

**USDA-APHIS-WILDLIFE SERVICES
PROJECT SUMMARY REPORT**

Village of Fayetteville White-tailed Deer Damage Management Program

Cooperators

Village of Fayetteville

USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services
5757 Sneller Rd
Brewerton, NY 13029

Effective Date

01/01/2017

Completion Date

04/01/2017

Background

The Village of Fayetteville is comprised of 1.7 square miles within the town of Manlius. The Village is comprised of residences interspersed with dense wooded areas, as well as numerous parks and greenspaces. Most of the homes feature landscaping, with ornamental plantings throughout. These factors along with native food resources and bedding areas create an ideal habitat for white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*).

Despite residents using best management practices to defend against deer damage, the deer herd continues to damage the local flora. Ornamental plants and shrubbery have been heavily browsed, causing residents an inordinate amount of economic damage. There is a visible browse line and little understory in the native foliage. In addition to the damage to vegetation, the abundant deer population also poses a threat to human safety in the form of vehicle collisions and tick borne diseases.

Objectives and Expected Results

The Village of Fayetteville has agreed to work together with Wildlife Services and private property owners to reduce the local white-tailed deer herd. The expected results are decreases in damage to private property and natural resources by browsing deer. Another expected benefit would be a reduction in danger of deer-vehicle collisions and tick borne diseases (Kilpatrick et al. 2014).

Methods

Properties belonging to the Village of Fayetteville and residents of the Village were surveyed for use by deer and evaluated for safety of firearms use. Once suitable properties were identified, bait (kernel corn) was placed in safe shooting zones. Deer were removed in the evening and night using suppressed, center-fire rifles with frangible ammunition and the aid of Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) devices and spotlights.

Results

Wildlife Services personnel made an initial visit to the Village of Fayetteville in January of 2017, to identify areas of deer usage. During the months of January, February and March, over a 9 night period, 76 white-tailed deer were removed from the Village of Fayetteville. This resulted in an average of 8.4 deer removed per night.

The majority of the animals removed were females (50; 66%). After processing, approximately 2,195 pounds of venison were delivered for donation.

Summary

The 2017 white-tailed deer damage management program in the Village of Fayetteville was successful and resulted in minimal conflicts with neighboring property owners or the general public. Overall, the removal of 50 female deer this year and 72 in 2016 aided in reducing a portion of the breeding population. As result deer vehicle collisions in 2016 were reduced by 30 percent. There were, however, several challenges that had a negative impact on the project. The main challenge was interference with baiting activities at several locations by the public in effort to discourage deer from using the bait stations. On several occasions removal activities were disrupted by a resident of a nearby property making noise to disrupt deer activity and removal activities at the bait station.

Recommendations

Due to the large number of deer observed and removed from the private properties within a two month period, WS recommends that additional private properties be added to the program to increase the overall coverage. The additional access would increase the number of deer removed and in turn lower the amount of damage that is being incurred by the residents of the Village of Fayetteville.

Gaining support and accessibility to Green Lakes State Park is also recommended in order to manage the white-tailed deer population utilizing those areas.

WS also recommends that the Village of Fayetteville continue tracking damage that is being inflicted by White-tailed deer. Types of damage such as deer/vehicle collisions, the number of phone calls received from the village residents concerning deer damage and the number of deer carcasses removed from roadways can be easily tracked. Tracking damage caused by white-tailed deer can help provide valuable data to the DEC to help determine the reasoning behind a deer damage management program, as well as the overall success of the program.

Literature Cited

Kilpatrick, H. J., A. M. LaBonte, and K. C. Stafford, III. 2014. The relationship between deer density, tick abundance, and human cases of Lyme disease in a residential community. *Journal of Medical Entomology* 51:777-784.