

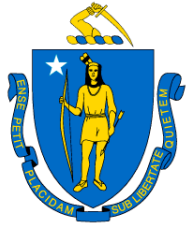


## *White-Tailed Deer Management Program*

*2017 Program Overview & Results*



A Joint Publication of the  
Massachusetts Department of Conservation & Recreation and  
Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife



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## Executive Summary

### **Context & Rationale for Deer Management in the Blue Hills Reservation**

From the canopy to the understory, healthy forest ecosystems are made up of trees and plants of multiple species and age classes, and the diversity of vegetation provides suitable and sustainable habitat for a rich and varied wildlife community. Recent deer density and preliminary vegetation surveys within the Blue Hills indicate very high deer populations. As manager and steward of the Blue Hills Reservation, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) is concerned with the long-term health of the Reservation's forest and the ecological impacts of sustained high deer densities on this natural resource. From the perspective of long-term forest health, tree regeneration is critical to the survival of forests and their ability to recover from natural disturbances. Forests with sustained high deer populations are susceptible to deer over-browsing young tree seedlings. In addition, extremely high deer densities can promote the spread of some invasive species and significantly reduce biodiversity.

DCR's mission is to preserve the properties and resources under its care. Based on the recommendations outlined in the 2011 Blue Hills Resource Management Plan, the results of deer abundance surveys, and a legislative mandate detailed in the 2014 Environmental Bond Bill, DCR and the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife (MassWildlife) developed a deer management plan for the Blue Hills Reservation that led to a controlled hunt in 2015.

The primary objective of the deer management program was to reduce deer densities to a level that allowed for the continuous growth and development of forest regeneration composed of adequate diversity of species and age classes. DCR's white-tailed deer management program is not intended to provide a new recreational opportunity in the Blue Hills. Rather, the program provides a concrete, practical, and workable solution intended to deal with a critical environmental problem.

The decision to manage the overpopulation of deer in the Blue Hills Reservation is not related to the role of deer in Lyme disease transmission or other tick-borne illnesses. DCR recognizes the myriad of research demonstrating conflicting results with regard to the correlation between deer densities, tick abundance, and Lyme disease contraction rates among humans. Furthermore, attempting to solve Lyme disease or reduce contraction rates is not a goal of DCR's deer management plan for the Blue Hills. Rather, as stewards of the Blue Hills Reservation, it is DCR's objective to reduce (and in the long-term reverse) the negative impacts of high deer densities on the Reservation's vegetation, promote the restoration of healthy habitat for other wildlife, and bring deer densities to a level more aligned with what the forest can sustain.

### **2017 Controlled Hunt Program & Harvest Results**

To continue the successful efforts undertaken in 2015 and 2016, DCR and MassWildlife implemented a third year of controlled hunting in the Blue Hills Reservation that featured an eleven-day archery hunt during the month of November 2017 and a four-day controlled shotgun hunt during the shotgun season in late November/early December 2017. Of the Reservations more than 7,000 acres, 776 acres were opened to archery hunting and 3,951 acres were opened to shotgun hunting.

A total of 67 deer were harvested from approximately 6.4 mi<sup>2</sup> of forest land opened to hunting; 10 deer were harvested during the permitted archery hunt and 57 deer were harvested during the controlled shotgun hunt. The total harvest represents a reduction of 10.4 deer/mi<sup>2</sup> from the hunted areas, which is similar to reduction rates for the previous two controlled hunts. Harvest results by management zone also support recent deer density estimates; as more deer harvested were from areas in which pellet count survey data found higher densities.

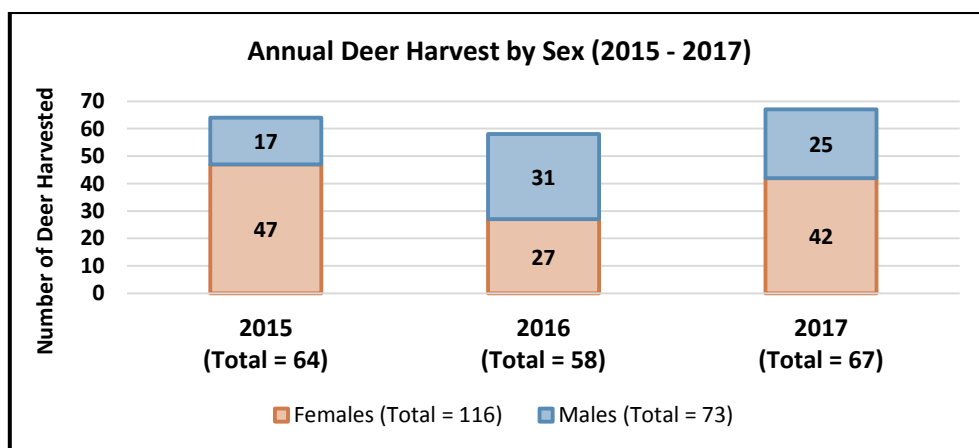
| Management Zone          | Square Miles Hunted | ARCHERY  |          |           | SHOTGUN   |           |           | Total Harvest (Archery & Shotgun) | Total Harvest Per mi <sup>2</sup> ‡ |
|--------------------------|---------------------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|                          |                     | Male     | Female   | Total     | Male      | Female    | Total     |                                   |                                     |
| Fowl Meadow *            | 0.60                | 2        | 4        | 6         | 6         | 9         | 15        | 21                                | 34.7                                |
| Little Blue *            | 0.11                | 1        | 0        | 1         | 3         | 3         | 6         | 7                                 | 64.0                                |
| Brookwood Farm (Archery) | 0.04                | 1        | 0        | 1         | --        | --        | --        | 1                                 | 24.6                                |
| Great Blue (Archery)     | 0.09                | 0        | 0        | 0         | --        | --        | --        | 0                                 | 0.0                                 |
| Great Blue               | 1.12                | --       | --       | --        | 2         | 4         | 6         | 6                                 | 5.4                                 |
| Houghton's Pond          | 0.90                | --       | --       | --        | 0         | 3         | 3         | 3                                 | 3.3                                 |
| Chickatawbut             | 1.57                | --       | --       | --        | 5         | 3         | 8         | 8                                 | 5.1                                 |
| Wampatuck                | 0.86                | --       | --       | --        | 0         | 7         | 7         | 7                                 | 8.1                                 |
| Ponkapoag                | 0.77                | --       | --       | --        | 3         | 6         | 9         | 9                                 | 11.8                                |
| Nike Site *              | 0.25                | 1        | 0        | 1         | 0         | 3         | 3         | 4                                 | 16.2                                |
| Braintree Site (Archery) | 0.12                | 1        | 0        | 1         | --        | --        | --        | 1                                 | 8.3                                 |
| <b>TOTAL</b>             | <b>6.43</b>         | <b>6</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>19</b> | <b>38</b> | <b>57</b> | <b>67</b>                         | <b>10.4</b>                         |

\* Archery and shotgun hunting permitted in this zone

‡ Harvest per square mile is calculated by dividing total deer harvest by the number of square miles hunted

An important outcome of the 2017 Blue Hills controlled deer hunt program is that 42 female deer were harvested, equating to at least 130 fewer deer in the spring of 2018. This estimate includes both the 67 deer that were harvested and a conservative estimate of the potential number of young that could have been added to the deer herd using an average of 1.5 fawns per female harvested. The harvesting of 42 females from the 6.4 mi<sup>2</sup> of huntable land is also significant because it represents a reduction of 6.5 females per square mile.

DCR and MassWildlife are very pleased with the results and smooth operational implementation of the 2017 Blue Hills Reservation permitted archery and controlled shotgun hunts. The controlled hunts represent continued progress toward addressing deer overabundance and its impacts in the Reservation. The chart below provides annual harvest results (by sex) for each of the three controlled hunts conducted thus far:

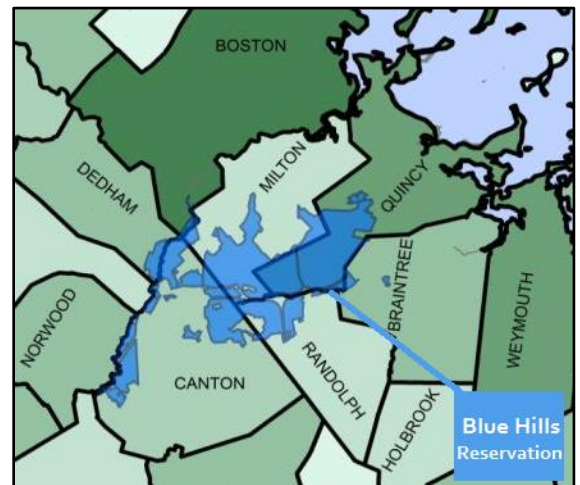


The successful execution of this plan and continued participation from permitted hunters represents a significant achievement. Like the 2015 and 2016 controlled hunts, the 2017 program demonstrated that hunting can be safely conducted in a suburban/urban setting.



## 1.0 The Blue Hills Reservation

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) manages and stewards the Blue Hills Reservation. The Reservation encompasses an area of over 7,000 acres and is situated less than ten miles south of downtown Boston in the communities of Braintree, Canton, Dedham, Milton, Quincy, and Randolph. A small portion of Fowl Meadow (north and west of the Neponset River) is located within the Hyde Park neighborhood of the City of Boston. The protection of this area as public open space began over 120 years ago with its establishment in 1893 by the Metropolitan Park Commission. As a public parkland and forested area, the Reservation contains a wide variety of natural resources, vegetation, wildlife, and cultural and archaeological resources, and its topography includes prominent hills (Great Blue Hill and Chickatawbut Hill), as well as open fields and several ponds and streams.



