



USDA APHIS WILDLIFE SERVICES  
 VISIBLE AREA METHOD  
 Deer Spotlight Survey Transect



Area Surveyed: Bent Tree

County: Pickens

Date: 12/7/10

Survey Conducted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Vis. L	+	Vis. R	=	Total	Vis. L	+	Vis. R	=	Total	Vis. L	+	Vis. R	=	Total			
.0	147	:	102	=	149												
.1	20	:	162	=	182	2.1	35	:	82	=	117	4.1	31	:	25	=	56
.2	10	:	32	=	42	2.2	98	:	75	=	173	4.2	56	:	3	=	59
.3	10	:	22	=	32	2.3	67	:	79	=	146	4.3	87	:	45	=	132
.4	48	:	122	=	170	2.4	31	:	20	=	51	4.4	36	:	88	=	124
.5	27	:	118	=	145	2.5	22	:	20	=	42	4.5	44	:	135	=	179
.6	20	:	20	=	40	2.6	20	:	50	=	70	4.6	27	:	18	=	45
.7	83	:	92	=	175	2.7	76	:	29	=	105	4.7	88	:	46	=	134
.8	20	:	121	=	141	2.8	81	:	117	=	198	4.8	29	:	5	=	34
.9	35	:	85	=	120	2.9	65	:	52	=	117	4.9	17	:	20	=	37
1.0	51	:	30	=	81	3.0	77	:	95	=	172	5.0	10	:	42	=	52

Subtotal: 1227

Subtotal: 1191

Subtotal: 892

1.1	77	:	105	=	182	3.1	70	:	80	=	150	5.1	97	:	38	=	135
1.2	75	:	46	=	121	3.2	35	:	90	=	125	5.2	68	:	96	=	164
1.3	46	:	37	=	83	3.3	31	:	117	=	148	5.3	61	:	38	=	99
1.4	102	:	102	=	204	3.4	22	:	34	=	56	5.4	10	:	37	=	47
1.5	50	:	82	=	132	3.5	63	:	49	=	112	5.5	55	:	33	=	88
1.6	31	:	59	=	90	3.6	21	:	55	=	76	5.6	8	:	18	=	26
1.7	23	:	51	=	74	3.7	42	:	67	=	109	5.7	39	:	25	=	64
1.8	33	:	87	=	120	3.8	29	:	32	=	61	5.8	34	:	66	=	100
1.9	49	:	202	=	251	3.9	35	:	79	=	114	5.9	21	:	59	=	80
2.0	138	:	143	=	281	4.0	56	:	18	=	74	6.0	94	:	71	=	165

Subtotal: 1538

Subtotal: 1072

Subtotal: 1020



USDA APHIS WILDLIFE SERVICES  
 VISIBLE AREA METHOD  
 Deer Spotlight Survey



Area Surveyed: Bent Tree Comm County: Pickens

Date: 2/8/10 - 2/10/10 Survey Conducted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Start: Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Temp: \_\_\_\_\_ Cloud Cover: \_\_\_\_\_ Wind Speed: \_\_\_\_\_

End: Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Temp: \_\_\_\_\_ Cloud Cover: \_\_\_\_\_ Wind Speed: \_\_\_\_\_

- Length of line in miles: 11.5
- Length of line in yards (miles x 1,760yds): 20,240
- Number of visibility stations (include .0): 116
- Grand total of all visibilities in yards: 18,822
- Average visibility per station (yds. visib. / #stats.): 162.2
- Square yards in line (length of line in yds. x avg. visib. pre sta.): 3,282,928
- Acres of visibility (sq. yds in line / 4,840 sq. yds. in an acre): 678.3

Bucks	Does	Fawns	Total Observed	Acres of Visibility	Acres Per Deer	Deer Per 1,000 Acres	Deer Per Sq. Mile (0.64 X deer pr 1000 acres)
			79	678.3	8.58	116.5	74.5

Does per Buck (does / buck):  $\frac{19}{46}$  14.75 28.0 43.4 High  
Low  
Average

Fawns per Doe (fawns / does): \_\_\_\_\_

Spotters: \_\_\_\_\_

Recorder: \_\_\_\_\_



USDA APHIS WILDLIFE SERVICES  
 VISIBLE AREA METHOD  
 Bent Tree Spotlight Survey



Date: 2/10/10

Temperature & Weather: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver: \_\_\_\_\_

Spotters: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Mileage: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Time: 8:55pm

End Mileage: \_\_\_\_\_

End Time: 10:55pm

Miles Traveled: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Number of deer: 19

No. of Deer	Location	Bedded	Feeding	Moving
—	Mulligan			
4	Tamarack	✓		
1	Denny Ridge	✓		
2	Tamarack	✓		
1	Little Pine MTP	✓		
—	Little Hendricks MTN			
—	Moss Patch			
3	Oglethorpe MTN Rd	✓(2)	✓(1)	
4	" " "	✓		
4	" " "	✓		
—	Brier Vista			

(19)



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

March 1, 2010

Animal and  
Plant Health  
Inspection  
Service

(b)(6)  
C/o Bent Tree Community, Inc.  
40 Little Pine Mountain Rd. #20202  
Jasper, GA 30143

Wildlife Services

School of Forestry  
and Natural  
Resources  
University of Georgia  
Athens, GA 30602  
706-546-5637  
Fax 706-316-9248

(b)(6)

It was a pleasure meeting you and the other Bent Tree personnel during our visit in February. Your assistance during the surveys made our work easier and more efficient and I thank you for it.

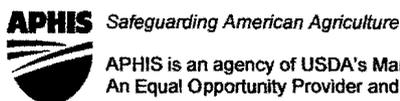
The methods utilized to estimate deer density in Bent Tree Community were based on protocol developed by Lewis Rogers of the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources. There are many published papers that describe similar techniques for conducting spotlight surveys for whitetail deer. For consistency we have adopted these techniques and use them for all of our surveys.

These methods involve establishing a survey route through the community and using this route for all surveys starting and ending in the same place each time. After the survey route is established we take visibility readings to obtain an estimation on the total area we can see during the survey. The protocol actually recommends this be done at night during the first survey however we feel it is more accurate to conduct the visibility index during the day utilizing laser range finders.

In order to obtain a more accurate estimation of deer density we take the average of 3 surveys. Many variables can cause deer numbers to fluctuate greatly. Thus only conducting one survey can potentially cause skewed density estimations.

During our 3 surveys we counted 40, 79 and 19 deer respectively giving us an average of 46. The survey route was 11.5 miles long and provided approximately 678 acres of visibility. Using the average of 46 deer counted provides a deer density of approximately 43.4 deer per square mile.

According to Georgia's Deer Management Plan 2005-2014 the average deer density for GA Game Management Unit 1 between 1995 and 2003 was 27 deer per square mile. The plan also states that Blue Ridge Mountain counties can sustain a deer density of 20 deer per square mile. Densities exceeding this level in mountainous counties run the risk of negative biological impacts. Initially these impacts would include changes in habitat and vegetative composition. If deer numbers continue to increase the overall health of the deer could suffer.



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(b)(6) Pg. 2

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Some additional observations during our site visit included the severe lack of understory and groundcover vegetation within the community. What little understory growth we noted was primarily comprised of mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*). The exception to this was three exclosures we visited on private property which contained good groundcover and understory growth.

While conducting the visibility index we observed several groups of deer feeding on dry oak leaves and mountain laurel. Both of these items would fall into the category of plants that would be considered extremely low on their preferred food list. In some areas we noticed browse lines starting to occur in patches of mountain laurel. All of the above observations are indicative of deer that are struggling to find quality nutrition.

I cannot say definitively if the overall health of the deer was in a state of decline. Our observations did seem to indicate that the deer were behaving in a way as to conserve energy. During our daytime visits the deer were feeding and very active. However during all three of our spotlight surveys, when the temperature was much lower, a large percentage of the deer we observed were bedded down. This does not indicate a deer population that is suffering but is atypical to the behavior we were observing in a nearby community.

The above observations along with our survey results do indicate a deer density that has exceeded the biological carrying capacity for the Bent Tree Community. If nothing is done to address the growing deer density the quality of habitat will continue to decline and the overall health of the deer will decline as well.

If you need any additional information please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Sincerely,

Steve Smith  
State Director



Safeguarding American Agriculture

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December 13, 2010

United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Animal and  
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Service

Wildlife Services

School of Forestry  
and Natural  
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(b)(6)

Bent Tree Community, Inc.  
40 Little Pine Mountain Rd. #20202  
Jasper, GA 30143

(b)(6)

It was a pleasure seeing you again last week as well as having the opportunity to meet with several Bent Tree residents at the meeting on Monday evening. All of the residents were very welcoming and friendly.

As I mentioned during the meeting we utilized the same survey route that was used in February. For constancy we will always use this route when conducting surveys in Bent Tree. This time however there was a significant difference in the visibility index. In fact the difference was such (30%) that I do not feel comfortable using the number obtained this time around. There were no significant changes in understory vegetation between the February and December surveys. Hence to maintain a fair comparison to the surveys conducted in February we opted to use the visibility index obtained then.

Spotlight survey protocol calls for surveys to be conducted within two to three hours after sunset. The reason for this is simply because this is typically when deer activity is at its highest. According to the Lewis Rogers (SCDNR) paper, "Most deer movement occurs during the first two hours after dark; therefore, it is important to begin the survey as soon as it gets dark."

One thing we were noticing in Bent Tree is the deer were much more active during the daylight hours than you would typically see outside an urban environment. This would especially be the case in a population that is prone to hunting pressure. Therefore in order to more accurately reflect the deer density present in Bent Tree we conducted three additional daytime surveys to accompany the three spotlight surveys.

I believe there are two advantages to this. First, like I mentioned above, we were counting the deer when their activity level seemed to be at a peak. This was probably somewhat influenced by the weather but I believe another factor played a bigger role. This being the urban environment where acclimation to human activity is very high and hunting pressure is very low. However regardless of the reasoning the idea of a spotlight survey is to count deer when they are most active. If this activity level is highest in the afternoon then that is when the surveys should be conducted.



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Page 2

The second advantage to the 3 additional surveys is more data sets. A big issue that was raised during the community meeting was the use of a small sample set (three surveys) and the lack of a statistical significance. By increasing the sample size the sampling distribution would become more accurate. The possibility of additional surveys in January or February was discussed. If this occurs the results from those surveys can be combined with these survey results to create an even greater, more accurate data set. This can be done because no significant population changing event (reduction or reproduction) will occur between the two sample dates.

During the three spotlight surveys we observed 28, 20 and 40 deer respectively. During the three daylight surveys we observed 62, 18 and 72 deer respectively. These 6 surveys produce an average of 40 deer observed. When applied to the original visibility index equation this produces an estimate of just under 38 deer per square mile.

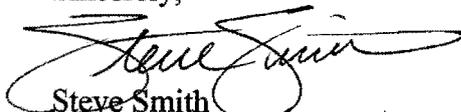
According to Georgia's Deer Management Plan 2005-2014 the average deer density for GA Game Management Unit 1 between 1995 and 2003 was 27 deer per square mile. The plan also states that Blue Ridge Mountain counties can sustain a deer density of 20 deer per square mile. Densities exceeding this level in mountainous counties run the risk of negative ecological and biological impacts. Initially these impacts would include changes in habitat and vegetative composition followed by reduced species diversity. If deer numbers continue to increase the overall health of the deer could suffer.

In addition to the above population estimate our general observations within Bent Tree point to a deer density that has exceeded the ecological carrying capacity. We cannot say for certain if the health of the deer in Bent Tree is suffering however the browse lines we noted on the mountain laurel indicate the deer are feeding on vegetation that is extremely low on their preferred food list.

From our observations we have no doubt that species diversity within Bent Tree is being negatively impacted. If compared to a similar habitat with less deer influence you would find fewer small mammal and bird species utilizing Bent Tree. This is in addition to the contrast in understory vegetation that would be present. As we've stated before deer are a keystone species that can directly, or indirectly, affect many other species.

If you need any additional information please do not hesitate to contact our office.

Sincerely,

  
Steve Smith  
State Director



USDA APHIS WILDLIFE SERVICES



Bent  
Tree

VISIBLE AREA METHOD

Reynolds Spotlight Survey

12/17

Date: 12/17

Temperature & Weather: clear, windy 29°

Driver: \_\_\_\_\_

Spotters: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Mileage: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Time: \_\_\_\_\_

End Mileage: \_\_\_\_\_

End Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Miles Traveled: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Number of deer: 20

Route 1  
⑦

No. of Deer	Location	Bedded	Feeding	Moving
	Alpine -			
	Mulligan -			
	Tamarack 1 doe			
	1 Pawn			
	1 standing			
	1 bedded			
	2 standing			
	Denny Ridge 1 standing			
Route 2 ①	Tamarack - 1 standing			
Route 3 ⑬	Little Pine 1 standing (Buck)			
	1 standing (Buck)			
	3 <del>standing</del> bedded			
	<del>4 bedded</del>			
20	Little Head <del>1 bedded</del>			
	2 bedded			
	Miss Patch -			
	ogelkuge UR -			
	Brian Vista 1 standing			







USDA APHIS WILDLIFE SERVICES  
 VISIBLE AREA METHOD  
 Reynolds Spotlight Survey



Berwt  
Free

Date: 6 Dec 2010 Temperature & Weather: 28°F, clear windy

Driver: \_\_\_\_\_ Spotters: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Mileage: \_\_\_\_\_ Start Time: 7:00

End Mileage: \_\_\_\_\_ End Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Miles Traveled: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Number of deer: 28

No. of Deer	Location	Bedded	Feeding	Moving
0	Mulligan			
2	Tamarack -			2
2	near Lake/Gulf house			2
3	2 adults / 1 fawn Dennis Ridge			3
2	Dennis Ridge -	2		
end Route 1 start Route 2 @ 7:26				
28, 2-				
5	@ 29.4 - tamarack -	2		3
1	@ 30.0 - stables	1		
1	@ 30.1 Bldg			1
end Route 2 @ 31.4 start Route 3 @ 31.9				
1	33.1 Bldg			1
3	33.5			3
2	35.6 little head & slippers in @ stables Rd			2
3	35.7 1a	3		
3	35.7 1 adult 2 fawns			3

end 36.2

15

16

28





USDA APHIS WILDLIFE SERVICES  
 BENT + Tree **VISIBLE AREA METHOD**  
**Reynolds Spotlight Survey**



Date: 12/8/10 Temperature & Weather: cloudy 30°F

Driver: \_\_\_\_\_ Spotters: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Mileage: 133.2 Start Time: 7:09

End Mileage: \_\_\_\_\_ End Time: 8:46

Miles Traveled: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Number of deer: 42

No. of Deer	Location	Bedded	Feeding	Moving
133.2	Alpine	1		
134.5	Tamarak	1		
135.2	Beach (1 male)			1
135.4				1
<hr/>				
start 2	137.1 <del>end</del> 138.7			
	139.3	1		
	140.0	2		
	140.1	5		
	140.6			1
	141.7	1		
<hr/>				
start 3	142.0 <del>end</del> 142.5			
	144.1	2		
	144.2	2		
	144.2	3		
	144.3			3
	144.4	2		
	144.4			1
	146.1			5
	146.4			1
	146.4			4
	146.8	5		
<hr/>				
Bent 3	146.8 <del>end</del>			

4

14

42





USDA APHIS WILDLIFE SERVICES  
 VISIBLE AREA METHOD  
 Deer Spotlight Survey



Area Surveyed: Bent Tree County: Pickens

Date: 12/8/10 Survey Conducted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Start: Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Temp: \_\_\_\_\_ Cloud Cover: \_\_\_\_\_ Wind Speed: \_\_\_\_\_

End: Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Temp: \_\_\_\_\_ Cloud Cover: \_\_\_\_\_ Wind Speed: \_\_\_\_\_

- Length of line in miles: 11.5
- Length of line in yards (miles x 1,760yds): 20,240 yds
- Number of visibility stations (include .0): 116
- Grand total of all visibilities in yards: 13,208 yds - 13,310
- Average visibility per station (yds. visib. / #stats.): 114 yds = 114.74
- Square yards in line (length of line in yds. x avg. visib. pre sta.): 2307360 yds 23223
- Acres of visibility (sq. yds in line / 4,840 sq. yds. in an acre): 476.73 ac  
479.82

Bucks	Does	Fawns	Total Observed	Acres of Visibility	Acres Per Deer	Deer Per 1,000 Acres	Deer Per Sq. Mile (0.64 X deer pr 1000 acres)
				<del>476.73</del>			

Count 1 - 28  
 Count 2 - 20  
 Count 3 -

479.82

Does per Buck (does / buck): \_\_\_\_\_

Fawns per Doe (fawns / does): \_\_\_\_\_

Spotters: \_\_\_\_\_

Recorder: \_\_\_\_\_



USDA APHIS WILDLIFE SERVICES  
 VISIBLE AREA METHOD  
 Deer Spotlight Survey Transect



Area Surveyed: Bent Tree

County: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 2/10/10

Survey Conducted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Vis. L	+	Vis. R	=	Total	Vis. L	+	Vis. R	=	Total	Vis. L	+	Vis. R	=	Total			
.0	84	:	78	=	162	2.1	64	:	10	=	74	4.1	63	:	5	=	68
.1	11	:	62	=	73	2.2	83	:	104	=	187	4.2	59	:	20	=	79
.2	27	:	40	=	67	2.3	104	:	10	=	114	4.3	24	:	5	=	29
.3	108	:	44	=	152	2.4	55	:	120	=	175	4.4	124	:	42	=	166
.4	60	:	55	=	115	2.5	160	:	20	=	180	4.5	86	:	25	=	111
.5	22	:	70	=	92	2.6	<del>800</del> 25	:	25	=	105	4.6	48	:	150	=	198
.6	114	:	31	=	145	2.7	166	:	70	=	236	4.7	190	:	25	=	215
.7	27	:	19	=	46	2.8	113	:	114	=	227	4.8	94	:	20	=	114
.8	18	:	10	=	28	2.9	70	:	83	=	153	4.9	72	:	10	=	82
.9	25	:	120	=	145	3.0	107	:	30	=	137	5.0	143	:	30	=	173
1.0	131	:	125	=	256												

Subtotal: 1281

Subtotal: 1593

Subtotal: 1235

1.1	94	:	52	=	146	3.1	103	:	50	=	153	5.1	15	:	25	=	40
1.2	78	:	54	=	132	3.2	80	:	20	=	100	5.2	107	:	25	=	132
1.3	154	:	189	=	343	3.3	106	:	30	=	136	5.3	160	:	100	=	260
1.4	76	:	105	=	181	3.4	103	:	15	=	118	5.4	81	:	15	=	96
1.5	82	:	80	=	162	3.5	103	:	120	=	223	5.5	36	:	25	=	61
1.6	32	:	47	=	79	3.6	49	:	25	=	74	5.6	100	:	63	=	163
1.7	229	:	48	=	277	3.7	84	:	40	=	124	5.7	123	:	15	=	138
1.8	70	:	150	=	220	3.8	131	:	20	=	151	5.8	111	:	35	=	146
1.9	197	:	100	=	297	3.9	101	:	80	=	181	5.9	20	:	75	=	103
2.0	61	:	125	=	186	4.0	205	:	80	=	285	6.0	32	:	47	=	79

