STATE OF NEW YORK

5542

2023-2024 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

March 16, 2023

Introduced by M. of A. THIELE -- read once and referred to the Committee on Environmental Conservation

AN ACT directing the department of environmental conservation to establish a deer management pilot program in the town of Southold

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, rule, or regulation to the contrary, the department of environmental conservation is hereby authorized and directed to establish a deer management pilot program in the town of Southold. Such program may, at the discretion of the department of environmental conservation:

a. set and modify deer hunting seasons and regulate methods of take and bag limits in the town of Southold;

b. allow use of firearms to take deer during the regular season and eliminate acreage minimums and special season constraints within the town of Southold;

c. regulate crossbow use within the town of Southold, including when, where, and who is eligible to use crossbows for the taking of deer;

d. set conditions under which hunters can receive some form of compensation for killing deer within the town of Southold;

e. allow 12- and 13-year-old hunters to hunt deer with the supervision of a licensed, experienced adult within the town of Southold;

f. allow 12- and 13-year-old hunters to hunt using firearms from a tree stand within the town of Southold, provided it is a tree stand designed to accommodate two or more persons and provided further that the supervising, experienced hunter is in the tree stand with the 12- or 13-year-old;

g. allow the department of environmental conservation to establish or extend, as needed, a special January firearm season within the town of Southold;

EXPLANATION--Matter in *italics* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [-] is old law to be omitted.

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h. allow the department of environmental conservation to regulate the standards for the harvesting of bucks or antlered deer within the town of Southold;

i. establish other incentives for hunters and landowners to permit public deer hunting on private land within the town of Southold;

j. issue any other rules or regulations regarding the taking of deer within the town of Southold as deemed necessary;

k. regulate deer culling by qualified professionals holding special permits under controlled circumstances, including:

(i) authorizing the department of environmental conservation to issue special permits for qualified professionals under controlled circumstances to conduct professional culling within the town of Southold;

(ii) granting the department of environmental conservation full regulatory authority over the issuance of such special permits and granting the department authority to establish any rules and regulations necessary regarding the taking of deer within the town of Southold, including but not limited to:

(1) authorizing the use of bait within 300 feet of a road;

(2) authorizing special permit holders to discharge firearms within 500 feet of a currently occupied dwelling or structure with the written or verbal approval of the owner of the property on which such dwelling or structure stands, or the current occupant of such dwelling or structure;

(3) authorizing the use of firearms equipped with sound suppression;

(4) authorizing the use of rifles; and

(5) any other rules or regulations regarding the taking of deer by such special permit holders as the department of environmental conservation deems fit within the town of Southold.

§ 2. This act shall take effect immediately.