

Mule deer doe chased and killed by workers in Invermere Fawns orphaned?

July 16, 2013

Invermere Deer Protection Society (IDPS) has learned that on Tuesday, July 9th 2013, landscape workers in Invermere pursued, harassed and then used rocks to kill a mule deer doe.

The crew is working in a large, lakefront recreation property in an upscale neighbourhood known as Fort Point in the District of Invermere. After the violent death, the contractor removed the body from the property. IDPS has been informed that the actions of the crew were witnessed and eventually reported to the Conservation Officer Service.

A week before the killing, other witnesses saw the workers on the property throwing rocks at a doe with fawns, presumably in an earlier attempt to evict the family. The property fences are now being reinforced and extended to exclude deer completely. However, since the killing, we have observed three small fawns, without a mother, frequenting the property. Sadly, it is obvious the lot was formerly a safe refuge in their limited home range. It is difficult to immediately determine if the fawns were orphaned by the assault but one has unique markings and is easily recognized.

The Invermere Deer Protection Society (IDPS) has been assured in recent communications with the Conservation Officer responsible that the incident is still under investigation. We understand that the BCSPCA and RCMP are also aware of the death and may proceed with their own investigations.

“We hope the Conservation Officer pursues charges under the BC Wildlife Act once the investigation is complete” said Devin Kazakoff, IDPS member. And we urge the BCSPCA to investigate the killing which by all descriptions seems to fit the Criminal Code of Canada definition of animal cruelty - when a person willfully causes or, being the owner, willfully permits to be caused unnecessary pain, suffering or injury to an animal.”

IDPS has been given a permit and is prepared to capture and transport orphan fawns to a wildlife rescue facility in Nelson BC. On advice of experts, our members are now monitoring the Fort Point area frequently to determine if there are orphan fawns, to observe if another doe adopts them and to monitor their health. Adoption is the preferred outcome and we understand this heart-warming mule deer behavior does occur. IDPS is ready to rescue and transport orphan fawns for rehabilitation should their condition deteriorate.

“This senseless, violent killing is a symptom of the negative attitudes perpetuated when municipalities choose to cull” said Kazakoff. “We hope all fawns survive and thrive but if orphaned, they have a much tougher road. We are all responsible to do what we must to live with and protect wildlife. Local governments should lead by demonstrating and fostering a respectful, responsible culture that values and accommodates nature. The District of Invermere can begin by assessing, improving and increasing public wildlife habitat and movement corridors, by adapting state of the art protection for district plantings, by creating an off-leash park, by adapting a “backyard habitat” program, by rewriting the fence bylaw and most importantly, by reversing the culture of intolerance they have regrettably, encouraged.”

Devin Kazakoff