Subtotal: 2023

Subtotal: 1545

Subtotal: 1218



USDA APHIS WILDLIFE SERVICES  
 VISIBLE AREA METHOD  
 Deer Spotlight Survey Transect



Vis. L	+	Vis. R	=	Total	Vis. L	+	Vis. R	=	Total	Vis. L	+	Vis. R	=	Total			
130																	
6.1	<del>130</del>	:	80	=	210	8.1	98	:	20	=	118	10.1	39	:	20	=	59
6.2	64	:	105	=	169	8.2	54	:	31	=	85	10.2	45	:	105	=	150
6.3	443	:	180	=	623	8.3	152	:	195	=	347	10.3	43	:	105	=	148
6.4	73	:	120	=	193	8.4	178	:	88	=	266	10.4	84	:	40	=	124
6.5	67	:	48	=	115	8.5	26	:	137	=	163	10.5	66	:	65	=	131
6.6	22	:	56	=	78	8.6	139	:	40	=	179	10.6	94	:	120	=	214
6.7	90	:	15	=	105	8.7	86	:	60	=	146	10.7	111	:	130	=	241
6.8	196	:	110	=	306	8.8	171	:	160	=	331	10.8	107	:	20	=	127
6.9	174	:	60	=	234	8.9	142	:	20	=	162	10.9	129	:	60	=	189
7.0	42	:	105	=	147	9.0	78	:	80	=	158	11.0	104	:	130	=	234

Subtotal: 2180

Subtotal: 1955

Subtotal: 1617

7.1	203	:	66	=	269	9.1	43	:	35	=	78	11.1	52	:	120	=	172
7.2	152	:	70	=	222	9.2	94	:	76	=	170	11.2	105	:	85	=	190
7.3	103	:	20	=	123	9.3	150	:	80	=	236	11.3	63	:	130	=	193
7.4	166	:	150	=	316	9.4	79	:	35	=	114	11.4	58	:	45	=	103
7.5	123	:	30	=	153	9.5	60	:	125	=	185	11.5	162	:	40	=	202
7.6	32	:	70	=	102	9.6	56	:	100	=	156	11.6		:		=	
7.7	107	:	25	=	132	9.7	88	:	10	=	98	11.7		:		=	
7.8	140	:	68	=	208	9.8	32	:	75	=	107	11.8		:		=	
7.9	146	:	30	=	176	9.9	29	:	140	=	169	11.9		:		=	
8.0	110	:	35	=	145	10.0	131	:	25	=	156	12.0		:		=	

Subtotal: 1846

Subtotal: 1469

Subtotal: 860



USDA APHIS WILDLIFE SERVICES  
 VISIBLE AREA METHOD  
 Deer Spotlight Survey Transect



Vis. L	+	Vis. R	=	Total	Vis. L	+	Vis. R	=	Total	Vis. L	+	Vis. R	=	Total
12.1	:		=		13.1	:		=		14.1	:		=	
12.2	:		=		13.2	:		=		14.2	:		=	
12.3	:		=		13.3	:		=		14.3	:		=	
12.4	:		=		13.4	:		=		14.4	:		=	
12.5	:		=		13.5	:		=		14.5	:		=	
12.6	:		=		13.6	:		=		14.6	:		=	
12.7	:		=		13.7	:		=		14.7	:		=	
12.8	:		=		13.8	:		=		14.8	:		=	
12.9	:		=		13.9	:		=		14.9	:		=	
13.0	:		=		14.0	:		=		15.0	:		=	

Subtotal: \_\_\_\_\_

Subtotal: \_\_\_\_\_

Subtotal: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Miles Surveyed: 11.5

Number of Visibility Stations: 116

Total of all Visibilities: 18,822 yds (56,466')



USDA APHIS WILDLIFE SERVICES  
 VISIBLE AREA METHOD  
 Bent Tree Spotlight Survey



Date: 2/8/10

Temperature & Weather: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver: \_\_\_\_\_

Spotters: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Mileage: 58268

Start Time: 8:20 pm

End Mileage: 58285

End Time: 10:30 pm

Miles Traveled: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Number of deer: 40

No. of Deer	Location	Bedded	Feeding	Moving
2	Mulligan			
3	Tamarack Dr.	✓		
4	" "	✓		
7	" "	✓		
8	" "	✓		
-	Denney Ridge			
1	Tamarack Dr (HP)			✓
7	" "			✓
<del>2</del> 2	" "			<del>✓</del>
1	Little Pine Mtn	✓		
3	" " "		✓	
1	Little Hendricks Mtn	✓		
-	Moss Patch			
-	Oglethorpe Mtn			
1	Briar Vista	✓		

40





USDA APHIS WILDLIFE SERVICES  
 VISIBLE AREA METHOD  
 Bent Tree Spotlight Survey



Date: 2/9/10

Temperature & Weather: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver: \_\_\_\_\_

Spotters: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Mileage: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Time: 8:11pm

End Mileage: \_\_\_\_\_

End Time: 10:12pm

Miles Traveled: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Number of deer: 79

23

No. of Deer	Location	Bedded	Feeding	Moving
2				✓
5		✓		
2		✓		✓
1		✓		
6		✓		
7				
1		✓		
3		✓		
4		✓		
5		✓		
2		✓		
1				
1		✓		
1		✓		
3				✓
7		✓		

51



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Animal and  
Plant Health  
Inspection  
Service

Wildlife Services

School of Forestry  
and Natural  
Resources  
University of  
Georgia  
Athens, Georgia  
30602

18 February 2010

(b)(6)

Big Canoe Property  
10586 Big Canoe  
Big Canoe, GA 30142

Dear (b)(6)

First of all, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for the assistance that (b)(6) the maintenance staff and the deer committee provided. Success of this operation was due to the tedious preparation and the collaboration of all parties involved.

As you know, we were able to safely remove a total of 94 deer from your facility on February 8-12, 2010. Reduction areas were identified by Big Canoe and facilitated during morning and evening hours. Below summarizes the biological results of the past removal.

- The harvested adult (2.5+ yr) sex ratio was 1M: 2.6F and the age percentage were 27% juvenile, 21% yearlings and 52% adults.
- Estimated venison supplied to charitable organizations was 3,034 lbs or 1.52 tons.
- Weight range and average adult weight was 32-140 lbs and 97.7 lbs respectively.
- Age range was 0.5-8.5yrs and the average adult age was 3.8 yrs.
- Total adult females/yearlings collected and percent pregnant was 50 and 90% respectively.
- Fetal sex ratio was 1.2M: 1F and peak breeding times was during the last week of November and the first week of December.

### Biological Results

In comparison with past reductions, deer collected this year had lower weights and fertilization rates. This could be contributed to a decrease of acorn production in the Piedmont and Blue Ridge physiographic regions. Lack of natural forage directly impacts deer weights and indirectly impacts fertility. The overall herd did have a breeding range with two distinctive conception peaks and a balanced fetal sex ratio. Breeding range was determined by fetal measurement in pregnant females. Graph 1 illustrates fetal age range.

Mailed  
2/23/10



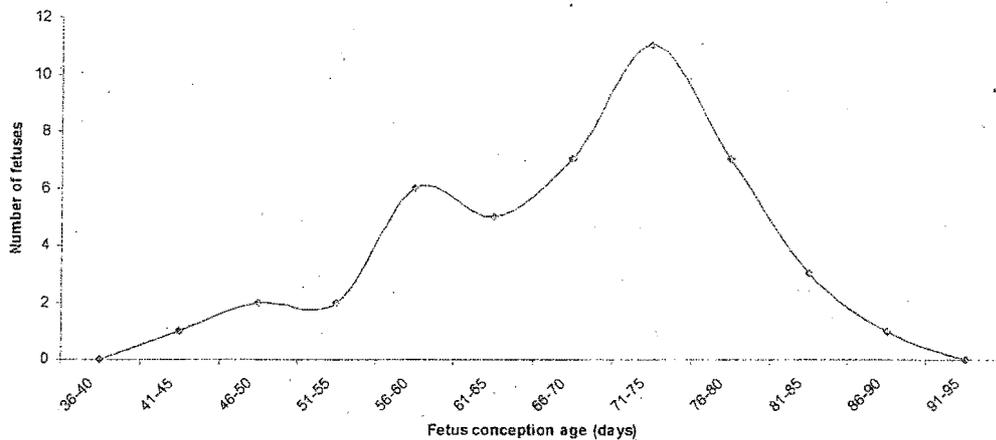
United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Animal and  
Plant Health  
Inspection  
Service

Wildlife Services

School of Forestry  
and Natural  
Resources  
University of  
Georgia  
Athens, Georgia  
30602

Graph 1. Fetal age range of pregnant female deer collected at Big Canoe, February 8-12, 2010.



These data suggest that current deer management techniques need to continue to maintain herd health, decrease deer/vehicle collisions and increase regeneration of native vegetation. Fetal measurements concluded that peak breeding days occurred during late November and early December. During this time more deer/vehicle collisions could occur due to high testosterone levels and breeding behavior.

Thank you for the opportunity to work with you and your associates on this project. If you need additional assistance with other wildlife species, please contact us.

Sincerely,

Leif Stephens  
Wildlife Biologist

Cc: (b)(6) Big Canoe Maintenance

## BILL FOR COLLECTION

(b)(6) Big Canoe Property 10586 Big Canoe Big Canoe, GA 30142
PHONE: 706-268-3346

Bill Number	BD 721310034
Vendor Code	58-1178491
Agreement No.	10-7213-8002 RA
Billing Date	3/8/2010
<b>Payment Due</b>	<b>4/7/2010</b>

Dates of Service  
2/8/10 - 2/12/10

Wildlife Management	\$12,500.00

<b>TOTAL DUE:</b>	<b>\$12,500.00</b>
-------------------	--------------------

*PLEASE INCLUDE A  
COPY OF THIS BILL  
WITH YOUR PAYMENT*

<b>For internal use only</b>	073-7213-024	\$11,179.29
	073-7213-700	\$1,320.71
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$12,500.00</b>

### NEW INFORMATION ABOUT HOW TO PAY

<p><b>Please remit payment within 30 days to</b> USDA, APHIS PO Box 979043 St. Louis, MO 63197-9000</p> <p><b><u>PAYMENTS MUST INCLUDE A COPY OF THIS BILL</u></b></p> <p><b>Make checks payable to: USDA-APHIS</b> <b>Please write your Bill Number on your check.</b></p> <p>To pay with a credit card (VISA, MasterCard, American Express, or Discover), please call the Accts. Receivable Helpline at 1-877-777-2128.</p> <p>For questions concerning this bill, please contact: Amanda Johnson (706) 546-5637</p>	<p>In accordance with the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996, invoices issued by USDA-APHIS are due and payable within 30 days. Payments not received by the due date are subject to late payment charges assessed at the rate established by the Dept. of Treasury (31 USC 3717).</p> <p>For overnight delivery, send payment to: USDA, APHIS Attn: PO Box 979043 1005 Convention Plaza St. Louis, MO 63197-9000 Telephone: 314-418-6635</p>
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Cooperator Copy     
  Remittance Copy     
  State Office Copy/Fax ART



**Agreement No.:**  
**Accounting Code:**

**COOPERATIVE SERVICE AGREEMENT**  
**Between**  
**BIG CANOE PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION (BC)**  
**and**  
**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
**ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE (APHIS)**  
**WILDLIFE SERVICES (WS)**

**ARTICLE 1**

The purpose of this Cooperative Service Agreement is to cooperate in the continuation of the successful long term deer management program for Big Canoe, located in Pickens and Dawson Counties, Big Canoe, Georgia. In addition to the deer management program, other wildlife problems that may exist can be addressed to help resolve conflicts.

**ARTICLE 2**

APHIS-WS has statutory authority under the Act of March 2, 1931 (46 Stat. 1468; 7 U.S.C.426-426b) as amended, and the Act of December 22, 1987 (101Stat. 1329-331, 7 U.S.C. 426c), to cooperate with States, local jurisdictions, individuals, public and private agencies, organizations, and institutions while conducting a program of wildlife services involving mammal and bird species that are reservoirs for zoonotic diseases, or animal species that are injurious and/or a nuisance to, among other things, agriculture, horticulture, forestry, animal husbandry, wildlife, and human health and safety.

**ARTICLE 3**

To meet as APHIS-WS and BC mutually agree:

1. The parties' authorized representatives who shall be responsible for carrying out the provisions of this Agreement shall be:

BC: (b)(6)  
Big Canoe Property  
10586 Big Canoe  
Big Canoe, Georgia 30142

APHIS-WS: Steven Smith  
USDA, APHIS, WS  
University of Georgia  
School of Forest Resources  
Athens, GA 30602

2. To meet as determined necessary by either party to discuss mutual program interests, accomplishments, needs, technology, and procedures to maintain or amend the Work Plan (Attachment A). Personnel authorized to attend meetings under this Agreement shall be BC or a designee, the State Director or his/her designee, and/or those additional persons authorized and approved by the BC, and the State Director.
3. APHIS-WS shall perform services more fully set forth in the Work Plan, which is attached hereto and made a part hereof. The parties may mutually agree in writing, at any time during the term of this Agreement, to amend, modify, add or delete services from the Work Plan.

#### ARTICLE 4

**BC agrees:**

1. To authorize APHIS-WS to facilitate implementation of a white-tailed deer management plan for a long term solution to the deer population problem. Authorize WS to Conduct direct control activities to reduce human health and safety risks and property damage associated with other wildlife species present on the property. These activities are defined in the Work Plan. APHIS-WS will be considered an invitee on the lands controlled by BC. BC will be required to exercise reasonable care to warn APHIS-WS as to dangerous conditions or activities in the project areas.
2. To reimburse APHIS-WS for costs of services provided under this Agreement up to but not exceeding the amount specified in the Financial Plan (Attachment B). BC will begin processing for payment invoices submitted by APHIS-WS within 30 days of receipt. The Cooperator ensures and certifies that it is not currently debarred or suspended and is free of delinquent Federal debt.
3. To designate to APHIS-WS the BC authorized individual whose responsibility shall be the coordination and administration of activities conducted pursuant to this Agreement.
4. To notify APHIS-WS verbally or in writing as far in advance as practical of the date and time of any proposed meeting related to the program.
5. APHIS-WS shall be responsible for administration and supervision of the program.
6. All equipment purchased for the program is and will remain the property of APHIS-WS.
7. To identify a single spokesman that can meet and deal effectively with the public to explain the Cooperator's position for deer management, and coordinate with APHIS-WS before responding to all media requests.
8. To provide qualified Cooperator personnel when needed to assist WS in wildlife collections.

9. To provide refrigerated storage facilities when required, and a lighted outside water supply for cleaning and temporary storage of white-tailed deer carcasses for later processing and distribution of edible venison to needy families and/or charitable organizations.
10. To provide for proper disposal of deer viscera by cooperator personnel.
11. To provide temporary lodging when needed for operations.
12. To permit WS employees access to areas as needed and to investigate and obtain legal, documented authority through applicable state, county, city and/or local ordinances, that will provide the needed permits and/or exemptions to conduct the agreed upon activities, as outlined in the Work and Financial plans developed for this agreement.
13. To inform local authorities and other interested parties, on an as needed basis, of control activities.

## **ARTICLE 5**

### **APHIS-WS Agrees:**

1. To conduct activities at BC as described in the Work and Financial Plans.
2. Designate to BC the authorized APHIS-WS individual who shall be responsible for the joint administration of the activities conducted pursuant to this Agreement.
3. To bill BC for actual costs incurred by APHIS-WS during the performance of services agreed upon and specified in the Work Plan. APHIS-WS shall keep records and receipts of all reimbursable expenditures hereunder for a period of not less than one year from the date of completion of the services provided under this Agreement and BC shall have the right to inspect and audit such records.
4. To coordinate with BC before responding to all media requests.
5. That the authorized WS representative will collect and maintain data on the deer project and provide a report of all WS activities related to BC.
6. To provide a wildlife biologist to implement the management plan for white-tailed deer damage control as well as manage other wildlife conflicts that may arise on cooperator property.
7. To keep a Memorandum of Understanding with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources that allows WS to manage urban deer complaints and control nuisance nonendangered and nonthreatened wildlife by capture and relocation, lethal control, or other techniques used in wildlife management.

8. To work with the BC public relations department, if requested, to help prepare any public releases or journal articles that help describe the mission of both parties involved.

#### **ARTICLE 6**

This Agreement is contingent upon the passage by Congress of an appropriation from which expenditures may be legally met and shall not obligate APHIS upon failure of Congress to so appropriate. This Agreement may also be reduced or terminated if Congress only provides APHIS funds for a finite period under a Continuing Resolution.

#### **ARTICLE 7**

APHIS assumes no liability for any actions or activities conducted under this Cooperative Service Agreement except to the extent that recourse or remedies are provided by Congress under the Federal Tort Claims Act (28 U.S.C. 1346(b), 2401(b), and 2671-2680).

#### **ARTICLE 8**

Pursuant to Section 22, Title 41, United States Code, no member of or delegate to Congress shall be admitted to any share or part of this Agreement or to any benefit to arise therefrom.

#### **ARTICLE 9**

All activities will be conducted in accordance with all applicable Federal, State and local laws, rules, and regulations. Nothing in this Agreement shall prevent APHIS- WS from entering into separate agreements with any other organization or individual for the purpose of providing wildlife damage management services exclusive of those provided for under this agreement.

#### **ARTICLE 10**

BC certifies that APHIS-WS has advised BC that other private sector service providers may be available to provide wildlife management services and notwithstanding these other options, BC requests that APHIS-WS provide wildlife management services as stated under the terms of this agreement.

#### **ARTICLE 11**

The performance of wildlife damage management actions by APHIS-WS under this agreement is contingent upon a determination by APHIS-WS that such actions are in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, and any other applicable environmental statutes. APHIS-WS will not make a final decision to conduct requested wildlife damage management actions until it has made the determination of such compliance.

**ARTICLE 12**

This Cooperative Service Agreement may be amended at any time by mutual agreement of the parties in writing. Also, this Agreement may be terminated at any time by mutual agreement of the parties in writing, or by one party provided that party notifies the other in writing at least 120 days prior to effecting such action. Further, in the event the Cooperator does not provide necessary funds, APHIS-WS is relieved of the obligation to provide services under this agreement.

**BIG CANOE PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION:**

BY:

(b)(6)

10/22/10  
Date

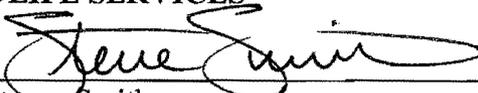
Big Canoe Property  
10586 Big Canoe  
Big Canoe, Georgia, 30142

In accordance with the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996, the Department of Treasury requires a **Taxpayer Identification Number** for individuals or businesses conducting business with the agency.

Big Canoe Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) 58-1178491.

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE  
WILDLIFE SERVICES**

BY:

  
Steven Smith

State Director, Georgia  
USDA, APHIS, WS  
University of Georgia  
School of Forest Resources  
Athens, GA 30602

10/27/10  
Date

# **Attachment A Work Plan**

## **White-tailed Deer Control at Big Canoe**

### **USDA, APHIS Wildlife Services**

#### **Introduction**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is authorized to protect American agriculture and other resources from damage associated with wildlife. The primary authority for Wildlife Services (WS) is the Act of March 2, 1931 (46 Stat. 1468; 7 U.S.C. 426-426c) as amended. Wildlife Services activities are conducted in cooperation with other Federal, State and local agencies; private organizations and individuals.

