

Code of Conduct
Freeville Deer Management Program

Fall 2022 - Spring 2023

Our deer management program is designed to maximize both participant and public safety, reduce potential confrontations or objections by the public while facilitating increased deer population reduction in the village. **All participants are required to obey all instructions and rules set forth below (and any updates).** Failure to follow these rules will result in immediate and permanent removal from the program.

General

1. The correct name for individuals in this program is participants or shooters. This is not a hunting activity per DEC and should be referred to as that on all official documents.
2. All participants must submit contact information (email, cell phone, backtag #) and their vehicle information (license plate numbers of all vehicles that may be used during permit activities) before venturing out. Bernd is collecting this information and will pass it on to the DEC and ECO's.
3. We will maintain a database of participants and their contact information that will be made available to all participants, as well as DEC Environmental Conservation Officers (ECO's). This should reduce the possibility for interruptions as ECO's check reports for potential poaching activities. All participants will be provided contact information for ECO's as well.
4. Due to the sensitivity and potential for objections to our activities from some community members, participants are not allowed to inform public of stand locations and names of landowners or participants.
5. All data of culls shall be reported to program manager for communication to Village Board for future determination on the goals of the program - to restore health to village deer population, limit deer car collisions, and protect important vegetation. These matrixes as well as accounts from the professionals participating in the program will determine effectiveness of program in its current state and any future changes needed.

Program Details

6. Permit activities will be allowed starting from board adoption of rules or from September 20-30th 2022 (baiting or observing only), whatever is later, and then approved participants can shoot from October 1st 2022 to March 31st 2023. Bait (if used) must be at least 300 feet from a public road. This is for bait only, you can be much closer to a road to shoot without bait, for example under an oak or apple tree. All setbacks need to be consistent with current DEC rules and regulations.

7. We will operate with a very small group of participants that will share a small number of stands. This small group of shooters will work together to keep all stand sites secured, baited and used effectively. Communication of when sites will be used and baited will be handled through an email or text chain amongst the group.
8. Locations should not be used more than twice a week and often longer resting periods are advisable. Which days and times participants use the location is up to each individual. We had the best success in the evenings and early night hours when deer are most relaxed.
9. The use of nuisance tags throughout this period allows (but does not require) baiting and shooting at night. It will be up to each individual how you want to exercise or reject this option. But it is important that we make efficient use of time, resources and stand locations. Using trail cameras to pattern deer use of bait locations will greatly aid in making efficient use of your time in a stand.
10. The Village may authorize funding to purchase bait (corn). If so, corn will be made available to participants (but you can supplement with your own as long as it does not contain any animal parts).
11. All participants need to sign the log of agents and agree to the permit conditions.
12. While in the field, each participant will need to be in possession of at least a single nuisance tag and a copy of the nuisance permit plus written permission of the landowner.
13. When in the field you must be in possession enough tags to tag any deer you shoot at.
14. Our allocated tags will be kept in a lockbox at the Village Barn which all the participants have access to. Unused tags are to be left at this location so shooters will know how many tags are left. If multiple shooters are out at the same time, they will keep in contact via text to coordinate the number of deer taken.
15. We are allowed to take bucks and antlerless deer on these permits. All antlers will need to be removed and be surrendered to the DEC within 10 days of taking of an antlered deer. There will be a dedicated box located with the tags to deposit the antlers.
16. Do not shoot when other people are within 200' of the tree stand. This potential interference is likely kept to a minimum due to typical nighttime shooting hours. Nobody has the right to interfere with the approved activities. Call Bernd from your tree if this is happening. Remember to use your cell phone to take video and sound of the interference, if it does occur.
17. Activities will only be conducted at pre-determined and approved locations (tree stands). No stalking or shooting while walking in or out of stand; no driving of deer. The only time this does not apply is if you need a follow-up shot and need to walk up to a downed deer. Weapon discharge restrictions still apply. Participants must be aware of a downed deer's location with respect to restricted area boundaries and are required to carry program maps when in the field.

