

## LETTERS

**Cayuga Heights off mark**

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We write to express our strong opposition to the proposal for mass "bait and shoot" killing of deer in the Village of Cayuga Heights. We believe it is morally reprehensible and bespeaks a deficit of vision and leadership, for the village to commit to mass slaughter without full exploration and fair consideration of non-lethal alternatives, especially in this well-resourced and knowledge-rich community.

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The village's accident and disease statistics do not establish an urgent safety need for imminent killing. Meanwhile, other options to minimize human-deer interactions exist, ranging from speed enforcement, road reflectors, lighting and fences, to sterilization in partnership with Cornell University or other community groups. Indeed, a previous sterilization effort in the village saw a substantial reduction in herd size in the two years it was implemented.

Bait-and-shoot killing has been found to be costly and controversial in other community deer control efforts. The Cayuga Heights plan seems rushed and fraught with potential hazards. Why not take the time, and exercise the vision and leadership, to fully assess village needs, build on connections with Cornell and other resources, and devise plans for minimizing deer-human conflict that will make the Village of Cayuga Heights a model of humane and thoughtful action, rather than another "bait-and-shoot" killing field?

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