

Attitudes Toward Moose Management in Maine



**Conducted for the
Maine Department of
Inland Fisheries and Wildlife**

2024



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Maine's moose season structure has remained unchanged for roughly 20 years. Recently, however, there has been renewed interest in revisiting the moose season structure and timing to determine whether changes would help to better meet the preferences of hunters, guides, recreationists such as wildlife viewers and anglers, large landowners, and outdoor recreation/tourism businesses.

Prompted by renewed interest, the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (the Department) sought to implement scientific research to determine the extent of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the current moose season structure and timing as well as support for or opposition to various alternative options under consideration. The research will assist in decision-making that may impact changes to the moose season implemented by fall 2025.

Specifically, the research entailed scientific surveys of residents, hunters, anglers, guides, large landowners (owning/managing more than 100,000 acres), and outdoor recreation and tourism businesses. The research component also allowed for public input outside of the surveys. The full methods are included in the body of the report.

The report includes chapters on results among residents, hunters, other recreationists and anglers, guides, large landowners, and businesses. A summary chapter then shows results on questions in common with all (or most) of the survey groups. The project also included an online town hall forum, the results of which helped to give perspective to the results of the surveys.

The results that follow in this Executive Summary are the tabulated results of all the surveyed groups for which there were robust samples: general population residents, hunters, recreationists, anglers, and guides. Their results are discussed quantitatively as percentages.

Note that large landowners and businesses are discussed qualitatively but are not included in the tabulated results; their sample sizes did not allow for statistically valid percentages to be reported. Their results are indicated as being *qualitative findings*.

This summary touches on only the main findings, but the full report has detailed analyses of the results.

(Reminder: Landowners and businesses did not have sample sizes that were large enough to be shown in the tables—showing these groups as percentages is not statistically valid. **Hereinafter, note that landowners and businesses will be discussed qualitatively in these bulleted findings but will not be shown in the tables.**)

ATTITUDES TOWARD MOOSE AND MOOSE MANAGEMENT

- **Most people want to see moose, and it is important to an overwhelming majority of Mainers that moose exist.**
 - Among residents, hunters, recreationists, and anglers, moose existing in Maine is considered important—from 95% to 97% say that this is important.
 - Qualitative findings: Landowners and businesses generally think it is important that moose exist.

Is it important or unimportant to you that moose exist in Maine? (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Very important	Somewhat important	Overall important (sum)	Neither	Somewhat unimportant	Very unimportant	Overall unimportant (sum)	Don't know
Residents	81	14	95	3	0	1	1	0
Hunters	90	7	97	2	0	1	1	0
Recreationists	82	13	95	3	1	0	1	0
Anglers	89	8	97	2	0	1	1	0

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table. Guides did not get the question.

- **The large majority of residents, hunters, recreationists, anglers, and guides are in the most accepting end of the continuum on acceptance of moose—no less than 77% of any of those groups are at the most accepting level.**
 - Although acceptance was high, residents and recreationists had the lowest percentages on the most accepting end of the continuum. Hunters, anglers, and guides had higher acceptance of moose.
 - Almost no residents, hunters, recreationists, anglers, or guides generally regard moose as a nuisance.
 - Qualitative findings: Most landowners indicated that they enjoy moose, with some worrying about the problems they cause, and businesses unanimously indicated that they are at the most accepting end of the continuum.

Generally, which of the following statements best describes your feelings about moose? (Percentage giving response)					
Survey group with robust sample	I enjoy seeing and having moose around	I enjoy seeing a few moose, but worry about problems they cause	I generally regard moose as a nuisance	I have no particular feeling about moose	Don't know
Residents	77	16	0	5	0
Hunters	86	9	0	4	1
Recreationists	78	16	0	5	1
Anglers	86	11	1	3	0
Guides	95	4	0	0	0

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

- **Opinions about the status of the moose population statewide are more often that the population is about right, but too low often rivals the about right response.**
- Among residents, hunters, recreationists, anglers, and guides, opinion is generally split between *about right* and *too low* regarding the moose population in the state.
 - The first table below summarizes opinion on the moose population statewide, and the second table summarizes opinion more locally.
 - Qualitative findings: Among landowners, opinion is quite mixed, and no generalities can be made; businesses are split, for the most part, between *about right* and *too low*.

