

**SCDNR**  
**URBAN DEER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM GUIDELINES**  
**ADOPTED 1/15/99**

Background

Human population growth and urbanization is a phenomenon that will continue. With this growth there is a concomitant loss of wildlife habitat and with respect to white-tailed deer, hunting as a management tool is often not an alternative. With a reduction and ultimate cessation of hunting in developed areas, deer populations increase unabated, thereby creating problems for residents. Problems include increased deer vehicle collisions, increased concerns among residents for certain zoonotic diseases and other human health issues, loss of planted ornamentals, destruction of native plant species, and concern over the health and well being of the local deer.

Many urban deer populations are in excellent condition because of the abundance, palatability, and nutritional value of cultivated plants. Because the deer are in good condition, reproduction, recruitment and survival are often high, compounding the problem. High density deer herds are typical of urban deer populations. Urban deer situations can be extremely divisive because often times human social issues hold more importance than the biological aspects of the local deer herd.

The SCDNR is aware of the difficulties in dealing with urban deer. A committee composed of Wildlife Management Section biologists was formed to develop guidelines that will provide direction to communities involved in urban deer crises. These guidelines have been developed, discussed and accepted by the Section.

Action

It is recommended that guidelines for the Urban Deer Management Program immediately be made available, upon request, to interested communities. These guidelines will serve to guide groups toward a deer management objective. SCDNR staff will provide support at organizational or public meetings, information on various control/management techniques, examples of necessary documents required for the program and other general technical assistance. Unless exigent circumstances are apparent, decisions as to the preferred approach for the community to take will be left up to the community. Guidelines will allow communities or governing entities to hire a private, non-departmental wildlife professional to provide contractual deer depredation assistance within urban areas. Permitting for general non-lethal control techniques (fencing, repellents, scare tactics, etc.) is not required by state law and may be conducted independent of this program. However, if the decision to use lethal techniques or other techniques involving the capture and handling of deer is reached, permits will be necessary pursuant to S.C. Code of Laws Section 50-11-1090 and other laws were applicable.

The following guidelines generally apply if lethal control techniques are considered. The program guidelines include, but are not limited to the following:

1. The program will apply to areas where the otherwise legal hunter harvests of deer is not feasible or is not allowed by local laws or ordinances.
2. The community or governing entity, working with a private wildlife consultant, will be responsible for providing SCDNR with sufficient information describing the history of the deer

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problem and other information relevant to the case and proposed course of action. This document may generally be called a Management Plan.

3. The community or governing entity will be responsible for providing SCDNR with sufficient information documenting public sentiment relative to the proposed course of action. Only in cases where the community's covenant provides, or the governing entity has, the authority to make decisions independently will this requirement be waived.
4. The community or governing entity will be responsible for resolving all local legal restrictions that may preclude the proposed course of action. SCDNR must be notified, in writing, of the resolution of these restrictions.
5. In the event that lethal removal of deer is selected as a control technique, the participating private wildlife consultant must meet the qualifications as determined by guidelines set by SCDNR.
6. Contracts or other stipulations made between the community or governing entity and the private wildlife consultant will be between those groups, i.e. SCDNR will not facilitate arrangements.
7. Permits for lethal techniques will be issued to the community or governing entity. Execution of the permit will be under the direction and supervision of the private wildlife consultant.
8. Any lethal techniques implemented must meet approval of the SCDNR and the American Veterinary Association.
9. In the event that lethal removal of deer is implemented, the community or governing entity will be responsible for carcass disposal including recommended donation to eleemosynary institutions.
10. Lethal removal of deer will be limited to the period September 15-March 1.
11. Due to documented high levels of stress and mortality, capture and relocation techniques will not be permitted.
12. Permits for fertility control techniques may be obtained only after SCDNR receives and approves a scientific research proposal submitted by a competent researcher.