



Harvard Deer Management Program

Harvard Conservation Commission has approved a Deer Management Plan designed to protect Harvard's forests and human health

Public Forums: Thursdays 10/17 & 10/24, 7pm, Town Hall

The Harvard Conservation Commission Deer Management Program is:

NEEDED:

- Overabundant deer hurt native tree/plant diversity and songbird populations
- Harvard forests are impacted by deer overpopulation
 - 11 Harvard forests surveyed by Mass Dept. of Fish & Wildlife
- Harvard deer population on track to double over the next 10 years
- Deer are the primary host for reproduction of disease-bearing ticks
- Deer are a major food source for mosquitos that transmit EEE & West Nile viruses
- Unchecked deer population: no primary predators - wolf/cougar gone since 1800s

SAFE:

- Isolated to clearly marked selected conservation lands
- Archery-only, off-trail, 75 ft maximum effective range
- Setback restriction: 500 ft from houses, 150 ft from roads
 - Most neighboring states have zero-300 ft setbacks
- Controlled permit process: limited numbers, state license, safety class, marksmanship test & interview required
- Zero non-hunter archery injuries in MA state history
- 8 MA towns plus MassAudubon & Trustees of Reservations properties have run controlled archery programs over past decade without injury or incident
- Majority of MA towns have open hunting on conservation lands - no injuries

EFFECTIVE:

- Forest regeneration improvement (1,140% increase under Quabbin Reservoir deer management program, running since 1990s)
- Deer-vehicle collisions down in Weston (program began 2012)
- Deer management has reduced ticks and tick-borne illness
- Illegal hunters (some currently in Harvard forests) often reported and removed via deer management programs
- No cost to town

- Hunter license fees support conservation

- All harvest used for carbon-neutral, environmentally-friendly, local, organic food

Deer Management Subcommittee

More information, including our Final Report, on the town website via www.harvard-deer.com