
Hunting and Fishing on Private Land in Oklahoma in 1964

FARRELL COPELIN

Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, Oklahoma City

JOHN PRICE

Crop and Livestock Reporting Service, USDA, Oklahoma City

and

VICTOR LAMBOU

Fisheries Research Laboratory,

Department of Wildlife Conservation, Norman

INTRODUCTION

The survey was conducted primarily to determine how much private land in Oklahoma is used for hunting and fishing. Additional information was sought on restrictions on the use of private land, the number of days of hunting and fishing, available game and fish, income to landowners from hunters and fishermen, and persons living on the land who hunt and fish on their place of residence.

DESIGN

Eighteen of the 77 counties in Oklahoma were selected for the survey in a stratified random sample (Figure 1). Within each of the 18 counties a stratified random sample was taken. Twenty percent of the land operators were to be included in the survey. The Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service offices had the most nearly complete list of farm and ranch owners available. However, since their list contained names of persons who no longer operated land and would not report, more than 20% of the names were chosen (Table I). State-wide, about 120,000 persons are listed as cooperators of the ASCS, but only 88,000 still operate land.

The survey consisted of a mail survey in two waves, followed by personal enumerations. On 3 April, 1965 questionnaires were mailed to 6022 persons in-

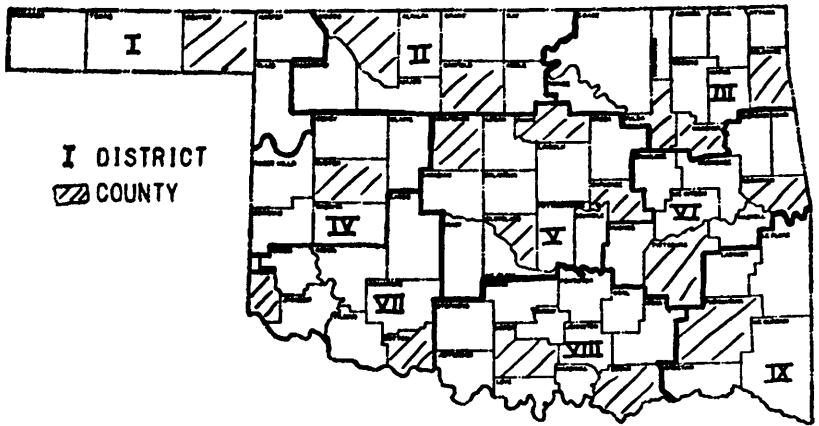


FIGURE 1. EIGHTEEN SAMPLE COUNTIES & NINE DISTRICTS

quiring about calendar year 1964. When returns from the first mailing dwindled to a few each day (12 days after the first mailing), a second questionnaire was mailed to nonrespondents. Twelve days later the mail survey phase was terminated and personal enumerators were trained. They interviewed 20% of those not responding to either mailing (Table I).

Enumerators assembled in Oklahoma City 27 April for instructions and survey forms. They were requested to complete the survey within two weeks. Most of the interviews were completed in that time period.

All data were placed on electronic data processing cards, and data were compiled and analyzed at the Computing Center, University of Oklahoma.

ANALYSIS

The number of land operators in Oklahoma has been decreasing for many years. The list of names available from the ASCS still contained the names of several persons who no longer operate a farm or ranch. Replies from these persons were discarded.

Within the sample 1878 usable replies were received by mail, and 677 persons were interviewed. Data from the personal interviews were expanded to represent all nonrespondents to the mail survey who were not interviewed. The information from the mail replies was then added to the expanded data from the personal interviews. The sum of these data were then expanded for the nine districts based on the ratio of the number of land operators in the county (or counties) to the number of land operators in the District (Table II). The sum of the district totals provided the state total.

An exception was made for replies to questions 10 and 11. Apparently these were not understood by persons reporting by mail. Only data from personal enumerations were used.

RESULTS

Oklahoma is primarily a rural state: 81.2% of the land area is in farms, and 92% of the land is privately owned (Table III).

