

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



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For:

Idaho Department of Fish and Game

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INSERT ELK SURVEY OBJECTIVES

METHODS

SAMPLING

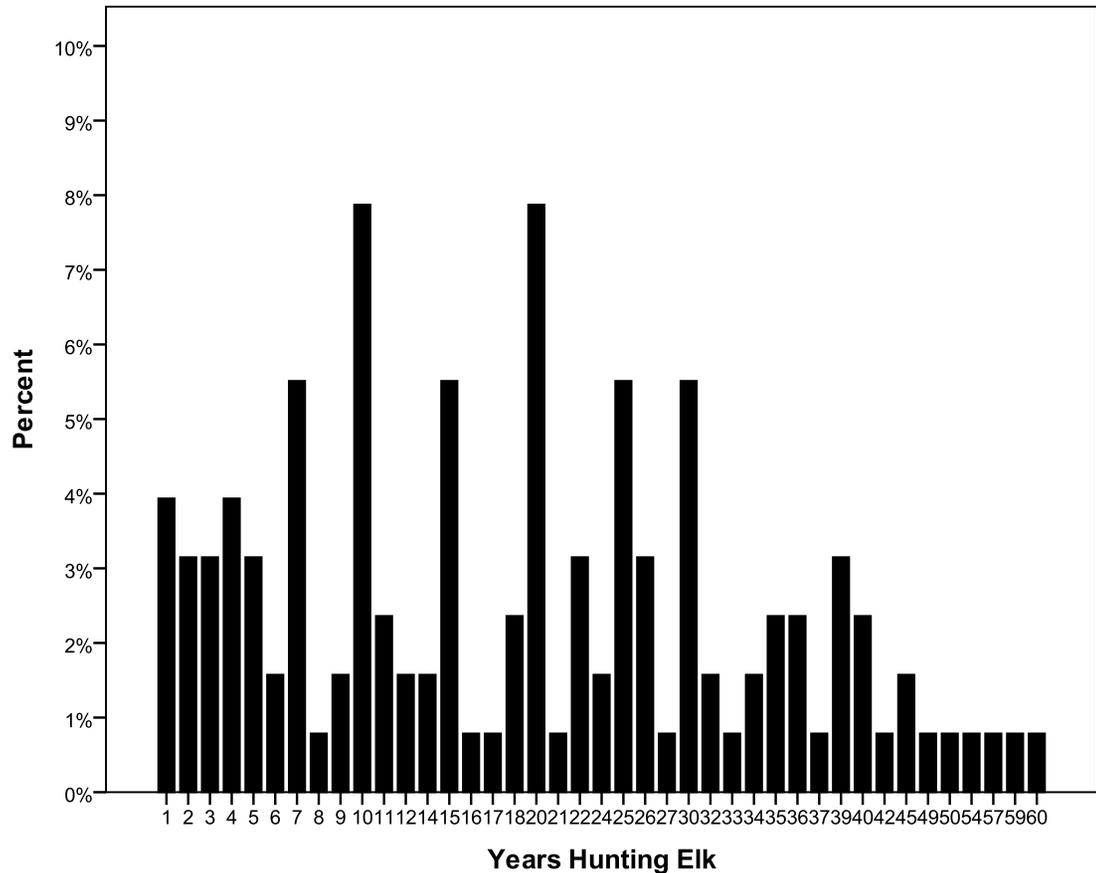
RESPONSE RATE.

ELK HUNTER PROFILES

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

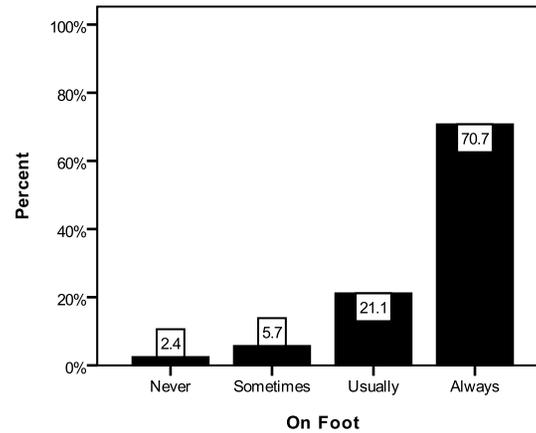
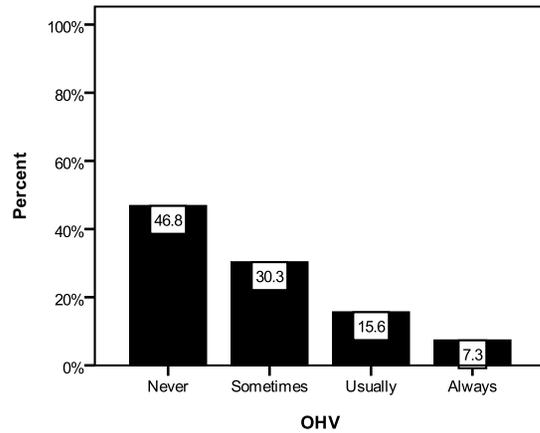
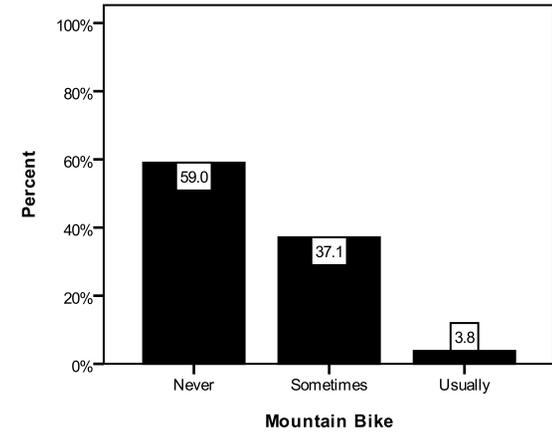
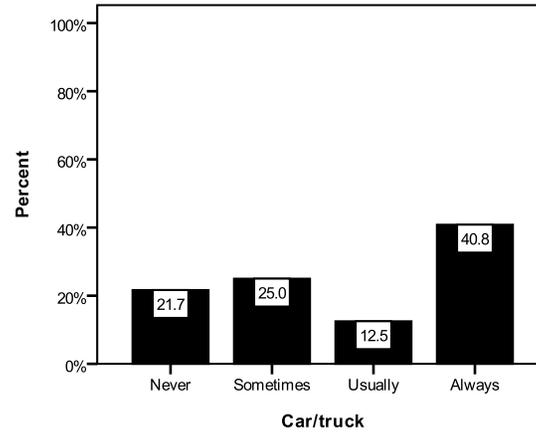
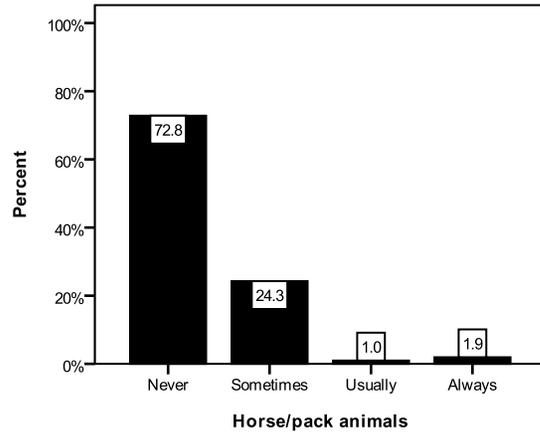
Now, some questions about your Idaho Elk hunting experiences and preferences.

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



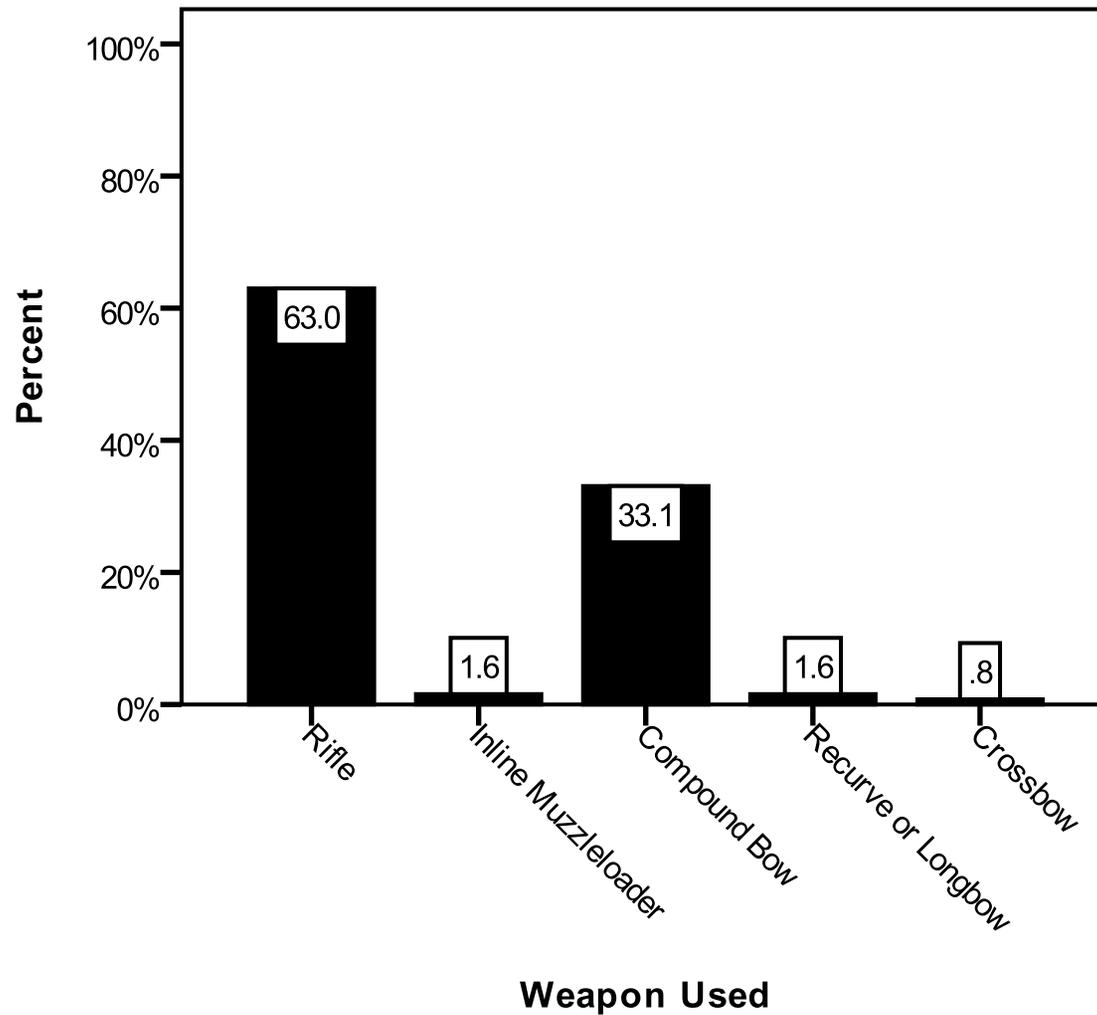
Q3: The distribution of responses for the number of years of hunting Elk in Idaho are similar between the Panhandle zone and the state average.

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?



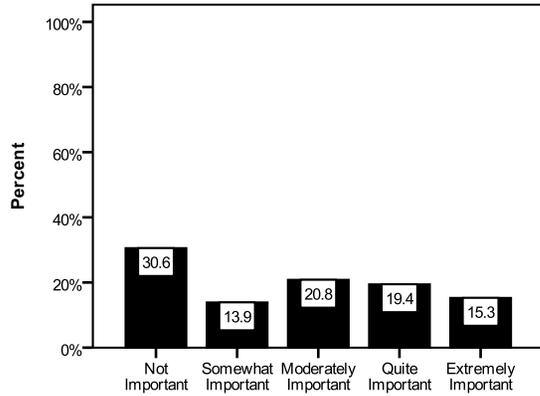
Q7: Respondents in the Panhandle zone most frequently hunt on foot or by car/truck. Compared to the state average, over 20% more respondents said they never use horse/pack animals. 15% more respondents also report using mountain bike sometimes.

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

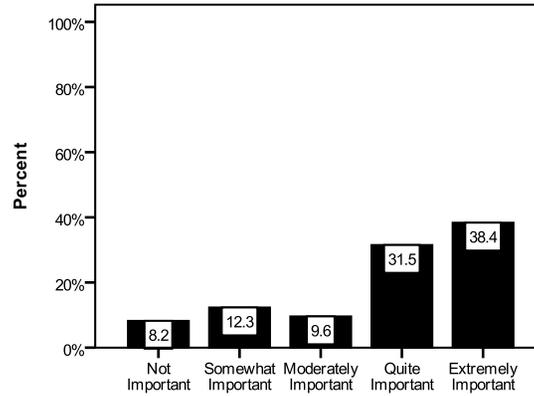


Q8: Hunters in the Panhandle zone are most likely to use a rifle or compound bow when hunting, which is the same for the state's average response.

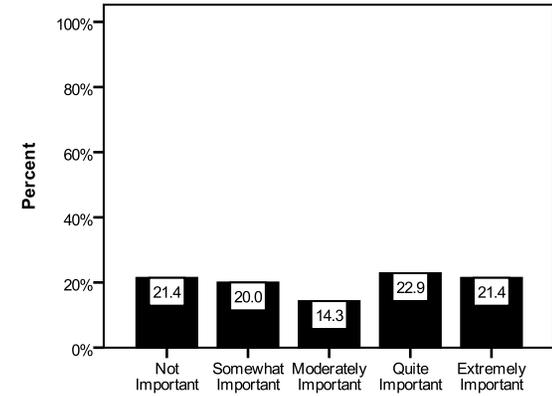
10. How important was each of the following in your decision to hunt during Elk archery, short-range weapons or muzzleloader seasons?



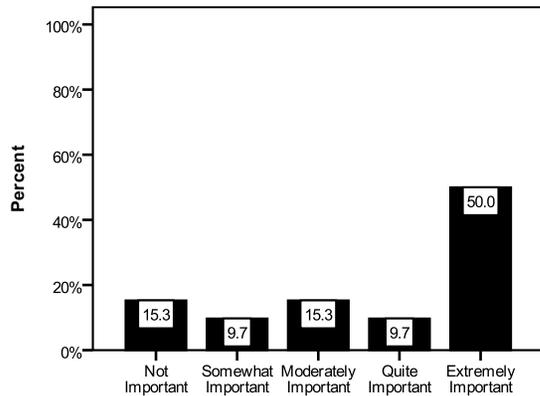
Increase Challenge



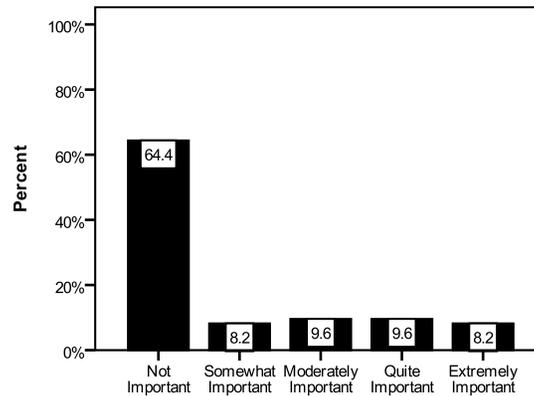
Hunt With Few Hunters on Field



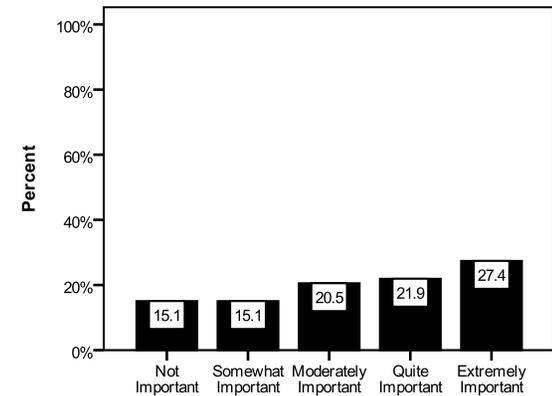
Improve Chance of Harvesting



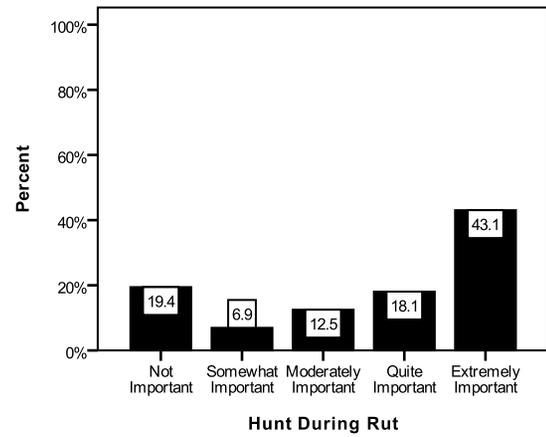
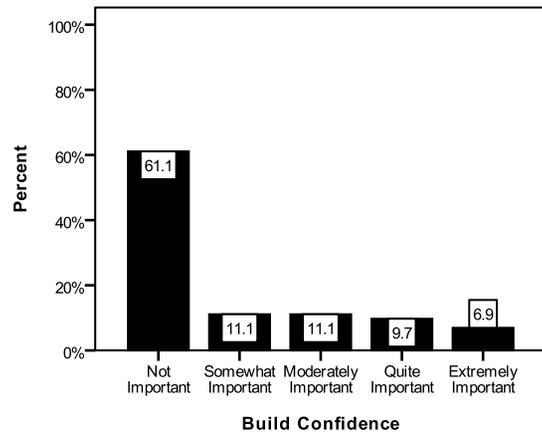
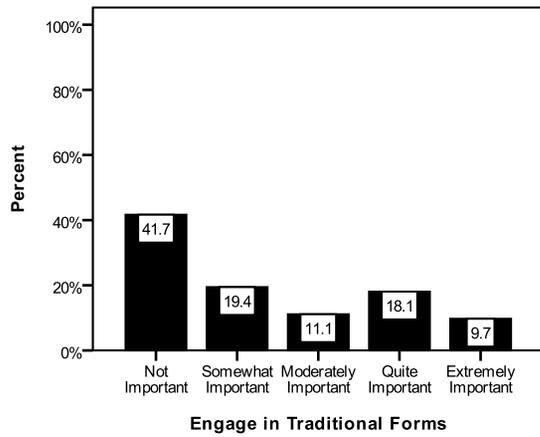
Expand Hunting Season



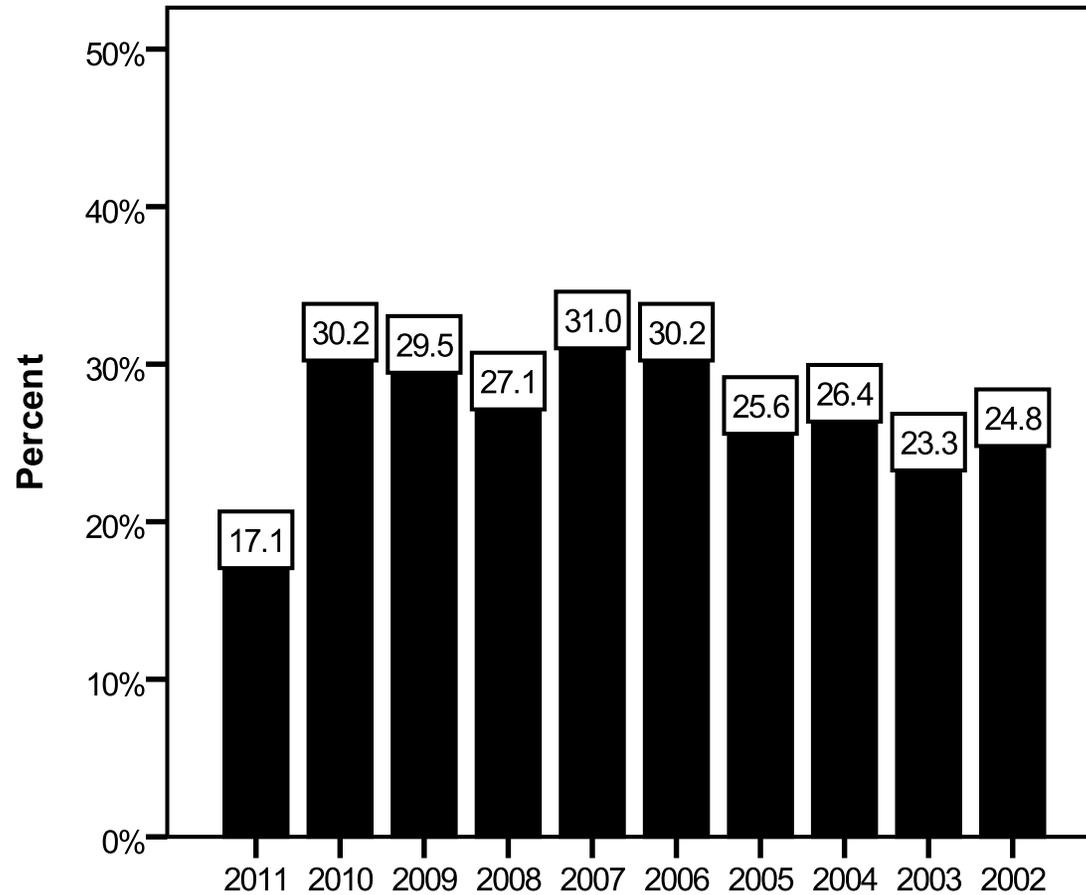
Hunt in Zone Where Rifle Limited



Adventure

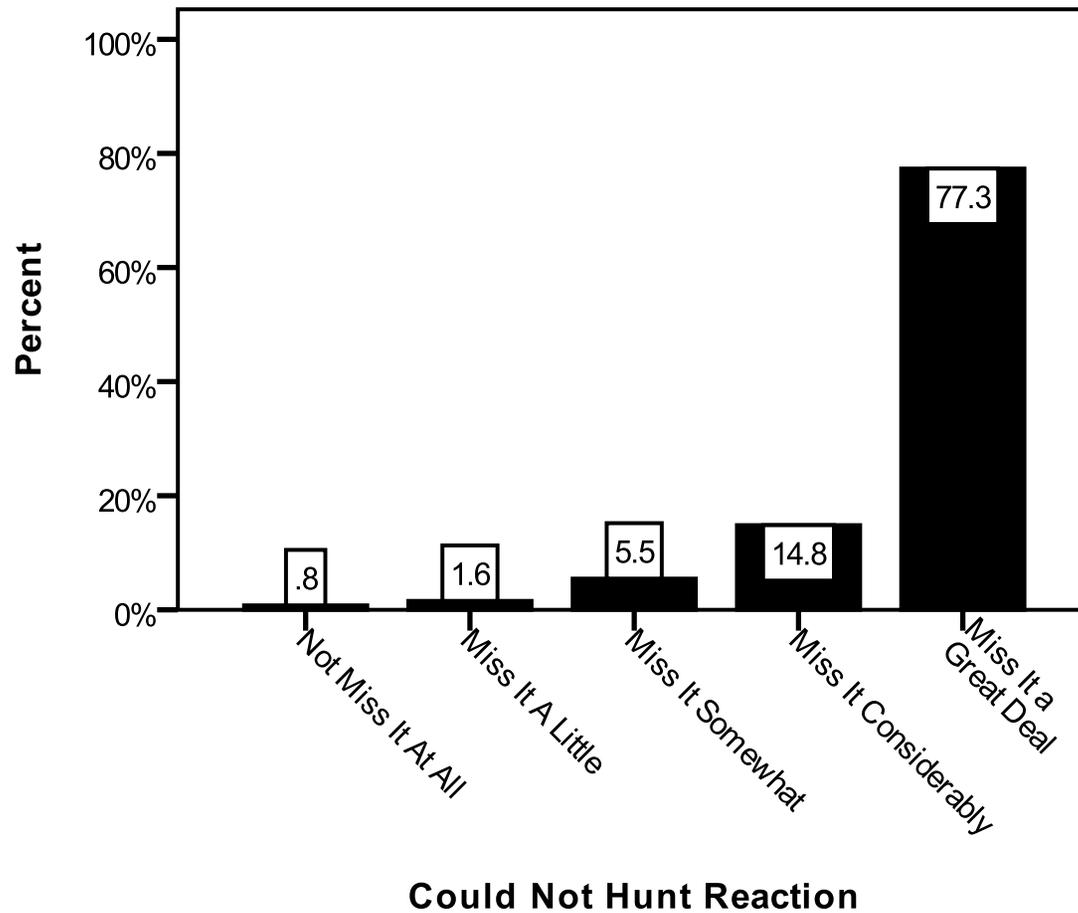


Q10: The three most important reasons for hunters to hunt during Elk archery, short-range weapon and muzzleloader seasons in the Panhandle zone are to hunt with fewer hunters afield, to expand their hunting season, and to hunt during the rut. 50% of respondents said it was extremely important to expand their hunting season; almost a quarter more than the state average.

