



City Council Study Session  
Deer Management Update  
June 24, 2024

# FH Deer Management HISTORY

- 2014 - The City of Farmington Hills determined the Deer Management process should begin
- 2015 - Began conducting research, collecting data, and working with the DNR
- 2017 - Farmington Hills began the idea of taking a regional approach vs city by city
- 2021 - Farmington Hills led a regional approach to deer management by establishing the Oakland County Urban Deer Coalition, that became the Southeast Michigan Urban Deer Coalition in 2023
- 2022 - Farmington Hills led the SEMIUDC and worked with SEMCOG on a 7 county deer survey
- 2024 - City of Farmington Hills employee Bryan Farmer, (Chair of the Southeast Michigan Urban Deer Coalition and mParks Archery Focus Area) selected to be member of a Statewide Deer Management Initiative (DMI) - 48 DMI members were tasked by the Natural Resource Commission (NRC) to address challenges the state is having with deer management
- February 2024 - DMI work began
- June 13, 2024 - DMI report to NRC on regulatory and non-regulatory recommendations
- June 26, 2024 - NRC workgroup meeting to mainly discuss regulatory recommendations
- July 11, 2024 - NRC meeting where it's expected that some regulatory items will be determined
- August 2024 - Non-regulatory items will continue being addressed by DMI, DNR, NRC, HMC ...
- Ongoing - Members of the DMI and other organizations continue to meet on deer management efforts that will ultimately improve deer management in communities throughout the state

# FH DEER CONCERNS

- Too many deer
- Landscape destruction and blight
- Ticks/Lyme disease
- Personal and pet safety

# FH DATA COLLECTION

Farmington Hills Residents Deer Information Log

Community Deer Management Survey

Research & Resources

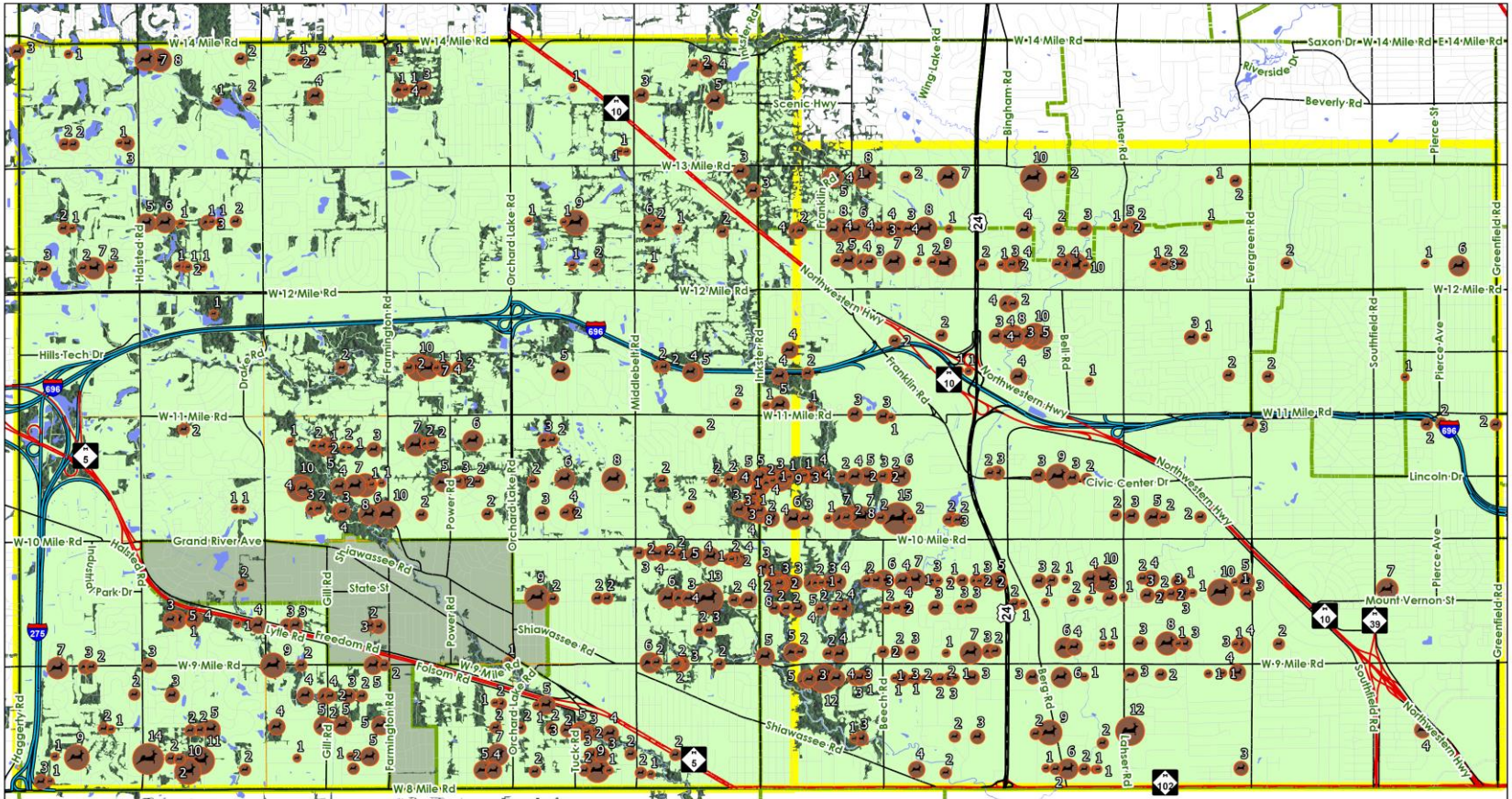
Deer/Vehicle Crash Data Collection

Annual Aerial Deer Survey

Communicate with Neighboring Communities

# EXAMPLE AERIAL DEER COUNT

COMBINED 2021 FARMINGTON HILLS AND  
SOUTHFIELD AERIAL DEER SURVEY RESULTS  
=1,598 deer

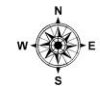


# Urban Deer Survey

Cities of Farmington Hills & Southfield  
Aerial Survey-February 2021



SOURCES: City of Farmington Hills, 2021  
Department of Special Services, 2021  
Deer Survey Conducted: 2/12/2021



# FH RESEARCH & RESOURCES

- Developed deer management section on city website  
<https://www.fhgov.com/Resident/Deer-Management.aspx>
- Shared resources through conversations
- Reviewed deer impacts on properties
- Gathered research on deer management practices
- In 2017, City Council enacted ordinance prohibiting deer feeding
- Networking with other communities and organizations

# FH DEER/VEHICLE CRASH DATA

- Oakland County had the most deer/vehicle crashes in Michigan in 2020
- 1,855 deer/vehicle crashes were reported in Oakland County in 2020
- According to Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning, deer/vehicle insurance claims average \$4,300
- Deer/Vehicle crashes are on the rise