Overall, would you say the moose population in Maine is too high, about right, or too low? (Percentage giving response)				
Survey group with robust sample	Too high	About right	Too low	Don't know
Residents	3	52	30	15
Hunters	4	44	40	12
Recreationists	3	52	31	14
Anglers	3	42	44	12
Guides	2	42	50	6

The most common response for each group (i.e., across the rows) is shaded green.

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

Overall, would you say the moose population where you [live/hunt/participate in outdoor recreation/guide most often] is too high, about right, or too low? (Percentage giving response)				
Survey group with robust sample	Too high	About right	Too low	Don't know
Residents (where lives)	3	48	41	8
Hunters (where hunts)	2	39	48	10
Recreationists (where recreates)	2	58	32	8
Anglers (where recreates)	2	44	46	8
Guides (where guides)	1	44	52	4

The most common response for each group (i.e., across the rows) is shaded green.

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

- **A lot of Mainers are knowledgeable about winter ticks—a majority of residents, hunters, recreationists, anglers, and guides were aware of winter ticks prior to the survey.**
- Awareness of winter ticks and their effects on moose is highest among guides, hunters, and anglers. It is lowest among residents and recreationists (see the next table below).
 - As shown in the table at the bottom of this page, self-assessed knowledge of winter ticks is highest among guides (three quarters of them know *a great deal or a moderate amount*), followed by hunters and anglers in a second tier (about half are at that knowledge level). Recreationists and residents are the least knowledgeable (about a third know *a great deal or a moderate amount*).
 - Qualitative findings: Landowners were aware of the winter tick problem, and they feel that they are knowledgeable about it. Awareness of winter ticks was high among businesses, and they consider themselves to be knowledgeable.

Prior to this survey, were you aware that winter ticks are affecting the moose population in Maine? (Percentage giving response)			
Survey group with robust sample	Yes	No	Don't know
Residents	62	33	5
Hunters	86	12	2
Recreationists	65	31	4
Anglers	84	15	1
Guides	97	2	1

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

How much would you say you know about winter ticks and their impacts on the moose population in Maine? (Percentage giving response)							
Survey group with robust sample	A great deal	A moderate amount	A great deal and a moderate amount combined (sum)	A little	Nothing at all	Don't know	Was not aware at all prior to survey (no or don't know in previous question)
Residents	10	22	32	24	5	1	38
Hunters	16	38	55	27	4	0	14
Recreationists	10	23	33	25	5	1	35
Anglers	11	42	53	27	4	1	16
Guides	29	50	79	15	3	0	3

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

- **The majority of residents, hunters, recreationists and anglers (but not guides) support moose hunting that allows calves to be taken to help address the winter tick problem.**
 - Support is consistent across four of the groups named above (from 61% to 63% support among residents, hunters, recreationists, and anglers), as is opposition (from 16% to 19%).
 - Guides, however, have much lower support (only 43% support) and much higher opposition (37% oppose).
 - Qualitative findings: Landowners generally support such a season, while businesses are split, with both the support and oppose positions represented.

If the Department predicts a high winter tick load that would likely result in a high rate of moose calf deaths over the winter, would you support or oppose a moose hunt that allowed the limited harvest of additional moose calves to improve the overall rate of moose calf survival during the winter? (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Strongly support	Moderately support	Overall support (sum)	Neither	Moderately oppose	Strongly oppose	Overall oppose (sum)	Don't know
Residents	30	31	61	12	9	8	17	10
Hunters	38	24	62	13	8	11	19	6
Recreationists	31	32	63	12	8	8	16	9
Anglers	35	27	62	14	8	9	17	7
Guides	20	23	43	17	14	22	37	3

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

ATTITUDES TOWARD HUNTING

- **Support for hunting, as well as moose hunting, and hunting as a way to control populations is high among residents, hunters, recreationists, anglers, and guides.**
 - Support for legal, regulated hunting is markedly higher among hunters, anglers, and guides than it is among residents and recreationists. The same holds true for moose hunting specifically and for hunting as a method to control moose populations.
 - Overall opposition is never higher than 14% among any group in the three questions tabulated below and on the next page.
 - Qualitative findings: Support for hunting in all three questions is high among landowners and businesses.

