

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



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For:

Idaho Department of Fish and Game

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INSERT ELK SURVEY OBJECTIVES

METHODS

SAMPLING

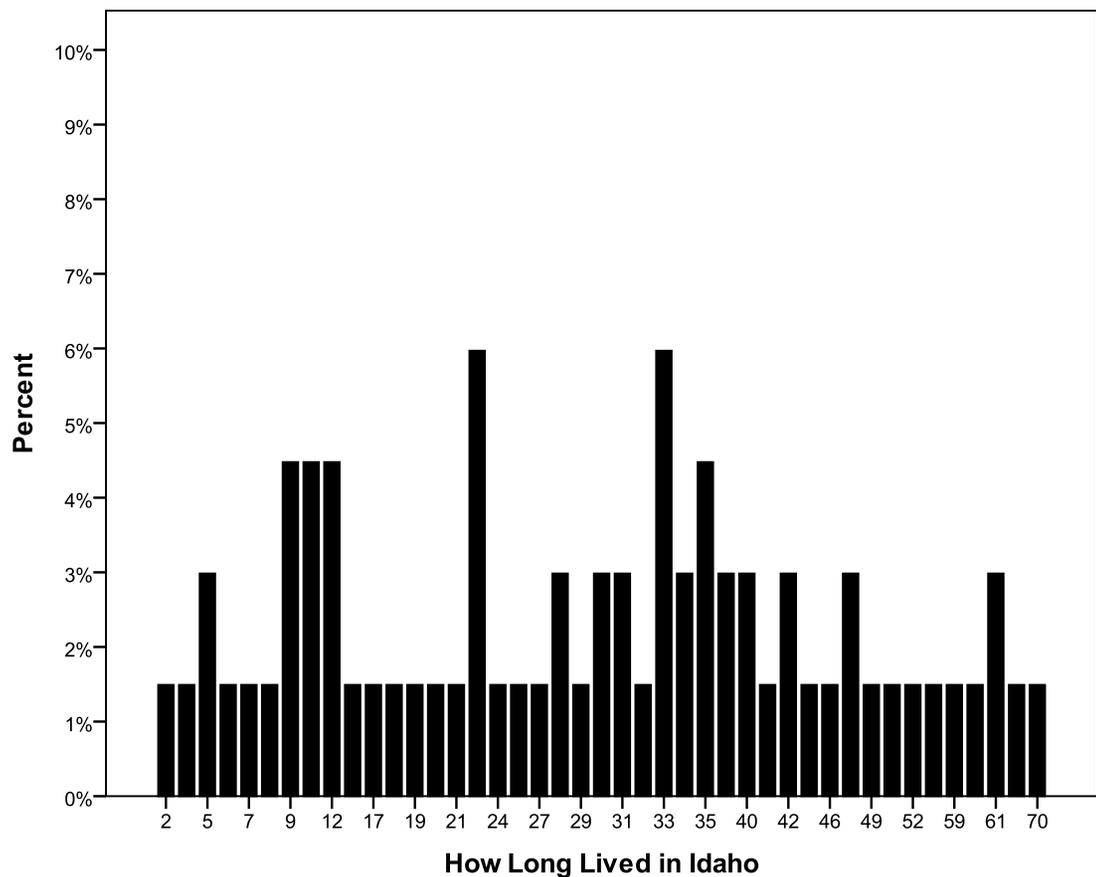
RESPONSE RATE.

ELK HUNTER PROFILES

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

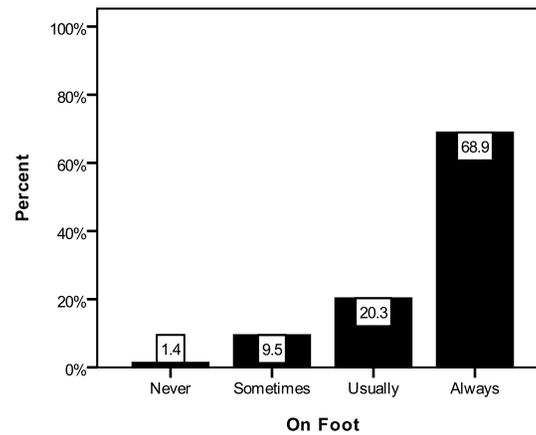
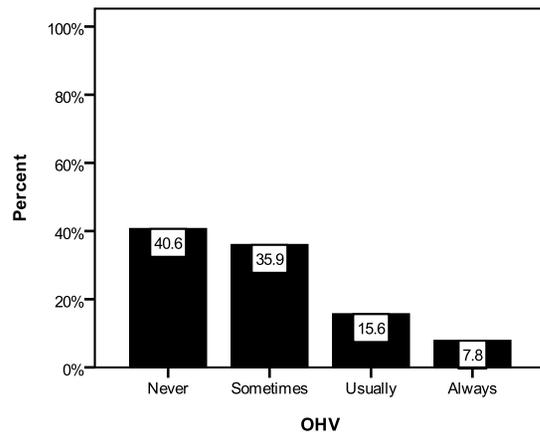
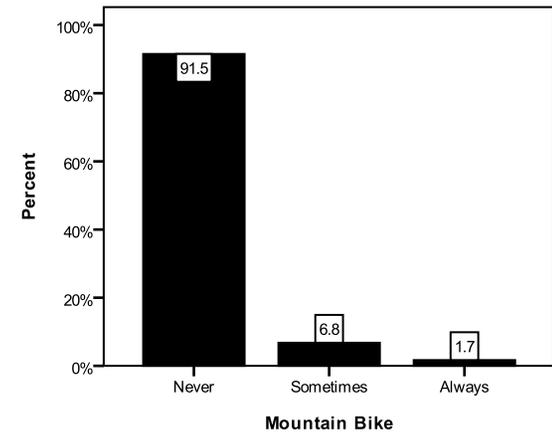
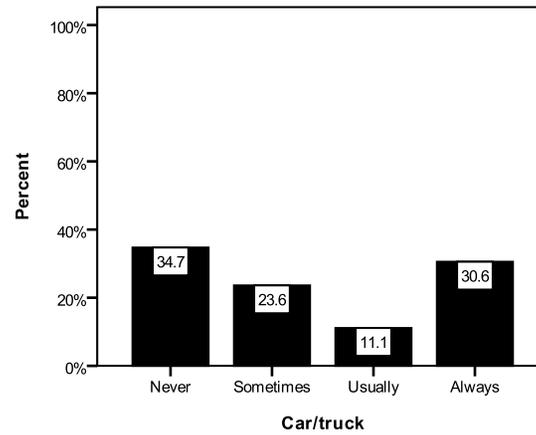
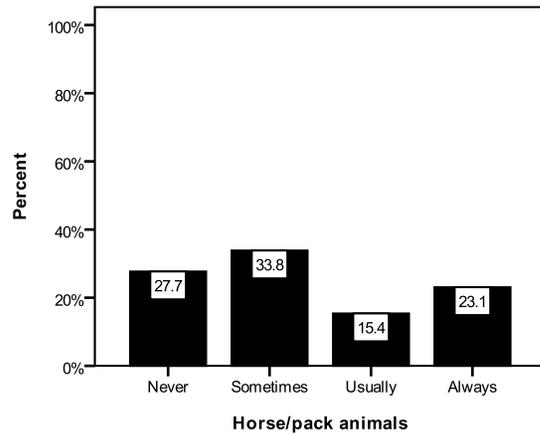
Now, some questions about your Idaho Elk hunting experiences and preferences.

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



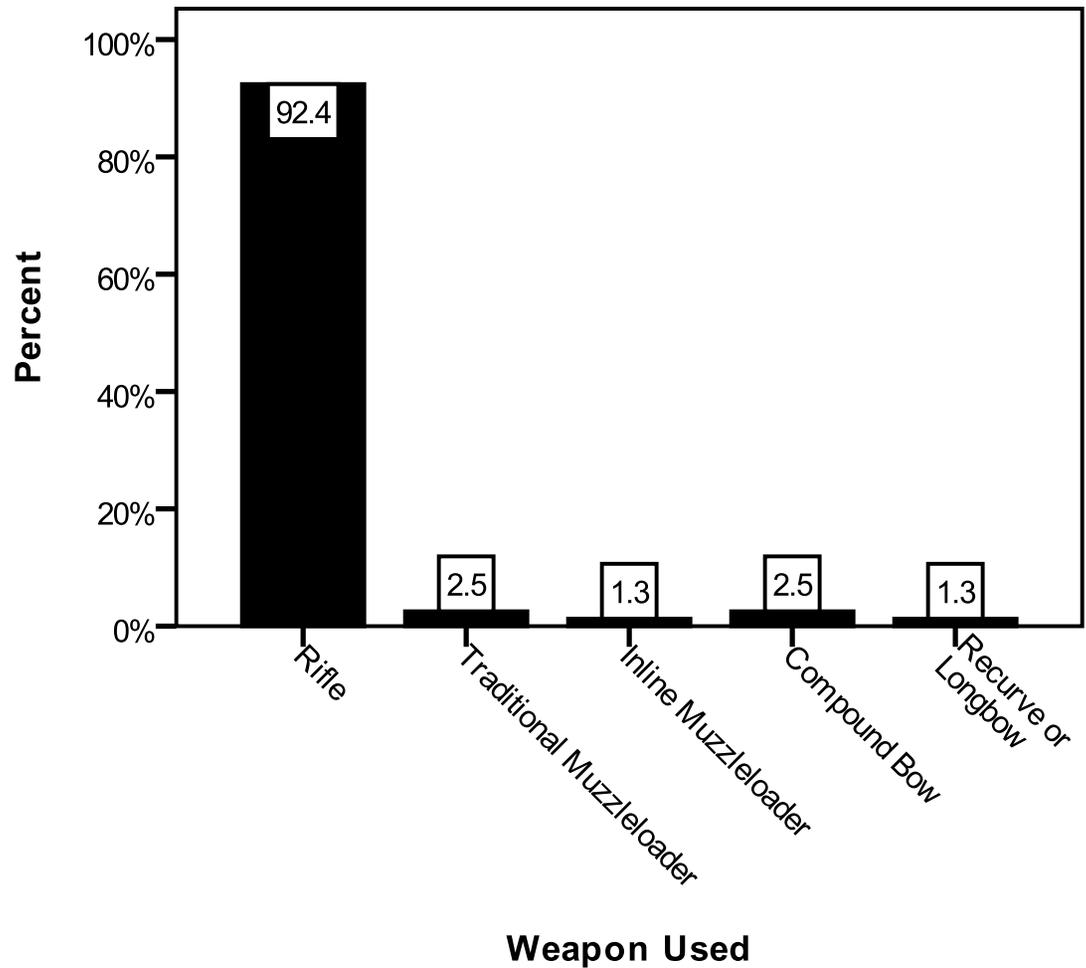
Q3: The distribution of responses is similar for the state average and the Middle Fork zone.

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?



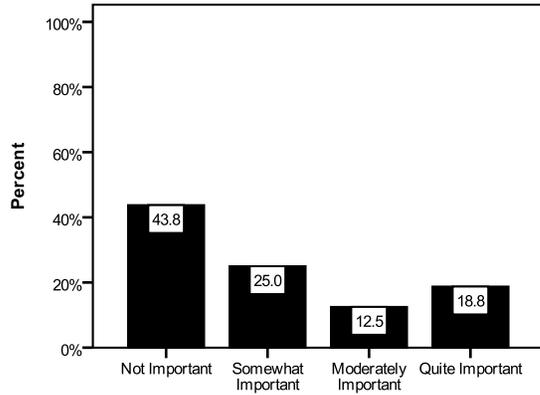
Q7: The distribution of responses is similar for the state average and the Middle Fork zone. However, responses dealing with horse/pack animals is an exception. 38.5% of hunters in this zone use horse/pack animals usually or always, compared to only 16.8% of the state average.

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

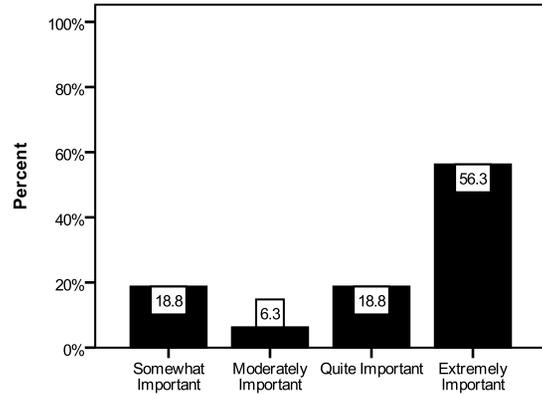


Q8: Unlike the state average, an overwhelming majority of Middle Fork hunters typically use rifles, a 35.2% difference over the average.

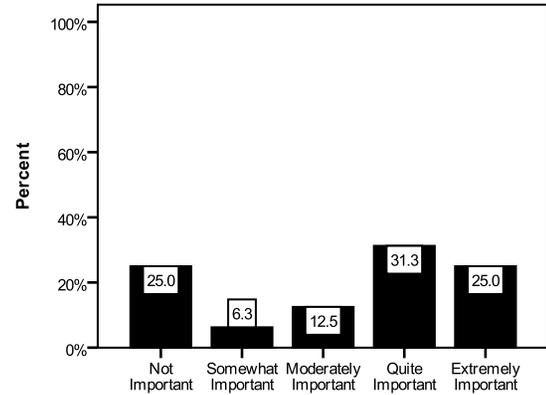
10. How important was each of the following in your decision to hunt during Elk archery, short-range weapons or muzzleloader seasons?



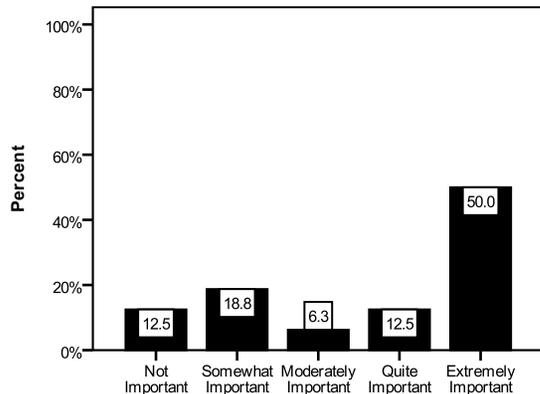
Increase Challenge



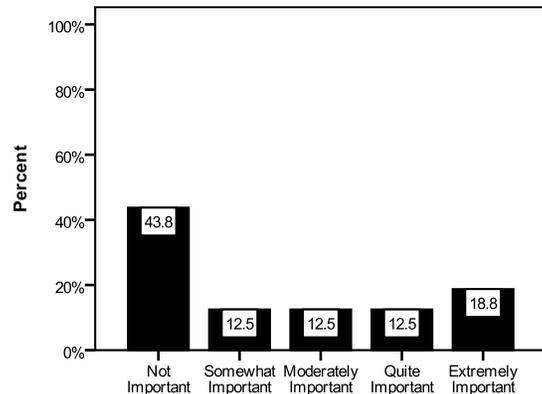
Hunt With Few Hunters on Field



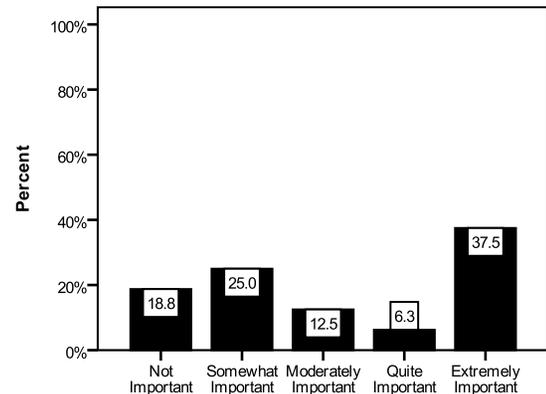
Improve Chance of Harvesting



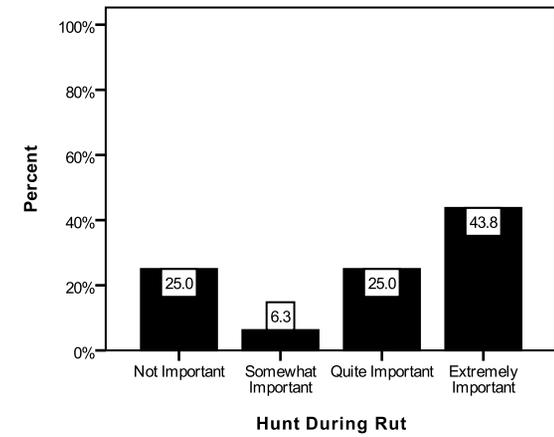
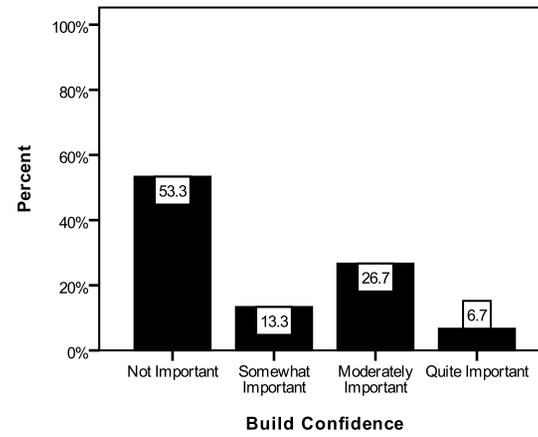
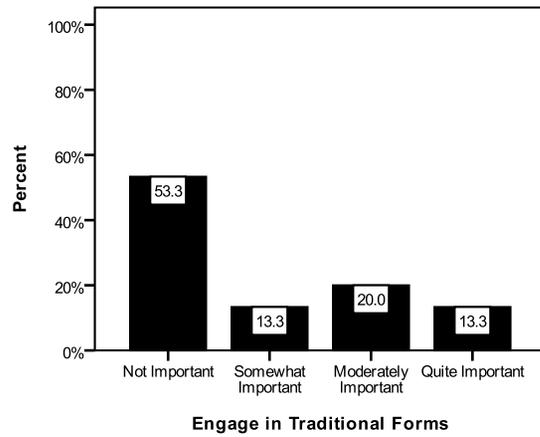
Expand Hunting Season



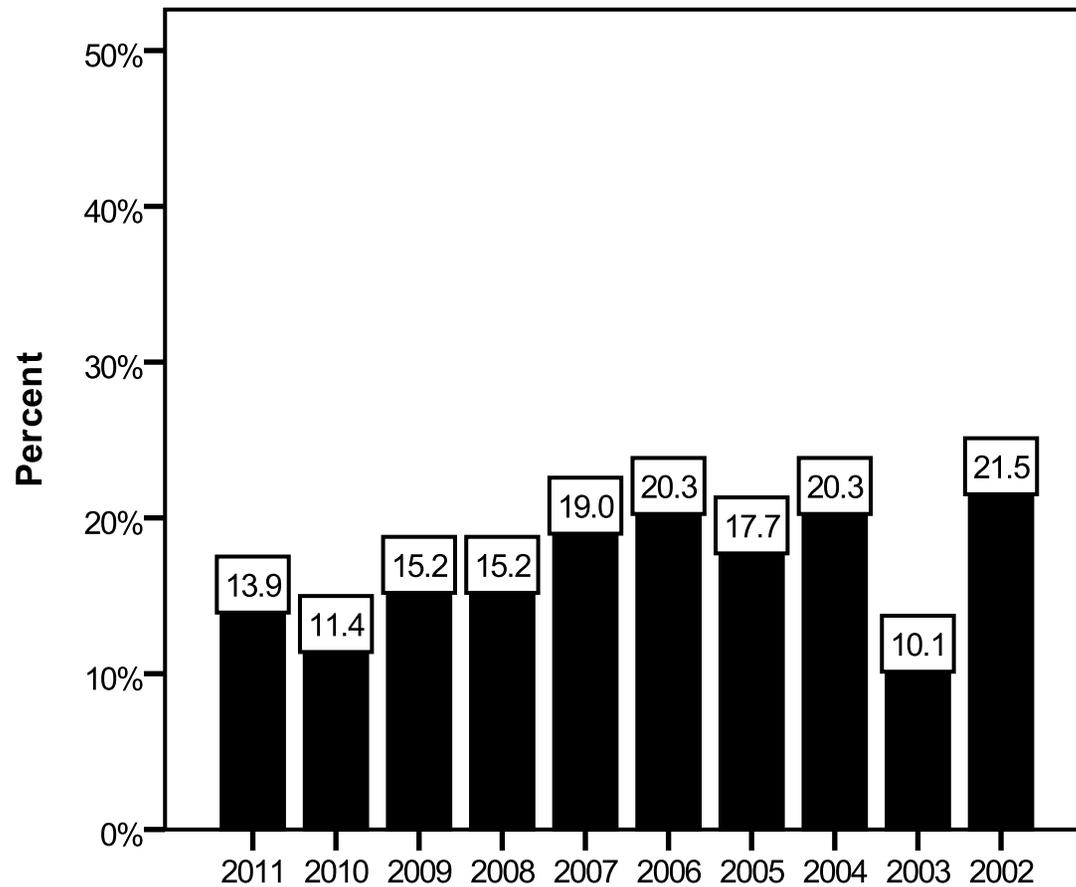
Hunt in Zone Where Rifle Limited



Adventure

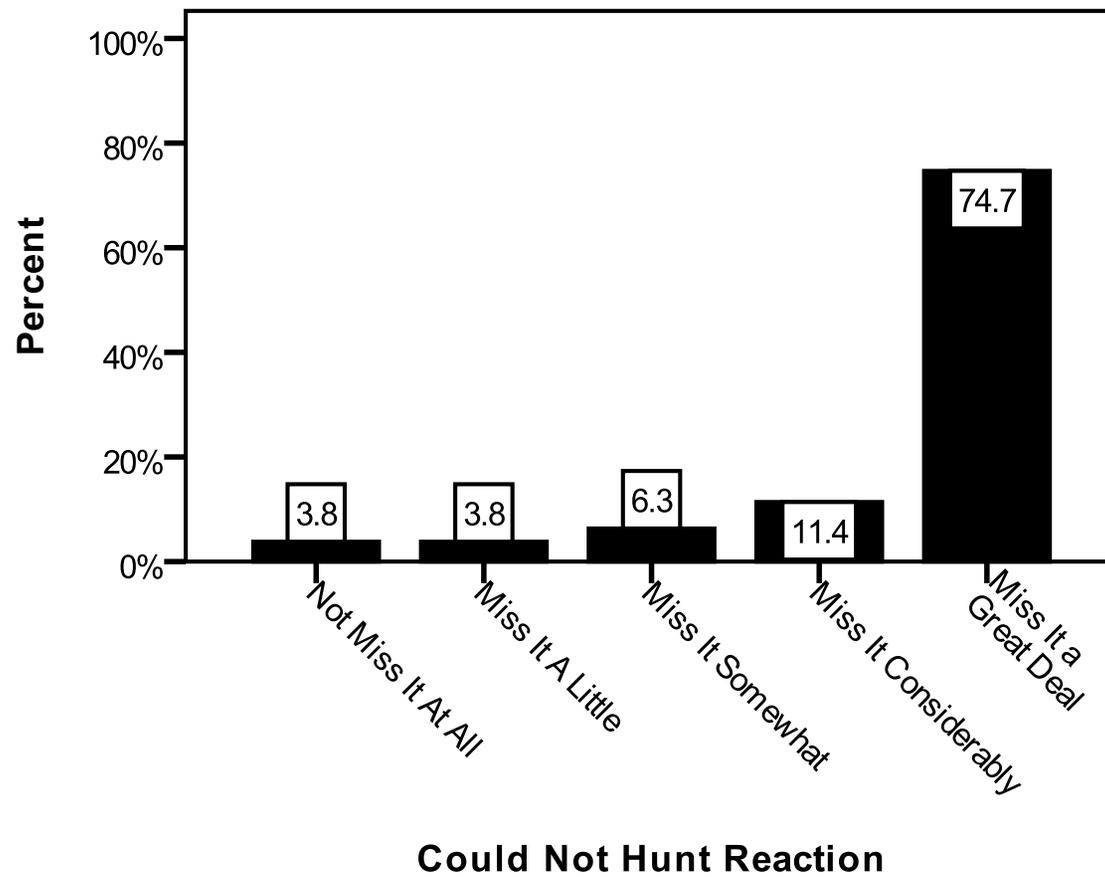


Q10: The distribution of responses is fairly similar between the state average and the Middle Fork zone. However, hunters in this zone reported that hunting with few hunters a field and expanding the hunting season were important to deciding to hunt in these seasons.

