

To the Environment Committee:

Sunday hunting will not resolve deer-related problems. One of the main problems with trying to manage deer numbers through any kind of hunting -- as repeatedly cited during a Smithsonian Institute conference on Deer Overabundance (McShea et. al 1997) -- is that deer are highly prolific, and their high reproductive rate can quickly compensate for declines in their population. The net result is that their numbers "bounce back" after hunting season. This is referred to as "compensatory rebound", and this is how the DEEP "manages" deer, making sure that there's always a desired number for hunters! Hunting deer has not reduced deer populations, nor is it intended to (just a smoke screen for the general public). Hunting is a money maker (less and less, as hunters decline in numbers), and they are eager to recruit possible Sunday hunters in order to make it more and more lucrative, that's all. (Deer numbers have been purposely increased since the 1974 Deer Management Act, providing hunting opportunities for all. First, they increase deer numbers, and now they pretend to want to lower the deer population (not true; they'd be cutting off their noses to spite their faces!)

Bow-hunting is one of the most inhumane forms of hunting because it results in unacceptably high crippling rates -- a high proportion of deer are wounded even when the most sophisticated forms of archery are used. (citations: Gregory 2005, Nixon et. al 2001, Moen 1989, Cada 1988, Boydston and Gore 1987, Langenau 1986, Gladfelter 1983, Stormer et. al, 1979, Downing) For every deer dragged out by hunters, another one is never retrieved and may linger and suffer from hours, days, weeks, even up to a year, slowly dying of infection, starvation, etc.

Only 1% of Connecticut residents hunt. Wildlife watchers, hikers, mountain bikers, dog walkers, and horseback riders outnumber hunters in Connecticut by 29 to 1 and outspend them by seven to one, contributing more than \$500 million dollars to the state's economy annually, (Source: The United States Fish and Wildlife Service). The overwhelming majority of people do not participate in hunting, and have only one day a week during hunting season when they can use the outdoors safely without the threat of bullets or arrows. Hunters already have four and a half months to hunt deer each year in Connecticut -- more than 100 days of recreational deer hunting at six days each week. Farmers can obtain deer depredation permits to kill deer throughout the year. There is no compelling reason to disrupt this longstanding tradition to appease a tiny minority. Please allow residents to feel safe in their own **backyards** at least one day a week, knowing that throughout the week, hunting may be done without their knowledge because bowhunting is silent and deadly, PLUS notification of neighbors is NOT required!

Sunday hunting will endanger public safety. Arrows (and bullets) know no boundaries and pose public safety hazards to anyone who is in a large radius of the hunter. Further, domestic animals, such as dogs and horses, are sometimes mistaken for game animals. Thus, expanding recreational opportunities for hunters diminishes opportunities for hikers, horseback riders, bird watchers, and many others.

Regards,

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