



# MID-ATLANTIC

— WHITETAIL SOLUTIONS, LLC —

**DICKERSON SITE 2**

**2022-2023**

**DEER REMOVAL PROGRAM - YEAR END SUMMARY**

Prepared by Dustin Prievo

**TOTAL DEER  
REMOVED**

34 DEER

**TOTAL TIME AFIELD**

383 HOURS

**NUMBER OF TOTAL  
HUNTS**

109

**AVERAGE HOURS PER  
HUNT**

3.51

**TOTAL ANTLERLESS  
(DOES) DEER OBSERVED**

521

**AVERAGE ANTLERLESS  
DEER OBSERVED PER HUNT**

4.82

**TOTAL ANTLERED (BUCKS)  
DEER OBSERVED**

215

**AVERAGE ANTLERED DEER  
OBSERVED PER HUNT**

1.93

**TOTAL DOES  
REMOVED**

31

**TOTAL BUCKS  
REMOVED**

3

**AVERAGE HUNT  
HOURS PER DEER**

11.26

**AVERAGE HUNTS PER  
1 DEER REMOVAL**

3.20

**TOTAL DEER DONATED  
TO HUNGRY FAMILIES**

28 (82%)



# *Landfill Site 2 - Dickerson, MD*

## *Deer Management Summary 2021-2022*

*Prepared by Dustin Prievo  
March 17, 2023*

*Mid-Atlantic Whitetail Solutions, LLC (MAWS) is submitting its 2022 – 2023 Annual Deer Management Report.*

### Changes for 2022-2023

#### New Hunters Added

Although the Mid-Atlantic Whitetail Solutions, LLC has a large membership of over 20 members, only the most elite and committed hunters are eligible to hunt on Site 2 landfill. In 2022-2023, the Mid-Atlantic Whitetail Solutions, LLC saw a need to add Brandon Austin to the Site 2 roster. This would deem valuable as he had accounted for 13 hunts (12%) with a total of 10 deer harvested (29%). We are excited to have Brandon apart of this property to continue to reach and exceed our overall deer management goals.

Levi & Wyatt Rentzel have graduated Deer Steward II from the National Deer Association making Dustin Prievo, Levi Rentzel & Wyatt Rentzel, the leaders of MAWS, all Level II Certified while all the general members continue to hold their Level I Certification.

*(Deer Steward Level I is a requirement to be a member of MAWS. For more information on the NDA's Deer Steward Program, please visit: <https://deerassociation.com/steward/>)*



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### Pre-Hunting Efforts

#### Signage & Property Cleanup

MAWS did not place any additional posted signs up this year, however, did add “Smile You’re on Camera” signs at the gate entrance during our scouting efforts on September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022. This same day, MAWS conducted litter pick-up along the roadways and removed four large bags of trash. MAWS also conducted trash removal inside the property lines and removed two large bags of trash.

