

Preserving the Seashore's Native Ecosystem

Management of the two species of non-native deer, axis and fallow, began in July 2007, in accordance with the Preferred Alternative in the Environmental Impact Statement. Approximately 600 non-native deer have been lethally removed from Point Reyes National Seashore-administered lands. Lethal removal of axis and fallow deer was accomplished by contracted experts in wildlife control. Safety of visitors and staff, as well as humane treatment of dispatched animals, was paramount. Over 80 % of culled deer were donated as food for the needy to Bay Area charities, local Native American tribes and condor recovery programs throughout California.

As part of a joint NPS-USDA research project to assess the field efficacy of an experimental contraceptive for fertility control in fallow deer. Eighty (80) adult fallow does were captured via dropnet (83%) and dartgun (17%). Animals were assessed for health, pregnancy and lactation status, fecal samples were collected for progesterone assay (pregnancy testing) and *Mycobacterium avium* paratuberculosis culture

(John's disease testing). All does were permanently and uniquely marked with ear tags and VHF radio telemetry collars fitted with mortality sensors. Animals were injected with either GonaCon™, an experimental immunocontraceptive developed by the USDA, or a sham injection. Experimental subjects will be monitored over the next 4-6 years via radio telemetry to assess efficacy and safety of the vaccine.



Radio-collared and ear-tagged fallow doe



Tule elk at the Tule Elk Reserve on Tomales Point

Long-term Elk Monitoring

2007 was the third and final year of a joint NPS-USGS-U.C. Berkeley project to study the elk populations at Limantour and Tomales Point.

Information on adult survival, reproduction and calf recruitment is pending. Three elk censuses were conducted at the Tomales Point Tule Elk Reserve during November and December of 2007.

The highest count was 585 elk, higher than in previous years. The increase in females, calves and spikes and high survivability indicate that the Tomales Point population will likely continue to expand in 2008. The free-ranging herd at Limantour and Drakes Beach has expanded slowly with current numbers estimated at approximately 50 animals.