

## Deer Management Plan

Public comments received as of Wednesday, September 08, 2021, 9:00am.....

1. Jeannine T. Fleegle – Wildlife Biologist with PA Game Commission
2. Randy Gornman
3. Greg Varholick
4. Jan Humphreys
5. Joel Royer
6. Rick Ritenour
7. Tamara Whited
8. Sara Stewart
9. Susan Comfort
10. Todd Thompson
11. Lee Schweitzer
12. Tom Simmons
13. Richard Mauk

provided  
9/8/21

Public comments received after Wednesday, September 08, 2021, 9:00am

14. Norma Tarnoff
15. Jean Nienkamp
16. Carol Cummins
17. Buck & Maggle Shotts
18. Ellen Chinn
19. Guy Haberl
20. Charles Olson
21. Jessica Jopp
22. Sara King
23. Gary Smith
24. Mike Lawer Sr
25. Dan Sadler
26. Joseph Tepper
27. Amanda Poole
28. Laurie Lafontaine
29. Christi Sheldon
30. Jason Easley
31. David Dahlheimer
32. Linda Finkbeiner
33. Gail Berlin

provided  
9/22/21

Friends of Whites Woods letter to the Board of Supervisors (copy to DCNR Director Tom Ford)

Bow Hunting Survey conducted by Friends of Whites Woods – provided summary & comments

# White Township Supervisors

950 INDIAN SPRINGS ROAD  
INDIANA, PENNSYLVANIA 15701-3506  
(724) 463-8585 FAX (724) 463-0705

September 28, 2021

Sara B. King  
12 Susan Drive  
Indiana, PA 15701  
724-357-9607

RE: Open Records Request #32

Dear Ms. King,

White Township is in receipt of your Open Records Request Form dated "September 20, 2021" (received by Open Records Officer on September 22, 2021 via email) requesting the following records:

- Request – Copies of all feedback sent to the Township (both email and hardcopy) regarding the White Township bow hunting program/deer management plan:
  - Answer – hard copies of all feedback are being provided.

Note: Personal information (applicants phone numbers and email addresses) have been redacted as authorized per the Right-To-Know Law, Section 708 Exceptions for public records.

I did not include the FOWW letter to the BOS dated September 16, 2021 and the results of the bow hunting survey conducted by FOWW considering the fact that you would already have copies of these records.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me at the above township office address or telephone number.

Sincerely,



Milton J. Lady  
Township Manager  
Open Records Officer

**milt@whitetownship.org**

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**From:** Ryan Shaffer <Ryanshaffer@whitetownship.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 23, 2021 2:14 PM  
**To:** milt@whitetownship.org; 'Chris Anderson'  
**Subject:** FW: Deer management

Read Below.... This is the deer expert with the game commission.

I plan to give her a call and discuss more in depth.

**From:** Fleegle, Jeannine [mailto:jefleegle@pa.gov]  
**Sent:** Monday, August 23, 2021 1:57 PM  
**To:** Ryanshaffer@whitetownship.org  
**Cc:** Kimmel, Nathaniel <nkimmel@pa.gov>  
**Subject:** Deer management

Hi Ryan,

Ned shared with me your information on the managed hunt for White township parks. The structured hunting materials looks great. However, I would caution you in measuring success by number of harvested deer. It is stated that deer are causing unsustainable forest conditions. Your goals should be structured around that. Below are some links that may be helpful and I certainly can answer any specific questions you may have.

[https://www.pgc.pa.gov/Wildlife/WildlifeSpecies/White-tailedDeer/Documents/Guide to Community Deer Management.pdf](https://www.pgc.pa.gov/Wildlife/WildlifeSpecies/White-tailedDeer/Documents/Guide%20to%20Community%20Deer%20Management.pdf)

Companion Video: <http://youtu.be/WqAdR8ojPPQ>

<https://www.pgc.pa.gov/Wildlife/WildlifeSpecies/White-tailedDeer/Documents/DeerGuide.pdf>

*Jeannine*

Jeannine T Fleegle | Wildlife Biologist  
Deer & Elk Section  
PA Game Commission | Bureau of Wildlife Management  
717-433-8750  
[www.pgc.pa.gov](http://www.pgc.pa.gov)



**From:** Joseph Tepper [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 15, 2021 8:28 PM  
**To:** wtinfo@whitetownship.org  
**Cc:** milt@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** Comments on Proposed Deer Management Plan for White's Woods

Hello,

I would like to provide comments on White Township's proposed Deer Management Plan for White's Woods Nature Center and White Township Recreation Complex.

First, how many deer need to be harvested from the parks? What is the harvest goal? If it is a large number, I question whether archery hunting is the way to accomplish it. Archery equipment, while lethal, has limitations compared to firearms. The maximum range is much more limited, in a practical sense. For example, most archery hunters will be proficient in accuracy with bows only out to about 30-40 yards. Hunters with crossbows may have a slightly longer proficient range, perhaps 40-50 yards. And in general, archery equipment is more difficult to shoot accurately than a firearm. In addition, the close distance to deer required for archery equipment is one of the reasons that archery hunters are successful much less often than firearm hunters. It is much more difficult to get that close to the animals, and even when that happens, the wariness of the deer can easily thwart the plans of the archer. I know this from my own experiences of being a very avid deer bowhunter for about 10 years. Other options that could be considered, perhaps in addition to archery hunting, include the use of shotguns, muzzleloaders, or even rifles, if it is deemed that they could be used safely within the parks.

I also believe that if deer population control is the goal, then the focus of a hunting season in the parks should be primarily on female deer. But I expect that wildlife biologists could provide the Township with expertise in this area.

I've read that the intended hunting season would be about 3-4 weeks long, from December into January. That is typically very cold weather here in Indiana county, and cold weather is not ideal weather for archery hunting. It can be done...but, it is more difficult for hunters to use archery equipment - particularly bows - in cold weather when the muscles can get much more stiff from standing still for hours at a time. If maximizing the harvest is the goal, then perhaps hunting should be allowed in earlier months.