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

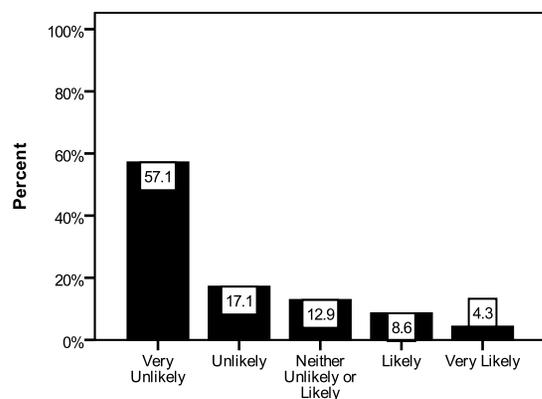
Q11: Over the past 10 years, the harvest success rates of Middle Fork hunters has tended to be lower than the state average, with about a 12% difference in 2003 and 2010 and 9.9% difference in 2009.

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

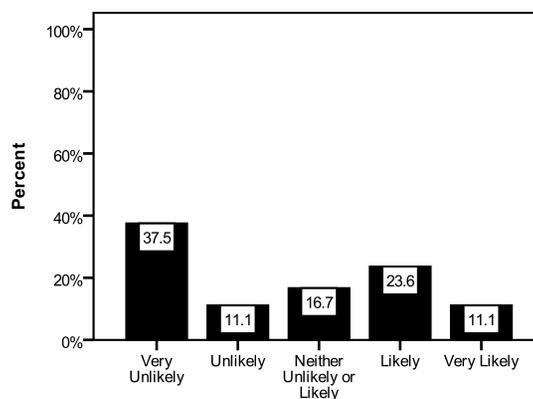


Q12: Like many other hunters in the state, a majority of Middle Fork hunters would miss Elk hunting in Idaho a great deal if they could no longer do so.

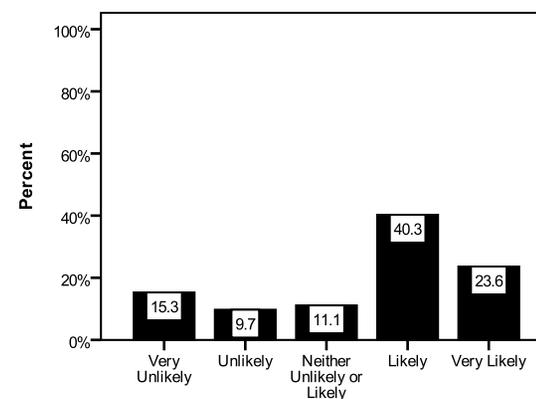
13. If you could not hunt Elk in Idaho, how would your hunting change?



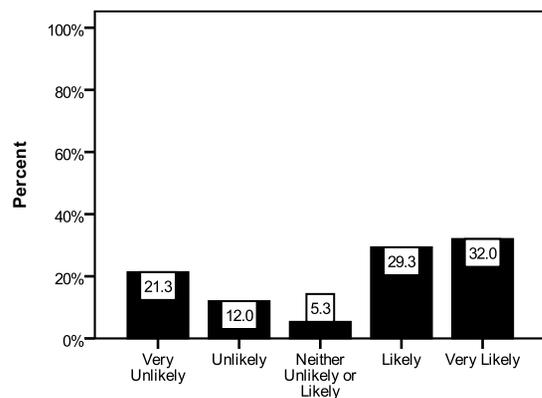
Hunt Waterfowl More



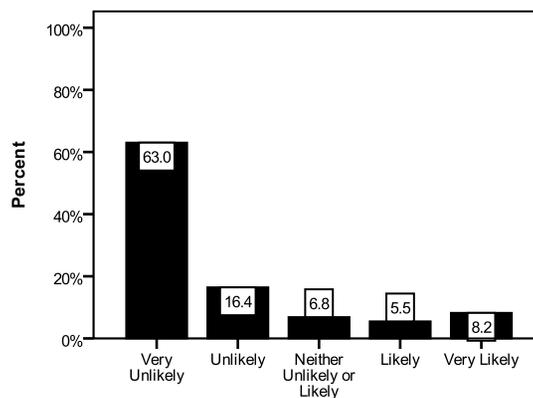
Hunt Upland Game More



More Time Hunting Other Game



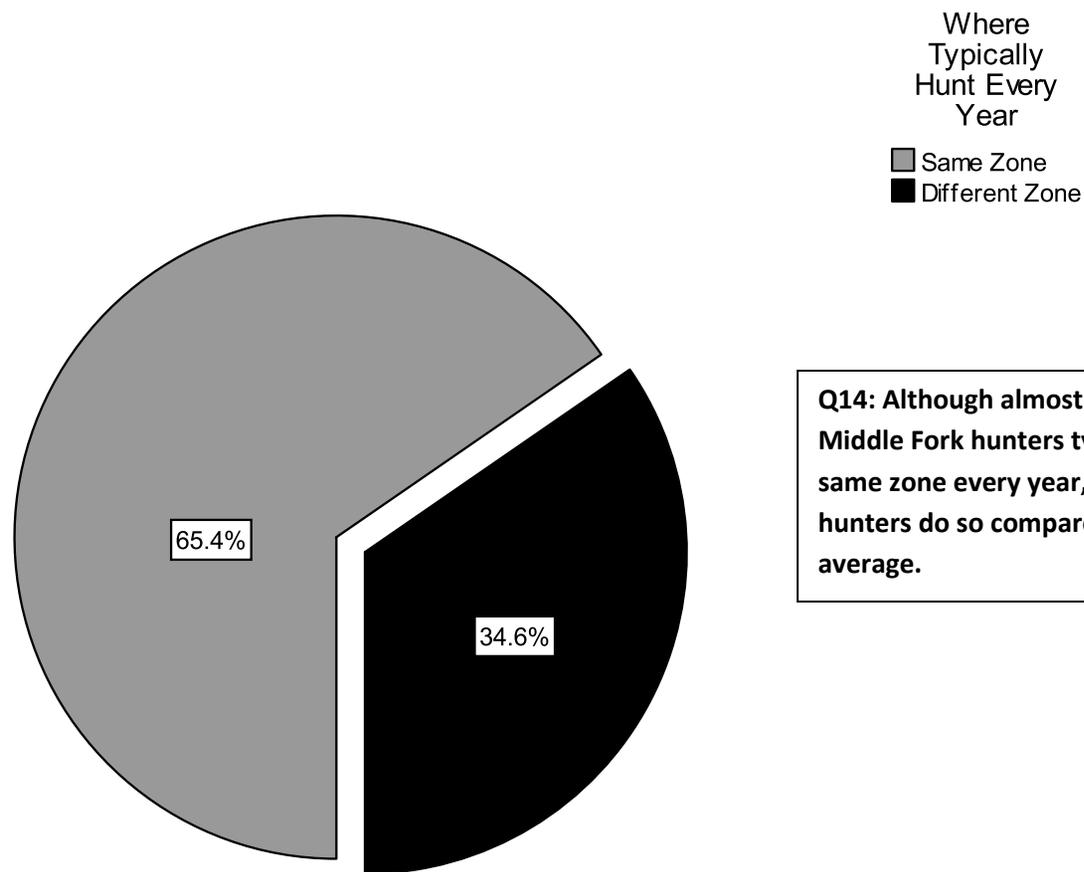
Hunt Elk in Other States



Not Hunt At All

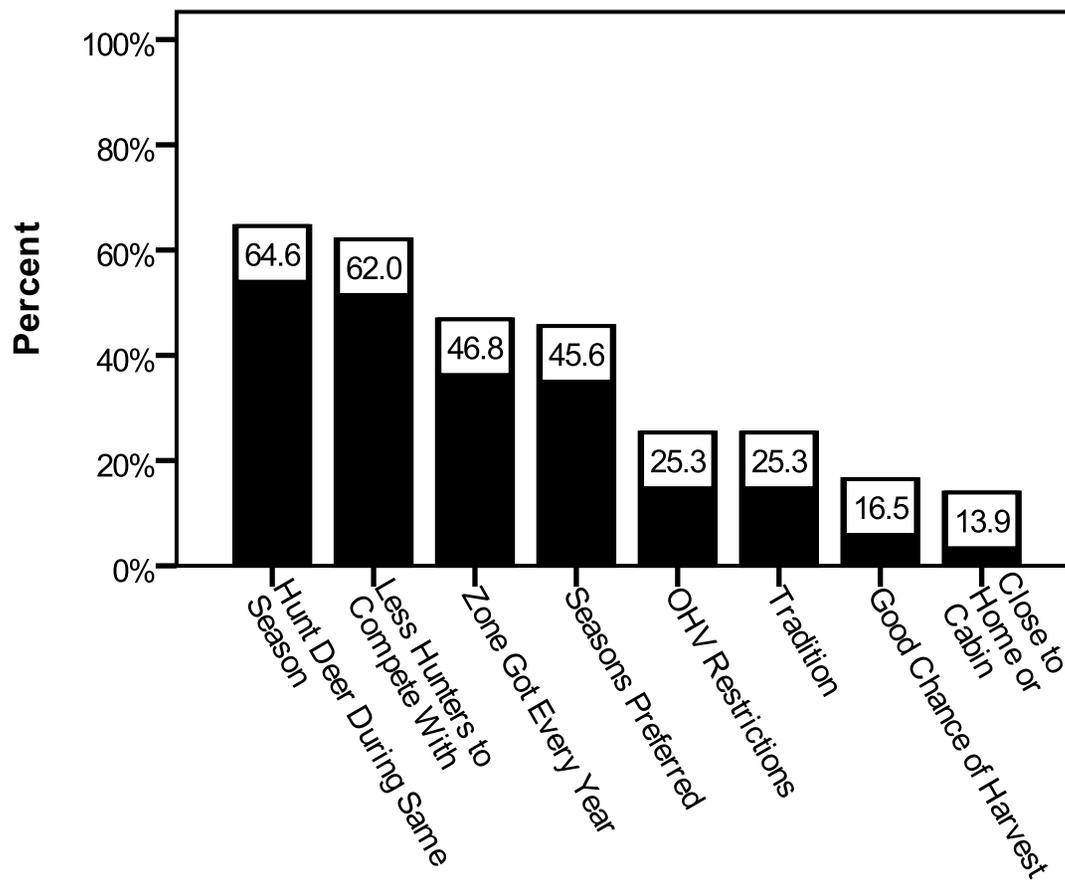
Q13: The distribution of responses is similar between the state average and the Middle Fork zone.

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



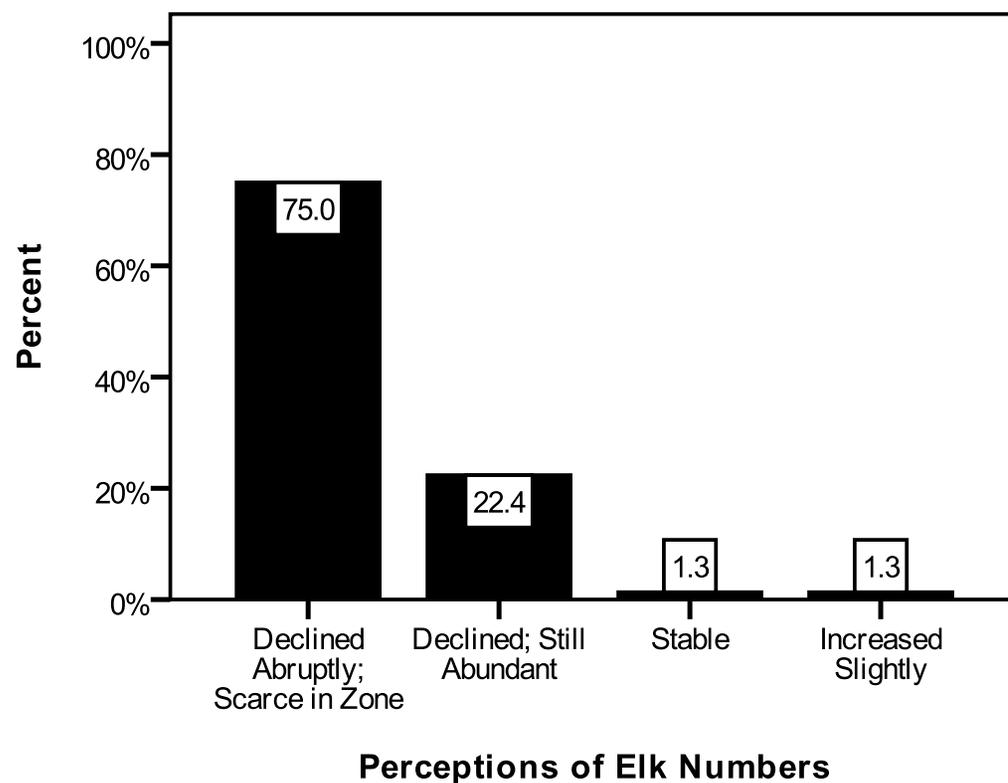
Q14: Although almost two-thirds of Middle Fork hunters typically hunt the same zone every year, 16.2% fewer hunters do so compared to the state average.

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



Q16: Unlike other hunters in the state, Middle Fork hunters find zones close to their home or cabin less desirable but favor those in which you can hunt Deer during the same season and have fewer hunters to compete with.

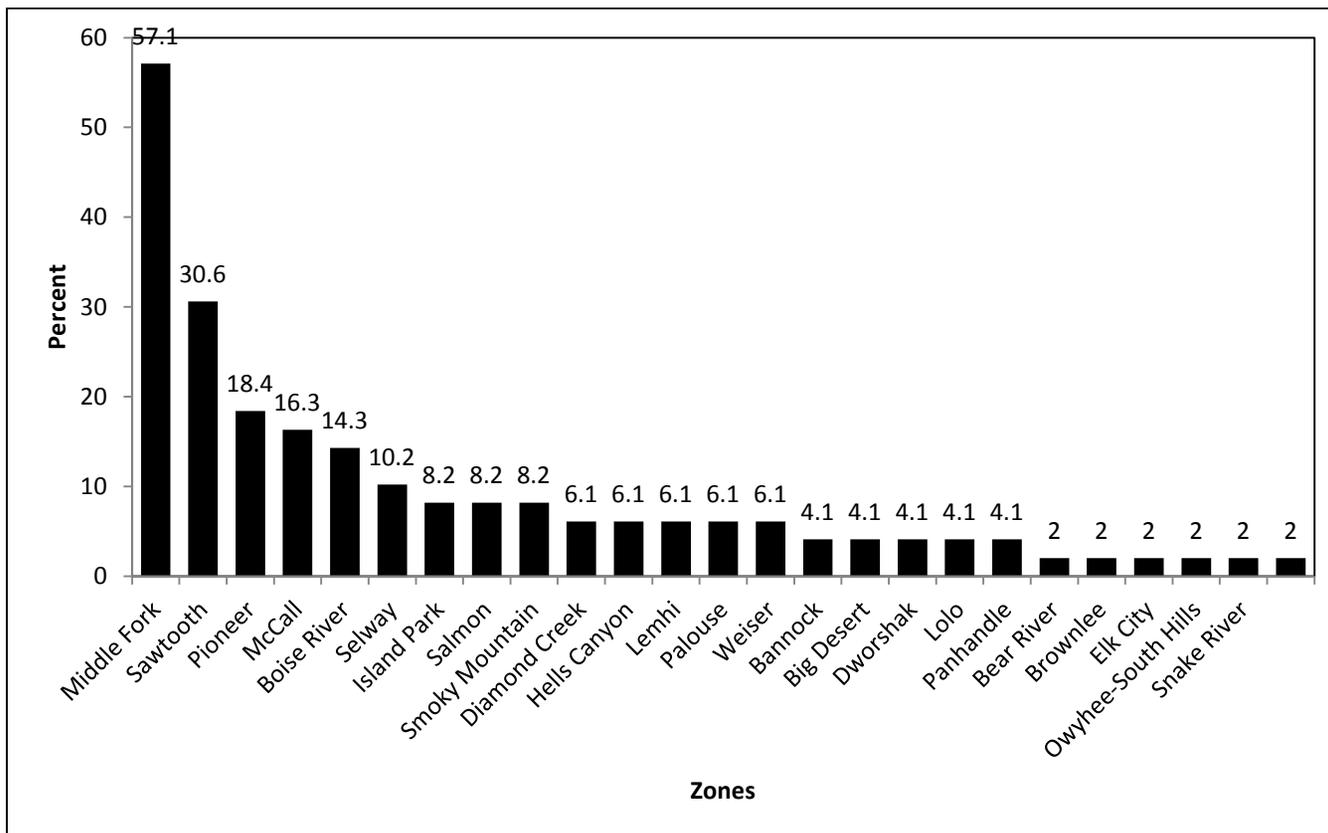
17. What are your perceptions of Elk numbers in the zone you hunted in 2011? Select the ONE statement from the list below that most closely matches your perceptions. (Please check only one response)



Q17: Similar to the state average, a majority of Middle Fork hunters perceive Elk numbers to have declined abruptly, resulting in scarcity in their 2011 zone.

