

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

August 2012

INSERT ELK SURVEY OBJECTIVES

METHODS

SAMPLING

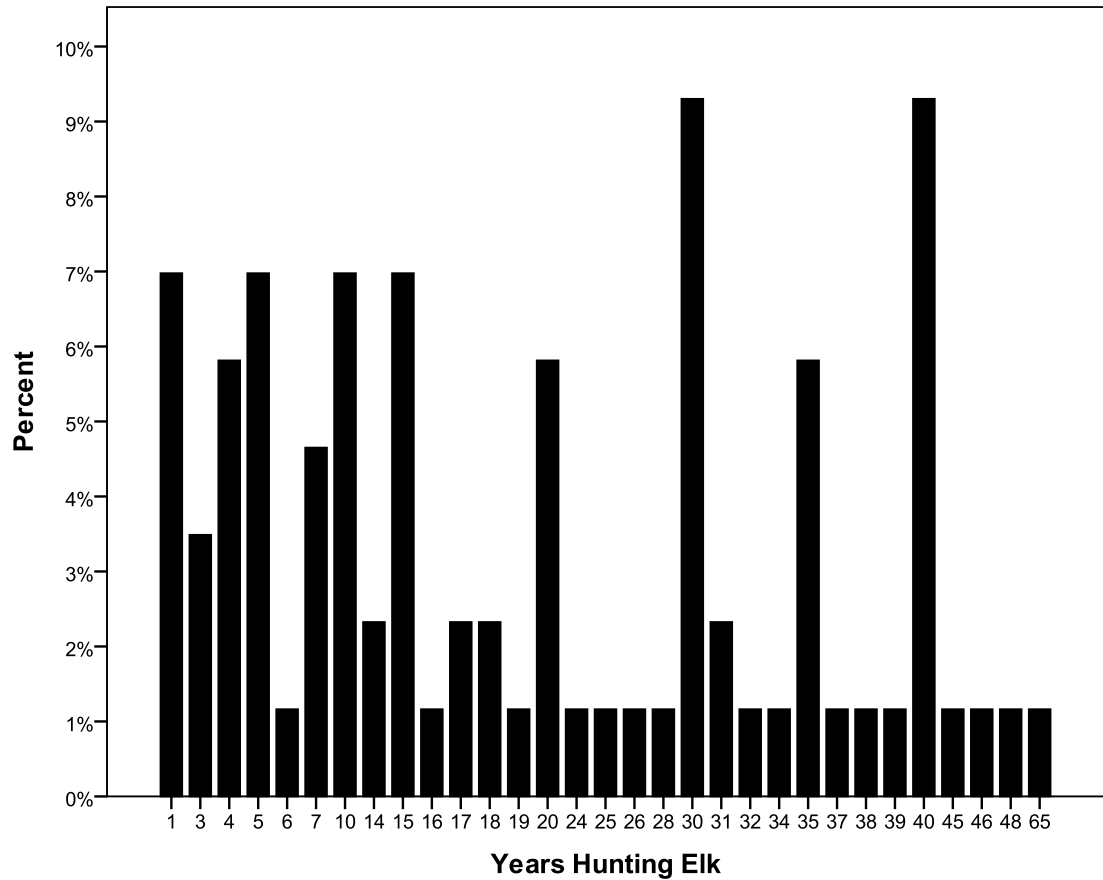
RESPONSE RATE.

ELK HUNTER PROFILES

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

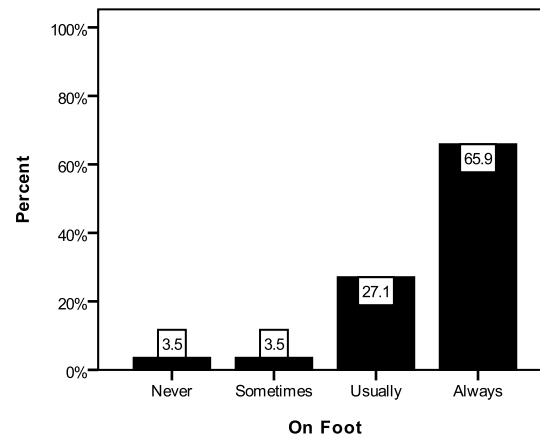
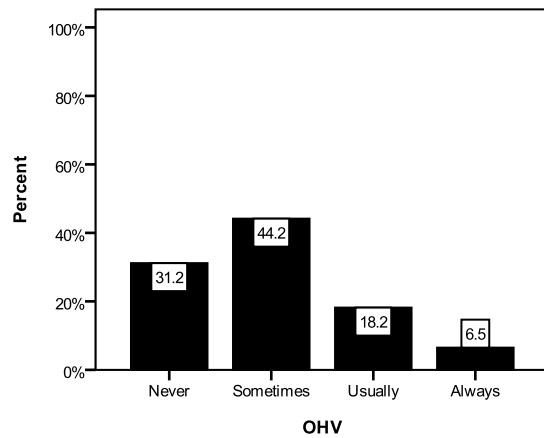
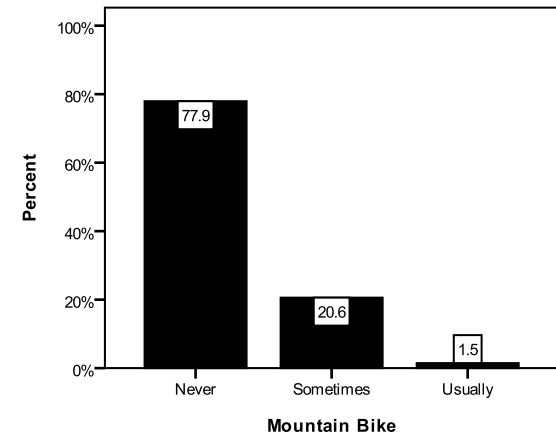
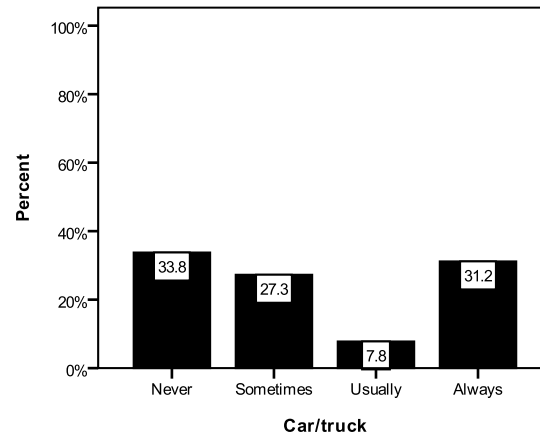
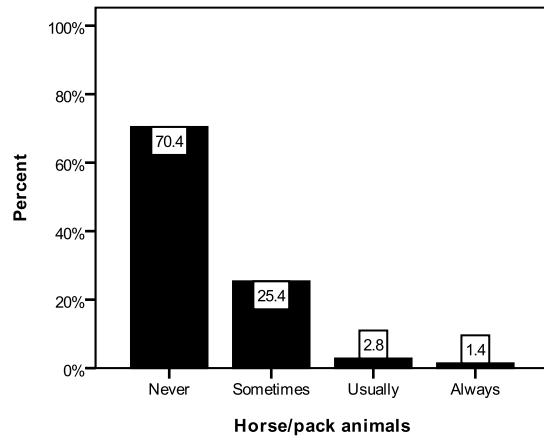
Now, some questions about your Idaho Elk hunting experiences and preferences.

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



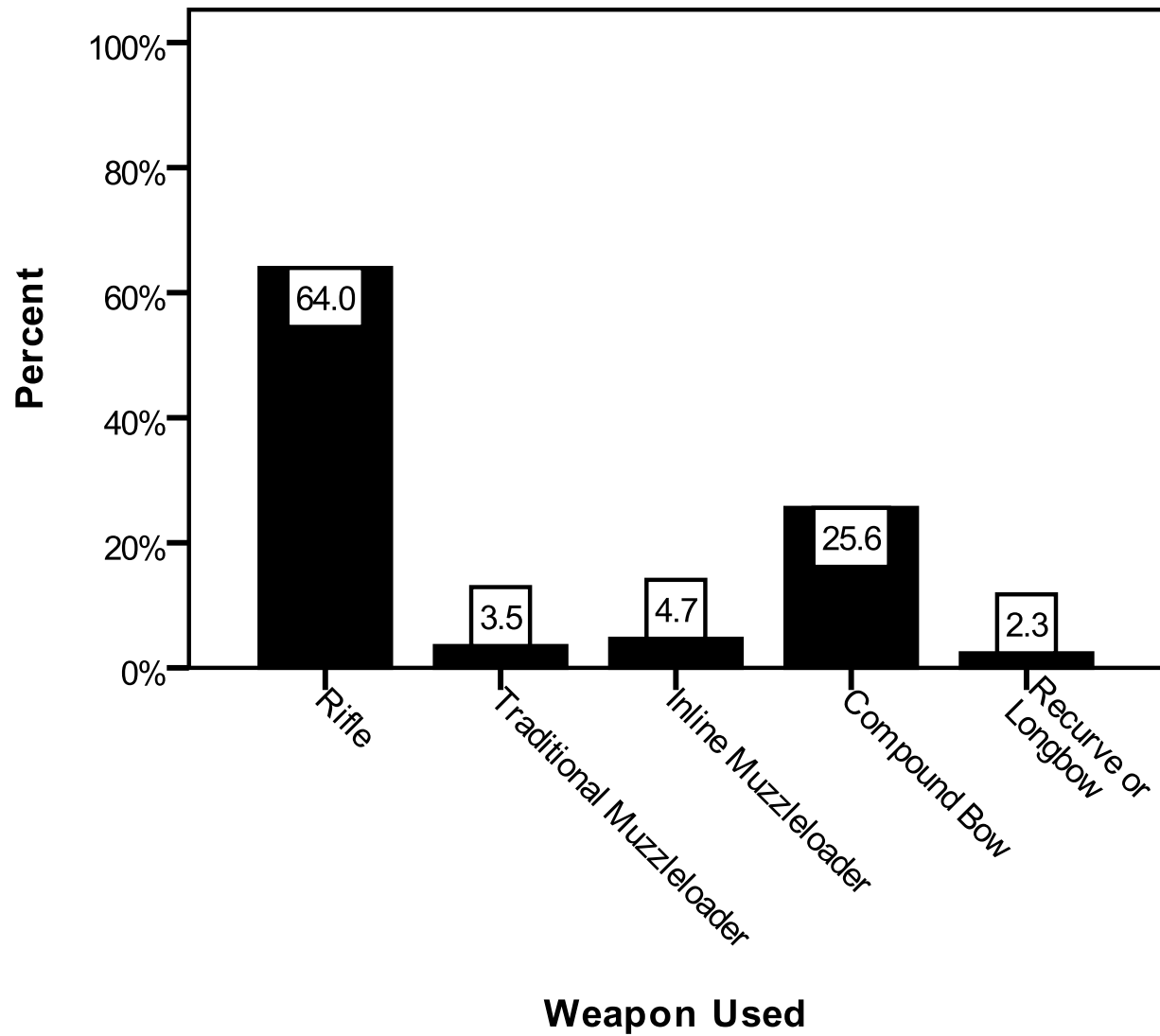
Q3: The distribution of responses for the Palouse zone follows a similar pattern as the state average.

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



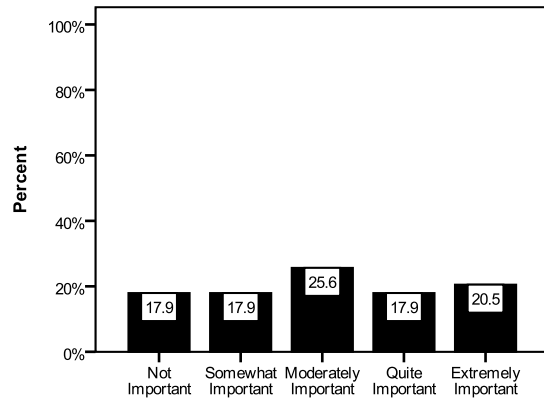
Q7: The distribution of responses between the Palouse zone and the state average are similar.

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

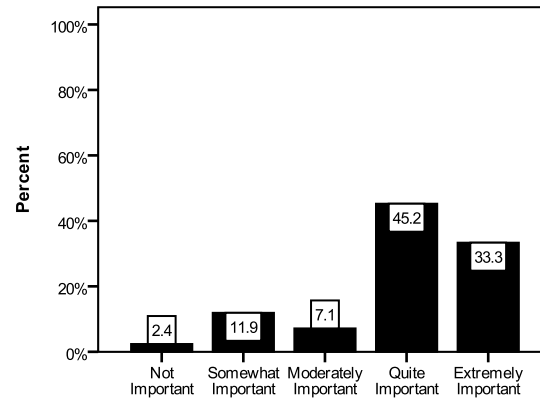


Q8: Rifles and compound bows remain the most typically used weapon between both the Palouse zone and the state average.

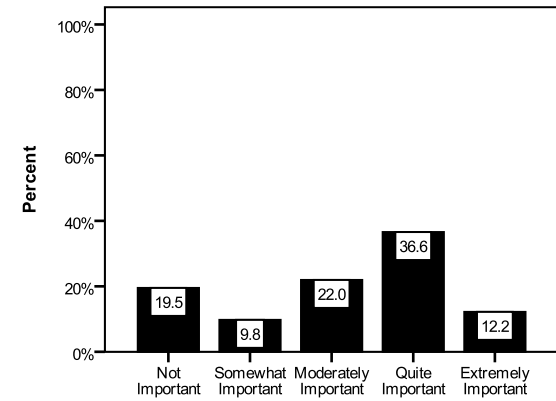
10. How important was each of the following in your decision to hunt during Elk archery, short-range weapons or muzzleloader seasons?



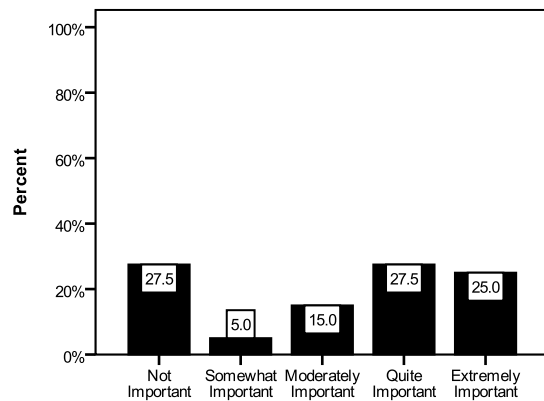
Increase Challenge



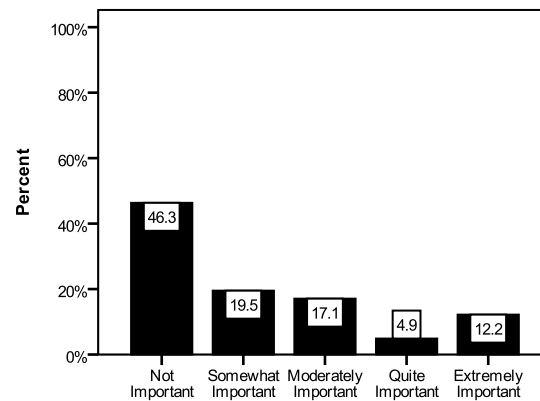
Hunt With Few Hunters on Field



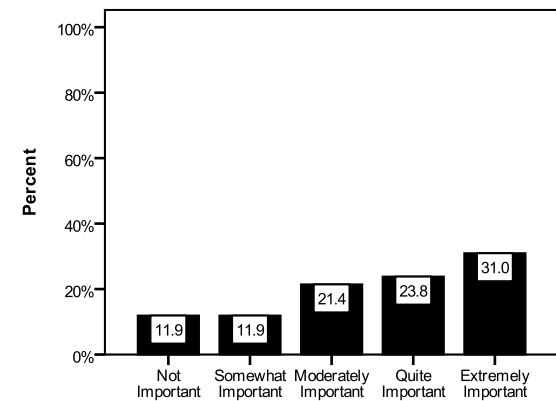
Improve Chance of Harvesting



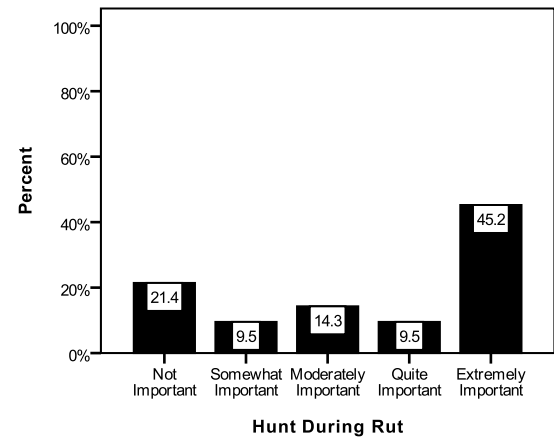
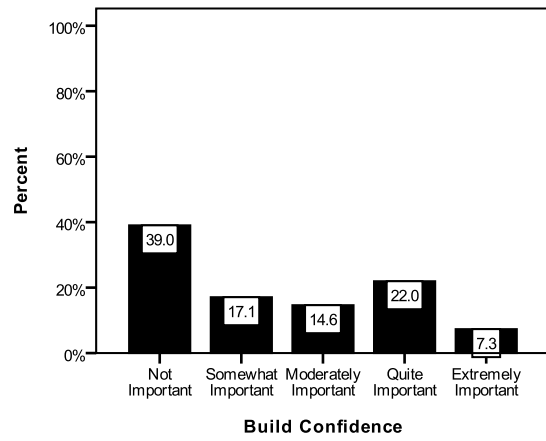
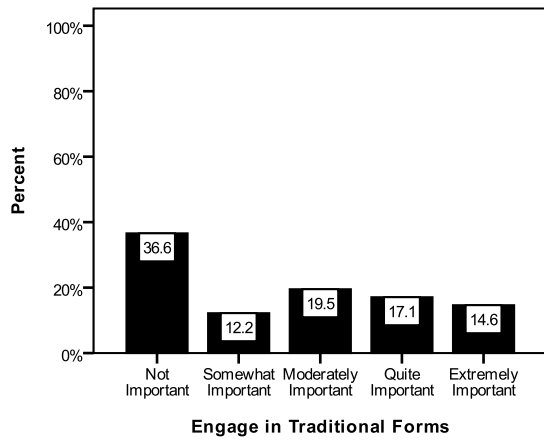
Expand Hunting Season



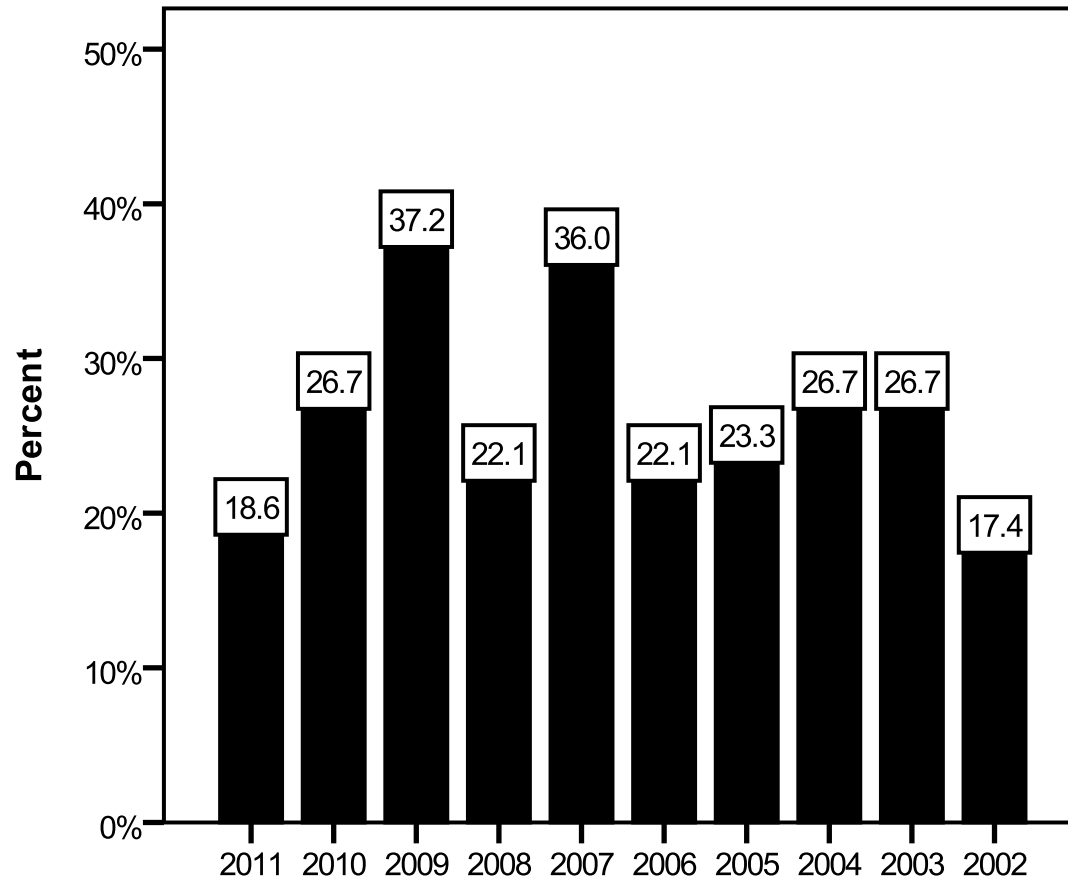
Hunt in Zone Where Rifle Limited



Adventure

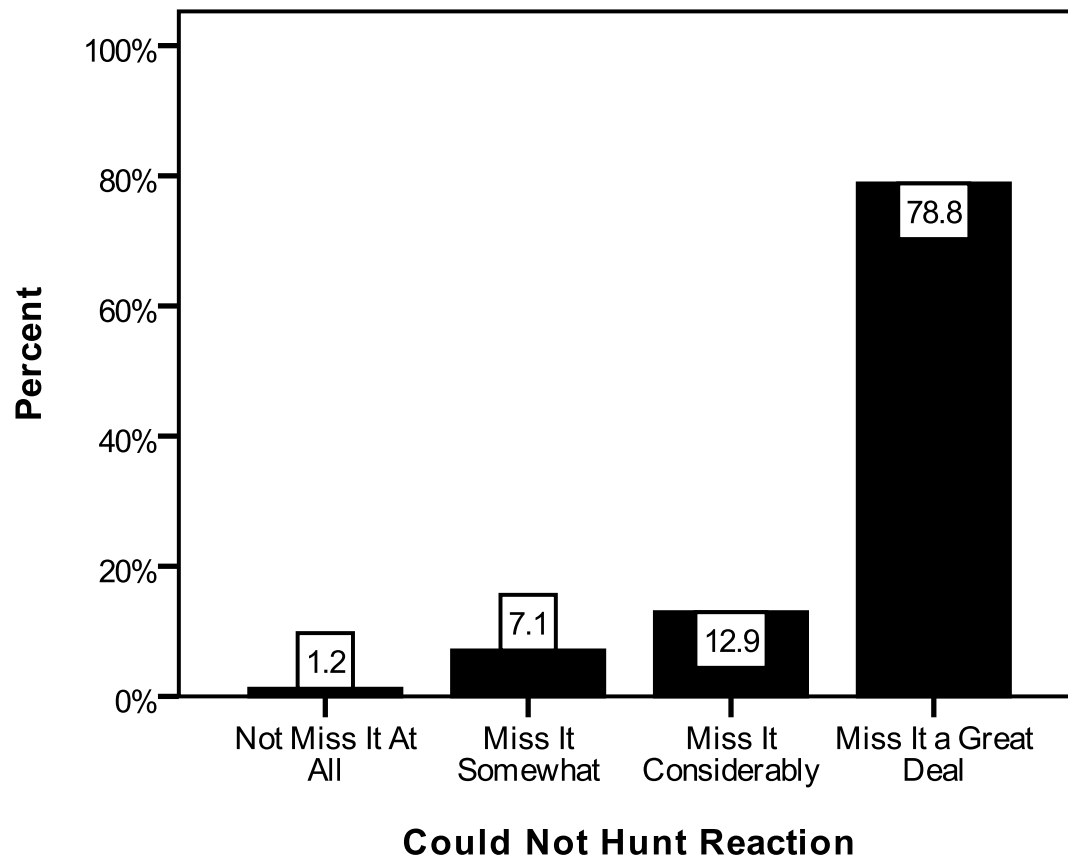


Q10: The reasons hunters made decisions to hunt in Elk archery, short-range weapon and muzzleloader seasons are similar between Palouse zone hunters and those across the state. However, those in the Palouse have reported that improving the chance of harvest is quite important to their decision making compared to other zones.

