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RESULTS OF THE 1997 ILLINOIS DEER HUNTER SURVEY

Administrative Report

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17 July 2001

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Abstract: Holders of 1996-97 deer hunting permits were surveyed via mail-questionnaire to profile their deer hunting activities, and to determine their attitudes and opinions about deer hunting, deer populations, and deer management in Illinois. The mailing list included recipients of all types of deer hunting permits and was stratified so that 150 names were selected for each county. Thus, the initial list included 15,300 names, which was reduced to 14,529 because the U.S. Postal Service was unsuccessful in making delivery to 771 individuals. A total of 10,114 usable questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 70%. The resulting data were tabulated by administrative region and/or type of permit holder. Statewide, 74% of the respondents held ≥ 1 paid firearm permits, 41% held ≥ 1 paid archery permits, and 86% held 1 or both of these permits. Regular firearm hunters spent an average of 4.5 days afield (maximum=7 days), and harvested an average of 0.30 antlered bucks and 0.67 total deer; only 1.0% took ≥ 2 antlered bucks and 47% took no deer. Archery hunters spent an average of 24.7 days afield (maximum=101 days), and harvested an average of 0.29 antlered bucks and 0.51 total deer; 2.6% took ≥ 2 antlered bucks and 67% took no deer. Respondents listed "to enjoy being out-of-doors viewing nature and wildlife in a natural setting" as the most important reason for deer hunting; "to harvest a trophy buck" rated fifth. Majorities or pluralities of the respondents supported limiting deer hunters to 2 archery permits, 2 firearm permits, and ≤ 4 total permits per year. Respondents rejected proposals to increase the price of permits, to discontinue free landowner permits, to require hunters to harvest an antlerless deer before taking an antlered buck, and to restrict holders of free landowner permits to harvesting antlerless deer. They also felt that limits of 1 antlered buck during archery season and 1 antlered buck during the firearm seasons were appropriate. Most (66%) of the respondents defined a quality deer as "any deer", "any deer considered good table fare", or "any adult deer". Quality Deer Management (QDM) was acceptable on selected state-controlled areas but should be voluntary at the county level. Majorities of the respondents thought the numbers of deer and deer hunters present were "about right", and pluralities believed the mid-December dates for the muzzleloader season and the mid-January dates for the handgun season should continue. Majorities gave good ratings to the Department of Natural Resources' deer management program and the data that it collects and analyzes. Management implications of these findings are discussed.

¹Illinois Natural History Survey

The goal of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) white-tailed deer management program is to provide a healthy herd capable of affording recreational and viewing opportunities, while controlling herd size in order to suppress negative deer/human interactions. As the deer population has increased (710,000 in 1997), the DNR must consider the impact of deer management on a variety of individuals and groups who may have different interests and points of view. Deer provide countless hours of entertainment to wildlife viewers and hunters. The economic benefits of deer hunting in Illinois is estimated to be >\$410 million annually (Southwick Associates 1997) and venison provides table fare for many thousands of families. On the other hand, thousands of deer-vehicle collisions occur on the state's roadways each year, and deer may negatively impact row crops, nursery stock, orchards, ornamental plants, and native forests.

Because the deer population has both positive and negative aspects, the DNR constantly strives to achieve the proper balance for the herd. Input from deer hunters and farm operators represents an important component of this process, since these 2 groups have a vested interest in the deer population. Thus, the DNR periodically surveys hunters and farmers to profile their activities, attitudes, and opinions with regards to deer and deer management in Illinois. The information provided improves the DNR's deer management program, which in turn provides positive feedback to the state's hunters and farmers. The process is mutually beneficial to the DNR and the public it serves.

Previous surveys were conducted for firearm and archery

hunters following the 1981, 1989, and 1994 seasons (Kube 1984, Anderson and Kube 1990, Anderson et al. 1996) and for archery hunters following the 1992 season (Anderson et al. 1994). Farm operators were surveyed in 1982 (Kube 1983), 1990 (Morgan et al. 1992) and again in 1997 (Shelton and Anderson 2001), concurrently with the present deer hunter survey.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

An 8-page, 24-question questionnaire was developed specifically for the 1997 Illinois Deer Hunter Survey (Fig. 1). This questionnaire and a letter of explanation (Fig. 2) were mailed (bulk rate) to 14,529 potential deer hunters on 25 August 1997. Non-respondents were sent 2nd and 3rd copies of the questionnaire, and accompanying letters (Figs. 3 and 4), on 8 September and 17 October, respectively. All mailings included a pre-addressed, postage-paid (first class) return envelope. As of 16 December 1997, 10,114 usable questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 70%.

The mailing list for this survey was developed from the names and addresses of residents who had received ≥ 1 of the various types of permits issued by the DNR for the 1996-97 deer hunting seasons. The sampling procedure was stratified so that 150 names were selected at random for each of the state's 102 counties. Thus, the initial mailing list included 15,300 individuals. Because 771 individuals were unreachable by the U.S. Postal Service, the actual or "working" mailing list was reduced to 14,529 names.

Data from the returned questionnaires were transferred to a computer file using a data management program (Ashton-Tate dBASE IV). The data were analyzed with a statistical program (SPSS Inc., SPSS 6.1). The 95% confidence intervals for responses to opinion-type questions, with sliding sample sizes and response ratios, are presented in Appendix A.

DEER PERMITS AND HUNTING REGULATIONS IN 1996-97

More than 210,000 residents received 505,302 deer hunting permits for the 1996-97 seasons. The types of permits issued included: paid firearm, paid archery, paid muzzleloader-only, paid handgun-only, paid landowner firearm, free landowner firearm, and free landowner archery. The paid archery permits were issued both by the DNR Permit Office and over the counter by license vendors. The latter cost \$25.50 each (including vendor's fee) and provided tags for one either-sex and one antlerless-only deer. Paid archery permits issued by the Permit Office cost \$15.00 each and provided a tag for one either-sex deer. Regardless of type, the paid archery permits were applicable statewide.

The paid firearm, muzzleloader-only, handgun-only, and landowner firearm permits were issued by the Permit Office, cost \$15.00 each, and were county specific. Each of these permits provided a tag for 1 either-sex or antlerless-only deer. The free landowner firearm and free landowner archery permits were issued by the Permit Office to qualifying landowners who hunted on their own land. Each free permit contained a tag for 1

either-sex and 1 antlerless-only deer.

Regular firearm deer hunting was allowed in 98 of Illinois' 102 counties (Cook, DuPage, Kane, and Lake excluded) and took place on 22-24 November and 5-8 December 1996. The muzzleloading rifle season occurred in the same 98 counties on 13-15 December (permittees could also hunt on 5-8 December). The handgun season took place on 17-19 January 1997, but was open in only 30 counties. Legal shooting hours for these seasons were 1/2 hour before sunrise to sunset.

The archery deer season began on 1 October 1996 and extended to 16 January 1997. However, archery hunting was suspended during the regular firearm deer season in the 98 counties open to firearm hunting. Legal shooting hours for archery hunting were 1/2 hour before sunrise to 1/2 hour after sunset.

FINDINGS

The findings of this survey were tabulated relative to the 5 administrative regions in the state (Figure 5) and/or by type of deer hunting permit held.

Deer Hunting Permits

Statewide, 74% of the participants in the 1997 Illinois Deer Hunter Survey held ≥ 1 paid firearm deer permits for the 1996-97 seasons (Table 1). Similarly, 41% of the participants held ≥ 1 paid archery permits. Collectively, these 2 types of permit holders represented 86% of the deer hunters in the state in 1996-97. The other types of permit holders, except free landowner

firearm permit holders, each represented <10% of the resident deer hunters.

These general trends for types of deer permit holders prevailed in all regions except Administrative Region 2, where a higher percentage of the participants had paid archery permits (72%) than paid firearm permits (63%). This "reverse trend" probably reflects the fact that firearm deer hunting was not allowed in 4 of the 9 counties in Administrative Region 2 in 1996-97.

