Why Hunt? Information & Fact Sheet

Title:

Retail: $10 + shipping
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Website: www.aldoleopold.org/whyhunt

Synopsis:
- An 84-page handbook examining hunting through the lens of conservation
- Explores the ecological, economic, and social reasons for hunting
- Includes historical context including a discussion of Aldo Leopold’s “land ethic”
- Peppered with profiles of new hunters who share various pathways into hunting, challenging the stereotype of the “hunter” and providing inspiration to those interested
- Includes basic information and resources for those interested in getting started or those experienced with an interest in becoming a mentor.

Audience:
For anyone with an interest in nature and its well-being.

- **Target:** Adults (18-40 years), urban and suburban, with conservation values, interest in local and sustainable food, or outdoor recreation who do not hunt and may be curious.

- **Secondary:** Current hunters interested in recruitment and mentoring.

Publication Goals:
To serve as a catalyst bringing the sometimes mutually exclusive groups of hunters and non-hunters into conversation, together, for the sake of conservation priorities. To serve as a tool for discussing each other’s values for greater understanding of each other and hunting.

- **Target:** Move non-hunters one step closer to supporting or participating in hunting.

- **Secondary:** Move current hunters to be more engaged in recruitment and mentoring.
Why the Need for More Hunters?
The number of people participating in hunting in Wisconsin and nationwide is declining significantly. This raises concerns because:

- **Ecologically** – hunters are a primary management tool to help regulate game populations human and animal health and habitat management

- **Financially** - license sales and excise taxes contribute 70-90% of state funding for fish & wildlife programs, state park and natural areas maintenance, for the benefit of visitors and the general public

- **Socially** –people engage with the land and deepen their own personal land ethic, pass on natural history and traditions, create bonds with family & friends

**Aldo Leopold Foundation’s Role:**
Aldo Leopold is a celebrated conservationist, but he also was a lifelong hunter. His thinking on hunting evolved over time and helped to inform his theories on game management (later wildlife ecology), dynamic ecosystems, and his well-known idea the land ethic. This combination of characteristics and knowledge puts him in a position of shared reverence among sometimes opposing viewpoints or groups. Therefore the Aldo Leopold Foundation sits in a unique and credible position as a convener to facilitate discussion and draw greater awareness and understanding of hunting’s role in conservation.

**Project Team and Major Funders:**
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources – grant funding, technical editing
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service – grant funding
Bast Durbin Advertising – layout design, writing
Aldo Leopold Foundation – concept, writing, editing

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