

Alpine City Urban Deer Committee

Results
Presentation



UDCC Purpose

- The Alpine City Council selected a committee of residents who responded to a request via the city newsletter for volunteers to form a committee of interested citizens (5) to gather resident input and study the impact of deer in the city and then to make a recommendation to the city council.

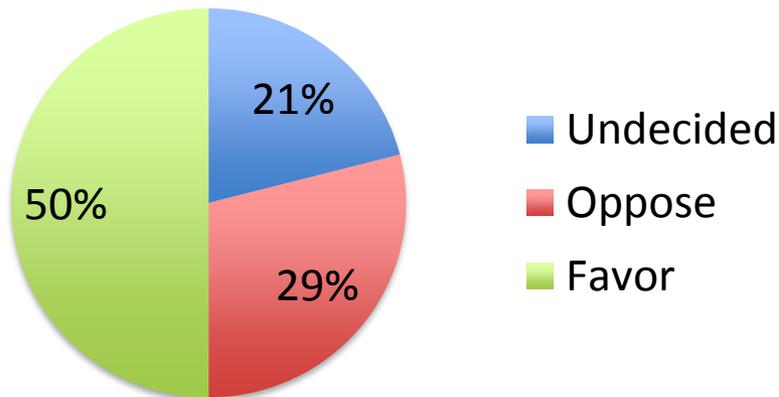
Committee Actions

- Conduct a **citywide survey** to gauge resident views on urban deer in the city.
- Conduct **deer census/count**
- Review **safety and damage** records
- Identify **what other cities are/have done** to control deer if anything.
- Identify **educational materials/actions** residents could take to live with wildlife

Mayor Watkins' Fall 2015 Survey

- Reviewed results from Mayor Watkins' fall survey question: Do you favor or oppose Alpine City taking measures to reduce the deer population?

Fall 2015 Survey Results

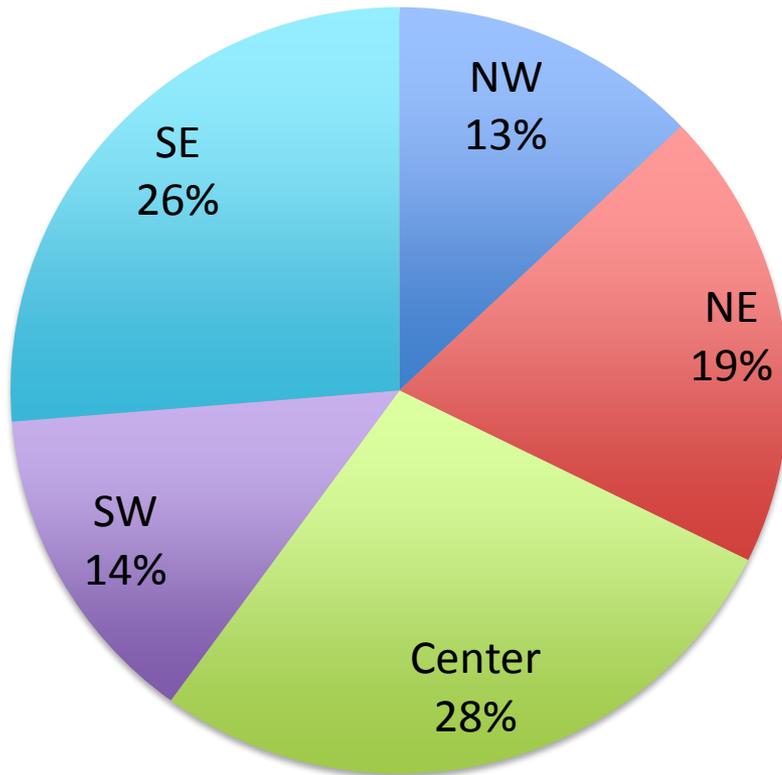


- Because the survey was embedded in an overall city questionnaire and did not give specifics on what was meant by reduce, the committee determined that it should conduct its own survey of Alpine residents.