Statewide, 41% of the paid firearm permit holders also held ≥ 1 paid archery permits (Table 2). Conversely, 74% of the paid archery permit holders also held ≥ 1 paid firearm permits. Thus, 44% of the permit holders had paid firearm permits and no paid archery permits, 11% had paid archery permits and no paid firearm permits, and 31% had both paid firearm and paid archery permits. Slightly more than one-half the paid firearm (54%) and paid landowner firearm (54%) permit holders, and slightly less than one-half of the free landowner firearm permit holders (46%), had no other type of deer hunting permit in 1996-97.

Paid muzzleloader-only and paid handgun-only permit holders had strong ties with paid firearm and paid archery permit holders. And, free landowner firearm and free landowner archery permit holders were closely associated with each other.

Deer Hunting Activities

Regular firearm deer hunters spent an average of 4.5 days afield during the 1996 firearm season (Table 3). About one-

fourth (27%) of them were in the field all 7 days. Hunters who participated in the muzzleloader-only season were afield an average of 2.5 days, with 57% of them active all 3 days. Similarly, handgun-only hunters were in the field an average of 2.3 days, with 49% of them active all 3 days.

The archery deer hunters were afield an average of 24.7 days in 1996-97; 43% were afield ≥ 21 days (Table 3). This high level of hunting activity is no doubt a manifestation of the exceptionally long archery deer season (101 days in most of the state) in 1996-97.

Statewide, 90% of the permit holders (all types combined) hunted deer on privately-owned land in Illinois in 1996-97 (Table 4). The proportion of hunters who were active on private land was highest in Administrative Region 1 (95%) and lowest in Administrative Region 5 (81%), where the Shawnee National Forest is located. Two percent of the deer hunters paid a fee to gain access to privately-owned land. The proportion of hunters who participated in fee hunting was highest in Administrative Region 2 (4%) and lowest in Administrative Regions 3 and 5 (1%).

Regular firearm hunters reported harvesting an average of 0.30 antlered bucks, 0.37 antlerless deer, and 0.67 total deer in 1996 (Tables 5-7). Only 1.0% of these hunters took ≥ 2 antlered bucks, and 47% took no deer whatsoever. For muzzleloader-only hunters, an average of 0.07 antlered bucks, 0.13 antlerless deer, and 0.20 total deer were harvested; 83% of these hunters took no deer. For handgun-only hunters, an average of 0.19 total deer (all antlerless) were harvested; 81% took no deer.

The archery hunters reported taking an average of 0.22 antlered bucks, 0.29 antlerless deer, and 0.51 total deer in 1996-97 (Tables 5-7). Only 2.6% of the archery hunters harvested ≥ 2 antlered bucks, and 67% did not harvest a deer of any kind.

It is significant to note that success rates (average deer/hunter) reported in this survey by the hunters are higher than rates derived from check station data. For instance, 1996 firearm hunter success calculated from permit information and harvest data was 0.51 deer/hunter, almost 24% lower than reported here. In addition, the proportion of firearm hunters that did not harvest a deer (from check station data) was about 58%, compared to 47% reported above. Similar, or even larger, discrepancies exist for the other seasons as well. These differences should be considered -- or at least noted -- when using success rates, or percentages of hunters harvesting multiple deer, derived from this survey.

Attitudes and Opinions

Reasons for Deer Hunting. The respondents were asked to rate the 4 top reasons they enjoy deer hunting (Table 8). On a relative scale (maximum=100), "to enjoy being out-of-doors viewing nature and wildlife in a natural setting" was rated highest (76). Second highest was "to harvest any deer" (49), which was followed by "for relaxation/recreation" (45) and "to obtain meat for consumption" (35). "To harvest a trophy buck" was rated fifth (28), and next to last, on the list. These perspectives on the enjoyment of deer hunting persisted in all

administrative regions and among all types of deer permit holders (Table 9).

Number of Deer Permits per Hunter. When asked their opinion of the maximum number of permits that a deer hunter should be allowed to receive per year, a plurality (49%) of the respondents said 2 for archery and a majority (54%) said 2 for firearms (Table 10). For all types of permits combined, 65% thought that ≤ 4 permits per hunter was sufficient. It is curious that 49% of the hunters checked 2 archery permits and 54% checked 2 firearm permits, but only 31% checked 4 for all types of permits combined. Logic tells us that, if a hunter thought 2 archery permits and 2 firearm permits were appropriate, he/she would conclude that 4 permits of all types were appropriate.

Cost of Permits. The respondents voiced strong opposition to the suggestion to increase the price of deer hunting permits (Table 11). Only 18% of the respondents supported increasing the price of a single resident permit from \$15.00 to \$20.00. Similarly, a meager 6% supported an increase to \$25.00 for this permit. These sentiments prevailed in all administrative regions in the state.

Landowner Deer Permits. When asked to express their views of the idea of limiting free landowner permit holders to antlerless-only deer, a plurality (48%) of the respondents were opposed (Table 12). Respondents in the administrative regions were split on this issue: a plurality (or majority) in Administrative Regions 1, 4, and 5 disliked the antlerless-only limitation whereas a plurality in Administrative Region 2 liked

it and respondents in Administrative Region 3 were tied on the issue.

When asked how they felt about continuing or discontinuing the paid landowner permit, a majority (52%) of the respondents thought it should be continued (Table 12). A majority or plurality of respondents in each administrative region expressed this same view.

Number of Deer per Hunter. A plurality (48%) of the respondents thought that archery hunters should be limited to harvesting a maximum of 2 deer per hunter per year (Table 13). The same limitation should apply to firearm hunters, in the opinion of 54% of the respondents. For all hunter types combined, 66% of the respondents thought that a limitation of ≤ 4 deer per hunter should apply. These sentiments were consistent (majority or plurality) in each of the 5 administrative regions.

Regardless of where they were located in the state, a majority (50-59%) of respondents felt that a maximum harvest of 1 antlered buck with firearm and 1 antlered buck with archery per hunter per year was sufficient (Table 14). Thus, if this scenario is followed, a hunter who used firearms only could take only 1 antlered buck per year, and a hunter who used archery only would have the same limitation. An individual hunter could not harvest 2 antlered bucks in a given season unless he/she used both firearm and archery equipment. This was a surprisingly restrictive response from the hunters, and such a regulation may have implications for hunter behavior and time spent afield that impact more than simply the number of bucks that an individual

may harvest. When combined with the other choice that allowed taking only two bucks (2-buck limit, but hunters' choice of seasons), 72% of respondents statewide supported a 2-buck limit in some form or fashion.

Quality Deer Management. When the respondents were asked to provide their definition of a quality deer, two-thirds (66%) of them said "any deer", "any deer considered choice table fare", or "any adult deer" (Table 15). The remaining hunters (34%) identified a buck with (various sizes of) antlers as a quality deer.

By a margin of 59% to 28%, the respondents felt that the application of Quality Deer Management (QDM) should be a voluntary process and not required by the DNR (Table 16). However, a majority (59%) of the respondents liked the QDM regulations that have been implemented on selected state-controlled areas in Illinois (Table 17). These opinions about QDM were consistent in all administrative regions.

Although a plurality (46%) of the respondents statewide said they would be supportive of a QDM program if it were proposed for the entire county where they firearm hunted most, these feelings did not persist in all administrative regions (Table 18). Paradoxically, the respondents expressed the reverse feelings (45% were unsupportive) about implementing a QDM program in the county where they archery hunted most. With regard to these responses, we point out that the question (#14 on the questionnaire) was phrased in the context of voluntary participation. Thus, implementation of QDM would be with the

understanding that participation was voluntary and not required by the DNR.

The final question regarding QDM asked the respondents to express their opinion of a regulation that would require a hunter to take an antlerless deer before harvesting an antlered buck. Nearly two-thirds (62%) of the respondents were unsupportive of such a restriction (Table 19). This opinion was consistent in all administrative regions.