In general, do you support or oppose legal, regulated hunting? (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Strongly support	Moderately support	Overall support (sum)	Neither	Moderately oppose	Strongly oppose	Overall oppose (sum)	Don't know
Residents	53	28	81	9	4	4	9	0
Hunters	88	8	96	3	0	0	1	0
Recreationists	54	28	83	8	5	4	9	1
Anglers	82	13	95	3	2	0	2	0
Guides	87	9	96	1	2	0	2	0

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

Do you support or oppose moose hunting in Maine? (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Strongly support	Moderately support	Overall support (sum)	Neither	Moderately oppose	Strongly oppose	Overall oppose (sum)	Don't know
Residents	45	30	75	8	7	8	14	2
Hunters	86	11	97	1	1	0	1	1
Recreationists	47	29	76	8	7	7	14	2
Anglers	70	21	91	2	4	2	6	1
Guides	87	9	96	1	3	0	3	0

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

In general, do you support or oppose hunting as a method to manage the moose population in Maine? (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Strongly support	Moderately support	Overall support (sum)	Neither	Moderately oppose	Strongly oppose	Overall oppose (sum)	Don't know
Residents	53	29	82	8	4	5	9	2
Hunters	89	8	97	1	1	0	1	1
Recreationists	54	28	82	8	4	5	9	2
Anglers	78	13	92	1	3	2	5	2
Guides	88	8	96	2	1	1	2	0

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

- Although a small percentage of all survey respondents oppose moose hunting, those that do most often do so because they oppose hunting in general or they are concerned about the sustainability of moose populations.

CONFLICTS DURING MOOSE HUNTING SEASON

- Although 56% to 59% of guides and 26% to 42% of hunters, recreationists, and anglers say that crowding by other people and crowding by hunters is a problem during moose season, they most commonly say it is a *minor* problem rather than a *major* problem. Only 10% to 14% of guides and 2% to 8% of hunters, recreationists, and anglers say crowding is a *major* problem.
- Crowding by people in general is highest among guides and is lowest among anglers. The same holds true for crowding by moose hunters. On these questions, more than half of guides rated them as problems during moose hunting season, and about a third of hunters and recreationists did so. Among anglers, about a quarter to a third rated them as problems.
 - Crowding by non-moose hunters is worse, in general, than crowding by moose hunters specifically during moose season.
 - Qualitative findings: Some landowners indicated that they had problems with crowding on their property during moose hunting season, typically describing the problems as *minor*. Likewise, some businesses indicated that they had problems with crowding where they were operating during moose hunting season, and they also typically describe the problems as *minor* rather than *major*.

How much of a problem, if any, is crowding by people in general in the woods and fields during moose hunting season in the area where you [hunt/participate in recreation/guide most often]? (Percentage giving response)					
Survey group with robust sample	Major problem	Minor problem	Overall problem (sum)	Not a problem at all	Don't know
Hunters	6	32	37	51	12
Recreationists	5	27	32	59	9
Anglers	2	24	26	67	7
Guides	14	45	59	39	2

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table. Resident data are wholly incorporated in the recreationist data for this question.

How much of a problem is crowding by moose hunters specifically? (Percentage giving response)					
Survey group with robust sample	Major problem	Minor problem	Overall problem (sum)	Not a problem at all	Don't know
Hunters	6	30	36	49	15
Recreationists	4	26	30	59	11
Anglers	4	23	27	63	10
Guides	13	46	59	38	3

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table. Resident data are wholly incorporated in the recreationist data for this question.

