



Humane Research Council <humanereseach@gmail.com>

Trends in Public Approval of Hunting, Fishing, and Shooting

1 message

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Research Highlights

A large majority of Americans (74%) approve of legal hunting, with 42% strongly approving.

Americans overwhelmingly support

Nationwide Scientific Survey Finds Continued Approval of Hunting, Fishing, and Shooting

Providing new findings that agree with several decades worth of data, a recent nationwide survey finds wide approval of hunting, fishing, and target shooting among Americans. The study, conducted by Responsive Management for the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), found that more than seven in ten Americans approve of legal hunting and legal, recreational shooting, while more than nine in ten

recreational fishing.

A large majority of Americans support recreational shooting activities; 71% approve of legal, recreational shooting, with 44% strongly approving.

More than a third of Americans are interested in going recreational target or sport shooting in the future.

In the past year...

9% of Americans have eaten wild game they personally harvested.

20% of Americans have eaten wild-caught fish they personally caught.

Recent Studies on Participation in and Attitudes Toward Hunting

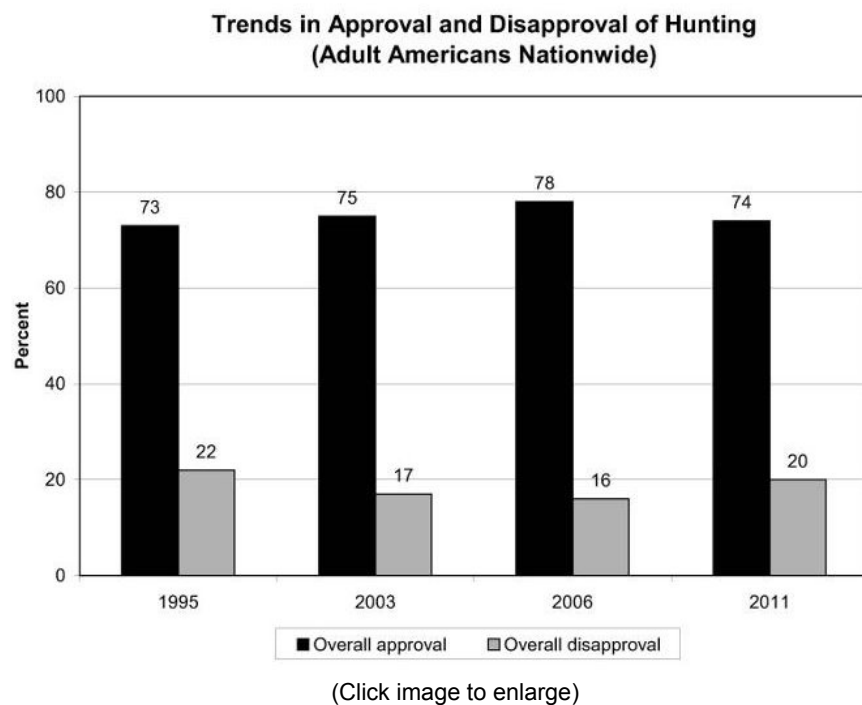
Hunting for Hunters

Published in the Izaak Walton League of America's magazine *Outdoor America*, this article on national hunting participation trends and the keys to recruitment highlights Responsive Management's research.

approve of legal, recreational fishing. Such results indicate that Americans' attitudes toward these activities have remained consistent over the past 15 years, with approval and support continuing to greatly outweigh disapproval and opposition. Other pertinent findings from the research include that substantial percentages of Americans voiced interest in going hunting, fishing, and shooting, while sizable numbers of respondents said they had consumed wild-caught (as opposed to farm-raised or commercially processed) game meat or fish in the 12 months prior to the survey. The demographic proportions of study respondents matched that of the U.S. population as determined by the U.S. Census Bureau's 2010 Census Profile.

Findings

Three-quarters of respondents (74%) in the 2011 survey indicated approval of legal hunting (42% said they strongly approve). Overall, this level of approval is in line with the proportions of Americans who said they approve of hunting in surveys conducted by Responsive Management in 1995, 2003, and 2006.



