

DeKalb County Forest Preserve District  
Sycamore, Illinois

**Forest Preserve Committee Minutes  
January 25, 2024**

The Forest Preserve Committee of the DeKalb County Board met in Sycamore, Illinois on Thursday, January 25, 2024. Chair Roy Plote called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. Those Members present were Mary Cozad, Meryl Domina, Terri Mann-Lamb, and Stewart Ogilvie. A quorum was established with five Members present, two absent.

Others present included Forest Preserve Superintendent Terry Hannan and IDNR Wildlife Biologists Pat McDonald and Jared Trickey.

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**Ogilvie moved to approve the agenda as presented. Mann-Lamb seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.**

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

**It was moved by Cozad, seconded by Domina and it was carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the October 30, 2023 Forest Preserve Committee Meetings.**

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

**REPORTS OF FOREST PRESERVE OFFICIALS**

Superintendent Hannan provided the following reports to the Committee:

<https://dekalbcounty.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/fn-rpt23dec-nrma.pdf>

<https://dekalbcounty.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/fp-rpt24jan-forestpreserve.pdf>

**IDNR REQUEST FOR SHARPSHOOTING ACCESS AT DEKALB COUNTY FOREST PRESERVE FOR CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE (CWD) PROGRAM**

The Committee welcomed Pat McDonald and Jared Trickey, Wildlife Biologists from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR). McDonald and Trickey thanked the Committee for allowing them to be present and share their report along with once again formally requesting to enter Potawatomi Woods Forest Preserve in Kirkland, Illinois in order to manage (in the form of sharpshooting) resident deer to conduct Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) testing. In addition to Potawatomi Woods, IDNR also requested to conduct sharp shooting at Haines Creek, Heritage Woods, and Kishwaukee Forest Preserves.

McDonald explained that management using sharpshooting to supplement hunter harvest allows the Department to conduct localized, focused deer reductions in small areas known to have CWD. The IDNR's goal is to reduce disease transmission rates by lowering densities in infected areas, to reduce environmental contamination from infected deer, and to remove sick deer from the population at a higher rate than deer are becoming newly-infected. Advantages of sharpshooting include: (1) reductions are limited to areas with disease, so healthy populations in the remainder of a county are not impacted as they would be if we relied solely on hunting for management; (2) sharpshooting can be conducted on properties that do not normally

allow hunting (or allow only very limited hunting), so management can occur in areas that normally serve as refuges to hunting; (3) focused sharpshooting has been shown to remove sick animals at a higher rate than hunting programs; and (4) sharpshooting can target specific high-risk deer social groups known to have CWD. Sharpshooting also provides detailed, localized surveillance information about disease distribution and prevalence rates within infected areas.

The above-mentioned Forest Preserves are of great concern to the IDNR. These areas have produced a large number of positive tests of CWD infested deer. Following the close of deer hunting seasons in January, teams of IDNR staff that are trained/certified for sharpshooting begin culling deer wintering in or around known CWD locations. All IDNR sharpshooting activities are carried out between now through March on Monday – Thursday evenings.

Sharpshooting areas are generally limited to locations within a 2-section buffer zone around each known CWD-positive section (1 section = ~1 mile<sup>2</sup>). Sharpshooting is only conducted with the permission of the landowner. All animals (including fawns) from which suitable tissue samples could be collected are tested for CWD. Additional tissue samples are collected for genetic testing and evaluation of reproductive status at the University of Illinois Champaign/Illinois Natural History Survey. All deer with negative CWD test results are processed and donated to the Feeding Illinois Food Pantry Network.

Depending on the relative success of a given area dictates how much time the IDNR will spend in that area as well as the prevalence of the disease in that area. Last year, the prevalence rate for all adult deer was 6.2% (males – 7.5%, females – 4.5%). DeKalb County prevalence was 5.56%; this year, 5 of 90 harvested adult deer tested positive. CWD has been detected in 19 counties.

Superintendent Hannan recommended that the IDNR be allowed to conduct sharpshooting in Heritage Woods, Haines Creek, and Potawatomi Woods Forest Preserves but not in the Kishwaukee Forest Preserve. The Committee agreed with Hannan’s recommendation and reached a consensus to approve allowing the IDNR into Potawatomi Woods Forest Preserve to continue their Chronic Wasting Disease Sharpshooting Management Program.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Mann-Lamb Moved to enter Executive Session for the Purposes of discussing Land Acquisition provided for by 5ILCS 120/2(c)(5) at 6:35PM. Ogilvie seconded the motion. Those voting yea were Cozad, Domina, Mann-Lamb, Ogilvie, and Chair Plote. None were Opposed. Motion carried unanimously.**

*The Committee entered back into their Open Meeting at 6:41 PM.*

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Mann-Lamb moved to adjourn the meeting. Domina seconded the motion and it was carried unanimously.**

Respectfully submitted by Liam Sullivan