

Washington Hunters' Attitudes Toward Wildlife and Hunting Management



Conducted for the
Washington Department of
Fish and Wildlife

2022



Washington Department of
Fish and Wildlife



**RESPONSIVE
MANAGEMENT**

WASHINGTON HUNTERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD WILDLIFE AND HUNTING MANAGEMENT

2022

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (the Department) to determine hunters' participation in and satisfaction with hunting various species, their attitudes toward wildlife management and Department regulations, and their thoughts on the use of lead ammunition, among other topics. Similar hunter surveys were conducted in 2007 and 2014; therefore, the study also includes a trend comparison of the survey results. To accomplish these objectives, the study entailed a scientific, multi-modal survey of licensed Washington hunters, resident and nonresident, age 16 and older.

The survey questionnaire was developed cooperatively by Responsive Management and the Department, based primarily on the earlier surveys. The sample of licensed hunters was provided by the Department, and it included those who had a license to hunt in Washington during the 2021-2022 hunting seasons. The sample was stratified by the following species or species groups to ensure scientifically valid results within each: deer, elk, bear, cougar, and small game.

The survey used a multi-modal approach that included multiple forms of contact (email and telephone) and two survey modes (online and telephone surveys). The survey was computer coded for both online surveying and telephone surveying. The survey was administered in June and July 2022, and Responsive Management obtained 1,154 completed surveys.

The analysis of data was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics as well as proprietary software developed by Responsive Management. The survey results were weighted by license type to match the proper proportions within the hunter license database. At a 95% confidence interval the sampling error is estimated to be plus or minus 2.88 percentage points.

GENERAL HUNTING PARTICIPATION

The survey first asked hunters what species they hunted in Washington during the 2021-2022 seasons. Most hunters (75%) hunted deer, while 44% hunted elk. Those species were distantly followed by waterfowl (29%), small game (25%), bear (23%), migratory birds (22%), and cougar (13%).

Looking at specific bird species, 21% of Washington hunters hunted grouse, 19% hunted waterfowl, 15% hunted pheasant, 11% hunted turkey, and 11% hunted quail. A majority of Washington hunters (59%) did not hunt any birds in 2021-2022.

Hunters in the survey hunted a mean of 25.9 years in Washington and a median of 25 years.

Nearly two thirds of Washington hunters (64%) have hunted outside of the state.

HUNTING LANDS

Most hunters (90%) hunted on public land in Washington in the past 3 years; 38% hunted public land exclusively. Meanwhile, 61% hunted on private land, with 10% who did so exclusively.

Among public land hunters, 66% hunted on U.S. Forest Service lands and 44% hunted on Bureau of Land Management lands (on the federal side), while 40% hunted on Department of Natural Resources lands and 39% hunted on Department of Fish and Wildlife managed lands (on the state side).

Those who hunted on private land in the past 3 years most frequently hunted on a friend or family member's land (56% did so), private timberlands (32%), and their own property (30%). None of those responses involved leasing the property.

Nearly a third of private land hunters (31%) hunted on lands enrolled in a Department private lands access program. Among those who hunted on land enrolled in a Department access program, the most commonly used program by far was "Feel Free to Hunt" (76% of these hunters used that program). About two thirds of hunters who used an access program (65%) were satisfied with the program, compared to 21% who were dissatisfied.

The vast majority of hunters (81%) think access to private land is important to their hunting in Washington, while only 7% think it is unimportant.

A slight majority of hunters (53%) would support paying an annual fee to participate in recreation on lands enrolled in private lands access programs. In contrast, 27% would oppose paying a fee. Among those who would support paying an annual fee for private lands access, the mean amount they think is acceptable is \$88.0 and the median is \$50.

The vast majority of hunters (83%) think it is important to provide public access to private timber property for wildlife management; 60% think it is *very* important. Only 4% think it is unimportant.

WILDLIFE AND HUNTING MANAGEMENT

A slight majority of hunters (56%) support road closures on public and private timberlands to reduce hunter crowding and disturbance of wildlife. However, a notable percentage (30%) oppose the road closures. A solid majority of hunters (71%) support using road closures to maintain healthy game populations during critical periods of the year; 18% oppose.

Hunters were informed that bobcat could be legally hunted at night with the use of spotlights. There was more support for (46%) than opposition to (22%) the practice.

Two thirds of hunters (67%) support the legal hunting of coyote at night with the use of spotlights; 13% oppose.

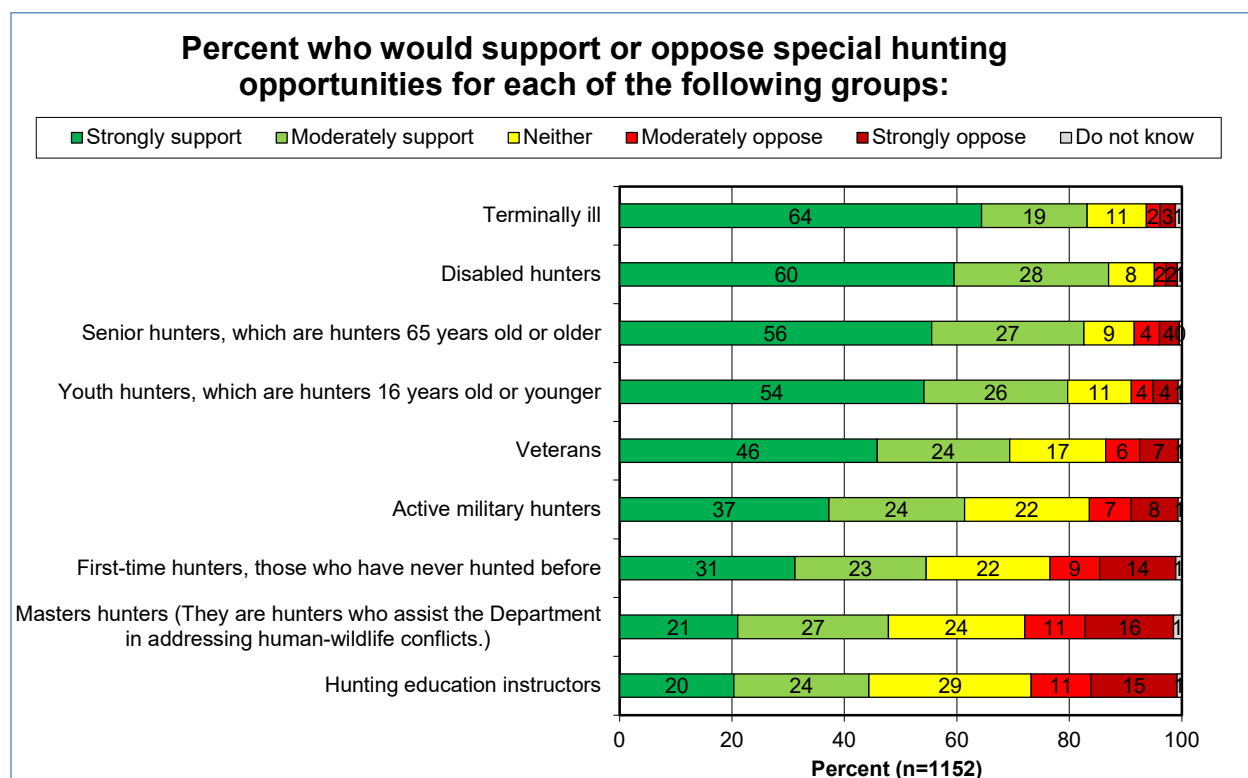
Almost all hunters (96%) think it is important for the Department to provide information about what it is doing to manage hunted species for overall wildlife management. A majority of

hunters (53%) say email is the best way to provide them with information about wildlife management.

Two thirds of hunters (68%) said that controlling ATVs and snowmobiles during hunting is important for wildlife management.

SPECIAL HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES

Hunters were presented with a list of special interest groups and were asked if they support or oppose special hunting opportunities for each. Majorities of Washington hunters had *strong* support for special hunting opportunities for the terminally ill, disabled hunters, seniors (65 or older), and youth (16 or younger).



MENTORING

Most hunters (85%) have mentored another person to help them get started hunting. Nearly half (45%) have mentored both family and non-family members. In addition, half of those who have ever mentored are currently doing so.

Two fifths of those who have not mentored another hunter (40%) are at least somewhat interested in doing so in the future.

Most of those who mentored others to start hunting did so while hunting deer (83%). Elk (44%) and grouse (34%) were also hunted by mentors and their protégés.

DEER HUNTING

Deer hunters most commonly used a modern rifle during the 2021 deer season (78% used a rifle). They also often used archery other than crossbow (17%) and muzzleloader rifles (12%).

There were slightly more deer hunters who were satisfied (47%) than dissatisfied (40%) with their deer hunting in Washington during the 2021 season. Those who were not satisfied most often cited lack of game and access issues as the reasons.

Over a quarter of deer hunters (28%) harvested a deer during the 2021 season.

Deer hunters were asked to rate the importance of six factors in having a quality deer hunting experience. All of the listed items received high ratings; those with over two thirds rated as *very* important were the timing of the hunting season, time with friends or family, and the length of the hunting season.

In another series, deer hunters were asked to rate the importance of five factors regarding the harvest management of deer. The ratings of *very* important were highest for the sustainable harvest of deer (75%), nutritious forage and avoidance of habitat degradation (70%), and deer population trends (62%).

Deer hunters were asked to name the most important issues facing deer in Washington, in an open-ended question. The top responses were predators (26% of hunters stated this), habitat loss (24%), and disease or the health of the herd (14%).

The Department's management of deer was not rated very well by Washington deer hunters. Under a third rated the management in the top half of the scale (6% excellent; 25% good), whereas nearly two thirds rated it at the bottom half of the scale (35% fair; 28% poor). Lower ratings were often the result of hunters' disagreement with management decisions.

Deer hunters were presented with three options for mule deer and were asked which would reduce hunter densities and potentially increase hunter success. The top result was split seasons, in which hunters could choose an early or late season license (30% of deer hunters chose this), followed by a special permit only season (14%) and species-specific deer licenses (10%). However, a third of deer hunters (32%) chose none of those options.

ELK HUNTING

A majority of elk hunters (56%) used a modern rifle for their elk hunting during the 2021-2022 season. They also commonly used archery other than crossbow (27%) and muzzleloader rifles (18%).

A majority of elk hunters (56%) primarily hunted elk with an eastside elk tag, while 39% primarily hunted with a westside tag; 4% used both about equally.

Satisfaction with elk hunting was low in 2021-2022: a third of elk hunters (33%) were satisfied, while a majority (52%) were dissatisfied. Lack of game was the top reason among those who were not satisfied, along with restrictive regulations and access issues.

Overall, 10% of elk hunters harvested an elk in 2021-2022.

Elk hunters were asked to rate the importance of six factors in having a quality elk hunting experience. As with deer hunters, all of the listed items received high ratings. Factors with at least two thirds of elk hunters rating them as *very* important were the timing of the season, the length of the season, and time with friends or family.

Also, elk hunters were asked to rate the importance of five factors regarding the harvest management of elk. The ratings of *very* important were highest for the sustainable harvest of elk (74%), nutritious forage and avoidance of habitat degradation (70%), and elk population trends (68%).

In an open-ended question, elk hunters said the most important factors facing elk in Washington were predators (30% stated this), disease or the health of the herd (22%), habitat loss (18%), and issues with elk management (12%).

Elk hunters gave low ratings to the Department's management of elk: 24% rated it in the top half of the scale (4% excellent; 20% good), whereas 70% rated it in the bottom half of the scale (33% fair; 37% poor). In follow-up, elk hunters' reasons for lower ratings include issues with elk management, lack of game, predator issues, and restrictive regulations.

A slight majority of elk hunters (52%) think the length of elk season for the weapon they use is too short, while 44% think it is about right. Only 1% think it is too long.

Given two options for elk hunting that would reduce hunter densities and potentially increase harvest success, 30% selected split seasons, where hunters could choose early or late season licenses, and 15% selected special permit only seasons. However, 44% chose neither option.

BLACK BEAR HUNTING

By far, modern rifles were most commonly used by black bear hunters during the 2021 hunting seasons in Washington (90% used modern rifles). Meanwhile, 17% used archery other than crossbow and 7% used muzzleloader rifles.

Regarding bag limits, 45% of bear hunters support a 2 bear limit, 32% say it depends on the population, and 15% support a 1 bear limit.

About half of black bear hunters (48%) were satisfied with their bear hunting during 2021, more than double the number who were dissatisfied (21%). Among those who were not satisfied, the top reasons given were the season length or timing and lack of game.

Over a third of bear hunters (38%) intentionally hunt bear every year, while 15% intentionally hunt bear but not every year. However, 45% hunt bear when the opportunity arises while they are hunting other species.

Regarding the spring special permit bear season, 41% of bear hunters think the season should be kept the same and 38% think it should be longer.

Two thirds of bear hunters (68%) think the fall general bear seasons should remain as-is, while 28% think it should be longer.

Most bear hunters (81%) support a general spring bear hunting season; 70% *strongly* support it. Only 6% oppose. A majority of bear hunters (62%) support a special spring permit bear hunt, compared to 18% who oppose. In addition, the vast majority of bear hunters (84%) support having a spring bear season; only 6% oppose.

A slight majority of bear hunters (54%) support lethal removal of bears to prevent damage to timber on private timberlands, double the percentage who oppose (27%). If bears are lethally removed to prevent timber damage, hunters most often prefer that licensed hunters remove the bears during spring season (63% stated this). Meanwhile, 19% prefer the use of licensed hunters during fall season and 10% prefer that kill permits be issued to timber companies for hunter use.

Bear hunters were asked about support for or opposition to three options to increase the Department's knowledge about harvested bears. By far, hunters had the most support for incentives to increase compliance with harvest reporting requirements (77% support this). This compares to 47% who support increased penalties for failure to comply with harvest reporting requirements and 37% who support mandatory bear carcass checks.

COUGAR HUNTING

Most cougar hunters (88%) hunted cougar with modern rifles in 2021-2022, while 19% used archery other than crossbow, 9% used muzzleloader rifles, and 9% used modern handguns.

Cougar hunters are most likely to hunt cougar opportunistically while hunting other species (73% do so), while 19% intentionally hunt cougar every year and 6% intentionally hunt cougar but not every year.

A majority of cougar hunters (56%) think the hunting seasons should be kept the same length, while 39% think they should be longer. No cougar hunters want shorter seasons.

Overall, 39% of cougar hunters were satisfied with their cougar hunting in 2021-2022, while 18% were dissatisfied. A substantial percentage gave a neutral answer or did not know. Restrictive regulations, lack of game, and lack of harvest were the top reasons given by those who were not satisfied.

BIRD HUNTING

Pheasant

Most pheasant hunters (84%) hunted pheasant in Eastern Washington in 2021-2022. Slightly more of these hunters were satisfied (49%) than dissatisfied (40%). In follow-up, Eastern Washington pheasant hunters who were not satisfied most commonly said lack of game was the reason (73% stated this). Access issues (19%), poor habitat (14%), crowding (7%), and predator issues (6%) were also cited as reasons.

Over two thirds of Eastern Washington pheasant hunters (69%) say that the Department's release of pheasants in Eastern Washington is important to their pheasant hunting.

Nearly a quarter of pheasant hunters (23%) hunted pheasant in Western Washington in the 2021-2022 season. Two thirds of Western Washington pheasant hunters (68%) were satisfied with their hunting in 2021-2022, while 24% were dissatisfied. Lack of game was the most common reason given by those who were not satisfied.

There is nearly twice as much opposition to (48%) than support for (28%) the release of pheasants in Western Washington on private land, where access is limited by the landowner. Of the 14 Western Washington hunters who support such a release, only 4 would still support it if it reduced the number of pheasants released on traditional release sites.

Most Western Washington pheasant hunters (80%) support increasing the Western Washington Pheasant Permit fee if it meant that the Department could continue to release the same number of pheasants in Western Washington each year. A majority of these hunters (53%) think the fee should be no more than \$100 (it is currently \$84.50), and 29% think it should be no more than \$120; 11% cannot support any increase.

Grouse

Two thirds of grouse hunters (67%) were satisfied with their grouse hunting in 2021-2022, while only 14% were dissatisfied. Among those who were not satisfied, lack of game, lack of free time, and changes to the hunting season were the top reasons.

About half of grouse hunters (47%) intentionally hunt grouse every year and 20% intentionally hunt grouse but not every year. On the other hand, about a third (31%) hunt grouse opportunistically while hunting other species.

Most grouse hunters (85%) used shotguns, while 21% used modern rifles, 11% used modern handguns, and 10% use archery other than crossbows.

Grouse hunters most frequently hunted in the first two months of the season (September and October 2021).

Most grouse hunters (90%) are at least somewhat comfortable telling the four grouse species apart in the field while hunting.

Grouse hunters would have slightly more support for (39%) than opposition to (30%) individual bag limits for each of the four species of grouse. The remainder are neutral or do not know.

Turkey

Most turkey hunters (81%) hunted in the Spring 2021 season (56% did so exclusively), while 39% hunted in the Fall 2021 season (15% did so exclusively).

Over three quarters of turkey hunters (76%) were satisfied with their turkey hunting in 2021, compared to only 7% who were dissatisfied. Among turkey hunters who were not satisfied, the top reasons stated were lack of game, lack of free time, access issues, and lack of harvest.

Turkey hunters were about evenly divided on the type of land hunted: 41% mostly hunted on public land, 35% mostly hunted on private land, and 20% hunted on both about equally.

Waterfowl

Three quarters of waterfowl hunters (75%) were satisfied with their hunting in Washington during the 2021-2022 season, while 15% were dissatisfied. Among those who were not satisfied, access issues, lack of game, lack of time, and the season length or timing were the top reasons.

Overall, 7% of waterfowl hunters participated in the Veterans and Active Military special waterfowl hunt on Saturday, February 5, 2022.

Waterfowl hunters hunted a mean of 14.1 days and a median of 10 days during 2021-2022.

Nearly half of waterfowl hunters (41%) said they know what the money raised from State Migratory Bird Permits is used for. In an open-ended follow-up question, those who said they know the use of the money most commonly said the money is used for habitat protection or improvement (70% stated this).

In another question, waterfowl hunters were provided a list of potential uses of funding and were asked to name the top priority: 35% said it should be purchasing habitat threatened with loss or degradation, 27% said it should be working with private landowners to allow hunting access, and 22% said it should be enhancing habitat on existing Department or other state land.

Waterfowl hunters were more likely to hunt on public land (66% did so) than private land (47%) during the 2021-2022 season.

Overall, 9% of waterfowl hunters belong to a duck hunting club on private lands. Also, 10% of waterfowl hunters typically lease private land for waterfowl hunting.

In addition, 15% of waterfowl hunters used a hunting guide service in Washington during the 2021-2022 season.

Other Bird Species

Nearly two thirds of quail hunters (63%) were satisfied with their quail hunting in Washington during the 2021-2022 season; 15% were dissatisfied. Among those who were not satisfied, the top stated reasons were access issues, lack of game, lack of time, and the season length or timing.

Over two thirds of chukar hunters (69%) were satisfied with their chukar hunting in Washington during the 2021-2022 season, while 15% were dissatisfied. Among those who were not satisfied, lack of game was the most common reason.

LEAD AMMUNITION

More Washington hunters disagree (41%) than agree (32%) that lead ammunition used for recreational shooting and hunting will negatively impact wildlife in the state.

Hunters who disagree that lead ammunition will harm wildlife were asked why, in an open-ended question. These hunters most often said that lead is harmful to some species but not all, there is not enough lead left behind by hunters to cause issues, and that they do not believe lead is harmful.

Over a third of hunters (38%) would support a new Department program to provide incentives for hunters to voluntarily use non-lead ammunition for hunting. In contrast, a third of hunters (33%) would oppose the initiative.

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INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (the Department) to determine hunters' participation in and satisfaction with hunting various species, their attitudes toward wildlife management and Department regulations, and their thoughts on the use of lead ammunition, among other topics. Similar hunter surveys were conducted in 2007 and 2014; therefore, the study also includes a trend comparison of the survey results. To accomplish these objectives, the study entailed a scientific, multi-modal survey of licensed Washington hunters, resident and nonresident, age 16 and older.

Specific aspects of the research methodology are discussed below.

QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

The telephone and online survey questionnaires were developed cooperatively by Responsive Management and the Department, based primarily on the 2007 and 2014 surveys as well as the research team's familiarity with hunting and wildlife management. There are slight differences between the telephone and online versions of the survey to accommodate each survey mode, but otherwise the surveys are identical.

The online survey was coded in an online survey platform. Note that the online survey was closed, meaning it was available only to respondents who were specifically selected for the survey and were provided with a unique access code that was required for entering the survey. Respondents could complete the survey only once. The survey could not be accessed through a general internet search.

The telephone survey was coded using Responsive Management's computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) system. An important aspect of this CATI process is that the computer controls which questions are asked, but each telephone survey is administered by a live interviewer.

For both the online and telephone surveys, the survey instrument was programmed to automatically skip questions that did not apply and to substitute phrases in the survey based upon previous responses, as necessary, for the logic and flow of the surveys. Responsive Management conducted pre-tests of the survey questionnaire in both modes to ensure proper wording, flow, and logic in the surveys. Both the online and telephone versions produced data that could be exported directly into Responsive Management's data analyses programs.

SURVEY SAMPLE

The sample of licensed hunters was provided by the Department, consisting of those who had a license to hunt in Washington during the 2021-2022 hunting seasons. The sample included email addresses and/or telephone numbers. The sample was deduplicated, meaning that hunters who held multiple licenses would only be included once to ensure that every hunter had an equal chance of being selected for the survey. A random sample was then pulled from the deduplicated license database for the initial survey administration.

The sample was stratified by species type to obtain a sufficient number of completed interviews for each type to ensure scientifically valid results. The survey goals for each species type are shown below:

Species or Species Type	Goal (Completed Interviews)
Deer	144
Elk	132
Bear	135
Cougar	135
Small Game	368

The contact procedures are further discussed in the following section.

MULTI-MODAL SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

The survey used a multi-modal approach that included two forms of contact (email and telephone) and two survey modes (online and telephone surveys). This multi-modal approach was used to ensure the most extensive coverage possible of Washington hunters, meaning potential respondents who could not be reached using one form of contact could be contacted using another.

Those hunters in the sample with an email address were first contacted by email with an invitation to take the survey. The email contained a direct link to the online survey, as well as a brief description of the purpose of the survey. As many as five emails were sent to hunters in the sample with valid email addresses: one initial email and four reminder emails. The initial email was sent to hunters in June 2022, with reminder emails sent to hunters who had not yet responded to the survey four more times, if needed. (One of the reminder emails was targeted to hunters with cougar and small game hunting privileges in order to acquire more completed interviews for those species categories.)

Note that incorrect and failed email addresses that could not be corrected were removed, and those hunters were placed in the sample to be contacted by telephone.

An example of the initial email is shown on the following page.

Email Invitation to Take the Survey

Dear Licensed Hunter,

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife is conducting this study to assess Washington licensed hunters' participation, preferences, and experiences regarding hunting in the state. Coming from a licensed hunter, your feedback is very important to this study and to future management decisions.

Your answers will be kept completely confidential and will not be associated with your name, license, or contact information in any way.

[Click Here to Start the Survey](#)

Responsive Management, an independent research firm that specializes in natural resource and fish and wildlife issues, has been contracted by the Department to conduct this study. The Department has utilized Responsive Management's research over the years to assist with its efforts including its [Game Management Plan](#). If you need technical assistance with this survey, please contact Responsive Management via email at research@responsivemanagement.com.

Thank you for your time and willingness to participate. [Click Here to Start the Survey](#)

Alison Lanier, Research Associate
Responsive Management

For the telephone phase of the survey, telephone interviews were conducted Monday through Friday from noon to 11:00 p.m. and Saturday from noon to 7:00 p.m., local time, using interviewers with experience conducting computer-assisted surveys about wildlife management and outdoor recreation. A five-callback design was used to avoid bias toward people easy to reach by telephone and to provide an equal opportunity for all to participate. When a respondent could not be reached on the first call, subsequent calls were placed on different days of the week and at different times of the day. The survey was conducted at the time of initial contact, or a callback time was set that was more convenient for the respondent.

For quality control, survey center managers monitored some of the interviews in real time and provided feedback to the interviewers. To further ensure the integrity of the telephone survey data, Responsive Management has interviewers who have been trained according to the standards established by the Council of American Survey Research Organizations. Methods of instruction included lecture and role-playing. The survey center managers and other professional staff conducted briefings with the interviewers prior to the administration of this survey. Interviewers were instructed on type of study, study goals and objectives, handling of survey questions, interview length, termination points and qualifiers for participation, interviewer instructions within the survey questionnaire, reading of the survey questions, skip patterns, and probing and clarifying techniques necessary for specific questions on the survey questionnaires.

For both the online and telephone versions of the survey, the questionnaire was programmed to branch and substitute phrases in the survey based on previous responses to ensure the integrity and consistency of the data collection. The survey questionnaire also contained error checkers and computation statements to ensure quality and consistent data.

Overall, the survey was administered in June and July 2022. After both the telephone and online surveys were obtained, the survey center managers and/or statisticians checked each completed survey to ensure clarity and completeness.

In total, Responsive Management obtained 1,154 completed surveys. The number of completed interviews for each species or species group and comparisons to study goals are shown below.

Species or Species Type	Goal (Completed Interviews)	Final Completed Interviews
Deer	144	697
Elk	132	549
Bear	135	313
Cougar	135	217
Small Game	368	629

The sum of completed interviews for each species or species group is much higher than the overall sample size because many hunters hunted multiple species. Also, hunters who hunted three or four of the primary big game species – deer, elk, bear, or cougar – were randomly assigned follow-up questions for just two of the species to avoid the fatigue of an overlong survey.

DATA ANALYSIS

The analysis of data was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics as well as proprietary software developed by Responsive Management. The survey results were weighted by license type to match the proper proportions within the hunter license database.

Throughout this report, findings of the survey are reported at a 95% confidence interval. For the overall sample of Washington hunters, the sampling error is estimated to be at most plus or minus 2.88 percentage points. This means that if the survey were conducted 100 times on different samples that were selected in the same way, the findings of 95 out of the 100 surveys would fall within plus or minus 2.88 percentage points of each other. The sampling error was calculated using the formula described on the following page, with a sample size of 1,154 and a population of 174,871 licensed Washington hunters.

Sampling Error Equation

$$B = \left(\sqrt{\frac{N_p(.25) - .25}{N_s}} \right) (1.96)$$

Where: B = maximum sampling error (as decimal)
 N_p = population size (i.e., total number who could be surveyed)
 N_s = sample size (i.e., total number of respondents surveyed)

Derived from formula: p. 206 in Dillman, D. A. 2000. *Mail and Internet Surveys*. John Wiley & Sons, NY.

Note: This is a simplified version of the formula that calculates the maximum sampling error using a 50:50 split (the most conservative calculation because a 50:50 split would give maximum variation).

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

In examining the results, it is important to be aware that the questionnaire included several types of questions:

- Single response questions: Some questions allow only a single response.
- Multiple response questions: Other questions allow respondents to give more than one response or choose all that apply. Those that allow more than a single response are indicated on the graphs with the label, "Multiple Responses Allowed."
- Closed-ended questions have an answer set from which to choose.
- Open-ended questions are those in which no answer set is presented to the respondents; rather, they can respond with anything that comes to mind from the question.
- Scaled questions: Many closed-ended questions (but not all) are in a scale, such as one that ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree.
- Series questions: Many questions are part of a series, and the results are primarily intended to be examined relative to the other questions in that series (although results of the questions individually can also be valuable). Typically, results of all questions in a series are shown together.

Most graphs show results rounded to the nearest integer; however, all data are stored in decimal format, and all calculations are performed on unrounded numbers. For this reason, some results may not sum to exactly 100% because of this rounding on the graphs. Additionally, rounding may cause apparent discrepancies of 1 percentage point between the graphs and the reported results of combined responses (e.g., when "strongly agree" and "moderately agree" are summed to determine the total percentage who agree).

For the open-ended questions, analysts read through all of the responses and assigned them into response categories that could be quantified on "Multiple Responses Allowed" graphs. Overall, analysts categorized over 5,400 responses. In addition, the full open-ended comments are being provided to the Department in a separate document.

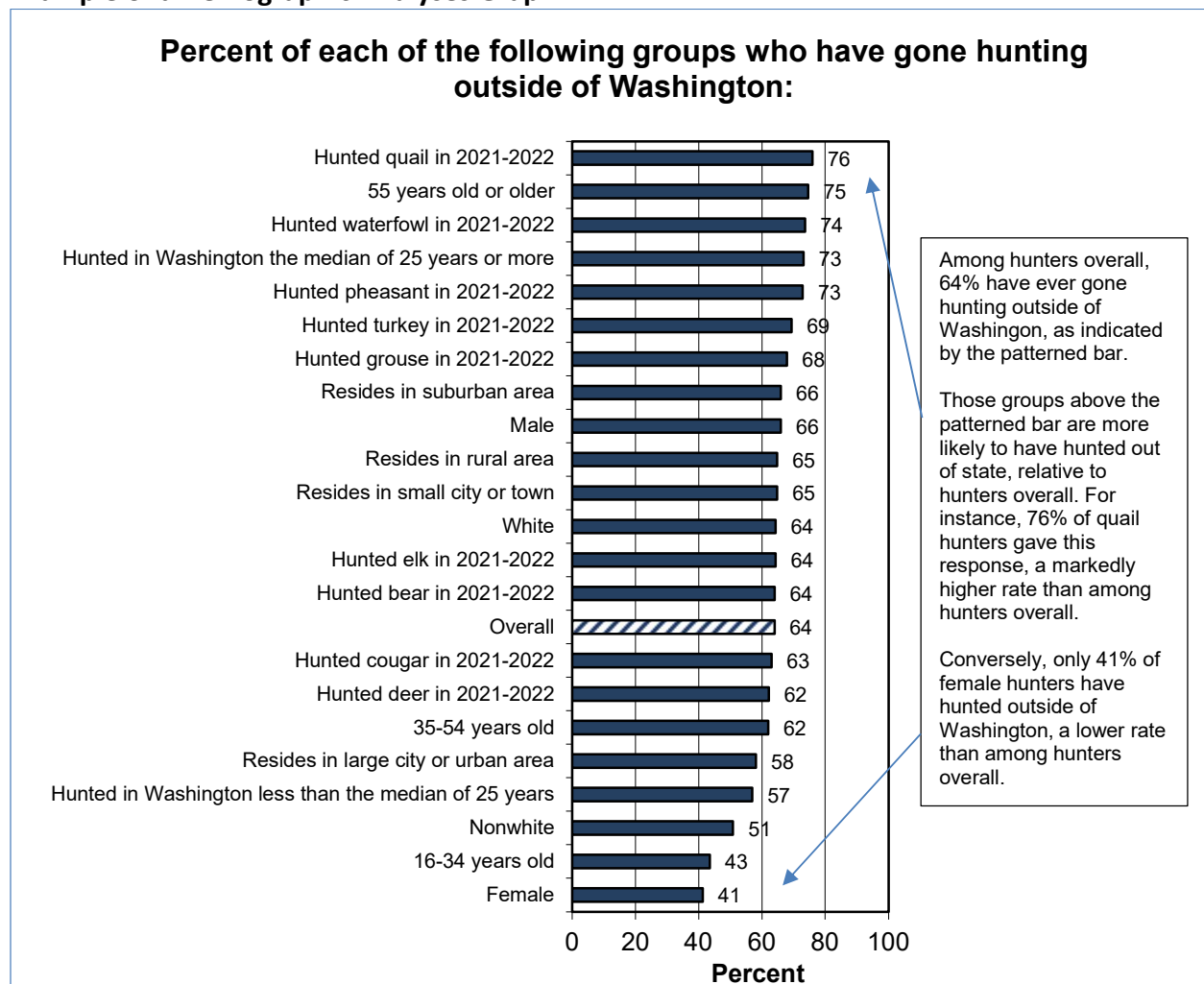
DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSES GRAPHS

In addition to graphs depicting the results of each individual survey question, the report includes special graphs that show how various demographic groups respond to certain questions. The example below shows the percentages of the various groups who have ever gone hunting outside of Washington.

Overall, 64% of Washington hunters have hunted outside of the state, as shown by the patterned bar. Those groups shown above the overall bar have a higher rate of hunting out of state compared to hunters overall. Meanwhile, those groups shown below the overall bar have a lower rate of having hunted outside of Washington.

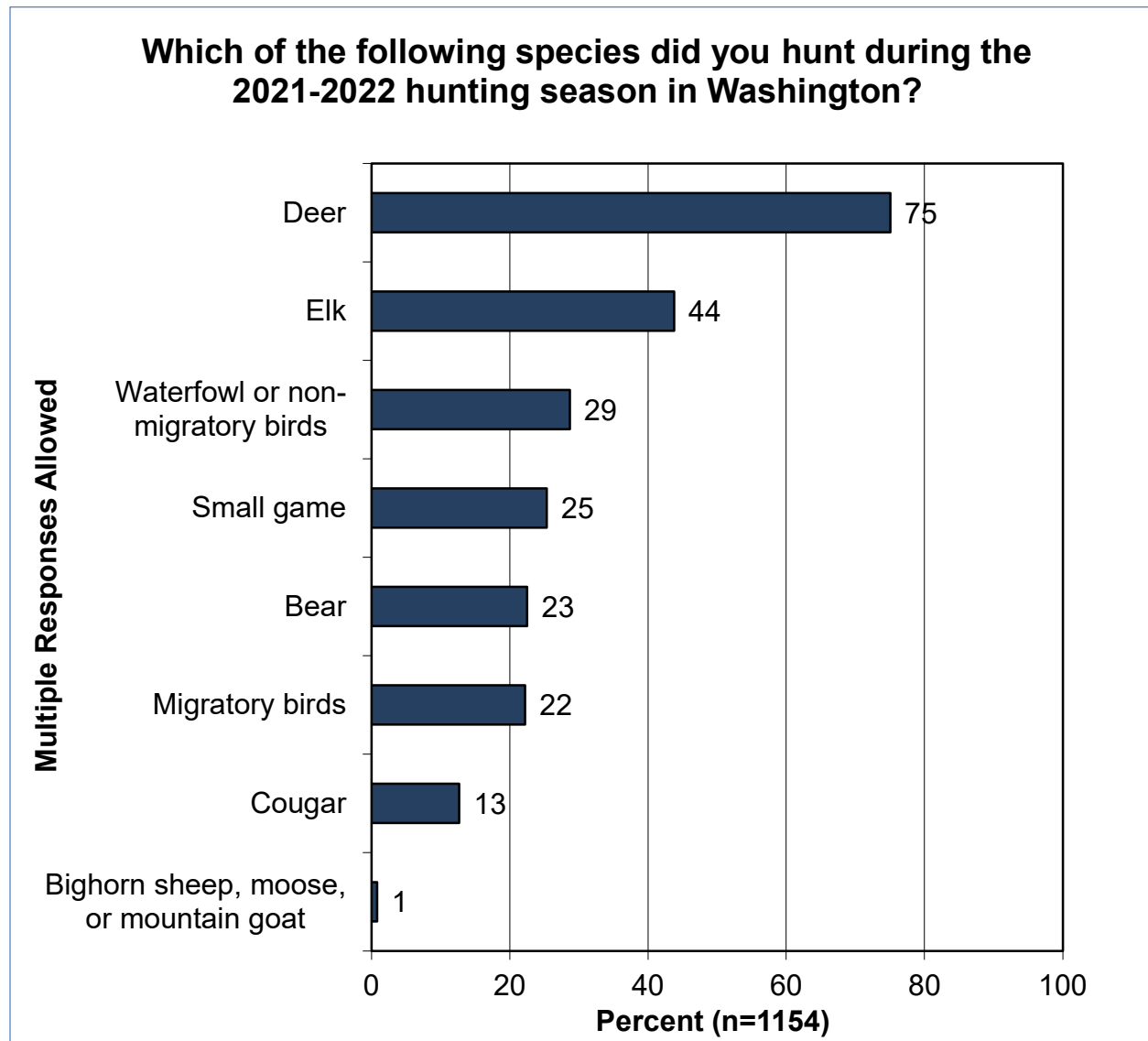
When one group is above the overall bar (for instance, in this example, males), its counterpart or one of its counterparts (in this instance, females) is below the overall bar. The distance from the overall bar matters, as well. If a group is close to the overall bar (such as bear hunters in this example), then the group should not be considered markedly different from hunters overall. A rule of thumb is that the difference should be 5 percentage points or more for the difference to be noteworthy.

Example of a Demographic Analyses Graph

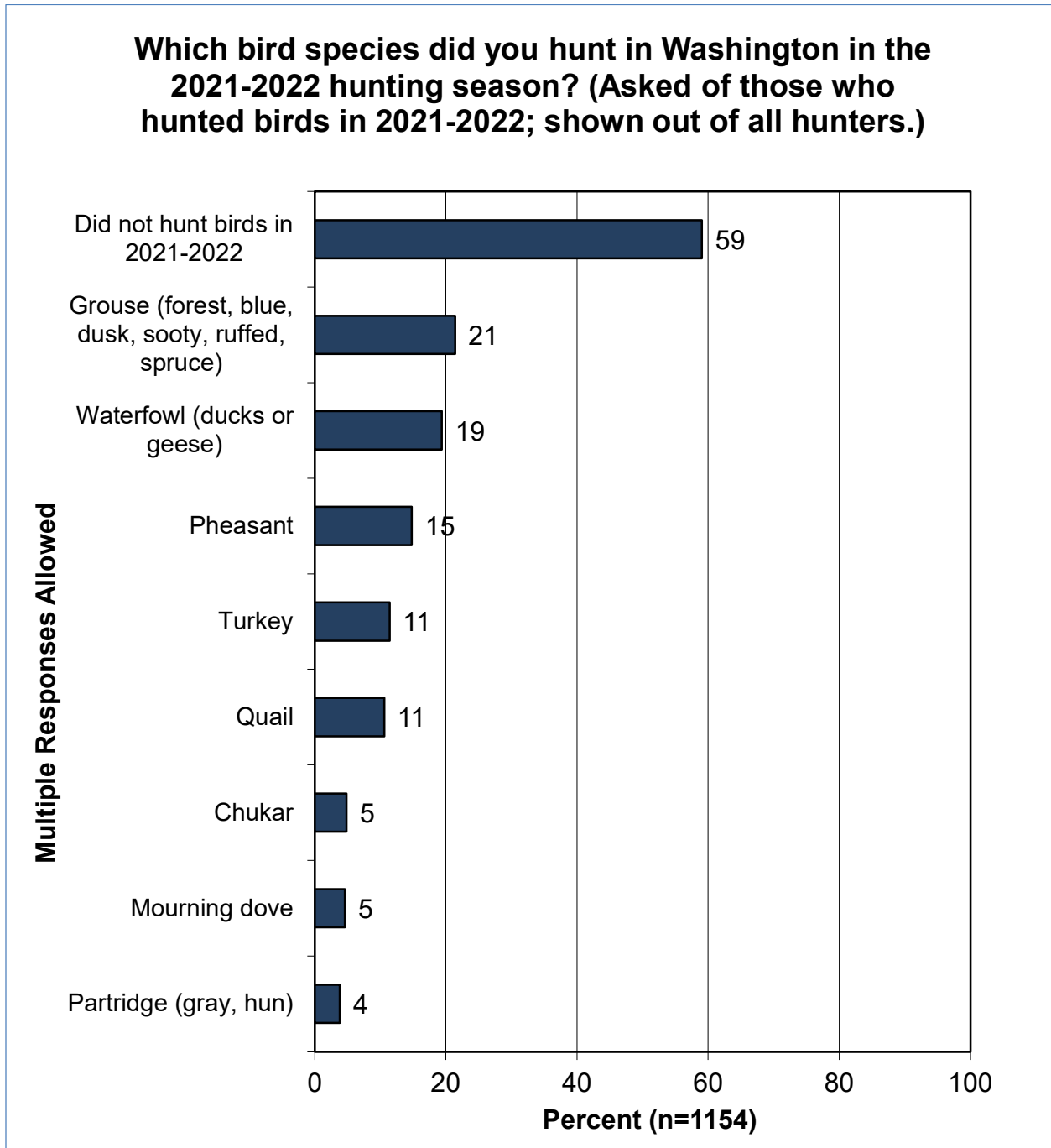


GENERAL HUNTING PARTICIPATION

The survey first asked hunters what species they hunted in Washington during the 2021-2022 season (those who did not hunt any of the listed species were screened out of the survey). Most hunters (75%) hunted deer, while 44% hunted elk. Those species were distantly followed by waterfowl (29%), small game (25%), bear (23%), migratory birds (22%), and cougar (13%).

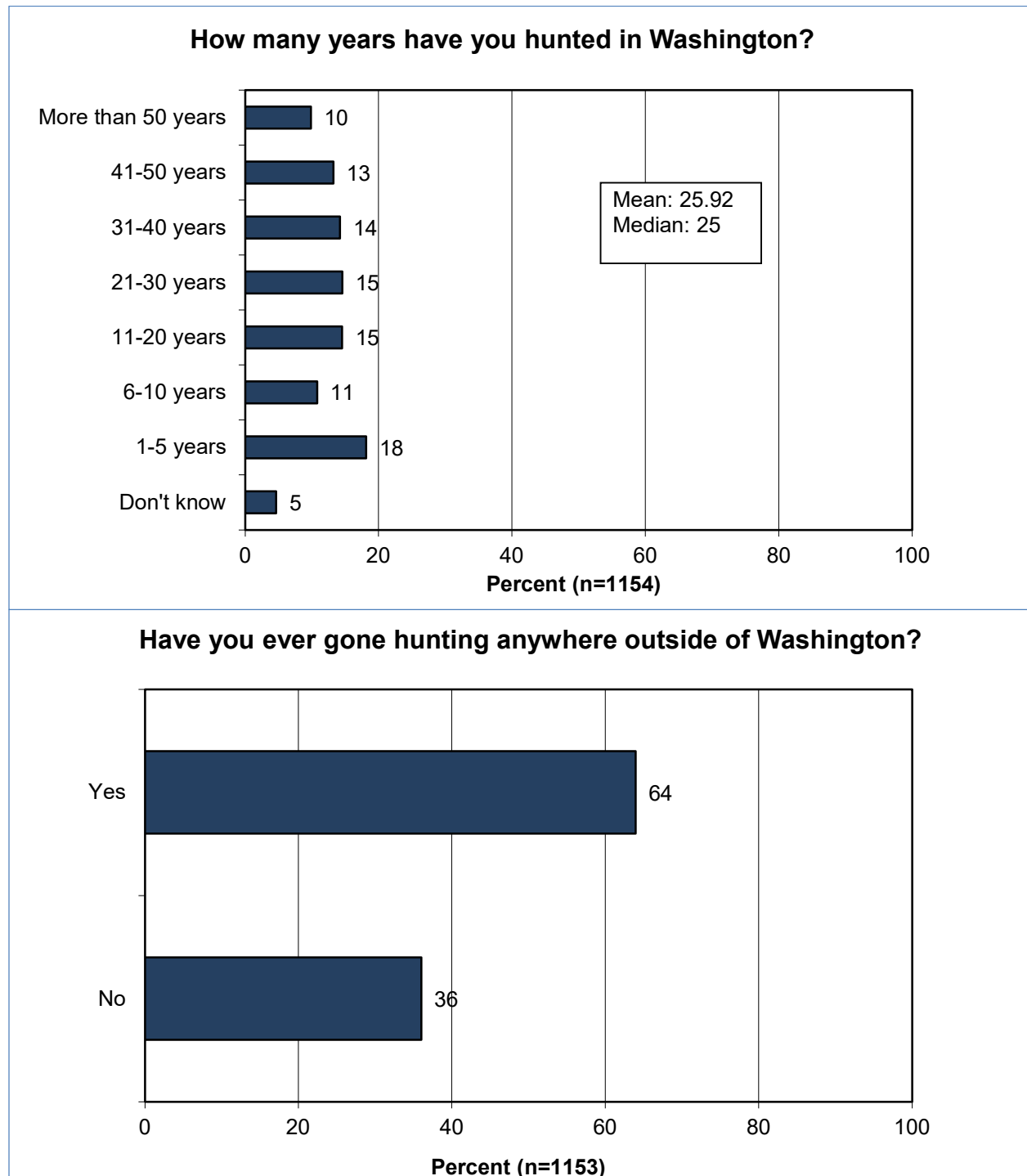


Looking at specific bird species, 21% of Washington hunters hunted grouse, 19% hunted waterfowl, 15% hunted pheasant, 11% hunted turkey, and 11% hunted quail. A majority of Washington hunters (59%) did not hunt any birds in 2021-2022.

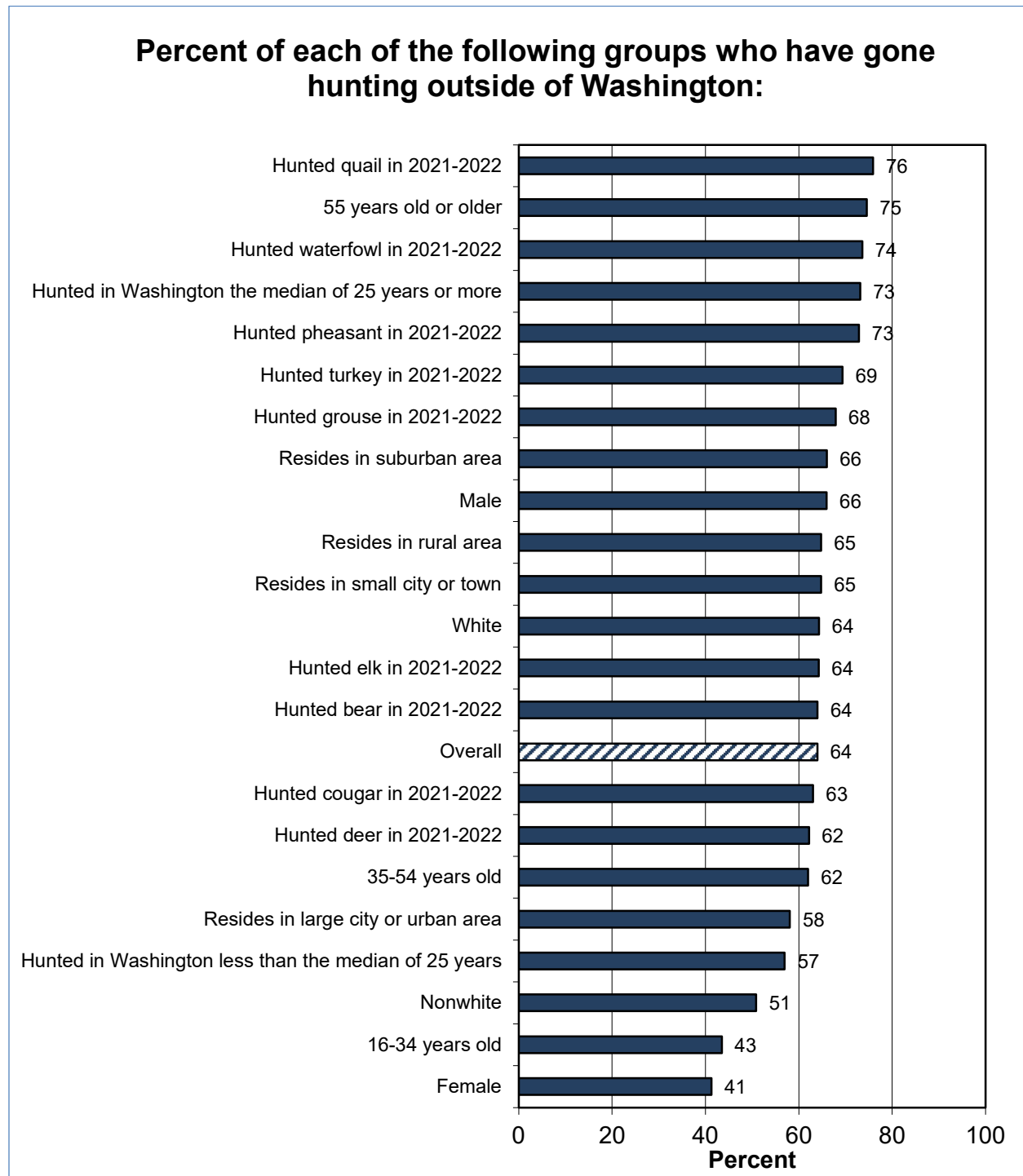


Hunters in the survey hunted a mean of 25.9 years in Washington and a median of 25 years.

Nearly two thirds of Washington hunters (64%) have hunted outside of the state.



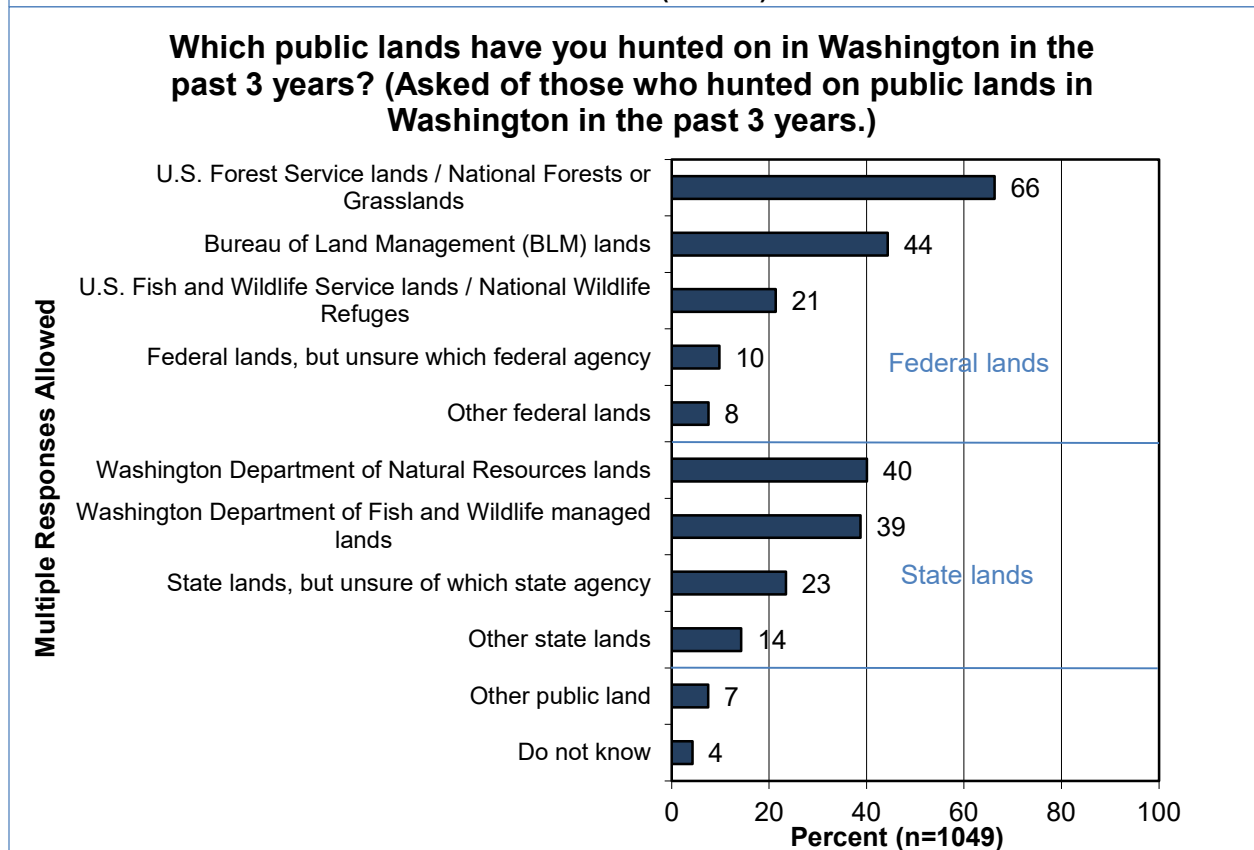
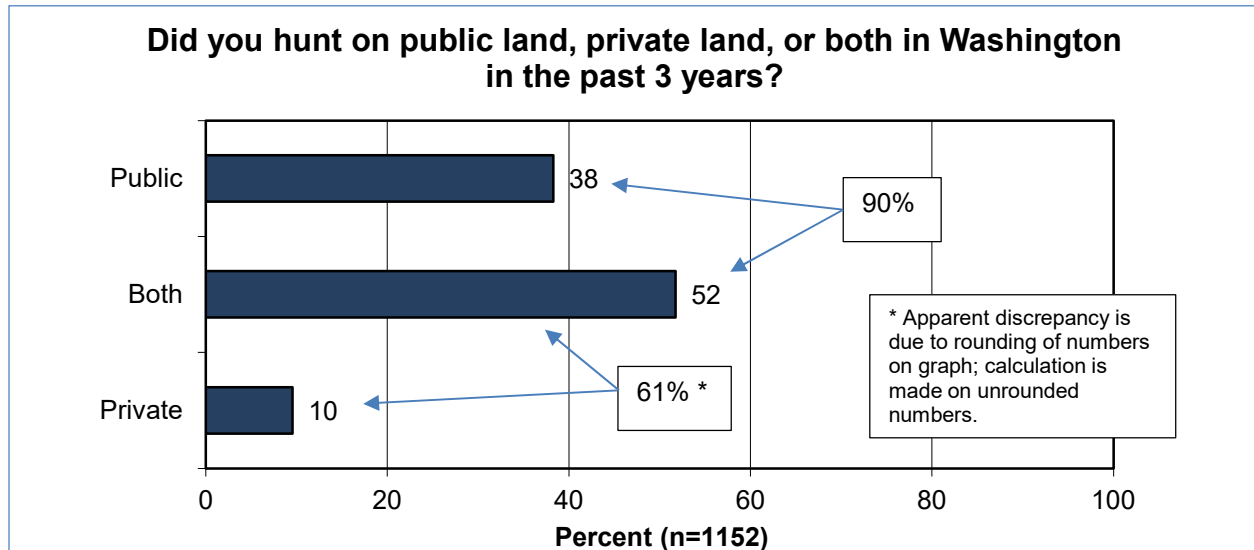
The demographic analyses graph below shows that the groups most likely to have hunted outside of Washington include quail, waterfowl, and pheasant hunters; those 55 and older; and those who hunted in Washington for the median of 25 years or more.



HUNTING LANDS

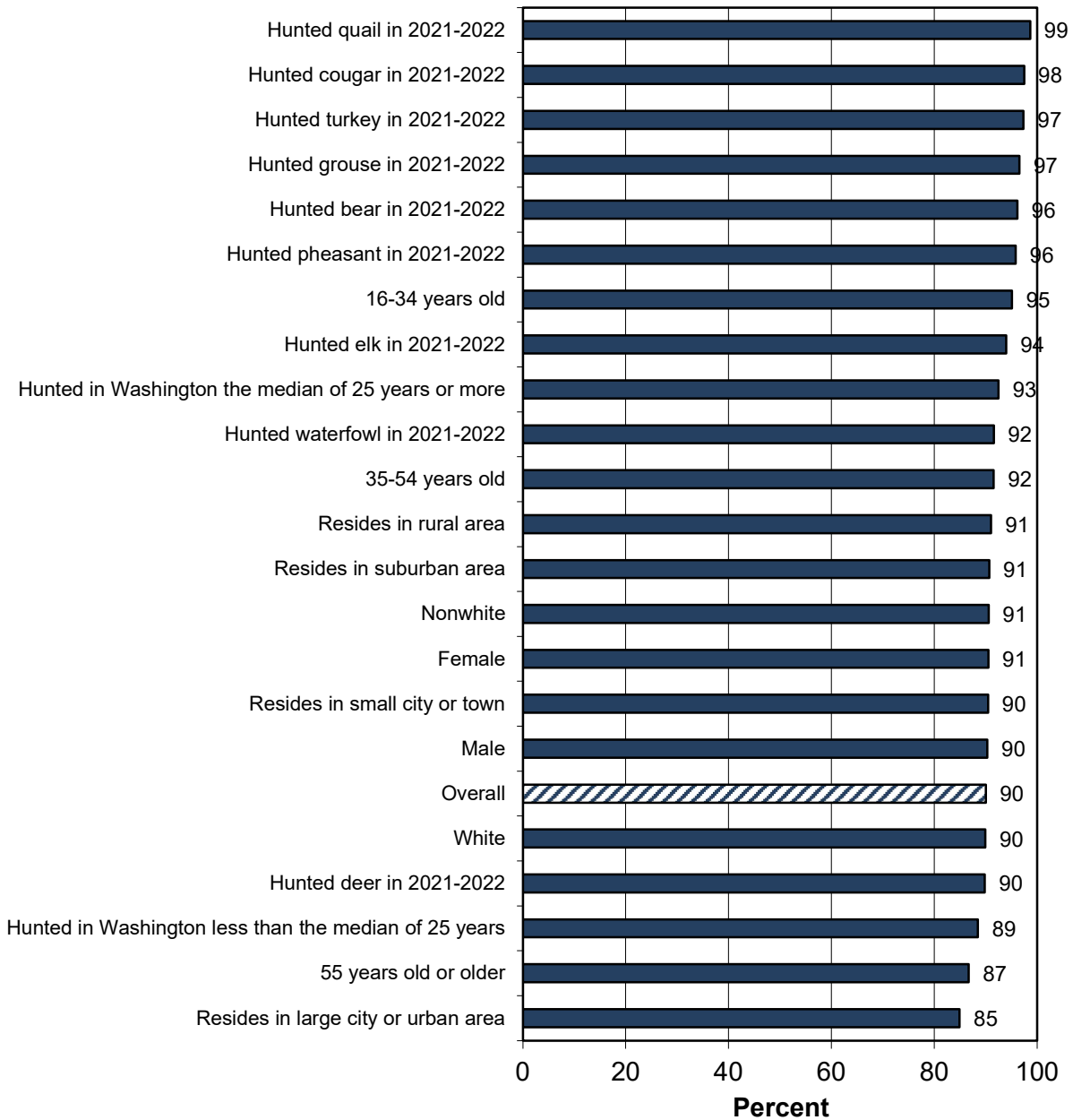
Most hunters (90%) hunted on public land in Washington in the past 3 years; 38% hunted public land exclusively. Meanwhile, 61% hunted on private land, with 10% who did so exclusively.

Among public land hunters, 66% hunted on U.S. Forest Service lands and 44% hunted on Bureau of Land Management lands (on the federal side), while 40% hunted on Department of Natural Resources lands and 39% hunted on Department of Fish and Wildlife managed lands (on the state side).

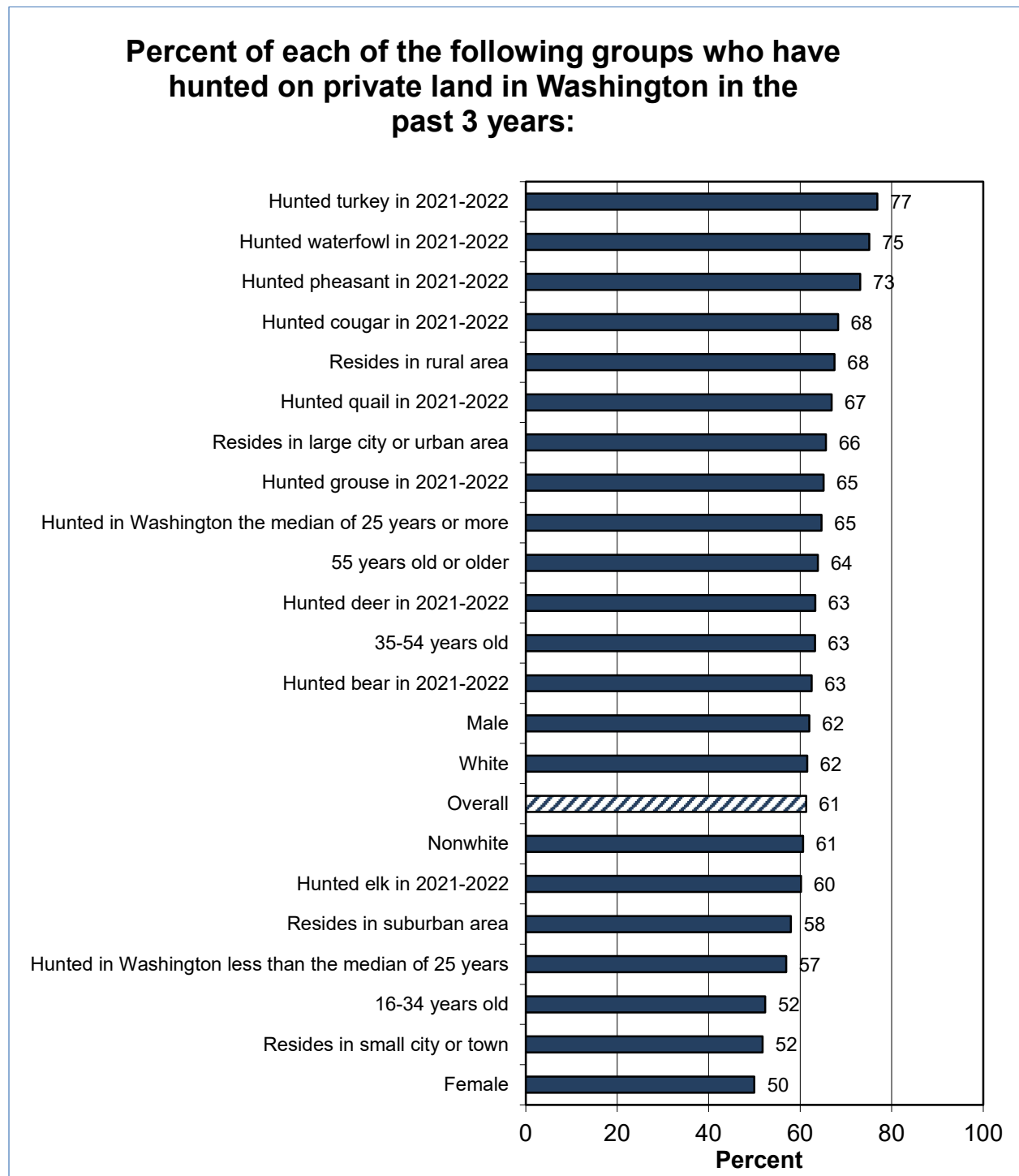


The groups more likely than hunters overall to have hunted on public land in Washington in the past 3 years include younger hunters and hunters of all species or species groups in the last season except deer hunters.

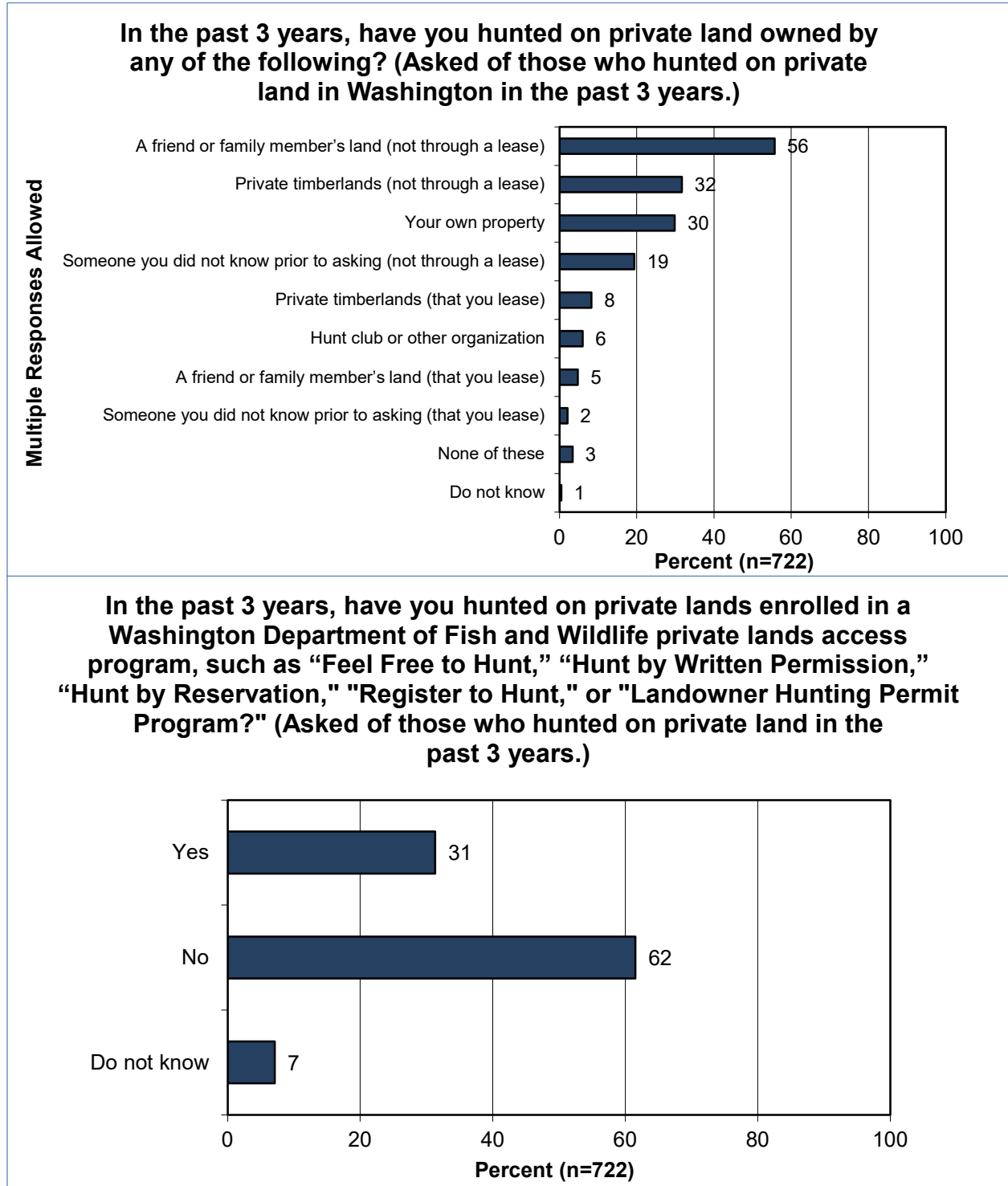
Percent of each of the following groups who have hunted on public land in Washington in the past 3 years:



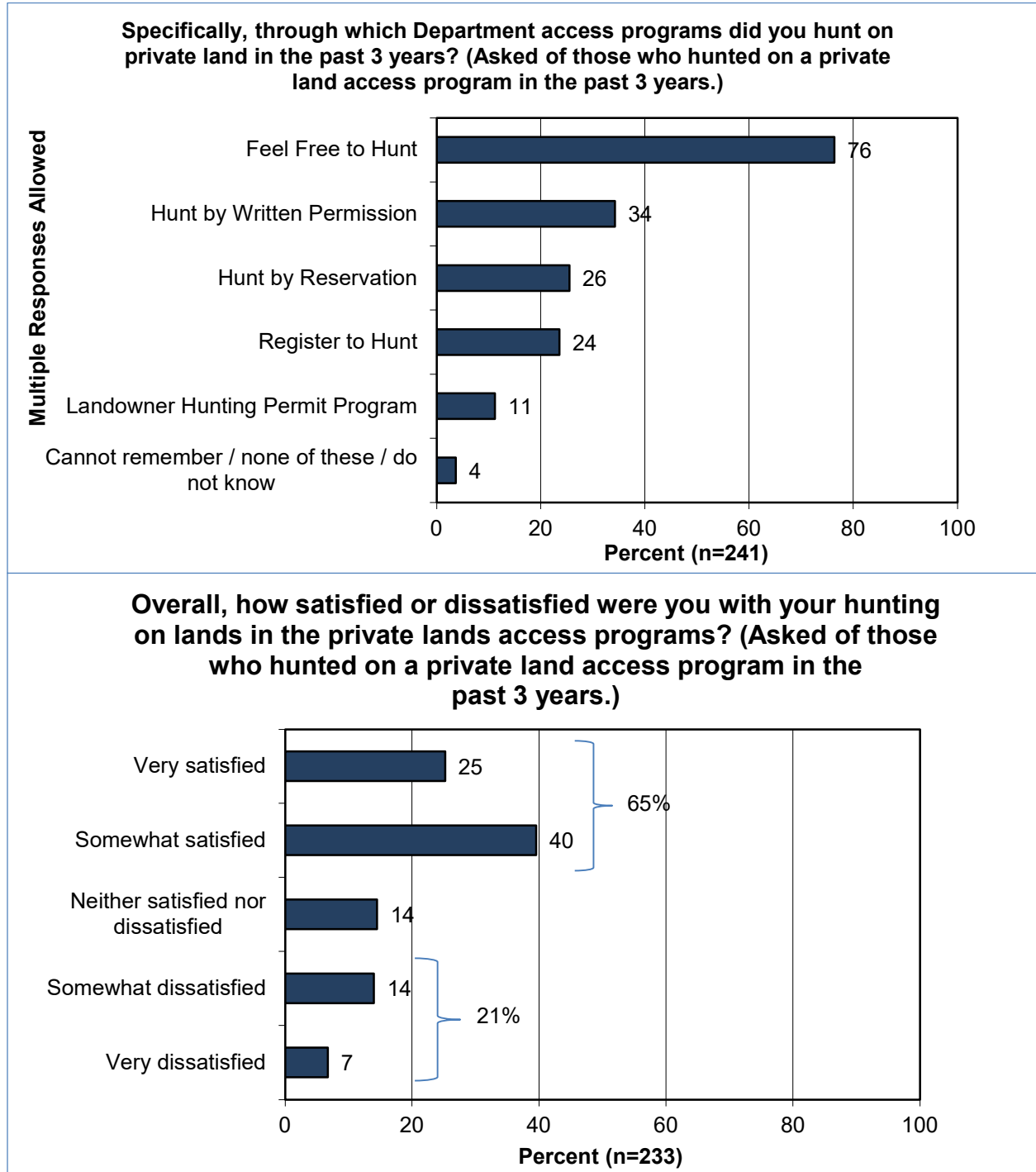
The groups most likely to have hunted on private land in Washington in the past 3 years include those who hunted turkey, waterfowl, and pheasant in 2021-2022.



