



**AGENDA**  
CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD  
REGULAR MEETING  
Wednesday September 11, 2024 6:00 pm  
Township Service Center  
2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Okemos MI

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1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER
2. MOMENT OF SILENCE
  - A. Remembering September 11th
3. PUBLIC COMMENT
4. APPROVE AGENDA
  - A. September 11, 2024
5. APPROVE MINUTES
  - A. July 10, 2024
5. COMMUNICATIONS
  - A. None.
6. DISCUSSION ITEMS
  - A. Acquisition Request & Review
    - a. Parcel A review
7. REPORTS
  - A. STAFF REPORT: Stewardship Coordinator, Emma Campbell
    - a. Update on current preservation projects & issues
    - b. MCC September Stewardship Calendar
    - c. Deer Management Program starting in October
  - B. ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION REPORT: Board Member, Yu Man Lee
  - C. PARK COMMISSION REPORT: Board Member, Mark Stephens
8. PUBLIC COMMENT
9. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS
10. ANNOUNCEMENTS
  - A. Next Land Preservation Advisory Board Meeting: Wednesday, October 9, 2024 at 6 pm at The Township Service Center, 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Okemos, Michigan 48864.
11. ADJOURNMENT

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Individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the Meridian Township Land Preservation Advisory Board by contacting: Director Courtney Wisinski, 5151 Marsh Road, Okemos, MI 48864 or 517.853.4600 - Ten Day Notice is Required.

Meeting Location: End of Creekstone Trl Road, Okemos, MI 48864

Providing a safe and welcoming, sustainable prime community.



A PRIME COMMUNITY  
meridian.mi.us



CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF MERIDIAN  
LAND PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
Township Service Center  
2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court | Haslett, MI  
Wednesday, July 10, 2024, 6 PM

PRESENT: Board Members: Jamie Hiller, Steve Thomas, Kris Parnell, Kathy Fay, Mark Stephens.  
ABSENT: Yu Man Lee.  
STAFF: Emma Campbell, Stewardship Coordinator.  
TOWNSHIP: James McCurtis.

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chair Hiller called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT: JENNIFER HAYES (2687 E LAKE LANSING RD), KEVIN TRACY (2751 STILL VALLEY DR.), LISA VANDERMEER (2750 STILL VALLEY DR.)

- A. Heritage Hill neighborhood has a nearby parcel for sale they are recommending for the Land Preservation Program.
- B. The property is owned by Michigan Conference of the United Christ. Neighboring residents feel the parcel being converted into greenspace would provide recreational opportunities and protect the wetland located on the property.
- C. Residents inquired what the acquisition process entails and what next steps would be for this property recommendation. Chair Hiller addresses the procedure for acquisition and factors we look for in the land that is for sale.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

- A. July 10, 2024

**Board member Fay moved to approve the July 10, 2024 Agenda to place on file. Vice Chair Thomas seconded.**

**Voice vote: unanimous.**

4. APPROVE MINUTES

- A. June 12, 2024

**Board Member Fay makes a motion to place the June 12, 2024 minutes on file. Board Member Parnell seconded.**

**Voice vote: Unanimous.**

5. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Ribbon Cutting August 14, 2024 at Davis Foster Preserve at 6 pm to reveal new name & rule signage, as well as ongoing signage improvements.

**Minutes – Land Preservation Advisory Board**

**July 10, 2024**

Page 2 of 6

**Board member Parnell moved to place communications on file. Board Member Fay seconded.**

**Voice vote: unanimous.**

**7. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- A. Heron Creek Preserve (see Exhibit A in July packet)
  - A. Land use history
  - B. Past & present stewardship efforts
  - C. Future goals, projects, and recent donation

**8. REPORTS**

- D. STAFF REPORT: Stewardship Coordinator, Emma Campbell
  - a. Trustee McCurtis is the new liaison for the Township Board to the Land Preservation Advisory Board. Has served on the planning commission and zoning board.
  - b. Update on current preservation projects & issues
  - c. Stewardship Field Work: floristic surveys starting in July & August, invasive species management (Japanese hedge parsley, sweet clover, veronica), creating access trails in preserves that need it (Tihart Preserve)
    - i. Scouting for native seed collection sites. Species collected so far; blue eyed grass, purple stemmed angelica
    - ii. MCC July Stewardship Calendar

1. 

