

Alberta Conservation Association
2023/24 Project Summary Report

Project Name: Hunter Perceived Access Survey

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Partnerships

Alberta Professional Outfitters Society

Alberta Fish & Game Association

Brad Fenson Outdoors

Government of Alberta

University of Alberta

University of Waterloo

Key Findings

- We found that a majority of hunters have positive or neutral views toward hunting access on private land and that their satisfaction with private land access is closely connected to their success in obtaining access and the perceived change in access success rate hunters experienced.
- We found that respondents who live or hunt in areas closer to large urban centres were more likely to have issues gaining hunting access on private land. Similarly, Wildlife Management Units closer to urban centres were more commonly cited as the most challenging to obtain hunting access.
- We found that respondents believed that previous trespassing issues, general anti-hunting sentiment, or an opposition to hunting are the primary reasons for them being denied hunting access.

- We found that respondents who hunt ungulate big game, particularly elk, and primarily hunt in the Foothills or Mountain zones were more likely to have a negative perception of hunting access on private land in Alberta.

Details

A survey of Alberta hunters was completed by Alberta Conservation Association to gain insight into their perspectives for gaining permission to hunt on private property. This survey was conducted to complement the 2020/21 Landowner Hunter Access survey.

Our survey was active for 36 days in 2021/22. We asked a series of questions pertaining to hunter demographics and general perceptions of spatial and temporal trends related to accessing private land for hunting. The majority of respondents had positive views toward their overall success at acquiring permissions on private land, the change in their success rate for acquiring access over the previous five years, and their satisfaction with hunting access on private land. However, there is a demographic that does appear to have difficulty accessing private land. This includes respondents who have not lived in Canada their entire lives, speak a language other than English at home, live in the southern portion of the province, and live or hunt near large urban areas. Additionally, those who hunt ungulate big game, particularly elk, and primarily hunt in the Foothills or Mountain zones were more likely to have negative views toward their experience with gaining permissions. Because our survey used a non-random (i.e., voluntary) implementation methodology, we cannot infer if these trends pertain to the entire hunter population in Alberta. However, we were able to learn about the types of hunters that are more commonly given access to private land, some of the challenges that hunters and landowners face, and the areas of common interest that may help to build and maintain relationships over time.