

August 22, 2019

To the Carlisle Board of Selectman:

Based on the discussion at town meeting and the public input during last year's hunt, the Deer Control Committee proposed two options for this fall's bow hunt season time restrictions: either no hunting on Saturdays or no hunting from 10am-2pm daily (there is already no hunting on Sundays per state law).

After hearing input from various boards, individuals, and a community input session, we have concluded that both options have serious flaws and that neither option is in the best interests of the town. The difficulty with excluding Saturdays is that some jobs do not have flexible hours that would allow hunting during the week only, preventing some qualified hunters from participating. The difficulty with excluding 10am-2pm is that it is very difficult to enforce and is disruptive to the hunt while not being an adequate amount of time to distinctly separate the different uses of the land.

Moreover, we recognized that the aggregate of the public input saw this program as granting exclusive use of portions of the town lands to a small number of hunters for their enjoyment at everyone else's expense. This is not the case. These regulations are explicitly designed to allow all other uses of the town lands to continue as they normally would with no restrictions while a small number of qualified hunters simultaneously provide a service to the town of safely helping to manage the deer herd.

Both the Saturday and 10am-2pm options would have continued to perpetuate this false narrative of "us vs. them" for who got exclusive use of the town land. We believe a better course of action is for the Deer Committee to actively work to bridge this divide in the community so we can come together and share the forest without fear. We hope to accomplish this through greater community engagement, including increasing dialog between the Deer Control Committee and the public on the safety related aspects of these regulations while also arranging for personal introductions between the hunters, the abutters, and the people concerned about hunting. By getting to know one another and removing the uncertainty that leads to fear we intend to diffuse this controversial topic and thereby address the majority of the concerns raised by the public about this program.

We have made other changes to this year's proposed regulations based on the input we received. The most important change is the inclusion of clear penalties for violations of the bow hunt regulations. We also provided additional set-back restrictions on the placement of the deer stands and wildlife cameras while tightening up the wording and clarifying various aspects of the regulations. We believe these changes represent an improvement in last year's regulations and request your approval and adoption of the 2019 Regulations for Bow Hunting of Deer on Carlisle Town Land.

Sincerely,



Jonathan DeKock

Chair, Deer Control Committee