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

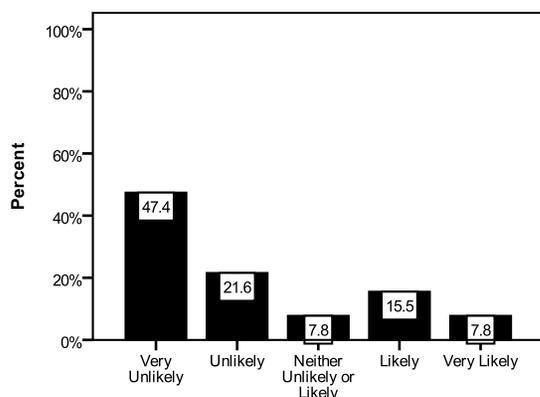
Q11: Harvest success has been higher for hunters in the Panhandle zone compared to the state as a whole for the years between 2002 and 2010. However, harvest success dropped by 13.1% in 2011, falling below the state average.

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

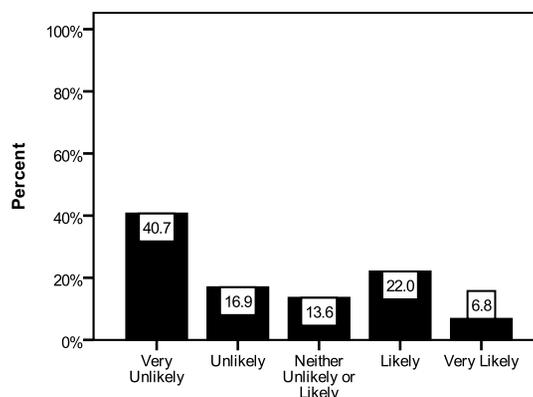


Q12: Very similar to the state, Panhandle zone hunters would miss Elk hunting in Idaho a great deal if they were not able to.

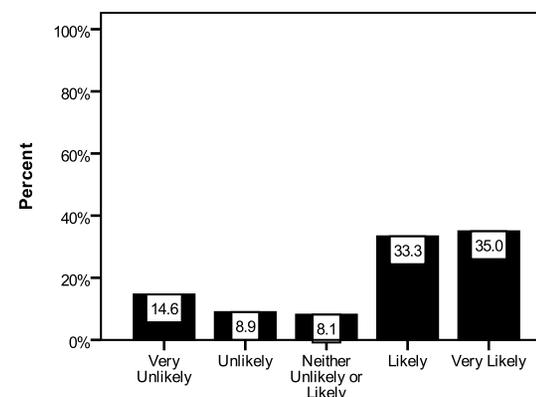
13. If you could not hunt Elk in Idaho, how would your hunting change?



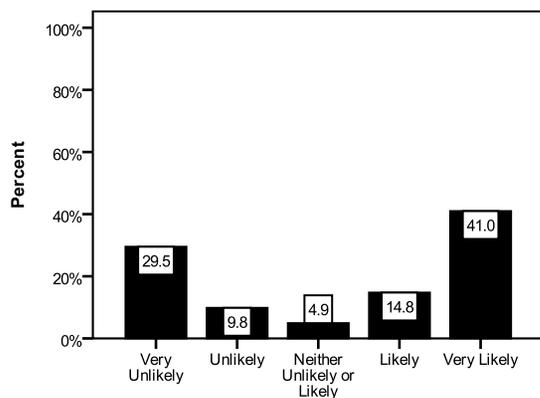
Hunt Waterfowl More



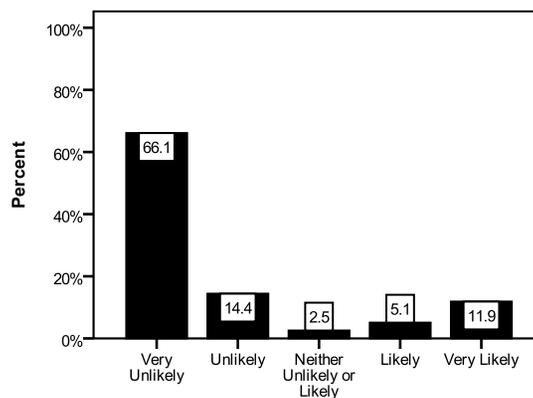
Hunt Upland Game More



More Time Hunting Other Game



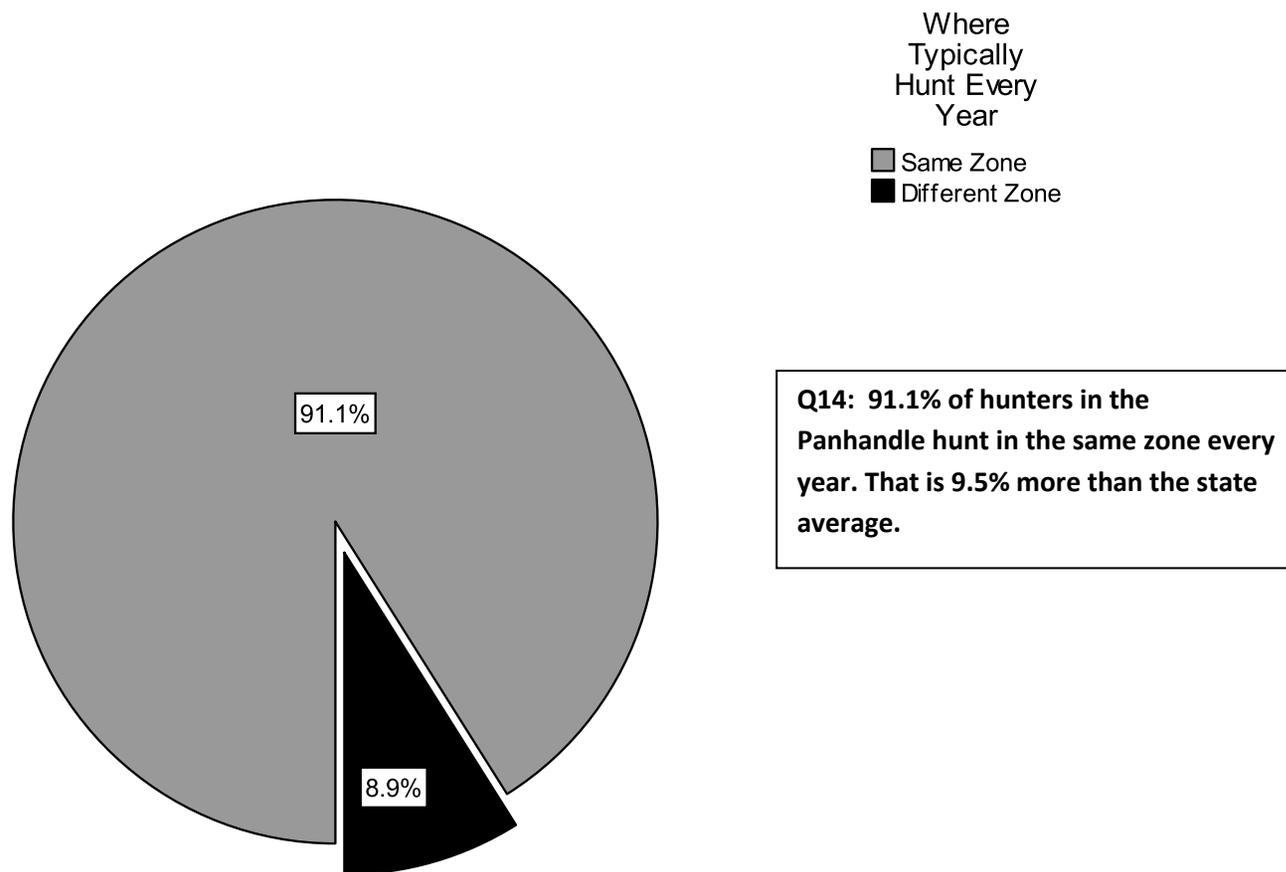
Hunt Elk in Other States



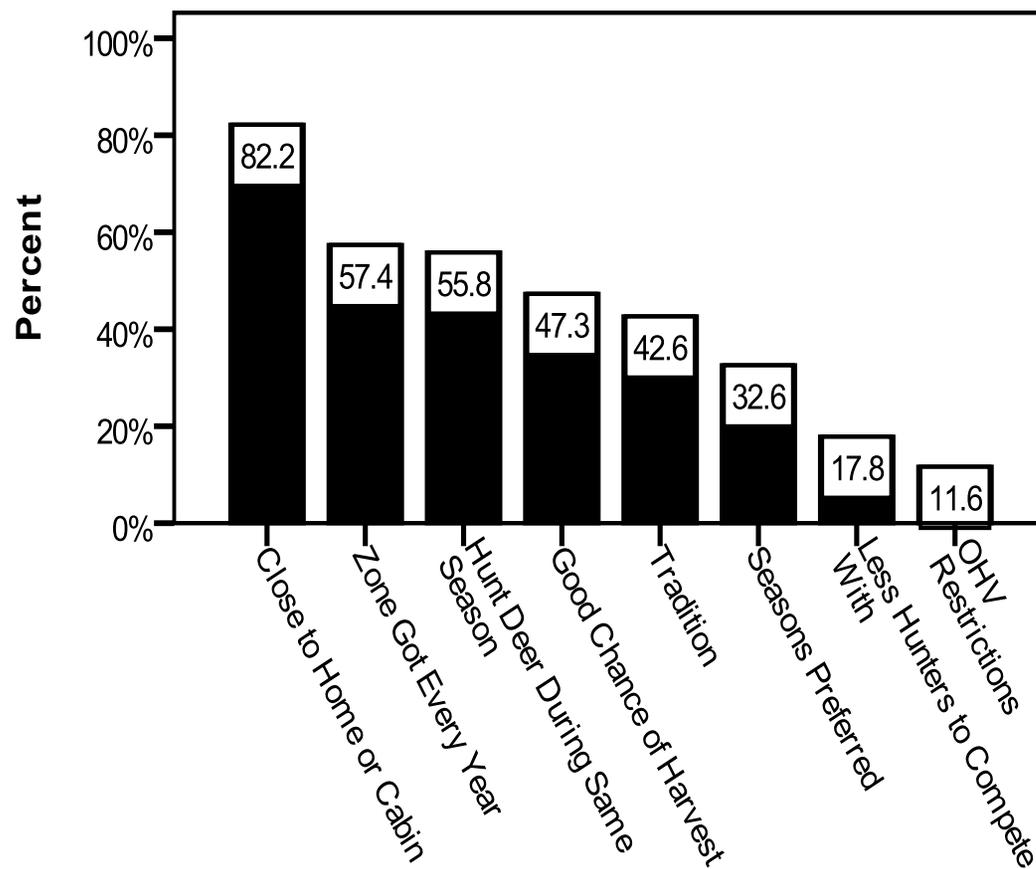
Not Hunt At All

Q13: Hunters in the Panhandle zone would spend more time hunting other game or hunt Elk in other states if they could not hunt Elk in Idaho. These results are consistent with those of the state average.

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

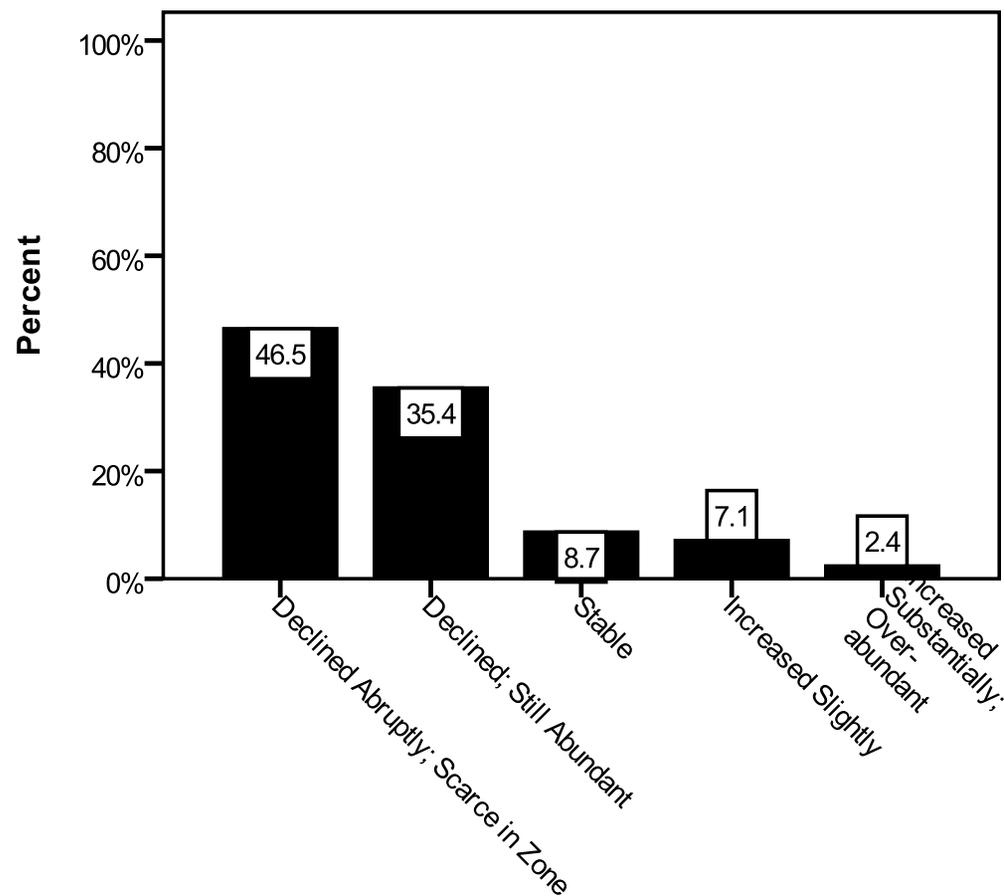


16. What makes the zone(s) you marked in Q-15 desirable to hunt Elk? (Please check all that apply)



Q16: Having a zone close to home or cabin is very desirable for hunters of the Panhandle zone. 28.2% more respondents found that desirable than at the state level.

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)

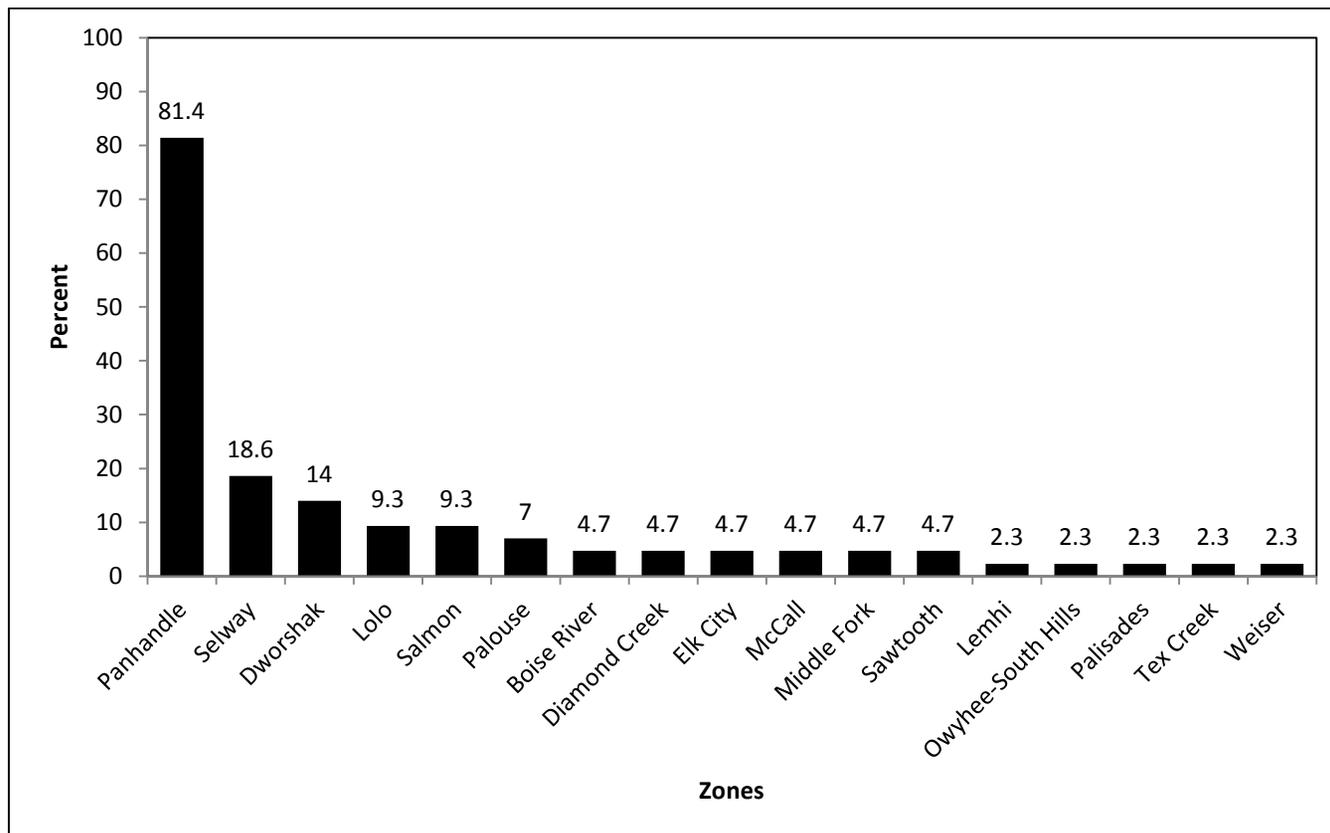


Perceptions of Elk Numbers

Q17: Panhandle hunters perceive Elk numbers in their zone slightly different than other hunters in the state. 4.9% less hunters find numbers to be stable, but 5.3% more find number to have increased either slightly or substantially compared to the state average.

