

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



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For:

Idaho Department of Fish and Game

January 2013

INSERT ELK SURVEY OBJECTIVES

METHODS

SAMPLING

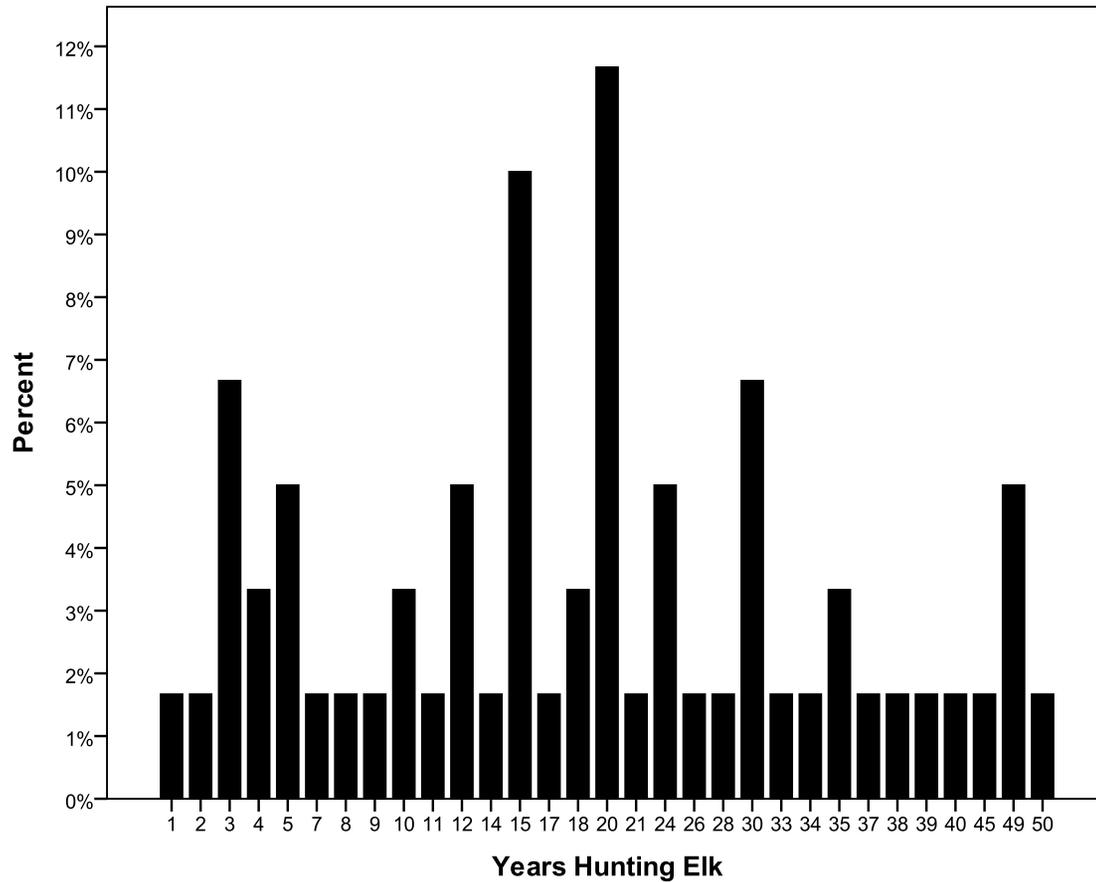
RESPONSE RATE.

ELK HUNTER PROFILES

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

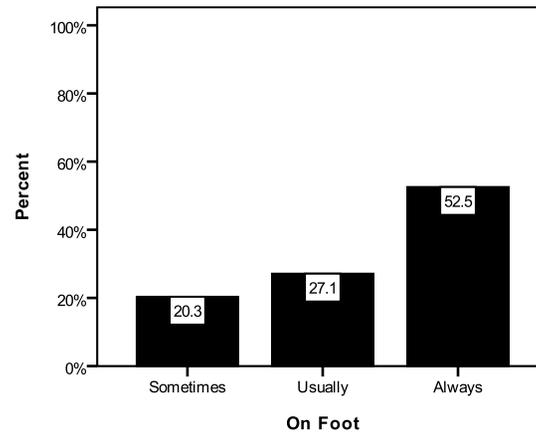
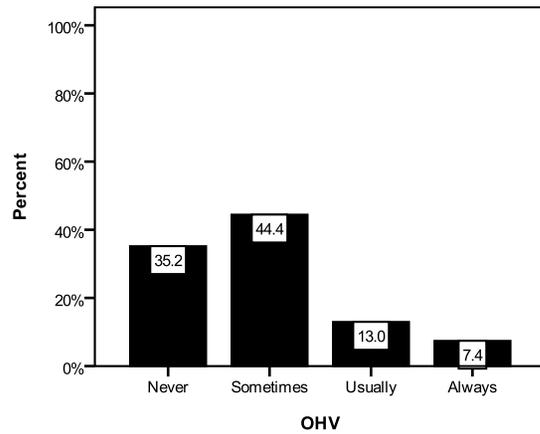
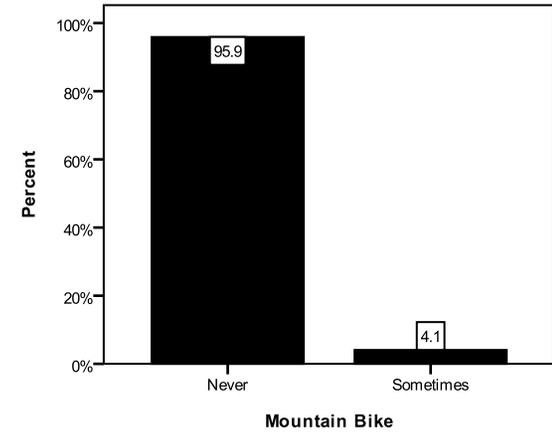
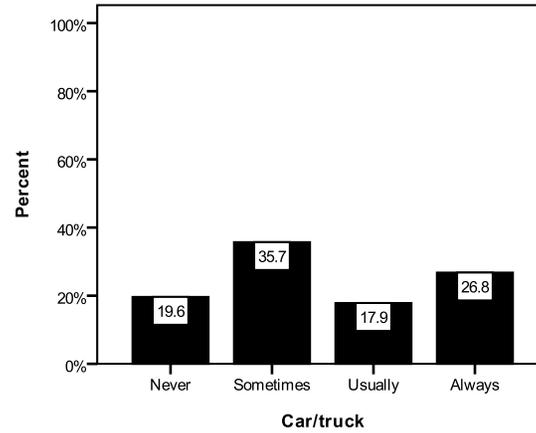
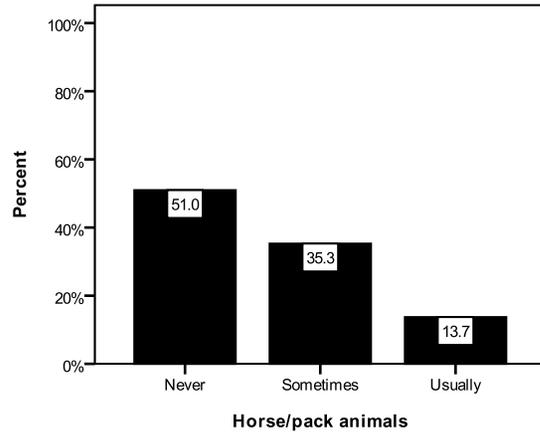
Now, some questions about your Idaho Elk hunting experiences and preferences.

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



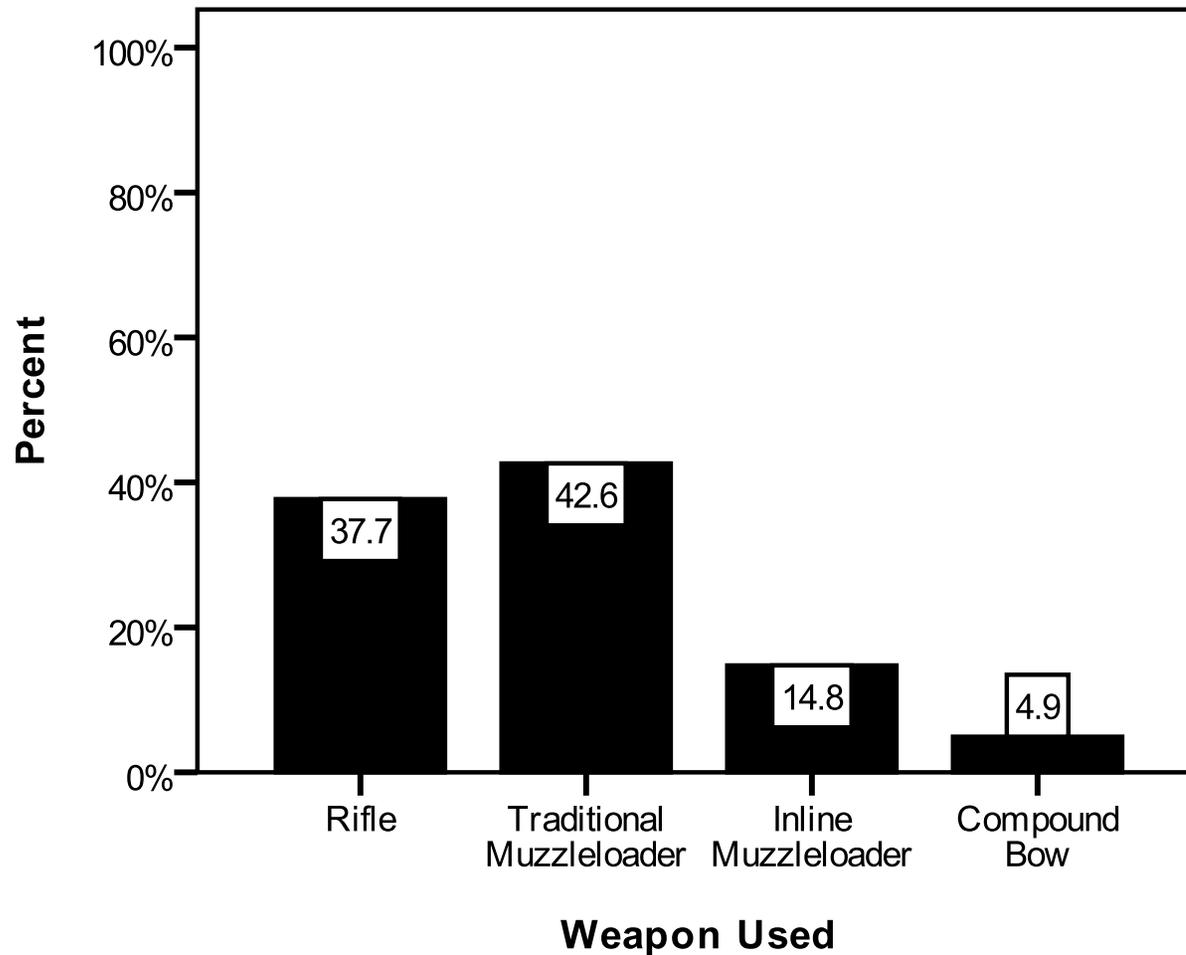
Q3: The range of years of hunting Elk in the Bennett Hills zone is smaller than that of the state average. Most hunters have been hunting for less than 35 years.

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?



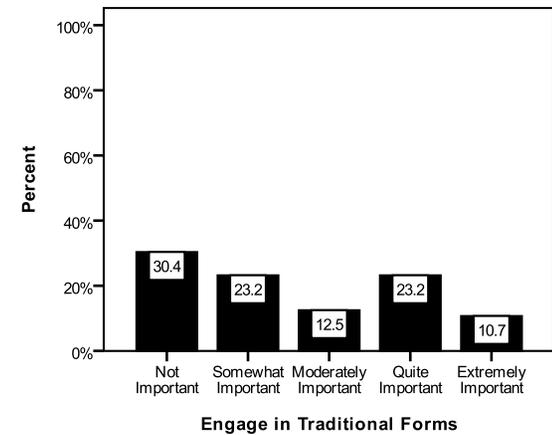
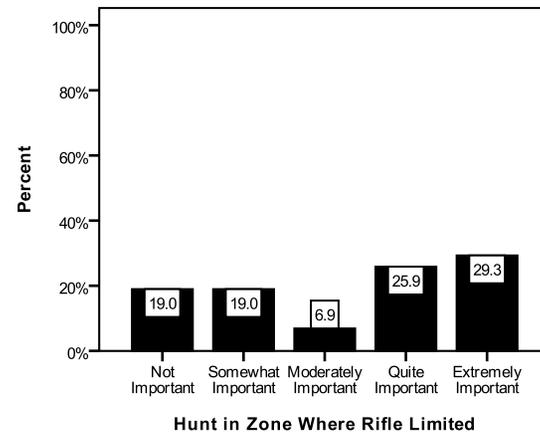
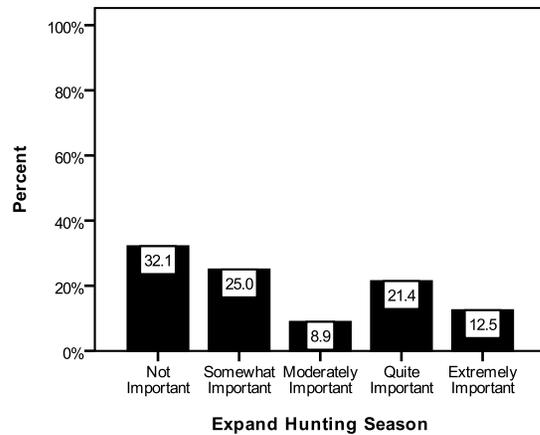
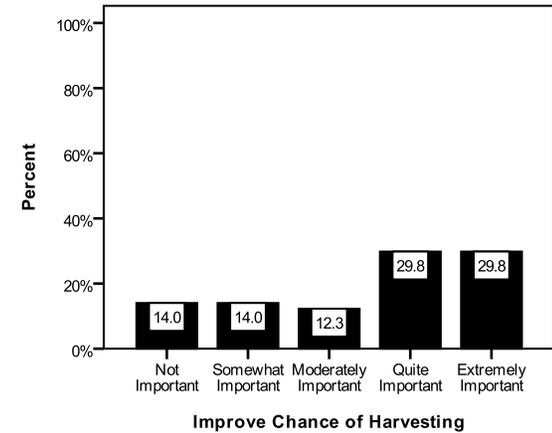
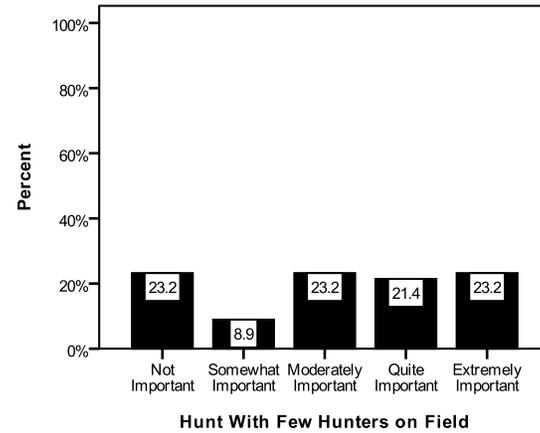
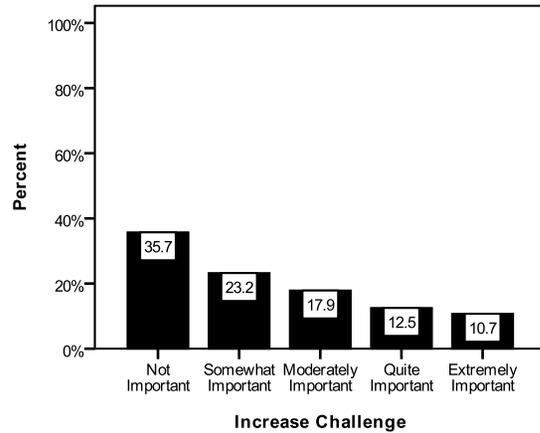
Q7: The distribution of responses between the Bennett Hills zone and the state average is similar. Hunters in this zone use OHVs slightly more than the state average and hunt on foot slightly less often.

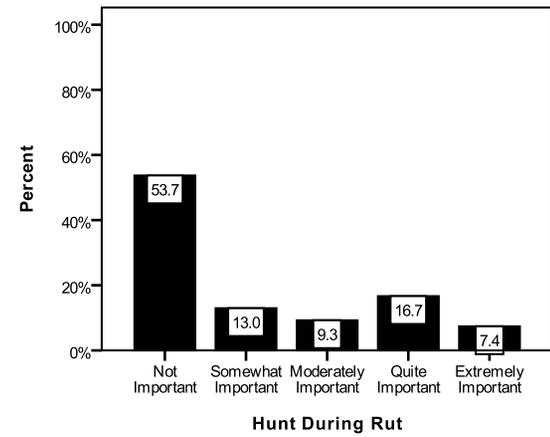
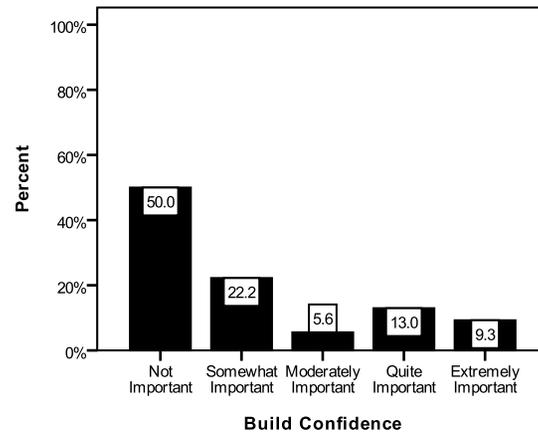
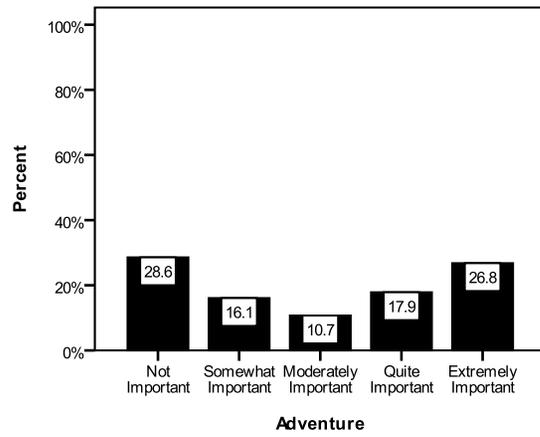
8. What type of weapon do you typically use to hunt Elk in Idaho? (Please check only one response)



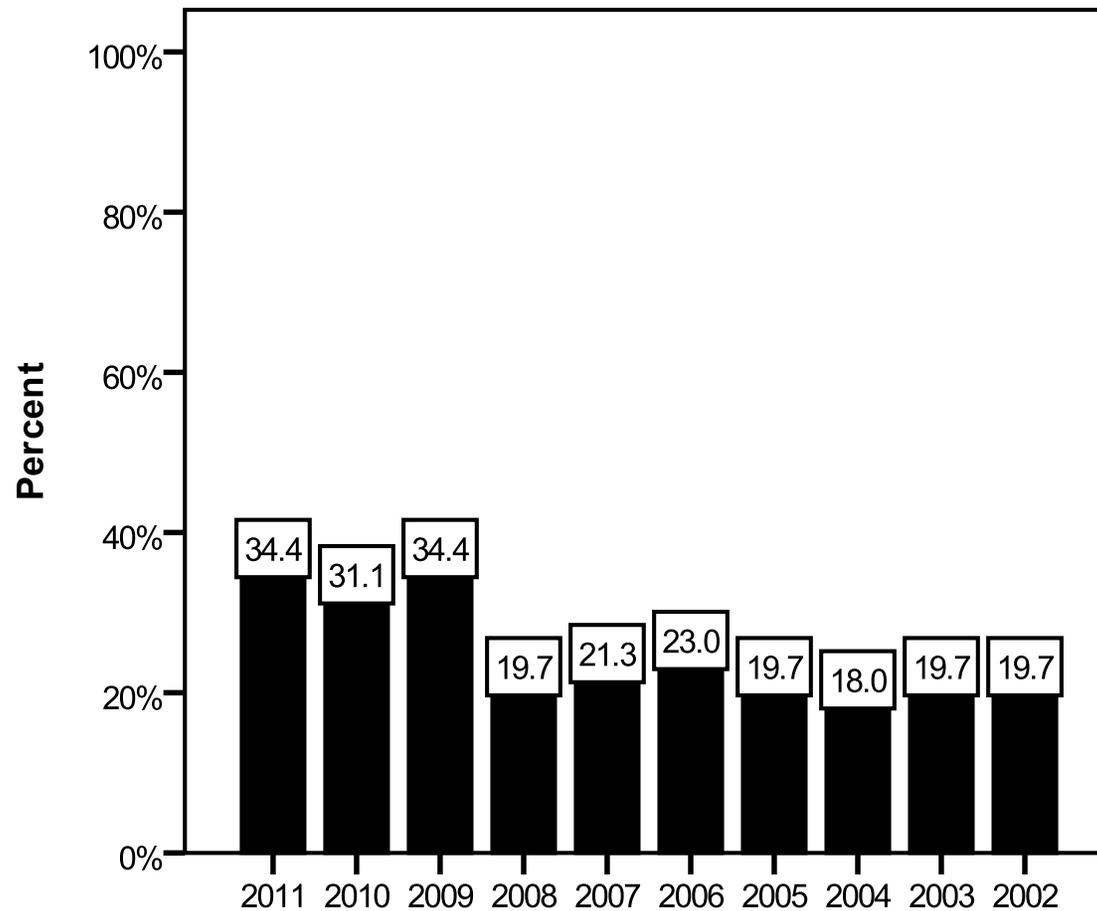
Q8: Weapon choice is considerably different in the Bennett Hills zone than the state average. Traditional muzzleloaders are typically used by almost half of hunters in this zone, a 38.7% increase over the state average. Inline muzzleloaders are also more widely used in this zone, 12.6% more than other hunters in the state. Compound bows are used significantly less in this zone, which are usually the second highest used weapon in the state (33.8%). Rifles are still a favorite by about a third Bennett Hills hunters but are used much less than the state average (57.2%).