Abundance of Deer and Deer Hunters. Majorities (59-66%) of the respondents in the various administrative regions thought the number of deer in the county where they firearm hunted or archery hunted most were about right (Table 20). The remaining respondents were more apt to think the number of deer was too low than too high. These sentiments prevailed in all administrative regions, except that respondents who archery hunted in Administrative Region 2 were more likely to think there were too many deer than too few deer.

There was no consensus among respondents as to whether the number of deer increased, decreased, or remained unchanged from 1992 to 1997 (Table 21). For the county where they firearm hunted most, 32% thought it had increased, 25% thought it had decreased, and 32% thought it was unchanged. The percentages were 31%, 27%, and 32%, respectively, in the county where respondents archery hunted most. These feelings were, for the most part, consistent from one administrative region to the next. However, hunters in Administrative Region 3 were more likely to think the number of deer has decreased than increased.

Along similar lines, the respondents were asked to express their opinion of the number of hunters in the county where they deer hunted most (Table 22). Sixty-one percent of the firearm hunters and 63% of the archery hunters responded by saying "about right". The remaining respondents were much more likely to think there were too many hunters than too few hunters. Respondents in all administrative regions expressed these same views.

Muzzleloader-Only and Handgun-Only Season Dates. In recent years, the muzzleloader-only season has been held during 3 days in mid-December and the handgun-only season has taken place during 3 days in mid-January. The respondents were asked what they thought about making some changes in the dates used for these specialized seasons (Table 23). Relatively few respondents supported changes, which were to combine the muzzleloader-only and handgun-only seasons into a single special season in mid-December or in mid-January. Instead, pluralities (35-42%) of respondents in all administrative regions and statewide opted to keep these specialized seasons separate and to continue with the mid-December and mid-January dates. In other words, the respondents did not want to make any changes in the dates for the muzzleloader-only and handgun-only seasons.

Fines for Violating Deer Hunting Regulations. Respondents supported (69%) the idea of increasing the penalty for violating deer hunting regulations from \$145 to \$350 (Table 24). Support for this change was overpowering in all administrative regions, ranging from a low of 65% to a high of 78%.

Rating DNR's Deer Management Program. The final 2 questions

on the survey instrument invited participants to grade or rate the DNR's deer management program (Table 25). A majority (53%) responded by indicating they had a high or medium level of confidence in the data collected and analyzed for the deer population. Only 10% of the respondents had a low level of confidence, whereas 31% said they were not familiar with these data. Similarly, a majority (63%) of the respondents gave an overall rating of excellent or good to the deer management program. On the flip side, only 27% rated the program as fair or poor. These ratings of the DNR's deer management program and associated data were consistent throughout the length and breadth of the state.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this survey indicate that resident deer permit holders make efficient use of the opportunity to deer hunt in Illinois. Hunters who were active during the regular firearm season were afield an average of 4.5 days or 64% of the total time available to hunt (Table 3). Similarly, hunters who participated in the muzzleloader-only season were afield an average of 2.5 days or 83% of the allowed time. For handgun-only hunters, the values were 2.3 days or 77% of the available time. When it is recognized that many hunters harvest a deer (fill their permits) on the first or second day, and are no longer afield, these use rates are truly phenomenal.

Because the archery deer season is exceedingly long (101 days in 1996-97), the use of hunting opportunity by archers

should be judged in a different light than those for firearm numbers. Archers reported spending an average of 24.7 days afield, which equates to 24% of the total number of days available. When family, work, and other obligations are taken into consideration, it is amazing that the average archery hunter can find the time to spend nearly 25 days in the field pursuing deer. By a wide margin, archery deer hunters spend more days afield (both total and per hunter) than any other group of hunters in the state (Anderson and Campbell 1997).

Majorities of the deer hunters believe that a maximum of ≤ 2 deer permits for archery, ≤ 2 permits for firearms, and ≤ 4 permits for all types of weapons combined, are sufficient (Table 10). The implementation of restrictions that reflect these sentiments may be appropriate for sociological reasons, but in reality they would be "felt" by relatively few hunters. Only 4.5% of the firearm hunters obtained ≥ 3 deer permits for the 1994 season, and 64% secured a single permit (Anderson et al. 1996). Reflecting the greater length of the archery season, archery hunters tended to obtain more permits that year, with 12.8% obtaining ≥ 3 permits, and only 45% securing a single permit (IDNR unpublished permit data).

Although concern has been expressed that some hunters are harvesting too many antlered bucks in the state, individual hunters infrequently take >1 of these animals. Only 1.0% of the regular firearm hunters, 2.6% of the archery hunters, and 4.4% of all hunters reported harvesting ≥ 2 antlered bucks during the 1996-97 seasons (Table 5). Only 0.6% of the hunters took 3

antlered bucks and 0.1% (1 per 1,000) took ≥ 4 antlered bucks. The hunter who harvests >2 antlered bucks in a season is truly a rare personality in Illinois. From a biological perspective, these high-harvest hunters have no measurable impact on the state's deer herd or the number of antlered bucks. While there may be sociological and perception reasons to impose additional restrictions on the number of antlered bucks a hunter may harvest (Table 14), such regulations will not improve the deer herd or the quality of antlered bucks in the state. When considering limits on the number of permits that individual hunters may acquire, or bag limits on antlered bucks, the DNR must guard against implementing restrictive regulations that may have unforeseen impacts upon managers' ability to harvest adequate numbers of female deer. For example, the DNR does not want to negatively influence the time that hunters spend afield.

It appears that most hunters look favorably on Quality Deer Management (QDM) programs on selected state-controlled areas, but felt that such programs should be voluntary if applied to entire counties (Tables 16-18). A majority of the hunters also rejected the idea of requiring a hunter to take an antlerless deer prior to harvesting an antlered buck (Table 19). In view of these findings, and recognizing that a majority of hunters do not limit their perception of "quality deer" to bucks with (various sizes of) antlers (Table 15), we believe that QDM programs have been appropriately addressed in Illinois. That is, these programs have been implemented on selected state-controlled areas, thus allowing sportspeople the freedom to choose whether or not to

participate in programs directed at the production of quality antlered bucks. At the same time, county-wide regulations should continue to allow the harvest of any deer regardless of size, age, sex, or antler configuration.

While there have been complaints that the special muzzleloader-only and handgun-only seasons are scheduled too late in the season, pluralities of the hunters prefer to make no changes (Table 23). Thus, we recommend that the DNR continue to select mid-December dates for the muzzleloader-only season and mid-January dates for the handgun-only season.

Participants in this survey gave the DNR's deer management program, and associated data collected and analyzed, good ratings (Table 25). They also felt that the number of deer present were "about right" (Table 20), that deer numbers were stable (Table 21), and that the number of hunters afield were "about right" (Table 22). These findings suggest that resident deer hunters are generally satisfied with the size of the deer herd and the deer management program that the DNR is currently overseeing in the Prairie State.

Acknowledgements. Appreciation is extended to J.H. Kube, J.E. Buhnerkempe, and J.M. Ver Steeg for assistance in developing the survey questionnaire and for critically reading a preliminary draft of this report; and to L.K. Campbell, K.D. Caldwell, and S. Stahl for data and word processing. This study was funded in part by Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Project W-112-R, the DNR, Division of Wildlife Resources, Illinois Natural History Survey, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, cooperating.

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Table 1. Type of resident deer permits held by participants in the 1997 Illinois Deer Hunter Survey: data by administrative region. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Type of Deer Permit in 1996-97	Administrative Region					Entire State
	1	2	3	4	5	
	(2,641)	(740)	(1,623)	(2,525)	(2,559)	(9,812) ^a
Paid firearm	79%	63%	74%	75%	76%	74%
Paid archery	42	72	48	37	40	41
Paid muzzleloader ^b	4	4	5	5	5	4
Paid handgun ^c	5	4	4	7	10	6
Paid landowner firearm	2	1	4	3	3	3
Free landowner firearm	11	5	12	19	17	15
Free landowner archery	7	2	5	9	10	8

^aThe sum of the sample sizes for the administrative regions is greater than the sample size for the entire state because some deer permit holders (2.8%) were active in >1 administrative region.

