

Wildlife Management Committee  
Sunrise Beach Texas  
Meeting Summary Oct 11, 2016

1. Welcomed 15 community members and TPW Biologist Dale Schmidt. Reviewed the purpose of the Committee and reminded folks present concerning the need to be respectful of other points of view during the discussion.
2. Reviewed the history of the Committee's work starting with the request in January of 2015 from the CCAA to ask the SRB City Council to review the deer population issue in SRB and the subsequent establishment of the WMC. Recent actions include the WMC suggestions from the June 18, 2016 WMC meeting being presented to the City Council, their discussion and action at the July 21, 2016 meeting, the August 9, 2016 mailing of the property owners' survey to 1090 owners, the September 14, 16, 20, 2016 volunteer deer population driving survey, and the WMC meeting today. It was noted that the 9 suggestions from the WMC committee that were presented to and reviewed by the City Council are the same 9 items sent in the property owner survey for support/non-support and comment.
3. Dale Schmidt from Texas Parks and Wildlife reviewed the results of the Deer Population (driving) survey conducted in September with comparison of past years. (Full report is available at [www.cityofsunrisebeach.org](http://www.cityofsunrisebeach.org) )  
South route: 2015 – 1.1 acres/deer; 2016 – 0.8 acres/deer  
North route: 2015 – 1.4 acres/deer; 2016 – 1.1 acres/deer  
Conclusion – our deer population is more concentrated now than in 2015 and is extremely high. Prediction is that there will be a significant die-off if the winter is at all severe. Discussion about the meaning of Cultural Carrying Capacity revealed once again that it is whatever the community is willing to accept as to the size of the deer population. There is no TPW recommendation for municipalities as to the number of acres/deer that is acceptable.
4. Mike Byrd reviewed the results of the mail-in property owners' survey including noting that there were a very large number of comments for the 369 returns out of 1090 surveys mailed (34% response rate). (Full report is available at [www.cityofsunrisebeach.org](http://www.cityofsunrisebeach.org))
5. After a period of questions and discussion about the information presented, Fred Butler offered suggestions as to what the Committee might want to recommend to the SRB City Council in follow-up to the survey results and related issues raised by the committee.
6. The following are recommended to the City Council based upon the original nine items from the June 18 WMC meeting subsequently included in the mail-in survey:
  1. Volunteer driving deer population survey – recommended to be conducted each year for the next two years (2017, 2018) and then reevaluated for possible change in frequency
  2. Deer opinion survey of property owners – recommended to be included every three years with the SRB phone book update mail-out (to offset costs) with an option to use the internet Survey Monkey to provide the information electronically. Survey questions should be consistent each time for comparison purposes.
  3. Education information concerning the feeding of the deer, the related City ordinance and the impacts – recommended to be provided on an ongoing basis utilizing the City web site, Nextdoor SRB, SRB Welcome packets and other venues as appropriate.
  4. Texas Parks and Wildlife Depredation Permit for the SRB airport to harvest deer for public safety reasons – recommended to go forward with this action with the following requirements:
    - a. Development of a complete action and safety plan for the execution of this permit
    - b. Favorable review of the plan by TPW representative
    - c. Approval of the plan by the SRB City Council
    - d. Application for the Depredation Permit with TPW
    - e. Deer harvesting at the SRB airport in accordance with the Permit requirements
  5. Neighboring ranchers to increase doe hunting – recommended a letter be sent from the City to ranchers outlining the suggestion to increase hunting on their property as a way of helping with deer population control. Include information on the use of the deer meat by food pantries to help feed those in need.
  6. Allowing deer hunting on Agricultural land plots of greater than 10 acres within the City limits – recommended to take no action on this suggestion at this time due to the complexity of action plan development, safety issues and negative perceptions in the community.

7. Engaging Orion Research and Management Services to harvest deer – recommended to take no action at this time primarily due to the cost involved of \$300/deer harvested.
  8. Changing the SRB City ordinances prohibiting fire arm discharge and hunting within the city limits – recommended no action be taken until the Depredation Permit action and safety plan is approved. Narrow changes specifically for the SRB airport then to be submitted for Council review and approval.
  9. Use of SRB property tax money to offset deer harvesting costs – recommended no property tax money be used for this purpose.
7. Next Steps – Fred Butler will:
- a. present the above recommendations to the SRB City Council at the October 20 Council meeting for discussion and possible action.
  - b. report to the WMC and the community any resulting City Council actions and follow-up.
  - c. call a meeting of the WMC in six months (April 2017) to review progress and assess current conditions unless an earlier meeting is deemed necessary