18. Parking in designated areas only (as specified by landowners).
19. Use your best judgment and be aware of your limitations for shot selection. Do not risk our long-term goals to reduce deer damage by taking poor shots. Double lung shots will reduce distances deer travel and avoid any landowner conflicts. Long distance shots are limited at night, anyway. Do not shoot at moving deer.
20. We have a strong preference for selection of which deer to shoot while you are in your stand. Ideally, we have individual deer or small groups approach the bait, but this is not always the case. (a) If you have >5 deer at the bait, or in the vicinity, PLEASE DO NOT SHOOT. It educates too many individuals. Ideally you pick each individual off as it approaches the bait. Please be disciplined – our overall success will depend on it. You may have chances once some individuals leave the bait to take remaining ones. (b) If you have groups with fawns approach the bait, please take the older animals first. The young ones will often hang around and you can take them as they come back to bait, or even stay there. (c) If you have a choice between two individuals, one of which is a buck, please take the doe. We are allowed to take antlered deer. The antlers need to be delivered to the DEC (see above).
21. No field dressing is allowed at any properties so prepare sleds, carriers, etc. Using sleds and carriers also leaves less marks at sites, avoids contaminating the area with scent marks.
22. Participants can determine the fate of all shot deer for either self-consumption or some type of donation. We have a strong preference to donate as many carcasses as possible to those in need.

Notes on personal behavior while conducting activities

23. Have cell phones ready and text among participants.
24. Knowledge of property boundaries, and respect for preferences by landowners are especially important. Be as discreet and silent as possible, use your best judgment and leave if a stand is compromised, do not confront other users unless being approached but report to deer oversight committee. Videotape or take pictures of people behaving inappropriately.
25. Be friendly and cordial when approached without offering details.
26. Within the area, there are certain landowners that do not support lethal deer management, or do not allow access to retrieve deer. Conflicts may arise; make sure you are mentally prepared when confronted. Stay calm, do not try to win an argument or engage in a shouting match. Explain that you are part of the approved Village of Freeville deer management program and then wait for support or the police to arrive. Alert the landowner to potential trespassers, should this occur.

A few notes on village deer management

27. It is important to not use a stand should your sent blow towards the bait or into the areas

from where deer approach. Please follow these guidelines strictly – if will help us achieve management goals. Deer will quickly “smarten up”. Do not spook deer unnecessarily.

28. Often there are multiple shot opportunities in a single sitting. Instead of immediately retrieving deer after you have taken a shot and see the deer fall, wait for additional deer to come by and retrieve them once you have 2 or 3 on the ground (except if you see more deer approaching). Remove the initial deer from the vicinity of the stand, retrieve your arrows and continue with your activity until you feel the productive period is over. As deer populations are reduced, fewer multiple shot opportunities will arise.
29. Participant’s experience in the Cornell, Village of Lansing and Trumansburg programs have shown that deer have several waves of activity. The first wave occurred around sunset, then another about 30-60 min later, then a lull of an hour or so, and then another wave of deer were approaching bait. Different properties show different activity patterns. Trail cams are a great help in patterning deer travel times and making use of the most productive times at your stand location. We are now also able to get out and shoot before daybreak, another important deer travel time.

Measurements of Success

The program will renew yearly based on the overall success of the program. Vehicle kill data, participant observation/results and resident input will be taken into account.

Yearly road kill numbers will be reported by Freeville DOT personal.

Regular village wide residential surveys will be continued on a 2-3-year basis to determine changes in tick borne illnesses and planting destruction. This will be in addition to yearly in-formal resident input.

This data along with input from local biologists and DEC personal will be used to see if desired goals are being meet and what changes (if any) need to be made to the program.

Please note all activities are always subject to LOCAL LAW NO. 1 FOR THE YEAR 2022.

This law provides and exception to the weapon discharge rules provided all these items are in true.

- (i) The Village of Freeville or its agent is actively operating a deer management program.
- (ii) Prior to taking such actions, the landowner or agent has completed all necessary paperwork to be in alignment with any Village of Freeville deer management regulations in place at the time.
- (iii) Landowner or agent has received back written approval from the Village or its agent that permission has been granted for a specified date range and it is currently within that date range.

- (iv) Such actions are taken in accordance with the NYSDEC Permit and all applicable New York State laws, rules and regulations, including the requirements of New York State Environmental Conservation Law Section 11-0931, including as such Section may from time to time be amended hereafter.
- (v) Such actions are taken in accordance with any Village of Freeville deer management, rules and regulations, including, but not limited, current time of date and setback rules.
- (vi) Such actions are taken on the permitted landowner's property only.
- (vii) Such actions are taken only by compound bow or crossbow;