

Colts Neck Wildlife Committee Report to the Township Committee

May 10, 2017

History

On May 25, 2016 the Wildlife Committee provided an update on deer management data to the township committee. The data had been collected over the previous four years with contributions from Monmouth County and NJ DEP Fish & Wildlife.

The data clearly demonstrated an increased risk to public safety due to motor vehicle incidents with deer, as well as a risk to public health due to an increase in the incidence of Lyme disease.

The following recommendations were presented:

1. Amend the discharge ordinance lot size from five acres to three acres.
2. Amend the discharge ordinance to include aggregated lots of three acres. (This will open many areas of the township that currently provide sanctuary and transit for deer in neighborhoods such as Clover Hill).
3. Request the county add Dorbrook Park and Hominy Hill to the county deer management program.
4. Amend the discharge ordinance to allow bow hunting on specific municipal properties.
5. Develop and implement the Colts Neck Outdoorsman Association to oversee the hunting on township property by Colts Neck resident outdoorsman only.
6. Allow hunting on leased municipal property.
7. Permit further ordinance change via resolution.

Changes Implemented

On May 24, 2016 the Monmouth County Parks adopted the recommendation number three to include Dorbrook Park and Hominy Hill GC to the county deer management program.

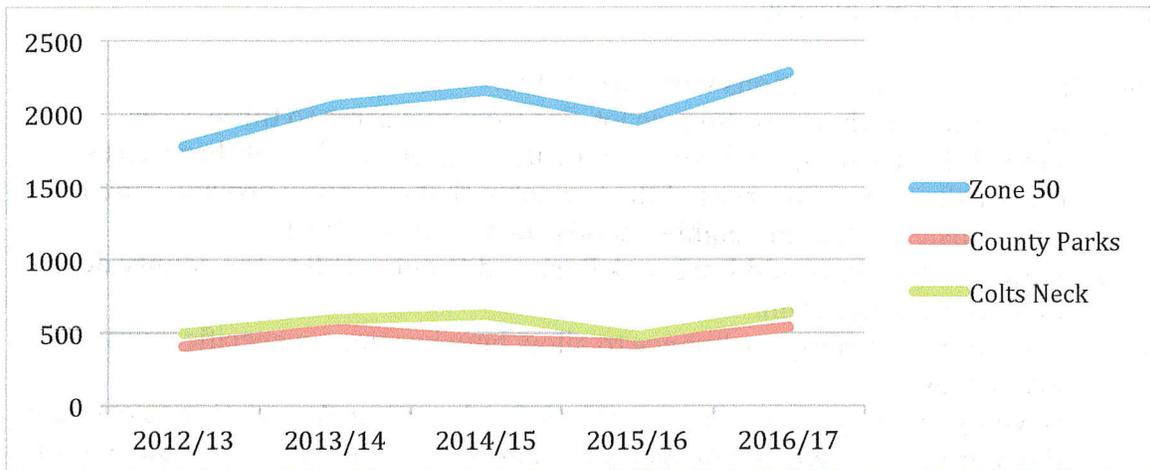
On September 14, 2016 the township committee adopted Resolution 2016-17 therefore implementing recommendations number one, two, and six.

The township committee elected to hold items number four and six in abeyance rendering recommendation number five moot. The Wildlife Committee suggested producing an interim report in one year, the project mid-point.

Mid program report

After a seasonal “perfect storm” of mild weather and high acorn production in late 2015, the data reported (2016-17 season) demonstrates a positive change in Colts Neck deer management.

Harvest	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Zone 50	1776	2062	2161	1957	2284
County Parks	407	533	456	426	539
Colts Neck	496	595	628	479	641

