



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 17-0970, **Version:** 1

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Resolution to Approve a Contract with NatureWrite, LLC for Monitoring and Assessment of Deer Impacts in Ann Arbor Natural Areas (\$33,000.00/yr, \$99,000.00 total)  
Approval is requested to contract with NatureWrite, LLC for continuation of monitoring and assessment of Deer Impacts in Ann Arbor Natural Areas for Deer Management Program Yrs 2-4.

Budget/Fiscal Impact: This expenditure is planned and budgeted in the approved FY2018 Community Services Building Administration budget. Funding for FY19 and FY20 will be budgeted as part of the on-going Deer Management Program.

The implementation of the Deer Management Program included monitoring the impact that deer were having to the vegetation in the City park natural areas. Prior to the initial cull, staff contracted with NatureWrite, LLC (Dr. Jacqueline Couteau) in 2015 to conduct a study of browse damage in 10 wooded City parks. Based on what was learned from the first year of research, the City Administration recommended hiring Dr. Courteau to conduct an expanded study that included additional park natural areas.

The proposed contract work plan would continue monitoring and assessment of deer impacts in the City natural areas. Monitoring will continue the red oak experimental seedling approach used in the pilot study for 2015-2016, and will also look at deer impacts on experimental plantings of wildflower species as well as existing trillium populations using the following Study Metrics:

- % of red oak seedlings browsed each year
- % of plants of each of 4 experimental wildflower species browsed, flowering, fruiting each year
- % change in trillium abundance and flowering over time

Under the terms of the City's contract with NatureWrite, LLC, Dr. Courteau will present an annual report to City Council on her monitoring findings for that monitoring period during the contract term.

Approval of a contract for services with NatureWrite, LLC is recommended.

Prepared by: David Borneman, Deputy Manager, Parks & Recreation Services/NAP  
and Mary Joan Fales, Senior Assistant City Attorney

Reviewed by: Derek Delacourt, Community Services Area Administrator  
Tom Crawford, CFO/Finance and Administrative Services Area Administrator

Approved by: Howard S. Lazarus, City Administrator

Whereas, Ecological concerns about the impact of deer on natural areas have a broad impact on the City as a whole;

Whereas, Determining whether deer damage is affecting biodiversity in City natural areas and potential long-term changes in ecological habitats was identified as a goal of the City's Deer Management Program;

Whereas, NatureWrite, LLC conducted a pilot study on red oak seedlings in Ann Arbor natural areas in 2015-2016, and conducted an expanded study in 2016-2017, which included a wildflower component;

Whereas, NatureWrite, LLC and its principal Dr. Jacqueline Courteau, a local consulting ecologist with extensive experience in southeastern Michigan monitoring of deer impact on vegetation, is the best source for continued monitoring of vegetation in the City natural areas during years 2 through 4 of the Deer Management Program;

Whereas, Funding is available in the approved FY18 Community Services Building Administration budget and will be planned and budgeted in FY19 and F20 as part of the Deer Management Program; and

Whereas, NatureWrite, LLC complies with the requirements of the City's Non-discrimination and Living Wage ordinances;

RESOLVED, That City Council approve a 3-year contract with NatureWrite, LLC for monitoring and assessment of Deer Impacts in Ann Arbor Natural Areas for a total of \$99,000 with funds to be available for expenditure without regard to fiscal year;

RESOLVED, That the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized and directed to execute the above contract subject to approval as to substance by the City Administrator and approval as to form by the City Attorney; and

RESOLVED, That the City Administrator be authorized to take all necessary actions to implement this resolution.