

**ELK HUNTING IN IDAHO:  
UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS AND EXPERIENCES OF  
HUNTERS  
[BANNOCK ZONE]**



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**For:**

**Idaho Department of Fish and Game**

**August 2012**

**INSERT ELK SURVEY OBJECTIVES**

**METHODS**

**SAMPLING**

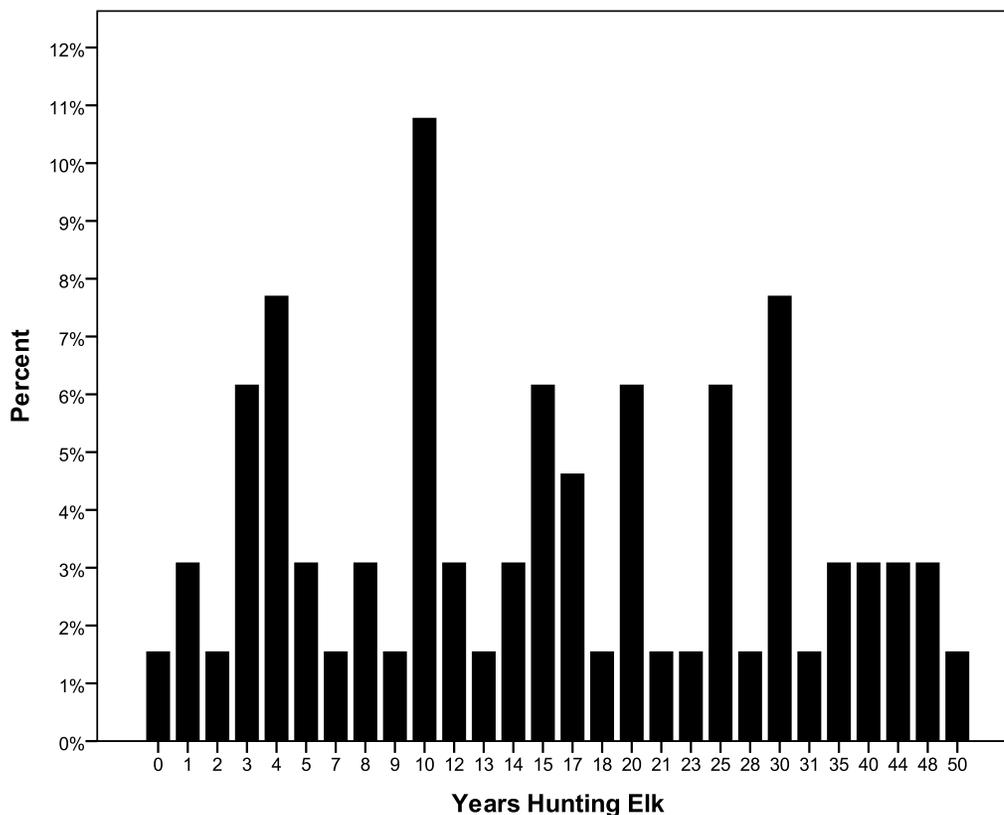
**RESPONSE RATE.**

# ELK HUNTER PROFILES

## (TRAVEL PATTERNS, HUNTING HISTORY, HARVEST SUCCESS, ZONE USE)

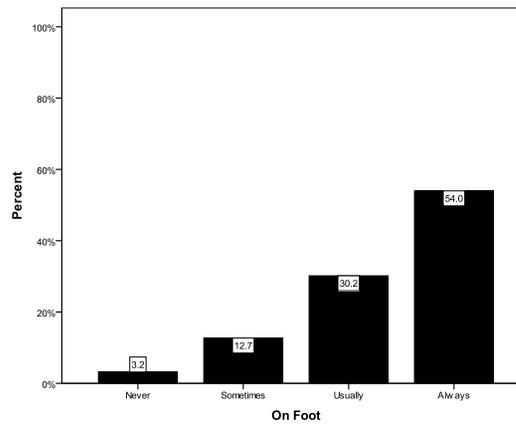
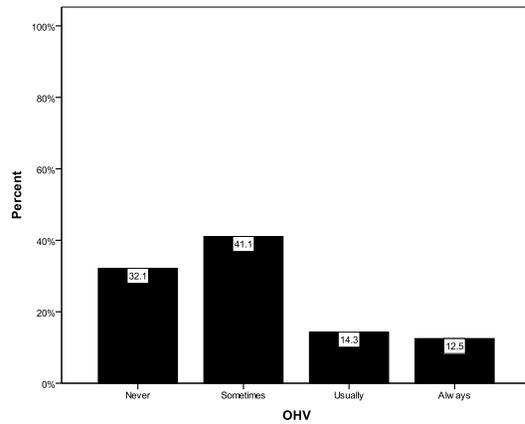
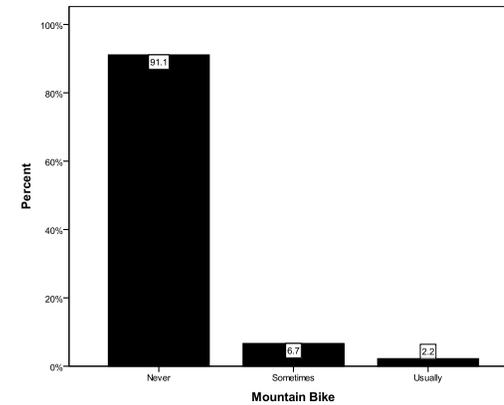
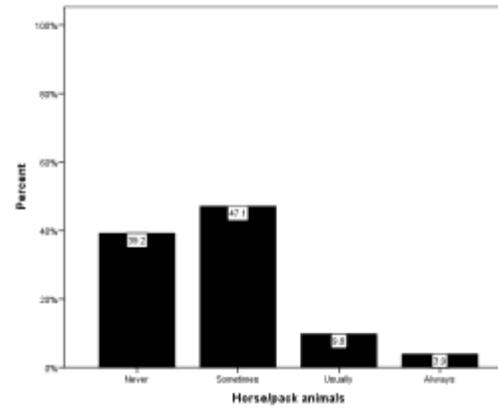
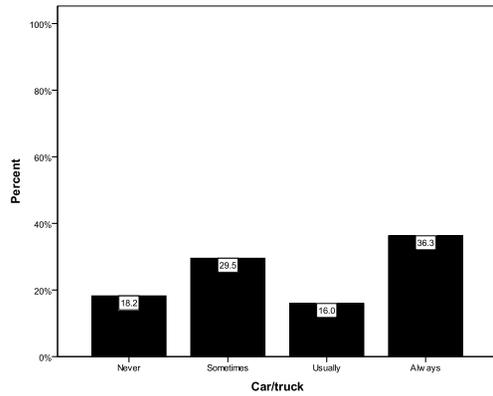
Now, some questions about your Idaho Elk hunting experiences and preferences.

3. About how many years have you hunted Elk in Idaho? *(Please enter the number of years)*



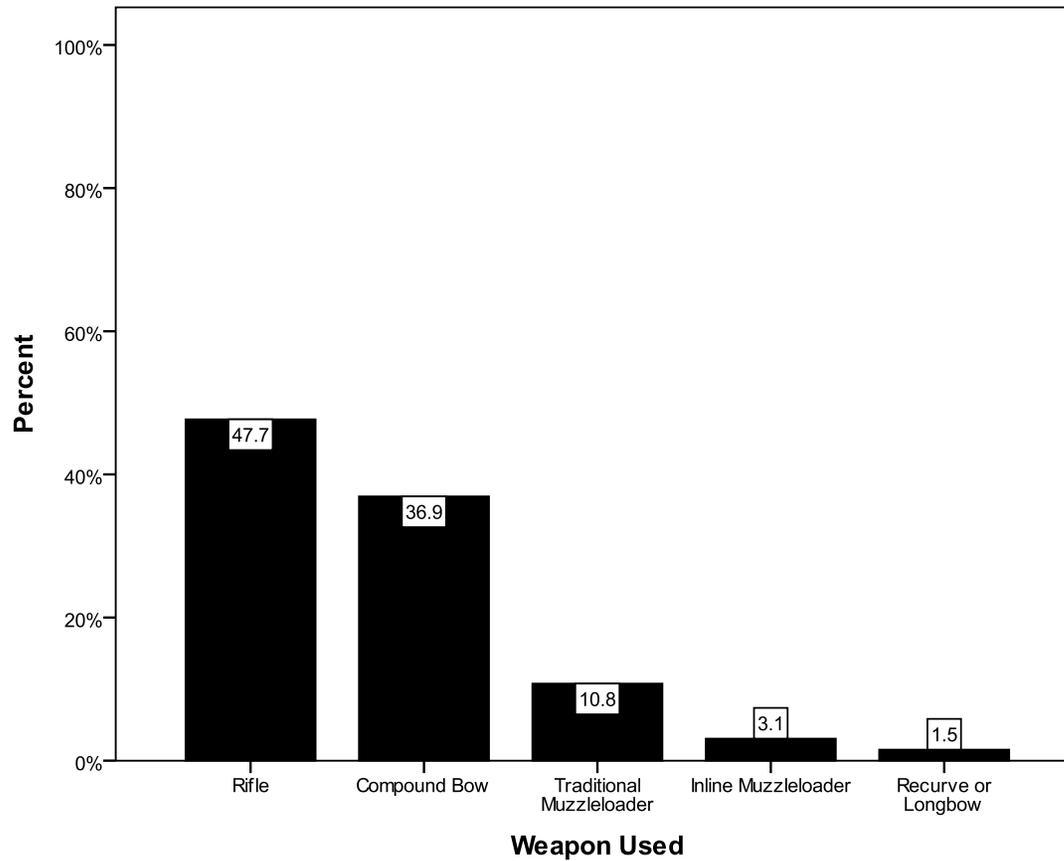
**Q3: The Bannock zone has a similar distribution of Elk hunting experience among respondents as the state average.**

**7. Excluding your travel to and from your home, how often do you use the following mode of transportation when you hunt Elk in Idaho?**



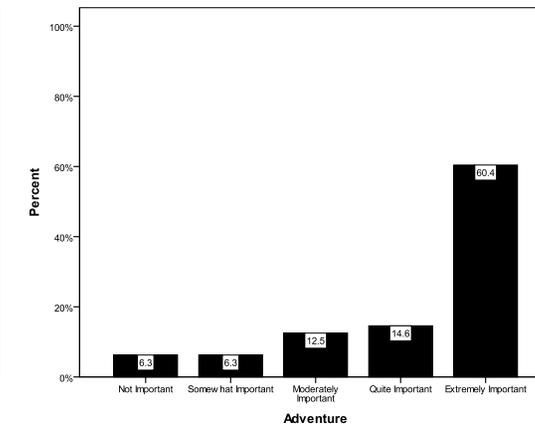
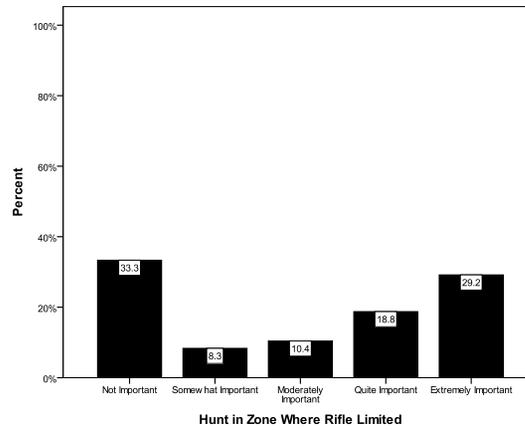
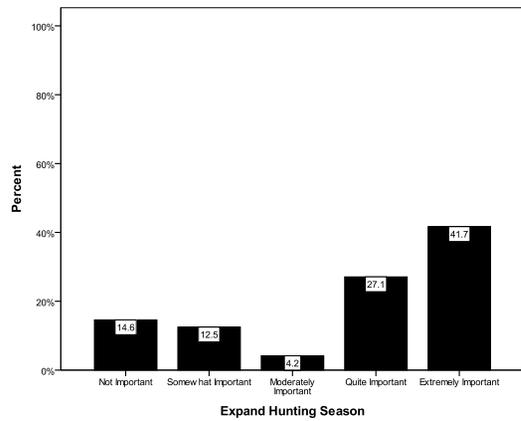
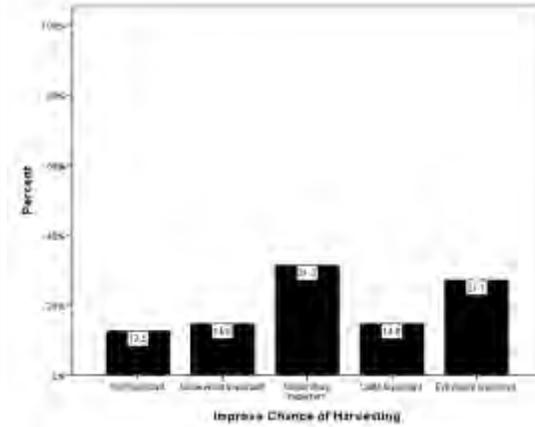
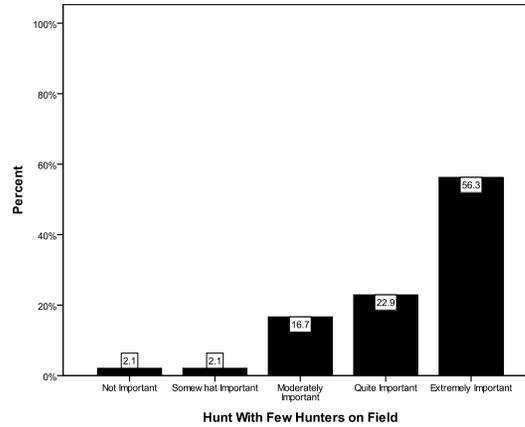
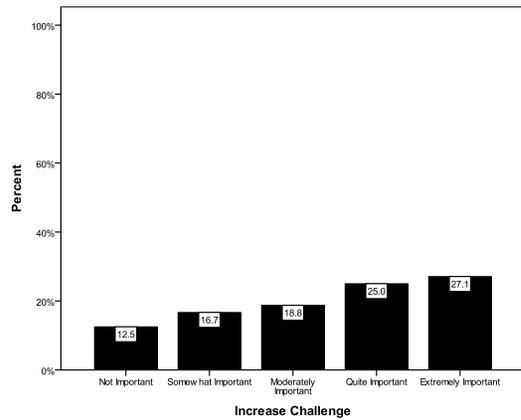
**Q7: The distribution of responses for the Bannock zone is similar to that of the state average. However, in this zone, more respondents report using horse/pack animals and OHVs sometimes than other hunters in the state.**

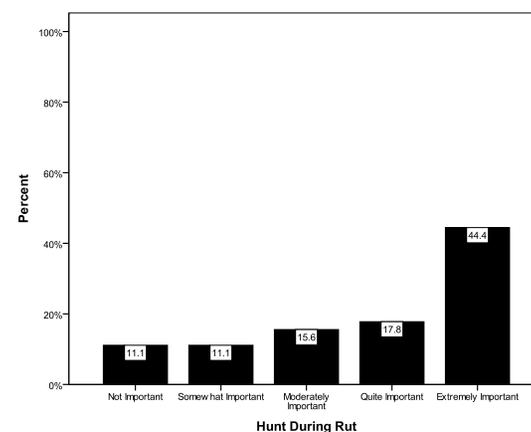
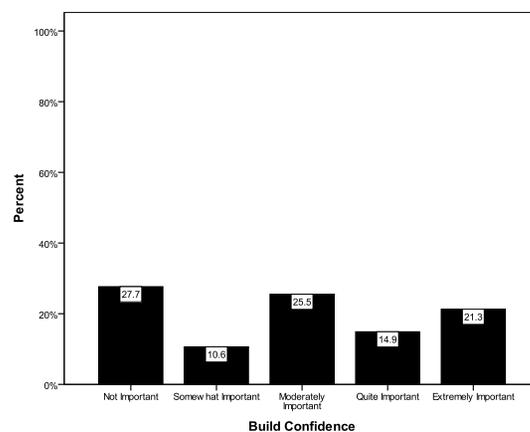
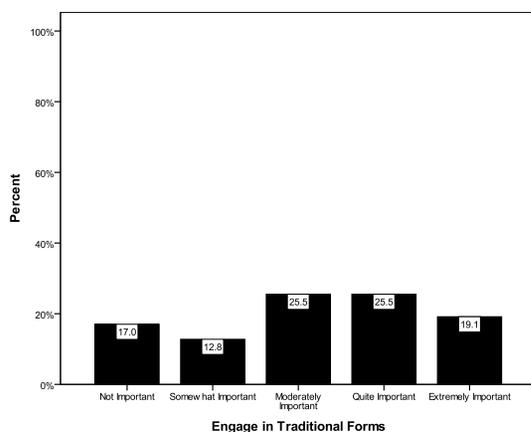
8. What type of weapon do you typically use to hunt Elk in Idaho? (Please check only one response)



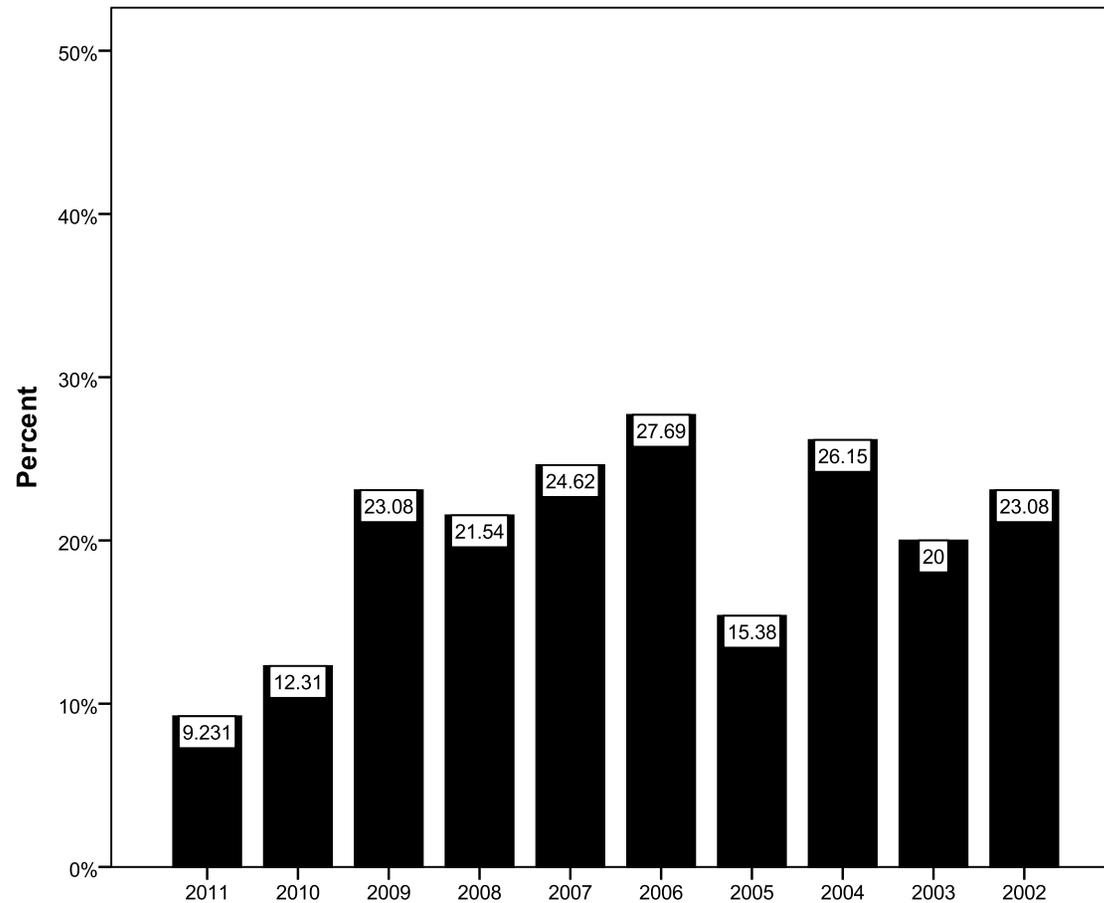
**Q8: Rifles and compound bows are the choice weapons for Bannock hunters, which is consistent with the state average. There is also a greater propensity for hunters in this zone to use traditional muzzleloaders.**

10. How important was each of the following in your decision to hunt during Elk archery, short-range weapons or muzzleloader seasons?