The WS program uses an Integrated Wildlife Damage Management (IWDM) approach (sometimes referred to as IPM or "Integrated Pest Management") in which a series of methods may be used or recommended to reduce wildlife damage. IWDM is described in Chapter 1, 1-7 of the Animal Damage Control Program Final Environmental Impact Statement (USDA, 1994). These methods include the alteration of cultural practices as well as habitat and behavioral modification to prevent damage. However, controlling wildlife damage may require that the offending animal(s) are killed or that the populations of the offending species be reduced.

This plan outlines the services to be provided by the Wildlife Services (WS) Program to continue the management of white-tail deer and other nuisance wildlife species at Big Canoe (BC) in Pickens and Dawson Counties, Big Canoe, Georgia.

#### **Basis for Program**

BC is a gated residential development which provides secure, picturesque, residential and recreational opportunities for a growing community. Sport hunting was not a viable option for BC and the deer herd was allowed to go unchecked and increase to a level that was not only hazardous for residents but also for the environment. Due to extensive browsing damage, decreased flora and fauna, deer-auto collisions, the potential for Lyme disease and overall decreased herd health, WS was contracted to reduce deer numbers and develop a long term management plan.

In addition, resident Canada geese, feral ducks and geese, beaver and vultures are other species of concern that occasionally create problems for BC.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources and the Cooperator agree that this service should be conducted by the WS to maximize safety, effectiveness, efficiency, and professionalism.

### **Planned Activities**

WS will continue to provide wildlife control options for white-tail deer and other species as needed and requested on BC property. With the constant development of the property and increased human population, the cultural carrying capacity also changes from year to year. Wildlife Services will maintain the deer herd at an acceptable community level. This control work will be done by approved methods that have proven successful in the past.

In addition to deer herd control, WS will continue, if requested, with vegetative surveys to measure the impact deer browsing is having on the native habitat.

Other wildlife problems will be managed using technical assistance or direct control depending on the situation and the best interest of all parties including the wildlife on the property. Several problem species that have been addressed in the past are beaver, vultures, Canada geese, feral waterfowl and woodpeckers.

All work will be conducted in a safe and professional manner and in full compliance with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and local laws. No attempt will be made to collect an animal unless the biologist is sure of the safety aspects of the situation.

Biological data will be collected for herd health monitoring purposes. Arrangements will be made to have edible venison distributed to needy individuals or charitable organizations.

WS employees will act in a professional manner at all times while on the BC property. Creating and maintaining a good image of the facility and WS is important to all parties involved. Safety will be of primary concern when operations are planned and executed. Appropriate authorities will be contacted prior to undertaking any management measures. WS will assist the public relations department with preparation of possible public releases to describe the operation.

### **Reports**

Reports will be provided to BC describing management activities and/or any new complaints received from residents. Meetings may be held any time BC deems necessary.

### **Effective Dates**

The cooperative agreement shall commence February 1, 2011 and shall expire on September 30, 2011.

**ATTACHMENT B  
FINANCIAL PLAN**

Personnel Costs-----	\$ 8,750
Travel and Mileage-----	\$ 1,000
Per Diem -----	\$ 700
Supplies-----	\$ 250
Program Support-----	\$ 1,800

TOTAL .....\$12,500

The distribution of the budget from this Financial Plan may vary as necessary to accomplish the purpose of this agreement, but may not exceed \$ 12,500.

Financial Point of Contact

Cooperator:	_____ (b)(6)	_____
	<Name to call for billing questions>	Phone
APHIS, WS:	<u>Amanda Johnson</u>	<u>706-546-5637</u>
		Phone

COOPERATIVE SERVICE AGREEMENT

Agreement No.:  
Accounting Code:

Between  
Bent Tree Community Inc. (BTCI)  
and the

10-7213-9038TF  
083-7213-811

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE (APHIS)  
WILDLIFE SERVICES (WS)

ARTICLE 1

The purpose of this agreement is to cooperate in a wildlife damage management project, as described in the Work Plan on the next page.

ARTICLE 2

APHIS WS has statutory authority under the Act of March 2, 1931 (46 Stat. 1468; 7 U.S.C.426-426b) as amended, and the Act of December 22, 1987 (101Stat. 1329-331, 7 U.S.C. 426c), to cooperate with States, local jurisdictions, individuals, public and private agencies, organizations, and institutions while conducting a program of wildlife services involving mammal and bird species that are reservoirs for zoonotic diseases, or animal species that are injurious and/or a nuisance to, among other things, agriculture, horticulture, forestry, animal husbandry, wildlife, and human health and safety.

ARTICLE 3

APHIS-WS and the BTCI agree:

1. APHIS-WS will provide the requested wildlife damage management services.
2. BTCI will provide the U.S. Department of Agriculture the sum of \$ 1,190.20 to cover the costs as outlined in the Financial Plan. Payment will be made by check payable to "U.S. Department of Agriculture" by a mutually agreed upon date.
3. BTCI ensures and certifies that it is not currently debarred or suspended and is free of delinquent Federal debt.
4. The monies received by APHIS-WS will be used for wildlife damage management activities and upon termination of the agreement any unexpended funds will be retained by APHIS-WS and used on similar program activities.
5. Nothing in this agreement shall prevent APHIS-WS from entering into separate agreements with any other organization or individual for the purpose of providing wildlife damage management services exclusive of those provided for under this agreement..
6. BTCI certifies that APHIS WS has advised the BTCI that there may be private sector service providers available to provide wildlife management services that the BTCI is seeking from APHIS WS.
7. The performance of wildlife damage management actions by APHIS-WS under this agreement is contingent upon a determination by APHIS-WS that such actions are in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, and any other applicable environmental statutes. APHIS-WS will not make a final decision to conduct requested wildlife damage management actions until it has made the determination of such compliance.

ARTICLE 4

Pursuant to Section 22, Title 41, United States Code, no member of or delegate to Congress shall be admitted to any share or part of this Agreement or to any benefit to arise therefrom.

ARTICLE 5

APHIS assumes no liability for any actions or activities conducted under this Cooperative Service Agreement except to the extent that recourse or remedies are provided by Congress under the Federal Tort Claims Act (FTCA), (28 U.S.C. 1346(b), 2401(b), and 2671-2680).

ARTICLE 6

The Agreement shall become effective February 8, 2010 and shall continue in effect until the completion or termination of the project. This Agreement may be amended or terminated at any time by mutual agreement of the parties in writing. Further, in the event BTCI does not provide necessary funds, APHIS-WS is relieved of the obligation to provide services under this agreement.

Tax Identification Number: x 58 153 2300

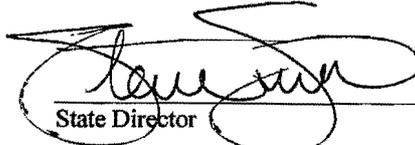
Bent Tree Community, Inc.  
40 Little Pine Mountain Rd. #20202  
Jasper, GA 30143

USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services  
200 Phoenix Rd.  
Athens, GA 30602

(b)(6)

Cooperator's Signature |

2-8-10  
Date

  
State Director 2/8/10  
Date

**WORK PLAN**

**Wildlife Species:** Whitetail Deer

**Description of Damage:** Overbrowsing

**Location:** Bent Tree Community, Pickins County

**Services Provided:** WS will conduct spotlight surveys to estimate deer density within Bent Tree Community.

**FINANCIAL PLAN**

Personnel Costs.....	\$863.66
Vehicle Usage.....	\$50.00
Supplies & Equipment.....	\$40.00
Travel.....	\$78.00
Program Support.....	\$158.54
TOTAL .....	\$1,190.20

The distribution of the budget from this Financial Plan may vary as necessary to accomplish the purpose of this agreement, but may not exceed **\$1,190.20**.

**Financial Point of Contact**

BTCL: (b)(6)  
Name to call for billing questions

770-893-2629 (b)(6)  
Phone

APHIS, WS: Amanda Johnson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone



Invoice No Inv.Date PO Number Reference

Audit No

Gross Amt Disc/HT

Net Amt

20100208 Feb08/10 N/A

CD0889

1,190.20

0.00

1,190.20

1,190.20

0.00

1,190.20

Distribution: 01-7220-08

1,190.20

BENT TREE COMMUNITY, INC-JBC  
40 LITTLE PINE MOUNTAIN ROAD #20202  
JASPER, GA  
30143

002991

2010 02 08  
DATE YYYY MM DD

PAY ONE THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED NINETY DOLLARS & TWENTY CENTS

\$1,190.20

U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

(b)(6)

⑈002991⑈

(b)(4)

COOPERATIVE SERVICE AGREEMENT

Between  
Bent Tree Community Inc. (BTCI)  
and the

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE (APHIS)  
WILDLIFE SERVICES (WS)

11-7213-9009 RA  
173-7213-700

ARTICLE 1

The purpose of this agreement is to cooperate in a wildlife damage management project, as described in the Work Plan on the next page.

ARTICLE 2

APHIS WS has statutory authority under the Act of March 2, 1931 (46 Stat. 1468; 7 U.S.C.426-426b) as amended, and the Act of December 22, 1987 (101Stat. 1329-331, 7 U.S.C. 426c), to cooperate with States, local jurisdictions, individuals, public and private agencies, organizations, and institutions while conducting a program of wildlife services involving mammal and bird species that are reservoirs for zoonotic diseases, or animal species that are injurious and/or a nuisance to, among other things, agriculture, horticulture, forestry, animal husbandry, wildlife, and human health and safety.

ARTICLE 3

APHIS-WS and the BTCI agree:

1. APHIS-WS will provide the requested wildlife damage management services.
2. BTCI will provide the U.S. Department of Agriculture the sum of \$ 2,600.00 to cover the costs as outlined in the Financial Plan.  
Payment will be made by check payable to "U.S. Department of Agriculture" by a mutually agreed upon date.
3. BTCI ensures and certifies that it is not currently debarred or suspended and is free of delinquent Federal debt.
4. The monies received by APHIS-WS will be used for wildlife damage management activities and upon termination of the agreement any unexpended funds will be retained by APHIS-WS and used on similar program activities.
5. Nothing in this agreement shall prevent APHIS-WS from entering into separate agreements with any other organization or individual for the purpose of providing wildlife damage management services exclusive of those provided for under this agreement..
6. BTCI certifies that APHIS WS has advised the BTCI that there may be private sector service providers available to provide wildlife management services that the BTCI is seeking from APHIS WS.
7. The performance of wildlife damage management actions by APHIS-WS under this agreement is contingent upon a determination by APHIS-WS that such actions are in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, and any other applicable environmental statutes. APHIS-WS will not make a final decision to conduct requested wildlife damage management actions until it has made the determination of such compliance.

ARTICLE 4

Pursuant to Section 22, Title 41, United States Code, no member of or delegate to Congress shall be admitted to any share or part of this Agreement or to any benefit to arise therefrom.

ARTICLE 5

APHIS assumes no liability for any actions or activities conducted under this Cooperative Service Agreement except to the extent that recourse or remedies are provided by Congress under the Federal Tort Claims Act (FTCA), (28 U.S.C. 1346(b), 2401(b), and 2671-2680).

ARTICLE 6

The Agreement shall become effective December 6, 2010 and shall continue in effect until the completion or termination of the project. This Agreement may be amended or terminated at any time by mutual agreement of the parties in writing. Further, in the event BTCI does not provide necessary funds, APHIS-WS is relieved of the obligation to provide services under this agreement.

Tax Identification Number: 58-1532300

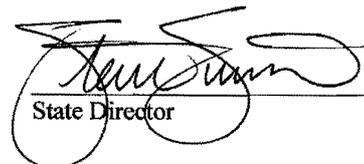
Bent Tree Community, Inc.  
40 Little Pine Mountain Rd. #20202  
Jasper, GA 30143

USDA-APHIS-Wildlife Services  
200 Phoenix Rd.  
Athens, GA 30602

(b)(6)

Cooperator's Signature

11-17-10  
Date

  
State Director  
12/6/10  
Date

**WORK PLAN**

**Wildlife Species:** Whitetail Deer

**Description of Damage:** Overbrowsing

**Location:** Bent Tree Community, Pickins County

**Services Provided:** WS will conduct a 3-night spotlight survey to estimate deer density within Bent Tree Community.

**FINANCIAL PLAN**

Personnel Costs.....	\$1,400.00
Vehicle Usage.....	\$112.00
Supplies & Equipment.....	\$00
Travel.....	\$861.00
Program Support.....	\$227.00
TOTAL .....	\$2,600.00

The distribution of the budget from this Financial Plan may vary as necessary to accomplish the purpose of this agreement, but may not exceed \$2,600.00.

**Financial Point of Contact**

BTCI: (b)(6) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name to call for billing questions Phone

APHIS, WS: Amanda Johnson \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone 706-546-5637



BENT TREE COMMUNITY, INC-RBC

USAGRI U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

Dec08/10

Check No. 001740

Invoice No	Inv.Date	PO Number	Reference	Audit No	Gross Amt	Disct/HB	Net Amt
20101208	Dec08/10	N/A		CD1201	2,600.00	0.00	2,600.00
					2,600.00	0.00	2,600.00

Distribution: 01-7220-08

2,600.00

THIS CHECK IS VOID WITHOUT A BLUE & GREEN BACKGROUND AND A PATTERNED WATERMARK ON THE BACK. HOLD AT ANGLE TO VIEW.

BENT TREE COMMUNITY, INC-RBC  
40 LITTLE PINE MTN RD #20202  
JASPER, GA  
30143

001740

2010 12 08  
DATE YYYY MM DD

PAY TWO THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED DOLLARS & 00 CENTS

\$2,600.00

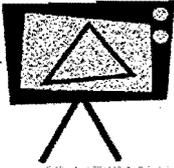
U.S. DEPT OF AGRICULTURE

(b)(6)

⑈001740⑈

(b)(4)

PAID BY MICROSPLITTING



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
10/14/2010 09:29 AM

To Leif R Stephens/GA/APHIS/USDA@USDA  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: Big Canoe 

History:  This message has been replied to.

Looks good!

Did you get the AC and TTD email from Jeff Jones last week? I couldn't tell if you were on the list or not. Anyway those documents (4/1/10 - 9/30/10) are due in mid November.

Thanks!

Leif R Stephens/GA/APHIS/USDA

Leif R  
Stephens/GA/APHIS/USDA  
10/14/2010 09:00 AM

To Steven H Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA@USDA  
cc  
Subject Big Canoe

Steven,

(b)(6) just called and wanted to tentatively set the removal during the week of Feb. 7, 2011. He also wanted to get the paperwork out the way. Please review the attached CSA so I can pass it on. [attachment "CSA Big Canoe 2011.doc" deleted by Steven H Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA]

Thanks

Leif Stephens  
Wildlife Biologist  
USDA APHIS WS  
o-706-546-5637  
c (b)(6)  
f-706-316-9248



Dana K  
Johnson/AL/APHIS/USDA  
01/25/2011 10:41 AM

To Leif R Stephens/GA/APHIS/USDA@USDA  
cc Frank L Boyd/AL/APHIS/USDA, Robert L  
Richey/AL/APHIS/USDA@USDA  
bcc  
Subject Re: Big Canoe 

I would like to send Leggs as he does a lot of night collections with trae. I would like to send both, but I can only afford to send one right now. I will get back in touch as soon as I speak to frank - but yes, please expect one.

Dana K. Johnson  
USDA / APHIS / Wildlife Services  
Wildlife Biologist  
334-844-5670 (office)  
334-844-5321 (fax)  
(b)(6) (cell)

"I drew the short straw as there was only one straw, it was short, and I was the only one drawing."

Leif R Stephens--01/19/2011 10:17:31 AM--Hey Dana, I hope things are going great for ya! We have Big C

Leif R  
Stephens/GA/APHIS/USDA  
01/19/2011 10:17 AM  
To Dana K Johnson/AL/APHIS/USDA@USDA  
cc  
Subject Big Canoe

Hey Dana,

I hope things are going great for ya! We have Big Canoe scheduled for the week of Feb. 7 and was wondering if you wanted to send one of your guys over. Let me know what you think.

Thanks,  
Leif

Leif Stephens  
Wildlife Biologist  
USDA APHIS WS  
o-706-546-5637  
c- (b)(6)  
f-706-316-9248



(b)(6)  
11/04/2010 08:51 AM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>,  
<Leif.r.stephens@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc (b)(6)  
bcc  
Subject FW: Request for Spotlight Survey information

Steve,

There is plenty of interest in your visit and survey in December. Leif and his brother were here the summer of 2009 and gave an in depth brief on the process of spotlight survey's and reduction in herd population. As part of your December visit can you or one of your team give an 'end to end' brief on the spotlight survey and analysis? Also anything we can get a hold of prior to December to read and digest would be helpful. Thanks.

(b)(6)

**From:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 04, 2010 8:25 AM  
**To:** (b)(6)  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Re: Request for Spotlight Survey information

(b)(6) - have you or (b)(6) talked with Steve Smith about whether it is ok with him if we have a "briefing" for people interested in the Spotlight Survey at Bent Tree? If he is not, then I cannot make the invitation at L&WL for people to attend anything on December 6.

If he is, then we will have to set up a time and I can tell people that that information will come later.

If you have not talked with him, then I will have to wait until the December L&WL meeting.

I will be home tomorrow evening (Friday). Am not accessing my e-mail that often so either call me on my (b)(6) or leave me a message at (b)(6) so I know whether to prepare a brief invite to present at the L&WL meeting the next morning.

(b)(6)



(b)(6)

04/12/2010 02:44 PM

To <Leif.R.Stephens@aphis.usda.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Bent Tree Forest management

History:

✉ This message has been replied to.

Leif,

It's been a while since I last communicated with you. I remain grateful to you and Odin for your great presentation a while back to a group of leaders here at Bent Tree. Since then I know you have recently assisted with a spotlight survey and one is planned for the late fall. This information on the deer heard density is most useful. The Board here has put together and ad hoc committee on forest management and I am chairing that committee. We are working to assess the health of our 5.5 sq. mi. mostly forested community and make recommendations to the board on forest management actions that will result in a sustainable ecosystem.

To that end I am asking for any leads that you may be able to give me on other north Georgia communities that are dealing successfully with similar issues. I know that our neighbors in Big Canoe are doing so but I need a few other examples in order to make our case. Also, are vegetative surveys in these areas available? Any help in this endeavor would be greatly appreciated.

Best regards to you and Odin,

(b)(6)



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
05/14/2010 09:33 AM

To (b)(6)  
cc Leif R Stephens/GA/APHIS/USDA@USDA  
bcc  
Subject Re: Bent Tree 

(b)(6)

Thanks for the e-mail and I hope all is well in your neck of the woods. It's hard to put a "lead time" on conducting a harvest in Bent Tree because we have stopped all deer removal operations because of the fawning season. The only lethal deer management we will do now is for the protection of human health and safety at airports or for very unique special requests by the GA DNR. So if you were to call me today with full approval and funding for a removal we still would not schedule anything until late winter. Winter is the most efficient time frame because we see a higher response from the deer to bait stations as naturally occurring food sources are more scarce.

Typically we prefer to conduct our removal projects in the January to April time frame. The reason we prefer to wait until January is to avoid any possible issues with hunters in the surrounding areas. We understand that no one is allowed to hunt in Bent Tree however if hunters from surrounding properties hear about us removing large numbers of deer from Bent Tree during the hunting season they may complain to DNR and scream foul. I'm not saying we will not work with you in the November/December time frame but if it can wait we would prefer to do so.

