

Supplemental Wild Animal Feeding Policy

Purpose

The Domain supplemental wild animal feeding policy describes the rules, expectations, and opportunities for supplemental wild animal feeding on all portions of the Domain. One of the unique aspects of residency in Sewanee is the village’s proximity and connection to relatively undeveloped forested land. This connection affords residents more frequent and varied opportunities to interface with wildlife than is experienced in many villages our size. This policy ensures that safe interactions with wildlife are afforded for the Sewanee community as part of the resource management program of the undeveloped portions of Domain.

Scope

Policies apply to faculty, staff, students, their guests, partner institutions, leaseholds, and other members of the University community.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Bait	Putting out food materials for wildlife to attract, lure, or entice them to a particular area to aid in capture or hunting.
Supplemental feed	Putting out food materials for wildlife to attract, lure, or entice them to a particular area for any reason other than hunting, including recreation viewing. This includes: providing feed or mineral supplement for deer, raccoons, or opossums, feeding of feral dogs or cats, or leaving food intended for domestic animals in an open and accessible location for wildlife.
Food plots	Naturally occurring foods, standing agricultural crops, or foods that are in place as part of normal agricultural practices and are not considered baiting or feeding.
Public	Any individual that is not directly related to faculty, staff, students, alumni, or leaseholders on the Domain. Public does not include short-term guests of faculty, staff, students, and leaseholders.

Policy Statements

In an effort to protect the health and safety of Sewanee resident humans and wildlife, all supplemental wild animal feeding and baiting on the Domain is prohibited, with the exceptions as follows:

- Bird feeders and
- Supplemental feeding and baiting for University sanctioned wildlife management, food plots, nuisance wildlife control, and research activities.

The use of supplemental feed can lead to the following problems:

1. Feeding encourages the congregation of animals in high densities in residential areas, increasing browse damage to lawns, gardens, and surrounding forests.
2. Feed intended for one species often attracts other less desirable species. For example, corn left out for deer also attracts opossums, raccoons, coyotes, and foxes. Cat food left out for cats attracts coyotes and desensitizes them to residential areas.
3. Feeding feral cats has negative effects on local bird, amphibian, and small mammal populations, and results in increased disease transmission and/or fight damage to domestic cats.
4. Feeding is the equivalent of junk food for most wildlife species especially ruminants (deer). Their digestive system is adapted to native vegetation and changes as the seasons progress. “Human food” also can stop a wild animal’s digestive system.
5. Feeding increases the likelihood of diseases being spread from animal to humans.
6. Feeding encourages populations to expand beyond levels that the natural food supply can support and encourages rats and other pest species.
7. Experience in other communities has shown feeding encourages animals to lose their fear of humans, increasing the risk for negative interactions, this is especially problematic for coyotes. As long as coyotes maintain their fear of humans, problems are minimal, but food-habituated coyotes harass people and their pets.

Promulgation

The procedure will be promulgated through:

1. Updated on the Sewanee OESS website ([link](#))
2. Lease Office

Implementation

Implementation of this procedure will be through the Office of Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability, specifically the Domain manager and Domain ranger. The Lease office will inform leaseholders of the policy and be responsible for its implementation on leaseholds.

Record Keeping of Policy Additions or Revisions

Previous policies, the updated policy (or new policy) and the rationale for changes will be retained by the Director of Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability and in the provost’s office for one year.

Effective Date/Approval

This policy follows the University Policy Framework adopted in 2015.

Effective date: February 1, 2018