Welcome to the Massachusetts Deer Survey!

You are invited to take part in a survey about deer in Massachusetts. The survey is part of a research project that investigates how concerns about and responses to deer vary across towns and cities in Massachusetts.

The survey should take approximately 10-20 minutes to complete. You can take the survey alone or consult with other town staff or volunteers who have knowledge about deer, hunting, and/or town bylaws or ordinances. You may complete this survey on a mobile device, but we recommend completing it on a computer.

Following completion of the survey, we may contact you to briefly follow-up on specific questions and/or to see if you are interested in participating in a follow-up interview.

Your participation in the survey and any subsequent interview is voluntary and your responses will remain confidential. Your survey responses will be labeled with your town name but not linked to your name or position. We will not include your name or any other identifying information in any reports from this research.

If you have any questions or comments about this research, you may contact the Principle Investigator for the project, Anne Short Gianotti, at agshort@bu.edu. To obtain further information about your rights as a participant in this research project, please contact Boston University Charles River Campus IRB Office at 617-358-6115 or irb@bu.edu.

Thank you very much for helping with this important study!

SECTION 1: Deer in your Town or City

This section will ask you some questions about how deer populations are changing in your town or city and the level of concern residents and town officials have about deer. We know you may not have exact data or numbers and are interested in your perception of the changes and town concerns. Please answer the questions to the best of your ability based on your experiences in your town or city. You can describe any uncertainty in your answers or provide additional information at the end of the section.

1. **Please estimate the proportion of residents that consider deer to be a problem in your town or city.**
   - ☐ All or nearly all
   - ☐ Majority
   - ☐ About half
   - ☐ Minority
   - ☐ None or nearly none

2. **To the best of your knowledge, how are deer numbers currently changing?**
   - ☐ Deer numbers are increasing → *Skip to Question 3 on next page*
   - ☐ Deer numbers are stable → *Skip to Question 3 on next page*
   - ☐ Deer numbers are declining
   - ☐ Don't know → *Skip to Question 3 on next page*

   2.a) What is the cause of the recent decline in deer populations?
   Select all that apply.
   - ☐ Environmental Factors
   - ☐ Implementation of a deer management program
   - ☐ Over-hunting
   - ☐ Other, please specify _____
   - ☐ Don't know

3. To the best of your knowledge, how have deer numbers changed in your town or city in the past 20 years?

☐ Deer numbers have increased

☐ Deer numbers have been stable

☐ Deer numbers have declined

☐ Don't know

4. How frequently do you or other local officials receive complaints about deer from residents?

☐ Often

☐ Sometimes

☐ Never → *Skip to Question 5 on next page*

☐ Don't Know → *Skip to Question 5 on next page*

4.a) Please describe the types of complaints you receive.

5. **How has the number of complaints regarding deer changed over the past ten years?**

☐ The number of complaints has increased

☐ The number of complaints has not changed

☐ The number of complaints has decreased

☐ There are no deer complaints

☐ Don't know

6. **How concerned are *residents* in your town about the following issues?**
Please indicate the level of concern for each item below.

	Strong Concern	**Moderate Concern**	**Minimal Concern**	**No Concern**	**Don't Know**
Deer-Vehicle collisions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Property damage due to deer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tick-borne disease	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Impacts of deer on forests	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Low deer sightings by hunters	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. **How concerned are *<u>you and other</u> officials* in your town about the following issues?** *Please indicate the level of concern for each item below.*

	Strong Concern	Moderate Concern	Minimal Concern	No Concern	Don't Know
Deer-Vehicle collisions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Property damage due to deer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Tick-borne disease	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Impacts of deer on forests	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Low deer sightings by hunters	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

8. **Please use the space below to comment on any uncertainty in your answers to the questions in this section or to provide any additional information that is relevant to understand concerns about deer and recent changes in population.**

Section 2: Deer Hunting in your Town or City

This section contains questions about deer hunting in your town or city.

9. Is hunting allowed on any *private land* in your town/city?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

10. Is hunting allowed on any *land owned or managed by non-profit organizations (e.g., land trust)* in your town/city?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

11. Is hunting allowed on any *state land* in your town/city?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

12. Is hunting allowed on any *land owned or managed by your town/city*?

- ☐ Yes → *Continue with Question 12.a below*
- ☐ No → *Skip to Section 3 on page 7*
- ☐ Don't know → *Skip to Section 3 on page 7*

12.a) What modes of hunting are permitted on lands owned or managed by your town/city?

- ☐ Firearms
- ☐ Archery
- ☐ Firearms and archery
- ☐ Don't know

12.b) How do hunters gain permission to hunt on lands owned or managed by your town/city? *You may select multiple options if different properties have different rules.*

- ☐ Hunters are selected by lottery
- ☐ Hunters are selected by town or city officials (no lottery)
- ☐ Open access, no permit or permission is required
- ☐ Don't know

12.c) If applicable, please describe how hunters are selected including any minimum qualifications considered in evaluating hunter applications.