Another item I would like to propose is the possibility of working with Big Canoe on this removal. Our Big Canoe POC, (b)(6) has expressed interest in working with Bent Tree to coordinate the removals together thus making it easier on the charities to get deer from both locations. (b)(6) even offered to allow the deer from Bent Tree to be brought over to Big Canoe and processed at their maintenance shed along with the Big Canoe deer. All of this was coffee talk so the details would need to be worked out however if this could work out it could equate to a considerable cost savings for both communities.

I hope this helped answer your questions however if you wish to discuss this matter further please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thanks and have a great weekend!

Steve

---

Steve Smith  
State Director  
USDA-APHIS-WS  
School of Forestry and Natural Resources  
University of Georgia  
Athens, GA 30602  
706-546-5637  
Fax 706-316-9248

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
05/13/2010 05:08 PM

To <steven.h.smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc



Subject Bent Tree

Mr. Smith,

I am the (b)(6) at Bent Tree Community in Pickens County. We have been debating the issue with our whitetail population for a decade now and perhaps we are on the verge of a breakthrough or at least a decision.

I have been asked what lead time is necessary for a culling operation once the go ahead is given from our end. In other words, if I called tomorrow with approval and funding, how long would it take to put a contract in place and when would the initial culling operation begin? Thanks. (b)(6) or

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

*Bent Tree Community Inc.*



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
03/09/2010 12:45 PM

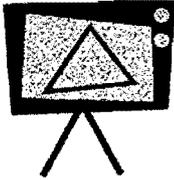
To Leif R Stephens/GA/APHIS/USDA@USDA, Daymond W  
Hughes/GA/APHIS/USDA@USDA  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Bent Tree Report

History:

 This message has been forwarded.



Bent Tree Survey Report.pdf



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
01/12/2010 02:26 PM

To (b)(6) Leif R  
Stephens/GA/APHIS/USDA@USDA  
cc  
bcc  
Subject RE: Bent Tree Wildlife Management Plan

(b)(6)

I've made some comments to the attached management plan. I am also including Leif on this reply so he can provide some input as well. I am also attaching the form 12A that we will need signed by any property owner that will allow us onto their land to conduct activities. The more the better. We only need one signed by a board member (president) to cover any common or POA/HOA property. Please have each landowner fill in lines 4, 5, 8-10 (if applicable), and 12. Then have them sign in section 8.

If anyone has any questions about the 12A please feel free to give them our number to call.

We'll be in touch soon. We are still looking into the logistics of doing surveys while we are at Big Canoe.

Thanks!

Steve



BTCI ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN DRAFT.doc Bent Tree Community 12A.pdf

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
01/11/2010 03:37 PM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject RE: Bent Tree Wildlife Management Plan

Steven,

Attached is a draft white tail management plan (based on what Leif gave us). Edit, review, and comment as you see appropriate.

(b)(6)

**From:** Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov [mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 11, 2010 11:56 AM  
**To:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** Re: Bent Tree Wildlife Management Plan

Thank you sir. We will be in touch soon.

Steve

---

Steve Smith  
State Director  
USDA-APHIS-WS  
School of Forestry and Natural Resources  
University of Georgia  
Athens, GA 30602  
706-546-5637  
Fax 706-316-9248

(b)(6)

01/11/2010 11:15 AM

To <steven.h.smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject Bent Tree Wildlife Management Plan

Steve,

Great talking to you. Attached are previous surveys that should be of value to you and your team. Please thank Leif and his brother for briefing us last summer. We look forward to working with you and your team soon.

(b)(6) [attachment "White tailed deer-Botanical Inventory 06072002.pdf" deleted by Steven H Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA] [attachment "White-Tailed Deer Impacts 05292002.pdf" deleted by Steven H Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA] [attachment "BTCI ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN -1a.doc" deleted by Steven H Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA]



(b)(6)  
10/14/2010 11:10 AM

To (b)(6)  
cc <Leif.R.Stephens@aphis.usda.gov>  
bcc  
Subject RE: Big Canoe CSA 2011

(b)(6) it may be worthwhile to forward a copy of this agreement over to our neighbors at Bent Tree? A while back, they were eager to gather any information we could provide, and this agreement answers many of the questions that were on the "check list" they sent over & you & I discussed. Thanks, (b)(6)

---

**From:** Leif.R.Stephens@aphis.usda.gov [mailto:Leif.R.Stephens@aphis.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 14, 2010 9:16 AM  
**To:** (b)(6)  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Big Canoe CSA 2011

(b)(6)

It was great talking with you on the phone today. I hope your family is doing well. Attached is the 2011 Cooperative Service Agreement for the annual deer reduction in February. The week of February 7th should work great. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Thanks,  
Leif

Leif Stephens  
Wildlife Biologist  
USDA APHIS WS  
o-706-546-5637  
c- (b)(6)  
f-706-316-9248



(b)(6)

12/20/2010 10:42 AM

To

(b)(6)

cc <Leif.R.Stephens@aphis.usda.gov>

bcc

Subject bait sights

(b)(6) we are going to start either today or tomorrow with the baiting on POA property only, we will start on private lots shortly after the Christmas holidays. Thanks,

(b)(6)



(b)(6)

01/03/2011 03:30 PM

To

(b)(6)

cc <Leif.R.Stephens@aphis.usda.gov>

bcc

Subject sharp shooters

(b)(6) don't forget that I need 3 {three} units for the sharp shooters starting on Monday, February 7<sup>th</sup> through Friday morning February 11<sup>th</sup>. Thanks, sweetie pie, oh yea, happy new year. (b)(6)



(b)(6)

01/05/2011 06:36 AM

To <Leif.R.Stephens@aphis.usda.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject FW: Bent Tree Vote

History:

✉ This message has been replied to.

Just F.Y.I. & interesting? (b)(6)

---

**From:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 04, 2011 12:01 PM  
**To:**  
**Cc:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** Bent Tree Vote

The Bent Tree Board decided to proceed towards a deer management program without an owner vote. The owners who are against controlling the herd petitioned for, and got, a recall vote on Board Member (b)(6) who was determined to be the prime mover of the deer control issue. 1016 ballots were mailed. 636 were returned. 110 voted to (b)(6). 526 voted to (b)(6) is now the Board President! It is interesting that the vote was effectively 5 to 1 in favor of control.

(b)(6)



(b)(6) To (b)(6)  
cc <Leif.R.Stephens@aphis.usda.gov>  
02/02/2011 04:00 PM bcc  
Subject RE: Deer Studies

History: This message has been forwarded.

(b)(6) the U.S.D.A. guys basically field dress the deer, but they do record gender, age, sex, weight, and age any unborn fetuses. If there is any obvious parasitic signs or any deformed deer, then special notations will be made. They always send me back a detailed report with the number of deer taken, aged unborn, estimated meat donated, as well as where they were taken, and when {morning or evening or spotlight}. To date, the only abnormalities I can recall are the fact that we have a couple of pi-ball deer here on the property, and the U.S.D.A. guys are given strict instructions to NOT remove them. I hope this has answered your questions, and while I have you, I ran into an employee of Bent Tree last week and told him that our removal program was coming up next week. And asked him to pass the work to my counter part that he's more than welcome to come observe, so he won't be totally in the dark as I was when we started 10 or 12 year back. I would extend that invitation to yourself and any of your board that would be interested. Feel free to contact me any day or evening if you would like to come over. Let me make one more point, then I'll go, not to scare you off, but I would urge some of you, at least the person that's going to head up your program to come over at least once if for no other reason than to get the "shock factor" of your first cull out of the way. Thanks for your confidence in me & the program Big Canoe operates.

(b)(6)

---

**From:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 02, 2011 3:14 PM  
**To:** (b)(6)  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Deer Studies

(b)(6)

I've been asked as a member of the Bent Tree Board to contact you for some info. When checking out the deer carcasses during the cull do they note any parasitic signs? Or do they just record gender, age, weight, and fetuses? Are you sent a report from them giving such info?

Just saw a notice from your POA on the cull next week. I hope everything goes well. Thank you.

(b)(6)



(b)(6)

02/03/2011 07:08 AM

To <Leif.R.Stephens@aphis.usda.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject FW: Special Announcement: 2011 Deer Reduction

History: This message has been forwarded.

---

**From:** Big Canoe Property Owners Association, Inc. [mailto:enews=bigcanoePOA.org@mcsv155.net] **On Behalf Of** Big Canoe Property Owners Association, Inc.  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 02, 2011 1:31 PM  
**To:** Toby  
**Subject:** Special Announcement: 2011 Deer Reduction

Email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser.](#)

## 2011 DEER REDUCTION

The 2011 Deer Reduction will take place from February 7<sup>th</sup> through the 11<sup>th</sup>. We know this is an emotional topic where people in the Community have strong opinions on both sides of the issue.

The Board decision to manage the size of the deer herd was made several years ago and the result has been improved health of the deer and the beginning of restoration of Big Canoe's natural vegetation. The Board Policy was updated in 2008 to include monitoring of vegetative regeneration and continued humane removal of deer by experts.

The Policy also requests Property Owner assistance in enforcement of the rules prohibiting the feeding of wildlife. It also reaffirms the Board's expectation that the Staff will enforce those rules.

As stewards for an ecological balance, we not only permit the deer herd to be healthy and vegetation to recover but we enable the balance to be restored whereby other creatures who depend on the vegetative food and cover can return. Please help where you can.

The removal activity will be primarily morning and evening at selected common property sites and on private properties where owners have given permission. Some night time spotlight removal may occur on common property areas including the golf courses and green spaces. The removal team will not be spotlighting from Big Canoe residential roads. Large bucks and Piebald Deer will not be removed.

The meat recovered from the removal will again be donated to local charities. Given the continuing economic difficulties

faced by some, the donation will be especially welcomed.

You are receiving this e-mail because either opted in at our website or you are a Big Canoe property owner.

[Unsubscribe tjones@bigcanoepoa.org from this list](#) | [Forward to a friend](#) | [Update your profile](#)

**Our mailing address is:**

Big Canoe Property Owners Association, Inc.

10586 Big Canoe

Big Canoe, Georgia 30143

[Add us to your address book](#)

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MailChimp



(b)(6)  
02/03/2011 03:53 PM

To <Leif.R.Stephens@aphis.usda.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject RE: Deer Collection

History:

✉ This message has been replied to and forwarded.

That's cool, I found out today that Bent Tree is going to vote again feb. the 15<sup>th</sup> on the cull & if it passes, they are to set up a march cull. Some of the board members may come over & observe? Got the rifle back yesterday & it's not as quiet as I had hoped, but still very accurate. I have the keys to your units on my desk, you are in 702,711 & 712, where you have stayed before. Do you know how many shooters you will bring? Doesn't matter, just wondering? See you next week, (b)(6)

---

**From:** Leif.R.Stephens@aphis.usda.gov [mailto:Leif.R.Stephens@aphis.usda.gov]

**Sent:** Thursday, February 03, 2011 3:38 PM

**To:** (b)(6)

**Subject:** RE: Deer Collection

Hey (b)(6)

I just got back in the office, so sorry for the late response. Bent Tree folks are more than welcome to drag deer, I mean participate just as long as it's good with yall. I would probably send that gun to someone who has fitted suppressors before. If that suppressor is not fitted right, it might affect the accuracy of the gun. Have a great weekend and we'll see ya next week!

Thanks again,

Leif

Leif Stephens  
Wildlife Biologist  
USDA APHIS WS  
o-706-546-5637

c- (b)(6)

f-706-316-9248

(b)(6)

01/31/2011 07:06 AM

To <Leif.R.Stephens@aphis.usda.gov>

cc

Subject RE: Deer Collection

Dr. of B S I suppose. Meeting at 2:pm sounds good to me, I'll have the keys to your units with me. I'm sure that the units are in the 700 section like before, but I'll have the keys regardless. I ran into an employee of Bent Tree Saturday at my little grand daughter's basket ball game & questioned him as to what B T was going to do & he said that they were getting closer to a removal program & I ask him to pass along an invitation to any one over there that would like to come over & observe the masters at work, & he said he would. Hope that was OK with you for me to do so? We are having about average results with our bait sights, so I guess we'll see what we see when we see it? It's been wild around here since Christmas with all the snow & ice, & I haven't dedicated as much time to the harvest as I usually do, but I don't think I have left out any details, I f I have overlooked anything, we'll deal with it in our usual calm & laid back manner.

Got all my paperwork in place & permit approved through the ATF & have been waiting for about 5 weeks for the gun shop to thread the barrel to fit the suppressor, & if I don't hear from him soon, I'm going to find someone else. I'm sure any machine shop can do the work? Any way, were set here as far as I know & all looking forward to seeing and working with you & the team again. Feel free if you need me to call, my cell is (b)(6) Thanks, (b)(6)

---

**From:** Leif.R.Stephens@aphis.usda.gov [mailto:Leif.R.Stephens@aphis.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 30, 2011 3:38 PM  
**To:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** Deer Collection

(b)(6)

I hope all is well with you and your clan. Time is gettin close!! Do you want us to meet up at the maintenance shop around 2pm on February 7th for a quick briefing? I'll be out of the office for the first part of week, but you can reach me on my cell if you have any questions or need anything. We all are looking forward to it! Thanks so much again for you tedious preparation!

Have a great week.

Leif

Leif Stephens  
Wildlife Biologist  
USDA APHIS WS  
o-706-546-5637  
c-706-255-9452  
f-706-316-9248



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
03/04/2010 10:54 AM

To (b)(6)  
cc Janet L Bucknall/MD/APHIS/USDA  
bcc  
Subject Big Canoe

(b)(6)

Thank you for your inquiry into the Big Canoe deer collection. The Big Canoe deer management program began in 2002 after several years of surveys showed an extremely high deer density that was having a significant biological impact on the habitat as well as health of the deer. After the initial reduction in 2002 Big Canoe chose to continue a population management program to maintain a healthier density with in the community. At this point the deer density is a culture carrying capacity in which Big Canoe is choosing to maintain with annual management. We provide the management services at the request of the Big Canoe. Hence your concerns about the annual collection should be brought up with the Big Canoe POA.

To receive any specific numbers a request needs to be made through our FOIA office. You can send a request to foia.officer@aphis.usda.gov.

If you need any additional information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Have a great day.

Steve

---

Steve Smith  
State Director  
USDA-APHIS-WS  
School of Forestry and Natural Resources  
University of Georgia  
Athens, GA 30602  
706-546-5637  
Fax 706-316-9248

Fax 706-316-9248

(b)(6)



(b)(6)

03/08/2010 06:22 PM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>

cc

(b)(6)

Subject Re: Big Canoe - deer

Mr. Smith,

I did talk to the POA at Big Canoe before I contacted you. Of course, I got the same answers that you gave me about "killing the deer". I understand, but do not agree.

The deer were on the mountains before you or I were ever put on this earth. God took care of them for, how many years? I still believe God will take care of the culling of the deer.

All I have to say to you and your "shooters" is, "I am just thankful to God that he gave me the talents, and ability, to support my family in this world without having to be "paid" to "lure these precious animals to the killing fields, and then kill them". I can understand hunters killing them, but not luring them to the killing fields then killing them while they are eating with their babies.

First, you tell us not to feed the deer - they will eat the undergrowth, then you say kill them because they are eating the undergrowth. If Big Canoe POA would let us feed them, maybe they wouldn't have to kill them.

I will not argue with you guys anymore, because you don't understand. Tell me one thing? Why do they "hide/conceal" the location of the "freezer truck" where they keep the dead deer, and why can't I find the shooters to talk to them?

Thanks for answering my e-mail after one month? I think my tax money does help pay your salary.

(b)(6)



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
03/09/2010 11:05 AM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: Big Canoe - deer 

(b)(6)

Thank you for your reply. The delay in my response was for a few reasons. Your original e-mail was submitted through the general USDA "Ask the Expert" on-line form. The USDA is the sixth largest agency in the federal government. Hence it took some time for your question to be routed through the system and finally be delivered to my inbox. I was out of town when your e-mail finally arrived and upon returning I requested clarification from our FOIA office as to what information could be released without going through the FOIA process. Once that questions was answered I was then able to reply to your e-mail.

There was no hidden freezer truck at Big Canoe. The deer were picked up every evening by the charity they were being donated to. In addition none of the shooters were hiding or avoiding contact with residents. We do not hide from anyone when we conduct this type of work. Although we very much understand the sensitive nature of this situation and strive to keep a low profile. It's our goal to complete these projects without any of the residents knowing we're in the community. However we are always available to anyone that wants to talk with us. You are currently communicating with one of the shooters from Big Canoe and if you would like to speak to me in more detail you are more then welcome to call our office.

Your question about God taking care of the deer is a little more complicated. It depends heavily on what your belief is. I'm by no means a biblical scholar however it does state in the book of Genesis that Man is to have authority over all that was created and that animals are used to fill the needs of men. I would also assume that "Man" is a part of God's plan thus we are responsible for managing the deer and keeping the herd healthy. According to the 6 days of creation land animals and Man were created together on day six. I don't believe that God had a separate plan for the animals on earth that did not involve "Man".

Looking at it from a biological perspective deer evolved from a pig-like ancestor approximately 30 million years ago. Up until quite recently (1000 years or so) there were many apex predators on the planet to manage deer populations. However we are now living in a time where top apex predators are no longer a factor in controlling deer numbers. The one exception to this is Man. Man is an apex predator and thus by our very nature we manage deer and other wildlife populations.

Basically this boils down to opinion. It depends on who you ask. I understand that you do not like the deer being killed in Big Canoe and I completely respect that. However like I mentioned in my initial reply the decision to continue the deer management plan in Big Canoe is 100% in the hands of the Big Canoe POA.

Thank you,  
Steve Smith

---

Steve Smith  
State Director  
USDA-APHIS-WS  
School of Forestry and Natural Resources  
University of Georgia  
Athens, GA 30602  
706-546-5637

706-546-5637  
Fax 706-316-9248

(b)(6)



(b)(6)

03/09/2010 07:22 PM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>

cc

Subject Re: Big Canoe - deer

Thank you Steve for understanding. I just can't stand the thought of a mother deer eating with her young, then all of a sudden she is gone, and the babies don't know how to forage for themselves. Not being nasty, but since you are a shooter, does it not bother you to kill these mothers?

I rescue feral cats, and spend lots of money, having them spayed/neutered and finding homes for them. I am just an animal lover. Currently, I have 7 cats who live in my house and never go outside. Four of which are feral cats.

I do not want to see the deer starve for lack of food. What I don't understand, and I have ask the POA people is, they tell us not to feed the deer that they will eat the undergrowth. Then they tell us we have to kill the deer because they eat the undergrowth. What do you suggest. Do I feed them when there is ice and snow on the ground, and the ground has been frozen for months?

I am a Christian and I believe when an animal dies their spirit goes to Heaven, just like ours does. I know someday I will see all my animals who have passed on, and in Heaven we won't have to kill the deer.

I know I sound "strange", but God gave me the love for animals. There is a lot I would like to talk to you about. What else does your position entale. I am new at this. Maybe I should have stayed in FL where there are so many people, they don't have room for stray animals.

Thanks again for understanding.

