



Town of Carlisle

Deer Control Committee

66 Westford Street
Carlisle, MA 01741

2020 Proposed Plan for Deer Control

Preamble

At the June 9, 2020 meeting of the Board of Selectmen, the Board requested the Deer Control Committee submit a revised plan for the proposed deer control measures for this year with modifications to the previously submitted plan as follows:

- 1) To not have a net increase in the number of parcels hunted
- 2) To not have a net increase in the number of days that are hunted
- 3) To not have a net increase in the number of simultaneous hunters
- 4) To require hunters to have an antlerless deer permit (ADP)
- 5) To add clarity on the proposal for hunting within the 500' dwelling setbacks
- 6) To address the concern raised regarding individuals not feeling safe on trails
- 7) To request that Mass Wildlife conduct updated density and browse studies

Recommendation

The Deer Control Committee recommends that the Board of Selectmen determine whether the Town wishes to control the population of deer by bringing a question to a future Town Meeting to definitively answer this question.

We recommend that the question be agreed to by both those in favor and those opposed to a hunting program on Town land so that it is a fair question. We also recommend that the question be binding and that it should last for some reasonable duration of time before the question is re-examined.

The bringing of such a question may be difficult as neither the advocates nor opposition to the hunt are a unified group. The Town Moderator has suggested it would be possible to give equal time to both advocates and opposition at Town Meeting. We recommend the Board consider how to enable these opposing positions to each effectively present their case at Town Meeting so the voters can have a clear picture of their choice.

Question

As the question can not be asked of the Town in time to impact this fall's hunt, the Board of Selectmen should determine whether or not we should have a hunt this fall.

The program is necessary to curtail the growth of the deer overpopulation problem. Our calculations indicate that the program run these past two years, although relatively small, was the difference between the population increasing and the population very slightly decreasing or holding steady. As such, continuing the hunt should prevent the problem from getting worse in the mean-time.

The Deer Control Committee understands the main concern raised by the public is related the feeling of safety while using the trails for recreation. This can be broken into two parts: First, fear of the hunters themselves. To address this, the Deer Control Committee recommends expanding last year's "Meet the Hunters" program to multiple events which anyone in the town can attend, and we will require that every hunter in the program participate in at least one of the events.

The second portion of the concern we heard is fear of being harmed by the act of hunting itself. The Deer Control Committee recommends improving our signage and holding presentations and discussions on the safety of features of the program. These safety features include using only bow hunting, setbacks from trails, fixed tree stands, advanced hunter education, background checks, interviews, and proficiency tests. We can explain how each of these items impact safety in detail, but perhaps for the Board at this time it is best to visualize it by showing the areas that are within a 75' range of the hunting stands as shown on the attached maps (shown to scale).

Proposal

If the Board decides to continue with the program, then we need to decide on the specifics of the program. Given that the hunting season starts at the beginning of October, there is insufficient time to make the significant changes previously proposed. Consistent with the directions given by the Selectmen on June 9, the Deer Control Committee now recommends making just a few minor changes to last year's hunt:

Parcel Swap

The Deer Control Committee recommends swapping Hart/Swanson and the DPW land for Greenough. It is our estimation that there is more of a need to control the deer population in the north-west and center of town as opposed to the eastern portion where there is already hunting on Great Meadows.

Greenough is 247 acres, whereas the combined area of Hart/Swanson and DPW is only 135 acres, a net reduction of 112 acres. In addition, previously there was hunting adjacent to 4.22 miles of trails on Greenough while in the new proposal it is only adjacent to 0.36 miles of trails on DPW and Hart/Swanson, a net reduction of 3.86 miles. Of the over 55 miles of trails in town, hunting on Town land will be adjacent to only 7.23 miles under this proposal.

Hunting Season

The Deer Control Committee recommends moving the season back by two weeks. Instead of October 5th through November 28th, our season would be October 19th through December 12th. It is our estimation that this would increase the number of deer taken as the deer tend to move more during daylight hours in the beginning of December.

The state allows firearms to be used for deer hunting during the last two weeks of our newly proposed season. However, our program would continue to be limited to bow hunting, and we would make the necessary changes to the regulations stress that.

This proposed change also makes more of the beautiful October leaf-peeping-season free of hunting on Town Land for those people who wish to walk these trails without any concerns about hunting happening nearby.

