



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

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Gettysburg National Military Park News Release

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Park deer management program will run October through March

In October, the National Park Service (NPS) will continue its program of deer management at Gettysburg National Military Park and Eisenhower National Historic Site, park officials have announced.

Gettysburg and Eisenhower national parks are reducing the number of deer in the parks directly by shooting. All venison will be donated to area food banks. Hunting is not permitted inside the two parks. Only qualified federal employees will take part in the effort to reduce the herd.

“Deer management is an unfortunate necessity of preserving the Gettysburg and Eisenhower parks. Intense browsing by high numbers of deer damages the historic landscapes. We need to protect the historic woodlots and the farm fields in order to tell the story of these two parks,” said park Superintendent John Latschar.

The deer management program will continue through the end of March. Annual deer reductions will continue from October through March each year, as necessary. A deer reduction community safety committee meets as needed on matters of public safety related to the program. The committee is composed of the local Pennsylvania Game Commission officer, the Chiefs of Police from Gettysburg Borough and Cumberland Township, the Chairman of the Gettysburg National Military Park Advisory Commission and the park Superintendent, Chief Ranger and Natural Resource Specialist.

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In 1995, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) described and considered a variety of options for meeting park objectives for deer management, including public hunting, relocation, and the use of sterilization and contraception. Hundreds of people participated in the public review of the EIS and many commented on it in writing. The NPS decided to reduce the number of deer in the parks through shooting.

A deer density goal of 25 deer per square mile of forest was established in the EIS. The park has now reached that goal and will continue to manage deer to maintain the level of 25 deer per square mile of forest.

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