



SHAKER HEIGHTS

Wildlife Task Force Via Zoom Wednesday, August 13, 11:00 am

This meeting is being held remotely (Zoom) pursuant to Chapters 113 and 115 of the Codified Ordinances and Resolution 22-29.

Join the Zoom meeting as a viewer or listener from a PC, Mac, iPad, iPhone or Android device at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88356179527?pwd=WmFxU05YaG5yQnRYY29NREVUZkVZUT09>, Password: 33553400; Description: Wildlife Task Force Meeting; or join by phone at 833-548-0282 (toll free); Webinar ID: 883 5617 9527; Password: 33553400. International numbers available at <https://zoom.us/u/ahwKbeuA>. The audio of the meeting will be available the following day on the City's [website](#).

1. Memo on Deer Contracts

Documents:

[WILDLIFE TASK FORCE MEMO.PDF](#)

To request an accommodation for a person with a disability, call the City's ADA Coordinator at 216-491-1440, or Ohio Relay Service at 711 for TTY users.



SHAKER HEIGHTS

Memorandum

To: Members of the Wildlife Task Force

From: Timothy Kohanski, Commander

cc: David E. Weiss, Mayor
Jeri E. Chaikin, Chief Administrative Officer
Wayne D. Hudson, Chief of Police

Date: August 07, 2025

Re: Contract with Precision Wildlife Management Ltd. And White Buffalo, Inc.

The City of Shaker Heights began a deer culling program via sharpshooting by Shaker Heights Police Department in 2016-2017. For the 2025-2026 season, we recommend that the culling program continue to be implemented jointly with the City of Beachwood. After the culling is complete, we recommend one day for White Buffalo, Inc. to enter the City of Shaker Heights to conduct sterilization on female deer in locations throughout the city where the sharpshooter is not able to effectively shoot the deer (Southern section of the City).

In 2016 in response to multiple resident complaints concerning the impact of the overabundance of deer, the Shaker Heights Wildlife Task Force comprised of residents and Council members studied the impact of the deer population in the City. The negative impacts associated with an overabundance of or excessive browsing by the deer population are well-documented:

- A deer population that is out of balance with its native ecosystem has detrimental impacts by directly and indirectly affecting native plant and wildlife populations, habitat quality, and ecosystem processes.
- When deer become overabundant, they cause a decline in biodiversity (the number and variety of species of living organisms) in natural areas and reduce the ability of native plants to survive and reproduce. Deer browsing reduces the height, vigor and reproduction of plants through the repeated removal of stems, leaves and flowering parts of plants. If left uncontrolled, the deer population impacts the health of our wooded areas by browsing trees on public and private land.
- Deer browsing negatively impacts wildlife that needs woodland understory for forage, nesting and cover. Deer browsing can, for instance, significantly reduce vegetation that birds use for foraging, escaping predators and nesting.
- Deer browsing and antler rubbing can cause damage to landscape and garden vegetation.
- An overabundant deer population causes a reduction in the availability of forage, which leads to the decline in the health of individual animals.



-Overabundant deer populations hasten the spread of disease that impact deer (e.g., chronic wasting disease) and humans (e.g., Lyme disease).

- A healthy, diverse forest has an understory full of native shrubs. A forest with too many deer lacks this critical layer. Most of the parklands' forests lack this important shrub layer. Shrubs that do exist are non-native invasive plants that deer do not eat. These types of plants also decrease the diversity in our parklands.

Since the 2018-2019 deer culling season, the City of Shaker Heights has used a contractor, Precision Wildlife Management Ltd., to conduct our deer culling program. Precision is a limited liability corporation started by retired Shaker Heights Police Lieutenant James Mariano, who began the program in 2016.

Results of a 2025 resident questionnaire indicated that 70.51% of respondents described deer in the City as abundant or overabundant, compared to 76.61% in 2024. The percentage of respondents who wanted to see a decrease in the number of deer in Shaker increased slightly from 69.11% in 2024 to 70.51% in 2025, but has remained above 63% since we began asking the question in 2015.

Shaker Heights attempted to undertake deer culling jointly with neighboring cities since 2013, with little success. In 2021, the City of Beachwood allowed access to a small portion of land in Beachwood along Shaker Boulevard for baiting and culling, but no deer were culled at this location, probably due to the deer's familiarity with it as a bait site.

