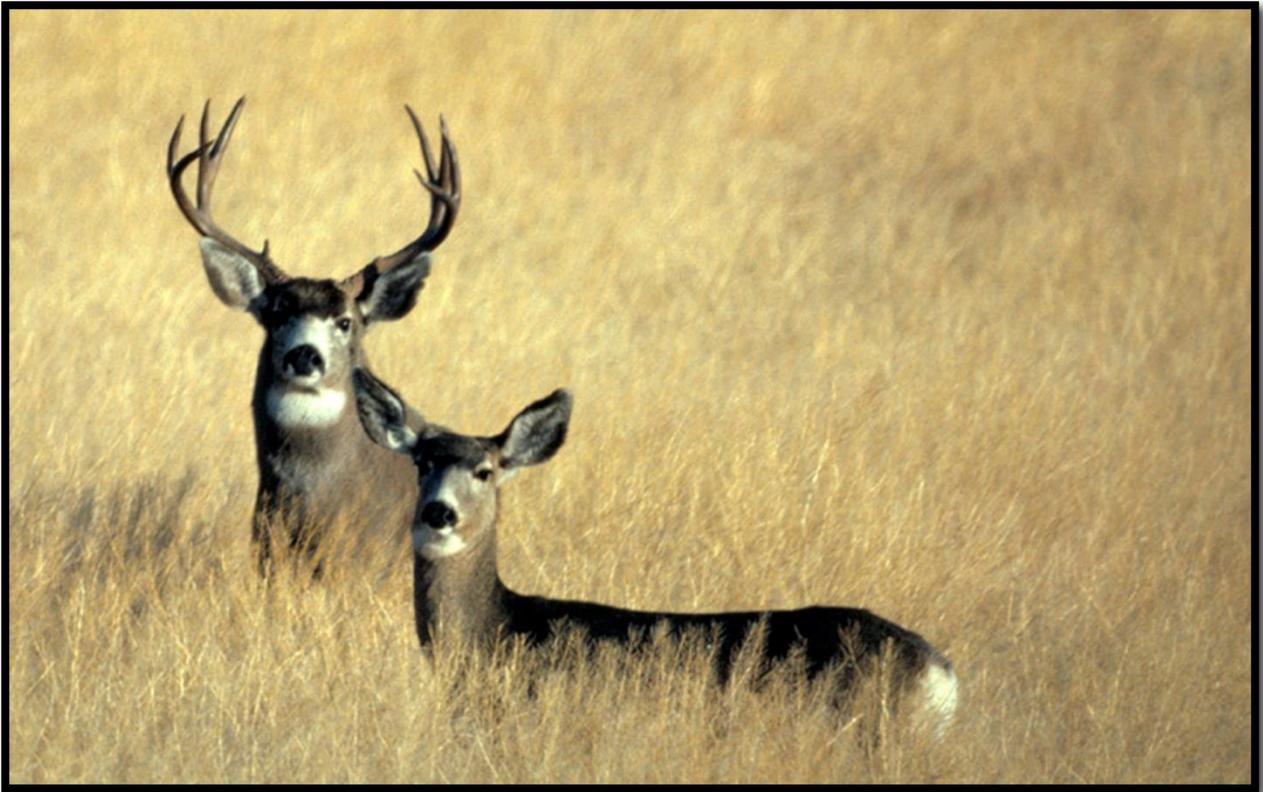


FINAL REPORT

Mule Deer Hunting and Management: Experiences, Attitudes and Preferences of Nevada's Mule Deer Tag Applicants



Prepared by:

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For:

Nevada Department of Wildlife

April 17, 2014

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Introduction

In November of 2013, at the request of the Tag Allocation and Application Hunt Committee (the TAAHC; a subcommittee of the Nevada Board of Wildlife Commission), the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW)) contracted with the Department of Conservation Social Sciences in the College of Natural Resources at the University of Idaho (UI), to develop a methodology and conduct a survey to measure the opinions and satisfaction levels among Nevada's mule deer hunters. This is a final analysis and report of the data collected between January 10, 2014 and April 11, 2014. These results, collected from 638 respondents, represent an unbiased representative sample of the Mule Deer hunter population of Nevada, and is accurate to better than $\pm 5\%$, at a 95% Confidence Interval. Appendix 1 presents an analysis of non-response characteristics.

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of the survey, as articulated by the TAAHC, was to learn from respondents their attitudes and opinions about such topics as "trophy" animals; "quality" hunt (i.e., quality v. quantity, congestion, etc.); season structures (i.e., weekend v. weekday openers, split seasons, season lengths, etc.); attitudes toward predation management; attitudes toward the use of Off Highway Vehicles; and so forth.

In 2012, 57,249 applicants applied for various big game tags during the main draw. A target group of 1,200 randomly-selected tag applicants was identified by NDOW to participate in the survey. Respondents were randomly selected from the pool of applicants who applied in 2012 and 2013 for mule deer tags for the big game draw (aka “main draw”). Past applicants under the age of 18 were excluded from this survey. Because approximately 10% of Nevada’s mule deer tags are issued to nonresidents, the sample included approximately 10% nonresident hunters.

Most (96%) of the applicants applied for tags using Nevada’s online application process. The remaining 4% applied using the traditional paper application process. Therefore, approximately 4% of the sample was paper-only applicants who had a history of applying on paper-only over the two years of 2012 and 2013. To maximize convenience to the participants, the survey process utilized a hybrid process allowing for both online and paper responses (to be returned to UI via US Postal Service).

Methodology

- In the first step of the survey process, NDOW sent an email to the random sample of 1,200 tag applicants on January 8, 2014, announcing that a survey was being conducted in cooperation with the Department of Conservation Social Sciences at the University of Idaho.
- The University designed two cover letters and postcards, and business envelopes for out-going and return responses. All letters and postcards were coordinated and approved by NDOW prior to use.
 - o The first cover letter was the initial contact announcement of the survey inviting addressees to participate in the survey. This letter was printed and mailed by NDOW on January 10th and explained the purpose of the survey and invited the respondents to take the survey online. It also informed them that if they did not want to take the survey online, they would be sent a paper copy of the questionnaire with a postage-paid return envelope.

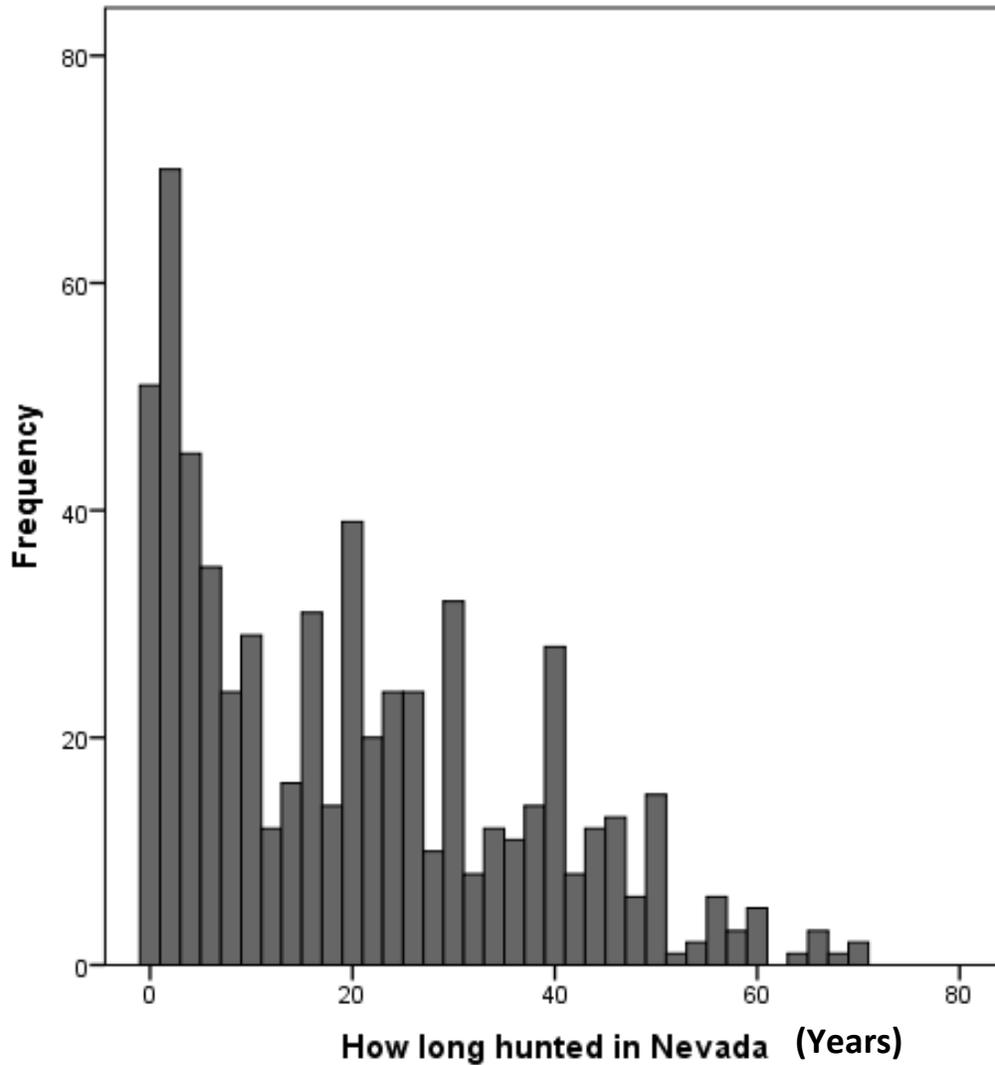
- A post card was sent on January 23rd by the University of Idaho after the first cover letter was mailed, to thank people who had already responded and to serve as a reminder to complete the questionnaire.
 - A second cover letter was sent as a final reminder asking addressees to complete the survey. These letters were sent by the University to only to those who had not yet taken the survey. Anticipating that most of those who have not taken the survey by this time have not done so due to their lack of internet access or having no computer experience, a paper questionnaire was provided in this second letter and included a postage-paid return envelope, so the respondent could complete the paper survey and return it to UI.
 - A final email reminder was sent by the staff of NDOW on March 26, 2014, to all remaining non-respondents.
 - Thirty-eight of the 1,200 mailings were undeliverable, resulting in a sample size of 1162. Eventually, 638 useable questionnaires were returned via mail and online for a response rate of 54.9%. Of these, 68.2% of the 638 responses were received on-line, and 31.8% were mailed in by the end of the survey on April 11, 2014.
- The University of Idaho created a website to host the online questionnaire. The University designed the online and paper questionnaires to be identical (same questions, potential responses, and sequence of questions) so that the data from both questionnaires could be merged into one data set.
 - The University informed the NDOW of the number of responses received on a weekly basis.
 - The University received mailed-in questionnaire responses and entered data into the database. The written PRELIMINARY report was provided to NDOW on March 5, 2014.

