It's no secret that the desire to shoot bigger bucks has spawned an entire industry catering to the needs and dreams of hunters and landowners. Nor is it news that the herd in many places is now better off for it.

But in striving to reach our hunting goals, can we go too far? Might we risk losing some of the mystique that drew us to deer hunting in the first place? In short, in trying to use management to make the hunting experience better, might we instead end up making it worse?

That question was the impetus for our feature “Managing Whitetail Management,” in the January 2001 issue. There, David Morris — who has over 20 years of professional deer-management experience — voiced concern that misusing some intensive management practices could take too much of the challenge out of harvesting deer. Were that to happen, David argued, we would risk the sanctity of what the hunting community knows as “fair chase.”

David's look at the ethics of various management practices was necessarily based on his own experiences, as well as those of many readers he knows across North America. But how do the rest of you feel about such matters? To find out, along with David's feature we ran a survey asking for your input. We wanted to know which practices you think have a place in today's deer woods.

In the past three issues, we revealed how readers voted on the fair-chase aspects of many hunting tactics, including everything from baiting and deer drives to snow tracking and the use of high-let-off bows. Now, it's time to reveal how you voted on some management practices now being used in the deer woods.

As with earlier parts of this series, keep in mind that our goal isn't to turn this into an "us against them" debate. That does none of us any good. All we want to do is show that there's a wide range of opinions on how to hunt and manage the species ethically. Engaging in an open dialogue makes us think about our own views and why we hold them, which is healthy in the long run.

That said, here's how you voted on many of the management questions we asked in our survey:

**HUNTING DEER THAT HAVE BEEN HANDLED BY MAN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fair Chase</th>
<th>Unfair</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14 Percent</td>
<td>84 Percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

David claimed in his feature that fair-chase hunting is impossible if the deer have been tuned or otherwise habituated to humans. “This involves handling, holding in captivity or any other type of recognized dependence on man, such as direct dependence on feed,” he wrote. (Notably, David distinguished this from supplemental feeding, which is part of many sound management programs.)

Seven of every eight voters agreed with the author, saying they were against hunting “handled” deer. Only 3 percent of Iowa voters approved of the practice, followed by 5 percent in Illinois and 7 percent in Missouri.

Highest support came from New Jersey, with 35 percent of voters approving of the practice as being consistent with fair chase. However, every other area with above-average support was below the Mason-Dixon Line: South Carolina (28 percent), Louisiana (24), Texas (23), Georgia (23) and North Carolina (21).

**HUNTING DEER IN HEAVILY OVEDBROWSED HABITAT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fair Chase</th>
<th>Unfair</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>77 Percent</td>
<td>21 Percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To have fair chase, “the habitat must be 'natural,'” David wrote. “By this, I mean there must be at least a certain minimum vegetative quality level, with the habitat in good condition and not too damaged or denuded by gross overbrowsing... This is primarily related to deer density and calls for a herd to be in balance with its food supply.”

David argues that if a deer is desperate for food it will sacrifice some security to find food, making it overly vulnerable to hunters. But based on the voting, not many of you agree that this is reason enough to avoid hunting nutritionally stressed animals. Indeed, some of you claimed that such herds need to be hunted, to get deer numbers in line with the food supply.

**INTRODUCING NON-NATIVE GENETICS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fair Chase</th>
<th>Unfair</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>43 Percent</td>
<td>55 Percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In his January feature, David contended that bringing in “new blood” of non-native genetics could help address some of the issues with native deer populations. The majority of readers who took our survey on fair chase expressed support for most efforts to grow bigger deer. Photo by Mike Searles.

DECEMBER 2001
THE NEW POLARIS SPORTSMAN 700 TWIN PROVIDES A POWER TRIP TO GET AWAY FROM IT ALL

Since the dawn of time, humans have worked to find better modes of transportation to increase their mobility and further develop civilization. Ancient people invented the wheel; Kirkpatrick MacMillan invented the modern bicycle and Karl Benz built the first automobile. With each advancement, mobility increased, cities grew larger and life became more.

