



DEER MANAGEMENT PLAN – 2020/2021 MERIDIAN CHARTER TOWNSHIP

Prologue to the 2020/2021 Management Plan

The purpose of this plan is provide both the Meridian Township Board and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources information, justification, and an outline for conducting a deer management program in Meridian Township. Meridian Township began their Deer Management Program in 2011. The program was developed in response to numerous complaints from residents regarding deer damage to personal property; an increase in car/deer collisions; and damage to the natural ecosystems in Meridian Township's 2,000 acres of parks and land preserves.

This plan was developed based on information collected from a community survey; expert advice from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR); sportsmen groups; garden clubs; township staff; and experts at Michigan State University. The mission of the DNR is to maintain a healthy white-tailed deer population, using sound scientific management; maximizing recreational opportunities while minimizing negative impacts on ecosystems and other wildlife species and without creating undue hardship to private interests.

2020 Summary

This Deer Management Program is currently in its tenth year and although it has received many accolades and has been deemed successful, there are still many over-population issues throughout the township and our residents continue to express their concerns. The discovery of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in 2015 affected the harvest numbers due to the fact that hunters are no longer able to bait the deer. In response, the Township continued to meet with Michigan Department of Natural Resources officials and our Police Department to explore additional ideas for an increased harvest. We believe that these additional steps taken will increase he harvest numbers. The goal of the 2020 management program is to harvest 300 deer. The intention is that these efforts will help maintain healthy deer, habitats, and outdoor recreational opportunities while achieving management goals.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. INTRODUCTION
- II. PURPOSE
- III. GOALS OF DEER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
- IV. DEER POPULATION INFORMATION
- V. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF BROWSED VEGETATION
- VI. ALTERNATIVES TO HUNTING
- VII. GENERAL FEATURES OF A MANAGED HUNT
- VIII. MANAGED HARVEST PROCEDURE & PROCESSING
- IX. ONGOING DEER MANAGEMENT
- X. EXTENDED SEASON HARVEST INFORMATION
- XI. PERSONAL LIABILITY
- XII. PUBLICITY
- XIII. COSTS AND BENEFITS
- XIV. TECHNICAL CONSULTANTS, OTHER EXPERT SUPPORT, ENDORSEMENT & OVERSIGHT
- XV. CONCLUSION

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Community Description & Location

Meridian Charter Township is located in Central Michigan on the northern edge of Ingham County. As of the 2010 census, the township had a population of 39,688. Meridian Township is the local government unit that includes the unincorporated communities and census-designated places of Haslett and Okemos. The Township takes its name from the fact that the Michigan Meridian, the prime north-south survey line, runs along the eastern edge of the township. It is from this line that all townships were surveyed and measured.

B. General Description of Potential Deer Management Areas

1. Government Owned Property

Township Land

Potential deer management areas may include select parks, land preserves, or other township-owned properties that are not specifically designated as a parks or land preserves.

Ingham County

Ingham County owns and manages two regional parks in the north-east portion of the township: Lake Lansing North and South Parks. Ingham County began conducting managed hunts in Lake Lansing North Park in 2012. The Ingham County Housing Commission manages the Dobie Road Farm property and it is managed by the Ingham County Board. The Board allowed Meridian Township to place hunters on the County-owned Dobie Road Farm property beginning in 2014. Hunting has been conducted on both County properties each year since 2012/2014.

Michigan State University

Michigan State University (MSU) owns a natural area designated as the Dobie Reserve, located on the west side of Dobie Road and the north side of the Red Cedar River. MSU also owns large farms within the south-west portion of the township. MSU places their own pest managers on their properties.

2. Private Property

The township contains numerous private parcels of land that are greater than five acres in size. In addition, it may be possible to manage deer on several private properties that have suitable hunting property that collectively comprise five acres or more. The Township mails letters to homeowners of 5+ acres encouraging them to either hunt their property, or to allow the Township to place a hunter on the property.

II. PURPOSE

A. Reasons for the Development of a Deer Management Plan

1. The Township has documented numerous complaints of white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) damage from township residents.
2. Response to complaints of damage to personal property (landscaping).
3. Increased deer/vehicle accidents within the township.
4. Increase of deer/human contact.
5. Nuisance deer roaming into densely populated residential neighborhoods.
 - In urbanized areas, remnant natural areas exist as fragmented landscape.
 - Deer may become highly concentrated in remaining habitat islands.
6. There is evidence of damage to the park and land preserve's ecosystems by deer over-browsing, as noted by local biologists, park naturalists, and park stewardship managers.
 - Recognizing that parks and land preserves support ecosystem services; protect water quality; and provide wildlife habitat.
 - Recognizing that preferred native forage plants (oak, cedar, trillium, bloodroot, and trout lily) can require up to 10 years to regenerate.
 - Recognizing that deer may facilitate the introduction and spread of invasive species through preferential forage on certain plant species and serving as dispersal conduits along game trails.
 - There are a high density of game trails throughout parks and land preserves.
 - Parks and land preserves serve as a protected area for plants and animal species.
 - Impacts on native plant communities have cascading effects on associated wildlife species.

