

DEFENDERS OF ANIMALS, INC.

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Animal Rights group to utilize the Town of Bristol's Voter Initiative to secure signatures from qualified electors in Bristol for a petition to enact an ordinance that would ban future deer hunting on town properties in the Town of Bristol.

Defenders of Animals, Inc., a Rhode Island based animal rights organization, has been successful supporting animal protection initiatives at both the state level and local levels since 1978 and has won court cases in RI involving animal protection issues.

There are safety considerations to consider, and there are hundreds of Bristol families and individuals against the hunting of deer on town properties like Minturn, Hopeworth, Skater's Pond, and 100-acre woods.

Residents have not been told that the main reason for vehicle and deer collisions is that the deer mating season and hunting season happen

at the same time, which only compounds the activity of deer crossing roadways. So instead of increased hunting in Bristol lowering the risk, it increases the risk of collisions.

The number of hunters has been dropping in RI, and in RI it is around 3/10 of 1% of Rhode Islanders. Bristol town officials need to know that RIDEM is trying to find ways to increase the number of hunters at the expense of the residents of Bristol. Bristol residents need to know that once hunting increases in Bristol it will never decrease. Just look at what happened to Prudence Island, Block Island, and towns over the years.

Defenders of Animals, Inc., is in favor of humane and scientific approaches to wildlife management.

In Rhode Island, the 2021-22 deer season was held from September 11, 2021, to February 28, 2022, and deer hunters reported killing 2,164 deer statewide. Using those figures, Rhode Island hunters would have killed 43,280 deer over a 20-year period.

Hunting is not the solution to keeping the herd numbers low. Hunting only results in making the deer herds stronger. Bristol is going to find out the hard way that this is not the right solution.

Prudence Island and Block Island residents found out the hard way, and now they must put up with scores of hunters, including out-of-state hunters.

Sterilization is one way to keep deer herds in check. Some areas of Cincinnati, for example, have 150 deer per square mile, compared with 20 per square mile for a healthy natural ecosystem.)

Based on records from the first three years of operation, there has been a 19 percent decline in the deer population.

Sites around the country that saw major drops after three years of doe sterilization: 34 percent in Cayuga, New York, 20 percent in Fairfax, Virginia, 47 percent on the National Institute of Health campus in Bethesda, Maryland, and 37 percent in a gated community in San Jose, California.