

NEBRASKA



HUNTER & ANGLER RESEARCH

2020 Survey of Nebraska Landowner Attitudes on Deer
Damage – General Report

Matthew Gruntorad and Christopher Chizinski October 7, 2020

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General Information

In 2020, we conducted a survey of Nebraska landowners from each Deer Management Unit (DMU). The goal of the survey was to assess the attitudes of Nebraska landowners about white-tailed deer and mule deer damage to their property as well as the structure of the current deer hunting season. This report is a short summary of the general responses to the survey.

Survey design

A postal-mail version of the questionnaire was sent to a landowners on May 1, 2020. A postcard reminder was sent to non-respondents on May 15, 2020, and a second mailing of a reminder with a replacement questionnaire was mailed to non-respondents on June 5, 2020. There were two questions that addressed the size and location of the landowner property, nine questions addressed attitudes about deer damage to landowner property, eight questions addressed hunting deer on landowners' property, and four questions addressed landowner attitudes about the current deer-hunting seasons. Respondents could choose to not answer any or all questions.

Survey population

Questionnaires were sent to between 170 and 280 landowners from each Deer Management Unit whose annual gross financial income from their property was greater than or equal to \$1,000. The average age of landowners invited to participate in the survey was 63 years. Thirty percent of these surveys were sent to females and 60% to males (10% were unknown). The average gross financial income of the property owned by landowners who were invited to participate in the survey was \$462,190.

Response rate

Overall, there were 4,493 questionnaires sent to Nebraska landowners. Eighty five were returned because of invalid mailing addresses. There were 1,437 landowners who completed the questionnaire. The overall response rate for the survey was 33%. Of landowners who completed the survey, 36% answered every question on the questionnaire.

Executive Summary

- Most Nebraska landowners reported that white-tailed deer had caused some level damage to their property in the past 24 months (77%), “light damage” was the most frequent response (43%). Landowners in the Calamus East, Frenchman, Loup East, Missouri, and Sandhills DMUs reported “moderate damage” due to white-tailed deer as frequently as or more frequently than only “light damage.” No units had “severe damage” as the most frequently chosen selection, nor did “severe damage” exceed “light damage” in any unit.
- Just over half of Nebraska landowners, who reported having mule on their land, reported any damage due to mule deer (53%). “No damage” was the most frequently reported amount of mule deer damage in the majority of DMUs. Landowners in the Calamus West, Frenchman, Pine Ridge, Platte, and Sandhills DMUs most frequently selected “light damage” (34%, 37%, 39%, 39%, and 42%, respectively). No units had “severe damage” as the most common selection. “Severe damage” only exceed “light damage” in the Sandhills DMU.
- Damage caused by white-tailed and mule deer to landowner property was most frequently reported as “Somewhat unacceptable” (33% and 30%, respectively) by the survey respondents. However, the acceptability of white-tailed and mule deer damage by landowners was varied among each of the DMUs.
- A greater proportion of respondents reported that they “frequently” had whitetail and mule deer on their property (65% and 28%, respectively) compared to the response options of “none” (3% and 22%, respectively), “occasionally” (21% and 21%, respectively), and “don’t know” (7% and 19%, respectively).
- A large majority of respondents had never contacted Nebraska Game and Parks Commission for help addressing deer damage (89%).
- A majority of respondents reported that deer hunting took place on their land (72%).
- Most respondents reported that they did not hunt deer themselves but were most likely to allow access to friends (62%) or family (67%) for hunting permission.
- Landowners were mostly nonrestrictive about the type of deer they allowed hunters to harvest.
- Most landowners indicated that the number of white-tailed deer and mule deer on their land was “about what they preferred” (34% and 24%, respectively). However, a greater percentage of land owners felt the number of mule deer was “too low” as compared to white tailed deer (16% versus 5%, respectively).
- Most landowners reported that they preferred the structure of the November firearm season and the antlerless season in its current state (44% and 46%, respectively).
- Most landowners stated they already have enough hunters on their land when asked what might influence them allow more deer hunters access to their property (55%).

Survey Results

Property size and location

1) In which Deer Management Unit is the majority of your land located?

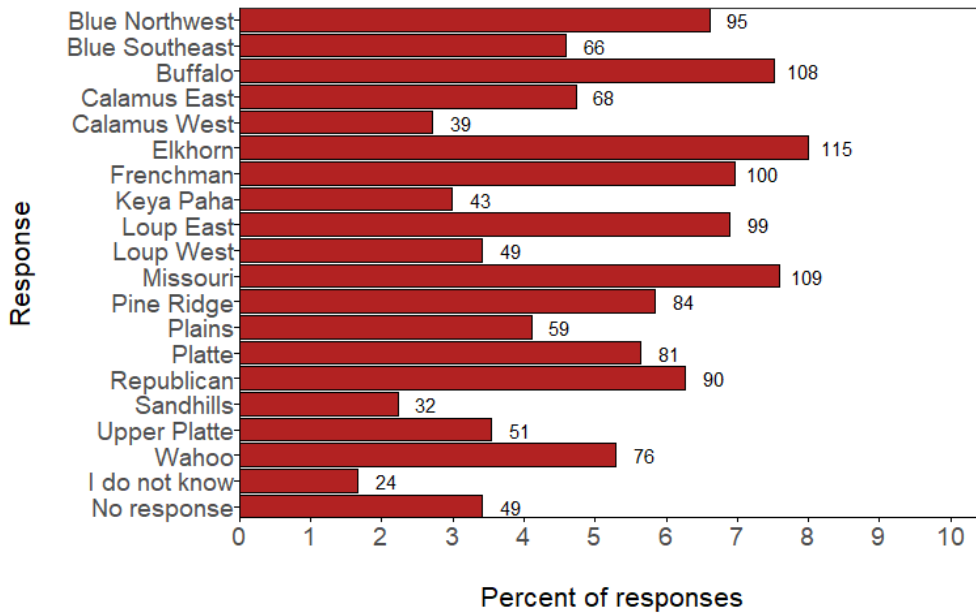


Figure 1. The Nebraska Deer Management Unit in which landowners hold the majority of their land as indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

2) About how many acres do you own or lease?

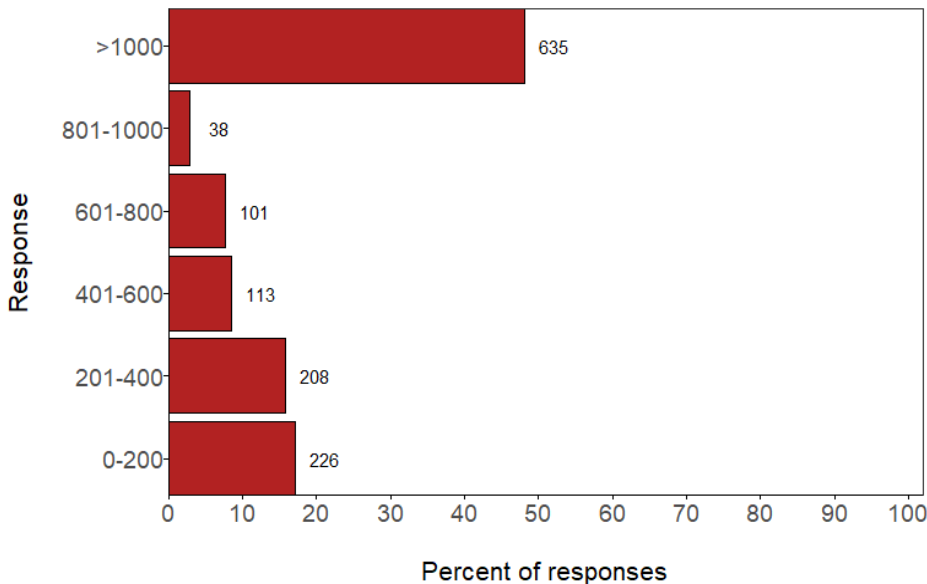


Figure 2. The approximate number of acres owned or leased by landowners as indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

Attitudes about deer damage

3a) To your knowledge, how frequently did you have white-tailed deer on your land during the past 24 months?