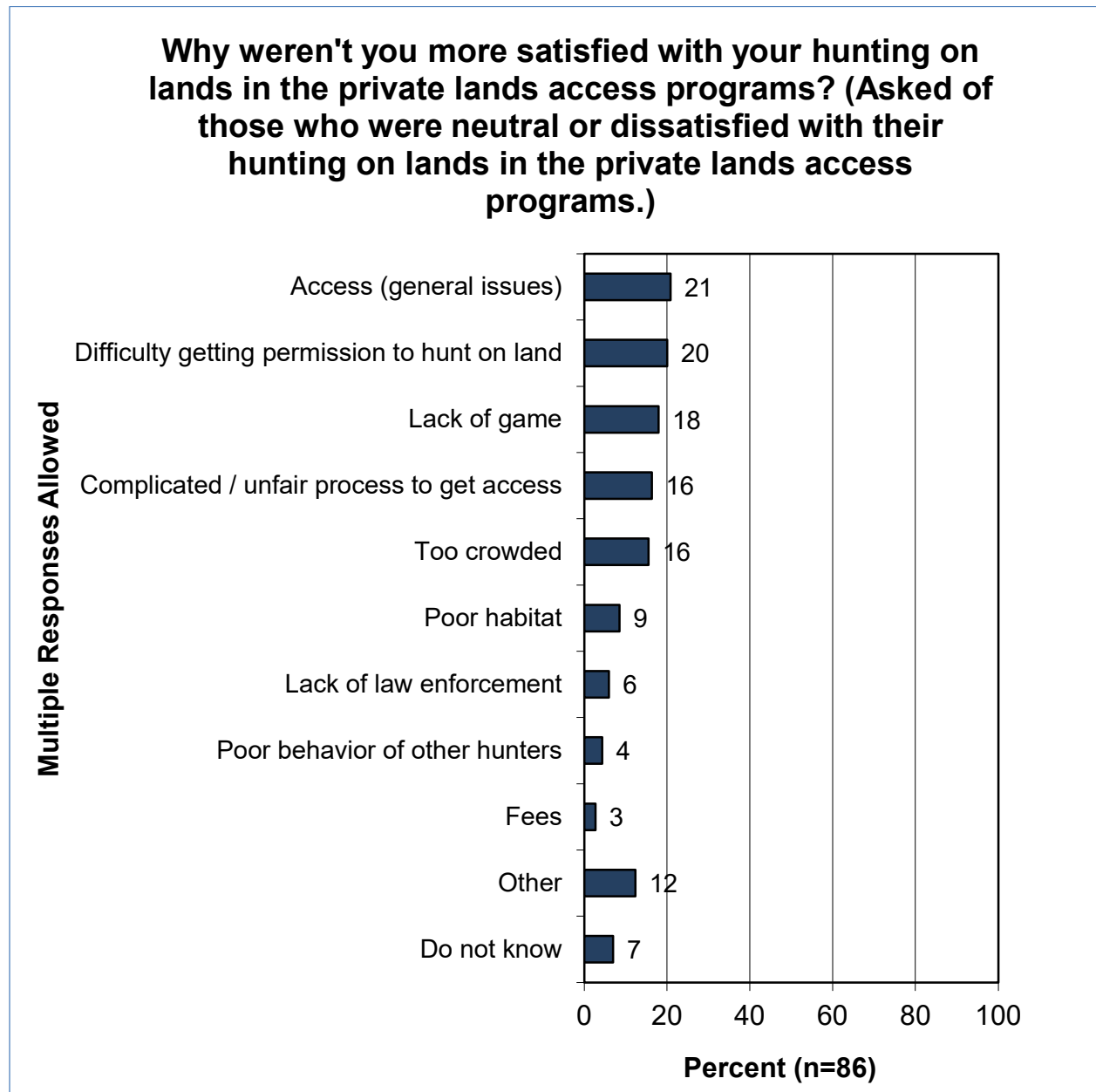
Those who hunted on private land in the past 3 years most frequently hunted on a friend or family member’s land (56% did so), private timberlands (32%), and their own property (30%). None of these top responses involved leasing the property. Also, nearly a third of these private land hunters (31%) hunted on lands enrolled in a Department private lands access program.



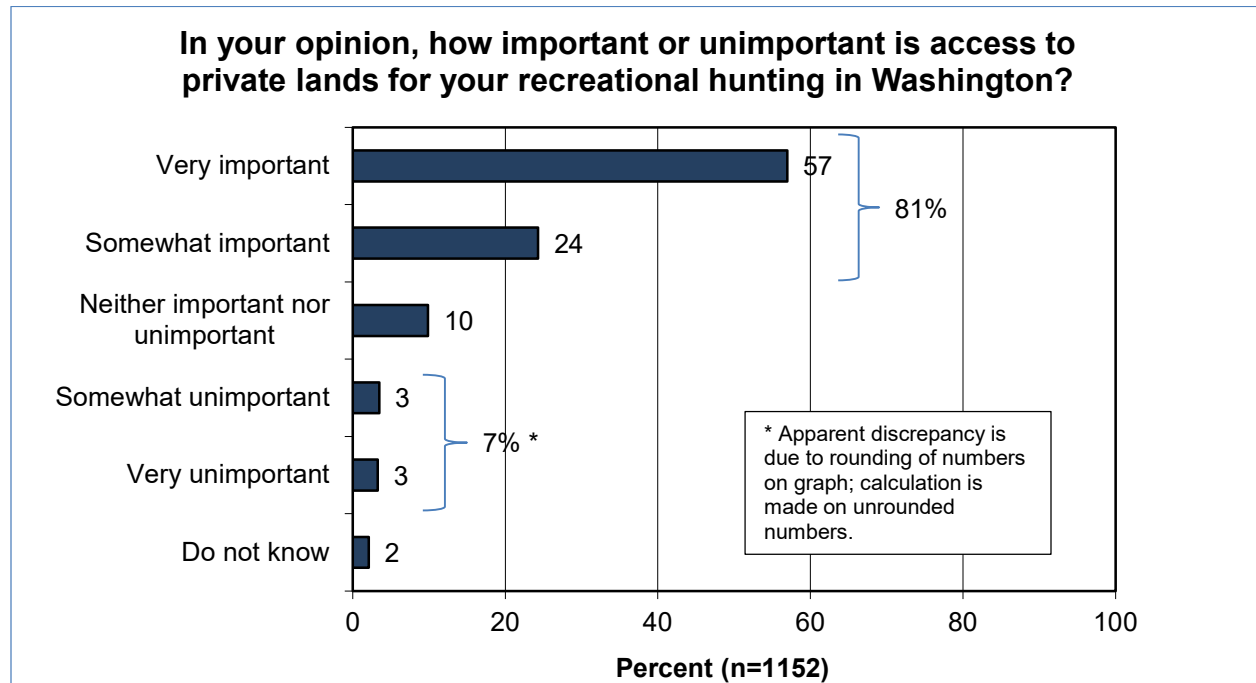
Among those who hunted on land enrolled in a Department access program, the most commonly used program by far was "Feel Free to Hunt" (76% of these hunters used that program). About two thirds of hunters who used an access program (65%) were satisfied with the program, compared to 21% who were dissatisfied.



Among those who were not satisfied with their hunting experience in a private lands access program, the most common reasons were general access issues, difficulty getting permission to hunt on land, lack of game, a complicated or unfair process to get access, and crowding.

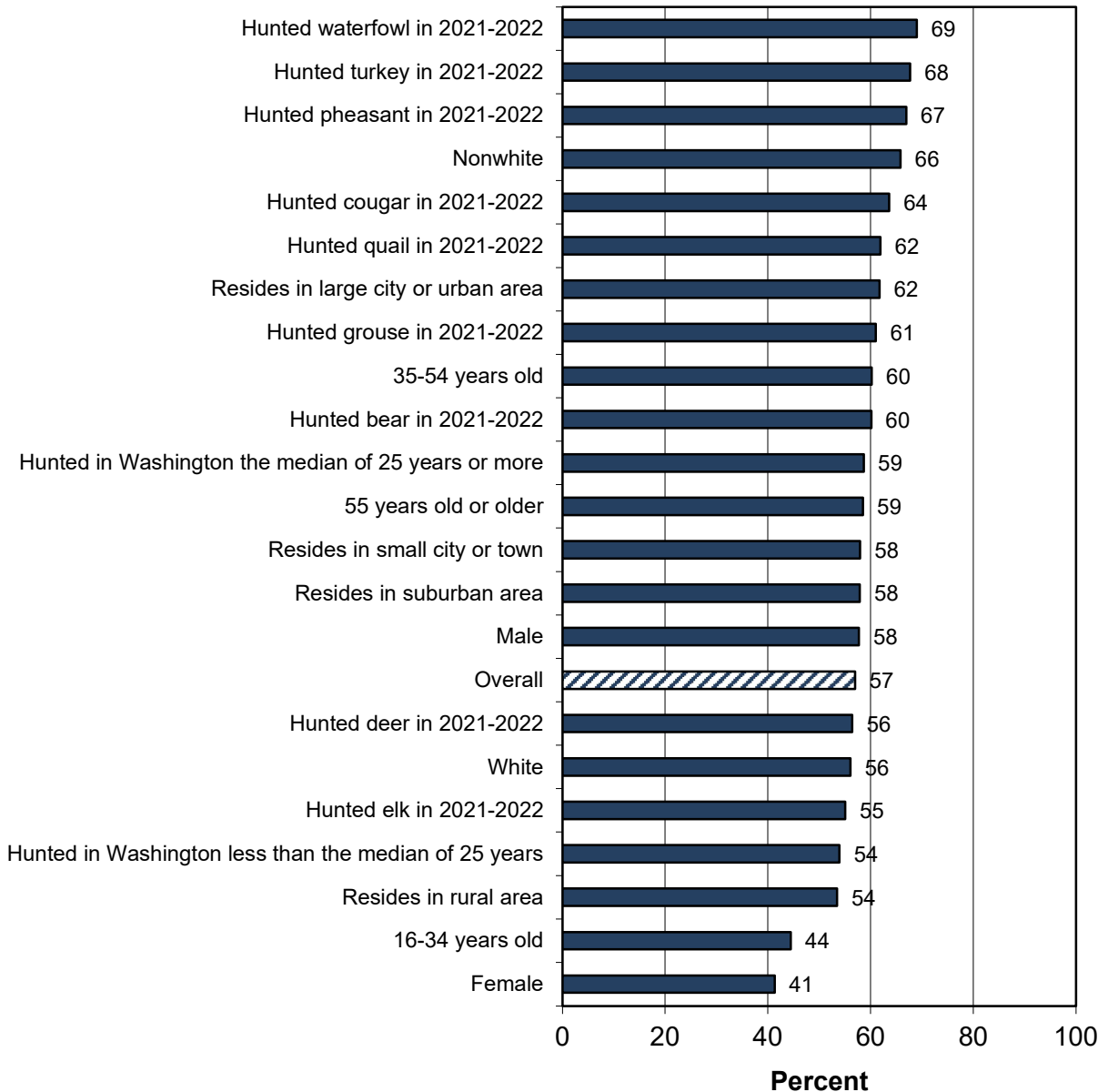


The vast majority of hunters (81%) think access to private land is important to their hunting in Washington, while only 7% think it is unimportant.

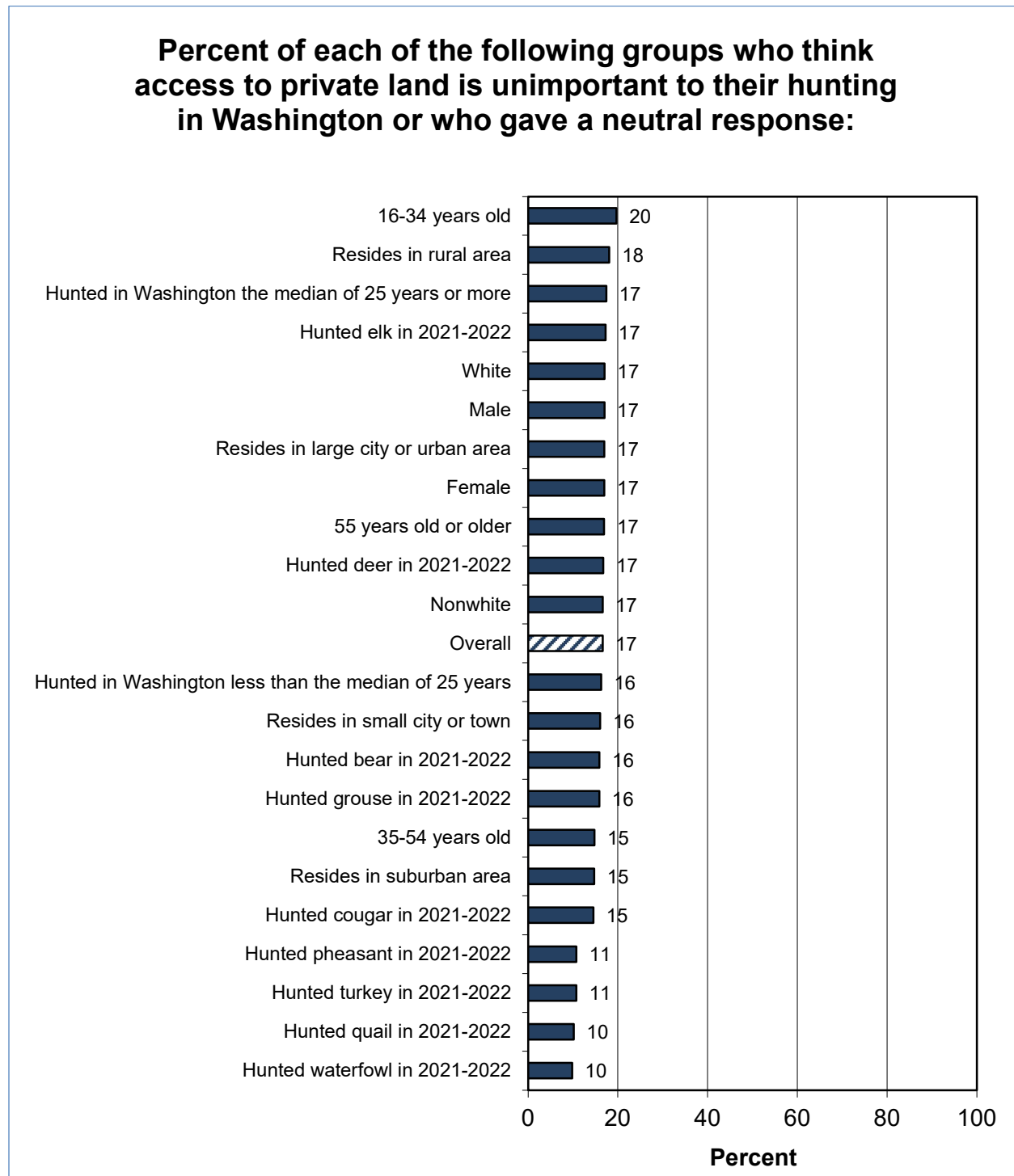


Waterfowl, turkey, and pheasant hunters; nonwhite hunters; and cougar hunters are more likely than other hunter groups to say that access to private land is *very* important.

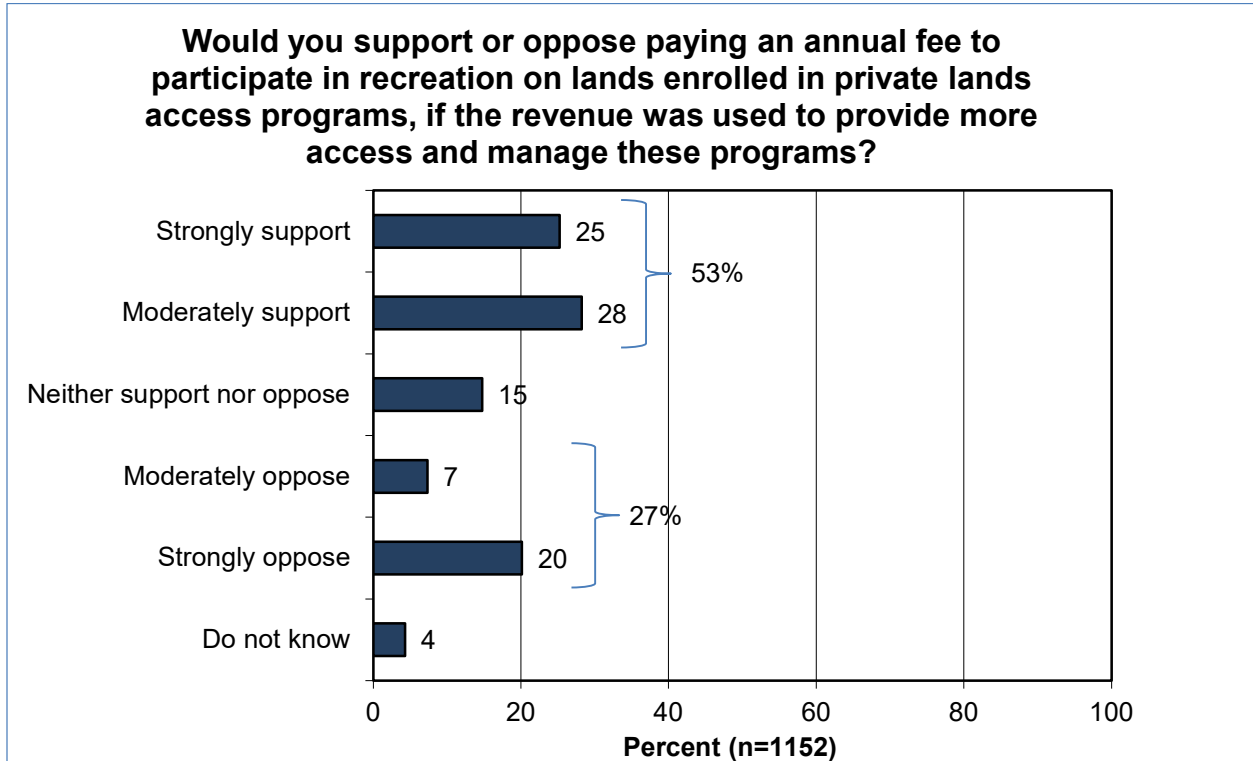
Percent of each of the following groups who think access to private land is very important to their hunting in Washington:



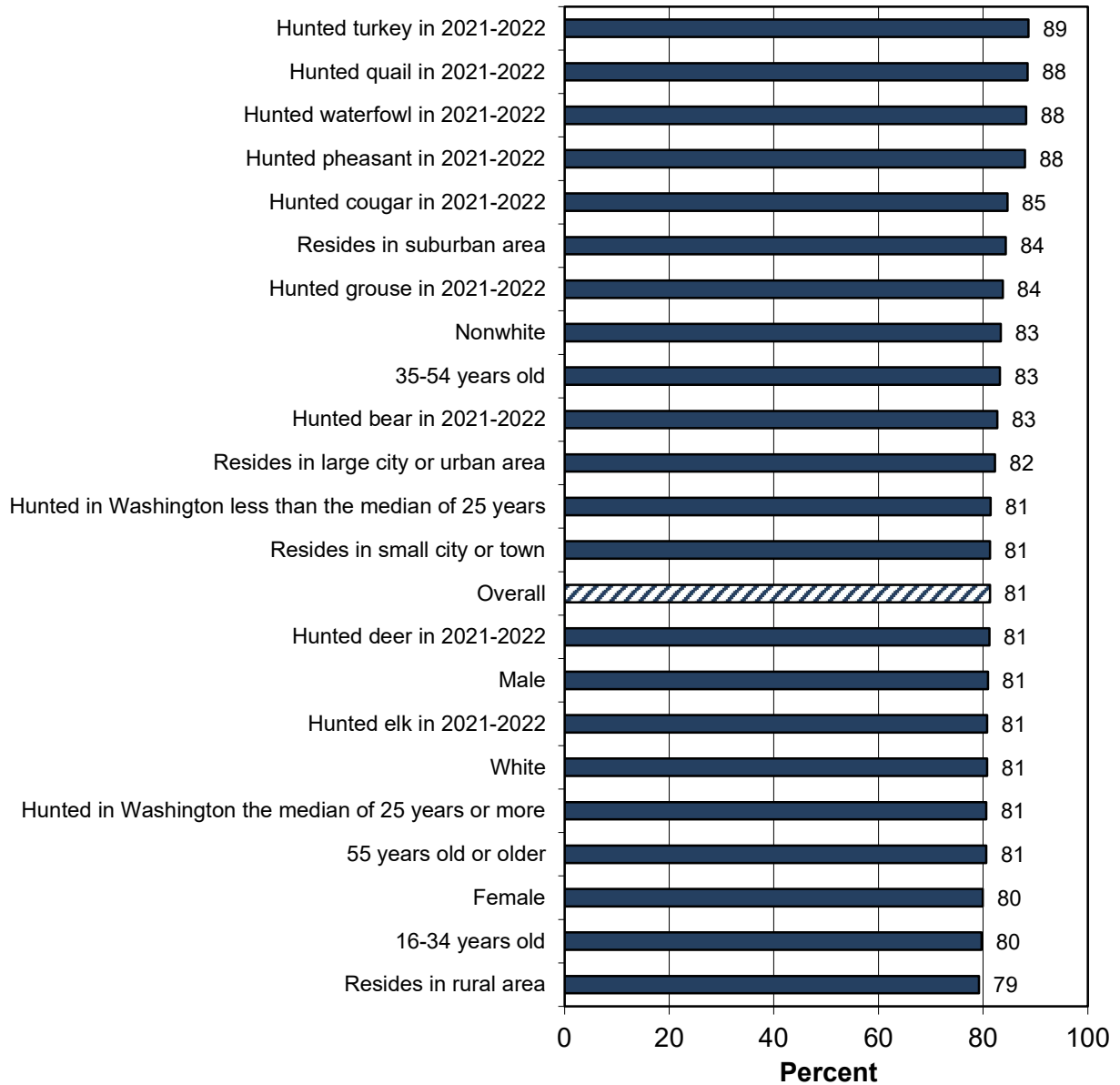
Pheasant, turkey, quail, and waterfowl hunters are less likely than other groups to say that private land access is unimportant or to give a neutral answer. There is little variation among the other groups.



A slight majority of hunters (53%) would support paying an annual fee to participate in recreation on lands enrolled in private lands access programs. In contrast, 27% would oppose paying a fee. The groups most willing to pay an access fee are turkey, quail, waterfowl, and pheasant hunters, as shown on the following page.

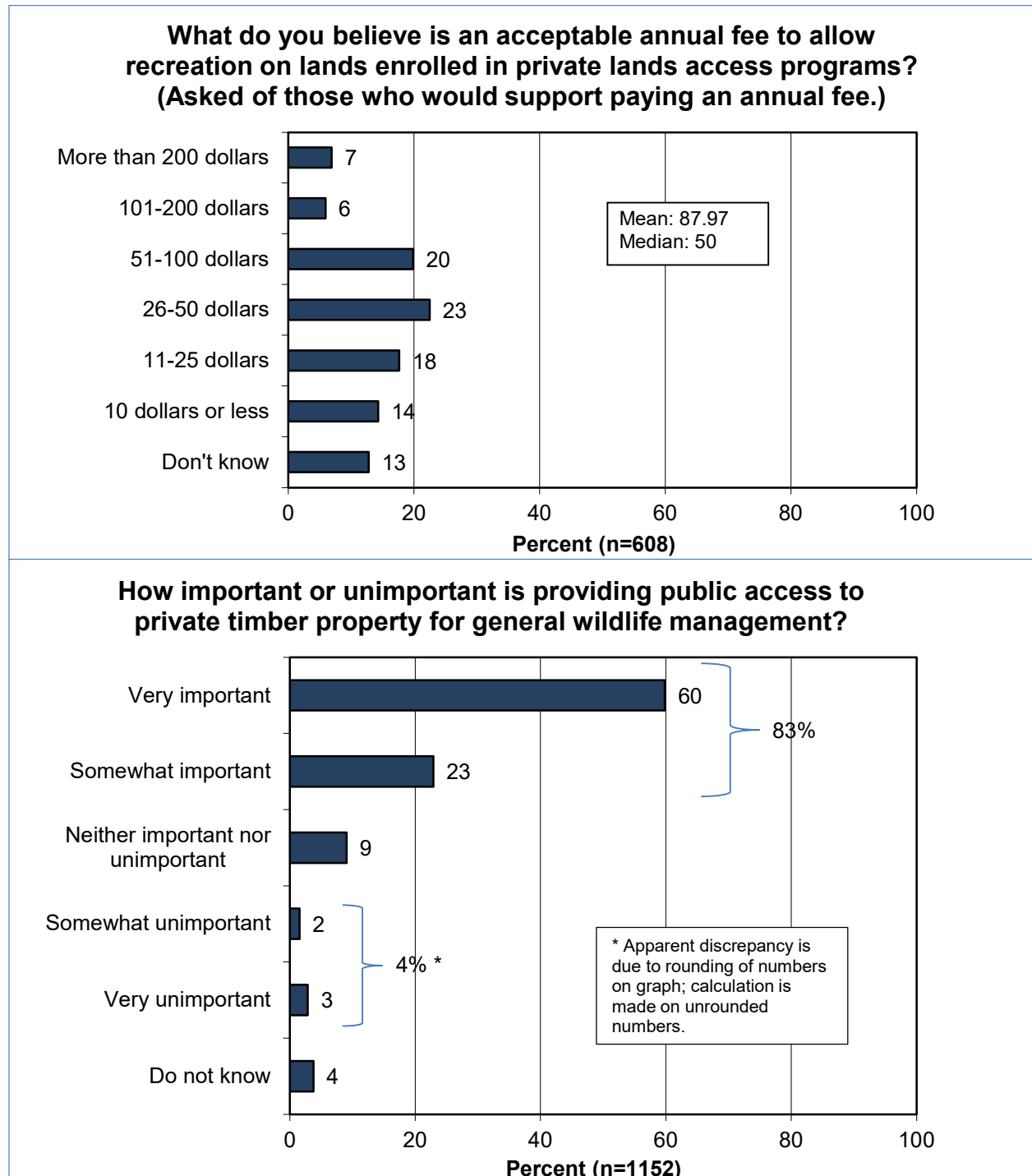


Percent of each of the following groups who strongly or moderately support paying an annual fee to participate in recreation on lands enrolled in private lands access programs:



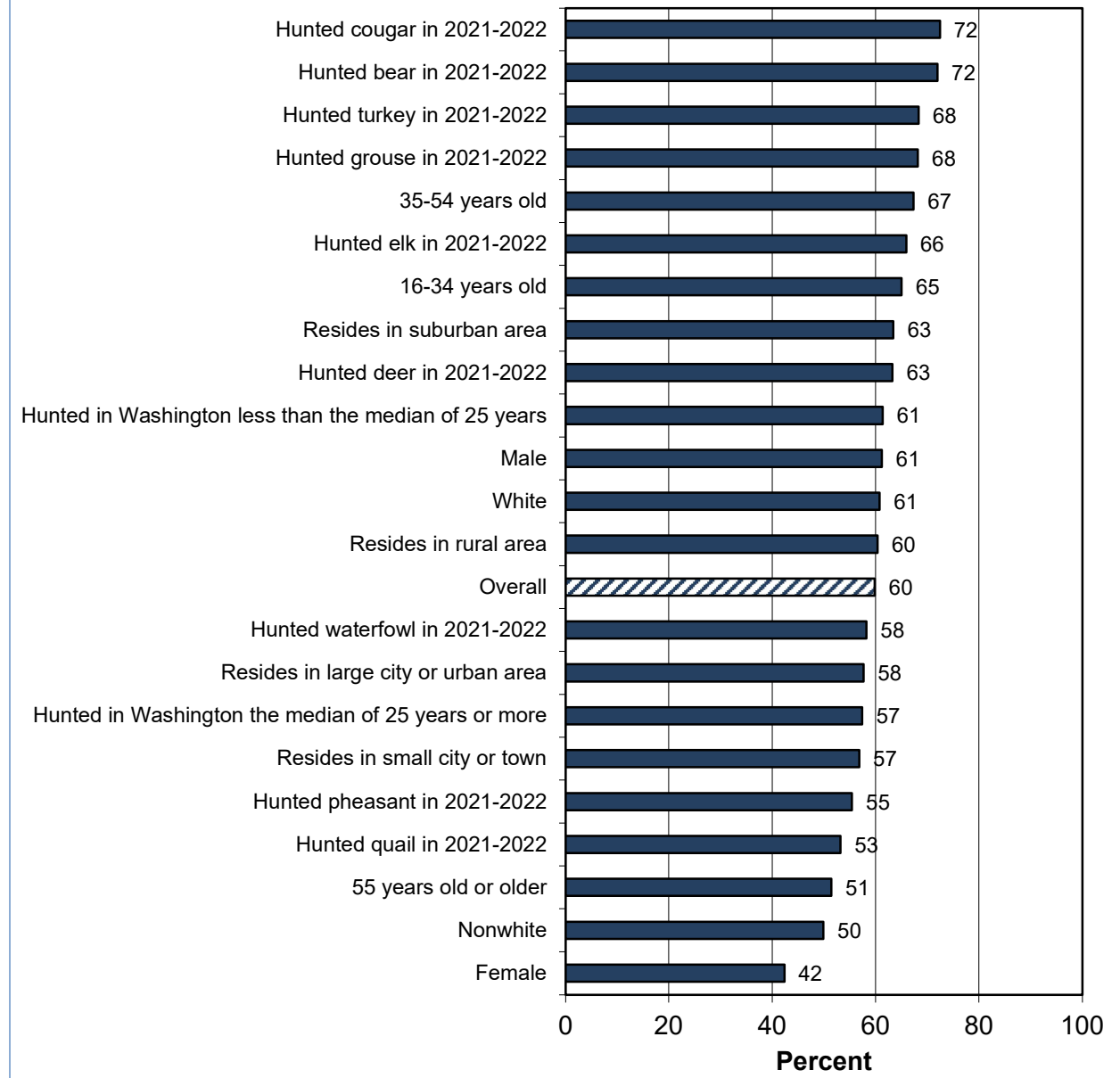
Among those who would support paying an annual fee for private lands access, the mean amount they think is acceptable is \$88.0 and the median is \$50.

The vast majority of hunters (83%) think it is important to provide public access to private timber property for wildlife management; 60% think it is *very* important. Only 4% think it is unimportant.

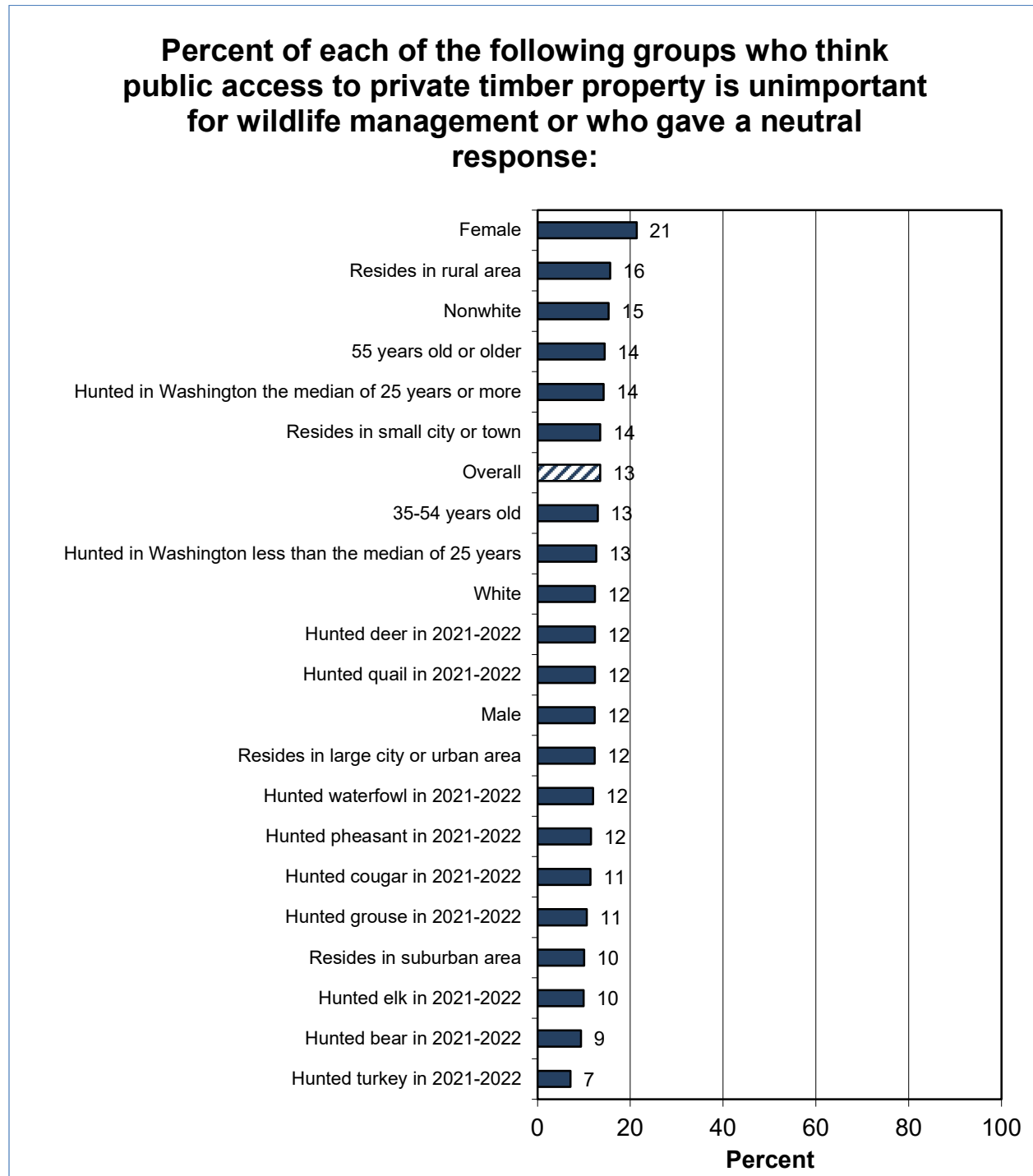


Cougar and bear hunters are the groups most likely to think access to private timber property is very important for wildlife management.

Percent of each of the following groups who think public access to private timber property is very important for wildlife management:

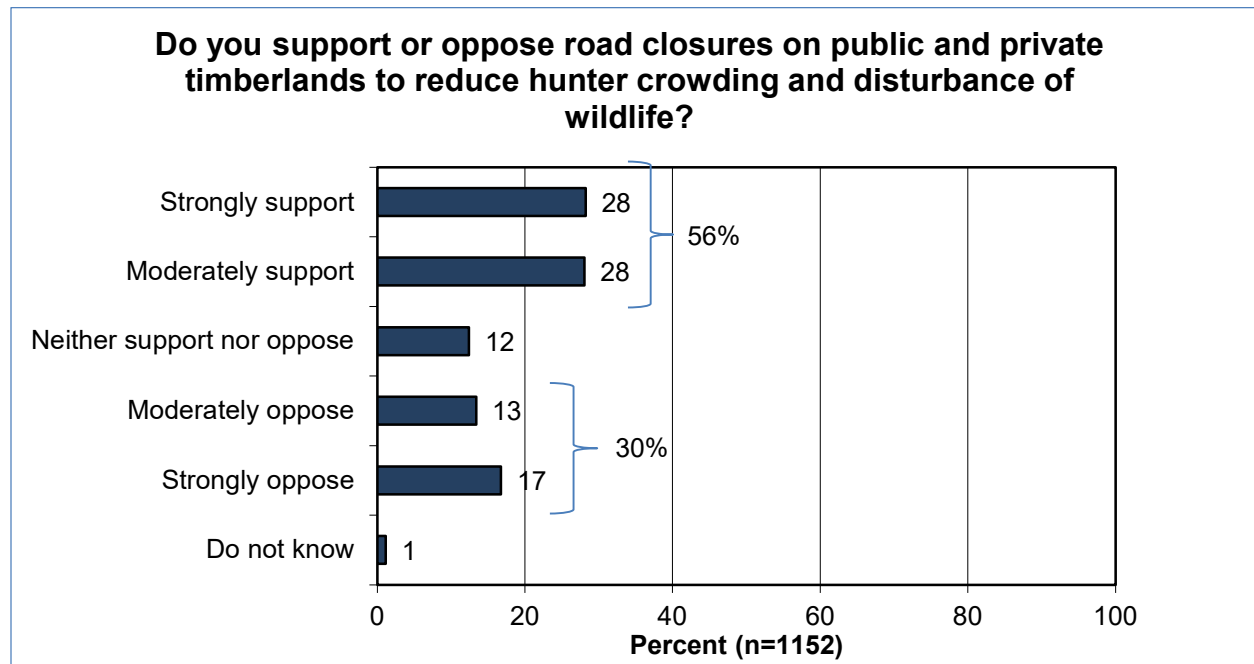


Female hunters were more likely than other groups to think that access to private timber property is unimportant for wildlife management (or to give a neutral answer).



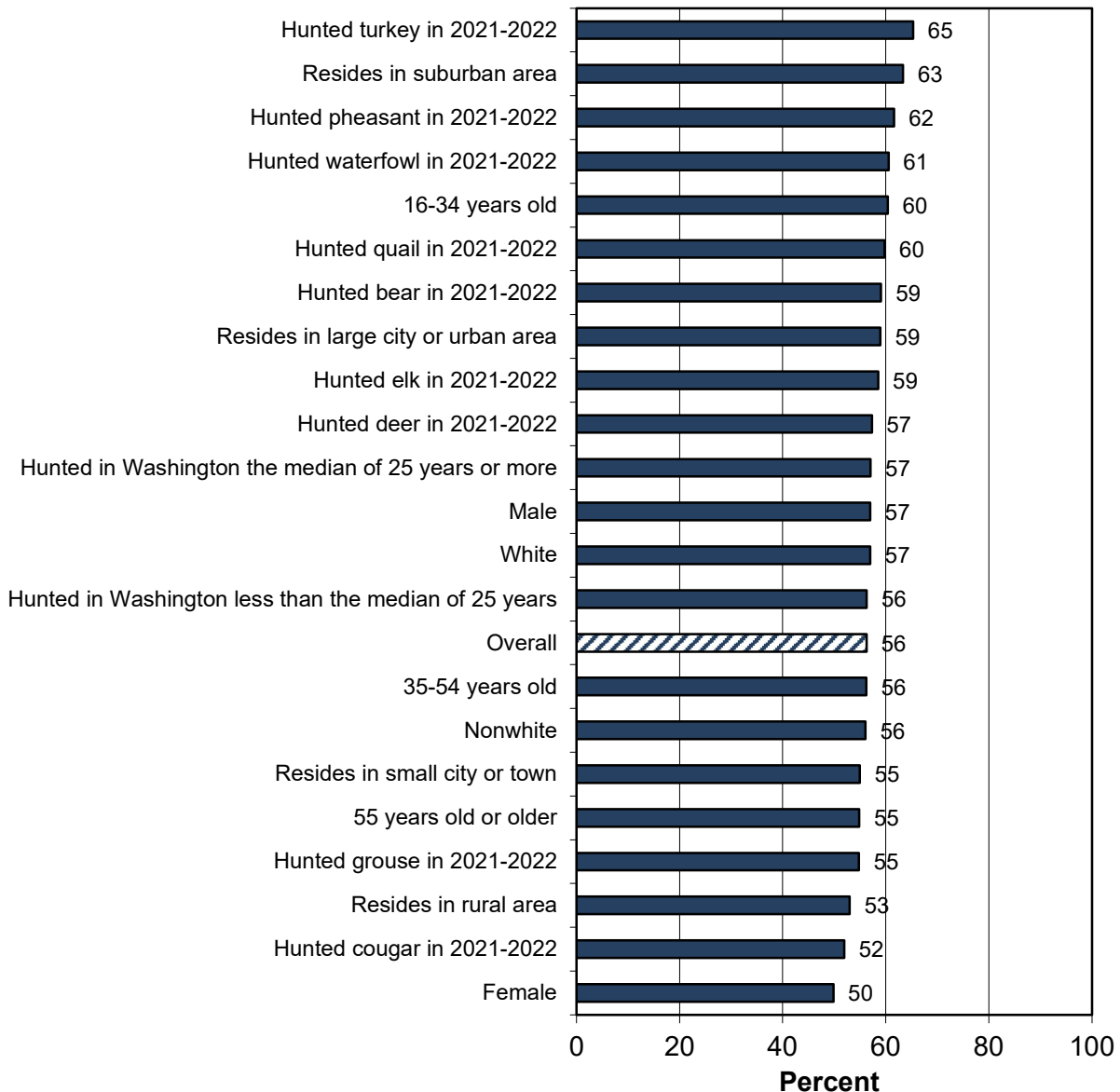
WILDLIFE AND HUNTING MANAGEMENT

A slight majority of hunters (56%) support road closures on public and private timberlands to reduce hunter crowding and disturbance of wildlife. However, a notable percentage (30%) oppose the road closures.

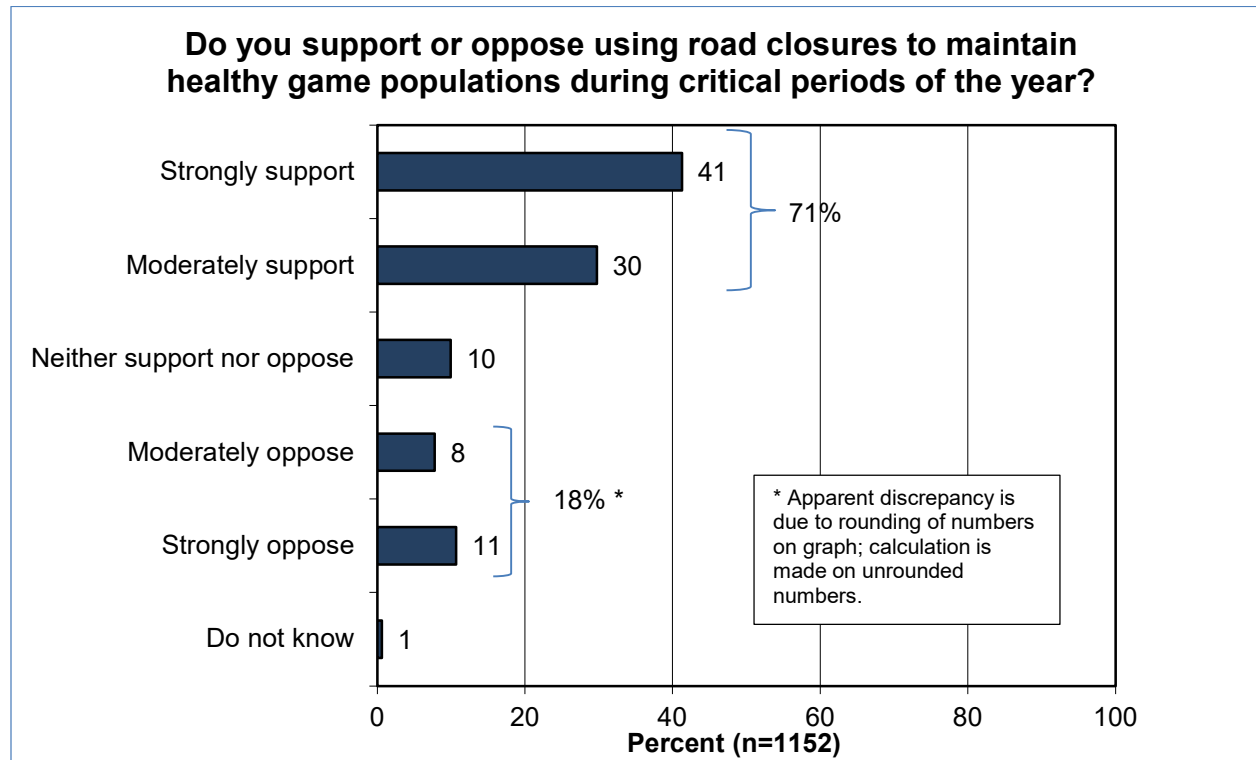


Turkey hunters and suburban residents are more likely than other groups to support road closures on timberlands to reduce hunter crowding and disturbance of wildlife.

Percent of each of the following groups who strongly or moderately support road closures on public and private timberlands to reduce hunter crowding and disturbance of wildlife:

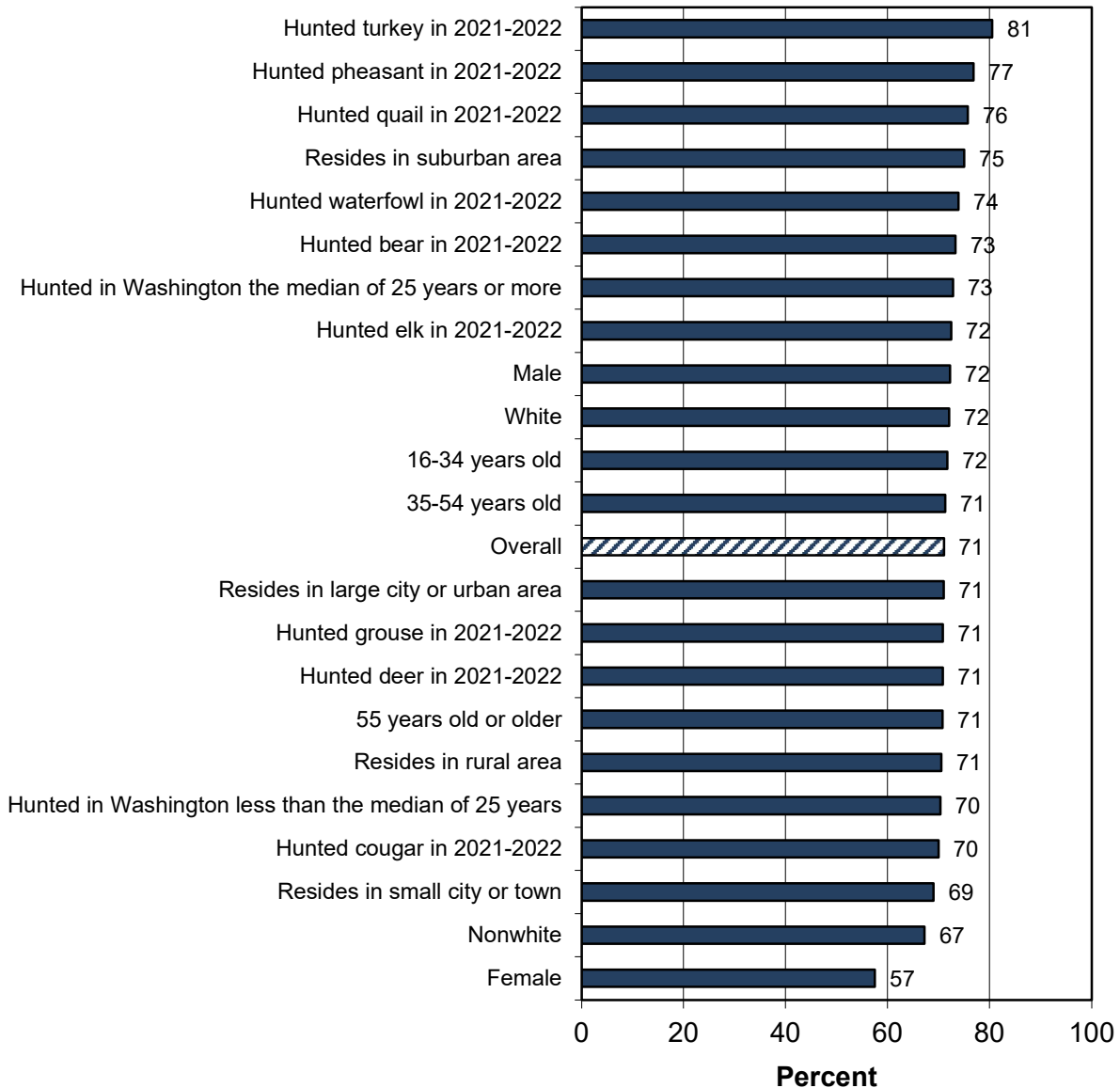


A solid majority of hunters (71%) support using road closures to maintain healthy game populations during critical periods of the year; 18% oppose.

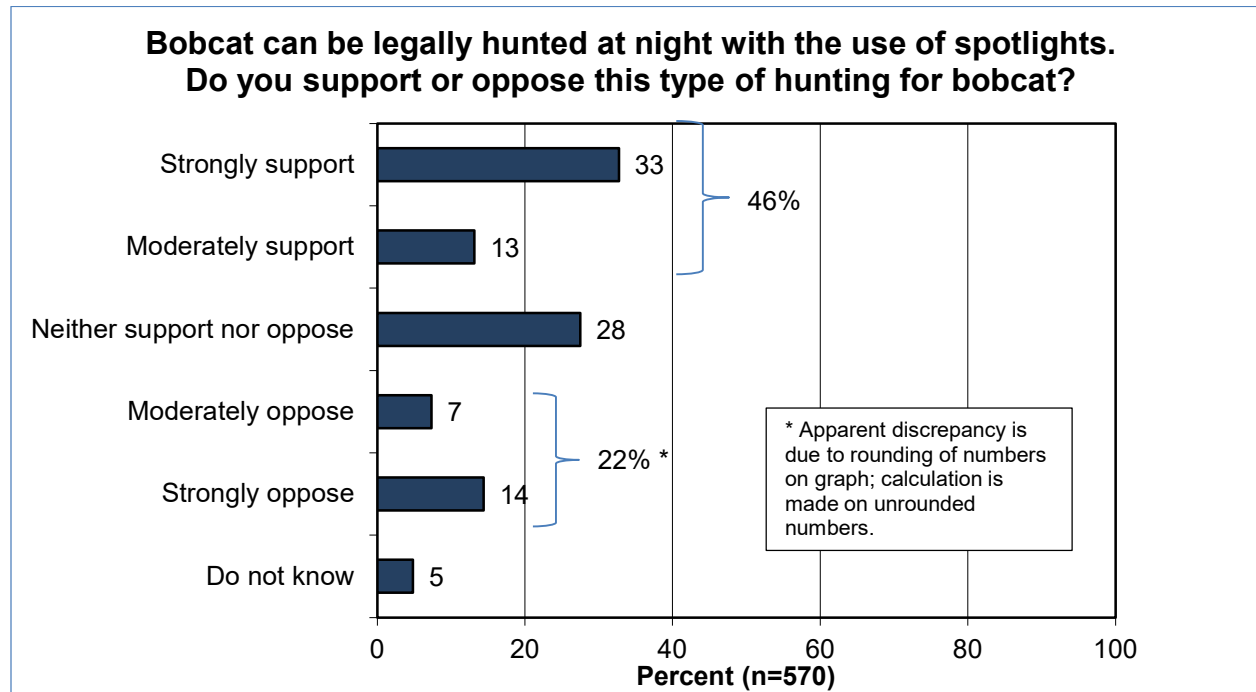


Turkey hunters are the most likely group to support road closures to maintain healthy game populations during critical periods of the year.

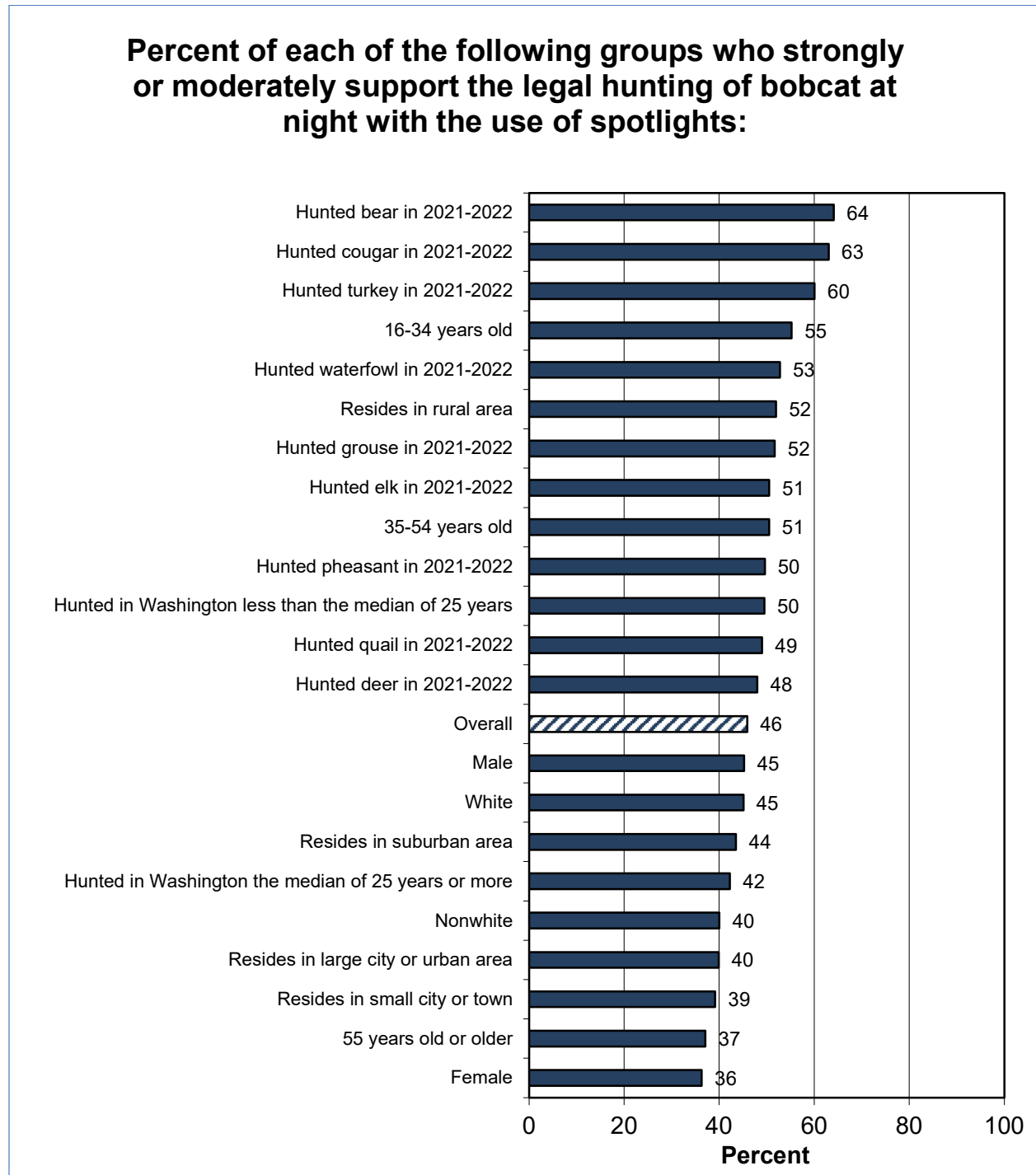
Percent of each of the following groups who strongly or moderately support using road closures to maintain healthy game populations during critical periods of the year:



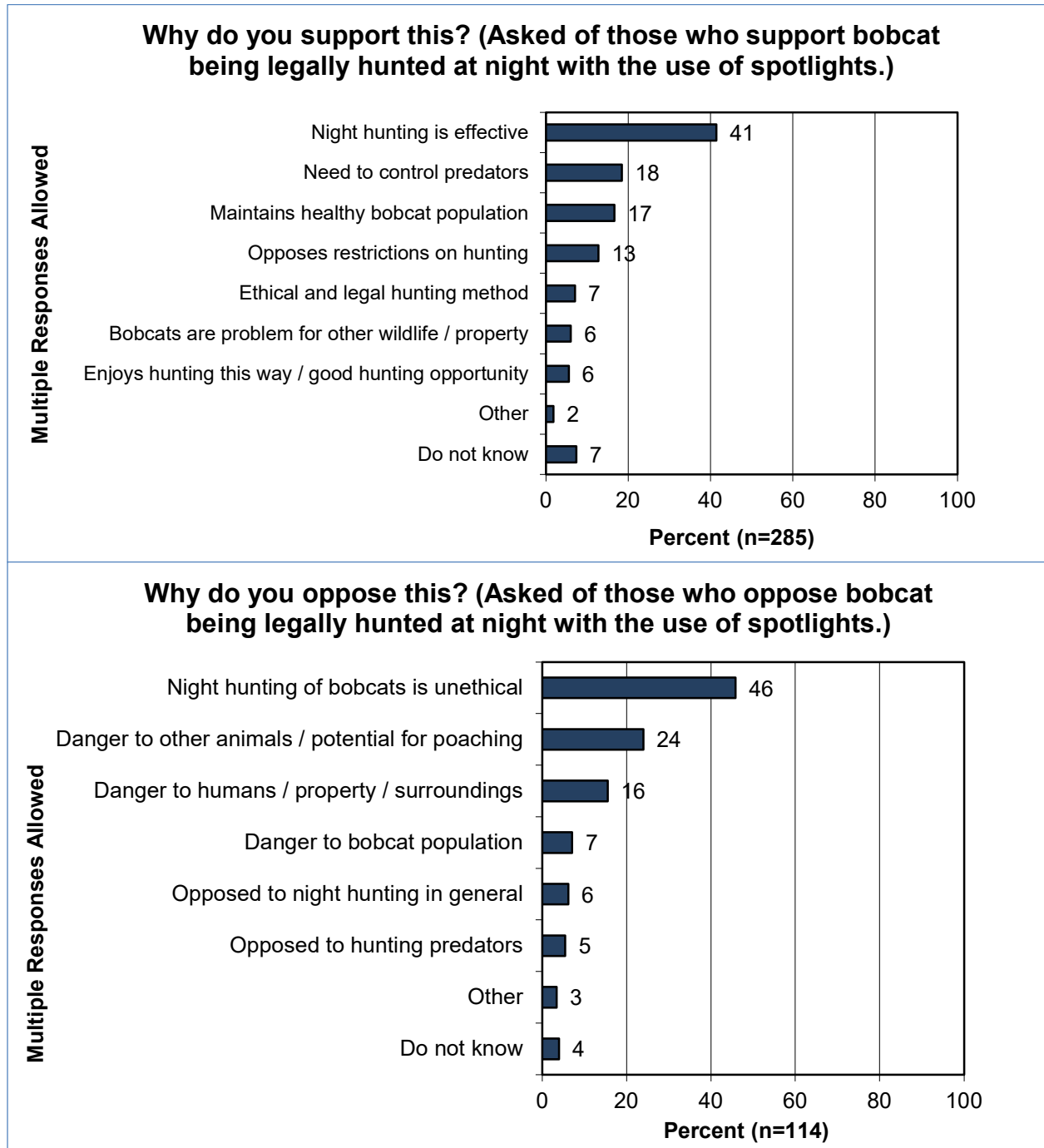
Hunters were informed that bobcat could be legally hunted at night with the use of spotlights. There was more support for (46%) than opposition to (22%) the practice.



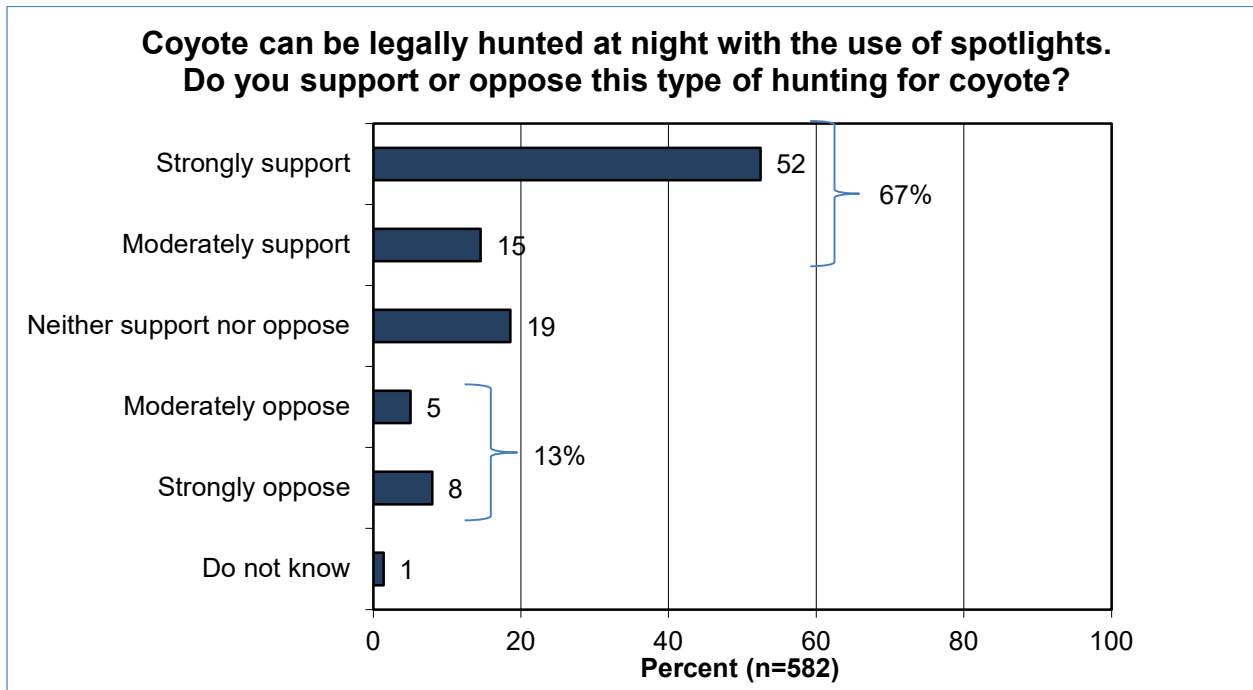
Bear and cougar hunters were more likely than other groups to support the legal hunting of bobcats at night with spotlights.



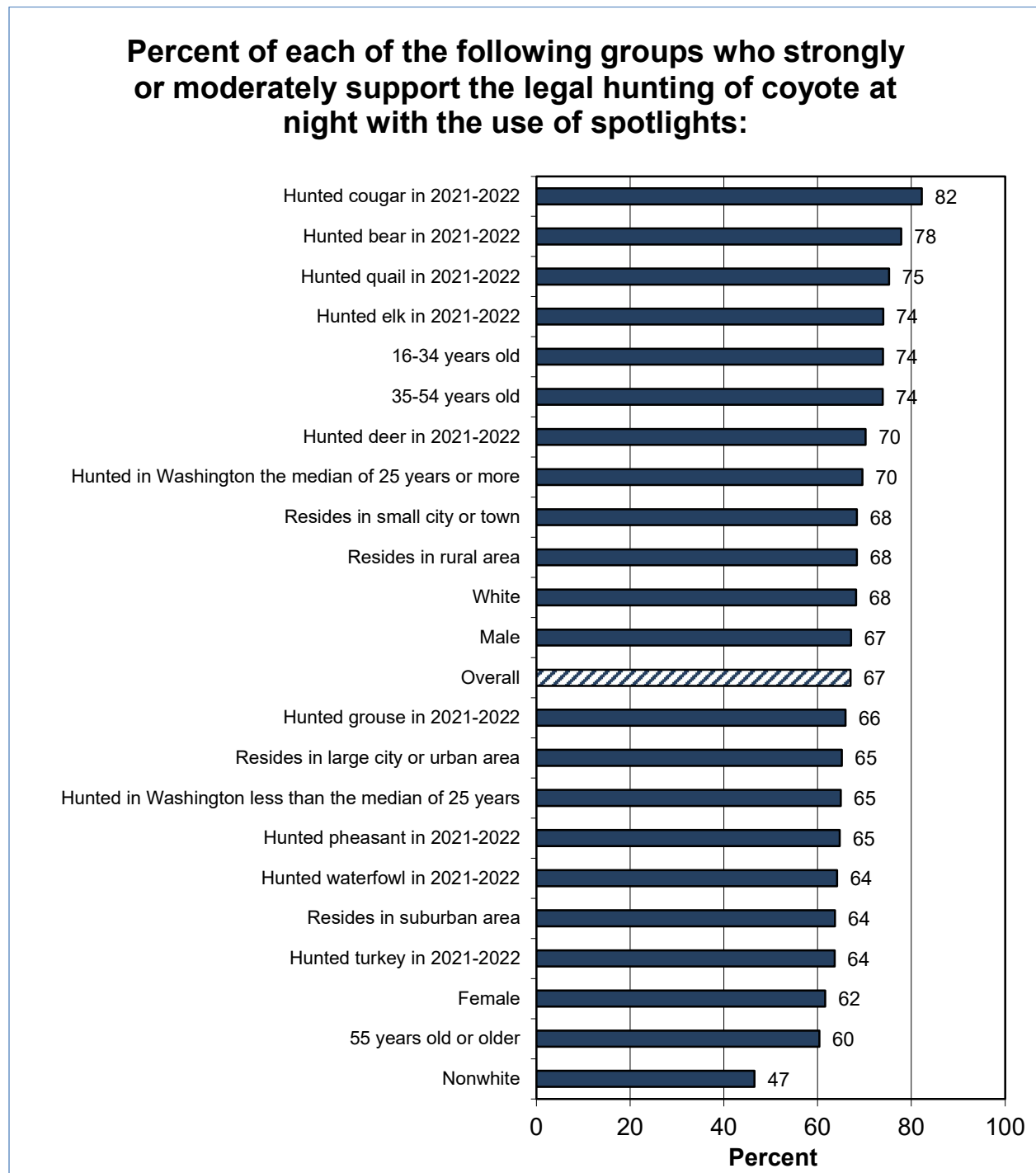
In an open-ended follow-up question, those who support the hunting of bobcat at night with spotlights most often support the practice because night hunting is effective (41% stated this). On the other hand, those who oppose most often do so for the belief that night hunting of bobcats is unethical (46%).