The graphic is a calendar for July 2024 titled "JULY STEWARDSHIP". It features the MCC logo and the slogan "CONNECT LEARN CONSERVE". The calendar grid shows events for various days: July 13th (Native Planting at Davis Foster Preserve), July 27th (Native Planting at Tihart Preserve), July 18th (Japanese hedge parsley pull), July 16th (Trailside Ecology River Walk Edition), and July 19th (Weekday Warriors). It also notes that Township Offices are closed on July 4th. A footer states "ALL EVENTS ARE WEATHER DEPENDENT & MAY BE CANCELLED THE DAY OF".

- E. ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION REPORT: Commissioner Yu Man Lee
  - a. Commissioner Lee is absent, there nothing to report since the Commission did not meet in July.
- F. PARK COMMISSION REPORT: Commissioner Mark Stephens
  - a. Nothing to report.

**Minutes – Land Preservation Advisory Board**

**July 10, 2024**

Page 3 of 6

9. PUBLIC COMMENT: JENNIFER HAYES (2687 E LAKE LANSING RD), KEVIN TRACY (2751 STILL VALLEY DR.),

- A. Residents are very appy to hear about the stewardship work happening in the Township
  - a. STEM night – Kevin Tracy would like a representative to attend the STEM night to have a demonstration. He will reach out to staff.

10. OTHER MATTERS AND BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS

- A. Board member Fay has rain barrels to give away. Staff advises to contact LeRoy Harvey.

11. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- A. Next Land Preservation Advisory Board Meeting: Wednesday, September 11, 2024 at 6 pm at the Township Service Center, 2100 Gaylord C. Smith Court, Haslett, MI 48840.

12. ADJOURNMENT

**Board member Parnell moved to adjourn the meeting. Board member Fay seconded.**

**Voice vote: Unanimous**

**Chair Hiller adjourned the meeting at 7:18 pm.**

# **Exhibit**

# **A**

## **Tihart Property Land Use Map (pre-acquisition)**

# **Exhibit**

# **B**

## **Tihart Preserve Stewardship & Land Management Efforts**



# SEPTEMBER

CONNECT  
LEARN  
CONSERVE

**STEWARDSHIP SATURDAYS | 9:30 AM - 12 PM**  
 These workdays occur every other Saturday year round.

- September 7th, Red Cedar Glen (end of Sylvan Drive), native planting
- September 21st, Lake Lansing North Preserve (1000 Wild Ginger Trail)  
 Join us to celebrate the start of fall with cider donuts and & native planting!

**WEEKDAY WARRIORS: Occurs every other Thursday**

- September 12th, Sander Farm (end of Sago Way), native seed collection
- September 26th, Davis Foster (5120 Van Atta Rd.), native seed collection

**VOLUNTEER THANKQUET | 6 PM - 8 PM**  
 A celebration of our hardworking community!

- Join us at the Central Park Pavilion (5151 Marsh Rd.) for a night of food, refreshments, lawn games, and good conversation! BYOB; alcohol is allowed in the park, just no glass please.



# STEWARDSHIP

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7 STEWARDSHIP SATURDAY 9:30 - 12 PM
8	9	10	11	12 WEEKDAY WARRIORS 1-3 PM	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21 STEWARDSHIP SATURDAY 9:30 - 12 PM
22 	23	24	25	26 WEEKDAY WARRIORS 1-3 PM	27 VOLUNTEER THANKQUET 6 - 8 PM	28

PLEASE CONTACT EMMA AT ECAMPBELL@MERIDIAN.MI.US, OR 517.853.4614



# VOLUNTEER THANKQUET

# 27

# SEPTEMBER 2024

A CELEBRATION OF OUR  
HARD WORKING COMMUNITY

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**CENTRAL PARK  
PAVILION 6 PM - 8 PM**

5151 MARSH ROAD, OKEMOS

**COME JOIN US FOR FOOD,  
\*REFRESHMENTS, LAWN GAMES, &  
GOOD CONVERSATION!**

\*ALCOHOL IS ALLOWED IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BYOB  
(JUST NO GLASS CONTAINERS ALLOWED)



