



**REPORT TO THE PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE
MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 5, 2012**

SUBJECT **REGIONAL DEER MANAGEMENT STRATEGY REPORT**

PURPOSE

To provide recommendations from the Citizens' Advisory Group (CAG) on a Regional Deer Management Strategy (RDMS).

BACKGROUND

Information on deer human conflicts was presented to the Planning Transportation and Protective Services Committee (PT&PSC) beginning on January 26, 2011 followed by reports on June 22, 2011, October 26, 2011 and approval of Terms of Reference (ToR) to prepare a Regional Deer Management Strategy on February 22, 2012.

The ToR approved by the Board was formulated to develop a more action orientated Regional Deer Management Strategy in consideration of Board direction to bring forward:

- relevant solutions from the region's in-progress goose management strategy
- applicable deer control measures identified in the BC MoE's Urban Ungulate Conflict Analysis Report
- the geographic areas where deer management strategies are most needed
- public engagement strategy and potential for a citizen advisory group in plan development
- methods for moving the Deer Management Plan from strategy into action
- how to address partnership arrangements for technical expertise, and funding and implementation strategies
- research gathered on deer population status and trends, deer collision data and resulting financial implications

Given the diverse community perspectives on how to respond to deer human conflicts, the public engagement process included a citizen-based approach through the appointment of a CAG that would develop recommendations supported by an expert resource working group. The direction from the Board also emphasised that the work needed to be completed in a concentrated time period of March to July 2012 with a priority on identifying distinct actions that would respond to the concerns raised by farmers with respect to crop loss on agricultural land.

The CAG was appointed by the Board in April of 2012, the group met a total of 13 times between May and August, and has prepared a RDMS, including recommendations (see Appendix 1). The management options discussed were taken directly from the *BC Urban Ungulate Conflict Analysis* and evaluated against eight criteria in three geographies (agricultural, rural and urban) by the CAG to determine their applicability within the region. The strategy contains an explanation of each management option along with a summary of the CAG's discussion and outcome of the evaluation process.

ALTERNATIVES

1. Receive the RDMS and refer it to CRD municipalities and electoral areas and the province to determine how to partner on implementing the recommended management options.
2. Receive the RDMS and advance the recommendations to the Board.
3. Receive the RDMS and recommend a public opinion survey be commissioned on the recommended management options.

IMPLICATIONS

Alternative 1 would provide the opportunity to discuss how the recommendations could be implemented with affected agencies. This would inform the committee of implementation implications such as necessary regulatory changes, approvals and resource requirements associated with the management options prior to the committee's recommendations to the Board on deer management.

If the committee chooses Alternative 2 and advances the recommendations to the Board as submitted, there would be an opportunity for public delegations before the Board decides on a course of action.

The decision by the PTPSC to not accept public delegations at this time was in anticipation of delegations being received by the Board when the committee makes its recommendations on deer management. Alternative 3 would provide the opportunity for representative public opinion through a survey. However work undertaken by the CAG demonstrates the complexities of the issue and the need for public education before an informed opinion could be offered. Therefore staff is of the opinion that a public survey would not effectively inform the Board beyond the recommendations brought forward by the CAG.

SUMMARY

Human deer conflicts were identified as a regional issue in January 2011. Since then the CRD has requested that the provincial government assume their traditional role of wildlife management. In response the province has advised that they would not take any action to enable or support the implementation of management strategies until a Deer Management Plan was prepared. The Board approved ToR for the preparation of a RDMS on February 22, 2012 and appointed a CAG to make recommendations on the issue.

The CAG worked between May and August to produce the Strategy attached as Appendix 1 which reflects their considerations and recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Planning, Transportation and Protective Services Committee:

1. thank the members of the Citizens' Advisory Group and Expert Resource Working Group for dedicated effort and voluntary time spent preparing the Regional Deer Management Strategy; and
2. receive the Regional Deer Management Strategy and refer it to CRD municipalities, electoral areas and the province to determine how to partner on implementing the recommended management options.

"Original Signed"

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Attachments: 1