



**City of Des Peres
Missouri**

January 10, 2023

Dear Phantom Forest and Bittersweet Woods Conservation Area Neighbor:

A managed deer hunt will take place at the two conservation areas known locally as Phantom Forest and Bittersweet Woods starting on Wednesday, January 18th and concluding on Wednesday, February 1st. During this time, both conservation areas will be closed to the public with signage posted at the primary trailheads located at Brighton Heights and Barrett Station Road.

This particular managed hunt is called a sharpshooter program – a concept in which professionally trained wildlife management specialist (White Buffalo) are retained to perform deer mitigation services using a combination of baiting techniques and suppressed firearms – both requiring special permits from the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC). Sharpshooting is widely considered to be the most effective tactic for reducing deer herds over a short period. For that reason, sharpshooter programs are amongst the most tightly regulated wildlife management programs available in Missouri, requiring extensive oversight and collaboration with State conservation officials – please reference the attached permit for more information.

The MDC and the City of Des Peres are working cooperatively to administer the managed deer hunt at Phantom Forest and Bittersweet Woods to help control the deer population which now far exceeds the carrying capacity of the land. When deer numbers are high, other plant and wildlife species struggle to survive or disappear altogether. To be responsible land managers, deer numbers should be kept in balance with the other species. Under this program, all deer carcasses will be transported by White Buffalo to a licensed processor and all meat is donated to charitable organizations. In addition, Des Peres has made arrangements to donate 20 carcasses to the St. Louis Zoo as part of its red wolf sanctuary program.

City of Des Peres staff will be available at all times during the managed hunt. Should you experience problems or have concerns related to the hunt, please call 314-835-6234; after regular business hours, please contact 314-835-6200 and ask to speak directly with our supervisor on duty. If you have questions related to the hunt prior to then, please contact us directly at 314-835-6132.

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