**Deer Management Final Report**  
**2023 - 2024**  
**March 29, 2024**



In 2023, Meridian Township conducted their 13<sup>th</sup> year of the Deer Management Archery Program. The archery portion of the program operates annually from October 1-January 1. The Meridian Police cull was developed in 2020 and added to the management program in January of 2021. A walk in cooler was purchased the same year for the purpose of donating harvested venison to local food banks. These additions came from approved funding by the board and for the last four years has contributed to the overall success of management objectives.

The Township Board initiated this program in 2010 in response to the continued high number of car-deer collisions and concerns with ongoing destruction of vegetation in parks, land preserves and in residential neighborhoods. Deer management is also imperative to mitigate the return of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD), which plagued the deer herd in 2015. The reported car/deer accidents have decreased over a thirteen year period of 36%, ([2011] 152/97 [2023]) with 2023 reporting the least accidents at 97.

Stewardship staff and volunteers have reported a noticeable reduction in deer browsing damage in parks and preserves included in management areas. CWD has not been reported since 2016, which indicates the white-tailed deer population is healthy enough to combat the disease. Due to the absence of CWD and funding from Michigan Sportsman Against Hunger (MSAH), venison from the program is donated to 15 local food banks. Locally harvested venison is providing a sustainable, local, and healthy source of protein to community members.

New to the 2023 Deer Management season is a collaboration between the Township and the Michigan State University (MSU) Fisheries and Wildlife Department. MSU researchers have partnered with Meridian Township to conduct a study on tick-borne disease in white-tailed deer and their relative home ranges. This study seeks to understand more about tick-borne disease distribution and possible reduction techniques within white-tailed deer populations.

The continued success of this program is a direct result of effective collaborative efforts with the Township Board, Departments of Public Works, Parks and Recreation, and Police, together with volunteer archery hunters, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Division (MDNR), Michigan State University's Fisheries and Wildlife Department, and the Michigan Sportsman Against Hunger Organization. **The culmination of efforts from these entities resulted in 300 deer harvested and 6,156 pounds of venison donated to 16 local food banks for the 2023-2024 management year.**

**Program Overview: Archery Program**

1. The Meridian Township Deer Management Program is highly managed and follows all Michigan Department of Natural Resources rules and guidelines in conducting this program.
2. All volunteer hunters must be residents of Meridian Township, submit to a criminal background check, pass an archery proficiency test, and attend the mandatory training meeting.

3. Parks and Recreation staff provides clear, consistent communication and enforcement of program rules and guidelines throughout the season and communicates daily with program participants.
4. All parks and land preserves remained open to the public during the archery season.
5. DPW staff member, Mike Ellis led and managed the cooler's maintenance as well as conducted venison deliveries four times per week to the processor in Carson City.

### **Program Overview: Police Cull**

1. A Damage and Nuisance Animal Control Permit was obtained from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The permit allowed the Police Department to cull 200 deer.
2. The Police Department utilized infrared technology, cameras, thermal imaging and suppressors to conduct the cull.
3. The Police Cull operated during the evening hours once parks and land preserves were closed.
4. No overtime pay was paid to the officers participating in the program.
  - Four DPW staff worked early morning hours, following the evening cull to field dress the deer before delivering them to the processor.

In addition Mike Ellis contacted and nurtured outstanding relationships with 16 local food banks where he distributed a total of 6,156 pounds of venison throughout both the archery and extended cull seasons. All donated venison went through testing for metal particles and CWD per mandatory MDNR testing. MSAH covered all processing costs for 221 donated deer, totaling a cost of \$23,205 for the 2023-2024 season

### **Program Statistics:**

#### **2023 Volunteer Archery Deer Management Program**

- Conducted under the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Deer Management Assistance Permit, during the regular archery season of October 1st 2024 - January 1st 2024.
- 67 resident volunteer archers participated.
- **141** Deer Harvested from 43 Township properties and 34 private properties (*see figure 1 at end of report*). 77 deer were donated.
- Estimated **3,436.5 volunteer hours** served in the field

#### **2024 Police Cull**

- Conducted under a Damage and Nuisance Animal Control Permit from the Wildlife Division of the MDNR: January 2, 2024 – January 13, 2024
- Cull is implemented by pre-selected and specially trained Meridian Township police officers.
- Management areas were chosen based on intersections of high density deer-car collisions according to Michigan State Police reports for Meridian Township.
- **159** deer culled and donated for the 2024 season.