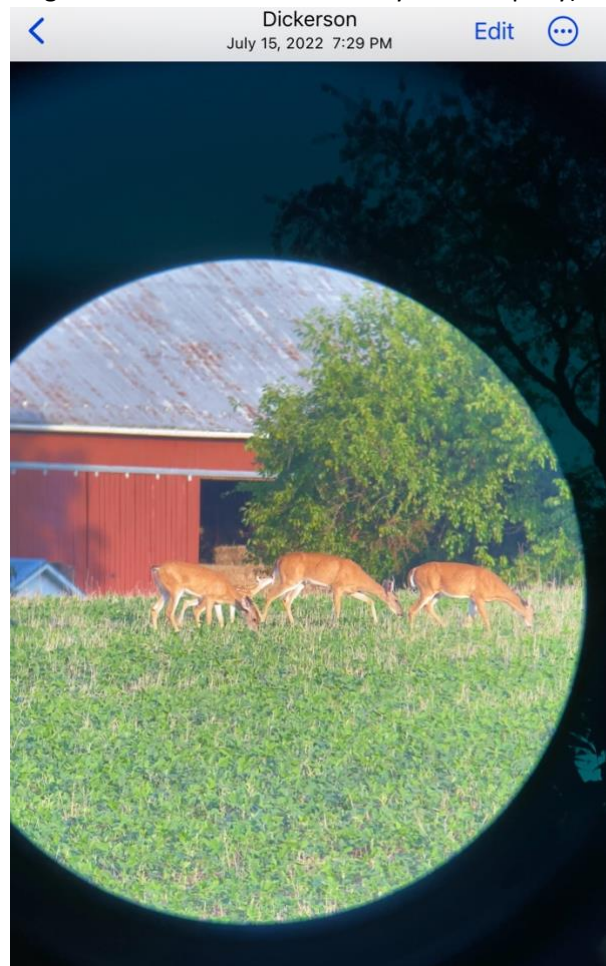
#### Trail cameras

MAWS continues to utilize a cellular-wireless trail camera system. This system allows MAWS to monitor the wildlife activity and trespassers on the Site 2 properties. MAWS cost to operate the trail camera system for this year (not including the cost of the cameras, mileage, or repairs and maintenance) was \$1967.32. This includes cellular service, SD Cards, and batteries. (This does not count for the cost of individual hunters’ cameras which estimates to an additional 6-8 cellular trail cameras on the property throughout hunting season in conjunction with the average 15-20 trail cameras used by the company).

MAWS usually removes the trail cameras at the end of the hunting season and re-installs them in late summer for herd scouting. This year, MAWS kept the cameras installed to continue monitoring trespassing and poachers as well as other activities detrimental to effective deer management like dogs running loose on the property. This was an additional expense than our typical year spending on trail cameras, however, it deemed to be very important as we found several trespassers and dogs on the property throughout the year.

#### Scouting

MAWS began scouting efforts as early as July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022 by one of the members. Most of the pre-hunting scouting efforts were conducted between July 15<sup>th</sup> to September 5<sup>th</sup>.





## Property Analysis

### Habitat Analysis (Same image as 2021-2022 report – Same Recommendation)



*Figure 1- This image shows the lack of sunlight on the forest floor which results in very low, ground level food sources for other animals such as squirrels, rabbits, ground nesting birds, turkeys and more. This is a result of an earlier overpopulated deer herd and will not bounce back until the ground is disturbed (raking, mulching or fire) and sunlight is able to reach the forest floor.*

MAWS will continue to recommend habitat improvements on this property. The early successional forest and native species in the large, wooded areas of the Site 2 properties were destroyed due to overpopulation of whitetail deer. For these species to recover, the forest floor needs sunlight. MAWS suggests a select timber harvest which could provide income opportunities but would provide a much better overall balanced habitat for herbaceous species and the wildlife residing here.

The goal of MAWS deer management program is to provide a quality ecosystem, not just euthanize deer. To accomplish this goal, one must first lower the deer densities, and then create habitat improvements, like select timber cuts, invasive species control, etc, which helps inhibit new growth aiding in a healthy habitat overall. As these species revive, deer would also use these species to supplement their current food sources and reduce deer feeding on farm crops, which also assists in the aide of our overall goals of reducing deer damage to the row crops.



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## Herd Analysis

MAWS observations show a balanced deer herd with a healthy population. Analysis of trail camera footage and the observation logs, show the herd population has increased in female deer over male deer this year by approximately 3 to 1. MAWS was hoping to provide a deer density study using trail cameras and baited stations in 2022-2023, however due to the increase (triple the price) in whole shelled



*Figure 1-This is a sample of a drone thermal imagery during a deer density study (Photo used as an example only and was not captured by MAWS)*

corn, MAWS was unable to conduct this. We are looking at an opportunity to obtain a thermal drone as our leaders are all certified drone pilots and conducting a late season deer herd analysis after the 2023-2024 deer season. The thermal drone would provide an extremely accurate “moment in time” deer herd analysis, however, this cost will be well over \$15,000 to our company, so we are doing our best to make this an option. This is 100% legal and will become a part of our business operation in 2023-2024 through our consulting side of our business and we will offer our services at no charge to those properties we currently hunt on.



