

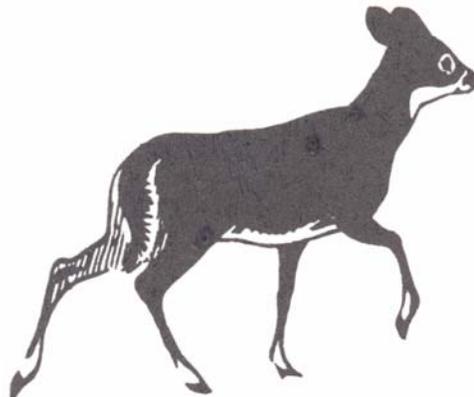
# **2009 Black Hills Deer Hunter Survey Report**

## **HD-3-10.AMS**

**Larry Gigliotti, Ph.D.**  
South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks



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#### **Suggested Citation**

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This report was produced for Game, Fish and Parks’ wildlife staff and administrators to evaluate the 2009 Black Hills deer season from the perspective of deer hunters and to improve their understanding of Black Hills deer hunters. Recommendations made in this report are solely my opinion and are intended as suggestions for future discussion and consideration by GFP wildlife staff. Recommendations in this report do not necessarily reflect any final decisions by wildlife staff or GFP policy.

*Larry M. Gigliotti*  
Planning Coordinator / Human Dimensions Specialist

# **Executive Summary**

## **2009 Black Hills Deer Hunter Survey Report**

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This survey represents the 15<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of studying Black Hills deer hunters, and the 14<sup>th</sup> year following the change in the management of the Black Hills deer herd. A major objective of these surveys are to track satisfaction and to identify other hunter-related parameters to evaluate the Black Hills deer season (i.e., provide an evaluation of each year's deer season from the hunters' perspective). A secondary purpose was to gain an overall better understanding of Black Hills deer hunters and Black Hills deer hunting.

The results of this study and previous years' surveys provides a very comprehensive description of Black Hills deer hunters and an evaluation of the change in deer management from the hunters' perspective. A response rate of about 87% was achieved (2,697 usable returned questionnaires). An evaluation of nonresponse bias was conducted and determined to be very minimal and not considered a problem for this survey with such a high response rate.

#### **Summarized Results**

Satisfaction had risen to very high levels for the periods 2003 through 2005, but started to drop thereafter with a small dip in 2006 but sliding to a relatively low level by 2009 (Figures A and B). Overall, about 54% of the deer hunters were satisfied with their 2009 Black Hills deer hunting experiences and about 34% were dissatisfied. The numbers of deer, bucks and quality bucks seen by Black Hills deer hunters have dropped in recent years (Table A). Also, hunters' subjective evaluations of the deer season based on three parameters (number of deer seen, number of bucks seen and quality of bucks seen) have also decreased in recent years (Figure C). Antler size (measured by total number of points) has been measured over the past 14 years (Table B). Females comprised 9.6% of the 2009 Black Hills deer hunters; this value has been steadily rising (Table C).

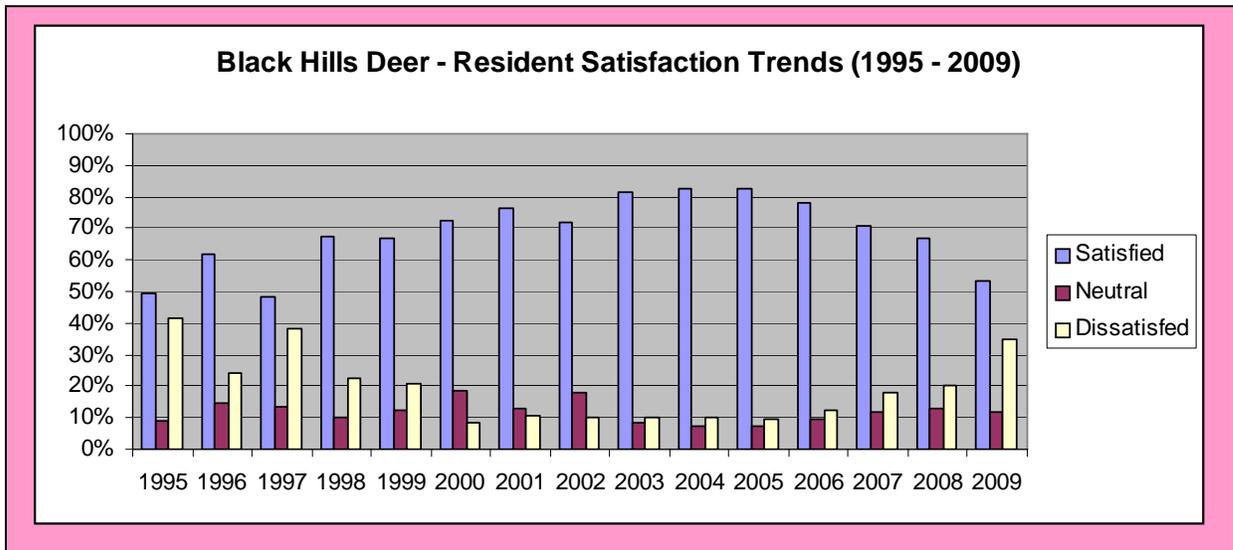


Figure A. Satisfaction trends for resident Black Hills deer hunters (1995 – 2009).

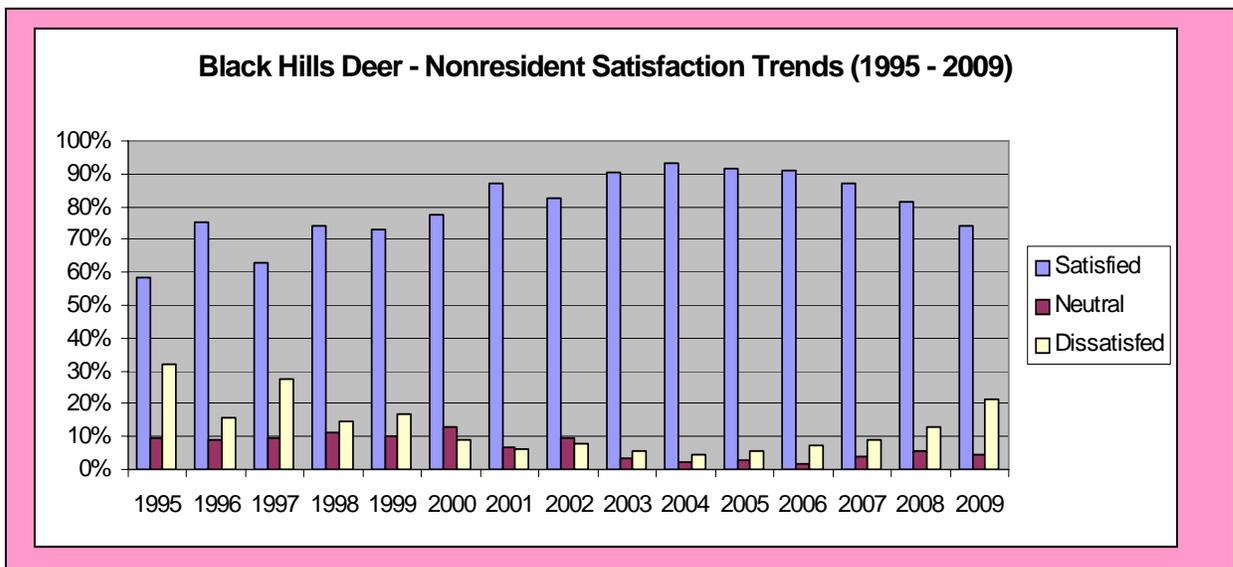


Figure B. Satisfaction trends for nonresident Black Hills deer hunters (1995 – 2009).

Table A. About how many deer, bucks and quality bucks did you see during your total Black Hills deer hunt?

Hunter Reported Mean Total:	Year											
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Deer Seen	42.4	43.5	77.5	54.6	69.3	80.0	77.4	82.1	74.9	72.4	58.3	40.7
Bucks Seen	3.6	4.6	7.6	7.2	7.9	10.0	10.9	11.0	10.8	11.7	8.8	7.6
Quality Bucks Seen	1.1	1.4	2.2	2.2	2.4	2.9	3.1	2.6	2.8	2.6	2.1	1.8

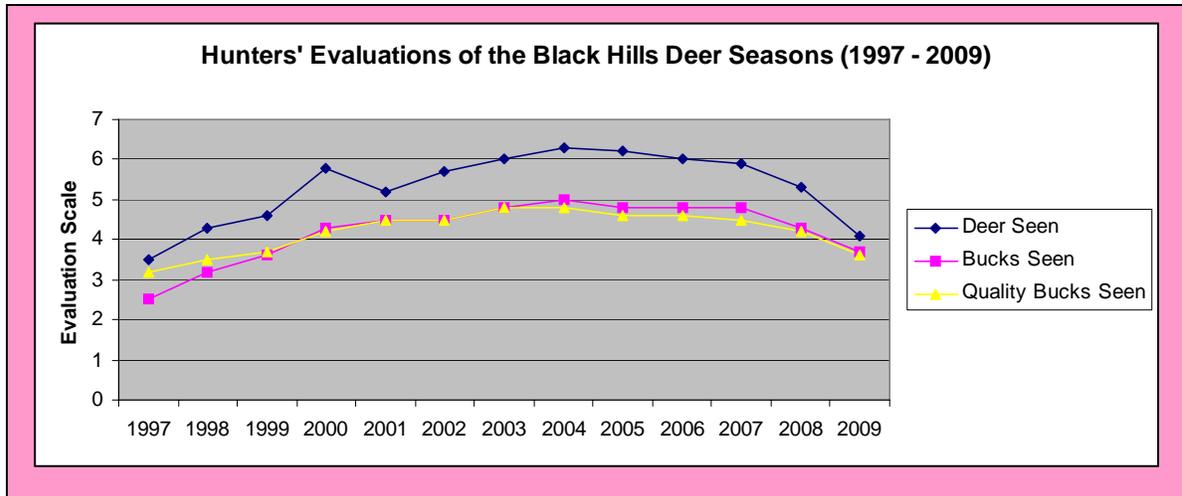
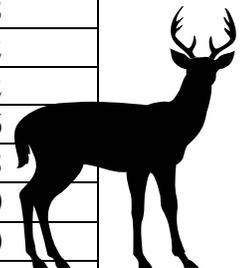


Figure C. Hunter evaluations of the Black Hills deer hunting seasons (1997 – 2009).

Table B. Antler size (Eastern count) trends for the Black Hills deer season (96–09).

Year	Whitetail Buck		Mule Deer Buck	
	Ave. Total Points	Sample Size	Ave. Total Points	Sample Size
1996	6.7	362	4.7	75
1997	6.7	318	5.1	100
1998	7.0	744	5.3	251
1999	7.0	464	5.5	188
2000	7.5	626	5.8	137
2001	7.8	646	5.9	218
2002	7.9	665	6.0	192
2003	8.1	757	5.9	212
2004	8.1	736	5.8	246
2005	8.2	598	5.7	168
2006	8.1	547	5.9	130
2007	8.2	590	6.9	30
2008	8.0	741	6.5	42
2009	7.9	797	7.0	45





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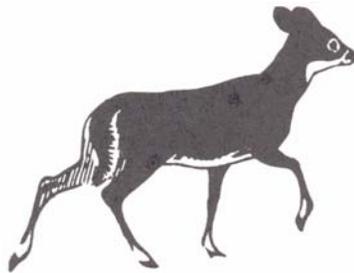
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# **2009 Black Hills Deer Hunter Survey Report**

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The purpose of this survey is to measure and track hunter satisfaction with and hunter evaluations of the Black Hills deer season. A change in the management of the Black Hills deer herd was implemented in 1996. The old management system emphasized maximum recreational opportunity by offering unlimited buck licenses sold over the counter and managing the herd via limited doe licenses sold by lottery for specific Black Hills deer units. The change emphasized management of the buck herd and hunter density by also limiting the number of buck licenses available that are sold via a lottery system. The change was very controversial but favored 2-to-1 by Black Hills deer hunters. The reason for the change was to improve overall satisfaction with Black Hills deer hunting.

Division of Wildlife has tracked deer hunters' satisfaction with and evaluations of their deer hunting experience for fourteen years following this change (1996–2009). A secondary purpose of the surveys is to explore factors related to a “quality” Black Hills deer hunt and to gain an overall better understanding of Black Hills deer hunters. Each year a different element of “quality” was studied, however this year the survey evaluated methodology issues (comparing e-mail and web-based surveys with regular mailed surveys and evaluating non-response bias). The 4-page survey instrument used this year measured some hunter evaluations of the 2009 Black Hills deer season (deer, bucks and quality bucks seen, hunters’ evaluations of these parameters, crowding, and satisfaction), days hunted, harvest, mountain lion interactions while deer hunting, years of Black Hills deer hunting experience, residence, age, and gender (Appendices A, B, and C). The survey also collected optional comments from respondents (Appendices D, E, and F). The 2009 Black Hills Deer Season was the third year for the change in the types of buck licenses available (increased protection for mule deer in the Black Hills)<sup>1</sup>. The purpose of this recent license change was to increase the age (and thus antler size) of mule deer bucks.

## **Methods**

**Regular Mail Survey.** Randomly selected licensed Black Hills deer hunters that did not provide GFP with e-mail addresses were mailed the first questionnaire at the end of the Black Hills deer season (November 30, 2009) with a reminder postcard being sent on December 10<sup>th</sup> (Appendix A). A second mailing of the questionnaire was sent out on December 31<sup>st</sup> with a reminder postcard being sent on January 11<sup>th</sup>. All hunters who received a mailed survey were also provided an opportunity to complete their survey on-line (web-based survey). The web-based survey and the e-mail survey were almost identical in appearance (Appendix B).

**E-Mail Survey.** Randomly selected licensed Black Hills deer hunters that had provided GFP with e-mail addresses were sent an e-mail invitation to complete their Black Hills deer hunter survey on-line. A link to the survey was provided in the body of the e-mail sent at the end of the Black Hills deer season (November 30, 2009). Hunters in this group were asked to complete the e-mail survey by December 10<sup>th</sup> and were sent one e-mail reminder on about December 7<sup>th</sup> before they would be sent a mailed survey. Non-respondents to the e-mail survey were then sent a mailed survey on December 11<sup>th</sup> and a reminder postcard on December 17<sup>th</sup>.

Respondents in both groups (regular mail and e-mail) were mailed a second questionnaire on December 31<sup>st</sup> with a reminder postcard being sent on January 11<sup>th</sup> and asked to complete the survey by January 26, 2010.

**Non-Response Phone Survey.** One hundred non-respondents were contacted by telephone and asked to complete a short survey (Appendix C).

**Analyses.** Part 1 will analyze the data collected by the three methods as a combined data set and Part 2 will analyze the data comparing the results by data collection method and analyze non-response bias.

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<sup>1</sup> Gigliotti, L.M. 2008. 2007 Black Hills Deer Hunter Survey Report. Report ID# HD-3-08.AMS. South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks Department. Pierre, SD.

## **Part 1**

### **Sample Selection and Return Rate**

The sampling procedure randomly selected 3,111 hunters (40% of the licenses available) (2,880 resident and 231 nonresident hunters), each group proportional to license type and unit (Tables 1 – 3). The final sample size was 3,104 (minus the 7 undeliverable addresses). A total of 2,697 usable questionnaires were returned for a return rate of 86.9% (Table 2). This is considered a good return rate. Resident hunters accounted for 92% of the usable returns (Table 3). Return rate was relatively proportional to the license types and units available in the Black Hills (Table 4).

### **Licenses**

In 2009 about 62% of the available licenses were the any-whitetail license (Type 11), about 7% were any-deer licenses (Type 01) and about 31% were antlerless deer licenses (Type 03 and 13), which closely matched the return rates for these license types (Tables 1 and 4). About 10% of the licensed hunters did not hunt in 2009 for various reasons (Table 5). Hunters with the antlerless licenses (Types 03 and 13) were much more likely to not hunt during the 2009 Black Hills deer season (8% for the any-deer / any-whitetail licenses and 14% for the antlerless licenses). Hunters with antlerless licenses (Types 03 and 13) hunting in units 1 and 2 (16% and 20%; respectively) were more likely to not hunt compared to antlerless license holders in units 3 and 4 (8% each).

### **Sample Description**

The top five resident counties for the 2009 Black Hills deer season were Pennington (33.8%), Lawrence (12.5%), Minnehaha (9.4%), Meade (8.2%), and Custer (6.7%) (Table 6). These were the same top five counties in 1997 through 2008. Black Hills counties (Pennington, Lawrence, Custer, Fall River and Meade) accounted for 62.1% of the total 2009 resident Black Hills deer hunters. West River counties, excluding the counties in the Black Hills accounted for only 3.6% and East River counties accounted for 34.2% of the total number of resident hunters (Tables 6 and 7).

Most 2009 Black Hills nonresident deer hunters came from Minnesota (28.5%), followed by Wisconsin (11.0%), Colorado (8.1%), Wyoming (6.5%), and Nebraska (6.4%) (Table 8).

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Most (90.4%) 2009 Black Hills deer hunters were male (Table 9). Percentage of female Black Hills deer hunters has risen from 3.7% in 1998 to 9.6% in 2009. Female hunters comprised 9.9% of the resident hunters and 5.4% of the nonresident hunters (Table 10). The mean age of the 2009 Black Hills deer hunters was 44.8 years (Table 11). On average, resident hunters were younger than were nonresident hunters (44.6 years vs. 47.0 years) (Table 12).

### **Hunting Statistics**

Resident hunters hunting with the any-deer or any-whitetail license types (Types 01 and 11) averaged 5.8 days of hunting and nonresidents averaged 4.8 days of hunting (Table 13). Resident hunters hunting with antlerless deer licenses (Type 03/13) averaged 4.3 days and nonresidents averaged 4.0 days. The 2009 Black Hills deer season provided an estimated 36,325 recreation days (Table 14). The frequencies of days hunted is provided in Table 15.

### **Harvest Statistics for 2009 Black Hills Deer Season**

Hunters harvested an estimated 2,310 whitetail bucks, 128 mule deer bucks and 1,444 antlerless deer (Table 16). Success in 2009 was lower compared to previous years (Table 17). Success for 2009 Black Hills deer hunters was about 55% (excluding hunters that did not hunt) or 49% (including all licensed hunters) (Table 18). The 2009 season included the possibility of hunters having more than one Black Hills deer license and success here is measured as harvesting at least one deer regardless of the license type or number of licenses held by the hunter. Hunter success with a type 01/11 license was estimated to be 56% and success for the antlerless deer license (Type 03/13 for all four units) was estimated to be about 52% overall (Table 18). Nonresidents had higher harvest success rates than did residents (70% vs. 54%; rate excludes hunters that did not hunt).

Most whitetail bucks harvested in 2009 were 8-points (eastern count) (46.2%) (Table 19). About 75% of the whitetail bucks harvested were 8-point or greater and about 49% of the mule deer bucks were 8-points or greater. Average number of points on harvested whitetail bucks increased from 6.7 in 1996 to 7.9 points in 2009 (Table 20). Average number of points on harvested whitetail bucks decreased slightly from recent, previous years. Average number of points on harvested mule deer bucks ranged from 4.7 in 1996 to 7.0 in 2009 (Table 20).

### Satisfaction with the 2009 Black Hills Deer Season & Trends (1995–2009)

About 55% of the Black Hills deer hunters were satisfied and about 34% were dissatisfied (Table 21). A greater percentage of nonresidents were satisfied compared to residents (74% vs. 54%). Appendices D, E and F contain general comments by the Black Hills deer hunters regarding the 2009 deer season.

Satisfaction levels have steadily risen between 1995 and 2006, with the exception of 1997 and a slight drop in 2002 but began to drop slightly in 2006 (in 2006 the slight dip in satisfaction level was for resident hunters only) and with more substantial drops in satisfaction levels for 2007 and 2008 and another substantial drop in satisfaction levels for the 2009 deer season (Tables 22 and 23 and Figures 1 and 2).

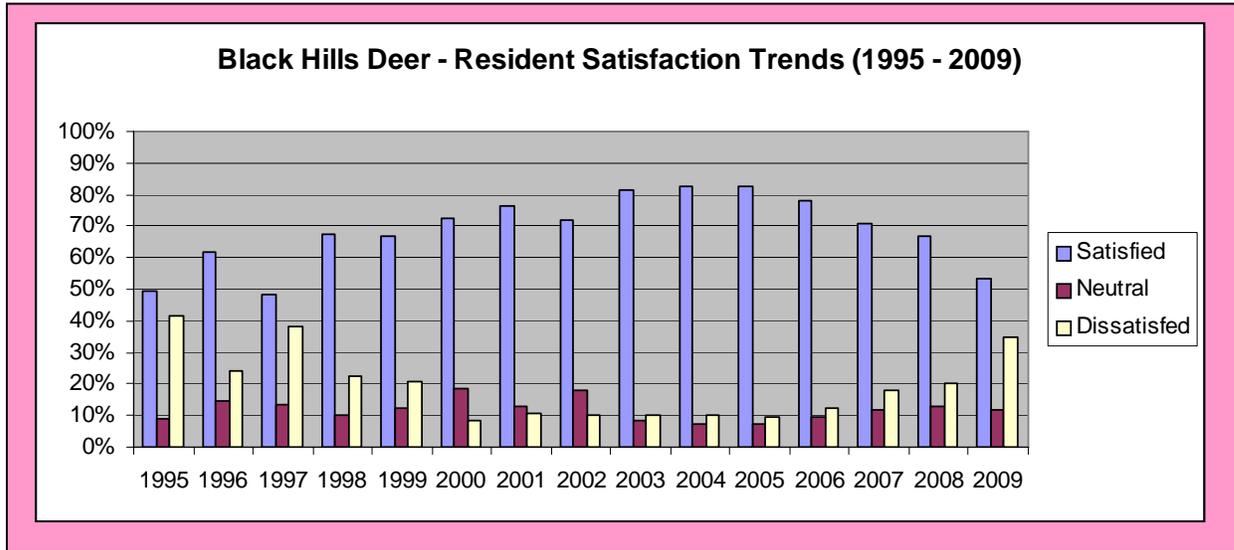


Figure 1. Satisfaction trends for resident Black Hills deer hunters (1995 – 2009).

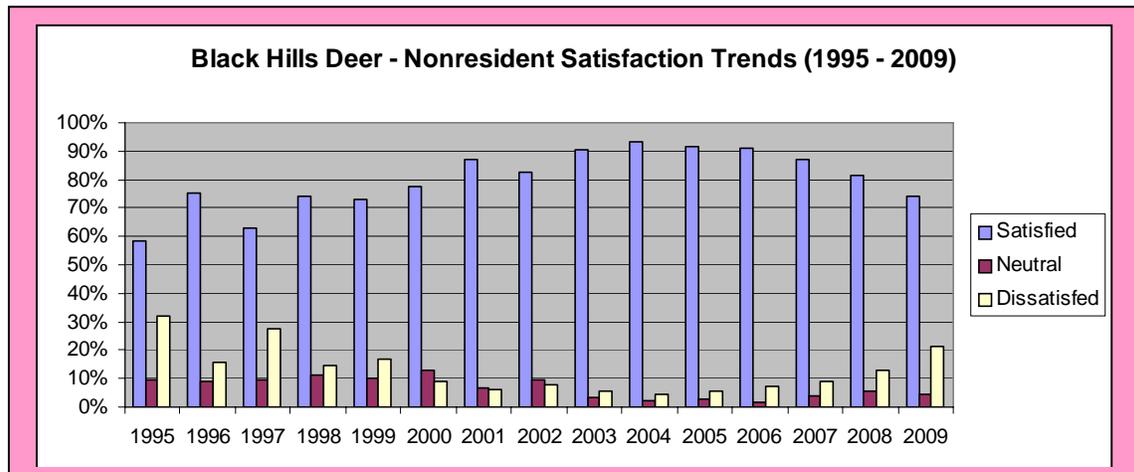


Figure 2. Satisfaction trends for nonresident Black Hills deer hunters (1995 – 2009).

### **Hunters’ Evaluation of the 2009 Black Hills Deer Season**

In addition to satisfaction, seven additional variables, designed to measure hunters’ evaluations of the deer season, were measured in the 2009 survey of Black Hills deer hunters. These variables were the number of deer, bucks, and “quality” bucks seen and hunters’ subjective evaluations of the number of deer, bucks, and quality bucks seen, plus an evaluation of the degree of crowding.

On average, 2009 Black Hills deer hunters saw about 41 deer, 8 bucks and 2 “quality” bucks (Table 24). The 2009 values for these parameters are down from the recent, previous years. Tables 25–27 include frequency distribution data for the number of deer, bucks and “quality” bucks observed while Black Hills deer hunting (1998 – 2009).

Hunters’ subjective evaluation, on a scale of 1 (very few) to 5 (average) to 9 (lots/exceptional), was 4.1 for the number of deer seen, 3.7 for the number of bucks seen and 3.6 for the “quality” of bucks seen (Tables 28–30). All three subjective evaluations improved significantly from 1997, however the values for 2009 were substantially lower than the previous few years (Tables 31 and 32 and Figure 3).

About 59% of the Black Hills deer hunters rated the degree of crowding as “just right,” 6% rated it as “not enough” hunters and 2% felt “very crowded” (Table 33). On average, hunters felt slightly less crowded in 2009 compared to 2008 (Table 34).

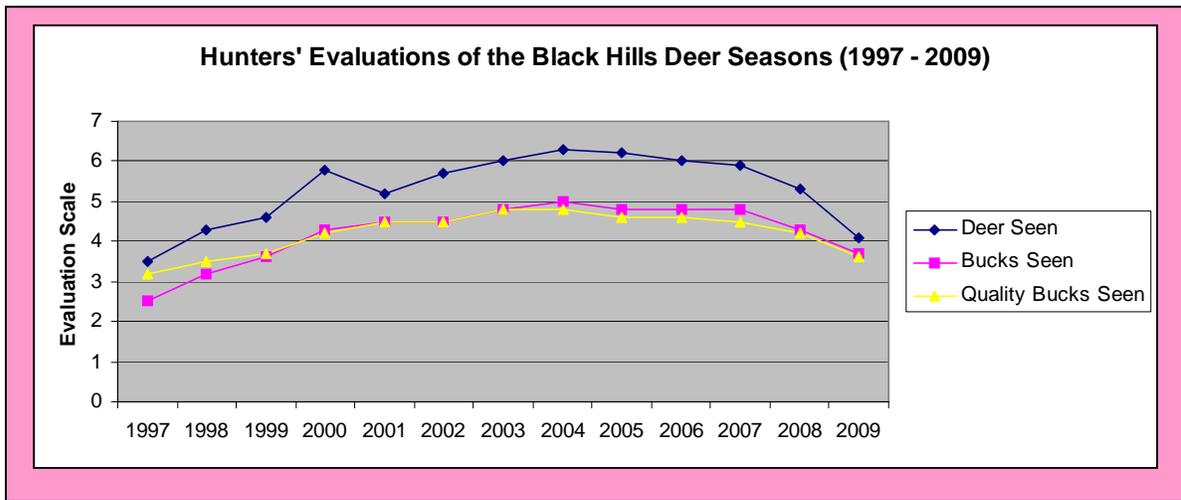


Figure 3. Hunter evaluations of the Black Hills deer hunting seasons (1997 – 2009).

### **Black Hills Deer Hunting Experience**

About 10% of the 2009 resident hunters were first time Black Hills deer hunters compared to about 23% of the nonresidents (Table 35). Residents had an average of 15.5 years of Black Hills deer hunting experience and nonresidents had an average of 9.4 years of Black Hills deer hunting experience.

### **Importance of Black Hills Deer Hunting**

About 22% of the 2009 Black Hills deer hunters said that Black Hills deer hunting was their most important recreational activity and another 44% rated it as a very important activity and 23% as a moderately important activity (Table 36). Residents and nonresidents were statistically similar in their rating of the importance of Black Hills deer hunting. The importance rating in 2009 was very similar to previous years measured (2000 – 2007) (Table 37).



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and quality bucks seen increases, hunters' evaluation of these parameters increases (Figure 4–6) (Tables 41 – 43). For example, on average in 2009, hunters seeing a total of 17 deer rated that as one (very few) while seeing 42 deer was rated as a five (average) and hunters seeing 87 deer rated the season as a nine (lots of deer) (Figure 4 and Table 41). Of course this scale changes for bucks with seeing 9 bucks being evaluated as a five (average) and seeing 21 bucks being evaluated as a nine (lots) (Figure 5 and Table 42). And, seeing about 2.4 quality bucks being rated as a five (average) and seeing about 4.9 quality bucks being rated as a nine (exceptional) (Figure 6 and Table 43). Thus for 2009, an average season would be seeing a total of 42 deer, 9 bucks and 2.4 quality bucks and an exceptional deer season would involve seeing 87 deer, 21 bucks and 4.9 quality bucks.

Of particular note is the change in these parameters needed to receive an average or higher evaluation over the 11 years measured (1999 – 2009). What this means is that as the actual "quality" of the Black Hills deer season changed (either increasing or decreasing), as measured by the number of deer, bucks and quality bucks observed by hunters during the season, so did the hunters' expectations.

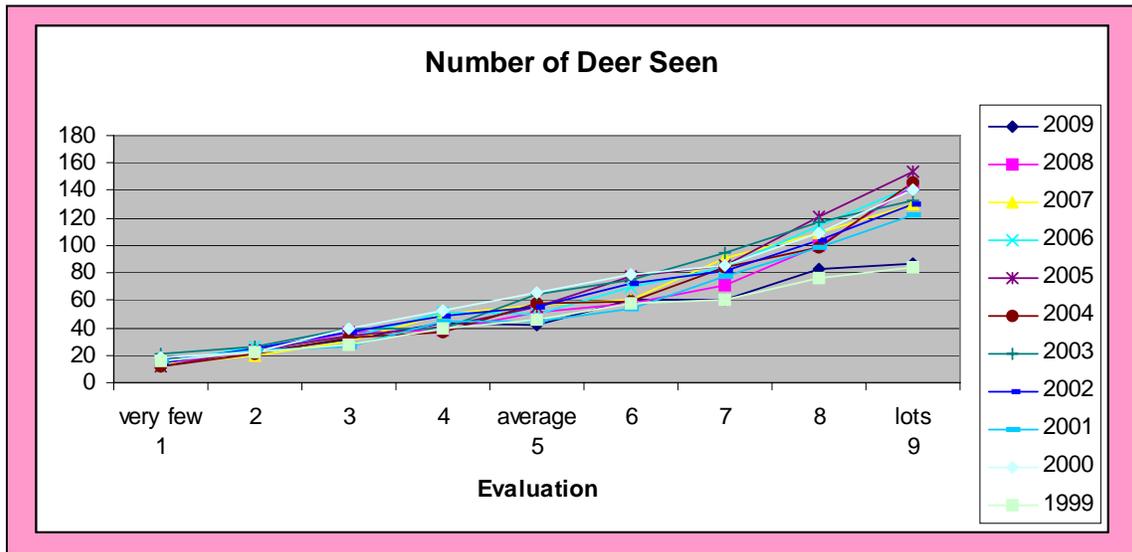


Figure 4. Relationship between the number of deer seen by hunters and hunters' evaluation of the number of deer seen (1999 – 2009).

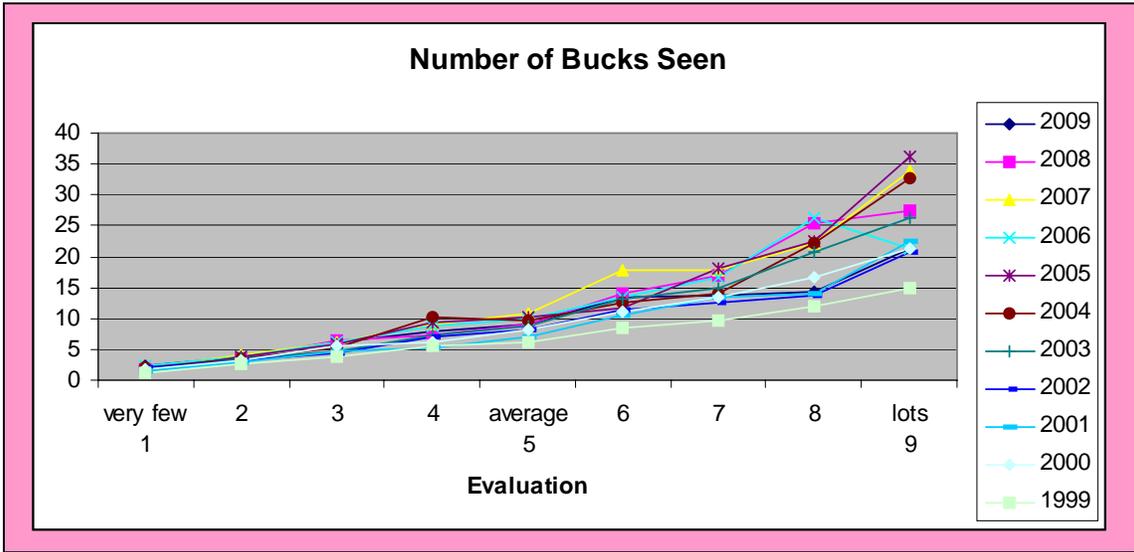


Figure 5. Relationship between the number of bucks seen by hunters and hunters' evaluation of the number of bucks seen (1999 – 2009).

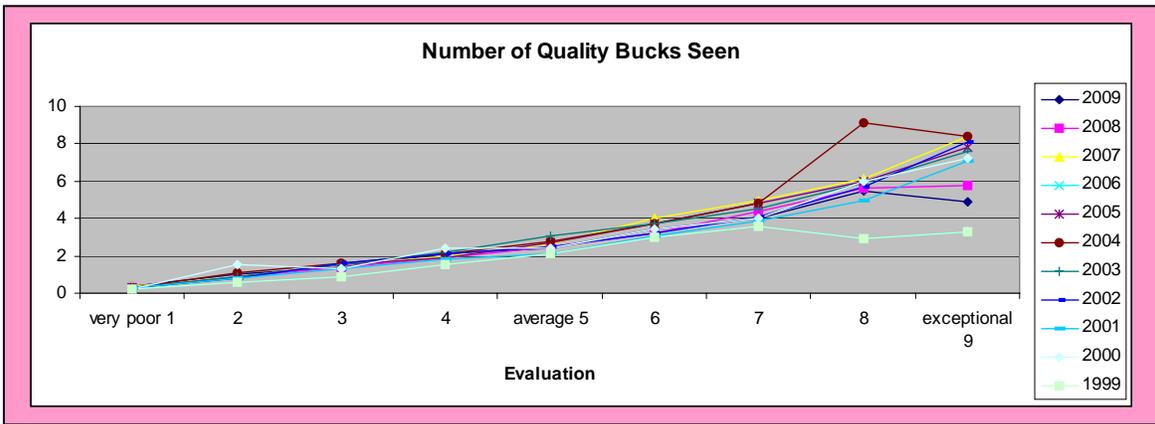


Figure 6. Relationship between the number of quality bucks seen by hunters and hunters' evaluation of the quality of bucks seen (1999 – 2009).

**Research Question #2**      What is the relationship between satisfaction of 2009 Black Hills deer hunters and various parameters measured in this survey, i.e., which variables are the best predictors of satisfaction?

Fifteen variables were tested for significant correlation with satisfaction; 13 variables were significant (Table 44). Age and gender were not linearly related to satisfaction. Evaluation of the number of deer seen had the highest correlation with satisfaction (0.557) while the actual number of deer seen had a much lower correlation (0.183). Evaluation of the number of bucks seen had the second highest correlation with satisfaction and evaluation of the quality of bucks seen was third. Success was measured two different ways. Success1, coded as none=0, doe or buck=1 had the fourth highest and success2, coded as none=0, doe=1, buck=2, had the fifth highest correlation with satisfaction.

Crowding can significantly affect satisfaction. Hunters feeling crowded were less satisfied than hunters not feeling crowded (Table 45). Also, hunters feeling that there were not enough hunters in the woods were less satisfied than those reporting that hunter density was “just right.”

The hunters’ evaluations of deer population parameters (evaluation of the number of deer seen, number of bucks seen and the “quality” of bucks seen) were much better predictors of satisfaction than were the actual values of the same deer population parameters (actual number of deer seen, number of bucks seen and the number of “quality” bucks seen) (Tables 46 – 48). Overall, hunters’ evaluations of the deer population based on these three factors were the three best predictors of satisfaction.

Nonresidents were more satisfied with their Black Hills deer hunting than were residents (Table 49). Black Hills and East River residents had higher satisfaction levels compared to West River residents.

Successful deer hunters (i.e., they harvested a deer) were much more satisfied than were unsuccessful deer hunters and hunters harvesting a buck were a little more satisfied than hunters harvesting a doe, although that difference was not significant (Tables 50 and 51). Overall, hunters who harvested a doe were about 23% more satisfied than unsuccessful hunters were and hunters who harvested a buck were about 25% more

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satisfied than unsuccessful hunters were. Overall, 66% of those harvesting a doe were satisfied and 73% of those harvesting a buck were satisfied compared to only 36% of the unsuccessful hunters being satisfied with their 2009 Black Hills deer hunting experiences.

Satisfied hunters tended to hunt fewer days (Table 52), however, this relationship is probably an artifact of the relationship between harvest success and satisfaction – successful hunters tend to hunt few days (successful hunters hunted 5.6 days compared to 6.1 days of hunting by unsuccessful hunters:  $F=6.894$ ;  $df=1/2,385$ ;  $p=0.009$ ).

Satisfied hunters had fewer mean years of Black Hills deer hunting experience compared to dissatisfied hunters (Table 53). The higher hunters' importance (of Black Hills deer hunting) rating the stronger their level of both dissatisfaction and satisfaction, i.e., the less importance that Black Hills deer hunting was the more likely that hunters rated their deer hunting experience as neutral or did not have an opinion (Tables 54 and 55).

**Research Question #2A**      What is the relationship between satisfaction of 2009 Black Hills deer hunters and size (based on total number of points) of antlered buck harvested?

The number of points on harvested whitetail deer was slightly correlated with satisfaction (Tables 56 and 57). Insufficient sample sizes made this analysis difficult, however the low correlations suggests that hunters tend to only shoot a buck with a rack that would meet their expectations for producing a satisfying experience.

**Research Question #3**      What is the relationship between years of Black Hills deer hunting experience and various selected parameters measured in this survey (2009)?

One variable that may impact hunter opinions and attitudes would be their amount of past Black Hills deer hunting experiences. Hunters with different levels of past Black Hills deer hunting experience may evaluate conditions differently. For this reason, a number of parameters measured in this survey were analyzed by years of Black Hills deer hunting experience.

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The number of deer seen tended to increase with hunting experience, however, the hunters' evaluations of the number of deer they saw was inversely correlated with years of hunting experience (Table 58). In other words, the more experienced deer hunters actually saw more deer but their evaluation of that number decreased with experience. On the other hand, the number of bucks and the number of quality bucks slightly increased with years of experience, but hunters' evaluation of the number of bucks and quality of bucks was not correlated with years of experience (Tables 59 and 60).

More experienced Black Hills deer hunters tended to hunt more days during the 2009 Black Hills deer season (Table 61). However, years of Black Hills deer hunting experience was not related to whether or not a Black Hills deer license holder actually hunted during the 2009 Black Hills Deer season (Table 62).

Unsuccessful Black Hills deer hunters in the 2009 deer season had slightly more years of Black Hills deer hunting experience than successful deer hunters (Success1); however, hunters harvesting a doe were less experienced than both unsuccessful hunters and hunters harvesting a buck (Table 63). This suggests that hunters with more years of experience are more likely to be targeting bucks.

Hunters that reported feeling crowded during their 2009 Black Hills deer hunt tended to have fewer years of Black Hills deer hunting experience; however, hunters that felt there were 'not enough hunters' had significantly more years of Black Hills deer hunting experience (Table 64). As would be expected, importance of Black Hills deer hunting was strongly related to years of Black Hills deer hunting experience (Table 65). Hunters dissatisfied with their 2009 Black Hills deer hunting experience had more years of Black Hills deer hunting experience (Table 66).

Age, gender and residence were significantly related to years of Black Hills deer hunting experience (Tables 67 – 69). As expected, more experienced hunters were older; females had less Black Hills deer hunting experience than males; South Dakota residents had more Black Hills deer hunting experience than nonresidents; and Black Hills residents had more Black Hills deer hunting experience than West River and East River residents.

## **Part 2**

### **Methodological Issues**

#### **Data Collection Method**

The e-mail survey respondents were sent an e-mail invitation to respond to the survey via a link to the survey within their e-mail invitation. Non-respondents to the e-mail survey and hunters that did not provide an e-mail address to GFP were mailed a paper survey questionnaire. The web survey respondents received a mail survey questionnaire but used the Internet address provided on their questionnaire to access the web-based survey and respond on-line.

Residents and nonresident 2009 Black Hills deer hunters were statistically similar in their response method (Table 70). The low use of the web-based survey response method was likely due to the fact that most hunters capable of using the Internet to respond to the survey had already responded using the e-mail survey route.

Percent not hunting in the 2009 Black Hills deer season was statistically similar as measured by the three response methods (Table 71). However, for reasons unknown, hunters responding via the e-mail survey hunted slightly fewer days during the 2009 Black Hills deer season compared to the other two survey collection methods (Table 72). Success (harvesting a deer) was statistically similar as measured by the three response methods (Table 72). Respondents via the mailed survey were slightly less satisfied compared to the two Internet response methods, although the summarized satisfaction measure was statistically similar for the three response methods (Table 73).

The number of deer, bucks and quality bucks seen and hunters' evaluation of these three parameters were all statistically similar as measured by the three response methods (Table 75). The three response methods measured slightly different hunter evaluation of crowing conditions during the 2009 Black Hills deer season and hunters' rating of the importance of Black Hills deer hunting but the differences were small and not very meaningful (Tables 76 and 77).

Hunters responding via the mail survey had a larger percent reporting that they observed signs of mountain lion and/or observed a mountain lion while deer hunting during the 2009 Black Hills deer seasons compared to the two Internet responding methods (Table 78).

Hunters responding via the mail survey had slightly more years of Black Hills deer hunting experience and were slightly older compared to the hunters responding via the two Internet response methods (Table 79). Gender was not related to response method (Table 80).

### **Non-response Bias**

Non-respondents were significantly more likely to have not hunted during the 2009 Black Hills deer season compared to survey respondents (23% vs. 10%) (Table 81). However, respondent and non-respondent hunters had statistically similar number of days of hunting during the 2009 Black Hills deer season and similar harvest success, but non-respondents were significantly more satisfied with their hunting experiences (Tables 82 – 84).

Respondents and non-respondents had statistically similar importance ratings for Black Hills deer hunters, but respondents had significantly more years of Black Hills deer hunting experience than non-respondents (15 years vs. 9 years) (Tables 85 and 86).

South Dakota residents and non-residents had similar response rates to the surveys (Table 87).

### **Discussion**

**Satisfaction.** The drop in hunter satisfaction with their deer hunting experiences over the past four years and especially the low level reached with the 2009 Black Hills deer season should be a cause for concern. The small drop in satisfaction in 2006 and 2007 could have been initially taken as normal fluctuations due to random events, but the continued drop in 2008 followed by a relatively large drop in 2009 suggests that conditions important to most hunters have deteriorated to a level requiring management intervention. An improvement in hunter satisfaction was the overall goal for the management action taken in 1996. Balancing the goals of providing a quality deer hunt while providing a maximum amount of recreational opportunity is a difficult process. To accomplish this managers need a better understanding of all the factors that contribute to a satisfying hunting experience for Black Hills deer hunters.

Harvest success is important for the satisfaction of Black Hills deer hunters (overall, harvesting a doe increased satisfaction by 23% and harvesting a buck by 25%)

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but the relationship is partly dependent upon hunter type. However, harvest success was not the best predictor of satisfaction. Other success-related variables were stronger predictors of satisfaction; namely, hunters' evaluation of the number of deer seen, number of bucks seen and "quality" of bucks seen. In other words, not all hunters need to actually harvest a deer to be satisfied as evidenced by the fact that about 36% of the unsuccessful hunters were satisfied (although overall satisfaction of Black Hills deer hunters increased to about 66% when harvesting a doe and 73% when harvesting a buck).

Just feeling that they saw an adequate number of deer, bucks or large bucks is more important to the satisfaction of Black Hills deer hunters than actually getting a deer every year. However, each hunter has a different evaluation of what is an adequate number of deer, bucks and large bucks. The important finding is that hunters' evaluations of these parameters had been improving since the change in Black Hills deer management in 1996. However, 2008 marked a reverse in the trend of increasing evaluations of these parameters with 2009 showing a marked decline in hunters' evaluations of the deer populations. Because hunters are now perceiving a decline in factors important in contributing to a quality or enjoyable hunting experience they are especially dissatisfied because they have recent memories of better times.

Another assumption about satisfaction is that the bigger the buck the more satisfied the hunter. Unfortunately, this is a difficult hypothesis to test using empirical data because apparently many hunters will not shoot a buck that they would not at least be partly satisfied with getting. The same can be said for harvesting a doe. In previous studies a number of hunters reported that they would pass up legal bucks that do not measure up to their standards.<sup>2</sup> These results strongly suggest that the key to increasing satisfaction will be in improving the Black Hills deer population.

Another frequent variable often reported as important to a quality hunting experience is crowding. Crowding was significantly related to satisfaction in this study. Hunters reporting that the degree of crowding was "just right" were the most satisfied and as hunters' degree of perceived crowding increased their satisfaction level decreased. However, the relationship was not as strong as success-related variables in this study

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<sup>2</sup> Gigliotti, L. M. 2005. 2004 Black Hills deer hunter survey. Report ID# HD-3-05.AMS. South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks. Pierre, SD

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largely because the deer management change in 1996 produced a large improvement by reducing crowding conditions. Before the change in Black Hills deer management in 1996 that limited the numbers of deer hunters, crowding seemed to be a common complaint. It is likely that had this study been conducted in 1995, crowding may have played a more significant role in predicting satisfaction. The salience of a problem will likely have a major role in overall satisfaction.

**Effects of the Black Hills Deer Management Change–Trends.** In addition to days hunted and harvest success information collected in the regular harvest surveys process, eight different hunter parameters have been identified and measured to evaluate Black Hills deer hunting from the hunters’ perspective. These eight parameters were:

1. total number of deer seen by the hunter during the season (1998-2009) (see Tables 24 and 25),
2. total number of bucks seen by the hunter during the season (1998-2009) (see Tables 24 and 26),
3. total number of quality bucks seen by the hunter during the season (1998-2009) (see Tables 24 and 27),
4. hunters’ evaluation of the number of deer they saw during the season (1997-2009) (see Tables 31 and 32),
5. hunters’ evaluation of the number of bucks they saw during the season (1997-2009) (see Tables 31 and 32),
6. hunters’ evaluation of the quality of bucks they saw during the season (1997-2009) (see Tables 31 and 32),
7. hunters' perception of crowding during the season (1997-2009) (see Table 34), and
8. hunters’ overall satisfaction level with the deer season (1995-2009) (see Tables 21 – 23).

All these parameters show that deer hunting from the hunters’ perspective had improved with the 2003–2006 period being especially good years, however, some parameters exhibited a slight drop in 2007 and 2008 and a significant drop in 2009.

One recommendation will be to identify some management actions to reverse the recent downward trend in satisfaction and continue monitoring the Black Hills deer season measuring these same eight hunter-perspective parameters and hunter-typology model as well as continuing to periodically study various aspects of what makes for a “quality” hunting experience in the Black Hills. A good average target for Black Hills

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deer hunting would be trying to maintain at least 75% satisfied and/or not more than 10% dissatisfied.

**The 2007 Change in Black Hills Deer Management.** The 2007 change in Black Hills deer management was a change in license types that eliminated the buck-only (2 point or better on one-side) license type and replaced it with a small number of any-deer licenses and a large number of any-whitetail licenses. The purpose of this change was to increase the antler size of mule deer in the Black Hills. This change likely lowered overall satisfaction a little. Many hunters were especially worried about dropping the 2-point restriction. Apparently too many hunters think that the 2-point restriction was responsible for the improvement in the Black Hills deer season.

It is difficult to predict how this change will impact future satisfaction because it will depend on how the mule deer population responds to the change. It will likely take about five years to give the change enough opportunity to improve the mule deer bucks (if it works) and for the hunters to perceive any improvement. Whether or not this factor (improvement in mule deer hunting) will be enough to off-set the negative aspect of the management change will need to be answered by future surveys. The negative aspect of the management change is the choice between the two types of buck-hunting opportunities that hunters have to make when they apply for a license. It is a difficult choice for many hunters to choose between the more preferred “any-deer” license that has much lower odds of drawing verses the less preferred (for many hunters) “any-whitetail deer” license that has much better odds of drawing.

**Hunter Comments.** The optional hunter comments provide a qualitative picture of hunter attitudes and the 2009 hunter comments paint a very graphic picture of hunter dissatisfaction with the 2009 Black Hills deer season. Many comments mentioned reduced deer populations. However, many hunters have blamed the entire situation on predation by mountain lions. The problem may be a combination of increasing hunter harvest and mountain lion predation in recent years. Note that from 2004 through 2008 the number of deer tags available and subsequently the Black Hills deer harvest increased significantly (Figure 7). The increased deer harvest held for a few years before it began to decrease along with success rate and hunter satisfaction. The solution for increasing

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satisfaction will require a large reduction in hunter harvest for a few years followed by close monitoring of deer numbers (and associated parameters), hunter harvest and satisfaction and other mortality factors, such as mountain lion predation.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Licenses Sold</b>	<b>Harvest</b>	<b>Success</b>	<b>% Residents Satisfied</b>
2000	7,921	3,969	50%	73%
2001	6,707	3,662	55%	76%
2002	6,454	3,369	52%	72%
2003	6,438	3,576	56%	81%
2004	7,346	4,589	62%	83%
2005	7,814	4,247	54%	83%
2006	8,939	5,405	60%	78%
2007	8,949	5,397	60%	71%
2008	8,523	4,638	51%	67%
2009	7,831	3,856	49%	54%

Figure 7. Black Hills deer season harvest statistics and resident hunter satisfaction.

The increased number of mountain lions killed during the 2010 mountain lion season may lead to more deer for the next Black Hills deer season, but returning the deer herd to the level that achieved very high hunter satisfaction (>80% resident satisfaction) will require some reduction in hunter harvest for a few years. Managing the Black Hills deer herd and hunting season must take an ecosystem approach because of the dynamic interaction of deer, mountain lions and hunters as well as other species. The hunter component will be the most difficult aspect. How many deer are needed to provide a quality hunting experience for most hunters? What is the most acceptable number of mountain lions from both the hunters' perspective as well as non-hunters? Fortunately, the long-term monitoring of hunter satisfaction has proved to be a rather diagnostic tool for measuring hunting quality and for matching deer populations with hunting pressure (number of licenses/tags allotted).

**Mountain Lions in the Black Hills.** In the 2003 survey some hunters provided comments about mountain lions and expressed concern that mountain lions may be impacting the deer population or expressed a desire for a hunting season. As a result, the topic of mountain lions was added as the special focus area on the 2004 Black Hills deer

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hunter survey. South Dakota's first mountain lion season was implemented in 2005 to run from October 1 through December 15 or when a harvest quota was reached (25 mountain lions or 5 breeding-aged females). The plan for the 2005 Black Hills deer hunter survey was to include an evaluation of the impact of the mountain lion season on the Black Hills deer hunting experience. However, plans changed when the season ended on October 24 after the fifth breeding-age female was harvested. Instead the 2005 Black Hills deer hunter survey contained three pages of general questions related to attitudes towards mountain lions and the 2005 mountain lion season. For a number of reasons, the 2006 and 2007 Mountain Lion seasons were changed to start on November 1, the same day as the start of the Black Hills Deer Season, thus the 2006 and 2007 Black Hills deer hunter surveys included an evaluation of the impact of the mountain lion season on the Black Hills deer hunting experience as well as a few other parameters related to mountain lions.

Most important was the finding that very few deer hunters perceived any negative impact from the Black Hills mountain lion season occurring with the deer season. While most felt neutral about the mountain lion season there were a significant number of deer hunters that felt the mountain lion season had a positive impact on the Black Hills deer season. The positive attitude towards the mountain lion season is probably the result of a high interest in hunting mountain lions. About 24% of the 2006 resident Black Hills deer hunters and 23% of the 2007 resident Black Hills deer hunters had purchased a mountain lion license. However, in 2008 the mountain lion season was changed to a later start-date (January 1<sup>st</sup>) and thus no longer over-lapped with the Black Hills deer season. This may have a small negative impact on satisfaction with the deer season.

Black Hills deer hunter surveys have tracked the percent of deer hunters observing a mountain lion while hunting deer during the Black Hills deer season since 2004. The percent of Black Hills deer hunters observing a mountain lion has been fairly consistent over the past six years, ranging from 6.0% to 8.5%.

**Data Collection Method.** The finding of low response rate to the web-based survey suggests that most survey participants that are capable of responding on-line have provided GFP with an e-mail address and responded to the e-mail invitation to complete their survey on-line. The web-based response option does not save out-going postage costs and adds considerable time and complexity to the survey process without adding significantly to the response rate. Therefore, the recommendation will be to drop this response option.

Survey methods used did result in a number of significantly different results that are hard to explain (Figure 8). The three survey collection methods have the exact same question wording following the same sequence. Although nine of 22 variables were significant (9.1%) many of the differences were small; however, survey methodology biases need further study.

<b>Parameter – Non-significant</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Residence (SD vs. out-of-state)	=0.228
Percent Not Hunting	=0.064
Harvest (Succes1 = No Harvest vs. Harvest)	=0.499
Harvest (Succes2 = No Harvest, Doe Harvest, Buck Harvest)	=0.059
Satisfaction ( Summarized Frequency)	=0.243
Number of Deer Seen	=0.248
Number of Bucks Seen	=0.945
Number of Quality Bucks Seen	=0.265
Evaluation of Deer Seen	=0.840
Evaluation of Bucks Seen	=0.804
Evaluation of Quality of Bucks Seen	=0.886
Mean Importance (Scale)	=0.344
Gender	=0.301
<b>Parameter – Significant</b>	<b>p-value</b>
Mean Days Hunted	<0.001
Satisfaction (Full Scale Frequencies)	<0.001
Mean Satisfaction (Scale)	=0.012
Evaluation of Crowding	<0.001
Importance (Frequency Scale)	=0.012
Observed Mountain Lion Sign	< 0.001
Observed a Mountain Lion	=0.005
Mean Years of Black Hills Deer Hunting	<0.001
Mean Age	=0.005

Figure 8. Variables tested for a significant relationship with survey collection method.

**Non-Response Bias.** Five of the eleven statistical tests for non-response bias were significant (Figure 9). Ten percent of the respondents reported that they did not do any deer hunting during the 2009 Black Hills season compared to 23% of non-respondents. This level of non-response bias with an 87% return rate would produce a harvest estimate that was about 2% higher than actual harvest level. A 2% non-response bias error would not produce a harvest estimate that was significantly higher than the value produced without adjusting for non-response bias.

Non-respondents were significantly more satisfied than were respondents based on all three of the satisfaction measures (Figure 9). Using the satisfaction scale measure non-respondents reported being 14% more satisfied. This level of non-response bias with an 87% return rate would produce a satisfaction scale estimate that was about 2% lower than actual satisfaction. A 2% non-response bias error would not produce a satisfaction estimate that was significantly lower than the value produced without adjusting for non-response bias. For example, the regular survey estimated that 55.1% of the deer hunters were satisfied; adjusting for non-response bias would produce an estimate of 57.6% being satisfied (2.5% difference).

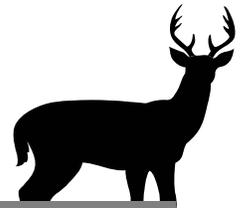
While there is some non-response bias, an 87% return rate reduces the impact of the bias to non-significant levels or at least to levels of differences too small to have an important impact on decision-making.

<b>Parameter – Non-significant</b>
Residence (SD vs. out-of-state)
Harvest (Succes1 = No Harvest vs. Harvest)
Harvest (Succes2 = No Harvest, Doe Harvest, Buck Harvest)
Mean Importance (Scale)
Importance (Frequency Scale)
Mean Days Hunted
<b>Parameter – Significant</b>
Percent Not Hunting
Satisfaction ( Summarized Frequency)
Satisfaction (Full Scale Frequencies)
Mean Satisfaction (Scale)
Mean Years of Black Hills Deer Hunting

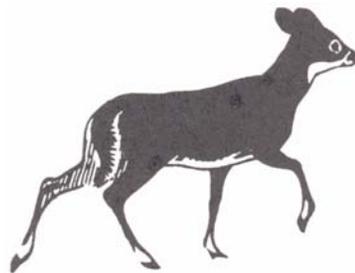
Figure 9. Variables tested for non-response bias.

