

**ELK HUNTING IN IDAHO:
UNDERSTANDING THE NEEDS AND EXPERIENCES OF
HUNTERS: PALISADES ZONE**



Prepared by:

Alexandria Middleton, Research Assistant

Nick Sanyal, Ph.D., Associate Professor

&

Ed Krumpe, Ph.D., Professor

For:

Idaho Department of Fish and Game

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INSERT ELK SURVEY OBJECTIVES

METHODS

SAMPLING

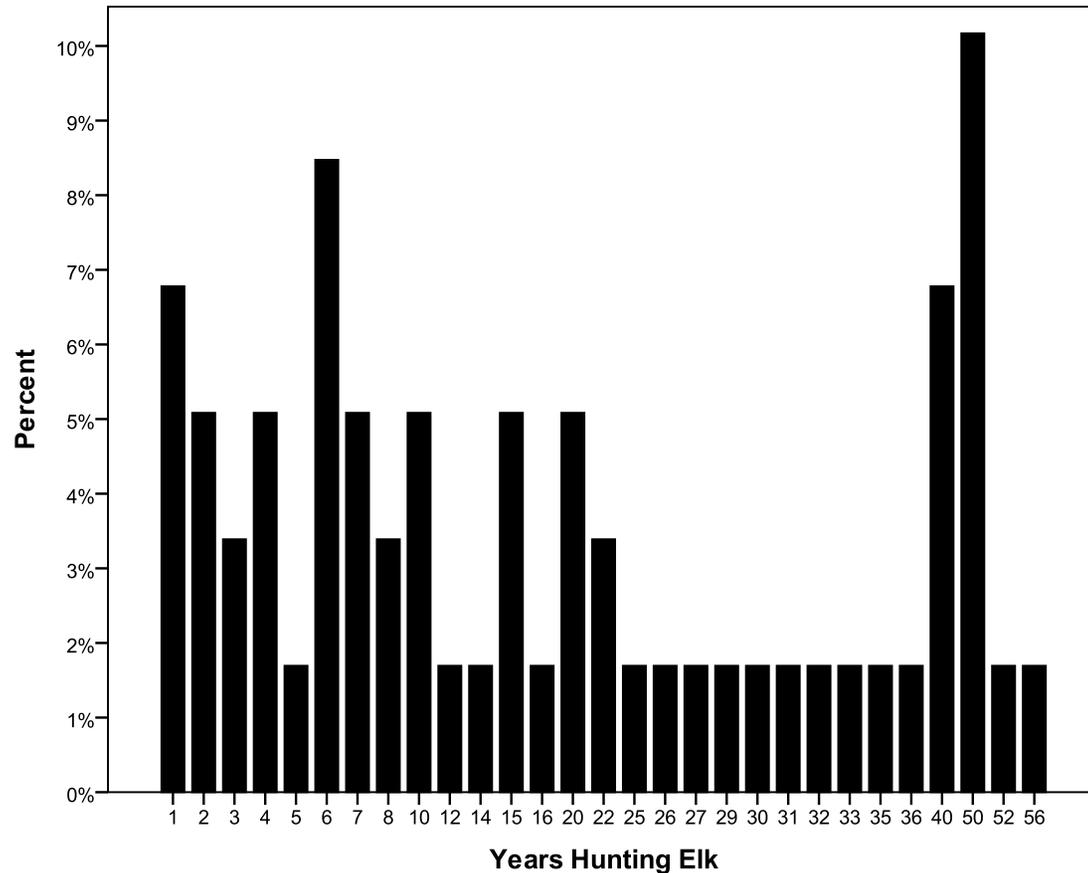
RESPONSE RATE.

ELK HUNTER PROFILES

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

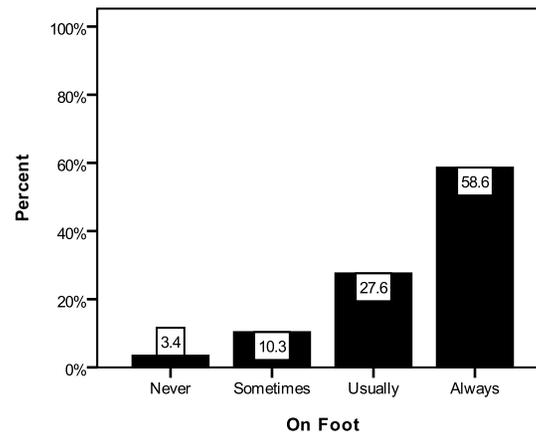
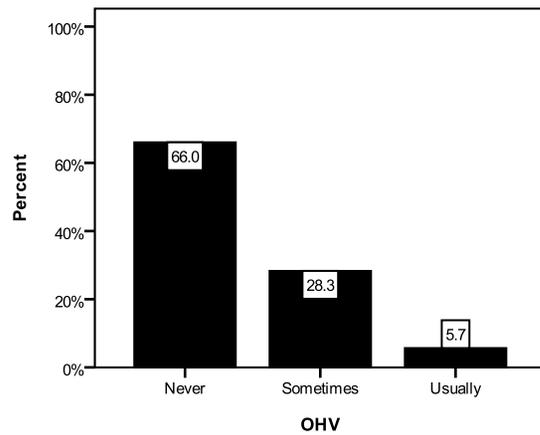
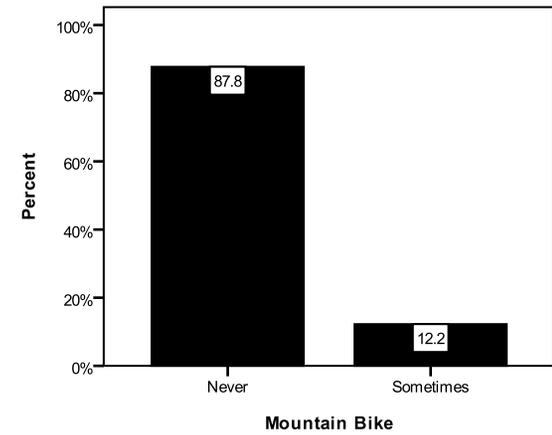
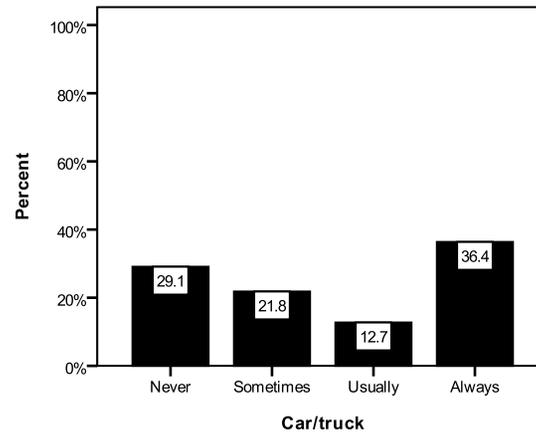
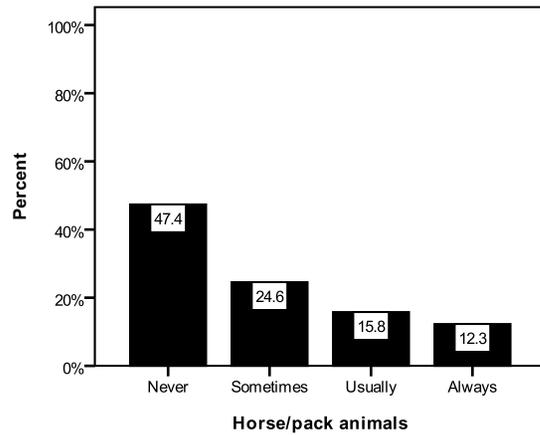
Now, some questions about your Idaho Elk hunting experiences and preferences.

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



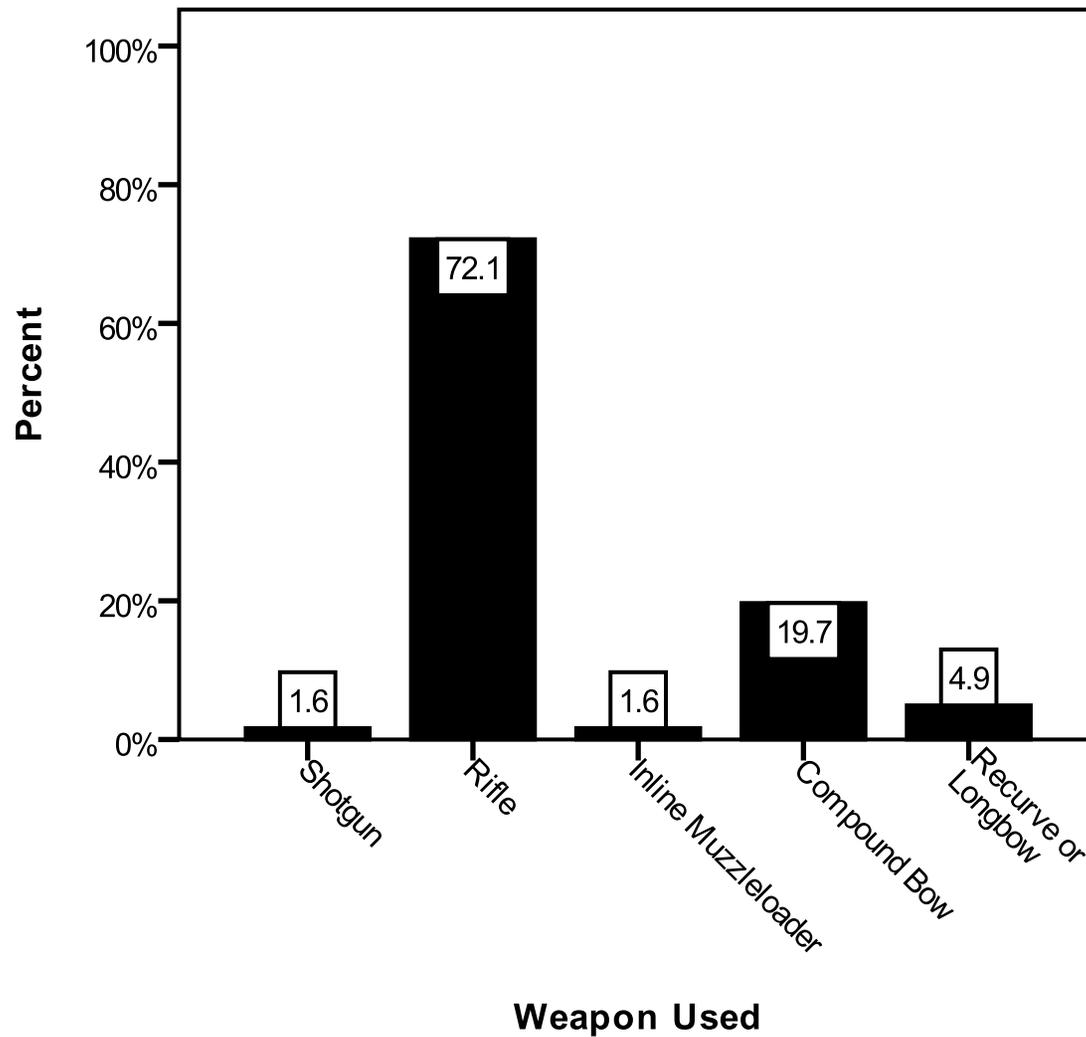
Q3: There are greater percentages of hunters in the Palisades zone that have hunted for 10 or less years or 40 plus years than the state average, which has the most hunters between 10 and 40 years.

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?



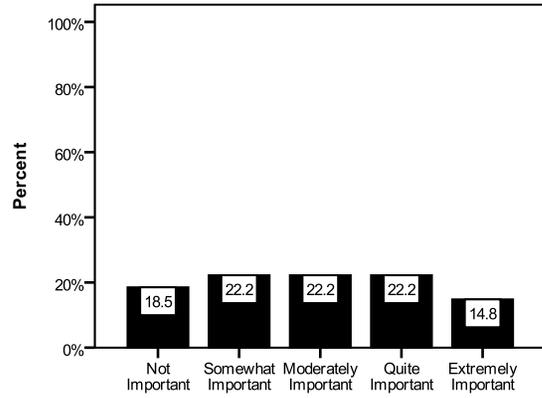
Q7: Hunters in this zone use modes of transportation similar to the state average. Similarly, they are most likely to hunt on foot or via car/truck. However, twice as many hunters in the Palisades zone never use an OHV than on average. Also, twice as many hunters always use horse/pack animals while hunting.

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

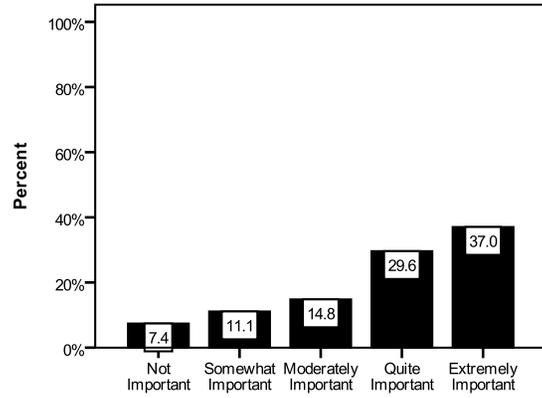


Q8: Similar to the state average, hunters in the Palisades zone use are most likely to use a rifle or compound bow when hunting. Rifles are a more typically used in this zone with 72.1% of hunters hunting with a rifle; 25% more than the state average.

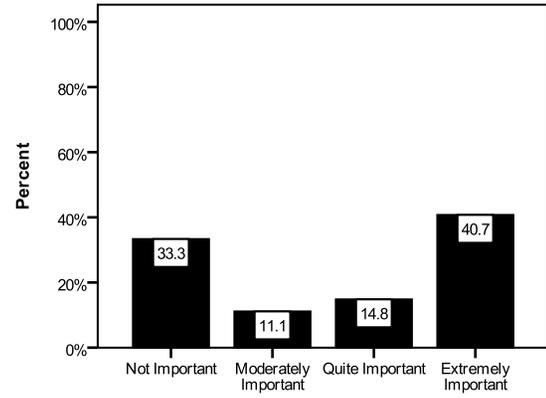
10. How important was each of the following in your decision to hunt during Elk archery, short-range weapons or muzzleloader seasons?



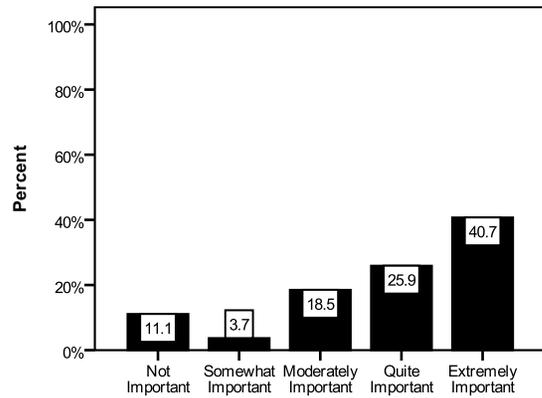
Increase Challenge



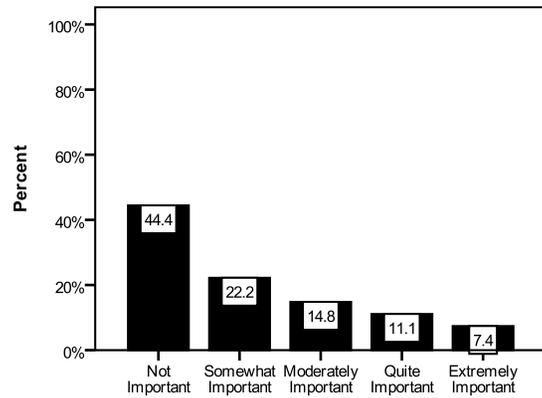
Hunt With Few Hunters on Field



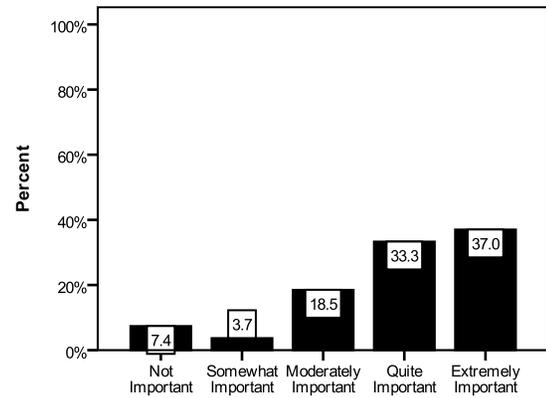
Improve Chance of Harvesting



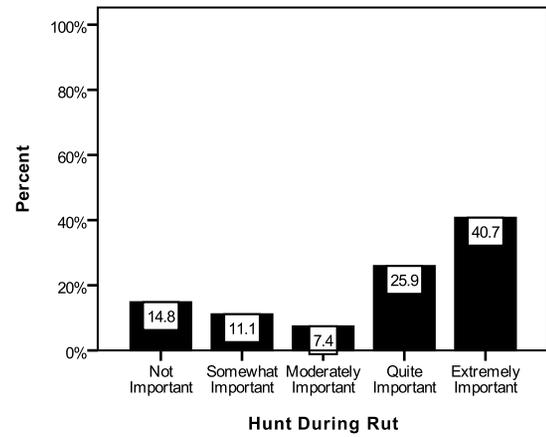
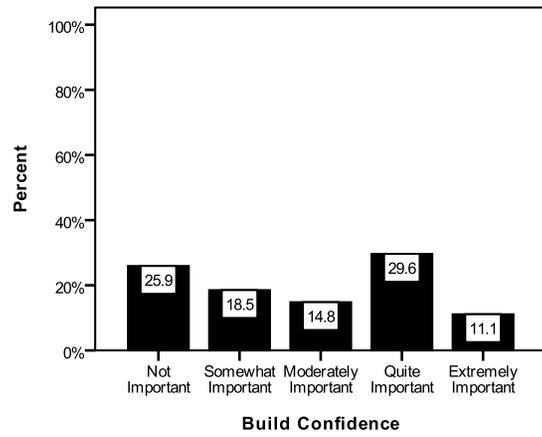
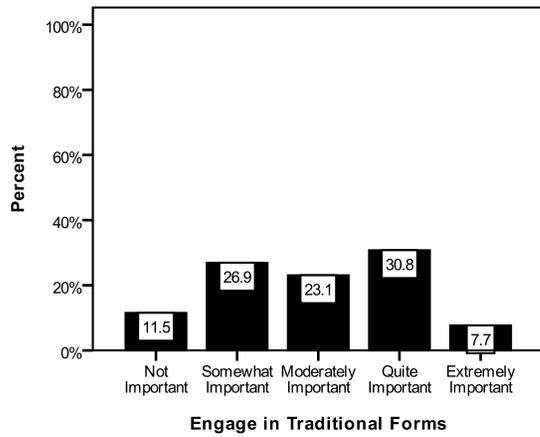
Expand Hunting Season