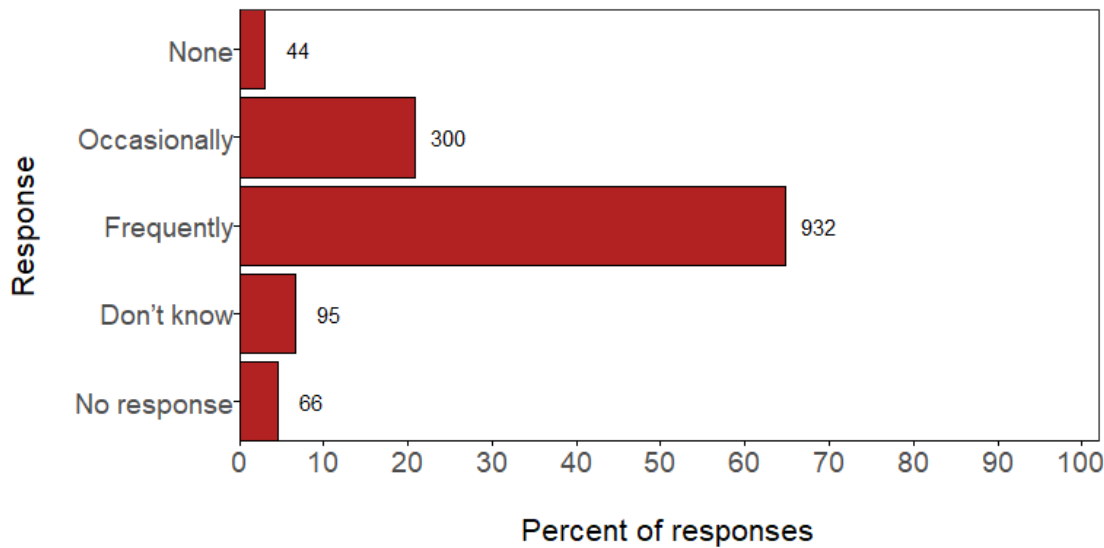


Figure 3. The frequency in which landowners had white-tailed deer on their land as indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

3b) To your knowledge, how frequently did you have mule deer on your land during the past 24 months?

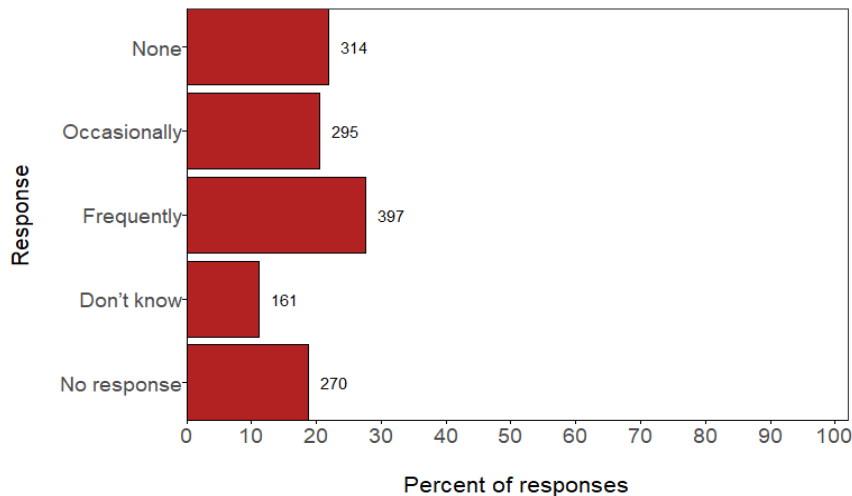


Figure 4. The frequency in which landowners had mule deer on their land as indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

4) How much, if any, damage from white-tailed deer occurred on your land during the past 24 months?

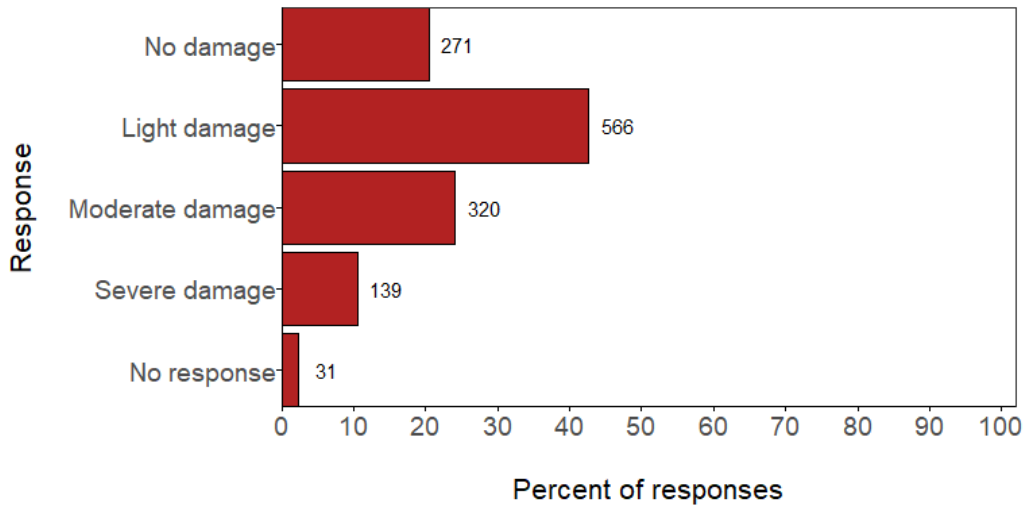


Figure 5. The severity of damage caused by white-tailed deer to landowner property in the previous 24 months indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents. Responses are limited to individuals who reported having white-tailed deer on their property (N = 1,327).

4a) How acceptable or unacceptable is the amount of damage inflicted by white-tailed deer in the past 24 months?