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



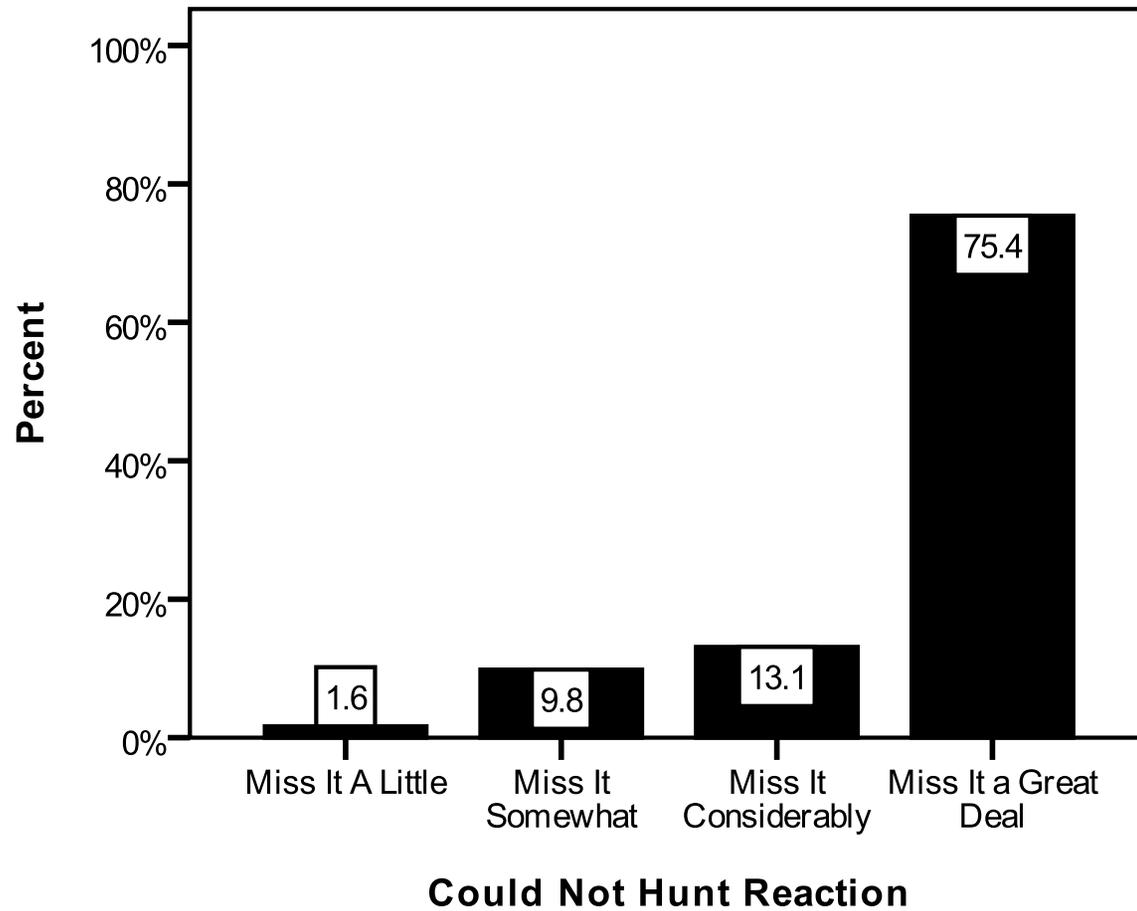


Q10: Unlike other hunters in the state, Bennett Hills hunters the most important factor in deciding to hunt during Elk archery, short-range weapon or muzzleloader season was to hunt in a zone where rifle limited. Also, hunting where there were fewer hunters were afield and to improve their chance of harvest were important

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

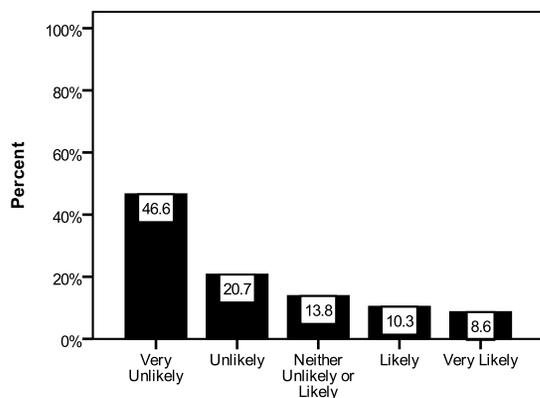
Q11: Harvest success patterns are slightly lower in the Bennett Hills zone than the state average from 2002 to 2008. However, from 2009 to 2011, hunters in this zone saw an increase in success compared to the state average by 9.3%, 8%, and 15.2% consecutively.

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

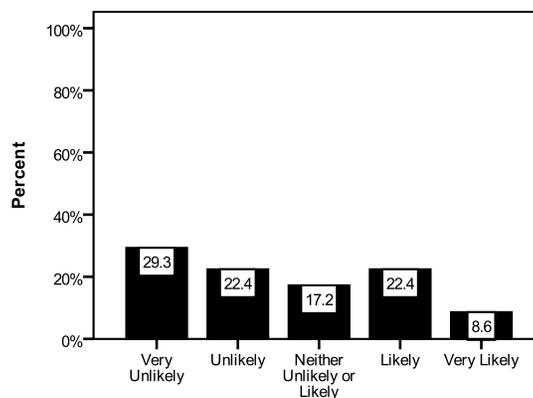


Q12: The distribution of responses between Bennett Hills respondents and the state average are similar.

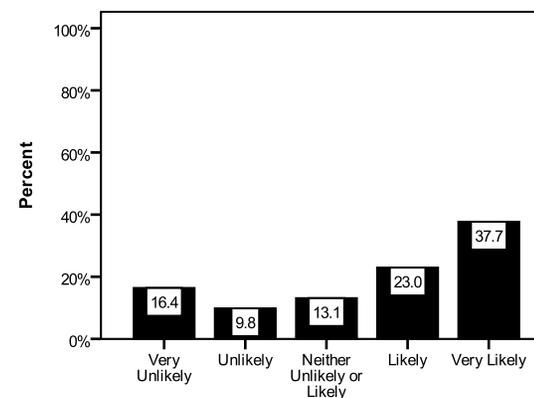
13. If you could not hunt Elk in Idaho, how would your hunting change?



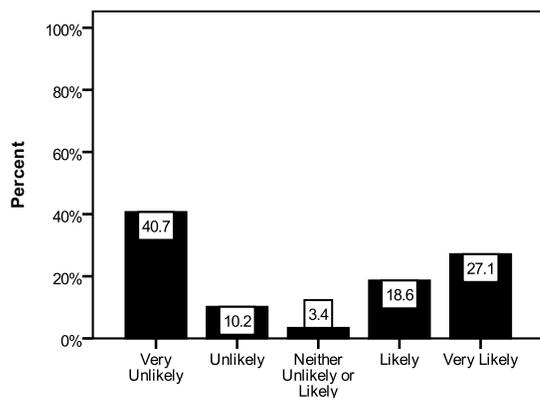
Hunt Waterfowl More



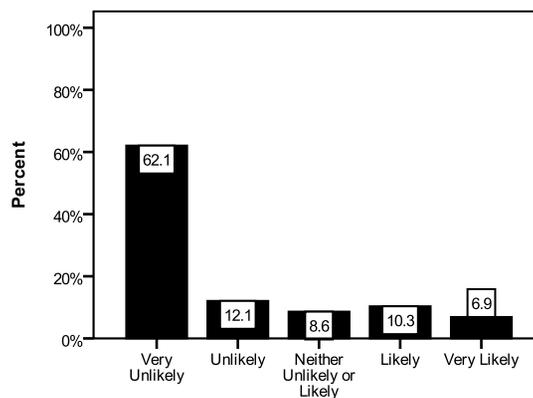
Hunt Upland Game More



More Time Hunting Other Game



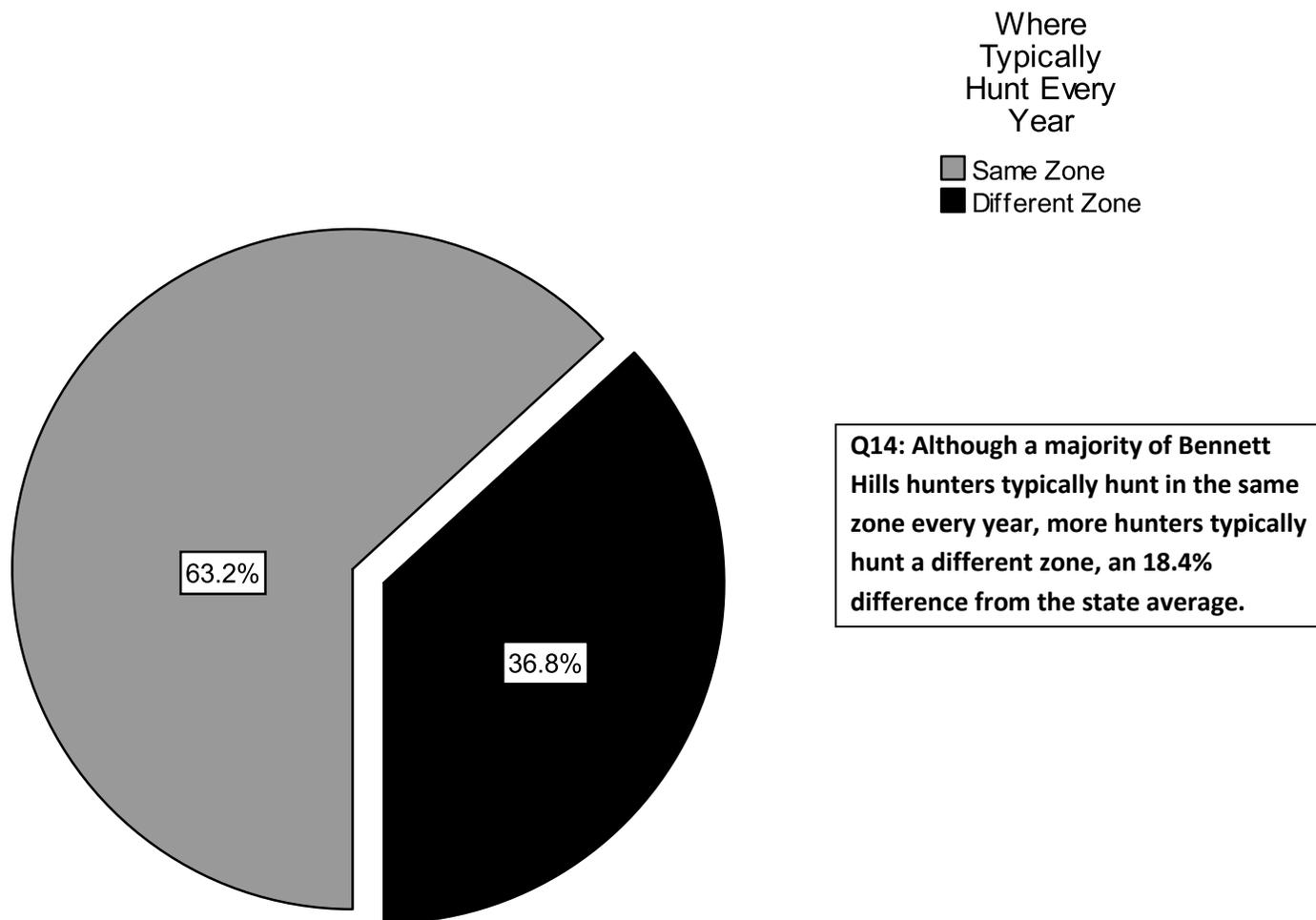
Hunt Elk in Other States



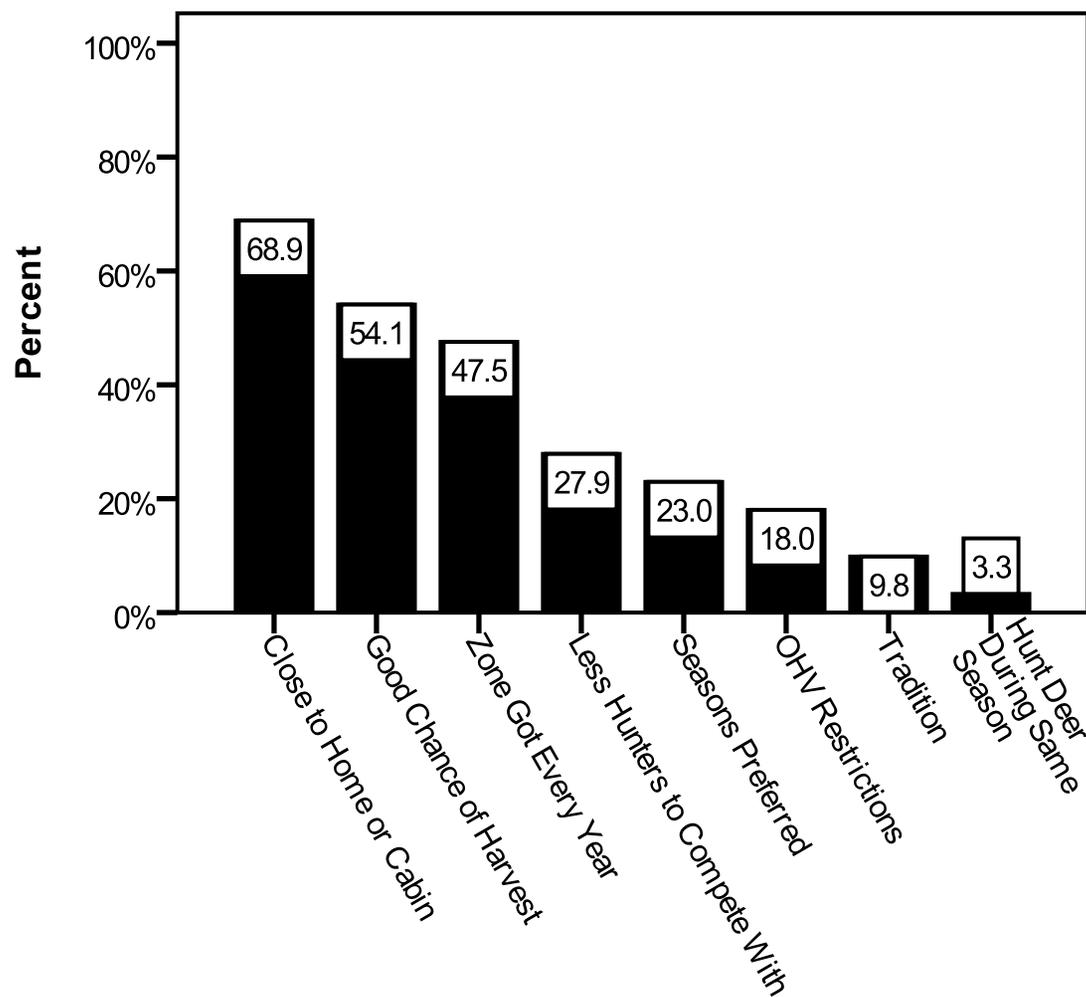
Not Hunt At All

Q13: The changes in hunting seen by Bennett Hills hunters if not allowed to hunt Elk is similar to those of the state average. They most likely would spend more time hunting other game.

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

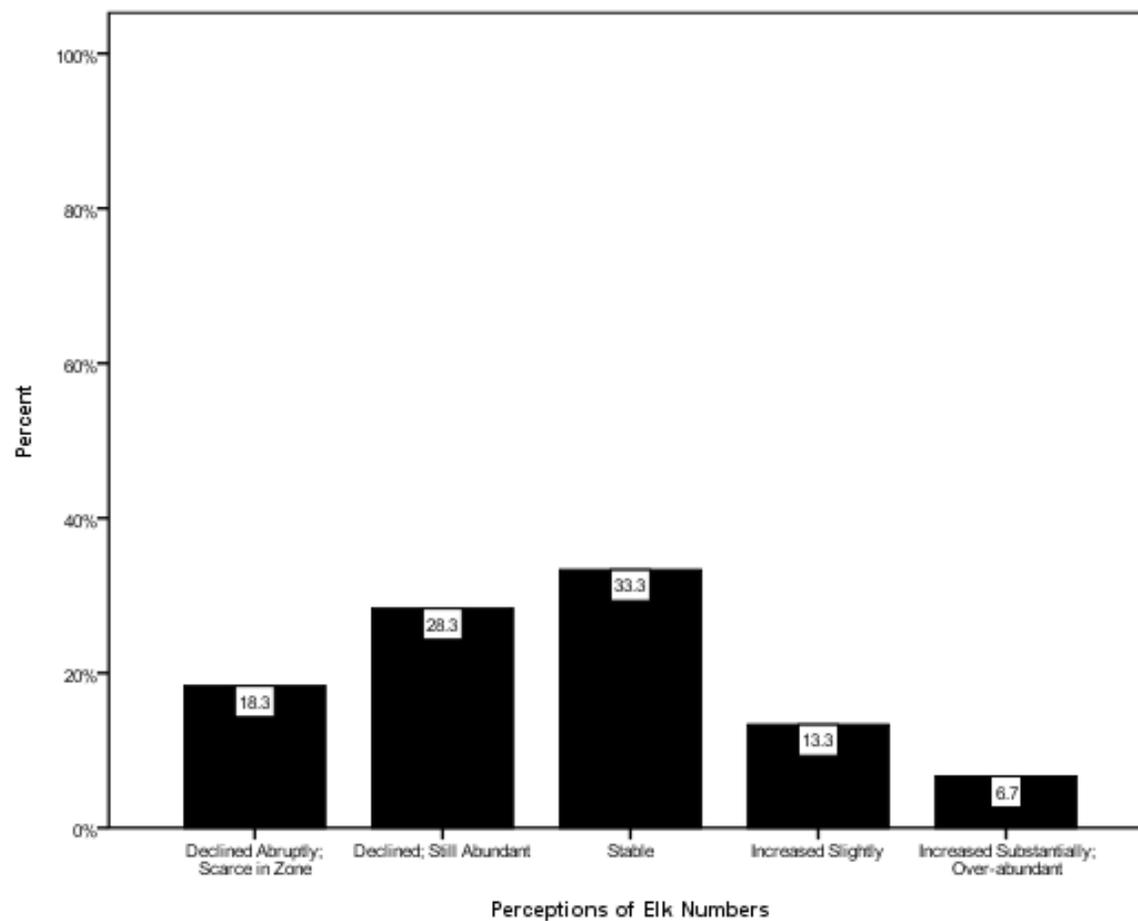


16. What makes the zone(s) you marked in Q-15 desirable to hunt Elk? (Please check all that apply)



Q16: The distribution of responses between the Bennett Hills zone and the state average is similar. However, hunters in this zone report that tradition and being able to hunt deer during the same season do not make a zone very desirable, unlike other hunters in the state.

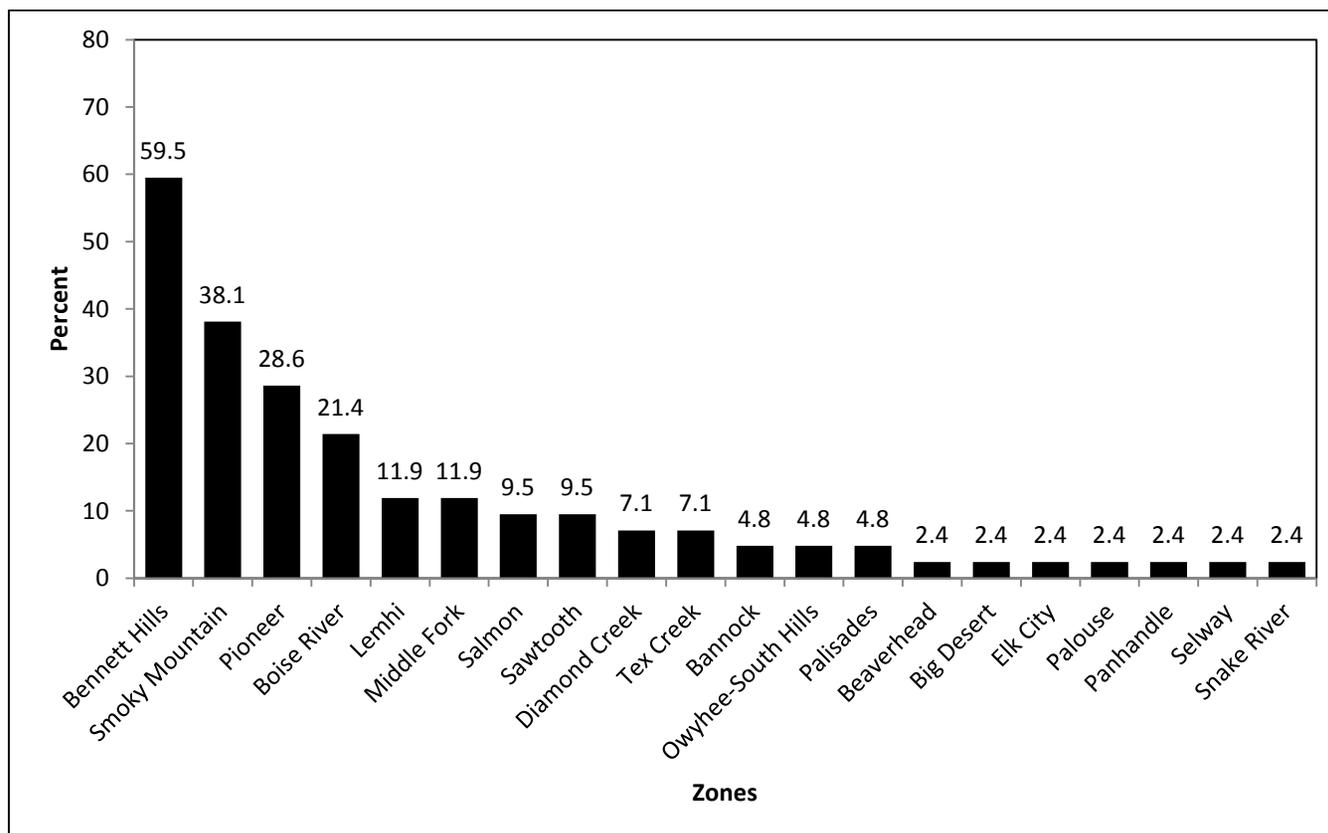
17. What are your perceptions of Elk numbers in the zone you hunted in 2011? Select the ONE statement from the list below that most closely matches your perceptions. (Please check only one response)



Q17: Unlike the state average in which a majority perceives Elk numbers to be scarce, a third of hunters in the Bennett Hills zone perceive Elk numbers to be stable in this zone. About 10% more hunters also perceive numbers to have increased slightly.