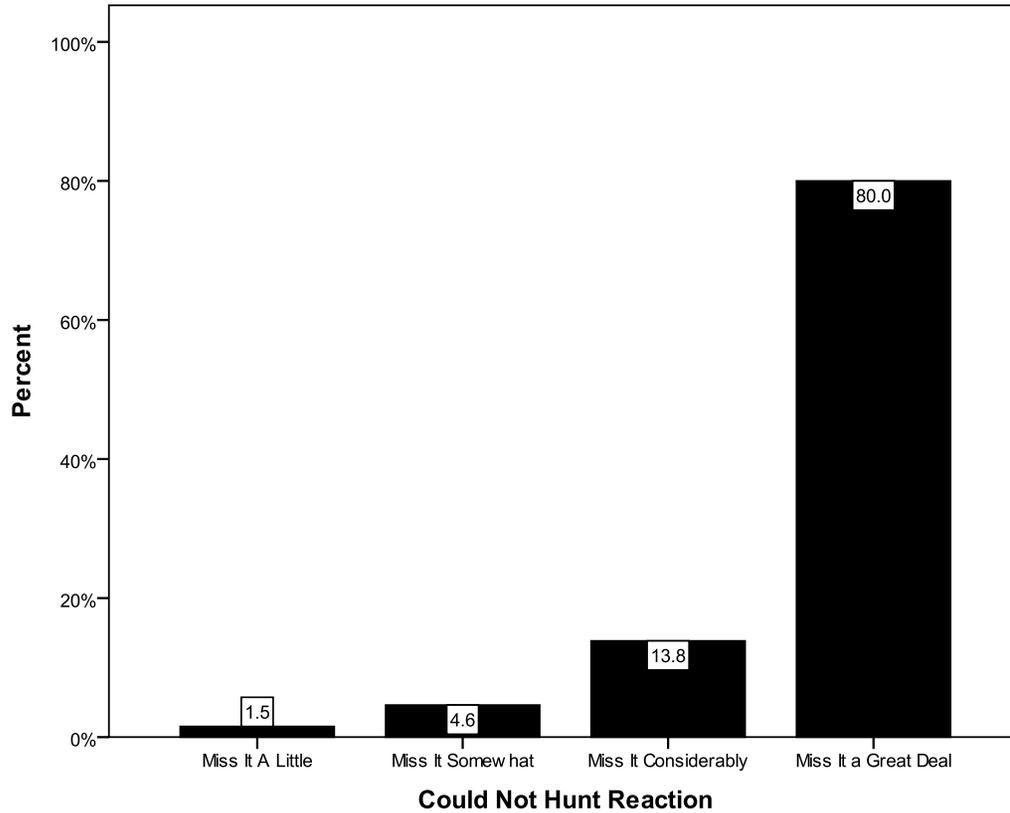


**Q10: The reasons for deciding to hunt during the Elk archery, short-range weapon, and muzzleloader seasons were much different between Bannock hunters and the rest of the respondents throughout the state. There was increased importance to Bannock hunters compared to the state average on: increasing the challenge (15.5% increase); hunt with fewer hunters afield (18.6% increase); and expanding the hunting season (17.2% increase). 60.4% of Bannock hunters felt that the adventure of hunting in these seasons was extremely important (26.8% increase from the state average). They also felt that building confidence and engaging in traditional forms were more important than other hunters.**

**11. What has been your Elk harvesting success in Idaho? (Please check all that apply)**

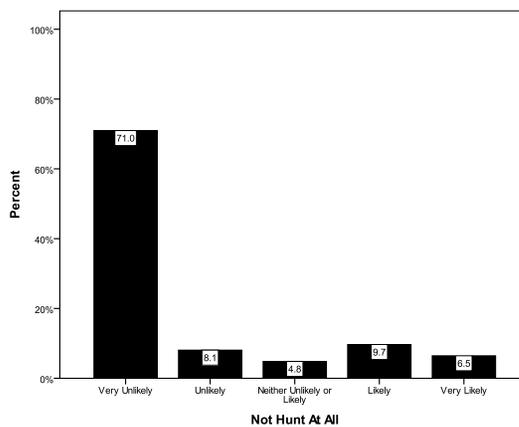
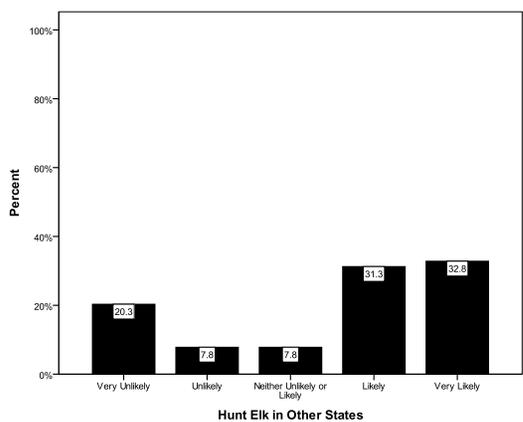
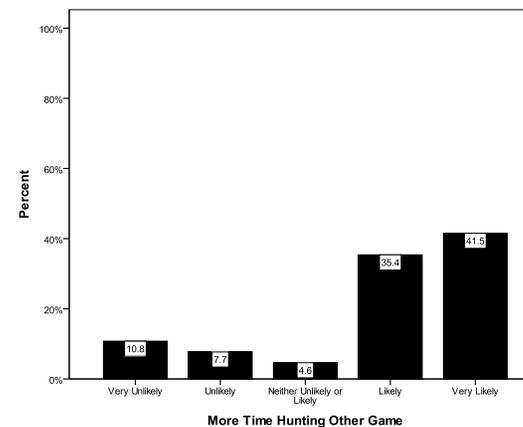
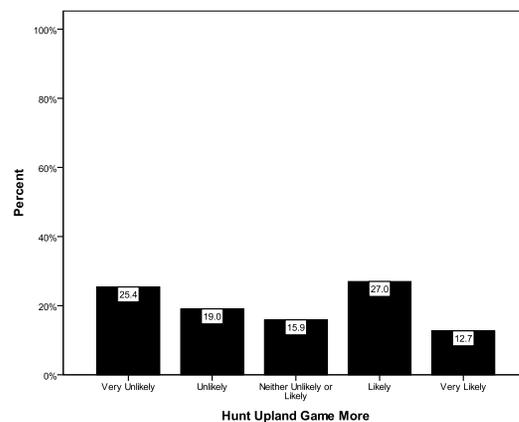
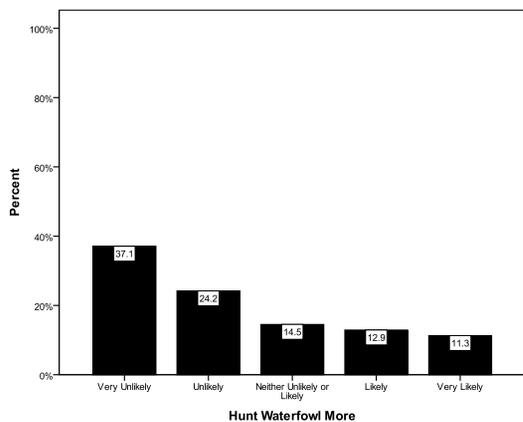
**Q11: The trend of Elk harvest success is pretty consistent between the state average the Bannock zone. There was an 8.6% difference (24.2% for the state) in 2005. However, in 2010 and 2011 the Bannock zone saw a plunge of Elk harvest rates that resulted in a 10.8% and 10% difference in harvest from the state average.**

12. If you could not hunt Elk in Idaho, how would you react? (Please check only one response)



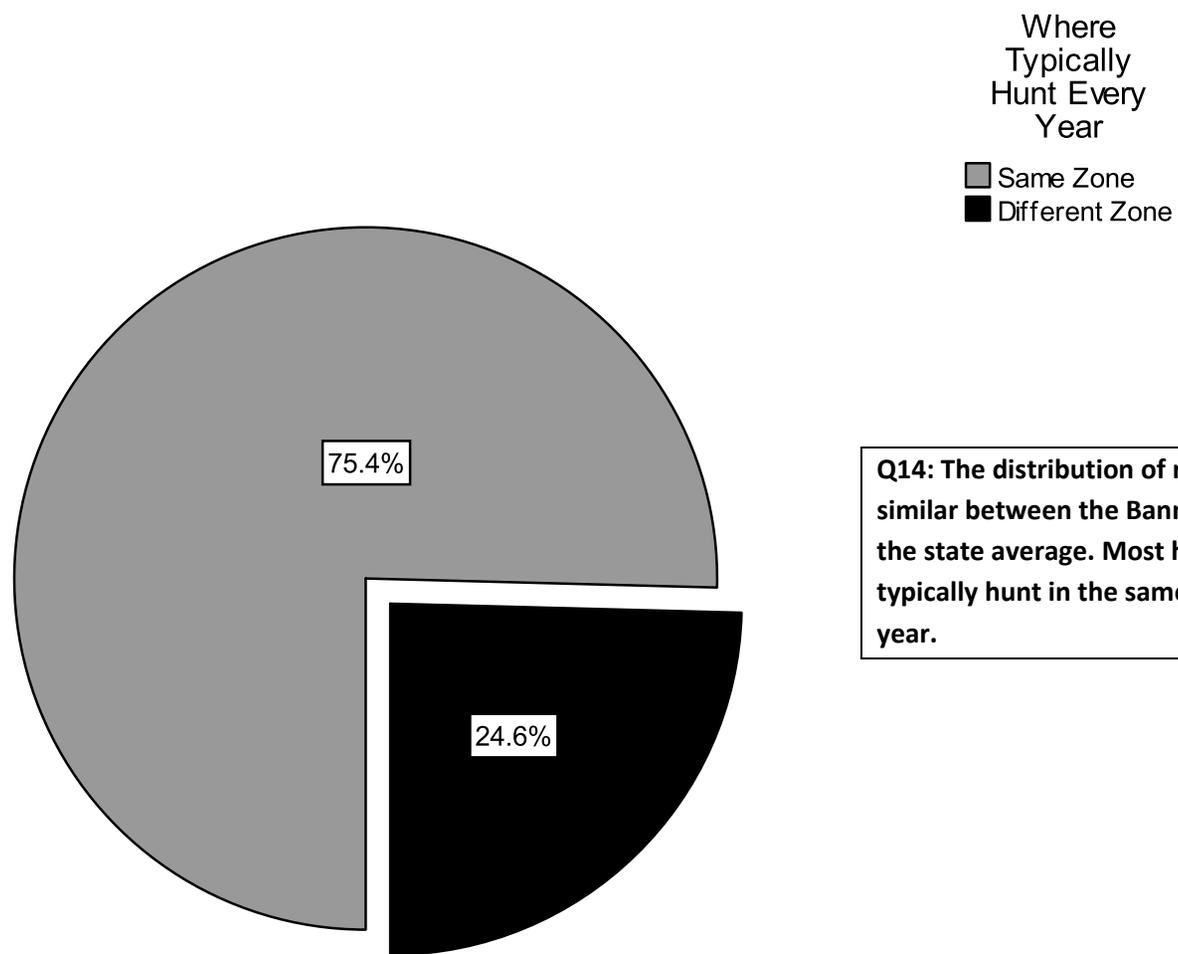
**Q12: Similarly to hunters across the state, if Bannock hunters could not hunt Elk in Idaho, they would miss it a great deal.**

### 13. If you could not hunt Elk in Idaho, how would your hunting change?



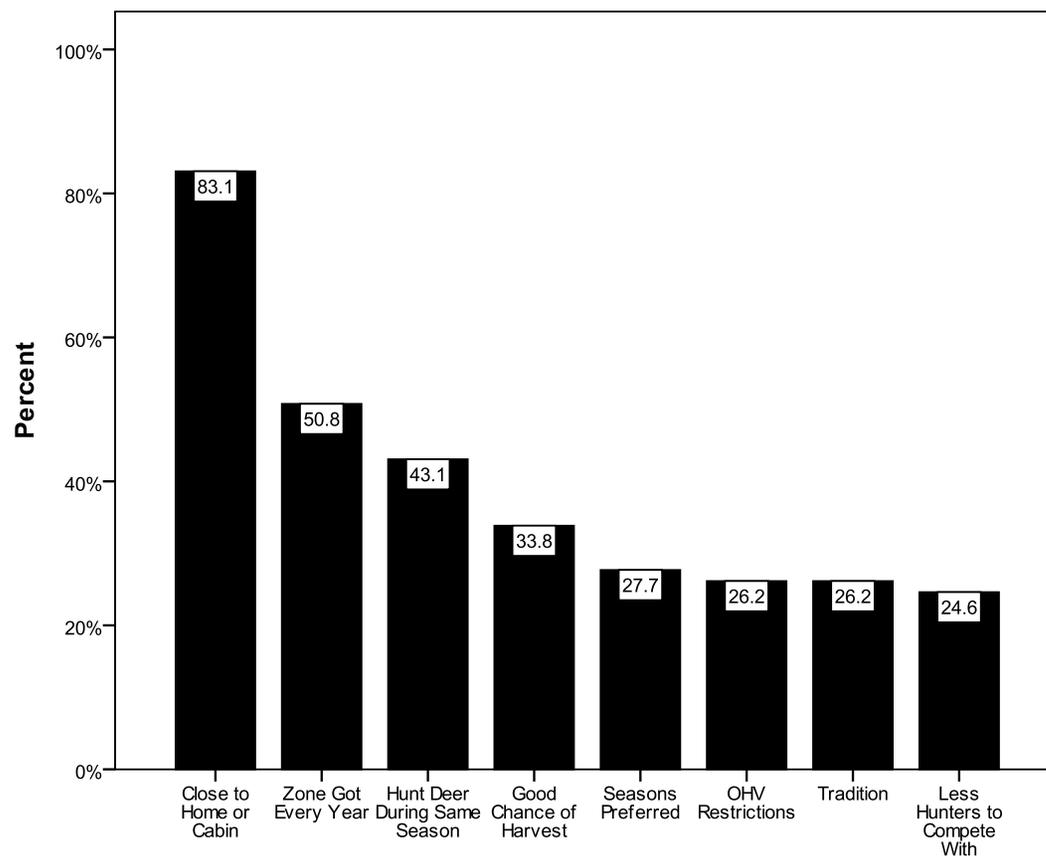
**Q13: The distribution of responses is similar between the Bannock zone and the state average. However, more Bannock hunters were 'very likely' to spend more time hunting other game than the state average (11.6% more).**

14. Which of the following best describes where you typically hunt Elk in Idaho? (Please check only one response)



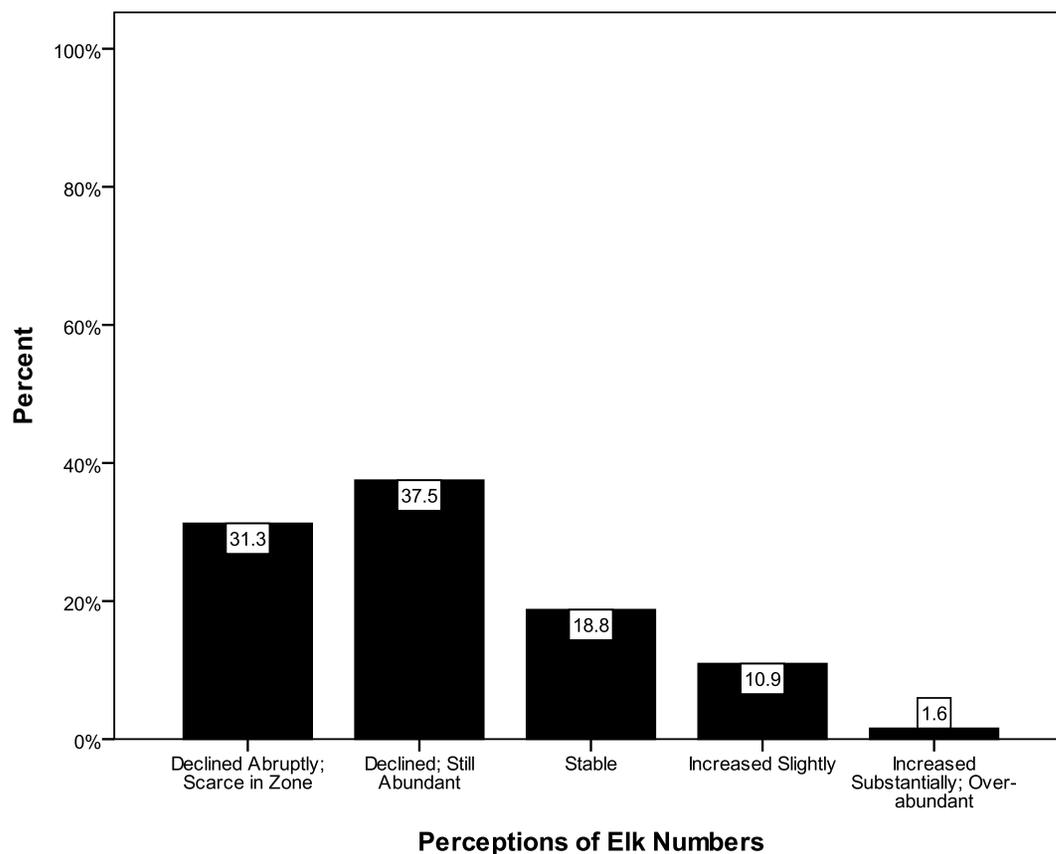
**Q14: The distribution of responses is similar between the Bannock zone and the state average. Most hunters typically hunt in the same zone every year.**

16. What makes the zone(s) you marked in Q-15 desirable to hunt Elk? (Please check all that apply)



**Q16: The distribution of responses is similar between the Bannock zone and the state average. Hunting close to the home or cabin was much more important to Bannock hunters than others (29.1% difference). Bannock hunters also found that zones with OHV restrictions and ones with preferred seasons were more desirable than the state average.**

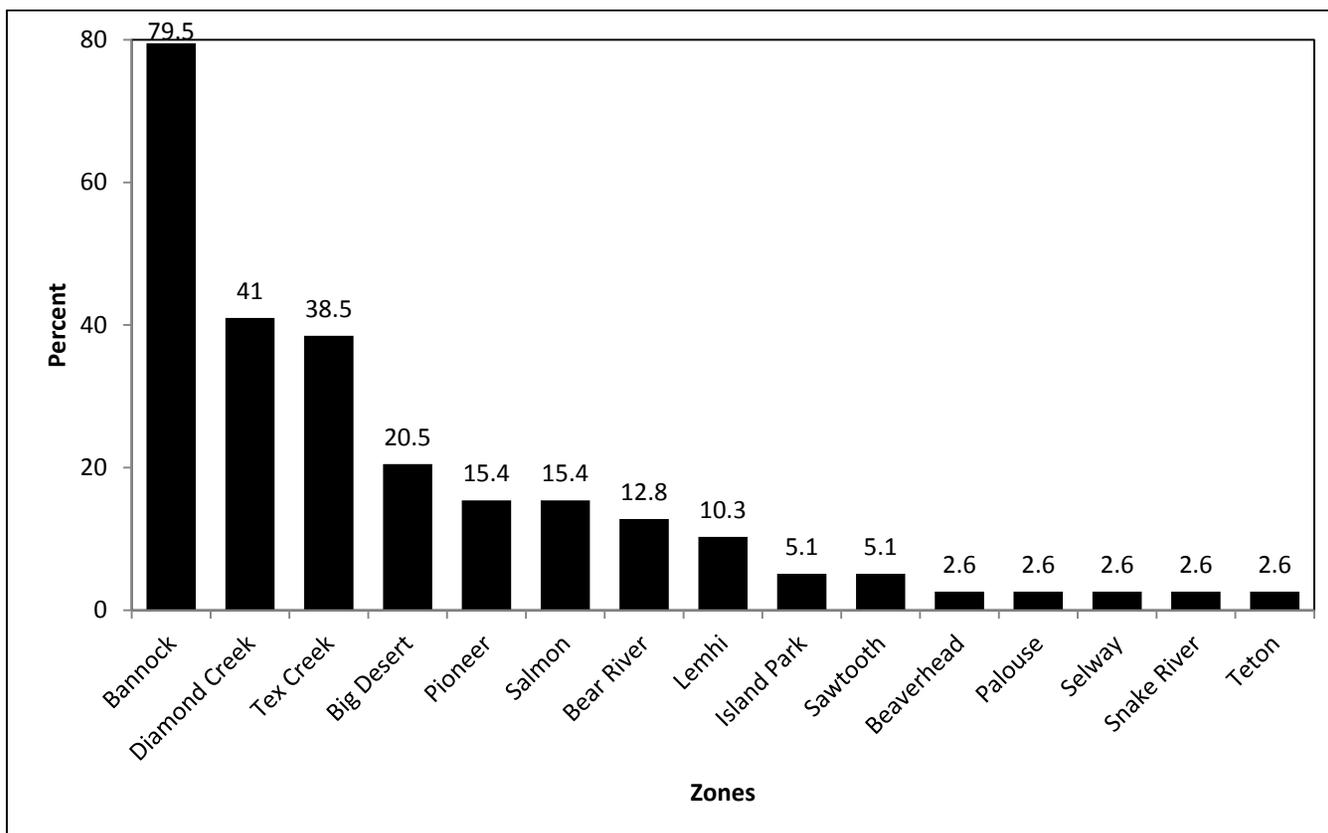
17. What are your perceptions of Elk numbers in the zone you hunted in 2011? Select the ONE statement from the list below that most closely matches your perceptions. (Please check only one response)



**Q17: Perceptions of Elk numbers in the Bannock zone are more positive than the state average. There was a 20.2% decrease in those who reported that Elk were scarce in this zone compared to the state average. Bannock hunters thought that numbers had increased slightly (7.5% difference) or were more stable (5.2% difference).**