# COMMUNICATION HIGHLIGHTS

- Met with representatives from Michigan DNR, Novi, Southfield, and others in 2017 to discuss the idea of a regional deer management plan
- Communicated with other city leaders on the impacts of deer in their community
- Collaborated with Southfield on performing aerial deer counts in 2018, 2019, 2021
- Formed the Oakland County/Southeast Michigan Urban Deer Coalition
- Working with communities in Grand Rapids and Lansing Area
- Support from DNR and others

# Urban Deer Management

**Chad M. Stewart**  
**Deer, Elk, and Moose Management Biologist**  
**Michigan Department of Natural Resources**  
**SOCMA Dinner**  
**3/20/2024**

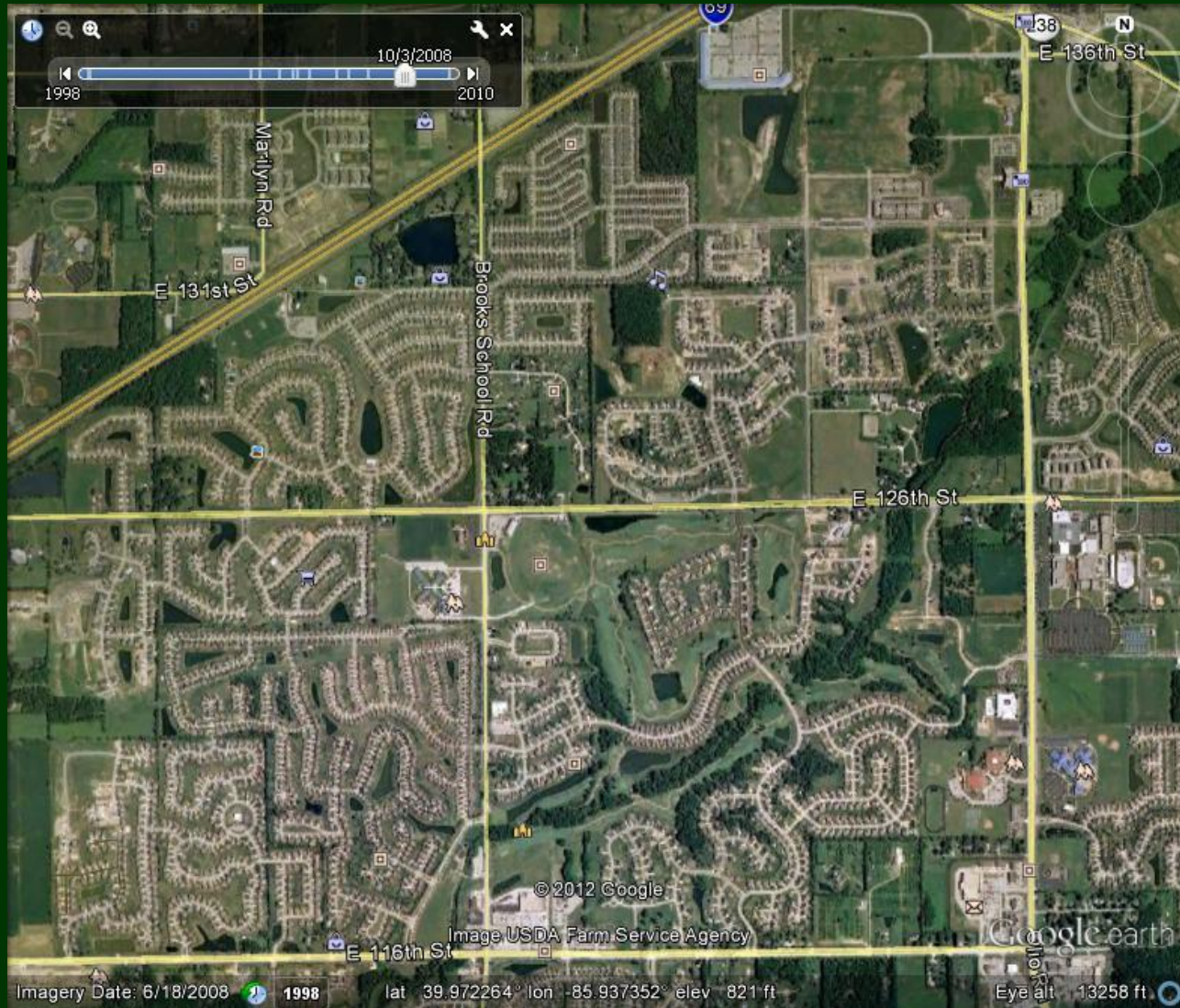


# Characteristics of Urban Deer

- High reproductivity
  - Reported as high as 1.8 fawns/adult doe
  - Early fawn breeding
  - No reproductive senescence
- Typically see high survival rates
  - Reported as high as 87%
- Typically see smaller home ranges