^bPaid muzzleloader-only.

^cPaid handgun-only.

Table 2. Overlap among the different types of resident deer permit holders who participated in the 1997 Illinois Deer Hunter Survey: data for entire state. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Permit Holder in 1996-97	No Others	Paid Firearm	Paid Archery	Other Types of Permits Held						Free Landowner Archery
				Paid Muzzle- loader ^a	Paid Hand- gun ^b	Paid Landowner Firearm	Paid Landowner Firearm	Paid Landowner Firearm	Free Landowner Firearm	
Paid firearm	(7,430)	54%		41%	4%	6%	<1%	2%	1%	
Paid archery	(4,115)	21	74	--	6	7	2	4	3	
Paid muzzle- loader ^a	(387)	7	78	67	--	20	3	7	8	
Paid handgun ^b	(584)	7	79	50	13	--	4	11	9	
Paid landowner firearm	(282)	54	11	24	4	4	--	6	15	
Free landowner firearm	(1,503)	46	8	10	2	4	1	--	45	
Free landowner archery	(789)	4	13	15	4	7	5	87	--	

^aPaid muzzleloader-only.

^bPaid handgun-only.

Table 3. Days spent afield by resident deer permit holders during the different deer hunting seasons in Illinois in 1996-97: data for entire state. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Parameter	Deer Hunting Season				
	Regular Firearm	Special Muzzleloader	Special Handgun	Archery	All
Mean	4.5 (8,806)	2.5 (434)	2.3 (555)	24.7 (4,407)	15.5 (9,784)
Distribution: 1 day(s)	8%	12%	20%	1%	5%
2 "	12	31	31	3	8
3 "	16	57	49	3	9
4 "	13	--	--	3	8
5 "	12	--	--	3	7
6 "	12	--	--	3	7
7 "	27	--	--	2	13
8-10 "	--	--	--	12	5
11-20 "	--	--	--	27	12
21-30 "	--	--	--	18	9
31-40 "	--	--	--	9	7
>41 "	--	--	--	16	10

Table 4. Types of property on which resident deer permit holders hunted deer in Illinois in 1996-97: data by administrative region for all permit holders combined. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Type of Property	Administrative Region					Entire State
	1	2	3	4	5	
	(2,646)	(741)	(1,624)	(2,527)	(2,726)	(9,830)
Publicly-owned	5%	12%	12%	7%	19%	10%
Hunter's own	21	12	21	28	26	24
Privately-owned w/o fee	71	72	66	63	54	64
Privately-owned w/ fee	3	4	1	2	1	2

Table 5. Antlered buck deer harvested by resident deer permit holders during the different deer hunting seasons in Illinois in 1996-97: data for entire state. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Parameter	Deer Hunting Season				All
	Regular Firearm	Special Muzzleloader	Special Handgun	Archery	
	(8,806)	(434)	(555)	(4,407)	(9,784)
Mean	0.30	0.07	0.00 ^a	0.22	0.38
Distribution:					
0 antlered	71.0%	93.8%	100%	80.6%	68.0%
1	28.0	6.0	0.0	16.8	27.6
2	0.9	0.2	0.0	2.5	3.7
3	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.6
4	<0.1	0.0	0.0	<0.1	0.1
5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	<0.1
6-10	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
≥11	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

^aHunters who participated in the special handgun season were limited to antlerless deer only.

Table 6. Antlerless deer harvested by resident deer permit holders during the different deer hunting seasons in Illinois in 1996-97: data for entire state. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Parameter	Deer Hunting Season				All
	Regular Firearm	Special Muzzleloader	Special Handgun	Archery	
Mean	0.37 (8,806)	0.13 (434)	0.19 (555)	0.29 (4,407)	0.48 (9,784)
Distribution:					
0 antlerless	67.5%	88.7%	80.9%	78.3%	64.0%
1	28.4	9.9	19.1	16.7	27.1
2	3.9	0.9	0.0	3.8	6.6
3	0.3	0.5	0.0	1.0	1.6
4	<0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.5
5	0.0	0.0	0.0	<0.1	0.1
6-10	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
≥11	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	<0.1

Table 7. Total deer harvested by resident deer permit holders during the different deer hunting seasons in Illinois in 1996-97: data for entire state. Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Parameter	Deer Hunting Season				
	Regular Firearm	Special Muzzleloader	Special Handgun	Archery	All
Mean	0.67 (8,806)	0.20 (434)	0.19 (555)	0.51 (4,407)	0.86 (9,784)
Distribution: 0 deer	47.1%	82.9%	80.9	66.9%	45.2%
1 "	40.1	15.2	19.1	21.3	34.7
2 "	11.7	1.2	0.0	8.1	13.4
3 "	0.9	0.7	0.0	2.5	3.9
4 "	0.2	0.0	0.0	1.0	1.8
5 "	<0.1	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.6
6-10 "	<0.1	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.4
≥11 "	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	<0.1

Table 8. Reasons given for resident deer permit holders for enjoying the sport of deer hunting: data by administrative region for all permit holders combined (Illinois 1997). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Reasons	Rating ^a by Administrative Region					Entire State
	1	2	3	4	5	
	(2,566)	(721)	(1,575)	(2,414)	(2,641)	(9,487)
To enjoy being out-of-doors/ viewing nature and wildlife in a natural setting	76	79	77	75	74	76
For relaxation/recreation	46	42	44	46	44	45
To obtain meat for consumption	36	32	32	34	38	35
To enjoy companionship of friends	21	18	22	22	23	22
To harvest a trophy buck	27	31	27	28	29	28
To harvest any deer	49	51	50	49	48	49
Others ^b	2	2	2	3	2	2

^aOn a scale of 0-100 after transforming the original scoring so that 1=100, 2=75, 3=50, and 4=25 (see question #5 in questionnaire).

^bIncludes to reduce deer population/crop depredation, challenge and excitement of hunting, tradition and love of hunting, and to teach youths about conservation and wildlife.

Table 9. Reasons given by resident deer permit holders for enjoying the sport of deer hunting: data by type of permit holder for entire state (Illinois 1997). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Reasons	Rating ^a by Permit Type							
	Paid Firearm	Paid Archery	Paid Muzzle-loader ^b	Paid Hand-gun ^c	Paid Landowner Firearm	Free Landowner Firearm	Free Landowner Archery	All
To enjoy being out-of-doors/viewing nature and wildlife in a natural setting	76	76	78	73	73	72	75	76
For relaxation/recreation	45	44	42	45	40	44	43	45
To obtain meat for consumption	37	31	36	37	39	31	30	35
To enjoy the companionship of friends	22	20	21	24	23	24	21	22
To harvest a trophy buck	28	33	32	29	32	27	30	28
To harvest any deer	49	52	53	51	48	49	52	49
Others ^d	2	2	2	3	2	4	3	2
	(7,045)	(3,975)	(377)	(563)	(261)	(1,368)	(734)	(9,487)

^aOn a scale of 0-100 after transforming the original scoring so that 1=100, 2=75, 3=50, and 4=25 (see question #5 in questionnaire).

^bPaid muzzleloader-only.

^cPaid handgun-only.

^dIncludes to reduce deer population/crop depredation, challenge and excitement of hunting, tradition and love of hunting, and to teach youths about conservation and wildlife.