**18. If you hunted in more than one zone in the past 10 years, please list them below.**

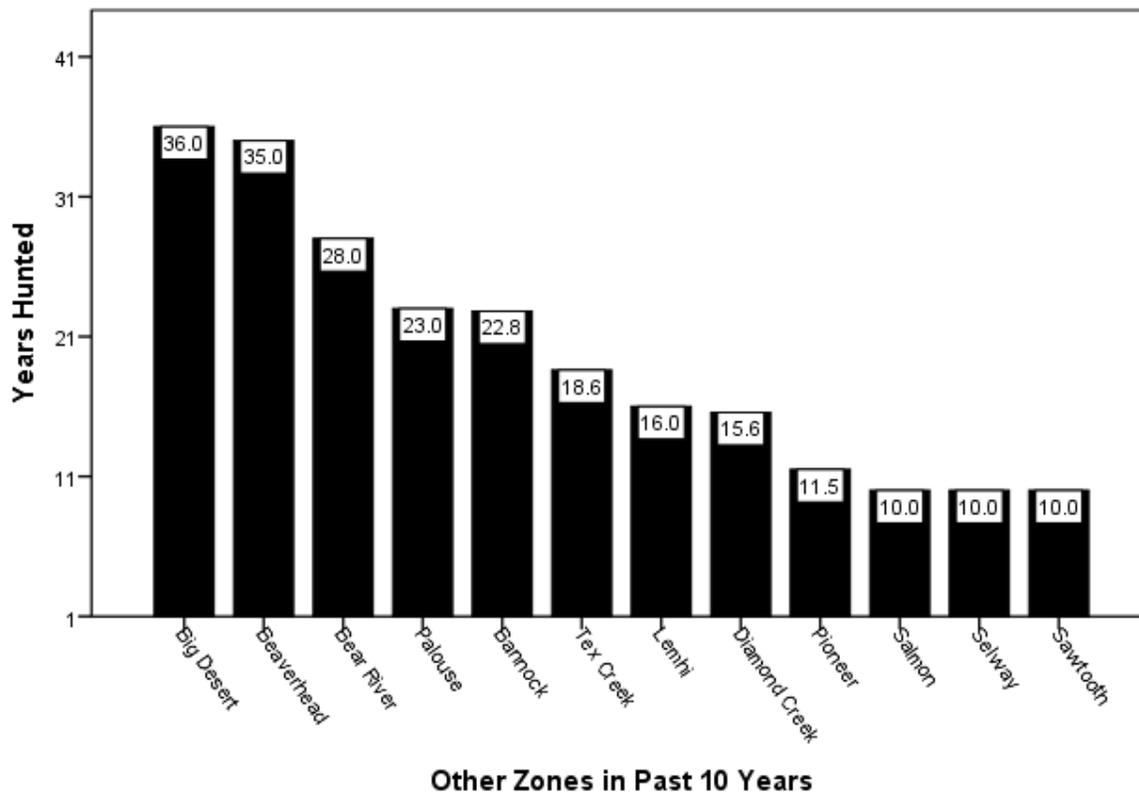
*(Please write in the Zone names, refer to map on page 5 for Zone names)*



**Q18: The Diamond Creek, Tex Creek, and Big Desert zones are the most popular zones to hunt in for Bannock hunters besides the Bannock zone.**

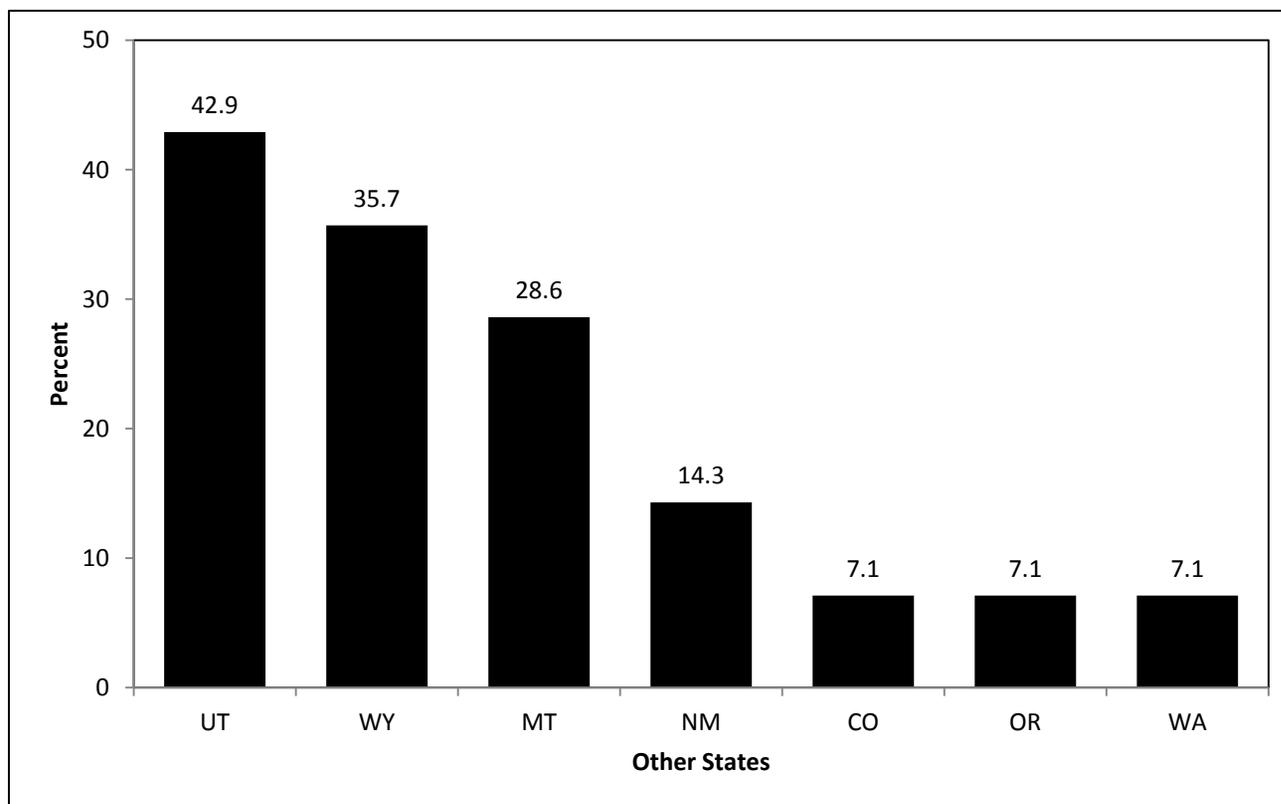
**20. How long have you hunted Elk in each of the zones you listed in Q-18?**

*(Please write in the name of the zone and number of years, refer to map on page 5 for Zone names)*



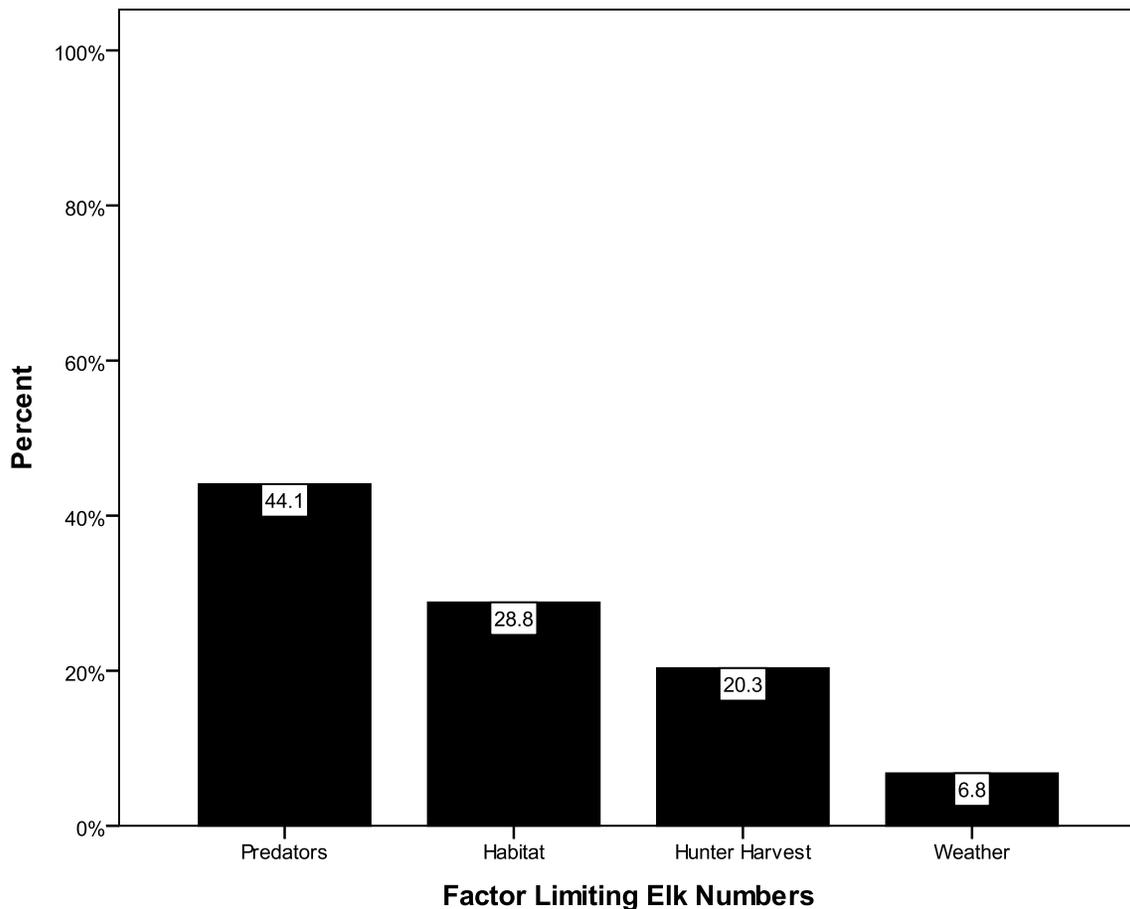
**Q20: Those who have hunted in the Big Desert zone have done so for an average of 36 years, followed closely by those in the Beaverhead zone with an average of 35 years. Those who have hunted in the Bear River zone have done so for an average of 28 years.**

**21. Do you also hunt for Elk in other states? (Please check one response)**



**Q21: For Bannock hunters who have hunted out of state have favored hunting in Utah, Wyoming, and Montana.**

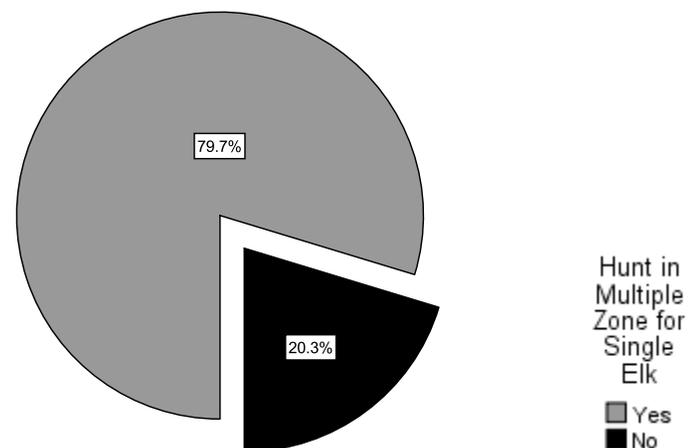
22. What do you believe is the primary factor limiting Elk numbers in the zone you hunted in 2011? (Check only ONE response)



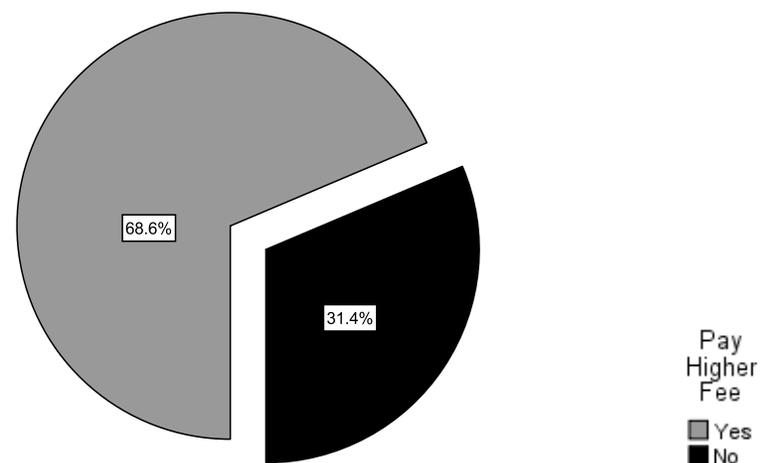
**Q22: Unlike a large majority (74.6%) of other hunters in the state, only 44.1% of hunters in the Bannock zone believe that predators are the primary limiting factor for Elk numbers in their zone. 21.1% more believe that habitat is the cause and 9% more believe that it is hunter harvest.**

23. Would you like to be able to hunt in multiple zones in a year for a single Elk? (Please check one response)

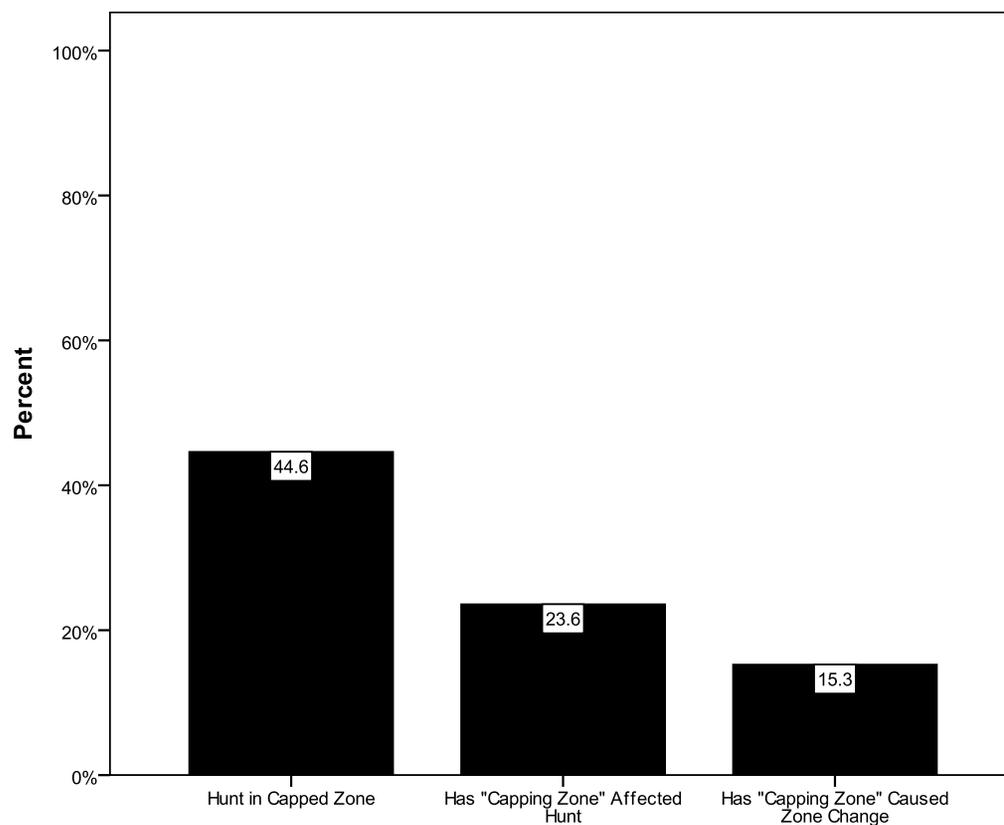
Like the majority of the state, Bannock hunters would also like to be able to hunt in multiple zones for a single Elk in a year. About one-third of hunters in this zone would also be willing to pay a higher fee to do so.



24. If YES, would you be willing to pay a higher fee (\$100 more for non-residents; \$30 more for residents) to do so? (Please check one response)

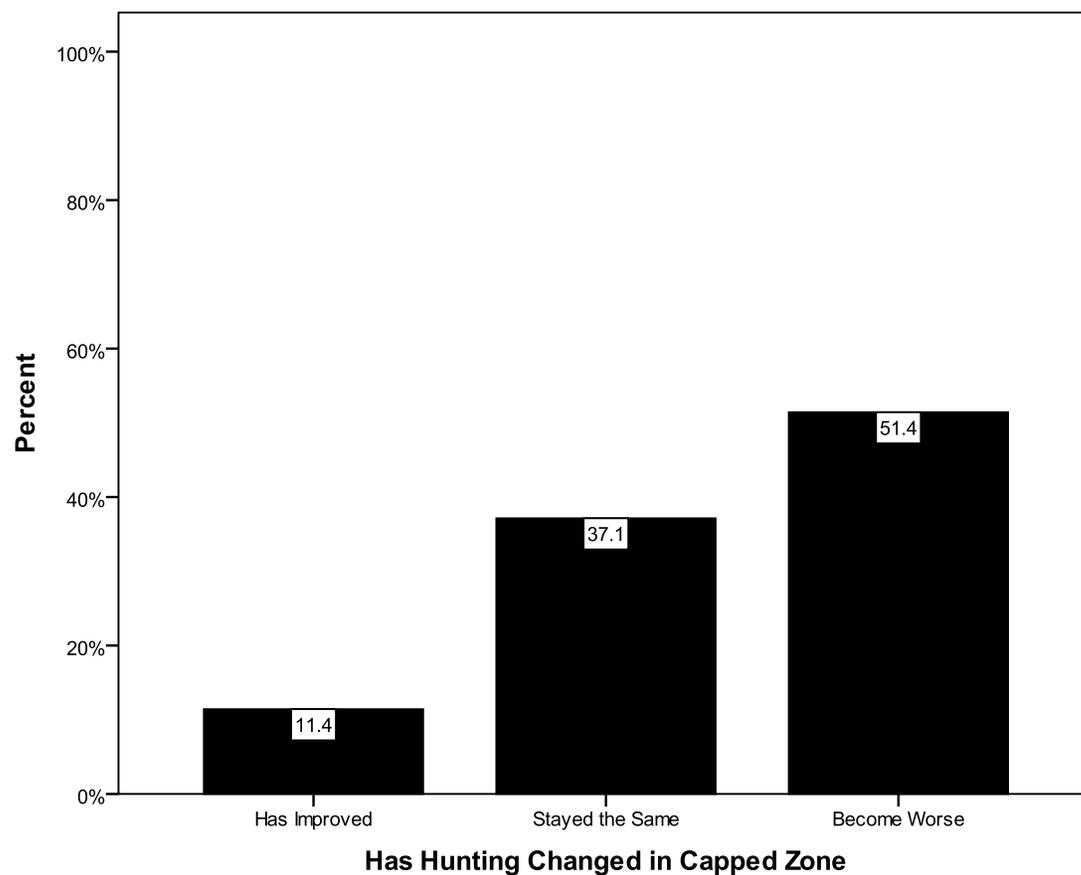


25. When the zone system was implemented the mechanism for reducing unlimited over-the-counter opportunity called "capping the zone" was developed by the department with the help of legislators, sportsmen and outfitters. This "capping the zone" is an allocation formula to distribute Elk tags to hunters (residents, nonresidents and outfitted residents) based on the historical use of the previous 5 years. What has been your experience with this management strategy? (Please circle one response for each question)



**Q25: The distribution of responses is similar between the Bannock zone and the state average. Almost a quarter of hunters believe that capped zones have affected their hunt.**

26. If you hunt in a “capped zone” has the Elk hunting changed since it was capped? (Please check one response)

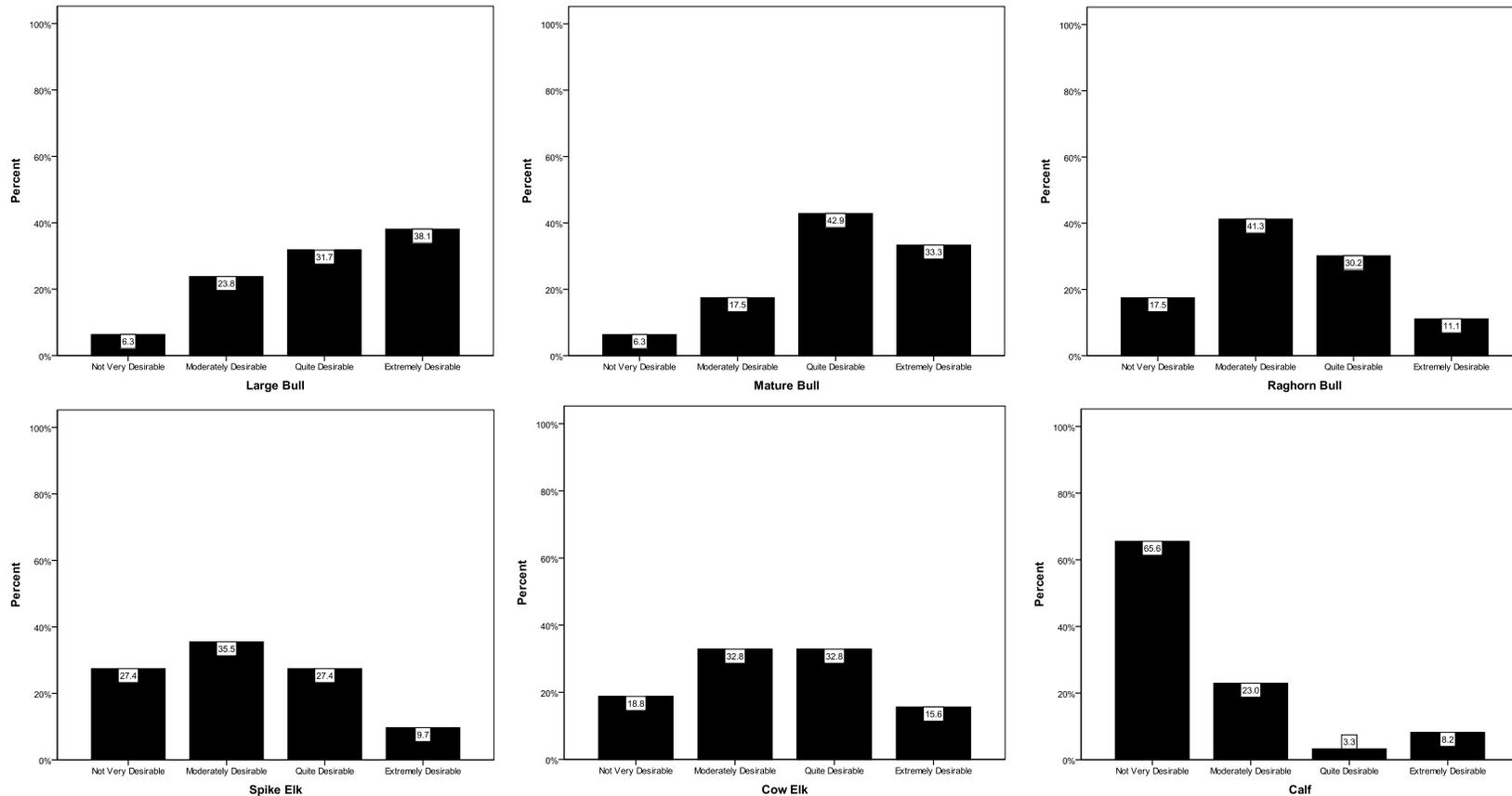


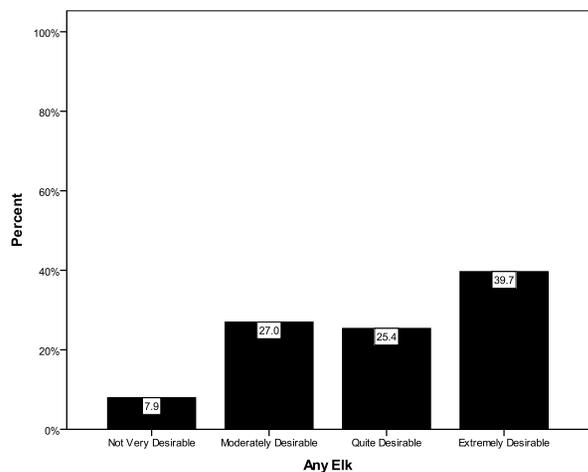
**Q26: The distribution of responses about hunter's feelings on hunting in capped zones is similar between the Bannock zone and the state average.**

# ELK HUNTING PREFERENCES AND MOTIVATIONS

In this section we seek an understanding of what you consider when deciding what kind of Elk to hunt and where to hunt them.

