

2024 Montgomery Parks Managed Lottery Firearms Deer Hunting: Program Handbook

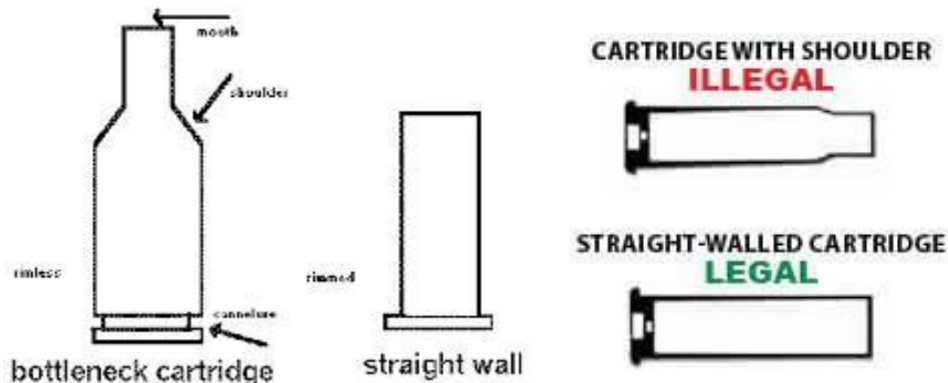


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NEW FOR 2024:

- Royce Hanson Conservation Park at Broad Run (RHCP-BR), located in Dickerson, MD will be added to the Lottery-based Program. This 435-acre park was acquired in 2021 by M-NCPPC. This park will be managed using a hybrid model that is new to the Lottery-based Program, whereas it will combine both archery and firearms hunting. Archery hunting will occur from September 9 – November 29, then again from January 11-31, while firearms hunting will occur on four (4) scheduled hunt dates during the winter months. Firearms hunts will occur much as they do in the traditional Lottery Program parks, however, staffing will be limited to 2 and ATV support/assistance will not be available. At the current time, this park is closed to the public and is undeveloped, with no trail system in place. Participants interested in hunting at this park should be aware that access and deer removal will be more challenging than a typical Lottery Firearms Program location. At this time, firearms stand sites at this park have not yet been finalized. If you apply and are selected for a firearms date at this location, your stand site will be communicated to you at a later date.
- There will be one (1) additional hunt day added at Rachel Carson Conservation Park, bringing the total number of hunt days at this location to four (4) during 2024.
- Montgomery County is now included in the state's CWD Management Area. Participants must be familiar with pertinent state guidelines found on MD DNR's "Chronic Wasting Disease in Maryland" page. Click [HERE](#) for more information. Reminder: If MD is not the hunter's home state, it is their responsibility to be aware of and follow their home state's laws regarding chronic wasting disease (CWD) and importation of deer harvested in MD.
- REMINDER: Allowable firearms and cartridges [Straight-Walled Cartridges now permitted]. Rifles that fire straight-walled cartridges, .350 -.500 calibers, may be used in the Montgomery Parks Firearms Managed Deer Hunting Program. 12-20 gauge shotguns remain permitted for use. Firearms discharge restrictions/regulations (shots less than 80 yards, ONLY) remain unchanged within the program. Safety First! It is requested that all firearms be cased or covered while in areas visible to the public. Please refer to Lottery Firearms Program Regulations document for more detailed information.



Montgomery County Deer Management and the Inception of the Managed Deer Hunting Program

In 1993, responding to citizen's concerns about deer-related problems, the Montgomery County Council established a Citizen Task Force to Study White-tailed Deer Management. As a result of this group's recommendations, the Montgomery County Deer Management Work Group (DMWG) was established to develop a deer management plan for the County and oversee the implementation of a countywide deer management program.

The DMWG is a multi-agency committee working together to address concerns surrounding deer population issues within Montgomery County. The goal of the plan is to "Reduce human-deer conflicts to a level that is compatible with human priorities and land uses."



At the recommendation of the DMWG, in response to the concerns of the citizens of Montgomery County, and the stakeholders they represent, managed deer hunting was implemented in the winter of 1996-1997, at Little Bennett Regional Park in Clarksburg (LBRP) and the Agricultural History Farm Park in Derwood. Since that time, managed hunting has ceased at the Agricultural History Farm Park, due to new development and proximity to housing, but the current firearms program includes:

- **Little Bennett Regional Park (LBRP) – Implemented in 1996**
- **Rachel Carson Conservation Park (RCCP) - Implemented in 2001**
- **Royce Hanson Conservation Park at Broad Run (RHCP-BR) – Implemented in 2024**

Managed hunting has been conducted annually since its inception in '96-'97 and has proven successful as a comprehensive means for reducing and maintaining the deer populations. To date, **6,780** deer have been safely harvested by managed hunt participants in the lottery firearms program and this program remains vital to the success of the Montgomery Parks' deer population management.

The Mission of the Managed Lottery Firearms Deer Hunting Program

The mission of the Managed Deer Hunting Program is:

" To utilize carefully selected hunters to safely reduce and/or maintain deer populations on select parklands, in an effort to alleviate damage to natural ecosystems and reduce human- deer conflicts to a level that is compatible with human priorities and land uses."

Safety is our number one priority for this program and is stressed in all facets of operations from the pre-screening hunter selection process through implementation in the field. Participant disregard or negligence of any safety element in this program will not be tolerated. Offenders will be removed from the program and, if deemed appropriate, will be subject to prosecution.

Participants can best further the mission of the Managed Deer Hunting Program by:

- Acting selflessly and responsibly
- Being reliable and arriving on time
- Following all rules and regulations meticulously and demonstrating willingness to safely harvest/remove multiple antlerless deer when the opportunity presents itself

Staying practiced and proficient with his/her firearm and other equipment as well as with target identification and shot selection (i.e. identifying antlered deer vs. antlerless deer, identifying ranges, etc.)