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

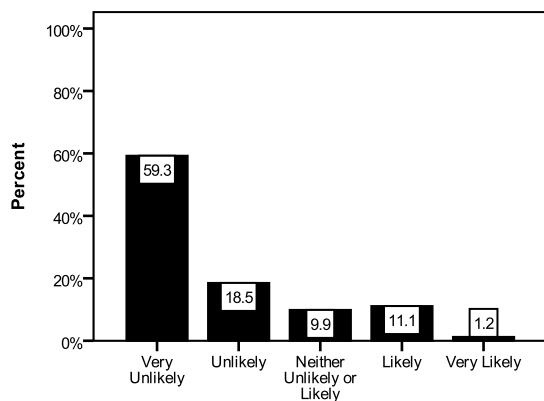
Q11: The distribution of responses about harvest are fairly similar between the Palouse zone and state average. However, in 2009 and 2007, Palouse zone hunters reported a 10% plus increase in harvest compared to the rest of the state.

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

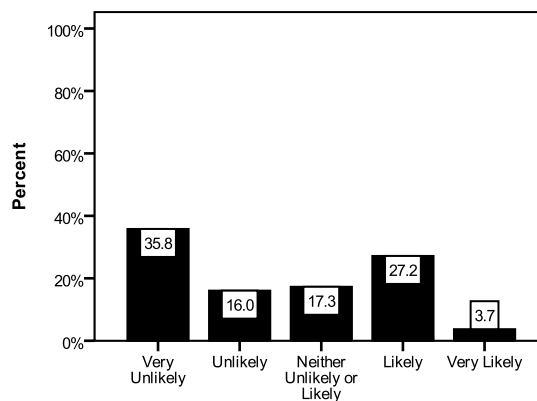


Q12: Similarly to hunters across the state, if Palouse hunters could not hunt Elk in Idaho, they would miss it a great deal.

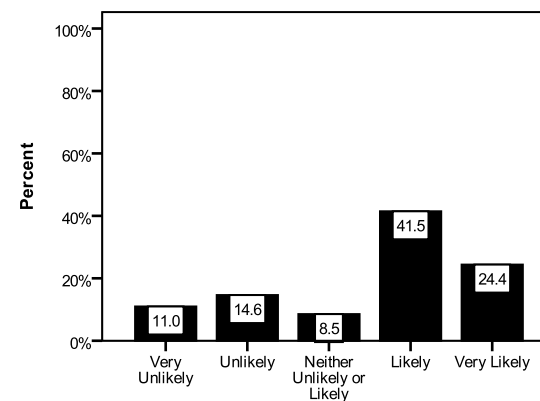
13. If you could not hunt Elk in Idaho, how would your hunting change?



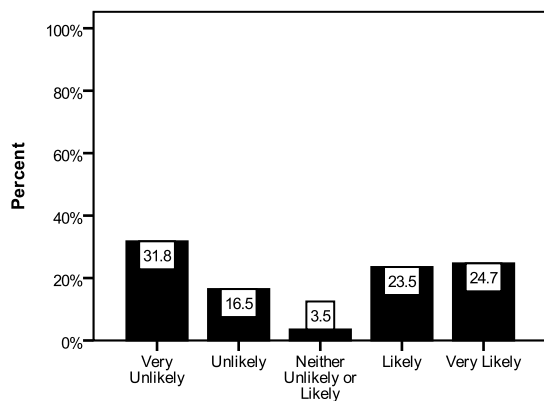
Hunt Waterfowl More



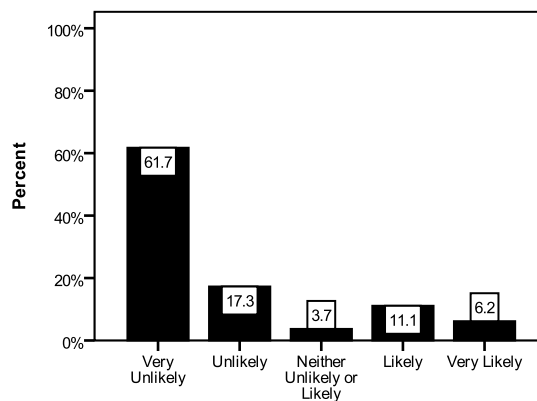
Hunt Upland Game More



More Time Hunting Other Game



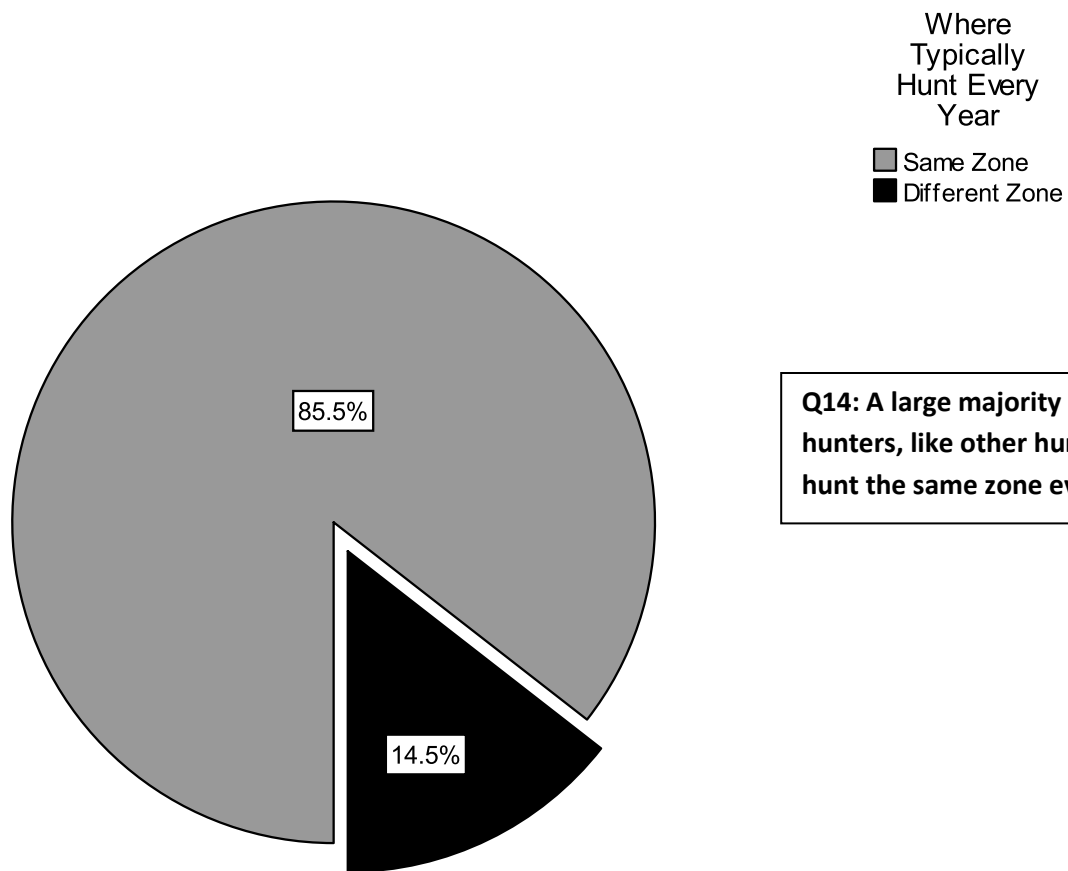
Hunt Elk in Other States



Not Hunt At All

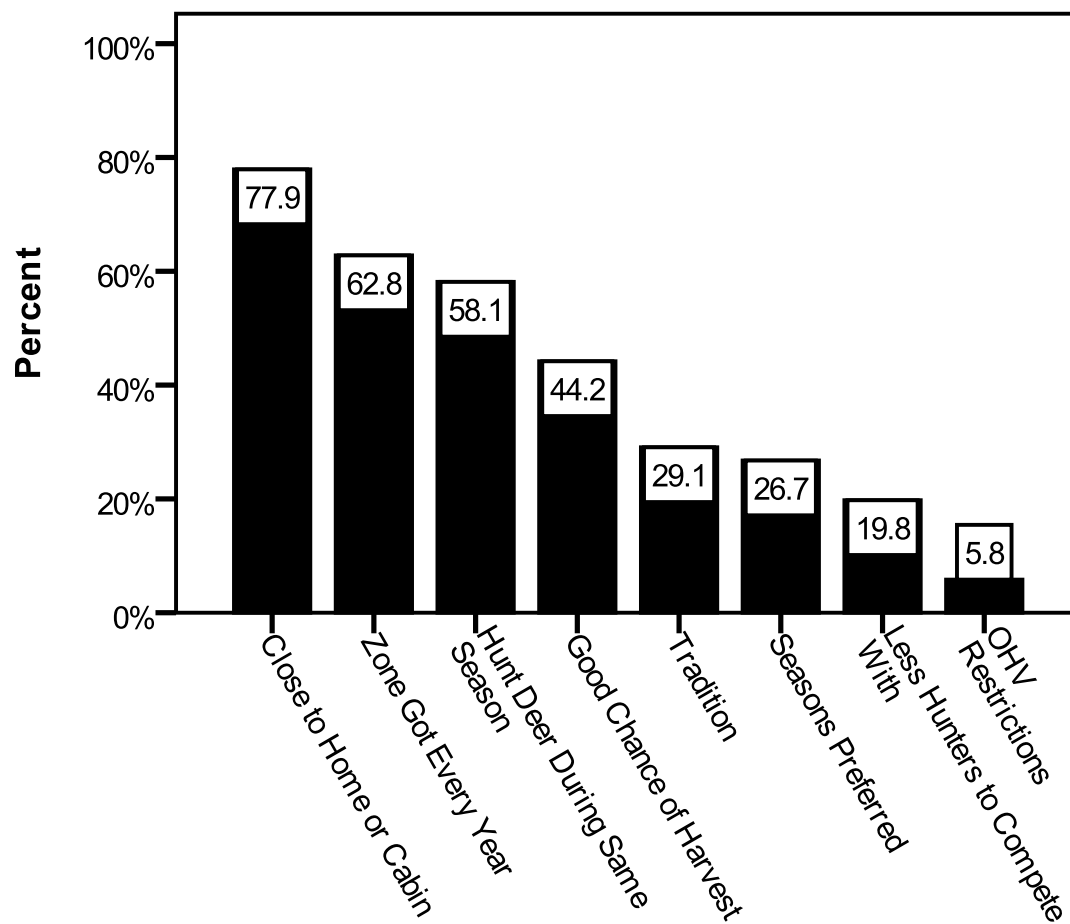
Q13: The distribution of responses are similar between the Palouse zone and the state average.

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



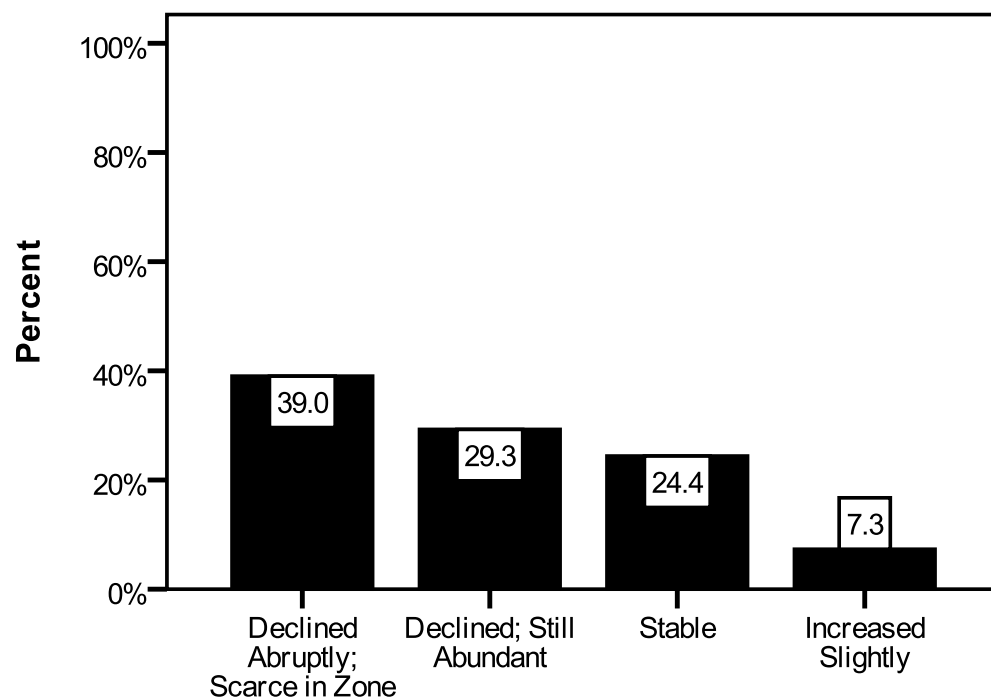
Q14: A large majority of Palouse zone hunters, like other hunters in the state, hunt the same zone every year.

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



Q16: The distribution of responses between the Palouse zone and state average are similar. Both groups find the same aspects desirable in a zone.

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)

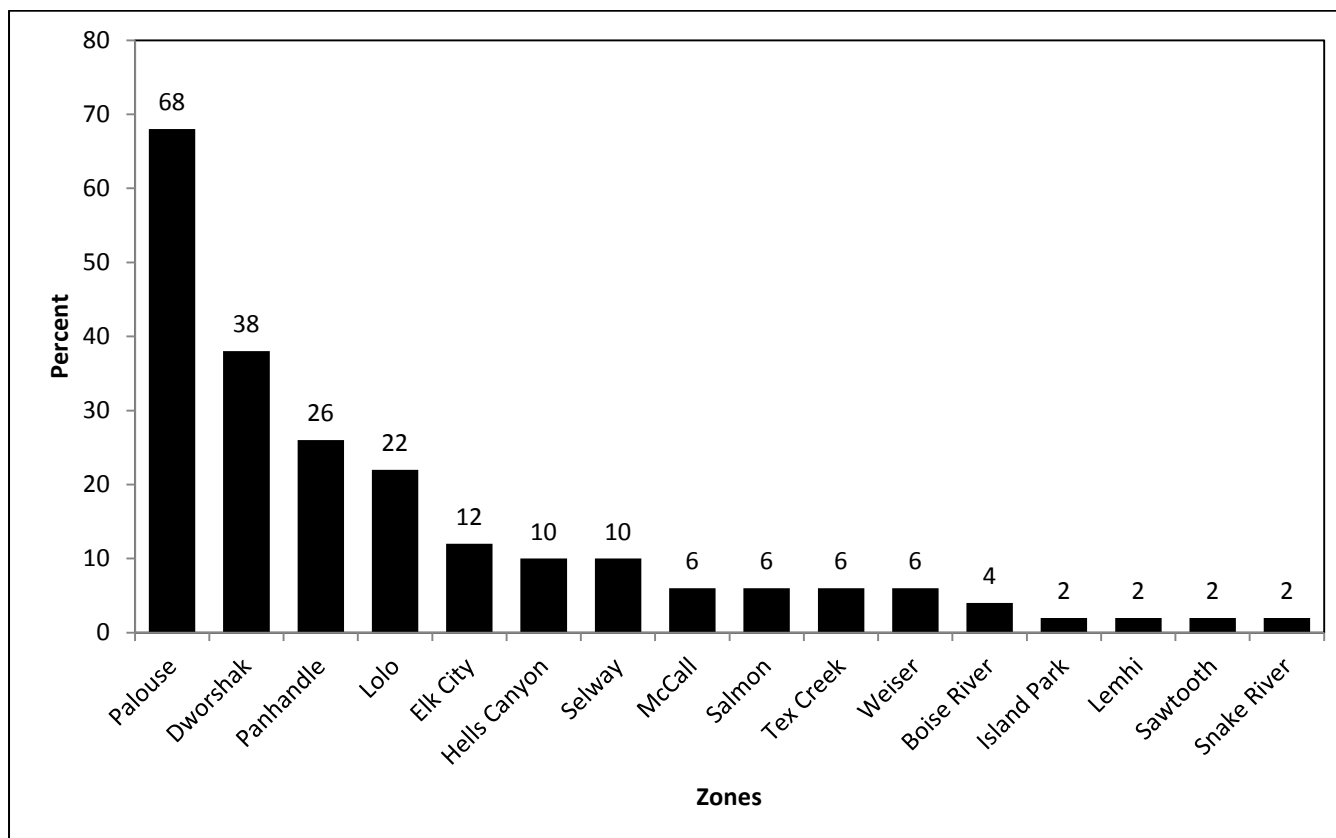


Perceptions of Elk Numbers

Q17: Compared the state average, 12.5% less hunters in the Palouse zone perceived Elk numbers to have declined abruptly. Also, 10.8% more hunters in the Palouse zone perceived the number of Elk to be stable in that zone.

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

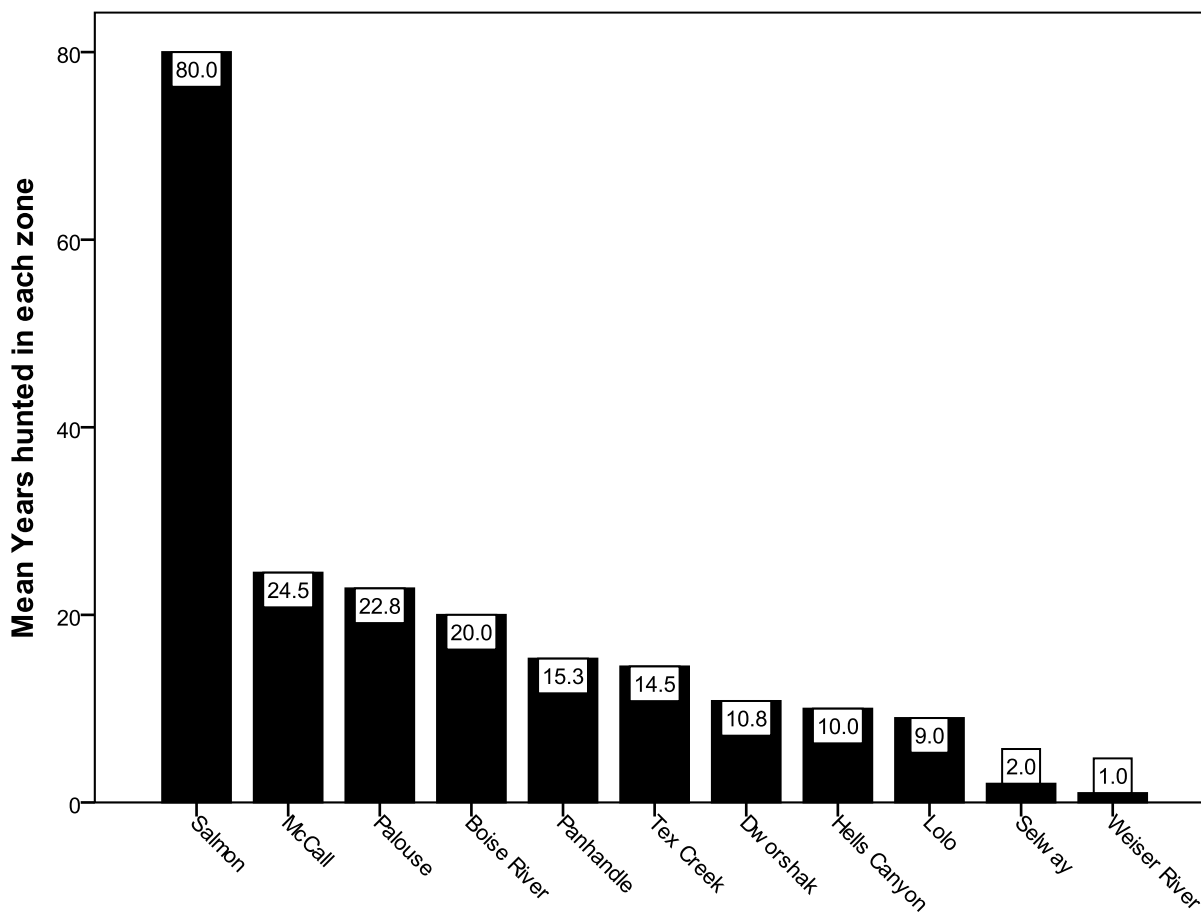
(Please write in the Zone names, refer to map on page 5 for Zone names)



Q18: The Dworshak, Panhandle and Lolo zones are the most popular zones to hunt outside of the Palouse zone.