SECTION 3: Restrictions on Deer Hunting in your Town or City

Some towns and cities have bylaws or ordinances that intentionally or unintentionally restrict hunting beyond state regulations. These bylaws and ordinances may restrict hunting by limiting access to particular properties, requiring written permission for hunting on certain properties, and/or by restricting discharge of firearms and/or arrows. This section asks about any restrictions on hunting in your town or city.

13. Does your town/city have any by-laws that restrict hunting?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

13.a) Which of the following hunting bylaws or ordinances exist in your town in addition to state regulations? *Select all that apply.*

- ☐ No hunting within Town/City limits, no exceptions
- ☐ No hunting within Town/City limits, with exceptions
- ☐ No hunting on some areas of municipal properties
- ☐ No hunting-related firearm discharge within Town/City limits, no exceptions
- ☐ No hunting by bow within Town/City limits, no exceptions
- ☐ Permit, approval, or other written permission required to discharge firearms within town limits
- ☐ Permit, approval, or other written permission required to discharge firearms on municipal property
- ☐ Permit, approval, or other written permission required to hunt by bow on municipal property
- ☐ Written permission or other consent from landowner required to discharge firearms on private lands

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☐ Written permission or other consent from landowner required to release an arrow on private lands

☐ Don't know

☐ Other restrictions. Please specify: _____

13.b) Please enclose a copy any bylaws or ordinances that intentionally or unintentionally restrict hunting in your town or city, or use the space below to indicate where we may obtain a copy of the relevant text.

SECTION 4: Efforts to Expand or Reduce Deer Hunting in your Town or City

Some towns/cities have considered changing town regulations to expand or reduce hunting. The section contains questions about any recent efforts to study deer or to expand or reduce the level of deer hunting in your town or city.

14. Is your town/city currently considering any changes that would expand or reduce hunting?

- ☐ Yes, considering changes that would expand hunting
- ☐ Yes, considering changes that would reduce hunting
- ☐ Yes, considering changes that would both expand and reduce hunting
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

15. In the past ten years, has your town/city expanded or reduced hunting? *Select all that apply.*

- ☐ Yes, the town expanded hunting by changing bylaws
- ☐ Yes, the town expanded hunting opportunities on municipal properties
- ☐ Yes, the town reduced hunting by changing bylaws
- ☐ Yes, the town reduced hunting opportunities on municipal properties
- ☐ No, no changes were made
- ☐ Don't know
- ☐ Other changes were made. Please specify: _____

16. Please describe any past or ongoing efforts to increase or reduce hunting access on private and/or municipal lands.

17. In the past ten years, has your town/city *considered but not implemented* any changes that would expand or reduce hunting?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No → *Skip to Question 18 below*
- ☐ Don't know → *Skip to Question 18 below*

17.a) Please describe the changes that were considered and why your town or city decided not to implement the proposed changes.

18. Has there been opposition to hunting in your town/city?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know

SECTION 5: Sources of Deer Information

Some towns/cities have looked for information about deer management or deer hunting. This section contains questions about any efforts your community may have taken to obtain information about deer management.

19. Has your town/city consulted any of these sources regarding deer management? *Select all that apply.*

- ☐ Division of Fisheries and Wildlife
- ☐ Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)
- ☐ Hunters
- ☐ Non-profit organizations
- ☐ Other communities
- ☐ Private Consultants
- ☐ University Faculty
- ☐ Other (Please Specify): _____
- ☐ Don't know

19. a) If applicable, please specify the non-profit organizations, communities, private consultants, or university faculty consulted or reviewed? *Please list.*

20. Has your community conducted research about the number and/or impacts of deer? *Select all that apply.*

- ☐ Yes, town officials or volunteers have conducted research
- ☐ Yes, other individuals or organizations have conducted research
- ☐ No → *Skip to Section 6 on page 13*
- ☐ Don't know → *Skip to Section 6 on page 13*

20.a) Please describe research about the number and/or impacts of deer in your community.

SECTION 6: Respondent background

Finally, this section contains questions about your position in town or city, and how you have learned about deer in your town or city.

21. What town or city do you work in?

22. How have you obtained information about deer issues in your town? *Select all that apply. (If multiple people are filling out the survey, please select all answers that apply for anyone in the group).*

- ☐ Personal experience
- ☐ Contact with residents in your official capacity (e.g., town meetings, phone calls, etc.)
- ☐ Informal conversations with other residents
- ☐ Conversations with other town officials or volunteers
- ☐ Survey of residents
- ☐ Other. Please specify: _____

23. In the table below, please indicate the positions held by any people who helped to answer the survey.

	Person 1	Person 2	Person 3	Person 4	Person 5
Town/City Clerk	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Town Manger or Administrator	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Select Board	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Animal Control Officer	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Board of Health	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Conservation Administrator/Agent	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Conservation Commission	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (Please specify)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

24. For each additional person who helped with the survey, please indicate the positions held.

Thank You!

We greatly appreciate your participation in our survey on deer management and hunting in Massachusetts. We may be in touch with you to follow-up on some of your responses or to talk more about deer management in your community.

We look forward to sharing results after we complete analysis of the responses in the coming year. If you have any questions or feedback, feel free to contact Anne Short Gianotti at agshort@bu.edu.