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Appendix G is a copy of the Report to Survey Participants for the 2009 Black Hills Deer Hunter Survey Report.



## TABLES – Part 1

### 2009 Black Hills Deer Hunter Survey Report

**Licenses:**

**Table 1.** Black Hills deer licenses sold and percent who did not hunt, 2009.

License Type <sup>1</sup>	Number Available		Number Sold		
	Resident	Nonresident	Resident	Nonresident	Total
BHD-BH1-01	500	40	518	40	558
BHD-BH1-11	4,500	360	4,506	359	4,865
BHD-BD1-03	400	32	410	32	442
BHD-BD1-13	800	64	762	102	864
BHD-BD2-13	250	20	250	20	270
BHD-BD3-13	250	20	251	20	271
BHD-BD4-13	500	40	521	40	561
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7,200</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>7,218</b>	<b>613</b>	<b>7,831</b>

<sup>1</sup>Type: BH1-01=any-deer; BH1-11=any whitetail deer; BD(1-4)-13=antlerless whitetail deer; BD1-3=any antlerless deer

**Sample Description (Black Hills 2009 Deer Season):**

**Table 2.** Overall response information for the 2009 Black Hills deer hunter survey.

	Residents	Nonresidents	Combined
<b>Initial Sample Size</b>	2,880	231	3,111
<b>Undeliverable</b>	7	0	7
<b>Final Sample Size</b>	2,873	231	3,104
<b>Number Returned (usable)</b>	2,487	210	2,697
<b>Usable Return Rate</b>	<b>86.6%</b>	<b>90.9%</b>	<b>86.9%</b>

**Table 3.** Percent of residents and nonresidents in the sample (2009).

RESIDENCE	Usable Return		Actual Distribution of Licenses Sold	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
<b>S.D. Residents</b>	2,487	92.2%	7,218	92.2%
<b>Nonresidents</b>	210	7.8%	613	7.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	2,697	100%	7,831	100%

**Table 4.** Percent return distribution by unit and license types (2009).

Unit and License Type	Usable Return	
	Number	Percent
BHD-BH1-01	187	6.9%
BHD-BH1-11	1,686	62.5%
BHD-BD1-03	142	5.3%
BHD-BD1-13	297	11.0%
BHD-BD2-13	92	3.4%
BHD-BD3-13	98	3.6%
BHD-BD4-13	182	6.7%
unknown	13	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,697</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Type 01 &amp; 11</b>	<b>1,873</b>	<b>69.4%</b>
<b>Type 03 &amp; 13</b>	<b>811</b>	<b>30.1%</b>
unknown	13	0.5%

**Table 5.** Black Hills deer hunters: percent not hunting (2009).

License Type	% Not Hunting	Unit	% Not Hunting	Deer	% Not Hunting
BHD-BH1-01	8.1%	0	8.3%	Buck	8.3%
BHD-BH1-11	8.3%	1	16.3%	Doe	13.7%
BHD-BD1-03	15.5%	2	19.6%	unknown	7.7%
BHD-BD1-13	16.7%	3	7.1%		
BHD-BD2-13	19.6%	4	8.2%		
BHD-BD3-13	7.1%	unknown	7.7%		
BHD-BD4-13	8.2%				
unknown	7.7%				
		Type	% Not Hunting		
		01	8.1%		
<b>Residence</b>	<b>% Not Hunting</b>	11	8.3%		
Resident	10.2%	03	15.5%		
Non-resident	6.7%	13	13.4%		
		unknown	7.7%		
<b>Total Percent Not Hunting: 9.9% (overall N = 2,689)</b>					

**Table 6.** Resident Black Hills deer hunters' home county (2009).

COUNTY	2009 Black Hills Deer Hunters	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
1. Minnehaha	211	9.4%
2. Pennington	759	33.8%
3. Brown	53	1.0%
4. Beadle	14	0.6%
5. Codington	18	0.8%
6. Brookings	47	2.1%
7. Yankton	35	1.6%
8. Davison	55	2.4%
9. Lawrence	280	12.5%
10. Aurora	11	0.5%
11. Bennett	0	0.0%
12. Bon Homme	10	0.4%
13. Brule	6	0.3%
14. Buffalo	0	0.0%
15. Butte	41	1.8%
16. Campbell	0	0.0%
17. Charles Mix	28	1.2%
18. Clark	2	0.1%
19. Clay	10	0.4%
20. Corson	0	0.0%
21. Custer	151	6.7%
22. Day	4	0.2%
23. Deuel	9	0.4%
24. Dewey	0	0.0%
25. Douglas	15	0.7%
26. Edmunds	1	<0.01%
27. Fall River	22	1.0%
28. Faulk	2	0.1%
29. Grant	8	0.4%
30. Gregory	3	0.1%
31. Haakon	8	0.4%
32. Hamlin	7	0.3%
33. Hand	7	0.3%
34. Hanson	8	0.4%
35. Harding	0	0.0%
36. Hughes	55	2.4%
37. Hutchinson	12	0.5%
38. Hyde	8	0.4%
39. Jackson	1	<0.01%
40. Jerauld	3	0.1%

Table continued on next page.

**Table 6.** Continued...Resident Black Hills deer hunters' home county (2009).

COUNTY	2009 Black Hills Deer Hunters	
	NUMBER	PERCENT
41. Jones	2	0.1%
42. Kingsbury	6	0.3%
43. Lake	25	1.1%
44. Lincoln	54	2.4%
45. Lyman	2	0.1%
46. McCook	19	0.8%
47. McPherson	1	<0.01%
48. Marshall	0	0.0%
49. Meade	185	8.2%
50. Mellette	1	<0.01%
51. Miner	9	0.4%
52. Moody	10	0.4%
53. Perkins	1	<0.01%
54. Potter	0	0.0%
55. Roberts	2	0.1%
56. Sanborn	1	<0.01%
57. Spink	5	0.2%
58. Stanley	5	0.2%
59. Sully	3	0.1%
60. Tripp	15	0.7%
61. Turner	12	0.5%
62. Union	11	0.5%
63. Walworth	2	0.1%
64. Ziebach	0	0.0%
65. Shannon	1	<0.01%
67. Todd	2	0.1%
<b>TOTAL (239 – missing values)</b>	<b>2,248</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>SUMMARIZED RESULTS</b>		
<b>Black Hills Counties<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>1,397</b>	<b>62.1%</b>
<b>West River Counties, excluding Black Hills</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>3.6%</b>
<b>East River Counties</b>	<b>769</b>	<b>34.2%</b>

<sup>1</sup>Pennington, Lawrence, Custer, Fall River, and Meade

**Table 7.** Trends in resident Black Hills deer hunters' home county (1995-2009).

<b>RESIDENCE</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
<b>Black Hills<sup>1</sup></b>	68%	64%	62%	56.5%	56.8%	59.6%	60.9%	59.2%
<b>West River, excluding Black Hill</b>	3%	3%	3%	5.0%	2.7%	3.7%	3.0%	3.2%
<b>East River</b>	29%	33%	35%	38.5%	40.5%	36.7%	36.1%	37.6%

<sup>1</sup>Pennington, Lawrence, Custer, Fall River, and Meade

**Table 7 - Continued.**

<b>RESIDENCE</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
<b>Black Hills<sup>1</sup></b>	62.2%	59.8%	60.1%	58.5%	58.9%	60.4%	62.1%
<b>West River, excluding Black Hill</b>	4.0%	4.2%	3.3%	4.3%	3.6%	3.9%	3.6%
<b>East River</b>	33.8%	36.0%	36.6%	37.2%	37.5%	35.7%	34.2%

<sup>1</sup>Pennington, Lawrence, Custer, Fall River, and Meade

**Table 8.** Nonresident Black Hills deer hunters' home state, based on the total license database (2009).

<b>STATE</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>
<b>Minnesota</b>	179	28.5%
<b>Wisconsin</b>	69	11.0%
<b>Colorado</b>	51	8.1%
<b>Wyoming</b>	41	6.5%
<b>Nebraska</b>	40	6.4%
<b>California</b>	31	4.9%
<b>Iowa</b>	28	4.5%
<b>Michigan</b>	27	4.3%
<b>Indiana</b>	16	2.5%
<b>North Dakota</b>	14	2.2%
<b>Illinois</b>	12	1.9%
<b>Pennsylvania, Utah</b>	10 ( <i>each</i> )	1.6% ( <i>each</i> )
<b>Arizona, Texas, Virginia, Washington</b>	8 ( <i>each</i> )	1.3% ( <i>each</i> )
<b>Kansas</b>	7	1.1%
<b>New Mexico</b>	6	1.0%
<b>Alaska, Idaho, New York, Oregon</b>	5 ( <i>each</i> )	0.8% ( <i>each</i> )
<b>Ohio</b>	4	0.6%
<b>Mississippi, Montana, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Tennessee</b>	3 ( <i>each</i> )	0.5% ( <i>each</i> )
<b>Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Hawaii, Kentucky, Missouri, Nevada</b>	2 ( <i>each</i> )	0.3% ( <i>each</i> )
<b>Maryland, New Jersey, West Virginia</b>	1 ( <i>each</i> )	0.2% ( <i>each</i> )
<b>TOTAL</b>	629	100%

**Table 9.** Percent of male and female hunters in the 1998 – 2009 Black Hills deer season.

SEX	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Male	96.3%	93.7%	93.9%	93.5%	93.5%	92.3%
Female	3.7%	6.3%	6.1%	6.5%	6.5%	7.7%
Sample size	355	1,701	1,813	1,746	1,734	1,907

**Table 9 - Continued.**

SEX	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Male	92.5%	92.1%	92.2%	91.7%	90.9%	90.4%
Female	7.5%	7.9%	7.8%	8.3%	9.1%	9.6%
Sample size	1,993	1,858	1,684	1,724	2,701	2,622

**Table 10.** Percent of male and female 2009 Black Hills deer hunters comparing residents and nonresidents.

SEX	Residents <sup>1</sup>		Nonresidents <sup>1</sup>	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Male	2,177	91.1%	194	94.6%
Female	240	9.9%	11	5.4%
TOTAL	2,417	100%	205	100%

<sup>1</sup>Chi-square=4.547; df=1; p=0.033

**Table 11.** Age distribution of 2009 Black Hills deer hunters.

<b>AGE CATEGORY</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>	<b>AGE CATEGORY</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>PERCENT</b>
12 – 14	68	2.6%	12 – 19	207	7.9%
15 – 17	85	3.3%	20 – 29	328	12.6%
18 – 20	84	3.2%	30 – 39	440	16.8%
21 – 24	119	4.6%	40 – 49	572	21.9%
25 – 29	179	6.9%	50 – 59	544	20.8%
30 – 34	199	7.6%	60 – 69	355	13.6%
35 – 39	241	9.2%	70 – 79	136	5.2%
40 – 44	261	10.0%	80 – 89	29	1.1%
45 – 49	311	11.9%	90 – 94	2	0.1%
50 – 54	291	11.1%			
55 – 59	253	9.7%			
60 – 64	216	8.3%			
65 – 69	139	5.3%			
70 – 74	79	3.0%			
75 – 79	57	2.2%			
80 – 84	25	1.0%			
85 – 89	4	0.2%			
90 – 94	2	0.1%			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,613</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,613</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Summarized Age Data Comparing 1998 – 2009</b>					
<b>1998</b>	Mean age = 40.9 years; median age = 41; range = 12 – 77.				
<b>1999</b>	Mean age = 41.3 years; median age = 41; range = 12 – 83.				
<b>2000</b>	Mean age = 40.7 years; median age = 40; range = 11 – 88.				
<b>2001</b>	Mean age = 41.4 years; median age = 42; range = 12 – 86.				
<b>2002</b>	Mean age = 41.5 years; median age = 42; range = 12 – 88.				
<b>2003</b>	Mean age = 42.7; median age = 43; range = 12 – 89; 95% C.I. = 42.0 – 43.4				
<b>2004</b>	Mean age = 42.8; median age = 43; range = 12 – 84; 95% C.I. = 41.8 – 43.2				
<b>2005</b>	Mean age = 42.9; median age = 44; range = 12 – 89; 95% C.I. = 42.1 – 43.6				
<b>2006</b>	Mean age = 43.6; median age = 45; range = 12 – 88; 95% C.I. = 42.8 – 44.4				
<b>2007</b>	Mean age = 44.7; median age = 46; range = 12 – 89; 95% C.I. = 43.9 – 45.5				
<b>2008</b>	Mean age = 44.1; median age = 45; range = 9 – 92; 95% C.I. = 43.5 – 44.7				
<b>2009</b>	Mean age = 44.8; median age = 46; range = 12 – 93; 95% C.I. = 44.2 – 45.4				

**Table 12.** Age distribution of 2009 Black Hills deer hunters comparing residents and nonresidents.

Age Category	Residents <sup>1</sup>		Nonresidents <sup>1</sup>	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
12 – 19	195	8.1%	12	5.9%
20 – 29	312	13.0%	16	7.8%
30 – 39	409	17.0%	31	15.2%
40 – 49	514	21.3%	58	28.4%
50 – 59	507	21.0%	37	18.1%
60 – 69	317	13.2%	38	18.6%
70 – 79	127	5.3%	9	4.4%
80 – 89	26	1.1%	3	1.5%
90 – 93	2	0.1%	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	2,409	100%	204	100%
<b>Mean<sup>2</sup>/95% CI</b>	44.6	43.95 – 45.27	47.0	44.83 – 49.12
<b>Median</b>	46.00		47.00	
<b>Range</b>	12 – 93		14 – 82	

<sup>1</sup>Chi-square=15.351; df=8; *p*=0.053

<sup>2</sup>Oneway ANOVA F=3.904; df=1/2,611; *p*=0.048



**Hunting Statistics:**

**Table 13.** Average days hunted by resident and nonresident Black Hills deer hunters by unit (2009).<sup>1</sup>

<b>Unit</b>	<b>2009 Residents</b>	<b>2009 Nonresidents</b>	<b>2009 Combined</b>
<b>BHD-BH1-01</b>	5.82	4.92	5.75
<b>BHD-BH1-11</b>	5.77	4.73	5.69
<b>BHD-BD1-03</b>	4.62	3.92	4.55
<b>BHD-BD1-13</b>	4.43	4.22	4.42
<b>BHD-BD2-13</b>	3.76	4.00	3.78
<b>BHD-BD3-13</b>	4.36	4.25	4.35
<b>BHD-BD4-13</b>	3.93	3.38	3.89
<b>unknown</b>	4.55	8.00	4.83
<b>Type – 01/11</b>	5.77	4.75	5.69
<b>Type – 03/13</b>	4.26	3.95	4.24
<b>Combined</b>	5.33	4.53	5.27

<sup>1</sup>Calculations do not include hunters that had a license but did not hunt.

**Table 14.** Total estimated recreational days of hunting during the 2009 Black Hills deer season.<sup>1</sup>

<b>Residence</b>	<b>Number of Days</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Residents</b>	33,734	92.9%
<b>Nonresidents</b>	2,591	7.1%
<b>Total</b>	36,325	100%

<sup>1</sup>There were 7,661 unique hunters (an estimated 7,048 residents and 613 nonresidents).

**Table 15.** Frequency of days hunted by 2009 Black Hills deer hunters comparing residents and nonresidents.

Day Hunted in 2008	Black Hills Deer Hunting Days – 2009		
	Residents	Nonresidents	Combined
	Percent	Percent	Percent
0	10.2	6.7%	9.9%
1	9.6%	4.8%	9.2%
2	14.0%	10.5%	13.7%
3	16.7%	18.2%	16.8%
4	12.6%	18.2%	13.0%
5	8.6%	14.4%	9.0%
6	6.1%	11.0%	6.5%
7	3.2%	8.6%	3.6%
8	3.2%	3.8%	3.3%
9	1.6%	1.9%	1.6%
10	5.6%	1.0%	5.2%
11	0.6%	0.0%	0.5%
12	1.8%	0.0%	1.6%
13	0.2%	0.0%	0.2%
14	0.5%	0.0%	0.4%
15	2.3%	1.0%	2.2%
16 – 20	2.1%	0.0%	1.9%
21 – 25	0.7%	0.0%	0.7%
26 – 30	0.6%	0.0%	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	2,480	209	2,689
<b>Mean</b> <sup>1,2</sup>	4.79	4.23	4.75
<b>95% CI</b>	4.61 – 4.97	3.89 – 4.56	4.57 – 4.92
<b>Median</b>	3.00	4.00	4.00
<b>Range</b>	0 – 30	0 – 15	0 – 30

<sup>1</sup>Calculations include hunters that did not hunt.<sup>2</sup>Oneway ANOVA F=2.954; df=1/2,687; p=0.086

**Harvest Statistics for 2009 Black Hills Deer Season:**

**Table 16.** 2009 Black Hills harvest estimate based on sample data and information on hunters with multiple licenses and multiple harvests.

<b>Harvest Type</b>	<b>Harvest</b>	
<b>Whitetail Buck</b>	2,284	
<b>Mule Deer Buck</b>	128	
<b>Whitetail Buck – fawn (button buck)</b>	188	
<b>Mule Deer Buck – fawn (button buck)</b>	14	
<b>Whitetail Doe (adult)</b>	1,043	
<b>Whitetail Doe (fawn)</b>	116	
<b>Mule Deer Doe (adult)</b>	80	
<b>Mule Deer Doe (fawn)</b>	3	
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,856</b>	
<b>Number of Licenses / Black Hills Deer - 2009</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>1</b>	7,538	98.4%
<b>2</b>	95	1.2%
<b>3</b>	17	0.2%
<b>4</b>	4	0.1%
<b>5</b>	7	0.1%
<b>Total (unique hunters)</b>	<b>7,661</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Deer Harvested (Number) by Hunters</b>		
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>0</b>	1,369	50.8%
<b>1</b>	1,280	47.5%
<b>2</b>	35	1.3%
<b>3</b>	7	0.3%
<b>4</b>	2	0.1%
<b>5</b>	4	0.1%
<b>Total (unique hunters)</b>	<b>2,697</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Table 17.** Overall harvest success by Black Hills deer hunters (1998 – 2009).

Season (old / new) <sup>2</sup>	Harvest Success Rate <sup>1</sup>					
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>30-Day / Type-05</b>	43.7%	43.8%	48.9%	57.9%	56.2%	60.9%
<b>10-Day / Unit Lic.</b>	55.3%	55.7%	66.0%	69.0%	71.7%	80.2%

**Table 17 – Continued.**

Season (old / new) <sup>2</sup>	Harvest Success Rate <sup>1</sup>					
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>30-Day / Type-05</b>	65.1%	60.4%	64.1%	64.6%	57.1%	55.9%
<b>10-Day / Unit Lic.</b>	77.2%	71.9%	75.9%	66.5%	62.4%	51.8%

<sup>1</sup>Success rate does not include hunters that did not hunt

<sup>2</sup>In 2005-07 this season changed from a 10-day season to a 30-day season. In 2007 – 2009 the type-05 license was changed to type 01&11 (any-deer and any whitetail) and the unit licenses were type 03 & 13 (any antlerless and whitetail antlerless).

**Table 18.** Harvest success by Black Hills deer hunters – 2009.

Success Measure	Harvest Success Rate	
	Includes Hunters that did not hunt	Excludes Hunters that did not hunt
<b>Overall</b>	49.2%	54.8%
<b>License Type 01/11</b>	51.1%	55.9%
<b>License Type 03/13</b>	44.6%	51.8%
<b>Resident</b>	47.9%	53.5%
<b>Nonresident</b>	65.2%	69.7%



**Table 19.** Antler size (Eastern count) for the 2009 Black Hills deer season.

Total Points	Whitetail		Mule Deer Bucks	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1	2	0.3%	0	0.0%
2	16	2.0%	0	0.0%
3	6	0.8%	0	0.0%
4	39	4.9%	11	24.4%
5	20	2.5%	2	4.4%
6	76	9.5%	6	13.3%
7	37	4.6%	4	8.9%
8	368	46.2%	10	22.2%
9	89	11.2%	5	11.1%
10	112	14.1%	5	11.1%
11	16	2.0%	2	4.4%
12	12	1.5%	0	0.0%
13	1	0.1%	0	0.0%
14	1	0.1%	0	0.0%
15+ <sup>1</sup>	2	0.3%	0	0.0%
<b>Number</b>	797	100%	45	100%
<b>Average</b>	7.87		7.00	

<sup>1</sup> One 16-point and one 20-point bucks were reported.

**Table 20.** Antler size (Eastern count) trends (1996–2009) for the Black Hills deer season.

Year	Whitetail Buck		Mule Deer Buck	
	Ave. Total Points	Sample Size	Ave. Total Points	Sample Size
1996	6.7	362	4.7	75
1997	6.7	318	5.1	100
1998	7.0	744	5.3	251
1999	7.0	464	5.5	188
2000	7.5	626	5.8	137
2001	7.8	646	5.9	218
2002	7.9	665	6.0	192
2003	8.1	757	5.9	212
2004	8.1	736	5.8	246
2005	8.2	598	5.7	168
2006	8.1	547	5.9	130
2007	8.2	590	6.9	30
2008	8.0	741	6.5	42
2009	7.9	797	7.0	45

**Satisfaction with the 2009 Black Hills Deer Season:**

**Table 21.** Satisfaction with the 2009 Black Hills deer hunting—*Considering your total 2009 Black Hills deer hunting experiences, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you?*

SATISFACTION (Scale)	2009 BLACK HILLS DEER HUNTING <sup>1</sup>		
	RESIDENTS	NONRESIDENTS	COMBINED
<b>Very Satisfied (+3)</b>	18.1%	38.3%	19.7%
<b>Moderately Satisfied (+2)</b>	22.8%	29.5%	23.3%
<b>Slightly Satisfied (+1)</b>	12.6%	6.2%	12.1%
<b>Neutral / No Opinion (0)</b>	11.7%	4.7%	11.1%
<b>Slightly Dissatisfied (-1)</b>	14.1%	5.2%	13.4%
<b>Moderately Dissatisfied (-2)</b>	10.0%	6.7%	9.8%
<b>Very Dissatisfied (-3)</b>	10.7%	9.3%	10.6%
<b>NUMBER</b>	2,205	193	2,398
<b>MEAN<sup>2</sup></b>	0.46	1.34	0.53
<b>95% C.I.</b>	0.38 – 0.54	1.05 – 1.62	0.45 – 0.61
<b>SUMMARIZED RESULTS<sup>3</sup></b>			
<b>SATISFIED</b>	53.5%	74.1%	55.1%
<b>NEUTRAL/No Opinion</b>	11.7%	4.7%	11.1%
<b>DISSATISFIED</b>	34.8%	21.2%	33.7%

<sup>1</sup>Pearson Chi-square:  $X^2=67.092$ ;  $df=6$ ;  $p<0.001$

<sup>2</sup>ANOVA:  $F=34.237$ ;  $df=1/2,396$ ;  $p<0.001$

<sup>3</sup>Pearson Chi-square:  $X^2=31.296$ ;  $df=2$ ;  $p<0.001$

**Trends–Satisfaction (1995-2009):**

**Table 22.** Trends in satisfaction with Black Hills deer hunting from 1995-2009 for resident hunters. The change in management strategy was implemented in 1996.

Satisfaction	RESIDENTS								
	1995 <sup>1</sup>	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Satisfied</b>	48.0%	60.4%	47.0%	67.4%	67.0%	72.7%	76.4%	71.8%	81.4%
<b>Neutral</b>	8.9%	14.8%	13.9%	9.8%	12.4%	18.8%	13.0%	18.2%	8.6%
<b>Dissatisfied</b>	43.0%	24.9%	39.1%	22.8%	20.6%	8.5%	10.6%	10.0%	10.1%
<b>Total</b>	941	1,294	1,397	325	1,436	1,661	1,531	1,632	1,647
<b>Mean<sup>2</sup></b>	0.1	0.8	0.2	1.1	1.1	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.7

<sup>1</sup>Last year of the old deer management system

<sup>2</sup>Scale: 3=Very Satisfied, 2=Moderately Satisfied, 1=Slightly Satisfied, 0=Neutral or No Opinion, -1=Slightly Dissatisfied, -2=Moderately Dissatisfied, -3=Very Dissatisfied

**Table 22 – Continued.**

Satisfaction	RESIDENTS					
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>Satisfied</b>	82.6%	82.6%	78.2%	70.6%	67.0%	53.5%
<b>Neutral</b>	7.5%	7.5%	9.3%	11.6%	13.0%	11.7%
<b>Dissatisfied</b>	9.9%	9.8%	12.5%	17.8%	20.0%	34.8%
<b>Total</b>	1,723	1,595	1,466	1,458	2,180	2,205
<b>Mean<sup>2</sup></b>	1.7	1.7	1.6	1.2	1.1	0.5

<sup>1</sup>Last year of the old deer management system

<sup>2</sup>Scale: 3=Very Satisfied, 2=Moderately Satisfied, 1=Slightly Satisfied, 0=Neutral or No Opinion, -1=Slightly Dissatisfied, -2=Moderately Dissatisfied, -3=Very Dissatisfied

**Table 23.** Trends in satisfaction with Black Hills deer hunting from 1995-2009 for **nonresident** hunters. The change in management strategy was implemented in 1996.

Satisfaction	NONRESIDENTS								
	1995 <sup>1</sup>	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Satisfied</b>	58.5%	75.4%	62.8%	74.1%	73.3%	77.7%	86.9%	82.5%	90.6%
<b>Neutral</b>	9.4%	8.8%	9.5%	11.1%	10.1%	13.1%	6.9%	9.5%	3.6%
<b>Dissatisfied</b>	32.1%	15.8%	27.7%	14.8%	16.7%	9.2%	6.2%	8.0%	5.8%
<b>Total</b>	159	114	137	27	258	128	145	137	139
<b>Mean<sup>2</sup></b>	0.7	1.4	0.9	1.3	1.5	1.8	2.0	1.8	2.1

<sup>1</sup>Last year of the old deer management system

<sup>2</sup>Scale: 3=Very Satisfied, 2=Moderately Satisfied, 1=Slightly Satisfied, 0=Neutral or No Opinion, -1=Slightly Dissatisfied, -2=Moderately Dissatisfied, -3=Very Dissatisfied

**Table 23 – Continued.**

Satisfaction	NONRESIDENTS					
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>Satisfied</b>	93.3%	91.4%	91.0%	87.0%	81.6%	74.1%
<b>Neutral</b>	2.0%	2.9%	1.5%	4.1%	5.4%	4.7%
<b>Dissatisfied</b>	4.7%	5.8%	7.5%	8.9%	13.0%	21.2%
<b>Total</b>	150	139	133	123	185	193
<b>Mean<sup>2</sup></b>	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.0	1.6	1.3

<sup>1</sup>Last year of the old deer management system

<sup>2</sup>Scale: 3=Very Satisfied, 2=Moderately Satisfied, 1=Slightly Satisfied, 0=Neutral or No Opinion, -1=Slightly Dissatisfied, -2=Moderately Dissatisfied, -3=Very Dissatisfied

**Hunters' Evaluations of the 2009 Black Hills Deer Season:**

**Table 24.** About how many deer, bucks and quality bucks did you see during your total Black Hills deer hunt (1998 – 2009)?

Statistics	Total Deer Seen						
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<b>Mean</b>	42.4	43.5	77.5	54.6	69.3	80.0	77.4
<b>Median</b>	30.0	25.0	45.0	30.0	40.0	50.0	50.0
<b>Mode</b>	30	20	50	50	50	50	50
<b>% seeing zero</b>	0.6%	0.7%	0.6%	0.4%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%
Statistics	Total Bucks Seen						
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<b>Mean</b>	3.6	4.6	7.6	7.2	7.9	10.0	10.9
<b>Median</b>	2.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	5.0	5.0	6.0
<b>Mode</b>	0	1	3	2	3	3	2
<b>% seeing zero</b>	19.1%	16.0%	8.4%	6.9%	6.4%	5.3%	4.1%
Statistics	Total Quality Bucks Seen						
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<b>Mean</b>	1.1	1.4	2.2	2.2	2.4	2.9	3.1
<b>Median</b>	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
<b>Mode</b>	0	0	0	1	0	1	1
<b>% seeing zero</b>	42.5%	39.9%	30.0%	25.1%	24.3%	21.3%	19.6%

Table 17 continued on next page.

**Table 24-Continued.** About how many deer, bucks and quality bucks did you see during your total Black Hills deer hunt (1998 – 2009)?

Statistics	Total Deer Seen					
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	
<b>Mean</b>	82.1	74.9	72.4	58.3	40.7	
<b>Median</b>	45.0	40.0	40.0	30.0	23.0	
<b>Mode</b>	100	100	100	20	20	
<b>% seeing zero</b>	0.2%	0.1%	0.7%	0.6%	1.4%	
Statistics	Total Bucks Seen					
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	
<b>Mean</b>	11.0	10.8	11.7	8.8	7.6	
<b>Median</b>	6.0	6.0	6.0	5.0	4.0	
<b>Mode</b>	4	3	3	2	2	
<b>% seeing zero</b>	5.8%	5.0%	5.8%	8.5%	10.0%	
Statistics	Total Quality Bucks Seen					
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	
<b>Mean</b>	2.6	2.8	2.6	2.1	1.8	
<b>Median</b>	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	
<b>Mode</b>	0	0	0	0	0	
<b>% seeing zero</b>	23.1%	23.5%	24.8%	30.9%	32.6%	

**Table 25.** Frequency of the number of deer seen by Black Hills deer hunters (1998 – 2009).

Frequency Range	Deer Seen – 1998 – 2009						
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
0 – 5	7.5%	8.5%	3.9%	5.8%	3.9%	3.2%	3.2%
6 – 10	12.7%	12.9%	6.4%	9.9%	6.2%	6.0%	7.3%
11 – 20	21.9%	22.9%	14.8%	20.0%	17.9%	14.8%	13.9%
21 – 30	16.4%	16.4%	15.2%	17.4%	14.7%	14.8%	15.6%
31 – 40	9.5%	7.0%	9.3%	10.0%	8.6%	7.1%	8.2%
41 – 50	10.4%	9.2%	12.1%	10.7%	11.7%	11.3%	11.7%
51 – 75	7.5%	7.2%	9.4%	8.0%	9.4%	10.1%	9.9%
76 – 100	7.5%	8.7%	12.3%	8.3%	11.8%	13.5%	13.0%
101 – 200	5.8%	5.9%	11.4%	6.9%	10.6%	12.6%	11.5%
> 200	1.2%	1.4%	5.1%	3.0%	5.1%	6.4%	5.8%
<b>Number</b>	347	1,687	1,662	1,659	1,655	1,765	1,861

Table continued

**Table 25 – Continued.** Frequency of the number of deer seen by Black Hills deer hunters (1998 – 2009).

Frequency Range	Deer Seen – 1998 – 2009						
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009		
0 – 5	2.8%	4.0%	4.5%	7.2%	12.0%		
6 – 10	6.6%	7.3%	8.0%	12.2%	15.3%		
11 – 20	16.5%	16.1%	16.6%	19.1%	22.0%		
21 – 30	14.4%	14.8%	14.8%	15.1%	15.9%		
31 – 40	8.7%	8.1%	7.8%	8.0%	6.6%		
41 – 50	11.1%	10.3%	11.5%	9.9%	9.4%		
51 – 75	9.7%	8.8%	8.0%	7.-%	4.8%		
76 – 100	12.3%	13.4%	13.6%	10.7%	7.7%		
101 – 200	11.3%	10.9%	9.8%	7.2%	4.7%		
> 200	6.6%	6.3%	5.3%	3.5%	1.4%		
<b>Number</b>	1,720	1,590	1,555	2,345	2,319		

**Table 26.** Frequency of the number of bucks seen by Black Hills deer hunters (1998 – 2009).

Frequency Range	Bucks Seen – 1998 – 2009						
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
0	19.1%	16.0%	8.4%	6.9%	6.4%	5.3%	4.1%
1	18.3%	17.4%	11.5%	10.8%	8.5%	7.8%	6.8%
2	14.0%	14.1%	11.1%	12.6%	10.9%	9.8%	10.1%
3	11.4%	10.3%	12.2%	12.1%	11.5%	10.8%	9.9%
4	8.6%	9.0%	9.0%	10.0%	10.5%	8.3%	8.2%
5	6.9%	7.8%	8.9%	8.9%	8.9%	8.1%	8.3%
6 – 10	16.3%	15.9%	20.8%	21.5%	22.4%	24.7%	23.7%
11 – 20	4.6%	7.5%	12.5%	11.8%	14.0%	14.8%	18.9%
> 20	0.9%	2.0%	5.6%	5.4%	6.8%	10.5%	10.1%
<b>TOTAL</b>	350	1,697	1,655	1,659	1,654	1,779	1,876

Table continued

**Table 26 – Continued.** Frequency of the number of bucks seen by Black Hills deer hunters (1998 – 2008).

Frequency Range	Bucks Seen – 1998 - 2009					
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	
0	5.8%	5.0%	5.8%	8.5%	10.0%	
1	6.1%	7.0%	6.7%	8.7%	11.1%	
2	9.7%	8.6%	9.3%	13.0%	12.2%	
3	9.5%	9.3%	10.5%	10.4%	11.4%	
4	9.9%	8.4%	7.9%	9.3%	10.2%	
5	8.6%	8.8%	9.4%	8.4%	9.4%	
6 – 10	22.5%	23.5%	22.8%	21.1%	18.5%	
11 – 20	16.2%	17.2%	15.0%	12.9%	10.9%	
> 20	11.7%	12.2%	12.5%	7.8%	6.3%	
<b>TOTAL</b>	1,739	1,530	1,503	2,378	2,324	

**Table 27.** Frequency of the number of “quality” bucks deer seen by Black Hills deer hunters (1998 – 2009).

Frequency Range	Quality Bucks Seen – 1998 – 2009						
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<b>0</b>	42.5%	39.9%	30.0%	25.1%	24.3%	21.3%	19.6%
<b>1</b>	25.9%	26.8%	24.8%	26.5%	23.6%	22.9%	23.3%
<b>2</b>	17.5%	14.5%	16.4%	20.1%	20.4%	18.8%	19.2%
<b>3</b>	9.2%	8.4%	10.7%	11.7%	11.5%	11.9%	12.4%
<b>4</b>	3.4%	4.3%	6.3%	5.7%	6.2%	6.9%	7.2%
<b>5</b>	0.9%	2.4%	3.9%	3.0%	5.4%	7.7%	6.9%
<b>6 – 8</b>	0.0%	2.3%	3.9%	3.5%	4.5%	4.8%	4.7%
<b>9 – 10</b>	0.6%	1.0%	2.1%	2.6%	2.1%	3.3%	3.0%
<b>&gt; 10</b>	0.0%	0.4%	1.9%	1.8%	1.9%	2.4%	3.6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	348	1,680	1,624	1,644	1,645	1,716	1,838

Table continued

**Table 27 – Continued.** Frequency of the number of “quality” bucks deer seen by Black Hills deer hunters (1998 – 2009).

Frequency Range	Quality Bucks Seen – 1998 - 2009					
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	
<b>0</b>	23.1%	23.5%	24.8%	30.9%	32.6%	
<b>1</b>	22.6%	23.0%	23.0%	23.9%	27.6%	
<b>2</b>	19.9%	19.0%	20.4%	18.7%	17.1%	
<b>3</b>	12.0%	10.4%	10.2%	10.3%	9.4%	
<b>4</b>	6.4%	7.3%	6.3%	5.0%	3.9%	
<b>5</b>	6.0%	5.4%	5.3%	4.6%	4.3%	
<b>6 – 8</b>	5.0%	5.1%	4.3%	3.0%	2.2%	
<b>9 – 10</b>	2.9%	2.8%	3.1%	2.0%	1.4%	
<b>&gt; 10</b>	2.2%	3.4%	2.7%	1.8%	1.4%	
<b>TOTAL</b>	1,676	1,513	1,494	2,327	2,330	

**Table 28.** Rating of the number of deer seen during the 2009 Black Hills deer season –How would you rate the total number of deer you saw this year while Black Hills deer hunting, based on your expectations, on a scale of 1 being very few, 5 about average, and 9 being lots of deer. Leave blank if you have no opinion.

Rating – Total Number Deer Seen	2009 BLACK HILLS DEER HUNTING		
	RESIDENT <sup>1</sup>	NONRESIDENT <sup>1</sup>	COMBINED
<b>1 VERY FEW</b>	18.8%	10.6%	18.2%
<b>2</b>	11.1%	4.8%	10.6%
<b>3</b>	13.7%	10.6%	13.4%
<b>4</b>	11.0%	11.6%	11.0%
<b>5 AVERAGE</b>	23.2%	21.7%	23.1%
<b>6</b>	6.0%	7.9%	6.1%
<b>7</b>	8.3%	11.1%	8.5%
<b>8</b>	3.1%	11.6%	3.8%
<b>9 LOTS OF DEER</b>	4.8%	10.1%	5.3%
<b>NUMBER</b>	2,166	189	2,355
<b>MEAN<sup>2</sup></b>	4.04	5.16	4.13
<b>95% C.I.</b>	3.95 – 4.14	4.81 – 5.51	4.04 – 4.23
SUMMARIZED RESULTS <sup>3</sup>			
<b>1-3 LOW</b>	43.6%	25.9%	42.2%
<b>4-6 MEDIUM</b>	40.1%	41.3%	40.2%
<b>7-9 HIGH</b>	16.3%	32.8%	17.6%

<sup>1</sup>Resident vs. Nonresident – Pearson Chi-square:  $X^2=59.205$ ;  $df=8$ ;  $p<0.001$

<sup>2</sup>Resident vs. Nonresident – ANOVA:  $F=41.203$ ;  $df=1/2,353$ ;  $p<0.001$

<sup>3</sup>Resident vs. Nonresident – Pearson Chi-square:  $X^2=40.058$ ;  $df=2$ ;  $p<0.001$

**Table 29.** Rating of the number of bucks seen during the 2009 Black Hills deer season –*How would you rate the number of BUCKS you saw this year while Black Hills deer hunting, based on your expectations, on a scale of 1 being very few, 5 about average, and 9 being lots of bucks. Leave blank if you have no opinion.*

Rating – Total Number Bucks Seen	2009 BLACK HILLS DEER HUNTING		
	RESIDENT <sup>1</sup>	NONRESIDENT <sup>1</sup>	COMBINED
<b>1 VERY FEW</b>	24.6%	14.1%	23.7%
<b>2</b>	11.1%	9.2%	10.9%
<b>3</b>	13.2%	7.0%	12.7%
<b>4</b>	11.7%	11.9%	11.7%
<b>5 AVERAGE</b>	22.5%	30.8%	23.2%
<b>6</b>	6.6%	5.9%	6.5%
<b>7</b>	6.1%	12.4%	6.6%
<b>8</b>	2.1%	5.4%	2.4%
<b>9 LOTS OF BUCKS</b>	2.2%	3.2%	2.3%
<b>NUMBER</b>	2,120	185	2,305
<b>MEAN<sup>2</sup></b>	3.65	4.50	3.71
<b>95% C.I.</b>	3.55 – 3.74	4.18 – 4.82	3.61 – 3.80
SUMMARIZED RESULTS <sup>3</sup>			
<b>1-3 LOW</b>	48.8%	30.3%	47.3%
<b>4-6 MEDIUM</b>	40.7%	48.6%	41.3%
<b>7-9 HIGH</b>	10.5%	21.1%	11.3%

<sup>1</sup>Resident vs. Nonresident – Pearson Chi-square:  $X^2=37.367$ ;  $df=8$ ;  $p<0.001$

<sup>2</sup>Resident vs. Nonresident – ANOVA:  $F=27.112$ ;  $df=1/2,303$ ;  $p<0.001$

<sup>3</sup>Resident vs. Nonresident – Pearson Chi-square:  $X^2=31.880$ ;  $df=2$ ;  $p<0.001$

**Table 30.** Rating of the QUALITY of bucks seen during the 2009 Black Hills deer season –How would you rate the QUALITY of bucks you saw this year while Black Hills deer hunting, based on your expectations, on a scale of 1 being very poor, 5 about average, and 9 being exceptional. Leave blank if you have no opinion.

Rating – QUALITY of Bucks Seen	2009 BLACK HILLS DEER HUNTING		
	RESIDENT <sup>1</sup>	NONRESIDENT <sup>1</sup>	COMBINED
<b>1 VERY POOR</b>	26.1%	17.2%	25.4%
<b>2</b>	12.1%	7.5%	11.7%
<b>3</b>	12.6%	15.6%	12.9%
<b>4</b>	10.8%	9.1%	10.6%
<b>5 AVERAGE</b>	20.5%	25.8%	20.9%
<b>6</b>	5.9%	9.1%	6.1%
<b>7</b>	7.2%	9.7%	7.4%
<b>8</b>	2.9%	5.4%	3.1%
<b>9 EXCEPTIONAL</b>	1.9%	0.5%	1.8%
<b>NUMBER</b>	2,060	186	2,246
<b>MEAN<sup>2</sup></b>	3.60	4.15	3.64
<b>95% C.I.</b>	3.50 – 3.69	3.84 – 4.46	3.55 – 3.74
<b>SUMMARIZED RESULTS<sup>3</sup></b>			
<b>1-3 POOR</b>	50.8%	40.3%	50.0%
<b>4-6 MEDIUM</b>	37.1%	44.1%	37.7%
<b>7-9 EXCEPTIONAL</b>	12.0%	15.6%	12.3%

<sup>1</sup>Resident vs. Nonresident – Pearson Chi-square:  $X^2=21.692$ ;  $df=8$ ;  $p=0.006$

<sup>2</sup>Resident vs. Nonresident – ANOVA:  $F=10.801$ ;  $df=1/2,244$ ;  $p<0.001$

<sup>3</sup>Resident vs. Nonresident – Pearson Chi-square:  $X^2=7.698$ ;  $df=2$ ;  $p=0.021$

**Table 31.** Comparison of the hunters' evaluation (on a scale of 1 to 9) of the number of deer, bucks and quality bucks seen during their Black Hills deer hunting in 1997 through 2009.

Mean Evaluation	Year							
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<b>Deer Seen</b>	3.5	4.3	4.6	5.8	5.2	5.7	6.0	6.3
<b>Bucks Seen</b>	2.5	3.2	3.6	4.3	4.5	4.5	4.8	5.0
<b>Quality Bucks Seen</b>	3.2	3.5	3.7	4.2	4.5	4.5	4.8	4.8

**Table 31 – Continued.**

Mean Evaluation	Year						% Change 97–09
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009		
<b>Deer Seen</b>	6.2	6.0	5.9	5.3	<b>4.1</b>		+7.5%
<b>Bucks Seen</b>	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.3	<b>3.7</b>		+15.0%
<b>Quality Bucks Seen</b>	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.2	<b>3.6</b>		+5.0%

**Table 32.** Comparison of the hunters' evaluation (on a scale of 1 to 9) of the number of deer, bucks and quality bucks seen during their Black Hills deer hunting in 1997 through 2009.

Evaluation of Number Deer Seen	Year							
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<b>LOW</b>	56.5%	37.8%	32.3%	11.6%	19.5%	13.1%	9.9%	7.2%
<b>MEDIUM</b>	32.2%	46.2%	47.7%	48.8%	52.3%	48.3%	45.9%	44.0%
<b>HIGH</b>	11.3%	16.0%	19.9%	39.6%	28.3%	38.7%	44.2%	48.8%
Evaluation of Number Bucks Seen	Year							
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<b>LOW</b>	74.1%	57.7%	51.0%	36.2%	33.2%	32.1%	27.2%	24.5%
<b>MEDIUM</b>	20.5%	33.9%	39.2%	45.1%	47.1%	47.7%	49.0%	48.9%
<b>HIGH</b>	5.4%	8.4%	9.8%	18.7%	19.7%	20.2%	23.8%	26.6%
Evaluation of Quality of Bucks Seen	Year							
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<b>LOW</b>	58.5%	52.7%	47.9%	39.5%	33.4%	32.4%	27.7%	26.8%
<b>MEDIUM</b>	33.3%	37.5%	39.3%	41.0%	43.7%	45.5%	46.1%	48.8%
<b>HIGH</b>	8.2%	9.8%	12.7%	19.5%	22.7%	22.1%	26.2%	24.4%

**Table 32 – Continued.** Comparison of the hunters’ evaluation (on a scale of 1 to 9) of the number of deer, bucks and quality bucks seen during their Black Hills deer hunting in 1997 through 2009.

Evaluation of Number Deer Seen	Year								
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009				
<b>LOW</b>	7.1%	12.0%	12.7%	19.7%	42.2%				
<b>MEDIUM</b>	45.2%	45.4%	46.5%	51.1%	40.2%				
<b>HIGH</b>	46.8%	42.6%	40.8%	29.2%	17.6%				
Evaluation of Number Bucks Seen	Year								
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009				
<b>LOW</b>	25.7%	26.8%	26.8%	35.5%	47.3%				
<b>MEDIUM</b>	52.3%	49.8%	52.0%	49.2%	41.3%				
<b>HIGH</b>	22.0%	23.4%	21.2%	15.2%	11.3%				
Evaluation of Quality of Bucks Seen	Year								
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009				
<b>POOR</b>	30.7%	31.4%	32.7%	38.2%	50.0%				
<b>MEDIUM</b>	48.2%	46.0%	46.2%	45.5%	37.7%				
<b>HIGH</b>	21.1%	22.6%	21.1%	16.4%	12.3%				

**Table 33.** Degree of crowding for the 2009 Black Hills deer season –*How would you rate the hunting conditions in terms of number of other hunters?*

HUNTING CONDITIONS	2009 BLACK HILLS DEER HUNTING					
	RESIDENT <sup>1</sup>		NONRESIDENT <sup>1</sup>		COMBINED	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Not Enough Hunters</b>	118	5.6%	11	5.7%	129	5.6%
<b>Just Right – Not Crowded</b>	1,202	57.4%	146	75.6%	1,348	58.9%
<b>Slightly Crowded</b>	498	23.8%	28	14.5%	526	23.0%
<b>Moderately Crowded</b>	226	10.8%	7	3.6%	233	10.2%
<b>Very Crowded</b>	50	2.4%	1	0.5%	51	2.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	2,094	100%	193	100%	2,287	100%

<sup>1</sup>Resident vs. Nonresident: Chi-square:  $X^2=28.267$ ;  $df=4$ ;  $p<0.001$

**Table 34.** Comparison of the hunters' evaluation of crowding during their Black Hills deer hunting in 1997 through 2009.

<b>Evaluation of Crowding</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2002</b>
<b>Not Enough Hunters</b>	7.0%	7.3%	10.0%	6.2%	9.8%	9.2%
<b>Just Right – Not Crowded</b>	51.2%	58.8%	66.3%	60.4%	64.8%	66.1%
<b>Slightly Crowded</b>	23.4%	21.5%	15.4%	21.8%	17.7%	17.5%
<b>Moderately Crowded</b>	11.4%	9.9%	6.5%	9.0%	6.0%	5.3%
<b>Very Crowded</b>	7.0%	2.5%	1.9%	2.6%	1.7%	1.9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	1,557	354	1,699	1,634	1,641	1,643
<b>Total License Sales</b>	12,362	8,262	7,830	7,921	6,707	6,449

**Table 34-Continued.** Comparison of the hunters' evaluation of crowding during their Black Hills deer hunting in 1997 through 2009.

<b>Evaluation of Crowding</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
<b>Not Enough Hunters</b>	7.5%	6.7%	6.3%	6.3%	5.2%	5.0%
<b>Just Right – Not Crowded</b>	64.9%	67.1%	66.0%	61.2%	59.1%	50.6%
<b>Slightly Crowded</b>	18.8%	18.4%	19.6%	21.1%	20.7%	26.6%
<b>Moderately Crowded</b>	7.0%	5.6%	6.2%	8.0%	10.1%	12.9%
<b>Very Crowded</b>	1.8%	2.1%	1.9%	3.4%	4.8%	5.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	1,710	1,841	1,679	1,519	1,494	2,349
<b>Total License Sales</b>	6,438	7,346	7,814	8,932	8,949	9,173

**Table 34-Continued.** Comparison of the hunters' evaluation of crowding during their Black Hills deer hunting in 1997 through 2009.

<b>Evaluation of Crowding</b>	<b>2009</b>					
<b>Not Enough Hunters</b>	5.6%					
<b>Just Right – Not Crowded</b>	58.9%					
<b>Slightly Crowded</b>	23.0%					
<b>Moderately Crowded</b>	10.2%					
<b>Very Crowded</b>	2.2%					
<b>TOTAL</b>	2,287					
<b>Total License Sales</b>	7,831					

**Black Hills Deer Hunting Experience:**

**Table 35.** Years of experience hunting deer by residents and nonresidents in the Black Hills, 1998 – 2009.

Years of Experience	RESIDENT							
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>1 Year</b>	6.1%	11.0%	10.0%	10.5%	9.6%	9.6%	13.2%	11.1%
<b>2 – 3 Years</b>	14.0%	15.0%	13.9%	13.3%	14.0%	13.4%	14.4%	15.3%
<b>4 – 5 Years</b>	13.7%	11.5%	11.3%	9.6%	11.0%	10.0%	10.1%	10.6%
<b>6 – 10 Years</b>	18.0%	14.6%	16.1%	18.9%	17.8%	18.2%	18.3%	16.1%
<b>11 – 20 Years</b>	21.0%	20.7%	20.2%	19.6%	21.8%	21.3%	19.1%	20.8%
<b>21 – 30 Years</b>	16.2%	13.3%	14.8%	14.0%	13.3%	14.7%	12.0%	12.2%
<b>31 or more</b>	11.0%	13.9%	13.7%	14.1%	12.4%	12.8%	12.9%	13.9%
<b>Number</b>	328	1,443	1,684	1,589	1,581	1,663	1,755	1,599
<b>Mean Years</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	15.0	14.3	14.9	13.9	14.6
<b>95% C.I.</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	14.2 – 15.5	13.3 – 14.5	13.9 – 15.3

**Table 35 – Continued.** Years of experience hunting deer by residents and nonresidents in the Black Hills, 1998 – 2009.

Years of Experience	RESIDENT							
	2006	2007	2008	2009				
<b>1 Year</b>	10.6%	11.7%	10.9%	9.8%				
<b>2 – 3 Years</b>	17.1%	15.9%	16.2%	15.2%				
<b>4 – 5 Years</b>	10.0%	10.4%	10.9%	10.8%				
<b>6 – 10 Years</b>	16.3%	13.4%	14.9%	16.0%				
<b>11 – 20 Years</b>	20.8%	21.2%	19.8%	19.2%				
<b>21 – 30 Years</b>	11.4%	14.1%	13.3%	13.9%				
<b>31 or more</b>	13.7%	13.3%	14.1%	15.1%				
<b>Number</b>	1,530	1,543	2,460	2,386				
<b>Mean Years</b>	14.5	14.9	14.9	15.5				
<b>95% C.I.</b>	13.8 – 15.2	14.2 – 15.6	14.3 – 15.4	15.0 – 16.1				

Table continued on next page.

**Table 35 – Continued.** Years of experience hunting deer by residents and nonresidents in the Black Hills, 1998 – 2009.

Years of Experience	NONRESIDENT							
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<b>1 Year</b>	25.9%	25.7%	27.5%	23.3%	30.1%	21.1%	21.3%	23.5%
<b>2 – 3 Years</b>	7.4%	17.5%	9.1%	20.5%	19.9%	24.8%	16.8%	15.4%
<b>4 – 5 Years</b>	11.1%	14.0%	13.7%	8.9%	10.3%	3.8%	14.8%	9.6%
<b>6 – 10 Years</b>	25.9%	8.9%	16.8%	19.9%	15.4%	12.8%	20.0%	15.4%
<b>11 – 20 Years</b>	3.7%	17.9%	14.5%	16.4%	12.5%	23.3%	12.9%	19.1%
<b>21 – 30 Years</b>	7.4%	10.9%	13.7%	7.5%	3.7%	11.3%	10.3%	11.0%
<b>31 or more</b>	18.5%	5.1%	4.6%	3.4%	8.1%	3.0%	3.9%	5.9%
<b>Number</b>	27	257	131	146	136	133	155	136
<b>Mean Years</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	8.4	8.7	10.1	9.1	10.3
<b>95% C.I.</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8.3 – 11.9	7.5 – 10.6	8.5 – 12.1

**Table 35 – Continued.** Years of experience hunting deer by residents and nonresidents in the Black Hills, 1998 – 2009.

Years of Experience	NONRESIDENT							
	2006	2007	2008	2009				
<b>1 Year</b>	24.0%	19.7%	23.9%	22.7%				
<b>2 – 3 Years</b>	17.8%	19.7%	22.4%	19.7%				
<b>4 – 5 Years</b>	10.9%	15.0%	11.9%	10.8%				
<b>6 – 10 Years</b>	14.0%	13.4%	15.4%	19.2%				
<b>11 – 20 Years</b>	16.3%	14.2%	13.9%	13.3%				
<b>21 – 30 Years</b>	8.5%	11.0%	9.5%	8.4%				
<b>31 or more</b>	8.5%	7.1%	3.0%	5.9%				
<b>Number</b>	129	127	201	203				
<b>Mean Years</b>	10.2	10.0	8.5	9.4				
<b>95% C.I.</b>	8.2 – 12.1	8.1 – 11.9	7.1 – 9.9	7.9 – 10.9				

**Importance of Black Hills Deer Hunting:**

**Table 36.** Importance of 2009 Black Hills deer hunting– *How important is Black Hills deer hunting to you in relation to all your other types of recreation, including other types of hunting?*

IMPORTANCE (SCALE)	RESIDENTS	NONRESIDENTS	COMBINED
<b>Most Important (4)</b>	22.0%	24.4%	22.1%
<b>Very Important (3)</b>	44.7%	38.3%	44.2%
<b>Moderately Important (2)</b>	22.7%	25.9%	23.0%
<b>Slightly Important (1)</b>	8.3%	6.7%	8.1%
<b>Not Important (0)</b>	1.2%	3.1%	1.4%
<b>No Opinion (0)</b>	1.1%	1.6%	1.2%
<b>NUMBER</b>	2,205	193	2,398
Pearson Chi-square: $X^2=8.229$ ; $df=5$ ; $p=0.144$			
<b>Mean</b>	2.76	2.71	2.75
<b>95% C.I.</b>	2.72 – 2.80	2.56 – 2.86	2.71 – 2.79
ANOVA: $F=0.408$ ; $df=1/2,396$ ; $p=0.523$			

**Table 37.** Comparison of hunters' rating of their importance of Black Hills deer hunting (1997–2009).

IMPORTANCE	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>Most Important</b>	*	*	*	18.6%	22.9%	23.4%	22.2%
<b>Very Important</b>	58.8%	62.5%	62.3%	45.7%	45.3%	43.8%	42.5%
<b>Moderately Important</b>	30.1%	30.7%	29.7%	25.7%	21.9%	22.4%	23.0%
<b>Slightly Important</b>	8.5%	6.2%	6.8%	6.7%	6.5%	6.1%	6.7%
<b>Not Important</b>	2.6%	0.6%	1.2%	1.3%	1.5%	2.0%	1.2%
<b>No Opinion</b>	*	*	*	1.9%	2.0%	2.2%	4.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	1,596	355	1,709	1,822	1,775	1,776	1,938

**Table 37-Continued.**

IMPORTANCE	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	
<b>Most Important</b>	24.3%	23.2%	23.3%	21.7%	<b>Data not collected in 2008</b>	22.1%	
<b>Very Important</b>	41.2%	43.5%	43.4%	43.1%		44.2%	
<b>Moderately Important</b>	25.3%	24.4%	23.7%	26.0%		23.0%	
<b>Slightly Important</b>	6.6%	6.4%	7.3%	6.9%		8.1%	
<b>Not Important</b>	1.8%	1.5%	1.4%	1.4%		1.4%	
<b>No Opinion</b>	0.9%	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%		1.2%	
<b>TOTAL</b>	1,996	1,838	1,695	1,692		2,398	

## Mountain Lions in South Dakota

**Table 38.** What type of interactions with mountain lions did you experience during this year's Black Hills deer season (2009)?

