

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of South Euclid entered into a Cooperative Service Agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Wildlife Services (WS) to implement portions of the City's Deer Management Program during the 2020-2021 management season. Under this agreement WS performed all sharpshooting activities, site preparation, baiting, biological data collection and field dressing of deer.

Deer damage management was conducted in accordance with the Ohio Division of Wildlife Deer Damage Control Permit # 7486. A total of four nights was needed to remove 60 deer from six active shooting sites. Ten of the 60 deer removed (16.67%) were antlered. Exactly 65% of the deer harvested were females. A total of 1,724 lbs. of processed meat from deer harvested on this project was donated by the City of South Euclid to 2 local food banks. Ten unprocessed deer were receipted directly to residents of South Euclid, while 9 whole deer were donated directly to the Geauga County Veterans Food Pantry by the City of South Euclid.

The 2020-2021 Deer Management Program was performed in a safe and efficient manner by all participants. There were no significant issues that developed as a result of any of the activities in the program. This was in no small part attributable to the Police Department's involvement with the program.

The goal of safely and efficiently removing 60 deer from the City for the initial year of the South Euclid Deer Management Program was achieved. Moving forward, the City of South Euclid needs to develop specific and/or modify existing measurable goals to monitor the effectiveness of the Deer Management Program. Continued lethal management will be a necessary component to reduce deer-related complaints submitted to police, deer-vehicle accidents, and negative public perception towards the deer population. Future efforts should concentrate on addressing specific geographical areas within the City that support higher numbers of white-tailed deer or deer that may pose an elevated risk to public safety or public attitude.

**United States Department of Agriculture
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
Wildlife Services**

**2020-2021 Summary Report of Activities
The City of South Euclid White-tailed Deer Damage Management Program**



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This document should be cited as:

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Wildlife Services. 2020-2021 Summary Report of Activities for the City of South Euclid White-tailed Deer Damage Management Program, South Euclid, Ohio. Cooperative Service Agreement No.21723980382RA. 10 pp.

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OVERVIEW

Site Description

The City of South Euclid, Ohio is in northeastern Cuyahoga County. South Euclid spans an area of 4.65 square miles in size. The City is comprised of industrial, commercial, and residential properties. Greenspace is scattered throughout and consists mainly of six city-owned parks and a section of the Cleveland Metroparks Euclid Creek Reservation located in the northeast corner of the City. South Euclid, like many cities in Ohio and throughout the country, is faced with the challenge of managing the damages associated with an increasing white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) population.

Scope and Need for Action

The biological carrying capacity of a wildlife population is defined as the maximum number of animals that an area's native and cultivated resources can support without degradation to the animal's health and the environment over an extended period of time. The cultural carrying capacity is defined as the maximum density of a given species that can coexist compatibly with the local human population (Decker and Purdy 1988). This term is useful when managing urban deer because it defines when conflicts with deer have exceeded an acceptable level and provides managers with a target for establishing management objectives. For any given damage situation, there will be varying acceptance thresholds by those directly, as well as indirectly, affected by the damage. Factors which may influence the cultural carrying capacity include landscape or vegetation impacts, crop damage, threats to public safety, the potential for illegal killing of deer, and personal attitudes and values. The threshold of wildlife damage acceptance is a primary limiting factor in determining the cultural carrying capacity. The City of South Euclid is using deer-related reports/complaints filed with the police department and a survey of resident concerns about deer to assist with evaluating their cultural carrying capacity (City of South Euclid pers. Comm. 2021).

The South Euclid Police Department receives resident reports/complaints regarding white-tailed deer in the City. These reports/complaints range from; deer damaging property, deer posing a threat towards people and/or pets and injured or dead deer in residents' yards. These reports often result in the Police Department spending time and resources responding to deer related issues in the City (City of South Euclid pers. Comm. 2021).