Survey Design

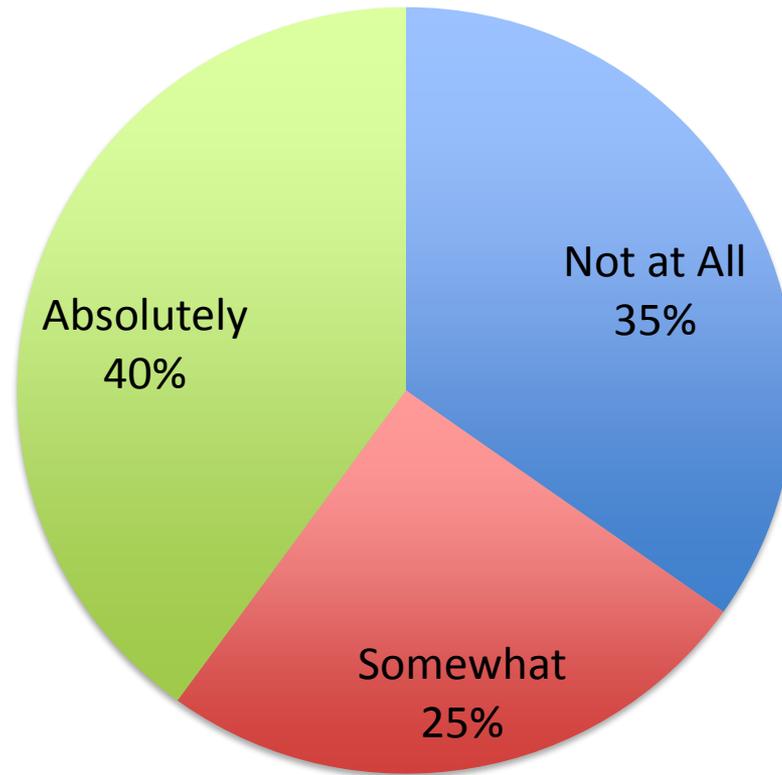
- **Information to Capture:**
 - What they wanted done about the deer: leave them alone, educate residents, trap and release them elsewhere, or harvest/kill them.
 - Where residents lived in the city by area
 - If having wildlife in the city was important to them
 - Whether they sustained property/physical damage
