Herd Reduction Option: Surgical Sterilization

Process:

Deer fertility control by surgical sterilization may involve surgically removing reproductive organs or interrupting the fertilization pathway. This method requires the management team to have specific expertise in both chemical capture (sedation darting) and veterinary anesthesia and surgery.

The technique begins with deer capture via tranquilizer dart. The deer is then transported to a surgical bay. For male deer: the vas deferens are clamped and separated (vasectomy). For the removal of a deer's ovaries, the animal is typically in and out of surgery in less than 20 minutes, and the mortality rate is less than 2%.

Anticipated Result:

- An immediate reduction in birthrate of the deer population, resulting in substantially few younger deer and a slowly decreasing number of steadily aging adult deer within the Town limits.

PROS

- Nonlethal management techniques are generally accepted by the public.
- Animal is typically in and out of surgery in less than 20 min. Mortality rate is less than 2%.

CONS

- Difficult to obtain sufficiently skilled staff.
- Involves the capture and handling of deer.
- Difficult to capture enough deer (80%) to control a population.
- Overall success will be greatest for closed or insular deer herds where the effects of deer immigration can be minimized.
- Costly option