# Landscape Changes



1999

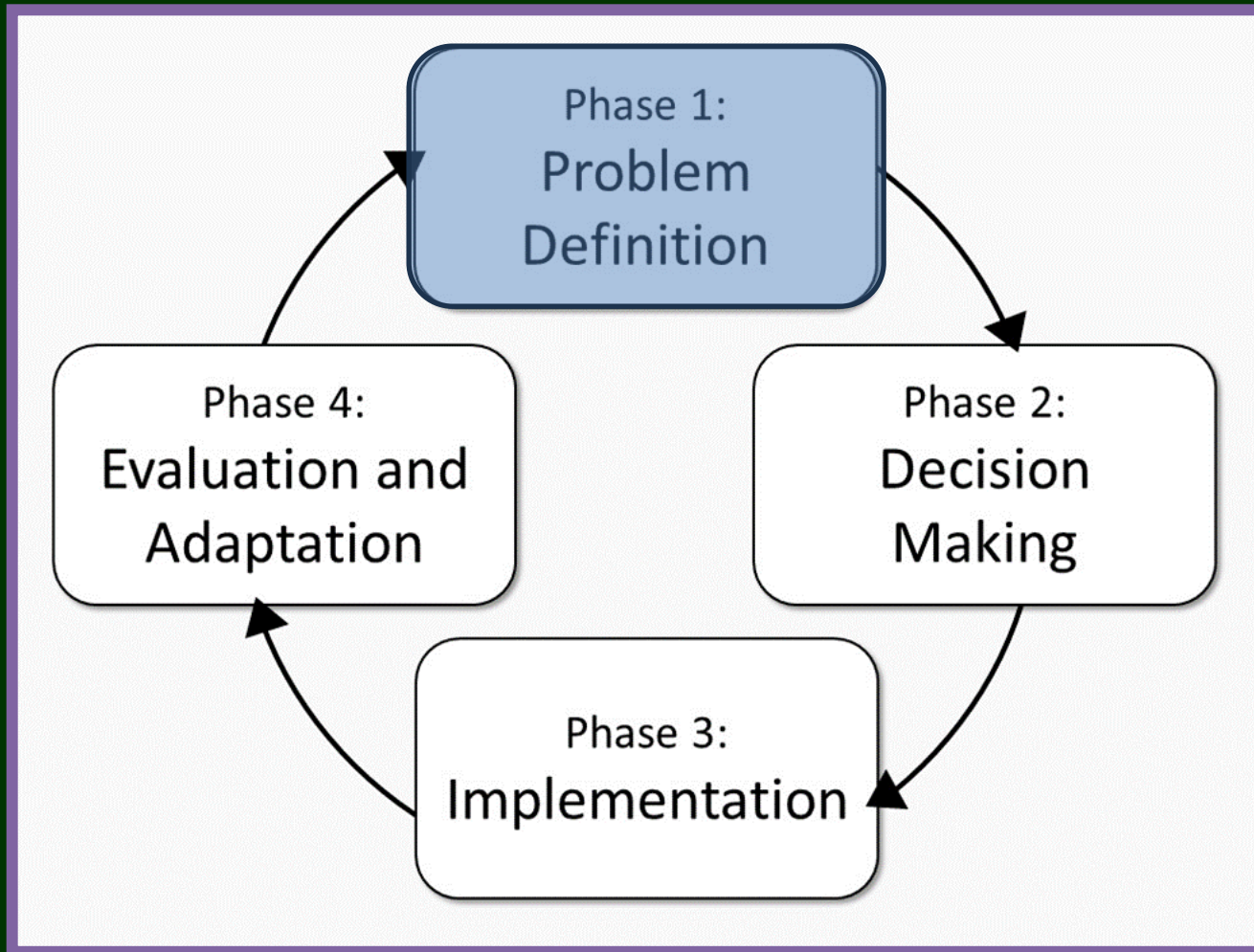
2008



# Urban Deer Management IS Conflict Management



# Community Based Deer Management



# Do we have a problem?

Gather information, assess, define the problem

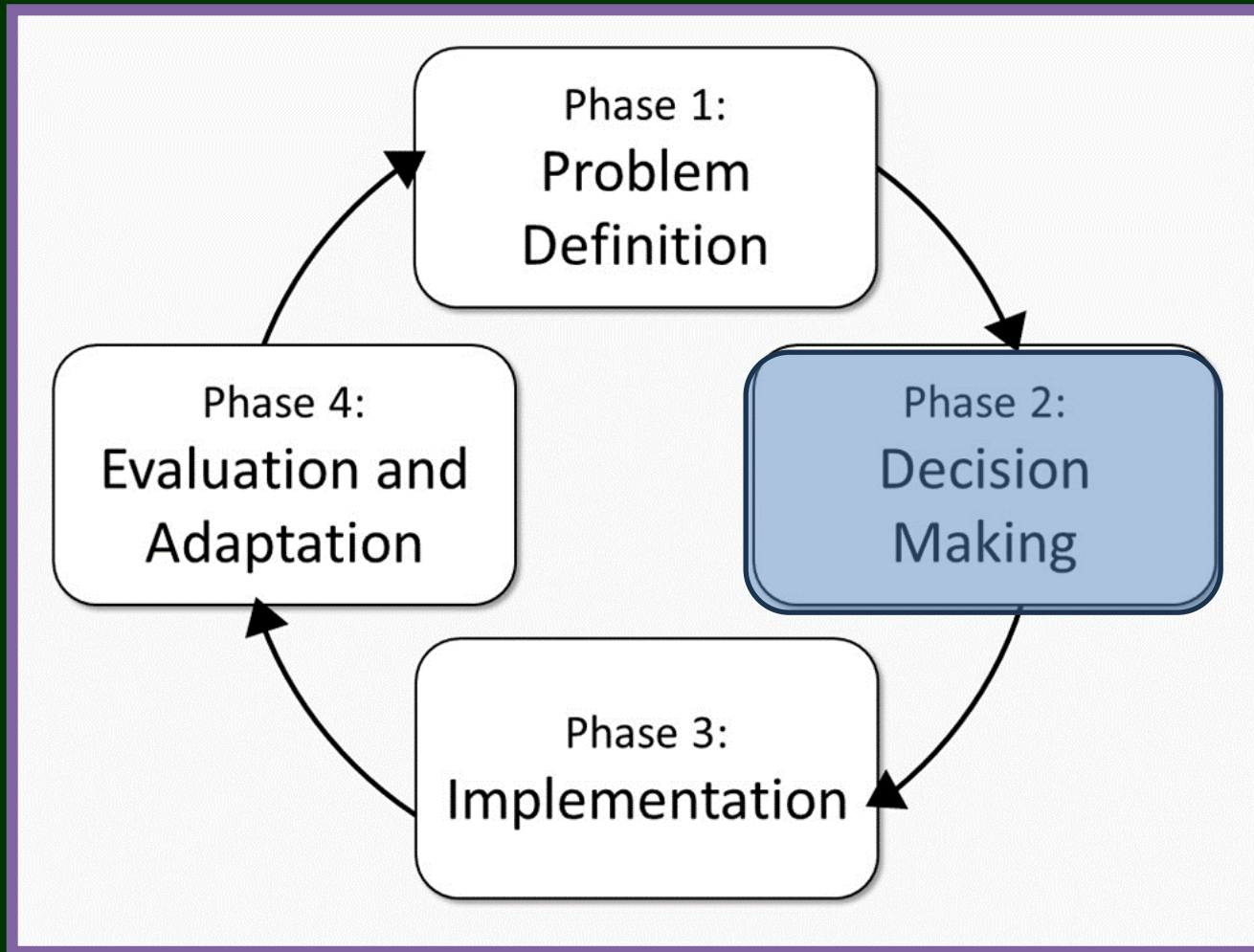
What problems are occurring? Where, when, who, severity?

How are you going to gather the data you need?

- Questionnaire of residents
- DVC (deer-vehicle crashes, struck deer calls)
- Agricultural and horticultural losses
- Monitoring deer browse to assess forest health