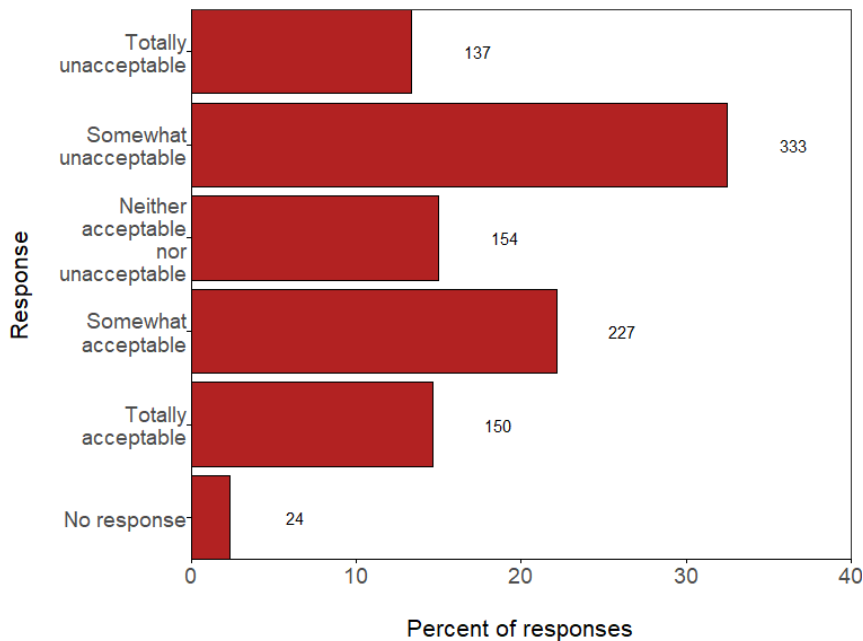


Figure 6. The level of acceptability of damage caused by white-tailed deer to landowner property in the previous 24 months indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents. Responses are limited to individuals who reported having white-tailed deer on their property and reported some level of white-tailed deer damage (N = 1,025).

5) How much, if any, damage from mule deer occurred on your land during the past 24 months?

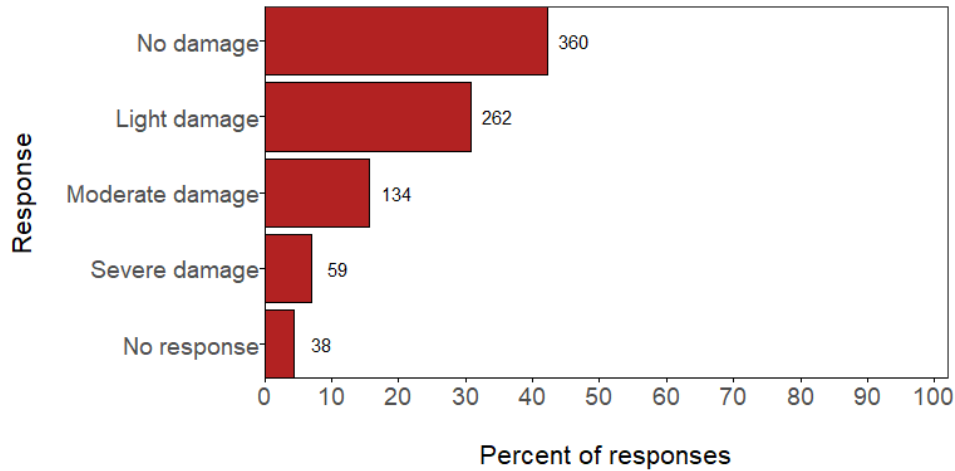


Figure 7. The severity of damage caused by mule deer to landowner property in the previous 24 months indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents. Responses are limited to individuals who reported having mule deer on their property (N = 853).

5a) How acceptable or unacceptable is the amount of damage inflicted by mule deer in the past 24 months?

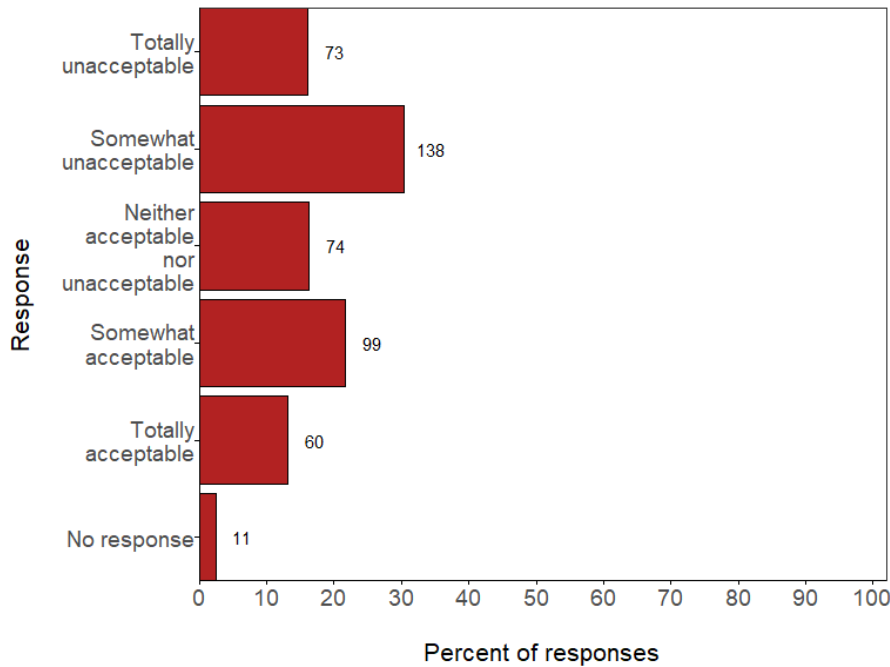


Figure 8. The level of acceptability of damage caused by mule deer to landowner property in the previous 24 months indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents. Responses are limited to individuals who reported having mule deer on their property and reported some level of mule deer damage (N = 455).

6) Have you ever contacted the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission for assistance in reducing deer damage on your land?

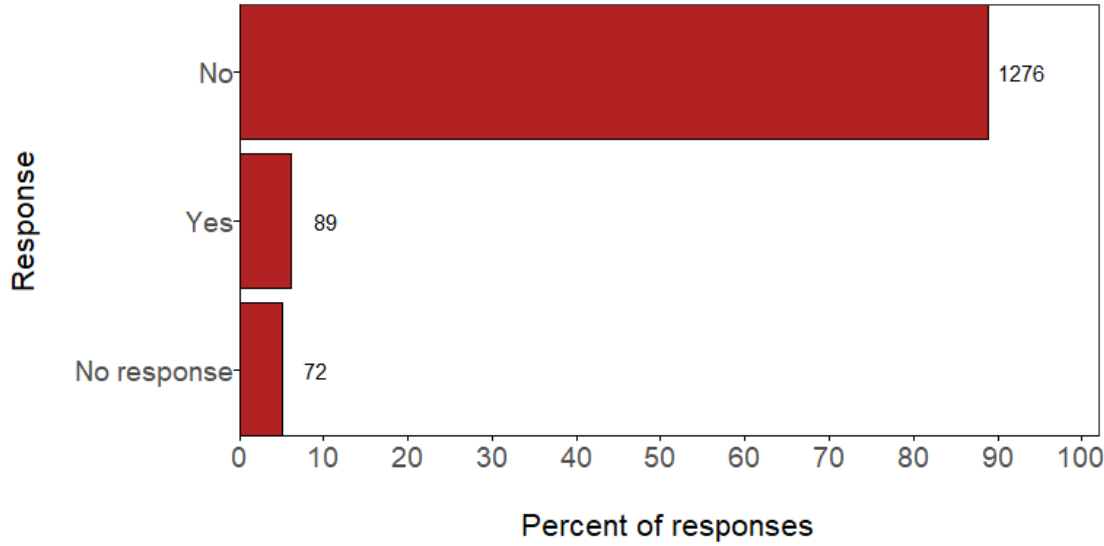


Figure 9. Whether or not landowners ever contacted Nebraska Game and Parks Commission for assistance in reducing deer damage indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

