

Wildlife on Private Lands Status Report 2007 & 2010 Supplemental Report (HD-6b-11.AMS)

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Landowners' Opinions about White-tailed Deer Numbers on Their Land

Landowner's opinions about the numbers of white-tailed deer on their land (2010) were summarized in 2007 and again in 2010 by landowner's primary county where their land was located (Table 1 and Maps 1 and 2). The scale ranged from -2 (*Far Too Few*) to +2 (*Far Too Many*). The counties are color-coded into six categories and three levels: 1) too few deer, 2) just about right, and 3) too many deer. Overall for both years there are more counties where the mean evaluation by landowners falls in the range of "too many deer" than there are counties in the "too few deer" range (Figure 1).

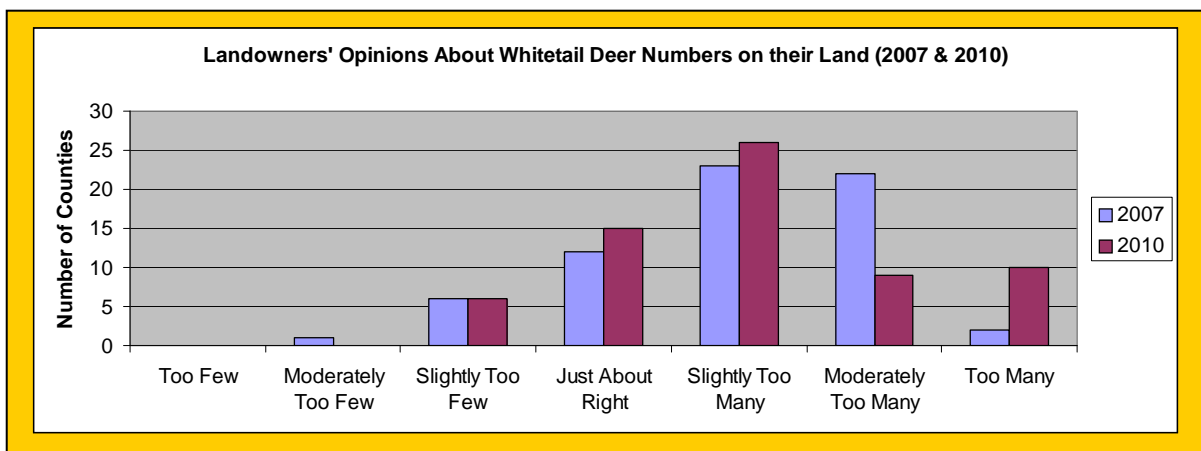


Figure 1. Average county ratings by landowners of their evaluations of whitetail deer numbers on their land (2007 & 2010).

Table 1. Percent change in landowner's opinions about white-tailed deer numbers on their land in 2010 from 2007.

