

TEGA CAY POLICE DEPARTMENT

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PLAN AFTER ACTION REPORT



February 2024

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Tega Cay Police Department would like to extend their sincere appreciation to the City of Tega Cay team members, the York County Sheriff's Office, the USDA, and the community for their invaluable assistance and support during the Wildlife Management Plan. The successful outcome of the operation, which aimed to create a safe environment for our residents, the public, first responders, and USDA personnel, was due to the exceptional joint effort. The collaborative approach adopted by all parties involved was instrumental in achieving the mission's objectives. Once again, we express our gratitude to each organization and individual involved for their unwavering commitment to public safety.

OVERVIEW

In 2015, the City of Tega Cay began monitoring the local deer population in the Tega Cay. The program was initiated in response to concerns about the steady rise in the number of deer observed in the area. It was estimated that the city had a deer population of 156. The City of Tega Cay conducted subsequent surveys on March 21, 2022, September 14, 2022, and September 11-12, 2023. The latest survey carried out on September 11-12, 2023, estimated the deer population to have increased to 1028. These findings suggest that the deer population in Tega Cay is continuing to grow at a steady rate.

In June of 2022, the Tega Cay City Council members embarked on a comprehensive exploration of the various options available for managing the deer population. The council was presented with a range of management strategies, and opinions regarding the effectiveness of each option were divided among the citizens. Despite these divergent opinions, there was a unanimous consensus among the council members that the chosen option must be implemented in a manner that prioritizes safety.

During the Tega Cay City Council meeting held on December 18, 2023, the council members deliberated and approved a contract with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to cull eighty deer. As a result, the Tega Cay Police Department was tasked with developing an operational plan that would prioritize the safety of the community. To achieve this objective, the Tega Cay Police Department developed various strategies and ideas, with the operational objective of ensuring a safe and secure environment for the residents, public, first responders, and USDA personnel.

The Tega Cay Police Department developed and implemented an operational plan that included three categories. The three categories of the plan were visibility, enforcement, and education.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Wildlife Management Plan was separated into two operational periods. The first phase of the plan was implemented between the 22nd and 24th of January, while the second phase was scheduled for the 5th to the 7th of February. During the specified period, officers encountered three individuals who were found on the golf course. However, no custodial arrests were made, and no citations were issued.

What went well:

- Partnership with the York County Sheriff's Office to provide deputies to ensure the plan had sufficient law enforcement coverage during the operational period.
- The utilization of Sign-Up Genius to coordinate TCPD coverage for the operational period.
- Operational briefings each night to cover assignments, enforcement, and safety measures for the shift.
- Including USDA in the nightly operational meetings.
- Having a dedicated dispatcher for the operational plan.
- Corporation and compliance from community members.
- Assigning radios to USDA members each night so there was a direct line of communication with officers.
- Having a designated point of contact with the USDA to address concerns and gain information.
- The utilization of the Incident Command System and applicable documentation.

Areas of Improvement:

- It is imperative to allow sufficient time between the approval of the agreement by City Council and the commencement of operations to devise a comprehensive communication strategy with the public.
- The operation, which necessitated a considerable amount of labor, imposed a burden on the organization.
- Radio earpieces are needed for USDA personnel.

OPERATIONAL PLAN

Operational Plan Objective:

To ensure a safe and secure environment for our residents, public, first responders, and USDA personnel.

Visibility:

In total, 63 officers and one dispatcher participated in the Wildlife Management Plan 6-day operational period. Forty-three officers were members of the Tega Cay Police Department, while 20 were deputies from the York County Sheriff's Office. Law enforcement personnel were paired in teams of two, and to increase the visibility of officers during the operational period, officers were strategically placed in marked and unmarked vehicles to prevent the public from accessing these areas.

