

Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department 2025 Ramsey County Cooperative Deer Management Plan

The Ramsey County Board of Commissioners, in December of 1999, approved a deer population management plan. Since the approval of the plan, the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department has implemented an annual deer management program, which includes population evaluations and management. Locations for deer management are set from aerial deer survey, hunter statistic and human-deer interaction data. Management tools can then be chosen to maintain or reduce deer numbers in these areas.

With guidelines provided from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources wildlife management department, the Ramsey County deer population goal is set at 15-20 deer per square mile of deer habitat. Management tools are implemented in areas that exceed this population goal or where the social carrying capacity (deer population level at which people can tolerate or accept the problems associated with a deer herd) is elevated. Deer herd populations that exceed the carrying or social capacity of the land can be detrimental to the overall health of the herd and impact the public through increased auto/deer collisions and the spread of deer ticks that may carry Lyme disease. The 2025 management program was reviewed by the Ramsey County Parks Commission members.

Aerial Deer Survey and Population Estimates

An aerial survey was not completed in 2024, due to minimal to no snowpack. A 12-inch snowpack is ideal to be able to see the deer well. A survey was completed in 2023 and a total of 175 deer were counted in mid-February and early March, which was a decrease since the last survey completed in 2021, when a total of 447 deer were observed. The deer count was lower in 2023 partially due to survey areas being reduced because of decreasing snow cover, which also made for poor visibility in areas that were surveyed. Survey conditions and locations are taken into consideration when making management decisions. (See Attachment 1 for the 2023 aerial survey map)

Annual Archery Program

Annual archery hunts are held at select Ramsey County operated park locations, in conjunction with neighboring municipalities to maintain or reduce the deer population. Several other agencies and municipalities are conducting or planning deer management programs within their jurisdiction, in addition to the management programs on county property. These include the Arden Hills Army Training Site, H.B. Fuller and the cities of Little Canada, Maplewood, North Oaks, Shoreview, Saint Paul and Roseville. The cities of Gem Lake, Vadnais Heights and White Bear Township still allow archery hunting on private property under certain city criteria.

The Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department, in cooperation with the associated municipalities, is proposing to conduct special archery hunts on 7 county properties in the fall of 2025. Ramsey County Parks, in coordination with Ramsey County Property Management, has expanded the Battle Creek Park hunt to include Boy's Totem Town for the third year. (See Attachment 2 – 2025 hunt information)

The program will be conducted using special archery hunts during the regular State of Minnesota archery season. Participants will be selected through the Metro Bowhunters Resource Base (MBRB), a non-profit organization who coordinates volunteer archers from the public. Hunts will be restricted to dates established by the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department. Archers will be allowed to keep the deer shot during the regular season. These hunts are expected to remove approximately 45 - 62 deer. A total of 57 deer were harvested during the 2024 season. Attachment 3 includes the 2024 hunt summary and harvest statistics.