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## Hunting Efforts

### Harvest Records

MAWS combined hunting effort for the 2022 – 2023 (September 2022 – January 2023) hunting season was over 383 hours on the Site 2 properties, 78 hours (20%) more than 2021-2022. MAWS harvested 34 white-tailed deer from the property. 31 deer (91%) were antlerless (30 female and 1 button buck), 3 were mature bucks. Twenty-eight deer (82%) were donated to facilities who work with groups like ours, providing meat to homeless shelters and less fortunate families.

According to deer management program records, a total of 704 deer have been harvested since 2010.



## Harvested Bucks

In 2022-2023, only three bucks were removed from the property. One aged 4.5 years of age while the other two were 3.5 years old. (As this report is made public, and with this years' poaching incident, we will no longer be sharing photos of the harvested bucks in the report. Those can be provided upon request separately if desired.)

Unlike "Big Buck Hunting Clubs" MAWS focuses their efforts on mature does. Most lease, public land and private hunting clubs target mature bucks. This not only off sets the deer balance, but due to the focus being on bucks, does often grow in numbers and overpopulate most areas. Habitat balance decreases, row crops become destroyed and hard to grow and diseases can set in throughout the deer herd. This is why MAWS will continue to focus on the task at hand by balancing the deer density through our focused efforts on mature does.

Structuring our efforts this way, is least rewarding to the hunter and most rewarding to the land owners, habitat and wildlife. With that, MAWS has always rewarded their hunters with the opportunity to harvest the most elusive and hardest buck to take, the mature bucks over 3.5 years of age, after taking their minimal number of required does. This provides a reward to the hunter for their work and continues to entice hunters to be productive, while also continuing the success of the program without having to provide monetary exchange to the volunteers for their work.



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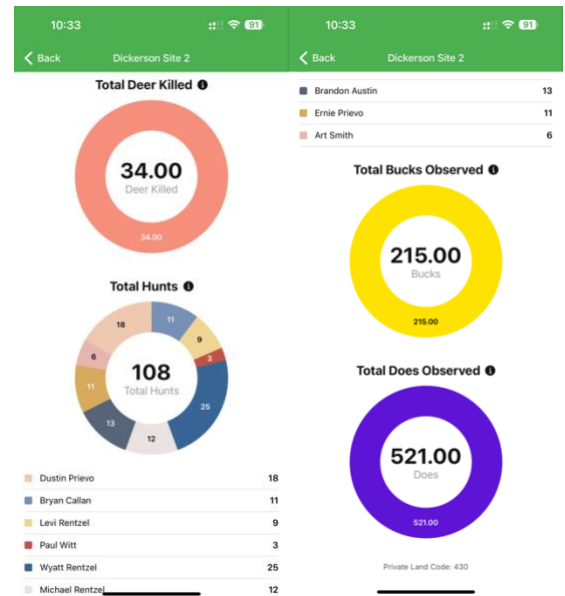
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## Observation & Harvest Data

Last year we developed our own mobile app and continue to use it with great success. The data collected can be reviewed on the summary form at the beginning of this report and assists us with ensuring we are in tune with our deer herd. Last year the total number of bucks observed were 269 to 371 does on a total of 84 hunts. This year a total of 215 bucks were observed with 521 does on 109 hunts. So, considering this data, last year there, were more bucks seen per hunt on an average of 3.2 bucks to 4.41 does. This year an average of 1.97 bucks were seen per hunt with an average of 4.77 does per sit. This data would reflect a decrease by 30% in the number of buck sightings and a similar number of doe sightings, suggesting slightly decreasing deer herd, however, goals were made to target specific areas this year more than others after we consolidated last years' data. These areas are more densely populated with does than bucks, and thus the data reflects this. Although this data may not directly reflect the deer herd, we like to collect this data for trend purposes, based off 3-5 years, so we look forward to utilizing these numbers more in the future. Noting the similar number of does per sit, it is worth mentioning that with 30% more hunts from (84 to 109), we were able to harvest 30% more does (24 to 31) from the year before.



Figure 4- Screenshots from the MAWS app showing collected data in a visual chart. (ABOVE 2021-2022) (BELOW 2022-2023)







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### Challenges

Although improved, we've continued to have neighboring dogs roam free along the property. These were reported into an affidavit three times with the local animal control and are awaiting reports of their next moves.