Today, civilization seems a little overwhelming. Skyscrapers, smog, stoplights and traffic jams as far as the eye can see. Now it's more important than ever for people to get away from their everyday hectic lives.

Polaris has answered the call by introducing the ultimate way to find relief from our fast-paced, high-stress world — the Polaris Sportsman 700 Twin. The most powerful, smoothest-riding ATV on the planet, the Sportsman 700 Twin makes getting to that secret spot deep in the woods or an unexplored trail high atop a mountain — a piece of cake.

The Sportsman 700 Twin is powered by a 683cc, even-firing parallel twin engine that is capable of producing 20 percent more horsepower and 25 percent more torque than its predecessor. And with an industry-leading 1,500-pound towing capacity, launching your boat or hauling a prized kill out of the woods has never been easier.

Though it is the most powerful ATV on the market, its tight, 76-inch turning radius, long-travel suspension, high ground clearance and the world's best-selling automatic transmission allow for a smooth ride and exceptional handling. A rocky, mountain trail or a fallen tree is no match for the Sportsman 700 Twin.

Information about the complete line of Polaris products is available from authorized Polaris dealers or from the Polaris home page at www.polarisindustries.com.

has the potential to compromise fair chase. However, he claimed that this threat largely comes from hunting the deer that have been released, not the descendants of those animals.

Few of us hunt native whitetails in the purest sense. Most states and provinces at least dabbled in restocking during the 20th century, moving deer within their own borders when possible but going elsewhere for brood stock when it wasn't.

What's done is done, and we've come to accept the descendants of those deer as "native," whether they are or not. But what about further infusions of new genetics, via restocking and/or artificial insemination? Do these threaten fair chase?

Votes largely divided along regional lines. Among states and provinces from which we got at least 20 votes, highest support was found in North and South Carolina, where 70 percent of voters in each state approved. In Tennessee, approval was 68 percent, and Florida came in at 62. Meanwhile, only 28 percent of Iowa respondents approved, with Vermont next at 29 and Wisconsin at 34.

FOOD PLOTS

Fair Chase: 79 Percent
Unfair: 19 Percent

David argued that using food plots to improve herd nutrition is consistent with fair chase. "All things being equal," he wrote, "a deer's wilderness is directly related to the quality and availability of food, provided it's always available and the deer don't associate it with man, both of which are the case with food plots."

Traditionally a means of luring deer to specific areas for hunting purposes, food plots now are being used more and more to improve herd health. And more than four of every five readers who expressed an opinion on using food plots to boost deer number and/or size supported it.

In areas from which we received at least 20 votes on this question, approval was highest in South Carolina and Texas (92 percent); followed closely by North Carolina, Arkansas and Florida (91); Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky and Oklahoma (90); and Mississippi (88).

By an overwhelming margin, readers in Maine expressed the lowest support; only 36 percent of respondents there gave it a thumbs-up. Then came voters in Minnesota, Wisconsin and New York, with 74 percent from each state advocating the use of food plots as fair chase.

SUPPLEMENTAL FEEDING

Fair Chase: 90 Percent
Unfair: 9 Percent

David supports supplemental feeding, provided it's used to "help level out and somewhat elevate the nutritional plane of a herd without degrading the habitat." An overwhelming majority of survey voters agreed.

Feeding got unanimous approval in Oklahoma, South Carolina, Rhode Island, Wyoming, Washington, New Brunswick, Colorado, Arizona, Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba. Nearly as supportive were voters in Kentucky (98 percent); Tennessee, West Virginia, Florida and Kansas (97); Michigan and Missouri (96); and Indiana (95).