Results for Each Question

First, a few questions about your general hunting behavior.

1. About how long have you hunted in Nevada? *(Please enter number of years)*

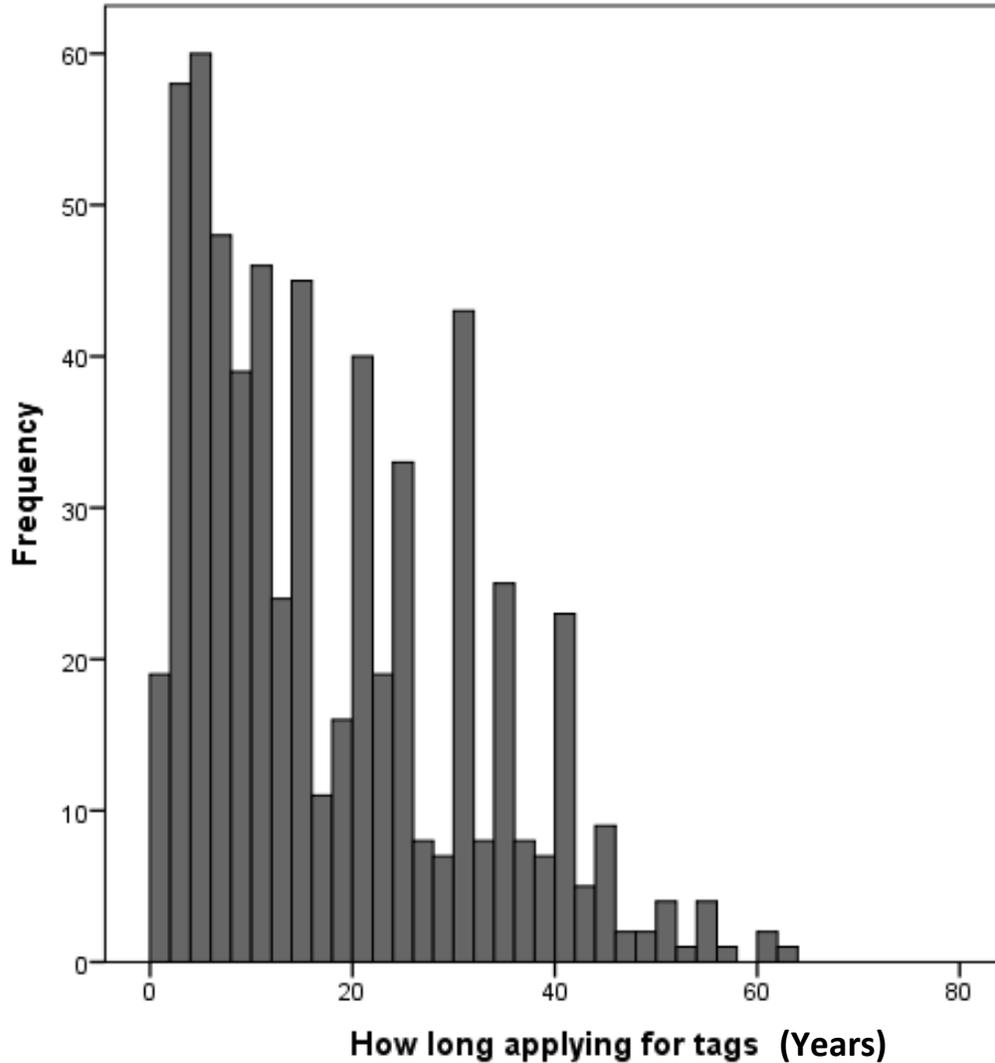
19.4 (mean) YEARS



Nevada residents have hunted in Nevada for an average of 23.8 years, while non-residents average 8.2 years. Overall, the Mule Deer hunting population is largely new hunters, with a declining proportion of seasoned hunters.

2. About how long have you been applying for **Mule Deer** tags in Nevada? (Please enter number of years)

17.6 (mean) YEARS



Nevada residents have hunted Mule Deer in Nevada for an average of 20 years, while non-residents average 11.5 years. Overall, the Mule Deer hunting population is largely new hunters, with a declining proportion of seasoned hunters.

3. Please circle those years that you did hunt Mule Deer in Nevada during the past 7 years? (*Please circle all that apply*)

Years Hunted	Resident Percent	Non-resident Percent
2013	45.0%	33.7%
2012	51.0	31.7
2011	40.2	30.0
2010	38.7	21.0
2009	45.8	26.0
2008	39.2	26.0
2007	38.3	26.0

Resident hunters participate at a higher rate than do non-resident hunters.

4. When applying for Mule Deer tags in Nevada, what is your primary weapon of choice? (*Please check only one response*)

Primary Weapon	Percent
Muzzleloader	5.9%
Longbow	11.2
Any legal weapon	82.9

5. Including yourself, how many tag holders at any one time do you typically go big game hunting with in Nevada? (*Please write in your response below*)

I typically hunt big game with 2.6 (average) tag holders, including myself, at any one time.

6. How many non-tag holders at any one time do you typically go big game hunting with in Nevada? (*Please write in your response below*)

As a tag holder I typically hunt big game with 1.4 (average) non-tag holders at any one time.

7. Are there any times during the **Mule Deer** season in Nevada that you prefer or avoid? (*Please check as many as apply in either column*)

Time of Season	Percent	
	I Prefer	I Avoid
Opening Day	61.5%	38.5%
First Weekend	61.5	38.5
First Week	80.1	19.9
Any Weekend	71.9	28.1
Any Weekday	91.4	8.6
Last Week	87.9	12.1
Last Weekend	75.7	24.3
Last Day	71.9	28.1

The most preferred times to hunt Mule Deer are “any weekday,” “last week,” “first week,” and “last weekend.” About a third of the hunters tend to avoid “first weekend” and “opening day.”

Now, some questions about your Nevada Mule Deer hunting experiences and preferences.

8. How often do you expect to be successful at **drawing** a MULE DEER TAG in Nevada? (*Please check only one response in the one appropriate column*)