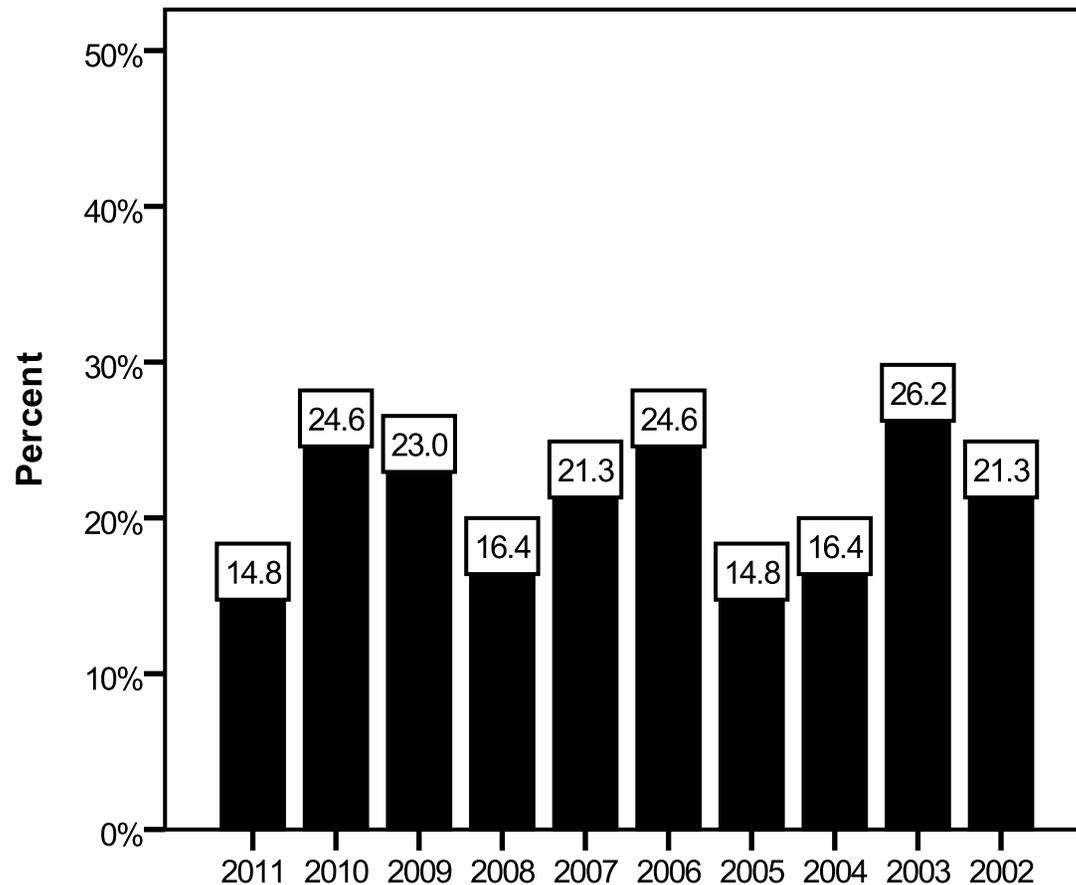
Hunt in Zone Where Rifle Limited



Adventure

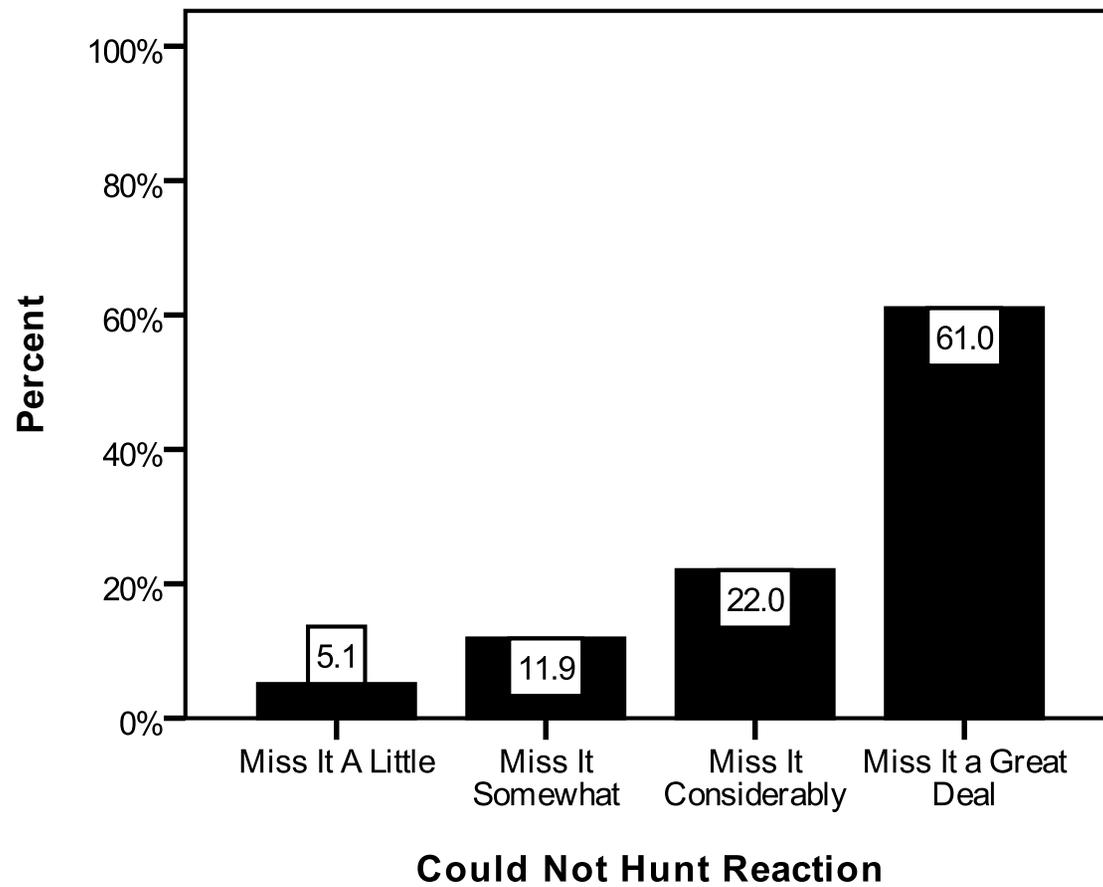


Q10: Hunters in the Palisades zone responded similarly to the state average in that the primary reasons they choose other weapons besides rifles was to hunt with fewer hunters afield, for the adventure and to hunt during the rut. They also found that expanding the hunting season, improving the chance or harvest, engaging in traditional forms and building confidence were also important factors.

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

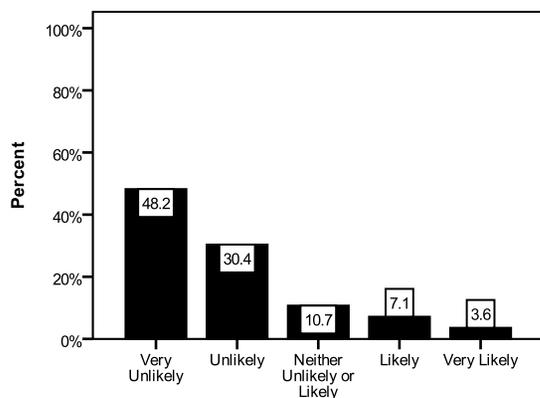
Q11: Hunters in the Palisades zone were slightly less successful at harvesting Elk than the state average. The percent of harvest dipped in by 5-10% in 2004, 2005, 2008 and 2011, while the state remained fairly stable all 7 years.

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

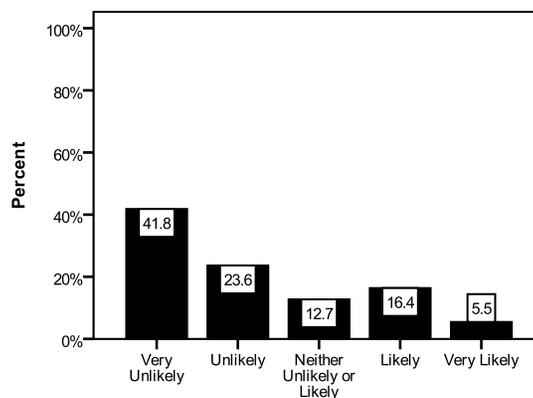


Q12: Less hunters in Palisades would miss hunting a great deal of they could not hunt Elk in Idaho by 15.8%. However, hunters reported they would still miss it and none said that they would not miss it at all.

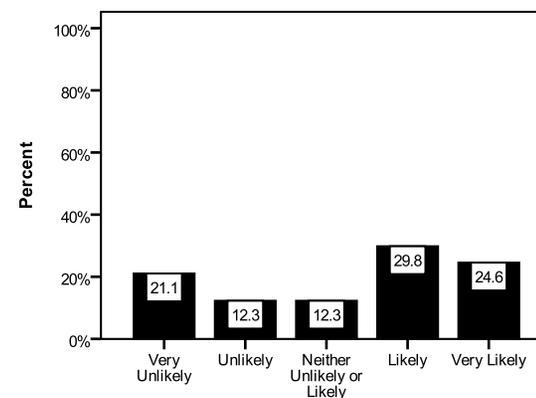
13. If you could not hunt Elk in Idaho, how would your hunting change?



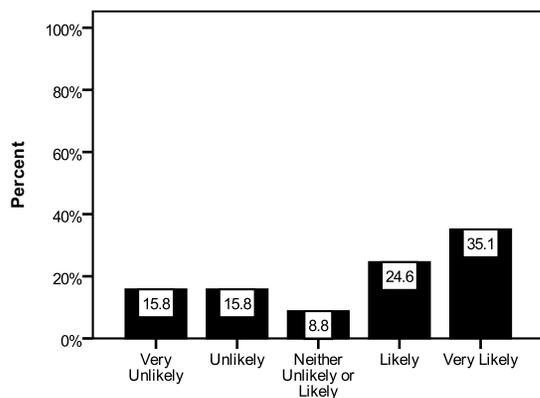
Hunt Waterfowl More



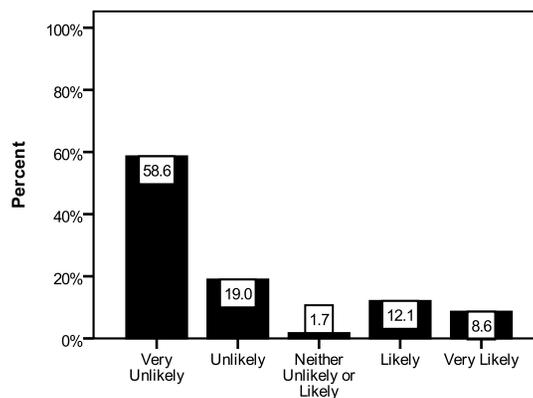
Hunt Upland Game More



More Time Hunting Other Game



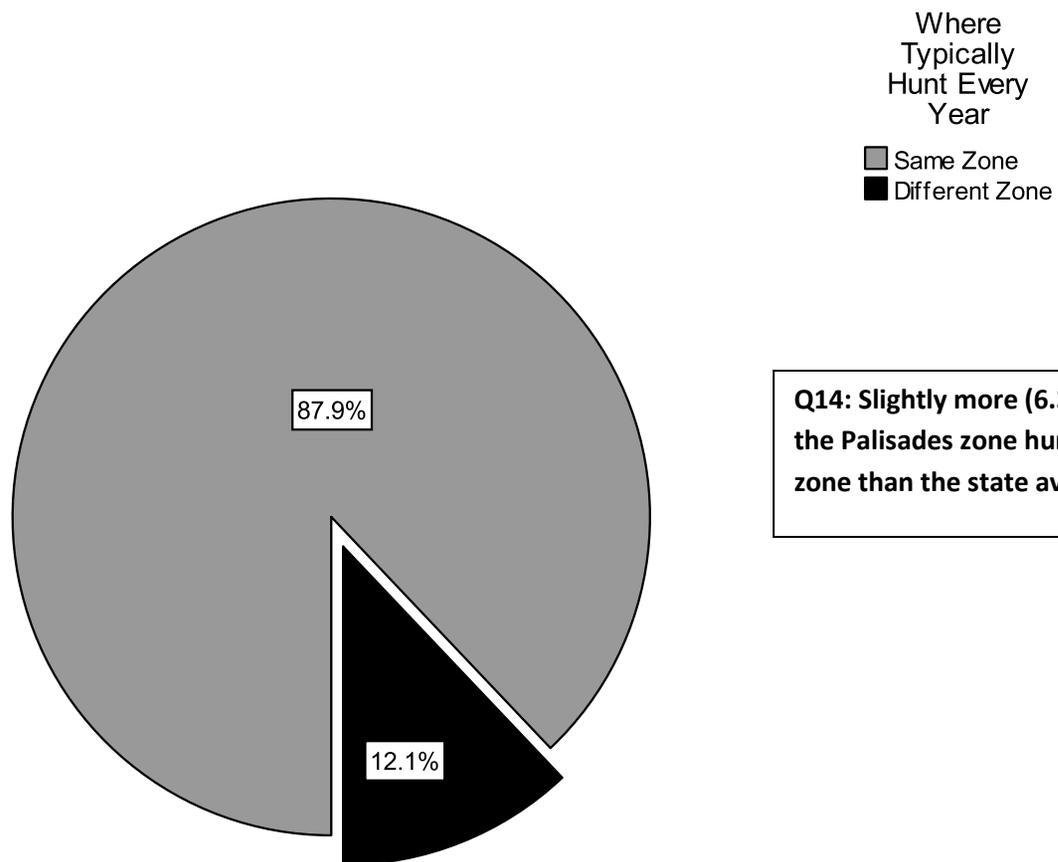
Hunt Elk in Other States



Not Hunt At All

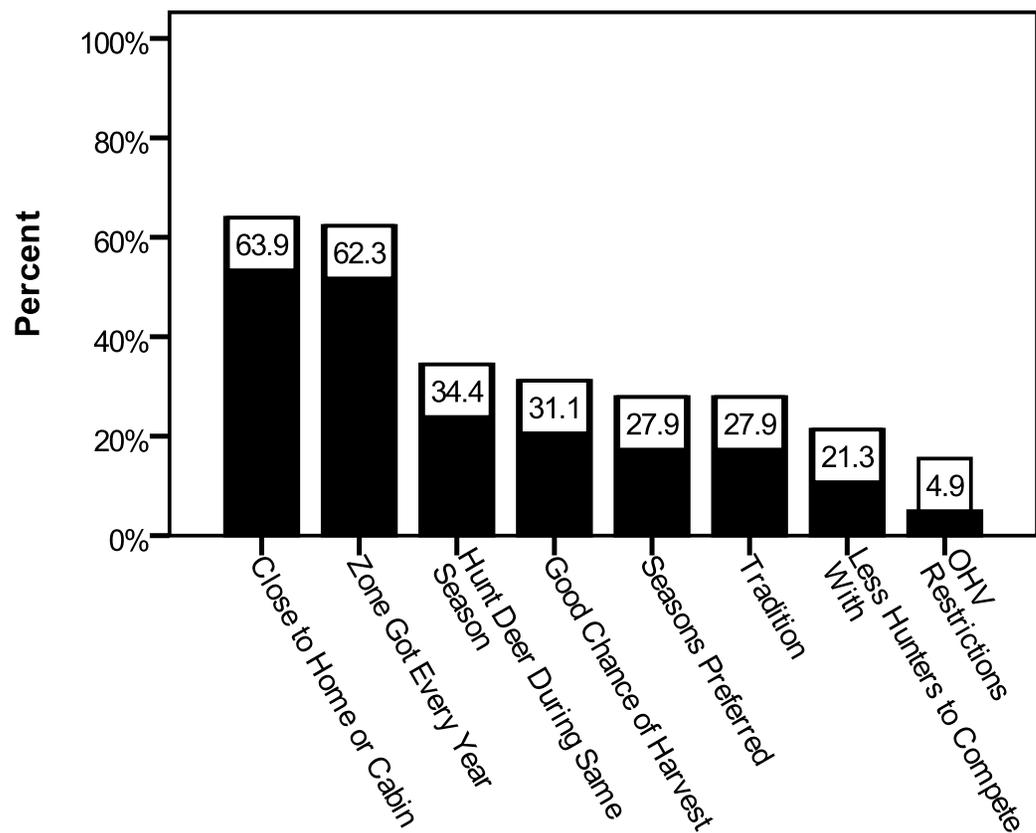
Q13: Similar to the state average, hunters in the Palisades zone would also spend more time hunting other game or hunt Elk in other states if they could not hunt Elk in Idaho.

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



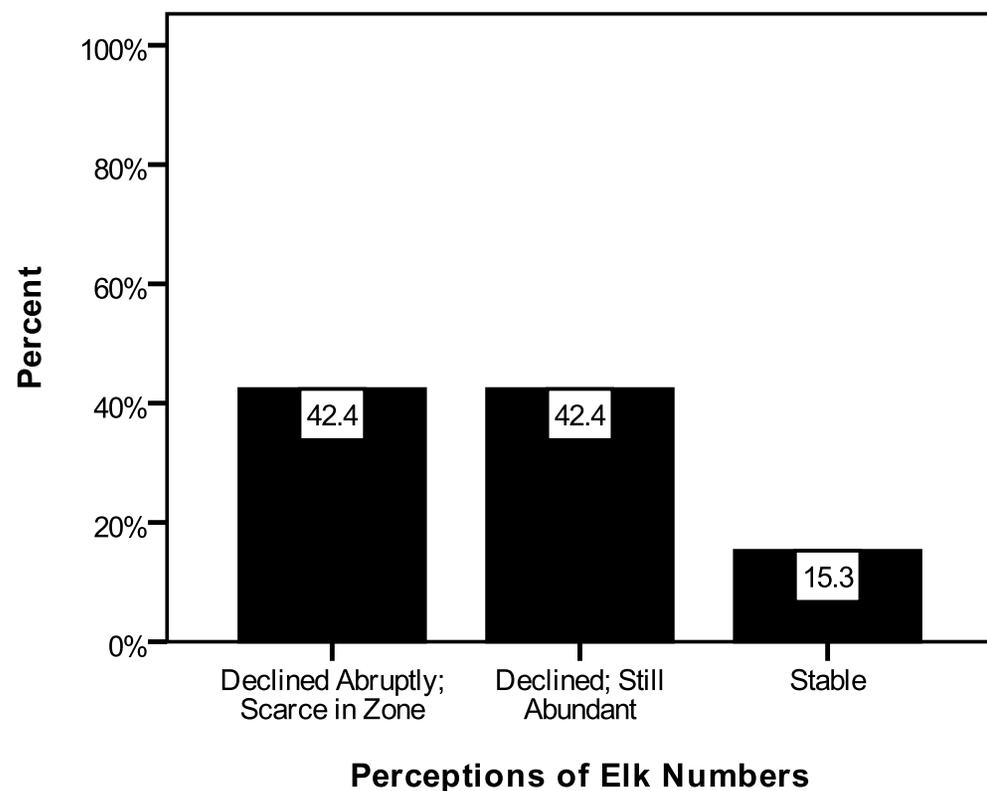
Q14: Slightly more (6.3%) hunters from the Palisades zone hunt in the same zone than the state average.

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



Q16: Hunters in the Palisades zone found the same attributes desirable for their zone as the state average. Having a zone close to a home or cabin and getting a zone they get every year were slightly more important to Palisades hunters with a 9.9% and 13.2% difference respectively. Fewer hunters (12.1%) in the Palisades zone sought zones with OHV restrictions.

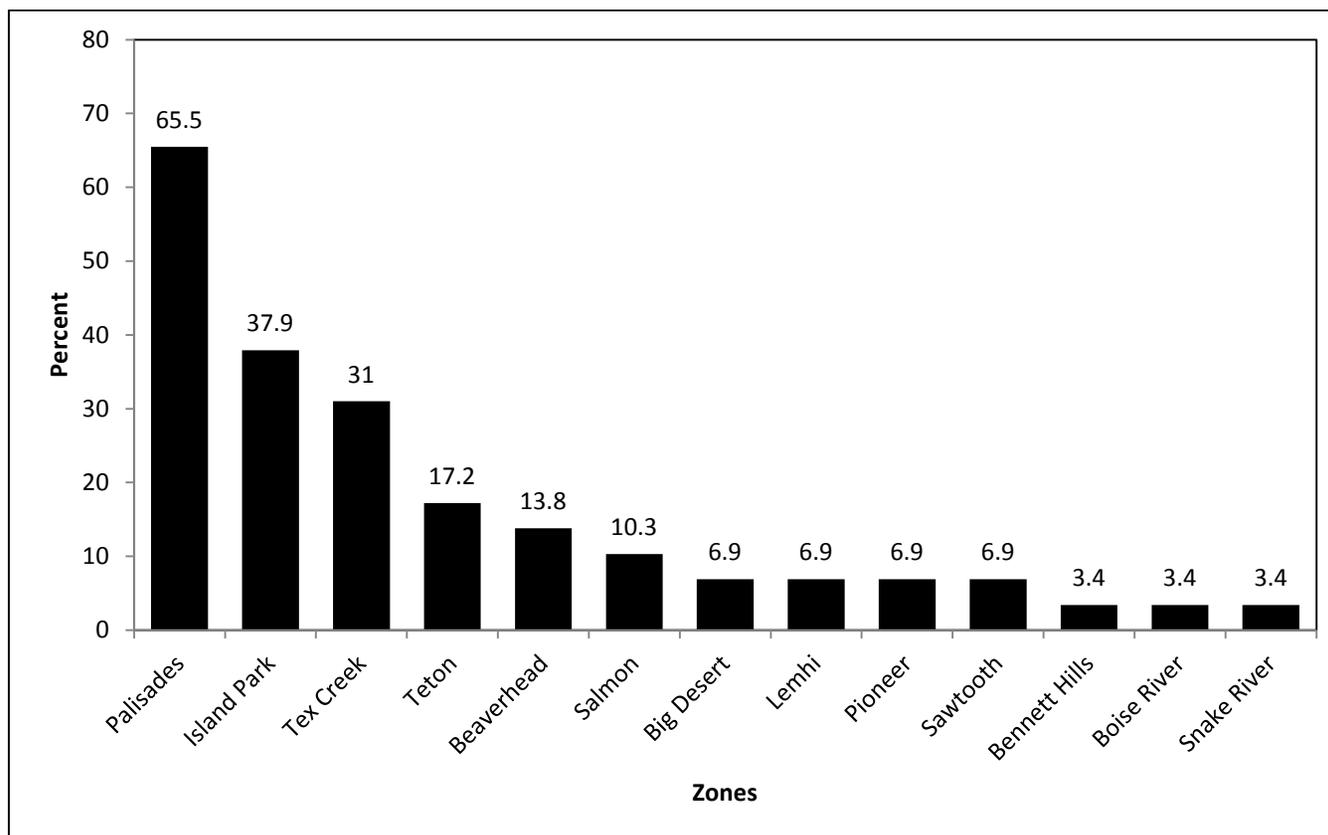
17. What are your perceptions of Elk numbers in the zone you hunted in 2011? Select the ONE statement from the list below that most closely matches your perceptions. (Please check only one response)



Q17: Hunters in the Palisades zone agree that Elk numbers have either declined or remained stable, with no increase in population. 11.7% more hunters in Palisades perceive that numbers have declined but remain abundant. Inversely, 9.1% less hunters than the state average thought that numbers have declined abruptly and numbers are scarce.

