



City of Rawlins Deer Management Plan

Mission Statement

The City of Rawlins Police Department will work cooperatively with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department to recommend a plan with various control alternatives to present to the City of Rawlins Council to consider that would achieve a deer density at acceptable levels per square mile of habitat to foster a healthy deer herd and still maintain enough deer for all to see and enjoy.

Purpose

Rawlins City Council has tasked staff to consider ways to handle the deer population in the City of Rawlins. One of the considerations is a lethal reduction program to address the local urban deer population, the City of Rawlins Police Department and City Manager have been asked to draft a preliminary operational plan, first year budget and to pursue the Chapter 56 permit from the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

Goals:

- Maintain public safety at all times while conducting deer management operations.
- Manage the urban deer population as determined appropriate by the Rawlins City Council, under the regulation of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.
- Utilize effective, humane methods and safe methods in the management of the urban deer population.
- Provide interested citizens with venison from harvested deer that have been disease tested so the animals are not wasted.

Procedures

Legal authority lies with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department to manage wildlife in Wyoming, under their authority they may issue Chapter 56 permits. The permit, if granted, would specify the number of deer to be taken in a given timeframe and list additional conditions and direction imposed by Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

The Rawlins Police Department would be utilized for the systematic lethal culling of the City of Rawlins urban deer population. Selected members of the Rawlins Police Department participating in the deer reduction program will be trained in the administrative procedures required and in firearms proficiency with the selected firearm and equipment to be utilized.

Method the Rawlins Police Department will utilize police officers trained in the administrative and operational procedures unique to this program. The basic process would comply with the procedures

outlined in the Chapter 56 permit issued under the authority of the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. This may include the managed culling of the Urban Deer population located within Rawlins. The biological samples for Chronic Wasting Disease testing would be collected, and the deer will be donated to interested citizens for processing and consumption pending the outcome of the CWD testing.

Training participating officers will complete training specific to this program. Topics will include administrative reporting requirements under the Chapter 56 Permit and as determined by the Rawlins Police Department, field dressing, skinning and biological sampling for CWD testing, distribution of harvested deer to interested citizens, and firearms competency with the selected equipment.

Manpower the Rawlins Police Department will utilize as a minimum two officer teams to harvest deer. The primary officer will serve as the safety officer, while the secondary will operate the firearm. The role of the Safety officer will be to maintain watch of the surrounding area and background as the first officer prepares to fire the weapon.

The Rawlins Police Department will utilize animal control officers to assist with management, operations, scouting / monitoring deer activity, and with establishing access to privately owned land as needed.

Site Selection keeping the goal of public safety in mind, the locations selected to harvest deer are of primary importance. The following are some considerations:

- Permission, sites will either be city owned land or on private land with the owner's permission (Note: deer will not be harvested on public roadways, or from any land that is not owned by the City of Rawlins without the permission of the landowner or their authorized agent.
- Background, sites will provide a clear/safe background to allow the use of firearms.
- Each site that is selected for the operation will have a day time safety evaluation conducted by Rawlins Police Department personnel. Operational plans will be developed for each selected location.
- Effectiveness, effort will be made to identify and use sites in problem areas.

Equipment the department will primarily utilize an tactical style rifle that is commonly issued as a patrol rifle. The department will use .223 caliber soft point ammunition, or other select firearms determined or allowed under the Chapter 56 permit. .

The rifle will be suppressed to minimize the sound of gunshots in city limits and to ensure discrete operations.

A low magnification optic will be utilized to aid with accurate shot placement.

If operations occur after dark, night vision or thermal imagers will be used by the safety officer to ensure there is a clear background and field of fire.

Public Safety the Rawlins Police Department will not discount public safety in the name of reducing the urban deer population. There is inherent risk in discharging firearms within city limits. Public safety will not be compromised. With proper site selection, day time safety evaluations, the oversight of a safety officer, and ultimately the decision of the officer to discharge the firearm, public safety will be maintained.

Ethics taking the life of an animal is a serious matter and every effort should be made to take only well placed, effective shots, so as to quickly and humanely dispatch the deer. In the event that a deer is wounded, every effort will be made to follow up and recover the deer in a safe and humane manner.

Transportation of the harvested deer will be through the use of the animal control vehicles, deer will be covered and out of the view of the public during transport.

Distribution of Deer will be made available to local citizens in the following manner. Harvested, field dressed and skinned deer will be available to citizens who agree to process them or pay for processing of the animal. These animals will only be released upon completion of Chronic Wasting Disease Testing CWD. Interested citizens will be able to submit a deer harvest request form to the City of Rawlins. Interested citizens may be required to complete and comply with an affidavit of informed consent regarding CWD testing, which requires they do not consume, or allow others to consume venison from harvested deer until test results are available.

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) testing once a deer is killed, Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) testing will occur by collecting a biological sample from the deer, and submitting the sample to the Wyoming Game and Fish Department for testing. Results are typically available within 3 days. The Rawlins Police Department will not release harvested deer until results are returned from Wyoming Game and Fish Department. Any deer testing positive for CWD will be disposed of properly.

Processing of the harvested deer it will be the recipients responsible to pay for processing or process the animal themselves. Rawlins Police Department will release the animal after testing for CWD is completed and negative results are returned. The City of Rawlins will not be responsible for processing.

Administrative reporting for each deer harvested will be tagged and documented in accordance with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department's Chapter 56 permit system. Each harvested deer will be documented with a Rawlins Police Department form designed to record the details of each harvest. A final, end of season report will be completed in compliance with the Chapter 56 Permit. Overtime reports will be completed to document and track wages associated with the program. In addition any additional costs associated with the program will be tracked in accordance with the City of Rawlins purchasing policy.

Program Review, On-going Evaluation and Future Considerations

Review and monitoring of the program will be ongoing, items of future consideration include:

- Cost per deer taken evaluation
- Citizen satisfaction survey
- Partnering with faith based and non-profit organizations to process and donate harvested deer to those in need.
- Update City of Rawlins Website, city social media sites with program details and information.