



ANIMAL
ALLIANCE
OF CANADA

*Animal
Protection
Through
Education &
Advocacy*

Bulletin Sifton Bog Deer

Alternatives to lethal culling

1. Why consider non-lethal alternatives?

- a. **A one time cull will not solve the problem – the complaints will not stop. A yearly cull will be required:** Killing the Sifton Bog deer will not solve any problems attributed to the deer because they move into the bog from the valley system and out of the bog and back into the valleys. Deer movement is confirmed by the variation in the number of animals, with as many as 52 and as few as 26 being counted in the bog.

London Council will be faced with a yearly controversy about whether or not to kill these animals. The non-lethal approach removes the controversy, while providing Council with a programme that helps address complaints.

- b. **Residents, who have lived in close proximity to urban deer culling programmes, have safety concerns:** Three common safety concerns are expressed by residents in communities where deer culling has occurred.

The first concern relates to the discharge of lethal arrows where residents walk and play. This is particularly true of Sifton Bog where residents recreate in the bog and yards back on the bog. Because of the size of the area, exclusion of residents and pets from the bog cannot be assured.

The second concern addresses panicked deer who may be driven into yards and onto roads in an attempt to escape the cull.

The third concern is about wounded deer, their movements through residential areas and onto roads and the possibility of families seeing wounded deer suffering and dying.

- c. **Residents who have lived in close proximity to urban deer culling have liability concerns. Will London City Council accept legal liability for the cull?** Residents who have lived in communities where urban deer culling has occurred have expressed liability concerns. London City Council must address this issue and notify residents whether the City will be legally

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liable for any property damage, bodily injury and/or death that results from the Sifton Bog deer cull.

2. Prevention and non-lethal intervention programme :

An integrated and ongoing programme of prevention and non-lethal intervention is key to addressing huma/deer conflicts. A comprehensive programme which involves a number of non-lethal interventions is set out by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (See appendices).

Components of the programme include:

- a. Moving the deer from the area.
- b. Excluding the deer from conflict areas and from specific plants and bushes through fencing.
- c. Using repellents to make plants less palatable and less desirable to deer.
- d. Using deterrents such as sound and visual scare devices and dogs.
- e. Planting less palatable landscape plants.

Comprehensive non-lethal programme for Sifton Bog deer:

1. **Moving the deer from the area:** This is clearly an option for the Sifton Bog deer given that they move in and out of the bog naturally. This approach allows for the gradual, more controlled movement, of deer out of the bog area, avoiding panic, injury and accidents. Such an approach would have to be coordinated with the community, the police and City traffic staff to ensure that the deer were able to cross safely in certain designated places.
2. **Excluding the deer from conflict areas and from specific plants and bushes through fencing:** Fencing provides a longer term solution to the impact of deer on landscaping, backyard gardens and bog plants. Deer Fence Canada offers an inexpensive, flexible fencing system for certain situations in the bog and in areas where the deer have easy access to the bog. The City will likely opt for more permanent fencing should the exclusion prove successful.
3. **Using repellents to make plants less palatable and less desirable to deer and deterrents to deter the deer:** Lists of repellents and deterrents are found in the appendices of this document. Again, these options are available to the City as part of an integrated non-lethal plan. Deterrents might be useful to assist in positioning the deer together to make moving them from the bog easier.
4. **Planting less palatable landscape plants:** The appendices include lists of plants that are rarely, seldom, occasionally and frequently damaged by deer. The Conservation Authority might consider native plants that are rarely or seldom damaged by deer in the rehabilitation planting. Residents whose yards back on or are close to the bog should consider plants that are largely unattractive to deer.