County	2010		2007		Difference (2007 → 2010)		
	Sample Size	Mean Evaluation	Sample Size	Mean Evaluation	Direction	from 0.00 ¹	% change
Gregory	70	+0.87	68	-0.06	- / +	-0.81	-20%
Tripp	55	+0.78	69	+0.16	+ / +	-0.62	-16%
Bennett	31	+0.77	27	+0.19	+ / +	-0.58	-15%
Mellette	20	+1.10	17	+0.53	+ / +	-0.51	-13%
Todd	13	+1.00	12	+0.50	+ / +	-0.50	-13%
Buffalo	5	+1.00	10	+0.50	+ / +	-0.50	-13%
Lyman	43	+0.65	29	+0.17	+ / +	-0.48	-12%
Jones	19	+0.84	13	+0.38	+ / +	-0.46	-12%
Corson	20	+0.45	22	=0.00	= / +	-0.45	-11%
Charles Mix	81	+0.42	76	+0.08	+ / +	-0.34	-9%
Jackson	15	+0.47	11	-0.18	- / +	-0.29	-7%
Dewey	18	+0.94	21	+0.67	+ / +	-0.27	-7%
Sully	18	+0.67	17	+0.41	+ / +	-0.26	-7%
Bon Homme	69	+0.28	55	+0.04	+ / +	-0.24	-6%
Aurora	45	+0.80	51	+0.57	+ / +	-0.23	-6%
Haakon	14	+0.21	16	=0.00	= / +	-0.21	-5%
Clay	30	+0.47	37	+0.32	+ / +	-0.15	-4%
Harding	9	-0.11	15	=0.00	= / -	-0.11	-3%
Codington	61	-0.18	63	+0.10	+ / -	-0.08	-2%
Campbell	29	+0.34	30	+0.27	+ / +	-0.07	-2%
Lincoln	69	+0.23	70	+0.17	+ / +	-0.06	-2%
Butte	53	+0.75	45	+0.69	+ / +	-0.06	-2%
Douglas	44	-0.16	37	+0.11	+ / -	-0.05	-1%
Perkins	37	+0.27	42	+0.24	+ / +	-0.03	-1%
Lake	68	-0.06	61	+0.05	+ / -	-0.01	0%
McCook	65	-0.28	57	+0.28	+ / -	=0.00	0%
Union	54	+0.35	49	+0.35	+ / +	=0.00	0%
Faulk	33	+0.85	37	+0.86	+ / +	+0.01	0%
Hutchinson	66	-0.08	70	-0.11	- / -	+0.03	+1%
Moody	55	-0.02	48	-0.06	- / -	+0.04	+1%
Walworth	27	+0.41	40	+0.45	+ / +	+0.04	+1%
Davison	47	+0.15	44	+0.20	+ / +	+0.05	+1%
Pennington	44	+0.45	46	+0.50	+ / +	+0.05	+1%
Day	84	+0.19	65	+0.26	+ / +	+0.07	+2%
Clark	39	+0.31	47	+0.40	+ / +	+0.09	+2%
McPherson	41	+0.54	45	+0.67	+ / +	+0.13	+3%
Kingsbury	65	+0.58	69	+0.71	+ / +	+0.13	+3%
Turner	72	-0.04	63	+0.17	+ / -	+0.13	+3%
Ziebach	4	+0.25	8	-0.38	- / +	+0.13	+3%
Grant	61	-0.30	56	-0.41	- / -	+0.11	+3%
Edmunds	31	+0.61	47	+0.72	+ / +	+0.11	+3%
Potter	33	+0.67	20	+0.75	+ / +	+0.10	+3%