In 2022, Shaker Heights and Beachwood implemented a joint deer culling program at a cost of \$110,000 to harvest 70 deer within both cities. Beachwood paid \$60,000, with Shaker's share at \$50,000, regardless of which City the deer were culled. Beachwood's contribution was \$10,000 higher for this first year in recognition of the work Shaker Heights had already done over the years to establish a successful and safe deer culling program. In 2022, we sought proposals from both the USDA and Precision Wildlife Management Ltd. As in the past, the USDA proposal had a time and material proposal, thus they did not guarantee they could meet the 70 deer requirement. Additionally, they required the City to provide a space to "Field Dress" deer carcasses, which we could not and cannot accommodate.

For the 2024-2025 season, the Precision team harvested a total of 90 deer in both cities (A 29% increase from the 2023-2024 season). Through this deer management program, 3,405 pounds of venison were donated to the Cleveland Food Bank and the Geauga County Veterans Food Bank. The lean ground venison provided an estimated 13,600 meals for people in need.

Precision proposes a scope of work to include:

- o All-inclusive and seamless operation. - ODNR permitting and reporting. - Deer carcass transportation and processing. - Fixed cost regardless of time spent to bait, set trail cameras, locate, cull, and transport.
- o Venison donated to local food banks.
- o Speedy and discreet removal of deer carcasses.
- o Thorough end-of-season culling report.
- o Coordination with Shaker Heights Police Department and Beachwood Police Department.
- o Excellent communication with residents in all encounters.



SHAKER HEIGHTS

The cost to each city for the 2025-2026 program will decrease from \$103,500 to \$81,000 for several reasons:

- Number of deer to be culled to decrease from 90 to 70 (25% decrease).
- Harvesting locations in each city remain limited. (This decrease in cost is also due to adding the sterilization cost for this season.)
 - Labor prices are increasing due to having to spend more time to harvest deer because of limited access to viable sites, and no deer processors offer field dressing, necessitating this function to be done by Precision.

After speaking with leaders from the City of Beachwood and Shaker Heights, we have discussed the need to add the component of sterilization after the culling is completed for the following reasons:

- Sterilized deer cannot reproduce, which leads to a population decrease over time, fewer births = natural decline.
- Sterilization works best in densely populated areas where it is more difficult to cull-Southern section of the City.
- Treated deer live out natural lifespan (10-14 years). Still contribute to land and garden destruction and remain a risk for vehicle collisions.
- Must be combined with a culling program. Sterilization alone is not approved by the State.

(It should be noted that the topic of sterilization was not mentioned in the Shaker Heights Wildlife Questionnaire in 2025. The State of Ohio has implemented a new tool for the 2026 season which is called the Urban Deer Issues Reporting Tool. This offers standardized statewide questions and date).

The benefits of a combined approach of culling and sterilization are as follows: 1) Immediate relief-culling continues to provide immediate, short-term population reduction, 2) Long-term control-sterilization prevents future births. (Sterilizing 15 does can prevent the birth of up to 225 fawns over their lifetime of ten years), 3) Regional collaboration-opportunities for shared resources, funding and operational coordination across neighboring communities.

We have been in contact with Dr. Anthony DeNicola from White Buffalo. This company has provided sterilization in the City of South Euclid for many years. The cost for White Buffalo to enter the City of Shaker Heights and sterilize 15-20 deer would cost \$30,000 (\$20,000 for labor and \$10,000 for the City of Shaker Heights share for mobilization costs). Labor costs include deer capture, a veterinarian on site to perform the surgery, deer transport and veterinarian support. The City of Shaker Heights would work in collaboration with the cities of Beachwood and South Euclid to contract with White Buffalo to perform these services in each respective city.

The total cost for culling and sterilization (one night) would be \$111,000. We would also continue to partner with the City of Beachwood for the 2025-2026 culling/sterilization season. (Beachwood has not yet determined the requested nights for sterilization).



An attachment has been included in this memorandum to provide a detailed quote and scope of work for both Precision Wildlife Management, LTD. and White Buffalo, Inc. Also included in an attachment to this memorandum is a background about what the process of sterilization would entail from White Buffalo, Inc.