Table 10. Attitudes of resident deer permit holders toward the maximum number of permits that a deer hunter should be allowed to receive per year: data by administrative region for all permit holders combined (Illinois 1997). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Number of Permits	Administrative Region					Entire State
	1	2	3	4	5	
Responses to the question,						
"In your opinion, what is the maximum number of permits that a deer hunter should be allowed to receive per year in Illinois?"						
Archery permits	(2,408)	(692)	(1,503)	(2,297)	(2,500)	(8,980)
1	14%	10%	17%	17%	14%	15%
2	53	45	51	47	46	49
3	10	15	12	11	13	12
4	11	16	9	10	12	11
5	1	2	1	1	1	1
≥6	6	8	5	8	8	7
No opinion	5	4	5	6	6	5
Firearm permits	(2,469)	(698)	(1,530)	(2,377)	(2,575)	(9,226)
1	19%	24%	25%	18%	16%	19%
2	58	56	55	52	52	54
3	11	9	9	12	14	12
4	6	6	6	9	9	7
5	1	<1	<1	1	1	1
≥6	2	2	2	4	4	3
No opinion	3	3	3	4	4	4
All types of permits	(2,346)	(652)	(1,453)	(2,243)	(2,370)	(8,678)
1	4%	4%	5%	4%	3%	4%
2	17	16	20	15	14	17
3	14	13	13	13	12	13
4	32	32	32	30	28	31
5	7	9	8	9	10	9
≥6	17	19	15	19	22	18
No opinion	9	7	7	10	11	8

Table 11. Attitudes of resident deer permit holders toward increasing the fees for deer permits: data by administrative region for all permit holders combined (Illinois 1997). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Options	Administrative Region					Entire State
	1	2	3	4	5	
Responses to the questions:						
"Resident deer hunting single permits currently cost \$15.00 (firearm and archery), while the resident archery combination permits (one either-sex tag and one antlerless-only tag) cost \$25.00. Would you be supportive or unsupportive of the following changes?"						
	(2,618)	(727)	(1,604)	(2,504)	(2,693)	(9,718)
Supportive	20%	24%	22%	16%	15%	18%
Unsupportive	71	70	70	75	78	74
No opinion	9	6	8	9	7	8
"Increase the price to \$20.00 for single resident permits (firearm and archery) and to \$35.50 for combination archery permits, with an appropriate increase in nonresident fees."						
	(2,583)	(714)	(1,598)	(2,469)	(2,664)	(9,605)
Supportive	7%	8%	9%	5%	5%	6%
Unsupportive	85	87	84	86	89	86
No opinion	8	5	7	9	6	8

Table 12. Attitudes of resident deer permit holders toward the issuance of free and paid (priority) permits to landowners: data by administrative region for all permit holders combined (Illinois 1997). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Options	Administrative Region					Entire State
	1	2	3	4	5	
Responses to the questions:						
"In recent years, qualifying landowners have been issued free firearm and archery deer permits that allow the harvest of one either-sex and one antlerless-only deer per permit, on their property only. What do you think of the idea of limiting all free landowner permits to antlerless-only deer?"						
	(2,641)	(739)	(1,621)	(2,514)	(2,718)	(9,798)
Like	38%	49%	43%	32%	37%	38%
Dislike	47	35	43	54	49	48
No opinion	15	16	14	14	14	14
"Qualifying landowners currently have the opportunity to purchase (fee \$15.00) county-wide deer permits before any other resident can obtain permits. Do you think this "paid landowner permit" should be continued or discontinued?"						
	(2,630)	(733)	(1,618)	(2,525)	(2,727)	(9,784)
Continued	51%	43%	49%	55%	52%	52%
Discontinued	37	41	38	32	35	35
No opinion	12	16	13	13	13	13

Table 13. Attitudes of resident deer permit holders toward the maximum number of deer that a deer hunter should be allowed to harvest per year: data by administrative region, for all permit holders combined (Illinois 1997). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Number of Deer	Administrative Region					Entire State
	1	2	3	4	5	
Responses to the question,						
"In your opinion, what is the maximum number of deer that a deer hunter should be allowed to harvest per year in Illinois?"						
Archery	(2,372)	(682)	(1,478)	(2,263)	(2,445)	(8,829)
1	15%	12%	18%	17%	14%	16%
2	52	44	51	48	46	48
3	10	16	11	10	13	12
4	11	16	10	11	12	11
5	1	1	1	1	1	1
≥6	7	8	5	8	8	7
No opinion	4	3	4	5	6	5
Firearm	(2,416)	(678)	(1,498)	(2,326)	(2,510)	(9,017)
1	19%	23%	24%	18%	16%	19%
2	57	57	55	52	52	54
3	11	10	8	13	14	12
4	6	5	6	8	9	8
5	1	<1	1	1	1	1
≥6	3	2	3	4	4	3
No opinion	3	3	3	4	4	3
All types of weapons	(2,377)	(261)	(1,468)	(1,029)	(2,417)	(8,805)
1	4%	3%	4%	4%	3%	4%
2	19	19	21	18	15	18
3	14	14	15	13	12	14
4	32	31	31	28	30	30
5	10	7	7	10	10	9
≥6	16	19	16	19	21	18
No opinion	6	6	5	6	9	7

Table 14. Attitudes of resident deer permit holders toward the maximum number of antlered bucks a deer hunter should be allowed to harvest per year: data by administrative region for all permit holders combined (Illinois 1997). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Number of Antlered Bucks	Administrative Region					Entire State
	1	2	3	4	5	
Responses to the question,						
"In your opinion, what is the maximum number of antlered bucks that a deer hunter should be allowed to harvest per year in Illinois? Note: firearm includes both shotgun and muzzleloader."	(2,614)	(729)	(1,607)	(2,502)	(2,699)	(9,718)
1 with firearm and 1 with archery, for a total of 2 bucks	56%	50%	59%	54%	51%	55%
2 with firearm and 2 with archery, for a total of 4 bucks	15	18	15	17	20	17
2 with firearm and/or archery, for a total of 2 bucks	18	22	17	17	16	17
4 with firearm and/or archery, for a total of 4 bucks	5	5	5	6	6	5
More than 4 bucks	2	2	2	2	2	2
No opinion	4	3	2	4	5	4

Table 15. Resident deer permit holders' definition of a "quality" deer: data by administrative region for all permit holders combined (Illinois 1997). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Options	Administrative Region					Entire State
	1	2	3	4	5	
Responses to the question,						
"Which of the following choices most closely describes <u>YOUR DEFINITION</u> of a 'quality' deer?"						
	(2,622)	(732)	(1,613)	(2,513)	(2,714)	(9,762)
Any deer	5%	5%	5%	7%	6%	6%
Any deer considered choice table fare	23	18	24	22	26	23
Any adult deer	41	35	37	39	33	37
Any buck with antlers	3	4	4	3	3	3
Any buck with at least 8 antler points	11	14	10	10	11	11
Any buck whose antlers are wider than the distance between the tips of the ears, with at least 8 antler points	10	14	13	12	12	12
Any buck with antlers large enough to qualify for the Pope and Young Record Book (score of 125 or higher)	6	8	5	5	7	6
Any buck with antlers large enough to qualify for the Boone and Crockett Record Book (score of 170 or higher)	1	2	2	2	2	2

Table 16. Attitudes of resident deer permit holders as to whether hunter participation in a Quality Deer Management Program should be voluntary or required by the DNR: data by administrative region for all permit holders combined (Illinois 1997). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Options	Administrative Region					Entire State
	1	2	3	4	5	
Responses to the question,						
"Quality Deer Management" may be defined as the use of restraint in harvesting young bucks, along with harvesting enough does to maintain a healthy herd. Limiting the harvest of young bucks is often accomplished by requiring that bucks have antlers of at least a minimum size (such as minimum spread or number of points, etc.) before they may be harvested. In your opinion, should hunter participation in such a program in Illinois be voluntary or required by the DNR?"						
	(2,619)	(736)	(1,613)	(2,509)	(2,734)	(9,762)
Voluntary	60%	56%	58%	60%	60%	59%
Required by DNR	29	36	30	26	27	28
No opinion	11	8	12	14	13	13

Table 17. Attitudes of resident deer permit holders toward the DNR's implementation of a Quality Deer Management Program on selected state-controlled areas: data by administrative region for all permit holders combined (Illinois 1997). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Options	Administrative Region					Entire State
	1	2	3	4	5	
Responses to the question,						
"The DNR has implemented a Quality Deer Management Program on selected state-controlled public areas. Under this program, hunters that choose to hunt at those sites may not harvest antlered bucks that do not have at least four or five points on one side. The intent is to increase the number of larger bucks on the area. What do you think of this program?"						
	(2,622)	(734)	(1,616)	(2,510)	(2,706)	(9,754)
Like	61%	66%	61%	58%	57%	59%
Dislike	18	19	16	19	21	19
No opinion	21	15	23	23	22	22

Table 18. Attitudes of resident deer permit holders toward the establishment of a Quality Deer Management Program in the county where they hunt most: data by administrative region for all permit holders combined (Illinois 1997). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Options	Administrative Region					Entire State
	1	2	3	4	5	
Responses to the question,						
"If the DNR proposed establishing the Quality Deer Management Program (as described in Question #12) throughout the entire county where you hunt most, would you be supportive or unsupportive?"						
County where firearm hunt most ^a						
	(2,310)	(376)	(1,328)	(2,276)	(2,531)	(8,732)
Supportive	46%	56%	48%	42%	46%	46%
Unsupportive	41	34	37	43	40	40
No opinion	13	10	15	15	14	14
County where archery hunt most ^b						
	(1,084)	(505)	(765)	(949)	(988)	(4,291)
Supportive	45%	49%	47%	42%	41%	44%
Unsupportive	44	43	42	48	46	45
No opinion	11	8	11	10	13	11

^aResponses of firearm deer permit holders only.