Safety for other park users is also a concern if the park will be open to hunting and other park users at the same time. Even with the use of elevated stands, archery hunting does pose some additional risk to other park users and pets. Arrows can travel long distances if deflected off of tree limbs, or rocks. Has White Township considered closing the park to other users during the period that hunting is allowed? If not, has the Township considered what could happen if a non-hunter or pet is injured from a hunter's actions - in the form of lawsuits, etc.?

I also noted within the Township's plan, the requirement for hunters to quality with archery equipment "to ensure safety and accuracy of gear." While I think this is a good idea, I would add that hunters should be required to qualify with the actual types of arrows they would use for hunting. (i.e., arrows with broadhead tips) Those can fly very differently than arrows with target tips and can be more difficult to shoot accurately, so in my opinion this should be considered by the Township.

In conclusion, and in my opinion as an experienced bowhunter, I don't think that an archery-only season - especially one that is only 3 or so weeks long, in winter - will amount to much of a harvest per season in these local parks. I also think that safety issues (and potential liability issues) should be carefully considered before any hunt moves forward.



**wtinfo@whitetownship.org**

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**From:** Carol Cummins [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 10, 2021 3:31 PM  
**To:** wtinfo@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** Deer Management Plan

The plan mentions posting from Dec 1 through Feb 20. I don't know all the hunting seasons but almost three months for hunting (a time others do not want to use the area) is too long a time to exclude other users.

Where at the White Township Recreation Complex would deer hunting be safe? The wooded area is near a playground, picnic area, school, house and Route 286.

Non-hunters who don't track the many hunting times, need to know exactly when hunters are permitted in these parks so we can stay clear of these areas that were not intended for hunting. Almost three months (almost a quarter of a year) is too long to exclude other users.

Sent from Mail for Windows

**wtinfo@whitetownship.org**

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**From:** Jean Nienkamp [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 8, 2021 12:27 PM  
**To:** wtinfo@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** Deer management plan

Thank you for your request for feedback.

1. I think the idea of having stickers on the vehicles of hunters is a good one, despite the red comment in the document. That way non-hunters who use the park will be aware that there are hunters there.
2. I hope that you post the allowed hunting times so that non-hunters know them. If you're mixing the 2 populations, you need to make sure information is available to each.
3. Can there be some kind of limit on hunting within sight of the hiking trails? Or at least shooting a bow towards a hiking trail? Again, both populations need to be able to coexist without danger.

Thanks!  
Jean

Dr. Jean Nienkamp  
Associate Professor  
Department of English  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
[REDACTED]

**From:** Randy Cornman [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, August 27, 2021 11:55 AM  
**To:** [milt@whitetownship.org](mailto:milt@whitetownship.org)  
**Subject:** comment(s) on Controlled Deer Hunt on Township property

Milt,

I am definitely in favor of a deer hunt in White's Woods and other Twp. lands.

Here is a list of my concerns with factors mentioned in the Gazette article Friday 8/27/21:

1. Restricting hunters to using elevated stands is discriminatory against the elderly and/or disabled hunter(s) who are still capable of hunting safely and humanely from the ground. I have a cousin age 73 who bowhunts and scores often. He says treestands are for young guys; at age 75 I agree.
2. I'm not sure I understand what the Penn State Cooperative Extension and PADCNR have to do with this. Whatever....
3. Applicants should be chosen by drawing or other lottery system, with preapproved application of course.
4. I dislike the idea that those fortunate applicants who participate in the first hunt will be given priority for the next hunt. That seems to me like a way to kill support from the hunting community. I do not believe the Game Commission's Pymatuning Goose blinds are awarded on any such basis. The deer hunt permits should be drawn annually at a regular published Township meeting. Most States' game agencies, including PGC, charge a fee to enter their special hunt lotteries such as elk, moose, etc. Helps to defray costs.
5. ID tags required on hunters' cars are an invitation to damage by NIMBYs and other saboteurs. Oh yeah!

Question: will the Township post Safety Zones, either by posters or purple paint, around the residences, etc.? Can't you just see the Friends of Whites Woods going nuts when they start seeing trees marked with purple paint? Love it!

Best wishes for a successful program!

Randy Cornman 20 Stevenson Ave. White Township [REDACTED]



**milt@whitetownship.org**

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**From:** Greg15701 [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, August 27, 2021 2:11 PM  
**To:** milt@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** Deer Management

After reading the article on your proposed deer management plan I am appalled at how you would choose participants. Your proposal is rife with favoritism and good ole boy networking. Most limited hunts are handled by lottery which opens it up to all who want to participate. And even worse is giving preferential status to those who hunted the previous year. You're basically giving a select few a private hunting preserve. The first archery season is usually six weeks long. Why not break up the season into two week blocks and then hold a lottery. That triples the amount of people eligible to hunt as well as the revenue. I am in favor of hunting this land as long as everyone gets a fair shake.

As far as deer traveling from other areas to Whites Woods, that may happen. But the deer that live here now have lost a lot of their natural fear of men. That is what causes most of the problems we currently face. I live on Water street and deer come through the neighborhood before it's even dusk.

Sincerely,  
Greg Varholick

**milt@whitetownship.org**

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**From:** Jan Humphreys [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 29, 2021 2:37 PM  
**To:** milt@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** White I ownship seer management plan

Dear Mr Lady,

I have been following the development of a deer management plan for White Township with great interest. The proposed plan looks well thought through and developed. You will never satisfy everyone but this is a good compromise. I suggest one change in the plan. I would only permit taking of antlerless (doe) deer. .If a hunter shoots a buck; he kills one deer. If he shoots a doe, he potentially kills three (the doe plus the two offspring which she would produce next year). If you want to reduce deer populations ,concentrate on the females not on the bucks. --just my two cents of thoughts.