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

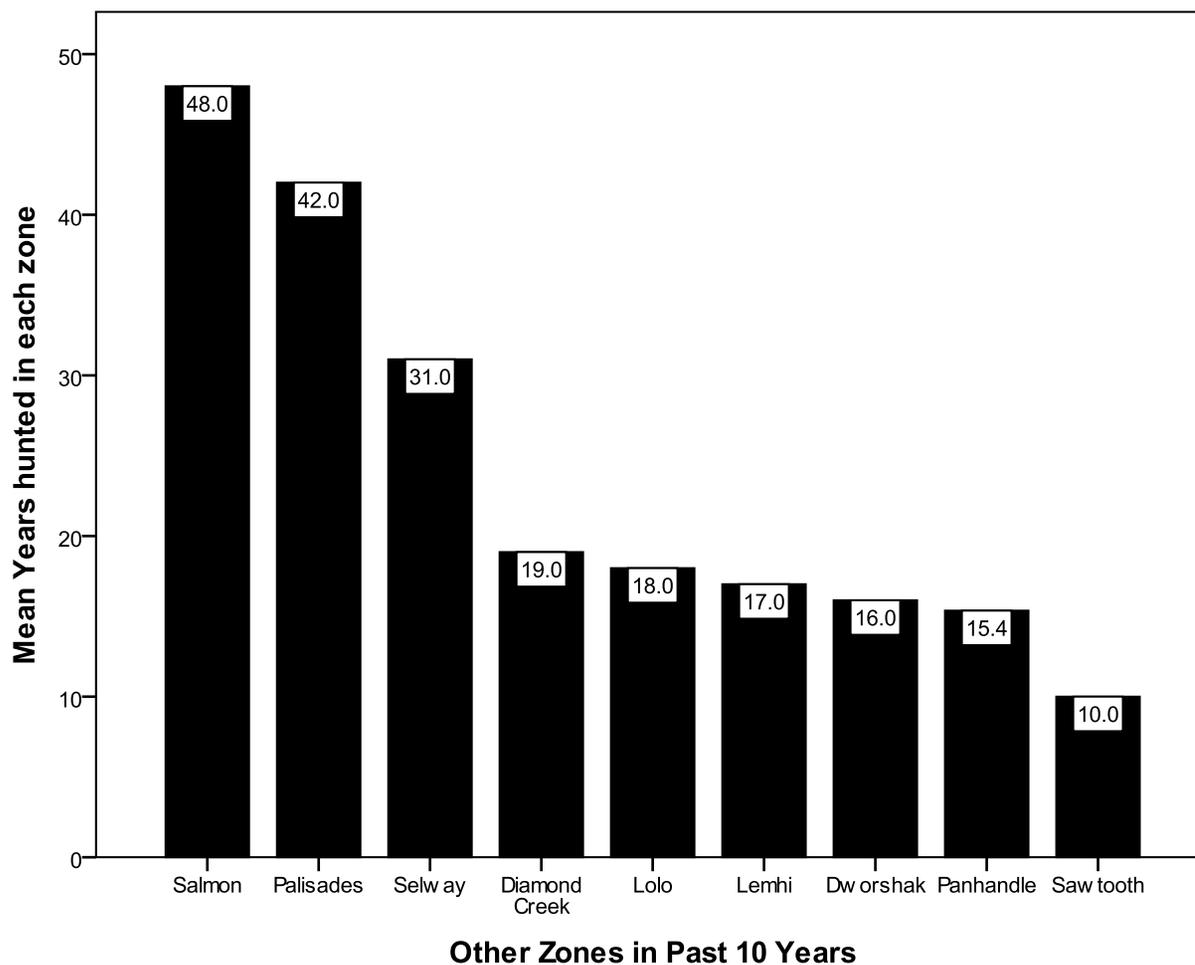
(Please write in the Zone names, refer to map on page 5 for Zone names)



Q18: Less than 20% of Panhandle hunters have hunted in any other zone in Idaho in the past 10 years.

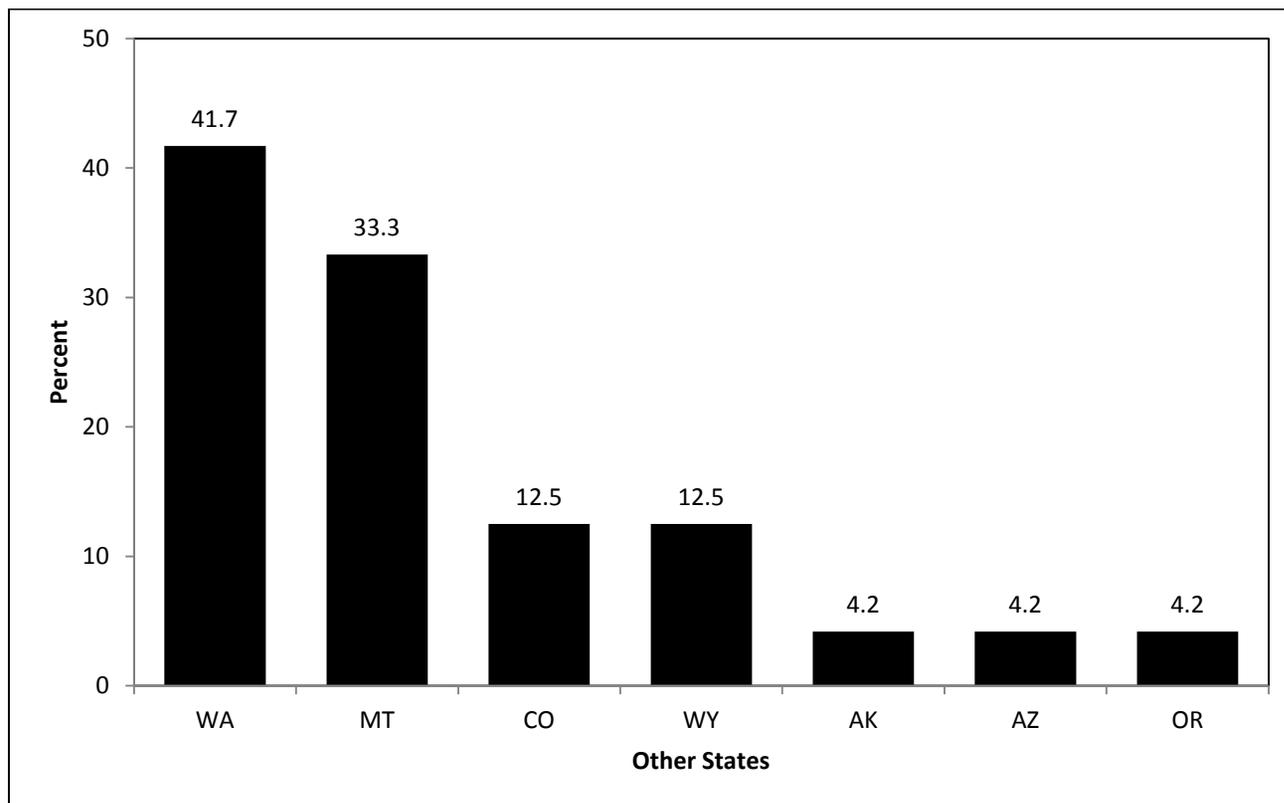
20. How long have you hunted Elk in each of the zones you listed in Q-18?

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



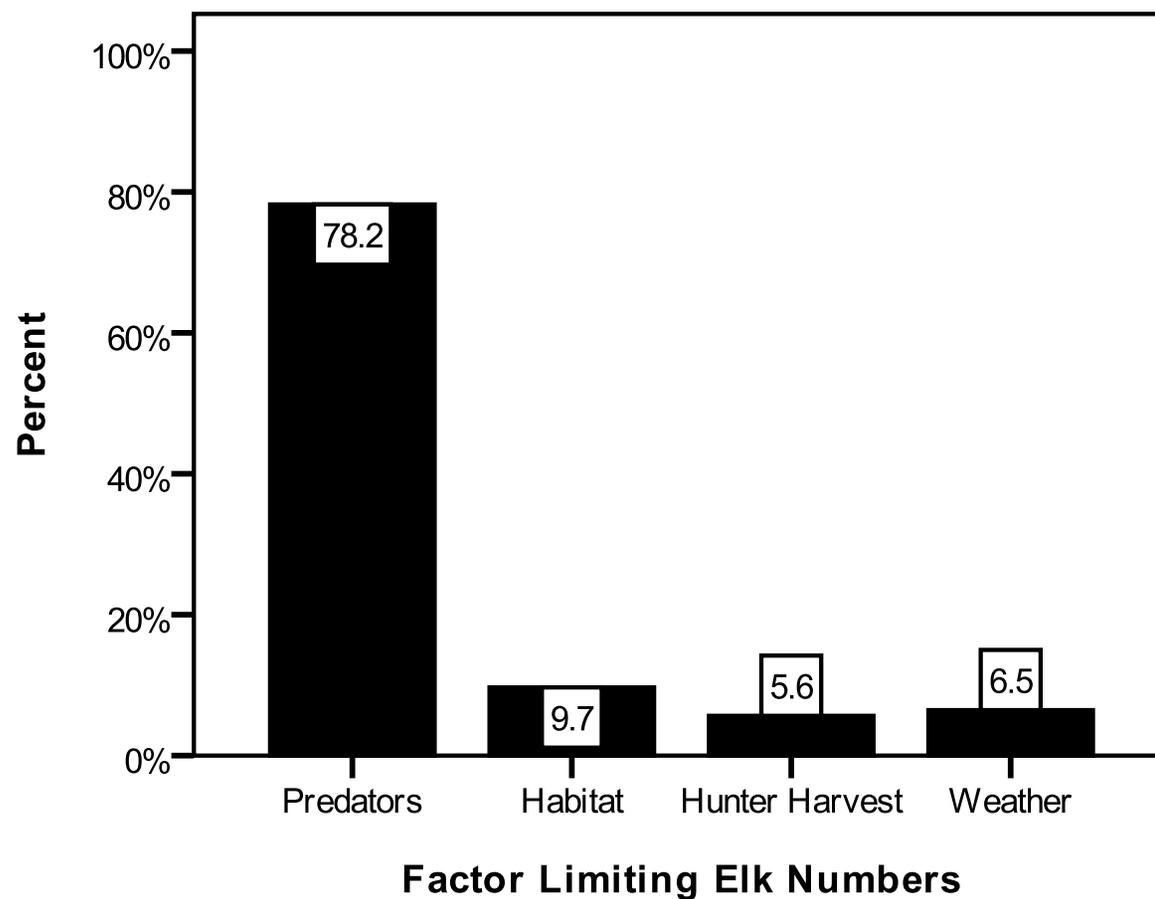
Q20: For the small percentage of hunters hunting in these zones, the Salmon, Palisades, and Selway zones have all been hunted for over 30 years.

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



Q21: Neighboring states of Washington and Montana are most frequented by Panhandle hunters who hunt out of state. There is a 27.4% increase for hunting in Washington between the Panhandle zone and the state as a whole.

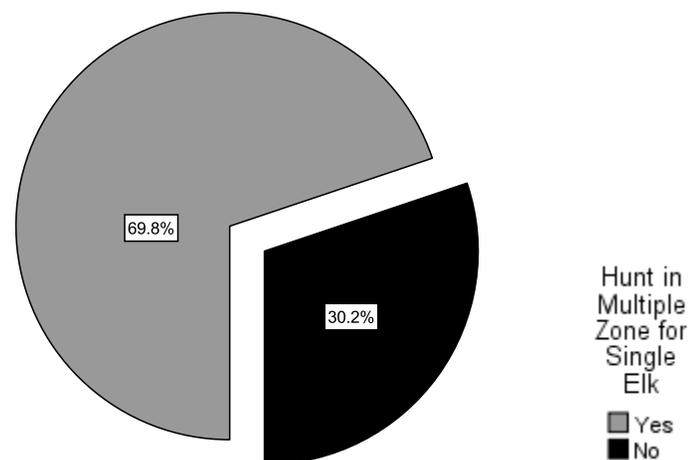
22. What do you believe is the primary factor limiting Elk numbers in the zone you hunted in 2011? (Check only ONE response)



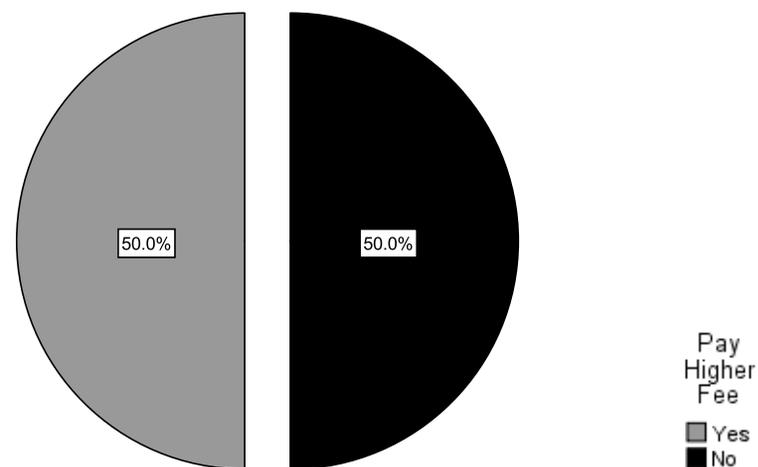
Q22: Hunters of the Panhandle zone and throughout the state agree on their beliefs that predators are the primary limiting factor of Elk numbers in their zones.

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

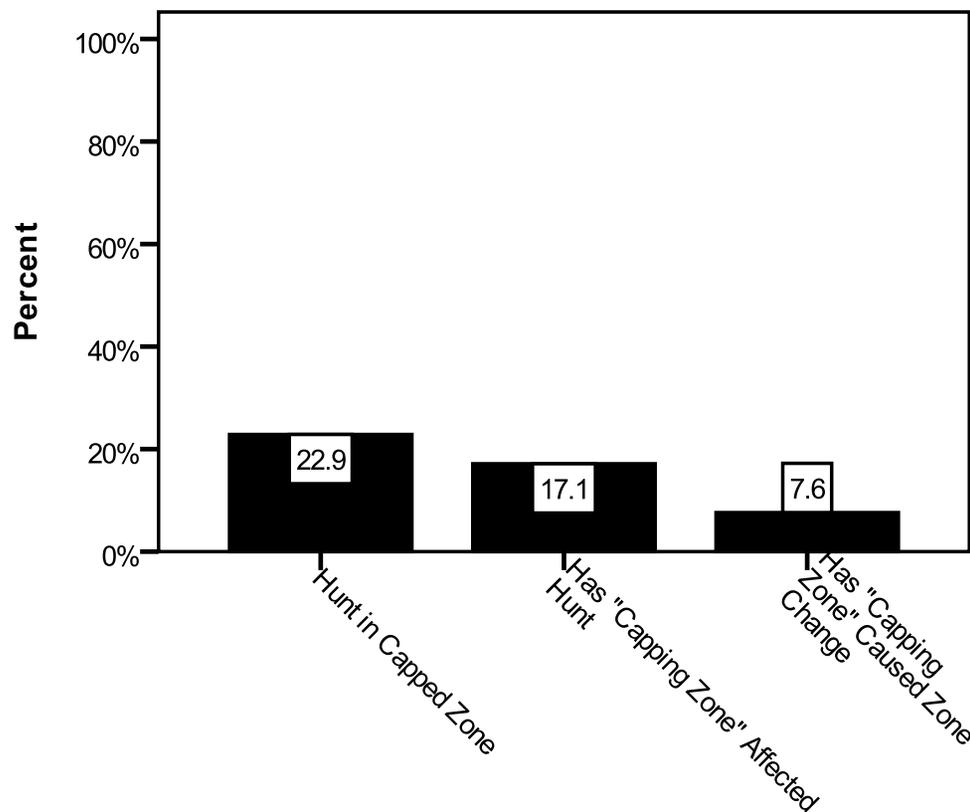
Only 69.8% of hunters in the Panhandle zone would like to be able to hunt in multiple zones in a year, a 12.7% decrease from the state average, and hunters are split on their willingness to pay a higher fee to do so.



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)

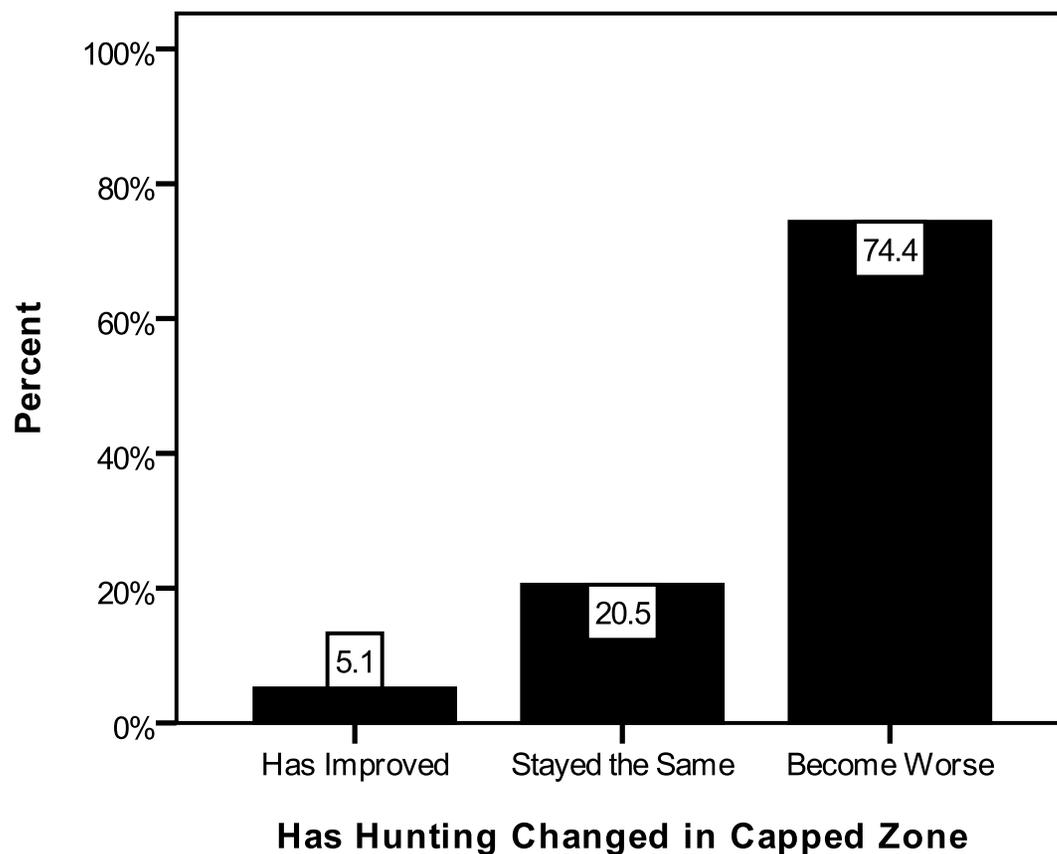


25. When the zone system was implemented the mechanism for reducing unlimited over-the-counter opportunity called “capping the zone” was developed by the department with the help of legislators, sportsmen and outfitters. This “capping the zone” is an allocation formula to distribute Elk tags to hunters (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: Half the number of hunters in the Panhandle zone compared to the state average have hunted in a capped zone. Hunters in this zone also have less input on whether “capping the zone” has affected their hunt or caused zone change.

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

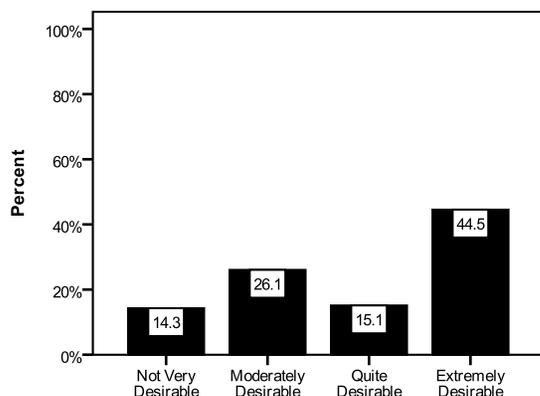


Q26: Out of those from the Panhandle zone who have had experience with capped zones, almost three-quarters felt that it has made Elk hunting worse, almost 20% more than the state average.

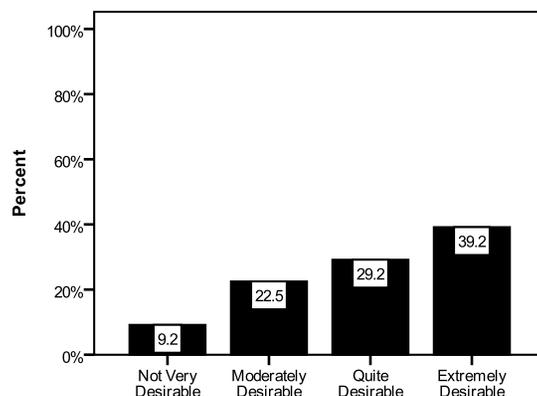
ELK HUNTING PREFERENCES AND MOTIVATIONS

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

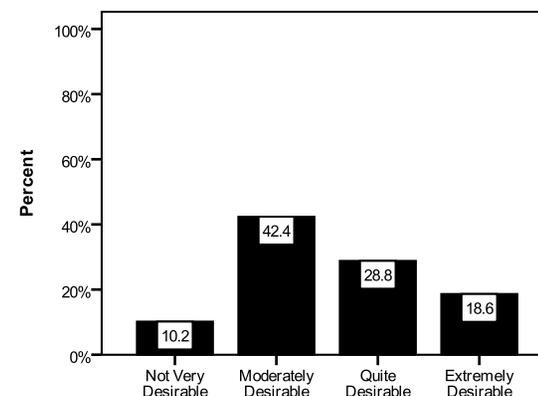
27. How desirable is it to you to harvest the following kinds of Elk?



