NCPPC)
- d. Continue to investigate methods that are appropriate for managing deer populations in smaller more urban parks that provide the level of control and safety required. (DMWG, M-NCPPC)
- e. The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) should continue current deer population management programs on their lands and continue to expand these efforts, as required to protect WSSC resources and adjacent property. (WSSC)

**7. Other recommendations**

Each year thousands of deer and other large animal carcasses are picked up and disposed of from along County roads. The current method of disposal (rendering) is expensive and depends on a contractor that has given notice to the county that it may stop providing this service in the near future. This would leave the county in the unacceptable position of having no way to dispose of carcasses at all. Much work has been done in recent years on developing methods of composting large animal carcasses that are sanitary, effective and environmentally sound. Composting is currently being used in New York, Virginia, and more locally by the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA). Developing such a program in the county would provide the additional benefits of being a more dependable and less expensive alternative of disposal.

- a. Develop a large animal composting program. This could possibly be done in conjunction with SHA and/or with other counties. Cost savings to the county could be substantial over the current disposal methods. (MCPD – Animal Services Division)

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# Deer Population Management

[MANAGED DEER HUNTS](#) | [PARK CLOSURE DATES](#) | [PARK POLICE-BASED SHARPSHOOTING](#)

**NOTICE:** The deer population management program for Rock Creek Stream Valley Park, Unit 2 has been approved and will begin January 2013. [Find out more here.](#)



## Managed Deer Hunts

- [Frequently Asked QuestionS \(FAQs\)](#)
- [Pre-screening Managed Hunt Packet \(pdf. 773kb\)](#)

M-NCPPC Department of Parks, in order to reduce and maintain deer populations in accordance with the goals of the County's deer management plan, conducts managed deer hunts in select parks during the Fall and Winter.

Programming is designed with public safety being paramount. Managed hunting programs are directed and supervised by the Department's Wildlife staff and participants are required to follow strict safety and procedural guidelines. Safety buffers are established to meet and exceed State and County ordinance and hunting sites are selected to use terrain, distance, and habitat to enhance safe weapons discharge.

Weapons discharge is directed into the ground and/or other suitable backdrops, and in many cases, hunting from an elevated position is *required* to ensure that hunters' have a suitable backstop. A variety of harvest strategies have been employed using all weapons legal in the county. However, most programming requires participants to utilize rifled shotguns to harvest deer. On dates when managed hunting is occurring the park is closed to the public.

Managed hunts were implemented in the county in the Fall of 1996 and have occurred annually ever since. To date, the Department has conducted managed deer hunting programs in twelve county parks with exceptional results. Currently, eleven parks are included in the Managed Deer Hunting Program.

To learn more about the Montgomery Parks managed deer hunting programs, please review the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) (FAQ's) regarding deer population management being conducted on County parkland.

If you would like to participate in the lottery based managed deer hunting program, pre-screening procedures must be followed. New applicants can download the pre-screening application & information here: [Pre-screening Managed Hunt Packet \(pdf. 773kb\)](#).

## Park Closure Dates

[Parks Managed Hunt Dates](#) | [Park Police Sharpshooting Dates](#)

## Montgomery Parks Managed Hunt Dates

### Park Closure Schedule for Fall 2012/Winter 2013

For public safety, the Department of Parks closes select park locations to public access for the duration of deer population management operations. These park closures are enforced, under park regulation (Chapter III, Section 2, Letter B.), by the Department's Park Police Division.

**MEDIA ADVISORY:** M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks Announces Seasonal Park Closures For Annual Deer Management Operations

#### Lottery-Based and Cooperative Managed Deer Hunting Programs (Shotgun)

Parkswill be closed from Sunrise to Sunset

- **October**

- 22 – Rachel Carson Conservation Park (Olney)
- 24 – North Germantown Greenway (Clarksburg)/Great Seneca Stream Valley Park (Gaithersburg)
- 27 – Woodstock Equestrian Park (Beallsville)

- **November**

- 2 – Hoyles Mill Conservation Park (Boys)
- 3 – Woodstock Equestrian Park (Beallsville)
- 3 – Bucklodge Forest Conservation Park (Boys)
- 5 – Rachel Carson Conservation Park (Olney)
- 6 – Blockhouse Point Conservation Park (Darnestown)
- 10 – Hoyles Mill Conservation Park (Boys)
- 14 – North Germantown Greenway (Clarksburg)/Great Seneca Stream Valley Park (Gaithersburg)
- 16 – Hoyles Mill Conservation Park (Boys)
- 17 – Woodstock Equestrian Park (Beallsville)
- 19 – Rachel Carson Conservation Park (Olney)
- 20 – Blockhouse Point Conservation Park (Darnestown)
- 28 – North Germantown Greenway (Clarksburg)/Great Seneca Stream Valley Park (Gaithersburg)
- 30 – Woodstock Equestrian Park (Beallsville)
- 30 – Bucklodge Forest Conservation Park (Boys)