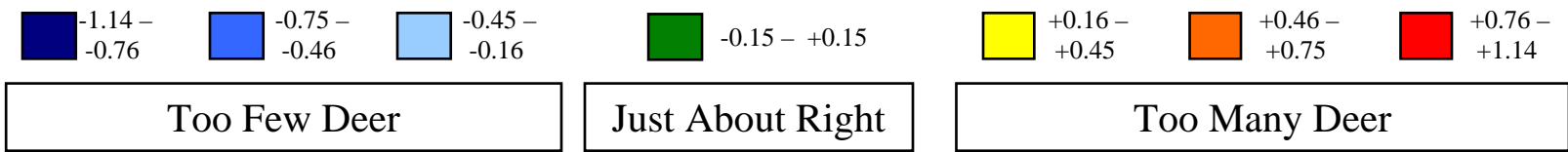
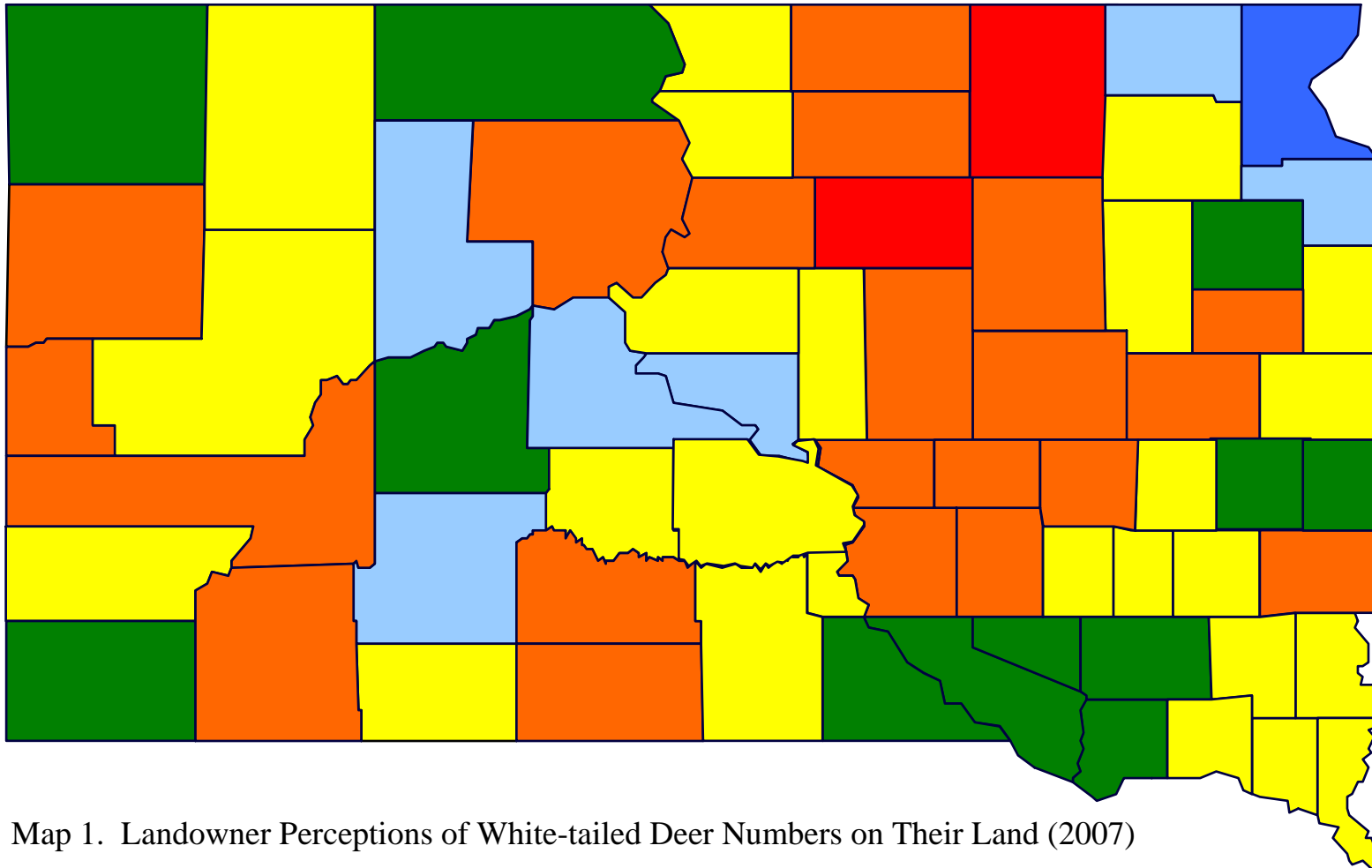
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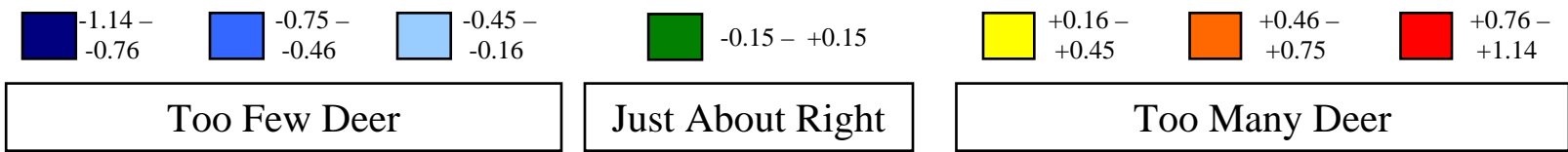
