

## Mary Mills

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**From:** Laura Simon [lsimon@humanesociety.org]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 07, 2010 1:41 PM  
**To:** Kate Supron; Robert Andolina; Christopher Crooker; Stephen Hamilton; Elizabeth Karns; Diana Riesman; Beatrice Szekely; Mary Mills  
**Subject:** Humane Society of the US letter re: proposed deer management plan  
**Attachments:** letter\_to\_mayor\_supron\_of\_Cayuga\_Heights.pdf; Ostfeld\_2011\_Lyme.pdf



letter\_to\_mayo Ostfeld\_2011\_  
supron\_of\_Cayulyme.pdf (5 MB)

Dear Mayor Supron and Village Trustees,

I have enclosed a letter outlining the HSUS's concerns with the proposed deer management plan. The HSUS would like to assist your efforts in creating a solid, effective and humane deer problem mitigation program as we have much expertise to offer. Please see the attached!

Cheers,

Laura Simon

Field Director, Urban Wildlife Program

lsimon@humanesociety.org <mailto:lsimon@humanesociety.org>

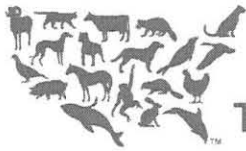
t 203.393.1050 c 203.314.3361

The Humane Society of the United States

CT Field Office - PO Box 3665 Amity Station- Woodbridge CT 06525 [humanesociety.org](http://humanesociety.org)

<<https://webmail.hsus.org/exchweb/bin/redir.asp?URL=http://www.humanesociety.org>>

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Dec 8, 2010

Ms. Kate Supron, Mayor  
Village Offices  
836 Hanshaw Road  
Ithaca, New York 14850

Dear Mayor Supron and Cayuga Heights Village Trustees,

I am writing on behalf of the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), a national organization with over 800,000 New York members, to express our strong opposition to the use of net and bolt to kill wild deer, and to question assumptions pertaining to the lethal control aspects of the proposed deer management plan. At the same time, the HSUS commends the Village for its forward thinking in including sterilization as a vital component of the plan.

### The use of captive bolt for killing wild deer

Captive bolt guns were designed for use on domestic animals in highly structured and controlled environments. The HSUS does not believe that net and bolt methodology can be used correctly and consistently enough in field settings to provide for the humane capture, restraint and killing of deer. A deer caught in netting panics and thrashes around, reacting not only to the restraint, but also to the perception of other impending threats to his safety such as approach and handling by people.

As stated by the American Veterinary Medical Association *Guidelines on Euthanasia* (June 2007), "Adequate restraint is important to ensure proper placement of the captive bolt. A cerebral hemisphere and the brainstem must be sufficiently disrupted by the projectile to induce sudden loss of consciousness and subsequent death." The AVMA points to those few contexts where penetrating bolt guns can provide euthanasia, if properly used and maintained –as being "in slaughterhouses, in research facilities, and on the farm when use of drugs is inappropriate." These conditions cannot be met in field settings with free-ranging deer when so many variables occur with restraint and handling. Accordingly, we cannot condone this procedure as humane.

### Lyme disease and hunting

Killing deer will also not reduce incidence of human cases of Lyme disease, as demonstrated by an interview with a leading researcher in the Harvard Newsletter <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/features/features/killing-deer-not-answer-reducing-lyme-disease.html> and by the new authoritative text, *Lyme Disease: the Ecology of a Complex System* (2011), which points out how assumptions that reducing deer will significantly reduce the black-legged tick (see attached chapter) are fatally flawed. The fact that the tick is carried by over 125 hosts, plus dozens of scientific

studies, all underscore the futility of trying to control the disease by reducing numbers of one host. Health authorities such as the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and World Health Organization don't recommend hunting to reduce the incidence of Lyme disease for the simple reason that it doesn't work.

#### Deer-car collisions

It seems counter-intuitive, but reducing the deer population won't necessarily result in fewer deer car collisions. For example, a county-wide study was conducted by the Virginia Department of Transportation to determine which factors are correlated with deer-vehicle collisions. The logistic regression indicated that deer density was either a non-significant factor or that deer/vehicle collisions were actually lower in areas of higher deer density. The conclusion was that "there is little evidence that increased deer harvest reduced deer/vehicle collisions (McShea et al, 2008, *Human-Wildlife Conflicts* 2: 110-121)." These kinds of data reflect the complexity of deer related problems and the need to make sure the remedy actually addresses the problem.

In closing, the HSUS applauds the city of Cayuga Heights for its progressive inclusion of deer sterilization in the proposed deer management plan. However, we strongly urge you to reject outright the use of net and bolt as a means of killing wild deer, as it is wholly inappropriate. The HSUS also encourages the city to reconsider the use of any lethal control in its proposed deer management plan.

Sincerely,



Laura Simon  
Field Director, Urban Wildlife Program  
(203)-389-4411

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A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Laura Simon.

Laura Simon  
Field Director, Urban Wildlife Program  
(203)-389-4411