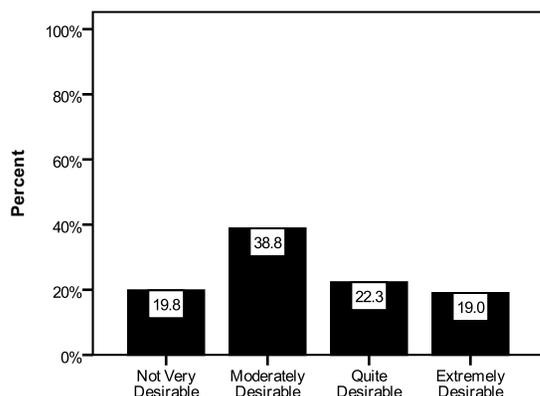
Large Bull



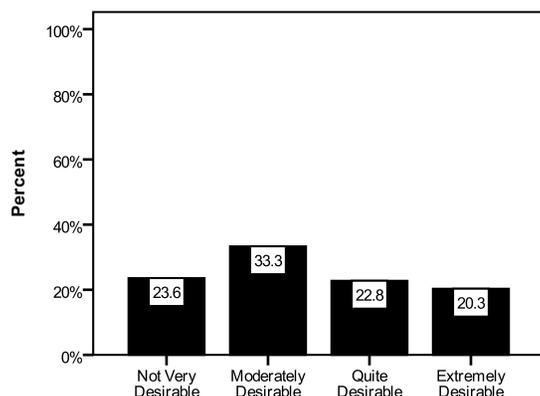
Mature Bull



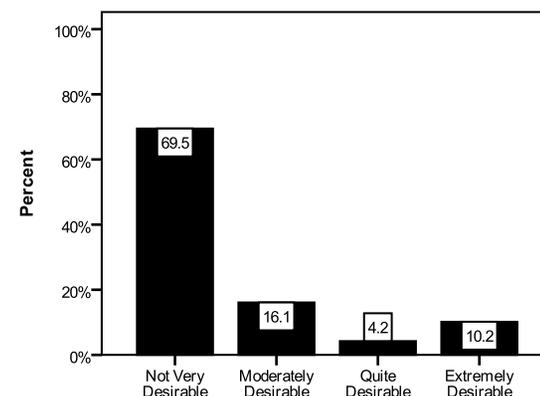
Raghorn Bull



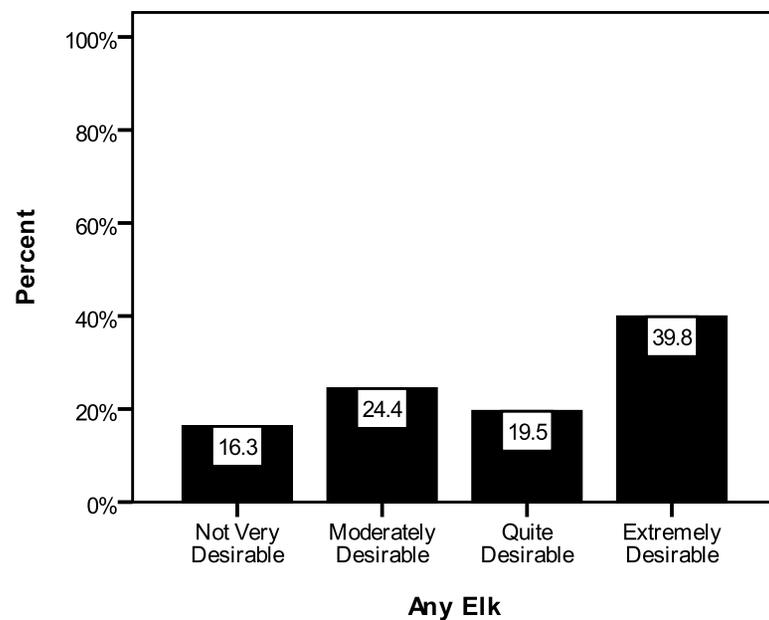
Spike Elk



Cow Elk

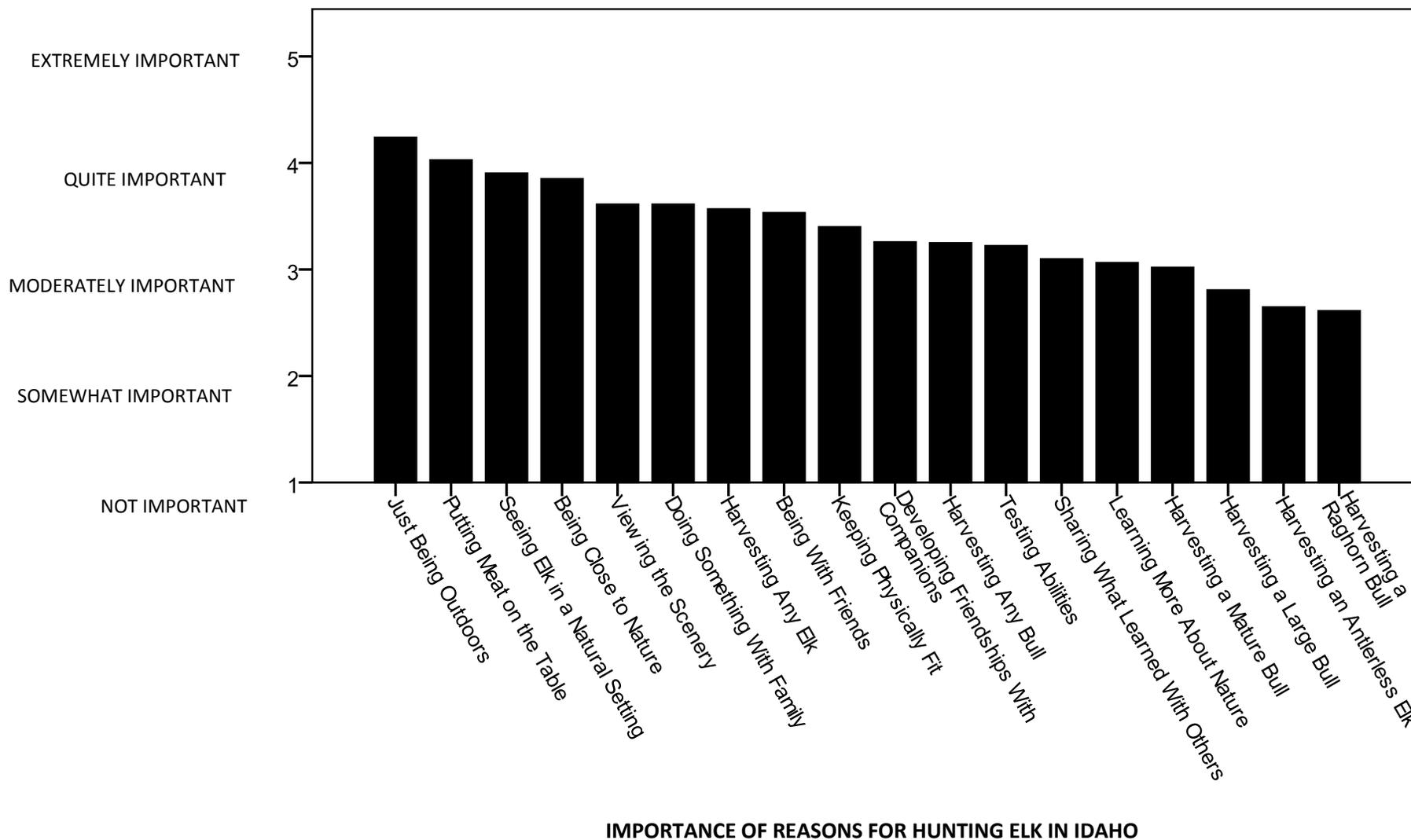


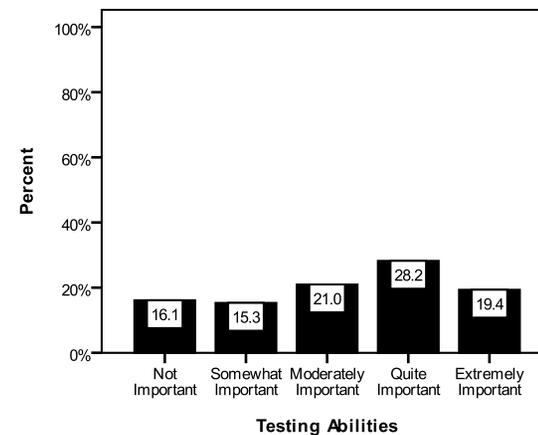
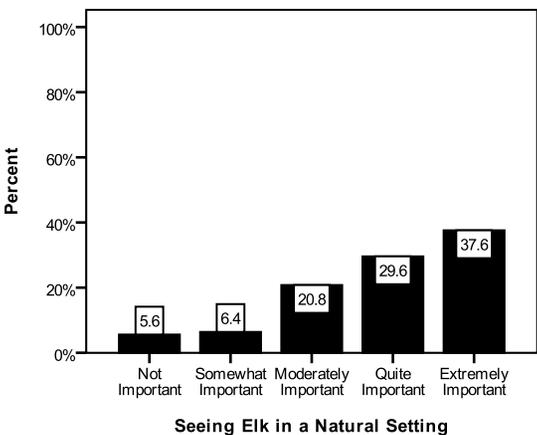
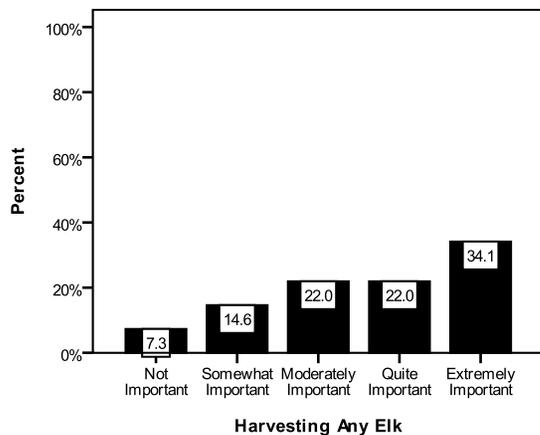
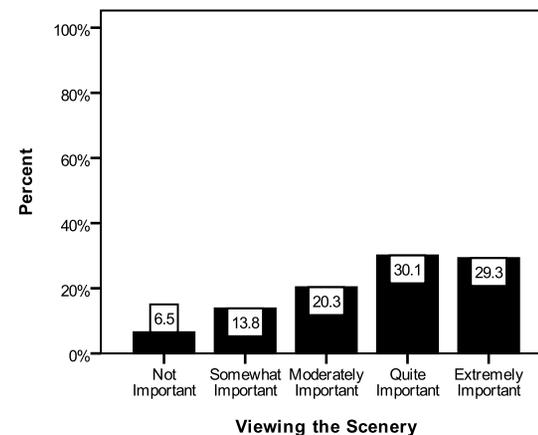
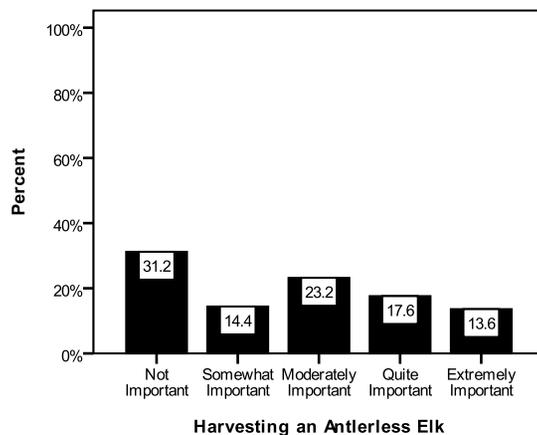
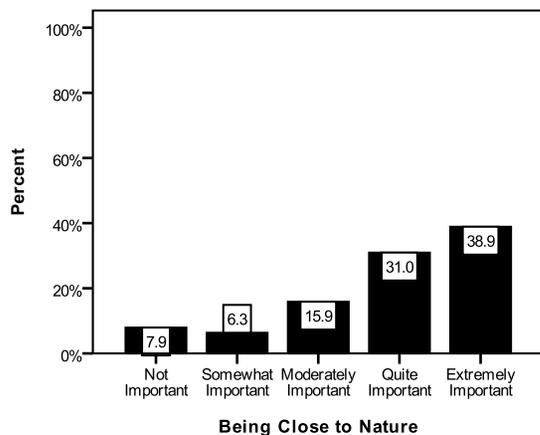
Calf

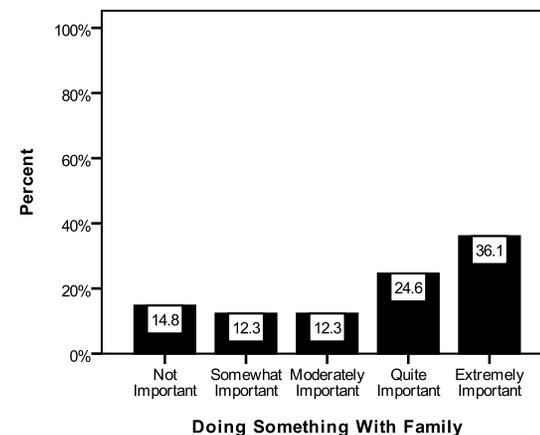
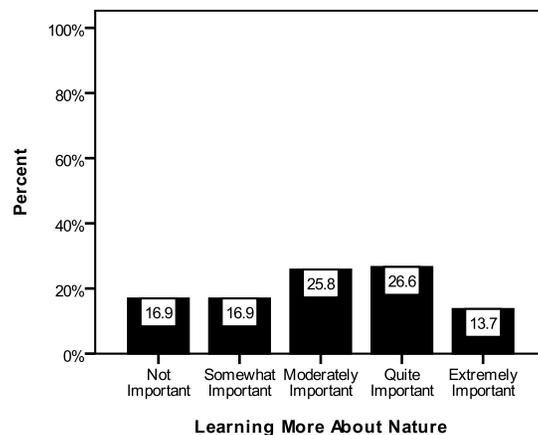
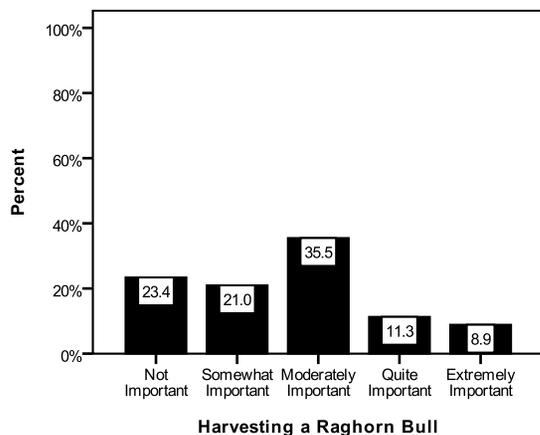
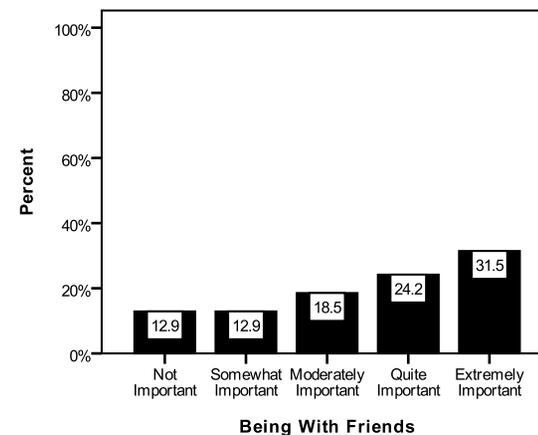
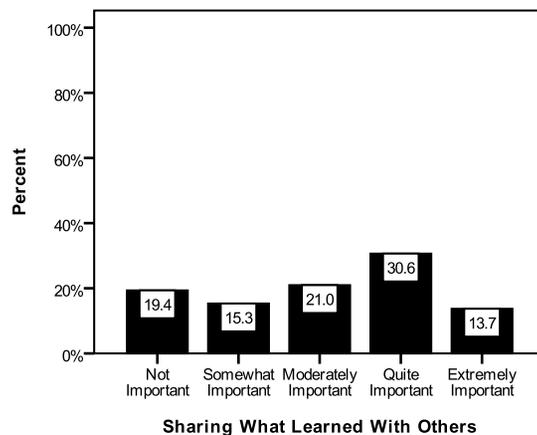
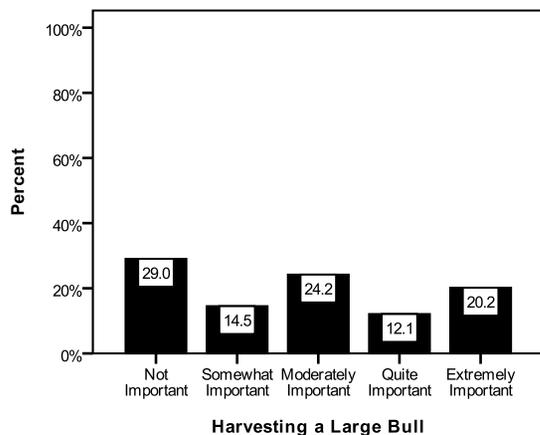


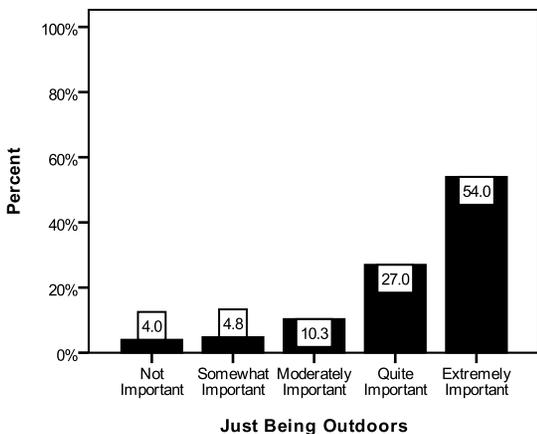
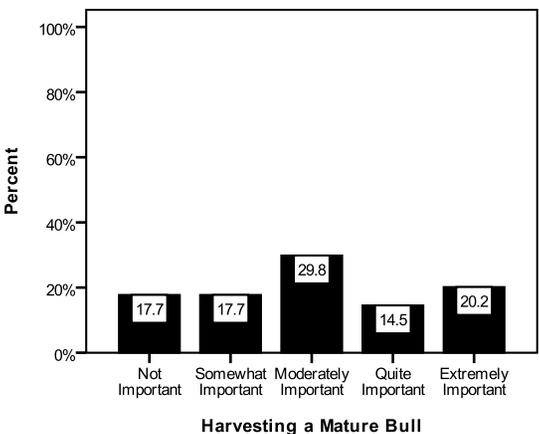
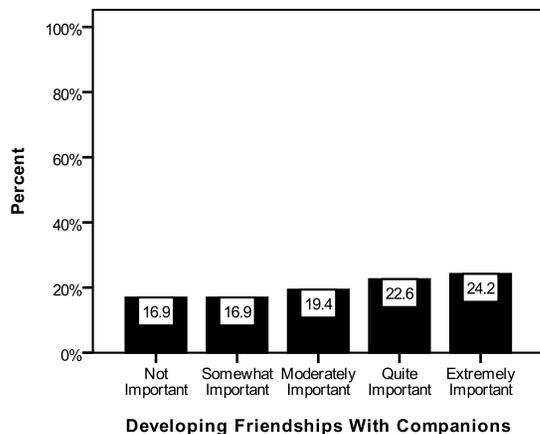
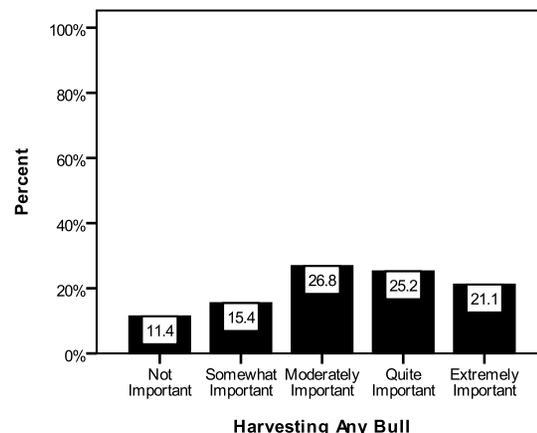
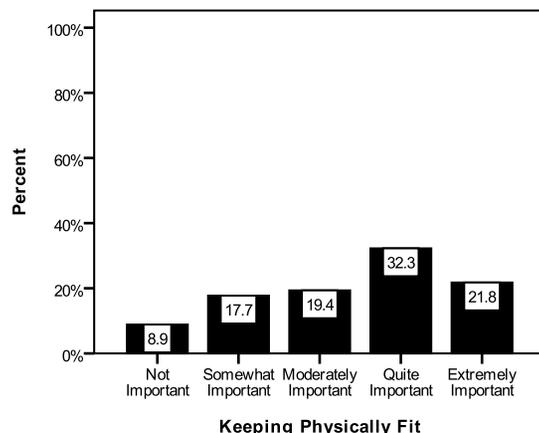
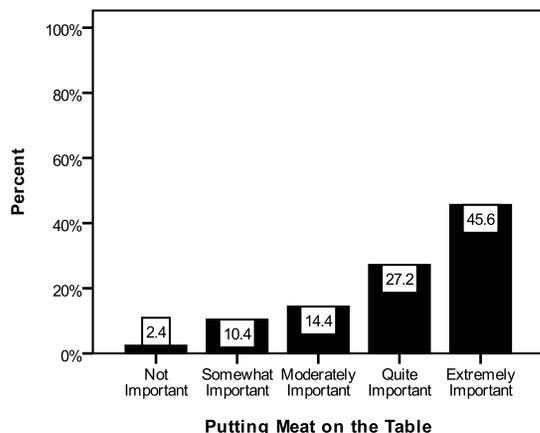
Q27: Similar the rest of the hunters in the state, hunters in the Panhandle zone felt that harvesting a larger or mature bull is most desirable. Almost 10% more respondents in this zone felt that any Elk was extremely desirable, and the desirability for a calf Elk increased slightly as well.

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?





