

Survey Information Letter

Study Title: From the Mouths of Hunters: Towards A Better Understanding of the Relationship Between Hunters and Conservation Action in Canada

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The following information is intended to help you make an informed decision about if you would like to participate in this survey. This letter explains what the study is about, possible risks and benefits, and your rights as a research participant. If you do not understand something in the letter, please contact Maya Basdeo using the contact information above, before consenting to participate.

What is the study about?

You are invited to participate in a Master's level research study that explores the relationship between hunters in Canada and conservation, from the perspective of hunters. As both a hunter and a conservationist herself, Maya Basdeo has an ongoing interest in the role hunters in Canada play in conservation projects and initiatives, and the ways in which hunter participation is communicated about in academic and non-academic material. Current academic literature about the relationship between hunting and conservation in Canada is limited and may not accurately represent hunters' views and actions concerning conservation.

The purpose of this research is to gain a more accurate understanding of how hunters in Canada view and engage in conservation by asking hunters directly. We plan to combine the results of this survey with interviews from expert hunter-conservationists in Canada, as well as existing academic literature about hunting and conservation in Canada.



What does participation involve?

Participation in the study will consist of an online anonymous questionnaire that takes approximately 15 minutes to complete. You will first be asked some demographic information such as age, cultural heritage, and residence location. The purpose of collecting demographic information is to capture and reflect the diversity among hunters in Canada which may help to counter incorrect stereotypes or assumptions that exist about hunters.

The remaining questions ask about the kinds of hunting and conservation activities you do, and your opinions about conservation. With your permission, anonymous quotations from open-ended responses may be used in papers and publications that arise from this research project.

Who may participate in the study?

This survey is intended for residents of Canada who are at least 13 years of age and are currently a hunter or have been a hunter in the past as determined by licence, permit, course or other respective qualification in your province or territory, including those for youth and apprentice hunters. If you are a youth hunter or hunting apprentice between the ages of 13 – 17, please discuss your participation with a parent or guardian before completing the survey.

Is participation in the study voluntary?

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decline to answer any question(s) by selecting “prefer not to answer”, or by skipping to the next question. You may stop participating at any time by not submitting your responses and closing your web browser.

Will I receive anything for participating in the study?

You will not receive any remuneration or in-kind benefit in exchange for your participation in the study. Since the survey is anonymous, email addresses will not be collected. Once the project has been completed, survey results and research findings will be made available on the survey website.



What are the possible benefits of the study?

Participation in this study may not provide any direct personal benefit to you. The study may benefit the academic community and greater society in the following way(s):

- Reflect the perspectives and opinions of hunters in Canada who complete the survey, potentially correcting misconceptions about what hunters think and do about conservation.
- Fill an existing gap in academic and general literature about the relationship hunters in Canada have with conservation, thereby informing future students and researchers who are interested in hunting and/or conservation.
- Provide a clearer definition of 'conservation' according to contemporary hunters in Canada.
- Provide insight to hunting and conservation communities and organizations about how best to engage with hunters about conservation issues and reduce barriers for hunters to participate in conservation efforts in Canada.
- Identify/confirm areas of overlap between hunters and other conservationists where collaboration may occur.

What are the risks associated with the study?

There are no known or anticipated risks associated with participation in this study. If a question or the topic makes you uncomfortable, you can choose not to provide a response.

Will my identity be known?

Your participation in this study, and the data collected, is anonymous. This anonymous questionnaire will not ask for your name or other identifying information. Removing your responses later is not possible because the researchers will have no way of identifying which responses are yours. Any identifying information included in written responses will be removed or coded in a way to not reveal personal attributes. When results are reported, they will be used to describe general categories of responses, and will not report individual survey responses.

How is data collected, stored, and protected?

The online survey you may choose to complete is operated by Qualtrics. Qualtrics



software has implemented technical, administrative, and physical safeguards to protect the information provided via the Services from loss, misuse, and unauthorized access, disclosure, alteration, or destruction. However, no Internet transmission is ever fully secure or error free. Only the researchers identified above will have access to survey data. Collected data will be securely stored on password-protected computers for at least 1 year. With your permission the data that you provide in this study may be shared publicly without any names or other identifying information.

Has the study received ethics clearance?

This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through a University of Waterloo Research Ethics Board (REB #44598). If you have questions for the Board, contact the Office of Research Ethics, toll-free at 1-833-643-2379 (Canada and USA), 1-519-888-4440, or reb@uwaterloo.ca.

Who should I contact if I have questions regarding my participation in the study?

If you have any questions about this study or need more information before you decide whether to participate, please contact Student Investigator Maya Basdeo by email at maya.basdeo@uwaterloo.ca.

