SSAA Port Macquarie Branch Inc.

Deer Hunting Protocol

For the

Port Macquarie Hastings

Local Government Area

Prepared By SSAA

Port Macquarie Branch Inc.
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Disclaimer

The information contained in this document is a guide only. It is not intended to be a directive to members who wish to
undertake shooting activities associated with the Wild Deer Management Strategy formulated by NCLLS.
By contributing to the strategy you are deemed to have indemnified Local Land Services, SSAA NSW, SSAA Port
Macquarie Branch Inc., their members and staff against any litigation whatsoever. SSAA Insurance Cover is $20M
At all times you are required to conduct yourself in accordance with and abide by NSW Laws, Acts and Regulations.
You are required to use your own judgment in assessing risks and take all necessary measures to prevent any
adverse outcome.
Introduction

The SSAA Port Macquarie Branch has an accreditation process for members to be part of a group to participate in wild deer culling within the Port Macquarie Hastings Local Government Area (PMHLGA).

Surveys and anecdotal evidence suggest that the wild deer population in the Port Macquarie area have reached an abundance level whereby their activities are causing significant damage to commercial agriculture, residential gardens: are being involved in traffic accidents and are threatening personal risk to humans. A recent TV report citing an instance of a red deer goring a person highlights the risks involved in the interaction between humans and wild animals the size of deer. Australians, having no cultural history with deer, are generally not readily aware of the risks associated with these animals when provoked or cornered.

North Coast Local Land Services has formulated a Wild Deer Management Strategy in which ground hunting will play a major role in the control of wild deer in the PMHLGA.

SSAA Port Macquarie Branch together with other stakeholders has been involved in the preparation of the strategy and has been invited to assist in its implementation.

This document outlines the minimum standards for inclusion in the culling group as well as supplying members with background information and the reporting tools required to complete the process.

Members will only be culling on private property where the owner grants permission and in doing so you should abide by the concepts outlined in this document. Owners can be advised of the benefits of sporting shooters undertaking control on their land but participants should equally outline that landholders are under no obligation to permit SSAA shooters on their land, regardless of the existence of the strategy. If other stakeholders invite members to cull elsewhere then you are to operate under their régimes and protocols.

It cannot be emphasized enough that members must exhibit a high degree of professionalism in going about any culling activity. Members will be dealing with landowners and the public in general; this together with the high risk to life and property requires your full attention and adherence to protocols.

Failure to meet appropriate standards will result in immediate removal from the culling group.

Prior to being included into the group, members will be required to complete an induction course. At the satisfactory completion of the course participants will be issued with an identity card that must be carried at all times when actively engaged in hunting. This identification is to be shown to landowners.

The Act and Regulations
Hunting of deer is to be carried out under the Game and Feral Animal Control Act 2002 and the Game and Feral Animal Control Regulations 2012. Refer to Appendix 4 for extracts.


The Act nominates all Australian deer species as game animals

The Act, Schedule 3 Game Animals, Other animals, Deer (Family Cervidae) states:

Deer species that may be encountered are:

- Chital (Axis axis)
- Hog Deer (Axis porcinus)
- Rusa (Cervus timorensis)
- Sambar (Cervus inicolor)
- Fallow Deer (Dama dama)
- Red Deer (Cervus elaphus)
- Wapiti deer (Cervus elaphus canadensis)

Under the Regulations all deer species may be hunted in accordance with the Act and Regulations. The Regulations stipulate species-specific requirements, methods of hunting and restriction on times of hunting.

Under the Regulations the following species have no open seasons and may be hunted in NSW all year round.

1. Chital (Axis axis)
2. Rusa (Cervus timorensis)
3. Sambar (Cervus inicolor)

Under the Regulations the following species have open seasons and may only be hunted in NSW during stipulated times of the year.

1. Hog deer (Axis porcinus)
2. Fallow deer (Dama dama)
3. Red deer (Cervus elaphus)
4. Wapiti deer (Cervus elaphus canadensis)

In April 2016, a revision to the regulations was gazetted changing certain regulations for the Port Macquarie Hastings Local Government Area (PMHLGA). [Game and Feral Animal Control
(Suspension of Game Hunting Licence Conditions) Order No3 2016.] This revision does not apply to areas outside PMHLGA.

