

Deer Survey Protocol

The deer survey is to be used to detect trend information overtime related to the deer population, not an absolute population estimate.

City officials should develop pre-determined survey routes that allow for good coverage of the survey area. Survey routes should have designated starting and ending points. If some portions of survey routes overlap, make sure deer are not counted twice and determine prior to the start of the survey which route will count deer found on overlapping portions. All survey routes should be driven at the same time across the survey area.

Visibility and deer densities can change depending on season, so surveys should be repeated throughout a given year to capture fluctuations in the deer population and changing vegetation. All deer encountered on a survey should be recorded. It would be beneficial (although not necessary) to record demographic information to have knowledge of buck:doe and fawn:doe ratios.

Individuals selected to observe and record data should have knowledge and skills that allow them to clearly identify deer in the field, as well as age and sex of deer (if possible).

Survey should:

- begin 10 minutes after sunrise or finish just prior to sunset
- have two observers (driver and passenger)
- randomly alternate starting and ending point for each route within a given survey period
- record age class (adult or fawn) and sex of deer if possible
- be repeated throughout the year

Procedures:

1. Fill out the general information prior to starting the survey
2. Record the start time, date, observers, route name, and weather (temperature and precipitation)
3. Start survey and do not drive over 15 mph (vehicle flashers can be illuminated to warn other vehicles)
4. Record all deer seen on survey and general location where deer were encountered
5. Driver counts all deer seen on their side of the vehicle and passenger counts deer on their side of the vehicle.
6. Be sure to not count deer twice
7. At the end of each survey record the end time

Gear for survey:

- Pen/pencil
- Clipboard
- Datasheets
- Map of survey route
- Binoculars
- “Deer survey in progress” sign for vehicle to alert nearby vehicles

*this is a suggested protocol and can be modified

