

Press Release

Contact: Lisa Sutterfield
Phone: (616) 847-4888

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FEEDING DEER IS DETRIMENTAL

GRAND HAVEN, MI, NOVEMBER 5, 2007: The City of Grand Haven's Urban Deer Management Task Force is forging ahead to sketch out the highly anticipated Urban Deer Management Plan. Public education regarding the subject is at the top of their priorities.

The Task Force feels that it is vital to inform the public that feeding the deer is harmful (rather than helpful) to the animals. A first step to reduce conflicts between deer and the human population is to refrain from feeding the deer. While recreational viewing is an enjoyable pastime, food placed to attract deer is not in the animal's best interest. Attracting and feeding deer supports an expanded herd size that is larger than the natural habitat can sustain. Increasing the herd increases the risk of vehicle/deer crashes and other nuisance issues. Additionally, the upsurge in contact between deer at the feeding site boosts their susceptibility to and transfer of disease. With this intensified exposure, the potential transmission of disease and parasites to humans escalates.

Providing a regular and reliable food source encourages deer to congregate, shifting their daily activity closer to the feeding area. Deer are grazers, and will continuously feed until they reach their destination. These actions lead to increased conflicts between the deer and their human neighbors.

For the long term health of the deer herd, please refrain from feeding the deer and keep other food sources (such as bird food) out of the deer's reach. If you have questions or concerns, please call the City Manager's Office at 847-4888 or email Lisa Sutterfield at lsutterfield@grandhaven.org.

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