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# Survey of Turkey Hunters – 2024/2025 Season

11/04/2025

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## Purpose

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MNDNR) periodically conducts surveys of hunters to understand their preferences for management, and participation and harvest in hunting seasons. This report details the results of one such survey of Minnesota turkey hunters in 2024 and 2025.

Of particular interest to this study was turkey hunters' satisfaction with the Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 seasons, and preferences for several potential changes to turkey hunting regulations and seasons. Topics included in this investigation include:

- 1) Satisfaction with the Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 turkey hunting seasons in Minnesota
- 2) Hunting effort and harvest by permit area
- 3) Crossbow use
  - a. Turkey wounding and harvest
- 4) Turkey hunting effort on public and private land and perception of crowding
- 5) Perceived turkey population trends
- 6) Preferences for objectives for the spring turkey season
- 7) Support for potential regulation changes including
  - a. Limiting fall harvest to only bearded birds
  - b. Adjusting the fall season dates to be either a 45-day season or a 75-day season
  - c. Creation of a youth specific season prior to the start of the spring season
  - d. Reducing the number of permit areas from 12 to 5
  - e. Eliminating the archery tag
  - f. Requiring hunters to purchase a turkey tag specific to a turkey permit area
  - g. Offering hunters the opportunity to purchase a second tag
  - h. Changing spring season structures and timing
- 8) Beliefs about crossbows
- 9) Beliefs about Minnesota DNR turkey management
- 10) Involvement in turkey hunting
- 11) Demographics

# Methods

## Sampling

We randomly selected 7,000 Minnesota turkey hunters over the age of 18 for participation in the study. Three samples were drawn. We first conducted a simple random sample of Spring 2024 firearms (n = 3,000) and archery license holders (n = 3,000). Next, we conducted a simple random sample of Fall 2024 license holders (n = 1,000), excluding those that may have been selected in the first two samples. Spring firearm and archery samples are mutually exclusive, though overlap exists between spring archery and firearm hunters, and fall hunters. Thus, estimates for fall may include some individuals that also hunted in the spring firearm and archery seasons, and vice-versa. We sampled at an intensity sufficient to achieve 95% confidence +/-5% for spring firearm, spring archery, and fall, given the expected response rate.

## Data collection

We used a mixed-mode collection procedure. All participants received a letter in the mail inviting them to visit a website and complete a questionnaire. Non-respondents received 2 follow up letters if they had not responded roughly two weeks following receipt of the first, and again after the receipt of the second. Data collection occurred following the close of the Spring 2025 turkey hunting season.

## Response rate

Of the 7,000 letters sent, 247 were returned as undeliverable. We received 2,187 completed questionnaires, for an effective response rate of 32%.

**Table 1. Number of responses by mode and response rate**

Initial sample	Undeliverable	Total responses	Adjusted response rate
7000	247	2187	32

## Weighting

We weighted responses to account for non-response bias by age within each stratum (Fall 2024, Spring Firearm 2025, and Spring Archery 2025) and the proportional representation of firearms and archery license holders within the spring turkey hunting season to create estimates for all spring turkey hunters. That is, reported estimates are representative of all hunters within a given stratum. Tables 2 through 5 contain counts of the population by four categories of age, and counts of responses, as well as proportions and weights applied to the data in making estimates for the population.

**Table 2. Calculation of weights by age for fall turkey hunters.**

Age category	Population count	Population proportion	Respondent count	Respondent proportion	Weight
18-36	1921	0.2582	101	0.2723	0.948219
37-48	1843	0.2477	102	0.2016	1.228671
49-63	1920	0.2581	137	0.2592	0.995756
64+	1755	0.2359	153	0.267	0.883521

**Table 3. Calculation of weights by age for spring firearm hunters.**

Age category	Population count	Population proportion	Respondent count	Respondent proportion	Weight
18-29	8530	0.2587	217	0.1936	1.33626
30-43	8238	0.2498	269	0.24	1.040833
44-61	8465	0.2567	284	0.2533	1.013423
62+	7743	0.2348	351	0.3131	0.74992

**Table 4. Calculation of weights by age for spring archery hunters.**

Age category	Population count	Population proportion	Respondent count	Respondent proportion	Weight
18-29	3373	0.2334	162	0.1816	1.285242
32-43	4087	0.2828	219	0.2455	1.151935
44-61	4001	0.2769	253	0.2836	0.976375
62+	2989	0.2069	258	0.2892	0.715422

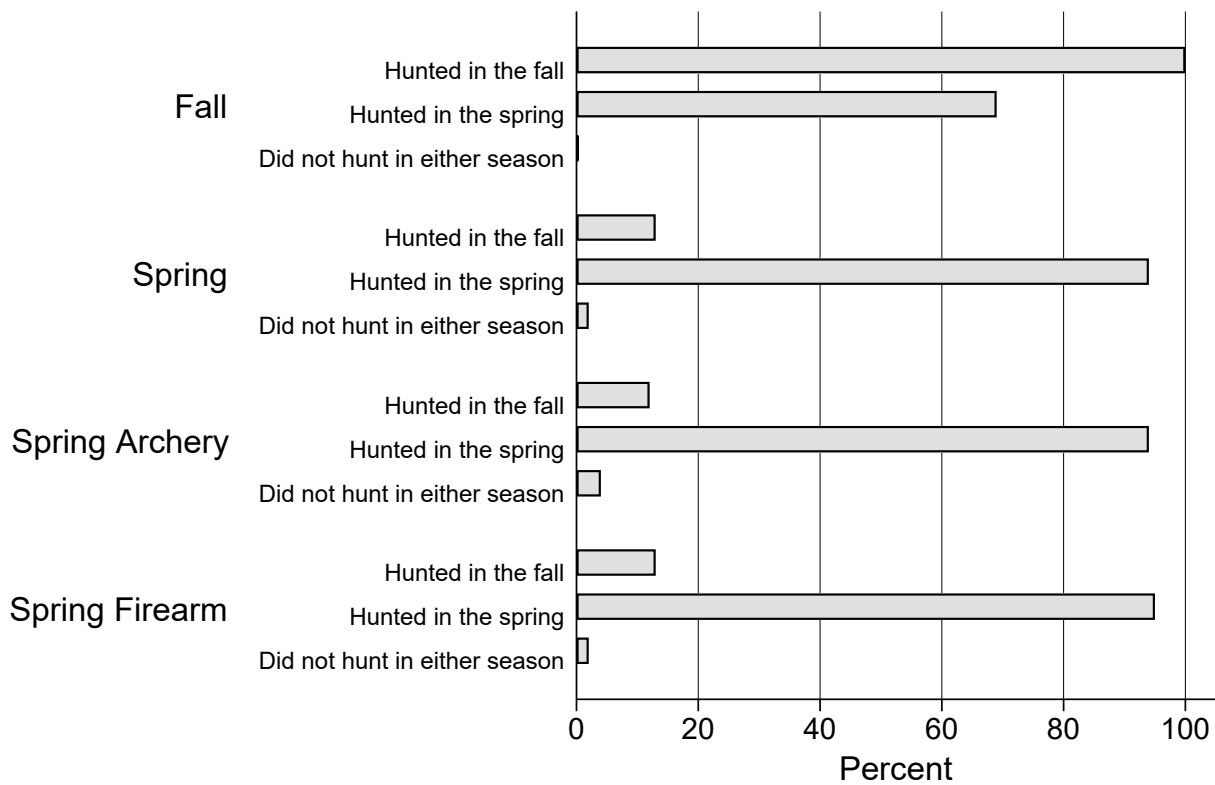
**Table 5. Calculation of weights by age for all spring turkey hunters.**

	Age category	Population count	Population proportion	Respondent count	Respondent proportion	Weight
Archery	18-29	3373	0.071121	162	0.080477	0.8837
	32-43	4087	0.086176	219	0.108793	0.7921
	44-61	4001	0.084363	253	0.125683	0.6712
	62+	2989	0.063025	258	0.128167	0.4917
Firearm	18-29	8530	0.179859	217	0.107799	1.6685
	32-43	8238	0.173702	269	0.133631	1.2999
	44-61	8465	0.178489	284	0.141083	1.2651
	62+	7743	0.163265	351	0.174367	0.9363

## Turkey hunting participation

We asked respondents if they participated in turkey hunting in Minnesota during the fall 2024 and spring 2025 turkey hunting seasons. Among those sampled for possessing a Fall 2024 turkey hunting license, 100% reported that they hunted during the Fall 2024 turkey hunting season in Minnesota. Similarly, 95% of spring archery and firearm license holders reported hunting during one of the spring 2025 turkey seasons in Minnesota. Around 3% of spring archery and firearms license holders reported that they did not hunt turkeys in Minnesota in 2024/2025. (Figure 1).

**Figure 1. Percent of turkey tag holders that participated in turkey hunting in Minnesota in 2024 and 2025.**



## Fall 2024 turkey hunting participation

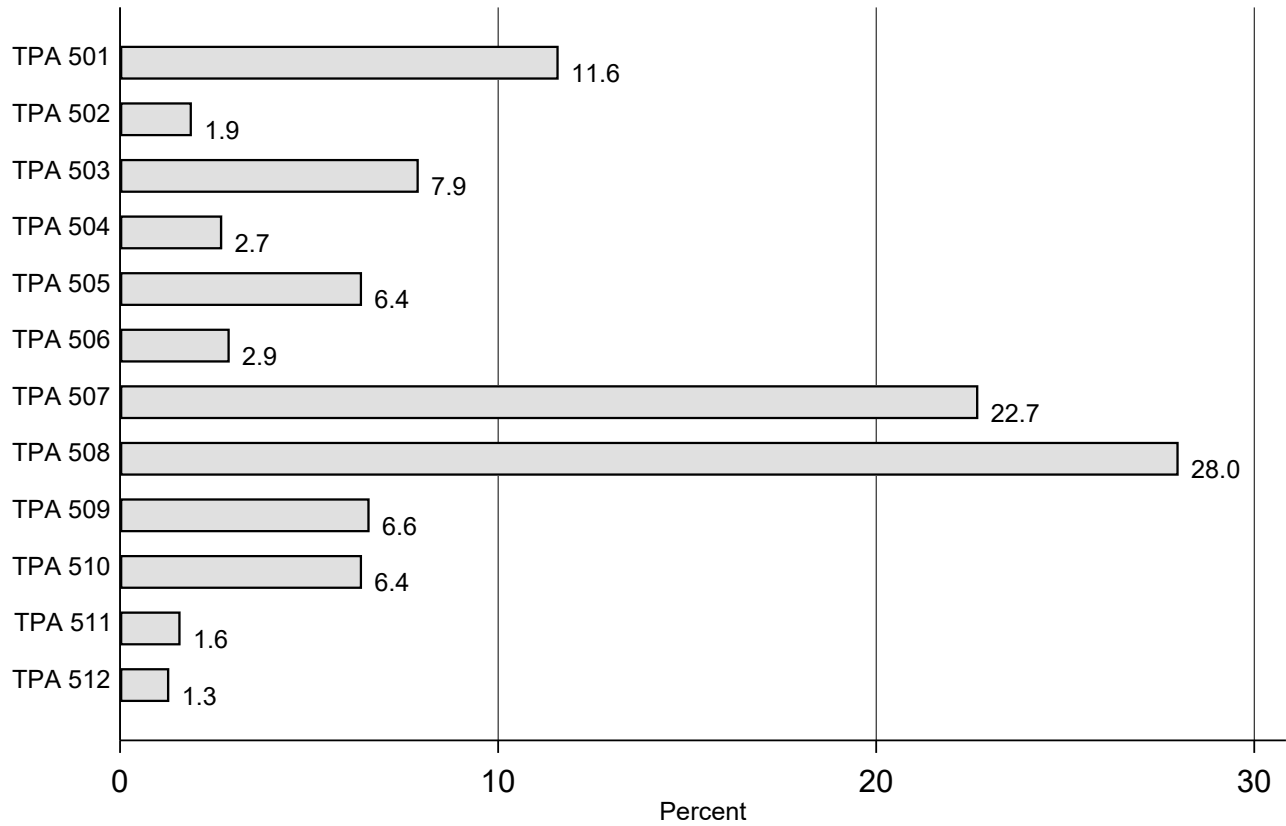
We asked fall 2024 turkey hunters which turkey permit areas (TPA) they hunted and how many days they spent hunting in that permit area(s). The most hunted TPA was 508 (28.0%), followed by 507 (22.7%), and 501 (11.6%). Fall turkey hunters spent an average of 4.95 days hunting. TPA 505 had the highest effort (6.51 days) and TPA 509 had the least amount of effort (3.3 days) (Table 6). 95% of fall turkey hunters hunted in one TPA during the fall season. 5% hunted in two TPAs during the fall season (Figure 3). 92% of fall turkey hunters hunted 10 days or less during the season. 58% of fall hunters hunted for 4 days or less.

An estimated 18% of fall 2024 turkey hunters used a crossbow to hunt during the fall season (Figure 4). Crossbow hunters spent a median of 5 days hunting with a crossbow, with the minimum days spent hunting as 1 and the most days spent hunting as 22 (Table 7). Additionally, we asked respondents to indicate whether their decision to participate in the fall 2024 turkey season was influenced by the crossbow regulation change. 34% of respondents indicated yes, and 66% indicated no (Figure 5). Finally, 37% of fall turkey hunters harvested a turkey (Figure 6). Of those 37%, 57% harvested a bearded bird and 43% harvested a non-bearded bird (Figure 7). 84% of birds harvested were with a firearm. Of archery equipment, 10% were harvested with a crossbow and 5% with a vertical bow (Figure 8).

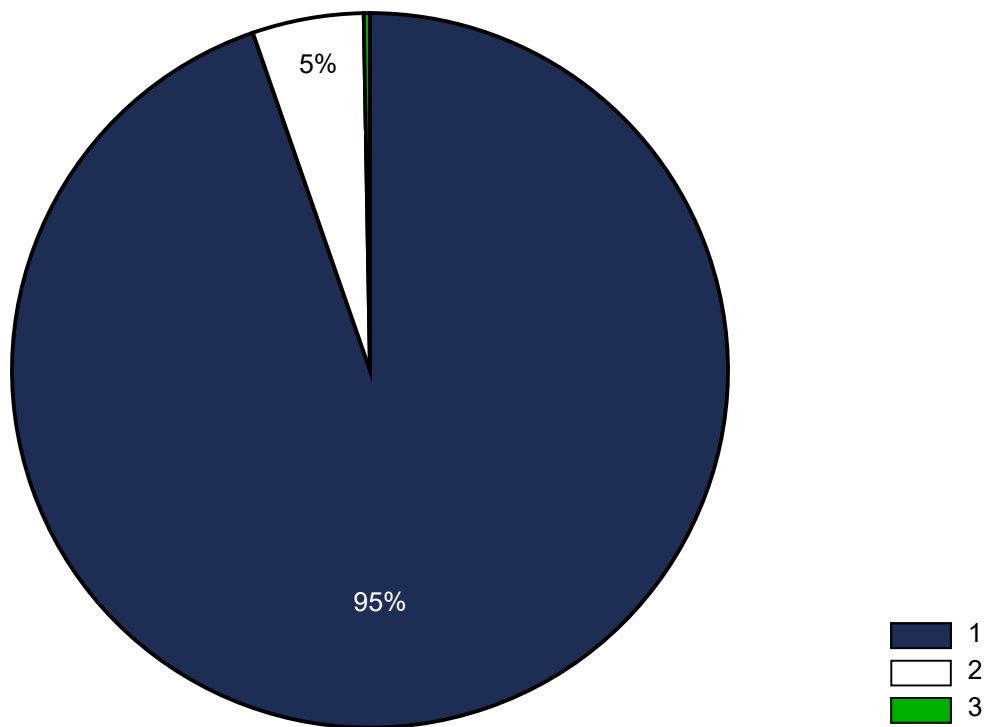
**Table 6. Percent of Fall 2024 turkey hunters that hunted in each TPA and mean and median days hunted in that TPA.**

TPA	% of hunters who hunted in the permit area	Effort (average days spent hunting)	SD	Median	Minimum	Maximum
501	12	5	4	4	1	15
502	2	5	5	3	1	15
503	8	6	7	4	1	25
504	3	6	5	4	3	18
505	6	7	4	5	1	16
506	3	5	4	4	1	12
507	23	5	4	4	1	20
508	28	4	3	3	1	10
509	7	3	2	3	1	10
510	6	5	5	3	1	25
511	2	3	2	2	1	7

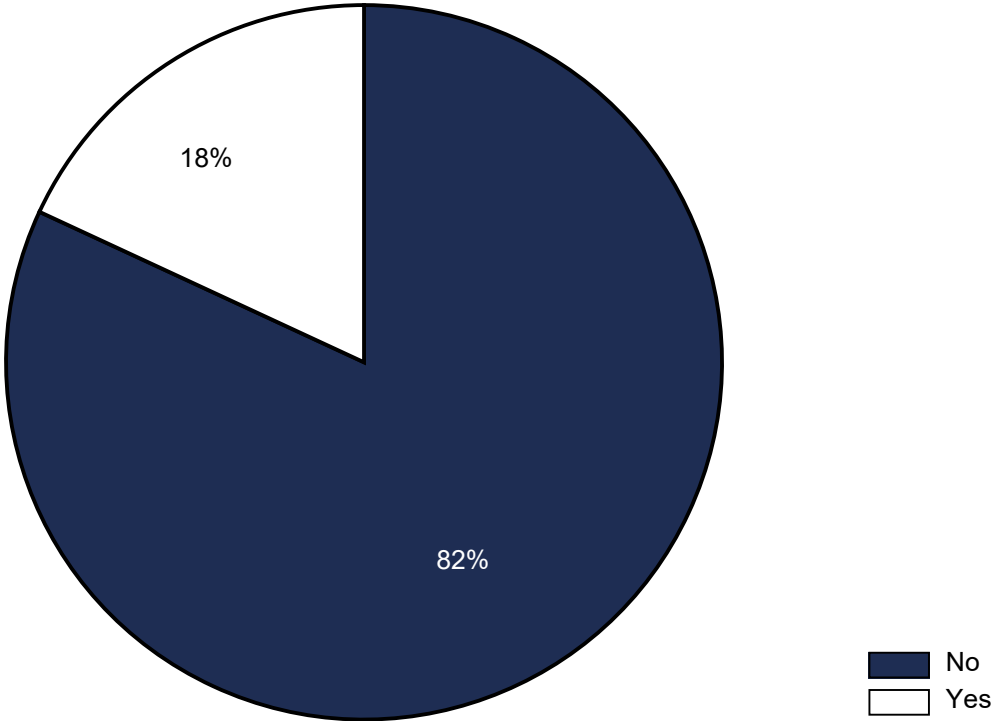
**Figure 2. Percent of fall turkey hunters hunting in each turkey permit area.**



**Figure 3. Percent of hunters hunting in 1, 2, and 3 TPAs during the Fall 2024 turkey hunting season in Minnesota.**



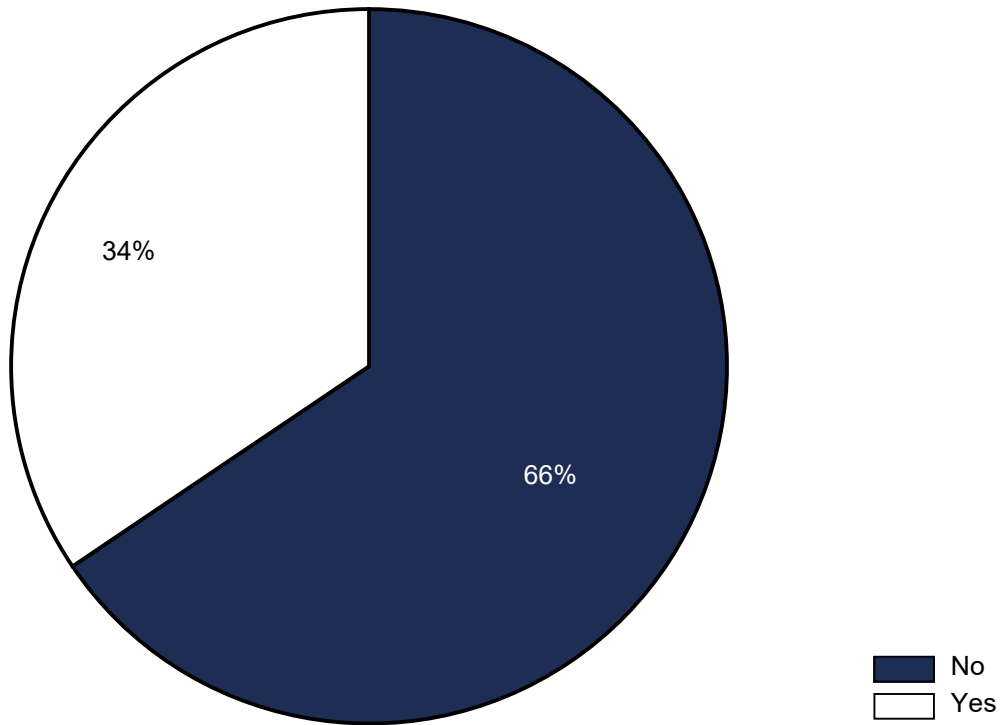
**Figure 4. Percent of hunters who used a crossbow to hunt turkey during the Fall 2024 turkey hunting season in Minnesota.**



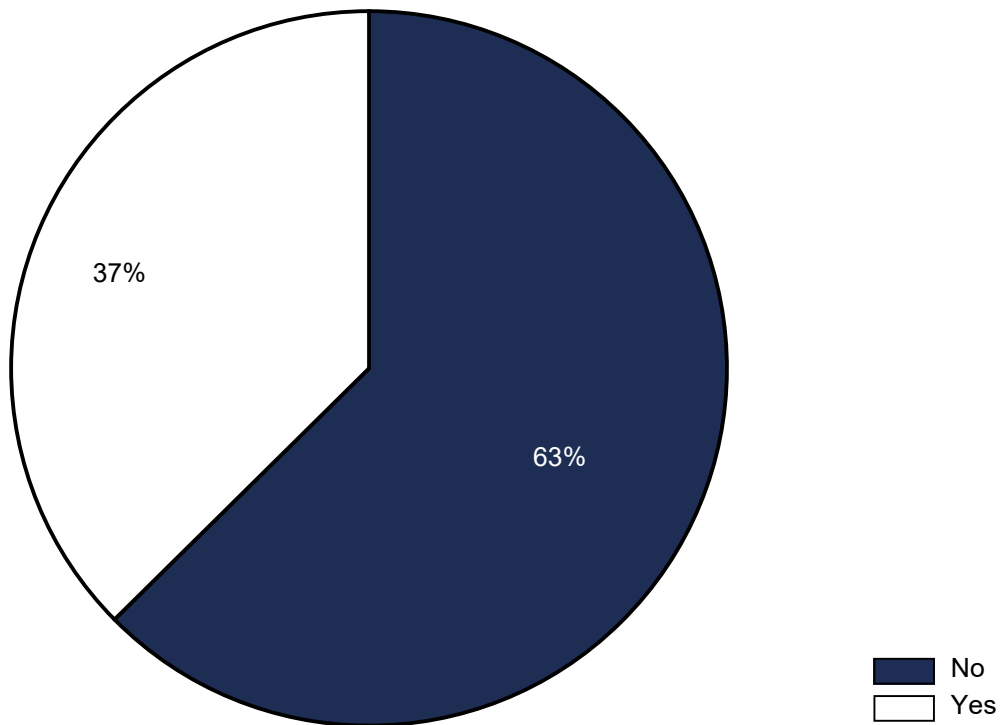
**Table 7. Mean and median number of days hunters spent hunting with a crossbow during the 2024 Fall turkey hunting season in Minnesota, among those who hunted with a crossbow.**

Mean (days)	SD	Median	Minimum	Maximum
6	4	5	1	22

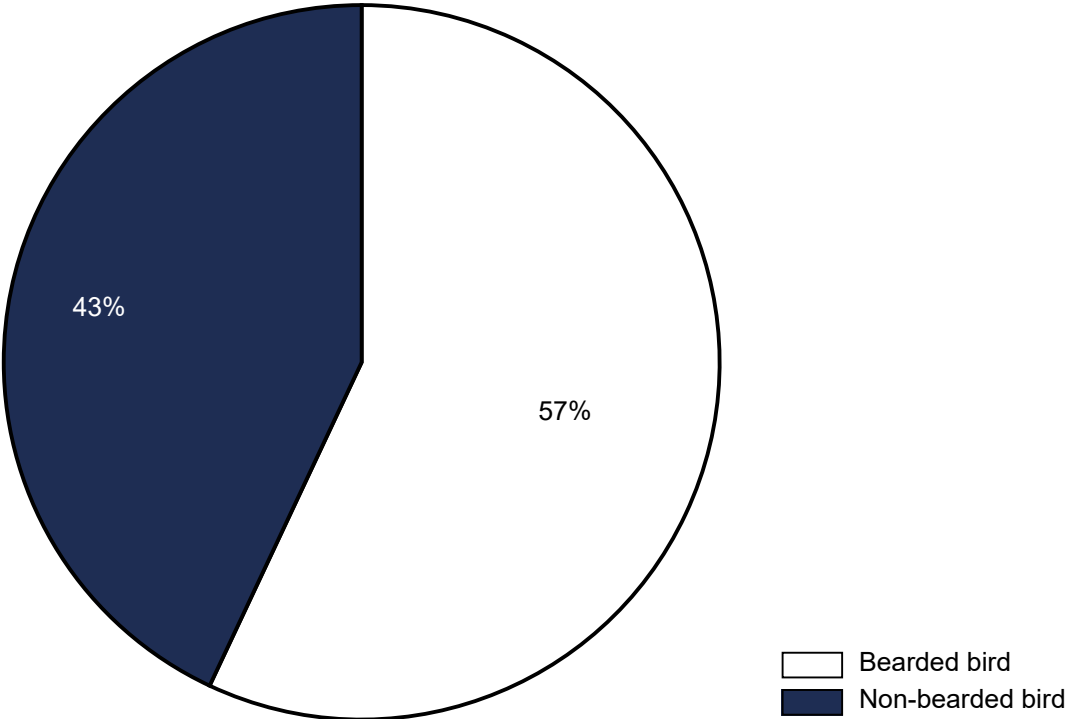
**Figure 5. Percent of fall turkey hunters that decided to participate in the fall 2024 season because of the change in the crossbow regulation in 2023.**