The dogs are harmless to humans, however, make our job very difficult trying to monitor and pattern the deer herd. Our intentions are not to upset the neighbor who owns these dogs, however, there have been well over 60 recorded incidents, one court proceeding, and very little improvements. The dogs chase deer, disturb nature, and at the end of the day, an "Animal at large" is against the law. We continue to protect the investments of Montgomery County by referring these incidents to the proper authorities and will continue to manage and respect the property as if it was our own by doing so.



### Hunting Trespassers/Poachers:

Due to the number of trail cameras monitoring the property, and with the effectiveness of cellular cameras being able to send immediate photos, MAWS was able to capture trespassers this year onto the property.

On December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022 our cameras captured two trespassers, illegally hunting on Site 2. DNR was immediately notified, and they set up on two suspicious vehicles nearby. While waiting for the poachers to return to these vehicles, they came over top of the Ashplant hill, dragging the deer they illegally killed, and saw the DNR officer waiting. A foot chase commenced but officers were not able to get to the two





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culprits. They did however find the deer they were seen dragging off from Site 2 that they illegally shot and confiscated it and donated it to the local donation center.

The case is still active, but the suspect has been identified and charges are pending. MAWS will continue to monitor the property and work with local law enforcement to protect the interest of Montgomery County.

### Deer/Venison Donation:

In 2022-2023, MAWS donated **81 deer** through Farmers & Hunters Help Feed the Hungry (from all properties) **25** of these donated deer being harvested came from the Site 2 Property. MAWS will continue to participate in the Farmers & Hunters Help Feed the Hungry program because it gives back to the community and makes the MAWS program full circle.

### Goals and Accomplishments:

Having been in business for over a decade and managing over 2650 acres annually, each of our property's have its own unique goals as each are in different stages in the management phase. A common goal for all of our properties starts and ends with the safety of the owner, neighbors, our members, the surrounding neighbors and the community.

In 13 years, we have zero reported injuries, near misses or incidents in regards to safety factors. We achieve this through successful training, communication and our set of bylaws that dictate how we operate. Additional goals, outside of deer management, for Site 2 uniquely, include monitoring the proper from a security perspective, keeping the property clean of debris and trash, and keeping good working relationships with the neighbors and leasing farmers. We continue to achieve this goal spending more time and money annually to provide a better service than the year before.

When it comes to deer management, we are in the latter phase of deer management which looks to maintain the healthy deer herd population we currently do. We achieve this by collecting data during summer months such as fawn recruitment numbers (how many fawns are born into the deer herd), shed antler collection post deer season (finding whitetail bucks' antlers indicating survival through deer season and then comparing the measurement of their antlers now to the following years).



Additionally, we monitor the weight of the does by age class to ensure there are no dramatic changes. All of this information keeps us well in tune with the deer herd which helps us make sound decisions on whether we need to increase or maintain our deer hunting efforts. This of course is done in conjunction with communication from the farmers and their crop reports. Currently, Site 2 is in the maintain phase where we look to remove 25-30 does annually from the deer herd. In our inception of the program we of course were highly overpopulated but over the past several years we have brought the deer herd to a healthy level. With this healthy and sustainable deer herd size, we are able to ensure quality forage availability beyond the farmers' crop, decrease the number of deer caused vehicle collisions, and maintain healthy relationships with neighboring landowners often created if deer herd densities are decreased too much.

Our only goal that we failed to miss from last year was to provide a deer density trail camera study, which was due to the rising cost of shelled corn. As we look at our observation and harvest numbers, we increased the number of deer removed overall, but not such a dramatic number that it warrants attention or adjustment. We look forward to continuing our management efforts into the 2023-2024 season with our goals of safety, property conservation, and maintaining a healthy deer herd as our priority.

## Overall Experience:

The 2022 – 2023 season was a success for MAWS when we look at the increase of the number of hunts and harvested deer on the property. MAWS members logged over 383 hours of hunting time and over 110 hours of cleaning, preparation, scouting and property maintenance. MAWS members demonstrate their commitment to providing quality deer management on Site 2. We look forward to our continued success and efforts to keep the property safe, secure, and healthy. MAWS continues to reach their goals year after year and are proud of the service provided while being thankful for the opportunity.