



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Valley Forge National
Historical Park

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Valley Forge National Historical Park - News Release

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Valley Forge National Historical Park Initiates the Second Year of White-tailed Deer Management

VALLEY FORGE, PA – Valley Forge National Historical Park will conduct the second year of the lethal reduction phase of the White-tailed Deer Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (plan) beginning in November 2011 and extending through March 2012. The plan addresses browsing of tree and shrub seedlings by an increasing deer population over the last two decades which has prevented the ability of native forests to grow and mature and has reduced habitat for a range of native wildlife species.

Over four years, sharpshooting, plus capture and euthanasia, will achieve an initial deer density goal of 31 to 35 deer per square mile from the 2009 density of 241 deer per square mile. Subsequently, the park will maintain the park deer population level through reproductive control, once an acceptable agent becomes available.

Extensive measures to ensure a safe, humane, and successful operation include using highly qualified and experienced marksmen familiar with the park's geography and with conducting reduction activities in a highly suburbanized environment. The National Park Service will work with biologists from the United States Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services. This agency has a long history of conducting safe and effective actions to reduce wildlife populations, including the reduction of deer populations at multiple locations in the Philadelphia region.

Additional safety measures include conducting population reduction actions when the park is closed, establishing safety zones, using bait to attract deer to safe removal locations, conducting shooting actions from an elevated position, and utilizing specialized, non-lead ammunition that is safe for use in urban areas and the environment. NPS is closely coordinating all activities associated with implementation of the white-tailed deer management plan with township and state law enforcement officials and with the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

For additional information please contact Kristina Heister, Natural Resources Manager, Valley Forge NHP via email at kristina_heister@nps.gov. You may also visit the park website at www.nps.gov/vafo.

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