

SUMMARY OF THE THREE DEER CULLS

And

Other Deer Population Control Efforts in Northwest Indiana

2011-2012, 2012-2013, 2013-2014

Ogden Dunes, Indiana

August 2014

Ogden Dunes has conducted three culls. The first was initiated by the prior Town Council during the end of 2011 and carried into the term of the current Town Council. The current council discontinued the first cull after it appeared the limit was not to be attained under the cull schedule set by the previous council. The current Council began a process of gathering information concerning what are too many deer and the alternatives regarding reducing the numbers of deer.

A second permit was granted to Ogden Dunes in the fall of 2012 to cull a limit of 40 deer. The limit of 40 was attained in six cull days.

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources, DNR, issued a third cull permit to Ogden Dunes for the 2013-2014 cull period. The permit application requested a cull limit of up to eighty deer. This was a number suggested by the DNR. The number of eighty was a limit. The number of eighty was never a goal or quest of the Council. It was merely a top limit. The fact that the cull resulted in the taking of 32 deer in no way can be interpreted as any kind of failure. As stated above, eighty was never any goal.

The Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore Park (IDNL) had also been conducting a years-long study regarding the proliferation of deer in the vicinities of the IDNL. The IDNL study resulted in the determination that there were excess deer. Their study included alternative ways to reduce the numbers. The most practical, effective and least costly method to accomplish the desired result of a smaller deer population were to hold deer culls in successive years if necessary. The IDNL began the culling process in the east unit. The IDNL held the first cull in the west unit, near Ogden Dunes, during the 2013-2014 cull period. In two days the IDNL culled 20 deer out of the West Beach area. See [Schedule A- Deer Cull Compilation](#).

The issue of deer over-population has been a concern in many of the Northwest Indiana communities and park lands. A snapshot of control efforts can be seen in [Schedule B](#). A total of approximately 795 deer were taken out of those areas listed on that schedule.

Interactions of deer, people and autos

Another area of concern is the potential for incidents and accidents between people and deer. At the bottom of Schedule B is a statement on the compilation of deer-vehicle collisions in Porter County. The number of deer-vehicle collisions per year averaged 415 for the last 10 years in Porter County.

Specifically, there are police accident reports filed for three incidents in Ogden Dunes in recent years. One was for an incident March 2, 2012 at 4:45a.m. reporting that a deer ran in to the side of the Ogden Dunes police squad car. Little or no damage was inflicted to the auto. Two other redacted reports reflected accidents that resulted in much more significant damage. An accident on April 13, 2014, around 1:40a.m., resulted in the rollover of the involved- vehicle. The driver only suffered a small cut on the hand. In that report the driver stated that he had looked at his cell phone and when he looked up, there was a deer in the road and he swerved to avoid the deer. The auto then rolled over off the side of a driveway. Another accident report dated May 24, 2014, involved a hit and run incident that occurred around 2a.m. The report indicated that vehicle 1, V1, had struck another vehicle, V2, and V1 left the scene. V2 had been parked off of the road. Further investigation by the Ogden Dunes Police Department led to a statement by the driver of V1 that the driver left the road to avoid a deer in the roadway and struck V2. The driver of V1 sustained a small cut on a thumb.

Recently on Facebook, a resident on Ogden Road related that her dog was let out in to the back yard and the dog was attacked by a deer.

There are a number of young persons who enjoy skate boarding down some of our hills to see how far they can go. If a deer popped out in front of them, it could be ugly. The same would be true of bike riders, of any age. Chris Lehmann, son of Scott and Joanne Lehmann, was knocked off of his bicycle a number of years ago, suffering cuts and bruises.

Information Concerning Costs and Donations Received Pertaining to the Deer Culls

See Schedule C for a schedule of costs and donations received for the past three culls as compiled by the Clerk Treasurer of Ogden Dunes.

By and far, the largest expense has been to defend the legal challenges to the permits issued by the DNR.