# Community Based Deer Management





# Develop Your Goals, Consider Alternatives, Make a Choice

Goals: general outcomes or desired future conditions

Objectives: Specific, measureable outcomes needed to achieve goals

Match your actions to your objectives

Deer committee may consider and weigh actions to achieve objectives

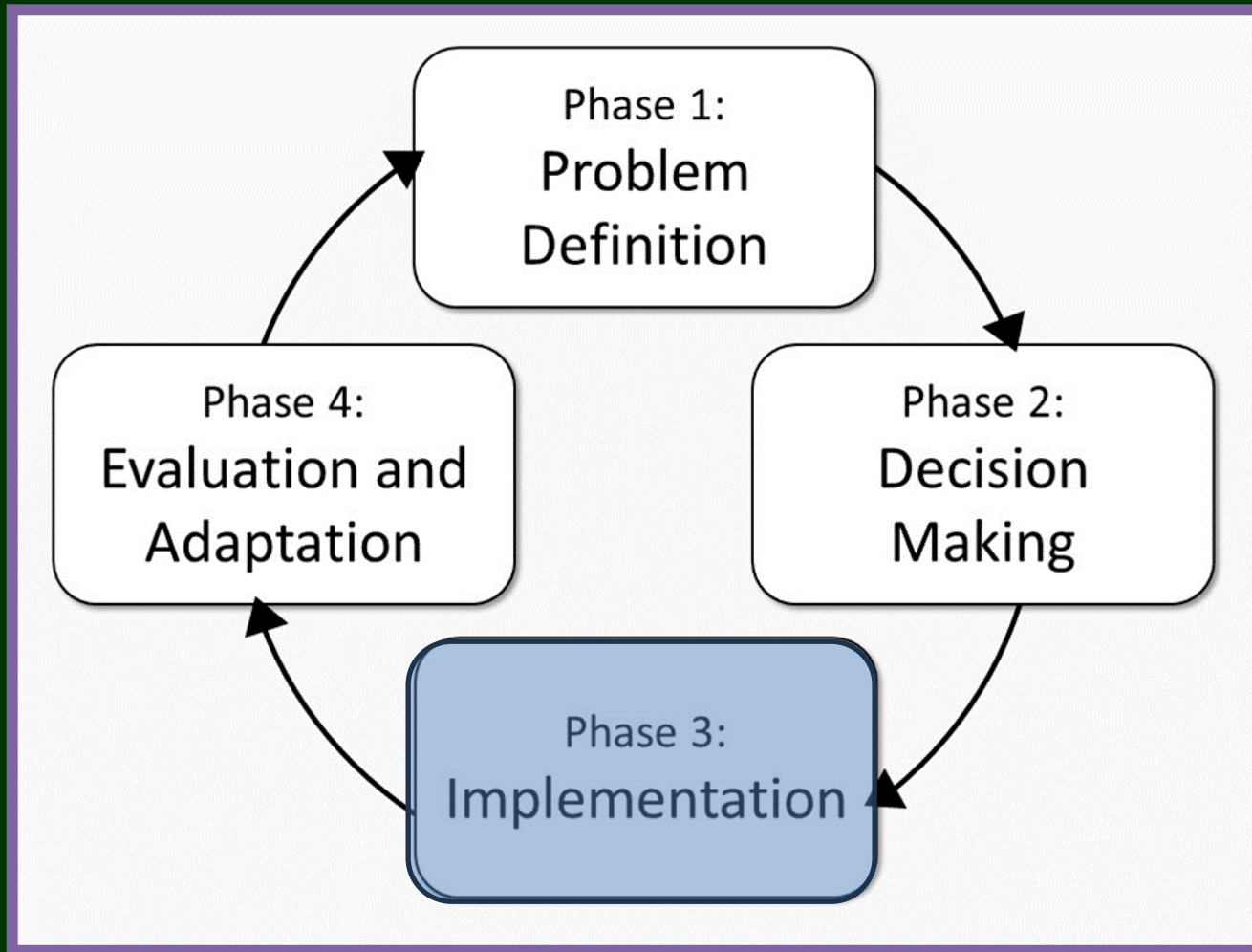


# Creating a Deer Plan

- ✓ Plan summary and background
- ✓ Problem definition
- ✓ Goals
- ✓ Measurable objectives
- ✓ Management actions recommended
- ✓ Management actions considered
- ✓ Plan for monitoring
- ✓ Plan for engagement
- ✓ Budget
- ✓ Timetable
- ✓ Responsibilities
- ✓ Supporting Documents
- ✓ References



# Community Based Deer Management



# Management Options

- No Action or Response
  - Pros
    - A compromise?
    - Inexpensive
  - Cons
    - Often viewed as inaction
    - Continued degradation of habitat and conflicts



# Management Options

- Nonlethal Options
  - Pros
    - Can exclude deer from problem areas
    - Expense can vary
  - Cons
    - Requires maintenance
    - No guarantees
    - Does not solve community wide problem



# Management Options

- Hunting
  - Pros
    - Inexpensive to communities
    - Can provide economic stimulus
    - Supported by most individuals
  - Cons
    - Some types of hunting (i.e. trophy) not supported
    - Local concerns regarding hunting in a community
    - Access issues



# Management Options

- Sharpshooting
  - Pros
    - Reduces deer population quickly
    - Safe
  - Cons
    - Expensive
    - Controversial



# Management Options

- Trap and Relocate/Remove

- Pros

- No projectile fired
- Removes deer from difficult areas

- Cons

- High stress to deer
- Expensive
- Relocation not allowed in Michigan





# Management Options

- Reintroduce Predators
  - Pros
    - Opportunity to return historical species
  - Cons
    - Socially unacceptable
    - Expensive
    - Complicated interactions requires study



# Management Options

- Contraception

- Pros

- Doesn't fire lethal projectile
    - Prevents future fawns from being born

- Cons

- Expensive
    - Doesn't remove deer which may be the problem
    - Nearly impossible to achieve results in free-ranging deer herds



# Contraceptive Drugs

- Gonacon and Zonastat
  - Both federally registered pesticides through the EPA
- Both require boosters
- Neither registered for use in Michigan (MDARD)

United States Environmental Protection Agency  
Office of Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances  
(7503P)

**EPA**

## Pesticide Fact Sheet

Name of Chemical: Mammalian Gonadotropin Releasing Hormone (GnRH)  
Reason for Issuance: New Chemical  
Date Issued: September 2009

**Description of Chemical**

Peptide Chain: Ser4-Tyr5-Gly6-Leu7-Arg8-  
Chem' using Hormone (GnRH)

Common Name:   
EPA PC Code:   
Chemical Abstr' Service (C/   
Chem'   
r

**RESTRICTED USE PESTICIDE**

For retail sale to and use only by Certified Applicators or persons under their direct supervision of the following organizations and their designated wildlife management personnel and only for those uses covered by the Certified Applicator's certification:

- Department of Interior and all its designated agents
- National Park Service, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management
- USDA and all its designated agents (i.e., U.S. Forest Service, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service)
- Health Agencies for agriculture/livestock & wildlife
- State Agencies for agriculture/livestock & wildlife
- Federally recognized Indian Tribes
- Department of Defense
- Humane Society of the United States

Each Responsible Authority for deer intended to be treated with Zonastat-D must sign a certification of use prior to the administration of the vaccine to any animals. The certification statement is attached to this label.

Sublabel B

**ZONASTAT-D**

Zonastat-D is a porcine zona pellucida immunocontraceptive vaccine indicated for use in limiting the populations of white tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) and other members of the family Cervidae.

