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Thomas W. Seamans

USDA, National Wildlife Research Center, Ohio Field Station, 6100 Columbus Avenue, Sandusky, OH

Zachary J. Patton

USDA, National Wildlife Research Center, Ohio Field Station, 6100 Columbus Avenue, Sandusky, OH

Kurt C. VerCauteren

USDA, National Wildlife Research Center

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Evaluation of Electrobraided Fencing as a Deer Barrier

Thomas W. Seamans, and Zachary J. Patton, USDA, National Wildlife Research Center, Ohio Field Station, 6100 Columbus Avenue, Sandusky, OH 44870 USA

Kurt C. VerCauteren, USDA, National Wildlife Research Center, 4101 LaPorte Avenue, Fort Collins, CO 80521 USA

Increasing white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*) populations in North America have led to direct threats to public safety as well as agricultural losses. Fencing is often used to keep deer from causing damage at both airports and agricultural areas. Tall, chain-link fences have been used successfully but are often prohibitively expensive. Electric fences have potential to offer a less expensive alternative. We tested a new electric fence design marketed under the name ElectroBraid. This fence, comprised of 0.6-cm polyester rope with copper wire woven into it, is carried on frangible, fiberglass posts set at 15-m intervals. From January to March 2002 we conducted both 1- and 2-choice tests on free-ranging deer in northern Ohio. We measured deer intrusions and corn consumption at 10 pairs of fenced sites with and without electricity. Mean deer intrusions at treated sites in both 1- and 2-choice tests were < 1/day while control site intrusions were 84-86/day. Mean corn consumption by all wildlife (e.g., deer, raccoons [*Procyon lotor*], fox squirrels [*Sciurus niger*]) differed between treated (< 2 kg/day) and control sites (15 kg/day). Based upon the results of this test and the cost of ElectroBraid we conclude that this fence, under the conditions of this 5-week test, was an effective and economical deer barrier.