



S-2026-04 Wildlife Management Policy

Consolidated policy framework for wildlife management and procedures

Policy Owner	General Manager / Security Operations / PDPOA
Primary Functions	Wildlife response, public safety, deer population management, permitting, reporting, contractor coordination, and documentation
Covered Wildlife	Deer and alligators, with framework applicability to similar other wildlife safety concerns
Regulatory Coordination	South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR), and South Carolina Dept. of Public Health, as applicable
Operational Leads	GM or designated representative Captain of Security; PD Security Team

1. Purpose

This policy establishes a consistent framework for wildlife management in the PDPOA managed portion of Palmetto Dunes, with specific procedures for deer population management and alligator-related safety concerns. The policy is intended to help PDPOA identify trends, respond to complaints or safety concerns, coordinate with qualified wildlife professionals, and comply with applicable South Carolina requirements.

2. Policy Goals and Objectives

- Balance the deer population with the needs of residents, guests, vehicles, property, and the natural environment so that wildlife and humans can coexist in a healthy and safe manner.
- Annually conduct a deer spotlight survey and review available data to make informed deer herd management decisions.
- Maintain a healthy and sustainable deer herd population. Improve overall herd health by ensuring the remaining deer have adequate nutrition, better body condition, and a healthier environment.
- Seek SCDNR review of deer survey results to determine whether culling is warranted and, if so, the number of deer tags that may be issued.
- Provide a clear staff response framework for alligator complaints or concerns on common property, regime property, and private property.
- Rely on qualified third-party wildlife professionals for technical recommendations involving deer management actions or alligator monitoring, removal, or harvesting decisions.
- Maintain required permits, tags, reports, after-action reviews, and internal documentation.

3. Scope

This policy applies to PDPOA wildlife management activities involving deer population management and alligator-related complaints, concerns, safety responses, permitting, tags, removal or harvesting decisions, reporting, and staff coordination. For alligator-related matters, this policy applies to all locations within Palmetto Dunes, including common property, regime property, and private property. It also establishes general expectations for other wildlife-related concerns where PDPOA response, documentation, or professional wildlife consultation may be appropriate.

4. Management Principles

Principle	Application
Safety First	Call emergency services (911) for any situation involving serious injury. PDPOA staff will take reasonable action while avoiding direct handling of wildlife.
Professional Judgment	PDPOA will rely on qualified third-party wildlife professionals and SCDNR guidance when determining appropriate method, response, removal, harvest, or culling actions.
Documented Decision-Making	Surveys, complaints, responses, permits, tags, documentation, internal reports, final reports, and after-action reviews should be maintained as part of the wildlife management record in accordance with PDPOA document retention policy.
Regulatory Compliance	Permitting, tags, harvesting, culling, reporting, and other actions will be managed consistent with SCDNR requirements and applicable law.
Limited Staff Participation	PDPOA personnel shall not participate in the reduction of the deer herd, the capture of an alligator, or other wildlife, and should rely on qualified providers for specialized wildlife activity.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
General Manager or Designated Representative	Reviews deer survey documentation, determines program actions based on available data and SCDNR review, manages deer cull permitting and reporting and prepares after-action review recommendations.
Captain of Security or Designee	Manages alligator reporting, tags, documentation, and devices necessary for harvesting alligators; receives injury-related notifications; coordinates Security response.

Security Officer / PD Security Team

Responds to wildlife complaints or reasonably foreseeable safety concerns, attempts to locate the reported concern, coordinates with a wildlife service provider. For alligator-related matters, this response applies on common property, regime property, and private property.

Qualified Wildlife Service Provider / Consultant

Conducts deer surveys, advises and executes on deer population management actions, attempts to locate or monitor alligators, and provides recommendations regarding alligator harvesting when appropriate.

Property Owner / Regime Representative

For alligator-related matters, property owners and regime representatives should promptly report concerns, assist with access when needed, and follow reasonable safety instructions. PDPOA will coordinate the alligator response regardless of whether the alligator is located on common property, regime property, or private property.

6. Deer Population Management Program

The deer population management component establishes a recurring survey, review, permitting, contractor selection, removal, and reporting framework.

6.1 Annual Spotlight Survey

- PDPOA shall have a deer spotlight survey conducted at least annually.
- The survey shall consist of observations made on at least two separate dates within the same month.
- PDPOA shall consult with a qualified third party to conduct the survey.
- Surveys shall be documented and reviewed by the GM within a reasonable time of completion.

6.2 Survey Review and Management Determination

- Available data shall be reviewed annually to make informed decisions regarding management of the deer herd in Palmetto Dunes.
- SCDNR shall review survey results and determine whether deer culling is warranted and, if so, how many deer tags would be issued.
- Based on SCDNR data, the GM may require actions that bring the deer population in line with SCDNR suggested density.
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- PDPOA intends that any directed deer cull use a lethal control method and tool performed by a participating private wildlife consultant or qualified professional under the supervision of the PD Security Team.

6.4 Permitting, Tags, and Reporting

- The GM or designated representative shall apply to SCDNR for required permits.