6a) In what year did you last contact the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission concerning damage caused by deer

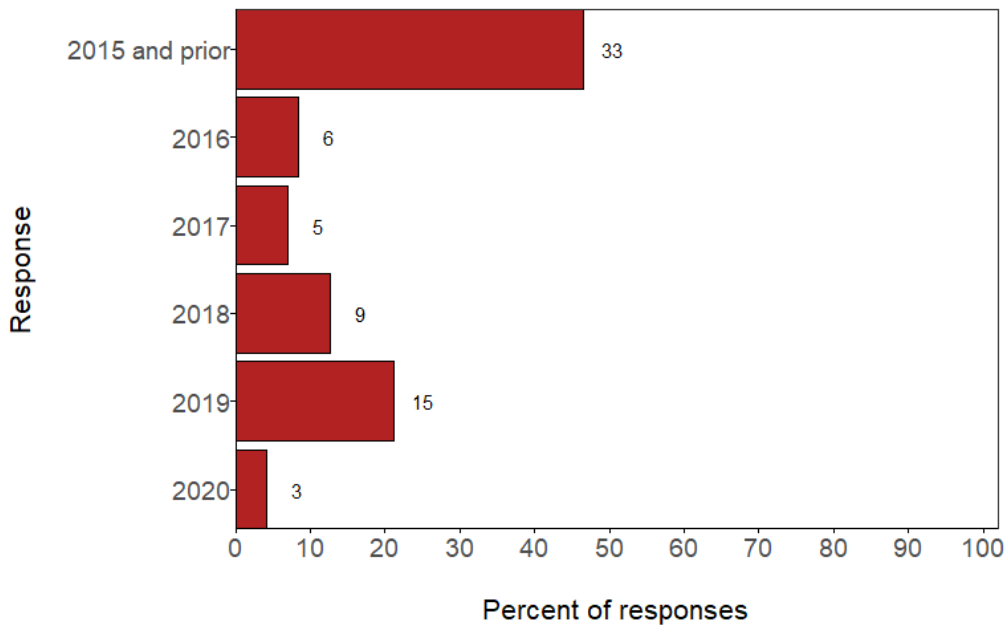


Figure 10. Year in which landowners most recently contacted NGPC concerning damage caused by deer indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

6b) How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the assistance you received?

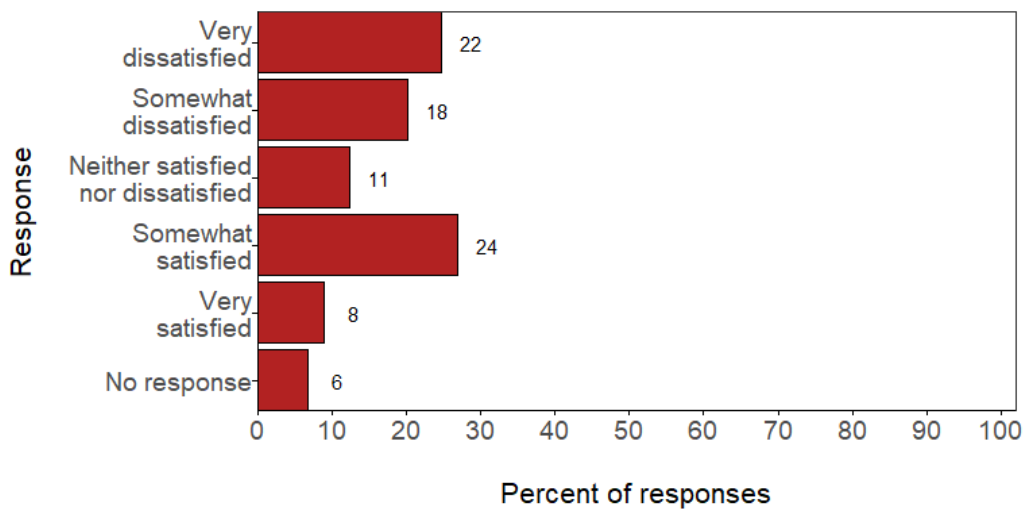


Figure 11. Level of satisfaction by landowners who sought assistance from NGPC concerning assistance with deer damage indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents. There were no responses from landowners owning property in the Loup West DMU.

7) Are you aware that the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission may issue permits to landowners to kill deer outside the hunting season to help reduce damage to their property?

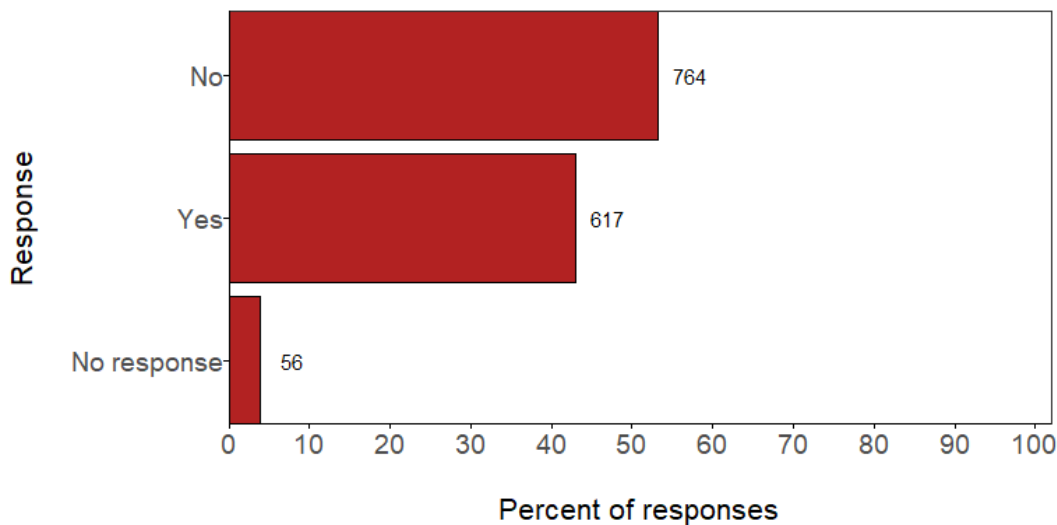


Figure 12. Knowledge of permit availability for landowners to kill deer outside of the hunting season to help reduce damage to property indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

Deer hunting on property

8) Did anyone (including yourself) hunt deer on your land during the past 24 months?