Response	Observed tracks or signs	
	2009 Black Hills Deer Hunter Survey	
	Number	Percent
NO	1,592	62.2%
YES	967	37.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,559</b>	<b>100%</b>
Response	Observed a Mountain Lion	
	2009 Black Hills Deer Hunter Survey	
	Number	Percent
NO	2,342	91.5%
YES	217	8.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,559</b>	<b>100%</b>
If Yes → Observed a Mountain Lion: How many?		
Response	Number	Percent
1	132	64.1%
2	36	17.5%
3	19	9.2%
4 or more	19	9.2%
<b>Total (missing = 11)</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>100%</b>
→ Were any of the lions you observed wearing a radio-collar?		
Response <sup>1</sup>	Number	Percent
No	115	55.8%
Not Sure	80	38.8%
Yes	11	5.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>100%</b>

<sup>1</sup>The response means that “one or more” of the sightings were in that category, e.g., 11 people reported that one or more of the lions they saw were wearing a collar.

**Table 39. Mountain Lions interactions** – Reported observations of mountain lions by Black Hills deer hunters (2004–2009).

Mountain Lion Interactions	Years – Percent YES				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Observed a mountain lion while Black Hills deer hunting	6.3% N=1,841	6.5% N=1,711	7.7% N=1,330	6.1% N=1,550	6.0% N=2,370

**Table 39 – Continued. Mountain Lions interactions** – Reported observations of mountain lions by Black Hills deer hunters (2004–2009).

Mountain Lion Interactions	Years – Percent YES				
	2009				
Observed a mountain lion while Black Hills deer hunting	8.5% N=2,559				

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**Understanding Black Hills Deer Hunters:**

**Research Question #1:** What is the relationship between the number of deer, bucks and quality bucks seen and hunters’ evaluation of these parameters?

**Table 40.** Pearson correlation and linear r-square statistics for the relationships between the number of deer, bucks and quality bucks seen and hunters’ evaluation of these parameters (2009).

Reported number of:	Evaluations of (Pearson correlation / r-square)		
	Deer Seen	Bucks Seen	Quality Bucks Seen
Deer seen	0.325 / (0.106)		
Bucks seen		0.404 / (0.163)	
Quality bucks seen			0.465 / (0.216)

All correlations are significant (p<0.001).

**Table 41.** Mean number of deer seen analyzed by hunters' evaluations of the number of deer seen during their 1999 – 2009 Black Hills deer hunt.

Hunters' Evaluation of the Total # of Deer Seen	Mean # Deer Seen									
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>1 Very Few</b>	16.0	18.4	15.6	14.2	21.6	12.4	11.3	15.1	13.0	14.6
<b>2</b>	22.7	22.0	23.2	24.8	26.2	21.2	23.5	26.8	19.2	22.2
<b>3</b>	28.0	38.8	26.9	36.9	39.5	32.6	33.6	33.4	29.8	36.2
<b>4</b>	39.9	52.4	44.6	48.7	39.3	37.3	40.1	51.6	49.3	37.7
<b>5 Average</b>	46.0	66.0	44.8	55.8	63.8	57.5	54.6	50.3	55.9	51.7
<b>6</b>	58.3	78.5	54.3	71.7	74.3	59.1	78.1	69.2	59.8	57.2
<b>7</b>	60.1	86.0	77.3	81.0	94.5	84.1	85.0	83.8	90.8	71.4
<b>8</b>	76.1	109.2	98.1	103.6	116.4	99.1	120.3	113.9	108.9	99.3
<b>9 Lots of Deer</b>	84.4	140.8	121.6	130.2	133.0	145.2	153.2	142.8	130.6	143.6

**Table 41 – Continued.** Mean number of deer seen analyzed by hunters' evaluations of the number of deer seen during their 1999 – 2009 Black Hills deer hunt.

Hunters' Evaluation of the Total # of Deer Seen	Mean # Deer Seen									
	2009									
<b>1 Very Few</b>	17.3									
<b>2</b>	22.5									
<b>3</b>	32.0									
<b>4</b>	43.0									
<b>5 Average</b>	42.4									
<b>6</b>	60.8									
<b>7</b>	60.5									
<b>8</b>	83.2									
<b>9 Lots of Deer</b>	87.1									

**Table 42.** Mean number of bucks seen analyzed by hunters' evaluations of the number of bucks seen during their 1999 – 2009 Black Hills deer hunt.

Hunters' Evaluation of the Total # of Bucks Seen	Mean # Bucks Seen									
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>1 Very Few</b>	1.2	1.8	1.6	1.9	1.6	2.0	1.6	2.4	1.9	1.8
<b>2</b>	2.7	3.1	2.8	3.2	3.5	3.6	3.8	3.8	4.1	3.4
<b>3</b>	3.7	5.5	4.7	4.4	4.7	5.4	5.8	6.2	6.1	6.5
<b>4</b>	5.5	6.0	5.4	7.0	7.4	10.3	9.2	8.9	9.0	7.4
<b>5 Average</b>	6.2	8.1	7.1	8.1	8.9	9.5	10.2	10.0	10.7	9.0
<b>6</b>	8.5	11.2	10.5	11.5	13.0	12.6	11.8	13.4	17.8	13.9
<b>7</b>	9.6	13.4	13.3	12.7	15.0	14.1	18.0	16.7	17.9	16.9
<b>8</b>	11.9	16.5	14.1	13.7	20.7	22.1	22.5	26.2	22.3	25.4
<b>9 Lots of Bucks</b>	15.0	21.2	22.5	20.7	26.3	32.7	36.2	21.3	34.0	27.3

**Table 42 –Continued.** Mean number of bucks seen analyzed by hunters' evaluations of the number of bucks seen during their 1999 – 2009 Black Hills deer hunt.

Hunters' Evaluation of the Total # of Bucks Seen	Mean # Bucks Seen									
	2009									
<b>1 Very Few</b>	2.2									
<b>2</b>	3.7									
<b>3</b>	6.0									
<b>4</b>	7.9									
<b>5 Average</b>	9.1									
<b>6</b>	13.5									
<b>7</b>	13.7									
<b>8</b>	14.3									
<b>9 Lots of Bucks</b>	21.4									

**Table 43.** Mean number of “QUALITY” bucks seen analyzed by hunters’ evaluations of the “QUALITY” of bucks seen during their 1999 – 2009 Black Hills deer hunt.

Hunters’ Evaluation of the “quality” of Bucks Seen	Mean # “QUALITY” Bucks Seen									
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
1 Very Poor	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3
2	0.6	1.5	0.8	0.8	0.9	1.1	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
3	0.9	1.3	1.3	1.6	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.4
4	1.5	2.4	1.8	2.1	2.2	2.1	1.9	2.3	2.0	1.9
5 Average	2.1	2.4	2.1	2.5	3.1	2.8	2.7	2.9	2.6	2.5
6	3.0	3.4	3.1	3.2	3.7	3.7	3.7	4.0	4.0	3.2
7	3.6	4.0	3.9	4.1	4.5	4.8	4.8	5.0	5.0	4.4
8	2.9	6.0	5.0	5.7	5.9	9.1	6.0	7.3	6.1	5.6
9 Exceptional	3.3	7.2	7.1	8.1	7.6	8.4	7.8	6.8	8.4	5.8

**Table 43.** Mean number of “QUALITY” bucks seen analyzed by hunters’ evaluations of the “QUALITY” of bucks seen during their 1999 – 2009 Black Hills deer hunt.

Hunters’ Evaluation of the “quality” of Bucks Seen	Mean # “QUALITY” Bucks Seen									
	2009									
1 Very Poor	0.4									
2	1.0									
3	1.4									
4	2.1									
5 Average	2.4									
6	3.4									
7	4.0									
8	5.5									
9 Exceptional	4.9									

**Research Question #2:** What is the relationship between satisfaction of 2009 Black Hills deer hunters and the various parameters measured in this survey, i.e., which variables are the best predictors of satisfaction?

**Table 44.** Pearson correlation between satisfaction<sup>1</sup> with 2009 Black Hills deer season and 15 variables measured in this survey.

<b>Question Number<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Variable<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>Pearson Correlation<sup>6</sup></b>
5	Evaluation of the number of deer seen (scale: 1 – 9)	0.557
7	Evaluation of the number of bucks seen (scale: 1 – 9)	0.482
9	Evaluation of the quality of bucks seen (scale: 1 – 9)	0.438
2	Success1 (0=none, 1=doe or buck harvest)	0.364
2	Success2 (0=none, 1=doe, 2=buck harvest)	0.342
8	Number of quality bucks seen	0.226
10	Evaluation of crowding conditions <sup>3</sup>	-0.191
4	Number of deer seen	0.183
1	Days of Black Hills deer hunting (2008 season)	-0.129
14	Residence (Non-resident=1, SD=1)	-0.114
13	Years of Black Hills deer hunting	-0.096
6	Number of bucks seen	0.064
11	Importance of Black Hills deer hunting <sup>4</sup>	-0.050
15	Gender (male=1, female=2)	-0.009
15	Age	0.004

<sup>1</sup>Satisfaction was re-coded as: 3 = Very Satisfied; 2 = Moderately Satisfied; 1 = Slightly Satisfied; 0 =Neutral or No Opinion; -1 = Slightly Dissatisfied; -2 = Moderately Dissatisfied; -3 = Very Dissatisfied

<sup>2</sup>See Appendix A

<sup>3</sup>Crowding was re-coded as: 1 = Just Right/Not Crowded; 2 = Slightly Crowded / Not Enough Hunters; 3 = Moderately Crowded; 4 = Very Crowded

<sup>4</sup>Importance was re-coded as: 0=Not, 1=Slightly, 2=Moderately, 3=Very, and 4=Most Important

<sup>5</sup>Means for all the variables in Table:

<b>Question #</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Number</b>
5	Evaluation of the number of deer seen (scale: 1 – 9)	4.13	2,355
7	Evaluation of the number of bucks seen (scale: 1 – 9)	3.71	2,305
9	Evaluation of the quality of bucks seen (scale: 1 – 9)	4.14	2,246
2	Success1 (0=none, 1=doe or buck harvest)	0.55	2,416
2	Success2 (0=none, 1=doe, 2=buck harvest)	0.90	2,418
8	Number of quality bucks seen	1.81	2,324
10	Evaluation of crowding conditions <sup>4</sup>	1.56	2,287
4	Number of deer seen	40.64	2,312
1	Days of Black Hills deer hunting (2008 season)	4.75	2,689
14	Residence (Non-resident=1, SD=2)	1.08	2,697
13	Years of Black Hills deer hunting	14.89	2,616
6	Number of bucks seen	7.64	2,317
11	Importance of Black Hills deer hunting <sup>5</sup>	2.75	2,398
15	Gender (male=1, female=2)	1.10	2,622
15	Age	44.79	2,613

<sup>6</sup>Un-shaded variables are significant @ 0.001 level (2-tailed) / Shaded variables in Table 48 do not have a significant correlation with satisfaction

**Table 45.** Hunter satisfaction analyzed by their evaluation of crowding (2009).

Satisfaction	Hunters' Evaluation of Crowding Conditions				
	Not Enough Hunters	Just Right – Not Crowded	Slightly Crowded	Moderately Crowded	Very Crowded
<b>Satisfied</b>	45.3%	62.4%	52.5%	41.6%	30.0%
<b>Neutral</b>	8.6%	9.9%	11.9%	12.9%	12.0%
<b>Dissatisfied</b>	46.1%	27.7%	35.6%	45.5%	58.0%
<b>Number</b>	128	1,343	522	233	50
Pearson Chi-Square: $X^2=70.740$ ; $df=8$ ; $p<0.001$					
<b>Mean Satisfaction<sup>1</sup></b>	0.01 <sub>a</sub>	0.86 <sub>b</sub>	0.41 <sub>ab</sub>	-0.06 <sub>a</sub>	-0.78 <sub>c</sub>
ANOVA: $F=22.867$ ; $df=4/2,271$ ; $p<0.001$ Note <sup>3</sup>					

<sup>1</sup>Satisfaction was re-coded as: 3 = Very Satisfied; 2 = Moderately Satisfied; 1 = Slightly Satisfied; 0 = Neutral or No Opinion; -1 = Slightly Dissatisfied; -2 = Moderately Dissatisfied; -3 = Very Dissatisfied

Note: Means in the same row that do not share subscripts differ at  $p<0.05$  in the Turkey HSD comparison.

**Table 46.** Mean number of deer seen and mean evaluation of the number of deer seen analyzed by hunter's satisfaction level (2009).

Satisfaction level	Mean Number of Deer Seen	Mean Evaluation of the Number of Deer Seen <sup>1</sup>
<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	25.0	2.3
<b>Moderately Dissatisfied</b>	26.8	2.4
<b>Slightly Dissatisfied</b>	32.3	2.8
<b>Neutral/No Opinion</b>	32.1	4.1
<b>Slightly Satisfied</b>	42.2	4.2
<b>Moderately Satisfied</b>	50.7	5.0
<b>Very Satisfied</b>	54.2	6.0
<b>ANOVA</b>	$F=14.029$ ; $df=6/2,299$ ; $p<0.001$	$F=185.326$ ; $df=6/2,338$ ; $p<0.001$

<sup>1</sup>See Table 28

**Table 47.** Mean number of bucks seen and mean evaluation of the number of bucks seen analyzed by hunter's satisfaction level (2009).

Satisfaction level	Mean Number of Bucks Seen	Mean Evaluation of the Number of Bucks Seen <sup>1</sup>
<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	8.4	2.2
<b>Moderately Dissatisfied</b>	4.8	2.3
<b>Slightly Dissatisfied</b>	4.8	2.7
<b>Neutral/No Opinion</b>	5.5	3.5
<b>Slightly Satisfied</b>	7.4	3.7
<b>Moderately Satisfied</b>	8.7	4.4
<b>Very Satisfied</b>	10.8	5.2
<b>ANOVA</b>	F=3.308; df=6/2,305; p=0.003	F=125.481; df=6/2,287; p<0.001

<sup>1</sup>See Table 29

**Table 48.** Mean number of quality bucks seen and mean evaluation of the quality of bucks seen analyzed by hunter's satisfaction level (2009).

Satisfaction level	Mean Number of Quality Bucks Seen	Mean Evaluation of the Quality of Bucks Seen <sup>1</sup>
<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	1.1	2.4
<b>Moderately Dissatisfied</b>	1.0	2.3
<b>Slightly Dissatisfied</b>	1.2	2.8
<b>Neutral/No Opinion</b>	1.4	3.2
<b>Slightly Satisfied</b>	1.8	3.6
<b>Moderately Satisfied</b>	2.1	4.2
<b>Very Satisfied</b>	3.0	5.2
<b>ANOVA</b>	F=24.343; df=6/2,313; p<0.001	F=96.830; df=6/2,229; p<0.001

<sup>1</sup>See Table 30

**Table 49.** Relationship between state residence (*see Table 3*) and residence within South Dakota (*see Table 6*) with hunters' satisfactions with their 2009 Black Hills deer hunting experience.

<b>State Residence</b>	<b>Mean Satisfaction<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>95% C.I.</b>
<b>South Dakota</b>	0.46	0.38 – 0.54
<b>other state</b>	1.34	1.05 – 1.62
<b>Average</b>	0.53	0.45 – 0.61
ANOVA: F=135.907; df=1/2,396; p<0.001		
<b>Residence in South Dakota (zone)</b>	<b>Mean Satisfaction<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>95% C.I.</b>
<b>Black Hills</b>	0.52	0.40 – 0.64
<b>West River</b>	-0.43	-0.90 – 0.04
<b>East River</b>	0.49	0.36 – 0.61
<b>Average</b>	0.46	0.39 – 0.56
ANOVA: F=7.819; df=2/2,024; p<0.001		

<sup>1</sup>Satisfaction was re-coded as: 3 = Very Satisfied; 2 = Moderately Satisfied; 1 = Slightly Satisfied; 0 = Neutral or No Opinion; -1 = Slightly Dissatisfied; -2 = Moderately Dissatisfied; -3 = Very Dissatisfied

**Table 50.** Relationship between success (Success 1 & Success2) and hunters' satisfactions with their 2009 Black Hills deer hunting experience.

<b>Success1</b>	<b>Mean Satisfaction</b>	<b>95% C.I.</b>
<b>Unsuccessful</b>	-0.27	-0.38 – -0.15
<b>Successful (doe or buck harvest)</b>	1.20	1.10 – 1.30
<b>Average</b>	0.54	0.45 – 0.62
ANOVA: F=363.974; df=1/2,385; p<0.001		
<b>Success2</b>	<b>Mean Satisfaction<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>95% C.I.</b>
<b>Unsuccessful</b>	-0.27 <sub>a</sub>	-0.38 – -0.15
<b>Doe Harvest</b>	1.11 <sub>b</sub>	0.94 – 1.28
<b>Buck Harvest</b>	1.24 <sub>b</sub>	1.12 – 1.37
<b>Average</b>	0.54	0.45 – 0.62
ANOVA: F=181.010; df=2/2,386;; p<0.001		

<sup>1</sup>Means in the same column that do not share subscripts differ at p<0.05 in the Turkey HSD comparison.

**Table 51.** Percent satisfied based on success (harvesting a doe or buck) for 2009 Black Hills deer hunters.

<b>Satisfaction</b>	<b>Unsuccessful</b>	<b>Doe Harvested</b>	<b>Buck Harvested</b>	<b>Combined</b>
<b>Very Satisfied</b>	8.3%	28.6%	29.4%	19.7%
<b>Moderately Satisfied</b>	15.4%	28.2%	31.0%	23.4%
<b>Slightly Satisfied</b>	12.7%	9.0%	12.9%	12.0%
<b>Neutral / No Opinion</b>	15.1%	11.3%	6.1%	11.2%
<b>Slightly Dissatisfied</b>	18.7%	10.5%	8.2%	13.4%
<b>Moderately Dissatisfied</b>	13.0%	7.3%	6.9%	9.8%
<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	16.7%	5.1%	5.6%	10.5%
<b>Number</b>	1,081	468	840	2,389
Pearson Chi-square: $X^2=359.402$ ; $df=12$ ; $p<0.001$				
<b>Satisfaction</b>	<b>Unsuccessful</b>	<b>Doe Harvested</b>	<b>Buck Harvested</b>	<b>Combined</b>
<b>Satisfied</b>	36.4%	65.8%	73.2%	55.1%
<b>Neutral</b>	15.1%	11.3%	6.1%	11.2%
<b>Dissatisfied</b>	48.5%	22.9%	20.7%	33.7%
<b>Number</b>	1,081	468	840	2,389
Pearson Chi-square: $X^2=290.652$ ; $df=4$ ; $p<0.001$				

**Table 52.** Mean days of hunting by Black Hills deer hunters' satisfaction level (2009).

<b>Satisfaction level</b>	<b>Mean Days of Hunting</b>	<b>95% C.I.</b>
<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	6.5	5.82 – 7.11
<b>Moderately Dissatisfied</b>	6.3	5.57 – 6.97
<b>Slightly Dissatisfied</b>	5.7	5.18 – 6.17
<b>Neutral/No Opinion</b>	4.7	4.18 – 5.26
<b>Slightly Satisfied</b>	5.1	4.62 – 5.66
<b>Moderately Satisfied</b>	4.9	4.60 – 5.23
<b>Very Satisfied</b>	4.7	4.31 – 5.04
<b>Total</b>	5.3	5.09 – 5.45
ANOVA: F=8.240; df=6/2,383; $p<0.001$		
<b>SUMMARIZED DATA</b>		
<b>SATISFACTION LEVEL</b>	<b>Mean Days of Hunting</b>	<b>95% C.I.</b>
<b>DISSATISFIED</b>	6.1	5.75 – 6.44
<b>NEUTRAL</b>	4.7	4.18 – 5.26
<b>SATISFIED</b>	4.9	4.66 – 5.10
<b>Total</b>	5.3	5.09 – 5.45
ANOVA: F=21.191; df=2/2,387; $p<0.001$		

**Table 53.** Mean number of years hunting in the Black Hills analyzed by hunters' satisfaction level (2009).

<b>Satisfaction level</b>	<b>Mean Years of Hunting In the Black Hills</b>	<b>95% C.I.</b>
<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	18.9	16.91 – 20.93
<b>Moderately Dissatisfied</b>	16.8	14.94 – 18.60
<b>Slightly Dissatisfied</b>	15.0	13.44 – 16.64
<b>Neutral/No Opinion</b>	14.5	12.81 – 16.12
<b>Slightly Satisfied</b>	14.9	13.33 – 16.52
<b>Moderately Satisfied</b>	14.3	13.13 – 15.46
<b>Very Satisfied</b>	13.8	12.59 – 14.97
<b>Total</b>	15.1	14.55 – 15.69
ANOVA: F=4.704; df=6/2,356; $p<0.001$		
<b>SUMMARIZED DATA</b>		
<b>SATISFACTION LEVEL</b>	<b>Mean Years of Hunting In the Black Hills</b>	<b>95% C.I.</b>
<b>DISSATISFIED</b>	16.8	15.72 – 17.80
<b>NEUTRAL</b>	14.5	12.81 – 16.12
<b>SATISFIED</b>	14.3	13.51 – 14.99
<b>Total</b>	15.1	14.55 – 15.69
ANOVA: F=8.175; df=2/2,360; $p<0.001$		

**Table 54.** Mean satisfaction with 2009 Black Hills deer hunting analyzed by hunters' rating of their importance of Black Hills deer hunting.

<b>Satisfaction</b>	<b>Mean Importance<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>95% C.I.</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Very Dissatisfied</b>	2.92	2.80 – 3.05	252
<b>Moderately Dissatisfied</b>	2.74	2.62 – 2.85	232
<b>Slightly Dissatisfied</b>	2.66	2.56 – 2.77	319
<b>Neutral/No Opinion</b>	2.34	2.21 – 2.47	266
<b>Slightly Satisfied</b>	2.67	2.56 – 2.79	289
<b>Moderately Satisfied</b>	2.79	2.71 – 2.86	557
<b>Very Satisfied</b>	2.97	2.89 – 3.06	471
<b>Average</b>	2.75	2.71 – 2.79	2,386
ANOVA: F=14.726; df=6/2,379; $p < 0.001$			

<sup>1</sup>Importance scale: 4=Most; 3 = Very; 2 = Moderately; 1 = Slightly Satisfied; 0 =Not or No Opinion

**Table 55.** Importance of Black Hills deer hunting analyzed by satisfaction level (2009).

<b>Importance</b>	<b>Dissatisfied</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Satisfied</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Most Important</b>	32.9%	6.2%	60.9%	529
<b>Very Important</b>	35.3%	8.9%	55.8%	1,055
<b>Moderately Important</b>	31.8%	15.9%	52.3%	547
<b>Slightly Important</b>	32.0%	17.5%	50.5%	194
<b>Not Important / No Opinion</b>	34.4%	29.5%	36.1%	61
<b>Average</b>	33.7%	11.1%	55.2%	2,386
Pearson Chi-square: $X^2=63.250$ ; df=8; $p < 0.001$				

**Research Question #2A**      What is the relationship between satisfaction of 2009 Black Hills deer hunters and size (based on total number of points) of antlered buck harvested?

**Table 56.**      Pearson correlation between satisfaction<sup>1</sup> with 2009 Black Hills deer season and size (based on total number of points) of antlered buck harvested.

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	<b>p-value (2-tailed)</b>	<b>Number</b>
Number of points on whitetail buck harvested	0.097	0.006	794
Number of points on mule deer buck harvested	0.180	0.236	45
Number of points on buck (whitetail and mule deer combined) harvested <sup>2</sup>	0.103	0.003	845

<sup>1</sup>Satisfaction was re-coded as: 3 = Very Satisfied, 2 = Moderately Satisfied, 1 = Slightly Satisfied, 0 =Neutral or No Opinion, -1 = Slightly Dissatisfied, -2 = Moderately Dissatisfied, -3 = Very Dissatisfied

<sup>2</sup>The total number includes 6 hunters that listed number of points without indicating species of deer harvested.

**Table 57.**      Mean antler size (total number of points) analyzed by satisfaction level (2009).

<b>Satisfaction Level</b>	<b>Mean Number of Total Points on Buck Harvested (2009)</b>		
	<b>Whitetail</b>	<b>Mule Deer</b>	<b>combined</b>
<b>Satisfied</b>	8.0 (average)	<i>Insufficient sample size (N=45)</i>	7.9 (average)
<b>Slightly</b>	7.6		7.5
<b>Moderately</b>	7.9		7.9
<b>Very</b>	8.2		8.2
<b>Neutral</b>	7.9		7.9
<b>Dissatisfied</b>	7.6 (average)		7.5 (average)
<b>Slightly</b>	7.8		7.8
<b>Moderately</b>	7.0		7.0
<b>Very</b>	8.0		7.9
<b>One-Way ANOVA</b>			
Whitetail (full satisfaction scale): F=3.267; df=6/787; p=0.004			
Whitetail (comparing Satisfied with Dissatisfied): F=2.128; df=2/791; p=0.120			
combined (full satisfaction scale): F=3.371; df=6/838; p=0.003			
combined (comparing Satisfied with Dissatisfied): F=2.557; df=2/842; p=0.078			

**Research Question #3**      What is the relationship between years of Black Hills deer hunting experience and various selected parameters measured in this survey (2009)?

**Table 58.**      Number of deer seen and hunters' evaluation of the number of deer seen analyzed by years of Black Hills deer hunting experience (2009).

<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b>Number of Deer Seen</b>	<b>Evaluation of Number of Deer Seen</b>
<b>1</b>	32.9	4.63
<b>2-3</b>	37.1	5.54
<b>4-5</b>	37.3	4.17
<b>6-10</b>	33.4	4.10
<b>11-20</b>	43.6	4.07
<b>21-30</b>	50.7	3.81
<b>31+</b>	48.6	3.66
<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	0.088 ( $p < 0.001$ )	-0.127 ( $p < 0.001$ )
<b>ANOVA</b>	F=4.757; df=6/2,286; $p < 0.001$	F=7.368; df=6/2,319; $p < 0.001$

Note: The Pearson correlation uses the actual number of years hunted, not the 7-goup value (1-7).

**Table 59.**      Number of bucks seen and hunters' evaluation of the number of bucks seen analyzed by years of Black Hills deer hunting experience (2009).

<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b>Number of Bucks Seen</b>	<b>Evaluation of Number of Bucks Seen</b>
<b>1</b>	6.3	3.49
<b>2-3</b>	6.7	3.82
<b>4-5</b>	6.0	3.64
<b>6-10</b>	6.1	3.80
<b>11-20</b>	7.4	3.72
<b>21-30</b>	12.0	3.74
<b>31+</b>	9.1	3.67
<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	0.060 ( $p = 0.004$ )	-0.008 ( $p = 0.696$ )
<b>ANOVA</b>	F=2.817; df=6/2,289; $p = 0.010$	F=0.776; df=6/2,271; $p = 0.589$

Note: The Pearson correlation uses the actual number of years hunted, not the 7-goup value (1-7).

**Table 60.** Number of quality bucks seen and hunters' evaluation of the quality of bucks seen analyzed by years of Black Hills deer hunting experience (2009).

<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b>Number of Quality Bucks Seen</b>	<b>Evaluation of Quality of Bucks Seen</b>
<b>1</b>	1.8	3.52
<b>2-3</b>	1.8	3.72
<b>4-5</b>	1.5	3.51
<b>6-10</b>	1.6	3.68
<b>11-20</b>	1.8	3.70
<b>21-30</b>	2.1	3.78
<b>31+</b>	2.1	3.48
<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	0.047 ( <i>p</i> =0.023)	-0.015 ( <i>p</i> =0.469)
<b>ANOVA</b>	F=1.539; df=6/2,294; <i>p</i> =0.161	F=0.901; df=6/2,212; <i>p</i> =0.493

Note: The Pearson correlation uses the actual number of years hunted, not the 7-goup value (1-7).

**Table 61.** Number of days hunting in the Black Hills deer season analyzed by years of Black Hills deer hunting experience (2009).

<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b>Days Deer Hunting (Includes Days=0)</b>	<b>Days Deer Hunting (Excludes Days=0)</b>
<b>1</b>	4.2	4.6
<b>2-3</b>	4.1	4.6
<b>4-5</b>	4.5	5.0
<b>6-10</b>	4.8	5.2
<b>11-20</b>	5.3	5.7
<b>21-30</b>	5.2	5.5
<b>31+</b>	5.6	6.1
<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	0.105 ( <i>p</i> <0.001)	0.098 ( <i>p</i> <0.001)
<b>ANOVA</b>	F=5.690; df=6/2,574; <i>p</i> <0.001	F=5.011; df=6/2,359; <i>p</i> <0.001

Note: The Pearson correlation uses the actual number of years hunted, not the 7-goup value (1-7).

**Table 62.** Mean years of Black Hills deer hunting experience comparing licensed hunters that did not hunt Black Hills deer in 2009 with hunters that did hunt in 2009.

<b>Hunting Black Hills Deer in 2009</b>	<b>Mean Years of Experience</b>	<b>95% Confidence Interval</b>
<b>Did Not Hunt in 2009</b>	13.8	10.76 – 16.82
<b>Hunted in 2009</b>	14.9	14.36 – 15.46
Success1 ANOVA: F=0.686; df=1/2,604; <i>p</i> =0.408		

**Table 63.** Mean years of Black Hills deer hunting experience analyzed by harvest success of the 2009 Black Hills deer hunters.

<b>Harvest Success</b>	<b>Mean Years of Experience</b>	<b>95% Confidence Interval</b>
<b>Success1</b>		
<b>Unsuccessful</b>	15.7	14.85 – 16.63
<b>Harvested a doe or buck</b>	14.6	13.84 – 15.31
Success1 ANOVA: F=3.987; df=1/2,362; p=0.046		
<b>Success2</b>		
<b>Unsuccessful</b>	15.7	14.85 – 16.62
<b>Harvested a doe</b>	13.0	11.83 – 14.16
<b>Harvested a buck</b>	15.4	14.50 – 16.37
Success2 ANOVA: F=6.507; df=2 /2,363; p=0.002		

**Table 64.** Mean years of Black Hills deer hunting experience analyzed by hunters' evaluation of crowding during the 2009 Black Hills deer season.

<b>Evaluation of Crowding (scale score)</b>	<b>Mean Years of Experience</b>	<b>95% Confidence Interval</b>
<b>Not enough hunters (1)</b>	20.6	17.63 – 23.49
<b>Just right – not crowded (2)</b>	15.4	14.64 – 16.19
<b>Slightly crowded (3)</b>	14.3	13.19 – 15.45
<b>Moderately crowded (4)</b>	12.8	11.11 – 14.51
<b>Very Crowded (5)</b>	13.1	9.35 – 16.88
ANOVA: F=7.007; df=4 /2,254; p<0.001		

**Table 65.** Mean years of Black Hills deer hunting experience analyzed by hunters' rating of the importance of Black Hills deer hunting.

<b>Importance of Black Hills Deer Hunting (scale score)</b>	<b>Mean Years of Experience</b>	<b>95% Confidence Interval</b>
<b>Not Important (0)</b>	9.9	5.84 – 14.02
<b>Slightly Important (1)</b>	9.8	8.07 – 11.43
<b>Moderately Important (2)</b>	12.2	11.07 – 13.28
<b>Very Important (3)</b>	16.1	15.21 – 16.91
<b>Most Important (4)</b>	18.9	17.68 – 20.15
ANOVA: F=26.478; df=4 /2,364; p<0.001		
Pearson Correlation: 0.203; p<0.001 (N=2,369)		

**Table 66.** Mean years of Black Hills deer hunting experience analyzed by hunters' satisfaction with the 2009 Black Hills deer season.

<b>Satisfaction with 2009 Black Hills Deer Season (scale)</b>	<b>Mean Years of Experience</b>	<b>95% Confidence Interval</b>
<b>Very Satisfied (+3)</b>	13.8	12.59 – 14.97
<b>Moderately Satisfied (+2)</b>	14.3	13.13 – 15.46
<b>Slightly Satisfied (+1)</b>	14.9	13.33 – 16.52
<b>Neutral / No Opinion (0)</b>	14.5	12.81 – 16.12
<b>Slightly Dissatisfied (-1)</b>	15.0	13.44 – 16.64
<b>Moderately Dissatisfied (-2)</b>	16.8	14.94 – 18.60
<b>Very Dissatisfied (-3)</b>	18.9	16.91 – 20.93
ANOVA: F=4.704; df=6 /2,356; <i>p</i> <0.001		
Pearson Correlation: -0.096; N=2,363; <i>p</i> <0.001		
<b>SUMMARIZED RESULTS</b>		
<b>SATISFIED</b>	14.3	13.51 – 14.99
<b>NEUTRAL / NO OPINION</b>	14.5	12.81 – 16.12
<b>DISSATISFIED</b>	16.8	15.72 – 17.80
ANOVA: F=8.175; df=2 /2,360; <i>p</i> <0.001		

**Table 67.** Mean age of 2009 Black Hills deer hunters analyzed by years of Black Hills deer hunting experience.

<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b>Mean Age (years)</b>	<b>95% Confidence Interval</b>
<b>1</b>	34.7	32.90 – 36.51
<b>2–3</b>	34.4	32.84 – 36.01
<b>4–5</b>	37.2	35.37 – 39.03
<b>6–10</b>	42.1	40.76 – 43.52
<b>11–20</b>	46.6	45.47 – 47.73
<b>21–30</b>	52.1	51.04 – 53.23
<b>31+</b>	62.4	61.29 – 63.40
ANOVA: F=202.688; df=6 /2,538; <i>p</i> <0.001		
Pearson Correlation: 0.588; N=2,572; <i>p</i> <0.001		

**Table 68** Mean years of Black Hills deer hunting experience analyzed by gender (2009).

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Mean Years of Experience</b>	<b>95% Confidence Interval</b>
<b>Male</b>	15.6	14.97 – 16.14
<b>Female</b>	8.2	6.97 – 9.35
ANOVA: F=61.665; df=1 /2,576; $p<0.001$		

**Table 69.** Mean years of Black Hills deer hunting experience analyzed by residence (2009).

<b>Residence</b>	<b>Mean Years of Experience</b>	<b>95% Confidence Interval</b>
<b>South Dakota Resident</b>	15.4	14.80 – 15.94
<b>Nonresident</b>	9.3	7.74 – 10.75
ANOVA: F=35.706; df=1 /2,614; $p<0.001$		
<b>Residence</b>	<b>Mean Years of Experience</b>	<b>95% Confidence Interval</b>
<b>Black Hills</b>		
<b>West River</b>		
<b>East River</b>		
ANOVA: F=35.706; df=1 /2,614; $p<0.001$		

## TABLES – Part 2

### Methodology Issues: 2009 Black Hills Deer Hunter Survey

#### Data Collection Method (Black Hills 2009 Deer Season)

**Table 70.** Responses via three different collection methods for the 2009 Black Hills deer hunter survey.

Response Method	Residents		Nonresidents		Combined	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Mail Survey	1,058	42.5%	80	38.1%	1,138	42.2%
E-Mail Survey	1,297	52.2%	114	54.3%	1,411	52.3%
Web Survey	132	5.3%	16	7.6%	148	5.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,487</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,697</b>	<b>100%</b>

Pearson Chi-square:  $X^2=2.961$ ;  $df=2$ ;  $p=0.228$

**Table 71.** Percent not hunting in the 2009 Black Hills deer hunting season analyzed by survey method.

Hunting in 2009	Mail Survey		E-Mail Survey		Web Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Not Hunt	130	11.5%	123	8.7%	14	9.5%
Hunt	1,000	88.5%	1,288	91.3%	134	90.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,130</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,411</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>100%</b>

Pearson Chi-square:  $X^2=5.489$ ;  $df=2$ ;  $p=0.064$

**Table 72.** Mean days of Black Hills deer hunting in 2009 (excluding those that did not hunt) analyzed by survey method.

Survey Method	Mean Days Hunting	95% C.I.	Number
Mail Survey	5.63	5.32 – 5.94	1,000
E-Mail Survey	4.52	4.31 – 4.74	1,411
Web Survey	5.04	4.35 – 5.73	148
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.99</b>	<b>4.81 – 5.16</b>	<b>2,559</b>

ANOVA:  $F=17.972$ ;  $df=2 / 2,556$ ;  $p<0.001$

**Table 73.** Success (harvesting a deer) in the 2009 Black Hills deer hunting season analyzed by survey method (excludes hunters that did not hunt).

Success	Mail Survey		E-Mail Survey		Web Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No Harvest	459	46.0%	568	44.2%	65	48.5%
Harvest	538	54.0%	717	55.8%	69	51.5%
<b>Total</b>	997	100%	1,285	100%	134	100%
Pearson Chi-square: $X^2=1.391$ ; $df=2$ ; $p=0.499$						
Success Type	Mail Survey		E-Mail Survey		Web Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No Harvest	459	46.0%	568	44.1%	65	48.5%
Doe Harvest	175	17.6%	286	22.2%	22	16.4%
Buck Harvest	363	36.4%	433	33.6%	47	35.1%
<b>Total</b>	997	100%	1,287	100%	134	100%
Pearson Chi-square: $X^2=9.068$ ; $df=4$ ; $p=0.059$						

**Table 74.** Satisfaction with the 2009 Black Hills deer hunting analyzed by survey method.

SATISFACTION (Scale)	Survey Method		
	Mail Survey	E-Mail Survey	Web Survey
Very Satisfied (+3)	16.0%	22.4%	22.1%
Moderately Satisfied (+2)	22.0%	24.6%	20.6%
Slightly Satisfied (+1)	14.9%	9.6%	15.3%
Neutral / No Opinion (0)	12.7%	10.1%	9.9%
Slightly Dissatisfied (-1)	12.9%	13.4%	16.8%
Moderately Dissatisfied (-2)	9.4%	10.3%	7.6%
Very Dissatisfied (-3)	12.2%	9.7%	7.6%
<b>NUMBER</b>	994	1,273	131
Pearson Chi-square: $X^2=38.680$ ; $df=12$ ; $p<0.001$			
<b>MEAN<sup>2</sup></b>	0.39	0.63	0.68
<b>95% C.I.</b>	0.27 – 0.51	0.52 – 0.74	0.35 – 1.01
ANOVA: $F=4.410$ ; $df=2 / 2,395$ ; $p=0.012$			
<b>SUMMARIZED RESULTS<sup>3</sup></b>			
<b>SATISFIED</b>	52.9%	56.6%	58.0%
<b>NEUTRAL/NO OPINION</b>	12.7%	10.1%	9.9%
<b>DISSATISFIED</b>	34.4%	33.4%	32.1%
Pearson Chi-square: $X^2=5.466$ ; $df=4$ ; $p=0.243$			

**Table 75.** Summary statistics analyzing the number of deer, bucks and quality bucks seen and hunters' evaluation of these three parameters for the 2009 Black Hills deer hunting analyzed by survey method.

Evaluation Parameter	Survey Methods (Mail, E-Mail, & Web)		
	ANOVA	Degrees of Freedom	p-value
Number Deer Seen	F=1.397	2 / 2,316	p=0.248
Evaluation of Deer Seen	F=0.174	2 / 2,352	p=0.840
Number Bucks Seen	F=0.056	2 / 2,321	p=0.945
Evaluation of Bucks Seen	F=0.218	2 / 2,302	p=0.804
Number of Quality Bucks Seen	F=1.328	2 / 2,327	p=0.265
Evaluation of Quality of Bucks Seen	F=0.121	2 / 2,243	p=0.886

**Table 76.** Hunters' evaluation of the degree of crowding for the 2009 Black Hills deer season analyzed by survey method.

Evaluation of Hunting Conditions	SURVEY METHOD		
	Mail Survey	E-Mail Survey	Web Survey
Not Enough Hunters	6.5%	5.2%	2.5%
Just Right – Not Crowded	57.2%	60.6%	57.0%
Slightly Crowded	20.7%	24.5%	27.3%
Moderately Crowded	10.4%	9.7%	13.2%
Very Crowded	5.2%	0.0%	0.0%
Number	978	1,188	121
Pearson Chi-square: $X^2=79.261$ ; df=8; $p<0.001$			

**Table 77.** Hunters' rating of the importance of Black Hills deer hunting analyzed by survey method.

IMPORTANCE (Scale)	Survey Method		
	Mail Survey	E-Mail Survey	Web Survey
Most Important (4)	25.2%	19.5%	24.4%
Very Important (3)	41.5%	47.0%	37.4%
Moderately Important (2)	23.1%	22.5%	26.7%
Slightly Important (1)	7.1%	8.8%	9.9%
Not Important (0)	3.1%	2.2%	1.5%
NUMBER	1,004	1,263	131
Pearson Chi-square: $X^2=19.612$ ; df=8; $p=0.012$			
MEAN <sup>2</sup>	2.79	2.73	2.73
95% C.I.	2.72 – 2.85	2.68 – 2.78	2.56 – 2.90
ANOVA: F=1.067; df=2 / 2,395; $p=0.344$			

**Table 78.** Hunters' interactions with mountain lions during the Black Hills deer hunting season analyzed by survey method.

Observed Signs of Mountain Lions	Survey Method		
	Mail Survey	E-Mail Survey	Web Survey
NO	56.2%	66.1%	66.2%
YES	43.8%	33.9%	33.8%
NUMBER	1,000	1,411	148
Pearson Chi-square: $X^2=25.237$ ; $df=2$ ; $p<0.001$			
Observed a Mountain Lions While Deer Hunting	Survey Method		
	Mail Survey	E-Mail Survey	Web Survey
NO	89.3%	92.9%	93.2%
YES	10.7%	7.1%	6.8%
NUMBER	1,000	1,411	148
Pearson Chi-square: $X^2=10.444$ ; $df=2$ ; $p=0.005$			

**Table 79.** Mean years of Black Hills deer hunting experience and mean age of hunters licensed to hunt deer in the Black Hills in 2009 analyzed by survey method.

Survey Method	Mean Years of Black Hills Deer Hunting	95% C.I.	Number
Mail Survey	16.4	15.48 – 17.32	1,101
E-Mail Survey	13.8	13.15 – 14.53	1,371
Web Survey	13.2	11.05 – 15.42	144
Average	14.9	14.34 – 15.43	2,616
ANOVA: $F=11.015$ ; $df=2 / 2,613$ ; $p<0.001$			
Survey Method	Mean Age (Years)	95% C.I.	Number
Mail Survey	45.9	44.79 – 46.93	1,103
E-Mail Survey	44.2	43.44 – 45.02	1,367
Web Survey	41.9	39.23 – 44.56	143
Average	44.8	44.16 – 45.42	2,613
ANOVA: $F=5.359$ ; $df=2 / 2,610$ ; $p=0.005$			

**Table 80.** Gender of hunters licensed to hunt deer in the Black Hills in 2009 analyzed by survey method.

Gender	Survey Method		
	Mail Survey	E-Mail Survey	Web Survey
Male	89.5%	91.3%	89.5%
Female	10.5%	8.7%	10.5%
<b>NUMBER</b>	1,114	1,365	143
Pearson Chi-square: $X^2=2.404$ ; $df=2$ ; $p=0.301$			

**Non-response Bias (2009 Black Hills Deer Season)**

**Table 81.** Percent not hunting in the 2009 Black Hills deer hunting season analyzed for non-response bias.

Hunting in 2009	Regular Survey		Non-respondent Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Not Hunt	267	9.9%	23	23.0%
Hunt	2,422	90.1%	77	77.0%
<b>Total</b>	2,689	100%	100	100%
Pearson Chi-square: $X^2=17.680$ ; $df=1$ ; $p<0.001$				

**Table 82.** Mean days of hunting in the 2009 Black Hills deer season analyzed for non-response bias.

Survey	Mean Days of Deer Hunting by All Licensed Hunters	95% C.I.	Number
Regular	4.75	4.57 – 4.92	2,689
Non-Respondent	3.99	3.22 – 4.75	100
Survey	Mean Days of Deer Hunting by Hunters Only	95% C.I.	Number
Regular	5.27	5.09 – 5.45	2,422
Non-Respondent	5.18	4.35 – 6.00	76

**Table 83.** Success (measured by harvesting one or more deer in the 2009 Black Hills deer season) analyzed for non-response bias.

Success	All Licensed Hunters			
	Regular Survey		Non-respondent Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No Harvest	1,369	50.8%	57	57.0%
Harvest	1,328	49.2%	43	43.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,697</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
Pearson Chi-square: $X^2=1.502$ ; $df=1$ ; $p=0.220$				
Success	Hunters Only (excludes hunters that did not hunt)			
	Regular Survey		Non-respondent Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
No Harvest	1,092	45.2%	34	44.2%
Harvest	1,324	54.8%	43	55.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,416</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>100%</b>
Pearson Chi-square: $X^2=0.033$ ; $df=1$ ; $p=0.856$				

**Table 84.** Satisfaction with the 2009 Black Hills deer hunting experience analyzed for non-response bias.

SATISFACTION (Scale)	Regular Survey		Non-respondent Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Very Satisfied (+3)	473	19.7%	22	28.6%
Moderately Satisfied (+2)	559	23.3%	21	27.3%
Slightly Satisfied (+1)	290	12.1%	15	19.5%
Neutral / No Opinion (0)	267	11.1%	7	9.1%
Slightly Dissatisfied (-1)	321	13.4%	7	9.1%
Moderately Dissatisfied (-2)	234	9.8%	4	5.2%
Very Dissatisfied (-3)	254	10.6%	1	1.3%
<b>NUMBER</b>	<b>2,398</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>100%</b>
Pearson Chi-square: $X^2=15.912$ ; $df=6$ ; $p=0.014$				
<b>MEAN</b>	0.53		1.36	
<b>95% C.I.</b>	0.45 – 0.61		1.01 – 1.72	
SUMMARIZED RESULTS				
<b>SATISFIED</b>	1,322	55.1%	58	75.3%
<b>NEUTRAL/No Opinion</b>	267	11.1%	7	9.1%
<b>DISSATISFIED</b>	809	33.7%	12	15.6%
Pearson Chi-square: $X^2=13.149$ ; $df=2$ ; $p=0.001$				

**Table 85.** Importance<sup>1</sup> of 2009 Black Hills deer hunting analyzed for non-response bias.

IMPORTANCE (SCALE)	Regular Survey		Non-respondent Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>Most Important (4)</b>	531	22.1%	31	31.0%
<b>Very Important (3)</b>	1,060	44.2%	33	33.0%
<b>Moderately Important (2)</b>	551	23.0%	25	25.0%
<b>Slightly Important (1)</b>	195	8.1%	8	8.0%
<b>Not Important No Opinion (0)</b>	61	2.5%	3	3.0%
<b>NUMBER</b>	2,398	100%	100	100%
Pearson Chi-square: $X^2=6.351$ ; $df=4$ ; $p=0.174$				
<b>Mean</b>	2.75		2.81	
<b>95% C.I.</b>	2.71 – 2.79		2.60 – 3.02	

<sup>1</sup>Measured: – How important is **Black Hills deer hunting** to you in relation to all your other types of recreation, including other types of hunting?

**Table 86.** Mean years of deer hunting experience in the Black Hills analyzed for non-response bias.

Survey	Mean Years of Deer Hunting Experience by All Licensed Hunters	95% C.I.	Number
<b>Regular</b>	14.9	14.34 – 15.43	2,616
<b>Non-Respondent</b>	8.8	7.04 – 10.62	100

**Table 87.** Proportion of resident and non-resident 2009 Black Hills deer hunters in the sample analyzed for non-response bias.

Residence	Regular Survey		Non-respondent Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<b>South Dakota</b>	2,487	92.2%	94	94.0%
<b>Other State</b>	210	7.8%	6	6.0%
<b>Total</b>	2,697	100%	100	100%
Pearson Chi-square: $X^2=0.432$ ; $df=1$ ; $p=0.511$				

# **Appendix A**

## **2009 Black Hills Deer Hunter Survey**

**Questionnaire and postcards used in the mail survey.**



Department of Game, Fish and Parks  
Foss Building  
523 East Capitol  
Pierre, South Dakota 57501-3182



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December, 2009

Dear Black Hills rifle deer hunter:

You were randomly selected to participate in this short survey designed to evaluate the 2009 Black Hills rifle deer season from the hunters' perspective. Game, Fish and Parks has been conducting this survey every year going back to 1995. The information you provide is used by game managers in making future decisions about the Black Hills deer seasons. Your prompt response will eliminate the need to send you another survey. Please take a few minutes to answer your questionnaire and return it using the pre-paid envelope provided. Also, please not remove your address label as the ID number is used to identify license type/unit.

You have the option of responding to this survey through the Internet. In 2008, nearly 27,000 hunters responded using the Internet, saving Game, Fish & Parks thousands of dollars in return mail postage costs alone. By using the Internet option, you not only save postage but data entry costs as well. To reply through the Internet, please type in the following address on your browser's address bar line:

**[www.sdgfp.info/surveys.htm](http://www.sdgfp.info/surveys.htm)**

You will need your Survey ID Number (located above your name on the address label) to log into your survey.

If you do not reply through the GFP web site or have problems entering your responses, you still have the option of returning this survey through the mail. Our goal is to receive a response from each survey recipient in this sample. If you have any questions regarding the use of this web page, please e-mail us at **SDGFPINFO@STATE.SD.US**

# 2009 BLACK HILLS DEER HUNTER SURVEY

Game, Fish & Parks, 523 E. Capitol, Pierre, SD 57501

Please note that this survey only pertains to the 2009 Black Hills **Rifle** Deer Season.

1. Number of days hunted \_\_\_\_\_. If you did not hunt this year write zero and skip ahead to question #13.

2. How many deer did you harvest in the 2009 Black Hills rifle deer season? [\_\_\_\_\_]

→ **If you harvested one or more deer**, please indicate the result of your Black Hills rifle deer hunt this year by checking (✓) the appropriate box below and/or writing in the number of deer harvested of type indicated.

a. Whitetail Buck (antlered) → total number of points: \_\_\_\_ (left + right antlers)

b. Mule Deer Buck → total number of points: \_\_\_\_ (left + right antlers)

[\_\_\_\_\_] c. Antlerless Whitetail Buck (button buck)

[\_\_\_\_\_] d. Antlerless Mule Deer Buck (button buck )

[\_\_\_\_\_] e. Adult Whitetail Doe

[\_\_\_\_\_] f. Fawn Whitetail Doe

[\_\_\_\_\_] g. Adult Mule Deer Doe

[\_\_\_\_\_] h. Fawn Mule Deer Doe

3. Considering your total 2009 Black Hills deer hunting experiences, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you? *Please circle only one response.*

Very <u>Dissatisfied</u>	Moderately <u>Dissatisfied</u>	Slightly <u>Dissatisfied</u>	Neutral or <u>No Opinion</u>	Slightly <u>Satisfied</u>	Moderately <u>Satisfied</u>	Very <u>Satisfied</u>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

4. About how many **DEER** did you see during your total 2009 Black Hills deer hunt?

[\_\_\_\_\_] **Total deer seen**

5. How would you rate the total number of **DEER** you saw this season while Black Hills deer hunting, based on your expectations, on a scale of 1 being very few, 5 about average, and 9 being lots of deer. Leave blank if you have no opinion. *Please circle only one number.*

<b>VERY FEW</b>				<b>AVERAGE</b>				<b>LOTS OF DEER</b>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

6. About how many **BUCKS** did you see during your total 2009 Black Hills deer hunt?

[ \_\_\_\_\_ ] **Total bucks seen**

7. How would you rate the total number of **BUCKS** you saw this season while Black Hills deer hunting, based on your expectations, on a scale of 1 being very few, 5 about average, and 9 being lots of bucks. Leave blank if you have no opinion. *Please circle only one number.*

<b>VERY FEW</b>				<b>AVERAGE</b>				<b>LOTS OF BUCKS</b>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

8. About how many **QUALITY BUCKS** did you see during your total 2009 Black Hills deer hunt?

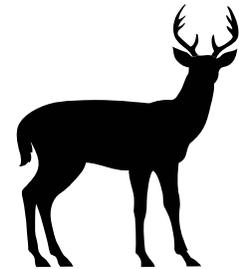
[ \_\_\_\_\_ ] **Total "QUALITY" bucks seen**

9. How would you rate the QUALITY of **BUCKS** you saw this season while Black Hills deer hunting, based on your expectations, on a scale of 1 being very poor, 5 about average, and 9 being exceptional. Leave blank if you have no opinion. *Please circle only one number.*

<b>VERY POOR</b>				<b>AVERAGE</b>				<b>EXCEPTIONAL</b>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

10. How would you rate the hunting conditions in terms of numbers of other hunters? *Please check (✓) only one response or leave blank if you have no opinion.*

- 1. **NOT ENOUGH HUNTERS**
- 2. **JUST RIGHT–NOT CROWDED**
- 3. **SLIGHTLY CROWDED**
- 4. **MODERATELY CROWDED**
- 5. **VERY CROWDED**



11. How important is **Black Hills deer** hunting to you in relation to all your other types of recreation (including other types of deer hunting or other types of hunting as well as non-hunting types of recreation)? *Please check (✓) only one response.*

- 1. **MY MOST IMPORTANT RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY**
- 2. **VERY IMPORTANT, BUT NOT THE MOST IMPORTANT**
- 3. **MODERATELY IMPORTANT**
- 4. **SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT**
- 5. **NOT IMPORTANT**
- 6. **NO OPINION**

Larry M. Gigliotti, Ph.D.

12. Please indicate which, if any, of the following types of interactions with mountain lions you have experienced during this year's **Black Hills deer** hunting season. Please answer each item by checking either no or yes.

- |   | <u>NO</u>                | <u>YES</u>                                 |
|---|--------------------------|--|
| a. Observed tracks or signs (e.g., buried deer carcass) of mountain lions while deer hunting this year (2009).. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>                   |
| b. Observed a mountain lion while deer hunting this year.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> → _____<br>number |

If Yes, based on the number of mountain lions you observed, how many were:

\_\_\_\_\_ NOT wearing a radio-collar

\_\_\_\_\_ You unable to determine if they were wearing a collar

\_\_\_\_\_ Wearing a radio-collar

**Information About Yourself:**

13. How many years have you hunted deer in the Black Hills (including this year)?

\_\_\_\_\_ total years of Black Hills deer hunting

14. Are you a South Dakota resident?

1. NO       2. YES... \_\_\_\_\_ county

15. What is your age and gender? \_\_\_\_\_ years       MALE     FEMALE

**THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR VALUABLE TIME COMPLETING THIS SURVEY.** Results from this survey will be posted on GFP's web-page.

**You may use this space for optional comments.** Comments received are included in the report given to GFP game managers, administrators and Commission members.

*Please return your questionnaire using the addressed, pre-paid return envelope provided.*

## Post Card Reminders:

December 10, 2009

Last week I mailed you a Black Hills deer hunter survey. This postcard reminder is being sent to ask you to complete and return your survey as soon as possible using the pre-paid return envelope provided or by the Internet. If you have already completed and returned it to us, please accept our sincere thanks.

YOUR response is needed even if you did not hunt Black Hills deer this year. The information from this survey is very valuable in making decisions related to Black Hills deer hunting.

**Please try to respond to the first mailing of the survey by December 21.** If by some chance you did not receive the questionnaire, or if it got misplaced, don't worry (just wait and watch your mail) as a second questionnaire will be mailed to you in a couple of weeks if we don't receive your completed questionnaire in the mail.

Larry Gigliotti  
Planning Coordinator/Human Dimensions Specialist

December 17, 2009

Last week I mailed you a Black Hills deer hunter survey. This postcard reminder is being sent to ask you to complete and return your survey as soon as possible using the pre-paid return envelope provided or by the Internet. If you have already completed and returned it to us, please accept our sincere thanks.

YOUR response is needed even if you did not hunt Black Hills deer this year. The information from this survey is very valuable in making decisions related to Black Hills deer hunting.

**Please try to respond to the first mailing of the survey by December 28.** If by some chance you did not receive the questionnaire, or if it got misplaced, don't worry (just wait and watch your mail) as a second questionnaire will be mailed to you in a couple of weeks if we don't receive your completed questionnaire in the mail.

Larry Gigliotti  
Planning Coordinator/Human Dimensions Specialist

January 11, 2010

Last week I mailed you a Black Hills deer hunter survey. This postcard reminder is being sent to ask you to complete and return your survey as soon as possible using the pre-paid return envelope provided or by the Internet. If you have already completed and returned it to us, please accept our sincere thanks.

YOUR response is needed even if you did not hunt Black Hills deer this year. The information from this survey is very valuable in making decisions related to Black Hills deer hunting.

**Please try to respond to the survey by January 26.** If by some chance you did not receive the questionnaire, or if it got misplaced, don't worry (just wait and watch your mail) as a second questionnaire will be mailed to you in a couple of weeks if we don't receive your completed questionnaire in the mail.