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

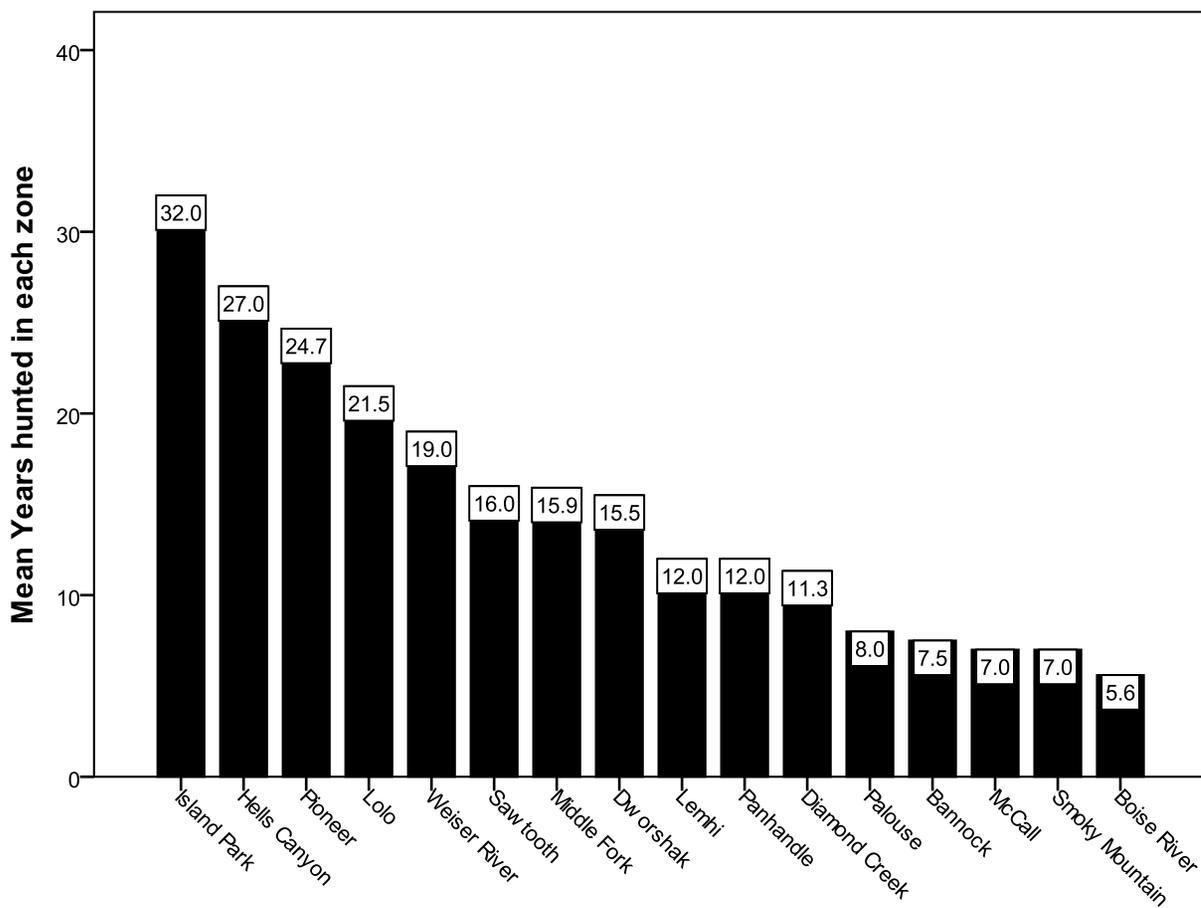
(Please write in the Zone names, refer to map on page 5 for Zone names)



Q18: The Sawtooth zone is the most popular zone for respondents to hunt in besides the Middle Fork zone.

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

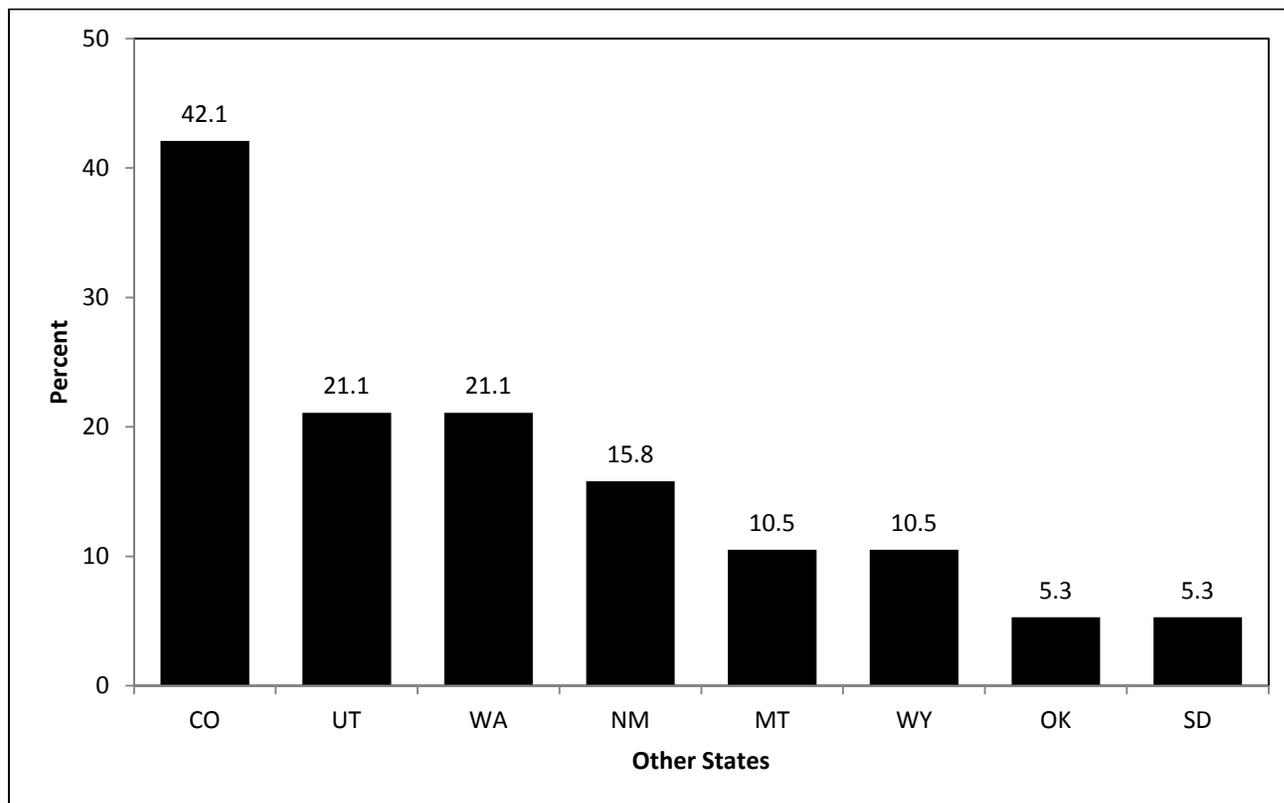
(Please write in the name of the zone and number of years, refer to map on page 5 for Zone names)



Q20: The Island Park and Hells Canyon zones have been hunted the longest among respondents. The Middle Fork zone itself ranks seventh in duration.

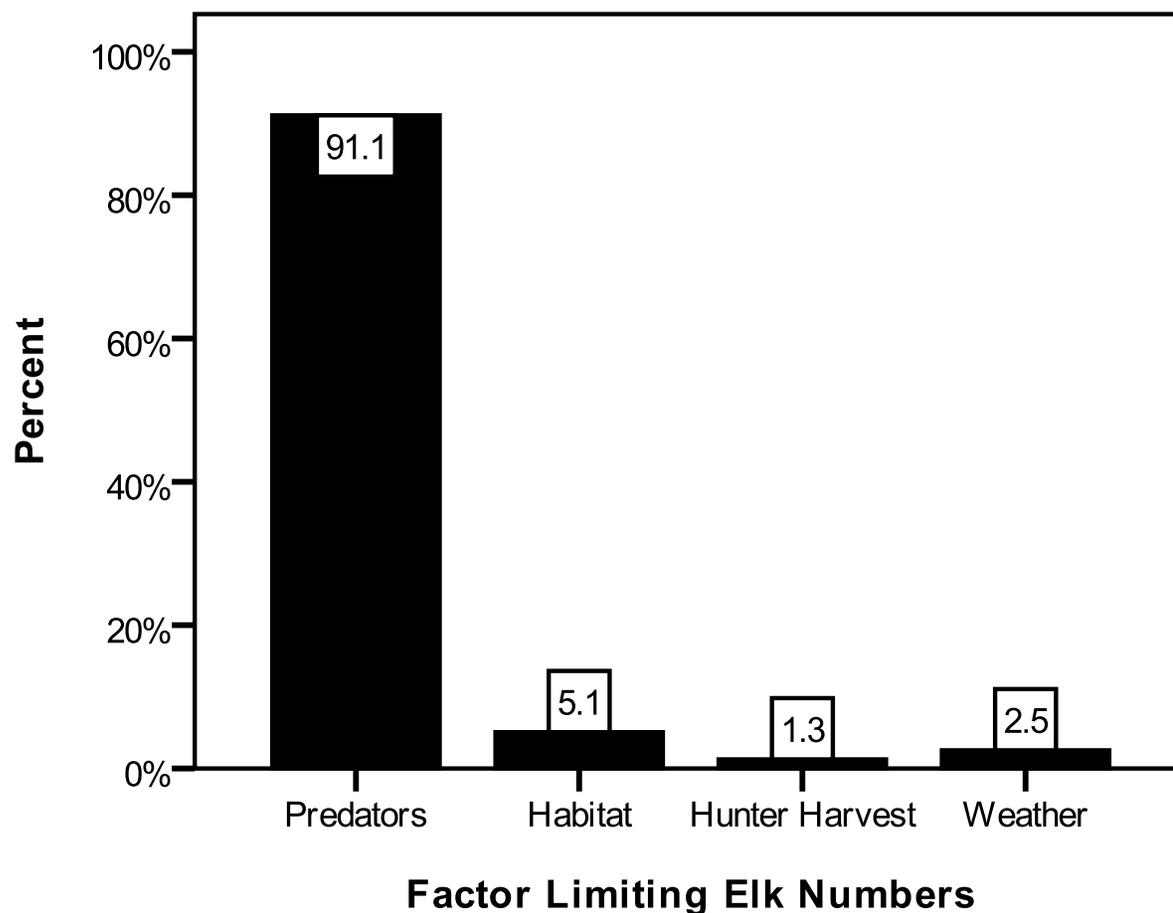
Other Zones in Past 10 Years

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



Q21: Middle Fork hunters who hunt out-of-state tend to visit Colorado the most. Utah and Washington are also been hunted by almost a quarter of respondents.

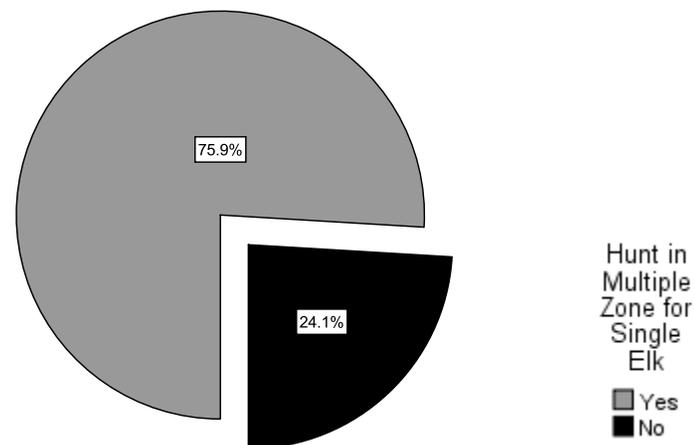
22. What do you believe is the primary factor limiting Elk numbers in the zone you hunted in 2011? (Check only ONE response)



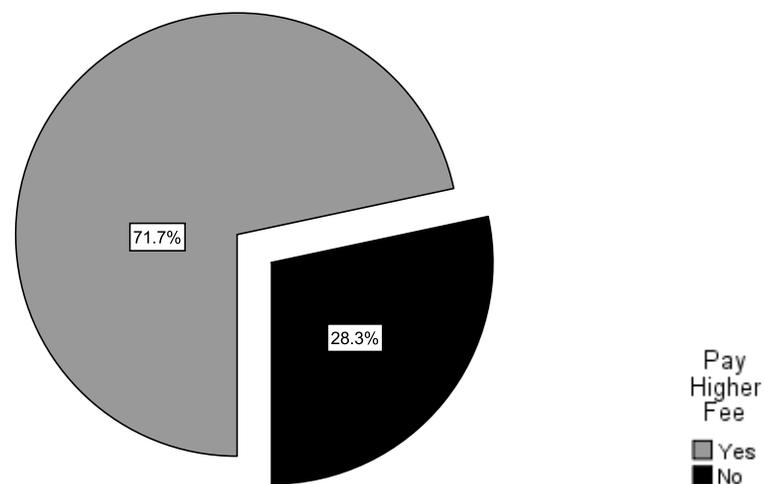
Q22: Similar to the state average, a large majority of Middle Fork hunters believe that predators are the primary limiting factor for Elk numbers.

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

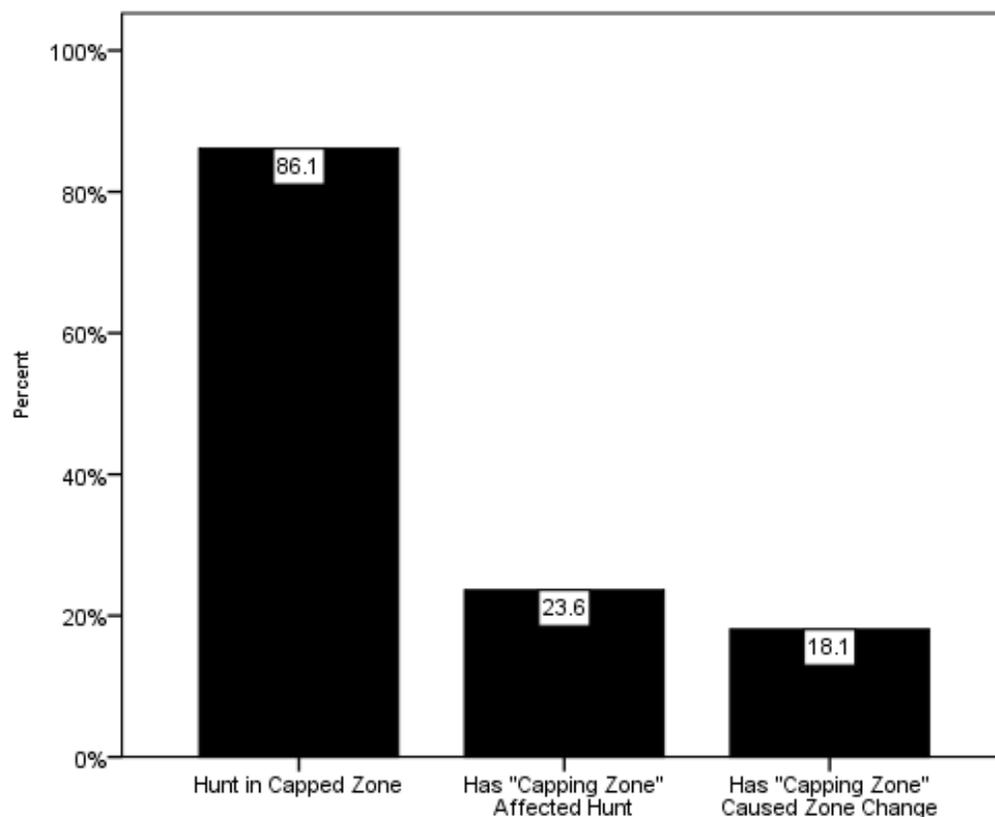
Like other hunters in the state, Middle Fork hunters would also like to be able to hunt in multiple zones for a single Elk in a year. Almost three-quarters of respondents would be willing to pay a higher fee in order to do so.



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)

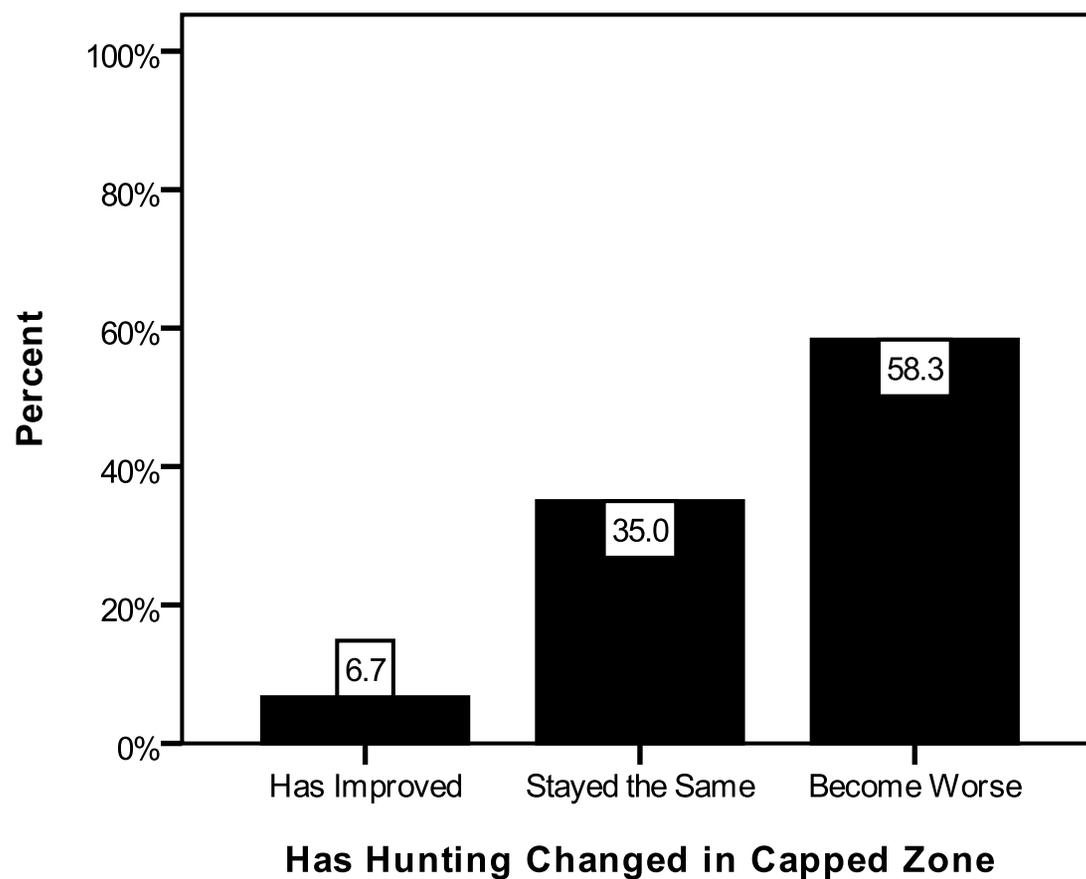


25. When the zone system was implemented the mechanism for reducing unlimited over-the-counter opportunity called "capping the zone" was developed by the department with the help of legislators, sportsmen and outfitters. This "capping the zone" is an allocation formula to distribute Elk tags to hunters (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 number of Middle Fork hunters who hunt in a capped zone almost doubles the state average.

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

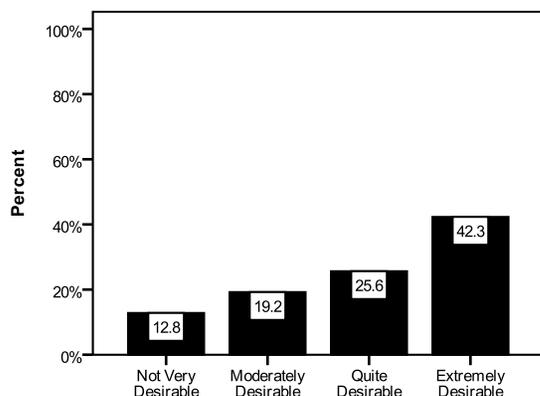


Q26: The distribution of responses is similar between the state average and the Middle Fork zone.

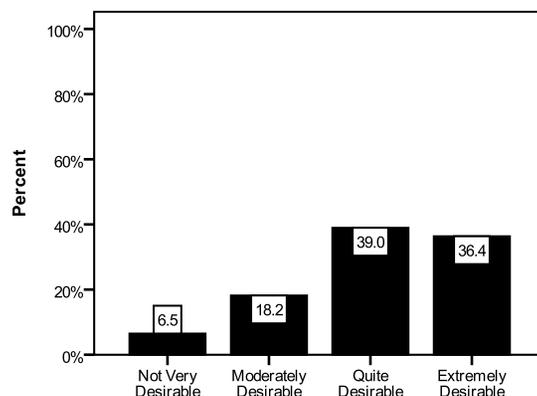
ELK HUNTING PREFERENCES AND MOTIVATIONS

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

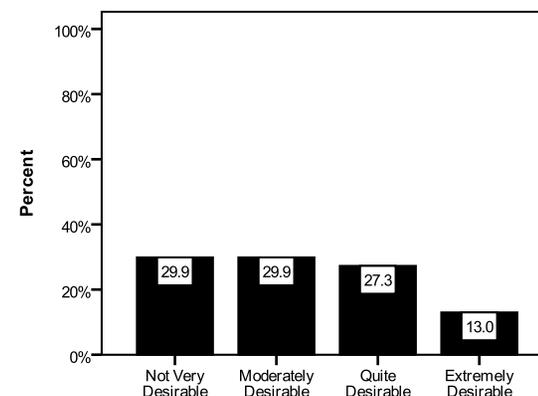
27. How desirable is it to you to harvest the following kinds of Elk?