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

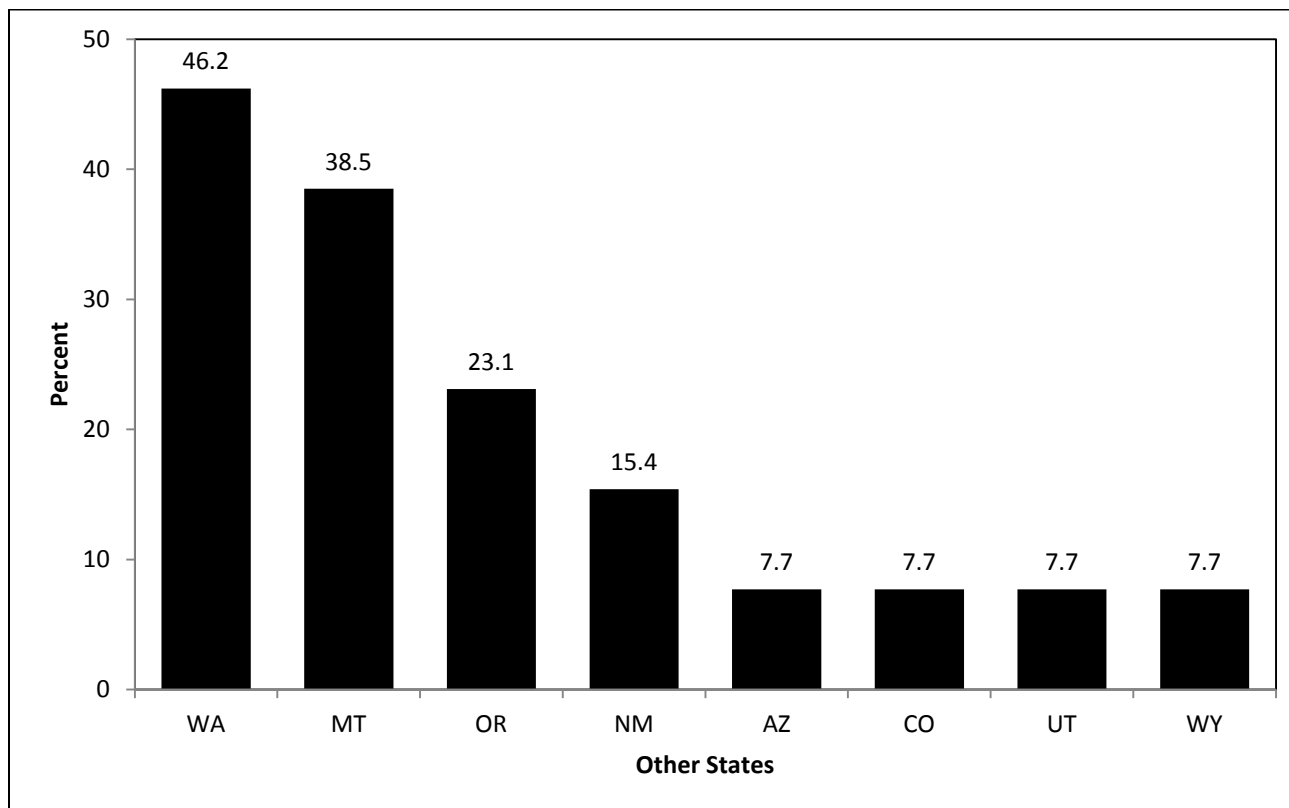
(Please write in the name of the zone and number of years, refer to map on page 5 for Zone names)



Q20: Hunters in the Salmon zone have hunted there for an average of 80 years. The next closest zones have mean years hunted below 25 years.

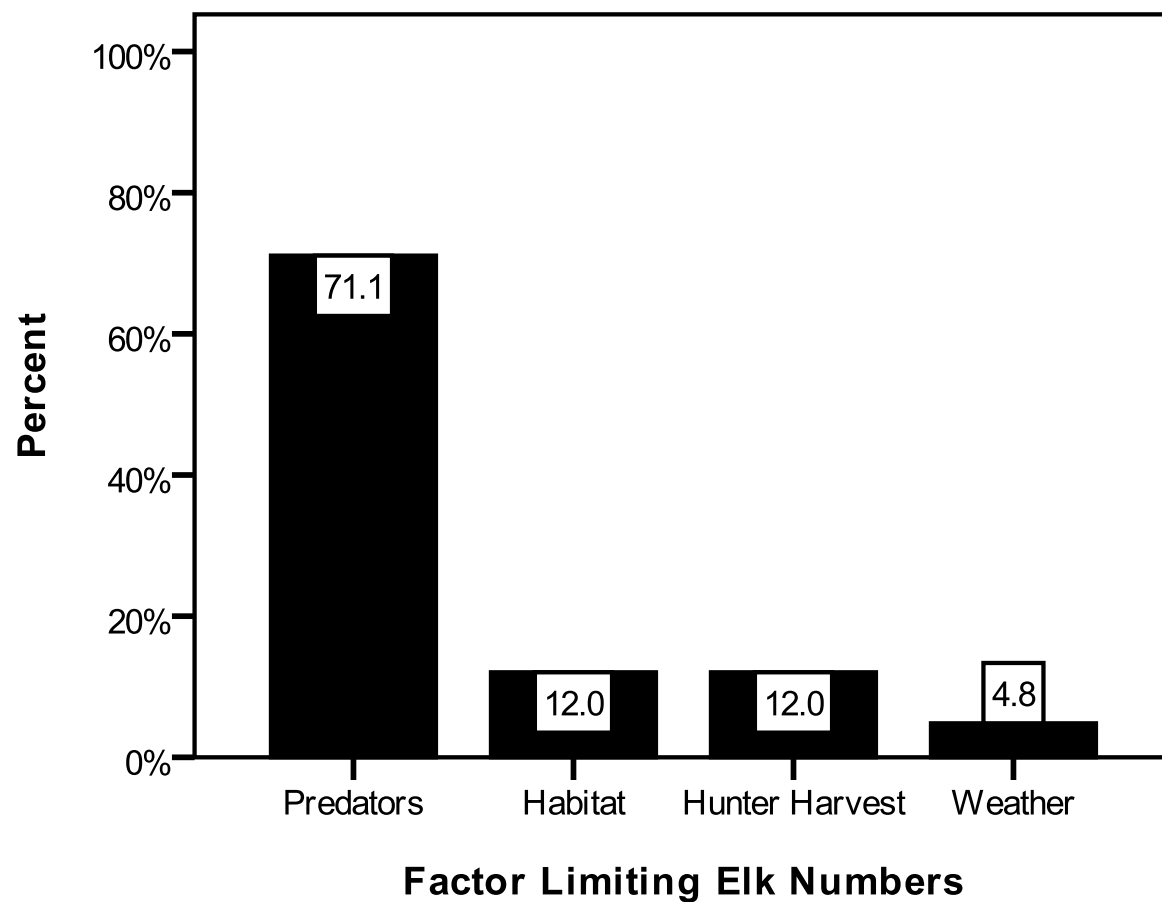
Other Zones in Past 10 Years

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



Q21: Almost half of Palouse hunters who have hunted in other states have hunted in Washington, over one-third in Montana, and almost a quarter in Oregon.

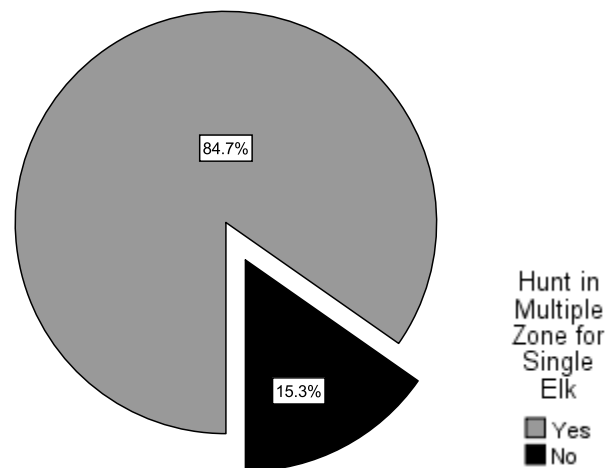
22. What do you believe is the primary factor limiting Elk numbers in the zone you hunted in 2011? (Check only ONE response)



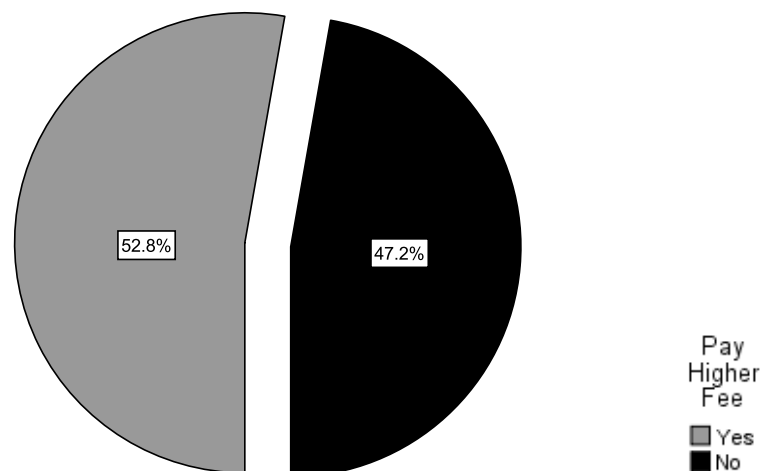
Q22: Like other hunters in the state, hunters in the Palouse zone believe that the primary limiting factor for Elk numbers are Predators.

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

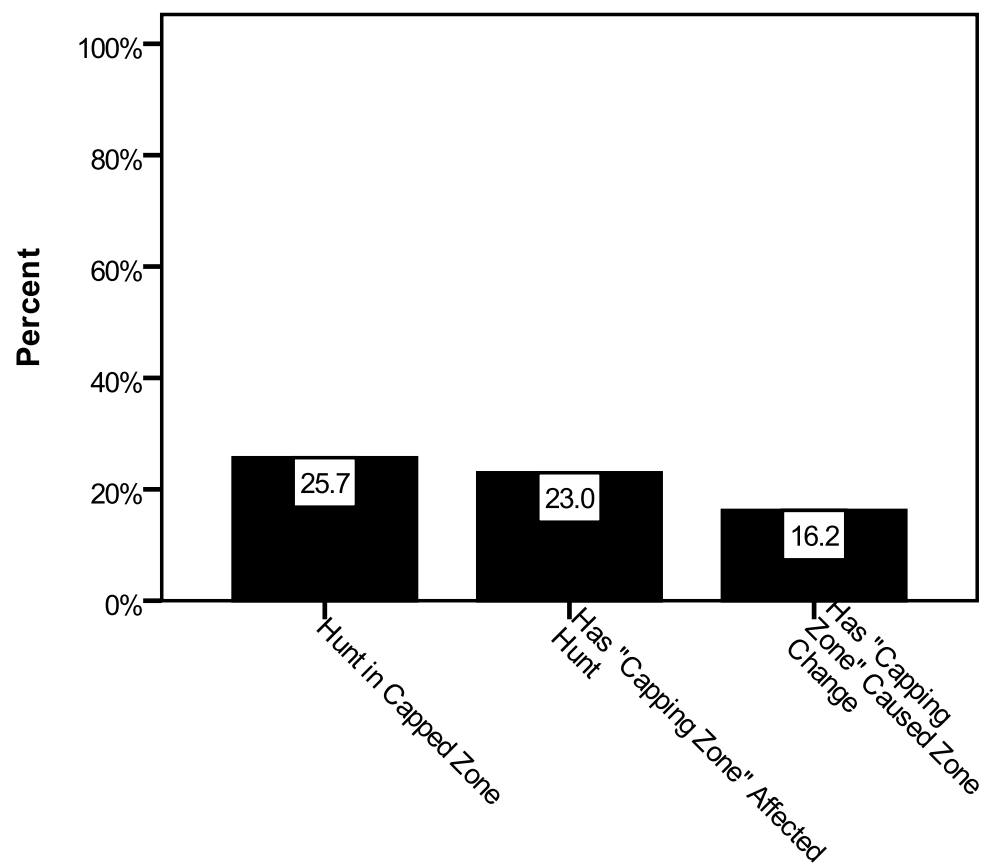
A large majority in both the Palouse zone and those throughout the state would like the ability to hunting in multiple zones in a year for a single Elk. However, fewer hunters in the Palouse zone would be willing to pay a higher fee to do so.



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

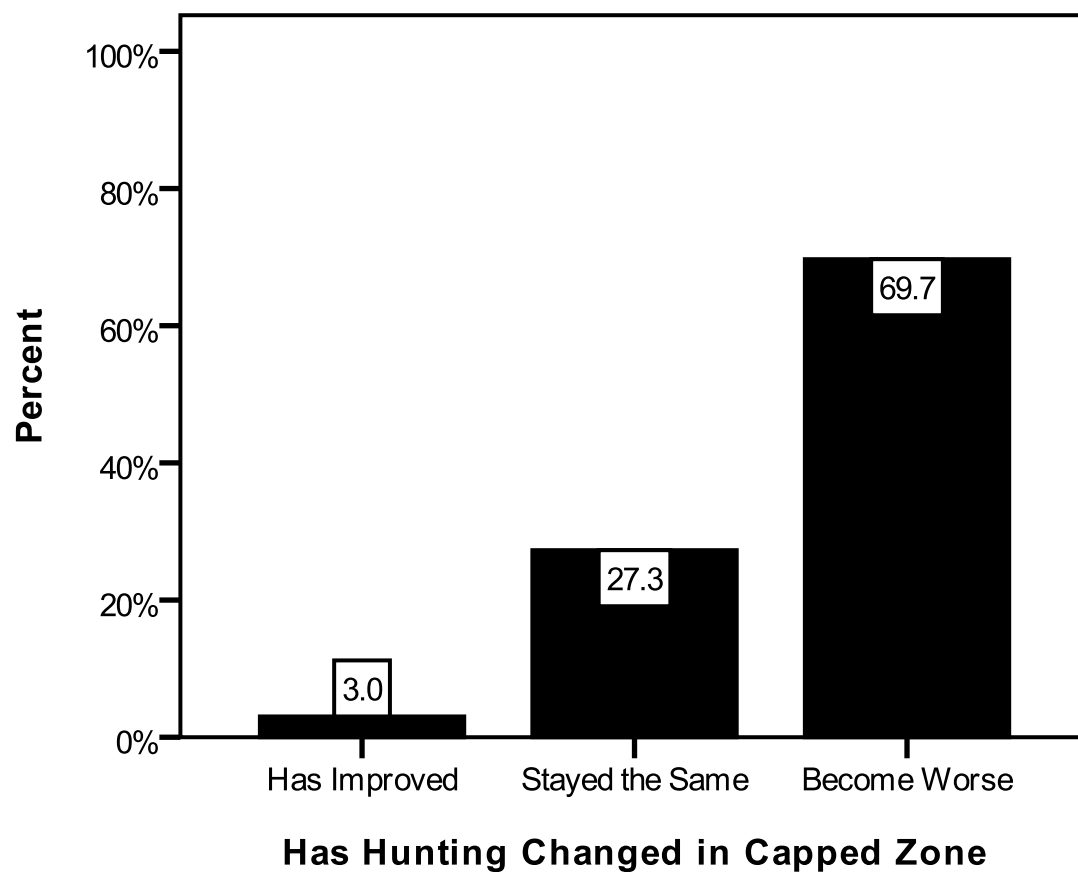


25. When the zone system was implemented the mechanism for reducing unlimited over-the-counter opportunity called "capping the zone" was developed by the department with the help of legislators, sportsmen and outfitters. This "capping the zone" is an allocation formula to distribute Elk tags to hunters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



Q25: In the Palouse zone, 18.9% less hunters had experience hunting in a capped zone compared to the state average. Their feelings on the effects on hunting that "capping a zone" has or it has causes hunters to change zones are similar to those of other hunters across the state.

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

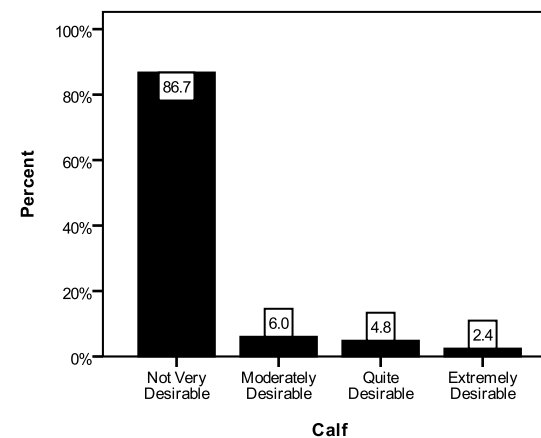
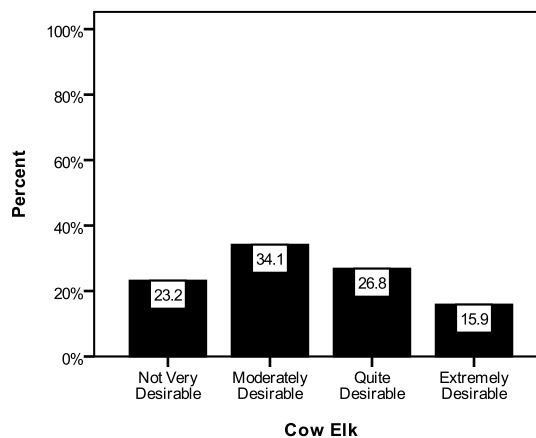
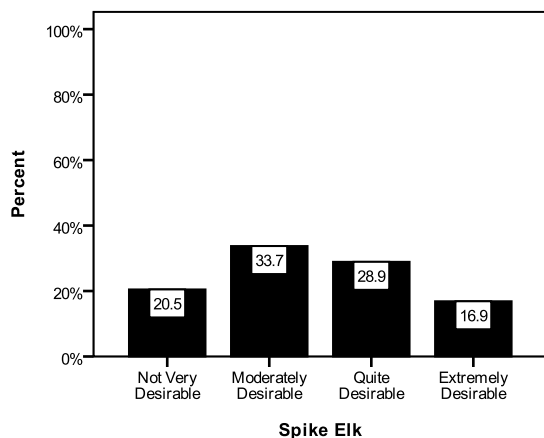
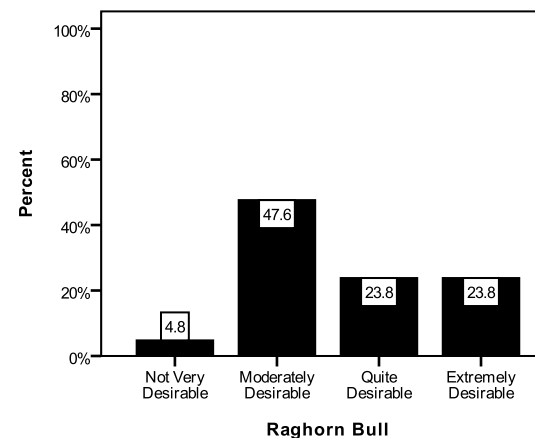
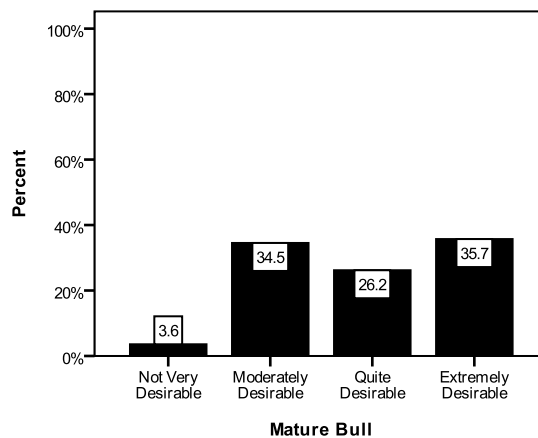
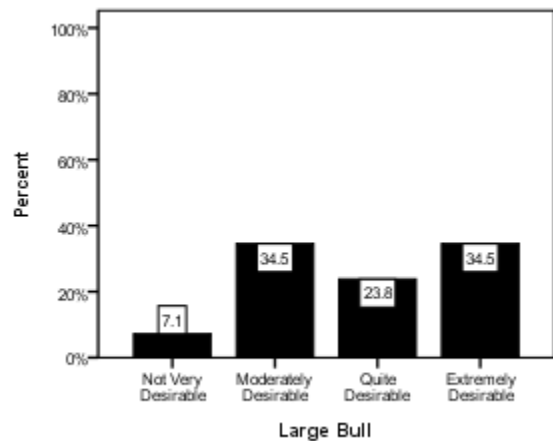


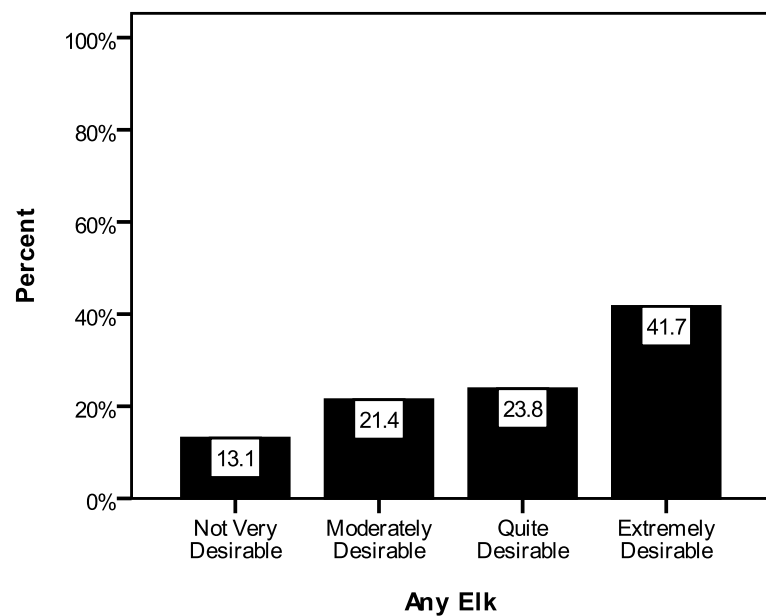
Q26: The distribution of responses are similar between the Palouse zone and the state average.