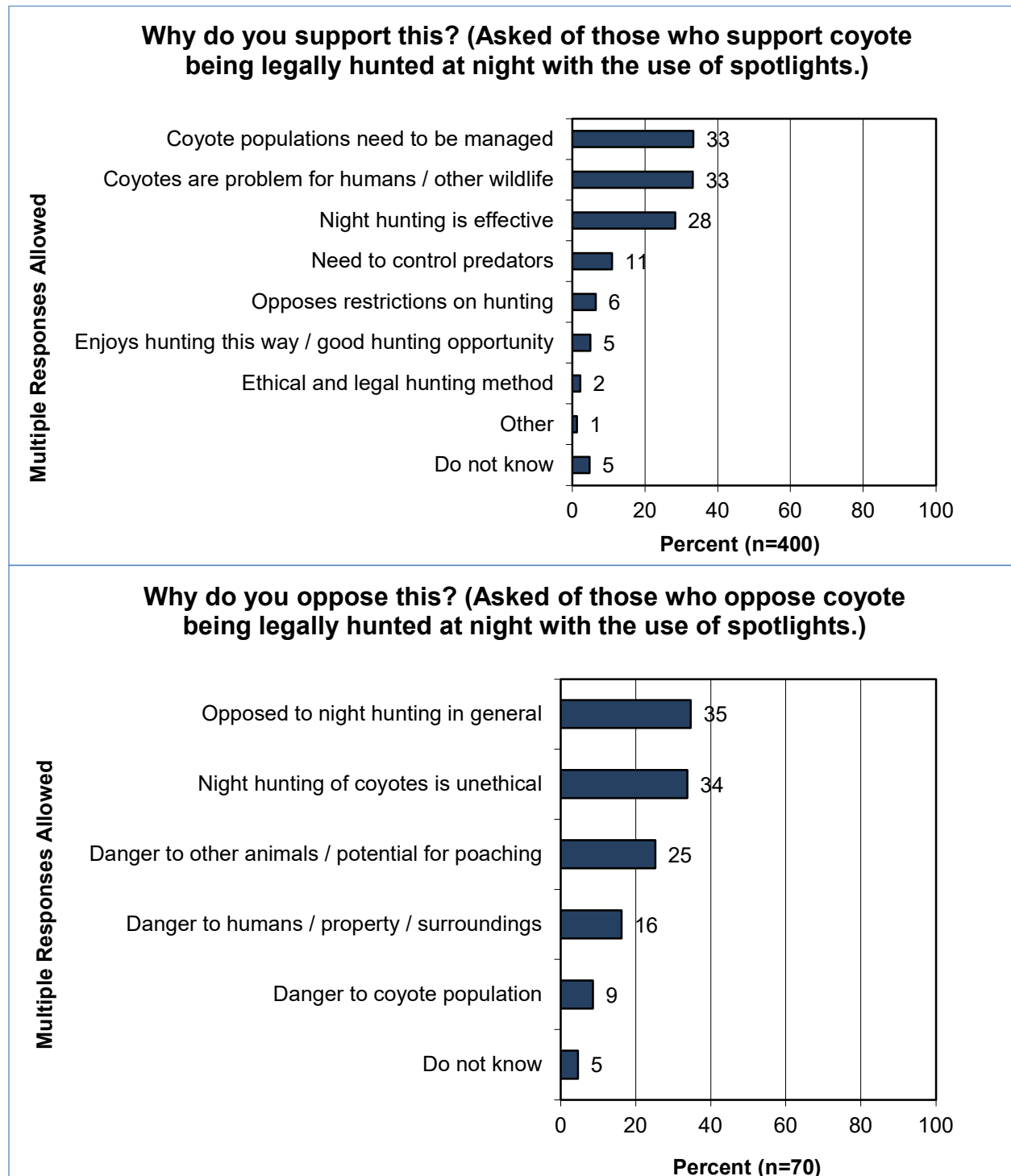
Two thirds of hunters (67%) support the legal hunting of coyote at night with the use of spotlights; 13% oppose.



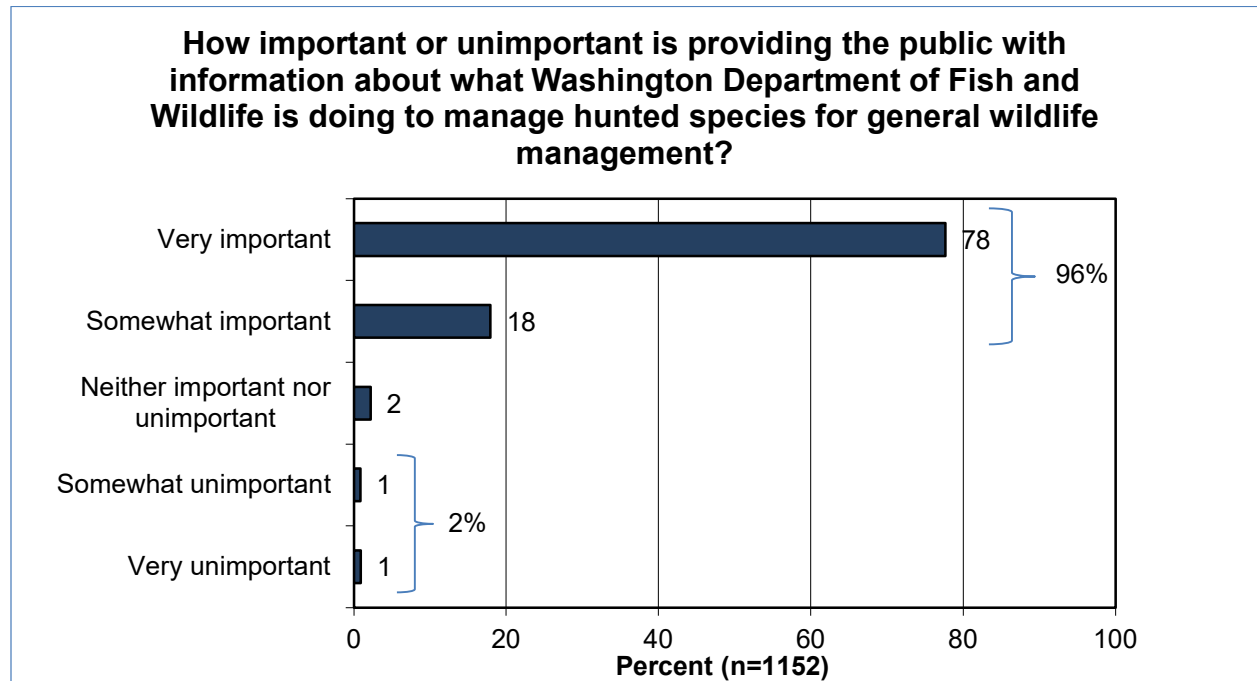
Cougar and bear hunters are more likely than other groups to support the legal hunting of coyote at night with the use of spotlights.



Those who support the legal hunting of coyote at night most often said the reason is that coyote populations need to be managed, that coyotes are a problem, and night hunting is effective. Those opposed are opposed to night hunting in general and think it is unethical.

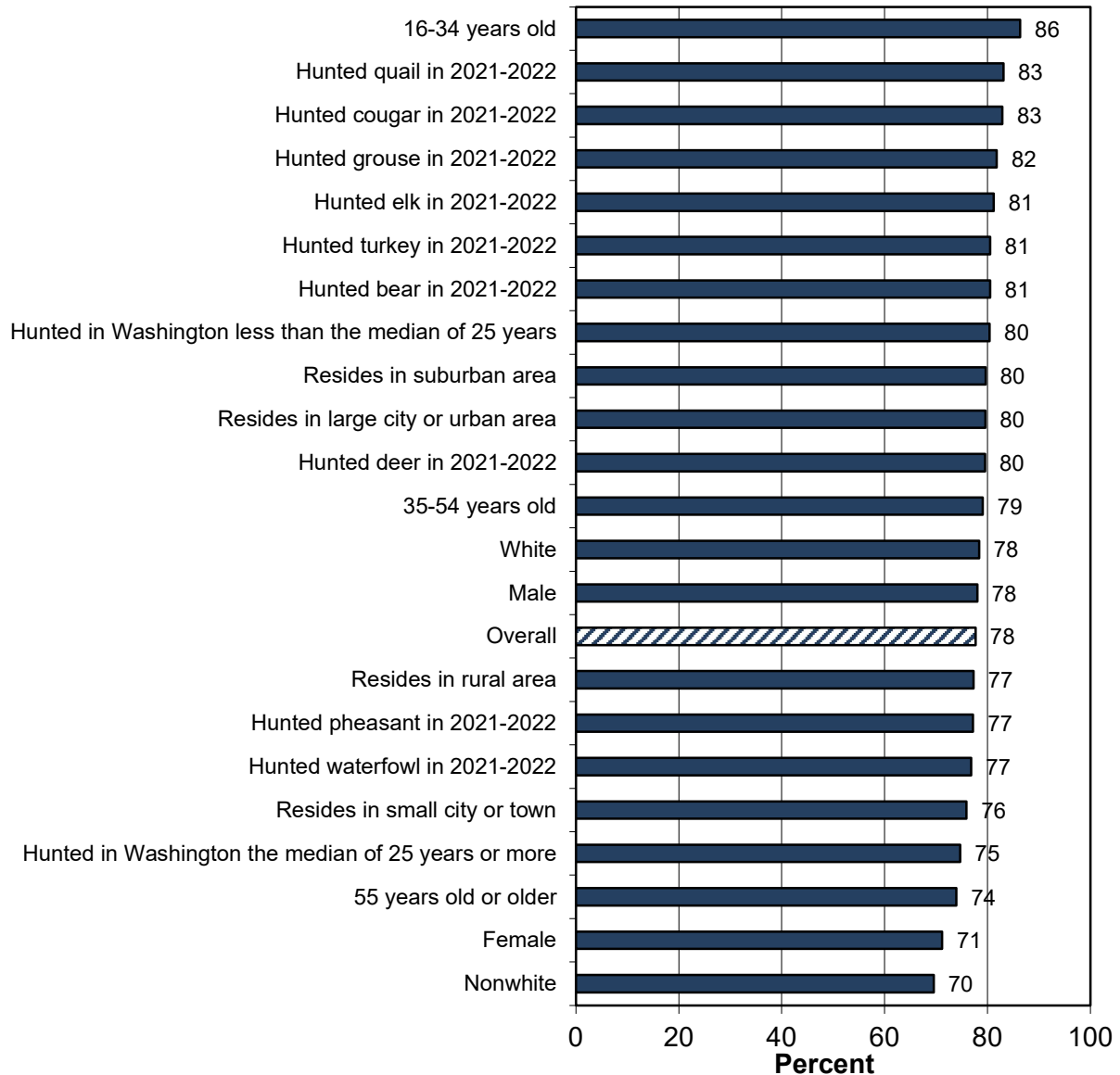


Almost all hunters (96%) think it is important for the Department to provide information about what it is doing to manage hunted species for overall wildlife management.

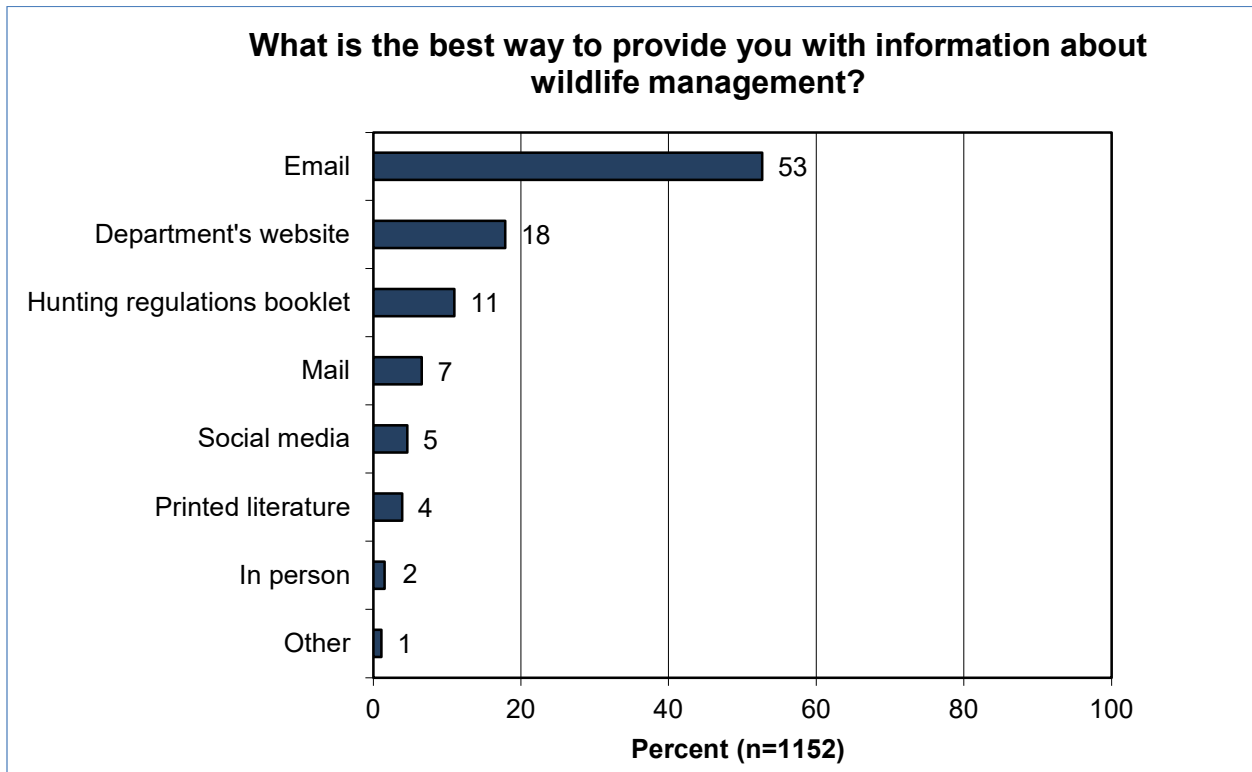


Younger hunters are the most likely to think it is *very* important to know about the Department's management of hunted species.

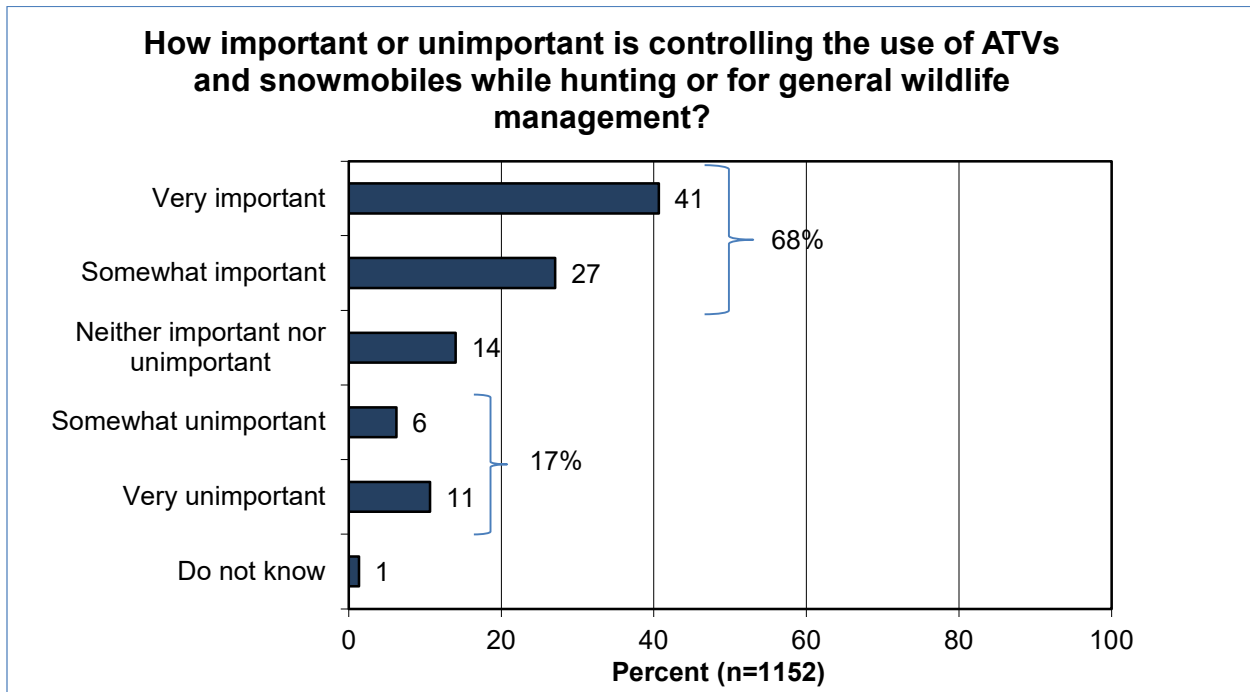
Percent of each of the following groups who think it is very important to provide the public with information about what the Department is doing to manage hunted species for general wildlife management:



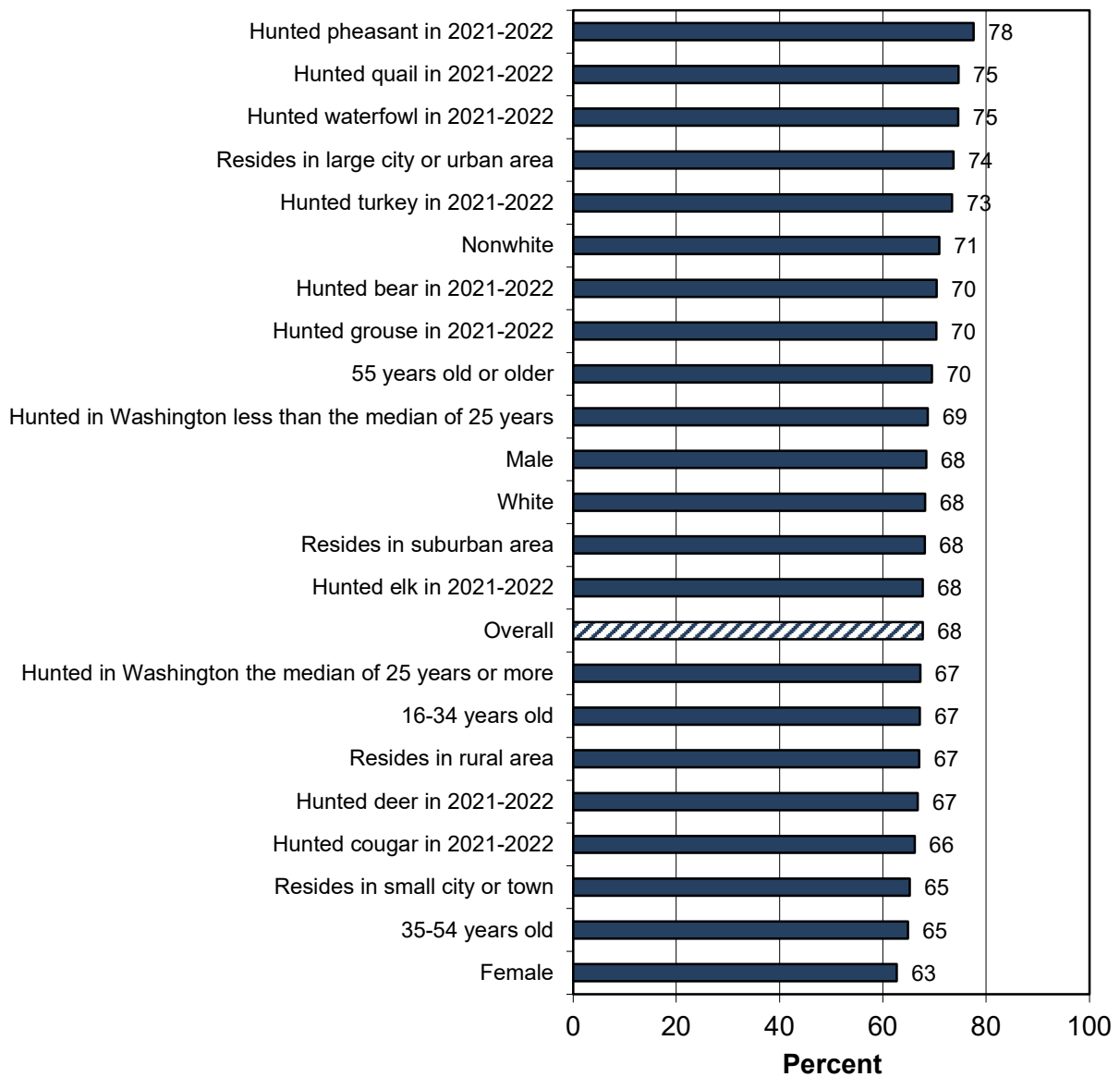
A majority of hunters (53%) say email is the best way to provide them with information about wildlife management.



Two thirds of hunters (68%) said that controlling ATVs and snowmobiles during hunting is important for wildlife management; 78% of pheasant hunters held this view.

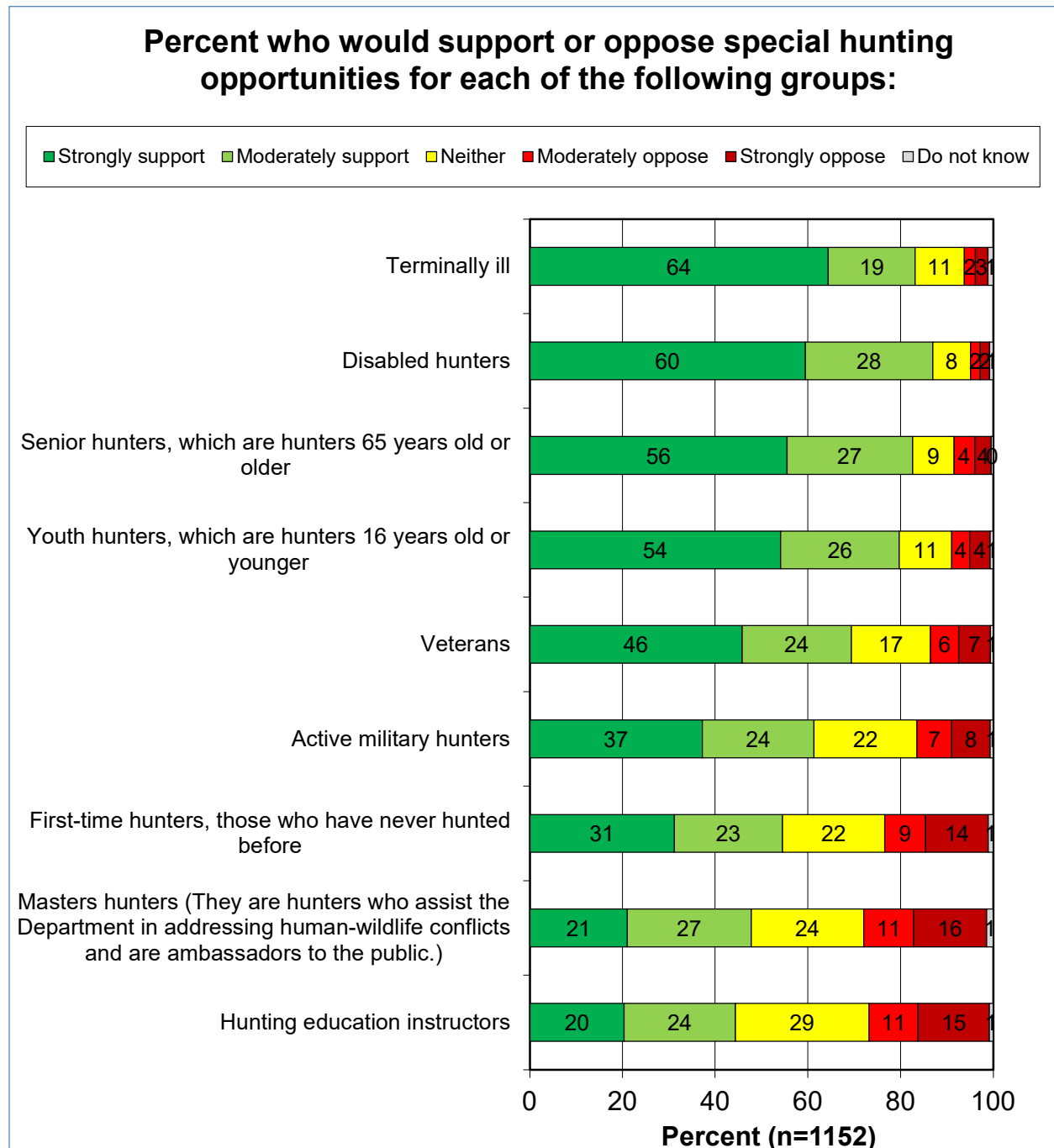


Percent of each of the following groups who think it is very or somewhat important to control the use of ATVs and snowmobiles while hunting or for general wildlife management:



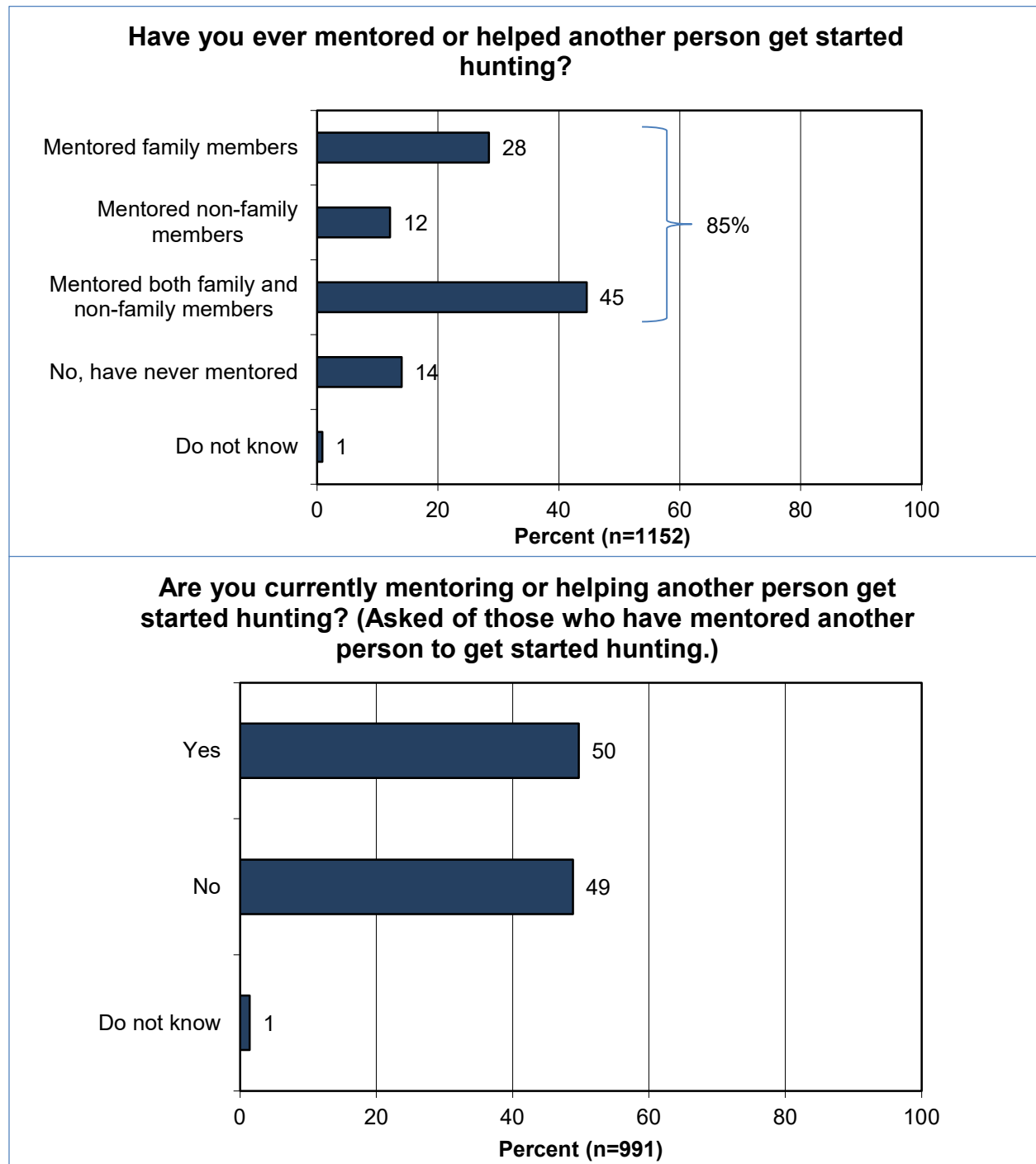
SPECIAL HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES

Hunters were presented with a list of special interest groups and were asked if they support or oppose special hunting opportunities for each. Majorities of Washington hunters had *strong* support for special hunting opportunities for the terminally ill, disabled hunters, seniors (65 or older), and youth (16 or younger).



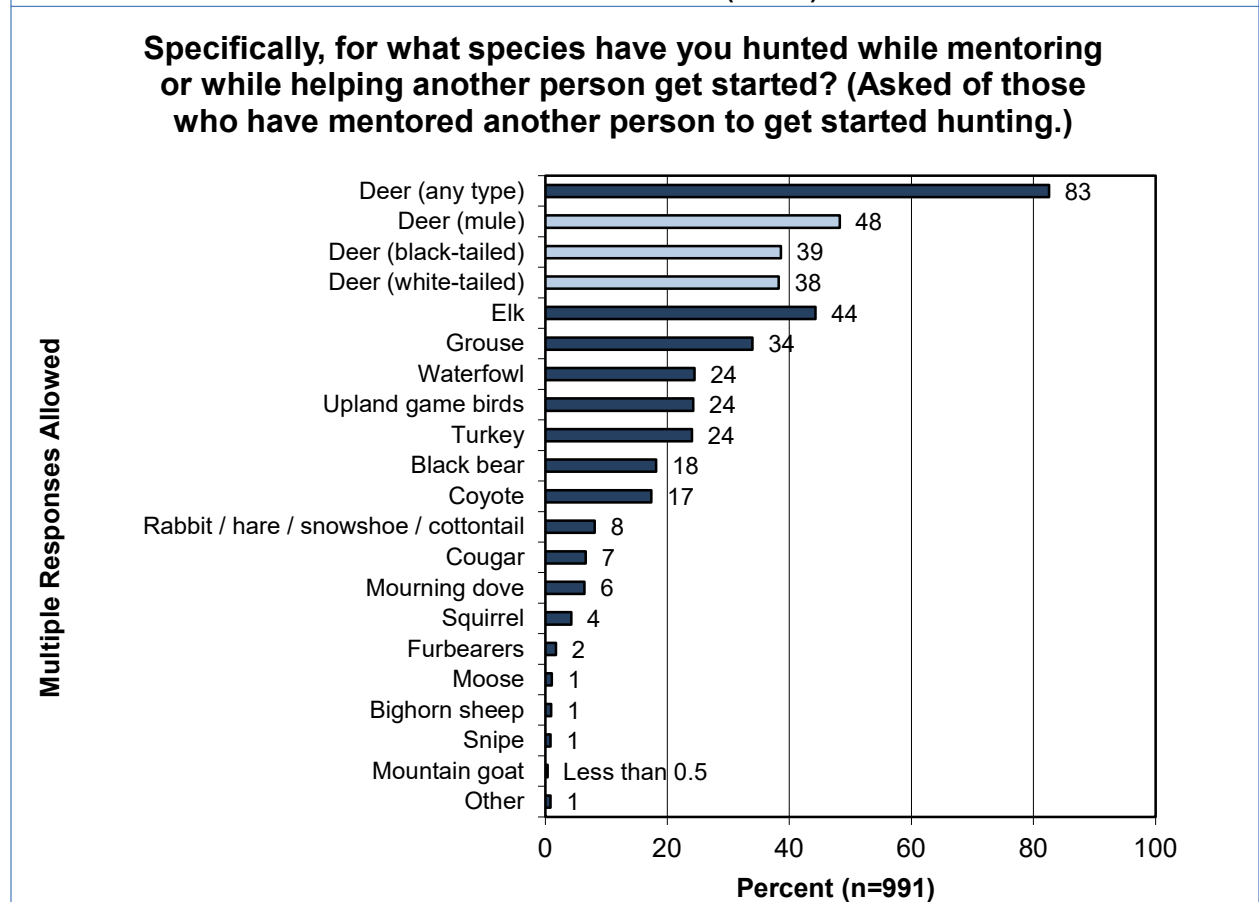
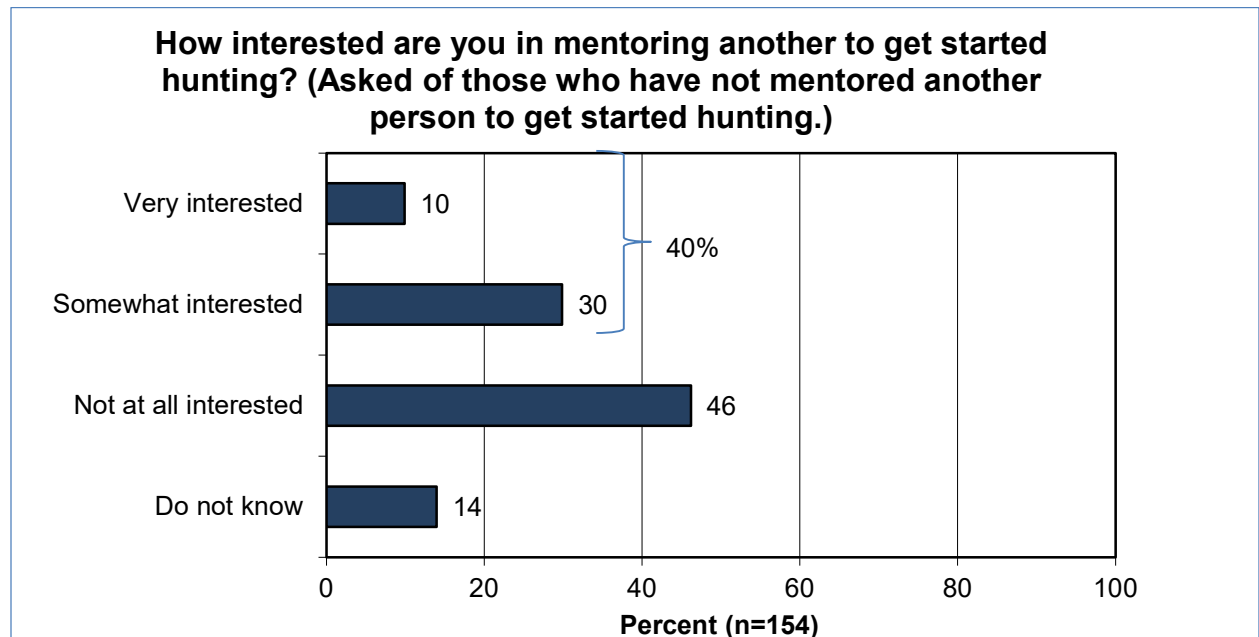
MENTORING

Most hunters (85%) have mentored another person to help them get started hunting. Nearly half (45%) have mentored both family and non-family members. In addition, half of those who have ever mentored are currently doing so.



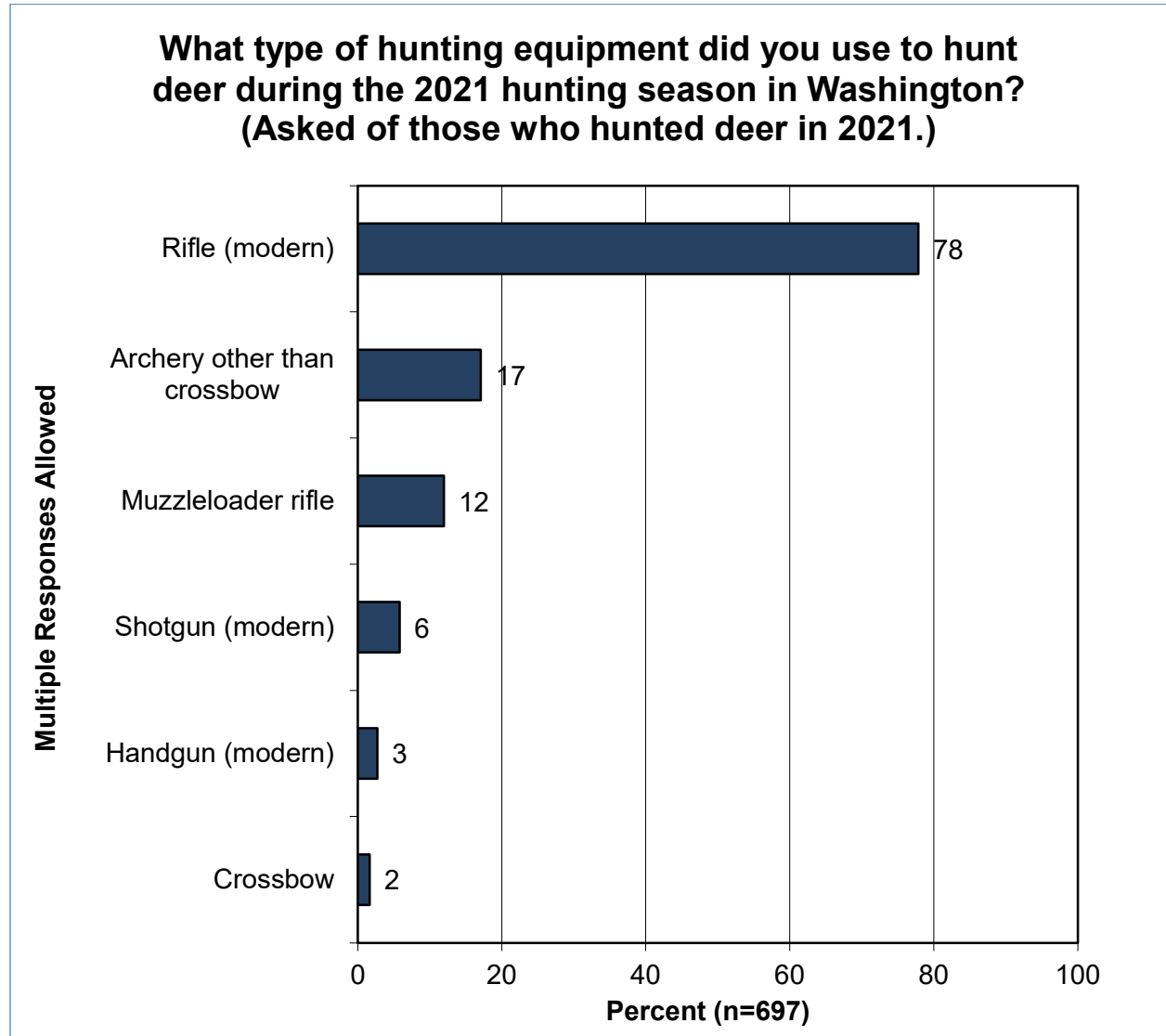
Two fifths of those who have not mentored another hunter (40%) are at least somewhat interested in doing so in the future.

Most of those who mentored others to start hunting did so while hunting deer (83%). Elk (44%) and grouse (34%) were also hunted by mentors and their protégés.

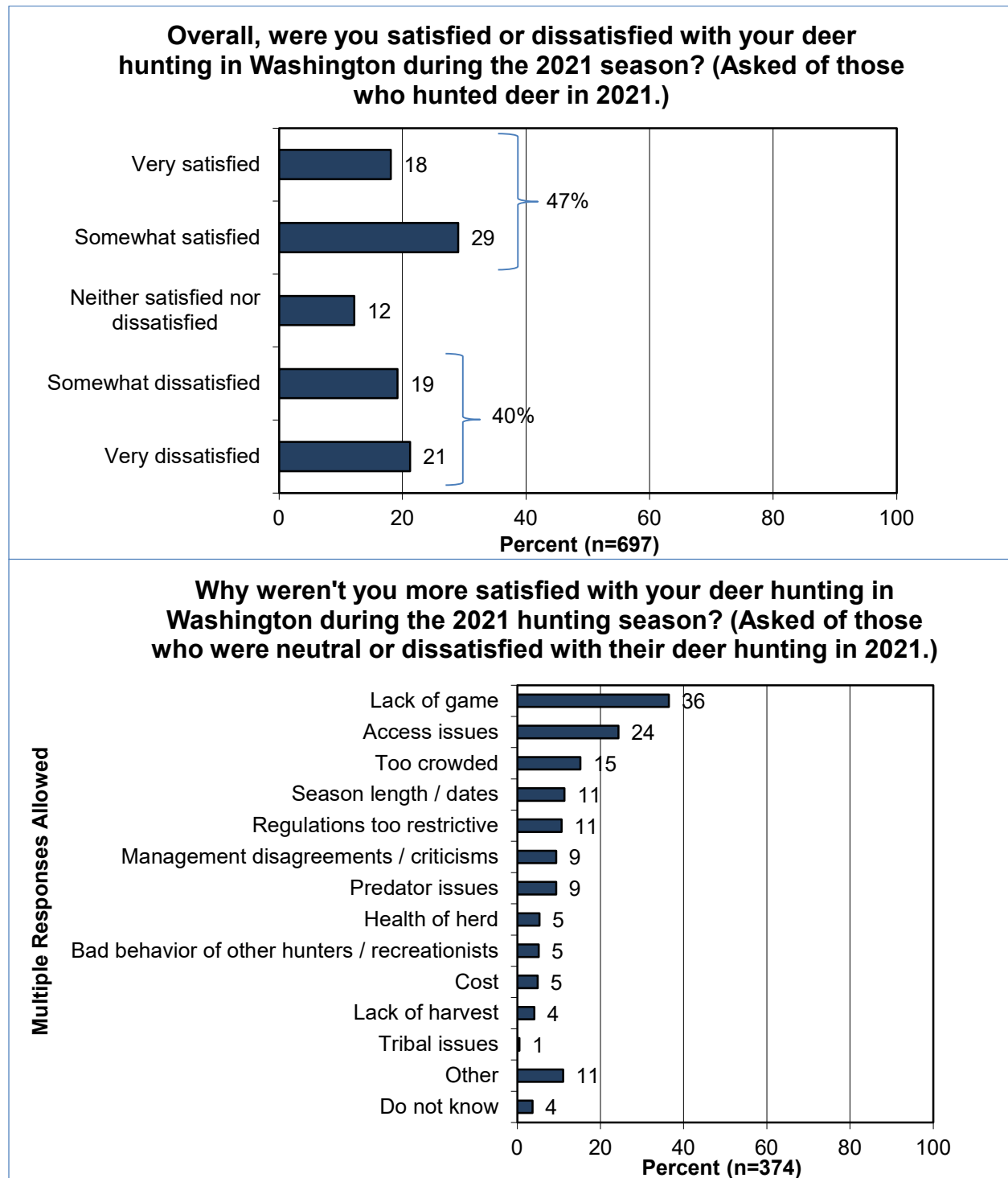


DEER HUNTING

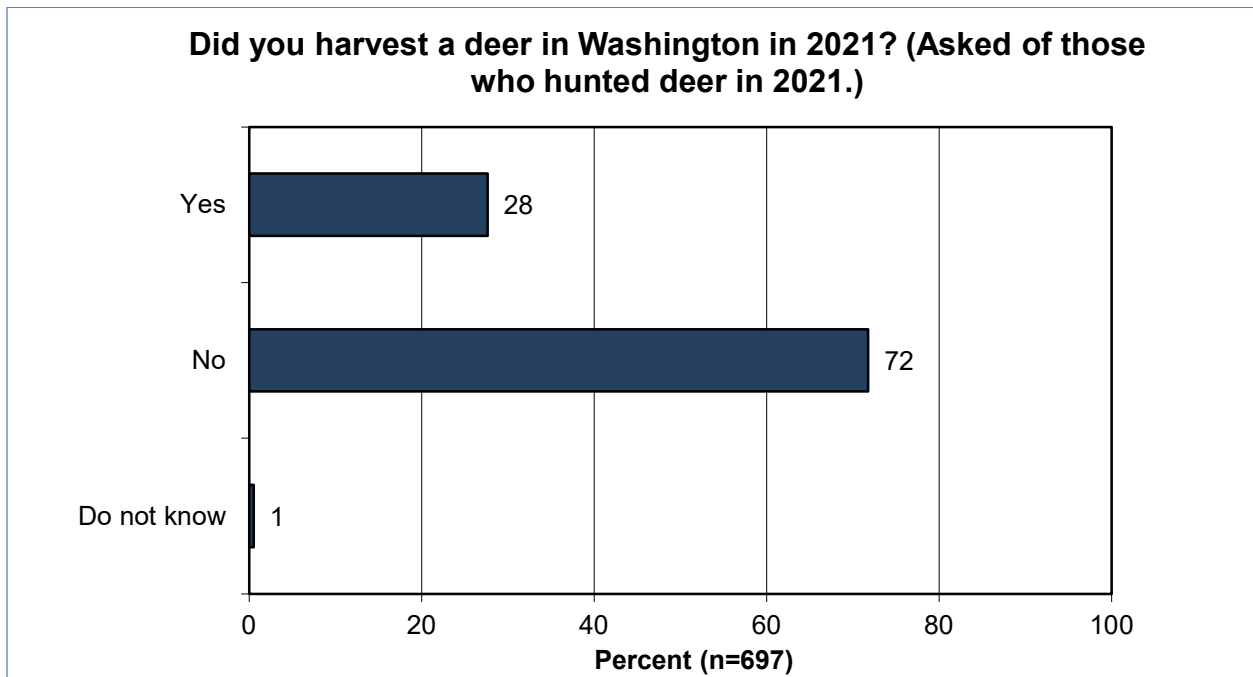
Deer hunters most commonly used a modern rifle during the 2021 deer season (78% used a rifle). They also often used archery other than crossbow (17%) and muzzleloader rifles (12%).



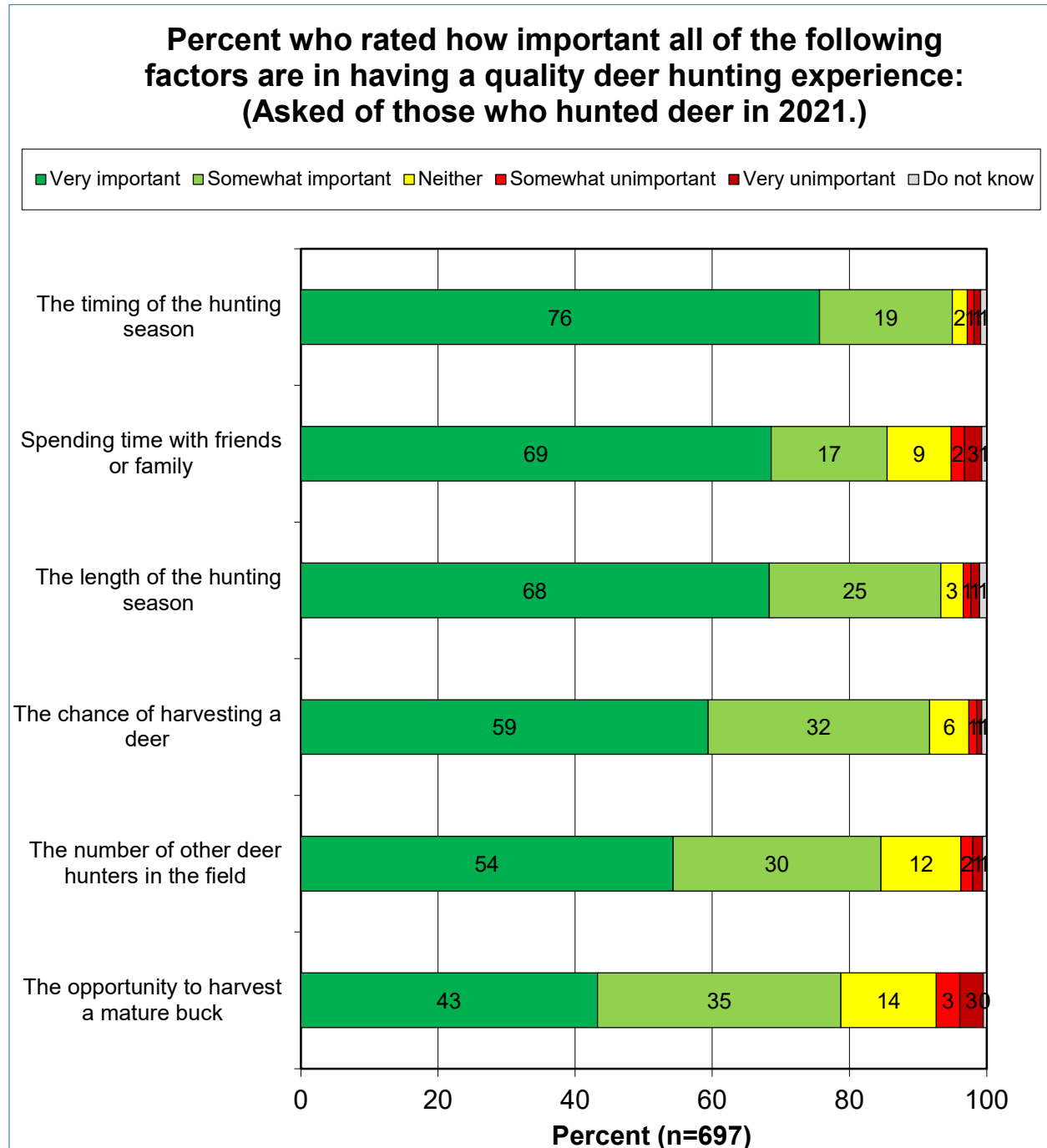
There were slightly more deer hunters who were satisfied (47%) than dissatisfied (40%) with their deer hunting in Washington during the 2021 season. Those who were not satisfied most often cited lack of game and access issues as the reasons.



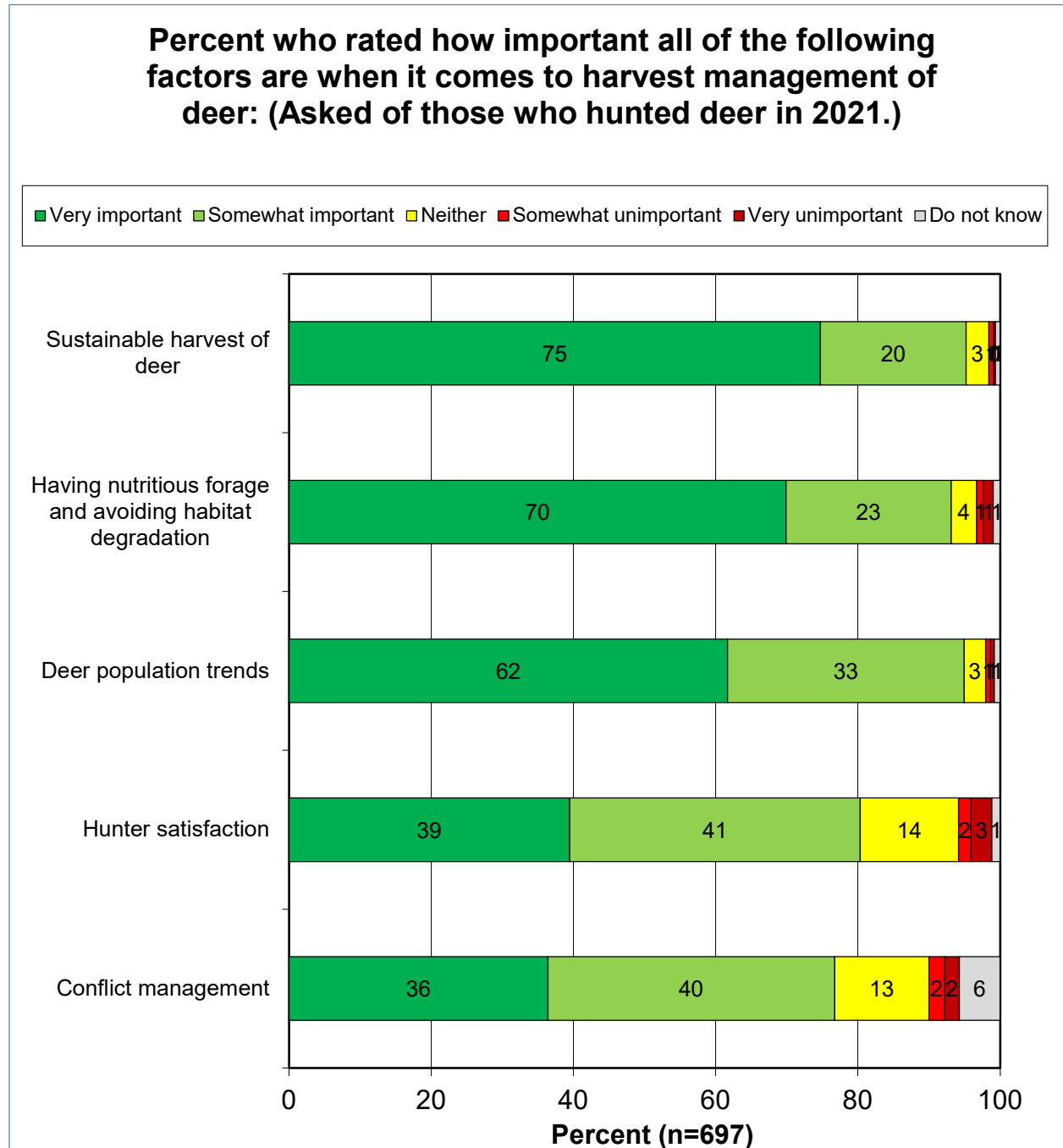
Over a quarter of deer hunters (28%) harvested a deer during the 2021 season.



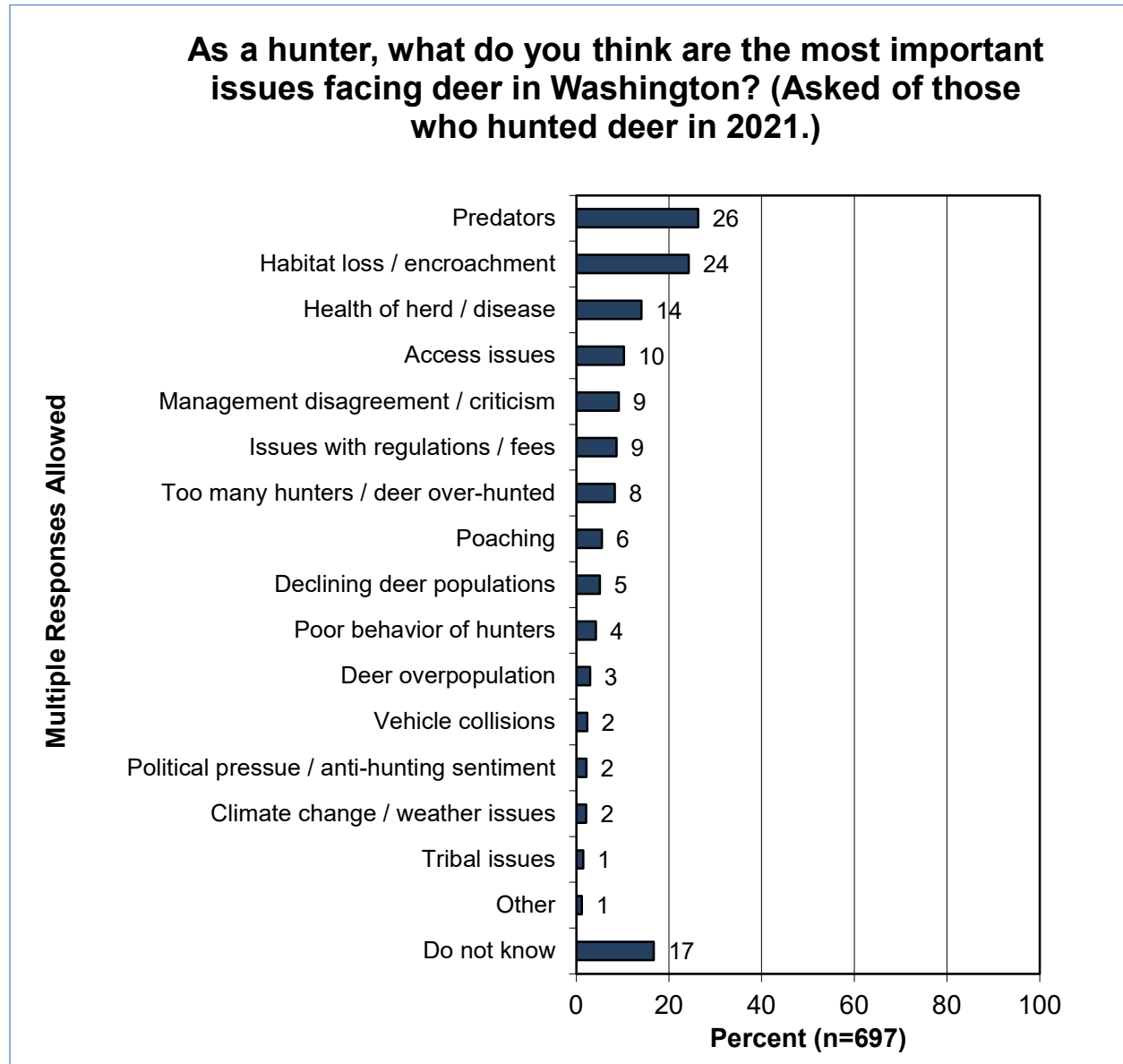
Deer hunters were asked to rate the importance of six factors in having a quality deer hunting experience. All of the listed items received high ratings; those with over two thirds rated as *very* important were the timing of the hunting season, time with friends or family, and the length of the hunting season.



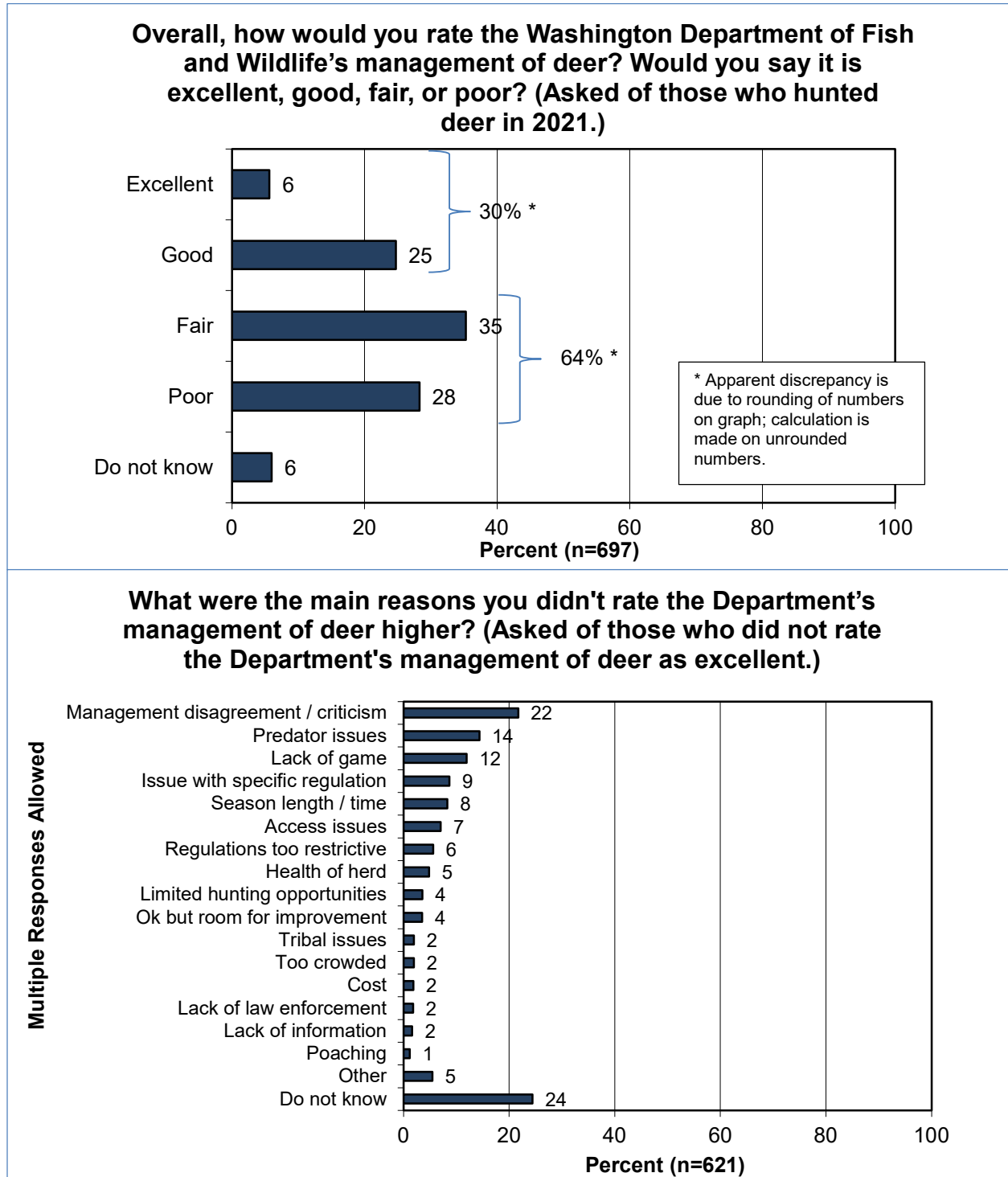
In another series, deer hunters were asked to rate the importance of five factors regarding the harvest management of deer. The ratings of *very important* were highest for the sustainable harvest of deer (75%), nutritious forage and avoidance of habitat degradation (70%), and deer population trends (62%).



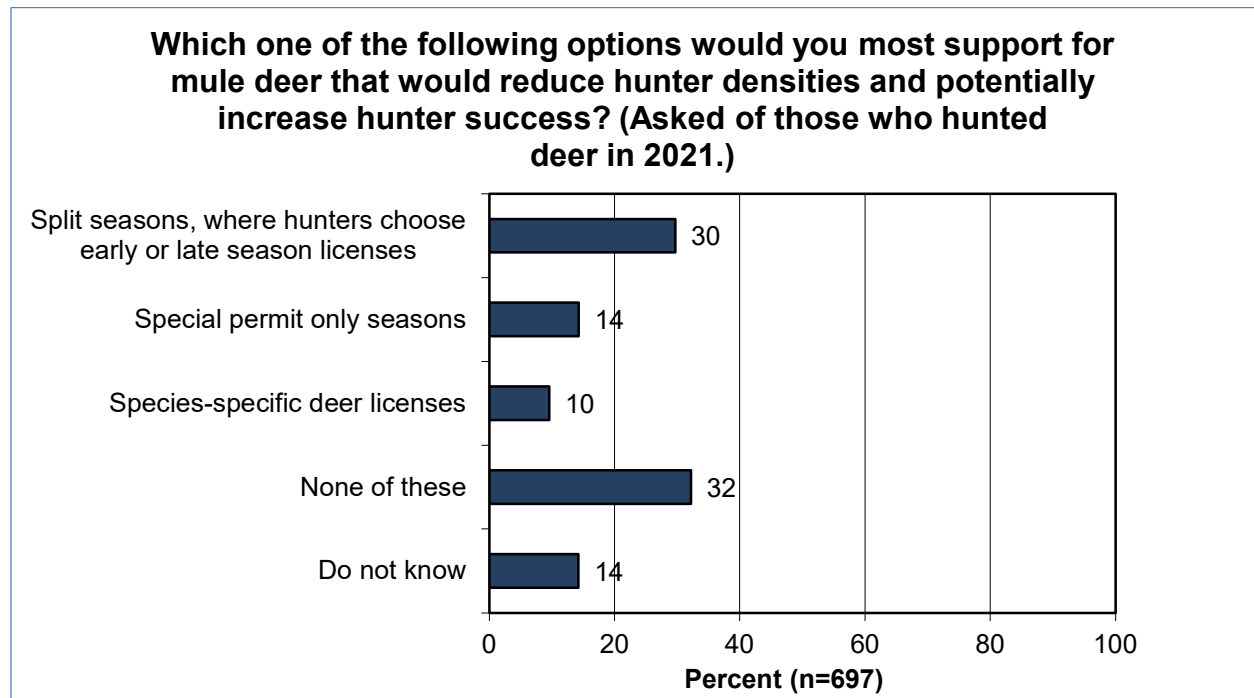
Deer hunters were asked to name the most important issues facing deer in Washington, in an open-ended question. The top responses were predators (26% of hunters stated this), habitat loss (24%), and disease or the health of the herd (14%).



The Department's management of deer was not rated very well by Washington deer hunters. Under a third (30%) rated the management in the top half of the scale (6% excellent; 25% good), whereas nearly two thirds (64%) rated it at the bottom half of the scale (35% fair; 28% poor). Lower ratings were often the result of hunters' disagreement with management decisions.