III. GOALS OF DEER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

A. Natural Resources Management Philosophy

Land management includes an ecosystem approach to ensuring the health and function of park and land preserve's natural communities. Management methods may include the control of deer densities, removal of invasive species, application of prescribed burns, and reintroduction of native plants.

B. Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) Deer Management Philosophy

The MDNR supports deer management in urban/suburban areas to help address:

1. Damage to ecosystems
2. High vehicle-deer crash incidence rate
3. Damage to residential landscaping and gardens
4. Public Act 451 of 1994: The Wildlife and their habitats of the state are valuable public natural resources held in trust by the state, and the state has a duty as trustee to manage its wildlife and their habitats effectively for the use and enjoyment of present and future residents and for the protection of the environment.
5. Natural Resources Commission Policy #2007: The Department's goal is to manage the deer herd using management practices based on scientific research to:
 - a. Maintain healthy animals and keep the deer population within limits dictated by the carrying capacity of the range
 - b. Limit effects on native plant communities, agricultural, horticultural, and silvicultural crops and public safety.

IV. DEER POPULATION INFORMATION

A. Michigan Deer Population - Statewide Trends

According to the MDNR, in the absence of predators, unmanaged herds readily increase to abundant levels which can result in:

1. Increased propensity for disease
2. Poor individual health of deer
3. High incidence of roadside mortality (vehicle-deer collisions)

B. Deer Population Goal

Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) and Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) suggest that minimizing impacts

to natural communities and associated wildlife may require managing herds at less than 20 deer per square mile.

C. Deer Productivity

According to the MDNR, it is likely that deer productivity will increase as population is reduced. Deer management clearly needs to be a multi-year effort. It is our hope that private landowners and adjacent communities will address the over-population issues as well.

D. Deer Population Evaluation

It is difficult to obtain exact numbers of the deer herd population. Options for establishing population includes:

1. Utilization of helicopter surveys to attempt to develop base line population information. The downside to utilizing helicopters is that it can be costly.
2. Local biologists have stated that it is unnecessary to take the measure of conducting a helicopter survey, and that the damage to vegetation, incidents of deer/vehicle accidents, and simple observations provide direct evidence and measures of the impacts of deer populations intended to be managed.
3. Trail cameras are another possibility for gathering informal numbers on the deer population.

E. Michigan State University (MSU) Research Project

A major benefit of Meridian Township is its proximity to MSU and the MDNR. MSU hosts The Boone and Crocket Quantitative Wildlife Center, which is a network of University programs dedicated to attracting the brightest students to the best universities to work with the foremost faculty in North America. The program promotes the development of conservation leaders to ensure the future of our wildlife legacy. The MSU students focus on issues that are reshaping wildlife conservation: land-use change affecting habitats, emerging diseases in wildlife, shifting patterns in weather and climate, and changing conservation policy.

Johnathan Trudeau, a Ph.D. student with the MSU Department of Fisheries and Wildlife and Boone and Crocket lab, is conducting a long-term research project on white-tailed deer movement that started in January 2018. This research is part of a large-scale collaboration between Michigan State University (MSU) and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) aimed at characterizing deer movement across a landscape with varying human development. With the emergence of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in mid-Michigan, it is crucial to understand deer movement

patterns to best inform effective disease management practices. The study area spans Ionia, Clinton and Ingham counties. Jonathan's team successfully captured and fit global positioning system (GPS) collars on 20 adult white-tailed deer in 2018 and 39 adult white-tailed deer in 2019, of which 22 remain. The GPS collars allow Jonathan to monitor the survival and movement of each deer for up to two years. Previous studies also included the study of the spatial distribution of suburban deer and were conducted by students utilizing pellet collection and DNA analysis from select locations across Meridian Township.

The following properties are being utilized for the study: Central Park, North Meridian Road Park, Ted Black Woods, Nancy Moore Park, Towar Woods, Central Meridian Uplands, Davis Foster Preserve, Red Cedar River East Preserve, Tihart/Cornell Wetland Preserve, Legg Park, Forest Grove Preserve, North Ridge Preserve, the Transfer station, and Tihart Preserve.

V. MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF BROWSED VEGETATION

Measures will be taken to evaluate improvements in the composition and structure of native plant communities.

A. Deer Enclosures

Deer enclosures are fenced areas that exclude deer. They are generally 10-12' in height and should be approximately 10' x 20' in size. In 2011, enclosures were constructed in:

1. Lake Lansing North Park
2. Towar Woods Land Preserve

B. Observations of Composition and Structure of Native Plant Communities

The deer enclosures have allowed us to directly compare areas open for deer browsing with the area that is enclosed. We have observed visible regeneration of oak, white pine, and cedar, increased diversity of spring ephemeral wildflowers, and a reduction in under story browse line. In addition, these highly visible enclosures include educational signage stating their purpose. The enclosures are placed in parks that have a lot of visitors for the purpose of providing public education on the issue.

