Human Dimensions Research Program Fact Sheet

2008-2009 Illinois Hunter Harvest Survey

**Purpose of the study:** To survey resident hunters (18-24 game animal hunting categories) annually to determine their activities and harvests in Illinois, as well as their characteristics, attitudes and opinions toward specific wildlife issues.

**Methods:** 2,883 purchasers of 2008-2009 hunting licenses or habitat stamps were sent a mail-back questionnaire in February-April 2009. 50% of the individuals had purchased hunting licenses and 50% had purchased habitat stamps. We received 1,770 usable responses for a 62% response rate.

**Highlights of results:** Key findings of this survey were as follows:

- Sales of resident hunting licenses increased 0.3% from 282,803 sold for the 2007 season to 283,746 sold in the 2008 season.
- Harvest decreased for 12 game animal categories (rabbit, quail, dove, gray partridge, woodcock, snipe, crow, groundhog, fox squirrel, red fox, coyote, and opossum) and increased for 4 categories (pheasant, gray squirrel, raccoon, and gray fox).
- More than half of hunters pursuing upland game (58%) and waterfowl (56%) reported difficulty finding land to hunt on. The majority of hunters pursuing deer and small game reported no difficulty in finding land to hunt on (70% and 59% respectively).
- Few resident hunters (4%) leased land to hunt in Illinois. Of those respondents who did report leasing land, deer (30%), turkey (14%), and small game (12%), were the most commonly pursued species on leased land.
- 77% of deer hunters supported extending the first firearm deer season to include Monday of the week of Thanksgiving, for a total of 4 days. 53% of deer hunters felt adding a day would increase their hunting participation.
- 64% of deer hunters supported changing the Late-Winter Antlerless Season from the current 3 days to 9 days by opening the season 6 days earlier.
- 71% of deer hunters supported adding an additional antlerless firearm deer season. 45% of deer hunters preferred the additional season be added in mid-October.

**For more information:**
For full text of this and other Human Dimensions reports and surveys, please go to [www.inhs.uiuc.edu/cwpe/hd/](http://www.inhs.uiuc.edu/cwpe/hd/)