1. *Restrictions on the use of private land for hunting and fishing in 1964*—The survey showed that about half of the private land operators permitted hunting and fishing only by themselves and their friends in 1964 (Tables IV-VII incl.).

TABLE I. PRIVATE LAND ACCESS SURVEY*

| County | Total Operators In County | Letters Mailed | Usable Mail Responses | Personal Enumerations |
|------------|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Beaver | 1011 | 296 | 96 | 32 |
| Garfield | 1838 | 538 | 215 | 59 |
| Woods | 1254 | 367 | 153 | 41 |
| Tulsa | 1305 | 382 | 131 | 36 |
| Wagoner | 1500 | 439 | 131 | 37 |
| Custer | 1397 | 409 | 142 | 52 |
| Kingfisher | 1086 | 318 | 111 | 41 |
| Payne | 1230 | 360 | 124 | 32 |
| Harmon | 632 | 185 | 72 | 19 |
| Bryan | 1360 | 398 | 115 | 51 |
| Okfuskee | 1011 | 296 | 61 | 44 |
| Delaware | 980 | 287 | 67 | 41 |
| Carter | 919 | 269 | 57 | 42 |
| Pushmataha | 673 | 197 | 52 | 28 |
| McClain | 977 | 286 | 81 | 28 |
| Cotton | 933 | 273 | 75 | 37 |
| Sequoyah | 1195 | 350 | 92 | 31 |
| Pittsburg | 1270 | 372 | 103 | 26 |
| | 20,571 | 6,022 | 1,878 (31.2%) | 677 |

*Actual numbers from the sample.

The word "friend" embraces hired hands or tenants living on the farm, relatives, neighbors and friends.

Slightly more than one-third of the private land operators reportedly open their farms and ranches to anyone by permission (36.6% for hunting and 34.9% for fishing). Enumerators indicated that some operators were prejudiced against hunters from large cities. Some of these operators may have permitted access to persons from rural regions of the State without a full-fledged open-door policy.

No access was permitted to about 10% of the farms and ranches, according to the survey (9.1 % for hunting and 11.1% for fishing). However, on some of these farms there was no hunting or fishing opportunity. This was apparent in District I (based upon reports from Beaver County only). Only 4% of the operators reported no access for hunting, and yet 34% indicated no access for fishing. Human population density is low in District I, and landowners are well known for their hospitality. It seemed inconsistent that no access was available to 34% of the land for fishing. A comparison of data on access and available fish indicates that two-thirds of the land operators did not have catchable-size fish on their places.

Persons queried were not consistent in answering all the questions on the long questionnaire. Therefore, a direct comparison cannot be made between access to private land and the number of operators with catchable-size fish. However, the data do indicate that the high percentage of no access in District I was related to the low number of ponds.

Less than two percent of the operators reported that sportsmen had paid a daily fee to hunt and fish, or had leased their land (1.6% for hunting and 1.2% for fishing).

II. *The number of days of hunting and fishing on private land*—According to this survey, there were 1,310,921 days of hunting and 1,403,996 days of fishing on private land in 1964 (Table VIII). This estimate of hunting is lower than the statewide estimate from a survey of hunters. In 1964 hunter reports indicated 1,730,174 days of hunting on public and private land.

III. *Available game*—Operators reported on game present and game hunted. Quail apparently was the most hunted of all the game on farms (Table IX).

The survey indicated a total of 167,251 ponds and lakes in Oklahoma and 68% of these stocked with catchable-sized fish.

IV. *Income from fees for hunting and fishing*—Only a small percent of the farm operators charged a fee for hunting and fishing (Tables VI and VII). The highest percent of operators charging for hunting was in McClain (8.7%) and Woods (5.5%). Fishing fees were charged by 5.2% of the operators in Delaware County, 4.6% in McClain, and 4.3% in Harmon.