ELK HUNTING PREFERENCES AND MOTIVATIONS

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

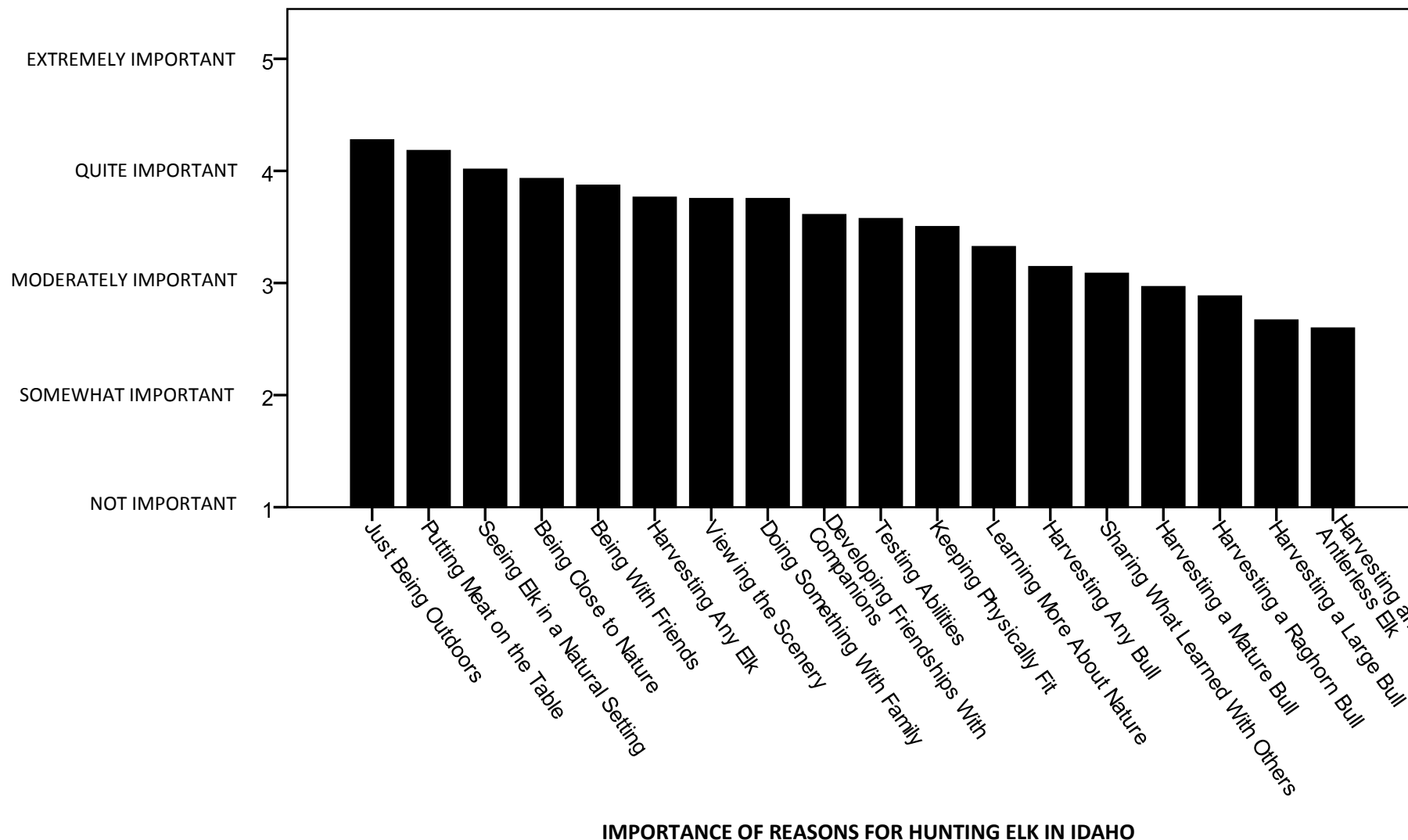
27. How desirable is it to you to harvest the following kinds of Elk?

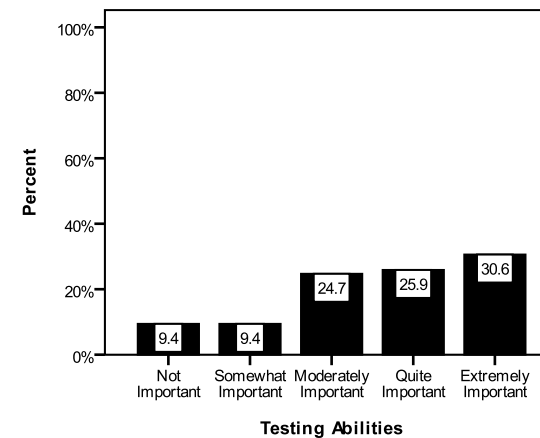
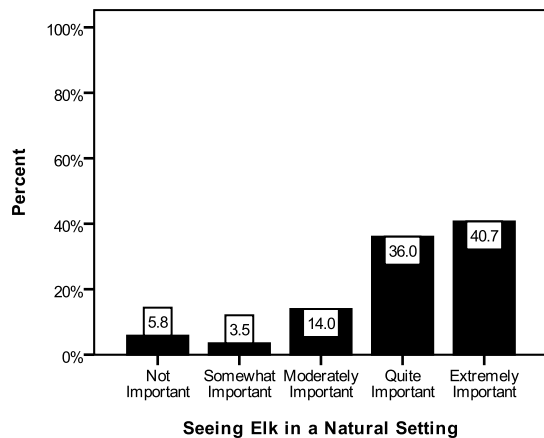
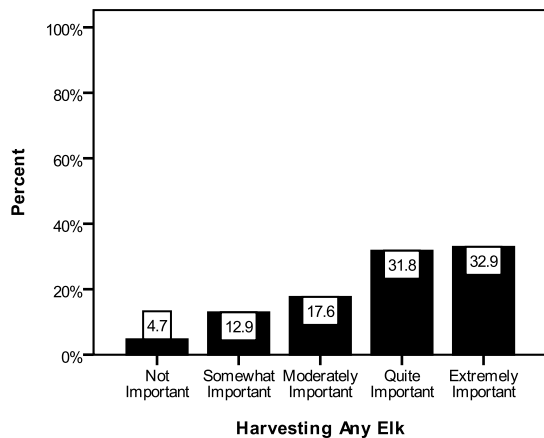
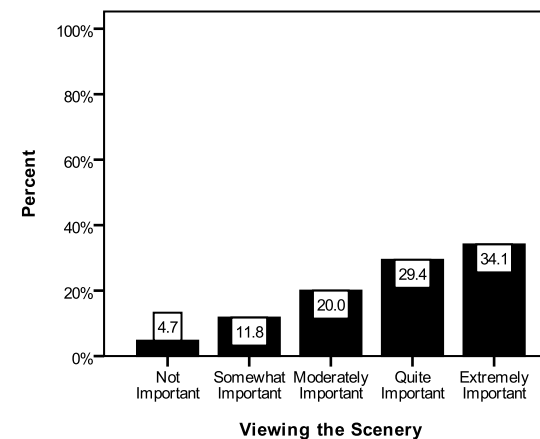
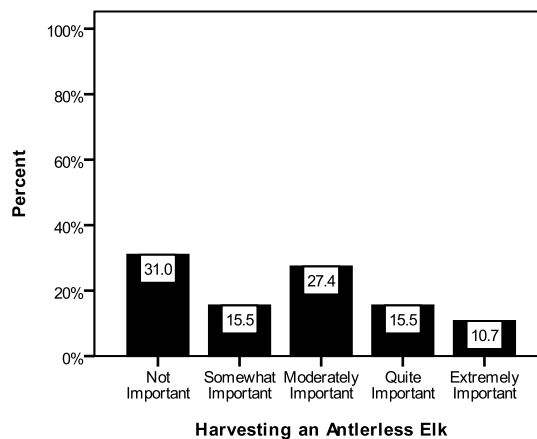
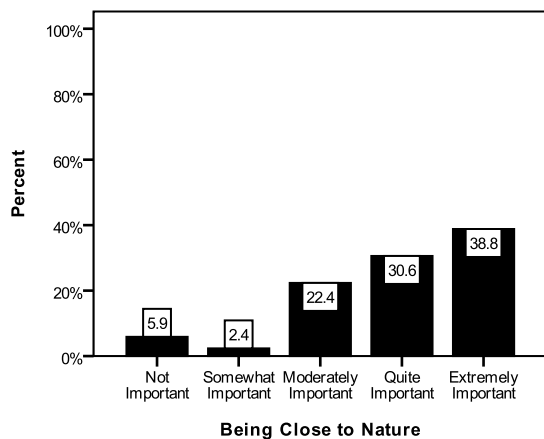


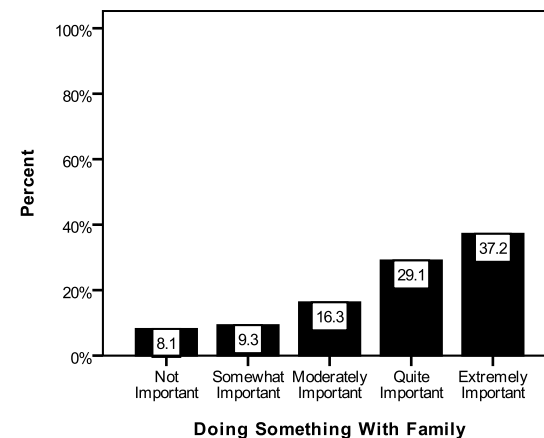
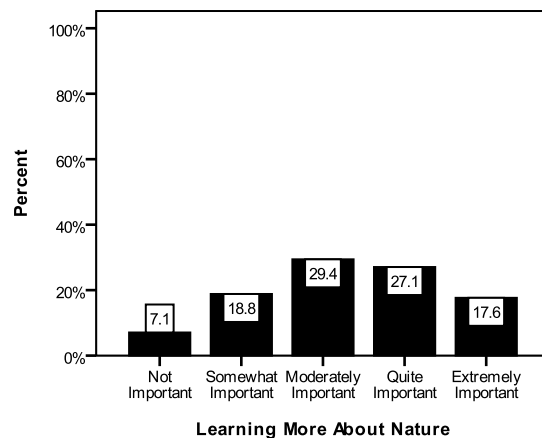
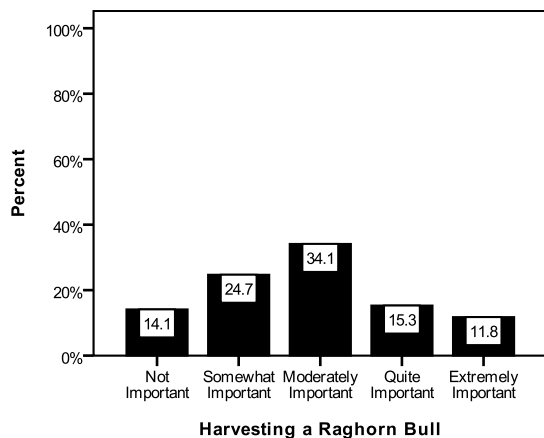
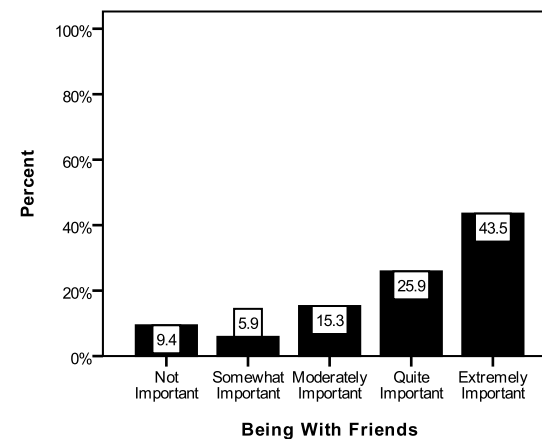
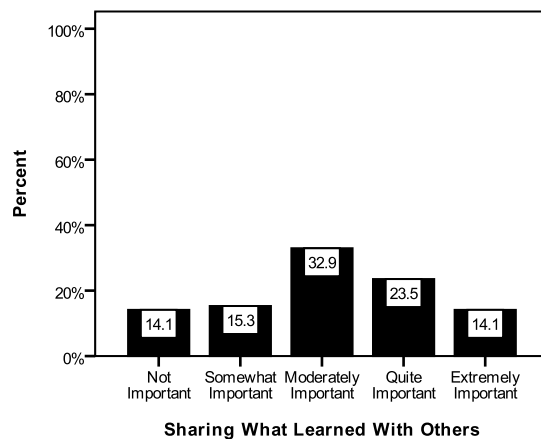
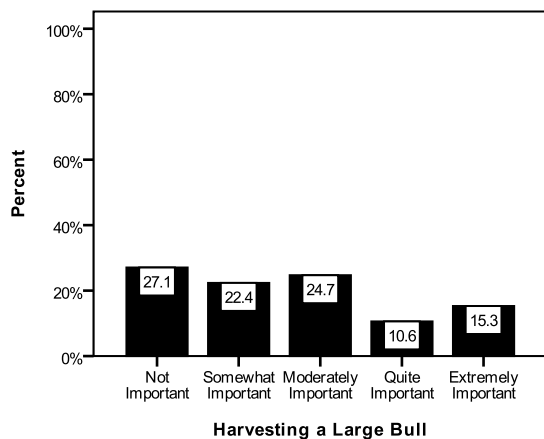


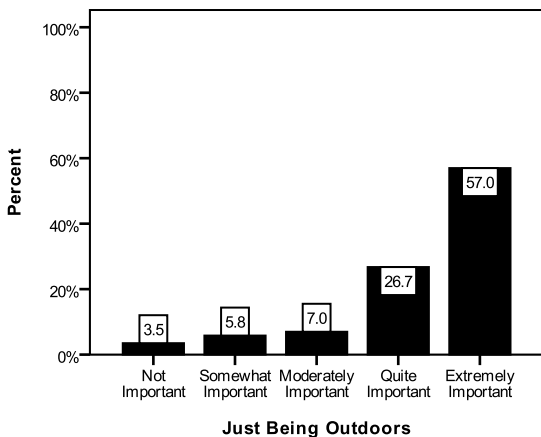
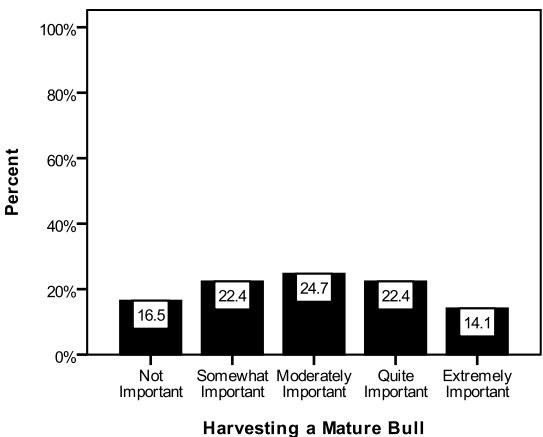
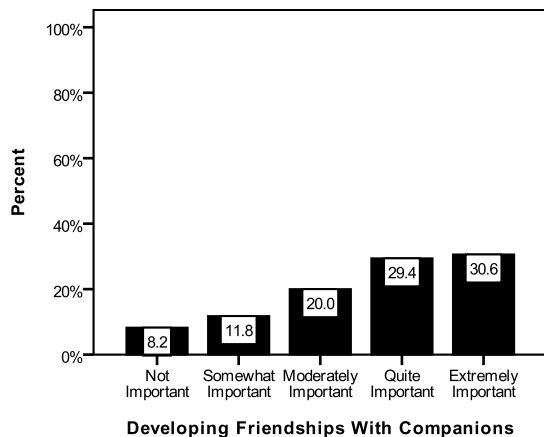
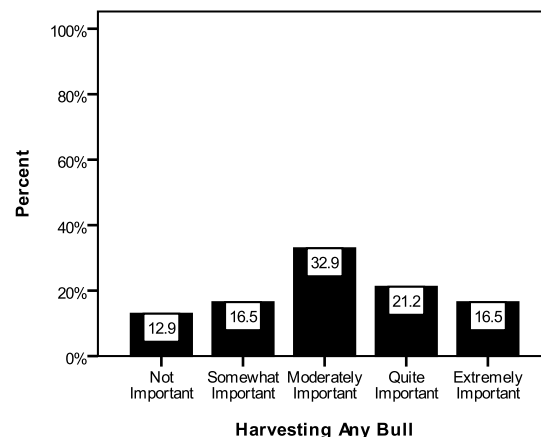
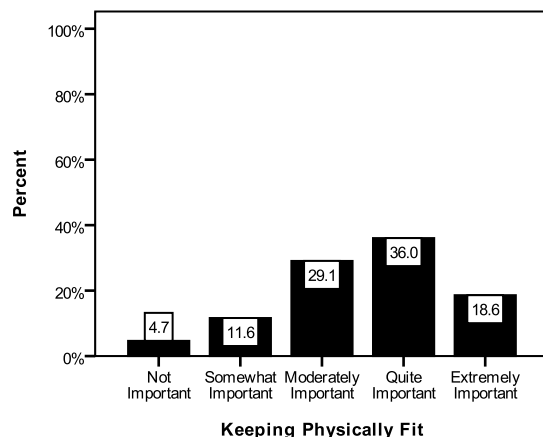
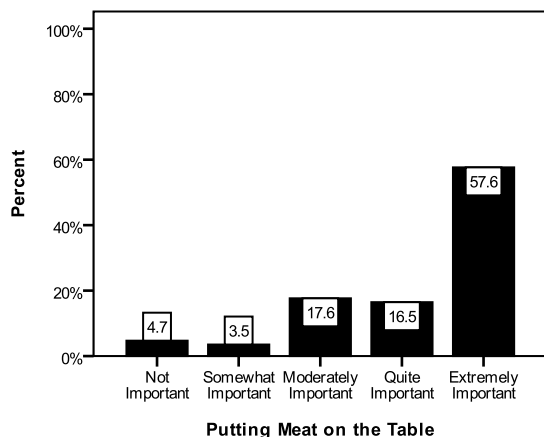
Q27: Hunters in the Palouse zone and across the state desire similar sizes of Elk.

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?