A donation fund was established in 2012 to allow voluntary contributions to be received by the Town to help offset the costs of conducting the culls. This fund was not established until after the 2011-2012 cull. The schedule shows the costs of processing to provide donations of venison to the Portage Township Food Pantry. For the last two culls, the costs were completely covered by donations, either by those marked for that purpose or by donations that were listed as undesignated.

In total, for the last two culls, \$10,600 was voluntarily and generously contributed to help offset the cost to the Town for administering the culls. That \$10,600 covered all of the costs for the last two culls when legal expenses are excluded.

The Ogden Dunes culls resulted in 1,037 one-pound packages of lean ground venison being donated to the Portage Township Food Pantry. These 1,037 pounds could make 4,000 quarter-pound burgers. Mixing in 1,000 pounds of ground beef could allow the making of 8,000 quarter-pound burgers.

Potential Deer Over-Population Without Culls

Schedule D is a schedule of the pregnancy rates revealed by IDNL research on their culls.

Autopsies revealed a pregnancy rate of 1.55 per doe for all does. For those does that were found to be pregnant, the rate was 1.91.

Applying the 1.55 rate to the number of does taken during the Ogden Dunes culls, those 60 does would have potentially delivered 93 more deer in the springs following their respective cull year. Subsequent springs would have resulted in another round of births, and so on. This does not reflect the natural mortality rates. This analysis does demonstrate a potential for serious increases in the numbers of deer in the area if measures are not taken to control the size of the herds.

Nutrients and White-tailed Deer

'The Journal of Wildlife Management', Volume 20, July, 1956, Number 3, contains an article entitled:

NUTRIENT REQUIREMENTS FOR GROWTH AND ANTLER DEVELOPMENT IN THE WHITE-TAILED DEER.

This article reflected the results of a study of a cooperative effort of several groups and the Department of Zoology and Entomology of Pennsylvania State University. This study was done using controlled deer and twenty 12 x 28 foot pens, each suitable for two deer. Food was controlled, measured and involved different mixtures of nutrients, vitamins and minerals.

One of the experiments started with fawns. By the end of the first year, October 1953, the research reflected that two pounds of high quality food was required daily for a deer weighing 50-60 pounds, 3-4 pounds for a 100-pound deer, and 5-6 pounds for a 150-pound deer. These amounts of high quality food permitted excellent growth and development. Equating this high quality food to good quality native deer browse containing greater moisture content would easily require twice the poundage of natural browse material.

Another study dealt with males and antler development. Males were found to lose weight during the rutting season and gain weight subsequently. In regards to deer that were two years old in the spring of 1954, research found that those weighing 150-200 pounds required daily amounts of 4-5 pounds of good quality food for maintenance and weight gain. This would translate to 8-10 pounds of good quality deer browse with higher moisture content per day.

Deer Cull Litigation

Challenges have occurred to each of the past three Ogden Dunes cull permits issued by the DNR. None of those challenges to the DNR or the Natural Resources Commission were successful.

The challenge to the permit for the 2013-2014 was carried to the furthest point beyond which the claimants would have had to file in court. The claimants did not seek relief in court. The first hearing was on November 22, 2013. On November 27, 2013 the administrative law judge entered a "Final Order of Dismissal with Denial of Claimants Request". The claimants did not attend the last hearing of their challenge which was held in Indianapolis on April 23, 2014, before the Natural Resources Commission acting under the Administrative Orders and Procedures Act, **AOPA**. The AOPA Committee on April 24, 2014 issued the "FINDINGS OF FACT AND CONCLUSION OF LAW WITH FINAL ORDER" wherein the DNR permit is affirmed. Paragraph 60 of that order states the claimants had not sustained their burden of proof. The claimants had provided no evidence by which the Commission could deny the permit. Paragraph 60 states the core deficiency is that the claimants are either unable or unwilling to accept that the burden of proof rests with them and not the Town or the DNR. Paragraph 61 states the unrefuted evidence supports issuance of the Special Permit.

The full AOPA report of April 24, 2014 is attached.

Respectfully submitted:

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