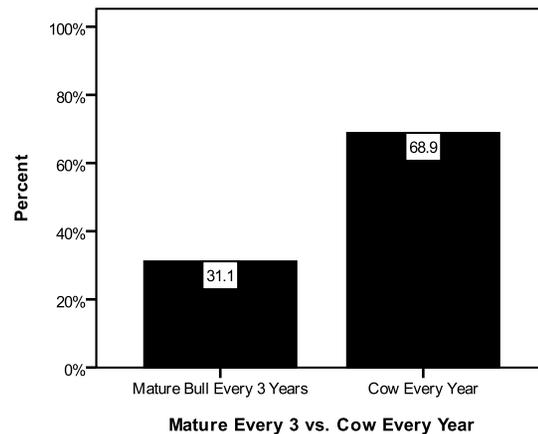
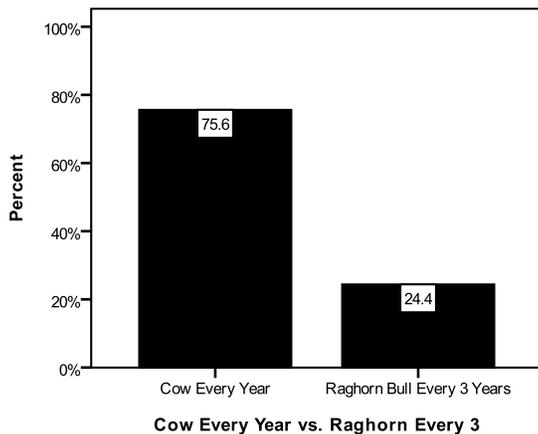
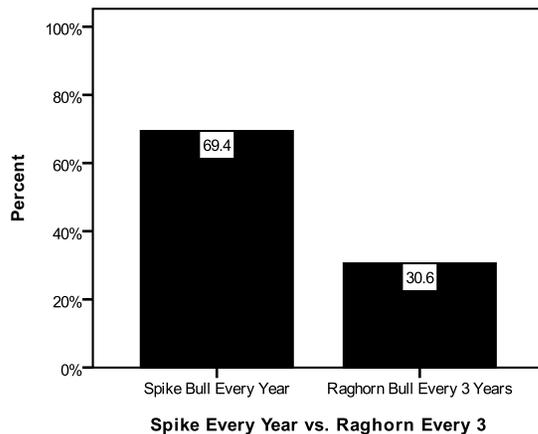
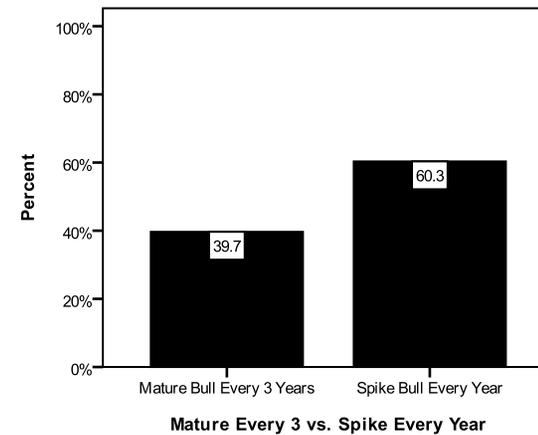
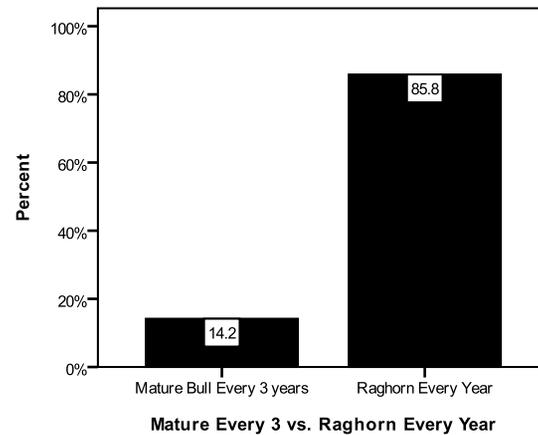
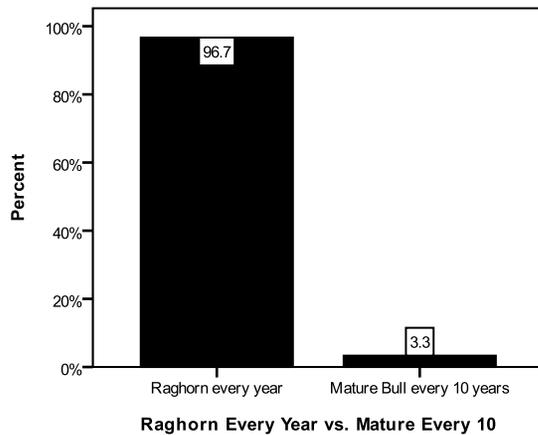


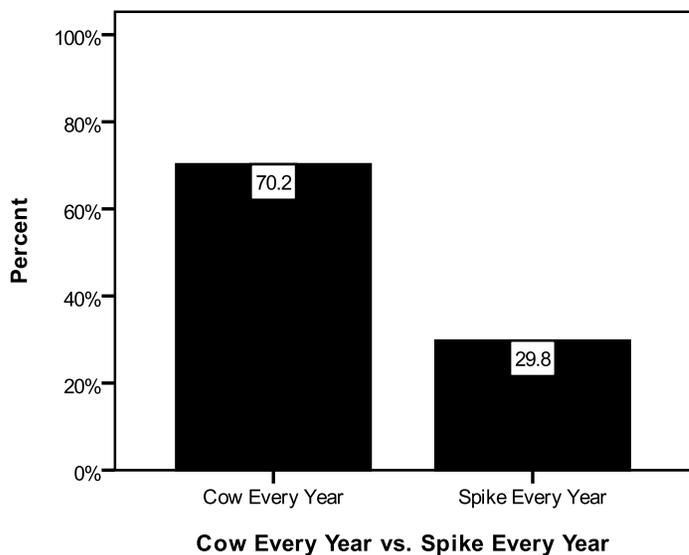


Q28: Four out of five reasons for hunting between Panhandle hunters and the state average were the same. However, those who hunt in the Panhandle zone reported that their second most important reason was to put meat on the table.

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.

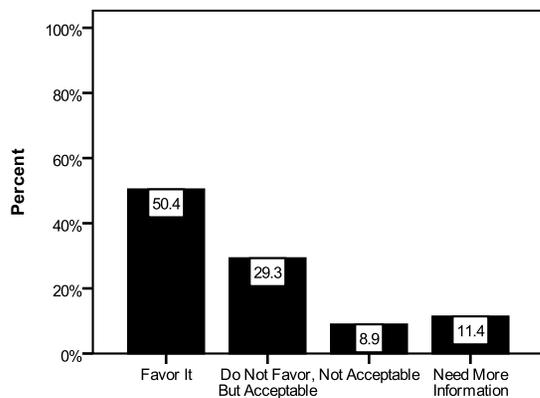




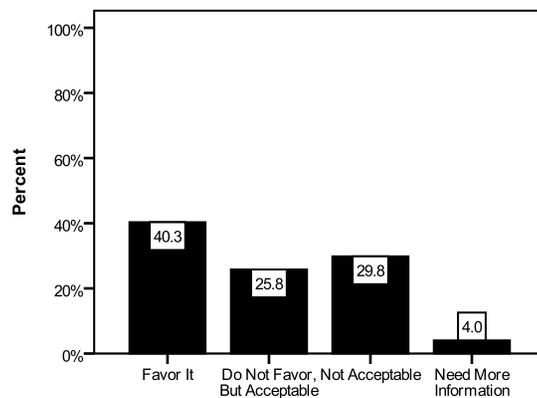
Q32: Hunters in the Panhandle zone are much more concerned with the opportunity to hunt every year versus the size of Elk they harvest. Hunters from this zone favored the 'every year' option every time over the alternative.

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

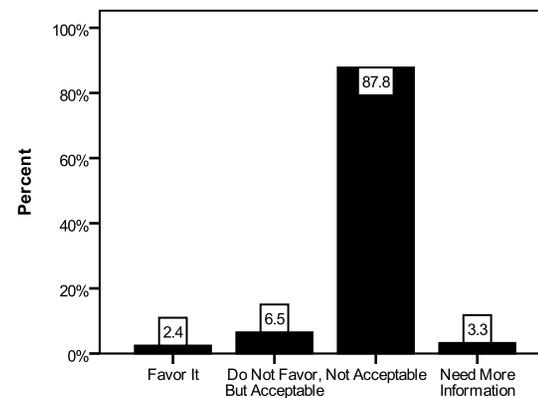
34. How do you feel about each of the following potential ways of improving Elk hunting, if needed?



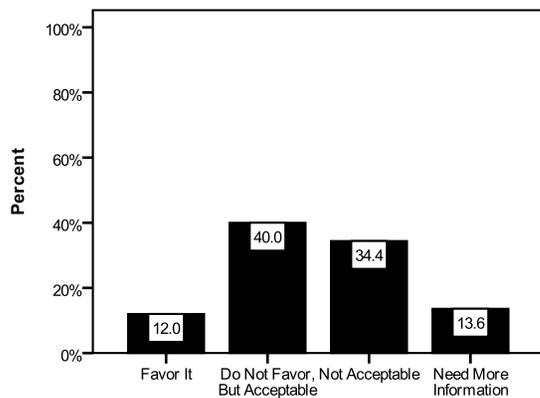
Longer Seasons



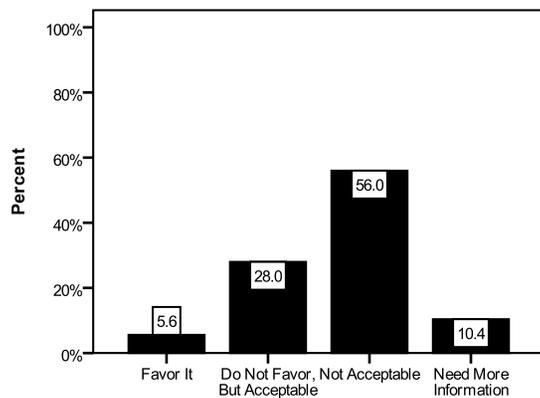
Choose Only One Weapon



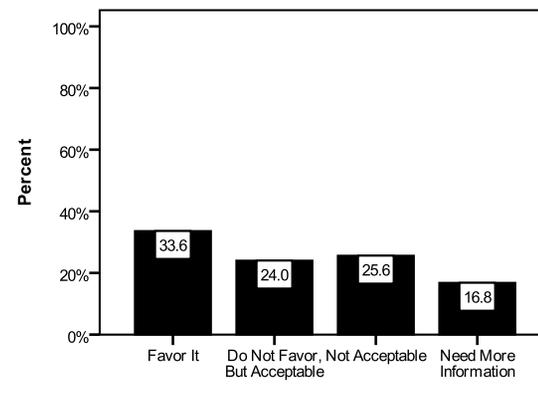
Choose Only One Species



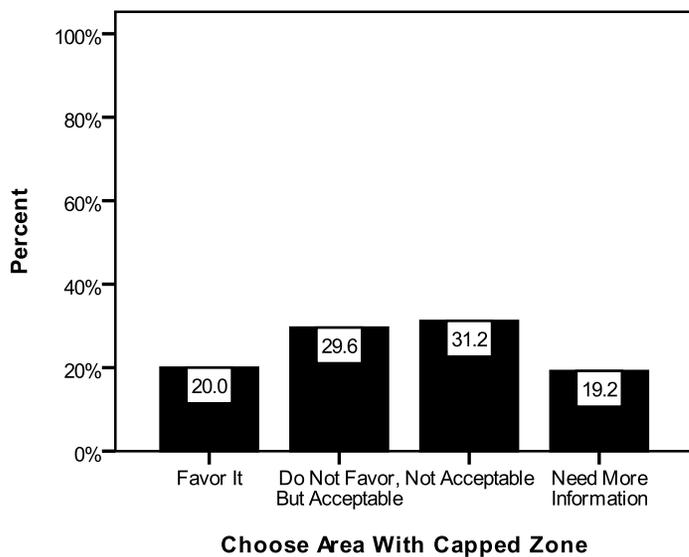
Controlled Hunts



Stratified Hunts

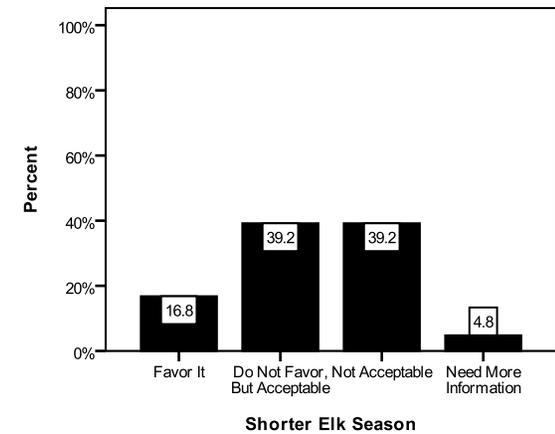
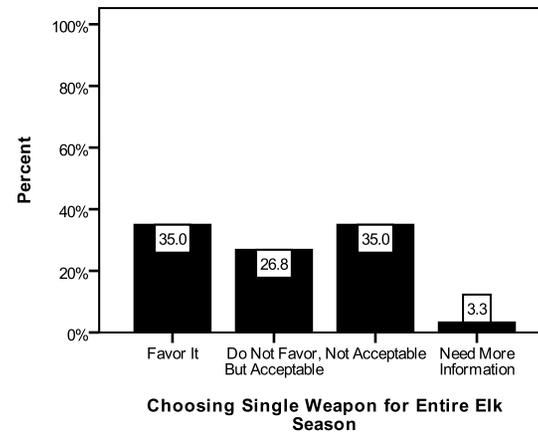
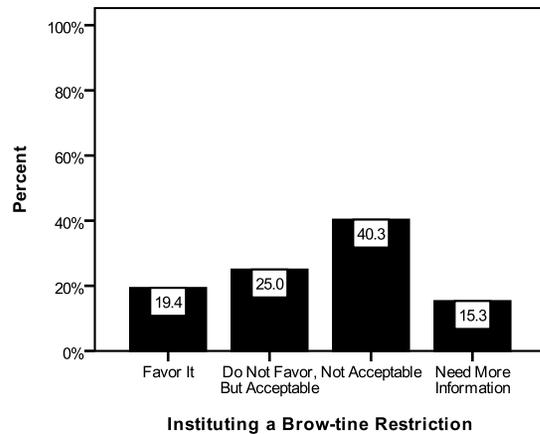
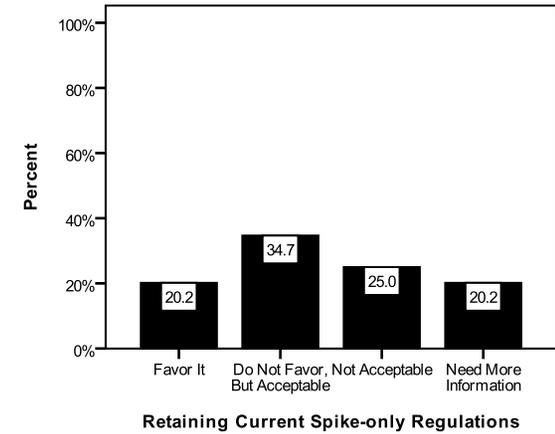
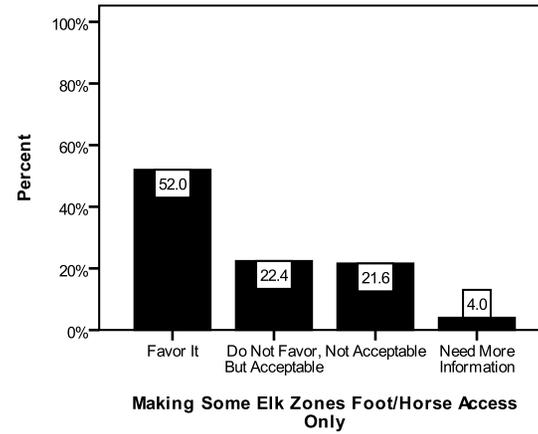
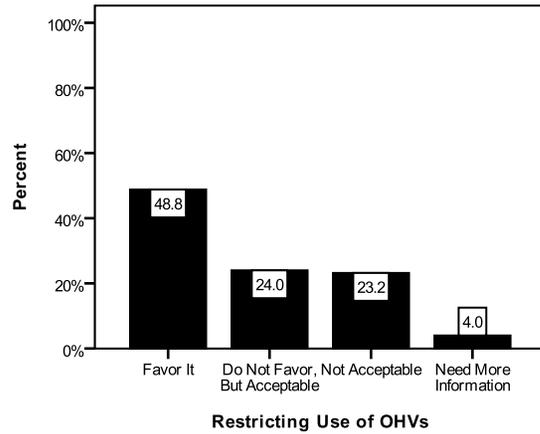


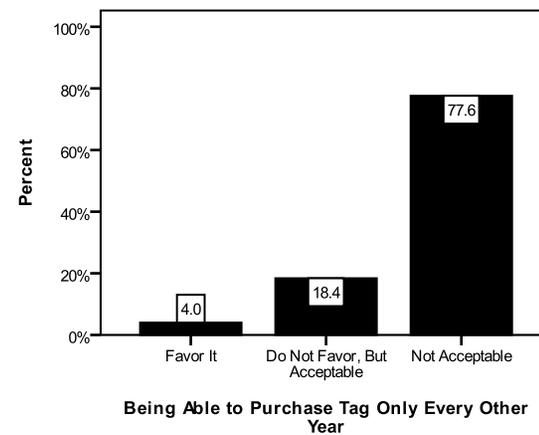
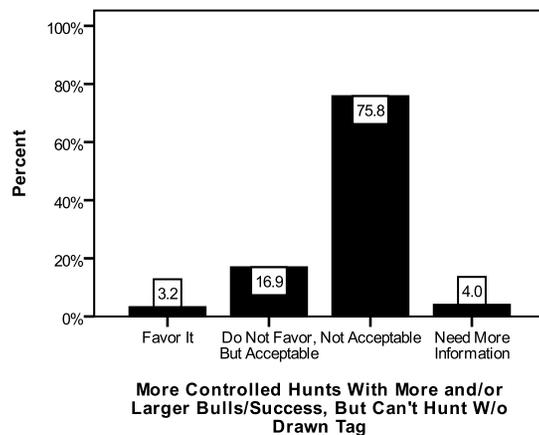
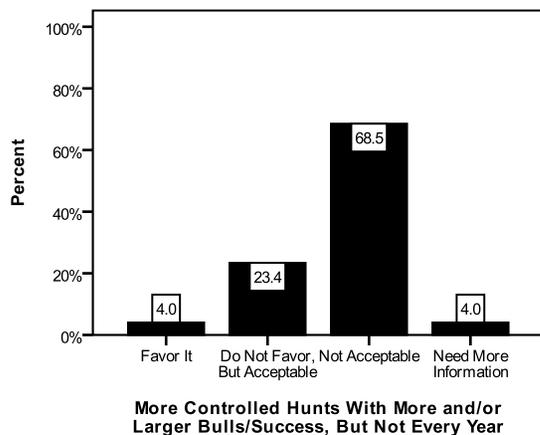
Choose Area With Motorized/Travel Restrictions



Q34: The most favorable potential strategy was increasing the length of the season. This is closely followed by choosing only one weapon. Results are very similar between this zone and the state as a whole. Stratified hunts and choosing only one species were both found unacceptable by both groups.

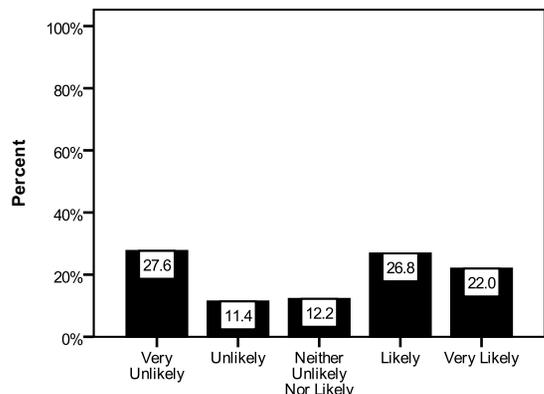
35. We would like to know how you feel about the following potential restrictions to increase the quality and size of Elk in Idaho and improve Elk hunting opportunities. Please indicate your opinion on the following potential restrictions.



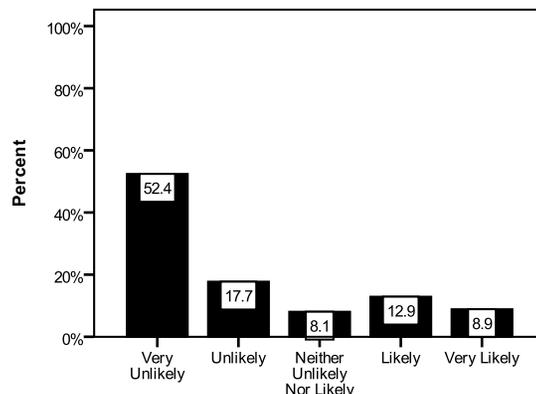


Q35: Results for both the Panhandle zone and the state average are similar in that respondents favored restricting use of OHVs and making some Elk zones foot/horse access only the most. They also found more controlled hunts with more and/or larger bulls/success, but not every year, more controlled hunts with more and/or larger bulls/success, but can't hunt without drawn tag, and being able to purchase tag only every other year as not acceptable options.

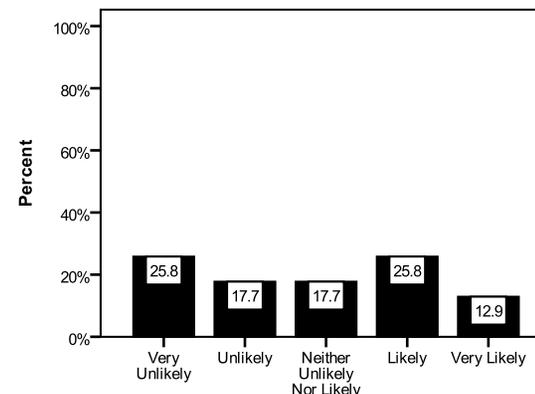
36. IF Idaho Fish and Game introduces restrictions that reduce Elk hunting opportunities to improve Elk populations, how would your hunting behavior change?