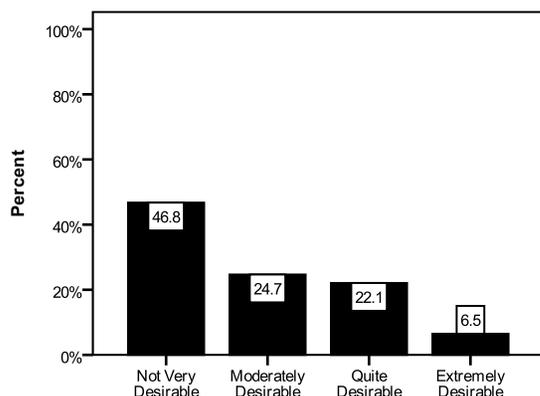
Large Bull



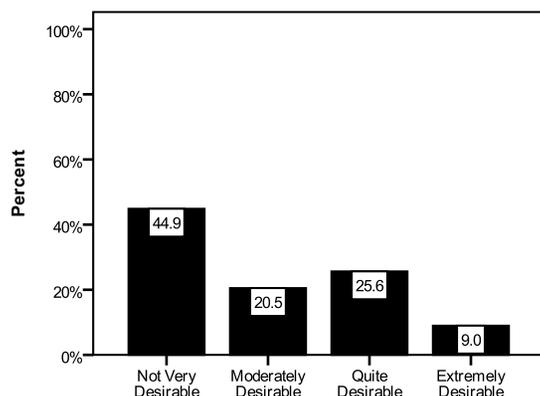
Mature Bull



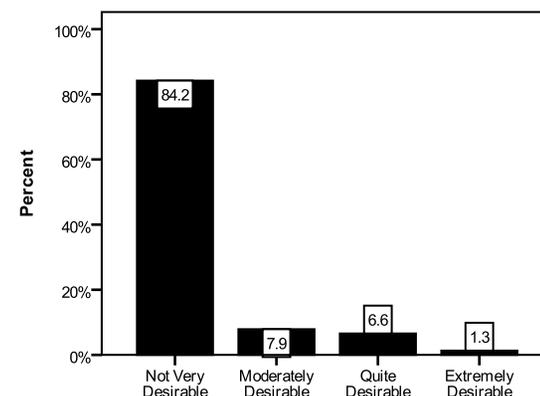
Raghorn Bull



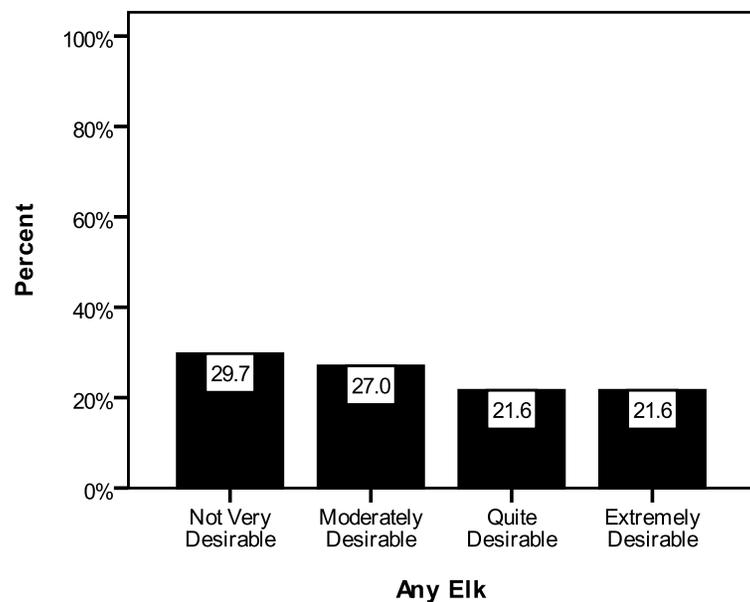
Spike Elk



Cow Elk

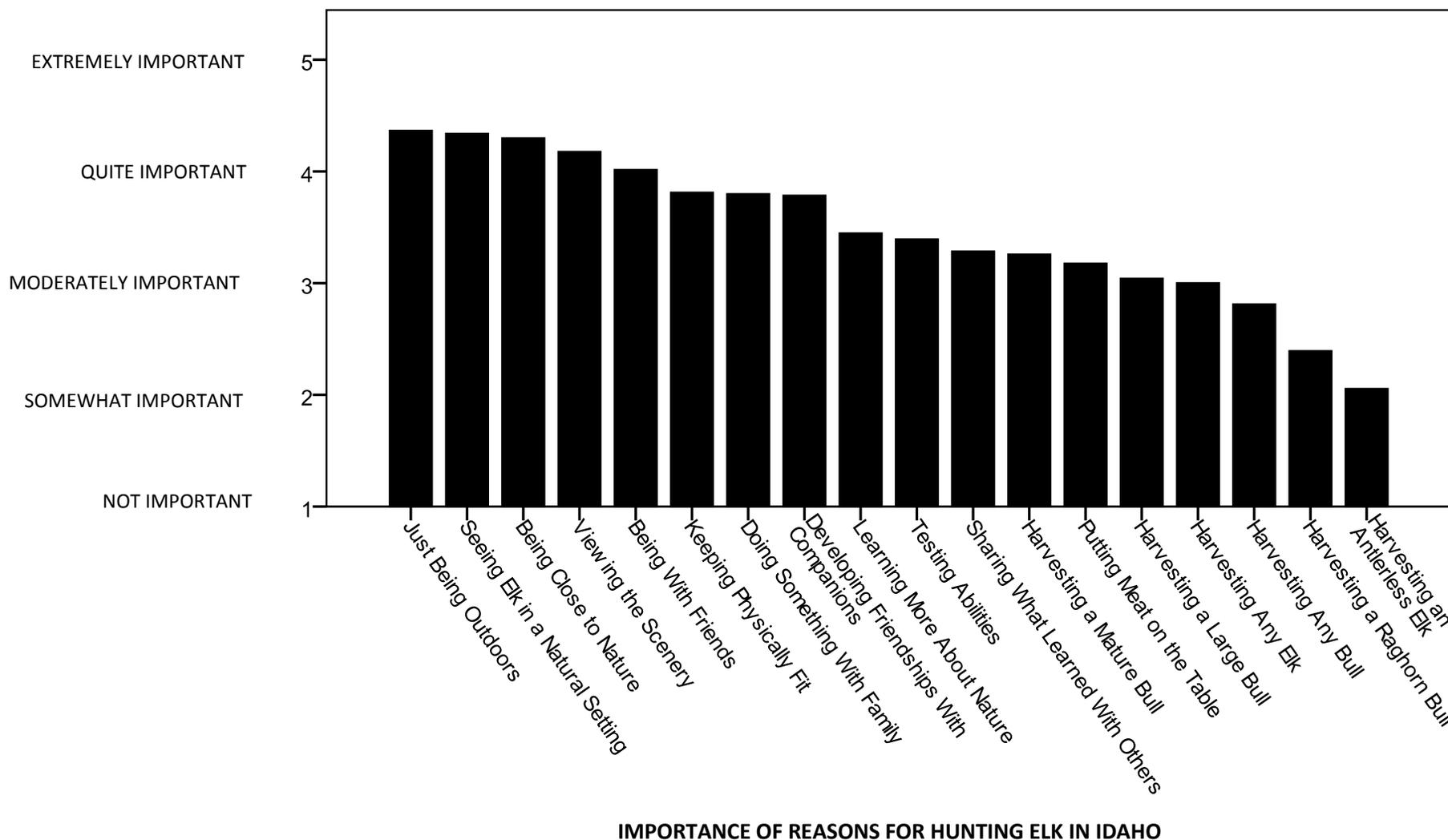


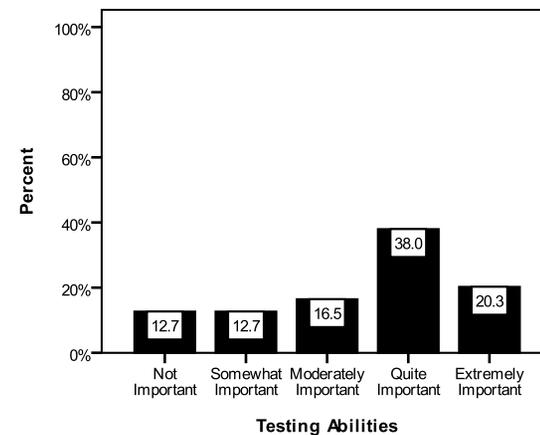
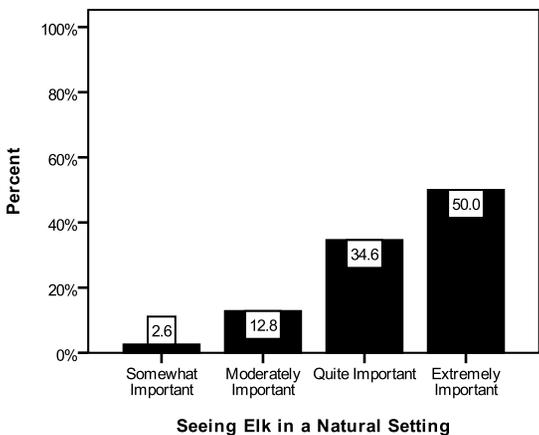
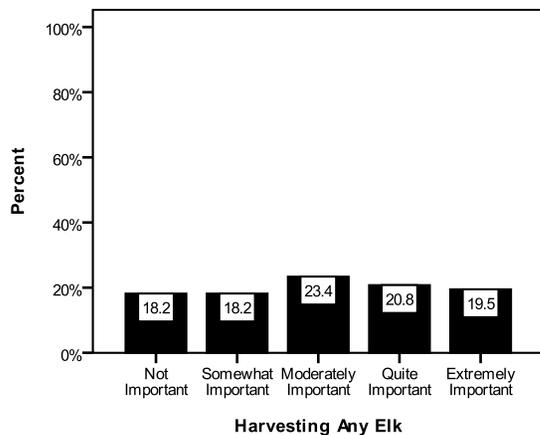
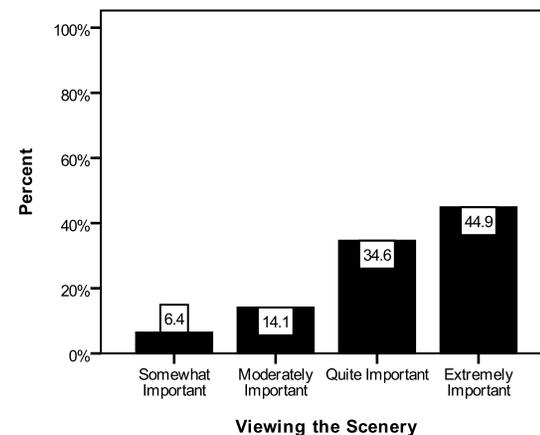
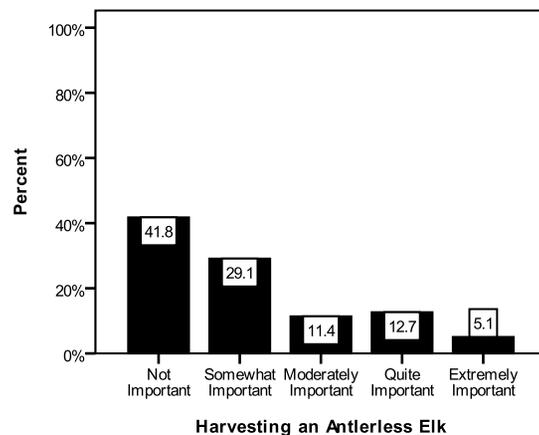
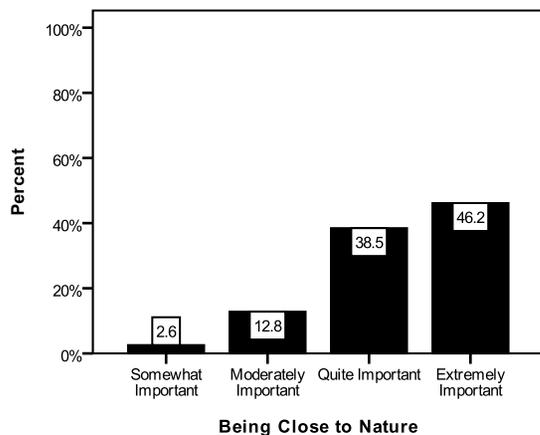
Calf

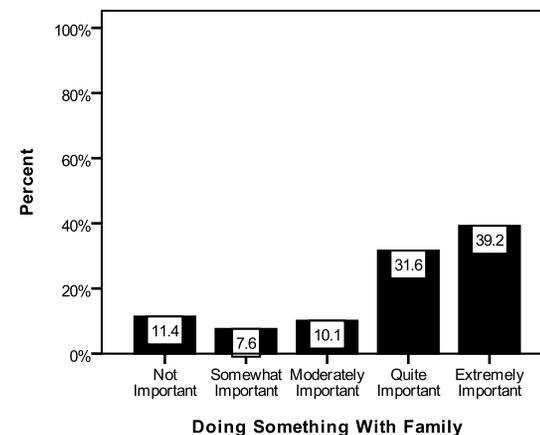
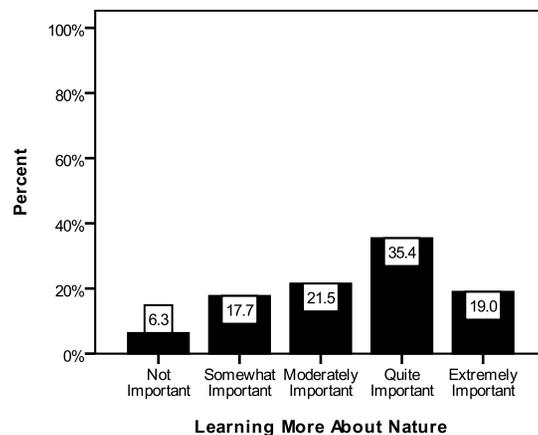
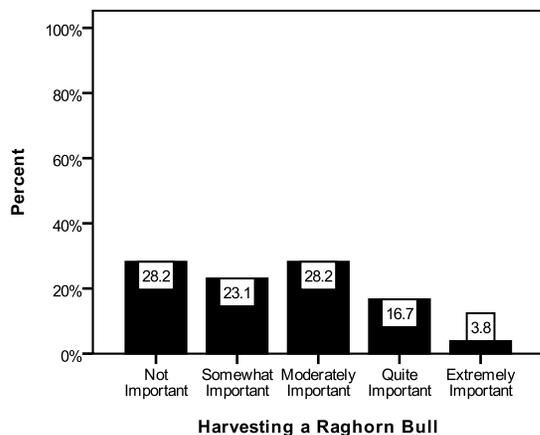
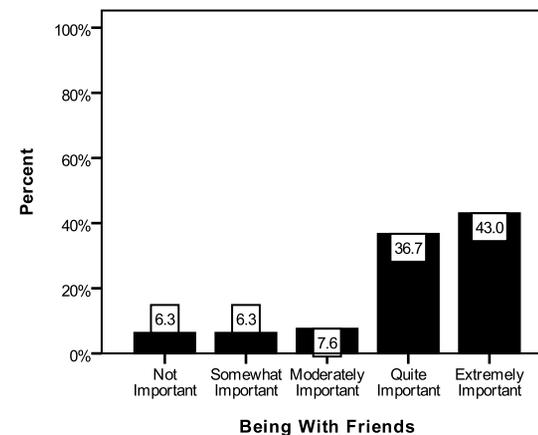
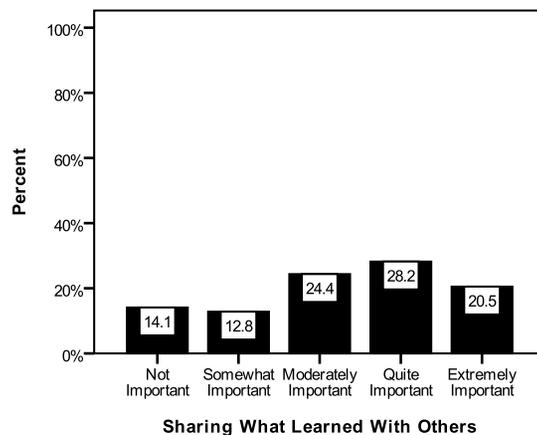
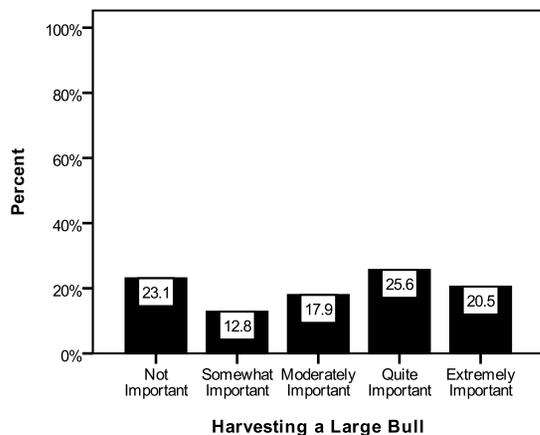


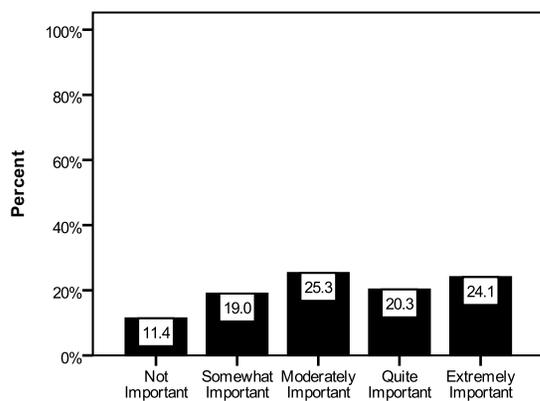
Q27: Middle Fork hunters find larger and more mature Elk more desirable, when compared to the state average.

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?