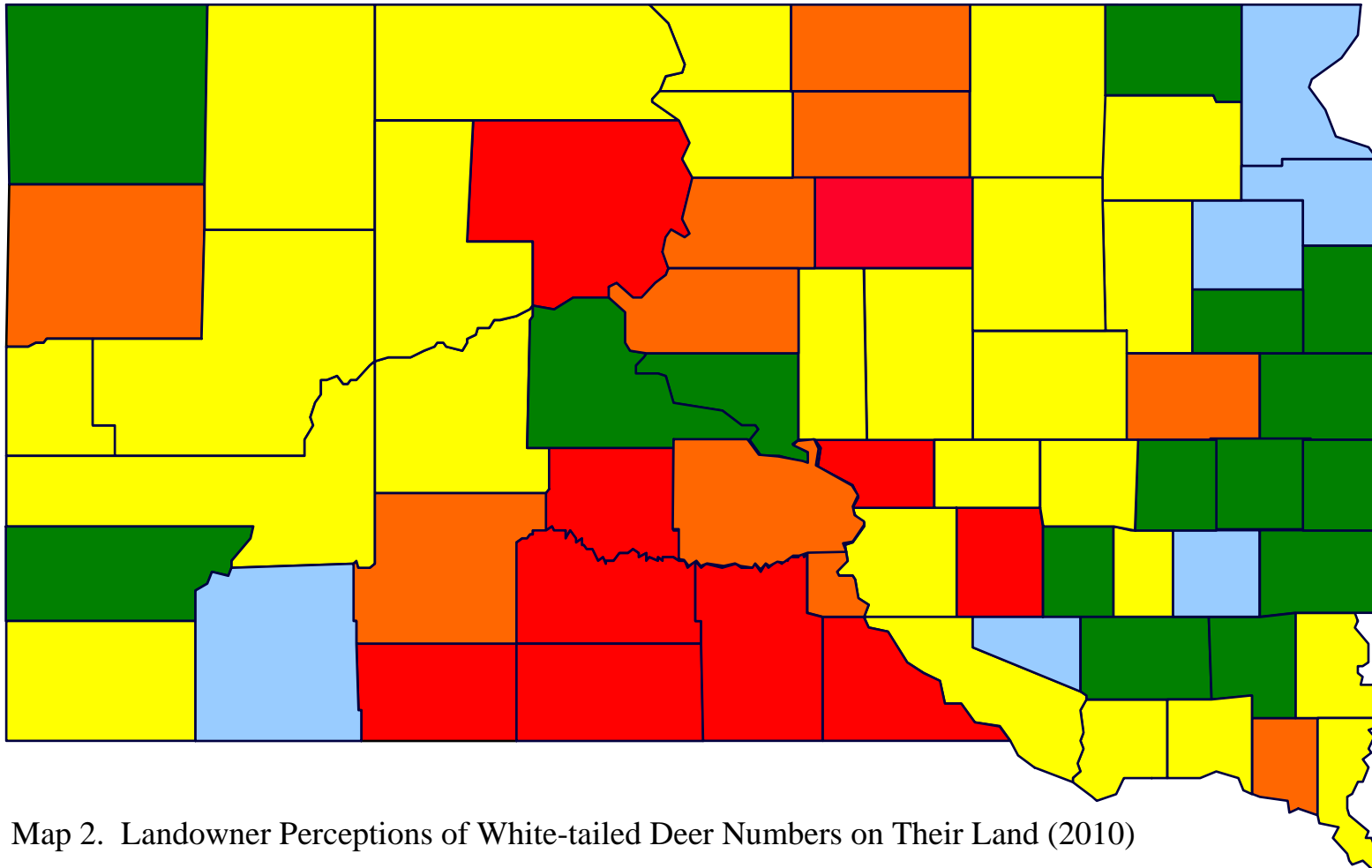
Table 1 - Continued. Percent change in landowner's opinions about white-tailed deer numbers on their land in 2010 from 2007.

