

# **2012 STUDY OF DEER MANAGEMENT ON PRIVATE LANDS IN SOUTHEAST MINNESOTA**



**A cooperative study conducted by the University of Minnesota for the  
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources**

**Your help on this study is greatly appreciated!**

*Please return your completed questionnaire in the enclosed envelope. The envelope  
is self-addressed and no postage is required. Thanks!*

Minnesota Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit  
Department of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Conservation Biology  
University of Minnesota  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

**First, we would like to know about your property.**

1. How many total number of acres did you own or lease at the end of 2011.

\_\_\_\_\_ Acres Owned  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Acres Leased

2. Please make a “rough” estimate as to how many acres of your property (owned and leased) are in each of the following categories:

Acres Owned	Acres Leased	Land Type
_____	_____	Private Residence (house, lawns, associated buildings)
_____	_____	Row Crops
_____	_____	Hay fields or Pasture
_____	_____	Orchards or vineyards
_____	_____	Vegetables or other truck crops
_____	_____	Woodlands (natural forest or tree plantings)
_____	_____	Brushland (including abandoned, overgrown fields)
_____	_____	Wetlands
_____	_____	Lands enrolled in State or Federal Conservation Programs
_____	_____	Other (please list: _____)

**Next we would like to understand how you manage hunting on your land.**

3. Is your property posted? Posting means signs displayed on the property line that indicate the land is private.

- Yes
- No → PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 6

4. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following reasons for posting your property:

	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
(A) Control who uses my land	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(B) Human safety	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(C) Liability concerns	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(D) Eliminate trespass	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(E) Keep wildlife for myself/family/friends	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(F) Reduce property damage	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(G) Livestock safety	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(H) Relationship with neighbor	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(I) Better control of deer population	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(J) Family tradition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Question 4 continued.

	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
(K) Conflict with other recreational users	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(L) Other (please describe below):	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. Did a single event cause you to post your property? (*Check only one*)

- Yes. If yes, please choose the one letter (select one from A through L) from **question 4** that best describes why you posted your property: \_\_\_\_\_
- No

6. Did you allow hunting on your property during the 2011 deer season? (*Check only one*)

- Yes
- No → **PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 9**

7. Who did you allow to hunt deer on your property? (*Check all that apply*). Please also estimate the number of people who hunted your property in 2011.

- Myself or family members \_\_\_\_\_ # of people
- Friends or neighbors \_\_\_\_\_ # of people
- Strangers who ask permission \_\_\_\_\_ # of people
- Specific groups of people who are affiliated with an organized hunting group \_\_\_\_\_ # of people
- People who lease my property \_\_\_\_\_ # of people
- Other (please list: \_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ # of people

8. Please indicate if you impose any deer harvest restrictions on your property. (*Please check one only*)

- Antlerless harvest is restricted, but hunters can take any legal buck
- Buck harvest is restricted to only large antlered bucks, but hunters can take any antlerless deer
- Buck harvest restricted to only large antlered bucks, and antlerless harvest is also restricted
- No restrictions on the type of deer that can be harvested
- Don't know
- Other (please list: \_\_\_\_\_)

9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding your decision about allowing or not allowing deer hunting on your property. (*Please circle one number for each statement*)

	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
Hunting will reduce the number of deer on my property.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hunting is a tradition in my family.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel pressure from my neighbors to allow hunting.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hunting will reduce the number of mature bucks on my property.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Question 9 continued.**

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Moderately Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Disagree</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Slightly Agree</b>	<b>Moderately Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
Allowing other hunters on my property will reduce my or my family's opportunity to hunt deer.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hunters cause too many problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am concerned about the liability of other hunters on my property.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am opposed to deer hunting in general.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am not opposed to hunting, but I want to provide a refuge for deer.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hunting reduces my privacy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hunting reduces damage caused by deer on my property.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hunting improves the quality of habitat on my property.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hunting on my property will help keep deer from being over-abundant in the area.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Letting others hunt on my property encourages a hunting tradition.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hunting puts my livestock at risk.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

10. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your future decisions about allowing other people to hunt deer on your property. *(Please circle one number for each statement below).*

<b>I would be more likely to allow or continue to allow other people to deer hunt on my property if...</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Moderately Disagree</b>	<b>Slightly Disagree</b>	<b>Neither</b>	<b>Slightly Agree</b>	<b>Moderately Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
The hunters would help me out by working on the property.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I felt like they were interested in getting to know me and understanding what I'm trying to do on my property.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I knew that they were safe and ethical hunters.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The hunters or an outfitter would pay me in order to hunt.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The Minnesota DNR would pay me to allow others to hunt.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
They follow the rules I have for hunting on my property.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

11. Do you lease any of your property for deer hunting?

- Yes
- No → PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 13

12. Please indicate to the extent you agree or disagree regarding your decision to lease your property to deer hunters. (Please circle one number for each statement below).

