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

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

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?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not At All Interested</th>
<th>Somewhat Interested</th>
<th>Very Interested</th>
<th>Interested, but land not suitable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Photographing deer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Hunting deer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Seeing deer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Plants</th>
<th>Estimated Value lost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flowers or ornamental plantings</td>
<td>$________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchards or vineyards</td>
<td>$________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables or row crops</td>
<td>$________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay fields or pasture</td>
<td>$________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodlands (natural regeneration)</td>
<td>$________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young tree plantations</td>
<td>$________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.)

____ 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

YOUR OPINIONS ABOUT HUNTERS AND HUNTING

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

1=Strongly Disagree 4=Agree
2=Disagree 5=Strongly Agree
3=Neutral/Don't Know

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Neutral/Don't Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Hunting is all right so long as hunters respect private property and obey conservation laws.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Posting is necessary for landowners to regulate how and when people use their land.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Hunting on private lands is necessary to keep deer populations from growing too large.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>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).</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Most hunters are responsible people.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Hunters should pay landowners for the privilege of access to private lands.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Posting my land does not reduce my liability if a hunter is injured on my property.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. New York law does not require hunters to obtain permission to hunt on unposted lands that are not enclosed with a substantial fence.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Hunters help reduce crop damage caused by deer and other wildlife.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Hunters are interested in conserving natural resources and protecting wildlife.</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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?
   ____ 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).