VI. ALTERNATIVES TO HUNTING

A. Fencing

1. Prohibits landscape connectivity, wildlife movement. Needs to be at least 10' high.

B. Translocation or trapping

1. Wildlife Division of MDNR will not allow removal of live deer. Deer may not be converted to private ownership.
2. Deer may be trapped and euthanized. Affordability depends upon source of labor, extent of local involvement.

C. Deer Immunocontraception (Birth Control)

1. Wildlife Division allows treatment under a special permit.
2. Feasibility and affordability are limited
3. Efficacy and side effects vary by treatment method
4. Annual applications are generally required to maximize effectiveness

D. Surgical Sterilization of Deer

1. Wildlife Division allows sterilization under a special permit.
2. Feasibility and affordability are limited. Capture and nearby facilities or mobile surgical procedures are required.

E. Landscape Alternatives

1. Meridian Garden Club - brochure about deer-resistant plants
2. Meridian Township Website - website about deer-resistant plants
3. Managing roadside vegetation to improve visibility
 - a. Ingham County Road Commission
 - b. Meridian Township Public Works
4. Modify driver behavior - signs and reflectors , education for young drivers

F. Roadside Management Options

1. Increase distance back from road edge that would be cleared of vegetation.
2. Increase signage at deer crossings
3. Install reflectors at deer crossings

VII. GENERAL FEATURES OF A MANAGED HUNT

1. Initiate highly managed deer harvest in Township and County owned properties.
2. Encourage private homeowners to hunt or allow hunting on their property.
3. Deer harvest will be conducted during the State-regulated hunting seasons for archery and will follow all State regulations.

4. Park and land preserve properties remain open to the general public during archery season.
5. Park entrances and major trail heads are posted with information about deer management program.
6. Press releases describing program will be published.
7. Notifications mailed directly to neighbors who own property located directly adjacent to designated hunting areas.
8. Humane treatment of deer.
9. Donation of venison to the hungry.
10. Communications and record keeping of all deer management data.

VIII. MANAGED HARVEST PROCEDURE & PROCESSING

- A. All hunting will be per state laws and regulations and per Township regulations according to the deer management hunt guidelines.
- B. Top priority of a managed hunt will be to protect the safety of hunters, neighboring residences, and the general public.
- C. A managed harvest will be held regular hunting seasons.
- D. All hunting is archery only, with the exception of a special harvest conducted by the Police Department
 1. Generally speaking, there is greater public acceptance for bow hunting because of the noise and the concern for errant shots.
- E. Firearm hunting
 1. Firearms may only be utilized by Meridian Township or State of Michigan Police
- F. Establishment of deer blinds and routes, tracking
 1. MDNR safety zone regulations will be observed
 - a. One hunter is housed per blind per hunt date.
 - b. Blind/elevated tree stand locations must be reported to the Township.
 - c. Hunters must remain within 50 feet of the blind at all times.
 - d. Hunters must report to Township staff each time they enter and leave public property.
 - e. Hunters are not to shoot unless they have a deer within close range.
 - f. Tracking may not be done on private property without permission.
 - g. Map of blind/tree stand locations will be indicated on aerial photos
 - a. Park or preserve boundary
 - b. Blind locations
 - c. Park or preserve trails

F. Public notification

1. Press releases
2. Direct mailing to all property owners adjacent to township-designated hunting areas
3. Educational pieces on deer management on social media and in other township publications/magazines/newsletters
4. Park or land preserve entrances and major trail heads will be posted, notifying park users of deer management program
5. The deer management program is discussed at public meetings including the Meridian Township Board; Park Commission; and Land Preservation Advisory Board

H. Neighborhood notification

1. Notification to neighbors directly adjacent to the park boundary
2. Address information is obtained from the latest Parcel Information Layer available to staff
3. Neighbors will receive notification cards at least 14 days prior to the first scheduled managed hunt date

I. Township Police and MDNR Conservation Officer support

1. Meridian Township Public Safety and MDNR Conservation Officers are valuable partners in the deer management program and assist, as needed, with any issues that may arise.

K. Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAPs)

Meridian Township has received approval from the MDNR to conduct a managed deer harvest for the 2020 Deer Management Assistance Program:

Chapter V Special Permit Regulations

5.80 Deer management assistance (DMAP) hunting permits; definitions, criteria for issuance, validity of permits, application procedures, restrictions and requirements; unlawful acts.

Sec. 5.80

(1) The terms in this section shall have the meaning described to them in this section.

(a) "Permit" means a deer management assistance (DMA) permit.

(b) "Permittee" means a person who has applied for and been authorized to purchase deer management assistance permits by the department.

(c) "Authorized designee" means one person who has been designated by the landowner and approved by the department, to act on behalf of the landowner to apply for and implement the provisions of deer management assistance permits. The

department reserves the right to deny a person, including the permittee, the authority to personally implement the provisions of a permit if such authority would conflict with a court order, administrative rule, or law.