## 2.0 Context for Deer Management in the Blue Hills

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) have legislative mandates and missions to protect and manage a myriad of natural resources including forests, wildlife, and the habitats upon which a diversity of wildlife depends. From the canopy to the understory, healthy forest ecosystems are made up of trees and plants of multiple species and age classes and the diversity of vegetation provides suitable and sustainable habitat for a rich and varied wildlife community. From the perspective of long-term forest management, tree regeneration is critical to the long-term survival of forests and their ability to recover from natural disturbances. Forests that contain high deer population densities are vulnerable to deer over-browsing young trees, which can prevent forest regeneration. In addition, extremely high deer densities can promote the spread of some invasive species and significantly reduce biodiversity.

DCR's management of the Blue Hills Reservation is guided by the existence of a comprehensive Resource Management Plan (RMP) that was approved by the DCR Stewardship Council in April 2011 following a robust planning and development process involving input from local residents, stakeholders, and the Friends of the Blue Hills.<sup>1</sup> The Blue Hills RMP noted a growing concern over the size of the deer population within the Reservation and the impact of over-browse on rare plants and other vegetation throughout the Reservation. DCR has become increasingly concerned with the long-term health of the Reservation's forest and the ecological impacts of sustained high deer densities on this natural resource. The RMP explicitly recommended that the agency work with MassWildlife to estimate the size of the deer population, determine its impacts on the Reservation's natural resources, and discuss deer management options.<sup>2</sup> As such, DCR and MassWildlife worked together to conduct a

<sup>1</sup> The Friends of the Blue Hills is a non-profit organization that works both independently and in cooperation with the DCR to preserve the natural resources of and enhance recreational opportunities in the Blue Hills Reservation. For more information visit: [www.friendsofthebluehills.org](http://www.friendsofthebluehills.org).

<sup>2</sup> To view a copy of the approved 2011 Blue Hills Resource Management Plan please visit: <https://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dcr/stewardship/rmp/bh/sections1-4.pdf>. Appendices can be viewed at: <http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dcr/stewardship/rmp/bh/appendices.pdf>.

deer population survey in 2013 to estimate deer density in and around the Blue Hills Reservation. Using distance sampling as a survey method, MassWildlife estimated that there were about 85 deer per square mile of deer habitat within the Blue Hills (95% Confidence Interval [CI] = 59 – 118).<sup>3</sup>

## 2.1 – Legislative Mandate

In addition to following the recommendations within the Blue Hills RMP, DCR and MassWildlife were issued a legislative mandate in the 2014 Environmental Bond Bill ([Chapter 286 of the Acts of 2014](#)), which was signed into law by former Governor Deval Patrick in August 2014. Specifically, Section 43 of the bond bill directs DCR (in consultation with MassWildlife) to “identify areas in which deer overpopulation is negatively impacting forestation, water resources, or plant growth on department-owned land” and “to develop and implement a harvest management plan for the identified areas.”

## 2.2 – 2017 Results of Deer Abundance Surveying

As a follow-up to the 2013 population survey, DCR and MassWildlife conducted two separate deer abundance surveys in 2017 utilizing two separate methodologies. The first method – distance sampling – was similar to the method used in 2013 by MassWildlife. The second method – pellet count surveys – followed the methodology used by DCR’s Division of Water Supply Protection (DWSP) to estimate deer abundance on their watershed lands.

The remainder of this section provides a brief overview of the results and findings of each population survey. Readers are encouraged to view the [2016 Program Overview & Results / 2017 Results of Deer Abundance Surveying](#) report to learn more about each survey.

**2017 Distance Sampling Survey Results:** Over four nights of surveying, 79 groups of deer (199 individual deer) were detected over 112 miles of transect. The estimate of density was 23 deer/mi<sup>2</sup> of deer habitat (95% Confidence Interval [CI] = 12 – 44 deer/mi<sup>2</sup>). It is important to note when interpreting this density estimate that the 2017 survey did not include the Fowl Meadow section of the Reservation because of a lack of navigable trails. MassWildlife did survey one trail in this area in 2013 with distance sampling, but the vegetation and wetlands surrounding the trail made it difficult to see any deer that were present. Thus, the distance sampling estimates from both years likely underrepresent deer density for the overall Reservation.

**2017 Pellet Count Survey Results:** Recent advances in pellet count survey methodology have allowed more accuracy in these surveys. Counting deer droppings instead of individuals has several distinct advantages:

- Deer droppings are easy to see, don’t move, and can be counted over a longer period of time.
- Counting droppings is relatively straightforward and can be done with a minimal amount of equipment or personnel.
- Pellet count surveys allow a finer-scale look at deer numbers by area within the Reservation.
- Pellet counts allow data to be collected in a more representative and random way in and around the Reservation and does not rely on the roads and trail network, which can limit the bias and lead to more realistic estimates of density.

Given these benefits, DCR and MassWildlife conducted deer pellet count surveys a few weeks prior to the distance sampling survey. To conduct the pellet-count survey, the Blue Hills Reservation was divided into four (4) areas: Fowl Meadow/Little Blue, Great Blue/Houghton’s Pond, Wampatuck/Chickatawbut, and Ponkapoag/Nike Site. At each site, transects of 800 meters (1/2 mile) long were identified and generated in ArcGIS and then

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<sup>3</sup> To view a copy of MassWildlife’s 2013 Blue Hills deer abundance survey report, please visit: <https://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dcr/parks/south/blue-hills-deer-survey-report.pdf>.



transferred to hand-held GPS units that were used for navigation. Participants in the study collectively walked over 50 km and deer pellets were counted in each study area.

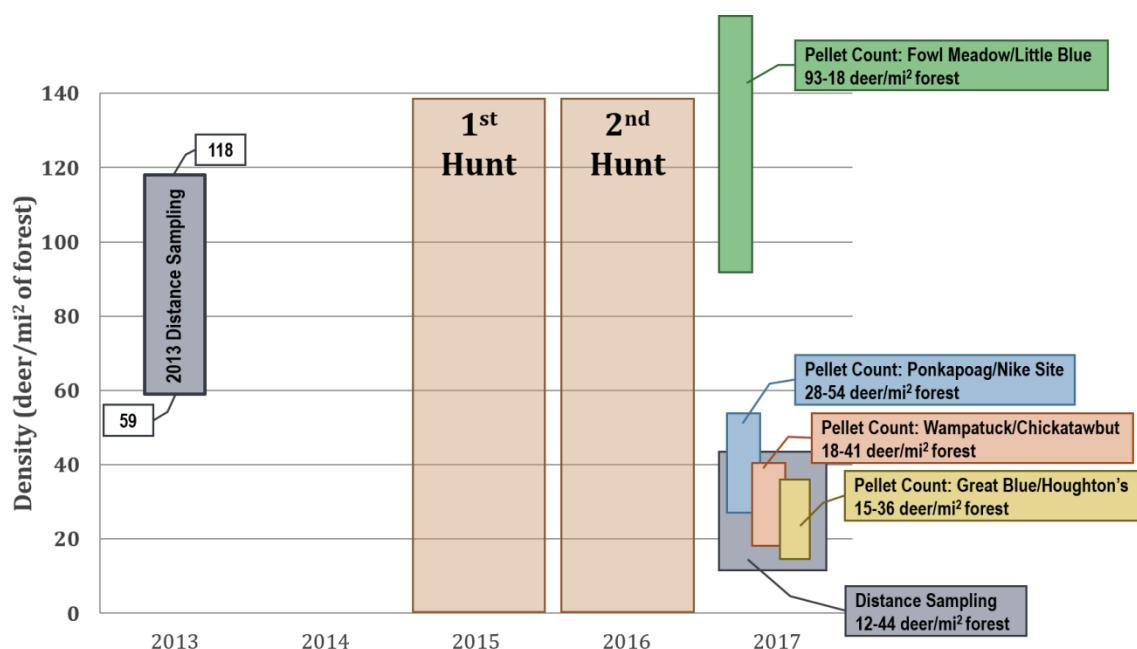
Deer densities were calculated and ranged from a low of 25.4 deer/mi<sup>2</sup> in the Great Blue/Houghton's Pond area to a high of 136.4 deer/mi<sup>2</sup> in the Fowl Meadow area (see table below). The overall average density estimate for the Blue Hills Reservation utilizing this methodology was about 52 deer/mi<sup>2</sup>. When Fowl Meadow is excluded from the analysis, the density estimate was 37 deer/mi<sup>2</sup>.

