



Deer Management Report

2020-2021

In 2020, the volunteer archery program experienced its most successful season to date harvesting 176 deer! The success this year was due to the effective collaborative efforts of the Township Board, DPW staff, Parks and Recreation staff, Police Department, volunteer archery hunters and the Sportsman Against Hunger Organization. The identification of CWD in Meridian Township in 2014 had a significant impact on our hunters' ability to achieve great success. The United States Department of Agriculture culled a number of deer in an effort to eradicate this disease from our community. This cull took place between 2015 and 2018. After the cull stopped, there was a 16% increase in the car-deer crashes. The continued high number of car-deer collisions and ongoing destruction of vegetation prompted many residents to reach out for answers and action from their elected officials. Manager Walsh set a goal to harvest 300 deer during the 2020-2021 season. With this goal in mind, it was apparent that new measures and additional efforts were required.

1. Focused on ways to ease the work for the volunteer hunters so they could spend more time in the woods and less time driving to and from the processor.

- Purchased an outdoor walk-in cooler – once the hunter field-dressed their deer, they dropped it off at the cooler and we took it from there.
- DPW Staff member, Mike Ellis led and managed the coolers' maintenance and deer deliveries twice per week to the processor in Jackson.
- Mr. Ellis managed the venison donation process by first reaching out to the Okemos and Haslett Food Banks to deliver the venison. It became immediately clear that other food banks were needed in order to distribute the large amount of venison we were receiving from the processor.
- Mike contacted and nurtured outstanding relationships with 14 local food banks where he distributed a total of 7,154lbs of venison throughout both the archery and extended hunt seasons.
- Purchased two freezers to hold the venison between deliveries.
- The volunteers were provided incentives and prizes for specific harvest milestones throughout the season to keep motivation high.
- Frequent engagement and consistent communication kept everyone motivated until the end of the season. It was very satisfying for everyone that the goal was not only met, but exceeded! The goal for the archery cull was 150 with the final tally reaching 176.

2. A Damage and Nuisance Animal Control Permit was obtained from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The permit allowed the Police Department to cull 150 deer.



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- The Police Department utilized Infrared technology to locate the animals and ensure nothing else was in the area. This equipment was previously owned by the department. No additional costs were incurred.
- The participating officers were all volunteers who were able to demonstrate both the ability to determine the safety of the shot and the marksmanship ability to place a well-aimed shot.
- No overtime was paid to the officers
- The Department purchased a rifle, ammunition, optics, batteries and suppressors to conduct the cull. A total of \$2,874.94 was spent on equipment to ensure the safety and success of the cull.
- Four DPW staff worked early morning hours following the evening cull to field dress the deer before delivering them to the processor.
- 4,874lbs of venison were donated from this program to 14 local food banks.

Program Statistics:

Volunteer Archery Deer Management Program

- October 1, 2020 - January 1, 2021
- 75 resident volunteers participating
- **176** Deer Harvested from 33 Township properties and 7 private properties
- 2,280 pounds of venison donated to local food banks
- 9,120 meals provided locally
- Dollar amount of venison donated = \$25,057
- Estimated 3,500 volunteer hours served in the field

2021 Police Cull

- January 15, 2021 - March 10, 2021
- **150** deer culled
- 4,874 pounds of venison donated to local food banks
- 19,496 meals provided locally
- Dollar amount of venison donated = \$53,565.26

Total Cull - 326 deer

Total Donation and Food Bank Numbers

- Okemos Community Church 595 pounds
- Haslett Community Church 310 pounds



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• Saint Paul Lutheran Church	350 pounds
• Williamston Food Bank	280 pounds
• Lakeside Chapel of Park Lake	400 pounds
• Capital Area Community Services	895 pounds
• Our Savior Lutheran & City Rescue Mission	1,270 pounds
• Redeemer United Methodist Church	150 pounds
• Community Baptist Church of Lansing	1,124 pounds
• Dansville Clothing & Food Bank	800 pounds
• First Presbyterian Church	150 pounds
• LMTS Outreach Center	200 pounds
• Charlotte Assembly of God	80 pounds
• Santa's First Responders Holiday Party	<u>550 pounds</u>

Total: 7,154 pounds

2020-2021 Program Cost

Permits, Equipment and Supplies:	\$23,710.89
Staff Hours: Parks, DPW	1,850hrs
Overtime Costs DPW Field Dressing: 170 OT hrs	\$ 5,917.46
Sportsmen Against Hunger Contribution for processing:	\$_____

Dead deer picked up and disposed of by Park Maintenance Staff (not included in totals):

2020 - 59

2021 - 26



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Jane & Emma handing out venison at Santa's First Responder Party.



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A huge truckload of 1,191 pounds of venison out for donation to local food banks.



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Mike Ellis delivering venison to Lakeside Chapel of Park Lake.