



Salida Urban Deer Task Force Recommendations

Members:

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- **Mission**

- Response to Debate regarding Urban Deer Herd
 - Research Current Urban Deer Herd Situation
 - Provide 3-4 Recommendations
 - Pro's, Cons, Cost of Implementation
 - Include the Option of “Do Nothing”

- **Meeting History**

- Regular Meetings on Monday Evening

- Understanding of Deer Habits and Dynamics
 - Understanding of Public Sentiment Urban Deer
 - Understanding of Colorado Parks and Wildlife Policies (Special thanks to Jim Aragon)

- Deer are Responsibility of Colorado Parks and Wildlife

- Most Recommendations Would Need Colorado Parks and Wildlife Approval Before Proceeding.

- Recommendations

- Many Were Discussed
 - Those not Brought Forward to City Council are covered in Recommendation Document

• Salida Urban Deer Herd

- Deer Herd That Does not Leave the Salida City Limits
 - Size - TBD
- All of Life's Necessities are Provided in Town
 - Abundant Food Supply
 - Some are Being Fed – **Illegal**
 - Shelter From Weather
 - No Predators Within City Limits
 - Other Colorado Cities are Seeing Predator Increase

- **Urban Deer Benefits**

- Lovely to Look At
- Free Fertilizer
- Tourist Attraction

- **Urban Deer Concerns**

- Landscape Destruction Due to Deer Grazing
 - Deer Herd Browse on Landscape Bushes and Plants
 - Will Eat Plants on Patios and Decks
 - Will Even Eat “Deer Resistant” Plants
- Concern Regarding Deer Droppings
 - Increasing Urban Herd = Increased Deer Droppings
 - Well-being Concern for Homeowners and Children
 - Homeowner Property, City Parks
- Safety Concerns Regarding Deer Health/Human Interactions
 - Less Tolerant Behavior Towards Citizens of Salida During Mating Season “Rut” and Once Fawns are Born (Spring, Summer, Fall)

Recommendation #1

Public Education & Awareness

- Recommendations:
 - Mountain Mail Column
 - Provided by a Volunteer or Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW)
 - Develop Information Pamphlet
 - Sent to City Households, Posted Around Town
 - Chamber of Commerce, Motels, Real Estate Offices.
 - Increase Deer Signage on Trails and Areas of Heavy Herd Traffic.
- Issues Addressed:
 - Deer Eating Shrubs and Flowers
 - Deer Dropping Health Concerns
 - Actual or Perceived Safety Issues

Recommendation #1

Public Education & Awareness

- Pro's
 - Increase Human Awareness,
 - Decrease Enticing Habitat
 - Change Human Behavior to Avoid Dangerous Confrontations
 - No Negative Political Feedback
 - Good Community Building
 - Aligned with Colorado Parks and Wildlife Awareness/Education Efforts
- Con's
 - None

Recommendation #1

Public Education & Awareness

- Cost
 - Brochure: \$1,000
 - Direct Mailing \$1,500
 - Signage
 - Graphic Design and Content - \$2,500 per sign;
 - Outdoor Durable Free-Standing Signs - \$160 per 18" x 24" Panel
 - 24" x 36" Panel - \$240
 - 5 One-Panel Signs - \$13,300 - \$13,700.

Recommendation 2

Support CPW Deer Management Strategy

- Recommendation:
 - Colorado Parks and Wildlife Strategy
 - Increased Number of Hunting Permits
 - Outside City Limits of Buena Vista and Salida
 - Control the Number of Deer Migrating Into the Cities.
 - Program Appears to be Meeting Objectives
 - High Level of Cooperation Between CPW and Private Land Owners.

Recommendation 2

Support CPW Deer Management Strategy

- Issues Addressed:
 - Deer Eating Shrubs and Flowers
 - Deer Dropping Health Concerns
 - Actual or Perceived Safety Issues
- Pros:
 - CPW Already has a Program in Place to Curb Deer Migration into the City.
 - Potential Reduction of Deer Herd due to Urban Deer Wandering out into Hunting Zones
- Cons:
 - None
- Cost to implement
 - None

Recommendation 3

Deer Count/Community Survey

- Recommendation:
 - Collect Info Regarding Residents' Opinion
 - Whether or Not Bothered by Deer
 - More Accurate Information Regarding Herd
 - How Many and Where They Reside.
- Issue Addressed by Solution:
 - Not Enough Input From Residents.
 - Not Enough Knowledge About the Size of the City Deer Herd.

Recommendation 3

Deer Count/Community Survey

- Pros:

- Community Survey
 - Multiple Options for Gathering Information
 - Mailed to Salida Households (2,931 when the City Surveyed Last Year)
 - Online
 - Obtained in Key Locales Around the City.
- Deer Count
 - Colorado Parks and Wildlife in Salida Interested in Helping Coordinate
 - A Deer Count Could Involve Many Citizens (Similar to a Bird Count) and Raise Public Awareness.
 - Determine if Deer Population is Located in only Certain Areas
- Information Could Help the City Determine Which, if any, Recommendations to Pursue.
- Potential College or High School Class/Individual Project

Recommendation 3

Deer Count/Community Survey

- Cons:
 - Expenditure of City funds to Conduct Survey and/or Count.
 - Someone/Organization Would have to Coordinate the Deer Count.
 - Possible Complaints about Expense for a Survey.
- Cost:
 - **Survey** – Printing and Mailing Costs - Approx \$4,000.
 - **Deer Count** – Advertising Cost to Recruit Volunteers.
 - City Could Tally the Results and Publish.