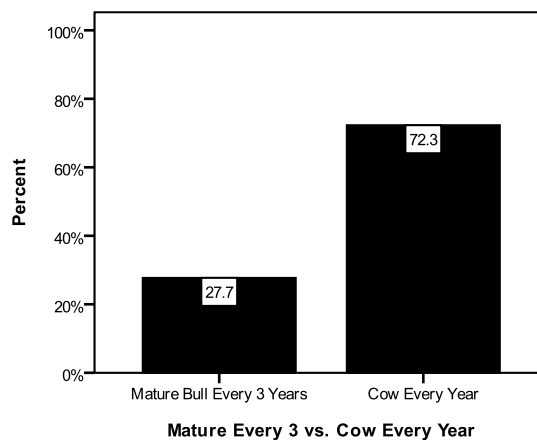
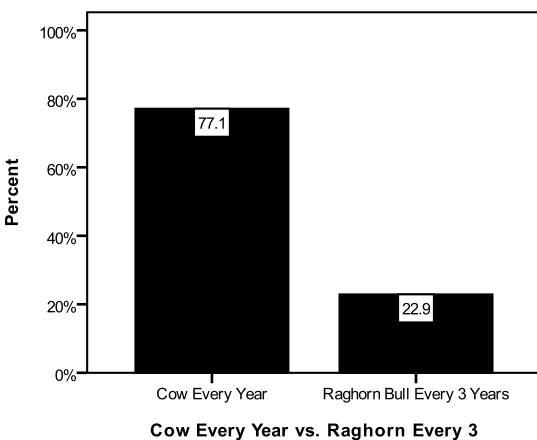
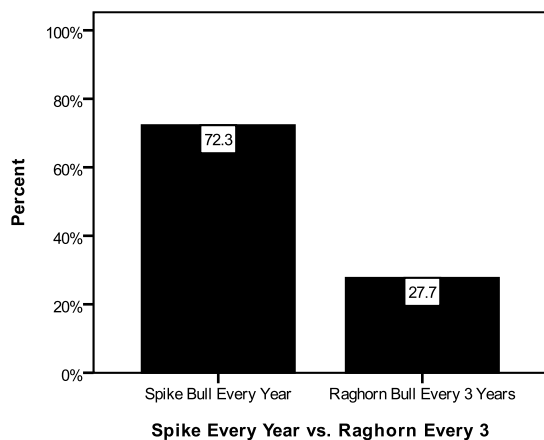
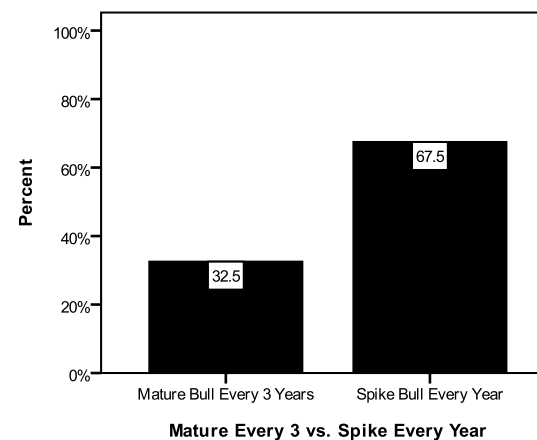
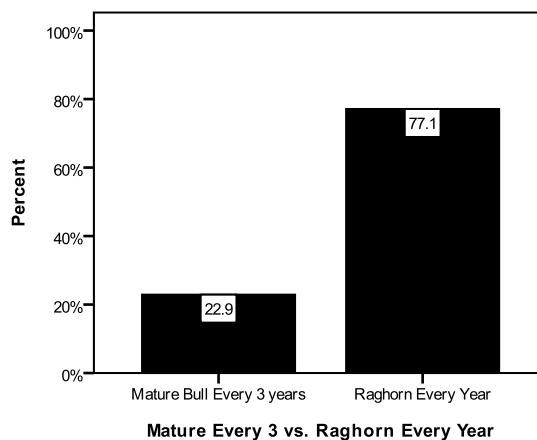
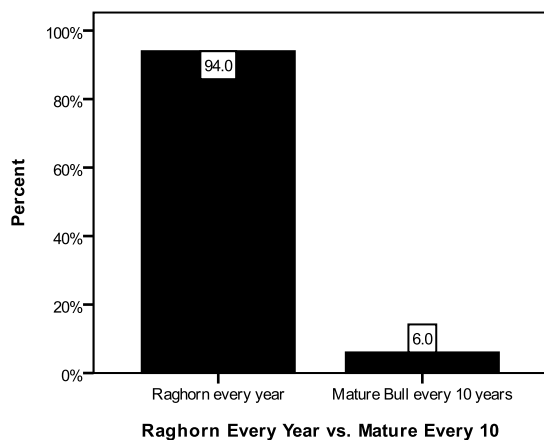


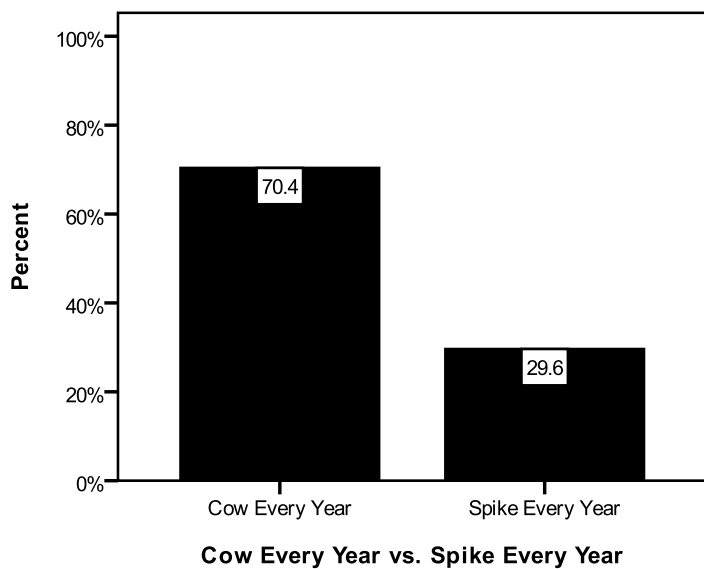


Q28: The distribution between the responses of Palouse zone hunters and the state average are similar. However, respondents from the Palouse find putting meat on the table a more important reason for hunting Elk than other hunters.

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.

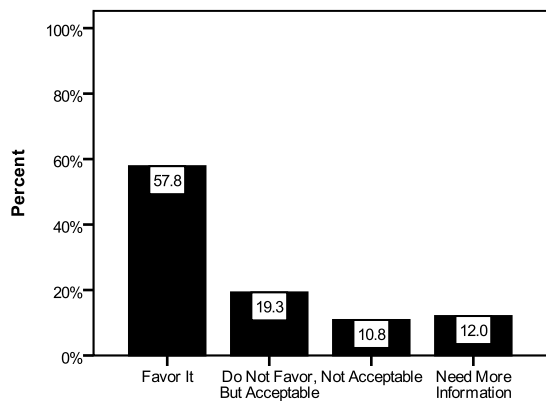




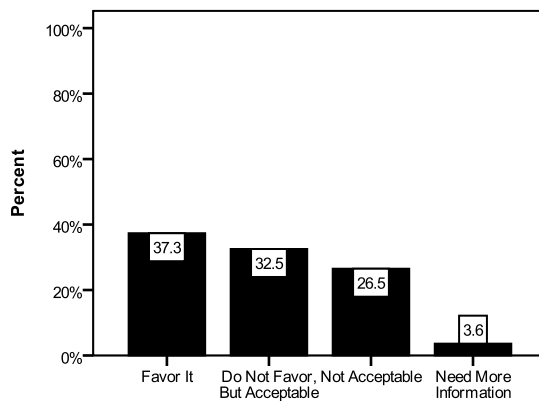
Q32: Palouse zone hunters put slightly more value on the opportunity to hunt every year rather than harvest size compared to the state average.

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

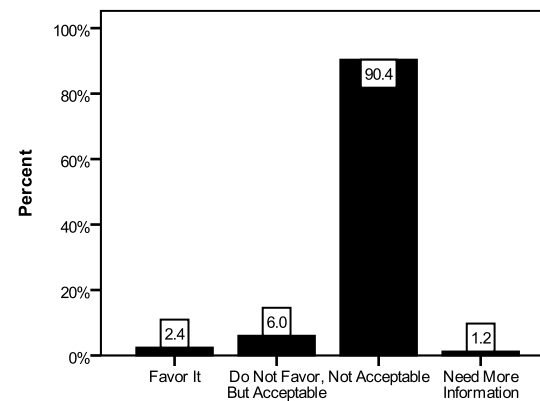
34. How do you feel about each of the following potential ways of improving Elk hunting, if needed?



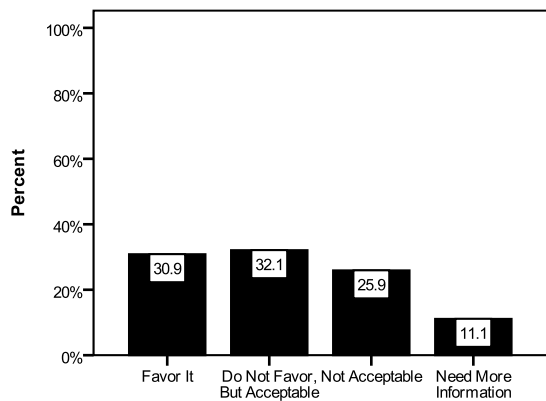
Longer Seasons



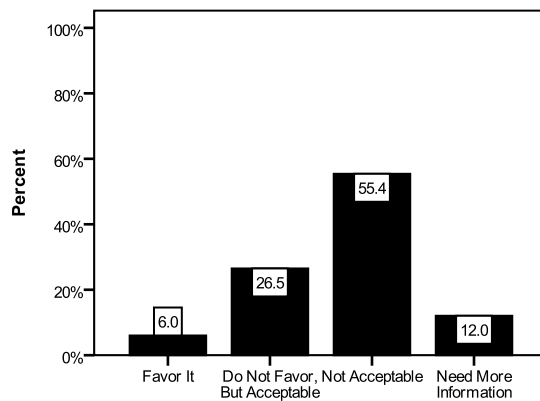
Choose Only One Weapon



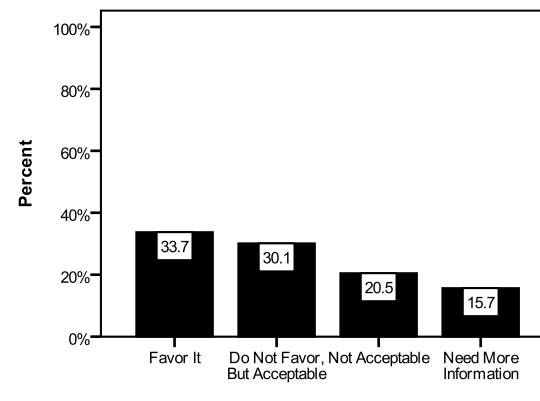
Choose Only One Species



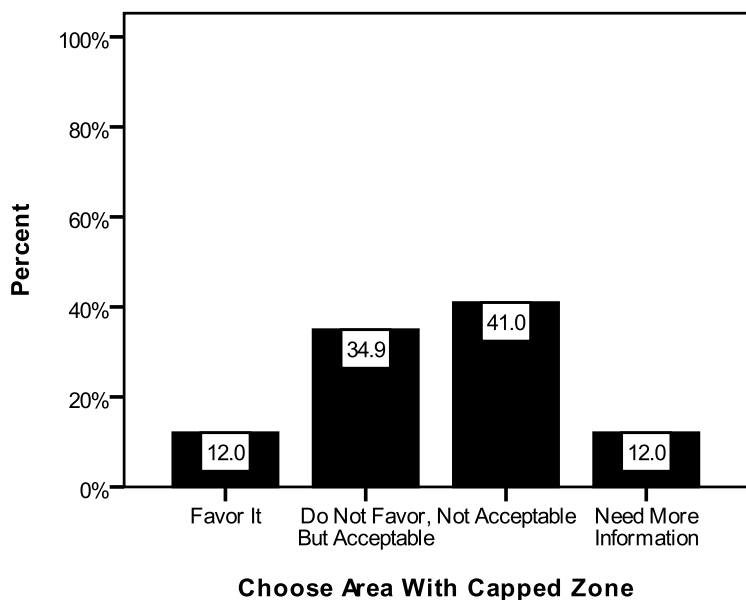
Controlled Hunts



Stratified Hunts

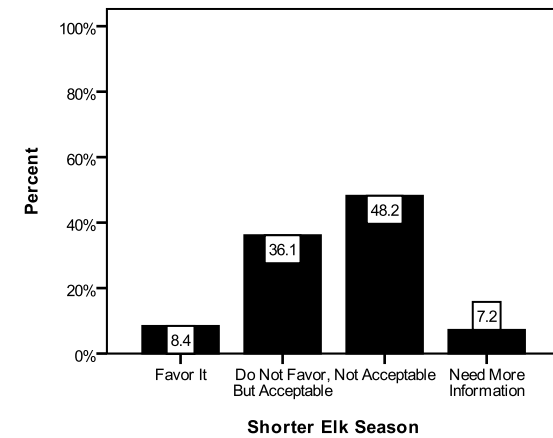
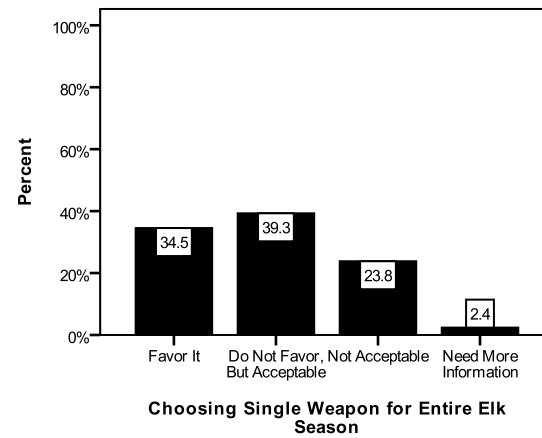
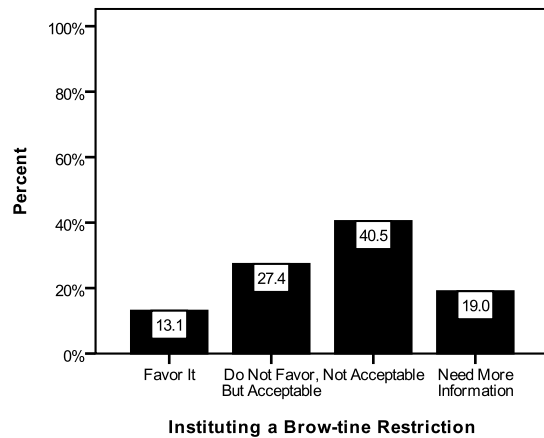
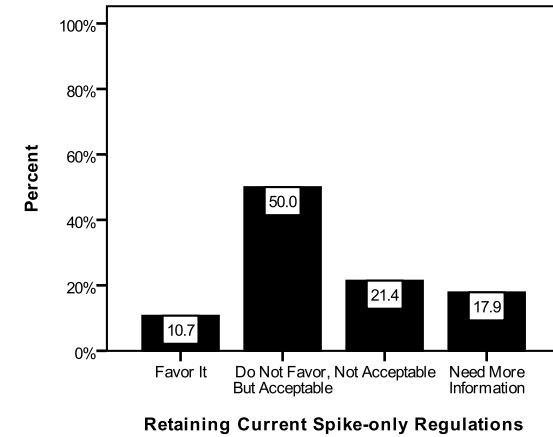
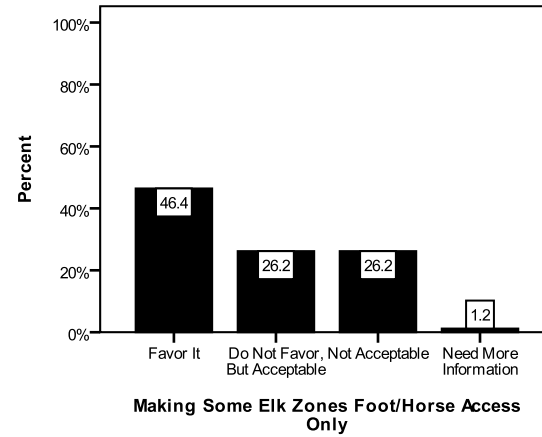
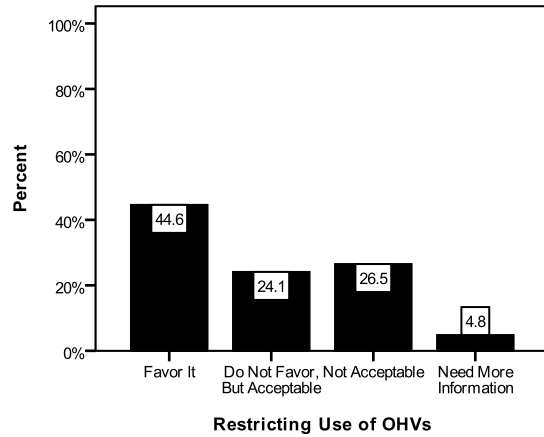


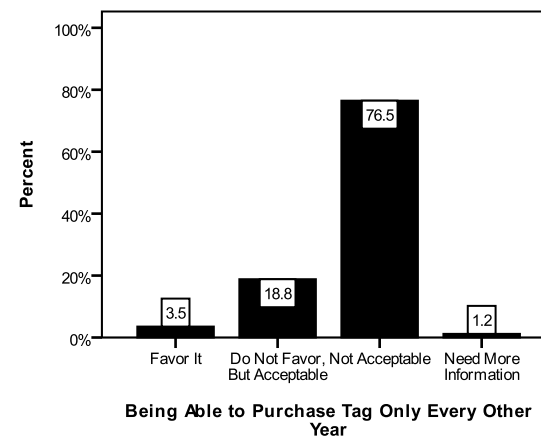
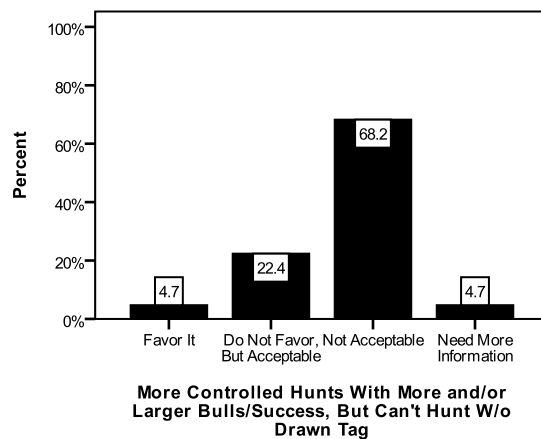
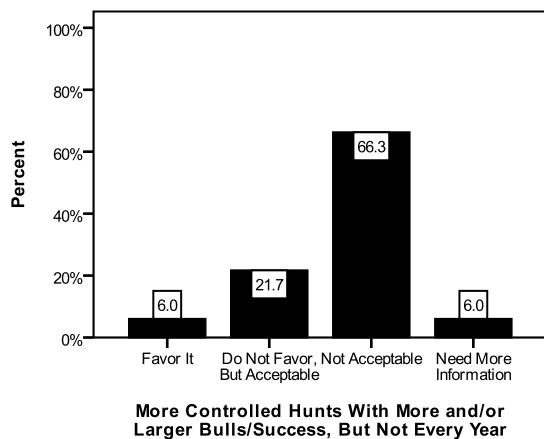
Choose Area With Motorized/Travel Restrictions



Q34: The distribution of responses between the Palouse zone and the state average are fairly similar, yet Palouse hunters find choosing an area with a capped zone as more unacceptable than other hunters across the state by 20%.

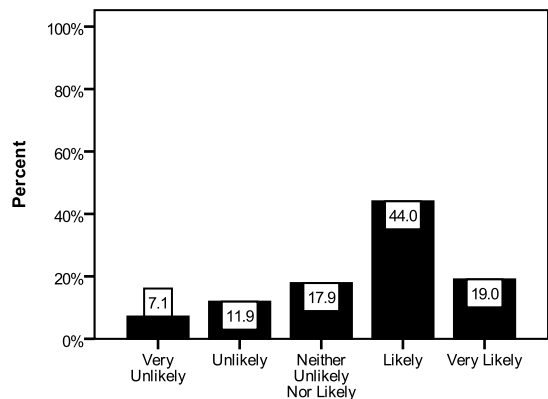
35. We would like to know how you feel about the following potential restrictions to increase the quality and size of Elk in Idaho and improve Elk hunting opportunities. Please indicate your opinion on the following potential restrictions.



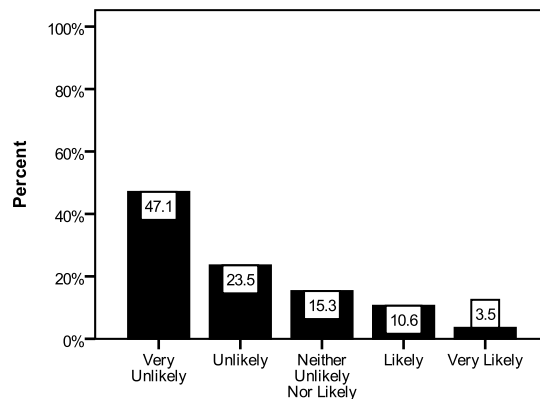


Q35: The distribution of responses by Palouse zone hunters and hunters across the state are similar. Those who hunt the Palouse find choosing a single weapon for the entire Elk season as slightly less favorable than the state average.

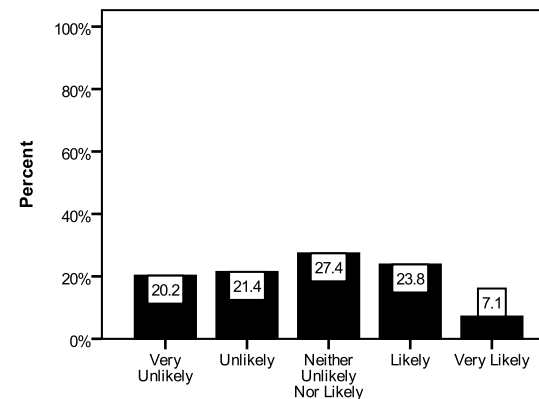
36. *IF* Idaho Fish and Game introduces restrictions that reduce Elk hunting opportunities to improve Elk populations, how would your hunting behavior change?