Deer-vehicle accidents are a serious concern nationwide because of losses to property and the potential for human injury and death (Conover 1997, Conover et al. 1995, Romin and Bissonette 1996). The economic costs associated with DVAs include vehicle repairs, human injuries and fatalities, and removal of deer (Drake et al. 2003). Annually, it is estimated that more than one million DVAs occur nationwide contributing to more than 200 human deaths (Williams et al. 2012). There are only a few deer-vehicle accidents reported/filed with the South Euclid Police Department on an annual basis. However, that does not imply that only a few DVAs occur in South Euclid each year. Studies have shown that a large portion of wildlife-vehicle collisions go unreported (Huijser et al. 2008, Snow et al. 2015). In areas of slower speed limits, where animals are still struck by vehicles, some motorists may choose not to report the accident because conditions don't warrant insurance claims etc. In other instances, animals are injured and travel away before dying, ultimately going unreported or otherwise not attributed to a vehicle collision (Huijser et al. 2008, Snow et al. 2015). The City of South Euclid does receive numerous reports of injured and dead deer on an annual basis (City of South Euclid pers. Comm. 2021).

Residents of South Euclid recently participated in a public survey to assess concerns regarding the City's deer population. Nearly 60% of respondents considered deer in their neighborhood to be a major problem. A large majority of survey respondents, over 80%, reported having deer damage to garden plants and landscaping in the last three years (City of South Euclid 2020). As rural areas are developed, deer habitat may be enhanced because fertilized lawns, gardens and landscape plants serve as high-quality sources of food (Swihart et al. 1995). Furthermore, deer are prolific and adaptable, and have

characteristics that allow them to exploit and prosper in most suitable habitat near urban areas, including residential areas (Jones and Witham 1990). The appealing nature of many ornamental landscape plants, coupled with high nutrient contents from fertilizers, offers an attractive food source for deer. In addition to browsing pressure, male white-tailed deer damage ornamental trees and shrubs by antler-rubbing which can result in broken limbs and bark removal. While large trees may survive antler-rubbing damage, smaller saplings often die or become scarred to the point that they are no longer aesthetically acceptable for landscaping.

The City of South Euclid implemented its first year of a Deer Management Program (DMP) in January 2021. The program was deemed necessary due to an elevated white-tailed deer population, which has resulted in an increase of deer-related reports received by police and a resident survey response supporting a decrease in deer numbers (City of South Euclid pers. Comm. 2021). For the 2020-2021 deer management season, the City enacted sharpshooting at seven different sites across the city.

In support of white-tailed deer management to alleviate conflicts with human safety and damage to property, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), ODW issued the Deer Damage Control Permit #7486 that authorized the City of South Euclid to remove up to 60 deer. The ODW is the regulatory authority of wildlife in Ohio. The ODW urban/suburban deer management goal is to provide a deer population that will allow maximum recreational, aesthetic, and economic benefits while minimizing conflicts with property damage, motor travel, loss of ecological biodiversity, and ensuring the overall health of the deer herd. It was under this permit that the City of South Euclid entered into a Cooperative Service Agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Wildlife Services (WS) to assist with portions of the City's deer management program.

METHODS

Baiting

Baiting with food attractants was used to draw deer into safe locations designated for sharpshooting activities. On 1 January 2021, WS personnel initiated the baiting of 7 sites prior to sharpshooting operations. Wildlife Services guidelines specified that approximately 20 lbs. of whole kernel corn be delivered to each site daily for the period of pre-sharpshooting baiting. The amount of bait distributed was to be reduced from 20 pounds to 10-15 pounds to ensure reliable daily visitations by deer. Bait was placed in 1-3 small piles, 5-10 yards apart to encourage a safe shooting distance between groups of feeding deer. Bait crews kept field logs of the sites they baited, time they baited, amount of bait placed at each site and the amount of deer activity at each site. Sites were also monitored with infrared cameras to assess resident deer populations, bait acceptance, and feeding times to ensure program efficiency.