Active Ingredients:	
Porcine zona pellucida (ZP3)(0.1%)	0.071%
Porcine zona pellucida (ZP1, ZP2, ZP4)(0.1%)	0.029%
Other Ingredients:	99.900%
Total	100.000%

This product contains 100 µg of PZP per 0.04 oz (0.5 mL)


Net Contents: 0.5 mL

EPA Reg. No. 86833-x  
EPA Est. No. 090192-MT-001

Humane Society of the United States  
700 Professional Drive  
Gaithersburg, MD 20879

Expiration date: xx-xx-xxxx

DB11 91498264.3



# Management Options

- Sterilization
  - Pros
    - Doesn't fire a lethal projectile
    - Prevents fawns from being born permanently
  - Cons
    - Expensive
    - Doesn't remove deer which may be problem
    - Difficult to achieve results



# Ann Arbor Deer Management



## YEAR FOUR SUMMARY REPORT

2019-20 Deer Research Program

Ann Arbor, Michigan

26 May 2020

Submitted by

Dr. Anthony J. DeNicola  
White Buffalo Inc.

From 2017-2020:  
78 deer sterilized  
432 deer lethally removed

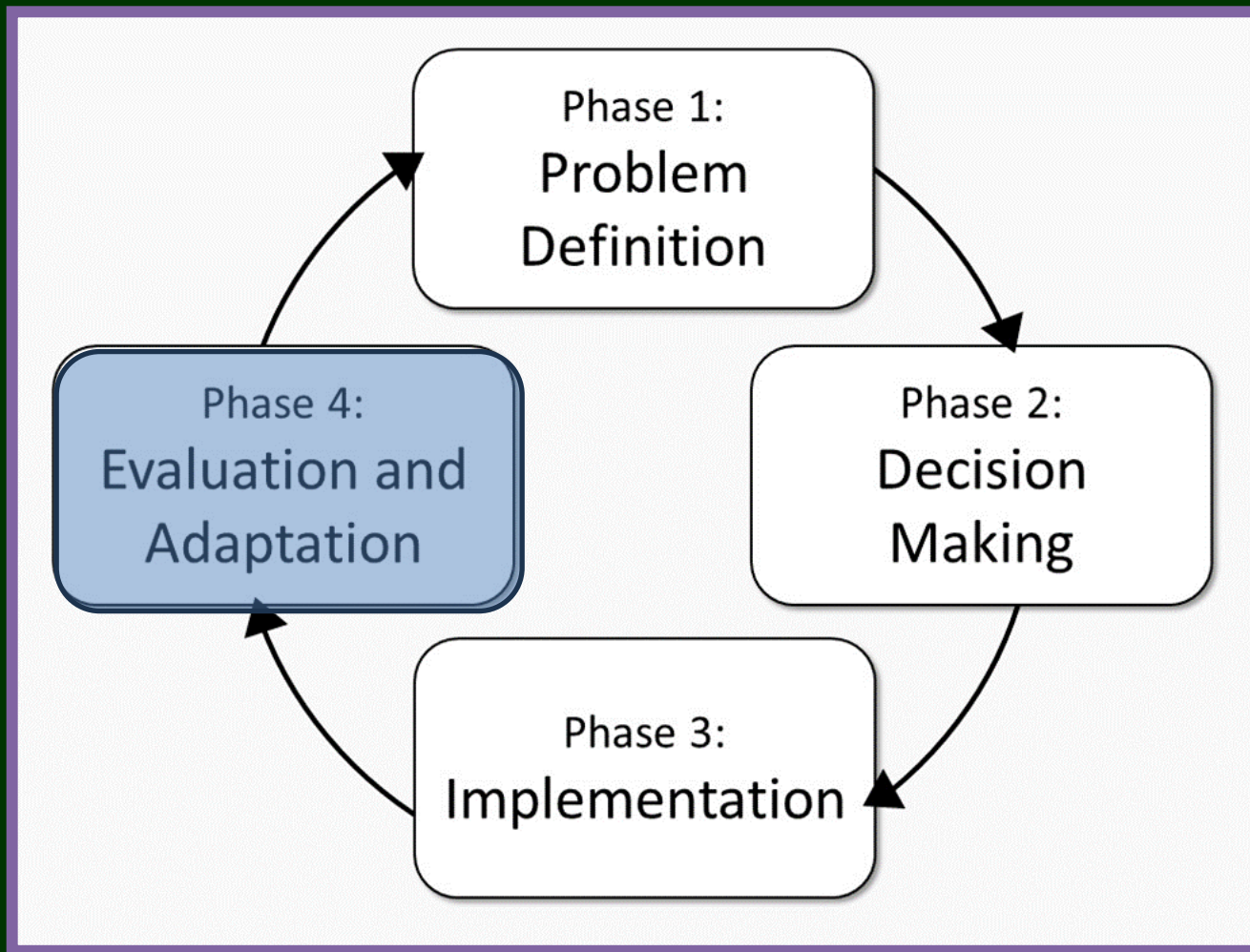
Estimated 47% reduction in South Study Area  
Estimated 60% reduction in North Study Area



Melanie Maxwell, The Ann Arbor News



# Community Based Deer Management



# Monitoring: Are you achieving your goals?

- Indicators: what you will measure/observe to understand current conditions and track progress towards objectives
  - Best to identify indicators prior to implementation to know your baseline
  - Some indicators can be simple (e.g., tracking DVAs), some more complex (e.g., forest monitoring effort)
- Which data, who is responsible, how, timeline?



# Oakland County Community Deer Coalition (NOW SE MI URBAN DEER COALITION)

- Goal is to develop a regional deer management plan (NOW STATEWIDE)
- Working collaboratively with SEMCOG
- Survey administered to citizens of Oakland County to gauge attitudes towards deer

**Oakland County communities addressing deer overpopulation with new survey**



Photos by: SCBPWS

By: Jenn Schanz  
Posted at 9:56 AM, Sep 30, 2022 and last updated 10:00 AM, Sep 30, 2022

(WXYZ) — Up through November 11, leaders in several Oakland County communities are asking for the public's input; about deer.

**OAKLAND COUNTY**

## Community input sought on Oakland County deer population

**Mark Hicks**  
The Detroit News

Published 11:15 p.m. ET Sept. 13, 2022

[f](#) [t](#) [e](#) [r](#)

Think close encounters with deer have become too much of a problem lately in Oakland County? Officials want to hear from you.





# Community Survey

- Assessment conducted in October-November 2022 through an invitation to participate distributed to local communities and the media.
- Valid response from 13,526 residents.