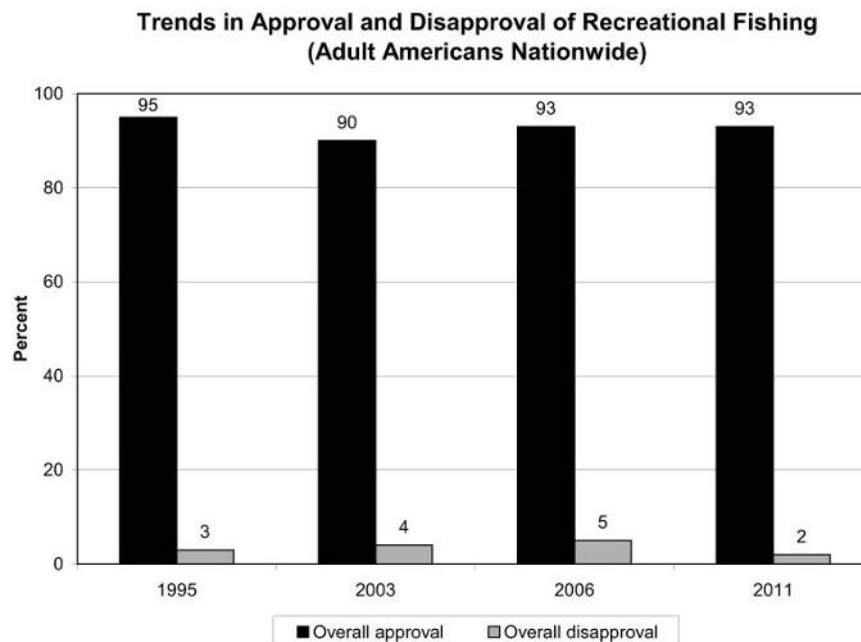
Note that minor fluctuations in the levels of approval fall within the sampling error for each survey, indicating that overall approval has not greatly changed.

While only about a tenth of the American population hunts each year (reflected in the 13% of 2011 survey respondents who said they had hunted in the 12 months prior to the survey), 95% of respondents indicated agreement when asked, "No matter your opinion on hunting, do you agree or disagree that it is okay for other people to hunt if they do so legally and in accordance with hunting laws and regulations?"

The 2011 survey also revealed that an overwhelming majority of Americans (93%) continue to approve of legal, recreational fishing, nearly matching the percentages that indicated approval in surveys conducted by

Responsive Management in 1995 (95%), 2003 (90%), and 2006 (93%).

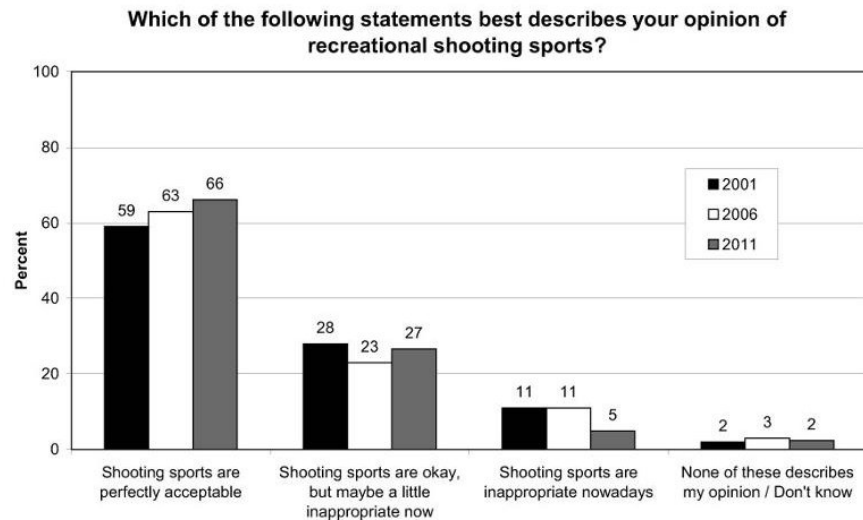
Inside the Mind of a Nonhunter
The National Wild Turkey Federation features Responsive Management's research in this article on public perceptions of hunting, published in the latest issue of *Turkey Country Magazine*.



Note that minor fluctuations in the overall levels of approval for fishing fall within the sampling error for each survey.