Larry Gigliotti  
Planning Coordinator/Human Dimensions Specialist

# **Appendix B**

## **2009 Black Hills Deer Hunter Survey**

**Questionnaire used in the e-mail and web surveys.**

# 2009 Black Hills Rifle Deer Hunter Survey

## 1. Default Section

**\* 1. How many days did you hunt during the 2009 Black Hills rifle deer season?**

## 2.

**\* 2. How many deer did you harvest during the 2009 Black Hills rifle deer season?**

0

1

2

3

4

5

6

## 3.

**\* 3. How many of each type of antlered deer did you harvest?**

	0	1
Whitetail Buck (antlered)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mule Deer Buck (antlered)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**4. If you harvested an antlered buck, how many total points (left + right antlers) did the buck you harvested have (leave blank if you did not harvest an antlered buck)?**

Total number of points

# 2009 Black Hills Rifle Deer Hunter Survey

## 5. How many of each type of antlerless deer did you harvest?

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Antlerless Whitetail Buck (button buck)	<input type="radio"/>						
Antlerless Mule Deer Buck (button)	<input type="radio"/>						
Adult Whitetail Doe	<input type="radio"/>						
Adult Mule Deer Doe	<input type="radio"/>						
Fawn Whitetail Doe	<input type="radio"/>						
Fawn Mule Deer Doe	<input type="radio"/>						

4.

## 6. Considering your total 2009 Black Hills deer hunting experiences, how dissatisfied or satisfied were you?

- Very Dissatisfied
- Moderately Dissatisfied
- Slightly Dissatisfied
- Neutral or No Opinion
- Slightly Satisfied
- Moderately Satisfied
- Very Satisfied

5.

## 7. About how many DEER did you see during your total 2009 Black Hills rifle deer hunt?

Total Deer Seen

## 2009 Black Hills Rifle Deer Hunter Survey

**8. How would you rate the total number of DEER you saw this season while Black Hills deer hunting, based on your expectations, on a scale of 1 being very few, 5 about average, and 9 being lots of deer, or check the 'no opinion' button if you di not have an opinion.**

- 1 (Very Few)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 (Average)
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 (Lots of Deer)
- No Opinion

**6.**

**9. About how many BUCKS did you see during your total 2009 Black Hills rifle deer hunt?**

Total Bucks Seen

## 2009 Black Hills Rifle Deer Hunter Survey

**10. How would you rate the total number of BUCKS you saw this season while Black Hills deer hunting, based on your expectations, on a scale of 1 being very few, 5 about average, and 9 being lots of deer, or check the 'no opinion' button if you di not have an opinion.**

- 1 (Very Few)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 (Average)
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 (Lots of Deer)
- No Opinion

**7.**

**11. About how many 'QUALITY' BUCKS did you see during your total 2009 Black Hills rifle deer hunt?**

Total 'Quality' Bucks  
Seen

## 2009 Black Hills Rifle Deer Hunter Survey

**12. How would you rate the QUALITY of BUCKS you saw this season while Black Hills deer hunting, based on your expectations, on a scale of 1 being very poor, 5 about average, and 9 being exceptional, or check the 'no opinion' button if you do not have an opinion.**

- 1 (Very Poor)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 (Average)
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9 (Exceptional)
- No Opinion

**8.**

**13. How would you rate hunting conditions in terms of numbers of other hunters?**

	Not Enough Hunters	Just Right - Not Crowded	Slightly Crowded	Moderately Crowded	Very Crowded
Degree of Crowding?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**14. How important is Black Hills deer hunting to you in relation to all your other types of recreation (including other types of deer hunting or other types of hunting as well as non-hunting types of recreation)?**

- My MOST Important recreational activity
- Very Important, but not the most important
- Moderately Important
- Slightly Important
- Not Important
- No Opinion

**9.**

## 2009 Black Hills Rifle Deer Hunter Survey

**15. Please indicate which, if any, of the following types of interactions with mountain lions you have experienced during this year's Black Hills rifle deer hunting season (2009).**

	No	Yes
Observed tracks or signs (e.g., buried deer carcass) of mountain lions while deer hunting this year	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Observed a mountain lion while deer hunting this year	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**16. IF you observed any mountain lions during the 2009 Black Hills rifle deer season (November 1 - 30), how many did you see (leave blank if you did not see any mountain lions)?**

Number of Mountain Lions Observed

**17. (Skip this question if you did not observe any mountain lions) Based on the number of mountain lions you observed, how many were:**

NOT wearing a radio-collar?

You unable to determine if they were wearing a collar?

Wearing a radio-collar?

**10.**

**18. How many years have you hunted deer in the Black Hills (including this year)?**

Total Years of Black Hills Deer Hunting

**19. Are you a South Dakota resident?**

No

Yes

**11.**

**20. South Dakota Residents - County?  
(Non-residents - Skip this question)**

**12.**

# 2009 Black Hills Rifle Deer Hunter Survey

## 21. What is your age?

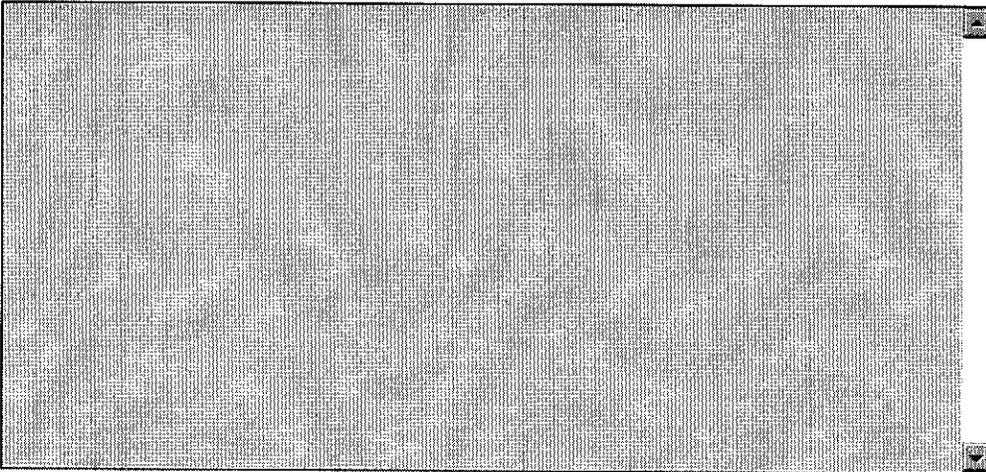
Years

## 22. What is your gender?

Male

Female

**23. You can use this space for options comments for GFP. Comments received are included in the report given to GFP game managers, administrators and Commission members.**



# **Appendix C**

## **2009 Black Hills Deer Hunter Survey**

**Questionnaire used in the non-respondent telephone survey.**

This survey only pertains the to 2009 Black Hills Rifle Deer Season (November 1–30, 2009).

1. Did you do any rifle deer hunting in the Black Hills during the 2009 Black Hills Rifle Deer Season (November 1–30, 2009)?

No → Skip ahead to Question # 6.  
 Yes → continue with question # 2.

2. How many days did you hunt in the 2009 Black Hills Rifle Deer Season (November 1–30, 2009)?

[\_\_\_\_\_] Days

3. How many deer did you harvest in the 2009 Black Hills Rifle Deer Season (November 1–30, 2009)?

[\_\_\_\_\_] Total Number of Deer → If zero, skip ahead to Question # 5

4. What did you harvest?

[\_\_\_\_\_] a) Whitetail Buck → Total number of Points [\_\_\_\_\_]

[\_\_\_\_\_] b) Mule Deer Buck → Total number of Points [\_\_\_\_\_]

[\_\_\_\_\_] c) Antlerless Whitetail Buck (button buck)

[\_\_\_\_\_] d) Antlerless Mule Deer Buck (button buck)

[\_\_\_\_\_] e) Adult Whitetail Doe

[\_\_\_\_\_] f) Fawn Whitetail Doe

[\_\_\_\_\_] g) Adult Mule Deer Doe

[\_\_\_\_\_] h) Fawn Mule Deer Doe

5. Considering your total 2009 Black Hills deer hunting experiences, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you? Please circle only one response.

Very <u>Dissatisfied</u>	Moderately <u>Dissatisfied</u>	Slightly <u>Dissatisfied</u>	Neutral or <u>No Opinion</u>	Slightly <u>Satisfied</u>	Moderately <u>Satisfied</u>	Very <u>Satisfied</u>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>

6. How important is Black Hills deer hunting to you in relation to all your other types of recreation (including other types of deer hunting or other types of hunting as well as non-hunting types of recreation)?

1. MY MOST IMPORTANT RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY  
 2. VERY IMPORTANT, BUT NOT THE MOST IMPORTANT  
 3. MODERATELY IMPORTANT  
 4. SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT  
 5. NOT IMPORTANT  
 6. NO OPINION

7. How many years have you hunted deer in the Black Hills (including this year)?

[ \_\_\_\_\_ ] years

**Codes: (Excel file)**

- ID 4 Digit Number  
 Q2 If the answer to question number one is NO, than Q2=0; otherwise,  
 Q2=number of days hunted  
 Q3 Total number of deer harvested  
 Q4a 1=Whitetail Buck →  
 Wpoints Total number of Points [ \_\_\_\_\_ ]  
 Q4b 1= Mule Deer Buck →  
 MDpoints Total number of Points [ \_\_\_\_\_ ]  
 Q4c number of Antlerless Whitetail Bucks (button bucks)  
 Q4d number of Antlerless Mule Deer Bucks (button bucks)  
 Q4e number of Adult Whitetail Does  
 Q4f number of Fawn Whitetail Does  
 Q4g number of Adult Mule Deer Does  
 Q4h number of Fawn Mule Deer Does  
 Q5 Satisfaction (1 – 7)  
 Q6 Importance rating (1 – 6)  
 Q7 Number of years

**Appendix D.** Optional comments received via the mailed survey questionnaire.

- ID: 3  
Get more mountain lions taken care of.
- ID: 13  
I have hunted since I was a kid, bucks or does and had never seen less deer than this year. Very few people are walking the woods; my wife is the only hunter I saw in the woods. I did see many folks in orange driving all over the place. Hunting season is a time my wife and I set aside to spend together with friends. I saw mountain lion tracks on deer, 3 different sets on a single deer. I also saw coyote tracks.
- ID: 23  
Deer numbers in the Black Hills are very low and the buck to doe ratio is almost equal, there is as many small bucks as there is doe. The state really needs to consider not issuing any doe permits or any any deer permits. The only things that need to be harvested is buck deer. This is coming from a landowner that is feeding a fair number of deer on private hay meadows and fields.
- ID: 24  
State Game & Fish does a nice job however it is a major disappointment not to be able to hunt even November. Would be really nice if Black Hills Residents had some priority, but acknowledged it is a complicated equation. Overall the hunting experience has improved a bunch in the last 10 years.
- ID: 26  
I think hunting was slow this year due to warm weather and lack of snow. Where I hunted most of the deer were mule deer. Too many ATV's scaring everything in the woods.
- ID: 29  
Lot of hunters saw very few does and fawns, something is getting the fawns, found their feet and legs in the woods – different locations.
- ID: 33  
Not going anymore
- ID: 35  
Should drop the doe season. Winters make it hard for mothers with babies unable to care for themselves. Would not want to shoot does with a young one by her side. Not many bucks or does. The extreme logging is taking joy out of hunting. no longer national forest but only a tree farm for big businesses, greed at its best!
- ID: 36  
It is nice to see a lot of mule deer but I hope they don't over run the feed or hunt the white tail deer population, all though I saw a lot of both at Deerfield, I believe the any deer limit has helped.
- ID: 41  
I was very excited to receive my first Black Hills Deer tag this year, however, do to unforeseen circumstances; I was unable to hunt this season. I am very hopeful I will receive the opportunity to get a tag next year and have a great hunt!
- ID: 43  
Quit offering large amounts of any whitetail deer permits! The whitetail population is dwindling in the Black Hills.

- ID: 48  
While I love to hunt and enjoy the outdoor time. I have noticed some very disturbing facts. In the last 3-4 years I have not seen the amount of deer, especially fawns, that used to cover the ranch. I have noticed this extreme change in many other areas around the ranch too! I feel something will need to change and seen on there won't be any deer to hunt or enjoy at all.
- ID: 53  
The number of deer I saw in the northern part of the Black Hills Deer unit are at best only ½ as many deer as past years hunted. I never did see a mature buck. Even going to a hunting location didn't see the sign, but it doesn't take a hunting to see that the deer are not even on the foothills.
- ID: 54  
I feel that this survey could be more accurate. If you asked what dates were hunted, because of weather conditions, and period of the rut. Can make a big difference to the amount of deer you will see. I have seen an improvement in the quality of bucks over the past few years. Leaving the license amount as they are now, in my opinion I would help buck quality even more in the years to come. It is a great privilege to hunt the great Black Hills of South Dakota.
- ID: 55  
My satisfaction with the Black Hills deer hunt came from my son shooting his first buck on opening day. We saw lots of deer on private land. Seeing quality bucks and getting a quality shot on one, or two different things. We usually see signs of mountain lions when hunting deer, this is the first year I actually saw one.
- ID: 58  
All of this information (the sighting of nine deer including two bucks) was from only 2 hours of hunting that one day.
- ID: 64  
The state is over harvesting does in the Black Hills the deer population is only 30% of what it was 5 years ago. Muzzleloaders, antlerless archers and youth deer should be more regulates as well as eliminating the any deer tag back to a buck tag. The Black Hills can't sustain many more years of this "unlimited doe" harvest, you are going downhill fast with the deer population, lions as well are taking their share all of these factors together spell disaster for the Black Hills Deer Herd if you don't change management strategies.
- ID: 72  
There are fewer deer in the Hills, in my opinion is something has to be done to the 4 wheel and 2 wheel (big & little) traffic close the Black Hills until all parties will put there heads together.
- ID: 75  
Landowners that feed all your wildlife should not have to buy a tag. Not enough doe hunters, the season should end December 1<sup>st</sup> when bucks start loosing horns. Muzzleloaders should be the same season as rest, they kill too many big buck that have already lost their horns. We are tired of road hunters and trespassers.
- ID: 82  
There are way too many deer and elk that graze on our pastures and hay bottoms and tear down our fences. The ranchers should be given a free tag per season for raising them. You get rid of deer in town for eating someone's shrubs, but you won't do anything about deer and elk eating hay crops that we depend on to feed our cattle. GF&P takes in the money while the ranchers put up with the headaches.

- ID: 95  
Total number of deer appeared to be noticeably down this year. Coyote numbers were way up.
- ID: 96  
I think that there is too many does being killed. I don't believe that any body should be hunting deer past November especially antlerless deer. There is way too many mountain lions.
- ID: 100  
You need to do more with the lions in the hills. I found at least 4 kills and if you don't you will be out of deer in a short time you should let dogs hunt the old lions out so the young ones will stay in the hills and not in town.
- ID: 117  
The Southern Hills deer population seems to be up and I could be choosey about the one I shot. 1 passed up some decent bucks to get the one I got.
- ID: 126  
Although I never harvested a deer in the hills it was a great hunting experience for my 12 year old son and me. Majority of deer we saw where to close to city limits to shoot.
- ID: 128  
I like the fact that there are bigger bucks in the hills since going to 2 points or better. Also I do not like that I have to purchase a buck and an antlerless deer tag in the prairie season. I do not shoot doe. Tag is thrown away each year.
- ID: 132  
I suspect lions are getting fawns as we love to be in the woods and saw very few fawns this last summer. We saw no coyotes at all this year. More deer than they used to kill. Quality of hunting in Black Hills is getting poor. We may go to another state next year, and leave deer here alone for a few years, to restock. I noticed less deer on private lands as well.
- ID: 138  
We saw what we could only consider bear tracks in Boles Canyon in the forest service, by a small picnic or campground south of Deerfield.
- ID: 162  
I'm not satisfied with every other year to get a Black Hills deer license when some get one every year.
- ID: 163  
I last hunted Black Hills deer in 2005 at which time there was about 5 times as many deer in the Hills. Please stop all doe hunting in the Hills except for in city limits. There are many places away from towns where there doesn't seem to be deer any more. other places have very few.
- ID: 167  
I feel deer numbers are considerably down. There should be no doe tags issued in the south western part of SD.

- ID: 173  
A lot of deer seem to hang out around homes and other urban areas. I could have shot a deer fairly easy on my hunt but I wanted to shoot an above the average buck. I really like the any deer any unit in the hills tag and I hope to get this tag again. I would not mind if it was buck only any unit in the hills. You have a lot of freedom to try new areas and hunt with friends with this tag.
- ID: 177  
Too many roads were closed. We walked miles; it appears mountain lions are taking their toll on the deer population the few we saw were really on the move. Talked to a lot of hunters, they saw very few and no bucks or buck and he was on the move, very disappointed in all of the road closures.
- ID: 190  
I think the high number of lions has hurt the deer numbers more then GF&P thinks.
- ID: 193  
I hunted mule deer only! A lot of walking!
- ID: 194  
Deer numbers are very low, so low I don't know where we are going to be next year. Between last years winter and the very high numbers of lions we are in trouble for come back soon.
- ID: 204  
It took 4 years and 3 points to get any whitetail. If a lion feeds on a deer every three tags out of 365 days that is 121-126 deer. For every 1200 cats that is 145920 deer or elk calves gone. No wonder hunting now sucks.
- ID: 206  
The area that I hunt received heavy logging and timber thinning. That is why I didn't see the number of deer I am used to seeing. Seeing way to many road hunters. Few people want to get out and walk. If they would walk they would see more deer to take. In good years and bad I have always been able to fill my tag with a 4 point or better by still hunting and most of them were two hundred yards or less from a well traveled road. There is still good numbers of deer to hunt.
- ID: 209  
The number of deer seemed to be the lowest I've seen in a long time.
- ID: 221  
Should increase the number of lion licenses. The fact that we are getting lions in towns of the Black Hills is indicative that there are to many lions with no fear of urban dwellers. Pets are more and more vulnerable if nothing else you should set up the lion ones for hunting close to the cities and towns and not in the sparsely populated parts of the Black Hills. Leave them alone in the more remote areas.
- ID: 225  
Very few deer compared to past years of hunting the same areas. I would encourage the GF&P to increase the lion quota and allow the use of dogs to do so. I also believe the winter kill was high last year and will be again this year.
- ID: 242  
Didn't see that many deer; also other hunters I talked to said the same thing.

- ID: 244  
Glad you raised the number of lions to be taken. I feel they do have an impact on deer.
- ID: 245  
I think deer numbers are down and the quality of bucks compared to last year is down.
- ID: 246  
The deer were small; 3 point buck is the biggest we saw. Way too many people hunting. I didn't have an option of one standing still for a first time hunter.
- ID: 249  
I saw plenty of deer sign but not many deer. A lot of places where there was deer sign there were fresh mountain lion tracks. I think there are too many lions and that is impacting the deer population.
- ID: 258  
Too many out of state hunters
- ID: 259  
Many of the does that come down from the hills last fall were dry and without fawn many more than we have seen in past years. The total number of deer is down and bucks were of poor quality.
- ID: 260  
The Chaps Programs clearly doesn't work in my opinion. Hunters seem to not be able to read a (no vehicle beyond this point). Shooting over boundary (fences) and such.
- ID: 264  
Over all hunting in SD is awesome. I live in the Rockerville area and have noticed a serious reduction in deer numbers. I have spotted lions in my yard over the years but am not sure if they are the cause. Also found kill remains around my home, more than years past. I do not hunt lions as I think they belong in the hills and should be controlled as you do now. Good job guys.
- ID: 272  
I work for Pennington County Highway Department out of Hills City, I am on the roads a lot. I don't see very many deer but see a lot of mountain lion tracks in the snow when plowing. I think you need to go back to two points or better. Like in 2003 that made for some good bucks and not shoot so many does off.
- ID: 278  
Saw mountain lions at night ran a crossed the road in front of us but didn't see buried carcasses in the area.
- ID: 287  
I think that there are not enough deer in this are to be sending all these licenses out.
- ID: 289  
More deer in my yard than in all the rest of the area I hunted.
- ID: 295  
I would like to see reminders or some sort of note sent out to let you know the application deadline. I know it would cost a lot, but I spend a lot of money on tags and fees every year. Last year I almost didn't get my elk application in on time, after applying for 15 year that would stink to miss my application have you ever seen the magazine Nebraska

Land? I would like to see South Dakota have a high quality magazine like that over all very happy with GF&P department.

ID: 301

On question 10 it depends on day of the week the beginning or the end of the season or location how close to town some people hunt before or after work. in the areas I hunt the deer population is down especially the does and fawns could be mountain lions, any deer, antlerless tags or diseases. I heard them all.

ID: 307

Hunted hard in Harding County very disappointed in the deer management up there.

ID: 311

Need system for better quality bucks.

ID: 319

I hunt for the meat. There are fewer deer in our area each year. No Mountain lion sightings.

ID: 321

There were many deer carcasses where I hunted but I am unsure if they were mountain lion kills or not.

ID: 325

We need to educate hunters on the importance of only harvesting quality bucks. So we can improve the quality buck population. if hunters are only hunting for the meat than just shooting a quality doe not a baby buck!

ID: 327

We hunt for meat, not necessarily a recreational activity.

ID: 336

This year was good compared to years past when we as a group would see far less deer and more lions and lion signs. It seems that where it looks like good lion country there are no deer!

ID: 337

Please consider closing some roads to allow hunters to get away from road hunters. Just closing a few roads around the Hills would help the hunting experience.

ID: 339

Think you should make the buck tags as a 3 point or better buck to let the little ones grow.

ID: 341

I saw more shooter bucks this year than I saw in the last 20 years.

ID: 348

The problem this year was the weather was to warm.

ID: 352

Let the mountain lions keep reproducing and you won't have any deer left at all.

ID: 366

The wet yield conditions and late harvest did not allow me to hunt the Black Hills this year. Thanks for the opportunity.

- ID: 394  
There are too many mountain lions.
- ID: 398  
You can't continue to kill so many does. Your double deer per hunter has to end with this 2009 season. I suggest buck only 3 points or better. I've never seen so few deer in my 63 years of hunting.
- ID: 400  
Not many deer in the Northern Hills; so the deer season sucked.
- ID: 404  
Go back to the two points or better on the bucks and not so many does. I seen a lot less deer this year than in the last couple of years.
- ID: 408  
Have not hunted in the Hills a lot in the 20 years here (most on the Prairie), worked in woods for 12 years for 1990-2002, saw the deer numbers increase (along with size and number of bucks) since 1990.
- ID: 410  
Poor road maintenance and too many roads were closed.
- ID: 419  
Absolutely the lowest deer population I have ever seen in the Black Hills. I am not sure whether to attribute it to the heavy snow fall in early 2009 or the mountain lions, but in either case the SD GF&P needs to reevaluate how it operates. 2009 was by far the worst year I have experienced in regard to quality deer populations.
- ID: 420  
We hunt in walk in only area, where no motorized vehicles are allowed, there is a lot more to hunting than the kill, peace, solitary, scenery, friendship, outdoors, because of these this is why I hunt the Black Hills. We need more areas where there is no motorized vehicles to preserve wilderness and true outdoors. Block more areas off and give the true hunters more areas to enjoy peace and this will also improve quality of game and make odds of hunting a little more equal with game.
- ID: 448  
Please make sure all hunters get the results of the chronic wasting survey to help them want to take their deer in to get checked.
- ID: 452  
I personally think the lions are pretty hard on the mule deer I would like to improve grouse hunting in the Black Hills. Contact me if there is something to do about improving conditions.
- ID: 459  
Saw almost no deer in the same area I've hunted in the past 8 – 10 years when there were lots of deer asked a GF&P person why there are almost no deer and was told winter kill. Don't believe it have had lots of snow in the past in the same area and always have had deer again this next year. Think there is a big cat problem that GF&P needs to be addressed.
- ID: 462  
I think that the mountain lions are taking a bigger toll on deer then is being told.

- ID: 472  
The weather this year was just too nice. Deer were not moving around much at all. I will try again next year.
- ID: 473  
We need to have more any deer tags
- ID: 491  
My dad shot a nice 5 x 5 the first Monday morning of the season and we hung it 10 feet off the ground in a tree and Wednesday when we went back to retrieve it a mountain lion had eaten everything from the back straps down. The cat had to be at least 12 feet up the tree when it ate the deer. Three of us urinated around the tree thinking that would keep away all predators but obviously that's a myth.
- ID: 492  
Your purported "survey" is a cruel joke, and I will no longer participate in it. SD GF&P has no intention of acting on any suggestions offered so why bother. As long as there are enough deer to feed the lions and provide those that can afford trespass fees a chance to shoot 3 or 4 deer, screw the rest of us, right?
- ID: 513  
You should eliminate youth deer season in the Black Hills unit.
- ID: 524  
Didn't see much deer not many does to fill tags; lots of deer in or around town hunting around Custer.
- ID: 557  
Please limit doe tags in the Northern Black Hills, they are way down. Please limit non-resident archery hunters in the Black Hills. There's an army of non-residents each fall.
- ID: 572  
No mule deer seen in the Baid Hills & Pactola area. Years ago they were abundant in this area. Like to see GF&P limit whitetail buck harvest to the 2 points or better to get the buck population to increase. Can't really say that many deer roaming the Hills bucks or does!
- ID: 576  
I would like to see more restrictions on tags and types of deer. Our potential to have quality deer herd is great, but there are too many hunters and too few quality bucks. IT would make fiscal sense as income to grow a reputable deer herd. People will pay more for better quality.
- ID: 580  
I saw more mule deer than whitetails.
- ID: 584  
The elk population is growing each and every year. Suggest more elk be harvested.
- ID: 590  
Deer numbers are declining, you must allow dogs for lion hunting! I like the mule deer management plan. Possibly allowing even fewer any deer licenses. Mule deer does should not be allowed to be killed by rifle or archery or muzzleloader.

- ID: 596  
I think the GF&P does a very good job managing the deer population in the Hills. The only thing that I would like to see change is having the 2 points or better regulation back into effect. I saw more spikes this year shot and alive then I ever have seen combined in past years. The quality in bucks have seemed to get poorer in the last two years. Thanks for your time!
- ID: 598  
I am mainly trophy hunter big bucks only. This year I seen very few does compared to past years of hunting. 5 does per day compared to 25 in years past. I am looking forward for license next year so I can try again.
- ID: 599  
Seen a few more mule deer this year so that seems to be a good sign. I also saw 8 sets of different mountain lion tracks in the Southern Hills. Still think population is higher than estimated, just look at how many and quick the lion season ends not using dogs.
- ID: 607  
There are too few deer and elk and too many lions. All fall I have watched calf and fawn numbers and they are half of what they should be probably 30% survival rate. If we don't get more lions killed in a few years we won't have any deer or elk to hunt.
- ID: 612  
Saw a lot of road hunters this year. People on 4 wheelers or pick ups on roads that were either closed or restricted to foot travel only 4 wheelers tearing up roads in Custer County and Storm Mountain (Pennington).
- ID: 615  
I went with my husband as a spotter for 18 years my first year of hunting was this year. Over the years this was an excellent place to hunt this year as exceptionally poor.
- ID: 616  
In all my years of hunting the last few have been the poorest populations I have seen the deer are smaller in size also. You can say the lions are not affected the animals to pacify the lion lovers but you don't have to be a Rhodes Scholar to know better. A hunter shoots 1 or 2 deer a lion kills how many in a year 40 – 50 multiply that by lion numbers. There are too many sighting to be only the few you claim you have a choice kill lions or have fewer elk and deer to hunt. You can't sell license without game to hunt. Quit shooting does and small bucks.
- ID: 617  
The deer I reported seeing this year are deer on public land only. I saw a couple hundred deer to include quality bucks on private land in the Black Hills.
- ID: 633  
I hunt with a group and take drives compared to 2 – 4 years ago our group definitely saw less bucks, does, and fawns.
- ID: 634  
I strictly hunt in the woods in favorite old places from Hills City west. In the last 2 years it seems the total number of deer seen has dropped 50 to 66 percent.
- ID: 637  
You have got to get the lion numbers down.

- ID: 640  
My hunting was in a certain spot that I hunt and I am a stand hunter so I don't see lots of deer, but I was hunting a certain buck also. I was displeased this year because I shot the wrong buck which was my fault but I did see a lot fewer does this year and most of them didn't have any fawn.
- ID: 646  
Wish I could get a tag every year instead of every other like the last 4 years have been since I live in the Black Hills.
- ID: 647  
The Black Hills deer have benefited from good moisture and feed the last 2 years. The deer I saw are in good shape. I think there are too many lions. I saw 1 cat and 3 kills in November they are taking a toll on our deer and elk numbers.
- ID: 651  
Muzzleloader either got really true primitive with flint lock or cap and ball or get realistic and allow optical scopes and red dot. Some day you to will be old enough to have your eyes go bad and not be able to line up 3 things 2 open sights and a target 100 yards away. People are leaving too many wounded animals out there. SD as a state is showing it's ignorance to the rest of the nation. Lets be proud not ashamed!
- ID: 665  
I also had a turkey license; I didn't see a turkey which is very unusual. Didn't even see a track where I was hunting but there was an over abundance of cat tracks at least 4 times as usual. I believe the cats population are growing to fast. I think there should be a bigger harvest.
- ID: 670  
Two many does being shot by youth and other doe seasons. Too many mountain lions there is tracks everywhere.
- ID: 693  
Didn't take a doe, because of the lack of deer seen, I think the deer population numbers are down only a few nice bucks seen other nice bucks at night or on private property. Too many hunters in most sections I hunted other areas not many deer seen at all.
- ID: 701  
The need to work with towns to get deer back out into the woods instead of being in town.
- ID: 709  
I archery hunt and have most every year since the fall of 1966. I have hunted with a rifle only a handful of years during that period and I am assuming comments with respect to lions are to reflect only the few days I hunted with rifle and not archery season.
- ID: 714  
I don't think that a resident that lives in the Black Hills should not have to go any with out a deer tag. I went 2 years without drawing any tag.
- ID: 716  
I don't think there should be any antlerless seasons until the deer population gets restored to normal, we see less and less deer every year.
- ID: 729  
Need to leave smaller bucks from breeding

- ID: 738  
Keep the 2 point or better rule has made the deer hunting 100 percent better
- ID: 740  
The area I hunt has a 50/50 mix of mule deer/whitetail deer. I had 4 years of preference for a as mule deer any license and gavbe up yet was very thankful to get a whitetail buck license. However I saw at 50 yards the biggest mule deer buck ever in the Hills. That is hunting!
- ID: 767  
Used to hunt by Whitewood every year but this year there just was not any deer there.
- ID: 768  
I think GF&P needs to thin out the lions; because they are hurting the elk and deer population also I think they need to open the mountain lion season early.
- ID: 772  
Had fun and a good hunt with friends
- ID: 773  
The first year hunting saw a lot of quality bucks 5 points (one side) the second year less quality bucks 4 points (one side). The 3<sup>rd</sup> year the same less quality bucks 3 points (one side) looks like a trend to me!
- ID: 779  
Wish you would make mountain lions season a drawing and you could use dogs to make it more of a hunt.
- ID: 810  
Due to the recession I was unable to hunt this year, very disappointing. I hunted for years when residents could purchase a license each year over the counter which my group did 40 years the draw broke up the group.
- ID: 811  
I was severely unhappy with the amount of people and it strongly made the hunt not as enjoyable so any way to improve the crowd.
- ID: 818  
I have only seen 2 mountain lions in 40 years until the last 5 years I have seen close to 15.
- ID: 824  
I think last winter and the mountain lions have taken a big toll on the deer population. Saw very few fawns this year and the mountain lion around my families homestead on an old ridge road is killing deer, not slashing them and only eating a small portion before moving on. That is a sign it is to easy for that cat to kill a deer have pictures of 6x6 it took down before November and hardly ate.
- ID: 828  
The area I hunt is around the Custer Park area, and I don't know if it was last year snow is to blame for the declining in deer numbers, but the hunters I talked to some have hunted that area for 45 years and stated that this is the most unusual year as far a deer number they have seen, they say 5 lions and didn't think there was a double sighting of any of them.

- ID: 831  
Large hunting parties, one of the about 50 people and warm weather overcrowding in open areas and the thick trees caused my hunting party of 4 to have a bad year for buck tags. Mule deer seem to be moving towards the Nemo area more. Fun none the less. Choice to take a small doe on the last day hope these spikes and 2 pointers that are thick keep growing.
- ID: 834  
I believe the deer population is down this year compared to past years. Although I never spotted a mountain lion this year, I have in previous years. I think the number of mountain lions have increased resulting in killing off the deer population. I would like to see the quota of lion tags increased to help manage the deer population better until this year, I thought the number and quality of bucks was on the incline which was making Black Hills hunting exceptional.
- ID: 836  
I would like to be able to buy a tag over the counter like we used to. My farming interferes once in a while. Last year I had a tag but couldn't go. Some years I don't draw them I am able to go.
- ID: 853  
We have had a hunting camp for 50 years but the draw has really messed it up. We don't go up there to kill deer we go up there to get together and have fun but we all don't draw tags that really messes things up for vacations.
- ID: 856  
We saw too much use of ATV's by hunters
- ID: 858  
I wish I could get my elk tag. After 14 years no tag
- ID: 864  
Fewest deer numbers ever if you saw deer it was in someone's yard or next to town. Some areas we always hunted had 0 deer. Had a couple of inches of snow one night and 3 days later never saw a track when finally found a pocket of deer we found 2 fresh lion kills. You have basically ruined my favorite big game hunt because of your lion protectionism. Get the lion population under control!
- ID: 881  
Shut it down for 2 years again get some quality bucks back.
- ID: 889  
Deer numbers are way down
- ID: 892  
Waited to long to get a Black Hills Buck tag and then didn't even harvest one. There are not enough any deer tags given out always whitetail and you can't always get them. Hunting was disappointing this year.
- ID: 916  
Covered a lot of ground on foot saw only one other hunter actually walking; most sportsmen road hunt. Did notice deer numbers were down possibly due to severe winter last year or mountain lions who knows.

- ID: 918  
I think the reason I didn't see a lot of deer is the dry conditions were I hunted and other hunters walking around.
- ID: 922  
Never seen very many quality bucks this year.
- ID: 926  
I am glad to see that the Piedmont Fire that was improved. The amount of dumped deer carcasses was down by a bunch from last year. It would be nice if the winterized areas would be accessible during bow season at least until the end of December. It is a good time to bow hunt after the pressure of gun season is off. It would only be fore 15 more days. Maybe move the dates to January 1 through June 1.
- ID: 931  
Number of deer we observed was much less than we expected. We did see a lot of deer signs, but few deer. Our group will not go back to hunt Black Hills deer.
- ID: 933  
For some reason, the deer pretty much left my field this year. No elk came in since early July and very few deer showed up. More Coyotes seem to be around and I know mountain lions are at least scaring the deer and elk and probably killing them.
- ID: 944  
I think the deer and elk population is going down. I have lots of friends in the Hills and they all think the mountain lion is taking a great toll on our wildlife.
- ID: 949  
The majority of the deer that I saw were on private property, on unhuntable property, or within city limits. Also seems like the huntable land is becoming so thick and overgrown that it is getting tough to hunt it.
- ID: 953  
Made my first deer hunting trip in the Black Hills 40 years ago this year. I missed a few years but not many. The changes made a few years ago in licensing have improved the hunting closer to what it was 40 years ago. Thank you for that.
- ID: 959  
I would like to see the mountain lion season open during the Black Hills deer season like it was in the past.
- ID: 977  
Point restriction should be instated. "Only 3 points per side or more should be able to be harvested"
- ID: 981  
Really feel the mountain lion numbers are excessive for the Black Hills area. I was very surprised this year by the lack of turkeys in the northern Black Hills during elk and deer season.
- ID: 984  
I had turkey tags this year and for the first time I didn't see any turkeys throughout my four days of hunting. My party and I were talking about this and also how none of use saw a single elk and only one lone mule deer. We hunted for Flag Mountain south to just beyond the Four Corners area. Of biggest concern to me was how large a problem the pine beetles are. I hope you guys can get them under control.

- ID: 987  
Need to close down Black Hills Deer season so the deer population can build back up.
- ID: 996  
Increase Mule deer tags
- ID: 1003  
I am very unhappy with the number of deer, does or bucks, that I saw in an area from Wyoming state line to Piedmont to Custer and many places in between. I saw many sets of mountain lion tracks in various areas mainly where there were deer. Most of the deer I saw were in housing developments or on private land near the foothills. My thoughts on why there is a lack of deer is mountain lion populations are greater than you let people know and over hunting does and fawns year after year. If you weren't so worried about the money you rest of the state. There are many private landowners that want you to pay big money for deer and then complained on the off season that there are too many and then we have to have a depredation season which takes more of the breeding population.
- ID: 1007  
My most important recreational activity in our Black Hills is archery hunting. Since the new rules on youth hunting in the Black Hills have started middle of September through January 31<sup>st</sup> season. It has been difficult if not impossible to find a quality buck during the archery season which starts weeks later, after the deer have been shot at for weeks. I am all for youth getting involved in the sport of hunting, but lets be fair and conscious about how many does we are going to harvest in a season when does begin to be shot at with rifles it makes an avid archery hunter who has been scouting and preparing much of the summer to bag on quality buck shelter, because the bucks know!! Please consider a compromise in this situation.
- ID: 1011  
I think my gun was broken.
- ID: 1020  
It would be nice if Black Hills Residents have first choice for the Black Hills Deer License.
- ID: 1021  
The weather was to nice most of the season. I think that's why I didn't see to many deer.
- ID: 1035  
This was the fewest deer I've seen hunting the Black Hills in 40 years. I saw maybe 10% of deer seen in good years. I hunted Mcvey Burn (Slate Creek) and China Gulch area not much sign observed.
- ID: 1053  
Finally got a Black Hills License after 2 years hunted in the same area, since I was 8. I set stalk and still hunt, only saw 2 other hunters in the woods on foot. Everyone else just driving up and down the road. Even so, not mean so many deer as in the past when licenses were unlimited. I was annoyed by use of motorcycles and ATV's. Lots of evidence of mountain lion kills, does were in good shape but I don't shoot girls. If I don't get the buck I'm skunked and there's next year.
- ID: 1067  
Hunting for me is a family heritage and I have 3 sons (1 in Wyoming) who love to hunt. I enjoy getting out with brothers and sons to hunt. I work in the woods logging and grew up on a small Black Hills Ranch. I appreciate your (GF&P) efforts to keep a healthy balanced herd – deer elk ect (didn't see much for bigger mature bucks).

- ID: 1088  
We need to go back to the 2 points or bigger bucks. I didn't like it before but it really helped produce bigger bucks.
- ID: 1096  
There are too many cats, eating too many deer, and elk. More cats than anyone thinks. I am a logger and I see more cats than big bucks.
- ID: 1100  
Hard to find roads and trails, roads are labeled different on Black Hills trails map than GPS or state map.
- ID: 1110  
Too many lions
- ID: 1117  
Need to change the mountain lion season to go during deer season. There are too many mountain lions in the Hills.
- ID: 1121  
Bucks should be 4x4 or bigger; close mule deer season for few years in the Black Hills!
- ID: 1123  
I saw a lot of road hunters but very few people willing to walk and "bust brush like my hunting group.
- ID: 1128  
Based on my observations, I think the deer and elk population area way down; due to the lions. I also have not seen or even heard a coyote. Also we didn't see one turkey. I think there are more mountain lions in the hills than people think.
- ID: 1136  
I truly believe we have a motor problem with the mountain lions when we go out and see 10 does and 2 fawns in the middle of summer there is a problem and it is not just reproductive or disease's. The modern outdoors person is not stupid. I know you people try to please everyone and I do not envy your job but something major needs to be done or we will not have the deer, elk sheep, and goats. That we all love to see.
- ID: 1152  
SD GF&P should allow all so hunters to purchase a buck license without a drawing system. This would encourage more people to hunt and with the large deer numbers, we need more hunters. The drawing system has caused many people to quit hunting. If you want more does to be taken, implement a program where hunters must shoot a doe before purchasing a buck license. Also, please increase the number of lions to be taken. The population of lions is too high!
- ID: 1154  
Wish we had more hunters. Still not happy with limited license. Like rack requirements no limited licenses.
- ID: 1161  
There were very few deer compared to earlier years. There were lots of mountain lion tracks everywhere.

- ID: 1167  
I started hunting deer in the Black Hills Deer season of 1960. During the time span I was able to hunt approximately 40 seasons and have harvested approximately 30 bucks. Of which I would classify as "quality bucks", approximately 10 of the bucks were 4 x 4 points or better. This season was one of the poorest of the 40 seasons I have hunted by way of numbers of deer seen and the number of bucks seen. I still hunt with my hunting partner and we both agree on the few numbers and the lack of "sign" observed in the woods. The area we hunt is mainly the "Central Hills" Highway 385 to the Wyoming Line.
- ID: 1169  
Most of the bucks that I saw were yearlings I saw 9 mule deer bucks on November 1<sup>st</sup> all but 2 were yearling. The other 2 were 2 years old. The whitetail buck I harvested was 2 or 3 years old most of the does had 2 fawns with them I harvest the whitetail about 1 – 1 ½ miles north of Moan ½ mile west of road 117.
- ID: 1179  
There were a low number of deer, found deer carcasses from cougars in areas hunted and also found skeletal remains no coyotes at all.
- ID: 1186  
Black Hills deer season should go back to bucks only 2 points or better seems to be getting fewer and fewer deer out in the worse every year and more "town" deer.
- ID: 1191  
Seems to me there are a lot more mountain lions than we think there are! That may be why it seems the deer population has dropped. We hardly saw any deer this year. Not matter where you went.
- ID: 1192  
Saw quite a large number of small 6 point bucks this year.
- ID: 1194  
Very good elk herd, what a good sight to see also had a few sighting of grouse and lots of turkeys keep up the good work.
- ID: 1203  
Why are some old roads left gated shut during hunting season? Especially when there appears to be no good reason for it.
- ID: 1208  
Hunted the handy cap area near Spearfish, SD.
- ID: 1211  
I have seen a lot of mountain lion kills this year most of them have been elk. 7 of them 2 were big bulls?
- ID: 1226  
The deer have gone down; Hills sent the cat have been in the Hills.
- ID: 1235  
No deer and way too many people hunting
- ID: 1246  
We hunted first 3 years (9 hunters) no one shot a deer. Hunted Deadwood to Custer, Deerfield to Hills City. Next Weekend we had snow/hunted 4 days (hiking & road hunting). Saw a cat near (sitting on the road) Deerfield Lake, saw cat tracks near Jewel

Cave. Have never seen so few deer in all my years. Have never seen so few deer in all my years. We all do not plan to hunt the Hills next year. We saw very few hunters and now we know why. Maybe they are sick CWD or to many cats. We really enjoyed hunting the Hills in the past.

ID: 1260

All the deer are in the towns or farm yards.

ID: 1271

I feel that far too many does have been shot over the last 3 years. I only saw 2 spike bucks this year, which indicates that too many does and fawns are being harvested. I have lived in Hills City for 53 years and the seasons are starting to look like the mid 90's where you shot the first buck you saw because you may not see another, please consider slowing down the doe harvesting. Thank you.

ID: 1277

Very disappointed this year, no deer because of the mountain lions; I just finally gave up going. I finally drew my buck tag and only saw one running.

ID: 1287

This does not have to do with Black Hills hunting, but I had a paddle fish tag this year. When we were leaving the water to Gavin's Point the Nebraska Game Warden checked us. I asked if he had arrested any violators or taken any over length fish. He said year and showed me a cooler with several about 40 fish. He was on the SD side. As we leave, we go through a SD game check in the camp ground with about 7 game wardens. I asked if they had caught many violators they said very few. I feel it would be worth it to be by waters edge instead of ½ a mile away and get SD the fines not Nebraska.

ID: 1289

The mountain lion I saw was in a neighborhood just north of Custer on my way home from hunting, not out in the forest where I was hunting.

ID: 1293

Great season, but numbers are down, I think because of mountain lions. I think the mountain lion population is exploding!

ID: 1294

The only quality bucks I saw were in the city limits of Rapid City & Hill City!

ID: 1311

Too many mountain lions get the four wheelers out of the woods

ID: 1313

I didn't take the time to hunt out a good buck. I know they are out there. The weather wasn't what I considered good deer hunting weather. Early in the fall I didn't see some real nice bucks, so they are out there.

ID: 1329

General deer numbers seem to be down from last year.

ID: 1340

I was disappointed that the point restriction on bucks has been removed and would personally like to see a restriction of 3 points. I would also like to see over the counter buck only tags come back so that families could continue to hunt together on a yearly basis as they do during other hunting seasons.

- ID: 1358  
I usually hold out and not shoot less mature bucks. I was shocked at the number of small bucks. It seems like we peaked and the quality of bucks is going down again. I attribute some of the smaller numbers to our spring 2009 storms.
- ID: 1359  
Harvesting to many does and fawns and bucks stop ATV's! Harvest more mountain lions.
- ID: 1360  
Of the 70 deer seen roughly 30 were bucks, 10 were does and the rest were fawns. The number of does is a concern to me as well as the maturity of the bucks.
- ID: 1362  
The mule deer population resides in Lead & parts of Deadwood they all have but disappeared Spearfish Canyon River Dead Ox, Dead Horse, Hells Gate, Jack Ass, Timber Gulch, Savoy, FS #733, FS #134 Mountain lions are saturating the Hills and eliminating the mule deer! I didn't have a mule deer license but still enjoy seeing them! Changes need to be made!
- ID: 1366  
I am young, but I hunt with my grandfather who has been hunting forty plus years. He said that this year is one of the worst years he has hunted due to poor numbers of deer in bother species. We hunt above the canyon rim and the numbers seemed to be very poor.
- ID: 1374  
Deer numbers are way down. I live above Spearfish in Mountain Plains right on the Forest Service Boundary lions are destroying the deer population.
- ID: 1375  
Buck Hunting in the Hills is as bad as I have ever seen it. You sold me turkey tags, this was the worst year ever seen in the Hills saw a game warden and he didn't stop to check us.
- ID: 1379  
Way too many people road hunting
- ID: 1397  
Saw 2 young fawns that had been killed by something. In different areas, 3 years ago I witnessed a coyote chase a deer down and kill it; we were able to kill the coyote it was a big old male got the deer by the throat.
- ID: 1425  
I know and I have stated this before there are fewer does than ever. To many doe tags are given out. For positive there should never have a 30 day (all season) doe or fawn hunting ever? And there never should be allowed (never ever) 4 wheelers allowed being in a hunting all an antelope season and never deer season ever. It is not fair to us old hunters.
- ID: 1436  
Would like to see doe season for a year or 2, so there would maybe more quality bucks out there. People shoot too many little bucks, not letting them grow up. We need to let those little guys get bigger to see their potential.

- ID: 1438  
You need to put a lot more mountain lions to be hunted not only so many females, but able to hunt for 1 month like deer season let as many people to get one.
- ID: 1444  
I saw more trash and off road damage than I ever have before.
- ID: 1447  
I would like to see you back to the doe season for 9 or 10 days in mid season like it needs to be. It relieved preserve during prairie season and give buck hunters some time before and after the less pressure. Now everyone is out all season knowing they can shoot a doe the last couple of days.
- ID: 1467  
Too many lions
- ID: 1469  
I have never seen a mountain lion in the wild.
- ID: 1475  
Too many out of state hunters
- ID: 1476  
There wasn't the seer around the Hills or prairie.
- ID: 1495  
I have to say for some reason, just driving around, I feel I saw less deer.
- ID: 1505  
It was my first year in the Hills and I enjoyed it very much, but there were way too many ATV's and pickup hunters. I like the traditional walk.
- ID: 1507  
I covered a lot of the Black Hills this year from 6 weeks before season to all through the season. It was a good year to find deer elk and lion signs. It seems that the deer numbers are very down this year especially in the higher elevations. This maybe the results of the major snow storm that hit the Hills in November of 2008. The deer numbers should come back if we have some normal weather years, and with good management including lion control and off road vehicle travel during the spring and early summer, the number of deer in the lower elevation and in residential areas need to be worked on.
- ID: 1511  
I would like to see tags sold over the counter, so people can plan a hunt every year.
- ID: 1517  
There are too many people that sound shoot instead see what they are shooting at. I have been there and got shot at. I help the GF&P to get more deer poachers out of the Hills. I am tired of seeing deer in the Hills with just the back legs and back straps gone and they leave the rest.
- ID: 1543  
Need to change draw date for Hills and Prairie, so a person can do 1 if they don't draw for the other.

- ID: 1549  
It is obvious there are more lions out there then first though. The deer population is smaller than I have seen in 40 years.
- ID: 1558  
I feel deer numbers are way down in the Northern Hills. Where we usually hunt we see 20-40 deer in a day this year we saw 3 and hardly any tracks or signs. Saw very few deer in town.
- ID: 1564  
I saw very few doe and very few young deer, this fall even along the road ways in the evenings. I sure don't know what happened to them. Everyone I have talked too hadn't seen very many deer.
- ID: 1582  
I saw much evidence of off designating trail 4 wheeler riding and scattering of beer cans. Off trail riding by motorized vehicles may have a much more negative effect on deer than the mountain lions do.
- ID: 1586  
There are way too many mountain lions!
- ID: 1590  
I checked not enough hunters; I believe you need to find a way to get people to shoot more antlerless deer. I usually shoot an antlerless deer if I can't find a buck and donate it. This year we hunted area to farm from Custer, didn't want to drive that far.
- ID: 1600  
Seen way too many carcasses with just the back straps cut out or just the horns cut off.
- ID: 1614  
The lions could be taking more deer than I thought. I saw many road hunters. The deer area in the woods not many traditional hunting parties in the Hills anymore mostly road warriors.
- ID: 1621  
Worst hunting I've ever seen archery or rifle although successful!
- ID: 1622  
This year was the fewest deer since I started hunting. I had one ore more mountain lions take 2 carcasses from our cabin and one night ate on one. They drank from a pond 50 feet from our cabin. I believe that mountain lions are the reason for the few deer. The deer are moving to town and so are the lions. As the deer are decreasing the mountain lions will go after more domestic animals.
- ID: 1626  
Saw lots of small bodied deer. Also observed many hunters shooting small doe or spike bucks! In my opinion you should bring back the 2 points or better restriction and limit the number of doe tags. Should not be able to shoot a fawn that t is with its mother.
- ID: 1633  
I hunted opening day till four days after. As we left we began to see more deer and more bucks in rut. I'm sure the hunting improved after we left. There are too many deer more tags next year please, especially antlerless.

- ID: 1634  
I'm not a road hunter.
- ID: 1649  
I live in St. Onge SD and have definitely seen the number of deer herds is not anywhere. The prairie numbers are way down. I have seen more coyotes than deer, found a couple carcasses. Would coyotes affect the herds? The deer numbers are not up.
- ID: 1651  
The two point minimum needs to be brought back. I am in the woods often very often I understand the GF&P tries to please everyone. My thoughts are this everything is good in moderation. Pine beetles are good but know look at the Harney Range (dead). Mountain lions (way to many) deer elk, sheep, goats, numbers and quality on a down hill spiral. If we do not act now it does not take a rocket scientist to figure out the outcome.
- ID: 1652  
In my observations this year, the number of does and fawns seemed down. I'm concerned too many antlerless deer are being harvested limiting the reproductive capacity of the herds.
- ID: 1658  
Let SD residents buy buck tags over the counter again!
- ID: 1663  
Just hunting in the Hills with my kids was very nice.
- ID: 1666  
I love the Black Hills Deer season. It is a family event that we look forward too!
- ID: 1669  
There were way too many out of state vehicles and hunters as far as I'm concerned you should hand out more tags to in state hunters first. I was the only one in my family with a tag and I had two years preference to get it. I think the state should regulate this a little bit better.
- ID: 1670  
I've hunted near the old Tiffle Mine (that's about 2 miles NE of Slate Creek Dam) for several years. The Forest service shuts the gates in this large area December 15<sup>th</sup> (that means no mountain lion hunting in this whole large area). I've been observing a decline in the deer population in this area, every year I draw a Black Hills license. This year was totally the worst. I hunt on foot not out of a truck. I have 4 different walks I use. Depending on the wind I leave my truck in the dark. I have a good stand I like to be on at first light. In the past years there were always coyotes trash talking. Not the last 2 years I've had a Black Hills license totally quiet. On November 17<sup>th</sup> I came across 6 cow elk no calves with them, and I would say about 65 to 70% of the does I saw had no fawns with them. Not good! On those same walks in the past I always came across turkeys none this year and no sign of them being around, same with the deer, very few scraps and rubs and not a lot of deer droppings. So I totally agree with (John Kanta – Rapid City Journal – November 28<sup>th</sup> when he said the Black Hills is near or above its carrying capacity for mountain lions) and the trouble with this area now. The mountain lion season opening date is so late. All the gates are closed and there won't be any lions taken out of this large area. This yarding area was a great plan years ago. Before the big growth in the mountain lion population at the rate it's going in this area in a few years there won't be any deer or elk left. Too have this large yarding area for. I would like to see the GF&P and the forest service come up with some way to level these gates open

during the mountain lion season or till the female lion quota is hit, or start the mountain lion season the first of November.

ID: 1672

I only hunt on my property which is 60 acres. I have wanted to harvest a buck that I can hang on the wall of my property. However I have limited shooting areas due to people (houses) on 3 sides of me. Just one of the thing I would like to do before I get to old to hunt.

ID: 1678

I also work within the Black Hills area and there were plenty of deer to hunt. As long as people are willing to actually walk out and hunt there will be ample opportunity to bag mature bucks and does for generations.

ID: 1686

More tags so everyone can get back to hunting in groups like we used to!

ID: 1699

Two many out of state hunters! I seen out of state hunter's along roads with guns pointing out of the windows of their trucks. Why don't you guy's raise the price of the out of state tags? All other states are priced \$250 - \$350 for those tags.

ID: 1714

Why are we not focusing on the hunting seasons out West? Our Governor seems to promote the East River Pheasant season more than our turkey season and deer season. There are days we go out hunting and see maybe one hunter. Since the draw the hunting season for turkey has been down. Lower the price for amount of state doe tag! Let's get these hunters back out to the west! Just from female's point of view!

ID: 1721

I believe the deer, elk and sheep herds are being hurt by the large numbers of mountain lions in the Black Hills increase the lion kills use dogs on a limited bases.

ID: 1731

Mountain lion tags should be sold to all residents from November 1<sup>st</sup> to November 30<sup>th</sup> each year like they were before.

ID: 1750

I don't use the internet, but I have always received all the help I've ever needed at the office. Thanks Susan for the good job.

ID: 1753

I hunt down around Pringle in the Southern Hill's on my grandfathers land and forest service, the deer and turkeys are being wiped out by lions, found many kills and lots of sign, the cat I saw had one kitten with her and was not afraid of humans, need to get a handle on it, or in a few years there will be no game animals left.

ID: 1758

There are way too many lions in the Hills we have a cabin near Rochford and have had close to 10 sightings of lions with in a couple mile radius of our place. We normally see 20 – 30 deer in meadows around us this year we saw 2 – 3 at best.

ID: 1762

I think we still need to have the two points or better rule, to have better quality bucks.

- ID: 1765  
We went over Thanksgiving so it was a little late in the season, maybe why we didn't see deer like past years, but talked to a lot of locals that said that there were too many lions and I believe them. Had a turkey tag and never saw a turkey in 6 days. That tells me there are too many cats.
- ID: 1768  
I spent much time scouting prior to the season and I will tell you that there are limited deer populations in the Hills. I was so surprised; I hunted hard over the season. I would like to know why there are so few deer in the Hills. I'm very concerned you will see deer in the residential areas however in the heart of the Hills they seem to have disappeared. Thanks for sending me this survey.
- ID: 1769  
There are too few deer and too many lions. Either seem a lion or sign each time out 4 different lions seen. Hunting different areas the Northern Hills, higher quota is needed during lion season. Seen herd of 21 cow elk only had 2 yearlings with the group. Have grazing allotment in Lawrence County observed very few fawns on fall round up. What's going to happen after all the deer and elk are eaten (cattle, new born calves, yearlings, cats, dogs, or humans)? A new management plan is needed, not saying eliminate just better control. My family has ranched in southern Lawrence County since 1896 never had this many lions.
- ID: 1776  
Some of our areas we have hunted for years, high and rugged area barren of deer! Too many mountain lions!
- ID: 1777  
I hunted from a tent camp for 8 days. Was in the woods covering 20 times of ground on foot and seen lots of deer but most were the same ones, each day not all of the places I hunted had deer in them but I had a very good time. There are too many people hunting from pickups just driving around.
- ID: 1781  
Would love to see a double tag or earn a buck tag to many does.
- ID: 1789  
I compare this season as far as deer population, to finding a deer in the Sahara.
- ID: 1790  
1 of us hunted got 1 deer very satisfied even if we hadn't got one.
- ID: 1794  
SD hunting atlas comes out to the public way too late distributed after hunting license need to be applied for.
- ID: 1796  
I think the number of deer is down in the last 3 years I have seen less deer.
- ID: 1801  
There doesn't seem to be near as many deer around the last couple of years! We didn't run into a lot of other hunter either which was nice.
- ID: 1803  
Saw only 1 whitetail buck that was a 4 point; 1 spike the rest were does and fawns couple of nice 2 point mule buck rest were small.

