

Bedminster Deer Management Program Proposal

The primary goal of Bedminster Townships Deer Management Plan is to manage the deer population with a paramount emphasis on safety. Safety is not limited to hunting safety but the idea that hunting operations and public use of township land will be separated during deer management operations.

Studies have found that at high densities, the amount of browsing done by deer can have detrimental effects on forest communities. Over browsing can eliminate understory herbaceous plants, shrubs, and saplings. These plants provide food and cover for numerous other wildlife species. The removal of the plants also allows for the invasion of exotic, non indigenous plants that can bring havoc to a stable eco system. Saplings are the future generation of the forest. If they are destroyed it may result in the failure of forest regeneration. Moreover, excessive deer populations have been linked to lyme disease and auto accidents, which can be costly and, in some cases, fatal to the vehicle occupants.

The white tail deer is a species with the capacity for very rapid population growth. By allowing for limited hunting on an annual basis, we would be applying continuous pressure on the deer population in an attempt to curb the rapid population growth they are capable of. A deer management plan such as this is the most effective, efficient and financially prudent method for achieving this goal.

Bringing hunters on to public land is for the purpose of deer herd management, not opening township property for the recreation of a few hunters. We will have an expectation of certain results over a limited time available.

Oversight of Program

The program will be managed by a three-person Bedminster Deer Management Committee (DMC). The committee will consist of:

- Citizen Representative
- Bedminster Police Chief
- Township Committee Liaison

The DMC will coordinate with NJ Division of Fish and Wildlife to:

- Determine management goal for year (species, gender, number)
- Determine which properties will be targeted for management
- Coordinate for relief from state mandated recreational hunting limits

The DMC will recommend to the Township Committee (TC)

- Up to 10 dates for exclusive hunting on specified township land
- Type of hunting permitted (bow, black powder, shotgun, etc.)
- Specific properties to be managed
- Screening Hunters, recommending selection to TC
- Consulting NJ Fish & Game to determine properties managed

Selection Criteria

- Interviewed by BDMC, recommended to TC
- TC selects
- Proof of Insurance
- Current hunting license
- Demonstrated hunting experience
- No incidents in previous 10 years
- Pass background check by BPD

Annual Time Table

August (first TC meeting)	DMC will present to TC: --Hunters selected for the program --Seasonal Goals --Dates/Locations to be hunted
September (first TC meeting)	TC will approve plan
September - February	-- Township will advertise dates/locations for hunting -- Hunting will be conducted on selected dates/locations -- Selected properties will be closed to the public on dates hunting is conducted.
April (first TC meeting)	DMC will present TC with results of previous season with recommendation for changes in upcoming season
1 May	DMC will advertise for new participants for upcoming season
June-July	DMC will convene and interview/screen candidates for participation in program

Rules for Permitted Hunters

This schedule will follow the dates permitted under the New Jersey division of fish and wildlife regulations.

- The schedule will be posted on the township website prior to the season.
- The list of properties that are to be managed will be posted on the township website each year.
- Unless otherwise specified, parks to remain open on dates when bow hunting is scheduled.

- Parks will have signs posted at major trail heads that specify the type of hunting scheduled.
- Residents that live adjacent to a township property are advised to check the website as to when hunting is scheduled.
- No hunting is permitted within 150' of an adjacent home for bow season and 450' for any other season.
- Unlawful and unsportsmen-like conduct will not be tolerated. Any observations of inappropriate activity should be reported to the Bedminster police dept. at 908 234-0585
- The annual access permit will indicate the weapon and the assigned location in which the permit holder is permitted to hunt.
- The annual access permit only allows for the hunting of deer by the means and dates specified on the permit. All other hunting on township property is strictly prohibited. As per state law, there is no hunting permitted on Sundays.
- In accordance with state requirements, a current New Jersey hunting license and current applicable deer management license must be on the individual at all times.
- Hunters with access permits are responsible for being aware and respectful of all park boundaries, safety zones and restricted areas.
- The driving of deer is permitted, if only, by unarmed persons.
- When using an elevated stand, such stand must be marked with a proper permit number.
- There shall be no trespassing on private property to gain access, and/or drive deer to any designated hunting site.
- Use or possession of alcoholic beverages while participating in the Deer Management Program is strictly prohibited.
- Any form of littering is prohibited, including but not limited to shotgun shell casings.

Potential Lands Available for Deer Management

Block	Lot	Acreage	Location
B- 38.01	L- 3.01	4.76 acres	River Road West
B- 9	L- 7	26.2 acres	Spook Hollow Road
B- 41	L- 26	74 acres	Stahl Natural Area
B-41	L-34	147 acres	Stahl Natural Area
B- 53	L-1	19 acres	River Road (2015-2016 site)
B- 53	L- 1.02	5.7 acres	River Road (2015-2016 site)
B- 53	L-2	31.8 acres	River Road (2015-2016 site)
B- 54	L-2	4.8 acres	Gilbert house Route-206
B- 43.01	L-1	51 acre	Schley Mountain / I-287
B- 59	L-1	158 acres	Schley Mountain / Hills
B- 26	L-8	26 acres	Deer Haven
B- 7	L-22	78.5 Acres	Black River Road Mill House Preserve (2015-2016 site)

Procedures

- Hunting will only be conducted on designated dates/locations.
- Those dates/locations will be posted:
 - Bedminster Township Website
 - Bedminster Facebook page
 - Local Newspaper
 - Signage at park/land
- Hunters will check in/out with BPD (secretary)
 - Time entered land
 - Location
 - Weapons used
 - Time exit land
- Only registered participants (hunters) allowed on property (no buddies tagging along)
- Hunters will wear Bedminster issued tag visible on the exterior of their clothing

Violations

Violations to the above rules will be subject to:

- Removal from program
- \$1000 fine for unauthorized hunters on township lands