- (2) Permits may be issued statewide to owners or authorized designee of land located in areas where current antlerless harvest methods are insufficient to achieve department deer management objectives or where one of the following conditions exist:
 - (a) The department has documented that the property owner has significant agricultural or horticultural crop damage caused by deer.
 - (b) The department has documented that a serious disease outbreak is a threat to the deer herd, livestock, or human health.
 - (c) The department has documented a significant safety hazard from deer.
 - (d) Current antlerless regulations are insufficient to achieve landowner deer management objectives.
- (3) DMA permits are valid only during an open season for the taking of deer as established by this order and only upon the land for which issued and adjacent private property with permission of the landowner.
- (4) DMA permits are valid only for the taking of an antlerless deer. A person less than 12 years of age shall not hunt deer with a firearm. A person hunting under the authority of a DMA permit shall carry the unused permit and shall exhibit the unused permit upon the request of a law enforcement officer.
- (5) A person, or authorized designee, owning land within a qualifying area as determined by the department, may apply for DMA permits by filing an agreement with the wildlife management unit supervisor. This agreement will include an estimate of desired antlerless harvest and numbers of hunters needed to meet the desired harvest objective. This agreement, once approved, shall be signed by both the permittee and wildlife management unit supervisor. The number of DMA permits will be determined by the wildlife management unit supervisor. A minimum of 5 DMA permits shall be issued per permittee. Failure to comply with these and other rules will make the permittee ineligible to participate in the DMA permit program for a period of 1 year.
- (6) The permittee shall not purchase more DMA permits than approved by the department.
- (7) These DMA permits shall be subsequently issued by the permittee. The permittee shall issue the DMA permits only to a person who purchased a bow and arrow deer, firearm deer, combination deer, or antlerless deer hunting license for the current hunting seasons. A person shall not accept, carry afield, use or attempt to use a DMA

permit unless they had purchased a bow and arrow deer, firearm deer, combination deer, or antlerless deer license for the current hunting seasons. A permittee shall not sell a DMA permit.

Permittees shall inform hunters about rules pertaining to the use of DMA permits.

- (8) Once issued by the permittee, a person issued a DMA permit shall not sell, lend, or allow another person to use or attempt to use the person's DMA permit. Unused permits may be reissued to hunters only by the permittee.
- (9) The provisions of section 3.103 shall apply to a permit and kill tag issued under this section. In addition, unless otherwise provided in this section, a person issued a DMA permit shall comply with all rules and regulations for the taking of deer for the season in which they are hunting.
- (10) Permittees shall report by January 15 to the wildlife management unit supervisor the name and address of all hunters and the number of deer harvested under the authority of DMA permits.
- (11) Deer taken under the authority of a DMA permit shall not be included in the season limit as defined in section 3.101(8) of this order. The daily limit and season limit shall be 1 deer per DMA permit.

History: Am. 15, 1998, Eff. Sep 10, 1998; Am. 6, 2001, Eff. Jun 1, 2001; Am. 10, 2002, Eff. Jul 15, 2002; Am. 8, 2003, Eff. Jun 7, 2003; Am. 18, 2005, Eff. Sep 9, 2005; Am. 16, 2006, Eff. Aug 11, 2006.

IX. ONGOING DEER MANAGEMENT

A. Continued deer management on a multi-year basis

1. 2011 was the first year of deer management. It was a pilot program on a small scale and included 25 hunters on 7 properties. In 2020 we had 75 hunters on 2,000 acres of public land.
2. Continue to encourage hunting on private properties.
3. Possibly hold a special hunt in January or February, as permitted by the MDNR

B. Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)

CWD is a deadly neurological disease found in the state's free-ranging deer population. Since the discovery of CWD deer in Meridian Township in May 2015, over 2,000 deer from Meridian Township have been tested for CWD in order to gauge the extent of the disease across the landscape. To date, ten deer in Ingham and Clinton counties have tested positive for the disease with five of them found in Meridian Township. To date, more than 61,000 deer in

Michigan have been tested for chronic wasting disease, and CWD has been confirmed in 120 free-ranging deer in eight Michigan counties: Clinton, Ingham, Ionia, Jackson, Kent, Gratiot, Eaton and Montcalm.

In summary, the discovery of CWD somewhat complicated the Meridian Deer Management program because the hunters are no longer allowed to utilize bait to attract the deer. This has resulted in a significant drop in deer harvested (seen from 2014 to 2015). In addition, local processors who processed the Township's deer are no longer participating in the Michigan Sportsmen Against Hunger program due to concerns over CWD. The World Health Organization has advised against consuming venison that is contaminated with CWD, although no link to harmful effects in humans has yet been proven. Many processors will not take deer within the core CWD zone to be sure they are not contaminating their equipment which would have to be thrown out if a CWD positive deer was processed. The DNR is unsure of when the CWD restrictions can be lifted but they advised it will be at least a few more years. Until that time, the closest processor that works with Michigan Sportsmen against Hunger is in Howell. However, many of our hunters donate their venison through other private programs or directly provide venison to families in need. A few local processors will still process deer in the core zone and then the hunters take it upon themselves to donate the meat to charity.