^bResponses of archery deer permit holders only.

Table 19. Attitudes of resident deer permit holders toward a regulation that would require a hunter to take an antlerless deer prior to taking an antlered buck: data by administrative region for all permit holders combined (Illinois 1997). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Options	Administrative Region					Entire State
	1	2	3	4	5	
Responses to the question,						
"Would you be supportive or unsupportive of a regulation that would require a hunter to take an antlerless deer prior to taking an antlered buck?"						
	(2,616)	(732)	(1,605)	(2,504)	(2,698)	(9,727)
Supportive	25%	30%	28%	22%	26%	25%
Unsupportive	63	60	60	64	62	62
No opinion	12	10	12	14	12	13

Table 20. Opinions of resident deer permit holders as to the number of deer in the county where they hunt most: data by administrative region for all permit holders combined (Illinois 1997). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Options	Administrative Region					Entire State
	1	2	3	4	5	
Responses to the question,						
"In your opinion, is the number of deer in the county where you hunt most too low, about right, or too high?"						
County where firearm hunt most ^a						
	(2,339)	(379)	(1,349)	(2,318)	(2,564)	(8,860)
Too low	17%	20%	24%	18%	17%	18%
About right	66	63	61	64	66	65
Too high	14	16	13	16	14	14
No opinion	3	1	2	2	3	3
County where archery hunt most ^b						
	(1,099)	(517)	(778)	(966)	(1,008)	(4,368)
Too low	20%	14%	31%	23%	19%	21%
About right	66	61	59	64	67	64
Too high	12	23	8	11	13	13
No opinion	2	2	2	2	1	2

^aResponses of firearm deer permit holders only.

^bResponses of archery deer permit holders only.

Table 21. Opinions of resident deer permit holders as to changes in the number of deer in the county where they hunt most: data by administrative region for all permit holders combined (Illinois 1997). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Options	Administrative Region					Entire State
	1	2	3	4	5	
Responses to the question,						
"In your opinion, has the number of deer in the county where you hunt most increased, decreased, or remain unchanged <u>during the last five years?</u> "						
County where firearm hunt most ^a						
	(2,341)	(360)	(1,354)	(2,317)	(2,567)	(8,870)
Increased	31%	31%	27%	33%	35%	32%
Decreased	22	25	35	24	24	25
Unchanged	35	36	27	32	29	32
No opinion	12	8	11	11	12	11
County where archery hunt most ^b						
	(1,102)	(515)	(778)	(967)	(1,015)	(4,377)
Increased	32%	36%	22%	31%	36%	31%
Decreased	23	18	38	26	27	27
Unchanged	34	35	29	32	29	32
No opinion	11	11	11	11	8	10

^aResponses of firearm deer permit holders only.

^bResponses of archery deer permit holders only.

Table 22. Opinions of resident deer permit holders as to the number of deer hunters in the county where they hunt most: data by administrative region for all permit holders combined (Illinois 1997). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Options	Administrative Region					Entire State
	1	2	3	4	5	
Responses to the question,						
"In your opinion, is the number of deer <u>HUNTERS</u> in the county where you hunt most too low, about right, or too high?"						
County where firearm hunt most ^a						
	(2,338)	(379)	(1,348)	(2,319)	(2,570)	(8,865)
Too low	5%	5%	4%	3%	4%	4%
About right	64	64	57	60	61	61
Too high	23	24	31	30	29	28
No opinion	8	7	8	7	6	7
County where archery hunt most ^b						
	(1,098)	(515)	(777)	(968)	(1,014)	(4,372)
Too low	6%	8%	3%	3%	4%	5%
About right	67	56	59	64	67	63
Too high	19	25	30	25	24	24
No opinion	8	11	8	8	5	8

^aResponses of firearm deer permit holders only.

^bResponses of archery deer permit holders only.

Table 23. Attitudes of resident deer permit holders toward changing the special muzzleloader-only and handgun-only seasons: data by administrative region for all permit holders combined (Illinois 1997). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Option	Administrative Region					Entire State
	1	2	3	4	5	
Responses to the question,						
"In recent years, the muzzleloader-only season has been held during 3 days in mid-December and the handgun-only season has taken place during 3 days in mid-January. Which of the following most closely describes your preference for changing or altering these seasons?"						
Combine into one special season in mid-December	(2,607)	(728)	(1,610)	(2,503)	(2,690)	(9,707)
	13%	12%	14%	13%	16%	14%
Combine into one special season in mid-January	8	8	10	8	9	9
Do away with the two special seasons, but allow the use of muzzleloaders and handguns during the regular firearm season	13	18	14	12	13	13
Keep muzzleloader and handgun seasons as they are now	41	35	40	42	40	40
No opinion	25	27	22	25	22	24

Table 24. Attitudes of resident deer permit holders toward increasing the fines for violating deer hunting regulations: data by administrative region for all permit holders combined (Illinois 1997). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Options	Administrative Region					Entire State
	1	2	3	4	5	
Responses to the question,						
"At the present time, the fines for violating various deer hunting regulations are highly variable, and allow considerable discretion on the part of the presiding judge. However, Illinois law states that civil penalties shall also be imposed for the unlawful taking or possessing of wildlife. The current civil penalty for deer is \$145. Would you think it appropriate or inappropriate if this penalty were increased to \$350?"						
	(2,638)	(738)	(1,618)	(2,512)	(2,714)	(9,785)
Appropriate	72%	78%	73%	66%	65%	69%
Inappropriate	18	13	16	22	22	19
No opinion	10	9	11	12	13	12

Table 25. Resident deer permit holders' evaluation of the DNR's deer management program and of the data collected on the States' deer population: data by administrative region for all permit holders combined (Illinois 1997). Sample sizes are in parentheses.

Options	Administrative Region					Entire State
	1	2	3	4	5	
Responses to the questions:						
"What level of confidence do you have in the data collected and analyzed by the Department of Natural Resource on the States' deer population?"						
	(2,641)	(737)	(1,621)	(2,516)	(2,721)	(9,801)
High level of confidence	21%	23%	19%	17%	16%	18%
Medium level of confidence	36	34	34	36	35	35
Low level of confidence	8	7	12	10	11	10
I am not familiar with these data	30	32	30	31	32	31
No opinion	5	4	5	6	6	6
"Overall, how do you rate the Department of Natural Resources' deer management program?"						
	(2,642)	(736)	(1,619)	(2,515)	(2,719)	(9,796)
Excellent	17%	18%	15%	15%	14%	15%
Good	50	52	47	47	48	48
Fair	20	18	24	23	23	22
Poor	4	3	5	5	5	5
No opinion	9	9	9	10	10	10

1997 ILLINOIS DEER HUNTER SURVEY



INSTRUCTIONS

To properly manage the Illinois white-tailed deer population, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) needs information about deer hunters, their hunting experiences, and their opinions of hunting regulations and other issues. Both firearm and archery deer hunters are being asked to provide information. Please answer all questions that apply to you, beginning with PART A (Deer Hunting Activity) below, and return this questionnaire.