TABLE II. OPERATORS IN 18 SAMPLE COUNTIES AND NINE CROP-REPORTING DISTRICTS

| District | Number Operators | County | Number Operators |
|----------|------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| I | 3,801 | Beaver | 1,011 |
| II | 10,338 | Garfield Woods | 1,838 1,254 |
| III | 12,603 | Tulsa Delaware Wagoner | 1,305 980 1,500 |
| IV | 7,353 | Custer | 1,397 |
| V | 17,064 | Kingfisher Payne Okfuskee McClain | 1,086 1,230 1,011 977 |
| VI | 10,921 | Pittsburg Sequoyah | 1,270 1,195 |
| VII | 8,944 | Harmon Cotton | 632 933 |
| VIII | 10,679 | Carter Bryan | 919 1,360 |
| IX | <u>6,297</u> | Pushmataha | 673 |
| | 88,000 | | |

TABLE III. OKLAHOMA FARM DATA IN BRIEF, LAND UTILIZATION

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|------------|
| Total land area (1959 Census) | Acres | 44,087,680 |
| Land in farms (1959 Census) | Acres | 35,800,688 |
| Percent of land area in farms | Percent | 81.2 |
| Number of farms in 1964 | Number | 88,000 |
| Cropland, total (1959 Census) | Acres | 14,043,828 |
| Land pastured, total (1959 Census) | Acres | 22,563,153 |
| Woodland, total (1959 Census) | Acres | 4,456,025 |
| Irrigated land, total (1959 Census) | Acres | 197,632 |

TABLE IV: HUNTING ACCESS IN PERCENT, BY DISTRICTS—1964

| District | No Hunting Permitted | Fee Hunting | Anyone By Permission | Family and Friends Only |
|----------|----------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| I | 4 | 0 | 48 | 47 |
| II | 12 | 3 | 27 | 58 |
| III | 12 | 1 | 39 | 49 |
| IV | 5 | 0 | 36 | 59 |
| V | 7 | 2 | 36 | 55 |
| VI | 8 | 1 | 38 | 53 |
| VII | 6 | 1 | 34 | 58 |
| VIII | 15 | 0 | 44 | 41 |
| IX | 5 | 0 | 37 | 58 |
| | 9.1 | 1.6 | 36.6 | 52.7 |

TABLE V. FISHING ACCESS, IN PERCENT—1964

| District | No Fishing Permitted | Fee Fishing | Anyone By Permission | Family and Friends Only |
|----------|----------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| I. | 34 | 0 | 29 | 37 |
| II | 18 | 2 | 27 | 53 |
| III | 15 | 1 | 37 | 47 |
| IV | 8 | 0 | 36 | 56 |
| V | 8 | 1 | 35 | 56 |
| VI | 7 | 0 | 39 | 54 |
| VII | 9 | 1 | 32 | 58 |
| VIII | 16 | 1 | 38 | 45 |
| IX | 5 | 0 | 38 | 57 |
| | 11.2 | 1.2 | 34.9 | 52.8 |

TABLE VI. HUNTING ACCESS IN PERCENT, BY COUNTIES—1964

| County | Hunting Permitted | | | No Hunting Permitted |
|------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| | Family & Friends Only | Anyone by Permission | Hunting Fee | |
| Beaver | 47.8 | 44.7 | 1.0 | 6.5 |
| Garfield | 47.6 | 31.6 | 1.3 | 19.5 |
| Woods | 69.0 | 20.4 | 5.5 | 5.1 |
| Tulsa | 32.8 | 31.8 | 1.0 | 34.4 |
| Delaware | 53.2 | 40.4 | 2.6 | 3.8 |
| Wagoner | 52.0 | 40.8 | 1.5 | 5.7 |
| Custer | 58.0 | 36.7 | .3 | 5.0 |
| Kingfisher | 46.0 | 43.8 | .5 | 9.7 |
| Payne | 71.1 | 17.3 | .3 | 11.3 |
| Okfuskee | 60.7 | 34.8 | .5 | 4.0 |
| McClain | 50.6 | 36.6 | 8.7 | 4.1 |
| Pittsburg | 52.0 | 35.4 | 2.7 | 9.9 |
| Sequoyah | 59.0 | 36.0 | 0 | 5.0 |
| Harmon | 60.3 | 34.1 | 2.8 | 2.8 |
| Cotton | 55.9 | 34.3 | .5 | 9.3 |
| Carter | 23.9 | 54.9 | 2.4 | 18.8 |
| Bryan | 48.0 | 37.9 | .2 | 13.9 |
| Pushmataha | 57.4 | 36.7 | .3 | 5.6 |

Operators did not report the amount of money received from hunting and fishing license fees.

