

Minutes
Bar Harbor Deer Herd Control Task Force
April 24, 2014
Upstairs Conference Room-Municipal Building
93 Cottage Street
4:30 pm

- I. Call to Order
In attendance, Robert Kelley, Jesse Wheeler, Robert Burgess, Bruce Connery, Tom Schaeffer, Sgt. Shaun Farrar.
- II. Absences
Robert Jordan, Chuck Starr
- III. Approval of the Minutes
Minutes of the April 3, 2014 meeting approved with corrected spelling of names, 6-0
- IV. Adoption of the Agenda

Agenda adopted by 6-0 vote.

Discussion of Urban Deer Management document from CT (posted on task force website): Excellent for its completeness and specifying costs, also for case studies. CT was able to use hunting to dramatically reduce deer numbers in a variety of settings, though many were in smaller or more concentrated areas than Bar Harbor. Examples demonstrate the principles recommended by Tom Schaeffer of initially reducing deer numbers using more aggressive approaches and then maintaining with archery seasons, also provides precedents for special hunts. Bar Harbor may be close to having a similar situation if we can estimate deer population densities from pellet surveys. Dr. Rand of ME CDC recommends <10 deer/sq mile to reduce incidence of Lyme Disease.

Short-term options for more aggressive deer population reduction: Methods such as contraception, trap-and-relocate, insecticide bait stations, and sharpshooters are non-starters for a variety of reasons, including high mortality (trap and relocate), lack of proven effectiveness (contraception), need for repeated application (all), and cost (all). A special hunt can be kept local and provide local control of property access and participants. Approaches include local, qualified participants, “residents/landowners and designees” – to be defined. Can also involve liberalized bag limits or use of bait if purpose is to reduce population. Would want to target does. Program would need to involve the town government to certify participants (landowners/residents). IFW can work with town to verify qualifications/legitimacy of participants (done on Islesboro and others).

Landowner permission could be built into permits. Adopting a Castine-like system would greatly simplify enforcement and access, really only need to enforce yellow-access-by-permission areas. Such a system would provide town and residents with control. Tom is unaware of any complaints from off shore islands where similar hunts have been implemented, but they are more isolated. Could include a meat donation program (Hunters for the Hungry) with local beneficiaries.

Need to define how designees would work. Resident/landowner OR designee? One designee per property? Designees could have access to multiple properties. Access/permission could be on the designee form. Participation would require state hunting license and associated prerequisites (hunter safety, no legal issues preventing participation) and participants could be screened by IFW (precedented). Residents would be responsible for designees, would also need to consider if property boundaries with granted access are within 100 yards of neighboring residence or structure that would require permission from neighbor or awareness of proximity. Enforcement of game laws would go to IFW Wardens, but local law enforcement would have authority over trespass laws.

Mapping update: Tabled until May 1 meeting.

V. Old Business

None

VI. New Business

None

VII. Items for Next Agenda

Continue discussion of short-term and long-term options for management.

Establish a timeline and deadlines for getting things onto Nov. ballot. (Rob B. will contact Dana Reed and Pat Gray to determine dates and requirements).

Any updates on ticks information and graphics.

VIII. Adjournment

6:10 by unanimous consent.