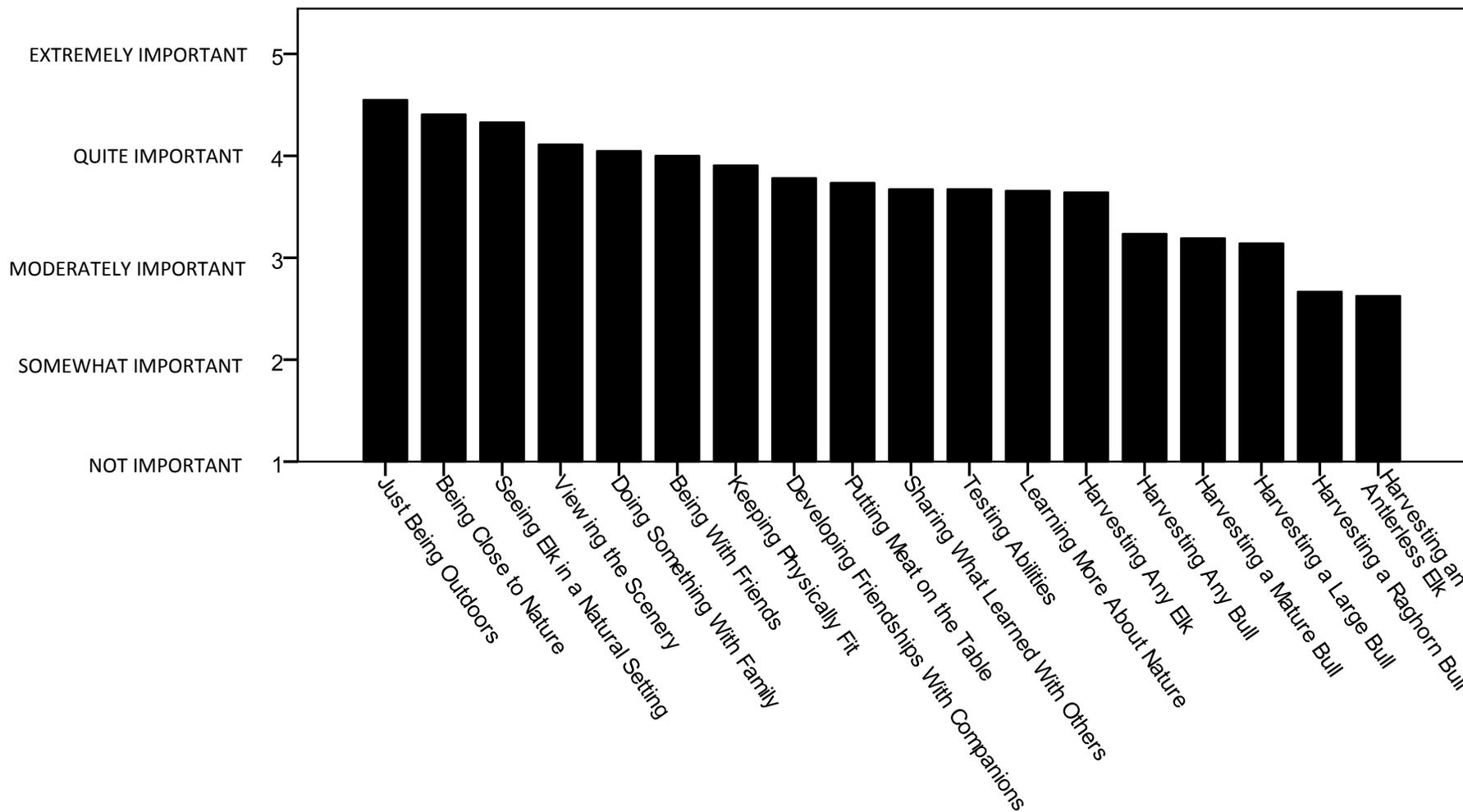
## 27. How desirable is it to you to harvest the following kinds of Elk?



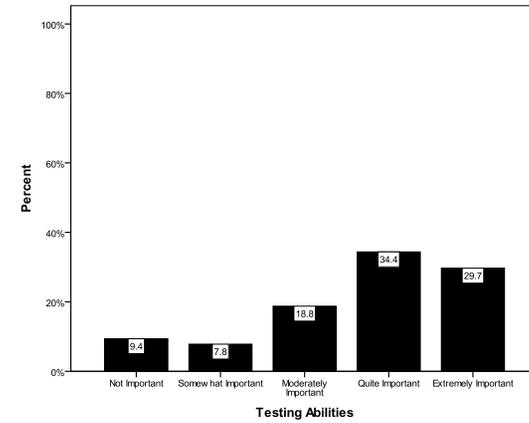
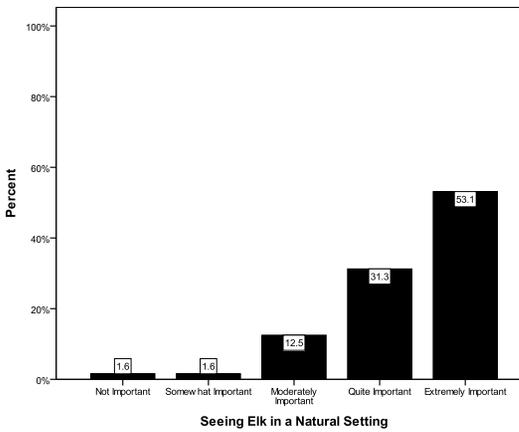
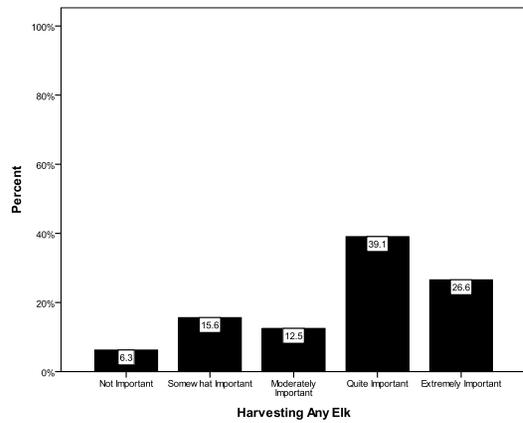
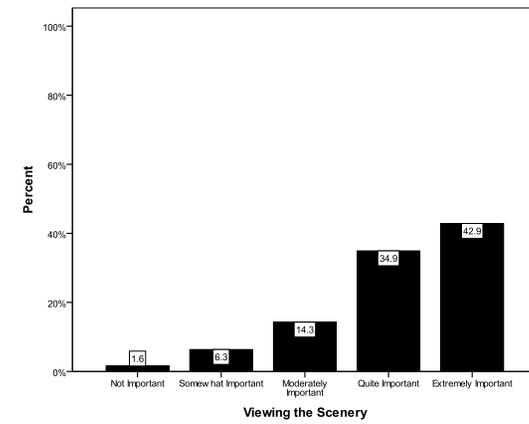
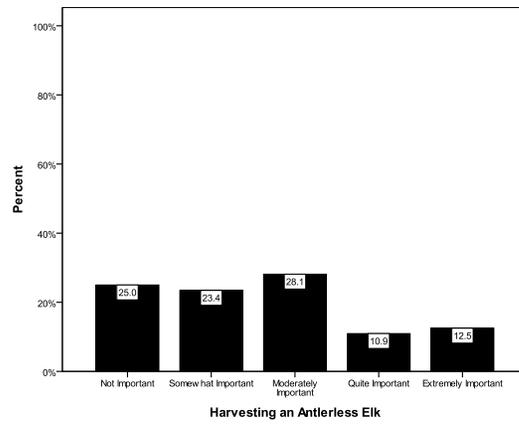
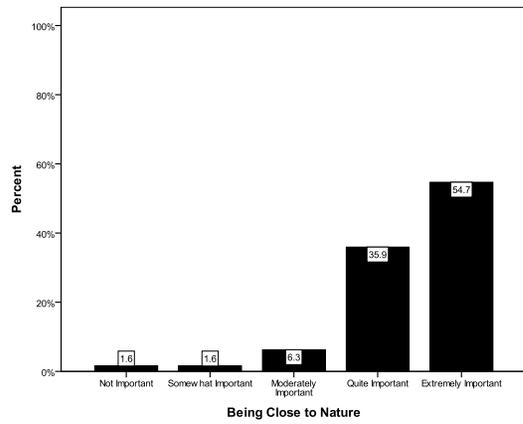


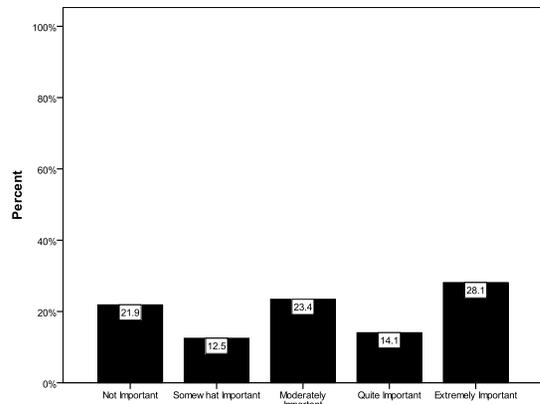
**Q27: The distribution of responses is similar between the Bannock zone and the state average. Bannock hunters find harvesting any Elk or a cow Elk slightly more desirable than other hunters in the state.**

28. Below is a list of possible reasons for hunting Elk in Idaho. How important to you is each of the following reasons for hunting Elk in Idaho?

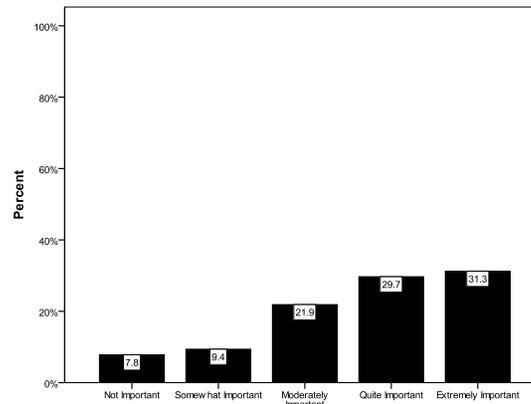


IMPORTANCE OF REASONS FOR HUNTING ELK IN IDAHO

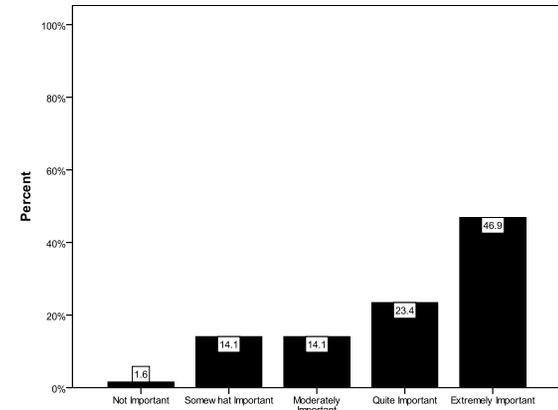




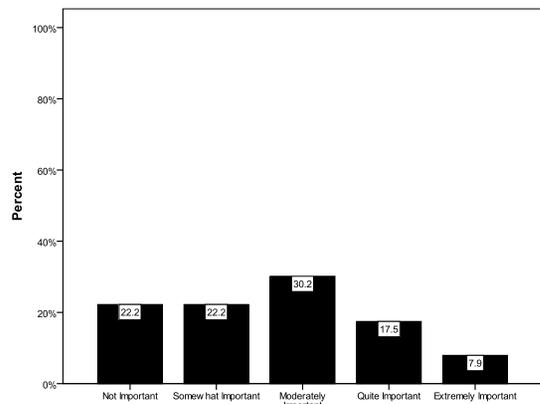
Harvesting a Large Bull



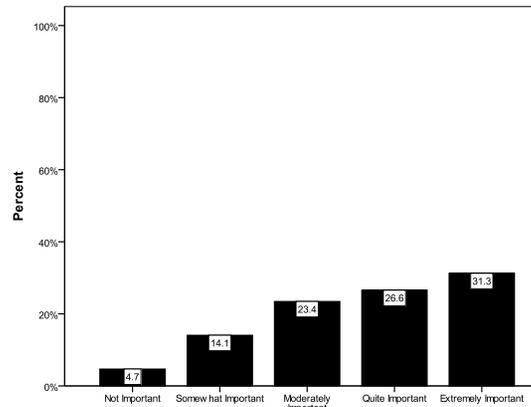
Sharing What Learned With Others



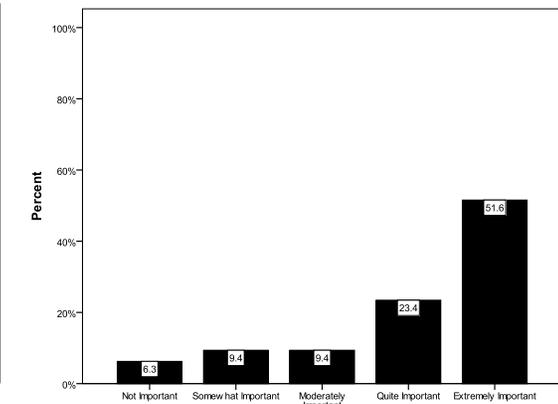
Being With Friends



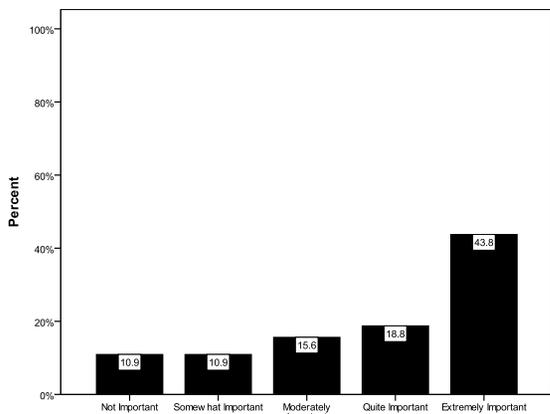
Harvesting a Raghorn Bull



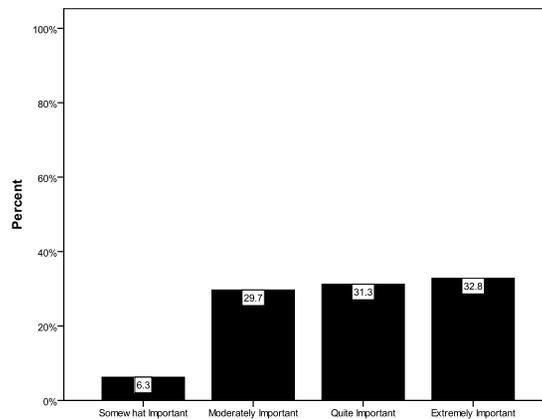
Learning More About Nature



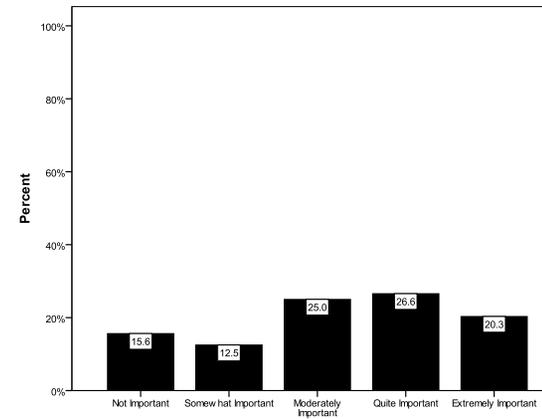
Doing Something With Family



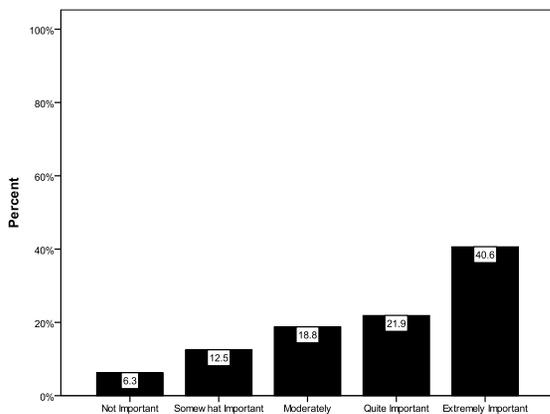
Putting Meat on the Table



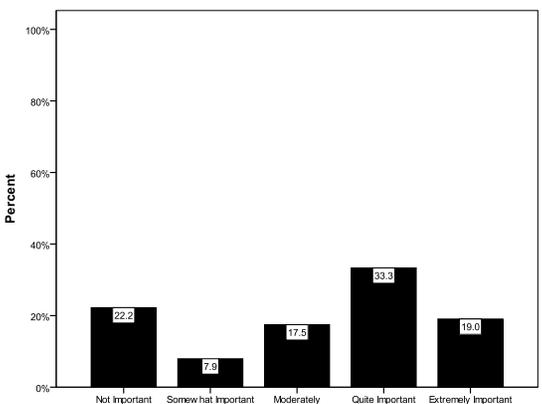
Keeping Physically Fit



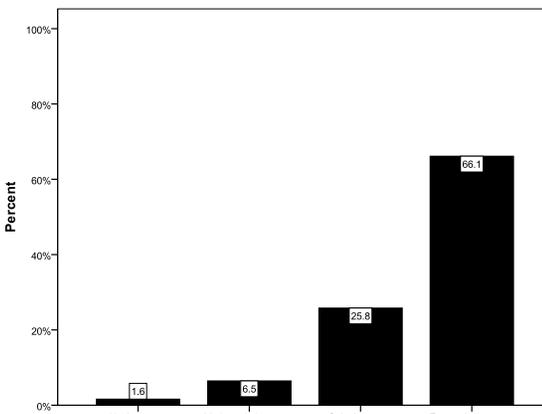
Harvesting Any Bull



Developing Friendships With Companions



Harvesting a Mature Bull

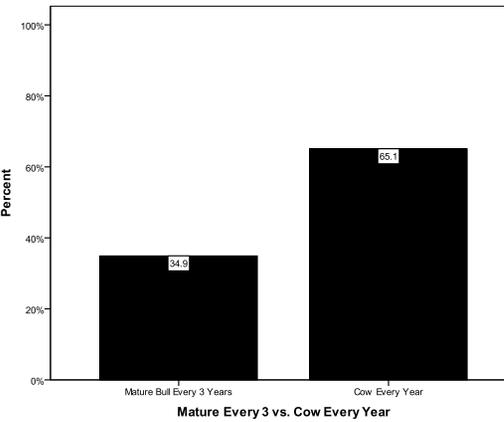
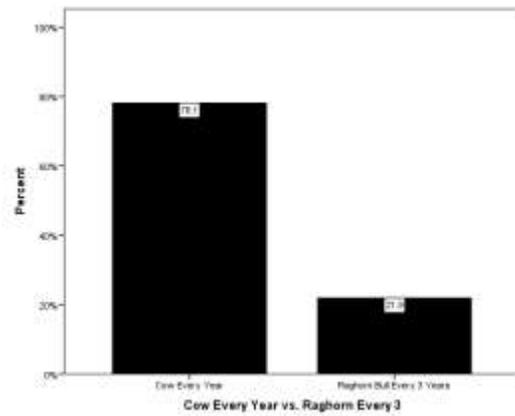
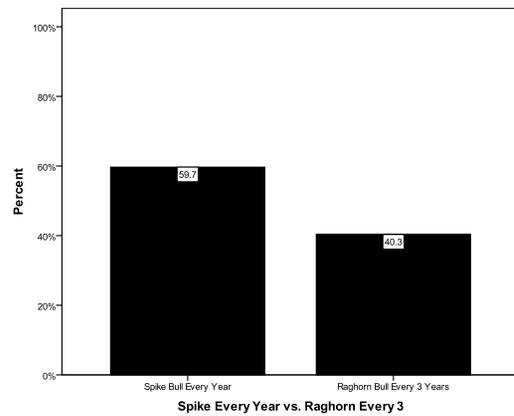
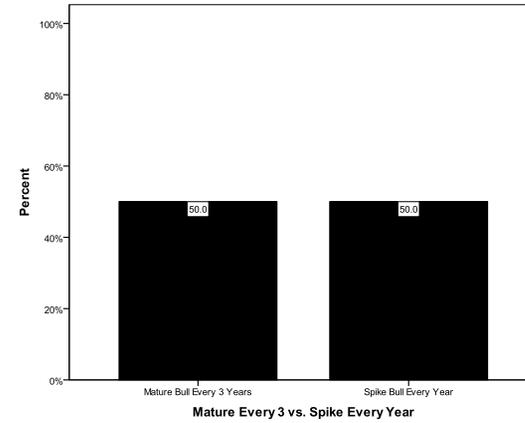
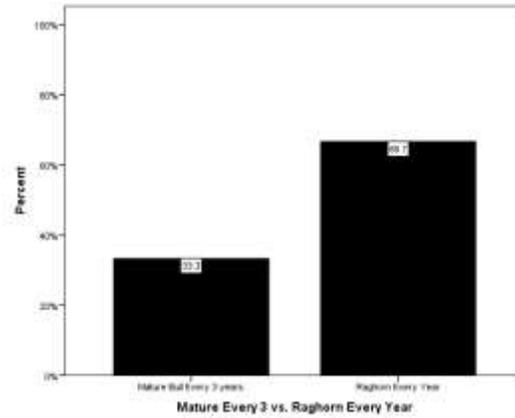
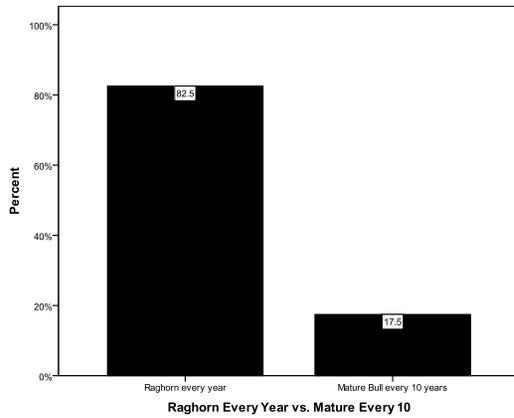


