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TOWN OF TRURO COMPLETES FIRST ANNUAL CONTROLLED MANAGED URBAN DEER HUNT

As part of the Town of Truro's Deer Management Strategy, the Town completed the first Controlled Managed Hunt in Truro in mid-February. The hunt ran for just over three weeks, and in total 14 deer were harvested.

The Controlled Managed Hunt was carried out with the guidance, oversight and permitting from the NS Dept of Natural Resources and Renewables (DNRR). Hunting was completed on three approved sites by proficient hunters who were granted special permits from DNRR. As outlined in the Town's Deer Management Strategy, a Controlled Managed Hunt is considered the most favourable population reduction method, in terms of effectiveness, feasibility, public cost, capacity and time to implement.

The Controlled Managed Hunt is expected to take place annually until the urban deer population can be brought to an acceptable and manageable level. For the first year of the program, 20 deer were permitted to be harvested.

"We took 14 deer in the first year of the program," stated Mayor Bill Mills, Town of Truro. "This was a conservative number that allowed the program to develop best practices and build efficiencies for future years. Council and I are very happy with the results, as public safety was paramount to the overall program. These 14 deer will help to feed families across Nova Scotia through our partnership with Feed Nova Scotia."

All deer harvested through the program were donated to Feed Nova Scotia and distributed to food banks throughout Nova Scotia.

"There's nothing more Nova Scotian than helping your neighbour when times are tough, and the Controlled Managed Hunt in Truro has certainly done that," said Karen Theriault, Director of Development and Communications at Feed Nova Scotia. "The deer meat that Feed Nova Scotia received through this program represents 1,890 servings of protein. That means critical nourishment for thousands of Nova Scotians who count on us and our network of food banks for support."

The Town's Deer Management Working Group wanted the program to operate on as little waste as possible. As part of the program, all hides were donated to Millbrook First Nation. Other parts of the

animal were used for Provincial and National research purposes, including research on COVID-19 in white-tailed deer.

“In addition to the COVID-19 screening we completed, deer were screened for parasites that can infect domestic animals and livestock. A critical aspect of public health is understanding the pathogens that wildlife carry; especially in an urban setting where wildlife, humans and pets share the same environment,” stated Dr. Sarah Stewart-Clark, Associate Professor at Dalhousie University. “As the only department of animal science and aquaculture in the province, it was important for us to contribute in this way.” Dr. Fraser Clark, Assistant Professor at Dalhousie University, continued, “While the test results for COVID-19 are not yet available, the deer screened were of good health and no macroparasites were detected. This pilot study allowed us to demonstrate proof of concept and we have applied to the Public Health Agency of Canada for funding which would allow us to partner and expand our monitoring so that our public health officials can make decisions with the most up to date information available.”

The purpose of the Town’s Deer Management Strategy is to reduce the deer population numbers within the Town of Truro for the benefit of natural ecosystems, citizen landscapes, reducing Deer Vehicle Collisions (DVC’s), public health concerns, the possible presence of deer predators, and an overall reduction of deer human conflict. While residents will need to learn to live with deer long-term, there are several measures that people can take to assist with deer management efforts in Truro and help to bring the urban deer population within a manageable number. The most important management tool for residents is to stop the feeding of deer within and around the Town.

"Deer are wild animals and Nova Scotians should not be feeding them. Leaving food outside attracts wildlife into populated areas which can pose a risk to both humans and wildlife. Working together, we can protect the health of the area's deer population and strive to create an environment where humans and wildlife coexist," said Bob Petrie, Director of Wildlife, Department of Natural Resources and Renewables.

The Town of Truro wishes to thank all partners involved in the first Controlled Managed Hunt within Truro. “Many people were working together to make this program a success,” said Mayor Mills. “Because of its success, we are already working to implement the hunt on an annual basis. We hope to start the next hunt during the Fall of 2022 to allow for more predictable weather and better overall conditions.”

For more information on the Deer Management Strategy, residents are encouraged to visit: <https://hub-connect-townoftruro.hub.arcgis.com/> and click on the Urban Deer Management tab.



Media Release

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