Cobalt  
Community  
Research



**SEMCOG**



SEMCOG 2022  
Deer Study  
N=13526

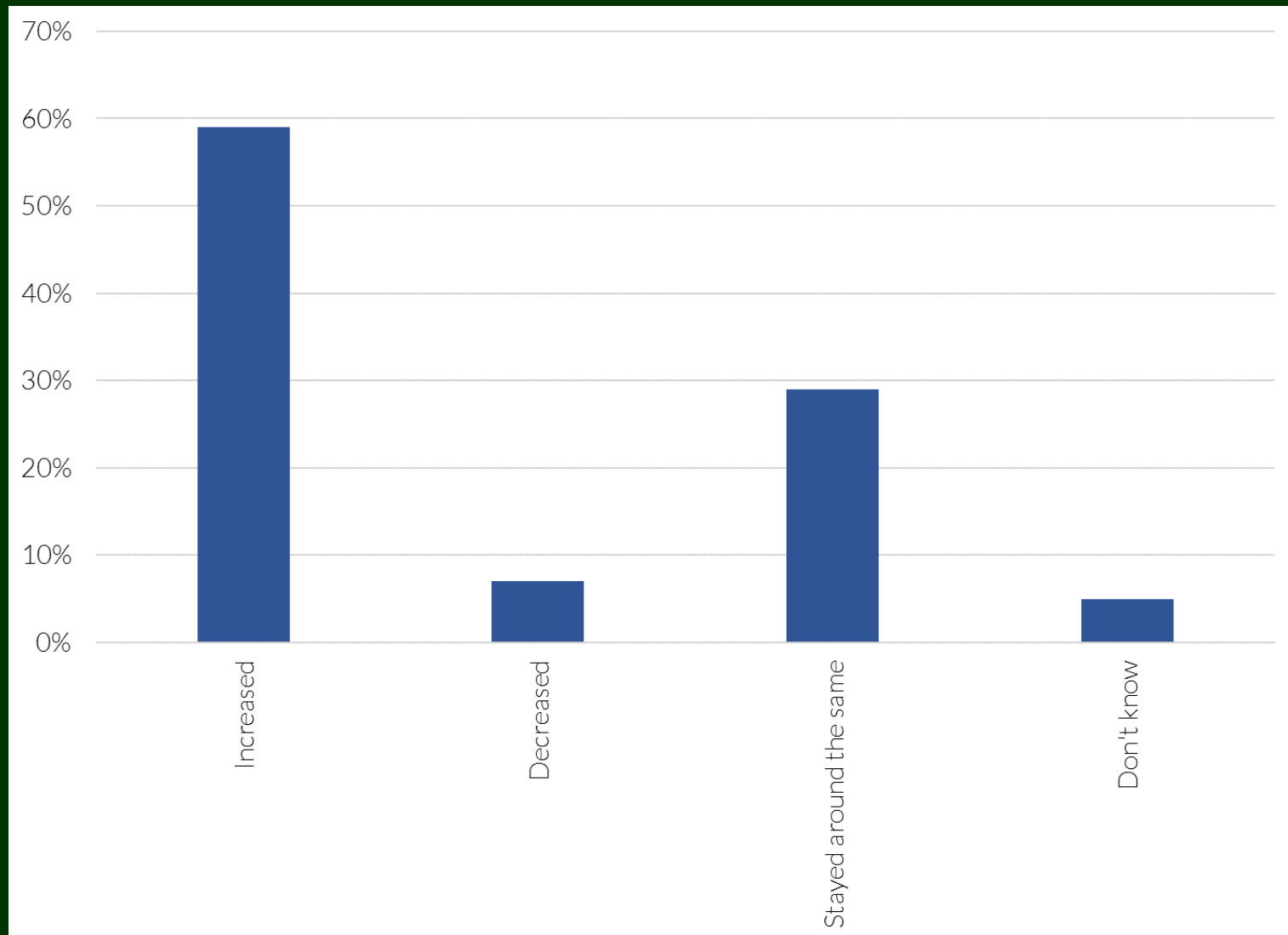
		Perception of Population				Feelings about Deer				
		Increased	Decreased	Stayed around the same	Don't know	I enjoy seeing and having deer around	I enjoy seeing deer, but have some concerns	I generally regard deer as a nuisance	I have no particular feelings about deer	Other (please specify)
Overall		59%	7%	29%	5%	38%	39%	27%	2%	6%
County	Livingston	28%	15%	48%	9%	73%	23%	9%	1%	2%
	Macomb	33%	14%	43%	11%	61%	29%	14%	2%	7%
	Monroe	35%	6%	39%	19%	61%	29%	10%	-	3%
	Oakland	66%	6%	25%	3%	30%	43%	31%	2%	7%
	St. Clair	39%	11%	44%	6%	61%	33%	-	-	6%
	Washtenaw	39%	14%	37%	10%	51%	31%	20%	2%	6%
	Wayne	55%	7%	33%	6%	53%	36%	14%	2%	6%
	Other	22%	17%	51%	11%	79%	14%	4%	2%	5%
Own/Rent	Own	60%	7%	28%	4%	37%	40%	27%	2%	6%
	Rent/lease	40%	10%	36%	14%	58%	34%	10%	3%	6%

