

gravel road. To the northwest you'll notice a portion of a river, plus to the north a very steep hillside also is in evidence. We know it is steep because the contour lines are 10 feet apart, and since they are extremely close together indications are that the drop of the hillside is abrupt. I don't like to climb steep hills, and neither do deer.

With what information we have gathered thus far, let's see if we can put together a deer movement pattern. Obviously in the riverbottom there will be corn, soybeans, alfalfa or other succulent foods whitetails favor, so they will spend time there during the night. Likewise, the fields on top (fields or pastures are shown in white) may also contain grain crops the deer will eat. So we can assume they will move from the bottom to the hilltop, and vice versa from time to time. And how will they get there?

Because the north-facing hillside is steep, the deer will not use it; instead the whitetails will use the more slowly ascending points located on the east and west ends of the abrupt hillside. Another critical factor in our favor here is the road to the south. While I don't like roads and the noise associated with them, they do serve to help me take deer. For instance, during daylight hours, deer will stay in the woods when travelling between the east and west points at the top of the hill, thus avoiding being seen by people traveling the gravel road. In this process, entirely because of the way the terrain is configured, an awesome hilltop field funnel has been formed.

When I started seriously studying the county to the south of me that contains virtually no saddles, I was fortunate to have my good friend Jay Mellencamp living there. In the exact type of situation I've just considered, Jay one morning entered a hilltop field funnel and set up his bestand. About 10:30 a.m., he used his custom-built muzzleloader to bring down a dandy triple main beam bruiser. This story left a lasting impression on me, convincing me of the advantages of these top field funnels.

For example, in our illustration, assuming a north wind, a hunter could come in from the south, take a stand in the funnel located about where my arrow is pointed on the topographical map, and never have a trophy whitetail detect his presence. Regarding many times to stand, when hunting in the morning I prefer to wait until all deer are in the field before walking to my tree-stand site. This way I'm not walking through whitetails well before daylight breaks, tipping them off to my presence. In illustration #4, a drawing, you will see all of what we have just discussed is laid out, how the deer use the terrain, and how it should be hunted.

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