--best,

J.G. Humphreys, PhD  
Professor Emeritus of Biology

**wtinfo@whitetownship.org**

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**From:** Rick [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 8, 2021 6:09 AM  
**To:** wtinfo@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** Deer Management Plan for White Township woodlots

Dear white Township Supervisors,

I applaud your plan to reduce the deer herd in White Township managed woodlots, and in particular White's Woods. Excessive deer are detrimental to the natural regeneration of forest flora.

The plan seems a bit restrictive but I understand the reasons for the rules.

This in no way is an endorsement for the White Township Vegetative Management Plan which is improper governance of this park.

Thank you,

Richard Mauk  
Resident, White Township



**milt@whitetownship.org**

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**From:** M Shotts [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 10, 2021 3:18 PM  
**To:** milt@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** Deer Management Plan

There are too many deer in our area, which is 345 Ridge Ave, Indiana, PA 15701. We cannot plant the flowers we want to because the deer eat them. Even perennials are not safe from the ravenous appetite of the deer. We cannot plant a garden because of the same reason. My husband, Buck, planted one tomato plant close to the house. It did not matter, the green tomatoes were eaten before they could rippen.

The deer need to be eliminated in any manner that is appropriate. I was born and raised at this location, and my husband and I have lived here after our marriage since 1978. We are asking you to please limit, remove, or kill the over populated deer that inhabit our area. Thank you.

Buck and Maggie Shotts  
345 Ridge Avenue  
Indiana, PA 15701

**From:** Ellen Chinn [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, September 13, 2021 11:57 AM  
**To:** wtinfo@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** Deer management

I am writing regarding the proposed bow hunting program in WWNC. Previously, I had written that I opposed hunting in WWNC, mostly because of safety concerns. However, I have since found out more about the program in place in the Pittsburgh area parks. It apparently has been very successful in bringing back a healthy understory and has a proven safety record. If White Township can implement a program for safely hunting deer in WWNC, using Pittsburgh's program as a model, I would support it, at least on a trial basis.

Ellen Chinn

**milt@whitetownship.org**

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**From:** Guy Haberl [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, September 13, 2021 1:06 PM  
**To:** milt@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** Deer Management Plan Comment  
**Attachments:** IMG\_0350.jpg

**Dear Milt,**

**This e-mail is intended to share with the Township Officials my feelings regarding a potential Deer Hunt in White Woods as part of a Deer Management Plan. Having resided on Forest Ridge Road for the past 17 years, I know first hand that there is a huge over abundance of deer in White's Woods. I understand the argument that we chose to live in the woods and that we need to just put up with the deer. I'm OK with a few deer running around the neighborhood but things have gotten way out of hand. The fact that large numbers of deer roaming our neighborhood eat everything that is not fenced in, is very frustrating. No flowers, no shrubs, no garden. You can't even put pumpkins on your front porch for Halloween they will come up onto the porch and destroy them. I can't count the times I have had close encounters with deer as I was traveling through the neighborhood. Of course living there I am keen to be on the lookout for them along the road at all times day and night. As I travel into the Borough of Indiana, I often see deer on Chestnut Street, North 9th Street, North 10th Street all the way to the intersection of Philadelphia Street.**

**I recall talking with Gail McCauly many years ago about the issue which was not as bad then as it is now. Gail said that the Township was looking at the possibility of a White's Woods Hunt to naturally control the herd. This is long overdue. I am 100% in favor of the controlled hunt in White's Woods. On related note, within the past several months there was a letter to the editor published in the Indiana Gazette. The letter from a woman who listed her address as Homer City, PA. encouraged White Township not to have a controlled hunt but rather use deer fencing to control the deer. As a tax payer who resides in White Township I am adamantly opposed to such a waste of our taxpayer money. A controlled hunt is a win/win. Ethical hunters are allowed to harvest some of the deer who's numbers are completely out of control.**

**I have attached a photograph of my back yard taken August 11, 2020 at 6:41 am. In it, you see twelve deer. There were five additional deer in my back yard that I was unable to get into one picture frame. Seventeen deer at one time in my back yard. Does White's Woods have a Deer Problem, yes very much so.....**

**Thanks for reading my rant Milt, hope you and your family are all well. I don't normally say anything and go with the flow. White Township is a fantastic place to live and raise a family. The Supervisors, management and workers do a great job and I couldn't be happier....**

Guy Haberl  
321 Forest Ridge Road  
Indiana, PA 15701

[REDACTED]







Rec'd 9/15/21

## DEER MANAGEMENT

I HAVE LIVED ON NORTH NINTH STREET FOR THE LAST 35 YEARS AND PUT UP WITH THE DISTRACTION CAUSED BY THE DEER HERD IN WHITES WOODS. FROM THE CUTTING OF TRAILS THROUGH MY FRONT YARD, TO THE STUNTING OR DESTROYING SHRUBS AND FLOWERS, TO EATING EVERYTHING IN MY VEGETABLE GARDEN.

DEER SEEM TO PREFER ANY TREE, SHRUB OR FLOWER WORTH ANYTHING WHILE NEVER TOUCHING A LEAF OF A WORTHLESS WEED. THEY ALSO WILL TAKE A FREE EASY MEAL HANDED OUT FROM PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE THAT THEY WILL STARVE TO DEATH IF NOT FEED. THESE ~~PEOPLE~~ PEOPLE NEED TO BE FINED OR AT LEAST INFORMED THEY ARE CAUSING MORE HARM THAN GOOD. BRINGING THESE ANIMALS INTO CLOSE UP CONTACT WITH HUMANS, NOT ONLY UPS THE CHANCES OF CONTRACTING LONES DISEASE, BUT UPS THE PROPERTY DAMAGE AS IN CAR CRASHES. THESE HAPPEN OFTEN ON NORTH NINTH STREET FROM NORTH SIXTH TO AS FAR INTO TOWN AS OAK STREET

ANY WAY TO REDUCE THIS HERD IS OK BY ME, I HAVE SEEN AS MANY AS 38 THATS THIRTY EIGHT IN THE EMPTY LOT ACROSS THE STREET FROM MY HOUSE, IN JAN. OR FEB. WHEN THEY HERD UP. THEY COME BACK YEAR AFTER YEAR, FOLLOWING THE SAME TRAILS OUT OF WHITES WOODS ACROSS THE TRACKS AND ACROSS NORTH NINTH UP OVER THE HILL INTO NORTH EIGHT STREET AREA, WERE SOMEONE HAS BEEN FEEDING THEM FOR YEARS

GARY Smith  
525 North Ninth St

Mike Lawer Sr. Deer Management Comments

Provided 9/15/2021 8:30 am. [REDACTED]

Definitely a nice plan and well drafted.