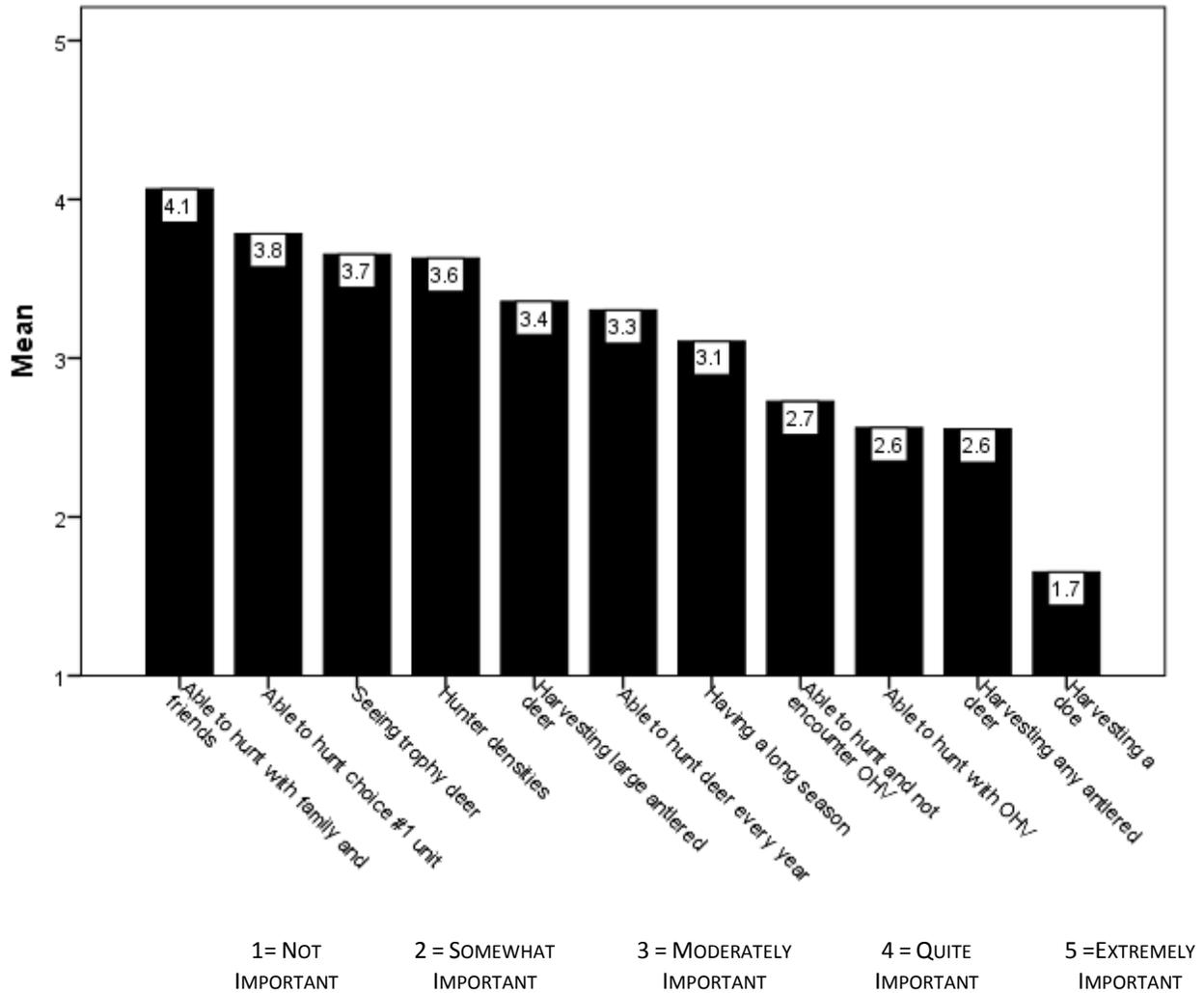
	Percent	
	Nevada Residents	Non-Residents
Every Year	26.2%	3.7%
Once Every 2 Years	38.9	12.4
Once Every 3 Years	20.9	23.0
Once Every 4 Years	7.8	13.0
Once Every 5 Years	3.6	14.9
Once Every 6 Years	0.7	8.1
Once Every 7 Years	2.0	24.8

About a third of Nevada residents expect to draw a tag every 2 years; non-residents are less optimistic with about a quarter expecting a successful draw every 3 years and an equal percentage expecting to be successful only 1 in every 7 years.

9. The quality of a Nevada Mule Deer hunting experience is dependent on many different attributes.
What is important for you?

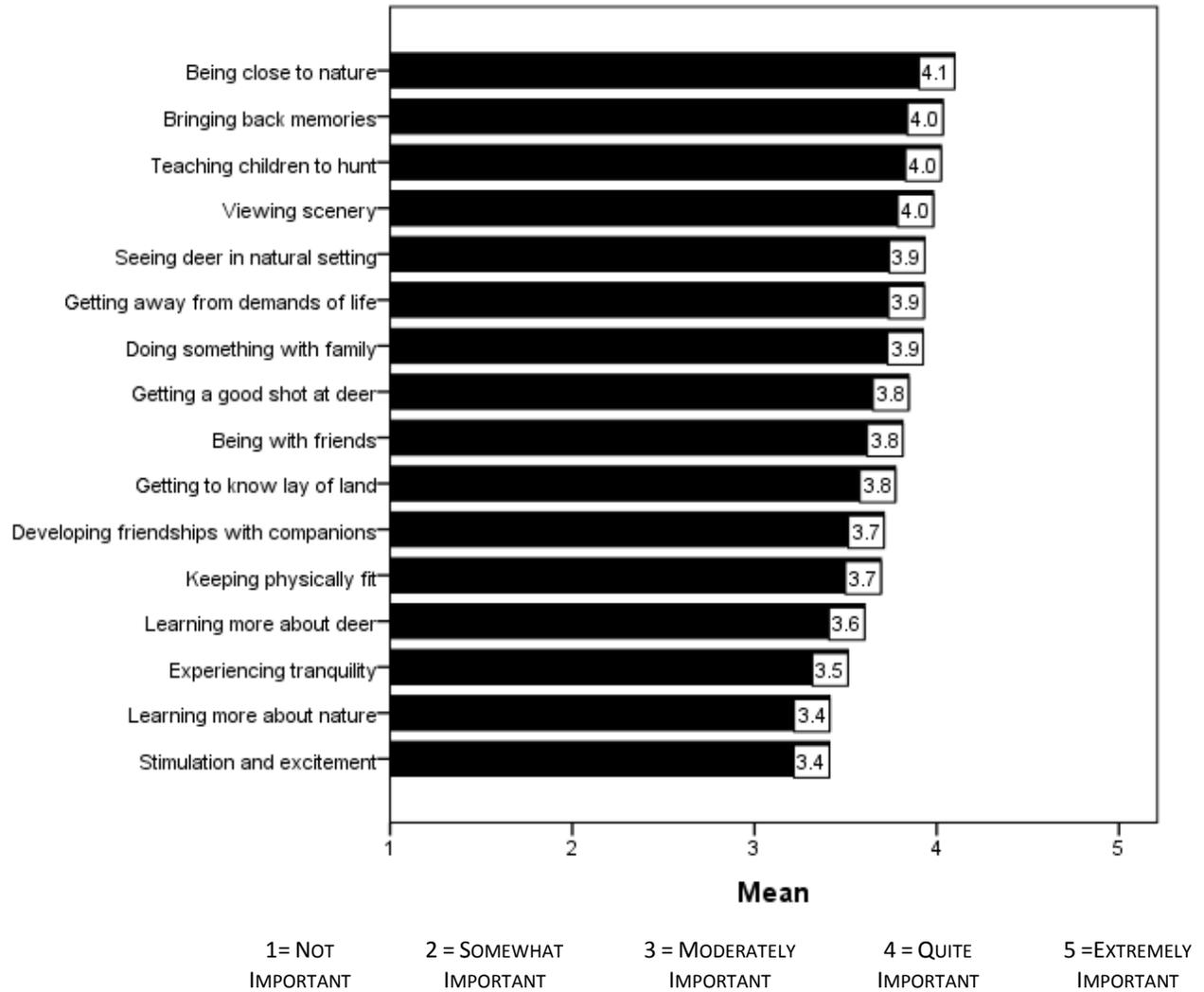
Attributes of a Quality Nevada Mule Deer Hunting Experience	Percent				
	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Moderately Important	Quite Important	Extremely Important
Being able to hunt Mule Deer with family and friends	4.2%	6.5%	12.2%	31.8%	45.3%
Seeing "trophy" Mule Deer	6.9	13.2	18.1	30.3	31.5
Being able to hunt Mule Deer every year	14.7	13.3	22.1	23.9	26.0
Low hunter densities	4.5	10.5	25.5	36.5	23.0
Harvesting large antlered Mule Deer	7.8	16.0	26.9	29.6	19.7
Harvesting a doe	28.5	19.0	20.8	15.7	15.7
Being able to hunt Mule Deer using an Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV)	38.9	13.3	15.9	17.7	14.3
Being able to hunt in the #1 unit of my choosing	10.8	16.4	33.2	27.5	12.1
Harvesting any antlered Mule Deer	31.7	17.2	23.0	16.9	11.2

Question 9 (continued)