Sharpshooting

Sharpshooting activities were conducted on both private and City-owned property. Each shooting site was inspected by representatives from WS and the South Euclid Police Department to identify safe shooting zones before sharpshooting operations were conducted. Safety zones for shooting were established and defined at each site by taking into consideration natural backstops created from either elevation or natural topography, direction of nearby structures and avoiding areas of potential human traffic. Local law enforcement was available for each sharpshooter during the duration of every shooting effort.

Wildlife Services used rifles equipped with noise suppression devices, also known as suppressors. Suppressors quiet the muzzle blast of a rifle shot by slowing and redirecting the gases produced when the ammunition is discharged. A suppressor does not silence the sonic signature (sonic crack) of the projectile (bullet) in flight. In accordance with the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)

guidelines for euthanasia, shots were placed with the goal of penetration and destruction of brain tissue, causing an instant loss of consciousness.

Wildlife Services used forward looking infrared (FLIR) technology aided by night vision devices and/or firearm mounted spotlights when conducting sharpshooting activities. Wildlife Services utilized a handheld FLIR unit to locate and observe deer in complete darkness. These capabilities also further enhanced WS' ability to ensure the safety of humans and pets during operations.

Deer were removed on a first opportunity basis provided safe shots were presented. Adult does were targeted first when more than one age/sex class was observed in a safe shooting location. This selection process allowed for the removal of breeding individuals first and often aided in the safe removal of juvenile deer at the same time or on subsequent nights.

Data Collection and Processing

All harvested deer were tagged using temporary tags created by WS per ODW permit instructions. Each tag contained a unique identification number. Harvested deer were transported to a central processing station. Biological data (gender, age, live weight and reproductive status) was collected from deer harvested during the project. Deer were aged by assessing the tooth replacement and wear of the lower jaw (Severinghaus 1949). Deer were classified into the following age (years old) categories; 0.5, 1.5, 2.5, 3.5, 4.5 and 4.5+. The ODW places all deer older than 4.5 years of age into the 4.5+ category.

Deer were processed for human consumption by a Litchfield, Ohio based processor. Seventeen hundred twenty-four pounds of processed meat from 41 deer harvested on this project was donated to 2 local food banks. Ten whole deer were donated directly to citizens of South Euclid, and the remaining nine whole deer were donated directly to the Geauga County Veteran Food Pantry by the City of South Euclid.

RESULTS

Effort

Wildlife Services sharpshooting activities occurred on four days (Table 1). A total of 56.5 man hours were spent conducting sharpshooting efforts to remove 60 deer, yielding a ratio of 0.94 man hours per deer harvested (total number of man hours spent shooting/total number of deer removed) (Table 2).

Table 1. Daily WS deer harvest in South Euclid, Ohio, 27 January 2021 – 25 February 2021.

Date	Deer Removed
01/27/2021	13
02/11/2021	18
02/22/2021	20
02/25/2021	9

Table 2. Effort required to harvest 60 deer in South Euclid, Ohio, 27 January 2021 – 25 February 2021.

Number of Days	Number of Man Hours	Number of Deer Removed	Average Number of Deer Removed per Day	Number of Man Hours per Deer Removed
4	56.5	60	15	0.94

Harvest Numbers by Site

A total of six sites were utilized by WS to conduct deer management activities. The PK site yielded the highest number of deer removed, accounting for 35% of the project total (Table 3).

Table 3. Number of deer harvested from each site and percentage of total harvest in South Euclid, Ohio, 27 January 2021 – 25 February 2021

Site	Number of Deer Harvested	Percent of Total Harvest
BW	9	15.00%
SE	13	21.67%
Oakwood	10	16.67%
PK	21	35.00%
Basin	0	0.00%
Service	7	11.67%
Total	60	100.0%

Age and Sex Distribution

Sixty-five percent of the deer harvested were females. Forty-seven (78.33%) of the deer harvested were 2.5 years old or younger (Table 4).

