



Public Comments Received; Proposed Deer Population Management Initiative for Sligo Creek Golf Course

Updated: November 10, 2011 / 4:08 PM

RECEIVED 1:49PM, OCTOBER 11

I support the plan to remove deer from the Sligo Golf Course during night hours through lethal means. Deer over population is destroying what little ecosystem we have left in the Sligo Creek stream valley.

I suspect the deer won't like it, but they can write their own emails.

Thank you for this proposal. It is long overdue.

RECEIVED 1:56PM, OCTOBER 11

please go ahead and shoot the deer. just don't shoot the people.

RECEIVED 2:21PM, OCTOBER 11

I am a resident of the neighborhood adjacent to Sligo Creek Park and a frequent user of the park. I support the efforts to humanely manage the deer population in the area.

RECEIVED 2:50PM, OCTOBER 11

I totally support the effort to decrease the deer population. Feel free to come to my backyard also- they just stand and stare at you , 2,3,4, at a time!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

RECEIVED 6:15PM, OCTOBER 11

To Whom it May Concern,

As an avid golfer at Sligo Creek Golf Course and resident of Montgomery County I am entirely against the proposed "deer population management" at Sligo Creek. Some of my best golf outings include seeing wildlife at Sligo Creek. I like seeing geese, deer, and other wildlife enjoying the same pristine golf course that I am enjoying simultaneously. To slaughter the deer at the golf course would dissuade me from using the course and take away from the future of my golfing enjoyment. Please consider other locations.

RECEIVED 7:25PM, OCTOBER 11

My husband and I are definitely for deer management in and around Sligo Creek Golf Course. The deer population have gotten totally out of hand.

Thank you.

RECEIVED 7:49PM, OCTOBER 11

I strongly support the proposal to manage the deer population in Sligo Creek Park. There are too many deer. They come out of the park searching for food and ravage our gardens during the summer. They have no natural predators in the area. Please move forward with this initiative.

RECEIVED 9:16PM, OCTOBER 11

Hi,

I want to add my voice to those who support deer management through police sharpshooting. I live adjacent to the Sligo Creek Golf Course and know first hand how destructive the deer are to property. Moreover, I feel so badly for them when they obviously don't have enough room to live comfortably and worry very much about collisions with them in my car. I usually avoid driving through the park late at night because of this worry.

I feel the most humane thing is the sharpshooting program, especially if the meat is provided to homeless shelters or food banks.

RECEIVED 9:17PM, OCTOBER 11

This is with respect to comments on the proposal to use lethal methods to limit the deer with Sligo Creek golf course. We live one block away and are overrun by deer. I support lethal means, so long as the utmost care is taken to protect human life.

Thank you so much,

RECEIVED 9:28PM, OCTOBER 11

Dear Department of Parks:

As a resident of the neighborhood adjoining the Sligo Creek golf course, I heartily endorse the efforts of the Department of Parks to reduce the deer populations in the Sligo Creek watershed through sharp shooting. I would ask that the Department of Parks please take appropriate steps to communicate to the local community when and where the sharp shooting will occur.

RECEIVED 11:28AM, OCTOBER 12

Hello,

I am writing to strongly support the proposed Sligo Golf Course deer management program. As members of the North Hills community just east of the golf course, my family and I use the Sligo Creek trail and parks on a near daily basis. My husband and I are both trained conservation professionals and we've been dismayed at the severity of the deer browse along the parkway. Combined with the heavy infestation of invasive plants, which deer do not eat, the park's native plant community has little chance of producing the next generation of canopy trees or a healthy forest understory for ground nesting wildlife.

I'd love to see the park continue to produce large shade trees, healthy wildlife habitat and an attractive recreational opportunity for the area's community members. Managing deer populations is an important step toward that goal. I know that budgets are tight and I sincerely appreciate the Park placing priority on this important program!

RECEIVED 5:58PM, OCTOBER 12

My wife and I support these measures in Sligo Creek Park in the vicinity of Colesville Road.

RECEIVED 11:14AM, OCTOBER 14

Dear Montgomery County:

I am writing in support of the proposal to hunt deer on Sligo Creek golf course. I think it is a great idea, and the only workable response to the current overpopulation of deer and lack of natural predators. The best part about the plan is the fact that the deer which are taken will be used to feed the hungry here in the Washington area. Please keep up the good work

RECEIVED 3:07PM, OCTOBER 14

I am in favor of reducing the deer population at the Sligo Creek Golf Course (and the park). Overpopulation leads to a damaged environment (including my neighborhood of Woodside Park), sickness, and danger to drivers. It is much better to cull the herd and use the venison for food, as described in your website, rather than have deer struck and killed on the road or left to die by the side of the road after being struck.

Next I'd like to see the county partner w/DC to **totally eradicate** the Norway rat!

RECEIVED 9:46AM, OCTOBER 15

Dear Park Managers,

It is great news to learn that the parks department is considering holding a managed deer hunt using police sharpshooters in Sligo Creek Golf Course. I live 1/2 mile southwest of the golf course, so I am in an excellent position to observe the deer and their impacts on native vegetation and ornamental plantings. White-tailed Deer populations have been at dangerously high levels for well over a decade. Two weeks ago in the afternoon I observed a herd of 13 deer on the Sligo bike path, about 100 yards south of University Ave. The deer didn't flinch as I jogged by them. Deer appear almost every night or early morning in our yard and those of my neighbors. The deer have become so accustomed to humans, that arm waving and stick throwing barely cause them to flinch. They have ruined and eaten hundreds of dollars worth of ornamental plants in my yard. Where we planted native paw paws, the deer actually bedded down and crushed the young trees.

Along Sligo Creek where I've assisted the Friends of Sligo Creek with their invasive plant removal program, I've witnessed how the deer avoid the invasive plants and forage extensively on the barely-surviving native plants. Oak and tuliptree seedlings have little chance to become established before the deer crop them down too the ground. To bring back the native vegetation and restore the forests in Sligo Creek Park, we need to remove the invasive plants AND control the deer population. These efforts must go hand in hand if we want to begin to make a lasting change to the natural habitats in the park.

The forests in the county parks, which are under the stewardship duties of the park department, need protection from deer. Without control efforts such as the managed hunt, our forests could become so damaged that the effects are long term. Without the ability for seedlings to grow to saplings and on to mature trees, the forests as we know them may slowly disappear. Aging trees die and topple over with increasing frequency, but there is no cohort of young trees to grow up in these gaps to take their place. The parks in Montgomery County were purchased and protected with millions of dollars of public funds. The forests play a vital role in regulating local air temperature, providing habitat for wildlife, and keeping rain and runoff on the land and in the soil. Intact, healthy forests are key to bringing back the Chesapeake Bay. The parks department has an obligation to provide the leadership and the stewardship over these public, natural resources. I give my strong support to your efforts to control the white-tailed deer by using sharp shooters.

RECEIVED 10:30AM, OCTOBER 16

My back yard borders on Sligo Creek Park. Please get rid of all the deer you can. You are welcome to stand in my back yard and shoot them. I trust your marksmen.

A friend of mine was just injured in a car-deer collision.

RECEIVED 12:06PM, OCTOBER 16

To whom it may concern;

I am writing in response to your recent notice of deer management / harvesting in the Sligo Creek area of Silver Spring in Montgomery County.

I am a long time resident of the Argyle Park neighborhood immediately adjacent to the Sligo Creek Golf Course.

As such I support your deer management / harvesting proposal. I understand the over-abundance of deer in our area presents a many-faceted problem in terms of traffic safety, disease, and nuisance.

Having said all of that, personally the deer do not bother me. I don't particularly mind finding five of them in my backyard as I frequently do. However, I have no wish to contract lyme disease, and having had a recent collision with a deer (not here but while on a recent trip to Joliet, Illinois) I do understand and empathize with the traffic safety issue.

I trust that your proposed harvesting method will be safe and humane.

RECEIVED 3:47PM, OCTOBER 16

I think it's a fine idea to manage the local deer population. I would also support donating the venison meat to a food bank if food regulations allow this.

RECEIVED 3:52 PM, OCTOBER 16

I fully support MCP deer control measures. As an animal rights activist, I support the move to thin out the deer population in order to allow other animals to live and thrive.

You may use my name to help you in this endeavor.

RECEIVED 5:13PM, OCTOBER 16

Please proceed with the culling of deer in the Sligo Creek area

Thank you!

RECEIVED 5:23PM, OCTOBER 16

Thank you for the opportunity to comment regarding Deer Management at Sligo Creek Golf Course.

If the assumption is correct that the Sligo Creek Golf course is overpopulated with deer, which in turn raises concerns regarding winter survival - then I support The Department of Parks recommendation to reduce the deer population -- **ON THE CONDITION THAT THE MEAT IS PROPERLY PREPARED AND PROVIDED TO APPROPRIATE FOOD PROGRAMS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY AND STATE.**

Thank you.

RECEIVED 5:44PM, OCTOBER 16

I am a member of The Friends of Sligo Creek and I am writing to you to express my strong objection to your recently announced plans to slaughter deer in Sligo Creek Park. These creatures have as much right to life as any other creature in the Park.