**2107 Pellet Count Survey – Unadjusted Deer Densities**

| Study Site                 | Density Estimate<br>(# of Deer/mi <sup>2</sup> ) | 95% Confidence Interval<br>(# of Deer/mi <sup>2</sup> ) |
|----------------------------|--|---|
| Blue Hills – Overall       | 51.6 mi <sup>2</sup>                             | 38.8 mi <sup>2</sup> – 64.5 mi <sup>2</sup>             |
| Fowl Meadow/Little Blue    | 136.4 mi <sup>2</sup>                            | 93.1 mi <sup>2</sup> – 180.0 mi <sup>2</sup>            |
| Great Blue/Houghton's Pond | 25.4 mi <sup>2</sup>                             | 14.5 mi <sup>2</sup> – 36.3 mi <sup>2</sup>             |
| Wampatuck/Chickatawbut     | 29.5 mi <sup>2</sup>                             | 17.9 mi <sup>2</sup> – 41.1 mi <sup>2</sup>             |
| Ponkapoag/Nike Site        | 40.8 mi <sup>2</sup>                             | 28.0 mi <sup>2</sup> – 53.7 mi <sup>2</sup>             |

Deer harvests during 2015 and 2016 likely led to a population reduction within the huntable areas and a slight population reduction across the whole Reservation. Rather than looking at the point estimates, it is more useful to look at the trends with confidence intervals included (see figure below). Combining the data from the 2017 distance sampling survey and the 2017 pellet count survey provides a wide interval around the estimate, but the trend is that deer numbers are lower than they were in 2013. Despite this, densities within the Reservation are still above the statewide goal of 6-18 deer/mi<sup>2</sup> of forest that is needed to reduce impacts to habitat and the forest.

**Blue Hills Deer Population Estimates: Pellet-Group & Distance Sampling Surveys (2013 – 2017)**







### 3.0 Rationale & Objectives for Deer Management in the Blue Hills

The primary objective and rationale for developing and implementing a deer management program is to maintain an ecologically sustainable deer density that allows for the continuous growth and development of forest regeneration. In particular, DCR is trying to reduce the negative impacts that high deer densities have on the regenerating forest to ensure a healthy forest composed of an adequate diversity of tree species and age classes. DCR's program for white-tailed deer management is not intended to provide a new recreational opportunity in the Blue Hills. Rather, the program provides a concrete, practical, and workable solution intended to deal with a critical environmental problem.

The decision to manage the overpopulation of deer in the Blue Hills Reservation is not related to the role of deer in Lyme disease transmission or other tick-borne illnesses. DCR recognizes the myriad of research demonstrating conflicting results with regard to the correlation between deer densities, tick abundance, and Lyme disease contraction rates among humans. Furthermore, attempting to solve Lyme disease or reduce contraction rates is not a goal of DCR's deer management plan for the Blue Hills. Rather, as stewards of the Blue Hills Reservation, it is DCR's objective to reduce (and in the long-term reverse) the negative impacts of high deer densities on the Reservation's vegetation, promote the restoration of healthy habitat for other wildlife, and bring deer densities to a level more aligned with what the forest can sustain.



### 4.0 2017 Permitted Archery Hunt Program Logistics & Operations

As was acknowledged in the initial [2015 Blue Hills Deer Management Plan](#), managing deer populations is a complex and dynamic process that is shaped and influenced by a variety of interdependent factors. As a result, DCR recognizes that effective deer management programs must provide and maintain a good degree of flexibility in order to make modifications and adjustments that are based on experience and results.

Building on the experience of the 2015 and 2016 controlled hunts, DCR and MassWildlife worked together to develop enhancements to increase the efficacy of the Blue Hills Deer Management Program. Specifically, the 2017 program separated archery hunting from shotgun hunting and established a separate permitted archery hunt in limited areas of the Reservation.

Over the last several years (and even prior to DCR's initiation of controlled deer hunting in the Blue Hills Reservation) a number of private property owners near or adjacent to the Blue Hills have voluntarily allowed archery hunters onto their land during the annual archery season to hunt deer. This informal program has been successful in harvesting a number of deer and highlighted the importance of cooperation between landowners and deer hunters. In many cases, archery hunting is the best practical solution to hunt smaller parcels. There are several areas within the Blue Hills Reservation that are challenging to hunt during the shotgun season but lend themselves well to limited archery hunting.

#### 4.1 – Timing & Length

To supplement efforts already taking place on nearby and adjacent private property and to enhance DCR's overall Deer Management Program for the Blue Hills Reservation, limited archery hunting was permitted in certain designated areas of the Reservation for a total of eleven (11) days on **Mondays through Thursdays only between November 6<sup>th</sup> and November 22<sup>nd</sup>**. In accordance with state hunting regulations, hunters were allowed to hunt one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

## 4.2 – Hunter Interest and Participation

Licensed hunters were offered the opportunity to apply on-line using a web-based form. The application process was open from September 8 through September 22, 2017 and permittees were selected utilizing a random lottery system.

A total of 450 hunters submitted applications for the permitted archery hunt. From among this applicant pool, DCR conducted a random lottery to select a single group of 75 archery hunters to receive access permits. In addition, 25 alternate hunters were selected. Access permits were valid on all eleven days in which archery hunting was allowed during the month of November and permitted hunters were allowed to hunt based upon their schedule and availability.

Of the hunters selected to participate, 63 access permits were actually issued. This was due largely to scheduling conflicts or other unforeseen circumstances that did not allow several selected applicants or alternates to attend one of the mandatory orientation sessions or participate in the archery hunt.

The table below provides archery hunt applicants and permittees according to state of residence:

| State of Residence | Number of Applicants | Number of Permittees |
|--------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Massachusetts      | 440                  | 60                   |
| New Hampshire      | 6                    | 3                    |
| Rhode Island       | 3                    | 0                    |
| Vermont            | 1                    | 0                    |
| <b>TOTAL</b>       | <b>450</b>           | <b>63</b>            |

Daily hunter attendance during the archery hunt is provided in the table below:

| Hunting Date | Number of Hunters Participating |
|--------------|---------------------------------|
| 11/6/2017    | 35                              |
| 11/7/2017    | 22                              |
| 11/8/2017    | 21                              |
| 11/9/2017    | 18                              |
| 11/13/2017   | 11                              |
| 11/14/2017   | 17                              |
| 11/15/2017   | 22                              |
| 11/16/2017   | 5                               |
| 11/20/2017   | 14                              |
| 11/21/2017   | 17                              |
| 11/22/2017   | 7                               |

### 4.3 – Management Areas and Hunter Distribution

Archery hunting was limited to the areas of the Reservation listed below and outlined on the map on the following page. Of the Reservation's more than 7,000 acres, a total of 776 acres were opened to permitted archery hunting across six (6) management areas. Permitted archery hunters were not assigned to a particular area.

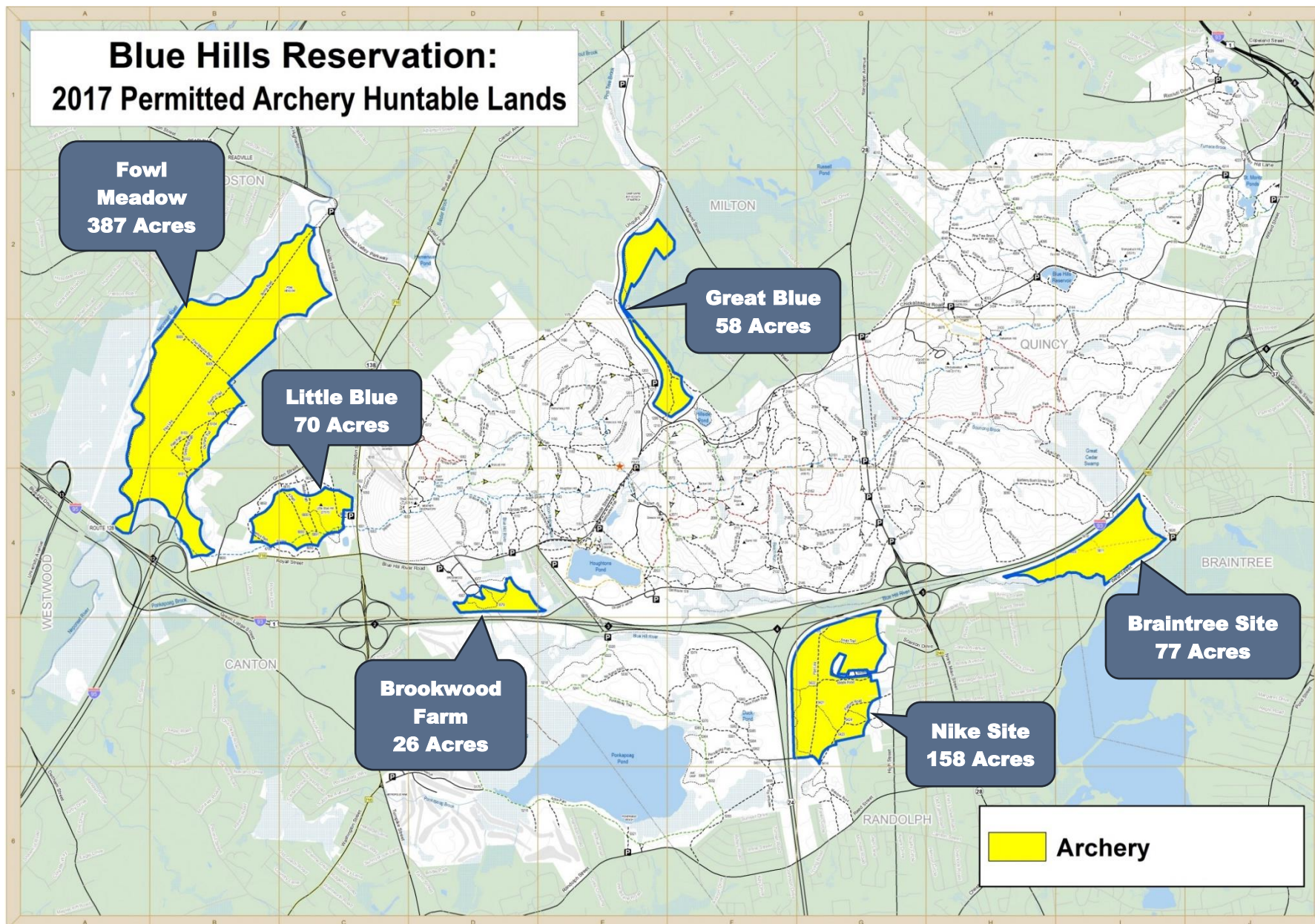
| Management Area | Acres Open to Archery Hunting |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| Fowl Meadow     | 387                           |
| Little Blue     | 70                            |
| Brookwood Farm  | 26                            |
| Great Blue      | 58                            |
| Nike Site       | 158                           |
| Braintree Site  | 77                            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>    | <b>776</b>                    |