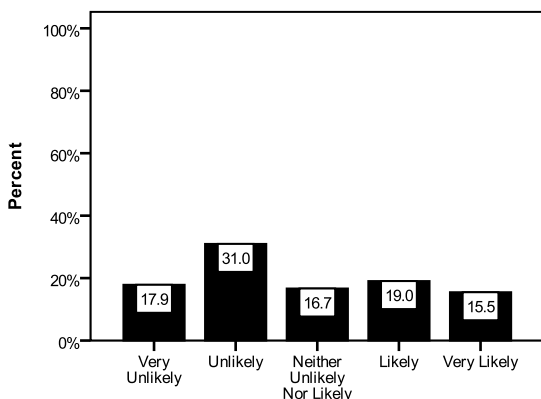
Hunt in Different Zones



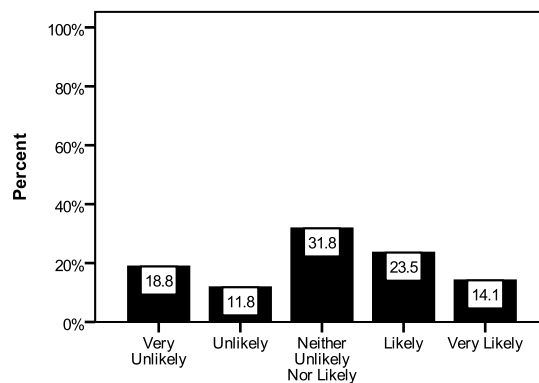
Quit Hunting Elk



Shift to Hunt Other Species



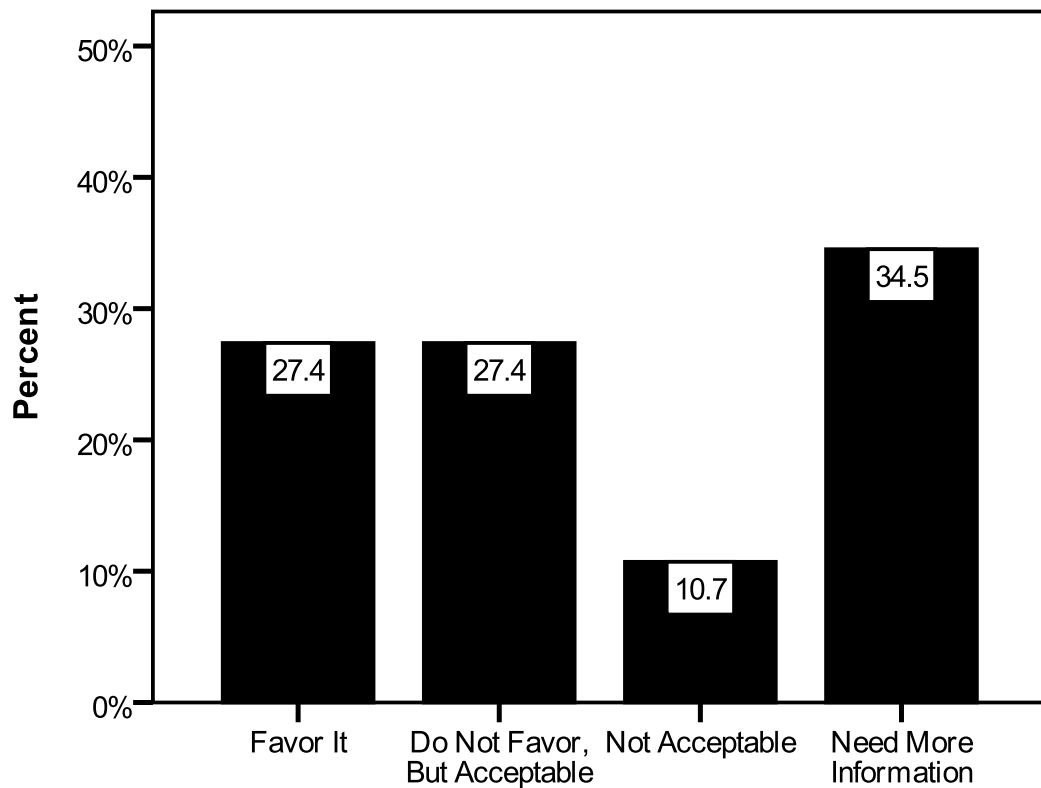
Not Change Hunting Behavior



Change Weapon Type for Increased Elk Hunting Opportunity

Q36: Palouse hunters find it more unlikely that they would change their hunting compared to the state average if restrictions were introduced, but the distribution of responses remains similar between the two groups.

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)

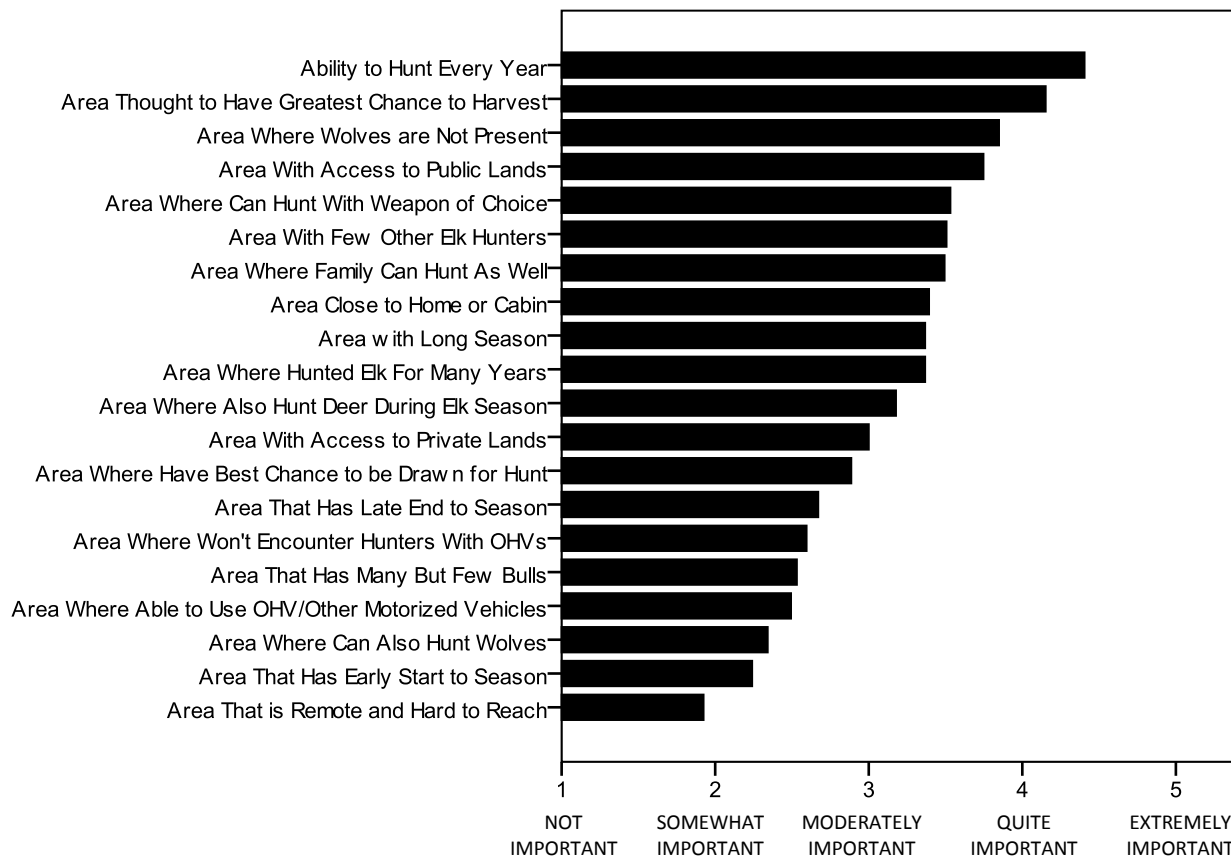


Q38: The distribution of responses is similar between the Palouse zone and the state average.

Feelings About Setting Season Conditions 2 Years in Advance

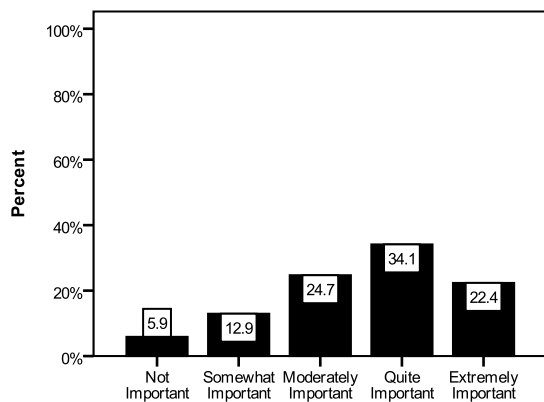
WHEN AND WHERE TO HUNT

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?

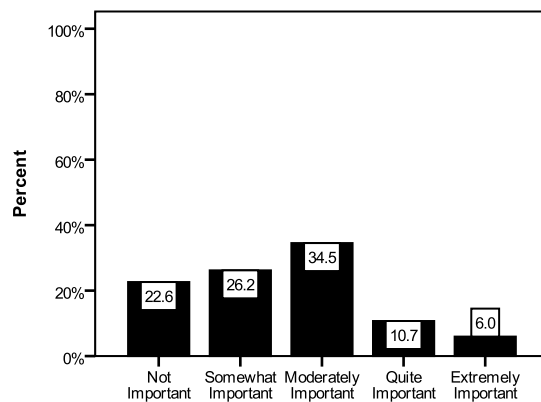


Q29: Palouse zone hunters find it slightly more important for them to have an area where they can hunt with their weapon of choice compared to other hunters in the state. The distribution of responses, however, is similar between this zone and the average.

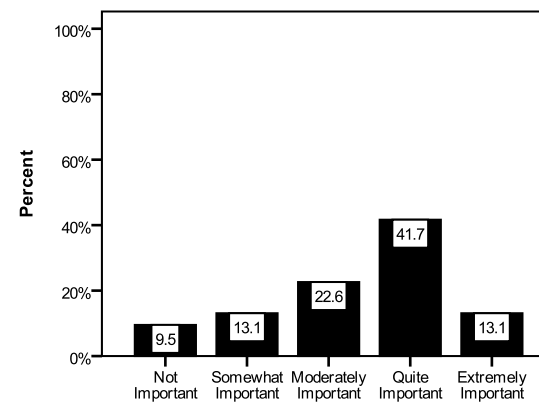
CHARACTERISTICS AFFECTING CHOICE OF WHERE TO HUNT IN IDAHO



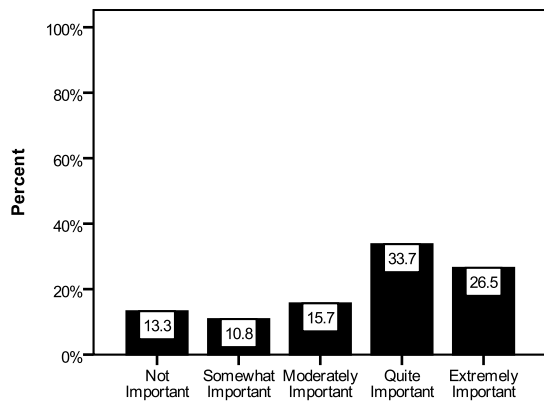
Area With Few Other Elk Hunters



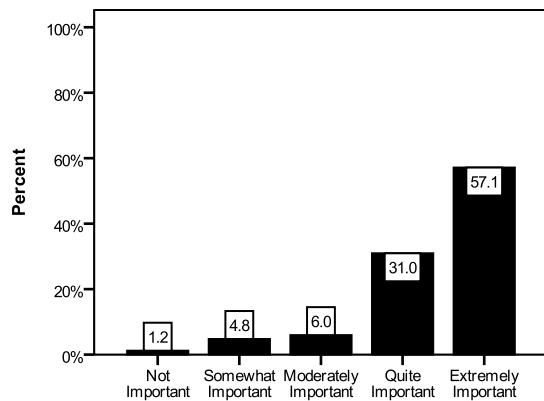
Area That Has Many But Few Bulls



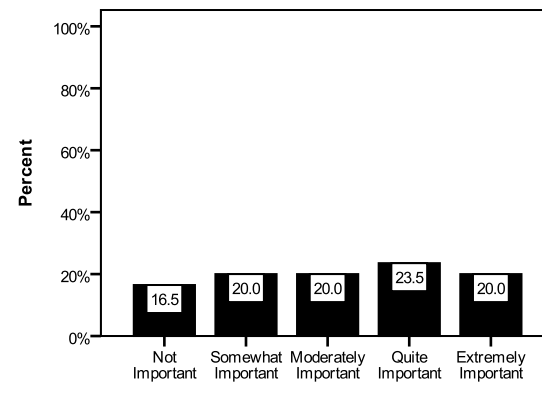
Area Where Hunted Elk For Many Years



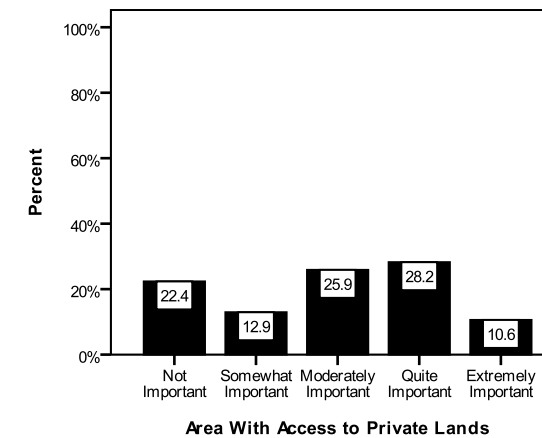
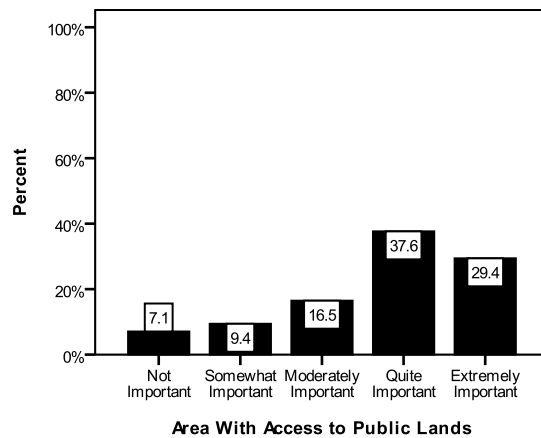
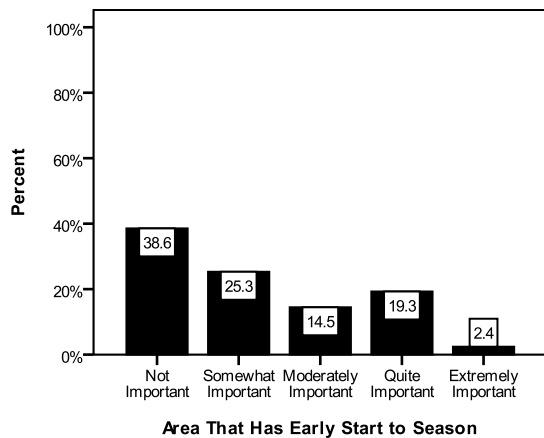
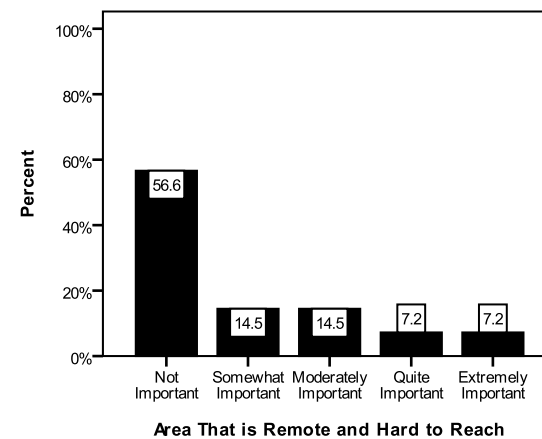
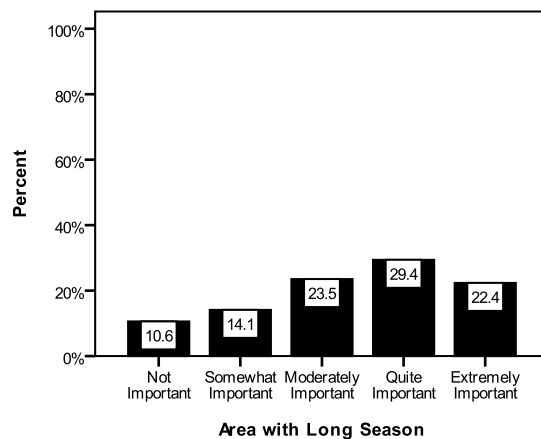
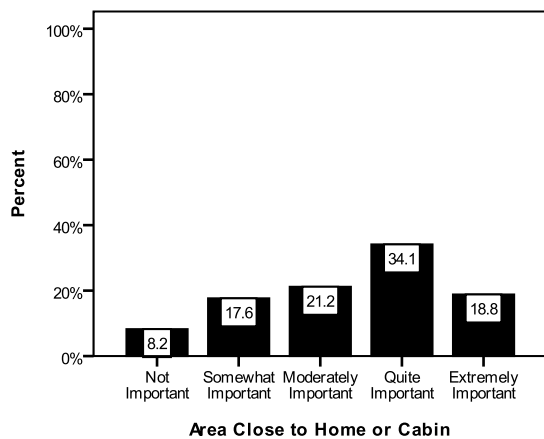
Area Where Family Can Hunt As Well

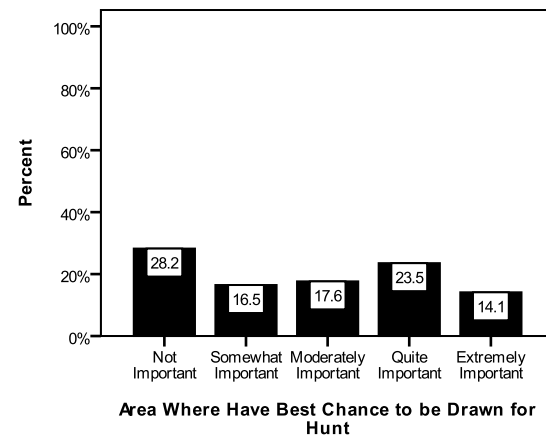
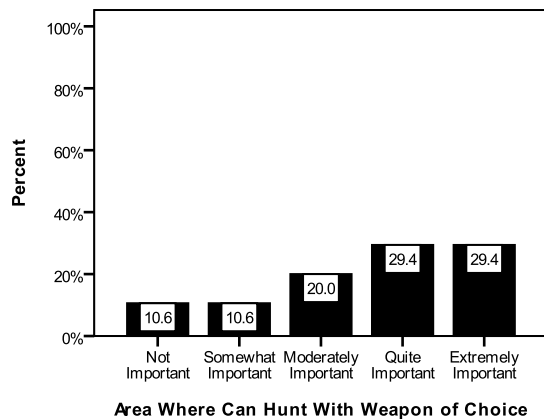
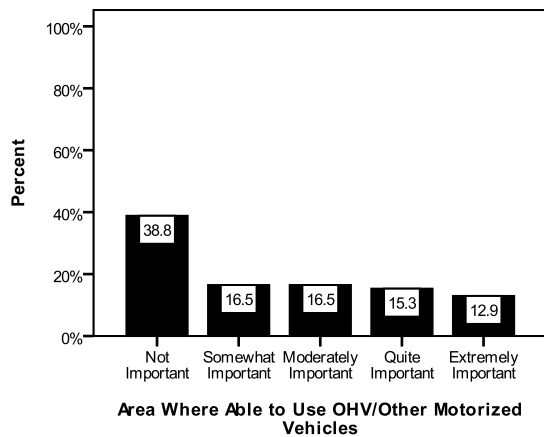
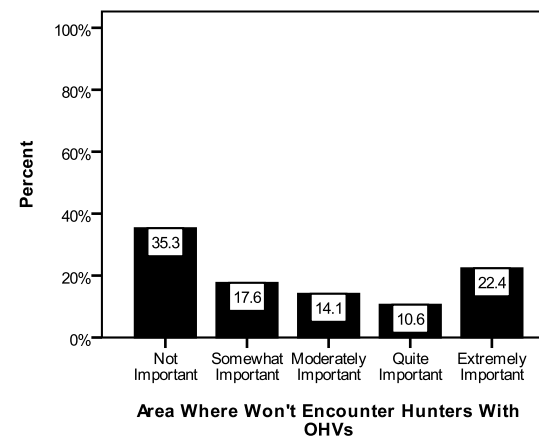
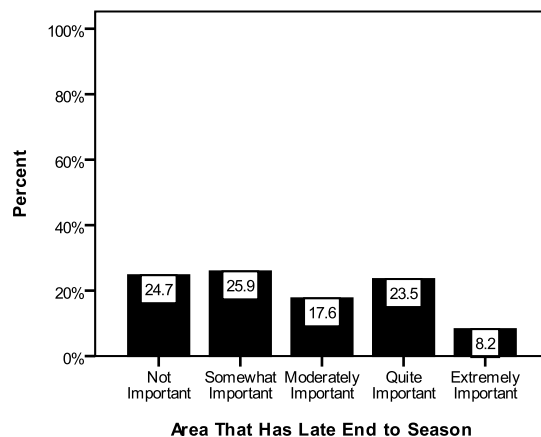
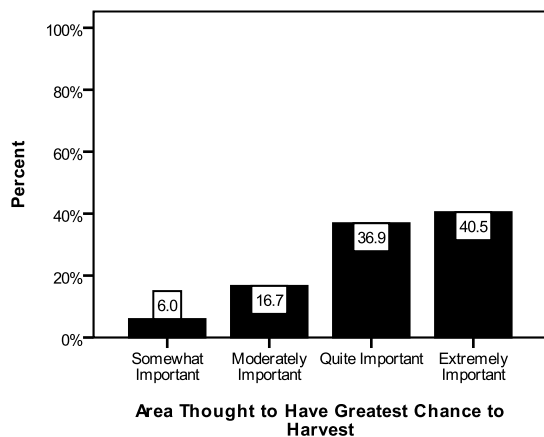