RECEIVED 6:09PM, OCTOBER 16

Dear Montgomery Parks:

I live on Sligo Creek Parkway. I have 1/2 acre on the creek line. When I moved here I used to have seven deer who would come and graze in my backyard. That was almost three years ago and I've never seen more than a couple and only once or twice a year since. I love seeing the deer and they are a welcome sight on my property. I pay very high taxes to live here. I resent the very thought that my tax dollars might go to cull deer. Absolutely not! I enjoy seeing them and they are welcome to feast on the shrubbery and other things growing on my property. Living in a forest means agreeing to share the space with the wildlife. If I had not understood and accepted that, I would not have bought property here. If the county feels it must "cull" the deer population, the only thing I would accept would be non-lethal. Furthermore, I

will do all I can to protect these deer. I don't care how you rationalize killing them--it's just plain wrong and I resent the very proposal.

RECEIVED 6:28PM, OCTOBER 16

I enthusiastically support any efforts to cull whitetail deer from the park. I am a weed warrior and have spent scores of hours removing invasive vegetation from our park. I would like to fill the void with native woodland vegetation and new trees, but they do not stand a chance from the deer pressure. I would also like to work without the risk of contracting Lyme Disease. Yes the deer are cute and I enjoy seeing wildlife, but in their current numbers, they are as much an invasive species as the porcelainberry and English ivy that I toil to control.

My final comment is that I am sure some people living near the site may feel uneasy about firearms being used in the neighborhood. But I would suspect that if one did a risk analysis, there is a greater chance of harm from hitting a deer while driving than being hit by a stray bullet.

RECEIVED 8:08PM, OCTOBER 16

Hello,

I am writing in regards to the deer culling efforts to be done in Sligo Creek. I grew up a few blocks from Sligo Creek and currently live a few minutes drive away. I have a sustainable landscaping business and do work for many homeowners in walking distance from Sligo Creek. The ecological damage to the park, caused by deer overpopulation, is the main reason I am in support of a heavy culling of the herds. It pains me to see such a drastic increase of invasive plants partially due to the overgrazing of our native plants. Since humans have eradicated all the local predators, human intervention is the only way to keep the herds in check. From what I understand hunting is the only practical method of effectively reducing herd numbers. It is my hope that this culling effort can have the added benefit of providing food to people in need. I am very excited to hear this may happen.

RECEIVED 8:21PM, OCTOBER 16

Dear Sirs,

I have lived in Takoma Park for 41 years on 13th Ave right on the hiker-biker trail. When I first moved in, there were no deer. In the last 6-7 years there has been an overabundance of them. They are a nuisance and a worry for their carrying of Lyme disease and a menace to traffic. They have no natural predator and have just been reproducing like crazy. Please, please, please cull them as soon as possible and as often as possible to get rid of them.

RECEIVED 4:54AM, OCTOBER 17

Although we don't live near the golf course, we do live right along Sligo Creek near the Adventist Hospital.

When we moved here 18 years ago, we never saw any deer near our house, but now we have to chase deer out of our yard three or four times a week all year round. They come through in groups of three to six at a time and have badly damaged many of the plants in my garden, eating some down to nothing.

So, I am in favor of culling some of the deer population. I hope the people living around the golf course feel the same way.

RECEIVED 5:58AM, OCTOBER 17

Please consider thinning or not having deer in Sligo Creek. I'm from Idaho, deer country, I understand the need for control, and I know the urban environment is unhealthy for deer. I truly care about the deer and know they need not to be living with cars, fences, terribly limited environment and terrorized by dogs and children and all the hazards of city life.

RECEIVED 7:43AM, OCTOBER 17

This sounds awful Can't there be a way to give female deer some kind of birth control or tranquilize them and bring them somewhere else i.e. zoo or a place

RECEIVED 8:13AM, OCTOBER 17

Dear Ms Bradford, as a 10 year resident of Montgomery County, and resident along the ever improving Comstock Branch of Sligo Creek, I am horrified at the imminent slaughter of deer scheduled for this winter.

I urge the Parks Department to reconsider the shooting of deer in Sligo Creek. While I appreciate that they are having an impact on the plants, there have to be non-lethal and non-violent methods implemented to sustain all native life in Sligo.

I am disappointed that the best advocate for Sligo, the Friends of Sligo Creek, have endorsed this policy, and consequently, I have withdrawn my financial support.

RECEIVED 8:59AM, OCTOBER 17

Dear Board Member,

I write to strongly opposed the proposed culling of deer in Sligo Creek. The "deer problem" is really a human-caused problem and killing the deer is both an ineffective and morally objectionable option. The main problems people have with deer are that they cause vehicle accidents and ruin landscaping. Residents should be encouraged to opt for deer resistant plants and shrubs. Drivers should also slow down and stay alert while driving along the Parkway. Alternatives such as fencing, chemical repellents, use of dogs and public education efforts should be used instead of culling the deer, which would need to be continued year after year if the root problems are not solved.

My family and I greatly enjoy seeing the deer and they are part of the Sligo Creek ecosystem. We keep our distance, plant native vegetation, slow down, and have never had any problems. I urge you to strongly consider and adopt all alternatives to culling deer in the Sligo Creek corridor and not engage in the needless killing of animals.

RECEIVED 8:13AM, OCTOBER 13

Dear Dept. of Parks,

I agree with your decision to use sharpshooters to kill deer to reduce the population. Although I am sure that the trained shooters take every precaution possible, I hope that the sharpshooters do not shoot across the Sligo Creek Parkway when hunting the deer, as there is a fairly steady stream of traffic. I know that the deer population must be managed and I am very glad that you are taking a humane approach, as well as donating the meat to feed the hungry.

Thank you,

RECEIVED 10:08AM, OCTOBER 17

Hi -- I live on Bristol Avenue, one block away from Sligo Creek Park, and I walk in the park almost daily. I rarely see deer, and do not see any destruction of vegetation. I strongly oppose the shooting of deer in the park because (1) it is cruel, and (2) it is unnecessary.

If the park managers are determined to reduce the deer population they should do so humanely by using one of the deer contraceptives that have been developed and used in other places and have been found to be up to 90% effective.

I enjoy the deer on the rare occasions I see them, and I do not want people with rifles in my neighborhood shooting them. This is a very important issue to me.

RECEIVED 10:48AM, OCTOBER 17

I am writing to support the Department's proposal to cull deer at night at the Sligo Golf Course. I live atin Silver Spring, several blocks from Sligo Creek. The deer are wreaking havoc along Sligo Creek, destroying the understory and causing other environmental damage. Managing the deer will decrease this ecological degradation and will also be safe, given that the culling will be by police sharpshooters at night when Sligo Golf Course is closed. Please proceed with the proposed deer management program.

RECEIVED 2:59PM, OCTOBER 17

Hi:

I drive and bicycle in Sligo Creek Park.

I am an active member of the South Four Corners Citizens Association and of Friends of Sligo Creek.

Deer in Sligo Creek Park are causing damage to the ecosystem and are a hazard to bikers and drivers.

Please know that I support your efforts to cull the deer at the Sligo Golf Course.

Of course there are many OTHER areas where deer reside in Sligo....

RECEIVED 4:38PM, OCTOBER 17

As a resident who lives within a quarter mile of Sligo Creek Golf Course and golfs there on a weekly basis, I fully support adding Sligo Creek Golf Course to the deer management operations in order to cull the herd.

While I've never noticed any issues with the population in the past, just in the last two weeks I've seen three deer on the course that can barely walk and are extremely skinny compared to other deer on the course. Rather than having additional deer suffer from the what I guess to be starvation or disease, I think it is important to cull the deer population on the golf course in order to keep a sustainable number of deer healthy.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

RECEIVED 5:22PM, OCTOBER 17

To whom it may concern:

We're writing to let you know that we fully support the proposal to cull deer at Sligo Creek Golf Course. We live near Sligo Creek and regularly use the area and see the damage the deer do to the vegetation. We hope that eventually all of the Sligo Creek Park system would have a deer management program put in place.

RECEIVED 5:37PM, OCTOBER 17

Dear MCP,

I am all in favor of culling deer. Although I do not live in the immediate vicinity of the golf course but near Three Oaks Drive, the deer have eaten away much of the undergrowth in our area. During the last few years, deer have been seen even in our slender strip of woods.

I only wish there were some safe way to extend deer culling down towards our area.

RECEIVED 5:45PM, OCTOBER 17

To whom it may concern,

I am not a hunter and ordinarily would not support hunting, but I am in favor of the deer cull on the Sligo Creek trail I live three blocks from the Sligo trail, and we have seen emaciated deer in our yard and neighborhood multiple times. I strongly believe culling the deer is the most humane thing to do.

RECEIVED 6:43PM, OCTOBER 17

Regarding the proposed deer management actions near Sligo Creek's golf course, I am highly supportive of the proposed action. The very high densities of deer in this area are a nuisance to many homeowners and gardeners; pose a significant human safety risk with deer crossing roads, especially along Sligo Creek Pkwy at night; and are preventing most regrowth of the woods along Sligo Creek. As the Park staff know, the area is becoming increasingly infested with non-native, invasive plants as the deer are quick to preferentially eat any natives that sprout. I applaud the Department of Parks for doing what it can to help homeowners and gardeners, reduce deer-vehicle collisions, feed the hungry with venison, and aid in the regeneration of the area woodlots. Please do not let the (highly) vocal minority deter you from carrying forth this proposed action.

RECEIVED 7:01PM, OCTOBER 17

To Whom it May Concern:

I am opposed to any "management" practices which include culling of Silver Spring's deer population.

Urban density is increasing and increasingly wildlife habitat is being lost to over-development. The problem is not so much the deer population but the human one.

