

Meeting notes of HVDMTF – April 28, 2010

Five interested residents were in attendance and contributed to the conversations:

Hannah Sothers – biologist

Nora Sirbaugh – Environmental Commission, master gardener,

Bob Holmes – master gardener

Ed Smatter (sp?)– doctor

Chuck Noona, hunter

Mike Van Clef discussed the results of the count – averaging 37 deer per square mile. Mike explained the method used as distance sampling and we should be aware that this count was done at the lowest point before birthing. According to Mike, the count should be 10 to 20 per square mile, which would require a 70% reduction. We should repeat this count once every three years. Also discussed was the newspaper article that resulted from the count.

Hannah stated her observations of losing forest diversity at the Bird Sanctuary on Featherbed Lane, which she attributes to deer foraging.

Mike answered a question regarding the potential count after birthing by saying that Duke Farms has a formula that says we could have as many as 54 per square mile at that time.

The average number of deer killed in a hunt is 1100, which does not account for those killed using depredation permits. It was mentioned that bow hunting is not allowed for depredation permit hunting.

Cross-bow hunting is now legal in NJ.

Hunterdon County Park System has an annual culling program. Chuck mentioned Montgomery Township's donation program. He will provide Denise with contact information.

Nora brought up the life cycle of deer and it was agreed that it would be a great topic for a future article.

Denise and Bill brought to the group's attention a letter received by the township from a resident expressing her concern over trapping done on a task force member's farm. Bill spoke to the member's son who said that while trapping had been done by a professional trapper for a couple of years, none was done this past year. Denise will reach out to the resident to discuss her concerns and to determine the source of her information.

There will be 5000 copies of the questionnaire printed, 2000 of which will go out with the senior advisory newsletter. Francesca suggested the Pennington Market as another site to hand out the questionnaires.

We will put the NJ Fish and Wildlife hunt map and the deer count map on our website along with Jim and Mike's article on the count.

The next meetings are scheduled on Wednesday, May 26, 2010 at 7pm at the township building and Wednesday, June 30th, 7pm at the township building.