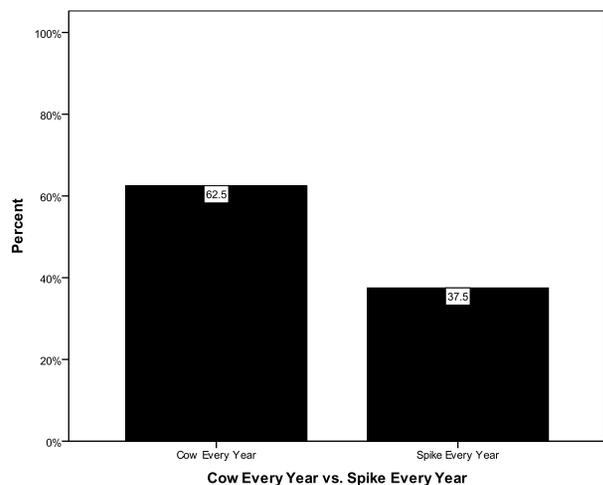
Just Being Outdoors

**Q28: The reasons to hunt Elk are similar between the Bannock zone and the state average. Top reasons for both groups of respondents are just being outdoors, seeing Elk in a natural setting, being close to nature, viewing the scenery, being with friends, and doing something with family. Reasons regarding harvest are less important to hunters in this zone.**

**Next, your opinions about some possible management options.**

**32. Managing to produce more large bull Elk would require reductions in bull harvest. Managers need to know whether hunters are willing make trade-offs between the size of bulls and the amount of opportunity to hunt. (For each of the following pairs of opportunity choices please indicate which one is most favorable to you by circling the appropriate letter) Please answer every one, even if you do not like either option.**

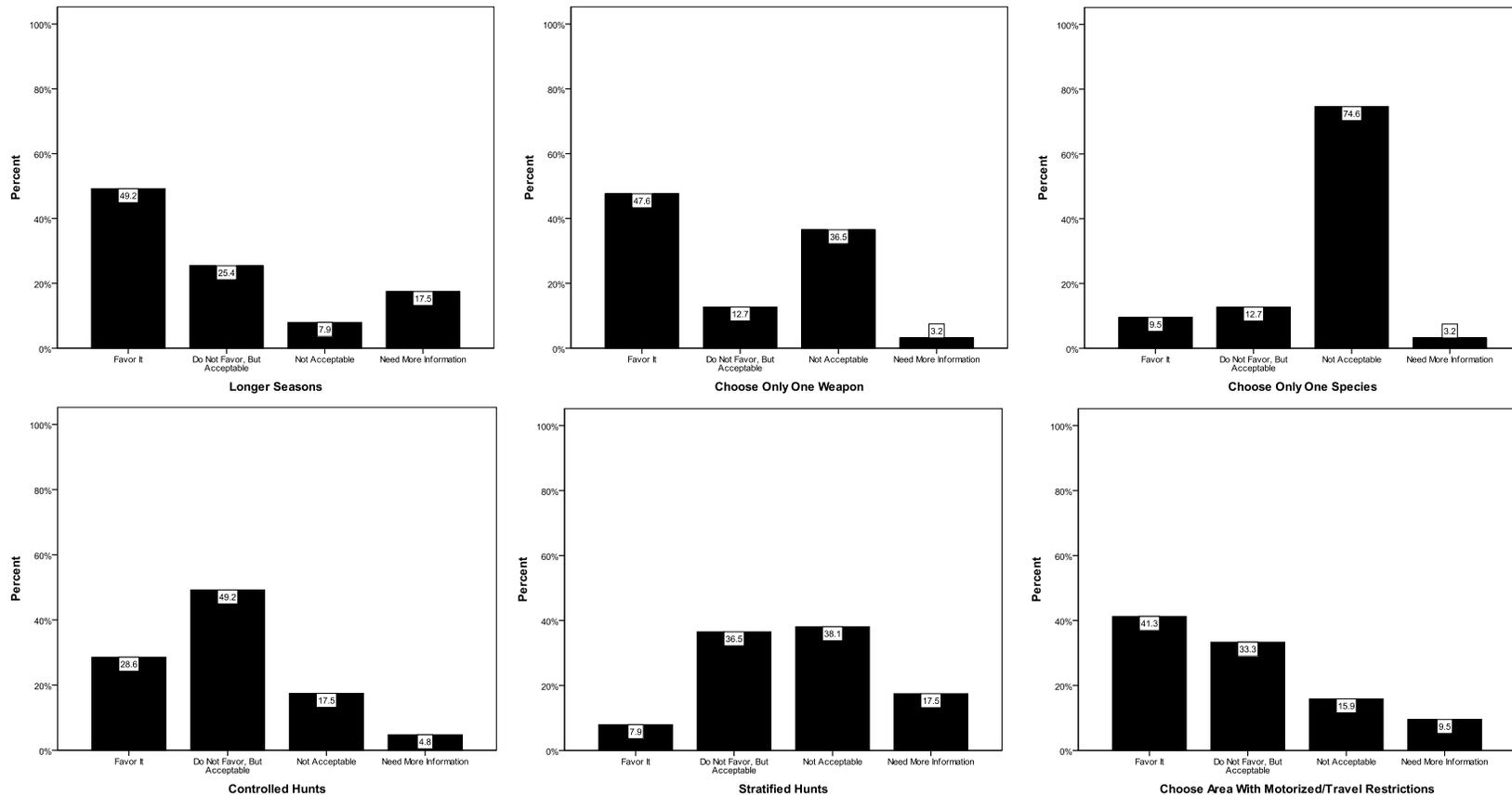


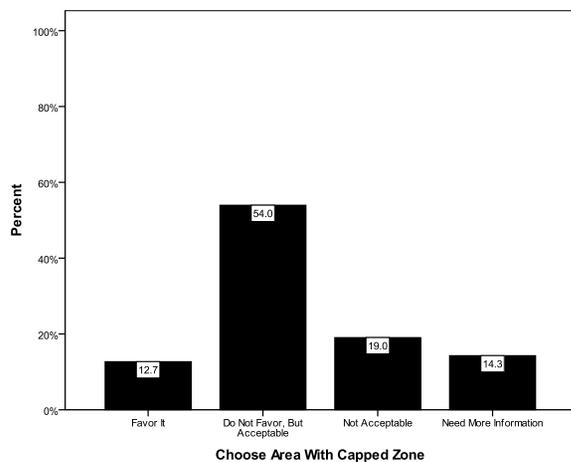


**Q32: The distribution of responses is similar between the Bannock zone and the state average. Bannock hunters also would rather preserve their opportunity to hunt than harvest larger Elk more frequently.**

# ACCEPTABILITY OF CURRENT AND PROPOSED MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND THE TRADE-OFFS INVOLVED

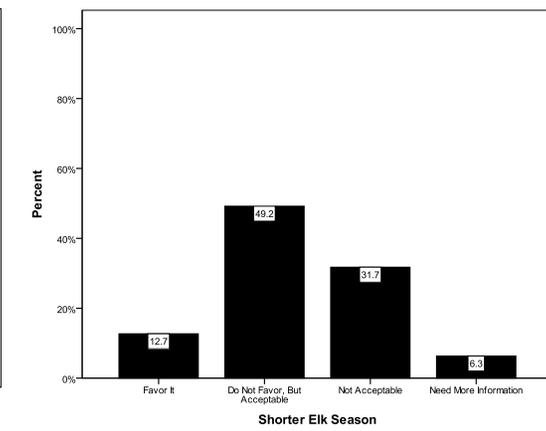
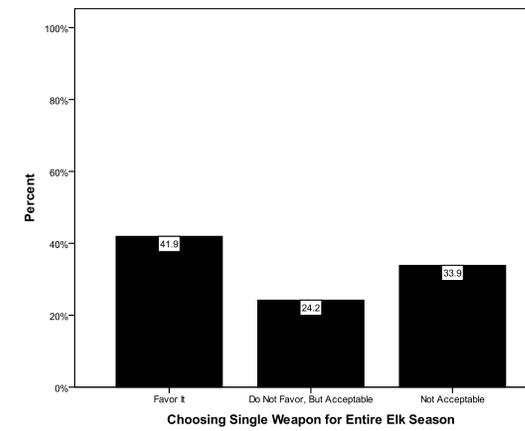
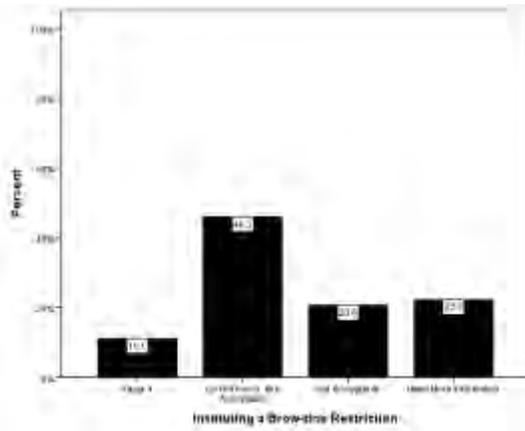
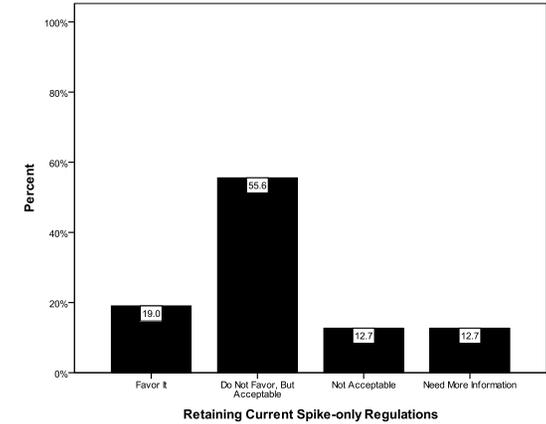
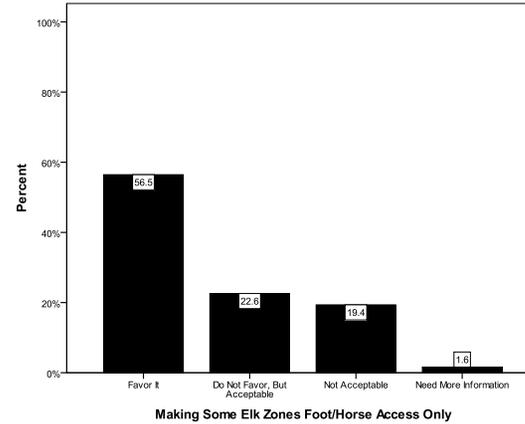
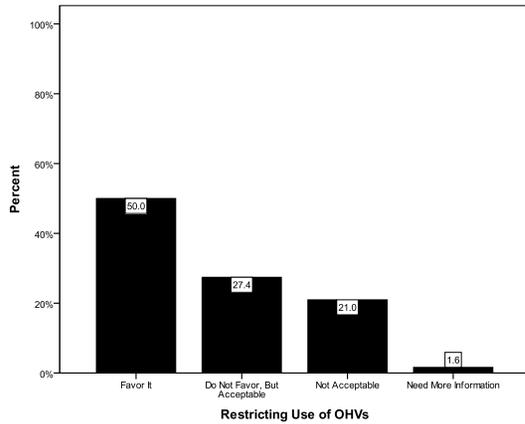
## 34. How do you feel about each of the following potential ways of improving Elk hunting, if needed?

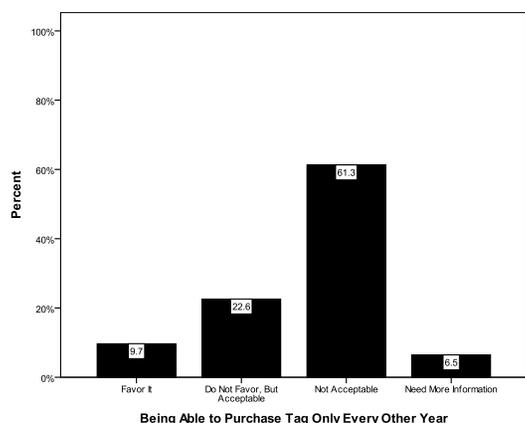
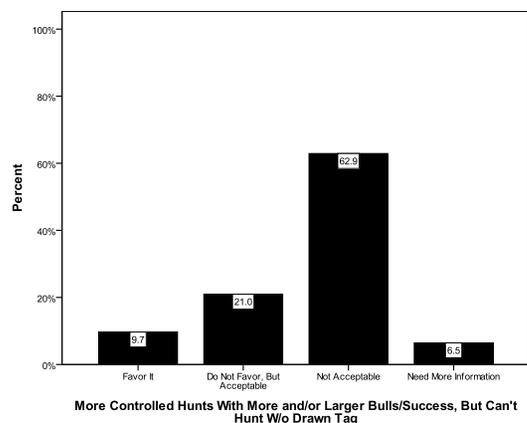
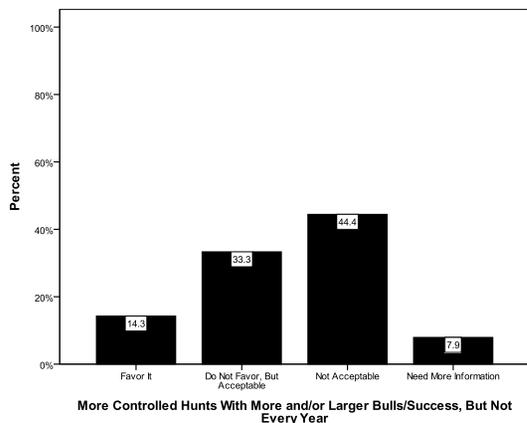




**Q34: The distribution of responses and how hunters feel about these potential management strategies are similar between the Bannock zone and the state average. Bannock hunters find choosing only one weapon less acceptable and favor controlled hunts less than other hunters in the state. They find stratified hunts slightly more favorable.**

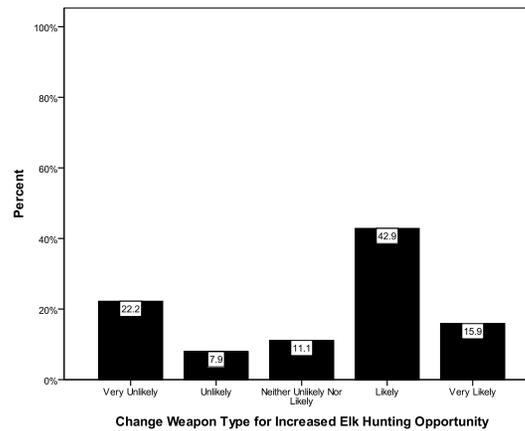
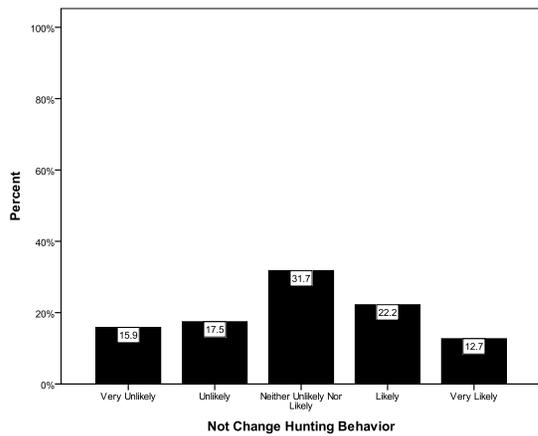
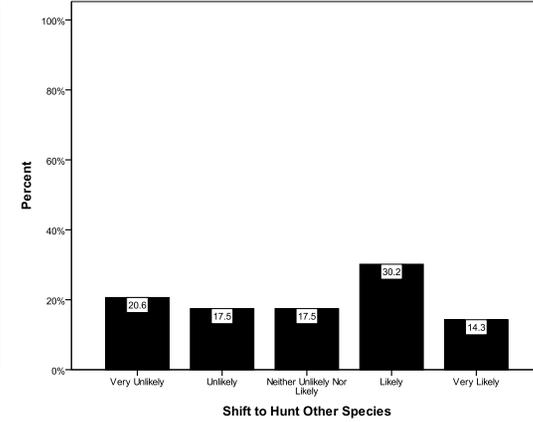
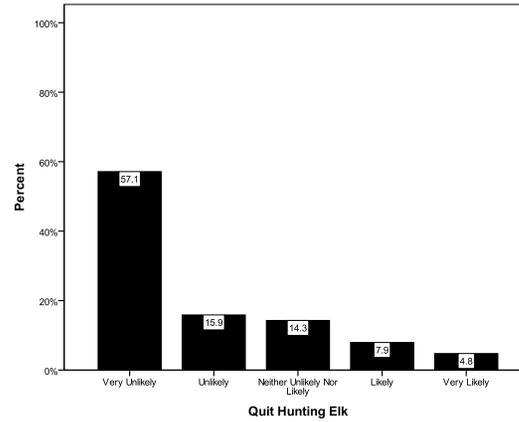
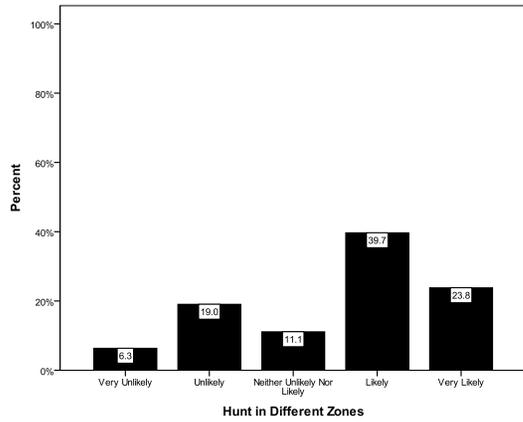
35. We would like to know how you feel about the following potential restrictions to increase the quality and size of Elk in Idaho and improve Elk hunting opportunities. Please indicate your opinion on the following potential restrictions.





