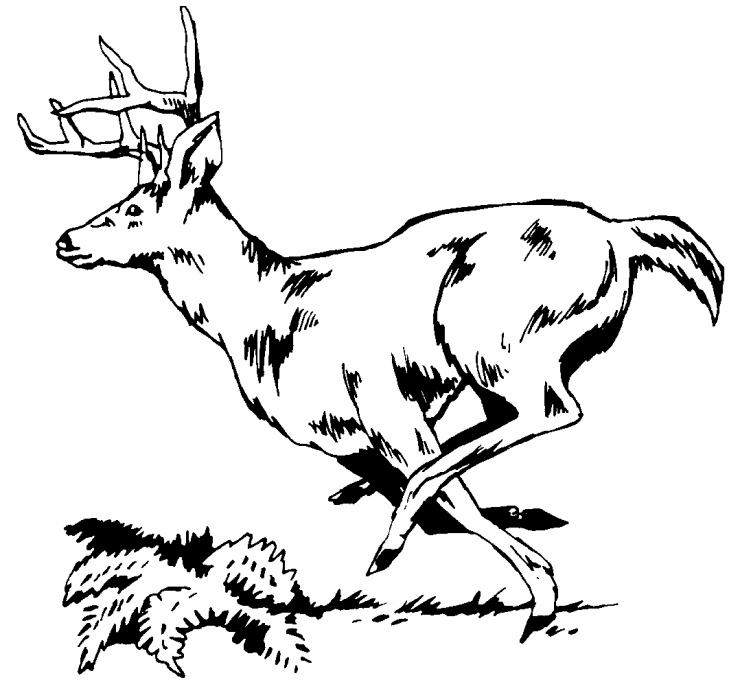


**DEER IMPACTS AND  
DEER HUNTING  
IN THE TOWN OF CAROLINE:  
A SURVEY OF LANDOWNERS**



Cornell University  
Human Dimensions Research Unit

# DEER IMPACTS AND DEER HUNTING

## IN THE TOWN OF CAROLINE:

### A SURVEY OF LANDOWNERS

Research conducted by the  
Human Dimensions Research Unit  
in the  
Department of Natural Resources  
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences  
Cornell University

Conducted in cooperation with  
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County and  
the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC)

The purpose of this survey is to learn more about how deer may impact your property in the Town of Caroline and your views on deer hunting. Information from this survey will help Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County and its partners improve and develop new educational materials, services and programs to help the Caroline community work with DEC to manage deer impacts in the town.

All landowners with 10 or more acres of property in the Town of Caroline were selected to receive this survey. By contacting these landowners we hope to map deer density and deer impacts at the town level. Please have the person in your household who is most familiar with this property answer the questionnaire.

Please complete this questionnaire at your earliest convenience, seal it with the white resealable label provided, and drop it in any mailbox; return postage has been provided. Your participation in this survey is voluntary, but we sincerely hope you will take just a few minutes to answer our questions. The information you provide will remain strictly confidential and will never be associated with your name.

## THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE!

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(This paper will be recycled again after results are tabulated.)

## YOUR LAND IN THE TOWN OF CAROLINE

This study concerns your land in the Town of Caroline. If you own two or more separate parcels of land in the Town of Caroline, please consider only those parcels of 10 or more acres when answering the following questions. We will use the term "property" to refer to this land.

### 1. Please make a rough estimate as to how many acres of your property are in each of the following categories:

<u>Acres</u>	<u>Land Type</u>
_____	Private residence (house, lawns, associated buildings)
_____	Orchards or vineyards
_____	Vegetables or row crops (including home vegetable garden)
_____	Hay fields or pasture
_____	Brushland (including abandoned, overgrown fields)
_____	Woodland and tree plantations (natural forest or planted trees)
_____	Wetlands (ponds, marshes, bogs, swamps)
_____	Other (list type: _____)
_____	TOTAL ACRES (in parcels of 10 acres or more in the Town of Caroline)

### 2. In what year did you acquire the property you own in the Town of Caroline? (If you added parcels of land over the years, write the year that you obtained the first parcel.)