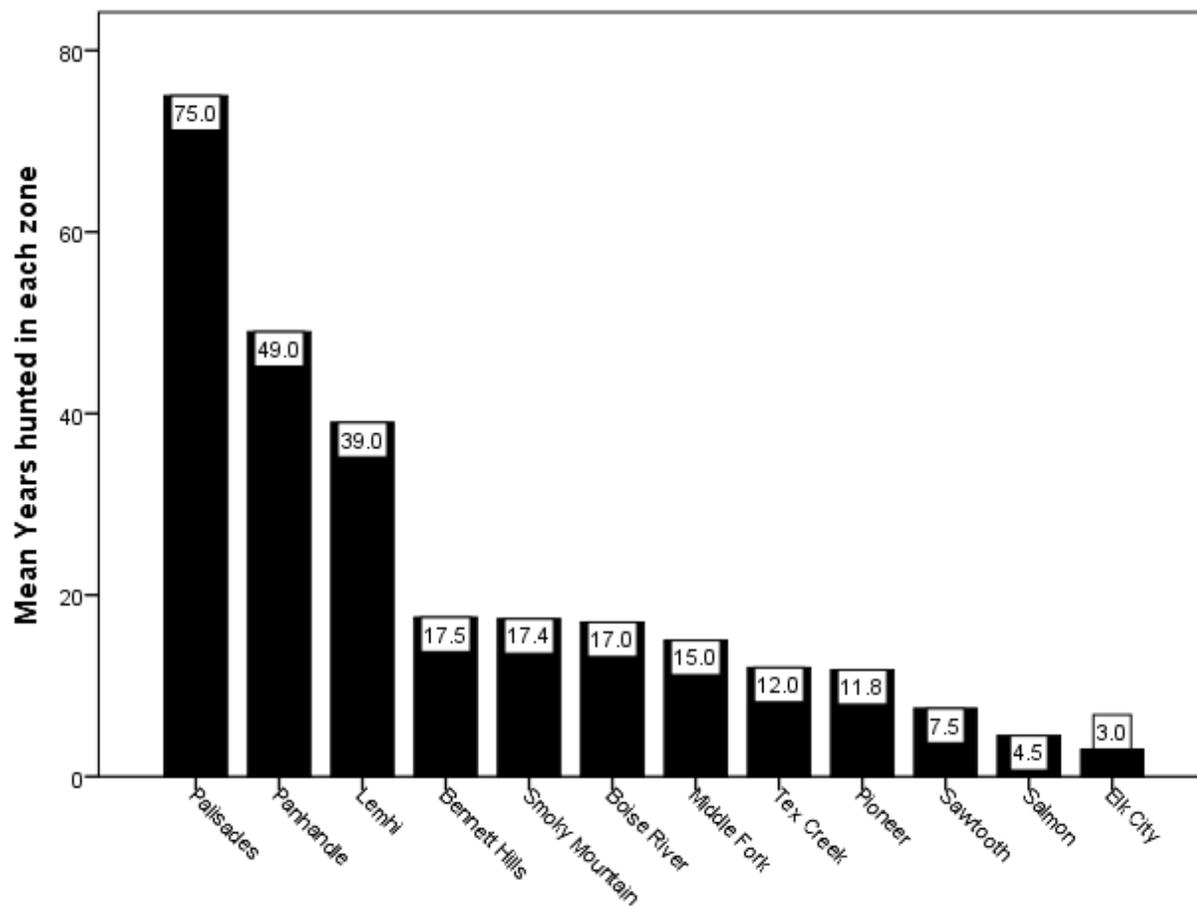
18. If you hunted in more than one zone in the past 10 years, please list them below.

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



Q18: The Smoky Mountain, Pioneer and Boise River zones are popular zones for Bennett Hills respondents to hunt in besides the Bennett Hills zone itself.

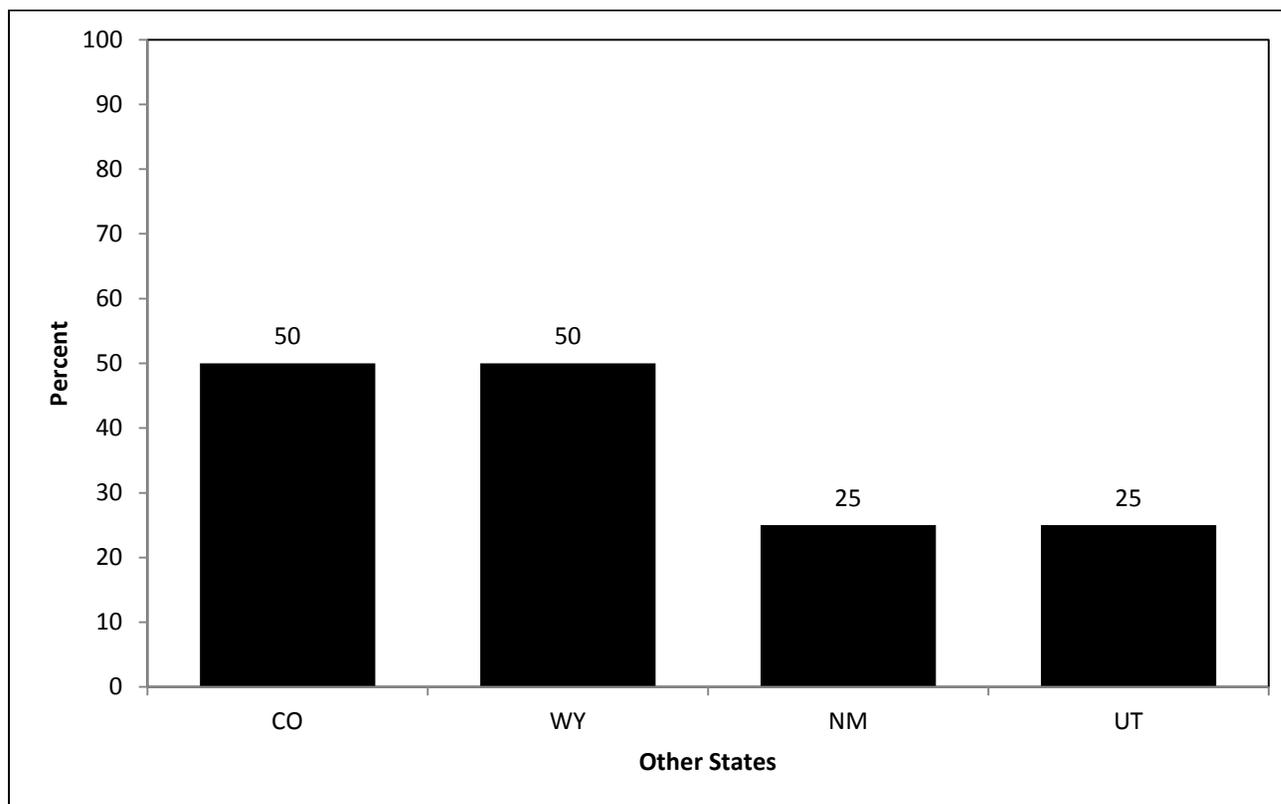
20. How long have you hunted Elk in each of the zones you listed in Q-18?
(Please write in the name of the zone and number of years, refer to map on page 5 for Zone names)



Q20: The Palisades, Panhandle, and Lemhi zones have been hunted the longest among respondents. Bennett Hills zone itself ranks fourth in duration.

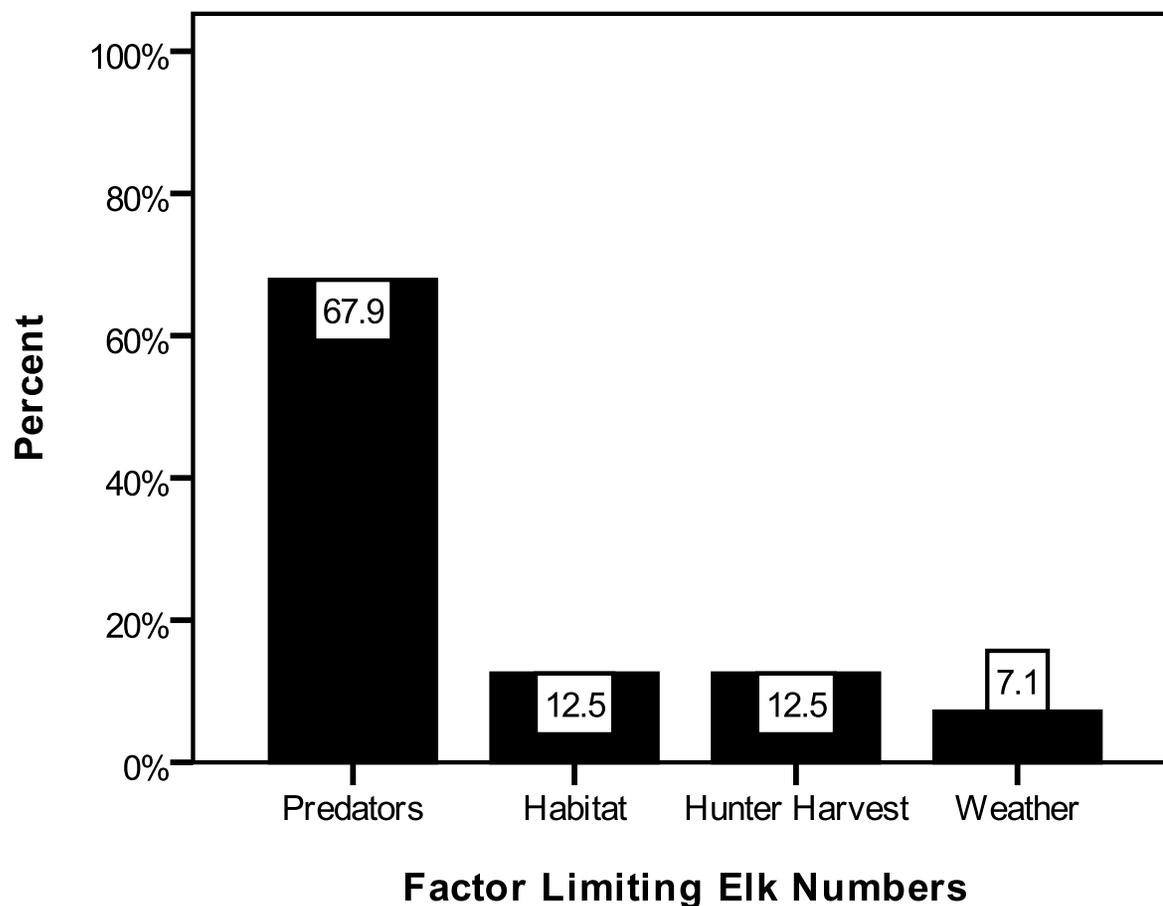
Other Zones in Past 10 Years

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



Q21: Other states hunted by Bennett Hills respondents are Colorado, Wyoming, New Mexico, and Utah.

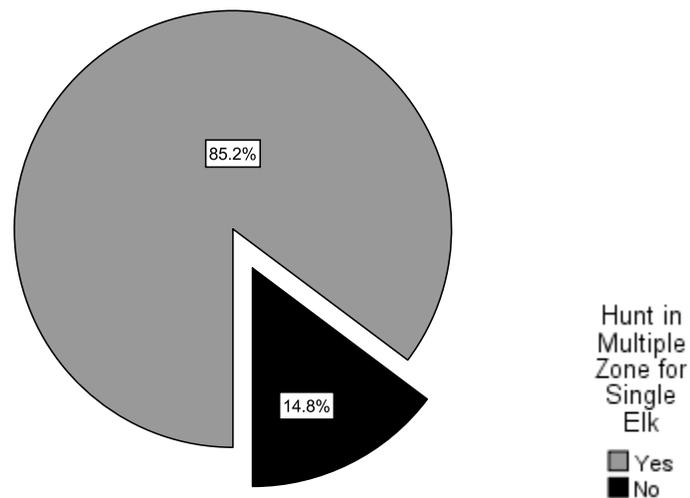
22. What do you believe is the primary factor limiting Elk numbers in the zone you hunted in 2011? (Check only ONE response)



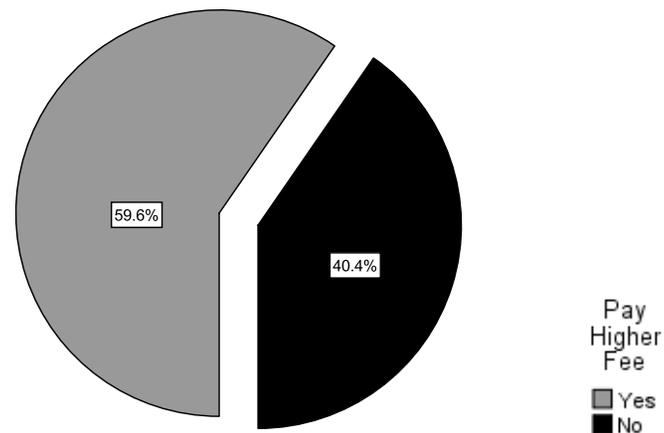
Q22: Similar to the state average, Bennett Hills hunters believe that predators are the primary factor the limited Elk numbers. However, some do attribute habitat and hunter harvest to as the cause to the problem.

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

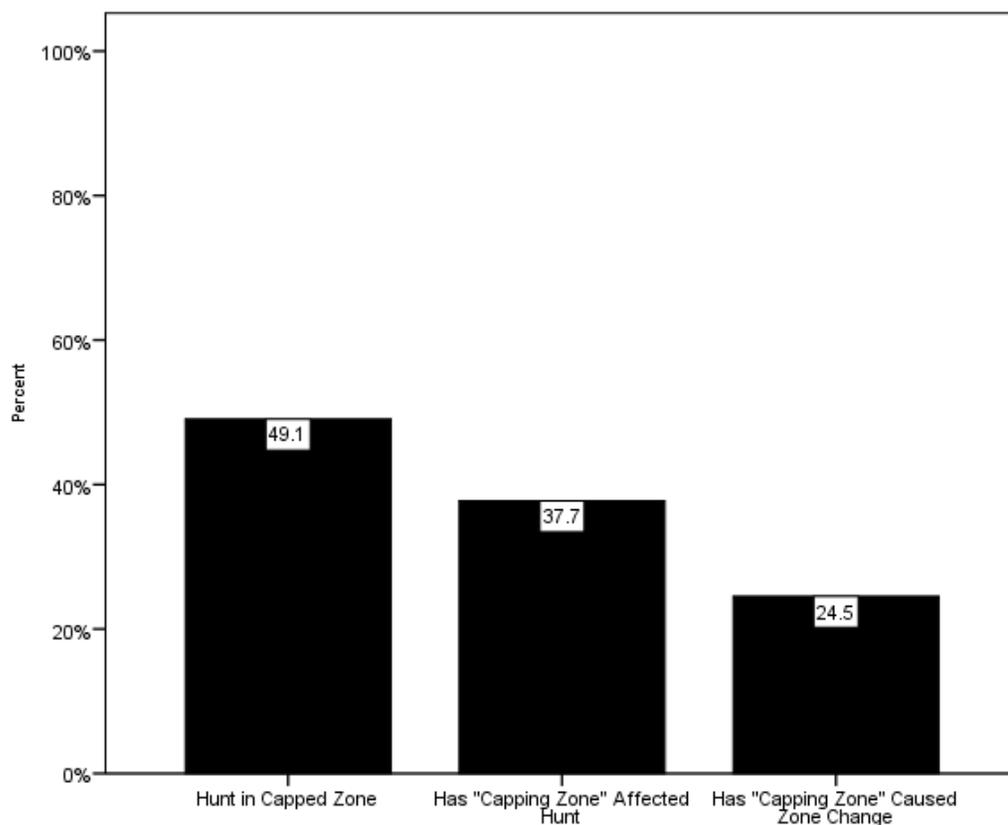
Like other hunters in the state, a large majority of Bennett Hills hunters would also like to be able to hunt in multiple zones for a single Elk in a year. A majority would also be willing to pay a higher fee to do so.



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)

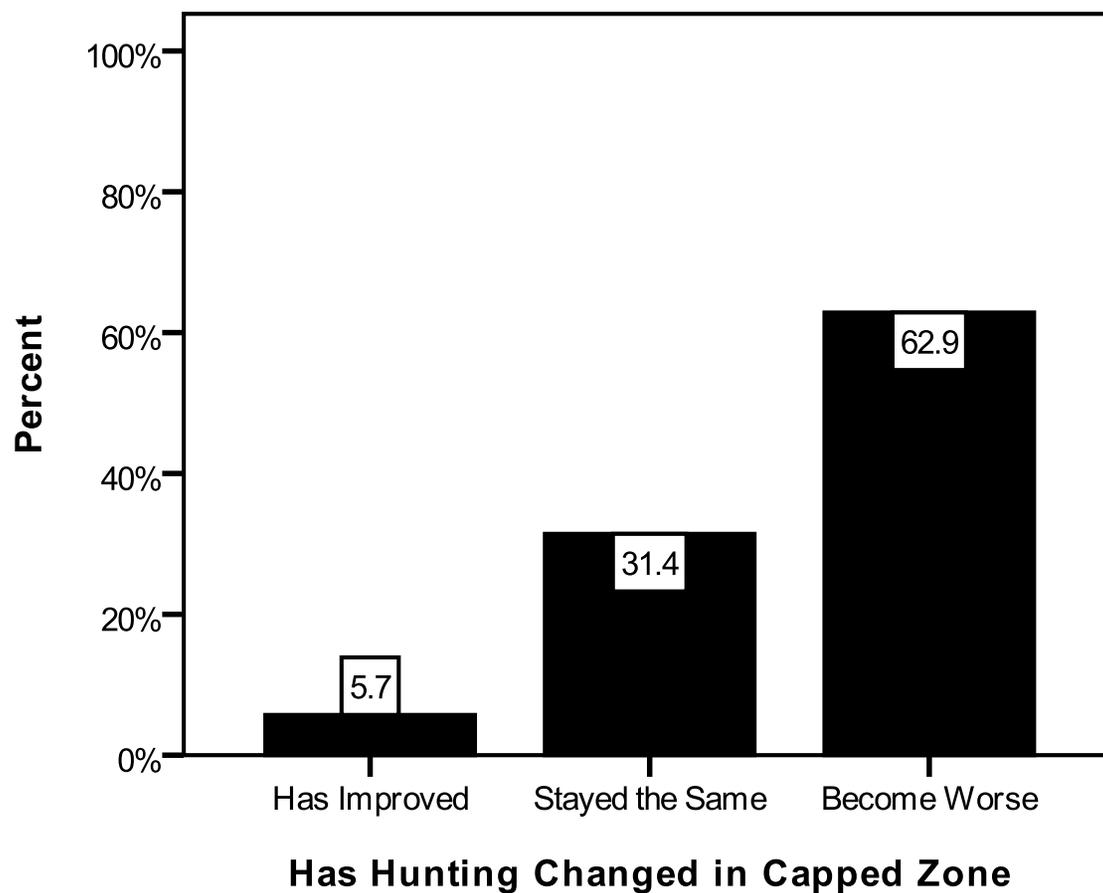


25. When the zone system was implemented the mechanism for reducing unlimited over-the-counter opportunity called "capping the zone" was developed by the department with the help of legislators, sportsmen and outfitters. This "capping the zone" is an allocation formula to distribute Elk tags to hunters (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 Bennett Hills zone and the state average. Almost half of respondents hunt in a capped zone, and about one in four hunters have changed zones because of capping.

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

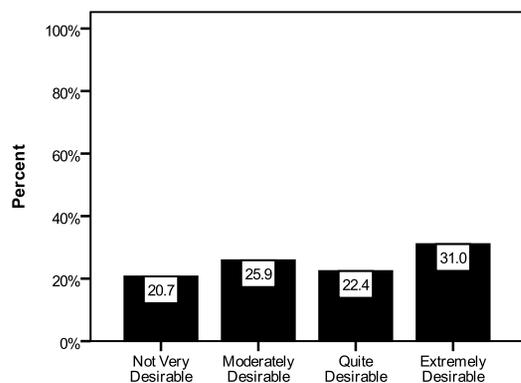


Q26: The distribution of responses is similar between Bennett Hills and the state average.