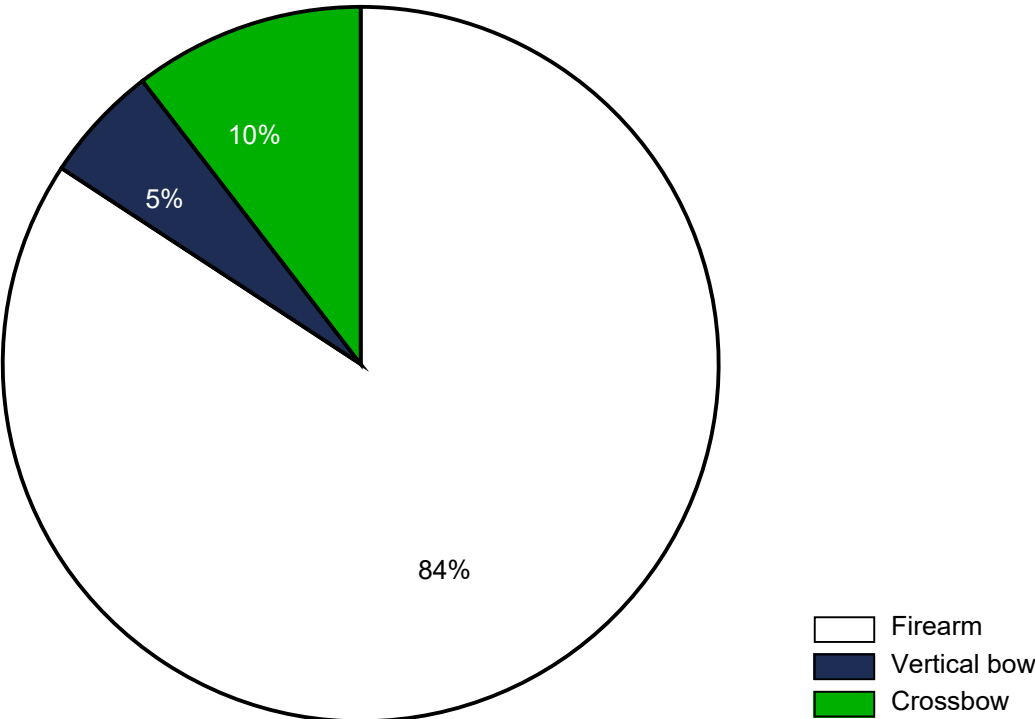
**Figure 6. Percent of fall turkey hunters' who harvested a turkey.**



**Figure 7. Percent of hunters who harvested a bearded and non-bearded bird during the Fall 2024 turkey hunting season in Minnesota, among those who successfully harvested a bird.**

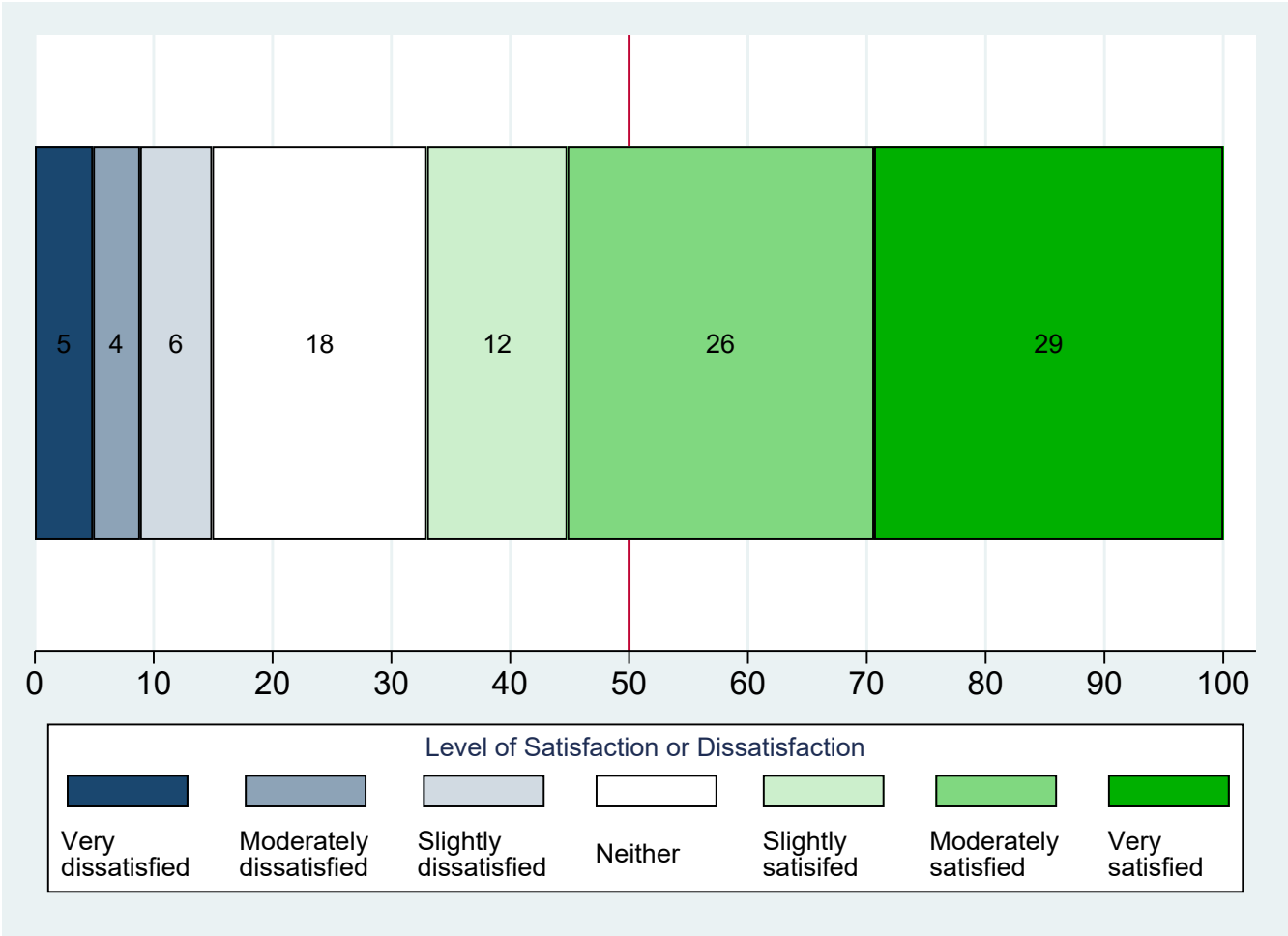


**Figure 8. Percent of hunters who harvested a bird during the Fall 2024 turkey hunting season in Minnesota using a firearm, vertical bow, and crossbow, among those who successfully harvested a bird.**

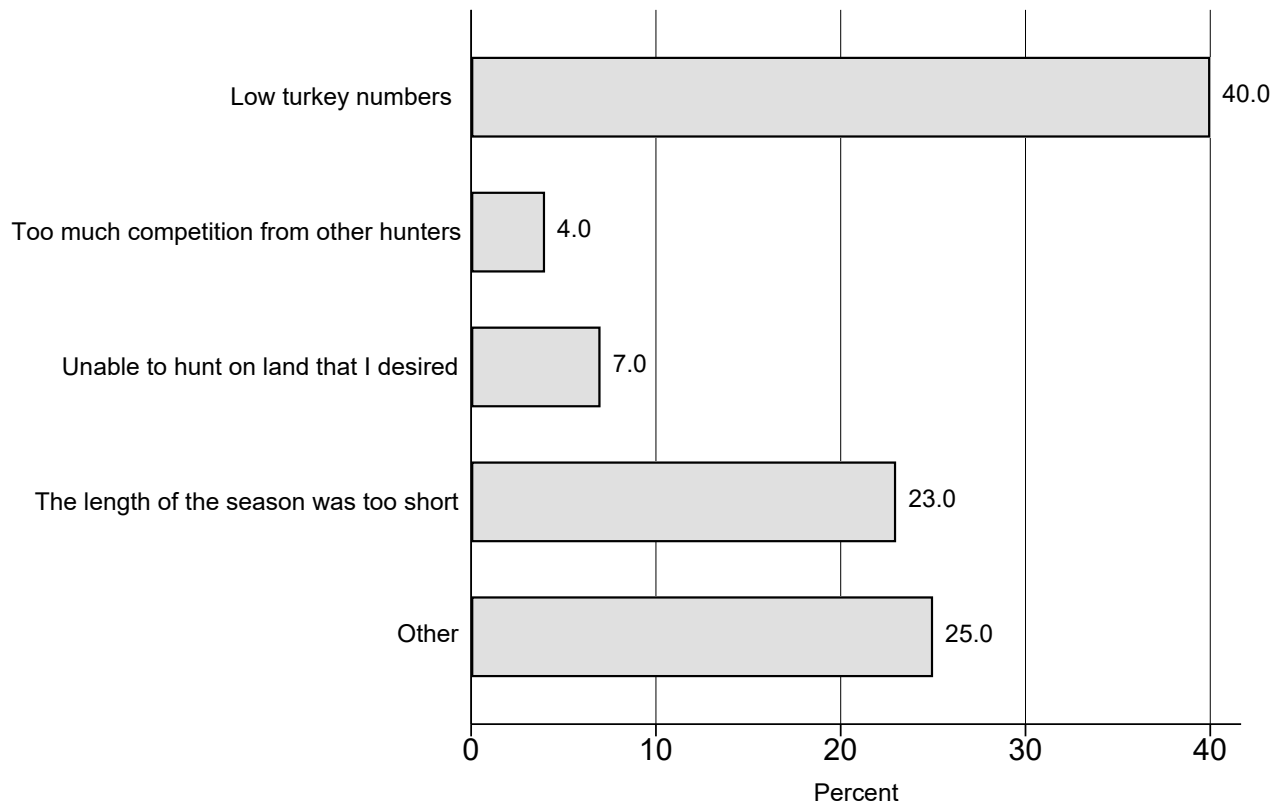


We asked fall turkey hunters to indicate their overall satisfaction or dissatisfaction with fall turkey hunting, and with elements of their fall turkey hunting experience in Minnesota in 2024. Most respondents (67%) were either slightly, moderately, or very satisfied with turkey hunting in Minnesota in 2024, while 15% were either slightly, moderately, or very dissatisfied (Figure 9). 18% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. If respondents indicated they were some levels of dissatisfied, they were asked to specify why. The most reported reason for dissatisfaction was low turkey numbers (40%), followed by “other” (25%) and the season length being too short (23%) (Figure 10). Additionally, fall hunters were asked to select their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with aspects of the fall 2024 turkey season. Across all aspects of the fall 2024 turkey season, fall hunters were relatively more satisfied than dissatisfied. Relatively few respondents reported dissatisfaction with “the number of other turkey hunters seen” (7%). Fall hunters were most dissatisfied with a “chance to harvest a turkey” (25%), followed closely by the “number of turkeys seen” (24%) (Table 8).

**Figure 9. Fall turkey hunters’ overall satisfaction with the fall 2024 turkey hunting season in Minnesota.**



**Figure 10. Fall turkey hunters’ reason for dissatisfaction with the fall 2024 turkey hunting season in Minnesota.**



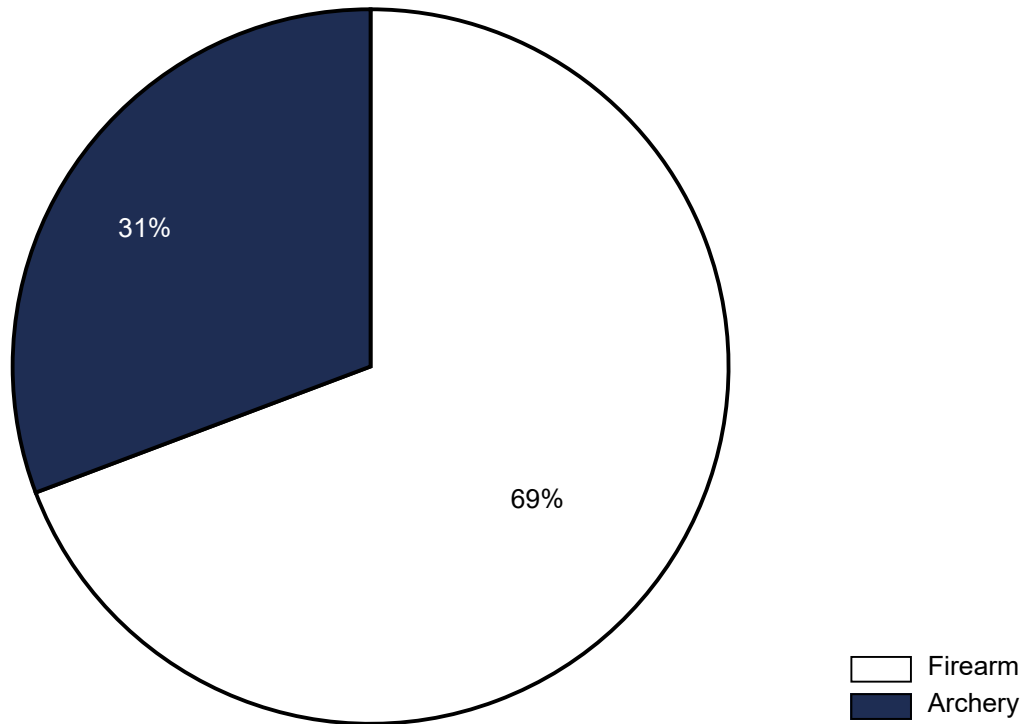
**Table 8. Fall turkey hunters’ satisfaction or dissatisfaction with elements of the fall 2024 turkey hunting season in Minnesota.**

	Very dissatisfied	Moderately dissatisfied	Slightly dissatisfied	Neither	Slightly satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Very satisfied
Number of turkeys seen	5%	7%	12%	11%	14%	26%	24%
Chance to harvest a turkey	7%	6%	12%	15%	13%	25%	23%
Turkey hunting regulations	2%	3%	6%	24%	9%	26%	29%
Number of other turkey hunters seen	2%	1%	4%	35%	9%	14%	36%
Length of season	5%	3%	9%	15%	9%	22%	36%

## Spring 2025 turkey hunting participation

69% of spring 2025 turkey hunters purchased a firearm tag and 31% purchased an archery tag (Figure 11). Spring firearm hunters spent an average of 4 days hunting, while spring archery hunters spent an average of 6 days hunting (Table 9). 67% of spring hunters used a firearm to hunt. 17% used a vertical bow and 13% used a crossbow (Figure 12).

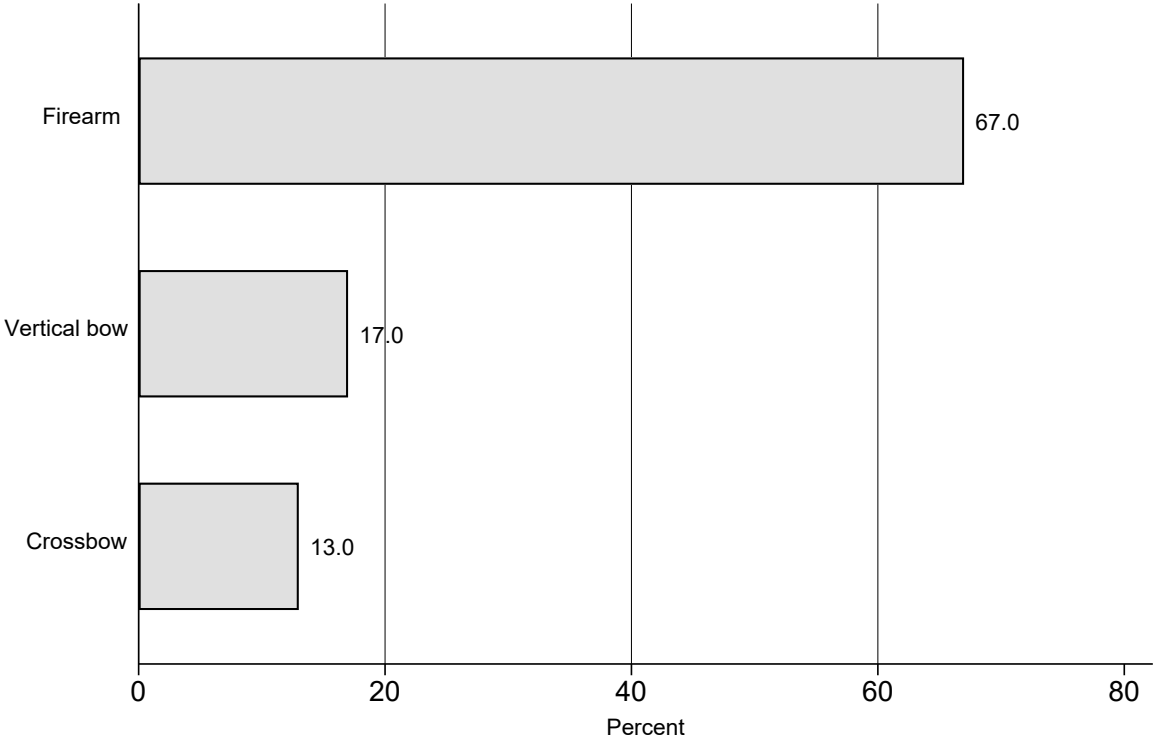
**Figure 11. Percent of spring turkey hunters that possessed a firearm and archery license in Minnesota in 2025.**



**Table 9. Mean and median days spent hunting during the spring 2025 turkey season by firearm and archery license holders in Minnesota.**

License Type	% of hunters	Effort (mean days spent hunting)	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Median
Firearm	69%	4	2	1	14	3
Archery	31%	6	5	1	37	5

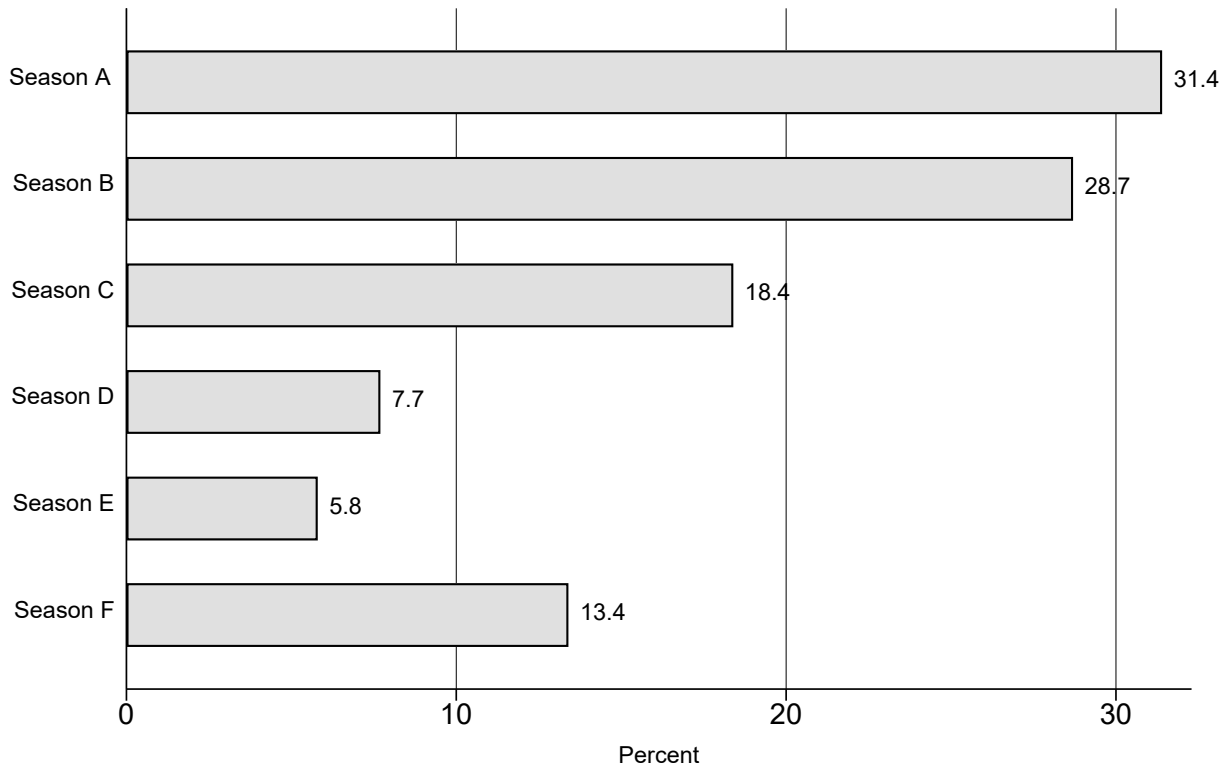
**Figure 12. Percent of spring 2025 turkey hunters hunting with a firearm, vertical bow, and crossbow in Minnesota.**



## Spring 2025 Firearm Hunting

Spring firearm turkey hunters were asked to identify which periods they personally hunted of turkey. The most frequently selected answer was season A (31.4%). Spring firearm turkey hunting participation decreased in a stepwise fashion, with each season (B, C, and beyond) drawing fewer hunters than the one preceding it. Season F was an exception to this trend, when participation rose again to 13.4% from 5.8% during the final period of the spring season (Figure 13). We asked spring 2025 firearm turkey hunters to indicate which permit areas they personally hunted in during the spring 2025 season and how many days they spent in that permit area(s) hunting. Turkey permit areas 507 (23.0%), 501 (21.0%), and 508 (18.0%) were the most visited permit areas by spring firearm hunters (Figure 14). Turkey permit areas 511 and 512 both had the least hunter use (1% for each). Across all permit areas, the average amount of days spent hunting was two to three days (Table 10). A majority of spring firearm hunters (96%) hunted in one turkey permit area. The remaining 4% of hunters utilized two permit areas to hunt (Figure 15). 53% of spring firearm turkey hunters harvested a turkey (Figure 16).

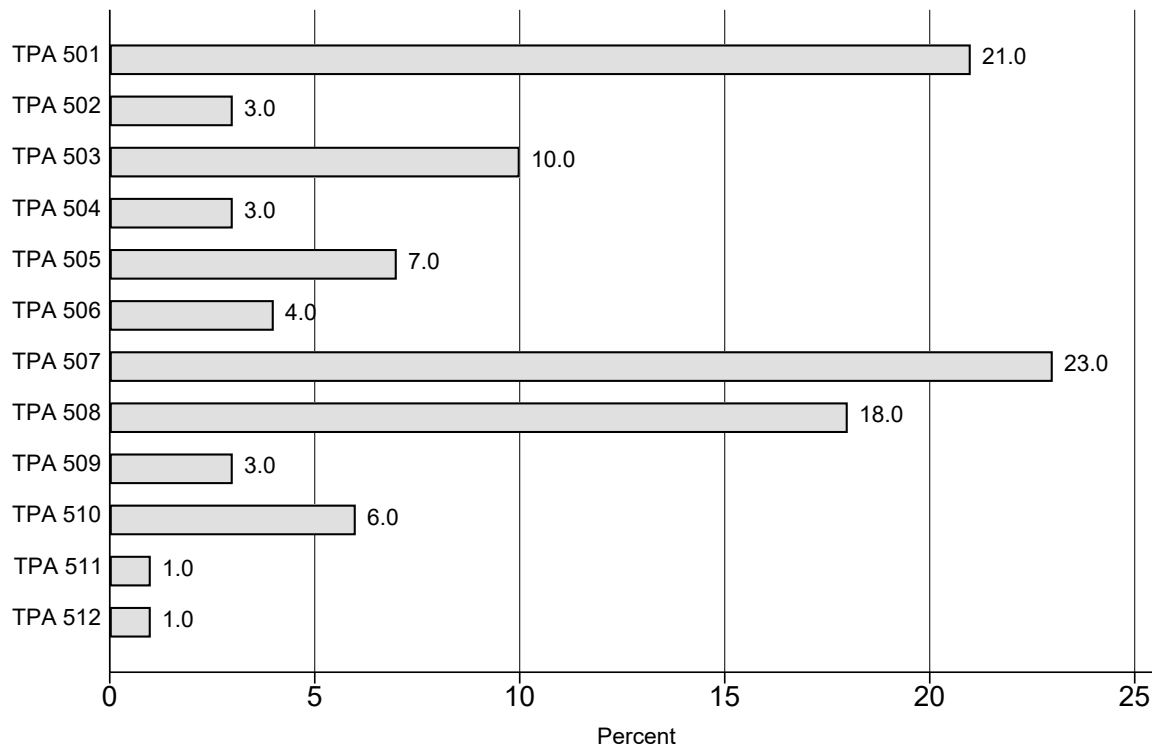
**Figure 13. Percent of spring 2025 firearm turkey hunters that hunted during seasons A-F in Minnesota.**



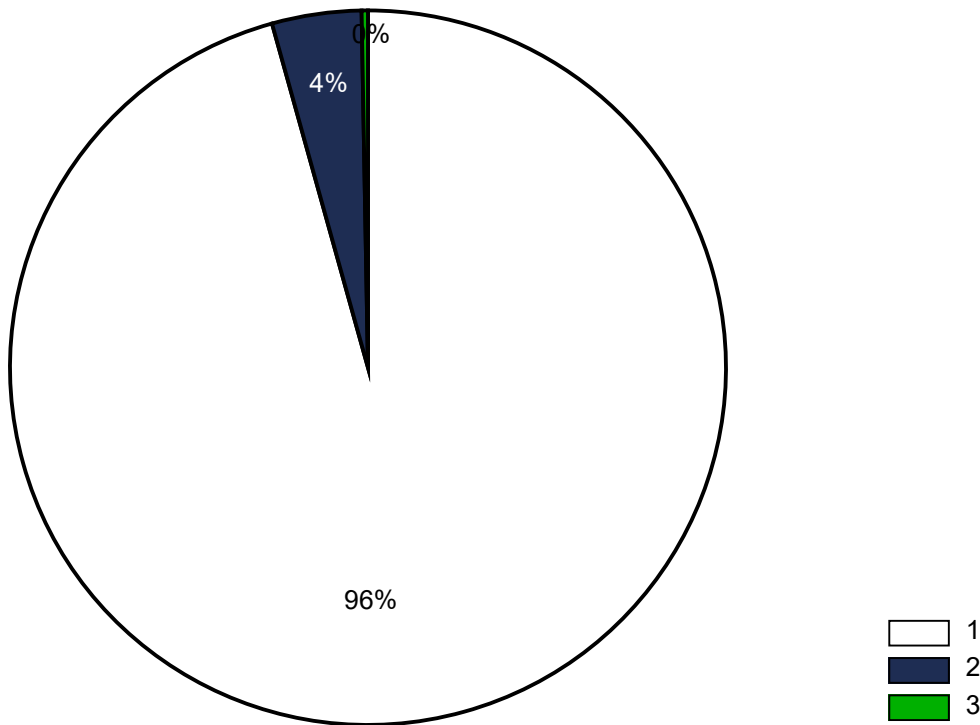
**Table 10. Spring firearm turkey hunters' effort by permit area.**