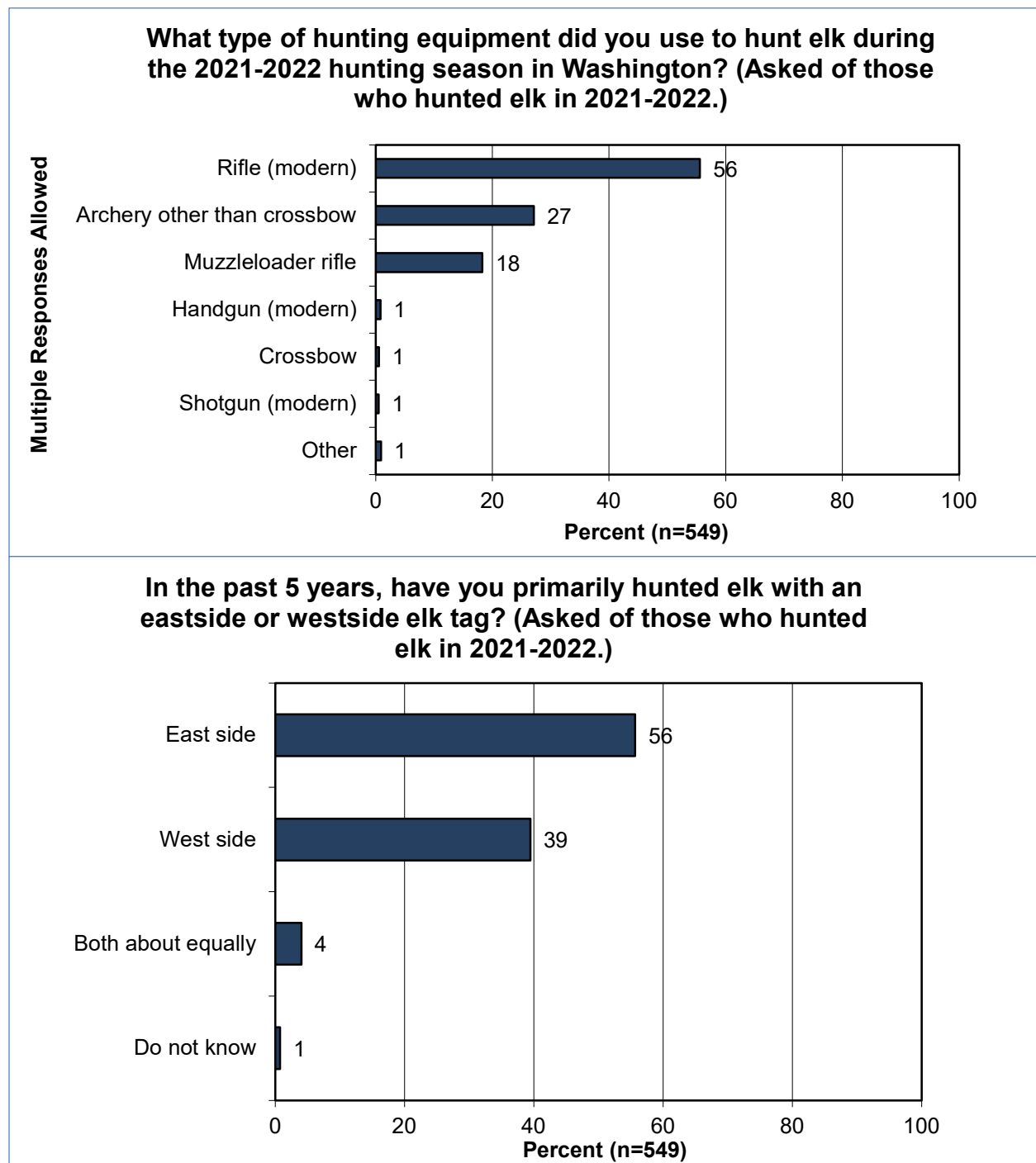
Deer hunters were presented with three options for mule deer and were asked which would reduce hunter densities and potentially increase hunter success. The top result was split seasons, in which hunters could choose an early or late season license (30% of deer hunters chose this), followed by a special permit only season (14%) and species-specific deer licenses (10%). However, a third of deer hunters (32%) chose none of those options.



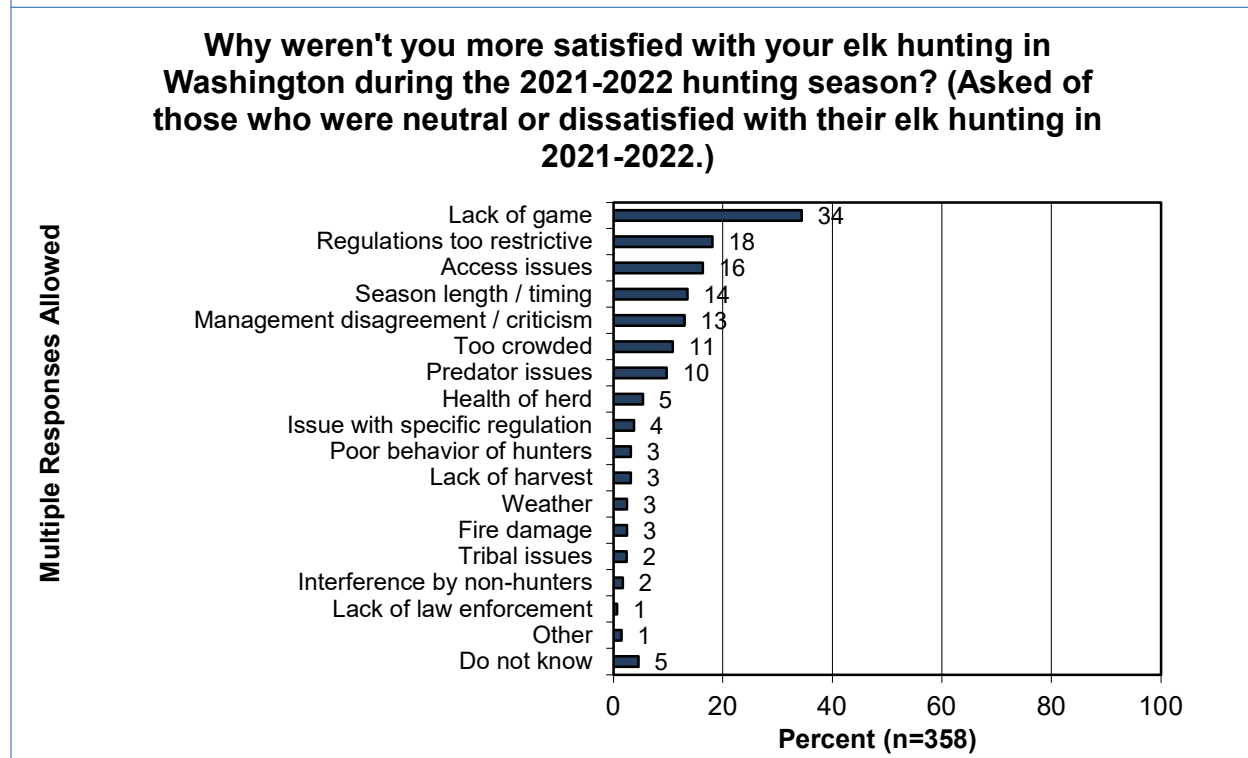
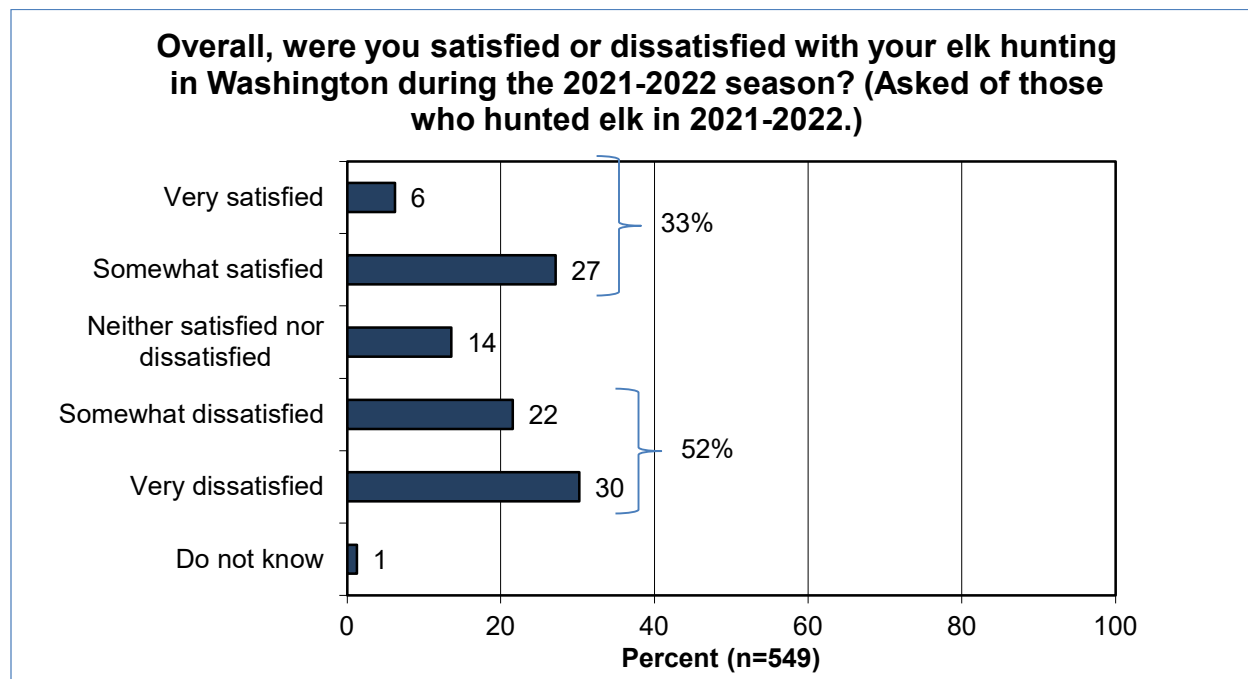
ELK HUNTING

A majority of elk hunters (56%) used a modern rifle for their elk hunting during the 2021-2022 season. They also commonly used archery other than crossbow (27%) and muzzleloader rifles (18%).

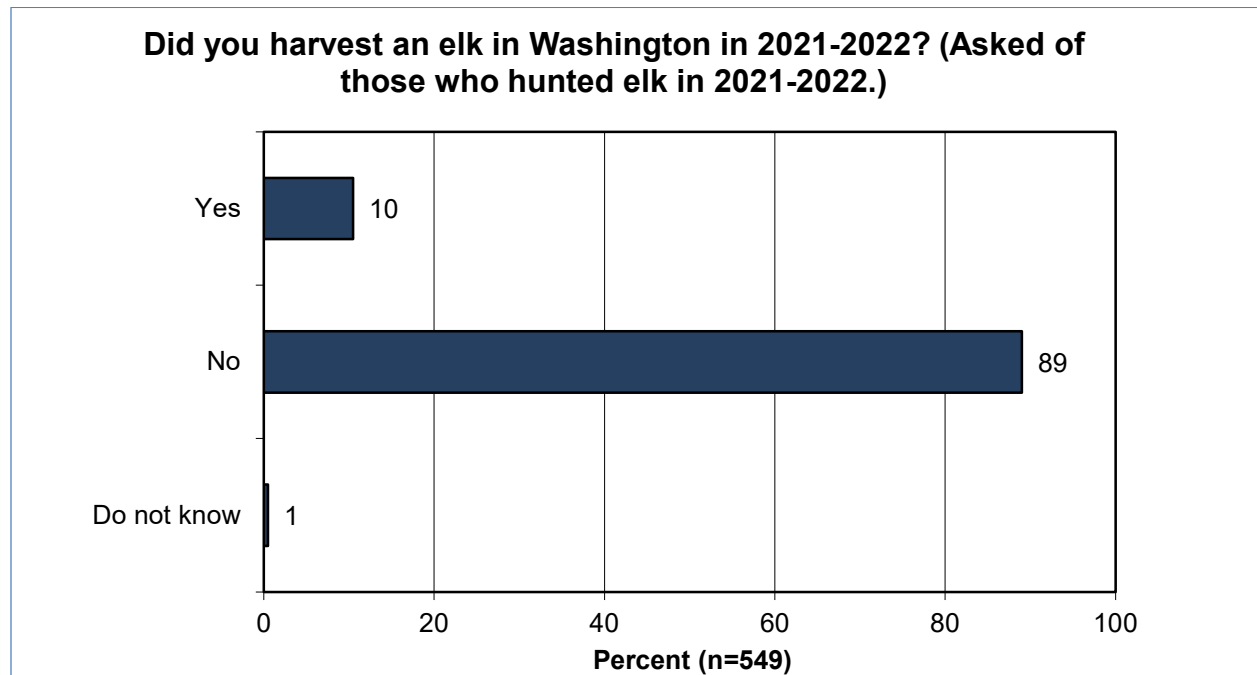
A majority of elk hunters (56%) primarily hunted elk with an eastside elk tag, while 39% primarily hunted with a westside tag; 4% used both about equally.



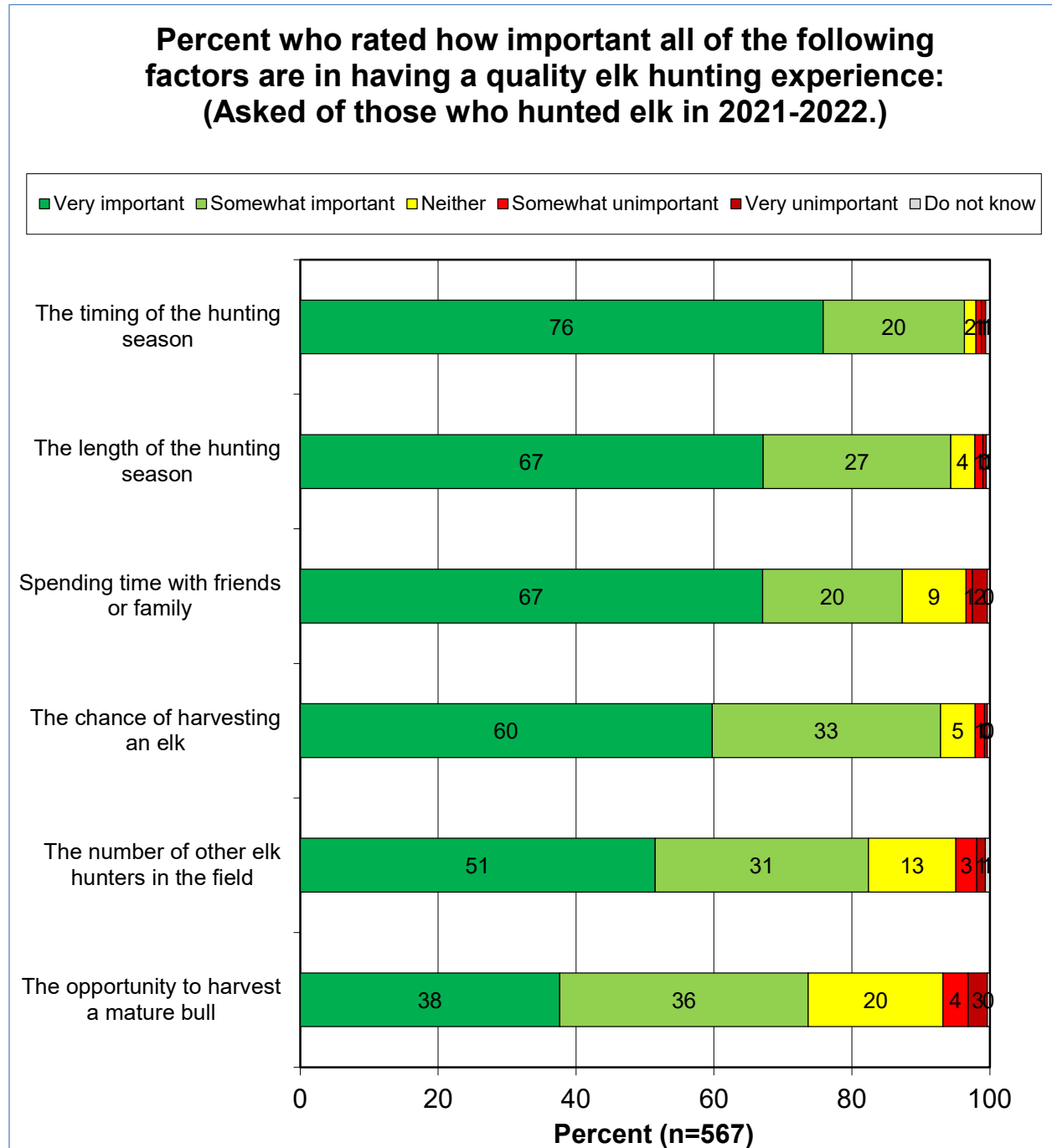
Satisfaction with elk hunting was low in 2021-2022: a third of elk hunters (33%) were satisfied, while a majority (52%) were dissatisfied. Lack of game was the top reason among those who were not satisfied, along with restrictive regulations and access issues.



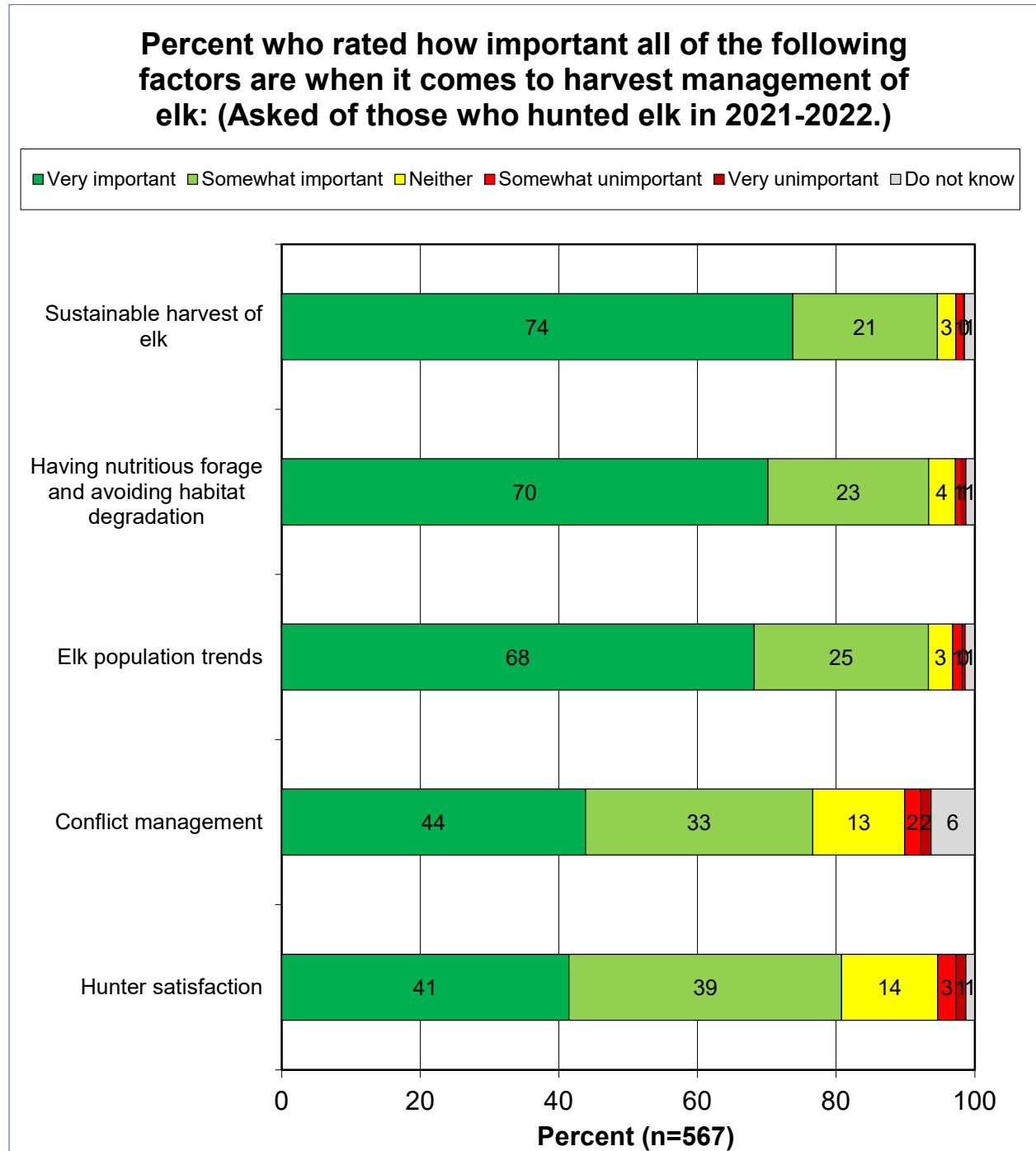
Overall, 10% of elk hunters harvested an elk in 2021-2022.



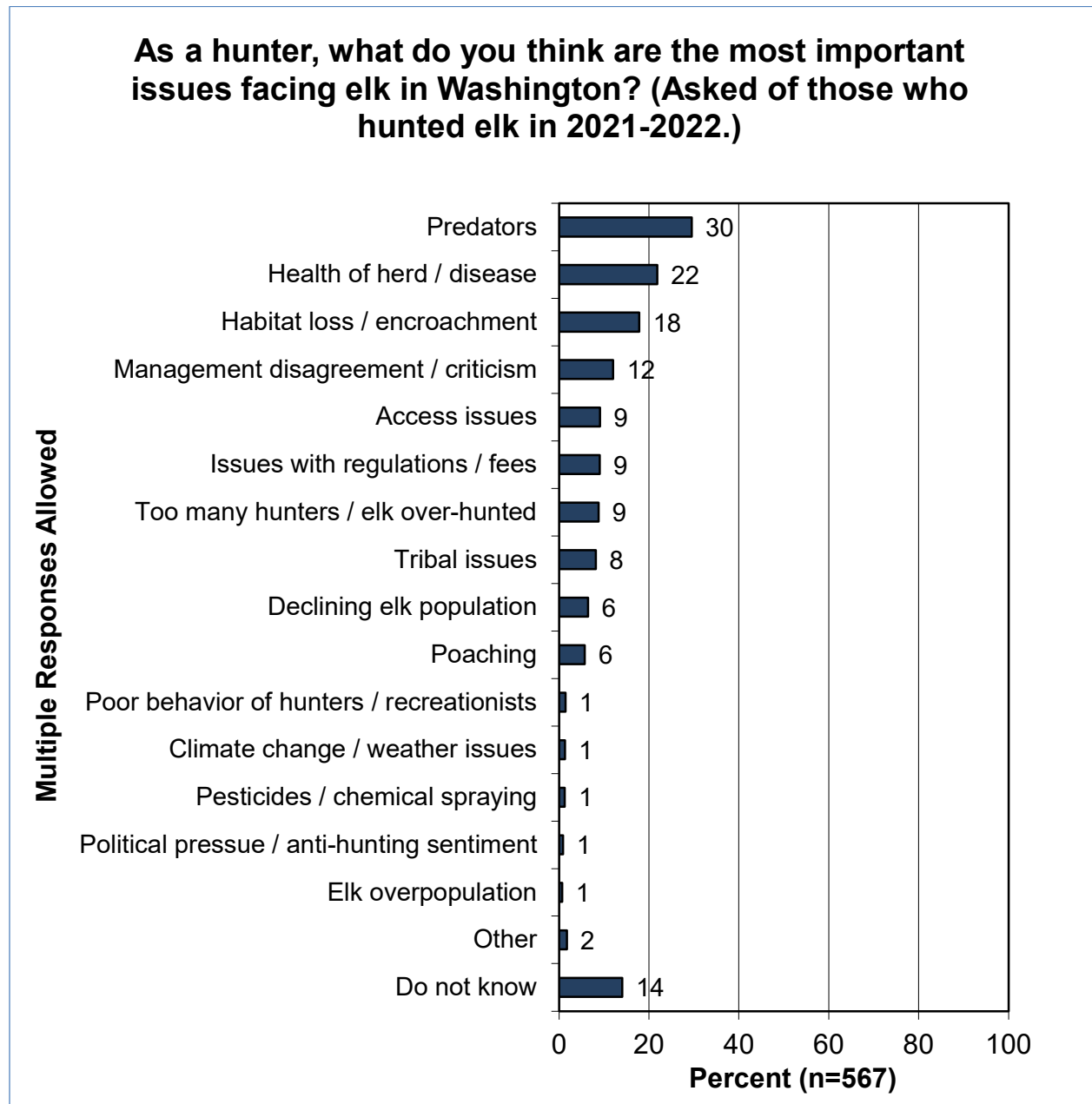
Elk hunters were asked to rate the importance of six factors in having a quality elk hunting experience. As with deer hunters, all of the listed items received high ratings. Factors with at least two thirds of elk hunters rating them as *very important* were the timing of the season, the length of the season, and time with friends or family.



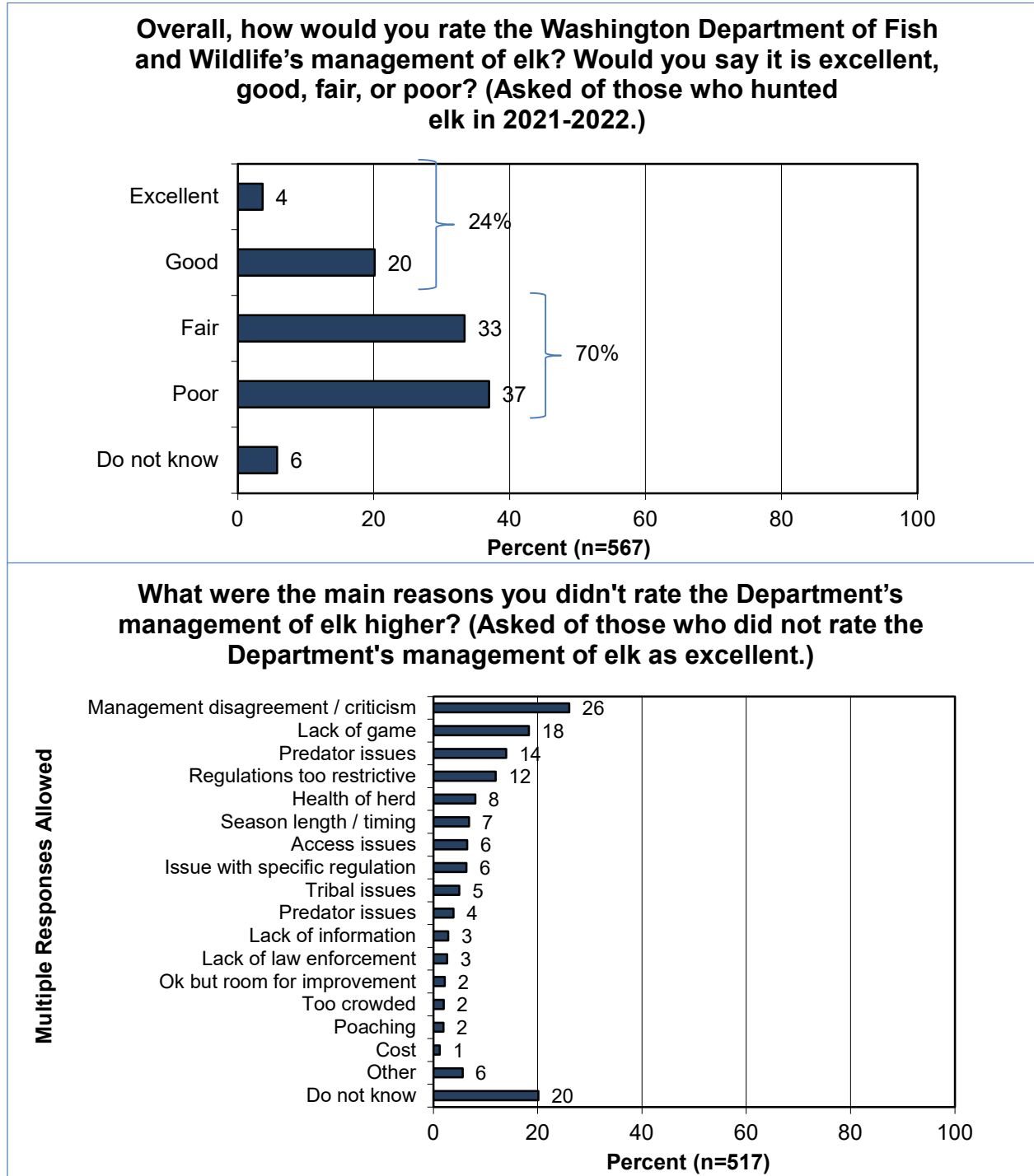
Also, elk hunters were asked to rate the importance of five factors regarding the harvest management of elk. The ratings of *very important* were highest for the sustainable harvest of elk (74%), nutritious forage and avoidance of habitat degradation (70%), and elk population trends (68%).



In an open-ended question, elk hunters said the most important factors facing elk in Washington were predators (30% stated this), disease or the health of the herd (22%), habitat loss (18%), and issues with elk management (12%). The full list is shown.

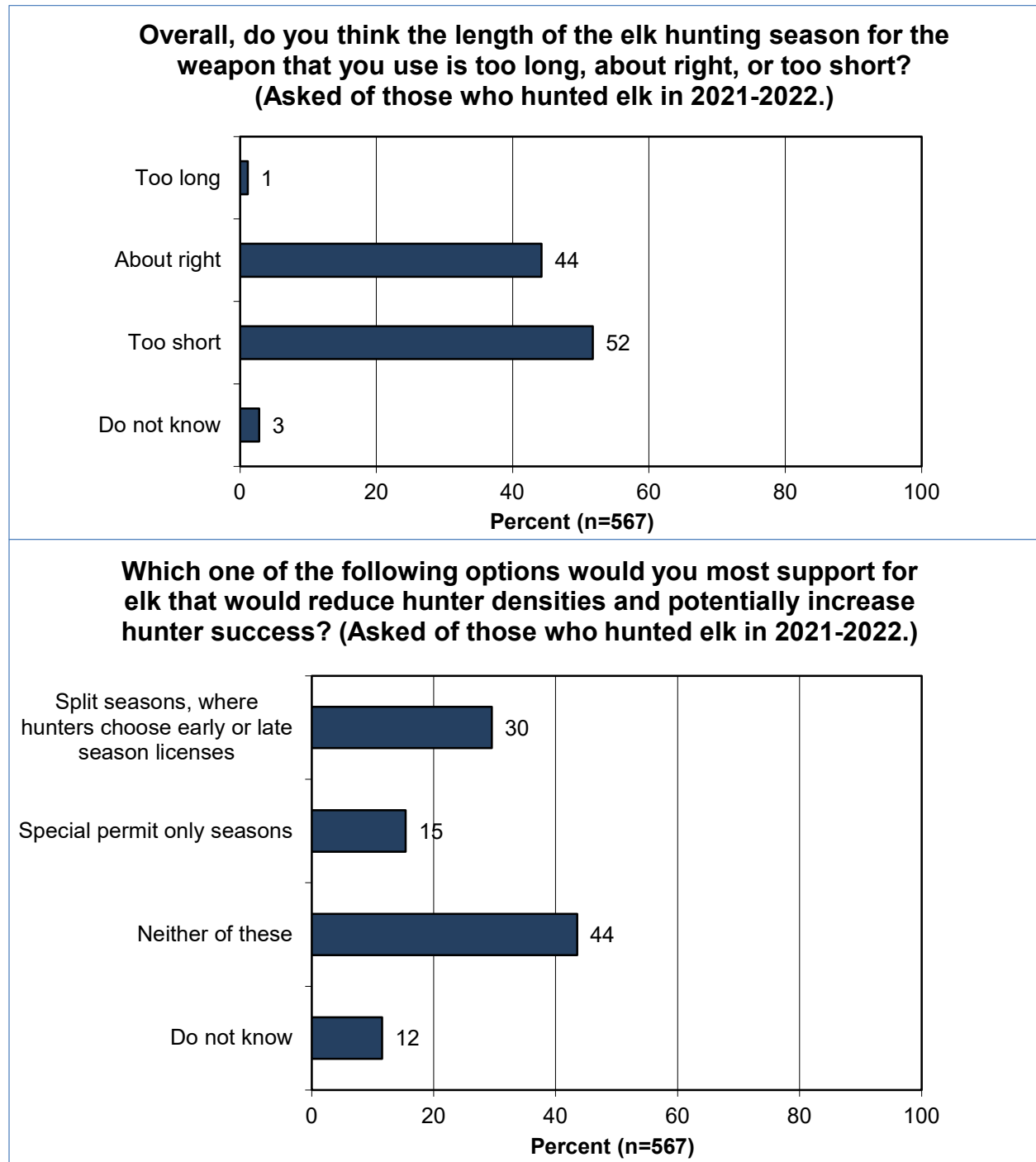


Elk hunters gave low ratings to the Department's management of elk: 24% rated it in the top half of the scale (4% excellent; 20% good), whereas 70% rated it in the bottom half of the scale (33% fair; 37% poor). In follow-up, elk hunters' reasons for lower ratings include issues with elk management, lack of game, predator issues, and restrictive regulations.



A slight majority of elk hunters (52%) think the length of elk season for the weapon they use is too short, while 44% think it is about right. Only 1% think it is too long.

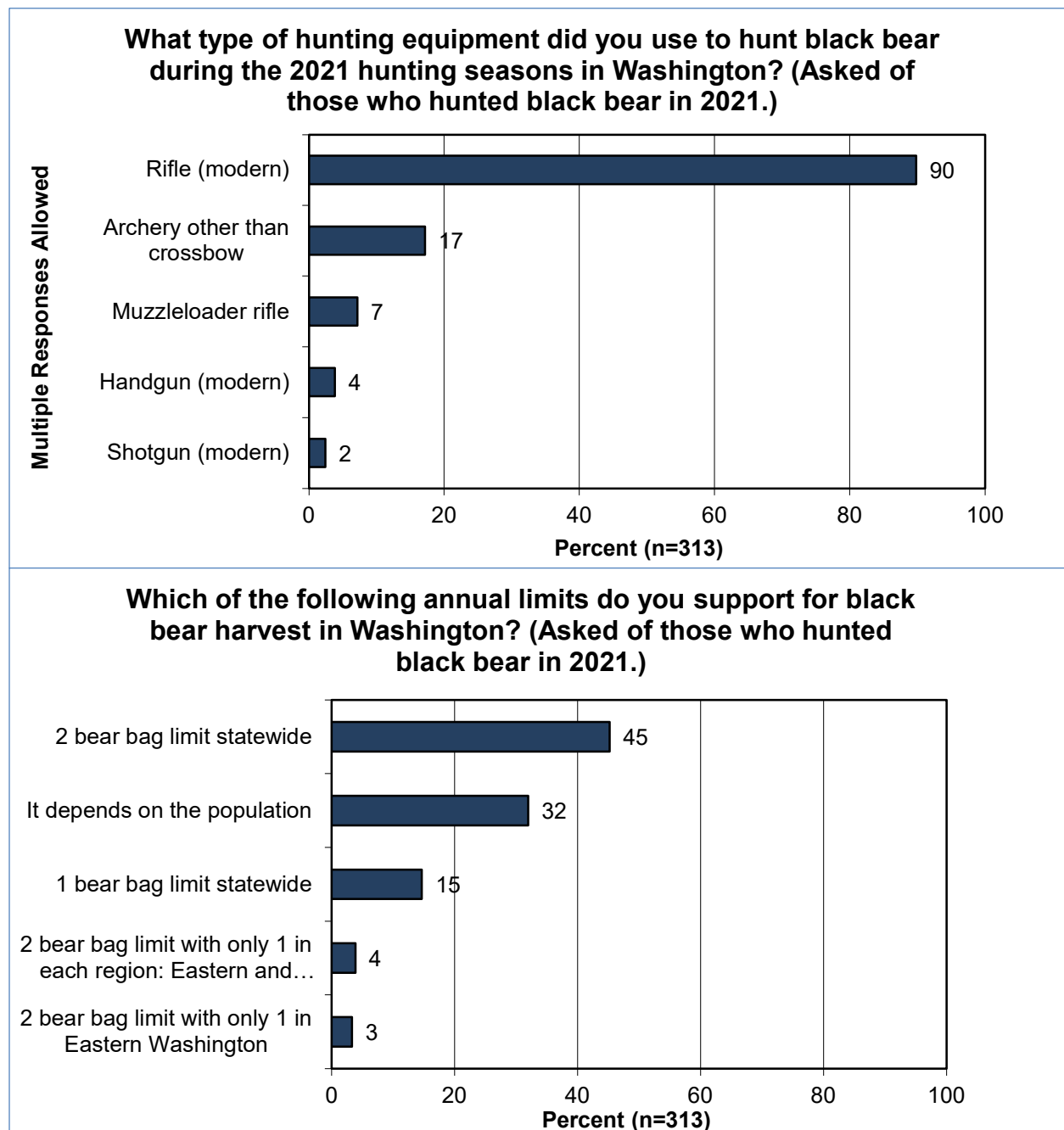
Given two options for elk hunting that would reduce hunter densities and potentially increase harvest success, 30% selected split seasons, where hunters could choose early or late season licenses, and 15% selected special permit only seasons. However, 44% chose neither option.



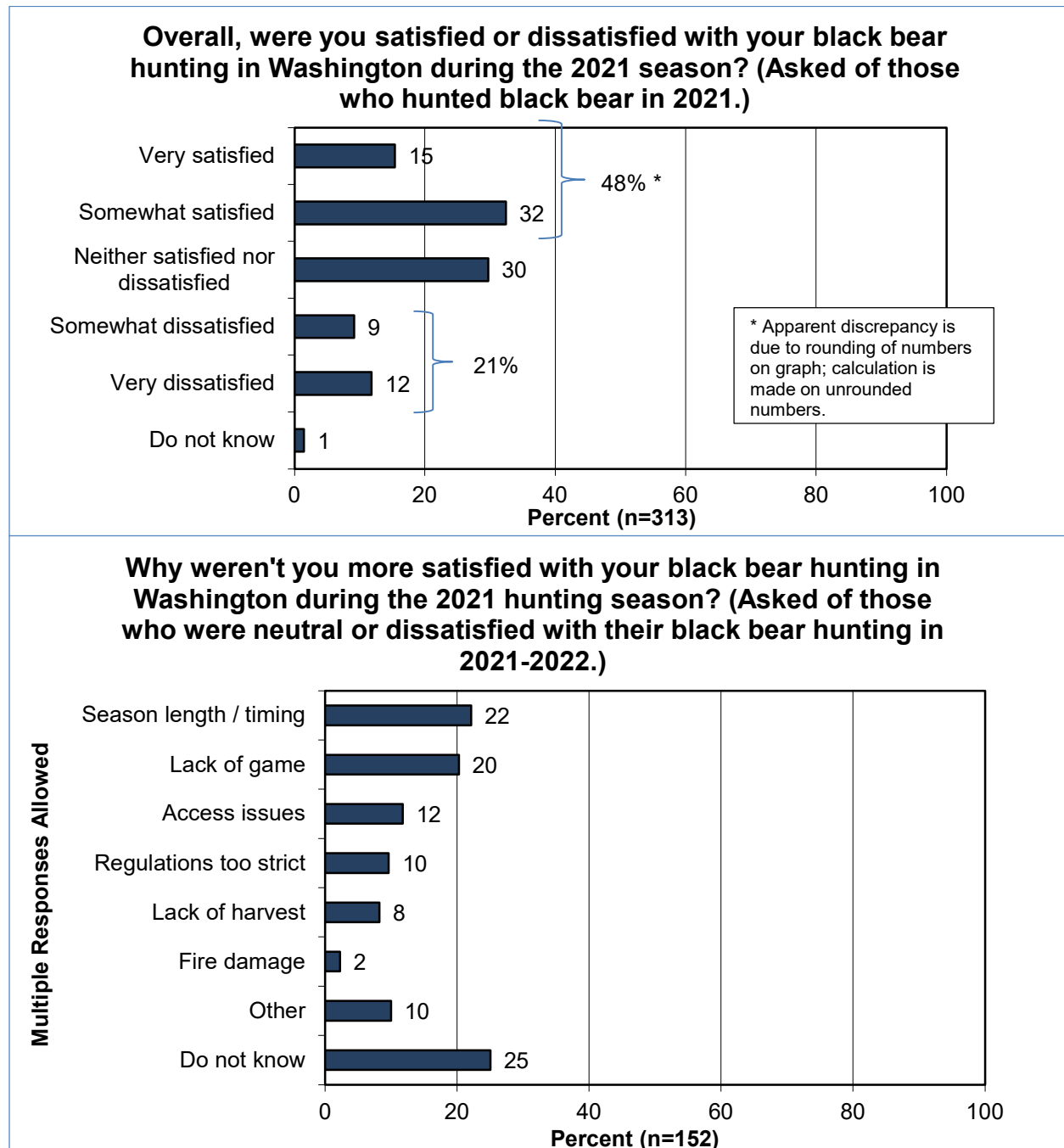
BLACK BEAR HUNTING

By far, modern rifles were most commonly used by black bear hunters during the 2021 hunting seasons in Washington (90% used modern rifles). Meanwhile, 17% used archery other than crossbow and 7% used muzzleloader rifles.

Regarding bag limits, 45% of bear hunters support a 2 bear limit, 32% say it depends on the population, and 15% support a 1 bear limit.

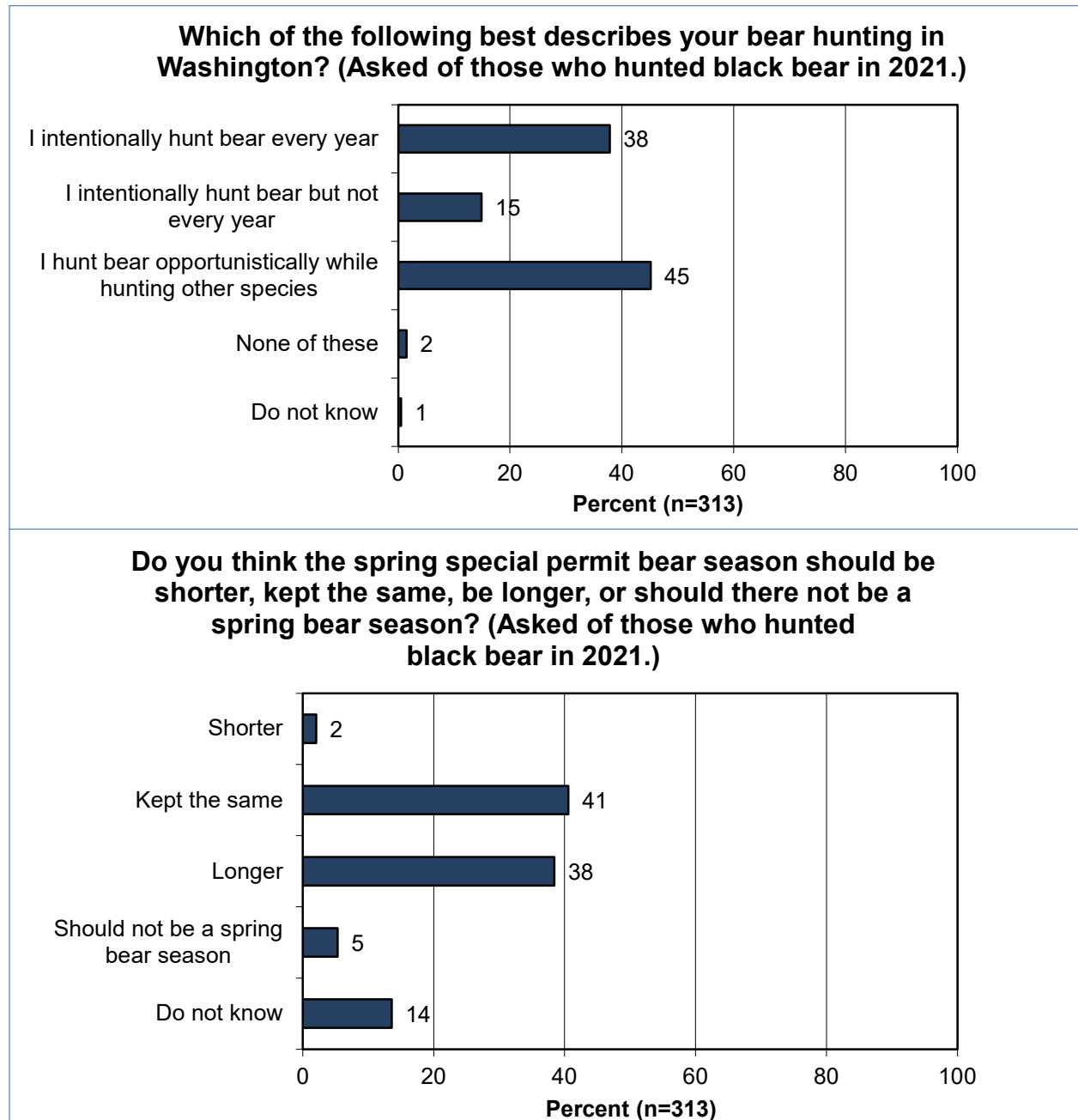


About half of black bear hunters (48%) were satisfied with their bear hunting during 2021, more than double the number who were dissatisfied (21%). Among those who were not satisfied, the top reasons given were the season length or timing and lack of game.



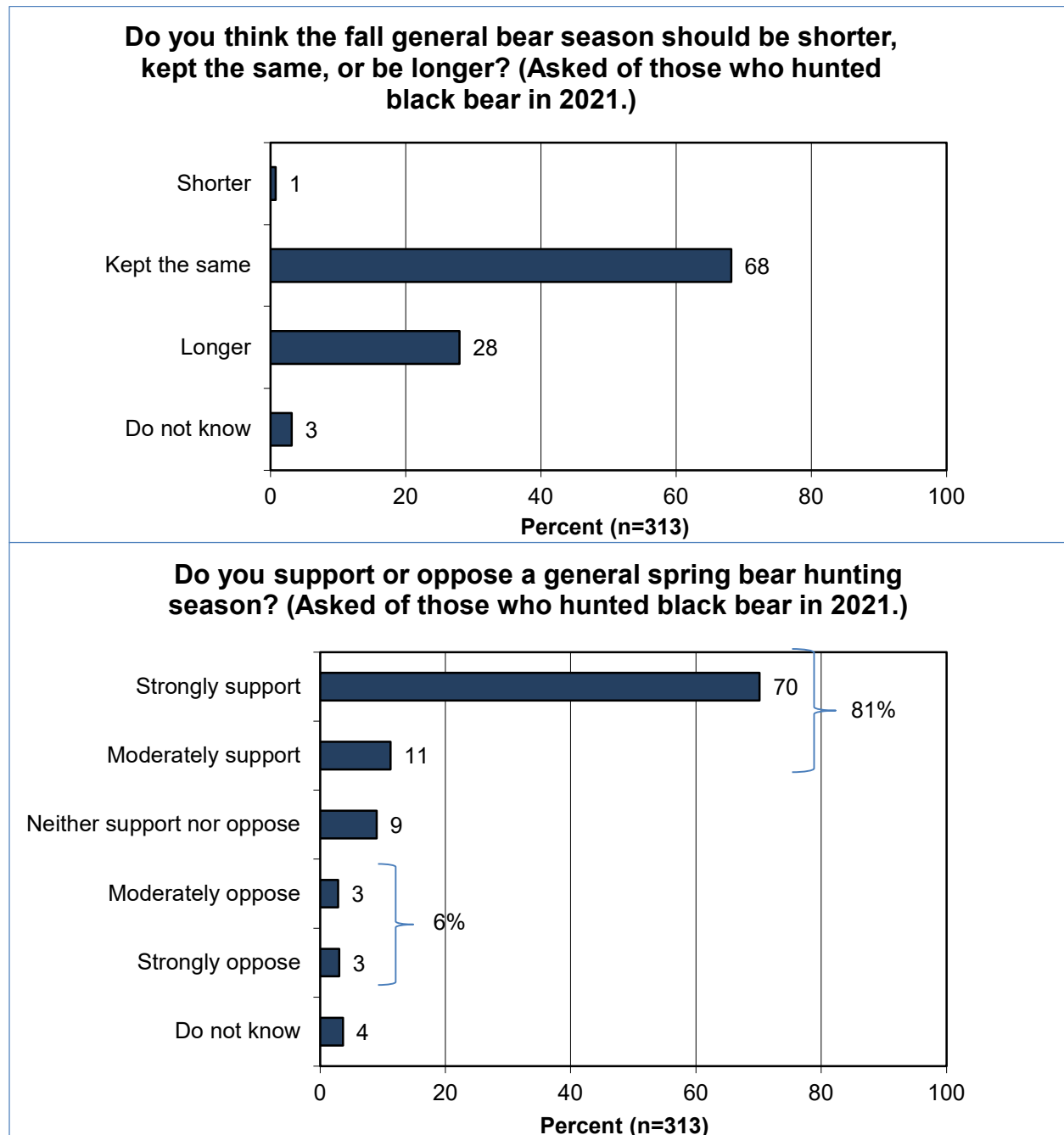
Over a third of bear hunters (38%) intentionally hunt bear every year, while 15% intentionally hunt bear but not every year. However, 45% hunt bear when the opportunity arises while they are hunting other species.

Regarding the spring special permit bear season, 41% of bear hunters think the season should be kept the same and 38% think it should be longer.

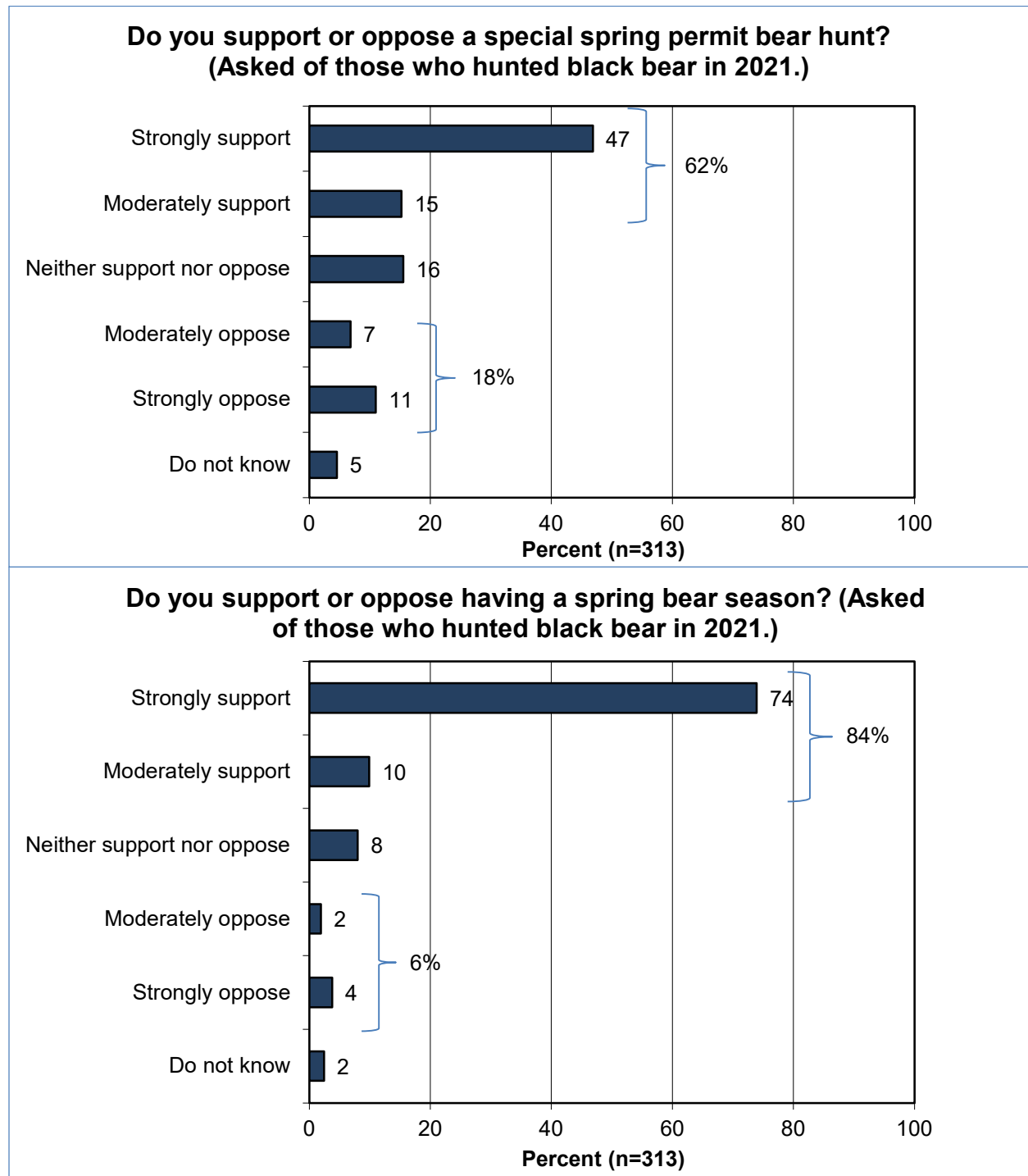


Two thirds of bear hunters (68%) think the fall general bear seasons should remain as-is, while 28% think it should be longer.

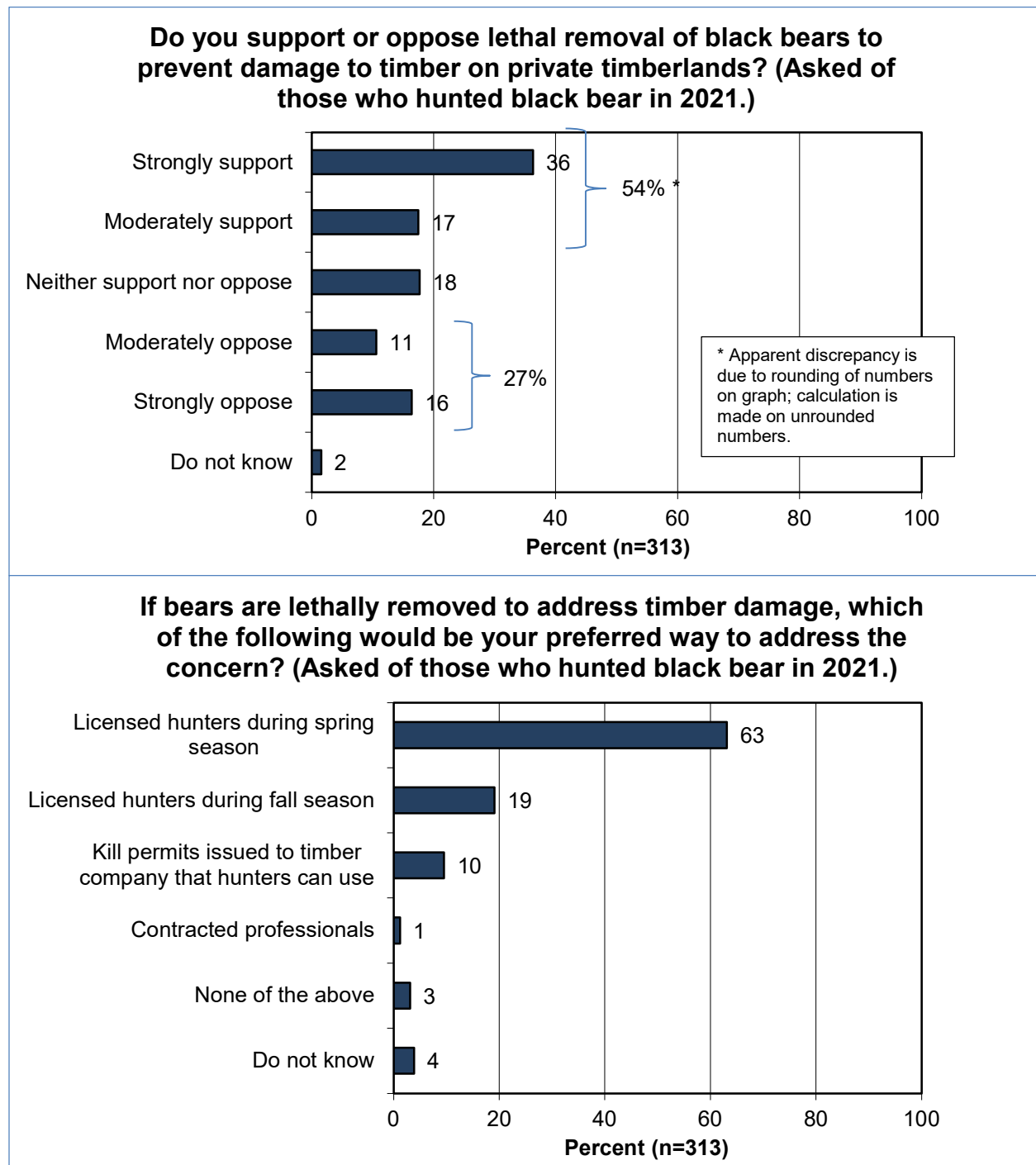
Most bear hunters (81%) support a general spring bear hunting season; 70% *strongly* support it. Only 6% oppose.



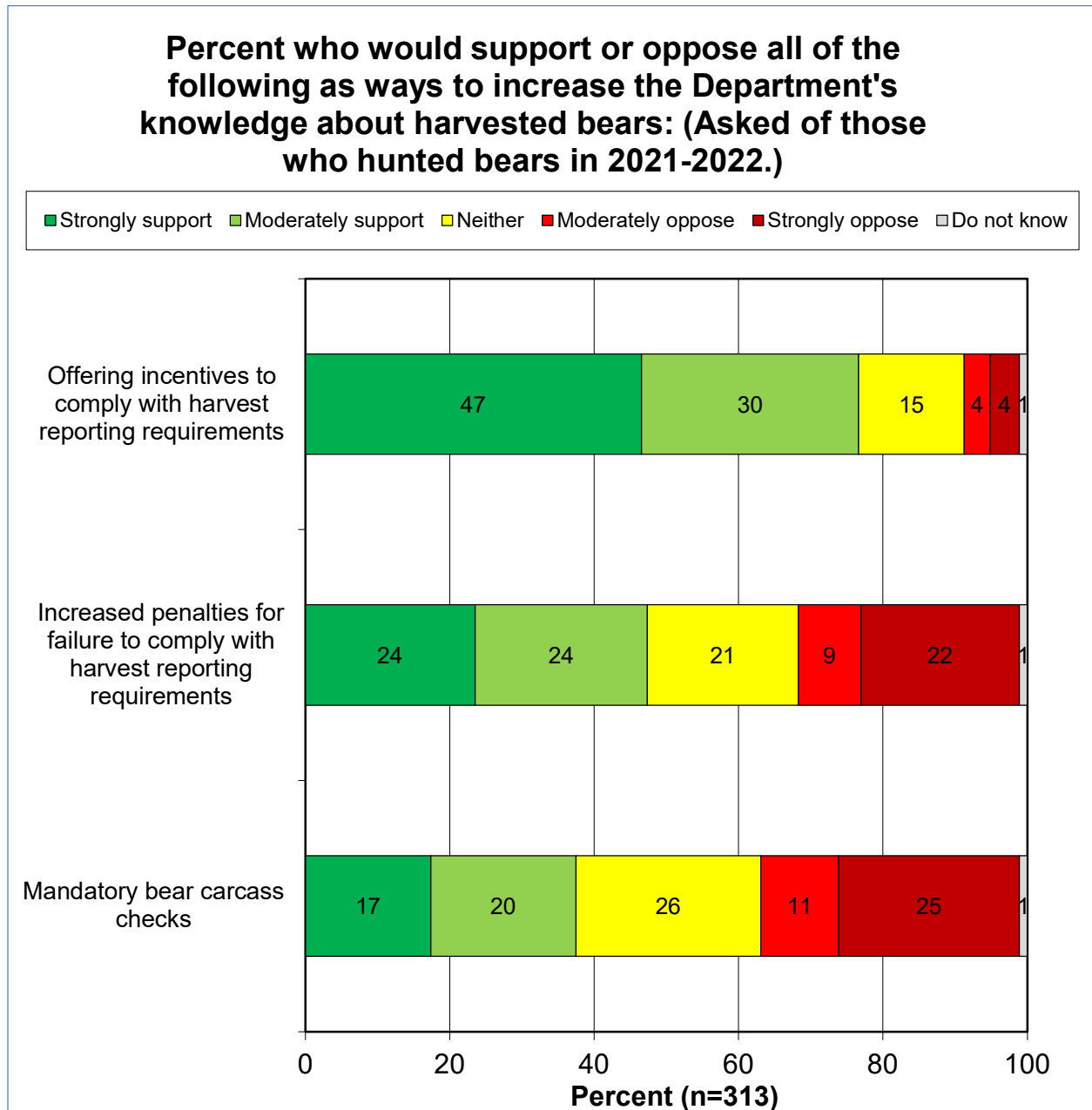
A majority of bear hunters (62%) support a special spring permit bear hunt, compared to 18% who oppose. In addition, the vast majority of bear hunters (84%) support having a spring bear season; only 6% oppose.



A slight majority of bear hunters (54%) support lethal removal of bears to prevent damage to timber on private timberlands, double the percentage who oppose (27%). If bears are lethally removed to prevent timber damage, hunters most often prefer that licensed hunters remove the bears during spring season (63% stated this). Meanwhile, 19% prefer the use of licensed hunters during fall season and 10% prefer that kill permits be issued to timber companies for hunter use.

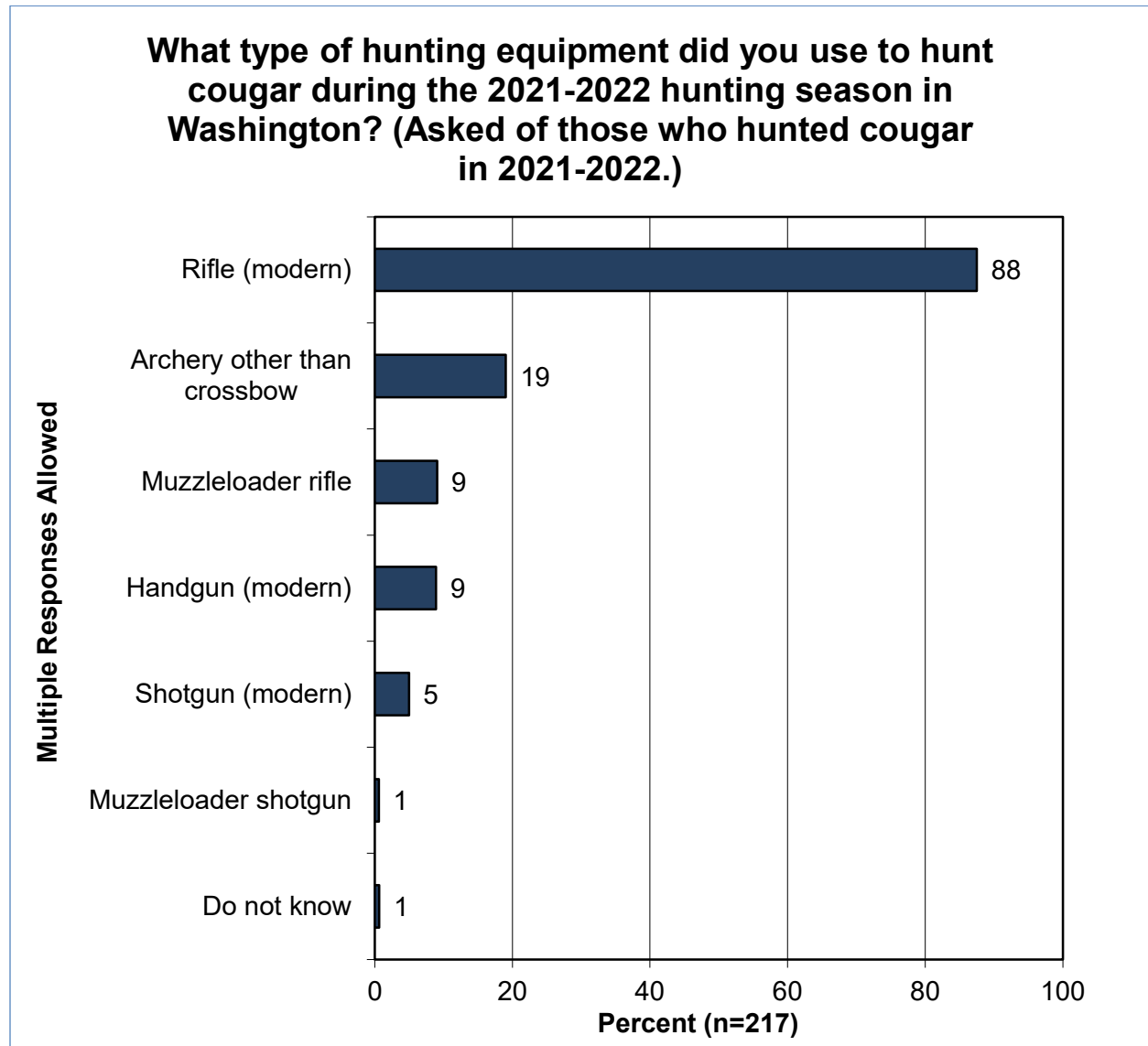


Bear hunters were asked about support for or opposition to three options to increase the Department's knowledge about harvested bears. By far, hunters had the most support for incentives to increase compliance with harvest reporting requirements (77% support this). This compares to 47% (summed on unrounded numbers) who support increased penalties for failure to comply with harvest reporting requirements and 37% who support mandatory bear carcass checks.



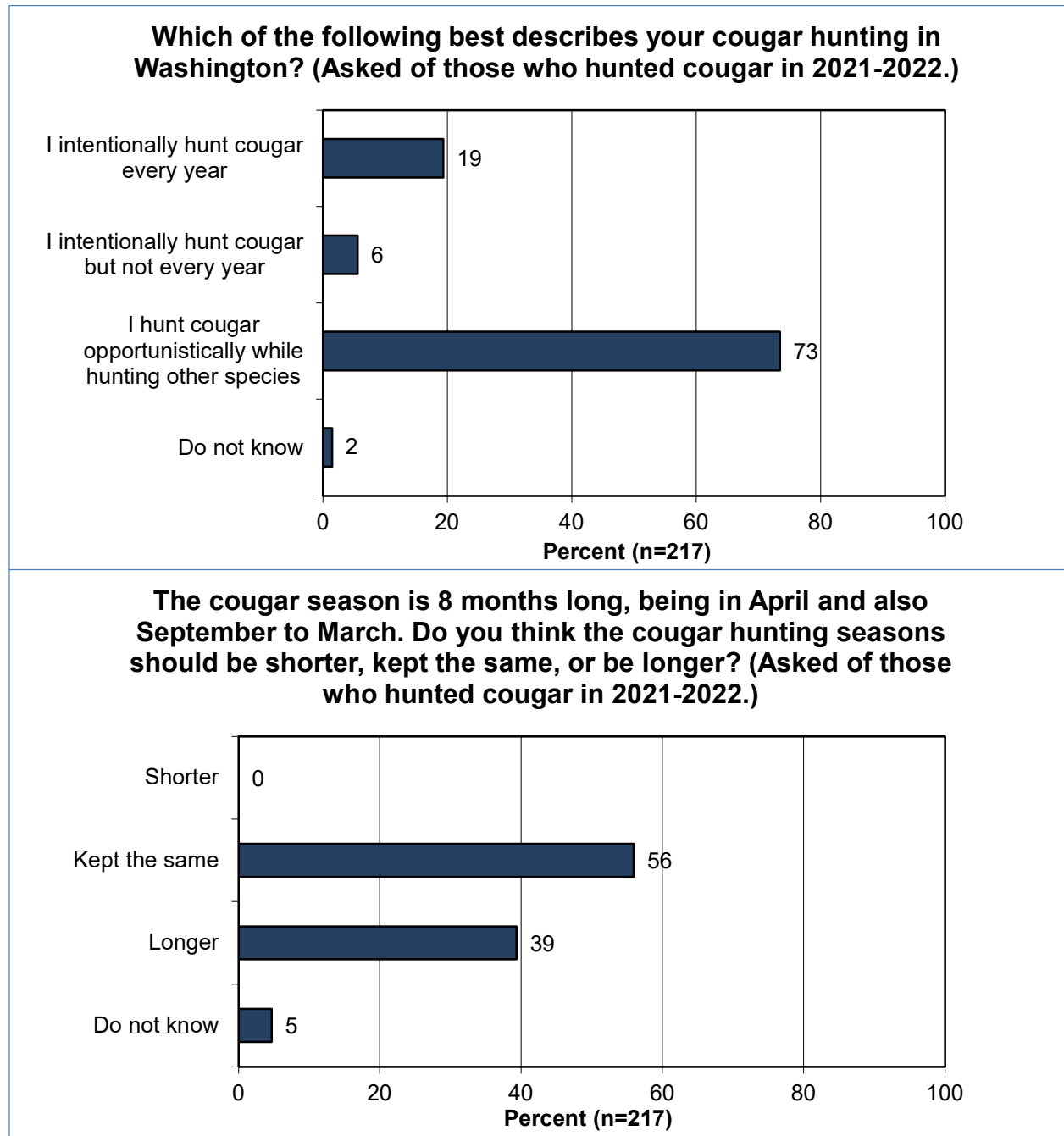
COUGAR HUNTING

Most cougar hunters (88%) hunted cougar with modern rifles in 2021-2022, while 19% used archery other than crossbow, 9% used muzzleloader rifles, and 9% used modern handguns.