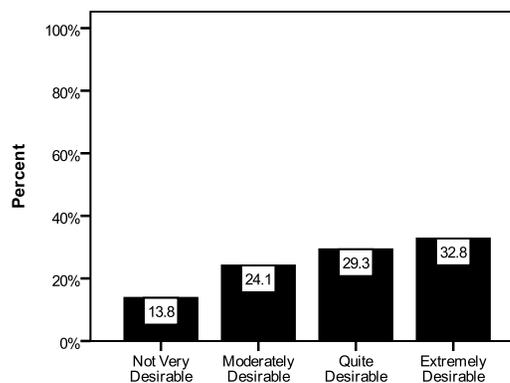
ELK HUNTING PREFERENCES AND MOTIVATIONS

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

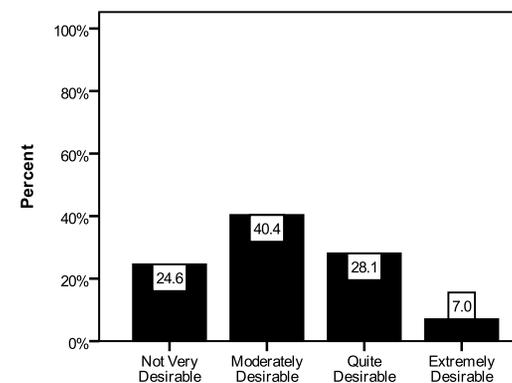
27. How desirable is it to you to harvest the following kinds of Elk?



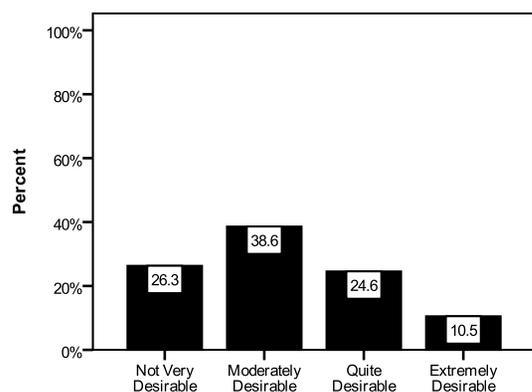
Large Bull



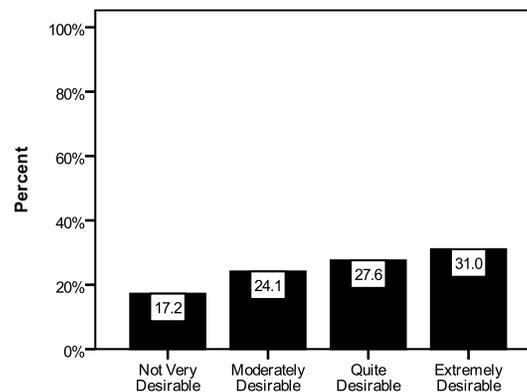
Mature Bull



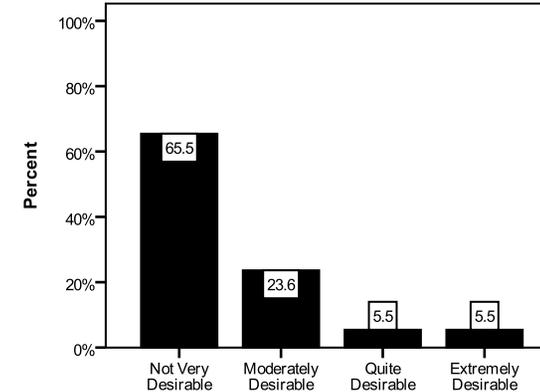
Raghorn Bull



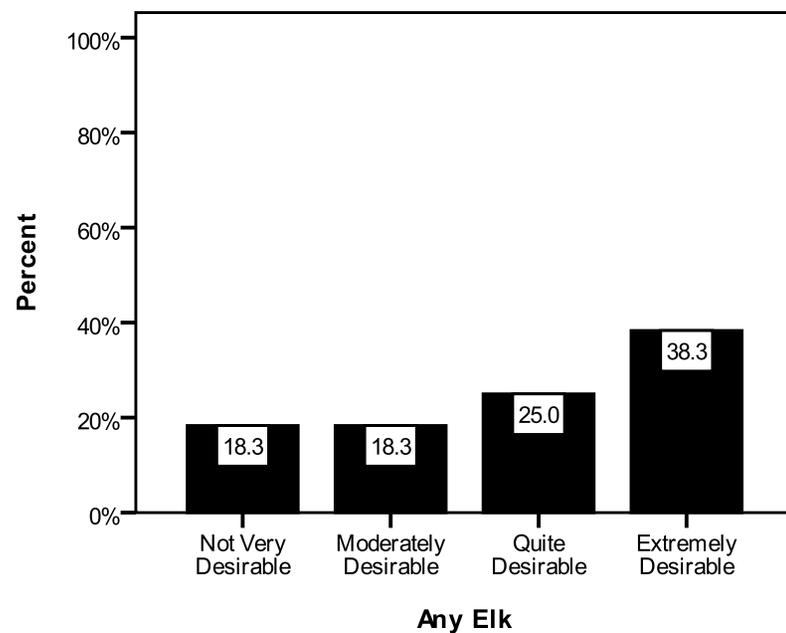
Spike Elk



Cow Elk

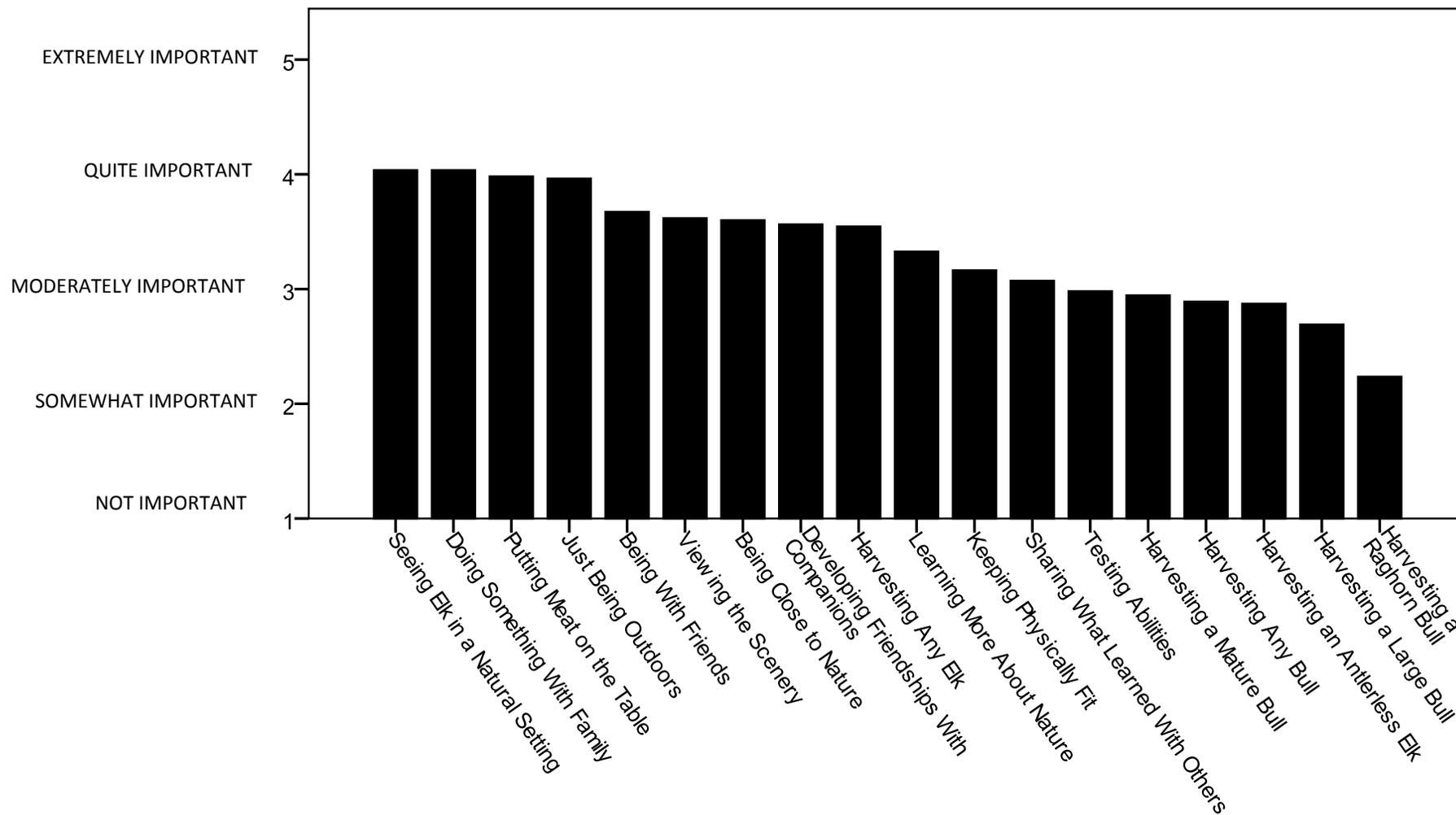


Calf

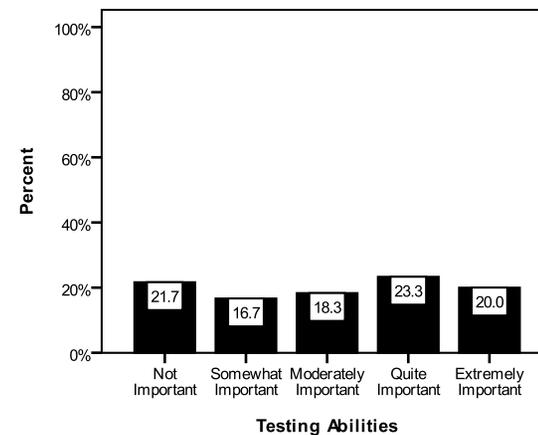
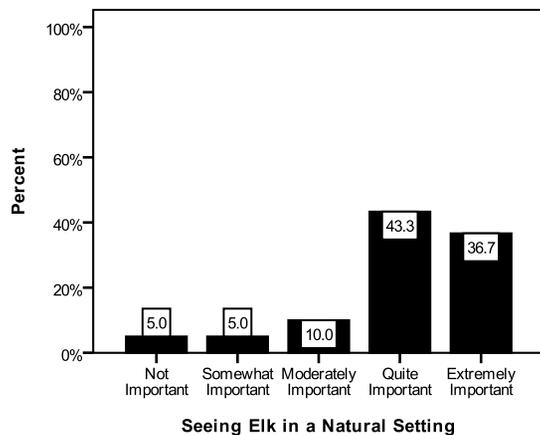
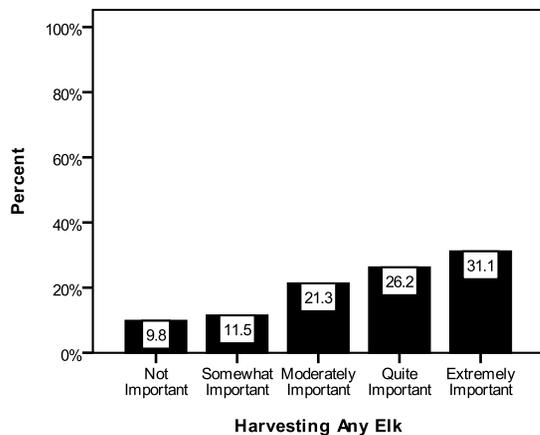
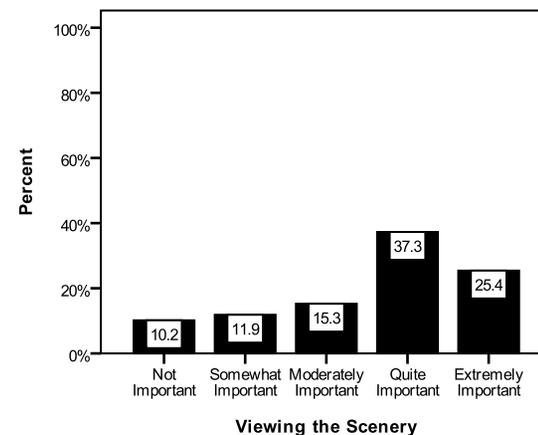
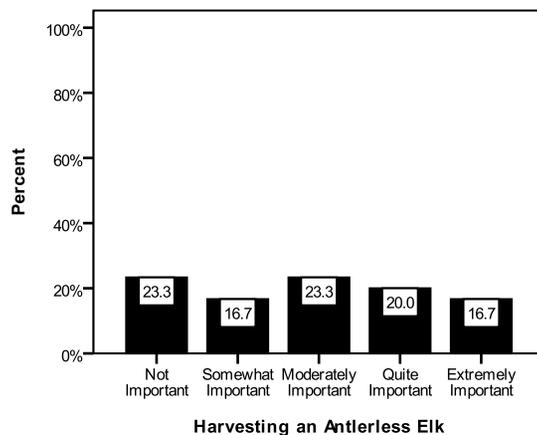
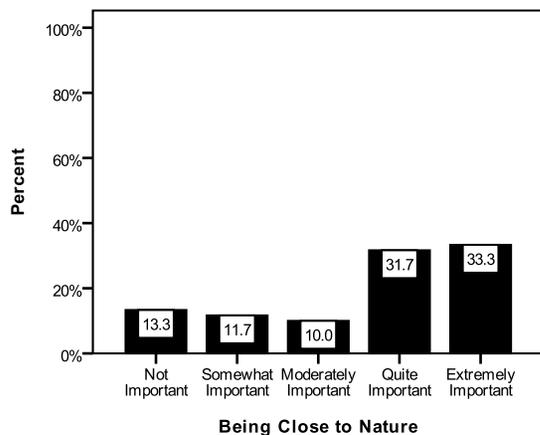


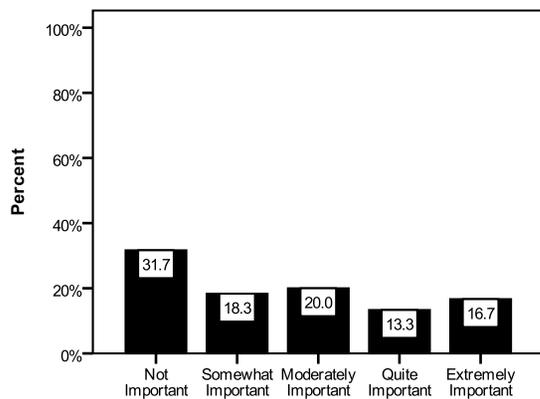
Q27: The distribution of responses is fairly similar between the state average and the Bennett Hills zone. However, hunters in this zone find cow Elk much more desirable than the state average. They also find calves and any Elk more desirable than other hunters.

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?

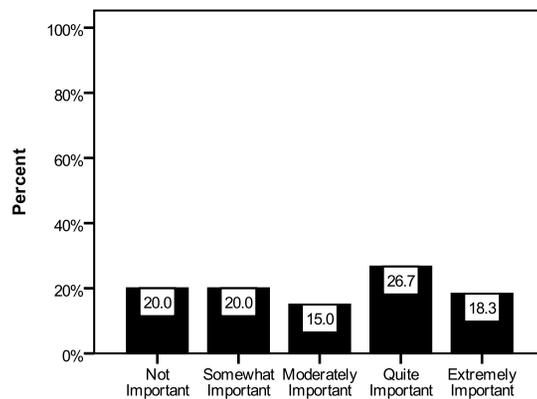


IMPORTANCE OF REASONS FOR HUNTING ELK IN IDAHO

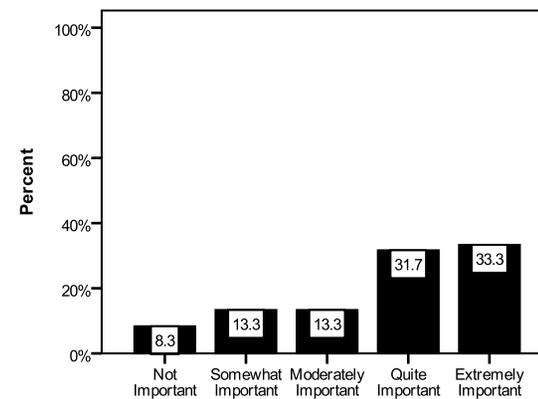




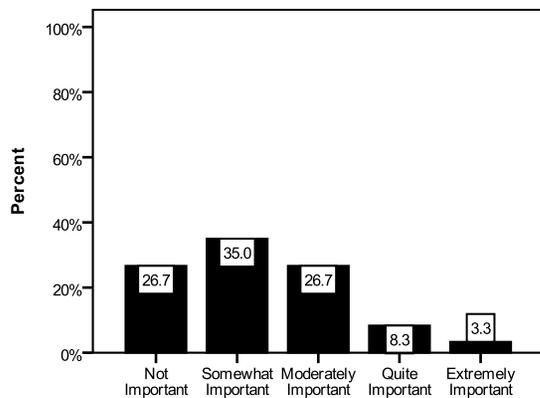
Harvesting a Large Bull



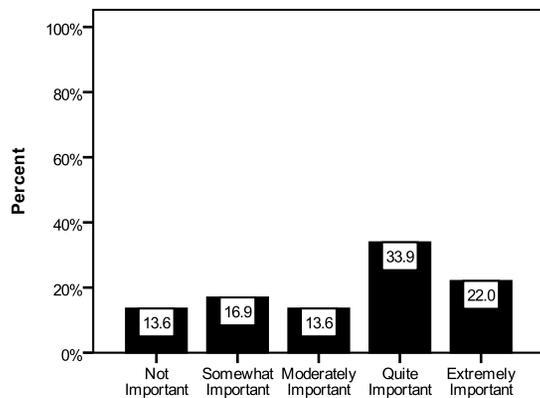
Sharing What Learned With Others



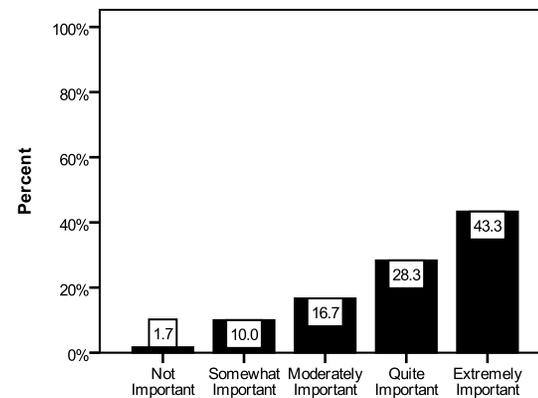
Being With Friends



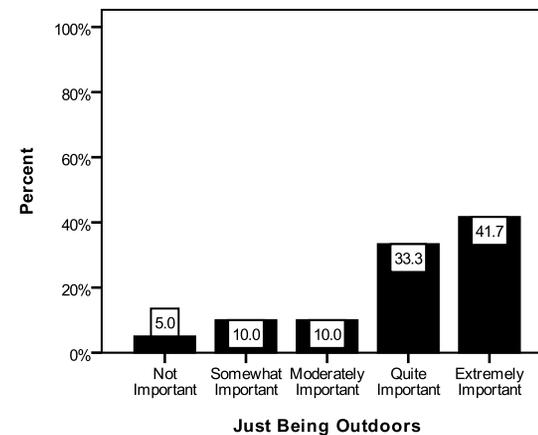
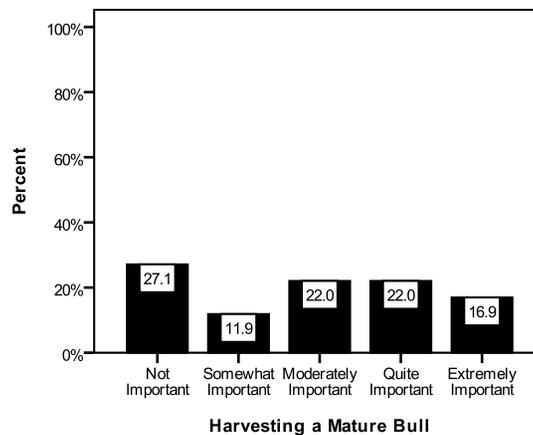
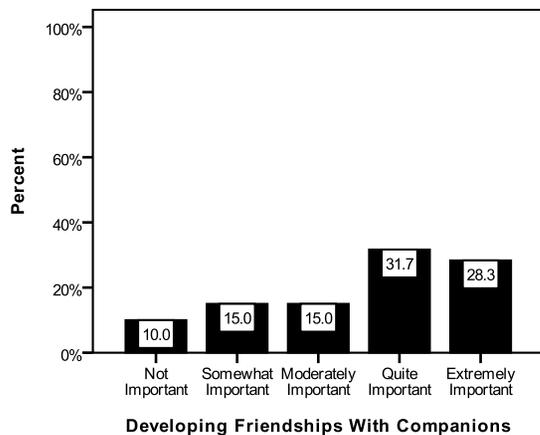
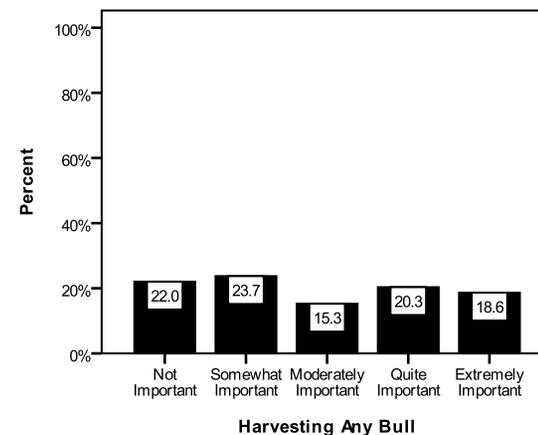
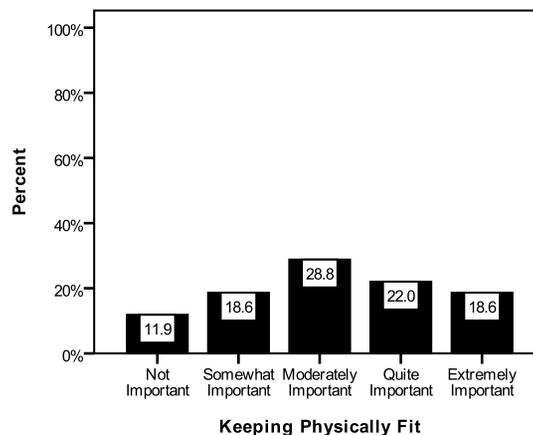
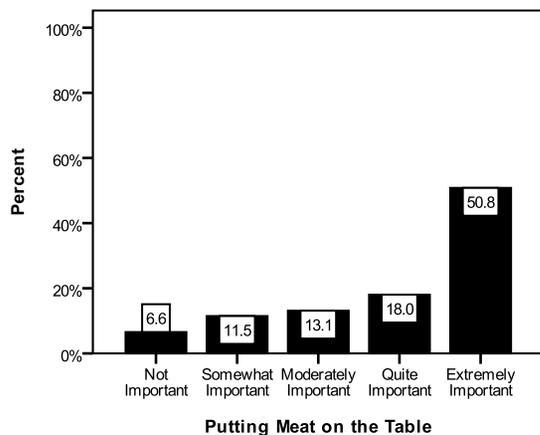
Harvesting a Raghorn Bull



