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Park Service To Utilize Sharpshooters To Thin Rock Creek Park Deer Herd

May 31, 2012 6:41 AM

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Credit: LUIS ROBAYO/AFP/Getty Images

WASHINGTON (AP) — The National Park Service will turn to sharpshooters, birth control and other methods to thin the growing deer herd in Rock Creek Park and protect the park's vegetation.

The [Washington](#) Post reports that the park service announced Wednesday that the plan was approved May 1.

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Officials said the deer herd has grown since the 1960s, when just four white-tailed deer were spotted in the park. They said the four-square-mile park now has 80 deer per square mile.

Park officials will continue monitoring the deer population and using fences to protect plants. However, they will also use sharpshooters and a capture-and-euthanize program. Sharpshooting will be done mainly at night during late fall and winter.

Officials also plan to use sterilization and other birth control methods on the deer.

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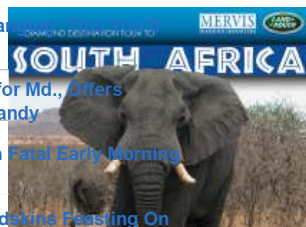
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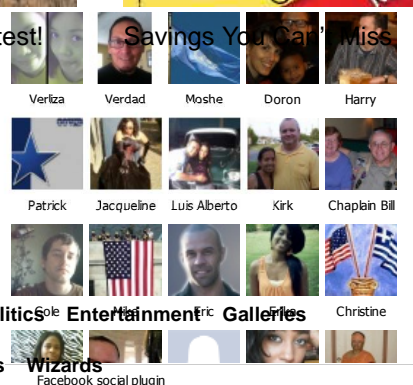
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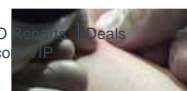
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