- The GM or designated representative shall serve as the PDPOA liaison for matters associated with execution of a deer cull and periodic review of deer culling and permitting processes.
- The GM or designated representative shall maintain paperwork, permits, tags, and related materials as required by SCDNR or others.
- The GM or designated representative shall submit reports to SCDNR regarding deer culling as required by law.
- Prior to any reduction of the deer herd, all cull locations shall be preapproved in writing by the GM.

6.5 Selection of Certified Sharpshooter

- The GM or designated representative shall select a certified sharpshooter to safely complete a deer cull.
- The selection process shall require successful completion of the SCDNR Hunter Safety Course or equivalent.
- The sharpshooter may be required to meet additional qualifications or complete additional training required by PDPOA.
- The sharpshooter shall be required to use a sound-suppressed firearm during the process.

6.6 Removal, Processing, and Final Report

- The GM or designated representative shall ensure removal of all deer carcasses.
- All deer carcasses shall be processed so that edible meat is removed and donated to eleemosynary institutions.
- The GM shall submit a final report to SCDNR upon completion of a cull.
- At minimum, the final report shall include the total number of deer removed, their sex, and the approximate number of hours spent during the cull.
- The GM shall generate a written after-action review and implement changes, if any.

7. Alligator Management and Response Procedures

All alligator complaints, safety concerns, provider coordination, removal recommendations, documentation, and internal reporting shall be coordinated through PDPOA regardless of whether the alligator is reported on common property, regime property, or private property.

The alligator management component guides staff in response to complaints or concerns regarding alligators and establishes PDPOA responsibility for coordinating all alligator responses on common property, regime property, and private property.

Response Area	Policy Direction	Responsible Party
Complaint or Safety Concern	When an alligator complaint or concern for safety is reported or reasonably foreseeable, a security officer shall respond and attempt to locate the alligator regardless of whether it is reported on common property, regime property, or private property.	Security Officer

Provider Coordination	Security shall request a wildlife service provider to the location to attempt to locate and/or monitor the alligator. Security shall coordinate access with the applicable property owner, regime representative, or managing entity, when needed.	Security / Wildlife Service Provider
Removal Recommendation	PDPOA shall rely on the recommendation of the wildlife service provider in determining whether an alligator should be removed, regardless of whether the alligator is located on common property, regime property, or private property.	Wildlife Service Provider
PDPOA Participation	If an alligator is removed, PDPOA personnel shall not participate in capture processes.	PDPOA Personnel
Tags and Documentation	If an alligator is harvested, PDPOA shall provide required tags and complete necessary SCDNR documentation.	Captain of Security or Designee
Internal Reporting	PDPOA shall prepare an internal report for each alligator response, whether the alligator is located or not and regardless of whether the response involves common property, regime property, or private property.	Security / PDPOA
Injury Response	Serious injury requires contacting emergency services first. Responding staff shall immediately report any injury incident to the Captain of Security.	Security / Emergency Services

8. General Wildlife Complaint and Response Documentation

This section applies to general wildlife reports involving raccoons, armadillos, birds, snakes, turtles, rodents, and other wildlife commonly found in the Hilton Head Island area, except for deer and alligators, which are addressed separately in this policy.

- PDPOA may receive, document, and review general wildlife reports when the reported condition involves common property, roadway safety, access control, a direct public safety concern, or another issue reasonably requiring Security or staff awareness.
- PDPOA may refer the reporting party to a qualified wildlife service provider, pest control provider, SCDNR, Beaufort County Animal Services, or another appropriate outside resource when professional assistance or regulatory guidance is needed.

- PDPOA personnel shall not attempt to trap, capture, relocate, remove, or directly handle general wildlife. Staff response should focus on safety, observation, notification, documentation, and coordination with qualified providers when appropriate.
- Removal, treatment, exclusion, relocation, repair, cleanup, or management of wildlife nests, dens, burrows, roosts, habitats, or related wildlife conditions located on private property is the responsibility of the applicable property owner or regime, and not PDPOA. This includes single-family residential property and regime-managed property.
- Private property owners and regimes are responsible for selecting, contracting with, paying for, and supervising any wildlife, pest control, exclusion, cleanup, repair, or habitat-removal service needed on their property, subject to applicable law and any required permits or approvals.
- PDPOA may take reasonable action to protect immediate safety, secure an area, notify the appropriate party, or document the concern, but such response does not transfer private-property maintenance, wildlife removal, nest removal, habitat removal, repair, or service-provider costs to PDPOA.
- General wildlife reports should be documented when the concern involves safety, common property, provider coordination, or escalation to an outside agency.
- PDPOA may participate in the South Carolina Department of Public Health's dead bird surveillance program that focuses on monitoring significant wildlife mortality events, particularly those associated with avian influenza and protected bird species.
- Incidents involving injury, aggressive animal behavior, immediate safety concerns, or blocked access should be elevated to the Captain of Security or designee. Serious injury requires emergency services first.

9. Policy Review and Administration

This policy should be reviewed as operational, safety, legal, SCDNR, or community conditions require. The GM or designated representative should review deer culling and permitting processes annually.