Learning More About Nature



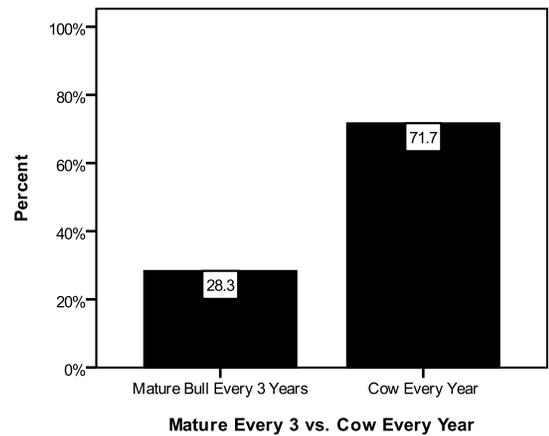
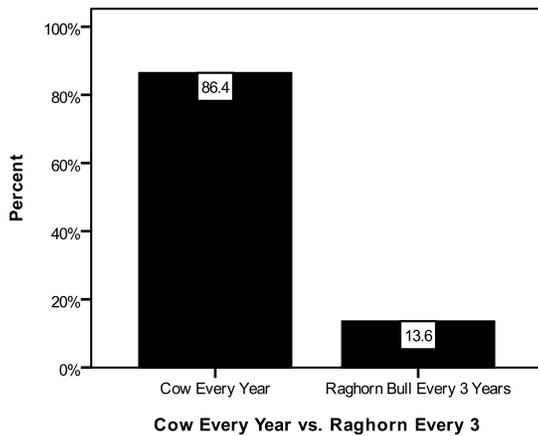
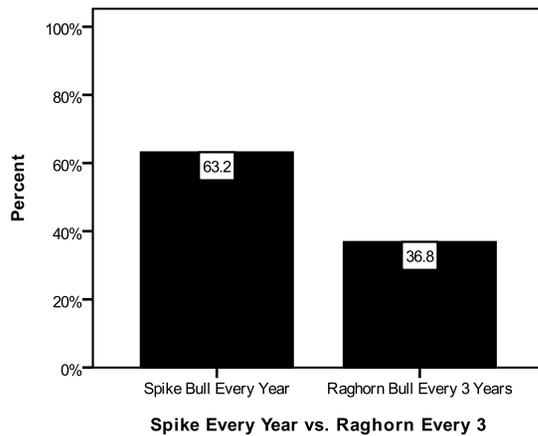
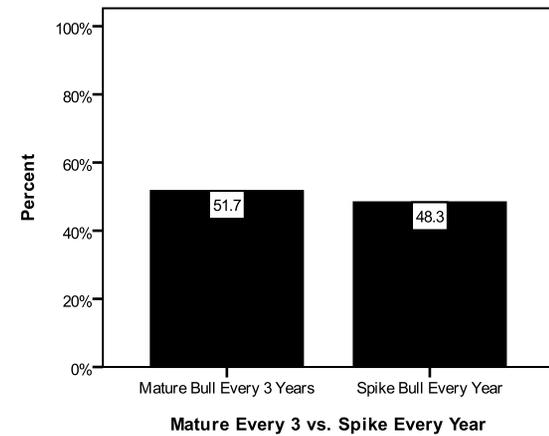
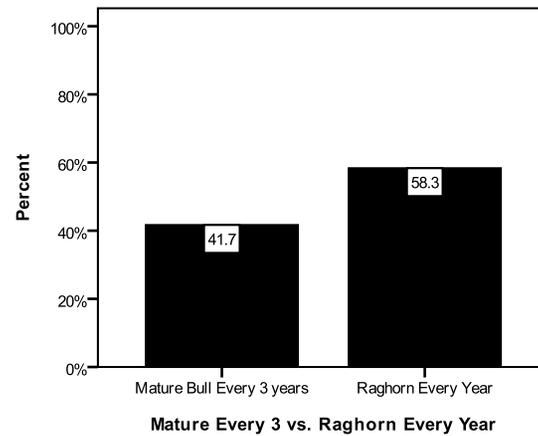
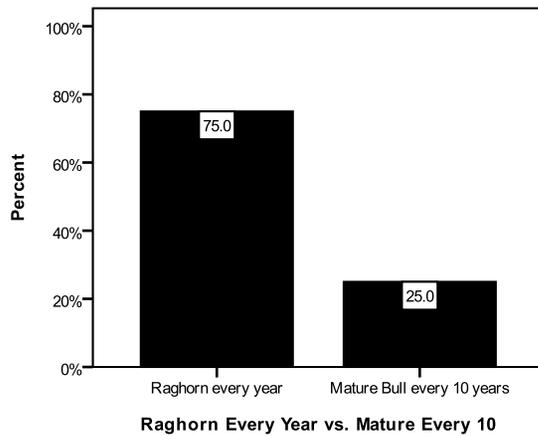
Doing Something With Family

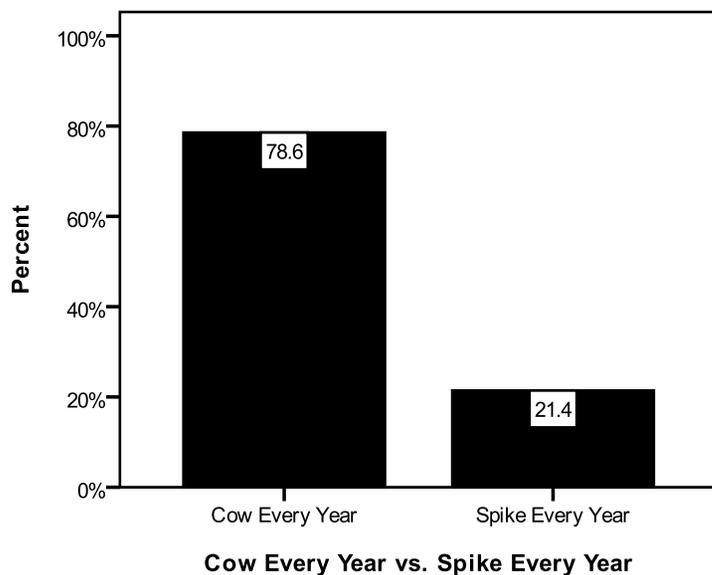


Q28: Several reasons for hunting Elk have similar importance between Bennett Hills hunters and the state average. However, putting meat on the table and doing something with family have a higher importance to Bennett Hills hunters than to others on average.

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.

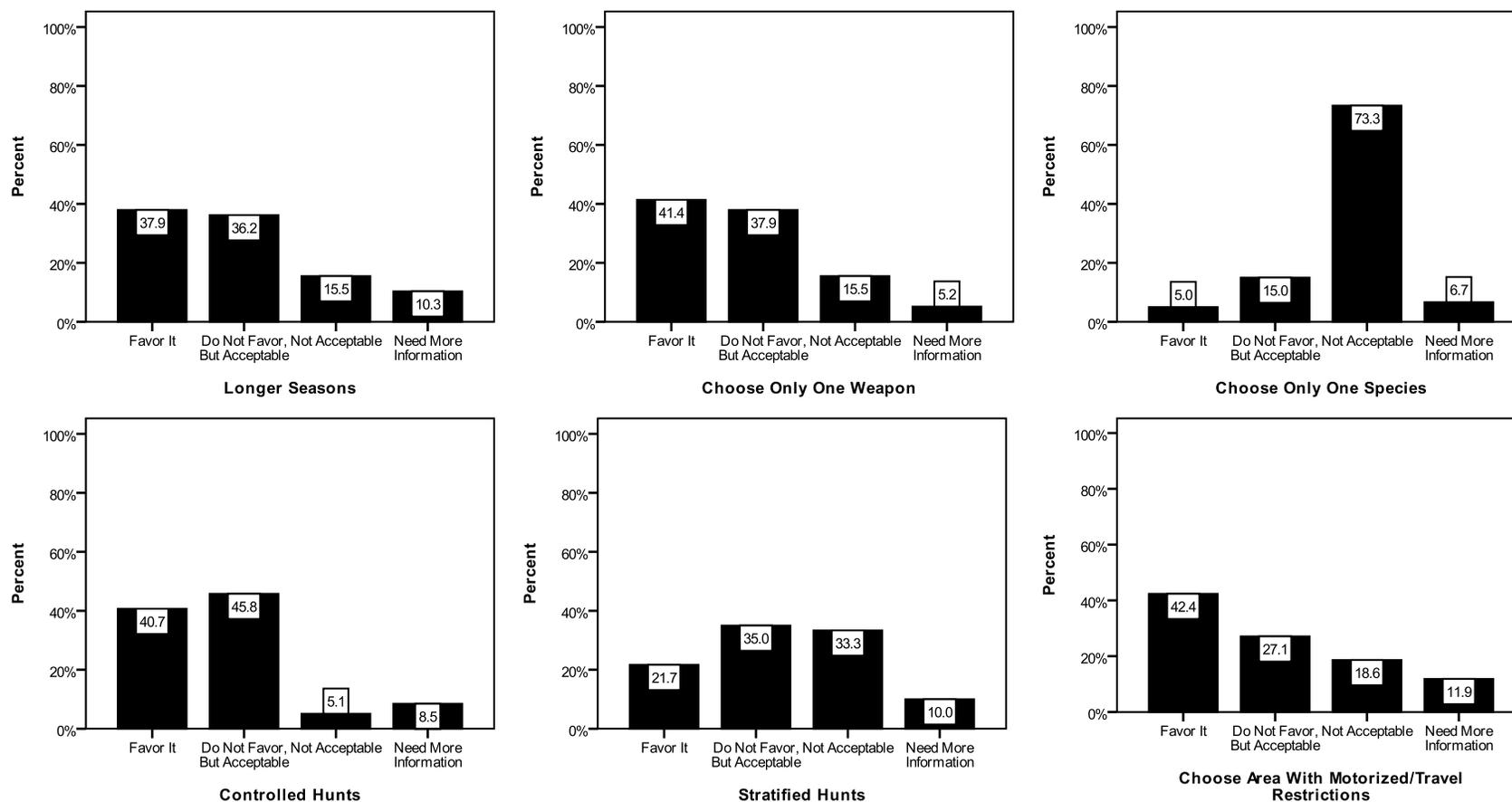


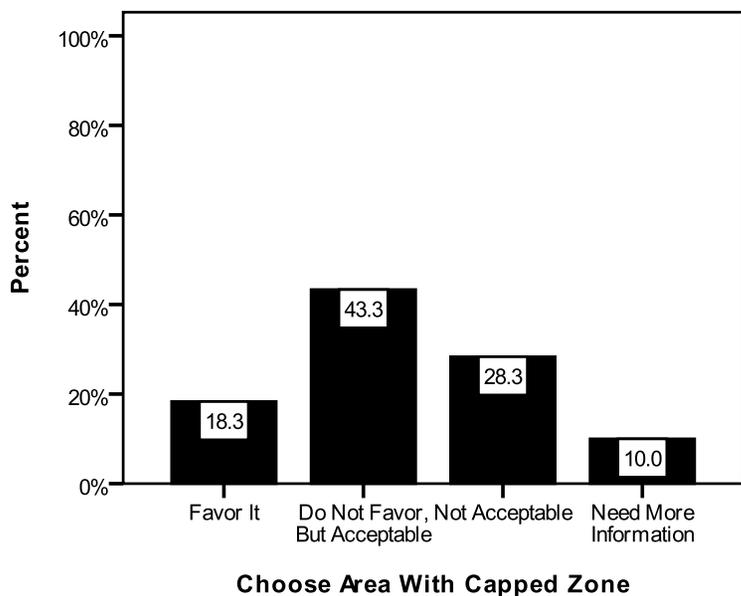


Q32: The distribution of responses is similar between Bennett Hills hunters and the state average.

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

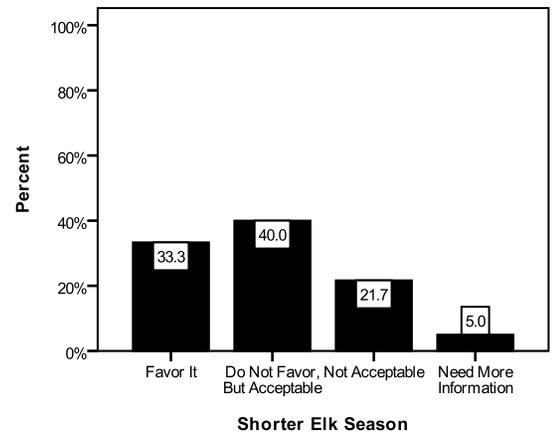
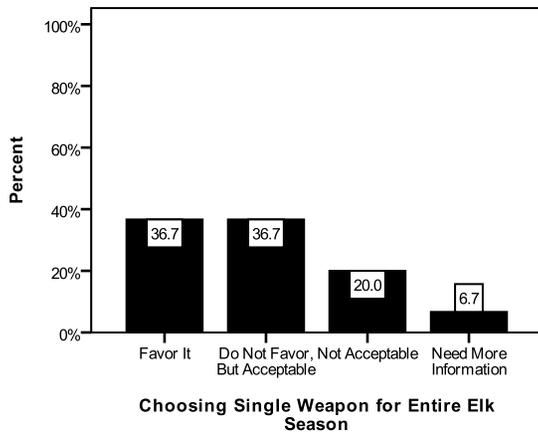
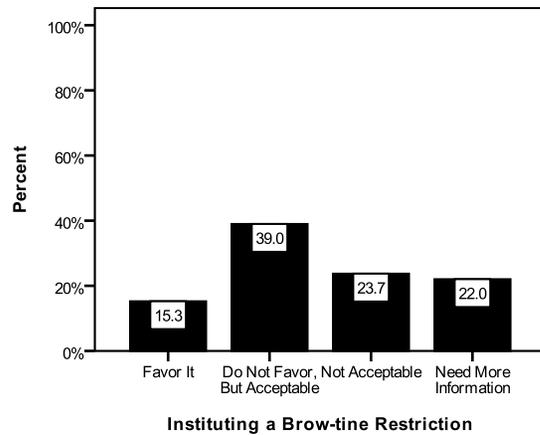
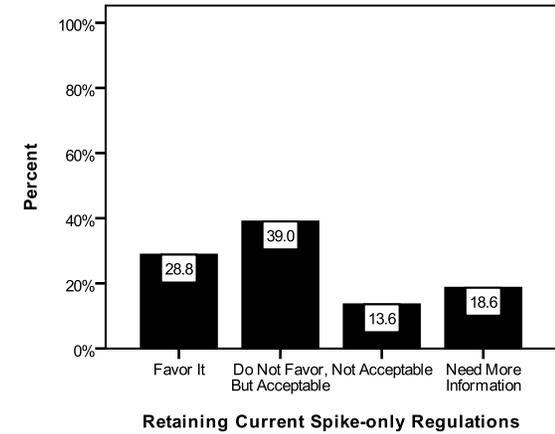
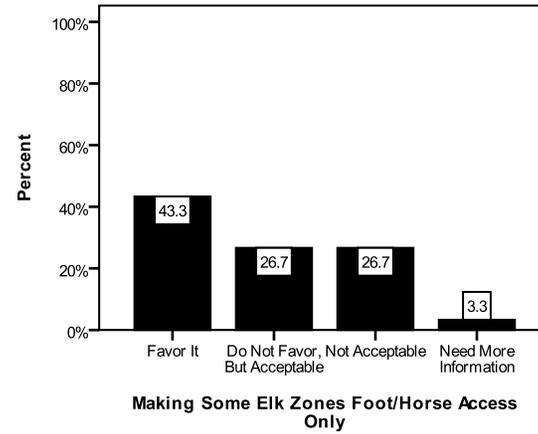
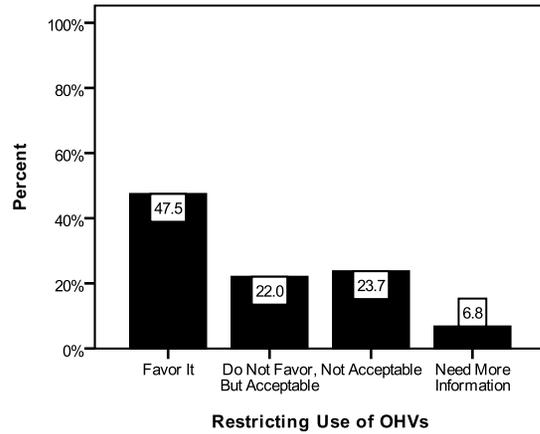
34. How do you feel about each of the following potential ways of improving Elk hunting, if needed?

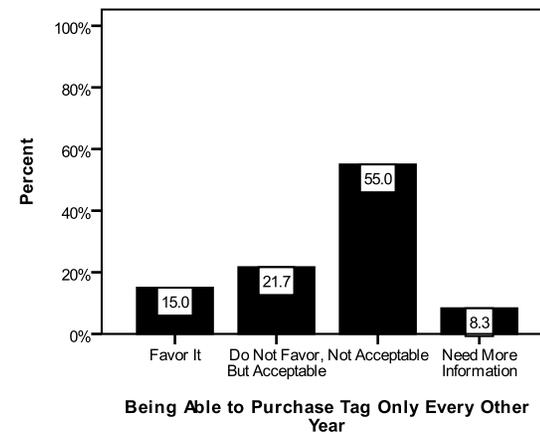
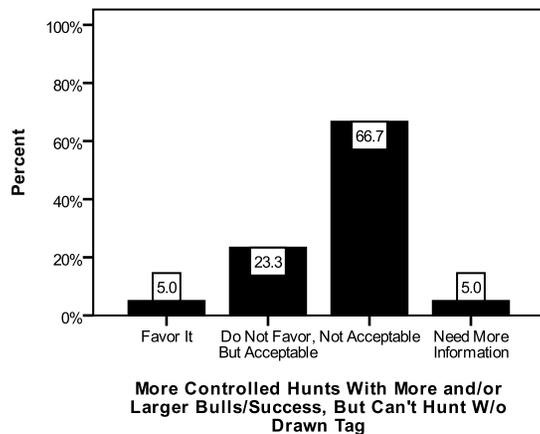
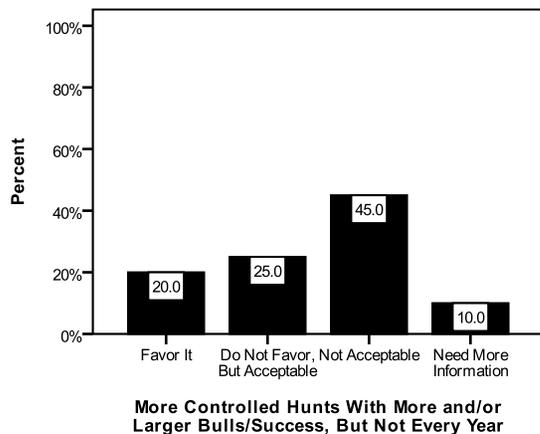




Q34: The distribution of responses is similar between the state average and the Bennett Hills zone.

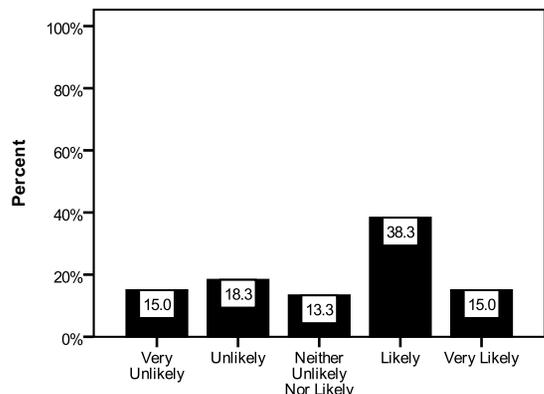
35. We would like to know how you feel about the following potential restrictions to increase the quality and size of Elk in Idaho and improve Elk hunting opportunities. Please indicate your opinion on the following potential restrictions.



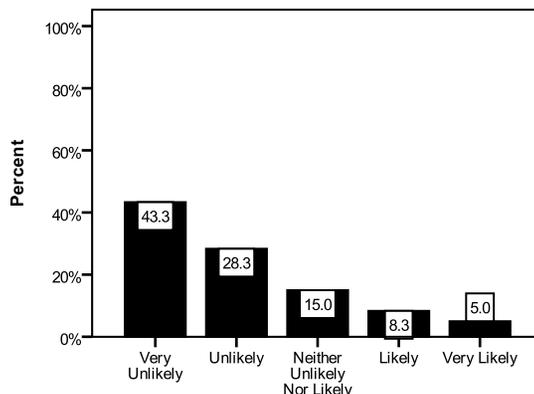


Q35: The distribution of responses is similar between the state average and the Bennett Hills zone.