ASSIGNMENT LIST (ICS 204)				ASSIGNMENT LIST (ICS 204)				ASSIGNMENT LIST (ICS 204)									
1. Incident Name: Wildlife Management Program		2. Operational Period: Date From: 03/05/2024 Time From: 17:00 Date To: 03/05/2024 Time To: 22:00		3. Branch: Police Division Patrol Group Extra-Duty Staging Area: TCPD		1. Incident Name: Wildlife Management Program		2. Operational Period: Date From: 03/05/2024 Time From: 17:00 Date To: 03/05/2024 Time To: 22:00		3. Branch: Police Division Patrol Group Extra-Duty Staging Area: TCPD		1. Incident Name: Wildlife Management Program		2. Operational Period: Date From: 03/07/2024 Time From: 17:00 Date To: 03/07/2024 Time To: 22:00		3. Branch: Police Division Patrol Group Extra-Duty Staging Area: TCPD	
4. Operations Personnel: Name: Major James Patterson Contact Number(s): (853) 411-0942 Operations Section Chief: Major James Patterson Branch Director: Captain Vince Helms Division/Group Supervisor: Captain Vince Helms				4. Operations Personnel: Name: Major James Patterson Contact Number(s): (853) 411-0942 Operations Section Chief: Major James Patterson Branch Director: Captain Vince Helms Division/Group Supervisor: Captain Vince Helms				4. Operations Personnel: Name: Major James Patterson Contact Number(s): (853) 411-0942 Operations Section Chief: Major James Patterson Branch Director: Captain Vince Helms Division/Group Supervisor: Captain Vince Helms				4. Operations Personnel: Name: Major James Patterson Contact Number(s): (853) 411-0942 Operations Section Chief: Major James Patterson Branch Director: Captain Vince Helms Division/Group Supervisor: Captain Vince Helms					
5. Resources Assigned:				5. Resources Assigned:				5. Resources Assigned:				5. Resources Assigned:					
Resource Identifier	Leader	to go	to go	Contact (e.g., phone, pager, radio frequency, etc.)	Reporting Location, Special Equipment and Supplies, Remarks, Notes, Information	Resource Identifier	Leader	to go	to go	Contact (e.g., phone, pager, radio frequency, etc.)	Reporting Location, Special Equipment and Supplies, Remarks, Notes, Information	Resource Identifier	Leader	to go	to go	Contact (e.g., phone, pager, radio frequency, etc.)	Reporting Location, Special Equipment and Supplies, Remarks, Notes, Information
ICPD	Sgt. J. Easley/Thomas	2			15 Shoreline/Beachwood	ICPD	Sgt. J. Easley/Thomas	2			15 Shoreline/Beachwood	ICPD	Sgt. J. Easley/Thomas	2			15 Shoreline/Beachwood
ICPD	Sgt. J. Easley/Thomas	2			15 Shoreline/Beachwood	ICPD	Sgt. J. Easley/Thomas	2			15 Shoreline/Beachwood	ICPD	Sgt. J. Easley/Thomas	2			15 Shoreline/Beachwood
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Figure 1-ICS 204 Forms for the operational period

Enforcement

The Tega Cay Police Department has a community-oriented policing philosophy and accomplishes this philosophy by developing relationships with our citizens and the business community. Officers were encouraged to utilize their discretion and apply the enforcement action necessary to change the behavior while practicing the community-oriented policing model. Officers were to examine the incident as a whole and apply the appropriate enforcement measures. During this operational period, officers issued zero citations and made no custodial arrests. Five calls of service were documented in connection with the plan. Three of the calls were for individuals attempting to access the golf course.

Education

In an effort to ensure public safety and prevent unauthorized access to the golf course, the City implemented a range of communication channels to disseminate information regarding the Wildlife Management Plan. The City utilized social media platforms, robocalls, emails, and local news outlets to inform the public of the event and urge them to refrain from accessing the golf course at night. Moreover, Chief Crosby released two statements on the City's official website to further reinforce the message and emphasize the importance of safety and compliance.

While recognizing that some residents may not have received the message through these communication channels, the City took additional measures to prevent unauthorized access to the golf course. Specifically, no trespassing signs were strategically placed at public access points to the course, serving as a visual cue that the area was closed and off-limits to the public during the event. This approach aimed to ensure that all members of the public were aware of the prohibition and that safety was maintained throughout the event.

Per City Code 34-48
NO TRESPASSING
on golf course and paths
during night time hours

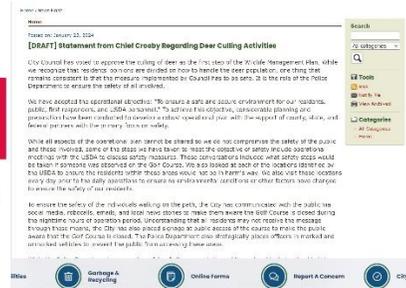


Figure 2: No Trespassing Signs

Figure 3: Website post

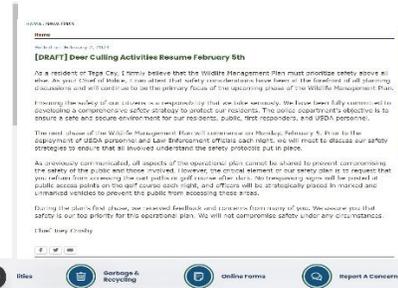


Figure 4: Website post

Additional Safety Measures:

- If, at any moment, any law enforcement or United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) personnel perceived that the program could not be executed while guaranteeing safety, all operations were to be immediately ceased.
- During the operational period, Major Patterson, Captain Holland, and USDA personnel conducted a daily visual inspection of each site. The objective of this inspection was to examine the field of view of the USDA members and ensure that the public would not be in danger if a USDA member decided to cull the herd in that location. Although the USDA member had a 180-degree view, the team member might have been restricted to a 25-degree sight picture for the purpose of safely culling the deer.

- Personnel from the USDA established safety protocols to be followed if an individual was observed within their field of vision. The USDA personnel were responsible for communicating with officers and providing them with pertinent details of their observations. The operational plan would not proceed until all parties agreed that the area was safe and clear, thereby ensuring the safety and security of all parties involved.
- Officers, either responding to a call for service or initiating a call on the golf course, were mandated to announce their location on the radio prior to disembarking from the patrol vehicle.