TPA	% of hunters who hunted in the permit area	Effort (mean days spent hunting)	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Median
501	21	3	2	1	10	3
502	3	3	2	1	7	3
503	10	3	2	1	10	3
504	3	3	2	1	11	3
505	7	3	2	1	14	3
506	4	3	2	1	10	2
507	23	3	2	1	14	2
508	18	3	2	1	12	3
509	3	3	1	1	5	3
510	6	3	2	1	7	2
511	1	3	2	1	7	2
512	1	3	3	1	8	2

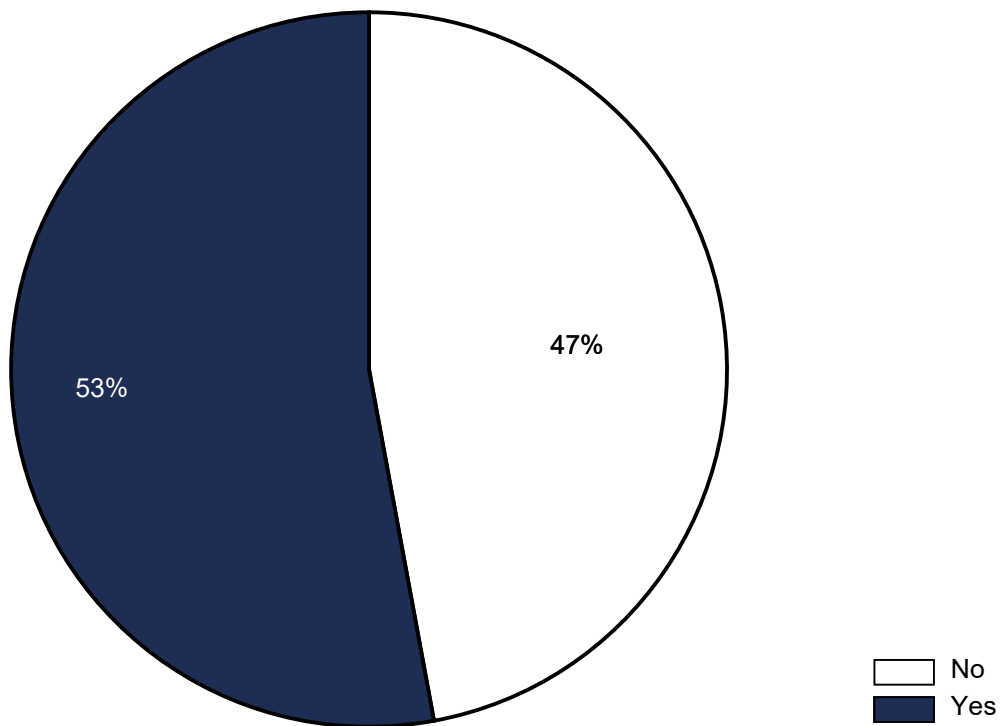
**Figure 14. Percent of spring 2025 firearm turkey hunters hunting in each turkey permit area.**



**Figure 15. Percent of spring firearm turkey hunters' who hunted in 1, 2, and 3 TPAs**

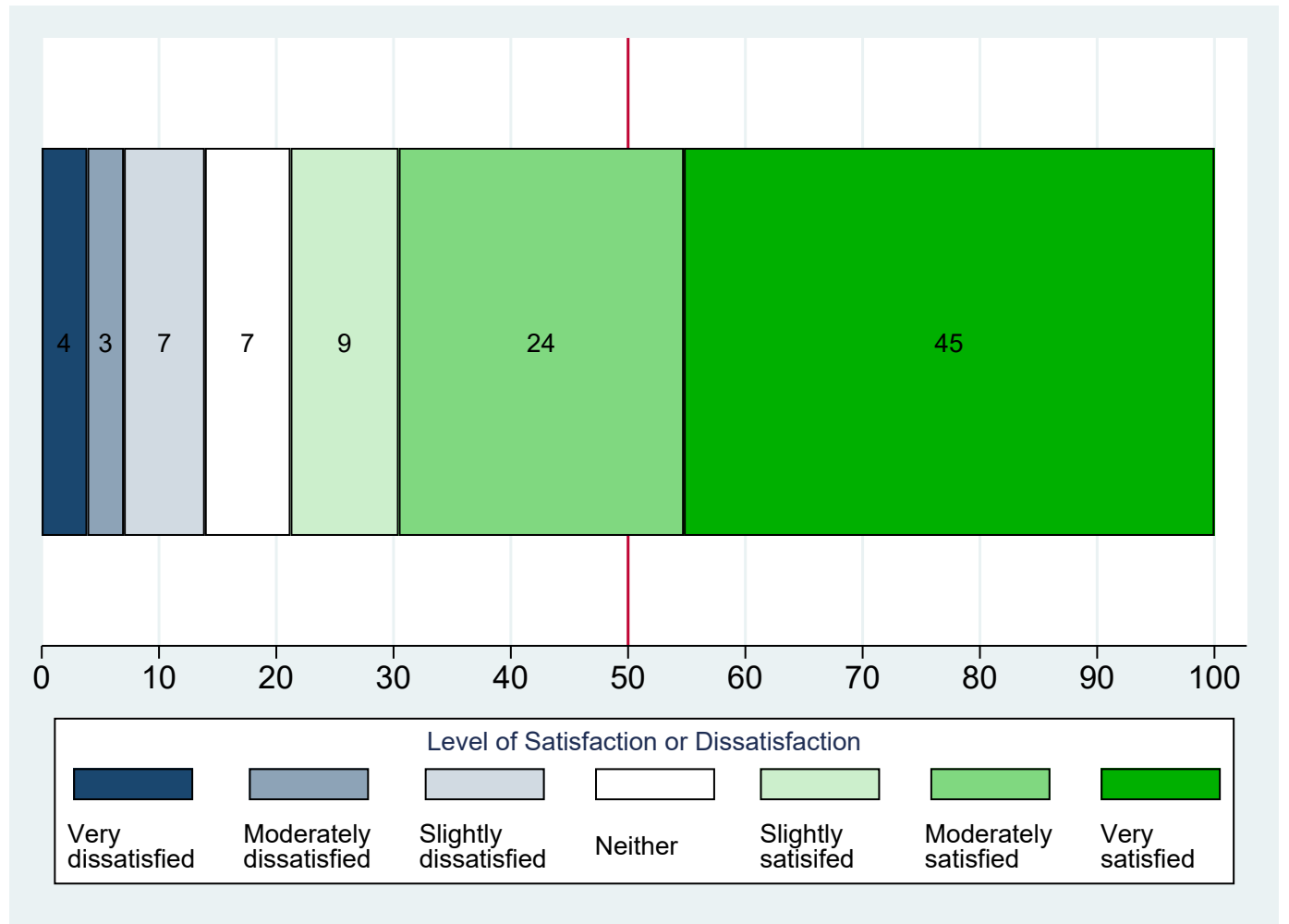


**Figure 16. Percent of spring firearm turkey hunters who harvested a turkey.**

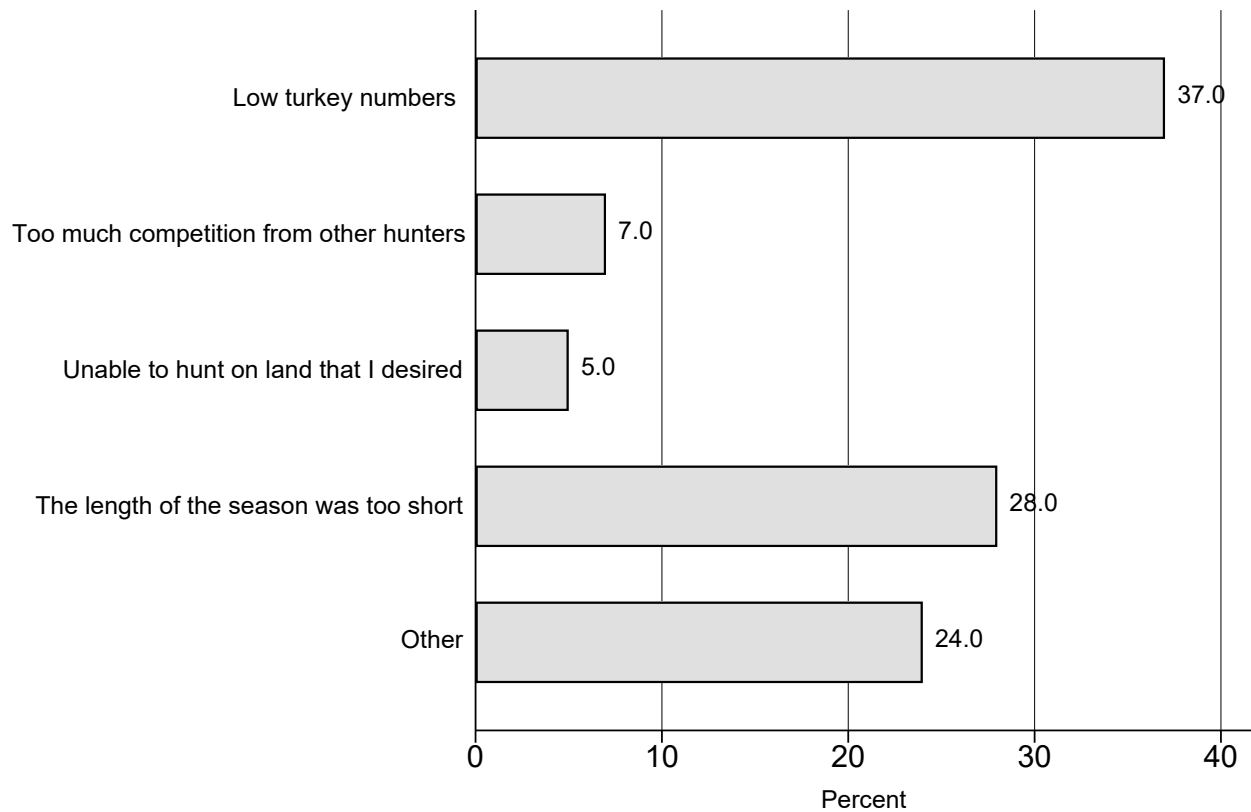


Spring firearm turkey hunters were asked to indicate their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the overall turkey season, as well as elements of turkey hunting. Most firearm hunters (78%) expressed some level of satisfaction with the overall turkey season. Few (14%) expressed some level of dissatisfaction (Figure 17). Hunters who indicated they were dissatisfied with their turkey hunting season were asked to indicate the main reason why. Low turkey numbers (37%) was the main cause of dissatisfaction, followed by the length of the season being too short (28%). Few hunters indicated that their dissatisfaction was from being unable to hunt on land they desired or that there was too much competition from other hunters (Figure 18). Between 64% and 74% of spring firearm hunters were some levels of satisfied with all elements of the spring turkey season. The length of the season had the most dissatisfaction (23%) of all elements of the spring turkey season. The number of other turkeys seen had the least dissatisfaction (9%). The number of turkeys seen and the chance to harvest a turkey had the highest satisfaction of all elements (74%) (Table 11).

Figure 17. Spring firearm turkey hunters' overall satisfaction with the Spring 2025 turkey hunting season in Minnesota.



**Figure 18. Spring firearm turkey hunters' reason for dissatisfaction with the spring 2025 turkey hunting season in Minnesota.**

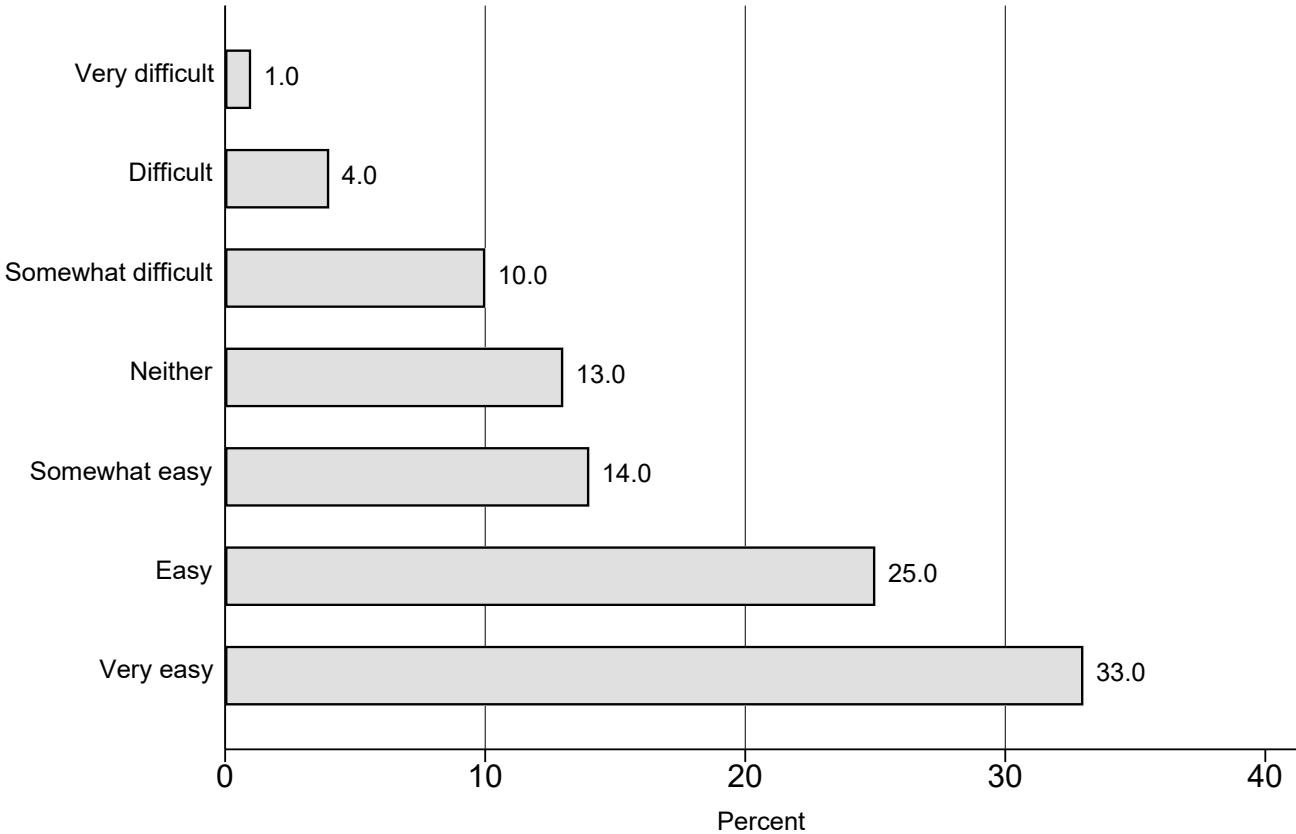


**Table 11. Spring firearm turkey hunters' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with elements of the spring 2025 turkey hunting season in Minnesota.**

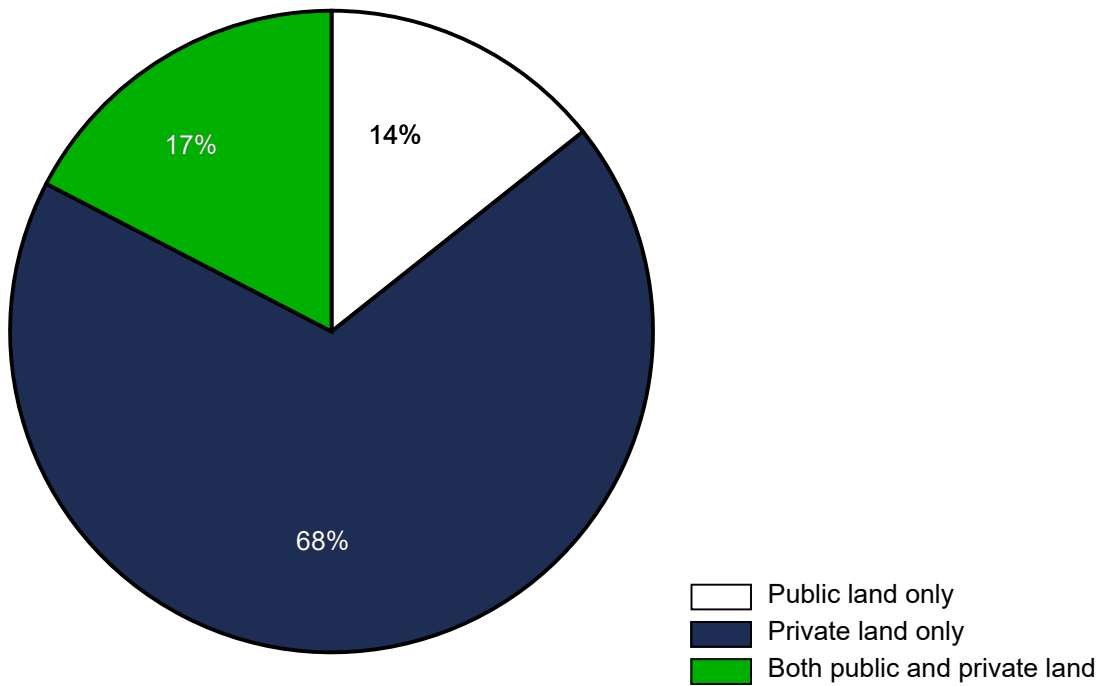
	Very dissatisfied	Moderately dissatisfied	Slightly dissatisfied	Neither	Slightly satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Very satisfied
Number of turkeys seen	5%	5%	10%	7%	14%	27%	33%
Chance to harvest a turkey	4%	4%	10%	8%	15%	23%	36%
Turkey hunting regulations	2%	4%	7%	18%	10%	28%	32%
Number of other turkey hunters seen	2%	1%	6%	28%	10%	17%	37%
Length of season	6%	6%	11%	11%	12%	22%	32%

Most spring firearm hunters (72%) expressed an easy ability to find a place to hunt turkey. 15% indicated they had some level of difficulty finding a place to hunt (Figure 19). 68% of hunters hunted on private land, followed by a mixture of public and private land (18%) and public land only (14%) (Figure 20). Those that hunted public land only were asked if they hunted public land because they were denied access to hunt on private land. Of the 14% that hunted public land only, 11% indicated it was due to denial of access to private land (Figure 21). 87% of firearm hunters experienced little crowding while hunting (Figure 22). 26% of hunters indicated that other turkey hunters prevented them from hunting in their preferred location (Figure 23). However, 92% of hunters indicated that other turkey hunters did not interfere with their ability to harvest a turkey during the spring season (Figure 24).

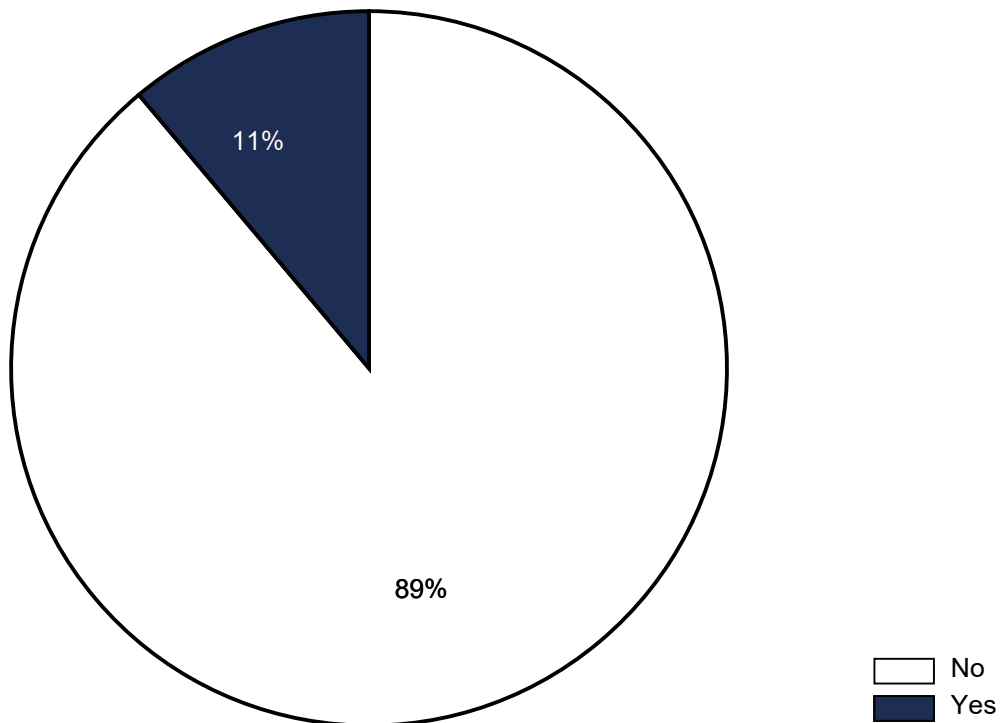
**Figure 19. Spring firearm turkey hunters’ perception of their ability to find a place to hunt.**



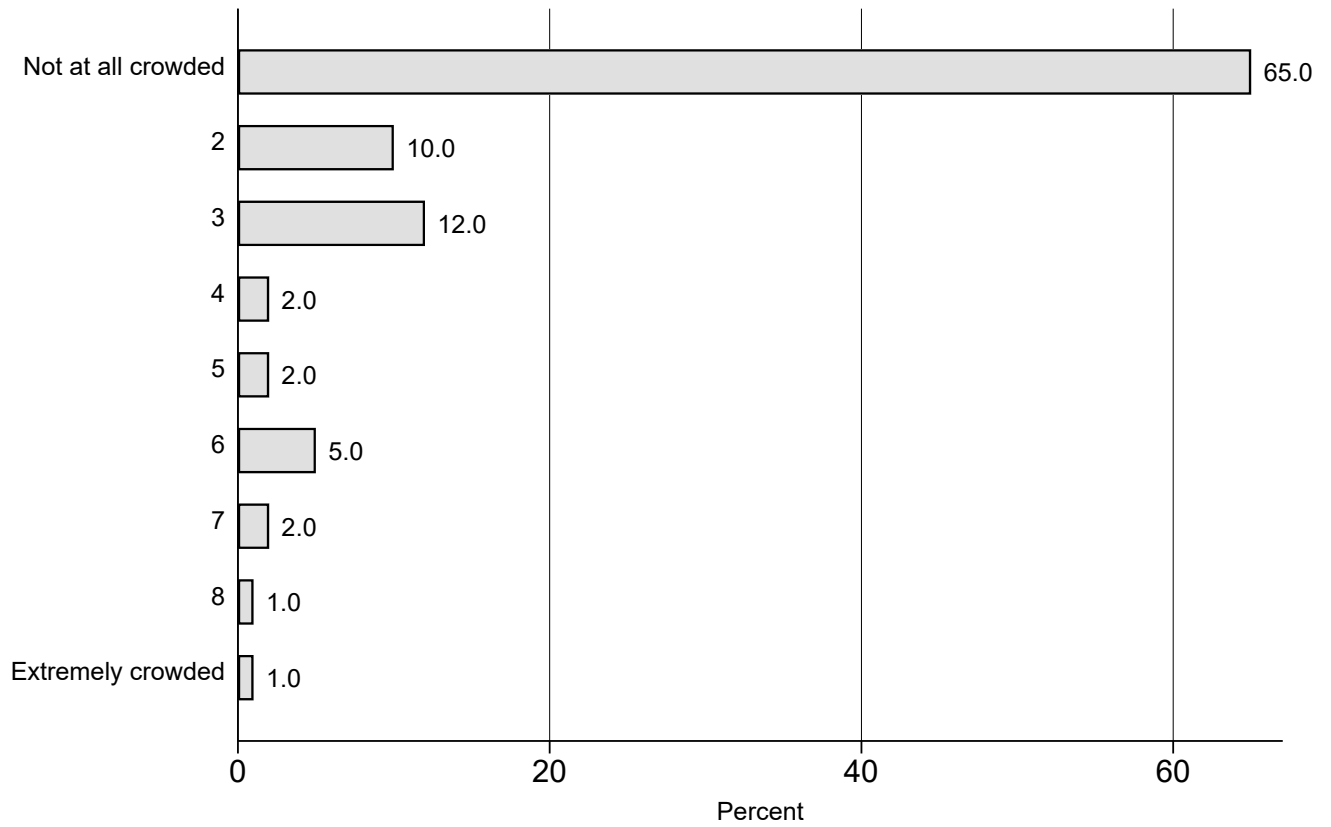
**Figure 20. Spring firearm turkey hunters' location of hunting by land type.**



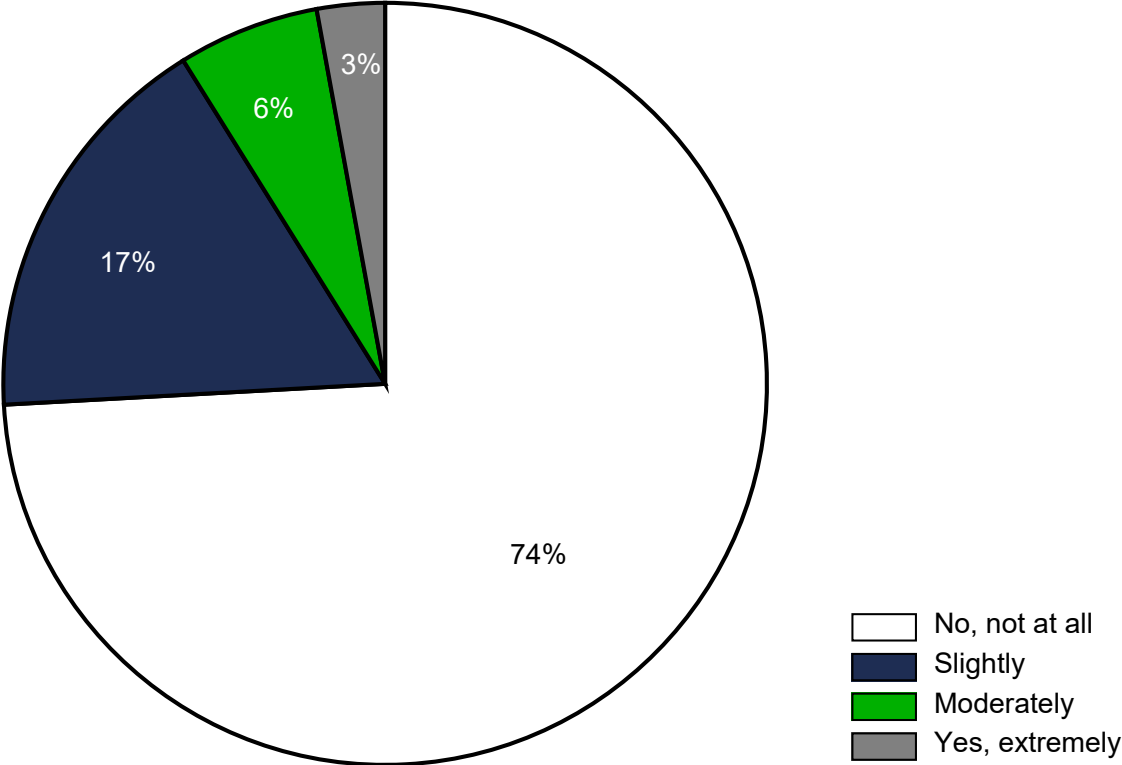
**Figure 21. Percent of spring firearm turkey hunters' who reported hunting on public land due to denial of private land access.**



