

-Deer Education-

January 16, 2003

Letter to Supervisor William R. Udicious

from Bob Nolan, Monroe County Deputy Director of Communications

Dear Supervisor:

I'm writing you this short note to request that you join in the countywide effort to educate Monroe County's residents about the recently revised New York State Law that prohibits the feeding of deer and makes it an offense to interfere with the natural feeding habitat of deer.

The enclosed press release was disseminated earlier this week and includes information regarding the newly revised state law on feeding deer. It also includes a number of safety tips for drivers in communities with high-density deer populations. Finally, it includes a message urging local officials to seek the cooperation of private landowners within their towns – requesting that they avail their lands to qualified persons for hunting.

I have also attached a summary of the volume of deer-car accidents recorded across the county in 2001. A review of these numbers provides a loose index regarding the deer population density in any given community. (The deer-car accident list enclosed was NOT an attachment to the public press release.)

Please join in this effort to help educate your residents through your personal opportunities with local media, your town newsletters, cable channels or other appropriate means available to you. Your cooperation and assistance is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Bob Nolan
Deputy Director of Communications
Monroe County

DEER MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP APPLAUDS IRONDEQUOIT'S SUCCESSFUL BOW HUNT PROGRAM

Based on recommendations from members of Monroe County's Long Term Deer Management Advisory Task Force, County Executive Jack Doyle today announced that annual efforts to reduce the deer herd in Durand Eastman Park through a 'bait and shoot' program will again be deferred one more winter as a result of the continuing success of the Town of Irondequoit's managed bow hunting program.

1,046 deer have been culled from the park and town properties since the program's inception in 1993. The County's 'bait and shoot' program has taken 876 deer while Irondequoit's bow hunt has culled a total of 370 including 68 deer taken in 201 and 62 taken in 2002. The County's program was deferred last winter and will be deferred again this winter as a result of continuing success of the town's bow hunt.

“Over time, the combined results of these managed efforts have significantly reduced the overpopulated deer herds in Irondequoit,” said Bob Nolan, a representative of the committee and a spokesman for Jack Doyle.

In 1993, the deer populations in Irondequoit were estimated by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to be in excess of 800 in an open range more compatible for 50 to 100 deer. A recent visual spot check by DEC officers counted 121 deer. That count is used as an index only in order to estimate that there are still approximately 250 to 500 deer in the Irondequoit range. The reduction in deer numbers correlates with deer-car accidents in Irondequoit. In 1993, deer-car accidents totaled 167 compared with 48 in 2002.

“While these results are positive, the efforts to manage an ever-propagating deer herd must be sustained, “ said Nolan. “The deer population in Irondequoit is dynamic and with each fawning season, their numbers increase again. It is likely that the combined efforts of the county’s sharpshooter program and Irondequoit’s bow hunt will both be required to sustain the reduction next fall.”

The County’s Wildlife Management Program was begun ten years ago as a way to reduce the high rate of deer-car accidents in Irondequoit, stem defoliation of certain species of plant life within Durand Eastman Park and reduce complaints from area homeowners regarding damage to their property. Since the program's inception in 1993, and in conjunction with Irondequoit’s bow hunting program, deer-car accidents in Irondequoit have been significantly reduced, park foliage has shown encouraging signs of recovery and complaints from area residents regarding property damage have declined.

Towns Countywide Urged to Join Education Effort

The task force also discussed the need for localized efforts to promote public safety awareness related to deer-car accidents through surrounding towns, the task force is making an effort to spread the word that it is now illegal and a violation to feed deer.

Title 6 of the Codes, Rules and Regulations of the State of New York was recently amended so that Part 189, a section dealing with chronic wasting disease, clearly prohibits the feeding of deer and makes it an offense to interfere with the natural feeding habitat of deer.

“Feeding deer encourages them to congregate and intensifies their population density,” said Nolan. “One of the most significant impacts of large herd is the introduction of the deer’s parasitic associate, the deer tick, into the surroundings. Additionally, chronic wasting disease, a fatal transmissible neurodegenerative disease which endangers the health and welfare of wildlife populations, is in imminent danger of being introduced into New York State, according to the DEC.”

Part 189 of Title 6 reads: The purpose for the new regulation is to prevent the introduction of this disease into New York, to restrict those activities that may increase the risk of the development or spread of chronic wasting disease in New York and to protect the health of wild white-tailed deer in New York.”

“The committee is encouraging the media, local town leaders, and landowners to become a part of the solution in this education effort,” said Nolan. “By intensifying

education efforts about deer and the dangers of large herds, we hope to dissuade people from feeding the deer all across the county. We also hope to encourage landowners to open their lands to qualified hunters during regular hunting season to remedy the growing imbalance of herd sizes in populated areas of Monroe County and New York State.”

Safety Tips

All deer and motor vehicle collisions are not preventable, but practicing some safety tips will reduce the chances of an accident, according to Monroe County Sheriff Patrick O’Flynn.

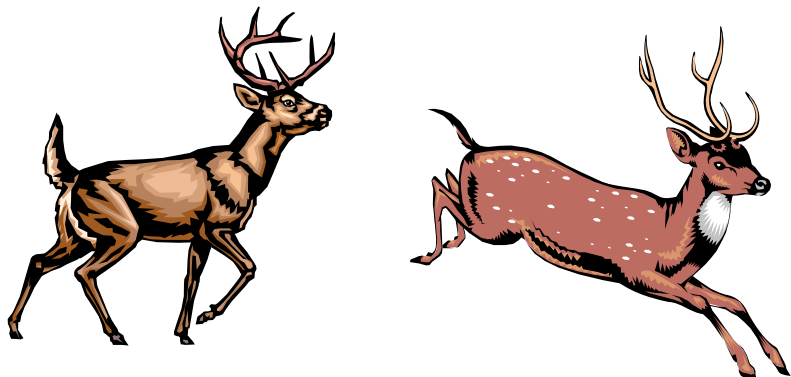
“The most active times for deer movement is generally during the drive time hours,” said O’Flynn. “Motorists have to be particularly careful during the morning, late afternoon and early evening hours. These times become very dangerous because twilight hours are the times that deer move the most.”

- Watch for deer along the roadside and slow down when you see deer. Where there is one deer there will be several deer.
- If you see a deer crossing sign, slow down. These signs are placed in areas that have proven to be deer crossing areas. If you see a deer crossing sign you can be assured that there has been multiple deer-car accidents in that area.
- When you have a deer cross in front of your vehicle, be careful not to take such drastic evasive actions as to lose control of your vehicle. It may be better to hit the deer than veer into the path of an oncoming vehicle or go crashing off the road.
- Be alert! Look for the ‘glow’ of animal’s eyes along the road.
- Make sure that all the vehicle occupants have their seat belts on and child restraint seats correctly installed.

For further information, call Bob Nolan at 428-3270; see us on the web at www.monroecounty.gov

Number of Deer related motor vehicle accidents (MVA’s) reported by Towns in 2001.

Town	#of MVA’s
Mendon	226
Henrietta	163
Webster	162
Greece	153
Ogden	126
Perinton	122
Chili	118
Penfield	109
Pittsford	109
Riga	92
Rush	86
Gates	80
Sweden	78
Brighton	61
Wheatland	58



Clarkson	57
Irondequoit	48
Parma	48
Hamlin	39
Rochester-city	1