

NORTH FORK PATCH

Posted by [Lisa Finn](#) (Editor) , September 03, 2013 at 08:31 AM

Deer Overpopulation Tackled By New Community Action Group

Neighbors are coming together to work toward solutions to the deer problems on the North Fork.

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North Fork residents are teaming up to take on one of what some feel is the single most significant problem in Southold Town — the overpopulation of deer.

Southold resident Sue Switzer, who is also a member of the Group To Save Goldsmith Inlet, and others have galvanized to form a new community action group to help deal with the problem of deer overpopulation on the North Fork.

The new North Fork Deer Management Alliance, according to a letter sent out describing its mission, is a group of local citizens who hope "to raise public awareness of the scope of the deer problem and to work with public officials to develop effective strategies to return the deer population to a level compatible with the health and safety of the human population and with the environmental and economic integrity of the region."

The group also seeks to partner with other citizen groups to build support for deer management programs.

According to NFDMA, deer, as the key host in the reproductive cycle of the black legged, or deer, tick, are central to the spread of tick borne diseases such as Lyme, babesiosis, and ehrlichiosis.

NFDMA said that studies have shown that where there are fewer than 10 deer per square mile there are virtually no ticks and no tick borne diseases.

"Thus, the current Lyme epidemic is an unnecessary one," the release reads.

Deer, in the burgeoning numbers currently seen around town, "are also responsible for the destruction of the under-story and with it, the habitat for native species of birds and animals, while consuming the acorns that would reseed the forests, and setting the stage for increased runoff," the release states.

In addition, farm crops and ornamental landscaping are lost to deer each year; farmers are forced to fence off their properties, often at taxpayer expense, NFDMA believes; subsequently, more deer are sent into residential neighborhoods and onto the roads.

"Deer/vehicle accidents are on the rise. 444 deer road kill were delivered to the town landfill in 2012," NFDMA said.

"The NFDMA believes that all of these problems can be solved with one action – that of returning the deer to a healthy balance with humans and the land."

The new group was announced a week after a couple was airlifted to the hospital after a deer [struck their motorcycle](#) on County Road 48 in Peconic.

Two days after the accident, the Southold town board announced an upcoming deer forum to address all sides of the deer issue.

Southold Town Special Projects Coordinator Phillip Beltz said after a series of hamlet-based community meetings over the past months, a primary concern of residents has been the problems posed by a burgeoning deer population.

To that end, a Deer Management Forum, to address ramifications and solutions for the overpopulation of deer in town, will be held on Thursday, Sept. 26, from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m. at the Town of Southold Recreation Center.

What do you think should be done to address the deer problem on the North Fork?