X. DEER CULLING INFORMATION

A. Deer Culling

This technique is sometimes used near human-populated areas to safely, humanely, and efficiently remove deer. Deer culling is an intensive method of deer removal by competent marksmen and should not be considered or mistaken for a form of hunting.

This deer management plan provides the details for culling for the Wildlife Biologist's approval. This management plan strives to reasonably attempt to resolve the problem on a localized scale (per MDNR's discretion) for an extended period of time. The plan must include:

B. Goal

The long-term objectives of the deer culling plan are to reduce the nuisance deer within the residential neighborhoods of Meridian Township.

C. Alternatives

The alternatives to deer culling are listed above. The plan is to continue to utilize volunteer hunters during the regular archery season (October 1 – January 1).

D. **Logistics**

- 1. Number of deer to be culled:** The goal is to harvest 150 deer through targeted culling. The deer could be male or female of any age. The police department plans to have shooters out ten times per month and hope to cull five deer per time. The goal is 50 deer per month.
- b. Timing** – culling will be conducted within the hours of 6 pm and midnight.
- c. Personnel** – culling will be conducted by select Meridian Township Police. The selections are made at the discretion of the Chief of Police.
- d. Methods, Equipment and Locations** – The officers selected to cull the deer will be equipped with suppressed firearms of various calibers. They will be permitted to use other specialized equipment including: night vision optics; thermal imaging equipment; rifle scopes; and other useful items. There will be two officers per cull (a spotter and a shooter), along with a Department of Public Works staff member who will drag out the deer. The police will have trail cams on each bait pile that will notify the police of the deer's presence. The police are hoping to work over 4-5 bait piles in 4-5 various locations. The police will either be in a set location or will be standing in a vehicle. The culls will be in targeted neighborhoods that are not currently part of the management program. We will focus on the areas in the maps above that are near the areas that are most affected by deer/car collisions. The plan is to get a minimum of four contiguous private properties that agree to allow the police cull. Most of our residential areas are subdivisions with fragmented natural areas. The deer go back and forth between the backyards and the natural areas. Their range is very small and they are essentially, “nuisance deer.”
- e. Safety Issues** – The officers involved in the deer culling program will be assigned as teams of two. One officer will check the backdrop of the site using thermal imaging equipment to determine that it is clear of people. Officers will pay particular attention to the angle of the shot taken, what their backdrop is, certainty of a well-placed shot. If there is any uncertainty of the safety of the shot either team member has the authority and responsibility to call off the shot.
- f. Utilization plan** – the culled deer will be field dressed by Township Department of Public Works staff and will be brought to the cooler at Meridian Township. The deer will then be taken to a processor and the venison will be donated to local food banks.
- g. Long Term Management Plan** – it is recognized that deer management techniques will likely need to be employed on a long-term basis. The plan will be assessed each year utilizing

information on deer/car collisions along with anecdotal evidence regarding nuisance deer in neighborhoods.

h. Public Information Plan – Neighborhood associations will be notified of the deer culling programs dates and times. Letters will be mailed directly to each property owner.

i. Lead Contact – Sgt. Andrew McCready

j. Process for Approval from the DNR:

The Wildlife Biologist will forward this plan to the Deer Specialist/Biologist, Regional Supervisor, and District Lieutenant for review. Upon consensus agreement, a Damage and Nuisance Animal Control Permit will be issued by the Permit Specialist.

XI. PERSONAL LIABILITY

- A. The hunters will be required to sign a release of liability form for participation in a deer management program.

XII. PUBLICITY OF ARCHERY PROGRAM

- A. Public Opinion Survey
 - 1. A survey regarding deer was conducted in 2010 and was readily available through the township website, www.meridian.mi.us or paper copies were be mailed to residents upon request. A follow-up survey will be conducted in 2020.
 - 2. Articles in the local newspaper notified residents about the online survey and postcards were mailed directly to each household.
- B. Letter to residents with greater than five acres of property
 - 1. Promotion of private hunting, within DNR regulations and season
- C. Park or preserve property closed notification signs with hunt dates and times
- D. Township meetings
 - 1. The deer management plan is discussed each year at the Township Board meetings, generally held on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month
- E. Social Media
- F. Newspaper
- G. Local Television

XIII. COSTS AND BENEFITS

COSTS

- A. Printing/postage

BENEFITS

- A. Donated venison

- | | |
|--|---|
| B. Neighborhood and volunteer notification | B. Improved herd health = intrinsic value |
| C. Park signage | C. Habitat benefits = intrinsic value |
| D. MDNR Licenses | |
| E. Supporting equipment | |
| F. Staff time | |
| = TOTAL MANAGED HUNTS COST | |