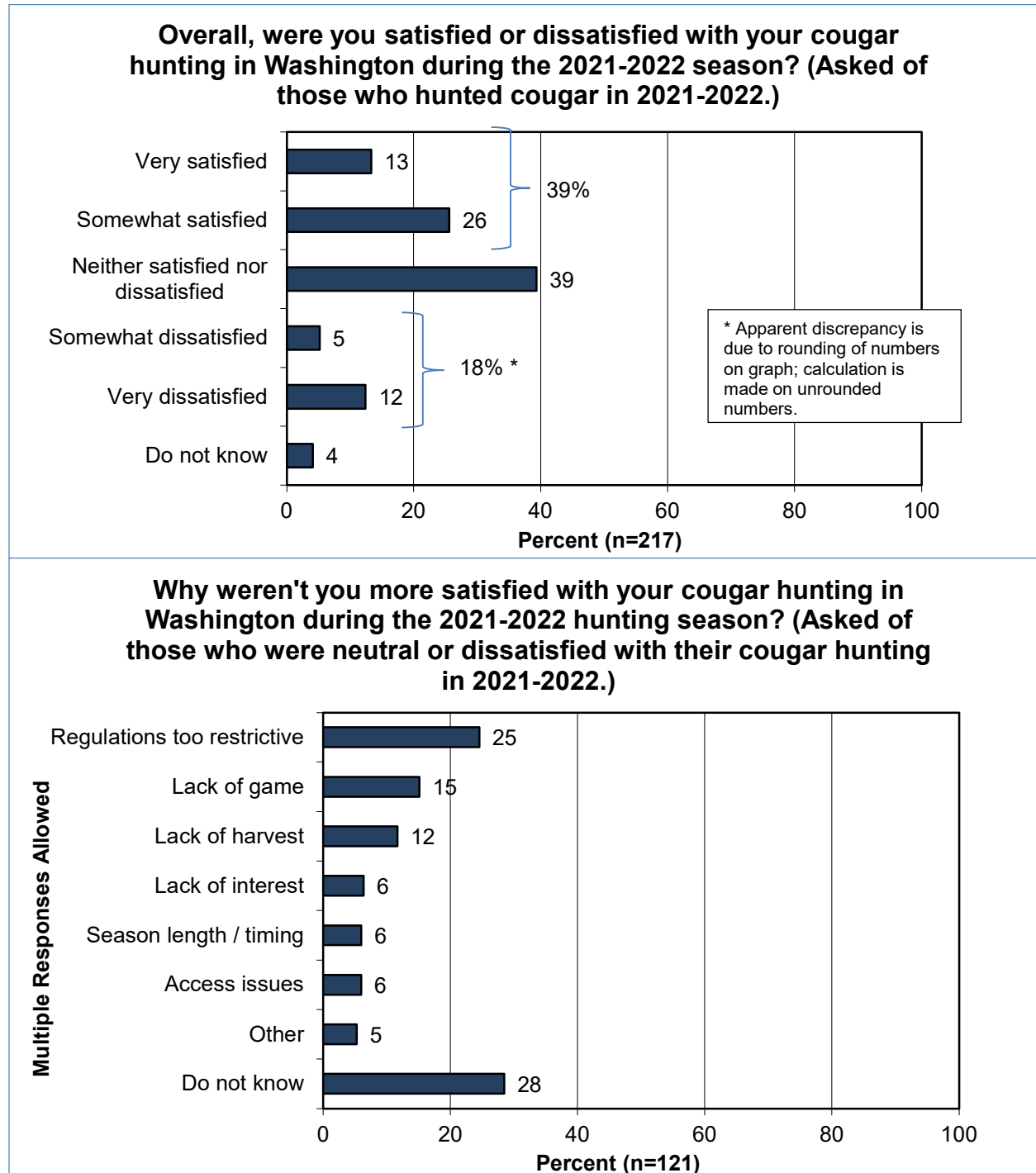


Cougar hunters are most likely to hunt cougar opportunistically while hunting other species (73% do so), while 19% intentionally hunt cougar every year and 6% intentionally hunt cougar but not every year.

A majority of cougar hunters (56%) think the hunting seasons should be kept the same length, while 39% think they should be longer. No cougar hunters want shorter seasons.



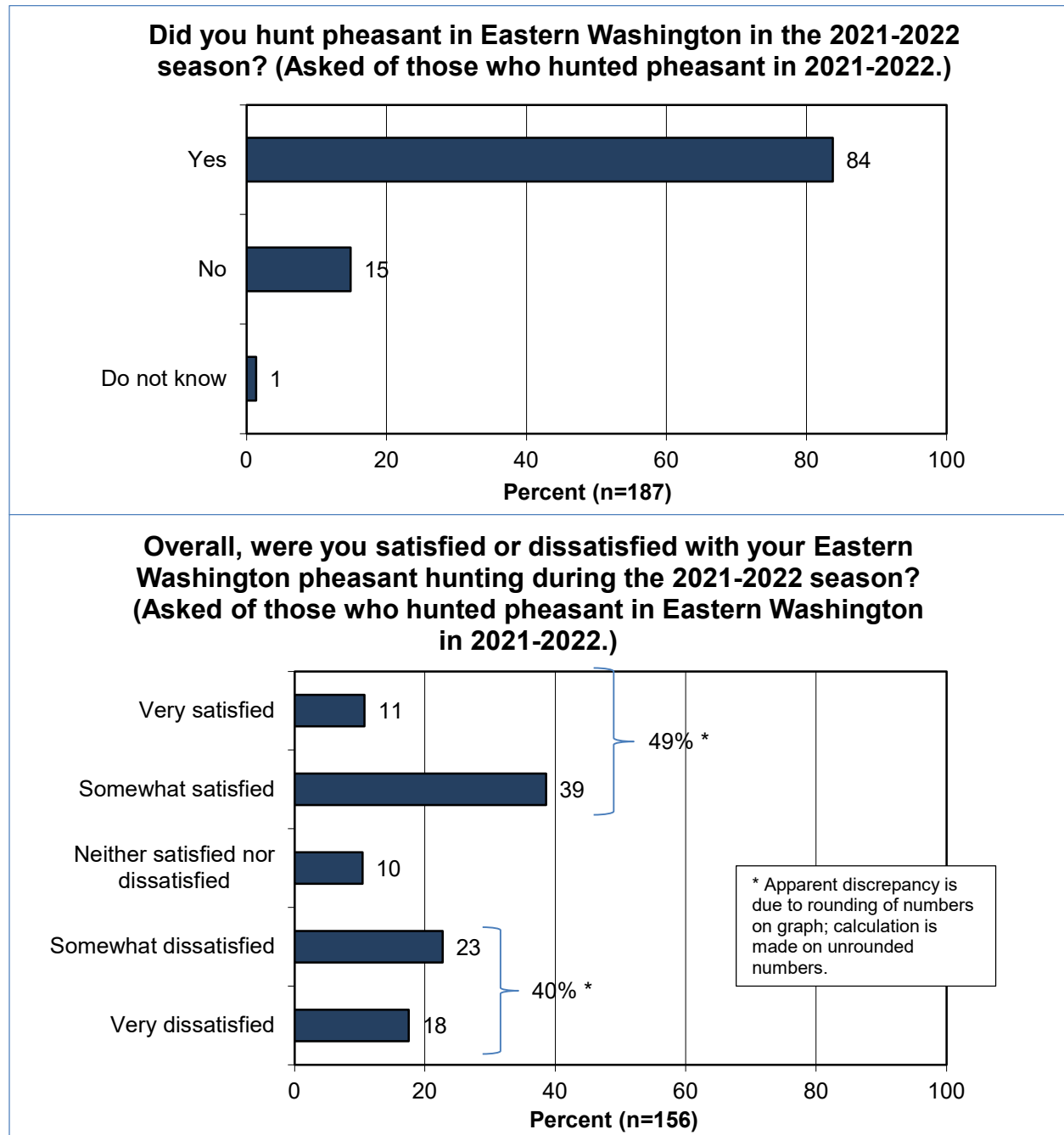
Overall, 39% of cougar hunters were satisfied with their cougar hunting in 2021-2022, while 18% were dissatisfied. A substantial percentage gave a neutral answer or did not know. Restrictive regulations, lack of game, and lack of harvest were the top reasons given by those who were not satisfied.



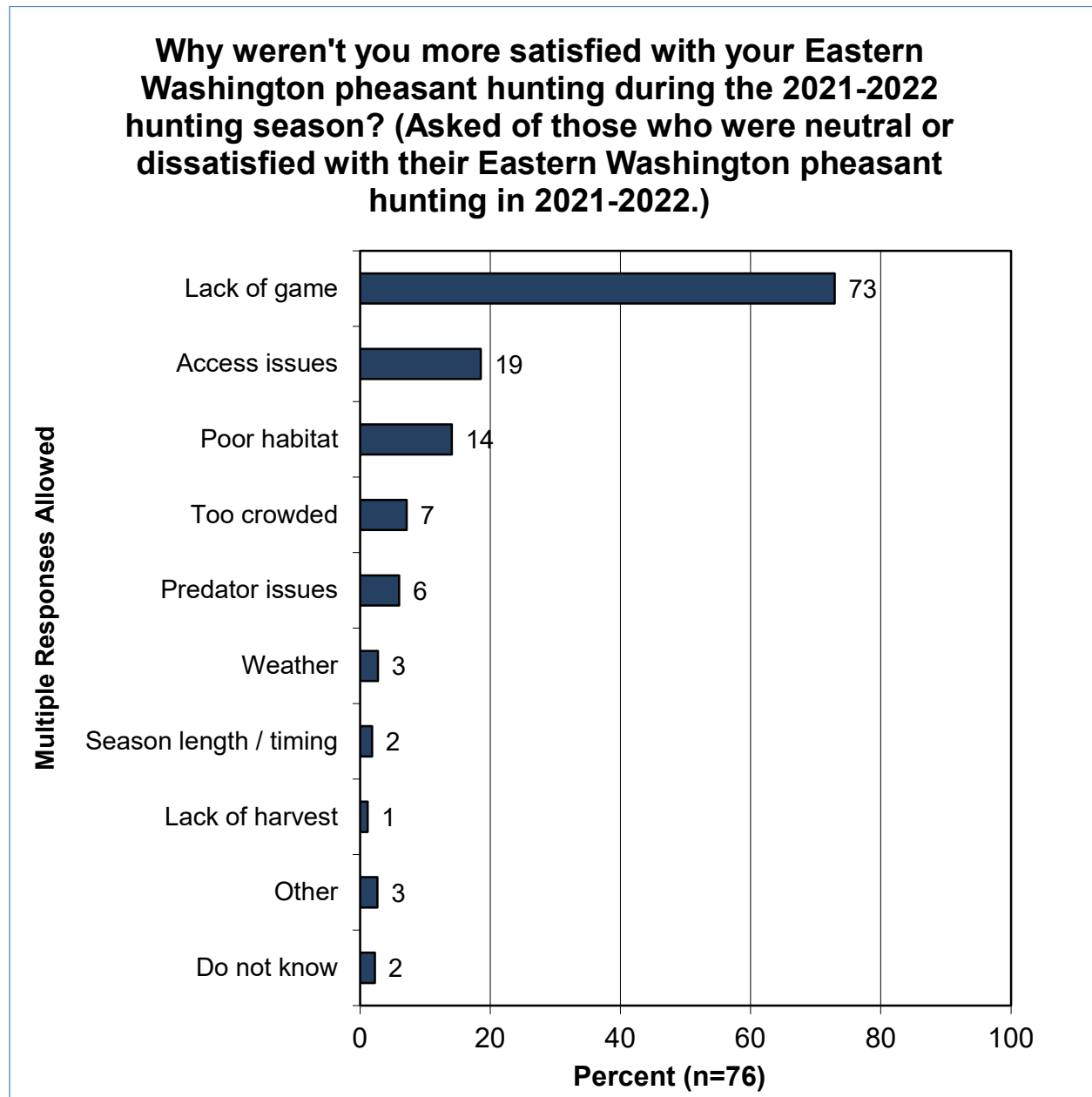
BIRD HUNTING

PHEASANT

Most pheasant hunters (84%) hunted pheasant in Eastern Washington in 2021-2022. Slightly more of these hunters were satisfied (49%) than dissatisfied (40%).

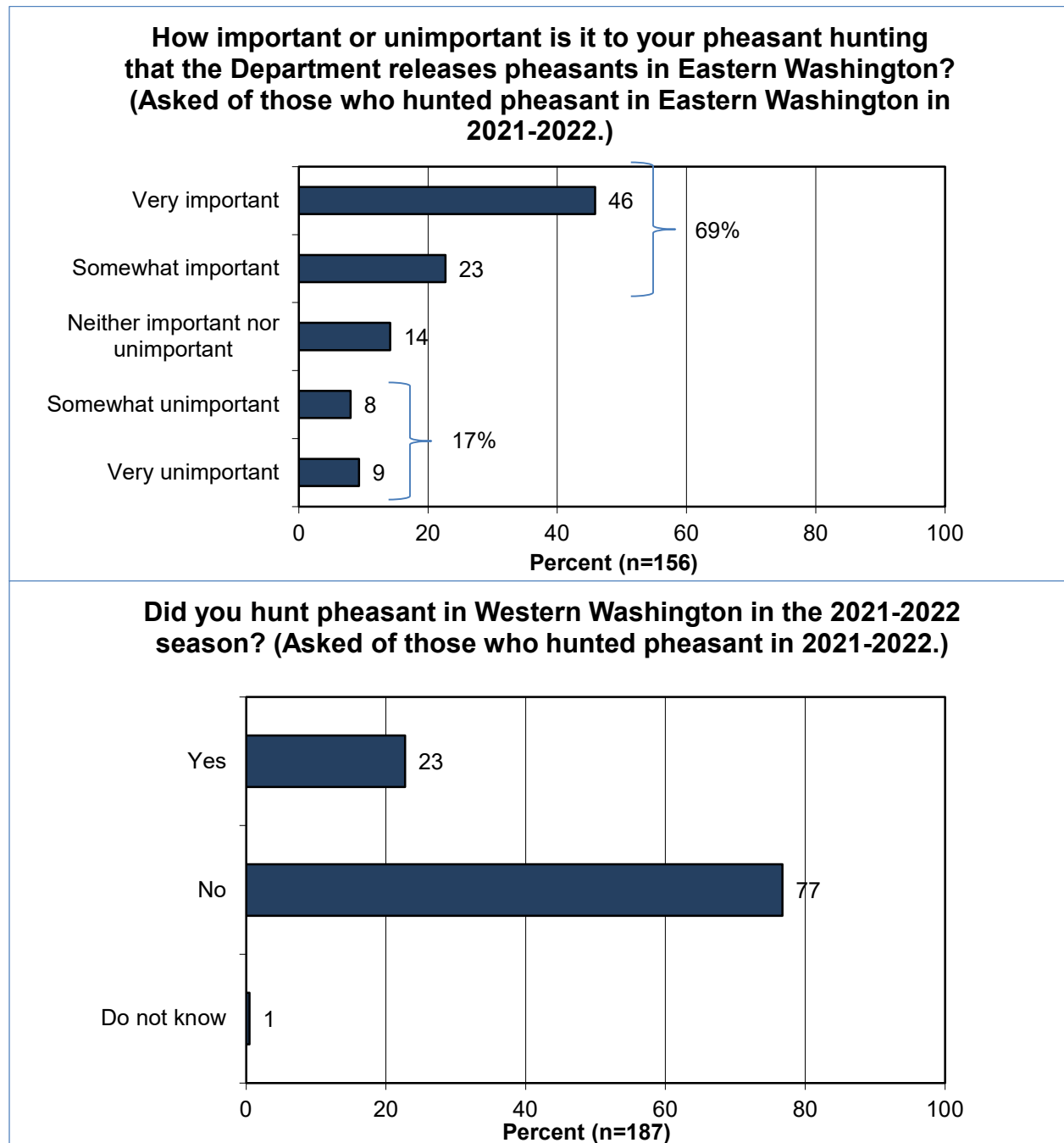


In follow-up, Eastern Washington pheasant hunters who were not satisfied most commonly said lack of game was the reason (73% stated this). Access issues (19%), poor habitat (14%), crowding (7%), and predator issues (6%) were also cited as reasons.

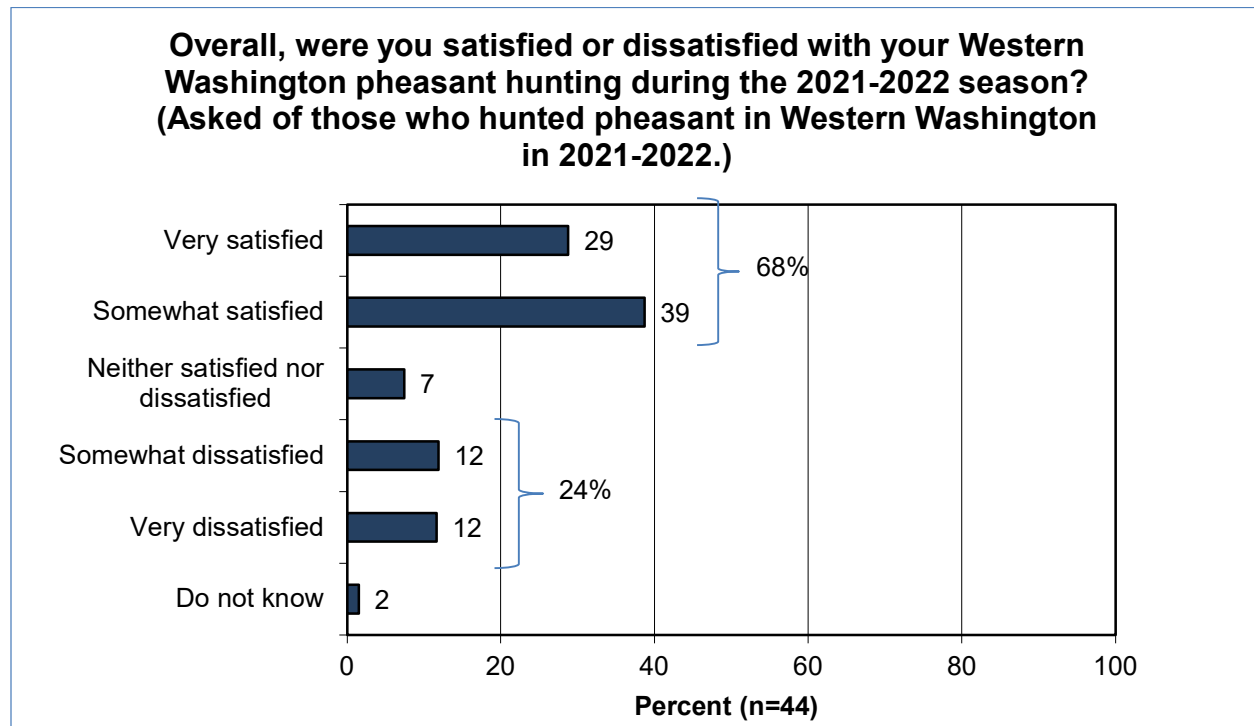


Over two thirds of Eastern Washington pheasant hunters (69%) say that the Department's release of pheasants in Eastern Washington is important to their pheasant hunting.

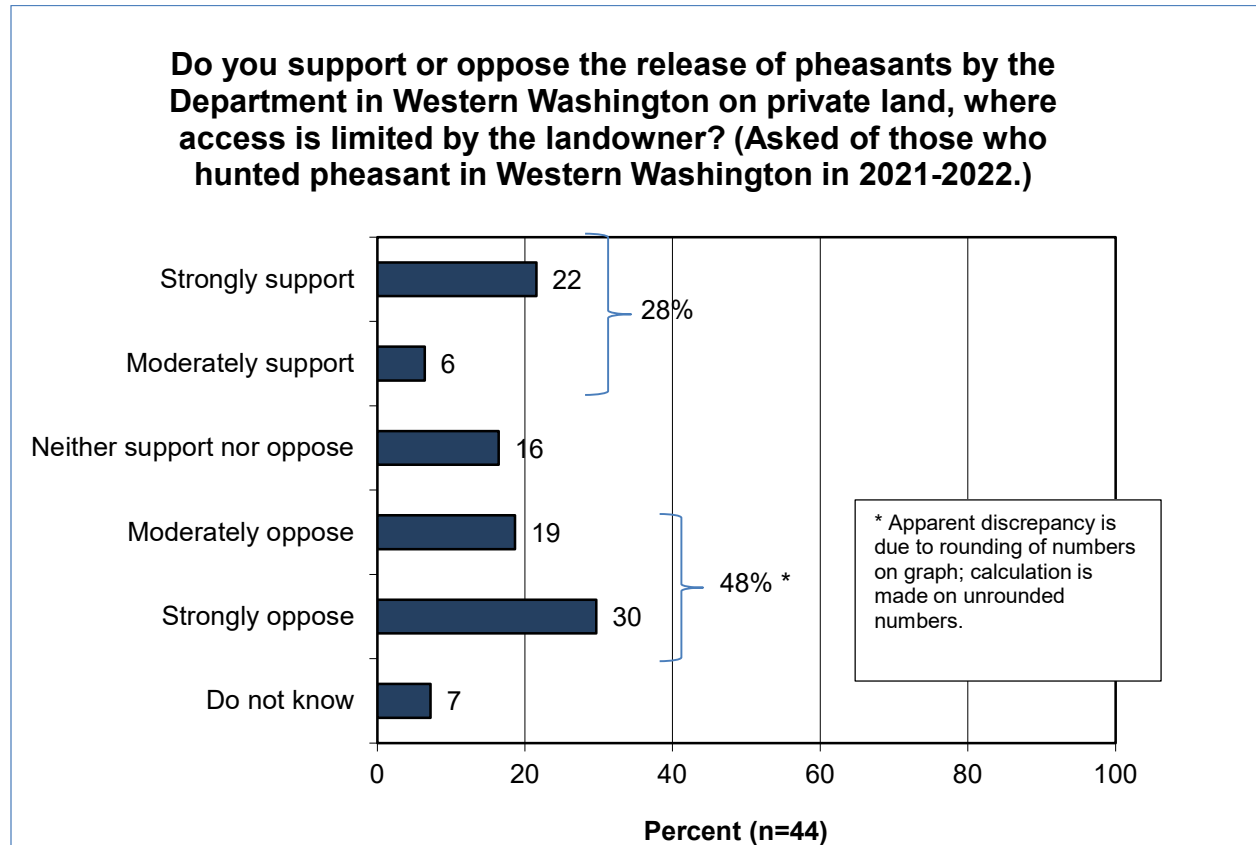
Nearly a quarter of pheasant hunters (23%) hunted pheasant in Western Washington in the 2021-2022 season.



Two thirds of Western Washington pheasant hunters (68%) were satisfied with their hunting in 2021-2022, while 24% were dissatisfied. Lack of game was the most common reason given by those who were not satisfied (a graph is not shown because of the low sample size).

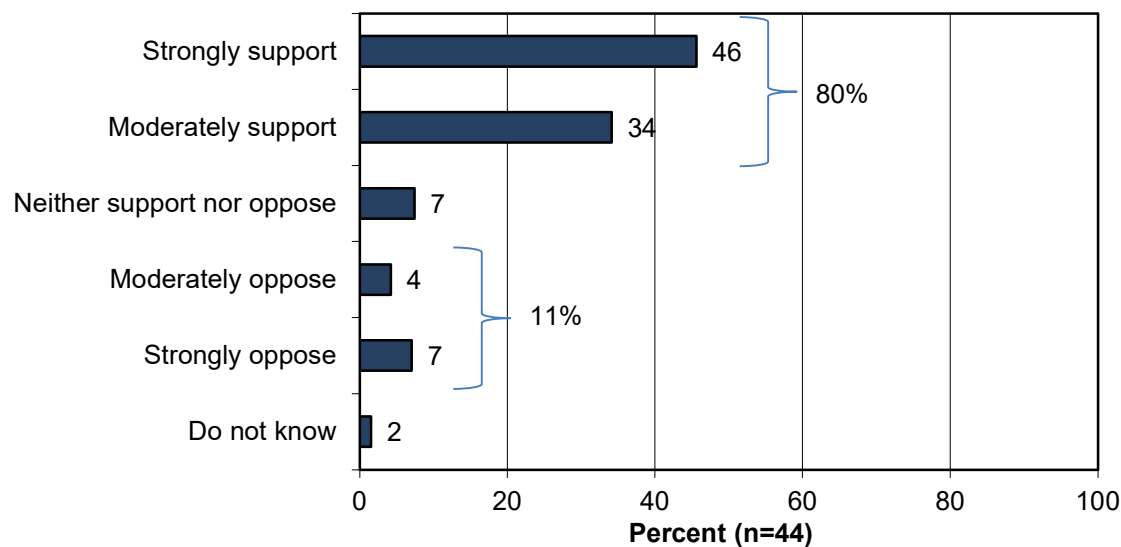


There is nearly twice as much opposition to (48%) than support for (28%) the release of pheasants in Western Washington on private land, where access is limited by the landowner. Of the 14 Western Washington hunters who support such a release, only 4 would still support it if it reduced the number of pheasants released on traditional release sites (graph not shown).

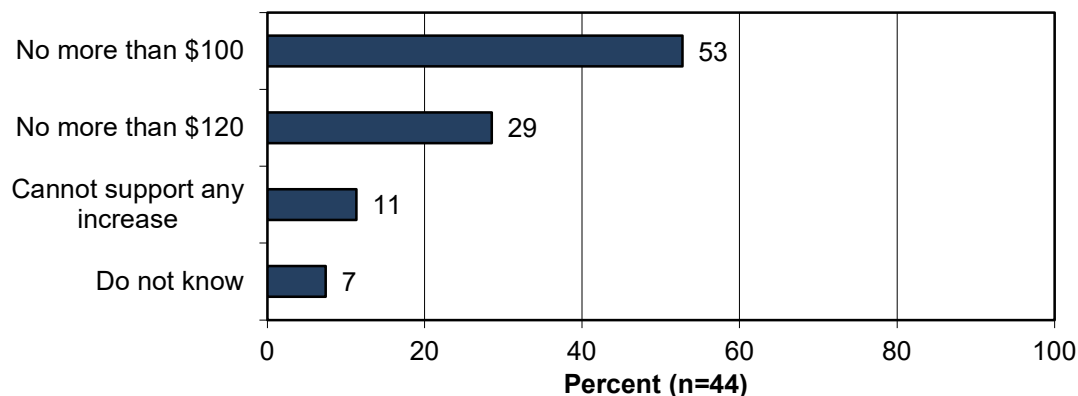


Most Western Washington pheasant hunters (80%) support increasing the Western Washington Pheasant Permit fee if it meant that the Department could continue to release the same number of pheasants in Western Washington each year. A majority of these hunters (53%) think the fee should be no more than \$100 (it is currently \$84.50), and 29% think it should be no more than \$120; 11% cannot support any increase.

As operational costs increase, the Department would need to reduce the number of birds released. Would you support or oppose increasing the Western Washington Pheasant Permit fee if it meant that the Department could continue to release the same number of pheasants in Western Washington each year? (Asked of those who hunted pheasant in Western Washington in 2021-2022.)

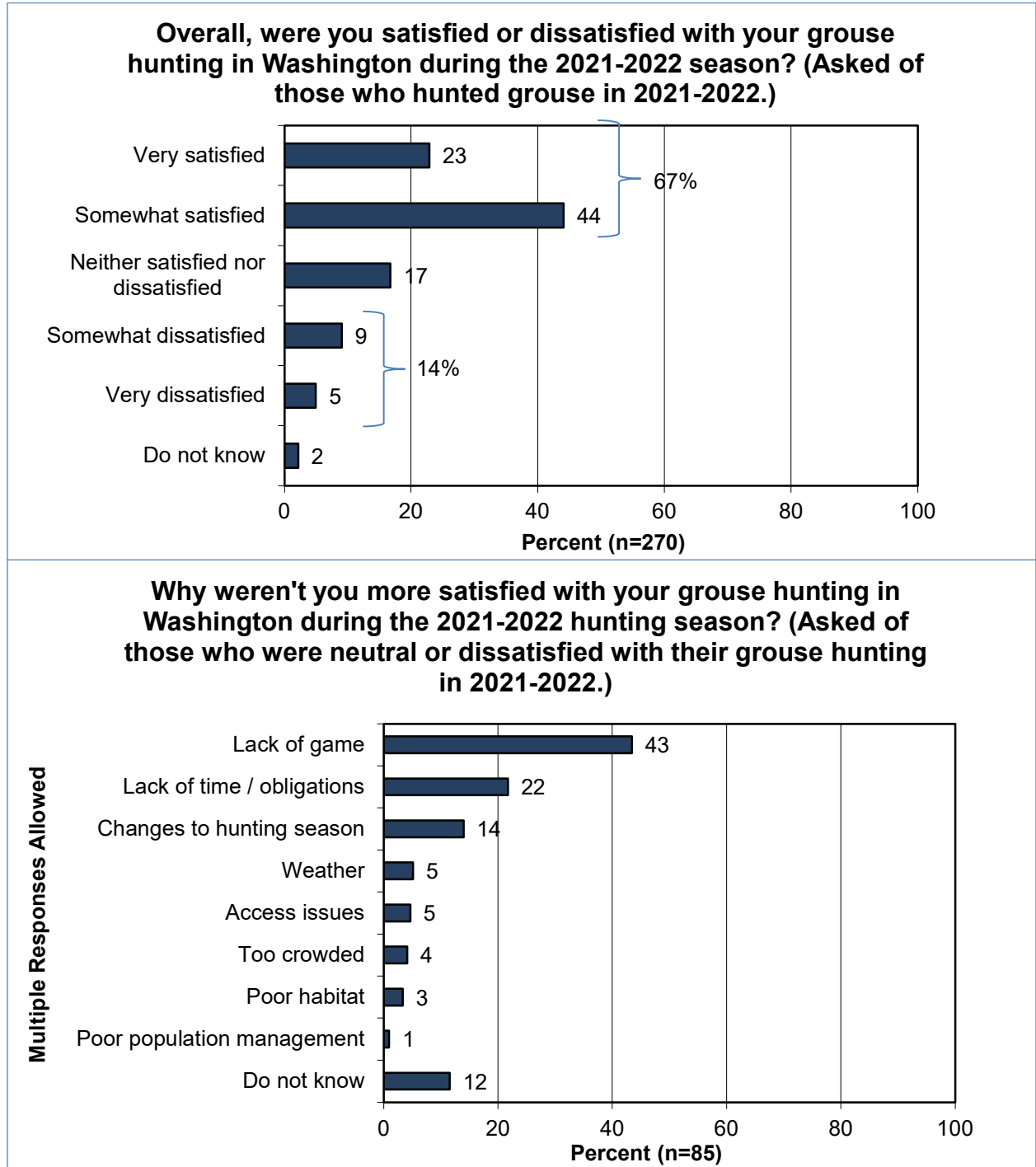


Currently, the Western Washington Pheasant Permit fee is \$84.50. If the Western Washington Pheasant Permit fee is increased, what do you think it should be? (Asked of those who hunted pheasant in Western Washington in 2021-2022.)



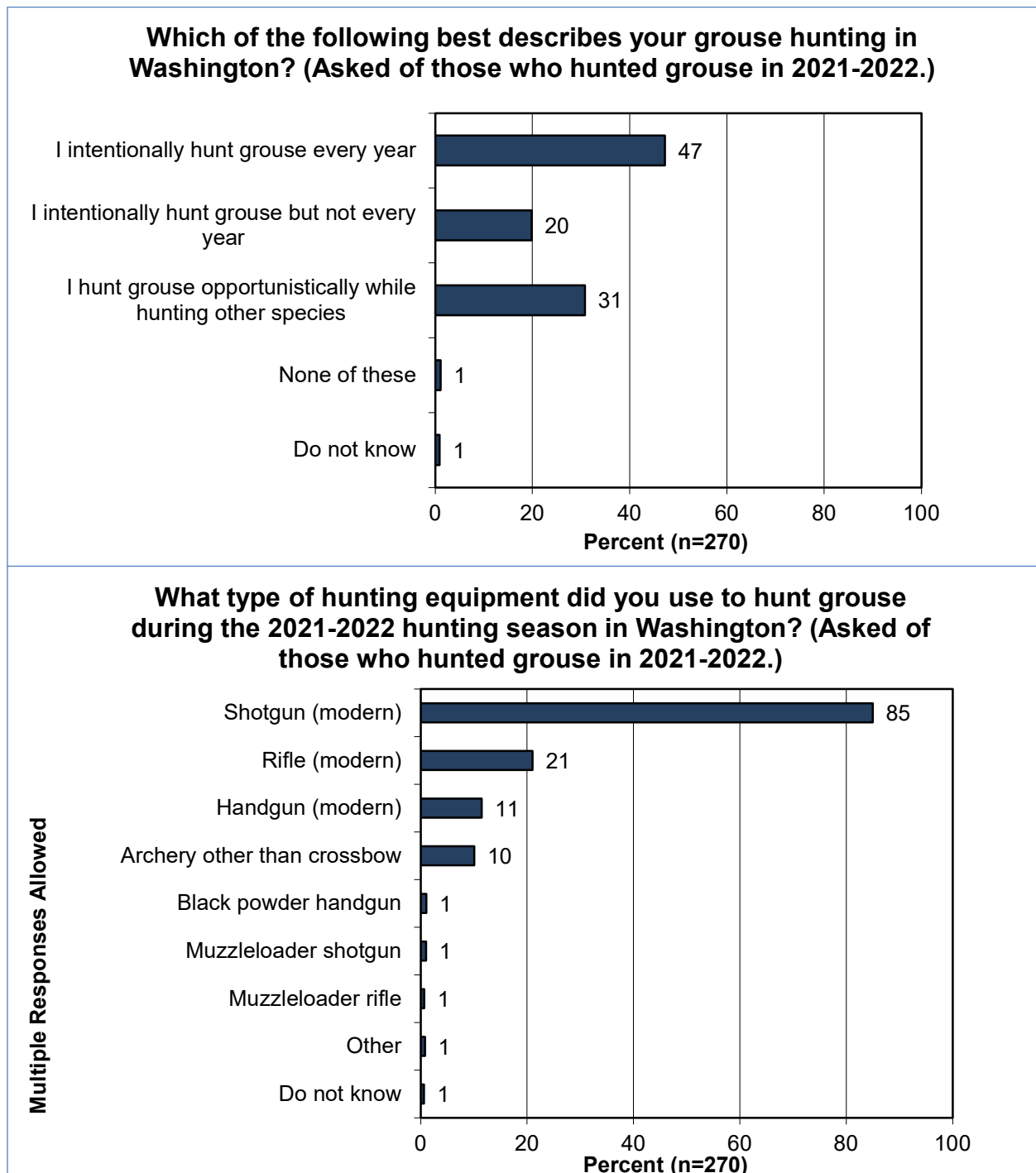
GROUSE

Two thirds of grouse hunters (67%) were satisfied with their grouse hunting in 2021-2022, while only 14% were dissatisfied. Among those who were not satisfied, lack of game, lack of free time, and changes to the hunting season were the top reasons.



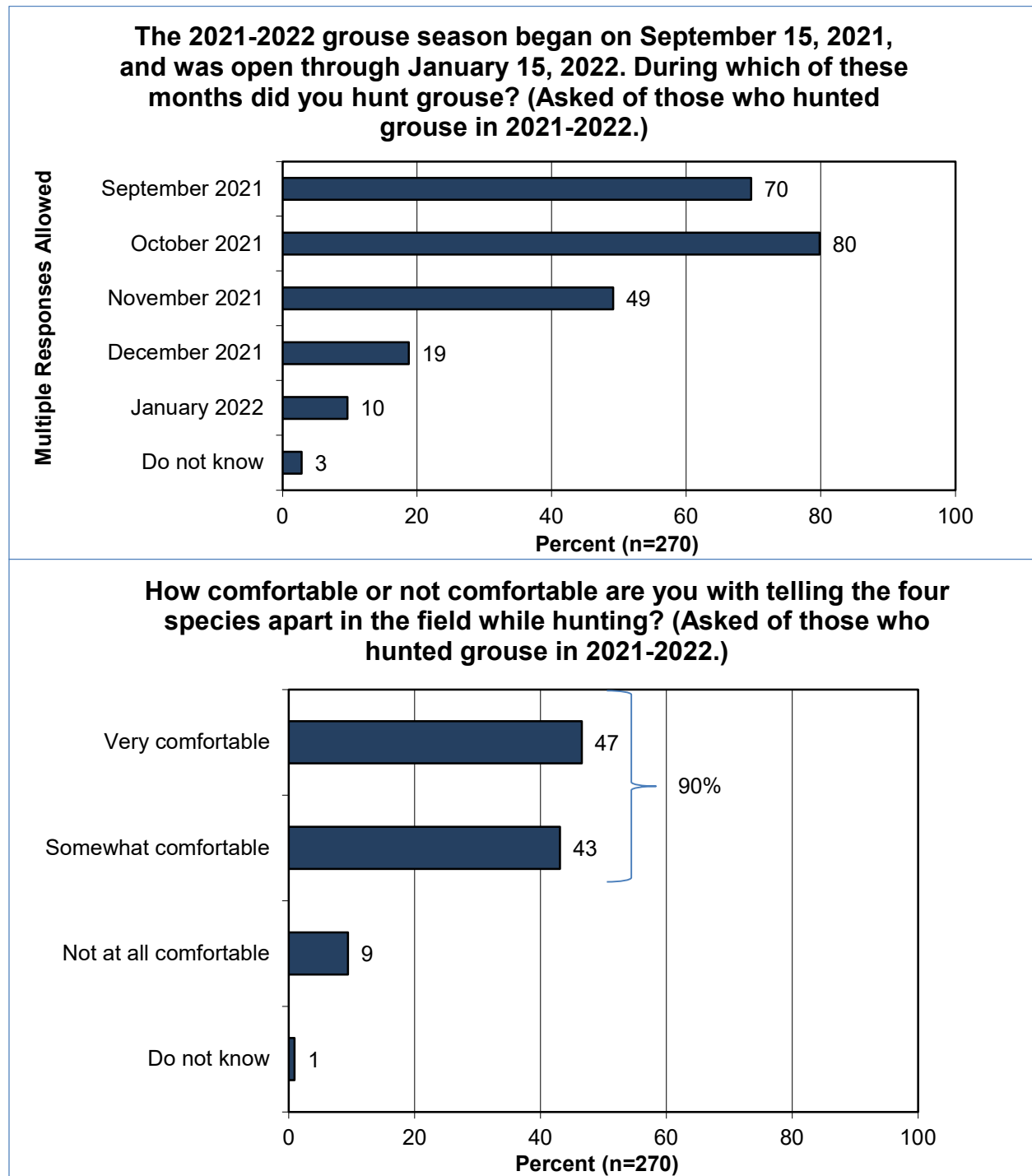
About half of grouse hunters (47%) intentionally hunt grouse every year and 20% intentionally hunt grouse but not every year. On the other hand, about a third (31%) hunt grouse opportunistically while hunting other species.

Most grouse hunters (85%) used shotguns, while 21% used modern rifles, 11% used modern handguns, and 10% use archery other than crossbows.

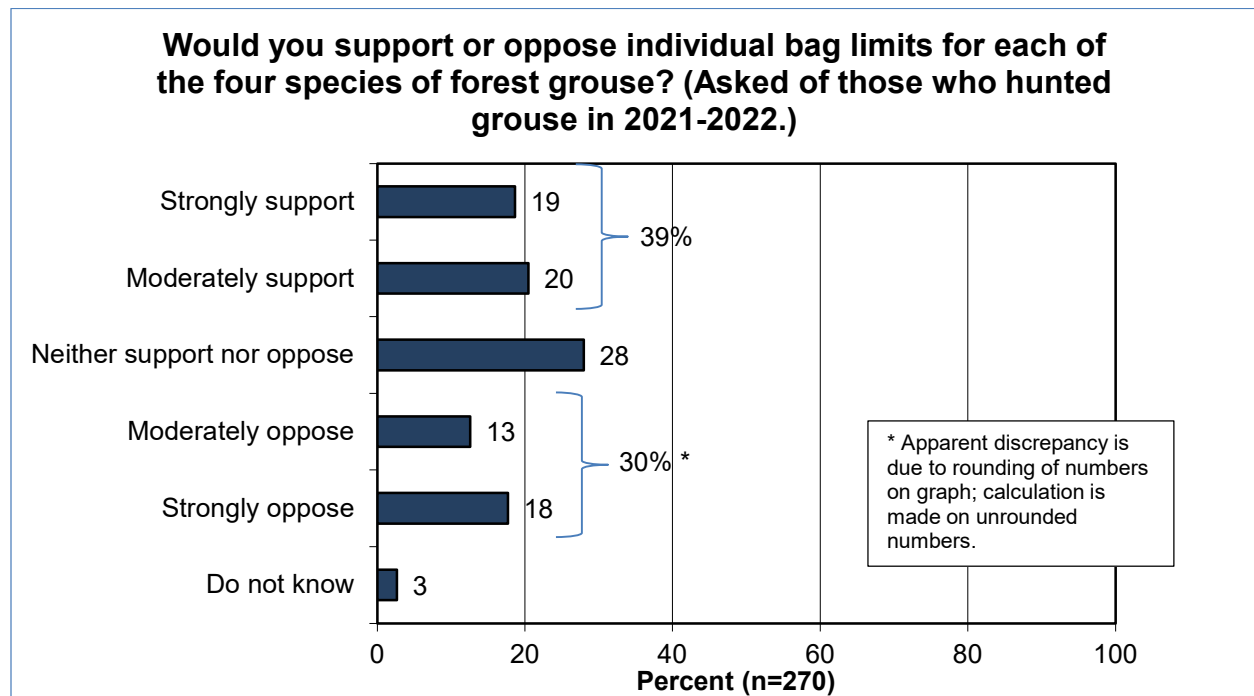


Grouse hunters most frequently hunted in the first two months of the season (September and October 2021).

Most grouse hunters (90%) are at least somewhat comfortable telling the four grouse species apart in the field while hunting.



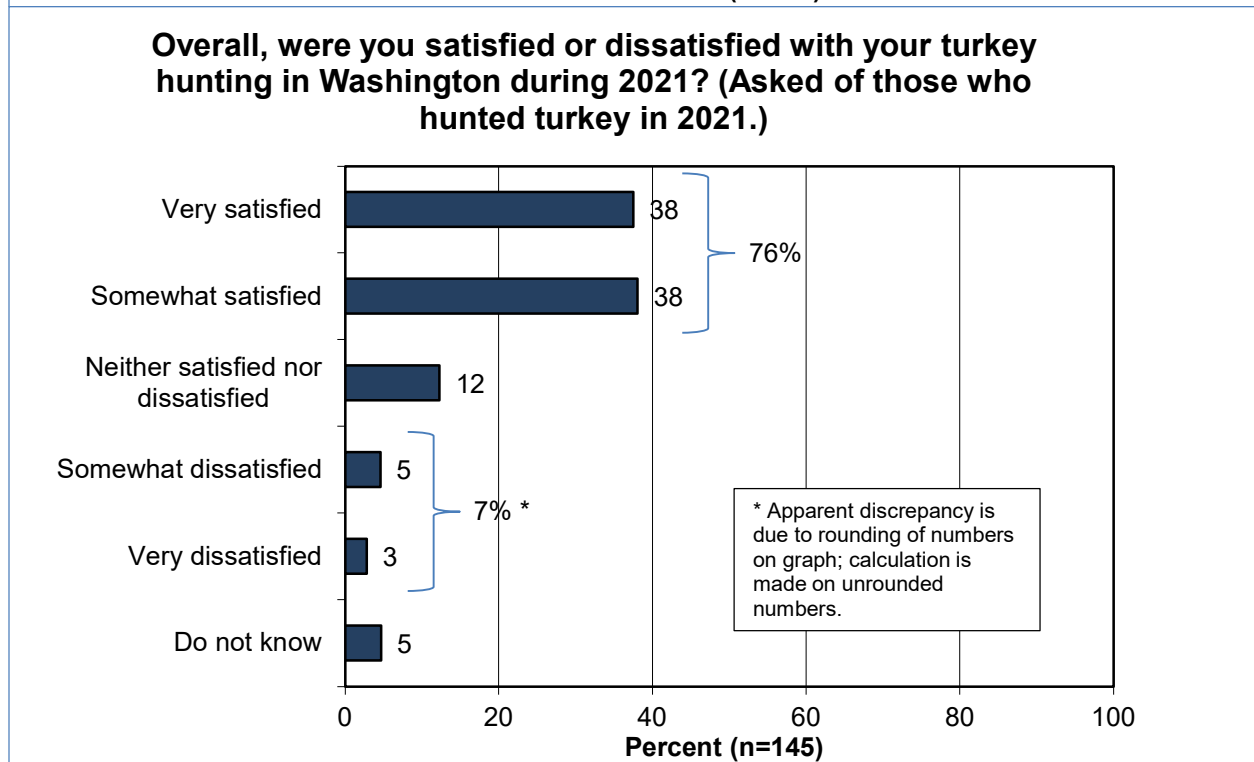
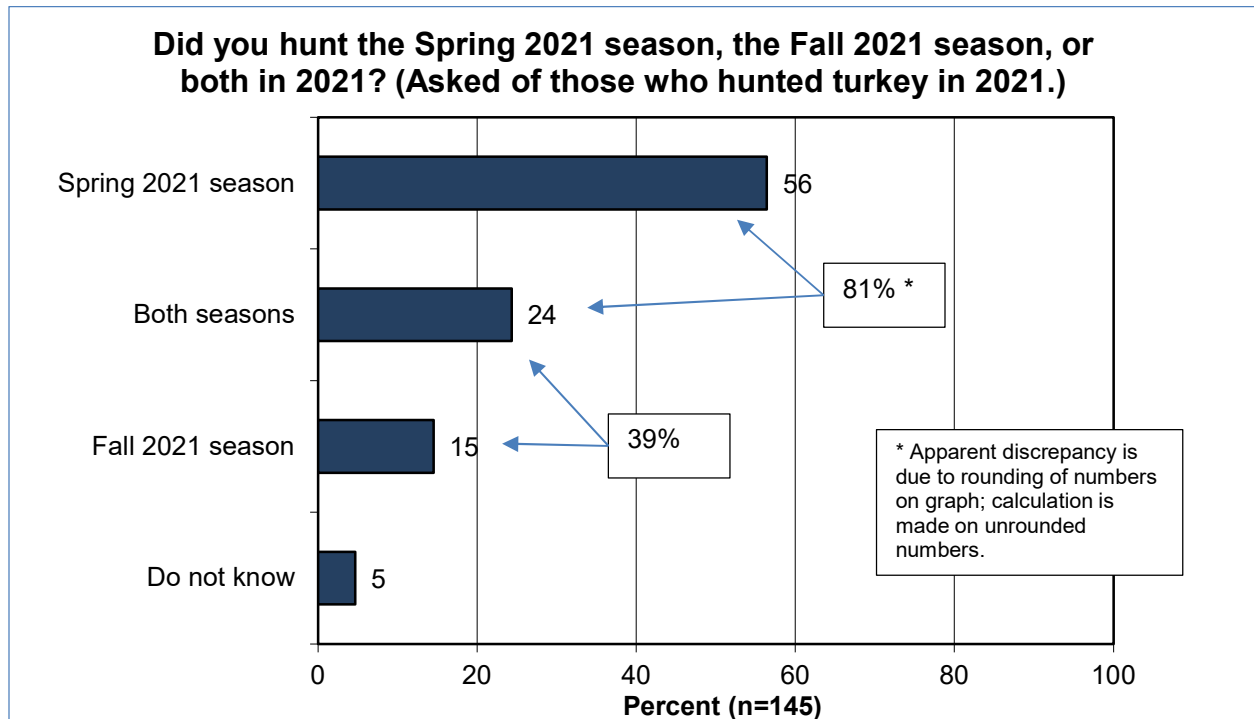
Grouse hunters would have slightly more support for (39%) than opposition to (30%) individual bag limits for each of the four species of grouse. The remainder are neutral or do not know.



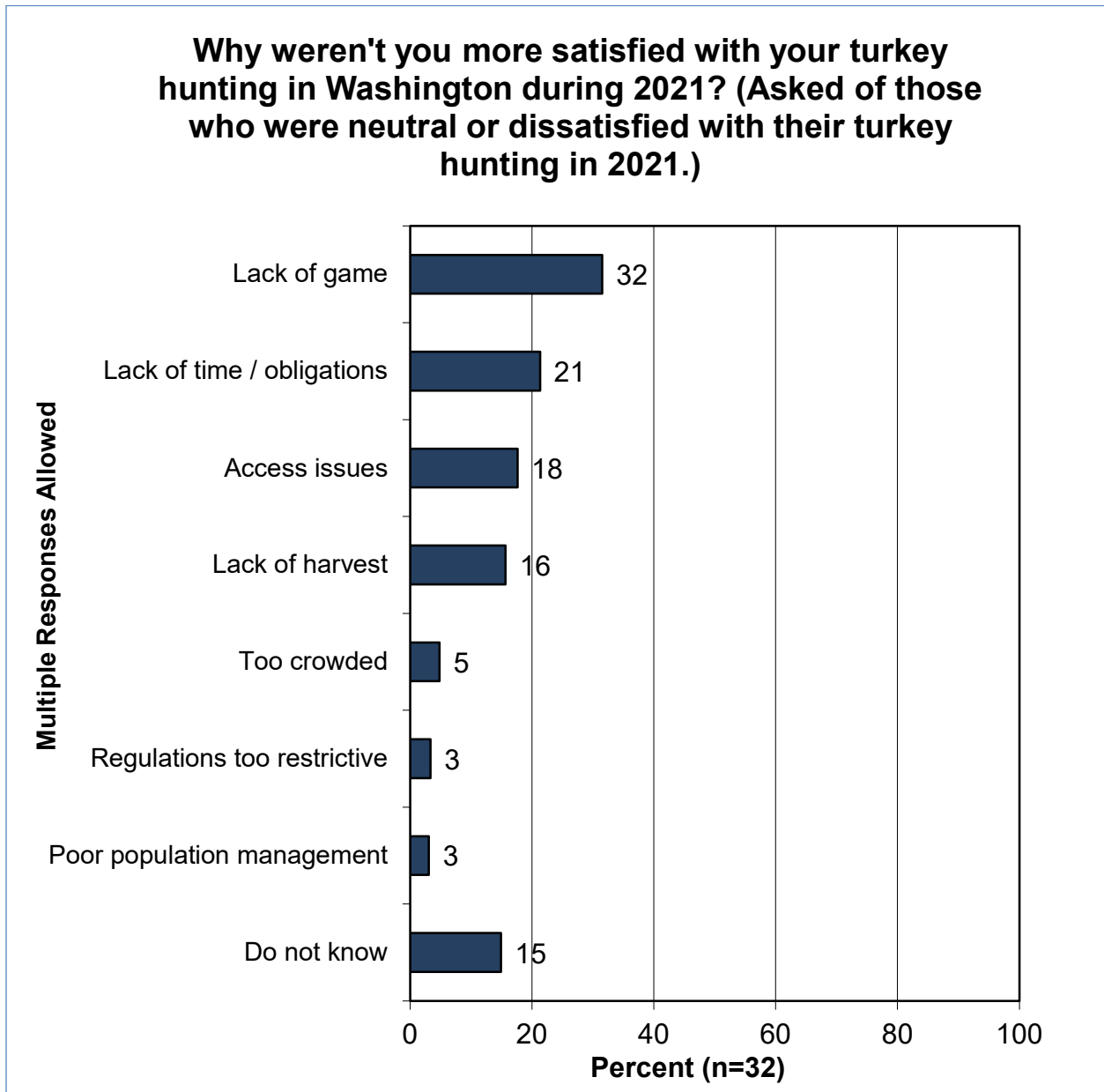
TURKEY

Most turkey hunters (81%) hunted in the Spring 2021 season (56% did so exclusively), while 39% hunted in the Fall 2021 season (15% did so exclusively).

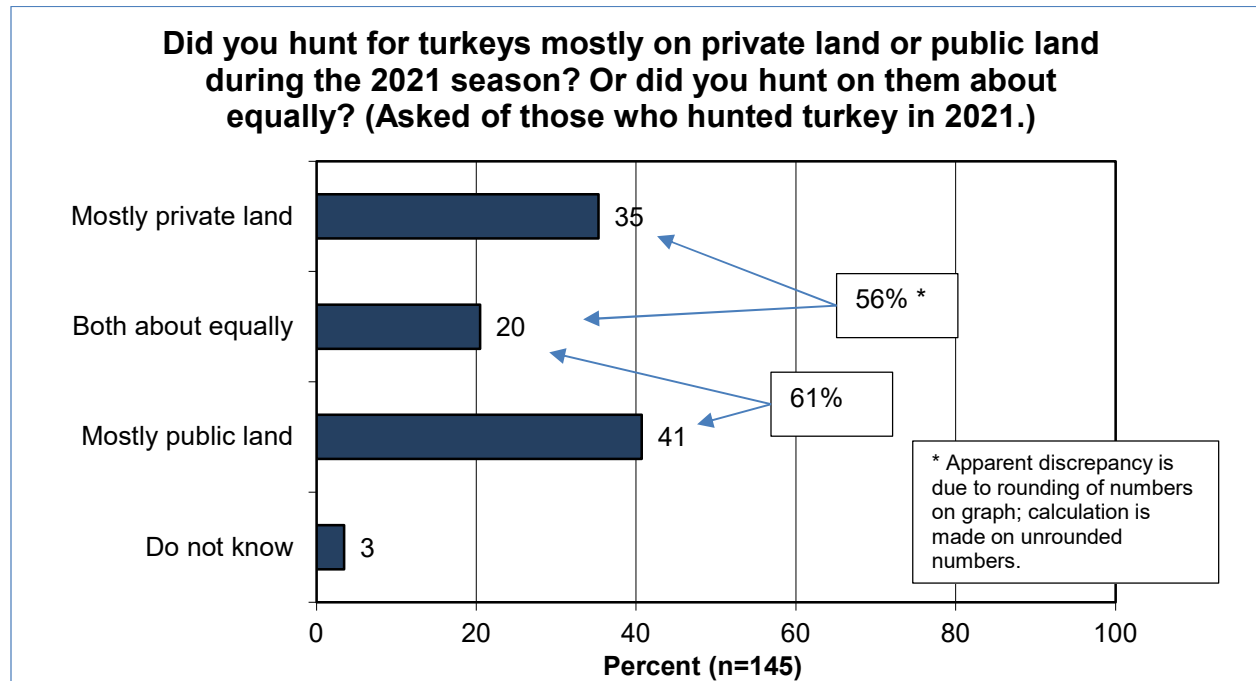
Over three quarters of turkey hunters (76%) were satisfied with their turkey hunting in 2021, compared to only 7% who were dissatisfied.



Among turkey hunters who were not satisfied, the top reasons stated were lack of game, lack of free time, access issues, and lack of harvest.

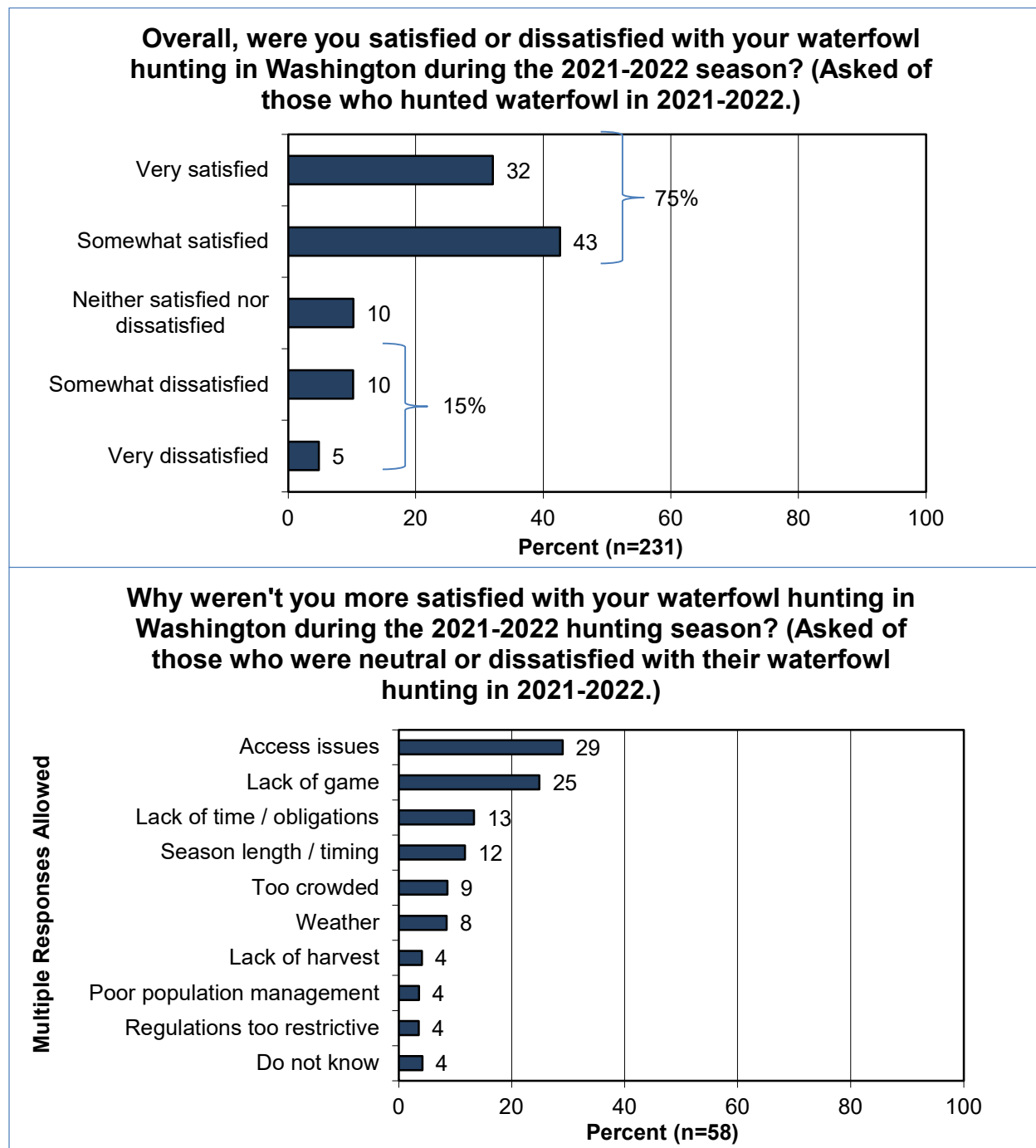


Turkey hunters were about evenly divided on the type of land hunted: 41% mostly hunted on public land, 35% mostly hunted on private land, and 20% hunted on both about equally.



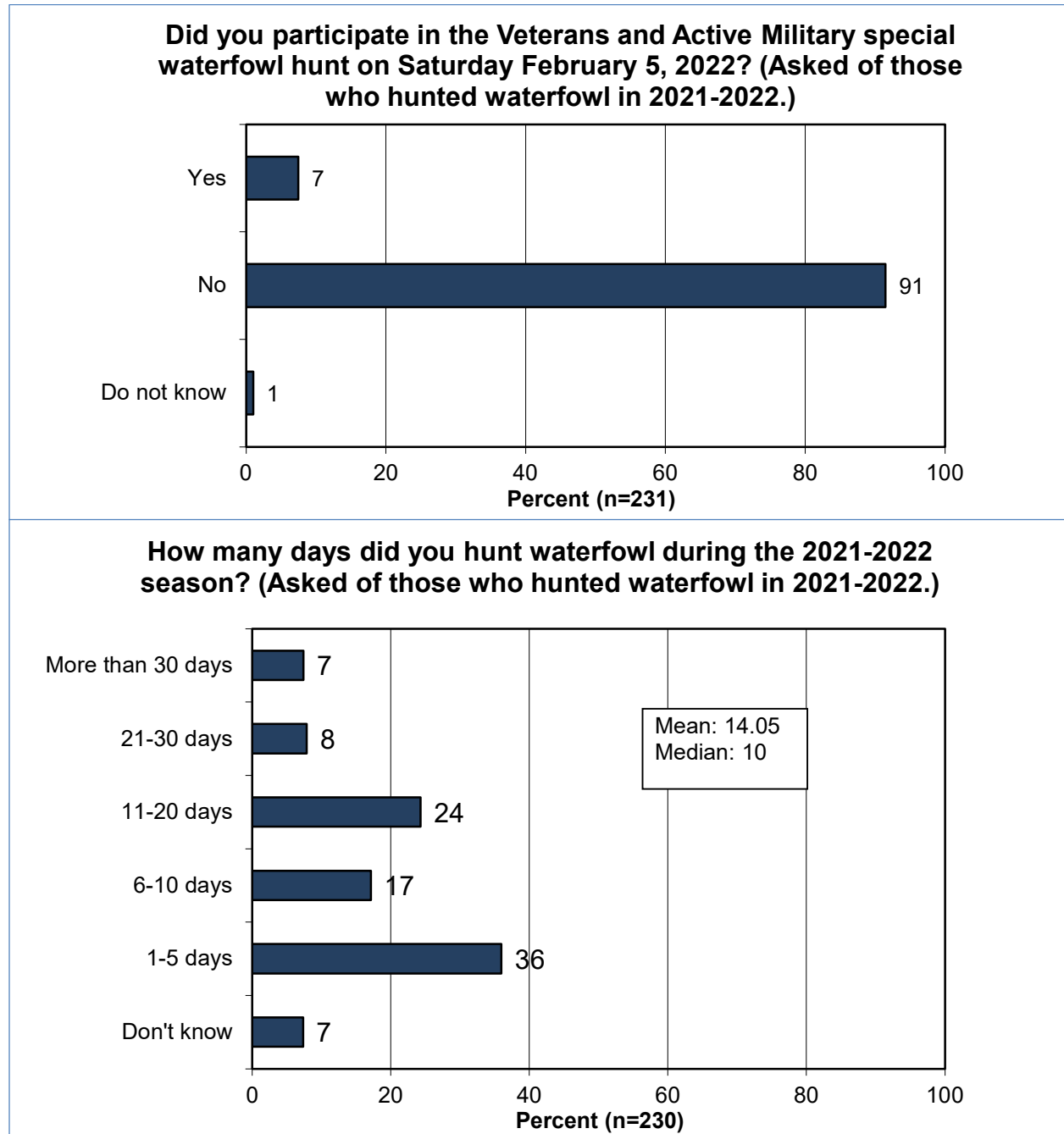
WATERFOWL

Three quarters of waterfowl hunters (75%) were satisfied with their hunting in Washington during the 2021-2022 season, while 15% were dissatisfied. Among those who were not satisfied, access issues, lack of game, lack of time, and the season length or timing were the top reasons.

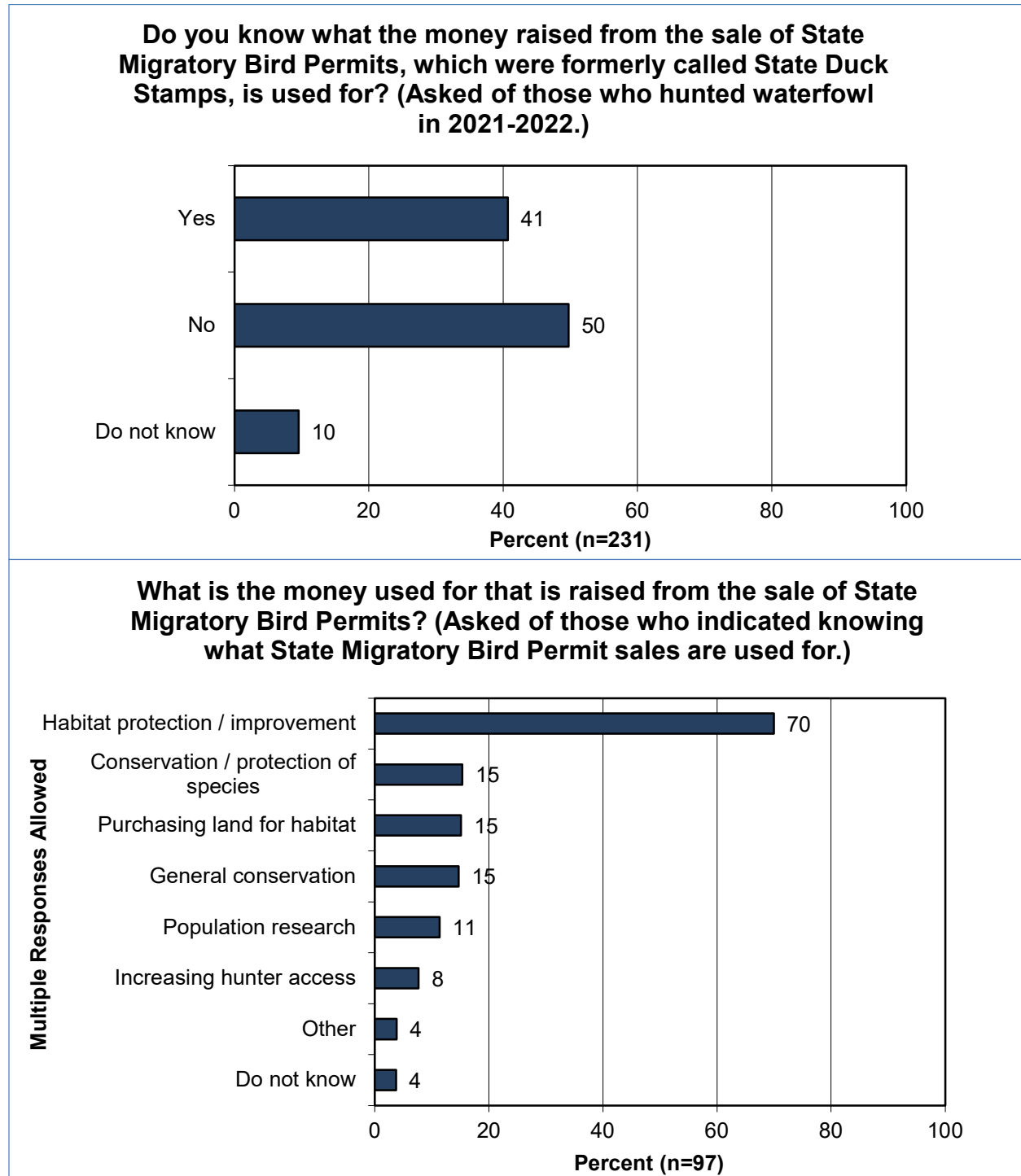


Overall, 7% of waterfowl hunters participated in the Veterans and Active Military special waterfowl hunt on Saturday, February 5, 2022.

