

Vassar Farm and Ecological Preserve

Vassar College

Campus Announcement

December 4, 2009

Vassar College Campus Announcement

To address a significant overpopulation of deer on the Vassar College Farm and Ecological Preserve, the college will hire a respected non-profit wildlife management and research firm to cull the farm's deer population to a sustainable size in early January 2010. This step has been recommended by a Vassar committee which oversees the Farm and Ecological Preserve for research purposes, and which ensures appropriate uses that maintain the farm and preserve's mission.

All venison from the cull will be donated to local food pantries, through such efforts as the Hunters Helping the Hungry program of the Federation of Dutchess County Fish and Game Clubs.

Vassar has studied and considered steps to address the deer population on its farm and preserve for several years. Neighbors with properties abutting the land are being notified of the culling plan. Portions of the 530-acre Vassar Farm and Ecological Preserve are in both the Town of Poughkeepsie and the City of Poughkeepsie, and the college has closely consulted with both municipalities on its deer management plans. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation is providing final approval.

With this deer management initiative Vassar joins such local organizations as the Mohonk Preserve and the Cary Institute for Ecosystem Studies, which for many years have taken similar steps to limit the deer population on their properties.

A national firm with extensive experience safely implementing comparable projects will provide two to three skilled hunters to perform the cull over a few days in early January, depending upon weather conditions. The cull will be conducted after sunset, and to ensure the public's safety Vassar will restrict use of the Farm and Ecological Preserve to daylight hours from December 20-January 20. Prominent signage around the land will explain these restrictions.

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Further Reading

- » [White-tailed deer overabundance in the Northeastern US \(PDF\) \(northeastern.pdf\)](#)
- » [Ecological Impacts of Deer Overabundance \(PDF\) \(overabundance.pdf\)](#)
- » [Impacts of White-tailed Deer Overabundance in Forest Ecosystems \(PDF\) \(usda.pdf\)](#)
- » *NYTimes*, Oct.'09: deer culls at Westchester Co. parks
([http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/18/nyregion/18deer.html?_r=1&scp=5&sq=joseph berger deer&st=cse](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/10/18/nyregion/18deer.html?_r=1&scp=5&sq=joseph%20berger%20deer&st=cse))
- » *Miscellany News*, Apr.'09: deer management at Vassar (<http://www.miscellanynews.com/2.1576/forum-seeks-solutions-to-deer-overpopulation-problem-on-vassar-farm-1.1733181>)

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