↑  
Consistent across demographic cohorts

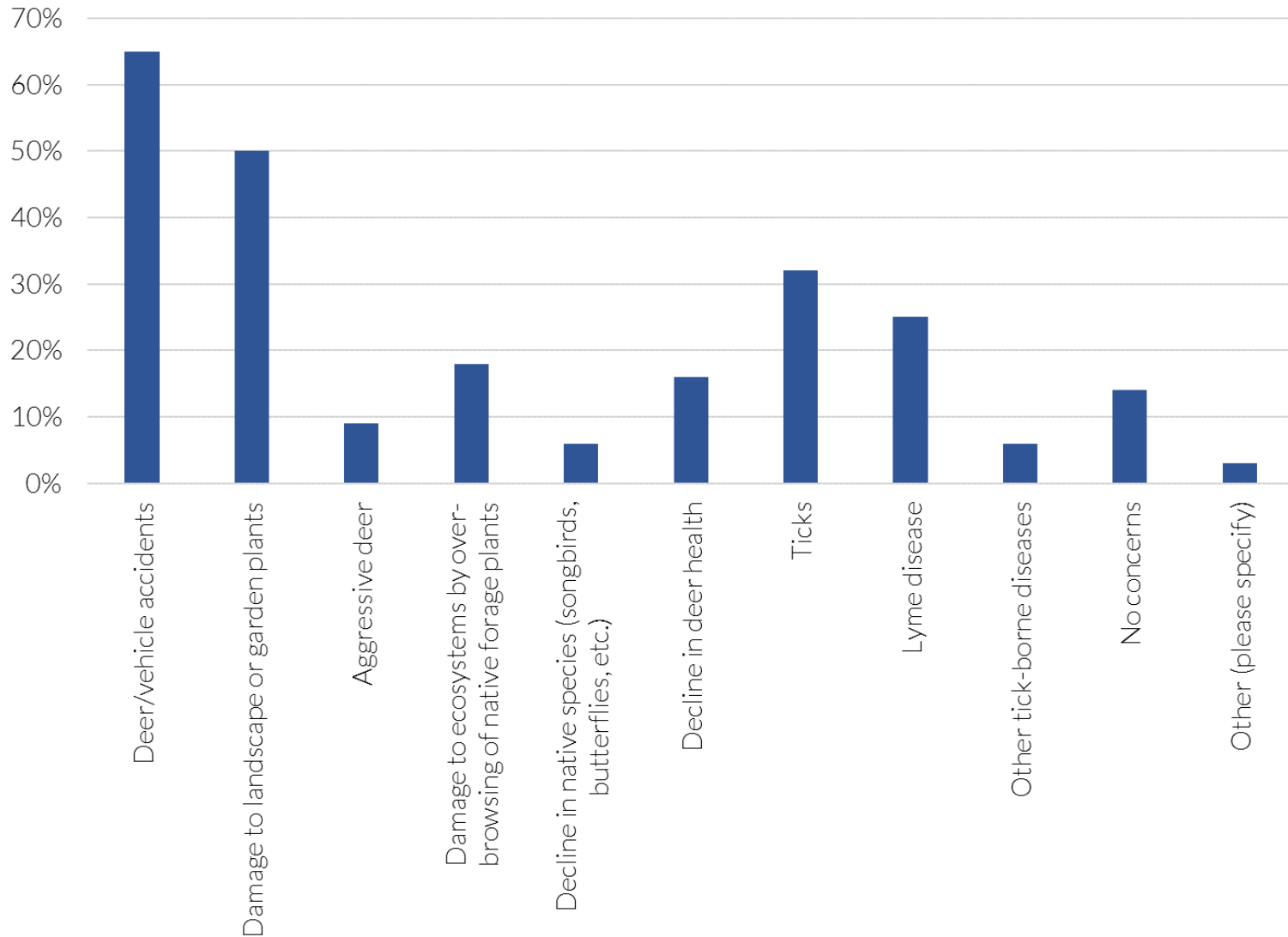
↑  
Varies by demographic cohort



# Perception of Deer Population Over Past 3 Years



# Concerns About Deer



# Accomplishments

- Completed a Survey
- Standardized Data Collection
  - Ability to compare and contrast between communities and years
- Development of a Management Plan
  - In progress
- Mentoring Other Communities
  - Grand Rapids and Metro 6





**Questions?**

**Chad Stewart**

**[stewartc6@michigan.gov](mailto:stewartc6@michigan.gov)**

**517-282-4810**

# SE Michigan Urban Deer Coalition and Updates

## Community (most involved)

AUBURN HILLS  
BEVERLY HILLS  
BIRMINGHAM  
FARMINGTON  
FARMINGTON HILLS  
FRANKLIN  
LIVONIA  
OAKLAND COUNTY  
ROCHESTER HILLS  
ROYAL OAK  
SOUTHFIELD  
WEST BLOOMFIELD  
WIXOM  
OTHERS ...

## Organization

Michigan DNR  
Oakland County Commissioner  
Outdoors Writer  
SEMCOG  
Michigan State University  
State Senate  
State House  
US Dept of Agriculture  
University of Michigan  
Others ...

# Review of the SE MI Urban Deer Coalition

- History - Began in Fall 2021
- Communities involved and partnering organizations
- Efforts
- Goals
- Actions
- Results



# Oakland County Parks

- 2024 Deer Cull with USDA
- Oakland County Parks and County Leaders ready to provide support on a deer management plan – staffing and possible funding
- Possible liaison to communities once a deer management plan is developed

# Metro 6 Group

- A coalition made up of communities in the Grand Rapids Area
- DNR's Human/Wildlife Interaction Specialist as a resource
- Kent County seeking to do survey similar to SEMCOG/SE MI Urban Deer Coalition's 2022 Survey
- Networking opportunity to develop a Statewide Plan and effort

# Meridian Township Example

- Meridian Township has developed a successful system to manage deer and has become the example to follow
- Similar organization with similar goals that is a member of the DMI
- History of Deer Management in Meridian Township
- Management Areas
- Data and figures
- Sustainability

# Deer Management Initiative (DMI)

- Over 2,500 individuals applied or were selected to be on the State of Michigan's DMI
- Bryan Farmer, Farmington Hills (Primary) was selected to the 48 person panel (Upper Peninsula and Lower Peninsula)
- John Michrina, Southfield (Secondary) was set to attend meetings in Bryan's absence
- Other organization members include individuals from the DNR, Farm Bureau, MI National Deer Association, MI Bowhunters Association, Michigan United Conservation Club, Meridian Township, and others

# What is the DMI?

- Deer Management Initiative
  - Requested by the Natural Resources Commission
  - Developed to address present day and future challenges in deer management
    - Hunter declines
    - Overabundant deer, particularly the Southern Lower
    - Lack of deer in parts of the Upper Peninsula



## Special Thanks

- Dwayne Etter
- Gary Roloff
- Michael Walters
- Jeff Pritzl
- Dan Storm
- Brian Frawley
- Todd Grischke
- Ryan Soulard
- Chris Hoving
- Joe Presgrove
- Tom Weston
- Jesse Lincoln
- James DeDecker
- Kristie Sitar
- Tom Seablom
- Tyler Petroelje
- Brian Roell
- Melinda Cosgrove
- Mitch Marcus
- Cody Norton

# Online Presentations

- [www.Michigan.gov/deer](http://www.Michigan.gov/deer)
  - Deer Management Initiative link



# Lower Peninsula-Challenges

- Top Challenges Identified:
  - Limited private land access
  - Presence/spread of diseases
  - Decline of hunters
  - Extreme deer densities relative to habitat
  - Miscellaneous



# Lower Peninsula-Objectives

- Top Rated Objectives:
  - Balanced and healthy deer herd
  - Contain/eradicate disease
  - Increased hunter satisfaction
  - Reduce deer conflicts
  - Increase hunter numbers
  - Increased hunter education on deer/deer mgmt.
  - Improved habitat







# LP Regulatory Line Items

	Support	Do not support	Abstain	Support%	TOTAL
Mandatory reporting	23	1	0	95.8%	24
Earn a second buck	19	3	2	79.2%	24
Combo doe / buck	13	8	3	54.2%	24
HAP	22	1	1	91.7%	24
Early and late antlerless harvest on public and private land	20	4	0	83.3%	24
More localized deer management - DMU region	20	1	3	83.3%	24
No baiting in disease area	18	5	1	75.0%	24
Expand late season urban archery doe hunting	24	0	0	100.0%	24
APR's expand	13	8	3	54.2%	24
Drone harvest recovery	11	10	3	45.8%	24
C - Bring back muzzleloader season	16	7	1	66.7%	24
C - Keep combo as is	10	12	2	41.7%	24





# Lower Peninsula Non-regulatory items

- Educate about the importance of antlerless harvest
- Increase funding/support for MSAH
- Improve public land habitat
- MDNR continuity on management actions across regions and increased transparency within the DNR/NRC
- Increase opportunities for access to agricultural and urban areas
- Support/endorse the Michigan Hunt Collaborative (pools R3 efforts from multiple conservation groups)
- Incentivize antlerless harvest in disease areas