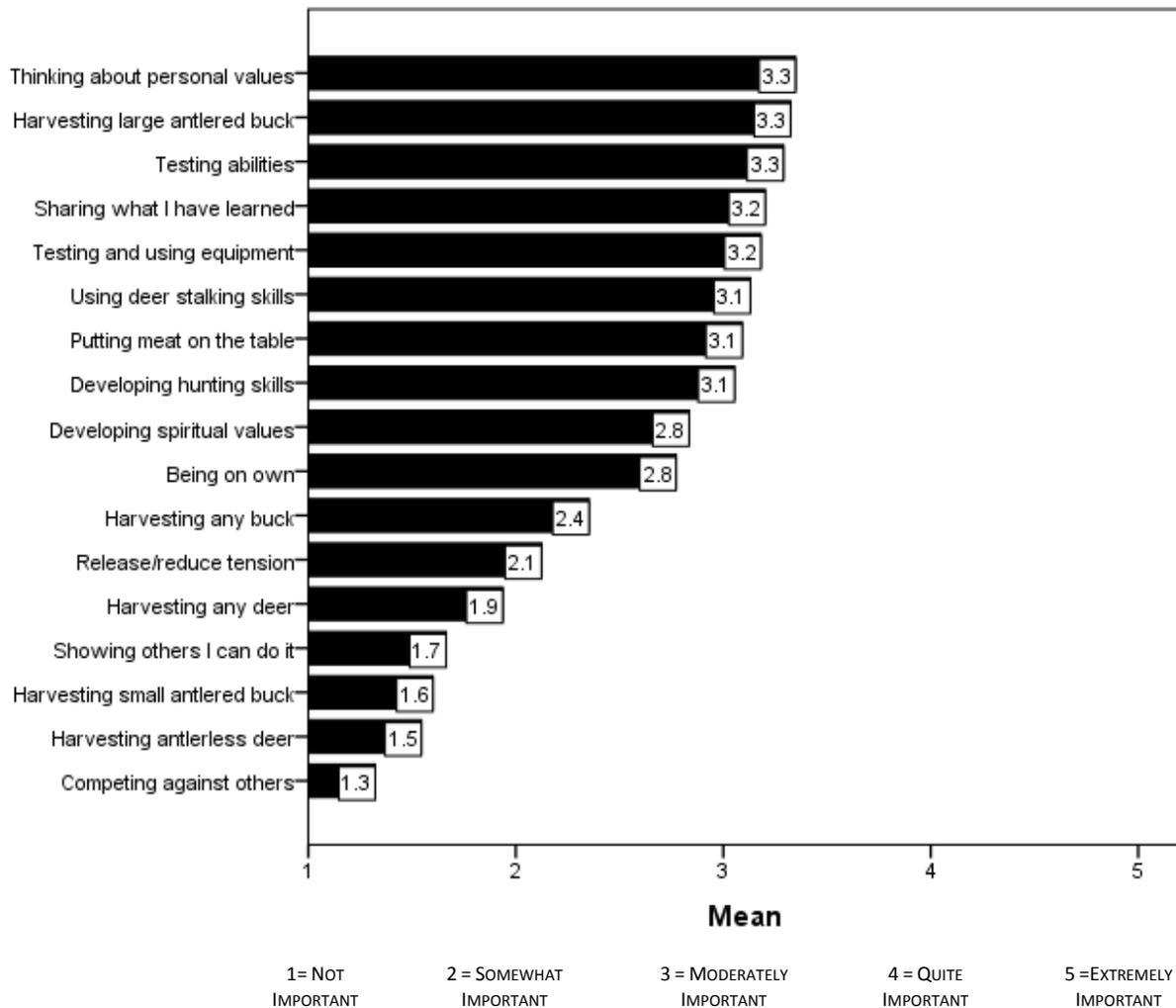


Hunters place most importance on being able to hunt with family and friends, seeing trophy deer, and being able to hunt deer every year. Slightly less important are the low hunter densities and being able to hunt in their preferred unit. Hunting with an OHV, harvesting any deer or harvesting a doe are least important.

10. People are motivated to hunt for many different reasons. How important to you is each of the following reasons for hunting Mule Deer in Nevada?



Question 10 (continued)



The most important motivations (≥ 4.0 , quite important) deal with the outdoor experience. Motivations that average a score of 3.0—3.9 (moderately important) are also dominated by the social nature of the hunting experience. Only 3 motivations deal with deer: getting a good shot, harvesting large antlered buck, and putting meat on the table. Of the items that are least important, 4 out of 9 deal specifically with harvesting.

11. How interested are you in applying for Mule Deer tags in Nevada for the next two years (2014-2015)? *(Please check one response)*

Percent				
NOT INTERESTED	SOMEWHAT INTERESTED	MODERATELY INTERESTED	QUITE INTERESTED	EXTREMELY INTERESTED
1.7%	2.7	3.9	11.2	80.5

Residents and non-residents had similar response patterns, and a majority is extremely interested in applying for a Mule Deer tag for the 2014-15 seasons.

12. In areas where doe harvest may be necessary in order to achieve management goals, would you support either sex archery deer tags? *(Please check one response)*

Percent			
I FAVOR IT	I DO NOT FAVOR IT, BUT IT IS ACCEPTABLE	IT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE	I NEED MORE INFORMATION
57.8%	23.6	7.2	11.5

Over half of the hunters favor an either sex tag; the option is acceptable to over 80% of the sample.

13. How do you feel about the use of personal trail cameras for monitoring wildlife during hunting? *(Please check one response)*

Percent			
I FAVOR IT	I DO NOT FAVOR IT, BUT IT IS ACCEPTABLE	IT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE	I NEED MORE INFORMATION
28.3%	38.2	25.5	8.0

Personal trail cameras for monitoring wildlife during hunting are not favored by Nevada Mule Deer hunters: Just over a quarter of the sample favors the use of trail cameras, and almost 40% find the practice acceptable, and it is not acceptable to 25.5%.

Next, your opinions about some possible Mule Deer management options.

14. Are you in favor of antlerless hunts (harvesting does) for Mule Deer if it could improve deer herd health or result in more fawns or larger bucks? *(Please check one response)*

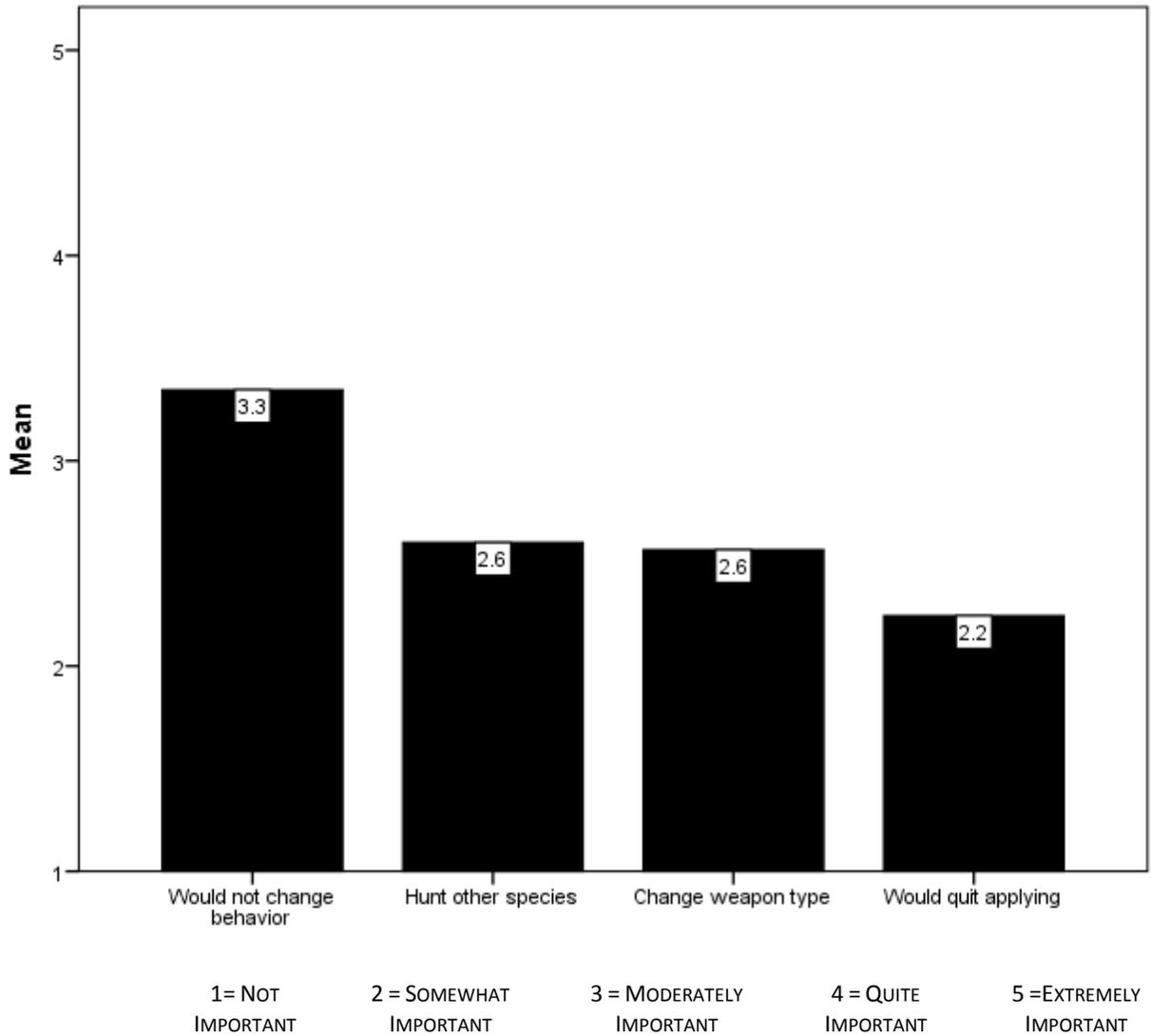
	Percent
No	7.2%
Yes	86.6
I don't know	6.2

A solid majority is supportive of antlerless hunts.

15. ***IF*** Mule Deer management strategies resulted in decreased deer hunting opportunities, how might your hunting behavior change?

Changes in your hunting behavior	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Neither Unlikely Nor Likely	Likely	Very Likely
I would quit applying for Nevada deer tags	38.2%	24.7%	18.3%	12.3%	6.5%
I would change my weapon type for increased deer hunting opportunity in Nevada	29.8	21.7	20.0	19.3	9.2
I would shift to hunting other species in Nevada	25.4	23.2	25.1	18.6	7.7
I would not change my Nevada tag application behavior	15.9	13.7	17.1	26.0	27.3

Question 15 (continued)



Hunters will stay loyal to the sport and are unlikely to change their Mule Deer hunting behavior in the face of changes in management that result in a decrease in Mule Deer hunting opportunities.