- ID: 1806  
Make killing a buck 2 points or better, when you went to this I've seen better bucks.
- ID: 1807  
The hunting is great compared to the 80's I saw a lot less deer because I set on a stand. Quality bucks are in the mid of the hunter, so what qualifies as a quality buck? Please keep limiting the amount of tags. As far as the mountain lions go, you need to realize there devastating the big game population look at Custer State Park elk herd. Need to kill way more lions.
- ID: 1811  
I was in a party of four, three out of four filled our tags, and the others were three & four points. I think the hunting is still great; you just have to be in the right spot at the right time, I could of taken a spike buck, but wanted him to grow and live another year because we always want to come back and hunt another day.
- ID: 1812  
More mountain lions limited
- ID: 1814  
Don't feel safe deer hunting or fishing in Black Hills due to population of mountain lions.
- ID: 1836  
I think the 2 points or larger for bucks was working. Now I see smaller bucks so I will shoot a doe before I will shoot a small buck.
- ID: 1838  
The overall number of animals in the Black Hills is down considerably, due to as you know mountain lions. Why else would you include question 12 in a deer survey. Let's see how the lion season turns out this year. Keep up the restricted number of any tags (mule deer), it's helping.
- ID: 1844  
This is the first year hunting deer in the Black Hills in several years. I think it was in the 1980's maybe early 1990's when I hunted in the Hills. I have hunted deer every year but have been hunted east of the Hills on the Plains.
- ID: 1851  
I didn't see any deer on forest service land. The deer I saw were on private land all the good hunting areas are being harvested for lumber. No traffic or walkers in those areas. Why so many fire trails closed to vehicle traffic at my age I can't walk that many miles and still be able to hunt. With no snow or moisture this November I though some of them trail should have been open; why not!
- ID: 1861  
The amounts of deer near the cities are growing.
- ID: 1862  
Make sure you are getting the right doe to buck ratio. We saw less deer in the Nemo area this year than the last 35 years.
- ID: 1876  
I have hunted with my dad since I was 5 years old. This was the worst year.

- ID: 1877  
After killing 2 antelope and 3 West River deer I had plenty of meat without the Black Hills Deer.
- ID: 1882  
Too many trails closed that used to be open to vehicle travel. The forestry should open the trails again like it used to be in the 50's or 60's. It locks us out of too many good hunting areas and makes it harder to get the deer out once they are bagged!
- ID: 1888  
I hunt the Black Hills for Archery Season also; Saw quite a few good bucks and some mature does. I also wish you would go back to the 2 points or better season for bucks because I feel it made better bucks for the future; over all I spend as much time out doors as I can in several spots (Black Hills) saw good numbers of deer.
- ID: 1889  
Deer were exceptionally down this year!
- ID: 1894  
Fewest numbers of deer I've seen in my 20 years of hunting the Black Hills.
- ID: 1895  
We should go to a buck with no less than total of 8 points to be taken. Seasons should not be open after bucks drop horns.
- ID: 1899  
You need to cut back on so many does being killed.
- ID: 1904  
I did see 2 head of domestic billy goats in Vanocer Canyon near the galena turn off. A fellow hunter saw them there the next week. We though they were mountain goats at first all white.
- ID: 1907  
Didn't see a lot of good size bucks (4x4 or better) tired some areas that were new that I have not hunted before. Waited till the last day to shoot did not see a lot of deer this season; saw more deer in Rapid City than in the Hills. I would like to see the 2 points or better some bucks, did see more elk than ever before this year.
- ID: 1908  
Very few adult does were seen mostly fawns and bucks. With the forest service closing roads more people were used to hunt in the same areas and the areas for hunting are reduced. More hunters were hunting in these limited areas.
- ID: 1909  
I would like to see more mountain lions killed so there could be more deer and elk. I like to be able to hunt every year.
- ID: 1910  
I think numbers were down on all deer hunting this season. Could have filled my tag but held out for a large buck. I didn't spend as much time in the Hills busy filling other tags.
- ID: 1916  
In small area we hunted this year we came across 5 – 6 whitetail and 1 antelope (transported in) that were poached with only rumps removed.

- ID: 1924  
Too many lions eating everything where no deer present, deer elk, and big horn populations are way down. Why let lions eat the game when sportsman's and starving family could. I would like to see my grandchildren be able to hunt deer, elk and big horn sheep. No mountain goats left now; use sportsmen's and tax payer's money to buy more to feed lions.
- ID: 1926  
Nothing wrong with the season
- ID: 1936  
You have to kill the mountain lions, they got the deer herd wiped out and there working on the elk and there are no elk calves in the summer.
- ID: 1938  
Weather was seasonably nice; I believe more lions should be shot. Raise the price of out of state tags.
- ID: 1940  
Need less non-resident tags
- ID: 1943  
I'd like to see more road closures.
- ID: 1957  
Deer were hard to find and low in numbers
- ID: 1962  
It seems to me that the snow fall too a great toll on the deer last year and/or the mountain lions or disease. Whatever it is this is pretty sickening when you can go from one year passing deer up to not seeing anything, but other hunters and animal carcasses. I am afraid the hunting is not going to be very good for a few years.
- ID: 1969  
I didn't see deer except on road or in people front yards.
- ID: 1972  
Very few deer this year! I saw a mountain lion and think this maybe contributing to the declining deer population.
- ID: 1989  
I do hunt deer in Stanley County with several of my relatives. Have since I was old enough to go with my dad and grandfather many years ago and now my younger cousins, but getting around is very hard so I end up as the sitter. I can't walk in the rough areas not in the Black Hills so do the same. Deer are very scarce in the northern Hills and areas in town, this year was not normal here. Thanks for the opportunity to explain this very poor deer year.
- ID: 1990  
We need more buck tags available.
- ID: 1996  
A lot of good hunt able areas.

- ID: 2009  
I have noticed a steady decline in deer and elk numbers over the past years since I started hunting the Black Hills in 2006. In some areas I have seen more Mountain lion signs than deer or elk signs. I have enjoyed hunting, but I do believe that there will be nothing more to hunt in the near future.
- ID: 2017  
I would have seen more deer but it only took one hour to harvest mine. Disappointed I didn't have a buck tag because I saw very nice one on my down, I did see mountain lion tracks last spring turkey hunting, southeast of St. Onge north of the interstate.
- ID: 2020  
I live in the Boulder Canyon area (by the gold course) too bad that so many deer are killed on this stretch of highway 14a. Last year we had a nice population of mule deer (north side of highway 14a) 15 – 18 head on a regular basis. We've seen most of them hit along the road, now we see 3 does only occasionally. The motorists on this road probably have a large impact on deer mortality than hunters, or lions. We are seeing more elk activity than in previous years.
- ID: 2024  
My husband and I hunt a small drainage when we have a Black Hills license and virtually harvest our deer every year. This year that drainage had absolutely no deer tracks to be found but did have numerous lion dung to be found. We estimated it was a lion with 2 young. Our other 3 secondary places we hunted had ample evidence of lion but virtually no deer prints. Our guess is there is an over supply of lions.
- ID: 2095  
Based on time spent in the Hills year around conversation with landowners, hunters, and interested parties the general conclusion which I supposed is that the deer population in the northern Hills is approximately 20 percent of what it was 2 years ago. GF&P's count of lions is a number reserved for fools and politicians, nowhere near the actual count. Be realistic, control the lions set a season based on deer populations not on dollars you can obtain for license sales.
- ID: 2105  
I just wish one year I will get a buck tag!
- ID: 2114  
Get rid of the drawing system for residents.
- ID: 2118  
I should get a preference point when I get my second choice not my first. 2 years in a row I put in for a buck but got a doe tag, still no preference points.
- ID: 2130  
Think you should be able to hunt the Hills' as a whole not by area only. They could issue special licenses for areas that have few hunters hunting so that they could harvest either buck or doe or both.
- ID: 2135  
My hunt this year was very disappointing. We drove numerous mile and trails between Spearfish and Iron Creek Lake and saw no deer very disappointing. We saw a very low amount of deer and a low amount of trails but noticed many mountain lion tracks. I think the mountain lions need to be dealt with before they turn on humans.

- ID: 2155  
We were in the north unit 3 groups 1 deer. 1 deer shot at, way more hunters than deer; will never go back to that unit.
- ID: 2158  
Put in for a buck tags every year and get declined, finally put in for a doe and got it.
- ID: 2180  
I was very disappointed in the draw neither I nor my wife got a tag on the first draw and she didn't on the second. I got a doe tag (whitetail) on the second draw, but way up by Spearfish, far from where I live in Custer, we see hundreds of deer driving daily between Custer and Hot Springs!
- ID: 2197  
I saw way too many ATV's driving over every type of terrain not on legal trails! I feel they should only be allowed to retrieve dead game and then only when not interfering with other hunters, and I mean I saw hundreds of ATV's illegally being used! Half of the Black Hills deer population is probably in Wyoming by now.
- ID: 2200  
Deer season was good, I know too many guys who buy tags for themselves and family members that is okay if family members go, but they don't
- ID: 2207  
I didn't see the deer like in the past.
- ID: 2209  
I was supposed to have 2 preference points for the Black Hills deer but when I applied there were none I think your preference point system is BS and only works for the people with lots of money.
- ID: 2234  
Deer hunting is an important recreational activity for me but it is also very important in that it provides meat as a food source that I and my family depend on.
- ID: 2255  
I will never apply for a second drawing if it is in the north section by Spearfish Canyon 60 percent of the area is private property and that is where most of the deer are. Too many housing developments going up all over the Hills, the hunting is getting ruined.
- ID: 2256  
Need better maps of mountain roads and available hunting are.
- ID: 2270  
I would like to go in and buy my license at a sporting good store like we used to do, not have to send in for it a couple of months before the season opens.
- ID: 2286  
Didn't see numbers of deer or turkeys this year compared to other years.
- ID: 2306  
I would like to see the sale of buck tags over the counter, like it used to be. It is hard to plan that far ahead for November when you have to apply for a tag in the middle of the summer!

- ID: 2308  
Plenty of healthy deer!
- ID: 2315  
There are too many deer and not enough food; very small deer, no bigger bucks seen at all very small bucks.
- ID: 2327  
Let's try hunting with an earn a buck program which is to prove a doe first or limit again points on one side with a minimum of 3 per side for a couple of years. You all are doing a great job.
- ID: 2329  
It might be just me but I had some difficulty in telling one area from another; in terms of what I wanted to apply for.
- ID: 2335  
I think the hard winter last year did a lot of damage to the population. Yes the lions have some to do with it also.
- ID: 2336  
I didn't go hunting because I heard the hunting wasn't that good in the Hills.
- ID: 2338  
I'm very upset at the number of out of state hunters, when friends and family in South Dakota didn't receive a license this year. Residents of this state put up with the deer along side of the roads all year long, but yet are denied the opportunity to maintain the deer population. This year I observed more out of state license plates than I have ever in my previous years of hunting in the Black Hills. I also observed poacher activity and when called the poacher line it was very difficult to be able to talk to the right person in my district I hope all this changes in the future.
- ID: 2360  
Between the bad winter of 2008 and 2009 and the mountain lions the deer need help in Lawrence County.
- ID: 2363  
The only comment or problem I have with SD deer hunting is the number of tags available each year for lottery. I have missed my first drawing choice the last 3 years in a row and I'm a resident of the state. I see so many deer in the ditches and approaching the roads throughout the state, it's a wonder if a lottery system is even necessary here. I have hunted SD 5 times and 4 of them have either been with a second or third round tag. It is getting a little frustrating.
- ID: 2412  
Use to see cats in the Black Hills except last two years. Check caves of last two year and no usage as before 4-5 years ago watched mother and two cubs grow up tile someone shot them so if you're looking for a supporter of cat hunting sorry I'm not one!
- ID: 2414  
Not sure if it was the weather or mountain lions but didn't see many deer Black Hills or prairie season just wondering.
- ID: 2420  
It was a very poor year for deer.

- ID: 2423  
I didn't see many deer this year as in the past. I think there are too many lions need to reduce the lion population!
- ID: 2426  
I didn't get drawn for my first choice. I got a leftover and it was a bad area.
- ID: 2437  
Based on the content of this survey (last page) you people are very aware of too many lions, this year is the worst year I've ever seen for numbers of elk and deer, lions have to go!
- ID: 2449  
Very poor area for deer, very few tracks sighted one deer.
- ID: 2452  
Driving through the Black Hills the deer population seems to be down. I still would like to see some areas set aside for trophy hunting 4 points or more.
- ID: 2474  
I covered many miles and areas from Spearfish to Iron Creek Lake and beyond. I didn't see one deer and hardly any tracks. I saw numerous lion tracks. I usually see a large amount of deer in Spearfish area in the morning and evenings but saw very few this years. It appears to me that there is a very serious problem with mountain lions in the Hills. Something should be done before they start in on humans. I am very concerned about this problem and considering not going to be Black Hills hunting again.
- ID: 2475  
Over a 10 mile area I saw in one day 4 sets of mountain lion tracks, later in Northern Lawrence County I seen one cat at about 200 yards. We need to get rid of the cats in Spearfish area. I live in Higgins Gulch; I've been within 6 feet of cats looking in my door. It was too close for me.
- ID: 2476  
I have seen many bucks; however I didn't have time to hunt till the last few deer of the season and then got my deer in short order, although they were seen like in a first part of the season.
- ID: 2525  
Only saw one doe in 5 hours of hunting (road hunting as I am disabled) only saw one deer.
- ID: 2532  
There seems to be less deer this year compared to last year. A lot less mule deer! I've also observed more lion signs this year. Every time I got out in the woods this year I saw lion tracks and signs. Please increase the lion harvest.
- ID: 2546  
Way too many lion in the Hills do something about it now or the deer herd will continue to decline. Saw very few does and fawns this year compared to last few years. I couldn't even fill my doe tag.
- ID: 2551  
We were a party of 2 we both got our deer. We both received info about removing and sending teeth to GF&P but neither of us received an envelope for mailing the teeth in.

- ID: 2560  
Deer numbers are way down for some reason. Listen to the Black Hills Residents, as far as a lion problem there are far too many lions. Why go back to the any deer tags, many people will take does if not able to take bucks more buck only tags.
- ID: 2575  
With price of tags going up and the cost of process a deer is really getting out of hand. To go walleye fishing and only get to keep 4 driving from rapid to Pierre isn't worth the trip or having to pay every lake you go to.
- ID: 2579  
I just wish more buck tags were issued because we saw a lot more bucks than last year and I haven't gotten drawn for a buck tag either year, which I've hunted. Almost all of the bucks we saw were mature and my dad got a nice 4 x 4. We only hunted for deer 1 day because we both filled our tag right away, which is obviously a sign of good hunting.
- ID: 2610  
Last winter was hard on them.
- ID: 2630  
Tracks of mountain lions in the snow are seen quite often.
- ID: 2635  
There are definitely not as many deer as the past several years. Imagine snow storms account for that part the most; also saw very few turkeys, compared to previous years. Do not believe that mountain lions are having that great affect as some people believe. IF that was the case I do not think there would be as many young ones than there seems to be also, seen a couple of nice herds of elk along Nemo Road.
- ID: 2637  
You should give out more buck tags next year.
- ID: 2653  
I hunted 12 days in that time all I could not find any does seems the bucks have taken over, maybe saw 5 does in all.
- ID: 2685  
I always enjoy going to the Black Hills area! I appreciate the hunting opportunities that are there. I hear to return as often as is feasibly possible.
- ID: 2708  
We saw better quality bucks when there was the 2 point or better system in order to harvest a buck.
- ID: 2712  
Our party had 5 licenses and filled 3; poorest year we have ever had hunting the Hills. Will probably not apply for a few years and see if the population and quality increases.
- ID: 2746  
Dry conditions, very warm more hunter pressure compared to last year
- ID: 2765  
Sure wish there were more any deer permits issued.

- ID: 2788  
Need to shoot more does. As soon as it snowed they came out of the woodwork. The idea that deer numbers are down is just silly. Hunters need to get out of their vehicles and walk over a hill or two. There are plenty of deer in the Hills.
- ID: 2790  
Trappers should not be allowed to use vehicles in public walk in areas. Hunters pay for the leasing of these lands yet trappers a definite minority reaps the benefits. We hunters with dogs have to avoid these prime hunting grounds. All vehicles should be kept out of walk in areas; the predator populations, mainly bobcats and coyotes are in bad shape due to illumination of prey species (prairie dogs) disease manage and do more trapping. What ever happened to the annual GF&P meeting here in Hot Springs?
- ID: 2805  
I was a very involved hunter in South Dakota up until this year when I received a felony charge 1 week before season opener. As you know without gun privileges, I can no longer hunt. I am going to miss hunting the Black Hills a lot. Perhaps one day I may petition this once I prove myself worthy once more, until then I'll stick with fishing!
- ID: 2828  
Online maps, explanation of units is a little unclear, boundaries not well marked.
- ID: 2840  
I have never seen a mountain lion in the Black Hills.
- ID: 2844  
The doe and buck application should be switched around with buck applications to separate units and doe applications to the entire Black Hills.
- ID: 2846  
Would like to know if you are going to close the fire trails off completely? I heard this from the Custer, SD Ranger Station.
- ID: 2850  
I wish that less buck tags were given out because we only saw about 7 deer while our party was hunting. Only 3 of thoughts deer were shooters, and the only one that got shot was by AMR Ranch. I also think that the Black Hills should get more feed lots for the mature bucks can get big and have half of the deer go to charity! The years I've been hunting there with my dad I've never seen so little of bucks. They need to raise then and chase them off to the wild and public hunting areas!
- ID: 2855  
Bucks seemed to out number does this year. I had a doe tag.
- ID: 2860  
Still waiting for a Black Hills any deer tag it's been 5 years now, just confused about why that would be.
- ID: 2862  
Don't limit buck licenses had a larger point requirement.
- ID: 2872  
The last four years I didn't get any deer license, even though I have applied through all of the correct channels. This year I finally get a license, but not a buck license, this year, either for your devoted state hunters to be treated this way can only mean the buck licenses are going to the out of state hunters instead of us this is not fair.

- ID: 2889  
The hunting was great and pressure was down. It was the best rifle deer season I've hunted even though I didn't harvest a deer. I know that I will keep applying for a tag.
- ID: 2891  
I was so elated to finally get drawn for a license.
- ID: 2897  
Non-residents should be able to get a buck or doe tag every year, especially after these many years. Don't care to hunt in Wyoming.
- ID: 2899  
The Black Hills deer hunting experience is very special in my family. I look forward to bring my two sons to the Hills to hunt deer as my dad did with myself and brothers. I hope a few more tags, are available to non-residents in the future, in my opinion its not all about trophy hunting but the Hills experience maybe offer some guaranteed tags to those willing to pay a premium price.
- ID: 2903  
There are a lot fewer turkey's observed this year. Continued reduction in tags for both residents and non-residents is not necessary. Make more doe tags (especially mule deer does) available. Buck herds seemed to be okay.
- ID: 2906  
The guys in our party saw 2 young lions for the first time in 20 plus years. General deer numbers seem to be low. There is a lot of logging.
- ID: 2909  
I enjoyed the experience, next time out I'll know better how to hunt and where. I'm a life long Michigan hunter with many trips to Wyoming and Colorado, for mule deer, elk and antelope. I have western hunting I just wish it was easier to obtain an out of state license.
- ID: 2912  
It would be nice if you went back to over the counter licenses. There are enough deer to support it and the hunting pressure would help keep the diseases in check before you have to go to expensive "how do we fix it" and fail programs. As we all know the hunters pick up the tags after the mistakes have been made and the price of hunting is already ridiculously high.
- ID: 2916  
The deer that I saw were all healthy in appearance. I believe deer numbers were so low due to the harsh winter conditions. I believe the more mature bucks were worn down from the rut and never had time to recover before the winter came. Although the total deer herd was low. I would guess it was down by about 50 percent.
- ID: 2928  
Our usual group of 12 wasn't able to go because only 4 were drawn! We all had the same amount of preference points.
- ID: 2929  
I enjoy hunting and camping during the deer season
- ID: 2932  
It was one of the most fun hunts I have had the park was very clean.

- ID: 2942  
The deer are down this year, the coyotes are up maybe time for bounty. The lion quota has to go up or the deer will continue to decline.
- ID: 2945  
I was a South Dakota resident when I first started deer hunting in the Black Hills now as a resident of Minnesota I still enjoy being able to hunt in the Black Hills of South Dakota.
- ID: 2952  
I saw a lot of deer in Hills City, than I did while out hunting.
- ID: 2957  
I was very disappointed as my dad who has hunted the Hills for years expected to see a lot of deer and many nice bucks. He was very surprised we hunted hard for 6 days and in the past our group of 10 (this year) was filled out in 3 days. What happened?
- ID: 2962  
Need to have size management on bucks so we can grow bigger bucks minimum of 3 point per side or maybe even 4.
- ID: 2964  
The mule deer we saw out numbered the whitetails by a large margin including shoot able bucks. Having a whitetail only tag and wanting a mule deer buck was disappointing. I would like to see the bucks only 2 points or more reinstated, the low numbers of non-resident any deer tags at this time make chances of getting one seemingly non-existent. Since saying that I still thoroughly enjoy my times in the Hills
- ID: 2967  
The Black Hills area a great place to hunt, however I would like to see a 4 point or better for both whitetail and mule deer for maybe 2 years. I saw lots of four point bucks in the 3 and half years old rang but nothing exceptional. SD and Wyo have way more lions than the GF&P realize. I have found lots of lion killed deer and elk.
- ID: 2987  
Too many trees are getting cut, and they opened up the trophy areas to drive trucks and 4 wheelers in messing up the area we hunted in.
- ID: 2989  
This was my first year going out to the Black Hills hunting and I was very pleased. You guys seem to be doing a very good job managing the deer herd.
- ID: 2993  
While discussing lions with SD natives near Deerfield, I heard that lions have nearly killed the wild turkey population and they are responsible for killing many fawns and yearling deer. I never saw a turkey outside of Custer State Park (in 5 days in the Hills).
- ID: 3000  
In my opinion the deer herd was down this year, both whitetails and mule deer. This was also observed by some of the residents in the area. We hunted west of Deerfield.
- ID: 3004  
The Black Hills are my favorite place to hunt.

- ID: 3010  
\$185 for a tag? Road hunting a national sport in South Dakota! Close some roads teach your youth to hunt! Very poor hunting, you owe me one tag! Head biologist should go back to school to count deer!
- ID: 3020  
Would like to see more non-resident licenses issued and available
- ID: 3025  
My husband is from South Dakota and has hunted the Black Hills for many years. He and I both think a few more non-resident tags would be good in Colorado; non-resident elk tags bring \$500 and a lot of money to the state division of wildlife. We are willing to pay the higher fee for a very fun hunt! Unfortunately he could not draw a tag this year or get a leftover doe tag to hunt with me.
- ID: 3027  
I answered all questions pertaining to deer I had seen while I was hunting. I saw many more deer (bucks and does) prior to the opening day as I was scouting and driving around as answered in the question this was my 19<sup>th</sup> year hunting, but it is my 38<sup>th</sup> trip to the Black Hills as I just love it out there. On November 1<sup>st</sup> on opening morning at 6:15 am, I had a 6 x 7 bull elk walk up to 20 yards away from me. That was the high light of my hunt. I won't have any preference points next year but I am going to apply anyway and hope by the luck of the draw I get another tag. At my age I will be 68 and know maybe I won't be able to do this much longer.
- ID: 3032  
The quantity of deer up in the higher hills seems to be down considerably. Saw more deer in and round Rapid City than all day in the Hills.
- ID: 3035  
They should call hunters in the Black Hills the "National Road Hunters"! What a terrible way to hunt. I though it was illegal to shoot off of roads close some roads and provide some areas with no roads! Poor hunting and poor quality of deer. \$185 for a tag that was worth \$2.
- ID: 3040  
First time hunting in the Hills, I was very disappointed saw relatively few deer, few bucks, no trophy bucks at all and we hunted end of the season. From the wear and tear on the roads it appears there are too many tags (and 4wheelers used) roads every one beat up badly! We won't hunt there again unless it improves really; nice country however! I appreciate CO Adam in Custer; he was most helpful and returned my call. Thanks very much to him so we hunted near Custer (north and south of Jewell Cave). Not pleased with CO in Hill City, called him 2 times and never returned my calls; called once way before the season too. The wildlife biologist in Buffalo never returned my call on antelope either most disappointing those fellows.
- ID: 3041  
Weather was too warm during my hunting period. Deer were not active during the day so we saw very few.
- ID: 3044  
I have had prairie tags for several years. This is my first year having a hills tag along with my prairie tags; I was disappointed by the number of deer in comparison to past years. Too many cat kills both prairie and hills. There were lots of signs of lions on the prairie that has never been there before.

ID: 3049

We were hunting in the area, marked on our maps, where we had drawn our any doe permits. A friend, who is a resident of Rapid City, rode around with us showing us the boundaries we were in the road around Mt. Roosevelt. Off to the left is a road going down to a construction area to be a sub division. These are occupied my husband John was riding with this friend and they drove down that road so they could show him the fence (boundaries of NF). They were sitting watching some mule deer when a police officer and a young lady officer pulled up and started yelling at them. When our friend was explaining what they were doing he (the cop) told them they could not hunt there because the city of Deadwood had annexed all that land. Then he made the comment "don't shoot my horses". When my husband and friend went on up the mountain a game warden stopped them to make sure they had the proper license, etc, so they asked him about this so called annexing of NF land he said there was not such thing. The next day our hunting buddy was hunting on up the road from me. I was in a hollow on the opposite side of the road. My husband was in the truck drinking coffee. Kenny shot a doe and it wasn't five minutes when I heard a vehicle come from one of the occupied houses. I heard it stop by our truck. They didn't see my husband in the truck. When they pulled around to the back of the truck the lady saw my husband. They were writing down the license plate number. When my husband started to get out they left, quickly. We were really expecting Mr. Nasty Cop to be there or stop us on the road down. The area where we saw the most deer signs was where we were told to stay out of. The area we had drawn to hunt. We drove a very long way to hunt here but rather than be harassed anymore we left and came home. Oh the first set of mountain lion tracks we saw were near one of the camping areas on Mt. Roosevelt. These tracks were fresh because it was just after a new snow. It had eaten a rabbit. Only thing there was a tuft of fur and a piece of intestine. The other set was about 15 miles from there and were slightly smaller. We are planning on putting in for fall turkey again in the fall and also antelope. Hope we don't run into anymore unhappy residents that don't know what public hunting areas are.

ID: 3050

While we were there we never heard one shot

ID: 3052

Allow more access to antlered licenses to out of state hunters.

ID: 3066

There was snow on the ground. I saw no fresh deer tracks. I did see old elk tracks!

ID: 3097

I own property in Meade County and business in Rapid City which I am paying taxes for, but do not live there. It would be nice to be able to receive resident hunting licenses.

ID: 3107

Why not give hunters over 70 a break on the "lottery". The years they are going to be able to hunt area fewer with ever successful drawing.

**Appendix E.** Optional comments received via the e-mail survey.

- | <b>ID</b> | <b>Comment</b>  |
|-----------|---|
| 5         | Had a really hard time finding deer, let alone a buck. Thought this problem could be contributed to the mountain lion population. Maybe issue more tags for mountain lions. I seen more elk hunting then I seen whitetail/mule deer!  |
| 6         | Need to issue out more West River tags.   |
| 9         | i did not see any elk or elk tracks. i personally feel that elk and deer numbers are down. but i personally feel that there are more cats in the hills than you know of.  |
| 12        | I think it is a mistake to allow the taking of young bucks (spikes, forks, etc.). The quality of bucks has increased dramatically over the past 15 years, as far as I can see.  |
| 19        | I personally saw two harvested decent bucks. One was my average-sized Muley and the other was a fantastically wide white tail. All other groups we encountered during our trip had small bucks at best and had trouble seeing anything.   |
| 28        | I have hunted in the black hills since i was 17yrs old and have always had good luck.I was very disappointed when gfp closed the muzzleloader hunting in the black hills,had i of known this i would not of sent in for a tag because i love hunting the hills.I had an archery elk tag and had 3 tree stands set up and when i sat in them i saw 15 to 20 doe deer every morning and evening with a couple of bucks. I was told that the deer population and herd was under control in the black hills, i dont believe it their is still to many doe deer! Why is it that archery deer and muzzleloader hunters (doe tags)got cut off before rifle hunters? That also happened in east river as well.  |
| 32        | Keep the whole black hills as one big unit so that a hunter has freedom to move about the whole black hills as conditions and hunting partners change throughout the season. The quality of bucks appears to be improving.  |
| 37        | I noticed a total lack of turkeys this year. When I was in the same areas two years ago we saw a lot of turkeys. I wonder what caused this.   |
| 42        | The weather conditions were not good too warm. saw one lion but many tracks   |
| 44        | I quit applying for the whitetail only tags to build up points for the any buck tag. After three years I drew one. I am flat amazed at the lack of deer I saw. I hunted a lot and I hunted a lot of country. I know that there were some bad weather years and some disease, and mountain lions. I saw a lot of mountain lion track. I talked to several other quality hunters that I know that have a lot of years hunting experience in the hills and they all said the same thing-the deer numbers are way down. The problem is letting hunters shoot does in the hills. Yes there are a lot of deer in the lower foot hills, but not after you get higher up. Most of the land on the lower foothills is private. I agree that there needs to be more harvest of does along the lower foothills. Make your units that way. Restrict doe tags to within one or two miles of the interstate, or between landmarks and the interstate. Issue an internet drawn up map indicating the zone complete with forest service roads. Yes you are going to have a few cheaters/poachers, but you will have the majority abiding by the law. Right now you are having all the does killed up high in the woods and not getting much done in the areas you really need the harvesting of does. We need some walk in areas in those areas needing the doe harvest. Go back to buck only tags in the hills and get that population built up. I am not whining because I did not get a deer. I had several opportunities to harvest a buck. I was just being picky on what I wanted and getting to be an old softy, but I still want to see deer. I welcome a call on this. 892-6199. |
| 62        | Not at all satisfied with the process of getting a black hills deer license. I was turned down for a license in 2007 and 2008. My teenage son was turned down in 2007,2008,and 2009. Hard to get our youth to be involved in hunting when they continually are turned down for a deer license. There must be a better way to allocate licenses to those that enjoy and want to hunt black hills deer.   |
| 63        | we need less mountian lions.  |

- 66 gfp may want to post signs for hikers during the BH deer season. There were a lot of hikers in the areas that were crowded. In specific, the nemo areas and Hisega areas. MOst if not all hikers did not have orange on at all. This includes the bike riders.
- 79 I thought it was a good experience, but did not have much time to hunt.
- 83 took 5 years to receive an any deer tag, and was turned down during those years for a any whitetail tag, we then send in for doe tags if there are left overs, the black hills is a great area for hunting.
- 91 I heard from a few local ranchers around Nemo and Rochford that there was a significant number of winter kill from last year. I was astonished on the small amount of deer seen.
- 94 Hunted up high mostly North of ONeil Pass and west of Tinton Road. Deer had already left prior to the opening of season due to early October snow. Should consider adjusting season date in that area since the deer herd appears to be so migrational. But would probably negativley impact the elk season.
- 98 less tags or see what is happening to all the deer
- 105 There were a significant number of 1 to 3 year old bucks; more than I've seen in my 6.5 years of living in South Dakota.
- 110 I came accross more than 10 Turkey carcasses while walking and did not see a Turkey while hunting for deer. Seems to me there are too many Lions in the hills and it's going to diminish our hunting opportunities.
- 111 The number of deer are way down. I think the point restriction need to be put back on. Keep the difrent tags for whitetail and muledeer. The muledeer seem to be on the rise. And seeing better muledeer bucks. But alot less whitetail.
- 112 Deer numbers in the areas I hunted this year seem to be down from the past few seasons.
- 118 I spoke to some land owners , they placed the reason for fewer deer on the Lion population. I have a son who lives at Westen Heights in Rapid City, He has pictures of a Wolf pack he seen in the Hills early this fall, I know they won't help the deer population.
- 122 open lion season during elk and deer season
- 125 Could a limit on number of points on a Buck help raise the quality and management of bigger Bucks. For instance, no Buck with three points or less, or have special tags for Buck's with four or more points.
- 126 I have been hunting in the hill 6 years out of the 17 years I have applied. I enjoy hunting in the hills more now because my son is old enough to go with me. We had some luck seeing some deer but mostly small bucks. Overall my hunting experience was good because I enjoy being in the beautiful scenary of the Black Hills. I wish there were more oppotunities to draw tags in the hills. I had 5yrs preference for this year.
- 133 not enough quality bucks. From everyone I talked to you would be lucky to see a descent buck. The odds of seeing a nice mature buck and alarmingly awful.
- 135 This year was a bad season all the way around. People do not have respect for other hunters while hunting public land. It was unreal how many hunters just drive and see a deer and then jump out and shoot without a concern in the world that there may be a hunter sitting in the woods as well. People just disrespecting the sport for those who put meat on the table for their families. I also was dissatisfied with the amount of hunters in one area. A person could not go hunting and feel safe. There are some people that receive licenses that have no business hunting because they are driving through areas at a fast pace and just scaring everything in sight. I like that you are able to drive into areas so that you dont have to drag your deer to the vehicle which could be miles away, but at the sametime I wish that the idiot hunters would go away. I feel that there are just to many licenses being awarded in certain areas and these areas are over hunted and the quality of deer are gone. I also know that a lot of the developments in the Black Hills/West River areas are feeding the deer, so they are not out there for hunting. I often wonder what these people are thinking about because they feed the deer during hunting season while at the sametime complain how destructive they are on their property. I just do not understand.

- 148 While I know very little about the situation. I do have an opinion. My feeling is that there is to many lions. I spent more time in the hills this year during and not during the season, and this was the least amount of deer I have probably ever seen. I understand having lions in the hills is important to the balance of the whole system. I just hope it is not hurting the deer and elk population to the point that it hurts the hunting experience. I would be interested to know the amount of lions in the hills and the impact they have on the deer and elk herd. Thank You.
- 151 I have only hunted deer in the Hills a few times, but have been out there for Turkey season and other adventures. For the number of deer that I observed this year, the number of animals seems to be down significantly in the northern area. In years past, lots of does, fawns, and bucks could be seen easily from the roads and back in the thick of things, but this year they seem to have been a bit thinner. Hope this will be helpful information.
- 152 any deer licenses should turn to antlerless after nov 30. season should be extended like west river deer
- 153 If you are retired and apply for a license after age 62 you should be able to get one without drawing for it, but still have to pay for it. Years are limited to enjoy the sport.
- 154 I would like to see more deer licenses for the black hills I missed the last two years. And I am not getting any younger.
- 160 First time I have hunted Black Hills since the limited license went into effect. Saw a lot more deer than in the past. Hunted early so did not see the quality of buck I was looking for, but was not disappointed. Saw a dead spike bull elk from the road and a deer also. Makes me wonder if poaching is a problem.
- 161 The number of deer seen over the last couple of years has been decreasing. Spots where we have seen large numbers of deer over the past few years were void of any this year. I don't know if it's the mountain lions or too many hunters. Something has surely dropped the deer numbers.
- 180 Deer this year seemed a bit harder to find however, I don't believe it had anything to do with the mountain lion populations. I believe the cooler weather and windy days has kept them in thicker cover and moving less.
- 183 saw lots of whitetail does, very few whitetail bucks and those that were seen were small 2-pointers and a spike and one 4x. would like to see more mule deer and larger whitetail bucks.
- 184 I think there should be more any deer tags for the Black Hills. Where I hunted the property owner will let anyone he knows hunt and there are a lot of deer in the area.
- 187 Of the 28 years I have hunted I was out 4 years with hunters the years I didn't draw a tag, I hunt mule deer and with only 500 tags, I think you should make them any mule deer so the white tail hunters don't put in for them that way only mule deer hunter apply for the 500 tags, I went 3 years without a tag and hope I don't have to wait another 3 years for another tag.
- 202 My Dad is 78 years old and still loves to hunt deer in the Black Hills. Of course like everyone else he likes to try to shoot a buck and to be honest he really does not have that many more years he can hunt. Please consider allowing senior hunters say over 75 or 80 an opportunity to shoot a buck by giving them a preference point on getting a buck tag. I think most young people would accept this because they know someday they will be old as well.
- 205 go back to a buck only license. do not combine it with an antlerless license.
- 212 I enjoyed the hunt this year compared to last year. It is disappointing to see all the hunters driving pickups instead of walking or posting an area.
- 213 It seems the deer numbers are down. I'm guessing due to possibly the last years heavy snow and hard winter. If that is the case, that the deer numbers are down due to the hard winter, or as some are guessing, due to more mountain lions, then why did I not see deer carcasses from the deer that have died due to heavy snow or due to the mountain lions? If you have time, and can take a stab at an answer I would appreciate it. Bill Warner
- 216 The amount of deer we see is almost none. Need to go back to bucks of two points only, at that time there were many more deer. What are you thinking.

- 217 I only hunted with bow and arrow this year and was very satisfied with the quality and the numbers of good bucks in the 135 b&c and larger...
- 224 Didnt see any mountain lions out hunting. A lion was shot in my neighbors back yard in Deadwood after it killed a deer in town. We did see a bobcat when we were hunting.
- 229 There seemed to be very few deer total and a very small number of bucks with more than 8 points. We didn't even see deer on the road sides during the evening. Of the folks we talked to during the weeked we hunted very few had much luck.
- 237 none
- 243 I would like to see it go back to buying your tag over the counter, BUT, noting that this will not happen, I would like to see all resident applications filled before any non resident tags were sold.
- 256 I have good connections in the Hills area to know where to hunt. Saw good numbers of Bucks for the short time i hunted. Did not see any huge bucks but only hunted 2 days. Going to the unit type hunting has really helped the buck numbers we see. I still think you need to go back to the 2 point or better rule to help get better quality bucks. They don't get to live long enough to become a quality buck otherwise.
- 259 a lot of the does that came down from the hills last fall were dry and without fawn,many more than we have ever seen in the past total number of deer are down and bucks were of poor quality.
- 265 This has been my best year for seeing a diverse wild life in the Black Hills since I was a teenager, the deer population I observed was larger than I expected and I had plenty of quality bucks to choose from. I saw both whitetail and muley around a 80/20 mix and a total of 24 elk with 4 nice bulls, I saw turkey and both Golden and Bald Eagles daily and the highlight was finally seeing the mountain lions. I was surprized I didn't see any coyotes for the amount of area I covered. Keep up the good work the Black Hills wildlife seem to be doing well.
- 266 very happy
- 277 There were VERY FEW deer this year in comparison with say 5 years ago. I have hunted the same basic area for 8 years and there has been a decline especially in the last 3 years. I saw no more than 1 doe with 2 fawns at a time and maybe the same deer on the only two occasions that I saw deer. This represents 3 full days of hunting and additional scouting. In the past I would have expected to see 25 to 30+ deer in that amount of hunting including several bucks. The amount of deer sign I saw was also greatly diminished from past hunting experiences. Either the number of tags or the number of lions needs to decrease to allow a rebound in the deer population. If you can get the lion population under control I would be willing to skip a couple of years hunting if it would allow a rebound in the deer population. At this point I am not sure I will even apply for tags next year.
- 281 would like to see the point restriction come back and like to see no season on mule deer for about 5 years.
- 284 Saw some good quality bucks Hunted 2nd weekend in nov.
- 288 The game fish and parks should sell deer licenses corresponding to the number of deer available, instead of how much money they need, and should let hunters know if the numbers are down BEFORE they buy a license. The 2 point minimum on bucks was a step in the right direction, but then they added an any deer season which actually cancelled out any positive effect. Another idea might be to consider the amount of public land in a given area when estimating deer numbers. The number of deer is pretty much a moot point if 90% of the area is private property that don't allow hunting. One more thing might be erecting signs better designating private property, or defining the borders of public land. I think most law-abiding hunters would be willing to donate to this cause, and would be happy to turn in anyone knowingly entering private property, or taking down signs designating such. As it is, it's a pretty tough job trying to tell the difference without a marker, a gps, or sometimes even a fence. I think this pertains to all types of hunting, in the hills and on the prairie.

- 293 Deer numbers seemed to be down quite a bit in areas I usually hunt. I already harvested a West River buck when I shot a doe in the hills. I donated the doe to sportsman against hunger. I missed two nice bucks early in the season in the hills.
- 294 Didn't get to hunt as much as I wanted to. Only made it out for one afternoon, that is the reason for the no option answers.
- 296 Very concerned with deer population>I live outside of Spearfish and I normally have a large number of deer on our property and in the last few and especially this last I rarely see the number of deer and no bucks. thank you
- 298 I feel that the restrictions on bucks in the hills should be set at 4 pt or better and i am glad to finally see a limitation on the mule deer there is no reason that the Black Hills cant be well known for there mulies like the mtns of colo. I also think the lion season needs to be set to allow the use of hounds they are very successful in wyo. and many other states that allow them the bighorn sheep i think are paying a crucial price because of the cat numbers...
- 299 I think we would have seen more quality bucks after Thanksgiving day because of increased rut activity.
- 300 I saw more quality bucks this season than I have ever seen while deer hunting in the Black Hills, I will say that the majoraty of my hunting was on private land. When I spent time in the national forest...I still saw plenty of deer....the quality of the bucks was ok.....I did not harvest a deer as I was looking for a big racked buck....I found several.....they are big for a reason....they are smart...at least smarter than me. Thank you for the privelage of hunting in the beautiful Black Hills...I hope you will continue to protect this privelage for individuals like myself who do not own land and believe that hunting deer and other wildlife is special and neccessary for the health and well being of the animals and the forest. I will take advantage of this comment section to put in my two cents on the mountain lion population in the Black Hills.....we have to many! Allow more lions to be harvested....let the hunters use dogs if they choose.
- 315 The reason I did not hunt was, the report of friends said their where no deer in the area we were going to hunt. Mountaion lions have the numbers down didn't see the reason to spend money on a trip u will not harvest an animal.
- 317 This year we went later in the year and seen a buck running a doe. Very impressed! Maybe an early muzzelloader season? Maybe a earlier muzzelloader season state wide? Troy Styke 940-9461
- 320 It would be nice to shoot more does out of the hills. Maybe issue more doe tags or double doe tags and let some of the smaller bucks life and instead shoot does.
- 328 We (my son & myself) did find one femle mountain lion That was dead. We reported it to the GF&P. We then met with a game biologist that is working on the study of the lions. We took him to where the dead lion was located. It was a taged lion that he was familiar with and appeared to have died from natural cause. We then helped him to retrieve the carcus to his vehicle. I would like to know the cause of death and the age of the lion if it is possible.
- 332 The taking out of so many trees this year is horrible.I think it had to do with some of the hunting and I also think the predators is a big factor in it to.
- 335 Very few deer, or even tracks, in areas where we've always seen deer ( Crystal Mtn. and south towards Misty Meadows) .
- 342 I think we picked the right weekend to hunt. I know other guys that went the next week to the same area and never saw any deer. We hunted November 13 & 14 there were deer everywhere and didnt see any other hunters.
- 343 because of medical problem's/surgery i was limited to the amount of hunting i could take part in. there were several very good area's my husband had found but could not take me to those places. my opinions might not be an accurate account of how this season was. thanks, traci
- 350 This season our group had seen more signs of mountain lions and fewer deer, noticeably less fawns and younger deer.

- 360 Deer numbers are way down-----I live in Piedmont area and we usually see quite a few fawns this year we saw two I believe the mountain lions are having a tremendous effect on the deer numbers
- 362 Too many Mountain Lions and a tough winter has drastically reduced the Black Hills deer herd. South Dakota needs to manage the Black Hills for Big Game species (Elk, Mt Goats, Bighorn Sheep, Deer) again and not Mountain Lions.
- 371 do away with multiple tags for a single person. Make it so hunters can only harvest one buck and one doe a year. Do away with the statewide archery and muzzleloader change them over to limited areas so you have better control over where the deer are harvested.
- 375 did not see any turkeys either. could have used a little snow
- 382 As I have said in the past, you have successfully decimated the Black Hills deer herd. It appears that the numbers are way down again. Shoot too many does while restricting access to the biggest tract of public hunting in the state.
- 396 I will definitely apply again next season.
- 398 The deer herd seems to be way down from years past. The quality of bucks seem to way down also.
- 402 Enjoyed the hunt even though didn't harvest a deer. I saw more deer overall in 2007. 2007 had a much higher number of does; bucks were about the same. We hunted in 2007 and 2009 north of Sheridan Lake.
- 417 I saw a great deal of poaching evidence this year-7 different deer carcasses where only the backstraps were removed and/or the head was cut off. All 7 were along the Sheridan Lake Road corridor between Rapid City and the Highway 385 junction. Made me sick and very mad!!
- 424 If one mature mountain lion kills one deer per week and there are approximately 300 lion in the Black Hills, that approximately 16,000 deer/year. How long can this deer population sustain such a loss? It won't be long and we will have much fewer deer than when the tags were unlimited over the counter!
- 431 You are going to have to open the mountain lion season similar to coyotes or the deer population along with elk will drop dramatically. If you talk with hunters and the locals they all agree that the lions are eliminating the game in huge numbers. When the public is seeing that many lions you know there are many times more in the area.
- 435 GOOD JOB!!! The number of bucks has greatly improved since the 2 points or better rule was put on a few years ago. I can remember hunting in the Hills and never seeing a buck for the entire hunt. We don't always get buck tags and apply for antlerless second choice, but always go along even without a tag just to see the Hills and take part in the "fellowship". Looking forward to next year!!!
- 439 My father and I hunted with a guy that has grew up in Hills. He has hunted there for 40+ years. He can not recall a time that he saw fewer deer than what we saw. We hunted from north of Hill City (deer creek) to south of Custer. We saw the vast majority of deer within the city limits of Custer. We covered over 200 miles of roads in a couple days. We walked around 10 miles of forest land. We should have seen more deer than what we saw. Talking with other hunters in Hill City there were not that many deer seen at all.
- 441 While I do NOT think the Mtn. Lion population is having an overly negative effect on the deer populations, I do think MORE lions should be allowed to be harvested. I do not intend to hunt lions, I just think there are more out there than is being reported.
- 444 You should reimplement the point restriction on bucks. Also, too many tags for antlerless or any whitetail deer. The herd is on the overall decline and numbers in the area I hunt (around the Jasper fire area and north through the Moon area) are down substantially. Bucks were few and far between in the area most of the summer and fall.

- 447 I did not see any mountain lions while hunting, but have had one in my back yard this year as have several other people in the area. I believe that the decreased deer numbers are being affected by the lions and I believe there are also a lot of coyotes in the hills that are taking their toll. I have seen alot of bucks in my neighborhood and a fair amount in the woods, but very few quality bucks. As many (old timer) hunters would tell you, the hunting is not what it used to be. I also think the type of logging and over developing is decreasing deer habitat
- 453 No deer around. To many are in town or in areas that use to be their habitat but have houses now. Way to many hunters in the woods. Very disappointed in the management of the deer herd. Like to see a management practice of quality and not a numbers game. GFP needs to figure out what they are doing.
- 455 I was disappointed to observe so few deer during this year season in the 'Hills'. As I live very near to my hunting activities I observe the population year around. There were some quality bucks but the total numbers were way down. I think this is due partially to the cat population, partially due to the rebounding coyote population, poor fawn production and bad timing on a series of spring storms. Some things can be adjusted, some cannot. We can, and in my opinion should, increase the mt. lion harvest. It is high time the opinions of the hunters paying into the department be heard. What do the non-hunting folks (lion cuddlers) contribute to the welfare of the department or the wildlife they,GFP, are in charge of ? I say to the GFP and Commissioners "Do what you know is best for the wildlife of the State and quit bowing to the media and bleeding hearts."  
Will Cooper  
Lead ,SD 57754  
422 Sawyer St.
- 469 Saw lots of East River hunters and none of the quality bucks I have seen in years past. Took my buck Nov 11, so missed the rut while hunting the prairie. Condidtions might have been better later in the month.
- 471 Didn't hunt in the hills this year because harvest was drug out so long.
- 474 There are more deer in town than in the woods.
- 484 I had a very enjoyable experience in htis years hunt and saw a generous amount of deer, I would have to say that it took too long for me to obtain a liscence.
- 490 It appears the numbers are way down--I don't know if that was due to the good weather but from the people I talked to the guys were not seeing the deer this year. It sure is great to be outdoors though!
- 497 The bucks seem bigger and more abundant now than in the days of unlimited liscenses.
- 499 lots of smaller 4 andd 5 point bucks in deerfield area. Not very many does. Between Piedmont and Sturgis very few deer were found. First 20 years of hills hunting saw no lions and very few tracks, last 4 years i have seen tracks every year and one lion.
- 505 deer numbers are down 10 fold from previous years. Also we hunt around Nemo where it was hard not to see and elk now you can't pay to see one.
- 508 i wasnt impressed by the quality of deer this 2009 hunting season. The warm weather conditions and people out riding there 4wheelers ever where in the blackhills made this years season even more of a challenge. The suggestion that I have is to close the Blackhills down from September 1st through December would help out significantly. When a hunter is trying to go walk out canyon edges or do lil mini drives its almost impossible because about every where a person looked there were either fourwheelers,dirtbikes or them 6wheelrhinos everywhere.
- 522 I TALKED TO A LOT OF HUNTERS WHO SAID THEY WERE NOT SEEING DEER. IT BECAME APPARENT AS TO WHY WHEN ASKED IS THEY MADE DRIVES. THEY ANSWERED BY SAYING WE DRIVE AROUND A LOT AND PUT ON A LOT OF MILES BUT WE ARE NOT SEEING THE DEER. TWO OF US WOULD WALK TOWARD EACH OTHER ON TOP OF LONG RIDGES WITH THE WIND RIGHT AND WE WOULD SEE ALOT OF DEER. THE SNOW LAST YEAR LET A FEW MORE BUCKS SERVIVE SO WE SEEN MORE BIGGER BUCKS THEN IN PAST YEARS.

- 525 Deer numbers were definitely down this year. I hunt with my father and grandpa who have over 80 years combined experience in the hills. Most of the deer were low on private ground, that's where we saw the majority of them. Up high there were very few, although did see some in the Rochford vicinity. My biggest problem with the BH deer season is lack of opportunity. Mentored hunts are not the answer to recruit young hunters, their parents taking them out and letting them spend time with them in the field at a young age will help get them interested. BUT, it is hard to keep young people interested in hunting if you can't draw a tag. Please explain to me what the difference is in managing a herd between giving opportunity and having a lower success rate, or limiting hunters and having a high success rate. The members of my family probably have more experience and have spent more hours in the hills for generations than anyone in your department. I have found most everything they have taught me to be true. You used to offer over the counter tags in the hills which worked for many generations of hunters, and gave people the opportunity to go afield. Many of these people might buy a tag just to have the opportunity to go out for an afternoon, many people didn't spend a lot of time hunting, but they had the opportunity, and success rates were relatively low for this reason. Now you limit tags, but success rates are much higher, i.e. your killing as many or more deer now than when unlimited tags were issued, and your losing hunters to lack of opportunity. Video games and other activities aren't keeping other young hunters such as myself from filling the ranks as much as the SDGF&P is from denying opportunity.
- 537 I am seeing less and less deer in the hunting woods and after a deerless day in the woods we drive home and see deer all over the residential areas. With the housing cancer moving into more and more of the meadows and valleys of the Black Hills, the deer are flocking into the rural and outlying housing areas feeding more on flowers, domestic plants and shelled corn. Many of these "well meaning" homeowners are feeding deer and wild turkeys which draws them from the legal hunting woods. Not only that but some areas (Johnson Siding and Nemo area to name just a couple...) become extremely dangerous traffic situations. I can personally attest to that. Then, of course, the Mountain Lions follow the food chain into town where they get into trouble and have to pay the price for doing a natural thing. I, for one, believe it is time to start enforcing a no feeding law and with fines stiff enough to cover costs of enforcement. I also believe the Mountain Lion is a strong factor in the lower deer sightings. I believe the Mt. Lion season should be moved back to coincide with the deer season. The state lost a LOT of license revenue by moving the Lion season into January. This was a result of listening to a very small group of people! Jerry Root (my name may be used if useful.)
- 565 Whitetail Deer tags should be available for purchase over the counter. There are too many deer and the herd seems to have a disproportionate number of animals that are malnourished or diseased. Additionally, there are too many road kill and nuisance deer being reported or seen.
- 585 I like what is being done for the mule deer but still seeing too few mule does. Would like to see us go back to the 2 pt. minimum on whitetails and a more restricted doe harvest. I seen two large cats that showed absolutely no fear of me within 50 yards. Let's see, 250 cats eating 1 deer a week = 12000 deer per year. If I see 4 cats in 15 days in 3 different areas I think we may have a population explosion. Please help! B.H. deer hunting is more exciting to me than elk or prairie deer hunting.
- 587 Buck to doe ratio has significantly increased in the last 10 years. Less hunting pressure and lower buck harvest due to the lottery has helped.
- 591 Thank you for continuing to manage the amount of tags given out per year in comparison to the winter kill off rate. I have heard of other states that have increased their deer tags per hunter even though the deer numbers were down considerably.

- 600 Does were very few and fawns non existent in areas from Vanocker Canyon west to Wyoming border S.of Hwy 14A to Hwy 44. Could be very serious problem. Spring storms of 09 have taken there toll. Lots of Cat and coyote tracks seen in each fresh snow that we recieved in Nov. Coyotes packing up. Witnessed pairs hunting on more that a couple occasions. Lots of bucks but could be a false perception due to the fact that whenever I saw a deer after the 10th of Nov. it was a buck or single doe with a buck. No groups. Very unusual.
- 602 I primarily hunt on public land on week days and literally miles away from access roads. I do this (of coarse) for two reasons, 1) to avoid other hunters and 2) to see more and better deer. I hunted about 10 days this season and was not really disappointed but surprised by how few deer I saw. I saw 2 bucks in these ten days both of which were of good quality. It is truly a treat to see quality bucks in the black hills, thank you for your efforts in this regard. I did not see an actual lion while hunting, however I saw tracks nearly every time I was out. As a hunter I appreciate the efforts being made to manage/ balance the deer and lion populations. Thanks for all of your hard work.
- 605 In September we had over 100 deer in our pastures and hay field and in November there were less than 10 on the whole place. Of course, November was quite warm this year and we have had good moisture so food and water are still available in the higher Hills. It is a little frustrating when some people have said "The mountain lions are killing them." We have told these people there is no way the mountain lions have killed 80-100 deer in two months. The bow hunters were quite successful in Sept. & Oct. on our place, but only three deer were taken during November rifle season. Please delete this last comment as soon as the person who typed or wrote the survey reads it. You need to proofread a survey before you send it out to the public. There are too many errors.
- 609 We have a cabin in the Merry-Go-Round west of Rockford. We are wondering about maybe some death lose from last years heavy snow or did the deer simply move out and did not return? The number of deer we saw are way down from what we usually see. I only saw 2 fawns!! We would appreciate your comments on what you think is the reason for the change in the numbers.
- 622 sd doesnt need mountain lions! let people hunt them with dogs and get rid of more of them
- 624 i noticed that there was a lot less deer this year, I think that decreasing the number of doe tags will help to increase the heard, and also to increase the number of lion tags will help aswell
- 625 In the area that I hunt (Boulder Conyon) the deer numbers have been declining every year for the last few years. A couple of hard winters and ample Mountain Lion sign probably have been aiding that trend. Thank-you Lonny Kracht
- 635 Lets go back to the two points or better for bucks.
- 636 The buck population appears to be boing down hill both quality and quantity, the genneral deer population is going down hill dramaticly especaily when you get five miles or further from town.
- 642 Season dates for mounhtain lion and black hills deer need to be at the same time for the east river working people to take advantage of both hunts.
- 645 I was not able to make it out to the Hills this year due to work conflicts. I appreciate your hard work maintaining our wildlife in SD.
- 648 only hunted 2 days with my grandson. then fell and broke 3 ribs so missed the rest of the season
- 652 I did see fewer deer this year hardly any Mule deer but am wondering if the population of both Whitetail and Mule deer is down because of Mountain Lions, used to see a lot more numbers where I live but just seeing one or two together at the most. Not the bunches of 10 or more.
- 658 The doe population in the Nemo road and hwy 385 region seemed very low this year.