XIV. TECHNICAL CONSULTANTS, OTHER EXPERT SUPPORT, ENDORSEMENT & OVERSIGHT

- A. Michigan Department of Natural Resources**
 - 1. Chad Fedewa, Wildlife Habitat Biologist, Rose Lake District Office
 - 2. Chad Stewart, Deer Specialist, MDNR 517-641-4903 x 248
- B. Michigan Natural Features Inventory**
 - 1. Steve Thomas, stevet4@sbcglobal.net
- C. Michigan Sportsmen Against Hunger**
 - 1. Neal Easterbrook, 248-585-1415
 - 2. Dean Hall
- D. Safari Club International – Lansing Chapter**
 - 1. Jim Leonard, JRLeonard54@gmail.com
- E. Meridian Garden Club**
 - 1. Jean Goetz, President, jeangoetz88@yahoo.com
- F. Clinton/Ionia branch of the QDMA (Quality Deer Management Area) and Stoney Creek Habitat Specialists**
 - 1. Chad Thelen, chad@stoneycreekoutdoors.net
- G. Ingham County Parks**
 - 1. Tim Morgan, Director, tmorgan@ingham.org
 - 2. Coe Emens, Lake Lansing Manager, cemens@ingham.org
- G. Michigan State University**
 - 1. Dr. William Porter
 - 2. Jonathan Trudeau, Ph.D. student, Boone and Crockett Fellow, jtrudeau@msu.edu

XV. SUMMARY

Meridian Township's Deer Management Plan strives to focus on an ecosystems approach by creating co-existence among wildlife, citizens and our suburban/natural communities in a safe and efficient manner.

This deer management plan recognizes that the use and enjoyment of deer by residents is highly variable. Selection of deer management methods requires consideration of general concepts and location-specific deer dynamics.

According to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, nearly one million Michiganders go to the woods and fields every fall to hunt and otherwise experience wildlife and open lands. Michigan has a proud and vibrant hunting tradition and a well-deserved reputation for responsible and innovative conservation. Hunting and hunter-conservationists are leading advocates for Michigan's strong natural resource economy, and at the center of their interests and enthusiasm is the management of white-tailed deer.

Meridian Township takes their role as an environmental steward seriously and as such, recognizes the need to implement science-based management of our fragile natural resources so that they may remain in perpetuity for future generations.

2020 DEER MANAGEMENT ARCHERY PROGRAM INFORMATION

1. **Volunteers:** archery season runs October 1, 2020 - January 1, 2021.
 - a. **75 hunters total hunting 40 township properties and 15 private properties.**
2. **Meat Donation:** Hunters are required to donate the first deer harvested. Hunters can donate as many deer as they wish or may keep them for personal use. Donations of venison will be given to local food banks. The Michigan Sportsmen Against Hunger program will pay the processing fee of all donated deer.
3. **2020 Hunting Permits:** DMAP permits used are only for antlerless deer in hopes to increase the amount of does harvested, reducing trophy hunting, decreasing numbers of future deer generations.
4. **Meat Storage and Processing:** A walk-in cooler has been installed at the Service Center for hunters to store harvested deer. Deer will be taken to a USDA certified processor by DPW employees once to twice a week. This decreases the amount of time hunters spend taking deer, and more time toward hunting the township properties.
5. **Additional Private Properties:** 15 private properties in the township have been added to the list for hunting. Two of the properties will be hunted by homeowners. Homeowners hunting on directly adjacent properties to township property will receive DMAP permits. All other properties have been assigned to volunteer

hunters. Two key properties are Delta Dental and the East Lansing Meridian Water & Sewer Authority. Private properties will be added throughout the season.

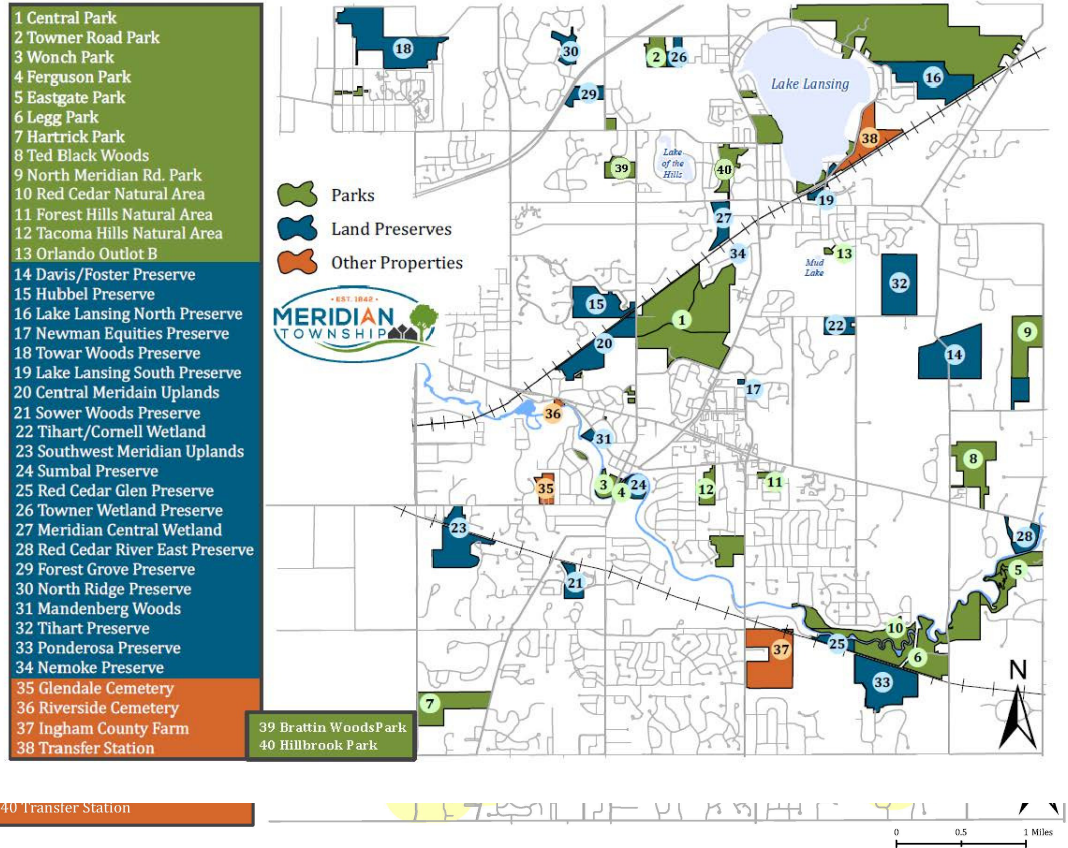
6. **Permit Reimbursement:** Hunters hunting on private properties in the township will be reimbursed for any permits used to harvest deer, decreasing the financial burden on the hunter and increasing incentive to harvest.
7. **Better Coverage:** Hunters with more time to hunt received more properties to hunt, ensuring better coverage of the township. Property assignments will also remain flexible throughout the season and may be adapted to cover any absences by assigned hunters.

