

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



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For:

Idaho Department of Fish and Game

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INSERT ELK SURVEY OBJECTIVES

METHODS

SAMPLING

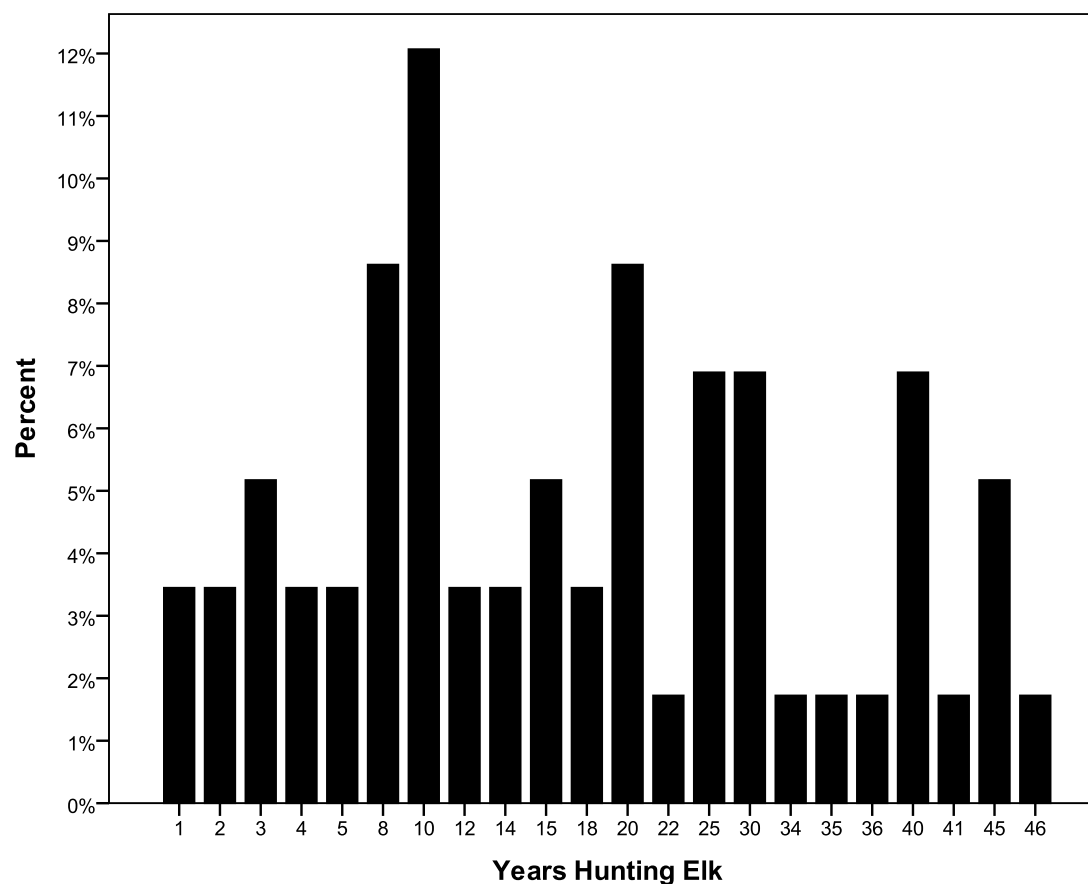
RESPONSE RATE.

ELK HUNTER PROFILES

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

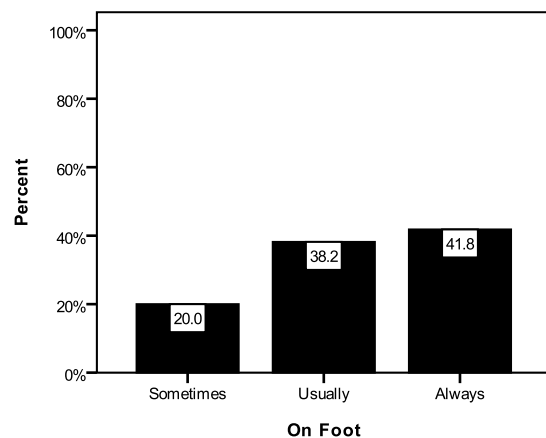
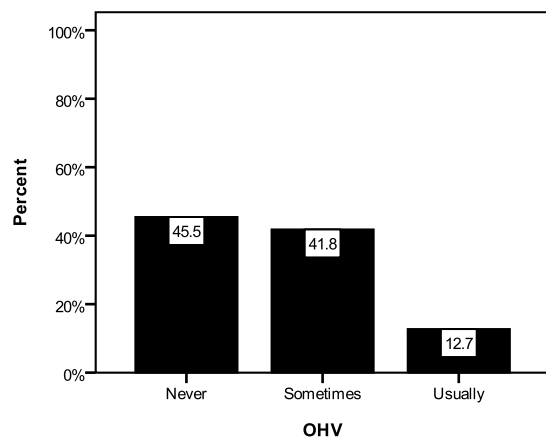
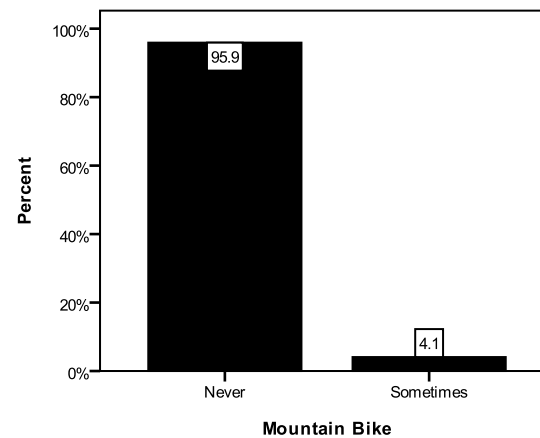
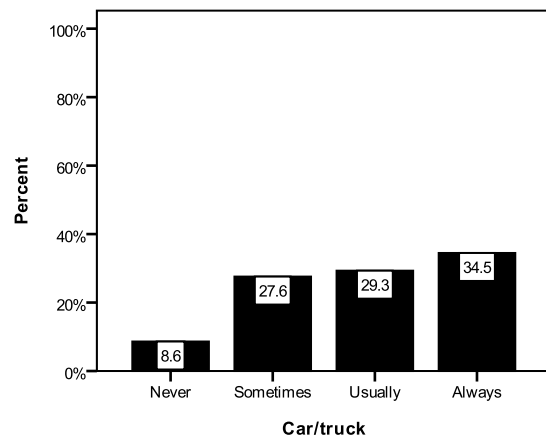
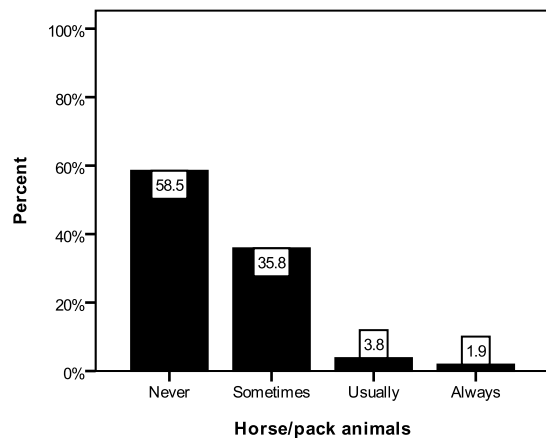
Now, some questions about your Idaho Elk hunting experiences and preferences.

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



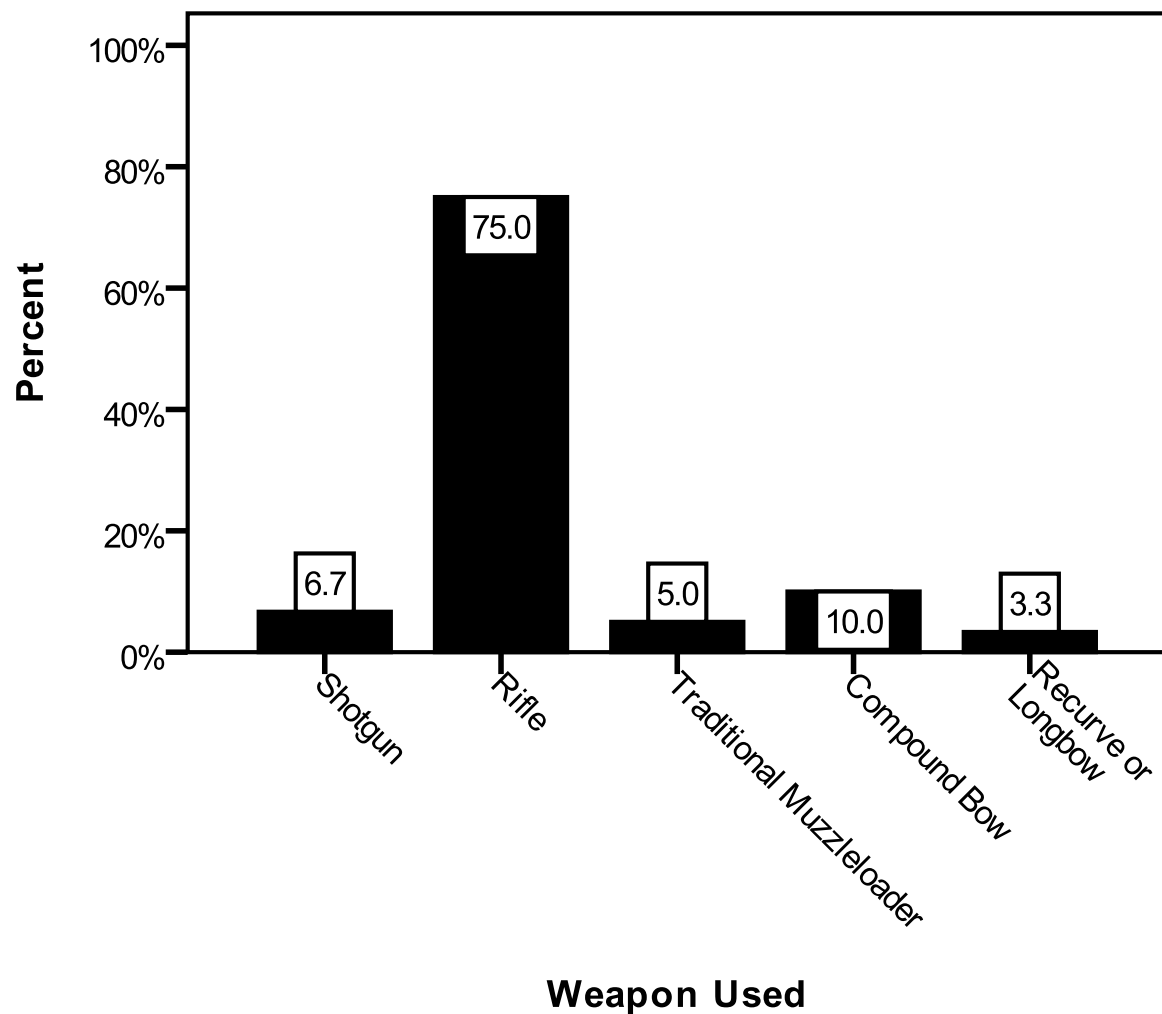
Q3: There is a larger percentage of hunters in the Snake River zone who have hunted for less than 10 years than the state average.

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?



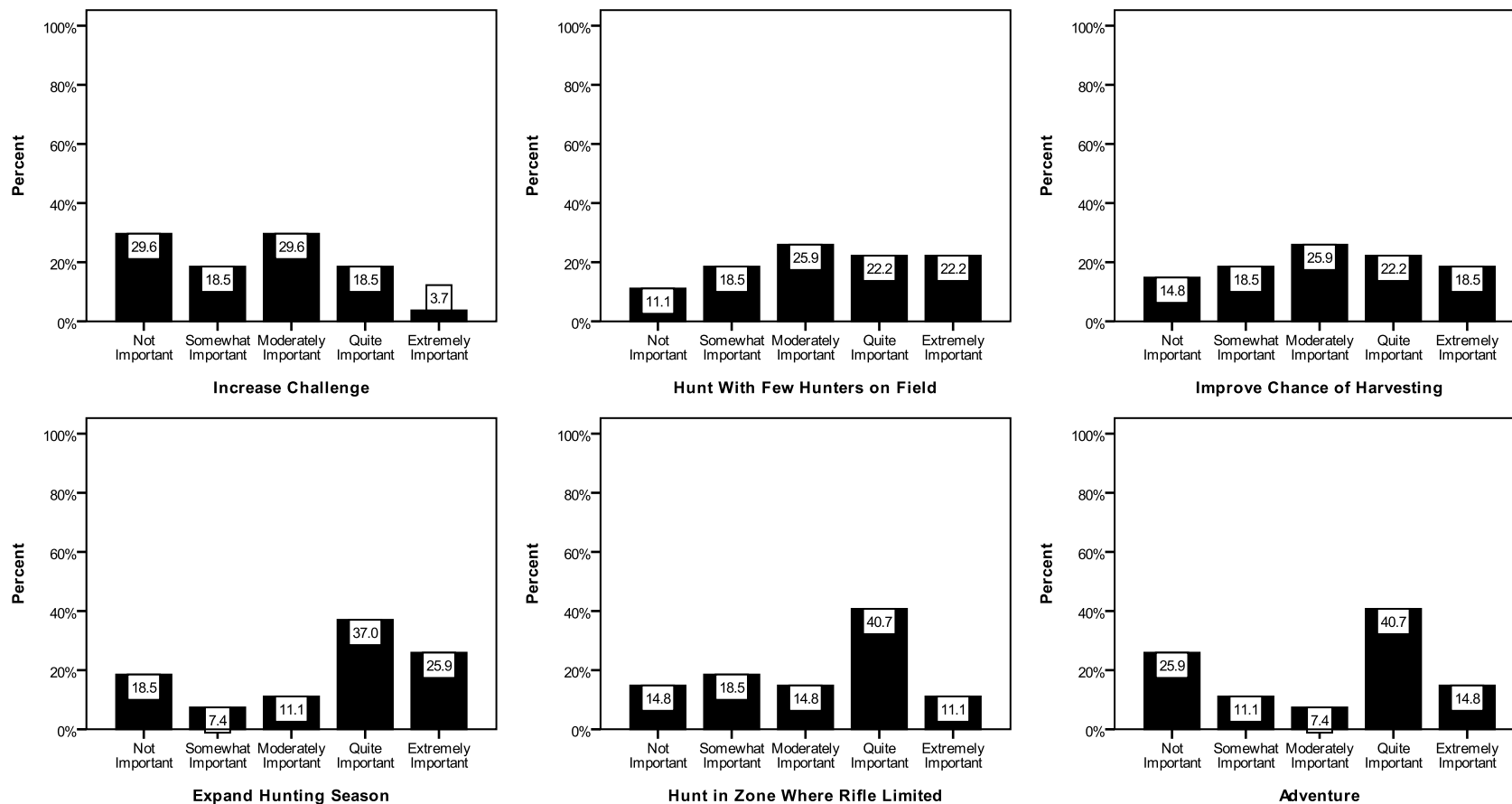
Q7: The responses distribution is similar between the state average and the Snake River zone.

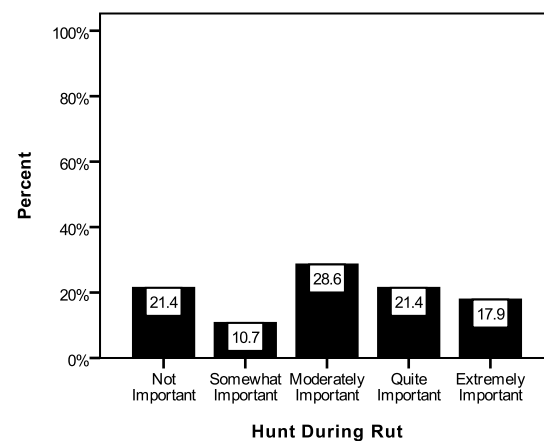
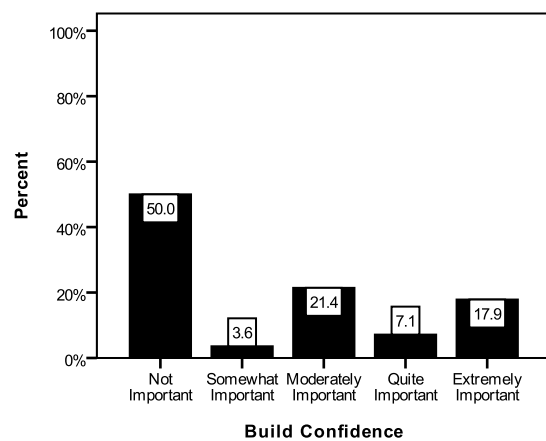
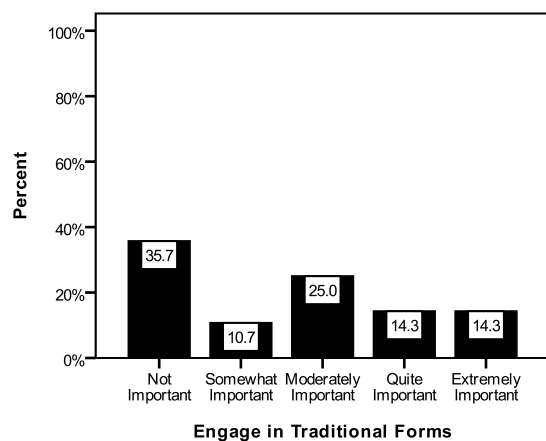
8. What type of weapon do you typically use to hunt Elk in Idaho? (Please check only one response)



Q8: Similar to the state average, rifles are the most popular weapon choice for hunters in the Snake River zone. However, about 20% more hunters use rifles in this zone than the state average.

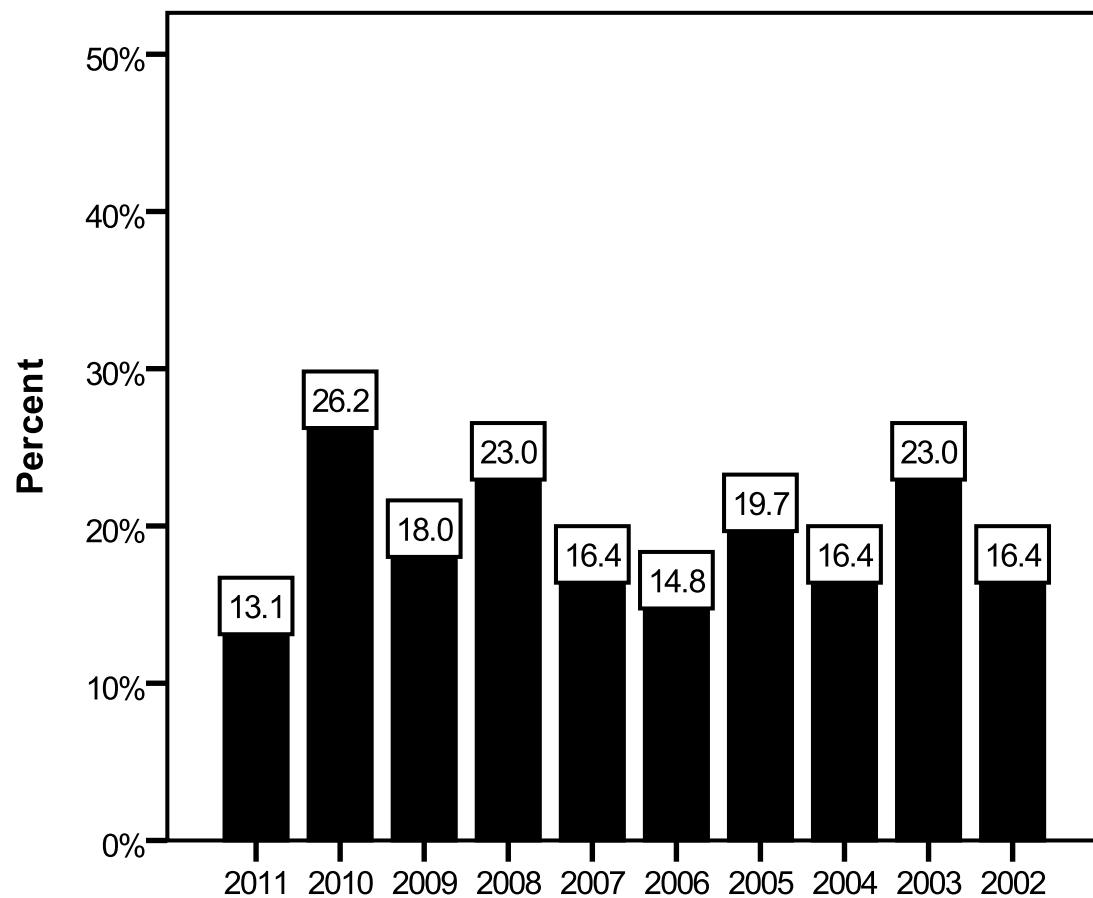
10. How important was each of the following in your decision to hunt during Elk archery, short-range weapons or muzzleloader seasons?