You only get one chance to make a first impression. Need to harvest as many deer as possible in first season. Will be easier to maintain herd in future years.

Waive the \$30 fee for WT residents only for kick off year. Some residents that will harvest a deer may be deterred by the fee.

Should open up when regular archery opens. Better opportunities for harvesting a deer.

Many homeowners may give permission for hunters to hunt in back yards or within 50 yards. Have we considered this. May open up more opportunities.



**From:** Joel Royer [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, September 06, 2021 2:10 PM  
**To:** Milton Lady (WT Manager)  
**Subject:** White's Woods Deer Management Comment

Per White Township's request for comments on the proposed Deer Management Plan, I submit the following:

If you use Google Satellite and look at the many thousands of acres of wooded property to the North and West of White's Woods, any effort to control the deer will be pointless. The deer from those areas will migrate to White's Woods because there will be more food.

Below is the Google Satellite view with White's Woods enclosed in the red area and the white distance line ending at 5 miles. And, the forested areas extend well beyond what is shown. White's Woods is simply too small to make much of a difference.



**From:** rritenour [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, September 05, 2021 10:10 PM  
**To:** wtinfo@whitetownship.org; milt@whitetownship.org; Info FWW  
**Subject:** Requested input on hunting in White's Woods  
**Attachments:** Ritenour bow hunting2.docx

Hello. I am writing in regards to your request for public input on deer hunting in White's Woods. I have written to you before, asking you to please rethink your decision to allow bow hunting in White's Woods. I am against the decision to allow hunting. The decision was made without thoughts of those of us who use the woods on a weekly, or sometimes daily basis. We enjoy the recreation of walking in the woods and enjoying Pennsylvania's natural beauty. That is what this Project 70 land was purchased for. It was never purchased with the idea of allowing hunting within its borders. Allowing bow hunting, where families come to safely enjoy their time in nature, is a reckless decision. Please do not wait until there is an accident before changing your minds. Once that were to happen, it would be too late.

I have enclosed a copy of a letter that I had sent to the Indiana Gazette.

Hopefully my letter will help you to see this matter in a different light. Thank you for your time, and for your support of White's Woods.

Sincerely,

Rick Ritenour

Sent with [ProtonMail](#) Secure Email



## White's Woods Does Not Need Hunting

I am writing in regards to the White Township Supervisors' recent decision approving bow hunting in the White's Woods area beginning this December. My family and I, along with our friends' families, walk the trails at White's Woods on a weekly basis. We've been doing this for quite some time now, throughout each season. After walking, we shop at businesses and eat at restaurants in White Township.

We think that your decision to allow bow hunting in White's Woods is a danger to any and all who will be using the park for its intended use. The trails have been there for a long time. The park was never designated for hunting. To allow bow hunting, with razor tipped arrows, at a place where families come to enjoy their walks in nature, is a complete disregard for the public who have been using the park. An injury, or even death to a member of the public, just to allow hunters to "maintain the herd," is an outrage. (The amount of deer that frequent White's Woods is actually very small.) Especially due to the fact that there are State Game Lands not far from White Township! Why put the park users and their families at such a dangerous risk, just so that a few hunters can hunt.

I call your attention to a Tribune Review article dated July 8, 2021 about a hunter in Nockamixon State Park (Buck's County) accidentally shooting and killing a teenager, thinking that he was a groundhog. The hunter was sentenced to years in prison, but the boy is dead.

We ask you to please reconsider your decision. How would you feel if one of us, or someone you knew, were to become a victim of a hunting accident, in a Project 70 area, where there was never hunting allowed before? There are plenty of opportunities for people to hunt in other areas. They do not need to come into White's Woods to hunt. It must be allowed to remain a safe place for the public to enjoy the public lands.



**From:** Tamara Whited [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, September 6, 2021 10:28 AM  
**To:** wtinfo@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** Deer Management Plan

Hello,

I have reviewed the Township's Deer Management Plan for the 2021-22 hunting season and must express a couple of concerns. First, after having reviewed the plan twice, I can still find no dates for the beginning and the end of the proposed season. Should we conclude that it begins with the posting of signs (December 1) and ends with the removal of signs (February 20)? The precise length of the season for White's Woods is of great importance, given that this park gets considerable use by walkers, hikers, runners, dog walkers, and cyclists on a daily basis. Even in the winter, many continue to hike in the woods (myself among them), and given adequate snowfall, White's Woods also receives cross-country skiers.

Second, I must express my misgivings about the long-term adequacy of this deer management plan. Yes, the deer population is too high to permit forest regeneration, as all stakeholders seem to be aware. However, because deer range over a considerable area, a yearly hunting season is not likely to be enough to permanently reduce this population. The present and future health of White's Woods has been the subject of considerable expert input over the past year and a half. The qualified foresters who have weighed in have emphasized the importance of deer fencing to allow for seedling growth, and more recently the idea of deer contraception has come up. I am an expert in neither technique, but as a concerned citizen and frequent user of WWNC, I would urge Township supervisors to take a longer view and plan for other deer mitigation projects.

