

# Morris County Park Commission White-tailed Deer Management Program

## Rules and Regulations – REVISED August 2021

The Morris County Park Commission (MCPC)'s White-tailed Deer Management Program is a controlled management program in which hunters are expected to focus harvest efforts on female deer. **To that end, hunters are expected to harvest two antlerless deer for every antlered deer for each permit that (s)he holds.** Failure to meet this requirement may result in penalties including suspension or permanent revocation of hunting privileges.

All MCPC Rules and Regulations will be strictly enforced except as modified by the rules outlined below. A summary of the MCPC's Rules and Regulations can be viewed online at [www.morrisparks.net](http://www.morrisparks.net). A complete set of Rules and Regulations can be viewed at the MCPC Headquarters located at The Cultural Center, 300 Mendham Road, Morris Township, New Jersey

### NOTICE FOR ALMATONG WELLFIELD HUNTERS

The following rule is in place for all hunters assigned to the Almatong Wellfield. Almatong Wellfield hunters must abide by these three rules in addition to all other rules outlined herein.

- ALM-1. All hunting at the Almatong Wellfield must take place from an elevated tree stand that is attached to the tree at least six feet above the ground.

### Program Requirements

1. The purpose of the MCPC's deer management program is to manage the deer population to promote a healthy, native ecosystem on park properties. **The goal of the program is the harvest of female deer, which can be accomplished through the targeted harvest of antlerless deer.** The MCPC reserves the right to remove any hunters that are not working towards the goal of the program as it deems necessary. This includes the failure to harvest antlerless deer or focusing harvest efforts on antlered deer for multiple seasons.
2. Hunters that do not harvest an antlerless deer in a five-year period will be permanently removed from the program.

### New Jersey State Laws and Division of Fish and Wildlife Regulations

3. All hunters with MCPC-issued access permits must abide by all New Jersey codes, rules, regulations, zones, license and permit requirements applicable to the hunting of deer and administered by the State of New Jersey and the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife (NJDFW) including but not limited to bag limits and the checking of deer using the NJDFW's Automated Game Check System. ***In instances where MCPC rules, regulations and procedures are more restrictive, all hunters with MCPC-issued access permits must abide by the enhanced restrictions in addition to all applicable New Jersey codes, rules, and regulations.***
4. All firearm hunters with access permits must wear a cap made of solid daylight fluorescent orange or an outer garment containing at least 200 square inches of fluorescent orange material visible

from all sides at all times while participating in the Deer Management Program. A camouflage-orange hat by itself is not adequate.

5. All bow hunters with access permits must wear hunter orange if the season overlaps with a firearm season at that park location.

### **Annual Access Permits**

6. In order to participate in the MCPC's Deer Management Program, a MCPC-issued annual access permit is required. Any person found hunting on MCPC land without an annual access permit will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. The permit must be carried whenever a hunter is on MCPC land for the purposes of the Deer Management Program. The access permit is only valid with a valid NJDFW hunting license and the applicable NJDFW zone permit when required.
7. Hunters must apply to the MCPC **each year** for an annual access permit according to procedures established by the MCPC. Participation in the Deer Management Program the previous year is not a guarantee that the applicant will be selected for an access permit the following year, though participants that show satisfactory effort and results as determined by the MCPC will be given preference to receive a permit over new applicants or those hunters with unsatisfactory attendance and results.
8. The annual access permit will indicate the type of weapon that is allowed by the permit (firearm **or** bow) and the assigned park location in which the permit holder is permitted to hunt. A **bow permit will only allow for access to one park** – additional bow permits are required if a hunter wishes to hunt in another location. A firearm permit will allow access to all designated firearm areas according to the designated schedule.
9. The annual access permit only allows for the hunting of deer by the means and on the dates specified on the permit. All other hunting is strictly prohibited. **Hunting on Sundays is prohibited in County Parks by State Law.**
10. All hunters will be provided with an armband identification holder which **must be worn at all times** while participating in any Deer Management Program-related activity (hunting, scouting, hiking to or sitting in tree stands, etc.) on MCPC property. The armband has a clear plastic pocket in which to hold the hunter's annual access permit. The annual access permit must be placed within the armband in such a way as to display the individual's name and permit number for the specific park location. There is a \$10 replacement fee for missing armbands.
11. In accordance with State requirements, a current New Jersey State hunting license and current applicable New Jersey State Deer Management Zone permit(s) must be displayed on the hunter's person while hunting in any designated MCPC hunting area.
12. Under no circumstance shall an individual without a MCPC-issued annual access permit accompany a hunter with an access permit while (s)he is on MCPC property for the purpose of participating in the Deer Management Program. This includes all Deer Management Program-related activities including but not limited to scouting in off-trail areas and setting up/or taking down tree stands.
13. Any hunter with a MCPC-issued access permit that is under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a licensed hunter who is over the age of 18 and holds a valid MCPC-issued annual access permit for the same Park.