- **December**

- 1 – Hoyles Mill Conservation Park (Boys)
- 4 – Little Bennett Regional Park (Clarksburg)
- 5 – Little Bennett Regional Park (Clarksburg)
- 6 – Little Bennett Regional Park (Clarksburg)
- 7 – Little Bennett Regional Park (Clarksburg)
- 7 – Hoyles Mill Conservation Park (Boys)
- 11 – Blockhouse Point Conservation Park (Darnestown)
- 14 – Hoyles Mill Conservation Park (Boys)
- 15 – Woodstock Equestrian Park (Beallsville)
- 17 – Rachel Carson Conservation Park (Olney)
- 18 – Blockhouse Point Conservation Park (Darnestown)

19 – North Germantown Greenway (Clarksburg)/Great Seneca Stream Valley Park (Gaithersburg)

- **January**

- 4 – Hoyles Mill Conservation Park (Boyds)
- 5 – Woodstock Equestrian Park (Beallsville)
- 5 – Bucklodge Forest Conservation Park (Boyds)
- 11 – Hoyles Mill Conservation Park (Boyds)
- 18 – Hoyles Mill Conservation Park (Boyds)
- 26 – Hoyles Mill Conservation Park (Boyds)

**Park Police-based sharpshooting locations 2012-13**

Parks Closed January 1 – March 31, from 5:30PM to Sunrise daily

- Agricultural History Farm Park (Derwood - including attached segments of Rock Creek Stream Valley Units 12 & 16)
- Needwood Golf Course (Rockville)
- North Branch Stream Valley Park Units 2 & 3 (Norbeck)
- North Branch Stream Valley Park Unit 4 (Olney)
- Northwest Branch Recreation Park (Aspen Hill - including Layhill Local Park in Wheaton)
- Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park Unit 7 (Norwood)
- Northwest Golf Course (Wheaton)
- Rock Creek Regional Park (Rockville)
- *Rock Creek Stream Valley Park Unit 2 (Bethesda/Chevy Chase) - Proposed expansion initiative for FY2013*
- Rock Creek Stream Valley Park Unit 7 (Aspen Hill)
- Sligo Creek Golf Course (Silver Spring)
- Wheaton Regional Park (Wheaton)
- Woodlawn Special Park (Sandy Spring)

**Tenant-Based Managed Deer Hunting Program**

Park is closed to public access year-round

- Goshen Recreation Park (Goshen)

## Park Police-based Sharpshooting

M-NCPPC Department of Parks, in order to reduce and maintain deer populations in accordance with the goals of the County's deer management plan, conducts Police-based sharpshooting in select parks during the period of January through March.

Deer population reductions are conducted from 5:30pm until Sunrise while the parks are closed to the

Unit. Park Police Officers participating in this program have received extensive training and certification and utilize the most advance equipment and techniques available. Weapons discharge is conducted in a safe manner with safe backdrops identified prior to firing.

Deer are removed safely, humanely, and discreetly. All deer harvested during such programming are donated to the Capital Area Food Bank for distribution to the regions charitable organizations. To date, the Department of Parks has donated at least 163,000 pounds of venison (652,000 servings) to those in need.

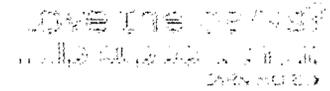
Police-based sharpshooting was implemented in the county in the spring of 1999 and has occurred annually ever since. To date, the Department has conducted Police-based sharpshooting programs in nineteen county parks with exceptional results. Police-based sharpshooting is being conducted annually, and the Department continues to investigate expanding efforts to parklands in need of deer population reduction. Click please review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ's\)](#) on this topic.

[back to top](#) - Last update: January 4, 2013

Montgomery County Department of Parks  
9500 Brunett Ave., Silver Spring, MD 20901  
[www.montgomeryparks.org](http://www.montgomeryparks.org)

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MontgomeryParks.org



# Proposed Deer Population Management Initiative for Rock Creek Stream Valley Park Unit 2, Chevy Chase

[PROJECT DESCRIPTION](#) | [PUBLIC INPUT](#) | [MEDIA CENTER](#) | [PROJECT CONTACT](#)

**The deer population management program for Rock Creek Stream Valley Park, Unit 2 has been approved and will begin January 2013.**

