

2014-2015 Supplement to Borough of Rose Valley Deer Management Plan

The Borough of Rose Valley approved a deer management plan in 2010 that recommended long term actions to control a burgeoning deer population that was having adverse effects on the Borough-owned parklands as well as the health and safety of Borough residents and visitors. Consistent with the principles of the existing deer management plan, the Rose Valley EAC recommends the following actions in 2014 and 2015.

1. The three wooded parks in Rose Valley: Saul Wildlife Sanctuary; Long Point (Chadwick) Wildlife Sanctuary; and Todmorden Woods shall be open to limited bow hunting (no firearms) by selected individuals from Monday, December 1 through Saturday, December 13, 2014, inclusive, and Friday, December 26, 2014, through Saturday, January 24, 2015, inclusive, on each day that bow hunting is legally permitted in Pennsylvania (this primarily excludes Sundays). This period includes the fall mating season, as that is a particularly favorable time for hunting, and covers the coldest part of the deer hunting season when public use of the parklands is lowest. The start date allows sufficient time for residents to receive the attached notice and for the attached signage to be posted. The start date of the hunt will be delayed accordingly if either the mailing of the notices or the posting of the signs is delayed.

The Borough parks will be closed to the public on hunting days before 9am and after 2pm. This allows hunting to take place at the most auspicious times, which are dawn and dusk. Pennsylvania State Game Commission (PGC) rules do not permit hunting after one half hour after sunset or before one half hour before sunrise.

Hunting is heavily regulated by the PGC. All hunters shall be required to comply with all applicable PGC rules and regulations. As a landowner permitting hunting on its own land, the Borough is empowered to impose additional limitations. The Borough has done so by specifying more restrictive dates and times for hunting (as described above). The Borough will also require each hunter to sign an agreement in favor of the Borough in the form attached.

Due to limited past success with bow hunting clubs and a potential conflict of interest in using the culling organization to conduct a hunt, the EAC has instead offered the hunting opportunity to local law enforcement personnel and their family and friends, as was done in the fall of 2011, 2012 and 2013. The Borough anticipates that at least 20 experienced bow hunters will participate in the hunt. No person will be authorized to hunt without a signed agreement with the Borough.

The EAC will conduct a daylight orientation meeting with participating hunters prior to the start of the hunt. Two alternate dates will be planned in November. Interested Borough officials are encouraged to attend.

The original deer management plan in 2010 estimated that 27 deer should be removed from the Borough-owned parklands. Permitted public hunting and a paid cull have since resulted in the taking of 23 deer, with at least two additional reports

of deer deaths. Therefore the 2014 public hunt is considered maintenance hunting, as envisioned by the original deer management plan.

2. Donated funds were made available for a forest vegetation monitoring plan, to include the creation of exclosures. The exclosures and the monitoring plan are designed to track the progress and effects of past efforts to reduce the deer population and to help determine the need for future efforts. The EAC designed and supervised the construction of a fenced exclosure in June 2013 with identical numbers and species of native tree seedlings, shrubs and herbaceous plants installed inside the exclosure and outside the exclosure. The initial results were assessed in late Spring 2014, and the native vegetation outside the exclosure had been severely browsed by foraging deer. This result indicates that maintenance hunting should continue.

The area outside the exclosure will be replanted with native vegetation and reassessed in the spring of 2015. To facilitate the assessment, the EAC recommends that the planted areas within and immediately adjacent to the exclosure be treated with a pre-emergence herbicide to control the dense growth of non-native invasive annual plants, mainly Japanese stiltgrass and mile-a-minute, which is interfering with the planted native tree seedlings, shrubs and herbaceous plants and making it hard to assess their survival and growth.