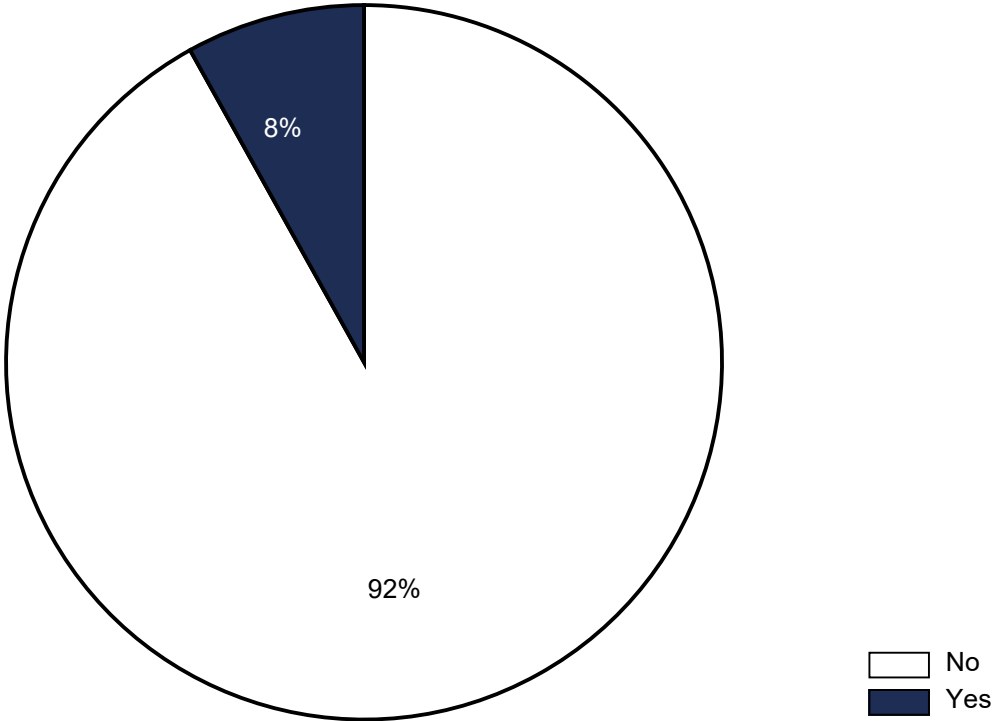
**Figure 22. Spring firearm turkey hunters' perception of crowding during the spring 2025 turkey hunting season in Minnesota.**



**Figure 23. Percent of spring firearm turkey hunters' who reported that the presence of other hunters prevented them from hunting in their preferred location.**



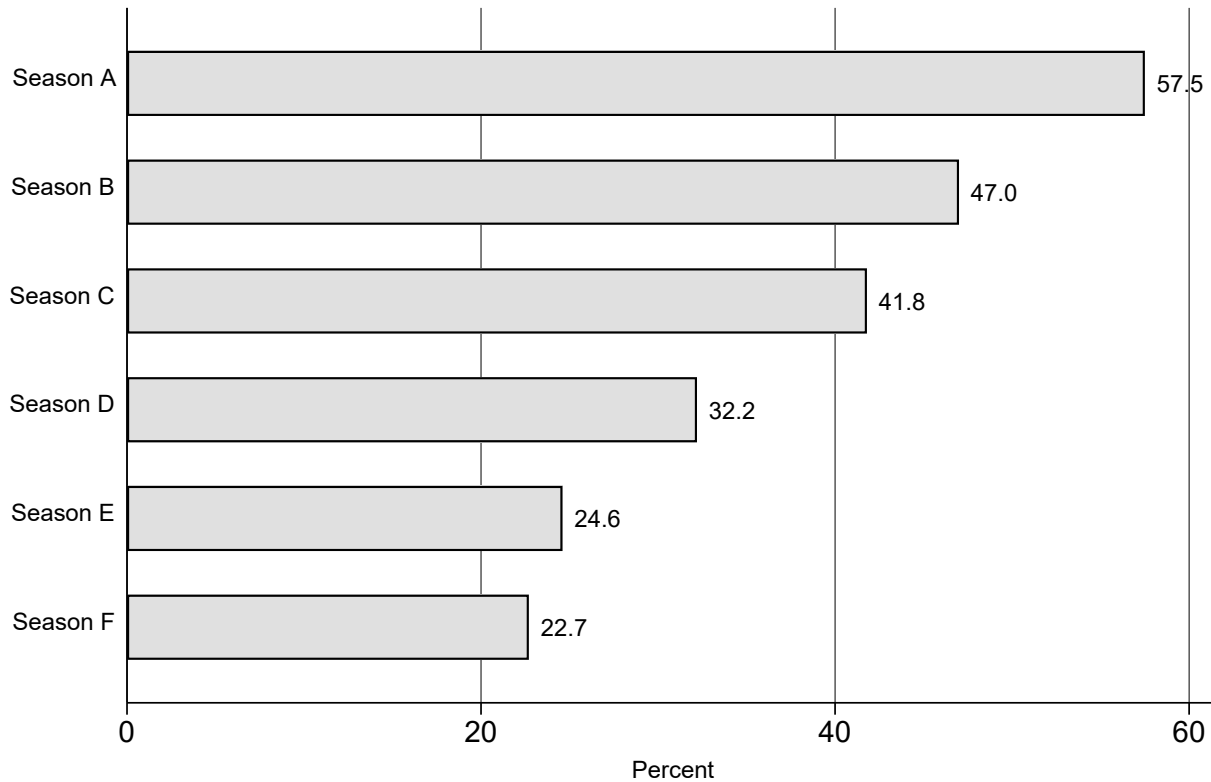
**Figure 24. Percent of spring firearm turkey hunters' who reported that the presence of other hunters interfered with their chance to harvest a turkey.**



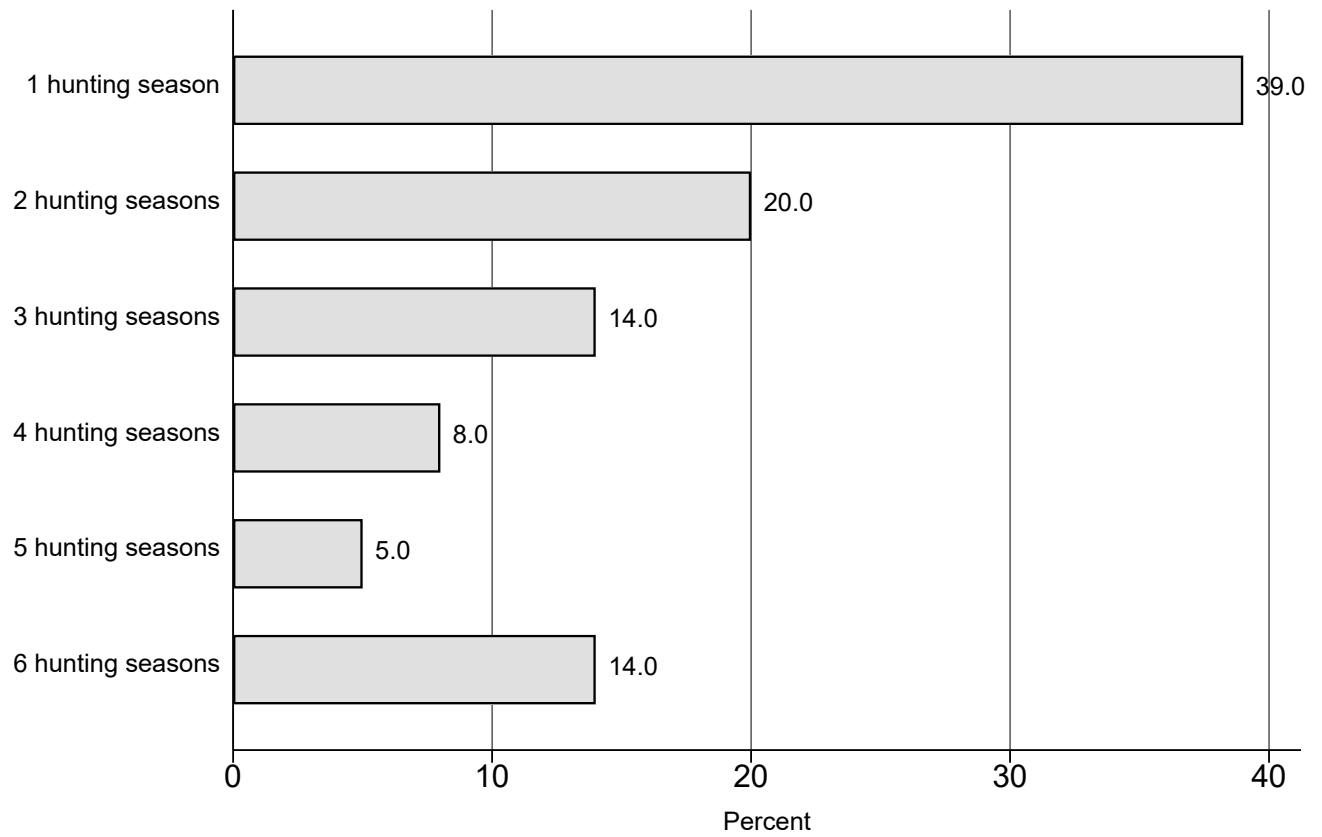
## Spring 2025 Archery Hunting

We asked spring 2025 archery turkey hunters which seasons (A,B,C,D,E, and F) they hunted. More than half of archery turkey hunters hunted during the A season (57.5%), but participation declined with each consecutive season. Season F saw the lowest participation with 22.7% of archery hunters reporting hunting during that time (Figure 25). 39% of spring archery hunters hunted in one turkey season (A,B,C,D,E, or F), 20% hunted in two seasons, and 14% hunted in three. 14% utilized all six seasons to hunt (Figure 26).

**Figure 25. Hunting seasons used by spring archery turkey hunters.**



**Figure 26. Number of hunting seasons used by spring archery turkey hunters.**

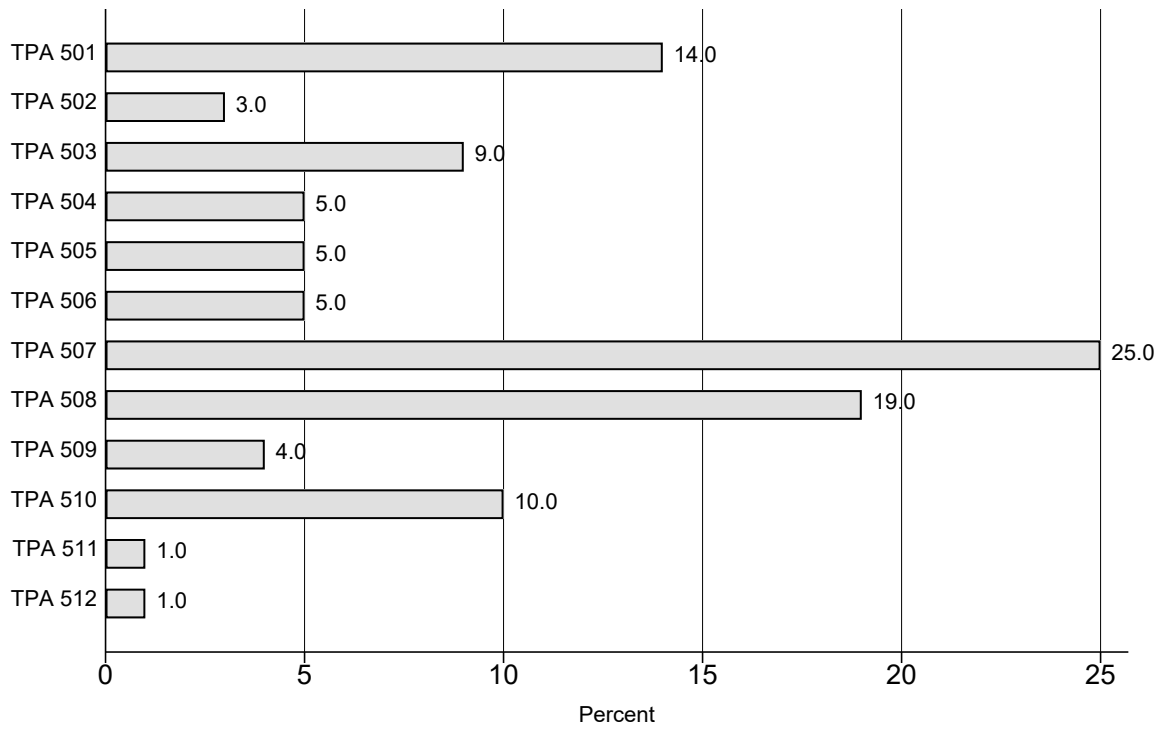


We asked spring 2025 archery turkey hunters which permit areas they hunted in during the spring 2025 season and how many days they spent in that permit area(s) hunting. Turkey permit areas 507 (25%), 508 (19%), and 501 (14%) were the most hunted permit areas by spring archery hunters. Turkey permit areas 511 and 512 both had the least hunter use (1% for each). Across all permit areas, the average amount of days spent hunting was four to eight days, with an upwards range of 35 days. Turkey permit area 504 had the highest average effort (8 days). Turkey permit area 512 had the lowest average effort (4 days) (Table 12, Figure 27). Most spring archery hunters (93%) hunted in one turkey permit area (Figure 28). 35% of spring archery turkey hunters harvested a turkey (Figure 30). Of those 35%, 53% harvested with a vertical bow and 47% harvested with a crossbow (Figure 31).

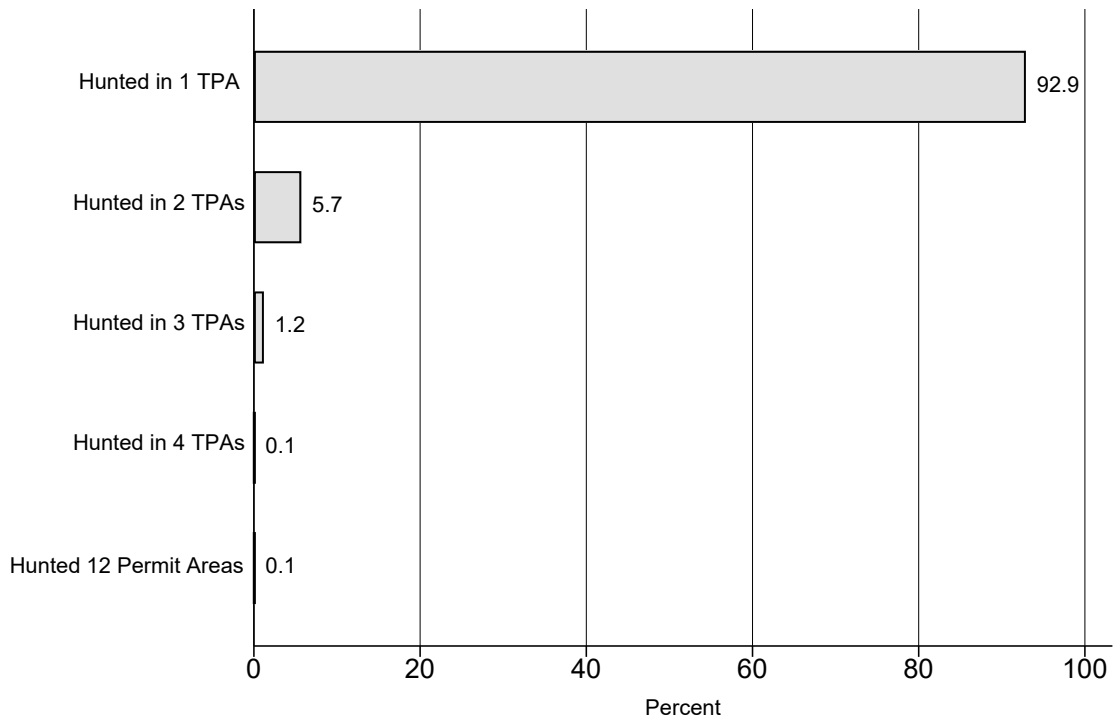
**Table 12. Spring archery turkey hunters’ effort by permit area.**

TPA	% of hunters who hunted in the permit area	Effort (average days spent hunting)	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Median
501	14	6	5	1	30	4
502	3	4	3	1	11	4
503	9	6	5	1	25	4
504	5	8	7	1	30	6
505	5	6	4	1	15	5
506	5	6	5	1	15	5
507	25	6	5	1	28	5
508	19	6	5	1	35	5
509	4	4	4	1	16	3
510	10	5	4	1	20	3
511	1	6	6	2	17	4
512	1	4	1	2	6	4

**Figure 27. Percent of spring archery turkey hunters hunting in each turkey permit area.**



**Figure 28. Number of TPAs used by spring archery turkey hunters.**

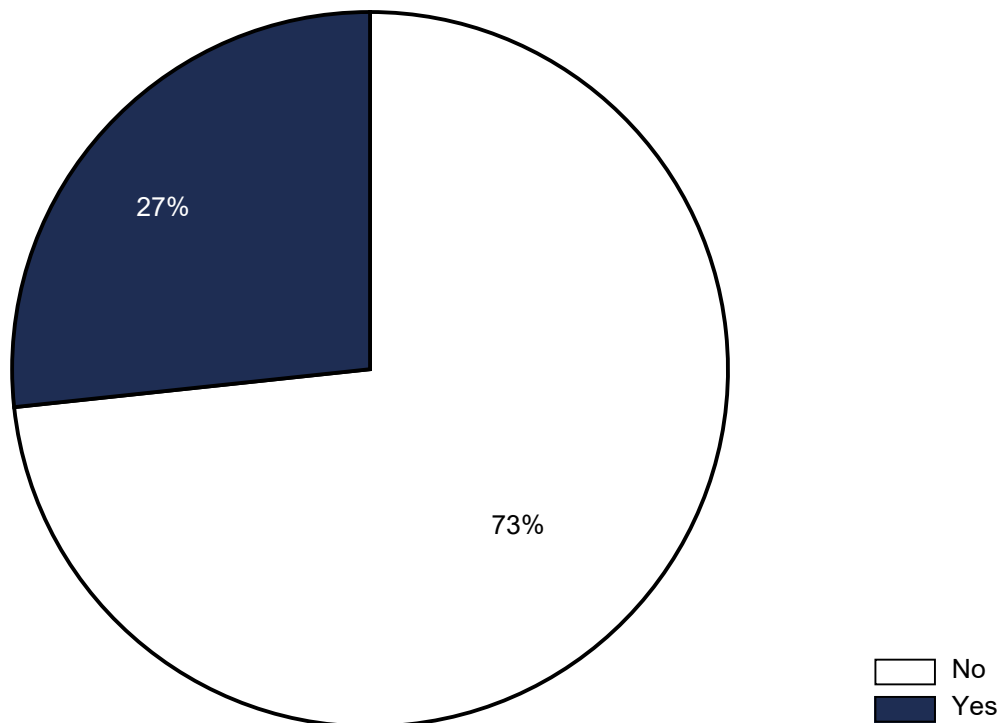


Spring archery hunters spent a median of 5, and an average of 6, days hunting with a crossbow, with the minimum days spent as 1 and the most days spent as 46 (Table 12). Additionally, we asked archery hunters to indicate whether their decision to participate in the spring 2025 turkey season influenced by the crossbow regulation change. 27% of respondents indicated yes, and 73% indicated no (Figure 29).

**Table 12. Spring 2025 archery hunters' mean and median number of days spent hunting using a crossbow, among those that use a crossbow.**

Mean (days)	SD	Median	Minimum	Maximum
6	6	5	1	46

**Figure 29. Percent of spring archery turkey hunters' who reported that they decided to participate in the spring 2025 season because of the change in crossbow regulation.**



**Figure 30. Percent of spring archery turkey hunters who harvested a turkey in Minnesota in 2025.**

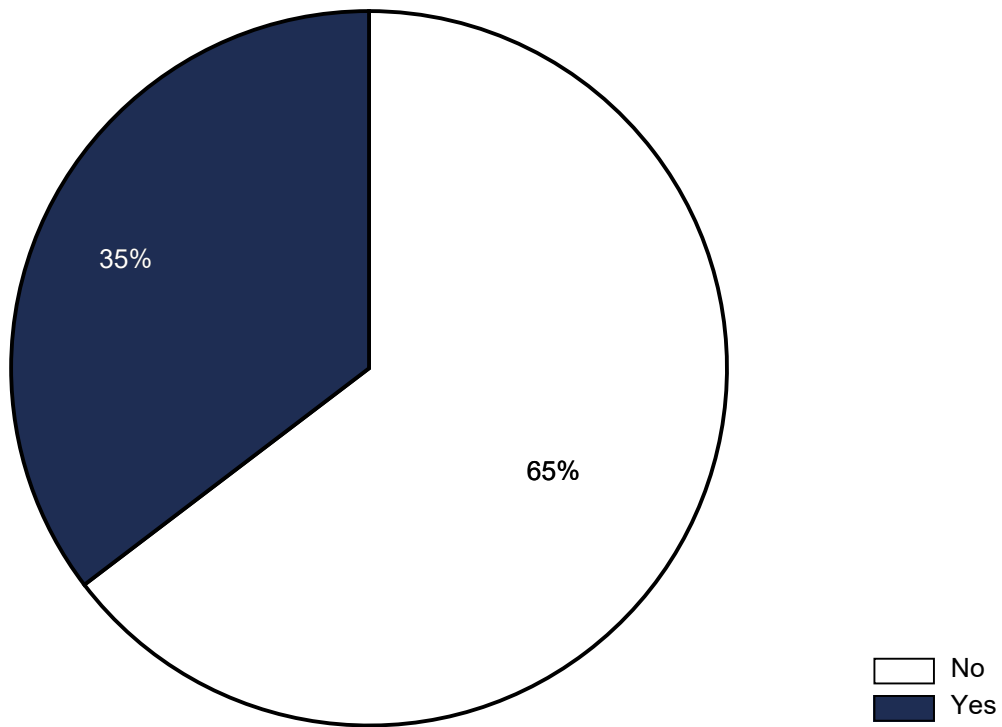
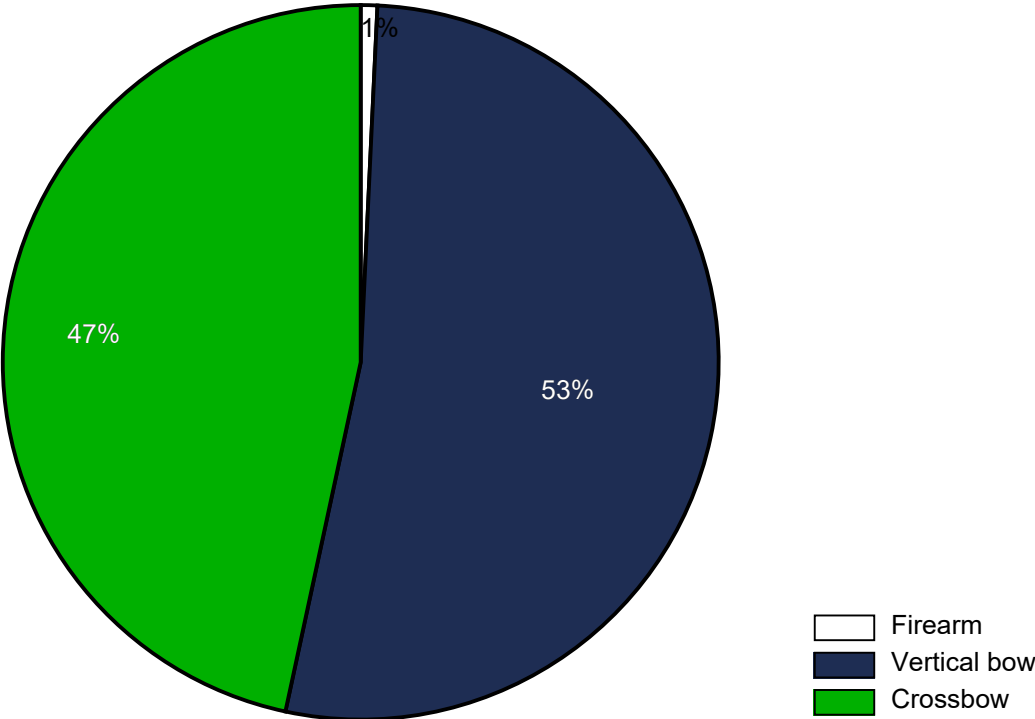
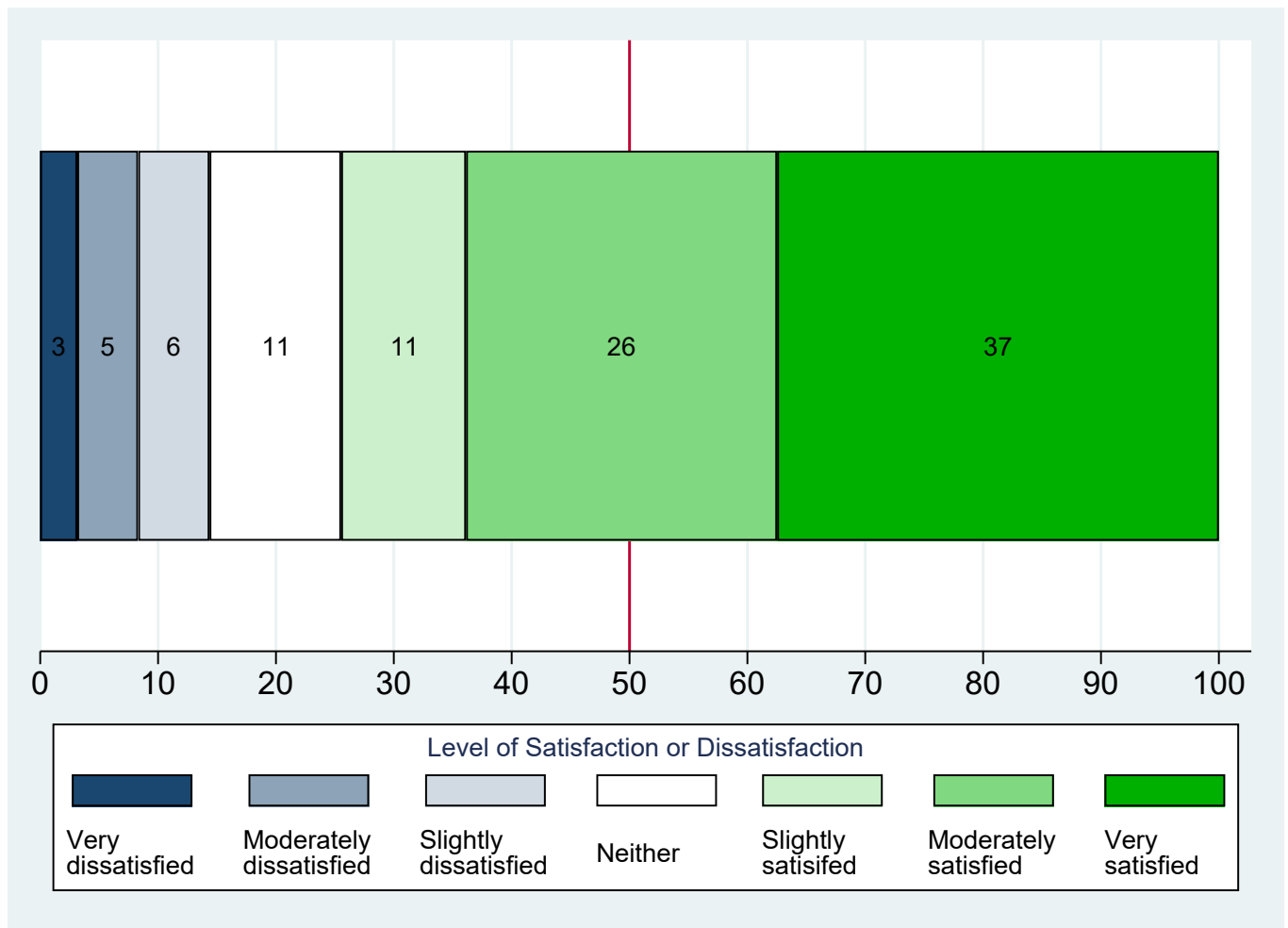


Figure 31. Percent of spring archery hunters who reported harvesting a turkey with a vertical bow, crossbow, and firearm, among those who harvested a turkey in Minnesota in 2025.