Number of Hunters

The Deer Control Committee recommends we continue to use the same 18 hunters that were in the program last year. If any of the hunters choose not to participate this fall, then we will take on new hunters from our waitlist to keep the number of hunters at 18.

Antlerless Deer Permit

We will adjust our regulations to require applicants to demonstrate that they have at least one Antlerless Deer Permit (ADP) to receive their permit to hunt on Carlisle Town Land.

500' Dwelling Setback

The Deer Control Committee does not intend to pursue this extension at this time.

Safety Concerns

As discussed previously, the Deer Control Committee will conduct "Meet the Hunters" events and safety presentations and discussions as well as improve the signage on the trails.

MassWildlife Studies

As described in the last meeting, MassWildlife was planning on assessing some of our lands this spring, but could not due to COVID-19; they plan try again next spring. The Deer Control Committee will confer with MassWildlife as requested. We will also try to arrange for MassWildlife (or Sudbury Valley Trustees) to train interested volunteers so additional assessments can be made.

Summary

In summary, the proposed hunt for 2020 would be nearly the same as the previous two years. Proposed modifications include swapping Hart/Swanson/DPW for Greenough, adjusting the season by two weeks, asking the same hunters to demonstrate an ADP, and having more "Meet the Hunters" and safety discussions with the public prior to the season starting.