16. We would like to know how you feel about the management of Mule Deer in Nevada. Please indicate your opinion on the following **potential** management options. (*Check one answer for each management action*)

Potential Management Options	I Favor It	I Do Not Favor It, But It Is Acceptable	I Would Not Accept It	I Would Need More Information
Special trophy deer areas, where the odds of drawing a tag are only 1 in 20 (5% chance)—but you should experience fewer hunters in the field, cooler temperatures, and longer seasons	50.6%	27.3%	14.1%	8.0%
A hunt specific to and restricted to designated Wilderness areas only, with their own dedicated tag allocations, knowing that access to the Wilderness areas is limited to pack animals or by foot only	41.0	26.0	22.0	11.0
Shorter early season (no longer than 12 days and incorporating only one weekend) hunts for any legal weapon—but you might have a chance to draw a deer tag every year	32.6	29.2	28.4	9.8
More late-season hunts that would result in significant reduction in tags and tag draw success each season—but you will likely get to experience lower hunter numbers	31.9	30.6	26.3	11.1
Reduced tag availability that may reduce your chances of drawing a deer tag—but you may get to hunt a longer deer season	25.0	33.6	31.8	9.6
Several shorter seasons with your chances of getting a tag significantly reduced—but you will experience lower hunter densities	24.7	34.2	29.5	11.6
A lower harvest success—but you could draw a tag and have an opportunity to hunt deer more often	21.3	31.0	30.0	17.7

Potential Management Options	I Favor It	I Do Not Favor It, But It Is Acceptable	I Would Not Accept It	I Would Need More Information
Shortening the Mule Deer season from 30 days to 14 days—but there would likely be more tags issued	20.8	25.8	46.3	7.2
Fewer tags, with regulations limiting the number of non-hunters in your party—but you will likely experience lower hunter densities	17.6	23.1	46.4	12.8
Two or three shorter deer seasons with more hunters in the field—but it may allow you to draw a deer tag more often	13.5	26.6	51.4	8.5

A majority rated four of the ten potential management options unacceptable. Conversely, the other 6 options were favored or accepted by at least 50% of the sample.

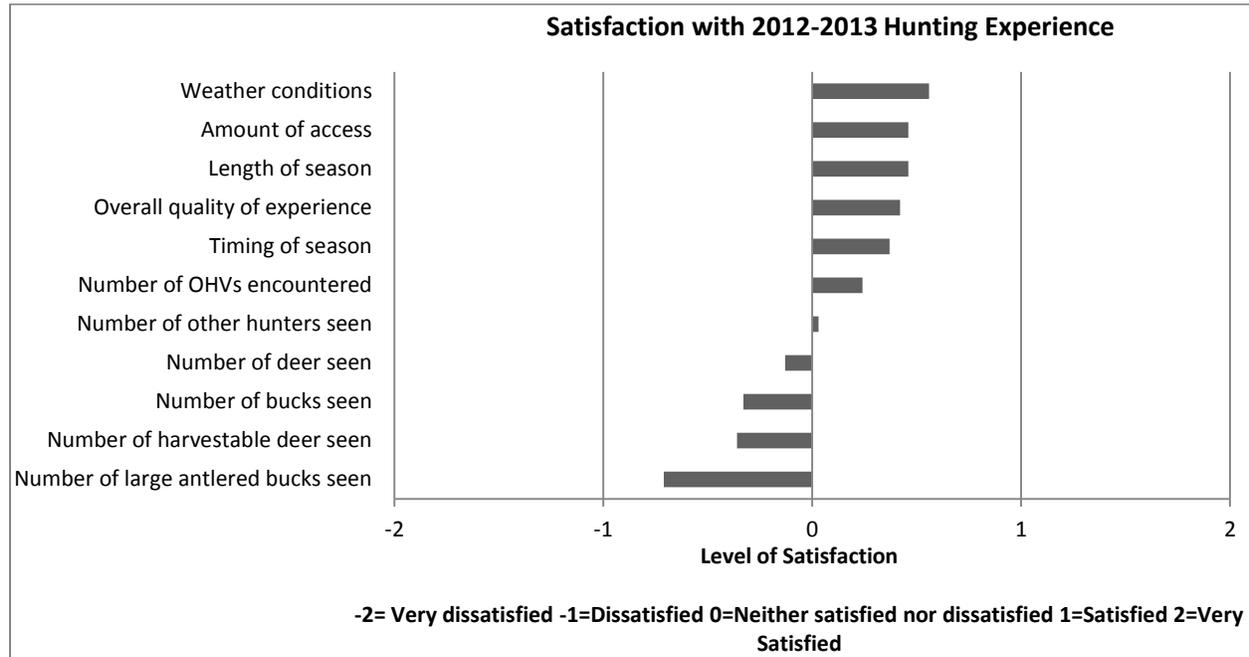
Now, some questions about your satisfaction with your Nevada Mule Deer hunting experiences.

17. How satisfied were you with your 2012-2103 Nevada Mule Deer hunting experience?

Attributes of your 2012-2013 Nevada Mule Deer hunting experience	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
The weather conditions during your hunt	5.4%	10.2%	24.6%	42.8%	17.1%
The overall quality of your Mule Deer experience	7.5	14.7	21.9	40.7	15.3
The amount of access	8.4	12.0	17.5	49.4	12.7
The number of deer you saw	18.2	25.4	17.9	28.7	9.9
The number of off-highway vehicles (OHVs) you encountered while hunting	10.5	8.7	36.1	35.2	9.3
The length of the deer season	6.9	9.3	23.4	52.0	8.4
The number of other hunters you saw	15.6	16.2	26.0	33.8	8.4
The number of bucks you saw	19.9	30.4	19.0	24.1	6.6
The number of harvestable deer you saw	20.4	33.0	15.0	25.2	6.3
The timing of the deer season	8.1	11.7	21.1	53.0	6.0
The number of large antlered bucks you saw	35.0	26.9	17.1	16.2	4.8

Question 17 (continued)

MEANS



Hunters were satisfied with 6 of the 11 attributes of their 2012-13 Mule Deer hunting experience. They were neutral about the number of other hunters seen, and were dissatisfied with 4 attributes: the number of deer seen, the number of large antlered bucks seen, the number of bucks seen, and the number of harvestable deer seen. For all four, a majority was either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their experience.

18. Overall, how satisfied are you with your chances of DRAWING a Mule Deer tag in Nevada? *(Please check one response)*

		Percent		
VERY DISSATISFIED	DISSATISFIED	NEITHER SATISFIED NOR DISSATISFIED	SATISFIED	VERY SATISFIED
12.3%	25.9	30.8	27.1	4.0

Although the plurality of respondents (30.8) were neutral about their satisfaction with their chances of drawing a tag, a slightly larger proportion (38.2%) were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their chances, compared with 31.1% who were either satisfied or very satisfied with their chances. Nevada residents were more satisfied with their chances of drawing a tag than were non-residents—33.2% were very satisfied/satisfied versus 24.5% of non-residents.

19. Overall, how satisfied are you with the job that the Nevada Department of Wildlife does managing Mule Deer populations? *(Please check one response)*

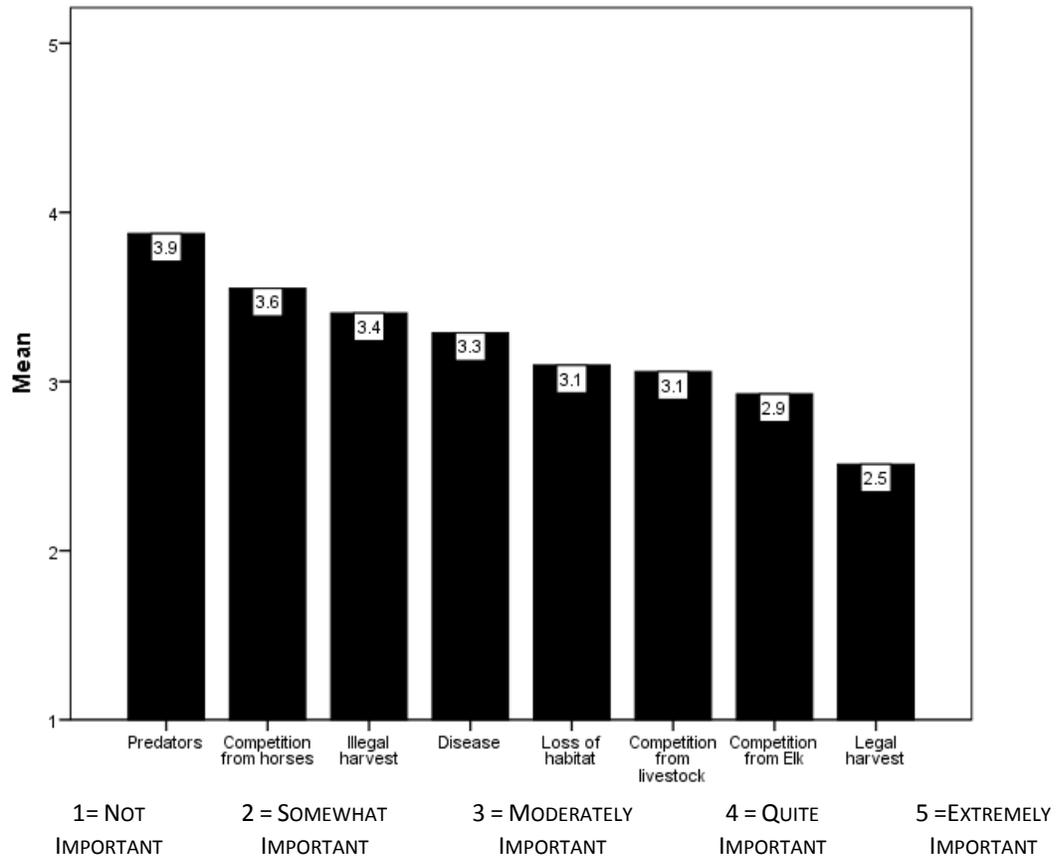
Percent				
VERY DISSATISFIED	DISSATISFIED	NEITHER SATISFIED NOR DISSATISFIED	SATISFIED	VERY SATISFIED
9.1%	13.9	34.6	36.6	5.7

A plurality (42.3%) is satisfied or very satisfied with the job that the Nevada Department of Wildlife does managing Mule Deer populations; about a third is neutral, and less than a quarter are dissatisfied. Non-residents hunters are more satisfied (over 54.1% versus 28.5% for residents, are either satisfied or very satisfied). This pattern holds up for the negative side of the scale too: 37.8% of residents are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, compared with 8.8% of non-residents.