**Total Deer Harvested- 300**

**Total Donation to Local Food Banks - A total of 6,156 pounds of venison were donated to the following local Food Banks:**

- *Okemos Community Church*
- *Haslett Community Church*
- *Community Baptist Church of Lansing*
- *Dansville Clothing & Food Bank*
- *St. Jude Catholic Church of Dewitt*
- *Community Baptist Church of Grand Ledge*
- *Santa's First Responders Holiday Party*
- *First Presbyterian Church*
- *St. John's Church of Christ*
- *Haslett Food Bank*
- *Lakeside Chapel of Park Lake*
- *Lansing City Rescue Mission*
- *Our Savior Lutheran Food Bank*
- *Williamston Food Bank*
- *Leslie Community Outreach*
- *Mason Food Bank*

Table 1. Meridian Deer Management program numbers since 2011

	<b>Total Hunters</b>	<b>Properties Hunted</b>	<b>Archery Harvest</b>	<b>Police Cull</b>	<b>Reported Deer/Car Collisions</b>	<b>Dead Deer Pickup</b>
<b>2011</b>	25	7	43	--	152	--
<b>2012</b>	50	18	90	--	153	--
<b>2013</b>	60	20	127	--	180	--
<b>2014</b>	73	21	150	--	137	--
<b>2015</b>	30	19	63	--	144	--
<b>2016</b>	73	31	73	--	164	--
<b>2017</b>	66	30	80	--	129	--
<b>2018</b>	74	38	57	--	129	--
<b>2019</b>	84	38	88	--	153	--
<b>2020</b>	75	42	176	150 (21')	100	46
<b>2021</b>	68	43	130	200 (22')	116	85
<b>2022</b>	70	63	156	200 (23')	103	134
<b>2023</b>	67	71	141	159 (24')	97	133

**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. Education and outreach to utilize native plants in landscaping is of utmost importance to this mission. A recent collaboration in 2023 with the Michigan State University Fisheries and Wildlife Department to study deer home ranges and tick-borne diseases within the deer population provides more insight into the ecology of Meridian’s white-tailed deer herd. The 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.

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.

**Figures for 2023 Season:**

*Figure 1: Total number of deer harvested at a property level. Only includes properties with >1 harvest.*