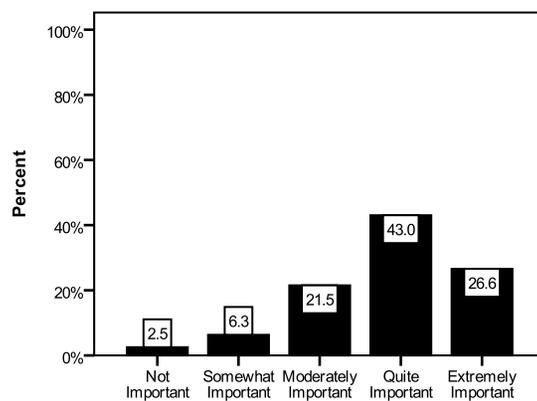




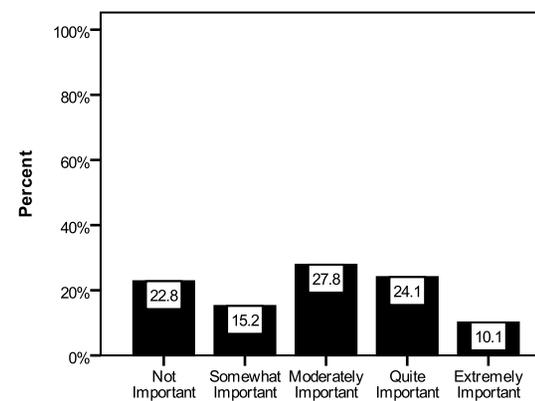




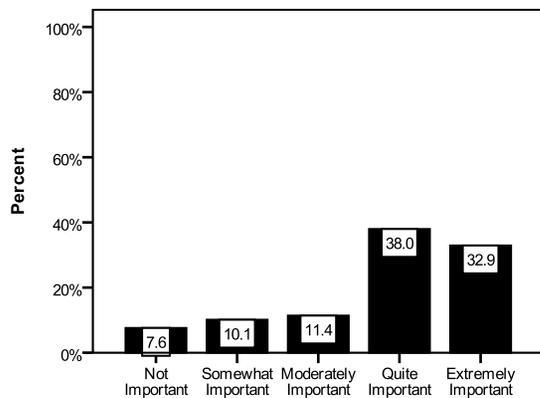
Putting Meat on the Table



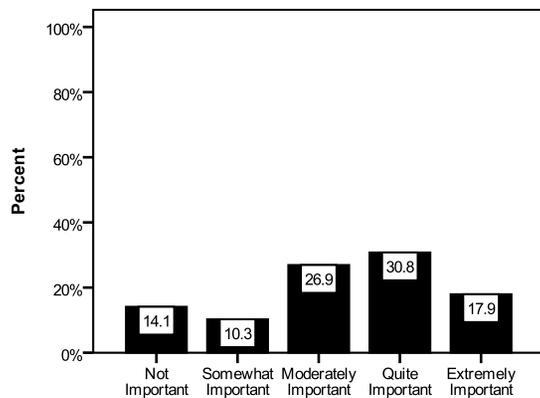
Keeping Physically Fit



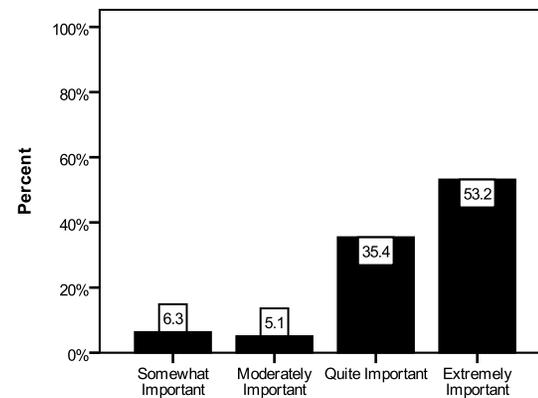
Harvesting Any Bull



Developing Friendships With Companions



Harvesting a Mature Bull

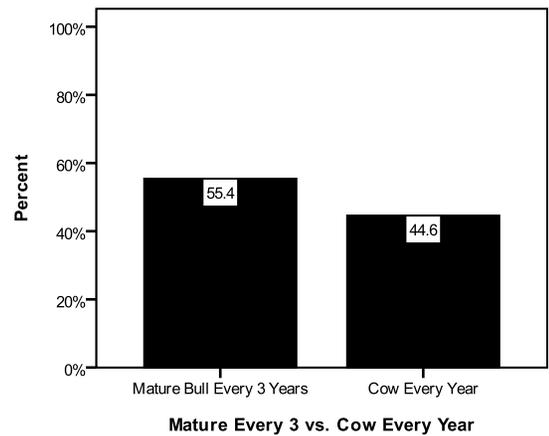
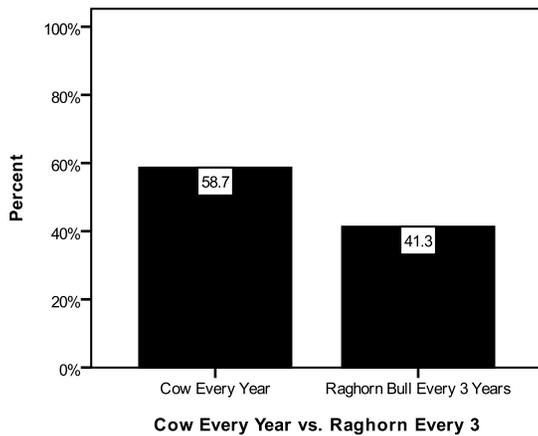
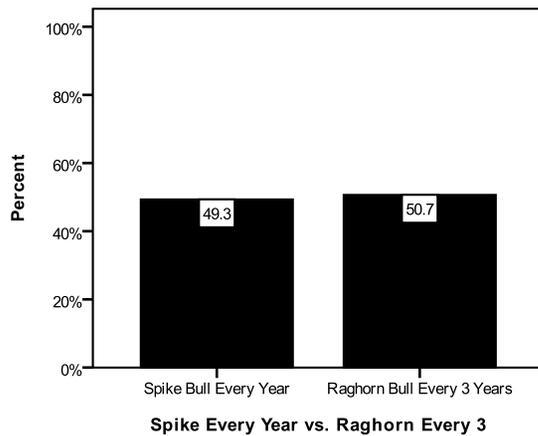
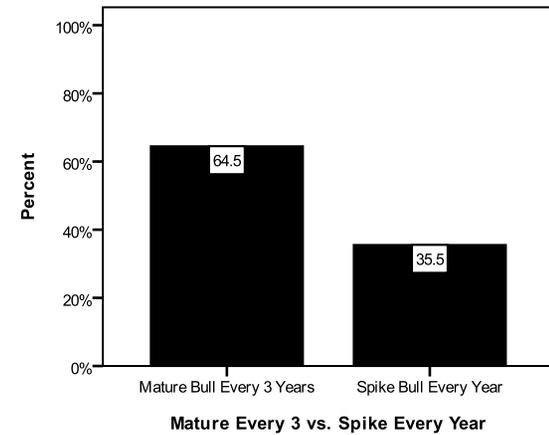
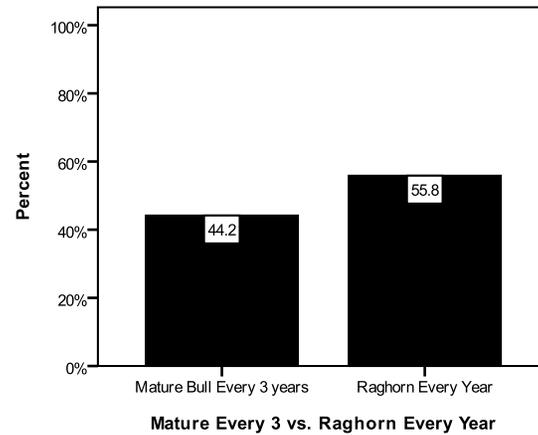
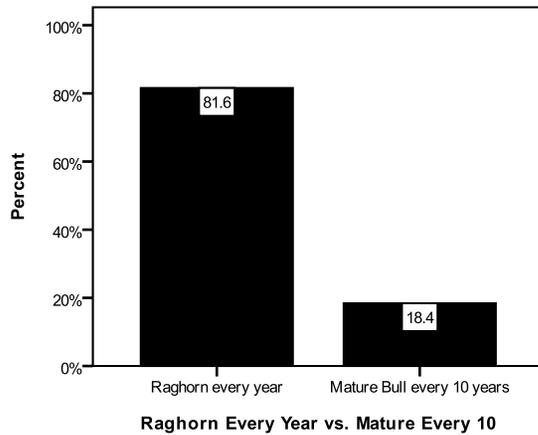


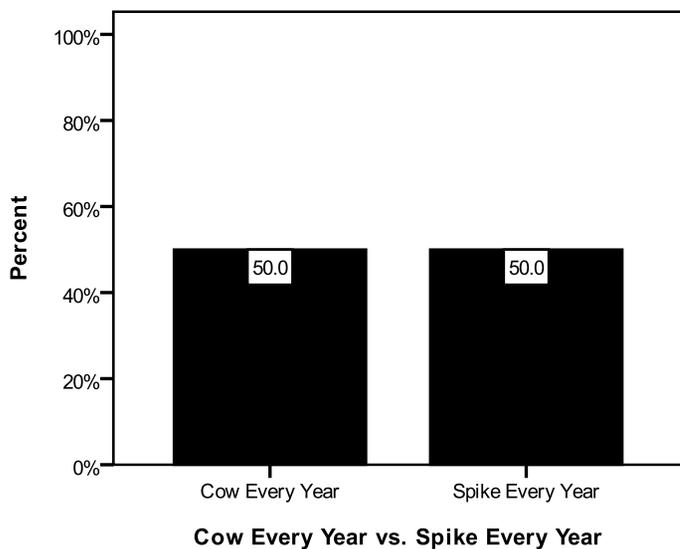
Just Being Outdoors

Q28: The top five reasons are the same between the state average and the Middle Fork zone. Also, hunters in this zone reported that keeping physically fit is important to their decision, more so than other hunters in the state.

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.

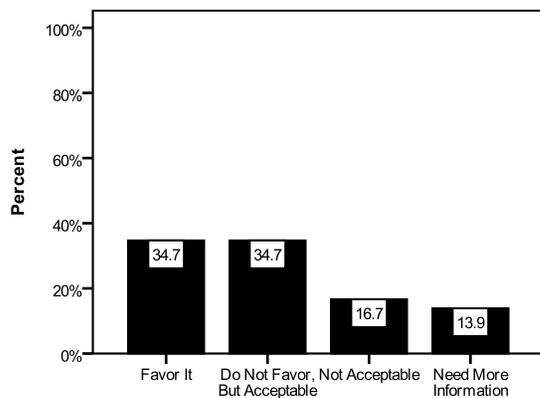




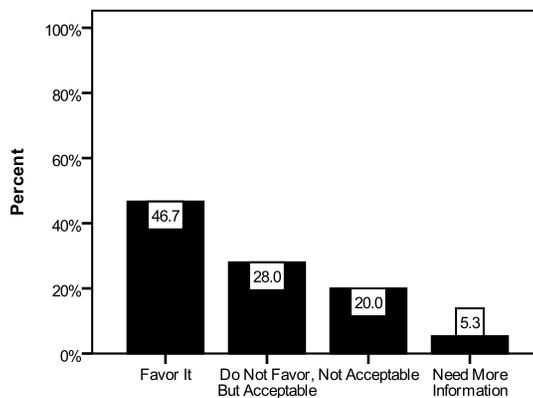
Q32: Unlike the state average, hunters in the Middle Fork zone prefer to hunt for bigger animals less frequently than to preserve the amount of opportunity to hunt.

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

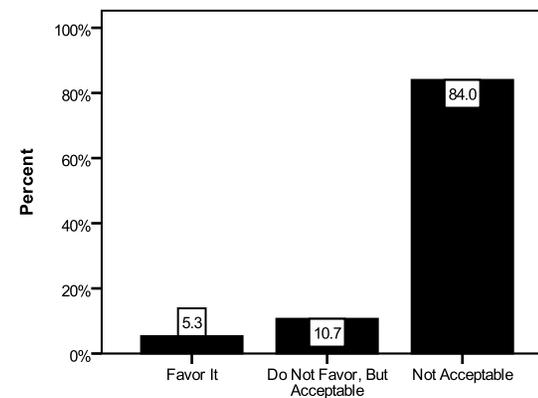
34. How do you feel about each of the following potential ways of improving Elk hunting, if needed?



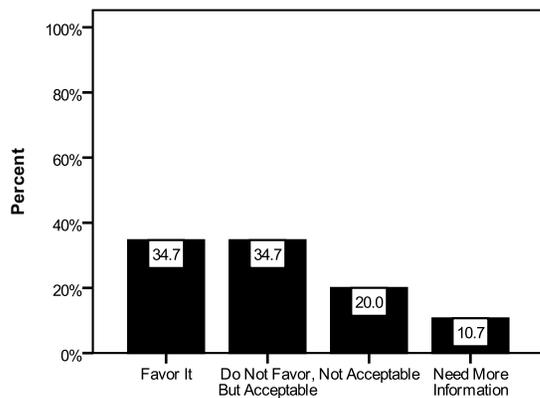
Longer Seasons



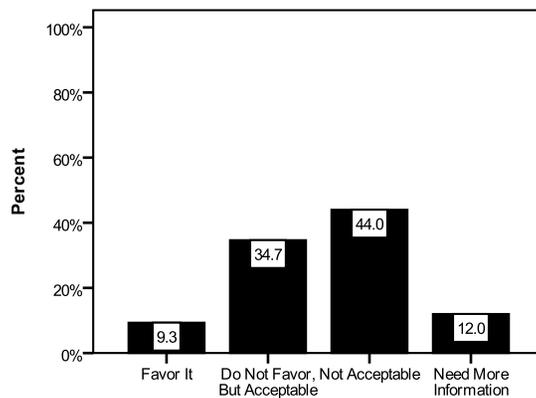
Choose Only One Weapon



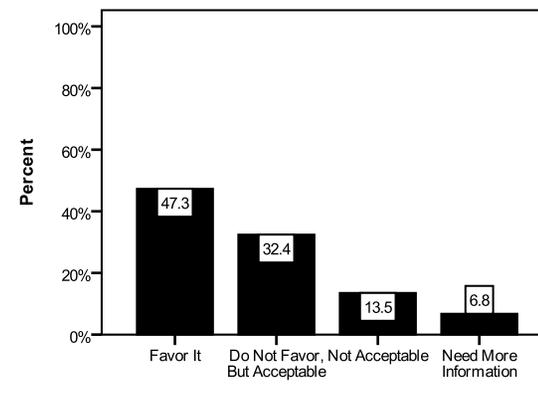
Choose Only One Species



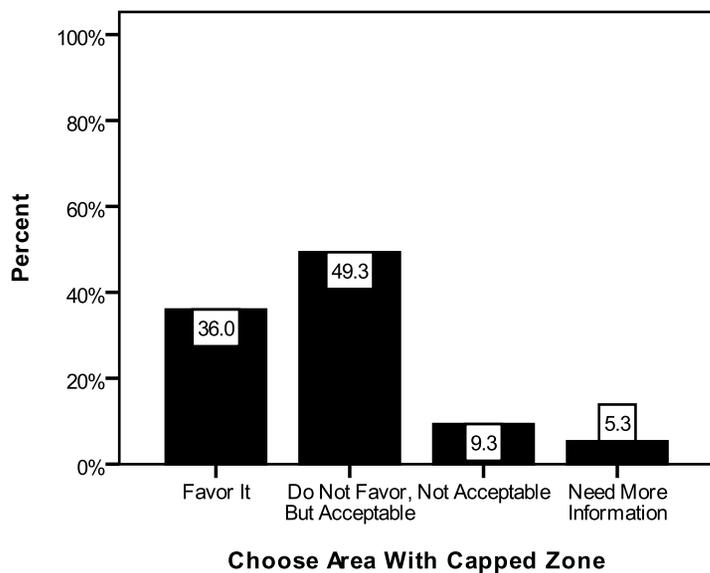
Controlled Hunts



Stratified Hunts

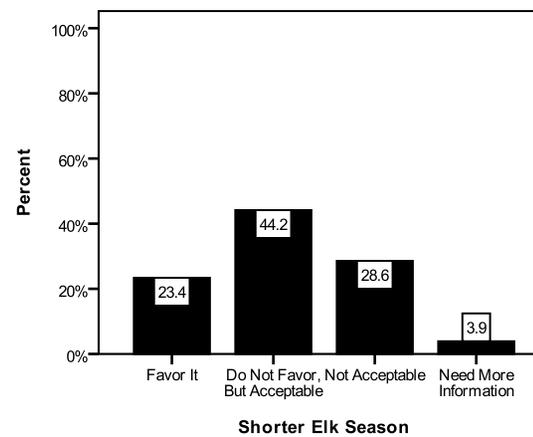
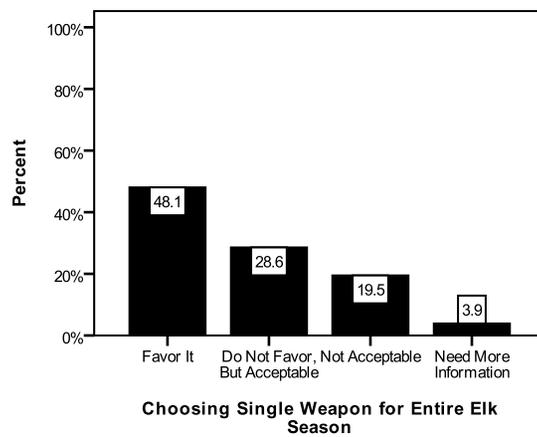
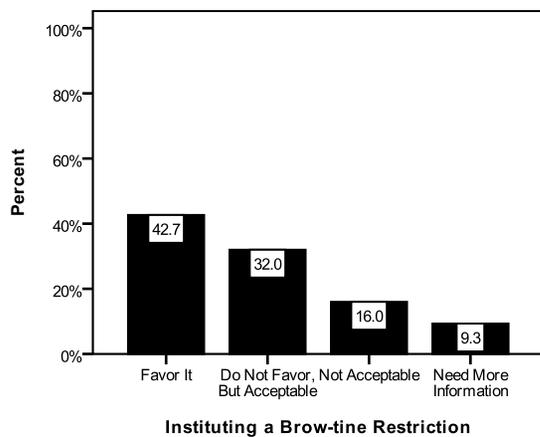
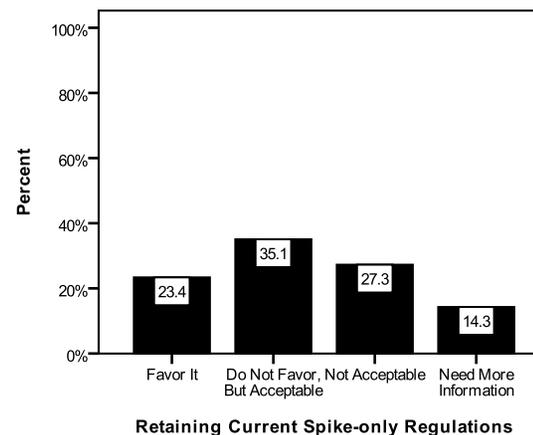
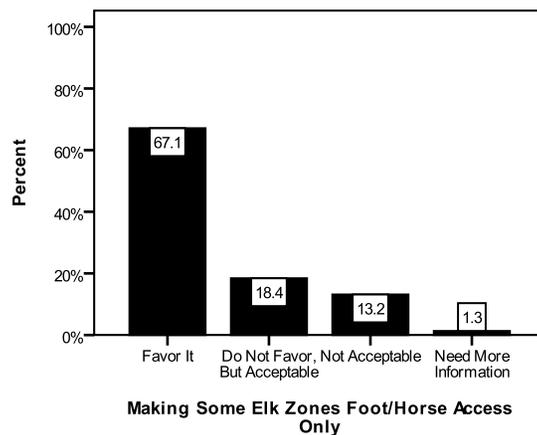
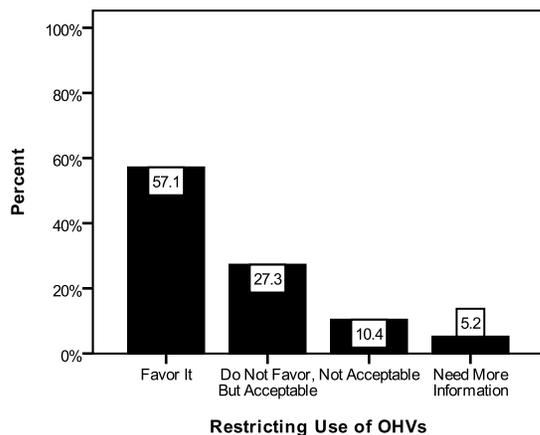


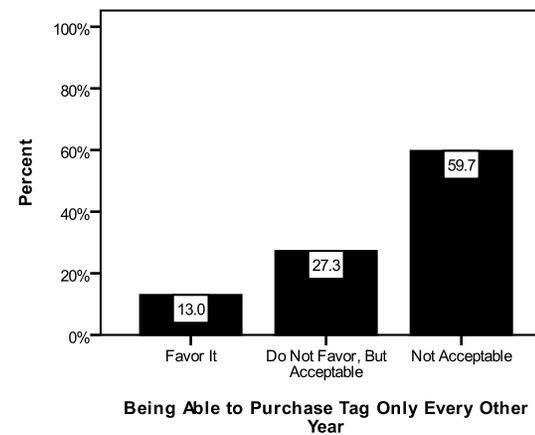
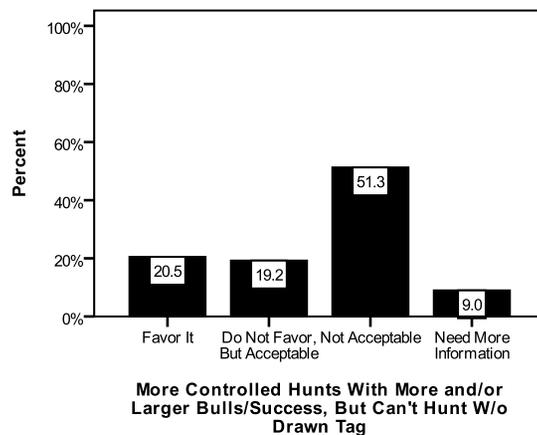
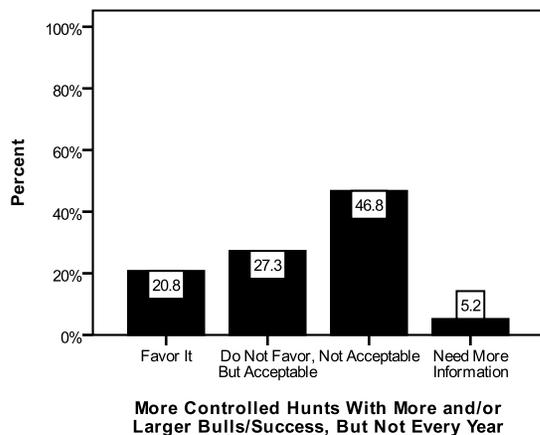
Choose Area With Motorized/Travel Restrictions



Q34: The distribution of responses is similar between the state average and the Middle Fork zone.

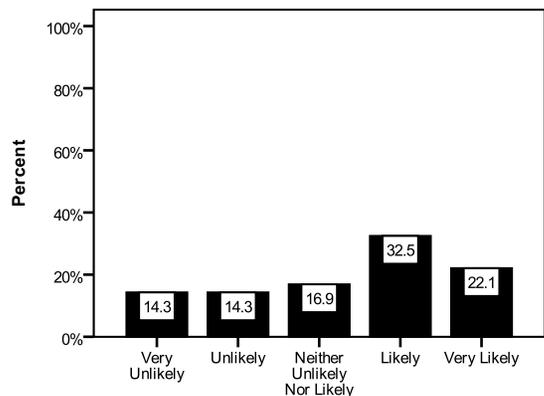
35. We would like to know how you feel about the following potential restrictions to increase the quality and size of Elk in Idaho and improve Elk hunting opportunities. Please indicate your opinion on the following potential restrictions.



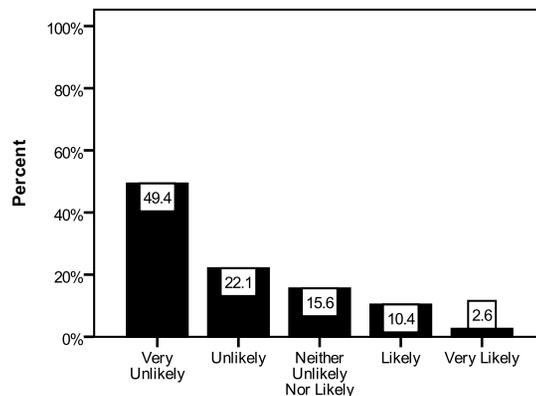


Q35: The distribution of responses is fairly similar between the state average and the Middle Fork zone. Slightly more hunters in this zone favor instituting a brow-tine restriction and also find a shorter Elk season more acceptable.

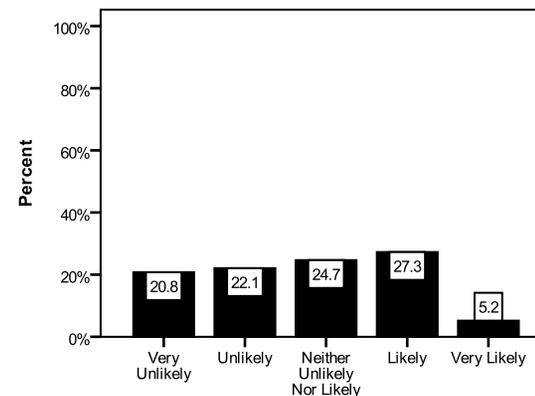
36. *IF* Idaho Fish and Game introduces restrictions that reduce Elk hunting opportunities to improve Elk populations, how would your hunting behavior change?