The Wildlife Task Force is requested to support the recommendation to contract with Precision Wildlife Management Ltd. in the amount of \$81,000 and White Buffalo, Inc. in the amount of \$30,000 for a total of \$111,000 to provide deer culling and sterilization services for the 2025- 2026 season.

Precision Wildlife Management LTD
2598 Morning Star Drive, Hinckley, Ohio. 44233
James A. Mariano, President 216-264-9777

Nuisance Wildlife Service Agreement

This Nuisance Wildlife Service Agreement (the “Agreement”) is dated the 1st day of November 2025, by and between The City of Shaker Heights, an Ohio municipal corporation, 3400 Lee Road, Shaker Heights Ohio. 44120, (216) 491-1400 (hereinafter designated the “City”), and Precision Wildlife Ltd., an Ohio limited liability company, 2598 Morning Star Drive, Hinckley, Ohio 44233 (216) 264-9777, (“Precision”), hereinafter designated.

1. Scope of Work:

- A. Precision will work with the City of Shaker Heights to address their Deer Management issues.

Precision shall provide the following services:

- i. Bait as needed, prior to the commencement of culling activity and throughout the culling season.
- ii. Precision will utilize special trail cameras at some of the bait sites.
- iii. Coordinate with the City, or their designee concerning bait site locations.
- iv. Coordinate with the Officer in Charge of the police departments during culling activities.
- v. Cull Deer. Deer Management signs will be posted during culling operations.
- vi. Properly tag the deer carcasses for transportation.
- vii. Professionally remove deer carcasses, discreetly field dress deer outside the city and the venison will be provided to the needy in the area, in accordance with applicable state law.
- viii. Record sex, fetus information and age of deer and report the information to the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife in a timely manner.
- ix. Precision shall fill out the necessary paperwork to request permits from the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife.
- x. Precision shall complete and provide an End of the Season culling report to be forwarded to the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife by the City.

- B. Precision bases this Agreement on the following:

- Permission from the City and residents to cull on City and private property throughout the city. Minimum of 5-10 viable bait sites in Shaker Heights (A viable bait site is a site that is easily accessible, multiple deer visit the site regularly, it is and safe to harvest deer in a discrete manner.)
- Precision will start baiting/culling deer on or about December 1, 2025.
- The culling days will be at the discretion of Precision.
- The services will terminate upon the earlier of:
 - The harvesting of 70 Whitetail Deer or
 - March 31, 2026
- Both the cities of Shaker Heights and Beachwood agree that 70 deer will be attempted to be harvested between the two cities and both cities must sign independent contracts.

- City will allow Precision to operate vehicles on paths in parks and median strips.
- City will allow Precision to cull deer from vehicles
- City will allow Precision to confirm weapon is sighted in daily at the Service Department salt pile.
- City will provide current data on deer calls for service during the past year as well as the number of deer/vehicle collisions and deer carcasses removed by the city.
- City will provide vegetation/biodiversity Plant Study Results if available as well as aerial deer survey, pellet survey or spotlight survey if available
- City will also provide information on updated deer management goals
- City is required by the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife to request the special permit tags. (Precision will fill out the designated forms for the city to approve and sign.)
- City will have signed contract with Precision in place by November 1, 2025, to start logistics and planning on November 1, 2025. Baiting and culling will start on or about December 1, 2025. City will grant permission to Precision to acquire private property bait sites given the City's private property protocols. Private property tracts that are 5 acres and above will not require agreement from neighbors.
- Cities will allow Precision to choose processor of their choice and donate all venison to persons in need in accordance with applicable state laws

2. Term:

The term of this Agreement shall commence on November 1, 2025, and shall terminate upon the earlier of the harvesting of 70 whitetail deer, between Shaker and Beachwood and completion of the end of the year culling report or March 31, 2026, unless extended in writing by agreement of the parties hereto, or unless sooner canceled or terminated as permitted herein.

3. Compensation:

Payment shall be made to Precision by the City of Shaker Heights in the amount of \$81,000.00 for services rendered in Shaker Heights. The City will receive an invoice for \$40,500.00 upon signing of contract. The \$40,500.00 will be due January 4, 2026. The remaining \$40,500.00 will be invoiced upon completion of culling 70 deer or March 31, 2026 and after the submission of the end of the season culling reports. Invoices submitted by Precision to the City are due within 30 days of receipt.