Yours sincerely,

Tamara Whited  
Indiana, PA

**milt@whitetownship.org**

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**From:** Sara Stewart [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 07, 2021 4:07 PM  
**To:** wtinfo@whitetownship.org; Milt  
**Subject:** Deer management comment

My name is Sara Stewart and I am a resident of White Township. I am writing to offer commentary on your proposed deer management program. I am a very frequent visitor to White's Woods Nature Center and I am opposed to opening it to hunting for any period of time.

-First and foremost, a lot of people walk in these woods every day. It is simply too dangerous to let people use weapons here - as your own current no-weapons ordinance says.

-There are plenty of other locations in this area for people to hunt.

-Although you've advertised it as recreation, bowhunting can be and often is cruel to deer that are not killed right away. Please allow the citizens of Indiana and neighboring towns to continue enjoying this nature center in peace. Thanks for your time.

-Sara Stewart

Pine Crest Drive, Indiana

**milt@whitetownship.org**

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**From:** Susan Comfort [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 07, 2021 4:18 PM  
**To:** wtinfo@whitetownship.org; milt@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** Community Response to Deer Hunting Plan for White's Woods

Dear White Township Supervisors,

I am adamantly opposed to the plan to hunt deer in White's Woods because I am extremely concerned about safety and viability of the plan. Please consider an alternative.

First, safety. The plan, as it is currently drafted, does not address public safety concerns. Hundreds of hikers and naturalists regularly hike in White's Woods Nature Center. Indeed, in the winter months from December to March, there are people cross-country skiing in the woods and playing frisbee golf. I know because I hiked with a friend of mine along with her two young children and two dogs last January in the woods. The children and the dogs love to run ahead on the trail. (These same children LOVE the frisbee golf course at S & T, so thank you for that!) They also sometimes bring their frisbees to play in the woods. I am concerned that if hunters are perched in deer blinds several hundred feet away, they may mistake the children for deer, and tragedy could ensue.

Regarding safety, I am also concerned that neighboring property owners may inadvertently be in harm's way. We have all heard of hunting accidents in which a hunter does not understand the boundaries of a hunting area and inadvertently targeted a person on adjoining property. Also, what if an injured or dying deer leaves White's Woods and ends up on someone's private property?

Second, viability. I am concerned that not enough study has been conducted to discover if a deer hunt would be the best approach to managing overpopulation in the park. Could we consider instead some sort of reproductive control method? Isn't that a more direct approach with much less impact on people who use the park.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Susan Comfort  
Indiana County Resident



**From:** Todd Thompson [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 07, 2021 6:10 PM  
**To:** wtinfo@whitetownship.org; milt@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** Proposed deer management plan

Mr. Lady and township supervisors,

As a resident of White Township, I read with chagrin your proposed deer management plan. This plan comes less than two years after the board passed an ordinance banning hunting in Whites Woods (in Jan. 2020). In the *Indiana Gazette* article about the passage of the ordinance, Rich Gallo is quoted as saying, "Public safety is our number one concern." What happened? The exception for culling deer, urged by Gail McCauley, was supposed to be for controlled hunts run by the state game commission, not White Township. This was crystal clear in the discussions at the time. I was present at several meetings on this issue and spoke at two of them in support of the ordinance.

Since the board seems to have backtracked on this issue, I will reiterate some of my points here.

1. During late 2019 board discussions on this issue, several of the board supervisors in their comments expressed concerns about the size of the deer herd in White's Woods, and that's certainly fair to bring up. But, **as Mr. Lady intelligently pointed out, many studies have shown that simply introducing hunting into an area does NOT have the effect of reducing a herd size. These studies are pretty conclusive on this point.**

2. So if hunting in White's Woods or other township parks is NOT really about herd population control, it is, as Mr. Lenz described it in several meetings, simply about recreation. Luckily, we as community members are trying to stop people from hunting for recreation in the region. As I mentioned fall 2019, there are myriad other opportunities for hunting within a 10-15 minute drive, including most of Blue Spruce Park, most of Yellow Creek State Park, and State Gamelands 248 and 217, in addition to private land (if I remember correctly, Mr. Lenz kindly and publicly invited hunters to hunt on his own land). White's Woods is one of the ONLY extensive woods in the area where hikers know they will never run into hunters. This, no doubt, attracts many hikers to the White's Woods and should be celebrated instead of derided.

3. Other recreational activities, such as shooting a gun and drinking alcohol, both of which are also quite fun recreation, are not allowed in White Township parks, nor is anyone proposing that they be. Regulating recreation so that all types of people can find a place to do what they love is important work of local governmental bodies. In 2019 I applaud the supervisors for drafting an ordinance that clarified previous ambiguities and that has enhanced the experience of the vast majority of users of White Township parks. I look forward to applauding them once again when they scrap this proposal.

Thanks for your time.

Todd Thompson  
White Township



**milt@whitetownship.org**

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**From:** lcs47 [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 07, 2021 7:31 PM  
**To:** milt@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** Deer Management

Please  
Leave the deer alone.

Thank you

Lee Schweitzer

Sent from my Verizon, Samsung Galaxy smartphone

**From:** Thomas Simmons [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 7, 2021 10:52 PM  
**To:** wtinfo@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** Deer Management Plan

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to comment on your draft proposed Deer Management Plan. I am a White Township and Whites Woods resident. Thank you for soliciting public comment, and thank you for your informative PennState Extension Forest Science fact sheet. I am not opposed to deer hunting in Whites Woods. However, the Deer Management Plan based on hunting should be part of a larger deer management plan and forest stewardship plan, not proposed alone in isolation. In addition, baseline data on deer density or activity and browse damage should be collected before hunting is allowed, and these data should be collected annually to assess effectiveness of the management. Lastly, a reduction of deer density alone is unlikely to reduce blacklegged tick numbers. I have seen estimates in the scientific literature that deer density has to be reduced to below five per square mile to reduce tick density because a single female tick lays ~2,000 eggs, and a single deer carries/hosts ~10 females at any one time.