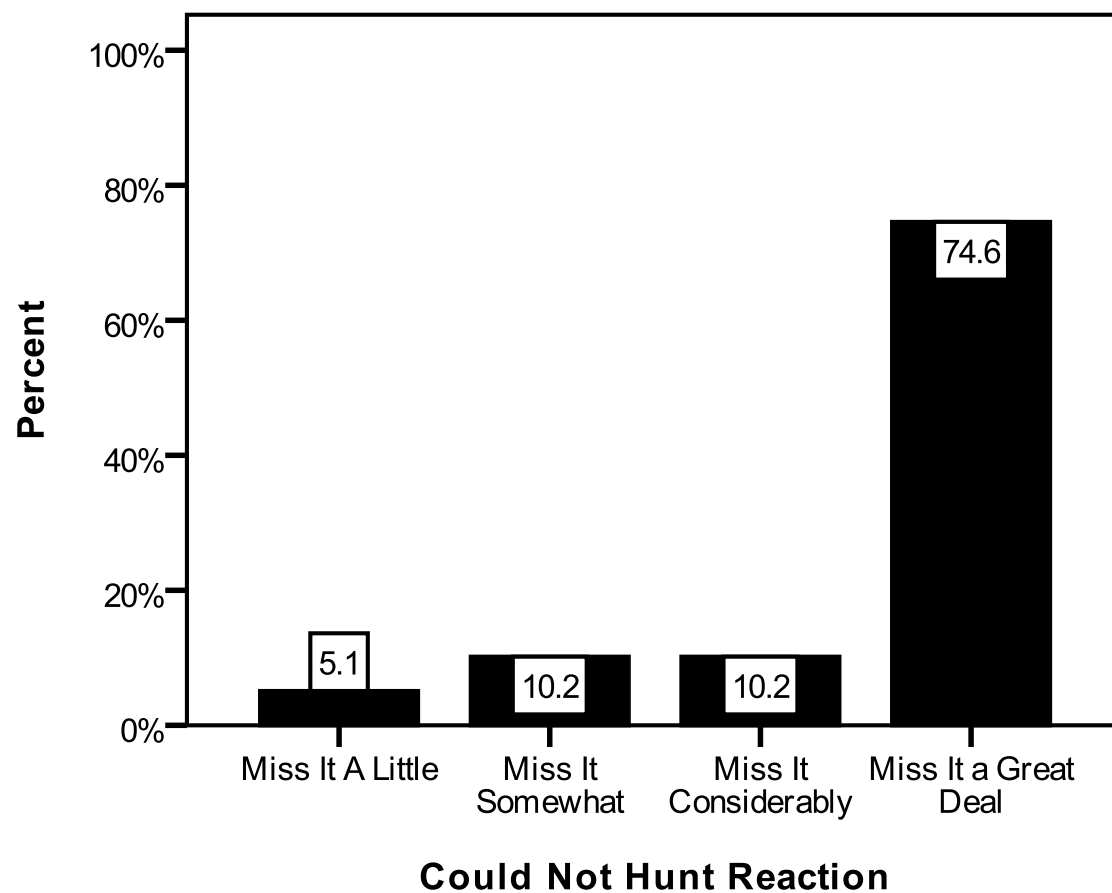
Q10: The responses distribution is similar between the state average and the Snake River zone. However, more hunters in this zone choose to hunt in these seasons to expand the hunting season and to hunt in zones where rifles are limited.

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



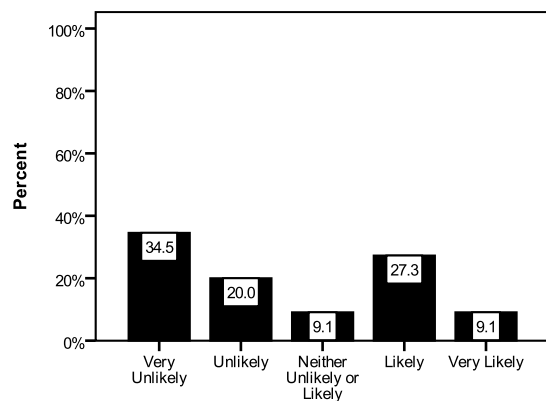
Q11: Harvest success rates for the Snake River zone has tended to be lower than the state average over the past 10 years.

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

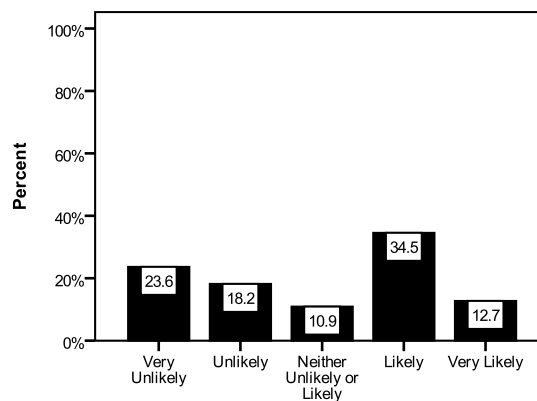


Q12: Like other hunters in the state, most hunters in the Snake River zone would miss hunting Elk in Idaho a great deal, if they were no longer able to do so.

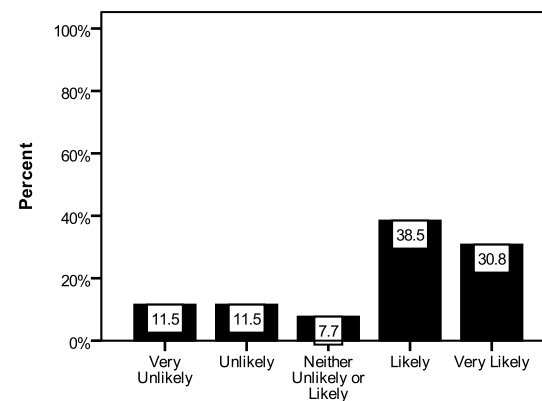
13. If you could not hunt Elk in Idaho, how would your hunting change?



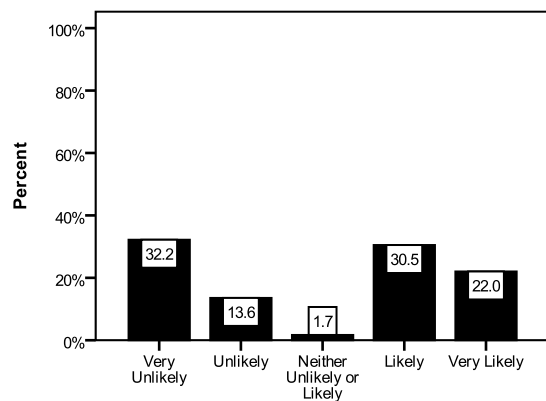
Hunt Waterfowl More



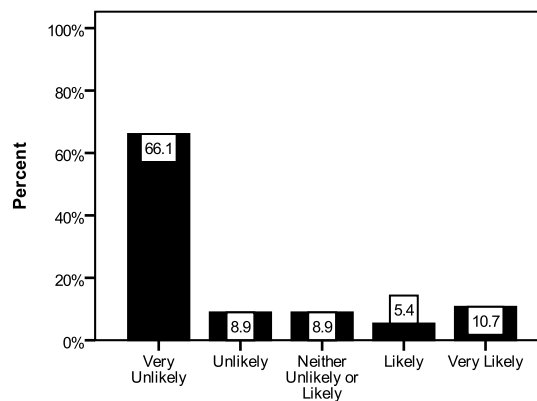
Hunt Upland Game More



More Time Hunting Other Game



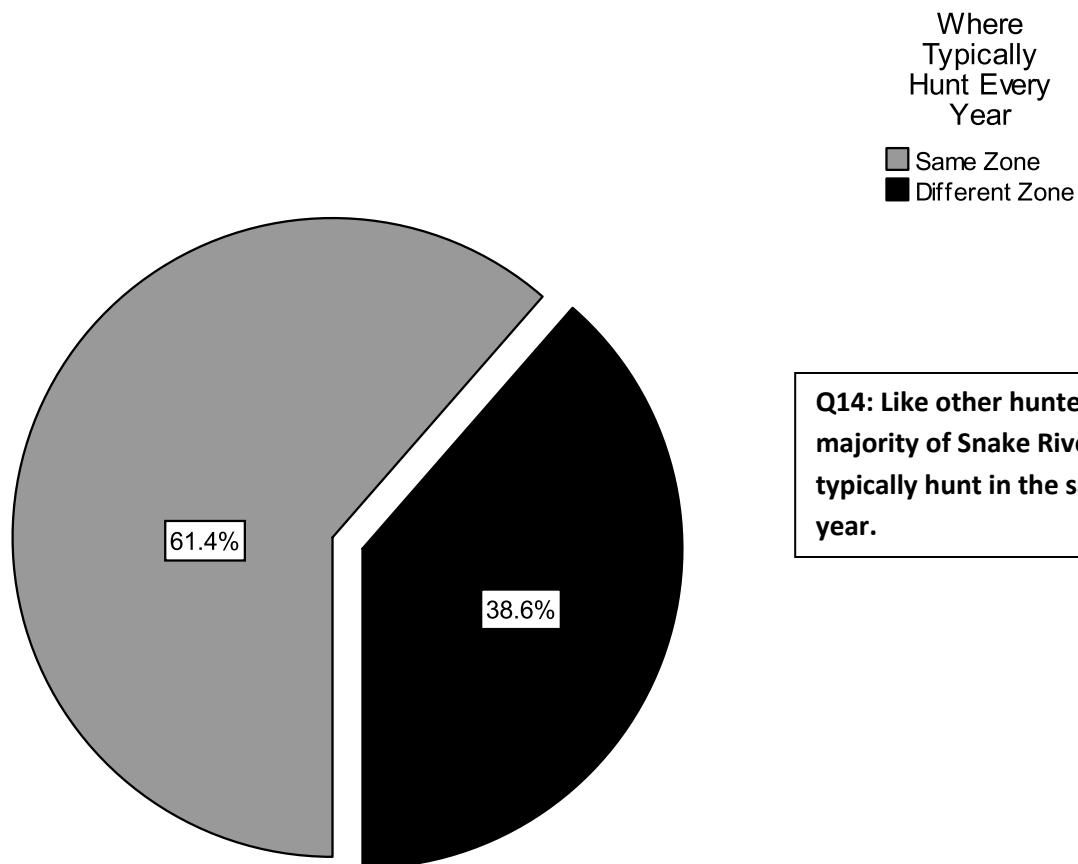
Hunt Elk in Other States



Not Hunt At All

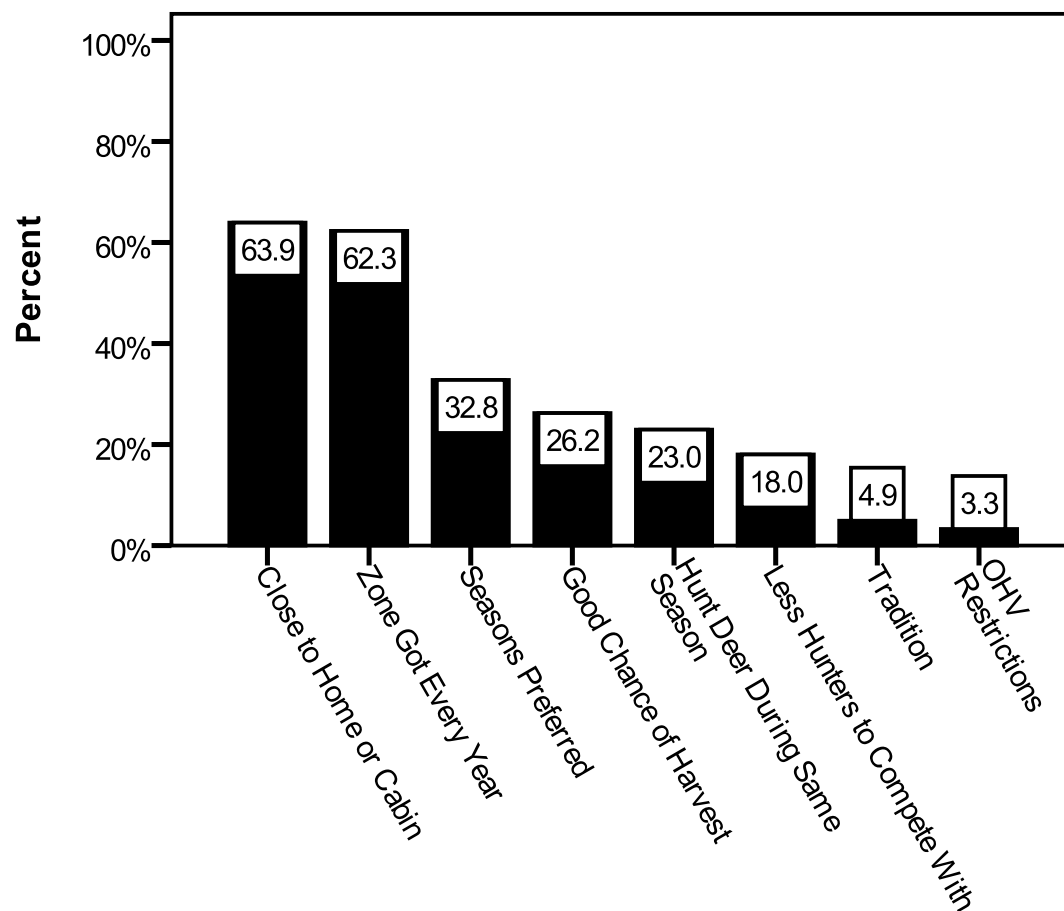
Q13: The responses distribution is similar between the state average and the Snake River zone. More hunters in this zone would be likely to change to hunting waterfowl or upland game more.

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



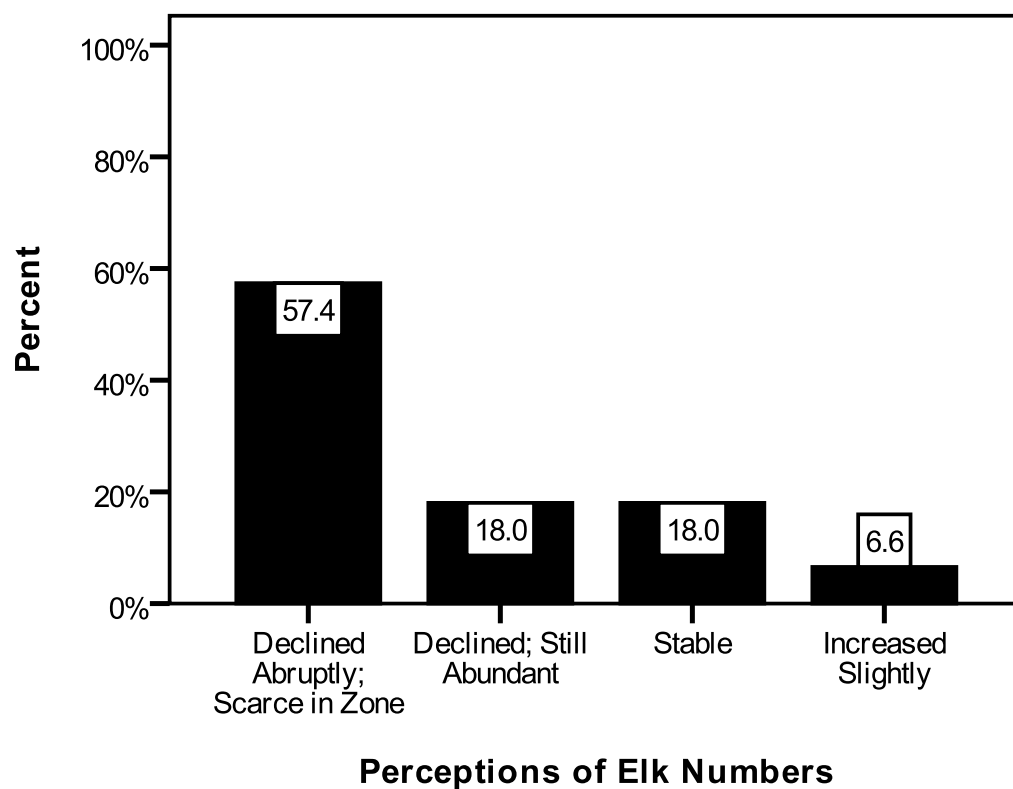
Q14: Like other hunters in the state, a majority of Snake River hunters typically hunt in the same zone every year.

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



Q16: The responses distribution is similar between the state average and the Snake River zone.

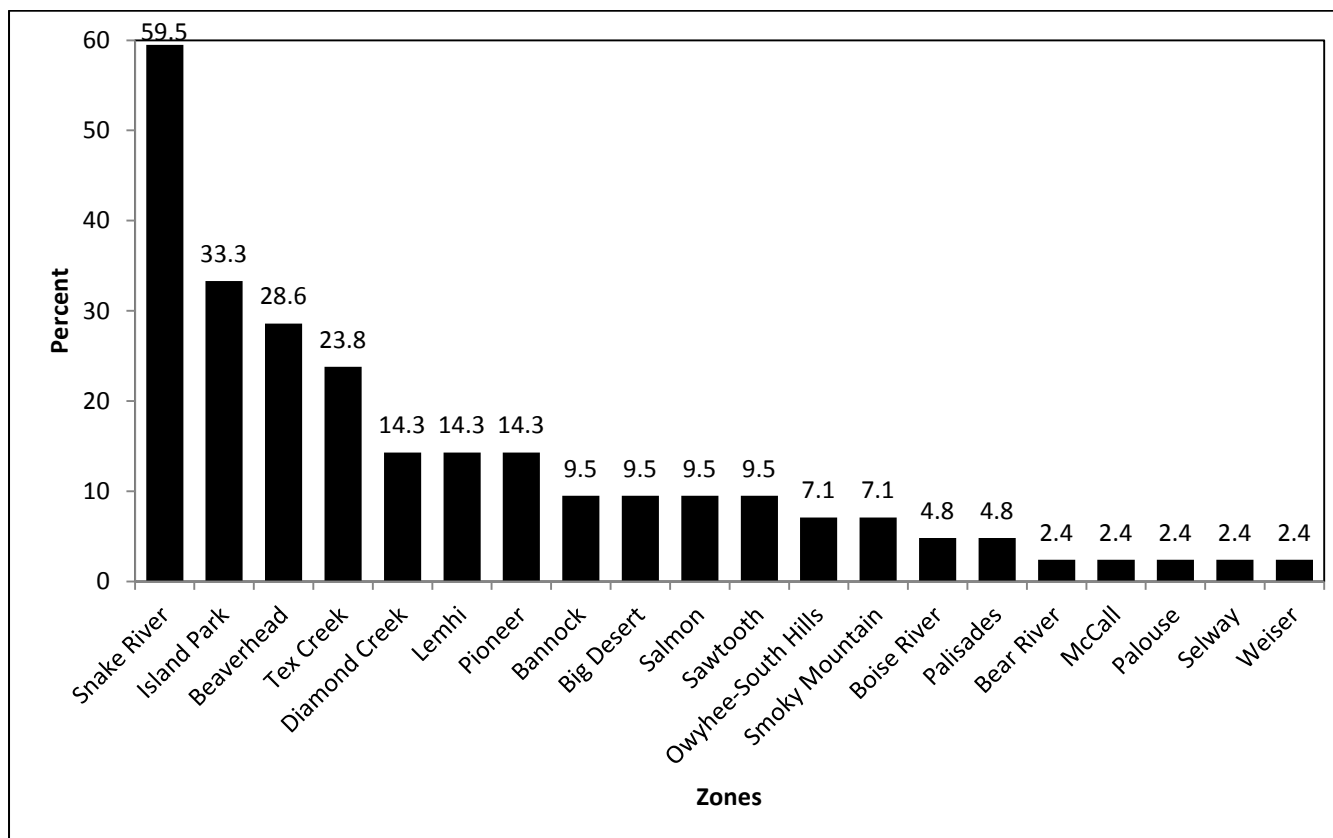
17. What are your perceptions of Elk numbers in the zone you hunted in 2011? Select the ONE statement from the list below that most closely matches your perceptions. (Please check only one response)



Q17: Similar to the state average, over half of Snake River hunters perceive Elk numbers to have declined abruptly in the zone, resulting in scarcity.

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

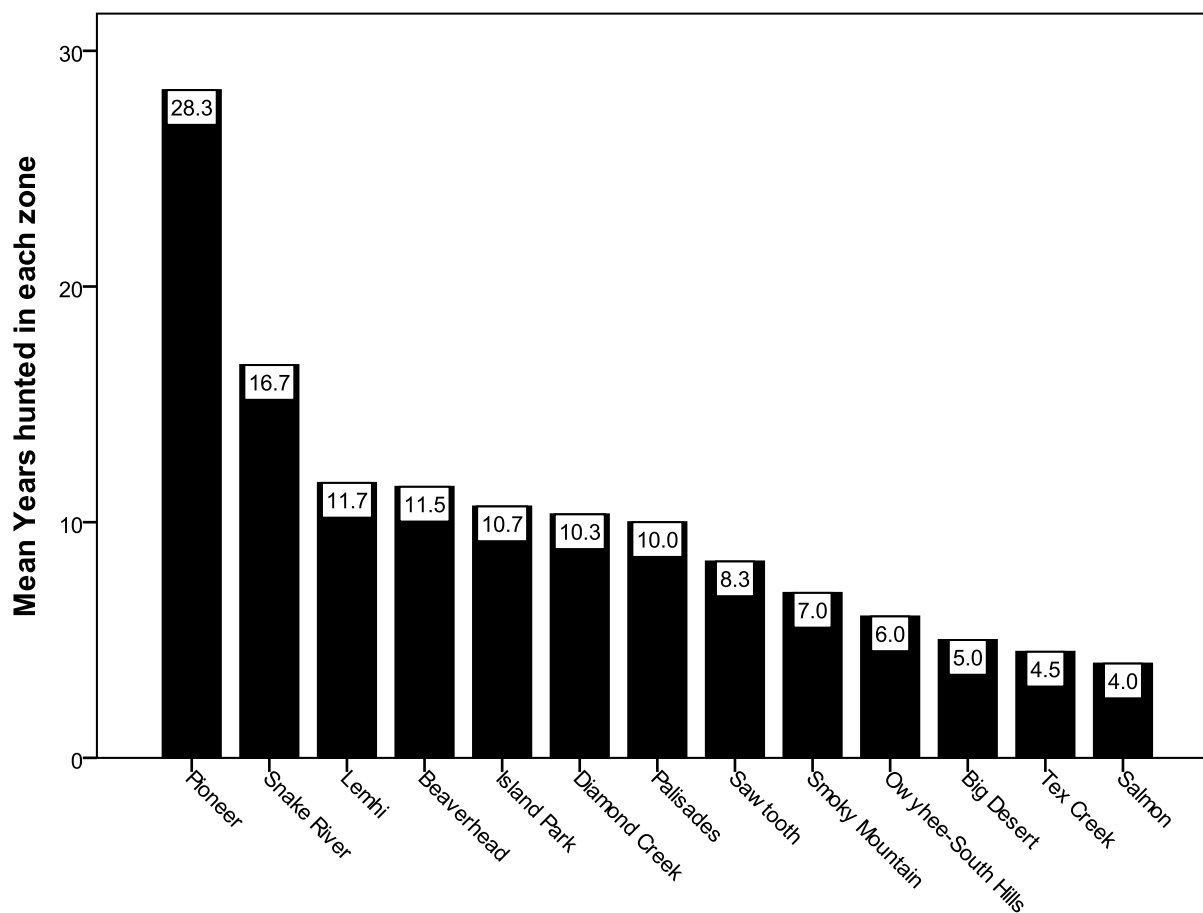
(Please write in the Zone names, refer to map on page 5 for Zone names)



Q18: The Island Park, Beaverhead, and Tex Creek zones are other popular zones for respondents to hunt in besides the Snake River zone.