	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
I have better control over who is using my land.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have better control over the type of deer that are harvested.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am managing my property for mature bucks.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Leasing allows me to earn extra money from my property.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel pressure from my neighbors who also lease their property.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I see leasing as the future way landowners can manage their property	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Other (please describe below):	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**In the next section we have questions about your deer hunting participation in Minnesota.**

13. To what extent would you support or oppose a regulation that would increase the proportion of antlered bucks in the deer area you hunt most often? (Please check one only).

- Strongly Oppose
- Moderately Oppose
- Neither Oppose nor Support
- Moderately Support
- Strongly Support
- Don't Know

14. Please check the boxes below to report when you hunted deer in Minnesota during the 2009, 2010 or 2011 Minnesota deer season? (Please check all that apply).

- 2009 →  Archery |  Firearm |  Muzzleloader
- 2010 →  Archery |  Firearm |  Muzzleloader
- 2011 →  Archery |  Firearm |  Muzzleloader

I DID NOT HUNT ANY OF THESE YEARS → PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 20 BELOW

15. Which **ONE** deer permit area did you hunt most often during the most recent deer season you hunted (**check one**):

- 338 |  339 |  341 |  342 |  343 |  344 |  345 |  346 |  347 |  348 |  349 |  602

If you did not hunt one of the permit areas listed above, please tell us which one you did hunt: \_\_\_\_\_

16. How much of your deer hunting did you do on each of the following types of land during your most recent deer hunting season? (*Circle one number for each item*).

	None	Some	Most	All	Don't Know
Private land that I own	1	2	3	4	9
Private land that I lease for hunting	1	2	3	4	9
Private land that I do <b>not</b> own or lease	1	2	3	4	9
Public land	1	2	3	4	9

**The next section will address deer populations and harvest management strategies in southeastern Minnesota. Please answer the questions to the best of your ability, even if you are not entirely familiar with the deer regulations. The regulations we refer to in this survey include:**

- **A 4-point to one side antler point restriction regulation for all deer seasons**
- **A prohibition on buck cross-tagging**
- **The 3A season was lengthened to 9 days (from 7).**
- **Youth hunters (17 or younger) are exempt from the regulation and can take any buck**

17. The regulations that were put in place in southeastern Minnesota in 2010 were designed to put more harvest pressure on antlerless deer and at the same time protect a large percentage of yearling bucks. In thinking back to when the regulations were announced before the 2010 deer season, please indicate your level of support at that time (again, *prior* to the 2010 deer season).

- Strongly Opposed
- Slightly Opposed
- Neither Opposed nor Supported
- Slightly Supported
- Strongly Supported
- Don't Know

18. After hunting under the antler point restriction regulations, please indicate whether or not your overall satisfaction with your hunting experience in southeastern Minnesota may have changed over time. (*Circle one response*)

- |                     |                         |                         |           |                         |                         |                     |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>1</b>            | <b>2</b>                | <b>3</b>                | <b>4</b>  | <b>5</b>                | <b>6</b>                | <b>7</b>            |
| Much Less Satisfied | Somewhat Less Satisfied | Slightly Less Satisfied | No Change | Slightly More Satisfied | Somewhat More Satisfied | Much More Satisfied |

19. After hunting under the antler point restriction regulations, please indicate whether or not your support for antler point restrictions in southeastern Minnesota may have changed over time. *(Circle one response)*

<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
Much Less Support	Somewhat Less Support	Slightly Less Support	No Change	Slightly More Support	Somewhat More Support	Much More Support

20. While no decision has been made to continue the following deer hunting regulations, please indicate your level of support for continuation of the regulations that were enacted in 2010. *(Please circle one number for each item).*

	Strongly Oppose	Slightly Oppose	Neither Oppose or Support	Slightly Support	Strongly Support	Don't Know
Keeping the 3A season at 9 days	1	2	3	4	5	9
Continue the 4-point to one side antler point restriction	1	2	3	4	5	9
Continue the prohibition of buck cross-tagging	1	2	3	4	5	9
Exemption of youth from the antler point restriction	1	2	3	4	5	9

21. Including 2011, how many years have you been hunting deer in Minnesota? \_\_\_\_\_ Years.  
 Please check this box  if you have not hunted deer in Minnesota.