Table 4. Age and sex distribution of deer harvested in South Euclid, Ohio, 27 January 2021 – 25 February 2021.

Age Class	Male	Percent of Total Harvest	Female	Percent of Total Harvest	Total for Age Class	Percent of Total Harvest
0.5	5	8.33%	10	16.67%	15	25.00%
1.5	3	5.00%	9	15.00%	12	20.00%
2.5	8	13.33%	12	20.00%	20	33.33%
3.5	4	6.67%	5	8.33%	9	15.00%
4.5	0	0.00%	1	1.67%	1	1.67%
4.5+	1	1.67%	2	3.33%	3	5.00%
Total	21	35.00%	39	65.00%	60	100.0%

Live Weight

Figure 1 depicts the mean live weights (lbs.) for deer harvested during management activities in South Euclid. Mean weights (lbs.) have been calculated by age class for both males and females.

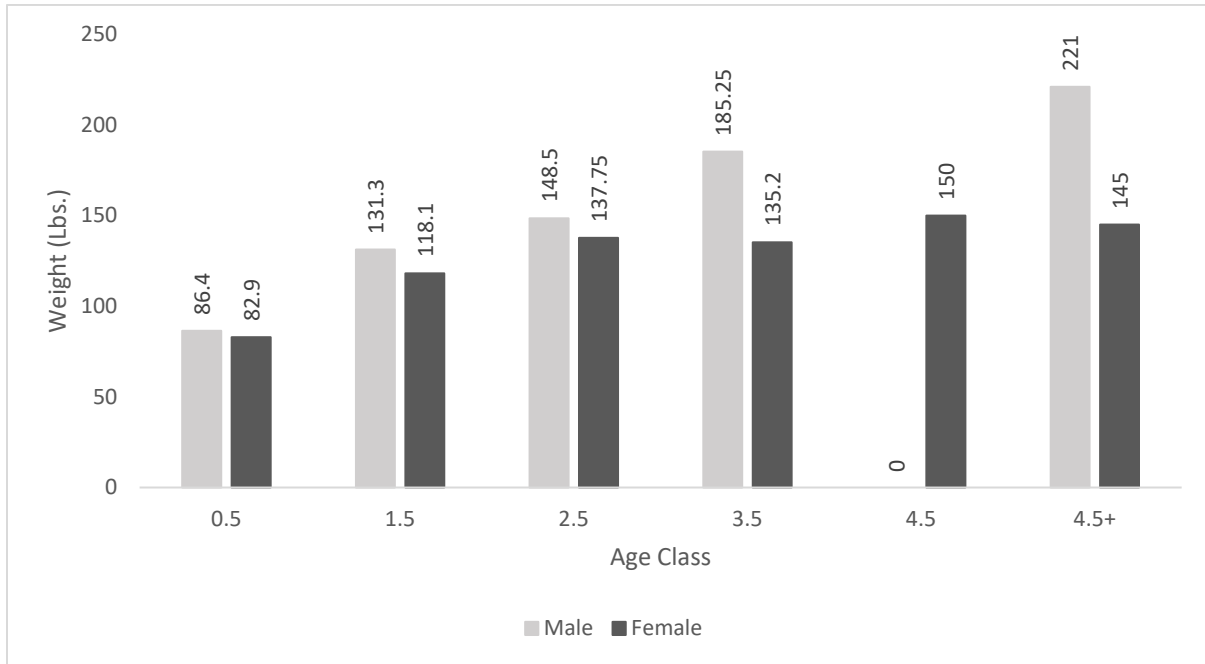


Figure 1. Mean live weights calculated by age class for male and female deer harvested in South Euclid, Ohio, 27 January 2021 – 25 February 2021.