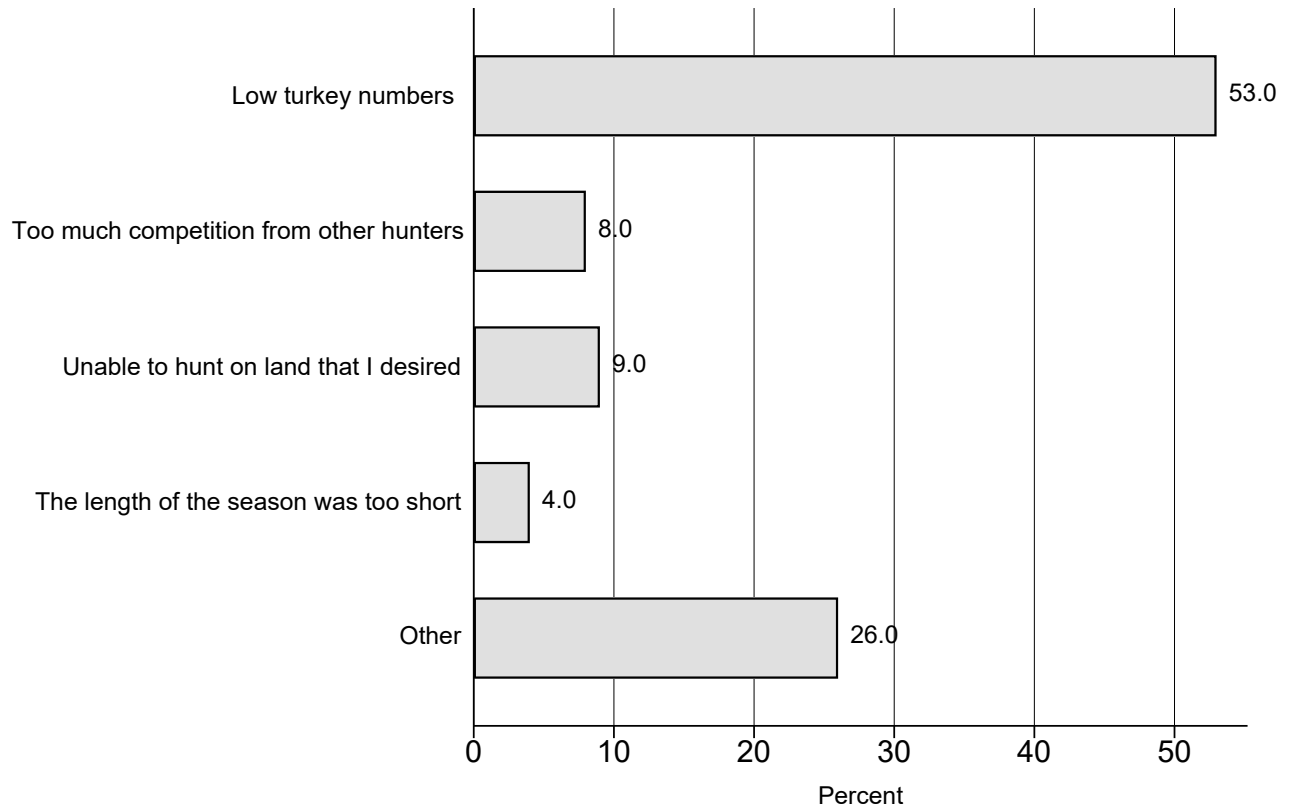


We asked spring archery turkey hunters to indicate their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the overall turkey season, as well as elements of turkey hunting. Most archery hunters (74%) expressed some level of satisfaction with the overall turkey season. Few (14%) expressed some level of dissatisfaction (Figure 32). Hunters who indicated they were dissatisfied with their turkey hunting season were asked to indicate the main reason why. Low turkey numbers (53%) was the main cause of dissatisfaction, followed by “other” (26%). Few hunters indicated that their dissatisfaction was from being unable to hunt on land they desired, the season was too short, or that there was too much competition from other hunters (Figure 33). Between 59% and 80% of spring archery hunters were some levels of satisfied with all elements of the spring turkey season. The number of turkeys seen had the most dissatisfaction (23%) of all elements of the spring turkey season. The number of other turkey hunters seen had the least dissatisfaction (10%). The length of the season had the highest satisfaction of all elements (80%) (Table 13).

**Figure 32. Spring archery turkey hunters’ overall satisfaction with the Spring 2025 turkey hunting season in Minnesota.**



**Figure 33. Spring archery turkey hunters’ reason for dissatisfaction with the spring 2025 turkey hunting season in Minnesota.**



**Table 13. Spring archery turkey hunters’ satisfaction or dissatisfaction with elements of the spring 2025 turkey hunting season in Minnesota.**

	Very dissatisfied	Moderately dissatisfied	Slightly dissatisfied	Neither	Slightly satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Very satisfied
Number of turkeys seen	5%	6%	12%	8%	15%	25%	28%
Chance to harvest a turkey	6%	7%	9%	11%	16%	21%	31%
Turkey hunting regulations	2%	4%	6%	23%	11%	26%	27%
Number of other turkey hunters seen	3%	2%	5%	32%	12%	17%	30%
Length of season	3%	3%	5%	11%	10%	19%	51%

We asked spring archery turkey hunters to indicate how difficult it was to locate a place to hunt, what type of land they hunted on, their perception of crowding while turkey hunting, and if they experienced any interference with their turkey hunting by another hunter. Most spring archery hunters found it relatively easy to find a place to hunt (69%) (Figure 34). Most hunters hunted on private land only (68%). 10% hunted on public land only and 23% hunted on a mixture of the two (Figure 35). Of those that indicated they hunted on public land exclusively or a mixture of public and private land, they were asked to indicate if their public land hunting was a result of being denied access to private land by a landowner. 25% indicated that yes, this was the case (Figure 36). Additionally, most hunters did not feel crowded, with the most frequent rating for crowding (61%) being a level 1 on a scale of 1 to 9 where 1 meant “not at all crowded” (Figure 37). The presence of other hunters did not prevent archery hunters from hunting in their preferred location, which a majority (68%) of hunters answering “not at all” to the question (Figure 38). Additionally, most hunters (91%) indicated that no, another hunter did not interfere with their chance at harvesting a turkey during the spring season (Figure 39).

**Figure 34. Spring archery turkey hunters’ ability to find a place to hunt.**

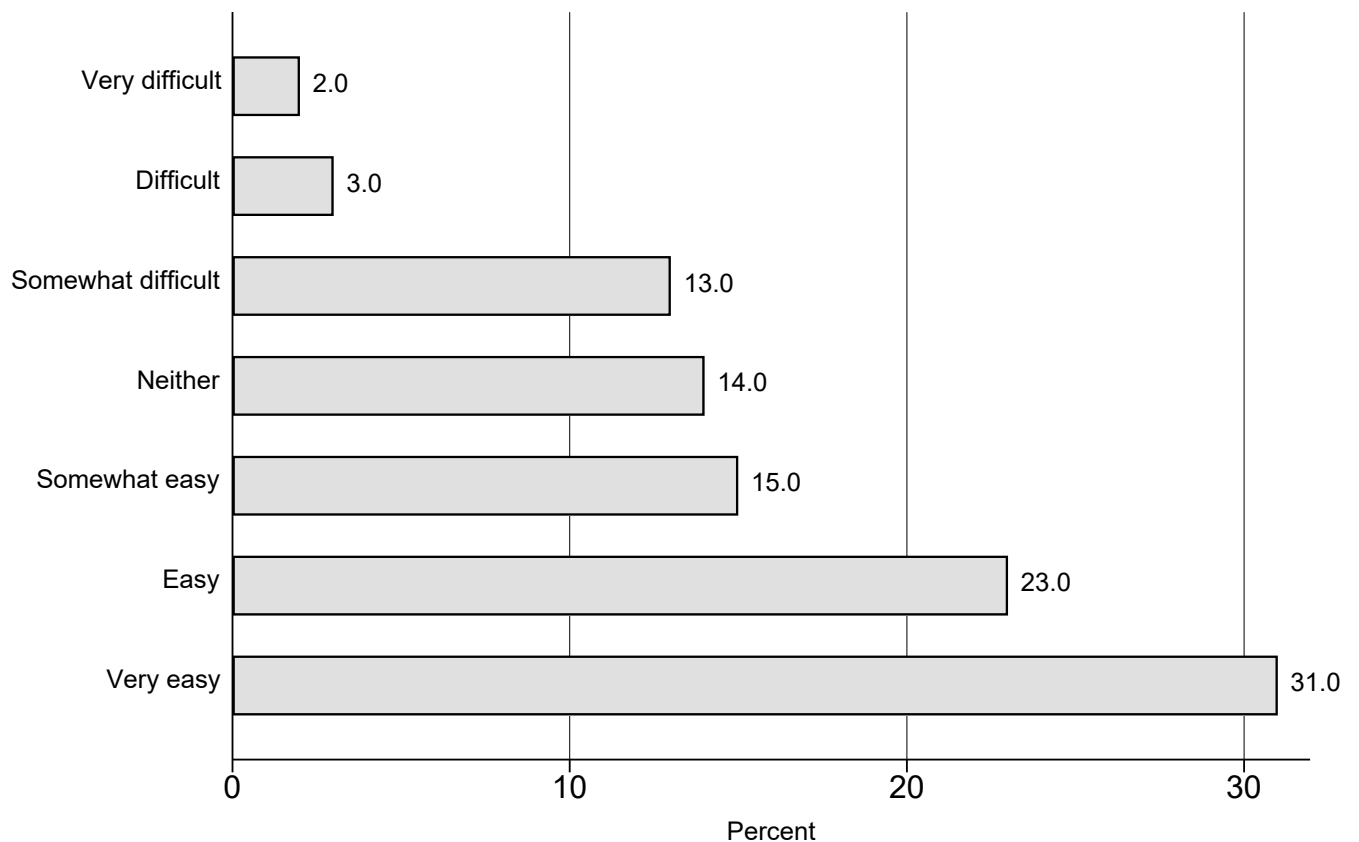


Figure 35. Spring archery turkey hunters' location of hunting by land type.

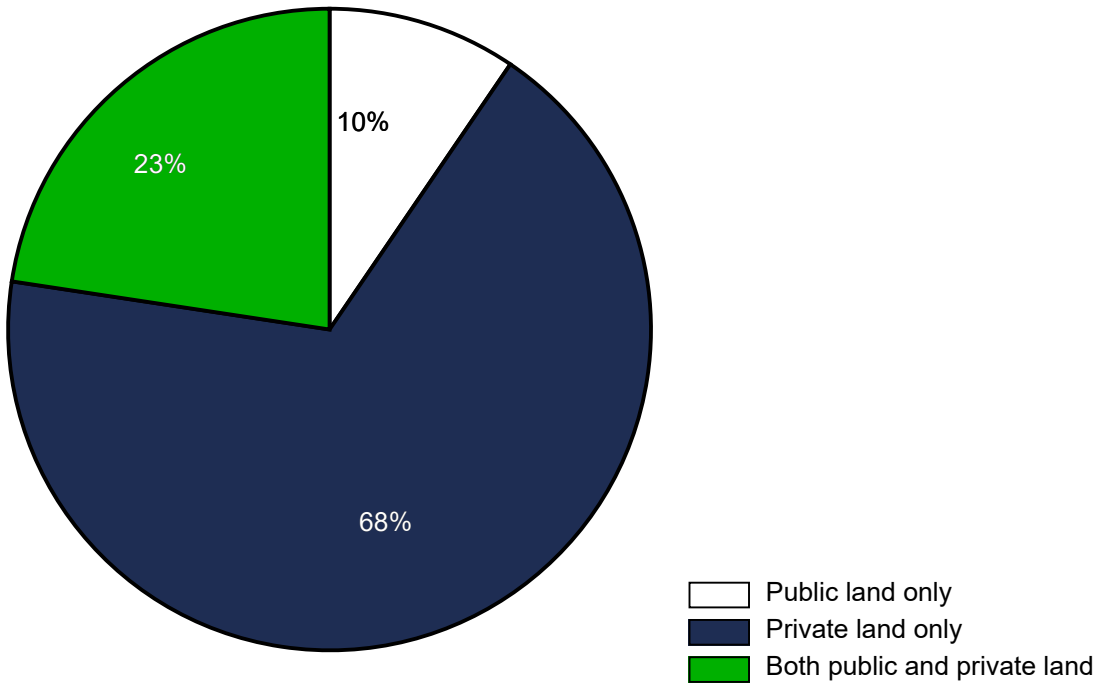
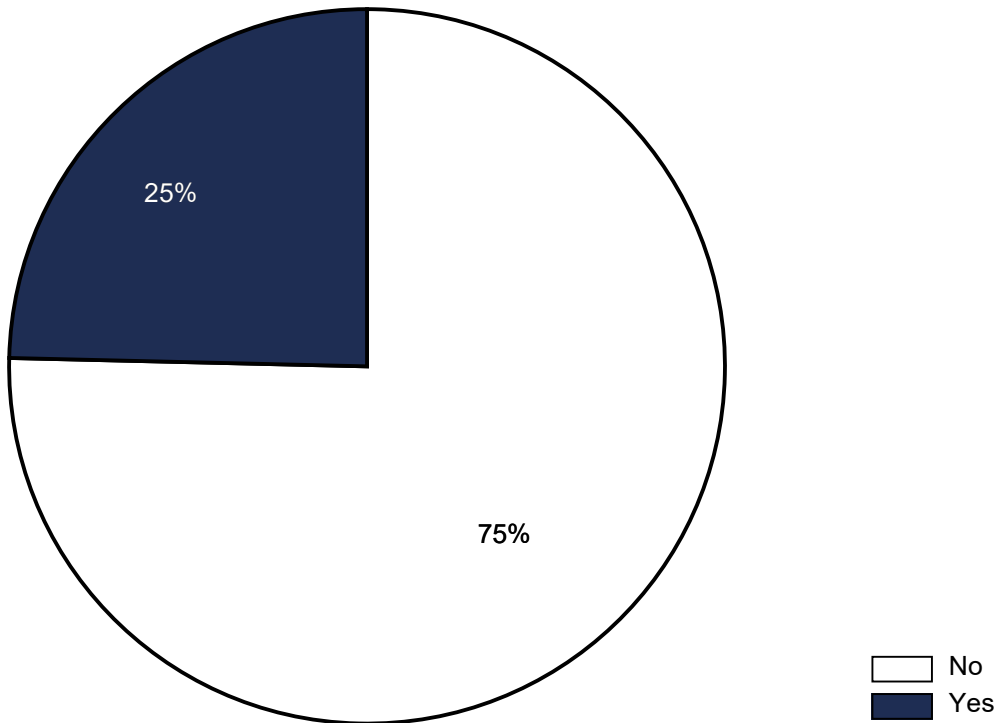
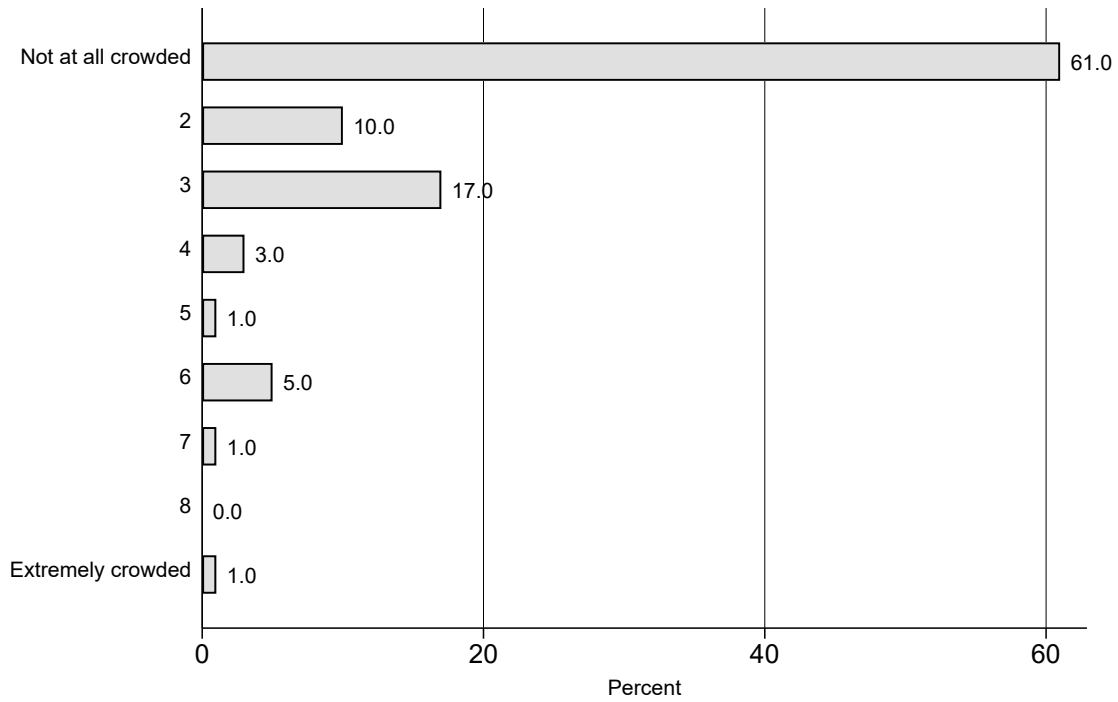


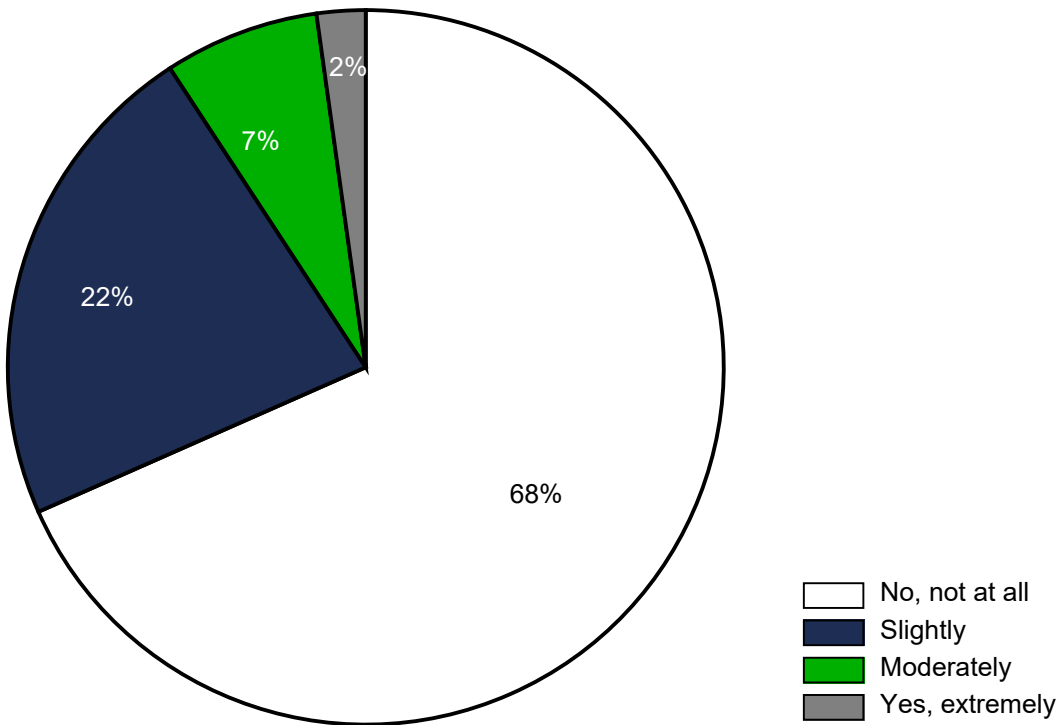
Figure 36. Spring archery turkey hunters' public land hunting due to denial of private land access.