Your responses are strictly confidential and will never be associated with your name. Since you are part of a small, randomly selected group, your participation is very important.

When completed, insert questionnaire into the self-addressed envelope and mail. POSTAGE IS PREPAID.

YOUR COMMENTS ARE WELCOME BUT PLEASE WRITE THEM ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER TO RECEIVE PROPER ATTENTION.

PART A: Deer Hunting Activity

1. Which of the following types of permits did you have for deer hunting in Illinois in the fall/winter of 1996-97?
(circle number for all that apply)

- Paid firearm permit.....1
- Paid archery permit.....2
- Paid muzzleloader-only permit.....3
- Paid handgun-only permit.....4
- Paid landowner firearm permit.....5
- Free landowner firearm permit.....6
- Free landowner archery permit.....7

Figure 1. The questionnaire used for conducting the 1997 Illinois Deer Hunter Survey (continued).

2. How many days did you hunt during each of the following deer seasons in the fall/winter of 1996-97?

	<u>Number</u>
•Regular firearm (Nov.22-24, Dec.5-8).....	_____
•Special muzzleloader (Dec.13-15).....	_____
•Special handgun (Jan.17-19).....	_____
•Archery (Oct.1-Jan.16).....	_____

3. In which county did you hunt most during each of the following deer seasons in the fall/winter of 1996-97?

	<u>County</u>
•Regular firearm (Nov.22-24, Dec.5-8)...	_____
•Special muzzleloader (Dec.13-15).....	_____
•Special handgun (Jan.17-19).....	_____
•Archery (Oct.1-Jan.16).....	_____

4. How many deer did you harvest (kill and retrieve) during each of the following seasons in the fall/winter of 1996-97?

	<u>Antlered</u>	<u>Antlerless</u>
	<u>Buck</u>	<u>Deer</u>
•Regular firearm (Nov.22-24, Dec.5-8).....	_____	_____
•Special muzzleloader (Dec.13-15).....	_____	_____
•Special handgun (Jan.17-19).....	_____	_____
•Archery (Oct.1-Jan.16).....	_____	_____

PART B: Your Opinions

5. From the list below, please rank the top four reasons you enjoy hunting deer. (enter "1", "2", "3", or "4" for the most appropriate answers)

- To enjoy being out-of-doors/viewing nature and wildlife in a natural setting....._____
- To obtain meat for consumption....._____
- To enjoy the companionship of friends....._____
- To harvest any deer....._____
- To harvest a trophy deer....._____
- For relaxation/recreation....._____
- Other (write in) _____

6. During the fall/winter of 1996-97, which of the following descriptions most closely identifies the type of property on which you deer hunted most? (Circle number for appropriate answer)

- Publicly-owned land.....1
- Your own property.....2
- Privately-owned property which you hunted free of charge..3
- Privately-owned property which you paid a fee to hunt.....4

7. In your opinion, what is the maximum number of permits that a deer hunter should be allowed to receive per year in Illinois? (circle appropriate number for archery permits, for firearm permits, and for all types of permits combined)

	<u>Archery</u> <u>Permits</u>	<u>Firearm</u> <u>Permits</u>	<u>All Types</u> <u>of Permits</u> <u>Combined</u>
One.....	1.....	1.....	1
Two.....	2.....	2.....	2
Three.....	3.....	3.....	3
Four.....	4.....	4.....	4
Five.....	5.....	5.....	5
Six or more.....	6.....	6.....	6
No opinion.....	7.....	7.....	7

8. In your opinion, what is the maximum number of deer that a deer hunter should be allowed to harvest per year in Illinois? (circle appropriate number for archery, for firearm, and for all types of weapons combined)

	<u>Archery</u>	<u>Firearm</u>	<u>All Types</u> <u>of Weapons</u> <u>Combined</u>
One.....	1.....	1.....	1
Two.....	2.....	2.....	2
Three.....	3.....	3.....	3
Four.....	4.....	4.....	4
Five.....	5.....	5.....	5
Six or more.....	6.....	6.....	6
No opinion.....	7.....	7.....	7

9. In your opinion, what is the maximum number of antlered bucks that a deer hunter should be allowed to harvest per year in Illinois? (circle number for appropriate answer)
Note: firearm includes both shotgun and muzzleloader.

- One antlered buck with firearm and one antlered buck with archery, for a maximum of two antlered bucks per hunter.....1
- Two antlered bucks with firearm and two antlered bucks with archery, for a maximum of four antlered bucks per hunter.....2
- Two antlered bucks with firearm and/or archery, for a maximum of two antlered bucks per hunter.....3
- Four antlered bucks with firearm and/or archery, for a maximum of four antlered bucks per hunter.....4
- More than four antlered bucks per hunter.....5
- No opinion.....6

10. Would you be supportive or unsupportive of a regulation that would require a hunter to take an antlerless deer prior to taking an antlered buck?

Supportive...1 Unsupportive...2 No Opinion...3

11. Which of the following choices most closely describes YOUR DEFINITION of a "quality" deer? (circle number for appropriate answer)

- Any deer.....1
- Any deer considered choice table fare.....2
- Any adult deer.....3
- Any buck with antlers.....4
- Any buck with at least eight antler points.....5
- Any buck whose antlers are wider than the distance between the tips of the ears, with at least eight points.....6
- Any buck with antlers large enough to qualify for the Pope and Young Record Book (score of 125 or higher)...7
- Any buck with antlers large enough to qualify for the Boone and Crockett Record Book (score of 170 or higher).....8

12. "Quality Deer Management" may be defined as the use of restraint in harvesting young bucks, along with harvesting enough does to maintain a healthy herd. Limiting the harvest of young bucks is often accomplished by requiring that bucks have antlers of at least a minimum size (such as minimum spread or number of points, etc.) before they may be harvested. In your opinion, should hunter participation in such a program in Illinois be voluntary or required by the DNR? (circle number for appropriate answer)

Voluntary...1 Required by DNR...2 No opinion...3

13. The DNR has implemented a Quality Deer Management Program on selected state-controlled public areas. Under this program, hunters that choose to hunt at those sites may not harvest antlered bucks that do not have at least four or five points on one side. The intent is to increase the number of larger bucks on the area. What do you think of this program? (circle number for appropriate answer)

Like.....1 Dislike.....2 No opinion.....3

NOTE: In questions 14 through 17, the "county where you firearm hunt most" refers to the county hunted during the regular firearm season (if you participated in that season). If you hunted during the Special Muzzleloader season and DID NOT hunt during the regular firearm season, the "county where you firearm hunt most" would refer to your muzzleloader hunt county.

14. If the DNR proposed establishing the Quality Deer Management Program (as described in Question #12) throughout the entire county where you hunt most, would you be supportive or unsupportive? (circle appropriate number for firearm hunting and for archery hunting)

	<u>County Where You Firearm Hunt Most</u>	<u>County Where You Archery Hunt Most</u>
•Supportive.....	1.....	1.....
•Unsupportive.....	2.....	2.....
•No opinion.....	3.....	3.....