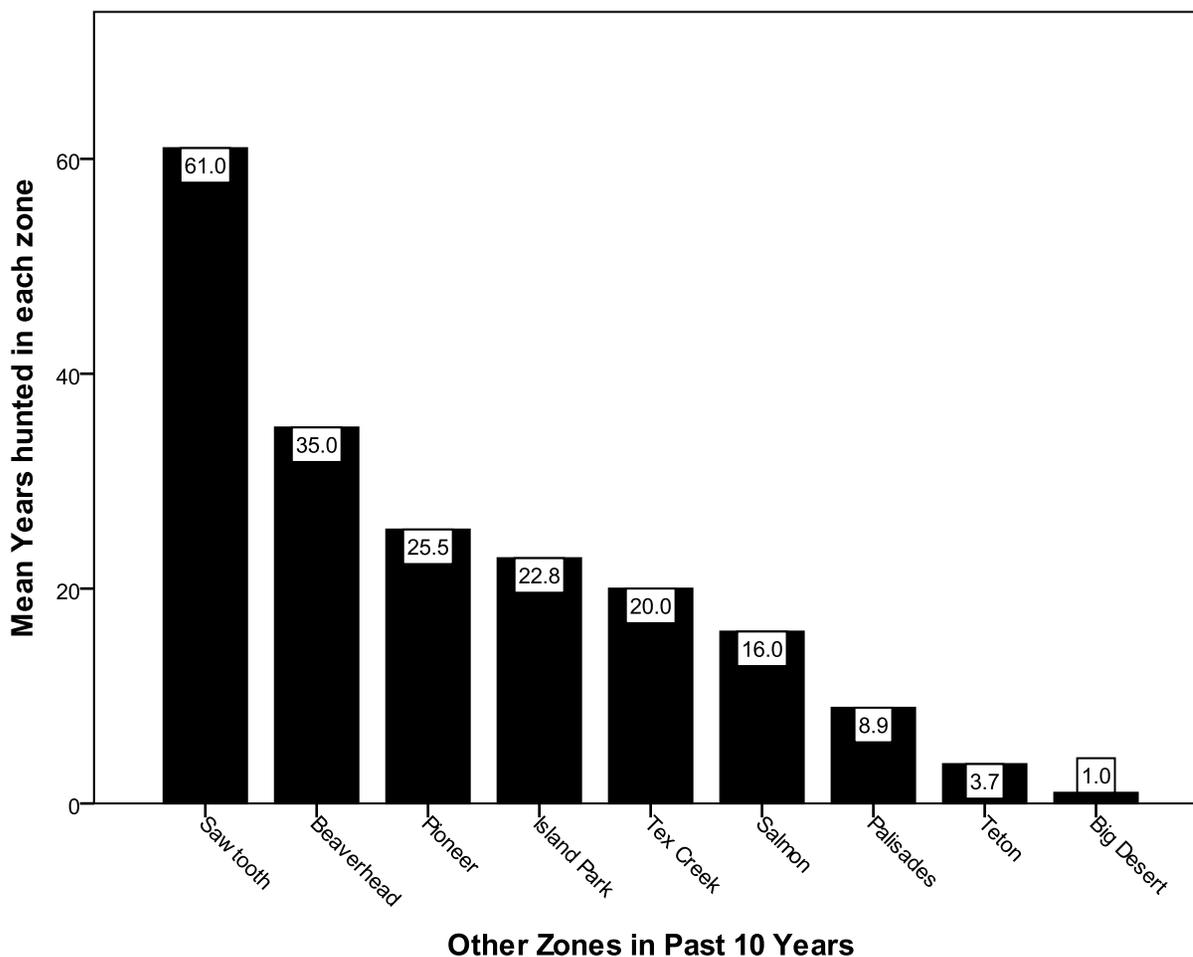
18. If you hunted in more than one zone in the past 10 years, please list them below.

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

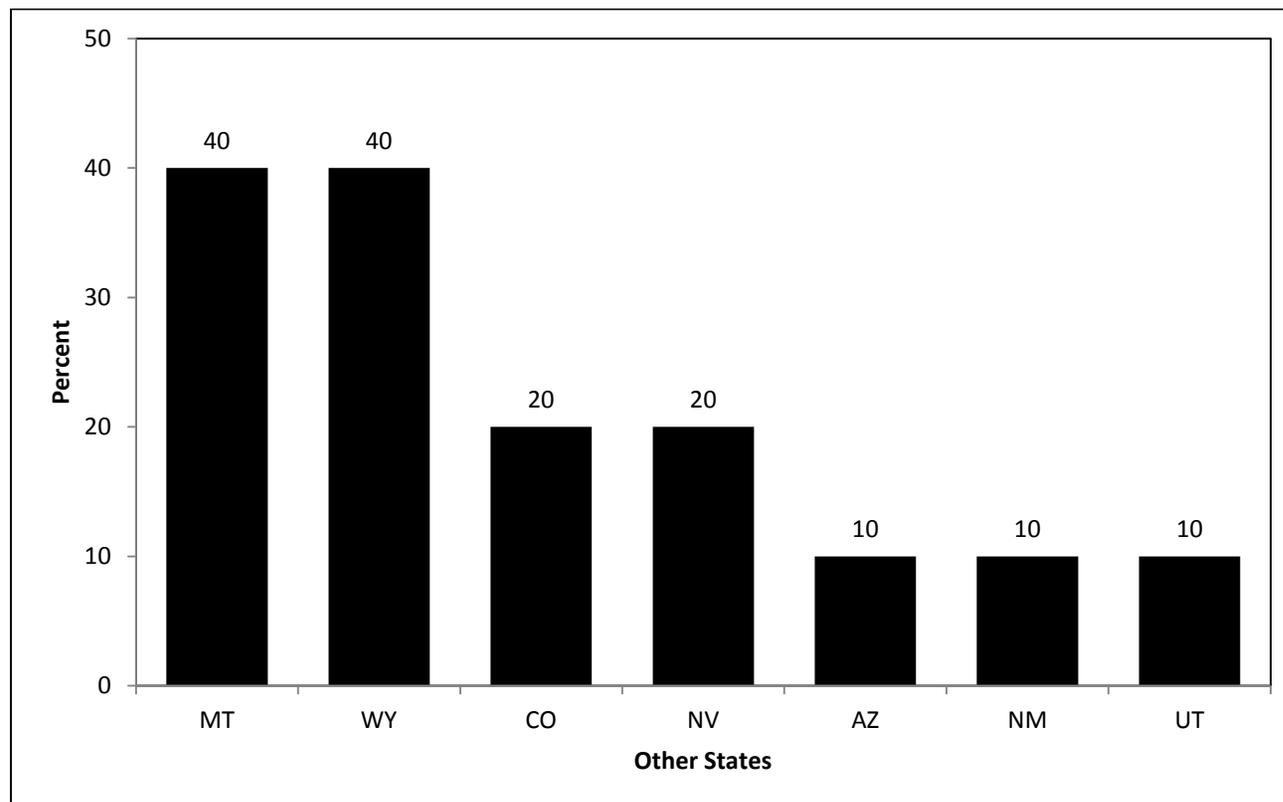


Q18: Besides hunting in the Palisades zone itself, over one-third of respondents reported hunting in the Island Park and Tex Creek zones as well.

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)

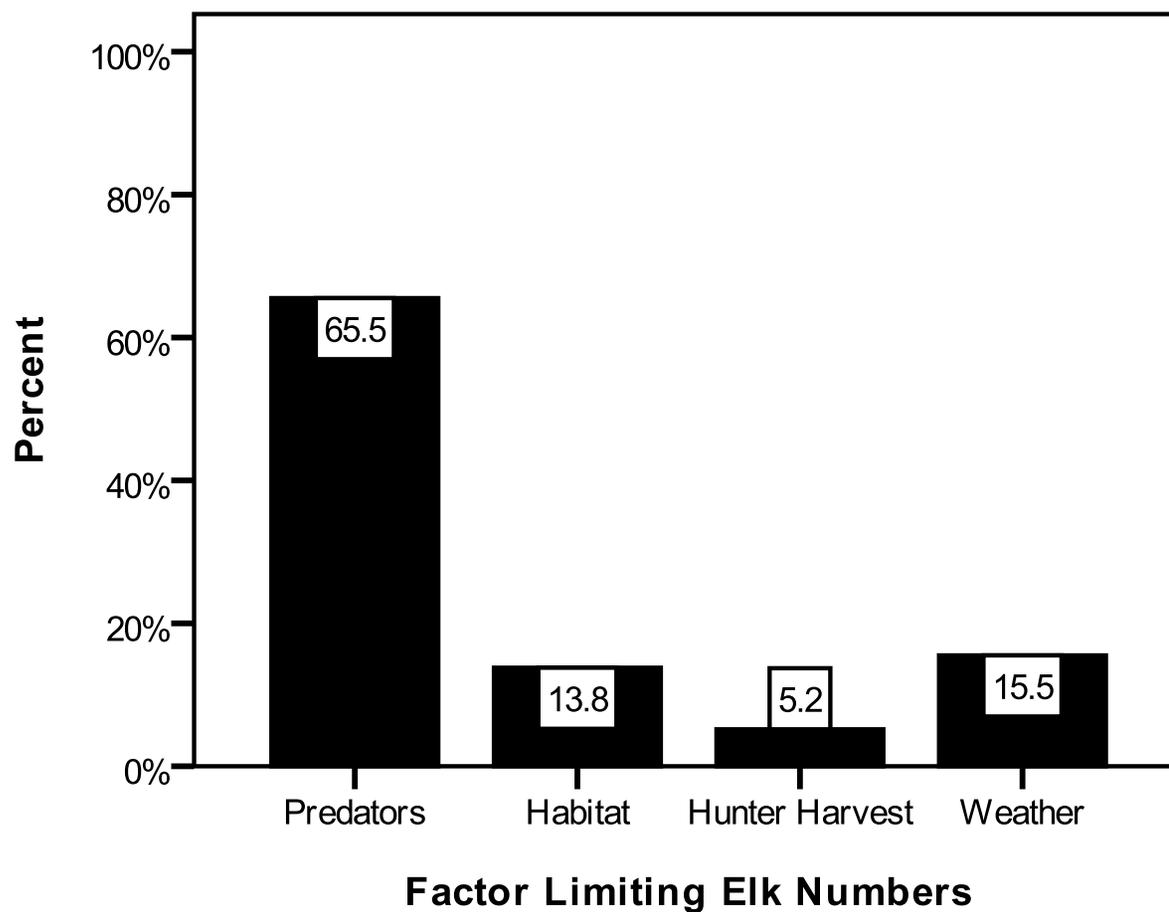


Q20: Although the Island Park and Tex Creek zones were hunted by a larger percent of respondents, the Sawtooth zone has been hunted the longest with a mean of 61 years.

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

Q21: For those who have hunted Elk in other states, Montana and Wyoming were the most frequented states with Colorado and Nevada following.

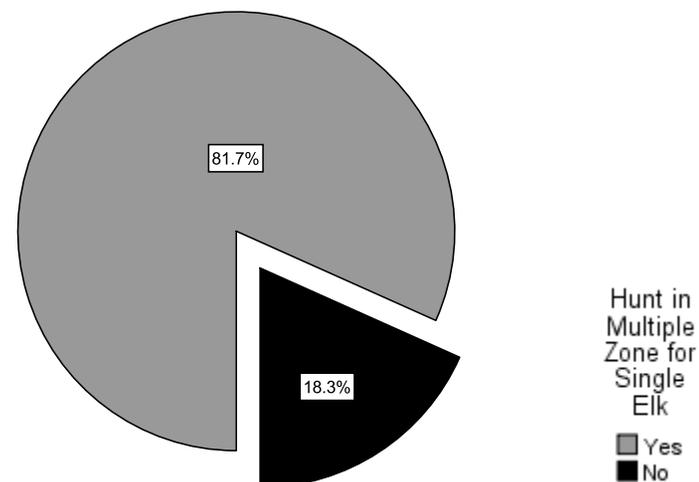
22. What do you believe is the primary factor limiting Elk numbers in the zone you hunted in 2011? (Check only ONE response)



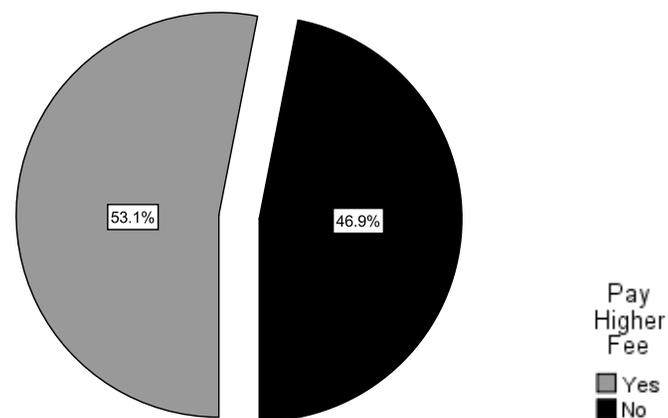
Q22: A majority of respondents believe that predators are the primary factor limiting Elk numbers in the Palisades zone. Only 5.2% believe hunter harvest is responsible, compared to 11.3% at the state average.

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

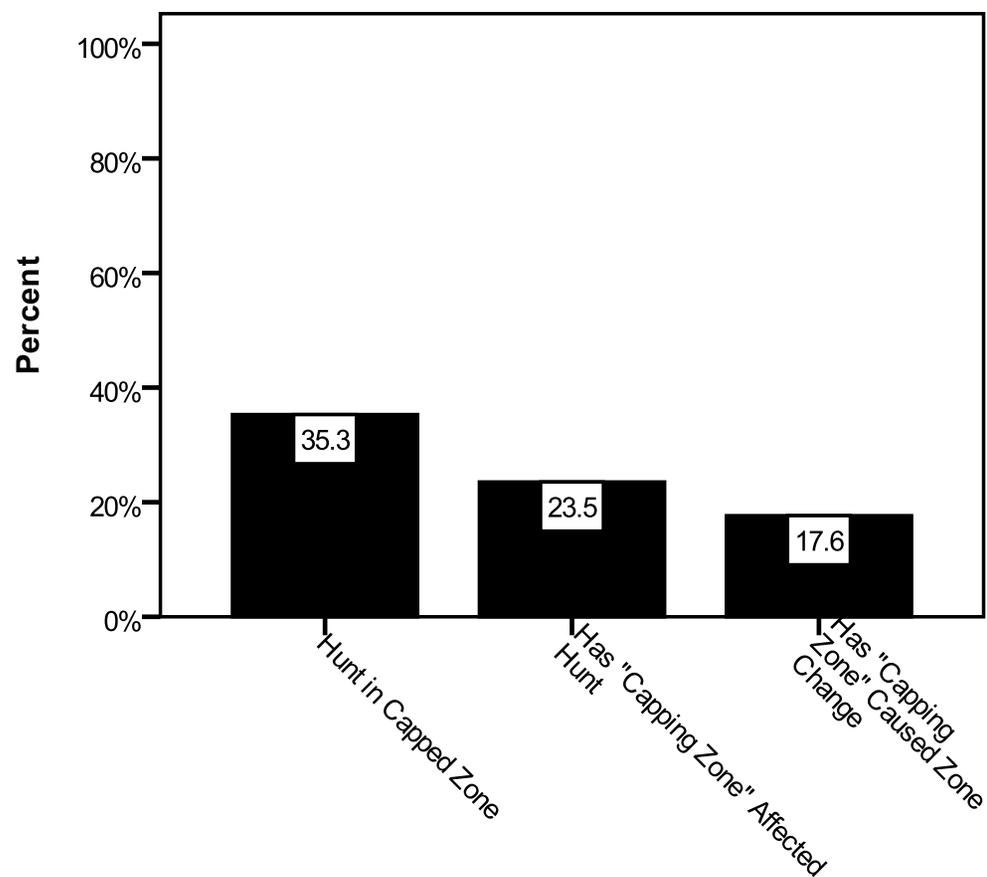
A large majority of respondents in the Palisades zone would like to be able to hunt in multiple zones in a year. However, respondents are almost split 50/50 on whether they would be willing to pay a higher for to do so.



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)

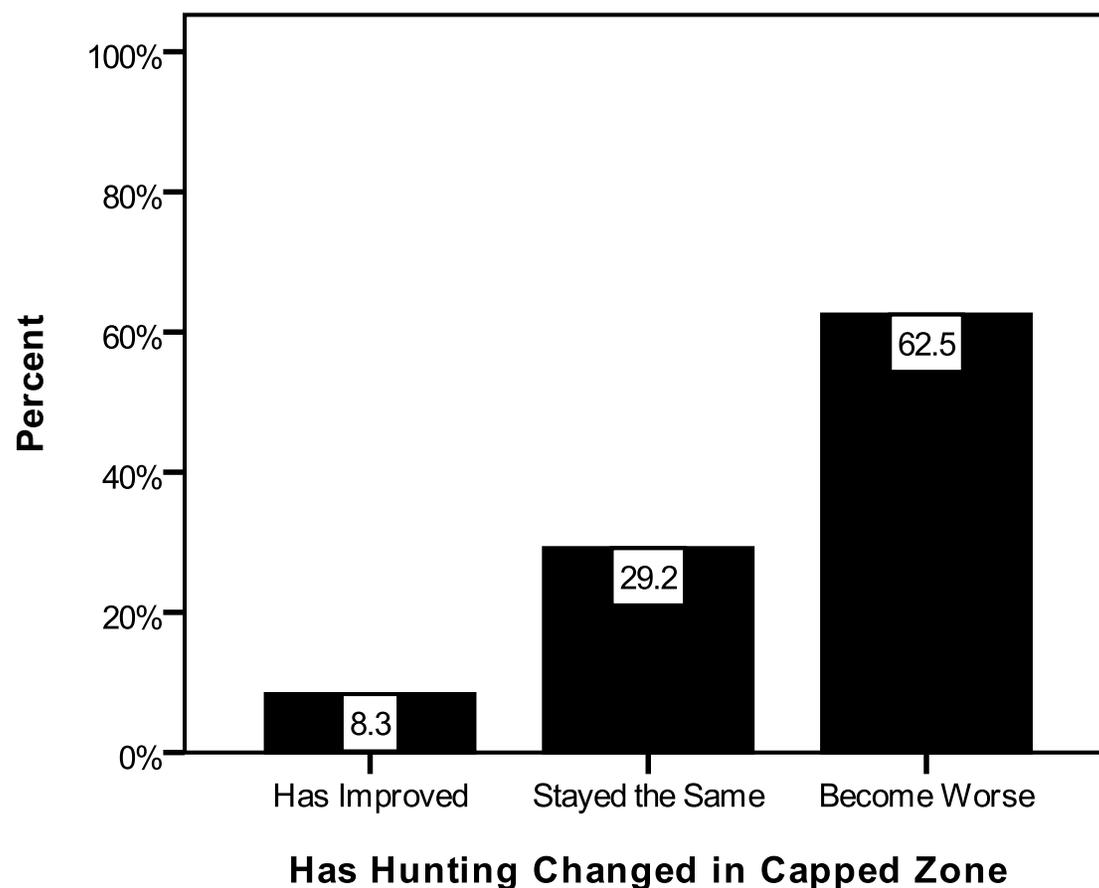


25. When the zone system was implemented the mechanism for reducing unlimited over-the-counter opportunity called “capping the zone” was developed by the department with the help of legislators, sportsmen and outfitters. This “capping the zone” is an allocation formula to distribute Elk tags to hunters (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: Slightly more than one-third of respondents from the Palisades zone have experience hunting in a capped zone. Besides that, results are very similar to the state average.

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

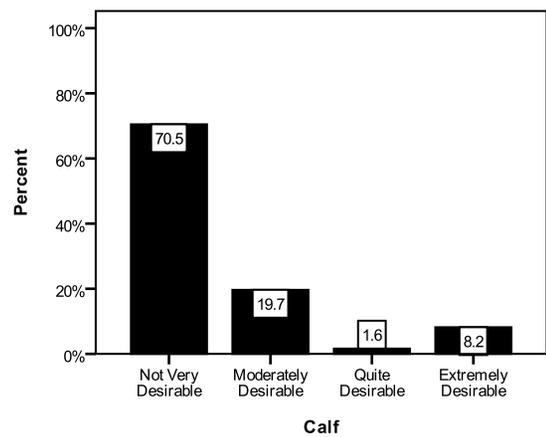
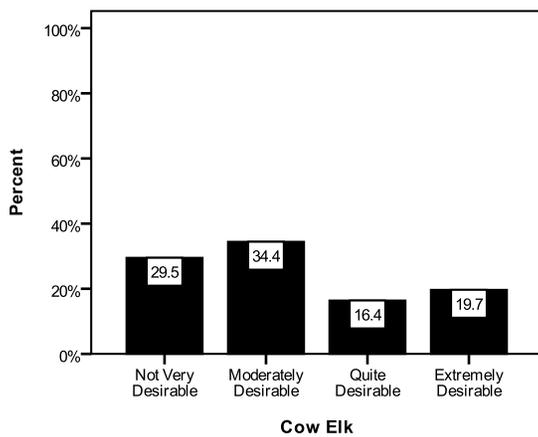
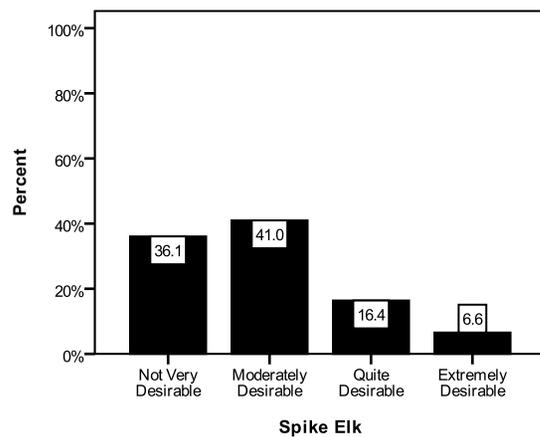
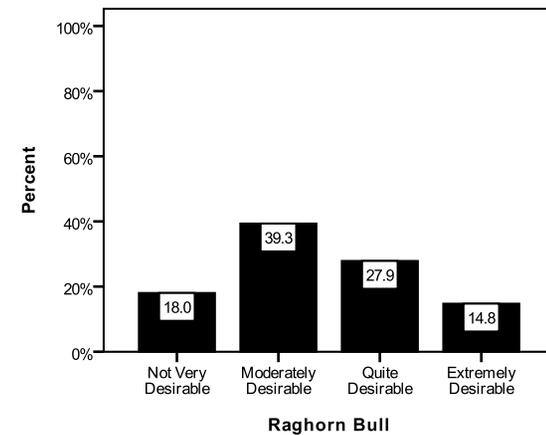
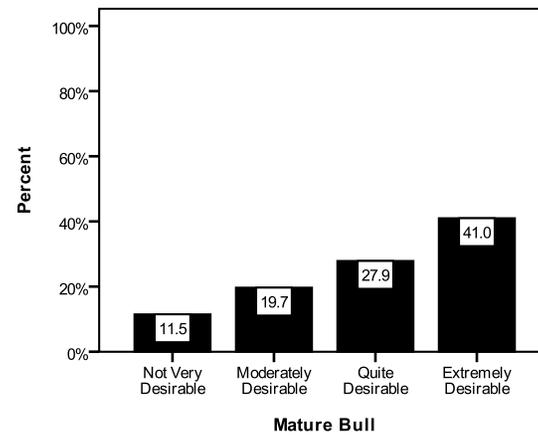
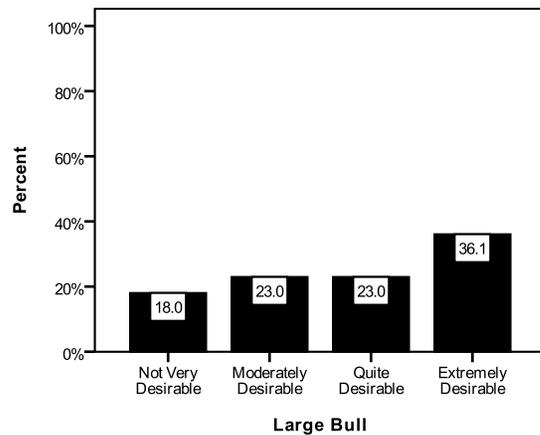


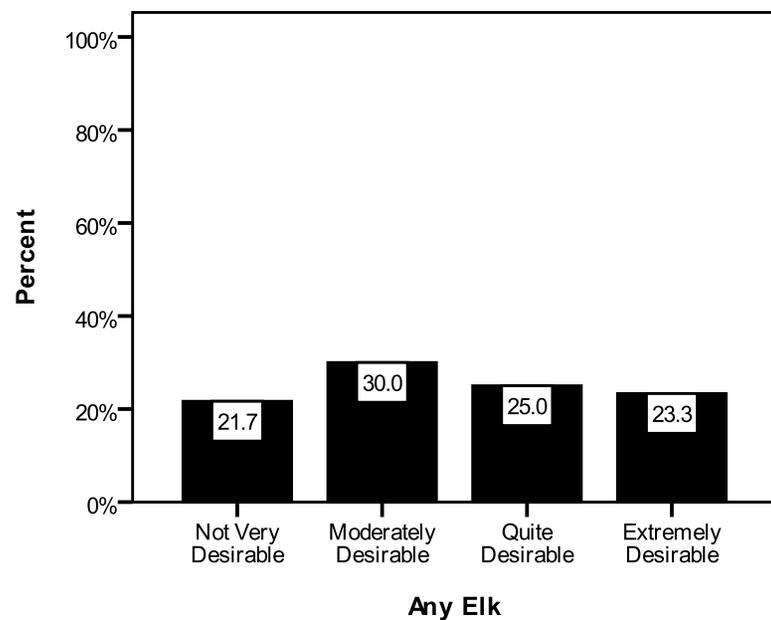
Q26: While over 60% of hunters in the Palisades zone perceive that hunting in a capped zone has become worse, almost twice as many respondents in this zone (8.4%) compared to the state average response (4.6%) reported that they thought that the hunting has improved.