A preferable option would be to increase green areas in Montgomery County where the deer population and other wild life would be brought down by predators. That is nature's way to achieve balance.

"Down county" is sufficiently large to increase the green space for wildlife and recreation. That would make the county more attractive and more habitable for all of us.

With regard to lyme disease of which deer are carriers, public education is preferable and lyme disease should not be used as a pretext for "management."

Thank you

RECEIVED 1:57PM, OCTOBER 18

Dear Sir or Madam,

It is wonderful news that you plan to include Sligo Creek below the Beltway in the deer management program. And better late than never, let me add. I am a gardener and victim to their regular visits to my property. As annoying as it is to have to fence in my ornamental and vegetable plants, that is as nothing compared to seeing the growing and I hope not permanent damage caused by the deer to Sligo Creek Park, including the browse line and the obvious loss of replacement trees and forbs. Following a successful hunt, we will be able to gauge whether the destruction to the park by the large number of deer is reversible. Please remove several more deer than you feel is necessary.

Thank you,

RECEIVED 4:08PM, OCTOBER 18

Don't Kill the Deer!

RECEIVED 5:48PM, OCTOBER 18

Over the weekend our car was struck by a deer leaping across the road.

Luckily for us, the deer hit the front of the car instead of the windshield. Had it gone through the windshield, we would likely be dead. Our car is now in the shop for at least a week with about \$3500 dollars worth of damage. And we're out the \$500 deductible to get the car fixed.

The excessive number of deer in our community is clearly dangerous.

Because the only predator now is the automobile, their numbers are climbing out of control. We support culling the deer population in order to bring it down to a number that the environment can sustain responsibly.

Please proceed with culling the herd in Sligo Creek, and anywhere else it can be done safely and humanely. Although we live near the lower end of Sligo Creek, we rely on culling north of us because our neighborhood is too densely populated to undertake culling safely.

RECEIVED 5:49PM, OCTOBER 18

I believe the deer management is necessary for the deer, humans, and flora . I have complete trust in our park police taking the deer out lethally.

I would like to purchase the venison if possible

RECEIVED 11:06AM, OCTOBER 19

I am in strong support of the proposed deer culling this fall / winter in Sligo Creek Park. It is quite evident that the deer are overpopulated and the culling program would help the health of the herd as well as make the roads safer for local drivers. I live adjacent to the part and give my full support to this proposal.

RECEIVED 11:18AM, OCTOBER 19

I am in support of the deer culling program in Sligo. They have overgrown the available habitat, and are causing many native plants to disappear, leaving room for non-native invasive plants, which deer don't eat, to flourish. The effect on the flora and fauna watershed is extremely negative. The dearth of native plants decreases the number of native insects that feed on the native plants. The dearth of native insects means that birds that nest in the area don't have enough food to feed their nestlings; also, the dearth of native plants means reduced fruit and seeds for the birds that migrate to other countries, reducing the likelihood of the migrants' survival.

The Friends of Sligo Creek has an active Removal of Invasive Plants program. This program to control invasive plants has seen some successes in controlling non-native invasive plants. However, the goal of allowing the native plants to re-establish themselves has not been achievable because the deer prefer to eat the native plants.

Culling deer is one way to help conserve the fragile ecosystem that is built around the creek. As long as it may be done without endangering human life, and without causing extended suffering of the deer, I am very much in support of this. In addition, if the meat may be used for feeding the area's population, I think that would be great, too.

RECEIVED 1:03PM, OCTOBER 19

This seems like a reasonable solution.

RECEIVED 9:12AM, OCTOBER 20

To Whom It May Concern:

We are longtime residents of Silver Spring. Our house is within two blocks of Sligo Creek Park and our garden is frequently visited by deer. We understand that the deer population within the park has grown and that their increased numbers are creating problems in residential areas abutting the park.

Nevertheless, we are set against the county proposal to shoot and kill these animals. First of all, the safety of persons using the park in the evening would be at risk. This is not virgin territory; people walk, run and bicycle in the park.

Secondly, the thought that these animals would be slaughtered for doing nothing more than trying to survive is antithetical to our beliefs. Is this the best the county can do? If the county wants to reduce the deer population, why not lace proffered food with contraceptives? Surely, there must be a product available that can effectively slow the growth of the deer herds.

The increasing number of deer in our park is a nuisance, not a menace that requires such drastic measures.

RECEIVED 10:25AM, OCTOBER 20

Montgomery Parks,

I support your proposed plan to conduct culling of deer in Sligo Park. I feel confident that you will take all appropriate steps to protect life and property.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

RECEIVED 10:59PM, OCTOBER 20

I'm 100% in favor of the proposed deer population reduction effort on Sligo Golf Course.

For the following reasons I'm also in favor of having their numbers reduced to zero.

I've lived directly behind Sligo Golf Course on Dallas Avenue for the past twenty-six years. In that time I've watched the deer population explode from zero to what it currently is today.

Approximately five years ago one of my neighbors was began experiencing a tingling in his fingers and having problems with his vision. A visit to the doctor resulted with a diagnosis of Lyme disease. In order to be well again, he had to go through the inconvenience and expense of taking antibiotics for several months.

A short time later I found a small tick imbedded in me. It was identified at the Maryland Extension Service in Derwood to be a species that can potentially carry Lyme disease. Upon my doctor's recommendation I, decided to take a 3 week regiment of antibiotics. Both myself and the neighbor work in office buildings and don't travel to any areas other than our yards where we would have encountered ticks.

I've also experienced, along with my surrounding neighbors, the destruction they've done and continue to do to my fruit trees, flower and vegetable gardens. as well as small trees by stripping the leaves from them. In addition I've had the displeasure of having to clean up the droppings they've left in my yard. There have been many nights they have either run across Sligo Creek Parkway in front of my car or I've run up on them standing in the middle of the road.

For these deer-human conflict reasons, that mirror the ones listed on your website, I repeat my agreement with your proposal. I know of no benefit that deer provide other than the aesthetic one, and if I want to see a deer there are many places within close distance I can go to do that. Therefore, it's my conclusion that the best course of action for the residential area around Sligo Golf Course would be to drastically thin the deer population, but the preferred to eliminate it entirely.

RECEIVED 9:42PM, OCTOBER 21

I write to strongly oppose the proposed hunting of deer in Sligo Creek. While I understand the perils of deer over-population such as destruction of vegetation and vehicular accidents, I would prefer to see non-lethal, humane measures used so that law enforcement resources can be better used to fight crime.

Killing deer is not an effective means of population control and must be done consistently to achieve its objectives. Other non-lethal measures, such as fencing, chemical repellents, and contraception stand a better chance of controlling the population and minimizing harms over the long term and should be considered before our tax dollars pay for animal slaughter.

Furthermore we should have more deer crossing signs on Sligo Creek Park to encourage drivers to SLOW DOWN and pay attention. I travel along the Parkway several times a week at the speed limit and find I am passed by drivers crossing the double line.

I pay some of the highest taxes in the country to live here and I think Montgomery County can do better by investigating humane methods before resorting to killing animals.

Thank you for considering my views.

RECEIVED 11:14AM, OCTOBER 22

To Whom It May Concern:

I support culling the deer on Sligo Creek. Every year, I am terrified that I will run into one in my car or on my bicycle. It is not humane to allow them to proliferate in such a populated area, even if you disregard the danger they pose to the humans around them.

Thank you

RECEIVED 8:07PM, OCTOBER 23

Parks Dept:

I am vehemently opposed to the plan to assassinate deer in Sligo Creek parkland. Friends of Sligo Creek co-founder ***** has been behind the push because deer eat the native plants. I severed all ties with FOSC several years ago when I could see that the core of the group was going to pursue this killing.

Killing deer is unethical, immoral, atavistic, savage, and wrong.

The argument is made that there are too many deer. What about too many people? What makes it right for us to decide they have to die, just because that's the most expedient route for us? Wait for birth control to be approved and available.

The argument is made that deer eat the native plants. So what? The Sligo Creek park strip is too insignificant to kill deer over. Use fencing to keep them out of key spots where native plants can thrive.

The argument is made that deer cause accidents. Mandate that proven deterrent devices be installed on all cars. Make drivers drive more carefully and with awareness of deer.

The argument is made that deer ticks cause Lyme disease. It has been shown that squirrels carry the ticks. Are you going to kill all the squirrels too?

These lovely deer are an awesome sight and in my 10 years living here I have only enjoyed seeing them out with their families and compadres. They do not come in my yard because I have a 5/6-foot fence. How would you like your family member or friend to be assassinated? What is humane about assassination? Would we say that it was humane for John F. Kennedy to be assassinated? For MLK? For Malcolm X?

I'm sickened to think of these animals being assassinated by people with a blood lust for the death of innocent creatures. Society needs to evolve to use the brainpower to find ethical solutions to living with nonhuman animals.

Look into your better selves and stop the killing of deer.

Thank you.

RECEIVED 8:50PM, OCTOBER 23

Dear County Parks People:

In a previous email message regarding the proposed "culling" of deer within the Sligo Golf Course, my husband and I were operating under the assumption that actions would be taken throughout Sligo Park.

We now better understand that the shooting of deer would occur strictly within the boundaries of the Sligo Creek Golf Course.

Nevertheless, it is our assessment that this action is, pardon the pun, overkill. Your website mentions various deer population control methods but does not indicate that contraception has ever been tried. Is it not possible to set out food or salt licks laced with contraceptives? This strikes us as a far more humane solution than stalking and shooting.