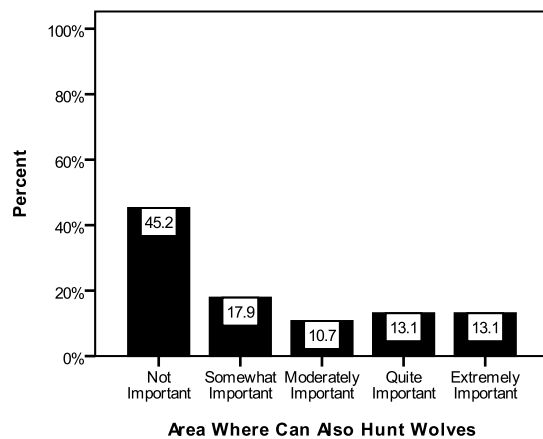
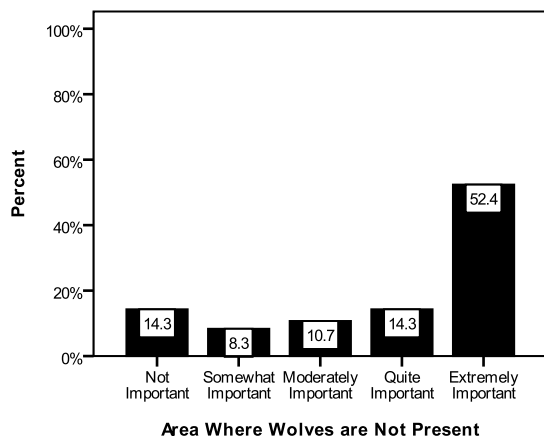
Ability to Hunt Every Year



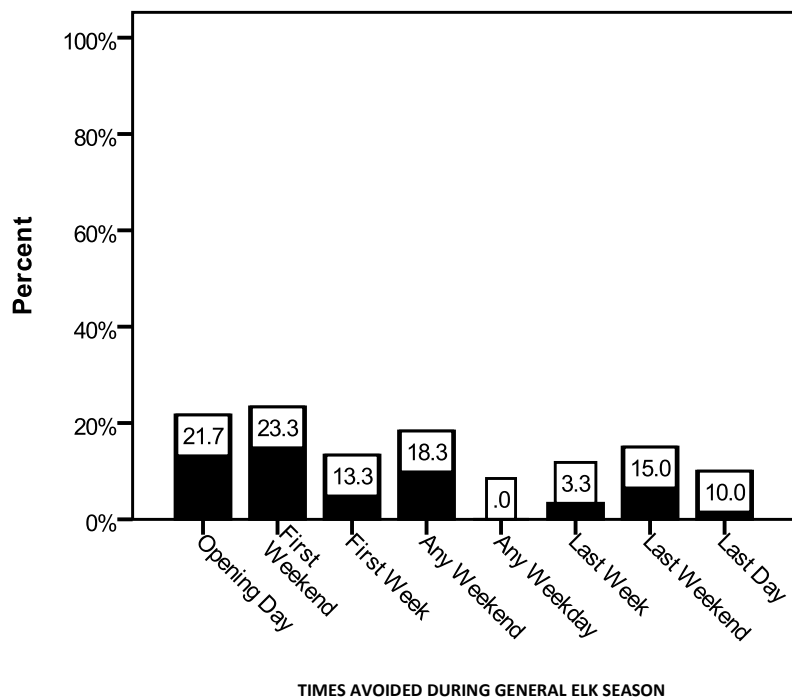
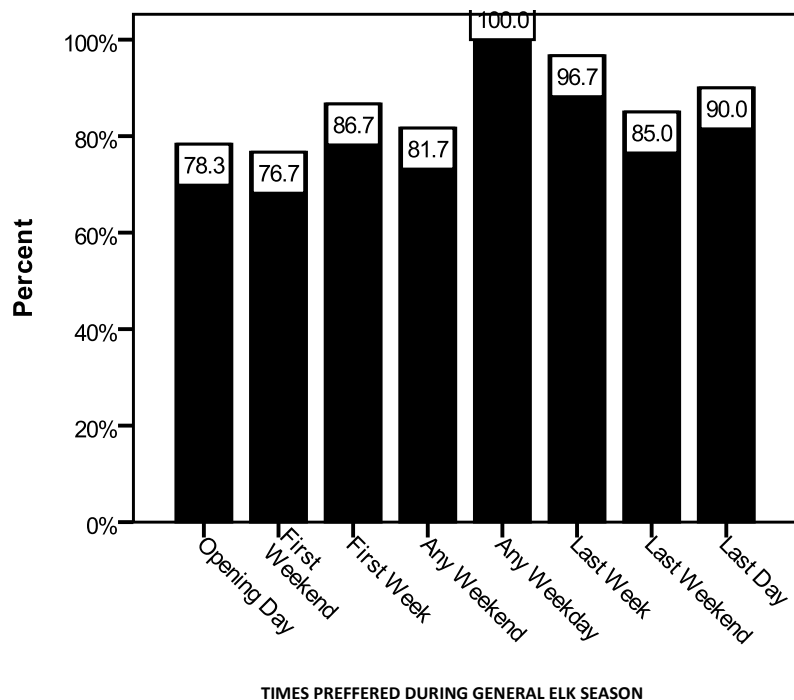
Area Where Also Hunt Deer During Elk Season







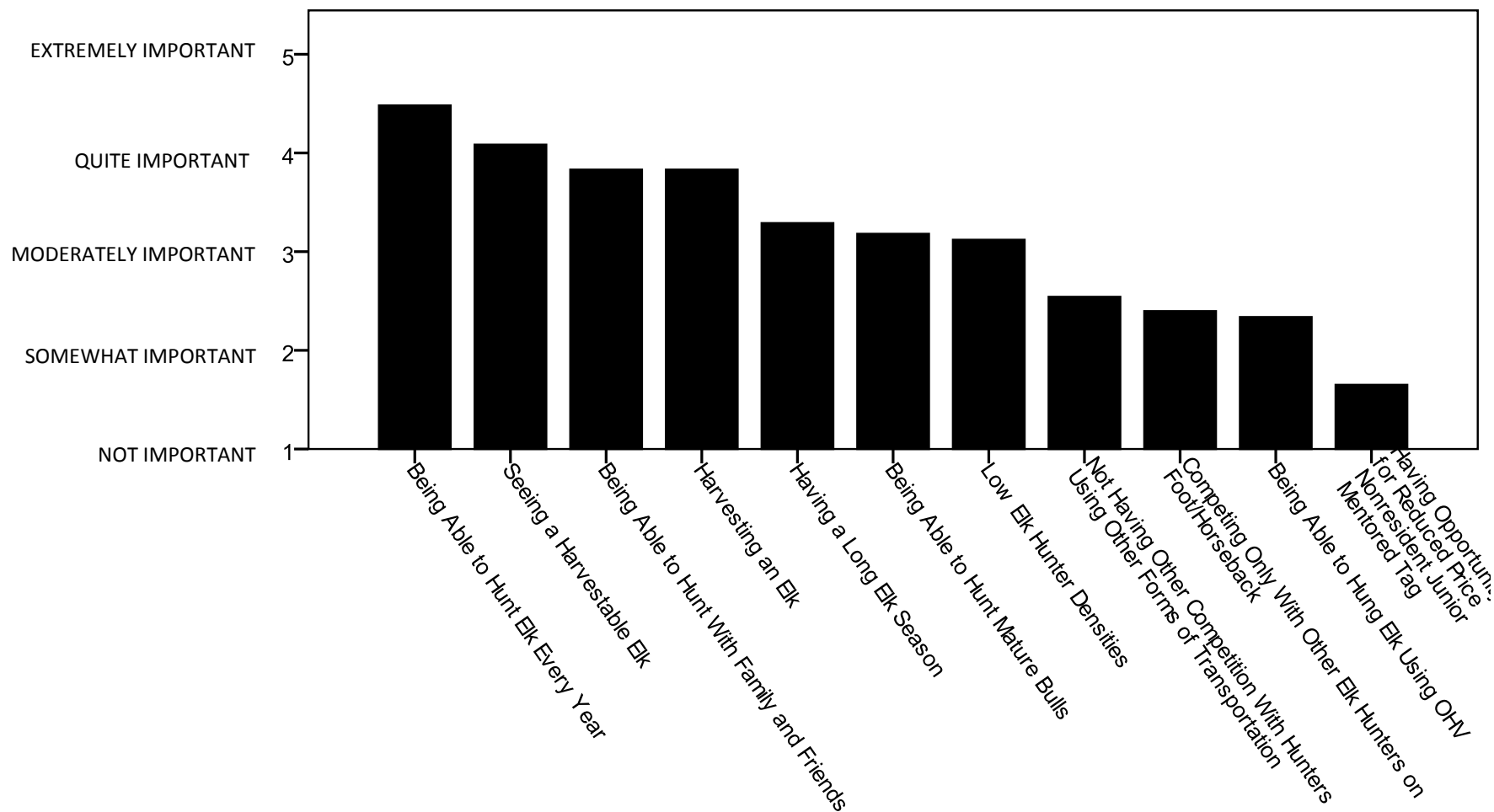
30. Are there any times during the general Elk hunting season in Idaho that you prefer or avoid? (Please check as many as apply)



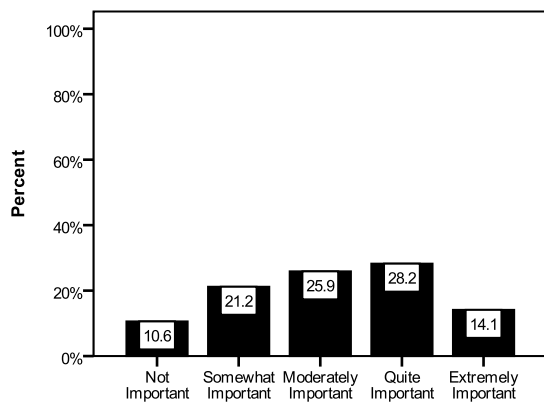
Q30: The preferences and distribution of responses are similar between Palouse zone respondents and the state average.

ATTRIBUTES OF A QUALITY ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE

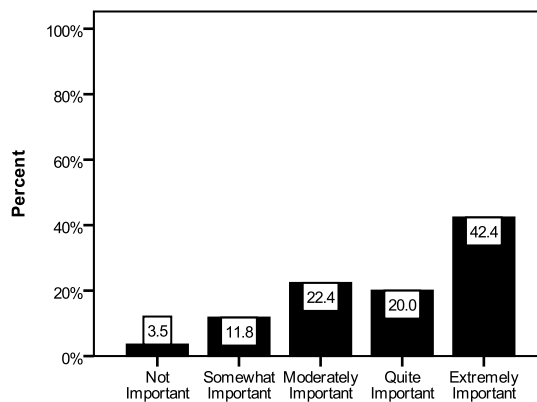
31. How important to you are each of these attributes for a quality Idaho Elk hunting experience?



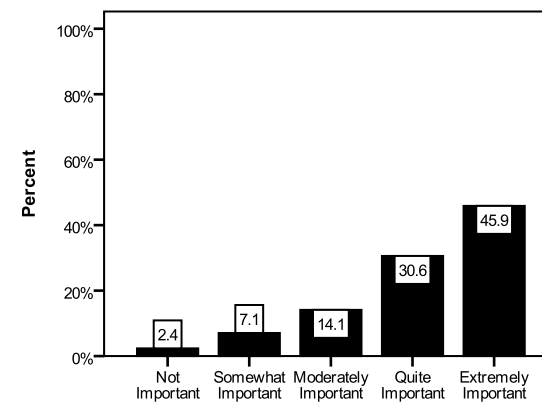
IMPORTANCE OF ATTRIBUTES FOR A QUALITY ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE IN IDAHO



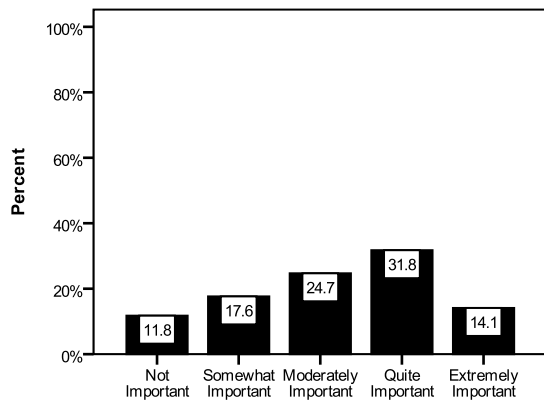
Low Elk Hunter Densities



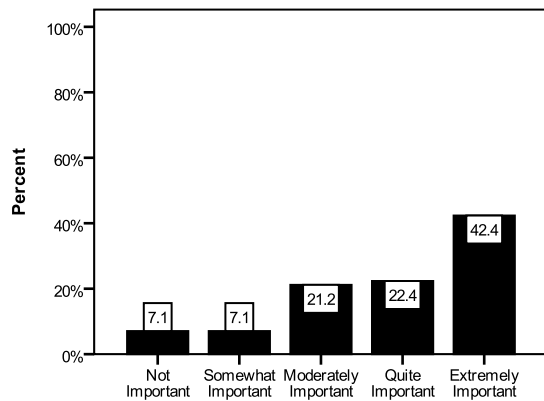
Harvesting an Elk



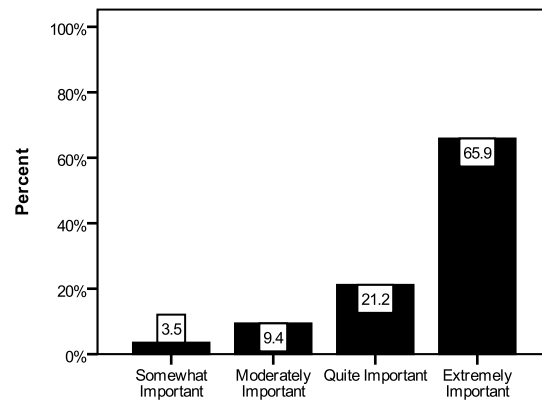
Seeing a Harvestable Elk



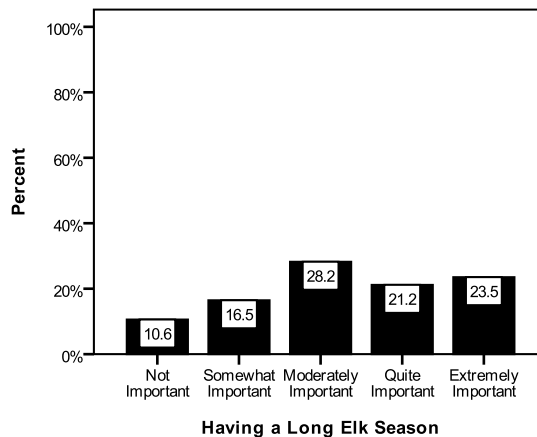
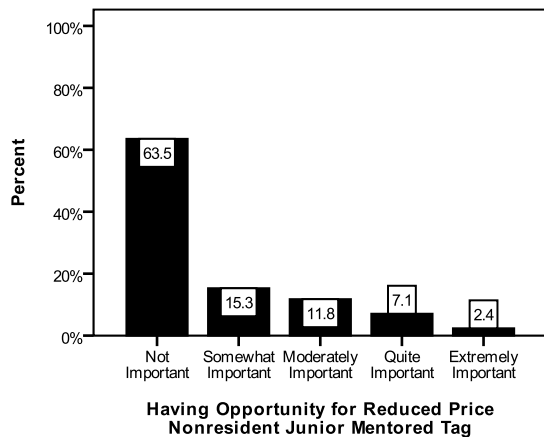
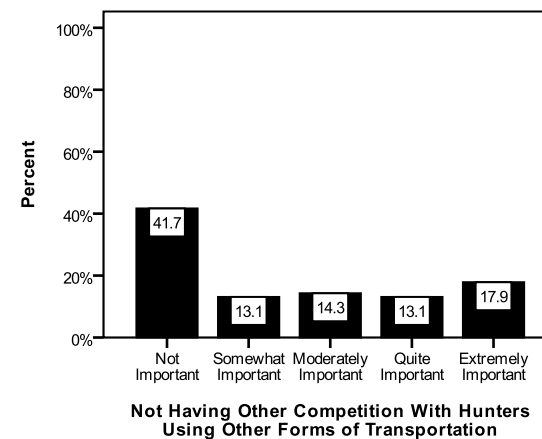
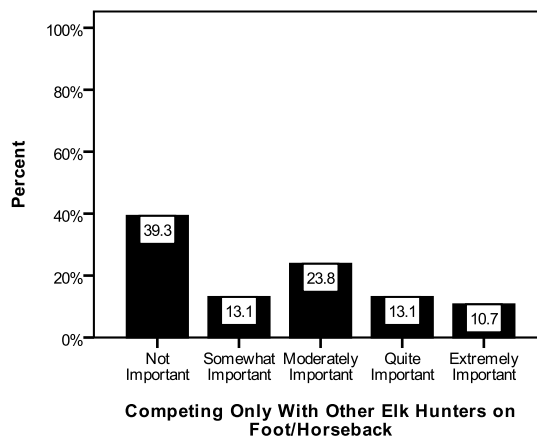
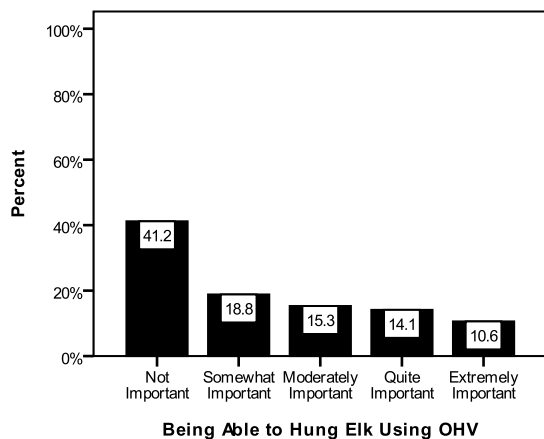
Being Able to Hunt Mature Bulls



Being Able to Hunt With Family and Friends



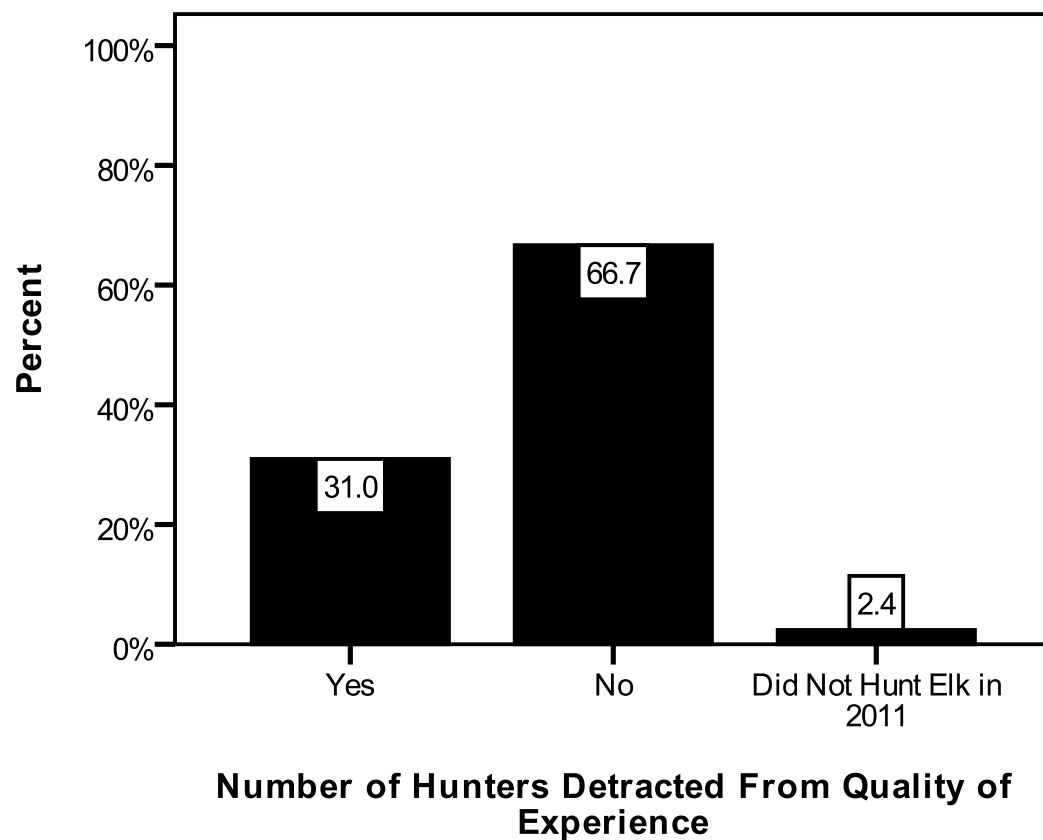
Being Able to Hunt Elk Every Year



Q31: Having a long Elk season is more important to Palouse zone respondents than the state average and exceeded the importance of the ability to hunt mature bulls and having lower Elk hunter densities.