Fetus Counts

Thirty-nine female deer were sampled, including 10 from the 0.5 age class. Thirty-one of the female deer had fetuses present, yielding a pregnancy rate of 79.49% and an average of 1.36 fetuses per female. A breakdown of additional reproductive characteristics can be found in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Reproductive data by age class for female deer harvested in South Euclid, Ohio, 27 January 2021 – 25 February 2021.

Age Class	No Fetus Present	Single	Twins	Triplets	Pregnancy Rate (%)	# of Fetuses per Female
0.5	7	3	0	0	30.00%	0.30
1.5	0	6	3	0	100.00%	1.33
2.5	1	0	11	0	91.67%	1.83
3.5	0	0	5	0	100.00%	2.00
4.5	0	0	1	0	100.00%	2.00
4.5+	0	0	2	0	100.00%	2.00
Total	8	9	22	0	79.49%	1.36

FUTURE MANAGEMENT

The City of South Euclid was successful in implementing the first year of their Deer Management Program in 2021. The initial goal of the safe and efficient removal of 60 deer from the population within the City was achieved. It will be imperative that the City evaluate the effectiveness of their Deer Management Program in working towards reaching the goals and objectives outlined in the City's Deer Management Plan. In particular, the City should define measurable goals they would like to achieve with their Deer Management Program, such as a reduction of DVAs, deer-related complaints received by police, and a decrease in negative public perception to the deer population through the use of citizen surveys. Baseline data is illustrated in Figure 2. Consistency in data collection and reporting will be critical to monitoring any progress made towards those goals.

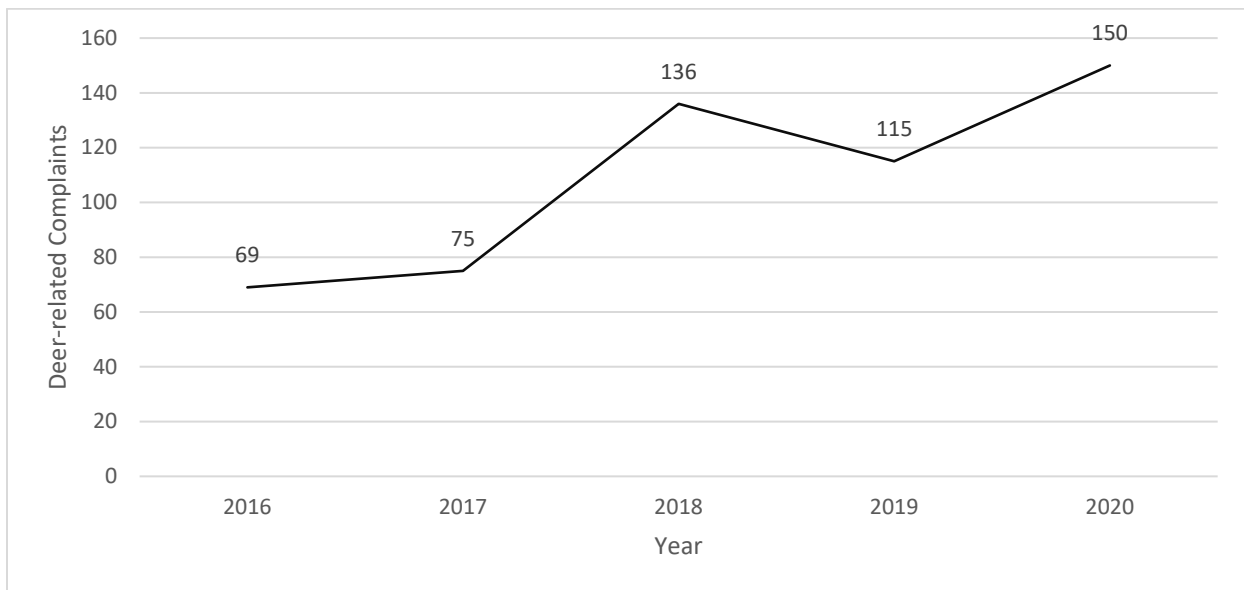


Figure 2. Complaints received by police of deer that were injured, euthanized, dead, or involved in an accident in the City of South Euclid, Ohio, 2016 - 2020. Data courtesy of the South Euclid Police Department.