RECEIVED 11:18AM, OCTOBER 24

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am completely in favor of your proposed deer management measures for the Sligo Golf Course/Sligo Creek Park area. My only question is whether the effort will be robust enough. I live less than a half-mile from the golf course, and I believe the current deer population is untenable. Yards near my house harbor a herd of deer of at least six individuals. They've destroyed many newly planted trees and saplings, not to mention lower decorative plants, such as hostas and azaleas. In nearby Rock Creek park, as I pulled out from a stop sign, a large deer leapt onto the hood of my car and launched itself over the car and into the woods.

But beyond my own interests, I'm concerned about what deer are doing to forested areas of Sligo Creek Park and to biodiversity. If we fail to keep the numbers of deer quite low, there will be inadequate successional growth to replace the large number of plants and trees lost to wind, disease, and old age. To maintain healthy parklands, I urge you not only to move forward with the deer management program at Sligo, but to create similar programs in parks throughout Montgomery County.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

RECEIVED 1:24PM, OCTOBER 24

My name is ***** and i am writing to complain about the proposed deer hunt in Sligo Park. I love seeing the deer and also find it heartbreaking. Humans always find a way to take land way from from the weak and claim it as their own. And yet we do whatever we want and suffer little consequence. Is there no way to relocate the deer so people can play golf and not be inconvenienced. Or can deer not have birth control implanted. Or do hunters like going in at night with night vision goggles with deer having little chance of escape. It seems very cowardly to me. My heart is broken. I could go on with how horrified I am by this proposal but I hope I made by point. I may never feel the same about the park again if this happens. The deer own the park also. They belong there more than humans do.

Thank you

RECEIVED 2:38PM, OCTOBER 24

Isn't there any other way? Has birth control been tried? Yes, there are more deer than usual, but shooting them seems so drastic. I know this is not an easy part of your job and I don't imagine anyone enjoys it very much, so please reconsider this approach to deer management.

Thank you for all that you do.

RECEIVED 6:22PM, OCTOBER 24

Park Officials:

I support the effort the county is making to control the deer population near Sligo Creek. I recently saw a dead Buck near exit 31 of the Capital Beltway. There are too many deer; they have to be managed.

RECEIVED 11:01AM, OCTOBER 25

To whom it may concern,

I think it's a shame to kill the deer in the Sligo Creek area. I walk my dog along the path between Rte 29 and 495 routinely and very much enjoy sighting deer and other wild life. It's so refreshing and nurtures my soul to see those beautiful and innocent creatures.

I totally understand the over-population issues and how the deer may suffer due to lack of space and food. I can also understand the potential danger to the animals and motorist with regards to collisions.

I can't, however, understand the human-deer conflict issues. I think there are numerous measures one can take to prevent deer from eating one's flowers and shrubs, etc. Killing them to solve that problem seems to be such a cold-hearted approach. I suppose some folks would prefer zero wild life, other than squirrels, living among them. I don't include myself in that group.

I'm sure those responsible for solving this issue will do their best to find a solution that satisfies all parties affected. I just hope they consider the life of the deer, for what it's worth, and those who enjoy their presence.

Thank you for the opportunity to let my feelings and opinions be known.

RECEIVED 10:11PM, OCTOBER 25

Dear Bloodthirsty Savages,

What have Bambi and I done to you all to deserve to be murdered right where we live on the Sligo Creek golf course? Are you going to kill me right in front of my kids? Why are you so hot and bothered to go out and commit murder on some flimsy pretext about "feeding the homeless" that you have to do it at my expense? ...bet you just say that to make yourselves feel better.

And why are you going to have police do this in the middle of the night? So you don't have to explain what's going on to your 4 year old daughter? Where she can't see it out in the open? The letters you receive on your website appear to be overwhelming in public support of this. But you don't ask these people for comment on whether they themselves can carry this out if they themselves had to do this in the presence of their own kids. If this "management" as you call it is the the right thing to do, than maybe all these people advocating it should have no problem doing it themselves, right in front of their little kids to witness it. It's only fair...a child knows right from wrong. Should be no problem then asking your own daughters permission and doing the shooting right in front of her.... if it *is* the right thing to do.

. And Bambi and I find this tract from your website particularly offensive....

"deer related impacts, such as automobile accidents, damage to agricultural crops and private landscapes, damage to natural communities, and potential of communicable diseases, are in need of mitigation"

...In need of mitigation? Really? Maybe all those other things you seem to believe are so important, maybe those are the things in need of mitigation! Maybe you can mitigate your need to "manage" and feel you need to control every aspect of the suburban world around you.

I know you all need to be killing something. It's in your nature. It should not be too difficult if you could just wait a little while longer. I am sure it won't be long before you start another war. Then just go volunteer. But I know you won't get involved personally because you two-legged things are basically cowards when it comes to killing. You are just too "chicken" if it means that what you shoot at, might shoot right back at you.

Bambi and I have done nothing wrong....Well almost nothing, Okay... Alright, maybe the kids did defecate all over the greens. Granted, I understand you get really pissed off when you have to stop and clean the stink off your white shoes.

Consider this ,

- 1) There really are not that many of us here. We are in a minority to the extreme
- 2) We were here first.
- 3) We don't vote
- 4) We don't pay taxes
- 5) We don't complain, come to council meetings or heckle..... making us ideal citizens.
- 6) We may be considered "homeless" having no fixed address, yet we live here in this county too.

Doesn't this make us "the dispossessed" by your standards? We do have some human friends who may think so. Maybe they can make a really big public stink too, just like we make on the golf course.

And *besides*, where do you get the money to sit around and think of this anyway? Aren't you supposedly broke and trying to reduce the national debt? Go furlough yourself!

Sincerely (terrorized),

Buck & Bambi Whitail

Submitting this letter on behalf of my four legged neighbors

RECEIVED 10:41PM, OCTOBER 25

Good Evening,

As a resident that lives behind the golf course on the Sligo Creek Parkway in Silver Spring I am familiar with the deer population that shares our neighborhood. The speed limit on Sligo Creek is 25 miles per hour and is enforced strictly (and thankfully) by the park patrols. I drive during the dawn and dusk hours when the deer are most active and I have been able to exist peacefully with the deer and have stopped a few times to allow them to cross the street. Deer are such peaceful, majestic animals that the thought of a controlled hunt, or the 'harvesting' of the deer is morally appalling and I wanted to voice my opinion that I strongly oppose the idea.

Living along the parkway is a delight, the trees, creek, deer and other wildlife ensure that each walk along the trail is different and that there is a little slice of nature still preserved just outside the city limits. While the 'harvesters' may be trained sharpshooters the idea of a professional strolling through my neighborhood with crossbow in hand ready to kill on site is disturbing. The deer living in this area have found a unique parcel of land to call home and I am curious what the total population size is, and what the ideal population size would be? I have seen 9 total deer; one family (buck, doe, two fawns) three does that travel in a pack, and one young buck.

It has been a treat to watch the two young fawns grow this summer, they have recently shed their white spots and are growing into young adolescents. I would like to be able to watch these deer grow, alongside their family, and continue to look for them in the woods, and not have to worry about seeing a marksman armed and ready for the harvest.

RECEIVED 5:12PM, OCTOBER 26

Sirs:

I am 100% in favor of the deer culling proposed for the Sligo Creek watershed and am especially in favor of processing the meat for distribution to those in need. I would also be in favor of selling the meat should surplus be available and the money could go back to supporting the cost of monitoring and research.

I will note that, as a homeowner, I enjoy seeing the occasional deer in my neighborhood, however I would rather see the population reduced to levels closer to levels in a more pristine (natural predators included) environment. I find the impact of too high deer population on my home garden to be excessive and intolerable and at times the deers are otherwise a nuisance. Perhaps three or four times this year I encountered multiple deer in my yard, at one point a group of eight. My son was even prevented for some time minutes? from entering our house because of a large group of deer blocking our driveway. I would have found this in part awesome but he was frightened. During the summer we found on an almost daily basis evidence of deer eating our tomatoes and our crop was pathetic as a result--it hardly warranted the effort of having a garden.

The absence of coyotes and other predators in the region mandates that human control be implemented if we are to enjoy a more natural (less human impacted) abundance of plants and animals in the Sligo Creek Watershed. Please do whatever you can to implement a harvesting regime that is effective. I would even consider implementing hunting by citizens if it were managed properly. People should enjoy nature and its bounty and an urban and public harvest could bring people closer to the idea of maintaining a healthy relationship with their environment.

RECEIVED 9:26PM, OCTOBER 26

As a Montgomery County resident near Sligo Creek Park in Takoma Park, I believe it is unfortunately time for deer culling. There are way too many deer in this essentially urban area than the limited green corridor can support. My only question is whether the golf course area is the best location, in terms of the density of deer. It is clearly a good location in other respects.