ELK HUNTING PREFERENCES AND MOTIVATIONS

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

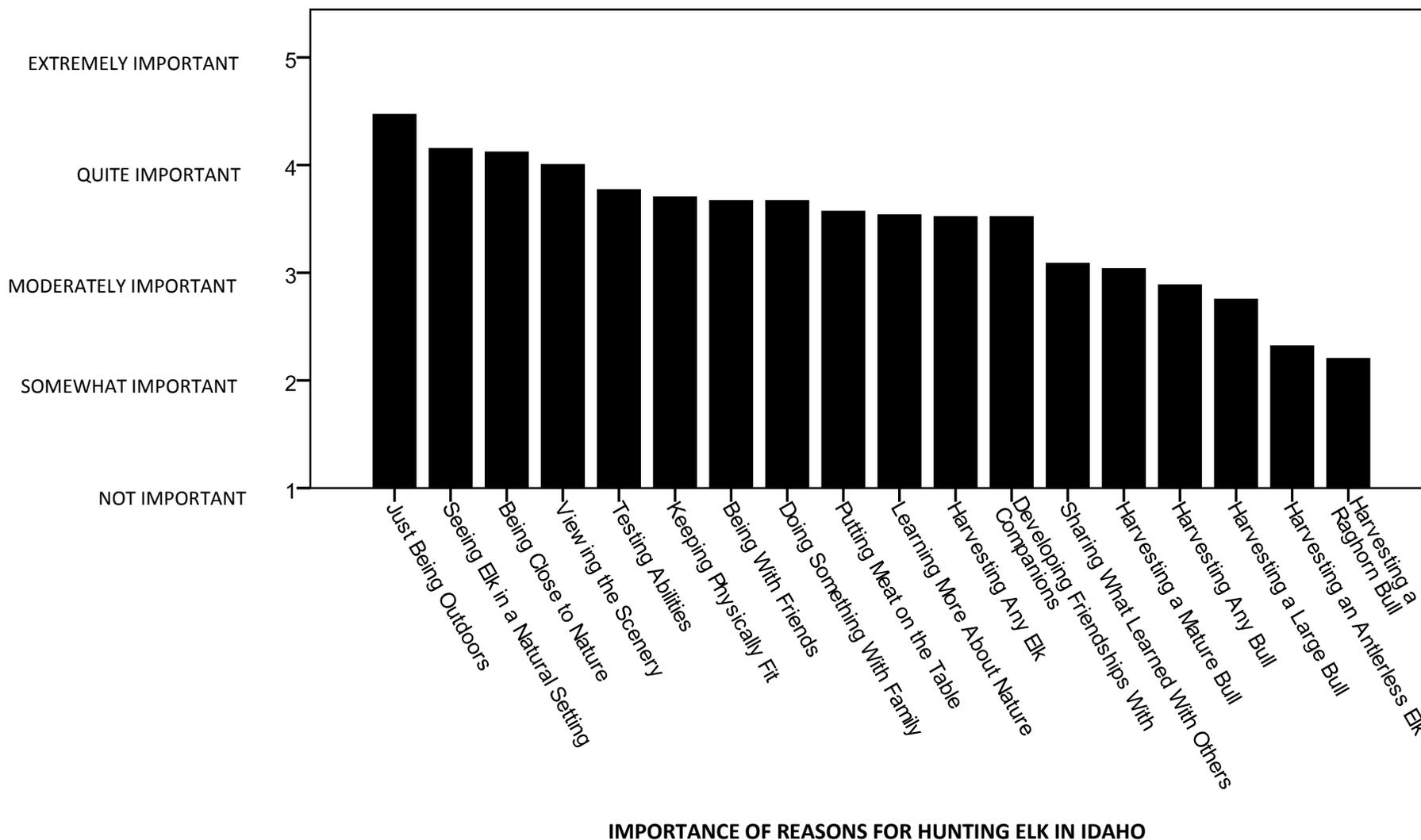
27. How desirable is it to you to harvest the following kinds of Elk?

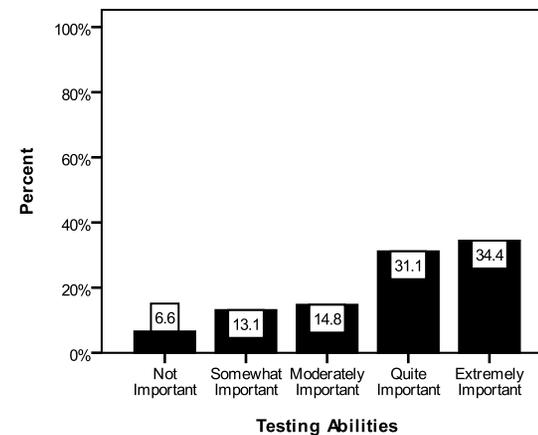
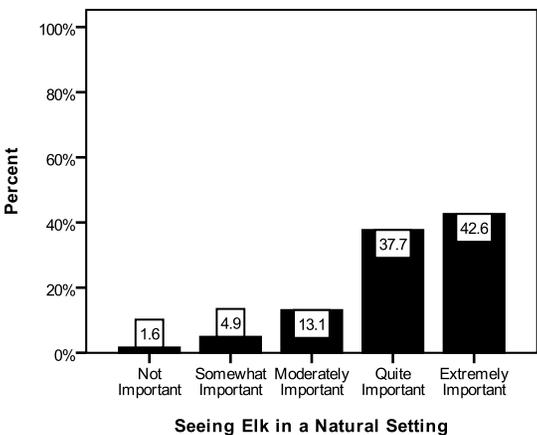
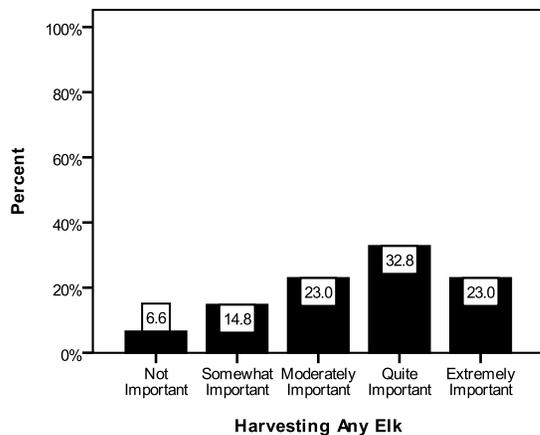
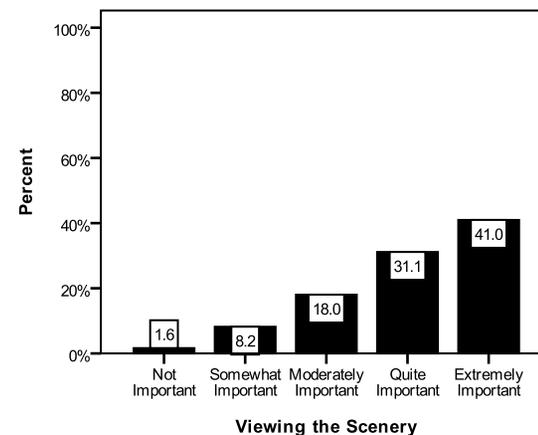
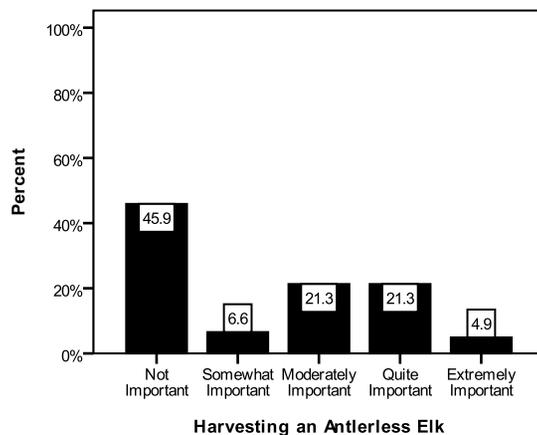
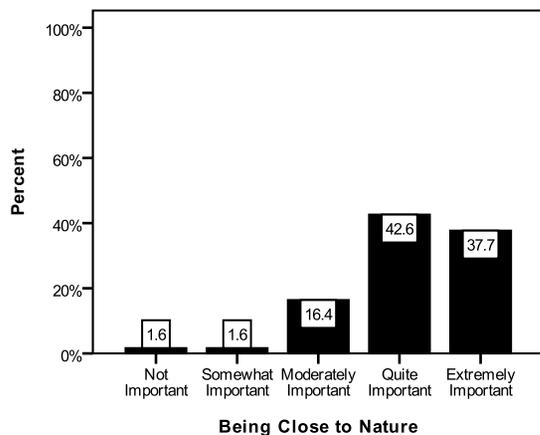


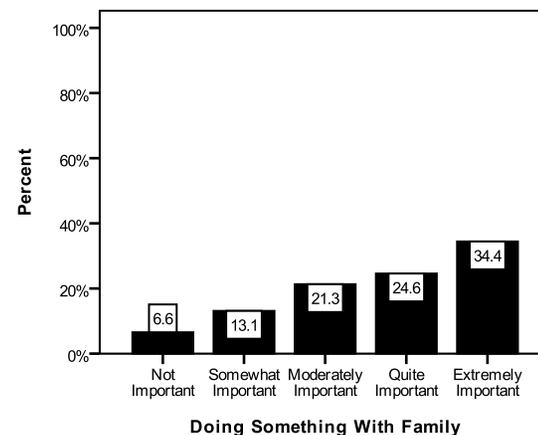
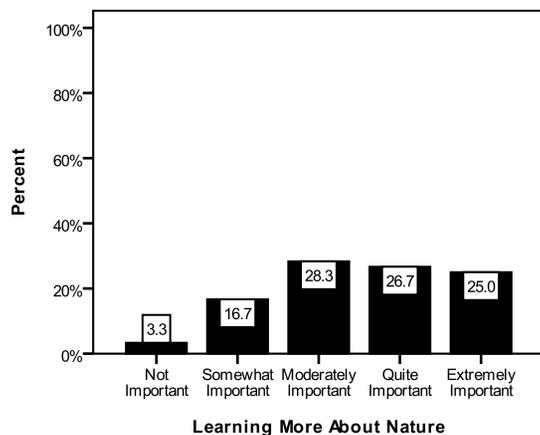
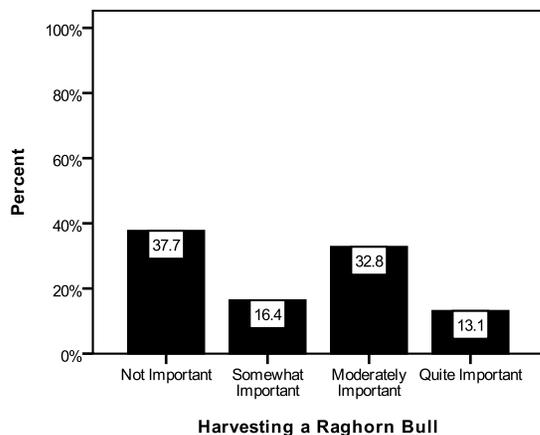
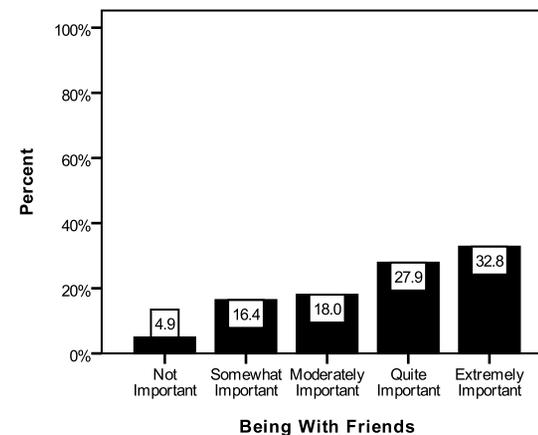
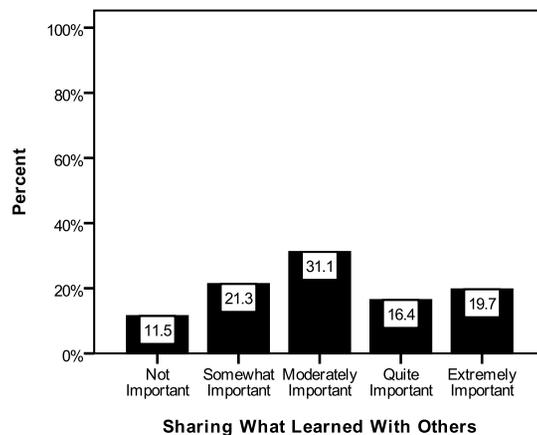
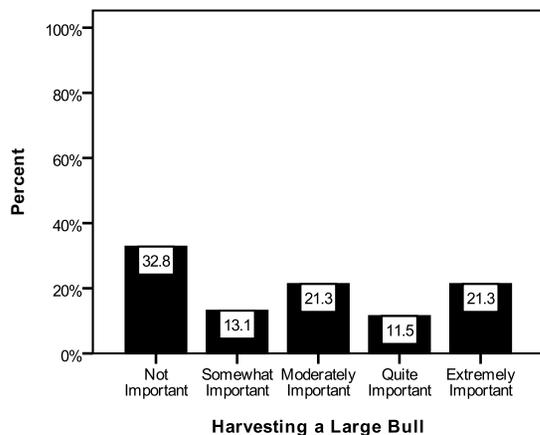


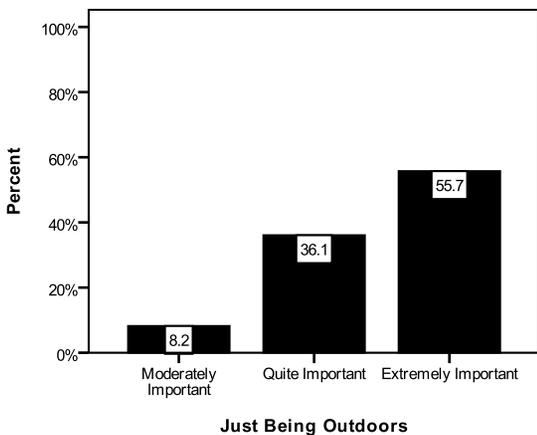
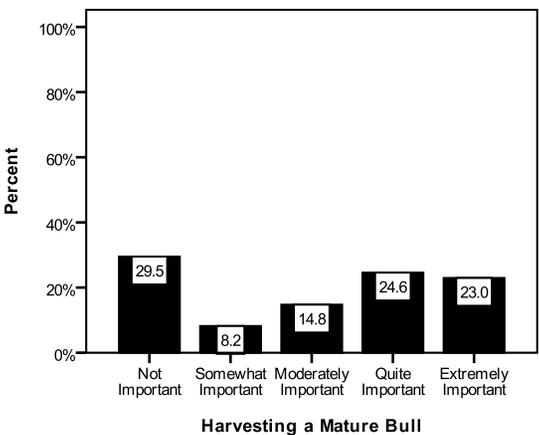
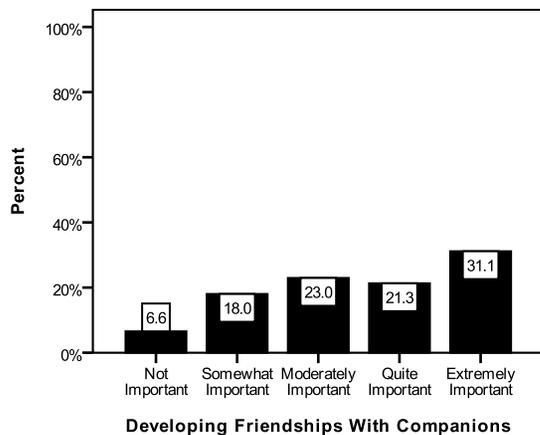
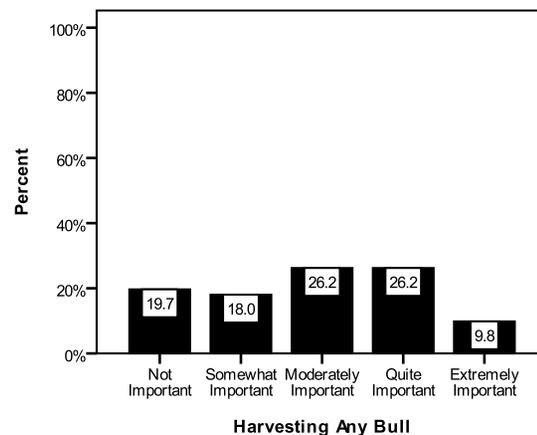
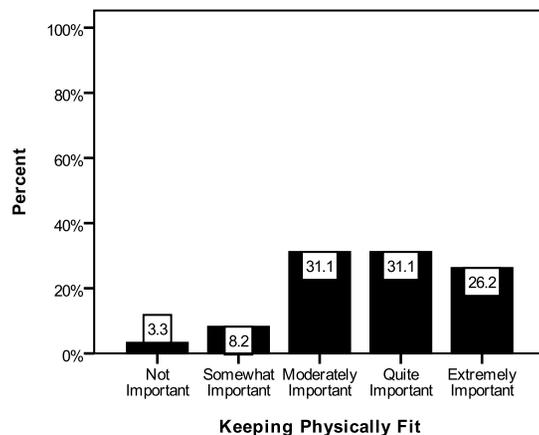
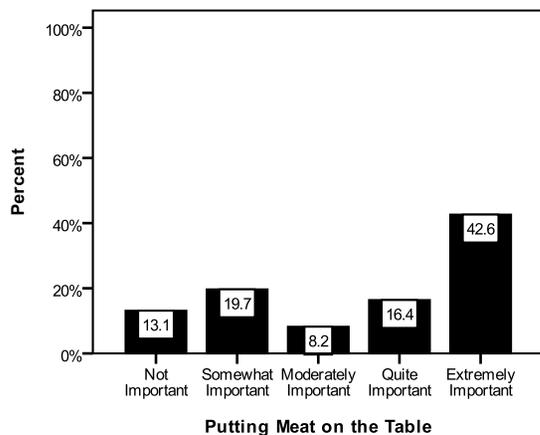
Q27: Hunters agree that harvesting a large or mature bull is the most desirable. Harvesting a calf is least desirable among hunters in this zone.

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?