Program Goals and Objectives

While we hope to provide an enjoyable hunting experience, this program is NOT a recreational program. Simply stated, this is a “management program.” Recreation may come as a by-product of this program, but it is not the priority, and will not be treated as such by Wildlife Ecology Staff.

The goals and objectives of the Managed Deer Hunting Program are:

- To SAFELY reduce over-populations of deer in select parks
- To maintain sustainable populations of deer in parks where population reductions have been successful, thereby reducing ecological, social and economic impacts caused by deer
- To balance white-tailed deer with their available natural habitat, thereby allowing them to fulfill their role within the environment

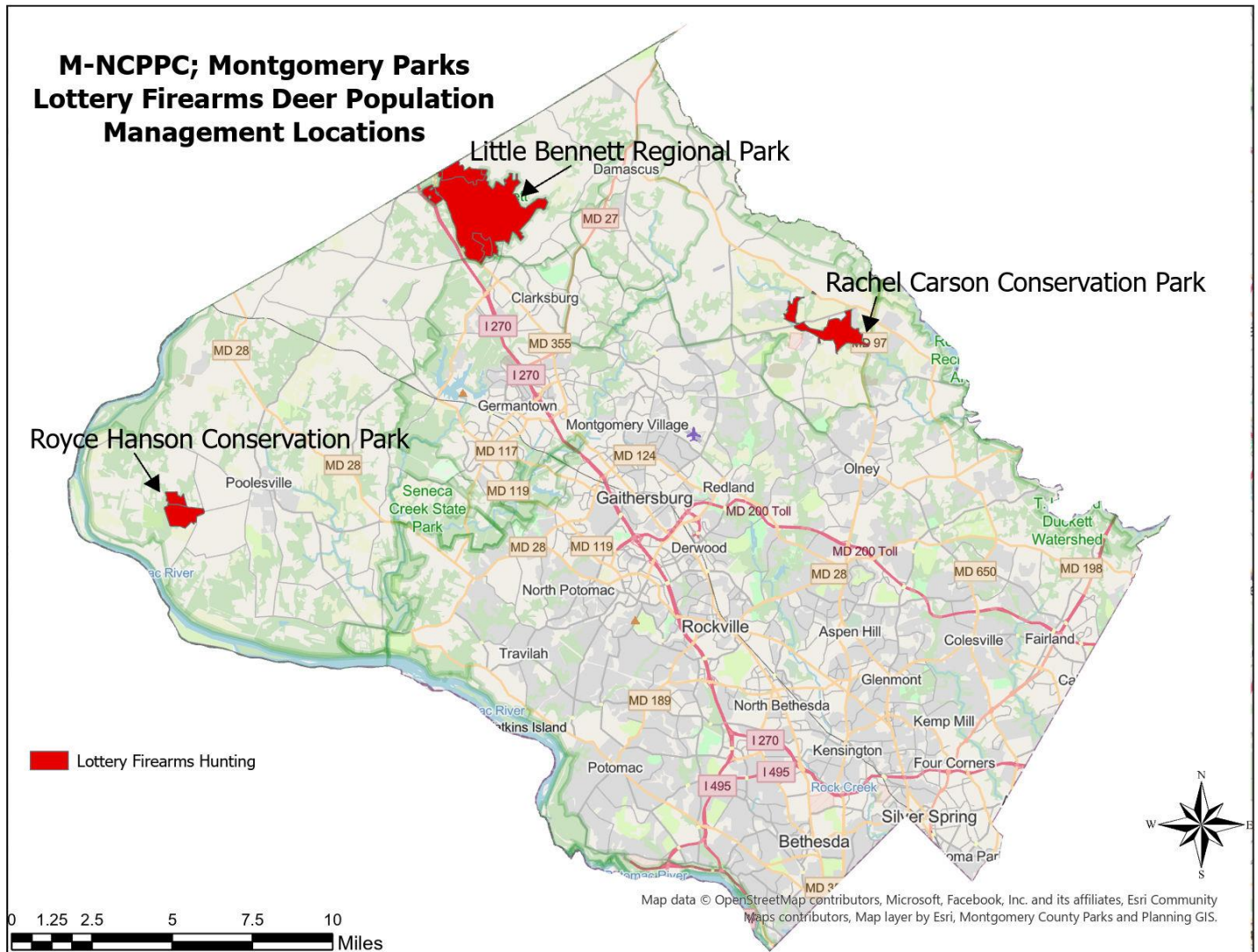
With these goals in mind, the hierarchy of priorities for this program can be summarized as follows:



1. Safety
2. Management Goals
3. Hunter Satisfaction

Managed Lottery Firearms Program Deer Hunting Locations

- Rachel Carson Conservation Park (RCCP) – Olney
- Little Bennett Regional Park (LBRP)– Clarksburg
- Royce Hanson Conservation Park (RHCP-BR) - Dickerson



For more information, see <http://www.parksdeermanagement.org> and click the link to access the password protected page (Approved Managed Hunt Participant Log-In) containing maps and other information for approved Managed Deer Hunting Program participants.

The Managed Hunting Program Lottery Explained

The Managed Hunting Program Lottery is intended to provide a fair system for the selection of hunting participants based on a drawing of random numbers annually. All parks currently under this program are drawn **separately**. Each applicant or applicant group may choose for which park(s) they wish to apply. Each participant/group may only be selected for one date at each location for a total of 2 possible selections per year, unless the number of available opportunities at a given location exceeds the number of applicants for that location (exceptions may apply based on specific circumstances, most notably, volunteer service hours).

NOTE: Participants who are interested in deer management volunteer work may request information by emailing mcp-deermanagement@montgomeryparks.org.