RECEIVED 10:24PM, OCTOBER 26

While my husband and I understand people's concern regarding the current deer population, we strongly oppose your plans for a mass killing of deer when there's a more humane alternative available. We've found information about a protein contraception vaccine that has been effectively used in Gaithersburg and other areas^[1]. We've also found information that supports the effectiveness and safety of this method and it shows a 60% reduction in the deer population^{[1][2]}. The cost of this method is lower than what is shown on the reports cited on your website.^[3]

From NIST: "Two-shot PZP vaccination programs, sponsored by the HSUS, have been more than 90 percent successful at blocking pregnancies for one year in white-tailed deer and wild horses in other areas of the country. In addition to its proven effectiveness, the PZP vaccine can be delivered easily by darts, cannot pass into the food chain, does not affect normal mating behavior, shows no side effects and allows a return to fertility when no longer administered."^[1]

Even if the contraceptive method has to be done annually, the deer population and the need for contraceptive vaccines will decline^[2]. This is a better solution than the annual killing of these deer.

If deer have no natural predators, are we to reduce ourselves to the levels of animals and simply kill? What makes us different is that we have the ability to feel compassion. I've been in a car accident involving a deer; deer have eaten plants from my garden. However, I don't see this as justification for a mass killing of these animals. Deer can't come to public meetings, send emails, or protest for their right to live. It's our responsibility to protect those who don't have a voice and are being inhumanely treated.

Thank you.

RECEIVED 8:03AM, OCTOBER 27

Hello:

RE: Public Comment on Deer Mgmt. at SCGC

I totally support the deer management plan at Sligo, as long as strict precautions are taken to safeguard the public.

I use the golf course frequently, the Sligo Creek trail and live only a few blocks away in Woodside Park. Deer are ubiquitous on my block and in my yard. Their gradual destruction of my landscaped garden, particularly this year, has been relentless. I have spent hundreds of dollars replacing plants and attempting to control their presence. I hope you will continue to thin the herd.

RECEIVED 10:08AM, OCTOBER 27

To Whom it May Concern,

We are writing to express our support for the plan to use specially trained Park Police sharpshooters as a way to safely and effectively manage deer populations in and around Sligo Creek. The overpopulation of deer in our neighborhood represents a threat to drivers, pedestrians, gardens, pets and via lyme disease, our health. We fully support and believe that Park Police sharpshooting is safe, effective and humane.

RECEIVED 11:03AM, OCTOBER 27

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RE: Public Comment on Deer Mgmt. at SCGC

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RECEIVED 1:09PM, OCTOBER 27

To Whom it May Concern,

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RECEIVED 3:26PM, OCTOBER 27

The deer population is out of control and this needs to done.

I fully support these effort

RECEIVED 5:50PM, OCTOBER 28

Dear MC Parks Department,

While I understand there are challenges to managing park land when there is deer overpopulation, I think the proposed technique (i.e., slaughtering) is an inhumane and ghastly way of dealing with whatever problems the deer population is posing. Surely we can find a more humane way of dealing with these

problems, whatever they are. Have alternate techniques been considered or tried? What about relocation or sterilization? I'd be interested to know why the deer are considered a problem.

RECEIVED 11:06PM, OCTOBER 28

Hi,

I wanted to comment on the deer population management at Sligo Creek golf course. I do not think it is necessary to lethally remove the deer. They are harmless creatures and I think it is wrong to kill them. They are part of the park environment and should be left alone. Please let them be!

RECEIVED 4:00PM, OCTOBER 29

I think killing the deer at Sligo Golf Course will do more harm than good.

RECEIVED 2:17PM, OCTOBER 30

Thank for safely controlling the deer population and helping to feed people in our community.

RECEIVED 8:50AM, OCTOBER 31

I support thinning the deer herds in Sligo Creek Park by sharpshooters. It needs to be done for the sake of the deer themselves and to reduce the risk of auto accidents with them. They also ruin a lot of gardens because there are too many of them for their park habitats to support.

RECEIVED 11:31AM, OCTOBER 31

Our house backs onto the creek near the Washington Adventist Hospital. We have been so frustrated with almost all out garden in shambles due to deer grazing. It is common to look out into the garden and see does and bucks brazenly grazing our hostas, roses, tree bark killing the plants we have literally spent thousands of dollars on. Not to make mention of the deer ticks that are ready to jump on our pets. Our neighbor's dog has just had a bout of illness due to the deer ticks.

Please cull them. There are no predators to keep the population in check. I believe the deer are a hazard to health in the city and a pest to those who care for their gardens.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

RECEIVED 8:51PM, OCTOBER 31

About managing deer in Sligo in 2012 -

GREAT!

RECEIVED 6:13AM, NOVEMBER 1

I believe the deer must be culled as they have no predators and there are so many of them that eventually they could be harmful for the vegetation...more than just my yard.

RECEIVED 11:47AM, NOVEMBER 1

I live a block from Sligo Creek and am appalled at how many people have spoken out in favor of the proposal to kill deer in Sligo Creek Park.

When we moved here over 40 years ago, there were no deer in the park. I still see them only occasionally, but it is a wonder and delight to me when I do. Walking in the park and seeing deer is one of the things that renews my spirit and makes life for this old woman worth living. I understand that the deer are a nuisance to some people by eating their plants. This does not justify killing them in my mind. The deer are native to our area and are there because humans encroached on their territory. They have a right to live. We who love them have a right to share this space with them. People could manage their gardens instead

of managing the deer by planting deer resistant plants. This may be a nuisance but certainly a more drastic measure than shooting the deer.

If overpopulation is really a problem for the deer, I suggest using contraceptive measures rather than the inhumane measure of death by shooting them down. Humans created this problem. It does not seem morally right for them to take the easy way out and gun down the deer.

That's what our country once did to the native Indians because they were in the way of progress. I hope we have progressed since that shameful time. We must find a more humane solution to the problems we have created. I don't want sharpshooters taking down deer, the innocent victims of all of this, in the middle of the night in my neighborhood.

We can do better. We have a moral obligation to find better solutions. Don't gun down deer in my neighborhood!

RECEIVED 11:55AM, NOVEMBER 1

I am strongly opposed to the sharp-shooting of deer in the park, in spite of the fact that we have deer damage to some of our plantings every year. Other more humane options have proven effective elsewhere - why not here? Besides, exposing the public to the danger and misery of injured deer running through the park and neighborhoods is loathsome.

RECEIVED 12:43PM, NOVEMBER 1

I understand the problems with a growing deer population, but why can we not tranquilize the deer and move them to another location in Maryland? That would seem much more humane and safer for our community.

RECEIVED 2:04PM, NOVEMBER 1

I live near the golf course and would not only like to see the population controlled there but also throughout Sligo Creek Park. Perhaps bow hunters could be used to kill deer too close to houses in the area of the creek.

RECEIVED 2:51PM, NOVEMBER 1

As a resident of Woodside Forest and a frequent user of Sligo Creek Park's hike/bike trail and driver on Sligo Creek Parkway, I strongly oppose your plan to use "sharpshooters" to euthanize deer. I recognize that the overpopulation of deer is a problem, particularly to the health of the deer.

However, I suggest that it would be a lot safer and likely less expensive (from a payroll standpoint--after all "sharpshooters" are likely more expensive than average shooters) to trap the deer. You simply enclose an area with 12-foot (higher, if necessary), temporary chain-link fencing. Put a timed feeder in there to feed corn to the deer every night at say, midnight. Observe for several nights or even weeks at feeding time, and when a satisfactory number of deer are using the feeding area, simply close the gate, herd the deer onto a truck, and take them either to a slaughterhouse if your intention is really to feed the poor, or to a more suitable area for the deer to be released.

If you proceed with this plan to use "sharpshooters," I request that you share with the community the qualifications required to be deemed a sharpshooter (please note that the qualifications are not outlined on your website--it just mentions that they are qualified). We want to be sure that the person firing rifles within several yards of many homes is not going to accidentally shoot and injure or kill our pets or our children. Furthermore, we will not know whether the gunfire that we hear at all times of the night is by the sharpshooters or by gang members. Many will likely report every instance of gunfire to the police, clogging the emergency and non-emergency phone lines.

Thank you for considering alternate means of dealing with this deer overpopulation.

RECEIVED 3:01PM, NOVEMBER 1

I live on Crosby Road on the park. I strongly support the culling plan.

RECEIVED 3:22PM, NOVEMBER 1

We absolutely support culling the deer herd here in Sligo Creek Park. We live on Clement Road, across the Parkway from the course, and our back yard abuts the park itself. Attached are two photos of a recent daylight visitor to the clearing at the base of our property as well as at our bird feeder. If you'd like to use our back yard, that would be fine too.

RECEIVED 6:05PM, NOVEMBER 1

I love animals, but the deer population is unsustainable. In the ten years that I have lived here, the increase has been marked. My understanding is that birth control is not a realistic option. Am I right? If deer were shot, would there be a way to make the meat available to the food kitchens and homeless shelters? It would be a shame to waste both lives and meat. Even so, I am in favor of this proposal.

RECEIVED 6:31PM, NOVEMBER 1

Dear Parks Management Team,

If it is the only way to manage the population, if the alternative is starving deer or deer killed or injured beyond help on the roads, then that is our fate. It is our obligation and our role to foster and preserve the natural balance on contiguous natural lands in our urban neighborhoods. The deep population is out of balance, or so I understand you to imply.

What will be done with the remains of the deer? Can the venison be donated to the food pantries to help feed the unemployed and the poor human families in Montgomery County?

I am not one who begrudges the deer the plants on the land around my house, or blames them for the presence of ticks and Lyme's Disease. I regret the need to shoot them.

As the great animal manager Temple Grandin has said, nature is cruel but we don't have to be.

So if we do this as a community, we do it because it is necessary, and we do it in a way which is least awful and most dignified for the animals, which are sentient and know fear and pain, and in a manner which somehow redeems us for not having left them enough room to live their lives in the balance of nature.