**Next we would like to know about crop and other damage caused by wildlife on your property.**

22. Did you experience deer damage to crops on lands that you own or leased in 2011?  
 Yes  
 No → PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 24  
 Don't have crops → PLEASE SKIP TO QUESTION 28

23. How would you describe the total amount of deer damage you experienced in 2011?  
 Negligible  
 Minor  
 Moderate  
 Severe  
 Don't Know

24. How would you compare the amount of deer damage you experienced in 2011 to what you experienced 5 years ago?  
 Much less damage in 2011 than 5 years ago  
 Slightly less damage in 2011 than 5 years ago  
 About the same damage in 2011 than 5 years ago  
 Slightly more damage in 2011 than 5 years ago  
 Much more damage in 2011 than 5 years ago  
 I was not farming 5 years ago

25. In addition to deer, please indicate which other species caused damage to your crops in 2011. (*check all that apply*)
- Raccoon
  - Turkey
  - Geese
  - Small rodents (mice, voles)
  - Gophers/Woodchucks
  - Other (please list: \_\_\_\_\_)

26. Of all the damage you attributed to wildlife in 2011, what percentage do you feel was due to deer? (*Please circle one percentage*).

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

27. In the table below, for each type of crop you grew in 2011, please provide your best estimate of the total acres you grew, the dollar value of deer damage to that crop, and the estimated percentage of the total crop value lost to deer damage.

Crop	Acres grown, 2011	Estimated dollar loss from deer damage to crop	Estimated percent of total crop value lost to deer damage
Corn	_____ acres	\$ _____	_____ % lost
Soybeans	_____ acres	\$ _____	_____ % lost
Alfalfa	_____ acres	\$ _____	_____ % lost
Other hay	_____ acres	\$ _____	_____ % lost
Tree fruits	_____ acres	\$ _____	_____ % lost
Grapes	_____ acres	\$ _____	_____ % lost
Stored Forage	_____ acres	\$ _____	_____ % lost
Nursery Products	_____ acres	\$ _____	_____ % lost
Vegetables	_____ acres	\$ _____	_____ % lost
Other: _____	_____ acres	\$ _____	_____ % lost
<b>TOTALS</b>	_____ acres	\$ _____	_____ % lost

**In the next section we would like to understand your preferences for deer management.**

28. Would you say you know A GREAT DEAL, A MODERATE AMOUNT, A LITTLE, OR NOTHING about deer management in southeastern Minnesota? (*Please check one only*).
- A GREAT DEAL - I read most of the hunting handbook, DNR news releases, follow the outdoor media, and am very familiar with the Zone 3 deer season changes
  - A MODERATE AMOUNT - I read parts of the handbook and occasionally follow the outdoor media
  - A LITTLE - I only read the parts that pertain to me and otherwise don't follow the outdoor media
  - NOTHING - I buy my license but I am not following the southeast deer management issue
  - DON'T KNOW



29. Over the past 5 years, what trend have you seen in the deer population in the area of your property?

- More deer now than 5 years ago
- About the same number of deer now as 5 years ago
- Fewer deer now than 5 years ago
- Don't know

30. In thinking about your property and the surrounding area, would you say the deer population is,

- Too high
- About right
- Too low
- Don't know

31. In thinking about your property and the surrounding area, at what level do you think the deer population should be managed? *(Please circle one)*

- |                               |                            |                          |           |                          |                            |                               |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>1</b>                      | <b>2</b>                   | <b>3</b>                 | <b>4</b>  | <b>5</b>                 | <b>6</b>                   | <b>7</b>                      |
| Decrease 50%<br>(Significant) | Decrease 25%<br>(Moderate) | Decrease 10%<br>(Slight) | No Change | Increase 10%<br>(Slight) | Increase 25%<br>(Moderate) | Increase 50%<br>(Significant) |