20. In your opinion, what factors are negatively affecting Mule Deer populations in Nevada?

Potential Factors Negatively Affecting Mule Deer Numbers	Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Neither Unlikely Nor Likely	Likely	Very Likely
Predators (Coyotes, Mountain Lion, Bobcats)	3.2%	9.9%	15.9%	38.1%	32.9%
Competition from wild horses	6.5	17.0	21.9	24.0	30.6
Illegal Mule Deer harvest (poaching, etc.)	4.7	18.1	24.9	36.5	15.9
Loss of habitat (due to housing, mining and energy development)	11.1	26.1	19.7	28.7	14.5
Competition from livestock	7.9	26.6	28.6	25.5	11.4
Competition from Elk	8.4	27.0	34.2	22.8	7.7
Wildlife diseases	2.4	17.0	36.8	36.9	6.9
Legal harvest of Mule Deer	15.9	36.5	30.2	14.9	2.5

Question 20 (continued)



Predators, wild horses, and illegal harvest and wildlife diseases are perceived as the factors depressing Mule Deer populations the most. Respondents were split on habitat loss and competition from livestock or Elk. Current sport hunting is not considered a likely factor.

21. Which of the following statements is closer to your opinion about hunting Mule Deer in Nevada?
 (Please check only one response)

	Percent
I don't care as much about the size of the number of points on a Mule Deer, what is most important to me is successfully <i>harvesting a Mule Deer each season</i>	36.8%
I am more interested in <i>mature or trophy Mule Deer</i> and will often bypass the chance to shoot smaller bucks, even if this means I do not harvest a Mule Deer during the season	63.0

22. Some people are motivated to hunt for trophy Mule Deer, while others are more opportunistic and will harvest any legal deer to fill their tag. To what degree do you consider yourself to be a trophy Mule Deer hunter or an opportunistic hunter? (Place an X in the appropriate box to show where you fall on this spectrum)

		Percent											
I am Primarily a Trophy Hunter	12.8%	11.9	13.1	9.9	6.8	10.0	8.2	8.8	8.3	3.7	6.5	I am Primarily an Opportunistic Hunter	

(Q 21 & 22, above) About two-thirds (63%) of the sample is more oriented towards mature or trophy animals. However, 90% of non-residents are more interested in mature or trophy Mule Deer and will often bypass the chance to shoot smaller bucks, even if this means they do not harvest a Mule Deer during the season (52.1% of residents are trophy hunters).

23. How do **you** define a **trophy** Nevada Mule Deer? (Please write in a suitable number for each characteristic that is important to you)

If you prefer to harvest **only** does, check here and → → skip to Q24, below.

If you have **NO** specific trophy preferences, check here and → → skip to Q24, below.

- ANTLER POINTS/SIDE _____ POINTS/SIDE
- ANTLER LENGTH _____ INCHES
- ANTLER SPREAD _____ INCHES
- BODY SIZE (WEIGHT) _____ POUNDS
- BOONE & CROCKET OR
POPE & YOUNG SCORE _____ POINTS

A majority (54.7%) of the sample had specific preferences for trophy animals and their responses are presented below. These data must be used with caution. Half (50.2%) of those who had specific preferences for trophy deer entered data in all 5 categories. 21.4% entered data in 4, and 12.1% in three.

Number of categories checked (Q23b-f)

Number of categories	Frequency	Percent
None	7	2.2
1	17	5.3
2	29	9.0
3	39	12.1
4	69	21.4
5	162	50.2
Total	323	100.0

The analysis below for Question 23B through 23F is from Cody Schroeder, Wildlife Staff Specialist – Game Division, NDOW.

Regarding Question 23 “how do you define a trophy,” it is apparent that some of the survey respondents did not interpret the categories correctly.

Q23B

Antler Pointer per Side	Percent
4	79.4%
5	15.3
6	5.3

Q23B: Overall it makes sense and is consistent with how I would expect it to be, the majority define a trophy as 4 point or better.

Q23C

Antler Length in inches	Percent
10	3.4%
12	8.4
14	2.8
15	1.7
16	3.4
17	1.1
18	5.1

Antler Length in inches	Percent
19	1.1
20	21.9
21	1.1
22	3.4
23	.6
24	20.8
25	6.7
26	7.3
27	1.7
28	5.6
30	3.9

Q23C: It is clear “Antler Length” was not interpreted the same by all respondents. But, the survey question did not define what is meant by “antler length” so it is somewhat understandable (e.g. main beam length vs. tine length vs. overall score in inches). I queried the 2010 Nevada Record Book (6th edition) for Typical Mule Deer and found that Right and Left Main Beam measurements varied between about 20 to 30 inches for over 1400 records that met the minimum 160 B&C score. Less than a dozen were over 30 inches in length and the longest main beam measurement was 30 4/8” on the 1919 Irland Buck which was only #8 all-time and scored 200 7/8 inches overall. The few survey returns that were recorded as less than 10” make no sense at all, the only possible thing I could think was that they were thinking “any antler tine length” or again simply wanted to make a statement that any measureable antler is a trophy.

Q23D

Antler Spread in inches	Percent
24	9.2%
25	8.0
26	12.2
27	4.2
28	25.2
29	1.5
30	39.7

Q23D: Antler spread was not defined as either “inside” or “greatest spread” as the distinction is made by Boone and Crockett, but I believe the vast majority of sportsmen use the outside or “greatest spread” when casually referring to mule

deer they see or harvest. However, beyond the small numbers, the overall distribution looks “normal” with the majority using “30 inches” as a benchmark that is typical of Nevada sportsmen and sportswomen to define as a trophy.

Q23E

Body Size – weight in pounds	Percent
120	.9%
140	.5
150	4.1
160	.9
170	1.4
175	3.6
180	10.5
190	2.7
200	36.4
210	1.8
215	.5
220	5.0
225	1.8
230	.9
235	.5
240	1.4
245	.5
250	22.3
275	.5
280	.9
300	3.2

Q23E: This category is problematic in my opinion and shouldn't be used for any management purposes. First, the survey didn't distinguish between Live Body Weight or Field Dressed weight, most hunters don't have the capability to weigh whole deer with stomach contents anyway, so they are simply guessing. I'm assuming respondents would be using “Live or Total” body weight as a reference, but even here the numbers are drastically optimistic. I queried our mule deer capture database to get an idea of real weights. We captured over 75 adults bucks between 2010 to 2014 all of which were considered “mature bucks” and live weights ranged between 120 to 200 lbs. The mean weight was 160 lbs. and only three deer were over 195 lbs. (of the 75 sampled deer, over half were 4 points or better and 4 were over 30 inches outside spread). Of the roughly 25% of respondents who considered a trophy deer to be at least 250 lbs. or more are simply not aware of reality for Nevada mule deer.

Q23F

Boone & Crockett or Pope & Young Score	Percent
150	1.6%
155	1.0
160	11.9
165	3.1
170	11.9
175	4.7
180	28.0
195	5.2
190	13.0
195	2.6
200	14.0
202	.5
220	.5
230	1.0
240	1.0

Q23F: Again the survey did not distinguish between Typical and Non-Typical for B&C score or Pope and Young score. B&C and P&Y are the exact same score (in measurements and inches) but the minimum score is what distinguishes between them (190 min for BC, 145 for PY record book). I'm assuming most respondents are using "Typical" as their reference point. Overall, the results make good sense, the majority are between 160 (Nevada Record book minimum) and 200 with a few fairly high-standard folks over 200 (or perhaps they were considering a Non-Typical score). For reference, there are only 9 entries in the NV Record Book (out of > 1400) for Typical mule deer that score 200 or more inches with the largest (as of 2010) being 205 4/8" taken in 1983 by Erich Burkhard.

Finally, some questions about you.

24. If awarded a tag, have you ever “turned in” a Mule Deer tag during the past 2 years (2012-2013)? *(Please check all that apply)*

	Percent
No	88.4%
Yes, in 2012	6.5
Yes, in 2013	5.3

“Turning in” a Mule deer tag is an infrequent behavior for hunters.

25. If you do NOT draw a tag, do you usually try to accompany family or friends who have drawn a deer tag, on a hunt? *(Please check one response)*

	Percent
No	30.9%
Yes	69.1

Two-thirds of hunters who do not draw a tag do try to accompany family or friends who have drawn a deer tag, on a hunt.