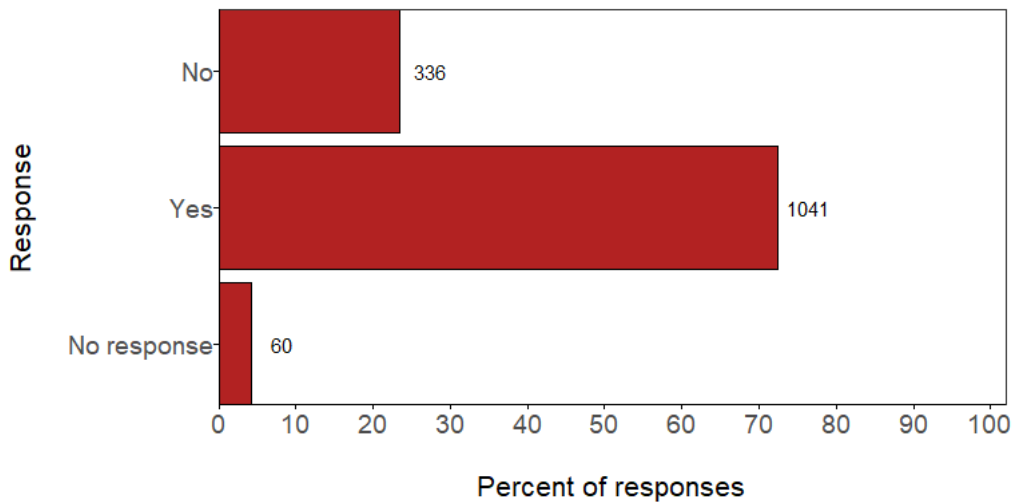


Figure 13. Whether or not any deer hunting occurred on landowner property in the previous 24 months indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

8a) Did you yourself hunt white-tailed deer on your land? (select all that apply)

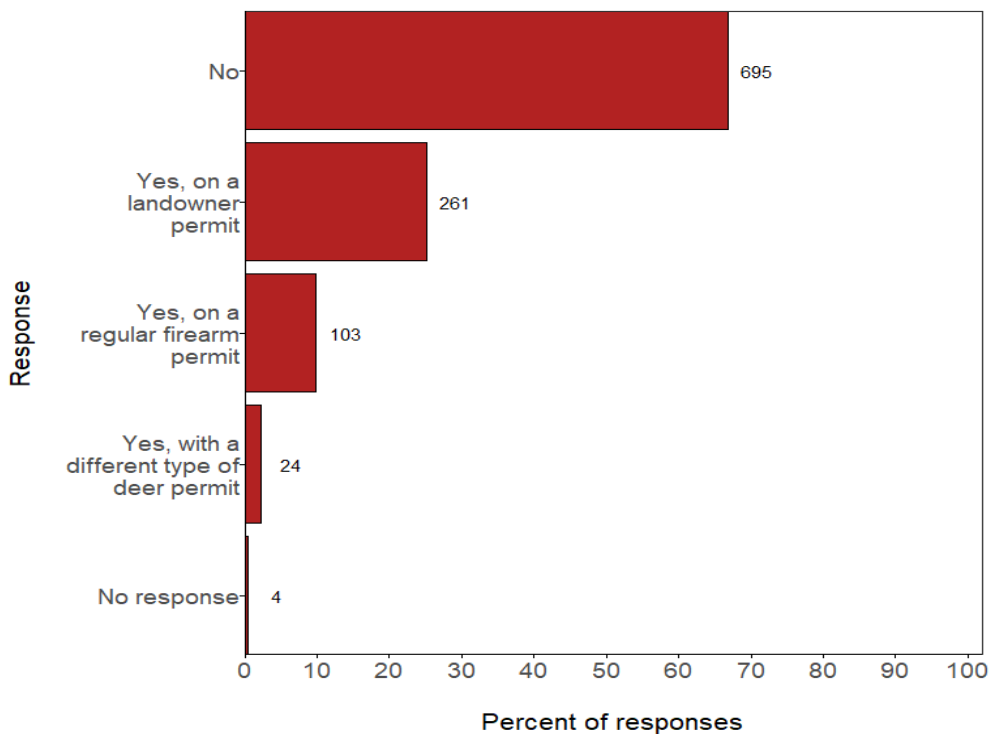


Figure 14. Whether or not the landowner personally hunted white-tailed deer on their land indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

8b) Did you yourself hunt mule deer on your land? (select all that apply)

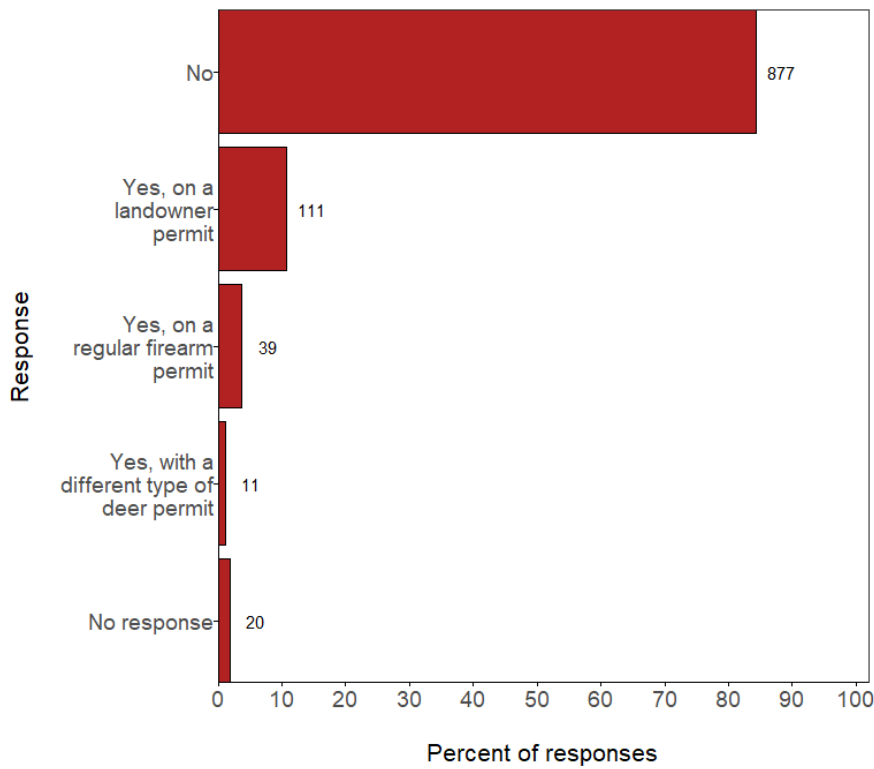


Figure 15. Whether or not the landowner personally hunted mule deer on their land indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

8c) Who else did you allow to hunt deer on your land? (select all that apply)

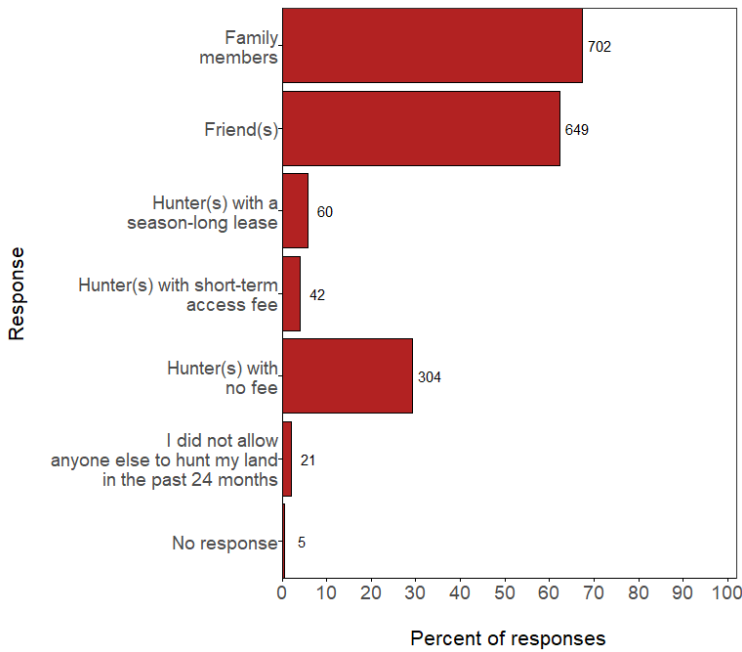


Figure 16. Persons other than the landowner who hunted deer on the landowner's property indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all responses and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of responses.