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

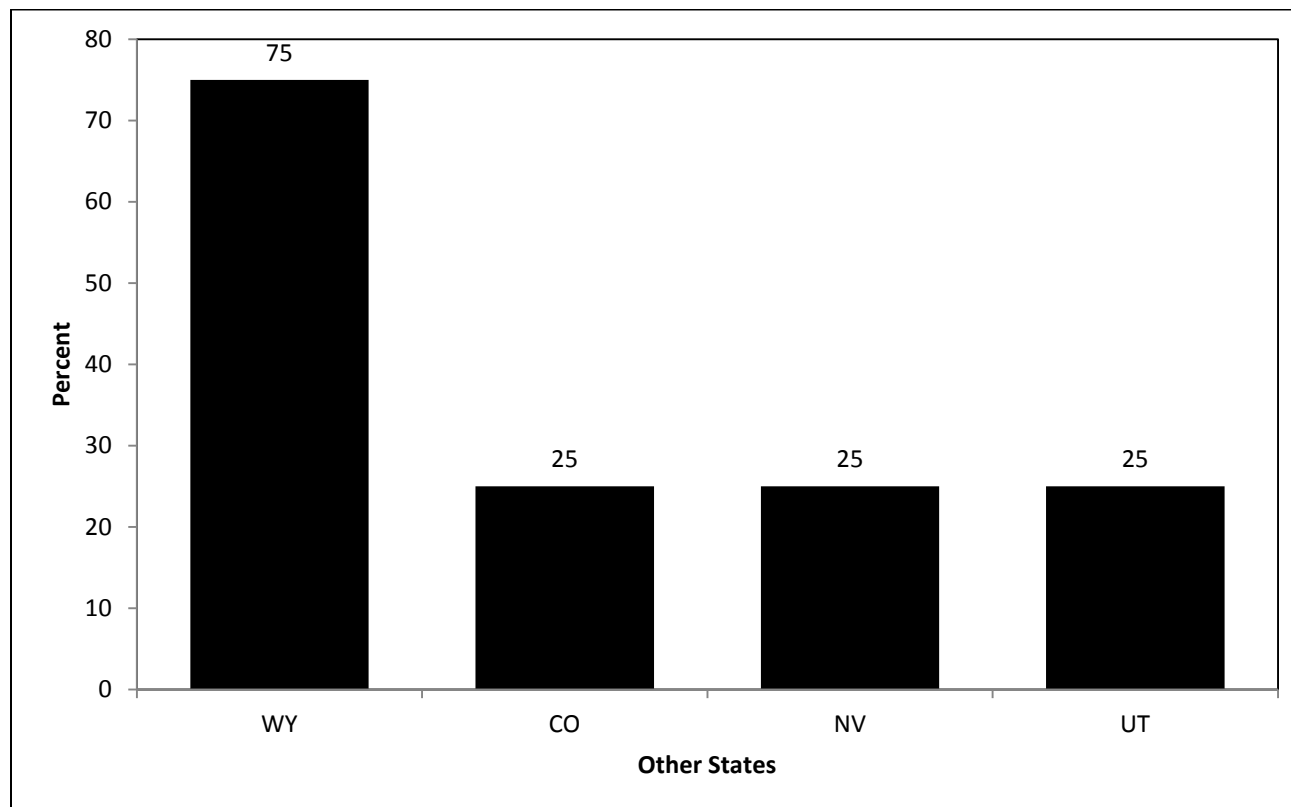
(Please write in the name of the zone and number of years, refer to map on page 5 for Zone names)



Q20: The Pioneer zone has been hunted the longest among respondents. The Snake River zone itself ranks second in duration.

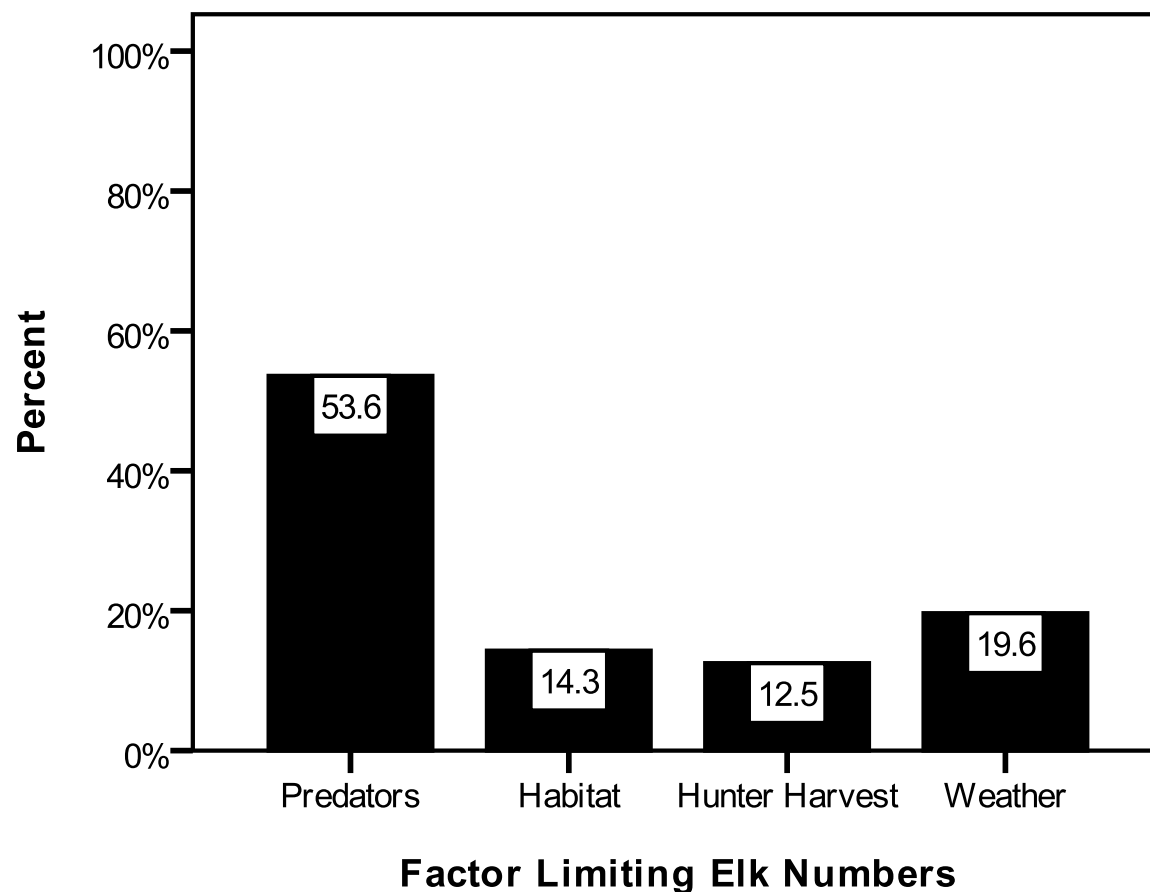
Other Zones in Past 10 Years

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



Q21: A majority of Snake River hunters who hunt out-of-state have hunted in Wyoming.

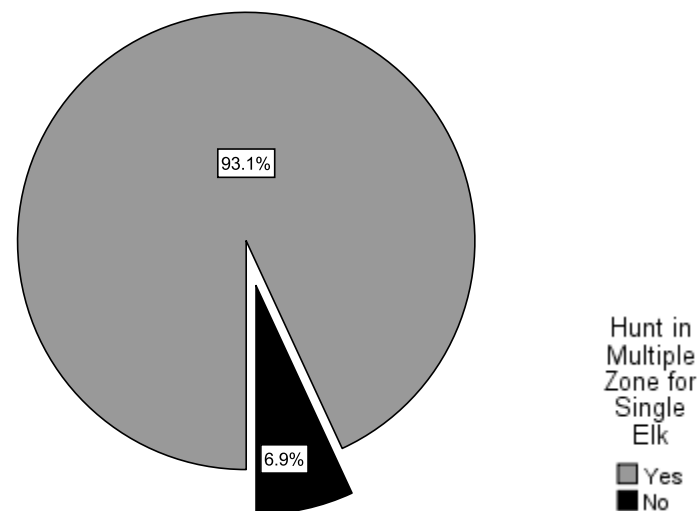
22. What do you believe is the primary factor limiting Elk numbers in the zone you hunted in 2011? (Check only ONE response)



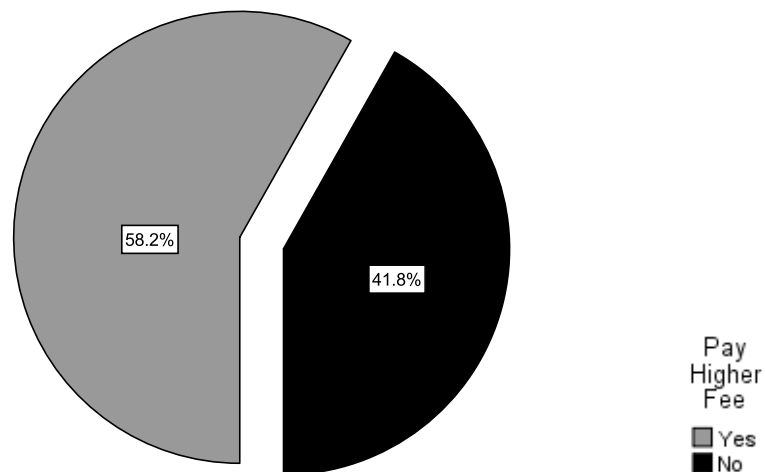
Q22: Similar to the state average, over half of hunters in the Snake River zone believe predators are the primary limiting factor for Elk numbers. However, 13.2% more hunters in this zone believe the cause is weather, compared to the state average.

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

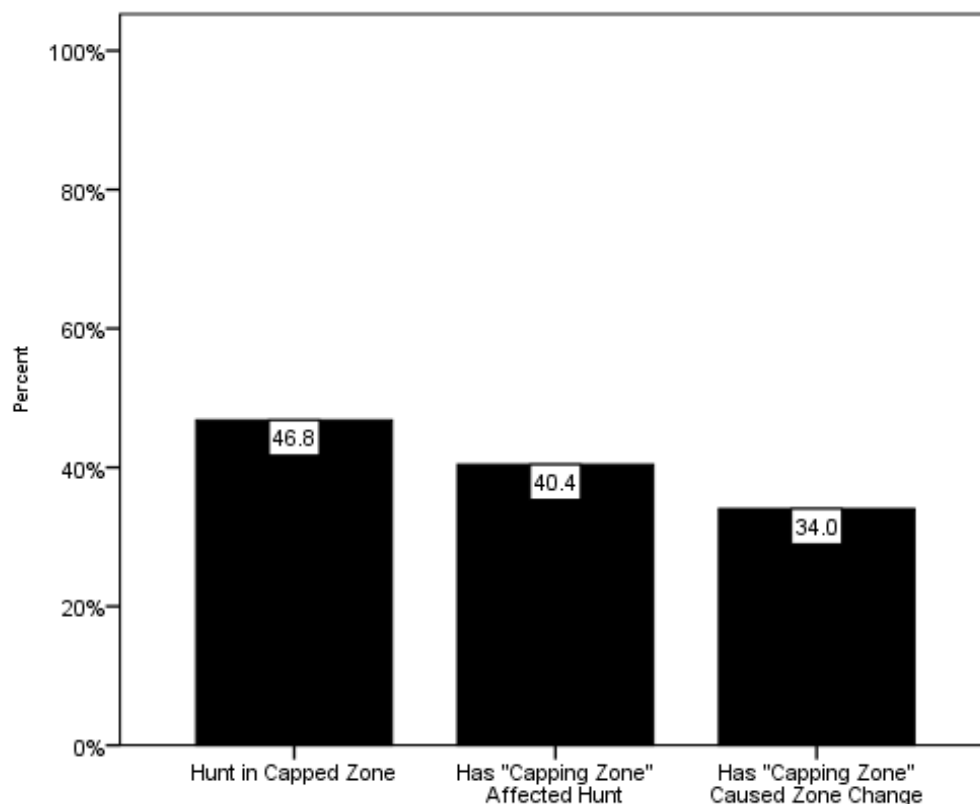
Like other hunters in the state, a majority of Snake River hunters would like to be able to hunt for a single Elk in multiple zones in a year. Over half of respondents said they would be willing to pay a higher fee in order to do so.



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

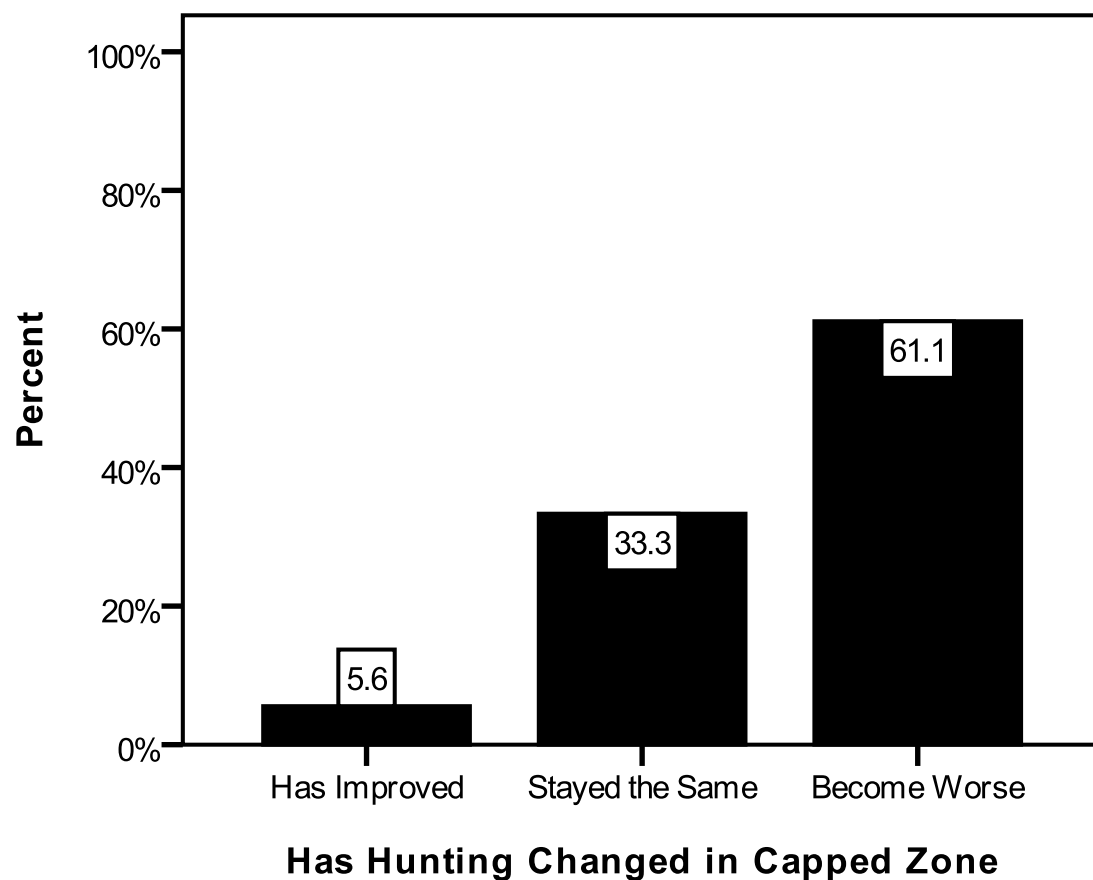


25. When the zone system was implemented the mechanism for reducing unlimited over-the-counter opportunity called “capping the zone” was developed by the department with the help of legislators, sportsmen and outfitters. This “capping the zone” is an allocation formula to distribute Elk tags to hunters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



Q25: The number of Snake River hunters whose hunting has been affected by a capped zone and who have changed the zone they hunt in because of a capped zone almost doubles the state average.

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

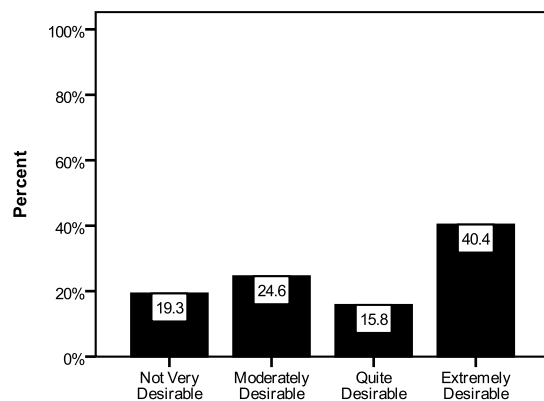


Q26: The response distribution is similar between the state average and the Snake River zone.

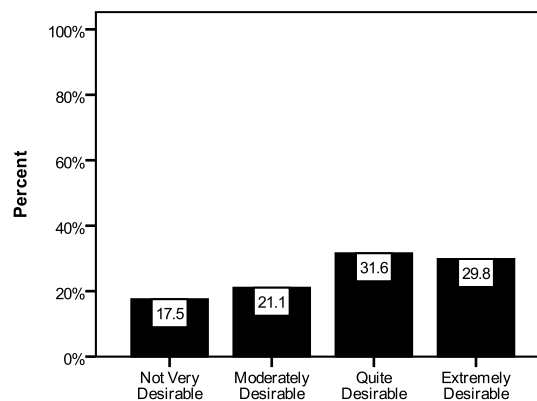
ELK HUNTING PREFERENCES AND MOTIVATIONS

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

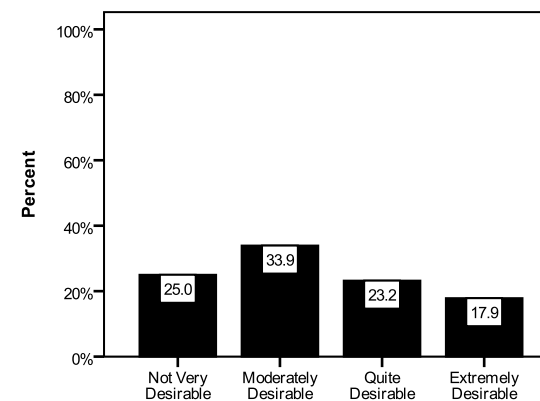
27. How desirable is it to you to harvest the following kinds of Elk?