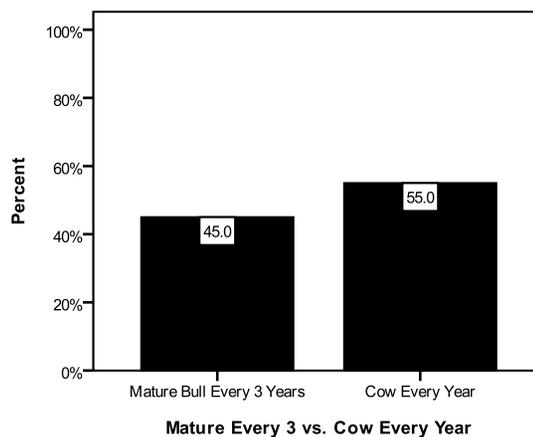
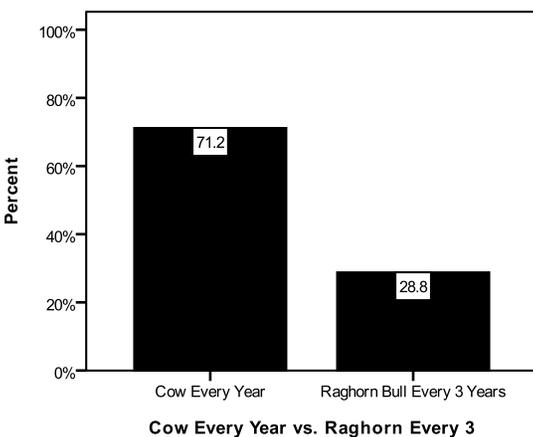
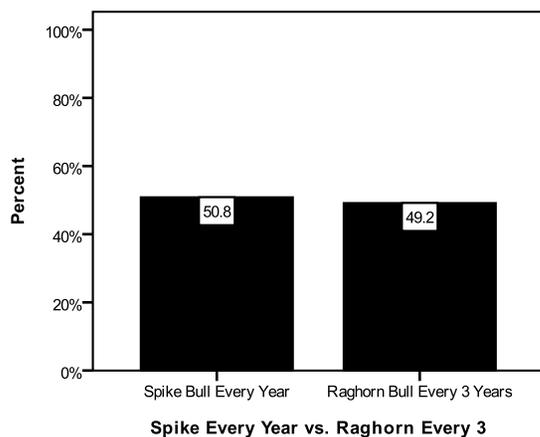
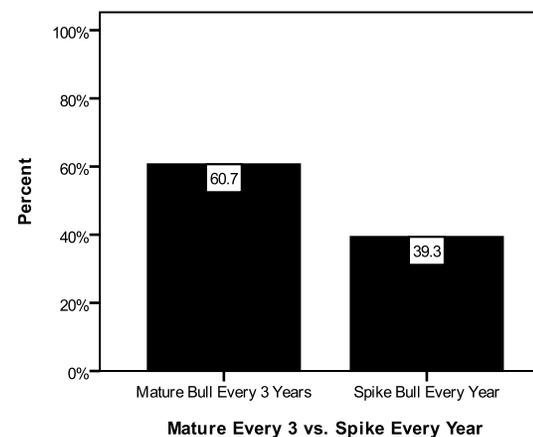
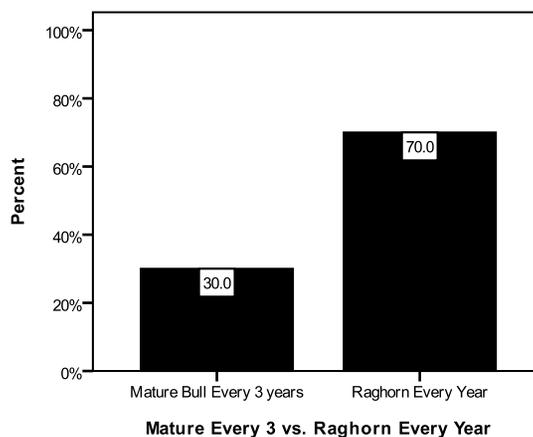
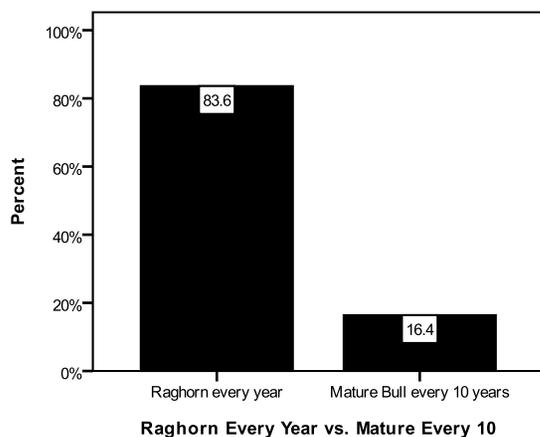


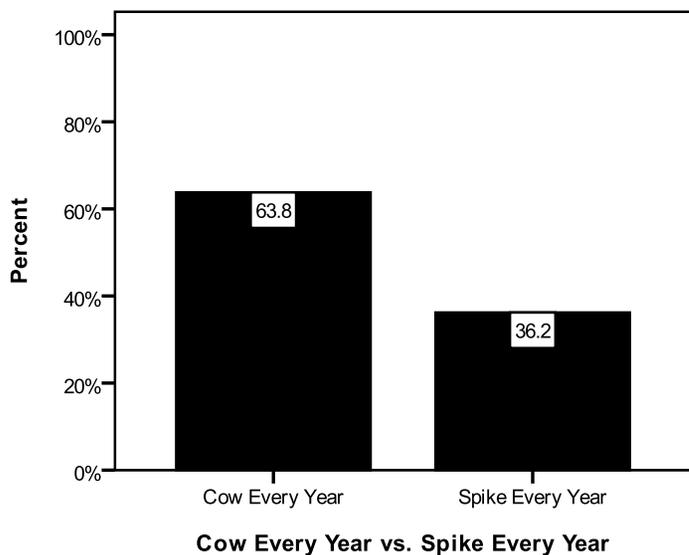


Q28: Responses from the Palisades zone and the state average are very similar. The top four reasons were the same for both groups, but Palisades hunters thought testing abilities and keeping physically fit were more important than being with friends or doing something with their family.

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.

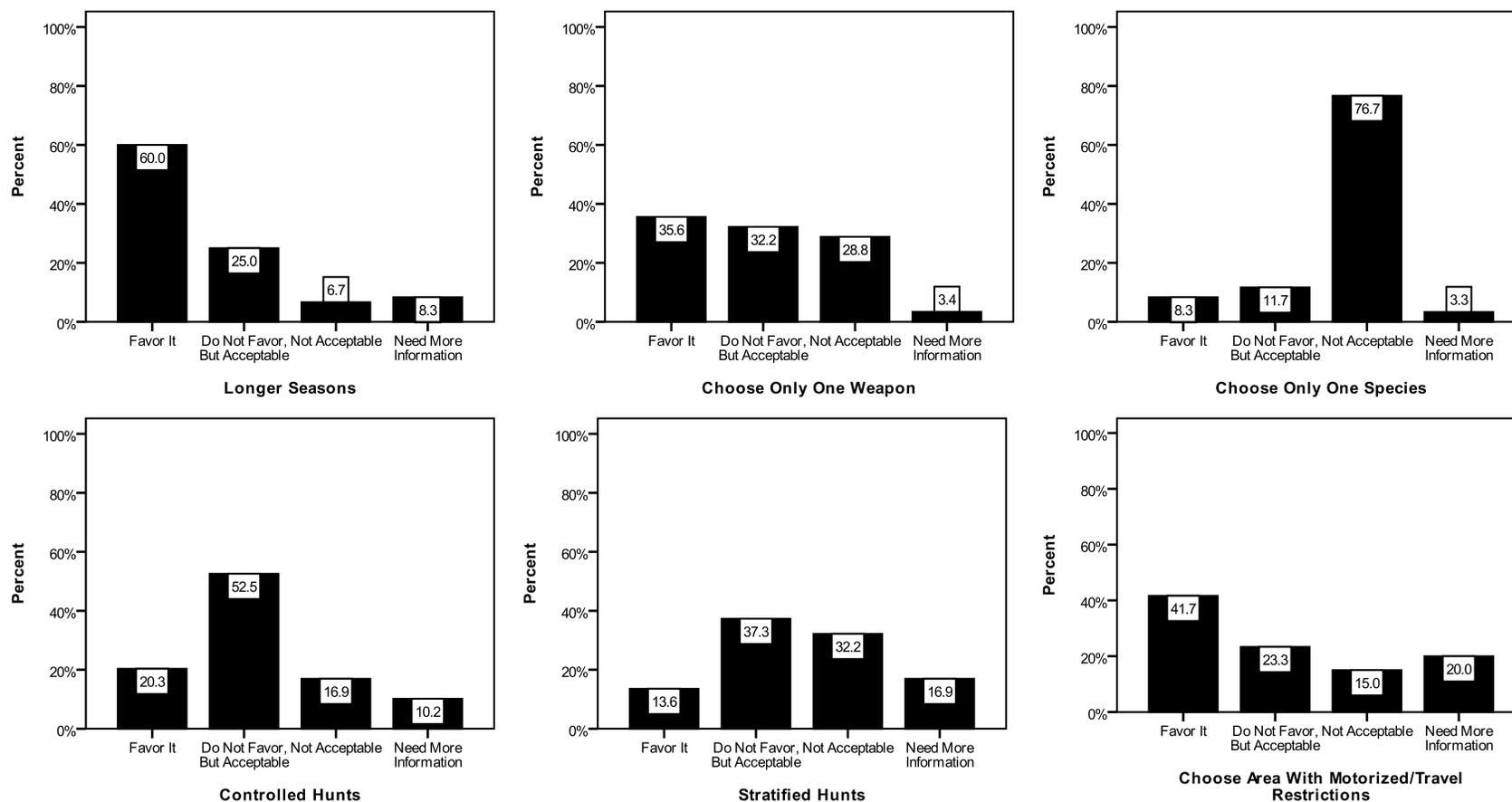


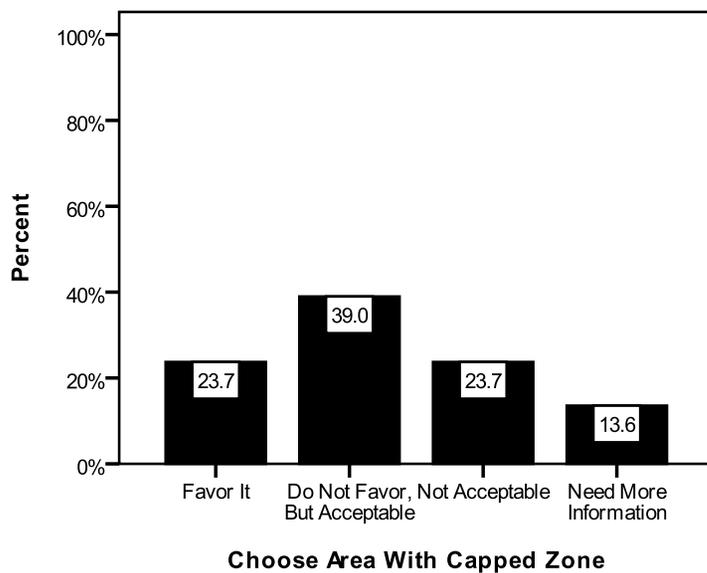


Q32: Hunters would much rather have the opportunity to hunt more often than harvest a larger Elk.

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

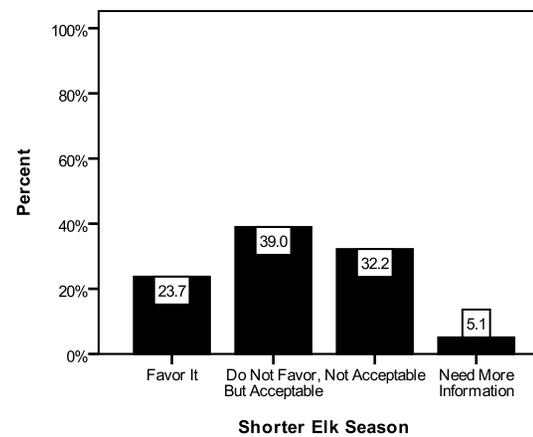
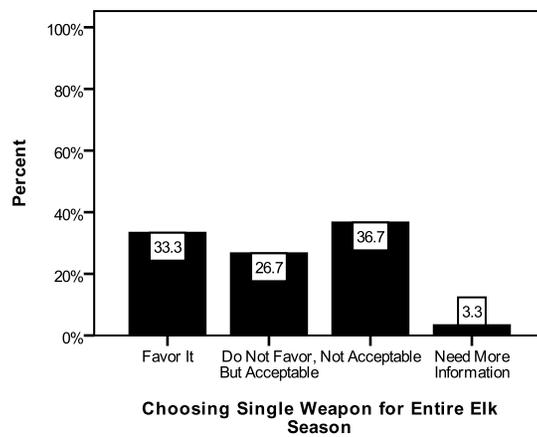
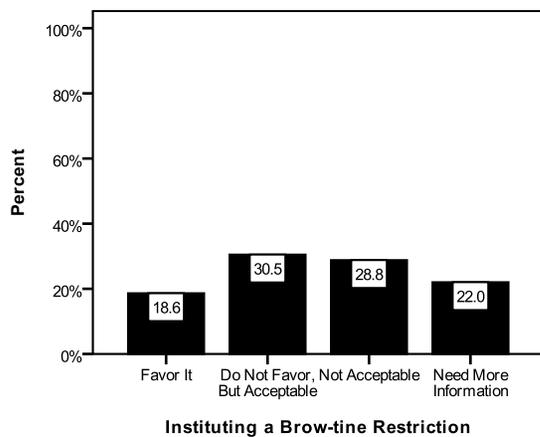
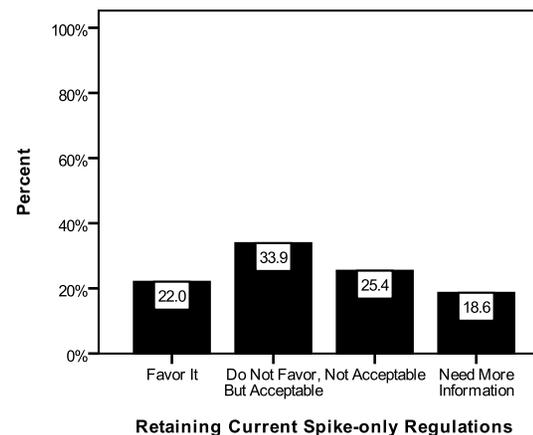
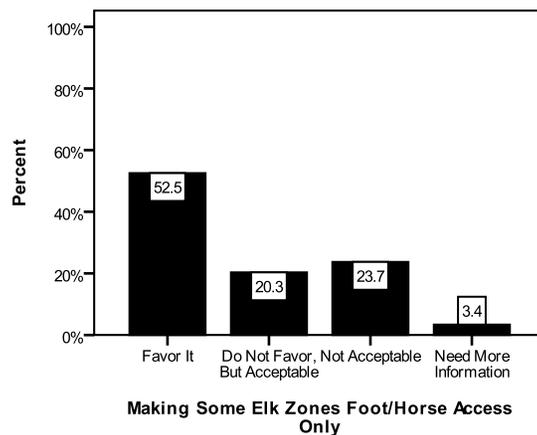
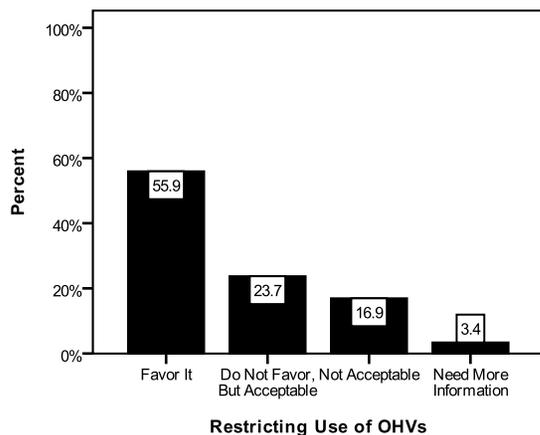
34. How do you feel about each of the following potential ways of improving Elk hunting, if needed?

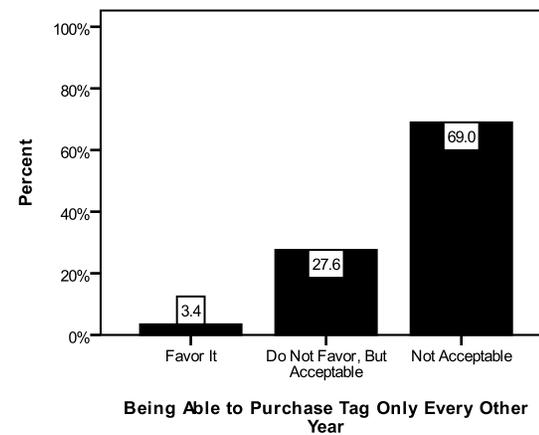
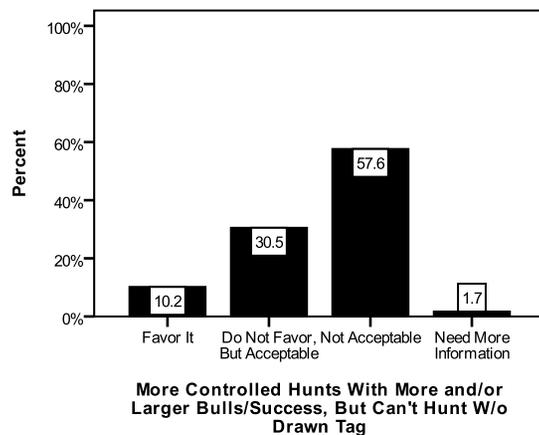
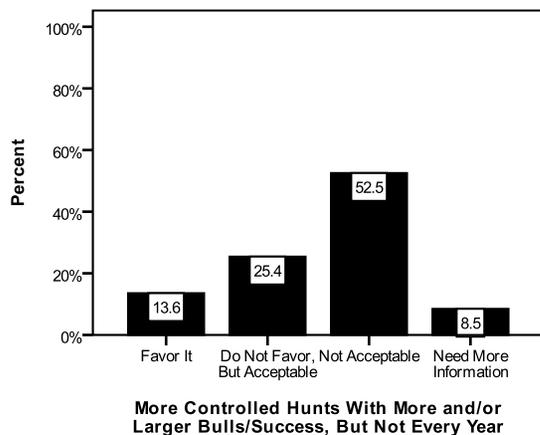




Q34: Most hunters in this zone found that lengthening the seasons was the most acceptable management strategy. The least acceptable option would be to choose only one species. These findings are very similar to responses at the state level.

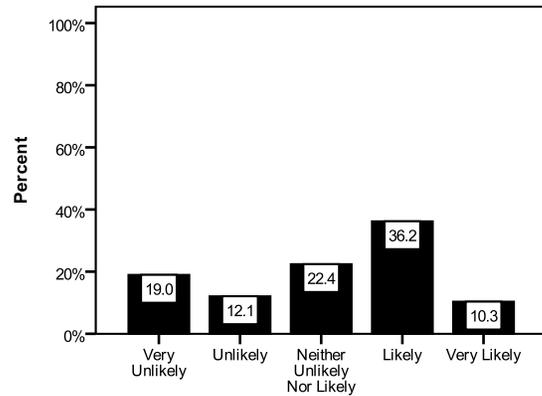
35. We would like to know how you feel about the following potential restrictions to increase the quality and size of Elk in Idaho and improve Elk hunting opportunities. Please indicate your opinion on the following potential restrictions.



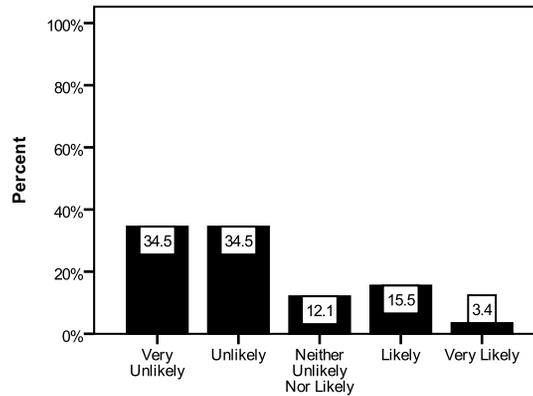


Q35: Like the state average, Palisades respondents found it most acceptable to restrict the use of OHVs or to make some zones foot/horse access only. The least acceptable options were more controlled hunts with more and/or larger bulls/success, but not every year, more controlled hunts with more and/or larger bulls/success, but can't hunt without a drawn tag, or being able to purchase a tag only every other year.

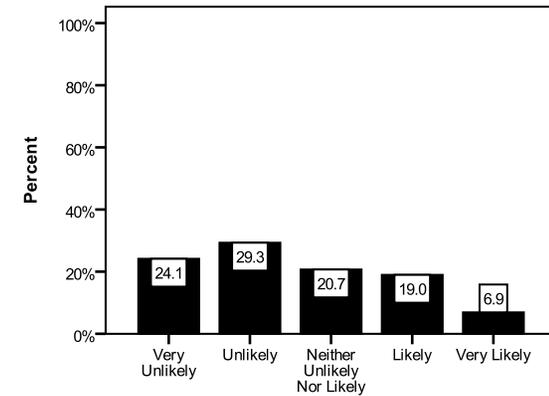
36. *IF* Idaho Fish and Game introduces restrictions that reduce Elk hunting opportunities to improve Elk populations, how would your hunting behavior change?



