

BARBARA S. RIVETTE**USDA-APHIS-WILDLIFE SERVICES
PROJECT SUMMARY REPORT****Village of Fayetteville White-tailed Deer Damage Management Program**Cooperators

Village of Fayetteville
425 East Genesee Street
Fayetteville, NY 13066

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

Effective Date

02/01/2016

Completion Date

04/01/2016

Background

The Village of Fayetteville encompasses 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. Numerous homes within the village feature elaborate landscaping, many containing 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 health and safety in the form of tick borne diseases and vehicular collisions.

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 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 deer activity and evaluated for safe firearms use. Once properties that meet these criteria were identified and written permission was obtained, 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, night vision equipment, and spotlights.

BARBARA S. RIVETTEResults

Wildlife Services personnel made an initial visit to the Village of Fayetteville in January, 2016 to identify areas of deer activity. The baiting program started on February 12, 2016 and continued until the completion of the project on March 29, 2016. Deer removal efforts were conducted on 6 separate nights between March 1 and March 29, 2016, and 89 white-tailed deer were removed from the Village of Fayetteville. This resulted in an average removal of 14.8 deer per night.

The majority of the animals removed were females (72; 81%). After processing, approximately 2,632 pounds of venison was delivered for donation to the local food bank.

Summary

The 2016 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. 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 one occasion removal activities were disrupted by a resident of a nearby property making noise to disrupt deer activity at the bait station.

Recommendations

Overall, the removal of 89 deer this year aided in reducing a portion of the population. However, due to the large number of deer observed on private properties within the Village of Fayetteville and adjacent properties, Wildlife Services 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 properties within the Village of Fayetteville.

Wildlife Services also recommends that the Village of Fayetteville begin 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. Such data will help to determine the reasoning behind a deer damage management program, and can also be used to measure the overall success of the program. Wildlife Services is willing to assist the village in determining ways of tracking damage caused by white-tailed deer.

BARBARA S. RIVETTE

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.