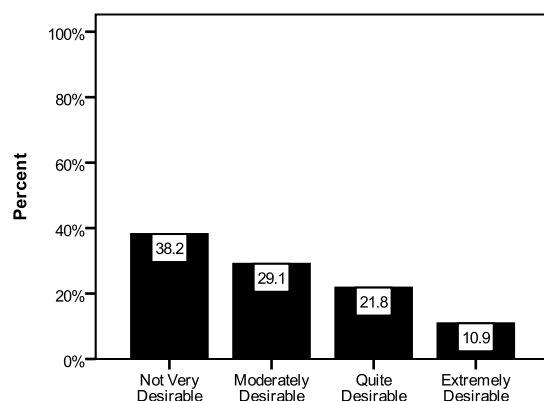
Large Bull



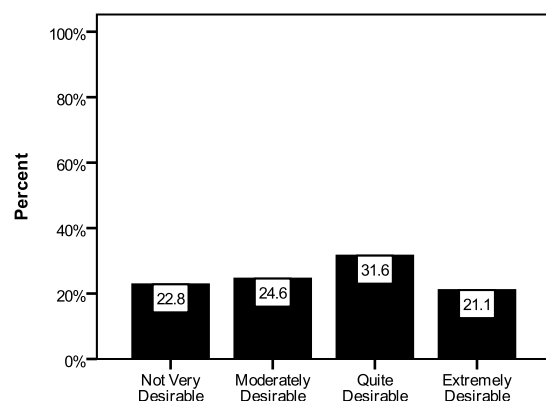
Mature Bull



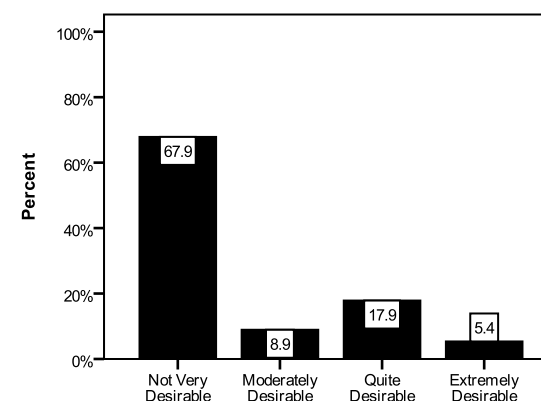
Raghorn Bull



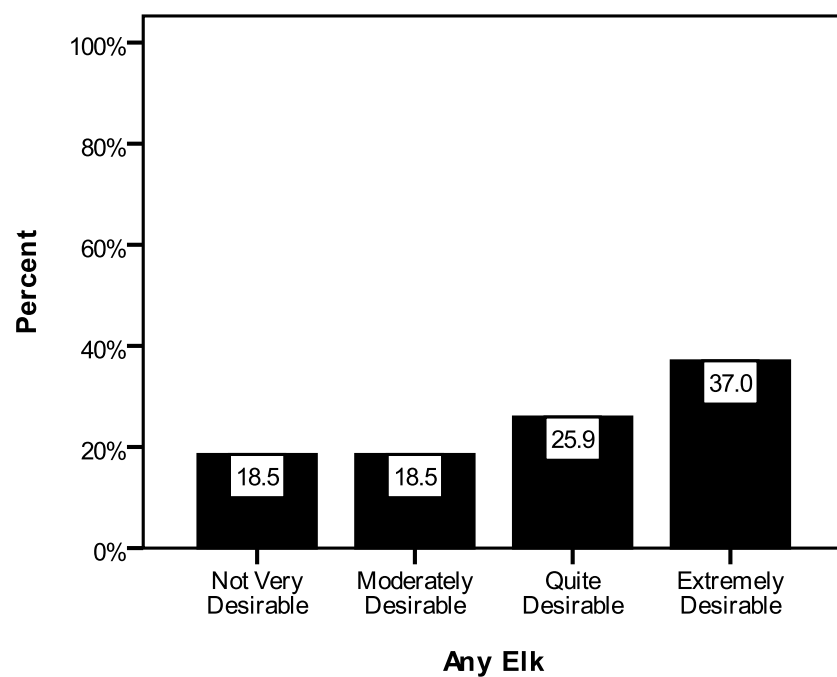
Spike Elk



Cow Elk

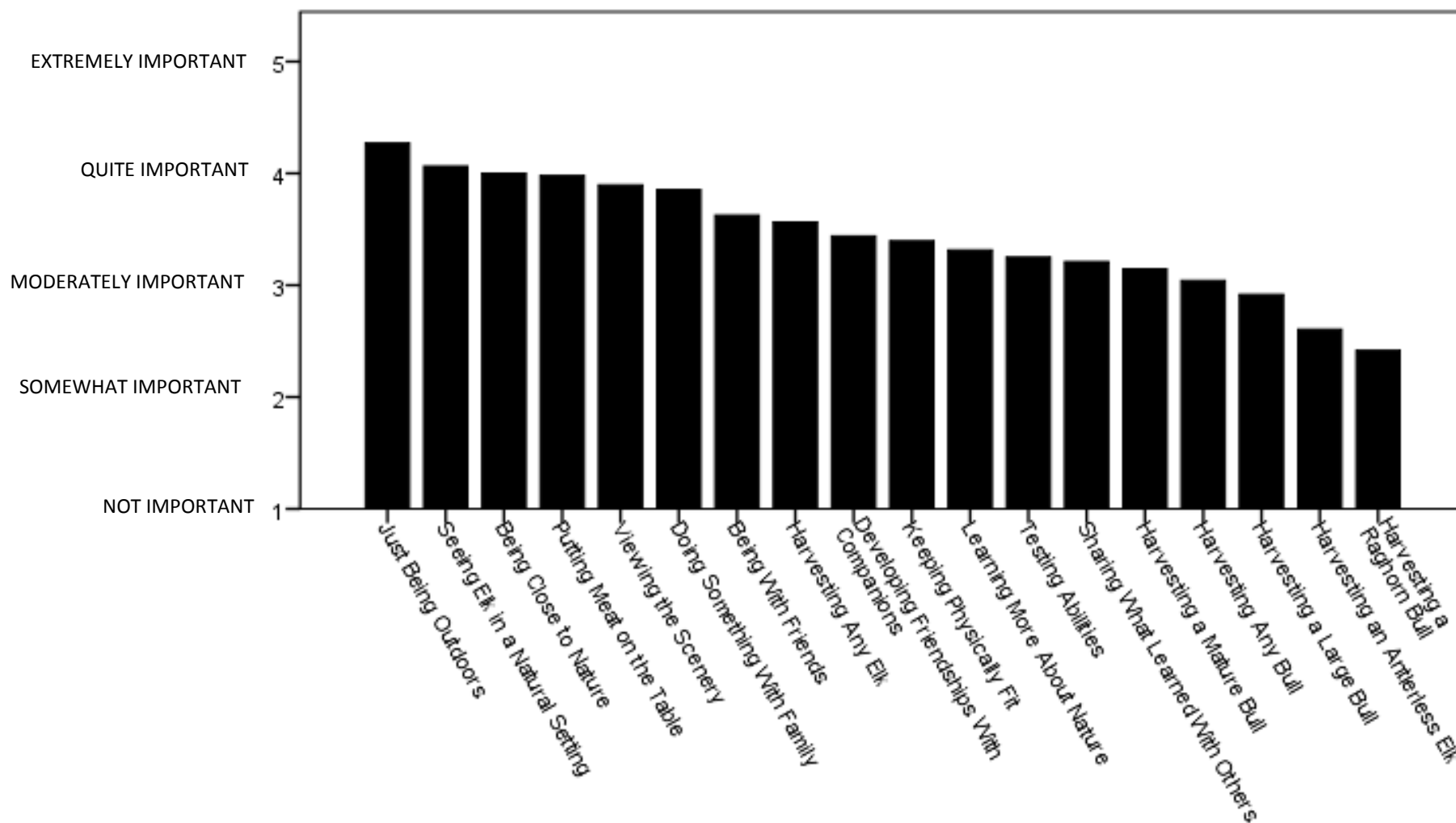


Calf

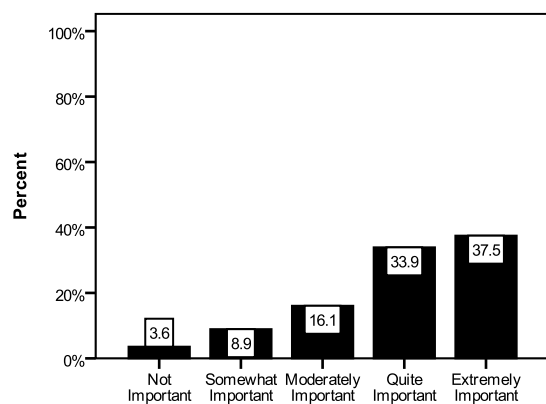


Q27: The response distribution is similar between the state average and the Snake River zone. More hunters in this zone find cow Elk or any Elk more desirable than the state average.

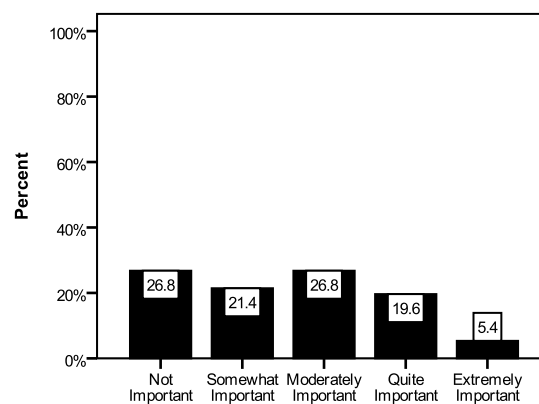
28. Below is a list of possible reasons for hunting Elk in Idaho. How important to you is each of the following reasons for hunting Elk in Idaho?



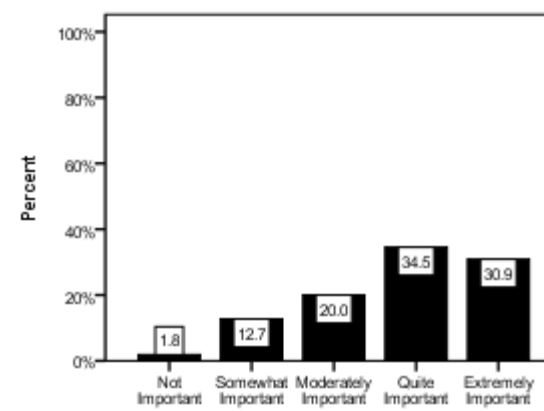
IMPORTANCE OF REASONS FOR HUNTING ELK IN IDAHO



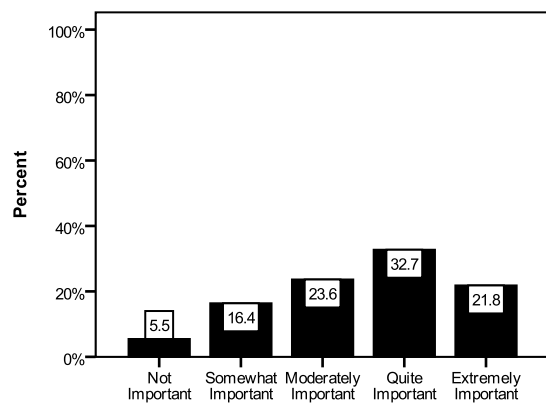
Being Close to Nature



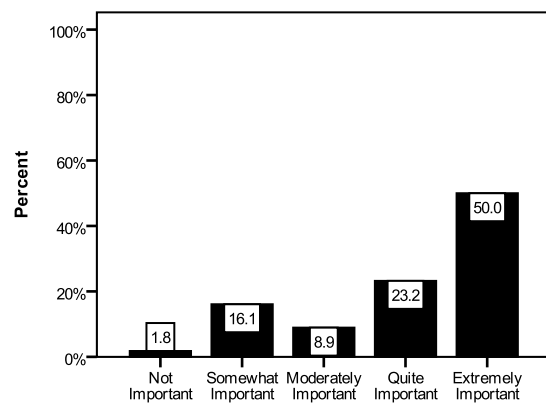
Harvesting an Antlerless Elk



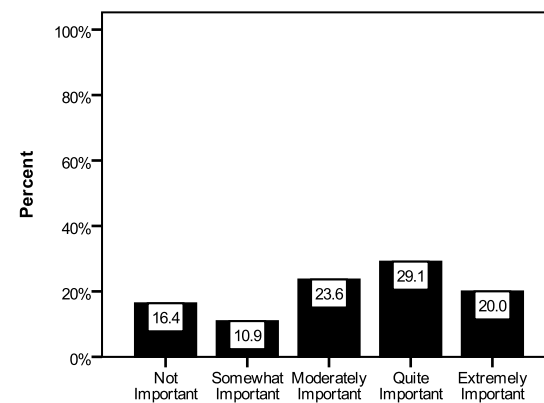
Viewing the Scenery



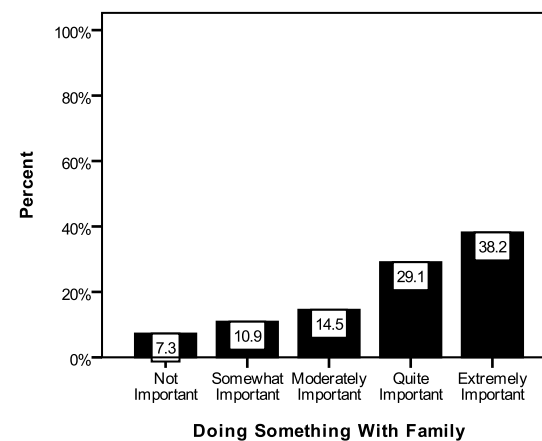
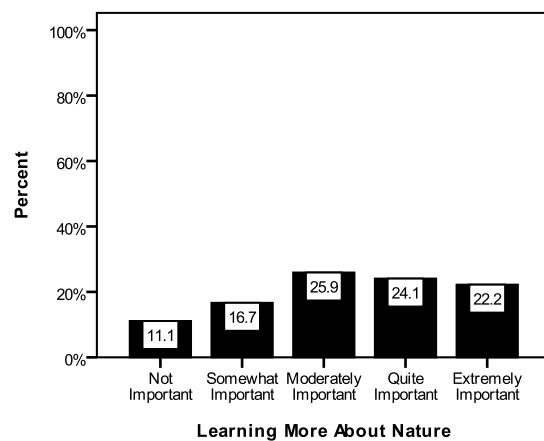
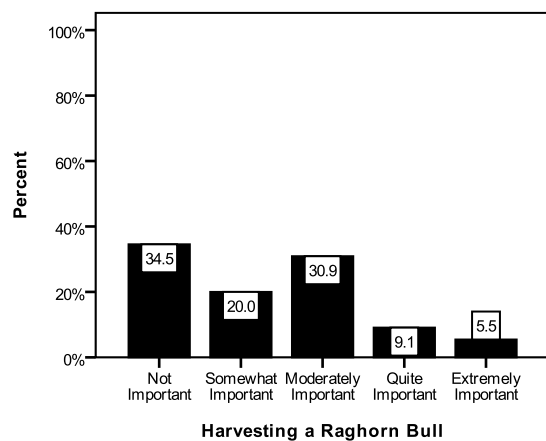
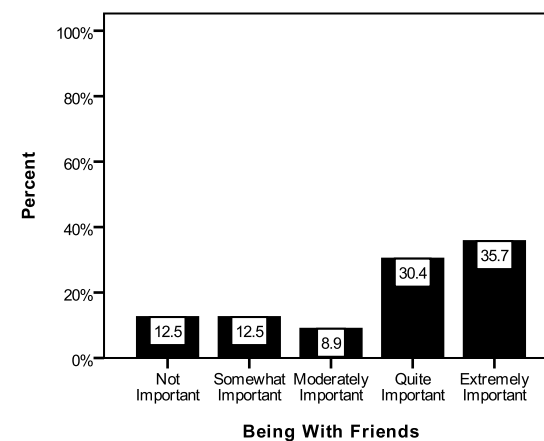
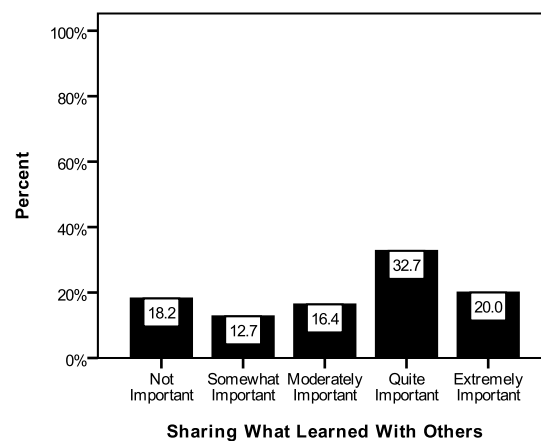
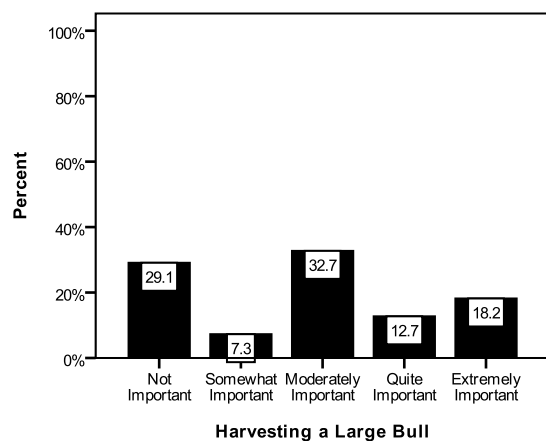
Harvesting Any Elk