In the spring of 2009, and again in 2020, a survey was sent to existing participants. These surveys included questions regarding the Managed Deer Hunting Program Lottery, and participant attitudes and perceptions of the Lottery System. While the system is fair, based on your 2009 responses, we recognized that perhaps it could be improved to better satisfy the participants as a whole. As such, effective fall 2009; a preference point system was instituted to increase the probability of selection for participants who may not have been selected in previous seasons. As a result, within the 2020 survey, 85% of Lottery Program participants rated the lottery as “good” to “excellent”. This is encouraging, but it should be noted that even with the change to add preference points, there is no guarantee of selection. This is still a random system, and results are based on computer generated random number lists.

To aid your understanding, here are the nuts and bolts of the Lottery:

- Applications are numbered in the order by which they are received.
- Group applications are assigned one application number (assuring fair chance for selection for individual applicants).
NOTE: *There is neither advantage nor disadvantage to applying as a group.*
- If preference points have been earned (i.e. an applicant or applicant group was not selected the previous year), then the applicant or applicant group will be assigned an additional application number for each consecutive prior year not selected, thereby increasing the odds of being drawn.
- **HEADS UP!** If any member of an applicant group has been replaced by another applicant, that group forfeits any and all earned preference points. If group members are deleted but not replaced, the group will retain any and all preference points.
- Applicant numbers are drawn at random using a random number generator (<https://www.random.org/>).

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Random Sequence Generator

This form allows you to generate randomized sequences of integers. The randomness comes from atmospheric noise, which for many purposes is better than the pseudo-random number algorithms typically used in computer programs.

Part 1: Sequence Boundaries

Smallest value (limit -1,000,000,000)

Largest value (limit +1,000,000,000)

Format in column(s)

The length of the sequence (the largest minus the smallest value plus 1) can be no greater than 10,000.

Part 2: Go!

Be patient! It may take a little while to generate your sequence...

Note: A randomized sequence does not contain duplicates (the numbers are like raffle tickets drawn from a hat). There is also the [Integer Generator](#) which generates the numbers independently of each other (like rolls of a die) and where each number can occur more than once.

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(Random Number Generator)

- Following selection, site assignments are made based on the following priorities:
 - Considerations are made for participants with disabilities or health concerns.
 - Considerations are made for group parking
 - There are random assignments for the remainder of sites.

Some additional considerations:

- Staff makes every reasonable effort to assure a fair system for all program participants.
- Sites are selected based on safety implications, deer habitat use, movement patterns, population density surveys and history of success, etc.
- Not every participant will have a successful hunting experience on a given day. Please do not blame and/or harass staff for lack of success. After all, this is *hunting!*
- If you feel a complaint is warranted or necessary, please contact Andy by phone or email subsequent to your hunt date (exception: if you have reason to believe that the safety of you, other participants or staff has been compromised, please speak with Andy directly on the day of the hunt).

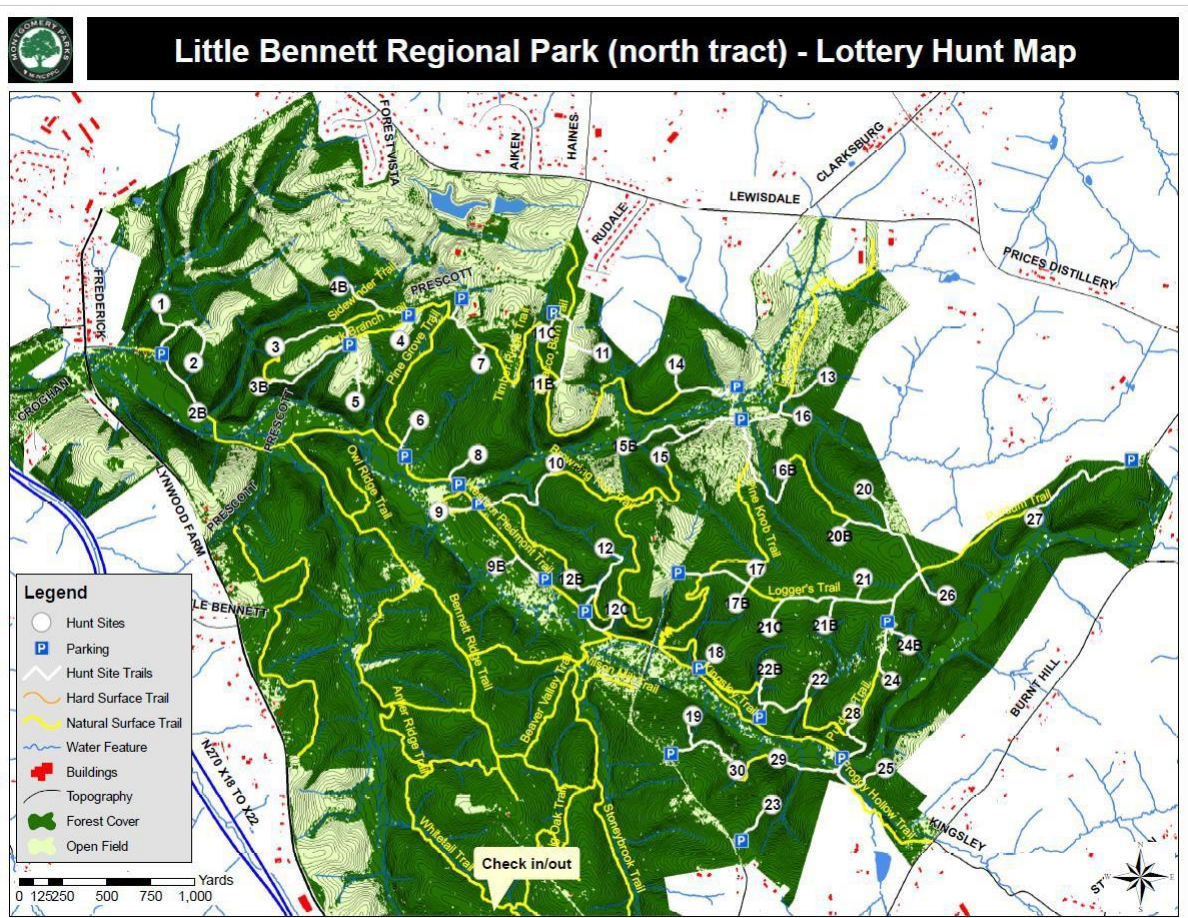
Random Number List	Lottery Selections	Applicant Name	Street	City	State	Zip Code	Special health considerations consider if person dates unable to participate (WB participate)
158	158						X 12/17, 12/18
174	158						X
126	158						X
49	175						X
71	126						X
155	126						X
128	71						X
96	155						X 11/14
108	155						X 11/14
40	96						X
186	96						X
149	40						X
139	104						X
188	104						X
14	186						X
66	186						X
14	149						X 14-Nov
30	149						X 11/5, 11/6
59	139						X
108	139						X
14	14						X
76	66						X
185	66						X
1							
198							
62							

