

CHEESEQUAKE STATE PARK
300 Gordon Road Matawan, NJ 07747 (732) 566-2161
NJ DEP 24-hr Hotline: (732) 566-2161

2020/2021 Deer Management FAQs

Q - Why are deer being hunted in a State Park?

A - The State manages Cheesequake Park for both recreational opportunities and resource protection; you cannot have one without the other. When the dominance of a particular plant or animal in the Park threatens the well-being of other plants and animals, or interferes with recreational opportunities, we have to take action. The deer in the Park had reached a population density creating a problem with which we needed to control.

Q- You hunted deer for nine years now, why do you need to hunt more?

A - Given the species ability for rapid population growth, it would be impossible to exterminate deer entirely using this level of management. We share your respect for deer and our goal is to keep them in the Park, but at lower population levels.

Q- What other methods have been tried to reduce the deer population?

A - The State has considered other non-lethal measures without success. Hunting is the most efficient and effective method currently available to manage the population.

Q- Why can't the State hire a professional company to hunt the deer?

A - The costs associated with 'sharpshooters' is quite high and is not a feasible financial option. Using hunters under a Special Permit offers the Park the most practical way available for us to manage the deer population.

Q- Will you close the Park while the hunt is going on?

A - No, there is no need to deny "non-hunters" access to the Park during the hunting season. Hunting is not allowed in the Park on Sundays.

Q- How can I become part of the program to hunt deer at Cheesequake?

A – Applications will be accepted beginning September 26, 2020 at the Park Office during regular office hours of 8 am to 4 pm. Hunters must provide a valid NJ Bow Hunting license, valid government issued photo ID, and a daytime phone number. Applications can be submitted in person, by fax (732-566-0249), mail, or e-mail at Cheesequake@dep.nj.gov .