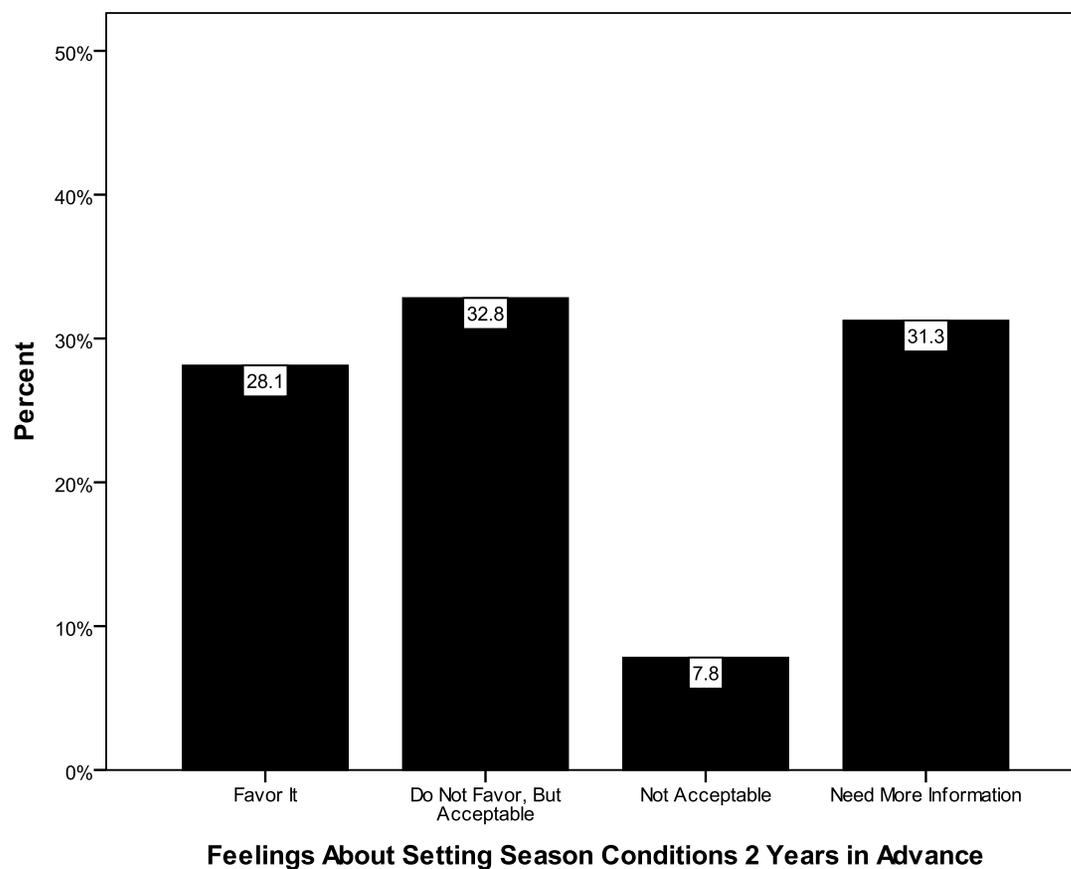
**Q35: The distribution of responses and feeling toward these potential restrictions are similar between the Bannock zone and the state average. Bannock hunters are less favorable of retaining current spike-only regulations, instituting a brow-tine restriction, or having a shorter Elk season but still find them acceptable.**

**36. *IF* Idaho Fish and Game introduces restrictions that reduce Elk hunting opportunities to improve Elk populations, how would your hunting behavior change?**



**Q36: The distribution of responses and how hunters would react to restrictions is similar between the Bannock zone and the state average. To quit hunting Elk is 'very unlikely' for both groups. However, Bannock hunters would be more likely to change their weapon type for increased Elk hunting opportunity.**

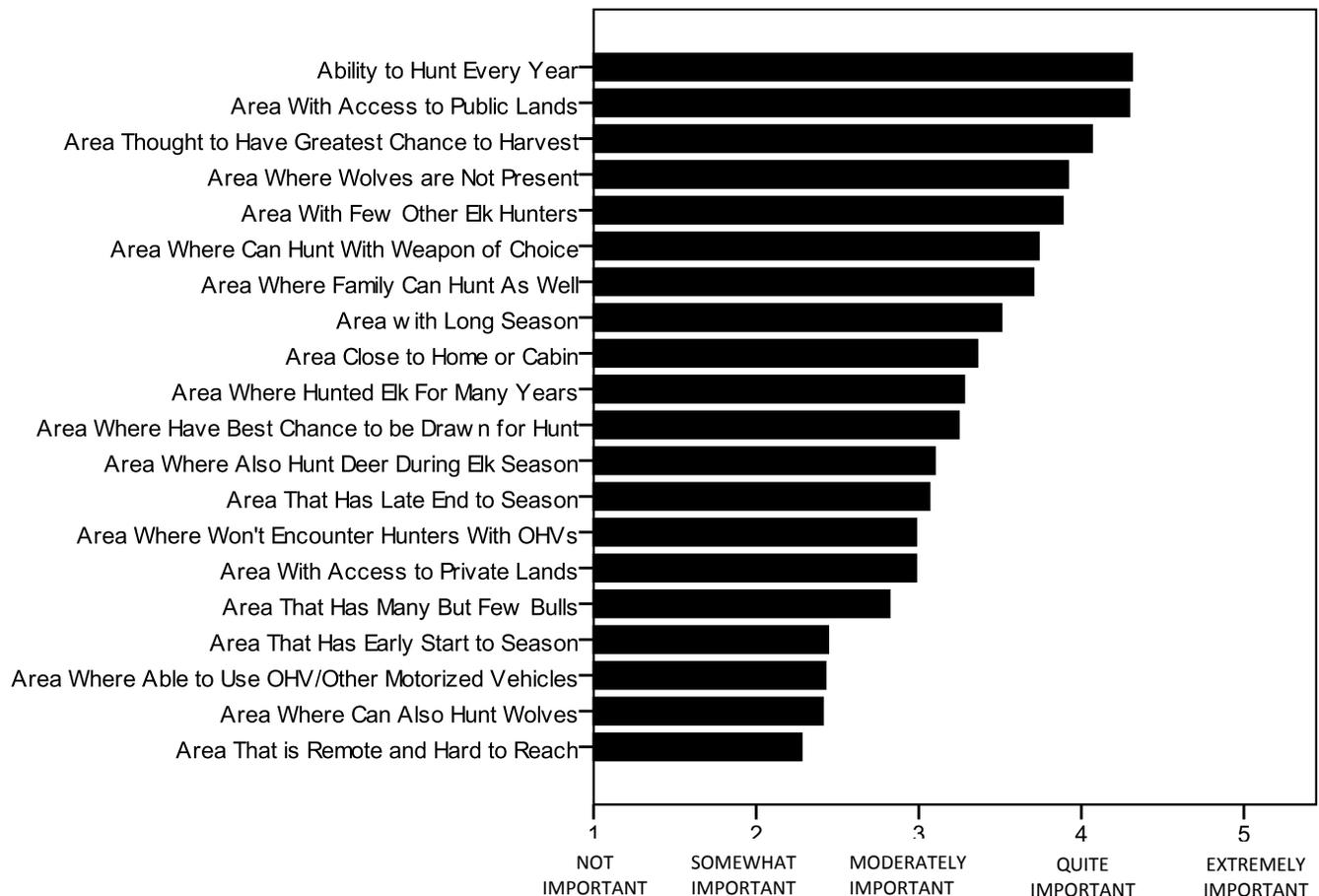
38. How would you feel about a big game regulation that sets the general season conditions for 2 years in advance, just like the current Moose, Mountain Goat, Bighorn Sheep, Upland Game, Turkey and Fishing regulations? (Please check one response)



**Q38: About one-third (28.1% and 28%) of hunters in the Bannock zone and the state favor setting season conditions for two years in advance. However, slightly more Bannock hunters do not favor it but find it acceptable, and another third would need more information.**

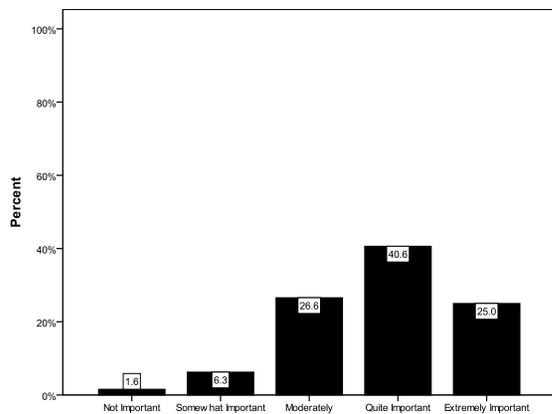
## WHEN AND WHERE TO HUNT

29. Each of the following characteristics may be things you consider when deciding where to hunt Elk in Idaho. How does each characteristic affect your choice of where to hunt Elk in Idaho?

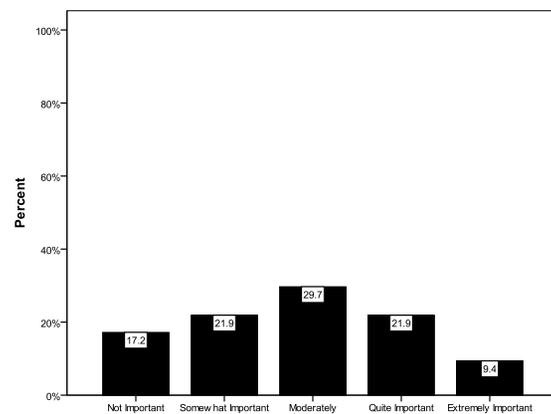


Q29: The top five characteristics of where to hunt for Elk are the same between Bannock hunters and other hunters in the state.

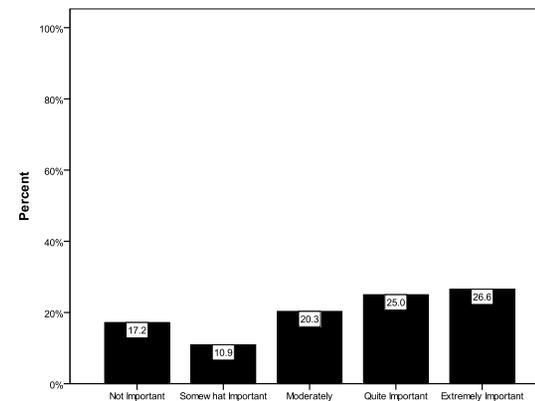
CHARACTERISTICS AFFECTING CHOICE OF WHERE TO HUNT IN IDAHO



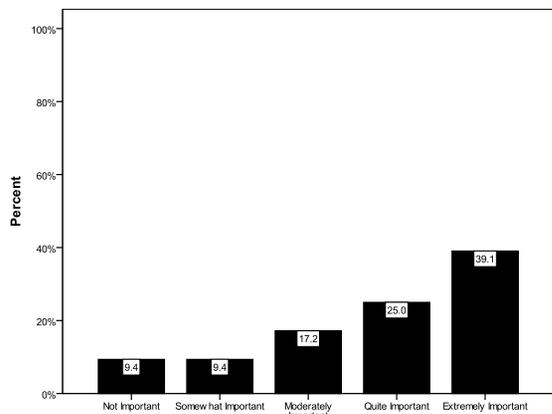
Area With Few Other Elk Hunters



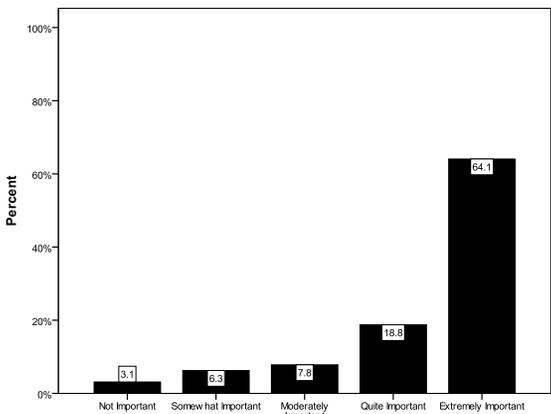
Area That Has Many But Few Bulls



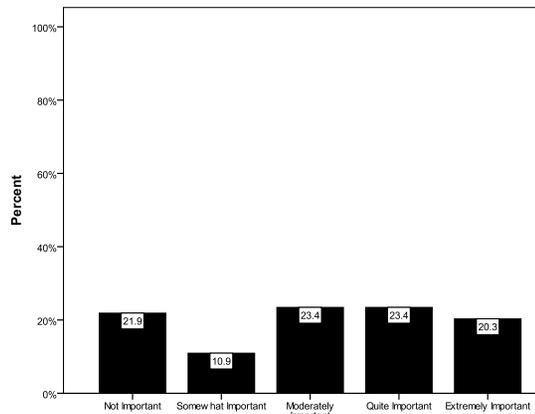
Area Where Hunted Elk For Many Years



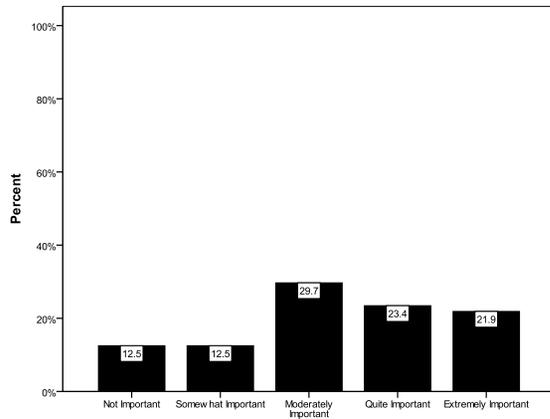
Area Where Family Can Hunt As Well



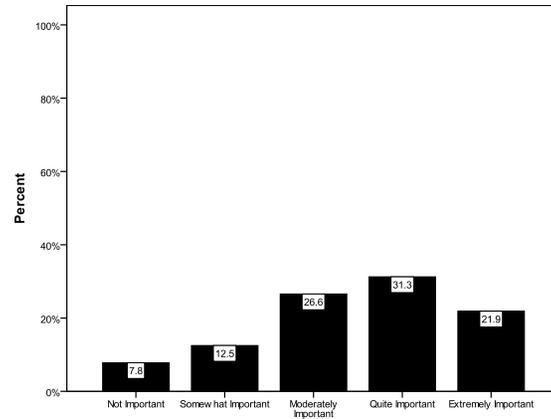
Ability to Hunt Every Year



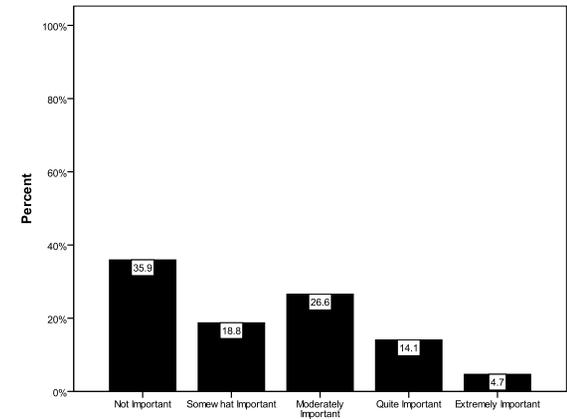
Area Where Also Hunt Deer During Elk Season



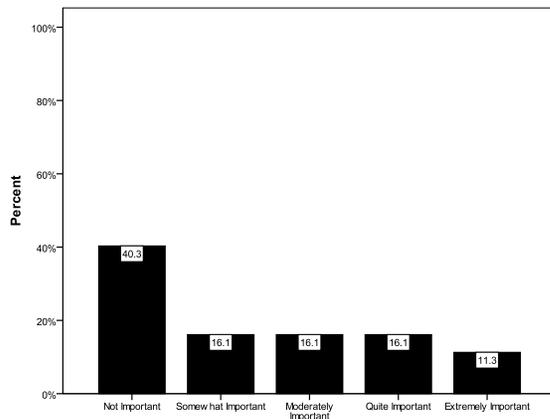
Area Close to Home or Cabin



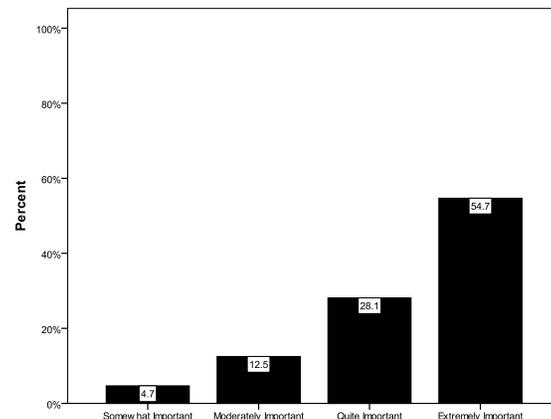
Area with Long Season



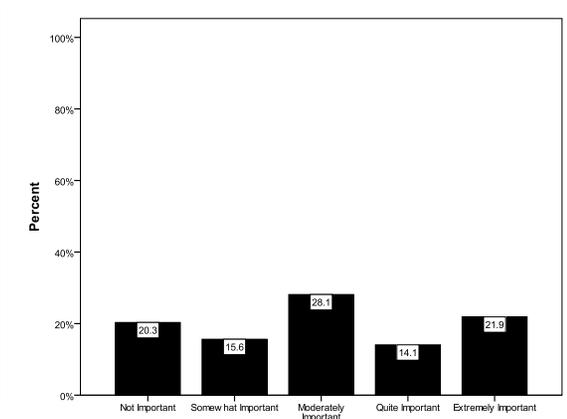
Area That is Remote and Hard to Reach



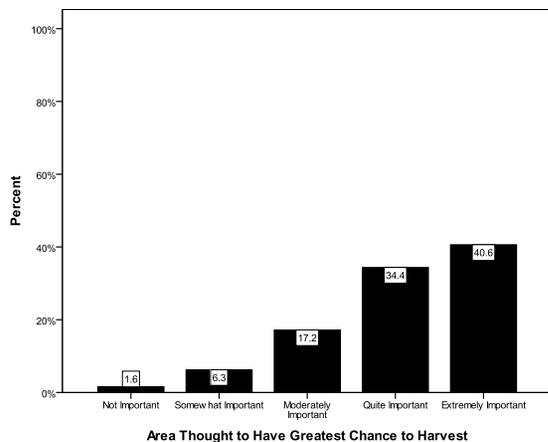
Area That Has Early Start to Season



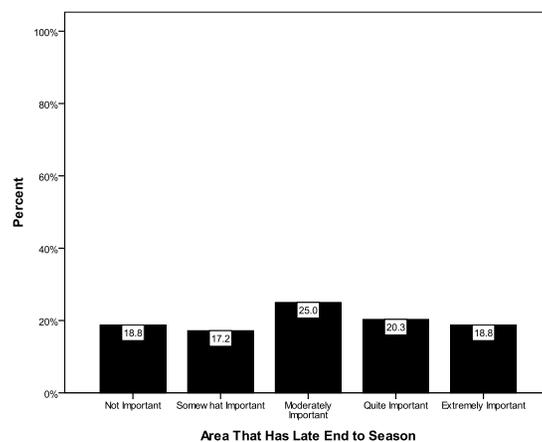
Area With Access to Public Lands



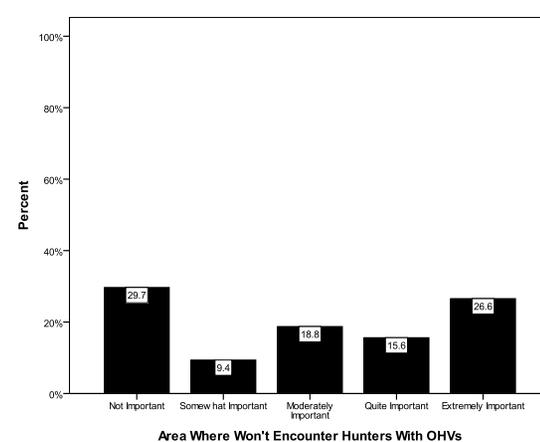
Area With Access to Private Lands



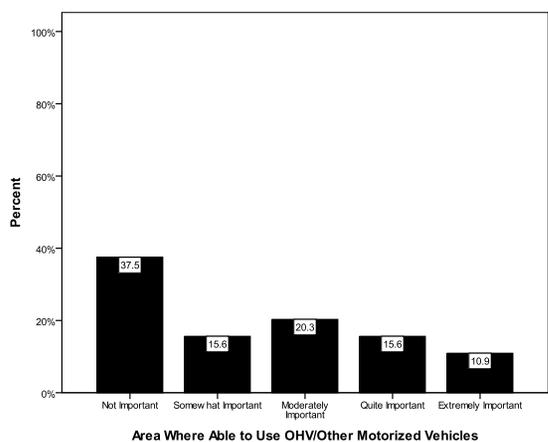
Area Thought to Have Greatest Chance to Harvest



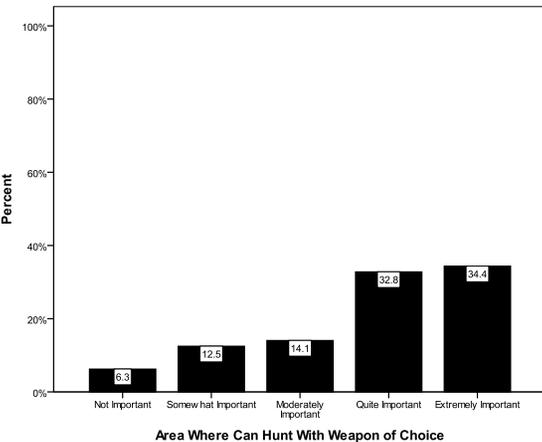
Area That Has Late End to Season



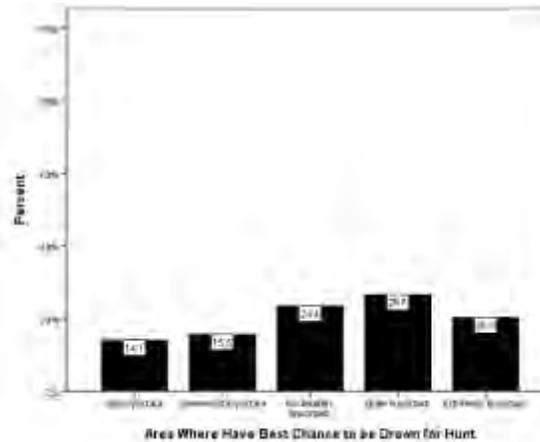
Area Where Won't Encounter Hunters With OHVs