4. Oversight and Notices:

All the work done under this Agreement shall be performed under the oversight of Shaker Heights, or their designee. All notices, reports, and invoices required of this Agreement shall be provided to the City, or their designee by email or regular U.S. Mail to the City of Shaker Heights, 3400 Lee Road, Shaker Heights, Ohio, 44120.

5. Insurance:

Precision shall provide proof that it and its employees are covered by, at least \$1,000,000 of general liability insurance. Precision shall provide the City with a certificate of insurance for such policy. The certificate of insurance shall name the City as additional

insured. Said certificate of insurance shall also provide that at least ten (10) days written notice shall be given to the City of any material change in, or cancelation of, said insurance policies.

6. Independent Contractor:

Precision hereby acknowledges that it is an independent contractor and neither it nor its employees or agents are employees of the city. Precision shall be responsible for the payment or withholding of any federal, state or local taxes, including, but not limited to income, unemployment, and workers compensation; and the Cities will not provide, or contribute to any plan which provides benefits, including but not limited to unemployment, insurance, workers compensation, retirement benefits, liability insurance or health insurance. All individuals employed by Precision who provide personal services to the cities are not public employees under state law.

7. Default:

Should Precision at any time fail in the performance of this Agreement, the City shall have the right to immediately, upon notice to Precision, suspend all work or any part thereof under this Agreement until such time as the cities are satisfied that the work might continue, and/or the cities may, after three (3) days written notice to Precision, to terminate the Agreement. The election by the City to either suspend or terminate this contract, or to refrain from doing so when it may have the right to do so, shall not be considered a waiver by the City of any of its rights under this contract or the law, but rather shall be considered additional to any such rights. In the event of the suspension, cancellation or termination of this Agreement, the City of Shaker Heights agrees to pay Precision for any approved work performed on behalf of Shaker Heights and has made no payment up to the time of said suspension, cancellation or termination.

8. Indemnification:

Precision shall indemnify and save harmless the City from and against all losses, claims, demands, payments, suits, actions, recoveries, and judgements of every nature and description made brought or recovered against the City. (Viable bait site is a site that is easily accessible, multiple deer visit the site regularly, discreet, and safe to harvest deer) by reason of any act or omission of Precision, its agents, or employees, in the execution of the work herein contracted for, or in the use by Precision of any equipment or procedures which do not fully comply with the state and federal regulations governing such use.

9. Assignments and Subcontracting:

This Agreement may not be assigned or transferred to any party or firm without the written permission of the City. To the extent that the City grants permission for the assignment or transfer of this Agreement, the party or firm assuming responsibilities of Precision shall be bound by all the terms and conditions of this Agreement. Precision shall use only its own employees. No subcontractor, and no affiliate, agent or subsidiary of Precision shall perform work without the written permission of the City.

10. Complete Contract:

This Agreement shall be deemed to contain all the terms and conditions agreed to between the parties, who both agree that no representations or promises of any kind whatsoever have been made other than herein contained, and this Agreement shall be binding upon both parties.

In witness whereof, authorized representatives of the parties to this Agreement, indicating their party's approval of the terms herein, have signed as of the dates set forth below.

Witnesses:

1. _____
2. _____

Precision Wildlife Management LTD.
By: _____

Printed Name: James A. Mariano

Title: President

Tax ID. No. _____

Date: _____

City of Shaker Heights

Witnesses

1. _____
2. _____

Mayor: David Weiss

Mayor: _____

Date: _____

The sum of \$ _____ is
on and after (date) _____
in the City Treasury or in the process of
collection, to the credit of Fund# _____,
and not appropriated for any other purpose.

Purchase Order No. _____

John Potts, Director of Finance

Date: _____

Approved as to form:

By: _____

William M. Ondrey Gruber, Director of Law.



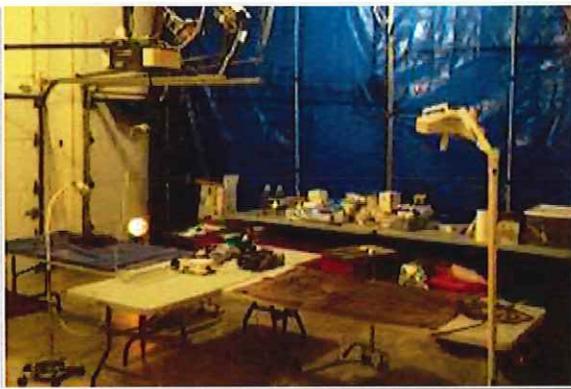
White Buffalo Inc.
Conserving Native Species and Ecosystems

Deer Management Techniques

Surgical Sterilization

What is the surgical sterilization process?