(Lottery Spreadsheet)

Scouting Activities

Scouting is permitted and is intended to prepare participants for the morning of the hunt in an effort to increase efficiency and allow for a smooth beginning to each hunt day. However, certain locations may best be scouted or may be scouted **only**, on the dates specified in the selection materials. Go to the (Approved Managed Hunt Participant Log-In) at <http://www.parksdeermanagement.org>, to access these materials, as well as other information and maps, etc. While Montgomery Parks are open to the public every day from sunrise until sunset, any access not typically open to the public, will be open to managed hunt participants on pre-selected Scout Dates, **only**!

NOTE: There may be select sites for which scouting is **not** permitted. This is due to type of access, or potential disturbance to the community, etc. However, if you are not yet familiar with how to get to the park and/or the Check-In/Check-Out location, you may wish to travel to the park for that purpose.



Example of a Managed Hunt Map
 (Note: Map format is subject to change)

Scouting activities should accomplish the following:

1.
Familiarity with the
Check-In/Check-Out Area



2.
Familiarity with your assigned
parking area and navigating to and
from the Check-In/Check-Out Area



3.
Familiarity with the
beginning of the reflective
trail leading to your
assigned site



NOTE: Navigating all the way to your assigned site on scout days is permitted, but not required. If you choose to navigate all the way to your site, please be sure your assigned site is authorized for scouting and proceed quietly and carefully. Please note that you should not expect to be able to clearly find your way into and out from your site on scout days. Staff intentionally marks sites in a way to make them relatively difficult to find in daylight in order to discourage vandalism/damage from the public. If you are not confident in your ability to navigate with a map, compass, GPS or cell phone, we recommend that you do not attempt to scout all the way into and around your site. The main objective of scouting is to be sure participants can find their assigned parking and the beginning of their reflective trail. On the morning of your hunt it is unlikely that you will have any difficulty finding your way in with the use of a flashlight. On the morning of your hunt, if you do experience any difficulty, staff will be on call to assist you. Simply call the cell phone number on your permit or come back to the check-in location to report your difficulty.

NOTE: On the morning of your hunt, **NEVER** begin hunting unless you are absolutely certain you have reached your assigned site (with a reflective marker denoted “SITE X”).



Example of Site Marker

Hunt Day Check-In/Check-Out Procedure

On every hunt day, participants are required to check-in and check-out with Park Staff and/or Volunteers. The following are mandatory procedures for check-in/check-out:

Check-In

- ✓ All gear (flashlight, commercial manufactured grade tree stand/saddle, safety harness, haul line, firearm, ammunition, knives, etc.) should be thoroughly inspected **prior** to arriving to the park and again prior to use in the field.
- ✓ Check-in begins at 5:00AM and continues until 5:30AM. Every participant should arrive on site before 5:30AM.
- ✓ If running late, you must contact Andy (240-507-3722). After 5:45AM, **NO** participants will be admitted.
- ✓ Upon check-in, you will receive a hunting permit and parking permit from staff. The permit must be with you at all times while hunting. The parking permit is to be displayed in a visible location on the dashboard of your vehicle
- ✓ Information will be provided regarding legal shooting time for a given day (i.e. one half hour before legal sunrise as defined by MD DNR).
- ✓ Ask any last-minute questions (“if in doubt, find out”).
- ✓ **PLEASE NOTE:** If unsafe weather conditions exist, Staff reserves the right to cancel operations for the day. We strive for safety first. Likewise, if you do not feel safe driving to your hunt location, **DO NOT DRIVE**. Simply contact Staff to inform them of your decision. For more information regarding cancellations due to weather, please visit <http://www.parksdeermanagement.org> and click the link to access the password protected (Approved Managed Hunt Participant Log-In) page containing maps and other information for approved Managed Deer Hunting Program participants.

Check Out

- ✓ You must make contact with Andy by 12:30PM (call, text or in person), and then return to the Check-In/Check-Out Area prior to departure from the park.
- ✓ Complete Hunter Check-Out Log to verify you are out and to record your field observations. (If you cannot find this sheet upon check-out, ask Wildlife Staff or assigned volunteers).
- ✓ Return hunting permit and parking permit
- ✓ All deer must be checked by Wildlife Staff for verification and data collection.
- ✓ Specimen sampling may occur by request of Wildlife Staff (i.e. samples to be tested for Chronic Wasting Disease etc.).
- ✓ Appropriate codes (County Code and Location Code) will be provided for you to complete the State-required deer harvest checking procedure (by phone or on-line).

Navigating to Your Assigned Site and Setting Up for a Safe Hunt

After checking in with Wildlife Staff, you will proceed to your assigned parking area where you will find your reflective trail leading to your assigned site. Parking will be identified by a reflective sign. Each parking sign will note the area/assigned sites accessed from the specific parking site. Please park in a manner that does not impede traffic passage.

When you have collected and inspected all of your gear, you may begin navigating to your assigned site. **DO NOT** load your firearm at this time! You must proceed to your site while it is still dark, and well before legal shooting time. Therefore, you must use a flashlight to follow your reflective trail to your site. This trail may begin near or far from the parking site but will be visible from the parking site with a flashlight.