 - Whether they wanted the city to use city money to address the options
 - What steps had already been taken by residents

Surveys Returned by Area



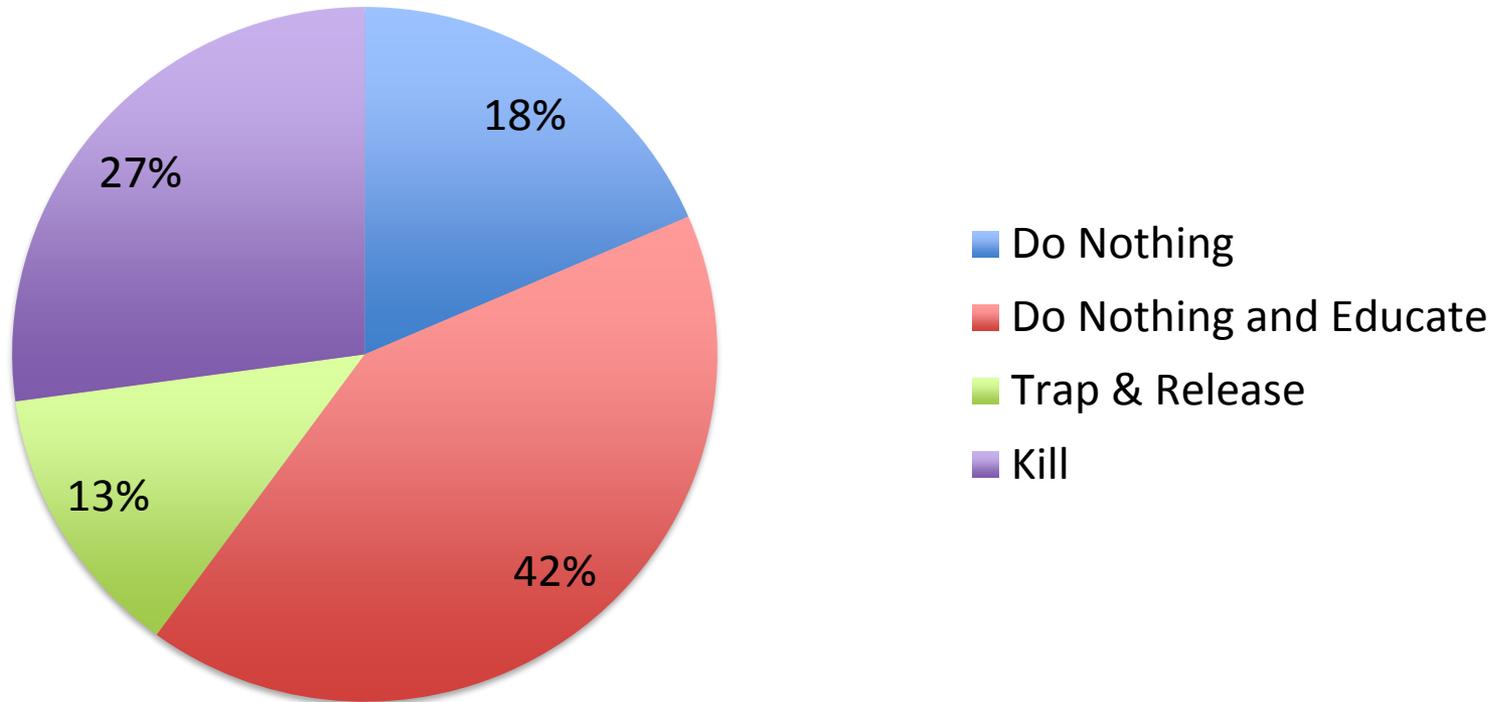
Respondents self-reported their city location. A higher response percentage probably occurred in the center because lots are smaller and closer together than in fringe areas.