White Buffalo Inc. has developed a technique for surgical sterilization of white-tailed deer. This technique removes the deer's ovaries and is similar to, but less invasive than a cat or dog spay. The animal is typically in and out of surgery in less than 20 minutes, and the mortality rate is less than 2%. The technique begins with deer capture via tranquilizer dart. The deer is then transported to a surgical bay. The surgical prep and surgery take approximately 20 minutes. After surgery, the deer is returned to the field, a reversal agent is administered and the animal is observed from a distance to ensure all is well.



When would this technique be used?

The appropriate technique to manage deer depends on a variety of considerations, ranging from the goals of the community to legal restrictions. The population impact of this technique is still being evaluated, but we are conducting trials in areas where there are high densities of deer, people and road networks. The two most important site criteria are animals that are easy to access with a dart projector and a road network that allows us to access the deer.

What is the status of this technique?

We are actively conducting sterilization projects to gain an baseline on what can be expected with a "fertility control only" approach. We want to determine what can be accomplished under the best case scenario with very high percentage treatment rates in "real" suburban settings (e.g, population demographics, reduction rates, immigration effects, cost, etc.).

Our present research is focused on the relative effort of sterilization versus vaccine delivery to treat high percentages of local populations. Our hypothesis is that the extra effort/cost per deer to retrieve and sterilize females is significantly less than the cost of repeatedly retreating the same female during its life, particularly when combined with the reduced efficacy of the vaccines (~10% do not respond - 100% effectiveness of surgical sterilization).



For more information visit: WhiteBuffaloInc.org

[Photo Credits: James Berglie/For The HSUS & Wildlife Rescue, Inc. at Phoenix, MD Surgical Sterilization Project]



Pros

- Only handle the animal once.
- Can use a variety of volunteers to reduce costs.
- 100% effective for all animals.
- Removal of the ovaries reduces movement in landscape due to breeding behavior.
- Perceived as a humane solution.
- Very low mortality rates.

Cons

- Deer persist in landscape, giving a delayed population reduction.
- Cost is higher than other methods.
- This is not a permitted management option in most States, it is still only permitted as research.



Our Surgical Sterilization Projects

East Hampton, NY

Area Description

- 5 miles² open suburban community

Total Numbers Treated (% of Population Treated)

- 114 does sterilized in Year 1 (Jan. 2015)
- ~60% with 46 does sterilized in Year 2 (Nov. 2015)

Surgical/Capture Mortality

- <2%

Results

- Initial density - 115 deer/square mile (Nov. 2015)

National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD

Area Description

- 0.5 miles² federal research campus

Total Numbers Treated (% of Population Treated)

- 24 does sterilized in Year 1 (Dec. 2014)
- 5 does sterilized in Year 2 (Dec. 2015)

Immigration

- ~3 females/year

Surgical/Capture Mortality

- <10%

Results

- Initial density - 90 deer/square mile (Dec. 2014)
- ~33% decline in Year 1
- Current density - 60 deer/square mile (Dec. 2015)

City of Fairfax, VA

Area Description

- 6 miles² open suburban community

Total Numbers Treated (% of Population Treated)

- ~40% with 18 does sterilized in Year 1 (Jan. 2014)
- ~85% with 18 does sterilized in Year 2 (Jan. 2015)
- ~93% with 6 does sterilized in Year 3 (Nov. 2015)

Surgical/Capture Mortality

- < 2%

Immigration

- Unknown

Results

- Year 2 density - 10.5 deer/square mile
- ~20% decline from Year 2 to Year 3
- Current density - 8.4 deer/square mile

Cincinnati, OH

Area Description

- 1 miles² open suburban community

Total Numbers Treated (% of Population Treated)

- ~90% with 41 does sterilized in Year 1 (Dec. 2015)

Surgical/Capture Mortality

- <5%

Results

- Initial density - 100 deer/square mile (Dec. 2015)



