

2,800 lbs. Of Venison Provided to A Local Food Bank.

In a cooperative effort, the Village of Four Seasons, Four Seasons Lakesites POA, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wildlife Services Division have recently concluded operations to reduce the overabundant white-tailed deer population that threaten a wide variety of resources and human health and safety for 2021. This is the third successful year of operations and nearly 2,800 pounds of venison was donated to a local food pantry this year alone. Overabundant deer populations do immense damage to vehicles and threaten human health and safety along the roadways on Horseshoe Bend. Deer management activities were conducted in the four and one-half square miles of property that encompasses a large portion of Horseshoe Bend.

Extensive safety measures are used to protect residents and neighbors during operations. Biologists, who are highly trained firearms experts from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, worked under the direction of the Village of Four Seasons and the Four Seasons POA and in coordination with the Missouri Department of Conservation and Camden County Sheriff's office to safely and effectively remove a portion of the deer population. Once deer were removed, they were transferred to the Village of Four Seasons and the Four Seasons POA for field dressing and donation. We realize field dressing can be difficult for residents to see, however, it's necessary in order to donate the venison.

The sites chosen are considered the safest options available. This type of culling is performed nationwide with many different species by the USDA. Some areas that need to be culled are not, due to even the slightest potential risk. A permit from the MDC is obtained and conservation agents participate in meetings, planning events and culling of deer. All sites are pre-determined and visited during daytime hours as well as cross referenced with aerial photos to ensure safety. Any location used requires permission from the landowner before operations are performed.

Wildlife Services professionals are wildlife biologists and wildlife specialists that are experts in addressing wildlife damage management. Wildlife Service professionals are not hunters. It is not a sport or a hunt but rather a well-researched method to control the deer population and reduce damage in the most efficient and effective manner possible.

The POA has held an archery hunt every year for over 20 years. This hunt has been determined as not effective enough to manage the current deer population. This hunt requires a hunter's education course but does not determine if any marksman skills exist. Furthermore, anyone can hunt on any property during hunting season with the property owner's permission and a hunting license.

The Village of Four Seasons and Four Seasons POA partnered in a town hall meeting regarding deer population on September 26, 2018 with a great turnout and overwhelming support to move forward with deer culling operations. This was also the #1 issue to be addressed in a survey conducted during the Village Comprehensive Plan. The Village of Four Seasons held two public meetings discussing the details on December 9th, 2020 @ 4:00 pm and November 11th, 2020 following 5:30 regular meeting.

The Village does not have contact info for its residents, but does have an email list with some property owners which is used for the *Village Voice* newsletter which can be joined by emailing info@villageoffourseasons.com. Social media is typically not utilized as it is opinion-based and not fact-based. The Village is funded via sales tax collected within the boundaries of the Village of Four Seasons.

How can you help? Simply don't feed the wildlife. Human interaction with wildlife is and always has been the biggest threat they encounter. The Village of Four Seasons does have an ordinance regarding feeding wildlife. Song birds are permitted but restrictions do exist.