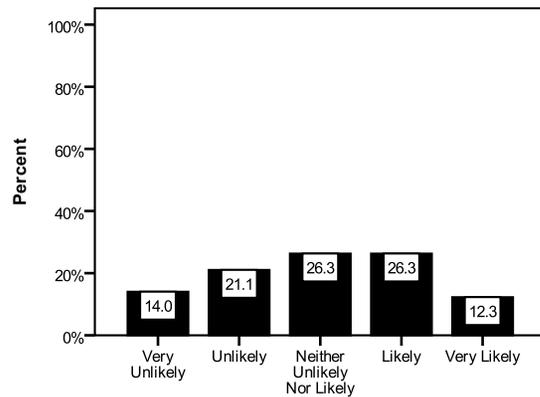
Hunt in Different Zones



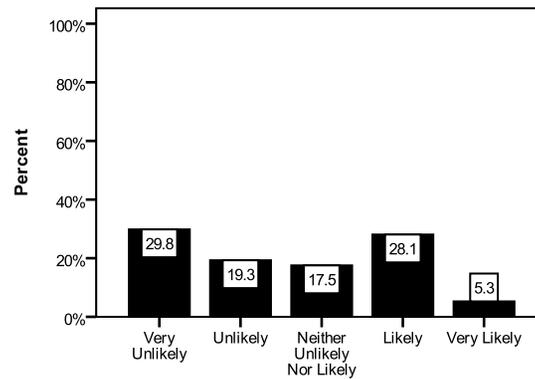
Quit Hunting Elk



Shift to Hunt Other Species



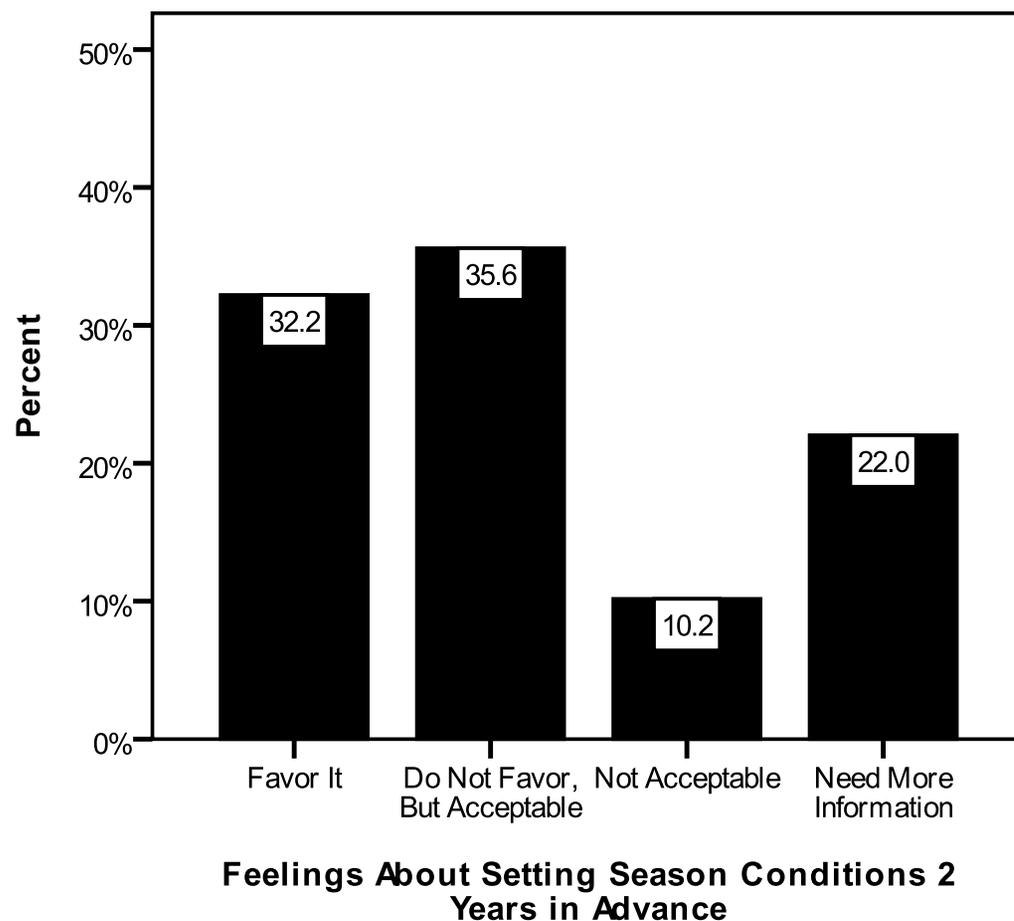
Not Change Hunting Behavior



Change Weapon Type for Increased Elk Hunting Opportunity

Q36: Almost half (46.5%) of hunters from the Palisades zone would most likely hunt in different zones if their opportunities were limited in this zone. Over one-third would not change their hunting behavior at all. Similar to the state, a majority thought it unlikely or very unlikely that they would quit hunting for Elk.

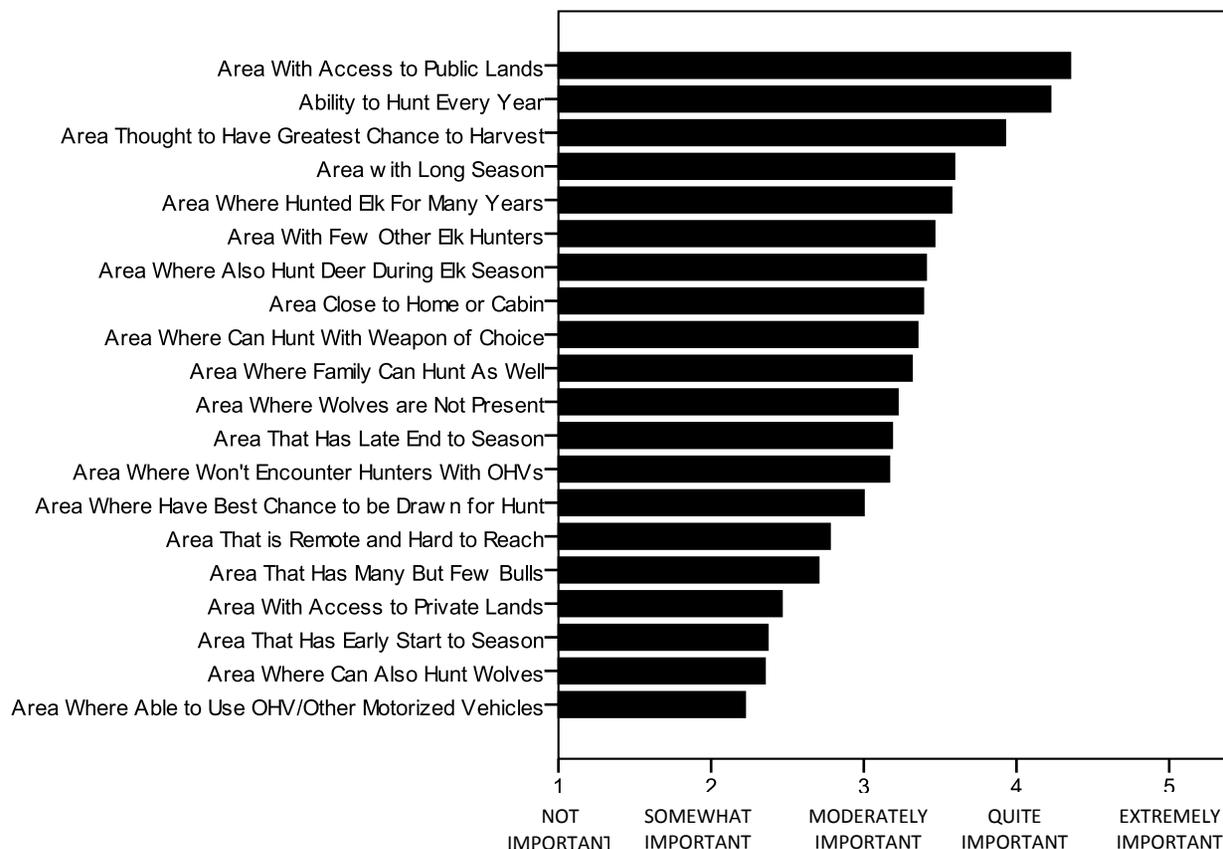
38. How would you feel about a big game regulation that sets the general season conditions for 2 years in advance, just like the current Moose, Mountain Goat, Bighorn Sheep, Upland Game, Turkey and Fishing regulations? (Please check one response)



Q38: Over two-thirds of respondents favor or find it acceptable to setting season conditions 2 years in advance. A majority at the state level also agree with this. Almost a quarter of respondents, however, need more information.

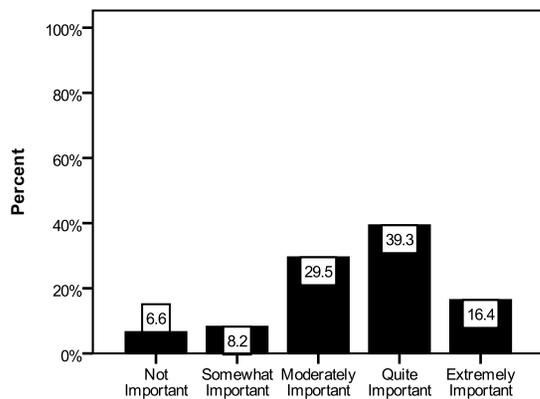
WHEN AND WHERE TO HUNT

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

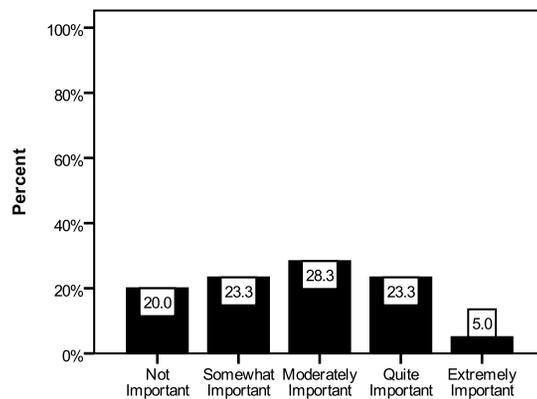


Q29: The top three characteristics reported in the Palisades zone are the same as the state average. However, to round off their top five, hunters in this zone also value an area with a long season and an area where they have hunted Elk for many years.

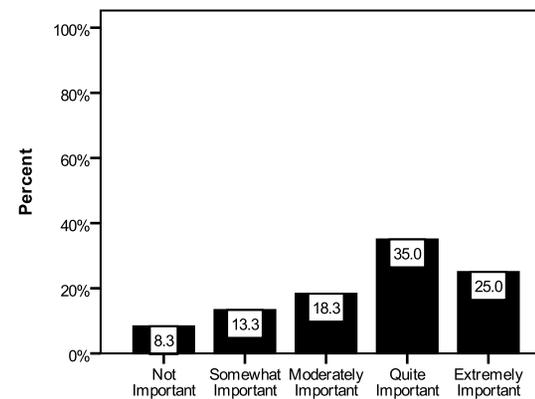
CHARACTERISTICS AFFECTING CHOICE OF WHERE TO HUNT IN IDAHO



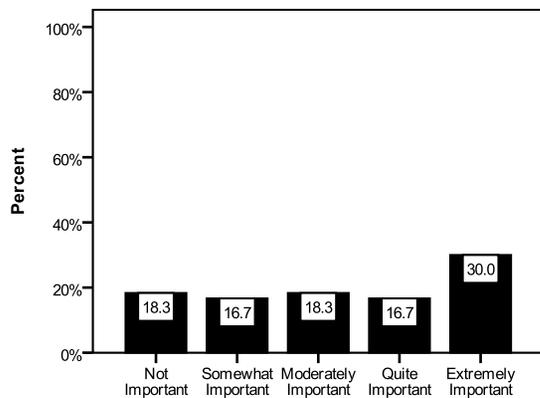
Area With Few Other Elk Hunters



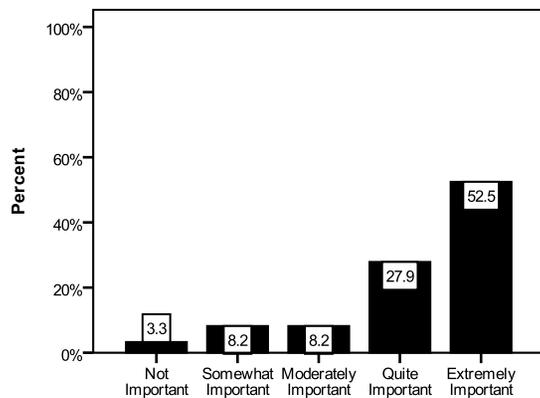
Area That Has Many But Few Bulls



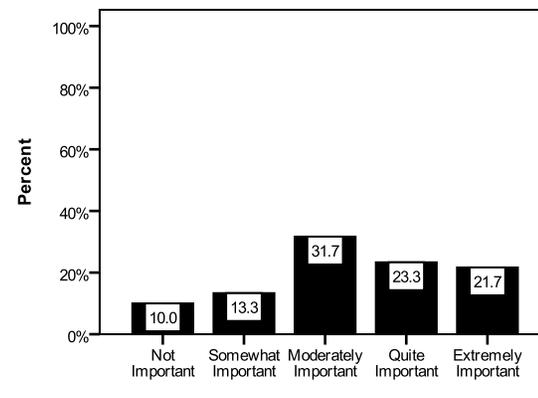
Area Where Hunted Elk For Many Years



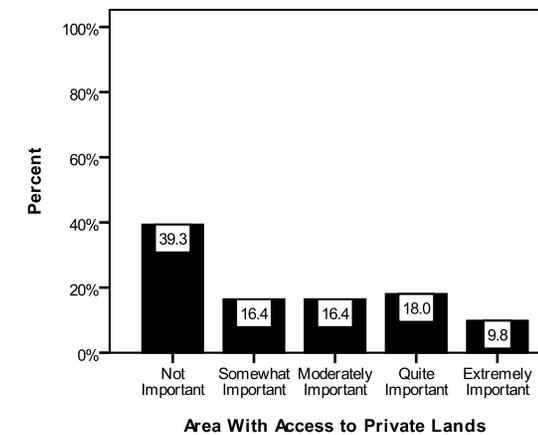
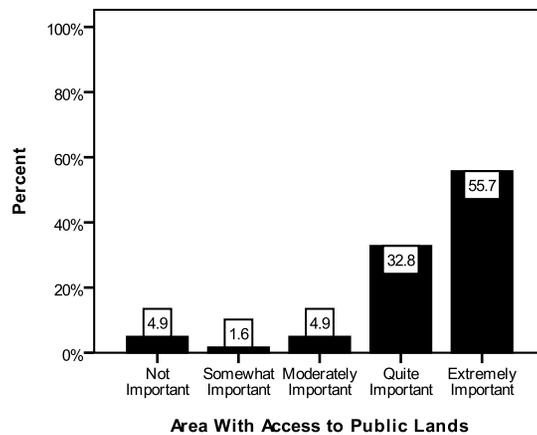
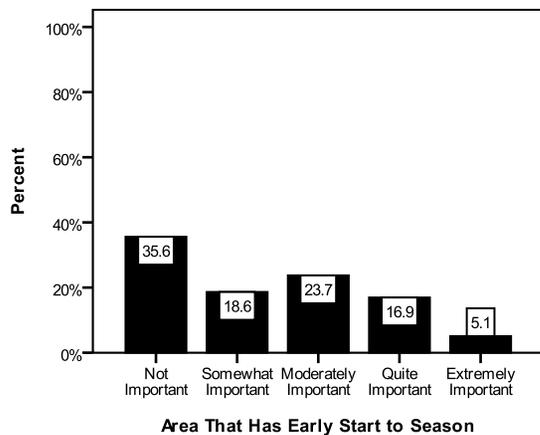
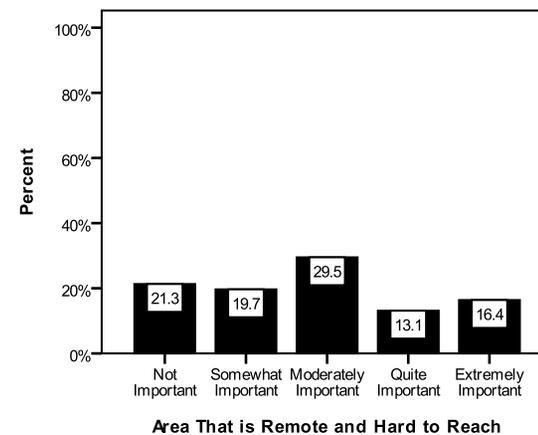
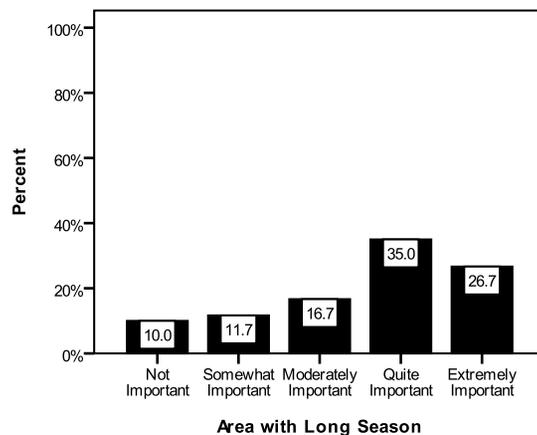
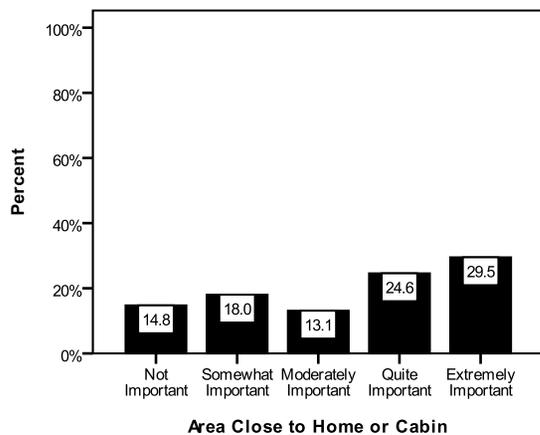
Area Where Family Can Hunt As Well

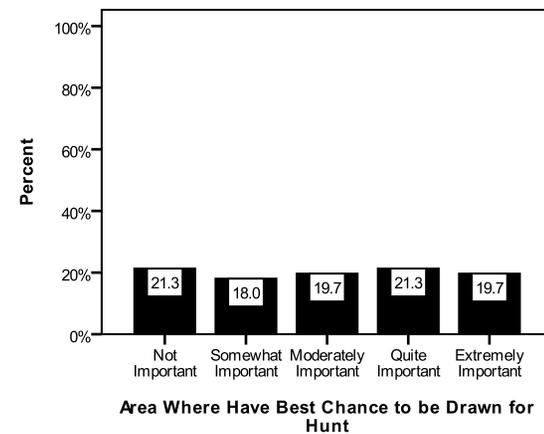
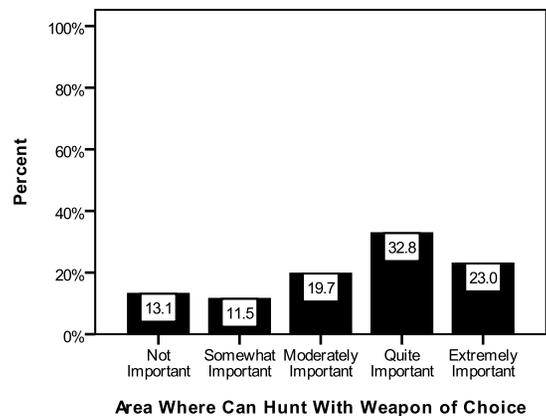
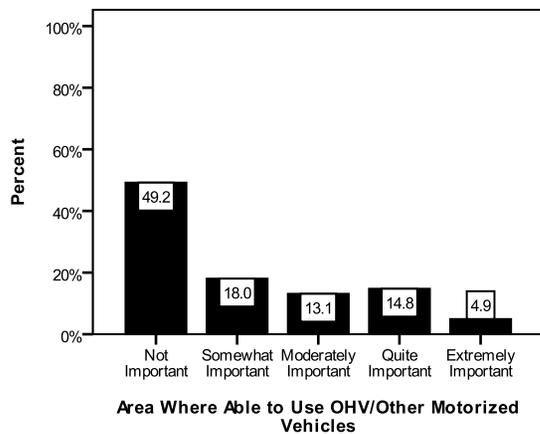
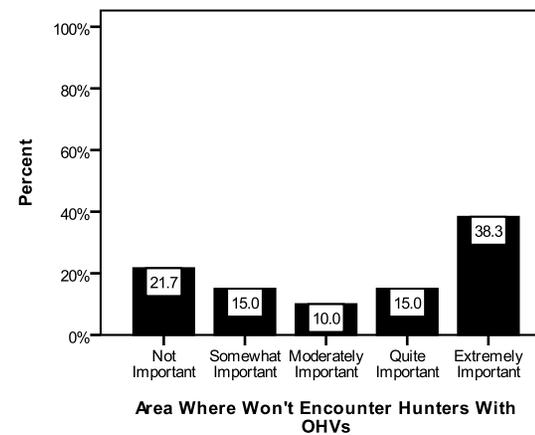
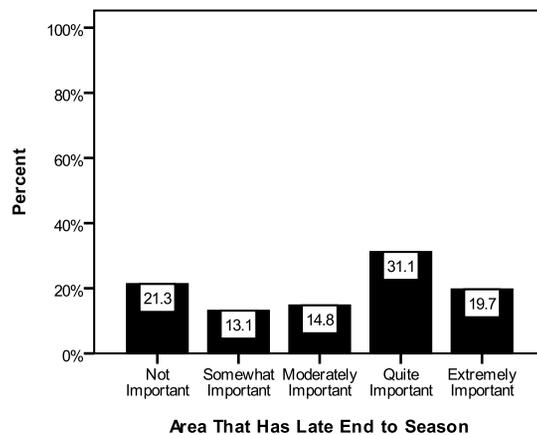
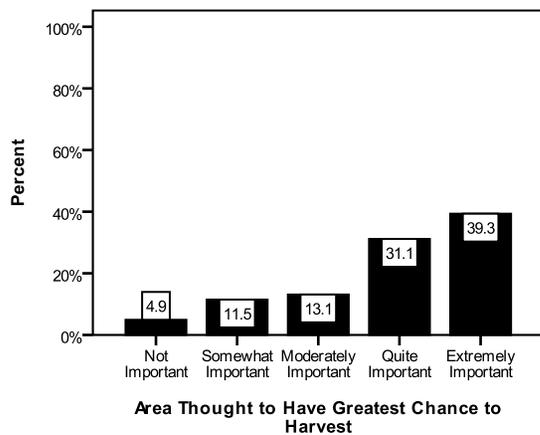