# SE MI Urban Deer Coalition Goals as it relates to the DMI

- Update the State (Urban) Deer Management Plan as a guideline to follow. City leaders can determine whether or not they want to enact the deer management plan in their community - for all Urban communities in the State of Michigan to ***decide*** community by community
- Develop education and resources for community leaders and State of Michigan residents as it relates to wildlife and habitat management
- Provide communities with connections to the State of Michigan and partnering organizations to assist with deer management programs and methods (R3, USDA, DNR, NDA, HMC, ...)
- Determine deer management budget for communities and identify ways to fund expenses for wildlife and habitat management
- Implementation of R3 Programs such as the Hunt Michigan Collaborative to educate and serve residents
- State funding to assist with Urban Deer Management

# Michigan's Deer Management Plan

## MICHIGAN DEER MANAGEMENT PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

- Investigate, implement, and evaluate programs designed to increase hunter recruitment, retention, and access so that hunting remains an effective population management tool
- Programs designed to increase hunter access to private lands, especially where deer are abundant, may be effective at achieving appropriate antlerless harvests and increasing recreational opportunities for hunters
- The benefits associated with deer hunting must be communicated to the non-hunting community so that deer hunting remains socially and politically acceptable
- Promote deer hunting as the primary tool to manage deer
  - Continue and expand the HAP program to reach approximately 24,000 acres by 2018
  - Investigate and implement additional programs, as needed, to improve hunter access to private land
  - Investigate the impacts of declining hunter numbers on the ability of hunting to maintain the deer harvest at appropriate levels

# MICHIGAN DEER MANAGEMENT PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

- Evaluate and implement programs designed to improve recruitment and retention of deer hunters
  - Continue to investigate and determine the primary factors involved with the decline in recruitment and retention of deer hunters
  - Implement and evaluate programs or regulations to improve recruitment and retention of deer hunters, if possible
  - Facilitate cooperation among educational institutions, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and the hunting/mentoring community to develop programs targeted toward hunter retention and recruitment
- Investigate and implement programs designed to improve hunter access to land including additional public land acquisition, public hunting on private lands, and information and education on landowner liabilities regarding hunters
- Work with organizations to facilitate relationships between farmers and hunters to increase deer harvest and hunting access on private lands to meet landowner objectives
- Identify opportunities to implement new and innovative tools for managing deer populations where voluntary programs are not effective

# DMI Presentation to NRC

- Regulatory and Non-Regulatory Recommendations

## PUBLIC COMMENT SUPPORTING:

- Support of UPDATED Statewide Urban Deer Management Plan
- Hunt Michigan Collaborative

# Public Comment – Statewide Urban Deer Management Plan

We have an overpopulation of deer in many cities. Deer/vehicle crashes and resident concerns continue to grow. The establishment of a Statewide Urban Deer Management Plan that offers solutions and action steps to manage deer in urban areas is needed. We have been working on deer management in Farmington Hills since 2014. In 2021, Farmington Hills led the effort to take a regional approach on deer management vs city by city and we developed the Southeast Michigan Urban Deer Coalition. Recently the Grand Rapids Area established a coalition to work on urban deer management and communities in the Lansing area are working on deer management. It is evident that when a city is left to figure it out on their own, inconsistencies develop and a lot of time is spent by the DNR, USDA and others to explain options to cities. On behalf of the Southeast Michigan Urban Deer Coalition, I would like to propose that the NRC and DNR support a statewide urban deer management plan that provides the necessary information and action steps so that city leaders can vote for or against enacting a deer management plan for their community.

# Public Comment – Hunt Michigan Collaborative

The LP DMI group voted 22 in favor of this idea with 0 no votes.

- Since 2017, the mParks Archery Focus Area has been working directly with leadership of USA Archery, the Archery Trade Association, and others to pilot the concept of creating a systematic approach to grow archery and hunting. When surveying residents of communities throughout the State of Michigan, we have learned that 40-50% of residents who participate in archery programs are interested in hunting, but we lack the connections of how to serve residents to give them the opportunity to hunt.
- We have learned that we can highly recruit, reactivate and educate people about hunting through parks and recreation archery programs. People often look at their local parks and rec department to sign up for dance, soccer, t-ball, and archery
- National studies show we need to put our dollars into getting a more diverse population into hunting and/or educated about conservation and sustainability. Parks and recreation is the ultimate recruiter to get people of all ages, ethnicity and ability into hunting.
- Through the work of the DMI, the idea of the Hunt Michigan Collaborative was created. The HMC connects organizations across the state that offer hunting and hunting related opportunities to the thousands of new recruits parks and recreation archery programs are bringing in
- Many organizations are already doing great work. The HMC will better connect efforts and promote hunting opportunities to the thousands of people that are **waiting to be shown how to hunt**. The HMC will even guide new hunters on farmland hunts to help reduce crop damage



# **The Hunt Michigan Collaborative**

## **ENDORSEMENTS**

**Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC)**

**Michigan Chapter of the National Deer Association (NDA)**

**Michigan Bowhunters Association (MBH)**

**Michigan Recreation and Park Association (mParks) Archery Focus Area**

**Michigan Chapter of the National Wildlife Turkey Federation (NWTf)**

# How will the Hunt Michigan Collaborative help Cities?

- Organizations who are part of the collaborative will provide assistance to communities in educating the public about wildlife management and conservation (native species vs invasive species, ...)
- Organizations such as the National Wildlife Turkey Federation will provide outreach education programs (at no charge) through city camps and nature programs
- The Michigan National Deer Association may offer assistance in connecting food banks to provide venison and offer Field to Fork programs to communities
- Residents will have the opportunity to learn about next step programs such as hunter safety programs, hunting programs, fishing programs, and other outdoor related program opportunities that cities do not offer

# Conclusion

1. The deer population is growing
2. Our ecosystem is being impacted
3. The overabundance of deer is a local, regional and state concern
4. Data collection will continue
5. What is the plan of action?

# Current Plan

The Michigan Deer Management Plan enacted by the MDNR stipulates:

*“This plan does not outline operational details of deer management in Michigan. Operational details will be specified at regional levels within an adaptive-management framework in which specific management methods are routinely adjusted and updated as local conditions, technology, regulations, and other aspects of management change.”*

# New Statewide Urban Deer Management Plan

1. Work with the NRC, MDNR, and others to develop a Statewide Urban Deer Management Plan that gives community leaders a plan to follow in their community to better manage deer
2. Determine funding sources needed to implement a successful deer management plan for communities

# What a Statewide Urban Deer Management Plan will offer...

The opportunity for city leaders to review a deer management plan, then make the decision to manage deer or not manage deer by enacting the plan

# Possible Funding Source – Wildlife Habitat Grants

- The DNR is seeking applicants from municipalities
- Approximately 1 million in anticipated funding
- Eligible Projects: Projects that enhance and improve the quality and quantity of game species habitat specific to Wildlife's Division Strategic Plan goal #2 – Manage habitat for sustainable wildlife populations and wildlife-based recreation
- Applications due in March
- Minimum: \$15,000 grant
- Match: 0 – 10%?

Questions?