I acquired the property in the year: \_\_\_\_\_

## YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH DEER

### 3. How interested are you in doing the following on your property?

	<u>Not At All Interested</u>	<u>Somewhat Interested</u>	<u>Very Interested</u>	<u>Interested, but land not suitable</u>
a. Photographing deer?	1	2	3	4
b. Hunting deer?	1	2	3	4
c. Seeing deer?	1	2	3	4

4. **How many deer have you seen on average per day on your property this winter? And what is the largest number of deer you have seen at one time on your property this winter?** *(Please write in zero, if you have not seen any deer.)*

- \_\_\_\_\_ average number seen per day this winter
- \_\_\_\_\_ largest number seen at one time this winter
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have not been on my property this winter

5. **Over the past 3 years, what trend have you seen in the number of deer on your property?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ more deer now than 3 years ago
- \_\_\_\_\_ fewer deer now than 3 years ago
- \_\_\_\_\_ about the same number of deer now as 3 years ago
- \_\_\_\_\_ don't know

6. **Please indicate below the types of plants deer appeared to be feeding on in the last 12 months on your property. Then estimate the value of that loss over the last 12 months.** *(If you know some damage has occurred, but are not sure of the amount, please put a "?" on the appropriate line.)*

<u>Type of Plants</u>	<u>Estimated Value lost</u>
_____ Flowers or ornamental plantings	\$ _____
_____ Orchards or vineyards	\$ _____
_____ Vegetables or row crops	\$ _____
_____ Hay fields or pasture	\$ _____
_____ Woodlands (natural regeneration)	\$ _____
_____ Young tree plantations	\$ _____

7. **Have you taken any steps to protect any of the above types of plants from deer damage?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ No
- \_\_\_\_\_ Yes → What measures have you taken?
  - \_\_\_\_\_ repellents
  - \_\_\_\_\_ scare devices
  - \_\_\_\_\_ fencing
  - \_\_\_\_\_ other

In the last 12 months, how much have you spent on deer damage control?

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

8. **Please check any items below that concern you or your family about deer in the Town of Caroline?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ deer-car accidents
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lyme disease transmission
- \_\_\_\_\_ other diseases in deer, such as chronic wasting disease
- \_\_\_\_\_ deer damage to ornamental plantings
- \_\_\_\_\_ deer damage to crops
- \_\_\_\_\_ effects of deer on forest regeneration
- \_\_\_\_\_ other concerns (please specify: \_\_\_\_\_)
- \_\_\_\_\_ none of these things are of concern

9. **Have you or anyone in your immediate family ever been in a deer-car accident?**

- \_\_\_\_\_ No
- \_\_\_\_\_ Yes → Approximately how many accidents? \_\_\_\_\_  
 What was the year of the most recent accident? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Were any of the accidents in the Town of Caroline?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ No  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Yes

10. **How do you personally feel about deer in the Town of Caroline?** *(Check one.)*

- \_\_\_\_\_ I enjoy the presence of deer, and I do not worry about problems they may cause.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I enjoy the presence of deer, but I worry about problems they may cause.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I do not enjoy the presence of deer and regard them as a nuisance.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have no particular feelings about deer in the Town of Caroline.

11. **How would you like the deer population in Town of Caroline to change, if at all?** *(Please check one.)*

- \_\_\_\_\_ Large decrease
- \_\_\_\_\_ Slight decrease
- \_\_\_\_\_ No change
- \_\_\_\_\_ Slight increase
- \_\_\_\_\_ Large increase
- \_\_\_\_\_ Don't Know

**POSTING YOUR LAND**

12. Was any of your land in the Town of Caroline posted, either to prohibit or restrict deer hunting between October 1, 2006 and December 31, 2006?

\_\_\_\_\_ No (*Skip to Question 15*)

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes (*Continue below with Question 13*)

13. Approximately how many acres of your land were posted between October 1, 2006 and December 31, 2006?

\_\_\_\_\_ acres

14. Please place a check on any line below that describes why you posted your property.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am concerned about having problems with hunters.

\_\_\_\_\_ I want to be able to control whether and when my land is used by hunters.

\_\_\_\_\_ It was posted to allow hunting by certain people only (e.g., family, friends, sportsman's groups).

\_\_\_\_\_ I (and other family members) don't feel safe on my property when it is being used by hunters.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am concerned about liability if someone is hurt when my property is being used by hunters.

\_\_\_\_\_ I'm afraid that my property will be damaged by hunters.

\_\_\_\_\_ I disapprove of hunting.

**DEER HUNTING ON YOUR LAND**

15. a. Approximately how many REQUESTS did you have during the 2006 deer season to use your land for deer hunting?

\_\_\_\_\_ requests

b. Approximately how many of the above requests did you APPROVE?

\_\_\_\_\_ requests approved

c. Approximately how many times during the 2006 deer season did you find evidence (or otherwise know) that your land was being used for deer hunting WITHOUT your permission?

