

## Alison Foulis - City Clerk

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**From:** Miriam Ganz  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 09, 2016 10:12 PM  
**To:** Alison Foulis - City Clerk  
**Cc:** James Campbell - Mayor; Marty Winter-Vice Mayor; Nancy Kemnitzer - Councilmember; Claire McAuliffe - Councilmember; Bob McCaskill - Councilmember; Mary Neilan - City Manager  
**Subject:** Deer in Belvedere Posting  
**Attachments:** Belvedere Deer – WildCare.pdf; ATT00001.htm

Hi Alison,

Could you please post this article "WildCare Opposes Sterilization of Local Deer" on the City of Belvedere's **Deer in Belvedere** website.

Thank you!

Mimi Ganz



## Belvedere Deer



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## WildCare Opposes Sterilization of Local Deer

The following article was co-written with the Marin Humane Society and ran in the Marin Voice section of the Marin Independent Journal. It outlines WildCare's opposition to a proposed plan to sterilize female deer in the Belvedere neighborhood of Marin.

Recent headlines have brought to light the efforts of a small group of Belvedere residents to hire a company from the East Coast to dart-tranquilize and surgically sterilize the female native Black-tailed deer in that community.

It is important to share with readers a few key points about this situation. First, the population of deer in Belvedere has not grown – it has remained the same for many years. The number of deer-related calls from the Belvedere area to both Marin Humane and WildCare's hotlines has remained the same, and the number of reported auto accidents related to deer has also not increased.

Second, the use of chemical control (darting an animal with a tranquilizer) is something reserved for critical or dangerous situations, and should not be undertaken lightly. Marin Humane almost never utilizes this method because there is an inherent risk to both the animal and the people around it. Deer in particular are extremely sensitive and can literally die from the shock of being darted and handled. Death may occur immediately, or in the days or weeks after

the stressful event. Or if the dart doesn't work effectively, you can have a deer putting itself – and humans – in danger.

Third, White Buffalo, Inc., the company the five residents want to hire to perform ovariectomies on the deer, plans to undertake serious surgery in a resident's garage with no clear plan for how the does would be cared for and monitored after they undergo the procedure. There are potential complications from infection and from the abdominal surgery itself, and there are no resources proposed to aid deer that suffer adverse effects from the procedure. This is not humane treatment of animals.

This sterilization plan is an extreme and premature option for a small deer population in a suburban neighborhood. The Marin Humane Society and WildCare question both the necessity and the efficacy of the proposed plan. For example, the deer (sterilized or not) will continue to eat the vegetation offered, and there are no barriers to other deer filling the niche left empty when the sterilized animals die.

The fact is, the only way to permanently resolve a nuisance wildlife problem is to eliminate what is attracting the animals. In this case, the attractants are the gardens of Belvedere residents. If those gardens are made inaccessible (through fencing, taste deterrents or other methods), the deer will move on, leaving the area and allowing the population to stabilize at a sustainable level. Removing the deer (through sterilization) will leave a desirable habitat open for other deer to come in. These other alternatives and solutions to control the impacts of deer on Belvedere are safer to implement, but have not been fully explored.

In addition, our organizations are concerned that neither the residents promoting the sterilization plan, nor White Buffalo, Inc. have conducted any current research or studies about the deer in Belvedere. The evidence of the need for this plan is anecdotal and based on residents' subjective impressions of deer predation on the area's flora. We question both the need for the sterilization plan, and we also question the hiring of White Buffalo, Inc. to implement it. White Buffalo, Inc. offers sharp shooting and canned hunts as part of its repertoire and we can't imagine many residents are comfortable hiring a company that employs such cruel methods of wildlife management.

Lastly, it's unfortunate to read that these residents feel deer fencing is a blight on the beauty of Belvedere. We believe fencing is a small price to pay to be able to peacefully coexist with wildlife. After all, isn't that one of the things that makes living in Marin so special?

Nancy B. McKenney, CEO

Karen Wilson, Executive Director

## We're here to help.

Everyone wants to do the right thing for wildlife... WildCare is here to help! We're located in downtown San Rafael, California — Marin County's largest city — making us a truly urban wildlife hospital.

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