Sincerely,  
Tom Simmons

**From:** Norma Tarnoff [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 09, 2021 12:44 PM  
**To:** milt@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** Deer Management in White's Woods

I am against the proposed White Township deer management plan for White's Woods for numerous reasons listed below.

1. How many deer browse in White's Woods? To my knowledge there has been no official count to estimate the numbers.
2. Several poachers have been reported in White's Woods bow and arrow hunting deer. If this plan is to go on for a month who will monitor the legal hunting hours per day and those hours following to make sure restrictions are followed?
3. Only 50% of deer shot by arrows die immediately. Many continue to run off. Does that mean dead deer can be found in surrounding properties?
4. PA deer carry Corona Virus. It is recommended that hunters use rubber gloves when gutting and not touch the animal's face. And how are these dead deer to be removed safely and without damage to native plant areas since there are no roads.
5. Shooting deer will only drive them to surrounding homes and areas.

This plan has not been carefully researched to evaluate the consequences. I hike in the woods all year but will not go near those woods during the hunt. It will be unsafe.

There are more serious problems with the understory that a hunt will not address, and again you don't even know how many deer you are dealing with. Deer issues can be handled effectively by using deer exclosures.

Please reconsider and do not jump at a no cost solution to deer when there is another choice.

Norma Tarnoff  
2740 Rebecca Street  
Indiana, PA  
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

**From:** Charles Olson [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, September 13, 2021 2:04 PM  
**To:** milt@whitetownship.org; wtinfo@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** White's Woods Deer Hunting Concern

September 11, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

As an area resident, I have come to know and love the White's Woods Nature Center as the "national park" of both White Township and the Indiana Borough. It is a place of refuge, calm, and rejuvenation for all who seek its solitude and reinforcing beauty.

I am very concerned regarding any attempt to "control" via "harvesting" the deer population by the artificial means of hunting for all of the following reasons:

- 1: Allowing bow hunting is seen by many as the first step to slide the image of the Center to that of a hunting reserve that would begin to turn the public's perception away from its current image as refuge and a place of peace.
- 2: Bow hunting, nor any "hunting" of any sort, will not control the deer population regardless of the number of hunters sent into White's Woods.
- 3: Bow Hunting only serves a very small minority of the population who seeks the convenience of not having to drive so far to kill an animal. This idea of a convenient, suburban hunting "opportunity" is exceedingly distasteful.
- 4: The natural order of animal life vis a vis available food supply will regulate itself without the need for deer harvesting.
- 5: In addition, bow hunting will cut off use of the White's Woods Nature Center to all hikers, dog walkers, and cross country skiers who far outnumber the hunters during the designated "hunting period".

Please leave this issue alone. You have a unique asset in the WWNC. It is a point of pride in the community and should be seen as a refuge for the community as well as the animal population. Indiana County is filled with areas for hunting. This action is not necessary and threatens a degradation of the Center's standing and value to the community. Please, leave it as it is.

Sincerely,

Chuck Olson  
472 South Seventh St  
Indiana, PA 15701



**From:** Jessica Jopp [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, September 13, 2021 7:48 PM  
**To:** wtinfo@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** Bow-hunting Plan Feedback

Dear White Township Supervisors,

The reasons I am opposed to any bow-hunting in White's Woods Nature Center are many:

- The woods are heavily used during the proposed hunting period
- There would be a risk, as your board announced not too long ago, to public safety
- From discussions with hunters I have learned that the bow mechanisms do not work well in cold weather
- The deer will simply scatter and reappear later
- The method is not effective
- The reason for the plan has not been made clear to the public, as at least three different rationales have been hinted at, though not any of them supported with data

In the interest of public safety I urge you to withdraw your plan.

Thank you,

Jessica Jopp  
Frequent hiker In White's Woods!

**From:** Sara King [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 14, 2021 12:49 PM  
**To:** wtinfo@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** Feedback to WT Deer Hunting Program (corrected copy!)  
**Attachments:** WWNC Trail Map Jim Clark we.pdf

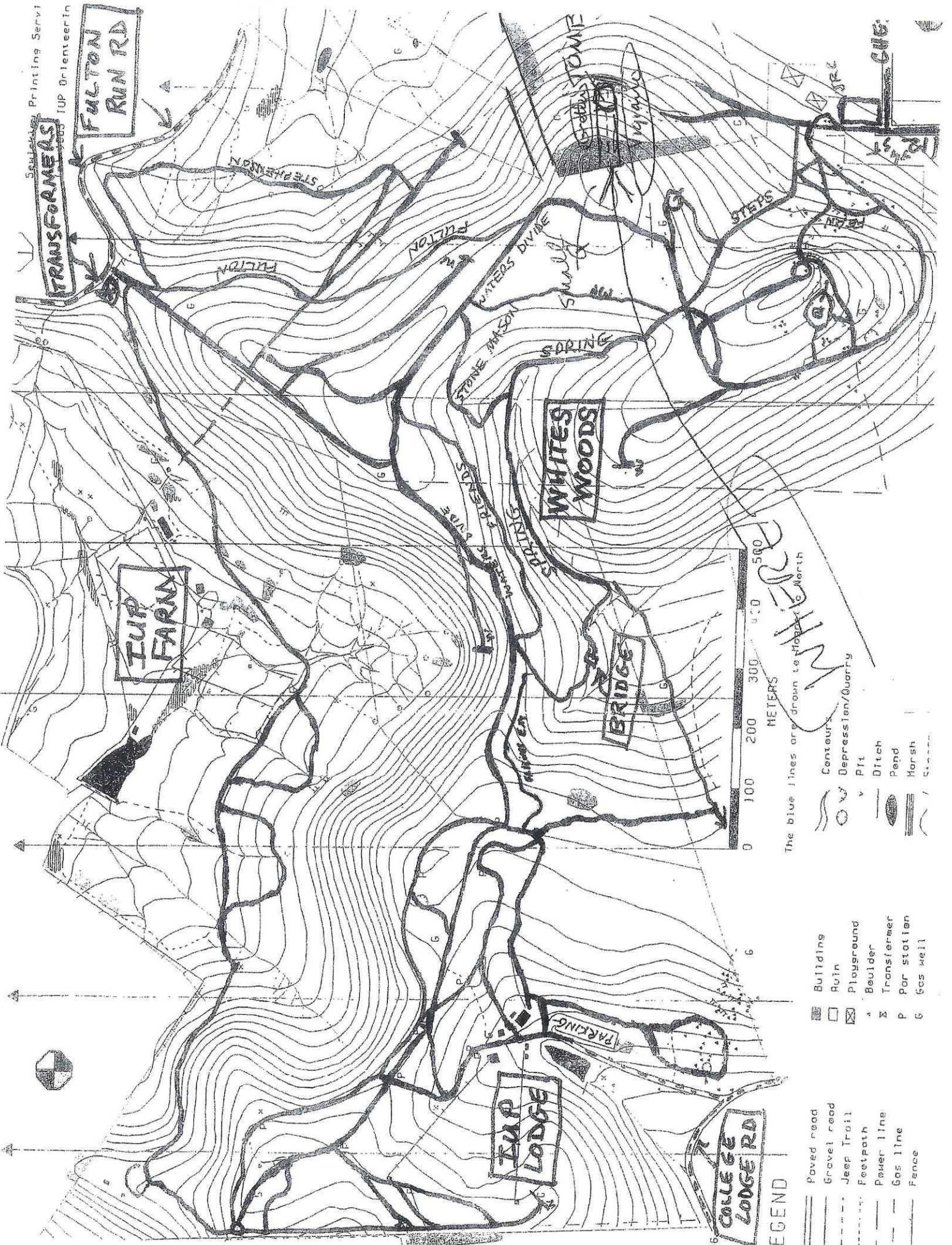
I am opposed to the deer hunting program now proposed.