The start to the trail will be marked with either yellow-green reflective tape or white reflective tacks and, in some cases where appropriate, will include the site numbers that will utilize the trail. You will find white reflective tacks marking the trail. These tacks will be placed at easily identified intervals but may be spaced at greater distances when site trails utilize existing park hiking trails or roads.

Where a trail requires a significant change of direction, or when multiple hunting sites stem from a main access trail, a larger piece of reflective tape will be placed and will indicate the site number and the direction that the trail will take OR 2 reflective tacks placed together will indicate change in direction (see photo below).



Your trail will end at a larger, yellow-green reflective marker of approximately 2"x8" that will note your site number: ex. "SITE X" (see photo below). You may utilize any tree within ten yards (10 Paces) of this site marker.



NOTE: If you do not arrive at a strip of yellow-green tape that SPECIFICALLY includes the word "SITE", then you have not arrived at your assigned site. Directional markers are NOT the same as site markers!

If you are unable to locate your site marker, or if you become lost, DO NOT guess whether or not you have arrived at your assigned site, and DO NOT begin hunting! If possible, return to where you last saw a reflective marker and look carefully for the next marker. If you cannot find one, contact Wildlife Staff at the cell phone number provided on your permit card, inform them of the situation and wait for instructions and/or assistance. Sites are selected for utmost safety of the public and of the other hunting participants. Please exercise discretion and patience in these situations. Assistance will be provided as quickly and quietly as possible.

Once you have located your assigned site marker, you may choose any tree within 10 yards (10 paces) of this marker from which to hunt. Prior to climbing any tree, be sure to inspect the tree as thoroughly as possible. Hunt **ONLY** from trees that are living, solid and of appropriate climbing size for your specific tree stand/saddle. If any given tree shows peeling bark, is rotting, appears to be hollow or is broken or breaking, **DO NOT** utilize the tree! Sites are selected with at least one suitable tree for climbing within 10 yards of the marker. Never-the-less, you must use your best judgment. If there is any question about the safety of a tree, do not climb it.

REMINDER: You are required to wear a safety harness while climbing, hunting and descending, and you are required to utilize a haul line to raise and lower your unloaded firearm.

With your tree selected, inspect your tree stand/saddle, safety harness and haul line one final time before hunting. Climb to a platform height of ***at least 10 feet***, be sure your stand is thoroughly secured to the tree and raise your unloaded firearm. Once safely settled in, look carefully and note any Safety Zone signs (see examples below). You may then load your firearm and begin hunting! If hunting from the ground (Little Bennett Regional Park, only), be sure to note all safe shooting directions providing a safe back stop for your slugs. Shoot only at stationary deer with a safe backstop!



Essential Safety Measures

It cannot be stressed enough: Safety is the #1 priority of this program! Please keep the following safety measures in mind at all times. Remind yourself, your hunting partners, and your fellow participants to observe them continuously. (See the Managed Hunting Program Regulations, presented in the online quiz.)

- ✓ You **must** wear the State-required amount of fluorescent orange/pink at **ALL TIMES** (*both* a daylight fluorescent orange/pink hat and vest are strongly recommended!). **NO EXCUSES**
- ✓ You must wear a full body safety harness at all times during treestand/saddle use, while climbing, hunting, and descending
- ✓ Locate any and all posted Safety Zone signs and **DO NOT** fire at deer beyond these signs.
- ✓ Be 100% sure of your target **AND** what is beyond it.
- ✓ All shots should be directed to the ground.
- ✓ With the exception of Little Bennett Regional Park, all shots must be fired from a minimum hunting height of 10ft to the foot platform.
- ✓ Shoot only at deer that are within 80 yards of your stand.
- ✓ **NEVER** shoot at deer that are on the horizon line (i.e. deer on the top of a hill).
- ✓ Shoot only at stationary targets. **DO NOT** shoot at deer that are running or bounding.
- ✓ Focus on one deer at a time. Try to limit your shots to one per deer and do not “herd shoot” (a.k.a. shoot rapidly at multiple deer).
- ✓ Minimize shots fired and take **ONLY** ethical shots with the maximum probability of quick expiration of the deer.

Treestand Safety

Treestand accidents are one of the leading causes of injury or death related to hunting. It is of vast importance that you educate yourself and stay up to date on the latest industry standards as they pertain to treestand equipment and use. As a participant of the Montgomery Parks Managed Deer Hunting Program, you are required to use a commercial manufactured grade treestand, and it is your responsibility to ensure that your treestand and safety harness are in good, safe working condition.

We cannot stress to you enough, the importance of making sure you are up to date and knowledgeable regarding your treestand and safety harness equipment. Please take this very seriously and be safe out there!

What to Do After the Shot

After you shoot a deer, you may investigate the results of the shot(s) following these guidelines:

- ✓ If possible, check on downed deer using binoculars from your tree stand/saddle.
- ✓ If necessary, you may climb down to go investigate the result of your shot(s) and/or inspect downed deer, however:
 - You must lower your UNLOADED firearm and leave it at the base of the tree at your site. Do not carry your firearm with you to check on downed deer.
 - You may NEVER hunt, carry a loaded firearm, and/or discharge your firearm while on the ground away from your site (unless instructed to do so by Staff).
 - You may not inspect downed deer or track hit deer outside of 80 yards from your site, unless authorized by Staff (be extremely cautious while inspecting and/or tracking.)
 - If further tracking is necessary, you must wait until after hunting hours and upon gaining approval of Wildlife Staff.
- ✓ Staff may be able to inspect deer for you if/when they pass through on patrol. Simply wave to staff to receive assistance.
- ✓ If further assistance is necessary, call Wildlife Staff at the phone number provided on the Hunting Permit (240-507-3722).