- 667 The Black Hills Deer season has always been a family trip. Before the kids could hunt they would go trail-driving and walking "the hills" with me. Since the mid 70`s our son has been hunting with me. He shot his first whitetail, a spike, when he was 14. He has lived in Mpls with his family for 25 years, so now it`s a bi-annual trip, if the drawing is favorable. He has 2 sons who are following our Dakota tradition. The oldest grandson started hunting in 2001, 3 generation #1, tagging a nice Muley buck. Dad and Grandpa tagged 2 whitetails, that`s 3 for 3, one 5X5 is hanging on my "Hills" bragging wall. In 2007 it was 3 generation #2, as our youngest grandson continues the tradition. It was an awesome trip, tagging 4 nice whitetails, that`s 4 for 4. The big one, a 5X5 is hanging on our son`s wall. Here it is 2009, 3 generation #3. Can we top 2007? We always hunt Thanksgiving week for 2 reasons. We like to hunt in the snow and the "HILLS RUT" is on. It was another 4 for 4 year. Our grandsons are catching on to the Hills hunting. A 5X5 European mount on one wall and a 4X5 full mount on another wall. We believe the management program used by GF&P in the Black Hills has done wonders for buck to doe ratio. We`re looking forward to our 3 generation #4 hunt. Thanks from the Braa Boys.
- 674 Never got to hunt last year as we were one of the group of hunters snowed in at Moon. This year the numbers seem very down.
- 676 Good job guys on limiting hunter numbers for a quality hunt. Till now I feel the hills had too many deer for the available browse, and could have had a higher doe harvest. Now I believe lions are severely impacting deer numbers in the areas I hunt. A harvest of 200 or more would still leave enough lions to ensure their survival and keep them from hurting the deer population as much. I also hunted the black hills in Wyoming this year and lion tracks were everywhere there too. This year was still pretty good deer hunting, but I am a very good hunter with a lot of experience. I expect next year to be much tougher as the amount of lion sign seems to be doubling every year. Their population will be maxed out and there will be hungry lions within a year. MY OPINION  
Cal Walsh Thank you
- 680 Too many hunters and not enough quality bucks. Saw a number of 2 points but only one buck that would have been worth shooting
- 699 Recommend sending the electronic survey after the season is over and not having a response due by Nov. 10 or you'll get a paper survey. More winterkill in BH this past winter - probably should have resisted issuing "any whitetail" tags and issued only antlered tags.
- 712 With all most all of west river deer land going to paid hunting this is the only affordable deer hunt left in the state.
- 719 My 2 hunting children and I counted 21 bucks over one weekend in the Nemo-Vanocker Canyon area. We observed very few fawns and many dry does. I found legs from spring fawns lost during the spring blizzard in many parts of the hills. We observed elk on 3 occasions, something I never did in my previous 34 seasons hunting in the the Black Hills. The populations seems to be growing annually. We don't consider lions a threat to our hunting and are willing to share deer with four-legged and two-legged hunters. We consider road hunters and ATVs on closed road systems and those people who build on and block off, huge tracts of the hills to hunters more of a threat to hunting than lions. Regulations on the dumping of deer carcasses and parts on public lands should be developed or enforced (i.e FR 520A and Shanks Gulch, off Hwy 44.) This turns off non-hunters and gives hunting a bad name.
- 720 FS is closing a lot of trails to areas where we used to hunt.
- 721 opening weekend saw alot less deer in central northern hills versus last few years. hunted the rest of season in southern hills
- 724 to few deer have never seen hunting this bad our area had far to much cat sign no fawns at all
- 726 Even though I had a Any whitetail tag I took a adult doe. Let the small bucks grow up and become five/six point.
- 739 Did not make it out this year.
- 749 It would be nice to have the deer licenses available over the counter again, it seems the deer are populated enough to be able to do this since I see so many dead on the road.

- 752 I can not explain the total lack of deer in large sections of the hills. I have never seen so few deer. But I did see two of the the best bucks ever both along road and safe from hunters.
- 753 The deer numbers are down. I spend a lot of time in the hills and am not seeing near the numbers of deer that I normally do, substantially! I was successful on my hunt because I got way off the beaten path, a long way from any road.
- 757 keep up the good work i heard all lot of buck stores
- 759 I think that the deer population is way down due to both the lions killing adult deer and coyotes getting fawns. I also hunt with a bow and this year in the area where I hunt I didn't see a single deer; where in years past I would see dozens. I hunt near Vanoucker canyon road west of the rock quarry and after an eveings hunt in years past you would see dozens of deer along the road back to Rapid City; this year you would be lucky to see one or two.
- 760 This was the worst deer hunting I've ever experienced in the Black Hills. I didn't see very many deer and only 1 decent buck. I didn't even see deer in the headlights going out in the morning or coming back after dark between Hill City and Deer Field, Moon, Rochford, and Nemo. I hunted those areas with the same results of not even seeing doe and fawn. I also didn't see a single flag wave as I walked through the woods as I always have before. I don't think its my hunting skills. I do think the deer are not there. I would even have had trouble filling my Any Whitetail tag with a doe the last day. I blame this on the toll mountain lions have on the deer population. Local folks claim the Elk herds are declining with very few young Elk being seen, same for young turkeys. Myself, I only saw one small flock of turkeys and no Elk. In past years I've always seen many turkeys and at least some Elk. Its been 2 years since I hunted in the Hills, so I think there's been a dramatic change in prey species in the last couple years. I suppose it will take someone being attacked before GFP makes any substantive changes in lion hunting policies - like number taken and methods used to hunt them (dogs). I've decided this is the last year I'll put in for a 2nd choice doe tag. I'll still apply for a buck, but if I don't draw it , I will not hunt or spend my money hunting in the Black Hills anymore. Jim Schmidt Canton, SD
- 762 Our deer hunting party did not see the number of deer that we have seen in past years. I'm not sure what the cause was, but it seems as though numbers were down significantly. Many of our tried and true areas that produce deer every year, simply did not hold the number of deer as in the past.
- 782 Just didn't work to get out to the Hills
- 784 Did not see very many deer in the Rochford area
- 786 Only hunted last day and a half, to busy harvesting corn, being so late in the season I guess we saw quite a few deer, wish the 2 point or better was still in affect. Saw more quality bucks last time I hunted the hills, which was 3 years ago.
- 787 Really wish the buck tags would have stayed as any buck. Two of the three nice bucks I saw on November 1st were mule deer.
- 791 I like the option of a whitetail only license.
- 794 Noticeably fewer deer this year. Numbers have been lower at our cabin near Hill City, too. It may be time to ease off on the pressure on the does, as it would be terrible for GFP to mismanage (overhunt) the deer out of the hills entirely. In the mean time, the thirty or forty deer in our yard (Rapid City) at home are doing fine. Any chance of considering a limited archery hunt on the over populated areas in town, matching the hunters and the landowners with a list to keep things under control and positive, while still making some money for GFP in the same effort?
- 804 I have been hunting Black Hills deer since 1985. When there was a fork horn or bigger buck limit the quality of bucks got bigger and better. For the last 8 years the quality of bucks has gone down hill. I believe mountain lions has had a factor in this.

- 813 I hunted the same area as I have for the past 12 years. Pervious numbers of deer seen have fluctuated, but have been extremely higher than this year. On opening day, 3 White tails were seen by my hunting party with 2 of us walking approximately 2.5 miles in an area where I have shot numerous large white tail bucks. I did not observe a mountain lion in this one area, but did observe evidence of a lion kill. In the area where I harvested my 2009 buck, last year the white tails were numerous. This year, only 2 doe and a buck were seen. A small buck was seen later in the same area and I had a mountain lion follow me out of the area as I walked it toward the end of the season. I did notice a high number of what I believe were deer ticks around the anus of the deer I killed and the deer killed by one of my hunting partners as I was gutting these deer. I have never noticed this before and am curious regarding this observation. Cliff Dahl
- 819 I feel that the management of the deer population has been very good. I think that the deer numbers are good, if you get out and actually walk into the woods to find them. I hear alot of hunters say that they did not see that many deer this year. Most of the hunters I saw this year were driving around on the forestry trails. Very few of the hunters that I saw actually took the time to get off the trails and walk into the forest a little bit. That was were I saw the majority of the deer this year. Last year with the snow cover the majority of the deer stayed near the houses/ranches and the trails looking for food. That was not the case this year with the warmer weather. I also feel that the older deer have become a little more educated, and are avoiding the open areas(like trails) during the high traffic periods. We did find a couple of deer skeletons grouped together suggesting winter kill, but not as many as I thought we would find considering all of the snow fall and the long cold winter in the hills.
- 827 Very frustrating to watch many deer on multiple occasions get ruined by road hunters: hanging guns out of windows etc. I hike in, scout during the summer, try to predict the movement of deer to get ruined by lazy unsportsmanlike activity. Just frustrating. Overall the management of the deer is good in SD reference other states. Thanks
- 829 I think the town of Whitewood took to many deer at the end of the year last year, they even went outside the city limits. Not sure about other cities. Also I have nothing against a land owner if they want to charge to hunt on their property but then they should have to pay a higher tax for those months because then that land is recreational. Also have heard several bragging about the money thy make off paid hunting and they don't report it, there nshould be a way to catch these people so they pay taxes on this income. There are also land owners out there that won't let people hunt but complain about wildlife on their property then just go out and kill them, what a waste. I also have seen areas that I used to hunt as a youngster that now are over grown with timber and no grass left just pine needles so deer have moved out of those areas which maybe why morre deer are moving towards town taking with them the mountain lion. I have seen many lions in the hills in my life and never once had one come at me, one female with her cubs has come within about 100 feet of where we are several times with her cubs and lay in the sun with the cubs playing for up to 30 minutes. I always carry a side arm to scare them if they were to come at me, but would only shoot to kill if they kept coming. The biggest lion I have ever seen was this year about 50 feet away aproximatly 8 feet long.
- 832 The deer population has been declining for 4 years. The quality of bucks has declined as well. 70% of the deer hunters are hunting in the Jasper Fire. We have a cabin at Moon and have observed the Hills deer season for 25 years. In 2001 and 2002 the deer population was good and so was the quality of bucks. Since then, it has been declining and it's getting worse. It's miserable hunting and needs serious attention.
- 835 I enjoy hunting in the Black Hills. I hunt deer and elk every chance I get. My only consern is the increase of private property and an easy way to determine if it is private or not. I have not had any problems with land owners but I fear it will become a problem and the non land owner will loose out. Anyway thank you for the many years of good hunting and at my age I don't know how many more I will have but I hope it is a lot.

- 839 Deer numbers seemed to be down in the upper hills but there were a lot of deer on the private land in the foothills.
- 841 While I did not see any quality whitetail bucks, where I could hunt them, I did see several quality muley bucks. One was the largest muley I have ever seen in the hills. I didn't think the hills could produce a quality muley of that caliber until my son and I saw this one on way back out to the road. I have lost my prairie deer hunting opportunities, to paid hunting (which I won't participate in), and the hills unit is the only rifle tag I have opportunities left to hunt. I have almost given up on a chance to hunt muleys in the hills. This year and last year I have observed a substantial increase in the muley population from years past. I would love the opportunity to hunt muleys again in the hills and have tried to get one of the any deer tags (to hunt muleys of which only 500 are available). I am rewarded by having to sit out since I can't seem to draw one of them. Then find myself again competing with the whitetail hunters and other unsuccessful whitetail/muley hunters for those few tags the following year. I would encourage GF&P to consider creating a separate muley license, like you are already doing for the whitetail only license, in which the applicant has to specifically apply for the muley tag only or for a whitetail tag only, ie - make the choice up front. The unsuccessful applicants would then earn a preference point for the license they applied for only, and cannot transfer their unsuccessful whitetail point into the muley license the following year or vice versa. Sharing these 500 any deer tags (the ONLY opportunity to hunt a muley) with the previous unsuccessful whitetail applicants isn't working. I hope GF&P can evaluate and create a better/fair opportunity to hunt muleys in the hills without having to compete with the would be whitetail hunters. The overall quality of the all of the deer herd has increased and the population seems to be strong. I did see a lot of other hunters out, but am not sure if that means there are too many other tags. Still had a very successful season. Thanks, Mark
- 843 Seen a bob cat!
- 846 I and my hunting buddy have enjoyed hunting in the Black Hills for many years. We have come home many times without our quarry but have never been sad only overjoyed with our experience. Thank You !  
Gary D.
- 847 Would be nice if more licenses were made available. I've heard several people mention that they were unable to get tags.
- 848 This year was the lowest number of bucks I have ever seen. Cut back on total licenses, I don't know.
- 851 deer population is way down in the nat. forest did not see deer when we scouted like in the past. and i also think that the youth hunters should hunt with the regular hunting season because for example my dad was bowhunting and two guys and a youth hunting female walked by his tree stand and didnt see anything so they decided to target practice. he walked over to them and asked them if they wer hunting and they said they wer but didnt see anything so they thought they woud shoot to make shure the gun was on. i thought you did that before the season not when your hunting.they wer on top of the hill and if it wasnt for a big rock it would have been a bad deal because they wer shooting strait at him. me and my 2 brothers youth hunted and we didnt need 3 1/2 months to kill a doe and besides you have to ask yourself is the kid shooting or is dad . after all my dad is a hunter and he would take us out and we got to pick the spot we scouted and shot the deer but if we didnt get one he new where we could and then next year we would get to try our luck again in a spot we picked . so you see in my opinion and it is just that that the youth hunters of today are really being led afield by someone who isnt hunting for the youth but hunting for themselvs. thank you and i hope you see that this is true and can change things a little so it can be fun for everyone and guys like my dad that are bowhunting dont have to be worried about catching a stray bullet because someone got boerd and didnt see a deer but thought they would practice shooting. not good for hunters in camo.
- 859 You should allow sitting on a lion kill all night. As long as there is a fresh kill within a given distance of you. Make it so we have to inform G F P so they are informed about the kill and that you will be hunting it at night. I would even make it mandatory to give GPS placment of kill.

- 861 Where did all the deer go this season? Saw only one whitetail doe during the three days that we hunted. Granted we only hunted three days. But even in the open meadows and outlying areas of the Black Hills we did not see any deer and last year they(deer) were all over the place.
- 863 I saw more lion tracks this year than ever before. I believe the lion population needs to be reduced. More SD tags need to be issued and be available during the deer and elk seasons. Or, as an alternative to a fall season, hunters should be allowed to hunt with dogs in the winter.
- 867 I don't know the statistics but I think the 2 point restriction put on bucks has increased the quality of the bucks in the Hills. I don't think restricting the number of buck tags did anything but keep hunters from enjoying the Hills hunt. I never felt crowded back when the tags were unlimited so I think the State should go back to unlimited buck tags. Thanks.
- 868 worst hunting i have ever seen, deer numbers down in parts that i would see tons of deer in previous years
- 877 I live in the Black Hills we need to up the quota on Mountain Lions...I believe they are affecting game numbers in deer, turkey and elk.
- 891 I think we should be able to buy Doe tags over the counter.
- 893 The hunting is so much better than it was in the in the 80's and 90's. Since going to a draw system we see far fewer deer but many more bucks. I had a nice 5by5 mule buck walk within 30m yards. I seen a nice 5 point white tail but didn't get a shot at it. I seen several small whitetail bucks that I wouldn't shoot, (Catch and release deer hunting!) I only heard 5 shots on opening day. We camped at Red Bank springs. We have been hunting the moon area for years. It is getting better each year. We are seeing way more mule deer. The lions are having little effect on deer population. Doe's all had twins or single fawns. I shot a large female cayotie. And while rattling for deer a had a bob cat appraoch my stand. One thing I would like to report, however. We found three shot elk that were not lost. Two 5 point bulls in the bald hills area. (3 miles west and north of Red Bank Springs) Had been shot and left. One had been gutted and partially skinned. The elk were killed just before the storm, 3 days before the opener. We found a cow elk that had been shot, near the old thundermug road, near bear run. I love the campimng experience and all the walking we did. Keep up the good work. I love seeing all the bucks. It is so much better than it was years ago. Being able to shoot a doe lets me take home some venison and pass on the small bucks. Don't change a thing!
- 898 Good hunting and great location, we just did not see that many probably due to the warmer weather the time we hunted. We'll go again and were only hunting bucks, passed up 2 does. Great trip and location we had fun in Rapid and Deadwood. I love the open area and all the different location to hunt. This was the first year in about 20 years that I have hunted out there and it should be a good start for future years on where to hunt. We did have some idea on where to go due to a local friend.
- 900 This year I have by far seen the fewest harvestable deer in the last 33 years. I believe that the increased length of the hunting season i.e. start of youth tags, early archery start, number of muzzle loader tags, has caused the movement of most of the deer herd to move into the housing areas in the Black Hills. This constant movement caused by the pressure of hunters from mid-September through the end of January pushes deer into unhunttable land. Along with this the almost unlimited number of doe tags has caused the deer population to decling below numbers to give a good hunting experience. I also believe that the high numbers of mountian lions in the Black Hills has contrubited to the herd decline. I think that research will show that lions when hunting in the spring will take a higher percentage of buck fawns as they tend to move instead of sitting tight like a doe fawn after the adult doe in distrubed. This has been documented by GF&P research in a radioed fawn study from the 1980s-1990s. If this is in fact the case this reduces the number of shootable bucks in any given 2 year period. This would help explain why I am seeing very few deer and only a couple of small spike bucks. I will continue to hunt but hope that with a reduction in doe tags, shorting the seasons some, and an increase lion harvests will make the hunting better.

- 902 My son and I hunted 4 days. I shot a fairly nice buck (for a hills buck) on the 25th. My son did not kill a deer however he is 14 and had a couple chances but wasn't able to harvest. Weather was great, but did not see a lot of deer. Heard other hunters talking of low harvest numbers this year. You probably already know this.
- 904 there are very few deer this year. and not in rut till the end of november. not sure if the mt.lions killed off alot of bucks or just the timing.
- 905 Our group of hunters saw less than 1/2 the number of deer that we normally see during the November hunt. We did end up finding 3 fresh partially covered mountain lion kills in an area where we have hunted for 38 years. We first started seeing one or two kill sights per season beginning around 2004. In 2008 we located 4 kill sights 2 old and 2 fresh. This year (2009) we located 3 that were about 1 week old or less. We have seen a steady decline in the number of deer seen during this same time frame. None of our hunting group is very happy to see the rise in lion kills and decline in deer population.
- 911 Deer numbers, both doe and buck were way down to what i am used to.
- 913 One of the biggest frustrations for our group this year was the number of road hunters. It is very difficult to sit or even spot and stalk when you have a vehicle driving by your hunting area every 10 or 15 minutes. It seems like on the weekend, the deer bed down and are extremely tough to find due to the large amount of vehicle traffic. I realize this is an issue the GFP cannot directly control, however, this type of hunting should be discouraged for able-bodied hunters. Thank you for taking the time and effort to send out such a survey. I think it is great that SDGFP gets input from the men and women out there doing it every day.
- 914 I thought the idea of 2 points or better was fine option to harvesting quality deer. Why not put it back on the books. Thank you.
- 928 We hunted the last weekend of November and didn't see many deer. The weather was in the low 40's so I expected to see good deer movement. I hunted with 3 others and I was the only one to harvest. I realize that hunting on the final weekend, the deer had been pressured and shot at for weeks, but overall it seems that the number of deer we see goes down each year. Talking to locals out there and other hunters that I know, the number of deer seen was down this year. My opinion is that the mountain lions in the Black Hills have really depleted the deer population.
- 930 The poor big game management in the black hills is starting to show. I can only imagine how pathetic it will be in five more years. I guess it depends on what you want have in the hills. I personally would like to see a balance of deer, elk, and lions. in a few more years there will be no more deer. just like last time we experienced gross miss management in the late 70s and early 80s. we finally got a healthy heard of deer and the lions moved in. for several years I had photographed them and treed them showed you pictures of them and only got replies that there are no lions in the Black Hills. It was not until four years later when we started having problems that you finally admitted there were 20 breeding adult lions in the hills. the next year we had a "problem" in your eyes, with only 42 breeding lions. you are managing our big game like the government manages our money. Am I upset. YES! Why.....Because I love to hunt and you are destroying my chances, and the next generations. Solution.... The gf&p needs to quit shooting deer and elk for deprodatation purposes, and most off all put an open season on lions. I see many lions a year. I see very few bobcats in the hills, but I trap a few every year. I know they are there. I see lions every year, so how many more lions are there. I can take you to places in the snow and show you over 20 different lion tracks in less than 5 square miles. each lion will kill 100 deer a year, and sence you are so worried about orphaned animals I am sure they only eat the young. I am not sure what your magic "low" number is for the lion population in the hills, but say you are at 100. that is 10,000 dead deer a year. That is 5,000 fauns not born. using a simple alg. formula, that is over 125,000 dead and unborn deer in five years. after the five years the loss is mind blowing. the good news is that after all the deer are gone so will be the lions. I guess I don't have to tell you how poor of a job you have done. if you ever leave your computer and go in the woods you will know for your self.

- 934 Maybe it was just the time I was able to hunt this year. But I did not see the number of deer and as much sign of deer as normal.
- 955 I am gravely concerned about the number of immature deer and does I saw during the Black Hills Season. Every place I saw multiple deer I also found mountain lion tracks. The in some places I saw as many mountain lion tracks as I found deer tracks. I strongly disagree with GFP's assessment of both the number of mountain lions and the effect they are having on the wildlife population. The elk I observed during BHD were also lacking in immature animals.
- 957 While this was a rough year for me, I think that it was mostly due to the unseasonably warm or snow free weather. Probably should have hunted higher elevations.
- 958 it would be nice to be able to apply with out of state hunters in the same application, all members of a hunting party would get a tag.
- 964 In the area that I hunted, the deer numbers were down from the years past.
- 965 TOO MUCH PRESSURE FROM HUNTERS. I WAITED & HUNTED TOWARD THE END OF THE SEASON, I THOUGHT HUNTER PRESSURE WOULD BE LESS, THERE MIGHT HAVE BEEN LESS PRESSURE, BUT STILL TOO MUCH TO HAVE ANY FUN. I DIDN'T SEE ANY WILDLIFE OF ANY KIND. I DO NOT HAVE TO SHOOT ANYTHING TO HAVE A GOOD TIME, BUT I DO NEED TO SEE WILDLIFE.
- 983 I would like to see less 4-wheelers being used to hunt and scare up game. I observed many 4-wheelers making their own trails. At the same time I also observed many 4-wheelers also being parked and used solely for transport of hunter and game.
- 995 Even thou I did not hunt any Buck, I really enjoyed every minute in the Black Hills. I think that it would help the new hunters(like me), to include stats in the hunting atlas about prior year deer harvest.
- 1000 The mountain lions observed were 3 small kittens crossing the road at night just south of Lead.
- 1009 Cat #s way up, deer #s way down. See a connection? Also, I like the new system to protect the mule deer, it is already making a difference and I look forward to the quality mule deer that this system is already starting to produce. I think you guys are BSing us on your cat # estimate.
- 1010 from what i witnessed this season i belive the deer population is being over hunted by people as well as other predators. we had the second worst winter in blackhills history last year that should have been taken into account when deciding how many tags were to be issued, the number should have been drastically reduced to account for the die off from last winter. i also hunted west river deer and the number of hunters was unbeliveable compared to the number of deer i saw, 10 hunters for every deer i saw. i would guess your harvest reports will reflect this. i would like to see some changes made for next season with these factors taken into account, as i have no interest in continueing hunting if this is going to be the scenario every year. thank you.
- 1012 to many hunters & very few deer -- does or bucks.
- 1023 I talked with about two dozen hunters in the Black Hills this year. A hunter from Sioux Falls who hunted archery elk in the Hills this year said he had seen five lions during elk season. Several other hunters had run across fresh kills and nearly all of them have seen lion tracks this year while hunting rifle deer or archery hunting. Most seem to believe the lions are having a major impact on the deer and elk population in the Hills. One thing I noticed this year was how much smaller the elk herds were and how few calves that were in those herds. I have been hunting in the Black Hills for the past 41 years and I believe the lions have made a major impact on the quality buck's in the Hills. Sure, you see pictures of nice buck's that have been killed this year in the Hills but, I believe that when the rut is over and the bigger bucks go off by themselves they are easy pray for the lions. Only a few mornings this year where we had fresh snow were we able to track. My brother and I cut eight different set of lion tracks and they were not the same cats. A few years back I was lucky enough to be picked to be on the staff that changed the licensing process for the Black Hills deer season. This change was done for several reasons; better management, quality hunting and to offer the best hunting experience around. More attention needs to be paid to lion reduction in the Hills.

- 1025 I am a resident of Penn ct...did not see it on list of ctys
- 1027 Although I was not successful in harvesting a deer in the Black Hills this year, I still enjoyed the opportunity. The number of deer I indicated on the survey includes only the deer that I saw during actual hunting time, not those seen before or after legal hours, along the road on way to hunting area, in town, neighbors front yard etc. I also saw other wildlife including, coyote (2), Elk (cow w/calf) and Bald Eagles (2 adult 1 juvenile, in Jasper fire area) and numerous Turkey and Grouse. I hope this information is of help and I look forward to applying for the 2010 season.
- 1029 After having to wait two years to get a tag, I expected a lot out of this year's hunt. But there were so many hunters in the woods it made it difficult to even try to hunt an area. I know that the GFP's job is to attempt to put out enough tags to keep deer numbers down, but at the same time make it so there are not too many hunters. After only seeing a few "decent" bucks all season, I believe that the SD GFP needs to implement a point system in order to let more bucks mature. I believe that this would also lead to more out of state hunters, which means more money to help manage the deer populations, wanting to come to South Dakota in order to hunt trophy deer. Another management practice I would like to see implemented is that in areas in which populations are too large, make hunters harvest a doe before they can harvest a buck. This will help improve doe to buck ratios as well as make the overall populations healthier by cutting down on the number of deer a particular area would have to support.
- 1032 I am dismayed at the number of ATVs roaming around the forest. I am a solitary stalking hunter and it is disappointing to have someone come roaring around on a 4 wheeler ATV when I'm hunting like I think a true sportsman does. I thought rifles had to be encased when in such a vehicle; and not just slung over a shoulder or clamped on a front luggage rack. There is no snow in the hills yet this fall. The disruption of the needle bed and rocks and soil, by ATVs is very evident. I strongly believe there need be more restrictions on road hunting and ATV use while hunting. I don't believe any motorized vehicle should be allowed to operate on any road or trail that does not have a number identified on a USFS BHNH Map. Game retrieval could be an exception if rifles would have to be encased and unloaded. Thank you Damon Ausmann 1027 Summerfield Dr Rapid City, SD 57703 348-9410
- 1034 I saw lots of fawns and lots of calf elk. The land was pretty dry this fall though, and my buck was terribly skinny, I am guessing because he was rutting so hard.
- 1040 The Hills deer population is down severely!!!!
- 1041 The area I hunt (around Rockerville) had considerably fewer deer this year than the last few years. I hunt this area during both rifle and archery seasons.
- 1042 I honestly feel the mountain lion population needs to be brought down to near zero. My son seen two mountain lions at his girl friends grandmas ranch. They were wondering why the deer population had dropped so dramatically at the ranch and now they know. Everyone I know wants the mountain lions gone, more must be done to accomplish this objective. My brother found an elk calf on my dads land by deerfield lake that was half buried. Elk and deer mean way more to the majority of the citizens of South Dakota than some worthless mountain lions that kill on average a deer per week per lion. It would be great if moose could be introduced into parts of the Black Hills they are a joy to see in the wild. If the GFP would canvass the people of South Dakota on mountain lions you would know that mountain lions need to be removed permanently from this state. They are worthless killing machines that significantly reduce the amount of huntable animals in this state.
- 1046 Weather played a big part this year. Not enough snow in my opinion. Last week of hunting was the best. Bucks were still in rut up till yesterday 11/29.
- 1054 Need to limit the use of ATV's for hunting. Too many ATV's driving around on trails in the hills interfering with hunters who want to hunt ethically!!

- 1063 make the hills a 4 point or better harvest rule! we could have large deer if we could let them grow. it would force people out of the truck and into the woods to find a shootable deer. creating a true hunting environment. you could even go back to unlimited tags to create income for GFP with the 4pt rule i dont think we would encounter over harvest. thanks for looking at my opinions
- 1065 Less deer every year, and more mountain lions.
- 1068 Would like to see better quality of bucks, and would be willing to wait longer for a buck tag draw.
- 1069 I feel the deer population is down. I didn't see much for quality bucks
- 1071 What happened to all the deer?
- 1079 We live west of Rapid adjacent to forest service land. Observed less than half the deer# seen last year
- 1082 I really enjoyed the hunting this season. The reason I go is not so much to harvest a deer but to enjoy the outdoors with my sons, ages 10 and 12. Hunting is something I did with my father and is something I want to share with my children. We enjoyed our days together, and for this I thank you.
- 1083 Overall, I had an enjoyable hunt. I hunt with just my son, so we are limited in the type of hunting styles we utilize. I see too many road hunters in the hills. I heard that the game and fish dept changed the classification of bucks this year to a spike being legal. I would strongly recommend that it be changed back to a fork or bigger as a legal buck. I would also recommend that the lion season be changed back to run with the black hills deer season. It is comforting to know that I can purchase a lion license and not have to worry about protecting myself if I should encounter one while hunting. I don't hunt lions as an individual sport, I just want the comfort of knowing I could have one while deer hunting.
- 1086 My personal opinion is that we need a point restriction to sustain trophy buck production in the Black Hills. The buck I harvested this season was the only decent buck since my first Hills hunt in 1980. Mature quality bucks are hard to come by and while that is a factor of hunting challenges in a forest environment the low numbers of quality bucks is also a contributing factor. Management to increase buck representation in mature age classes should be encouraged.
- 1089 Pheasant season should be extended and the yearly limits should be determined by the amount of birds. It is ridiculous that bag limits do not reflect this. A birds average life is 16 months, why are we trying to "save" birds from year to year. Roosters have nothing to do with the amount of birds we have in coming years. There will be plenty available to breed in the coming spring. Please re-assess how you are determining policy on this and other issues that pertain to biologic science.
- 1092 too many roadhunters
- 1093 I have two negative comments about Black Hills deer hunting this year: 1) I have hunted in the area which includes the Battle Creek Fire scar for over 20 years now. The total lack of land management following the fire is almost unbelievable. I know GF&P doesn't control this, but it's important for all land/game management agencies to work together. GF&P tries to promote getting out of the vehicle, off the road, and hunting the right way. But in this area USFS has not done anything to take care of the extreme load of down, dead tree material left after the fire 7 years ago. This makes hunting on foot an extreme adventure. If there had been snow on the ground this year, it would have been almost impossible and in reality very dangerous. A lot of the down dead trees are stacked like jack straws, knee deep in most places, higher than that in some. It really makes the possibility of sprained ankles, broken legs, etc. a real possibility. This area needs to be managed, either by removing or burning this dead down material. It would promote better wildlife habitat as well as make for a more enjoyable hunting experience. While myself and my hunting companions braved the off-road, on-foot adventure in this area, very few hunters did. This undoubtedly led to our high success rate (9 for 9 in our group). But it also leads to my second negative comment: 2) Almost total lack of people getting out of their vehicles and actually hunting! In fact it really burns me when these "road" hunters spot myself and other hunters out beating the bush getting deer moving and then they try to take advantage of our work. I understand this is almost impossible to police and/or enforce but it's really frustrating.

- I'm not advocating stronger rules/regulations; just wish folks were more ambitious when they want to hunt.
- 1102 I found a deer that had been killed by a mountain lion (eviserated and drug under a tree). There were much fewer deer this year based on my previous hunt 3 years ago when I had a tag. I talked to several other hunters that saw no deer at all. One hunter that I talked to had seen several mountain lions. Where I hunted for 30 plus years behind Pactola there were no deer at all and it used to be great hunting there.
- 1105 Noticed that the doe population is down. Just don't see the large groups of doe's. most I saw was from three to five doe's in a group.
- 1122 From my observations the deer numbers seemed down. more in the ridge top terrain, compared to my experiences from other years. Although numbers on the "plateau" or flatter areas also seemed to lack compared to previous years.
- 1124 I believe the Black Hills deer population is in severe decline based on the numbers of deer seen as compared to the previous few years. There are fewer deer seen in the hayfields and meadows, fewer road kills and I suspect the hunter success rate will be down this year as compared to the past 3 to 4 years. I believe the mountain lion over-population is the main cause of the decline in the deer and elk population. I hope we can continue to increase the mountaion lion quota until we can see a decrease in the lion population. At the current rate of lion harvest, combined with mortailty from all other causes still does not equal or exceed the birth rate of lion litters. Based on the GF&P lion population estimate of 220 lions, if 1/3 are breeding age females (73) and they only breed every other year or so (35 litters) and they average 3 kittens per litter, there is a possible recruitment of +/- 105 kittens per year. Studies have shown lions must make a major kill (deer, sheep, or elk) every 6-8 days. The predation on South Dakota's big game resourse by mountain lions is likely over 10,000 animals. How long until we will have no elk season at all? We have had fewer deer and elk tags the past couple years and it looks like it is just going to get worse, based on reports by hunters I have talked to, everyone is seeing fewer big game animals. (And everyone is seeing more and more lions and lion sign) I urge the commissioners and game managers to consider increasing the lion quota until a definite reduction in lion population can be documented. So long as the GF&P continues to monitor a signifigant number of radio collared lions, the department can practically guarantee that the lions will always have a breeding population, and can gaurantee the general public that in the unlikely event of an over-harvest of lions, there will always be a sustaining population. Thank you for your consideration.
- 1126 Mountain Lions are nice to have around but I think we need to knock the numbers way down. We don't need to allow them to be at maximum saturation in the Black Hills. Obviously they are since they are moving out to find their own new range. Allow a larger kill level and if necessary to get there allow hunting with dogs. Our deer/elk/sheep are a more valuable resource then the cats. It's hard enough on these animals dealing with our encrouchment on their habitat to have to deal with the cats also. I have a home in the hills West of Tilford and used to see elk on a regular basis. Now I am lucky if I see an elk once a year. I saw none this year even though I am right in the middle of habitat they used on a regular basis. I saw two cats this year and tracks on a regular basis. Don't let the vocal minority have so much control of our wildlife decisions. I want to see animals not cat tracks.
- 1129 Less deer total than normal but a higher percentage of bucks. I'm getting tired of 4-wheelers and other fat-assed atvs. While the total number of hunters seems down in our area the number of road hunters continues to climb...I can't understand that, given the lower numbers of deer seen from the road.
- 1130 Would like to see Any Deer Tag again not Any White-tail or Mule

- 1139 In discussion with other hunters and Black Hills residents, I am of the opinion that the mountain lion population and probably the coyote population are have a detrimental affect upon the Black Hills deer population. I lived in Wyoming for a short while and my ranch customers were able to sell only about 65% of the lambs they had on hand in June and the primary cause was a heavy population of coyotes. I feel that when the predators get out of hand, the prey animals suffer. My opinion
- 1140 I am a marine currently stationed at 29 Palms, CA. Is there anyway I can use my deer tag as a depredation/doe tag over the Christmas and New Years holidays? That will be my only chance to be back in South Dakota. Thank you, Brian Bormes
- 1142 Moved here in 2002 and have been hunting west river and the hills since then. This would have to be the worst year I have experienced hunting in SD so far. And I am not a road hunter. I put a heck of a lot of miles on hiking through the hills this year. Say what you will about the decline of the deer population (and elk calves), but everyone that spends time in the hills knows that the decline corresponds to the increased number of lions!
- 1165 Most of the deer I saw this season were Mule.
- 1171 Deer numbers were down I thought but I did see a lot of bucks.
- 1175 I think the mountain lions need to be hunted with dogs so that you can see them well before killing. The deer and elk are gone from the boundry area on the wyoming border. A friend saw 3 lions and has hunted everyday for 20 years and this was the worst year as far as seeing animals. The cow elk are gone. The winter snow may have moved them some where else. Thanks
- 1176 I like to get out and enjoy the peace and quiet of the outdoors, just getting back to nature and it's rewarding if I do harvest a nice deer, either doe or buck. This year all I saw was flashes of white tails. I never like to shoot unless I know it's going to be a good shot. I am trying to instill this into my son also. I'm getting to old todrag one out of the woods for a half mile or better also. The deer were deeper into the woods this year I thought. Thanks for the opportunity to hunt this year, I just left them for another hunter next year!
- 1177 I dont know the reason but over the past twenty some years i have seen tons of bucks but one thing i have noticed was that thier racks are geting smaller they will have the same points but very small racks the one thing i hear alot is that the black hills is not the places to come and hunt for great bucks but this is the only place i hunt. I would like to see a turn in the quality of bucks that are coming out of the black hills. thanks for all your hard work
- 1181 I saw lots of good shooter bucks, just not the one I was looking for. keep up the good work. :-)
- 1184 Good management. Don't change a thing.
- 1188 One season no buck tags and sell a certain amount of doe tags at sporting good stores. to many does
- 1193 I have hunted the Black Hills since I have been 16 years old. It was nice to buy the Deer license over the counter. Now i get License every other year or two. What a disappointment for a resident to miss the previlage to hunt in the black hills. I wanted to take my son and daughter more that once before they go off to college. It would be nice to have a lion season at the same time of deer season when I'm travelen across the state. Greg Doty
- 1196 I have been hunting the hills with my father since I was very young. I think that the lottery system and doe harvest efforts have greatly improved the hunting over the past twenty years. Although it may be harder to get a tag each year, I do enjoy the restricted licenses. The hunting is better and there are fewer competing hunters than when it was an unlimited tag system. The SD GFP is doing a great job of managing this system. Thank you and keep up the good work. We appreciate your efforts.
- 1199 We saw a substantial amount of deer, but almost all of them were this year's fawns, or possibly yearlings.

- 1206 I have lived in South Dakota for 14 years now. I have applied for a deer licence every year and recieved a licence 7 times. Personally the way GFP does things in this state is ridiculous. I still don't understand the whole POINTS system and have asked hunters who have lived here all of their lives to explain it to me, and they can't! I have shot 7 deer in the Black Hills and reported every one and it shows up on your website and my profile that I have only shot 1. So it takes 7 deer to get 1 POINT? I can't think of any other state that has this system or heard of any other state. And I have alot of friends that live and hunt in other states and they think this POINTS system is extremely strange. What ever happened to buying a doe licence over the counter?  
David Kelting Hill City, SD
- 1221 The quality of bucks I encountered this trip (They were in active rut) were probably one of the best years I've ever experianced. I did not see the number of deer I usually do (this was also the case during my archery trip out there this year as well) but was very impressed with the quality of bucks... We saw three muley bucks running together during the archery hunt that would all have scored in the 180's and my wife was hooked from then on.. Very very pleased this year...John
- 1228 I thoroughly enjoy hunting in the Black Hills but I am getting more and more frustrated every year at the number of hunters I am running into. I wish additional areas to hunt would be open to the public as there is a serious problem of overcrowding.
- 1230 I seen way to many road hunters in my area this year I would have had a chance at a few bucks while sitting if it weren't for all the road hunters shooting at does and smaller bucks making the deer skittish.
- 1231 There are WAY too many roads to acess for hunting that the average hunter will drive while the sportsman will walk that area instead. My party of three walked from sun up to sundown and no matter where you are at you will cross roads or see some hunters driving right where you were going to walk and ruins the days hunt. Was very dissapointed at the deer population for whitetails we saw more muleys which is good no complaints there but not any good bucks.
- 1242 Very Disappointed with the lack of Deer in general!
- 1248 The only quality buck I saw in a legal hunting area was one of the biggest muleys I have seen in years in the hills or prairie. He was walking around a meadow in the hills without a care in the world. To bad I had whitetail only tags. Saw 10 or 12 quality bucks while driving through town in the early morning and evening in Rapid City. I guess thats how they get that big. lol Helped my kids get their deer, so, all in all it wasn't a bad year.
- 1249 Recommend limiting the doe hunting in the hills to bring the numbers back up. Not seeing near the deer as I did 20 to 30 years ago.
- 1262 I am a bit dissapointed to see the number of deer tags decreasing progressively over the last few years as the number of deer in towns and near towns and in housing developments seems to increase each winter (January, February).
- 1267 Would really like to see increased antler restrictions on bucks to improve the number of quality bucks available.
- 1281 The number of deer seen this year was exceptional low. I feel the deer herd in the Black Hills is in trouble. The liberal licenses over the last serveral years including muzzle loader tags has severely reduced the doe numbers. The constant disturbance by ATV users, road hunting, cattle etc to just mention a few had impacted the Black Hills deer herd. Hunting and hiking in the Black Hills is my favorite recreational activity harvesting a deer is not a major factor in my experience, but observation of a healthy deer herd makes my season. Today society has a lot of so called hunters however in light of some of the ridiculous 'hunter aides' we have a lot more "shooters" instead of woodsman. In fact road hunting in the Black Hills is rampant, I usually never see a person in the woods. I'm a retired wildlife biologist and worked in this profession for over 30 years.SDGF is a great organization, I wish tags were avaiable each year for us folks who truly appreciate harvesting a quality buck say 5-points or better-I'd sign up for this tag each year to pursue a quality buck but more important an experiance to pursue an elusive old timer, of which usually ever year I observe one or so animals. Hope the comments help.

- 1282 During hunt in black hills area, Kelly Spur RD. I had negative experience when I was positioned during hunt last hour of hunting hours a hunter parked his vehicle and walked into my line of sight. he saw me and I made my self more visible to him but he proceeded to position himself so as to prevent me from having a safe shooting area and taking my efforts to have a good hunt away. I then moved and backtraced to my starting point as i left my original spot just moments after I got up the other hunter shot his rifle. i assume he shot at the game I anticipated on. Very unsportsmanlike but as I pride my self as a better sportsman I did what was safe and gave up my good hunting position so as not to have conflict with other hunter. The other hunter saw me and should of known that I had already taken a point where deer would most likely traverse. Last year a hunter in the spearfish area was spotlighting deer early in the morning before sunlight chasing what chance i may of had. I suppose that being considerate when hunting gets you less tags filled. My patience is running out with such people and hope that some of these people are straightened out. I have some ideas not nice ones. but you know what im thinking anyway. I have two tags unfilledfor Hot Springs area and am thankful for that. I hope that I will be sucessfull for Blackhills tags next year, but I dont anticipate that other hunters will become more considerate. I have noticed that this year there have been less deer in the areas i normally hunt.
- 1284 I would like to see less 4-wheelers being used to hunt. The deer I observed seemed to be bigger and healthier this year than other years which is suprizing because of the winter we had last year.
- 1290 from the privat land i hunteted the owner believes the lions have thinned the deer heard considerably
- 1291 We have a cabin in the Northern Black Hills near Strawberry Pond so we spent alot of time out there observing deer. I love both archery hunting and rifle hunting in the Black Hills, but I am seriously considering not wasting my time anymore. 5 years ago the hunting was outstanding. Over the last 3 years we have seen a serious decline in deer numbers. I will not shoot a doe, because I want to keep reproduction up. But very few fawns are making it into fall. I have not shot a deer of any type in two seasons. We have seen mountain lions, tracks, and kills in the immediate vicinity of our cabin near Strawberry Pond. In addition, to low numbers, the deer that are surviving are very skiddish and difficult to hunt. I attribute most of the decline to mountain lions, the numbers are way higher than what is reported. I would estimate at least adult 3 lions are within a 1 mile radius of Strawberry Pond. Please direct Lion Hunters to that area. I think GF&P should change the Mountain Lion season back to the Fall and increase the number of permits. The current policy is not working to control the numbers.
- 1292 I did not see the number of deer that I normally see. I believe the main factors were the numbers of deer were down from last year, there are getting to be to many mountain loins, and the weather was on the warm side. The number of tags given out is fine but I wish that the GF&P would go back to the 2 point buck or better rule, it seemed to help the number of bigger bucks that a person would see while hunting.
- 1308 The deer population in the outlying areas is drastically reduced. It appears to me the deer population is mainly around housing developments and in communities. I have hunted around Custer for many years and have recognized the deer population has decreased on federal lands where housing developments are not close by. I attribute the decline to over-harvesting and predation from mountain lions and other predators. Increasing mountain lion population will not increase deer population. I feel if mountain lions are not controlled more aggressively the decline in deer population will continue.
- 1309 To many mt. Lions in the black hills. Elk and deer numbers are way down.Either to many tags or to many cats or both!
- 1321 Deer numbers appear dramatically reduced. Reduce #of licenses and kill more mountain lions

- 1324 Most of the logging trails were closed to vehicles unless you had a ATV. Didnt like the fact that the ATV'S were able to use the logging trails and vehicles were blocked from them. I seen a lot of Mountain lion sign in the Black hills which makes me think that it has affected the deer population more than in past years. We usually take the logging trails as far as they will take us than get out and hike from their, with most of the logging trails closed off it really limited us to were we could hunt. I guess we need to save money to afford a ATV so we can hunt the trails like everyone who already owns a ATV! Little surprised on how much public hunting land that has been sold off over the past several years to private individuals. At this rate in ten years i would be surprised if their would still be great land to still hunt in the Black Hills!
- 1328 The number of deer is way down in the old Girl Scout camp area and not very good in the Nemo area from my previous hunting years experience.
- 1333 Mountain lions need to be controlled before it's to late.
- 1341 There was a little confusion in obtaining my paper license. I received an email that I was successful in the drawing. When I did not get my license in the mail I went into my account and found out that my credit card declined. Once I reentered my card information all went through fine. Maybe there is some way to notify folks when this happens? My daughter has not filled her youth tag as of yet, so planning to do a little more hunting. Thanks, had a very successful hunt. Gale N. Thompson
- 1342 not many deer! whats the deal?
- 1349 Some thing has cut down the number of deer over the last few years
- 1363 It was a great experience! Going to try again next year!
- 1370 I would still like to see point restrictions in place for bucks (minimum of 3 points on one side). This is an easy distinction to make when hunting and any hunter who says that this is too much of a burden probably should not be out there endangering others.
- 1372 There were less deer seen by most people around Spearfish this year, but hunting was still a good experience and there were enough deer to make it a good hunt. I did have a large mountain lion come right by my pop up tent during the middle of the day, it really made me quite nervous. I also saw mountain lion tracks twice during my bow hunting, when there was snow on the ground. There are enough deer and apparently enough mountain lions.
- 1378 this year wasnt like any other, it seemed as if the deer just moved out of the hills, i have enjoyed scouting for deer all summer and fall long whether i have a tag or not i spend a lot of time out looking and this year there were not deer to be seen.
- 1387 I wish I would have gotten into big game hunting sooner in my life. I found my experience in the Black Hills hunting White tail very rewarding and intoxicating. I believe the SDGFP are doing a fantastic job in the regulation of the deer population. Thanks to everone who is involved and have a very Merry Christmas.
- 1395 It is the opinion of myself and my family who have been hunting in the Hills for 30+ years that there are either 1. More mountain lions than the GFP realizes 2. The GFP issues too many Hills Deer licenses. I have only been hunting in the Hills personally for 3 years, but I have seen a dramatic decrease in the total white tail population. My fiance and his father own land in the Hills and have been hunting for 30+ years and spend every weekend during the fall as well as several weekends throughout the Summer in the Hills and commented that this is the worst they have ever seen. Not only are there very few bucks, there are very few deer in general; doe and fawn included. I don't know if I will apply for a Hills Deer tag again because I think that there should be some significant changes to the draw system or to the number of tags issued. Considering I am a newly introduced female to this sport, I am disappointed with my Hills Deer hunting experience. I will probably stick with my bow hunting and skip the Hills Deer process in the future.
- 1396 saw alot of does but not alot of Bucks. Seemed like the population is down a little.

- 1398 I think the number of small (4 point or less) bucks should be limited. You do not see large deer anymore. I think that is because some people will shoot anything with a horn. We have lots of does in the Northern Hills and not that much pressure from hunters.
- 1400 In general, the deer population is down in our area of the Black Hills. We saw fewer twins and less fawns this spring.
- 1403 I think if we want to keep quality bucks in the hills we have to go back to the 2 spikes or more rule.
- 1410 The weather had an impact on my hunt. It was too warm outside and there wasn't any snow!
- 1414 saw a lot of deer but the hills have become much more crowded with housing and many of the deer we saw were in areas that we could not have hunted. I had a white tail tag and several of the nice bucks I saw were mule deer.
- 1415 I was all excited for this year's hunt (after 4 years denied a tag) as I saw plenty of deer this summer. I cannot stress enough how bad is to walk 2 miles just to see someone shoot a deer from their pickup. Way...way too many hunters this year. We were crawling all over each other. I saw 1 decent buck all season and he was on private land. My father is handicapped and has a permit to hunt from a vehicle but it seems that's all I saw hunters do this year. I purposely chose areas closed to wheeled vehicles and saw pickup after pickup. I hunted 8 or so days and never once saw a game warden. Until the hills are patrolled and the # of hunters is decreased, I will never apply for a hills tag again. Darren Dubbelde 605-393-7501
- 1420 I have been coming to the Hills the last 15 years with a group of friends. This year we did not see deer like the past. The quality of bucks has continued to improve over the last few years. I don't know if the long, hard winter of 2008 cut down on numbers, but we didn't see deer like the past.
- 1422 We saw less deer this year than any previous year. North of the "Moon Area" we never saw a whitetail deer. However, we did see at least 50 to 200 Elk each day of our hunt. (And that was in different areas) The Elk are taking over the Black Hill! We saw them from Foxtail Draw and south, to Moon and north or south. Where ever we saw Elk there were either no deer or the deer were on the run to clear the area. Elk numbers are too high and need to be lowered to allow the deer population to return to where it was 10 years ago! Also, why did the GFP change the license to any whitetail. I understand the reason to separate the Mule Deer, however there are so few whitetails that I question not having a limited number of whitetail doe tags and return to the "fork or better" buck-only tag as before.
- 1425 Low deer numbers.
- 1433 Observed deer carcass buried by mountain lion. Did not see the lion. Location was between Pringle and Custer, about a mile west of the highway.
- 1439 Way too many hunters for the amount of deer seen.
- 1440 Would prefer the mountain lion season be moved back to November.
- 1448 Dear Sirs: I beleive it is time that all rifle deer seasons should start on the same date (WR-ER-BH) and either be two weeks or one month in length. That only one choice be made at application time. (either WR-ER-BH). After the first drawing, any leftover licenses (WR-ER-BH) may be applied for, even if a applicant's choice was given. Same would apply for a third drawing for any leftover tags. It is totally unfair for some hunters to have a West River license, East River license and Black Hills license while others do not draw any tags at all. It is also unfair for some hunters to draw tags three and four years in a row, while others do not draw tags for three and four years in a row. By making a hunter to choose their first choice a priority, perhaps this would eliminate many from not drawing a tag at all. Thomas B. May Custer, South Dakota

- 1449 it seems to me that all of the deer have moved into city limits, of custer, hill city, rapid city. I actually hunt and this has to be one of the worst years as far as seeing deer, and what i would call shooter bucks. i dont know if you can blame it on the mountain lions, but something has happened to the deer. i used to see groups of 10-20 does with a buck, this year i would see groups of 1-5 does and most of the times with no bucks, or little ones. i feel that there are too many total buck, doe,combination, licenses given out!!!! thanks for listenig.
- 1454 Need to order some cooler weather and snow for November. Enjoyed the season and the hiking/hunting anyway.
- 1458 The weather was the biggest problem this year. There was no snow and it was TOO WARM!
- 1459 Should have left Mt. Lion season running concurrent with BHD
- 1468 Other hunters in the same area I hunt also reported seeing lions in the area. In past years it was not uncommon to see 15-20 deer on each outing, I had a hard time finding 5 on my regular walk abouts. Thats why I didnt pass up any decent duck this year. NOT only do we have lions, we have alot of lions.
- 1480 it would be nice to not be able to legally drive to both sides of a locked gate . If there is a maintained trail leading to either side of a gate and it is locked , I see it as a waste of gas and a possible danger to someone used to being able to leave in an emergency .
- 1489 Even though I did not see as many deer as I had expected, I had a really good time. That is what hunting is all about. I plan on applying for many years to come.
- 1492 Deer hunting was great this year but I think GFP should consider a 3 point or better rule. This may help to increase the number or quality bucks.
- 1499 I feel they should go back to the 2 points or better on any bucks shot, I love the any deer tags, allows you to still fill your tag, but on bucks shot they should be 2 points or better, I think the quality of bucks saw has gone down. Also I think they should break up the any deer tags to area's. it seemed last year when the northern hills had a bunch of snow, a bunch of those hunters came south and took a larger population of deer from the south, hurting the population and quality of bucks saw. I think they should make the any deer tags area like the doe tags.
- 1502 Since I started hunting deer in the Black Hills approx. 15 years ago, the quality of bucks that we see has gone up every year. We especially started to notice it a couple years after the change to the 2 points or better rule and limiting the number of tags. Now that it has changed again and you can shoot anything, we are seeing people shoot more spikes and forkhorns. The last two years we have hunted, we have seen a noticeable decrease in the number and quality of bucks. Some people blame it on the mountain lions, some on the management. I believe it has more to do with the management. There are plenty of deer hunting opportunities in South Dakota. If you want the meat, you can get about as many doe tags as you need. I would rather see the Black Hills herd managed for quality bucks. I don't drive 300 miles to hunt for a spike.
- 1506 Number of deer seem to be down substantially since last year. Hunted the Jasper burn area west of Custer and have hunted the area for about 50 years.
- 1514 Less deer seen but majority were healthy and appeared to be slightly larger than in the past. Only one whitetail deer not well - appeared to have a leg injury. Whitetails acted more like deer should act - small groups and on guard. Saw 6 of 9 bucks were 4 pt or better. Hunted both weekends and weekdays. Hunters were rare - almost had impression "road hunters" gave up and will tell you shoot to shoot more lions because there are not enough deer. Personal feeling is a viable lion population is thinning the deer herds and that is a good thing.
- 1515 I wish I could have got out of work and hunted more days this year. The few days I did hunt were great.
- 1516 I think they give to many tages out and should cut down the number of antlerless tags for sure. Also I think that more hunters need to get out of their vehicles and walk. To many road hunters and not enough deer being moved.

- 1520 My opinion there should be fewer hunters. Too many roads and logging trails to drive on. I think there should be fewer tags given out, of those tags given maybe hunters can shoot buck doe combos. Thanks
- 1538 license should be able to be bought over the counter like the old days-this would give the tag to guys that wanted to hunt-i know guys that put in and received tags and didnt even go out to the hills. some of the best hunting i/we ever had was when 12 or so of us guys would go to the hills and hunt for 5 days and have a good time. now that you have the application system, it busted up our party as everyone cant draw. lost track of alot of good friends.
- 1547 Very few deer seen this season compared to all other years I can remember. I don't know if it was the spring storms that reduced the number (I didn't find hardly any carcasses) or if it is the mountain lions that have reduced the numbers so significantly.
- 1548 Seemed like the deer population was down this year. Didn't see as many does this year, and never seen a large buck. Hunting with 3 other guys and all harvest a buck. But we walked alot of miles. Would like to see buck licencse be 2 point or better. I Hunted when you could buy over the counter licencse and it was hard to shoot even a spike. Then number of tags went down and you had to shoot two point or better. In that time frame we seen alot of really nice bucks. We harvest a 170 boone and crocket one year. Now it seems like the big bucks are not around after letting people shoot any deer. Not making it a two point or better.
- 1556 I would like to see it go back to the old way and be able to buy a tag over the counter. I dont care if I get a deer or not its the time spent with friends and family that I enjoy and able to enjoy the outdoors
- 1572 I think the Black Hills has a dense amount of deer compared to other parts of the country. Especially the foothills. I think this is true even though I believe the numbers were down this year. In my opinion I think the Black Hills should be managed for trophy class bucks better. I do not think the season has to be a full month long. I think that if it were around two weeks it would be better. There are other states that do not try to just sell tags, they try to manage for trophies and I think this would be a better approach for South Dakota. These other states are (Iowa, Kansas, Illinois, And Wisconsin to name a few). I know these states have better nutrition than this part of the country but I think western South Dakota could have more trophy class bucks if the population was managed better. Thanks for your time, Dustin Arndt.
- 1574 I think the mountain lions are having far more impact on the elk and deer populations than is what is stated by SDGFP. After hunting with friends that had elk tags in the moon area it is very appearent that something is taking a substantial total on big game animals. Their was very few logging roads a game trail that didn't show some kind of mountain lion activity. Sportsman are not stupid and are far more informed than many want to believe. Lets not allow South Dakota to become the next stick our heads in the sand game management state. The South Dakota Game Fish & Parks has done a great job in many areas out west but the mountain lions could undermine all the efforts by sportman groups..ie RMEF and the state have accomplished.
- 1576 I was unpleased with the amount of drive by hunters and shots before daylight. other wise i enjoy being in the black hills hunting.
- 1577 didn't see as many bigger bucks or as many deer this year
- 1588 to many hunters and the ones that never get out of there trucks need to be policed better. hunter ethics have realy gone out the window it seems these days. I wish we would see more game wardens out during the season im trying to teach my son good ethics. please bring back the two point rule. thanks for all gf&p does to make hunting fun and enjoyable
- 1592 There seem to be more out of state hunters this year, at least where I hunt. The number of nice bucks seem to be way down. road hunting pressure is WAY up. I see probably 30 times more hunters driving than walking. very rarely did I run into hunters hoofing it. several times I saw ATV's behind locked gates where I was hiking.