15. In your opinion, is the number of deer in the county where you hunt most too low, about right, or too high? (circle appropriate number for where you firearm hunt and for where you archery hunt)

	<u>County Where You Firearm Hunt Most</u>	<u>County Where You Archery Hunt Most</u>
•Too low.....	1.....	1
•About right.....	2.....	2
•Too high.....	3.....	3
•No opinion.....	4.....	4

16. In your opinion, has the number of deer in the county where you hunt most increased, decreased, or remain unchanged during the last five years? (circle appropriate number for firearm hunting and for archery hunting)

	<u>County Where You Firearm Hunt Most</u>	<u>County Where You Archery Hunt Most</u>
•Increased.....	1.....	1
•Decreased.....	2.....	2
•Unchanged.....	3.....	3
•Don't know.....	4.....	4

17. In your opinion, is the number of deer HUNTERS in the county where you hunt most too low, about right, or too high? (circle appropriate number for firearm hunting and for archery hunting)

	<u>County Where You Firearm Hunt Most</u>	<u>County Where You Archery Hunt Most</u>
•Too low.....	1.....	1
•About right.....	2.....	2
•Too high.....	3.....	3
•No opinion.....	4.....	4

18. In recent years, qualifying landowners have been issued free firearm and archery deer permits that allow the harvest of one either-sex and one antlerless-only deer per permit, on their property only. What do you think of the idea of limiting all free landowner permits to antlerless-only deer? (circle number for appropriate answer)

Like.....1 Dislike.....2 No opinion.....3

19. Qualifying landowners currently have the opportunity to purchase (fee \$15.00) county-wide deer permits before any other resident can obtain permits. Do you think this "paid landowner permit" should be continued or discontinued? (circle number for appropriate answer)

Continued...1 Discontinued...2 No opinion...3

20. In recent years, the muzzleloader-only deer season has been held during 3 days in mid-December and the handgun-only season has taken place during 3 days in mid-January. Which of the following most closely describes your preference for changing or altering these seasons? (circle number that most closely matches your opinion)

- Combine into one special season in mid-December.....1
- Combine into one special season in mid-January.....2
- Do away with the two special seasons, but allow the use of muzzleloaders and handguns during the regular firearm season.....3
- Keep the muzzleloader and handgun seasons "as they are now".....4
- No opinion.....5

21. Resident deer hunting single permits currently cost \$15.00 (firearm and archery), while the resident archery combination permits (one either-sex tag and one antlerless-only tag) cost \$25.50. Would you be supportive or unsupportive of the following changes? (circle the number for appropriate response for each change)

21a. Increase the price to \$20.00 for single resident permits (firearm and archery) and to \$35.50 for combination archery permits, with an appropriate increase in nonresident fees.

Supportive...1 Unsupportive...2 No Opinion...3

21b. Increase the price to \$25.00 for single resident permits (firearm and archery) and to \$45.50 for combination archery permits, with an appropriate increase in nonresident fees.

Supportive...1 Unsupportive...2 No Opinion...3

22. At the present time, the fines for violating various deer hunting regulations are highly variable, and allow considerable discretion on the part of the presiding judge. However, Illinois law states that civil penalties shall also be imposed for the unlawful taking or possessing of wildlife. The current civil penalty for deer is \$145. Would you think it appropriate or inappropriate if this penalty were increased to \$350? (circle number for appropriate answer)

Appropriate...1 Unappropriate...2 No opinion...3

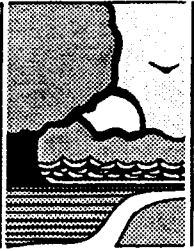
23. What level of confidence do you have in the data collected and analyzed by the Department of Natural Resources on the State's deer population? (circle number for appropriate answer)

- High level of confidence.....1
- Medium level of confidence.....2
- Low level of confidence.....3
- I am not familiar with these data.....4
- No opinion.....5

24. Overall, how do you rate the Department of Natural Resources' deer management program? (circle number for appropriate answer)

- Excellent.....1
- Good.....2
- Fair.....3
- Poor.....4
- No opinion.....5

Thank you for your cooperation
POSTAGE IS PREPAID



ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

524 South Second Street, Springfield 62701-1787

Jim Edgar, Governor ● Brent Manning, Director

Dear Fellow Sportsman:

You are one of a select group of Illinoisans asked to provide information about your deer hunting activities, your attitudes toward deer populations, and your opinions of deer hunting regulations.

The information supplied by you and other selected hunters is vital to the management of white-tailed deer in Illinois. Our goals are to safeguard deer populations, to grant maximum deer hunting opportunities to license holders, and to minimize deer depredation and auto collision problems.

The information you provide is used to better understand the characteristics of our deer population and how hunters feel about deer. It will also help us understand how deer hunters view their sport and regulations pertaining to deer hunting.

Your reply is very important, even if you did not hunt deer last year or you were not successful. Only a limited number of deer hunters can be contacted, therefore, your response is urgently needed.

Please take a few minutes to fill out the parts of the enclosed questionnaire that apply to you. If you do not remember exact figures, please give your best estimates.

Drop the completed questionnaire in the mail. Postage is prepaid.

Sincerely,

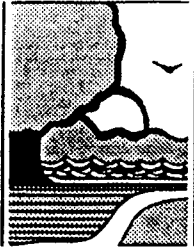


Jeffrey M. Ver Steeg, Chief
Division of Wildlife Resources

JMV:WLA:bd

Enclosure
D1

Figure 2. The letter that accompanied the first mailing of the questionnaire.



ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

524 South Second Street, Springfield 62701-1787

Jim Edgar, Governor ● Brent Manning, Director

Dear Fellow Sportsman:

Recently, we mailed you a Deer Hunter Survey questionnaire and requested that you fill it out and return it as soon as possible. We have not received your form at this time. Perhaps you have misplaced the questionnaire or you have not found time to complete it and return it to us.


We are providing another questionnaire which we hope you will complete and return as soon as possible. If you have already returned the first questionnaire, please throw this one away. The information supplied by you and other deer hunters being sampled will be of great value to the Department of Natural Resources in better directing the management of our white-tailed deer resources.

Please fill out the questionnaire completely and return it even if you did not hunt deer last year or you were unsuccessful.

Please drop the completed questionnaire in the mail. Postage is prepaid. Your prompt attention will be sincerely appreciated.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



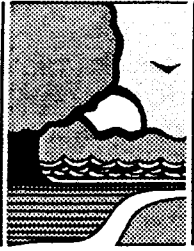
Jeffrey M. Ver Steeg, Chief
Division of Wildlife Resources

JMV:WLA:bd

Enclosure
D2

Figure 3. The letter that accompanied the second mailing of the questionnaire.

[printed on recycled and recyclable paper]



ILLINOIS
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

524 South Second Street, Springfield 62701-1787

Jim Edgar, Governor ● Brent Manning, Director

Dear Fellow Sportsman:


This letter is to remind you that we still would like to receive your copy of the Deer Hunter Survey questionnaire. We don't like to keep bothering you, but this information is very important which only you can provide.

Another copy of the questionnaire is enclosed. We hope you will complete it and return it as soon as possible. If you have already returned a questionnaire, please destroy this one. Your response is needed, even if you did not hunt deer last year or you had an unsuccessful season.

Postage is prepaid for returning the questionnaire. Please drop the completed questionnaire in the mail. Your prompt attention will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey M. Ver Steeg, Chief
Division of Wildlife Resources

JMV:WLA:bd

Enclosure
D3

Appendix A.

Table A1. The 95% confidence intervals (in \pm percentage points) for responses to opinion-type questions on hunter surveys.

Percentage of Respondents Expressing a Specific Opinion	95% Confidence Intervals ^a When Sample Size Equals:							
	100	200	400	1,000	2,000	4,000	8,000	16,000
10	6.0	4.2	3.0	1.9	1.3	0.9	0.7	0.5
20	8.0	5.7	4.0	2.5	1.8	1.3	0.9	0.6
30	9.2	6.5	4.6	2.9	2.0	1.4	1.0	0.7
40	9.8	6.9	4.9	3.1	2.2	1.5	1.1	0.8
50	10.0	7.1	5.0	3.2	2.2	1.6	1.1	0.8
60	9.8	6.9	4.9	3.1	2.2	1.5	1.1	0.8
70	9.2	6.5	4.6	2.9	2.0	1.4	1.0	0.7
80	8.0	5.7	4.0	2.5	1.8	1.3	0.9	0.6
90	6.0	4.2	3.0	1.9	1.3	0.9	0.7	0.5

^aCalculated with the formula,

$$2 \sqrt{\frac{pq}{n}}$$

where n = sample size
 p = proportion of respondents
 q = 1-p

Example: $2 \sqrt{\frac{0.1 \times 0.9}{100}} = 6.0$