The Order suspends certain conditions as follows:

Schedule 1 Conditions of game hunting licences

5(1) (a) Fallow deer - open season suspended.

5(1) (c) Red deer - open season suspended.

6(1) (a) Prohibition on spotlight usage – suspended for some deer species

8(1) Prohibition on aircraft, watercraft and motor vehicle usage as a shooting platform – suspended for some deer species.

10(1) Prohibition on night shooting – suspended for some deer species

In summary

The following conditions apply to the Port Macquarie Hastings Local Government Area until the 30th April 2018. All deer hunters are required to have a G or R licence.

Strong Control

Hog deer (Axis porcinus) - may only be hunted during open season, on foot, in daylight hours.

Wapiti deer (Cervus elaphus canadensis)- may only be hunted during open season, on foot, in daylight hours.

Moderate Control

Chital  (Axis axis) - may be hunted all year round, on foot, in daylight hours.

Samar – may be hunted all year round, on foot, in daylight hours.

Light Control

Fallow deer (Dama dama) - may be hunted all year round, from a motor vehicle or on foot using a spotlight as required, day and night.

Rusa (Cervus timorensis) - may be hunted all year round, from a motor vehicle or on foot using a spotlight as required, day and night.

Red deer (Cervus elaphus) - may be hunted all year round, from a motor vehicle or on foot using a spotlight as required, day and night.

Sambar/Rusa crosses are not identified in the Act, but as they are of the Cervidae family they fall under the Act. It would be safest to cull these animals under Sambar conditions unless directed to cull under Rusa conditions.

Accreditation

The skills needed to participate within the culling group include:
• Being able to identify the different deer species
• Carry out risk assessment
• Map reading
• GPS navigation
• Spotlight use
• Marksmanship

The club will provide a general education course at a time to be nominated.

If participants have a G or R License issued by the DPI Game Licensing Unit and have accessed the hunt booking process you are deemed to have satisfied the map reading and GPS components.

Team Composition

Accredited hunters shall be paired up to form a team. Hunting shall be conducted at all times as a team for the following reasons:

• Management of equipment - driving, spotlighting, range finding etc.
• Target confirmation.
• General surroundings awareness.
• Downed animal locating.
• Injury assistance.
• Event witness.

Where possible team composition will be self-selected, any unpaired persons will be allocated a partner on a trial basis.

Cull Allocation

The club controller will allocate culls on a rotational basis, if participants are unable or do not want to undertake the job it will be offered to the next team on the list.

Firearms and Calibre

Rusa and Rusa X are the most prominent species in our area. The DPI minimum calibre size for the humane culling of these species is .277 (270 Winchester) therefore our branch is nominating
the 270Win as the minimum calibre requirement for firearms used in the culling process. Smaller deer species capable of being taken with lesser calibres won't know the difference.

Reconnaissance

Reconnaissance is to be undertaken prior to any hunting activity and should include:

- Accessing an orthographic map, Google Earth map or ordinance map in order to familiarise yourself with the general area.
- Undertake a site inspection.
- Conduct a risk assessment of the site.

Firearms should not be carried during these processes.

Site Inspection

At a time agreed during daylight hours the team is to attend the site and introduce themselves to the property owner. Identity cards are to be produced as conformation of SSAA membership.

If at all possible, have the owner conduct the team around the site, he/she will know the property intimately and identify likely hot spots for deer and feral animals.

Take note of the ground/soil type and consider the likelihood of ricochets.

You should also discuss with the owner/s any concerns they may have and any special requirements they want the team to abide by. You should also at this stage confirm if any feral animals are to be culled. If they are, note species types, e.g. cats, dogs, goats, pigs and foxes.

Having had a basic familiarisation of the site, the team is to retrace their steps and undertake a risk analysis of the area and document it in words and marked up a plan. Take photographs to help plan your activities.

