Lethal Deer Control Options in Maryland

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Dispelling the Self-Regulation Myth

- Lethal control required given current technologies
- Deer do not self regulate at levels compatible with most humans, especially in suburban/urban environments
- Hunting does not increase deer populations
- Increased productivity does not offset direct reduction of a deer population
- Catoctin, Monocacy, Antietam, Patuxent, NIST, NIH, etc etc vs. private lands
Lethal Options

• Regulated Hunting

• Managed Hunts

• Organized Archery Hunts

• Deer Cooperator Permits (sharpshooting)

• Deer Management Permits (crop damage permits)
Regulated Deer Hunting

• 70,000 deer hunters annually

• 800,000 days deer hunting annually

• Harvest 75,000+ deer per year (50% success rate)

• Overall most economical deer management technique

• Overall most effective deer management technique
#1 in U.S. for antlerless harvest per square mile and antlerless harvest per hunter
Deer Seasons & Bag Limits

Early September – January 31 annually

35+ deer bag limit in Region B (5 in Region A)

Encourage the harvest of antlerless deer (i.e., females)

Liberal allowance of weaponry (modern muzzleloaders, crossbows, etc.)

Expanded Sunday hunting
Q15. What is your general opinion of deer hunting? (Gen pop survey)

- Strongly in favor: 41 (67%)
- Somewhat in favor: 26
- No opinion / neutral: 16
- Somewhat opposed: 7 (17%)
- Strongly opposed: 10
- Don't know: 1

(n=800)
Q13. Deer should be hunted to maintain a healthy deer population. (Do you agree or disagree with this statement?) (Gen pop survey)

- Strongly agree: 47 (77%)
- Moderately agree: 30
- Neither agree nor disagree: 4
- Moderately disagree: 7 (17%)
- Strongly disagree: 10
- Don't know: 2

Percent (n=800)
Managed Hunts

• Highly regulated firearm deer hunting
  – By application only and often with shooter qualification requirements
  – Fixed stand locations with defined shooting directions
  – Set days and hours
  – Hunters often driven to and from the stand
  – Harvested deer picked up at set times and locations
  – Popular with parks and some watersheds

• Emphasis on safety

• Often labor intensive/expensive

• More emphasis on quantity vs quality

• 1,000 – 2,000 deer harvested annually

• Generally effective and publicly supported
Organized Archery Hunting

- Limited-access but more independent than managed hunts
  - By approval only and often with shooter qualification requirements
  - Fixed property locations
  - Often set days and hours
  - Popular with some public properties

- Emphasis on discreteness and safety

- Less labor intensive

- Effective in more populated areas

- More emphasis on quantity vs quality

- <1,000 deer harvested annually?

- Generally effective and publicly supported
Deer Cooperator Permits

• Professional deer removal via sharpshooting
  – Individuals tested and permitted by DNR with annual permit fee
  – Requires operation plan for each location
  – Generally limited to February-March unless human safety issues
  – Used in densely populated areas and other limited access areas
  – Limited use in agricultural setting as well
  – Allows for night-shooting

• Emphasis on discreteness, safety, and professionalism

• Effective in more populated areas

• 1,000 – 2,000 deer harvested annually

• Generally effective and publicly supported

• Generally expensive
Deer Management Permits

• “Crop damage permits” to alleviate deer damage to **commercial** agricultural crops

• 1,800 permits issued annually

• Harvest approximately 8,000 deer

• Can be used 365 days a year

• No night-shooting

• Some allowance of rifles in shotgun-only counties
Crop Damage Permits

Statewide Deer Management Permit (DMP) Harvest, 1993 - 2017

No. of Deer Harvested

Deer Contraceptives/Sterilization