

9/18/09

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PPOA White-tailed Deer Population Control Recommendation:

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Over the last decade the population of white-tailed deer inside Pecan Plantation has increased to well above the habitat's carrying capacity. This is evident by the severe browse damage to native plants, casual observations, deer browsing on ornamental plants, vehicle collisions and recent deer surveys. Many homeowners inside Pecan Plantation have expressed concern as the deer population numbers continue to rise. In response the Wildlife Committee has organized a group of concerned individuals to address the deer population issues and explore control measures.

Three daytime white-tailed deer surveys were conducted in the August-September time frame. These surveys were conducted by six teams that were assigned routes inside the residential areas (PPOA property). Each team consisted of four individuals, one driver, one data recorded and two observers.

Keeping deer-related damages and habitat carrying capacity in mind, the absolute maximum deer density inside Pecan Plantation should be 10-15 acres per deer. The current population is at 4.36 acres per deer (see Table 1).

Carter P. Smith
Executive Director

Table 1:

Date	Deer Observed					Acres Sampled	Acres Per Deer
	Bucks	Does	Fawns	Unidentified	Total		
8/27/2009	90	382	195	24	691	2,900	4.20
9/3/2009	64	315	147	40	566	2,900	5.12
9/10/2009	94	448	179	19	740	2,900	3.92

Estimated Population on 4,500 Acres	
Bucks: 134	Acres/Deer: 4.36
Does: 618	Does/Buck: 4.62
Fawns: 281	Fawns/Doe: 0.46
Total: 1,033	

Population Control Recommendations

Optimum:

Bucks	Does	Total
50	350	400

Minimum:

Bucks	Does	Total
25	275	300

This recommendation is based on the survey numbers in Table 1. The total area within the Brazos River boundary is +/- 4,500 acres. The 2,900 PPOA property was surveyed and the 1,600 pecan orchard was not. The estimate was based on the 2,900 PPOA property survey where the density was on average 4.36 acres per deer. These are visible deer recorded on the surveys and a minimum number of animals that frequent/reside on the PPOA property. Therefore, this is a conservative estimate. It is evident that the overall density is well above maximum carrying capacity

The optimum recommendation of 400 total deer will lower your post-removal adult population to 7 acres per deer. The ultimate goal should be to reduce the deer population to a natural free ranging estimate for Hood/Johnson counties to 25-30 acres per deer. The removal of 300 deer may only have a slight effect, and most likely will require a large number of deer to be removed next year. The reason for that is there is an estimated 281 fawns in the population. If we assume 100% fawn recruitment into the population (the animals that reach 1 year of age) one could assume that if you only took 281 animals you would effectively just stopping production for 1 year.

My recommendation is to:

- *Seek and utilize a Texas Parks and Wildlife Department issued Trap, Transport and Process Permit to remove excess white-tailed deer from the population. Removed animals then should be donated to an organization that will feed needy families in North Texas.


- *Continue to monitor the population with surveys in the August-September time frame.

- *Control white-tailed deer numbers on an annual basis until a desired post harvest/post-removal population size is reached.

- *Focus removal efforts in the high deer density areas as shown on the recent surveys.

- *Prohibit the feeding of white-tailed deer on PPOA property.

Prepared By:


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Deer Survey #1 Pecan Plantation
Thursday August 27, 2009 8am-10am
Rainy, 76 °F

Bucks/Does/Fawns/Unknown/Total

Team #1 Westwood	7	40	7	0	54
Team #2 Bellechase	18	43	23	0	84
Team #3 Airpark	15	89	44	0	148
Team #4 Plantation Dr	36	108	81	13	238
Team #5 Retreat, Monticello	4	60	27	0	91
Team #6 Ravenswood	10	42	13	11	76
Totals	90	382	195	24	691
% of Total	13%	55%	28%	4%	

Deer Survey #2 Pecan Plantation
Thursday September 03, 2009 8am-10am
Sunny, 83°F

Bucks/Does/Fawns/Unknown/Total

Team #1 Westwood	2	15	1	3	21
Team #2 Bellechase	6	34	7	1	48
Team #3 Airpark	14	48	35	0	97
Team #4 Plantation Dr	16	81	33	0	130
Team #5 Retreat, Monticello	12	68	47	32	159
Team #6 Ravenswood	14	69	24	4	111
Totals	64	315	147	40	566
% of Total	11%	56%	26%	7%	

Deer Survey #3 Pecan Plantation
Thursday September 10, 2009 4pm-6pm
Sunny, 89°F

Bucks/Does/Fawns/Unknown/Total

Team #1 Westwood	4	10	2	0	16
Team #2 Bellechase	15	53	21	0	89
Team #3 Airpark	12	59	34	0	105
Team #4 Plantation Dr	10	84	33	4	131
Team #5 Retreat, Monticello	15	120	42	4	181
Team #6 Ravenswood	38	122	47	11	218
Totals	94	448	179	19	740
% of Total	13%	61%	24%	2%	