14. Annual access permits are not transferrable.
15. **Hunters that show no participation effort for more than one year will be removed from the program.** Hunters that forfeit their permits before the end of the program season will not be penalized.

### **Designated Hunting Areas and Safety Zones**

16. **No hunter shall have a nocked arrow or loaded firearm while within 450 feet of any building or school playground.** This requirement applies to **both firearm and bow hunters.**
17. Hunters with access permits are responsible for being aware of all Park boundaries, safety zones, and restricted areas.
18. Hunters with access permits must obey all posted signs. No hunting shall be permitted in any safety zone or restricted area for any reason, even if a hunter has obtained permission from an adjacent landowner.
19. Hunters with access permits shall not enter restricted areas as designated on a Park hunting map or private property for any reason. If a hunter has permission to access private property or needs to access a restricted area for any reason, (s)he must contact the Morris County Park Police.

### **Deer Driving**

20. The driving of deer is permitted but the hunters responsible for moving deer may not be armed.
21. Under no circumstance is the driving of deer from private property permitted.
22. The driving of deer from MCPC property to adjacent areas is prohibited.

### **Hunt Schedules**

23. Unless a more specific schedule is specified, hunting may begin one half hour before sunrise and must end one half hour after sunset. Hunters with access permits shall not be in the Park more than 30 minutes before the designated hunting start time, and more than 30 minutes after the designated hunting end time.
24. A hunter with an access permit who must remain in the Park for more than 30 minutes after the end of designated hunting hours in order to track a wounded deer or find a lost person must inform the Morris County Park Police directly by cell phone or in person.

### **Handling of Weapons**

25. **Hunters using crossbows must do so from an elevated tree stand** that is attached to the tree at least six feet above the ground. **Crossbows must be unloaded,** except when the hunter is in the elevated tree stand.
26. Firearm hunters are permitted to utilize both shotguns and muzzleloaders but must abide by NJDFW requirements regarding the use of weapons during designated hunting seasons in the applicable deer management zone and must hold all necessary NJDFW permits for the use of the weapon.

27. The NJDFW specifies the permitted weapon type; required gauge, caliber or draw weight; type of projectile(s) permitted; and necessary firearm sights and bow releases for each hunting season. All hunters must abide by these requirements.
28. No weapon, including but not limited to firearm, arrow, or bolt shall be discharged across MCPC owned or managed access roads, paths or trails.
29. No firearm, bow, arrow, or bolt shall be left unattended at any time.

### **Tree Stand Requirements**

30. Only commercially manufactured hang-on, climbing, and ladder tree stands are permitted. Such stands shall be attached to the tree by use of a cable, chain or strap to minimize injury to the tree.
31. Hunters may utilize a ground blind unless they are using a crossbow per Rule #25. All rules listed under Tree Stand Requirements apply to the ground blind. The ground blind counts as a tree stand, i.e. a hunter may have either a tree stand or a ground blind in the park for which they hold an access permit, not both.
32. A hunter may leave only one tree stand in each park for which they hold an access permit. In the case of firearm permits which allow access to multiple areas, a hunter may leave a tree stand in each of the designated areas. If a hunter holds a bow permit and a firearm permit for the same area, only one tree stand is permitted. A hunter may use additional hang-on, climbing, or ladder tree stands and access devices in an area, but they must be removed on a daily basis.
33. No tree stand shall be located within 50 feet of maintained MCPC service or access roads, marked trails, or public roads.
34. A tree stand must be marked in an obvious location with the owner's MCPC annual access permit number for the current program season in characters that are visible from the ground. Unidentified stands will be confiscated.
35. A tree stand and access devices are permitted to remain in a tree for the duration of the MCPC hunting season in that specific park location. No stand or access devices shall be placed in a tree for more than two weeks before the season begins, nor shall a stand or access devices remain in a tree for more than two weeks after the last day of hunting in the park indicated on the hunter's access permit or after the revocation of a hunter's access permit.
36. Access to and from a tree stand is limited to commercially manufactured screw-in steps, strap-on steps, or climbing sticks. Tree gaff climbers, spikes, and nail-on steps are not permitted. A hunter must adhere to the manufacturer's safety recommendations when using a tree stand and its safety devices.
37. A hunter must use a safety harness while in the tree stand, and must use a haul line to raise and lower the firearm and/or bow.
38. Removal of vegetation to gain access to, improve line of sight for, or hang a tree stand shall be kept to a minimal amount. Excessive removal as determined by the MCPC may result in the revocation of the responsible hunter's access permit.