8d) Which deer did you allow other hunters to harvest on your land? (select all that apply)

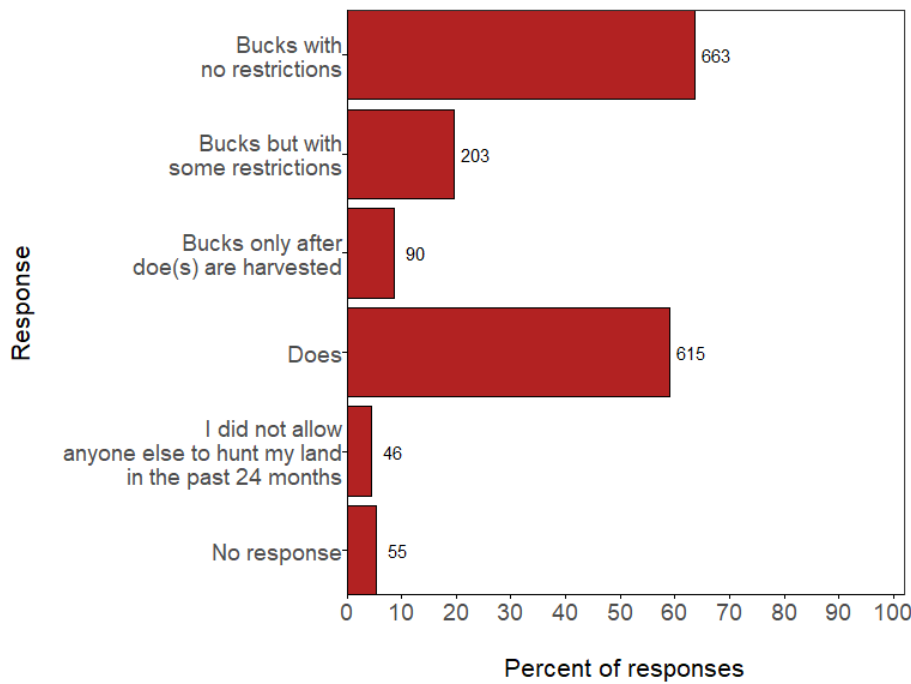


Figure 17. The type of deer landowners allowed others to harvest on their property indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all responses and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of responses.

8e) How many total individuals (including yourself) hunted deer on your land in the 2019 deer hunting season?

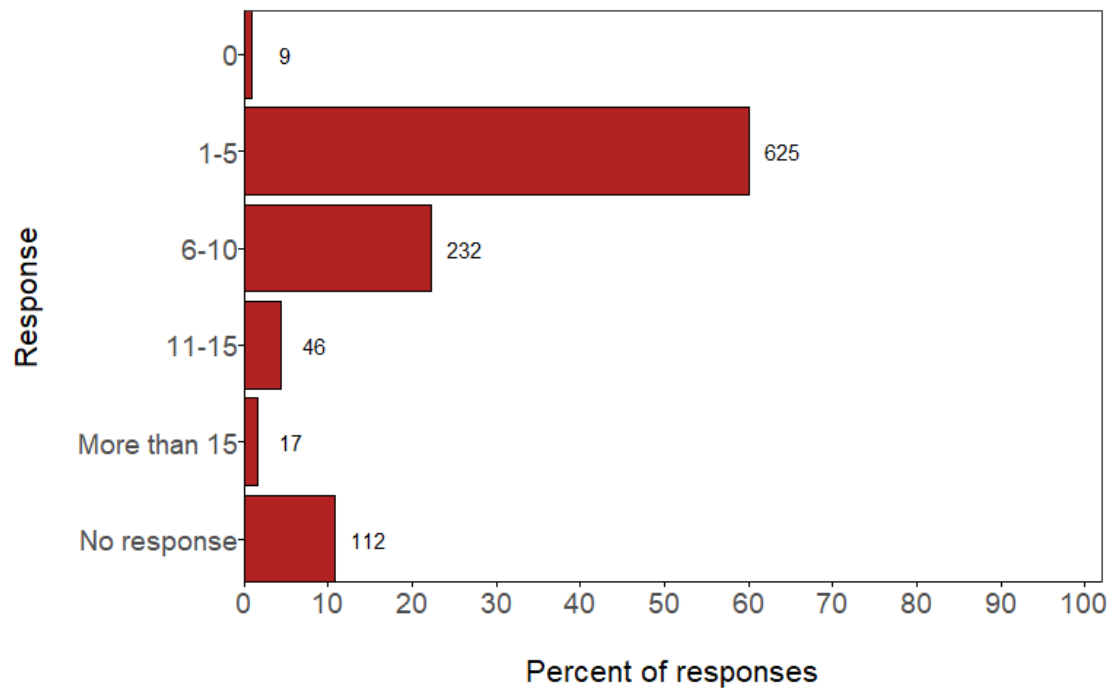


Figure 18. The total number of individuals who hunted deer on the landowners' property in 2019 indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

9a) How do you feel about the number of white-tailed deer on your land during the past 24 months?