Deer Management Program Statistics

(Collision based on data provided on the MSP "Traffic Crash Reporting System – Crash Statistics Report Selection Criteria")

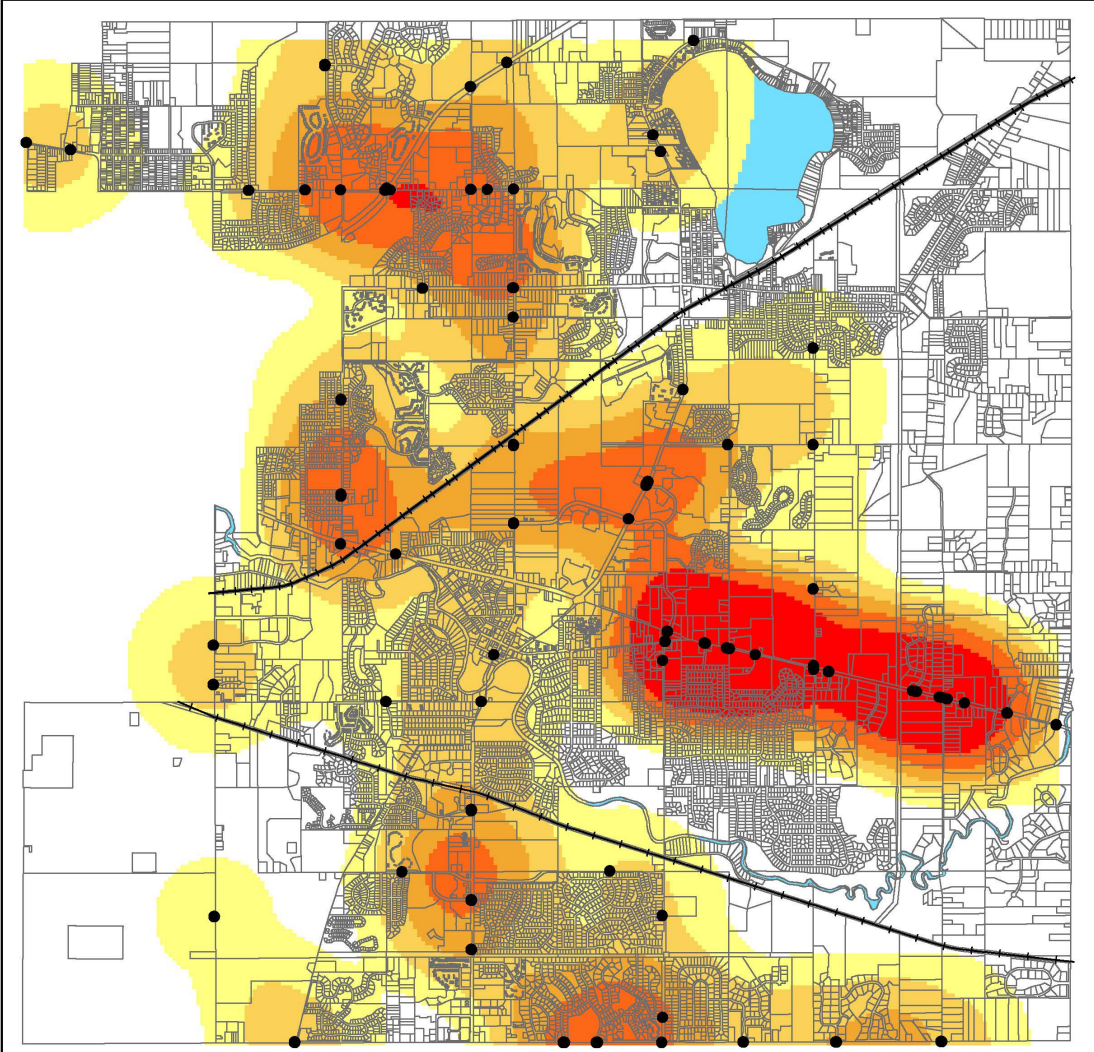
	Total Hunters	Properties Hunted	Deer Harvested	Reported Deer/Car Collisions
2011	25	7	43	152
2012	50	18	90	153
2013	60	20	127	180
2014	73	21	150	137
2015	30	19	63	144
2016	73	31	73	164
2017	66	30	80	129
2018	74	38	57	129
2019	84	38	88	153
2020	84	40 (2300 acres)	145 (as of 12/12/20)	-----