County	2010		2007		Difference (2007 → 2010)		
	Sample Size	Mean Evaluation	Sample Size	Mean Evaluation	Direction	from 0.00 ¹	% change
Brule	48	+0.44	37	+0.59	+ / +	+0.15	+4%
Yankton	62	+0.18	55	+0.36	+ / +	+0.18	+5%
Meade	67	+0.27	60	+0.45	+ / +	+0.18	+5%
Hyde	17	+0.24	9	+0.44	+ / +	+0.20	+5%
Stanley	11	=0.00	10	-0.20	- / =	+0.20	+5%
Beadle	77	+0.31	74	+0.51	+ / +	+0.20	+5%
Roberts	94	-0.27	97	-0.48	- / -	+0.21	+5%
Deuel	56	+0.04	51	+0.25	+ / +	+0.21	+5%
Hanson	37	+0.19	29	+0.41	+ / +	+0.22	+6%
Hand	58	+0.29	51	+0.51	+ / +	+0.22	+6%
Hughes	30	+0.13	25	-0.36	- / +	+0.23	+6%
Marshall	65	+0.02	53	-0.25	- / +	+0.23	+6%
Lawrence	52	+0.40	51	+0.65	+ / +	+0.25	+6%
Shannon	8	-0.25	2	+0.50	+ / -	+0.25	+6%
Custer	48	-0.10	57	+0.35	+ / -	+0.25	+6%
Miner	43	+0.14	49	+0.41	+ / +	+0.27	+7%
Jerauld	38	+0.42	32	+0.69	+ / +	+0.27	+7%
Sanborn	43	+0.37	46	+0.65	+ / +	+0.28	+7%
Hamlin	59	+0.15	47	+0.51	+ / +	+0.36	+9%
Minnehaha	111	+0.12	114	+0.49	+ / +	+0.37	+9%
Fall River	29	+0.45	33	+0.06	+ / +	+0.39	+10%
Brown	98	+0.34	101	+0.83	+ / +	+0.49	+12%
Spink	68	+0.18	54	+0.70	+ / +	+0.52	+13%
Brookings	129	+0.01	114	+0.53	+ / +	+0.52	+13%
Average	3,184	+0.26	2,976	+0.31	+ / +	+0.05	+1%