Does Deer Population Positively Contribute to Home Value/Quality of Life



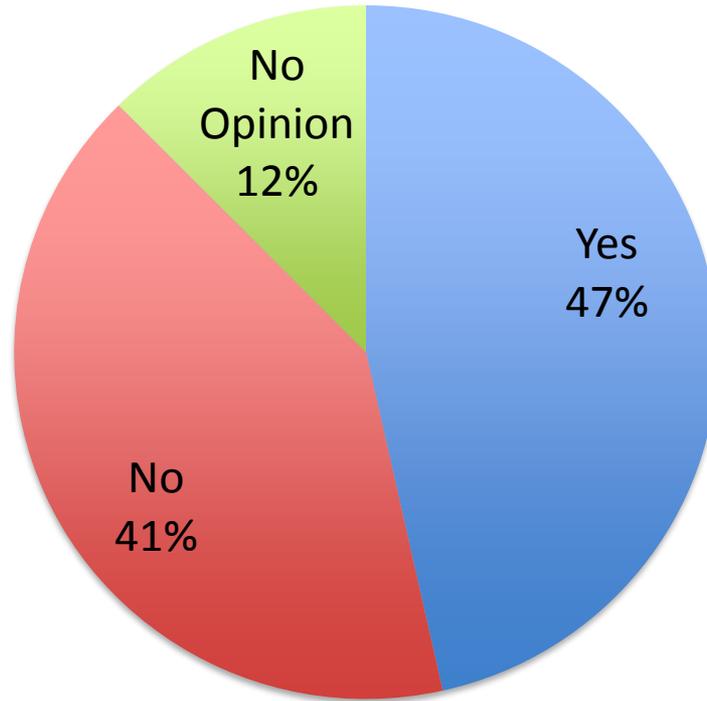
Action Alternatives

60 % want the deer to be left alone and 40% want deer removed

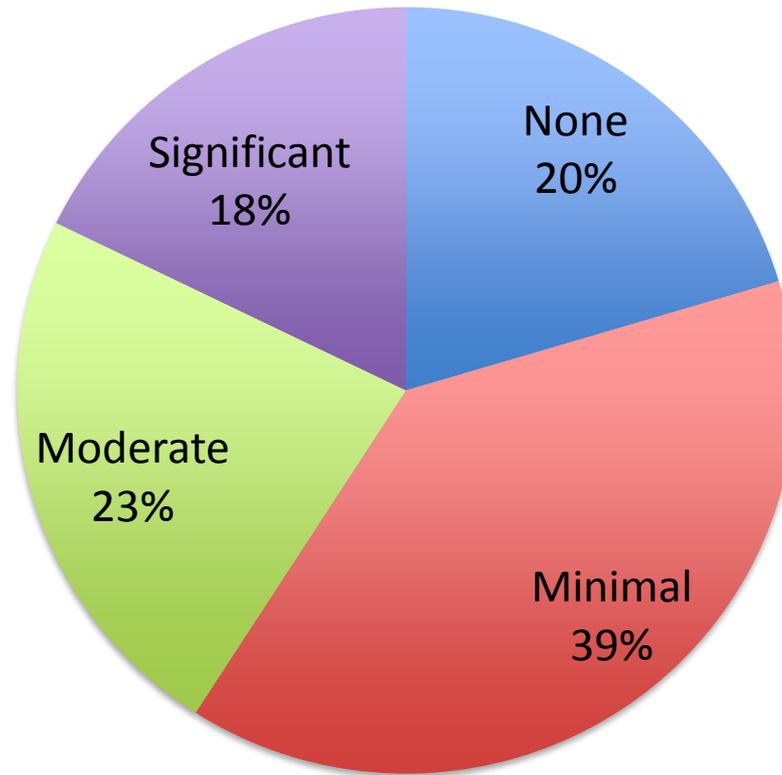


Use of City Funds

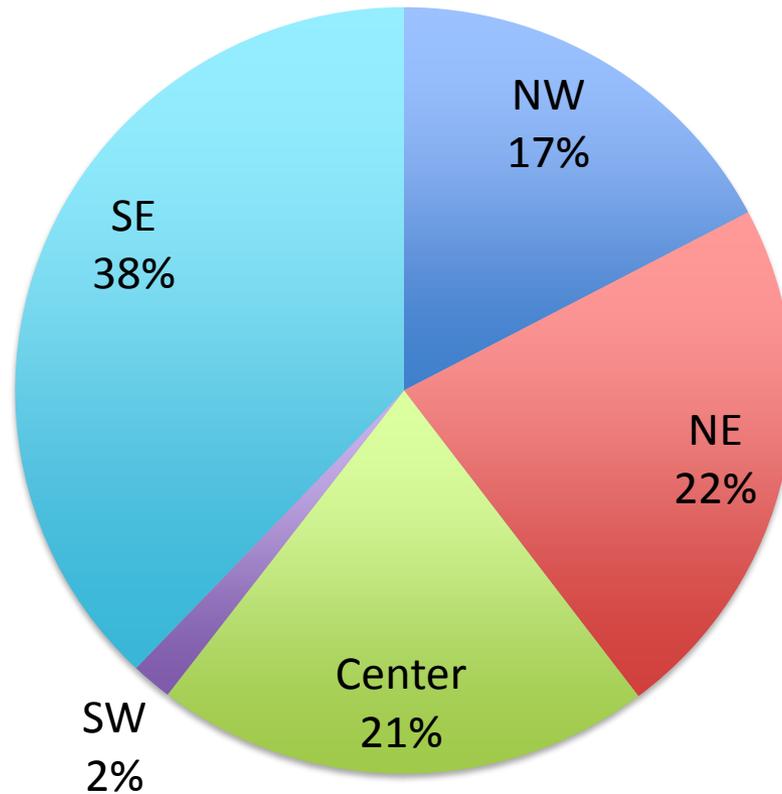
About 3% of Yes answers were qualified by respondents to mean that they only wanted city funds used to help educate residents