### 4.4 – Hunter Orientation

As outlined in the [2017 Blue Hills Deer Management Plan](#), all permittees were required to attend an orientation session that was organized and hosted by DCR, MassWildlife, and the Massachusetts Environmental Police (MEP). Orientation sessions were conducted on October 24 and November 2, 2017. All selected applicants who completed an orientation session were given DCR-issued access permits to participate in the permitted archery hunt.

During the orientation sessions, permittees were provided an overview of the [2017 Blue Hills Deer Management Plan](#) and the rationale and objectives for conducting a controlled deer hunt. In addition, DCR and the MEP presented and provided information on public safety, hunter safety, and archery hunting safety. Permittees were provided a thorough review of the management zone maps and boundaries, check-in procedures, and the specific rules and regulations that would govern the conduct of the eleven-day archery hunt (see Appendix A). MassWildlife also provided permittees with information on pre-hunt scouting, field dressing and tagging of harvested deer, and how to obtain antlerless deer permits specific to the Blue Hills controlled hunt.

## Blue Hills Reservation: 2017 Permitted Archery Hunttable Lands





## 5.0 2017 Controlled Shotgun Hunt Program Logistics & Operations

DCR and MassWildlife implemented a third controlled shotgun hunt in the Blue Hills Reservation during the 2017 shotgun season in late November/early December 2017.

### 5.1 – Timing & Length

The timeframe for the 2017 controlled shotgun hunt was during the annual shotgun season in late November/early December. Although the shotgun season in Massachusetts lasts approximately two weeks, the 2017 controlled shotgun hunt featured a total of four (4) days of hunting:

- Week 1: Tuesday, November 28<sup>th</sup> and Thursday, November 30<sup>th</sup>
- Week 2: Tuesday, December 5<sup>th</sup> and Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup>

### 5.2 – Hunter Interest and Participation

Licensed hunters were offered the opportunity to apply on-line using a web-based form. The application process was open from September 8 through September 22, 2017 and permittees were selected utilizing a random lottery system.

A total of 645 hunters submitted applications for the controlled shotgun hunt; 425 of these hunters applied to hunt during the Week 1 segment and 220 hunters applied to hunt during the Week 2 segment. Applicants were separated into two separate applicant pools based upon the hunting segment selected on their application. From each applicant pool, DCR conducted random lotteries to select two groups of 131 shotgun hunters to receive access permits. In addition, two groups of 46 alternate hunters were also selected.

Of the hunters selected to participate, 121 access permits were actually issued for Week 1 and 127 access permits were issued for Week 2. This was due largely to scheduling conflicts or other unforeseen circumstances that did not allow several selected applicants or alternates to attend one of the mandatory orientation sessions or participate in the shotgun hunt.

The table below provides shotgun hunt applicants and permittees according to state of residence:

| State of Residence | Number of Applicants | Number of Permittees (Week 1) | Number of Permittees (Week 2) |
|--------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Connecticut        | 1                    | 0                             | 0                             |
| Maine              | 1                    | 0                             | 0                             |
| Massachusetts      | 621                  | 113                           | 123                           |
| New Hampshire      | 15                   | 5                             | 3                             |
| Rhode Island       | 2                    | 2                             | 0                             |
| Vermont            | 5                    | 1                             | 1                             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>       | <b>645</b>           | <b>121</b>                    | <b>127</b>                    |



Daily hunter attendance during the controlled shotgun hunt is provided in the table below:

| <b>Date</b>      | <b>Number of Hunters Participating</b> |
|------------------|--|
| Day 1 (11/28/17) | 105                                    |
| Day 2 (11/30/17) | 80                                     |
| Day 3 (12/5/17)  | 108                                    |
| Day 4 (12/7/17)  | 91                                     |

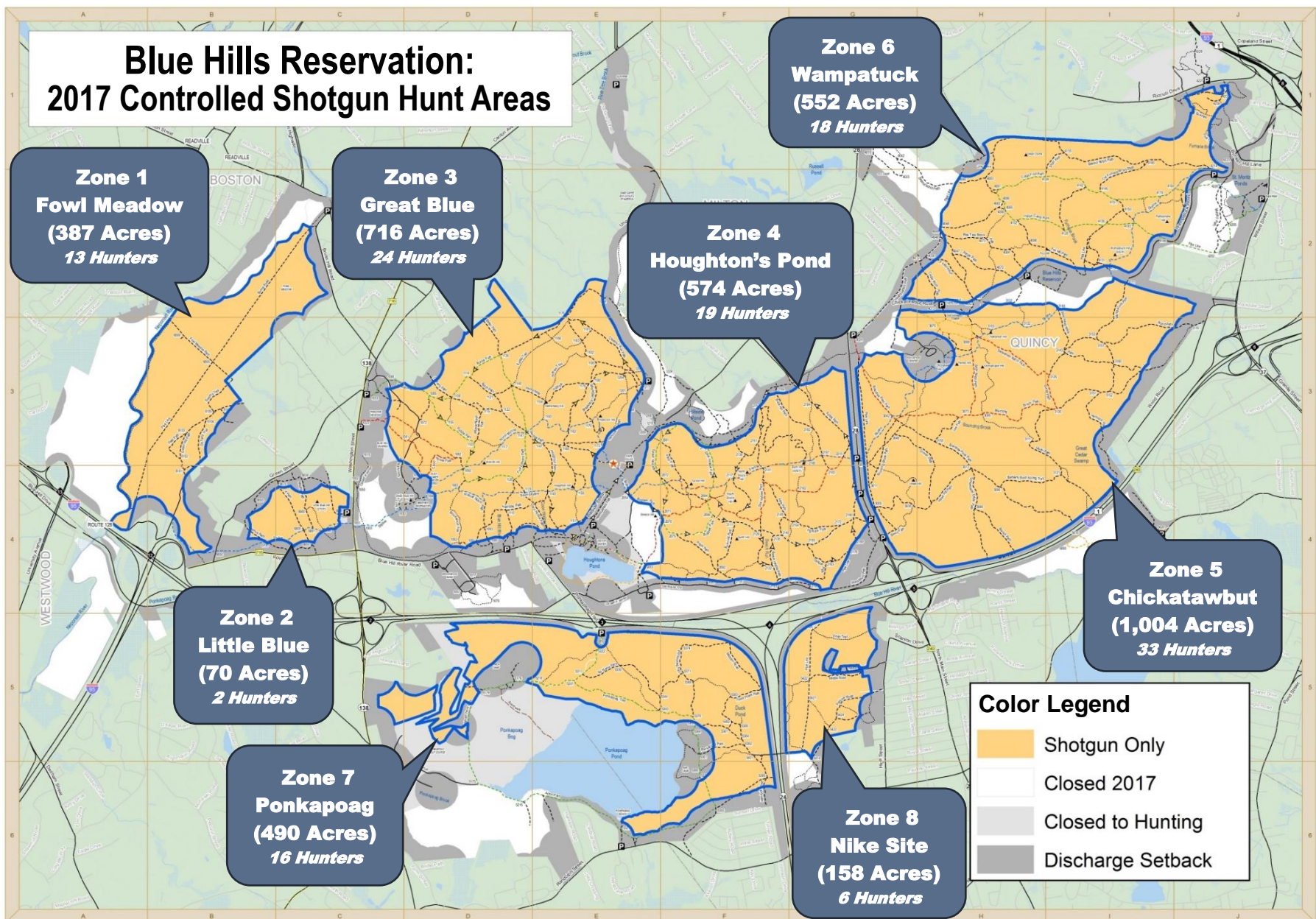
### 5.3 – Management Areas and Hunter Distribution

Shotgun hunting was limited to the areas of the Reservation listed below and outlined on the map on the following page. Of the Reservation's more than 7,000 acres, a total of 3,951 acres were opened to controlled shotgun hunting across eight (8) management areas. Permitted shotgun hunters were assigned to a particular area and required to remain within their assigned management area while hunting.