HUNTING SATISFACTION

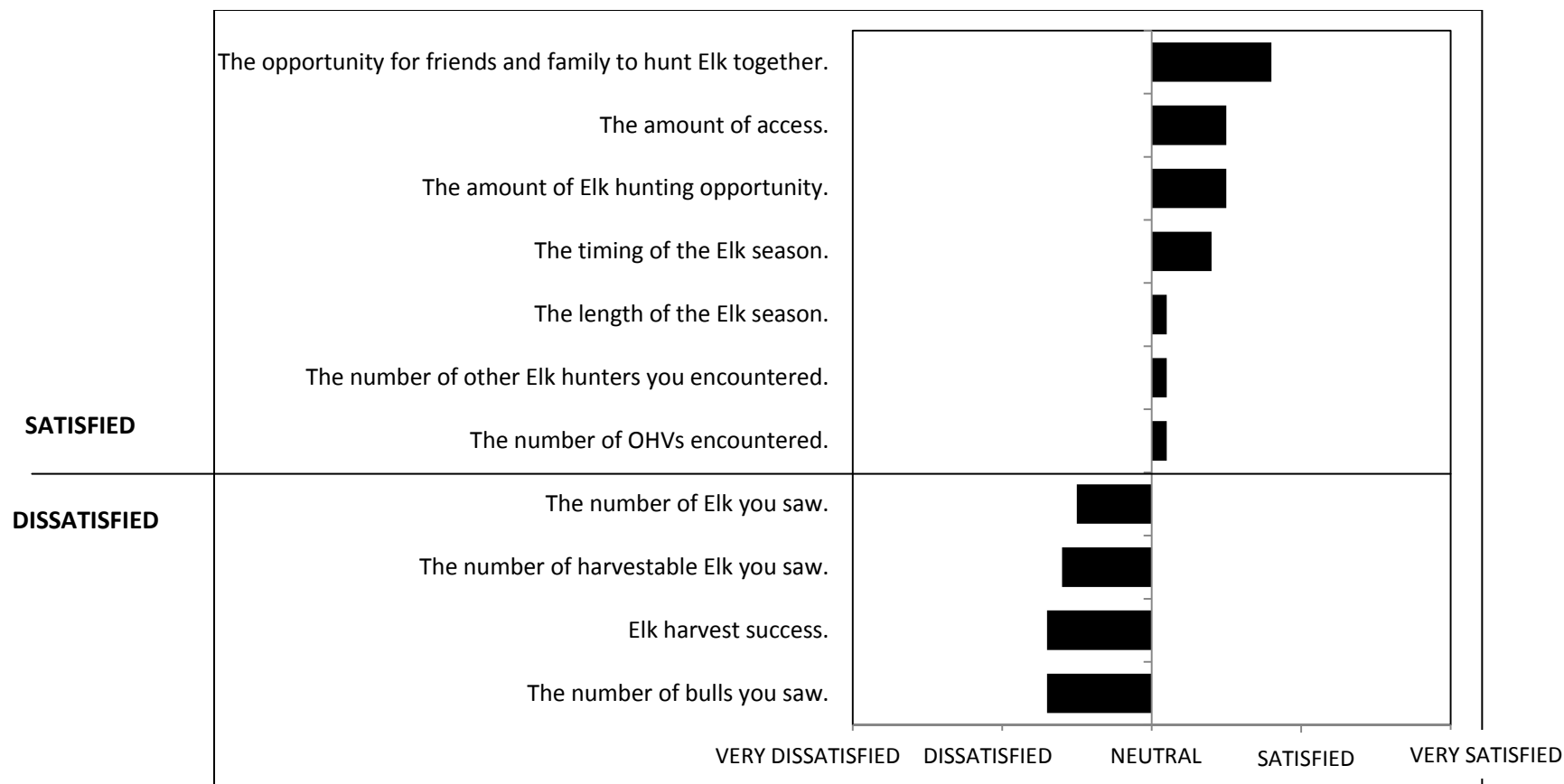
33. Were there times during your 2011 Elk season when the numbers of other hunters seriously detracted from the quality of your hunting experience? *(Please check one response)*



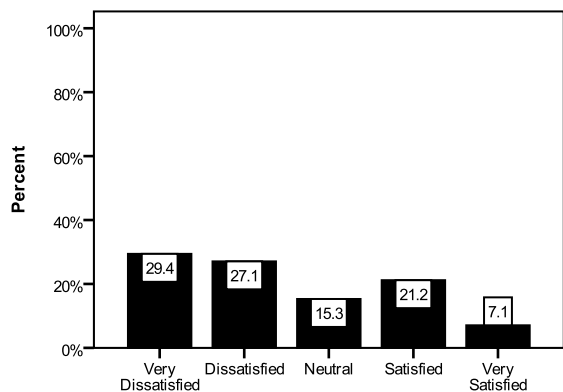
Q33: The distribution of responses are similar between the Palouse zone and the state average.

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

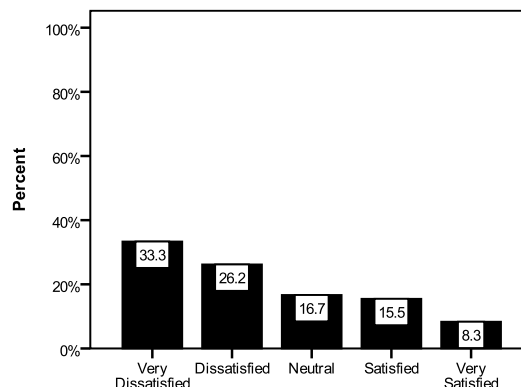
37. How satisfied were you with each of the following aspects of your 2011 Elk hunting experience?



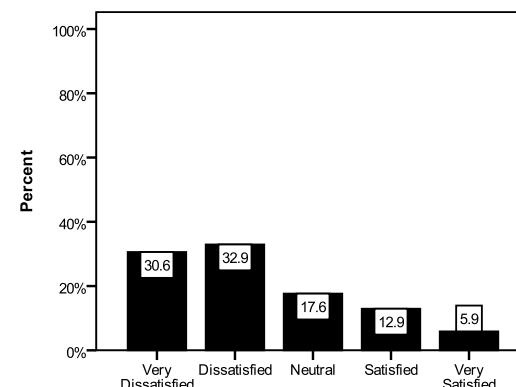
SATISFACTION OF ASPECTS OF 2011 ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE



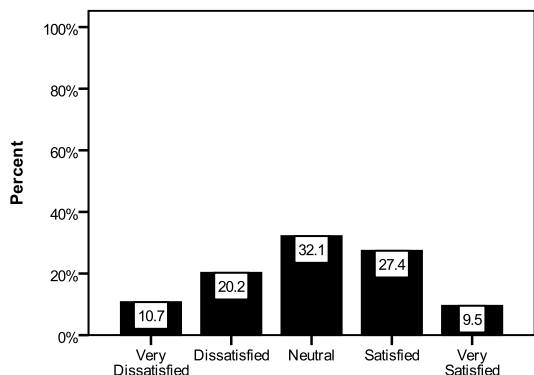
Number of Elk Seen



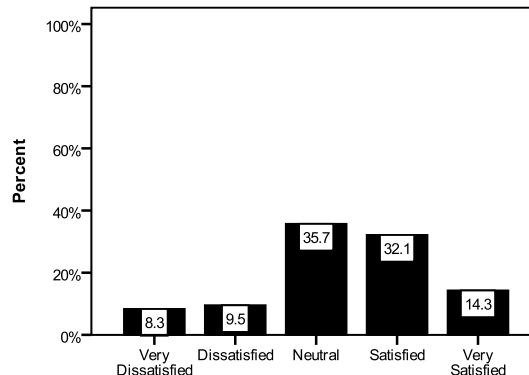
Number of Harvestable Elk Seen



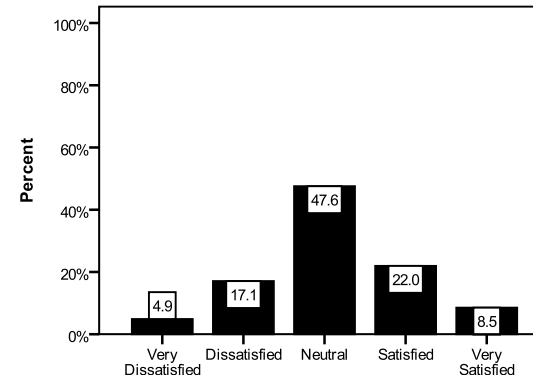
Number of Bulls Seen



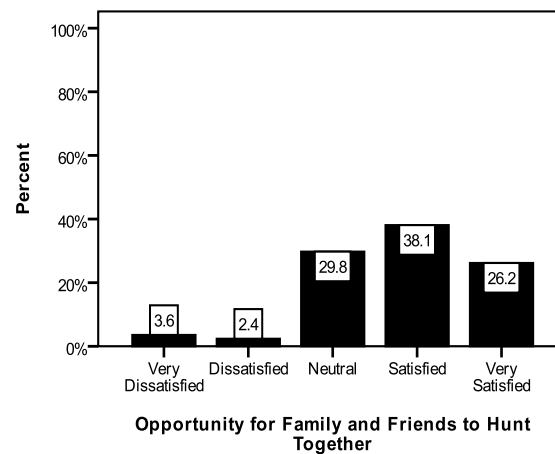
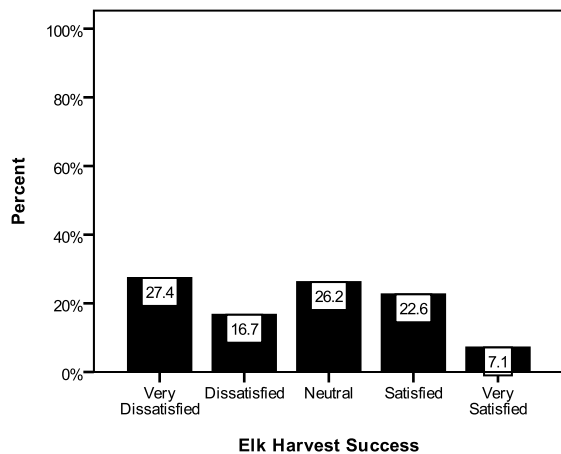
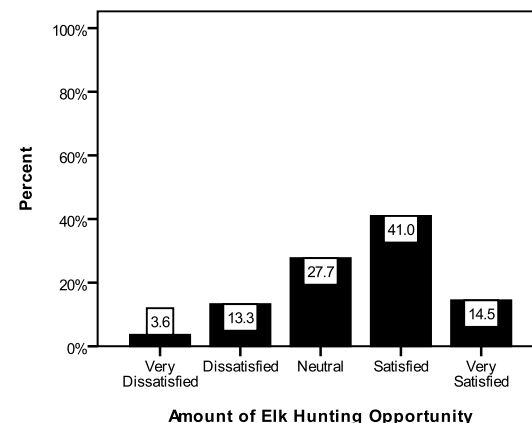
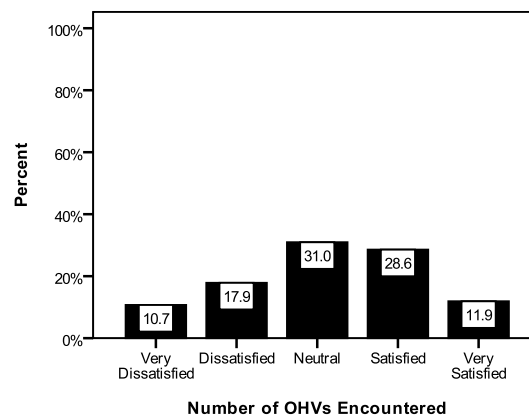
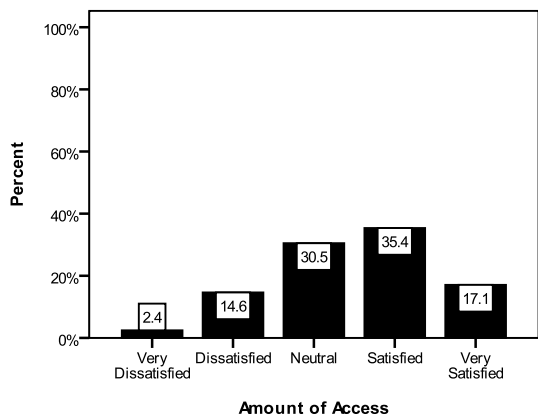
Length of Elk Season



Timing of Elk Season



Number of Elk Hunters Encountered

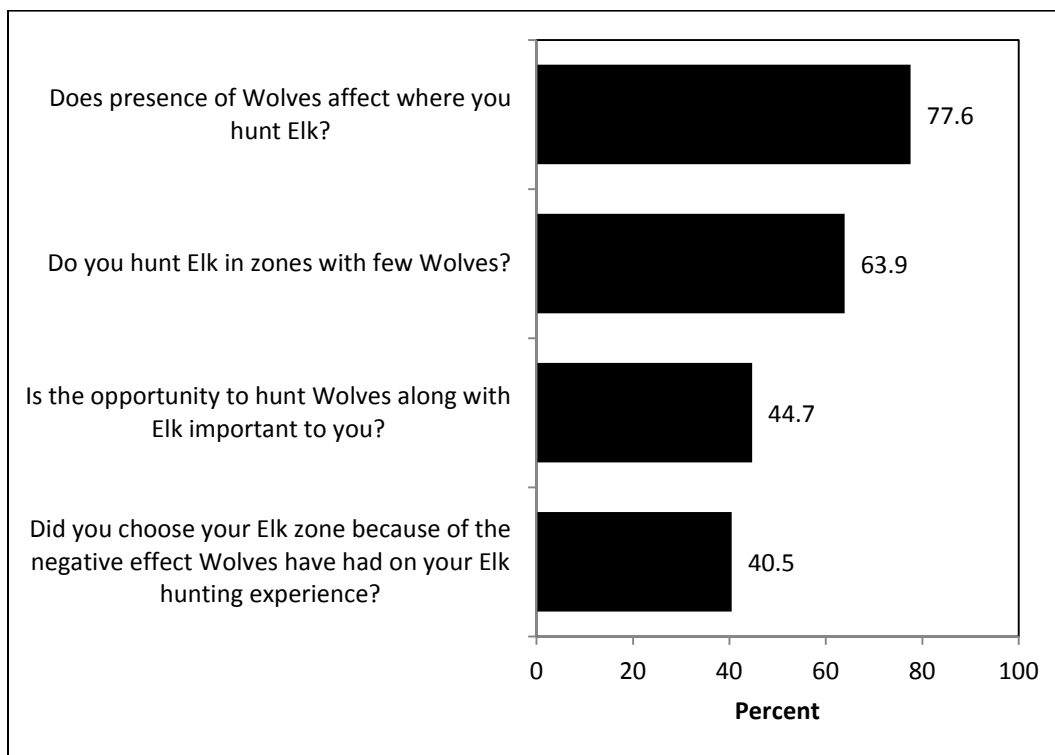


Q37: Palouse zone hunters were more satisfied with the amount of Elk hunting opportunity and the amount of access than the state average. Both groups were similarly dissatisfied with Elk numbers seen and harvest success.

PERCEPTIONS OF PREDATORS

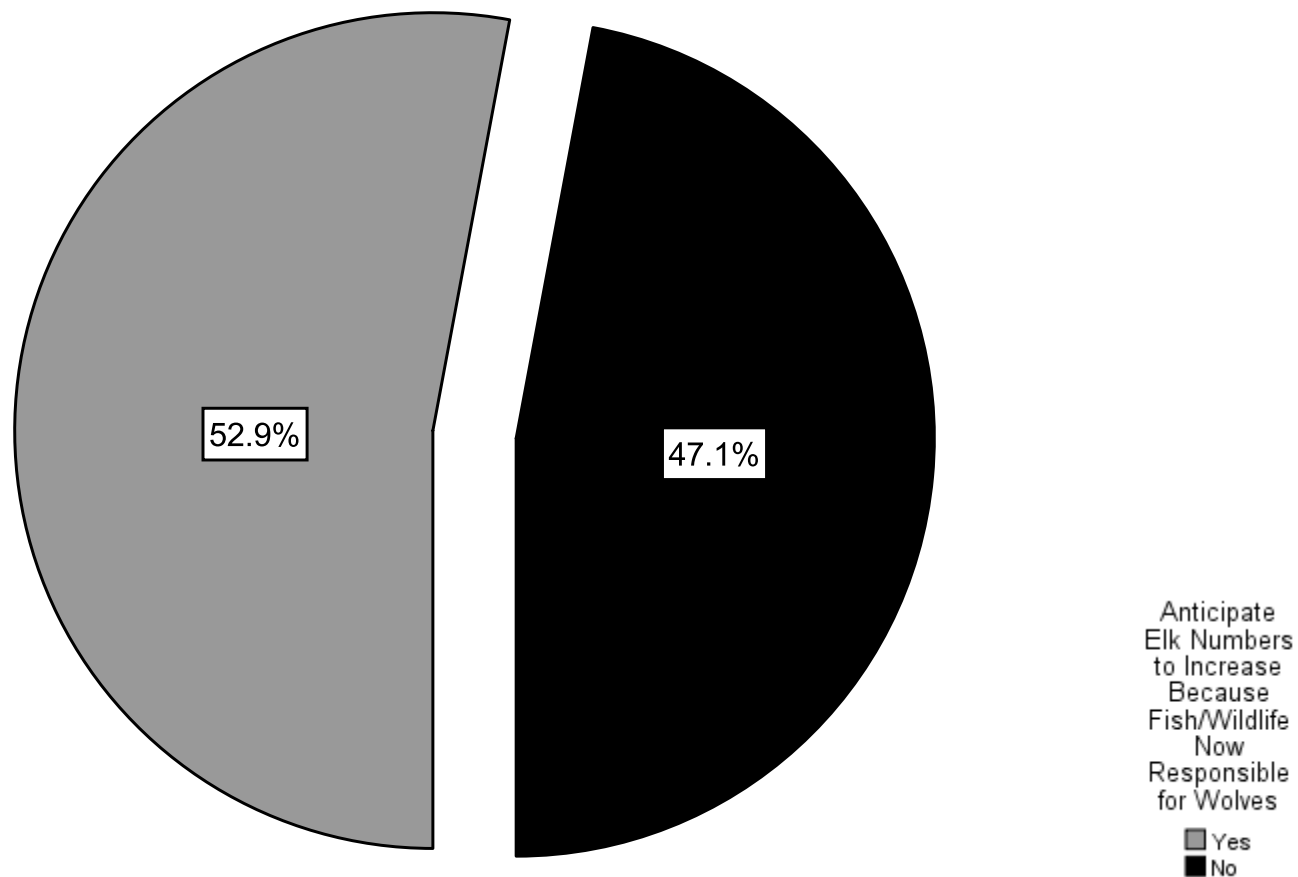
Two questions about predators in Idaho.

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



Q39: A larger percentage of Palouse zone respondents said that they hunt Elk in zones with few Wolves compared to the state average.

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



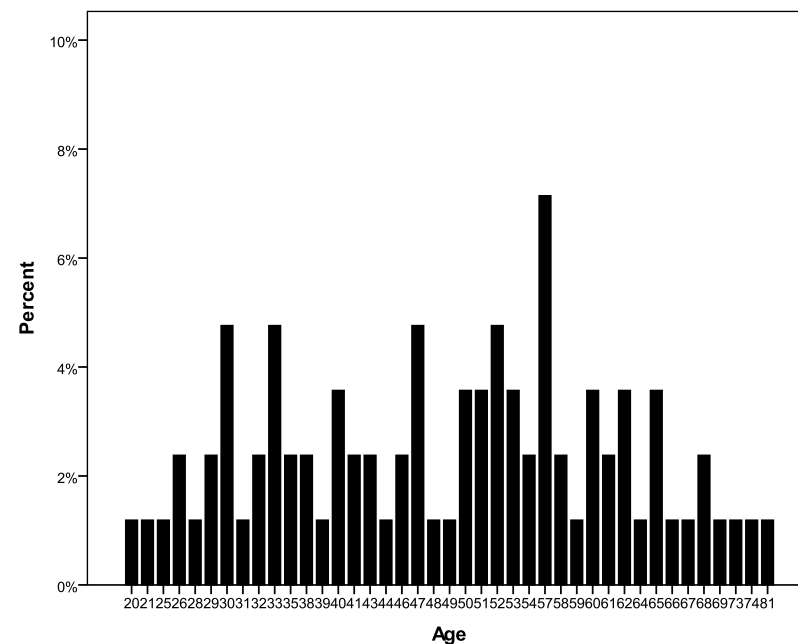
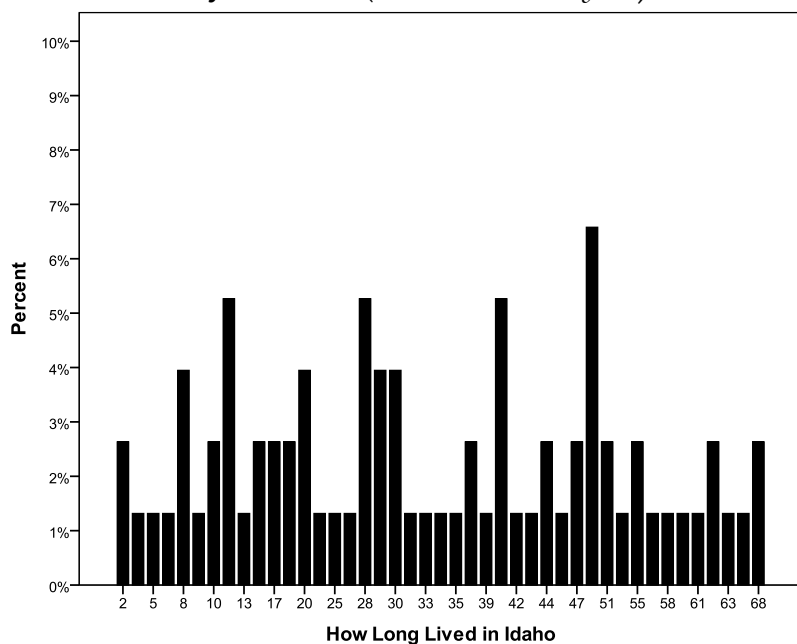
Q40: A slightly smaller percentage of respondents in the Palouse zone anticipate the increase of Elk numbers with IDFG management of Wolves compared to the state average.

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 for both Q42 and Q43 are similar between the Palouse zone and the state average.