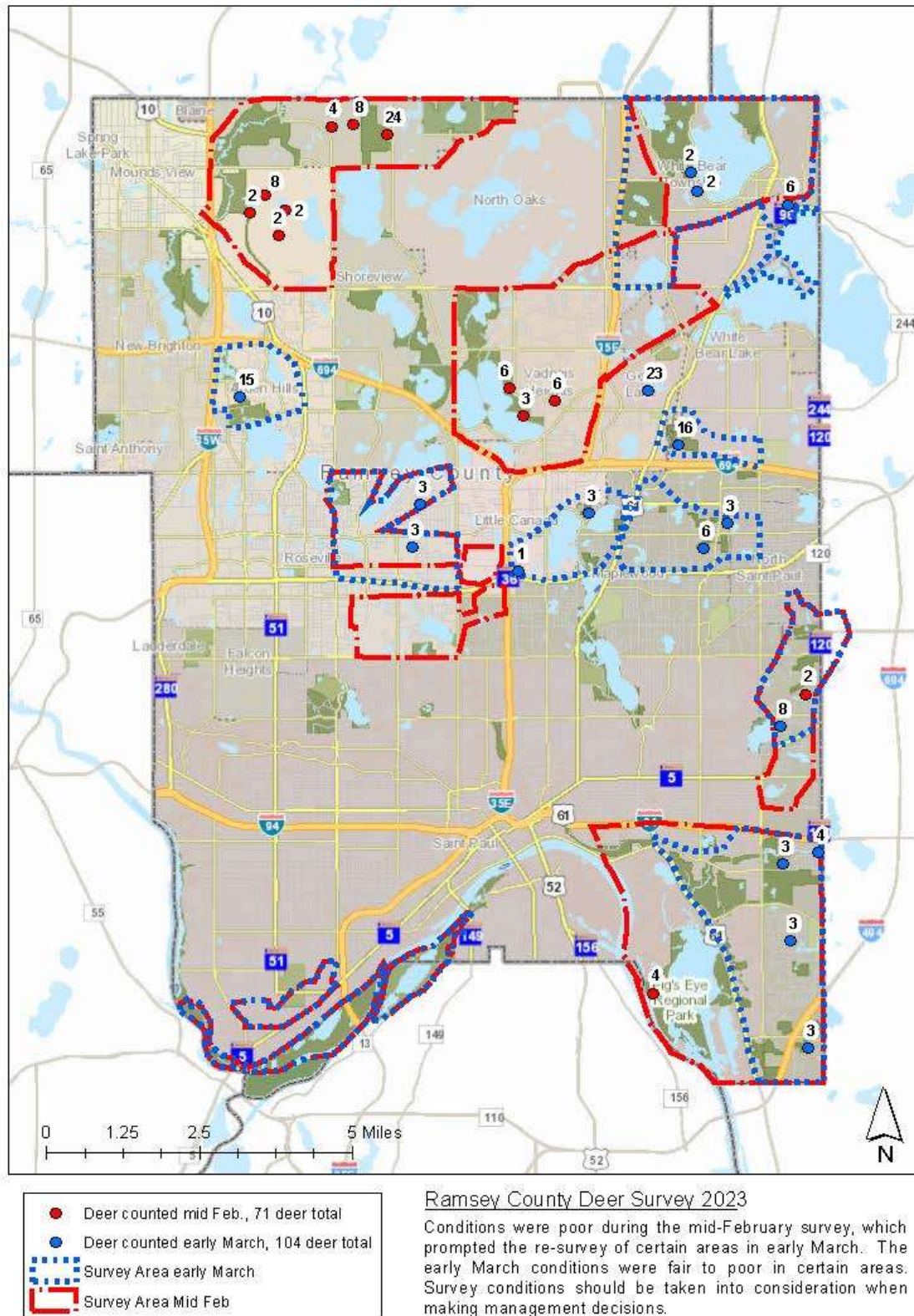
Sharp Shooting Program

Firearm sharpshooting can be used to quickly reduce numbers to a safe level in areas where the deer herd has far exceeded the population goal. The Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department first used sharpshooting in 2005 as a deer reduction option in conjunction within the cities of Maplewood and St. Paul. In 2014, 2015, and 2016 the Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department aided the City of Maplewood with coordinating sharpshooting on city and county land in northern sections of Maplewood. Annually, since 2017, the City of Maplewood, City of Saint Paul and Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department coordinated with the United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Wildlife Services for the removal of deer through sharp shooting within southeastern Ramsey County. The total deer removed through sharp shooting and general locations is listed in the table below:

Location	Location	City	2005	2014	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Highwood area	Highwood Ave area	St. Paul / Maplewood	200			64	33	22	14	50	20	30	29
Northern section of Maplewood	Larpenteur / Century area	Maplewood		120	75								
Annual total		Annual totals	200	120	75	64	33	22	14	50	20	30	29
		Permitted take / Goal	200	120	75	100	75	75	50	50	50	50	50

In 2024, 29 deer were removed, successfully reducing the deer population within the Highwood Ave area. The Ramsey County Parks & Recreation department, in cooperation with the affected municipalities, is proposing to allow sharpshooting on county land for the winter of 2025/2026 in select areas where the number of deer exceed the social or carrying capacity of the land, which is usually elevated at 3 to 10 times the population goal of 15-20 deer per square mile of deer habitat.