A large majority of Americans support the right of their fellow citizens to engage in shooting activities: 71% of respondents in the 2011 survey indicated approval of legal, recreational shooting, with 44% saying they strongly approve.

Also noteworthy are trends in Americans' overall opinions of the shooting sports: 66% of Americans in 2011 indicated shooting sports are perfectly acceptable, compared to 63% who said the same in 2006 and 59% in 2001. At the same time, the percentage of Americans who said shooting sports are inappropriate nowadays has declined from 11% in 2001 and 2006 to just 5% in 2011.



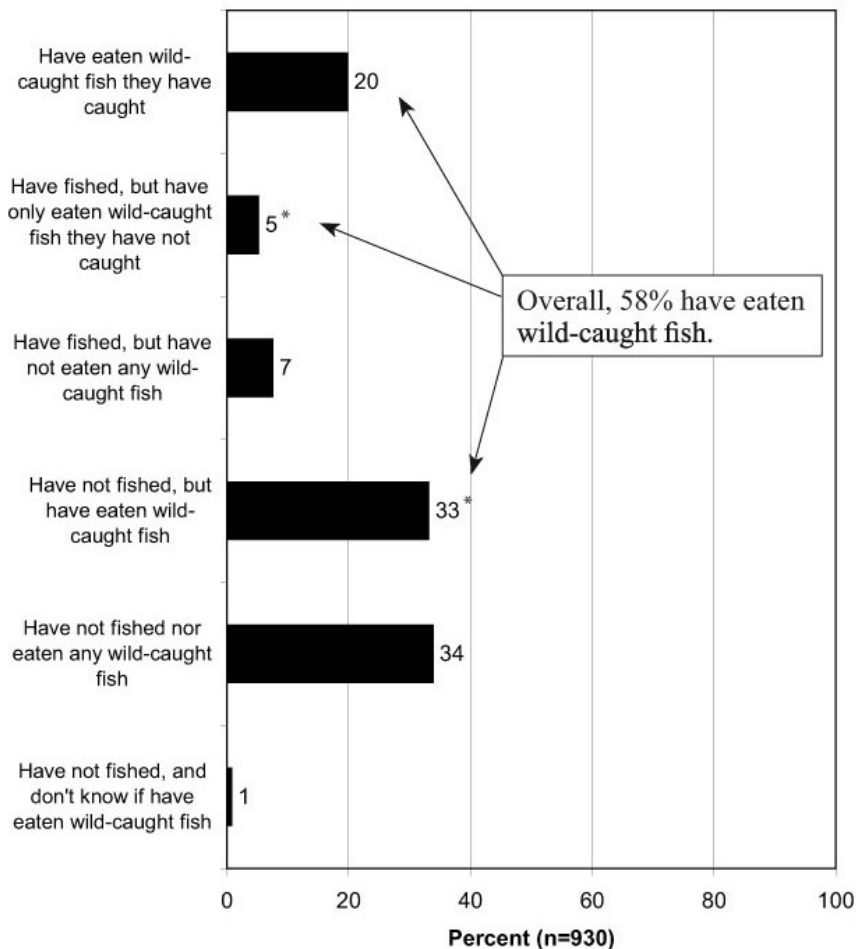
(Click image to enlarge)

Following their overall positive attitudes toward hunting, fishing, and shooting, substantial numbers of Americans are interested in participating in these activities. More than a quarter of Americans (27%) say they are interested in going hunting in the future, while more than half (56%) are interested in going fishing. Meanwhile, more than a third (37%) say they are interested in going recreational target or sport shooting in the future.

A further line of questions in the 2011 survey estimated the rates at which Americans consume meat harvested in the wild. A substantial percentage of respondents (42%) said they had eaten wild-caught game meat (such as venison, wild turkey, boar, buffalo, or duck, not including meat from farm-raised sources) in the 12 months prior to the survey. Meanwhile, more than half of Americans (58%) had eaten wild-caught fish (either freshwater or saltwater, not including shellfish or commercially processed fish such as fish sticks or fish patties) in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Despite that these questions measured respondents' perceptions of wild meat they consumed (i.e., some people may have eaten farm-raised meat, fowl, or fish that they incorrectly perceived as "game" or "wild"), they remain important as indicators of Americans' indirect support for hunting and fishing.