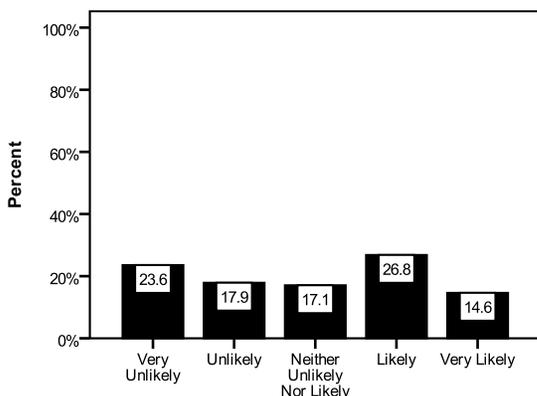
Hunt in Different Zones



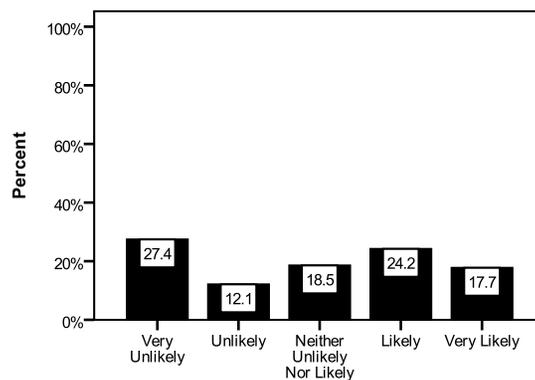
Quit Hunting Elk



Shift to Hunt Other Species



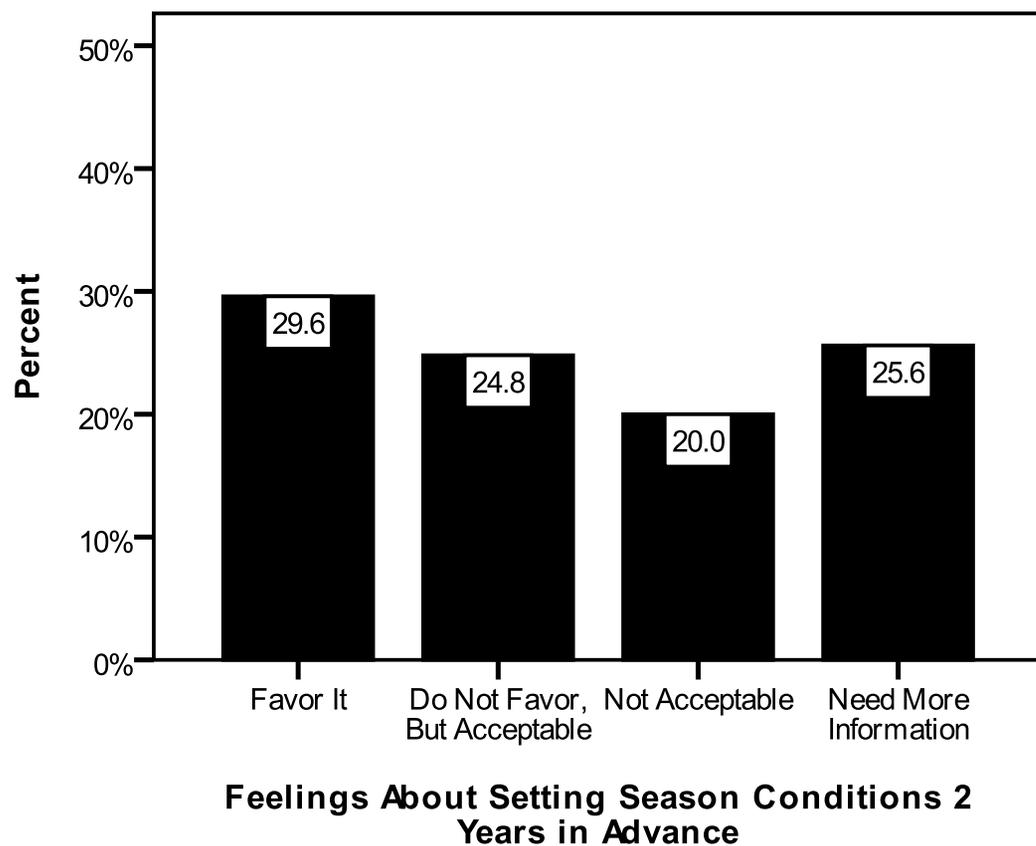
Not Change Hunting Behavior



Change Weapon Type for Increased Elk Hunting Opportunity

Q36: Almost half of Panhandle zone hunters said it was likely or very likely they would hunt in a different zone if hunting opportunities were limited in this zone. Similar to the state average, over 70% of respondents said it was very unlikely or unlikely they were quit hunting Elk.

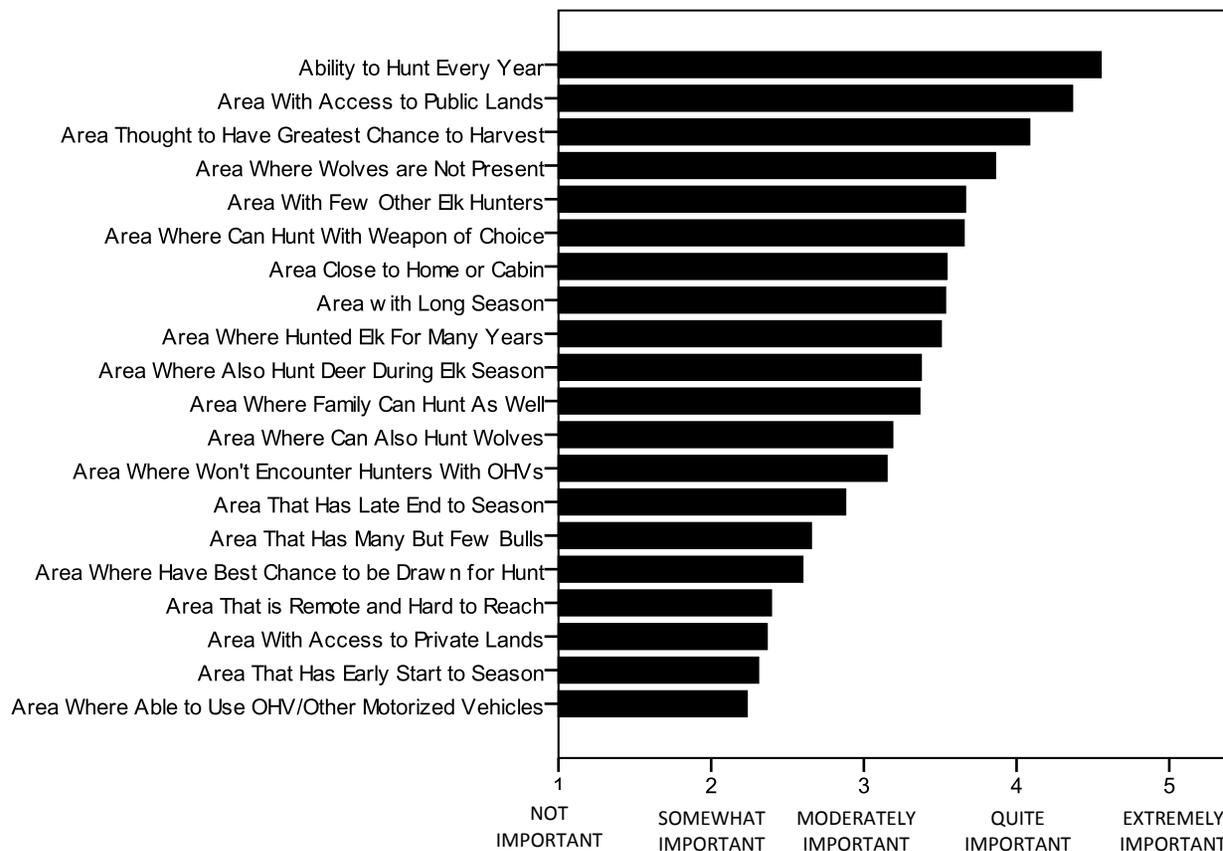
38. How would you feel about a big game regulation that sets the general season conditions for 2 years in advance, just like the current Moose, Mountain Goat, Bighorn Sheep, Upland Game, Turkey and Fishing regulations? (Please check one response)



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

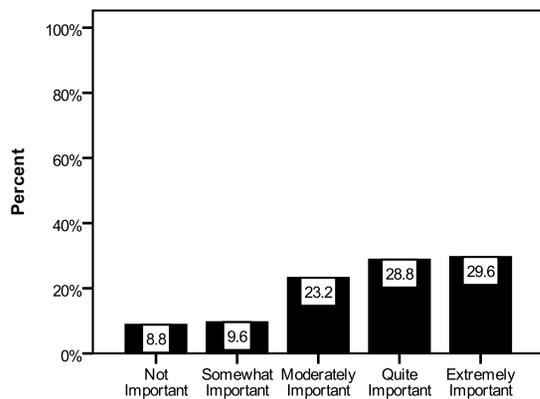
WHEN AND WHERE TO HUNT

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

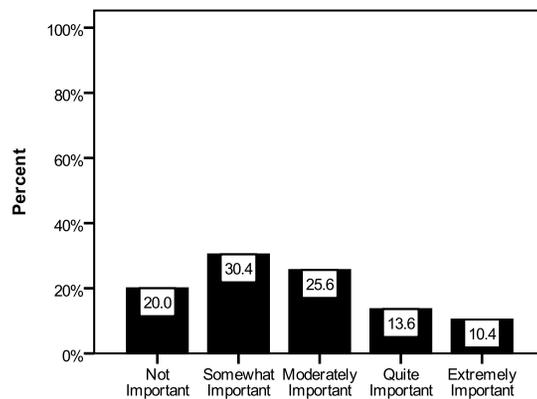


Q29: The five characteristics of most importance are the same for the Panhandle zone and the state average.

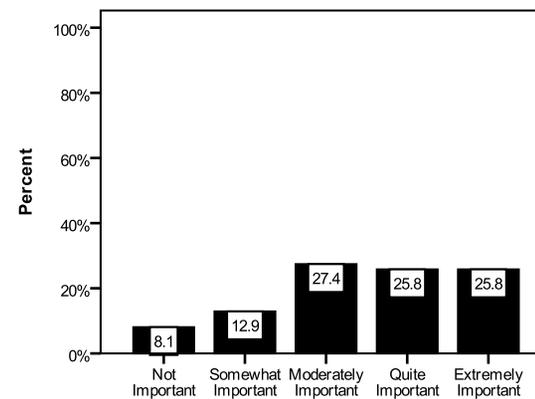
CHARACTERISTICS AFFECTING CHOICE OF WHERE TO HUNT IN IDAHO



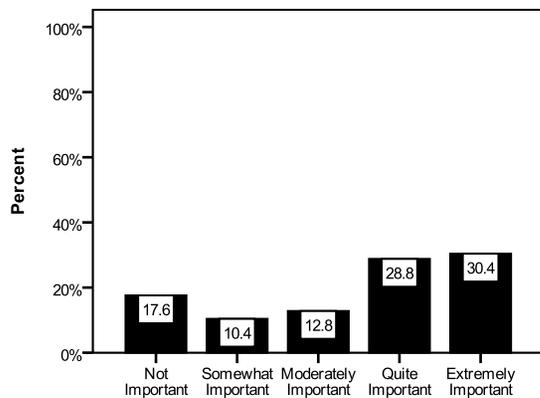
Area With Few Other Elk Hunters



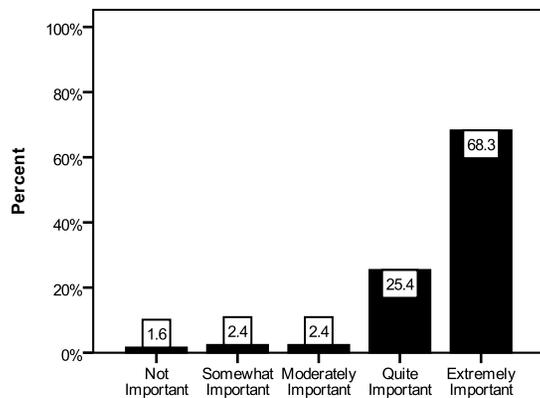
Area That Has Many But Few Bulls



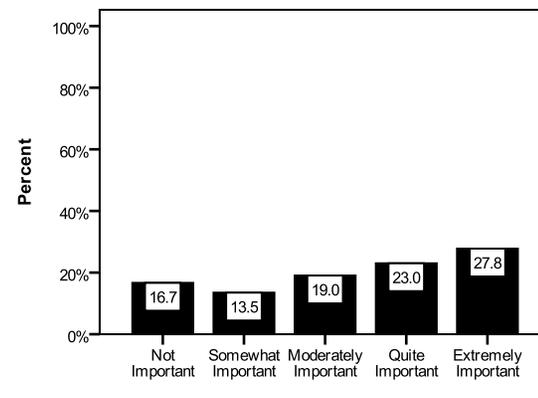
Area Where Hunted Elk For Many Years



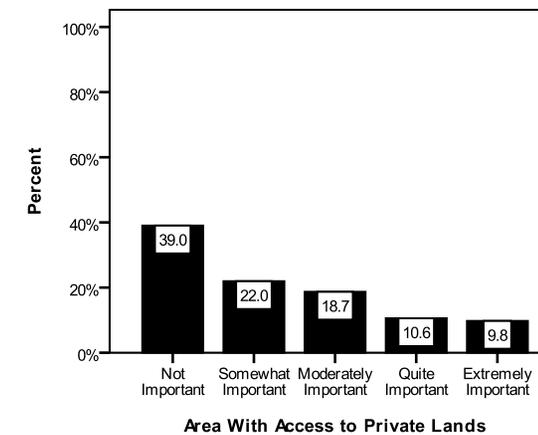
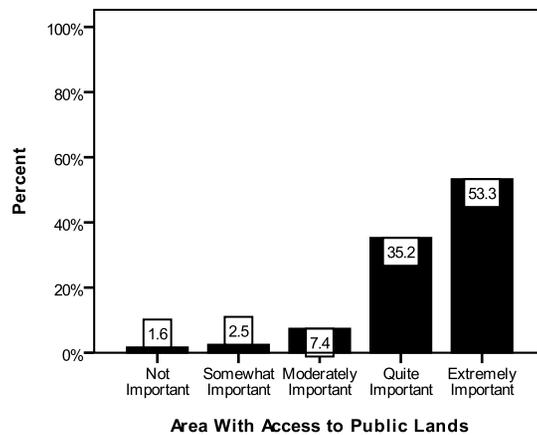
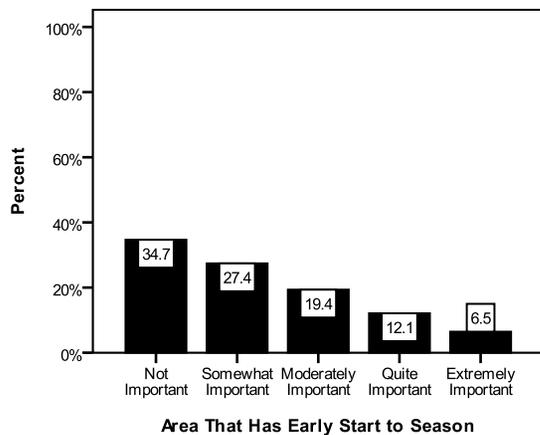
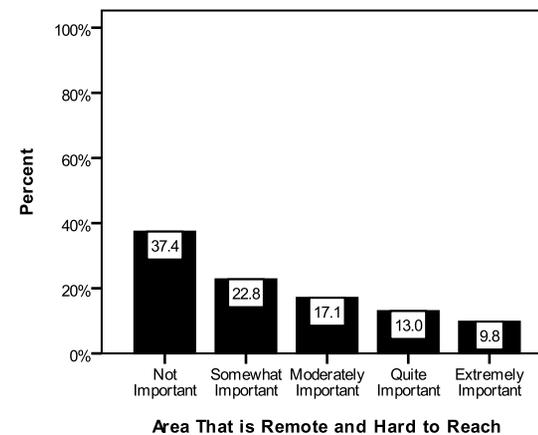
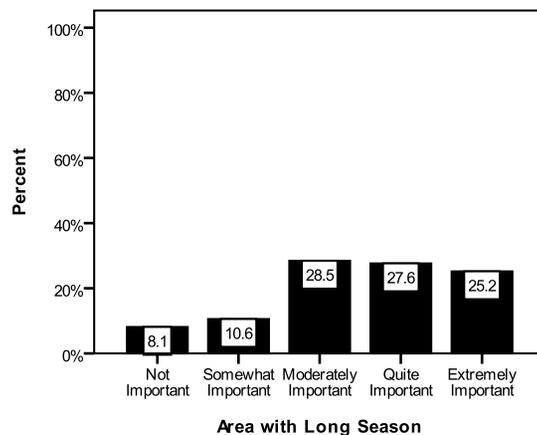
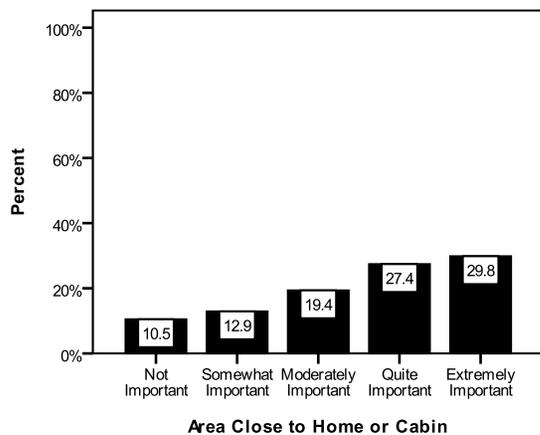
Area Where Family Can Hunt As Well

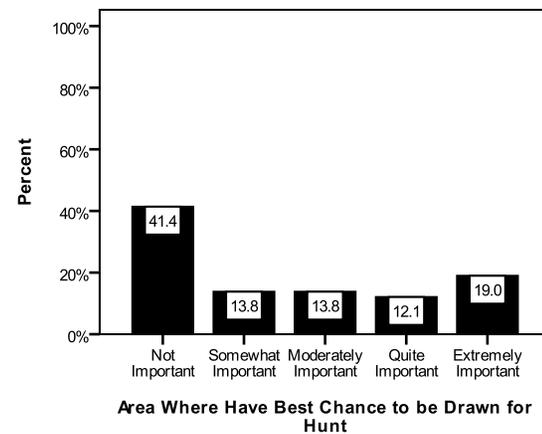
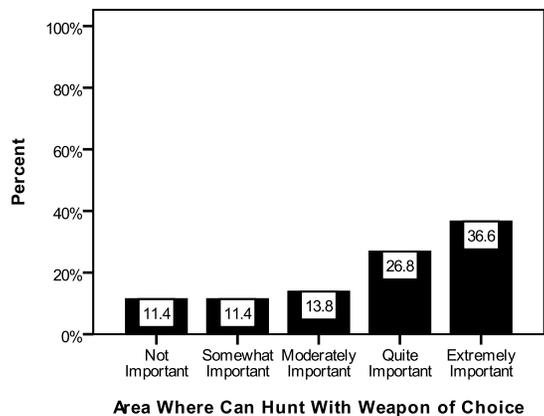
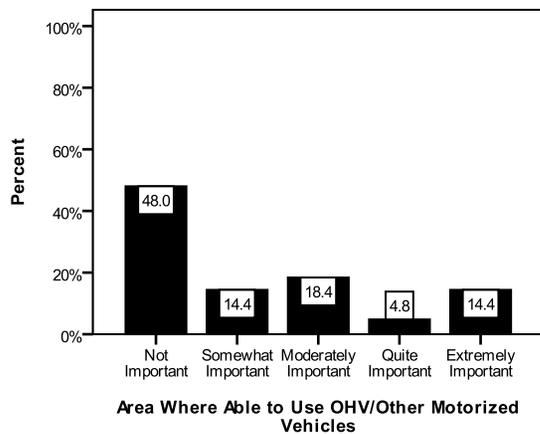
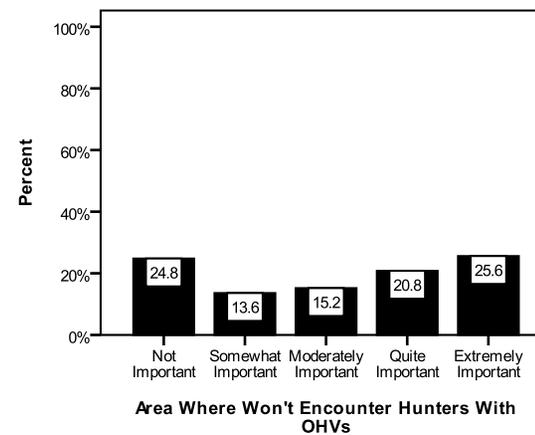
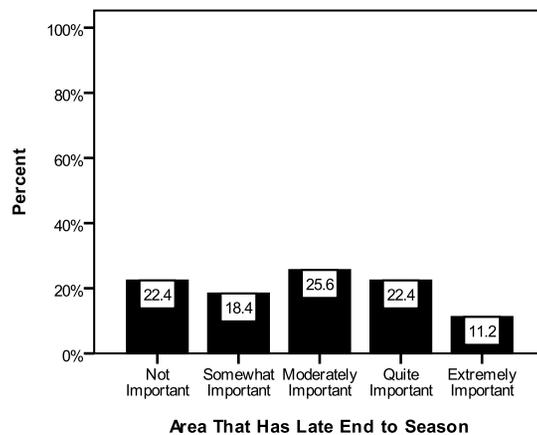
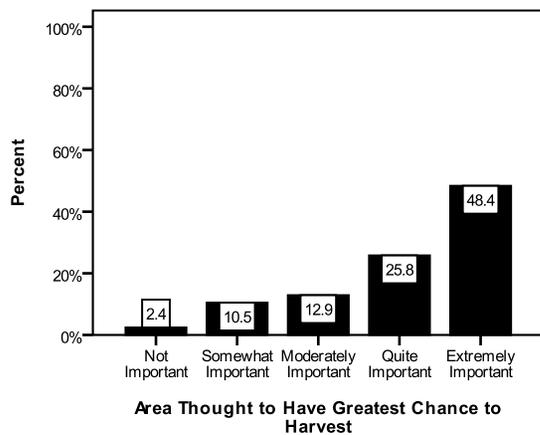