The table below provides total acreage opened to shotgun hunting, the maximum number of hunters allowed for each management zone and the actual number of hunters participating each day:

| <b>Management Zone</b> | <b>Acres Open to Hunting</b> | <b>Maximum Number of Hunters</b> | <b>Day 1 (11/28/17)</b> | <b>Day 2 (11/30/17)</b> | <b>Day 3 (12/5/17)</b> | <b>Day 4 (12/7/17)</b> |
|------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1-Fowl Meadow          | 387                          | 13                               | 11                      | 11                      | 13                     | 13                     |
| 2-Little Blue          | 70                           | 2                                | 2                       | 2                       | 2                      | 2                      |
| 3-Great Blue           | 716                          | 24                               | 17                      | 12                      | 17                     | 14                     |
| 4-Houghton's Pond      | 574                          | 19                               | 14                      | 9                       | 16                     | 14                     |
| 5-Chickatawbut         | 1,004                        | 33                               | 27                      | 25                      | 28                     | 21                     |
| 6-Wampatuck            | 552                          | 18                               | 12                      | 5                       | 14                     | 16                     |
| 7-Ponkapoag            | 490                          | 16                               | 16                      | 12                      | 12                     | 6                      |
| 8-Nike Site            | 158                          | 6                                | 6                       | 4                       | 6                      | 5                      |
| <b>TOTAL</b>           | <b>3,951</b>                 | <b>131</b>                       | <b>105</b>              | <b>80</b>               | <b>108</b>             | <b>91</b>              |

# Blue Hills Reservation: 2017 Controlled Shotgun Hunt Areas





## 5.4 – Hunter Orientation

As outlined in the [2017 Blue Hills Deer Management Plan](#), all permittees were required to attend an orientation session that was organized and hosted by DCR, MassWildlife, and the Massachusetts Environmental Police (MEP). Orientation sessions were conducted on October 26, November 1 and November 8, 2017. All selected applicants who completed an orientation session were given DCR-issued access permits to participate in the controlled shotgun hunt.

During the orientation sessions, permittees were provided an overview of the [2017 Blue Hills Deer Management Plan](#) and the rationale and objectives for conducting a controlled deer hunt. In addition, DCR and the MEP presented and provided information on public safety, hunter safety, and firearms safety. Permittees were provided a thorough review of the management zone maps and boundaries, check-in procedures, and the specific rules and regulations that would govern the conduct of the four-day shotgun hunt (see Appendix B). MassWildlife also provided permittees with information on pre-hunt scouting, field dressing and tagging of harvested deer, and how to obtain antlerless deer permits specific to the Blue Hills controlled hunt.

## 5.5 – Road Closures

DCR and MSP closed Chickatawbut Road (from Route 28/Randolph Avenue to Route 37) and Wampatuck Road (from Chickatawbut Road to Route 37) to vehicular travel during each of the four hunting days. The road closures were announced in advance of the controlled hunt via traffic advisories and variable message boards stationed at key park entrances and intersections in and around the Reservation. On each day of the controlled hunt, these roads were re-opened to vehicular traffic by or before 6:00 PM.

## 5.6 – Unified Command

The safe, successful, and smooth operation of the 2017 controlled shotgun hunt is largely due to the integrated and meticulous inter-agency coordination among DCR, MassWildlife, MEP, and MSP facilitated by the unified command structure implemented during the controlled shotgun hunt. The unified command structure, supported by the use of two-way radio systems by all staff throughout the field, allowed for centralized coordination of on-the-ground resources, efficient communication, and effective management of any issues or situations that arose in any part of the Blue Hills Reservation.



## 6.0 2017 Program Costs

Primary costs associated with implementing the 2017 Blue Hills controlled hunt program included: DCR overtime staffing; State Police details; Environmental Police details; space rental for hunter orientations; and signage, supplies, and equipment. The majority of these expenses were associated with staffing. The chart below provides a cost for each of the main cost categories. The total cost of the 2017 controlled hunt program represents a decrease of approximately \$68,700 (a 64% reduction) from the 2016 hunt.

| Description                          | Amount          |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| MA State Police Details              | \$13,008        |
| MA Environmental Police Details      | \$15,700        |
| DCR Staffing                         | \$7,068         |
| Space Rental for Hunter Orientations | \$1,494         |
| Supplies, & Equipment                | \$752           |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>\$38,022</b> |



## 7.0 2017 Harvest Results

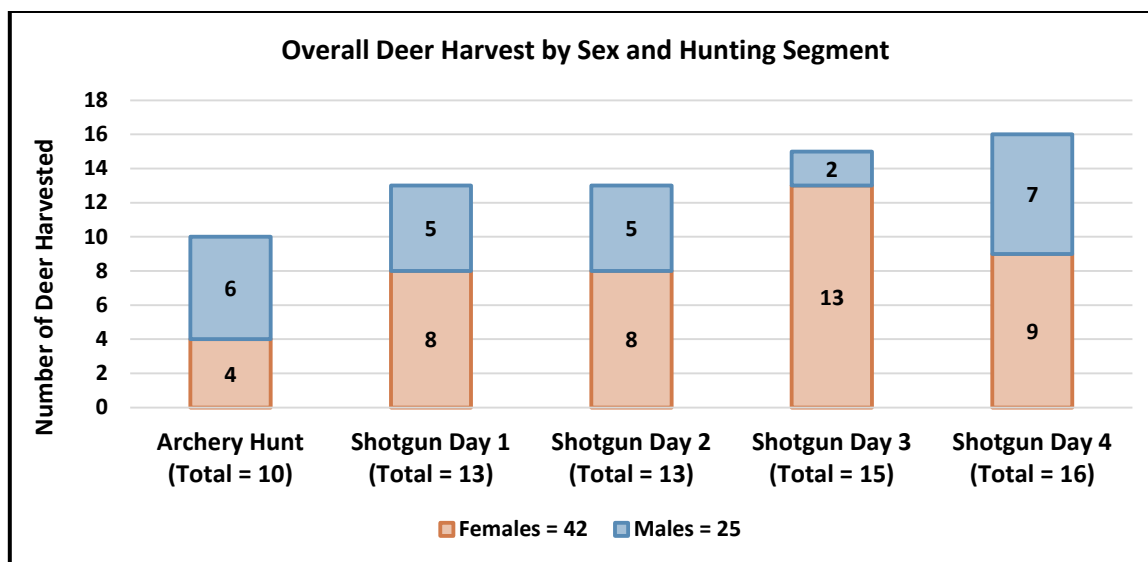
### 7.1 – Overall Deer Harvest

A total of 67 deer were harvested from approximately 6.4 mi<sup>2</sup> of forest land opened to hunting; 10 deer were harvested during the permitted archery hunt and 57 deer were harvested during the controlled shotgun hunt. The total harvest represents a reduction of 10.4 deer/mi<sup>2</sup> from the hunted areas, which is similar to reduction rates for the previous two controlled hunts. Harvest results by management zone also support recent deer density estimates; as more deer were harvested from areas in which pellet count survey data found higher densities.

### 7.2 – Harvest by Sex & Management Zone

An important outcome of the 2017 Blue Hills controlled deer hunt program is that 42 female deer were harvested, equating to at least 130 fewer deer in the spring of 2018. This estimate includes both the 67 deer that were harvested and a conservative estimate of the potential number of young that could have been added to the deer herd using an average of 1.5 fawns per female harvested. The harvesting of 42 females from the 6.4 mi<sup>2</sup> of huntable land is also significant because it represents a reduction of 6.5 females per square mile.

The chart below presents the overall deer harvest by hunting segment and sex:



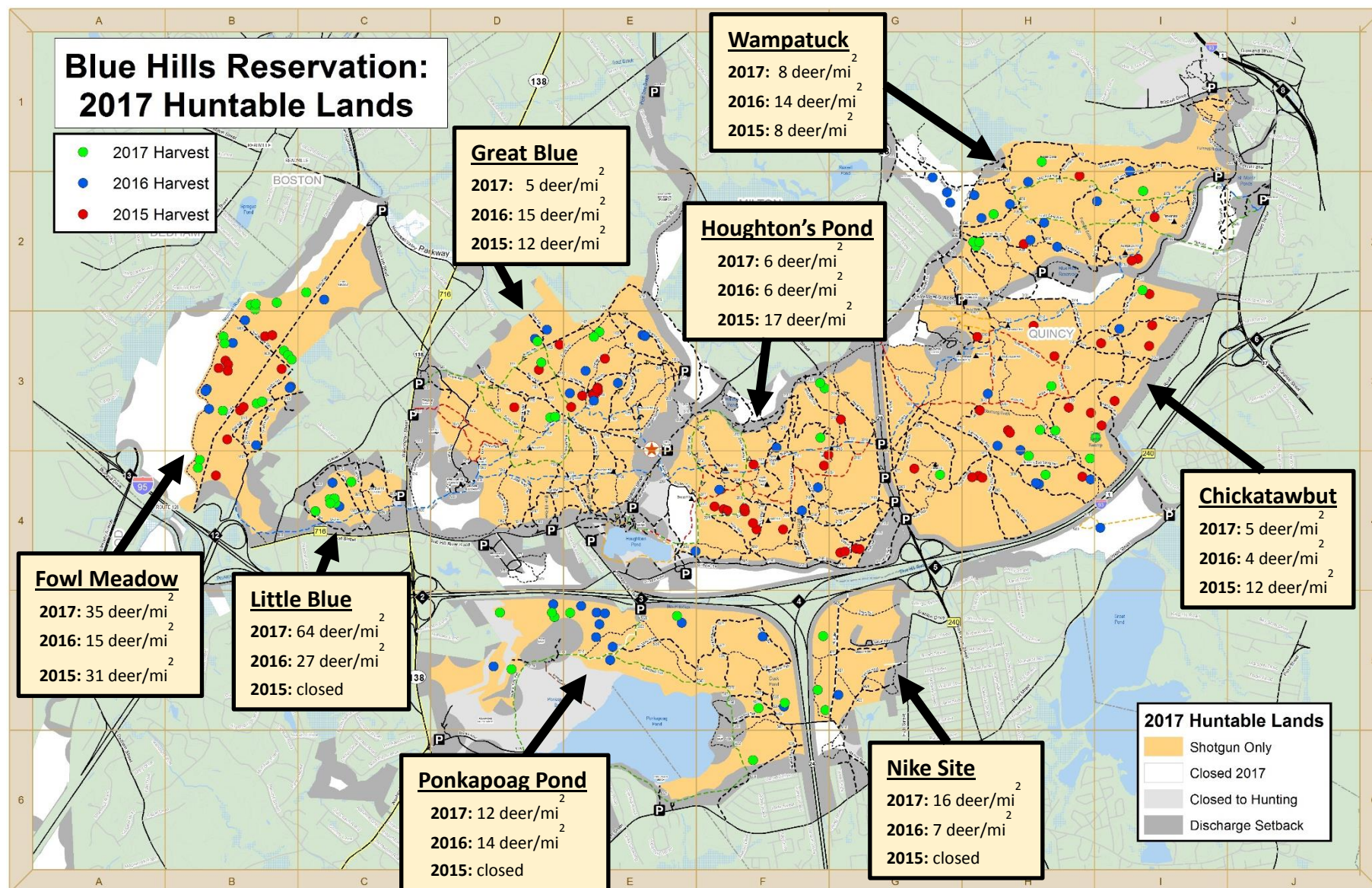
The table below provides more detailed information and deer harvest results for each of the management zones:

| Management Zone          | Square Miles Hunted | ARCHERY  |          |           | SHOTGUN   |           |           | Total Harvest<br>(Archery & Shotgun) | Total Harvest Per mi <sup>2</sup> ‡ |
|--------------------------|---------------------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|                          |                     | Male     | Female   | Total     | Male      | Female    | Total     |                                      |                                     |
| Fowl Meadow *            | 0.60                | 2        | 4        | 6         | 6         | 9         | 15        | 21                                   | 34.7                                |
| Little Blue *            | 0.11                | 1        | 0        | 1         | 3         | 3         | 6         | 7                                    | 64.0                                |
| Brookwood Farm (Archery) | 0.04                | 1        | 0        | 1         | --        | --        | --        | 1                                    | 24.6                                |
| Great Blue (Archery)     | 0.09                | 0        | 0        | 0         | --        | --        | --        | 0                                    | 0.0                                 |
| Great Blue               | 1.12                | --       | --       | --        | 2         | 4         | 6         | 6                                    | 5.4                                 |
| Houghton's Pond          | 0.90                | --       | --       | --        | 0         | 3         | 3         | 3                                    | 3.3                                 |
| Chickatawbut             | 1.57                | --       | --       | --        | 5         | 3         | 8         | 8                                    | 5.1                                 |
| Wampatuck                | 0.86                | --       | --       | --        | 0         | 7         | 7         | 7                                    | 8.1                                 |
| Ponkapoag                | 0.77                | --       | --       | --        | 3         | 6         | 9         | 9                                    | 11.8                                |
| Nike Site *              | 0.25                | 1        | 0        | 1         | 0         | 3         | 3         | 4                                    | 16.2                                |
| Braintree Site (Archery) | 0.12                | 1        | 0        | 1         | --        | --        | --        | 1                                    | 8.3                                 |
| <b>TOTAL</b>             | <b>6.43</b>         | <b>6</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>19</b> | <b>38</b> | <b>57</b> | <b>67</b>                            | <b>10.4</b>                         |

\* Archery and shotgun hunting permitted in this zone

‡ Harvest per square mile is calculated by dividing total deer harvest by the number of square miles hunted

The map on the following page shows the boundaries of each of the management zones and provides the deer harvest per square mile for the 2015, 2016, and 2017 controlled hunts. In addition, the colored dots identify the approximate deer harvest locations for each year.



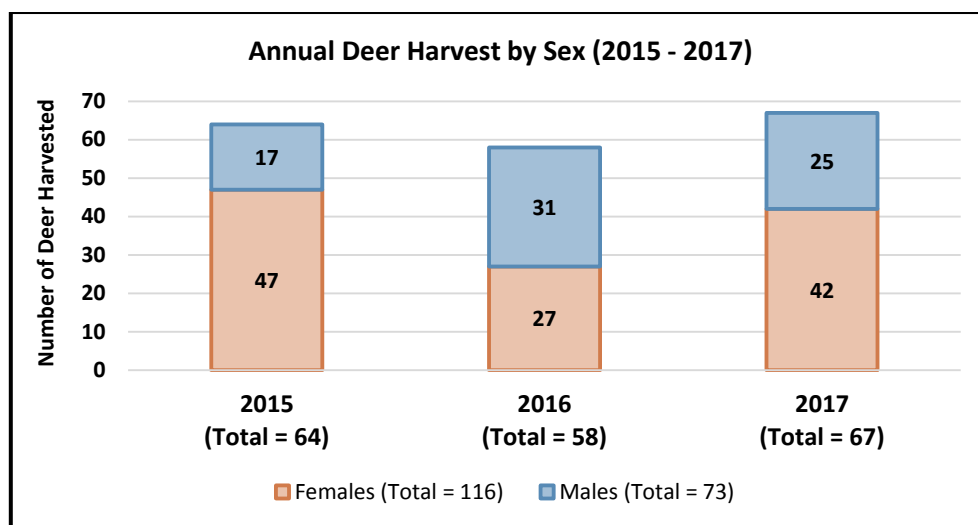
NOTE: Harvest locations for 2017 only include deer harvested during the controlled shotgun hunt. Harvest locations for the permitted archery hunt were not recorded.



## 8.0 Synopsis of the 2017 Deer Management Program

As was acknowledged in the initial [2015 Blue Hills Deer Management Plan](#), managing deer populations is a complex and dynamic process that is shaped and influenced by a variety of interdependent factors. As a result, effective deer management programs must incorporate and maintain a good degree of flexibility in order to make modifications and adjustments that are grounded in experience and ongoing assessment.

DCR and MassWildlife are very pleased with the results and smooth operational implementation of the 2017 Blue Hills Reservation permitted archery and controlled shotgun hunts. The controlled hunts represent continued progress toward addressing deer overabundance and its impacts in the Reservation. The chart below provides annual harvest results (by sex) for each of the three controlled hunts conducted thus far:



From the perspective of public safety, all agencies involved in the coordination and implementation of the 2017 controlled hunt were satisfied. Considerable time was spent assessing a myriad of operational aspects associated with conducting controlled hunting within the Reservation and developing a plan that addressed these operational concerns. The successful execution of this plan and buy-in from permitted hunters to the overall goal of safety represents a significant achievement. Like the 2015 and 2016 controlled hunts, the 2017 program demonstrated that hunting can be safely conducted in a suburban/urban setting.



## APPENDIX A



*All permittees are required to know and understand the information contained in this document. Please review and read this document carefully and thoroughly prior to attending your assigned hunter orientation.*

### Blue Hills State Reservation

#### Deer Management Program

#### 2017 Permitted Archery Hunt Rules

#### Background:

The Blue Hills Deer Management Program is part of the Department of Conservation & Recreation's (DCR) long-term effort to manage high deer densities within the Blue Hills Reservation. The primary objective and rationale for developing and implementing a deer management program is to maintain an ecologically sustainable deer density that allows for the continuous growth and development of forest regeneration. In particular, DCR wishes to reduce the negative impacts that high deer densities have on the regenerating forest to ensure a healthy forest composed of adequate diversity of species and age classes.

DCR and the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) have concluded that the most practical, workable, and effective management option to accomplish the goal of reducing deer densities is through the use of controlled/permitted hunting. **As such, the Blue Hills Controlled Hunt is not a recreational hunt.** DCR and MassWildlife view the hunters selected to participate in the hunt as partners in successfully achieving the primary objectives of deer management in the Blue Hills. As partners in this effort, DCR and MassWildlife expect all selected permittees to abide by and comply with the rules of the Blue Hills Controlled Hunt Program, DCR's regulations for use of its parklands, MassWildlife's rules and regulations related to hunting, and all Commonwealth laws regarding the possession and discharge of firearms.

Selected permittees who violate any rules or regulations will be immediately removed from the property, ineligible for participation in future years, and subject to any relevant fines or penalties prescribed by applicable state laws and/or regulations.

#### General Rules & Provisions for the 2017 Blue Hills Permitted Archery Hunt

**1. Hunting by Access Permit Only:** Hunting of white-tailed deer shall be allowed in designated areas of the Blue Hills Reservation by those persons holding an access permit issued by the DCR. All persons to whom such a permit has been issued are also required to have a valid 2017 Massachusetts Hunting/Sporting License issued by MassWildlife.

DCR-issued access permits are valid only for the person named on the permit and for the date/time period specified on the permit.

**2. Organization & Timing:** The 2017 Blue Hills Permitted Archery Hunt will take place over the course of eleven (11) days on Mondays through Thursdays from November 6<sup>th</sup> to November 22<sup>nd</sup>. In accordance with state hunting regulations, hunters will be allowed to start hunting one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

Access permits for archery hunting will be valid on all days in which archery hunting is allowed. Permitted hunters are allowed to hunt up to a total of eleven (11) days.