On the other end of the spectrum, just 68 percent of voters in Maine and 83 percent of those in Wisconsin agreed that supplemental feeding is consistent with fair chase.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Next month, we'll see how readers voted on the practice that elicited the most comments of any on our survey: the use of high fences in deer management. Stay tuned!
It's no secret that the desire to shoot bigger bucks has spawned an entire industry catering to the needs and dreams of hunters and landowners. Nor is it news that the herd in many places is now better off for it.

But in striving to reach our hunting goals, can we go too far? Might we risk losing some of the mystique that drew us to deer hunting in the first place? In short, in trying to use management to make the hunting experience better, might we instead end up making it worse?

That question was the impetus for our feature “Managing Whitetail Management,” in the January 2001 issue. There, David Morris — who has over 20 years of professional deer-management experience — voiced concern that misusing some intensive management practices could take much of the challenge out of harvesting deer. Were that to happen, David argued, we would risk the sanctity of what the hunting community knows as “fair chase.”

David’s look at the ethics of various management practices was necessarily based on his own experiences, as well as those of many readers he knows across North America. But how do the rest of you feel about such matters? To find out, along with David’s feature we ran a survey asking for your input. We wanted to know which practices you think have a place in today’s deer woods.

In the past three issues, we revealed how readers voted on the fair-chase aspects of many hunting tactics, including everything from baiting and deer drives to snow tracking and the use of high-let-off bows. Now, it’s time to reveal how you voted on some management practices now being used in the deer woods.

As with earlier parts of this series, keep in mind that our goal isn’t to turn this into an “us against them” debate. That does none of us any good. All we want to do is show that there’s a wide range of opinions on how to hunt and manage the species ethically. Engaging in an open dialogue makes us think about our own views and why we hold them, which is healthy in the long run.

That said, here’s how you voted on many of the management questions we asked in our survey:

**HUNTING DEER THAT HAVE BEEN HANDLED BY MAN**
Fair Chase: 14 Percent
Unfair: 84 Percent

David claimed in his feature that fair-chase hunting is impossible if the deer have been tamed or otherwise habituated to humans. "This involves handling, holding in captivity or any other type of recognized dependence on man, such as direct dependence on feed," he wrote. (Notably, David distinguished this from supplemental feeding, which is part of many sound management programs.)

Seven of every eight voters agreed with the author, saying they were against hunting "handled" deer. Only 3 percent of Iowa voters approved of the practice, followed by 5 percent in Illinois and 7 percent in Missouri.

Highest support came from New Jersey, with 35 percent of voters approving of the practice as being consistent with fair chase. However, every other area with above-average support was below the Mason-Dixon Line: South Carolina (28 percent), Louisiana (24), Texas (23), Georgia (23) and North Carolina (21).

**HUNTING DEER IN HEAVILY OVERBROWSED HABITAT**
Fair Chase: 77 Percent
Unfair: 21 Percent

To have fair chase, "the habitat must be ‘natural,’” David wrote. "By this, I mean there must be at least a certain minimum vegetative quality level, with the habitat in good condition and not too damaged or denuded by gross overbrowsing. . . . This is primarily related to deer density and calls for a herd to be in balance with its food supply.”

David argues that if a deer is desperate for food it will sacrifice some security to find food, making it overly vulnerable to hunters. But based on the voting, not many of you agree that this is reason enough to avoid hunting nutritionally stressed animals. Indeed, some of you claimed that such herds need to be hunted, to get deer numbers in line with the food supply.

**INTRODUCING NON-NATIVE GENETICS**
Fair Chase: 43 Percent
Unfair: 55 Percent

In his January feature, David contended that bringing in "new blood"...
products

THE NEW POLARIS
SPORTSMAN 700 TWIN
PROVIDES A POWER TRIP TO
GET AWAY FROM IT ALL

Since the dawn of time, humans have worked to find better modes of transportation to increase their mobility and further develop civilization. Ancient people invented the wheel; Kirkpatrick MacMillan invented the modern bicycle and Karl Benz built the first automobile. With each advancement, mobility increased, cities grew larger and life became more.