39. Only reflective tacks, clips, or twist ties may selectively be placed in trees to mark access routes, and must be removed within two weeks of the end of the MCPC hunting season in that specific park location. Flagging tape is prohibited.
40. Hunters are not permitted to utilize another hunter's tree stand without the owner's permission.

### **Access and Parking**

41. Firearm hunters are required to check in with MCPC staff at a designated location before accessing and leaving the park. Hunters will be required to report the number of harvested deer when checking out with staff; however (s)he must also comply with NJDFW Automated Game Check System requirements as well as end of season survey requirements as specified herein .
42. There shall be no trespassing on private property to gain access to any designated MCPC hunting areas.
43. All hunters with access permits will be made aware of all parking areas available to them within the Park prior to the start of the program season. Maps specifying the same will be supplied along with the annual access permit. Failure to park in designated areas may result in fines or the revocation of a hunter's access permit. Any hunter with an access permit that chooses to park outside the boundaries of the Park or along a roadside should familiarize themselves with municipal regulations. The MCPC will not be held responsible for any tickets or fines issued to a hunter for noncompliance with local traffic ordinances
44. Designated parking areas may include areas next to access gates. In these areas, hunters must park in such a way that will allow access to park and emergency vehicles
45. Upon receipt of the annual access permit, each hunter will be issued a vehicle identification tag for use during the program season. Each tag will be marked with the appropriate permit number. This **vehicle identification tag must be displayed on the dashboard and be clearly visible** whenever hunters with access permits are on MCPC property for the purpose of participating in the Deer Management Program. Carpoolers are encouraged to display their vehicle tag in addition to the driver's for safety purposes.

### **Baiting and Trail Cameras**

46. Baiting within safety zones, non-designated hunting areas and restricted areas is prohibited.
47. The use of any type of container or feeder to dispense or hold bait is prohibited.
48. A maximum of five (5) gallons of non-manufactured, natural baits, such as fruits, vegetables, and shelled grains may be used. The use of minerals, manufactured supplements, liquids, molasses, blocks and licks is prohibited.
49. No baiting is permitted prior to two weeks before the park area deer hunting season begins in that specific park location.
50. All bait piles and trail cameras, if not located within 30 yards of a labeled treestand, must be clearly labeled with the hunter's MCPC annual access permit number for the current program season.

### **Field Dressing**

51. Field dressing of harvested deer is restricted to areas located at least 25 feet away from MCPC trails, access roads, parking areas, and buildings.

### **Harvest Requirements**

52. For every three (3) female deer harvested, the responsible hunter will receive one access permit during the following year's program at no cost. **To qualify for this credit, tag numbers must be provided and the sex and harvest location including the Deer Management Zone and Unit reported to the NJDFW must correspond with the information provided to the MCPC.** The credit will be forfeited upon the receipt of any warnings or summons from the MCPC, the Morris County Park Police, local law enforcement officers or NJDFW Conservation Officers for infractions of the program rules and regulations and/or New Jersey laws, codes, rules and regulations.
53. All hunters with access permits will be mailed an end-of-season harvest summary form. **Completion of this form and its return by the specified deadline is mandatory.** Even those hunters that fail to harvest a deer for the season are required to return this form. Hunters who fail to submit this form or who provide the MCPC with false information will be removed from the program.
54. **Hunters must keep track of the NJDFW Automated Game Check System confirmation numbers received for all deer harvested on MCPC property.** This information must be submitted along with the end-of-season harvest summary form and is subject to verification against NJDFW records.

### **Vehicle Use**

55. All motorized off-road vehicles, including ATVs, are strictly prohibited from all MCPC property.
56. The driving of any vehicle on unauthorized roads is prohibited.

### **Miscellaneous**

57. The use or possession of alcoholic beverages while participating in the Deer Management Program is strictly prohibited.
58. Any form of littering is prohibited including but not limited to shotgun shell casings and rubber gloves.

**Participation in the Morris County Park Commission's White-tailed Deer Management Program is not a right. The Morris County Park Commission reserves the right to suspend or reject individuals as it deems necessary. Any hunter found violating any of the above stated rules will have their annual access permit and hunting privileges within the Morris County Park Commission suspended indefinitely.**