Waterfowl hunters hunted a mean of 14.1 days and a median of 10 days during 2021-2022.

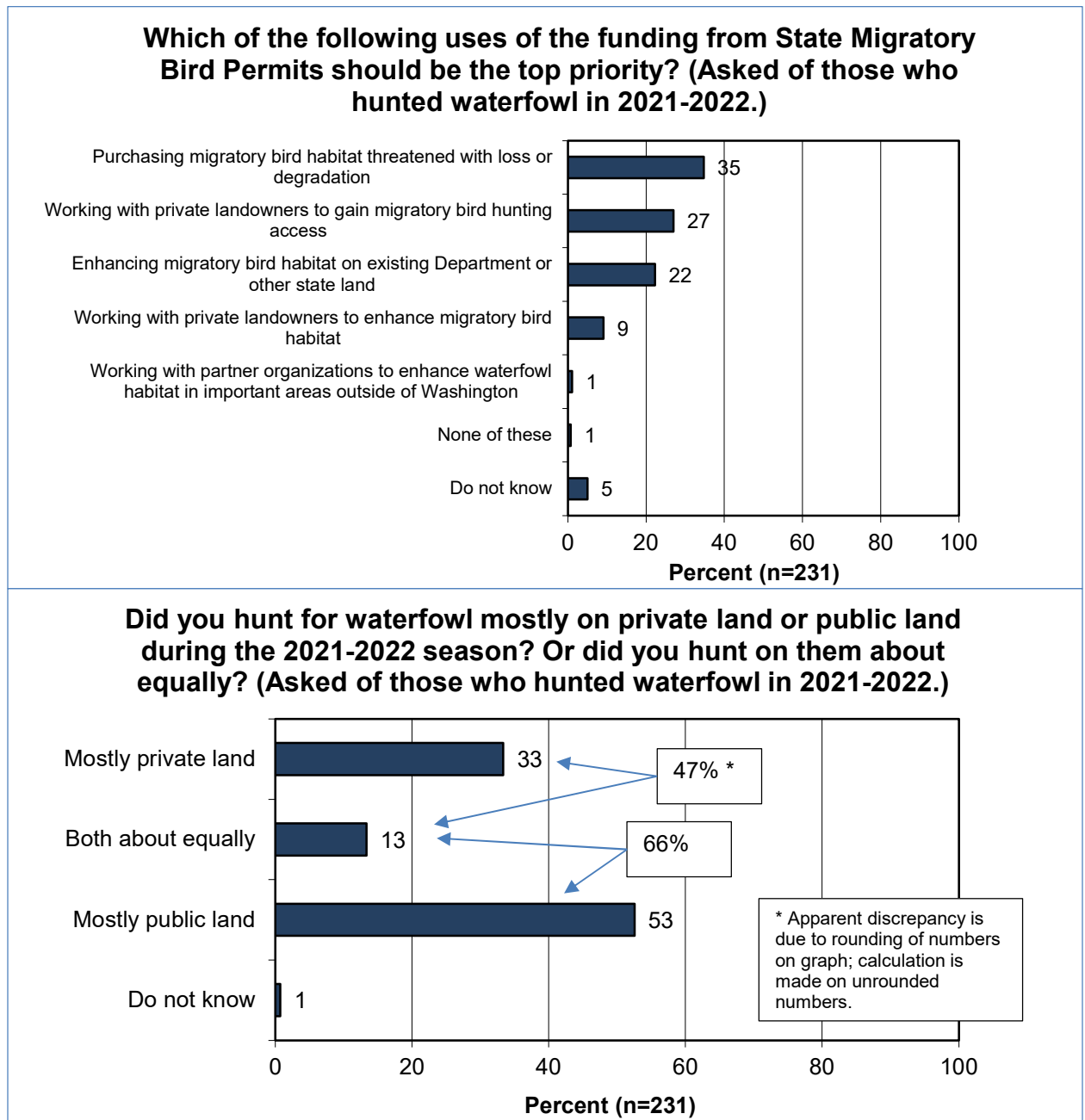


Nearly half of waterfowl hunters (41%) said they know what the money raised from State Migratory Bird Permits is used for. In an open-ended follow-up question, those who said they know the use of the money most commonly said the money is used for habitat protection or improvement (70% stated this).

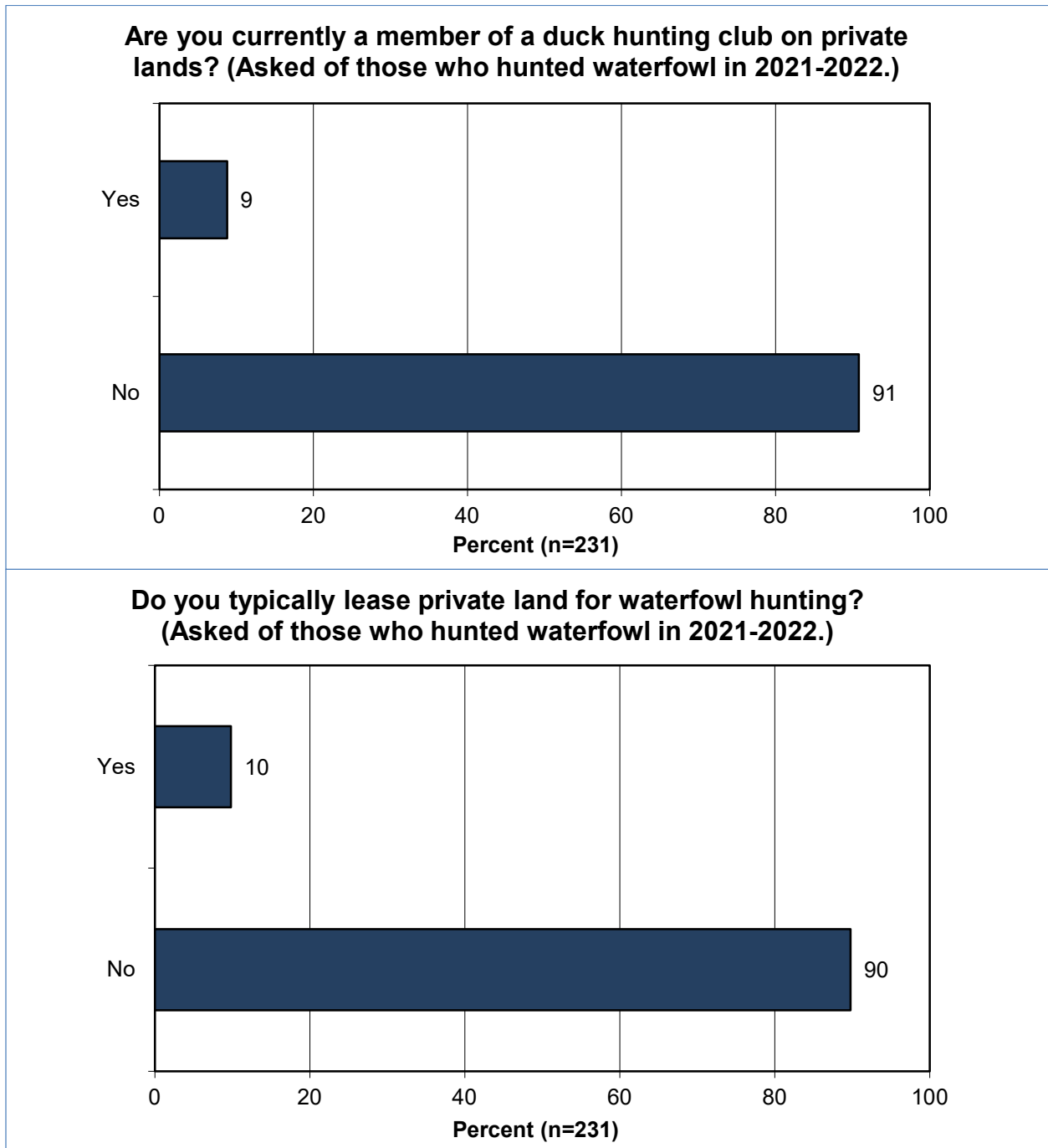


In another question, waterfowl hunters were provided a list of potential uses of funding and were asked to name the top priority: 35% said it should be purchasing habitat threatened with loss or degradation, 27% said it should be working with private landowners to allow hunting access, and 22% said it should be enhancing habitat on existing Department or other state land.

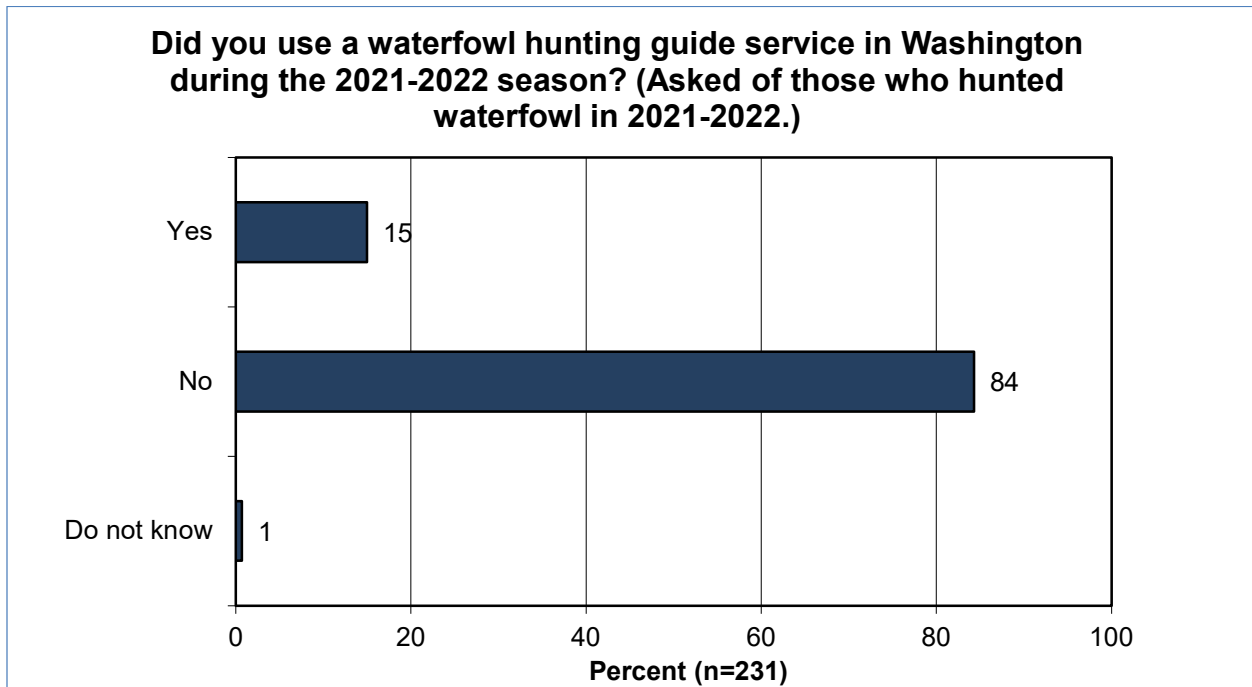
Waterfowl hunters were more likely to hunt on public land (66% did so) than private land (47%) during the 2021-2022 season.



Overall, 9% of waterfowl hunters belong to a duck hunting club on private lands. Also, 10% of waterfowl hunters typically lease private land for waterfowl hunting.

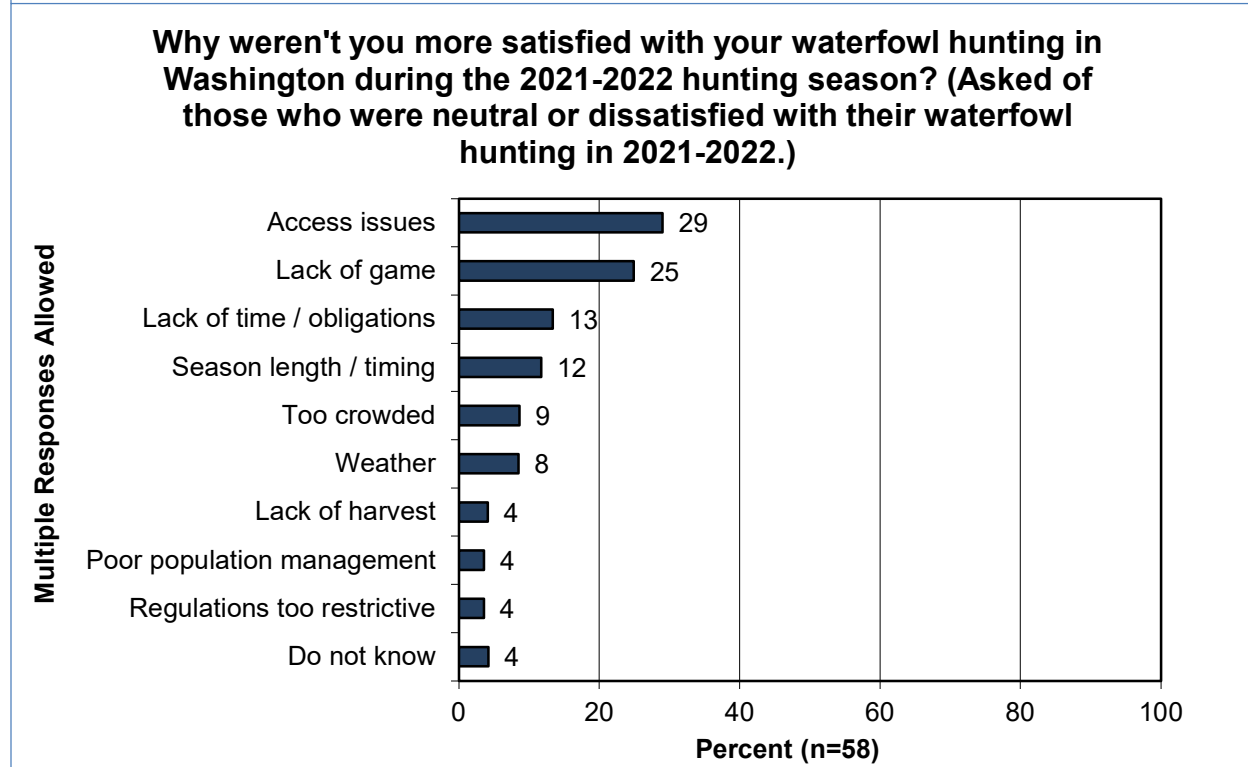
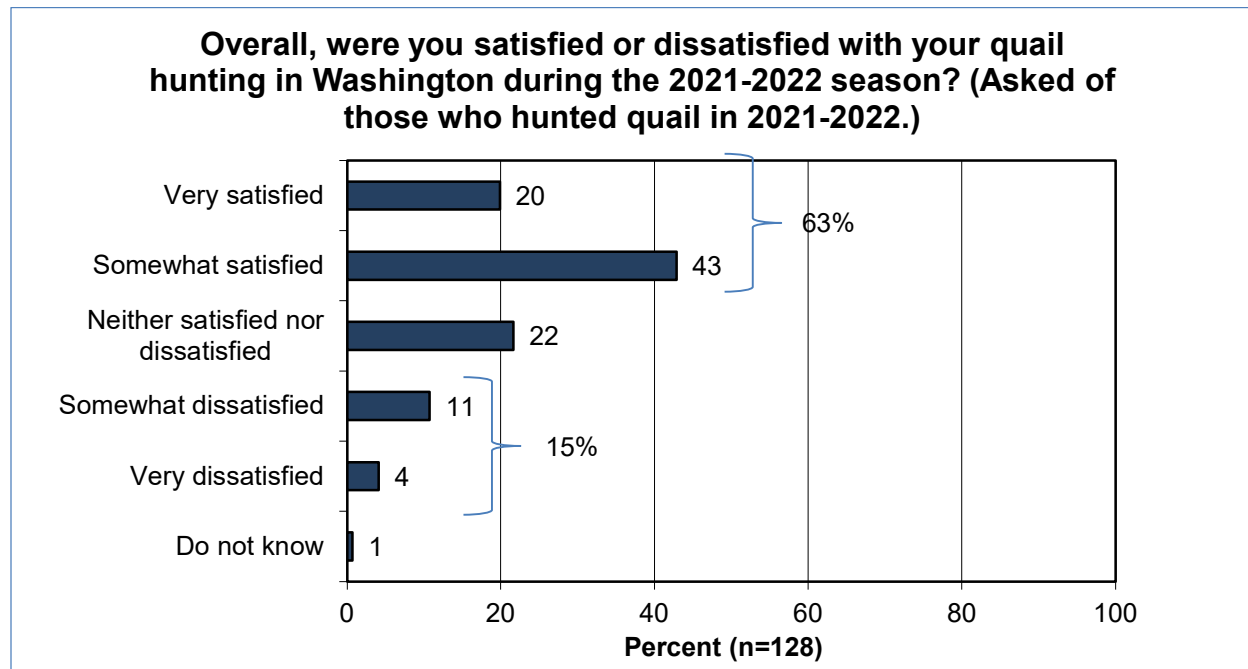


In addition, 15% of waterfowl hunters used a hunting guide service in Washington during the 2021-2022 season.

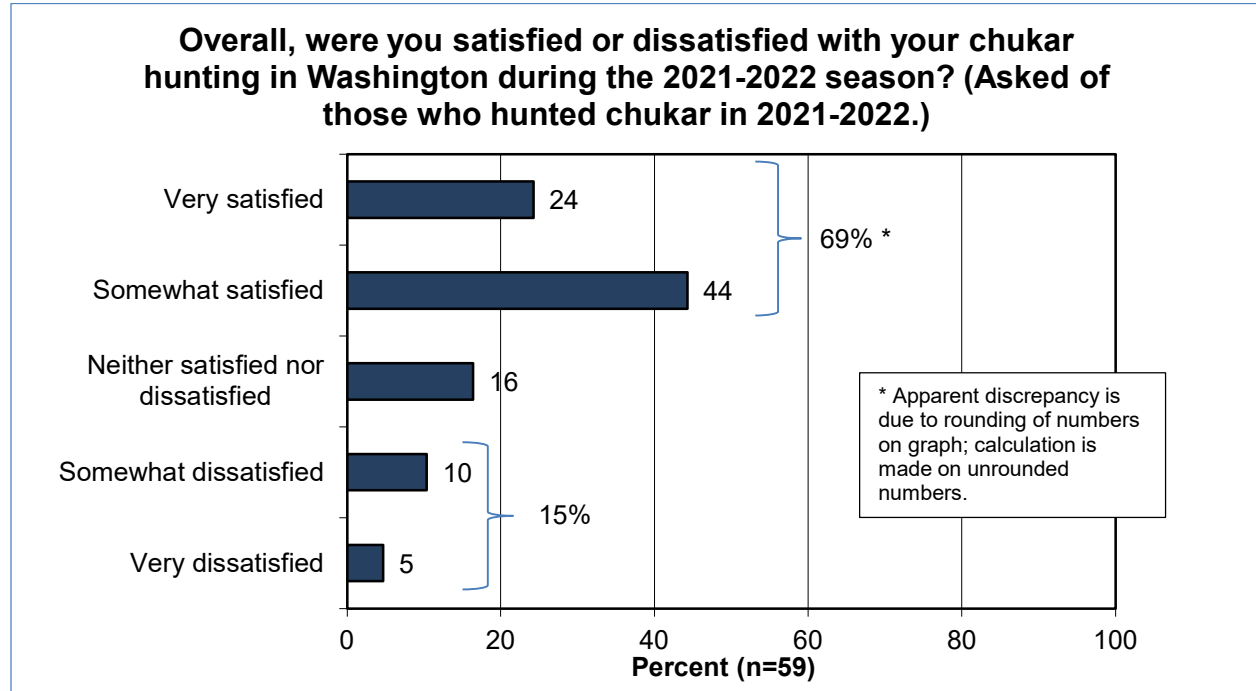


OTHER BIRD SPECIES

Nearly two thirds of quail hunters (63%) were satisfied with their quail hunting in Washington during the 2021-2022 season; 15% were dissatisfied. Among those who were not satisfied, the top stated reasons were access issues, lack of game, lack of time, and the season length or timing.



Over two thirds of chukar hunters (69%) were satisfied with their chukar hunting in Washington during the 2021-2022 season, while 15% were dissatisfied. Among those who were not satisfied, lack of game was the most common reason (a graph is not shown because of the low sample size).

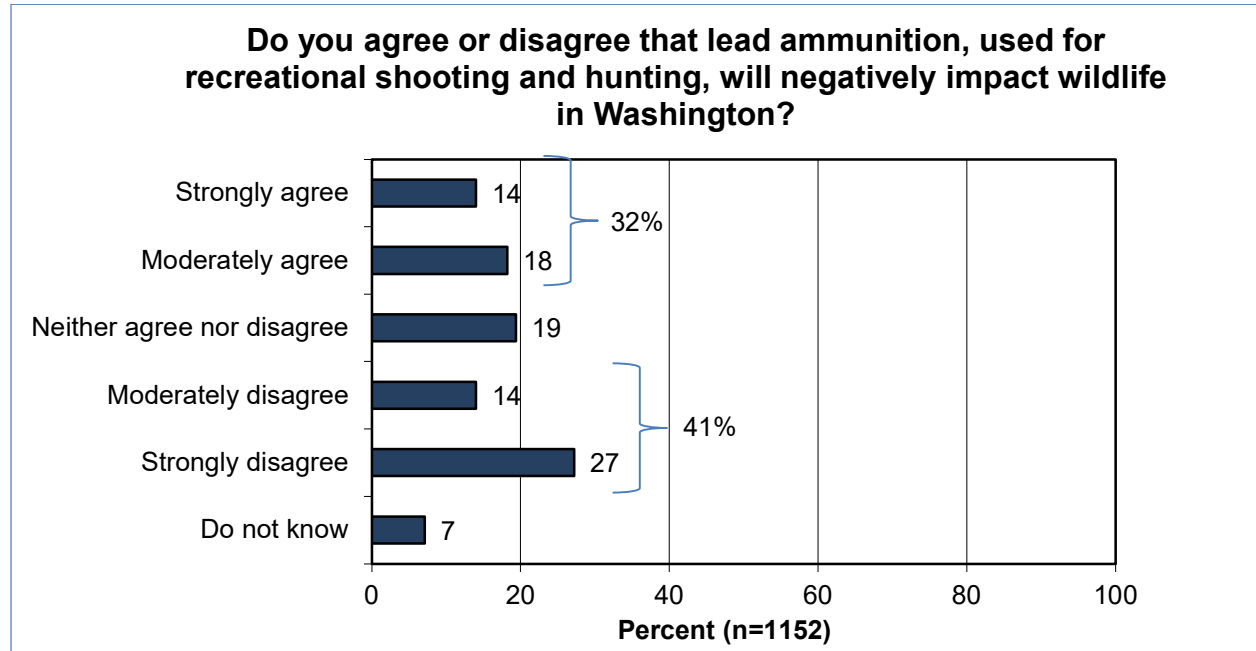


SHEEP, MOOSE, AND GOAT HUNTING

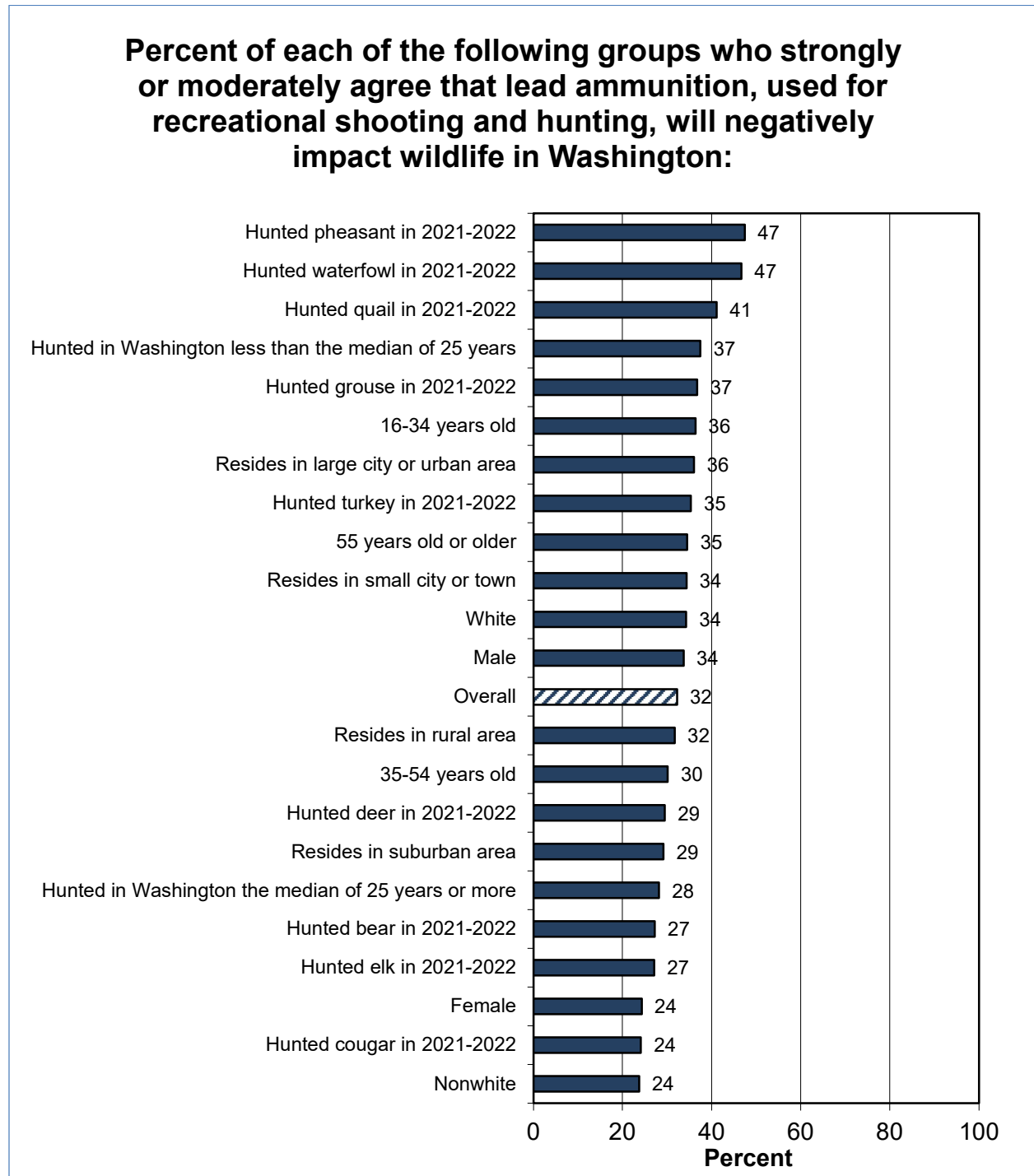
Only 10 Washington hunters stated that they hunted bighorn sheep, moose, or mountain goat in the 2021 seasons (the three species were presented as a single option at the beginning of the survey). In follow-up, those 10 hunters were asked which specific species they hunted: 2 said they hunted bighorn sheep, 1 said moose, and 7 replied “none of these.” Because of the low sample sizes, as well as the inconsistency of the responses, no graphs are shown for this section.

LEAD AMMUNITION

More Washington hunters disagree (41%) than agree (32%) that lead ammunition used for recreational shooting and hunting will negatively impact wildlife in the state.

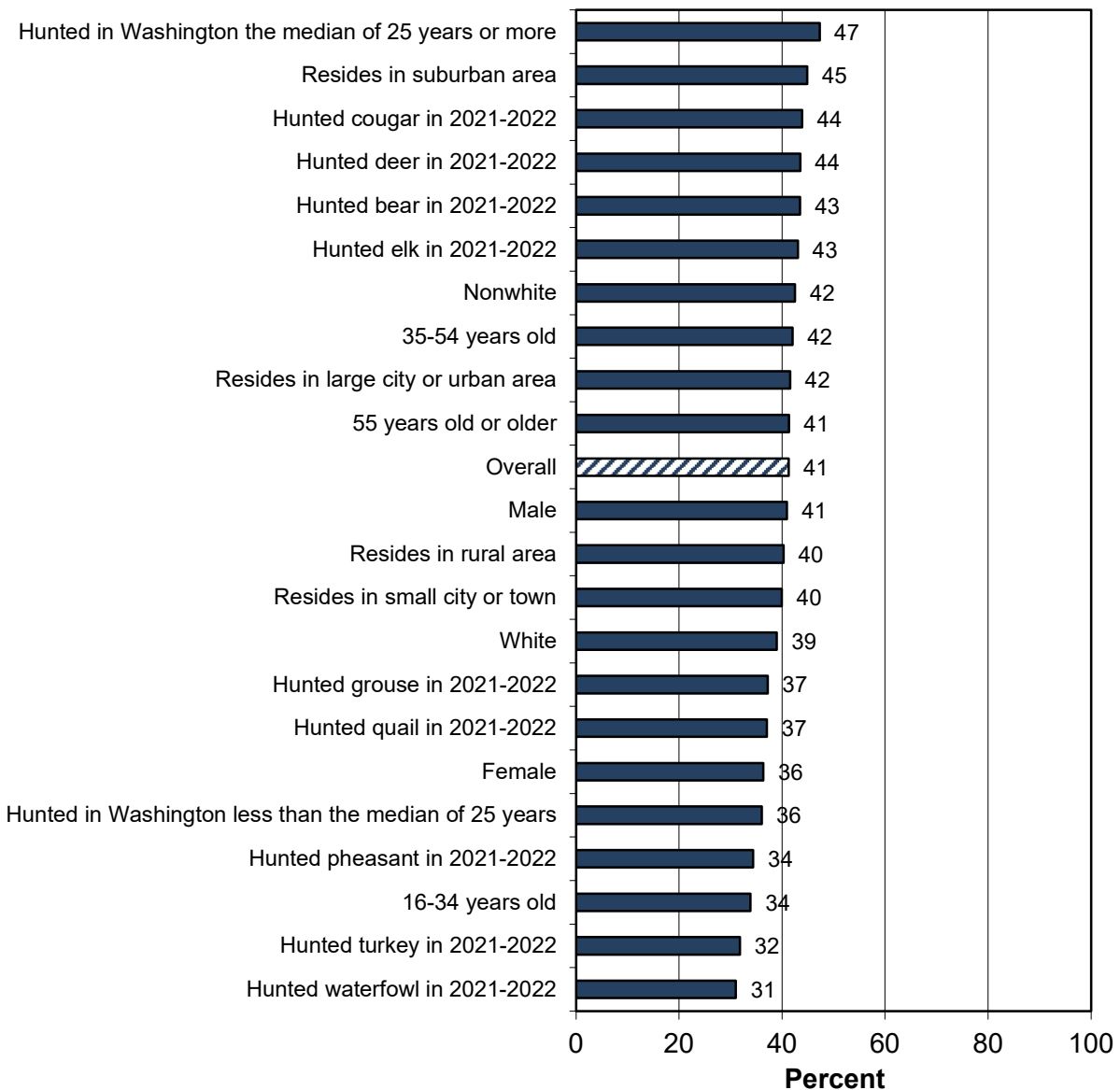


Pheasant, waterfowl, and quail hunters are the groups most likely to agree that lead ammunition will negatively impact wildlife.

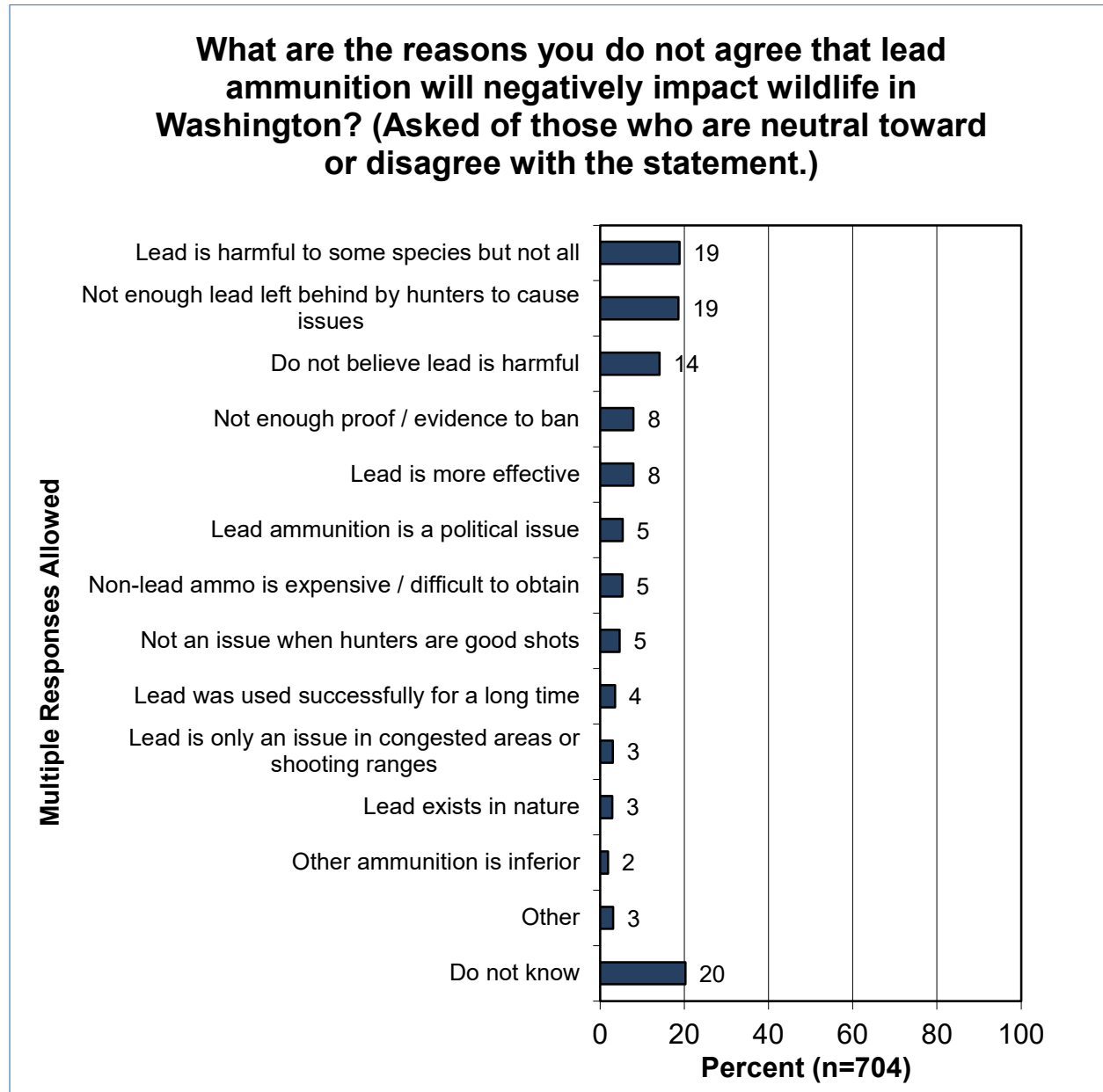


Long-time Washington hunters are the group most likely to disagree that lead ammunition will negatively impact wildlife.

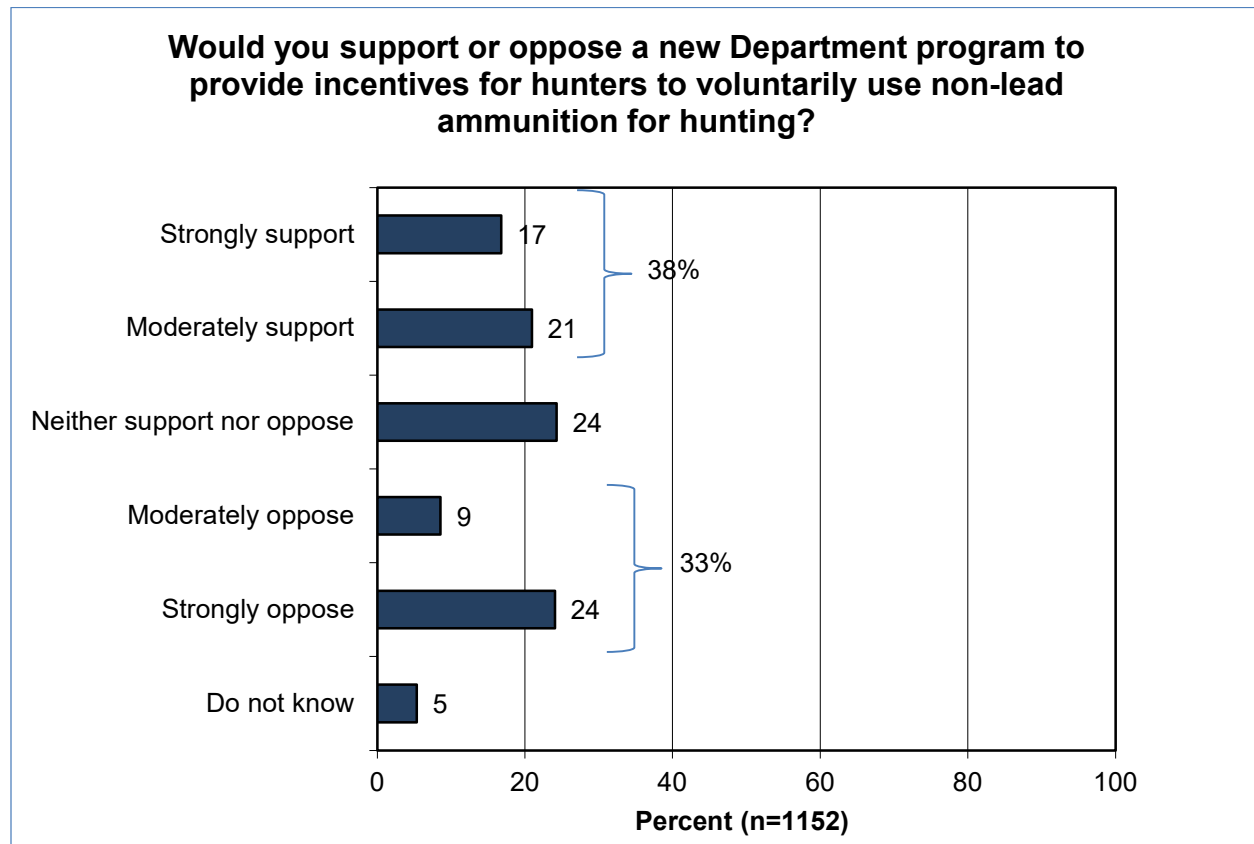
Percent of each of the following groups who strongly or moderately disagree that lead ammunition, used for recreational shooting and hunting, will negatively impact wildlife in Washington:



Hunters who disagree that lead ammunition will harm wildlife were asked why, in an open-ended question. These hunters most often said that lead is harmful to some species but not all, there is not enough lead left behind by hunters to cause issues, and that they do not believe lead is harmful.

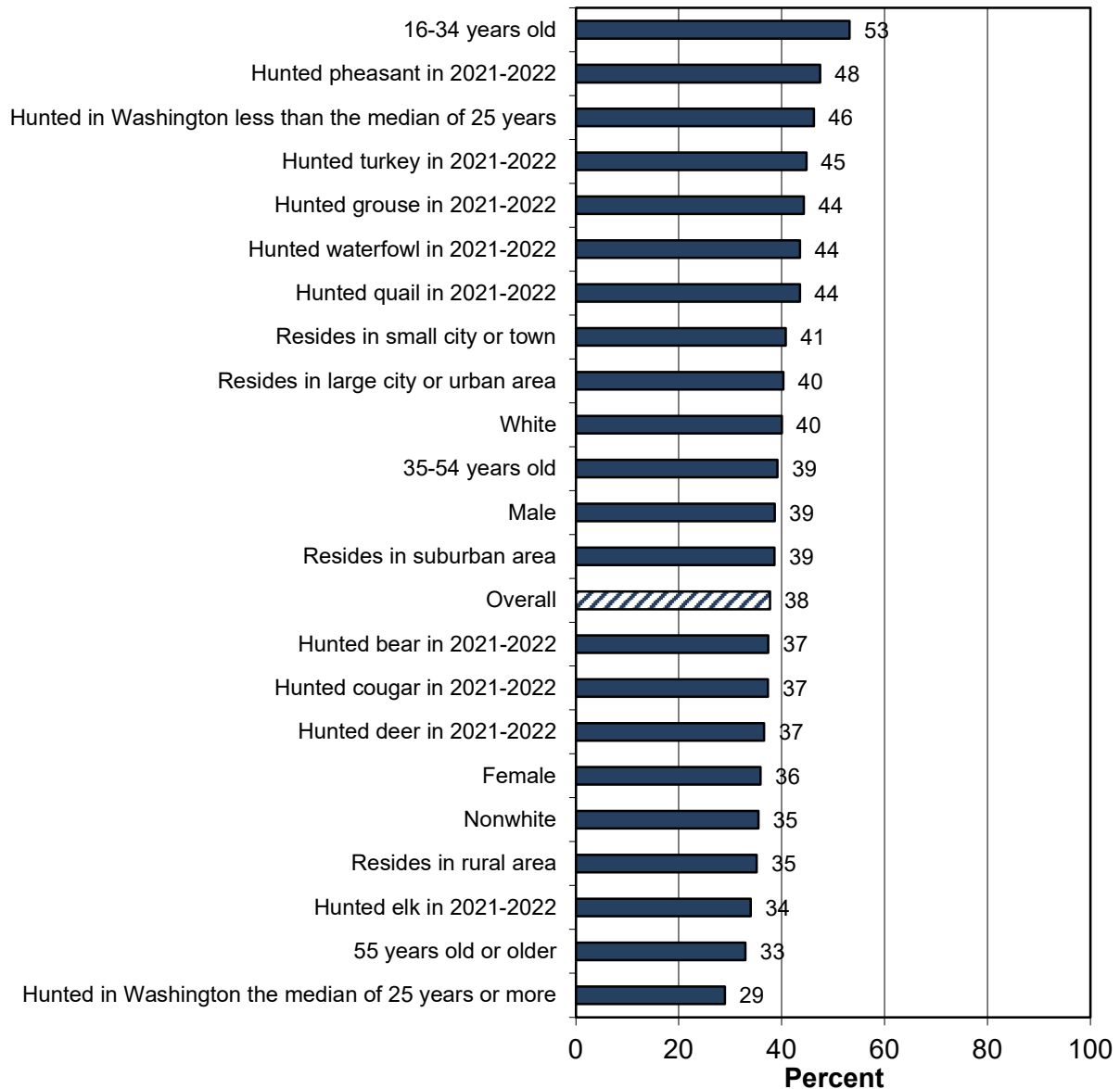


Over a third of hunters (38%) would support a new Department program to provide incentives for hunters to voluntarily use non-lead ammunition for hunting. In contrast, a third of hunters (33%) would oppose the initiative.



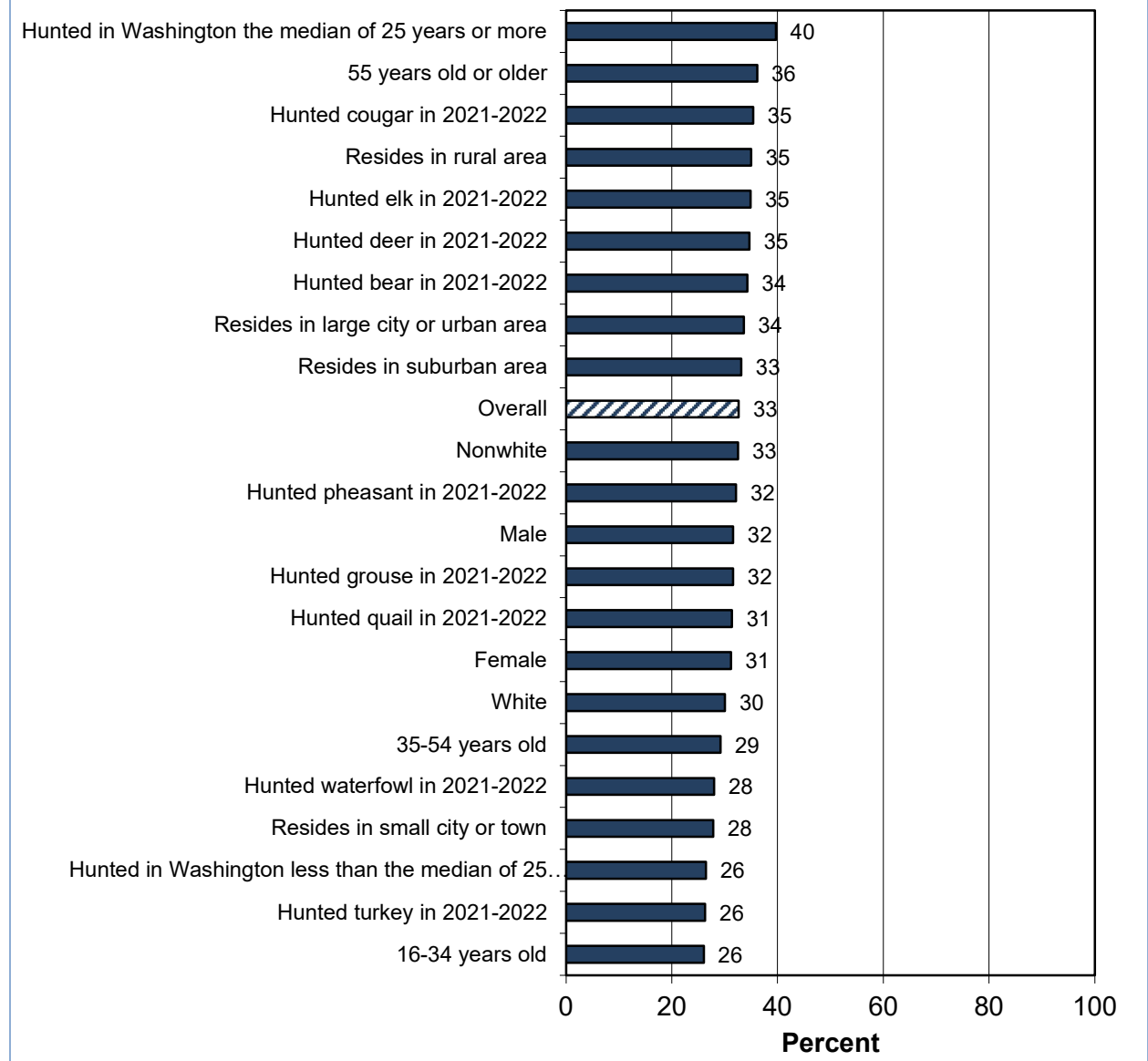
The groups most likely to support incentives for non-lead ammunition are younger hunters, pheasant hunters, and those who hunted in Washington less than the median of 25 years.

Percent of each of the following groups who would strongly or moderately support a new Department program to provide incentives for hunters to voluntarily use non-lead ammunition for hunting:



The group most likely to oppose incentives for non-lead ammunition is those who hunted in Washington the median of 25 years or more.

Percent of each of the following groups who would strongly or moderately oppose a new Department program to provide incentives for hunters to voluntarily use non-lead ammunition for hunting:



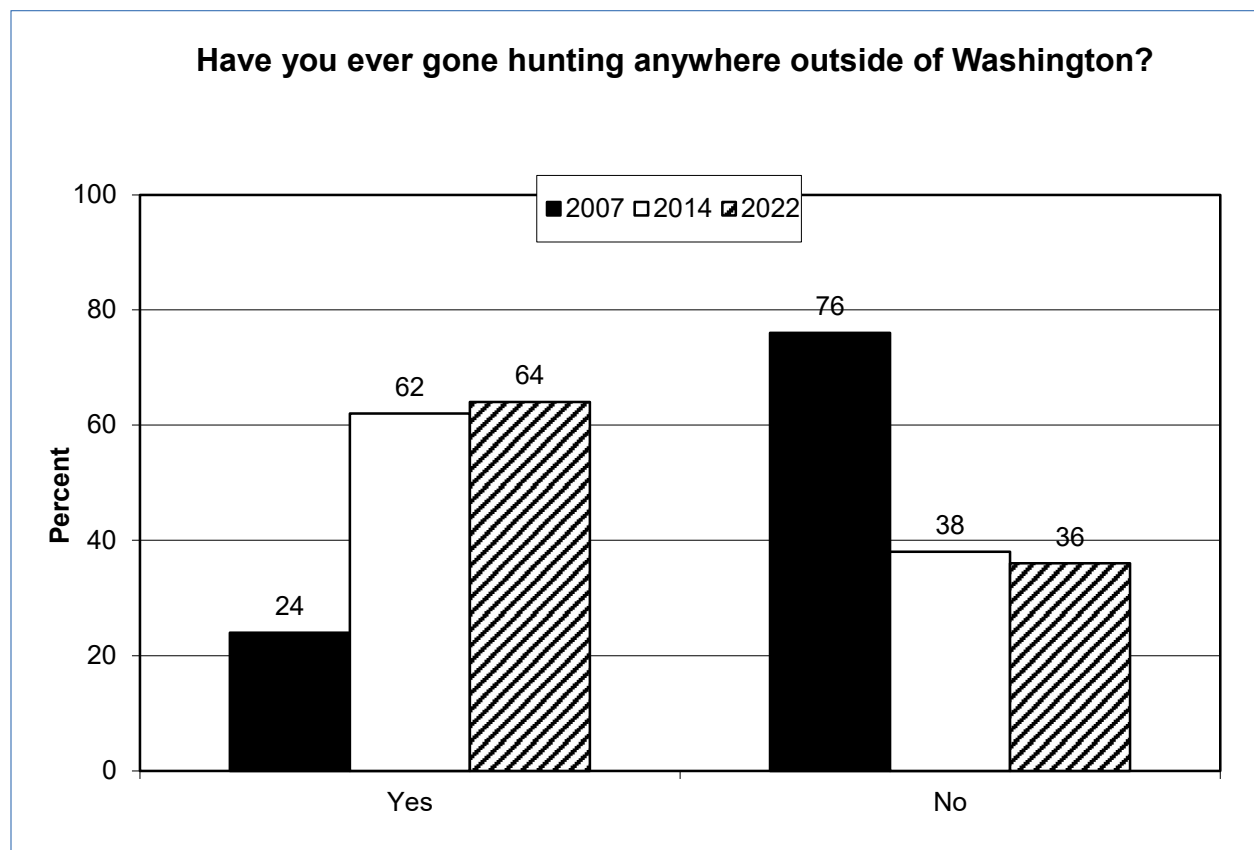
TRENDS

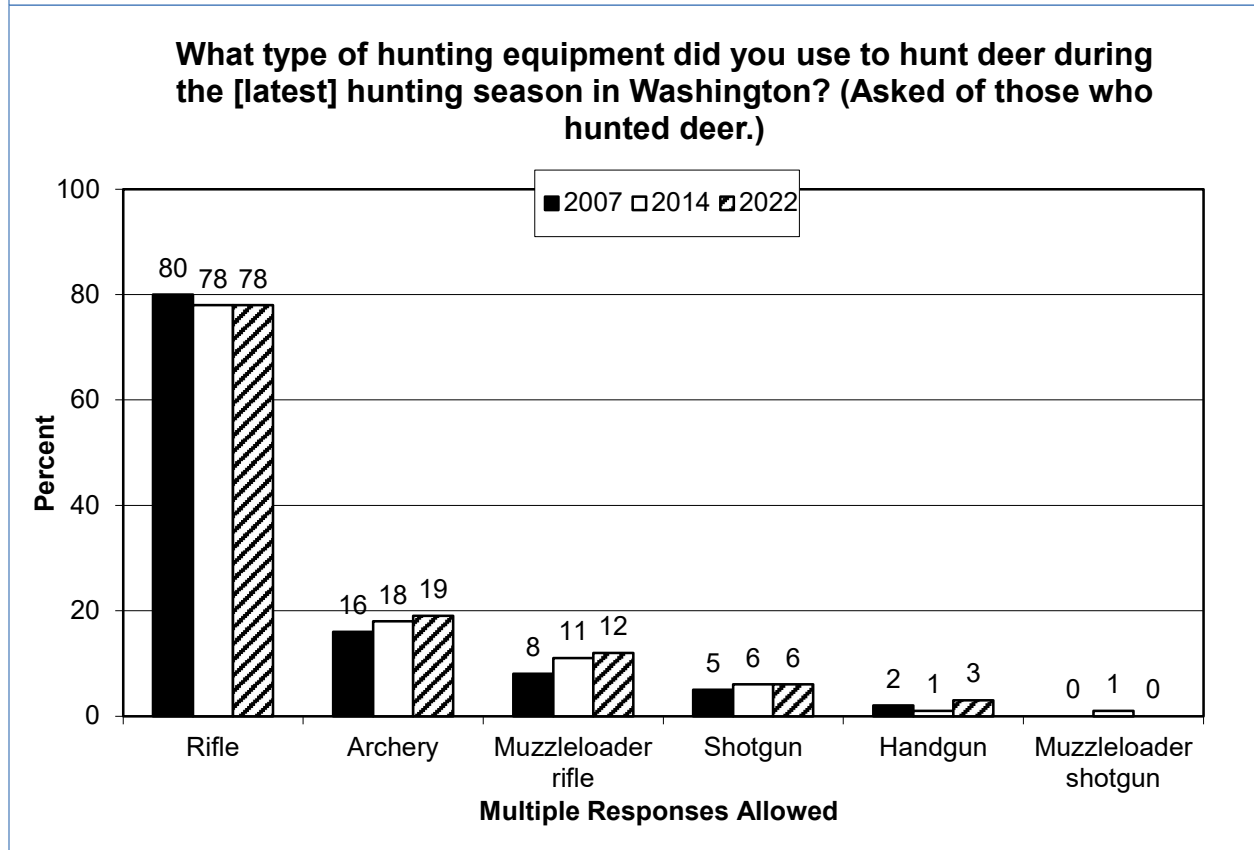
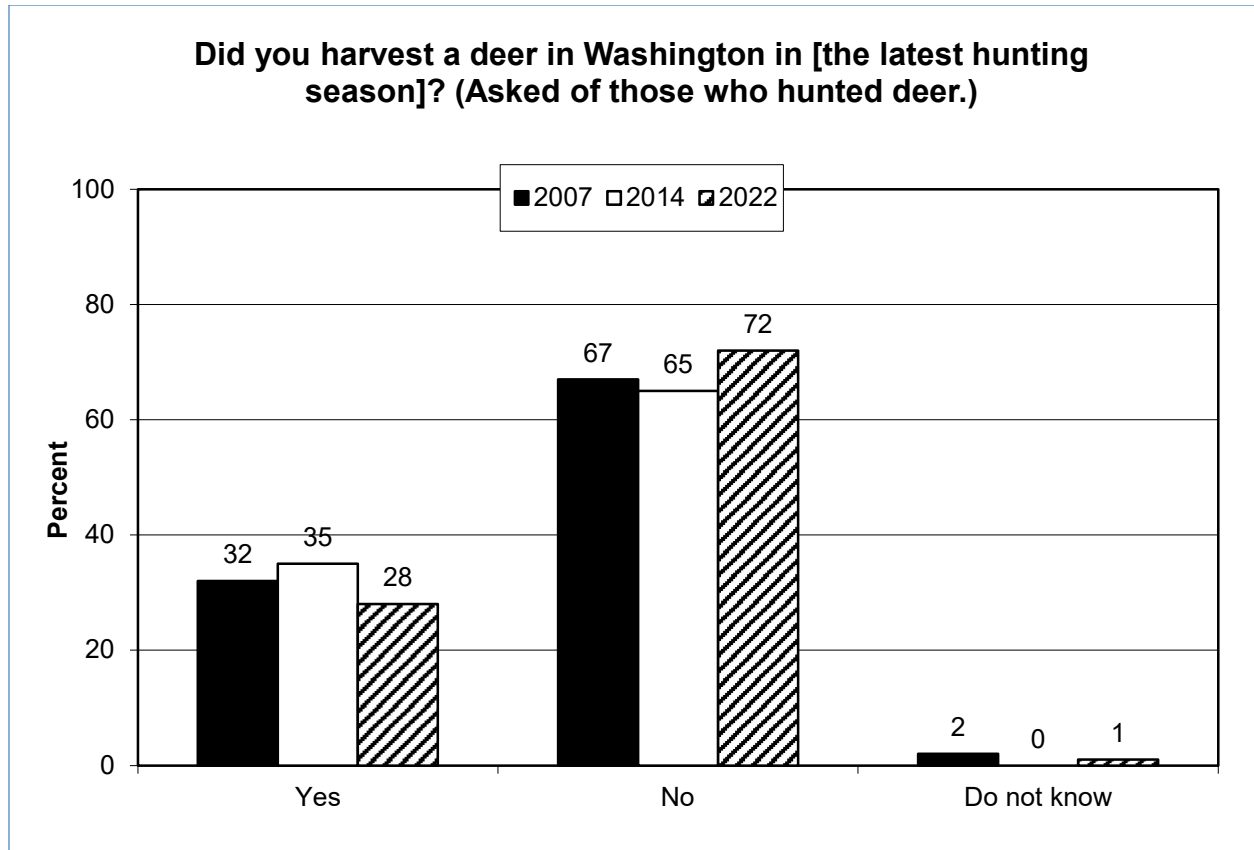
The trends should be interpreted cautiously, as two changes in methodology could have affected some questions. One change is that the previous surveys were conducted entirely by telephone, while the 2022 survey included, in addition to telephone surveys, online surveys to licensed hunters invited to take the survey (the survey was specifically by invitation to licensed hunters; the survey could not be accessed through a general internet search).

A second methodological change was made to the sampling plan. In the previous surveys, potential respondents were assigned a single species according to their license type, done randomly. For instance, those with a license that included deer, elk, bear, and cougar would, in the previous surveys, be randomly assigned only one of those species. Hunters who had not hunted that species to which they had been randomly assigned were ineligible for the survey. This resulted in a large number of ineligible respondents because a relatively large number had not hunted the single species assigned to them, even though they had hunted something else on that particular license.

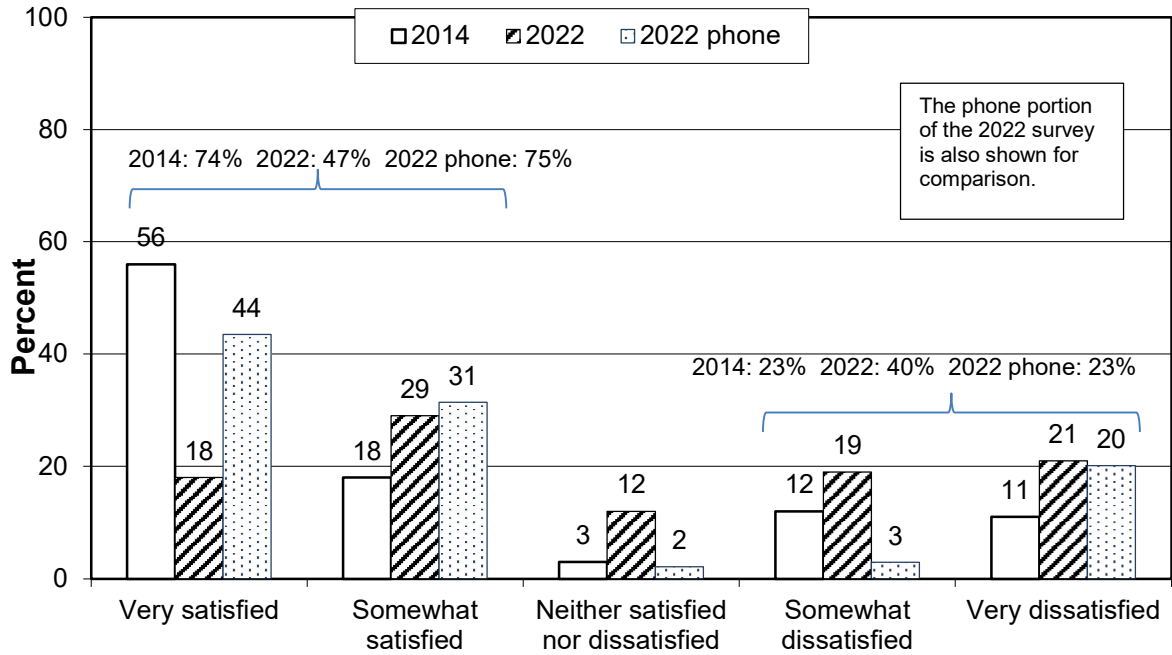
In the 2022 survey, those who had licenses for more than a single species were asked if they had hunted all the species for which the license allowed, then they were assigned into a survey path for particular species. This resulted in fewer ineligible hunters in the survey. Note also that this made the analyses slightly different. In the previous surveys, those assigned to get the various species questions were mutually exclusive. In the 2022 survey, a hunter could be in more than one species group shown on the graphs.

In totality, these methodological differences could affect trends. Those examining the trends in this section should keep these differences in mind.

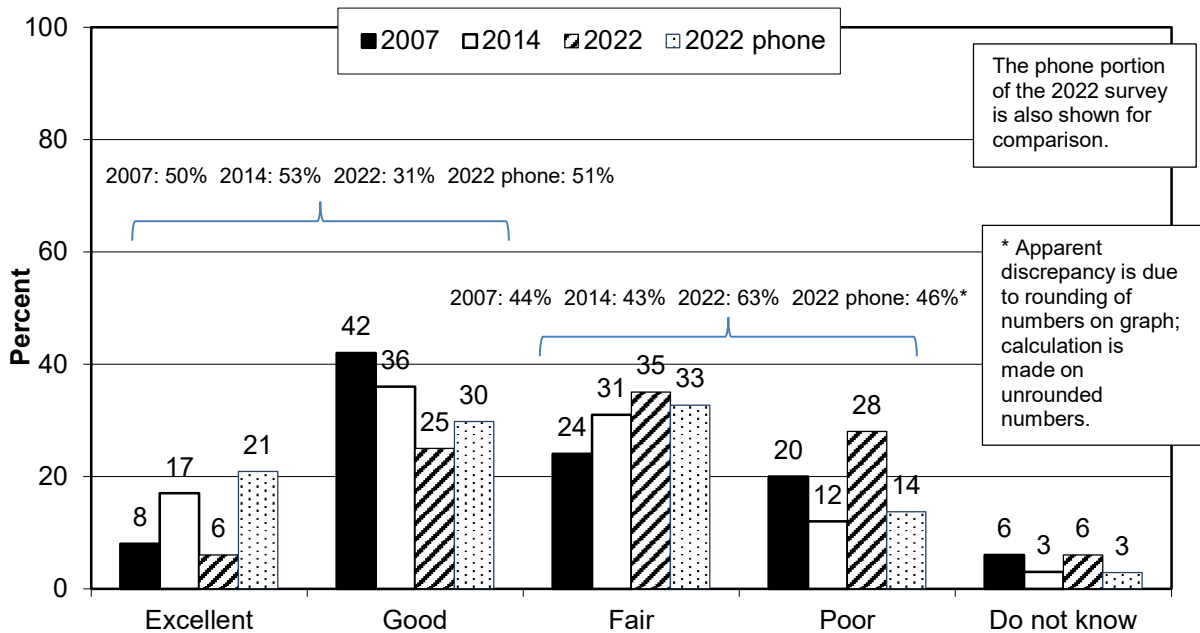


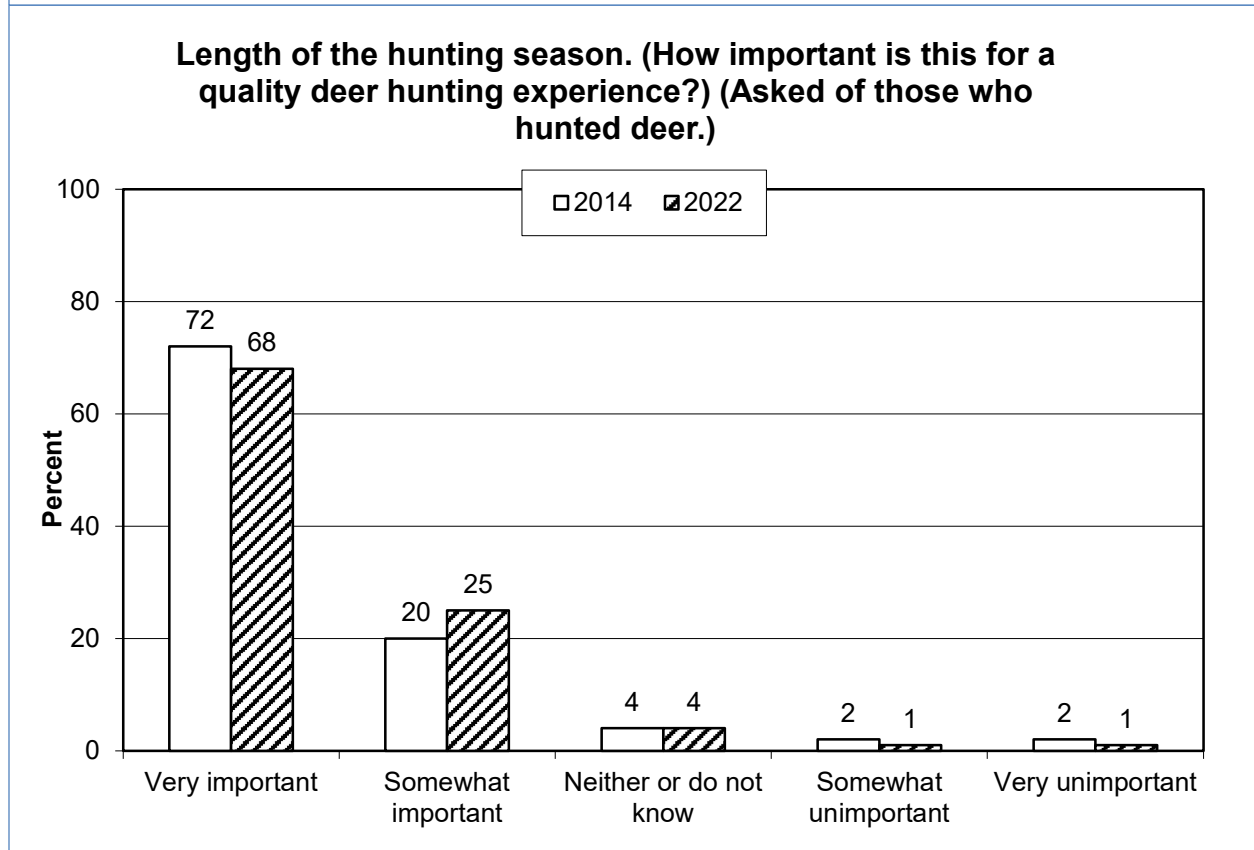
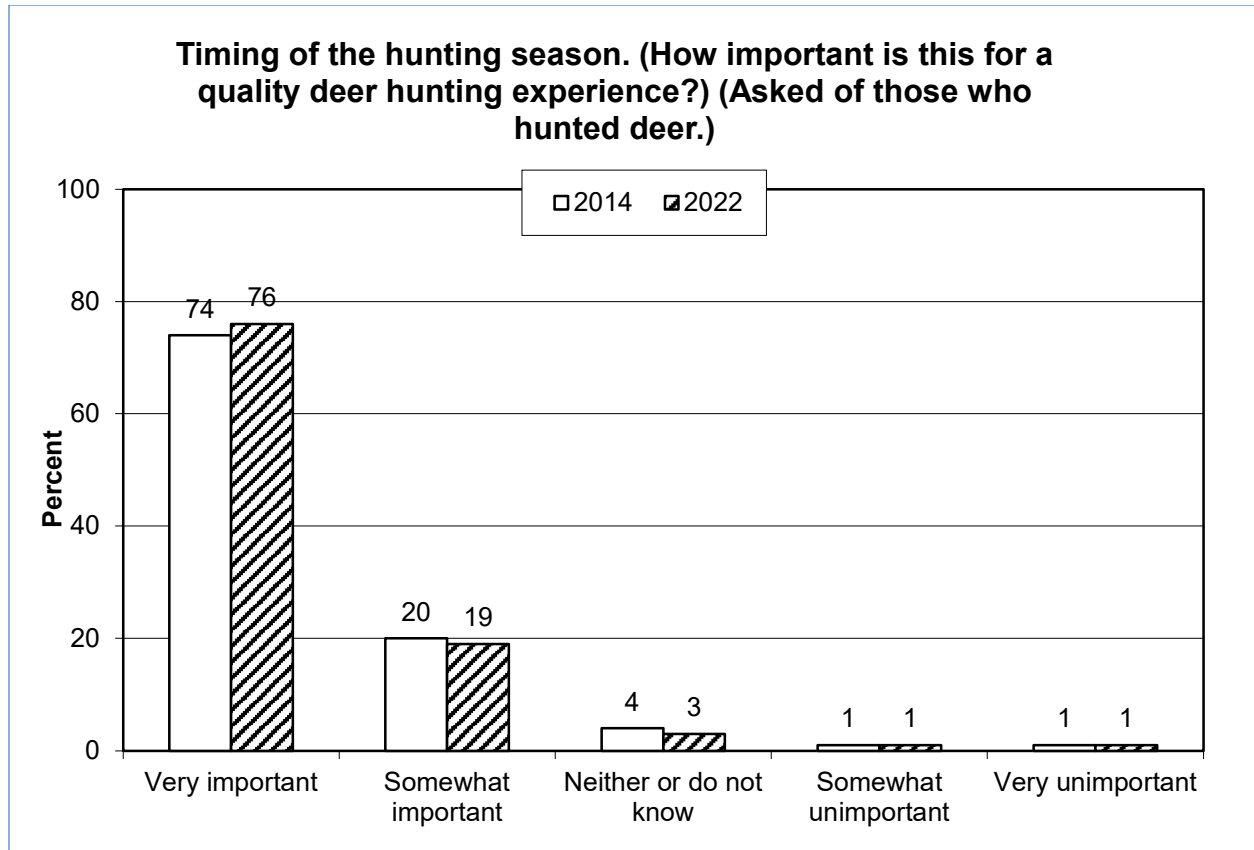


Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with your deer hunting in Washington during the [latest] season? (Asked of those who hunted deer.)