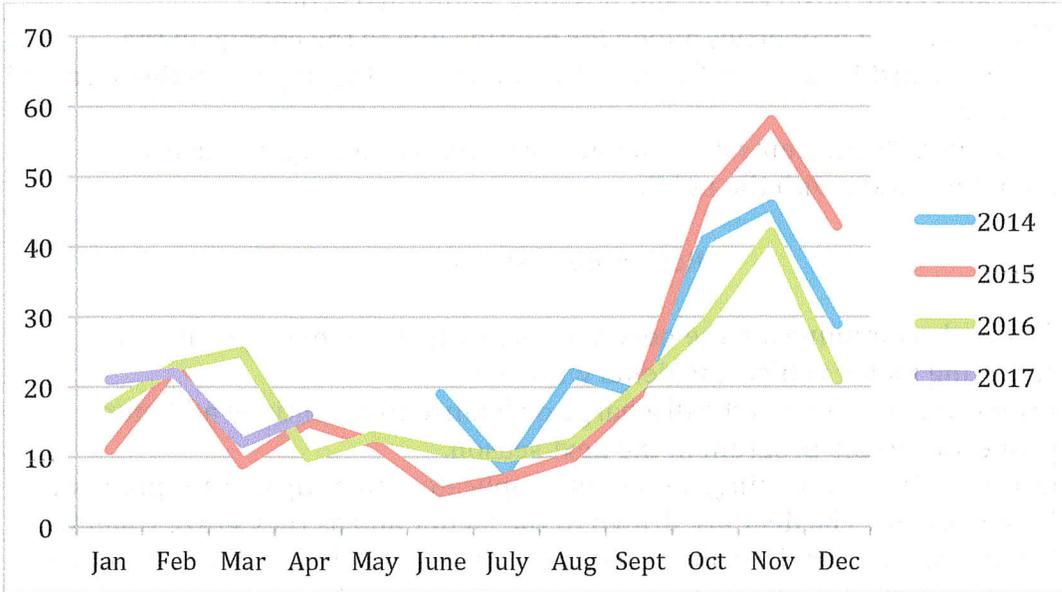


The harvest in Colts Neck increased 33.8% exceeding the program goal by 18% to the highest number in the previous five years! This same trend (with varying results) was consistent across the county and Zone 50.

The county deer management program harvest results were 28 deer harvested, (Dorbrook, 8 and Hominy Hill, 20). Dorbrook and Hominy Hill will remain on the county program for 2017-18.

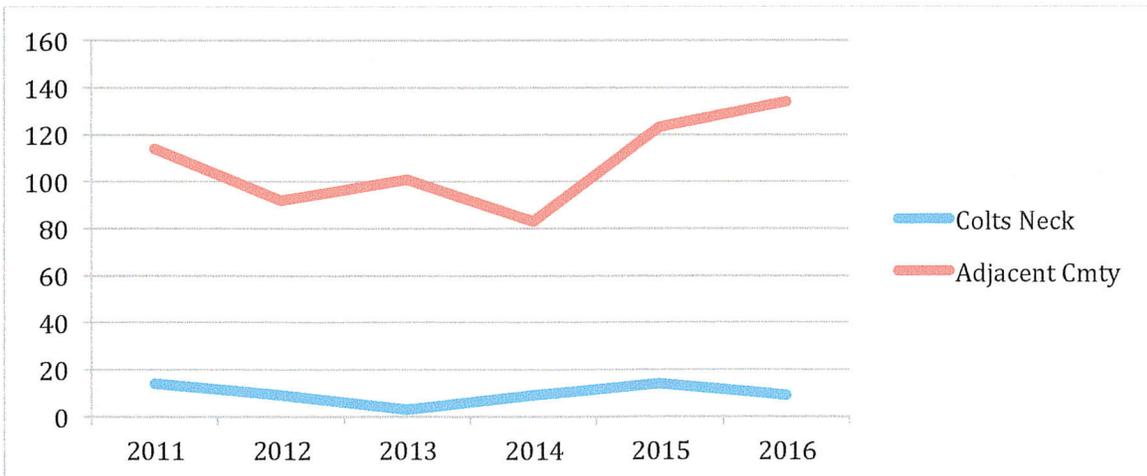
Motor Vehicle Incidents

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2014						19	8	22	19	41	46	29
2015	11	23	9	15	12	5	7	10	19	47	58	43
2016	17	23	25	10	13	11	10	12	20	29	42	21
2017	21	22	12	16								



Lyme Disease

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Colts Neck	14	9	3	9	14	9	
Adjacent Cmty	114	92	101	83	123	134	



Observations

1. Weather during this hunting season was closer to normal than 2015 and although acorn production was again high the deer population remained mobile in search of sustenance.
2. Although reported and confirmed cases of Lyme disease were lower in Colts Neck the rapid rise in cases among adjacent communities is alarming and warrants close observation and possibly, additional action.
3. The number of properties added for hunting due to the change in the discharge ordinance is difficult to determine, as is the impact on the herd and harvest.
4. Motor vehicle incidents remain under-reported and require consistent communication with the public.

Recommendations

1. Regularly communicate the need for data from the public, specifically, reporting motor vehicle incidents with deer.
2. Promote the change in the discharge ordinance to potentially add more properties to the program in the next season.
3. Consider 4-poster feeding/insecticide applicators to mitigate the spread of Lyme disease. The deer are drawn to the feeder and as they graze rollers laced with insecticide is applied to the neck of the animal. Each station can cover a forty-acre area but must be maintained by a licensed insecticide applicator.