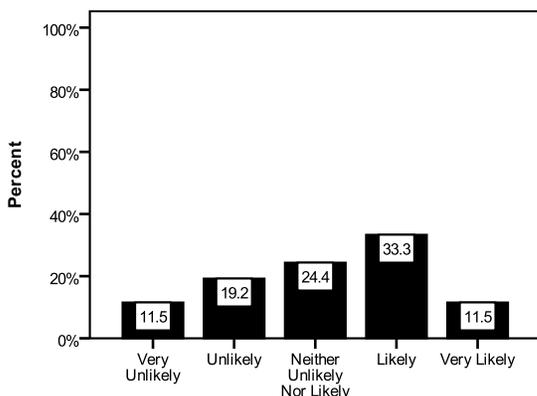
Hunt in Different Zones



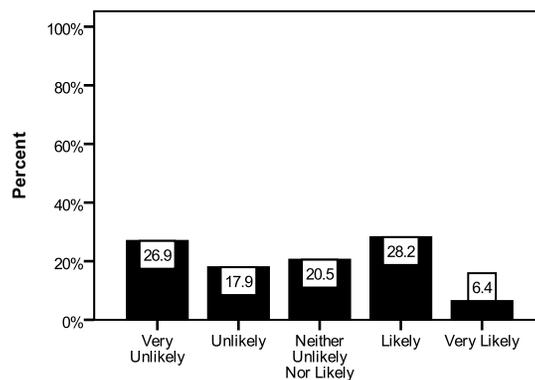
Quit Hunting Elk



Shift to Hunt Other Species



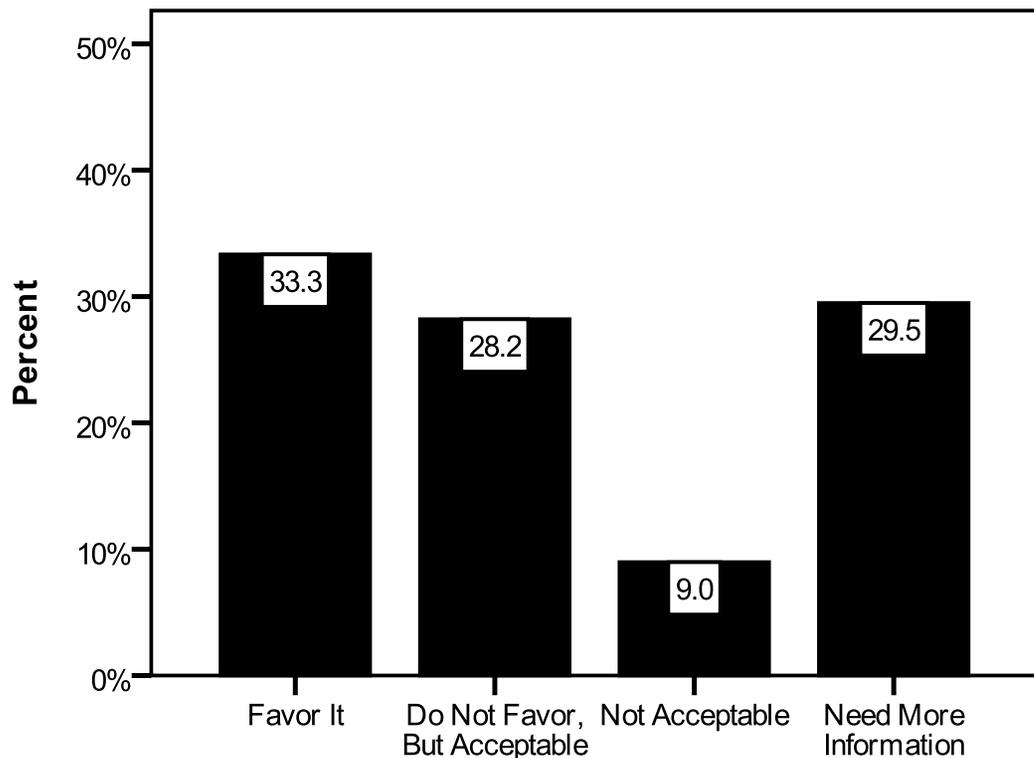
Not Change Hunting Behavior



Change Weapon Type for Increased Elk Hunting Opportunity

Q36: The distribution of responses is similar between the state average and the Middle Fork zone.

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)

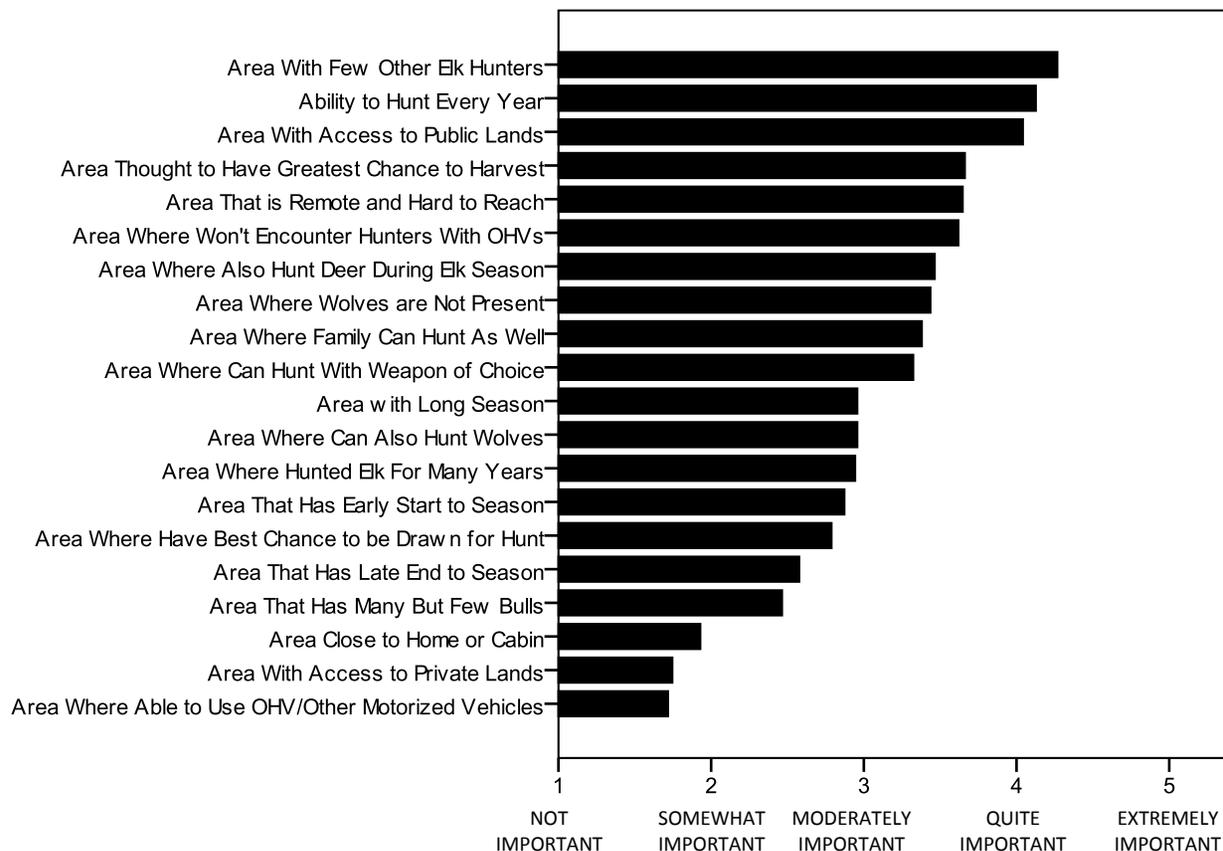


Feelings About Setting Season Conditions 2 Years in Advance

Q38: The distribution of responses is similar between the state average and the Middle Fork zone.

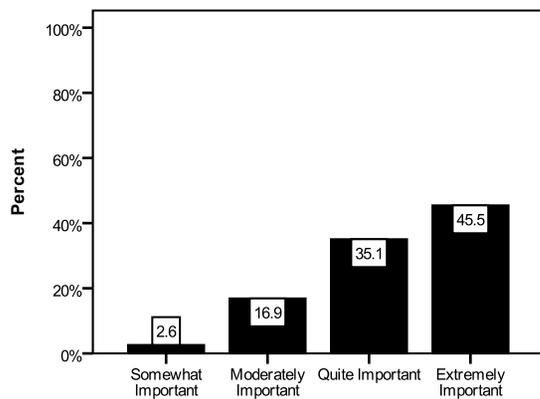
WHEN AND WHERE TO HUNT

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?

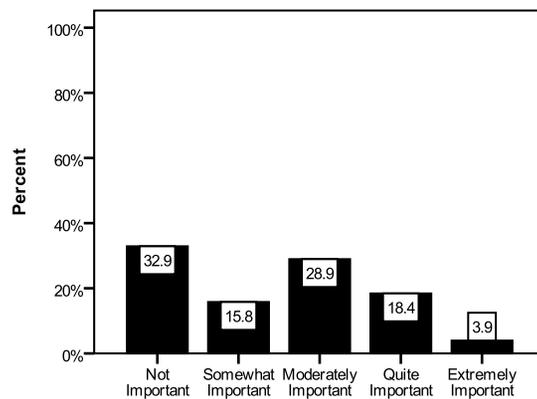


Q29: Unlike the state average, Middle Fork hunters reported that an area with few other Elk hunters greatly influences where they hunt. Also, an area that is remote and hard to reach is quite important to their decision making.

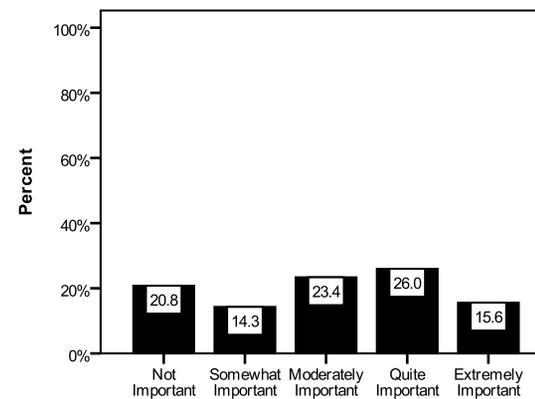
CHARACTERISTICS AFFECTING CHOICE OF WHERE TO HUNT IN IDAHO



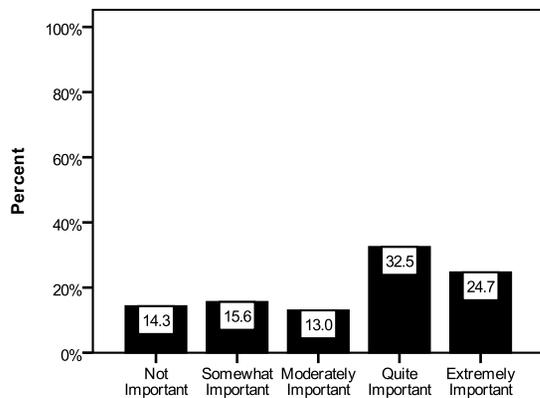
Area With Few Other Elk Hunters



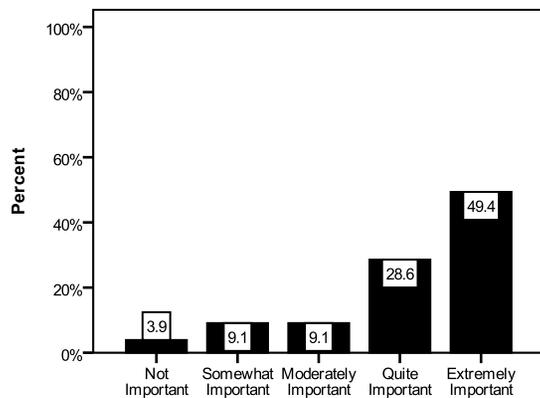
Area That Has Many But Few Bulls



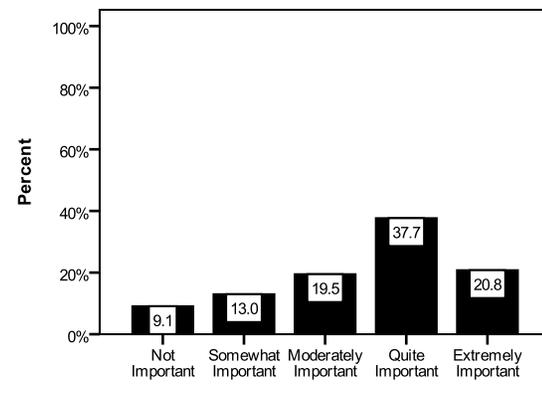
Area Where Hunted Elk For Many Years



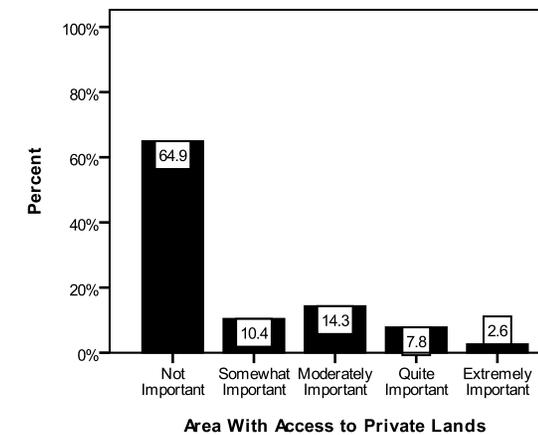
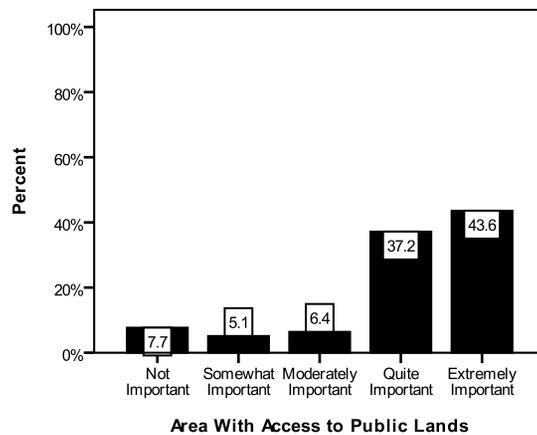
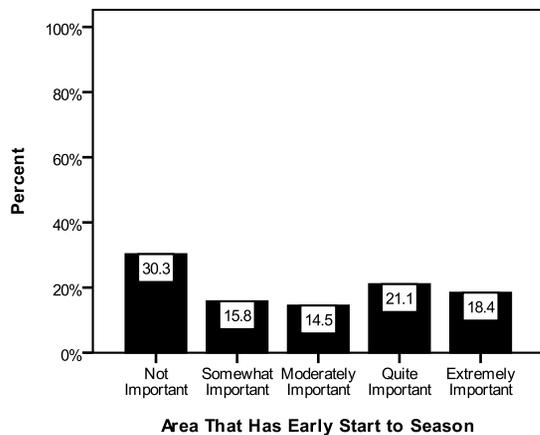
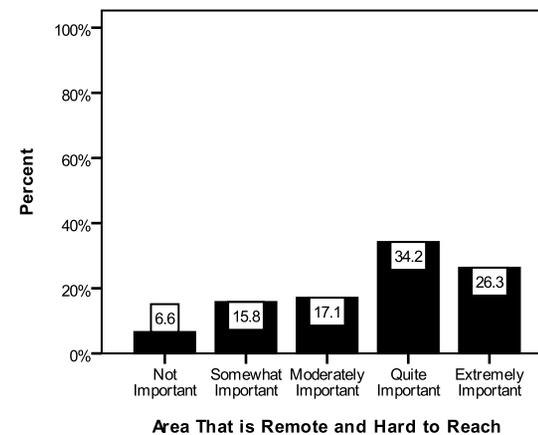
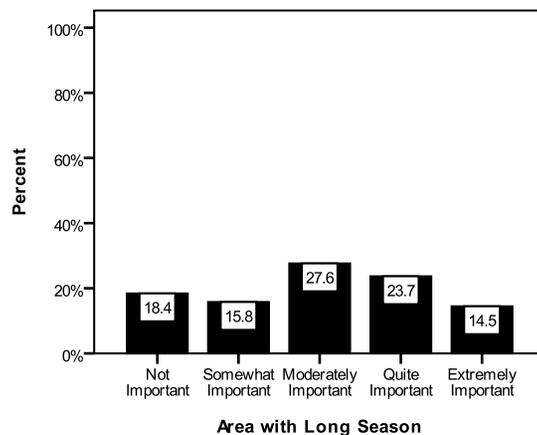
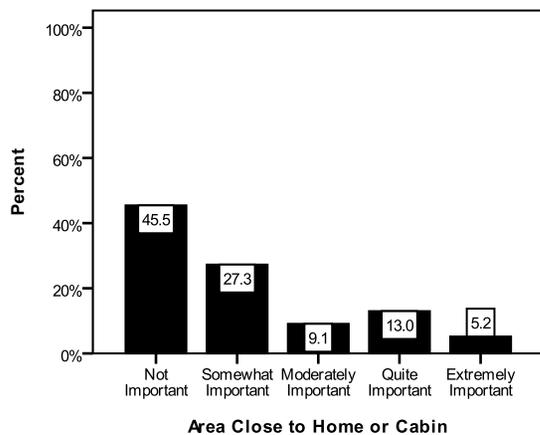
Area Where Family Can Hunt As Well

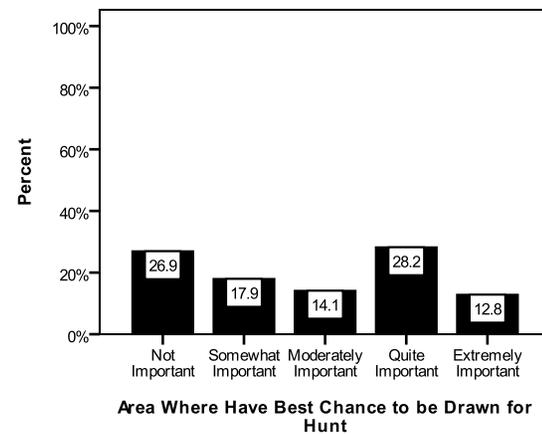
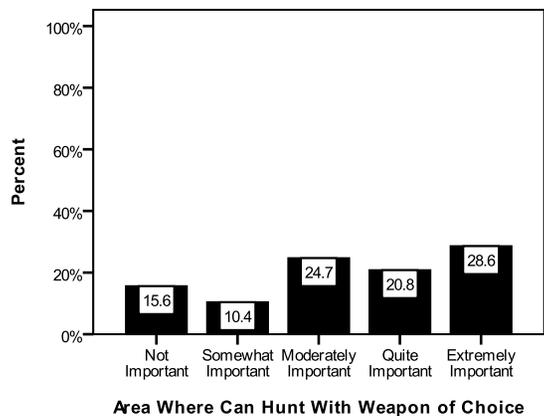
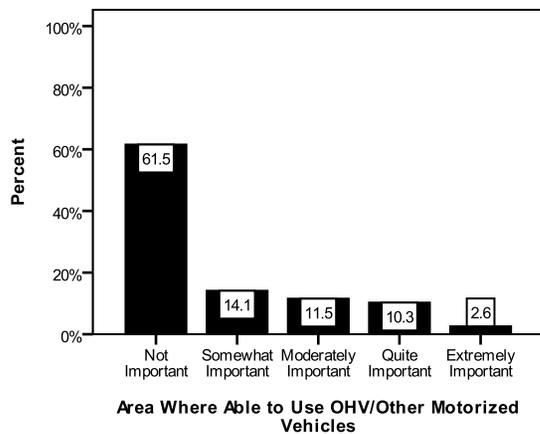
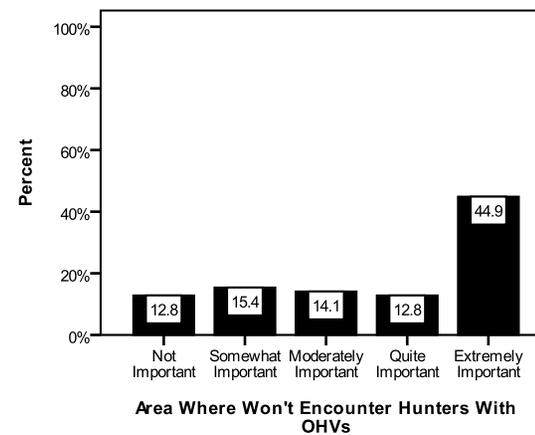
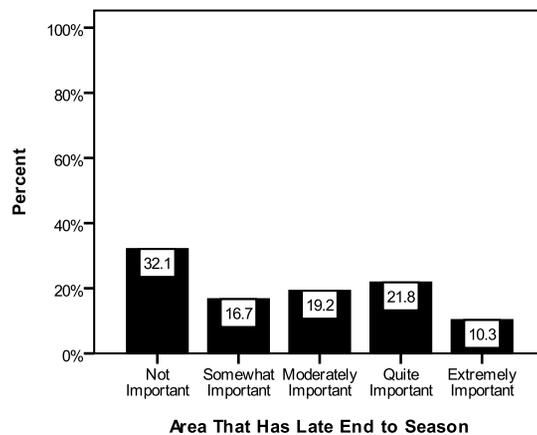
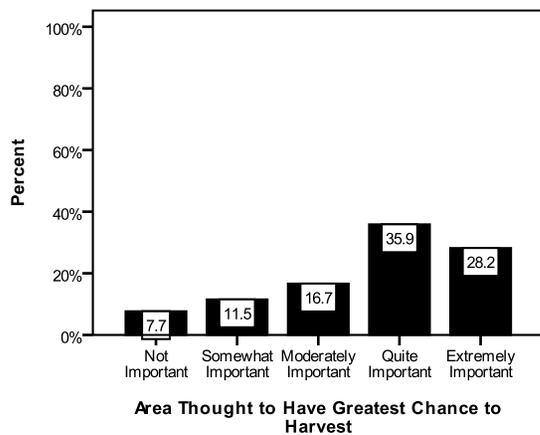