I hope we will go forward to protect and foster contiguous natural lands up and down the eastern seaboard as we move into the 21st century, so that the other species can continue make their way as they have done throughout the whole of creation.

If we have to kill these wild animals in their habitat, if that is the best choice, to me that is not ultimately a good thing for us. Our challenge very soon is to figure out how not to be profligate with the earth and its creatures - the joy and health of which we have borrowed from our descendants.

RECEIVED 7:16PM, NOVEMBER 1

I am delighted to learn that there will be some attempts made to limit the deer population in the Sligo Creek Park area. Realizing how difficult it would be to have action taken in the park itself, the golf course provides the perfect location. The deer currently have no predators, a very unnatural situation. Their population has exploded far beyond the capability of the area to support them. They are destroying native plants, encouraging the spread of invasive species.

Please reduce the deer population and help preserve Sligo Creek Park.

Thank you.

RECEIVED 7:38PM, NOVEMBER 1

Please. Do it yesterday

RECEIVED 10:43PM, NOVEMBER 1

My house backs up to Sligo Creek Park. I greatly enjoy seeing the local deer. I see them almost every day. Even so, I have no problem with sharpshooters culling the herd. Contraception does not work. It just doesn't! Meanwhile, the deer are over-browsing the habitat. This creates problems for other animals, but especially for the plant life. The deer eat up the understory of the forest. The more deer, the more they eat.

Even if they're culled, they'll come back over time until they have to be culled again. They're resilient. In the mean time, I would enjoy seeing a healthier forest, fewer but healthier deer, and perhaps more wildlife (besides deer).

By the way, the sharpshooter option is an extremely humane solution when compared to car accidents, chronic malnutrition or starvation.

RECEIVED 11:28PM, NOVEMBER 1

I'm writing to support the plan to cull pestilential deer in Sligo Creek. A good idea to donate the meat to a food bank. If it weren't for the safety issue of being in a crowded urban area, I'd even support raising revenue by selling licenses to hunters to shoot these deer.

RECEIVED 7:58AM, NOVEMBER 2

Although we don't live near the golf course, we do live right along Sligo Creek near the Adventist Hospital.

When we moved here 18 years ago, we never saw any deer near our house, but now we have to chase deer out of our yard three or four times a week all year round. They come through in groups of three to six at a time and have badly damaged many of the plants in my garden, eating some down to nothing.

So, I am in favor of culling some of the deer population. I hope the people living around the golf course feel the same way.

RECEIVED 12:25PM, NOVEMBER 3

Deer are cute but we have way too many of them. We live near the park and they are a real hazard when driving so we agree with this culling approach. Please try to donate the meat so it is not wasted.

RECEIVED 6:25PM, NOVEMBER 3

Hello -

I live near Sligo Creek Park and Holy Cross Hospital.

Assuming that certified trained and qualified hunters known to Montgomery County will conduct the hunts, I support the use of lethal methods to remove deer from the park, for two reasons:

1. Safety for people, vehicles and the deer themselves when they cross roads.
2. At such high concentrations, they are decimating the park's native plants and trees. Deer prefer certain plant species which become rare compared to levels they should be in healthy forests, and they prevent new trees from growing up to replace those that are growing older by continually browsing on them.

It would be great if people or organizations could use the meat from the deer that are harvested.

RECEIVED 8:15PM, NOVEMBER 3

Sounds like a good plan. i drive through the park early in the morning and see deer all the time, always concerned about hitting them.

I don't know what else you can do to control the deer population, short of introducing a few wolves. that's the most natural response, but guess that won't go over so well.

So please let your officers cull the population.

RECEIVED 9:02PM, NOVEMBER 3

While I understand the urge to protect Bambi, my experience as a homeowner and amateur naturalist adjacent to Sligo Creek Park has convinced me that the Parks system must take steps to control the rampant growth of the deer population. We live across the street from Sligo Creek Park on Hilltop Road in the city of Takoma Park. The plants on our nearly one-acre property are decimated by the burgeoning deer population. This includes not only landscape and garden plantings such as azaleas, tomatoes, and their favorites, hosta. It also includes the woodlands on our property. When we first moved here in 1989, there were always young seedlings of native trees and shrubs coming up. In recent years, though, the deer have eliminated most of the undergrowth, and there are no successors to the native wildflowers, bushes, and taller beech, oak, and tulip poplar trees that comprise the forest. On a typical day (like this morning), there are six or seven underfed deer trying to nourish themselves on our small patch of land. I fear for the future well being of the other wildlife (especially birds) that rely on the understory plants for food and shelter. Since we no longer have natural predators sufficient to control the deer population, I strongly believe the Parks system has a responsibility to keep the deer population in balance. I support the proposal to cull deer.

RECEIVED 5:55AM, NOVEMBER 4

As a resident on Dallas Ave, I would like you exterminate all of these pesky beasts. Kill them one and all.

RECEIVED 1:30PM, NOVEMBER 4

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in SUPPORT of the proposed plan to lethally remove deer (by sharpshooters) at night from Sligo Creek Golf Course. As a botanist, I can see what the overpopulation of deer is doing to Sligo Creek Park. I see deer along the road at night almost every time I drive by the golf course. I am surprised that there are not more car accidents. Culling deer populations in this area on an annual basis is long overdue. Shooting deer is acceptable. Methods such as putting deer on birth control is not cost effective. I hope that this proposal is implemented in January.

RECEIVED 3:02PM, NOVEMBER 4

I am opposed to the Department of Parks plan to use lethal force to remove deer from Sligo Creek Golf Course. The golf course borders residential neighborhoods. Bullets and/or other projectiles could land in residential neighborhoods and injure residents. Birth Control should be used to control the deer population. Birth Control would not harm the deer and would be a safer and more humane way of controlling the deer population at Sligo Creek Golf.

RECEIVED 5:03PM, NOVEMBER 4

I fully support deer population management in Sligo Creek Park.

RECEIVED 10:03PM, NOVEMBER 4

How many of the estimated 43 to 54 deer living on Sligo Golf Course will be removed? I hope it's all of them. Even so, it would only be temporary. They'll eventually migrate back again from other areas. I'm completely in favor of the proposed deer hunt.

RECEIVED 11:26AM, NOVEMBER 5

I would like to go on record, as a taxpayer and animal lover that I think killing deer is WRONG. In China they kill baby girls because they are not the "preferred" gender. Killing wildlife is the same, in my opinion. You can come up with all kind of "rationale" for doing so, (deer ticks, garden raids, road danger) but no rationale suffices for killing. Not "even" animals.

RECEIVED 7:33PM, NOVEMBER 5

Dear Parks staff,

I live on a cul-de-sac with park access between Colesville and Forest Glen roads. I love seeing deer in the park, and they swing through our yard and garden at various times of the year. I have also spent hundreds of hours over the past 8 years in the park, volunteering as a Weed Warrior and helping with the Friends of Sligo Creek "Remove Invasive Plants" program. While I am glad there are deer and other wild animals in the park, I know that an overpopulation of deer brings a number of problems, including damage to the native plant ecosystem that we are trying to protect through our invasive species work.

I support deer management in Sligo Creek Park as proposed.

RECEIVED 1:09AM, NOVEMBER 6

Hello,

I just wanted to speak up and let the Parks dept. know that I support the deer management plan as proposed.

Besides for damage to agricultural/private land, the deer can harbor diseases, especially given their high density for the area.

I trust the dept. will carry it out the process in a humane way.

RECEIVED 1:27PM, NOVEMBER 6

To Whom This May Concern,

As a Sligo area resident and an admirer of the habitat, I urge you to find an alternative solution to the proposed "Deer (Massacre) Management Initiative". Destroying these beautiful creatures saddens me deeply. Also, I am left wondering how many fawns may go hungry or else be left alone and defenseless as a result of this initiative. Will the Marksmen be ordered to kill the young as well? VERY SAD! Yes, I do realize that there are many deer casualties of motorists in our area, however, I still can't help but think that this is an aggressive and perhaps unnecessary proposal and NATURE is better left alone.

Needless to say, I am opposed.

RECEIVED 8:58AM, NOVEMBER 7

Dear Parks staff,

I live about a block from Sligo Creek Park and have spent hundreds of hours over the last seven years, volunteering as a Weed Warrior and helping with the Friends of Sligo Creek "Remove Invasive Plants" program. While I am glad there are deer and other wild animals in the park, I know that an overpopulation of deer brings a number of problems, including damage to the native plant ecosystem that we are trying to protect through our invasive species work.

I support deer management in Sligo Creek Park as proposed.

RECEIVED 9:51AM, NOVEMBER 7

I agree with your proposal especially that fact that the meat goes to the food bank.

RECEIVED 10:13AM, NOVEMBER 7

I am in favor of the proposed deer culling as long as it is done in a contained and safe area for doing so, which I assume would be within the golf course property. I live only a block away from Sligo Creek Park on St Andrews Way. We have a deer family or 3 or 4 that comes thru our yard almost every day. They are cute but they have destroyed my wife's tomato plants and have feasted on hostas and other plants in our yard. I am also concerned about our safety in the neighborhood, since I've seen the deer startled and take off without regard to their surroundings. A pedestrian or child could be badly injured if they came on one of these animals unexpectedly, which I've done while walking my dog.