\_\_\_\_\_ times

16. During the 2006 deer hunting season (October 14 – December 19, 2006), including the archery season, how many different people (including yourself, if applicable) do you think hunted deer on your property? On approximately how many days do you believe someone hunted deer on your property? And how many deer were taken over the course of the season? (*If you know some hunting occurred and/or some animals were taken, but are not sure of the number, please put a “?” on the appropriate line.*)

\_\_\_\_\_ # of people who hunted

\_\_\_\_\_ # of days hunted

\_\_\_\_\_ # of does and antlerless fawns taken

\_\_\_\_\_ # of antlered bucks taken

17. Please indicate below which of the following people and hunting methods you WOULD ALLOW for deer hunting on your land. (Check all that apply.)

**YOUR OPINIONS ABOUT HUNTERS AND HUNTING**

- Family
- Friends and Neighbors
- Strangers who ask permission
- Strangers who do NOT ask permission
- Archery hunting
- Muzzleloader hunting
- Gun hunting

I don't allow hunting on my land → If your concerns were addressed, can you imagine any circumstances under which you would allow deer hunting on your land?

No     Maybe     Yes

If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

18. Before reading about the topic here, were you aware of Nuisance Deer Permits, available through DEC, which allow removal of nuisance deer at any time of the year outside of the big game hunting seasons?

No

Yes → Did you apply for any of these permits in the past 12 months?

No  
 Yes

19. Before reading about the topic here, were you aware of Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) permits, available through DEC, which provide additional antlerless deer tags that landowners can give out to licensed hunters for use during hunting season?

No

Yes → Did you apply for any of these permits in 2006?

No  
 Yes

20. For each statement below, circle the number that best reflects your feelings. (Please circle one number for each item.)

1=Strongly Disagree  
2=Disagree  
3=Neutral/Don't Know

4=Agree  
5=Strongly Agree

	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>		<u>Neutral/ Don't Know</u>		<u>Strongly Agree</u>
a. Hunting is all right so long as hunters respect private property and obey conservation laws.	1	2	3	4	5
b. Posting is necessary for landowners to regulate how and when people use their land.	1	2	3	4	5
c. Hunting on private lands is necessary to keep deer populations from growing too large.	1	2	3	4	5
d. The liability for allowing hunting is extremely low on lands that do not have man-made hazards (such as open wells, fallen-in buildings).	1	2	3	4	5
e. Most hunters are responsible people.	1	2	3	4	5
f. Hunters should pay landowners for the privilege of access to private lands.	1	2	3	4	5
g. Posting my land does not reduce my liability if a hunter is injured on my property.	1	2	3	4	5
h. New York law does not require hunters to obtain permission to hunt on unposted lands that are not enclosed with a substantial fence.	1	2	3	4	5
i. Hunters help reduce crop damage caused by deer and other wildlife.	1	2	3	4	5
j. Hunters are interested in conserving natural resources and protecting wildlife.	1	2	3	4	5

## YOUR PERSONAL BACKGROUND

The following information will be kept confidential and will never be associated with your name.

21. In what year were you born? \_\_\_\_\_
22. What is your gender?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Male  
\_\_\_\_\_ Female
23. What is your highest level of formal education? *(Check one.)*  
\_\_\_\_\_ Primary school  
\_\_\_\_\_ Some high school  
\_\_\_\_\_ High school diploma (or GED)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Some college or technical school  
\_\_\_\_\_ Completed an undergraduate degree  
\_\_\_\_\_ Completed a postgraduate degree
24. Do you live on one of your parcels of 10 acres or more in the Town of Caroline? *(Check one.)*  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, year-round  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, but only for part of the year  
\_\_\_\_\_ No, but I live nearby within the Town of Caroline  
\_\_\_\_\_ No, I live outside the Town of Caroline
25. Are you a part-time or full-time farmer?  
\_\_\_\_\_ No  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes
26. Please circle approximately what percentage of your total net household income comes from your property in the Town of Caroline (in parcels of 10 acres or more).

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

27. Normally, Cornell University never associates your name with the information you provide. However, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County might want to contact you with specific information of interest to you based on your answers to some of the questions above. Would you be willing to have Cooperative Extension contact you (likely by mail) with information that might be of specific interest to you?

\_\_\_\_\_ No, I do not want to be contacted

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I would be willing to be contacted

Also, DEC may begin a “Deer Watchers Program” in your area. The program would ask people to count the number of deer on their property 3 times between Aug. 20 and Sept. 20 and report it to DEC. This provides DEC with an additional index to deer population trends that helps them better manage the deer herd. Would you be interested in receiving information on the program if it is started this summer? Other information you provided in this questionnaire would still be kept confidential and not associated with your name.

\_\_\_\_\_ No, I do not want to receive information on this program from DEC

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I would be interested in receiving information on this program

Please use the space below for any additional comments you may wish to make.

**Thank you for your time and effort!**

To return this questionnaire, simply seal it with the white removable seal, and drop it in the mail (return postage has been provided).