(b)(6)



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
03/12/2010 03:28 PM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: Big Canoe - deer 

(b)(6)

I apologize for the late response as I was away from the office for a couple of days. To answer your question about being a shooter I really need to explain that as biologists we view things at the population level and not the individual animal level. In other words we want to see an overall healthy population and that sometimes means we need to remove individuals. Don't misunderstand us....the majority of our employees are animal lovers as well. I myself have 2 cats, 3 snakes and a turtle. In fact the majority of our employees here in Georgia have pets of some sort. Just recently one of my employees (who was a shooter in Big Canoe) lost his dog and was very upset over it. We do not lack that connection with animals....we just view wildlife from a different perspective.

As for removing mothers and leaving babies behind, please know that when we conduct these reductions the fawns have been weaned and at an age in which they can survive on their own. In fact we stop all of our urban deer collections prior to fawning season for this very reason. We do not remove deer while fawns are still dependent on their mothers. After the safety of our employees and our cooperators humaneness is a top priority.

You bring up the feeding issue and you will find that the majority of wildlife biologists will not support any type of supplemental feeding. We stress the adage of leaving the "wild" in wildlife. Any type of supplemental feeding can cause wildlife to become dependant on humans for survival. This can only lead to additional problems down the line. Having said that I am never going to argue that someone should never put out a bird feeder. However you would be surprised at the percentage of calls our office receives with wildlife issues that can be linked to some sort of direct or indirect feeding.

Florida has more problems with invasive species than any other state. Irresponsible pet owners have turned Florida into a biologists nightmare. We have many employees in FL dealing solely with exotic invasives like iguanas, monitors, pythons and Gambian pouch rats to name just a few.

(b)(6) I do not think you are strange at all. You have an extreme passion for animals is there is nothing strange about that. I truly respect what you do with feral cats and wish there were more people doing this. You are taking the extra step and solving the problem and I commend you for that.

I hope I've helped explain our side of the work we conduct. I completely understand your strong emotions about the matter which is why we take the extra steps to make sure you do not see it. We do not do this to hide.....we do this out of respect.

Please let me know if I can answer any additional questions.

Have a great weekend.

Steve

---

Steve Smith  
State Director  
USDA-APHIS-WS  
School of Forestry and Natural Resources  
University of Georgia  
Athens, GA 30602



>

03/12/2010 05:16 PM

(b)(6)

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Re: Big Canoe - deer

Thank you Steven for understanding. Since this is our first year living in Big Canoe, I was very upset when I learned the deer were being killed. I fully understand why this has to be done. It just took you explaining it to me to "calm me down". I get very upset when I see how people treat their animals. They get cats, dogs, etc., and when they get tired of them, they just turn them out.

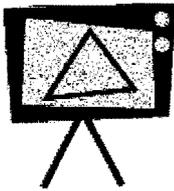
Don't tell the Big Canoe POA, but I did feed the deer for a while, then I realized they were depending on me for food, so I gradually stopped the feeding. If the weather ever clears up in GA, everybody can take care of themselves.

Is there anything else I can do to help you? I rescued feral cats in Canton, until the HOA threatened to put me out of the community. I took my 4 ferals, and moved to Big Canoe.

I'm sorry if I was nasty in my first e-mail, but hopefully, you understand why I was upset.

I will keep your e-mail address and stay in contact.

(b)(6)



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
02/03/2010 05:59 PM

To (b)(6)  
cc (b)(6)  
bcc (b)(6) Leif R  
Subject RE: news

(b)(6)

Sorry for the late response as I was out of the office all afternoon. I actually am not concerned about PETA getting involved. We've dealt with threats from PETA before and they normally only get involved when there is a good chance to gain some heavy media attention. This will not be the case with Big Canoe. If this was being done in downtown Atlanta we might see some PETA presence. However having said that I never say never.

I expect that PETA will respond to the lady in question with tips and suggestions that she can do to disrupt the operation or get the word out. However most of the time these threats fade away and nothing happens. I've worked on urban deer projects in the past with protestors and they can draw some media attention in more metropolitan areas but it did not have an adverse affect on our work. We have SOPs in place to deal with this type of situation. If the media does decide to cover the subject we are prepared for that and have Carol as an excellent resource.

We always prepare for the worst and hope for the best.

As for the location to work up deer....I am fine keeping it at the maintenance shed as long as access can be limited. If I recall correctly the back of that shed was well hidden from all roads and the only way to see us was to drive in or sneak through the woods. Even if the fence cannot be fixed is we can put up some barriers to keep cars out I would be happy with that. I do not see a reason to move the operation unless you truly think it will be a problem keeping folks out.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions.

See you Monday.

Steve

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
02/03/2010 01:22 PM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc

(b)(6)

Subject RE: news

Me again Steve. Just occurred to me that should there be protesters, all this lady has to do is call them in to the gates, and we have no way of knowing who they are, or how many. Any property owner can call in as many guest as they choose? I'm not

trying to make a big deal of this, just don't want any of us to be blindsided? (b)(6)

**From:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 03, 2010 1:12 PM  
**To:** 'Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov'  
**Cc:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** RE: news

Steve, we do have a gate here across the road leading into the maintenance area. We will have to make some repairs to it, but will have that done before Monday. My concerns would not be her, but P.E.T.A. protesters showing up. Of course, they could not gain access to the property unless they are owners, but could do a great deal of damage protesting at our front gate as well as the North gate? If you think it's needed, we can go to the Golf Maintenance area for cleaning and processing?????? Thanks for looking into this, (b)(6)

**From:** Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov [mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 03, 2010 12:40 PM  
**To:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** Fw: news

(b)(6)

I have an e-mail into our public affairs folks to see what they recommend. However the biggest issue I see is our cleaning location. Can you restrict access to people getting into the maintenance area while we are working up the deer? If you can than we should be fine. She might be able to disrupt a couple of locations but we still should be able to get the job done.

Thanks!

Steve

---

Steve Smith  
State Director  
USDA-APHIS-WS  
School of Forestry and Natural Resources  
University of Georgia  
Athens, GA 30602  
706-546-5637  
Fax 706-316-9248

----- Forwarded by Steven H Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA on 02/03/2010 12:37 PM -----

Leif R Stephens/GA/APHIS/USDA

02/03/2010 12:19 PM

To: Steven H Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA@USDA  
cc  
Subject: Fw: news

Here ya go. You think we need to work with them to prepare a press release just in case something happens?

Leif Stephens  
Wildlife Biologist  
USDA APHIS WS  
o-706-546-5637  
c- (b)(6)  
f-706-316-9248

----- Forwarded by Leif R Stephens/GA/APHIS/USDA on 02/03/2010 12:18 PM -----

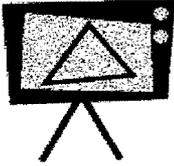
(b)(6)

02/03/2010 11:04 AM

To: <Leif.R.Stephens@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc:  
Subject: news  
ect

(b)(6)

Good morning and sorry to bring this to you, but you probably need to know. I received a letter this morning from a lady that lives here & she's not happy with the deer harvest. That of course is nothing new to us, but she has called the local paper {Pickens County Progress} as well as contacted P.E.T.A. I don't know what might come of this, but just thought you needed a heads up before you arrived. Thanks, (b)(6)



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
02/04/2010 03:02 PM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: 

Sounds good (b)(6) We'll check it out Monday.

---

**From:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** 02/04/2010 03:01 PM EST  
**To:** Steven Smith; Leif Stephens  
**Cc:** (b)(6) (b)(6)

Steve, I've taken a second look at moving the deer dressing area, and believe the second location at Golf Maintenance may very well be a better location. It's more secluded than the Garage area we have always used and no one would be aware of anything going on there. As soon as you get on property Monday, I'd like for you guys to look & see what you think. I have talked to the Golf Course Super, (b)(6) and he has agreed to allow us access to this area if we want it. Even without the threat of our operation getting disrupted, I think this area would serve us well. There is a large covered concrete area {probably 30'X30'} there and that would eliminate the smell that lingers in the garage for weeks after you guys have gone. Lets look when you arrive,  
Thanks (b)(6)



(b)(6)

To

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov (b)(6)

01/20/2011 09:15 AM

cc

(b)(6)

Please respond to

bcc

(b)(6)

Subject Re: SOP

I have a strong objection to the "daylight" spotlight surveys proposed. It is a continuation of the number manipulation without scientific basis started by USDA on their recent trip. Unless the USDA agrees to return to confirm the VI to be used (at their expense), I see no reason to bring them back.

(b)(6)

-----Original Message-----

From: (b)(6)

Sent: Jan 19, 2011 11:20 AM

To: (b)(6) Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov, (b)(6)

Cc: (b)(6) (b)(6)

(b)(6)

Subject: SOP

Gentlemen,

Thank you all for your input.

I have done my best to include all points of view in this document.

Regards,

(b)(6)

(b)(6)



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
01/07/2011 04:09 PM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: Cost estimates 

Hey (b)(6)

When you mentioned a Monday afternoon on the phone I was afraid you would suggest the 24th. I'm scheduled to be at a conference in Atlanta from the 24th -26th. However I checked the schedule and it is really vital that I be in attendance Tuesday and Wednesday. Hence if the 24th is good with everyone else on your list then I will make every effort to be there. Worst case scenario I miss the late lunch and show up just before the meeting starts. Otherwise everything sounds good.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Have a great weekend!

Steve

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
01/07/2011 12:41 PM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject Re: Cost estimates

Steve,

Thank you VERY much. This is really helpful as we formulate our plan.

I mentioned yesterday that we are putting together a panel for a Town Hall meeting. One of the purposes is to review the most recent Spotlight Survey Report that you provided.

We have in mind a 4-5 member panel that would include (b)(6) and perhaps Leif Stephens.  
This is a work in progress.

Would you be able to be with us on Monday, January 24. We would give ya'll a late lunch (1:30 to 2:00) and then conduct a Town Hall meeting (4PM) where each of the panel would be given 10 minutes to talk on their area of expertise. Following we would open the floor to questions until 6:30. Dinner would be provided for any of the panel who would like to stay.

These plans are in a beginning phase but I would appreciate knowing your availability as you would be a key player.

Thanks again for all your help. I will be in touch re. the SOP for Bent Tree deer counting going forward.

Regards,

(b)(6)

----- Original Message -----

**From:** [Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov)

**To:** (b)(6)

**Sent:** Friday, January 07, 2011 9:13 AM

**Subject:** Cost estimates

Good morning (b)(6)

I've plugged in the numbers for the requested services and came up with the cost estimates below. If you need any additional information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Have a great weekend!

Steve

**Two night spotlight survey training session - \$1,036.45**

**Three night culling with no lodging provided - \$10,687.79**

**Three night culling with lodging provided - \$9,346.25**



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
01/10/2011 08:18 AM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: Town Hall 

Sounds good.

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
01/08/2011 01:56 PM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc (b)(6)  
Subject Town Hall

Steve,

I have contacted (b)(6) regarding the Town Hall and asked if he would be available either January 24th or January 31st. Hopefully we can firm up a date that is mutually convenient.

Regards,

(b)(6)



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
01/14/2011 10:50 AM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: Town Hall @ Bent Tree 

Hey (b)(6)

January 31st works great for me. I've got it penciled in. Are you getting good responses from the other invitees?

I'm in the office all day today. Give me a call (706-546-5637) and I will explain my decision on the index. Too much to keep brief in an e-mail.

Thanks!

Steve

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
01/14/2011 08:56 AM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject Town Hall @ Bent Tree

Good morning Steve,

I think we have settled on a date for our Town Hall. Will January 31st work for you?

We would commence at 4pm. I will get an agenda to you for comment once the date is firm.

Also, could you briefly explain why you decided to use the visibility index used during the first survey? Did this yield a higher or lower projected deer count ?

Do you think we should include daylight counts in our Bent Tree protocol ?

Thank you so much.

(b)(6)



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
01/14/2011 03:36 PM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: draft two 

Hey (b)(6)

I added a couple of comments to the 2nd Draft. Overall though it looks good. I think you've got a great start on this process. Nice work!

If you have any additional questions please do not hesitate to call.

Cheers!

Steve



Bent Tree Spotlight DRAFT TWO survey SOP.doc

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
01/14/2011 10:22 AM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject draft two

Steve,

Would you take a look at Draft Two. I have had some input from one of our retired Ph.D's from Tech.

He makes some good points about how Bent Tree deer behave differently than those in a wilderness area that is hunted.

Thanks again !!!!

(b)(6) attachment "DRAFT TWO survey SOP.doc" deleted by Steven H Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA]

(b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)



(b)(6)

01/19/2011 09:00 AM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Re: Cost estimates

Good morning Steve,

Thanks for the answers. We had a good BOD meeting yesterday. The entire BOD, with only one exception, voted to "accept and endorse" the Forest Management Resolutions passed from the previous BOD. That puts us one step closer to reaching a final conclusion.

The Town Hall will be part of the process as well. Then I will present all findings at the February 1 worksession. The vote will be on the February 15 agenda. That will be the drop-dead date for any scheduling.

.....With one exception.

I will have a final SOP for deer density approximation to you by the end of today. Since there are some issues with the visibility index, I was thinking last night that we might try to get in a 2-day training count.....your guys and our Bent Tree employees (4 of them).....you all could do a two day training/count prior to the January 31st Town Hall.

If you ran the visibility one more time, did 2 afternoon counts and 2 evening counts using our new protocol.....that would add 4 more data points to those you gathered on the last count. Then I could go to the BOD with a more secure recommendation for culling.

What say you ? Highest Regards, (b)(6)

----- Original Message -----

**From:** [Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov)

**To:** (b)(6)

**Cc:**

**Sent:** Tuesday, January 18, 2011 12:14 PM

**Subject:** Re: Cost estimates

Hi (b)(6)

I hope things are starting to thaw out a little up there and you've been able to get out to restock on "essentials". As for the visibility index I might recommend this. Let's go ahead and do another one when the next round of surveys is completed and then take an average of the three indexes. I think that would be a solid estimation on viewable area and then you would not need to conduct another index after that. Unless of course your understory vegetation changes which I do not foresee in the near future.

The culling questions:

Who (how) do we bait with corn?

Once the bait locations are established you'll place 50-100lbs of corn out and let the deer find it. This

may take anywhere from 1 day to 5 days however given your densities I would think it would be closer to the former. Once the deer start hitting the bait locations regularly the bait will need to be replenished every 2-3 days initially and then probably every day when they really start pounding it.

Where (how do we determine best location(s) ?

Several factors play into this one. First start with the areas that are seeing the highest activity. Then focus on property owners that are fed up with the deer and willing to cooperate with this process and let us use their property (they will need to sign one of our trespass agreements). These locations should also be as far as possible from anyone that is opposed to the culling. We will not remove deer next door to someone who loves deer and does not want to see them killed. Not only is this a recipe for disaster it's just plain rude. From this point, if we can schedule it, we would like to come up and take a look at all the locations to ensure they will work and will be safe. We would then recommend a specific bait location. Ideal locations for us allow the use of a second story deck to give us a good downward angle as well as not require us to mess with treestands each visit. Plus these deer are already acclimated to people on their decks so this is not a new danger being inserted into their environment.

How many people would be involved and need to be housed (we are looking at getting a donated cabin that usually rents)

We would be thinking 3 nights.....number of deer between 50 and 100 .....need some help with that.

Given what you told me over the phone I worked up those estimates utilizing 5 people for three nights. Baring any unforeseen circumstances we should be able to reach that goal without a problem.

I am CERTAIN that I am missing something.

In addition to the above items we will also need a location to work the deer up. This was one major advantage to working with Big Canoe in that we could do all of this over there. We typically use a maintenance shed (golf course or public works) that has running water and a covered area that we can hang our scales from. We will clean, age, weigh and do general observations on all the deer we collect. We will also do fetus data collection as well. This is not something that we like the public to see so the more secluded the location the better. Ideally if it has gate access that would be grand. I always try and give details from sites we've worked in the past where the facilities were perfect for our needs. We'll work with whatever the community has available.

The last big thing is disposal of the deer entrails. You may want to contact Big Canoe to see what they do with theirs. Most places simply haul them to the landfill.

I cannot think of anything else at this time. I would like to throw this out though if I can. Leif and I looked at our calendars recently and the week of March 14 would be ideal on our end for a "POSSIBLE" cull. This is spring break at the university so we would not need to worry about class that week and it also gives us a good amount of time to get all the ducks in a row. Just throwing that out there.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions. We're used to working with communities going through this process for the first time. Hence you are not bugging us in the least.

Cheers!

Steve

(b)(6)

01/15/2011 11:48 AM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>

cc: (b)(6)

Subject Re: Cost estimates

Steve,

We are getting really close to having our counting protocol ready. (see near final version attached)

We will need to work on getting the appropriate visibility index into that Attachment. It might mean that we do a third one when you do our training. That might settle any concerns about the variability in this measurement. What are your thoughts on that ?

Thank you again for your input and we appreciate the endorsement when it is time.

As for lining up a POSSIBLE cull.

I know that we can't coordinate with Big Canoe this year because there is just too little time. However, I also realize that we have a narrow window for completing the task. Thus, if you could begin to help me formulate the process so we are ready to go (this will likely be coming up in the February BOD meetings.....and we could have a firm answer the second Tuesday in Feb.

Who (how) do we bait with corn?

Where (how do we determine best location(s) ?

How many people would be involved and need to be housed (we are looking at getting a donated cabin that usually rents)

We would be thinking 3 nights.....number of deer between 50 and 100 .....need some help with that.

We have already spoken with Timothy House so I know they would be ready to pick up as requested.

I am CERTAIN that I am missing something. Thanks again for your help. If we can just make it through this first one MAYBE the community can move forward.

Regards,

(b)(6)

----- Original Message -----

**From:** [Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov)

**To:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** Friday, January 07, 2011 9:13 AM  
**Subject:** Cost estimates

Good morning (b)(6)

I've plugged in the numbers for the requested services and came up with the cost estimates below. If you need any additional information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Have a great weekend!

Steve

**Two night spotlight survey training session - \$1,036.45**

**Three night culling with no lodging provided - \$10,687.79**

**Three night culling with lodging provided - \$9,346.25**



(b)(6)

01/19/2011 11:20 AM

To

(b)(6)

<Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>

(b)(6)

cc

(b)(6)

bcc

Subject SOP

Gentlemen,

Thank you all for your input.

I have done my best to include all points of view in this document.

Regards,



(b)(6) final survey SOP.doc



(b)(6)

01/19/2011 11:22 AM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Survey Protocol

Steve,

I think we are ready to go with this.

Would you be able to write a short endorsement of the plan ?

Thanks so much.

(b)(6)



final survey SOP.doc

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

***DRAFT***

# A-

**Effective Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Review Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Purpose:**

The purpose of the procedure is to outline the protocol for the conduct of periodic *Deer Density Surveys* in order to gather trend data and monitor the relative size of the deer population within Bent Tree.

**Background:**

The Bent Tree 20/20 Ad Hoc Committee reported the results of a property owner survey ranking "Wildlife & Forest Management" a "HIGH" priority.

The Bent Tree 2010 Ad Hoc Forest Management Committee recommended that Bent Tree "institute a deer herd monitoring program in 2010 that addresses both the size of the herd and the health of the herd."

The Bent Tree 2010 Board of Directors in a Board Resolution dated November 16, 2010 stated that Bent Tree "Institute on-going and annual deer herd and wildlife-monitoring programs..."

The Bent Tree 2011 Board of Directors, on January 19, 2011 voted to accept and endorse the November 16, 2010 Resolution.