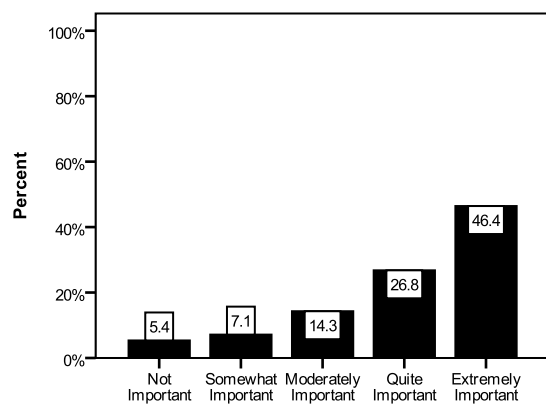


Seeing Elk in a Natural Setting

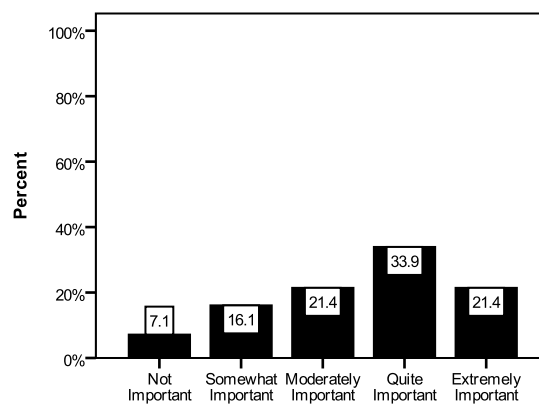


Testing Abilities

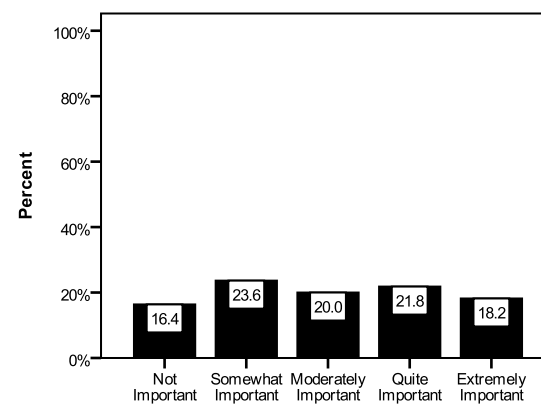




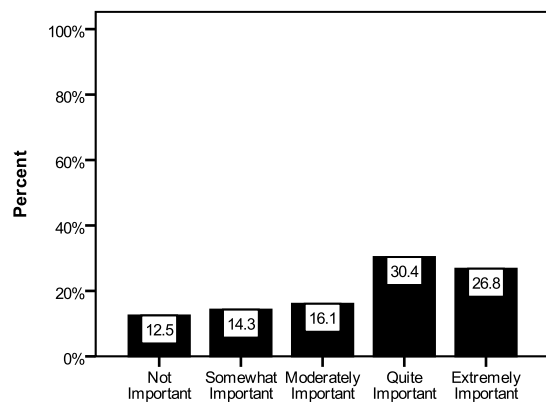
Putting Meat on the Table



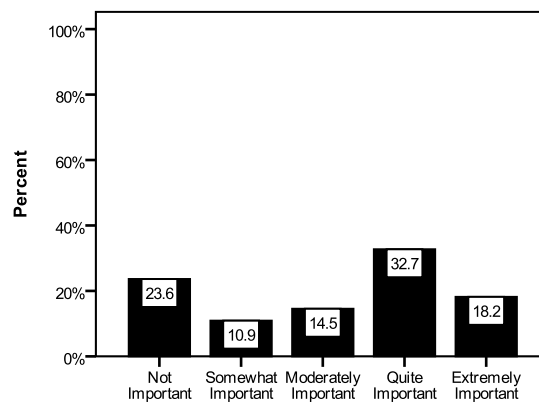
Keeping Physically Fit



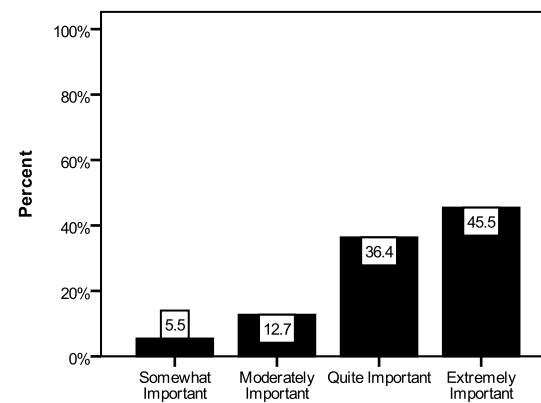
Harvesting Any Bull



Developing Friendships With Companions



Harvesting a Mature Bull

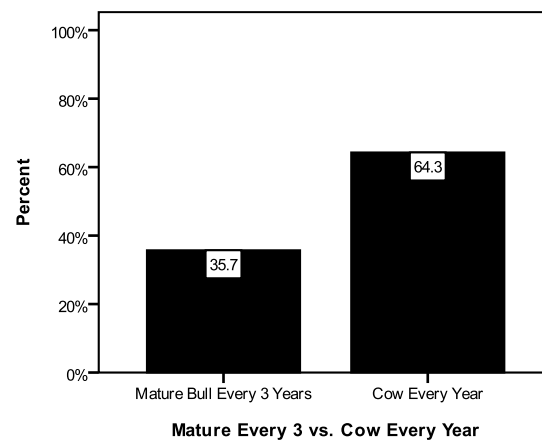
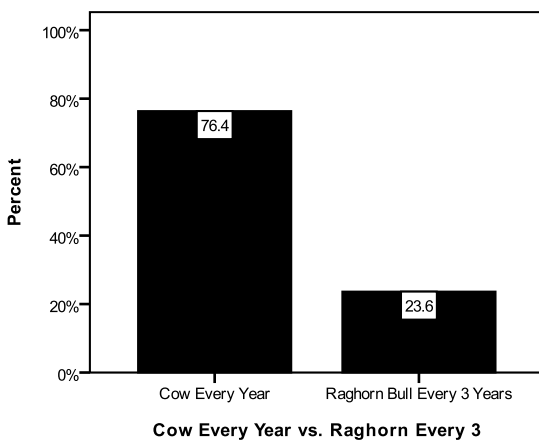
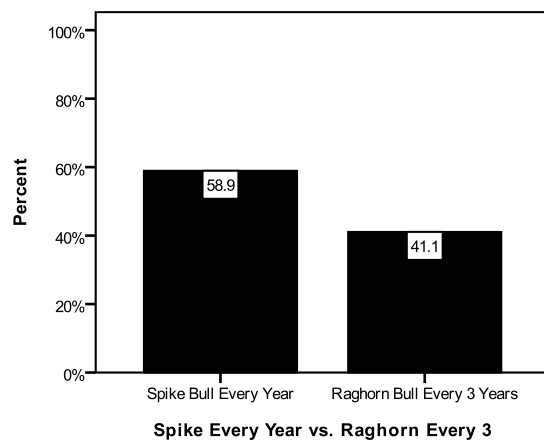
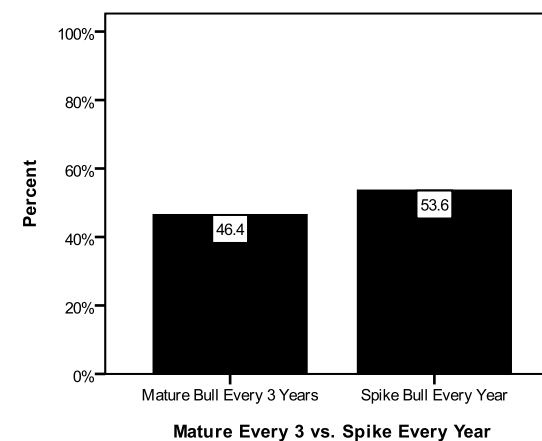
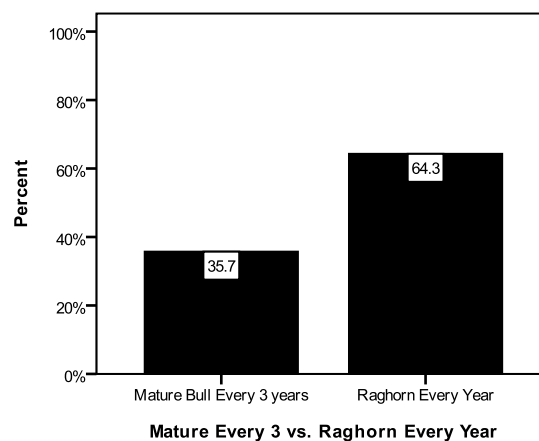
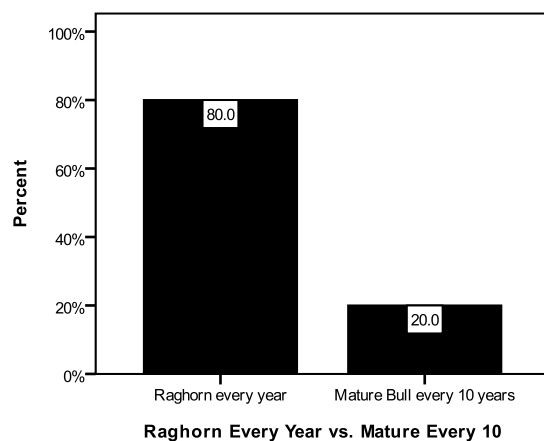


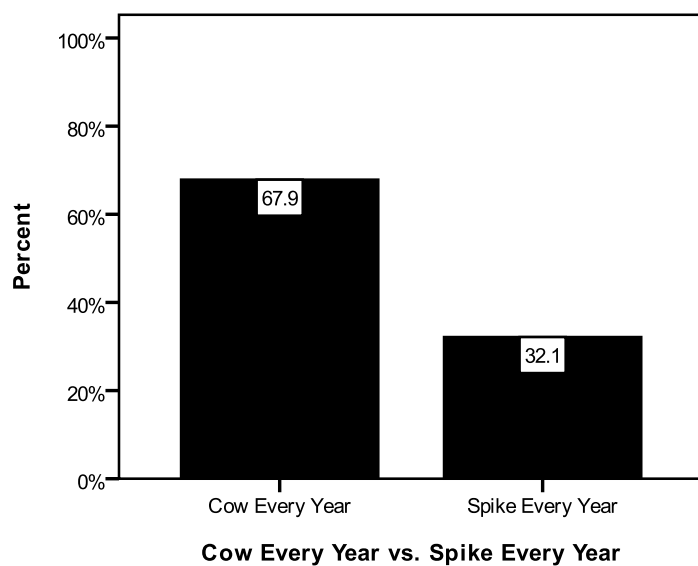
Just Being Outdoors

Q28: The top three reasons are the same for both the state average and the Snake River zone. However, hunters in this zone reported that putting meat on the table is quite important to why they hunt Elk.

Next, your opinions about some possible management options.

32. Managing to produce more large bull Elk would require reductions in bull harvest. Managers need to know whether hunters are willing make trade-offs between the size of bulls and the amount of opportunity to hunt. (For each of the following pairs of opportunity choices please indicate which one is most favorable to you by circling the appropriate letter) Please answer every one, even if you do not like either option.

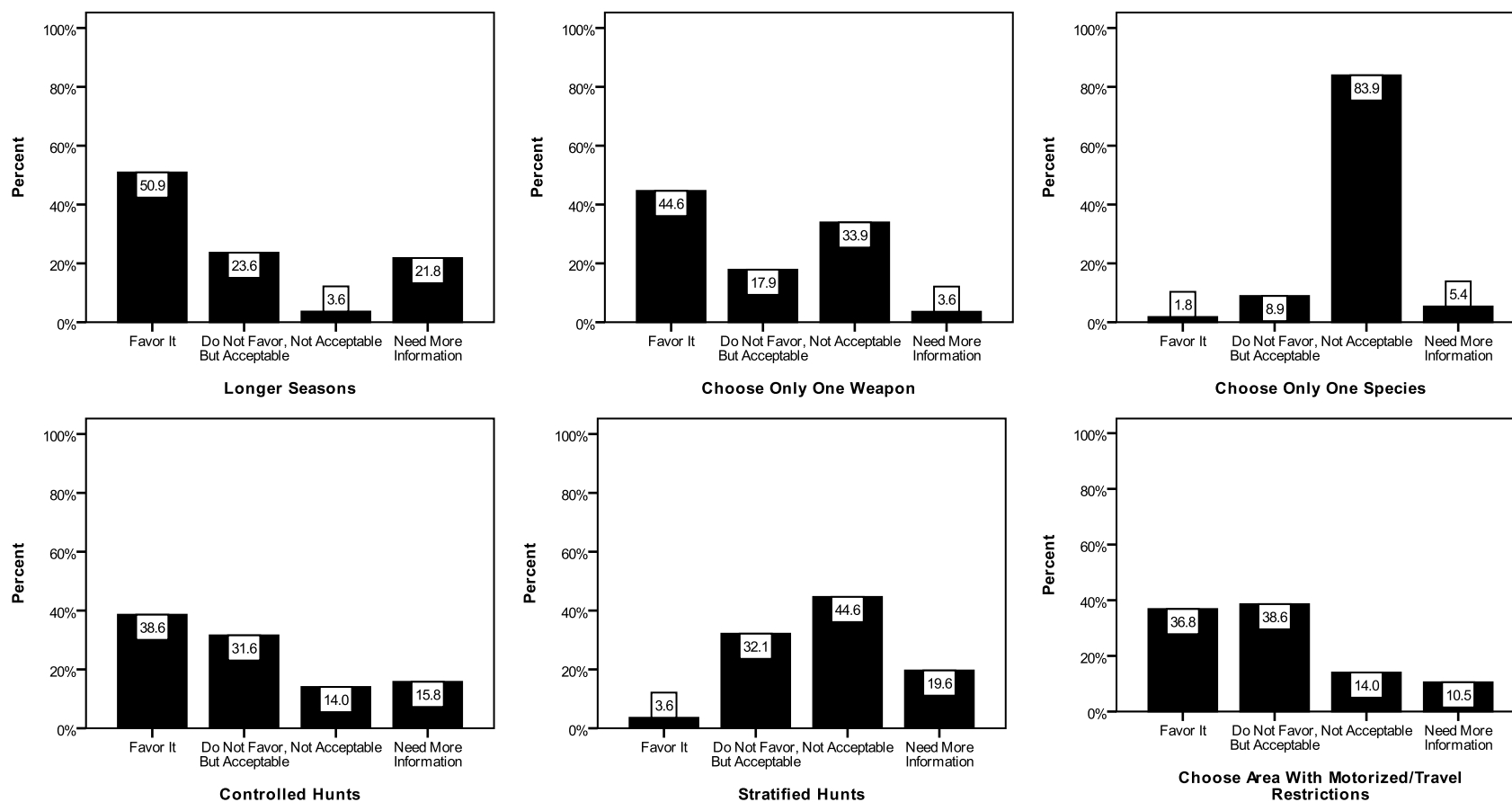


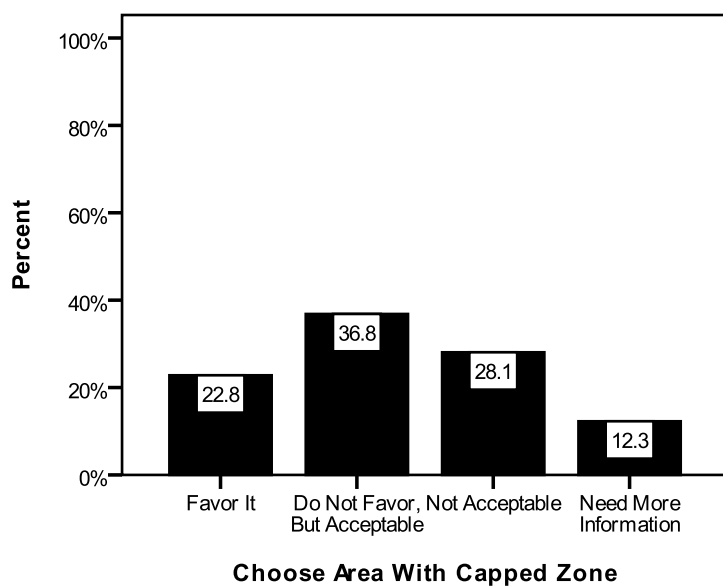


Q32: The response distribution is similar between the state average and the Snake River zone.

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

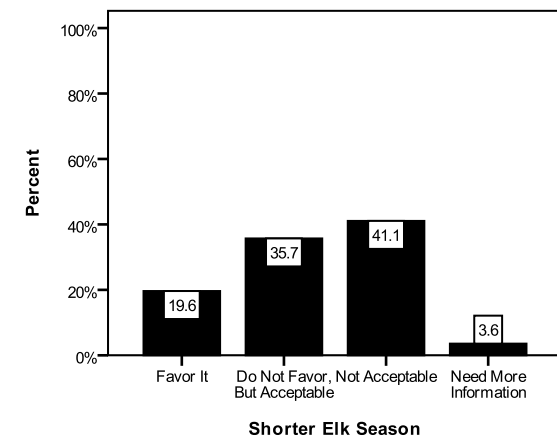
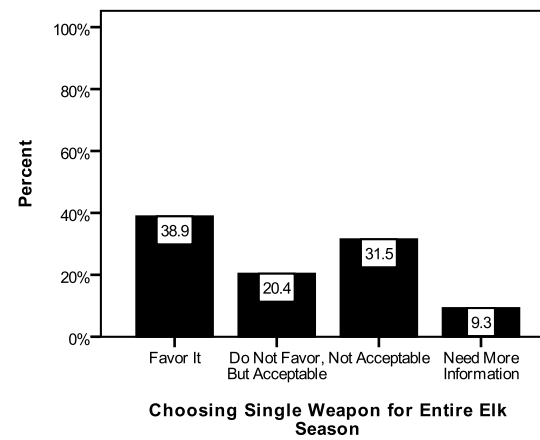
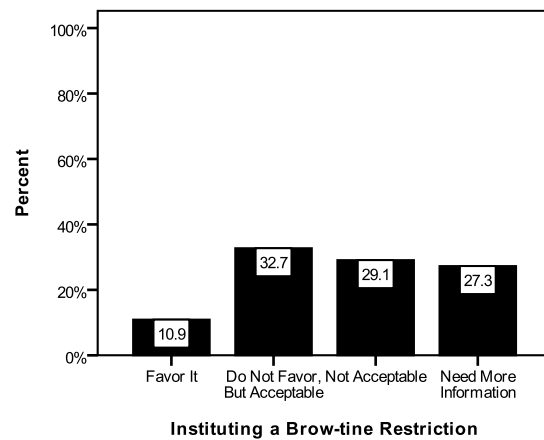
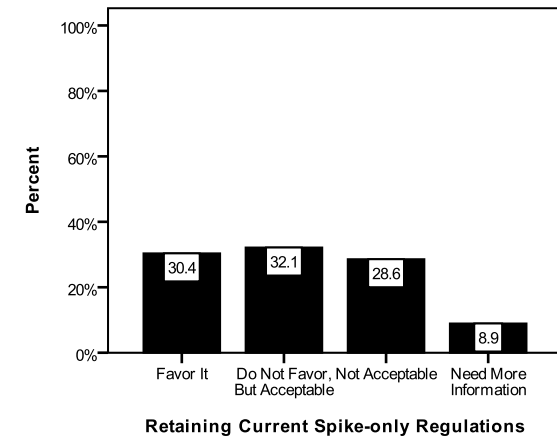
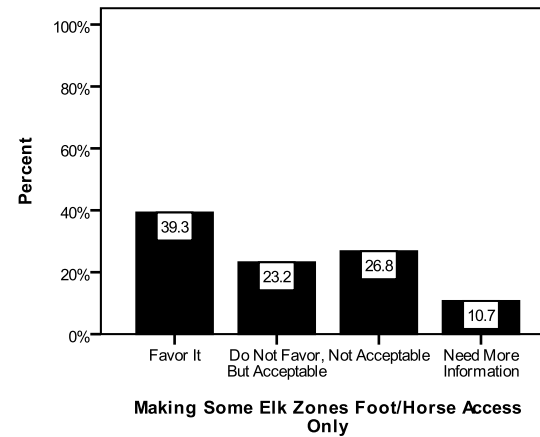
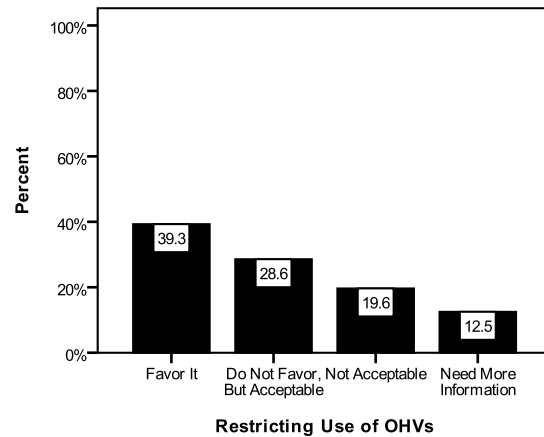
34. How do you feel about each of the following potential ways of improving Elk hunting, if needed?

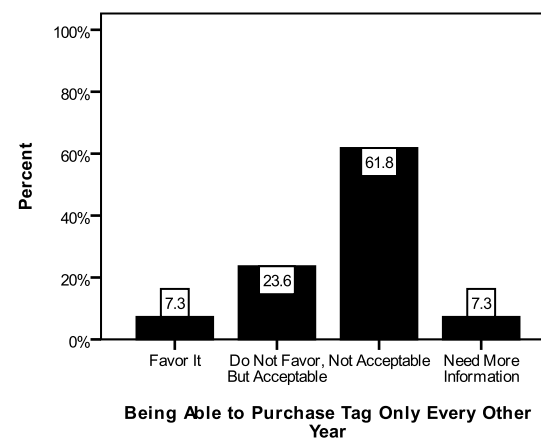
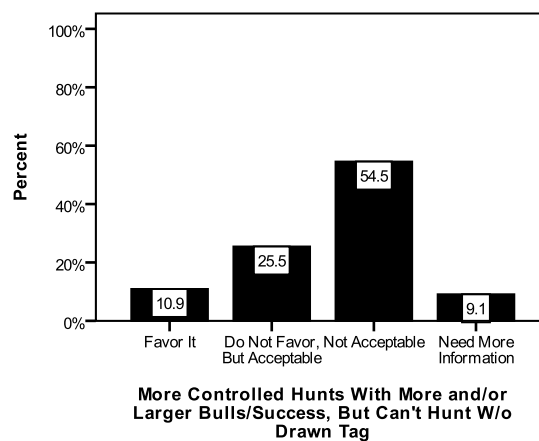
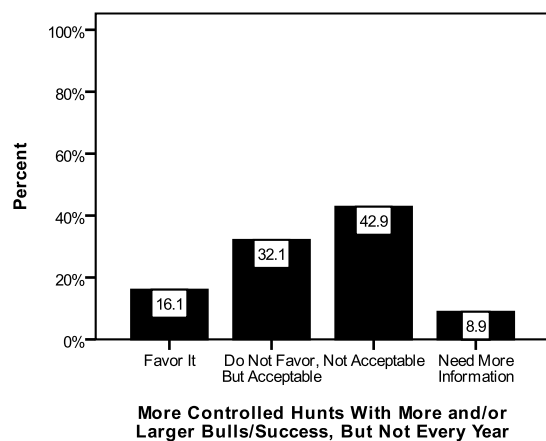




Q34: The response distribution is fairly similar between the state average and the Snake River zone. More hunters in this zone said that choosing only one weapon was unacceptable but also favored longer seasons and controlled hunts.

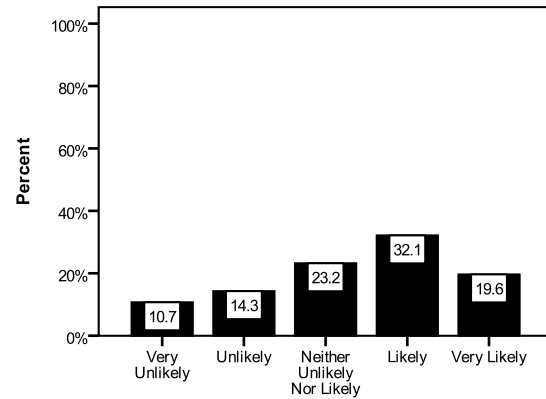
35. We would like to know how you feel about the following potential restrictions to increase the quality and size of Elk in Idaho and improve Elk hunting opportunities. Please indicate your opinion on the following potential restrictions.



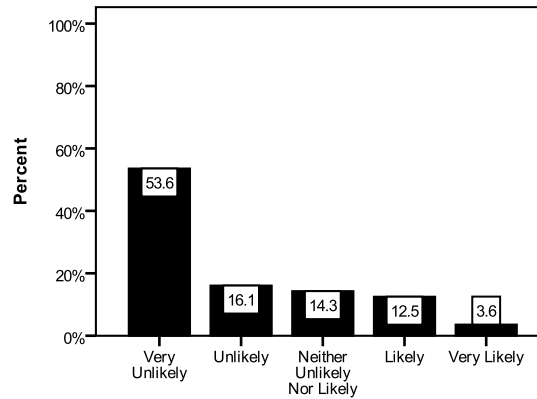


Q35: The response distribution is similar between the state average and the Snake River zone.

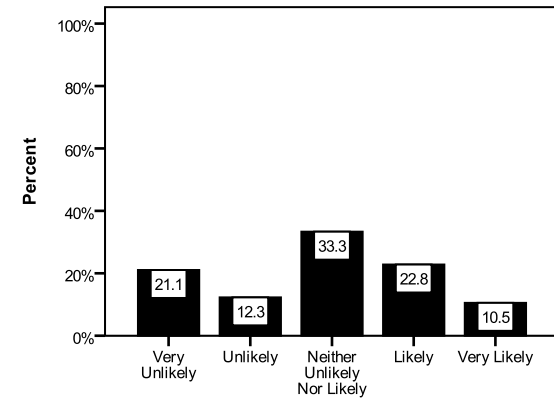
36. IF Idaho Fish and Game introduces restrictions that reduce Elk hunting opportunities to improve Elk populations, how would your hunting behavior change?