¹Difference: positive values are movements towards 0.00 and negative values are movement away from 0.00.

Overall (statewide) landowner opinions about the numbers of deer on their land changed very little (about 1% closer to *'just about right'*) (Table 1 and Figure 2). However, there was a shift in the locations of counties with landowners reporting high deer numbers (Maps 1 and 2). Landowner opinions about the numbers of deer on their land changed very little from 2007 to 2010 in over half of the counties (Map 3). In this analysis, change is measured by how much closer or further from a value of 0.00 (*just about right*) occurred from 2007 to 2010. In over half of the counties, perceptions of deer numbers in 2010 were within 5% (plus or minus) of the evaluations recorded in 2007. In six counties landowners perceived a 6-10% departure from a perfect score (0.00; *just*





about right’) from the landowners’ perspective and nine counties showed an 11-20% departure from 0.00. On the other hand, in 13 counties landowners reported a 6-10% improvement in deer numbers from their perspective, i.e., movement in scores closer to 0.00 in 2010 compared to opinions measured in 2007 and 3 counties landowners perceived a 12-13% improvement.

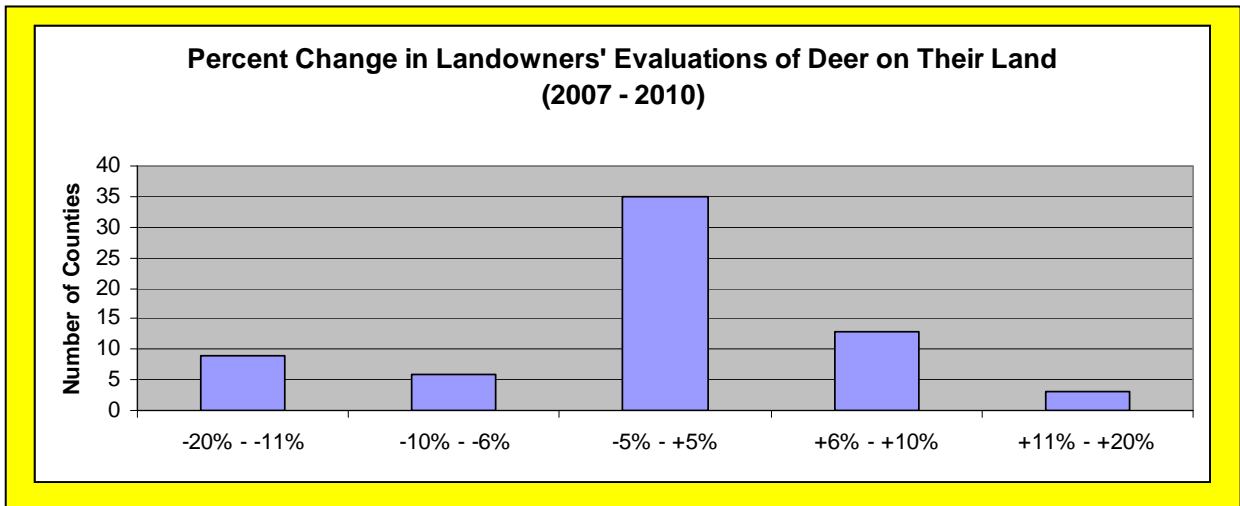
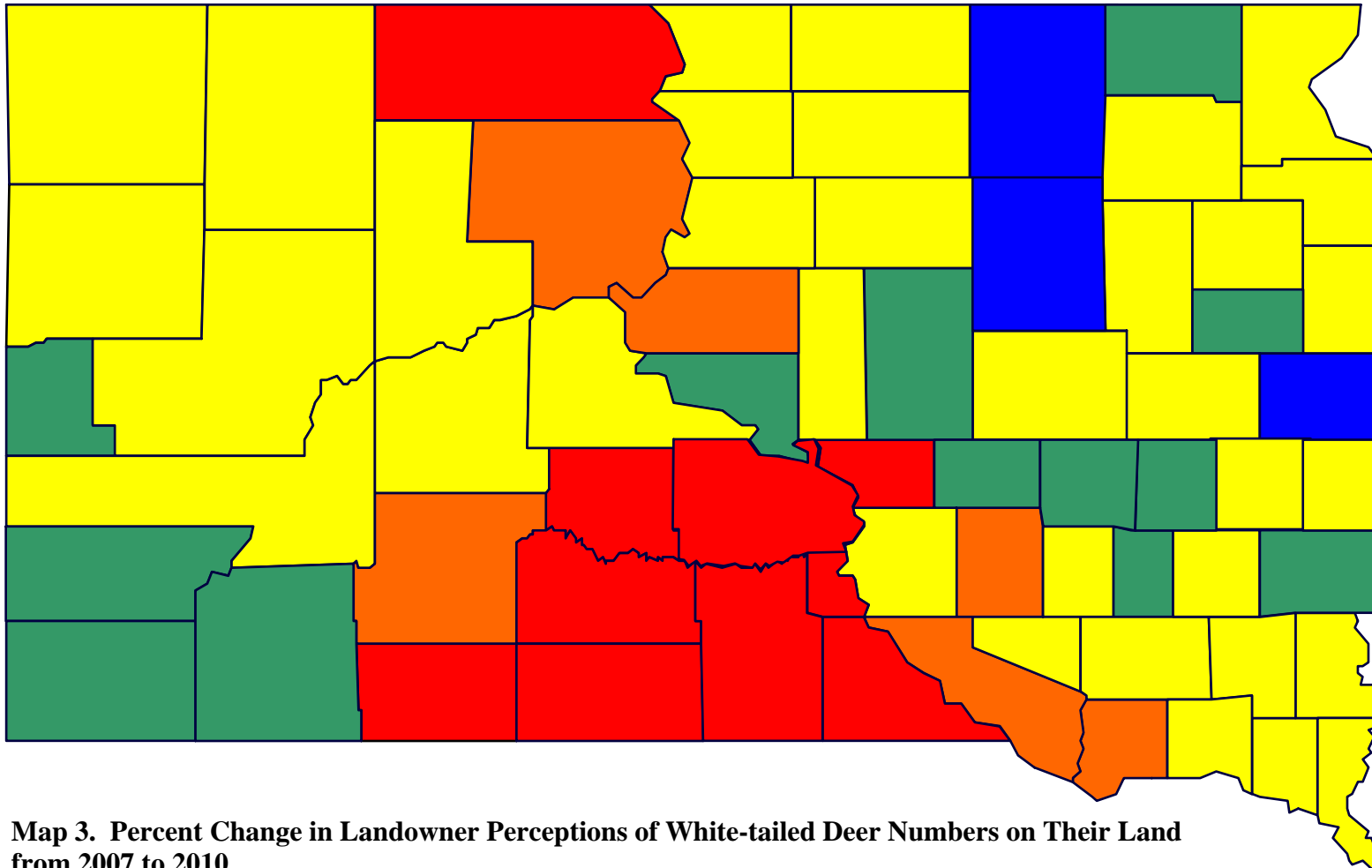