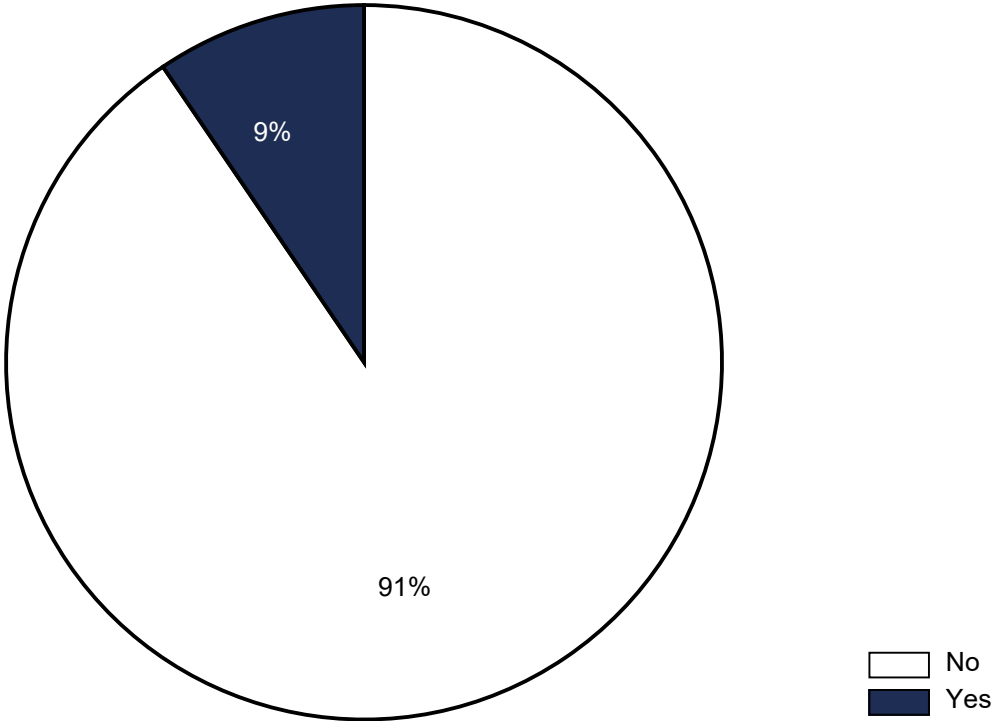
**Figure 37. Spring archery turkey hunters' perception of crowding.**



**Figure 38. Spring archery turkey hunters' perception that the presence of other hunters prevented them from hunting in their preferred location.**

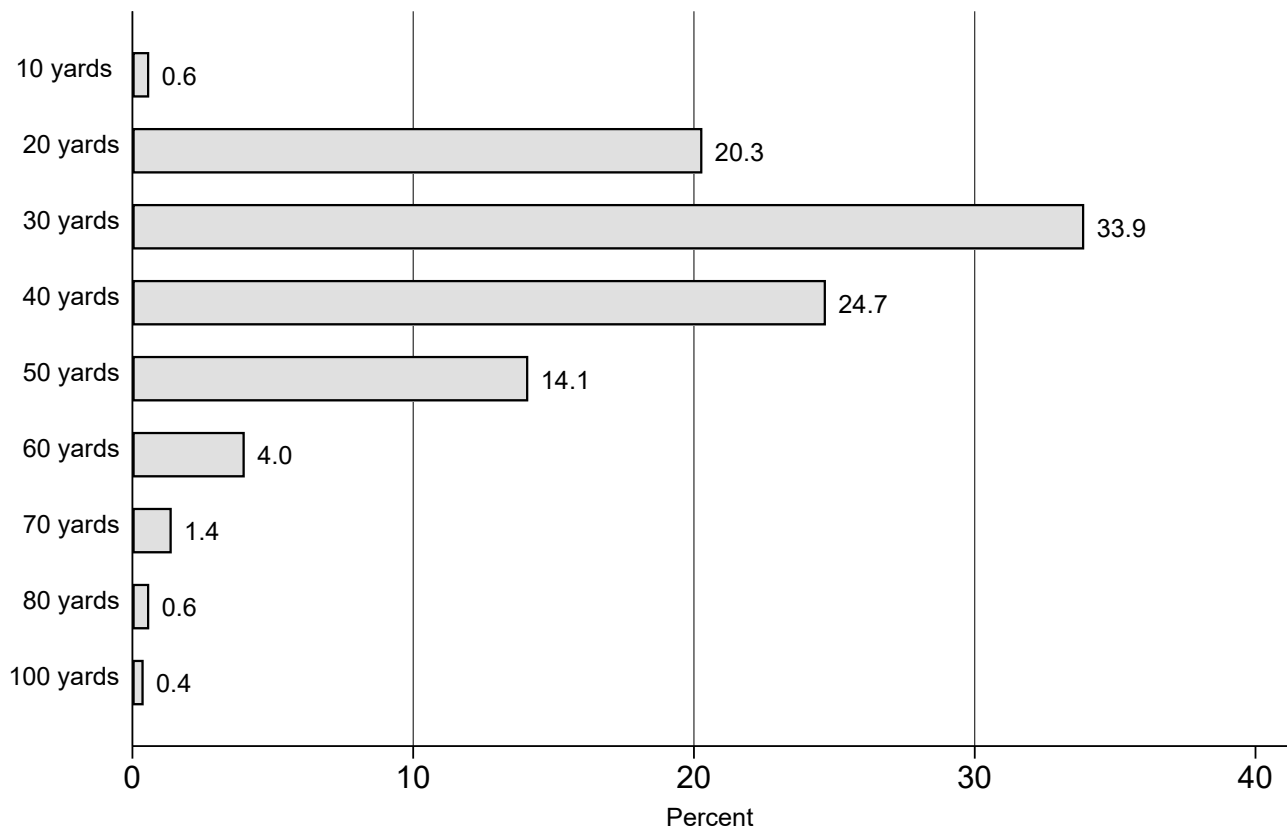


**Figure 39. Spring archery turkey hunters' perception that the presence of other hunters interfered with their chance to harvest a turkey.**

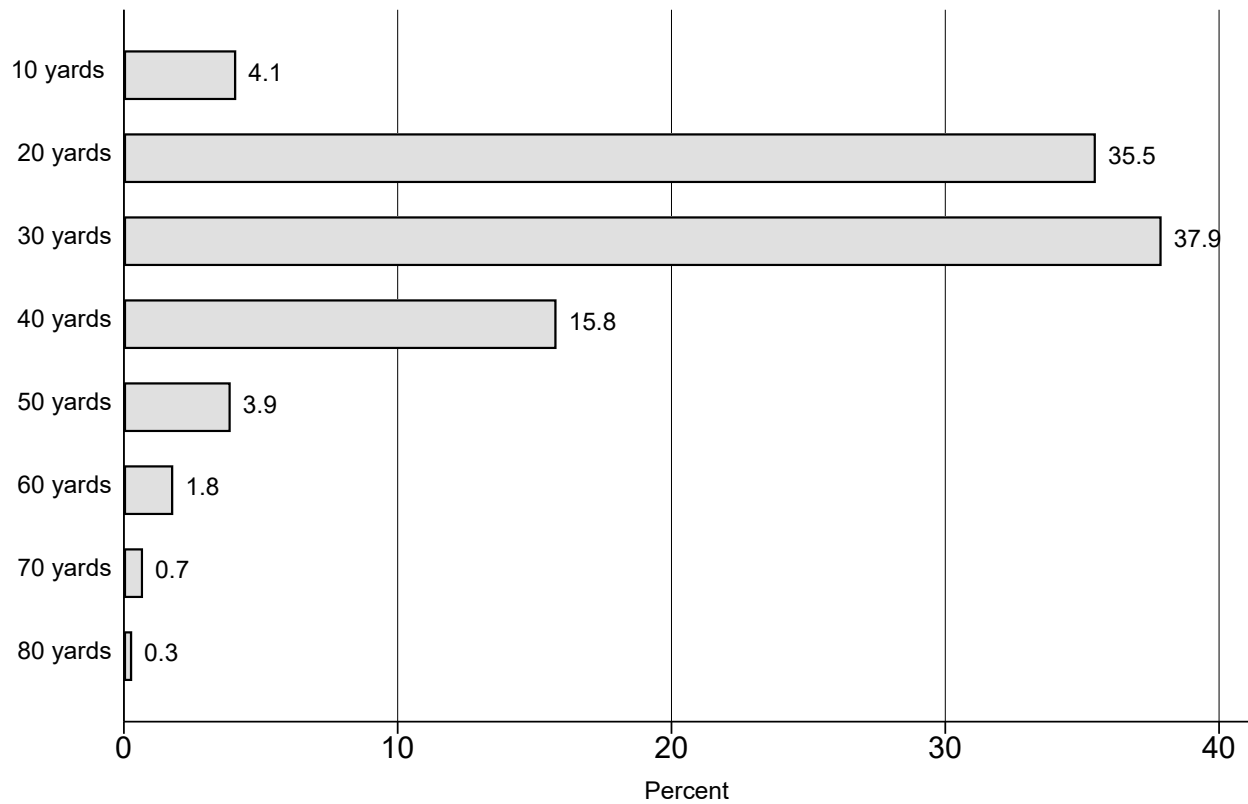


Spring turkey hunters, who indicated they used archery equipment during the spring 2025 season, were asked an additional set of questions regarding archery equipment use including the maximum distance they were comfortable shooting a turkey with a crossbow and a vertical bow, and if they had shot and missed or shot at and wounded any turkeys during the spring 2025 turkey season in Minnesota. The maximum distance a majority (33.9%) of spring archery hunters are comfortable shooting a turkey with a crossbow is 30 yards. The second majority maximum distance was 40 yards (24.7%), followed by 20 yards (20.3%) (Figure 40). The maximum distance spring archery hunters are comfortable shooting a turkey with a vertical bow is 30 yards (37.9%). This is followed closely by 20 yards (35.5%) (Figure 41). 22% of spring archery hunters shot at and missed a turkey with archery equipment during the spring 2025 season. Of those that shot at and missed a turkey, the mean number of turkeys missed was 1. 6% of turkey hunters wounded and did not recover a turkey with archery equipment during the spring 2025 season. Of those that wounded and did not recover a turkey, the mean number of turkeys wounded and not recovered was 1 (Table 14).

**Figure 40. Spring archery turkey hunters’ maximum shooting distance comfortability with a crossbow.**



**Figure 41. Spring archery turkey hunters' maximum shooting distance comfortability with a vertical bow.**



**Table 14. Spring archery turkey hunters missed shot and wounding loss.**

	Percent	Mean (SD)
Shot at and missed a turkey	22	1.3 (0.49)
Wounded and did not recover a turkey	6	1.1 (0.29)

## Comparison of spring firearm and archery hunters

Although firearm and archery hunters hunt concurrently during the spring season, they are two different groups of hunters with different hunting behaviors. However, many results paralleled one another across the questionnaire. For both archery and firearm hunters, TPAs 507, 508, and 501 were the most popular hunting locations. Both groups also had low use of permit areas 511 and 512. 53% of firearm hunters harvested a turkey, as opposed to 35% of archery hunters. Archery hunters spent slightly more time, on average, hunting (6 days) over firearm hunters (4 days). Satisfaction with the spring season was generally high for both groups. Firearm and archery hunters were both most dissatisfied with number of turkeys seen. However, firearm hunters were also dissatisfied with the length of the season and archery hunters were not. Both groups had similar patterns regarding land type used to hunt, with 68% of both groups using private land.

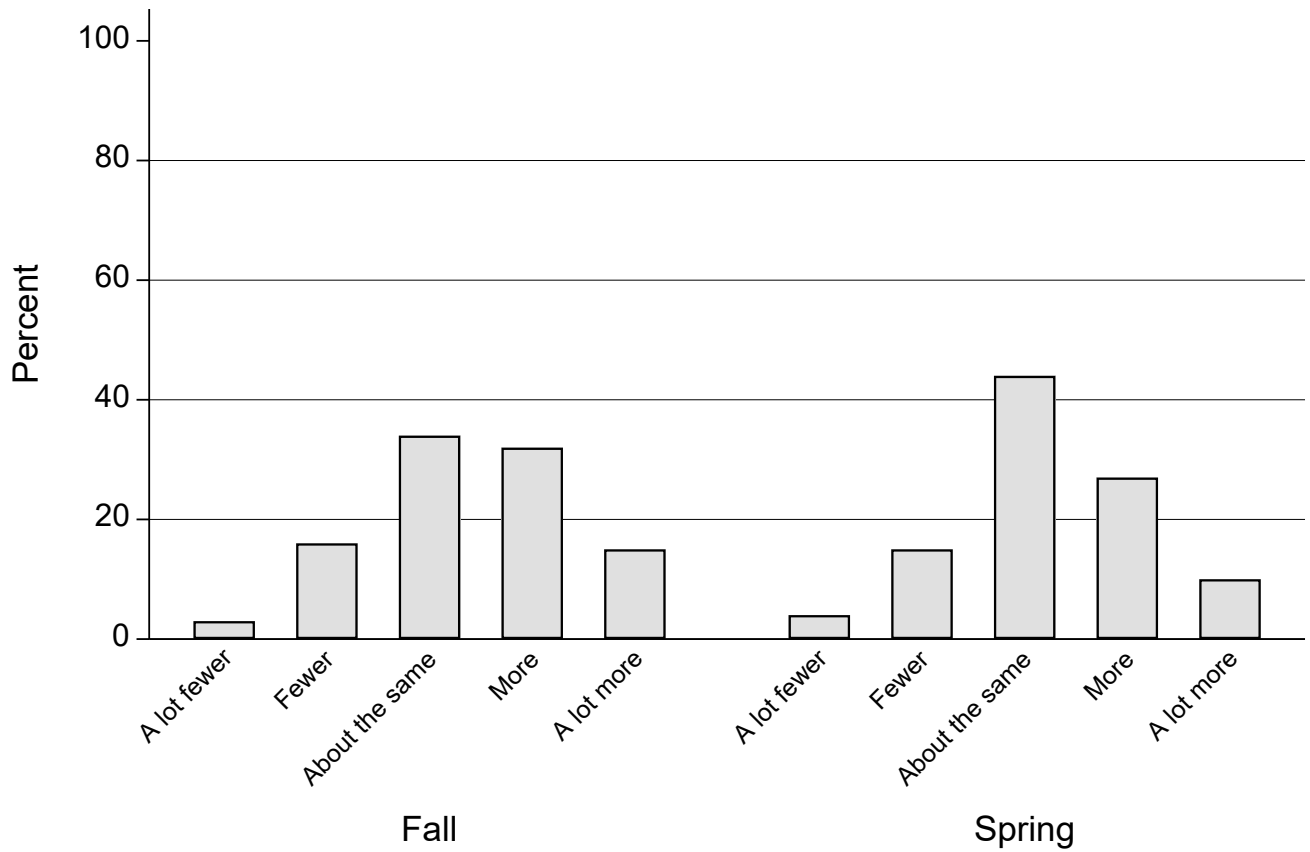
## Minnesota turkey populations and management

All turkey hunters were asked to respond to questions regarding turkey populations and management. Turkey hunters were asked to indicate the trend they have observed in the turkey population of their most hunted turkey permit area over the past 5 years. The majority response for each hunting group type (fall/spring archery/spring firearm/spring all) was “about the same” (33%-45%). The second most reported response for each group was “more” (27%-32%) (Figure 42, Table 15). Additionally, turkey hunters were asked to indicate their perception of the turkey population in the area they hunt most often. All hunting groups had a majority response of “about right” (61%-68%). However, despite their indication that the turkey population is about the same or increasing slightly, the second most common response amongst all groups was “too low” (19%-26%) (Figure 43, Table 16). In summary, turkey hunters believe that the turkey population is about the same or slightly increasing, and that the turkey population in the area they hunt is about right or too low.

**Table 15. Trend seen in the turkey population in the areas hunted most often by fall and spring turkey hunters.**

	A lot fewer	Fewer	About the same	More	A lot more
Fall	3%	16%	34%	32%	15%
Spring archery	5%	15%	41%	27%	12%
Spring firearm	4%	15%	45%	27%	9%
Spring all	4%	15%	44%	27%	10%

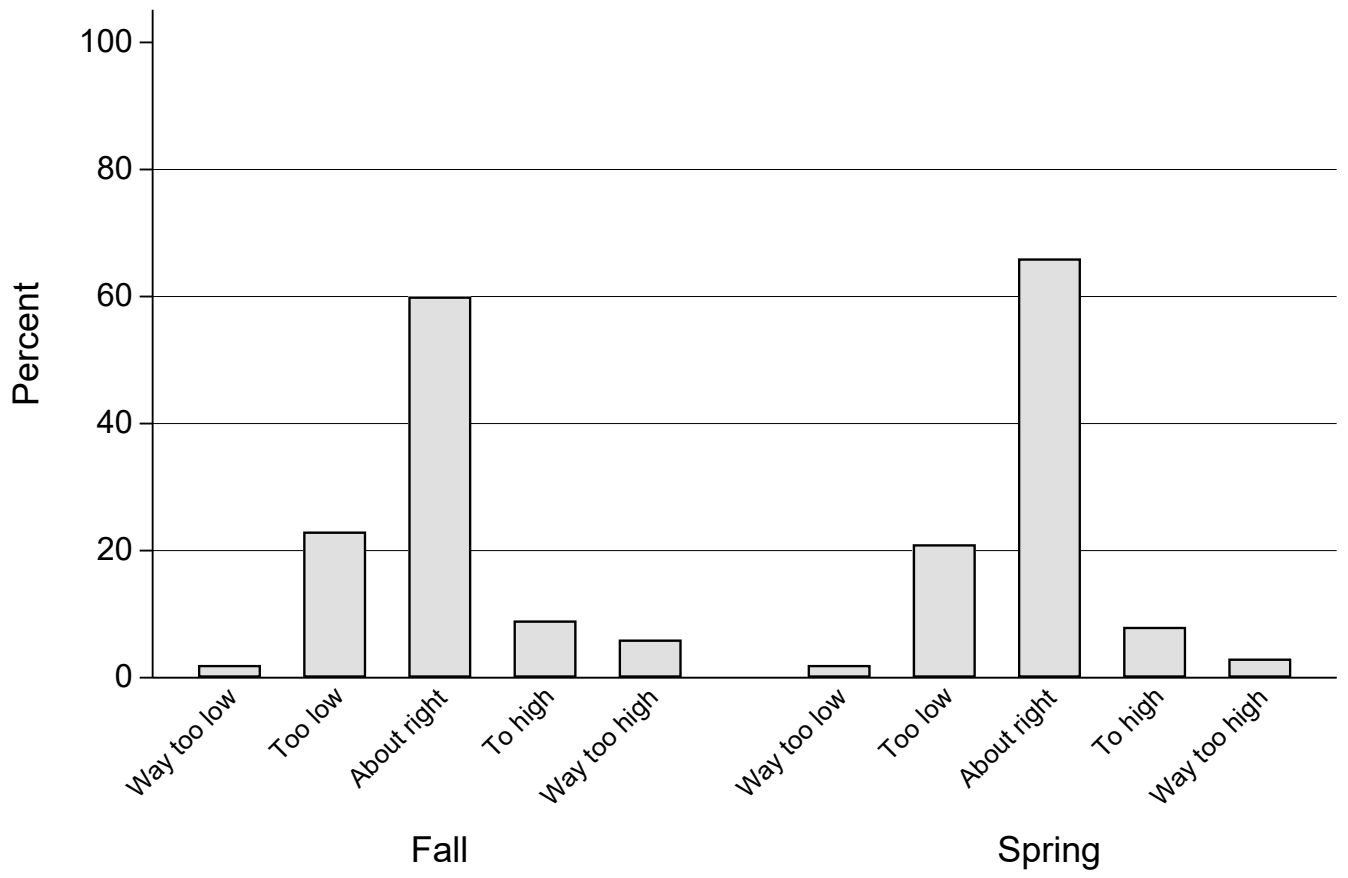
**Figure 42. Trend seen in the turkey population in the areas hunted most often by fall and spring turkey hunters.**



**Table 16. Perception of the turkey population in the areas hunted most often by fall and spring turkey hunters.**

	Way too low	Too low	About right	Too high	Way too high
Fall	2%	23%	60%	9%	6%
Spring archery	3%	26%	61%	6%	4%
Spring firearm	2%	19%	68%	8%	2%
Spring all	2%	21%	66%	8%	3%

**Figure 43. Perception of the turkey population in the areas hunted most often by fall and spring turkey hunters.**



The DNR is considering changes to the structure of the spring turkey season based on several objectives related to turkey hunting. When asked to indicate the importance of a variety of objects for the spring turkey season, turkey hunters across all groups (fall/spring archery/spring firearm/spring all) indicated that ensuring an abundance of turkeys (43%-46%) and maximizing the quality of the turkey hunting experience (40%-45%) was very important (Table 17, Table 21). Minimizing the complexity of turkey hunting regulations had the highest response of “not important at all” across all groups (13%-14%) (Table 20). The ability to estimate the turkey population status from harvest information had a fairly even split between “somewhat important,” “moderately important,” and “very important” (Table 18). Additionally, when asked to rank the same objectives from most to least important (with a 1 being the most important and a 5 being the least important), all turkey hunting groups ranked “ensuring an abundance of turkeys” as the most important objective. Fall turkey hunters found their second most important objective to be maximizing turkey hunting opportunity. However, spring archery and firearm hunters indicated their second most important objective was maximizing the quality of the turkey hunting experience. Minimizing the complexity of turkey hunting regulations was indicated as the least important objective across all groups (Table 22).

**Table 17. Fall 2024, Spring 2025, Spring firearm 2025, and Spring archery 2025 turkey hunters’ perception of the importance of objectives for the establishment of turkey hunting seasons in Minnesota: Ensuring an abundance of turkeys.**

	Not at all important	Slightly important	Somewhat important	Moderately important	Very important	Mean (SD)
Fall	3	4	21	28	43	4.1 (1.0)
Spring firearm	1	7	17	29	46	4.1 (1.0)
Spring archery	3	5	19	28	45	4.1 (1.0)
Spring (all)	2	6	17	29	46	4.1 (1.0)

**Table 18. Fall 2024, Spring 2025, Spring firearm 2025, and Spring archery 2025 turkey hunters’ perception of the importance of objectives for the establishment of turkey hunting seasons in Minnesota: The ability to estimate turkey population status from harvest information.**

	Not at all important	Slightly important	Somewhat important	Moderately important	Very important	Mean (SD)
Fall	5	9	29	29	28	3.6 (1.1)
Spring firearm	5	10	27	32	26	3.6 (1.1)

Spring archery	5	11	30	29	26	3.6 (1.1)
Spring (all)	5	11	28	31	26	3.6 (1.1)

**Table 19. Fall 2024, Spring 2025, Spring firearm 2025, and Spring archery 2025 turkey hunters' perception of the importance of objectives for the establishment of turkey hunting seasons in Minnesota: Maximizing turkey hunting opportunity.**

	Not at all important	Slightly important	Somewhat important	Moderately important	Very important	Mean (SD)
Fall	4	7	26	30	37	3.9 (1.1)
Spring firearm	4	10	24	28	34	3.8 (1.1)
Spring archery	5	8	27	30	30	3.7 (1.1)
Spring (all)	5	9	25	29	33	3.8 (1.1)

**Table 20. Fall 2024, Spring 2025, Spring firearm 2025, and Spring archery 2025 turkey hunters' perception of the importance of objectives for the establishment of turkey hunting seasons in Minnesota: Minimizing the complexity of turkey hunting regulations.**

	Not at all important	Slightly important	Somewhat important	Moderately important	Very important	Mean (SD)
Fall	14	14	21	24	27	3.4 (1.4)
Spring firearm	13	15	29	21	22	3.2 (1.3)
Spring archery	15	14	27	23	21	3.2 (1.3)
Spring (all)	14	15	28	22	22	3.2 (1.3)

**Table 21. Fall 2024, Spring 2025, Spring firearm 2025, and Spring archery 2025 turkey hunters' perception of the importance of objectives for the establishment of turkey hunting seasons in Minnesota: Maximizing the quality of the turkey hunting experience.**

	Not at all important	Slightly important	Somewhat important	Moderately important	Very important	Mean (SD)
Fall	2	6	19	29	44	4.1 (1.0)
Spring firearm	2	5	19	29	45	4.1 (1.0)
Spring archery	1	5	23	32	40	4.0 (1.0)
Spring (all)	1	5	20	30	43	4.1 (1.0)

**Table 22. Turkey hunters' mean ranking of importance of spring turkey season objectives.**

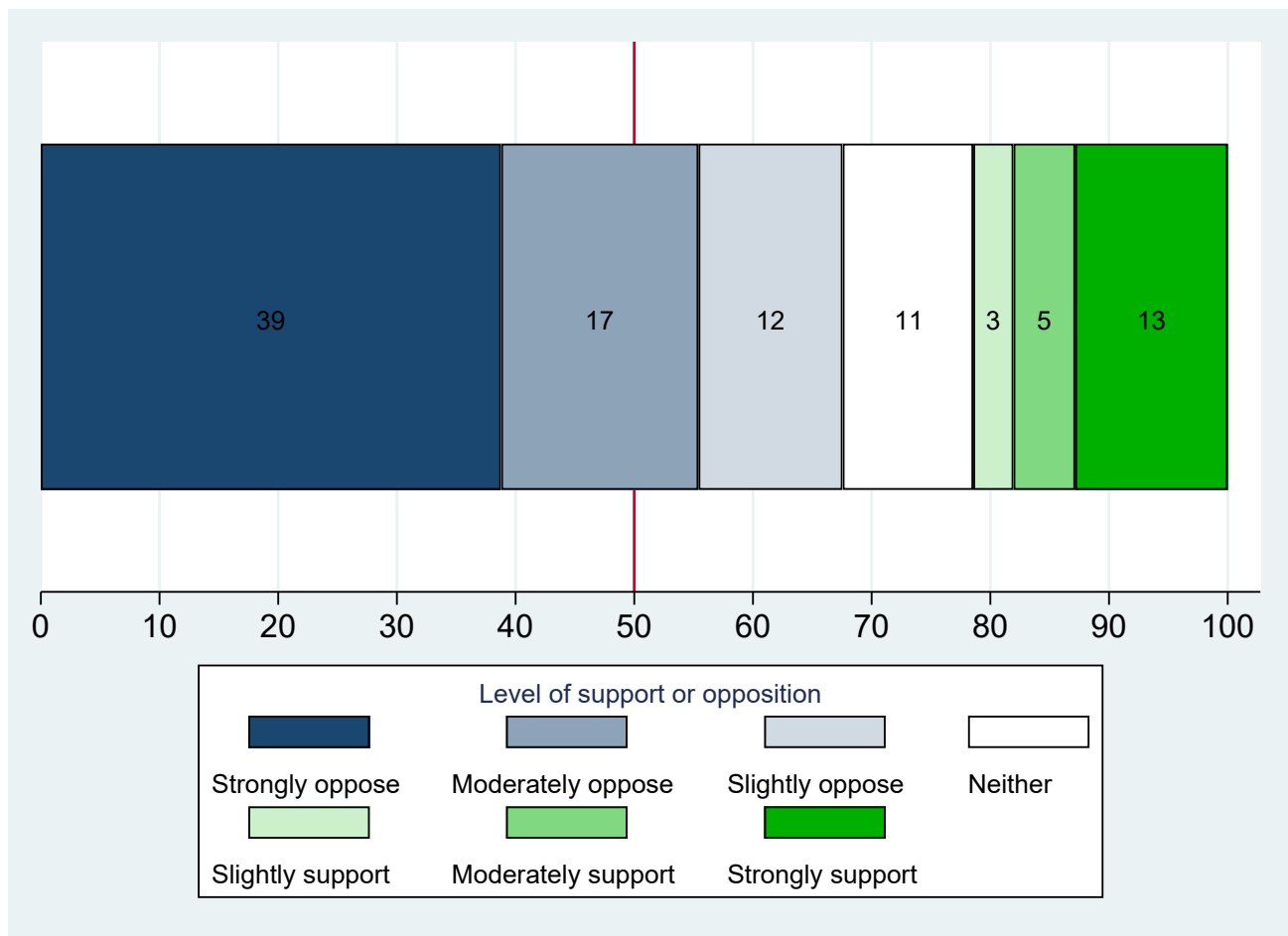
Objective	Fall ( $\bar{x}$ )	Spring Archery ( $\bar{x}$ )	Spring Firearm ( $\bar{x}$ )	Spring all ( $\bar{x}$ )
Ensuring an abundance of turkeys.	2.0	1.8	1.9	1.9
The ability to estimate turkey population status from harvest information.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5
Maximizing turkey hunting opportunity.	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.9
Minimizing the complexity of turkey hunting regulations.	3.9	3.9	4.1	4.0
Maximizing the quality of the turkey hunting experience.	2.9	2.9	2.7	2.7

## Preferences for fall and spring turkey season regulations and designs

### Fall bearded bird only

Currently, fall turkey hunters can harvest a bird of either sex in Minnesota. We asked Fall 2024 turkey hunters to indicate their support or opposition to limiting fall harvest to bearded birds only. Most respondents (68%) expressed some level of opposition (slight, moderate, or strong) to making a regulation change that would limit fall harvest to bearded birds only (Figure 44). Less than a quarter of hunters supported the change.

