

# Deer Survey

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**RESPONSIVE MANAGEMENT**, an independent firm specializing in public opinion research on natural resource and outdoor recreation, surveyed the general population of Pennsylvania residents to determine their opinions and experiences with deer in the area where they live.

In November and December 2011, phone interviews were conducted with 9,212 residents. Twenty-five percent of respondents identified themselves as hunters—a much higher percentage than who actually purchase a license each year in Pennsylvania. More than half of residents (56%) watch deer near their homes and 49% say they enjoy having deer around. Fifty-four percent of respondents say the deer population where they live is just right, 20% said it is too high, 18% said too low, and 8% didn't know. Generally, respondents who identified themselves as hunters were more likely to say they enjoyed having deer around and were more likely than nonhunters to say that deer populations were too low.

Lethal methods of controlling deer were supported by 63%. Pennsylvania residents were asked if they supported or opposed four different options for managing deer populations. Eighty-five percent indicated some level of support for legal, regulated hunting and only 12% voiced opposition to hunting. Interestingly, 22% more of the respondents supported legal regulated hunting than “lethal methods” of controlling the deer population. The management option with the second highest level of support was fertility/birth control with 46% supporting and 45%

opposed. Additionally, only 39% supported professionals or sharpshooters (54% opposed) and 24% supported trapping and killing (72% opposed).

Seventeen percent of single-family homeowners in Pennsylvania said that they allowed some form of hunting on their property (either by themselves or others). Pennsylvania homeowners who did not allow hunting on their property were asked their reasons why; 48% said property is too small or too close to neighbors, 48% said they live in sub/urban area where hunting is not feasible, 10% cited concerns about safety and only 9% mentioned an opposition to hunting. □