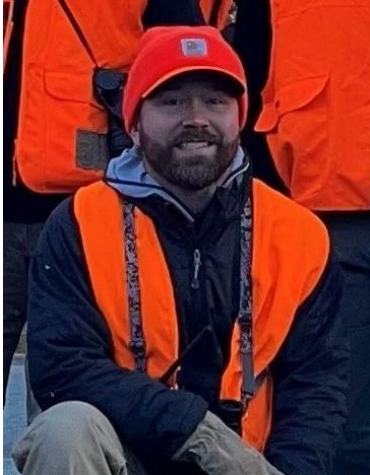
NOTE: Every reasonable effort must be made to recover wounded deer. Each year, Staff has noted at least some level of wounding loss of deer by participants. It is our direct intention to minimize this unfortunate occurrence. As such, please be utmost, responsible hunters and give these animals the respect they deserve. Only take the highest percentage shots at well-identified, stationary deer! If you shoot a deer and can see from your stand that it is wounded, but still living, contact Wildlife Staff at the number provided on the permit card to inform them of the situation. Staff will advise you on how to proceed. Likewise, if you see a wounded deer from your hunt site that you did not shoot, contact Wildlife Staff to inform them and to receive instruction. In general, if there is a wounded deer within accepted range of your stand (80 yds), and you have a safe shot opportunity, we ask that you put the wounded deer down. However, if there is any question, and/or you have the ability to first contact Wildlife Staff, please do so immediately.

NOTE: Quartering deer in the field/ “packing out” is not permitted in this program.

* As a standard procedure, Wildlife Staff will remove antlers from any previously wounded, antlered deer that is harvested by a participant who is not “buck ready” (whether authorized to do so or not).

Staff Presence and Effort

Meet your Managed Deer Hunting Program Managers:



Andy Simmons

**Natural Resources Specialist
with the Department of Parks'
Wildlife Ecology &
Management Unit**

Andy is the primary manager and contact point for this program. He will be onsite at every hunting operation, and will oversee all operational procedures, data collection and enforcement, etc.



David Petersen

**Senior Natural Resources
Specialist with the Department
of Parks' Wildlife Ecology &
Management Unit**

David is the assistant manager and secondary contact point. He will be onsite at every hunting operation, and will assist with all operational procedures, data collection and enforcement, etc.



Ryan Butler

**Principal Natural Resources
Specialist and Department of
Parks' Wildlife Ecology &
Management Unit Leader**

Ryan is responsible for overseeing all aspects of the Wildlife Ecology & Management Work Program. He will be present in a supporting role at many of the hunting operations.

Contact Information

Andy Simmons:

- **(Cell)** 240-507-3722 (to be used for hunt days/day before only, calls and/or texts)
- **(Office)** 301-962-1352 (primary contact #)

David Petersen (Only if Andy is not available):

- **(Office)** 301-962-1351 (primary contact #)
- **(Cell)** 240-338-3923 (to be used for hunt days/day before only, calls and/or texts)

MONTGOMERY PARKS

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Waters House | 12535 Milestone Manor Lane | Germantown, MD 20876
MontgomeryParks.org

Others assisting with this program include individuals from: Rock Creek Regional Park Staff, Little Bennett Regional Park Staff, Black Hill Regional Park, Park Planning and Stewardship Staff, and volunteers.

Our staff works hard to ensure safety, first and foremost, and strives to help managed hunt participants achieve optimal success. As such, we request your utmost patience and respect.

Staff patrols and/or deer drives may or may not occur depending on staff availability and professional discretion. Please keep a watchful eye for staff on patrol and be respectful of their efforts. ALWAYS be sure of your target AND what is beyond it! While on patrol, Staff will check on participants as you are encountered in the field. Staff may also be present at varying levels to assist with deer removal after the hunt. However, this is not guaranteed, and you should plan to remove your own deer from the field. **NOTE:** On rainy, snowy, or foggy mornings, Staff patrols and/or deer drives may be limited or eliminated. Restriction of these efforts on poor weather days maximizes safety and minimizes loss of deer after wounding.



MONTGOMERY PARKS

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission
Waters House | 12535 Milestone Manor Lane | Germantown, MD 20876
MontgomeryParks.org

Participant Interaction with the Public

In general, during hunting operations, participant encounters with members of the public are unlikely, but they do occur. If you observe or encounter citizens, or are encountered by citizens, call Wildlife Staff immediately (number provided on the Permit) to inform them of citizen presence. Do not speak to the citizens unless they speak to you, so as not to startle them. If you are confronted by citizens: remain calm, be courteous, keep your firearm secured and pointed in a safe direction. When appropriate, discretely unload your firearm. Refer any questions or concerns to Wildlife Staff at the number provided on the permit card. If citizens become belligerent, refer them to Wildlife Staff again, calmly explain that you can be of no further assistance, and discontinue the conversation. If the situation escalates, call Wildlife Staff immediately*.

* If you are unable to contact Wildlife Staff, remain in your stand with your firearm secured until you are sure that the person(s) has safely left the area. Only then should you return to hunting.



Most importantly, in all cases, remain calm, collected and courteous. You are a permitted participant in a Department of Parks sanctioned program. The park is officially closed to all other members of the public, and there are signs surrounding the park indicating this closure. If you encounter members of the media, call Wildlife Staff immediately. Act discretely and discontinue your activity until you receive instruction from Wildlife Staff to resume. If questioned or confronted, explain that the park is closed and that they will need to speak to Park Staff for any additional information (you may provide them with the phone number on the back of the permit card). Do not speak to them further unless informed to do so by Wildlife Staff. In all cases, do not continue hunting and/or shooting until you are sure that citizens are safely clear of the area.

Bag Limits and Antler Restrictions

This program allows for the harvest of an unlimited number of antlerless deer (unless otherwise instructed on the day of the hunt), while restricting the harvest of antlered bucks. We ask that you observe all deer very carefully prior to taking any shot, and accurately distinguish between the sexes.