Appendix A: Budget

July 11, 2020

Fall 2020 Carlisle Bow Hunt Projected Budget

Direct Expense

Supplies/signage	\$150	
Stipend – Deer Agent	\$300	
TOTAL Expense		\$450

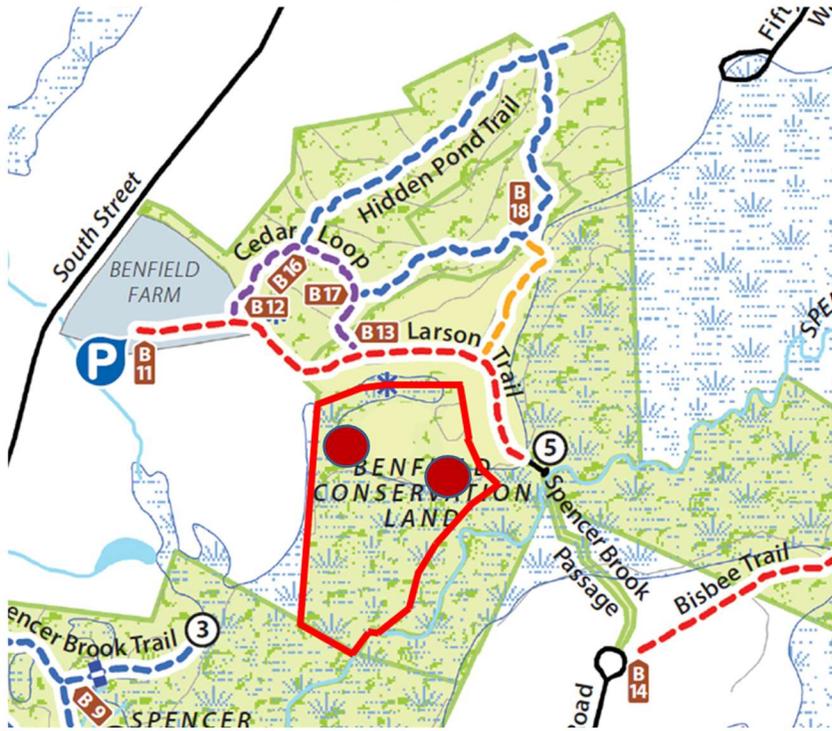
Income

18 permits @ \$30	\$540	
TOTAL Income		\$540

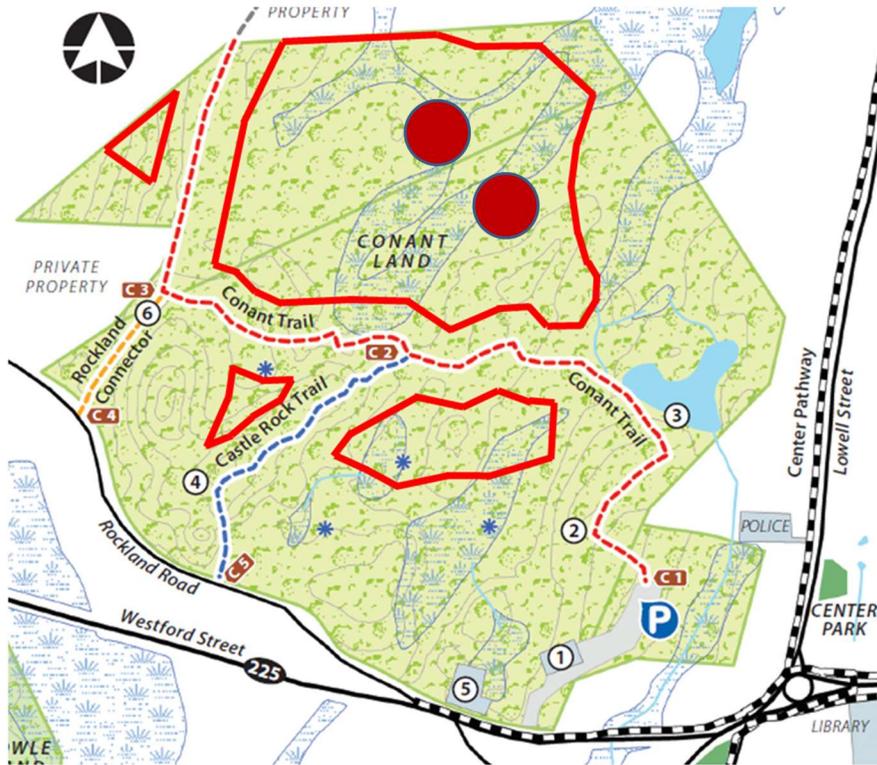
Notes:

1. As for all other town committees, the DCC meetings and minutes will be posted by Town Hall staff.
2. As for other town committees with fees, the bow hunter processing fee will be deposited by Town Hall staff and invoices will be submitted by the DCC for payment by Town Hall staff.
3. Any needed CORI checks will be done by the Town Administrator.

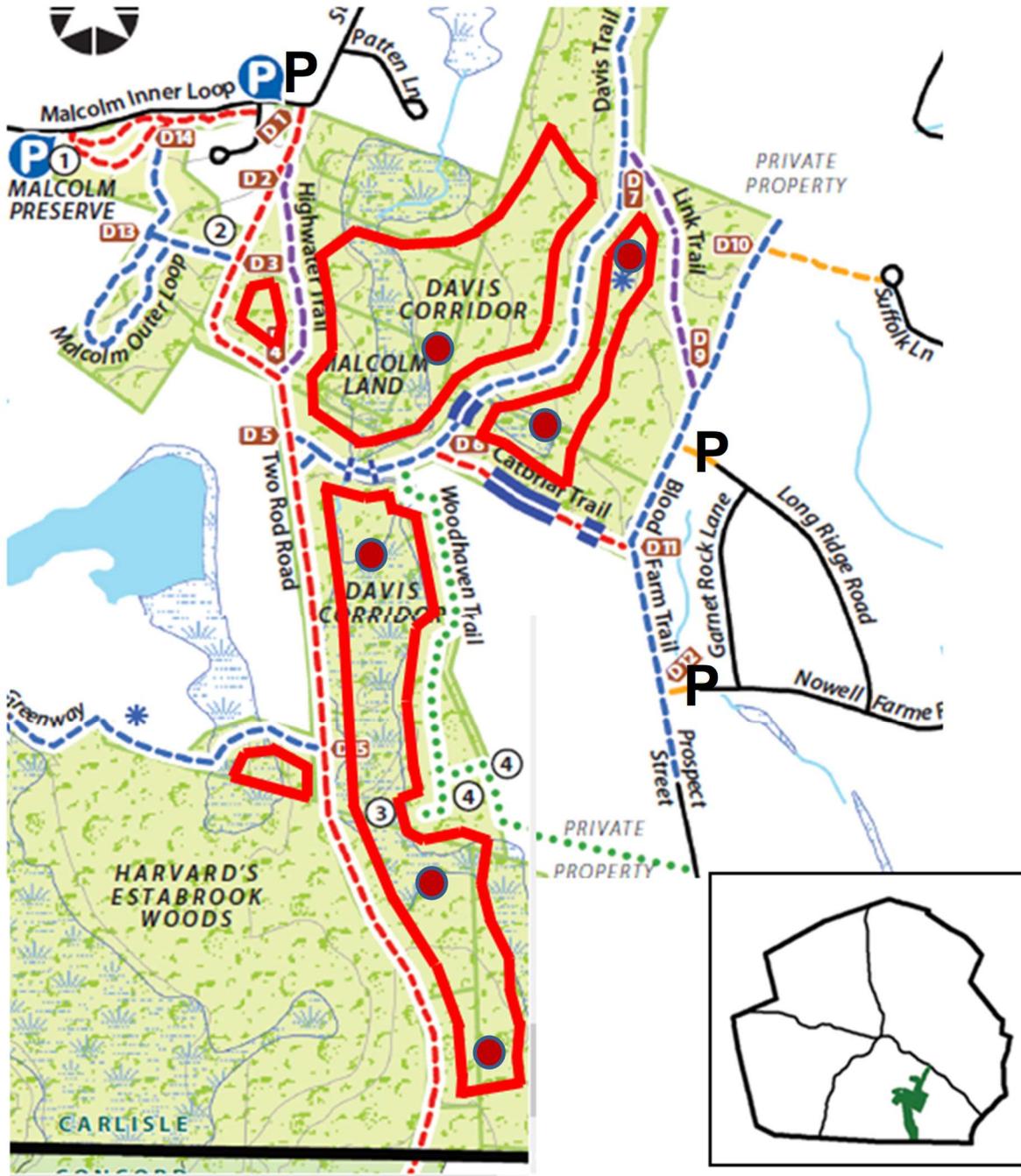
Appendix B1: Hunting Maps (Benfield)