**Figure 44. Fall turkey hunters' support or opposition to limiting the fall turkey harvest to bearded birds only.**



### Fall season structure

We asked fall 2024 turkey hunters to consider three hypothetical season dates and lengths for the fall turkey hunting season and rank them in order of their most to least preferred. The most preferred season structure was the Saturday nearest September 16<sup>th</sup> (small game opener) and finish on the last day in November (approximately a 75-day season), with the highest percentage of respondents ranking it as their first choice (43%). However, 44% of fall turkey hunters also ranked this option as their least preferred (3<sup>rd</sup>) choice. The

choice that received both a majority high ranking and minority low ranking was the Saturday nearest September 16<sup>th</sup> (small game opener) and finish on the last day in October (approximately a 45-day season). The least preferred season structure was the Saturday nearest October 1<sup>st</sup> and open for 30 days, with the lowest percentage of respondents ranking it as their first choice (25%) and 46% ranking it as their third choice (Table 23).

**Table 23. Fall turkey hunters’ ranking of season structure for the fall season. Only fall hunters responded to this question.**

Season Structure	First Choice	Second choice	Third Choice
Saturday nearest October 1 <sup>st</sup> and open for 30 days	25%	30%	46%
Saturday nearest September 16 <sup>th</sup> (small game opener) and finish on the last day in October (approximately a 45-day season)	32%	58%	10%
Saturday nearest September 16 <sup>th</sup> (small game opener) and finish on the last day in November (approximately a 75-day season)	43%	13%	44%

**Youth tag**

Currently, youth may participate in any spring season (A,B,C,D,E, and F). We asked hunters their support or opposition to a proposal that would create a youth specific season prior to the spring opener, and subsequently require youth to purchase a tag for a single spring season (A,B,C,D,E, and F) should they choose to participate. All hunting groups showed more levels of opposition (57%-59%) to this regulation change than levels of support (23%-24%). Approximately one fifth of each group indicated they neither supported nor opposed the youth specific season proposal (Table 24).

**Table 24. Turkey hunters’ support or opposition to creating a youth specific season.**

Hunting Group	Strongly oppose	Moderately oppose	Slightly oppose	Neither	Slightly support	Moderately support	Strongly support
Fall	33%	16%	6%	22%	4%	8%	11%
Spring Archery	39%	12%	8%	18%	5%	8%	11%
Spring Firearm	35%	16%	8%	18%	6%	8%	10%
Spring all	36%	15%	8%	18%	6%	8%	10%

## Eliminating the spring archery tag

Currently, archery hunters may hunt during any spring season (A,B,C,D,E, and F). Some express concerns about equity and increased harvest given that crossbows are now allowed for all during archery seasons for turkey. We asked all turkey hunters their support or opposition to eliminating the spring turkey archery license and requiring that archery hunters purchase a license for a specific turkey season like firearms hunters. 83% of spring archery hunters strongly opposed this proposal. 45% of fall hunters strongly opposed this proposal. The strongest preference of spring firearm hunters was strongly opposed (24%), followed by neither support nor oppose (23%). Across all groups, the sentiment appears to be opposition or neutrality, as opposed to support (Table 25).

**Table 25. Turkey hunters’ support or opposition to eliminating the spring archery tag.**

Hunting Group	Strongly oppose	Moderately oppose	Slightly oppose	Neither	Slightly support	Moderately support	Strongly support
Fall	45%	6%	7%	16%	7%	5%	14%
Spring Archery	83%	6%	3%	3%	1%	1%	3%
Spring Firearm	24%	11%	7%	23%	8%	10%	18%
Spring all	42%	9%	6%	17%	6%	7%	14%

## Reduction of number of permit areas

There are currently 12 turkey permit areas in Minnesota. Some desire to reduce this number to aid in population monitoring and estimation and reduce regulatory complexity. We asked hunters their support or opposition to reducing the number of turkey permit areas from 12 to 5. A plurality of hunters regardless of season or weapon type, neither supported nor opposed the regulation change (43%-48%). More hunters supported the change (30%-36%) than opposed (17%-19%) (Table 26).

**Table 26. Turkey hunters’ support or opposition to reducing the number of permit areas from 12 to 5.**

Hunting Group	Strongly oppose	Moderately oppose	Slightly oppose	Neither	Slightly support	Moderately support	Strongly support
Fall	8%	6%	3%	43%	10%	13%	17%
Spring Archery	6%	7%	6%	48%	11%	12%	11%

Spring Firearm	7%	6%	6%	44%	12%	14%	10%
Spring all	7%	6%	6%	46%	11%	14%	10%

### Requiring tags to be permit area specific

Currently, turkey licenses are valid statewide, unless for lottery hunts in specific locations. This flexibility confounds efforts to monitor turkey populations as effort in permit areas is not known. We asked hunters their support or opposition to requiring hunters to purchase a turkey tag specific to a turkey permit area. Across all groups, there was more opposition (51%-59%) than support (25%-30%) for this proposal. Slightly less than one fifth of each group neither supported nor opposed the proposal (15%-18%) (Table 27).

**Table 27. Turkey hunters’ support or opposition to requiring hunters to purchase a turkey tag specific to a turkey permit area.**

Hunting Group	Strongly oppose	Moderately oppose	Slightly oppose	Neither	Slightly support	Moderately support	Strongly support
Fall	31%	10%	13%	15%	9%	9%	12%
Spring Archery	41%	9%	9%	16%	9%	9%	7%
Spring Firearm	27%	15%	9%	18%	10%	12%	8%

### Second tag availability

Currently, hunters may only purchase one tag per season. We asked hunters their support or opposition to offering turkey hunters the opportunity to purchase a second tag a) anytime during the season, and b) in the season (e.g., F). Across all hunting groups, there was more support (50%-60%) than opposition (31%-36%) to offering the opportunity to purchase a second tag at any time during the spring season (Table 28). The same trend held true for offering the opportunity to purchase a second tag during the last season of the spring season. There was more support across all groups (44%-49%) than opposition (33%-37%). However, support was slightly lower for this second tag opportunity than the opportunity to purchase a second tag during any season in the spring season and neutrality was slightly higher (Table 29). Both second tag options have more support than opposition across all groups. Offering a second tag during any season in the spring season had more support than only during the last season in the spring season.

**Table 28. Turkey hunters’ support or opposition to offering turkey hunters the opportunity to purchase a second tag in any season of spring season.**

Hunting Group	Strongly oppose	Moderately oppose	Slightly oppose	Neither	Slightly support	Moderately support	Strongly support
Fall	19%	5%	7%	10%	13%	15%	32%
Spring Archery	23%	7%	6%	13%	13%	12%	25%
Spring firearm	18%	7%	7%	10%	14%	16%	27%
Spring all	20%	7%	7%	11%	14%	15%	27%

**Table 29. Turkey hunters’ support or opposition to offering turkey hunters the opportunity to purchase a second tag in the last season of the spring season.**

Hunting Group	Strongly oppose	Moderately oppose	Slightly oppose	Neither	Slightly support	Moderately support	Strongly support
Fall	22%	5%	9%	15%	15%	15%	19%
Spring archery	22%	6%	9%	20%	16%	13%	15%
Spring firearm	18%	7%	8%	19%	15%	16%	17%
Spring all	19%	7%	8%	20%	15%	15%	16%

### Adjusting the spring season start date

Some hunters have expressed concerns about spring turkey hunting activity occurring during the peak of turkey hen egg laying and incubation. In addition, the harvesting of dominant males during peak breeding may delay breeding, which can result in reduced reproduction. We asked hunters their support or opposition to moving the start of the spring turkey season one week later to the Wednesday nearest April 22<sup>nd</sup> to help avoid this. Among fall hunters, there was slightly more overall support (39%) than opposition (37%). The opposite was true of spring archery and firearm hunters who expressed more overall opposition (45% respectively) than support (30% and 35% respectively). About one fourth of each group expressed neither support nor opposition to the proposal (22%-27%). Of those that hunt in spring, there is more opposition than support for this proposal change (Table 30).

**Table 30. Turkey hunters’ support or opposition to moving the start of the spring turkey season one week later to the Wednesday nearest April 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

Hunting Group	Strongly oppose	Moderately oppose	Slightly oppose	Neither	Slightly support	Moderately support	Strongly support
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Fall	20%	8%	6%	27%	9%	13%	17%
Spring Archery	24%	10%	11%	26%	11%	10%	9%
Spring Firearm	21%	13%	11%	22%	12%	12%	11%
Spring all	22%	12%	11%	23%	11%	11%	10%

### Spring turkey hunting season structure preference

We asked turkey hunters about their preferences for 3 alternative spring season structures under two different scenarios 1) with an opening day of the Wednesday nearest April 15<sup>th</sup>, and 2) an opening day of the Wednesday nearest April 22<sup>nd</sup>. The 3 season structures were 1) 6, 7-day seasons (A,B,C,D,E,F) – current structure, 2) 3, 14-day seasons (A,B,C), and 3) 2, 7-day seasons (A,B) and 2 14-day seasons (C,D). Turkey hunters ranked the 3 structures from 1 to 3 for each scenario, where 1 = most preferred, and 3 = least preferred. For each season structure in each scenario, we report the proportion that selected each season structure as their first, second and third most preferred, and the mean ranking. The smaller the mean ranking, the higher relative preference hunters expressed for that season structure under that scenario. We present estimates for fall, spring firearm, spring archery, and all spring hunters in Table 31 for an April 15<sup>th</sup> start date, and Table 32 for an April 22<sup>nd</sup> start date.

Regarding a season start date of the Wednesday nearest April 15<sup>th</sup>, similar proportions (~40%) of firearm, archery and all spring hunters selected the 6, 7-day season, and the 3, 14-day season structures as their most preferred. Mean rankings for firearm, archery, and all spring hunters slightly favored the status quo 6, 7-day structure. Fall hunters, however, slightly preferred the 3, 14-day structure over the status quo. The 2,7-day, and 2-14-day structure was clearly the least preferred among the 3 for the April 15<sup>th</sup> start date scenario (Table 31.)

Regarding a season start date of April of the Wednesday nearest April 22<sup>nd</sup>, a plurality of fall, spring firearm and archery, and all spring hunters selected the 3, 14-day season structure as their most preferred. This option was also the lowest mean ranked of the three for all hunters. Again, the 2,7-day and 2,-14 day structure was the least preferred (Table 32).

**Table 31. Turkey hunters’ most and least preferred season structure if the spring season started on the Wednesday nearest April 15<sup>th</sup>.**

Season Structure	Fall (Rank 1/Rank 2/Rank 3)	Spring Firearm (Rank 1/ Rank 2/Rank 3)	Spring Archery (Rank 1/ Rank 2/ Rank 3)	Spring all (Rank 1/ Rank 2/Rank 3)
6, 7-day seasons (A,B,C,D,E,F) – current structure	36%/30%/34%	44%/27%/28%	44%/28%/28%	44%/27%/29%
Mean rank	1.98 (0.84)	1.84 (0.84)	1.85 (0.84)	1.84 (0.84)
3, 14-day seasons (A,B,C)	47%/23%/30%	40%/25%/35%	43%/28%/29%	41%/25%/34%
Mean rank	1.82 (0.86)	1.95 (0.87)	1.86 (0.84)	1.93 (0.86)
2, 7-day seasons (A,B) and 2 14-day seasons (C,D)	17%/47%/36%	15%/38%/36%	14%/45%/42%	15%/47%/38%
Mean rank	2.19 (0.70)	2.21 (0.69)	2.28 (0.68)	2.23 (0.69)

**Table 32. Turkey hunters’ most and least preferred season structure if the spring season started on the Wednesday nearest April 22<sup>nd</sup>.**

Season Structure	Fall (Rank 1/Rank 2/Rank 3)	Spring Firearm (Rank 1/ Rank 2/Rank 3)	Spring Archery (Rank 1/ Rank 2/ Rank 3)	Spring all (Rank 1/ Rank 2/Rank 3)
6, 7-day seasons (A,B,C,D,E,F,) – current structure	36%/30%/34%	38%/29%/33%	39%/27%/34%	38%/28%/33%
Mean rank	1.99 (0.84)	1.95 (0.84)	1.96 (0.85)	1.95 (0.85)
3, 14-day seasons (A,B,C)	50%/24%/27%	45%/19%/36%	47%/25%/27%	46%/21%/33%
Mean rank	1.76 (0.84)	1.90 (0.89)	1.79 (0.84)	1.87 (0.88)
2, 7-day seasons (A,B) and 2 14-day seasons (C,D)	15%/46%/39%	17%/52%/32%	14%/48%/39%	16%/51%/34%
Mean rank	2.25 (0.69)	2.15 (0.68)	2.25 (0.68)	2.18 (0.68)

## Turkey hunters’ beliefs about crossbows

We asked turkey hunters to report their agreement or disagreement with four statements regarding crossbow use in turkey hunting. Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed that being able to use a crossbow is attracting new hunters that would not otherwise hunt. All hunting groups (fall, spring archery, spring firearm) indicated more agreement (43%-56%) than disagreement (21%-30%) (Table 33). A majority of fall hunters (48%) and spring archery hunters (52%) agreed that crossbows are a good way to introduce youth to hunting turkey. Spring firearm hunters were split on the issue, with 38% disagreeing and 37% agreeing (Table 34). All hunting groups disagreed (36%-47%) that they are more likely to continue hunting in the future because crossbows have been made legal for all hunters. However, fall and spring archery hunters were nearly split on the issue, with 34% and 36% agreeing on the statement (Table 35). Fall and spring archery hunters agreed (43% and 50% respectively) that hunters hunted more days during the 2025 Minnesota spring turkey season because they could use a crossbow. However, fall hunters were nearly split between agreement and neutrality (40%) on the issue. Spring firearm hunters neither agreed nor disagreed on the issue (42%) (Table 36). When asked to rate the impact of crossbow availability of their spring 2025 turkey season, all hunter groups expressed a majority neutrality (42%-76%). However, spring archery hunters had a near split with overall positivity (38%) (Table 37).

Overall, fall hunters agree that crossbows attract new hunters, are a good way to introduce youth to turkey hunting, and that hunters hunted more days during the 2025 Minnesota spring turkey season because they could use a crossbow. They are split in agreement and disagreement about whether they are more likely to

continue turkey hunting in the future because crossbows have been made legal to use for all hunters and overall expressed neutrality on the impact on their spring turkey season. Spring archery hunters' crossbow attitudes mirror those of fall hunters, except they lean neutral to positive on the impact of crossbows on their spring 2025 turkey season. Spring firearm hunters' attitudes vary slightly from fall and spring archery hunters. Spring firearm hunters are less likely to continue hunting turkey in the future because crossbows have been made legal to use for all hunters. They are also more split on whether it is a good way to introduce youth to turkey hunting and are neutral when asked if hunters hunted more days during the 2025 Minnesota spring turkey season because they could use a crossbow. They are a majority neutral regarding the impact of crossbows in their spring 2025 turkey season.

**Table 33. Being able to use a crossbow is attracting new hunters that would not hunt otherwise.**

Hunting group	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
Fall	10%	5%	6%	22%	19%	16%	20%
Spring archery	14%	6%	8%	16%	21%	13%	22%
Spring firearm	12%	8%	10%	26%	20%	12%	11%

**Table 34. Crossbows are a good way to introduce youth to hunting turkey.**

Hunting group	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
Fall	15%	6%	9%	22%	17%	12%	19%
Spring archery	18%	8%	8%	15%	19%	12%	21%
Spring firearm	18%	9%	11%	23%	18%	10%	9%

**Table 35. I am more likely to continue turkey hunting in the future because crossbows have been made legal to use for all hunters.**

Hunting group	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
Fall	26%	6%	4%	30%	7%	8%	19%
Spring archery	31%	7%	3%	21%	7%	8%	21%
Spring firearm	32%	10%	5%	33%	7%	5%	8%

**Table 36. Hunters hunted more days during the 2025 Minnesota spring turkey season because they could use a crossbow.**

Hunting group	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
Fall	11%	3%	4%	40%	17%	10%	16%
Spring archery	12%	5%	5%	28%	17%	14%	19%
Spring firearm	12%	7%	7%	42%	16%	7%	10%

**Table 37. Turkey hunters' experience with crossbows influences on their spring 2025 turkey season.**

	Very negative	Negative	Somewhat negative	Neutral	Somewhat positive	Positive	Very positive
Fall	7%	3%	5%	59%	3%	7%	15%
Spring Archery	8%	6%	6%	42%	5%	13%	20%
Spring firearm	7%	4%	5%	76%	2%	4%	2%

## Trust in the MNDNR

We asked turkey hunters their agreement or disagreement with six statements regarding their trust in the MNDNR to manage Minnesota turkeys. All hunter groups generally agree that the MNDNR does a good job at managing wild turkey in Minnesota, the MNDNR is open and honest in the things they do and say, and the MNDNR can be trusted to make decisions about turkey management that are good for the resource (Table 38, Table 39, Table 40). All groups also expressed a majority of moderate agreement that the MNDNR will make decisions about turkey management in a way that is fair, has biologists and wildlife managers who are well trained to do their jobs, and listens to Minnesota turkey hunters' concerns (Table 41, Table 42, Table 43). One outlier to this overall trust in the DNR is that approximately 25% of spring archery hunters expressed some level of disagreement that the MNDNR can be trusted to make decisions about turkey management that are good for the resource and that the MNDNR is open and honest about the things they do and say (Table 40 and Table 39). Table 44 and Figure 45 depict an overall trust index by hunting group and overall, with the Minnesota DNR. The number 4 reflects a neutral trust in the DNR. Fall turkey hunters have slight to moderate trust in the MNDNR (5.01). This is the same as spring archery (4.68) and spring firearm (4.97) hunters. The entire respondent pool had a trust index of 4.89, indicate slight to moderate trust in the DNR to manage turkey.

**Table 38. The Minnesota DNR does a good job of managing wild turkey in Minnesota.**

Hunting group	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
Fall	2%	4%	7%	22%	15%	38%	13%
Spring Archery	4%	4%	9%	24%	18%	33%	9%
Spring firearm	3%	4%	6%	18%	18%	41%	11%
Spring all	3%	4%	7%	20%	18%	38%	10%

**Table 39. When deciding about wild turkey management in Minnesota, the Minnesota DNR will be open and honest in the things they do and say.**

Hunting group	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
Fall	2%	5%	8%	24%	16%	32%	14%
Spring Archery	5%	5%	10%	29%	17%	26%	8%
Spring firearm	3%	4%	7%	25%	18%	32%	12%
Spring all	4%	4%	8%	26%	17%	30%	11%

**Table 40. The Minnesota DNR can be trusted to make decisions about turkey management that are good for the resource.**

Hunting group	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
Fall	3%	4%	6%	23%	19%	35%	10%
Spring Archery	5%	7%	11%	23%	18%	29%	8%
Spring firearm	4%	4%	7%	19%	20%	34%	11%
Spring all	4%	5%	8%	20%	19%	32%	10%

**Table 41. The Minnesota DNR will make decisions about turkey management in a way that is fair.**

Hunting group	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
Fall	3%	5%	8%	23%	17%	34%	10%
Spring Archery	4%	5%	9%	26%	19%	29%	6%
Spring firearm	3%	4%	8%	22%	20%	35%	9%
Spring all	3%	4%	8%	23%	20%	33%	8%

**Table 42. The Minnesota DNR has wildlife managers and biologists who are well-trained for their jobs.**

Hunting group	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
Fall	3%	2%	4%	28%	13%	33%	18%
Spring Archery	3%	4%	7%	30%	15%	30%	12%
Spring firearm	3%	6%	9%	26%	15%	35%	14%
Spring all	3%	3%	4%	27%	15%	34%	13%

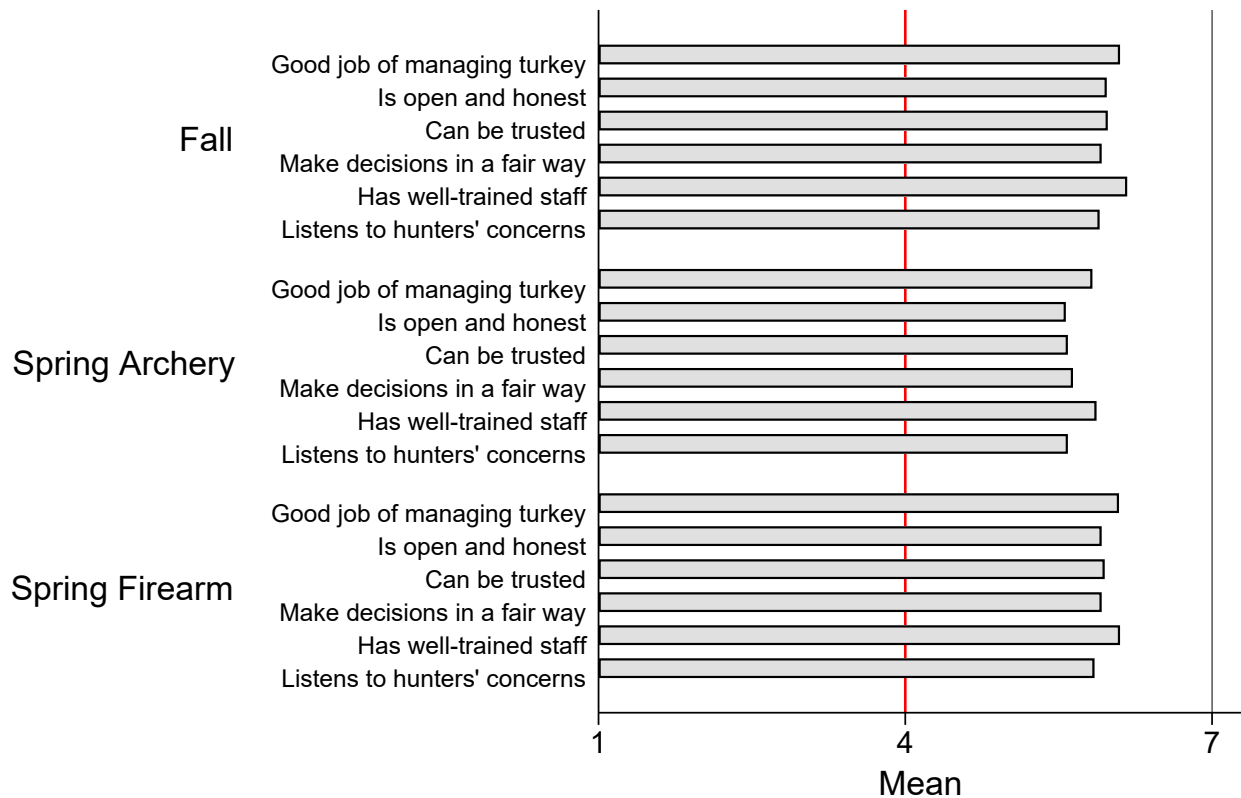
**Table 43. The Minnesota DNR listens to turkey hunters' concerns.**

Hunting group	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
Fall	3%	5%	7%	24%	19%	31%	11%
Spring Archery	5%	6%	9%	28%	21%	25%	8%
Spring firearm	3%	4%	6%	27%	19%	33%	8%
Spring all	4%	4%	7%	28%	19%	30%	8%

**Table 44. Minnesota turkey management trust index.**

	Fall ( $\bar{x}$ )	Spring archery ( $\bar{x}$ )	Spring firearm ( $\bar{x}$ )	Average ( $\bar{x}$ )
The Minnesota DNR does a good job of managing wild turkey in Minnesota.	5.10	4.83	5.09	5.00
When deciding about wild turkey management in Minnesota, the Minnesota DNR will be open and honest in the things they do and say.	4.97	4.57	4.92	4.82
The Minnesota DNR can be trusted to make decisions about turkey management that are good for the resource.	4.98	4.59	4.95	4.84
The Minnesota DNR will make decisions about turkey management in a way that is fair.	4.92	4.64	4.92	4.83
The Minnesota DNR has wildlife managers and biologists who are well-trained for their jobs.	5.17	4.87	5.10	5.05
The Minnesota DNR listens to turkey hunters' concerns.	4.90	4.59	4.85	4.78
Average ( $\bar{x}$ )	5.01	4.68	4.97	4.89

**Figure 45. Minnesota turkey management trust index.<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup>The following are the full trust prompts asked to respondents. The Minnesota DNR does a good job of managing wild turkey in Minnesota. When deciding about wild turkey management in Minnesota, the Minnesota DNR will be open and honest in the things they do and say. The Minnesota DNR can be trusted to make decisions about turkey management that are good for the resource. The Minnesota DNR will make decisions about turkey management in a way that is fair. The Minnesota DNR has wildlife managers and biologists who are well-trained for their jobs. The Minnesota DNR listens to turkey hunters’ concerns.

All turkey hunters agree that turkey hunter opinions should matter moderately to very much (94%-96%) in turkey management in Minnesota (Table 45). However, a majority of turkey hunters from all groups (72%-76%) feel that they had only had moderate to few opportunities to voice opinion to the MN DNR regarding turkey management (Table 46).

**Table 45. How much should turkey hunter opinions matter in turkey management in Minnesota?**

Hunter group	Not at all	2	3	4	Very much
Fall	1%	3%	27%	26%	43%
Spring archery	1%	6%	23%	30%	41%
Spring firearm	1%	4%	27%	30%	38%
Spring all	1%	5%	26%	30%	39%

**Table 46. Do you feel you have the opportunity to voice opinions to the Minnesota DNR about turkey management?**

Hunter group	Not at all	2	3	4	Very much
Fall	7%	15%	33%	26%	18%
Spring archery	10%	16%	37%	23%	14%
Spring firearm	9%	13%	33%	26%	19%
Spring all	9%	14%	34%	25%	18%

## Involvement in turkey hunting

We asked respondents to state their agreement or disagreement with 4 statements regarding their involvement in turkey hunting in Minnesota.

Most respondents across all groups (83%-85%) either slightly, moderately or strongly agreed with the statement “turkey hunting is one of the most enjoyable things I do” (Table 47). About half of turkey hunters from each group (50%-57%) agreed that participation in turkey hunting says a lot about them (Table 48). However, fewer respondents across all groups agreed that they find a lot of their life is organized around turkey hunting and that many of their friends and family are in some way connected to turkey hunting (Table 49 and Table 50). These findings indicate that turkey hunting is a deeply meaningful activity for most participants but may be a more individualistically focused activity. An involvement index was created to measure overall involvement in turkey hunting. A value of 4 indicates neutrality. All hunting groups had a value at or equal to 4.65, indicating slight to moderate involvement. Spring firearm hunters had the strongest involvement index value. However, all index values by group were extremely close to one another. A final involvement index across all participants produced a value of 4.72, again showing moderate involvement with turkey hunting (Table 51 and Figure 46).

