

THE URBAN DEER PROBLEM in INVERMERE

A Tale of Bureaucracy, Facebook, & Lawyers

Deer Problems

- Increased complaints of aggressive behaviour to dogs and people
- Deer eating garbage is unfortunately common
- Deer eating various 'deer proof' plants and causing property damage
- Number of deer in town seems larger every year
- Some of the deer look very unhealthy (fear of disease)
- Increased number of predators (cougars) coming into town and Feeding on deer in people's yards near the schools
- Mysterious deaths of deer, fear that people are "taking things into their own hands"
- Huge deer proof fences common, creating an unfriendly community



Timeline

<u>Sept 2009</u>	<u>Discussions started with the Province regarding Urban Deer</u>
<u>June 2010</u>	<u>Province provides Urban Ungulate Conflict Analysis</u>
<u>Dec 2010</u>	<u>Terms of Reference for Deer Committee Adopted by Council</u>
<u>Jan to Jul, 2011</u>	<u>Committee completes research on Deer Management and prepares Report</u>
<u>August 2011</u>	<u>Final Deer Committee Report received and adopted by Council, a deer cull and reducing the deer population over the next few years a key recommendation</u>
<u>Sept 2011</u>	<u>Deer Cull Permit submitted to Province for approval</u>
<u>Nov 2011</u>	<u>Permit for Deer Cull Issued</u>
<u>Nov 2011</u>	<u>Every candidate in municipal election spoke in favour of a deer cull</u>
<u>Dec 2011</u>	<u>Trapping RFP Issues</u>
<u>Dec 2011</u>	<u>Several Facebook sites against the cull begin (ex: Don't be a Monster, Don't support the Slaughter of Invermere Deer), some opposition begins</u>
<u>Jan 2012</u>	<u>Group of opposed citizens both complains about the lack of public process And also tells people the cull can be stopped if they show up at a council meeting and try to convince Council not award the cull contract</u>
<u>Jan 2012</u>	<u>Trap and Cull contract awarded</u>
<u>Feb 10, 2012</u>	<u>Injunction to cease cull granted, and a lawsuit against Invermere filed, Claiming a lack of consultation and attacking the Provincially recommended process</u>
<u>Feb 24, 2012</u>	<u>Injunction not extended, Cull proceeds</u>
<u>Mar 15, 2012</u>	<u>Cull permit ends, 21 deer caught in the cull, those opposed sabotaged traps</u>
<u>October 2013</u>	<u>Lawsuit dismissed against Invermere, deer opposition set to appeal</u>
<u>November 2013</u>	<u>Opinion Poll on deer cull, 74% in support of deer cull being one of the tools Opposition group went door to door, had full page ads in the newspaper, after losing the vote claimed</u>
<u>March 2014</u>	<u>Province of BC says no to helping pay for any legal costs defending their process</u>
<u>June 2014</u>	<u>District awarded Court Costs for both petition and appeal process (collection unlikely)</u>

Frustration with the Province

- No financial support, these are Crown Animals, local government has no authority but assumed responsibility- pays the cost
- Conflicting information, Province will not rule out hazing, relocation, birth control- but also will not allow these without study (more money). Province does not stand up to the deer lovers.
- Viewed as being a local problem- it isn't!
- Lots of promises, very little action (committee)