Recommendation 4

Birth Control for Urban Does

- Recommendation:
 - Doe Captured, Tagged, and Inoculated with Birth Control Vaccine
 - **PZP - Developed at Tufts University**
 - Safe for Deer, Predators and Human Consumption
 - Effectively Used to Reduce White-tailed Deer at Fire Island National Seashore in NY.
 - **GonaCon - Developed at the National Wildlife Research Center in Ft. Collins**
 - Safe for Deer, Predators and Human Consumption
 - Also Prevents Mating Behavior.
 - Multi-year, Single Injection Contraception.
 - Approved by the EPA
 - Successfully Field Tested in Silver Springs, MD
 - Bald Head Island, NC - Six year Effectiveness Project

Recommendation 4

Birth Control for Urban Does

- Issues Addressed:
 - Deer Eating Shrubs and Flowers
 - Deer Dropping Health Concerns
 - Actual or Perceived Safety Issues
- Pros:
 - Humane and Effective Reduction of Urban Deer Population
 - Vaccinated Does Tend to Keep Other Deer out of Their “Territory.”
 - Community Solution - Not an Individual Solution.
 - GonaCon Project Leader Interested in Doing a Pilot Study in Salida
 - Will Apply for Grant to Fund Project.
- Cons:
 - Will Require Study, and Extensive Work to Develop and Implement
 - Must be Approved by the CPW and the State Wildlife Commission
- Cost to implement
 - GonaCon - TBD

Possible Solutions Considered, But Not Recommended - 1

- "Do Nothing."
 - City Council Decision to Literally “Do Nothing”.
- Pro's:
 - Easy to implement
 - Possible short term solution until we have community consensus on other options.
- Con's:
 - Will do nothing to address what is believed to be a growing community problem.
 - Lead to Implementation of Individual Benefit Solutions
 - Waiting to implement solutions could worsen the problem
 - Public outcry that the city is unwilling or unable to find solutions.

Possible Solutions Considered, But Not Recommended - 2

- In-town Harvesting.

- Summary:

- Professional or licensed sharp shooters (or bow hunters)
- Contracted by the city to cull the urban herd.

- Pro's:

- Short term, the herd would be reduced.
- Meat from harvested animals could be distributed.

- Con's:

- Inhumane Treatment of Animals.
- Huge Public Outcry.
- Safety and Legal Issues Associated with use of Weapons in Town.
- Studies in Other Places Indicate Lack of Success in Long-Term Reduction of Herd Numbers.

Possible Solutions Considered, But Not Recommended - 3

- Dog Herding.
 - Trained Dogs Used to Herd the Deer Out of Town.
- Pro's:
 - Possible short term herd reduction without killing.
- Con's:
 - This method is designed for rural, not urban areas.
 - Little indication that deer would not return soon.
 - Difficulty in finding or training the dogs.
 - It is illegal in the City to allow dogs to chase deer.

Possible Solutions Considered, But Not Recommended - 4

- Eliminating the Dog Leash Law.
 - Eliminate current leash laws, and let the dogs chase the deer away.
- Pro's:
 - Effective way of running the deer out of town, and thus, reducing the urban deer herd.
- Con's:
 - Safety issues and serious danger of injury to deer, dogs, and people.
 - Danger of having bands of dogs roaming the city.
 - Currently illegal (CPW)

Possible Solutions Considered, But Not Recommended - 5

- Sterilization

- Perform ovariectomy (remove ovaries) of does.
 - Requires darting (tranquilizing) does
 - performing brief surgery in a mobile unit.
- Probably a multi-year program before all does are treated.
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- Pros:
 - It's permanent and only has to be performed once.
 - Conducted over a 3 year period in at least 2 eastern communities with complete coverage of the doe population.
 - Method is compatible with humane society goals – spaying.
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Possible Solutions Considered, But Not Recommended – (5b)

- Cons:
 - Requires qualified vets/vet techs to perform surgeries
 - Not currently being done in Colorado
 - Risk of death to the deer Due to intensive hands-on process.
 - Logistics are complicated – Requires lots of people helping.
 - Would take community education to be acceptable.
 - Would require State Wildlife Commission approval.
- Cost:
 - In the Baltimore area, in the 3 year operation mentioned above, costs were \$1,200- \$1,300 per doe
 - Dropped to \$500/doe w/ More volunteers

Possible Solutions Considered, But Not Recommended - 6

- Trap and Transplant

- This method involves trapping deer in problem areas and moving them somewhere else.

- Pro's:

- High availability of release sites outside of Salida.
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife already has a program in place to curb deer migration back into the City.

Possible Solutions Considered, But Not Recommended – (6b)

- Con's:
 - High Mortality
 - Approximately 4% of the deer die in transport.
 - 25% of translocated deer die within the first two months
 - More than 85% of deer may not survive longer than one year.
 - High return rate of deer into the City.
 - “Reproduction rebound” occurs – the remaining deer have a higher birth rate.
- Cost:
 - \$400 per deer

Conclusion

- **More information is needed – Information needs to be gathered**
 - **Where are the deer – how big is the herd – travel corridors being used**
- **Need to continue to Educate Salida residents that deer are wild animals**
 - **Need to be respected as such**
- **Need to control the size of the Urban Deer Herd**
 - **Try to control damage being done to property**
 - **Control the potential of serious incident between deer, residents of Salida and pets will increase.**
 - **Salida has the possibility of participating in the USDA-APHIS National Wildlife Research Center pilot study for GonaCon deer contraceptive**
 - **Should not delay the opportunity to take advantage of the Department Of Agriculture's offer to find grant money to fund the project.**