**Table 47. Turkey hunting is one of the most enjoyable things I do.**

Hunting group	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
Fall	1%	2%	2%	12%	21%	30%	32%
Spring Archery	1%	2%	1%	10%	22%	35%	29%
Spring firearm	1%	2%	3%	9%	17%	32%	36%
Spring all	1%	2%	3%	9%	18%	33%	34%

**Table 48. I find a lot of my life is organized around turkey hunting.**

Hunting group	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
Fall	6%	12%	12%	27%	18%	14%	11%
Spring Archery	3%	13%	11%	29%	24%	12%	8%
Spring firearm	4%	14%	9%	26%	22%	13%	11%
Spring all	4%	14%	10%	27%	22%	13%	10%

**Table 49. Most of my friends and family are in some way connected to turkey hunting.**

Hunting group	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
Fall	7%	18%	10%	21%	21%	12%	11%
Spring Archery	6%	15%	10%	20%	24%	17%	8%
Spring firearm	5%	14%	8%	19%	27%	17%	11%
Spring all	5%	14%	9%	19%	26%	17%	10%

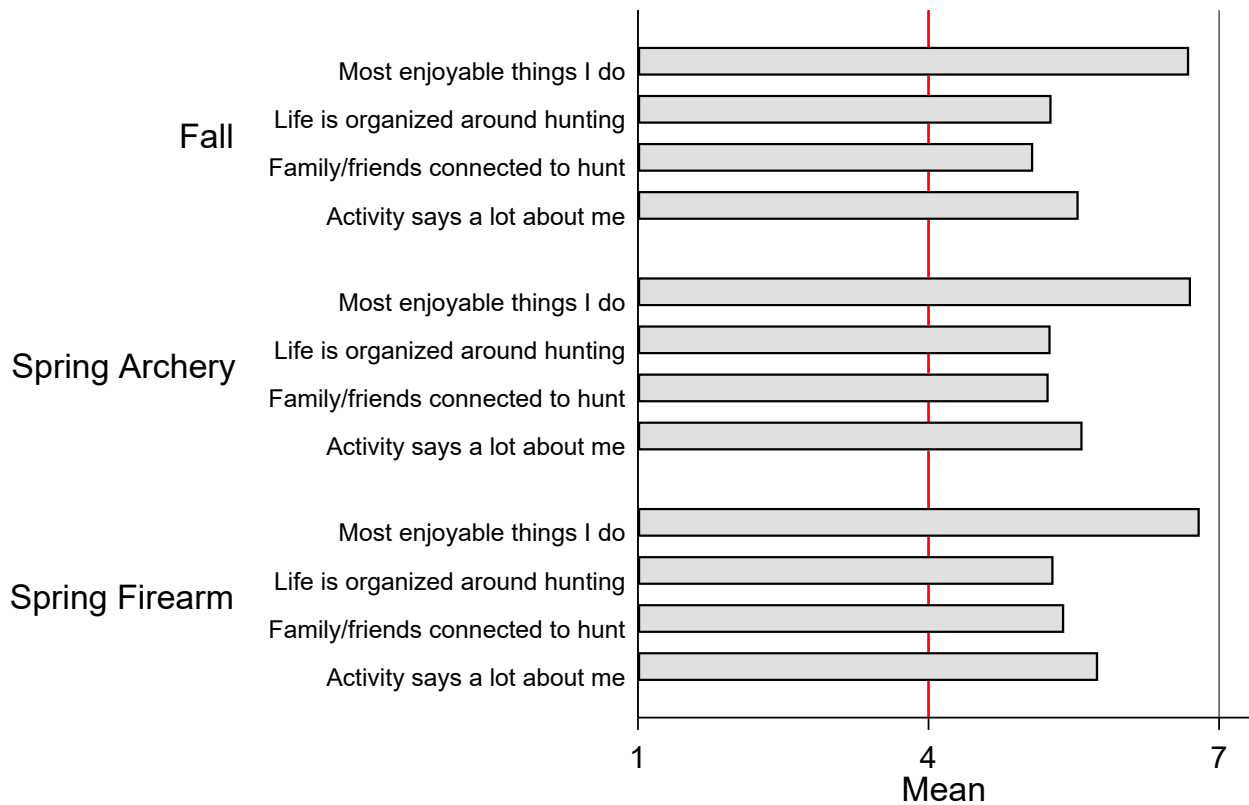
**Table 50. Participation in turkey hunting says a lot about who I am.**

Hunting group	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither	Slightly agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
Fall	4%	11%	8%	29%	18%	17%	15%
Spring Archery	4%	10%	5%	28%	22%	18%	13%
Spring firearm	3%	8%	5%	26%	23%	19%	15%
Spring all	3%	9%	5%	27%	23%	19%	14%

**Table 51. Minnesota turkey management involvement index.**

	Fall ( $\bar{x}$ )	Spring archery ( $\bar{x}$ )	Spring firearm ( $\bar{x}$ )	Average ( $\bar{x}$ )
Turkey hunting is one of the most enjoyable things I do.	5.69	5.71	5.80	5.73
I find a lot of my life is organized around turkey hunting.	4.27	4.26	4.29	4.27
Most of my friends and family are in some way connected to turkey hunting.	4.08	4.24	4.40	4.24
Participation in turkey hunting says a lot about who I am.	4.55	4.59	4.75	4.63
Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	4.65	4.70	4.81	4.72

**Figure 46. Minnesota turkey management involvement index.<sup>2</sup>**



<sup>2</sup>The following are the full involvement prompts asked to respondents. Turkey hunting is one of the most enjoyable things I do. I find a lot of my life is organized around turkey hunting. Most of my friends and family are in some way connected to turkey hunting. Participation in turkey hunting says a lot about who I am.

## Demographics

Respondents were asked to identify other species they hunt in Minnesota, in addition to turkey. The most common species to hunt besides turkey are deer. Fall turkey hunters’ second most common species to hunt are grouse, while spring archery and firearm hunters are pheasants. More spring archery hunters hunt predators than fall and spring firearm turkey hunters. The least hunted species across all turkey hunting groups was bear. Very few turkey hunters do not hunt other species besides turkey (Table 52).

**Table 52. Other species hunted by turkey hunters in Minnesota. Data listed are counts of responses.**

	Fall (n)	Spring archery (n)	Spring firearm (n)
Deer	336	799	906
Pheasants	158	396	496
Waterfowl	156	353	453
Grouse	198	332	463
Other small game (rabbits, squirrels)	155	259	302
Bears	89	190	168
Predators (coyotes, fox, raccoons)	119	338	279
I do not hunt other species besides turkey.	4	12	55

# Appendix A. Questionnaire

2025 Minnesota Turkey Hunter Survey

Dear Turkey Hunter,

Thank you for your help with this important study. Results of this effort will inform decisions about turkey management in Minnesota, and your voice matters. The survey should take roughly 15 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary, and you may stop at any time. Thank you for your time!

Please enter the PIN you received on your contact letter or email.

Tennessee notice: In accordance with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, you are being informed of the following: The information you provide in this survey is being collected for research into turkey management in Minnesota. Your participation is voluntary, and you have the right to refuse to answer any questions or to stop completing the survey at any time. The data collected will be used solely for understanding Minnesota turkey harvest and hunter preferences. Under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, the information you provide is classified as private. If you have any questions regarding the use of your information or your rights under this Act, you can contact a researcher at TurkeyHunterSurvey.agency@state.mn.us. Providing the requested information is not required by law; however, if you choose not to provide the data, it may affect the completion of a study. Thank you for your cooperation! Please advance forward if you consent or stop the survey if you do not.

## Section 1. Turkey hunting participation

**Q1.** Which of the following 2024/2025 turkey seasons did you hunt in Minnesota? (*Select all that apply*).

Fall 2024       Spring 2025       I did not hunt

## Section 2. Fall 2024 Turkey Hunting Season

**Q2.** In which permit areas did you personally hunt during the **Fall 2024** Turkey Season in Minnesota? (*Select all that apply*).

- |                           |                           |                           |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> 501 | <input type="radio"/> 505 | <input type="radio"/> 509 |
| <input type="radio"/> 502 | <input type="radio"/> 506 | <input type="radio"/> 510 |
| <input type="radio"/> 503 | <input type="radio"/> 507 | <input type="radio"/> 511 |
| <input type="radio"/> 504 | <input type="radio"/> 508 | <input type="radio"/> 512 |

**Q3.** Approximately how many days did you hunt turkeys in each of the permit areas that you hunted during the **Fall 2024** Turkey Season in Minnesota? (*Select one*).

Days – permit areas filled from selection above

**Q4.** Did you hunt with a crossbow during the **Fall 2024** Turkey Season in Minnesota? (*Select one*).

Yes       No

**Q4a.** If yes, approximately how many days did you hunt with a crossbow during the **fall 2024** turkey season? (*Select one*).

\_\_\_\_ Days

**Q4b.** Beginning in 2023, all hunters were allowed to use crossbows to hunt turkey during the fall season. Was your decision to participate in the Fall 2024 Turkey Season influenced by the regulation change? (*Select one*).

\_\_\_\_ Yes, I participated in the Fall 2024 Turkey Season **because** of the regulation change allowing crossbows to be used by all.

\_\_\_\_ No, the regulation did not affect my decision to participate in the Fall 2024 Turkey Season.

**Q5.** Did you harvest a turkey during the **Fall 2024** Turkey Season in Minnesota? (*Select one*).

\_\_\_\_ Yes                      \_\_\_\_ No

**Q5a.** If yes, what weapon did you kill the bird with? (*Select one*).

\_\_\_\_ Firearm    \_\_\_\_ Vertical bow            \_\_\_\_ Crossbow

**Q5b.** What type of bird did you harvest in the **fall 2024** season? (*Select one*).

\_\_\_\_ Bearded bird    \_\_\_\_ Non-bearded bird

**Q6.** Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your **Fall 2024** turkey hunting experience? (*Select one.*)

Very dissatisfied	Moderately dissatisfied	Slightly dissatisfied	Neither	Slightly satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Q6a.** If you reported that you were either slightly, moderately, or very dissatisfied with your overall experience during the **Fall 2024** Turkey Season in Minnesota, what was your primary reason? If your primary reason is not listed, please select other and write it in. (*Select one*).

- \_\_\_\_ Low turkey numbers
- \_\_\_\_ Too much competition from other hunters
- \_\_\_\_ Unable to hunt on land that I desired
- \_\_\_\_ The length of the season was too short
- \_\_\_\_ Other (text box entry)

**Q7.** How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the following aspects of your hunt during the **Fall 2024** Turkey Season in Minnesota? (*Select one for each*).

	Very dissatisfied	Moderately dissatisfied	Slightly dissatisfied	Neither	Slightly satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Very satisfied
Number of turkeys seen	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Chance to harvest a turkey	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	Very dissatisfied	Moderately dissatisfied	Slightly dissatisfied	Neither	Slightly satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Very satisfied
Turkey hunting regulations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Number of other turkey hunters seen	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Length of season	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Section 3. Spring 2025 turkey season**

**Q8.** Which type of permit did you purchase for the Spring 2025 turkey season in Minnesota? (*Select one*).

\_\_\_\_\_ Firearm    \_\_\_\_\_ Archery

**Q9.** In which Spring 2025 Season/Period(s) did you personally hunt for turkey in Minnesota? (*Select all that apply*).

- Season A. April 16-22
- Season B. April 23-29
- Season C. April 30 - May 6
- Season D. May 7-13
- Season E. May 14-20
- Season F. May 21-31

**Q10.** In which permit areas did you personally hunt during the Spring 2025 turkey season in Minnesota? (*Select all that apply*).

- 501
- 502
- 503
- 504
- 505
- 506
- 507
- 508
- 509
- 510
- 511
- 512

**Q11.** Approximately how many days did you personally hunt turkeys in each of the permit areas that you hunted during the Spring 2025 turkey season in Minnesota? (*Select a day from each dropdown*).

\_\_\_\_\_ Days – permit areas filled from selection above

**Q12.** Which of the following weapon types did you use to hunt with during the Spring 2025 turkey season in Minnesota? (*Select all that apply*).

\_\_\_\_\_firearm    \_\_\_\_\_vertical bow    \_\_\_\_\_crossbow

**Q12a.** Approximately how many days did you hunt with a crossbow during the Spring 2025 turkey season? (*Select one*).

\_\_\_\_\_Days

**Q12b.** Beginning in 2023, all hunters were allowed to use crossbows to hunt turkey during the spring season. Was your decision to participate in the 2025 spring season influenced by the regulation change? (*Select one*).

\_\_\_\_\_Yes, I participated in the Spring 2025 turkey season **because** of the regulation change allowing crossbows to be used by all.

No, the regulation change did not affect my decision to participate in the spring season.

**Q13.** Did you harvest a turkey during the spring 2025 season in Minnesota? *(Select one).*

Yes       No

**Q13a.** If yes, what weapon did you kill the bird with? *(Select one).*

Firearm       Vertical bow       Crossbow

**Q14.** Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your spring 2025 turkey hunting experience? *(Select one.)*

Very dissatisfied	Moderately dissatisfied	Slightly dissatisfied	Neither	Slightly satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Very satisfied
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Q14a.** If you reported that you were either slightly, moderately, or very dissatisfied with your overall experience during the Spring 2025 turkey season in Minnesota, what was your primary reason? If your primary reason is not listed, please select other and write it in. *(Select one).*

- Low turkey numbers
- Too much competition from other hunters
- Unable to hunt on land that I desired
- The length of the season was too short
- Other (text box entry)

**Q15.** How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the following aspects of your hunt during the Spring 2025 turkey season in Minnesota? *(Select one for each).*

	Very dissatisfied	Moderately dissatisfied	Slightly dissatisfied	Neither	Slightly satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Very satisfied
Number of turkeys seen	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Chance to harvest a turkey	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Turkey hunting regulations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Number of other turkey hunters seen	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Length of season	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Q16.** How easy or difficult was it for you to find a place to hunt the Spring 2025 turkey season in Minnesota? *(Select one).*

Very difficult				Very easy		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Q17.** What type of land did you hunt during the Spring 2025 turkey season in Minnesota? (*Select one*).

Public land only     Private land only     Both public and private land

**Q17a.** If you hunted public land only, was it because you asked for access to private land and were denied by the landowner? (*Select one*).

Yes     No

**Q18.** Using the scale below, circle the number that best describes your perceptions of crowding on your MOST crowded day during the Spring 2025 turkey season in Minnesota. (*Select one number*).

<i>Not at all crowded</i>	<i>Slightly crowded</i>	<i>Moderately crowded</i>	<i>Extremely crowded</i>					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

**Q19.** During the Spring 2025 turkey season, did the presence of other hunters prevent you from hunting in your preferred location? (*Select one*).

No, not at all     Slightly     Moderately     Yes, extremely

**Q20.** Did another hunter interfere with your chance to harvest a turkey during the Spring 2025 turkey season in Minnesota? (*Select one*).

Yes     No

**Section 4. Spring 2025 Spring Archery Equipment Hunters**

**Q21.** What is the maximum distance you are comfortable shooting at a turkey with a crossbow? (*Select one*).

Crossbow    \_\_\_\_\_ yards

**Q21a.** What is the maximum distance you are comfortable shooting at a turkey with a vertical bow? (*Select one*).

Vertical bow    \_\_\_\_\_ yards

**Q22.** Did you shoot at and miss any turkey with **archery equipment** during the spring 2025 turkey season? (*Select one*).

Yes     No

**Q23.** How many turkeys did you shoot at and miss with **archery equipment** during the spring 2025 turkey season? (*Select one*).

\_\_\_ Turkey(s)

**Q24.** Did you wound and not recover any turkey with **archery equipment** during the spring 2025 turkey season? (*Select one.*)

\_\_\_\_\_Yes      \_\_\_\_\_No

**Q25.** How many turkeys did you wound and not recover with **archery equipment** during the spring 2025 turkey season? (*Select one.*)

\_\_\_ Turkey(s)

**Section 5: Minnesota Turkey Populations and Management**

**Q26.** Over the past 5 years, what trend have you seen in the turkey population in the areas you most often hunt for turkey? (*Select one.*)

A lot fewer	Fewer	About the same	More	A lot more
1	2	3	4	5

**Q27.** In thinking about the area you most often hunt for turkey, what would you say about the turkey population? (*Select one.*)

Way too low	Too low	About right	Too high	Way too high
1	2	3	4	5

**Objectives for a Minnesota spring turkey season**

**Q28.** The Minnesota DNR is considering changes to the structure of the Spring turkey hunting season. There are several reasons for considering new turkey hunting regulations:

- Harvest information could be used to estimate turkey populations. The current regulations do not allow DNR to track or estimate abundance. Since turkey tags are currently valid statewide, it is not possible to estimate harvest success or track turkey abundance using harvest data. If turkey tags were valid for specific turkey permit areas, it would be possible to estimate harvest success and track turkey abundance.
- The inability to estimate turkey populations limits the potential to liberalize hunting opportunity.
- Some hunters believe that the 7-day seasons are too short and would prefer longer ones. Longer seasons might increase opportunity and harvest success, but the structure of longer seasons could lead to increased competition with other hunters.
- Some hunters believe that turkey hunting regulations are too complex, and that simplifying them might improve the hunting experience, entice new hunters, and increase participation.

Considering these issues, the Minnesota DNR has created several objectives for potential changes to Spring turkey hunting. How important are each of the following objectives to you in deciding about a Minnesota spring turkey hunting season? (*Select one for each*).

	Not at all important	Slightly important	Somewhat important	Moderately important	Very important
Ensuring an abundance of turkeys.	1	2	3	4	5
The ability to estimate turkey population status from harvest information.	1	2	3	4	5
Maximizing turkey hunting opportunity (i.e. number of permits, bag limit, reduce barriers to hunting).	1	2	3	4	5
Minimizing the complexity of turkey hunting regulations.	1	2	3	4	5
Maximizing the quality of the turkey hunting experience (i.e. number of turkey encounters, harvest success rate, low conflict between hunters, ability to hunt with family & friends).	1	2	3	4	5

**Q29.** How would you rank these objectives from most important to least important in regard to the spring turkey season? (Rank each).

	Rank
Ensuring an abundance of turkeys.	
The ability to estimate turkey population status from harvest information.	
Maximizing turkey hunting opportunity (i.e. number of permits, bag limit, reduce barriers to hunting).	
Minimizing the complexity of turkey hunting regulations.	
Maximizing the quality of the turkey hunting experience (i.e. number of turkey encounters, harvest success rate, low conflict between hunters, ability to hunt with family & friends).	

**Section 6: Preferences for fall and spring turkey season design**

The questions to follow relate to your preferences for turkey hunting seasons and regulations.

**Q30.** In Minnesota during the fall turkey season, hunters are permitted to harvest one wild turkey of either sex or age. How much do you support or oppose a regulation change that would limit the fall turkey harvest to only bearded birds? (*Select one*).

Strongly oppose	Moderately oppose	Slightly oppose	Neither	Slightly support	Moderately support	Strongly support
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Q31.** The fall turkey season currently begins on the Saturday nearest October 1<sup>st</sup> and is open for 30 days. Two alternatives fall turkey season structures have been proposed. The first would open the season on the Saturday nearest September 16th (small game opener) and finish on the last day in October (an approximately 45-day season). The second would open the season on September 16th (small game opener) and finish on the last day in November (an approximately 75-day season). Which fall season structure do you most and least prefer? Please rank the following fall turkey hunting season structures, with number 1 as your MOST preferred season structure and number 3 as your LEAST preferred season structure choice. (Rank each).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Saturday nearest October 1<sup>st</sup> and is open for 30 days (current season structure)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Saturday nearest September 16th (small game opener) and finish on the last day in October (an approximately 45-day season)**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Saturday nearest September 16th (small game opener) and finish on the last day in November (an approximately 75-day season)**

**Q32.** Currently, a youth tag allows youth hunters to participate in any spring turkey season (A, B, C, D, E, F). There is a proposal to create a youth specific season and require youth to purchase a tag for a single spring season (A, B, C, D, E, or F) should they choose to participate. This change may help in estimating turkey populations. How much do you support or oppose creating a youth specific spring season prior to the A season, and require youth to purchase a tag for a single season (A, B, C, D, E, or F)? A youth tag would no longer be valid for all spring seasons. *(Select one)*.

Strongly oppose	Moderately oppose	Slightly oppose	Neither	Slightly support	Moderately support	Strongly support
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Q33.** There are currently 12 turkey permit areas in Minnesota. How much do you support or oppose reducing the number of permit areas from 12 to 5? The 5 new permit areas would be larger than the current ones, and their boundaries would be drawn to coincide with landscape features that affect turkey populations. *(Select one)*

Strongly oppose	Moderately oppose	Slightly oppose	Neither	Slightly support	Moderately support	Strongly support
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Q34.** Currently, an archery tag allows an archery hunter to hunt during all spring turkey seasons (A,B,C,D,E,F). There is a proposal to eliminate the archery tag and require all turkey hunters to purchase a tag for a single season (A, B, C, D, E, or F) regardless of the equipment they may choose to hunt with (firearm, vertical bow, crossbow). This change may help in estimating turkey populations. How much do you support or oppose eliminating the spring archery turkey tag? *(Select one)*.

Strongly oppose	Moderately oppose	Slightly oppose	Neither	Slightly support	Moderately support	Strongly support
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Q35.** Turkey tags are currently valid anywhere in the state of Minnesota. How much do you support or oppose requiring hunters to purchase a turkey tag specific to a turkey permit area? This change would facilitate the estimation of harvest success and tracking of turkey abundance. *(Select one)*

Strongly oppose	Moderately oppose	Slightly oppose	Neither	Slightly support	Moderately support	Strongly support
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Q36.** How much do you support or oppose the following for the **spring** season? *(Select one for each).*

	Strongly oppose	Moderately oppose	Slightly oppose	Neither	Slightly support	Moderately support	Strongly support
Offering turkey hunters the opportunity to purchase a second tag in <b>any</b> season of the spring season.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Offering turkey hunters the opportunity to purchase a second tag only in the <b>last</b> season of the spring season.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Q37.** Some hunters have expressed concerns about spring turkey hunting activity occurring during the peak of turkey hen egg laying and incubation. In addition, the harvesting of dominant males during peak breeding may delay breeding, which can result in reduced reproduction. Starting the season later may help avoid this. Currently, the Spring turkey season begins on the Wednesday nearest April 15th. How much do you support or oppose moving the start of the Spring turkey season one week later to the Wednesday nearest April 22<sup>nd</sup>? *(Select one)*

Strongly oppose	Moderately oppose	Slightly oppose	Neither	Slightly support	Moderately support	Strongly support
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Q38.** If the spring turkey season started on the Wednesday nearest April 15<sup>th</sup> (current regulation), which season structure would you most and least prefer? In each season structure, the length of the last season will vary in length depending on what day of the month the first season starts. Please rank the following spring turkey hunting season structures, with number 1 as your MOST preferred season structure choice and number 3 as your LEAST preferred season structure choice. *(Select one)*

\_\_\_\_\_ 6, 7-day seasons (A,B,C,D,E,F) – current structure

\_\_\_\_\_ 3, 14-day seasons (A,B,C)

\_\_\_\_\_ 2, 7-day seasons (A,B), and 2 14-day seasons (C,D)

**Q39.** If the spring turkey season started on the Wednesday nearest April 22<sup>nd</sup> (proposed new regulation), which season structure would you most and least prefer? In each season structure, the length of the last season will vary in length depending on what day of the month the first season starts. Please rank the following spring turkey hunting season

structures, with number 1 as your MOST preferred season structure choice and number 3 as your LEAST preferred season structure choice. (Select one)

\_\_\_\_\_ 5, 7-day seasons (A,B,C,D,E)

\_\_\_\_\_ 3, 14-day seasons (A,B,C)

\_\_\_\_\_ 2, 7-day seasons (A,B), and 2 14-day seasons (C,D)

**Section 7: Crossbow Attitudes**

**Q40.** The Minnesota legislature passed a law in 2023 allowing crossbows to be used by all hunters during spring turkey archery season. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding crossbow use in turkey hunting? *(Select one for each statement.)*

	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither	Somewhat agree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
Being able to use a crossbow is attracting new hunters that would not hunt otherwise.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Crossbows are a good way to introduce youth to hunting turkey.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am more likely to continue turkey hunting in the future because crossbows have been made legal to use for all hunters.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Hunters hunted more days during the 2025 Minnesota spring turkey season because they could use a crossbow.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Q41.** Overall, how has allowing crossbows during the entire turkey season influenced your spring 2025 turkey hunting experience? *(Select one).*

Very negative	Negative	Somewhat negative	Neutral	Positive	Somewhat positive	Very positive
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Section 8: Minnesota DNR Turkey Management**

**Q42.** How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the Minnesota DNR and its turkey management? *(Select one for each).*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
The Minnesota DNR does a good job of managing wild turkey in Minnesota.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
When deciding about wild turkey management in Minnesota, the Minnesota DNR will be open and honest in the things they do and say.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The Minnesota DNR can be trusted to make decisions about turkey management that are good for the resource.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The Minnesota DNR will make decisions about turkey management in a way that is fair.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The Minnesota DNR has wildlife managers and biologists who are well-trained for their jobs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The Minnesota DNR listens to turkey hunters' concerns.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Q43.** Please select your opinion on the following statements about turkey hunters' involvement in management. (*Select one for each*).

	Not at all				Very Much
How much should turkey hunter opinions matter in turkey management in Minnesota?	1	2	3	4	5
Do you feel you have the opportunity to voice opinions to the Minnesota DNR about turkey management?	1	2	3	4	5

### **Section 9: Involvement in turkey hunting**

**Q44.** How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your involvement in turkey hunting in Minnesota. (*Select one for each statement*).

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Turkey hunting is one of the most enjoyable things I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I find a lot of my life is organized around turkey hunting.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Most of my friends and family are in some way connected to turkey hunting.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Participation in turkey hunting says a lot about who I am.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

### **Section 10: About you**

**Q45.** What other species do you hunt in Minnesota? (*Select all that apply*).

- Deer
- Pheasants
- Waterfowl
- Grouse
- Other small game (rabbits, squirrels)
- Bears
- Predators (coyotes, fox, raccoons)
- I do not hunt other species besides turkey.

**Q46.** Was this survey completed by the person it was addressed to?

- Yes
- No

We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.

Your response has been recorded.