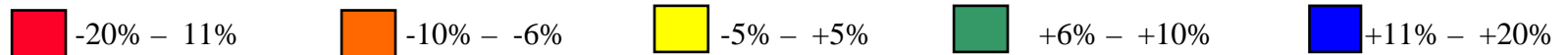
Figure 2. Percent change in landowners’ evaluations of deer numbers on their land from 2007 to 2010.

Note: The percent change is measured from a perfect score of 0.00, representing “*just about right*” on the scale used to measure landowners’ opinions. A negative percent-value reflects a greater departure from a ‘perfect’ score of 0.00 in 2010 compared to when measured in 2007. A positive percent-value reflects an improvement or percent movement towards a ‘perfect’ score of 0.00 in 2010 compared to when measured in 2007.

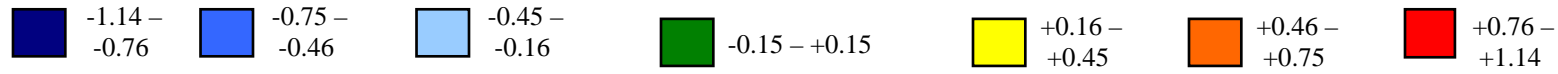
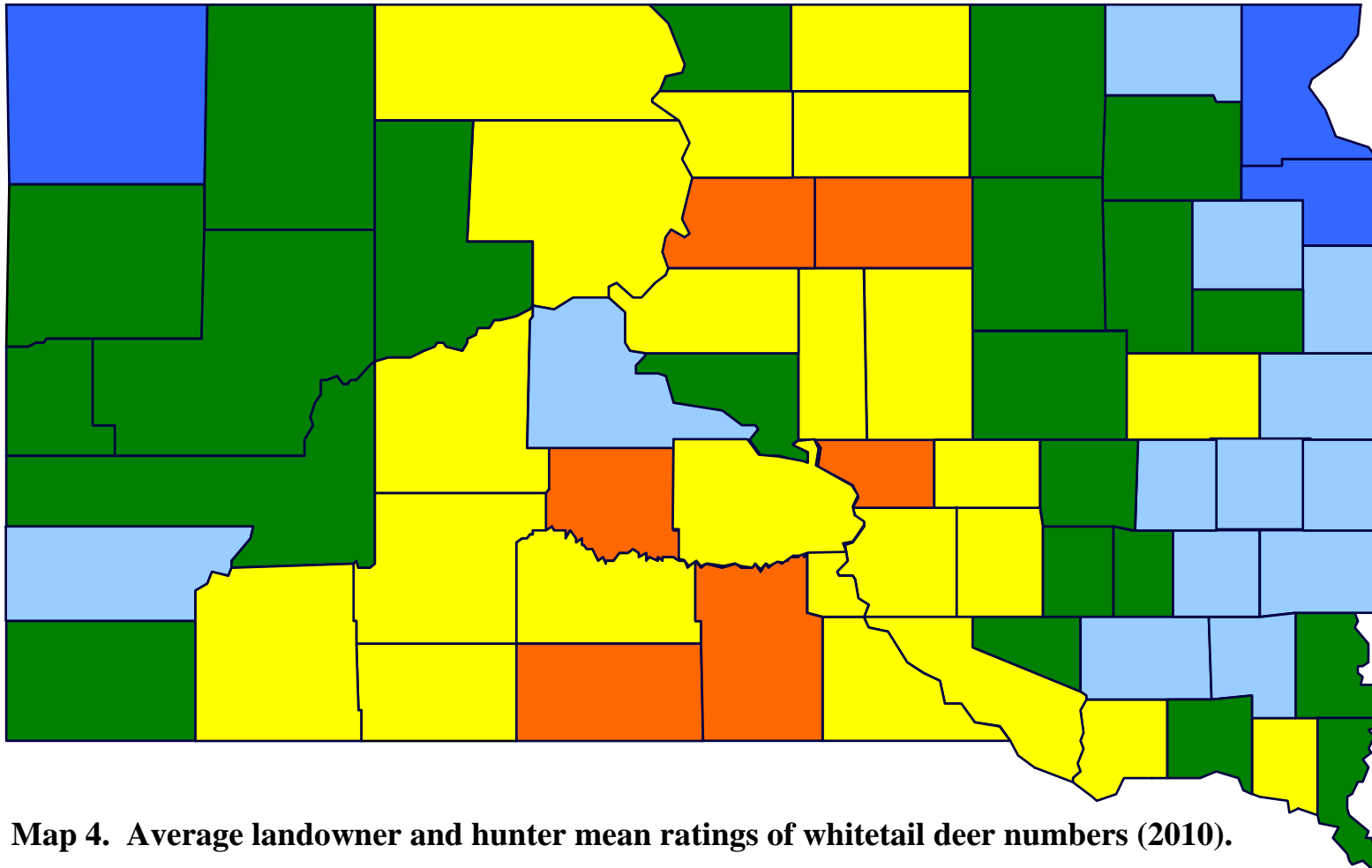
From the landowners’ perspective deer numbers increased somewhat in the south-central area of South Dakota, but showed improvement in a few areas around the state, most notably in Brown, Spink and Brookings counties (Map 3). However, decisions about deer numbers need to also consider the other major stakeholder involved in deer management –the hunter. A compromise for deer numbers would consider both landowner and hunter opinions about deer numbers. Map 4 depicts an average of both landowners and hunters perceptions of deer numbers in 2010. In general, there is a band of counties along the eastern boarder of South Dakota falling in the range of “*too few deer*” followed by a band of counties rating the deer numbers as “*just about right*”; most of the counties in central South Dakota fell in the range of “*too many deer*”, with many of the far western counties rated as “*just about right*”.



Map 3. Percent Change in Landowner Perceptions of White-tailed Deer Numbers on Their Land from 2007 to 2010.



Change Away from Perfect Score (0.00)	Little Change	Change Towards a Perfect Score (0.00)
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Too Few Deer

Just About Right

Too Many Deer