

July xx, 2019

Honourable Doug Donaldson  
Minister  
Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

Dear Minister Donaldson,

We, the undersigned Mayors representing xx municipalities in Greater Victoria, are seeking your support to develop and implement a region-wide deer management strategy.

As you know, your ministry is working with the District of Oak Bay on a research project to gather baseline data on deer densities, range, population dynamics and dispersal rates and then to support a first round of immuno-contraception over the summer and fall of this year.

Other municipalities in Greater Victoria have also launched research initiatives to gather baseline data on deer populations. For example, the Township of Esquimalt, through the Urban Wildlife Stewardship Society (UWSS), has undertaken two comprehensive deer population estimate surveys over the last two years that provide robust data on numbers and primary locations. A third survey will be undertaken shortly.

The Township of Esquimalt also conducted a 2016 survey of residents that found that 62 percent of residents are concerned about the presence of deer, 52 percent had spent money to deal with or prevent deer damage to their plants and 13 percent reported experiencing aggressive behavior by a deer.

While Oak Bay's efforts to use immuno-contraception is a good and humane first step at controlling the deer population, deer management is most effective when undertaken on a region-wide basis; otherwise, neighbouring deer populations will move in to fill newly-created voids. However, your ministry has jurisdiction for deer management and has only approved immuno-contraception in Oak Bay and only as part of a research project.

Therefore, we want to work with you and your ministry to finalize and confirm our collective deer population research efforts and then utilize a region-wide deer immuno-contraception strategy to manage and gradually reduce the deer population across our municipalities.

We want to underscore the need to move forward quickly on this process. Every year, more and more deer are being hit by cars or being infected by diseases, while an increasing number of our residents are being impacted by aggressive deer behavior. Residents are looking for governments to take fast and humane action to manage and reduce the deer population in our municipalities.

We look forward to discussing this further with you and will be seeking a meeting with you at this year's UBCM in Vancouver.

Your sincerely,