Meridian Township Deer Management Areas 2020



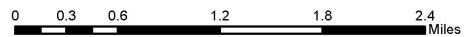


Meridian Township Deer-Vehicle Collisions (2019)

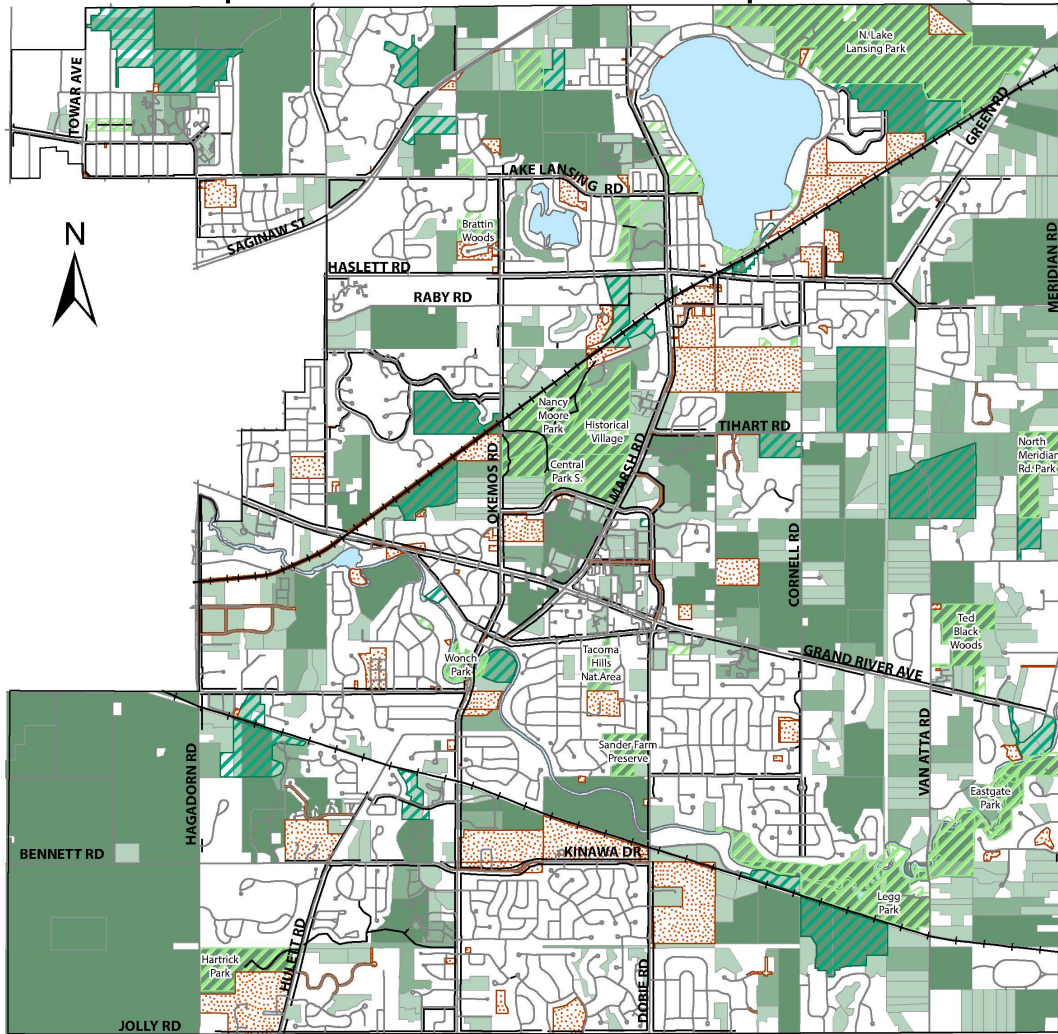


Legend

- Deer-Vehicle Collisions
- High
-
-
- Low



Deer Management Analysis Properties in Meridian Township > 5 Acres



Parcels > 5 Acres	— Street
Acreage	+ + Railroad
0-4	— Pathway
5-14	■ Government Owned
15-24	■ Park
25+	■ Land Preservation
	■ Water