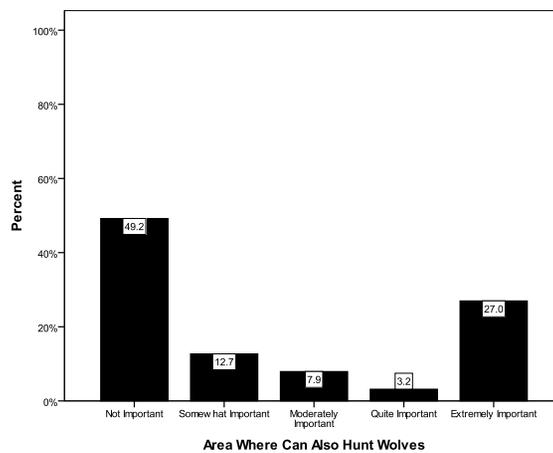
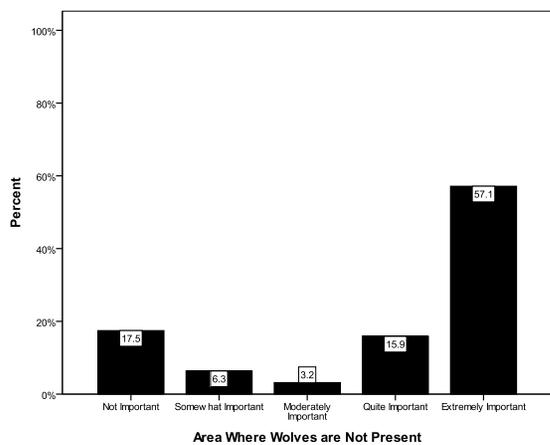
Area Where Able to Use OHV/Other Motorized Vehicles



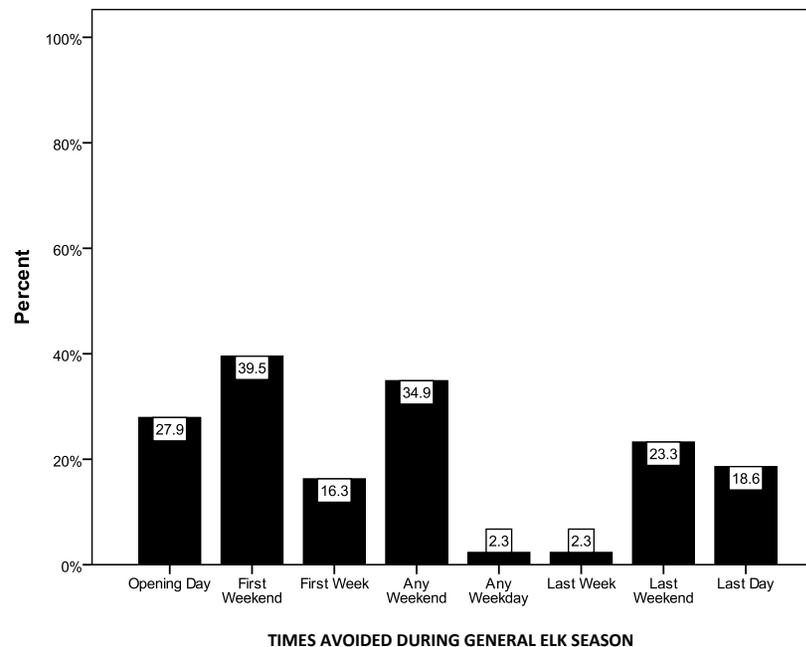
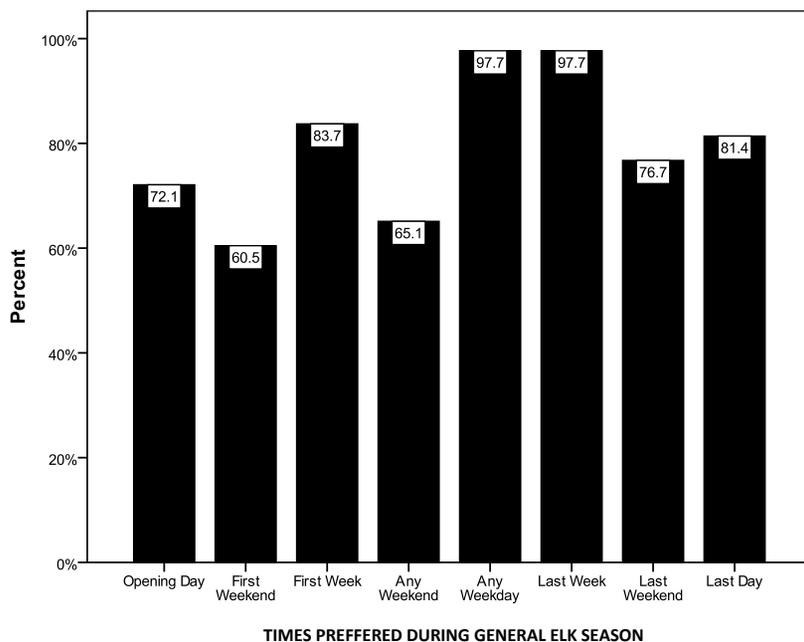
Area Where Can Hunt With Weapon of Choice



Area Where Have Best Chance to be Drawn for Hunt



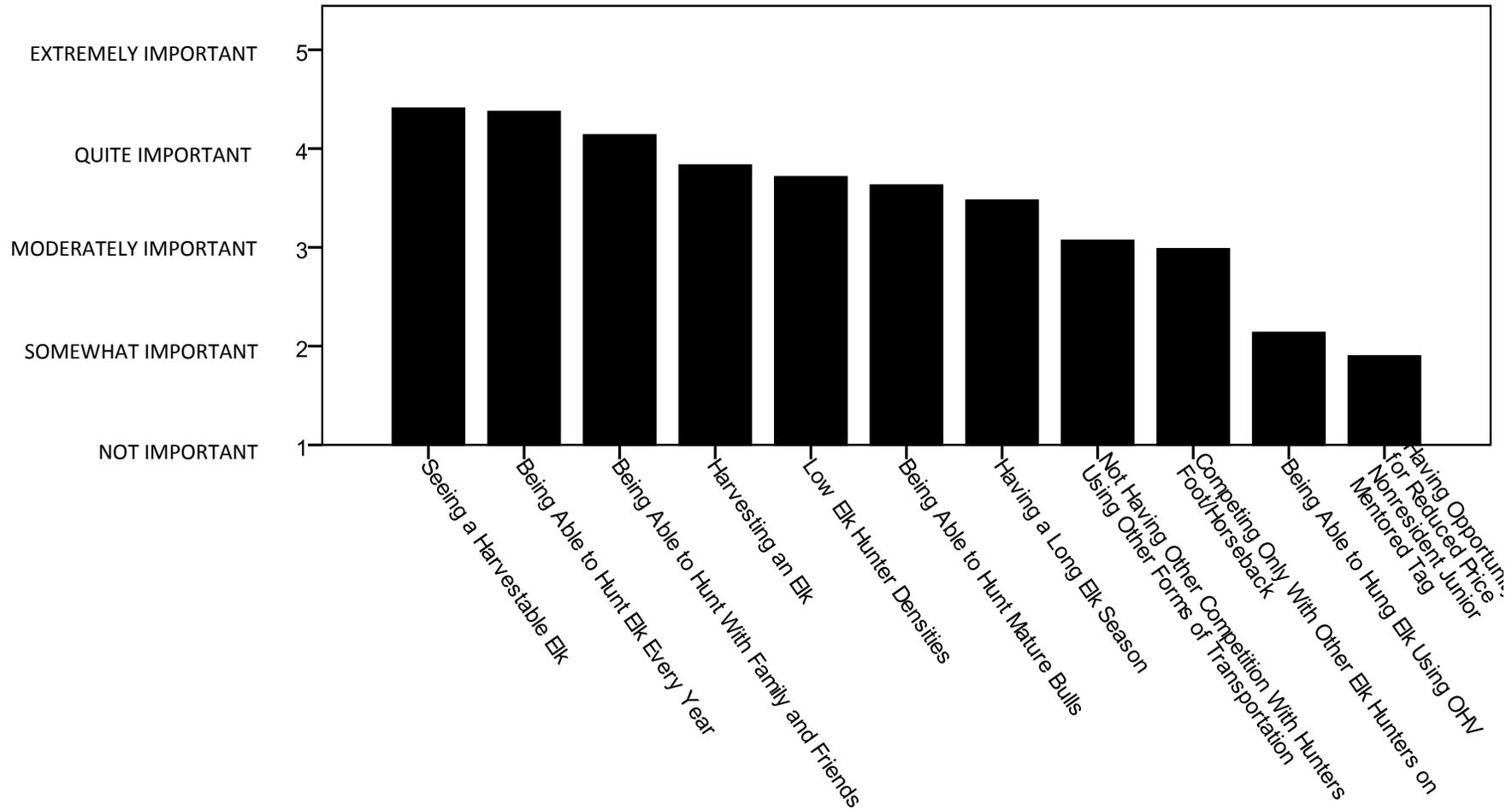
30. Are there any times during the general Elk hunting season in Idaho that you prefer or avoid? (Please check as many as apply)



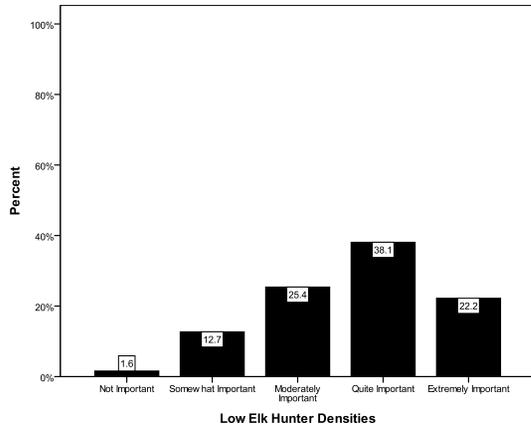
**Q30: The distribution of responses is similar between the Bannock zone and the state average. However, Bannock hunters prefer to get a last hunt in at the end of the season. There was a 9% for this zone for those who preferred to hunt during the last week. There was also a slight increase for those who prefer to hunt on the last day.**

# ATTRIBUTES OF A QUALITY ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE

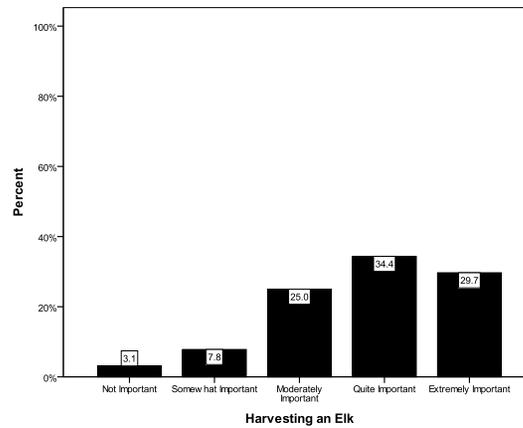
31. How important to you are each of these attributes for a quality Idaho Elk hunting experience?



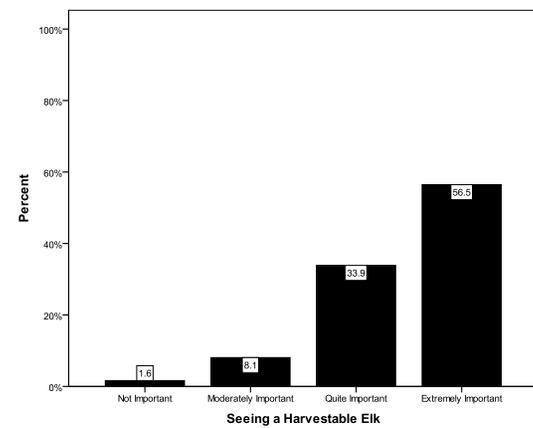
IMPORTANCE OF ATTRIBUTES FOR A QUALITY ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE IN IDAHO



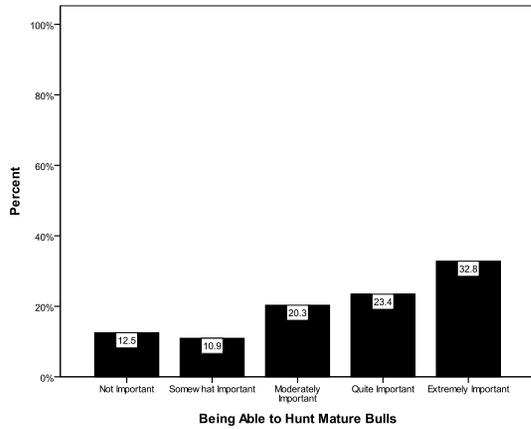
Low Elk Hunter Densities



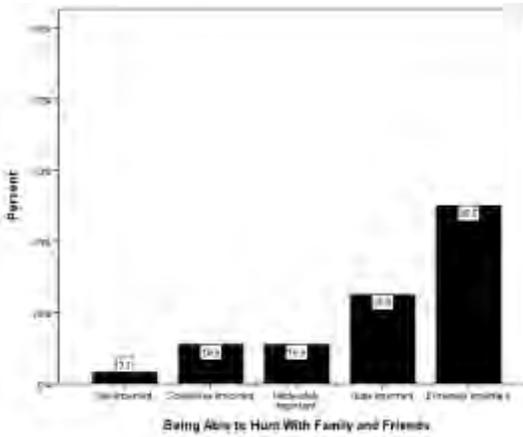
Harvesting an Elk



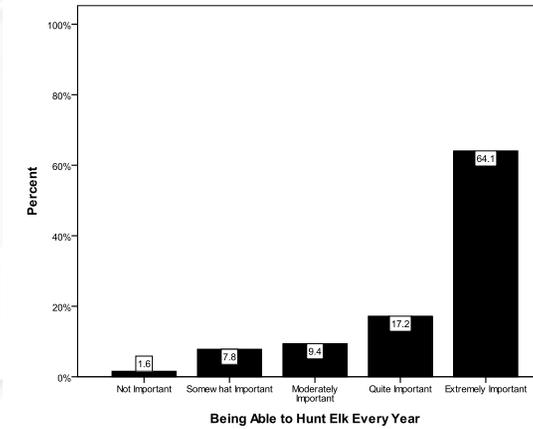
Seeing a Harvestable Elk



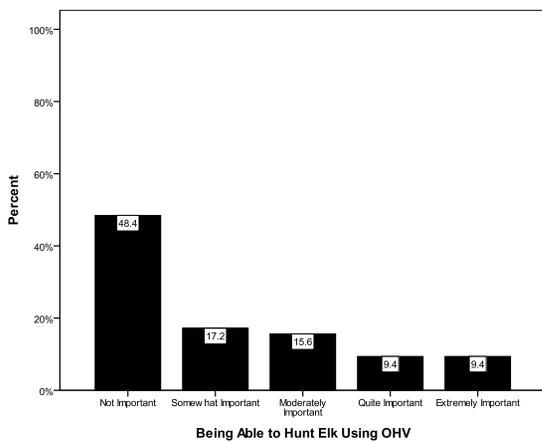
Being Able to Hunt Mature Bulls



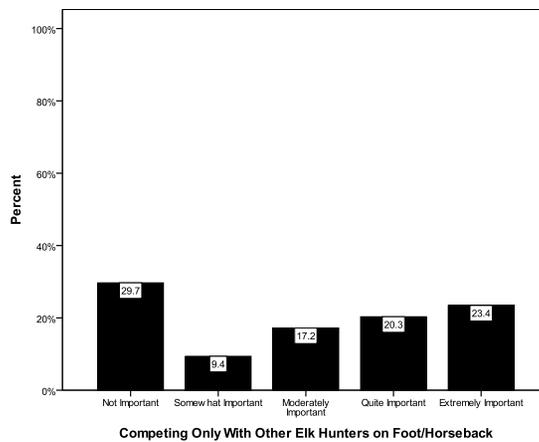
Being Able to Hunt With Family and Friends



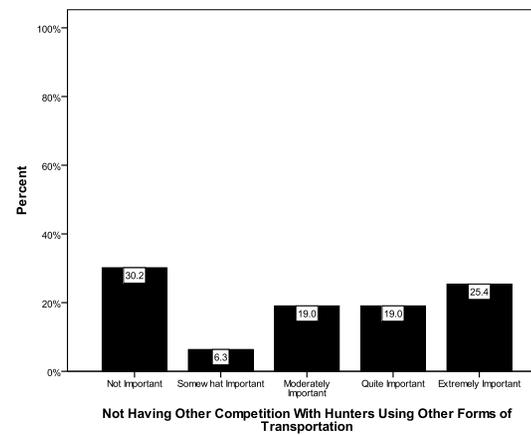
Being Able to Hunt Elk Every Year



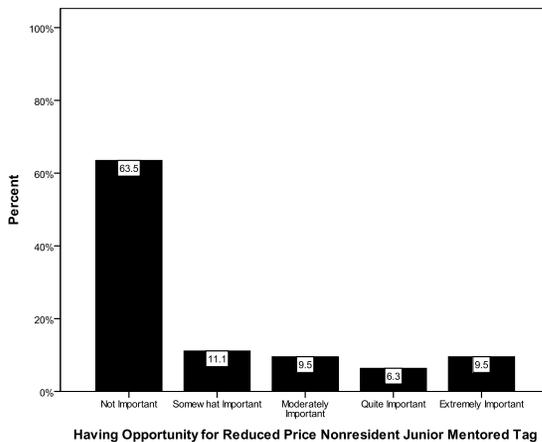
Being Able to Hunt Elk Using OHV



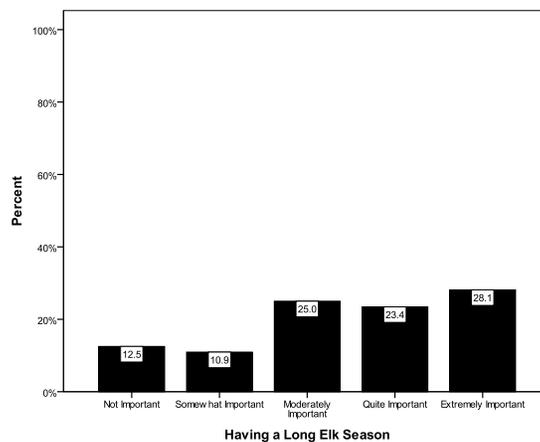
Competing Only With Other Elk Hunters on Foot/Horseback



Not Having Other Competition With Hunters Using Other Forms of Transportation



Having Opportunity for Reduced Price Nonresident Junior Mentored Tag

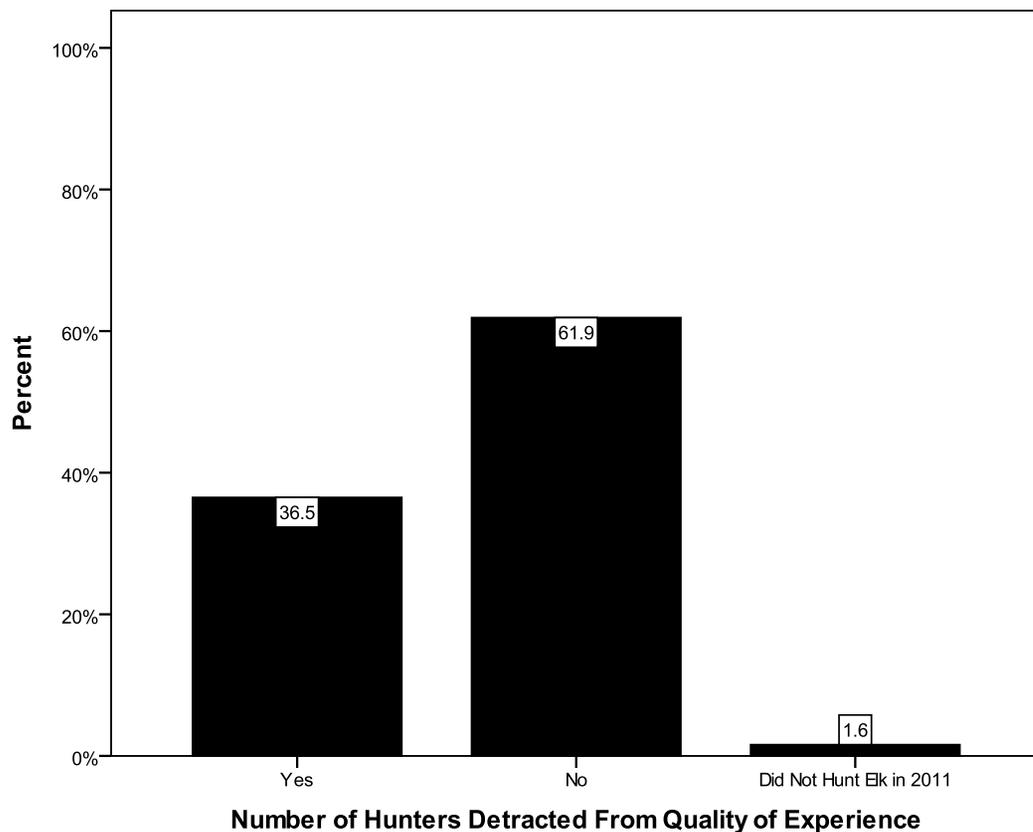


Having a Long Elk Season

**Q31: Hunters within this zone and within the state responses on the importance of attributes for a quality Elk hunting experience were very similar, and they ranked the same attributes for the six most important attributes.**