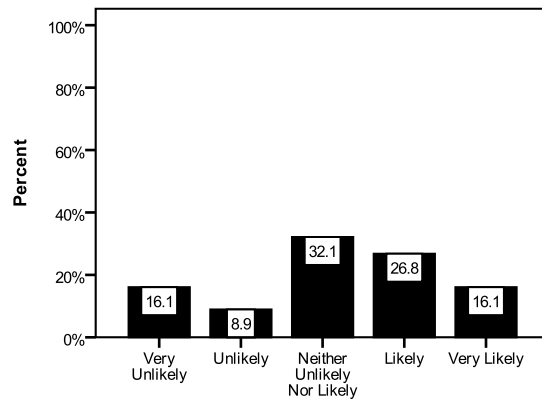
Hunt in Different Zones



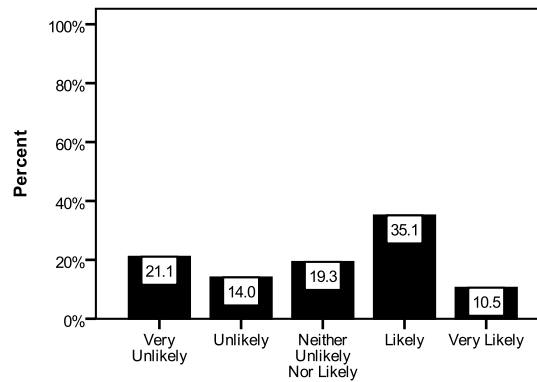
Quit Hunting Elk



Shift to Hunt Other Species



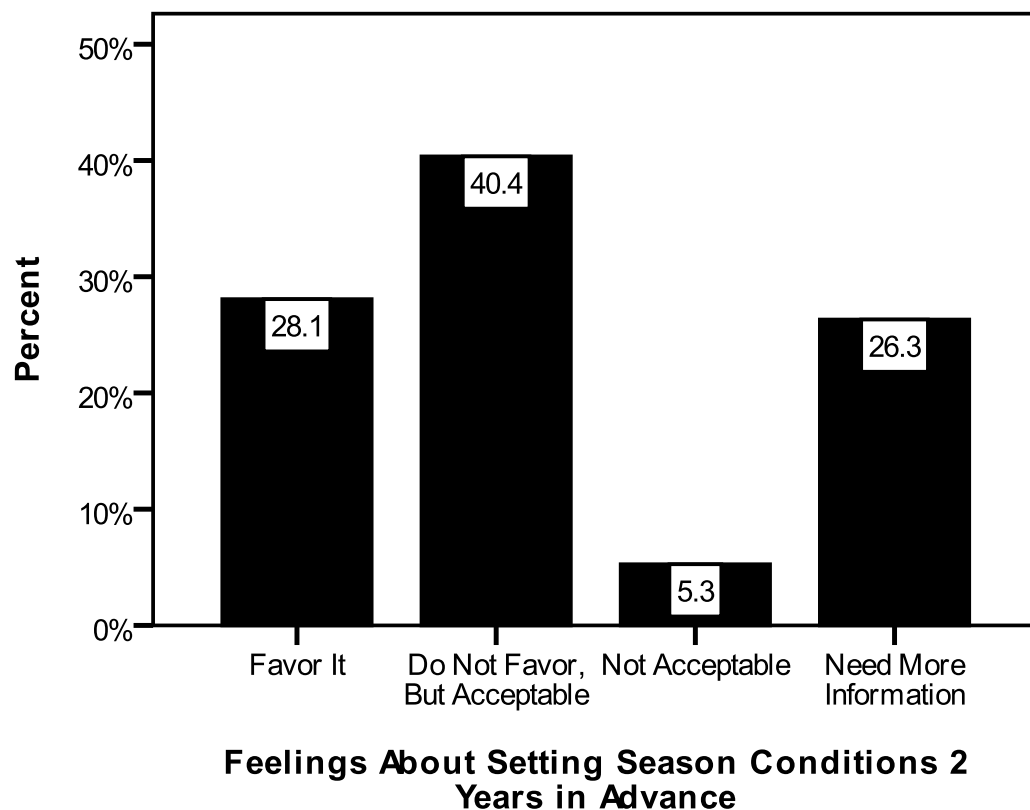
Not Change Hunting Behavior



Change Weapon Type for Increased Elk Hunting Opportunity

Q36: The response distribution is similar between the state average and the Snake River zone.

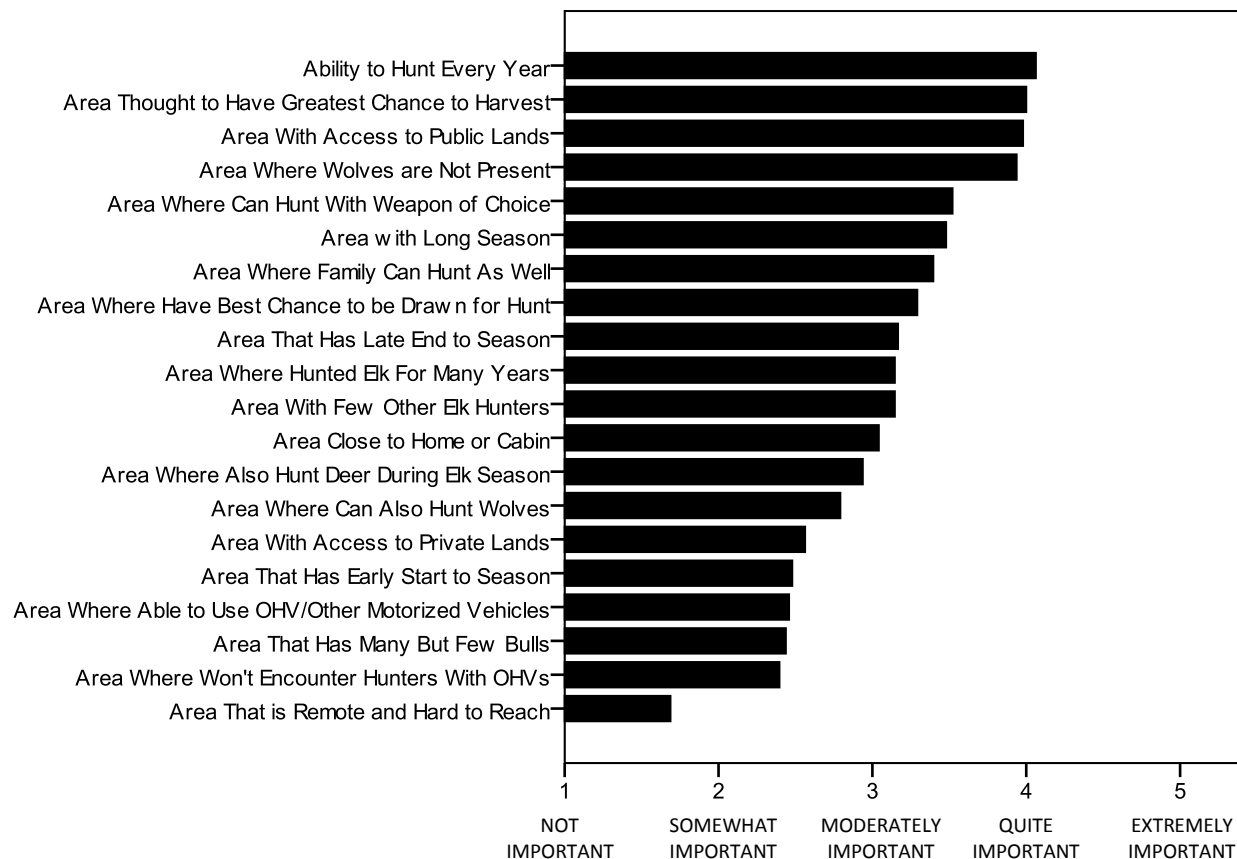
38. How would you feel about a big game regulation that sets the general season conditions for 2 years in advance, just like the current Moose, Mountain Goat, Bighorn Sheep, Upland Game, Turkey and Fishing regulations? *(Please check one response)*



Q38: Unlike the state average, about 15% more hunters from the Snake River zone did not favor this regulation but still found it acceptable.

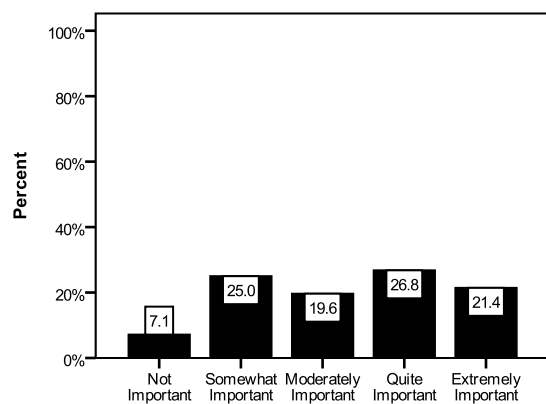
WHEN AND WHERE TO HUNT

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?

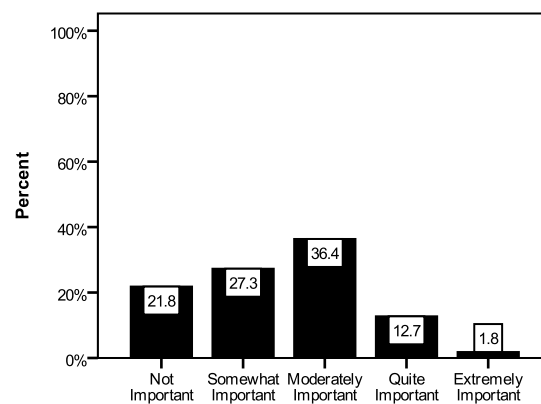


Q29: The top four characteristics are the same for both the state average and the Snake River zone. Hunters in this zone responded that an area where one can hunt with the weapon of choice was quite important and rounded out their top five.

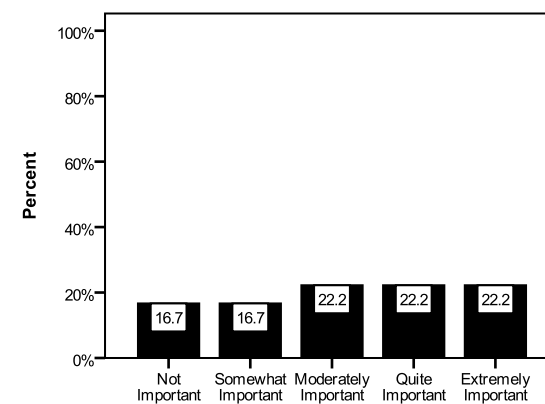
CHARACTERISTICS AFFECTING CHOICE OF WHERE TO HUNT IN IDAHO



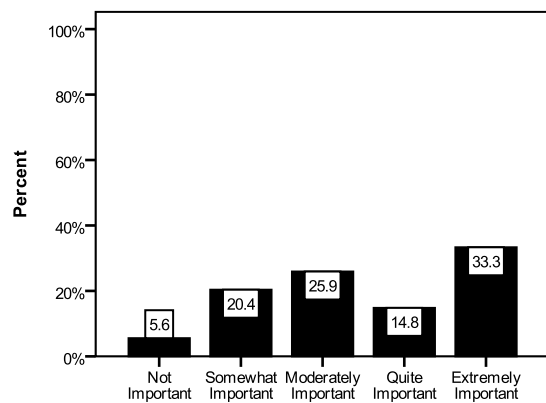
Area With Few Other Elk Hunters



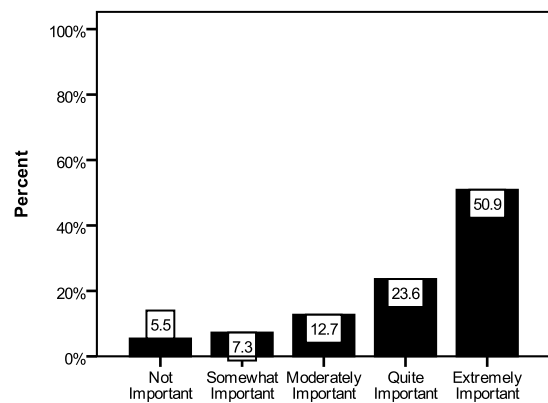
Area That Has Many But Few Bulls



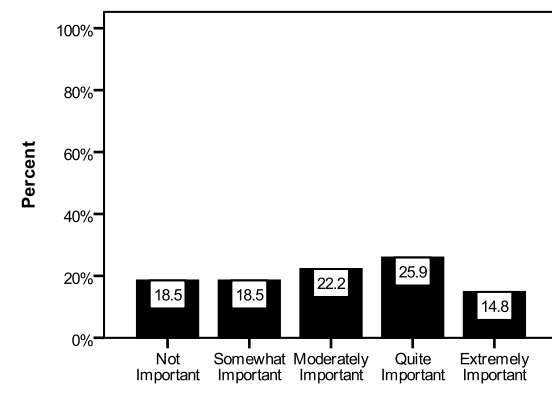
Area Where Hunted Elk For Many Years



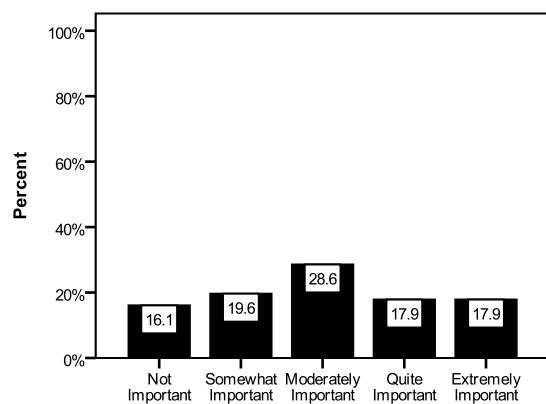
Area Where Family Can Hunt As Well



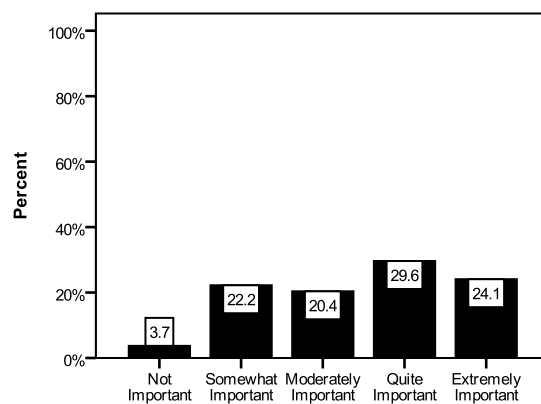
Ability to Hunt Every Year



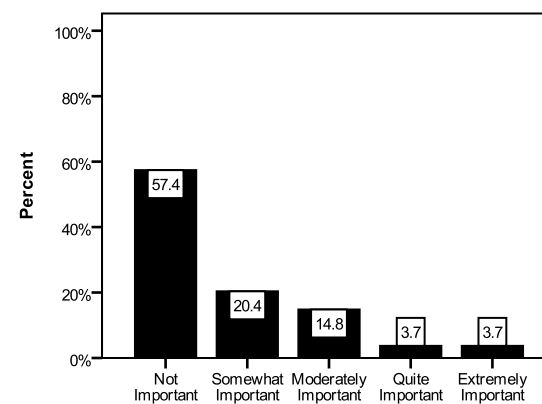
Area Where Also Hunt Deer During Elk Season



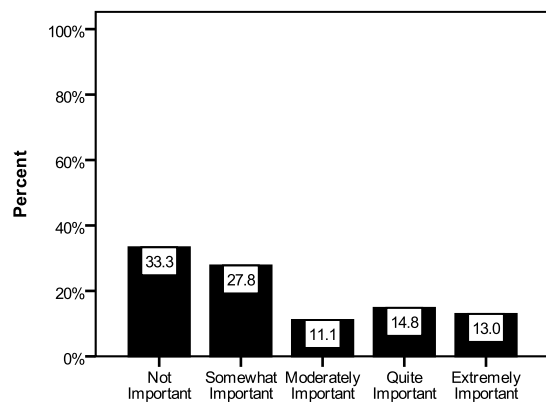
Area Close to Home or Cabin



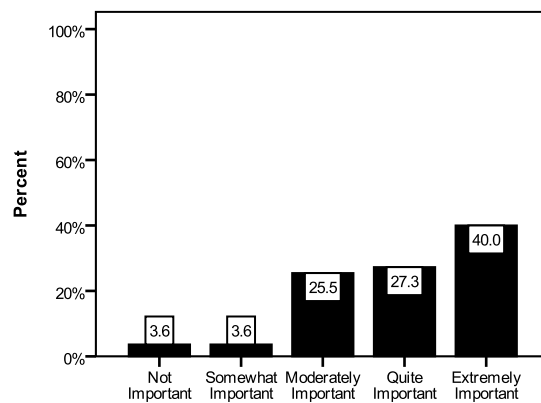
Area with Long Season



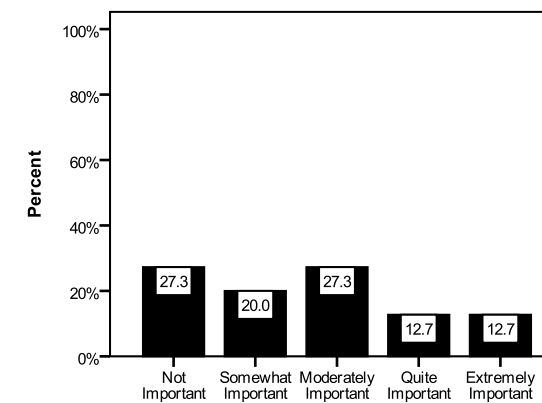
Area That is Remote and Hard to Reach



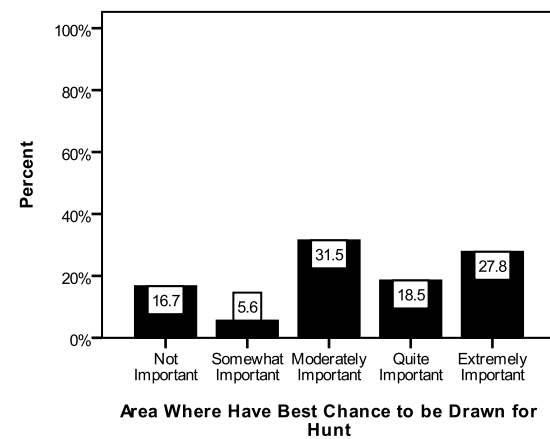
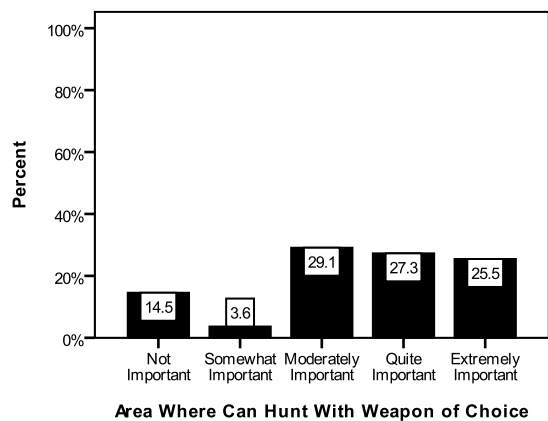
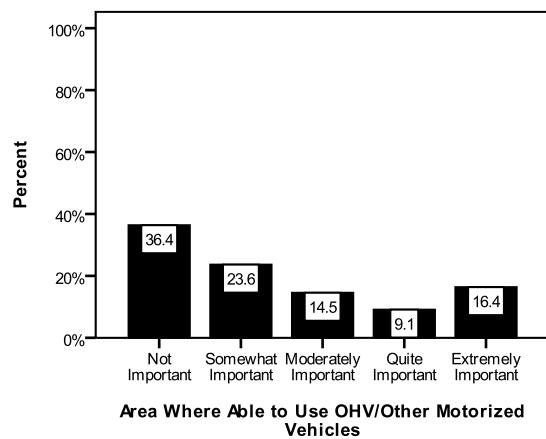
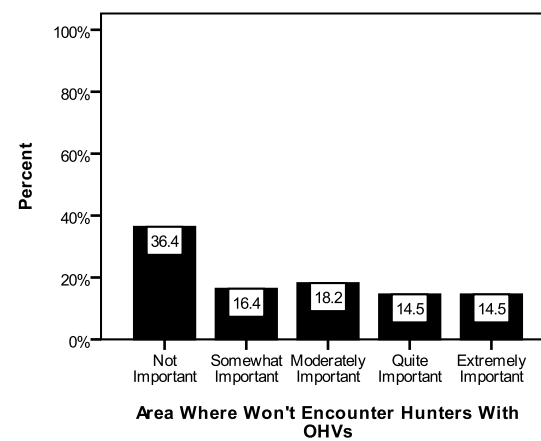
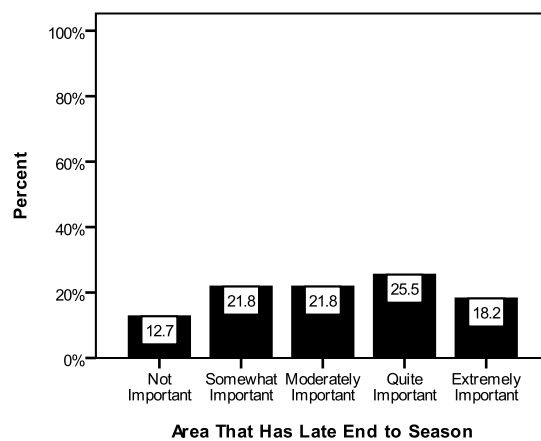
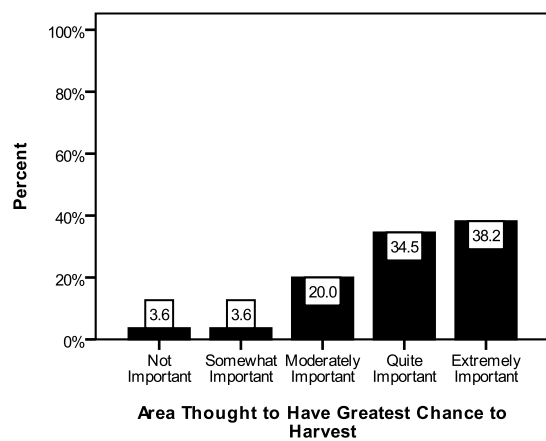
Area That Has Early Start to Season