Property Damage

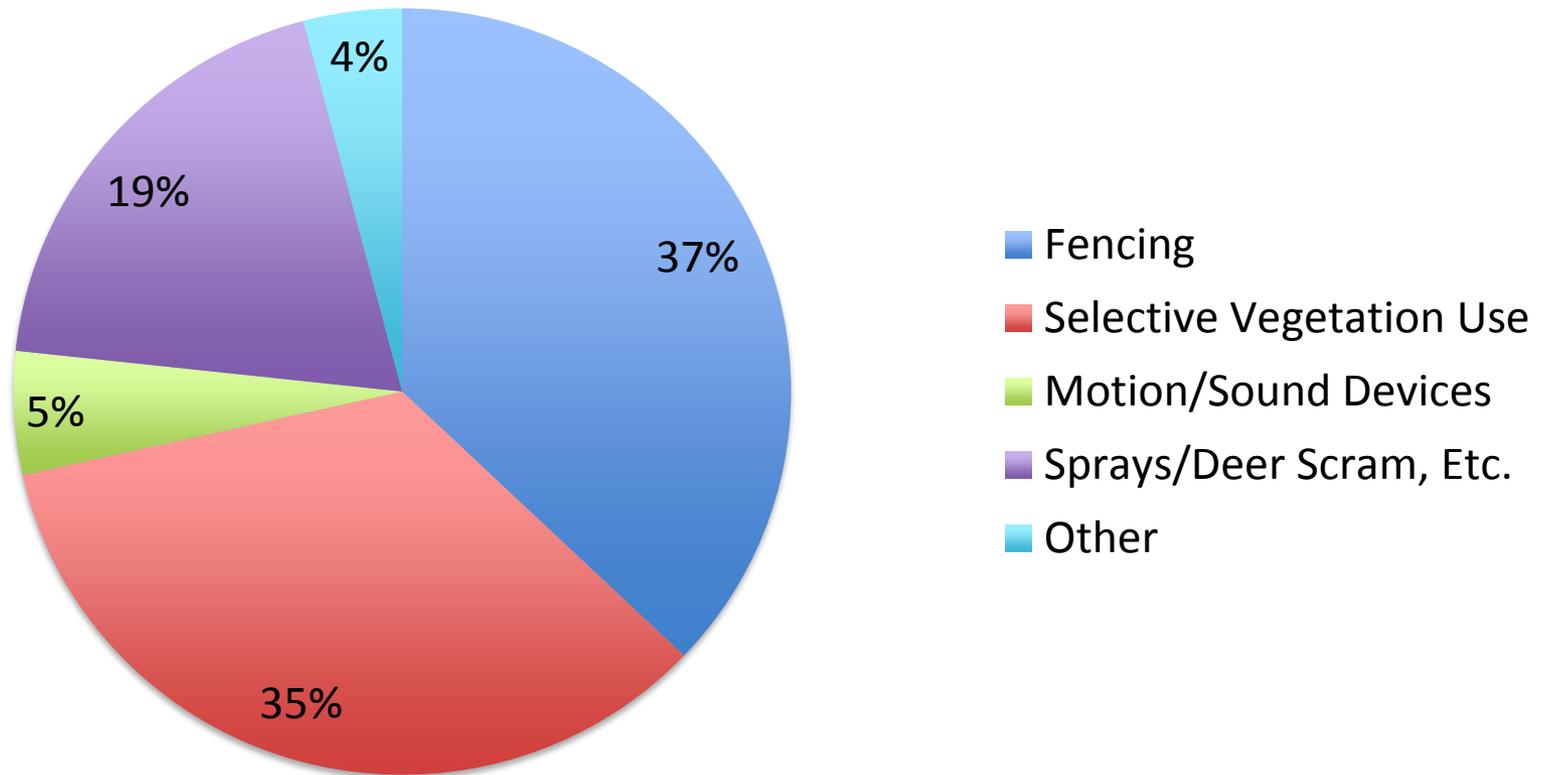


Where is Significant Damage in the City Being Done?



Steps Taken to Minimize Damage

Some people attested that these steps didn't work for them, but others used them successfully.



Other Includes

- Net Plants & Shrubs
- Spread Urine around perimeter of yard
- Spread Shredded Soap around yard
- Put Moving Items in yard
- Shot pellets or paint balls at deer
- Have a dog(s)
- Screamed or yelled at deer to frighten them
- Put in an electric fence

Main Complaints

- Eat and cause damage/destroy flowers, plants, shrubs, & trees
- Leave droppings all over the yard which is unsightly, messy, and possibly unhealthy
- Present a driving hazard on the roads
- Becoming too familiar with people so are not afraid: i.e. pose aggressive attitude toward domestic animals and have caused some harm

Reasons Residents Like the Deer

- Moved to Alpine to enjoy natural surroundings: mountains and wildlife variety
- Enjoy watching the deer
- Humans moved into their habitat so we should adjust to them not vice versa
- Act as a reminder to drive safely and stay within speed limits
- Without suitable deer populations, predators could become more aggressive towards humans and pets

Additional Remedies Suggested by Residents

- These ideas have not been censured for feasibility, cost, or legality
 - **Sterilization through drug administration (done on East Coast)**
 - **Drive deer out of the city**
 - **Issue more hunting tags/ Conduct a city wide bow hunt**
 - **Allow citizens to contract directly with a city approved trap and release organization to trap deer on their own property**
 - **Plant deer forage on the hill sides**
 - **Reduce/limit building on hillsides**
 - **City helps residents with purchase of fencing materials**