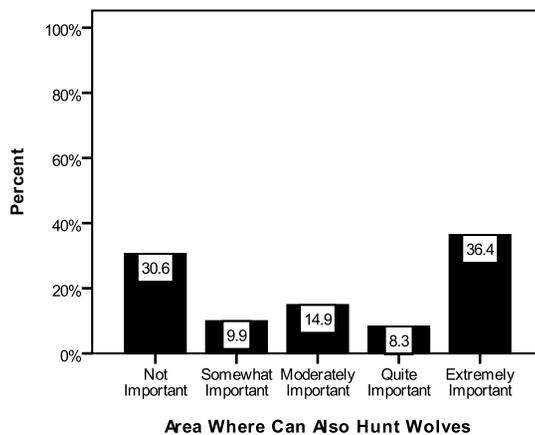
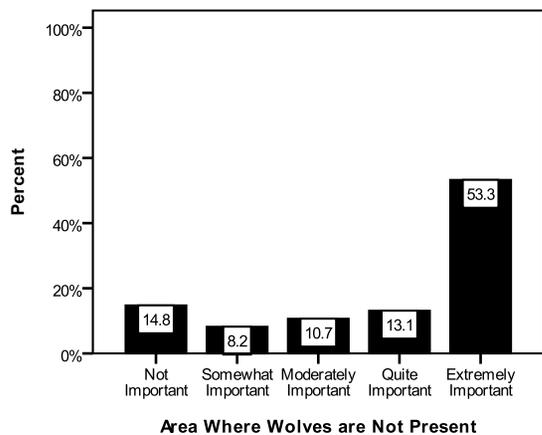
Ability to Hunt Every Year



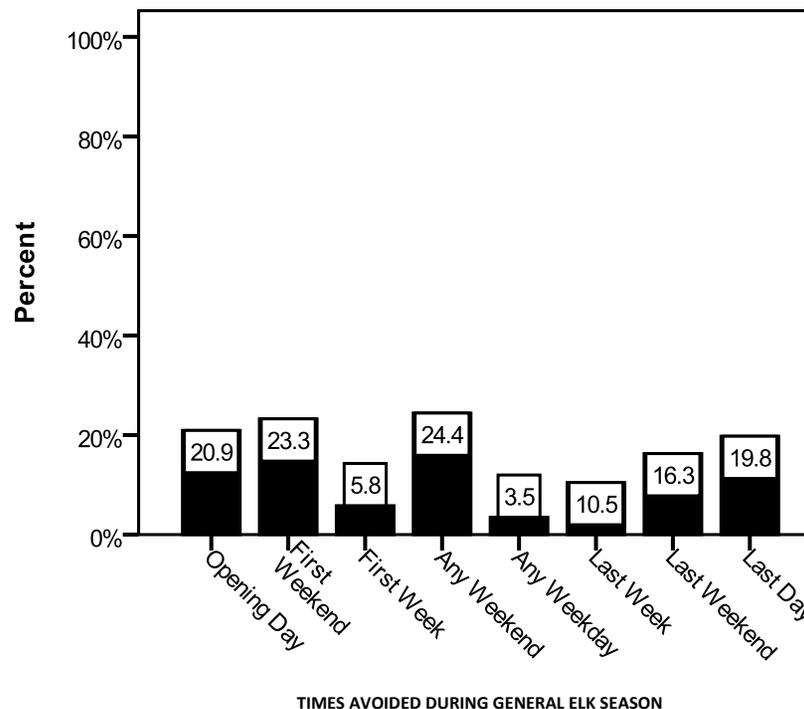
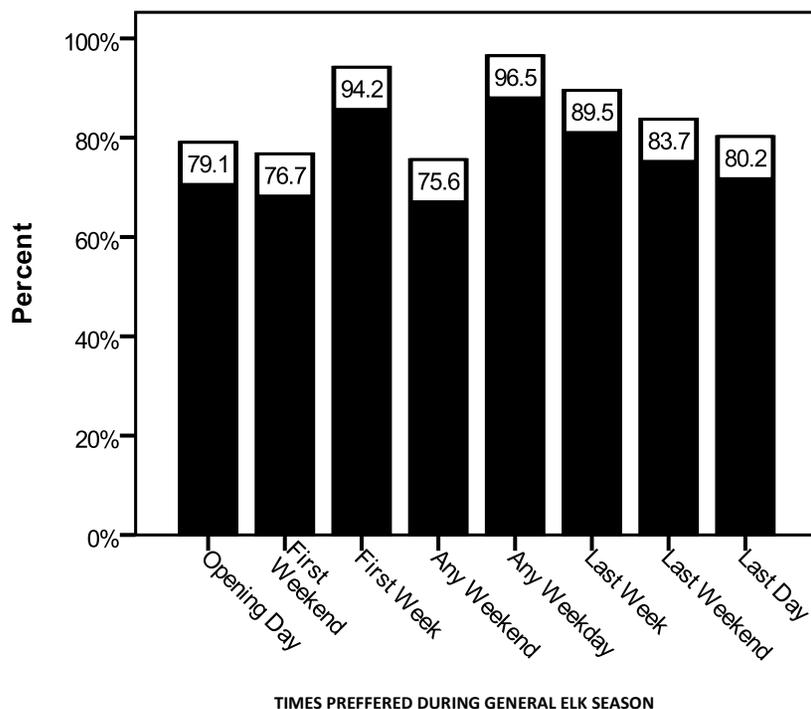
Area Where Also Hunt Deer During Elk Season







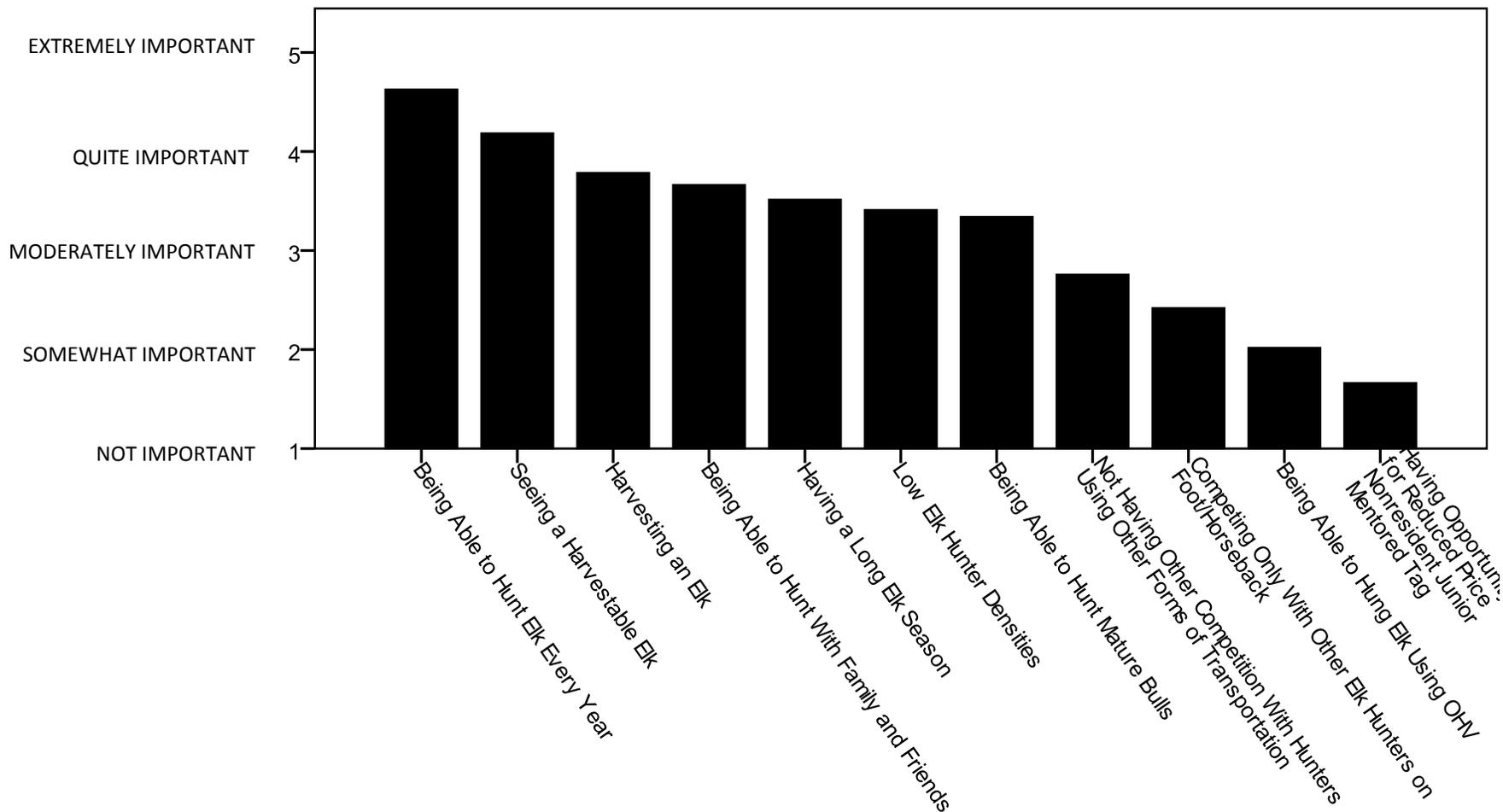
30. Are there any times during the general Elk hunting season in Idaho that you prefer or avoid? (Please check as many as apply)



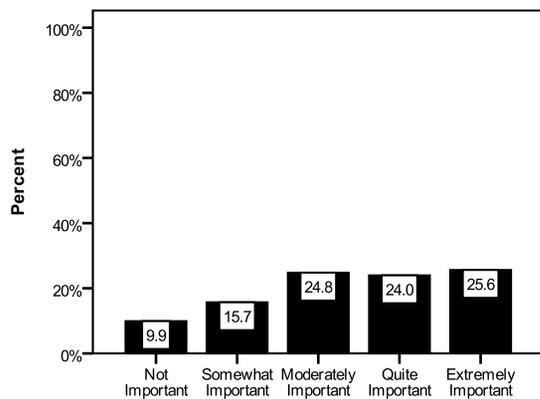
Q30: The distribution of responses for the preferences of hunters in the Panhandle zone and the state average are similar.

ATTRIBUTES OF A QUALITY ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE

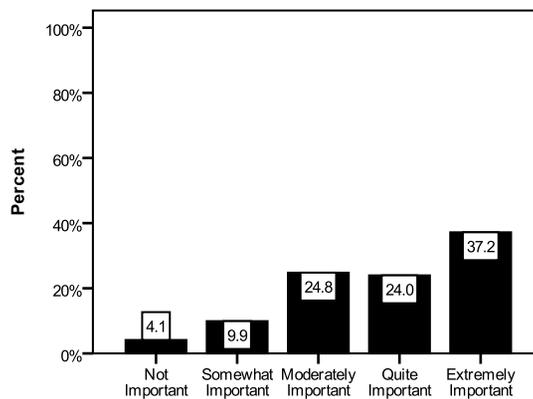
31. How important to you are each of these attributes for a quality Idaho Elk hunting experience?



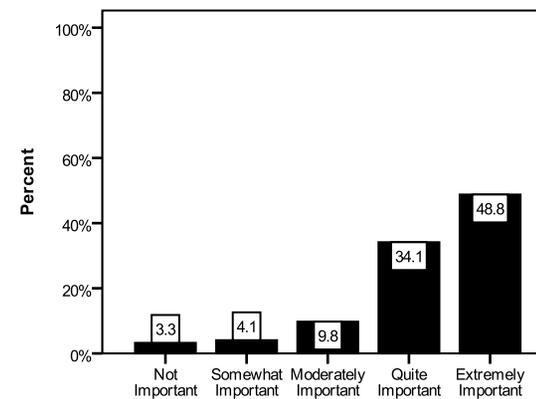
IMPORTANCE OF ATTRIBUTES FOR A QUALITY ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE IN IDAHO



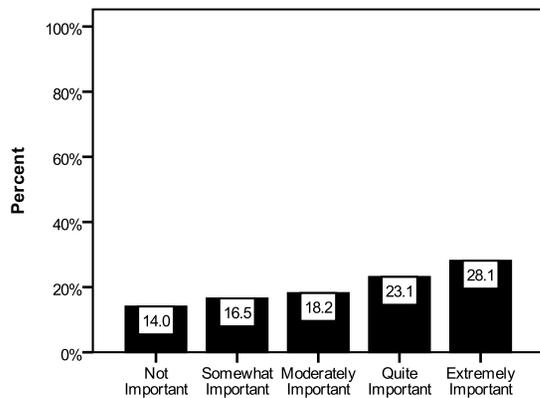
Low Elk Hunter Densities



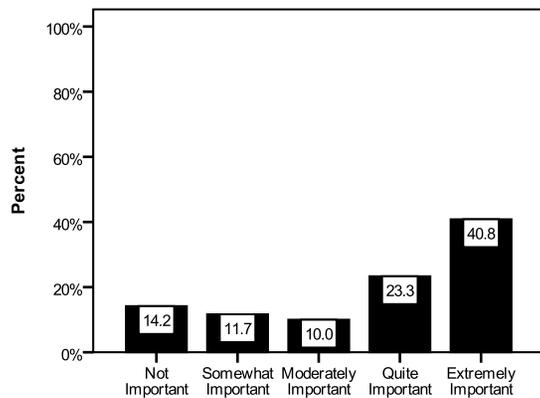
Harvesting an Elk



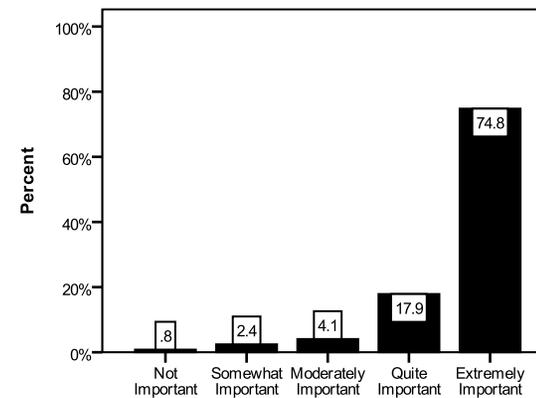
Seeing a Harvestable Elk



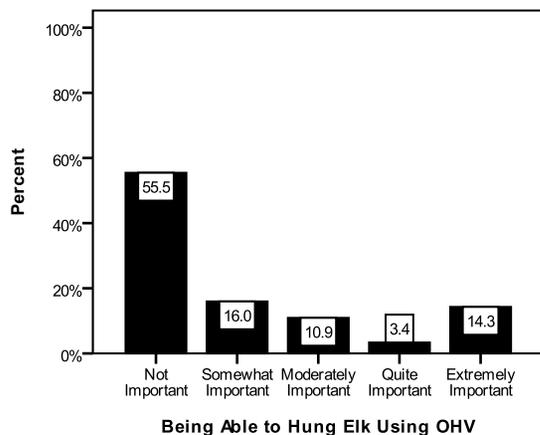
Being Able to Hunt Mature Bulls



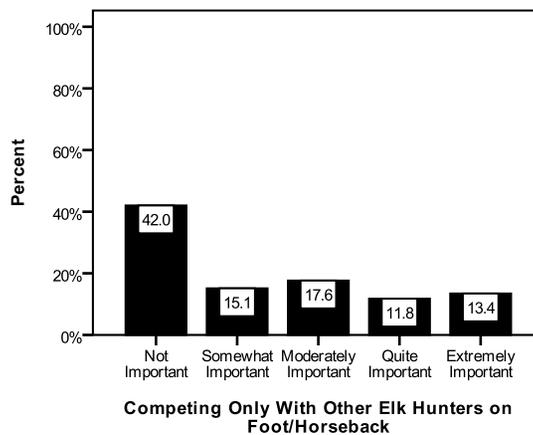
Being Able to Hunt With Family and Friends



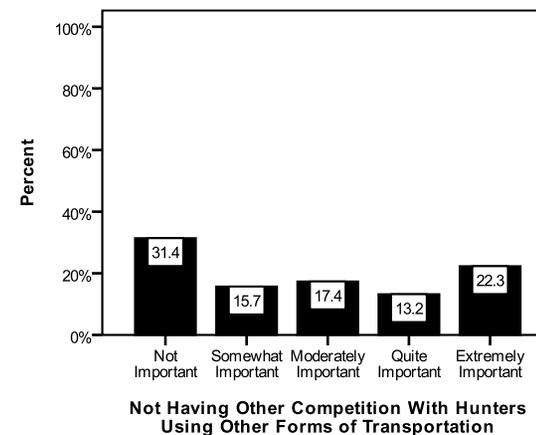
Being Able to Hunt Elk Every Year



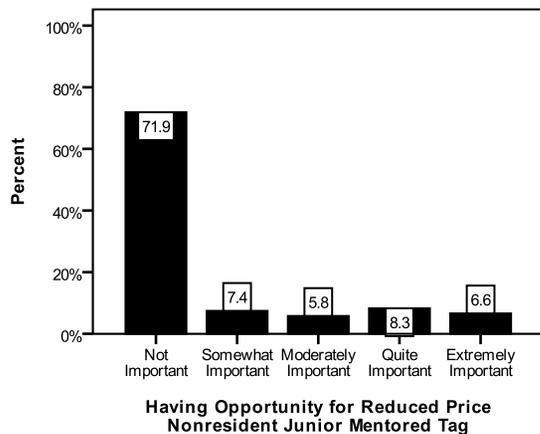
Being Able to Hunt Elk Using OHV



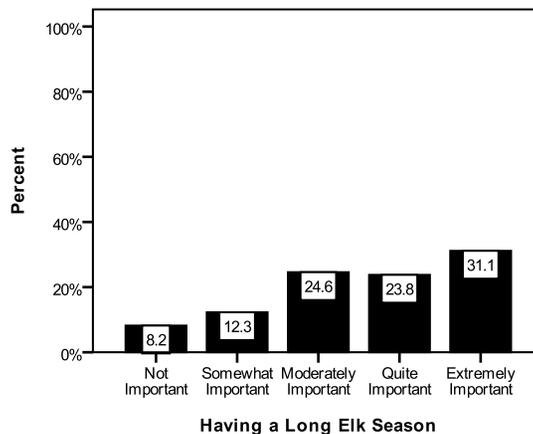
Competing Only With Other Elk Hunters on Foot/Horseback



Not Having Other Competition With Hunters Using Other Forms of Transportation



Having Opportunity for Reduced Price Nonresident Junior Mentored Tag

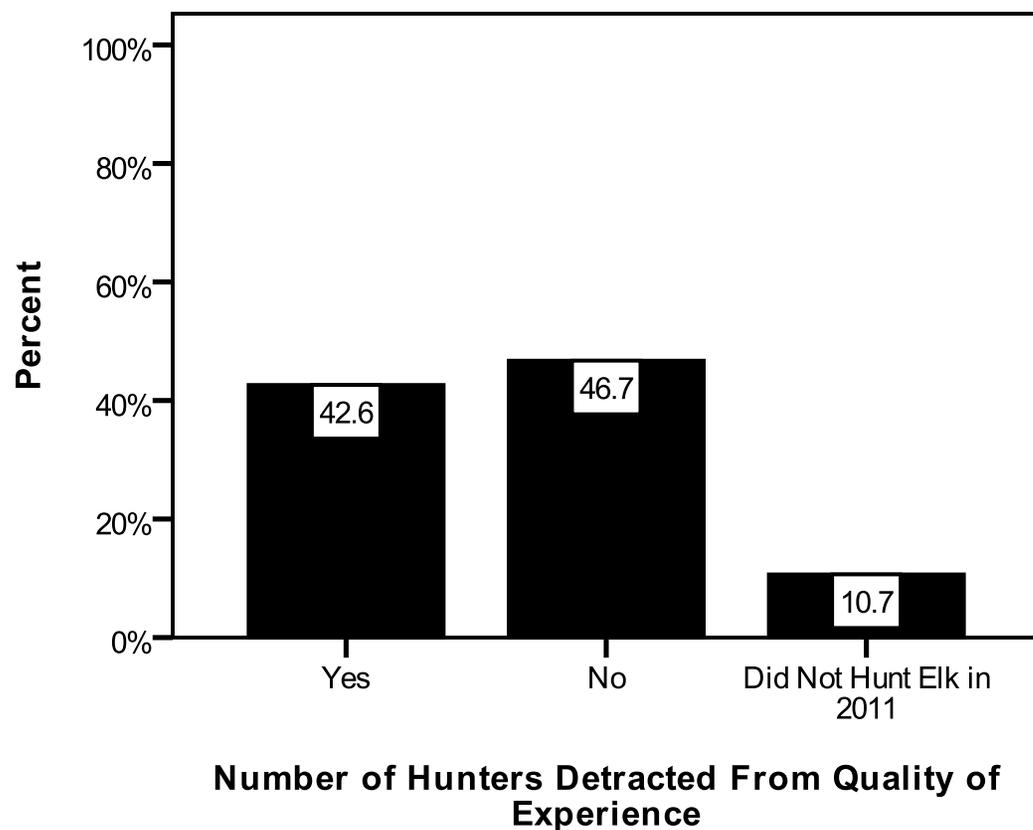


Having a Long Elk Season

Q31: Compared to the state average, Panhandle hunters find it more important to have a long Elk season than the ability to hunt mature bulls. The responses between both groups are similar.