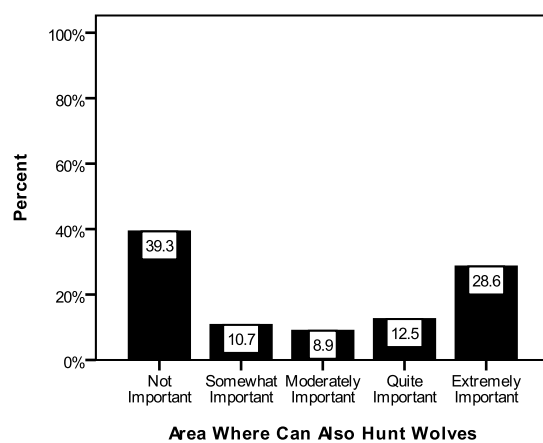
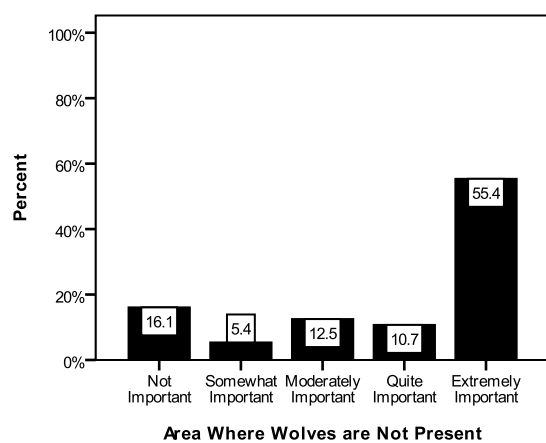


Area With Access to Public Lands

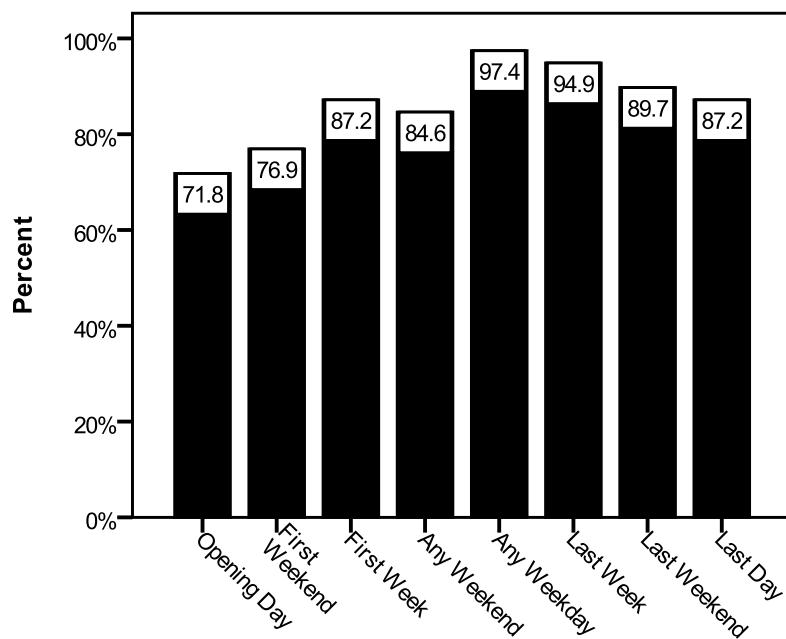


Area With Access to Private Lands

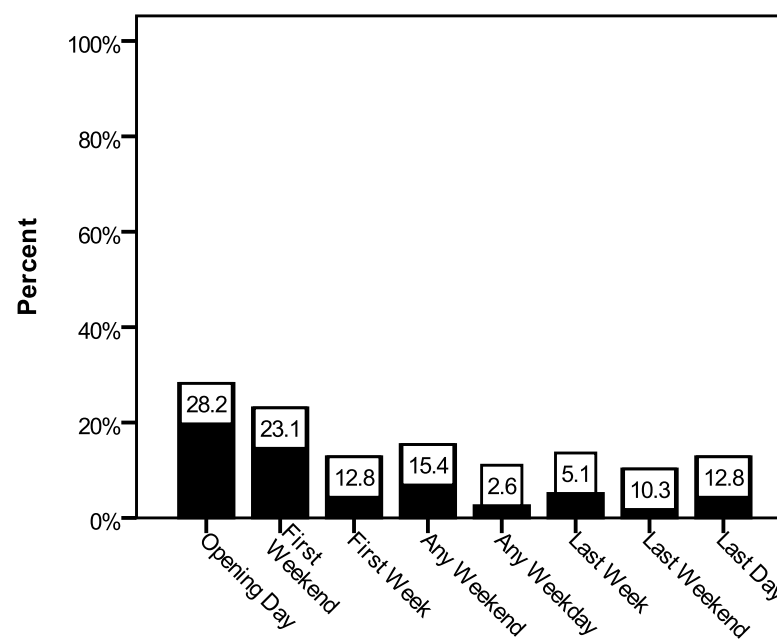




30. Are there any times during the general Elk hunting season in Idaho that you prefer or avoid? (Please check as many as apply)



TIMES PREFERRED DURING GENERAL ELK SEASON

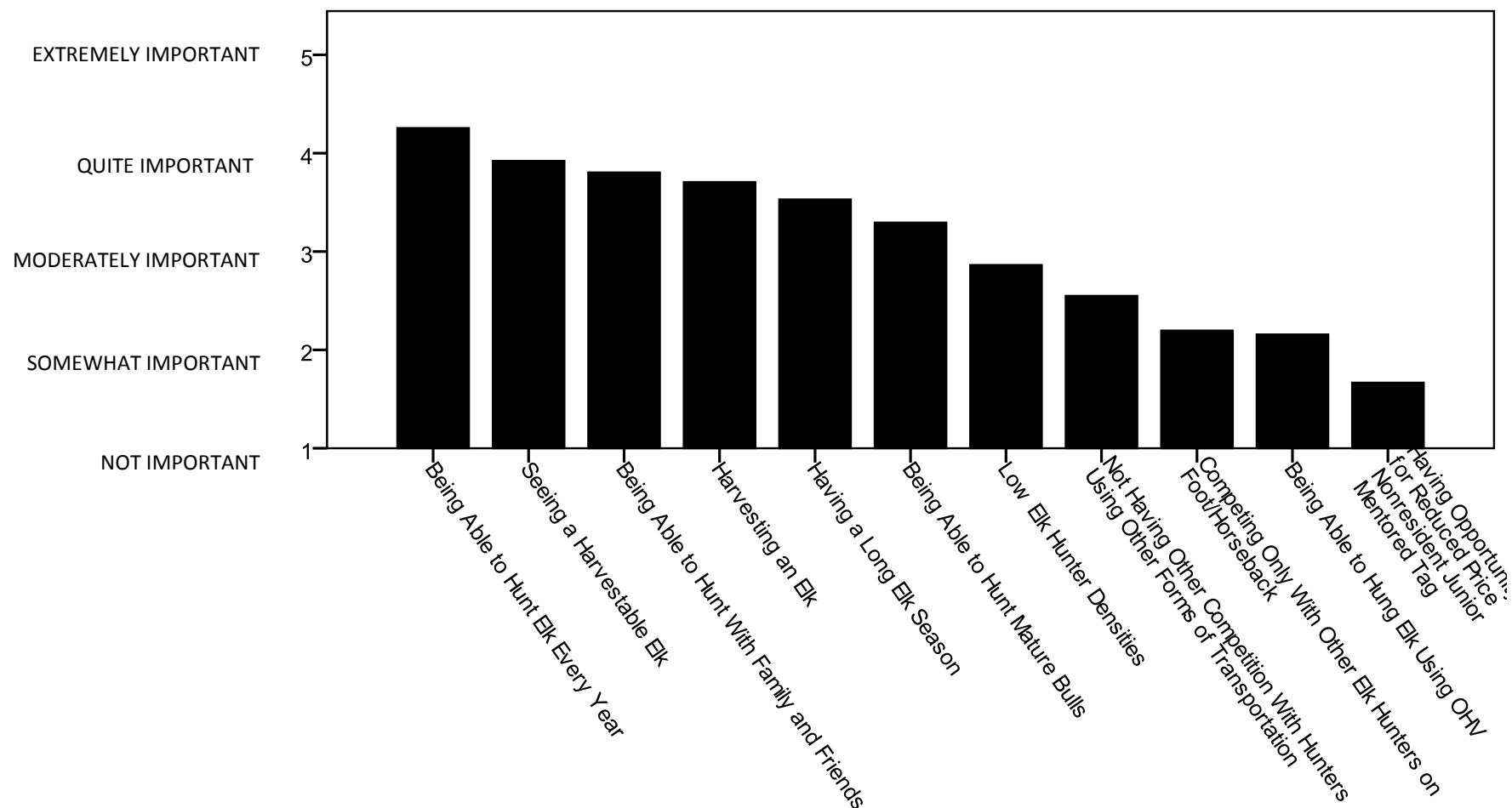


TIMES AVOIDED DURING GENERAL ELK SEASON

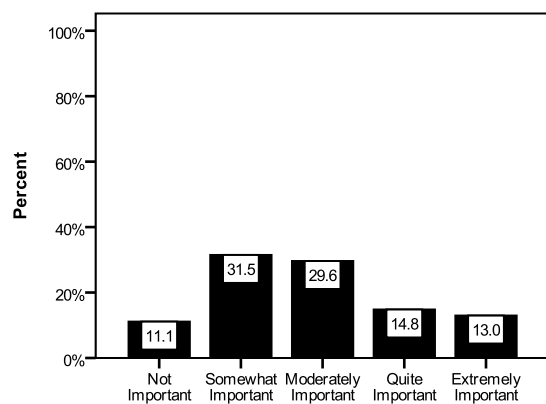
Q30: The response distribution is similar between the state average and the Snake River zone. Weekdays are preferred by both groups.

ATTRIBUTES OF A QUALITY ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE

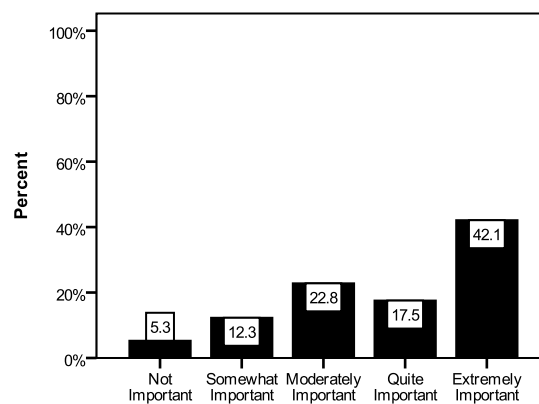
31. How important to you are each of these attributes for a quality Idaho Elk hunting experience?



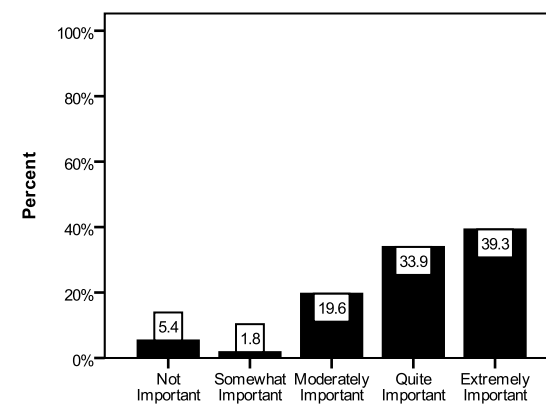
IMPORTANCE OF ATTRIBUTES FOR A QUALITY ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE IN IDAHO



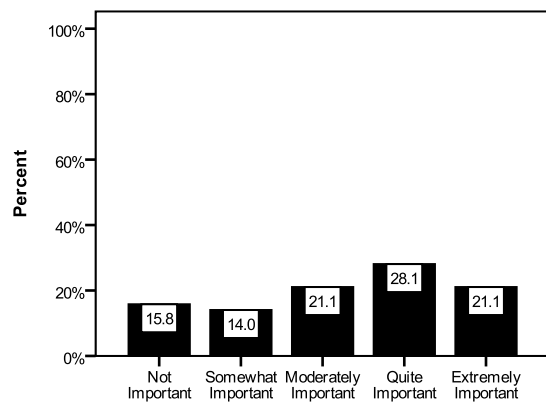
Low Elk Hunter Densities



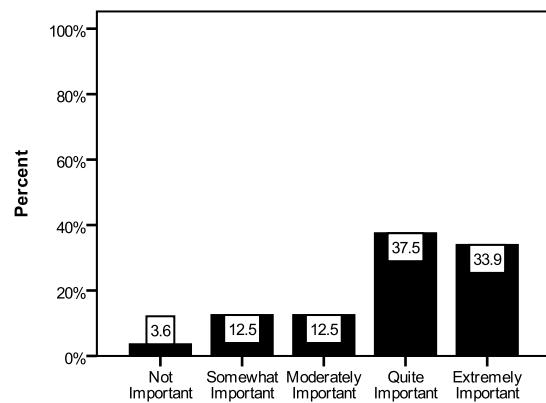
Harvesting an Elk



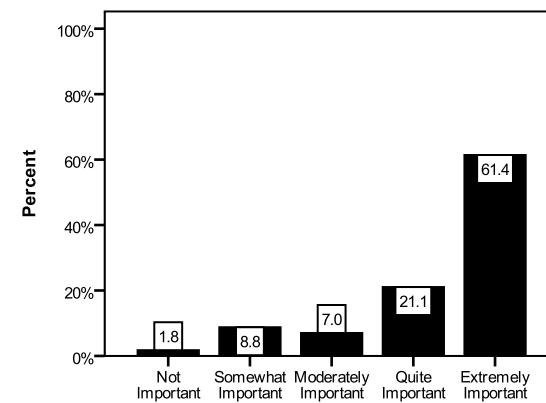
Seeing a Harvestable Elk



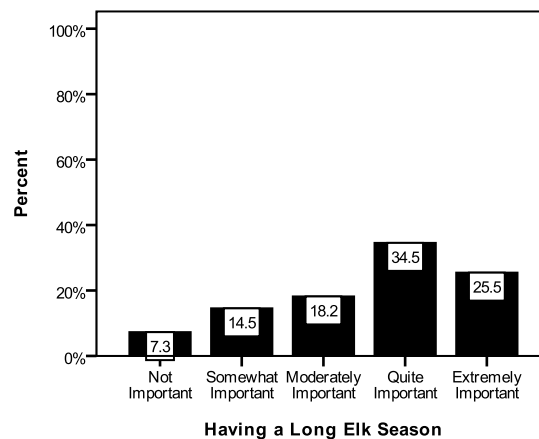
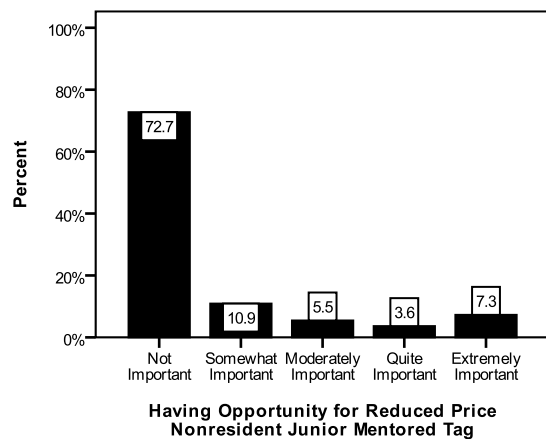
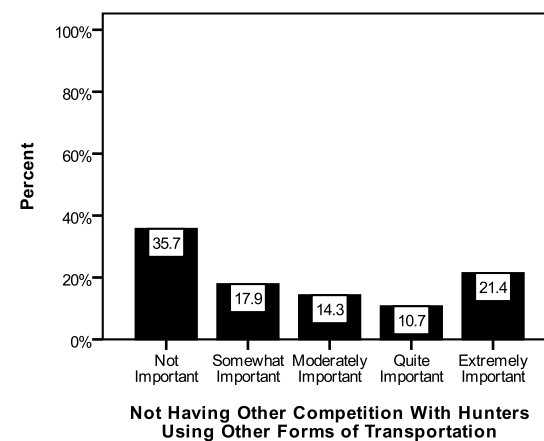
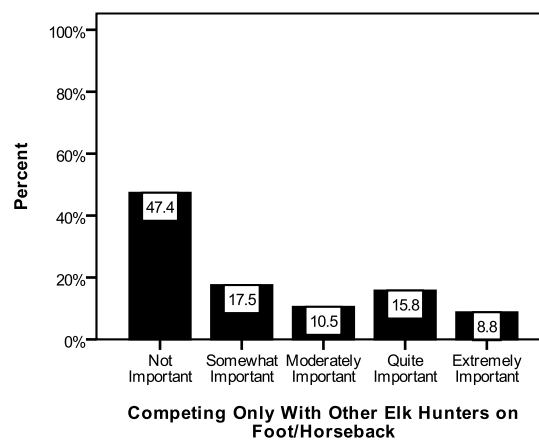
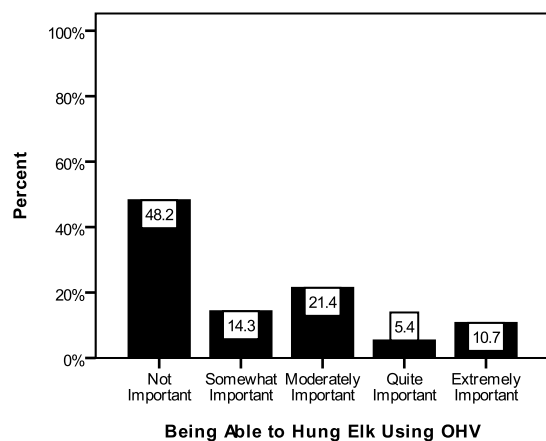
Being Able to Hunt Mature Bulls



Being Able to Hunt With Family and Friends



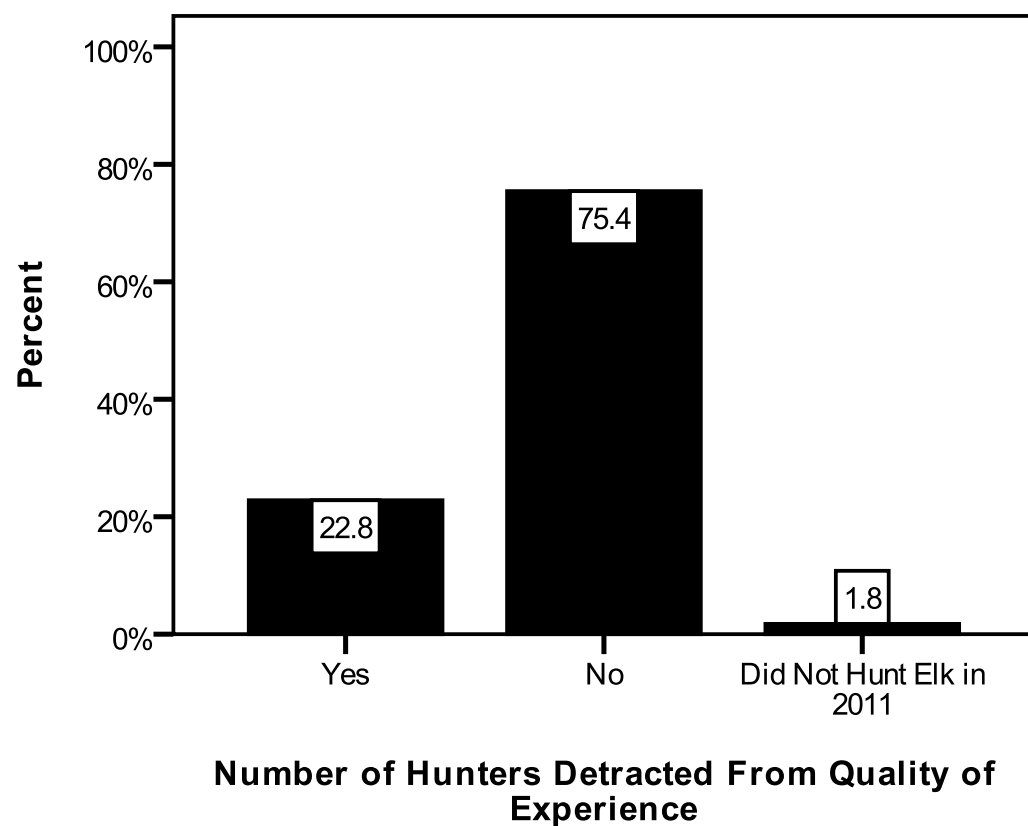
Being Able to Hunt Elk Every Year



Q31: The top four attributes are the same for the Snake River zone and the state average. Hunters in this zone responded that having a long Elk season made for a quality Elk hunting experience to round out the top five.