1. Any management plan in the WWNC should be based on extensive data that specifically describes the White's Woods Nature Center, as indicated by the DCNR response to White Township regarding the 2020 proposed management plan and the September 8, 2021 response from Director Tom Ford. Before any proposed deer hunting plan is developed, the Township needs to collect information related to vegetative plots, transects, indications of deer pressure, damage, objectives, deer density goals, various options for deer browse control (as needed) and other factors related to human use, safety, and public input regarding all goals and objectives.
2. It appears that the Township is working with an outdated trail map of the White's Woods Nature Center. Most trails are, on average, 100-150 feet apart - often much closer because the trails converge. The furthest distance between trails is about 600 feet. (An updated map is attached - though I believe that at least one new trail may have been developed on the north side of this park since this map was completed.)
3. A deer browse management plan should be one part of a long-term, holistic management plan and should not be developed as an isolated program.

Sara King

White Township resident





0 100 200 300 400 500  
METERS

The blue lines are drawn to height to North

- Contours
- Depression/Quarry
- Pit
- Ditch
- Pond
- Marsh
- ...

- Building
- Ruin
- Playground
- Boulder
- Transformer
- Post station
- Gas well

- Paved road
- Gravel road
- Jeep trail
- Footpath
- Power line
- Gas line
- Fence

LEGEND



**wtinfo@whitetownship.org**

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**From:** Dan Sadler [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 15, 2021 12:39 PM  
**To:** wtinfo@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** White's Woods Deer Hunting Plan

Dear White Township Supervisors:

I am strongly opposed to the proposed deer hunting plan. I live in White Township and I hike in White's Woods 4 to 5 times a week throughout the year. I would not feel safe hiking in the park while people were hunting deer, and would therefore be unable to use the park during this period.

Sincerely,

Dan Sadler

**wtinfo@whitetownship.org**

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**From:** Amanda Poole [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 17, 2021 7:08 AM  
**To:** wtinfo@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** Letter of concern

Greetings,

I am writing to voice my concern about the proposal to allow bow hunting in White's Woods. I frequent the woods with my children and dogs throughout the year. Living in a region where hunting is the norm, even at state parks, there are no other natural areas where we can hike safely during hunting season. We rely on White's Woods for time to spend outdoors together - something that is critical for the mental and physical health of our family. There are plenty of places to hunt. There are no other places to hike. This has been a hard couple of years. Please don't take away the one place we go to be happy together.

Kindest regards,  
Amanda Poole

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

**wtinfo@whitetownship.org**

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**From:** Laurie Lafontaine [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 17, 2021 2:40 PM  
**To:** wtinfo@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** White Township Proposed Deer Management Plan

I am a White Township resident who uses White Township's park properties and particularly Whites Woods.

I am glad that this plan is proposed and not an official stance enacted by the Supervisors. While you have gathered some impressive documents that you include as attachments, you still have a long way to go. You only have one introductory paragraph providing very little data driven information before launching into action items, rules, instructions, and an application. Where is the justification for the action items, rules, instructions, and application? How are you going to evaluate the success of this program? The documents that are in the attachments from various sources such as Penn State, Cornell, and Pa Game Commission are only general guidelines aimed at helping form a specific, individualized plan needed for our White Township municipality's park lands.

At this time I have no personal opinion one way or the other about how to manage the deer population in the various township parks. But based on this proposed deer management plan as it reads today, I would have to be opposed. This document needs to be individualized to our township utilizing various research and data before it can become an acceptable plan. I don't like to criticize without offering to help develop solutions. I detest the division and dissentious bantering in our township over this matter. As chair of the county planning commission and a county park board member who has helped develop and implement many planning documents, I feel I have some expertise to offer any assistance to come to a resolve on this matter. If you so desire, you can email me.

Laurie



**From:** christi sheldon [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 17, 2021 3:09 PM  
**To:** wtinfo@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** Deer Hunting feedback  
**Attachments:** image1.jpeg; Untitled attachment 00041.txt

**FAMILY SAFETY CONCERNS NOT ADDRESSED BY YOUR PLAN**

I have not had my safety concerns alleviated by your posted plan. I do not agree to this proposal.