**3. Hunter Distribution:** Selected archery hunters will not be assigned to a particular management zone or area of the reservation while hunting.

The boundaries of the management zones have been delineated using not only the existing state firearms discharge setback laws, but also hard boundary delineations such as trails, roads, and pathways. In some areas, DCR has posted no hunting signs to delineate the boundary of a management zone. All permittees are required to know the boundaries of their management zone and all hunters should be respectful of other archery hunters already hunting in a certain area to avoid over-crowding. Absolutely no hunting or release of an arrow is allowed outside of the delineated boundaries. Permittees will be provided detailed trail maps with the boundaries of their management zone clearly delineated.

**4. General Hunting & Discharge Prohibitions:** No hunting or release of an arrow is allowed outside of the boundaries of the designated management zones, within 500 feet of any building or dwelling, within 150 feet of any roadway, or in any area posted as no hunt zones.

**5. Hunter Orientation Required:** All permittees are required to attend a hunter orientation session in order to be allowed to participate in the Blue Hills Permitted Archery Hunt. Selected hunters who do not fulfill the hunter orientation requirement will not receive a permit and will not be eligible to participate in the controlled hunt.

**6. Deer Hunting Only:** The Blue Hills Permitted Archery Hunt is restricted to white-tailed deer only. The shooting or injury of any other bird or animal species is strictly prohibited.

**7. Hunting Implements:** Pursuant to 321 CMR 3.01(3), permitted archery hunters are allowed to hunt with a bow and arrows of the type and design specified for the hunting of deer. Crossbows may

be used by permit only in accordance with 321 CMR 3.01(3).

- 8. Scouting:** Permitted archery hunters are allowed to scout the designated management areas beginning October 16, 2017. During the month of November, permitted hunters are allowed to scout on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays only. While scouting, permittees are required to have the following on their person:

- DCR Notice of Selection Letter
- 2017 Massachusetts Hunting/Sporting License
- Valid photo ID

The use of trail/game cameras for the purposes of scouting is prohibited. In addition, scouting will not be allowed on those days in which archery hunting is actually taking place. No scouting is allowed after Wednesday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>.

- 9. Tree Stands:** Permittees are allowed to use tree stands while participating in the permitted archery hunt. Permittees may use multiple tree stands. Tree stands must be either a climbing tree stand or a hang-on tree stand with climbing sticks (please be sure to bring the bottom section of the climbing sticks with you on the days in which you hunt).

Hunters will be allowed to keep their tree stands in the forest if they wish. All tree stands must be removed by 6:00 PM on Wednesday, November 22, 2017.

The installation of a tree stand does not entitle a hunter to a particular area of the Reservation. Hunters possessing a permit may hunt in any area within the boundaries of the designated archery hunting zones.

In accordance with DCR's regulations at 302 CMR 12.11 (10), the installation of a permanent tree stand is not allowed. Permanent tree stands are defined as a type of hunting platform or structure (emplaced for any period of time) which is fastened to a tree by nails, bolts, wire or other fasteners which intrude through the bark into the wood of the tree.

- 10. Hunting Blinds:** The use of on-the-ground hunting blinds is prohibited.
- 11. Vegetation Cutting:** Cutting of branches, trees, or shrubs is prohibited.
- 12. Minor Permittees:** Any permittee selected to participate in archery hunting who is also under the age of 18 years must be accompanied by an adult over the age of 21 years while hunting. The accompanying adult must also be a registered hunter possessing a valid 2017 Massachusetts Hunting/Sporting License. The accompanying adult must attend a mandatory orientation session (with

the minor permittee) and will not be allowed to hunt.

- 13. Antlerless Permits:** MassWildlife will make antlerless deer permits specific to the Blue Hills Permitted Archery Hunt available to all permittees who successfully complete the mandatory orientation session. All hunters selected to participate must purchase at least two (2) antlerless permits. The use of any Zone 10 antlerless permits is prohibited in the Blue Hills. Antlerless deer harvested during the Blue Hills Permitted Archery Hunt are considered "bonus deer" and do not count toward state bag limits. Antlered deer will count toward the statewide bag limit of two (2) antlered deer.

- 14. Parking & Vehicular Access:** Permitted hunters are not allowed to park their vehicles along the sides of Route 24 or I-93. In addition, vehicular access is prohibited on the Reservation's trails. Permittees should make use of designated parking areas.

- 15. Hunter Check-In:** All permittees are required to check-in on those days in which they choose to hunt. Daily check-in will allow staff to know which hunters are in the Reservation each day. Failure to check-in may disqualify a permittee from participating in the hunt.

The check-in process will require that hunters first report to the Blue Hills Reservation Headquarters (located at 695 Hillside Street, Milton, MA). A black lock box will be stationed outside of the Reservation Headquarters. Hunters must tear the stub off of their DCR access permit and place it into the lock box.

- 16. Documentation:** While hunting, all permittees must have the following on their person:

- DCR Blue Hills Controlled Hunt Access Permit
- MassWildlife Blue Hills Antlerless Deer Permits
- 2017 Massachusetts Hunting/Sporting License
- Valid Photo ID

Failure to provide any of these documents while hunting will disqualify a permittee from participating in the hunt.

- 17. Deer Tracking:** Permittees are prohibited from tracking any wounded deer onto private property or a roadway. If you wound a deer and it crosses onto private property, use the phone number on the back of your permit to contact DCR. If necessary, an Environmental Police Officer will meet you at your location and accompany you onto private land to search for the deer.

- 18. Deer Cleaning:** Permittees who harvest a deer are required to move the deer at least 100 feet



away from a trail for the purposes of gutting and cleaning the deer. Harvested deer must be legally tagged prior to moving. To the greatest extent possible, permittees are encouraged to select areas that are generally out of view for the disposal of deer parts.

**19. Deer Removal & Check Station:** Permittees who harvest a deer must first legally tag the deer, and then are responsible for transporting the deer to their vehicle (may not be concealed from view). There will be no deer check station set up in the Blue Hills during the archery hunt. As such, any permittee who harvests is required to check the harvested deer online through the MassFishHunt website. In addition, DCR will provide permittees with Harvest Cards that must be completed and submitted to DCR for each harvested deer. Harvest Cards can be left at the Reservation Headquarters or mailed to DCR.

**20. Compliance with Rules & Requests:** All permittees within the Blue Hills Reservation shall obey the directions of posted regulatory signs, any state or local law enforcement official, Environmental Police Officer, DCR Ranger, DCR employee, and MassWildlife employee.

**21. Carry In – Carry Out:** No litter or refuse of any sort may be thrown or left in or on any land or water within the Blue Hills Reservation while hunting.

**22. Conduct & Alcohol / Controlled Substances:** Any form of disorderly conduct is strictly prohibited during the controlled hunt. Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages or any other controlled substance while participating in the controlled hunt is strictly prohibited.

**23. Pets & Animals:** Permittees may not bring any pets or other animals with them during the controlled hunt.

**24. Property Damage/Vandalism:** DCR is not responsible for any damage or vandalism to a permittee's property, vehicle, tree stand, or other possessions.

**25. MassWildlife Rules & Regulations:** Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife rules and regulations related to hunting shall apply to the Blue Hills Reservation Permitted Archery Hunt. In the event of a conflict, the Blue Hills Permitted Archery Hunt rules and provisions take precedence over the rules and regulations of the MassWildlife.

**26. Cancellation:** The permitted archery hunt (in its entirety or specific dates) may be cancelled at any time due to severe weather conditions or security situations. In the case of cancellation, DCR will make all efforts to provide advance notice to permittees.

## APPENDIX B



### **Blue Hills State Reservation** **Deer Management Program** **2017 Controlled Shotgun Hunt Rules**

*All permittees are required to know and understand the information contained in this document. Please review and read this document carefully and thoroughly prior to attending your assigned hunter orientation.*

#### **Background:**

The Blue Hills Deer Management Program is part of the Department of Conservation & Recreation's (DCR) long-term effort to manage high deer densities within the Blue Hills Reservation. The primary objective and rationale for developing and implementing a deer management program is to maintain an ecologically sustainable deer density that allows for the continuous growth and development of forest regeneration. In particular, DCR wishes to reduce the negative impacts that high deer densities have on the regenerating forest to ensure a healthy forest composed of adequate diversity of species and age classes.

DCR and the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) have concluded that the most practical, workable, and effective management option to accomplish the goal of reducing deer densities is through the use of controlled/permitted hunting. **As such, the Blue Hills Controlled Hunt is not a recreational hunt.** DCR and MassWildlife view the hunters selected to participate in the hunt as partners in successfully achieving the primary objectives of deer management in the Blue Hills. As partners in this effort, DCR and MassWildlife expect all selected permittees to abide by and comply with the rules of the Blue Hills Controlled Hunt Program, DCR's regulations for use of its parklands, MassWildlife's rules and regulations related to hunting, and all Commonwealth laws regarding the possession and discharge of firearms.

Selected permittees who violate any rules or regulations will be immediately removed from the property, ineligible for participation in future years, and subject to any relevant fines or penalties prescribed by applicable state laws and/or regulations.