- 1593 I have hunted deer in the Black Hills for 25 years, have a cabin in the Hills, and spend a lot of time there. The last few years I have noticed a smaller number of deer, elk, and big horn sheep. I believe it is because we have too many mountain lions. I do not think we should eliminate all the lions but their numbers need to be reduced significantly in order to get the numbers closer to what they once were.
- 1616 What happened to all the deer this year. In the past few years I was seeing good numbers of deer and quality bucks and was really disappointed this year. My feeling is there are WAY too many mountain lions.
- 1624 I always enjoy hunting in the Black Hills and hope I will get to do this every year. The only reason I did not shoot a deer this year was I was hunting for horns only since I was given a deer from a relative that I will consume in the next year. I would have liked to of shot a doe and donated it but it was too late in the day and I was not able to arrange it to be taken to a donation center the next day since I had to head home early and had a vehicle that I could not carry a whole carcass in. Also, I saw more big Whitetail bucks this year than any previous year I have hunted in the hills so the management program seems to be working just fine. Thanks.
- 1628 Deer numbers were down all over west river this year.
- 1630 We hit the peak of the rut. The bucks were moving in the open during daylight hours, and chasing does. For that reason we saw a lot of bucks this year, but not as many does as we've seen in past years. The deer were also concentrated many in one area. Areas we've hunted in the past had very few deer. We saw relatively few hunters. There were as many or more non-hunters on ATVs, UTVs, or out walking their dogs.
- 1636 See a equal amount of mule deer buck as whiteys. Seen 6 mule deer spikes. No snow made tracking difficult and warm weather had the deer moving at night a lot.
- 1659 Deer numbers are way down and a point restriction for bucks would in my opinion help.
- 1668 I hunt private land and we observed less deer than the last years by a wide wide margin. We normally have a herd of at least 100 does and fawns with 2 dozen buck. This year we saw 9 total deer on our property.
- 1671 Kill More whitetail doe deer
- 1676 In the areas we usually hunt on a regular year we would see 20 -30 deer a day. This year we struggled to see 5-8 deer a day. I tried hunting different areas and the futher I would get into the woods the less deer I would see. I found the most deer by houses. I'm still satisfied by the hunt, I hunted harder this year than the last 20 years or so, but the deer weren't there. Was there a 40-50% winter kill last year? or is it, there is to many predetors?
- 1687 I have hunted deer for many years in the Black Hills mostly Custer, Sounty. Deer numbers are way down when you get 5 miles outside of the City limits. I remember when every spike buck you saw was shot 20 years ago. Then you cut tags and went to the 2 point restriction and didn't kill all the does and the deer population went up. We started to see good quality bucks and started to even pass up several 4 and 5 point bucks. This year as well as last year deer numbers are down. I didn't even see a 5 point buck in the hills. I spend 80% of my time in the woods as I work for the Forest Service. I don't know if there are more tags or more people hunting the same areas that I do but there seemed to be an over abundance of hunters. Keep up the Mule Deer Management. Mule Deer numbers are way up as well as good quality bucks. I would reccommend cutting the Black hills doe tags to nothing for afew years. Implamenting the 2 point rule again. Making the season a split season and cutting out the rut. Turn the rut into a muzzleloader trophy tag. Thanks Aaron Thompson
- 1690 I'm Very disappointed in the number of trails that the BHFS have closed. Areas that I have set up tree stands in the past are no longer accessable. If the BHFS shuts down the 6000 plus miles of trails that they have indicated that they plan to close next year, then the quality of the hunt will decrease greatly due to concentration of hunters. We saw this happen last year due to the early snow storm that effectively shut down many trails.

- 1693 I believe that out of state hunters need to be watched more closely. I personally observed some hunters with minnesota plates shoot before shooting time and also not follow the road hunting rules. I was then later that day given a warning by a game warden for having shells in the magazine of my gun with nothing in the chamber. I was accused of road hunting myself. It sure is nice to have out state hunters here that don't have to follow the rules and be harassed for doing nothing wrong. Thanks for ruining the last thing I really enjoyed.
- 1698 too many coyotes
- 1701 I was not able to fill my deer tag because I broke my arm!!! I wish there was a way to sing over a tag, my brother nore my dad drew a tag...
- 1709 Not a lot of deer seen this year. I saw a lot of deer in and within 5 miles of Rapid City; over 50, by the time I was leaving town. Once in the outer areas of the hill the deer population was very minimul.
- 1712 I feel that based on the number of deer that I saw while hunting the mountaion lion population is taking far more deer that GFP is considering. I feel that the mountaion lion population is far greater than indicated by GFP and that a greater number should be eradicated. I see more deer (does and fawns) in my yard than I saw while hunting over what was probably a 100 square mile area of the southern black hills. I feel that the current lottery system allows for substancially more hunters from East River and out of state hunters than those of us who live in the Black Hills. We should go back to being able to buy a Black Hills Buck license over the counter as it used to be. When I see more elk than deer there is something wrong with the way the number of licenses issued is handled. If I sound a bit antagonized I am. Those of us who live in the Black Hills should have better access to licenses than the out of area hunters in as much as we are the ones who's hay piles are attacked by the deer and elk. The current system of licensing is terribly flawed.
- 1718 I think the Deer hunt in the Hills is being managed well. It's a mountain hunt, and the quality of the experiance is more important than a big harvest or Trophy-quality Bucks (just not going to happen anyway).
- 1719 There are very few deer(at least many fewer than I have ever observed) out in the woods in the Black Hills. There are too many deer in the towns and around the housing developments outside of town. I believe 4500 ANY whitetail permits are putting too much pressure on the whitetail doe population. 4500 any whitetail buck is OK.
- 1726 Between our hunting group and others that I talked to that hunted in the Black Hills, it seems that there were less deer seen this year. I think the weather played a factor because there was no snow to get deer moving, and I am hoping that is the reason.
- 1730 there are a lot of mouhtain lions in the hill . maybe to many?
- 1734 I understand that late November is the 'rut'. I think that archery and 'muzzleloading rifles' should not have the opportunity to hunt during rifle season, the month of November should be rifle only. Most of these hunters put up tree stands, and occupy them at the most opportune times, which I cannot fault them for, but this is basically allowing people to stake a claim on certain sections of the forest.
- 1735 I did not get to hunt the later part of the season do to other obligations.I was in east river hunting Ringnecks the last 10 days of Nov.
- 1742 We hunted near Rochford, November 12-15, with fresh snowfall two of those days and saw very few deer or tracks. This is usually a great area for seeing pleanty of deer but this year was a very tuff hunt. One person in our party did see two mountain lion kittens near the Rochford cemetary but he did not see an adult cat.
- 1746 just wanted to let you know i saw a good number of mule deer this year i think your efforts to build up the mule population seems to be working thank you
- 1749 Good year hunting, I did not shoot a buck as I was trophie hunting and there was very high Lion activity in the area I hunt. This always seems to move the big bucks out. Cat seaason in january should be good though!

- 1756 let's bring back antler restrictions. Kill more lions. Thanks
- 1757 I believe the deer population is down significantly from previous years. I am concerned about the mountain lion population being too high. When one not only sees tracks on several occasions but now actually sees a mountain lion, the population must be significant. Areas where I've hunted and have always held deer now have few to none. Something is affecting the deer population and I believe the lion population impact on other wildlife is being underestimated. I live near the Spring Creek Bighorn preserve and while we used to see sheep every few months I haven't seen one for about 2 years. There used to be significant deer in this area too but now there's few...very few. I expect the turkey harvest success to start to drop also.
- 1760 Public areas in the Northern Hills is getting scarce due to closed trails. Need to open more area for hunting as the deer population is less every year in the open areas. I believe the deer are migrated to the closed areas as they are not hunted there.
- 1764 I don't think their was as many deer out their as tags issued. Since I didn't get a deer can a person apply for another license to hunt longer?
- 1777 I usually only hunt does for the meat, but I am a little concerned with the trophy hunters in our area and taking only bucks , even the small ones. Some need a few years to grow up and make the genetics and population stronger.
- 1780 i live in rural custer county there is zero inforcement of road hunting ban. where i live you need a traffic cop
- 1786 I believe what would help out would be the use of a vehicle to retrieve your game if you are on a closed road or a walk in area
- 1788 I only hunt areas closed to motorised traffic by the Forest Service. In the last 3 years the deer population has declined a lot! I scout these ares year-round. The once heavily used trails are gone, the amount of scat on the ground has declined. These areas have plenty of forage for both deer and elk and also an abundant supply of water. I have seen an increase in the mountain lion sign (tracks, buried kills, etc.) Also over the last few years I have had numerous encounters with Lions year-round. I will admit I spend way more time in the back country of the Black Hills than 99% of the typical hunter, but as a life long resident of Custer County we have more lions here now than any other time I can remember.
- 1797 Hunting the hills, was fun. wish we had a little more time to harvest our bucks. Extending the season even one week would be beneficial. Seeing how the season falls during holiday-time travel, it makes it a little harder to find the time.
- 1800 Need to reduce the number of mounitian lions so we can have a better chance of growing more and better quality deer
- 1808 2 hunting partners had mtn lions walk past them. 1 was 20 yards away, 1 was 60 yards away. I feel the mtn lion season should be during rifle season. I think there is too many lions in the hills. I would buy a mtn lion tag, if the season was in nov. Not enough time in jan. to hunt lions.
- 1823 It really seems that we need to let the bucks grow in some areas. Does were very abundant. Side comment. Thank everyone that makes hunting possible...
- 1826 This year was very depressing for Deer hunting. I spent some much time sitting and driving and saw very few deer. the ones i did see where just pitiful in size and the bucks werent worth throwing a rock at. I was able to harvest a a large 4x4 but it was on private land where the deer were being fed. other then that I was shocked with the little amount of deer and the pitiful size of the bucks. Still very satisfied to be able to hunt though I love the sport.
- 1828 the limited number of any deer tags has made good results on the quality of mulie bucks
- 1834 need more license to many deer killed by vehicles
- 1837 The number of deer seemed to be down alot.
- 1840 It took me 17 days in montana to fill my NR elk tag. I had no time to hunt for black hills deer. Wish I could get refund on BH Deer Tag.

- 1841 I finally called Game, Fish & Parks because I wasn't sure this survey was legitimate. Normally, any e-mail from Game, Fish & Parks comes with that name, not some individual. I would bet the response would be better overall if the survey showed Game, Fish & Parks rather than an employee's name.
- 1845 not that many deer and no nice bucks
- 1848 I hunted from Nov 5th to the 8th and didn't see many hunters. The high country had some snow but didn't see a deer until I moved to the slate dam area. I go anymore for the sites and sounds of the wild and to see God's nature at work. If I see a good deer that's a plus.
- 1858 The hunters we did come into contact with were not from the Black Hills region and most were quite rude considering they were hunting in our "backyards." The three big bucks that were shootable were interrupted by east river and out of state hunters ruining our hunt!
- 1867 GFP needs to communicate to the Hunters when the deer popluation is down or if the deer have moved to the foot hills because of early snow etc. That way hunters can have a better idea of where to start there hunting season or weekend.
- 1869 I came down with 'SHINGLES' this year and was almost unable to hunt!
- 1870 I hunt the northern hills primarily, i think last year access was limited due to snow, this may explain seeing more and bigger bucks this year, I believe the GFP is doing an excellent job managing the deer herd in the hills....thanx
- 1872 Deer numbers are definitely down in the Northern Hills. I did see several small bucks but not as many quality bucks as I have seen in previous 5 years. Most of the deer are in the foothills, very few up high. Please take care in issuing antlerless licenses in next few years. thank you
- 1880 i do not count the deer while i am hunting so that section is an estimate.
- 1881 I would like to see 4 by 4 or bigger bucks to be killed.
- 1884 I spent the months of June-October (~30 days total) in the woods to observe wildlife and enjoy the Black Hills and did not observe many deer at all. I did, however, see some very good quality bucks during that time. 5 or 6 in the 130-140 class and 1 that should score about 170 (typical). Whitetails only. I saw 1 solid mule deer buck and a few mature, but smaller ones. As for numbers, I don't know if it was just a function of where I was hunting and the amount of pressure, but I've never seen fewer deer in the woods. It makes me wonder if disease, lions, winter kill, or something else impacted their numbers. Area I focused June and-October were largely in the Boles Canyon, Redbird Canyon, Blind Park areas. I deer hunted in the Minnesota Ridge, Englewood, and Bessant Park areas. Saw lion evidence (tracks, scat, and a kill) around large elk herds (numbers greater than 50). Spent a lot of time observing elk during the summer/fall. Saw a number of large (>15) cow/calf herds with a cow/calf ratio of about 17 cows to 3 calves (18%-hey, I'm an engineer, what can I say). Don't know if that is a normal ratio or not, but it is low in comparison to previous years. Can't help but think lions got a few more calves and I'd imagine a large number of deer. Trail cameras caught a lot of elk on water holes and occassionally caught a lion right after elk used the water. I have friends that are loggers, they seem to know more about the wildlife in the Hills than any hunters that I know. They frequently see lions, and I'd suggest that you contact logging operations for some of the most reliable lion information that you can get. One logging operation monitored a lion on their job site that was going through 2-3 deer per week. Caught most of it on trail cameras (posted at Scheels 2 years ago to win photo contest). Not uncommon for them to jump a deer when going in the woods and it would have its entrails hanging out. Guess that's how the lion "keeps one in the fridge" for later feeding. Lions are great to have in the Hills, but there are too many guys.
- 1885 Due to warmer than normal November (as has been the case for many years), rut started late.... I have suggested for many years that season dates should be shifted to Nov 15- Dec 15.
- 1892 It would be nice to see an antlerless extended season like you do for west river deer.
- 1901 Alot of hunters!
- 1917 Make it snow next year!!
- 1918 I used to see a bountiful supply of elk and deer in the Black Hills. I saw only a herd of 12 elk, and I think the deer numbers seem low. Please do something about the Mt. lions.

- 1923 Didnt see too many deer this year dont know if the weather last year killed them off. Would suspect that a lot of dear are gone due to the lions. I think there is alot more then predicted. Saw alot of tracks and kills. Not that I know anything but maybe up the limit on cats! Who knows. Probably the worst year for seeing does. Upside saw more bucks. Oh well maybe next year. Did see alot more mulies in the area like horse creek and deerfield.
- 1930 Number of lions and coyotes need to decrease, so deer numbers can recover. I like the any deer tag under normal conditions, but I would not have shot a doe as this damages the number of deer significantly. I saw very few fawns. In the area where we live there was about 1 in 10 does who had a fawn.
- 1933 Really appreciate the option of applying for any deer, any whitetail deer or antlerless whitetail. Allows us to build preference points to the license we want. Thanks
- 1942 Want another chance next year
- 1950 I enjoy deer hunting in the Black Hills and am fine with not drawing a tag every year, as long as the management of Black Hills deer is directed toward quality hunting.
- 1952 The deer had migrated from central Lawrence County to a less snowy part of the Black Hills following the heavy October snows?
- 1961 didn't hunt much this year even though I had the licenses. I was helping a friend build a cabin and just ran out of time, but plan to do more hunting next year.
- 1967 I think we need to go back to two points or bigger in the Black Hills and be able to buy tags over counter.
- 1978 deer sightings were down alot from previous years except in town,(Hillcity), where there is a certainly a deer problem! The quality of bucks does seem to be getting better but the numbers seem to be down.
- 1979 Deer numbers way down this year. Normally see between 250-300 deer during season, but this year the numbers have decreased drastically due to bad winter last year or the Mountain Lion population has increased killing more deer.
- 1980 The deer number in my opinion was down quite a bit whether due to last years long winter or mountain lion presence or kills. I saw lion tracks every time I went hunting in different locations.
- 1982 Seems like the deer count is down this year and for sure the number of bucks in this area west of Custer was down. Not sure if it is the mountain lion population or not . We have not seen any lions around our home. I have seen lions in the hills in other areas. In 2009 I saw 3 but I work in the woods.
- 1985 I came across a poaching situation where I found 4 bucks dumped by a trail where I hunt. OFF HWY 385,turn on Custer Gulch Rd, then turn onto Eidlweiss Mt. RD. Road 251 1c is the area I spent most of my time. The deer were obviously poached, cut up for the meat, back straps etc. and the horns cut off. 3 whitetail and 1 mule. I reported the sighting. My question would be is everything being done to ensure everyone is obeying hunting laws. I have hunted for many years in the Black Hills and it has been many years since I have seen or experienced a game check. I wonder if the GF&P is properly staffed because I certainly have not seen many accounts of a law enforcement official out and about being seen. Judging what I seen,I believe this practice of poaching may have become more common. I feel harsher penilties should be enforced for poaching and certainly a more visible effort to enforce gaming laws by GF&P and law enforcement. I have great faith in SD GF&P. I do believe that certain depts. are shorthanded. Lets focus less on the stuffed deer by the road to catch offenders and get some game checks and law enforcement exposer out in the Black Hills.
- 1986 Based on what I have read about quality deer managment and what I have observed of the Black Hills white tail deer there are too many does to each buck. I would like to see fewer whitetail buck tags given out and more antlerless whitetail deer tags given out.
- 1987 I answer for my pass word acouple of times and never got a reply could you sent me my pass word so i can login during hunting season.
- 1991 I didn't see as many deer this year as I did last year while hunting

- 1992 The data I provided may be non representative since college commitments prevented me from getting out more than once opening morning. The other 6 members of the deer camp all filled their tags with either their buck or if doe only, a doe within 3 days of hunting. Discard if your modeling permits.
- 2001 Hunting was a little slow this year, although we managed to shoot some deer in our group it was slow, I think in part to it being a full moon and the deer was feeding at night and bedding down in the day. We did enjoy ourself and had a good time.
- 2007 Observed 50-60 deer per day up until june, then deer seemed to dissappear from july on.
- 2012 if it ain't broke why fix it!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
- 2014 I think we could go back to buying license over the counter, and give residents an even chance against the out of staters.
- 2015 I have not hunted deer in the hills alot. However, I do spend most weekends and some time during the week in Sept and October (for the last 12 to 15 yrs) with a camera during the buggle season or with people elk hunting. Over the last 5 to 7 I have steadily seen a decrease in the amount of young deer and elk calves. Our deer and elk population in the hills is a bad sign of what the future holds for hunting. This fall the number of calves was the lowest I've seen. They are the factories for tomorrow. I don't want to see the cat population gone. However, I feel we need to get a handle on how many. I have been saying it for years now that we have to many and was glad to see the report in the Rapid Journal and the term saturated was used. Well chosen I may add. The Black Hills are not large enough to sustain much of a cat population and maintain any kind of elk and deer population. You get X amount of dollars a year off of elk applicants and correct me if I am wrong, but when that started, I thought that was to be used for elk habitat. Every year the GFP get X amount of dollars from the elk applicants. I don't mind your idea of that, because of the large amount of habitat being lost daily to developers. If there was a place to donated to ta stop that I would. However there is none, so we need to deal with it in other ways. Thanks for what you do. Sometimes its difficult when you feel like money is being kept to support elk habitat to support an animal higher up the food chain.
- 2019 I saw more deer in town of Spearfish and on private land going to hunting areas than in the hunting areas. I'm not disappointed in the hunting trip, because I did the best I could not knowing the area not having time to scout before the hunting trip. Better luck next year
- 2023 only got to see about 4 whitetail does and 4 mulies. very few hunters no pressure to move them .to much noise to walk and only way to hunt was sit down and wait and the drive in and out of the area.this year just taking drives thru the natioal forrest we have seen 9 mountain lions in broad daylight.we use to have deer by our cabin we use to see around 20 per day just driving to and from now we are lucky to see 2 with the largest mountain lion to be collared just caught a short distance behind ourcabin in deadman canyon. the area we like to hunt is 85to wyo line i-90 back to 85.the deer are just not there anymore. just driving from spearfish to rapid 3 days ago we counted 22 dead deer on i-90. why are you not filling the deadman feed stations with hay? if you want you can call me at 605-347-5306
- 2033 Hunted private land in the foothills. Saw plenty of deer although the number of fawns was down. Got the wits scared out of me one morning when I slowly turned to my left and discovered a bobcat was almost close enough to touch, ready to pounce on me. My scream sent him back in the direction he came from.....quickly.
- 2036 the deer count was way down this year compared to the last years. i don't know if it was due to the early snow? we hunted in the norther hills area.
- 2044 1) Crowding is a function of where you go. 2) Deer hunting is not recreation. It is the killing of wild animals. I don't understand how people can claim they get pleasure from killing animals. The animals die painful, brutal deaths. I do it because I want to eat venison, and prior to this year I could justify it by claiming to keep the numbers down, but the numbers are already down this year. So I was after meat only. 3) What's this "quality buck" deal?

- 2046 I live in the Black Hills. GF&P wants me to teach my children about hunting and all the fun that goes with it but the system of liscensing that is in place make it impossible to truely enjoy the experiance. my oldest daughte has only been able to hunt for a buck deer once. now she is in college and maybe some day she will get to hunt for buck deer. My youngest daughter will be going to college soon and we hope that she will get to hunt for bucks. When I grew up my father took me hunting every year, I learned to enjoy the outdoors and loved the quality time I got to spend with my father. I'm afraid that my opportunity to pass the same to my daughters is gone. hunting "anterless deer" everyyear is not fun.
- 2047 The deer looked in good shape I could have filled my tag but just did not feel good about a shot
- 2055 There sure where fewer deer, and they were more jumpy. Hunting areas seemed more difficult to find without other hunters nearby.
- 2056 Hardly seen any deer this year, previous years our group usually fills in about a day and a half this after 3 1/2 days only seen maybe 6 or 8 deer and that was next to residential areas.
- 2058 The GFP has done an excellent job of managing deer hunting, especially in the Black Hills. If you draw a license (for a buck) you will see quite a few nice bucks that are wall hangers! A few years ago you rarely saw a large buck. My first buck was a 7 point muley taken in 1946 just off Dark Canyon on the old narrow gauge rail road bed. My second was a 2 point whitetail taken near Perren Mountain. I am blessed with many other whitetails over the years - some does. Giving doe licenses in the Black Hills has balanced the deer herd quite well, particularly that hunters have finally accepted shooting does. I would also point out that I remember when you did not see deer on the prairie and now that is where you find the really large trophy bucks, mule and whitetail. Thanks for a job well done! Harry Paulsen
- 2064 Road Closures In The Black Hills Please allow game retrieval similar to Custer State Parks. Where you can only use certain roads to hunt on, but when you get an animal down you are allowed to get out with a vehicle or 4-wheeler provided you do not destroy the forest. The proposed National Forest rules will promote a lot of road hunting. Thank You
- 2068 Issue more mule deer tags if possible.
- 2070 The group of guys I was going to hunt with, hunted for 4 days and saw only 6 deer. Is there a reason there are so many tags and the deer count is down? I understand that this is only a small sample, but in addition to the other people I have talked to seems to indicate that the deer herd is down while the tags sold is still high. Kyle
- 2071 Part of the problem we ran into this year appears to have been Christmas tree hunters out in the forest with no orange on during the last few days of the season. This makes it very dangerous for both the person doing the Christmas tree hunting and the hunters, as the hunter has to get into a position to try and not shoot towards someone who may or may not be where you last saw them. The ideal option would be to have the forestry service not issue Christmas tree permits until after the rifle season is over or they require people in the out in the hills during a rifle season to wear Blaze Orange, like the hunters have to. Also saw some archery hunters out during rifle season, with no orange on. This is also a serious hazard to both hunters. A number of us hunters only get to hunt on weekends and over Thanksgiving, as this is the time we have off work.
- 2079 Couldn't find anyone to hunt with. Don,t know where to hunt
- 2080 Just didn't seem like the deer were there compared to last year. last yr you couldn't walk into the wood s with seeing deer. this was totally opposite. talked to quite a few other hunters and they had the same opinion. some ares i went the was snow. I walked quite a ways and didn't really even see any tracks in the snow. Oh well, better luck next yr.

- 2082 I did not see many deer on my 3 days hunting but I got a good doe the third day so I quit 'hunting' I saw many deer in town (Lead) just walking and some really nice bucks. I have seen many more deer during hunting season but few on my days hunting. I think they got more active after the first two weeks of November as the bucks were in rut then and they were moving more. I would love to see an archery season in town to cull some of the does at least. Better on my table than the fender of my car! I know the GF&P shoots them off of hay stacks so why not a few from town? I would take some!
- 2083 USUALLY NOT REAL BAD HUNTING BUT I WAS WITH A PARTY OF 5 AND NOBODY GOT ANYTHING THE HOT WEATHER WAS THE BIGGEST FACTOR IN OUR NOT KILLING A DEER
- 2085 I got the license on the internet and due to my stupidity ended up with a license in area one witch I had never hunted.
- 2086 we hunted the Terry peak area. Late season with snow cover & most deer moved out of the area. Not upset about hunt as we see many deer during the summer/fall. Just hunted the wrong area.
- 2089 sure would be nice to get a buck tag but maybe next year with the preference points i have. more tags should be given to residents than to non residents, they don't live here. leave the mountain lions alone, nature will take care of itself.
- 2100 I didn't make it out there this year due to crop still unharvested. Though last year we saw alot less deer then in the past. My opinion is that we should have kept it a buck only season with a number of doe tags in each unit. Being able to harvest a doe as last a chance has taken aot of does that we otherwise would not have harvested. Some of those does are buck fawns being taken.You have tried to limit the number of mule deer bucks being taken, then added a tag you could harvest a mule deer or whitetail doe in northern unit?
- 2103 I spent my time hunting the west river season,less people
- 2108 I hunted the north, didnt see any deer in the hills, but coming in to town seen buck and doe a lot
- 2112 Based on the low numbers of deer I observed and several deer skeletons found during my time out in the field I believe we had a large winter kill last year. Which when you factor in the average age of a deer and the number of years since we last had a truly taxing winter, I believe a lot of deer didn't know how to survive. This is either from migrating habits not being passed on or deer choosing not to migrate based on the availability of food sources around human habitation. I also believe that the deer that did migrate traveled farther than just the foothills. Of course you can't leave predators out of the equation either.
- 2120 Weather too nice to hunt, Never get a buck license. What's the deal? Did not go out to hunt this year. Jim Thorson
- 2121 I seen a male mountain lion before the season. Someone I know seen one during the season. I think the lion population is alot higher than reported and they are having a devastating effect on the deer population. Most of the deer I see are in the city limits or close to housing developments. This draws the lions in to populated areas... I suggest going back to allowing lion hunting during the deer season and raising the quota of lions shot substantially. Also allow the use of dogs. al r.
- 2122 My son and I hunted the Spearfish area and did lots of walking. In what little driving we did the only two does we saw were in the archery only public area.
- 2127 Deer population appeared to be down considerably from previous from prior years.
- 2133 we hunted in area bd1 85 north to spearfish hunted around 733 road we saw nothing we dont know if it was because there was so much snow you had in oct. or what. we didnt see deer in spearfish or the surrounding area or even around lead, we saw mounition lions tract everyday we were out there, we hunted for 3 days we saw tracts in differant areas, we were going everywhere we could, so what happen to the deer

- 2136 It was very hard to find any deer where there weren't already many other hunters. I think all the logging in the area may have had something to do with a lack of deer. The only two bucks we saw on our hunt were very young. I had a doe tag, but only saw a few young does. I didn't feel this area was a very good one to hunt. I have been along on hunting trips for many years and I have never seen so few deer and SO many hunters in one area.
- 2138 In my opinion the quality and quantity of Deer hunting has fallen steadily since hunting permits have been changed to a drawing instead of over the counter sales. Your accrued points system for Elk has glaring issues also. I personally know 4 people who have drawn Elk tags on their first try and 3 more who have been issued permits back to back while I know several dozen who haven't been able to ever get a permit. I personally have given up getting an Elk permit in the state in which I have lived my whole life but I have found numerous other states who are more than happy to give me a permit so I have been forced to take my hunting dollars to those states. How sad that our tax dollars have hired the "best" people available for the GF&P and yet they have failed so miserably. The "Up" side is that you have managed to hire an excellent staff of Game Wardens so you can at least be proud of that fact.
- 2140 The deer numbers are down. Bucks with good racks are in short supply. I hear other hunters saying they observed mountain lions or fresh tracks. I believe there are more lions in the Black Hills than what we are led to believe. When they come into town like Spearfish near the elementary school and are shot, it tells me they are getting pushed around in their territory by other cats. People said more deer in town due to lions. We thank you for the job you are doing. Respectfully yours; Arland Clark
- 2142 I guess I would like to know how the deer population is doing, and if there is a better chance of drawing a buck tag in the future? I guess my personal opinion on S.D. game management is pretty good, I think the number of quality bucks are still on the rise, but I haven't been able to spend much time hunting in the Black Hills in the last couple of years. I do have a brother that lives up in the hills and he sees a lot of nice deer.
- 2143 The early hunting was difficult because of the snow.
- 2153 I am having a tough time drawing a buck tag 4 yrs preference. what luck. I want the mountain lion season changed back. thanks for reading, NRA FOREVER
- 2154 I realize heavy snows and weather may have been a huge factor in winter survival. However, the question comes to mind if the predator population of mountain lion and coyote have taken their toll and might be harvested more heavily. Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the sport of deer hunting.
- 2157 none at this time.
- 2159 AREAS FOR ANTLERLESS DEER ARE TOO RESTRICTIVE. EVEN IN THE EARLY SEASON WHEN THE SNOW AND COLD IS THERE AND YOU'VE TAKEN YOUR VACATION DAYS FOR HUNTING AND THE DEER HAVE MOVED DOWN ANTLERLESS DEER SHOULD BE ALL OVER THE HILLS!
- 2161 Lost my Father this season and did not hunt.
- 2164 I am very unsatisfied with the draw system. I am a resident home owner in Mead county(10 years). My work takes me out of the country three years at a time. Then after each three year cycle abroad I spend one year at home. The one year I spend at home is my only opportunity to hunt deer. During the last two cycles I was unsuccessful drawing a black hills buck tag. For me that means 8 years without a buck tag in the hills. I pay taxes (even when I am out of country) and support wildlife. When will I have the opportunity to hunt Black hills deer??? My thoughts are that NO out of state tags should be offered until ALL residents who want to hunt Black hills deer have had the first choice. Don't sell my hunting rights for big \$ out of state tags. Reduce the number of cats (giving more tags) they are reducing the number of deer. I had to enter three drawings just to get a doe tag in a small unit. Because of my work I wont even be able to apply again until 2012 I AM NOT HAPPY

- 2171 To many roads closed. We walked into hunting areas up to 3 miles to find possible better hunting conditions. My son passed up a small 4 point buck because of accessibility of retrieving the buck. We are not road hunters and like to actually hunt for deer. We hunted hard. Out of six people in our hunting party the buck mentioned above was the only buck seen. It seems to us the predator factor is weighing hard upon the deer population. As a lifelong rancher I grew up in the 1960's when 1080 was in use and we had an over supply of deer. It appears to me that we have went to the other extreme and have an over supply of predators.
- 2172 The area north and west of hwy 85 (where i had a white tail antlerless tag) seems to have very few whitetail does. Need to go back to the way it was in the past where there were more any deer licenses so that a person has a better chance of actually getting a deer.
- 2178 I'm a resident and have been one for ever. I feel residents should be able to get a tag every year. I depend on the meat to feed my family. I pay alot of property taxes annually that help manage the GF&P. The only thing I'd like to see is more tags for hills deer, but I realize deer numbers are on the decline. (Could it be caused by greater numbers of mountain lions?) I have hunted many years in the hills and across the state, but have never seen a lion. I'm not sure I want to! I love the outdoors and in particular, hunting. I'd like you to keep up the good work that the GF&P does!
- 2179 the unit 1 in the northern hills for does was very bad . This was the worst hunting I have ever experenced in all the years I have hunted in the hills. I did not see a doe that I could get a shot at.
- 2180 We can't understand why so few South Dakota residents were able to get tags for this season.
- 2182 We never hunted the area before. There was just no deer in our unit. We also had a turkey lic. and did not see one. We miss out on our first draw where we have good luck. We will not hunt this unit in the future. Thanks for listening. Darrell Elkins
- 2185 Did not see many deer, but it was a great hunt as always!
- 2192 This was the worse deer hunting I have experienced in all my years of hunting in the Black Hills. My son and I drove 400 miles of backwoods trails and we walked several ridges seeing nothing. We only saw three does and we harvested one of those deer. We did not have buck tags, but if we had I would have been more disappointed because we did not even see a buck. We did see nearly 100 mule deer does and fawns immediately north of Highway 16, north and west of Custer, SD, near the Wyoming state line, while we were turkey hunting. I do not understand why the Game and Fish does not grant more mule deer tags. We did see 40 elk which included 5 bulls, but of course we did not have an elk tag. I also think it should be easier to get an elk tag, especially a cow tag. We talked to other hunters and they all expressed the same disappointment with the lack of deer, especially late in the season. We hunted over Thanksgiving break. Several hunters reported seeing lions and tracks of lions and they believed that the lions were killing a lot of deer. We did see more than 100 whitetail deer on the lower parts of Beaver Creek near the city of Newcastle, Wyoming.
- 2194 Only had doe tags. Saw lots of deer and enjoyed my day in the field. It was my decision to not shoot (could have easily filled)
- 2204 Overall great experience hunting in the Hills this year. I wish i could have seen more Deer and that there were some more tags available. I found it very difficult to find deer down Tinton Rd. It seemed there was alot of Mt. Lion Activity up there. Even though I did not see any I found many fresh tracks in the areas I was hunting.
- 2205 We have a cabin at Iron Creek Lake and there were plenty of deer there this summer. We saw nearly zero sign of deer up there this november. The only places we saw deer were in community areas, or just on the edges, making hunting extremely poor overall. I enjoyed the hunt dispite the lack of deer, since I was mainly there to be with friends for a few days. I'm pretty worried about next years birth yeild and how it's going to affect the next 3 years of quality deer hunting.
- 2210 Would have liked a longer season. I wasn't able to fill my Black Hills tags, would be nice to have a second season like the west river tags do.

- 2214 I would like to see more Does taken and less Bucks, the bucks seem to be getting smaller.
- 2220 You need to do something about the Mt. Lions. When you drive down a forest trail and you cut 4 lion tracks before you cut a deer track, something is wrong. When you take a 1/2 mile walk through the woods on a bearing and come across 8 lion killed carcasses, something is wrong. Until this cat problem is brought under control, I don't know if I'll be back out to hunt deer or elk. Others feel the same. Think of your lost revenue if this happens. People want to see deer and have opportunities to harvest one and put meat in the freezer. We didn't see any turkeys, elk, porcupine or many other small mammals. We only saw very few deer. This isn't limited to just our group. Everyone is saying the same thing. The woods have a hauntingly empty feeling. What do you think the lions are going to eat once all the elk/deer are gone? Does a kid need to get attacked before something is done to control the problem? I hope not. Be proactive, get the cats under control, although it will be very difficult because it might be too late. Think how many have been killed in Rapid City alone, the Hills is way above its carrying capacity for mt. lions. I also understand the importance of having large predators to keep game populations in check and get rid of sick/diseased animals, as they are part of a healthy ecosystem, but this is ridiculous. Fix the problem, and be aggressive to get it done.
- 2230 I would like to see more buck tags in the Hill season. I saw a few and could not shoot and this is the second year in a row. Thanks for the good management practices.
- 2236 Most everyone I saw was a road hunter-very few would get out and walk in the woods or climb a hill...I did and thats why I was successful, and got away from the lazy folks.
- 2238 everybody out there apparently knew there were no deer from last years spring storms, then why did g.f.p. offer so many tags! i guess money!
- 2242 Saw no turkeys this entire deer season. Very interesting. I feel something is affecting the turkey population. Also saw no elk. No turkey sign either in areas we usually see plenty of turkeys. Saw many mountain lion tracks, more mountain lion tracks than turkey sign.
- 2244 Not many decent sized Does this year, a lot of young ones...saw 2 moutain lion cubs on slate creek by the pond. They didn't have a collar but they were pretty. A lot of people had a hard time finding deer this year.
- 2251 drew liscense for area by spearfish but with the early snow and snow last year we saw almost no deer. the deer we did see were around spearfish or sturgis and nothing in the higher elevations. didn't even see much of anything for deer tracks.
- 2253 Deer numbers appeared to be way down this year from previous years.
- 2259 Due to not being drawn for my first choice, I applied for a leftover license and was not drawn for that so I applied again. This time for a unit that I have never hunted before. (North of 85, west of Sturgis, east of WY border.) I now know why there were so many leftover antlerless deer tags available. I saw no deer in this unit except on the outskirts of Spearfish. I found very few ways to get into the hills from the main roads. I do not own an ATV. I did not adequately scout this area until after the season had started and then I spent most of my time trying to find sign instead of hunting. Little to no luck in finding any. I probably will not hunt this unit again.
- 2266 It seemed strange that I didn't get either an 'any deer' or an any 'whitetail deer' from the first drawing, but for some reason, there were quite a few left for a second drawing. Shouldn't all the tags be distributed among the first drawing applicants?
- 2269 1.) Need to cut the any license to 2 points or better. 2.) Cut back on doe licenses, I hunted all day w/o seeing a doe, where last year they were all over. 3.) Increase the mountain lion tags, every where I went I saw tracks.
- 2280 WE DID NOT SEE ALOT OF DEER THIS YEAR WE SEEN ALOT MORE BUCKS THIS YEAR THAN WE SEEN IN PAST YEARS. SO I DONT KNOW WHERE ALL THE DEER ARE THEY ARENT UP AT THE HIGHER LEVELS OR EVEN AT LOWER LEVELS.
- 2284 I still beleive that residents of the black hills should be able to purchase their tags over the counter with proof of ID of where they reside and be gauranteed an any deer license if they desire to hunt. As we are the ones who pay the taxes to live here in the beautiful black hills.

- 2285 WHY DID YOU GIVE ALL THOSE TAGS TO A UNIT WITH POOR AT BEST DEER NUMBERS. WAS THERE A MISS COUNT, OR DOESNT ANYONE PAY ATTENTION! EVEN THE GAME WARDEN DIDNT SEE A SINGLE DEER HARVESTED ON OPENING DAY. VERY FEW SHOTS WERE HEARD YET MULTIPLE HUNTERS. MY PARTY WALKED APPROX FIVE MILES, SAW ELK AND TURKEY AND THE DEER WERE IN CITY LIMITS OF SPEARFISH. THIS ALONG WITH ALL COSTS INVOLVED MIGHT MAKE SEVERAL HANG UP THEIR GUNS TO THIS HUNT IN THE FUTURE. FAR BETTER NUMBERS IN THE SOTHERN HILLS. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN NICE TO GET PRIVLEDGES TO HUNT ANOTHER UNIT, AS FOR SOME THIS IS A SOURCE OF MEAT!
- 2290 Extremely disappointed with the lack of deer in the hills. The only place we really saw deer was in town.
- 2293 I enjoyed hunting in the hills! I would like to see multipul deer tags available to archery hunters. I actually would rather to archery hunt than rifle hunt.
- 2296 Hardly any deer, very disappointed. You should open up the season again for people that couldn't fill their tags like they do for prarie.
- 2299 Drew any whitetail antlerless deer in the Northern hills (North of highway 14) - where there are almost no whitetail (all mule deer). Now we know why they were left over. Why do we need to break the hills into little units - they are not that big. If the population becomes out of balance, the deer will move around.
- 2305 Really tough hunting this year by Spearfish and Deadwood. We seen two deer total and both of them were mule deer bucks and we had whitetail tags. It is a little disappointing not seeing deer but my guess is that the northern hills have been hit hard the last two years with early winter storms. We hunted by Hill City last year and seen more deer than we ever have for the five years we have been hunting in the hills. I think the deer are either winter killing or migrating to better areas. Overall I still had a good time because I love the hills but it was a little discouraging not seeing deer.
- 2309 My opinion would be that there are to many mountain lions. We saw 3 deer in 3 days while hunting. We saw an additional 5 deer at our house on Deer Mountain. If there are 400 mountain lions (I think that is the number that the GF&P predicts) in the hills and they each kill 1 deer a week (I guess you can do the math, about 20,000 a year.) it would not take long to wipe out the deer population.....
- 2317 Very poor deer season, of which I believe due to to many other seasons prior to rifle season, i.e., bow muzzel, youth, and letting West River hunters hunt doe from 10-01-09 to 10-30-09. Additonally we seem to prioritize Mountain Lion above Traditonal Deer Hunting Season. Also I seem to draw a Black Buck very seldom now days why? I do not believe any non resident tags should be issued when we have residents denied these tags---they should be first and foremost. Thank you..
- 2320 To whom it may concern, I was impressed by the quality of bucks I saw this year. All of them had a good base and the smallest one I saw was a 4 point (on each side). The buck I harvested was obviously an old deer, he hardly had any teeth left to pull out but he still had a lot of mass and a good body size. When i went out for my antlerless whitetail tag, I unfortunately wasn't able to find any deer at all. I went up by spearfish and walked about seven miles throughout the day and uncountered quite a few hunters. They too were unable to find any deer that day. I spoke with a rancher that lived up there and he said the deer pretty much moved out because of the early snow in october and the logging that was taking place. I did however come across a hurd of elk and some mountain lion tracks. All in all I am very pleased with my hunt this year. Thanks for your time, Casey
- 2324 Very different year. Heard lots of complaints on low number of deer. Some saying weather/blizzards from last year, others blaming numbers on too many Mt. lions. Cover was also very thick in most areas so unless you got out and hunted tough to see most deer, I don't feel sorry for those who can't get their butts out of the car to do a little walking! I do agree the deer numbers were down though. Other than a little more work good year!!

- 2325 I would like to see more buck tags issued, and more any deer tags issued.
- 2331 to many does killed ,to many lions living
- 2333 I had a doe tag for the area north of hwy 85 - spearfish area, and we noticed very few deer being seen and taken in the 3 days we hunted- also confirmed by the game warden we talked with. However, I went along with a buddy who had a buck tag, and went west of Custer, and we saw alot of deer, and alot of bucks- many in the 3-4 point range, and a couple 5 pointers, all whitetail, and all in one day.
- 2334 As I predicted on my survey two years ago too many Deer in the Black Hills resulted in a large die off the last two years. Coming out of the winter of 2007/2008 the Deer were in very poor condition. That spring I counted 5 dead along the route I usually walk every morning, about a mile and a half round trip. These were Deer that died some distance from the road due to starvation not road kill. The early snow drove the deer to high ridges and southern exposures by November of 2008 so most died away from the area where I walk. Where I would see twenty or more Deer in the summer of 08 I would see six in 2009. There were more six X six bucks in 07 then total bucks in 2009. The population of White tail (vermin) Deer maybe at about the right level. Maintaining this level by requiring two Deer permits with the requirement that the doe permit be filled and checked off by an official before the Buck permit is valid my be a way to achieve this. This may allow the Mule deer population to recover, othwise the white tail will contnue to crowd them out of the hills. I would suppose the lion population that exploded with the over population of white tail Deer will be a problem to the recovery of the Mule Deer for a few years but hunting and lack of easy food should thin them out over time. The quality buck program worked for a short time but by having many large bucks to hunt does were left to eat them out of a food base. Then the program went bust.
- 2335 I think the cats had something to do with the population but the bad winter last year I think had the most do with the lack of deer this year.
- 2343 There doesn't seem to be as many deer in the hills as previous years. Which i am sure you are aware of.... However i don't understand why communities such as Spearfish, Whitewood and Rapid City contract professional hunters to eradicate the deer populations around the towns. I archery hunt outside of the town of Whitewood and after the city contracted the deer kill I never saw deer from my tree stand again..... Thank you for allowing me to leave this comment.
- 2344 We found a very fresh mountain lion kill with in 100 yds of where I harvested my two doe the second weekend of the season. It was a fawn freshly killed, (still had the bloody foam coming out of its nose) that was buried. Only the nose and feet stuck out from under the pile of needles. Two weeks later I went back to the same location with my boy, and found the entire fawn eaten. The head and feet were still there, but there was no meat on the bones. It also left the stomach, but everything else was eaten. These little finds sure make hunting in the hills lots of fun!!
- 2346 Every time I aply for a doe tag in a curtain area & I don't get that area & I get stuck up by spearfish/lead/deadwood area & its loaded with hunters & I see very few deer! My roommate aplied for the same unit I did & he got it I did not we went to that unit & within 30 minutes had his doe tag filled! I personally if I don't draw a buck tag I'm just not going aply for any leftover tags! There should be info available on land owners so we could ask them if we could hunt on their land!
- 2348 Couldn't hunt this year due to the Corn still in my fields. Maybe GFP could extend the hunting season this year.

- 2349 I believe that the number of hunters within the black hills this year was way out of proportion. There were many out of staters. Another thing that I believe is that the two points or better on one side for buck tags is a very important tool and when it was in effect it was making HUGE differences. However now that the rule has been changed you can already see that the number of quality bucks is going down. The majority of deer that I saw killed this year in the northern hills were spikes. I understand that we have some people that have issues with not killing something every year, and I understand this. However with that being said in order to have good conservation and keep people coming back to hunt we must be conscious of the Two Point Rule. I also believe that you will hear many people talking about the deer numbers being very low this year; and I agree that they are down somewhat, but if people would get out of their damn vehicles and walk into the forest they would realize that the numbers are still here, just without a few straglers.
- 2353 Thank You for the great work GFP is doing year round.
- 2357 very poor managed.....
- 2367 THE NORTHERN HILLS HAD VERY FEW DEER
- 2371 I think the lack of deer was a product of early snow storms driving the deer out. deer populations in the past have been good.
- 2372 There was very few deer on both private and public land.
- 2373 This season was enjoyable with the exception of not drawing a buck license, although I am pleased with what the GF&P are doing with wildlife management. My complaint is with the online service. My husband and I have always applied together. This year, 2009, when trying to apply online with my account and password, it kept coming up with my account under my husbands name, when it should have been my account with him as second. I finally got frustrated and gave my account to him and set up a new account for me. Unfortunately that resulted in him receiving his any buck license and I got only the 3rd drawing for a doe, in an area not familiar with us. Now I am concerned that next year when I apply with my husband again I will lose my preference points. All in all it was a good season and looking forward to next year, however I would like a call or some sort of response to my concerns. Thanking you in advance, Linda Gibbons
- 2375 Had tried for a tag around Custer area. Did not get it and ended up getting a leftover tag in the North Area by Spearfish. There are deer there but too much private land. Deer were all on private land....Only saw about 10 total deer in forest area in 4 days of hunting. I got stuck with the North Area 2 years in a row now and do not plan to hunt again in that area. I plan to look into out of state hunting for next year. I have been skunked 2 years in a row. Last year I hunted the same area and saw less deer than this year.
- 2384 need more access, it is hard enough hunting the hills, when you can't drive back in there aways! Thank you! Troy
- 2392 Second year in a row I did not get my tag for a buck. Very disappointed. I have land to hunt on but can't even shoot a buck if I see one because I can not draw a buck tag.
- 2393 This being my first year hunting here in South Dakota I had high hopes but, there were far to many people out in the Hills. Having grown up and lived in other states where I exclusively hunted public land I felt very crowded and found it hard to get away from people. Because of this I didn't feel safe no matter how much orange I wore and therefore hunted far fewer days than I normally would have. Also, \$35 is way to much to pay for a deer tag. Especially when there are states that sell over the counter elk tags for \$20. I am an avid hunter and I highly doubt that I will be hunting deer in the Black Hills again. I am going to take my money and go out of state where I can get away from the crowds.
- 2398 there are way too many deer in the black hills. i just didn't have time to hunt this year. there are also too many lions. i've seen as many as three in one day on my way to work! thanks, jim
- 2402 I have not drawn a buck permit for the past two years and resent the fact that a large number of left over buck permits were for non-residents only.

- 2417 I only hunted for a portion of 1 day in the very northeastern end of the unit and do not consider this a very representative sampling as opposed to others. In general I saw a lot less deer though during the elk season which I spent most of Oct in the northern unit.
- 2425 I really think the mountain lions have had an impact on the declining number of deer in the Black Hills. The number of deer that I have seen the last few years, especially last year and this year has greatly declined. The only place you see any deer at all is in the towns and suburbs. I hope we don't have to wait until the mountain lions move into these areas and start causing serious problems there before something is done to control their numbers.
- 2427 could not hunt this year,
- 2428 This is the first year that I hunted in area number 1. I hunted the southern portion of this area. I saw very few deer this year. The deer that I did see were along the Spearfish Canyon and in among the housing areas. I had a doe tag and did not fill this year even after 4 days of hunting. I am not sure where the deer were at. The southern land of area number 1 is pretty rough territory. I also hunted the south west part of area 1 and saw 0 deer.
- 2431 Keep up the good work
- 2432 What does it take to draw a rifle buck tag for the black Hills? I have not drawn one for 3 years. Now I hear talk of deer overcrowding in towns and needing to be exterminated. Why can't a hunter get a tag?
- 2435 I don't think the GF&P have any idea of the true number of mountain lions. It didn't matter where I went, I saw tracks all over. I hunted spots that I have been in with other hunters in past years and didn't see any deer.
- 2436 We enjoyed our hunt, but the pickings were pretty meager. Thank you!!!
- 2446 Hunted one day (about 1 hour) in West River (unit 21b) and got one buck.
- 2450 Only recieved a leftover whitetail doe tag. Hunted eight days and only saw mule deer and elk. I might have been in too high of an elevation because there wasn't any whitetails where I was at.
- 2451 I enjoy rifle hunting the Black Hills and prefer to do so over rifle hunting anywhere else in the state. However, of late it seems that we can only get drawn about every two years. It would be nice if there was a way to have preference on which rifle deer season you would like to apply for in the state. Even though I live East River my time spent hunting the Hills is by far more meaningful to me and East River rifle hunting just is not the same experience. I think there would be more hunter satisfaction if you had a better opportunity to draw a tag in the unit you most prefer to hunt. I stress that this could be for the first drawing only and all could apply for whatever is leftover. Just a thought and I may be over looking something but it would be nice if it could be considered.
- 2453 As I stated I have hunted in the Black Hills for 33 years now. I'ts not about going out there to kill a deer. It's about the hunting trip. If you are lucky enough to havest a deer then that's a plus. What really irratates me is you can't draw a tag in the area where you have hunted for many years. There is no shortage of deer you just have to hunt for them. That's the sport. More and more deer are killed on the roads every year and yet the liscense numbers decrease. Let the lions kill them, let the cars kill them but don't let the hunters hunt. Go figure. The ones harping about the few numbers of quality deer should get out of their pickups and actually go hunting if they want a quality deer. They are there but they don't walk up to the road and stand there unless they are stuffed! Having to take a leftover liscence in an area you've never been just so you can go on a hunting trip is not the same. I learned if you can't draw just stay home. Not much fun to drive to an area you don't know to hunt where the only deer you see are stuffed. Let us hunt! Thank, You
- 2457 My party just couldnt afford it this year, and besides....non of us got a Buck tag anyways...the lottery system sucks in the black hills.....We have hunted all the years that it wasnt that good...and now we cant even get a tag
- 2458 Lawrence county was not listed as an option
- 2459 It was my first Black Hills deer hunt and I loved it. I will surely do it again.

- 2462 People should be allowed to hunt until they fill their tag, and not have a limited area to hunt in.
- 2466 I feel there are too many roads that people can drive on and road hunt deer in the Black Hills. ATVs are a huge problem. There are so many ATV tracks all over in the hills. They don't stay on the approved roads, they drive them wherever they please. This is very frustrating to someone that is out hunting on foot! I wish there were more areas that no vehicle travel was allowed like the big horn sheep area.
- 2468 The most deer I saw was where I couldn't shoot them like in town or close to town, was very frustrating.
- 2473 I had a antlerless white tail tag this year and although I saw many mulies I did not see any antlerless white tail deer in the areas I normally hunt. The backwoods held mulies but the only whitetails I saw were in someone's yard (including mine) or on the fringe of the city. Therefore I did not fill. KEN
- 2478 I do enjoy going out to hunt in the Hills - but it has been several years since I have been able to get an any deer tag - buck tag - I enjoy seeing more bucks in the Hills, but I seriously question the reason why so many non-residents that I see leaving our state with bucks , while I as a resident am not able to hunt a buck. This same issue applies for your black powder buck hunts. I applied for and always got a black powder tag when all a person could hunt for was a doe, but although I have applied for every year that the buck tags have come out- I have so far always not succeeded in drawing one. As a resident, I feel we should be receiving the any deer tags first, and if there are any left over then let the non-residents apply. Since most of these non-residents come from states that have their own deer hunting seasons, maybe you should be charging them more for the privilege that is being taken from our own residents. That being said, I realistically know that the answer lies only in the dollars that they bring to SD. And sadly, I also realize that those same dollars that they bring will soon spell the end to hunting as I know it, and as my uncles and grandfather taught me to love. Perhaps that capitalistic approach to hunting where those with the money will be the only ones left standing (hunting) may also spell the end to the SDGF&P -
- 2495 I feel we have problems. How many deer are going to youth hunting, lions, and subdivisions? Maybe time to back off on the youth tags and put in with regular season that allows 1 tag only. Has to be a major impact on total numbers with lions around. Subdivisions we are stuck with.
- 2498 trying to make sure that the deer doesn't have any nubs on the head since they are now called bucks even since they are not visible.
- 2503 I chose not to harvest a doe this year, but could have. I was extremely dissapointed in the number of deer I saw in the hills, especially bucks. Numbers appears quite low compared to five years ago. Kill more mountain lions.
- 2504 Hunted late in the season, early in the season would have seen more deer.
- 2511 The mountain lion harvest must be increased significantly!! Or in a few years, there won't be a BH deer season.
- 2517 Bring back "over the counter" license sales for the Black Hills.and open the units to include the whole Black Hills area.
- 2520 I had some medical issues come up the weekend was going to hunt had other things planned for other weekends of season.
- 2526 Deer and Elk numbers are down dramatically from the past few years. Are you just selling licenses or does someone care about the resource? I have lost confidence in this department and how they manage our deer and elk herd. They are not listening to sportsman and not sure they really listen to land owners. You are wiping out the deer herds on public land!!! That is where 90% of hunters hunt today. Private land owners who complain about deer numbers do not let anyone hunt unless they pay big dollars. I want a decent deer hunt on public land. I don't mind harvesting antlerless deer but don't wipe them out on public land and walk in units.