Today, civilization seems a little overwhelming. Skyscrapers, smog, stoplights and traffic jams as far as the eye can see. Now it's more important than ever for people to get away from their everyday hectic lives.

Polaris has answered the call by introducing the ultimate way to find relief from our fast-paced, high-stress world—the Polaris Sportsman 700 Twin. The most powerful, smoothest-riding ATV on the planet, the Sportsman 700 Twin makes getting to that secret spot deep in the woods or an unexplored trail high atop a mountain—miles from the nearest strip mall—a piece of cake.

The Sportsman 700 Twin is powered by a 683cc, even-firing parallel twin engine that is capable of producing 20 percent more horsepower and 25 percent more torque than its predecessor. And with an industry-leading 1,500-pound towing capacity, launching your boat or hauling a prized kill out of the woods has never been easier.

Though it is the most powerful ATV on the market, its tight, 76-inch turning radius, long-travel suspension, high ground clearance and the world’s best-selling automatic transmission allow for a smooth ride and exceptional handling. A rocky, mountain trail or a fallen tree is no match for the Sportsman 700 Twin.

Information about the complete line of Polaris products is available from authorized Polaris dealers or from the Polaris home page at www.polarisindustries.com.

has the potential to compromise fair chase. However, he claimed that this threat largely comes from hunting the deer that have been released, not the descendants of those animals.

Few of us hunt native whitetails in the purest sense. Most states and provinces at least dabbled in restocking during the 20th century, moving deer within their own borders when possible but going elsewhere for brood stock when it wasn’t.

What’s done is done, and we’ve come to accept the descendants of those deer as “native,” whether they are or not. But what about further infusions of new genetics, via restocking and/or artificial insemination? Do these threaten fair chase?

Votes largely divided along regional lines. Among states and provinces from which we got at least 20 votes, highest support was found in North and South Carolina, where 70 percent of voters in each state approved. In Tennessee, approval was 68 percent, and Florida came in at 62. Meanwhile, only 28 percent of Iowa respondents approved, with Vermont next at 29 and Wisconsin at 34.

FOOD PLOTS
Fair Chase: 79 Percent
Unfair: 19 Percent

David argued that using food plots to improve herd nutrition is consistent with fair chase. “All things being equal,” he wrote, “a deer’s wilderness is directly related to the quality and availability of food, provided it’s always available and the deer don’t associate it with man, both of which are the case with food plots.”

Traditionally a means of luring deer to specific areas for hunting purposes, food plots now are being used more and more to improve herd health. And more than four of every five readers who expressed an opinion on food plots to boost deer number and/or size supported it.

In areas from which we received at least 20 votes on this question, approval was highest in South Carolina and Texas (92 percent); followed closely by North Carolina, Arkansas and Florida (91); Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky and Oklahoma (90); and Mississippi (88).

By an overwhelming margin, readers in Maine expressed the lowest support; only 36 percent of respondents there gave it a thumbs-up. Then came voters in Minnesota, Wisconsin and New York, with 74 percent from each state advocating the use of food plots as fair chase.

SUPPLEMENTAL FEEDING
Fair Chase: 90 Percent
Unfair: 9 Percent

David supports supplemental feeding, provided it’s used to “help level out and somewhat elevate the nutritional plane of a herd without degrading the habitat.” An overwhelming majority of survey voters agreed.

Feeding got unanimous approval in Oklahoma, South Carolina, Rhode Island, Wyoming, Washington, New Brunswick, Colorado, Arizona, Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba. Nearly as supportive were voters in Kentucky (98 percent); Tennessee, West Virginia, Florida and Kansas (97); Michigan and Missouri (96); and Indiana (95).

On the other end of the spectrum, just 68 percent of voters in Maine and 83 percent of those in Wisconsin agreed that supplemental feeding is consistent with fair chase.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Next month, we’ll see how readers voted on the practice that elicited the most comments of any on our survey: the use of high fences in deer management. Stay tuned!