Spotlight Survey methodology is established in the literature as the accepted protocol for deer density approximation.

Attachment 1: Procedures for Establishing Deer-Spotlight Transects and conducting deer-spotlight surveys, Lewis Rogers, Regional Wildlife Biologist, South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Department

Attachment 2: Conducting White-tailed deer spotlight surveys in Texas, Steve Jester, Wildlife Biologist, Jim Dillard, Technical Guidance Biologist, Mineral Wells, Gary Homerstad, Technical Guidance Biologist, Victoria

**Schedule:**

Unless directed otherwise by the Bent Tree Community Inc. Board of Directors, Bent Tree will make every effort to conduct two spotlight surveys annually. The first survey will occur between January 1 and March 30 and the second will occur between November 15 and December 31. Data for each survey should be collected a minimum of six times within a seven day period. Data collection will commence as follows:

3 counts between the hours of sunset and sunset plus three hours on nights without a full moon

3 counts between the hours of sunset minus four hours and sunset

The following conditions should be considered for optimum results:

- Foliage is off the deciduous trees.
- Extreme inclement weather is avoided.
- Wind velocity does not exceed 10 miles per hour.

**Team:**

A four person team will be the minimum manpower utilized to perform a survey. Each four man team will include the following:

- two spotters (which may be Bent Tree employees determined by the General Manager and trained on the process)
- one driver
- one recorder

A driver and a recorder selected from a group of trained volunteers provided by the Lake & Wildlife Committee.

The Lake & Wildlife Committee mission as set forth in Bent Tree Rules & Regulations states:

*"The mission of the Lake & Wildlife Committee is to protect and maintain our natural resources in order to serve the needs of the Bent Tree community. To this end, the committee will provide leadership in protection, management, and suitable use of the forest and related ecosystems and resources they contain. Such resource include fish and wildlife...."*

Note: trained volunteers should behave "professionally". An observer may accompany the survey to assure accuracy. It should be understood that discrepancies of a few deer are not statistically significant.

**Equipment:**

Two Q-beam 12 volt spotlights (one backup recommended)  
 12 volt vehicle battery and connectors to power spotlights  
 Vehicle: pickup truck with accommodations for required study team  
 Clipboard, pencil, flashlight to be used by the recorder(s)

Note: The lights, vehicle, and other required equipment may be furnished by Bent Tree in coordination with the General Manager.

**Route:**

The survey will be taken using the same route each time. (Appendix 3)  
 The driver will drive the route between 5 and 12 mph.

**Count:**

Spotters will search the area adjacent to the roadway and provide a verbal count of deer sighted to the recorder. Clear communication should be established between the counters, the recorder and the driver. Each count should be acknowledged and confirmed by both the counter and the recorder.

Groups of deer observed will be identified by odometer reading along the survey route and the number in each group will be noted. A group is defined as more than one deer within approximately 100 ft.

**Results:**

The counts will be recorded and reported to the Bent Tree Board of Directors. No attempt will be made by Bent Tree employees participating in the survey to make any interpretation of the meaning of actual numbers counted.



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
01/28/2011 10:22 AM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: Town Hall 

Yes Ma'am. That is assuming this is the same location we had the last town meeting before our surveys in December?

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
01/28/2011 10:12 AM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject Re: Town Hall

More good news ! I had made not of Odin's expertise and hope to bring him back to Bent Tree in the summer.

I will add his name to the panel. See you Monday.

Do you all know how to get from the Main Gate up to the Club Tamarack ?

----- Original Message -----

**From:** [Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov)  
**To:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 27, 2011 4:56 PM  
**Subject:** Re: Town Hall

Hah....your generosity is very much appreciated but not necessary. I did forget to mention that Odin Stephens, our biologist in North Georgia, will be attending as well. I forwarded him all of the information.

(b)(6)

01/27/2011 04:19 PM

To <[Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov)>  
cc  
Subject Re: Town Hall

Can I pack you a sandwich for the road ?

We are looking forward to having you with us.

(b)(6)

----- Original Message -----

**From:** [Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov)

**To:** (b)(6)

**Sent:** Thursday, January 27, 2011 11:05 AM

**Subject:** Re: Town Hall

Hi (b)(6)

I will be picking up (b)(6) after he finishes his class @ 1:20 on Monday. Hence we should get to Bent Tree in the 3:30 to 3:45 time frame. As for dinner afterwards you don't need to do that. I appreciate it but we'll probably just plan on getting on the road back to Athens.

Look forward to seeing you Monday.

Have a great weekend!

Steve

(b)(6)

01/26/2011 01:13 PM

To <[Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov](mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov)>, (b)(6)  
"Killmaster" <[Charlie.Killmaster@dnr.state.ga.us](mailto:Charlie.Killmaster@dnr.state.ga.us)>  
cc  
Subj Town Hall  
ect

"Charlie

Gentlemen,

Thank you all for your willingness to be with us on January 31st.

The program will commence at 4:00 in the Club Tamarack Recreation Room. We will conclude by 6:30.

I can have someone meet you at our main gate area upon arrival.

Our format will be:

1. Introduction and welcome
2. The opportunity for each of you to speak for approximately 15 minutes.  
If you would, please give a brief summary of your background and experience.  
I will also send, in separate communication, one area that you might elaborate on for us.
3. We will open to questions from the audience.

I am expecting that our entire Board of Directors will be present.

We would love to have lunch and/or dinner for you. If you will let me know your schedule I will put something together for us.

Thank you once again.

Regards,

(b)(6)



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
01/28/2011 11:19 AM

To (b)(6)  
cc Odin L Stephens/GA/APHIS/USDA@USDA  
bcc  
Subject Re: areas of comment 

I forwarded this to Odin to give him the opportunity to talk about himself....he loves doing that.

These topics look fine. Although I may not fill 15 minutes....I hope that is OK.

Looking forward to getting abused!

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
01/28/2011 10:30 AM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject areas of comment

Steve,

Since Odin is coming, would you send me his credentials so that I might add him to the panel.

Here are the areas that I thought each of you might address.

Mr. Killmaster: What does it mean that deer are a "keystone" species?

Mr. Steve Smith: Would you elaborate on the results of the recent Spotlight Survey and address the concerns regarding the visibility index. Also, what motivated you to broaden your study to include afternoon counts.

(b)(6) Describe what is meant by "biological carrying capacity" and how does that term specifically relate to Bent Tree.

Mr. Odin Smith: When (b)(6) spoke with the Forest Management Committee he commented that "when a habitat is destroyed you will see it". Would you tell us what indicators you would look for.

**Thank you so very much for agreeing to spend this time with us.**

**Highest Regards,**

(b)(6)



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
02/01/2011 07:13 PM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: thank you

Hi (b)(6)

I'll work that up and get it to you this week.

Thanks!

Steve

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
02/01/2011 05:02 PM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject thank you

Steve,

Thank you so much for taking the time to visit with us last evening. While not everyone was cordial, I hope you know that the majority of those in the room were very pleased that you came.

I have two favors:

1. there is a huge outcry about us using the numbers from your recent study as a basis for estimating the numbers of deer we should take out. This morning I made a proposal at the BOD meeting that we hire USDA to remove between 50 and 60 deer. They were NOT happy. So.....my question.....would you give me the formula you used.....and also the second visibility index.....that way I can have some range of numbers. I think you stated that the second index was a 30% smaller area and that would have produced much larger population estimates.
2. Is there any way that you can provide the data on how many deer have been removed from Big Canoe and the costs associated with those removals over the past 10 years. I can't see what this is going to tell them but I think they are getting at the fact that this is a never ending problem that we will need to throw our money away on every year.

Thank you again. I think you all did a fine job in a most difficult situation. You will have a more formal thank you ASAP.

Regards,

(b)(6)



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
05/14/2010 11:03 AM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject RE: Bent Tree

(b)(6)

Early fall would be more than enough time for us to schedule a removal. Ideally we would like to have about 30-45 days to plan, coordinate with property owners and locate bait sites. We would then like to have at least 2-weeks of prebaiting time to get the deer acclimated to the bait sites and on a routine. So if you wanted to shoot for a January date we would like to have all the paperwork in order by early or mid November.

Steve

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
05/14/2010 10:00 AM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject RE: Bent Tree

Steve,

Thanks, you answered all my questions and generated one more. If we planned on a January 2011 removal, when is the latest that I need to make that decision? Is early fall OK? In any case I do plan to coordinate closely with Big Canoe and take advantage of working together and the coordination.

(b)(6)

*Bent Tree Community Inc.*

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov [mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Friday, May 14, 2010 9:33 AM  
**To:** (b)(6)  
**Cc:** Leif.R.Stephens@aphis.usda.gov  
**Subject:** Re: Bent Tree

(b)(6)

Thanks for the e-mail and I hope all is well in your neck of the woods. It's hard to put a "lead time" on conducting a harvest in Bent Tree because we have stopped all deer removal operations because of the fawning season. The only lethal deer management we will do now is for the

protection of human health and safety at airports or for very unique special requests by the GA DNR. So if you were to call me today with full approval and funding for a removal we still would not schedule anything until late winter. Winter is the most efficient time frame because we see a higher response from the deer to bait stations as naturally occurring food sources are more scarce.

Typically we prefer to conduct our removal projects in the January to April time frame. The reason we prefer to wait until January is to avoid any possible issues with hunters in the surrounding areas. We understand that no one is allowed to hunt in Bent Tree however if hunters from surrounding properties hear about us removing large numbers of deer from Bent Tree during the hunting season they may complain to DNR and scream foul. I'm not saying we will not work with you in the November/December time frame but if it can wait we would prefer to do so.

Another item I would like to propose is the possibility of working with Big Canoe on this removal. Our Big Canoe POC, (b)(6) has expressed interest in working with Bent Tree to coordinate the removals together thus making it easier on the charities to get deer from both locations. Toby even offered to allow the deer from Bent Tree to be brought over to Big Canoe and processed at their maintenance shed along with the Big Canoe deer. All of this was coffee talk so the details would need to be worked out however if this could work out it could equate to a considerable cost savings for both communities.

I hope this helped answer your questions however if you wish to discuss this matter further please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thanks and have a great weekend!

Steve

---

Steve Smith  
State Director  
USDA-APHIS-WS  
School of Forestry and Natural Resources  
University of Georgia  
Athens, GA 30602  
706-546-5637  
Fax 706-316-9248

(b)(6)

05/13/2010 05:08 PM

To <steven.h.smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject Bent Tree

Mr. Smith,

I am the General Manager at Bent Tree Community in Pickens County. We have been debating the issue with our whitetail population for a decade now and perhaps we are on the verge of a breakthrough or at least a decision.

I have been asked what lead time is necessary for a culling operation once the go ahead is given from our end. In other words, if I called tomorrow with approval and funding, how long would it take to put a contract in place and when would the initial culling operation begin? Thanks.

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

***Bent Tree Community Inc.***



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
01/03/2011 04:42 PM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Survey Report 

(b)(6)

I hope the Christmas season treated you well and you've managed to slip back into reality without too much of a holiday hangover. Attached is the report for the December surveys. I apologize for the lateness in getting it to you. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Have a great week!

Steve



Bent Tree Survey #2 Report.pdf



(b)(6)

11/17/2010 03:24 PM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject RE: Bent Tree

History:  This message has been replied to.

I'll take care of it and have it for you on the 6<sup>th</sup>.

(b)(6)

*Bent Tree Community Inc.*

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov [mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov]

**Sent:** Wednesday, November 17, 2010 2:40 PM

**To:** (b)(6)

**Subject:** RE: Bent Tree

(b)(6)

Attached is the Cooperative Service Agreement for the spotlight survey we'll be conducting in December. There is no need to get this back to me before Dec. 6. I can pick it up when we arrive. If you have any questions please let me know. Otherwise I'll see you on Dec. 6.

Have a great Thanksgiving holiday.

Steve

(b)(6)

10/22/2010 01:19 PM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>

cc

Subject RE: Bent Tree

Thanks, that will be fine.

(b)(6)

*Bent Tree Community Inc.*

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov [mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov]

**Sent:** Friday, October 22, 2010 1:13 PM

**To:** (b)(6)

**Subject:** Re: Bent Tree

(b)(6)

I apologize for the late reply. I've checked our calendars and we would like to do the spotlight surveys during the week of December 6. I will work up an agreement in the next couple of weeks and get that to you for signature. I assume you will be the signing authority?

Our standard protocol for a deer spotlight survey is 3 nights. That is how we conduct all of our surveys and we will do the same in Bent Tree. There is no advantage or reason to conduct an extra survey night.

If you need any additional information please let me know.

Thanks!

Steve

---

Steve Smith  
State Director  
USDA-APHIS-WS  
School of Forestry and Natural Resources  
University of Georgia  
Athens, GA 30602  
706-546-5637  
Fax 706-316-9248

"It is the mark of an educated man to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it". Aristotle

(b)(6)

10/15/2010 12:01 PM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc

Subject Bent Tree

Steve,

As I said, I was asked to schedule a 4 night spotlight survey during calendar year 2010.

Preliminary dates of December 6 or 13<sup>th</sup>.

My contact information :

(b)(6)

Look

forward to hearing from you.

(b)(6)

*Bent Tree Community Inc.*



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
11/17/2010 02:39 PM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject RE: Bent Tree 

(b)(6)

Attached is the Cooperative Service Agreement for the spotlight survey we'll be conducting in December. There is no need to get this back to me before Dec. 6. I can pick it up when we arrive. If you have any questions please let me know. Otherwise I'll see you on Dec. 6.

Have a great Thanksgiving holiday.

Steve



Bent Tree Spotlight Survey #2 CSA.pdf

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
10/22/2010 01:19 PM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject RE: Bent Tree

Thanks, that will be fine.

(b)(6)

*Bent Tree Community Inc.*

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov [mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Friday, October 22, 2010 1:13 PM  
**To:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** Re: Bent Tree

(b)(6)

I apologize for the late reply. I've checked our calendars and we would like to do the spotlight surveys during the week of December 6. I will work up an agreement in the next couple of weeks and get that to you for signature. I assume you will be the signing authority?

Our standard protocol for a deer spotlight survey is 3 nights. That is how we conduct all of our

surveys and we will do the same in Bent Tree. There is no advantage or reason to conduct an extra survey night.

If you need any additional information please let me know.

Thanks!

Steve

---

Steve Smith  
State Director  
USDA-APHIS-WS  
School of Forestry and Natural Resources  
University of Georgia  
Athens, GA 30602  
706-546-5637  
Fax 706-316-9248

"It is the mark of an educated man to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it". Aristotle

(b)(6)

10/15/2010 12:01 PM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject Bent Tree

Steve,

As I said, I was asked to schedule a 4 night spotlight survey during calendar year 2010.

Preliminary dates of December 6 or 13<sup>th</sup>.

My contact information :

(b)(6)

Look

forward to hearing from you.

(b)(6)

*Bent Tree Community Inc.*



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
12/15/2010 10:21 AM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: Bent Tree Community Spotlight Survey 

Hi (b)(6)

I hope you're keeping warm this week. It's cold enough for us here in Athens I can only imagine what it's like in the mountains.

It was our pleasure to share whatever information we could with the residents of Bent Tree. That is why we are here. I'm currently working on your report now and was planning on including the information from February's surveys as a comparison. I've got to run out to an airport that is having issues with coyotes on the runway so I'm not sure if I'll get the report done this week like I planned. Hopefully I'll still get it knocked out.

When completed I'll submit an electronic copy of the report to (b)(6)

Thanks and stay warm!

Steve

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
12/14/2010 11:40 PM

To "Steve Smith" <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc

(b)(6)

Subject Bent Tree Community Spotlight Survey

Steve - I'm sorry I did not have a chance to talk with you following the completion of the Spotlight Surveys and before your returned to Athens.

Thank you for providing us with such an informative presentation on Spotlight Surveys and information obtained from our previous spotlight surveys last February. We appreciate the thoroughness of your information and the time you and Wildlife Biologist Leif Stephens were willing to spend answering so many questions. Would it be possible for you to share those portions of the presentation that gave specific information about your February findings here?

We look forward to receiving your report resulting from the surveys last week. Please send it to the attention of our (b)(6) and he will make certain that the Board members receive a copy.

Thank you again.

(b)(6)



(b)(6)

11/19/2010 03:38 PM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>

cc

(b)(6)

bcc

Subject Visit to Bent Tree for Spotlight Survey

Steve - we met last February when you were here. I am (b)(6) this year's President of the Bent Tree Community, Inc., Board of Directors. (b)(6) have been copying me on e-mails to you. I tried to call you this morning and left a message for someone to have you call me or to give me your extension. Time is running short and I have some details I would like to go over with you on the presentation you have agreed to do. I want to be sure that we have everything prepared for you and that there are no misunderstandings.

In one of your e-mails, you asked (b)(6) if we wanted a formal presentation or short overview. I think it would be easier to cover this by phone if you could call me at (b)(6). Not knowing the difference between the two types of presentations, I assume what we want would be best covered by a formal presentation.

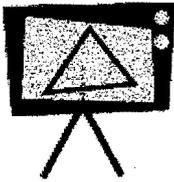
We would like your presentation to educate community residents who will not be participating in the surveys. There hasn't been a lot of formal community education. We may have a rather large group attending with a wide variation in understanding so I would imagine the formal presentation would be best. If you give the formal presentation, will you need audio visual equipment? Will you have handouts? Do you have anything that you can provide for us to reproduce for you?

We are assuming that you are coming in on Monday, December 6 and will conduct the first spotlight survey that night. If that is so, we would like for you to give your presentation earlier that day. What time would work for you? I will need that info as soon as possible so I can reserve the room and post the time on our announcements.

There are a few other questions I would like to go over, so I would appreciate a call as soon as you have time. I will be leaving town on Wednesday next week and will be gone through Thanksgiving weekend. If you cannot reach me on my (b)(6) please try my (b)(6) and leave a message with your direct number and a good time to return your call.

I am looking forward to meeting you again.

(b)(6)



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
01/12/2010 02:26 PM

To (b)(6) Leif R  
Stephens/GA/APHIS/USDA@USDA  
cc  
bcc  
Subject RE: Bent Tree Wildlife Management Plan

(b)(6)

I've made some comments to the attached management plan. I am also including Leif on this reply so he can provide some input as well. I am also attaching the form 12A that we will need signed by any property owner that will allow us onto their land to conduct activities. The more the better. We only need one signed by a board member (president) to cover any common or POA/HOA property. Please have each landowner fill in lines 4, 5, 8-10 (if applicable), and 12. Then have them sign in section 8.

If anyone has any questions about the 12A please feel free to give them our number to call.

We'll be in touch soon. We are still looking into the logistics of doing surveys while we are at Big Canoe.

Thanks!

Steve



BTCI ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN DRAFT.doc Bent Tree Community 12A.pdf

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
01/11/2010 03:37 PM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject RE: Bent Tree Wildlife Management Plan

Steven,

Attached is a draft white tail management plan (based on what Leif gave us). Edit, review, and comment as you see appropriate.

(b)(6)

**From:** Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov [mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 11, 2010 11:56 AM  
**To:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** Re: Bent Tree Wildlife Management Plan

Thank you sir. We will be in touch soon.