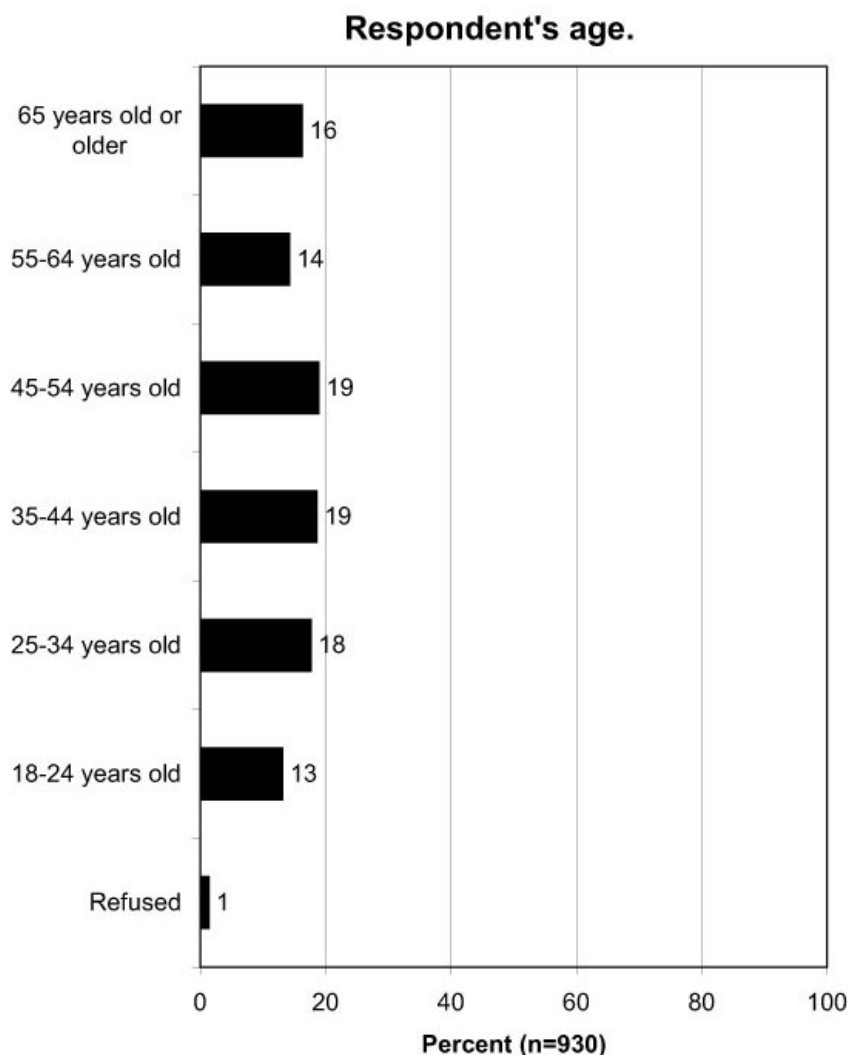
Americans' wild-caught fish eating habits in the past 12 months (2011)



(Click image to enlarge)

**Note that these questions measure perceptions; some people may have eaten farm-raised fish that they incorrectly perceived as "wild."*

Methodology The 2011 study entailed a telephone survey of 930 randomly selected U.S. residents ages 18 and older (both landlines and cell phones were called) properly proportioned among all the states to be representative of the United States as a whole. The gender split of the sample closely mirrored overall population estimates determined by the U.S. Census, with about 49% male and 51% female.



(Click image to enlarge)

Note that the survey was administered to a sample of U.S. residents ages 18 and older.

The questionnaire was developed cooperatively by Responsive Management and the NSSF, and the telephone survey was conducted from August to September 2011.

To avoid initially disclosing the subject matter of the research and to minimize nonresponse from those not interested or involved in hunting, fishing, and shooting, the survey began by asking respondents several participation questions to which a majority were likely to respond in the affirmative (i.e., Did you watch a movie at the theater in the past 12 months?, Did you use a swimming pool in the past 12 months?).

Findings were reported at a 95% confidence interval (or higher), with a sampling error of plus or minus 3.37 percentage points.

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