HUNTING SATISFACTION

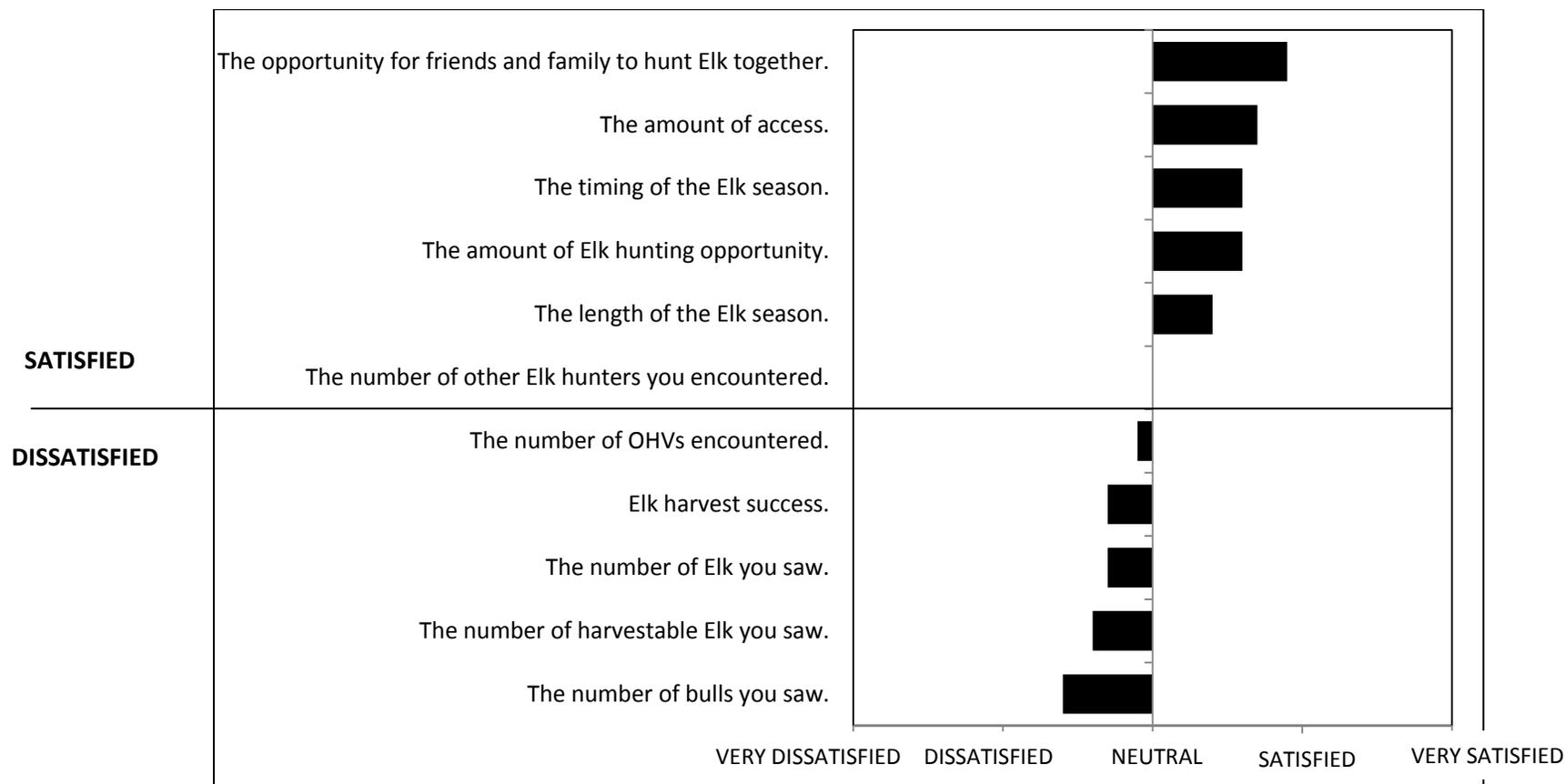
33. Were there times during your 2011 Elk season when the numbers of other hunters seriously detracted from the quality of your hunting experience? *(Please check one response)*



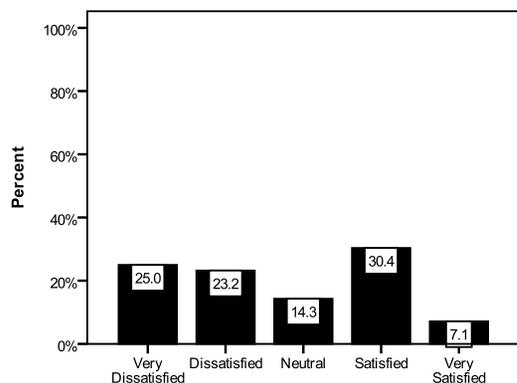
Q33: Respondents for the Panhandle zone were almost split in their decision of whether or not the number of hunters detracted from the quality of their hunting experience. Over 10% more respondents reported that the number of hunter did detract from the quality in this zone.

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

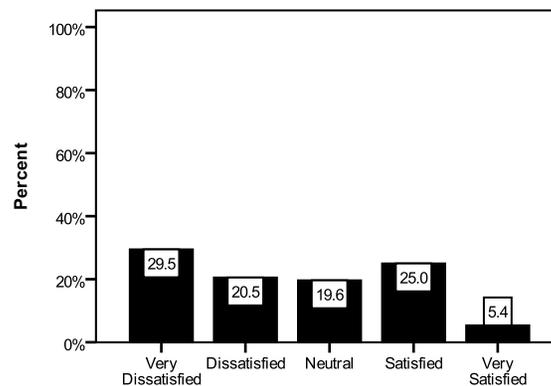
37. How satisfied were you with each of the following aspects of your 2011 Elk hunting experience?



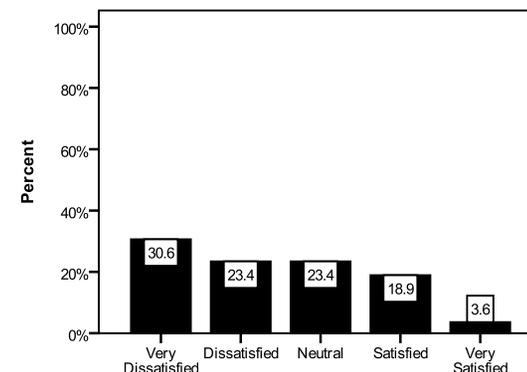
SATISFACTION OF ASPECTS OF 2011 ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE



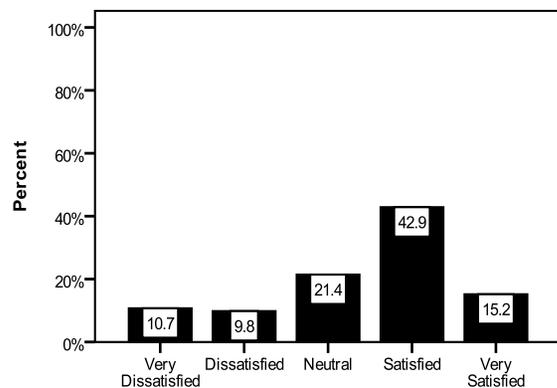
Number of Elk Seen



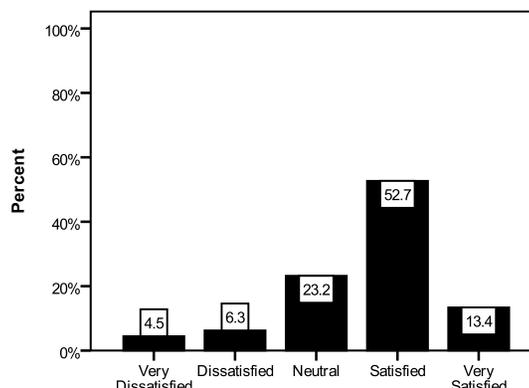
Number of Harvestable Elk Seen



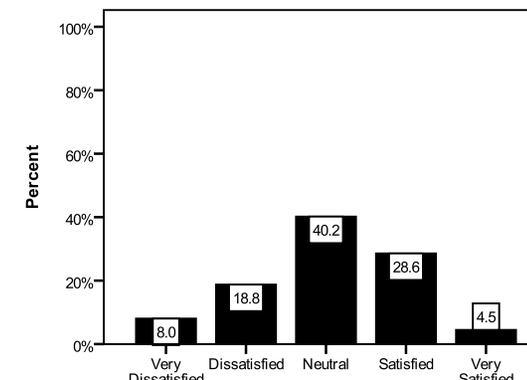
Number of Bulls Seen



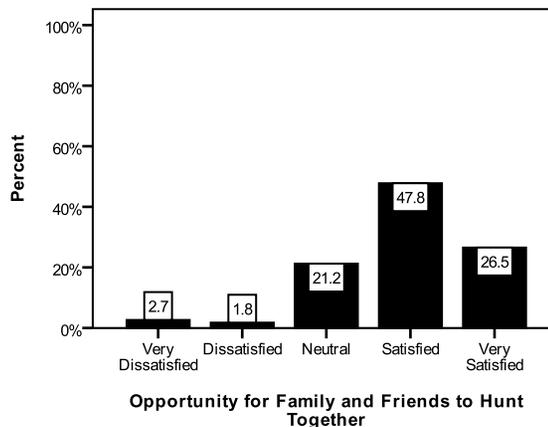
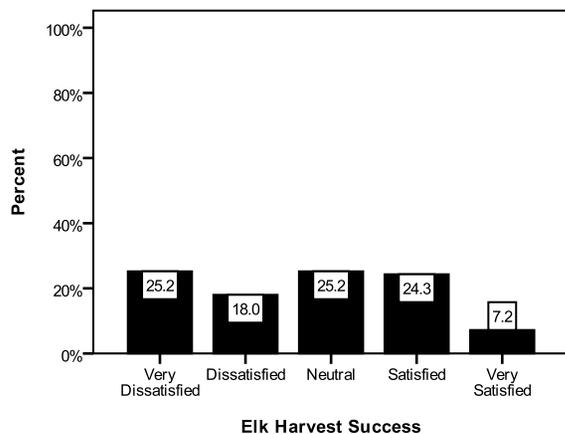
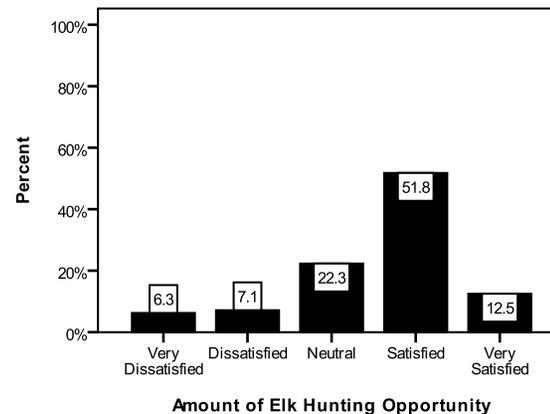
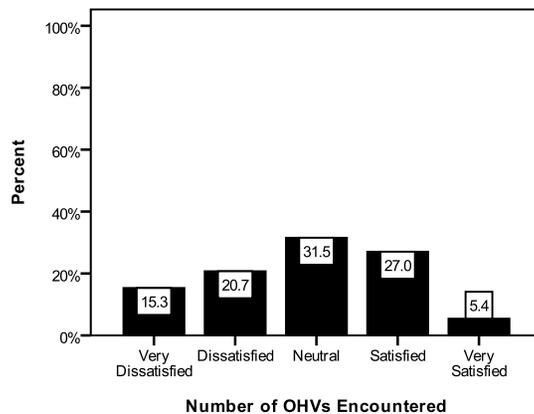
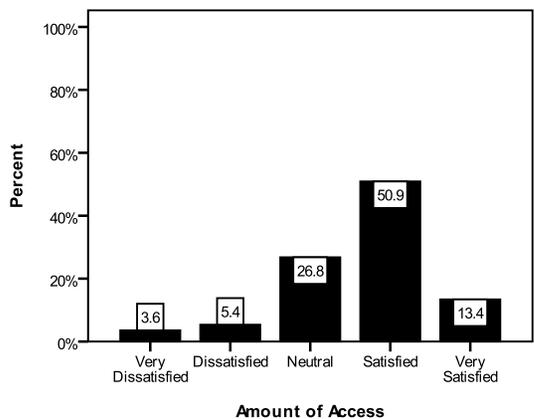
Length of Elk Season



Timing of Elk Season



Number of Elk Hunters Encountered

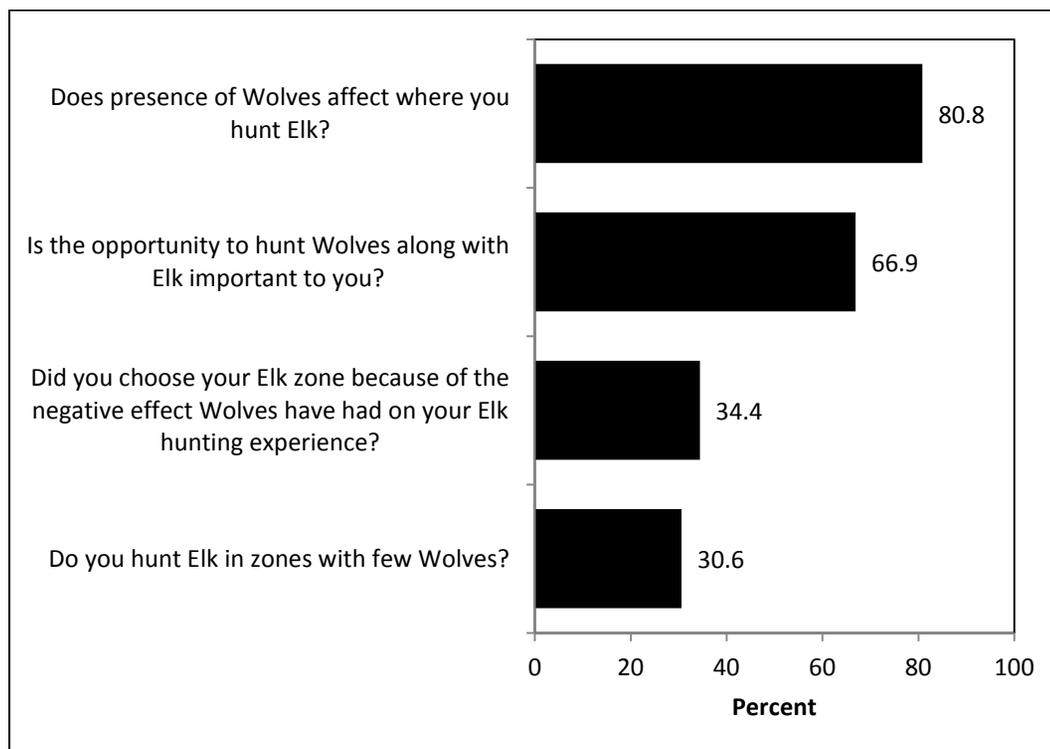


Q37: Both hunters from the Panhandle zone and the state average felt similarly with their satisfaction. However, Panhandle hunters were dissatisfied with the number of OHV users they encountered.

PERCEPTIONS OF PREDATORS

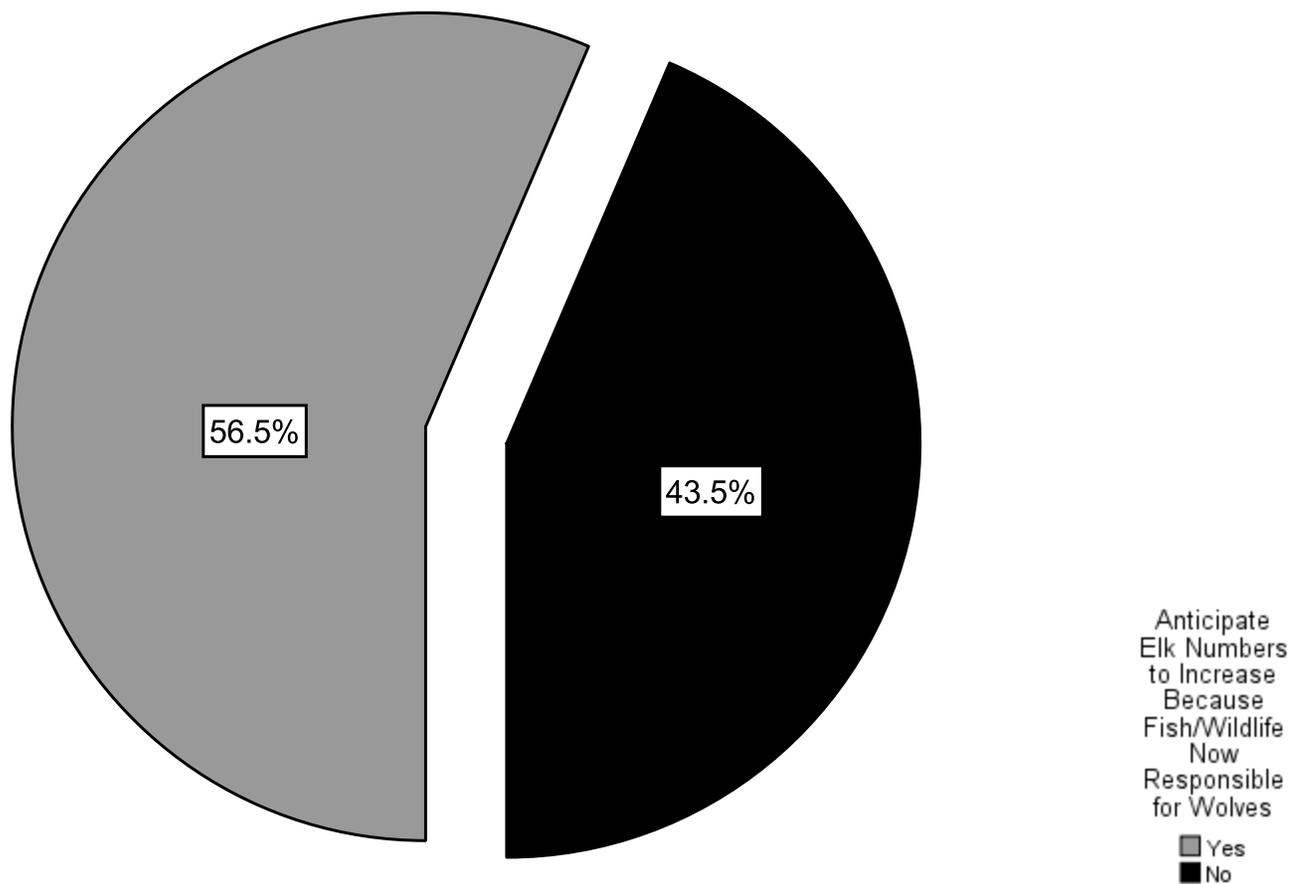
Two questions about predators in Idaho.

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 Panhandle zone and 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)



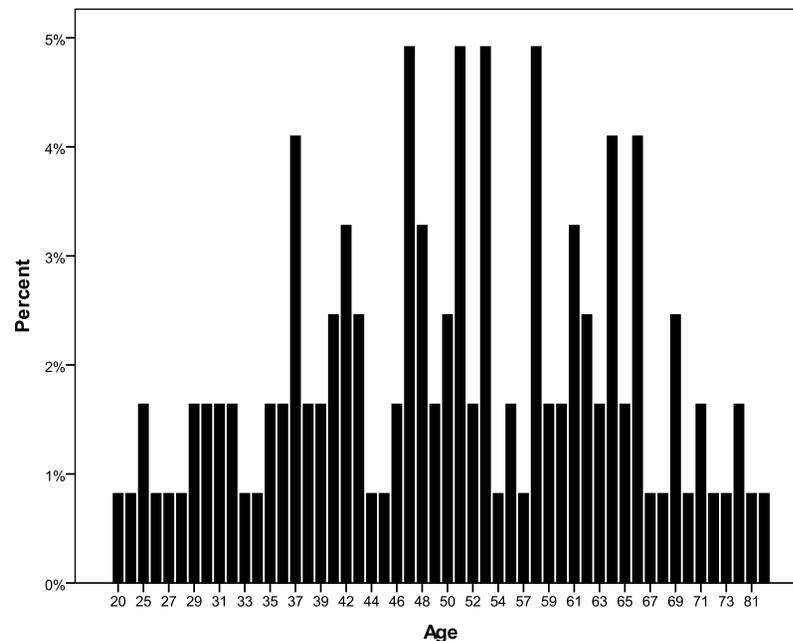
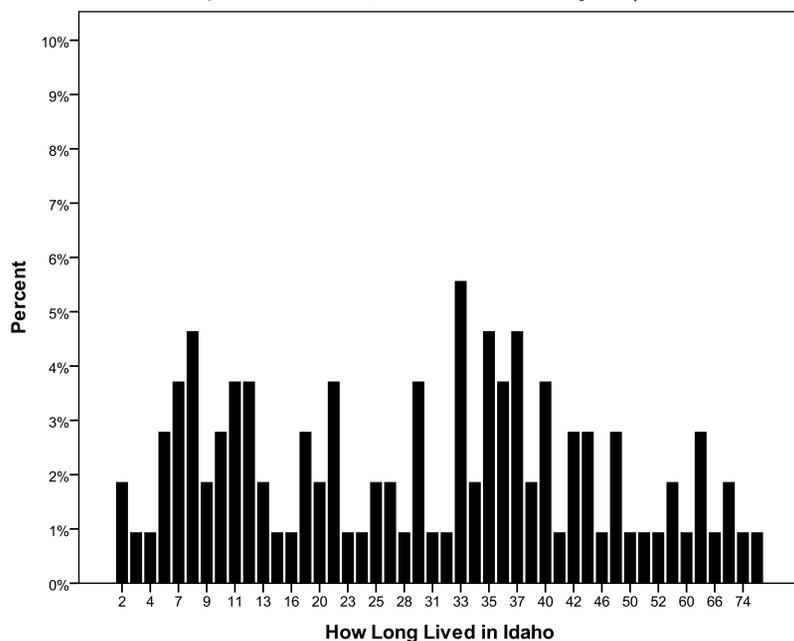
Q40: Panhandle respondents anticipate the number of Elk to increase slightly less than the state average.

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 range of the age and length of residency are slightly less for the Panhandle zone than the state average.