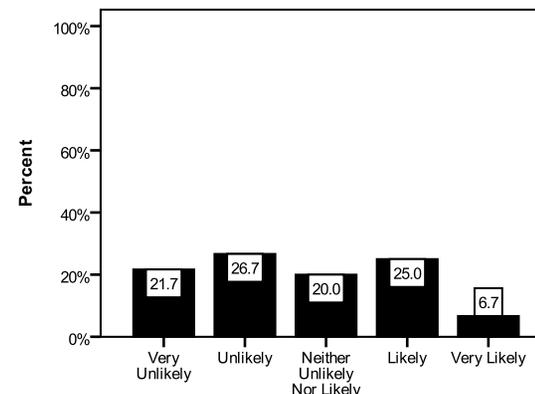
36. *IF* Idaho Fish and Game introduces restrictions that reduce Elk hunting opportunities to improve Elk populations, how would your hunting behavior change?



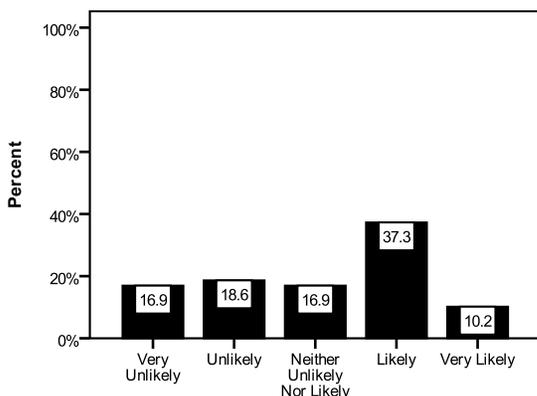
Hunt in Different Zones



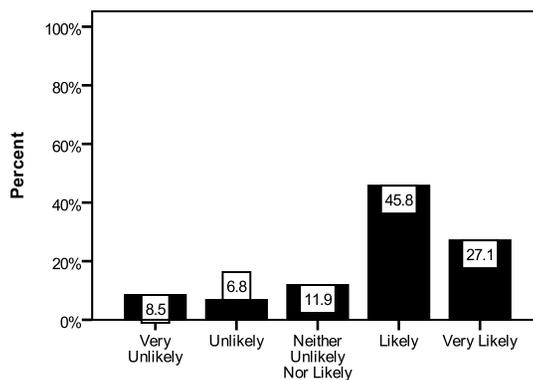
Quit Hunting Elk



Shift to Hunt Other Species



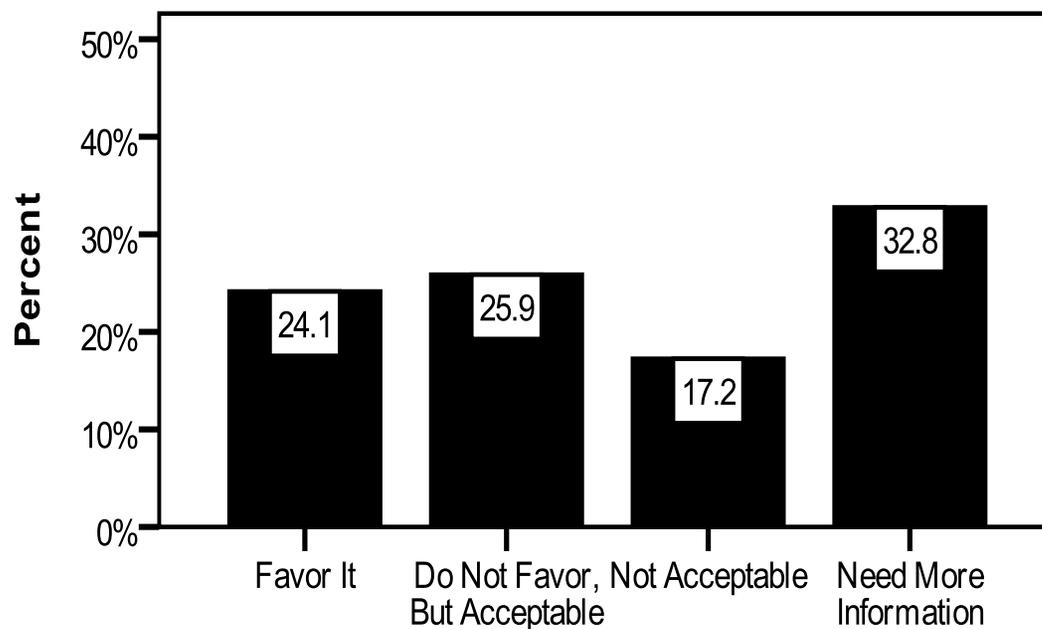
Not Change Hunting Behavior



Change Weapon Type for Increased Elk Hunting Opportunity

Q36: The distribution of responses between the state average and the Bennett Hills zone is similar. Hunters in this zone are most likely to not change their behavior, hunt in different zones, or change weapon type for increases 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)

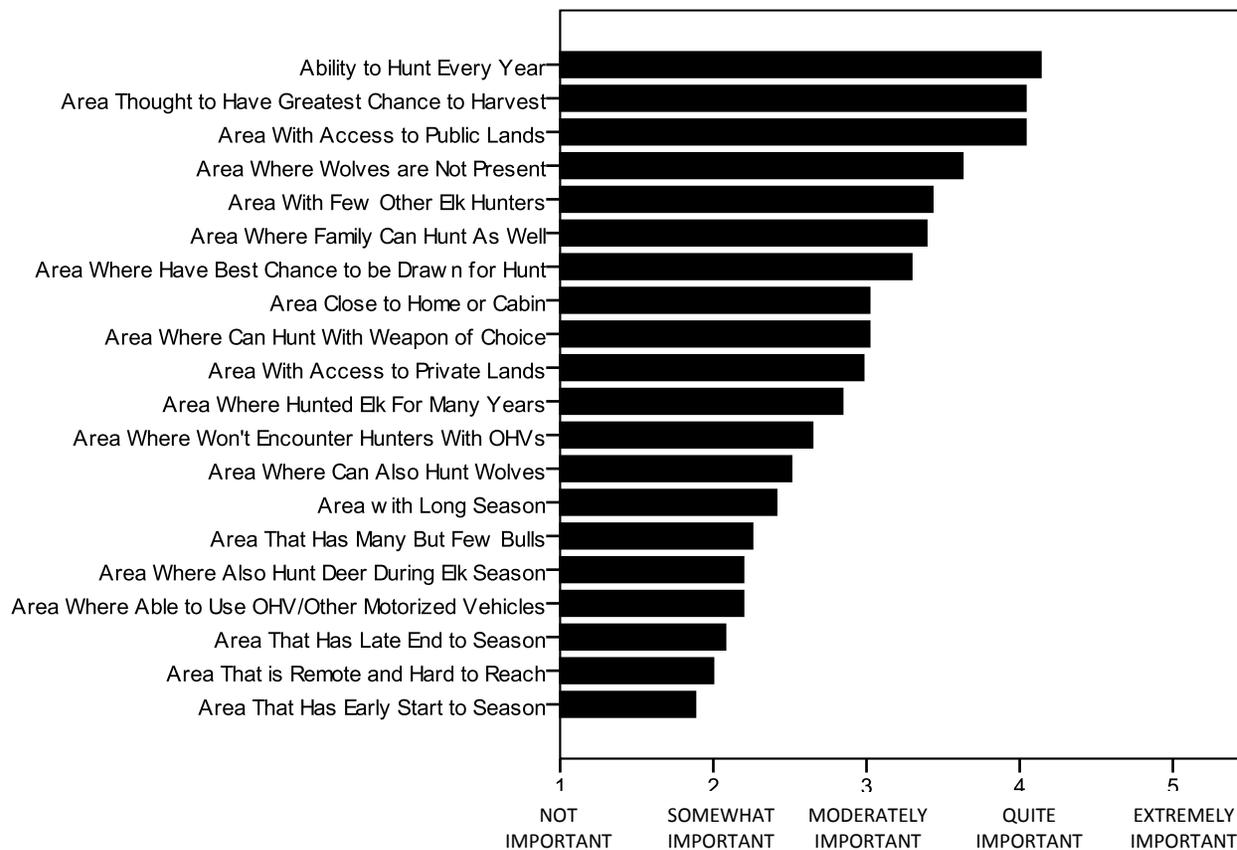


Feelings About Setting Season Conditions 2 Years in Advance

Q38: The distribution of responses is similar between the Bennett Hills zone and the state average.

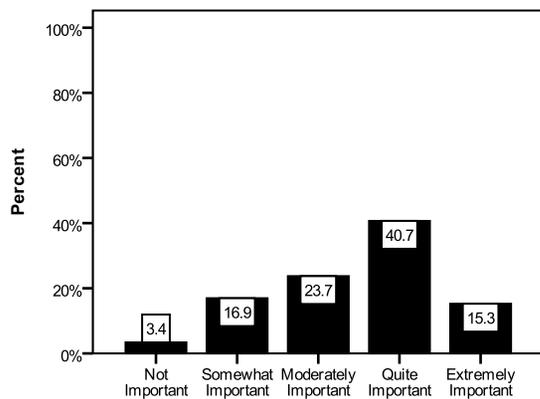
WHEN AND WHERE TO HUNT

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?

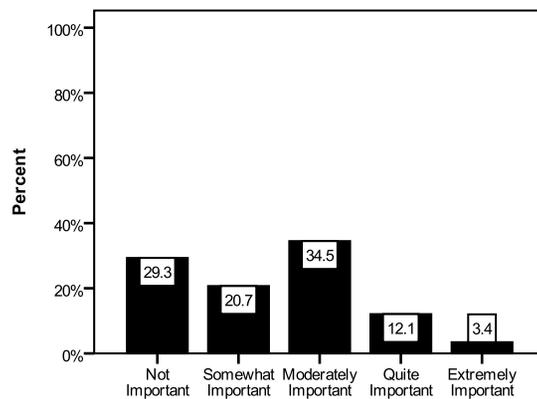


Q29: The top five characteristics are same for the state average and the Bennett Hills zone.

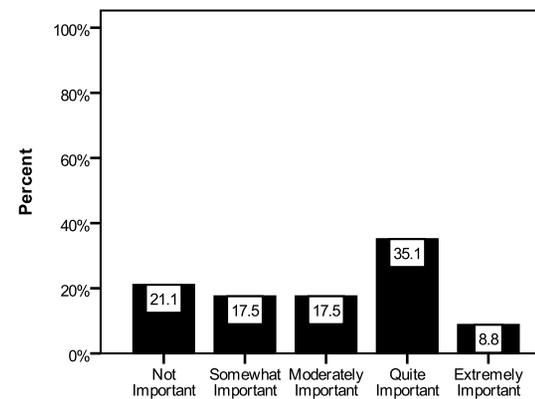
CHARACTERISTICS AFFECTING CHOICE OF WHERE TO HUNT IN IDAHO



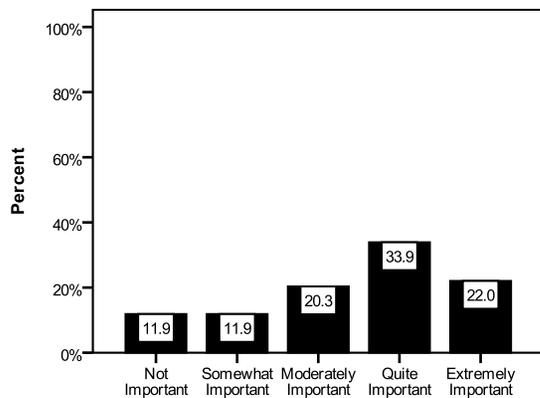
Area With Few Other Elk Hunters



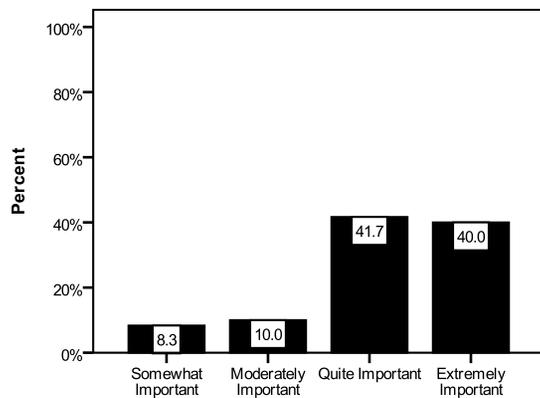
Area That Has Many But Few Bulls



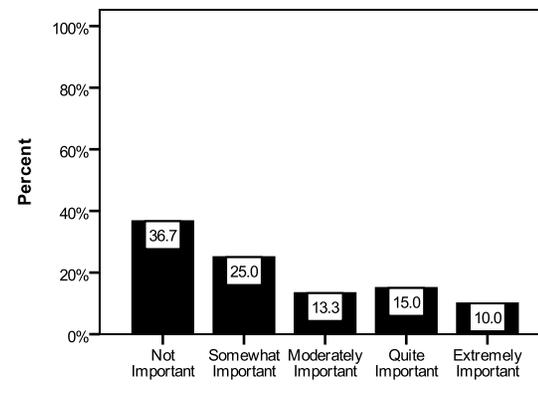
Area Where Hunted Elk For Many Years



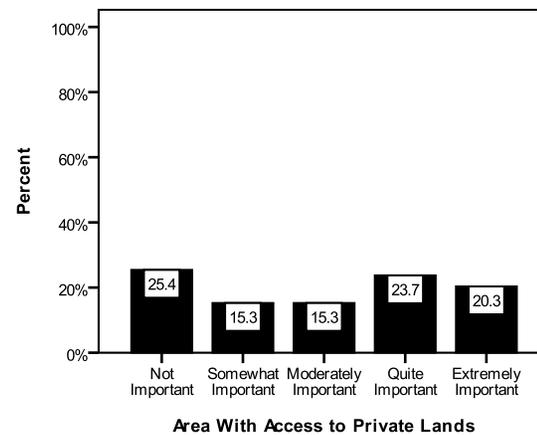
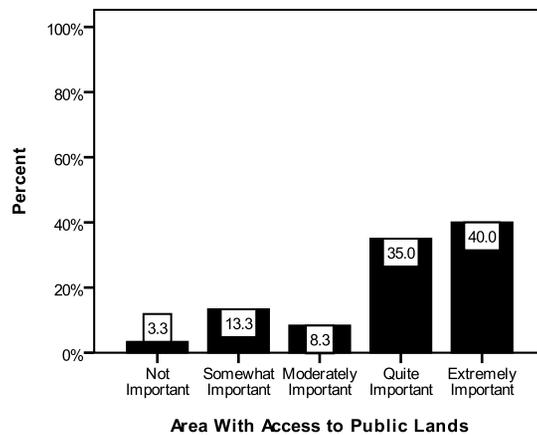
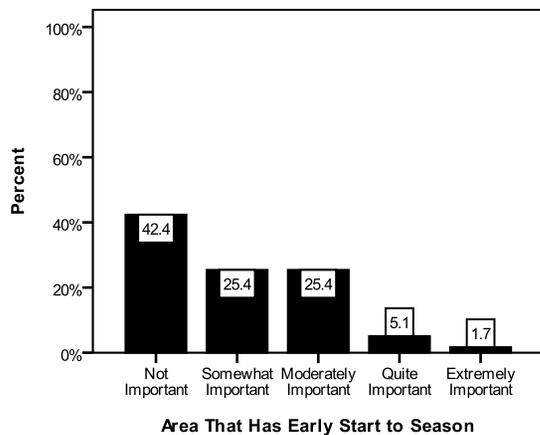
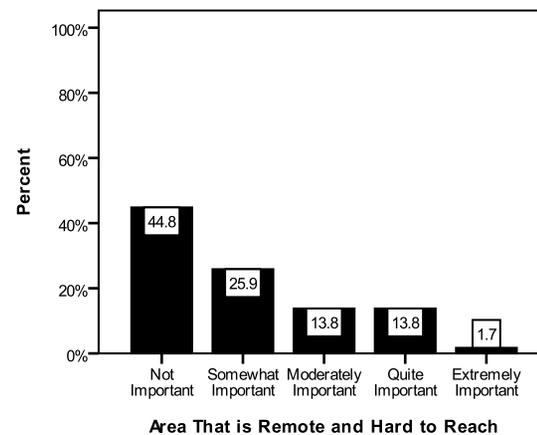
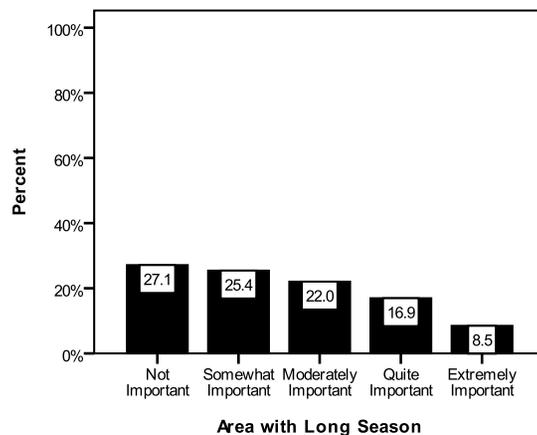
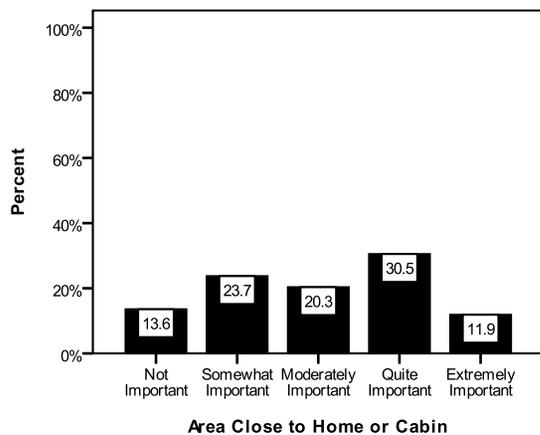
Area Where Family Can Hunt As Well

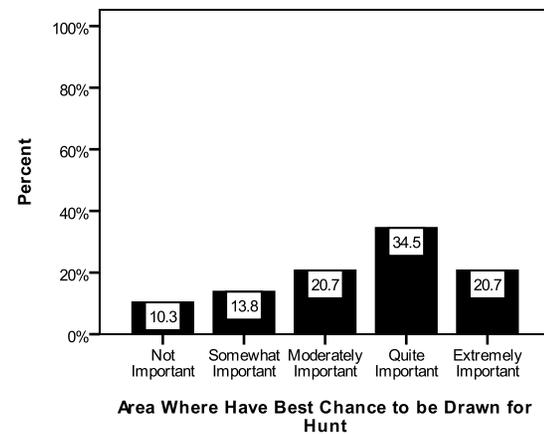
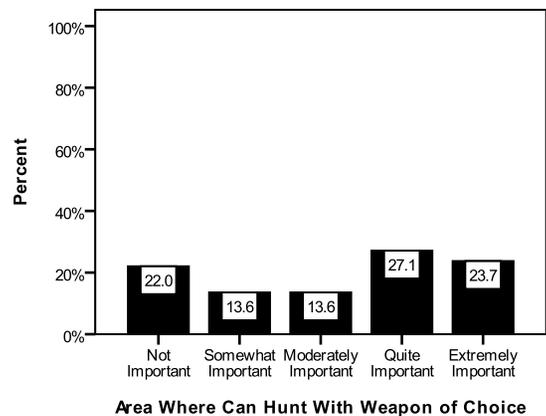
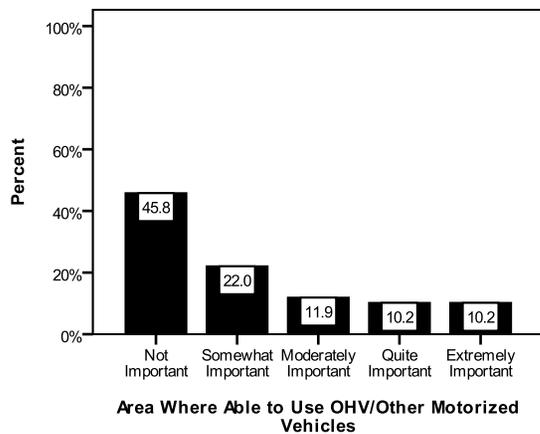
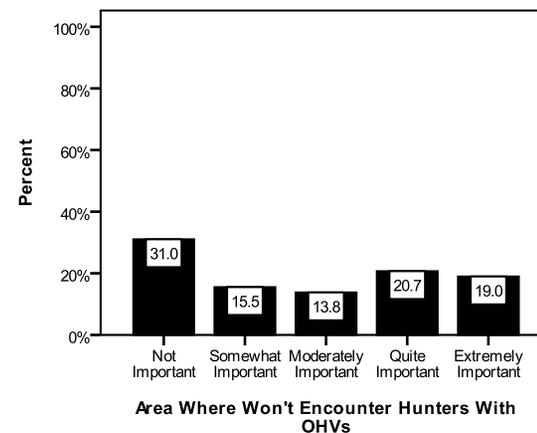
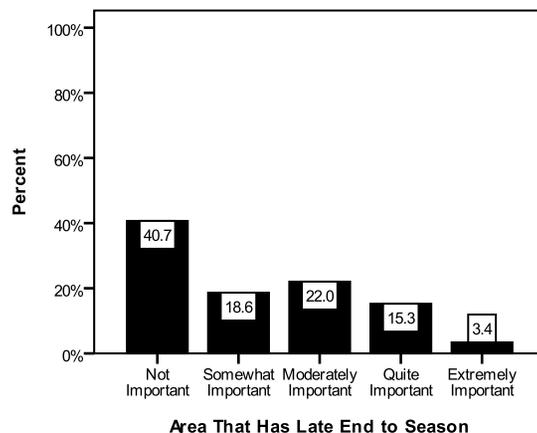
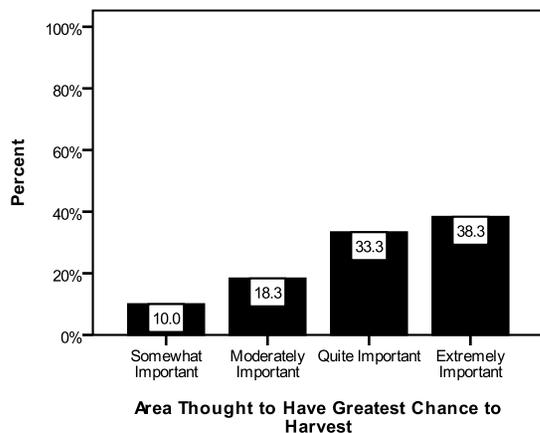