Continued lethal management will be necessary to lower deer-related public safety and public attitude concerns below the cultural carrying capacity. Lethal management should be concentrated within areas of the city that support higher numbers of white-tailed deer or deer that may pose an elevated risk to public safety. Those areas can only be identified through sound and effective monitoring which should include; analyzing the locations and trends of deer-related police service calls within the City (Figure 2), analyzing the locations of reported DVAs within the City, and accurately and consistently evaluating public perception to the deer population through citizen surveys on an annual basis. As areas of abundant deer populations and conflicts are identified, WS recommends that the City increase the access to both City-owned and privately-owned lands to all current methods of take available to more effectively assist in reaching the goals established in their Deer Management Plan.

Lethal management should be supported with non-lethal measures for an Integrated Wildlife Damage Management (IWDM) approach. The most effective approach to resolving wildlife damage is to integrate the use of several methods simultaneously. Management alternatives should be reviewed and updated annually. Goals should be evaluated and updated to reflect changes in deer populations, DVAs, deer-related complaints, and overall public perception to deer within the City of South Euclid. As the deer management program continues there may be a need to refine or change techniques to have continued success.

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APPENDIX 1. 2020-2021 South Euclid Deer Damage Management Age and Sex Data

Date	ID Number	Sex (M/F)	Age	Fetus Count	Live Weight
1/27/2021	FY21SE001	M	4.5+	0	221
1/27/2021	FY21SE002	M	1.5	0	114
1/27/2021	FY21SE003	F	2.5	0	130
1/27/2021	FY21SE004	F	3.5	2	150
1/27/2021	FY21SE005	F	2.5	2	151
1/27/2021	FY21SE006	F	1.5	2	150
1/27/2021	FY21SE007	F	0.5	0	85
1/27/2021	FY21SE008	F	2.5	2	135
1/27/2021	FY21SE009	M	2.5	0	126
1/27/2021	FY21SE010	F	1.5	1	114
1/27/2021	FY21SE011	M	0.5	0	83
1/27/2021	FY21SE012	F	2.5	2	128
1/27/2021	FY21SE013	F	0.5	0	87
2/11/2021	FY21SE014	F	1.5	1	111
2/11/2021	FY21SE015	F	2.5	2	139
2/11/2021	FY21SE016	M	3.5	0	179
2/11/2021	FY21SE017	M	3.5	0	183
2/11/2021	FY21SE018	F	0.5	0	81
2/11/2021	FY21SE019	M	2.5	0	126
2/11/2021	FY21SE020	M	0.5	0	78
2/11/2021	FY21SE021	F	1.5	1	119
2/11/2021	FY21SE022	F	1.5	2	130
2/11/2021	FY21SE023	F	2.5	2	136
2/11/2021	FY21SE024	F	0.5	0	88
2/11/2021	FY21SE025	F	0.5	0	74
2/11/2021	FY21SE026	F	1.5	1	114
2/11/2021	FY21SE027	F	2.5	2	127
2/11/2021	FY21SE028	F	3.5	2	119
2/11/2021	FY21SE029	M	2.5	0	150