The harvest goals of this program dictate that antlerless deer are targeted, with an emphasis on adult females (does). This is because mature does are the primary producers in the reproductive cycle. One of the goals of this program is to encourage healthy breeding ecology within the local deer herd. This means that we strive to achieve a balanced buck/doe ratio and a balanced age structure with representatives from each age class, while reducing the overall population.

Antler restrictions are another means by which we attempt to achieve a balance in the age structure of the bucks in a given location. However, there is some debate over the biological benefit to these restrictions. These restrictions are not intended to create a trophy hunting opportunity, nor are they intended to diminish the enjoyment of you, as a hunt participant. They are first and foremost intended for the potential benefit of the deer herd, and we suspect that the restrictions may, over time, actually increase frequency of mature buck sightings and prove enjoyable to hunt participants. In that way, antler restrictions also serve as an incentive for participants to return year after year with the very real hope that he/she may see and possibly even harvest the buck of a lifetime.

The following is an outlined description of the bag limits and antler restrictions set forth by this program:

- ✓ Participants may harvest an unlimited number of antlerless deer.
- ✓ At least one ANTLERLESS deer must be harvested before a participant is eligible to harvest one MATURE antlered deer (see antler restrictions). Adult female deer should be the primary objective.
- ✓ Antler Restrictions - After harvesting at least one antlerless deer, participants may harvest one mature antlered deer under the following criteria:
 - Antlers with an inside spread of at least 15 inches
 - Participants who FIRST harvest 3 ANTLERLESS deer may harvest an antlered deer of their choice. This means that the antler restriction is removed. However, hunters are encouraged to follow the antler restriction parameters voluntarily.

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- Participants under the age of 18 who are hunting at Little Bennett Regional Park, only, may harvest a buck of their choosing without antler restrictions and without the requirement of first harvesting **an antlerless deer**. However, youth hunters are also encouraged to follow the antler restriction parameters voluntarily. A maximum of ONE antlered deer may be harvested.
- Participants who are drawn for a buck lottery tag on the morning of their hunt may harvest an antlered deer of their choice, prior to harvesting **an antlerless** deer. Antler restrictions will **not** apply to buck lottery tags.

NOTE: Staff reserves the right to change bag limits at any time based on professional discretion.



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IMPORTANT ANTLER RESTRICTION NOTES:

SPIKE BUCKS - Spike bucks with at least one antler measuring 3 inches or longer are considered antlered deer and are not eligible for harvest! [Exception – participants who first harvest 3 antlerless deer and youth hunters under the age of 18 who are hunting at Little Bennett RP, only.] Be absolutely certain of your target before squeezing the trigger. **DO NOT** harvest a mature antlered buck unless you are certain that you have first harvested an antlerless deer AND that you have not mistakenly harvested any spikes or other legally antlered deer!

MARGINAL BUCKS - Avoid harvesting marginal-sized bucks. Please squeeze the trigger only if you are certain that the buck has an inside spread that exceeds 15 inches!

It is recognized that some mature antlered deer may not exhibit antler characteristics meeting these restrictions. In the case that a harvested buck does not meet the antler restrictions, antler beam circumference will be measured at the base. If antler beam circumference is greater than or equal to 3.75 inches, an exception will be made for the participant. While our goal is to restrict the antlered deer harvest to 3.5 yr old bucks and older, we have found that aging bucks by tooth wear and replacement is simply too subjective for proper enforcement. While still not perfect, utilizing the circumference measurement as the exception will keep things black and white for staff and participants. NO other exceptions will be made. We appreciate your best efforts and cooperation with this restriction.

The following images are great examples of the types of mature antlered deer that exist in our parks. These are the types of bucks that we hope and expect you to wait for the opportunity to harvest. We recognize that restraint can be difficult. However, we believe the benefits far outweigh the costs. All photos were taken on Montgomery County Parkland!



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All regulations will be enforced by Wildlife Staff and Park Police (if deemed necessary). In every case, honesty is the best policy. Staff recognizes that mistakes can be made but must also maintain minimum standards. Infractions will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and penalties issued accordingly. For example, participants who harvest antlered deer that do not meet the antler restrictions will forfeit the antlers to Wildlife Staff who will remove the antlers from the skull with a saw. Any participant found repeatedly in violation of the Antler Restrictions will be subject to further disciplinary action. Likewise, participants who harvest antlered deer without first harvesting **an antlerless deer**, will be required to forfeit the carcass and antlers, and will be subject to further requirements and/or disciplinary action as evaluated by Wildlife Staff and/or Park Police. Dishonesty and/or failure to comply with this enforcement will not be tolerated, and offenders removed from the Managed Deer Hunting Program.

* As a standard procedure, Wildlife Staff will remove antlers from any previously wounded, antlered deer that is harvested by a participant who is not “buck ready” (whether authorized by staff to do so or not).

Any participant found to be unsafe, unethical, and/or dishonest will be permanently dismissed from the program and citations will be issued as appropriate.

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The End of the Hunt Day

Hunting ends at 11:30AM each hunt day. At this time, participants must unload their firearm and cease hunting. By no later than 12:30PM, all participants must report to Staff regarding their status (i.e. if they have deer down, if they need to track deer, if they are in the process of field dressing, if they need assistance, etc.) prior to returning to the check-in/check-out area to complete the check-out procedure.

Reporting on status can be done by phone call, text message (to Andy only) or by returning to the check-in/check-out area to inform Wildlife Staff. Once status is reported, participants may continue working to remove their deer from the field. **NOTE:** If communicating by way of text message (or voicemail), please be sure to identify yourself and your location.

All participants are responsible for field dressing, tagging, removing, transporting and making use of the deer that he/she harvests. Field dressing of deer must occur out of sight of homes, roads and trails. All viscera should be placed away from trails out of view (cover with sticks and leaves if possible).

DNR procedure for tagging and reporting harvested deer must be followed. Field tags must be attached to the deer (unless deer has been checked in at the place of kill and a confirmation number has been received) AND Harvest Report Cards must be completed prior to moving from the place of kill. It is highly recommended that all participants complete the DNR harvest reporting requirements prior to departure from the park.