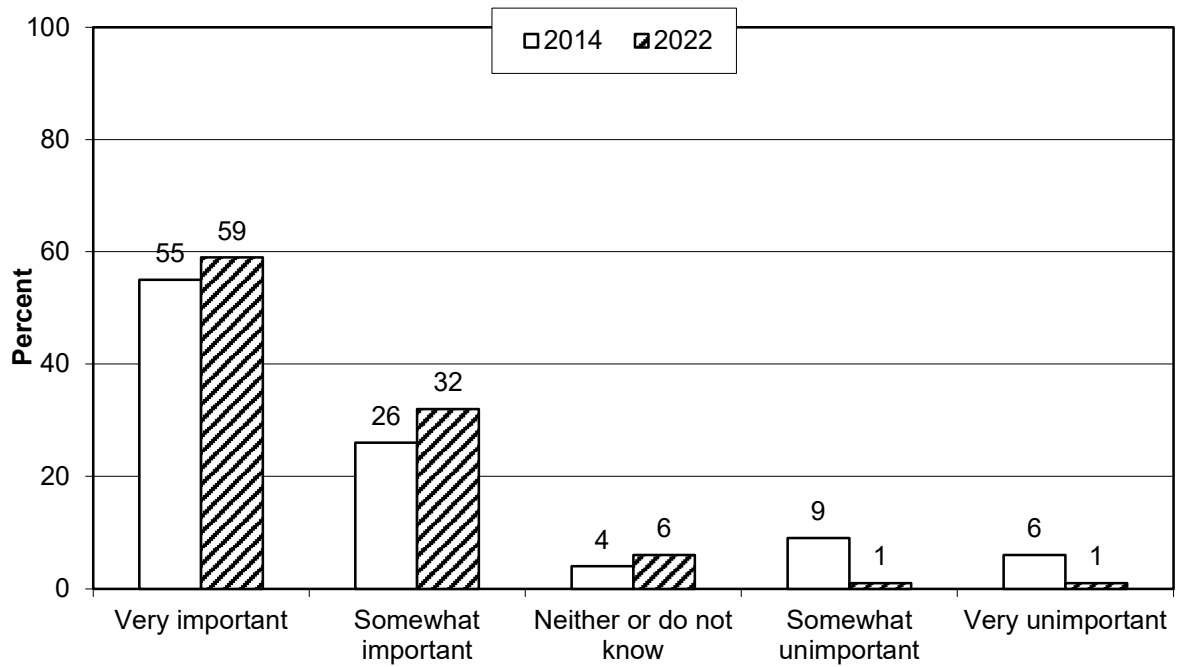


Overall, how would you rate the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's management of deer? Would you say it is excellent, good, fair or poor? (Asked of those who hunted deer.)

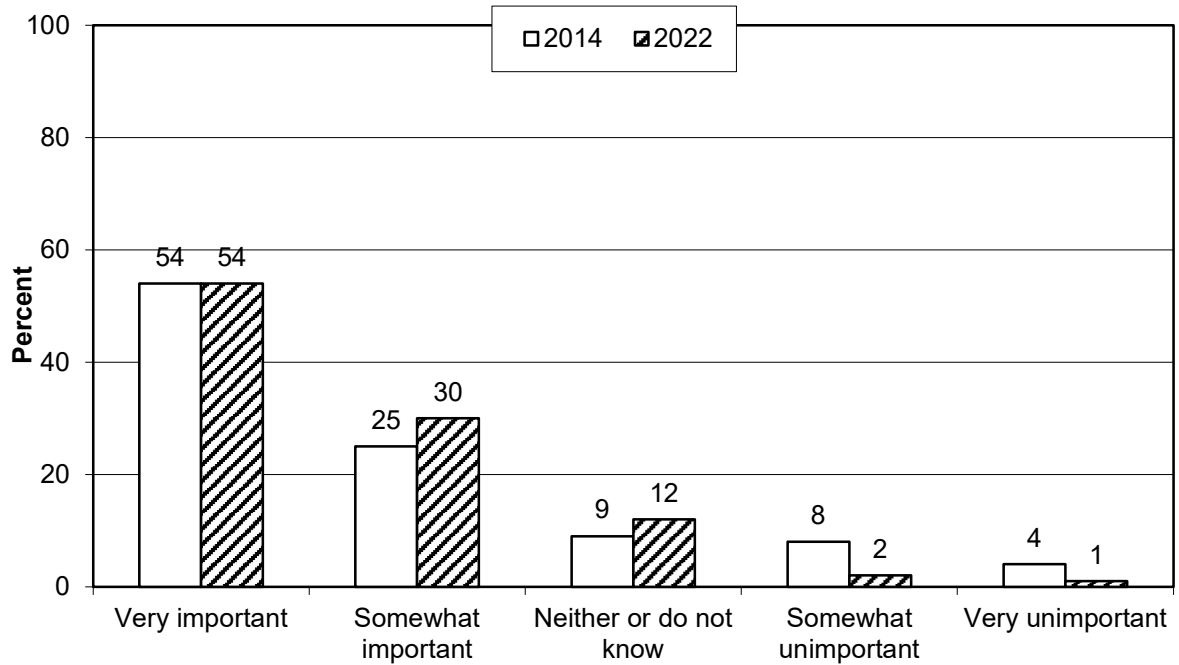




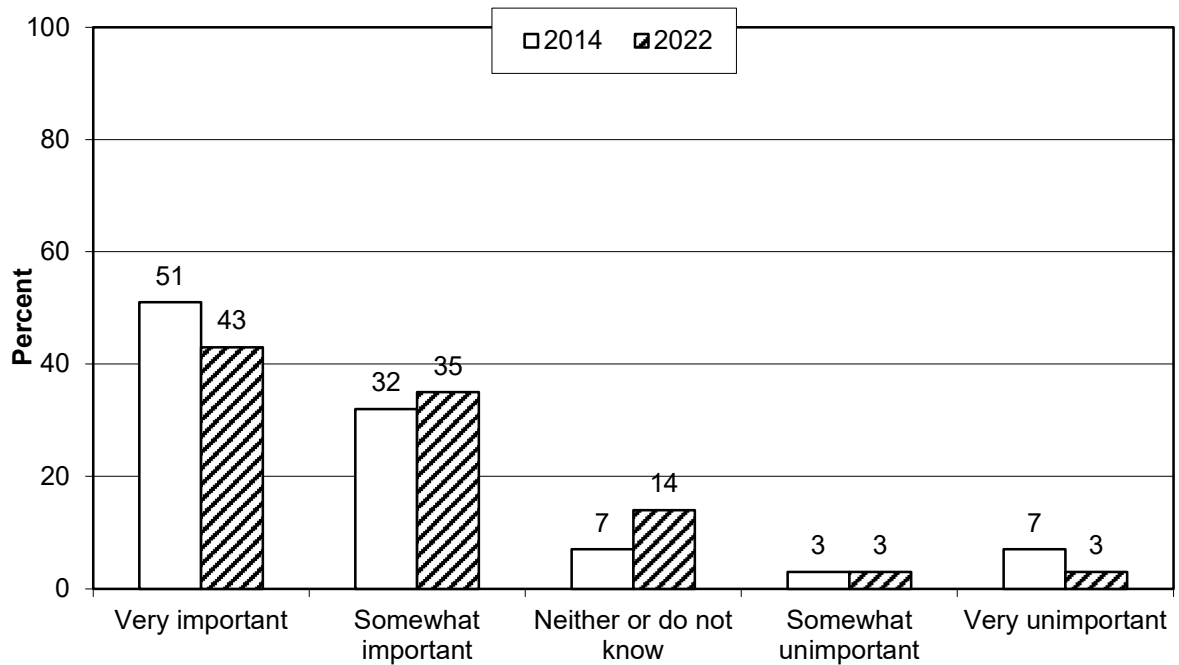
Chance of harvesting a deer. (How important is this for a quality deer hunting experience?) (Asked of those who hunted deer.)



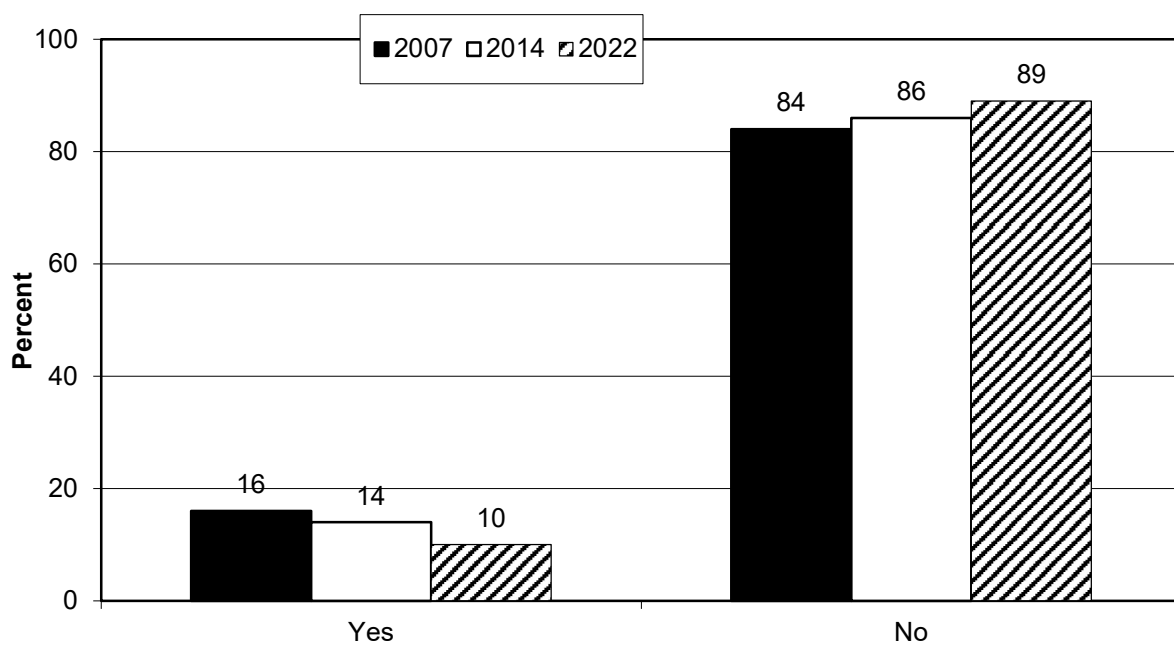
Number of other deer hunters in the field. (How important is this for a quality deer hunting experience?) (Asked of those who hunted deer.)

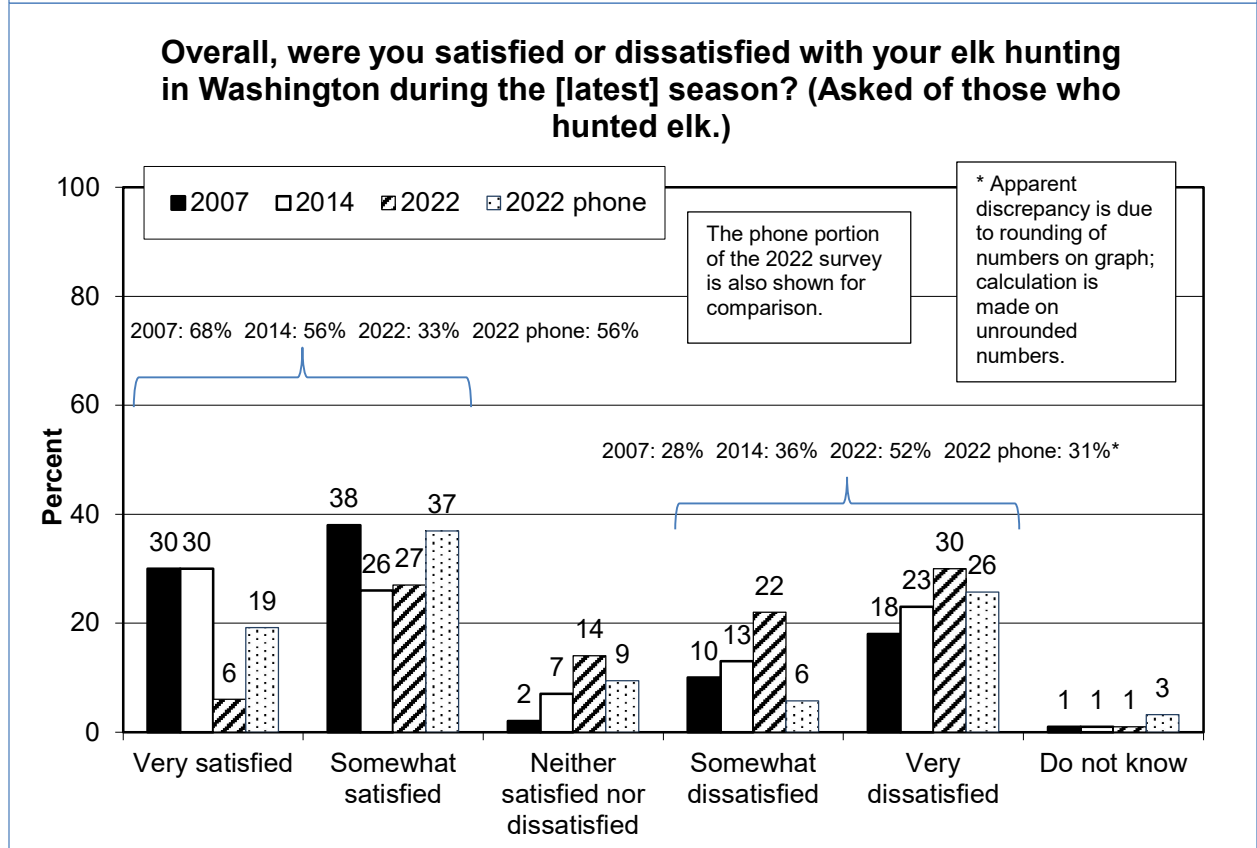
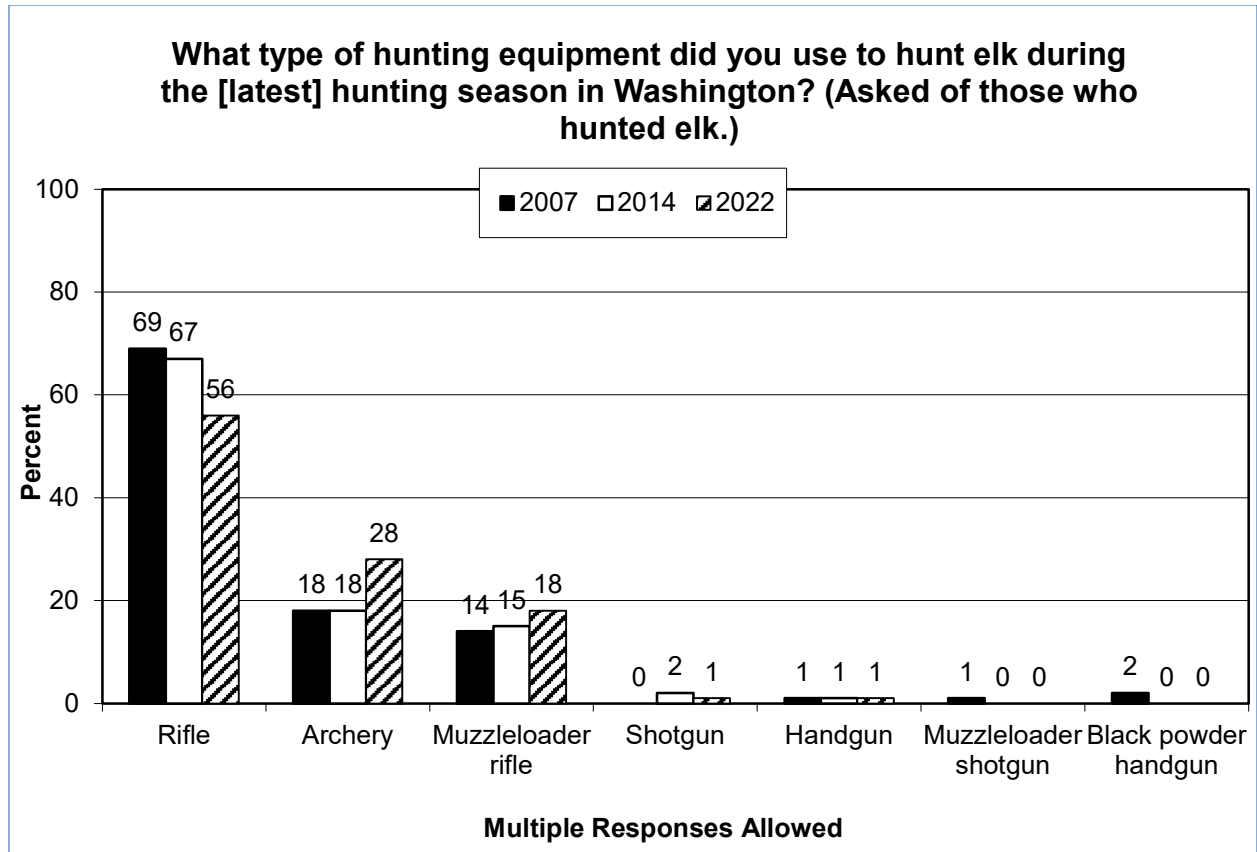


Opportunity to harvest a mature buck. (How important is this for a quality deer hunting experience?) (Asked of those who hunted deer.)

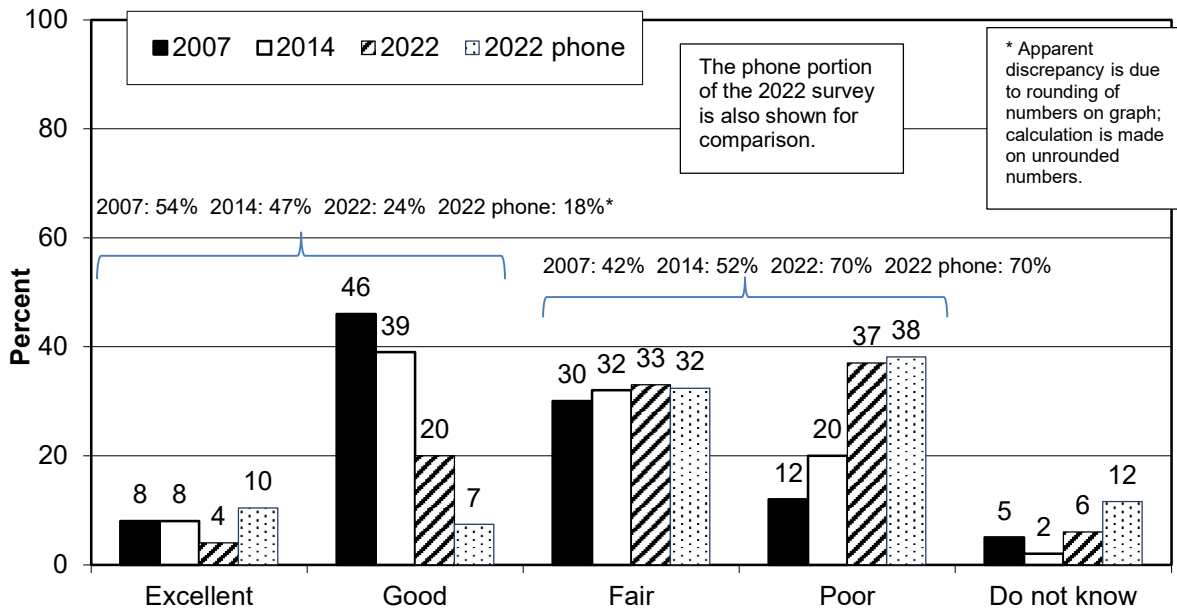


Did you harvest an elk in Washington in [the latest hunting season]? (Asked of those who hunted elk.)

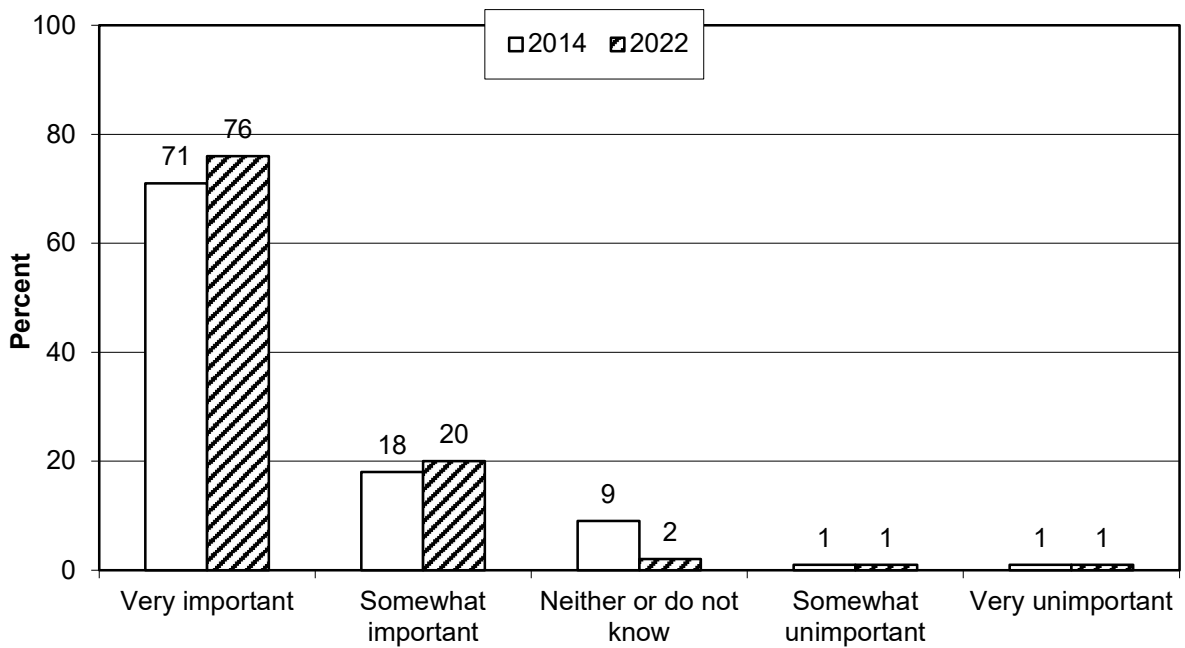


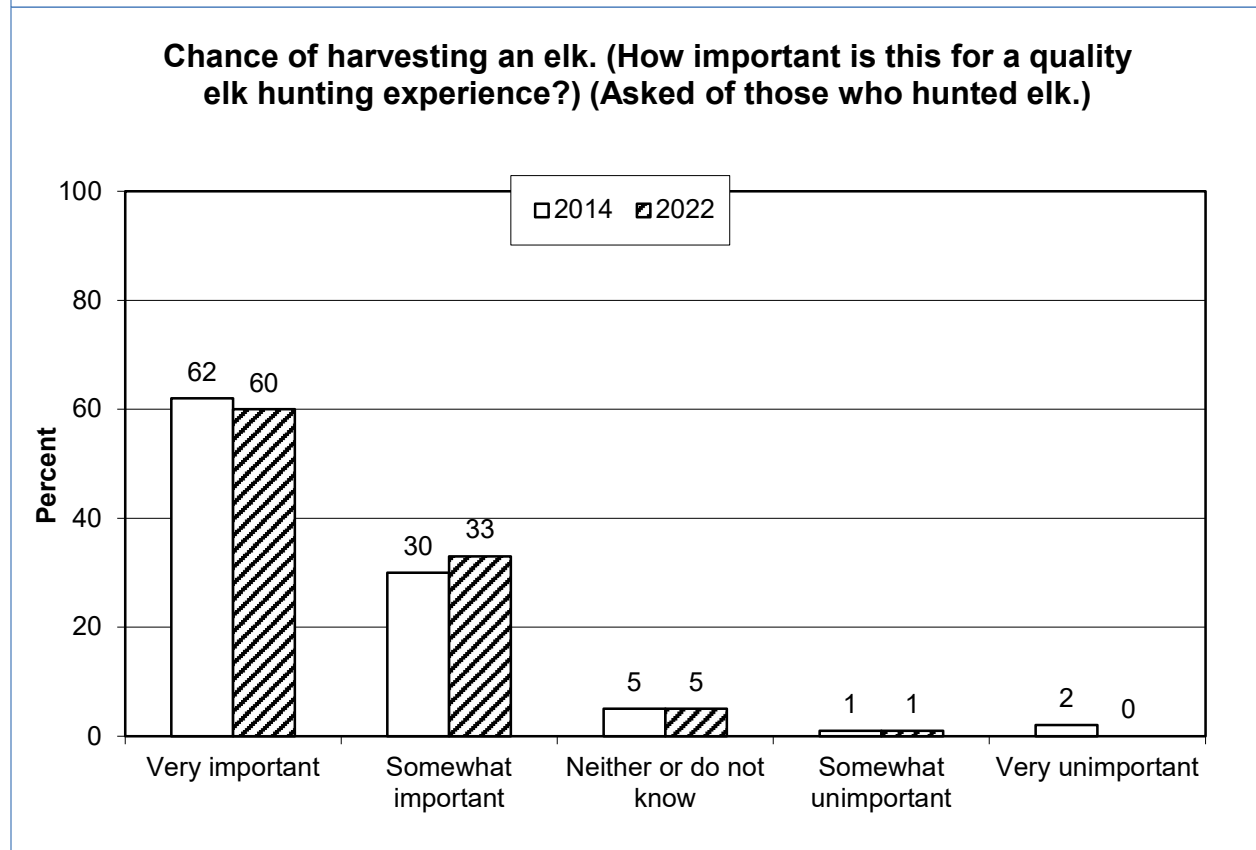
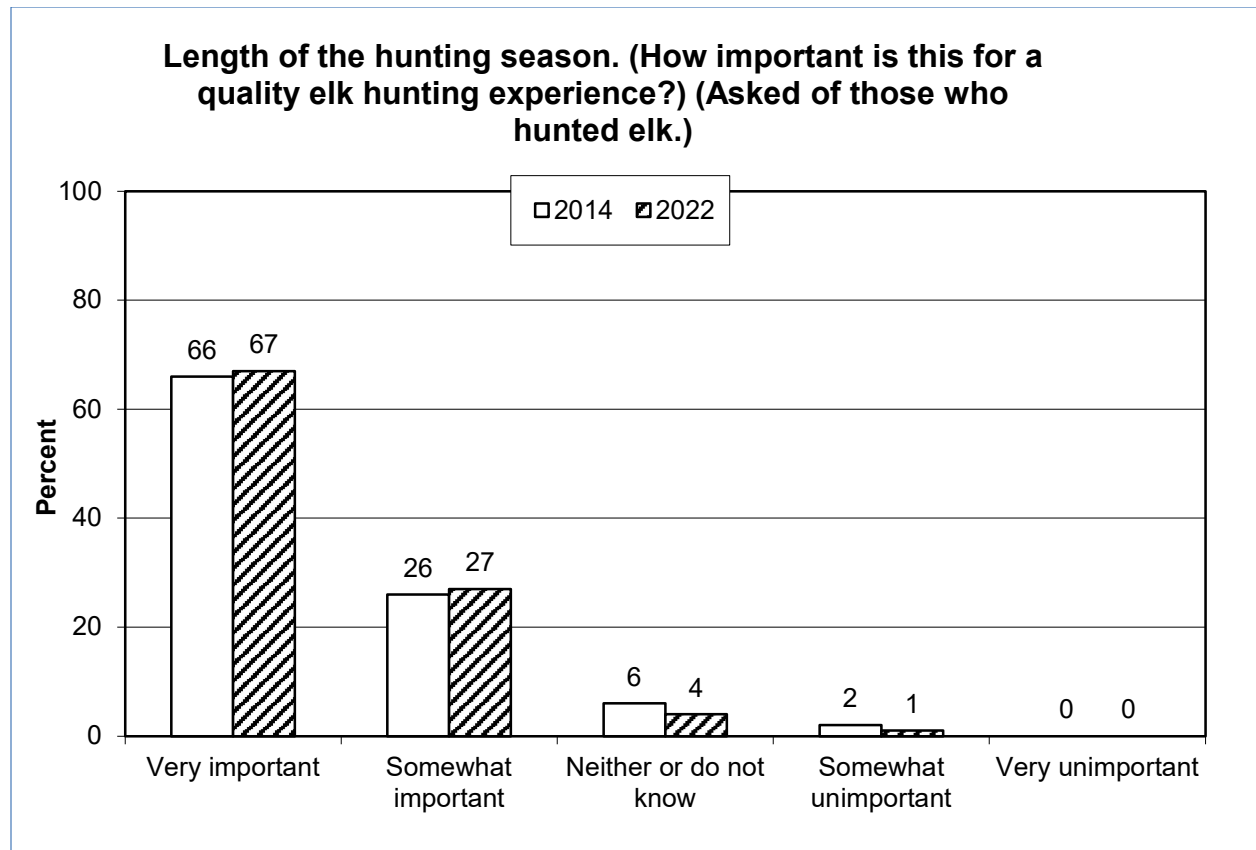


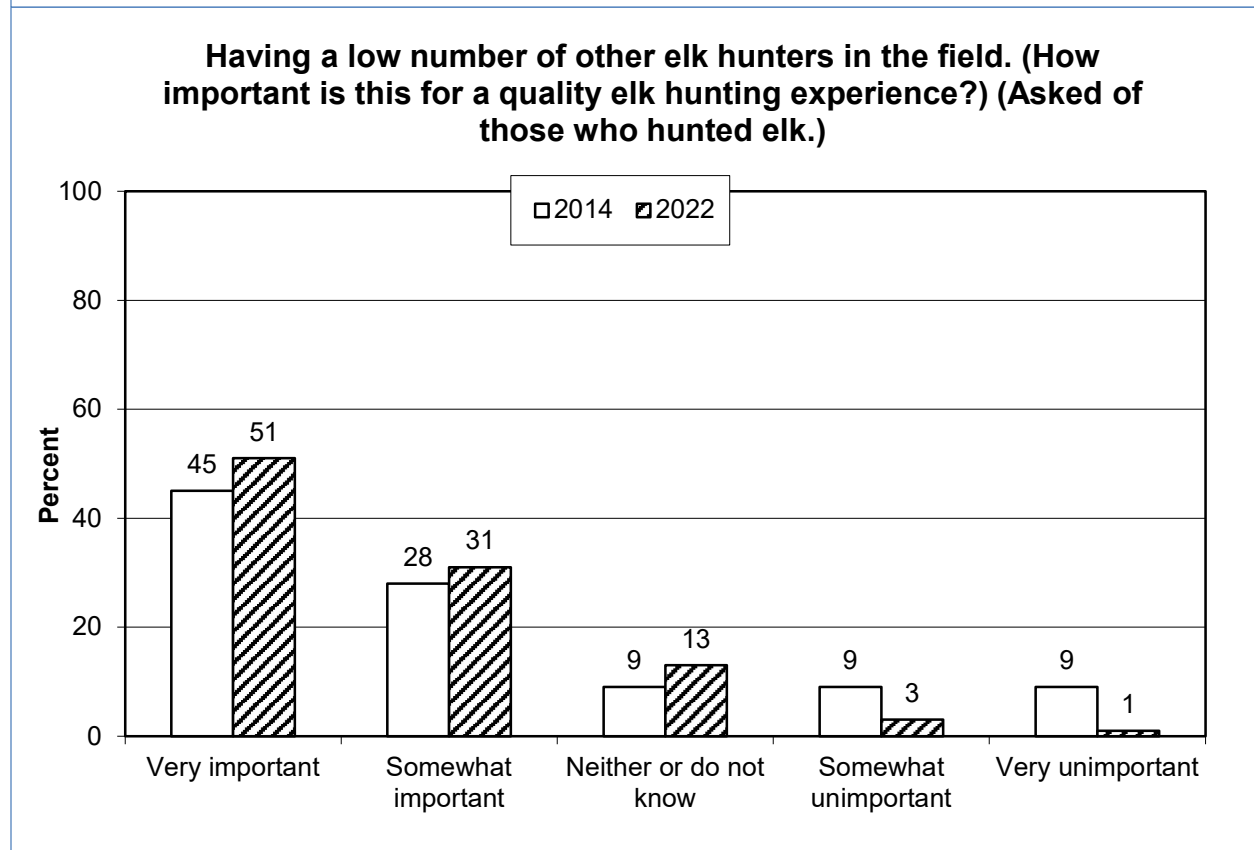
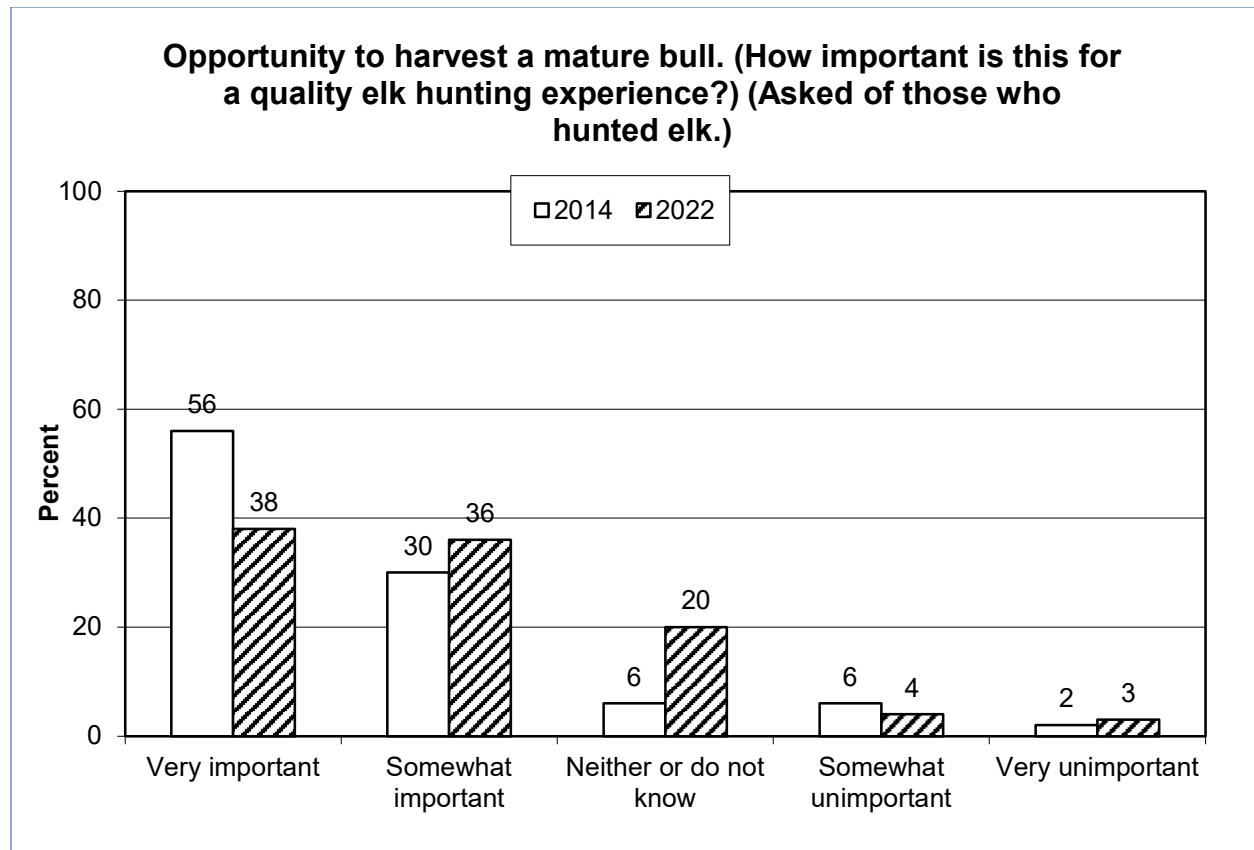
Overall, how would you rate the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's management of elk? Would you say it is excellent, good, fair, or poor? (Asked of those who hunted elk.)



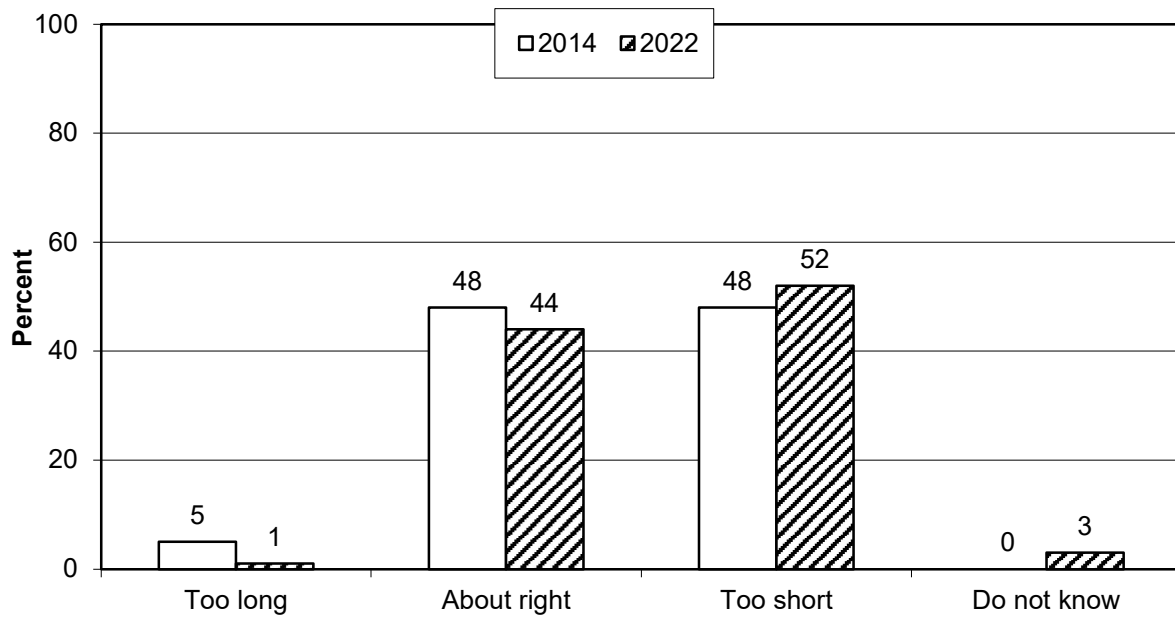
Timing of the hunting season. (How important is this for a quality elk hunting experience?) (Asked of those who hunted elk.)



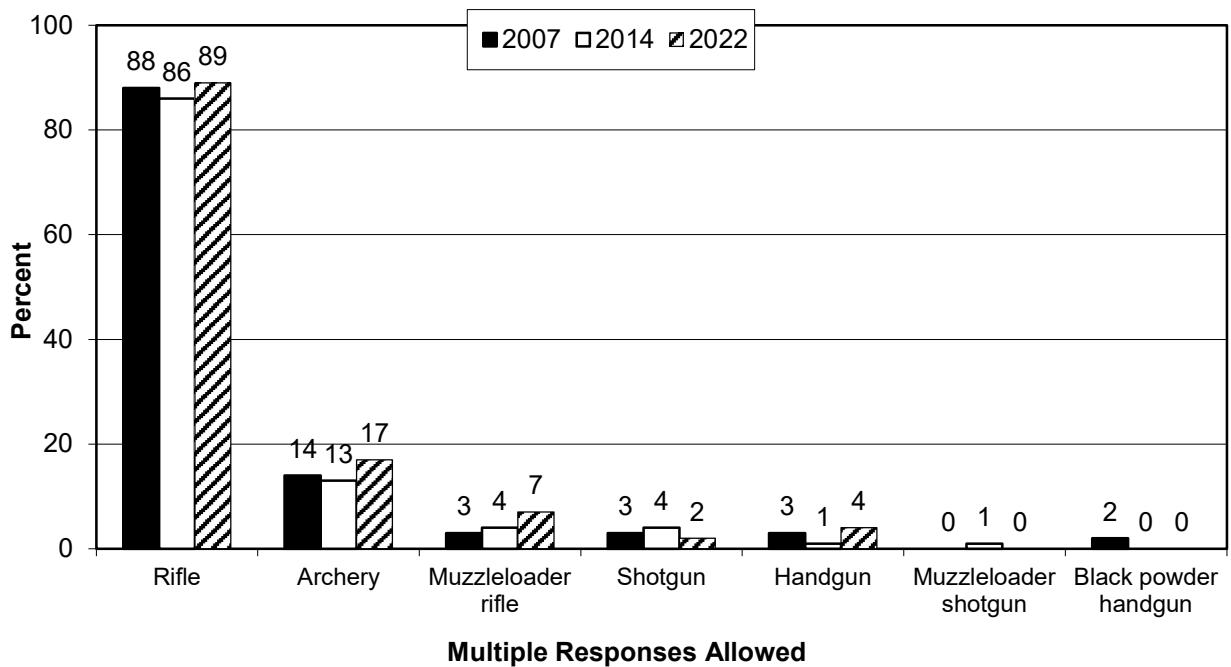




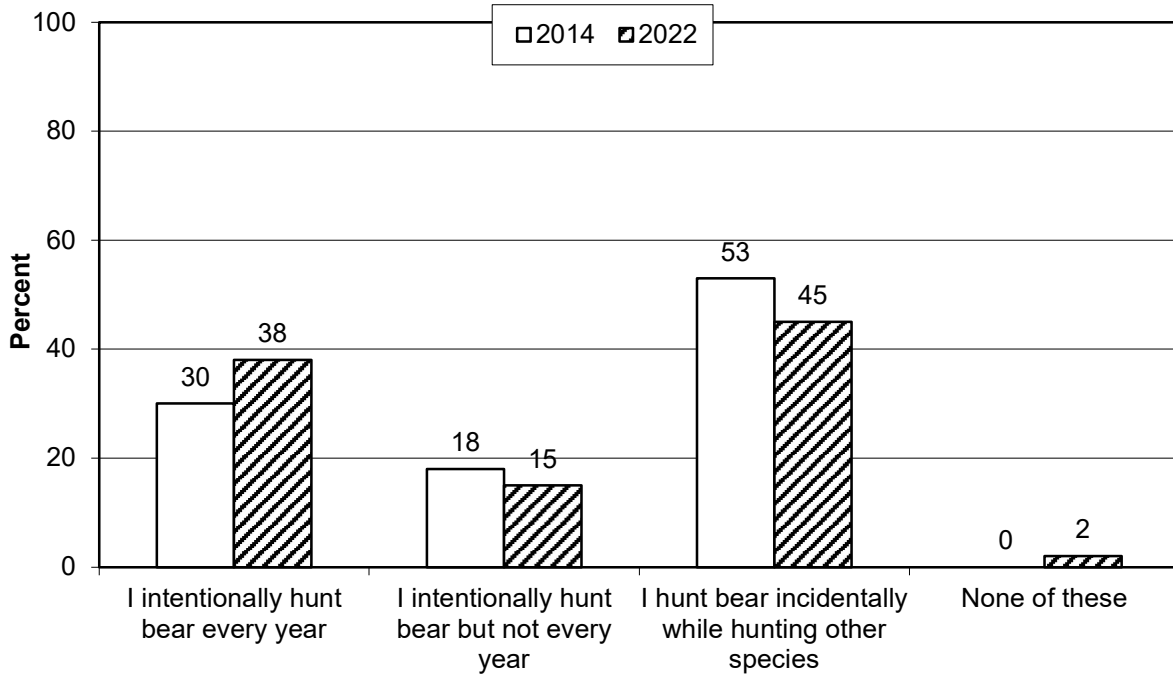
Overall, do you think the length of the elk hunting season is too long, about right, or too short? (Asked of those who hunted elk.)



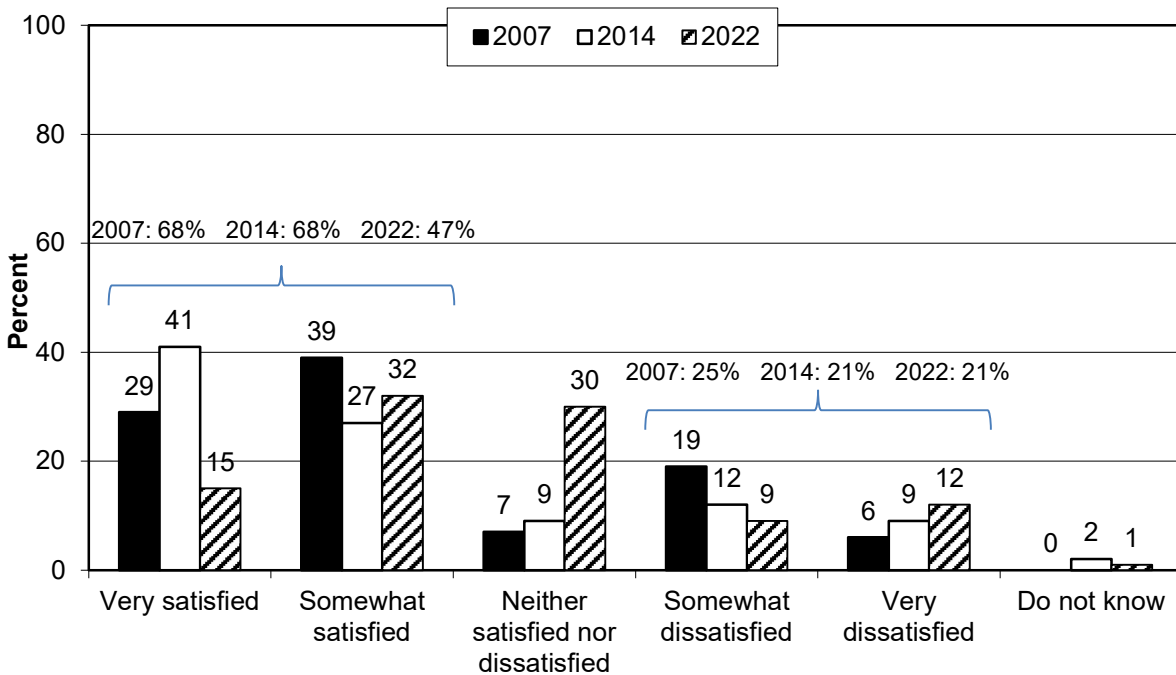
What type of hunting equipment did you use to hunt black bear during the [latest] hunting season in Washington? (Asked of those who hunted black bear.)



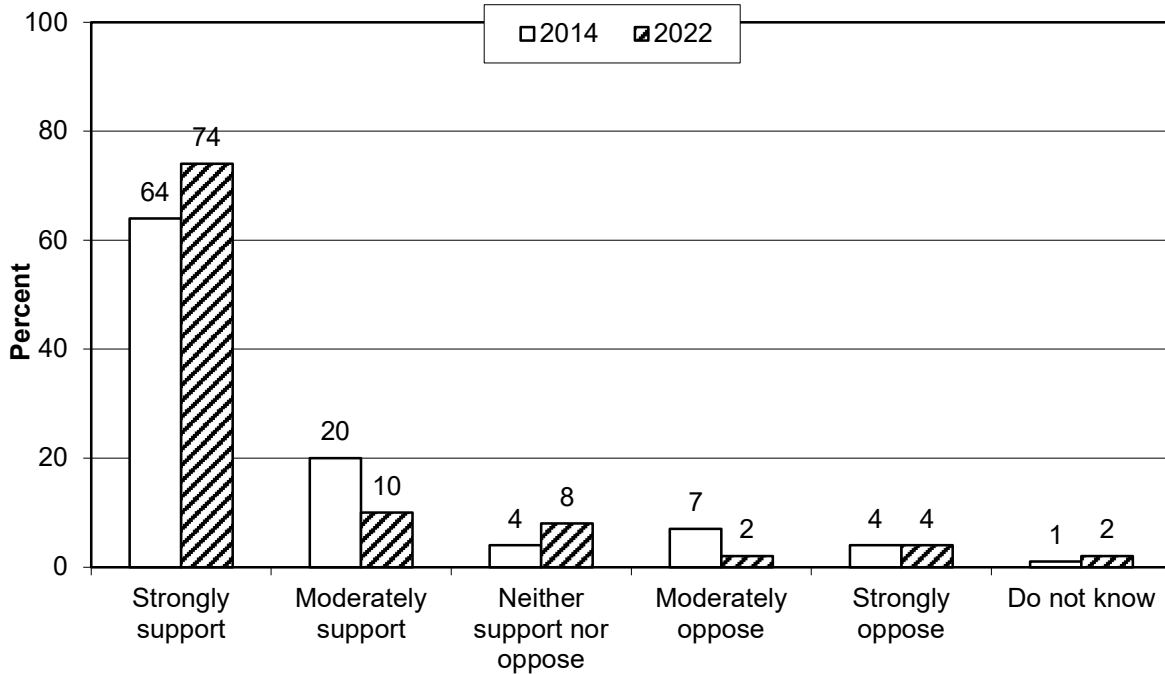
Which of the following best describes your bear hunting in Washington? (Asked of those who hunted black bear.)



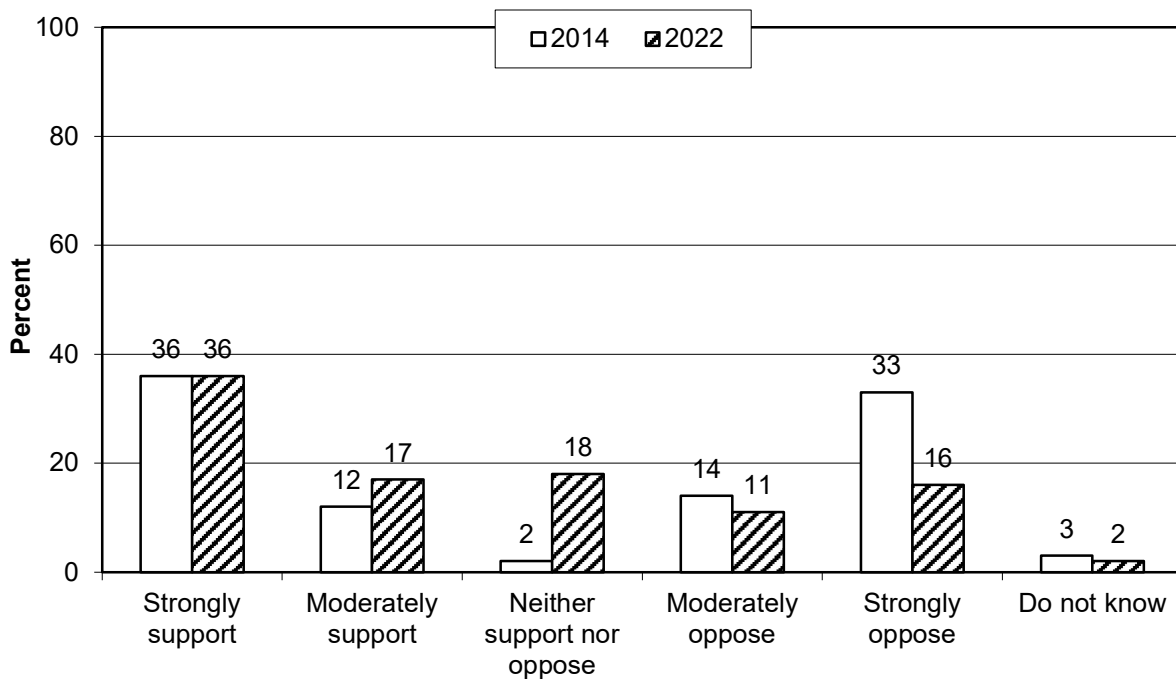
Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with your black bear hunting in Washington during the [latest] season? (Asked of those who hunted black bear.)

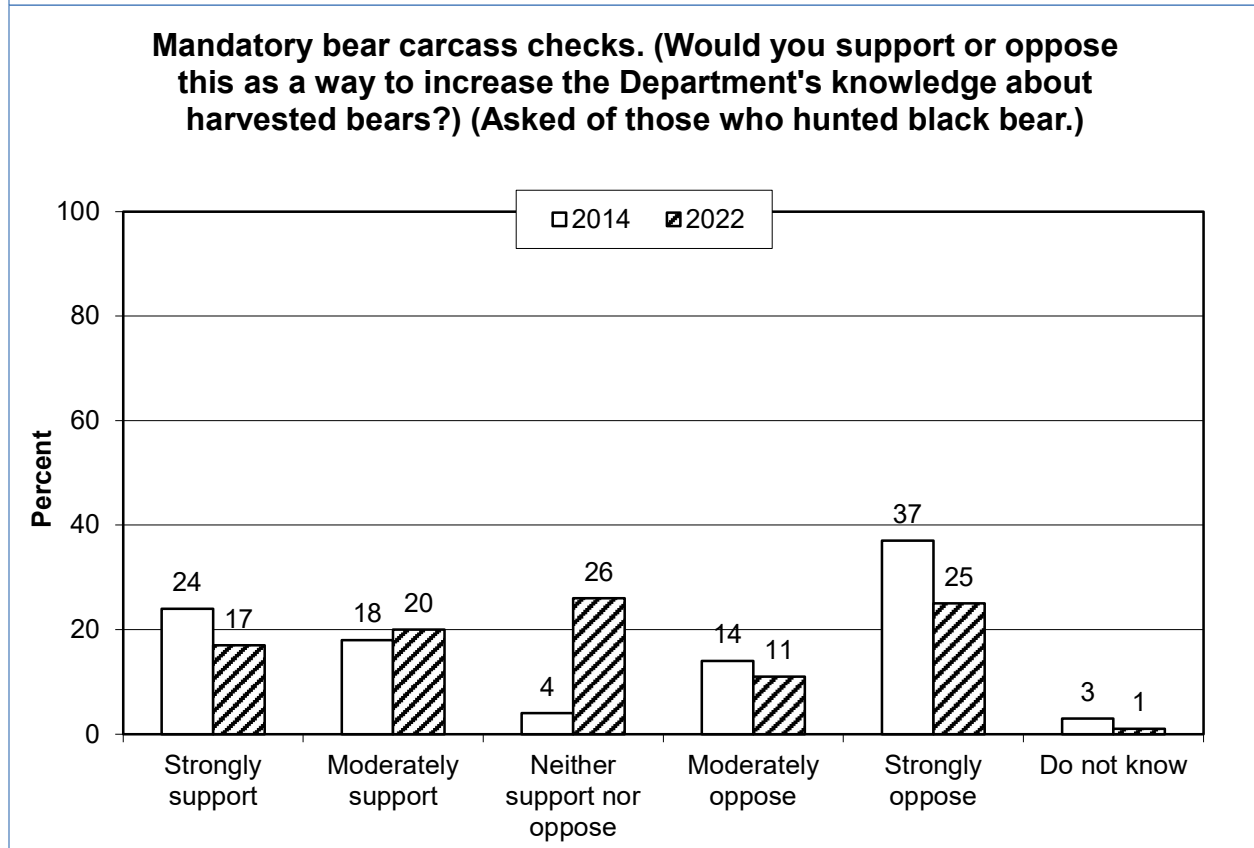
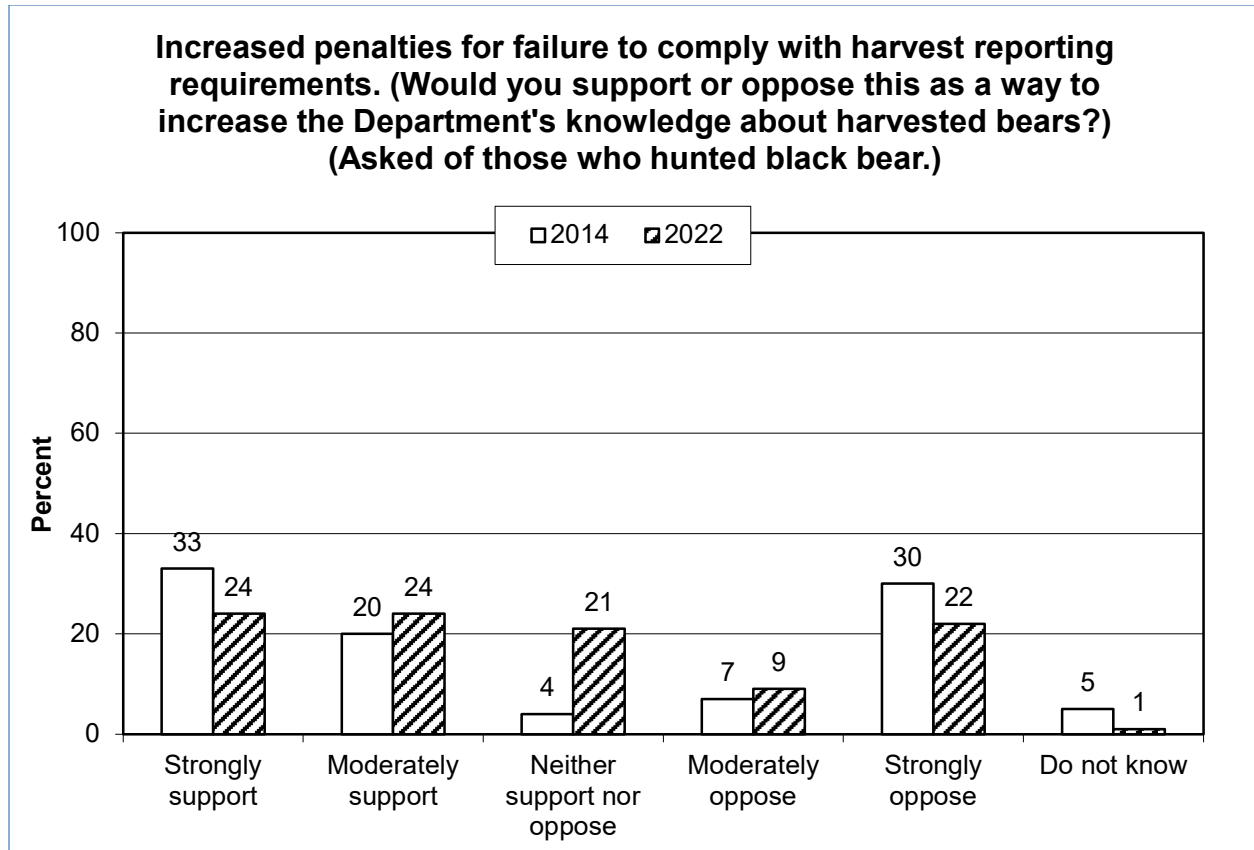


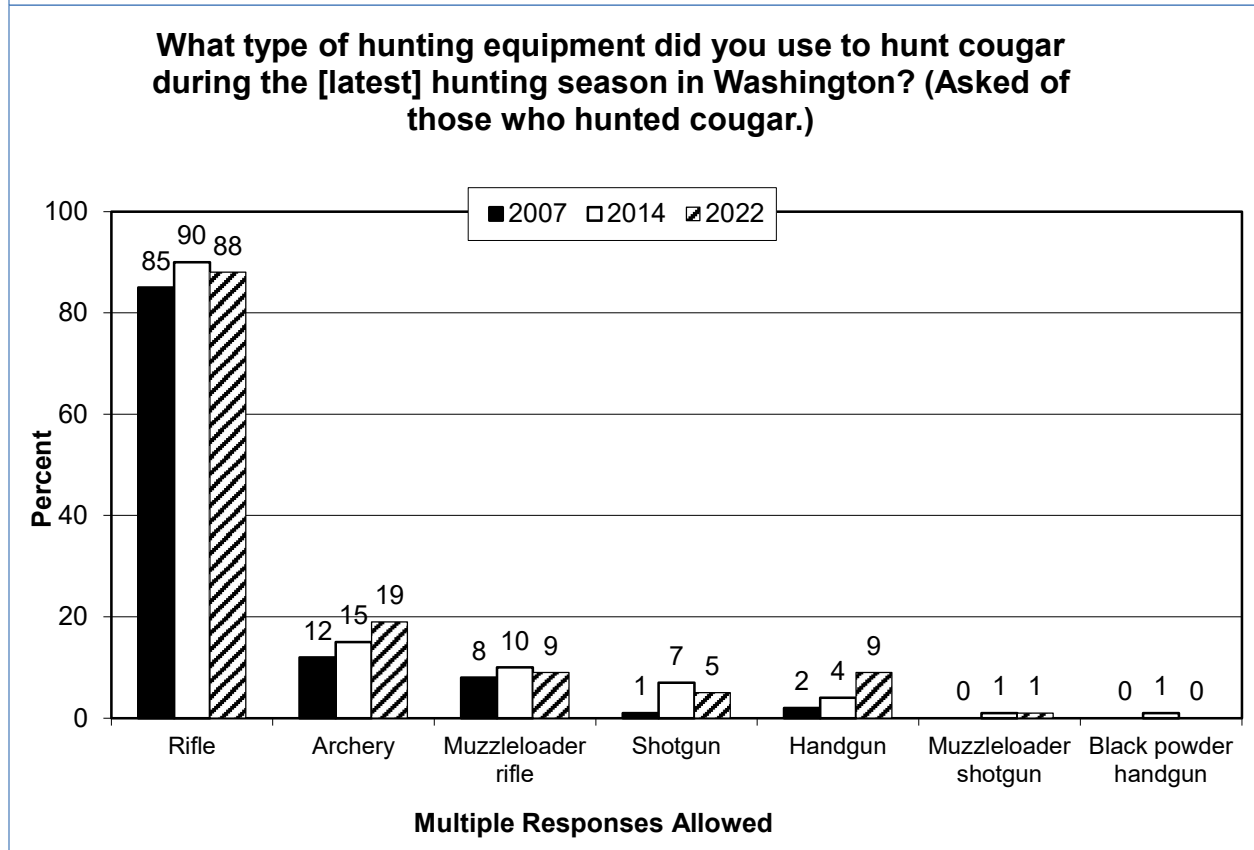
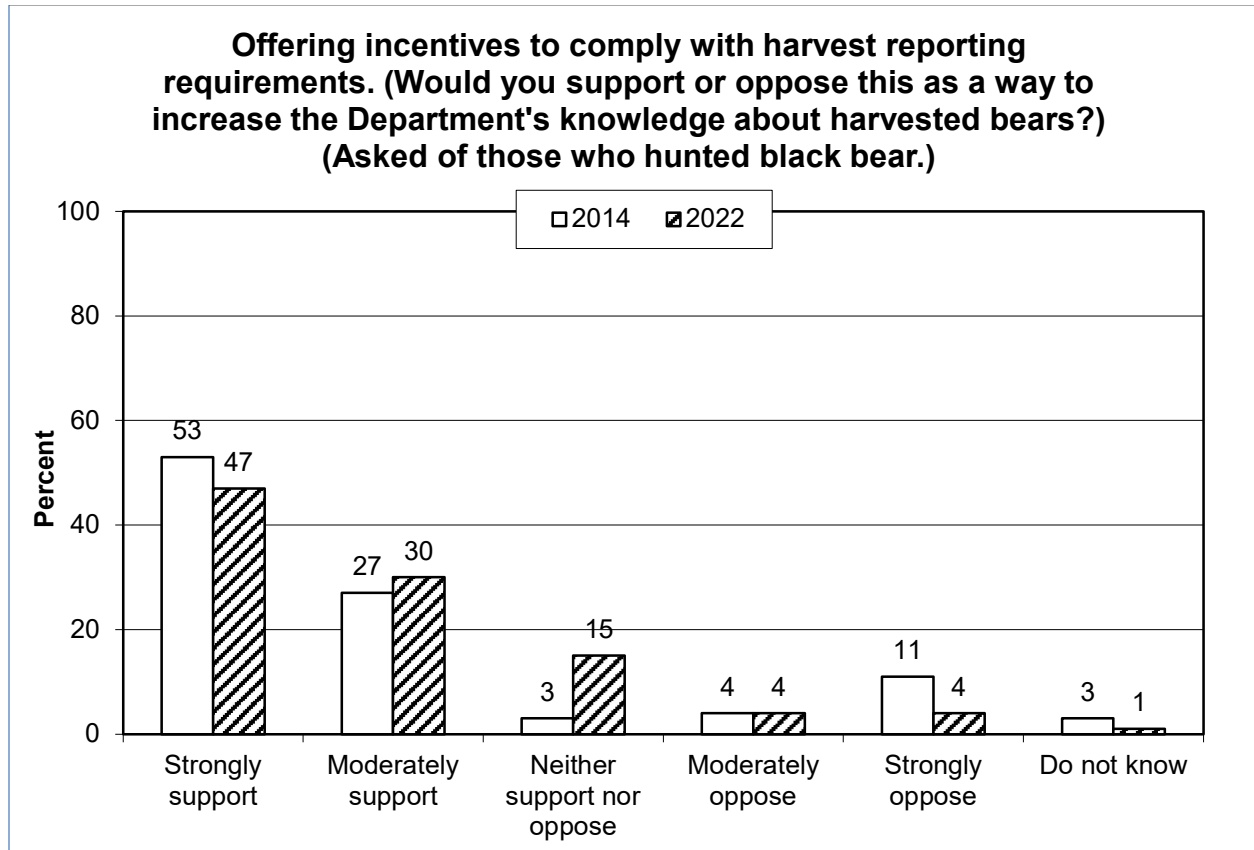
Would you support or oppose a spring bear hunting season? (2014) / Do you support or oppose having a spring bear season? (2022) (Asked of those who hunted black bear.)