Steve

---

Steve Smith  
State Director  
USDA-APHIS-WS  
School of Forestry and Natural Resources  
University of Georgia  
Athens, GA 30602  
706-546-5637  
Fax 706-316-9248

(b)(6)

01/11/2010 11:15 AM

To <steven.h.smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject Bent Tree Wildlife Management Plan

Steve,

Great talking to you. Attached are previous surveys that should be of value to you and your team . Please thank Leif and his brother for briefing us last summer . We look forward to working with you and your team soon .

(b)(6) attachment "White tailed deer-Botanical Inventory 06072002.pdf" deleted by Steven H Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA] [attachment "White-Tailed Deer Impacts 05292002.pdf" deleted by Steven H Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA] [attachment "BTCI ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN -1a.doc" deleted by Steven H Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA]



(b)(5)

(b)(5)

(b)(5)



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
01/26/2010 03:01 PM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject RE: Bent Tree Wildlife Management Plan 

Hey (b)(6)

Here is the proposal as requested. Please let me know if you need anything else.

Thanks!

Steve



Bent Tree Survey Proposal.pdf

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
01/26/2010 02:03 PM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject RE: Bent Tree Wildlife Management Plan

Steve,

I have misplaced your survey (spotlight and vegetation) estimates for the 9 Feb week and for other weeks. We are still trying to make it happen here in Bent Tree. If you could resend them I'd be most appreciative. Hope to see you the week of 9 Feb (and maybe watch the action).

Thanks, (b)(6)

(b)(6)

**From:** Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov [mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 19, 2010 10:26 AM  
**To:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** RE: Bent Tree Wildlife Management Plan

Hi (b)(6)

I hope your weekend was a pleasant one. I fully understand if the board chooses to insure that all the "i"s are dotted and "t"s crossed. I did not want to try and pressure a decision in being made but did want it to be known that there was the opportunity for significant savings for BTC1.

I do not have any program plans as that is something the community normally drafts themselves around what goals they have. I would assume the Big Canoe plan will provide some valuable information for the

process.

As for the GA laws and regulations regarding deer management I will refer you to a brand new website that the GA DNR recently put together. <http://georgiaurbandeerplan.com> This site should provide all the information you seek about deer management in GA. Under the "Links" section near the bottom of the first page is the full Urban Deer Management Plan as well as the Statewide Deer Plan.

Please let us know if you have any additional questions or need any additional information. At the very least lets plan on getting together during the week of the 8th to put faces with the names.

Thanks!

Steve

(b)(6)

01/17/2010 07:46 AM

To: <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject: RE: Bent Tree Wildlife Management Plan

Steve,

I had a long session with our (b)(6) yesterday. We (the Board members) will head over to Big Canoe Friday to learn more about the Big Canoe Conservation Task Force Program and tour the deer management operation. (b)(6) has tasked me to draft a Bent Tree Environmental Conservation Program Package, get it approved, and educate our community (have (b)(6) in) before we start sizing our deer herd to the 'carrying capacity' of our forest. I don't think I can make all of that happen by the 2<sup>nd</sup> week in Feb. But I'm going to try! Have you got a few (soft copy) Program plans that I could use as a 'straw man' while I put a Bent Tree package together? I will try to get the Big Canoe package this week. Can you quote me the Georgia law/regulation that requires the management of white tail deer in GA? I'll keep you posted and hopefully sooner than later we will get our forest and wildlife back in balance. Thanks.

(b)(6)

**From:** Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov [mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Friday, January 15, 2010 2:26 PM  
**To:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** RE: Bent Tree Wildlife Management Plan

(b)(6)

Attached is the proposal for conducting the surveys. Hopefully your president will decide to go ahead with the surveys the week of Feb. 8 as it will save you guys some money. If it's something that is going to occur eventually it would be best to go ahead and knock it out while we are in the area.

Please let me know if you need anything else.

Have a great weekend!

Steve

(b)(6)

01/14/2010 12:41 PM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject RE: Bent Tree Wildlife Management Plan

Steve,

Thanks for the info. Our Board of Directors is planning to make a trip to Big Canoe next week to look at their deer management operation. Hopefully we can make plans from there. Our ( BOD) President is reluctant to commit for the surveys the week of 9 Feb but would definitely like a briefing from the team if possible. Maybe when she sees your estimated cost we can convince her different. Thanks for all of your help. I'll stay in touch.

(b)(6)



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

January 15, 2010

Animal and  
Plant Health  
Inspection  
Service

(b)(6)

Bent Tree Community Inc.

(b)(6)

Wildlife Services

School of Forestry  
and Natural  
Resources  
University of Georgia  
Athens, GA 30602  
706-546-5637  
Fax 706-316-9248

When a community is experiencing damage from a high concentration of whitetail deer we always recommend spotlight surveys be conducted. The surveys establish a baseline estimation of abundance to compare once deer management begins. The surveys also provide scientific support to the necessity of deer management. Most people can look at a community and tell that there are too many deer however the surveys provide the evidence to support such a claim.

I am including two proposals for conducting spotlight surveys in Bent Tree Community (BTCI). The first proposal is for the surveys to take place during the week of Feb. 8. This proposal is considerably lower because we would cost share the expenses with Big Canoe (BC) thus save money on travel. BC is already providing lodging for us hence those expenses are reduced as well.

The second proposal is for a trip to BTCI to conduct the surveys at a future date. I was unsure if BTCI had the ability to provide lodging like BC so I included lodging into this proposal. If lodging can be provided then the travel expenses would be reduced some.

**WHITETAIL DEER SPOTLIGHT SURVEY CONDUCTED FEBRUARY 8-12**

Personnel	\$863.66
Vehicle Use	\$50.00
Equipment/Supplies	\$40.00
Travel	\$78.00
Program Services	\$158.54
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,190.20</b>



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United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

(b)(6) Pg. 2

Animal and  
Plant Health  
Inspection  
Service

Wildlife Services

School of Forestry  
and Natural  
Resources  
University of Georgia  
Athens, GA 30602  
706-546-5637  
Fax 706-316-9248

### WHITETAIL DEER SPOTLIGHT SURVEY

Personnel	\$1,901.90
Vehicle Use	\$116.50
Equipment/Supplies	\$40.00
Travel	\$693.00
Program Services	\$454.75
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3,195.75</b>

If you have any questions or need any additional information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you.

//s//

Steve Smith  
State Director



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(b)(6)

02/02/2010 05:02 PM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Bent Tree need for USDA Wildlife Services

Steve,

Things are cooking over here in Bent Tree. We will probably need your services in the very near future if not next week. I'll give you an update tonight or tomorrow, I still need to put the financing together. I definitely want to meet you next week and hopefully introduce you to Bent Tree.

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
02/02/2010 07:18 PM

To (b)(6)  
cc <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>, (b)(6)  
bcc (b)(6)  
Subject Bent Tree Forest Management Study

All,

Please give consideration to this. Funding is not in our current budget for this effort. If you would like to help this effort we might be able to start to revitalize our forest and wildlife situation. The decision is yours. Either way I intend to meet with the USDA Wildlife Services Director (Steve Smith) next week to look at our alternatives. Both a vegetation and wildlife survey are required. I thank you for your consideration.

(b)(6)

**From:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 02, 2010 5:20 PM  
**To:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** Forest Management Study

As I told you in today's Work Session, the 2020 Ad Hoc Committee has agreed to conduct a seminar for us in the next month or so to be sure we fully understand all of their recommendations, along with the details and research leading up to those recommendations. However, there is an issue that lends itself to going forward without waiting for that seminar.

2020 recommended that we conduct a Forest Management Study, and at the urging of several of you, I am planning to create a Forest Management Study Ad Hoc Committee right away. I'll be giving this more thought and would like more input from each of you, but currently I anticipate that this Committee would help us identify experts in forest & tree management as well as wildlife management, with an emphasis on gathering information and helping us inform our community. I particularly would like to see the Study result in some recommendations before our budget deliberations next Fall.

In anticipation of this, and to take advantage of cost savings during our tight economic times, I am asking (b)(6) to coordinate with (b)(6) to arrange for USDA personnel to visit Bent Tree while they are in our area. I understand from (b)(6) that these people will be working in our area sometime in the next few weeks and that they are willing to give us a drastically reduced rate to instruct us on determining our deer population on a square mile basis. Regardless of how the Ad Hoc Committee proceeds, this is information we would need to have anyway.

Let me know if you have any questions or concerns with this.

(b)(6)



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
02/04/2010 08:28 AM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: Survey results for Bent Tree 8-12 Feb 

Hey (b)(6)

I'm at a meeting all day today so I'm limited to my blackberry. I do not see a problem with us utilizing the same survey route as 2002 unless there has been some big changes to the community that may impact the old route. However if everything is consistent then we should be fine.

So are the surveys a definite go for next week?

Thanks!

Steve

---

**From:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** 02/04/2010 07:56 AM EST  
**To:** Steven Smith  
**Cc:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** Survey results for Bent Tree 8-12 Feb

Steve,

Attached are the 2002 Bent Tree survey results. If you folks can make it next week, will your survey results address the same areas? (b)(6) is our (b)(6) and will be involved during your visit. Looking forward to talking to you this morning.

(b)(6)

(b)(6)

June 7, 2002

(b)(6)

Bent Tree  
40 Little Pine Mountain Rd  
#20202  
Jasper, GA 30143

(b)(6)

Enclosed please find a hard copy of a report and an invoice for the botanical inventory I have completed for Bent Tree relating to impacts of deer browsing on native plants. I have already transmitted an electronic copy of this to (b)(6) who has reviewed it and asked me to make some small changes in the reporting.

I appreciate the chance to assist you with this. I wish you all good luck in dealing with this problem. Please let me know if you need any further assistance.

Sincerely,

(b)(6)

cc: file

INVOICE

To: (b)(6)  
(b)(6)  
Bent Tree  
40 Little Pine Mountain Rd  
#20202  
Jasper, GA 30143

Billing Date: June 7, 2002

Billing for study and report of impacts  
of deer browsing on native plants.

9 hrs @ \$25/hr: \$225.00  
Mileage - 112 mi @ .32/mi: \$35.84

Amount to be Paid: \$260.84

Send to:  
(b)(6)

Taxpayer I.D. Number: (b)(6)

**Botanical Observations of the Impacts of White-tailed Deer Grazing  
on Plant Populations at Bent Tree, Georgia**

By: (b)(6)

June, 2002

## Botanical Observations of the Impacts of White-tailed Deer Grazing on Plant Populations at Bent Tree

Observations were made of the impacts of white-tailed deer grazing on native plant populations in several locations of the Bent Tree resort on May 29, 2002. These observations were made in response to concerns by many residents of a perceived decline in abundance and diversity of wildflowers in this area over the last eight years. In a one time survey of this site, some twenty-two species of native plants were observed to have been subject to various degrees of predation by white-tailed deer. Most of this grazing appeared to be patchy and sporadic. In some instances, species that are usually considered high in the foraging preference ranking for deer such as cat-brier (*Smilax* sp.) or poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*) appear to have been avoided while other flowering species that are typically abundant in roadside habitats such as fire pink (*Silene virginica*) and black-eyed Susan (*Rudbeckia hirta*) were nearly completely absent. A dramatic example of the impact that the deer population are having on native plants was an examination of a fenced in area which contained many species that would normally occur in the natural habitats of Bent Tree such as toadshade trillium (*Trillium cuneatum*), jack-in-the-pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*) and pink lady's slipper (*Cypripedium acaule*). While these species flourished in the protected enclosure, nearby adjacent habitats were devoid of any of signs of these endemic Appalachian wildflowers. Listed below is a partial account of those species that appear to have been negatively impacted by grazing from deer.

### Species Showing Evidence of Impacts by Deer Grazing

Scientific Name	Common Name	Comments
<i>Alnus serrulata</i>	common alder	Very heavily browsed
<i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>	columbine	Infrequent species, negatively impacted
<i>Aralia nudicaulis</i>	wild sarsaparilla	Infrequent species, negatively impacted
<i>Arisaema triphyllum</i>	jack-in-the-pulpit	Moderately browsed
<i>Daucus carota</i>	Queen Anne's lace	Heavily browsed
<i>Geranium maculatum</i>	wild geranium	Frequently browsed
<i>Houstonia caerulea</i>	blueets	Moderately browsed
<i>Iris cristata</i>	dwarf crested iris	Heavily browsed
<i>Lobelia cardinalis</i>	cardinal flower	Severely impacted by deer
<i>Lysimachia quadrifolia</i>	whorled loosestrife	Moderately browsed
<i>Monarda didyma</i>	crimson bee balm	Moderately browsed
<i>Phlox carolina</i>	Carolina phlox	Heavily browsed
<i>Podophyllum peltatum</i>	may apple	Moderately browsed
<i>Polygonatum biflorum</i>	Solomon's seal	Heavily browsed- possibly in danger
<i>Rudbeckia hirta</i>	black-eyed Susan	Heavily browsed
<i>Sanguinaria canadensis</i>	bloodroot	Frequently browsed
<i>Silene virginica</i>	fire pink	A common species, heavily reduced
<i>Solidago canadensis</i>	common goldenrod	Moderately browsed
<i>Tiarella cordifolia</i>	foam flower	Moderately browsed
<i>Trillium cuneatum</i>	toadshade trillium	Very heavily browsed and possibly in danger from browsing
<i>Trillium grandiflorum</i>	large-flowered trillium	Nearly extirpated from Bent Tree
<i>Trillium undulatum</i>	painted trillium	Restricted species, possibly extirpated

## Discussion

In the absence of a monitoring program, it is extremely difficult to come to absolute conclusions regarding the impact of white-tailed deer grazing on native plant species at Bent Tree. From the evidence of casual observation and accounts of long time residents of this area, it would appear that a substantial decline in many species has occurred. Certain uncommon species like painted trillium, wild sarsaparilla and columbine are exceptionally valuable components of natural diversity and their extirpation is a great loss to the biodiversity of this area. In many locations, sites that once contained a great number of wildflowers now are reduced to populations of just a few fern species (apparently unpalatable to deer). A greater abundance of non-native species, such as Japanese stilt grass (*Microstegium vimineum*), was observed in these areas that should harbor native plants. Numerous studies (see literature cited for Miller and Bratton\* 1992) indicate that white-tailed deer can have a tremendous impact on native plant species. Experience of this author with a number of federally listed plants such as fringed campion (*Silene polypetala*) and relict trillium (*Trillium reliquum*) have vividly demonstrated that certain species suffer tremendous damage from the recent high population levels of deer in the southeast. As indicated by Miller and Bratton\* (1992) "areas in close proximity to open fields and intensively utilized by deer lost over 25% of their species compared to control areas".

Although no quantitative data can be provided at this time, it is likely that many herbaceous plant species have suffered a reduction in abundance and perhaps elimination from Bent Tree as a result of impacts from over browsing. Current data for deer populations levels indicate a density that is generally regarded above the carrying capacity for this species. Without efforts to control this population, effects that are now seemingly speculative may become even more apparent. The recent efforts by adjacent land owners at Big Canoe have made an important first step at mitigating the negative impacts that uncontrolled deer populations can have on native plants. In order for these efforts to be most effective, concurrent action by landowners at Bent Tree would be advisable in the near future.

\* Miller, S.G., S.P. Bratton and J. Hadidian, 1992. Impacts of white-tailed deer on endangered and threatened vascular plants. *Natural Areas Journal* 12 (2): 67-74.

**White-tailed Deer Impacts on the Bent Tree Forest Environment**  
Report (05/29/2002)

By Kent Kammermeyer  
Senior Wildlife Biologist  
GA DNR, Wildlife Resources Div.

A field trip conducted on May 29, 2002 to 4 areas of Bent Tree was very productive and insightful.

The team of Bent Tree residents

(b)(6)

and

(b)(6)

and myself spent 2 hours evaluating the impacts of deer on the native

forest vegetation and some exotic home landscape plants. Without extensive previous botanical records or deer browse exclosures protecting selected spots, long-term deer impacts for the present and future are difficult to gauge. One obvious example would be a plant species that may have existed 10 years ago but now has been totally extirpated by deer. Another problem is that some plant species can recover from fairly heavy deer browsing (ex: greenbrier) but there is no way to document this from one visit or one year. We were able to view (b)(6) deer proof back yard exclosure which showed dramatic differences between plant life inside and out as a result of excessive deer browsing outside.

Despite the difficulty involved, we did conclude that the current high numbers of deer are impacting native vegetation (as well as exotic ornamentals) in several locations on Bent Tree at a moderate or greater level. Herbaceous species currently in danger of severe reduction or eventual extirpation by repeated over-browsing include toadshade trillium, heartleaf (wild ginger), wild geranium, wild columbine, Queen Ann's lace, crested iris, bluets, whorled loosestrife, phlox and others. Evidence of browsing was conspicuous on rhododendron, sweetgum and Virginia pine. There was also heavy browsing on woody species such as sweetshrub, Virginia creeper, common alder, red maple, black cherry, dogwood, yellow poplar, and yellow root. There was heavy deer browsing on greenbrier (cat briar) and poison ivy. It was good news that these 2 plants still existed in portions of the forest (Sleepy Hollow and Beaver Run Trail) and were not totally extirpated, since they both are highly preferred by

deer! Greenbriar, strawberry bush (bleeding hearts), buffalnut and japanese honeysuckle are "indicator" plants for deer because they rank high on deer preference lists. When deer populations remain extremely high for several successive years, the indicator plants will either totally disappear or climb totally out of reach (greenbriar and honeysuckle).

The above field trip was preceded by a March 28 field trip through the golf course and private residences near the lake where similar heavy browsing was documented. On this trip in early spring when deer browse lines are easier to see, we saw obvious browse lines on the following plants:

Hemlock, American Holly, other hollics, juniper, rhododendron, azaleas, forsythia, English Ivy, Japanese honeysuckle, and greenbriar. American Holly and juniper were especially surprising since the plants rank very low on deer preference scales.

So, whats the bottom line? Based on the 2 plant surveys, the 3 spotlight counts completed in April 2002, and the similarities with the Big Canoe deer herd, the Bent Tree deer herd is already above the biological carrying capacity of the forest to support it. Current numbers may be in the range of 30-35 deer/square mile (160-200 deer). This means a gradual decline in the number of plants and plant species which make up the plant community on the forest floor. Some will become extinct in the forest. Other implications of maintaining a high deer population include greater risk of tick borne diseases and an unhealthy deer population with stillbirths, high fawn mortality, low body weights and even late winter mortality following poor acorn crops or severe winters. Higher deer mortalities associated with the incidence of Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD) is also a reality in high deer populations because transmission from deer to deer is greater. BHID is a cyclic (5-8 year cycle) viral disease transmitted by biting midges in late summer. It does not affect people but is fatal or quite debilitating to the deer. It would not be unusual for 5-10% of the herd to succumb to the disease when it hits.

The only way to prevent the above described conditions is to reduce the deer herd to a level where no further damage will occur to the native plants and the health of the deer herd itself. In a setting such as Bent Tree, the only way to accomplish this is to kill deer using either bowhunters or sharpshooters or both. Further details on these options can be provided at a later date. There are no other viable or feasible alternatives.



(b)(6)  
02/04/2010 09:57 AM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc (b)(6)  
bcc

Subject RE: Survey results for Bent Tree 8-12 Feb

History: This message has been replied to.