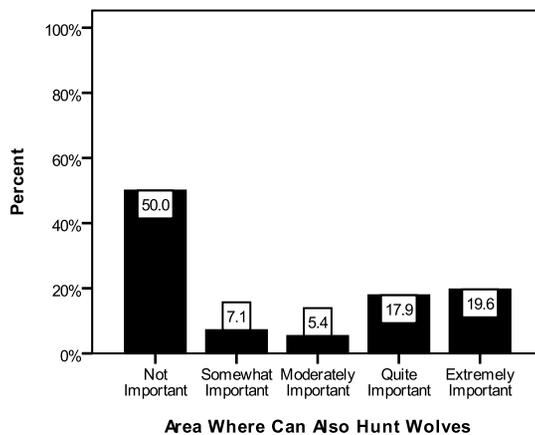
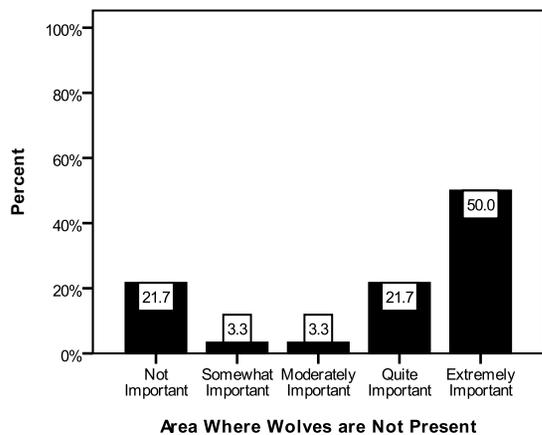
Ability to Hunt Every Year



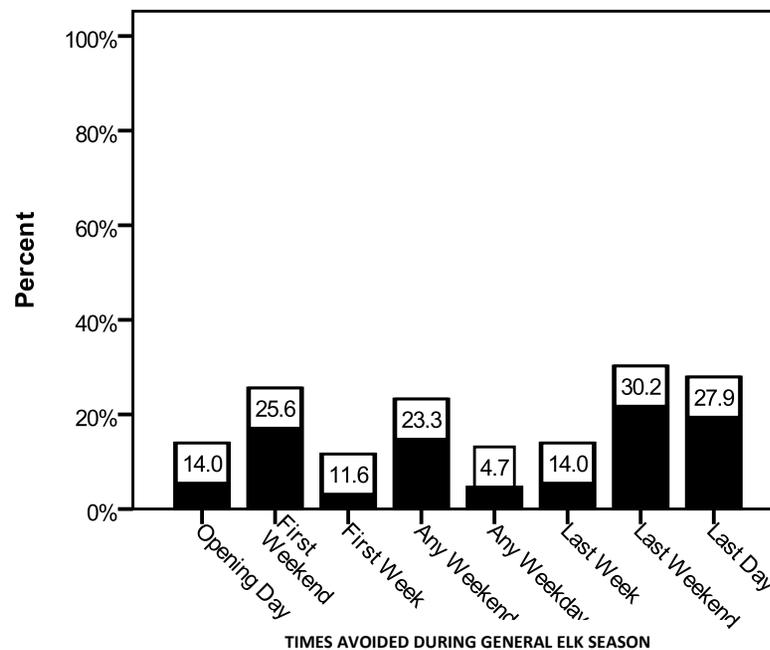
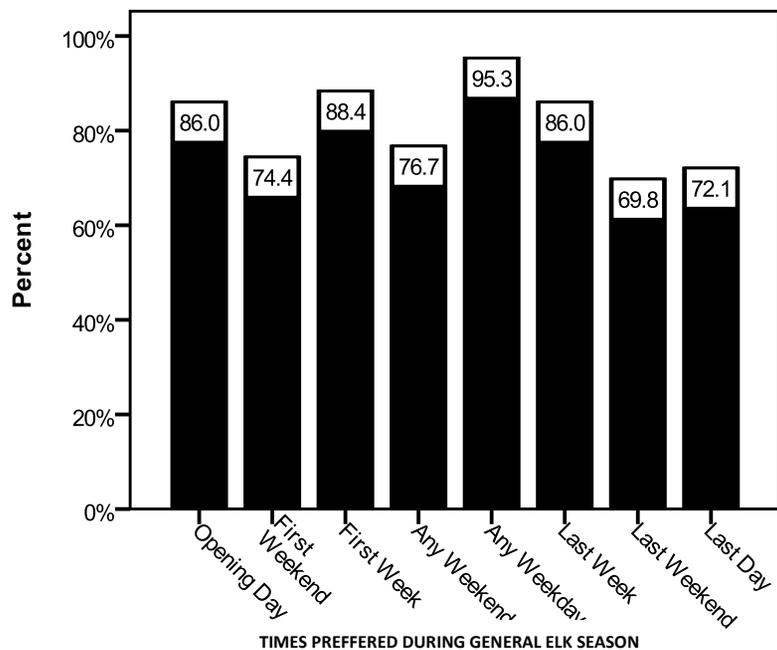
Area Where Also Hunt Deer During Elk Season







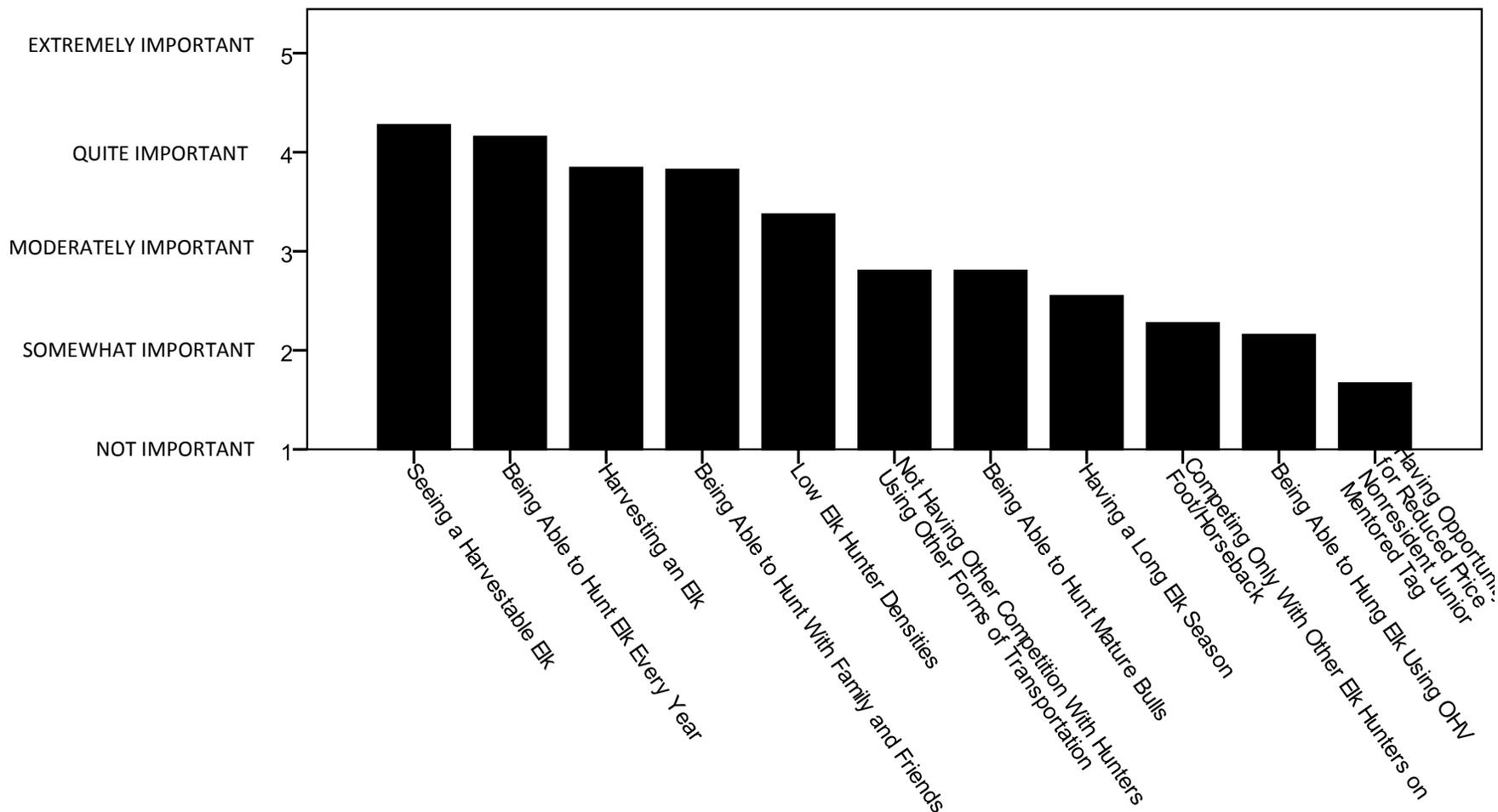
30. Are there any times during the general Elk hunting season in Idaho that you prefer or avoid? (Please check as many as apply)



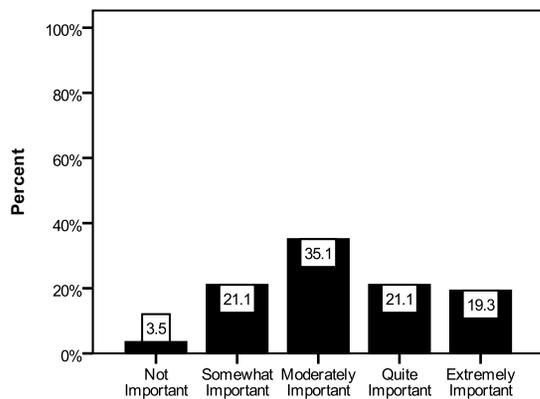
Q30: Though similar to the state average, less hunters in the Bennett Hills zone avoid certain times of the season and generally prefer most times.

ATTRIBUTES OF A QUALITY ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE

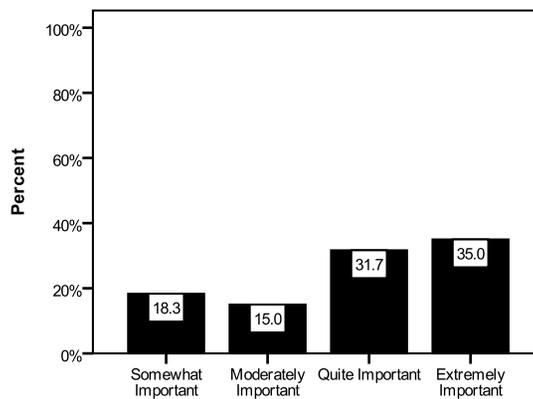
31. How important to you are each of these attributes for a quality Idaho Elk hunting experience?



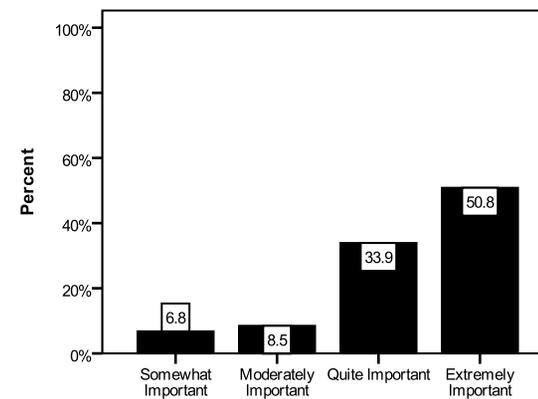
IMPORTANCE OF ATTRIBUTES FOR A QUALITY ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE IN IDAHO



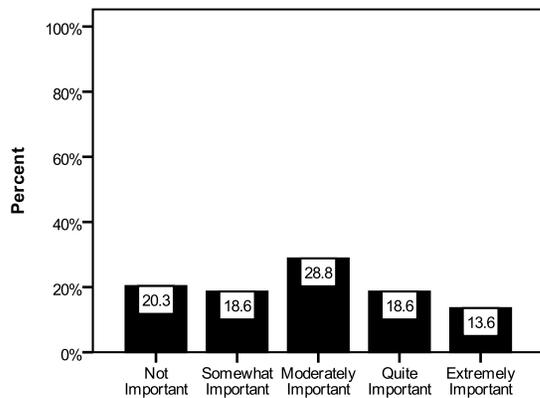
Low Elk Hunter Densities



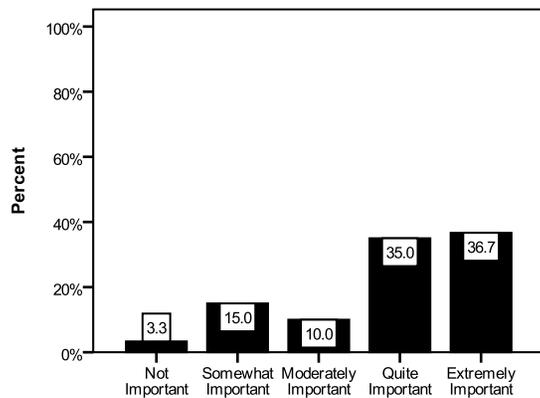
Harvesting an Elk



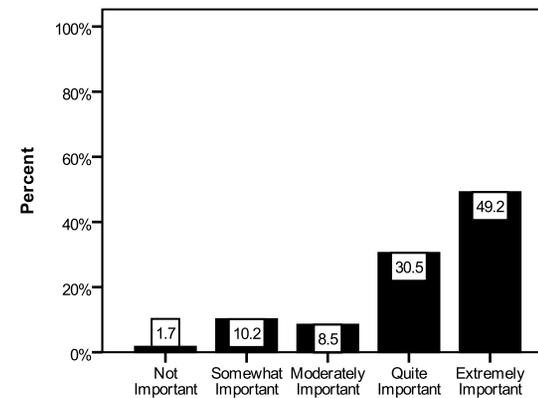
Seeing a Harvestable Elk



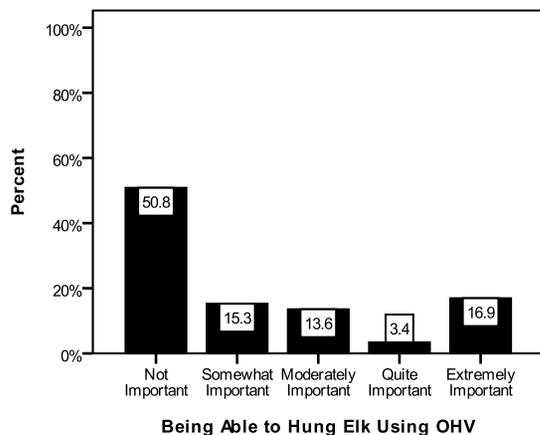
Being Able to Hunt Mature Bulls



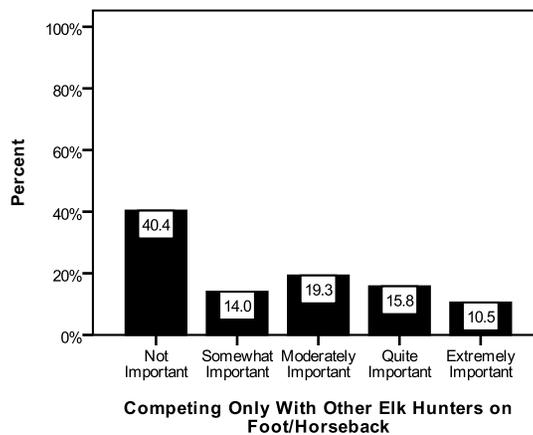
Being Able to Hunt With Family and Friends



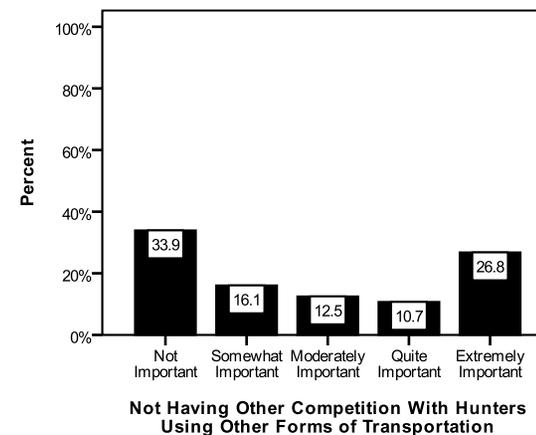
Being Able to Hunt Elk Every Year



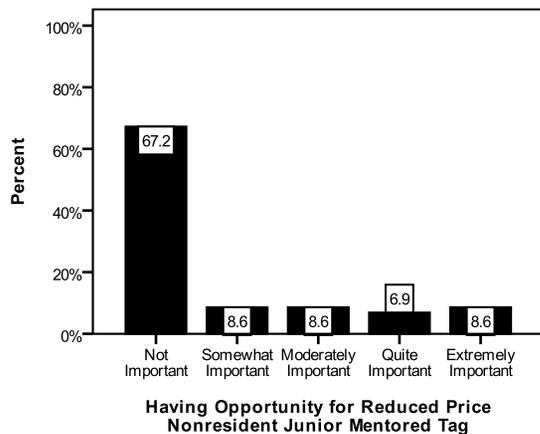
Being Able to Hunt Elk Using OHV



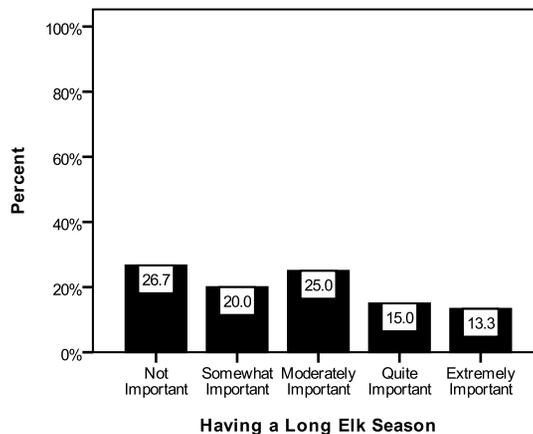
Competing Only With Other Elk Hunters on Foot/Horseback



Not Having Other Competition With Hunters Using Other Forms of Transportation



Having Opportunity for Reduced Price Nonresident Junior Mentored Tag

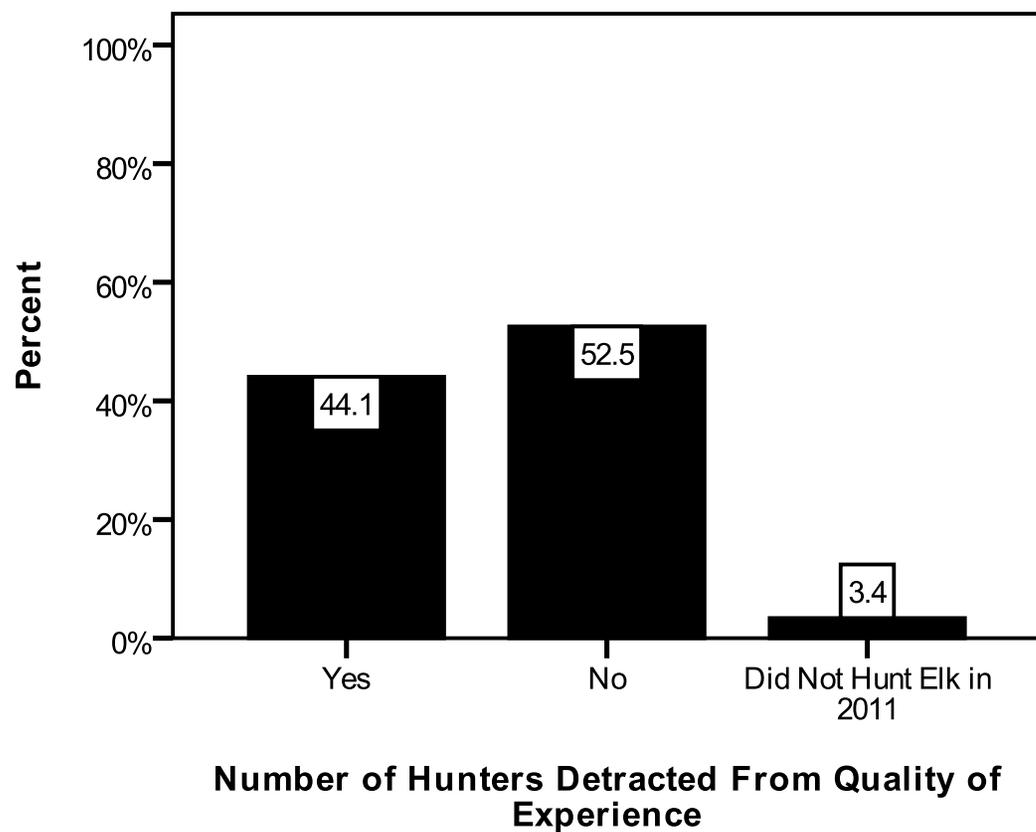


Having a Long Elk Season

Q31: The top four attributes are the same for the Bennett Hills zone and the state average. To round out the top five, Bennett Hills hunters also finds low Elk hunter densities as moderately important.