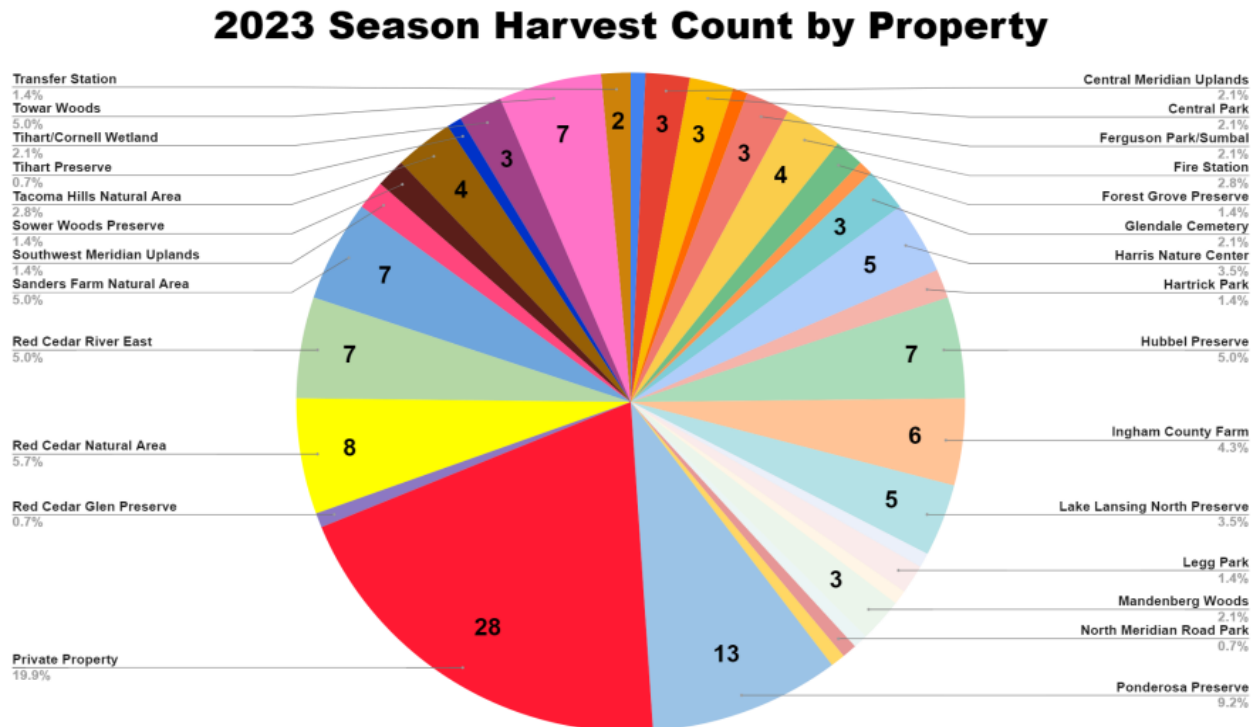
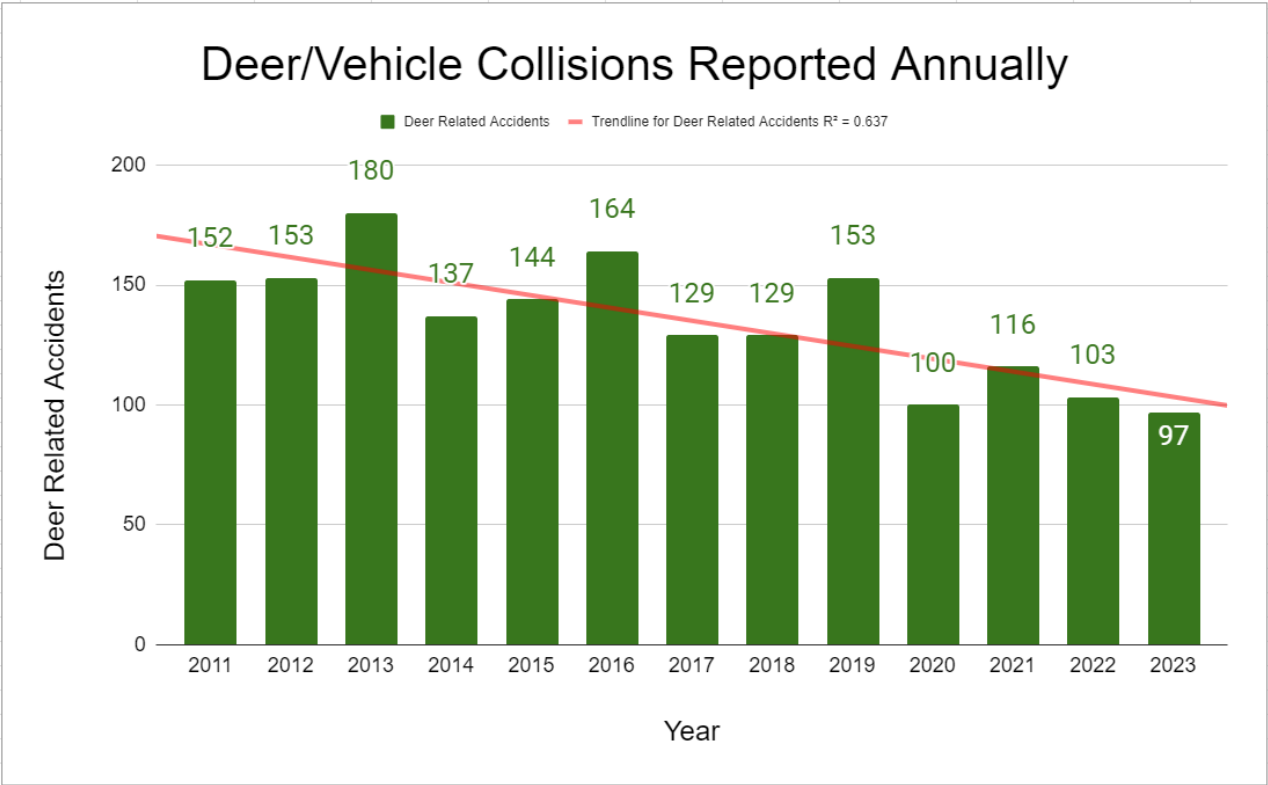


