



Request for Applications/Proposals Deer Management Program at St. Patrick's County Park

Issue date: March 1, 2010

The St. Joseph County Parks and Recreation Department (SJCP) is seeking applications/proposals from organized groups of experienced Indiana licensed archery hunters/corporation for the purposes of white tail deer management at St. Patrick's County Park. Indiana residents are preferred. Individual applications will not be accepted. (see scope of service below).

Interested parties should submit their written proposal no later than **4:00pm on April 1, 2010 to:**

Evelyn Kirkwood, Director
St. Joseph County Parks and Recreation Department
50651 Laurel Rd
South Bend IN 46637
574-277-4828
Fax: 574-273-2334

St. Joseph County Parks reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.

Background

St. Joseph County Parks' decision to consider a deer management plan was based on several factors: (1) we believed we were observing more deer and deer trails within the park property, and more damage to landscaping trees and herbaceous ground cover and a decrease in key indicator species of wildflowers; (2) the park acquired an additional 105 acres in early 2007, and that property has been hunted extensively for the past 7 years, resulting in a harvest of approximately a dozen deer; (3) we wanted to act proactively, NOT reactively, to protect the forest ecosystem and wildflowers, and ultimately the health of the deer themselves.

Although St. Patrick's County Park is not in a crisis situation, the deer population should be stabilized to prevent increasing damage to the woodland habitat.

A deer management program has been conducted at St. Patrick's County Park in 2007, 2008, 2009.

Scope of Service

The contracted group will be the sole group allowed to hunt on the property and will be required to operate under the following conditions:

All hunters in the group must be Indiana-licensed archery hunters, adhering to all Indiana hunting rules and regulations. A maximum of eight (8) licensed hunters will be allowed to participate during the legal archery season. The hunting group members serve as volunteers for SJCP.

Hunters will be limited to an approximately 105-acre portion in the southeast area of St. Patrick's County Park as designated by SJCP. In certain instances, when the park is closed to the public, the control program may be extended to other areas of the park as approved by the Director.

Deer harvested by hunters by the selected group will count towards a hunter's regular license and bonus antlerless license quotas. Comprehensive lifetime hunting license holders are not required to purchase bonus antlerless licenses.

Hunters will be required to hunt from tree stands only using legal archery equipment. No cross bows. Stands must not be visible from the periphery of the property. Stands must adhere to the same protocol as those used on state-owned land. Stands must be removed on the last day of the hunting season.

The hunting group, as a unit, will be required to take 10 to 30 deer in the legal archery season. (quota to be reviewed annually) 95% of the harvest must be antlerless deer.

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The group coordinator will be required to maintain and submit weekly an Excel spreadsheet with all hunting activity on the property, which includes:

- check in and check out times of all hunters on the property, stand locations, total of hours volunteered
- a record of every arrow shot and result of the shot
- tag records for every deer harvested
- site observations

Each hunter will be allowed to keep up to two deer for personal use. All others must be taken to an authorized processor for donation of the meat to needy organizations (example: D&C Meats- Osceola, is a participant in the Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry, and will process the deer at no charge). Documentation of delivery of deer to processing plant for purposes of sending meat to the food bank or other 501 c3 organization is required.

Field dressing on site is permitted; however, gut piles must be out of sight from periphery of park or from hiking trails.

A mid-season meeting with the hunting group coordinator and park staff is required for an update on the progress of the hunt.

St. Joseph County Parks will provide

- Access to the 105 acres at St. Patrick's County Parks during the hunting season, including access to gates at the site. An aerial map of the site will be provided. Buffer zones will be explained in the safety meeting.
- Permission to plant and use food plots on the hunting area, provided they are approved *in advance* by the SJCP.
- Permission for the hunting group to contact local law enforcement authorities if trespassers or poachers are found in the park.
- A list of dates and/or times when hunting will be closed or curtailed based on events or activities of adjacent property owners.

Application Process

- The hunting group leader, or coordinator, should **send a COVER letter** indicating interest in the program.
- Note: the hunting group coordinator will be the contact and liaison with SJCP.
- Include a completed application for each hunter that will participate as part of your hunting group documenting experience with archery and deer hunting, etc.
- Include a \$5 application fee per individual in your group (payable to St. Joseph County Parks.) The fee is non-refundable.

Applications will be reviewed and lead hunters/coordinators will be selected for interviews with SJCP.

Following the interview process and selection all hunters in the selected team must meet with SJCP staff for a safety meeting and pass an archery proficiency test which will be arranged by SJCP with the assistance of the IDNR.

If your group is selected...

- Every hunter in the selected group must sign a waiver of liability and indemnification agreement.
- The selected hunting group will sign an agreement for services for three (3) years. Each party reserves the right to terminate or renegotiate terms of the agreement annually based on such items as the hunting group's documentation, harvest numbers, assessments by park staff as to recommended changes to the number of deer harvested, etc.