V. *Land operators who hunt and fish*—Oklahoma law provides that persons living on land can hunt and fish there without a license. If they hunt or fish elsewhere, they are required to have a license.

An estimate of licensed and unlicensed hunters was developed by associating data from several surveys. About 81.5% of the hunters were licensed (Table X). This survey of land operators indicated that 29% of the operators that hunted, hunted only on their place of residence. Therefore, they were entitled to hunt without a license. Thirty-two percent of the operators who fished, fished only on their place of residence. About 84% of the fishermen were licensed. (Table XI).

TABLE VII. FISHING ACCESS IN PERCENT, BY COUNTIES—1964

| County | Fishing Permitted | | | No Fishing Permitted |
|------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------------------|
| | Family & Friends Only | Anyone by Permission | Fee Fishing | |
| Beaver | 42.0 | 25.9 | 1.2 | 30.9 |
| Garfield | 40.2 | 33.0 | 2.2 | 24.6 |
| Woods | 73.7 | 16.1 | 2.2 | 8.0 |
| Tulsa | 35.4 | 34.6 | .8 | 29.2 |
| Delaware | 57.0 | 28.2 | 5.2 | 9.6 |
| Wagoner | 53.9 | 40.1 | .2 | 5.8 |
| Custer | 56.0 | 35.5 | .3 | 8.2 |
| Kingfisher | 44.3 | 41.1 | .8 | 13.8 |
| Payne | 67.4 | 20.6 | .5 | 11.5 |
| Okfuskee | 62.2 | 31.8 | .7 | 5.3 |
| McClain | 54.0 | 38.5 | 4.6 | 2.9 |
| Pittsburg | 55.1 | 36.7 | .9 | 7.3 |
| Sequoyah | 59.6 | 35.3 | .3 | 4.8 |
| Harmon | 61.7 | 21.3 | 4.3 | 12.7 |
| Cotton | 56.3 | 33.1 | 1.0 | 9.6 |
| Carter | 38.3 | 41.8 | 3.0 | 16.9 |
| Bryan | 48.2 | 35.4 | .4 | 16.0 |
| Pushmataha | 56.7 | 37.2 | .3 | 5.8 |

TABLE VIII. TOTAL VISITS TO PRIVATE LAND

| District | Hunting | Fishing |
|----------|------------------|------------------|
| I | 37,374 | 8,108 |
| II | 119,491 | 95,828 |
| III | 156,232 | 171,437 |
| IV | 134,946 | 189,849 |
| V | 295,653 | 265,344 |
| VI | 221,351 | 201,306 |
| VII | 173,794 | 154,551 |
| VIII | 75,975 | 193,716 |
| IX | 96,105 | 123,857 |
| | <u>1,310,921</u> | <u>1,403,996</u> |

TABLE IX. KINDS OF GAME AVAILABLE

Operators Reporting Game

| | Number | | Percent Harvested |
|-----------------|--------------|----------------|-------------------|
| | Game Present | Game Harvested | |
| Ducks | 25,943 | 12,164 | 47 |
| Geese | 9,408 | 5,568 | 59 |
| Dove | 64,292 | 31,104 | 51 |
| Quail | 76,404 | 58,049 | 58 |
| Squirrel | 52,699 | 32,622 | 48 |
| Rabbit | 73,742 | 38,284 | 51 |
| Pheasant | 5,602 | 2,862 | 51 |
| Turkey | 5,213 | 1,426 | 29 |
| Prairie Chicken | 1,391 | 187 | 14 |
| Deer | 19,930 | 9,153 | 46 |

TABLE X. LICENSED AND UNLICENSED OKLAHOMA HUNTERS—1960

| | Licensed | Unlicensed | Total Fishermen |
|--------------|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Resident | | | |
| 12-15 | 0 | 20,804 ¹ | 20,804 |
| 16-64 | 167,520 ² | 7,907 ³ | 175,427 |
| 65 and over | 0 | 9,704 ⁴ | 9,704 |
| Non-Resident | 1,973 ⁵ | 0 | 1,973 |
| Total | 169,493 (81.5%) | 38,415 (18.5%) | 207,908 |

¹According to the 1960 National Survey of Fishing and Hunting 12.2% in this age class hunted. There were 170,528 Oklahomans in this age category. Some of these may have purchased a special permit to hunt turkey, pheasant, prairie chicken or deer.

