

## **Non-Lethal Deer Management Meeting**

Date: July 19, 2016

Location: City Hall CSAA Office

In Attendance:

Derek Delacourt,	City of Ann Arbor
Bob McGee	A2 Residents for Non-Lethal Deer Management
Lisa Abrams	FAAWN
Dr. Anthony DeNicola (Phone)	Founder/President White Buffalo

### **Meeting Purpose**

The intent of the meeting was to discuss the services White Buffalo provides related to deer management. The company was mentioned on several occasions with the MDNR, MSU and residents as one that had the background and experience to assist with a non lethal fertility control project. The conference call was to gain better understand of what White Buffalo does and how they operate.

### **Meeting Summary**

White Buffalo:

Taken from their website

- White Buffalo, Inc. (WBI) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is focused on the conservation of native species and ecosystems. We sponsor, support, and conduct scientific research and educational efforts to improve the understanding of natural resources for the purpose of conservation. Our approach is unique, in that we generate funding for conservation research by providing management alternatives in non-traditional settings. We have spent the last two decades committed to improving both technology and techniques to maximize safety, humaneness and efficiency for the management of ungulates. We continue to share our findings with fellow professionals and others passionate about ecosystem management.

Fertility Control:

White Buffalo has a record of partnering with communities to develop lethal and non-lethal deer management programs. They have extensive experience with fertility control programs including immunocontraceptive, (PZP), and surgical sterilization. It is their opinion that surgical sterilization is the more effective means of fertility control. With PZP or other vaccines the administration of the drug requires darting and handling the deer on two, potential three instances. This increases the cost of the program and mortality rate for the deer. White Buffalo, the MDNR and MSU all agree that the primary cause of mortality associated with a fertility program is not surgery or the vaccine but the darting and handling of the deer.

Dr. DeNicola also noted that some deer mortality cannot be avoided due to hidden preexisting medical issues, as with any mammal undergoing surgery.

In the company's experience the initial cost of surgical sterilization is 25% higher than administering a vaccine but only handling the deer once reduces the overall program cost.

Dr. DeNicola demonstrated a significant understanding of the cull undertaken by the City and the issues creating impediments to success deer in an urban environment. He provided suggestions on how surgical sterilization could be an effective partner to the lethal cull in reducing the population, lessening the impacts of deer and achieving an agreed upon "maintenance point" for the City. The primary discussion centered on the ability to use surgical sterilization in areas that the City is not able to cull due to MDNR prescribed setbacks and geographical restrictions.

White Buffalo does not have issues or concern with operating in the field at the same time as other organizations. White Buffalo also provides culling services. Their desire is, if the City moves forward, to partner on developing a comprehensive program that includes lethal, non-lethal and reporting requirements. In his opinion there is a great opportunity in Ann Arbor to develop a comprehensive plan combining methods.