Date	ID Number	Sex (M/F)	Age	Fetus Count	Live Weight
2/11/2021	FY21SE030	F	0.5	1	78
2/11/2021	FY21SE031	F	4.5+	2	154
2/22/2021	FY21SE032	F	2.5	2	145
2/22/2021	FY21SE033	F	1.5	1	102
2/22/2021	FY21SE034	F	3.5	2	130
2/22/2021	FY21SE035	F	4.5	2	150
2/22/2021	FY21SE036	F	0.5	1	85
2/22/2021	FY21SE037	M	2.5	0	141
2/22/2021	FY21SE038	F	2.5	2	146
2/22/2021	FY21SE039	M	2.5	0	156
2/22/2021	FY21SE040	M	0.5	0	101
2/22/2021	FY21SE041	M	1.5	0	143
2/22/2021	FY21SE042	M	3.5	0	186
2/22/2021	FY21SE043	M	3.5	0	193
2/22/2021	FY21SE044	F	0.5	0	85
2/22/2021	FY21SE045	F	2.5	2	130
2/22/2021	FY21SE046	F	3.5	2	140
2/22/2021	FY21SE047	M	1.5	0	137
2/22/2021	FY21SE048	M	0.5	0	90
2/22/2021	FY21SE049	M	2.5	0	153
2/22/2021	FY21SE050	F	3.5	2	137
2/22/2021	FY21SE051	F	0.5	1	91
2/25/2021	FY21SE052	F	4.5+	2	136
2/25/2021	FY21SE053	F	1.5	2	127
2/25/2021	FY21SE054	M	2.5	0	168
2/25/2021	FY21SE055	F	2.5	2	141
2/25/2021	FY21SE056	M	2.5	0	168
2/25/2021	FY21SE057	F	2.5	2	145
2/25/2021	FY21SE058	M	0.5	0	80
2/25/2021	FY21SE059	F	1.5	1	96
2/25/2021	FY21SE060	F	0.5	0	75

APPENDIX 2. 2020-2021 City of South Euclid Ohio Division of Wildlife Deer Damage Control Permit

Control Permit Number: 7486
Key: 08391291775

Division of Wildlife
Ohio Department of Natural Resources
DEER DAMAGE CONTROL PERMIT

DNR 9004

The following permit is issued to:

Kevin Nietert (216) 381-0400
(Name of Landowner, Lessee, or Agent) (Phone No. w/Area Code)
1349 S. Green Rd **South Euclid** **44121**
(Mailing Address) (City) (Zip Code)

This permit may be utilized on the following properties in Cuyahoga County:

Address (closest road intersection if no address)	
1. <input type="checkbox"/> Mailing Address (if checked)	
2. City owned/managed properties	
3. Private property in cooperation with the city	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	

Only the below listed shooters may be present while pursuing deer utilizing this Deer Damage Control Permit:

- All shooters (except for Ohio resident landowners, their spouses, and children) must have a current Ohio hunting license to take deer under this permit.
- All shooters are subject to a background check and may be denied as a shooter if they have been convicted of a prior wildlife or weapons offense.

Shooter's Legal Name	Date of Birth
1. USDA Wildlife Services	1/1/2000
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

This permit shall be in effect from **January 22, 2021** to **March 31, 2021**

This permit authorizes the killing of a total of **50** deer on properties listed on this permit.

The following must be notified: (not required to notify if "N/A" is written).

before shooting each day: **N/A** at ()
after shooting each day with the number of deer shot: **N/A** at ()

Special conditions of this permit: **Special conditions are contained in the email sent to you and shall be attached to this permit.**

KN I acknowledge that if I am not the landowner, I must have written permission from the landowner prior to utilizing this permit to conduct control activities on the listed property(ies).
(Initials)

KN I certify that I have read and understood all of the rules and conditions for the use of this permit listed on the front and back of this permit. Further, I understand that any failure to comply with all of the provisions of this permit will result in its immediate revocation and that any misuse of this permit will result in prosecution. I also understand that this permit does not supersede, and I must adhere to, any local laws, rules, or ordinances that pertain to the properties where this permit will be utilized.
(Initials)

KN I certify that all statements made by me in this application are true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief and that I understand that knowingly and willfully providing false information and applying for this permit/license is a violation of Section 2921.13 of the Ohio Revised Code for which I am subject to arrest.
(Initials)

Kevin Nietert 1/25/2021
(Signature of Landowner, Lessee, or Agent) (Date)