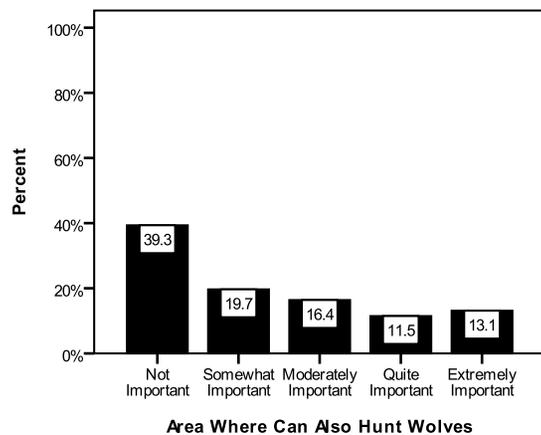
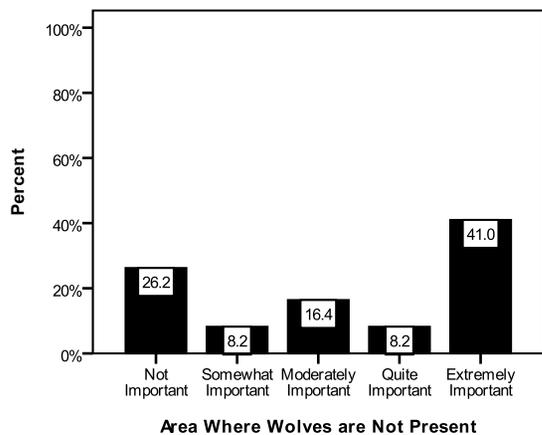
Ability to Hunt Every Year



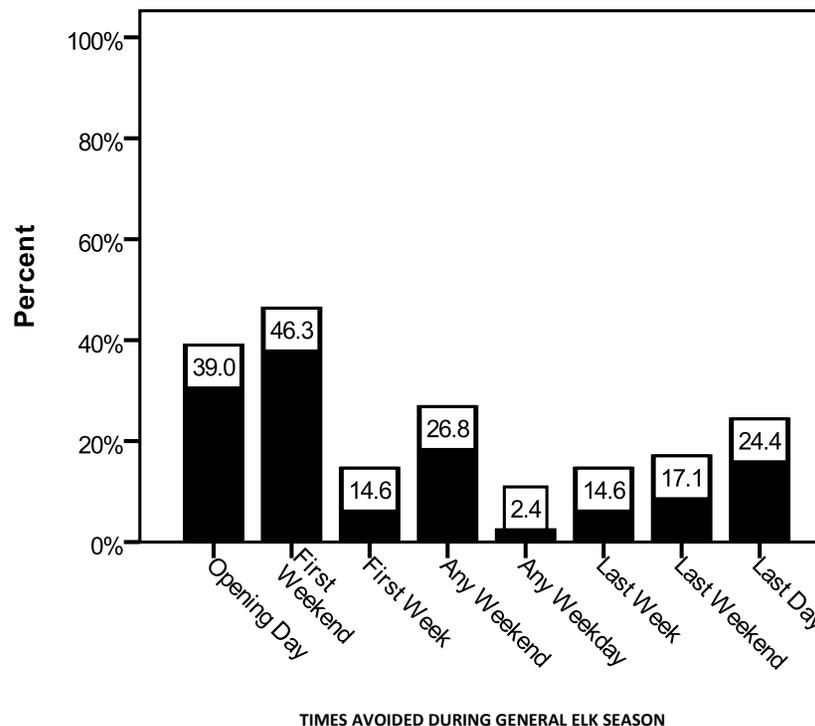
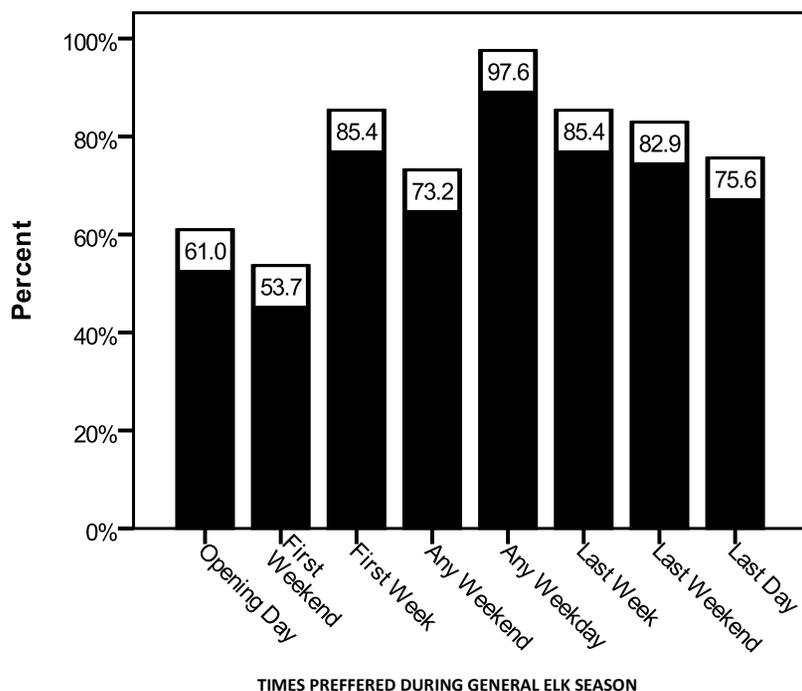
Area Where Also Hunt Deer During Elk Season







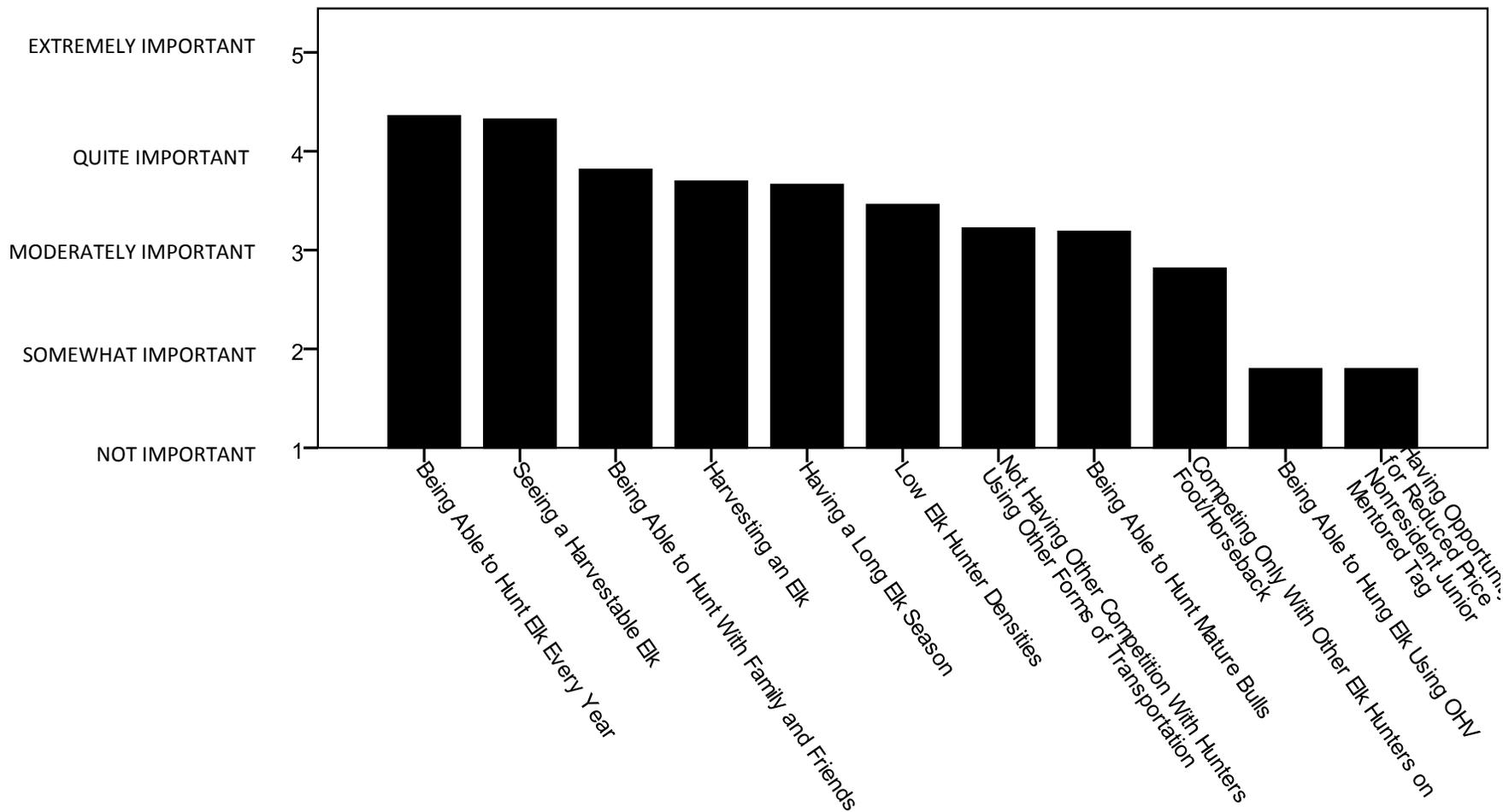
30. Are there any times during the general Elk hunting season in Idaho that you prefer or avoid? (Please check as many as apply)



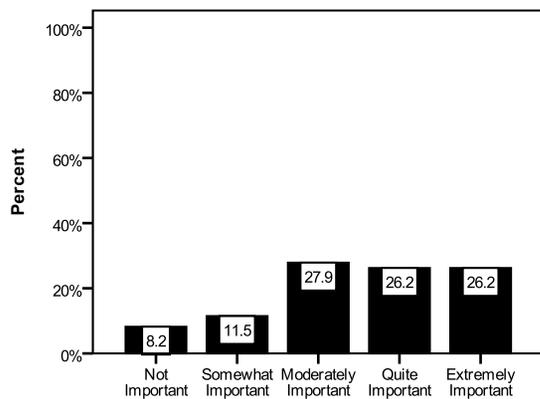
Q30: The preferences of hunters in the Palisades zones are the same as those at the state level. Hunters tend to prefer to hunt on any weekday, during the last week of the season and during the first week. They tend to avoid the first weekend, opening day and any weekend in general.

ATTRIBUTES OF A QUALITY ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE

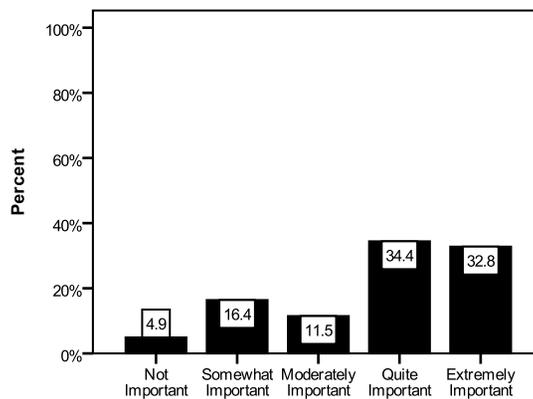
31. How important to you are each of these attributes for a quality Idaho Elk hunting experience?



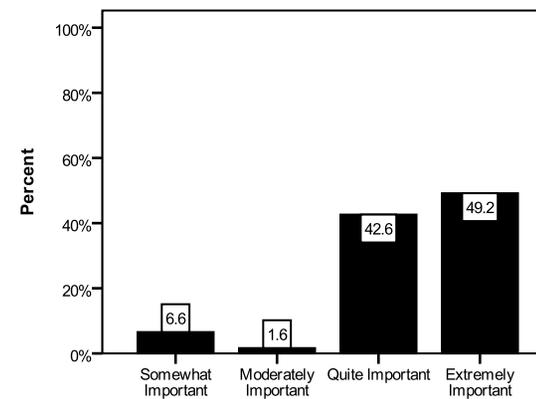
IMPORTANCE OF ATTRIBUTES FOR A QUALITY ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE IN IDAHO



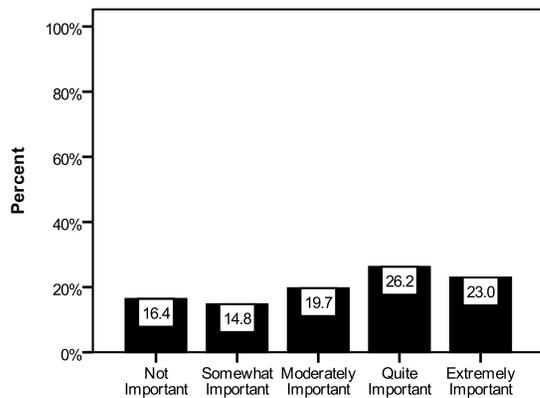
Low Elk Hunter Densities



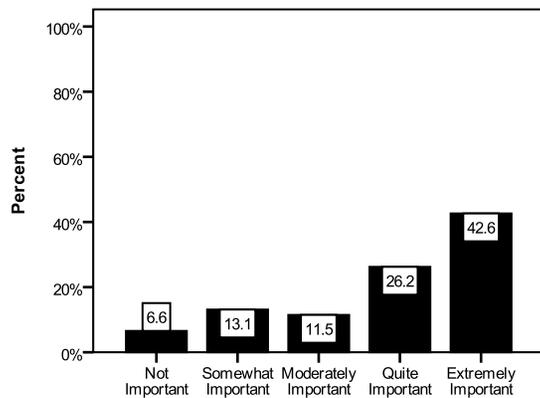
Harvesting an Elk



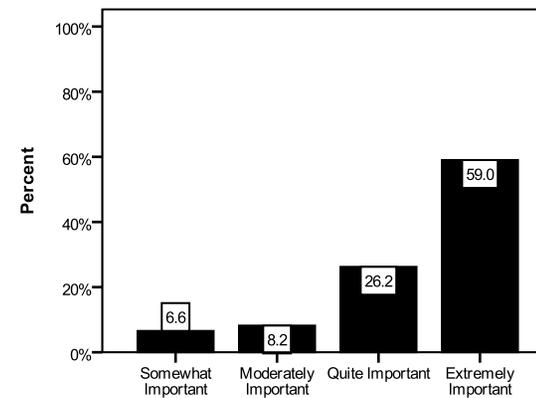
Seeing a Harvestable Elk



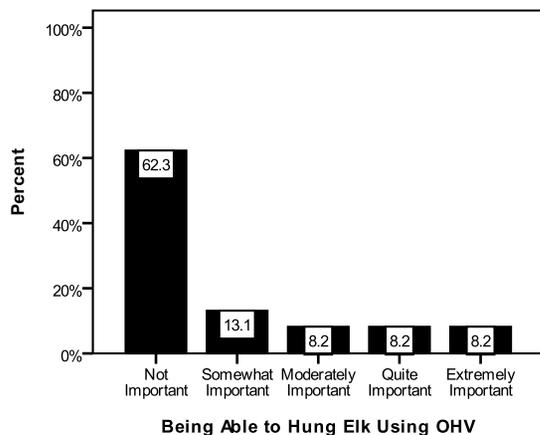
Being Able to Hunt Mature Bulls



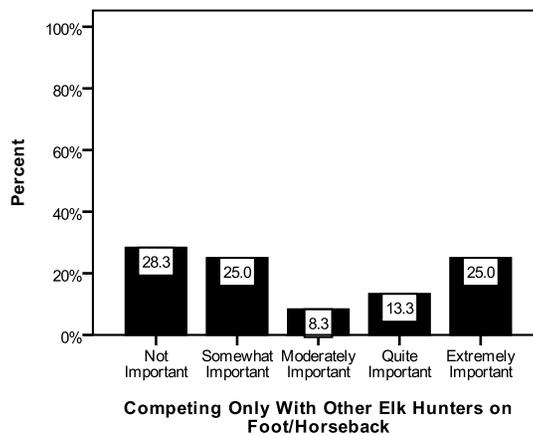
Being Able to Hunt With Family and Friends



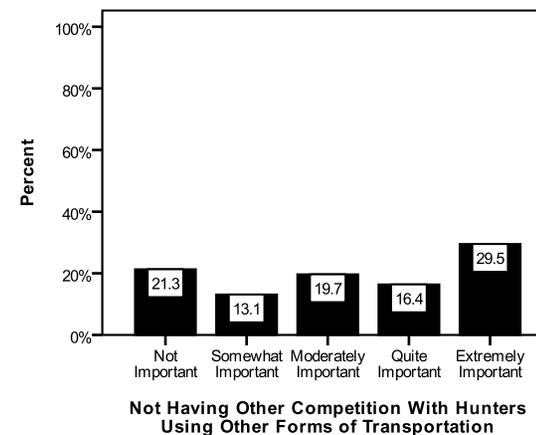
Being Able to Hunt Elk Every Year



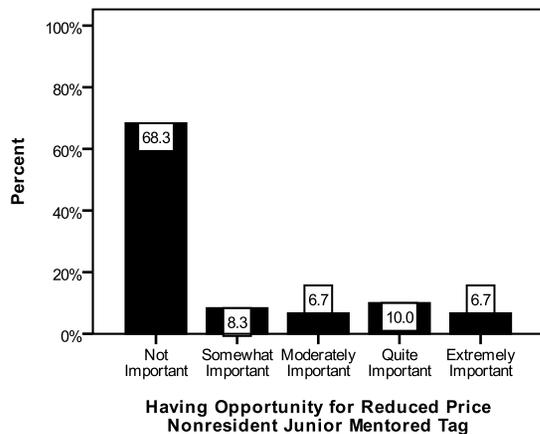
Being Able to Hunt Elk Using OHV



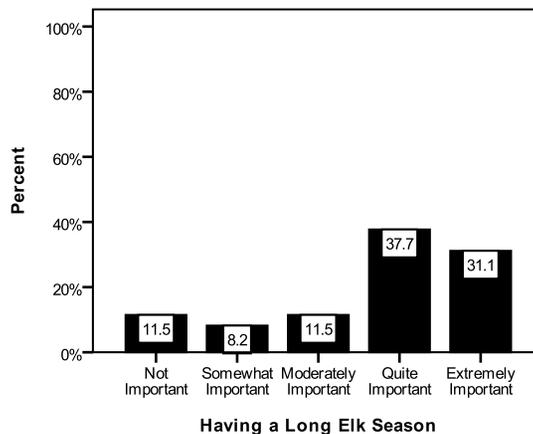
Competing Only With Other Elk Hunters on Foot/Horseback



Not Having Other Competition With Hunters Using Other Forms of Transportation



Having Opportunity for Reduced Price Nonresident Junior Mentored Tag

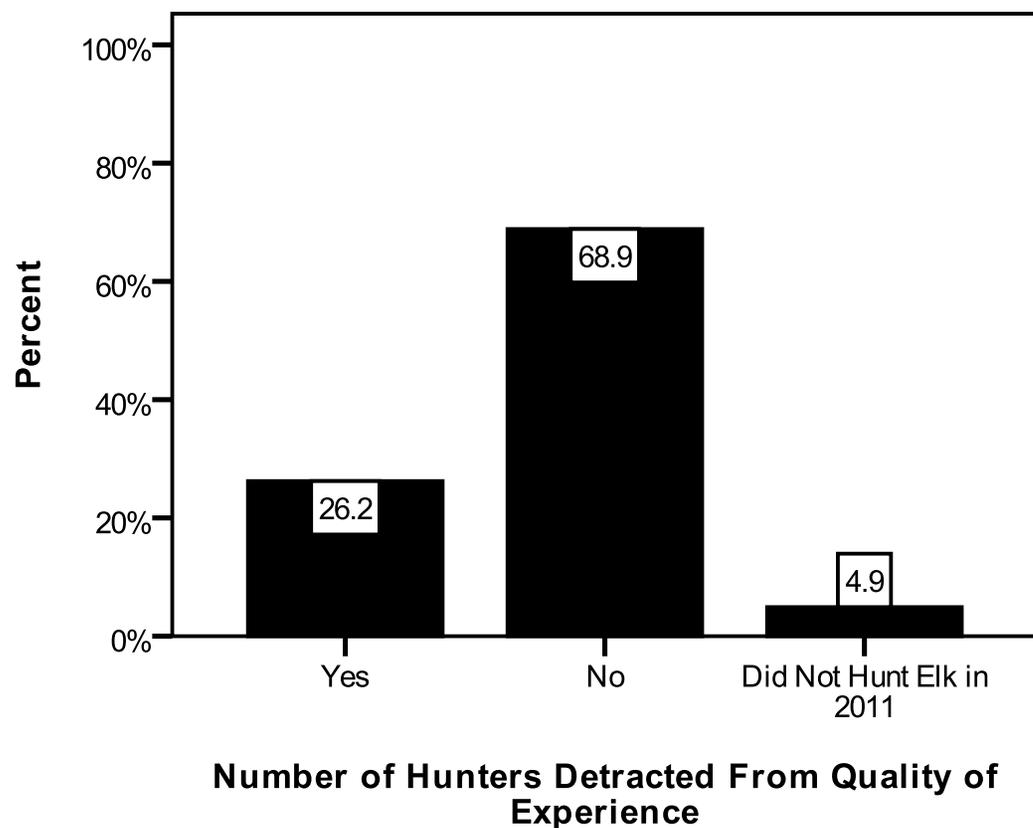


Having a Long Elk Season

Q31: The top four attributes to a quality hunting experience were the same in the Palisades zone as the state average. However, Palisades hunters tend to value having a longer Elk season more than being able to hunt mature bulls.