32. During the last 5 years, about how many deer were killed on your property each year?

\_\_\_\_\_ number of bucks/antlered deer each year

\_\_\_\_\_ number of does/antlerless deer each year

33. How many deer would you prefer to have killed on your property each year?

\_\_\_\_\_ number of bucks/antlered deer each year

\_\_\_\_\_ number of does/antlerless deer each year

34. When you think about deer management in your area, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
It is my personal responsibility to manage deer populations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Landowners in my community should be responsible for managing deer populations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The Minnesota DNR should be responsible for managing deer populations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The Minnesota DNR should be responsible for talking to community members about managing deer populations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is my personal responsibility to talk to others in my community about deer management.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Landowners in my community should talk to each other about managing deer populations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The deer populations in my community are well managed.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

35. With 1 being your most preferred and 6 being your least preferred, please rank (from 1 to 6) the following strategies that could be implemented to lower deer populations.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **Earn-A-Buck**. This would require all deer hunters to kill an antlerless deer before killing an antlered buck. Under this regulation, hunters cannot shoot a buck until they first killed an antlerless deer. As a result, harvest rates on antlerless deer will increase.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Buck License Lottery**. The annual firearm license would be valid for antlerless deer only. Hunters interested in killing antlered bucks would need to apply for a permit through a lottery system. Only lottery winners would be eligible to hunt antlered deer. Unsuccessful applicants would be restricted to hunting antlerless deer during the current year, but would gain preference points in the lottery which would improve their chance of getting drawn for a buck license in future years. A hunter would likely win a buck permit every 2-3 years depending on hunting pressure.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Antler Point Restriction**. This regulation has been used since 2010. Only bucks with at least one 4-point antler would be legal to harvest. Hunters could take any antlerless deer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Early Antlerless Season**. This regulation has been used since 2005. A 2-day antlerless only season would be implemented over the MEA weekend and deer taken during this season would not count against the annual bag limit.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Limited Depredation Permits**. These are permits issued to landowners that could be used during the deer season. The permits would be valid for antlerless deer only and only on specified private lands.
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Localized special seasons**. These would be firearms hunts on private lands before or after the regular firearms season.

36. One idea for lowering deer populations in local areas is to develop localized special seasons. In general please let us know what you think about such seasons. Please circle one response to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

Do you agree or disagree with the following...	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
In general I support the idea of firearms hunts on private lands either before or after the regular season.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I would prefer that such a season be <b><u>before</u></b> the regular firearm deer season in <b>late summer (August-Sept.)</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I would prefer that such a season be <b><u>before</u></b> the regular firearm deer season in <b>early fall (mid-Sept – early Oct.)</b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I would prefer that such a season be <b><u>after</u></b> the muzzleloader deer season ( <b>mid-Dec.</b> )	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I would prefer that such a season be <b><u>after</u></b> all the seasons are over ( <b>January</b> )	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

37. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about managing your land, use of wildlife and how you see your community.

	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
Managing deer on my land is something I rarely think about.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Being a good private land wildlife steward is an important part of who I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I often think of myself as a good private land wildlife steward.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Managing deer and other wildlife on my land is central to who I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel strongly attached to the community I live in.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
There are many people in my community who I think of as good friends.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I often talk about my community as being a great place to live.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Humans should manage fish and wildlife populations so that humans benefit.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
We should strive for a world where there's an abundance of fish and wildlife for hunting and fishing.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hunting does not respect the lives of animals.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The needs of humans should take priority over fish and wildlife protection.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Fish and wildlife are on earth primarily for people to use.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hunting is cruel and inhumane to the animals.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
People who want to hunt should be provided the opportunity to do so.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is acceptable for people to kill wildlife, if they think it poses a threat to their life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is acceptable for people to kill wildlife, if it poses a threat to their property.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

38. What is your gender?

Male

Female

39. What was your total household income before taxes last year? \$ \_\_\_\_\_

40. What year were you born? \_\_\_\_\_ YEAR

41. What is the highest level of formal education you have completed? (*Please check one*).

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grade school                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Some college                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Some high school                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Four-year college (bachelor's) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High school diploma or GED                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Some graduate school           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Some vocational or technical school          | <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate/Professional degree   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vocational or technical school (associate's) |   |

**Please write any additional comments you might have in the space below:**

**Thank you for your help!**

**Please complete the survey and mail it back in the enclosed self-addressed envelope. No postage is necessary.**

If you have any questions about the survey please contact Dr. David Fulton, Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, 1980 Folwell Ave, 200 Hodson Hall, St. Paul, MN 55108 Phone: (612) 625-5256 or Amanda Sames by e-mail at same0057@umn.edu