Our Surgical Sterilization Projects

Villages in San Jose, CA

Area Description

- 700 acres fenced (only 6-7 ft high) with open front gate

Total Numbers Treated (% of Population Treated)

- ~90% with 103 does sterilized in Year 1 (Jan. 2013)
- 100% with 12 does sterilized in Year 2 (Oct. 2013)
- 115 total does sterilized
- 30 deer “relocated” outside the fence, 55% returned

Surgical/Capture Mortality

- 1%

Immigration

- 0 females/year

Results

- Initial density -154 deer/square mile (Oct. 2012)
- ~20% decline after Year 1 (includes relocation)
- ~20% decline after Year 2
- 0% decline after Year 3
- Current density - 93 deer/square mile (Nov. 2015)

Town and Country, MO

Area Description

- 10 miles² open suburban community

Total Numbers Treated (% of Population Treated)

- 100 does sterilized in Year 1 (Dec. 2009)
- 30 does sterilized in Year 2 (Dec. 2010)

Surgical/Capture Mortality

- <1%

Immigration

- Unknown

Results

- Due to low housing and road densities in much of the city, sterilization only could not achieve management objectives.
- Culling (non-sterilized deer only) followed to reduce total population by ~60%

Phoenix, MD

Area Description

- Single point of access on 14 acres

Total Numbers Treated (% of Population Treated)

- ~50% with 33 does sterilized in Year 1 (Feb. 2011)
- ~75% with 17 does sterilized in Year 2 (Feb. 2012)
- ~80% with 9 does sterilized in Year 3 (Feb. 2013)
- ~90% with 10 does sterilized in Year 4 (Feb. 2014)
- ~90% with 11 does sterilized in Year 5 (Feb. 2015)
- 80 total does sterilized

Surgical/Capture Mortality

- <1%

Immigration

- ~3-4 females/year

Annual Mortality

- ~10%

Results

- Population stable at 90 deer/square mile

Village of Cayuga Heights, NY

Area Description

- 1.8 miles² open suburban community

Total Numbers Treated (% of Population Treated)

- ~95% with 134 does sterilized in Year 1 (Dec. 2012)
- ~100% with 15 does sterilized in Year 2 (Dec. 2013)
- 149 total does sterilized

Surgical/Capture Mortality

- <1%

Immigration

- ~3 females/year

Results

- Initial density - 125 deer/square mile (Jan. 2013)
- ~20% decline after Year 1
- ~20% decline after Year 2
- 76 deer/square mile (Jan. 2015)
- WBI managed hunt harvested an additional 48 deer.
- Current density - 50 deer/square mile (March 2015)



For the last three decades, scientists have explored fertility control in wildlife. White Buffalo Inc. has been intimately involved in much of this research.

Management of white-tailed deer population densities has conventionally focused on lethal removal (e.g., sharpshooting or hunting). In an increasing number of communities, however, lethal deer management strategies have become impractical for legal, safety, and ethical reasons. The impracticality of implementing lethal strategies has fostered an interest in alternatives, including contraception and surgical sterilization. Surgery is currently the only reliable means to permanently sterilize female deer and has been demonstrated to be safe for the treated animals. Sterilization may provide an alternative deer management technique for reducing suburban herds in communities willing to commit to a long-term effort, and where lethal deer removal is impractical. Surgical sterilization is scale-limited based on the ability to capture and sterilize 80% or more of the female deer in a population and maintain that level each field season. Overall success will be greatest for areas where the effects of immigration are minimized. White Buffalo Inc. has trained local volunteers to handle immobilized deer and veterinarians to conduct the surgical procedure. We have documented a 50% decrease in cost with volunteer involvement.

[Download](#) our summary on surgical sterilization.

[Read about our surgical sterilization efforts in Fairfax City, VA.](#)

[Learn more >>](#)

[Read about our fertility control research.](#)

[Learn more >>](#)

[Review our experience in our Business Portfolio.](#)

[Learn more >>](#)

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[About Us](#)

Find out more about White Buffalo Inc. We've got a great team of biologists, educators and veterinarians who support research that is relevant in an environment heavily influenced by humans.

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White Buffalo Inc. is registered as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions to White Buffalo Inc. are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law. White Buffalo Inc.'s tax identification number is 06-1431342.



