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# Supervisors order study of deer overpopulation

By MARGARET HARPER  
Gazette Staff Writer

## WHITE TOWNSHIP

White Township officials will have a better idea of just how bad the township's deer overpopulation is after the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture conducts a deer census.

Township supervisors on Wednesday unanimously approved a motion to participate in a Department of Agriculture study for production of a white-tailed deer management plan for the township.

The study is part of two-pronged approach used for deer management by the department, said Larry Garner, township manager.

The first aspect involves a census in which officials estimate how many deer are in the area.

Garner originally spoke with officials about studying the White's Woods area of the township, but

he plans to ask if the department can take a more wide-ranged approach.

The cost of participating in the study is \$5,713, and Garner said he was unsure if that would increase if the entire township were studied instead of just areas near White's Woods.

He stressed that this portion of the project is only a study to "get a better handle" on the situation, not a deer harvest.

The second part of the program, which the township is not obligated to participate in after the study, involves deer removal. Garner said he hasn't discussed this aspect much with officials, and after the meeting, he declined to elaborate on the methods the Department of Agriculture recommends to harvest deer.

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# White Twp. supervisors approve deer study

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Township officials are also investigating which areas are more problematic. Chris Anderson, code enforcement officer, made a map of the township and pinpointed where all deer carcasses have been picked up from the township's roadways from February 2007 to present.

The dead deer are most heavily concentrated in the area of North Ben Franklin Road, where about 13 of the 22 total deer were picked up. In the entire northwest quadrant of the township, about 15 to 17 deer were picked up.

The map showed deer that were picked up only on township roads; data for Pennsylvania Department of Transportation roads were not available, Garner said.

Supervisor Gail McCauley noted that the numbers might actually be higher, because some deer move off the road to die after being struck by

3) ment with Indiana County and Indiana Regional Medical Center for use of the White Township Recreation Center in the event of emergencies at county facilities or IRMC.

The county and IRMC are required to have an emergency back-up plan in the event that something would happen to their facilities, Garner said. Both have expressed interest in the center because of its size.

For example, he said, if a tornado were to wipe out the courthouse, the county could conduct business at the ice center. Or if a pandemic flu struck the area, patients needing a lower level of care could go to the center if IRMC were filled to capacity.

Garner recommends that the township consider allowing use of the facility through some sort of agreement. The supervisors instructed Garner to proceed with discussions.

Reported that the group Friends of White's Woods, which opposes an adopted forestry management plan to remove 550,000 board-feet of trees from the area, have requested meeting minutes and other documents relating to White's Woods from early December to last week.

Garner will send out the documents today. They include a response letter from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources pertaining to the township's request to review the plan.

After reviewing the plan, the DCNR reported that the plan "has a few shortcomings" and does not meet the requirements of plans approved as DCNR stewardship plans, which Garner says are more aggressive in methods of timbering.

But, the letter also stated that DCNR has no role in managing White's Woods under Section 2207 of the Second Class Township Code.

Garner has now sent another letter asking whether the plan complies with requirements for managing Project 70 lands.

The Project 70 Land Acquisition and Borrowing Act has restrictions on use of land purchased with a state bond issue through taxes, which is how the township obtained White's Woods.

As required under Project 70, the deed to White's Woods contains a property easement as follows: "This indenture is given to provide land for recreation, conservation and historical purposes, as said purposes are defined in ... Pennsylvania Statute 72, section 3946.20(c)."

Garner will now wait for a reply.

Announced that townships across Pennsylvania are being encouraged to make extra cleaning efforts for the environment from April 19 to May 3.

Jerry Boucher asked that township residents do their part by cleaning up debris and other

4) Rejected adopting an ordinance that would have changed the method of payment for supervisors. The ordinance was rejected after some supervisors expressed concerns.

Currently, supervisors are paid \$100 per meeting attended. Under the Second Class Township Code, supervisors are eligible for a salaried amount of up to \$3,250 annually, which can be paid by the month.

Eugene Gemmell said it concerned him that there was no clause in the ordinance that stated a supervisor would not be paid if he or she did not attend the meeting.

That means that if a supervisor attended only every other meeting or so, he or she would still be paid the full amount annually, which he said would not be fair. Gemmell then made a motion to instruct Garner to investigate rewriting the ordinance with such a clause. The motion passed unanimously.

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