Attachment 1 **2023 Aerial Deer Survey Map**



Attachment 2

Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department Ramsey County Cooperative Deer Management Archery Program (Fall 2025)*

Site	max # of hunters	expected harvest
(Fri-Sun)		
Poplar Lake	8	4-8
Pig's Eye	18	8-10
Fish Creek	12	6-8
Turtle Creek	10	4-6
(Mon-Wed)		
Battle Creek & Boys Totem Town	15	7-10
Vadnais	20	10-12
<u>Rice Creek North Trail</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>4 - 6</u>

* All sites will have two 3-day hunts during October, November or December.
They will be Fri-Sun or Mon-Wed.

Attachment 3

Ramsey County Parks and Recreation Department 2024 Special Archery Deer Hunt Summary

Archery Hunts

Ramsey County Parks and Recreation department's 25th annual special permit archery hunt, in conjunction with St. Paul, Maplewood, Little Canada, Vadnais Heights, Shoreview, and White Bear Township, was a safe and successful season. There were multiple 3-day hunts in October, November, and December within 7 Ramsey County sites.

A total of 57 deer were harvested in 2024, compared to 72 in 2023. The 2024 deer harvest included: 17 adult doe, 7 fawn doe, 25 adult bucks, and 8 fawn bucks (see attached table). The antlerless harvest rate was 56% in 2024, which is a 11% decrease from 2023. The overall success rate for the special archery hunts was 63% in Ramsey County; state average for archery is 25%.

Minnesota Bowhunters Resource Base (MBRB) provided 90 archers, not including hunt coordinators. No safety problems were reported during any of the hunts. Some park users continued to use the park trails during the hunts, even with "park closed" signage. This is an annual occurrence and archers have adapted to the potential of having park patrons in the hunt areas.

2024 HARVEST STATS

Ramsey County Site	Adult Buck	Adult Doe	Fawn Doe	Fawn Buck	Site Total
Battle Creek	5	6	2	1	14
Fish Creek	3	3	3	0	9
Pigs Eye	4	2	2	4	12
Poplar Lake	2	3	0	1	6
Rice Creek	2	0	0	1	3
Turtle Creek	3	2	0	0	5
Vadnais Hts	6	1	0	1	8
Total	25	17	7	8	57

Ramsey County Cooperative Deer Management Implementation Program for 2025

Site	Cities	Max # hunters	Hunt Dates	Orientation
Monday-Wednesday				
Battle Creek & Boys Totem Town	Maplewood, St. Paul	15	Oct. 20 – 22, Nov. 3 – 5	Sept. 24
Vadnais Lake	Vadnais Heights	20	Oct. 27 - 29, Nov. 17 - 19	Oct. 1
Rice Creek Trail	Shoreview	7	Oct. 27 - 29, Nov. 17 - 19	Oct. 1
Friday - Sunday				
Poplar Lake	WBT, Shoreview	8	Oct. 31 – Nov 2, Nov. 14 – 16	Sept. 24
Fish Creek	Maplewood, St. Paul	12	Oct. 24 – 26, Nov. 14 - 16	Sept. 24
Pig's Eye	St. Paul	18	Oct. 24 – 26, Nov. 14 - 16	Oct. 1
Turtle Creek	Shoreview	10	Dec. 5 – 7, Dec. 12 -14	Sept. 24

*** Hunts held on State or Municipal land, not on Ramsey County Parkland**