

WESTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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MEMORANDUM

TO: WESTON SELECT BOARD
FROM: JORDAN MCCARRON, WESTON CONSERVATION ADMINISTRATOR
SUBJECT: 2022 DEER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM SUMMARY
DATE: MARCH 14, 2022 (APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION 2-28-2022)

Weston Conservation Commission has completed the 11th year of its Deer Management Program. This multifaceted program includes studying the effects of deer on Weston's forests, educating residents on Lyme disease and deer tick prevention, and reducing the deer population to ecologically appropriate levels.

The Conservation Commission has established several vegetation monitoring programs to assess the long-term effects of deer browse on Weston's forests. A total of ten deer exclosures are being monitored to study the long-term impacts of deer over-browse.

Below, please find the summary from the 2022 hunting season, and our recommendations for 2023.

Results based on Hunter Log Database

- The following properties were open to regulated hunting: Blaney Aquifer, Case Estates/Chestnut Street Conservation Area, Coburn Meadows, College Pond Conservation Area, Dickson Fields, Doublet Hill, Highland Forest, Jericho Town Forest, MWRA's Norumbega Reservoir, Ogilvie Town Forest, Old Road, Trailside Conservation Land, Sears Land, and Wellington Farm.
- A total of 43 deer were harvested from 45 hunters – 21 does and 23 bucks; this is up from 30 deer harvested during the 2021 season.
- A more typical year in terms of deer observations, indicating a return to adequate acorns/mast in the forest.
- Hunters donated a total of 71 hours of land management work clearing trails, installing and removing temporary hunting signage, looking for illegal deer stands, picking up trash and litter, removing debris from the Hobbs Pond Dam, and participating in Stewardship Saturday program.
- Other wildlife observed by hunters included red-tailed hawk, barred owl, fisher, coyotes, red fox, turkey, chipmunks, bobcat, and squirrels.
- Hunter/resident interaction – Hunters reported numerous positive interactions with residents.

Other 2022 Deer Population Impacts

- 20 deer-car collisions were reported to the Weston Police Dept.
- According to the MA Div. of Fisheries and Wildlife, 13 additional deer were harvested on private land in Weston.

Cause of Deer Mortality in Weston	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Deer/car collisions ⁱ	26	24	23	34	28	22	20	17	21	22	24	20
Deer harvested on conservation land	N/A	18	20	25	26	32	29	35	40	45	30	43
Deer harvested on private land	12	18	22	19	14	19	22	18	8	11	14	13
Total	38	60	65	78	68	73	71	70	69	78	70	76

Conservation Land	Huntable acres	# hunters	# deer harvested in 2022
Blaney Aquifer	23	2	3
Case Estates/Chestnut Street	15	3	0
Coburn Meadows	5	1	1
College Pond Conservation Area	70	2	0
Dickson Fields	23	3	4
Doublet Hill	24	2	1
Highland Forest	203	5	2
Jericho Town Forest	572	14	14
Norumbega Reservoir (MWRA)	50	2	5
Ogilvie Town Forest	197	5	9
Old Road	5	1	1
Sears Land	87	2	1
Trailside	13	2	1
Wellington Farm	4	1	1
Total	1,291	45	43

Conservation Commission Recommendation for 2023

The Commission deems that the program, including preparation, implementation, and follow-up, continues to be successful. Over the course of 11 years, 343 deer have been harvested on town conservation land (and an additional 190 on private land).

ⁱ Only collisions reported to the Weston Police Dept. are noted here. In general, car insurance companies don't require a police report to be filed and therefore, many deer-car collisions are not reported to the Police Dept.