RECEIVED 1:35PM, NOVEMBER 7

As a resident of Montgomery County who is extremely concerned with the welfare of our watersheds, I am writing to submit a public comment in favor of deer culling in Sligo Creek Park.

My family and I enjoy viewing wildlife of all kinds in the County's parks, including deer, but I have come to the informed conclusion that the damage done by deer overgrazing to habitat for other animals, the sustainability of the ecosystem, and efforts to eradicate invasive species is completely compelling. In addition, I believe it inhumane to subject deer to starvation that forces them to forage in areas where their own safety and that of humans is severely compromised.

I urge you to maintain the highest possible standards for public safety and humane culling, but I have no doubt whatsoever that culling Sligo Creek deer is the best course of action.

RECEIVED 1:41PM, NOVEMBER 7

I strongly support your efforts, including the culling of deer in County parks, to reduce the damage and danger caused by excess deer population in Montgomery County.

RECEIVED 5:44PM, NOVEMBER 7

I am writing to express my strong support for culling of deer at the Sligo Creek golf course. I am a resident of Takoma Park and an active member of Friends of Sligo Creek, and I have seen the damage caused by deer at the golf course, throughout the park, and in my own neighborhood. I am also a professional ecologist and am well aware of the larger impact high deer populations have on the local ecosystem and on their own health and well fare.

Thank you for taking this important step.

RECEIVED 8:36PM, NOVEMBER 7

Dear County Parks Directors and County Commissioners:

I'm not a huge fan of hunting for "sport" -- in fact I don't consider it sport -- however as a biologist and environmentalist, I realize that the ecosystem of the few remaining natural areas interwoven with the urban sprawl we call southern Montgomery County, are seriously out of balance.

This is very true for Sligo Creek Park and its surrounding areas due in large part to a deer population that is too large. Without natural predators, the exponential growth of the deer population is harming the underbrush and low-lying plants and the diversity of the system. This encourages and helps invasive species to take root which further harms the ecosystem balance.

Therefore I support the controlled hunt or cull that is planned to remove these deer, and for the meat to be put to good use. It's obviously not the most ideal situation, but one that cannot be avoided at this time to help both the natural ecosystem as well as human safety.

RECEIVED 11:07AM, NOVEMBER 8

To Whom it May Concern:

I am in favor of deer culling for Sligo Creek Park. We have herds of deer roaming our neighborhood damaging our gardens and landscaping. I also would like to know if feeding the deer corn kernels left on the public sidewalk is prohibited. This creates a collision hazard since the deer have to cross the road to get the corn.

RECEIVED 9:51AM, NOVEMBER 8

Please include us as very much in favor of lessening the deer population problem in Montgomery County by lethal means. Although we are not in the Sligo Creek area, our neighborhood in Potomac is also overrun with these animals. There have been several accidents and near-accidents as well as cases of Lyme disease.

Please do whatever you can to diminish this crisis.

RECEIVED 11:42AM, NOVEMBER 9

I want to add my support for this necessary function. I have been well-acquainted with the damage the excess population of deer is causing to our native plants. The boom in the number of deer must be curtailed. While it is unfortunate that serious and expensive steps need to be taken, there seems no other way out.

RECEIVED 1:31PM, NOVEMBER 9

Dear MCP-Deer Management program.

I live near Sligo Creek and Carroll Avenue, south of the proposed culling.

However, I use Sligo Creek Parkway past the Golf Course frequently, as part of my commute.

I heartily endorse the proposed culling. Deer appear on my street and in my back yard and are a threat to plant life. With no natural predators, they become a hazard to local flora and fauna. Under other conditions, they would be kept in check by their own predators. I feel that unfortunately, we must take on that role.

Thank you for your attention.

RECEIVED 1:59PM, NOVEMBER 9

Happy hunting - It's way overdue.

Actually, I had a couple of questions.

1. Will we know what night exactly the culling will take place either in January or February? If so, how will that be communicated
2. Will there be several nights of culling? I think you'll need more than one to get the deer population to a manageable number.
3. Will you be targeting does primarily or also bucks?

Good luck.

RECEIVED 2:24PM, NOVEMBER 9

To Whom it May Concern:

I would like to express my support for the decision to cull the deer population in Sligo Creek Park. There do seem to be way too many of them around. Sighting them has become as common as sighting a squirrel. The damage the deer do to the plants and undergrowth is having a negative affect on the environment. I can't imagine that there is enough to sustain all of the deer as well. I LOVE the plan to donate the food to local food banks! Excellent idea!

Thank you so much for taking proactive steps in this matter and thank you for taking the time to solicit and read our feedback.

RECEIVED 2:27PM, NOVEMBER 9

I support the culling but not without regret. The population has grown too large for this area, through no fault of the deer. The regeneration of the park is being totally eaten by the deer. If it were not for the plants in neighborhood lawns, more deer would starve. Unfortunately, they do not eat the non-native invasive species, but prefer the native plants. Contraceptive drugs are not effective enough. Therefore I reluctantly support the managed hunt.

RECEIVED 3:48PM, NOVEMBER 9

I am writing in support of Parks reducing the number of deer in Sligo Creek Park. The number of deer are far above the caring capacity of Sligo Creek Park. A few deer are nice to see, but they are doing harm to the environment by consuming many of the native plants in the Park. I volunteer in the Park with the Weed Warrior Program. As we remove many invasive plants such as bush honeysuckle, the woods are opened up and deer can now get to native plants easier to eat or rub their antlers on to mark territory. The Park loses many (I dare say hundreds) of trees each year because of buck rubs. Many places in the Park have lost wild flowers because the deer eat them so the plants do not reproduce. Because large deer population are a major cause for destroying many the native plants, maybe we should stop removing the non-natives plants. But stopping the removal of invasive plants will be irresponsible because of the ecological damage it will cause to the forests.

I strongly urge the Park System to start removing deer from Sligo Creek.

RECEIVED 6:01PM, NOVEMBER 9

I not able to open the FOOSC letter to Mo. Co. Parks, so will just make my comments ...not knowing what it said.

Sorry.

The deer are leaving the park areas because they do not have enough food.

Could we not establish areas that are planted with enough food to keep them happy and out of harm's way?

Deer running in the streets are dangerous, and deer running through yards and eating expensive and tenderly cared for plants is really annoying.

Planting lots and lots of "deer food" seems like a good solution to keep them in a safe place.

I really hate the idea of killing them, and would be willing to help with planting "deer food areas" in our parks.

RECEIVED 7:29PM, NOVEMBER 9

I support the culling of deer in Sligo Creek Park, as endorsed by the Friends of Sligo Creek Board of Directors.

RECEIVED 7:39PM, NOVEMBER 9

I am a resident of Silver Spring. My house overlooks Sligo Creek Park. The deer often come up to my yard and I find it to be such wonderful thing. I often boast to people I know about my Deer friends that frequently visit me. They do dine in my yard, but I don't feel that they are damaging anything too important. I think it will be a terrible shame to kill my friends off.

RECEIVED 8:06PM, NOVEMBER 9

As residents of Bruce Drive close to Sligo Creek Park, we strongly support culling of deer in this park. As Weed Warriors, we see the devastation the deer have inflicted on the understory of the forest. The plants in our own yard are razed by the deer, even the impatiens in our fenced in back yard. Please do what you can to help control this scourge.

RECEIVED 8:53PM, NOVEMBER 9

To whom it may concern,

we live very close to Sligo Creek Park and use this wonderful space to exercise, walk our dog and take our children bike riding. While we love animals, we support the proposed culling of the deer population in Sligo Creek Park.

After dealing with Lyme disease we are very aware of the ever growing deer population and would like to see it reduced.

RECEIVED 9:53PM, NOVEMBER 9

Please do not kill Deer in the Sligo Park golf club. You should not kill any Deer PERIOD.

RECEIVED 9:58PM, NOVEMBER 9

Dear Sirs,

I emphatically support the proposal to control the deer population in Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park. I have lived in the North Hills of Sligo neighborhood for more than 38 years and my family and I have used the Park regularly since we moved here in 1973. For more than 20 years, I have walked or bicycled in the Park on a daily basis. During that time I have observed the steady degradation of the vegetation in the Park resulting from deer browse. This damage has increased dramatically in the past 10 years. One example is the destruction of wildflowers, particularly mayapples, which appear to be a favorite food of the deer. Within just a few years, the large patches of mayflower in the woods in the area near Dallas Avenue have almost completely disappeared.

In addition to the damage in the Park, there is the damage that now occurs regularly in yards throughout our neighborhood. Gardening is a hobby of mine and in 1995 I began collecting and growing daylilies. There was no problem until 2005 when deer first began to eat the flowers. The damage increased each year and attempts to protect the plants became so time consuming that at the end of 2010 I essentially gave in and transplanted virtually all my collection from the front to the back yard. There I have better possibilities for deer control with fences and repellents.

Another problem with the increasing deer population is the issue of Lyme disease. While my family has not been infected, several of residents of North Hills have been and must face all the debilitating effects of the disease along with the increased medical expenses.

Total elimination of the deer in the park would be the ideal solution, but is probably not feasible. However, some control measures are imperative. Thus, for the reasons stated above I strongly support the control program proposed.