HUNTING SATISFACTION

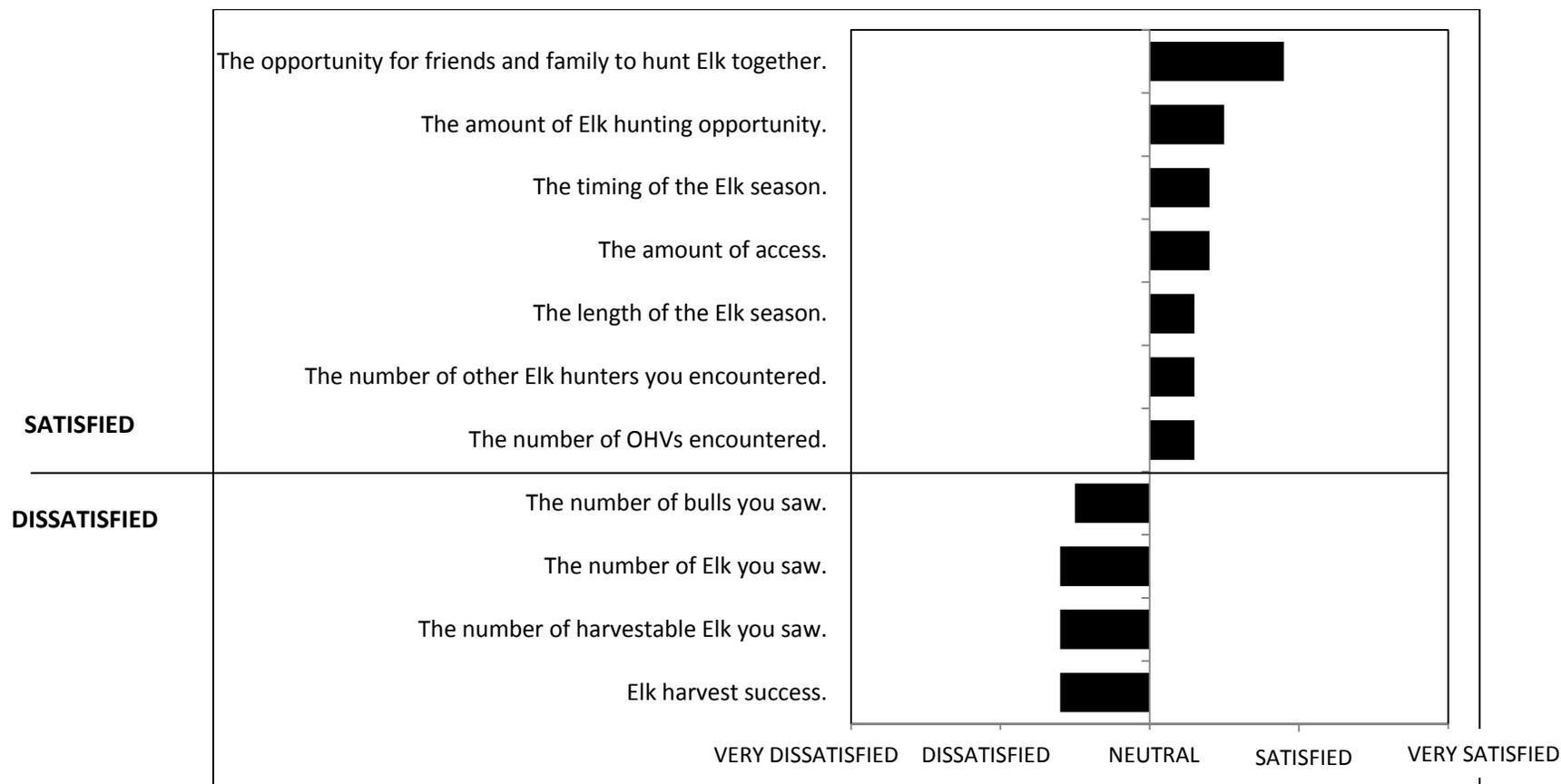
33. Were there times during your 2011 Elk season when the numbers of other hunters seriously detracted from the quality of your hunting experience? *(Please check one response)*



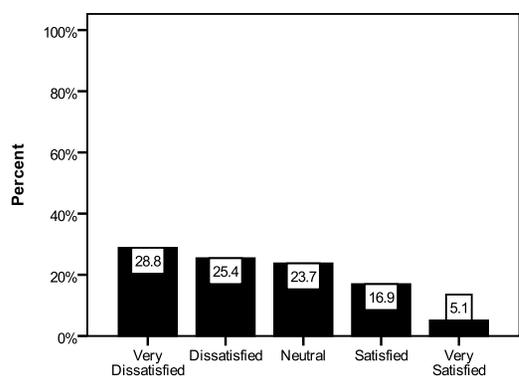
Q33: Less hunters in the Palisades zone thought that their hunting experience had been negatively affected by the number of hunters than the state average.

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

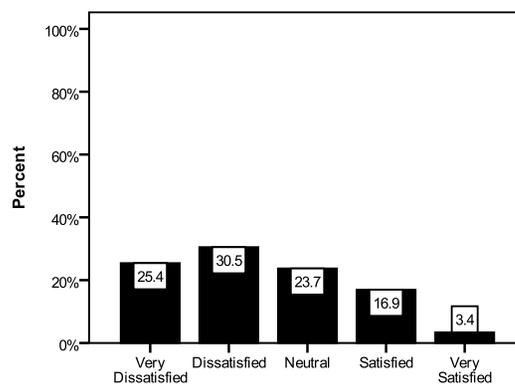
37. How satisfied were you with each of the following aspects of your 2011 Elk hunting experience?



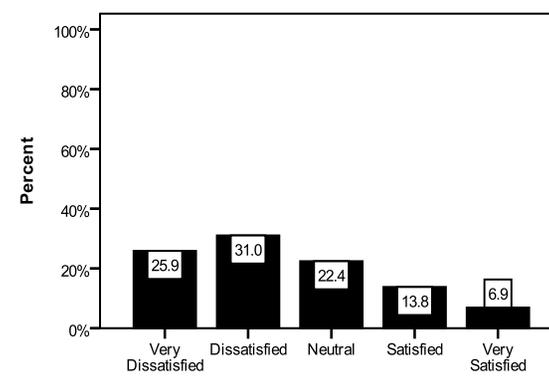
SATISFACTION OF ASPECTS OF 2011 ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE



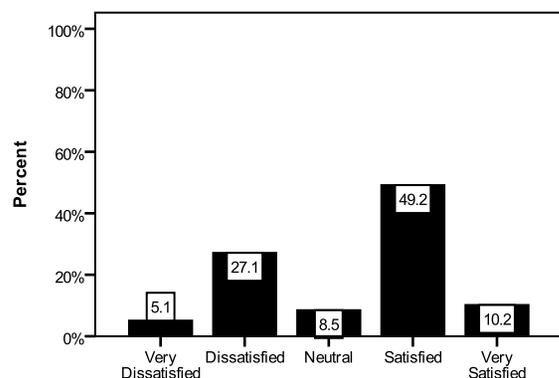
Number of Elk Seen



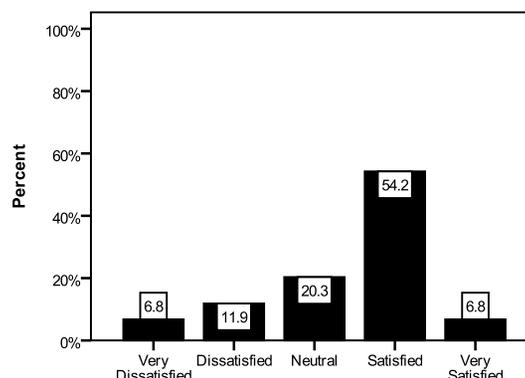
Number of Harvestable Elk Seen



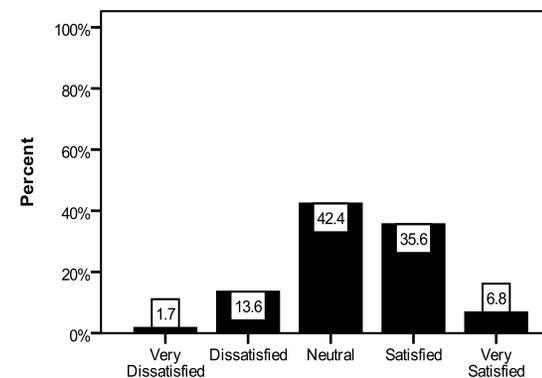
Number of Bulls Seen



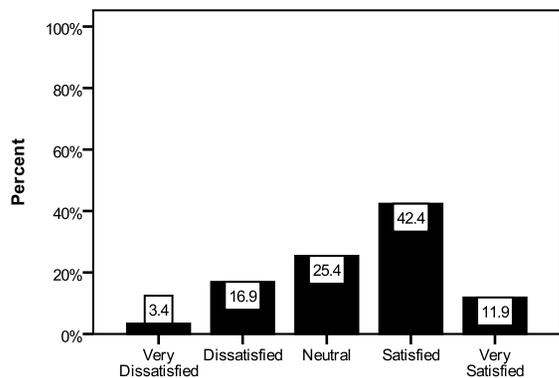
Length of Elk Season



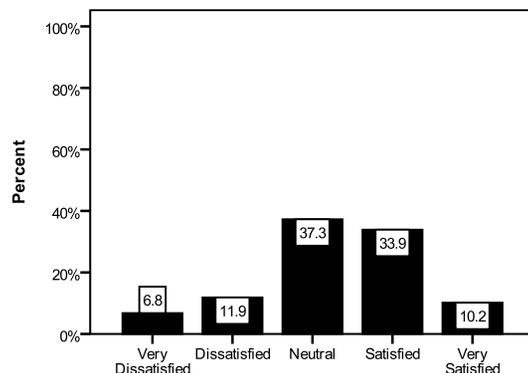
Timing of Elk Season



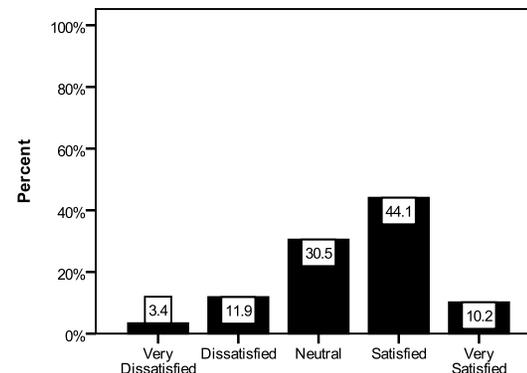
Number of Elk Hunters Encountered



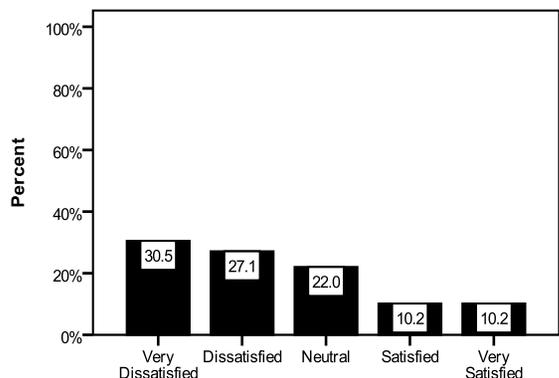
Amount of Access



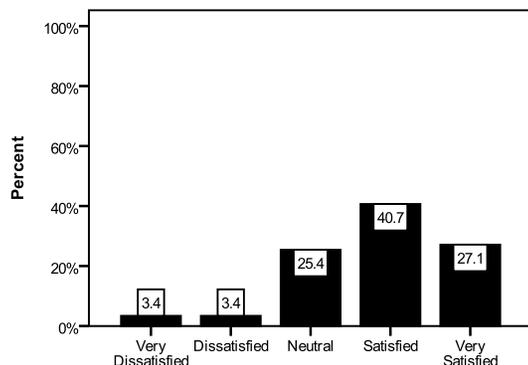
Number of OHVs Encountered



Amount of Elk Hunting Opportunity



Elk Harvest Success



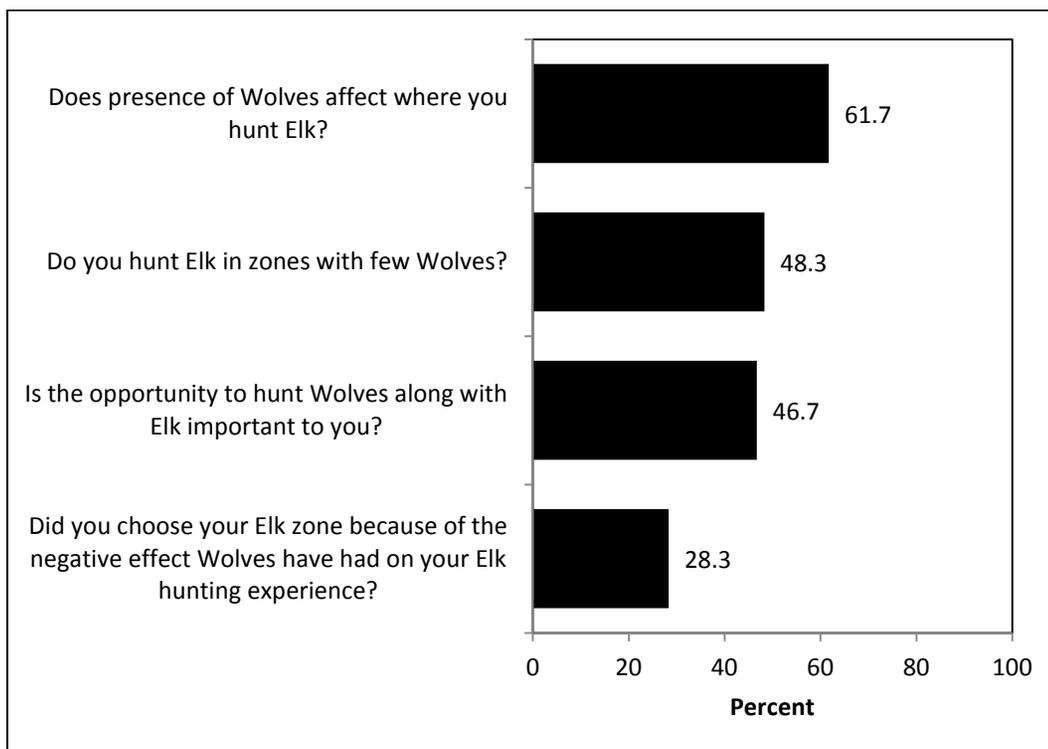
Opportunity for Family and Friends to Hunt Together

Q37: The amount of opportunity to hunt together with friends and family top both scales for the state average and the Palisades zone. The number of Elk, harvestable Elk, and bulls seen and harvest success are four aspects that were of dissatisfaction for Palisades hunters and the state.

PERCEPTIONS OF PREDATORS

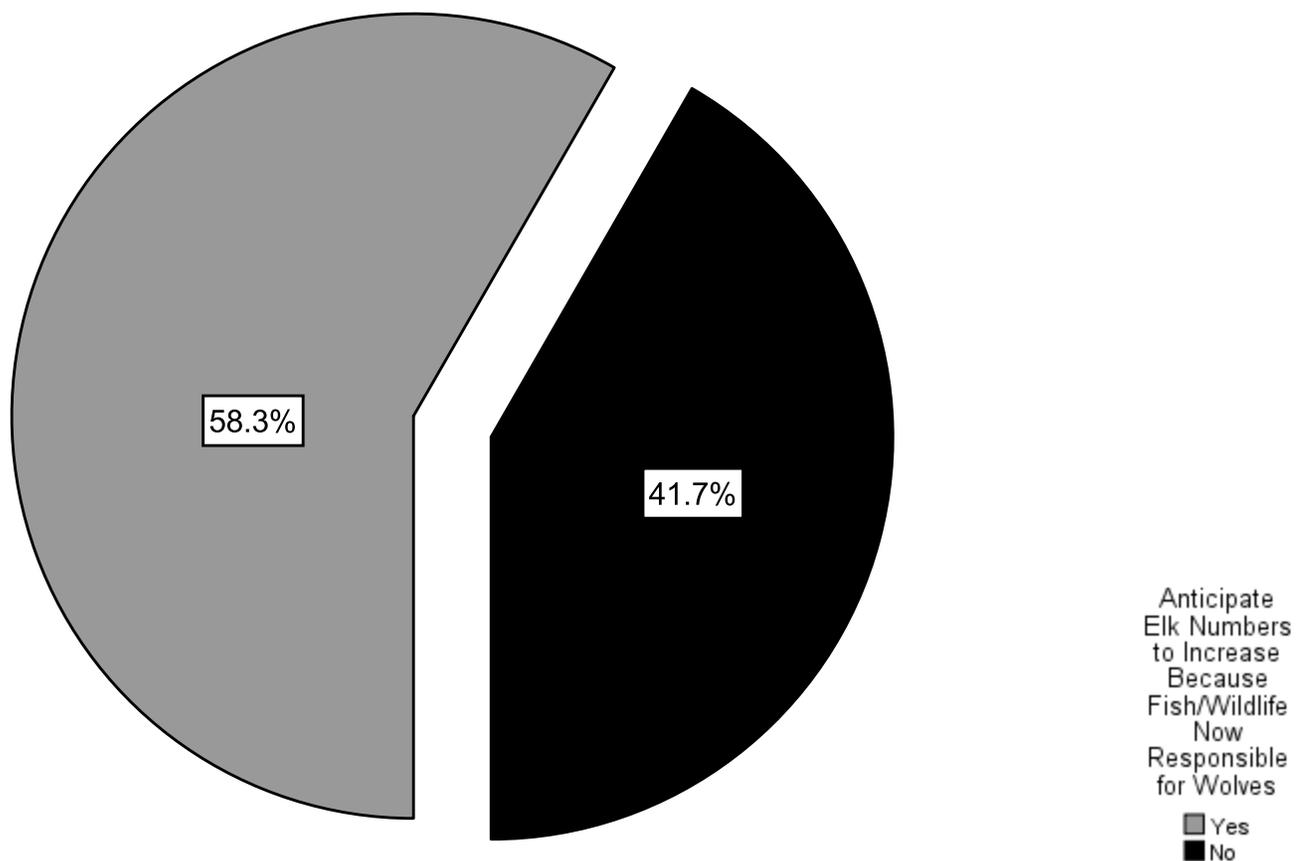
Two questions about predators in Idaho.

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



Q39: The presences of Wolves most significantly affected where respondents hunted both in the Palisades zone and among the state average. In the Palisades zone, almost half of hunters hunted in a zone with few Wolves and said that the opportunity to hunt Wolves along with Elk was important.

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



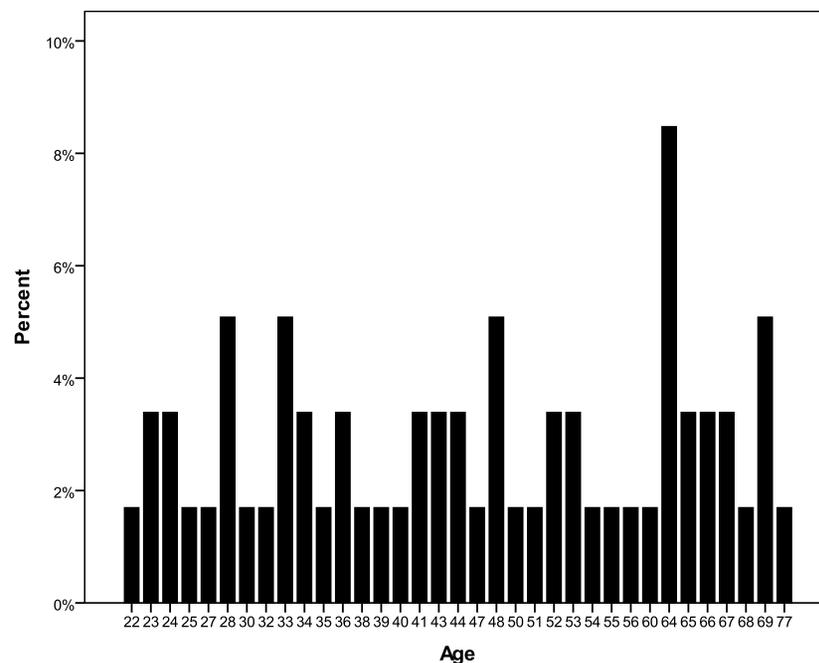
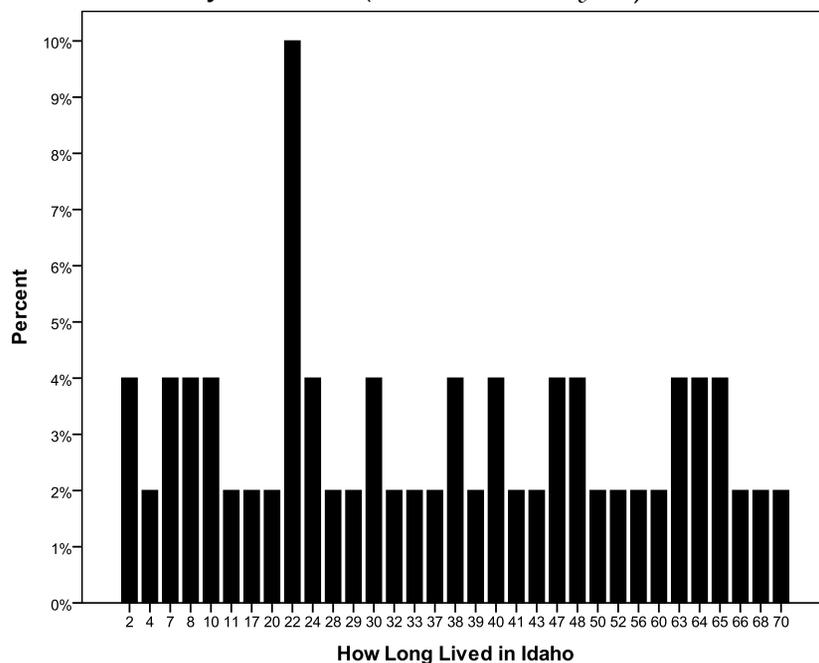
Q40: A majority of respondents anticipate that Elk numbers will increase with IDFG management of Wolves, similar to state wide results.

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 ranges of age and length of residency are smaller for the Palisades zone than the state average.