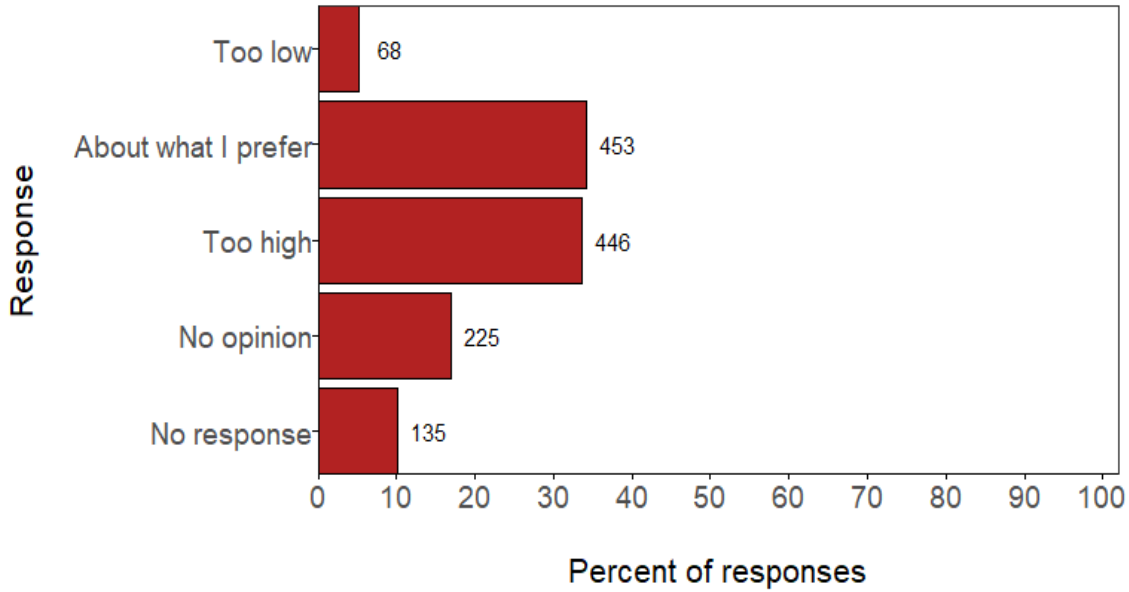


Figure 19. Attitude about the number of white-tailed deer that were present on the landowners' property in the previous 24 months indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents. Responses are limited to those who reported having white-tailed deer on their land.

9b) How do you feel about the number of mule deer on your land during the past 24 months?

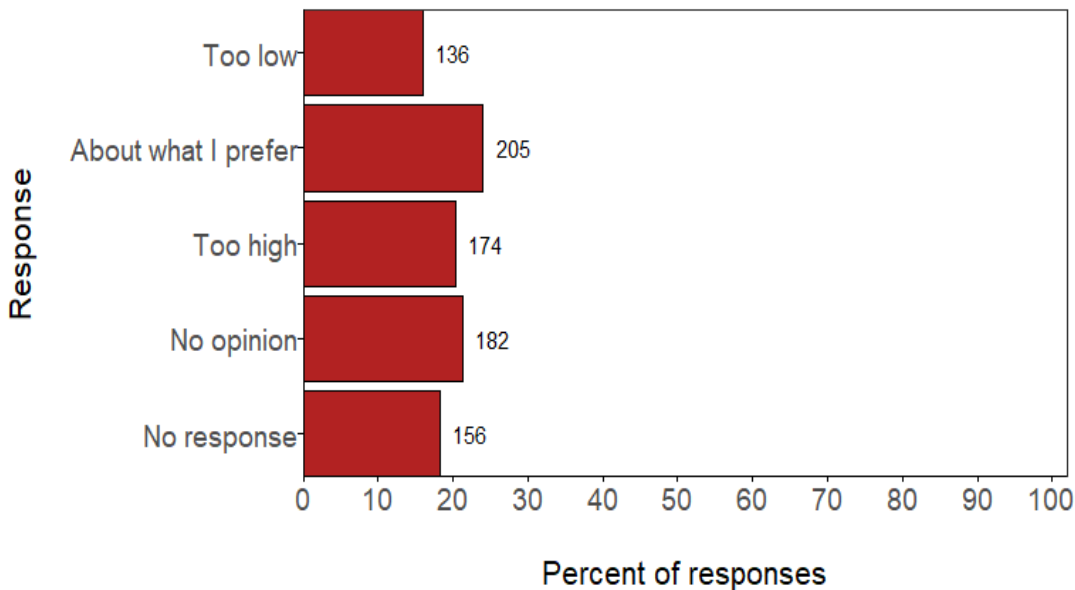


Figure 20. Attitude about the number of mule deer that were present on the landowners' property in the previous 24 months indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents. Responses are limited to those who reported having mule deer on their land.

10) During the past 24 months, have you had problems with hunters during the firearm season?

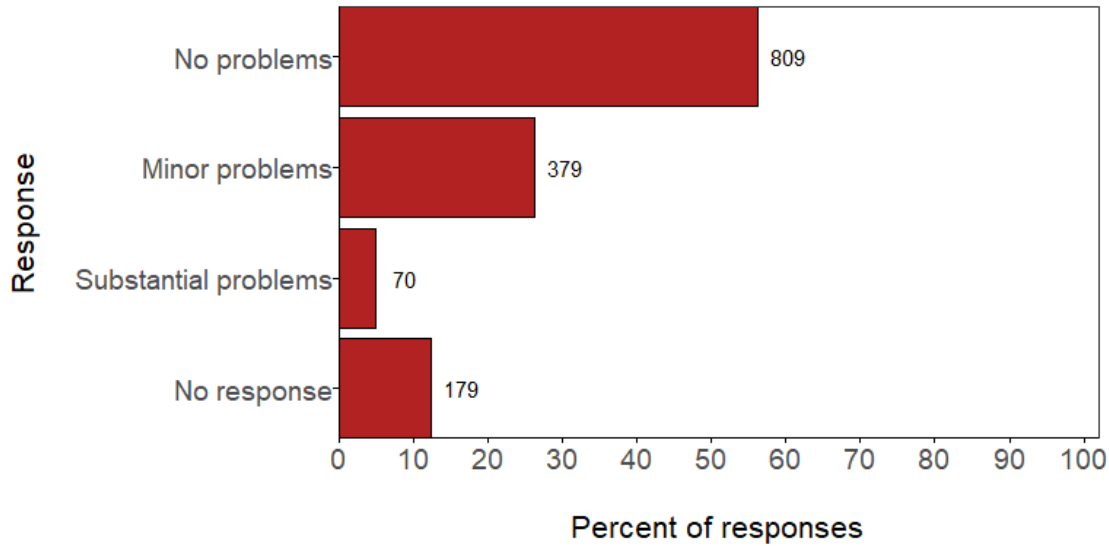


Figure 21. Severity of problems by landowners with hunters during the firearm season in the previous 24 months indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

Attitudes about current deer seasons

11) The current nine-day November firearm deer season ends the Sunday before Thanksgiving. When would you prefer the season take place?

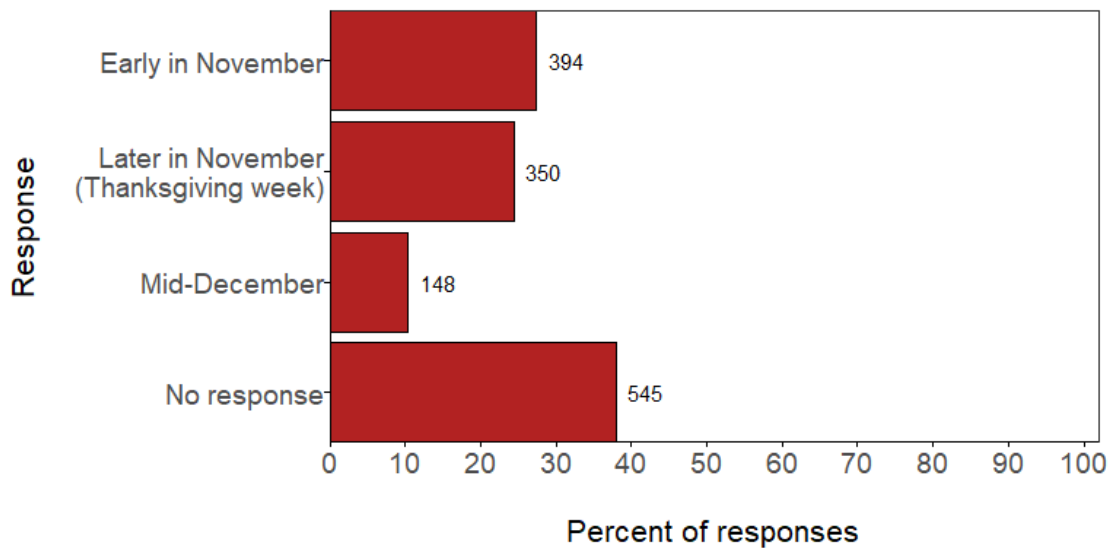


Figure 22. Landowner preference for when the firearm season should take place indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

12) How do you feel about the length of the nine-day November firearm deer season?

