



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Catoctin Mountain Park

6602 Foxville Road
Thurmont, MD 21788

(301) 663-9388 phone

(301) 271-2764 fax

Catoctin Mountain Park News Release

February 16, 2016

For Immediate Release

Ed Wenschhof, Acting Superintendent

Catoctin Mountain Park Donates More Than 30,800 Pounds of Deer Meat to Local Food Banks

THURMONT, MD – Catoctin Mountain Park completed the seventh year of white-tailed deer population reduction as prescribed in the Catoctin White-tailed Deer Management Plan / Final Environmental Impact Statement. The plan addressed the consumption of tree and shrub seedlings by an increasing deer population, which has limited the ability of native forests to regenerate.

Reduction began on November 16, 2015 and was concluded on January 21, 2016, resulting in the removal of 76 deer from the park. This season, more than 2,400 pounds of venison (deer meat) were donated to the local Thurmont Food Bank, the Help Hotline, and the Lunch Place soup kitchen. Since 2010, the park has donated more than 30,800 pounds of venison to local food banks.

According to Pastor Sally Joyner-Giffin, coordinator of the Thurmont Food Bank, “It's a tremendous help to the Thurmont Food Bank to partner with Catoctin Mountain National Park to get fresh deer meat to local people. More than 500 households have benefited from this partnership that uses local resources to feed those in need. The Park Service and Shuff's Meats have been wonderful to work with. During the cold winter month's people really appreciate receiving high protein meat that can supplement the basic foods we give regularly out.”

HELP Hot Line staff stated that “The Help Hot Line Food Bank at Blue Ridge Summit PA is most grateful to again this year get venison, our main source of protein, from the Catoctin Mountain Park's Deer Harvest Program. Our clients are very appreciative to have this quality meat, 59 families received food assistance in the months of December 2015 and January 2016. Many of these families, most with children, prefer the burger because of its versatility, however we find the ladies willing to share recipes for the roast which they use for stews and BBQ.”

Before the first season of deer management began in February 2010, there were approximately 123 deer per square mile in the Park. Park Biologists estimate that the deer population is now within 15 - 20 deer per square mile, which is the target density described in the White-tailed Deer Management Plan/EIS.

NPS employees that conduct annual plant surveys found that there are nearly 10 times the number of native tree seedlings today than there were before deer management operations began. Before deer management, there were roughly 255 seedlings per acre and there are currently about 2,443 seedlings per acre. Park staff will continue to conduct annual vegetation monitoring, fall deer density surveys, and deer reduction operations as needed to maintain the herd at 15-20 deer per square mile.

Catoctin Mountain Park is one of 409 units administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. The Park Visitor Center, located on State Route 77 three miles west of Thurmont, Maryland, is open Sunday-Saturday from 10:00 am – 5:00 pm.

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Correspondence should be addressed to: Superintendent, Catoctin Mountain Park, 6602 Foxville Road, Thurmont, MD 21788. Please visit the Catoctin Mountain Park website at www.nps.gov/cato for more information. General information can be obtained by calling the Visitor Center at (301) 663-9388.