Figure 2: Deer vehicle collisions reported to the township police department annually from 2011-2023.



## Item 7.A



**To: Land Preservation Advisory Board Members**  
**From: Courtney Wisinski, Director of Parks & Recreation**  
**and Emma Campbell, Stewardship Coordinator**  
**Date: September 17, 2024**  
**Re: Meridian Township Deer Management Program 2024**

Meridian Township is heading in to its thirteenth year of urban deer management. Urbanization has caused an over-population of deer that has resulted in an increase in reports of vehicle/deer collisions, concern for public, and a disruption of the ecological balance of our natural areas. While these remain the priorities of our program, we will continue to grow and evolve to best serve our community as well as the health of the Township's white-tail deer population.

### 2024 Meridian Deer Management Overview:

- MDNR Deer Management Plan submitted and approved for 300 deer harvests utilizing Deer Management Assistance Permits (DMAP). These permits allow for antlerless harvest only.
- 67 residents are registered as volunteer archers, to enact the management program from October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 to January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025.
- 43 Township properties have been selected for the 2024 management program with volunteer archers placed at each (2023 management map attached)
- 26 private properties have given permission for hunter placement during the archery season.
- All volunteers are required to donate their first deer harvested. All donated venison is delivered to local food banks, and processing costs are paid by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. In 2023-2024, 6,156 pounds of venison was donated to 16 local food banks.
- Michigan State University will be collaborating with the Deer Management Program to conduct research on tick-borne diseases and their burden on the white-tail deer population (memo attached).

Meridian is a leader in urban deer management and provides a unique opportunity for residents to participate in important land management. Collaboration with researchers at Michigan State University and state biologists with the MDNR will continue to provide important data to aid in future management decisions for white-tail deer in the Township.

## Item 7.A



**To: Township Board Members**  
**From: Courtney Wisinski, Director of Parks & Recreation**  
**and Emma Campbell, Stewardship Coordinator**  
**Date: September 17, 2024**  
**Re: Michigan State University Deer Targeted Anti-Tick Project Collaboration**

We are pleased to continue our partnership with Michigan State University conducting research on the deer and tick population utilizing the Deer Management Program. The goal of this research project is to potentially develop a deer-targeted oral drug delivery unit to reduce the environmental risk to humans due to tick-borne diseases, such as Lyme disease. The research with Meridian Township is based solely on gathering information on the deer and tick population and the potential dissemination techniques that could be used for future administration of anti-tick medication. As a result of this collaboration, Meridian Township will benefit from data received, which will provide information on our deer herd numbers as well as the rate of Lyme disease in the Township.

Objectives of the study:

- Quantify questing tick abundance and parasitism of deer.
- Quantify deer and non-target wildlife species use of field sites for potential deployment of oral medication delivery units.
- Quantify consumption rates of a food product designed to deliver medications to white-tailed deer at different times of year.
- Quantify uptake of a placebo biomarker (rhodamine B) by deer to examine theoretical uptake of medication.
- Communicate project goals and results to Township officials and public.
- Study fawn mortality rates in the Township.

Michigan State researchers will continue the project through the 2024-25' deer management season, conducting field recon prior to the archery season to ensure study sites are chosen with little to no public activity. There will be six to eight sites of study total across Township lands. The study will remain in effect until May 2026. Township staff place high value on research collaboration with Michigan State University, and the benefits future studies will provide for the local wildlife, natural areas, and residents of Meridian Township.