26. In March of 2013, the Nevada Department of Wildlife made major revisions to their website (www.ndow.org). Have you visited the NDOW website since this revision? *(Please check one response)*

	Percent
No	32.3%
Yes	67.7

27. If you have visited the revised NDOW website please rate the website’s ease of navigation? *(Please check one response)*

	Percent
Extremely difficult to use	1.7%
Somewhat difficult to use	19.9
Somewhat easy to use	61.2
Extremely easy to use	17.2

The new NDOW website has been seen by almost two-thirds of Mule deer hunters and most of them (78.4%) find the site somewhat or extremely easy to use.

28. Suggested improvements for the NDOW website provided by respondents.

Written suggestions from respondents are provided in Appendix 2.

29. From what sources do you currently get your information about Nevada Department of Wildlife's Mule Deer management strategies and programs? *(Please check all that apply)*

Sources of Information	Percent
Friends	58.8%
NDOW website	58.1
Other hunters	56.4
NDOW reports, publications, pamphlets	39.9
Internet/forums	25.0
Magazines	21.5
Newspapers	21.2
NDOW staff	15.4
TV	8.5
County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife	8.2
Radio	6.8
Other	0.5

Note: respondents were allowed to select multiple responses; percentages sum to greater than 100%.

Congruent with many previous studies of information dissemination, Nevada Mule deer hunters rely most on word-of-mouth sources (Friends, 58.8% and other hunters, 56.4%) for information about Nevada Department of Wildlife's Mule Deer management strategies and programs. Since it is not known where these sources get their information from, the mix of available sources provided should be maintained. The "Other" category includes mention of stores, hunting organizations, and ranchers.

30. Are you aware of the *County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife* system (referred to as CABs or County Game Boards)? *(Please check only one response)*

	Percent
No	71.9%
Yes	28.1

31. If YES, how many County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife or Wildlife Commission meetings have you attended in the past 3 years (2011, 2012, & 2013)? *(Please check only one response)*

	Percent (of the 28.1%)
None	78.4%
One meeting	6.8
Two meetings	4.3
Three or more meetings	10.5

Less than a third of all hunters are aware of *The County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife* and very few have attended CAB meeting in the past three years.

32. In the past two years (2012 & 2013) have you been a member of any conservation or sportsmen's organizations? *(Please check one response)*

	Percent
No	60.8%
Yes	39.2

33. Would you be interested in becoming more involved in wildlife management issues, and in particular Mule Deer management, at the *County Advisory Boards to Manage Wildlife* or Wildlife Commission meeting level? *(Please check only one response)*

	Percent
No	38.4%
Yes	22.8
I don't know	38.8

34. If the Nevada Department of Wildlife offered a Mule Deer Management Seminar which would address techniques to improve hunter success and enhance the hunt experience, how to process the harvested deer to ensure quality care of the meat, and proper care of the cape for a taxidermist, would you attend? *(Please check one response)*

	Percent
No	35.3%
Yes	41.0
I don't know	23.7

35. Are you: *(Please check only one response)*

	Percent
A resident of Nevada	72.5%
A U.S. Citizen, but <u>NOT</u> a resident of Nevada	27.2
Not a U.S. Citizen	.3

36. If you are a Nevada resident, what county are you a resident of? *(Please write in the name of your Nevada county of residence)*

County	Percent
Carson City	4.0%
Churchill	2.1
Clark	23.7
Douglas	3.0
Elko	18.3
Eureka	0.5
Humboldt	3.0
Lander	2.1
Lincoln	1.6
Lyon	5.6
Mineral	0.5
Nye	3.7
Pershing	0.7
Storey	0.5
Washoe	27.9
White Pine	2.8

37. If you are a Nevada resident, how many years have you been a resident of the state? *(Please write in your answer)*

I HAVE BEEN A NEVADA RESIDENT FOR **33.4 (mean)** YEARS

38. How many children do you have? *(Please write in your answer)*

I HAVE 2.7 (mean) CHILDREN

	Percent
I have no children	17.4%

39. How many of your children hunt? *(Please write in your answer)*

1.9 (average) OF MY CHILDREN HUNT

	Percent
None of my children hunt	21.9%

40. How many years of formal education have you completed? *(Please circle one number)*

Years of Education	Percent
Elementary School	
1	0%
2	0
3	0.2
4	1.0
5	0.3
6	0.3
JR. High-High School	
7	0.2
8	0
9	0.5
10	0.5
11	2.0
12	24.5
College or Trade School	
13	12.5
14	16.2
15	8.1
16	15.3
Graduate or Professional Degree	
17	4.0
18	5.9
19	2.2
20	2.2
21+	4.0

41. Are you (*Please check one*):

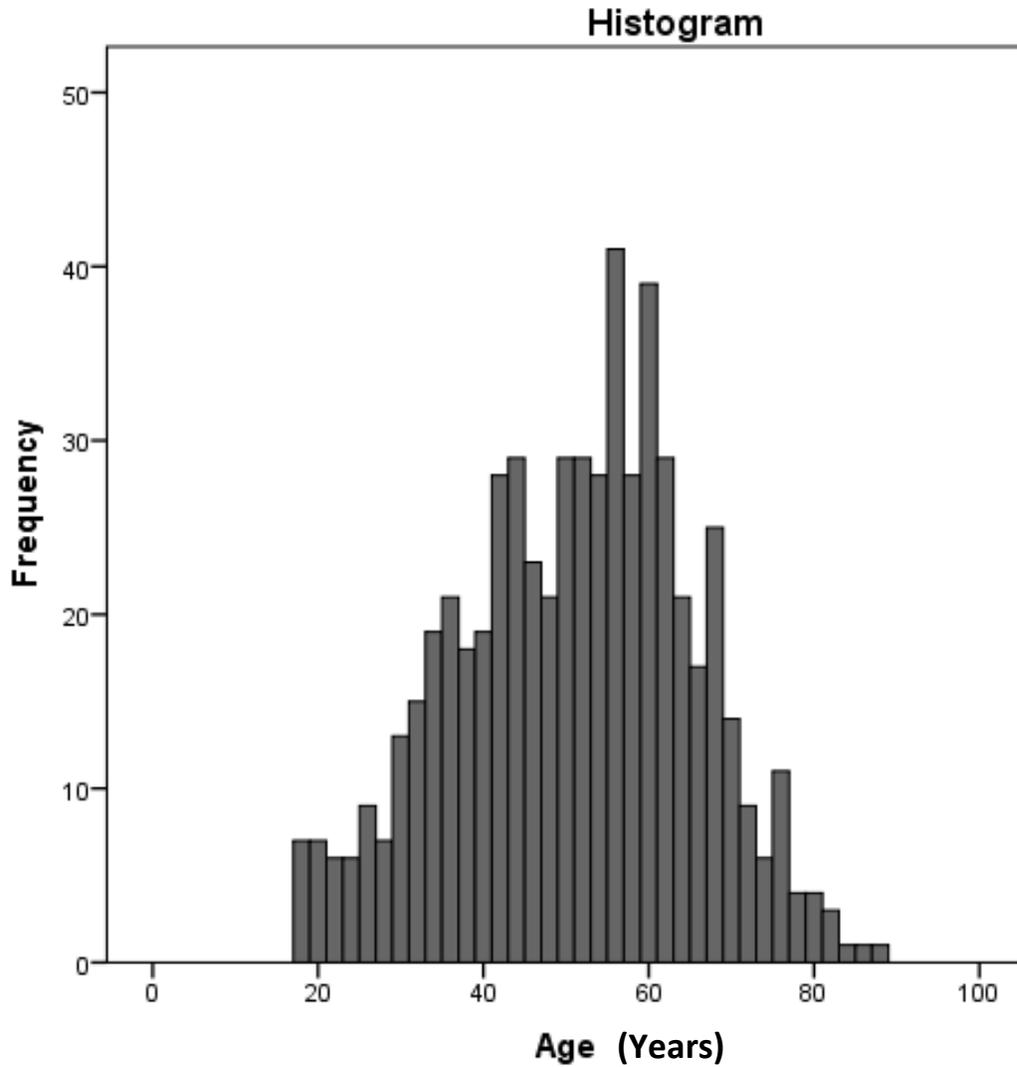
	Percent
Female	12.0%
Male	88.0

42. Are you currently: (*Please check all that apply*)

	Percent
Employed full-time	69.9%
Employed part-time	5.1
A student	3.6
Retired	22.1
A homemaker	2.7
Unemployed	1.5

43. What is your current age? *(Please write in your answer)*

50.4 (mean) YEARS



44. Do you have any “physical condition such as vision or hearing impairment, or any condition that limits your ability to perform activities such as walking, climbing, reaching, lifting, or carrying?” *(Please check one response)*

	Percent
No	83.4%
Yes	16.6

45. How likely will your age or health impair your ability to hunt Mule Deer in the next 2 years (2014-2015)? *(Please check only one response)*

PERCENT				
VERY UNLIKELY	UNLIKELY	NEITHER UNLIKELY NOR LIKELY	LIKELY	VERY LIKELY
54.9%	22.2	10.4	9.4	3.0

46. Which of the following best describes your approximate annual total household income, before taxes, for **2012**? *(Please check only one response)*

	Percent
I'd rather not answer	18.4%*
Less than \$20,000	3.3
\$20,000-\$39,999	7.6
\$40,000-\$59,999	14.1
\$60,000-\$79,999	18.7
\$80,000-\$99,999	17.1
\$100,000-\$119,999	16.1
\$120,000-\$139,999	5.4
\$140,000-\$159,999	5.4
\$160,000-\$179,999	2.4
\$180,000 or more	10.0

*Excluded from the income distributions in the table.