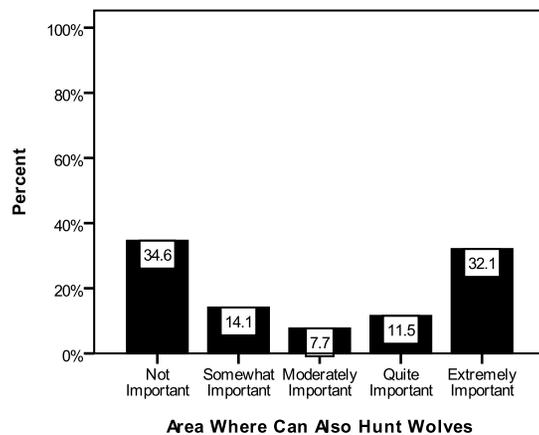
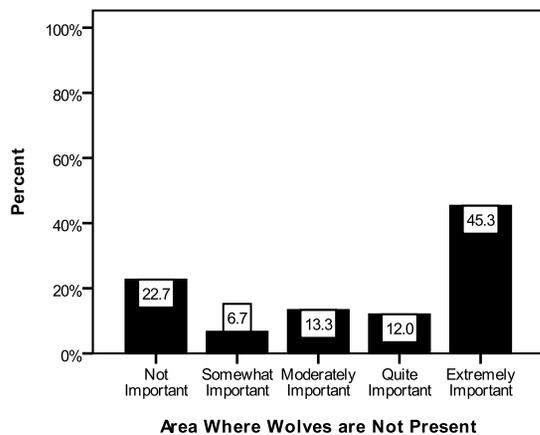
Ability to Hunt Every Year



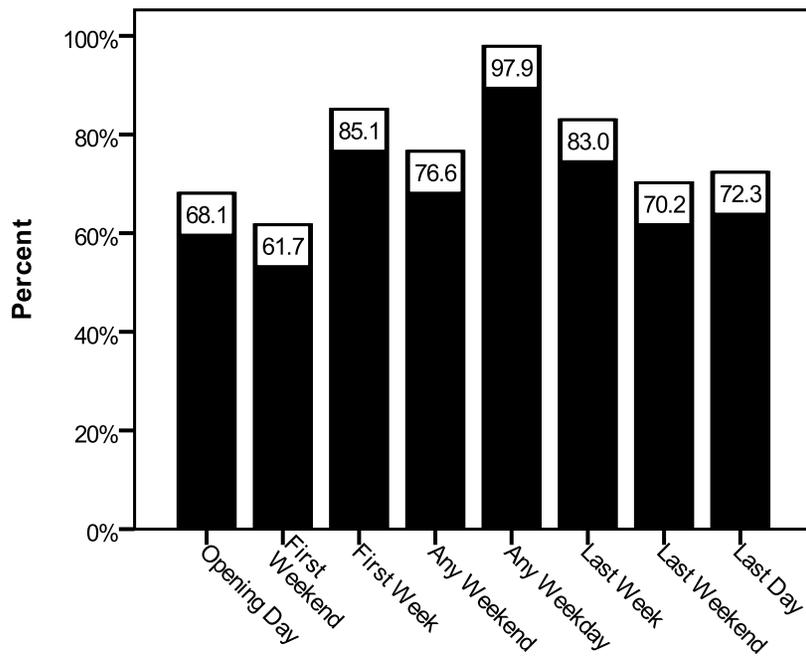
Area Where Also Hunt Deer During Elk Season



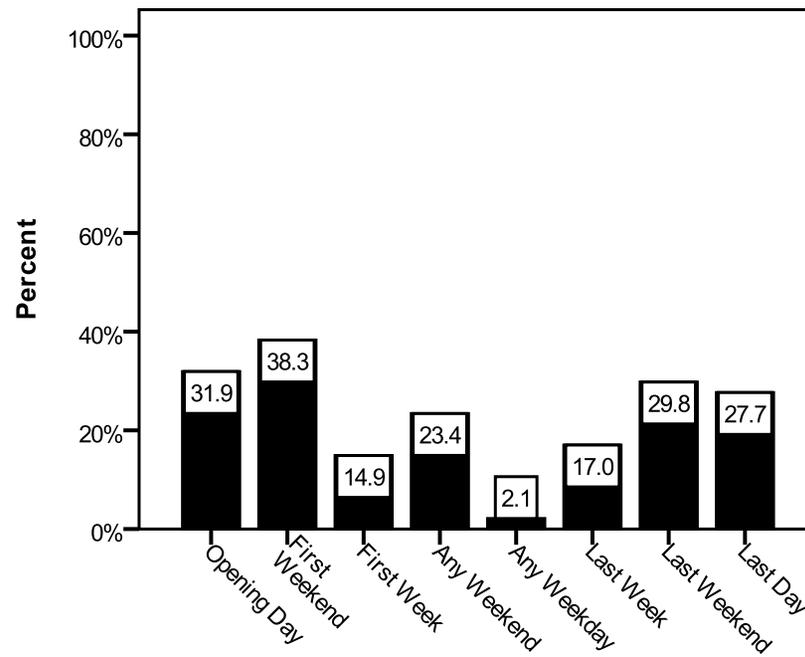




30. Are there any times during the general Elk hunting season in Idaho that you prefer or avoid? (Please check as many as apply)



TIMES PREFERRED DURING GENERAL ELK SEASON

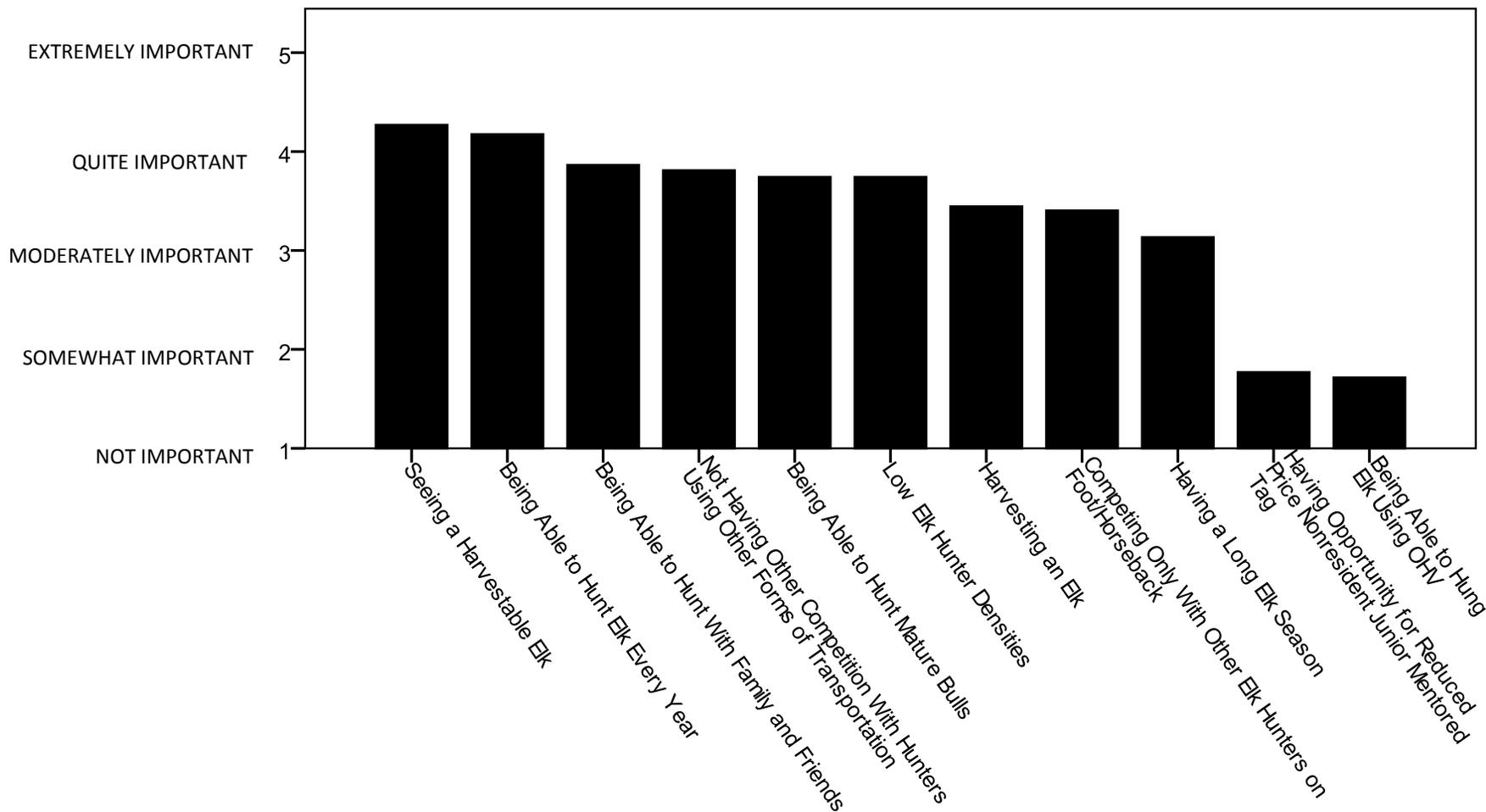


TIMES AVOIDED DURING GENERAL ELK SEASON

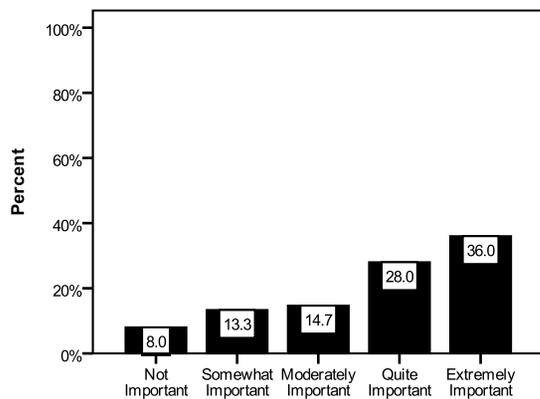
Q30: The distribution of responses is similar between the state average and the Middle Fork zone. Weekdays are the preferred hunting times for both groups.

ATTRIBUTES OF A QUALITY ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE

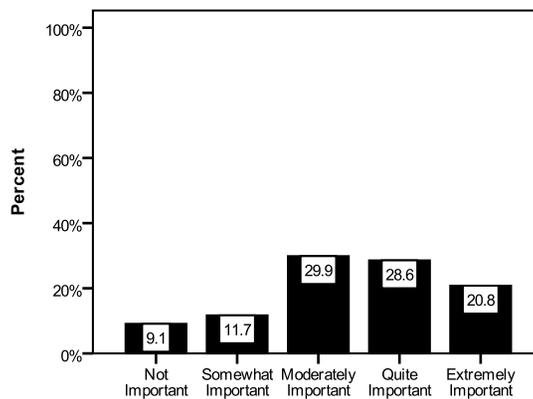
31. How important to you are each of these attributes for a quality Idaho Elk hunting experience?



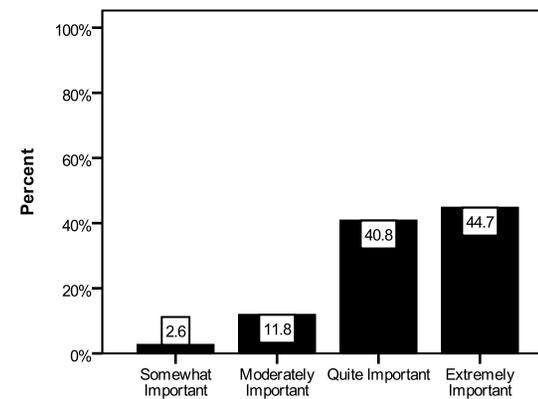
IMPORTANCE OF ATTRIBUTES FOR A QUALITY ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE IN IDAHO



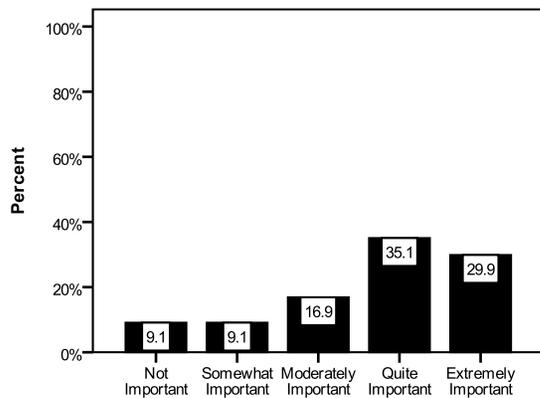
Low Elk Hunter Densities



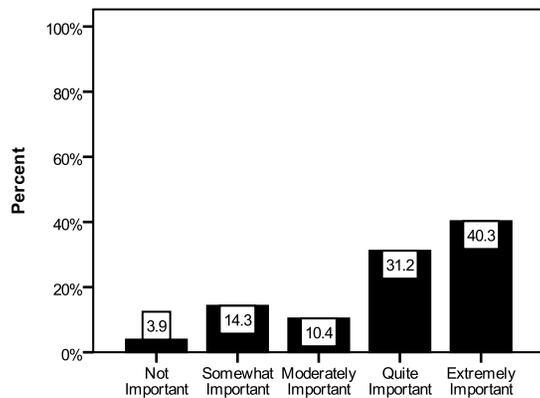
Harvesting an Elk



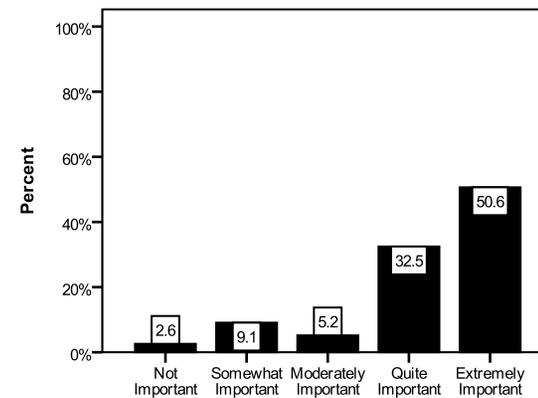
Seeing a Harvestable Elk



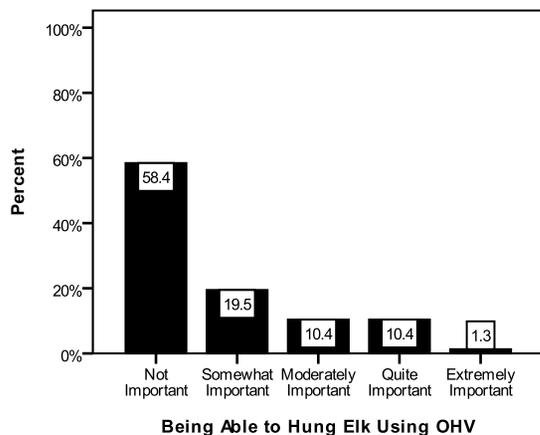
Being Able to Hunt Mature Bulls



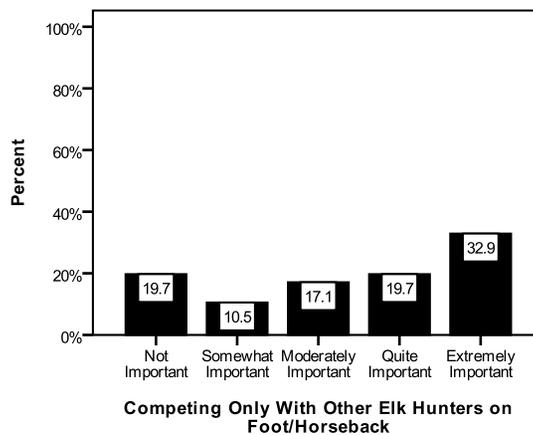
Being Able to Hunt With Family and Friends



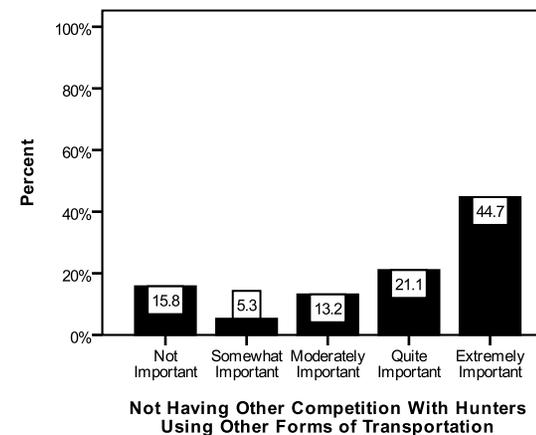
Being Able to Hunt Elk Every Year



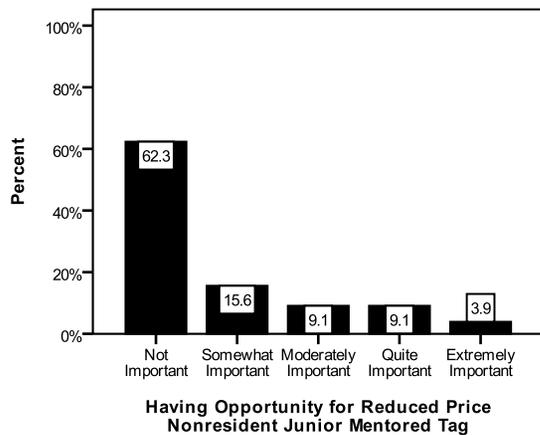
Being Able to Hung Elk Using OHV



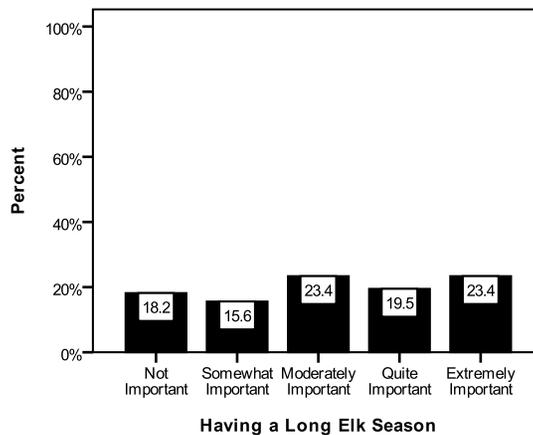
Competing Only With Other Elk Hunters on Foot/Horseback



Not Having Other Competition With Hunters Using Other Forms of Transportation



Having Opportunity for Reduced Price Nonresident Junior Mentored Tag

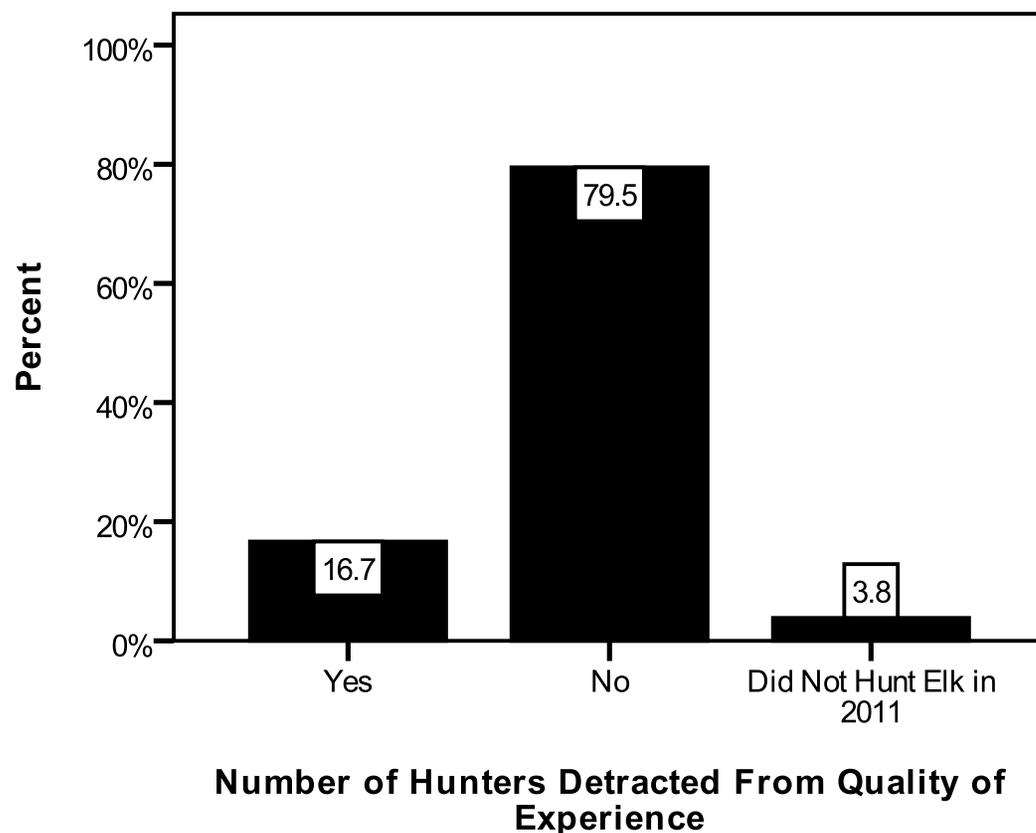


Having a Long Elk Season

Q31: The top three attributes were the same for both the Middle Fork zone and the state average. Hunters in this zone also felt that not having other competition with hunters using other forms of transportation was a desirable attribute.