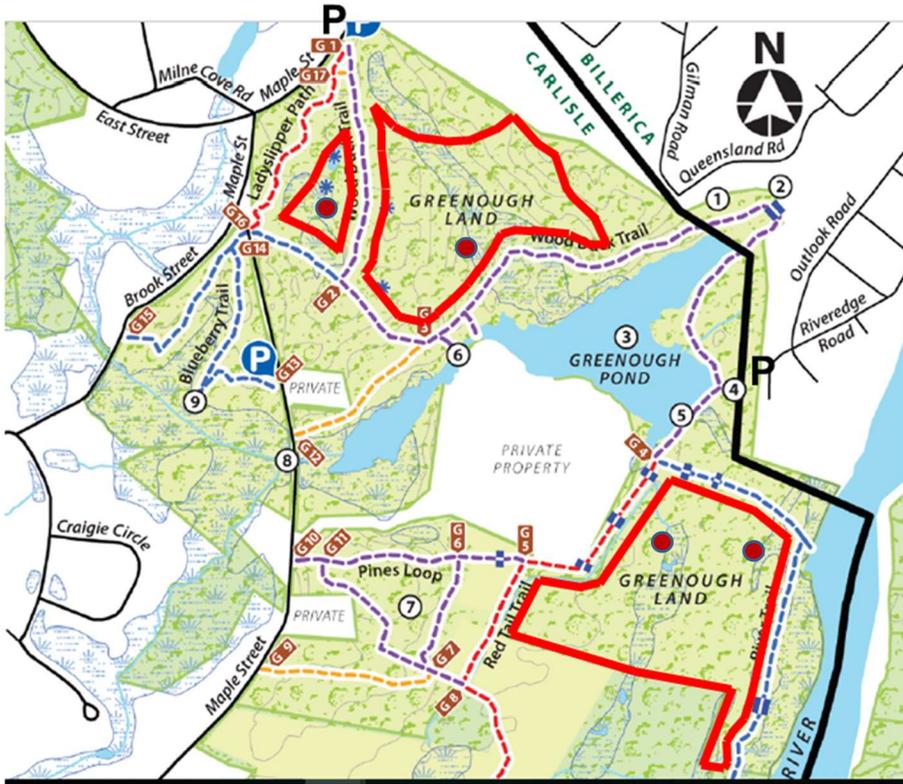
Appendix B2: Hunting Maps (Conant)



Appendix B3: Hunting Maps (Davis)



Appendix B4: Hunting Maps (Greenough)



Appendix B5: Hunting Maps (Town Forest)