## Project Description

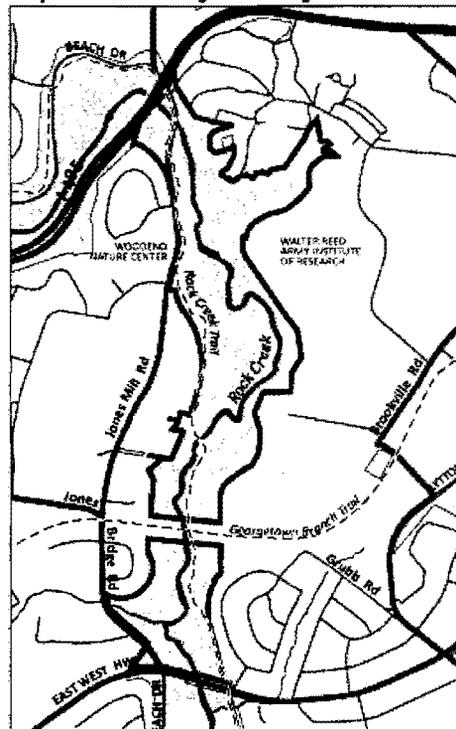
The 277-acre section of parkland has been selected to address damage caused by an increasing population of deer, including deer-related automobile accidents, damage to agriculture and natural resources, and increased potential of communicable diseases such as Lyme disease. Recent estimates indicate deer population in this park is three times the recommended density for an area this size. The decision to add this park to the deer management operations was made after review of citizen complaints and input and with strong support from the community..

Montgomery County Department of Parks, M-NCPPC (Parks) has conducted deer density estimates in Rock Creek Stream Valley Park, Unit 2 during the years 2008 through 2010. It is currently estimated that 40-50 individual deer utilize this parkland area of 277 acres; a deer density of 3 times higher, minimum, than recommended for this location.

The Department of Parks has received requests for, and support of, deer population reduction efforts on these parklands from property owners of the affected area.

Highly trained and certified Park Police Sharpshooters will lethally remove deer from the park, under very stringent guidelines and in the most humane way possible. The deer management operation will take place when the park is closed to the public, from 5:30 p.m. until sunrise each day from February 1 through March 31, 2013, and recur annually January 1 through March 31 as necessary. Information about the hunts will be posted on signs throughout the park, on the Montgomery Parks' website homepage and communicated via Park Police patrols. All deer harvested through the effort will be donated for consumption at local soup kitchens.

**Rock Creek Stream Valley Park #2  
Proposed Deer Management Program Area**



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Rock Creek Stream Valley Park, Unit 2 is among 25 other parks in the Montgomery Parks' system selected for managed hunts during the fall 2012 – winter 2013 season. Park Closure Dates and locations for upcoming deer management operations including Lottery-based Managed Deer Hunts, Cooperative Managed Deer Hunts and Park Police-based Sharpshooting Operations vary.

## Public Input

Public comments on this initiative were accepted until 3:00pm on Friday, October 26, 2012. The decision to approve this initiative was made by the Department's Administration and staff following review of all public comments and associated data.

### View Public Comments

You may review a summary of all public comments for this initiative. Personal information such as name and address is not included in the comments summary.

## Media Center

As they become available, press releases, news articles and items of interest will be listed here and the Parks Media Center.

- MEDIA ADVISORY: M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks Announces Seasonal Park Closures for Annual Deer Management Operations, September 21st, 2012
- ONLINE ARTICLE: The Gazette, October 3, 2012
- ONLINE ARTICLE: The Rockville Patch, October 5, 2012
- ONLINE ARTICLE: The Bethesda Patch, October 10, 2012
- ONLINE ARTICLE: The Gazette, October 10, 2012
- ONLINE ARTICLE: WTOP.com, October 12, 2012
- ONLINE ARTICLE: The North Potomac Patch, October 15, 2012
- ONLINE ARTICLE: BethesdaNow.com, November 8, 2012
- ONLINE ARTICLE: The Gazette, November 8, 2012
- MEDIA ADVISORY: Montgomery Parks Approves Deer Management for Rock Creek Stream Valley Park, Unit 2; Program to Begin February 11, January 7th, 2013

## Project Contact

Bill Hamilton, Principal Natural Resource Specialist  
[MCP-deermanagement@montgomeryparks.org](mailto:MCP-deermanagement@montgomeryparks.org)

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# Donate Deer to Feed the Hungry

at

20301 Whites Ferry Road, Poolesville MD

**Phone: 240-388-0602**

from September through April

## **This location does not process deer**

All deer will be inspected by Joe Brown before being put in the cold box in preparation for transport to a game processing facility. Mr. Brown reserves the right to turn away any deer found unsuitable for donation. Please **DO NOT** put deer in the cold box yourself, or leave them outside unattended. Drop-off is by appointment only.

**Please call Joe Brown at 240-388-0602 between 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

**Monday thru Saturday except Holidays to make an appointment for donation drop-off.**

Deer must:

- be checked via the DNR Internet or telephone check-in system
- be correctly tagged as per DNR requirements for in-season hunting and crop damage permits
- be completely field-dressed
- be hosed out if the contents of the digestive tract have been introduced into the body cavity (ex. if the stomach or intestines have ruptured)
- be in good condition

Deer will be transported to processors and distributed to the hungry via local food banks.

For additional information and details on the Deer Donation Program, please contact the County's Agricultural Services Division at 301-590-2823. For drop-off appointments and details, please call 240-388-0602.



Department of Economic Development  
Agricultural Services Division

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