HUNTING SATISFACTION

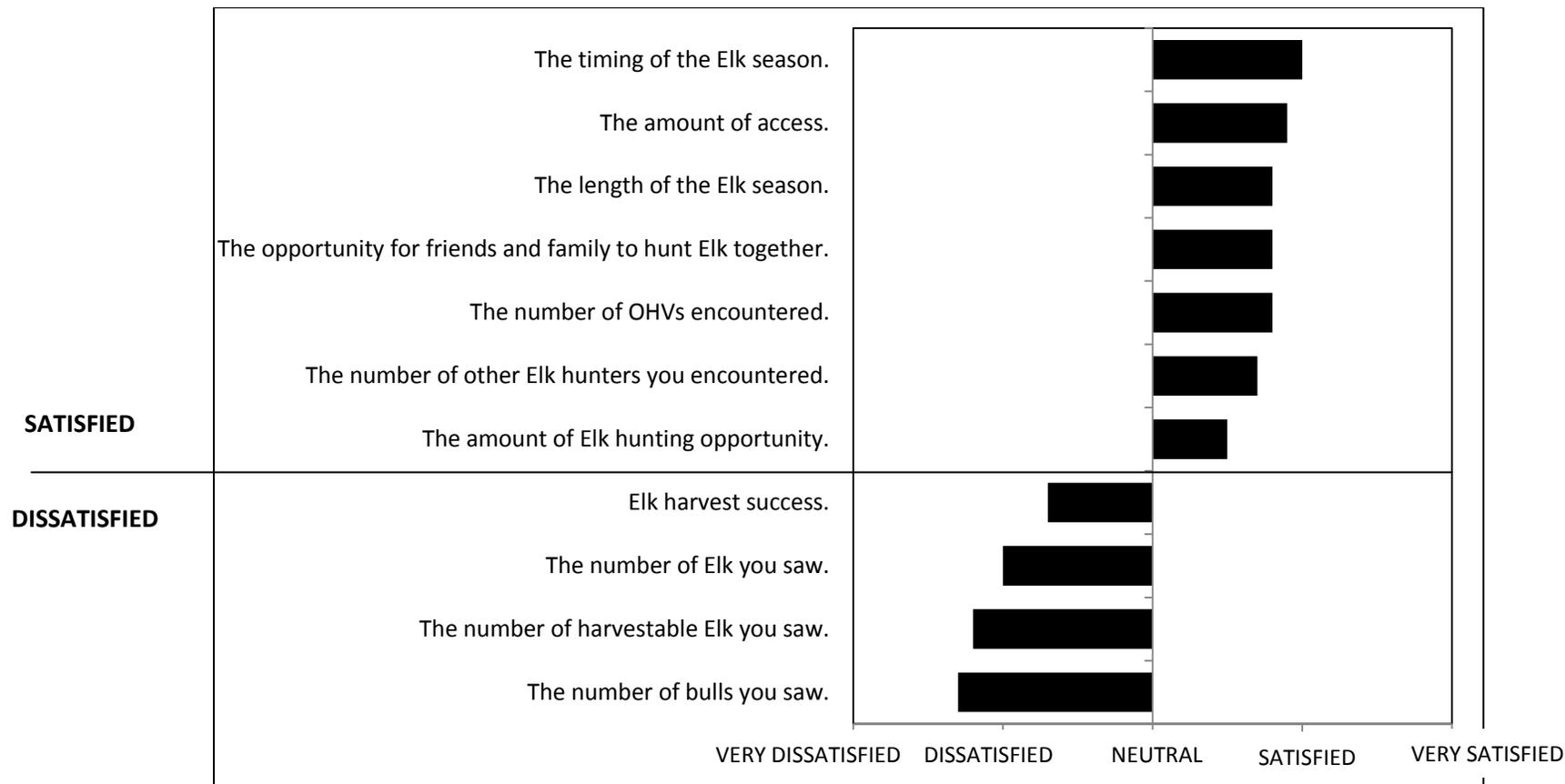
33. Were there times during your 2011 Elk season when the numbers of other hunters seriously detracted from the quality of your hunting experience? *(Please check one response)*



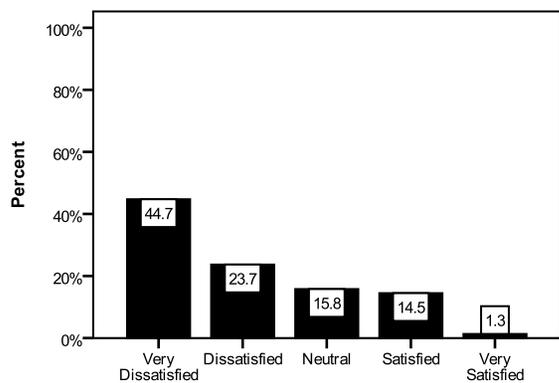
Q33: Like other hunters in the state, most Middle Fork hunters reported that the number of other hunters did not detract from the quality of their 2011 hunting experience.

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

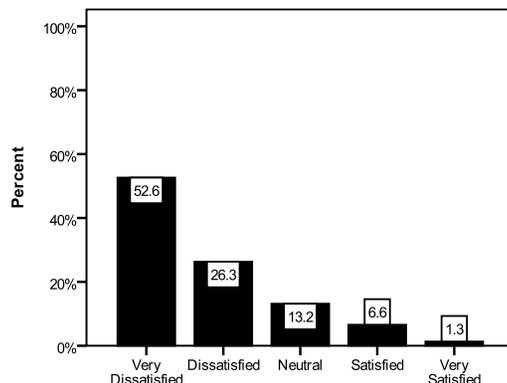
37. How satisfied were you with each of the following aspects of your 2011 Elk hunting experience?



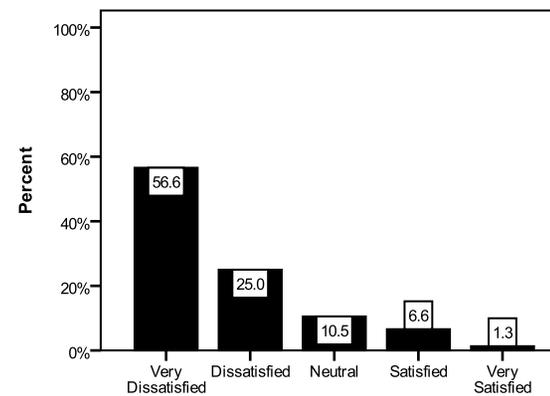
SATISFACTION OF ASPECTS OF 2011 ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE



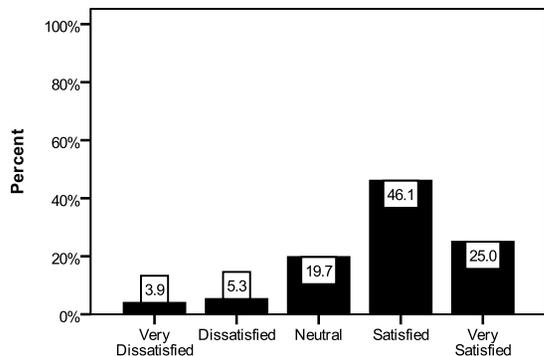
Number of Elk Seen



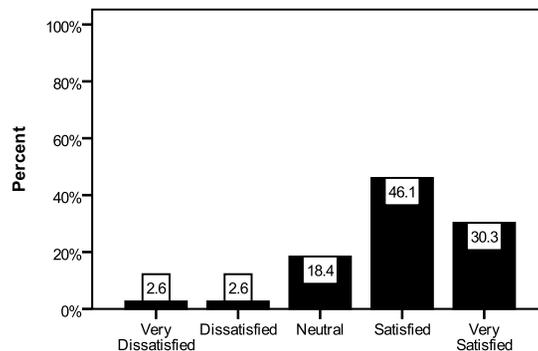
Number of Harvestable Elk Seen



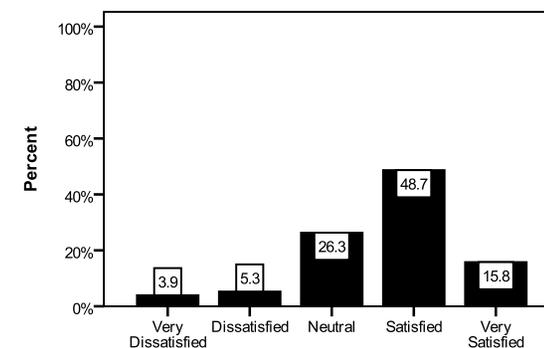
Number of Bulls Seen



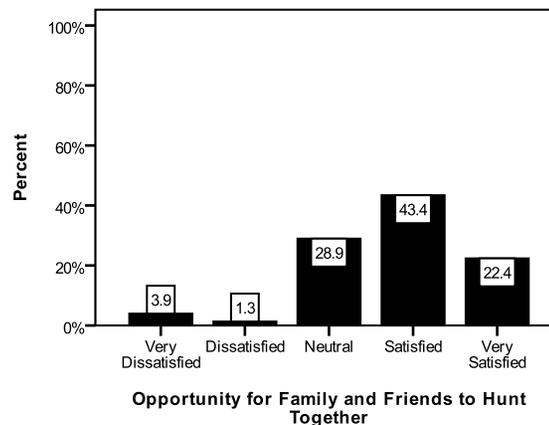
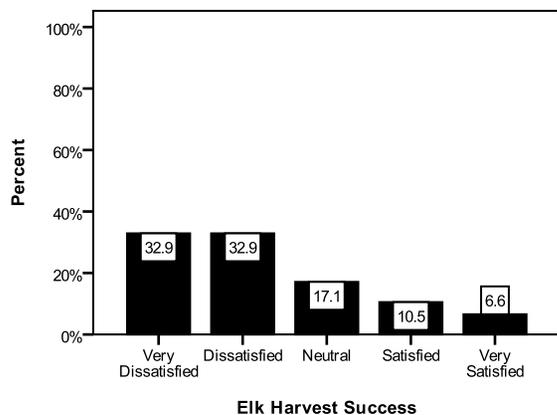
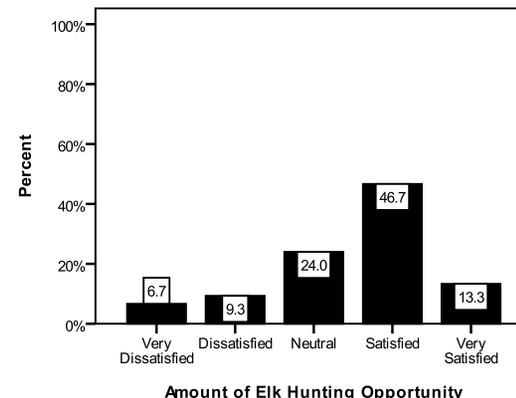
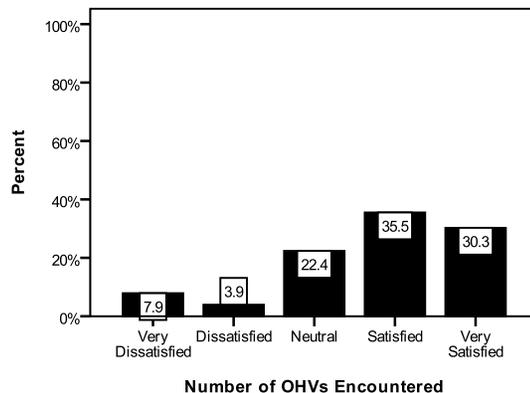
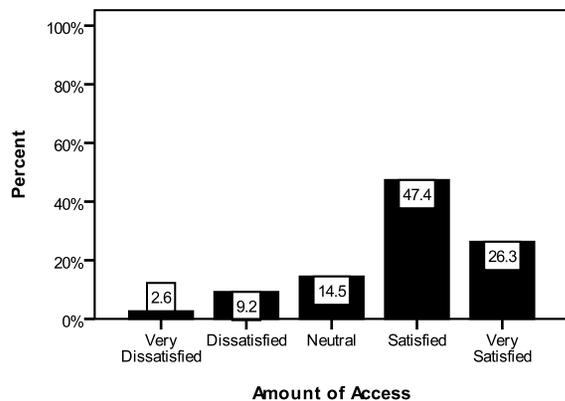
Length of Elk Season



Timing of Elk Season



Number of Elk Hunters Encountered

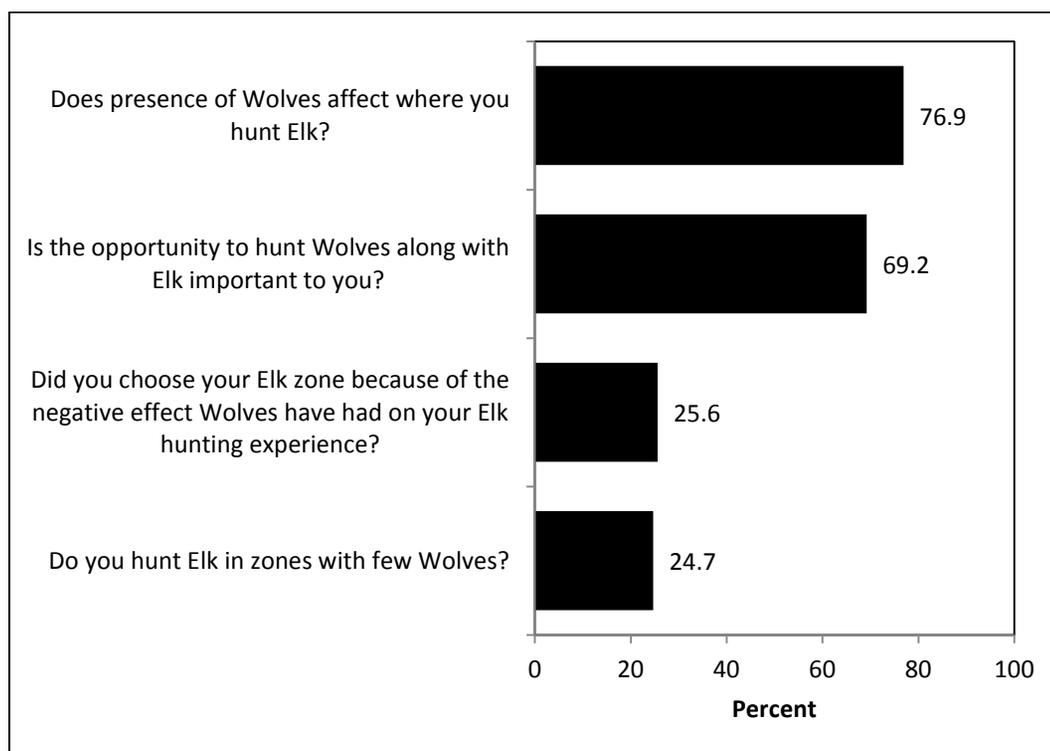


Q37: Like other hunters in the state, hunters in the Middle Fork zone were most dissatisfied with the number of Elk they saw and their hunting success.

PERCEPTIONS OF PREDATORS

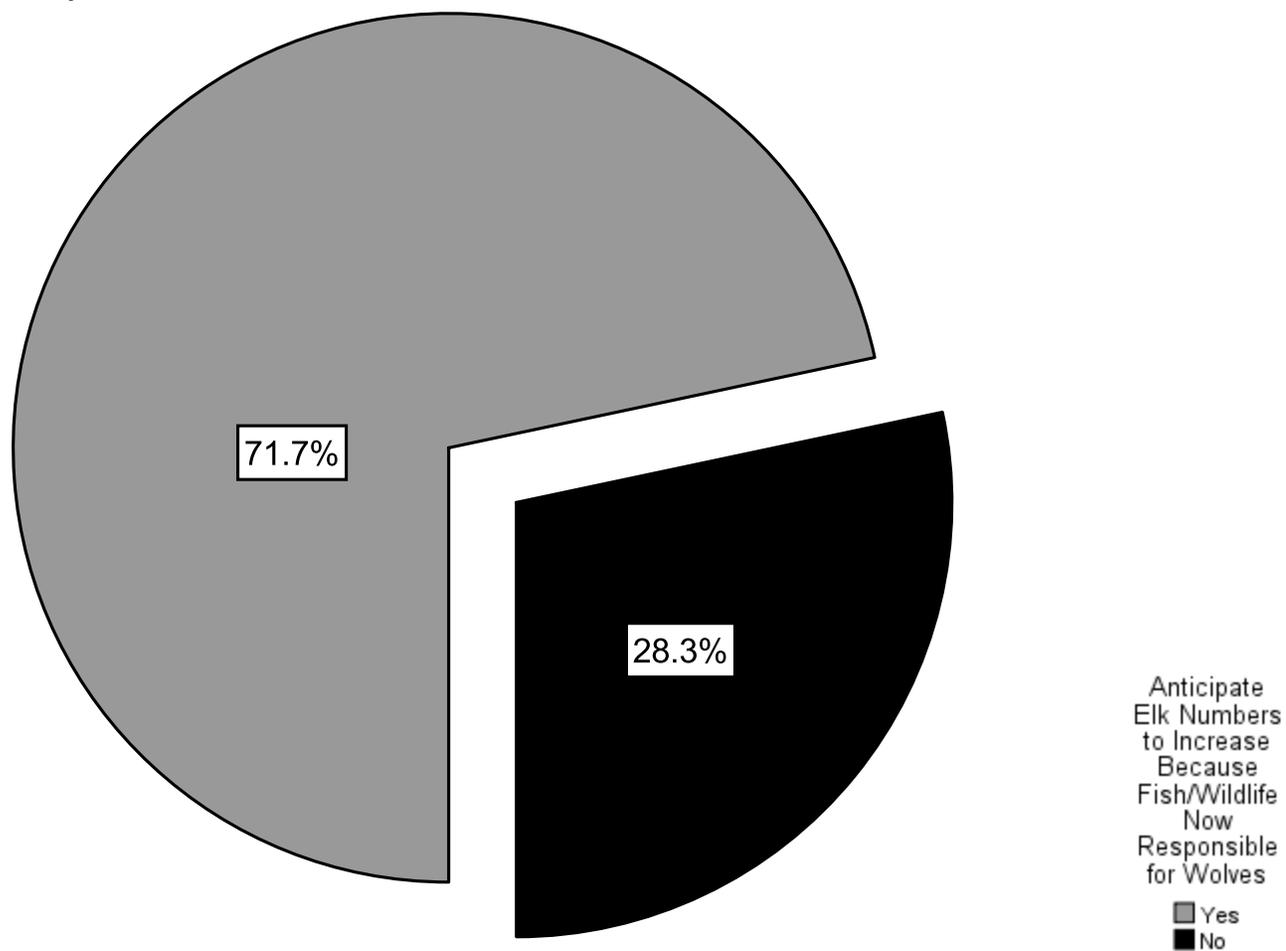
Two questions about predators in Idaho.

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



Q39: The distribution of responses is similar between the state average and the Middle Fork zone.

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



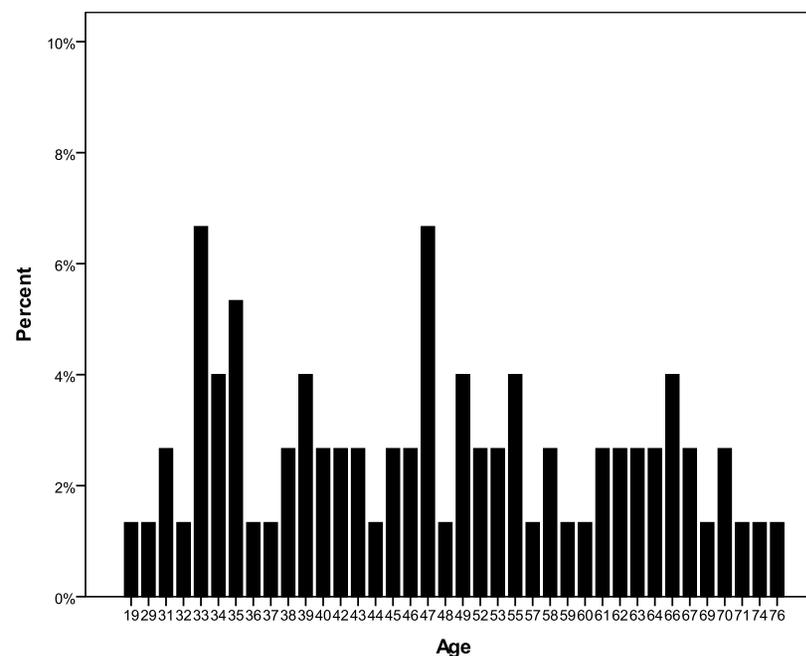
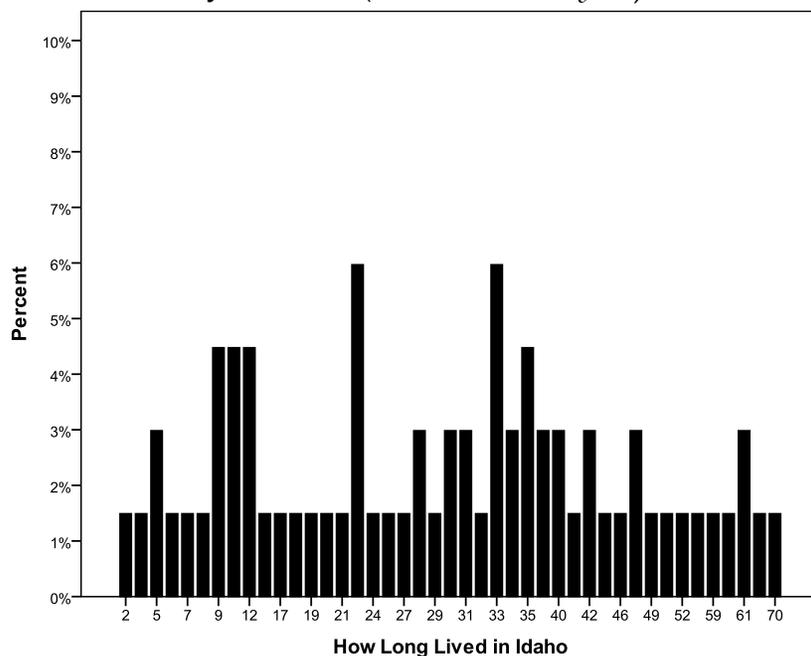
Q40: Similar to other hunters, a majority of Middle Fork hunters anticipate Elk numbers to increase with IDFG management of Wolves.

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 state average and the Middle Fork zone for both Q42 and Q43.