47. If there is anything else you'd like to tell us about Mule Deer hunting in Nevada, please use this space to do so.

Results of the written comments are categorized in a separate document appended to this report: *Mule Deer Hunting and Management: Written Comments from a Mail and Online Survey of Nevada Mule Deer Hunters.*

Comments submitted by the survey respondents were categorized into 39 different topics. The table below shows the topics and the count of comments related to each topic. Comments containing multiple topics are repeated under each topic so that the reader can see the complete context in which the topic was mentioned.

Topic	Count		Topic	Count
Access	28		Money	15
Cameras	6		Non-Resident	16
Cost	14		OHV	31
Coyotes	7		Out-of-State	22
Disease	2		Opportunity	9
Does	11		Poaching	3
Elk	14		Positive	17
Experience	16		Predators	26
Fire	13		Quality	27
Guides	13		Seasons	31
Habitat	32		Skills	13
Herd	64		Success	5
Horses	26		Survey	16
Hunters	55		Tags	119
Hunts	9		Trophy	34
Info	5		Units	14
Lions	14		Weapon	17
Mature	21		Wilderness	6
Meat	7		Youth	5
Mgmnt	35			

APPENDIX 1

Non-Response Bias Analysis

By splitting the sample of 1200 tag applicants into those who responded to our survey questionnaire and those who did not, we were able to examine our data for evidence of a systematic non-response bias.

Variable	Respondent Characteristic	Non-respondent Characteristic	Comments
Age (mean)	51.1 years	43.3 years	Respondents are significantly older.
Percent Nevada Resident	64.9%	77.3%	Non-residents responded at a slightly higher level.
% male	82.1	92.5	Women responded at a slightly higher rate than men.
% Web application in 2012	71.5%	70.5%	
Successful tag draw in 2012	35.1%	32.0%	
% who hunted in 2012	31.5%	26.5%	
% who harvested in 2012	13.8%	12.2%	No significant differences
% Web application in 2013	74.0%	74.0%	
Successful tag draw in 2013	29.2%	32.3%	
% who hunted in 2013	22.9%	17.8%	
% who harvested in 2013	11.4%	6.9%	Successful hunters are slightly over represented among respondents.
Nevada county of residence (<i>differences only</i>):			
Carson City	4.6	1.7	
Churchill	2.2%	5.8	Residents from counties with urban centers responded at a slightly higher rate than did residents of the more rural areas of Nevada.
Douglas	2.9	4.8	
Elko	17.6	14.3	
Nye	2.9	4.8	
Washoe	27.1	21.0	

In general we found no meaningful bias between respondents and non-respondents in the data we collected. We are confident that our data represent a true random sample of Nevada Mule Deer hunters and that our data retain the fidelity of the sample drawn by Systems Consultants (SCI-Nevada) on behalf of NDOW.

APPENDIX 2

Suggested improvements for the NDOW website provided by respondents (Q28)¹

Access	Have the icon for hunter tag questioner easier to access
Apply	There should not be any extra charges for applying online! Should be able to set up a saved account that stores your past year's information for ease of reapplying. I apply to hunt with the same party each year, and it is time consuming to re-enter each hunter's information individually each year.
	The hunter choice and hunt area numbers are, at times, irksome. There must be a simpler way to do this. I do like that when making application on-line the system will not let you submit a mistake.
	Some times it is hard to get an application to go through. Some of the terminology is confusing.(party, single hunter)
	None if I get something not right I can't move to the next box very helpful
	make the hunter unit maps easier to reference WHILE filling out the main draw application. That should be able to be pulled up while filling out the online app. so that you have a heads up display in the same window.. That would cut down on mistakes choosing the wrong hunter units (or having to reference a paper map while doing the online application). Most people don't have the paper map handy when doing the online application.
	Make finding dates for applying for tags easier to find. So you know when the upcoming applications need to be submitted by.
	It's easy to find what I'm looking for, but many times it doesn't work when I try to fill out an application or fill out my harvest card. This year there was no way to select my harvest card to fill out, so I had to mail in the paper copy.
	in general, it appears to be hierarchical, but does not behave as such. For example, there was no main easily identified link to get a duplicate in the apply for license section.
	Be able to apply for all your hunt choices in one application process, there is too much back and forth.
Confusing	Get rid of huntnevada.com the two sites make it confusing. make it one site with all aspects of both.
Consistent	No, I can get around it without too much trouble. But -- NDOW needs to be consistent in nomenclature/definition use across all the elements of State sponsored hunting in Nevada
Dates	Add rut dates for area's
Design	Difficulty in using the site is based primarily on being unfamiliar with the new design.
Direct	More direct links to menu items, not being redirected to other sites
Easier	Make more user friendly
	make it easier for the computer illiterate?
	I'm not that computer sharp.

¹ Comments are provided verbatim with no editing.

FAQs	improve the FAQs on areas that are visited frequently
Harvest card	It's easy to find what I'm looking for, but many times it doesn't work when I try to fill out an application or fill out my harvest card. This year there was no way to select my harvest card to fill out, so I had to mail in the paper copy.
Laws	better clarification on some of the laws in all counties, not just big game but furbearer, and varmint as well
Locate	links in the body of a page should stand out more so that it is more intuitive to click on that link. As it stands now, i may go to a page and not realize that there are any links to click on.
	less tabs and more buttons, the site is not very intuitive. Place most common uses on top like Application for hunting and classes, Draw Results, Surveys and area maps...
	Have more specific dropdown windows for what your looking for
Log in	Easier way to log in for hunter info.
Maps	Please include the hunter area maps in a printable version.
	Make wintering area maps available to the public on NDOW's website. Our family loves to shed hunt for fun and exercise and downloadable wintering area maps for both deer and elk in Nevada, like many other states provide, would be awesome!!!
	Online maps seemed difficult to find.
	make the hunter unit maps easier to reference WHILE filling out the main draw application. That should be able to be pulled up while filling out the online app. so that you have a heads up display in the same window.. That would cut down on mistakes hoosing the wrong hunter units (or having to reference a paper map while doing the online application). Most people don't have the paper map handy when doing the online application...
	hangs up on maps
	find the hunt area map quicker
	Easier map location.
	Site specific, click on map and choose date range
	better bounders and maps .
	Access and presentation of hunt boundaries and descriptions (this is currently NOT available. Easier access and presentation of hunt statistics and draw success.
Navigation	The site is not very intuitive, especially if you do not frequent the given page or location. Finding a new page for specific piece of information is very difficult to find the first time. The search engine does not help if the phrasing or terminology i not spot on.
	The more breadcrumbs a person has the follow, the more likely they are to get lost navigating to the page they want. Pages that get accessed the most should only be a maximum of two clicks away from the Homepage.
	Provide a direct link to huntnevada.com right on the hunting selection of the NDOW site. One that is easy to see and one click away.
	needs to be easier to find things
	make it easier to find information such as hunter information sheets.
	Improve navigation. For example, you could use bread crumbs along the top of the screen so a user knows where they are, the path they've used to get there and can navigate backwards easily. You could also keep the main navigation menu on the left constant on every page to ensure the same benefits listed above for bread

	crumbing. The current navigation is just horrible overall. I get frustrated every time I go on the website. Information is more difficult to find and navigation and link labels are often not intuitive.
Payment	Each person should be able to pay with there own credit card
Photos	Please include names and locations of the pictures of people and their trophies.
	Photo memories is fun to look at, but it seems it has become more difficult to submit pictures as there are less of them. The process isn't really defined on the website anywhere. Everything else is great!
Reports	improve harvest info access and HIP
	I have a hard time finding hunting, scouting, or survey reports on the new website.
Results	Need to make it easier to find draw results and point totals
Search	The site is not very intuitive, especially if you do not frequent the given page or location. Finding a new page for specific piece of information is very difficult to find the first time. The search engine does not help if the phrasing or terminology i not spot on.
	I cannot find things I want to find. search needs to be better.
	A better search function.
Simplify	Like the old one better! Kiss strategy, keep it simple s.
	KISS- Keep It Simple Stupid
	K.I.S.S. the old website had an easy way to navigate and find what you're looking for. This new site I'll go to three or four pages before I get to the page I need. Sometimes I just give up and look it up in the printed regulations. Keep It Simple Shoter.
Speed	Needs to load faster upon internet access, especially for rural areas.
	Add Bandwith? Site slow to respond.
Stats	Access and presentation of hunt boundaries and descriptions (this is currently NOT available. Easier access and presentation of hunt statistics and draw success.
Suggestion	Consider a "plan the hunt" function similar to what Colorado's DFW offers at their main website.
Update	Try updating fish and hunting reports more often.
	The site should be updated more frequently. There is very little useful, timely information on the site. The fishing side of the site is worse. The fish stocking report has not been updated since early November and the fish report provides nothing but datd information. ndow.org is the last place I would look for information on hunting/fishing. They might want to provide a link to Joe Doucette's weekly column in the Elko daily free press for timely information. I also enjoy ice fishing and you would think hat ndow.org would post ice conditions in the winter months, but they do not. I sent an email to the site several years ago requesting that they post ice conditions, which I thought was a reasonable request. They have not done so and did not reply to my email to tell me why the couldn't.
	Keep adding content

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