Steve,

Bent Tree Board of Directors would definitely like to have your team do its magic here next week. Please pass on your expectations (and timeframes) on what to do and what to see. Some of our residents (including me) would like to go through the evolution with your team so we can be trained on how to keep track of the health of our forest and wildlife. How many of the bullets in the checklist (attached) need action for next week's survey prior to your arrival? We have a number of residents here that have created exclosures (to save native vegetation) over the years that will be available for you to see. Also we can show you some of the high density browsing/grazing areas on a couple of routes around Bent Tree. I'll be meeting with our General Manager this afternoon to put together a plan that meets your expectations.

(b)(6)

**From:** Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov [mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 04, 2010 8:29 AM  
**To:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** Re: Survey results for Bent Tree 8-12 Feb

Hey (b)(6)

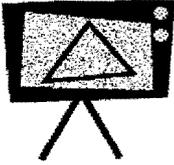
I'm at a meeting all day today so I'm limited to my blackberry. I do not see a problem with us utilizing the same survey route as 2002 unless there has been some big changes to the community that may impact the old route. However if everything is consistent then we should be fine.

So are the surveys a definite go for next week?

Thanks!



Steve draft BT Forest Management Plan - Deer section.doc



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
02/05/2010 05:28 PM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject RE: Survey results for Bent Tree 8-12 Feb 

(b)(6)

Attached is the Cooperative Service Agreement for us to conduct the spotlight surveys. If you have any questions please let me know. Otherwise I will see you Monday @ 11 am.

Have a great weekend!

Steve



Bent Tree Spotlight Survey CSA.pdf

---

Steve Smith  
State Director  
USDA-APHIS-WS  
School of Forestry and Natural Resources  
University of Georgia  
Athens, GA 30602  
706-546-5637  
Fax 706-316-9248



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
02/18/2010 12:49 PM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: Thanks again! 

Thanks (b)(6) It was great meeting some of the Bent Tree Community and working with you last week. I've had a lot of things pile on this week so it may be next week before I can get the report to you. I'll get it to you as soon as I can.

Thanks again!

Steve

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
02/14/2010 08:11 AM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject Thanks again!

Steve,

Truly enjoyed working with your team! I know your report will project an estimate of our deer population. I know that the Georgia State White Tail Deer Management plan states that an ideal 'carrying capacity' for Deer Management Unit 1 (DMU-1) is 25 deer/sq mi (Bent Tree is in DMU-1) given a healthy forest understory. I know that (b)(6) states that for an over-browsed understory the target 'carrying capacity' is 10-15 deer/sq mi to allow for regeneration of the understory. If you comment on the health of our forest understory will you also recommend a target 'carrying capacity' based on the prospect of forest regeneration? I look forward to working with you and your team sooner than later!

(b)(6)



(b)(6)

02/19/2010 08:24 AM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>

cc

bcc

Subject Bent Tree Environmental Management

Steve,

Take your time. Our next window of opportunity won't be until the Nov/Dec timeframe.

(b)(6)

**From:** Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov [mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov]

**Sent:** Thursday, February 18, 2010 12:50 PM

**To:** (b)(6)

**Subject:** Re: Thanks again!

Thanks (b)(6) It was great meeting some of the Bent Tree Community and working with you last week. I've had a lot of things pile on this week so it may be next week before I can get the report to you. I'll get it to you as soon as I can.

Thanks again!

Steve



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
03/01/2010 08:53 AM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: Bent Tree Forest Management 

(b)(6)

I'm working on your survey today. I should have you something this evening.

Steve

---

**From:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** 03/01/2010 08:47 AM EST  
**To:** Steven Smith  
**Subject:** Bent Tree Forest Management

Steve,

We have our first March Board of Director's meeting tomorrow. Forest Management is on the agenda. Is there anything you would like for me to pass on about your survey? Cheers.

(b)(6)



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
03/11/2010 07:54 AM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject RE: Bent Tree Forest Management

(b)(6)

I agree that the 40 number seemed low to me from what I remembered. However the sheet only has 40 deer marked down. Hence you can put the "error" on the recorder.....don't tell him I said that though.

Have a great weekend!

Steve

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
03/10/2010 06:26 PM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject RE: Bent Tree Forest Management

Steve,

Thanks for the great work! We will stay in touch.

(b)(6)

Ps – According to your recorder, on the first night we had 49 (vice 40) sightings..

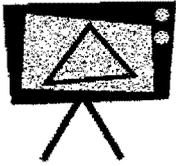
**From:** Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov [mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 09, 2010 12:46 PM  
**To:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** Re: Bent Tree Forest Management

Hi (b)(6)

I hope your weekend was a good one and that you guys had the amazing weather up there that we had down here. I finally got the chance to finish up the site visit report for you to pass along to the community. If you have any questions about the attached letter please do not hesitate to contact me.

Have a great week!

Steve



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
04/21/2010 11:34 AM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: Bent Tree Forest Management

Hi (b)(6)

I hope all is well up your way and the weather is treating you as good as it is us. We currently have nothing scheduled yet for 2010. We typically do not start scheduling removals until early fall at the earliest. Hence we have a wide open slate. Normally we do not do a lot of collections in November and December because of the hunting season. By waiting to do our collections after the season we tend to not ruffle the feathers of the hunting community. This is not saying we cannot or will not do it. If you would like to have something done before the end of the calendar year we can accommodate you.

Is the board/president ready to sign a cooperative agreement or are they still on the fence?

I look forward to working with you.

Thanks!

Steve

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
04/21/2010 08:30 AM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject Bent Tree Forest Management

Steve,

Residents here in Bent Tree are putting pressure on the Board to reduce the size of our deer herd to the carrying capacity of our forest this year. Does your team have any open dates in the Nov-Dec timeframe?

(b)(6)

**From:** Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov [mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 09, 2010 12:46 PM  
**To:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** Re: Bent Tree Forest Management

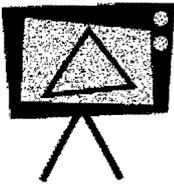
Hi (b)(6)

I hope your weekend was a good one and that you guys had the amazing weather up there that we had down here. I finally got the chance to finish up the site visit report for you to pass along to the community.

If you have any questions about the attached letter please do not hesitate to contact me.

Have a great week!

Steve



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
08/12/2010 03:53 PM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: Saga of the Bent Tree deer population - Update from (b)(6)

(b)(6)

You've found yourself in the middle of a controversy that is not uncommon in rural communities like Bent Tree. I wish I could tell you it will get easier....but I can't. It's not uncommon for individuals to continue to request input from additional sources until they finally hear what they want to hear. However I can assure you that anyone that comes into Bent Tree and tries to declare that the deer and environment is healthy are delusional. All of the experts that have provided Bent Tree with information are scientists. We rely on facts and data to come to a conclusion. Conclusions that cannot be supported by facts is not sound science. Our personnel, GA DNR personnel, and UGA faculty are not concerned whether or not Bent Tree culls deer....we have no irons in the fire. We only provide the evidence of our surveys and make our recommendations. After that it is the communities hands.

I actually have seen a couple of (b)(6) papers on beavers. Other than that I am not familiar with him. To answer your question he is not more qualified to address Bent Tree and their issues with deer. You can argue that he is less qualified simply because most, if not all, of his research has been based in Illinois. Although he does have some background in urban wildlife so I don't know. I'm curious as to how they decided on him? There is nothing in his background that I can see that would make him stand out as an expert in this area.

As for your request for costs I can provide you with estimates for everything except the bear removal. GA DNR still addresses the nuisance bear issues in north Georgia. If you call the region 1 game management office in Armuchee ( 706-295-6041) they should provide assistance. I will get the costs associated with full health check necropsies and throw together the other estimates for you by first of the week.

Hope everything else is going well. Not sure what kind of temperatures you are having in the mountains but in Athens it's brutal.

I'll be in touch.

Steve

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
08/12/2010 02:48 PM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject Saga of the Bent Tree deer population - Update from (b)(6)

Steve,

The Saga of the Bent Tree Deer population continues. Our BT Forest Management Committee is about to present its' findings after five months of studying the issue (Board President will not allow a

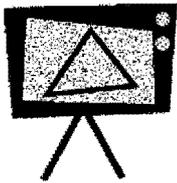
decision by the Board until the final report is in) and having many experts (USDA/GA DNR/UGA experts/etc) take an look inside Bent Tree. We have six candidates running for next years' Board of Directors, three are in favor of culling and three are 'lovers' interested in letting nature take its' course. So the community is electrically charged on both sides. Some deer (this summer) have expired from unexplained causes or 'natural causes'. None have been lethally removed. I have been tasked to gather the cost figures for:

1. Cost of a 4 night deer density spotlight survey (probably in Dec/Jan timeframe)
2. Cost of a deer herd health survey (probably 6-10 lethal removals plus 'Vet' autopsys' in the Nov/Dec/Jan timeframe)
3. Cost of culling (Big Canoe type) to remove 100-150 deer (timeframe TBA)
4. Cost for removal of @ 50 geese in the June 2011 timeframe
5. Cost for removal of a handful of 'nuisance' bear currently raiding our dumpsters and becoming far too familiar with Bent Tree residents
6. And any other costs that you might think of

Can you help is this area? Cheers! It's just another day in 'paradise' here in Bent Tree.

(b)(6)

Ps – The BT 'Rally for the Deer' special interest group has not accepted any of the findings of 'Georgia experts' to date and have stated that the Feb 2010 Spotlight survey is 'worthless'. They have asked for an 'unbiased' and full survey of both BT forest and wildlife (to last at least two years) and have recommended a Professor Nielsen from out of state to conduct the study. His resume attached. Have you ever heard of this individual? And why would he be better suited (or not suited) than his Georgia counterparts?[attachment "claycv09.doc" deleted by Steven H Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA]



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
09/16/2010 12:21 PM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: Bent Tree deer population Assistance - Update from  
(b)(6) 

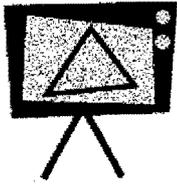
Hey (b)(6)

Unfortunately we are slammed right now and will be well into mid-October. Hence I, nor anyone else, is available to make it up for a meeting on any of those dates. As for SCWDS I still have not gotten a response. I tried again this morning and left another message for the individual that does the necropsies. If I do not hear back from him by the end of the week I will put a call into his supervisor. I'm sorry they are horrible at returning phone calls.

If you go ahead with the meeting let us know how it goes. I'm glad to hear the group is at least moving in a direction now. Progress,

Steve

(b)(6)



**Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA**  
09/16/2010 01:40 PM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc

Subject **Re: Bent Tree deer population Assistance - Update from**  
(b)(6) 

(b)(6)

I just got a return call from SCWDS and they are throwing some numbers together for us. Should know something in the next day or two. We also discussed the best time frame to do herd health checks on whitetail deer in the southeast. To get the best data on the health of the herd mid-July to mid-August is the best time to do it. There are parasite levels they look for to truly get an accurate indication of the health of the animal. These parasite levels drop during the winter months. They've done years of research on hunter harvested deer and have found that the winter months is just not a good time to do herd health checks.

I would strongly discourage Bent Tree from spending any funds on a herd health check outside of those summer months if you truly want to get a accurate report.

I'll send along the figures as soon as I get them from SCWDS.

Thanks.

Steve

(b)(6)



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
09/22/2010 09:36 AM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: Bent Tree deer population Assistance - Update from  
(b)(6) 

Hi (b)(6)

I now have some figures for you on a herd health check in Bent Tree. For SCWDS to do a complete work up on the deer (five is protocol) it will be \$2,500. In addition to this the charge to collect the 5 deer will run approx. \$875. Hence the complete estimate for a herd health check is \$3,375. Again, like I mentioned before it is better to do this during the summer months.

Hope this helps.

Have a great week!

Steve

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
09/16/2010 08:27 AM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc

(b)(6)

Subject Bent Tree deer population Assistance - Update from (b)(6)

Steve,

The Forest Management Survey Group has completed its work and has concluded that our deer herd population is above the carrying capacity of our forest, deer browsing has eliminated nearly all the seedlings and saplings of desirable forest species, soil compaction and erosion are significant problems, etc. Their recommendations include an immediate herd health check, deer density counts, long term deer (bear, geese) management program, no feeding policy enforcement, community wide education program, etc.

Our Board of Directors would like to get several of the professional players (to include DR Nielsen) together for a round table discussion for immediate action items and long term actions. Possible near term dates are 21 Sept PM, 29, 30 Sept, 1 Oct. Can you or one of your team be available for one or more of those dates?

Also have you heard back from the SCWDS? We will probably need their support before the year is out. Thanks for all of your help.

(b)(6)

**From:** Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov [mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov]

**Sent:** Thursday, August 19, 2010 5:16 PM

**To:** (b)(6)

**Subject:** Re: Saga of the Bent Tree deer population - Update from (b)(6)

(b)(6)

I apologize for not getting back to you sooner on this request. I'm still waiting to hear back from our colleagues at the Southeastern Cooperative Wildlife Disease Study with an estimation on the herd health check. In the mean time I wanted to go ahead and provide the other figures you asked for.

**1. Cost of a 4 night deer density spotlight survey (probably in Dec/Jan timeframe)**

This will be approximately \$2,600 if no lodging can be provided and about \$2,400 if lodging is provided. This estimation is for a 3-night survey. Our protocol is to conduct 3-night surveys and we prefer to stick with that. There is no advantage to doing a 4th night on these surveys.

**2. Cost of a deer herd health survey (probably 6-10 lethal removals plus 'Vet' autopsy's in the Nov/Dec/Jan timeframe)**

Still waiting to hear back from SCWDS. Will let you know as soon as I have the figures.

**3. Cost of culling (Big Canoe type) to remove 100-150 deer (timeframe TBA)**

This would run \$12,500 if lodging is provided and about \$14,500 if no lodging is provided. These figures could also be reduced some if the removal is scheduled to coincide with the Big Canoe removal in February.

**4. Cost for removal of @ 50 geese in the June 2011 timeframe**

This would be approx. \$1,200.

I hope this helps. As soon as I get in touch with SCWDS I'll forward the herd health check estimation.

Thanks and have a great weekend!

Steve



(b)(6)  
11/09/2010 09:19 AM

To  
cc (b)(6)  
<Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
bcc  
Subject December Bent Tree Spotlight Survey

(b)(6)

Attached are the spotlight survey routes utilized during the February survey. I recommend we utilize the same routes for the December survey. Also I recommend the you be assigned as driver, with the backup driver being (b)(6) since you are familiar with the February routes and (b)(6) is most familiar with all of the BT roads, especially at night, and (b)(6) has immediate access to Public Safety personnel if required.



(b)(6) USDA Wildlife Services survey routes-a.doc

# USDA Wildlife Services

## Spotlight Survey Routes 6-9 December 2010

The same three routes utilized during the February 2010 spotlight survey are recommended for the December 2010 spotlight survey.

Route 1 – Start: Admin Parking lot to Alpine Dr, to Mulligan Way, to Tamarack Dr, left at the 19<sup>th</sup> Hole remaining on Tamarack Dr, to Denny Ridge Rd, up Denny Ridge Rd to Bee Tree Ridge Dr.

Route 2 – Start: Tamarack Dr and Denny Ridge Rd, Tamarack Dr. around the lake, across the spillway and dam, continuing on Tamarack Dr to Mulligan Way.

Route 3 – Start: 19<sup>th</sup> Hole parking lot, up Little Pine Mountain Rd to Little Hendricks Mountain Rd, up Little Hendricks Mountain Rd to Moss Patch Trail, Moss Patch Trail to Oglethorpe Mountain Rd, Oglethorpe Mountain Rd down to Briar Vista, left on Briar Vista to the cul-de-sac.

Total distance for the three routes is approximately 11 miles.



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
11/17/2010 01:21 PM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject RE: FW: Request for Spotlight Survey information 

(b)(6)

Any chance we can do a formal presentation on the second day (7th)? I have an appointment for the morning of the 6th so we will not be getting up there until the early afternoon on the 6th. Or we could do it in the afternoon of the first day. Either way is fine with me.

Thanks!

Steve

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
11/09/2010 09:20 AM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc  
Subject RE: FW: Request for Spotlight Survey information

Steve,

We would like for a formal presentation the morning of the first day. Thanks.

(b)(6)

**From:** Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov [mailto:Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 09, 2010 9:05 AM  
**To:** (b)(6)  
**Subject:** Re: FW: Request for Spotlight Survey information

(b)(6)

The link below is a good summary of deer spotlight surveys. It's out of Texas but the information still applies.

[http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/land/private/agricultural\\_land/gpm2010/Appendix%20L%20Conducting%20White-tailed%20Deer%20Spotlight%20Surveys%20in%20Texas.pdf](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/land/private/agricultural_land/gpm2010/Appendix%20L%20Conducting%20White-tailed%20Deer%20Spotlight%20Surveys%20in%20Texas.pdf)

Would you like for us to prepare a formal presentation to give to the group one day while we're there? We can do this or just simply be ready to give a short overview and answer questions. Just let us know and we'll be ready.

Cheers!

Steve

(b)(6)

11/04/2010 08:51 AM

To: <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>, <Leif.r.stephens@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc: (b)(6)  
Subject: FW: Request for Spotlight Survey information

Steve,

There is plenty of interest in your visit and survey in December . Leif and his brother were here the summer of 2009 and gave an in depth brief on the process of spotlight survey's and reduction in herd population . As part of your December visit can you or one of your team give an 'end to end' brief on the spotlight survey and analysis? Also anything we can get a hold of prior to December to read and digest would be helpful . Thanks.

(b)(6)

**From:** (b)(6)  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 04, 2010 8:25 AM  
**To:** (b)(6)  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Re: Request for Spotlight Survey information

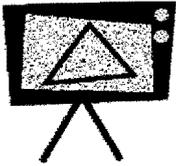
(b)(6) have you or (b)(6) talked with Steve Smith about whether it is ok with him if we have a "briefing" for people interested in the Spotlight Survey at Bent Tree? If he is not, then I cannot make the invitation at L&WL for people to attend anything on December 6.

If he is, then we will have to set up a time and I can tell people that that information will come later.

If you have not talked with him, then I will have to wait until the December L&WL meeting.

I will be home tomorrow evening (Friday). Am not accessing my e-mail that often so either call me on my (b)(6) - or leave me a message at (b)(6) so I know whether to prepare a brief invite to present at the L&WL meeting the next morning.

(b)(6)



Steven H  
Smith/GA/APHIS/USDA  
12/23/2010 01:46 PM

To (b)(6)  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Re: Action items for 2011 

Hey (b)(6)

Congratulations on your triumphant victory. The people have spoken. I'm currently working on the spotlight survey report but unfortunately will not get it completed until next week. I'll get it to (b)(6) as soon as I get it wrapped up. I'll also look at the calendar and get back to you about possible dates for January and February.

Have a great holiday season and remember to sleep with one eye open!

Cheers!

Steve

(b)(6)



(b)(6)  
12/22/2010 07:56 AM

To <Steven.H.Smith@aphis.usda.gov>  
cc (b)(6)  
Subject Action items for 2011

Steve,

The Bent Tree Community voted to remove Bob Cloyes from the Board of Directors. The results: 1016 ballots mailed – 636 ballots returned – 110 votes to remove (b)(6) 526 votes to retain (b)(6) on the Board. I think the community is ready to reduce our deer herd population! So, does your scheduled workload allow for a spotlight survey in January and a reduction evolution in February? Looking forward to your December Spotlight report.

(b)(6)

Ps - I'll let you know of the 2011 Board Officer election results 3 January.