Safety Comparisons

- Alpine is different from and is minimally comparable to other cities such as Highland, Bountiful, etc. with regard to driving safety:
 - Alpine is located at the juncture of 2 mountain ranges so there is no outlet for cars just passing through and doesn't have a high-speed highway going through it
 - Only has 1-40 MPH section and a couple of 30-35 MPH sections
 - In 2015, only had 5 “auto accident” reports filed by police concerning deer/auto encounters and one incident

Auto Accidents

- **6 Police reports were filed in 2015**
 - 5 estimated minor or no damage to vehicles
 - 1 estimated damage at over \$999: front end damage but car was drive-able
 - 4 incidents occurred on roads with speed limits greater than 25 MPH
 - 3 of the deer ran away after being struck
- **Possible solutions to address concerns about the possibility of future deer/auto collisions include:**
 - Reevaluate and adjust speed limits/aggressively enforce speed limits
 - Post deer crossing signs/ use of speed bumps in known crossing areas
 - Implement a “deer aware” program in schools

Property Damage and Public Health

- Only **18%** of household respondents to the survey indicated that significant damage had been sustained, well below the hurdle of “serious” damage required by the DWR
- According to utah.health.gov, the CDC, and the DWR, there are no known risk factors associating mule deer with Lyme disease in Utah.
- Acknowledging that Brucellosis exists in some populations of large hoofed mammals including deer, we could find no information quantifying any risk of Brucellosis to Utah residents from mule deer.
- Although some residents report aggressive deer behavior, there have been no (0) reported & documented deer attacks on humans/pets in Alpine.
- It would be appropriate to include educational resources on the city’s website to help residents understand deer behavior and help them protect themselves and their animals from possible harm from wildlife.

Actions Other Cities Have Taken

Challenges faced by Utah cities: agricultural loss, over population of summer deer, high speed highways within boundaries, damage to forage areas around the cities.

What are cities doing?

- **Bountiful**: Traps & relocates – 256 trapped in 2015/16; excellent info website: <http://www.bountifulutah.gov/Deer-Plan>
- **Herriman**: Combo program: Traps & relocates deer found within city limits; hunts outside city limits.
- **Midway**: Co-exists with deer/ no eradication programs
- **Highland**: Controlled hunting program
- **Park City**: Co-exists with deer/ no eradication programs
- **Provo**: Considering combo trap/relocate & hunt programs like Herriman

Deer Census/Count Data

- A UDWR biologist conducted 3 deer census surveys of Alpine
- Procedure:
 - Alpine's size is about 4,000 acres.
 - Biologist monitored at least 1,000 acres (25%) of Alpine.
 - Each area was a little different than the previous area. The last 2 were slightly larger.
- Results:
 - 1st survey observed 9 deer total (4 bucks/5 does) on 6/ 29
 - 2nd survey observed 11 deer total (1 buck/10 does) on 7/13
 - 3rd Survey observed 12 deer total (6 bucks, 3 does, 3 fawns) on 8/8
- Biologist's conclusions
 - There are low numbers of deer found within Alpine City during the summer
 - Deer may be moving in and out of city as there were different deer found each count
 - Beneficial to do winter count and a migration study to understand movements better

Wildlife Forage & Habitat Restoration

- **Strategies to help address human/deer conflicts**
 - Improve habitat for deer outside City limits to reduce need for deer to enter the city for food and water.
 - Conduct a study to better understand deer movements to assist in developing effective habitat projects.
 - Work within city limits to reduce attractants for deer to enter the city (e.g. food, water, cover, etc.)
 - Educate Alpine City residents on how to better co-exist with the wildlife found in this area addressing fence building and other deterrents.
 - Develop a website, nature center, etc. where residents can readily go to answer questions and find help.

Committee Recommendation

- We acknowledge that 60% of Alpine residents want the deer to be left alone and 73% (60% + 13% trap & relocate) of residents do not want the deer to be killed.
- However, residents suffering from the effects of the deer need help.
- First, we do recommend that the city adopt education programs, implement with the UDWR a forage & habitat restoration project, investigate business partnerships that could help residents with property improvements to discourage deer, and provide online resources as outlined in the report to help Alpine residents live with our wildlife in addition to any other action the council takes.
- However, the committee does not make any specific action recommendations, but instead we submit to the council the results from the survey and our other research for its consideration in making the final action determination.