

Although it will be five or ten years before degree of success can be better verified, it appears that elk are biologically adaptable to eastern Oklahoma. A limited hunt is tentatively planned for 1973. If illegal kills can be reduced, the future of elk as a significant big game species in eastern Oklahoma will be enhanced. Elk will possibly be limited to refuges and public hunting areas in northeastern Oklahoma, but they have potential for occupying much of the southeastern part of the state. At present it seems feasible that Oklahoma hunters will be harvesting elk far eastward from traditional western United States elk range.

A SPATIAL ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC ATTITUDES TOWARD HUNTING AND FIREARM USAGE IN MIDDLE TENNESSEE

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It has generally been accepted that the public attitude toward ownership and usage of firearms has undergone considerable change as the American population has become more urbanized. This study examines the attitudes of Middle Tennesseans toward hunting and the use and control of firearms (non-pistol) by individuals. An areal analysis was conducted to determine differences of opinion within the population according to the type of residence — rural, town or city.

A random sample was conducted during October 1971 by personal questionnaire in a city of approximately 450,000, a town of 17,000, and from rural dwellers of Middle Tennessee. The sample was confined to adult males because of the traditional masculine nature of hunting and the use of guns. The total sample consisted of 270 individuals; 55 from rural, areas, 72 from small towns and 143 from the city.

In an analysis of Table 1, differences between the three groups become readily apparent. The number of adult males who consider themselves hunters changes from 70% for the rural man to 44% for those living in small towns to 30% for the city resident. The greater opportunity offered the non-urban person probably accounts for this difference, but the fact that competitive recreational pursuits are fewer in the country might also be a contributing factor.

The differences in opinion either favoring or opposing all hunting is relatively consistent throughout the region. Nearly 90% of rural dwellers favored hunting while 71% of both town and city persons felt likewise.

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Table 1. Public opinion toward hunting and firearm (non-pistol) registration in Middle Tennessee during October 1971 as indicated by results of a questionnaire submitted to a sample of adult males.

	Percentage		
	Rural Residents	Town Residents	City Residents
Hunters	70	44	30
Non Hunters	30	56	70
Favor Hunting	89	72	71
Oppose Hunting	7	14	12
No Opinion	4	14	17
Oppose Registration of Hunting Guns	60	60	41
Favor Registration of Hunting Guns	36	30	54
No Opinion	4	10	5

As to the question of governmental registration of hunting weapons, about 60% of the rural and town residents opposed any such regulation. The person who lived in the city, however, favored registration of all firearms by about the same margin as the others had disapproved of the measure. This difference can perhaps be explained by the fact that fewer city residents are hunters and because of the fact that city law enforcement officials generally support federal legislation on hand gun control as an aid in crime control.

The small town and rural hunter was able to get into the field an average of 13 and 12 times per year respectively while the city resident could hunt only seven times per year. When each group was asked whether or not hunting in Tennessee was better now than twenty years previously, between 50 and 60 percent in each group answered in the affirmative. Nearly 100% of deer hunters answered "yes" to this question.

Men who indicated that they were hunters were asked to indicate the type of game they had hunted at least once in the previous 12 month period. The results listed in Table 2 shows small game the most pursued. Squirrel and rabbit stand out with more than one-half of the hunters indicating they had hunted each species at least one time in the past year. Approximately one-third of the hunters interviewed sought quail and dove while one-quarter hunted deer.

There are several implications revealed in the findings of the survey. One is that some firearm regulatory control may be a reality in the foreseeable future. Consequently, professionals in the area of wildlife management should evaluate their own state or region to determine the impact of any future registration laws.

Another implication of the survey is that the small game hunter will probably demand implementation of research and regulatory measures to insure his being able to participate in this leisure activity. It is well known that habitat is the key to small game success. It is also well known that habitat is perhaps the most difficult thing to provide in areas where most of the land is privately owned. Programs to encourage development of small game cover should be espoused at every available opportunity. A new federally sponsored experimental program operating this year in several states (including South Carolina and Louisiana in the Southeast) may provide some help in this area of small game. The program pays farmers an average of \$300 to allow hunting and fishing on their property.

Table 2. Type of game hunted at least one time during the year prior to October 1971 as indicated by results of a questionnaire submitted to a sample of Middle Tennessee hunters.

	Percent Hunted			Total
	Rural Residents	Town Residents	City Residents	
Squirrel	73	65	50	61
Rabbit	65	68	41	58
Quail	43	22	34	34
Dove	30	34	30	31
Deer	27	24	22	24
Varmit	6	13	1	6
Water Fowl	1	2	4	3
Bear	0	11	0	3
Turkey	3	3	0	2
Boar	0	3	0	1

A QUICK METHOD TO ASSESS STREAMSIDE WOOD DUCK BREEDING HABITAT

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In response to a need for information on wood duck habitat in north Alabama for use in a TVA regional land-use planning report, a quick method of assessing overall streamside breeding habitat was developed and executed in 1970. Biologists from TVA and the Alabama Department of Conservation participated. All streams large enough to be noted on each road map of the 11 counties were visited at all points crossed by roads. The immediate habitat was rated as good, fair, or poor and/or none. The following criteria were used:

Good: Wide mix of 14" + dbh hardwoods, overmature trees visible, little human disturbance.

Fair: Good mix of hardwoods up to 14", few overmature trees, some human activity.

Poor and/or Non-habitat: Hardwoods generally 10" or less, high human activity; or habitat destroyed.

Results of the survey are given in Table 1.

Nearly 1,600 miles of such streams were visited in approximately two man-months' time. Twenty-one percent was rated good; 28 percent fair; and 51 percent poor or non-habitable for wood ducks throughout the 11-county north Alabama area. Habitat in individual counties ranged from Jackson County's 55 percent good to DeKalb's 87 percent poor and/or non-habitat rating.