## HUNTING SATISFACTION

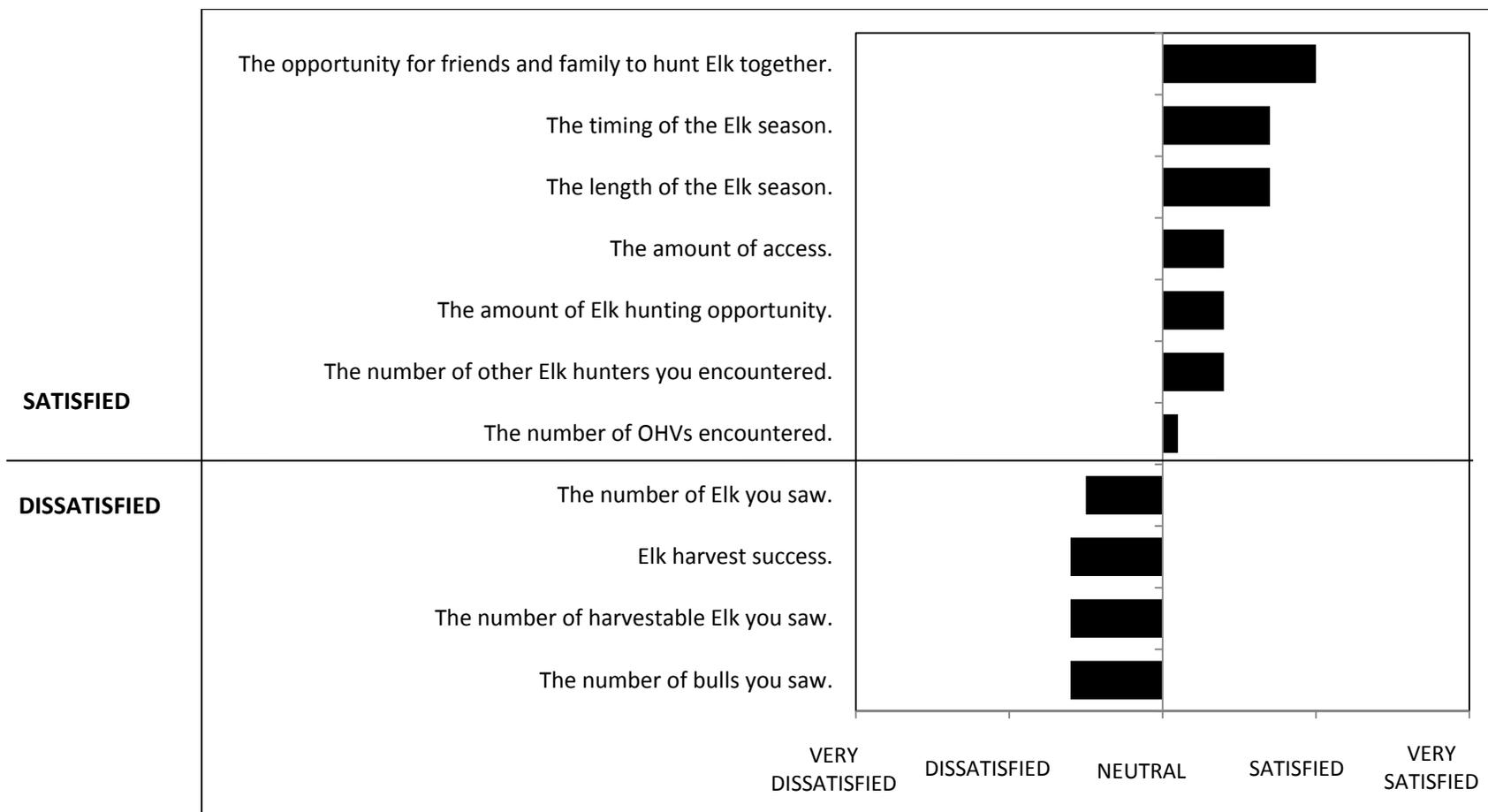
33. Were there times during your 2011 Elk season when the numbers of other hunters seriously detracted from the quality of your hunting experience? *(Please check one response)*



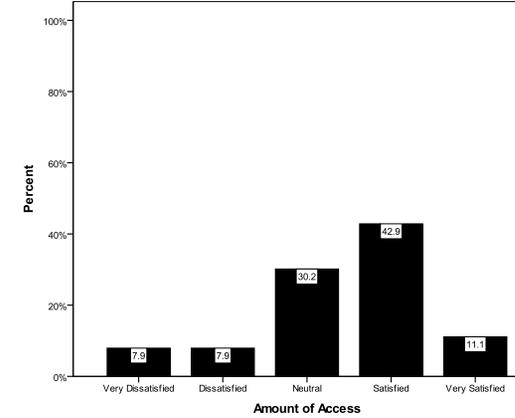
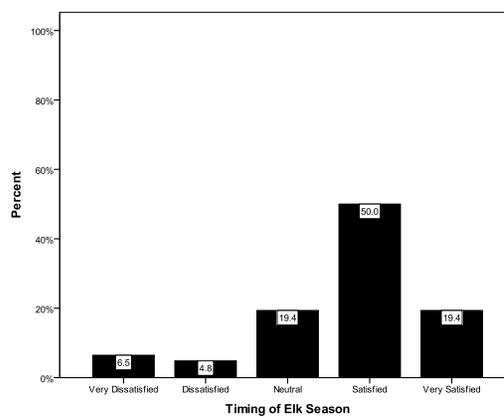
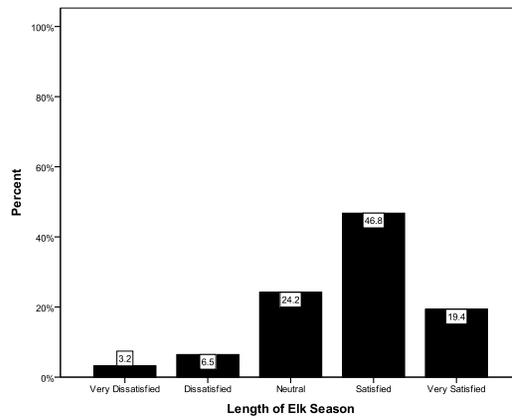
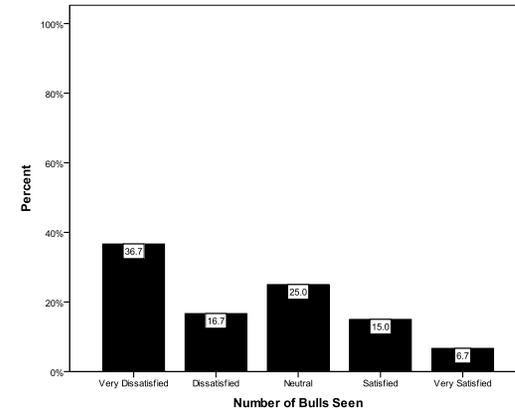
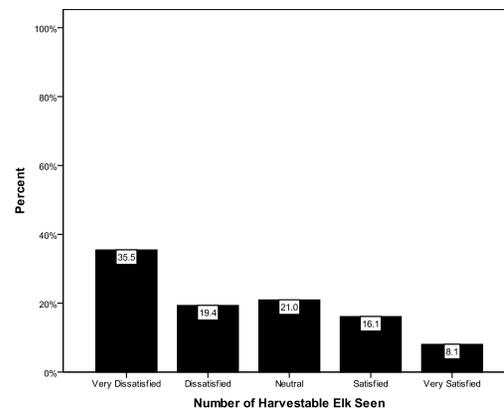
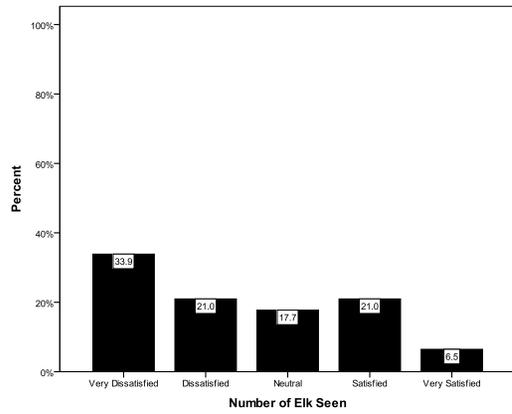
**Q33: The distribution of responses is similar between the Bannock zone and the state average.**

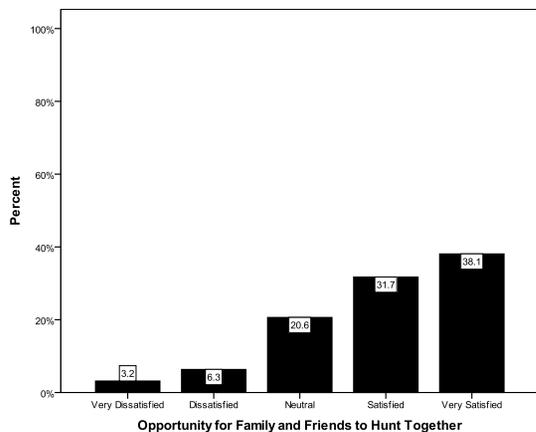
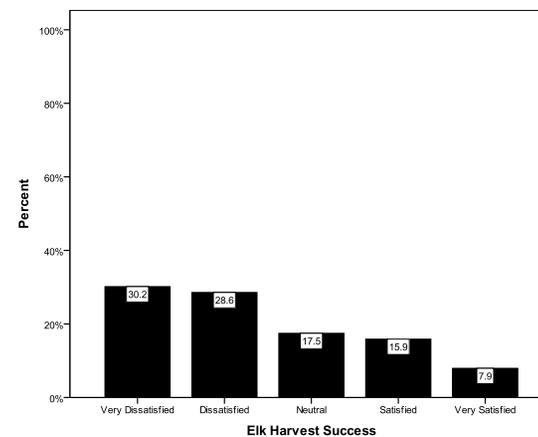
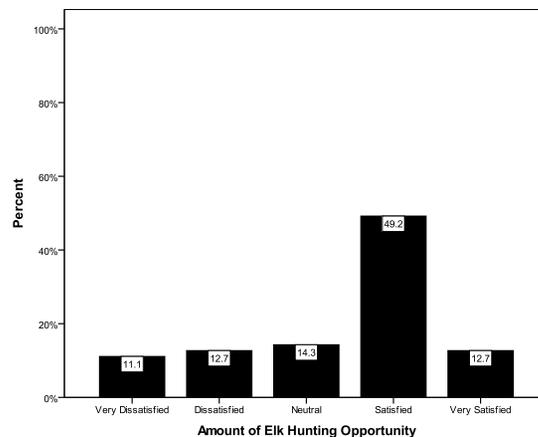
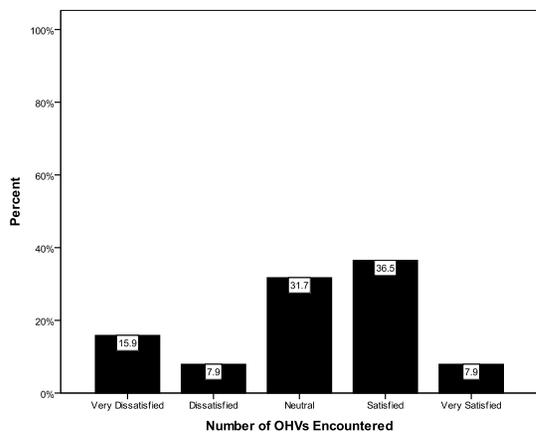
**Now, some questions about the satisfaction you experienced with Elk hunting in Idaho in 2011.**

**37. How satisfied were you with each of the following aspects of your 2011 Elk hunting experience?**



**SATISFACTION OF ASPECTS OF 2011 ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE**



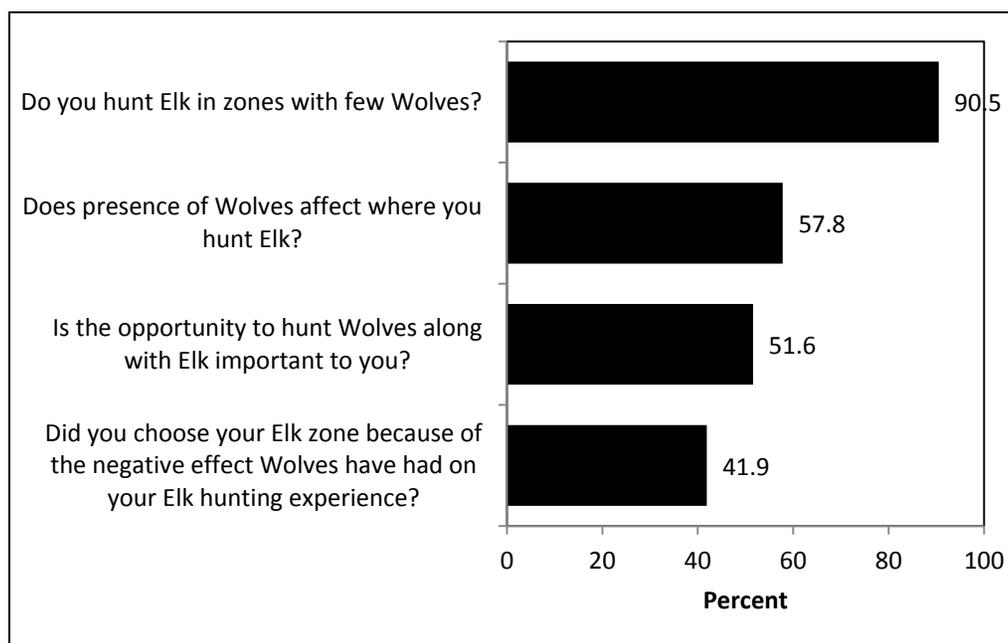


**Q37: The distribution of responses is similar between the Bannock zone and the state average. Both groups of respondents felt that their harvest success and the numbers of Elk they saw were unsatisfactory.**

## PERCEPTIONS OF PREDATORS

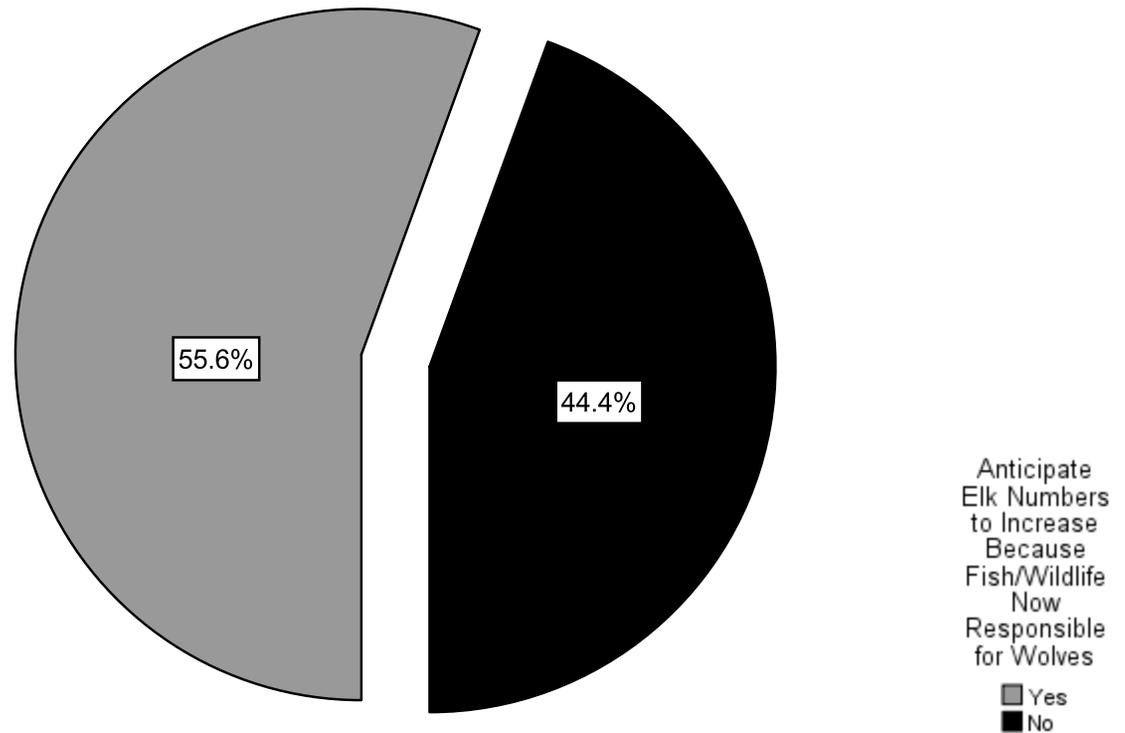
Two questions about predators in Idaho.

39. How do Wolves affect your Idaho Elk hunting experience? *(Please circle one response for each item)*



**Q39: Most Bannock hunters hunt in zones with few Wolves, about a 60% increase over the state average. Other than that, the distribution of responses was similar between the Bannock zone and the rest of the state.**

40. Do you anticipate Elk numbers to increase now that Idaho Fish and Game is responsible for managing wolves?  
(Please check one response)



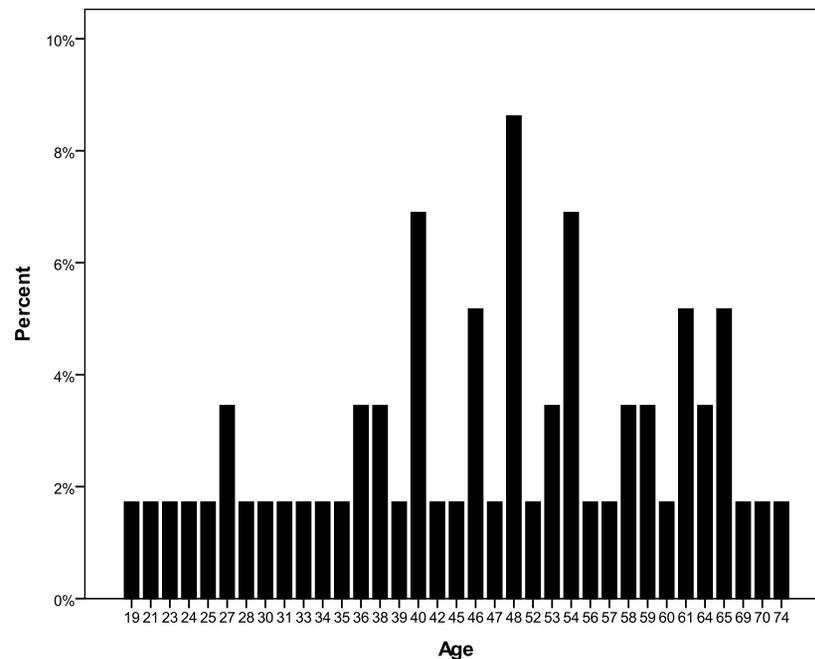
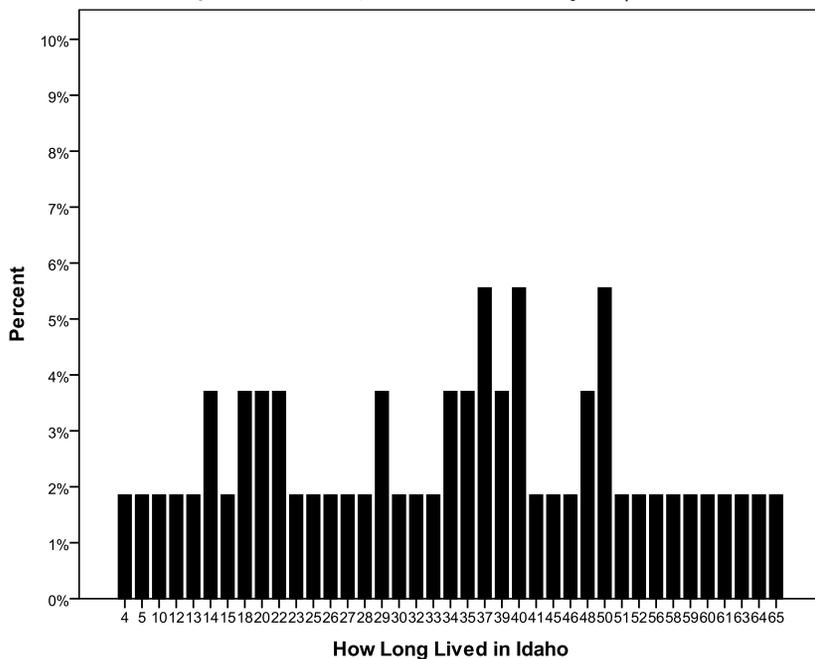
**Q40: Fewer Bannock hunters, than the state average (61.9%), anticipate Elk numbers to increase with IDFG's management of Wolves.**

# DEMOGRAPHICS

**Finally, some questions about you!**

42. How long have you lived in Idaho? *(Please enter the number of years)*

43. When were you born? *(Please enter the year)*



The distribution of responses is similar between the Bannock zone and the state average for both Q42 and Q43.