HUNTING SATISFACTION

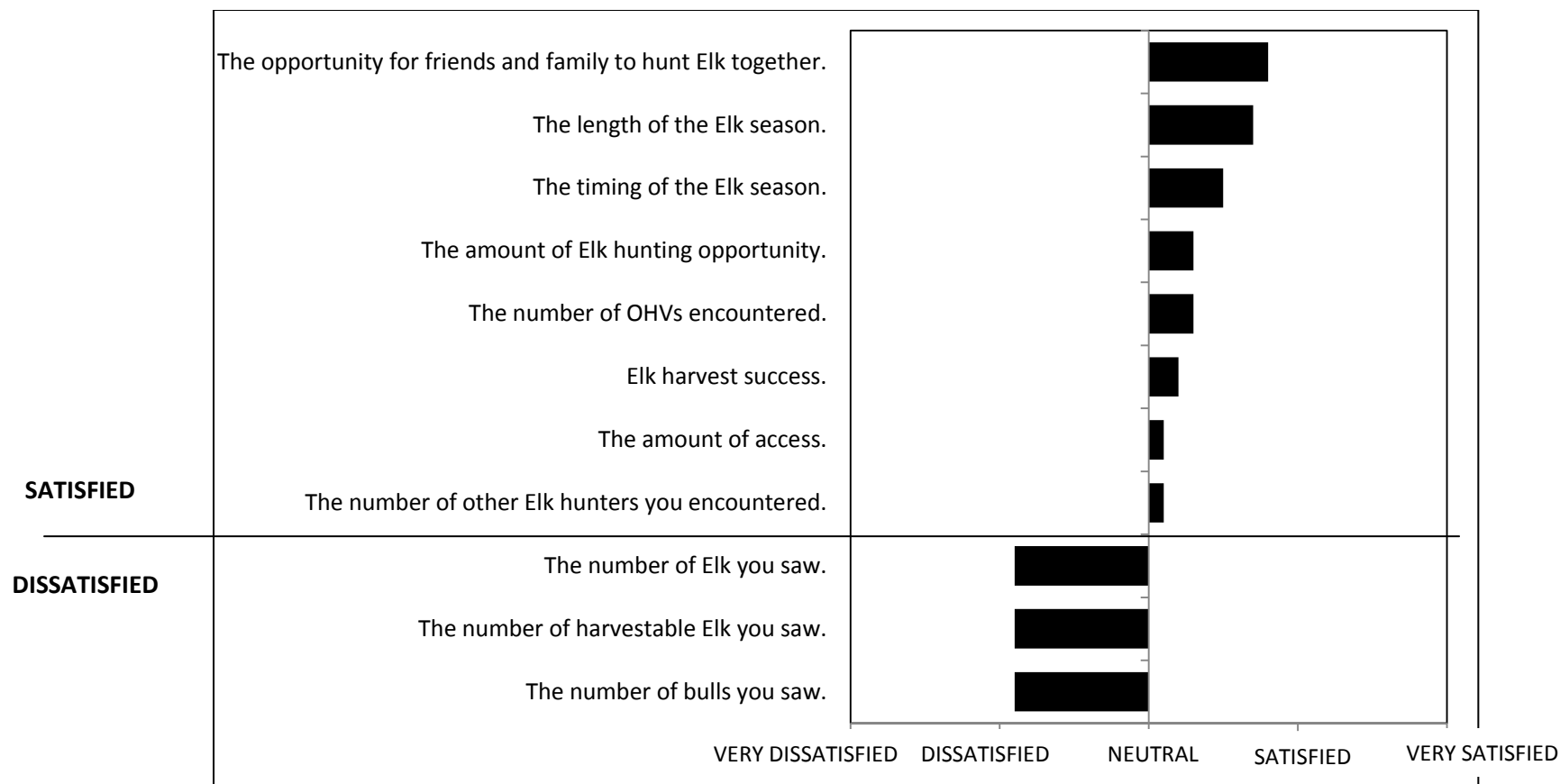
33. Were there times during your 2011 Elk season when the numbers of other hunters seriously detracted from the quality of your hunting experience? *(Please check one response)*



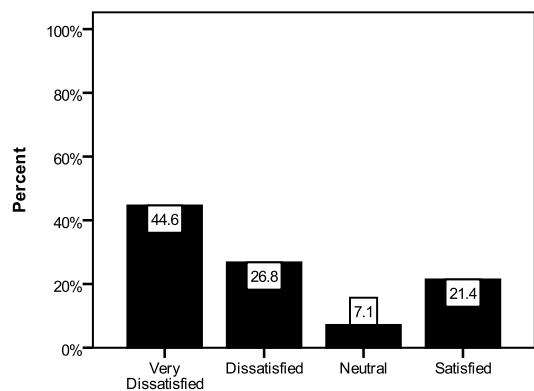
Q33: Similar to the state average, three-quarters of Snake River hunters said that the number of other hunters did not detract from the quality of Elk hunting experience.

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

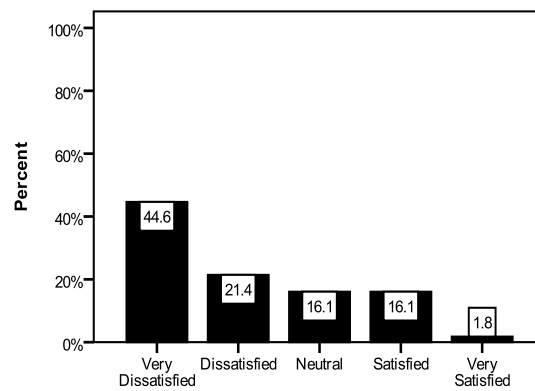
37. How satisfied were you with each of the following aspects of your 2011 Elk hunting experience?



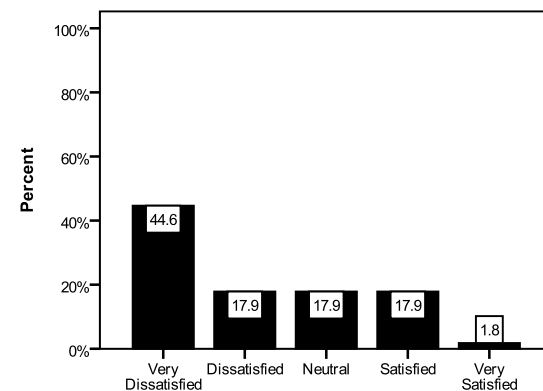
SATISFACTION OF ASPECTS OF 2011 ELK HUNTING EXPERIENCE



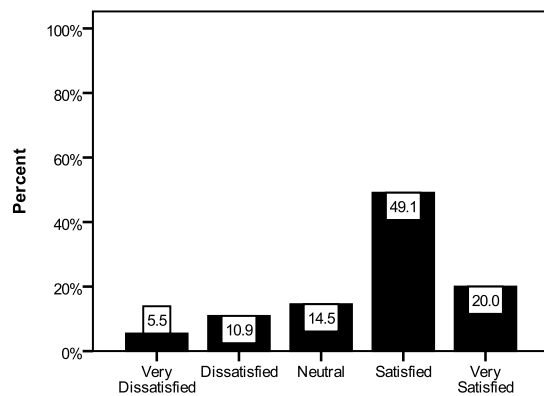
Number of Elk Seen



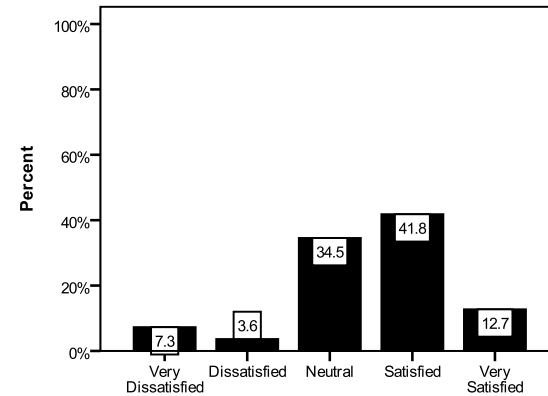
Number of Harvestable Elk Seen



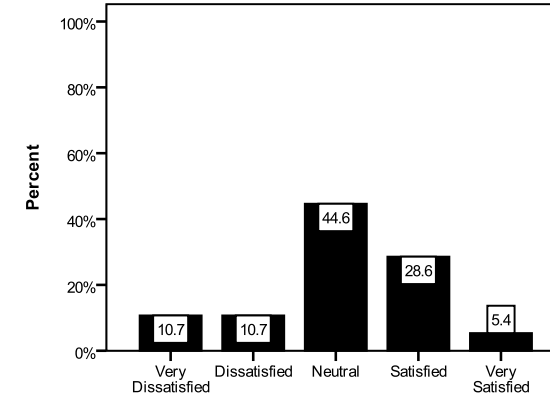
Number of Bulls Seen



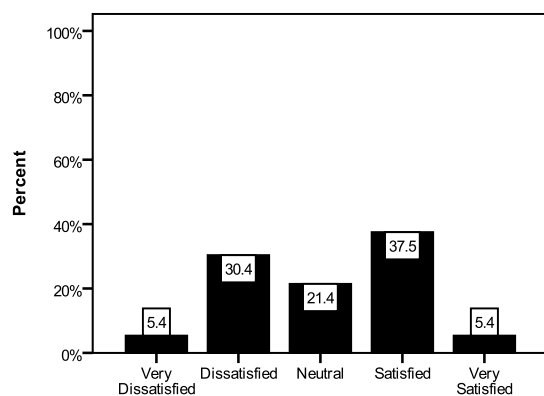
Length of Elk Season



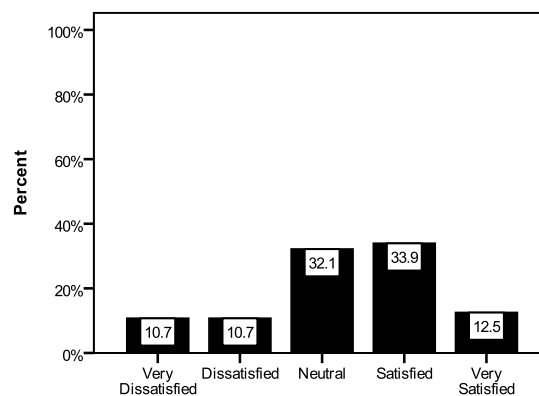
Timing of Elk Season



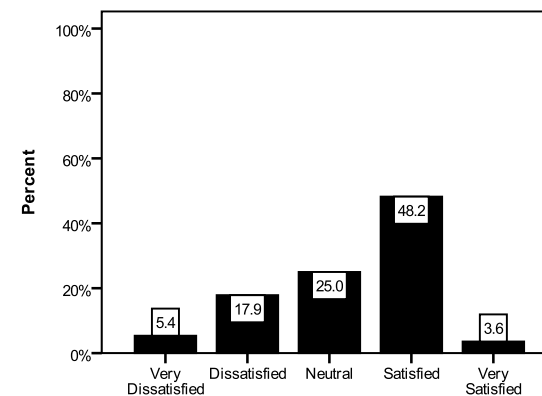
Number of Elk Hunters Encountered



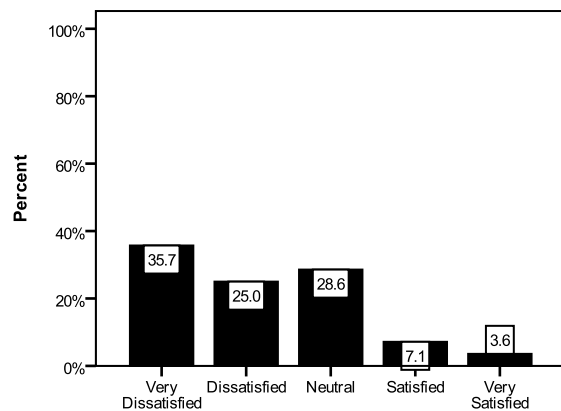
Amount of Access



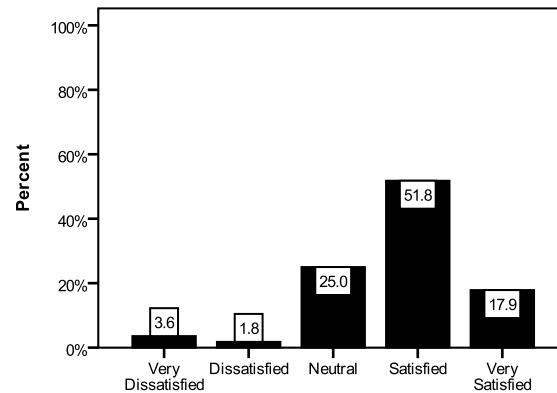
Number of OHVs Encountered



Amount of Elk Hunting Opportunity



Elk Harvest Success



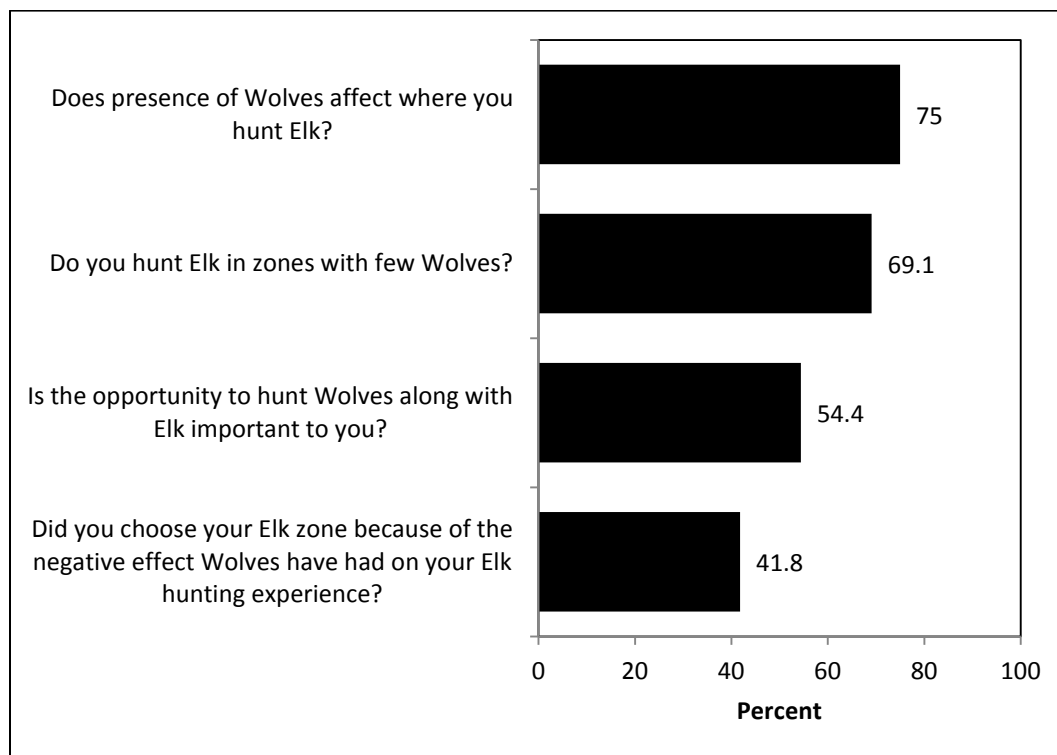
Opportunity for Family and Friends to Hunt Together

Q37: Similar to other hunters, Snake River hunters were most dissatisfied with the number of Elk they saw.

PERCEPTIONS OF PREDATORS

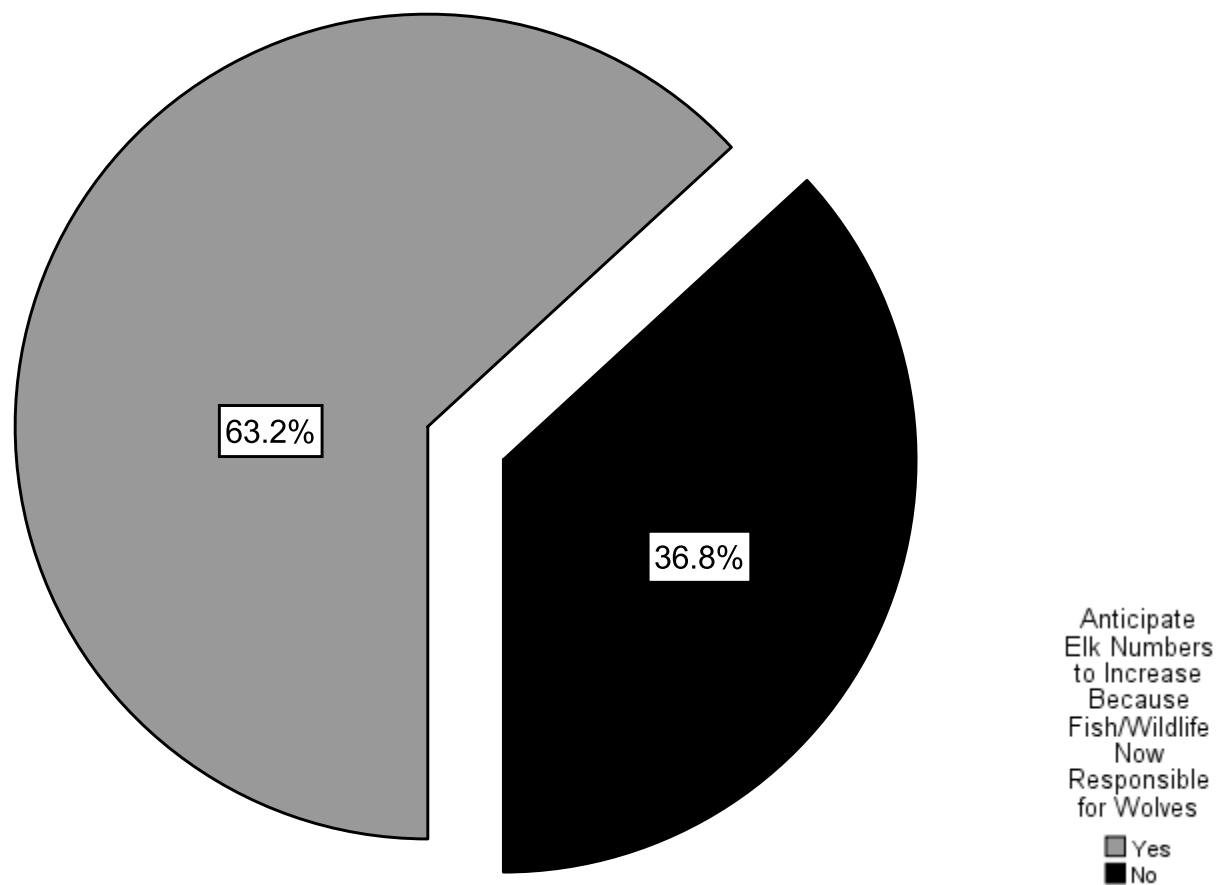
Two questions about predators in Idaho.

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



Q39: The response distribution is similar between the state average and the Snake River zone. However, about 30% more hunters in this zone hunt Elk in zones with few Wolves.

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



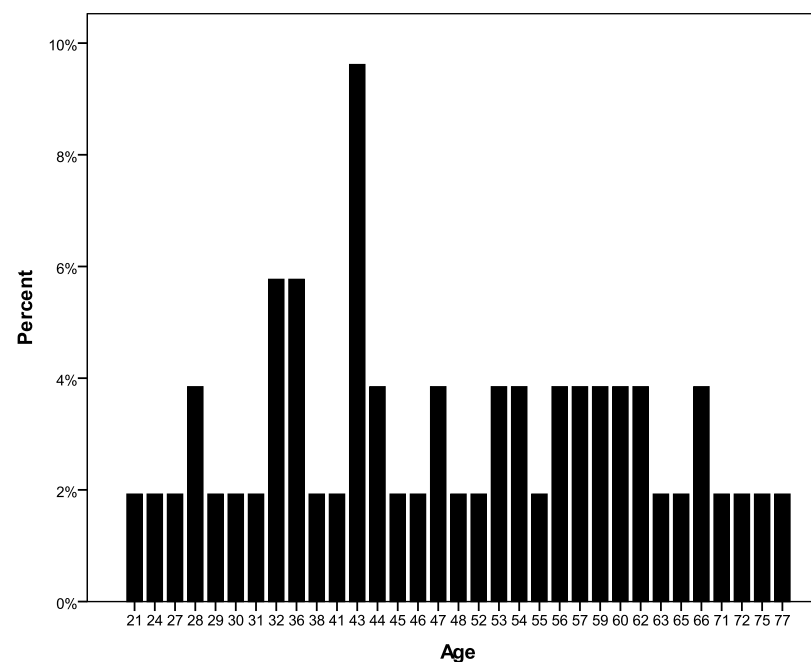
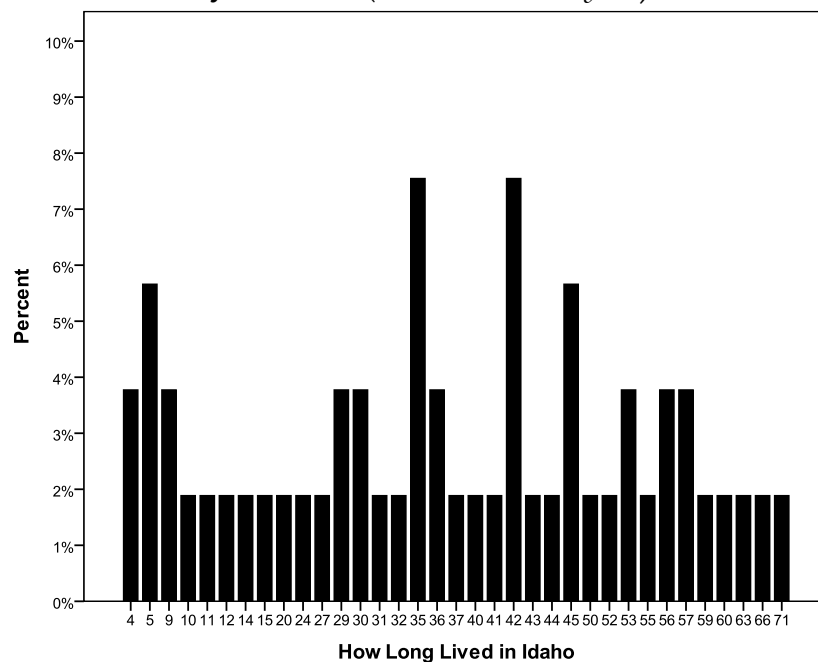
Q40: Like other hunters in the state, Snake River hunters anticipate increasing Elk numbers with IDFG management of Wolves.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Finally, some questions about you!

42. How long have you lived in Idaho? *(Please enter the number of years)*

43. When were you born? *(Please enter the year)*



The response distribution is similar between the state average and the Snake River zone for both Q42 and Q43.