

Source

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TO: City Council
FROM: City Manager and Staff 
DATE: July 25 2006
RE: Bow Hunting on City Property

SUMMARY:

This report is a reminder of the approaching deer bow hunting season and the City Ordinance that permits bow hunting on seven (7) City owned properties.

DISCUSSION:

The City Ordinance that established an archery deer hunting program was passed by Council in August, 2004 in response to numerous resident communications related to safety and property damage caused by deer as well as many deer-vehicle collisions. The program established guidelines to be followed by anyone wishing to bow hunt for deer on permitted City property, including the requirement for hunters to attend an orientation and registration session prior to the start of bow hunting season. During this session, hunters are made aware of the rules and regulations, the list of available properties where hunting is permitted and designated parking areas. Those attending are given a card to be displayed in their vehicle along with a permit to be carried to show that they have permission to hunt on City property. Hunters are also required to follow all Department of Conservation regulations.

Currently bow hunting for deer is allowed at the following City properties:

1. Sanitary Landfill
2. Grindstone Nature Area
3. Twin Lakes
4. Sewer Utility property on Strawn Road
5. Sewer Utility property on the SW corner of Waco and Brown Station Roads*
6. Sewer Utility property on Coats Lane*, and
7. Sewer Utility property on Bainbridge Lane*.

*(Sewer Utility properties 5, 6 and 7 shown above were added in 2005.)

In 2004, approximately 24 deer were harvested from the original four properties where hunting was allowed. This number increased to approximately 33 in 2005. Obtaining accurate numbers is difficult as it is a self-reporting program where hunters are encouraged to call the Missouri Department of Conservation when a deer is taken. There have been very few, if any complaints from neighboring residents since this program

Fiscal Impact

YES

NO

Other Info.

was established. Last year the only complaint received was from a hunter who had his stand stolen at Grindstone Park.. According to John George with the Missouri Department of Conservation, Columbia has instituted a successful urban deer management program, one which will be featured in a *Conservationist* article this summer or fall. In 2004, over 170 hunters signed up for the program, a number which increased to over 240 last year.

City staff met with John George earlier this month to review the list of properties where hunting is currently permitted. It was the consensus of the group to not add any additional locations at this time. Councilman Loveless has suggested taking a more aggressive approach and that the City staff look at the possibility of adding Longview Park, Smith-Manhasset Park, the Russell property and Nifong Park to the list of approved sites. Staff has evaluated all four locations as follows:

Longview Park- This is a ten acre neighborhood park that is currently undeveloped. The entire property is an open field so we do not think it would be very attractive for hunters. There are deer in the area but we feel most stay on the sewer treatment plant property. Numerous houses back up to Longview on the west whose owners may not be very receptive to hunters

Smith-Manhasset Park - Construction is currently on-going on this 10 acre site. We would recommend that it not be opened for hunting.

Russell Property - This is a large tract with lots of deer. We know that there are a lot of hunters interested in hunting this site as we often receive vocal complaints from neighbors about illegal hunting occurring on the property. It has been staff's opinion that the surrounding neighborhood would be strongly opposed to opening this site to hunting.

Nifong Park - The wooded portion of the park does have deer and might be suitable for limited hunting. During the month of September there are usually several events occurring in the park including the three day Heritage Festival with thousands of attendees. October is a very popular month for school kids to visit the Park and County Museum. One possibility might be to open Nifong to hunting only after the first of November. Use of the park drops substantially after that time.

Hunter orientation/registration sessions have been scheduled at the ARC for 8:30 a.m., Saturday, August 26th along with two sessions on Tuesday, August 29th at 3:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. The bow hunting season begins on Friday, September 15th, 2006.

SUGGESTED COUNCIL ACTION:

Staff are not recommending any changes to the list of City properties for bow hunting deer. If Council would like to add or delete from the list of permitted sites, they should instruct staff to prepare an amendment to the Ordinance for introduction at its next meeting. If changes are approved, all hunters signed up for the program will need to be notified.