

**TOWN OF HARVARD
DEER MANAGEMENT SUBCOMMITTEE MINUTES
ZOOM MEETING 6:30pm – 7:30 pm
Monday May 11, 2022**

Committee members

**Ben Urquhart, Bob Douglas, Joe Pulido, Tom Cotton, Paul Willard
Don Osmer, David Pinard – Volunteer**

Bob gave the introduction.

All minutes are on website and videos can be found on Harvard TV.

Recommended Meetings with David Stainbrook State Deer Biologist and Robert Wernerel, State Botanist.

Tom spoke to the Fish and Wildlife report of the 2021 deer season by Dr. Feehan.

Gave stats on deer. Over 100,000 deer state-wide.

60 deer harvested in Harvard total.

30 in Archery Season, 19 Shotgun Season, 11 Primitive Firearms Season

30 by bow, 6 by crossbow, 13 by muzzle loader, 11 by shotgun.

Bob- More deer taken by bow than gunpowder.

Jamie L Goethlich -from Univ Wisconsin. Jacobson Camera Study information.

“Deer are hard to count”.

Discussed camera study method for counting deer.

Bait is used in some states for studies to draw in deer.

Look for unique bucks – count how many times re-photographed.

Costs – depends on labor costs and cost of cameras. Can be as low as \$28. Tasco camera.

Takes night pictures – Infra red.

Images can be grainy – and identifying unique bucks is important.

Jamie is doing PhD project on six different suburbs in Boston.

Lincoln, Carlisle, Weston, and three other towns.

20 to 30 cams per town.

Public lands, setbacks, land cover (agriculture or developed), interface.

153 Cameras out in the field. Vegetation survey done too. Browse of oak and maple and ornamental plants.

Tom asked about grid studies.

Jamie: you could put out one camera per property. More for larger acreage. Half mile apart – would cover the home range. Jamie: you want to maximize the deer you see. Place where deer will likely be.

Jamie is not using bait on his study.

Studies are usually short in duration. Set up and study time.

If you have multiple cameras you need to be sure you don't re-count the same buck.

Has to be done Aug to Jan before bucks shed their antlers. Usually done in September. Bucks start to grow antlers in April.

Paul: what is the interval between shots.

Jamie: Photoburst every 5 min.

Paul: time of day, date on each photo. Camera placement must be important. Where you place the camera is yes or no – if you see deer at all.

Jamie: Fudge factor is - you separate out the individual deer and work out the math.

Like I said, “Its hard to count deer.”

Many biologists – use other criteria. Car strikes, increase tree mass, etc.

Jamie: This just returns number of deer in this method.

Bob: I like the camera studies – with our interns and retrieved some interesting observations.

We will call you with questions. Thank you.

Ben gave report on Oak Sentinels, method.

Seedlings are planted and observed for browsing by deer.

Perhaps a low-cost way to gather deer density information.

Bob asked about costs.

Ben around \$50 for 40 bundle of seedlings (old number) buck or two per plant.

Oak seedlings 89-cents to \$2 each.

Ben offered to post studies on website.

Bob thanked ben for his report.

Question on deer covid vector from previous meeting.

Dr Feehan replied,” Covid should not be a reason to suspend a fall hunt in all of north America there has been only one case of a human catching covid from a deer and that was in deer farmer in Ontario that worked closely with the deer. The risks are infinitesimally small when you consider 6 billion deer harvested every year” He also offered to field any questions. “No evidence wildlife is a vector in the USA” from Website.

Consideration of new locations:

Joe: Revisit Prospect Hill and re-evaluate. There are possible other approaches.

Bob: There are other entrances that don’t involve soccer field.

Don Osmer: Brown/Tripp has a solid amount of deer. Lower Holy Hill has deer.

Bob: Can the areas be carved up?

Tom: Tripp parcel allows land management – but hunting prohibited.

Ben: We should go to the commission with explanations.

Bob: We can give new information on the sites.

David Pinard: We should have the right information – we may want to give people the information on how the 4 deer taken multiply in just four years.

Qualifying new hunters

Joe: Look at old and new hunters, keep the higher tier participants. Perhaps bring in new hunters for those areas that were not active.

Committee considered keeping the number at the 15 for now, all hunters would of course have to pass the qualifier.

Ben asked about new hunters – Joe stated new requests are coming in. He is speaking to program hunters to see why they may have had low participation.

Bob: Please discuss with the scouts. It should be a meritocracy, people in the wood get more deer. It will never be perfect. Joe and team, please give us recommendations.

Code of conduct.

Please sign and turn in.

Will reconvene when more info on recommendations.

We may meet Monday nights.

March 28, 2022 Minutes reviewed and approved. Tom Motion made to accept, Paul seconded.
Typos corrected. Parcels corrected. Unanimous.

Bob: "Don, Eve, Jamie, Dave, and questions? Hearing none, is there a Motion to adjourn?"

Joe motion, Tom second. Unanimous

Meeting adorned. Special thanks to Jamie.