RECEIVED 10:44PM, NOVEMBER 9

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposal to cull deer from Sligo Creek Park. As an across-the-street neighbor of the park and someone who makes regular use of the hiker-biker trail, I have seen increasing damage both within the park and on our property in the 22 years our family has lived here. The number of deer using our yard as a bedroom, bathroom, salad bar, and pick-up lounge seems to grow every year, and instead of one or two we often see groups of five or more making themselves at home (despite our efforts to repel them with sprays). This might be just a nuisance except for the damage these animals are doing to the environment and the health hazards to which they are exposing us as their numbers grow out of control. For example:

- Voracious deer are visibly changing the habitat in the wooded areas of our property. In the last few years, we have lost a generation of young saplings and native shrubs because the deer eat them before they can get large enough to survive. I expect the same thing must be happening in the park itself. Most of our trees are tall, mature beech, oak, and tulip poplars, and the overpopulation of deer relative to the food supply is preventing the growth of new ones that can take their place in future years. Those smaller trees and shrubs are also needed as habitat for other woodland animals and the birds everyone loves.
- The large number of deer overflowing from the park creates health concerns for Montgomery County residents. Twice my wife has required antibiotic treatments for deer ticks that bit her while she gardened in our yard. These deer-borne insects are known to carry Lyme disease. Moreover, we regularly have to dispose of piles of deer excrement that are left around the yard. If the deer population weren't so large, they would not be forced to spend their time so close to human habitation.
- There is also the auto safety issue as the number of deer continues to grow. Many of us who live near the park have had the experience of a deer suddenly appearing in the road, and we should all be very concerned about the risk of injury these large animals pose to drivers who encounter them unexpectedly.

I urge you to help restore the balance of nature in and around Sligo Creek Park by proceeding with the plan to cull the deer population.

RECEIVED 1:32AM, NOVEMBER 9

I fully support the control of deer populations by lethal means in the golf course property. Deer overpopulation is destroying the ecosystem and deer running into roads are endangering people in vehicles. MNCPPC must take action. I'm sorry this proposal is coming so late because many areas are already decimated.

This is the most scientifically sound and cost-effective approach to controlling deer overpopulation.

RECEIVED 8:13AM, NOVEMBER 10

I am completely in favor of culling the deer around Sligo Creek Parkway. I often drive from University Boulevard down to Wayne Ave and unfortunately while a scenic drive, I have to often been hyper-aware of my surroundings because of the deer potential in the area. Therefore, please go forward with the proposed managed hunt.

Thank you for the request for input from the public.

RECEIVED 8:24AM, NOVEMBER 10

Dear Montgomery County,

I live backing onto the Wheaton Spur of Sligo Creek park, where the Dennis water projects flow into Sligo creek. I am about a mile from the golf course, but am affected massively by deer. I have seen a herd of 14 deer running through my yard once, although 2-4 is more common. I also have fox, hawk and giant heron occasionally show up in my yard, which I appreciate.

I APPRECIATE and fully approve of a deer cull. Although it is beautiful for me to walk in, I consider Sligo Creek Park to be a WORKING Park, necessary to clean up the Bay and our other waterways, for which our state is on the hook financially. The current unnatural overabundance of deer is clearly and significantly damaging the park. Please fix it!

I understand the problem with public perception, and suggest you emphasize the following in your public relations:

1) The overabundance of deer depletes the plant life, which results in starvation and death for other animals (as well as the forest, as a living entity). Although we may see and appreciate deer, other smaller animals have a right to life too.

2) Left to themselves, without natural predators, the deer will achieve some maximum population when the death rate equals the birth rate. This seems to me to indicate that every year, with a herd size of 120, at least 20 (? or more?) "extra" deer will die of starvation or disease. Mostly the young, and females. Compared to a cull of (?) every 5-10 years, this really does not result in more death of deer, just faster and more humane.

3) Many means of "birth-control" have been tried for deer experimentally, and none are doable at this time.

In any event, this is something that is necessary at this time, and I approve these efforts.

RECEIVED 9:24AM, NOVEMBER 10

Dear Parks Department,

As a resident of the Sligo Neighborhood (Hayes Avenue), I support the cull of deer in Sligo Creek Park. My husband had Lyme disease and we were lucky to catch it early. We are happy to have the deer living around us, but we fully understand the need to control the population.

RECEIVED 10:06AM, NOVEMBER 10

Dear Montgomery Parks --

I live just across the Beltway from Sligo Golf Course in the Sunset Terrace neighborhood, and I support deer culling to try to preserve Sligo Creek Park. I am also very happy that Friends of Sligo Creek has lent its support to the culling. Thanks.

RECEIVED 10:15AM, NOVEMBER 10

I am writing to comment on the proposal to "cull" the deer population in Sligo Creek Park. I am a frequent driver on Sligo Creek Parkway. The number of times, including last night, when deer have crossed the road before my car, has increased substantially in the last year or two. And while the fawn I encountered last night was adorable, it does seem like we have a public safety problem. I am therefore supportive of the Parks Department plans to kill some of the deer, and applaud the County for arranging to donate the meat to a food bank that can put the venison to good use.

RECEIVED 11:07AM, NOVEMBER 10

I am writing to express our strong opposition to the proposal for the culling of deer in Sligo Creek Park. As members of the Sligo Park Hills community, we are against killing the deer that make their home along the creek.

We are very grateful to the Parks Department for the opportunity they have provided for us to comment on this plan before it moves forward.

Please let us know of any decisions that are made regarding this matter.

Many thanks.

RECEIVED 12:01PM, NOVEMBER 10

Please consider the thinning of deer in the Sligo Park area. As someone who "walks" the park regularly, I can tell you that the deer are no longer frightened by people and get much too close for my comfort level. Just recently, a biker had a serious accident because a deer jumped in front of him while biking on the trail. I live near the area in front of what is known as the "Colt Terrace Tot Lot" and the number of deer that come within 10 feet of me is simply put. **scary. They no longer move when a human is nearby.** Please consider helping us with this ever increasing problem.

RECEIVED 12:16AM, NOVEMBER 10

I would like to add my support for the proposed Deer Culling project in Sligo Park. I not only support the Sligo effort, but also feel that ongoing culling in many other areas of the county are necessary.

I live in Kemp Mill and have witnessed the extreme destruction of regrowth areas and private gardens in our surrounding parks due to the ever growing deer population.

I have been bitten by deer ticks on more than one occasion and am fearful of the severe effects of Lyme disease.

The fact that venison is used to feed those in need is an excellent outcome.

Please register my support for all county deer culling efforts.

RECEIVED 12:45PM, NOVEMBER 10

For the reasons outlined in the letter to you of August 8th from the Board of Directors of the Friends of Sligo Creek, I favor the proposed deer culling. Our house is a few hundred feet from the park boundary (at the intersection of Park Crest and Park Valley) and we have noticed a significant increase in the number of deer in and near the park in recent years.

RECEIVED 1:44PM, NOVEMBER 10

Please do not cull the herd of deer in Sligo Creek Parkway. They are here and should stay here. They have not been a traffic hazard and should be protected.

RECEIVED 1:52PM, NOVEMBER 10

Dear Maryland-National Capitol Park and Planning Commission:

We are writing to comment on your proposal to conduct deer management at Sligo Golf Course on Sligo Creek Parkway in Silver Spring.

We live near the Sligo Golf Course in the Seven Oaks neighborhood. This is an area in which we have often walked our dog and ridden bikes.

We agree that the neighborhood faces tough problems because of the deer population.

However, we are strongly opposed to your solution to deploy police sharpshooters to kill deer attracted to bait stations at night. We do not want our tax dollars to be spent in this way. There is a better solution.

The following are our main objections:

- First and foremost, we live in a densely populated area. No matter how many precautions you might take, the actions of human beings and other wildlife are unpredictable. The risk of someone being in the wrong place at the wrong time is too high. For example, what if a neighbor – not realizing that he was close to an active culling station – decided to take a breath of fresh air on a clear winter's night? I've known this to happen. Or what if some neighbors decided to go cross country skiing on the snow-covered bike trail when a full moon was coming up – but the night was an active deer culling night? We've done this. What if other creatures (like the neighborhood's beloved red fox) went for the bait?
- Second, we absolutely do not want guns introduced in the neighborhood for any reason at any time.
- Third, we do not want to hear gunfire late at night. We do not know if we would hear the shooting at our location, but we do not want to take a chance. The sound of gunfire is horrible and destabilizing to a community – whatever the cause. We did not move to our neighborhood to hear gunfire.
- Fourth, we detest the notion that we will shoot our deer. We have come to enjoy seeing them around us everyday. The thought that we will pay our tax dollars to murder the amazing young buck that shows up around our house makes us both physically ill.

They are beautiful, majestic creatures. Yes, they have eaten many of our plants. We know that FOSC volunteers and others have worked very hard to restore native plants and invigorate the health of the watershed here – and the deer have eaten many of them. Yes, there is an increased risk of Lyme's disease. But, we will put in plants that are not of interest to them. (We are doing our homework on deer-resistant plants now.) We are trying to take precautions against ticks when we garden and walk. In all fairness, deer are not the sole vector of Lyme's disease. Yes, we are nervous when we see them at the side of the road. But, we drive very cautiously and slowly through areas they frequent.

So clearly there is a problem. However, there is a better way to managing our deer population than shooting them in our parks. While we can understand the temptation to follow this course, we understand that other jurisdictions with similar problems have used birth control to manage the population, with positive results. We do not see any down side to the birth control solution. It may even be easier on the taxpayer pocketbook in the end and not take away police resources that may be sorely needed elsewhere.

Thank you for your consideration.