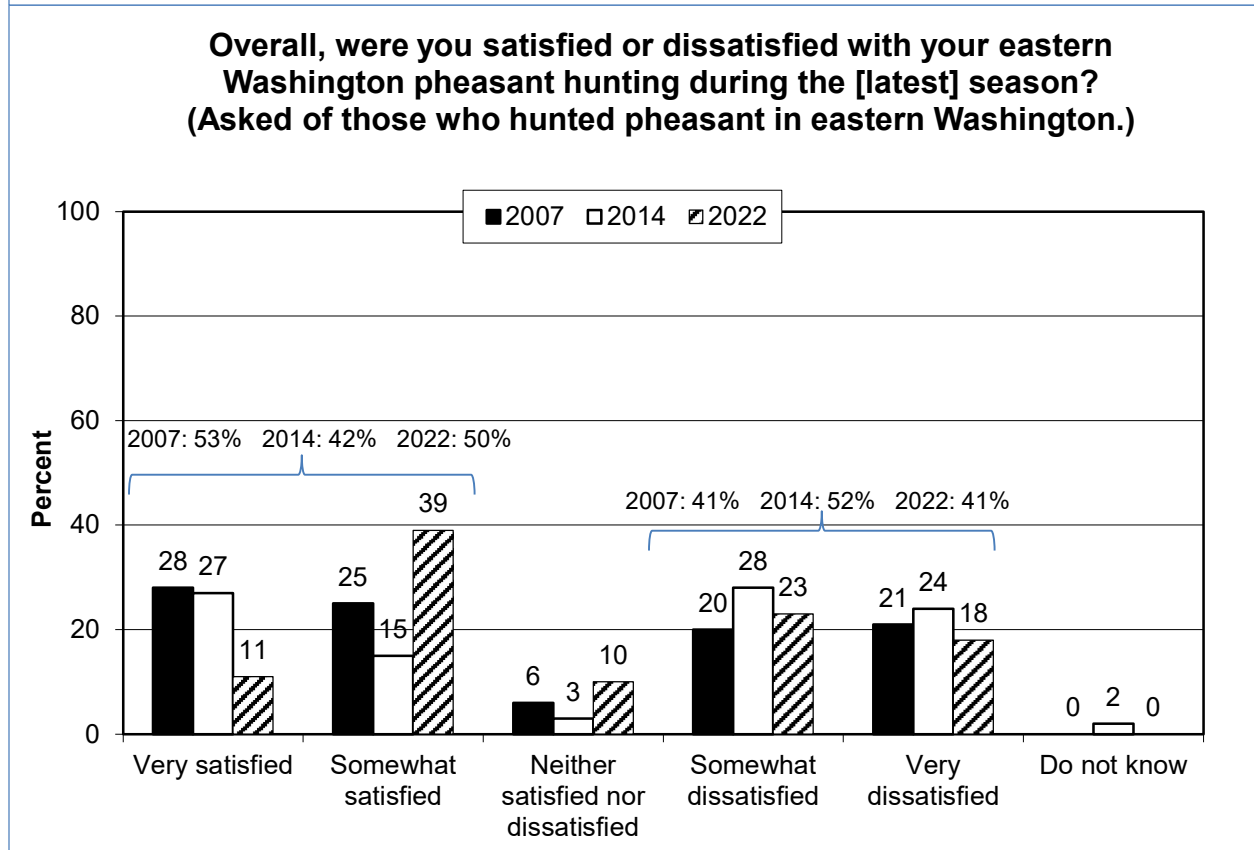
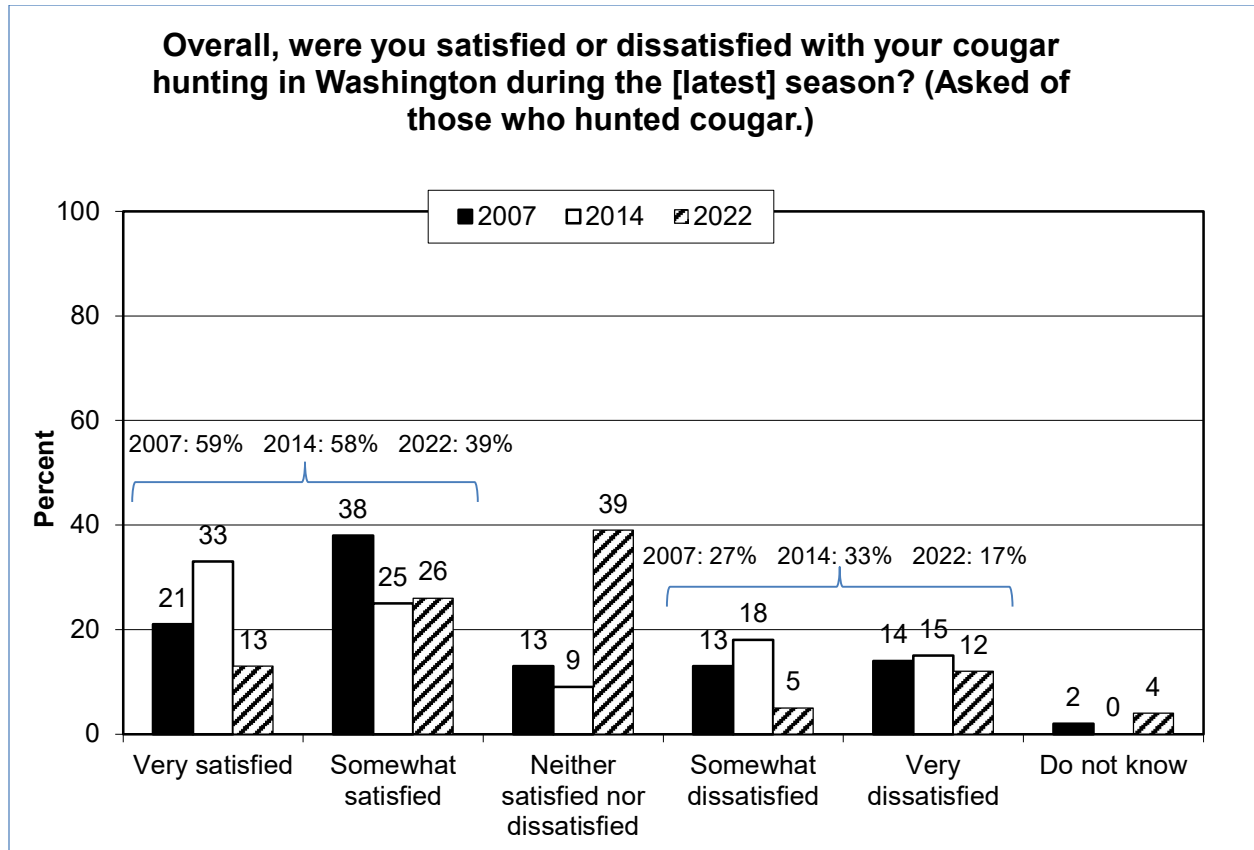


Do you support or oppose lethal removal of black bears to prevent damage to timber on commercial timberlands? (Asked of those who hunted black bear.)

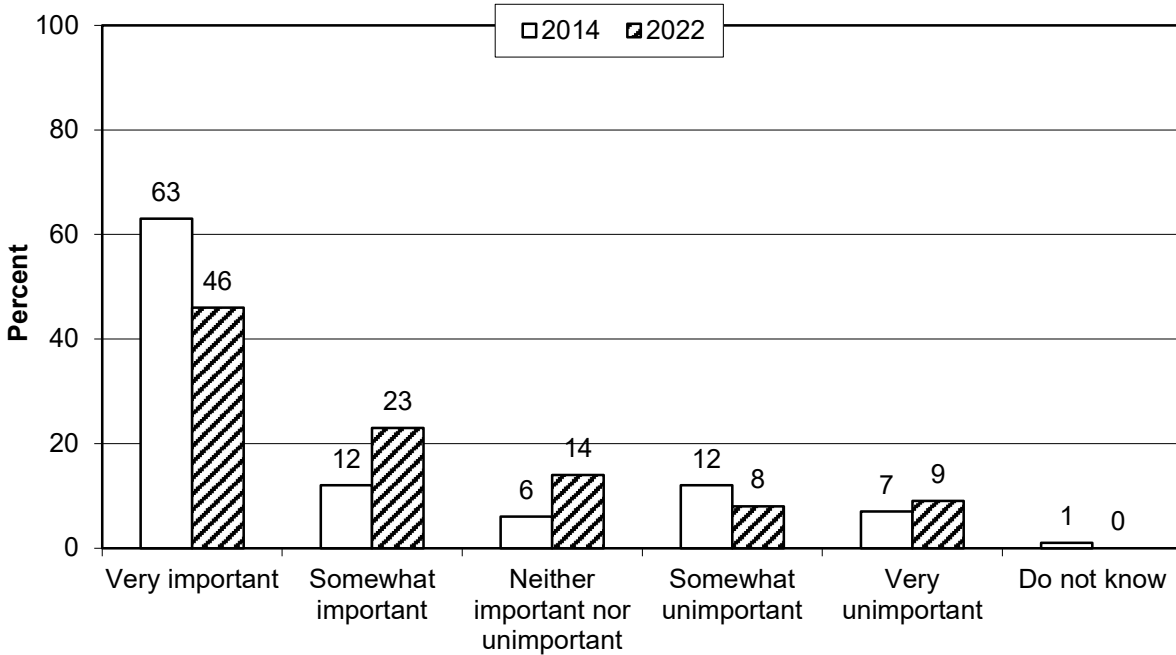




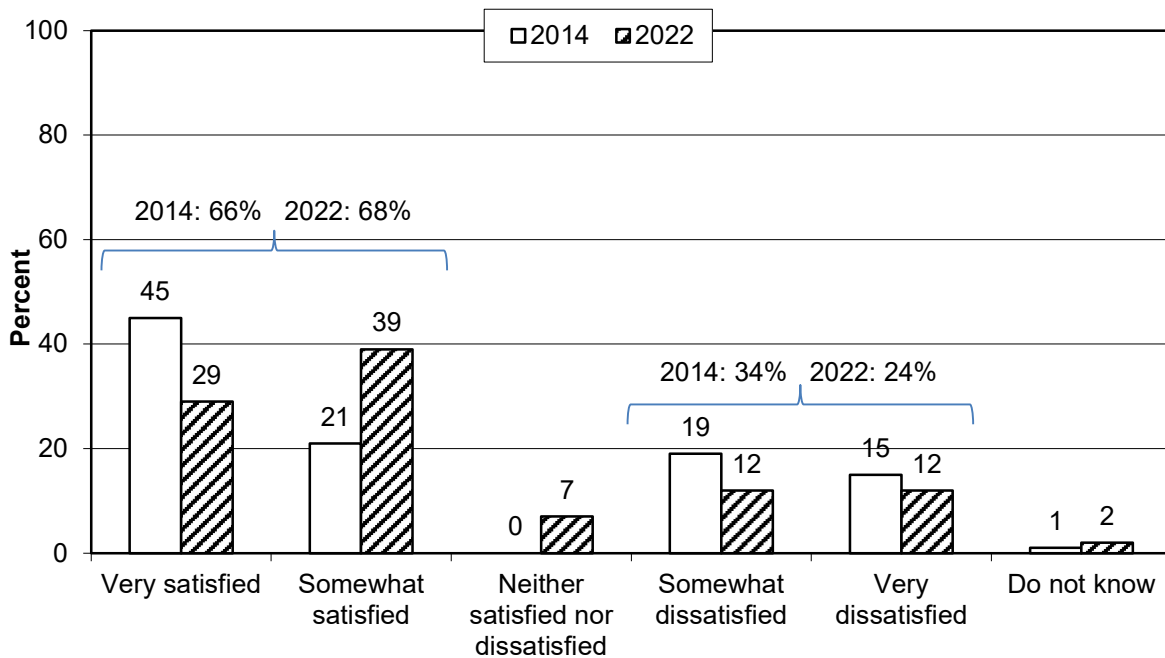




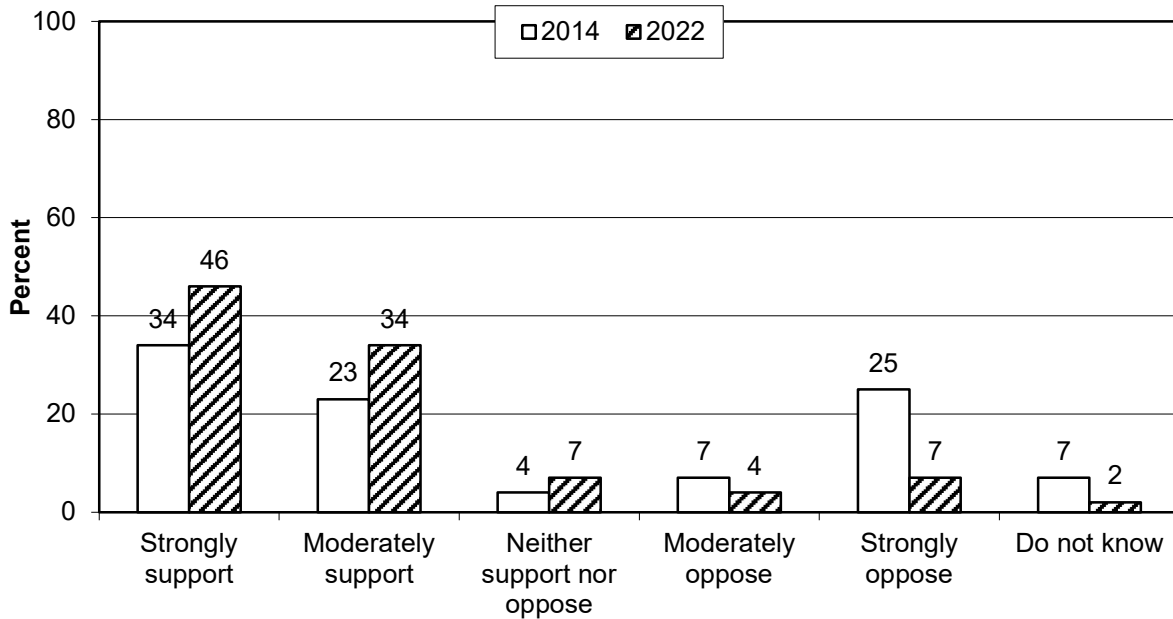
**How important or unimportant is it to your pheasant hunting that the Department releases pheasants in eastern Washington?
(Asked of those who hunted pheasant in eastern Washington.)**



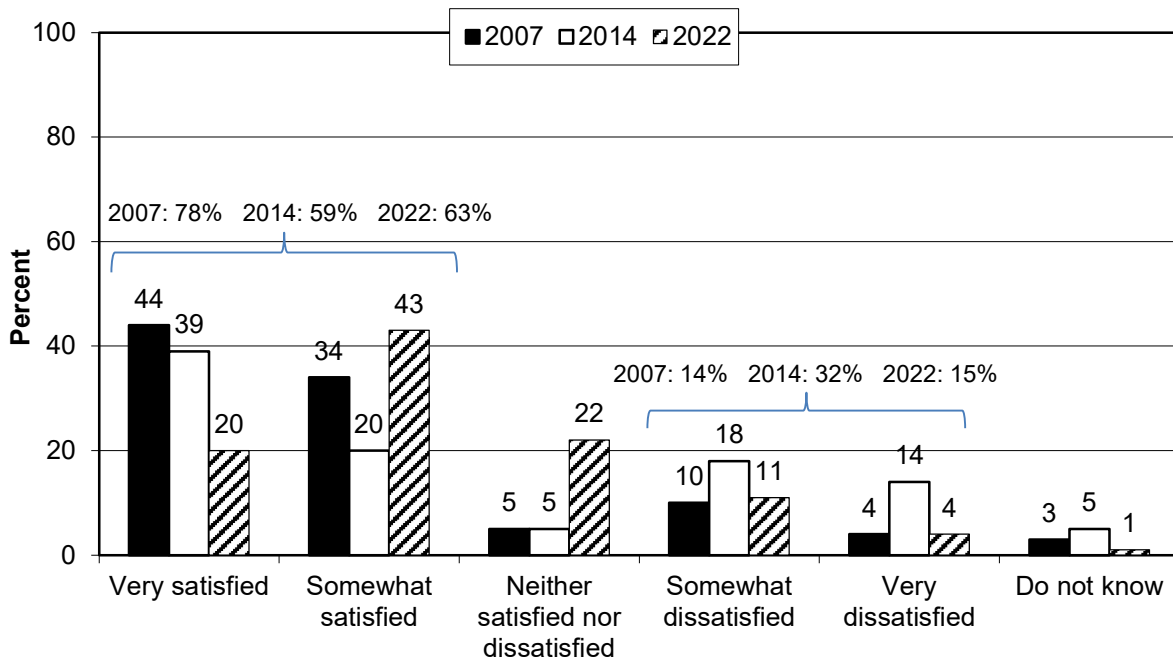
**Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with your western Washington pheasant hunting during the [latest] season?
(Asked of those who hunted pheasant in western Washington.)**



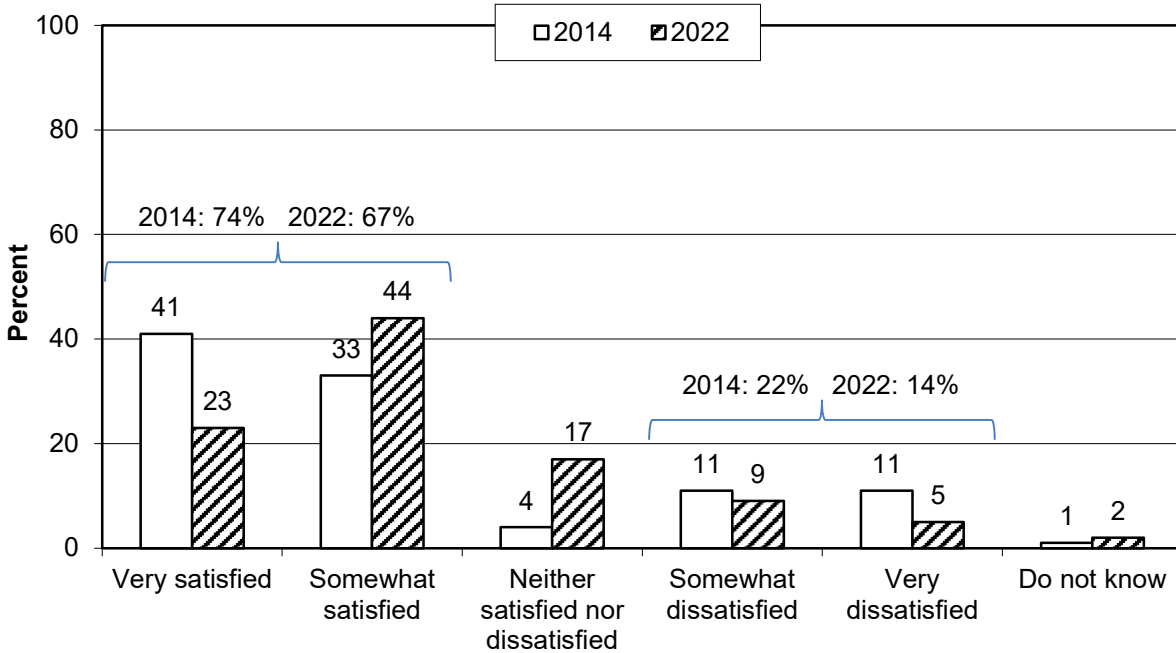
**Would you support or oppose increasing the Western Washington Pheasant Permit fee if it meant that the Department could continue to release the same number of pheasants in western Washington each year?
(Asked of those who hunted pheasant in western Washington.)**



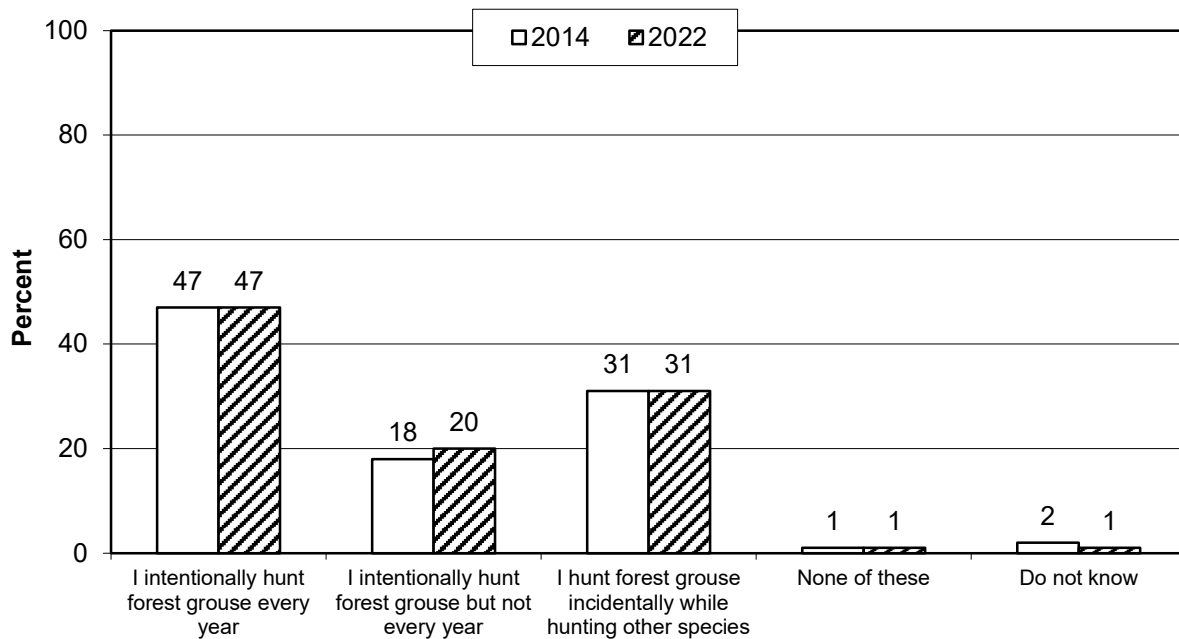
**Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with your quail hunting in Washington during the [latest] season?
(Asked of those who hunted quail.)**



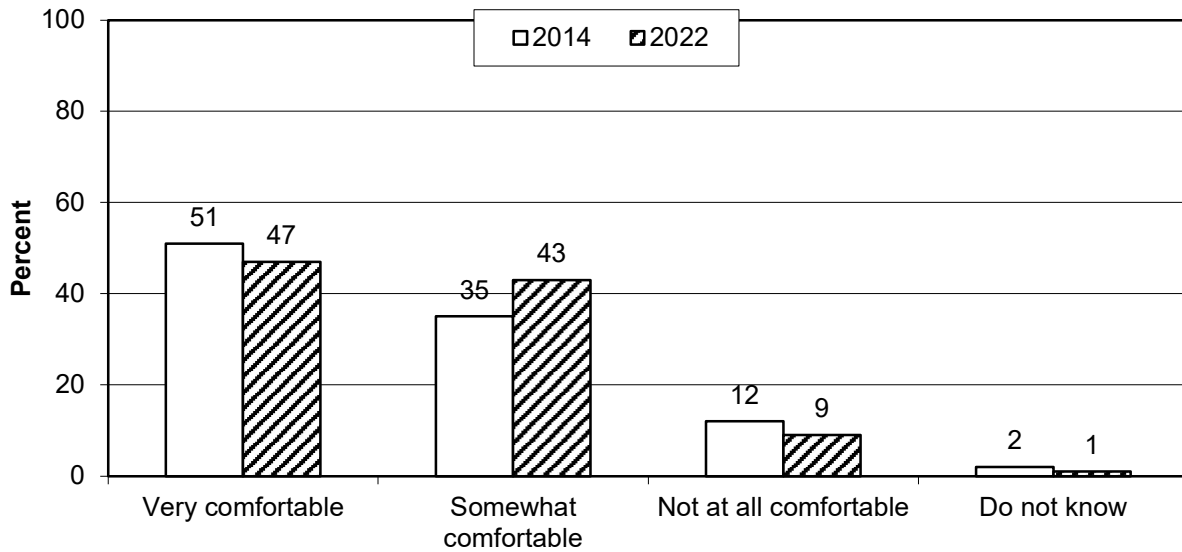
**Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with your forest grouse hunting in Washington during the [latest] season?
(Asked of those who hunted forest grouse.)**



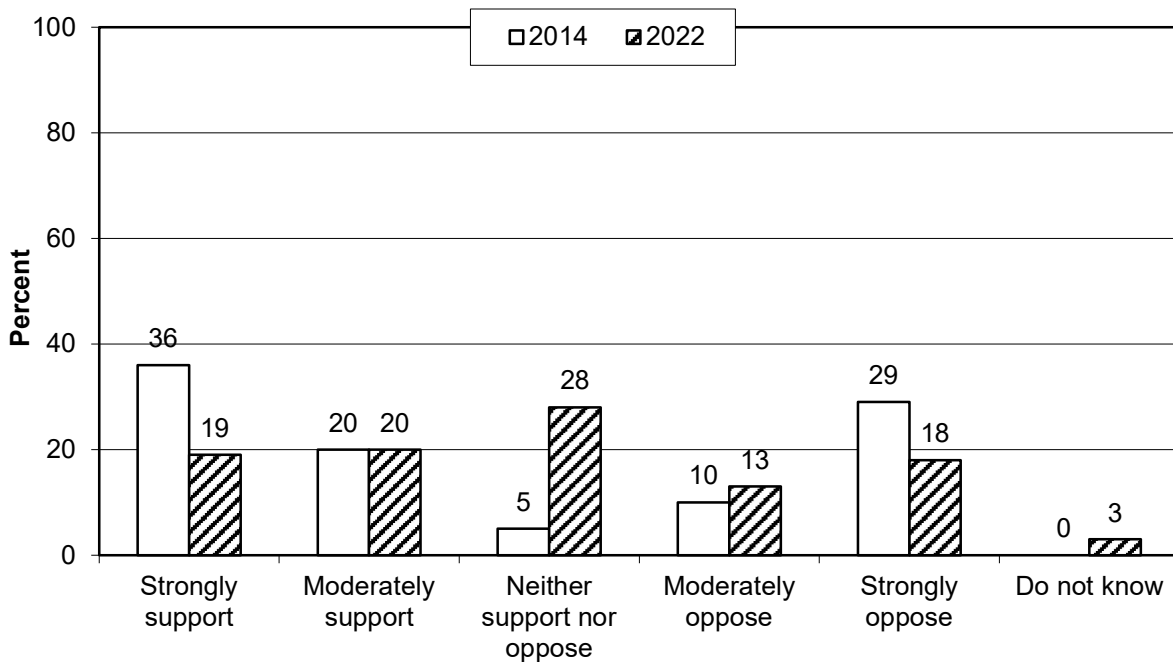
Which of the following best describes your forest grouse hunting in Washington? (Asked of those who hunted forest grouse.)



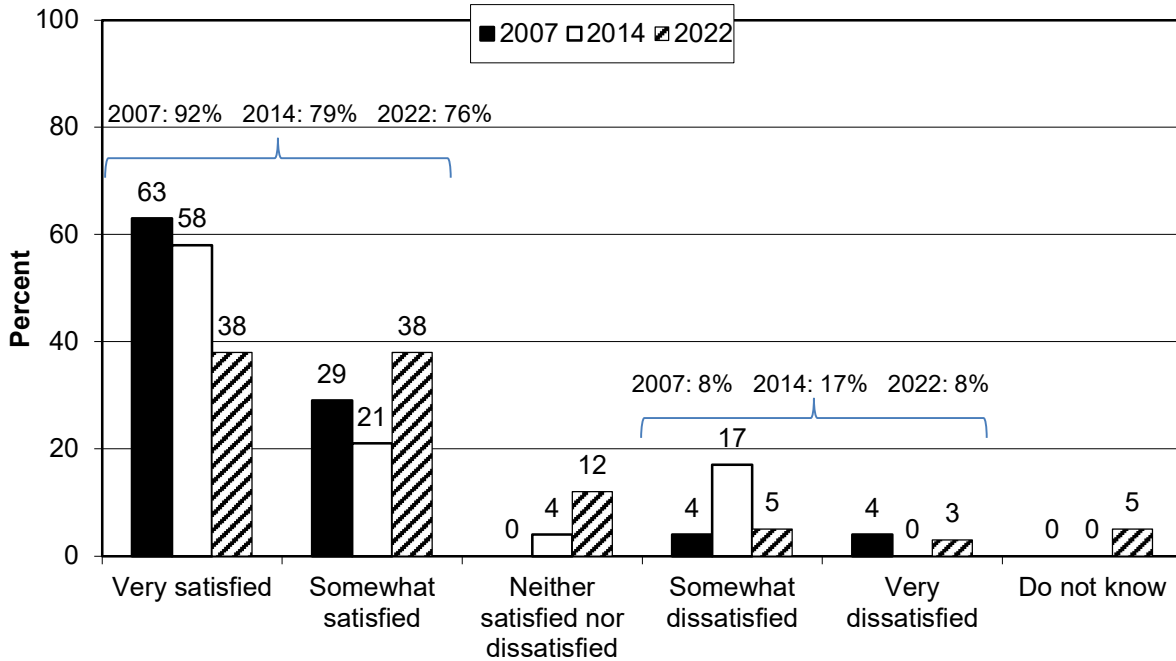
There are four species of forest grouse that are hunted in Washington, which are dusky, sooty, spruce, and ruffed grouse. Dusky and sooty grouse are both formerly known as blue grouse. How comfortable would you say you are with telling the four species apart in the field while hunting? (Asked of those who hunted forest grouse.)



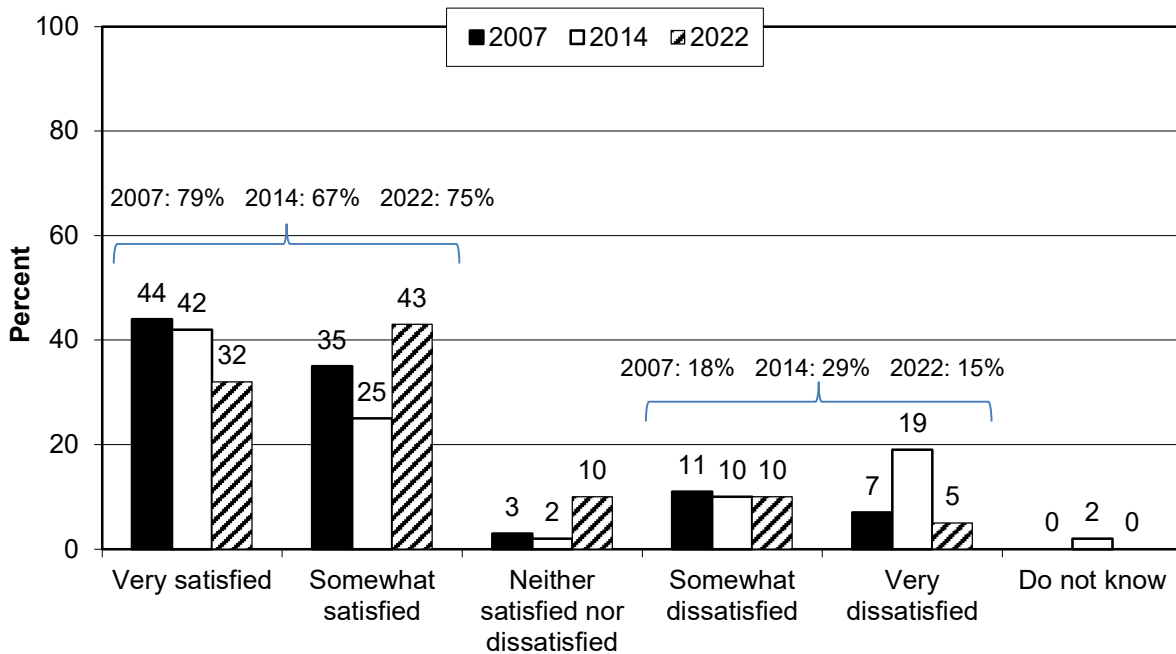
Would you support or oppose individual bag limits for each of the four species of forest grouse? (Asked of those who hunted forest grouse.)

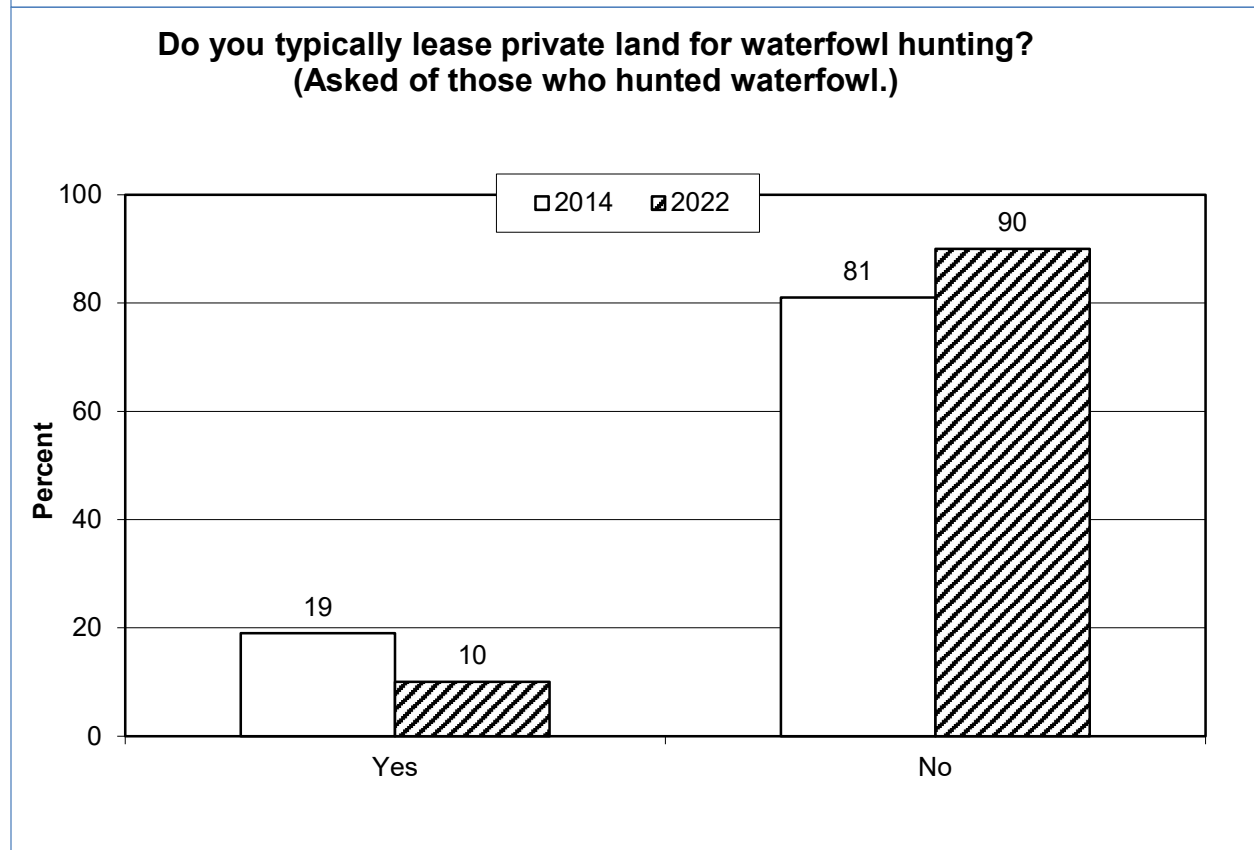
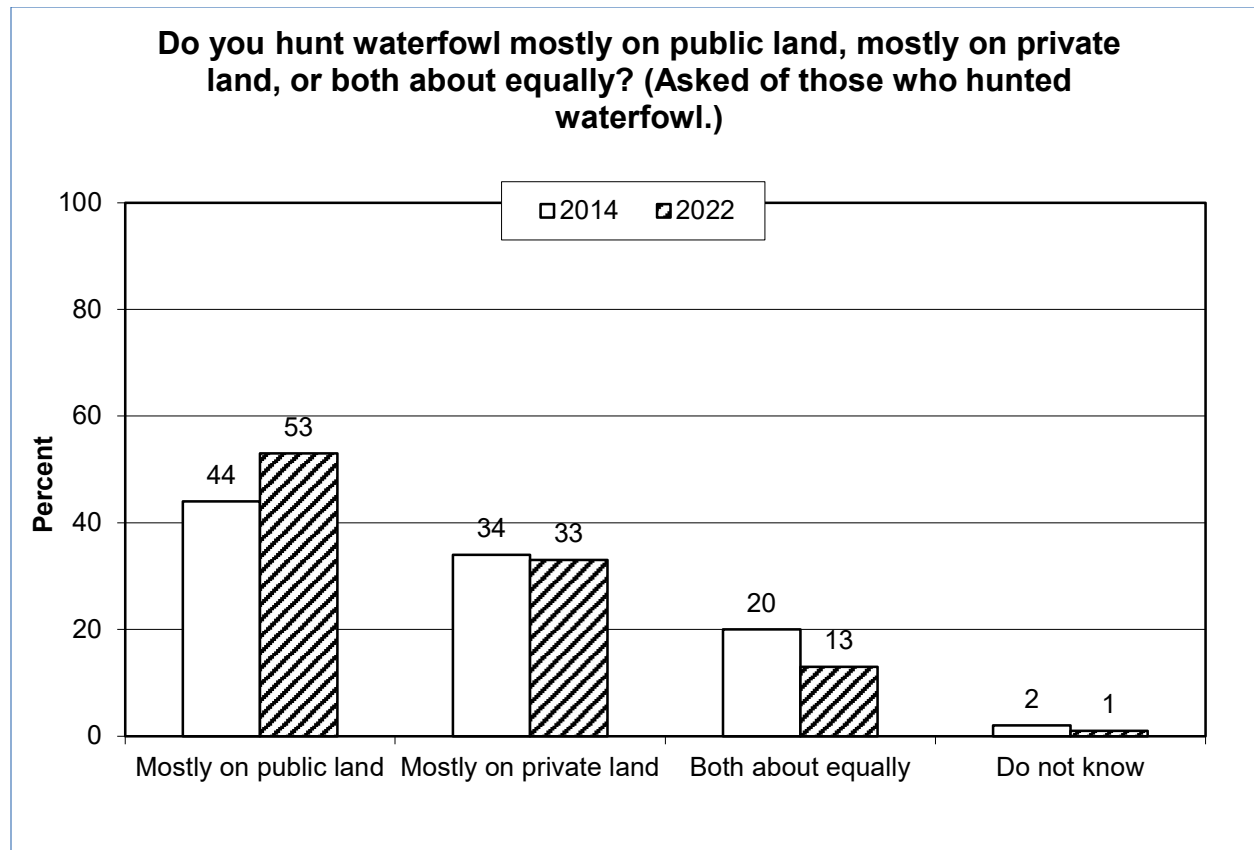


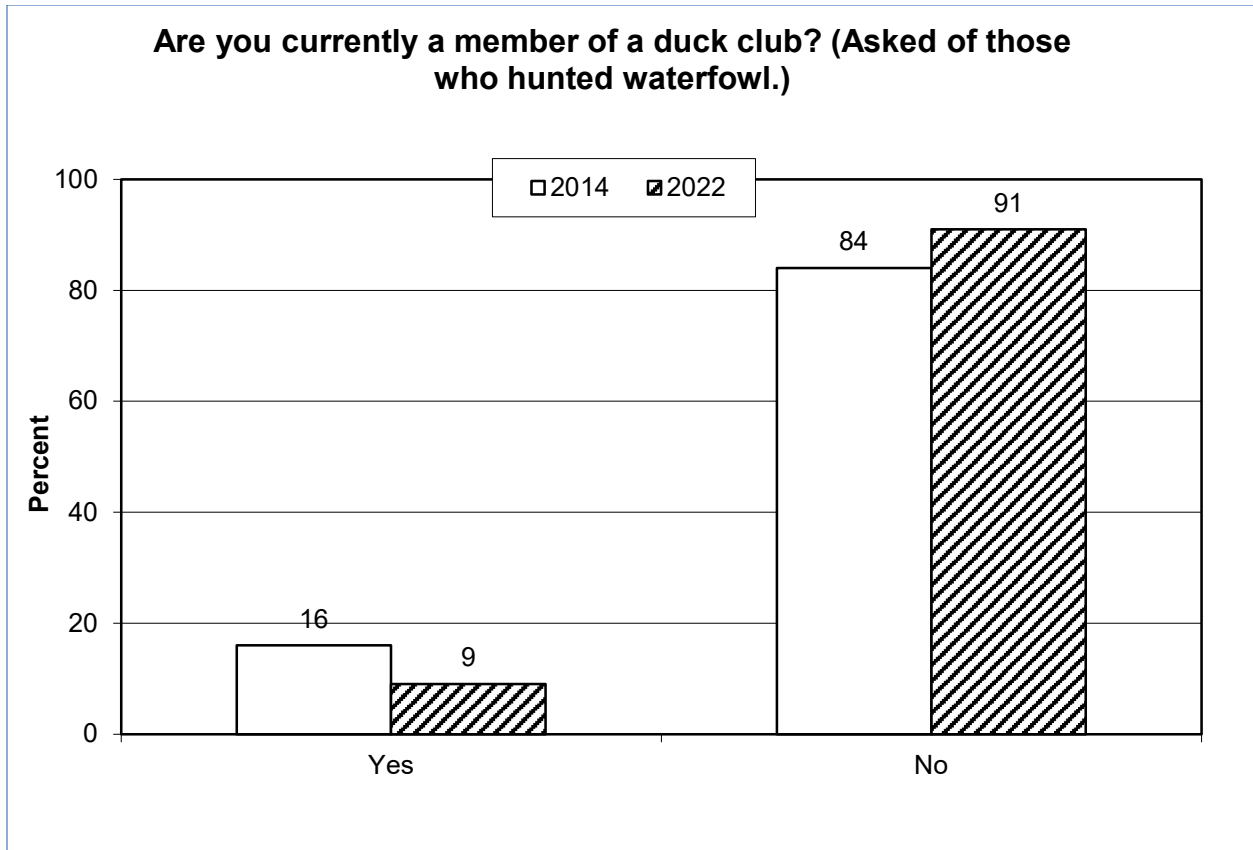
Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with your turkey hunting in Washington during the [latest] season? (Asked of those who hunted turkey.)



Overall, were you satisfied or dissatisfied with your waterfowl hunting in Washington during the [latest] season? (Asked of those who hunted waterfowl.)

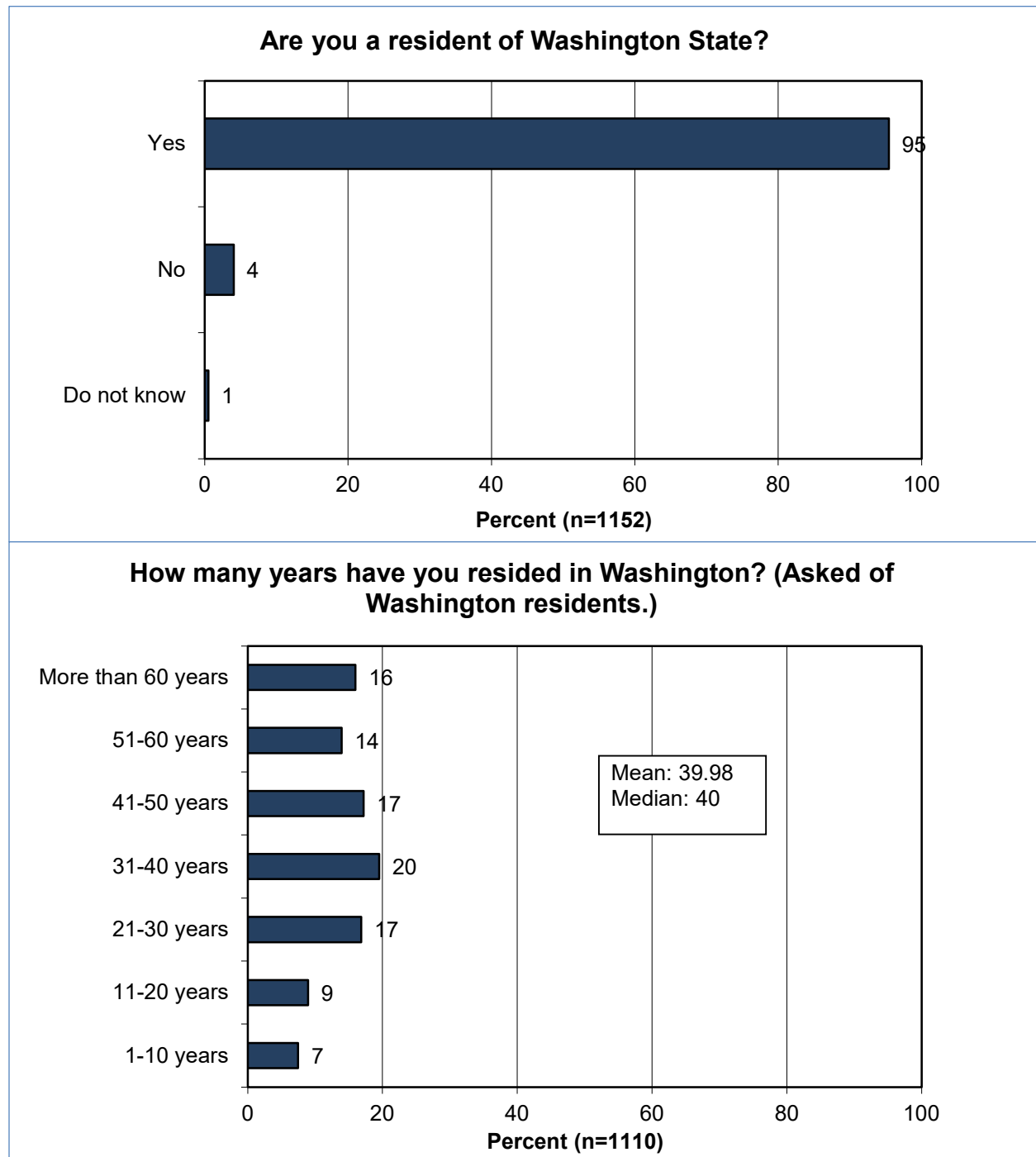


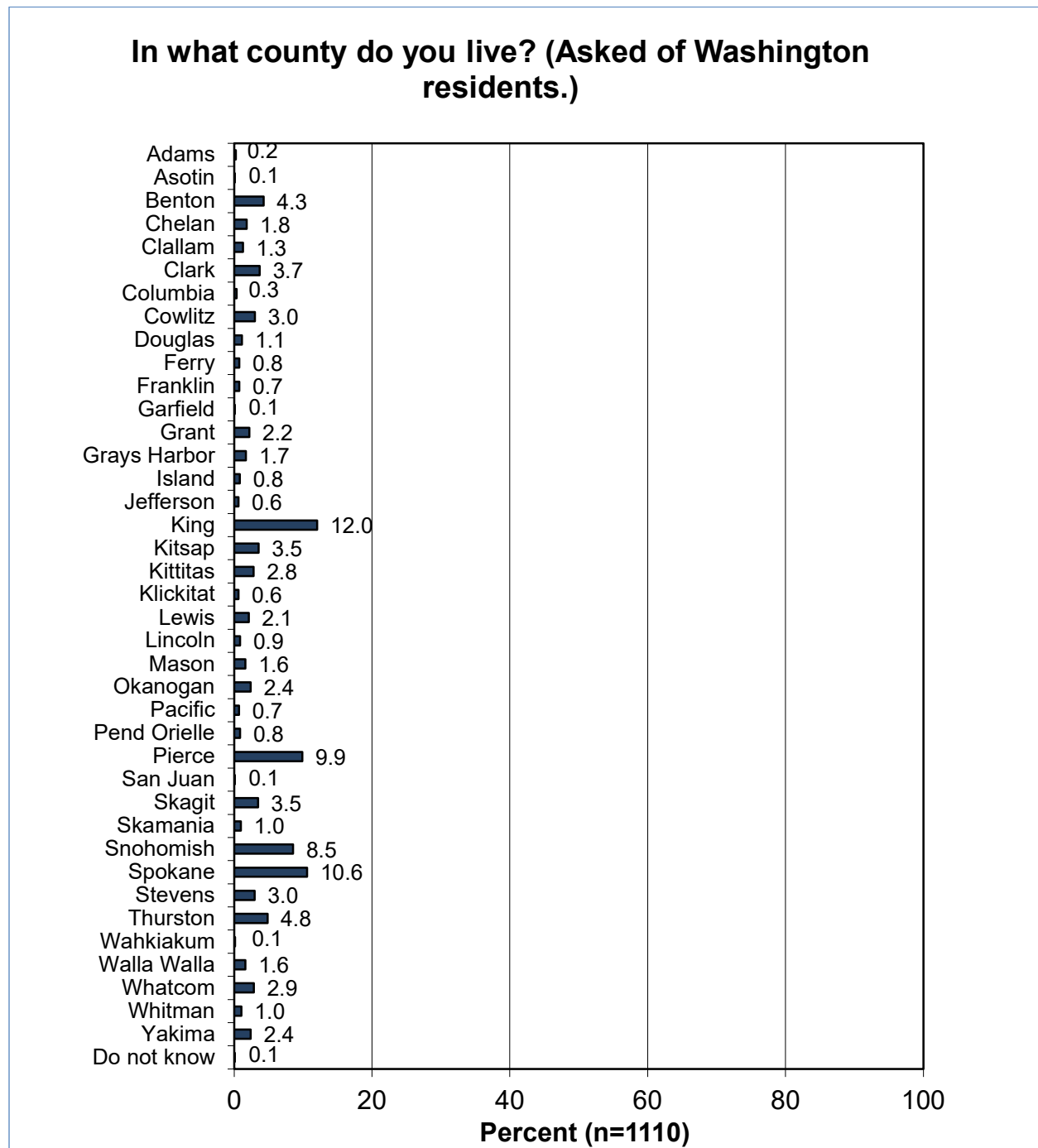


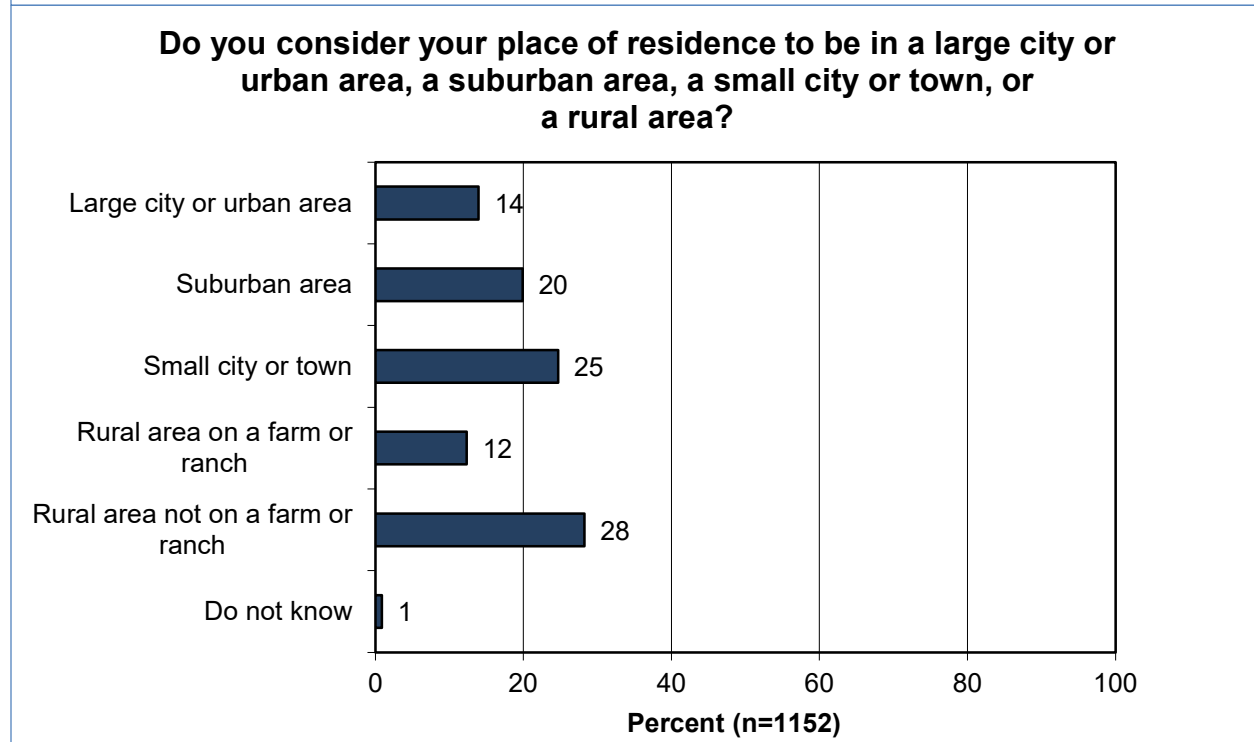
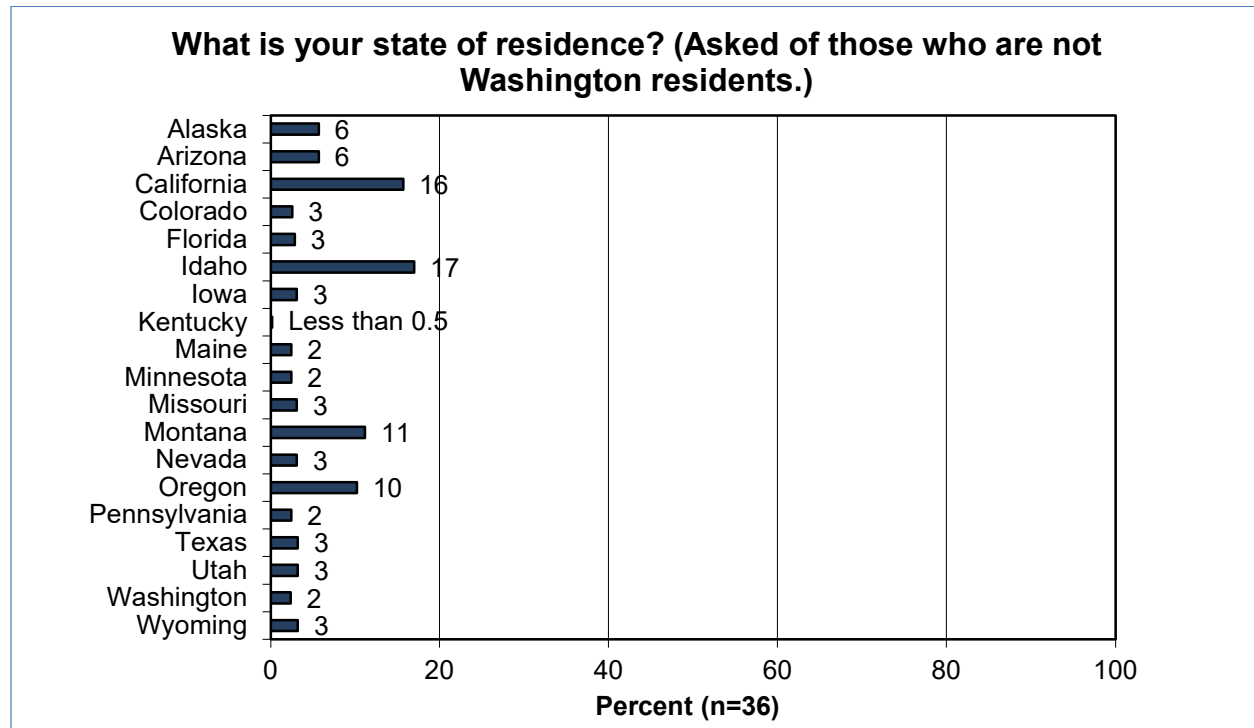


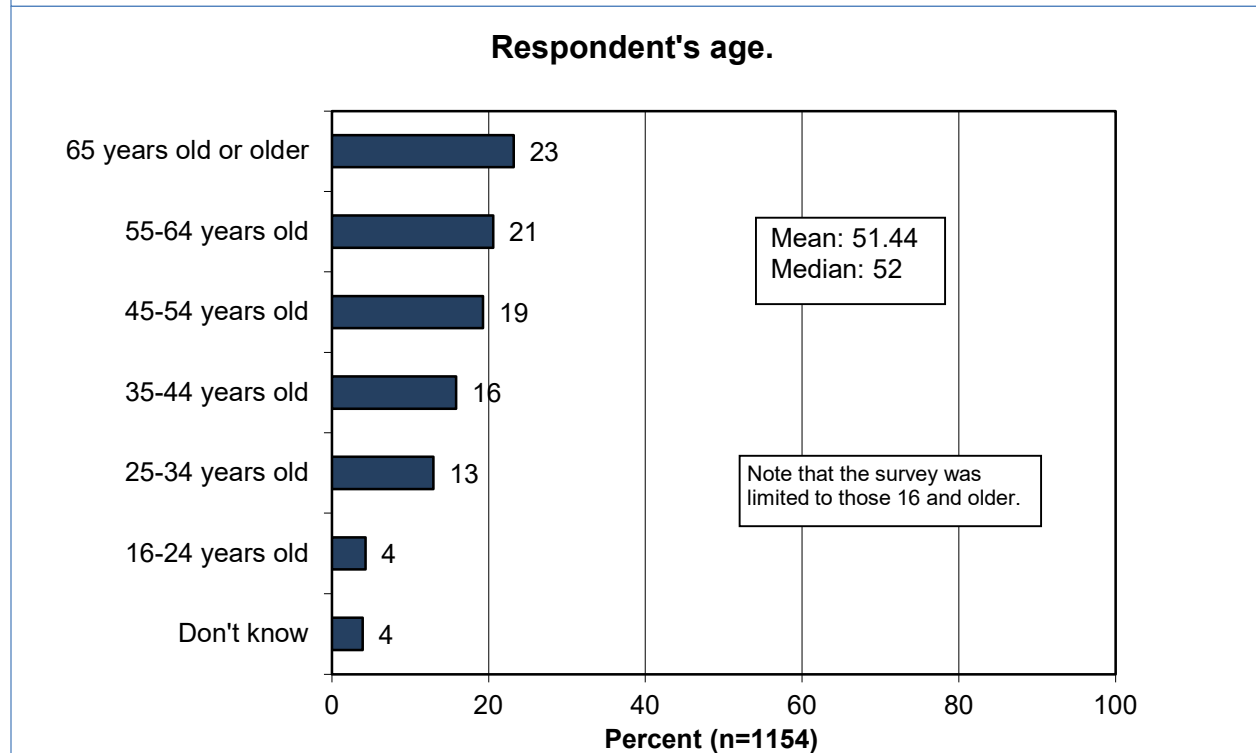
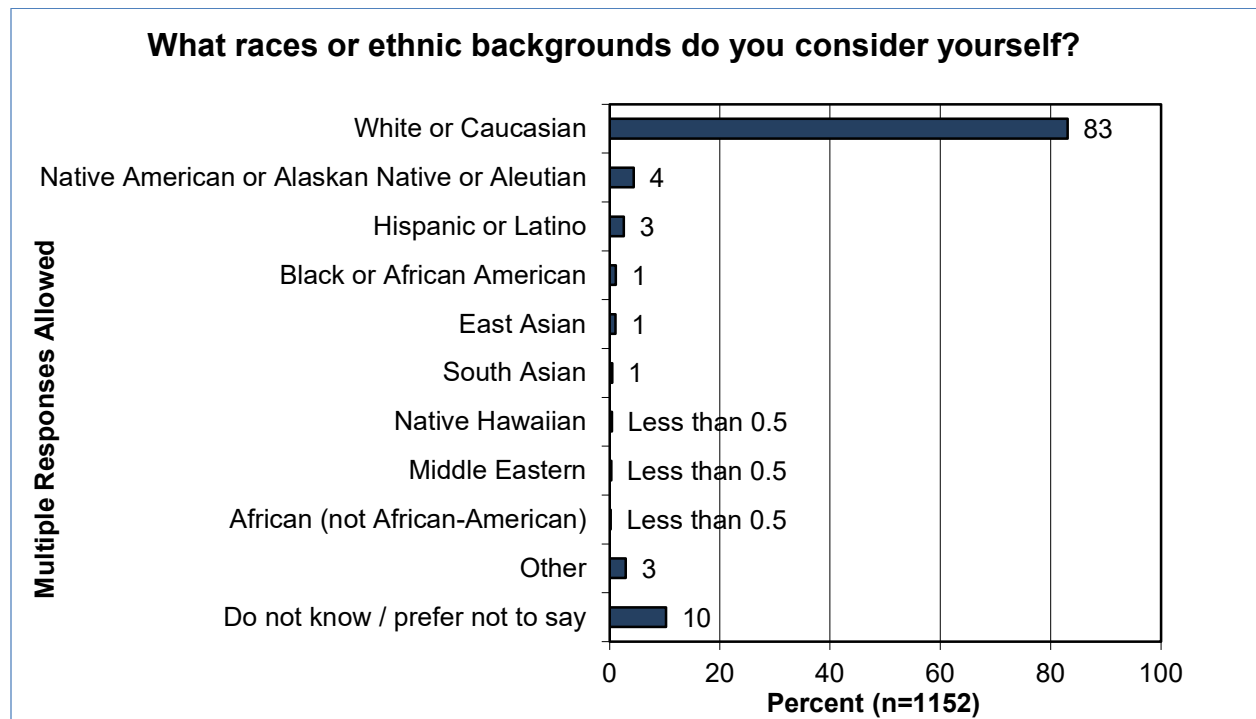
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

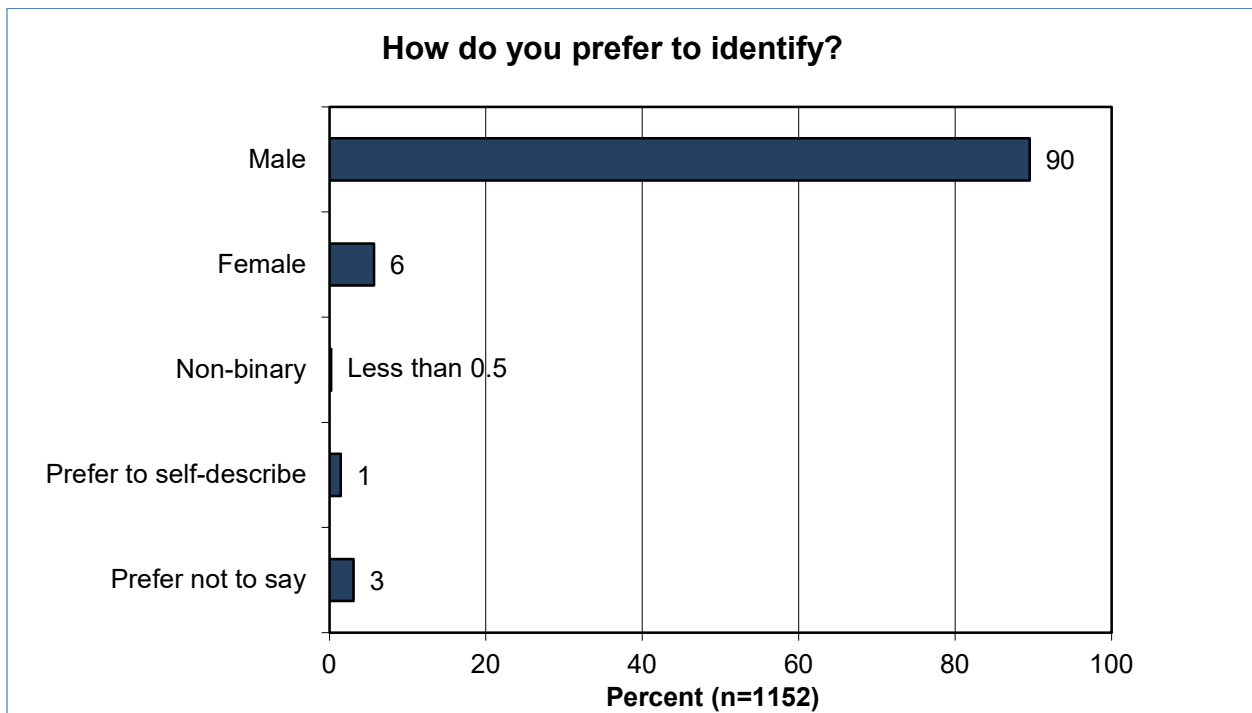
The following demographic data were primarily used for crosstabulations, but they are shown in this section on their own: Washington residency, years of residency, county (among state residents), state (among nonresidents), type of residential area (urban-rural continuum), race or ethnicity, age, and gender.











ABOUT RESPONSIVE MANAGEMENT

Responsive Management is an internationally recognized survey research firm specializing in natural resource and outdoor recreation issues. Our mission is to help natural resource and outdoor recreation agencies, businesses, and organizations better understand and work with their constituents, customers, and the public. Focusing only on natural resource and outdoor recreation issues, Responsive Management has conducted telephone, mail, and online surveys, as well as multi-modal surveys, on-site intercepts, focus groups, public meetings, personal interviews, needs assessments, program evaluations, marketing and communication plans, and other forms of human dimensions research measuring how people relate to the natural world for more than 30 years. Utilizing our in-house, full-service survey facilities with 75 professional interviewers, we have conducted studies in all 50 states and 15 countries worldwide, totaling more than 1,000 human dimensions projects *only* on natural resource and outdoor recreation issues.

Responsive Management has conducted research for every state fish and wildlife agency and every federal natural resource agency, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Coast Guard, and the National Marine Fisheries Service. Additionally, we have also provided research for all the major conservation NGOs including the Archery Trade Association, the American Sportfishing Association, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, Dallas Safari Club, Ducks Unlimited, Environmental Defense Fund, the Izaak Walton League of America, the National Rifle Association, the National Shooting Sports Foundation, the National Wildlife Federation, the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Safari Club International, the Sierra Club, Trout Unlimited, and the Wildlife Management Institute.

Other nonprofit and NGO clients include the American Museum of Natural History, the BoatUS Foundation, the National Association of Conservation Law Enforcement Chiefs, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators, and the Ocean Conservancy. As well, Responsive Management conducts market research and product testing for numerous outdoor recreation manufacturers and industry leaders, such as Winchester Ammunition, Vista Outdoor (whose brands include Federal Premium, CamelBak, Bushnell, Primos, and more), Trijicon, Yamaha, and others. Responsive Management also provides data collection for the nation's top universities, including Auburn University, Clemson University, Colorado State University, Duke University, George Mason University, Michigan State University, Mississippi State University, North Carolina State University, Oregon State University, Penn State University, Rutgers University, Stanford University, Texas Tech, University of California-Davis, University of Florida, University of Montana, University of New Hampshire, University of Southern California, Virginia Tech, West Virginia University, Yale University, and many more.

Our research has been upheld in U.S. Courts, used in peer-reviewed journals, and presented at major wildlife and natural resource conferences around the world. Responsive Management's research has also been featured in many of the nation's top media, including *Newsweek*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, CNN, National Public Radio, and on the front pages of *The Washington Post* and *USA Today*.