Your only concern for safety seems to be for that of the hunters, rather than the families, children, students and athletes using WW, as you note (quoted below) efforts to protect the hunters from "unwanted attention" from non-hunters.

Who will protect non-hunters from unwanted attention in the form of accidents by hunters?

Who will protect the homeowners?

Who will protect the children and families who use WW daily?

The area is not safe as a hunting ground for anyone using the hilly, twisty paths of Whites Woods. having brought a bow hunter on those paths, I say this from the POV of a hunter and of a recreational user of WW.

It is also not an effective deer management plan, since the deer will just go to adjacent property until the hunt is over.

Not only do you have zero plans to have anyone physically there to monitor these hunts, but I spoke with DCNR and a "controlled hunt" would be coordinated with the Game Commissioner.

You link to a document from 2014 by the Game Commission, but even in this document it states that deer fencing is very effective long term way of managing a deer population.

The only objection they have is it's expense, which many of us have pointed out to you is non-existent due to federal grants that will pay for the fencing.

## 5. Fencing

### Definition:

Construction of a physical or electric barrier to exclude or direct deer movements from an area

Barrier fencing (minimum 8-foot high; woven wire or individual wire cages 1.5-feet in diameter and 3-4-foot high; fine netting to cover shrubs and gardens; or any type of fencing that creates an obstacle to deer access)

### Advantages:

- a) Provides long term deer exclusion
- b) Can be used for individual trees/shrubs/plants or large blocks
- c) Performs well under intense deer pressure
- d) Many options available

### Disadvantages:

- a) Expensive (\$5-7 per linear foot)
- b) Regular maintenance is required
- c) Changes aesthetics of area
- d) Difficult to use across water gaps and flood plains
- e) For large areas, deer must be removed from inside the fence
- f) Local ordinances may restrict use

### Application:

- a) Individual trees/plants/shrubs

This brings into question the stated purpose of your hunt plans, a purpose which is much more effectively achieved by FREE deer fencing.

The link to Penn state college cooperative doc quotes the opinion of a retired game commissioner, not a current member of the board. The board is appointed by the Governor of Pennsylvania, and serve 4 year terms that can be extended for only 2 years.

Obviously it is not an endorsement of your plan since it's dated 2014. If you have worked with the CURRENT Game Commission board on this specific plan this year, please share those emails.

It's very concerning that your entire board has shown zero concern for the safety of regular users of Whites Woods. Can any of you explain why this is so?

Christina Sheldon

Sent from my iPad



**wtinfo@whitetownship.org**

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**From:** Jason Easley [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 17, 2021 4:13 PM  
**To:** wtinfo@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** Deer Management Plan

As someone with a background in public sector budgeting, your deer management plan makes no sense. The small amount of revenue that would be derived is offset by the legal liability that would come from any incident.

The township can acquire deer fencing for free. Free is always better at a time of pandemic public sector funding shortfalls.

Your plan is foolish, irresponsible, and shows no regard for the community or surrounding residents.

Jason Easley

JASON EASLEY

Owner/Managing Editor PoliticusUSA

[REDACTED]

**From:** David Dahlheimer [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 17, 2021 4:29 PM  
**To:** wtinfo@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** White Township (WT) Deer Hunting Proposal

I am strongly opposed to your WT Proposal to permit bow hunting of deer in in WT's parks, specifically in Whites Woods Nature Center.

The proposal details no measurable objectives, and offers no evidence that previous such programs have resulted in significant improvements in decreased deer herd size, or caused increased desirable plant or tree regeneration. The absence of any measures or estimates of current herd size guarantee that the effect of hunting cannot be convincingly shown to have increased or decreased the subsequent herd size.

What is clear is that this hunting would result in decreased safety for the many users of WWNC, the major reason cited by the WT Supervisors in previous consistent rejection of hunting in WWNC. This decreased safety will cause the many walkers, hikers, etc. to not use the woods during any possible hunting period. This is exactly what DCNR asked that WT not do in their management recommendations. not to decrease the recreational use of the WWNC.

Please reject this current plan, or at least extend the comment period to first allow the public meeting you are currently planning.

Thank you.

David Dahlheimer  
White Township

**From:** Judith Sheldon [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 17, 2021 4:54 PM  
**To:** wtinfo@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** White's Woods

Dear Good People of Indiana, Pennsylvania,

I am a frequent out-of-state visitor to Indiana, and have been so impressed by, and impacted by, the deep sanctuary provided by White's Woods. You are fortunate indeed to have beautiful land dedicated to, and held for, the sanctity of being in nature. Whether walking a trail, sitting quietly, or standing on the edge of the river, we are immersed in the safety and mystery of all of creation - trees that seem to emanate rays of sunlight, small scampering animals, breezes that create musical scores, rippling water, and we are sometimes. . . watched silently by deer.

White's Woods is a remarkable epicenter for human solace, for feeling at one with nature, for the possibility of meditative solitude, and for figuring out our intense and challenging world, in a peaceful and comforting environment.

I hope that you will not consider destroying this spiritual oasis, this mental health resource, and this Get Back to Yourself experience, with anything as antithetical as hunting - any kind of hunting, any type of weapon, any time of year. Sanctuary and Hunting are simply not workable in the same space.

There are many people, perhaps in many states, who would wish to have a White's Woods nearby. You have it, and I urge you to keep it.

Sincerely,

Linda Finkbeiner



**wtinfo@whitetownship.org**

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**From:** Gail Berlin [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 17, 2021 5:22 PM  
**To:** wtinfo@whitetownship.org  
**Subject:** Opposed to bow-hunting plan

Dear White Township Supervisors:

I opposed the plan to hunt deer by bow in White's Woods. This plan endangers the people who regularly walk there, will not help to keep deer out in the way that enclosures would, and seems an unnecessarily cruel way to hunt the deer, particularly those who regularly live there and are relatively tame.

Thank you for considering my objections.

Best,  
Gail Berlin