- 2530 I am a disabled hunter and after reading the HUNTING AND TRAPPING HANDBOOK on page 47 I was in the understanding that i could carry a loaded gun on the 4-wheeler. A game warden stopped me and gave me a citation. I then went to Mike Kintigh and it took him 3 hours to find out what they were ticketing me for. There is a disabled permit that is different than my disabled license it is not clear in the book. It ended my hunting. I still don't know why i was ticketed.
- 2539 Last year in the game production area near spearfish I saw three different groups of two deer, a group of four deer, and a medium sized buck, This year I saw some tracks and 1 carcass where someone had done a sloppy job of gutting a deer, but no live deer. I had to go over by whitewood to find a doe. I don't know if the deer are moving into town and being poached, or are being eaten by mountain lions, but I know the deer that used to come by my house in lead are gone also. Driving through boulder canyon going to work I haven't seen near as many deer there in the last couple months either. I don't have the credentials to speculate why, but there were less deer in the northern hills area that were easily visible this year than in the last few years.
- 2547 we saw alot of very small deer other then that it was a good hunt
- 2549 We seem to have plenty of deer, particuarly does in this area. My wife complains that we do not see mountain lions on the property.
- 2554 Deer numbers are down drastically and I suspect the Lion population is up a lot. Didnt see any Lions but saw many tracks and a few kill sites.
- 2556 my dad and i think that there should be more than 30 lions to be killed, we observed three or four carcass' that had been killed by lions and we did not see any sign of turkeys
- 2563 Many mountain lion tracks of very large size were observed in the area north of Rochford. I hunted late in the season and had only a doe license. It did seem total numbers of deer were low and it did appear that mountain lions are very hard on the herd in the Rochford, Old salt, Minnesota ridge area. I would suggest that the mountain lion season be the same as the deer season and the number to be shoot increased substantially. Hunting was alright doe sightings seemed very low considering the weather and lack of snow.
- 2566 Number of deer seen down in remote areas, but still see large numbers near residential areas such as Keystone and Hill City that are off limits to hunting.
- 2570 This is my first ever experience deer hunting with rifle or otherwise. I chose the black hills region because I have a friend who lives in that area that helped get me outfitted and set up and gave guidance and direction for my first hunt. I applied for a "any black hills deer" license but got only a doe permit which is OK with me because after the comraderie I'm primarily interested in the size and quality of the deer/meat vs a trophy or rack.
- 2571 My partner had a stroke and we couldn't hunt this year.
- 2582 I believe the quality of bucks in the Black Hills has improved a lot since the state went to a draw on buck tags, I believe that by limiting the number of licenses has allowed a lot of the younger bucks to reach maturity, I grew up in the hill's and lived there my entire life until 10 yrs ago when I moved to Harrold, during the 70's & 80's it wasn't unusual in the areas that I hunted to encounter 60 to 70 doe's and fawns before I would see an adult buck.
- 2586 keep killing any lions in yards or towns. deer numbers appear good. elk on the decline
- 2587 There was just not enough time to get out and hunt. It's very upsetting that there is only a small window to get out and hunt. My husband lost his Black Hills Buck Tag so he couldn't even go up in the hills for himself this year. All around this year was a huge disappointment.
- 2588 Not real impressed with the way game wardens and forest sevice people. They all think you are a liar and a poacher. You are automatically guilty when ever they stop you for a game check. You always have to explain your self and prove that you are not guilty. This is very unfair. Especially to the warden in Meade county (Scott). Will not hunt Meade County ever again.

- 2589 I hunt in Piedmont/Tilford area, It's always a joy seeing city pukes park their vehicle behind hay stacks and sit there until dusk then open up on on anything that walks in the field. (that's hunting?) Hell you don't dare to go in the wooded area behind these fields cause some dumb-ss isn't watching what is behind the target. This year I have met more rude hunters in the field than I care too , This one of the main reason I do not put in for a hills tag very often. After this season I don't think I will again, I'll stick to archery and black powder less dummies around.
- 2591 I have a place which my son's and I built near Pactola. I pay over \$3,400 a year taxes to Pennington County and have not been able to draw a buck license for the last three seasons. I am very angry not to receive a buck license because I am getting up in years and know that out of staters are getting licenses while South Dakotans are not. I bought land and build there thinking I at least had some place I could hunt without being locked out by farmers. I was wrong. We moved to Sioux Falls in 1992 and I wonder if this affects my chances?
- 2612 I think there are to many cattle in the Hills. Also too many non-resident hunters.
- 2625 My impression of the low number of deer I saw while hunting may be due to the warm temps. Since the weather has cooled down I have seen many more deer. The homeowner who allows us access to the BHNH said he had a mountain lion in his yard one of the mornings we were on his land. There had been one killed in the same area last year. Thank you for all your work in trying to manage the deer population.
- 2626 We are overhunting everything in SD but Lions and Birds! I would like to see more regulation on bucks as far as what can be shot!!!!
- 2628 I enjoyed getting out in the Hills. There was only one day that I did not see deer. I hope to go hunting again next year. Hopefully, I will be smarter than the deer next year.
- 2640 I would just like to commend John Kanta on the outstanding game management that is going on out here in the Black Hills!!!
- 2652 Because of my work schedule, I was only able to hunt 2 days. Those two days were around Thanksgiving and the temps were in the 60's. I saw very few deer. I did see quite a few road hunters. Because of my limited time in the field, it is difficult to put an accurate gauge on this year's hunt.
- 2661 We had a problem receiving our tags, but when I called, the person I talked to was very helpful, looked up the tags, and mailed them to us. I was very impressed with her. Thanks for all you do.
- 2667 Sure seems hard to draw tags, Seems odd when you apply and do not draw you can apply for leftover t ags . Example last year for elk i did not draw and applied 3- more times for leftovers still unsecsufel !!!
- 2668 I think doe tags should be available across the counter. The lottery is working great for bucks.
- 2670 It would be great to be able to go in areas that are open and not closed (logging/fire roads). Main problem I had this year around the Nemo area was all (many) ATV riders just cruising up and down the trails scaring any game that might be in the area. Would like to see ATV's used to transport hunters to their hunting spot only and no other use of these for the month on Nov. A safety issue in its self with having people out there not hunting with rifle rounds traveling the distance they do. Just a thought.
- 2673 why not go back to buying licences over the counter? Or at least left over tags.
- 2683 It was an awesome first deer hunting experience. Looking forward to next year
- 2695 We hunt and camp in the summer out on song dog road, I have never seen litter before, this year it was a garbage can. We stopped and picked up the first trash, then the next dump and then realized it was beyond out little grab. I hate rules, we camp out in the national forest and give up camp fires for the solitude and natural setting, yet something needs to be done about litter, mostly beer cans and bottles.
- 2703 We saw many hunters driving the roads, but not one hunter on foot the whole day.
- 2704 All the deer moved to town.

- 2707 Get rid of the Lions!!! I don't think you have a clue to how many there are.
- 2709 Regarding the county question, it wouldn't let me put the county I am from so I put the county I hunted in.
- 2716 We had 1 contact with a GF & P officer. It was very positive. I appreciated his style. He came off as a conservation officer not a cop.
- 2718 Please make it easier for resident Military to get a licence. As a veteran I would like to see a discount for licences. Thank you Dan Petersen Retired Marine.
- 2726 keep up the good work
- 2734 Yje only complaint I have is regarding the way the tags are doled out. The current system makes it very difficult to plan a hunt when you can not even be sure about who or what type of tags will be given out. It detracts from the hunting experience when you have to allow for several different hunts in different areas. I know we could apply as a single group, but then you run the risk of no hunting at all. I don't know what the answer is to that problem, but I sure hate to see groups that have been getting together every year for the last 20 years stop doing so because they do not get to hunt together.
- 2736 it has been four years since i drew a buck tag i think you people should go back to over the counter tag sales . Have any deer and antlerless tags that way a person would have a chance to get a buck if they did not they could still get a doe Thankyou
- 2737 I saw a quite a few deer because of my experience and knowing where to look. Over all in the south unit it seems there are fewer and fewer deer each year.
- 2738 i think the mule deer population was up. we just couldnt figure out what happen to all of the deer over the last 2 years. we did see a lot of elk again. I would like to add that the gfp has been doing a great job of managing the population over the years. the only guess that we could come up with is the lions are eating them. one guy in our party did see a lion this year.
- 2740 Authorize more antlerless whitetail deer tags for the southern hills unit.
- 2741 I have hunted the past four year's in the Black Hill's and a few year's prior to that ,I think the quality of the Buck's have improved but that maybe the total number of deer is down in the area's I hunt.
- 2743 I believe most places in the Black Hills are far too accessible by motorized vehicle. The satisfaction I get by hunting deer is getting up in the high country where you have to walk for miles and don't have to worry about an ATV or pickup spoiling your hunt. That's truly fair-chase hunting. That's also where the big bucks are in other forests in the country. There are very few places such as this in the Black Hills because there are so many roads. Having said that, I love these Black Hills.
- 2752 The drawing process for the Black Hills deer season needs to be changed. The "Any deer" license should be a completely separate drawing than the "Any Whitetail". If I understand those at GF&P correctly, the "Any deer" is a tougher draw than an elk tag. If someone has "Any" for a first choice and they are gone, then the second choice should be honored at that time, rather than filling all the "first choices" and then drawing the "second choices" from what is left. However the draw is done, a written description of the process needs to be provided on each application as far as the order of the choices filled. I know several applicants, including myself, that have 4-6 years preference for the "any" tags and did not realize how difficult that is to draw. Now, if we switch to "any whitetail", we'd be giving up those preferences just to hunt something, which also is not a popular choice. If the number of applicants has exceeded the tags issued, then eliminate the second choice all together.
- 2753 Most of the deer I saw while hunting were on private land (fields). I only saw 3 antlerless deer while in the field hunting. I saw Mule deer bucks while driving in areas near Rochford where I was not hunting or licensed to do so. I am not sure what the laws is to shooting deer on private land if the land is not obviously posted. It should be more clear in the hunting guidelines.

- 2754 I was 18 when you changed to the lottery system for deer tags. If memory serves me correctly it was because there were not to many bucks left. Here in the Custer area there is an abundance of deer. I think we could probably go back to purchasing the tags locally. May be for a few years (5) then go back to lottery for 5 years. I miss being able to stop in and get my tag when I needed it Thanks for listening Brendan Roetzel
- 2774 We were disappointed in the amount of deer seen in the timber. Most of the deer were seen in people's yards or in the city limits where we could not hunt. It was difficult to find deer in the more remote areas. The deer we seen were very spooked. We hunted over Thanksgiving weekend so it was near the end of the season. We observed very few hunters. The hunters we observed had similar complaints.
- 2785 very dissappointed not to get any deer license for the black hills
- 2789 Still too many vehicles running off of designated roads. Especially ATV's.
- 2793 Most of the deer seen in my unit were in City limits or private landowner's pastures (i.e. not huntable). The number of deer in this unit was way below my expectations for numbers based upon other central/northern units hunted before.
- 2801 The only "deer" that was of quality was a decoy. We waved and passed on by.
- 2804 With the large amount of does and fawns that I have seen I would beleive that it would be good management to allow individuals the opportunity to apply for double doe tags. This would increase the revenue for the state and increase tourism for the local businesses. I would also like to see more buck tags issued. What does the surveys conducted show for the amount of quality bucks in the various areas of the hills?
- 2806 next year issure two tags.. but before a person can shoot a buck they first must harvest a doe have it checked in then they will be allowed to take a buck.. way to many does in the hills
- 2809 It is bull crap that we live in the middle of the hills and we can't even draw a buck tag. My dad and I applied individually and because we put down a doe tag as a second choice we automatically received one of them instead of a buck tag. That is crap. This makes for a bad deer season when this is the only deer tag that I apply for. Luckily I got a prairie tag that had a buck on it. I have very limited time to hunt and I would like to hunt close to home so I can maximize my time in the field and I am also on a limited budget. I think you can make this a better system if you really wanted to work at it and do so. Also, get rid of more of those damn mountain lions. They are taking more and more of the calf elk and deer and pretty soon we will be getting less tags because you are seeing less deer because the lions are eating them all. There are more than you think in the hills. Lets kill more so the deer can rebound. We see lots of deer within a mile of town but get out in the country and we see a lot less deer. Wonder why? Protected a little more? YES. Get on the stick and do what needs to be done. Quit protecting the poor kitty.
- 2811 I have a small acreage outside Custer and determined that I would only hunt that site to harvest an antlerless deer this year. I saw a few doe/fawn animals but was not in a position to shoot one. I could have killed one large and one smaller 4X4 buck at less than 100 yards. The antlerless animals were largely in town-one evening after shooting hours I counted 16 head along Laughing Water creek in Custer and came within 4 feet of hitting another one on Montgomery street. The deer I saw on my land were only migrating to town in the evening or leaving in the morning. I think we need to recind the leash laws in town so the dogs can chase the deer back into the woods.
- 2812 lets control those lions, i suspect they are taking quite a toll on the big game population in the hills.
- 2814 Would like to see a buck license next year!
- 2815 I would like to see the deer population managed for more mature bucks. I would also like to see more info on your site about EHD, CWD, predator loss and other factors contributing to the lack of 4+ year old deer. Thanks for a good hunt.

- 2830 2 things need to be worked on 1. I have not been able to draw an "any deer" tag after 4 years of trying, while an out of stater sent in with an in stater and received this tag on the first year. 2. Mt Lions are decimating the deer population. Call it what you want, but every year we are observing less and less deer and even less quality bucks. This year alone, I hunted harder than in the past doing at least 75% of my total hunting on the ground walking, and I would estimate I only saw 5% of the deer that I have seen in previous years. Either remove the Mt Lion from the Black Hills or you wont be left with any deer, elk, mt goats, or big horn sheep.
- 2841 Concerned about the number of lions I saw, especially when I wasn't looking for them. I also saw 4-5 lion kills. I hope our priority to manage deer is as high as our priorities have been to ensure that the lions establish themselves in the hills.
- 2842 I think your deer management program works there are more quality bucks and the population seems to be stabalized. I which after being a resident and hunter for 35+ years and a avid hills hunter, the G.F.P. would give us olders guys who do not have that many years to quality hunt a buck license more often.
- 2845 Many "quality" bucks seen within Custer City Limits...many does and fawns as well
- 2858 they need to hand out more buck tags
- 2880 Just drew a doe tag this year in the leftover draw. Hope to draw a buck tag next year but understand that limiting the number of tags is key to managing the herd properly. The one day I hunted I passed on a few does so I had the opportunity to harvest a deer had I decided to. The day I hunted I did see mountain lion tracks on the forest service road walking in, they looked to be 3-4 days old though.
- 2883 I moved to SD in 1955 and left the state in 1974. I started hunting the BH's in 1957 and have tried to hunt every year since but have only missed abot 4 years. I am confused with the way the selection of license are made and would like to see some kind of an alternative selection.
- 2885 Oncw again I had a great time hunting in your state. The application process was easy, the people in Custer were great and the hunting was excellent. What ever you are doing keep it up.
- 2887 Many thanks for all your efforts to ensure quality hunting experiences for both resident and non-resident hunters.
- 2894 Overall the deer population seems to be doing very well. However there is definitely an inordinate amount of deer that seem to be resident in town. This is obviously a consequence of various factors, but does need to be dealt with, as it clearly has some very unfavorable outcomes (disease, conflict with pets, lions in town, etc). It would be beneficial to have these resident "city deer" experience a hunting season. This is done in several other states through a special archery hunt. Rather than cost the city/state money to pay 'sharpshooters' - archery hunters pay the state to harvest these deer. The nicest buck I saw in my short hunt was sitting in someones front lawn...
- 2896 I've always been pleased with the hunting experiences in the Black Hills. I'm somewhat disappointed with the restrictions on vehicles being prohibited from leaving designated roads. I appreciate the need to protect the environment; however, why not allow a vehicle to leave the roadway for the express purpose of retrieving game?? This wasn't an inconvenience this year, but as I and my fellow hunters get older; it's a challenge to have to carry an animal a significant distance from the point of kill, to a vehicle, if the vehicle has to remain on the roadway. Please add this request to your list of "things to consider for future years."

- 2902 Having grown up in South Dakota and then attending SDSM&T for five years, deer hunting in the Black Hills has been an important part of my life. The changes GFP made some years back to the harvest numbers and types have significantly improved the quality and number of bucks. Now that I live out of state, I only have two suggestions that would improve the quality of the experience for me: 1) Increase the number of out-of-state tags available-- We came for a week and brought my in-laws with us. We rented a cabin near Hill City and made quite a contribution to the local economy (lots of Christmas shopping). We had also invited two other couples to join us, but they chose to not join us after they were unsuccessful in the drawings. I would recommend that the number of tags available would be just slightly more than half of the annual non-resident applicants so there would be a high probability that a person could draw a tag every-other year. 2) Many states offer a "lifetime hunting license" or a "lifetime resident" designation which allows former residents to participate as residents for their lifetime. I personally would be willing to pay between \$1200 to \$1500 for such an option, as it would allow me apply with my family members, and the reduced license costs would allow me to participate in more seasons. In most cases, I would invite my out of state friends to join me, thus increasing GFP's annual revenue and improving the local economies. Many thanks for all that GFP has done to make my Black Hills deer hunting experience even better! Regards, -George S. Arnold
- 2904 Thanks for a great non-resident opportunity year after year!
- 2917 I think my disappointments for the 2009 Black Hills Deer Hunting trip come mainly from 2 reasons. First from the severe winter kill of Dec 2008 Thru April of 2009. The second reason for my disappointment, In my opinion, comes from possible over harvesting of does in recent years.
- 2924 # of deer seen in 2 days of scouting prior to firearms season (November 1) significantly lower than previous years.
- 2925 Wasn't able to make it to use my tag.
- 2926 Hunting in various areas between Lead and Hill City I saw mountain lion tracks on a daily basis. Deer numbers were lower than I have seen in many years. North and west of Hwy 385 there were no deer or signs of deer visible from there to the Wyo. border, just large healthy looking coyotes. I hunted 11-13 through 11-18.
- 2933 Did not see as many total deer as other years ,but it still was a very very good trip as before.
- 2940 THERE WERE MANY DEER IN THE AREA WE HUNTED, SEEING NEARLY 100 ON THE FIRST DAY. WE HUNTED 4 DAYS. WE WERE LOOKING FOR LARGER DEER BUT COULD HAVE FILLED OUR TAGS ON THE FIRST MORNING. THERE WERE 5 IN OUR PARTY AND ALL FILLED TAGS ON EITHER FRIDAY AFTERNOON OR SATURDAY MORNING. HAVING LIVED IN SOUTH DAKOTA FOR 36 YEARS PRIOR TO MOVING IT DOESN'T SEEM RIGHT THAT I HAVE TO WAIT 2 OR THREE YEARS TO GET A TAG AGAIN. IT DOES NOT SEEM LIKE PREFERENCE POINTS MEAN ANYTHING WITH SOME PEOPLE GETTING TAGS EVERY YEAR WHILE SOME HAVE TO WAIT. IF I HAVE A PREFERENCE POINT THEN I SHOULD BE AHEAD OF EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT HAVE ONE. WITH THE NUMBER OF DEER IN THE HILLS, THE NUMBER OF TAGS SHOULD BE INCREASED WHETHER ITS FOR RESIDENTS OR NON-RESIDENTS OR BOTH.
- 2947 Please return to the combined muel deer and whitetail deer buck tags.
- 2949 I believe that you should change the Black hills deer season like the west river season where you can get a double tag if wanted. The buck to doe ratio needs to be looked at. Then a person can get 2 deer a any deer and antlerless deer. Thank you and I hunted there several years ago when you had to buy your tag at a local store and when you stopped that your Buck quality improved dramatically. Thank you William-Etta, Mississippi
- 2950 My Dad, James t. Johnston helped me fill out this questionnaire. Thank You, I had a great time in the Hills.
- 2954 I will be coming back had fun hunting in your state. My states deer management is a joke compared to yours.
- 2960 none

- 2966 Does and first year fawn numbers appear to be down substantially from previous years. Also the number of turkeys seen was way down from previous years. In 5 days of hunting, only one group of turkeys were observed. The last few years turkeys were around every corner. Lion tracks were seen on virtually every deer drive that my group conducted. Although only one was seen by a member of your hunting party, the growl of one was also heard.
- 2969 In the 12 or 13 years I have been hunting, this was probably one of the slimmest years for number of deer seen. The deer herd seemed to be down quite a bit. When you ask about quality bucks, I passed on a couple of smaller 8 pointers, (total points Minnesota terminology). I finally shot a fork for meat. I did not see any cats this year, but have seen them in the past. In my experience, the old growth parts of the woods seem to hold great numbers of deer, but they seem to be disappearing fast. Like my honey hole in the Experimental Forest, gone, along with all the deer it used to hold. I realize it was a tough winter and cat numbers are high but logging is going to take its toll on the deer herd. Thanks Frank Forstner
- 2971 I used to be a resident and hunted through high school and college. I have not hunted since leaving in 1974. I received a license and would have hunted this year but my wife's mother passed away and I had to cancel my trip.
- 2975 The bucks in the BH seem quite small. I wish there were more quality bucks. The total number of deer seemed to be way down. I don't know if it was due to the harsh winter last year, or mountain lions or CWD or something else.
- 2986 Saw quite a few deer in the town of Spearfish but very few in the hunting grounds.
- 2992 Enjoyable experience,
- 2996 Eliminate the choice of whitetail or mule deer and make both available on the same license.
- 2998 Excellent experience. Beautiful landscape.
- 2999 Motorcyclists driving off numbered trails are doing a lot of habitat damage where we hunt. Each time we travel to the Black Hills to hunt we have at least one confrontation with a group who ruins our morning or afternoon hunt. They seem to be doing so intentionally. Their attitudes have ranged from belligerent to indifferent toward the damage they do.
- 3001 While I was unsuccessful in harvesting a buck, the trip was anything but unsuccessful. The beautiful scenery, abundant wildlife more than made up for it. If I had one concern at all it was the number of dogs that were seen running through the woods or seen eating in gut piles. On two separate occasions, I had different groups of domestic dogs circling my stand. Thanks for great season though! ~Mark Simpson, Eagan, MN
- 3002 Deer numbers seemed quite low for 2009 compared to 2006 when we last hunted in the Hills. As a nonresident I do not expect to harvest a deer on every trip to hunt the hills, but do expect of course to see some deer. Based on the deer numbers for this year I will still return to hunt the hills when I next draw a tag. However if deer numbers on that return trip would be lower than 2009 it would greatly affect my decision to return at a later time.
- 3006 Had a great time, thanks
- 3008 The weather had a lot to do with this year's hunt! We hunted in temperatures from 54 to 75 degrees opening week on the rifle hunt.
- 3018 Too much logging in Black Hills is hurting hunting areas.
- 3021 The Black Hills are very well managed. The ratio of bucks to doe's is impressive. The fish and game dept. is doing an excellent job. This is a wonderful place to hunt.
- 3036 Did not get time to hunt due to new baby

- 3038 Appears more deer in built up areas, like Hill City, Rapid City, etc on private property that you can't hunt. I walked many of my old hunting areas west of Hill City and their is way to much small jack pine, good for deer to hide but hard for hunting. I personally wish you'd go back to the old days of being able to buy a tag over the counter not this limited draw system. This is my 1st tag for the Black Hills since 2003, and it is nearly impossible to get together with old friends and relatives like in the past, our old hunting tradions have all but disappeared now that we can't get our tags as in the past and hunt as a group anymore.
- 3041 Have hunted the Black Hills off and on for many years. I do not care if I shoot a deer but I do love the experiance of being in the Hills. I grew up in South Dakota and got my Masters Degree in wildlife biology at SDSU so I have long been familiar with the Hills and hunting in S.D. The reason we saw very few deer this year is undoubtably weather related. When we got there there was a lot of snow on the ground but the weather turned warm and the deer were just laying down in the daytime and coming out to feed late at night. My son shot a fine doe and we were very happy to just have one deer to butcher (freezer is full). Keep up the good work. Denis Allen, former Regional Naturalist with Minnesota DNR.
- 3042 We saw two deer in two full days of hunting. We typically see approximately 150 deer in a two-day period, so we were pretty bewildered.
- 3047 I liked the preset amount of non-resident tags per zone (Like BD1-BD4). Now that buck tags (any deer tags) cover the whole black hills unit (BH-1) I feel like I get a buck tag less often.
- 3053 My answers include responses for all my group which includes four hunters....
- 3054 Saw a lot of whitetail does, mulie does. 2 above average mulie bucks, 1 decent mulie buck and 1 small whitetail buck. Not crowded at all. I think that you should allow more non-resident take of mulies (especially does). I would be happy to take one or two mulie does with a chance to take a mulie buck as well. I did have a great time and the Black Hills was a great experiance. I will be back in two years.
- 3058 Again, as I have in the past I have told the GFP that I'm no fan of the lottery. I'm 61 and probably made my last trip to the Hills with my group, we've missed many trips out there due to the lottery and the only thing the lottery has done has broken up the tradition many of us non-resident hunters had from all over the US. Then to top off the move to the lottery you've been "killing" off way to many does. I've emailed yo my thoughts on that subject more then once and I don't have a degree in biology. You can't keep harvesting the amount of does you have been doing these past few years. It's no problem when yo have a ran of mild winters but what happens when you have one like 2008??? You are seeing that this year. Our group had hunted the Hills around Rochford annually from 1974 until the lottery got us and then it has been every three years. 2003 & 2006 had lots of deer and nice bucks but this years we saw very few deer and NO decent bucks. We worked hard from sun rise to sunset for six days and harvested 8 small bucks. The deer just wasn't there and the amount and size of the bucks were even worst. The winter of 2008 was hard on the deer herd and especially the bucks. Combine the winter they went throught and then a couple of spring snows took it's toll. With the decreased amount of does available the bucks worked even harder during the rut. I'd be wiling to bet hunting is going to be down in the Hills for the next two to three years (without any major weather problems) maybe longer.
- 3060 If you counted all deer that we saw in town and private property, then there were quite of few deer. But out in the hunting areas, there wasn't anything. When you talk to the conservation officer at the very end of the day, and he says that he has not seen a deer, dead or live, all day, that sums it up that there wasn't much to hunt. I enjoyed my hunt out there, with the other guys who had hunted many years out there. They said that they won't be going back to that area again. If they don't get a different area, we won't spend the time or money go there again.
- 3067 Northern Black Hills was devoid of deer from Spearfish canton west to wyoming as far as I can tell

- 3075 I believe that the numbers of deer are dropping due to the high numbers of mountain lions. I have never seen the high numbers of tracks that i observed this season. We hunted right after a fresh snow and i was amazed not only with the number of tracks we saw but that we could tell there were several different lions in a relatively small area. Upon leaving our hunting spot and returning to our cabin about 20 miles away we returned to a mess of garbage that had been tipped over by a lion. With that experience in mind you have to ask yourself how many lions are out here. Even though the overall number of deer i saw were down the quality of the bucks were the best i have ever seen. I personally saw 4 bucks between 130 and 140 class.
- 3078 The limited quota is working well. Keep up the good work. What we used to think was A good buck is A dink anymore.
- 3079 I like that you are embracing technology with your website, but it could be more "user friendly", as it is hard to find things. I'm sure it will improve over time. Thanks
- 3083 I had a great shot at a nice doe, but someone pulled behind me with a barking dog in the back of thier truck and spooked the deer away. What mad me even more mad was that person laughed and then went on their way!!!!!! I didn't see so many doe, and that was by far VARY disappointing since we came from Milwaukee Wisconsin, and we came during opening week there!! :( Not as many Whitetail as we were told would be there!!
- 3093 I own 47 acres in the black hills not just in south dakota for this i would like cheaper tags and more able to get a buck tag
- 3098 Unfortunately, my work schedule did not allow me to use my out-of-state BH rifle deer license.
- 3102 I appreciate the opportunity to hunt deer in SD. I was a long time resident but now live in the twin cities area. I think it would be an excellent opportunity to hunt elk in the Black Hills as well. Many of us former South Dakota residents would love to come out and have the opportunity to hunt elk in the Black Hills. Thank you.
- 3105 the one thing that I find the most enjoyable about hunting in South Dakota is the cost other states including my home state are so much more expensive and they do not have the quality or quantity of opportunities to harvest an animal.
- 3106 i hunted in unit bh413 and i believe you are giving out too many doe tags in this area. it was a very challenging hunt to find a large mature doe. but i had a great time thanks

**Appendix F.** Optional comments received via the web-based survey.

<b>ID</b>	<b>Comments</b>
59	did not hunt because of the late crop harvest
86	I would like to know how the mountain population is effecting the deer population. I am in favor of having the lions in the hills and have gotten a license to hunt them in the past. The mule deer population seems to be less than it used to be and is that due to the cats? I feel the SD GF&P is doing a good job of managing our wildlife. Thanks for your efforts to keep my hunting a pleasure for me.
110	The best thing about Black Hills hunting was being able to take a Whitetail or Mule deer with a buck only tag. Now you have to wait for years to draw an any deer tag or get a Whitetail only tag every other year on average. I preferred the two points or better on one side method for the Black Hills season. It seemed like you saw better quality bucks then and people weren't able to take the small bucks like they can now. I also think the Mountain Lions are out of control and killing off alot of the game animals. I only saw 2 Whitetail fawns and no Elk calves while hunting for four days. I saw lots of does and cows but no young. I also came across about ten Turkey carcasses but saw no live Turkeys during my four day hunt. That tells me the Lions are eating very well for now but soon no one will apply for tags if the game animals are depleted. Please take steps to correct this problem before Black Hills hunting becomes a memory.
124	lots of deer, more bucks than typical, few "quality" but more "respectable" bucks than I've seen in some in alot of years from when I first started hunting in my youth.
137	I feel there needs to be more licenses for residents and less for non-resident hunters.
155	Hunting was hard in 2009. I mostly believe it was because of the weather. I was not discouraged and plan to apply again next year. There is nothing better than hunting n South Dakota.
178	This was my first year hunting in the Black Hills, second year putting in. I am very pleased with the management of the deer. SDGFP are doing a good job. I look forward to hopefully getting a tag this year. Thanks for a job well done.
248	I think to many doe are being harvested. Where we normally hunt gets hunted pretty hard, and the deer population isnt half is big as it used to be. In my opinion with the quality of bucks anymore, I think people either shoot a nice buck or a doe. I think there needs to be another limited draw archery unit for the hills, and no doe tags for any season for awhile. The group I hunt with found at least two mountain lion kills. I think the quota for them should be doubled.
375	did not see any [0] turkeys either !
381	I am concerned of the low number of whitetail deer that I seen this season and the number of anywhitetail tags rather than buck only and limited antlerless tags and no point restrictions. I also beleave last winter was very hard on deer.
395	US Forest service is closing way to many roads. Us older people can not walk in to these areas. Would be nice if the GF&P could visit with the forest service on this as I am sure you interact on wildlife issues.
445	I think there needs to be fewer tags that allow for bucks to be killed. You issue "any whitetail" tags but the majority of the hunters don't drive across the state to shoot a doe. They will take the first thing with antlers. Even though the bucks won't get as big as their east river counterparts, there is still the possibilty of growing fine looking bucks if they are given the chance to grow. I know the quality improved years ago when buck harvest was limited by the draw system. Now it is time to expand on that idea.
470	I didn't make it hunting because I had underground water trouble. Getting that fixed was a little more important then hunting. Thanks
515	got my first buck!!!!
566	Number of deer appear to be decreaseing for the last 5 years.

- 679 first hills deer hunt since 1983. was suprised at the buck to doe ratio. hunted with five partners and i was the only hunter to see let alone harvest a mature whitetail.
- 797 When was the last time anyone saw an elk calf, or even a porcupine in the hills?? I think you are doing a fabulous job of managing the hills for the MOUNTAIN LIONS benefit!! I can't help but wonder what you are planning on feeding them when the last deer and elk is gone, maybe tourists!!!! It was difficult to even find fresh tracks of deer in the snow this year.Something DRASTIC needs to be done and very very soon!!
- 806 I do think that mountain lions have had a lot to do with the amount of decent shooter bucks being harvested. the bigger bucks tend to run orhang with fewer other deer/bucks which in turn leaves these bucks more vunerable to mountain lion attacks.I saw a kill from a lion this season,a 150 class buck killed by a lion/not the lion killing the buck but was killed by lions as per covered up and tracks around carcass /
- 1081 We have a few relatives that live in the black hills and we visit them at least twice a year. One of the things we do there is go deer and elk watching.This last Thanksgiving was a real poor year in deer/elk sightings.We traveled on many "back" roads and seen very little signs of either.(tracks). There was a fresh snow fall a day before we got to the hills, so our expectations were pretty high. I've been traveling to the hills for more than thirty years and this year was the worst for deer/elk sightings.I'm sure there are many reasons for this,(snow kill,mountain lions,etc.)but my son is at the age where he would like to go hunting deer/elk in the hills.Like I wrote in my survey, we seen a lot of mountain lion tracks, but they can't be the only reason for the lack of sightings.In years past,you would see deer on any road you traveled in the hills. I'm no expert, but mother nature has a way to straighten things out. I'm sure in a year or two, it'll be right back were it was.
- 1118 Two years ago when we went we saw more then a hundred deer per day or close to it, and this year we saw ten deer in two days...
- 1185 I could only go on the weekends so all info is based on that.
- 1280 I would like to see the tags go to doe tags for late season hunting.
- 1391 Most deer seen were not very big in size. I hunted in Rolling Hills as well as Bethlehem Road areas. Deer seemed to be much more scarce this year than in the past. Many trails/roads above Bethlehem Road are very rock covered and rough or have deep ruts and make access to certain areas very difficult.
- 1435 i feel that more doe's need to be taken out of the black hill's
- 1498 Too many small white tail bucks. Maybe consider placing a minimum standard on harvesting antlered deer for a while. 4 point per side. Otherwise, harvest does. Thanks
- 1587 1. Concerned that too many doe licenses are being issued in the Black Hills. After last winter there doesn't appear to be as many does in the area that I hunt. 2. I noticed a reduced number of fawns this year. 3. Among the fawns that I saw there seemed to be a large number that were probably conceived during the second breeding cycle. 4. I continue to be concerned and disappointed by the ATV use of closed roads.
- 1623 I hunt around Moon and am very disappointed in the number of deer I saw compared to previous years. I saw a total of 6 bucks. - 2 whitetail - 4 mule. Of the 60+ deer I saw , over half seen in one afternoon.
- 1694 Would not be disappointed to very very limited season in Hills next 2-3 years to allow population to recover from 2009 winter kill.
- 1761 The number of quality bucks seem to be decreasing again over the past couple years.

- 1767 The Game production area southeast of Spearfish off of Christensen Dr has received moderately heavy logging activity during the month of November for the last two consecutive years. I understand the managers of the game production area are doing what they feel is required to improve habitat, but it seems they should be able to schedule the logging during minimal public use times instead of right through deer season. This was a significant issue in reducing the quality of the hunting experience for myself, my family, and every other hunter (about 15) I spoke with in this area during the 2008 and 2009 seasons.
- 1787 enjoyed the hills very much. keep up the good work.
- 1825 I was a South Dakota resident when I got my license but I have recently moved to Minnesota. I was a resident of Brookings County. A death in the family prevented me from going hunting this year.
- 1896 99%ofdeerinnorthernhillsarintownonly.
- 1931 I have hunted almost everyday this season in hopes for a respectable buck that is worthy to be shot ate and hung on the wall with hiking stalking and still hunting i expected a ten point buck at least wider than his ears at least a 120 to 140 class buck however out of 30 bucks one may have scored 120 the rest were young 6 or 8 points at best. In past years ive had chances at multiple bucks 140+ the ones that make your heart pound where you cant catch your breath and make u quiver like a leaf on a tree. why is this year so different. Is it from the previous winter, desease, or just from all the road hunters i see driving with the windows down and gun across their lap. While sitting in vantage points i saw some shadey things go on along the roads. they are lucky i couldnt make out the license plate. The other guy didnt roll his window down far enuf sounded like he shot out his window the young buck ran right past me once again i couldnt get a plate number. Ive tried my luck at road hunting in the past its not possible to park get out close the door and step off the road and make a legal shot. why is it allowed. I still want to be a hills hunter but wheres the big bucks like ive seen in the past. Am i loosing my hunting ability, was i in bad hunting areas wheres the big healthy bucks that make me quiver. I would like some kind of feedback, an answer to my concerns, and some bigger binocs to see a license plate at 300 to 500 yards away, but id rather have a chance at a big buck even though no hunt is guarenteed i dont wanna shoot a 90 class buck just to fill a tag for meat.
- 1956 I didn't hunt this year but my brother did and he saw very few deer. We hunt in the norhtern hills and the locals he talked to said that there wasn't as many deer this year as in the past.
- 1960 based on the years that i have hunted with my Dad in this area, we are convinced that the winter certainly killed some deer. Dad is pretty convinced that the lions have had a significant effect too because of the number of tracks and from different lions in this area and the fact that his partner trapped one a couple years ago in this area too which the game warden picked up. There are also almost no turkeys here either and they used to be all over the place.
- 2206 Deer numbers have dropped considerably the last three years. I didn't see near as many fawns let alone sets of twins. Harsh winter, cats, or over harvesting?
- 2330 Had to skip this years hunt for school. I love too hunt the Hills.
- 2374 was just bad that it started on a sunday only had one day to hunt
- 2430 I beleive the mountain lion season should continue. Although i do not hunt mountain lion I have heard them the last couple years after I bagged my deer. I beleive there are plenty of them in the hills.

- 2486 I saw several instances of Mtn. Lion kills, in many different locations that I hunted this year. Also, there seems to be a greater number of coyotes in the Black Hills than I have seen in the past five or six years as well. The turkey population appears to be significantly reduced as well. The deer herd in the Black Hills is definately in worse shape than it has been in the previous years as well. The number of deer that I saw is roughly 1/4 of what I have seen in past years, and I am thinking that between last years winter kill, Mtn. Lion predation, and Coyote predation, the mortality rate of fawns was much higher than even I would have suspected. The whitetail doe numbers that I did see were down overall, but more importantly, I saw very few tending yearlings, and very few older does. Most of the does that I saw were likely in the 1-1/2 to 2-1/2 year old range. Unfortunately, there was only one oppportunity of a clear clean shot, however, the warm temps on the opening day and an unpredictable wind pattern at 8:30 AM on a southern aspect slope made for only a fleeting window of oppportunity. The dumba\$\$ that was terrorizing a logging road about 400 yards away on the 4-wheeler didn't help either. This was south of the Slate Creek Road, off China Gulch. I did, however, see a ~2-1/2 to 3-1/2 year old whitetail buck with a 4 x 4 basket rack (that might have measured all of 14") that was probably the fattest deer I have ever seen in the Black Hills. That fat toad, literally, had a second chin and roll near his haunches. This was on the south east side of the Gillette Prairie area. I was able to put a beautiful stalk on a whitetail that I spotted from 200 yards along the edge of a clear cut. Closed the distance to about 80 yards, wind in my favor, and everything else going well. Right up until I saw a pair of 4" to 5" spikes on him. Watched him for 20 minutes though, and with that considered my hunt a success. That was on the last day of the season, and the only deer I had seen in the previous four days of hunting that presented an oppportunity to tag out, except for the antlerless tag I had drawn.
- 2592 even though i shot my deer first day out ive been out alot for my archery tag and my wife had a black hills deer rifle and she hunted a minimal of 7 days seen a lot of other hunters i mainly hunt the erskin gulch area and its starting to be real crowded which in turn has found more trash up there and it upsets me cause ive been up there by myself and with my dad and brother since i was a kid. just hope something is done to fix that issue i respect and love the hills and hate when people dont resident and non resident alike thank you
- 2597 To many roads closed off, not able to cover as much land.
- 2629 I had a lot of fun.
- 2634 There is alot more mountain lions in the hills than people think. There is sign everywhere.
- 2642 I think it is simple arithmetic. The youth hunt harvests enough does. I would like to see unlimited licenses for 4 point (one side) or bigger. That would allow the small bucks to grow up, and everyone would have a chance to take a nice buck. Success would be very low for a few years, but, at least a hunter could get a tag every year and hunt the hills wheather successful or not, and, of course you would sell more licenses. I would also cancel the any whitetail tags.
- 2817 lots of lion sign-tracks and kill's
- 2845 Routinely see deer (does/fawns/bucks) in and around Custer City. Some were of "quality" grade bucks.
- 2847 Not related to Hills season but thanks for starting East River Rifle later in Nov. as it should be.
- 2905 Originally from SD, I love coming back to the Black Hills. Ienyoy coming back and see the beautiful Hills and look forward to coming again. Thanks for all the wonderful experiences !
- 2937 I think lion numbers are getting out of control when i see 6 lions in 7 days of hunting and only 40 deer.Im just hoping someday soon we get these numbers back down where they should be,like 20 statewide.This would help get our Elk and Deer herds where they should be so us hunters can have a quality hunt that we dream about, Most of us hunters here in S. Dak. dont have the funds to go to others states and hunt quality game. When i was younger we had great deer and elk herds, and there were lions just not hundreds of them.Up the numbers u wont kill them all,no way

- 2943 Just want to say that I love the black hills and being able to hunt deer there is an experience that makes life just that much more enjoyable!
- 2972 I started hunting the BH when I was 12. I've moved around a lot since graduating from Augustana, but I always try to come back to the BH to hunt. If I don't draw a firearms tag, I get an archery license. Over the years, the game management (limiting tags, no spike harvests, etc) have had a large impact upon the quality of bucks. Years ago, the number of deer seen may have been equal to today's count (or even higher), but the number of big-racked bucks harvested by the group of guys I hunted with were few (oh, we'd manage a couple wall-hangers a year, but most were fork-horns up to scraggly 4-points). This past season, I saw maybe two-dozen bucks (not sure how many were double-counted, since I kept my hunting area limited to the area behind Eidelweiss/Pactola). At least five were shooters, and I had several excellent opportunities to harvest one -- however, I held off for a monster I've seen the past five seasons. I caught a couple glimpses of him after shooting hours, but no opportunity. In all -- keep up the good work managing BH's deer; it's paying off. If I could be somewhat self-serving, I wouldn't mind a few more out-of-state tags offered. After all, for what we pay, it takes 10 resident tags to create the same revenue. One disappointing observance of note: four bucks dumped off the dirt road in the area I hunted -- heads cut off. Obvious poaching. We called it in, but nobody at the GFP seemed too interested. Please, some more game enforcement! 25 years ago, I remember stopping for several game checks each season. The last few years I haven't seen a single one. Nor have I seen a conservation officer in the field. If you've got to charge more for tags to pay for more enforcement, let me be the first to encourage you to do so. Of other note, I've never, in all my years, seen so much mountain lion sign. Day two of my hunt revealed a fresh, half-buried deer carcass not 100 yards from my stand. Tracks and scat abundant throughout the area. Last year, while bowhunting the same area, I even had a close encounter with a lion -- I was well-hidden, wearing camouflage, at dusk. The cat came out across the clearing from my and walked straight to my position. I drew the bow when the cat -- obviously unafraid or unaware of my presence -- came within 15 yards. We had a stare-down, me at full-draw and he in a crouch (I prayed that our meeting didn't turn into a scuffle). After a half-minute, he turned and went back into the woods. Understand that the Oberweiss homes aren't more than a half-mile from this location, and this particular cougar was quite bold. Finally, let me offer a solution to your mulie problem in Rapid City. Many communities, including some here where I live now in Illinois, recruit experienced archery hunters and pair them with landowners. Each participant undergoes training and must pass a proficiency test. All the meat is donated. And it costs the community nothing -- the hunters volunteer. So stand down the National Guard sharpshooters on the golf course and just try it once.
- 3009 Mother found out she had cancer the week before 3 friend and myself were to make our hunting trip to the Black Hills. Friends all had a good time hunting in the Black Hills. Look forward to hunting there next time we qualify for a license.
- 3023 You have a decent population of white tail deer. Not too many not too few, don't slaughter them like other states have! I enjoyed hunting SD Black Hills deer and plan to come back if things stay relatively the same.
- 3714 The deer numbers appeared to me to be on the decline for the last 4 years. Mainly the whitetail does I've noticed their numbers declineing. I have noticed the number of mule deer sightings to be more this year, so your efforts to increase their numbers seems to be working. Hope to see more deer next year.

- 8000 I live near the Whispering Pines Sheridain Lake Road area I have 6 to 8 deer pass thru my yard daily. They are on the way over to the housing to eat flowers garden produce and Kentucky Blue grass which is finer stem than the native grasses plus more platable. I also believe that they have found a safe haven from the area mountain lions that reside in teh area because of the population of the houses and people. My concern is little children playing in the yard squeal in laughter much like a animal (deer) in distress. I have hear many rabbits and injured deer (becasue of hay /grain swathing) that attracts lions because of the high pitch sounds !! Hiking the Spring Lake canyons this summer I have taken pictues of mountain lion scat. I see there has been two harvest one mile west of Strato Bowl and you and i know what there range can be on a night hunt. Best of luck on deer , big game control and lion control in the year of 2010
- 8000 It really angers me too see the number of people hunting from roads and rights-of-way during both deer and elk seasons in the Black Hills. It's disrespectful to me as a fellow hunter, to GFP as a lawmaker, and to the animals themselves. "Road hunting" seems to be part of the hunting culture here, much more so than any of the other places I've hunted (MN, IL, CO, CA), and it reflects badly on all South Dakota hunters and on GFP for their complete lack of enforcement. It really sad to see trucks full of "hunters" driving up and down every since 2 track in the entire black hills. I'd like to see more roads closed after they're no longer needed for logging to increase the area where it's possible to get out and walk and not run into road hunters. How am I supposed to use any real tactics to find a deer when at any moment a truck can drive by and completely ruin my hunt?
- 8000 NEED TO LET THE BUCKS GET A LOT BIGGER . PUT A POINT OF 3 ON ONE SIDE SO ALL THE LITTLE ONES WILL NOT GET SHOT .
- 8000 The deer numbers in the Northwest hills had to be down due to winter kill or lions.
- 8000 I have had a lot of comments over the years and your still here!!!!!!!!!!
- 8000 I hunted around crook mountain near whitewood, I did not see as many deer this year then I normally do.

Larry M. Gigliotti, Ph.D.

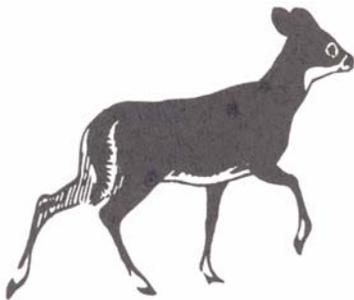


Department of Game, Fish and Parks

Foss Building  
523 East Capitol  
Pierre, South Dakota 57501-3182



Report to Survey Participants  
2009 Black Hills Deer Hunter Survey



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April 2010

Dear Black Hills Deer Hunter,

This is a summary report of the 2009 Black Hills Deer Hunter Survey. We sincerely thank all of you who participated by completing and returning your questionnaire. About 40% of the 2009 Black Hills deer hunters were selected to participate in this year's survey. A total of 2,697 questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 86.9%. I am very pleased with such an excellent response as it demonstrates the importance and value of Black Hills deer hunting and the willingness of our hunters to take an active role in its management efforts. Each year we gain a better understanding of Black Hills deer hunters which will help us better manage the Black Hills deer herd.

This survey represents the 15<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of studying Black Hills deer hunters, and the 14<sup>th</sup> year following the change in the management of the Black Hills deer herd. A major objective of these surveys is to track satisfaction and other hunter-related parameters to evaluate the Black Hills deer season (i.e., provide an evaluation of each year's deer season from the hunters' perspective). A secondary purpose of these surveys is to gain an overall better understanding of Black Hills deer hunters and Black Hills deer hunting.

Sincerely,  
Larry Gigliotti

## 2009 Black Hills Deer Hunter Survey Report Larry M. Gigliotti, Ph.D.

The most glaring results were the numbers of hunters dissatisfied with their 2009 Black Hills deer hunting experience. Satisfaction had risen to very high levels for the periods 2003 through 2005, but started to drop thereafter with a small dip in 2006 but sliding to a relatively low level by 2009 (Figures A and B). Overall, about 54% of the deer hunters were satisfied with their 2009 Black Hills deer hunting experiences and about 34% were dissatisfied. The relatively large drop in 2009 suggests that conditions important to most hunters have deteriorated to a level requiring management intervention. Because hunters are now perceiving a decline in factors important in contributing to a quality or enjoyable hunting experience they are especially dissatisfied because they have recent memories of better times.

The numbers of deer, bucks and quality bucks seen by Black Hills deer hunters have dropped in recent years (Table 1). Also, hunters' subjective evaluations of the deer season based on three parameters (number of deer seen, number of bucks seen and quality of bucks seen) have also decreased in recent years (Figure C). Antler size (measured by total number of points) has been measured over the past 14 years (Table 2).

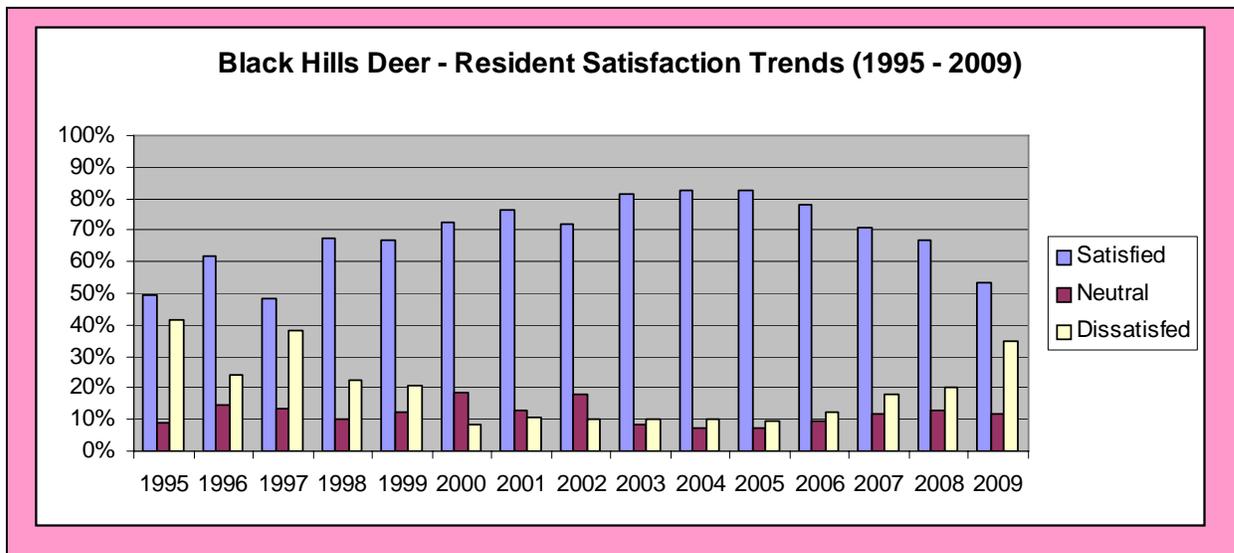


Figure A. Satisfaction trends for resident Black Hills deer hunters (1995 – 2009).

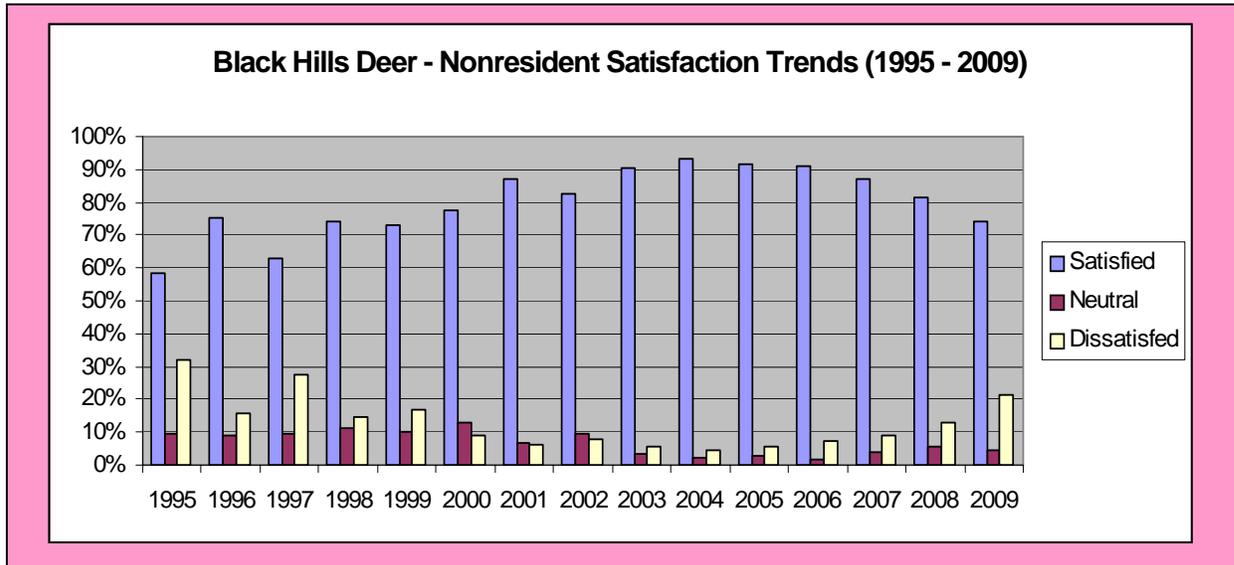


Figure B. Satisfaction trends for nonresident Black Hills deer hunters (1995 – 2009).

Table 1. About how many deer, bucks and quality bucks did you see during your total Black Hills deer hunt?

Hunter Reported Mean Total:	Year											
	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Deer Seen	42.4	43.5	77.5	54.6	69.3	80.0	77.4	82.1	74.9	72.4	58.3	40.7
Bucks Seen	3.6	4.6	7.6	7.2	7.9	10.0	10.9	11.0	10.8	11.7	8.8	7.6
Quality Bucks Seen	1.1	1.4	2.2	2.2	2.4	2.9	3.1	2.6	2.8	2.6	2.1	1.8

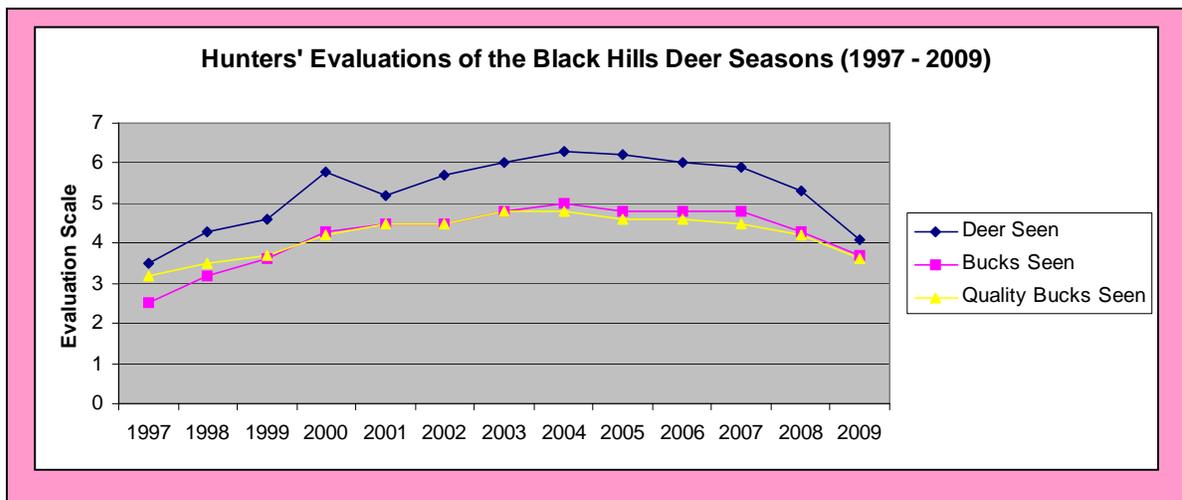
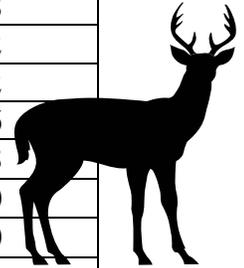


Figure C. Hunter evaluations of the Black Hills deer hunting seasons (1997 – 2009).

Table 2. Antler size (Eastern count) trends for the Black Hills deer season (96–09).

Year	Whitetail Buck		Mule Deer Buck	
	Ave. Total Points	Sample Size	Ave. Total Points	Sample Size
1996	6.7	362	4.7	75
1997	6.7	318	5.1	100
1998	7.0	744	5.3	251
1999	7.0	464	5.5	188
2000	7.5	626	5.8	137
2001	7.8	646	5.9	218
2002	7.9	665	6.0	192
2003	8.1	757	5.9	212
2004	8.1	736	5.8	246
2005	8.2	598	5.7	168
2006	8.1	547	5.9	130
2007	8.2	590	6.9	30
2008	8.0	741	6.5	42
2009	7.9	797	7.0	45



**Mountain Lions.** About 8.5% of the deer hunters reported that they observed a mountain lion while hunting during the 2009 Black Hills deer season. This parameter has been measured for the past six years (Table 3).

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Table 3. Reported observations of mountain lions by Black Hills deer hunters (2004–2009).

Mountain Lion Interactions	Years – Percent YES					
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Observed a mountain lion while Black Hills deer hunting	6.3% N=1,841	6.5% N=1,711	7.7% N=1,330	6.1% N=1,550	6.0% N=2,370	8.5% N=2,559

A complete copy of these survey results can be found on the GFP web-page:  
<http://gfp.sd.gov/hunting/big-game/deer/>  
 or send your name and address to:  
 Larry Gigliotti  
 South Dakota Game, Fish & Parks  
 523 E. Capitol  
 Pierre, SD 57501  
 or send your name and address to me by e-mail: [larry.gigliotti@state.sd.us](mailto:larry.gigliotti@state.sd.us)  
 and ask for the **2009 Black Hills Deer Hunter Survey Report.**

