

SUMMARY REPORT ON DEER MANAGEMENT RESULTS

FROM 2011-2012 TO 2014-2015.

AUGUST 2015

The last town council recognized that there was a severe overpopulation of deer in our town and began the first efforts to address the issue despite opposition. Making this most difficult choice addressed all the concerns of all citizens in our town, A BASIC RESPONSIBILITY OF GOOD GOVERNMENT. It was a beginning effort in addressing an out of balance eco system that threatened the health and safety of our citizens. It initiated a broad based conservation management effort that targeted the reduction of damage to gardens and native plants and trees, a reduced risk for automobile and bicycle accidents, a reduced risk for Lyme disease and a genuine concern for the health of the deer population as well.

Four years later and with the cooperative efforts from the NATIONAL PARK SERVICE for the last two years, a total of 178 deer have been culled; 107 in Ogden Dunes, (17 this year) and 71 (51 this year) in the West Beach area north of US 12 and east Of County line road. A flyover in March to assess the results showed that the population had been reduced to a level that meets suggested numbers (8-15) for A Town of our land size (approximately 3/4 sq. mile according to 2010 census.).

Given the results and anecdotally observed significant reduction in garden, native plants, tree and bush damage, and overall noticeably

healthier animals, it is suggested that any consideration for a Cull for this coming season not be pursued.

However, it is very important that this issue must remain on the radar for all future Councils. This problem will be a continuous one as long as we are surrounded by our National Park. It is also important that we all do not feed these animals and thus contribute to and encourage a resurgence of large #'s of deer in our town. It is suggested and recommended that each year we again join in a combined fly over with NPS, Beverly Shores, Dune Acres and any other interested government/private entity. This can be done with donated funds. If over population begins to occur again, a short season and a small # of animals harvested can keep the problem from becoming so severe, like it has been. A continued and positive relationship with NPS is also needed. Our responsibility must be to manage and maintain a balance in our eco system in our unique and especially blessed community.

Finally, please keep in mind that the 4 year effort provided over 4,000 basic meals from over 1000 lbs. of donated venison to very needy people at the Portage food bank who were very grateful and thankful for the food. All went to human consumption.