Site Risk Analysis

The risk analysis shall comprise the following elements

- Persons
- Self
- Stock
- Property
- Utilities
- Bullet path and trajectory

Persons

Inspect the site for normal pedestrian and vehicle traffic routes (tracks, paths and roads) and identify these on the plan. Look for locations where persons could appear without
warning. Identify normal residence and work areas of the property and mark up the plan. Check for and identify human habitation in close proximity to the property boundaries.

Self

Be aware of and identify any hazards that present a risk to yourself and your passengers. Note embankments, water hazards, potholes, concealed objects such as stumps and electrical hazards.

Stock

Identify type and location of any stock. Locate paddocks where they are located, and be aware of stock movements. Domestic stock can have similar eye colours to game in the spotlight.

Property

Note the location of residences, sheds and other out buildings that may contain machinery or equipment. Note position of fences, gates, posts, water tanks and the like.

Utilities

Note the location of power poles, overhead wires, transformer pads, substations, telegraph equipment, gas storage tanks and bottles together with any associated signage, markers and protection.

Bullet path and trajectory

Knowing and understanding how and where your projectile will cease to be a hazard is an important part of risk management. A typical example would be:

Assuming the average height of a shot taken will be in the order of 1200mm above ground level, a horizontal shot angle, a scope zeroed at 100 metres, a 150 grain 308 cal. projectile will travel approximately 430 metres before striking the ground. Depending on ground conditions a ricochet event must also be considered. Other typical calibre ranges that may be used as a guide:

- 130gn 270 Win 495m
- 150gn 270 Win 475m
- 140gn 7mm08 Rem 475m
- 150gn 308 Win 430m
- 180gn 375 Win 380m

Bullet pass through is not unusual and any down range consequences must be understood before any shot is taken.

Having completed the assessment of the site it may be found that the site is unsuitable for culling. Participants should consider ways to deter deer intrusion into the property so as to direct them to an adjacent area suitable for culling. This may not always be practical.
Hunt Plan

Plan your hunt and hunt your plan is the mantra that should be adopted at this point.

Discuss your ideas with the owner prior to determining a final course of action to ensure both parties are happy with the arrangements. Remember the participant’s presence on the site is at the discretion of the owner.

Any shots taken must be viable, with a one-shot kill being the only acceptable outcome. Mortally wounded deer lying in someone’s backyard bleeding to death could provoke outrage with some sections of the community and bring totally unwanted publicity upon the strategy.

Hunting plans need to indicate:

- Date
- Day/Night
- Time
- Transportation
- Hunt method - foot, vehicle, and tree stand, ambush.
- Firearms, ammunition, rests, shooting sticks, spotlight.
- Clothing - 3D, Camo, day cloths, jackets, boots etc.
- Food and water

Whatever method is chosen, agree the plan with the owner and stick to the plan, don’t change it if things aren’t working out, others may be working around the same information and any ad hoc moves could have unwanted results. If your plan is unsuccessful determine a remedy and create a new plan for a future occasion.

Carcass disposal

The carcass belongs to the landowner and they will determine what is to be done with it. If they want it, it is theirs. If it is agreed that the animal is to be left on site to decompose, cut the gut open to allow scavengers easy entry. If they request its removal then it can be disposed of in a manner to be determined as agreed, this may include taking of carcass for personal use, gifting to an third party or dumping at cost at Sancroix Waste Disposal Site.

Contacts

Contact the following persons and organizations prior to culling activity:

- Owner - phone
- Police – phone 6583 0199
• Club – hunting@ssaapmq.com.au Notify names, date, location and times.
Neighbors (Ask owner to contact neighbors for times of shooting events)

Reporting

Results of the activity are to be entered on the form provided and sent to Local Land Services as noted on the form.
A copy is to be emailed to the clubs hunting address hunting@ssaapmq.com.au
Appendix 1

Forms
Appendix 2

Wild deer identification

And

Port Macquarie Hastings Council

Local Government Area
Appendix 3

Ground Shooting
Appendix 4

Act and Regulation Extract
Appendix 5

Risk Assessment Guide Sheets