#### **General Rules & Provisions for the 2017 Blue Hills Controlled Shotgun Hunt**

**1. Hunting by Access Permit Only:** Hunting of white-tailed deer shall be allowed in designated areas of the Blue Hills Reservation by those persons holding an access permit issued by the DCR. All persons to whom such a permit has been issued are also required to have a valid 2017 Massachusetts Hunting/Sporting License issued by MassWildlife. All persons to whom such a permit

has been issued who are also residents of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts must have a valid FID card or license to carry. All licenses must be valid on the days in which the controlled hunt is scheduled to take place.

DCR-issued access permits are valid only for the person named on the permit and for the date/time period specified on the permit.

**2. Organization & Timing:** The 2017 Blue Hills Controlled Shotgun Hunt will take place during the annual shotgun season over the course of four (4) days:

- Tuesday, November 28<sup>th</sup>
- Thursday, November 30<sup>th</sup>
- Tuesday, December 5<sup>th</sup>
- Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup>

In accordance with state hunting regulations, hunters will be allowed to start hunting one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

**3. Management Zone Assignments:** Each permittee is assigned to a particular management zone. The management zone shall be noted and identified on the DCR-issued access permit. Permittees are required to remain within the boundaries of their assigned management zone while hunting.

The boundaries of the management zones have been delineated using not only the existing state firearms discharge setback laws, but also hard boundary delineations such as trails, roads, and pathways. In some areas, DCR has posted no hunting signs to delineate the boundary of a management zone. All permittees are required to know the boundaries of their management zone. Absolutely no hunting or discharge of firearms is allowed outside of the delineated boundaries. Permittees will be provided detailed maps with the boundaries of their management zone clearly delineated.

**4. General Hunting & Discharge Prohibitions:** No hunting or discharge of firearms is allowed outside of the boundaries of the designated management zones, within 500 feet of any building or dwelling, within 150 feet of any roadway, or in any area posted as no hunt zones. In 2017, no hunting will be allowed west of the Neponset River (in the Fowl Meadow area) and in the southwest areas of the Ponkapoag section (including Ponkapoag Golf Course).

**5. Hunter Orientation Required:** All permittees are required to attend a hunter orientation session in order to be allowed to participate in the Blue Hills Controlled Shotgun Hunt. Selected hunters who do not fulfill the hunter orientation requirement will

not receive a permit and will not be eligible to participate in the controlled hunt.

6. **Deer Hunting Only:** The Blue Hills Controlled Deer Hunt is restricted to white-tailed deer only. The shooting or injury of any other bird or animal species is strictly prohibited.
7. **Hunting Implements:** Permittees selected to participate in the 2017 controlled shotgun hunt will be allowed to use shotguns with slug only. The use of buckshot is prohibited.
8. **Scouting:** Permittees are allowed to scout within their management zone prior to the controlled hunt. While scouting, permittees are required to have the following on their person:
  - DCR Notice of Selection Letter
  - 2017 Massachusetts Hunting/Sporting License
  - Valid photo ID

The use of trail/game cameras for the purposes of scouting is prohibited. In addition, scouting will not be allowed on those days in which the controlled hunt is actually taking place.

Scouting for shotgun hunters in 2017 shall be allowed on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays during the month of November. No scouting will be allowed after Wednesday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>.

9. **Tree Stands:** Permittees are allowed to use tree stands while participating in the controlled shotgun hunt. Tree stands must be either a climbing tree stand or a hang-on tree stand with climbing sticks (please be sure to bring the bottom section of the climbing sticks with you on the day of the controlled hunt).
  - Permittees selected to hunt on November 28<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> are allowed to install tree stands beginning November 26<sup>th</sup> and must remove the tree stand by December 2<sup>nd</sup>.
  - Permittees selected to hunt on December 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> are allowed to install tree stands beginning December 3<sup>rd</sup> and must remove the tree stand by December 9<sup>th</sup>.

The installation of a tree stand does not entitle a hunter to a particular area of the Reservation. Hunters possessing a permit to hunt in a particular management zone may hunt in any area within the boundaries of that zone.

In accordance with DCR's regulations at 302 CMR 12.11 (10), the installation of a permanent tree stand is not allowed. Permanent tree stands are defined as a type of hunting platform or structure (emplaced for any period of time) which is fastened to a tree by nails, bolts, wire or other fasteners which intrude through the bark into the wood of the tree.

**10. Hunting Blinds:** The use of on-the-ground hunting blinds is prohibited.

**11. Vegetation Cutting:** Cutting of branches, trees, or shrubs is prohibited.

**12. Minor Permittees:** Individuals possessing a valid 2017 Massachusetts Hunting/Sporting License who are also under the age of 18 years were required to apply with a co-applicant who is over the age of 21 years. The co-applicant is also required to be a registered hunter possessing a valid 2017 Massachusetts Hunting/Sporting License. As co-applicants, both individuals are considered permitted hunters and are allowed to participate in the controlled hunt.

**13. Antlerless Permits:** MassWildlife will make antlerless deer permits specific to the Blue Hills Controlled Shotgun Hunt available to all permittees who successfully complete the mandatory orientation session. All hunters selected to participate must purchase two at least (2) antlerless permits. The use of any Zone 10 antlerless permits is prohibited in the Blue Hills. Antlerless deer harvested during the Blue Hills Controlled Deer Hunt are considered "bonus deer" and do not count toward state bag limits. Antlered deer will count toward the statewide bag limit of two (2) antlered deer.

**14. Parking & Vehicular Access:** Permitted hunters are not allowed to park their vehicles along the sides of Route 24 or I-93. In addition, vehicular access is prohibited on the Reservation's trails. Permittees should make use of designated parking areas. Permittees will also be allowed to park in the pull-off parking areas on Chickatawbut Road and Wampatuck Road. Where there is sufficient space, permittees may also park along the sides of Chickatawbut Road and Wampatuck Road so long as the vehicle is completely beyond the painted white shoulder line.

**15. Check-In & Check-Out:** All permittees are required to check-in and check-out each day they are scheduled to hunt. Failure to check-in and check-out by the appropriate times will disqualify a permittee from participating in the hunt. Check-in will take place between 4:30 and 7:00 AM. All permittees must check-out by 6:00 PM.

**16. Documentation:** While hunting, all permittees must have the following on their person:

- DCR Blue Hills Controlled Hunt Access Permit
- MassWildlife Blue Hills Antlerless Deer Permits
- 2017 Massachusetts Hunting/Sporting License
- Valid FID card or license to carry
- Valid Photo ID

Failure to provide any of these documents while hunting will disqualify a permittee from participating in the hunt.

- 17. Deer Driving:** Only permitted hunters may participate in any deer driving. Permittees are not allowed to invite or bring family or friends for the purpose of deer driving. Permittees are prohibited from driving deer toward roadways/highways, private property, or areas of the Reservation where hunting is not be allowed.
- 18. Deer Tracking:** Permittees are prohibited from tracking any wounded deer onto private property or a roadway. If you wound a deer and it crosses onto private property, contact the Massachusetts Environmental Police using the phone number provided on the back of your DCR-issued access permit. An Environmental Police Officer will meet you at your location and accompany you onto private land to search for the deer.
- 19. Deer Cleaning:** Permittees who harvest a deer are required to move the deer at least 100 feet away from a trail for the purposes of gutting and cleaning the deer. In addition, no deer parts can be disposed of within 100 feet of the Blue Hills Reservoir. Harvested deer must be legally tagged prior to moving. To the greatest extent possible, permittees are encouraged to select areas that are generally out of view for the disposal of deer parts.
- 20. Deer Removal & Check Station:** Permittees who harvest a deer must first legally tag the deer, and then are responsible for transporting the deer to their vehicle (may not be concealed from view) and must bring the deer to the Blue Hills deer check station on the day of harvest (the 48 hours does not apply and online checking is not allowed). A hunter may harvest a deer, legally tag it, and then continue to hunt and harvest one more deer prior to checking both deer. Once those two deer are checked, the hunter may return to their management zone to continue hunting.

**21. Compliance with Rules & Requests:** All permittees within the Blue Hills Reservation shall obey the directions of posted regulatory signs, any state or local law enforcement official, Environmental Police Officer, DCR Ranger, DCR employee, and MassWildlife employee.

**22. Carry In / Carry Out:** No litter or refuse of any sort may be thrown or left in or on any land or water within the Blue Hills Reservation while hunting. To the greatest extent possible, hunters should remove spent shell casings from the Reservation.

**23. Conduct & Alcohol / Controlled Substances:** Any form of disorderly conduct is strictly prohibited during the controlled hunt. Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages or any other controlled substance while participating in the controlled hunt is strictly prohibited.

**24. Pets & Animals:** Permittees may not bring any pets or other animals with them during the controlled hunt.

**25. Property Damage/Vandalism:** DCR is not responsible for any damage or vandalism to a permittee's property, vehicle, tree stand, or other possessions.

**26. MassWildlife Rules & Regulations:** Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife rules and regulations related to hunting shall apply to the Blue Hills Reservation Controlled Shotgun Hunt. In the event of a conflict, the Blue Hills Controlled Shotgun Hunt rules and provisions take precedence over the rules and regulations of MassWildlife.

**27. Cancellation:** The controlled hunt (in its entirety or specific dates) may be cancelled at any time due to severe weather conditions or security situations. In the case of cancellation, DCR will make all efforts to provide advance notice to permittees.