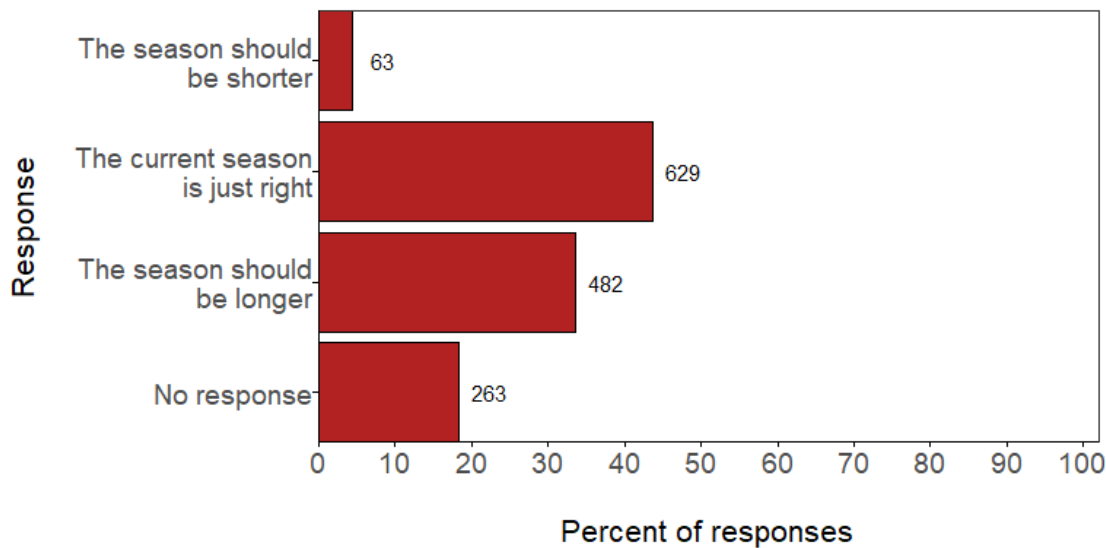


Figure 23. Attitude about the length of the nine-day November firearm deer season indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

13) The late antlerless season currently runs from January 1-15. How do you feel about the length of the late antlerless deer season?

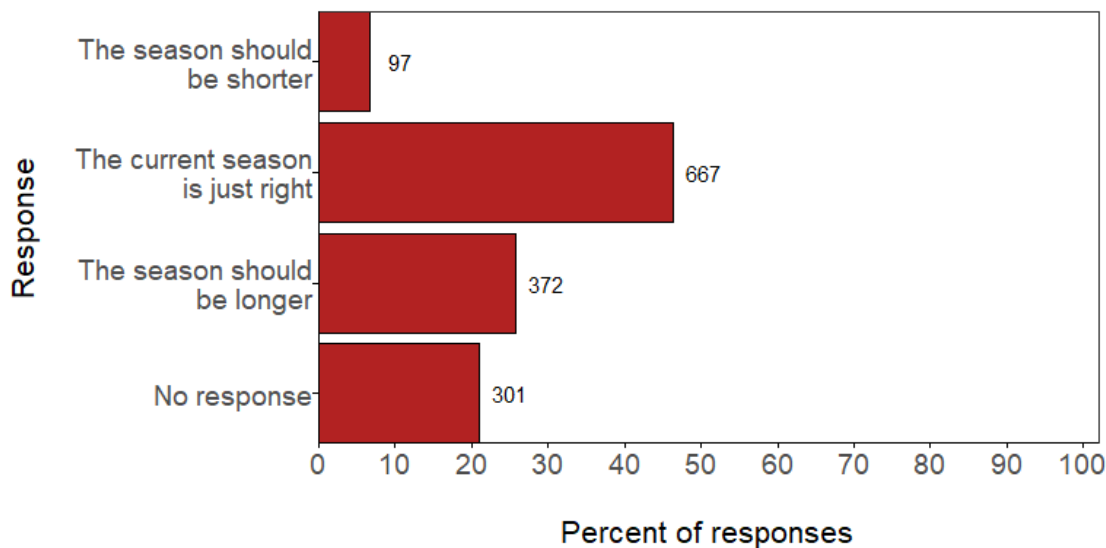


Figure 24. Attitude about the length of the late antlerless deer season indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

14) What would influence you to allow more deer hunters access to your property? (check all that apply)

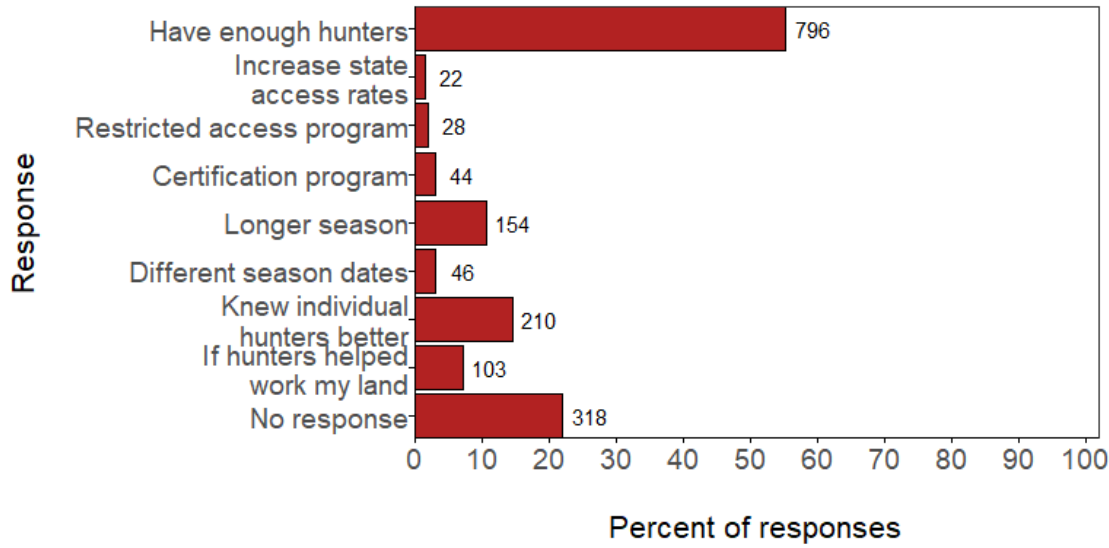


Figure 25. Occurrences which would influence landowners to allow more deer hunters access to their property indicated by respondents to the 2020 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all responses and the number to the right of the horizontal red bars indicates the actual number of responses.