

Executive Summary for the 2023 Deer Management Program

Seventeen Harvard Town properties were open for archery hunting of deer under the DMS program in 2023: Barrett, Blomfelt, Coke, Daman/Stephenson (east), Dunlap, Gillette, Gravel Pit, Great Elms, Hermann Orchard/Rodriguez, Maxant, Old Mill, Perini, Shaker Spring House, Tripp/Stephenson (west), Vesenka, Warila and Willard/Poitras. Four of these properties (Gravel Pit, Old Mill, Tripp/Stephenson (west) and Warila) were added this year.

DMS continued the practice from 2022 of assigning hunters to the seventeen properties in the program. The twenty-five qualified hunters were assigned a property based on participation in the 2022 program, Harvard residency or a Town of Harvard employee.

Twenty-three of the approved hunters did get out to hunt. They spent 88 hours scouting and 662 hours hunting. Participation by the hunters varied greatly, with one hunter getting 39 trips in and another hunter only getting one trip in. Ten hunters accounted for 85% of the trips to scout or hunt. 55% of all hunting and scouting activity was on Barrett, Coke, Daman/Stephenson (east), Warila, and Willard/Poitras properties.

A total of ten deer (six does and four bucks) were harvested from seven properties in 2023, compared to four harvested in 2022. One deer was taken on each of the following: Barrett, Blomfelt, Coke, Hermann Orchard, and Willard/Poitras; two were taken on Tripp/Stephenson (west) and three on Daman/Stephenson (east). The total deer harvest in 2023 in Harvard was 78; in 2022 it was 72.

There was a single report of hunter harassment or vandalism. A camera was interfered with, and the police were contacted.

On four occasions DMS hunters discovered unpermitted individuals hunting on town property; two apologized and left after they were advised they could not hunt on these properties; two were observed remotely and were reported to local and state environmental police.

The DMS is appreciative of the support from the Conservation Commission and the Select Board for this program.