Field Tag- Attach permanently to head of deer or leg of turkey. ||
Date: 11/30/13 County: Frederick ||
Hunter's Name: John Q. Hunter ||
Hunter's DNRid #: 012345 ||
----- **Fill Out Big Game Harvest Record** ----- ||

Hunters have 24 hours within which to report their harvest to MD DNR by the phone or on-line check-in procedure described in the “Deer and Turkey Tagging and Checking Instructions” located in the MD Guide to Hunting and Trapping found at <http://www.eregulations.com/maryland/hunting/>. While it is not required for managed hunt participants to complete the MD DNR checking procedure prior to leaving the park, it is recommended.

MD Big Game Harvest Record

THIS CARD MUST BE IN YOUR POSSESSION WHILE HUNTING

DNRid: 12345
Licensee: JOHN Q. HUNTER

Species WT Deer Sika Deer Turkey
 Managed Hunt Deer
Sex Male Female Button Buck
Weapon Firearm Bow Muzzleloader
Date 11/24/12 County Frederick
Confirmation # 987654321000
Report Harvests at
www.gamecheck.dnr.state.md.us
or 1.800.800.0121

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Participants are responsible for removing their own harvested deer from the field. However, when available, some assistance may be provided through the use of Staff, ATV support. In these cases, we ask that participants have their tagged, field-dressed animals together **in one location near a trail or field edge for ease and efficiency of pick-up**. This assistance is prioritized by need (i.e. those with physical disabilities or health considerations, those having harvested multiple deer, etc), and patience is required! Please come prepared to remove your own deer (i.e. bring deer drags, sleds, pull carts, etc.). Please note that deer removed by ATV may be exposed to dirt and debris. At your own discretion, if preferred, participants may refuse assistance. After removal from the field, all deer should be transported **discretely** to the check-out area for observation/data collection. Once checked, deer should be transported away from the park **discretely** (i.e. covered with a tarp on a trailer or rack and/or in the bed of a pick-up truck).



This is NOT how to transport deer discretely!

M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks does not assume responsibility for the use of harvested deer. All harvested deer must be utilized by the participant or donated to other individuals or organizations who will utilize them appropriately. If desired, Managed Hunt participants are welcome to share harvested deer with other fellow hunters on the day of their hunt. However, Park Staff will not assume any responsibility for overseeing these activities. Further information regarding locations where deer can be donated is available in the Maryland Guide to Hunting and Trapping found at <http://dnr.maryland.gov/huntersguide/Pages/default.aspx>, as well as on the secure, Managed Hunt Participant Log-In page accessed through www.parksdeermanagement.org. The managed hunt check-out procedure, as described earlier, should be followed prior to departure from the park.

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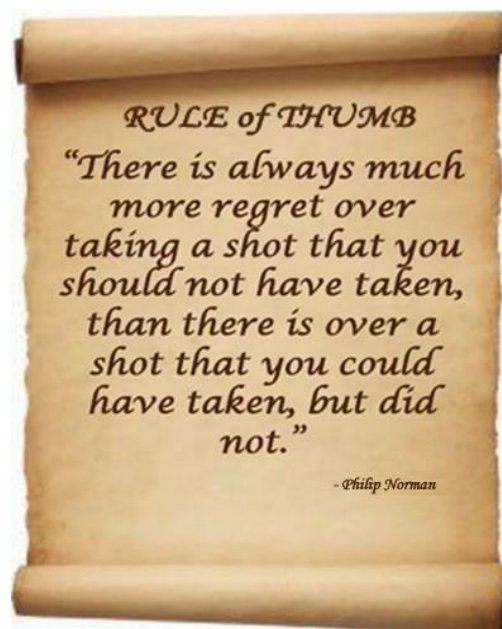
NOTE: Montgomery County is now included in the state's CWD Management Area. Participants must be familiar with pertinent state guidelines found on MD DNR's "Chronic Wasting Disease in Maryland" page. Click [HERE](#) for more information. If Maryland is not the hunter's home state, it is their responsibility to be aware, and follow their home state's laws regarding Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) and importation of deer harvested in MD.

Wrap Up

Thank you for taking the time to thoroughly read these guidelines. Please refer to them often.

In preparation for, and throughout the coming season, please use the logic: "If in doubt, find out!" Do not act on assumptions. Ask questions if, and when necessary! You may contact Wildlife Staff at 301-962-1352 or MCP-deermanagement@montgomeryparks.org. On hunt dates and/or for urgent reasons, you may call 240-507-3722.

Only **you are responsible** for your own decisions and actions. Through your hunting activities on parkland, you are representing yourself and the Montgomery Parks Managed Deer Hunting Program. Please do your part to ensure the continuation of this program and the enjoyment of yourself and your fellow hunters for many years to come. Hunt SAFELY and best of luck to you!



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Additional Resources

Links to other websites and helpful information of interest to Managed Deer Hunting Program participants. The views and opinions included on the websites are not necessarily those of the M-NCPPC, Montgomery Parks. The Department of Parks does not endorse these organizations or businesses.

- Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) - [Guide to Hunting and Trapping](#)

- Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in Maryland - https://dnr.maryland.gov/wildlife/Pages/hunt_trap/CWD_in_Maryland.aspx

- Treestand Manufacturers Association (TMA) - <http://www.tmastands.com/>

- Farmers and Hunters Feeding the Hungry - <http://www.fhfh.org/>

- Montgomery County Cold Box deer donation - <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/agservices/Resources/Files/programs/Deer-Donation-Flyer.pdf>

- Local Deer Processing –
 - KS Kuts: 12415 Prices Distillery Rd, Damascus MD (240) 457-1844 (Also on Facebook)
 - Tim Mullinix – 240-246-6199

- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration - <http://www.noaa.gov/>