²License sales: Includes 62,191 resident hunting; 105,329 combination hunting-fishing.

³In 1960 the average farm family size was 3.31. There were 94,676 farm operators, 87% of which lived on the land (82,368 operators; 272,638 people). Assuming that 1 in 10 hunted (the statewide average), 27,264 persons hunted. According to a survey of land operators in 1964, 29% hunted only on their place of residence. This means 7907 were entitled to hunt without a license.

An unknown number of persons in the following categories may also hunt without a license: 1. Honorably discharged war veterans who are disabled to the extent of 60% or more; 2. Citizens of Oklahoma serving in the U. S. Armed Forces on properly authorized 10-day leave of absence from military duty and serving outside the State of Oklahoma.

⁴According to the 1960 National Survey 3.9% in this age class hunted. There were 248,831 persons in this age class in Oklahoma. Some of these may have purchased a special permit to hunt turkey, pheasant or prairie chicken.

⁵License sales reports: 1057 non-resident hunting; 716 Red River hunting; 200, 10-day hunting.

TABLE XI. LICENSED AND UNLICENSED OKLAHOMA FISHERMEN—1960

| | Licensed | Unlicensed | Total Fishermen |
|--------------|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Resident | | | |
| 12-15 | 0 | 47,918 ¹ | 47,918 |
| 16-64 | 382,303 ² | 17,449 ³ | 399,752 |
| 65 and over | 0 | 20,902 ⁴ | 20,902 |
| Non-Resident | 87,160 ⁵ | 0 | 87,160 |
| Total | 469,463 (84.5%) | 86,269 (15.5%) | 555,732 |

¹According to the 1960 National Survey of Fishing and Hunting 28.1% in this age class fished. There were 170,528 Oklahomans in this age category.

²License sales: Including 276,974 resident fishing; 105,329 combination hunting-fishing.

³In 1960 the average farm family size was 3.31. There were 94,676 farm operators, 87% of whom lived on the land (82,368 operators; 272,638 people). Assuming that 1 in 5 fished (the statewide average), 54,528 persons fished. According to a survey of land operators in 1964, 32% fished only on their place of residence. This means 17,449 were entitled to fish without a license.

An unknown number of persons in the following categories may also fish without a license. Honorably discharged war veterans who are disabled to the extent of 60% or more; 2. Citizens of Oklahoma serving in the U.S. Armed Forces on properly authorized 10-day leave of absence from military duty and serving outside the State of Oklahoma; 3. No person shall be required to secure a license to fish with pole and line, trot line or throw line in streams, natural lakes, natural ponds, and mine pits in the county in which he is a bona fide resident, or in streams, natural lakes, natural ponds, and mine pits which form a part of the boundary line of the county in which he is a bona fide resident, when using any bait other than commercial or artificial bait, blood, stink bait, cut fish, minnows, and shrimp.

⁴According to the 1960 National Survey 8.4% in this age class fished. There were 248,831 persons in this age class in Oklahoma.

⁵License sales reports: 39,837 non-resident annual fishing licenses; 47,323 non-resident 10-day licenses.

DISCUSSION

This survey should be helpful to future wildlife administrators in determining trends in the availability of private land for hunting and fishing. Perhaps it should be revised at five-year intervals.

In future surveys it would be desirable to ask fewer questions on a single survey.

The analysis of the percent of fishermen licensed in the state is inadequate. Footnote No. 3 in Table XI lists three categories of persons who are exempt from purchasing a fishing license. The number of persons in each category is unknown but should be determined.

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