HUNTING SATISFACTION

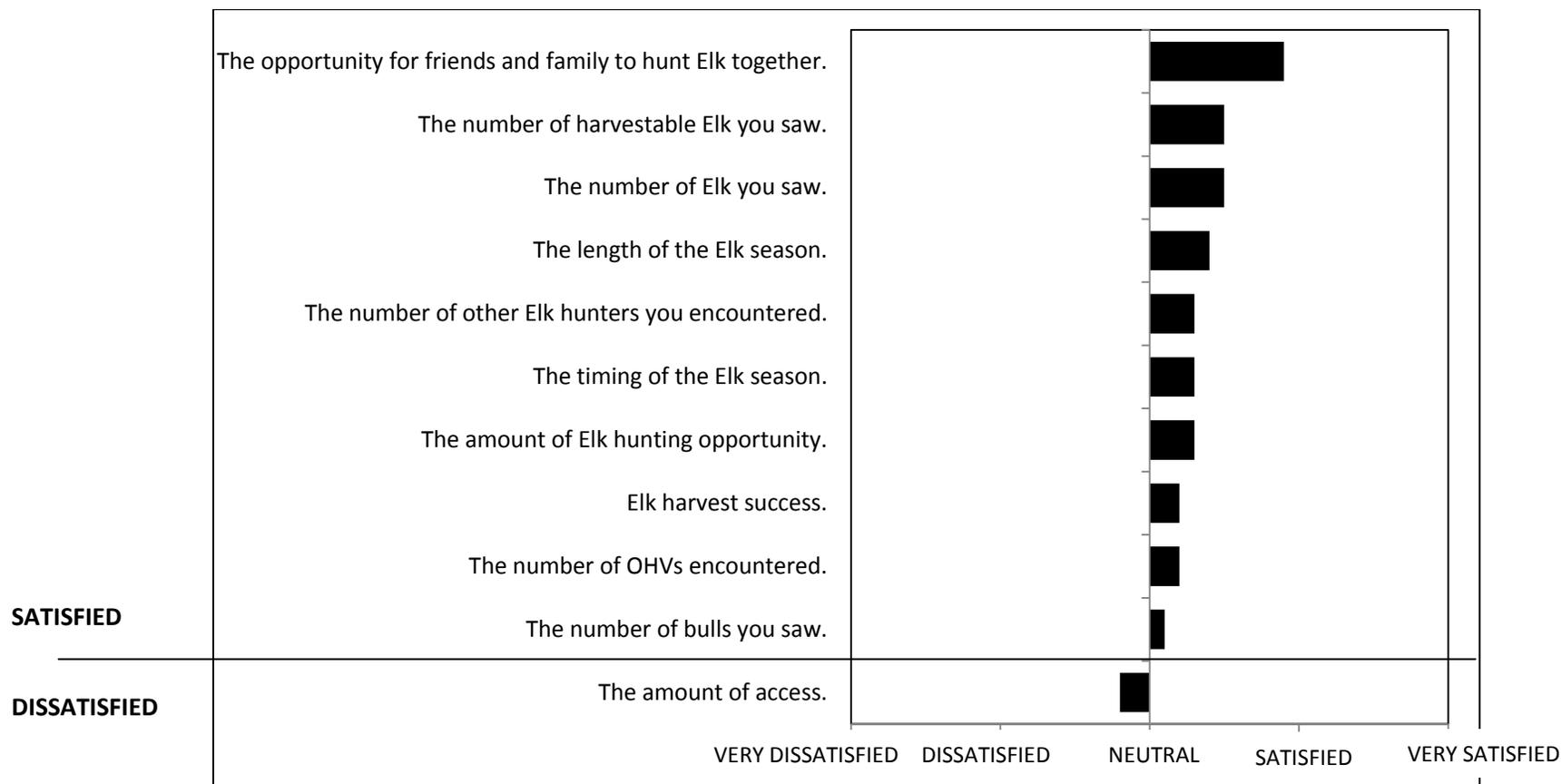
33. Were there times during your 2011 Elk season when the numbers of other hunters seriously detracted from the quality of your hunting experience? *(Please check one response)*



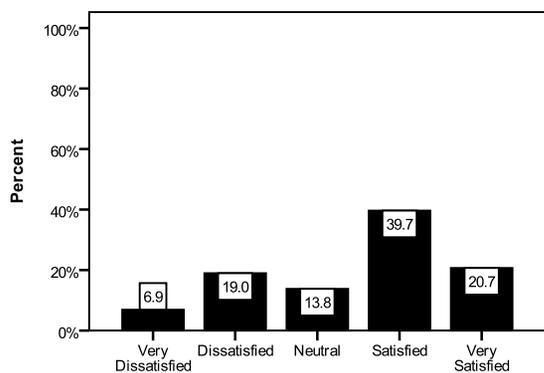
Q33: The distribution of responses is similar between Bennett Hills hunters and the state average.

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

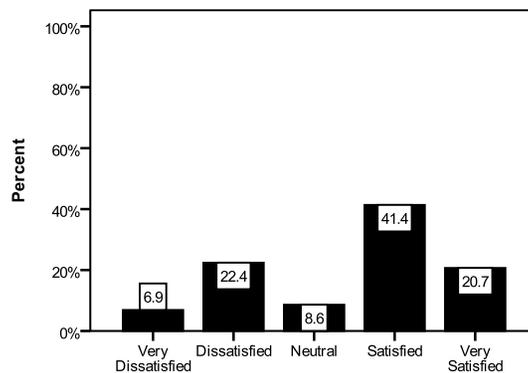
37. How satisfied were you with each of the following aspects of your 2011 Elk hunting experience?



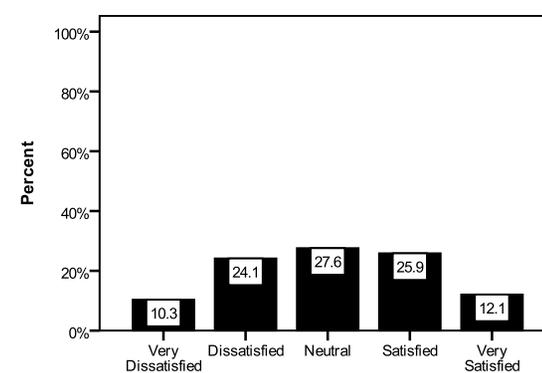
SATISFACTION OF ASPECTS OF 2011 ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE



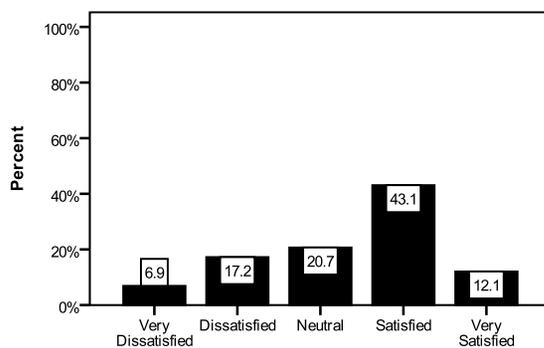
Number of Elk Seen



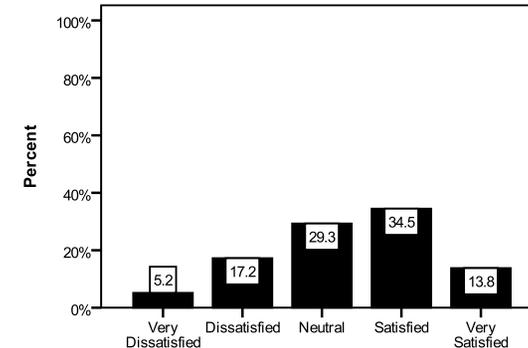
Number of Harvestable Elk Seen



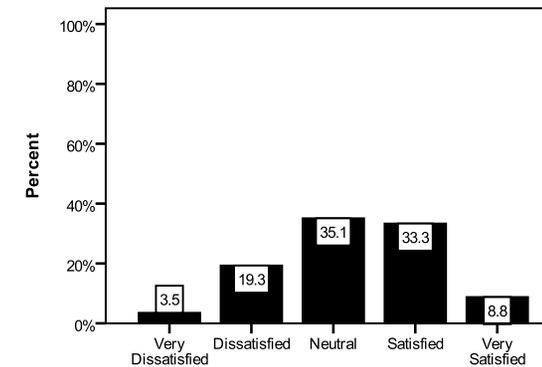
Number of Bulls Seen



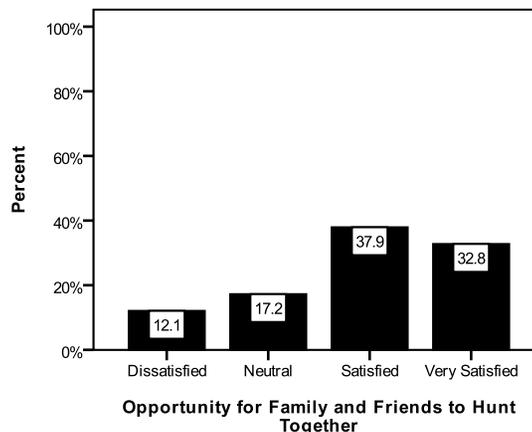
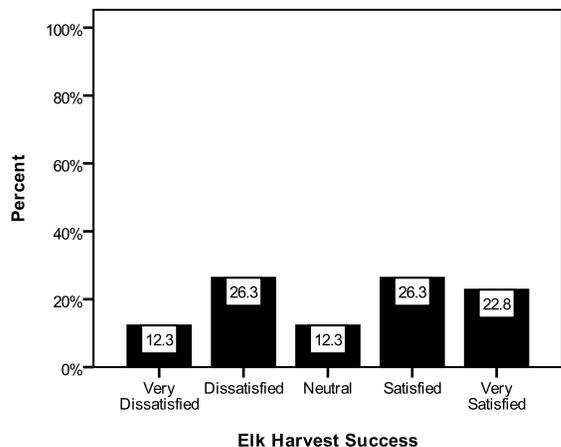
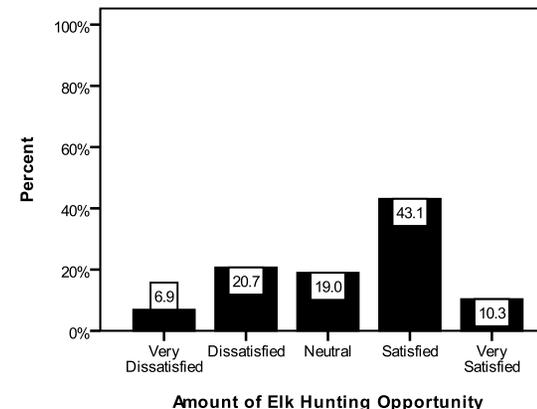
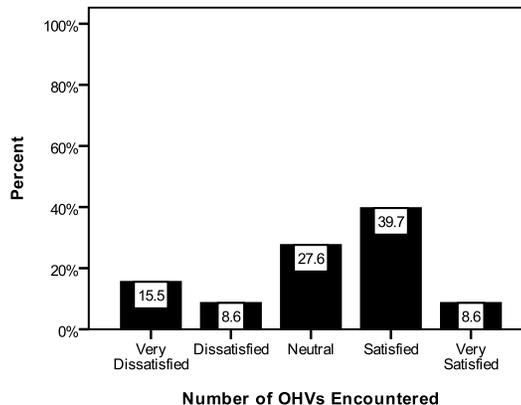
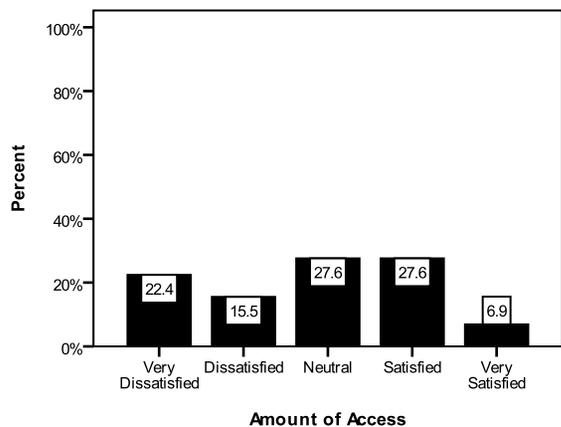
Length of Elk Season



Timing of Elk Season



Number of Elk Hunters Encountered

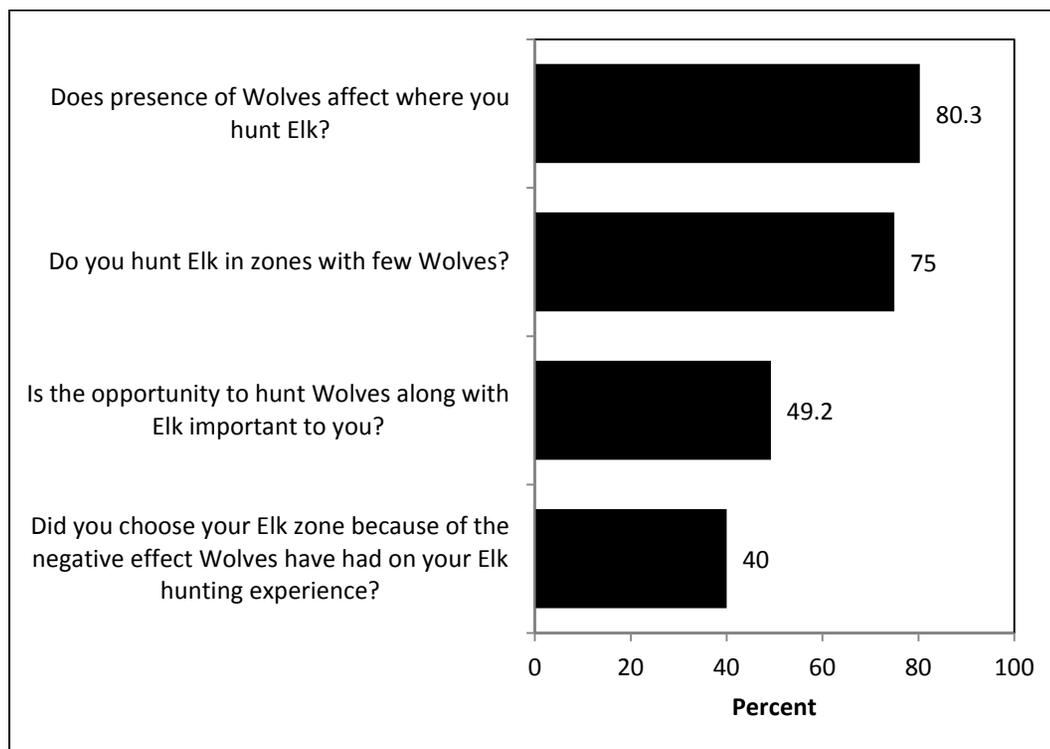


Q37: Unlike the state average, the only dissatisfaction Bennett Hills hunters had was with the amount of access during their 2011 Elk hunting experience.

PERCEPTIONS OF PREDATORS

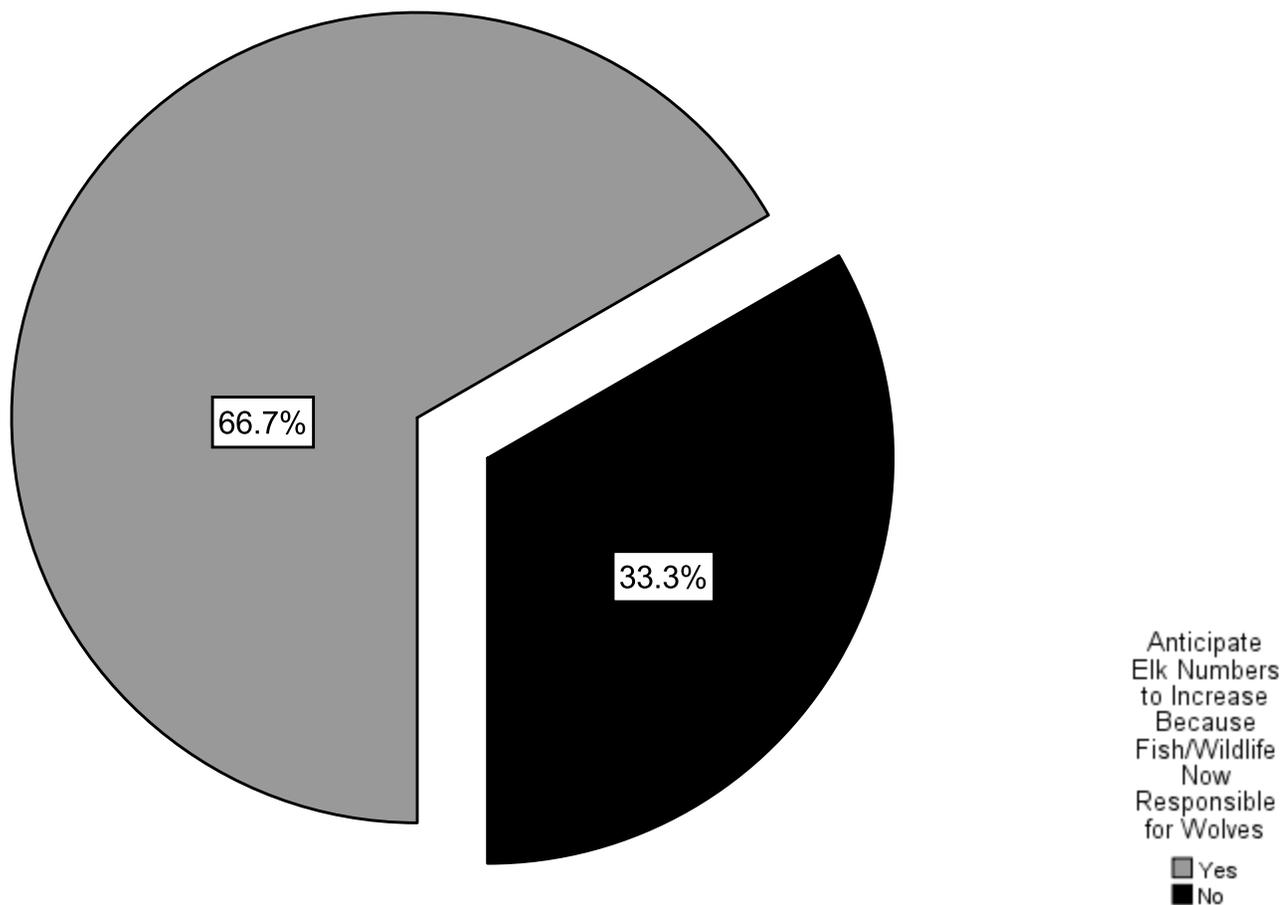
Two questions about predators in Idaho.

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



Q39: Compared to the state average, about 40% more hunters in the Bennett Hills zone hunt in a zone with few Wolves.

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



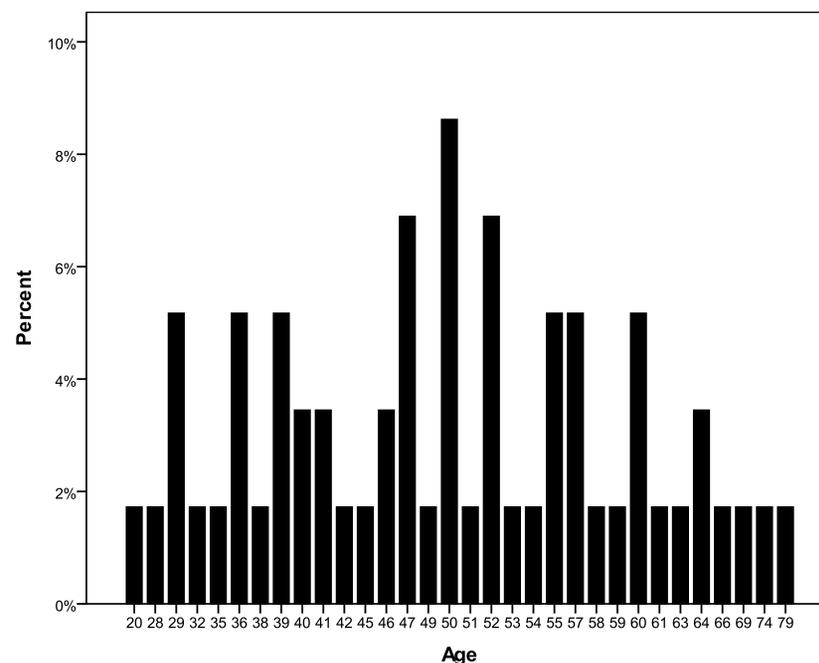
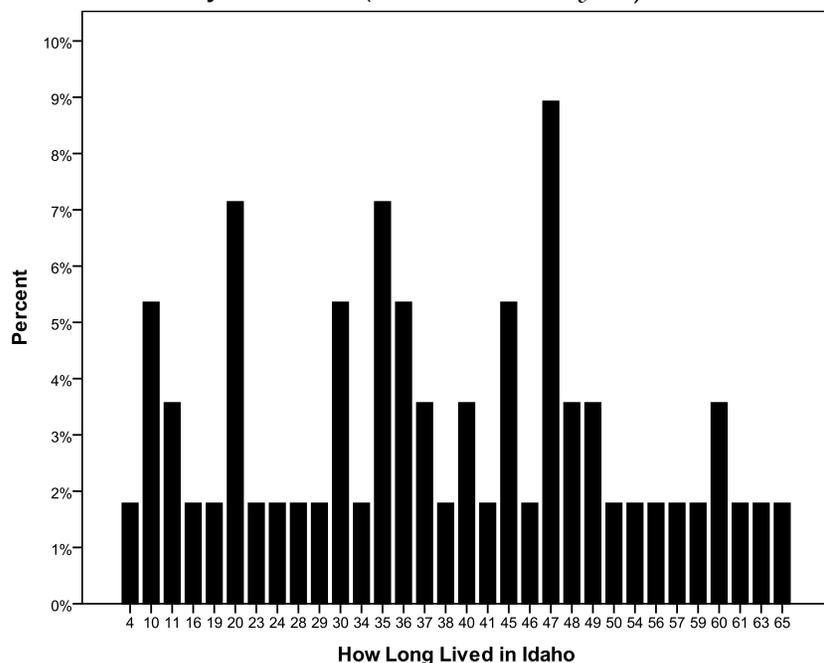
Q40: The distribution of responses is similar between the state average and the Bennett Hills zone.

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 Bennett Hills zone and the state average for both Q42 and Q43.