

Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department 2020 Ramsey County Cooperative Deer Management Program

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners, in December of 1999, approved a deer population management plan. Since the approval of the plan, the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department has implemented an annual deer management program, which includes the use of archery and/or sharp shooting as deer management tools. Annual aerial surveys are conducted during the winter to determine deer herd populations. Locations for deer removal are set from survey and hunter statistic data and management tools can then be chosen to maintain or reduce deer herds. Deer herd populations that exceed the carrying capacity of the land can be detrimental to the overall health of the herd and impact the public through increased auto /deer collisions and the spread of deer ticks that may carry Lyme disease. With guidance given from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources wildlife management, the deer population goal is 15 -20 deer per square mile of deer habitat in Ramsey County. The 2020 management program was recommended for approval by the Ramsey County Parks Commission on April 8, 2020.

Annual Archery Program

Annual archery hunts are held at county park locations in conjunction with neighboring municipalities to maintain or reduce the deer population. A number of agencies and municipalities are conducting, or planning deer management programs within their jurisdiction, in addition to the management programs on county property. This includes the Arden Hills Army Training Site, H.B. Fuller, and the cities of Little Canada, Maplewood, North Oaks, Shoreview, St. Paul and Roseville. The cities of Gem Lake, Vadnais Heights and White Bear Township still allow archery hunting on private property under certain city criteria.

Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department, in cooperation with the associated municipalities, is proposing to conduct special archery hunts on 8 county properties in the fall of 2020, see Attachment 1. The program will be conducted using special archery hunts during the regular archery season. Participants will be selected through the Metro Bowhunters Resource Base (MBRB), a non-profit organization who coordinates volunteer archers from the general public, and hunts will be restricted to dates established by the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department. Archers will be allowed to keep the deer shot during the regular season. These hunts are expected to remove approximately 78-123 deer. A total of 89 deer were harvested during the 2019 season, see Attachment 2, which includes the 2019 hunt summary and harvest stats.

Sharp Shooting Program

Firearm sharpshooting can be used to quickly reduce numbers to a safe level in areas where the deer herd has far exceeded the population goal. The Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department used sharpshooting in 2005 as a deer reduction option in conjunction within the cities of Maplewood and St. Paul. In 2014, 2015, and 2016 the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department aided the city of Maplewood with coordinating sharpshooting on city and county land

in northern sections of Maplewood. In 2017, 2018 and 2019 the city of Maplewood, city of St. Paul and Ramsey County Parks and Recreation department coordinated with the United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Wildlife Services for the removal of deer through sharp shooting, within southeastern Ramsey County. The total deer removed through sharp shooting and general locations is listed in the table below:

Location	City	2005	2014	2016	2017	2018	2019
Highwood Ave area	St. Paul / Maplewood	200			64	33	22
Larpenteur / Century area	Maplewood		120	75			
	Annual totals	200	120	75	64	33	22
	Permitted take / Goal	200	120	75	100	75	75

As shown, the 2019 removal efforts did not reach the permitted goal and the 2020 survey data shows that the deer populations within the Highwood ave and Larpenteur ave areas still exceed the population goal. The Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department, in cooperation with the affected municipalities, is proposing to allow sharpshooting on county land for the winter of 2020/2021 in select areas where the amount of deer is between 3 to 10 times the target populations. Currently the areas of interest include locations within the city of Maplewood and city of St. Paul in southeastern Ramsey County, which includes the Highwood and Larpenteur avenue areas.

Aerial Deer Survey

An aerial survey was completed in 2020, with a total of 720 deer observed within the survey boundaries. This is an increase from the 602 deer counted during the last survey completed in 2019. The deer population exceeds the overall goal of 15-20 per square mile of deer habitat in certain areas. See Attachment 3 for aerial survey map.

Attachment 1.

Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department Ramsey County Cooperative Deer Management Archery Program (Fall 2020)*

Site	max # of hunters	expected harvest
(Fri-Sun)		
Poplar Lake	16	5-10
Pig's Eye	24	10-20
Fish Creek	12	8-15
Turtle Creek	10	4-8
Otter Lake	10	4-8
(Mon-Wed)		
Battle Creek	26	15-20
Vadnais	20	10-15
Rice Creek North Trail	7	4 - 6

*Non-Ramsey Sites***

Maplewood

(Fri-Sun)

Priory	10	4-8
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St. Paul

(Mon-Wed)

Highland	4	2-4
Crosby	10	4-8
Little Pigs Eye North		
(MN DNR & City of St. Paul Lands)	4	4-5

White Bear Township

(Fri-Sun)

Benson Airport	4	4-5
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County Property used by city special Hunt***

Kohlman Marsh	TBD	TBD	--
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* All sites will have two 3-day hunts during October, November or December.
They will be Fri-Sun or Mon-Wed.

** These hunts are held on city owned property and approved by their city councils. Ramsey County Parks assists in the hunter management and coordination.

*** The City of Little Canada holds a special hunt on properties surrounding county open space. This allows them access to Ramsey County property. Ramsey County does not coordinate the hunt.

Attachment 2.

Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department 2019 Special Archery Deer Hunt Summary

Archery Hunts

Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department's 20th annual special permit archery hunt, in conjunction with St. Paul, Maplewood, Little Canada, Vadnais Heights, Shoreview, and White Bear Township, was a safe and successful season. There were multiple 3-day hunts in October, November, and December within 9 Ramsey County sites. Ramsey County assisted with the hunt coordination on four non-Ramsey County sites, which included the Priors park in Maplewood, Highland Park in St. Paul, land north of Little Pig's Eye Lake owned by the MN DNR and City of St. Paul and Benson Airport in White Bear Township.

A total of 89 deer were harvested in 2019, compared to 81 in 2018. The 2019 deer harvest included: 42 adult doe, 5 fawn doe, 35 adult bucks, and 7 fawn bucks (see attached table). The antlerless harvest rate was 61% in 2019, which is a 1% increase from 2018. The overall success rate for the special archery hunts was 56% in Ramsey County; state average for archery is 25%.

Minnesota Bowhunters Resource Base (MBRB) provided 167 archers, including hunt coordinators. No safety problems were reported during any of the hunts. Some park users continued to use the park trails during the hunts, even with "park closed" signage. This is an annual occurrence and archers have adapted to the potential of having park patrons in the hunt areas.

2019 HARVEST STATS

<i>Ramsey County Sites</i>	Adult Doe	Fawn Doe	Adult Buck	Fawn Buck	Site Total
Battle Creek	6	2	7	0	15
Vadnais Lake	4	1	2	1	8
Rice Creek	1	0	4	0	5
Otter Lake	7	0	2	0	9
Poplar Lake	4	0	3	1	8
Fish Creek	5	0	4	0	9
Pig's Eye	2	1	1	0	4
Turtle Creek	2	0	1	0	3
Tamrack Nature Center	3	0	4	0	7

TOTALS **34** **4** **28** **2** **68**

Non-Ramsey County Park Hunts

Crosby	2	0	4	3	9
MN DNR	2	0	1	0	3
Benson Airport	1	0	0	1	2
Priory	3	1	2	1	7

TOTALS **8** **1** **7** **5** **21**

TOTAL **89**

Attachment 3. 2020 Aerial Deer Survey Map