How much of a problem is crowding by those hunting species other than moose, such as deer, bear, turkey, grouse, and other small game? (Percentage giving response)					
Survey group with robust sample	Major problem	Minor problem	Overall problem (sum)	Not a problem at all	Don't know
Hunters	8	35	42	52	5
Recreationists	7	29	36	55	9
Anglers	5	31	36	58	6
Guides	10	45	56	42	2

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table. Resident data are wholly incorporated in the recreationist data for this question.

- **Finally, crowding by other recreationists is less than crowding by people in general and crowding by hunters.**
- Although most did not find crowding to be a problem by other recreationists, about a third of hunters, recreationists, anglers, and guides say that crowding by other recreationists is a problem during moose season, but only very small percentages think it is a *major* problem.
 - Qualitative findings: Some landowners had *minor* problems in this case, and businesses generally did not indicate that other recreationists were a problem.

How much of a problem is crowding by recreationists other than hunters, such as anglers, trappers, wildlife viewers, hikers, campers, or boaters? (Percentage giving response)					
Survey group with robust sample	Major problem	Minor problem	Overall problem (sum)	Not a problem at all	Don't know
Hunters	3	26	29	64	7
Recreationists	5	30	35	59	6
Anglers	4	34	37	58	5
Guides	4	29	34	65	2

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table. Resident data are wholly incorporated in the recreationist data for this question.

- **Asked about it in a direct question, most respondents indicated that they did not experience a conflict with anyone during moose season. However, guides were more likely than any other group to indicate that they experienced a problem with anyone during the moose season.**
- Guides had the most conflict, by far, at 30%, while no more than 10% of the other groups had experienced conflicts with others during the moose season.
 - Qualitative findings: Some landowners experienced conflict during the moose season; of those that did, the conflict was often related to signage being ignored by recreationists. Some businesses also experienced conflict during moose season where they operate. Typical types of conflict include traffic, blocked roads, going through locked gates, and not respecting signage.

Again, moose hunting seasons occur primarily in late September and again from mid-October through the first week of November, depending on the Wildlife Management District. Have you experienced conflicts with anyone else at all during moose hunting season in the area where you [hunt/participate in activities/guide most often]? (Percentage giving response)			
Survey group with robust sample	Yes	No	Don't know
Hunters	10	85	5
Recreationists	6	92	2
Anglers	6	93	1
Guides	30	68	2

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table. Resident data are wholly incorporated in the recreationist data for this question.

- **As the next table shows, guides had more conflict during moose season with the various types of recreationists than did hunters, recreationists, and anglers. Among hunters, recreationists, and anglers, 74% or more did *not* have problems.**
- This question was asked of all respondents and was not based on any previous question about conflicts.
 - Qualitative findings: Landowners (those who had conflicts) had conflicts with a variety of groups including moose hunters and hunters in general, campers, gatherers (e.g., food, shed antlers), and people in general. Businesses (those that had conflicts) had conflicts with a variety of groups including moose hunters and hunters in general, wildlife viewers, other recreationists in general, people in general, and trappers.

Have you experienced conflicts with any of the following types of recreationists during moose hunting season in the area where you [hunt/participate in recreation activities/guide]? (Percentage giving response)				
Those with whom the survey groups had conflict	Survey group with robust sample			
	Hunters	Recreationists	Anglers	Guides
Moose hunters	7	2	4	26
Hunters of species other than moose	5	5	2	21
Hunters in general	4	4	2	6
People in general	4	5	6	7
Anglers	0	1	4	1
Wildlife viewers	3	2	2	5
Leaf peepers	3	3	5	5
Outdoor photographers	1	1	2	2
Hikers	2	3	3	2
Campers	2	2	4	4
Motorboaters	1	1	5	1
Canoers and kayakers	0	1	2	0
Whitewater rafters	0	0	1	0
Food gatherers	0	1	1	0
Trappers	1	2	0	1
Other types of recreationists	3	1	4	4
None of these / no conflict	74	80	75	52

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table. Resident data are wholly incorporated in the recreationist data for this question.

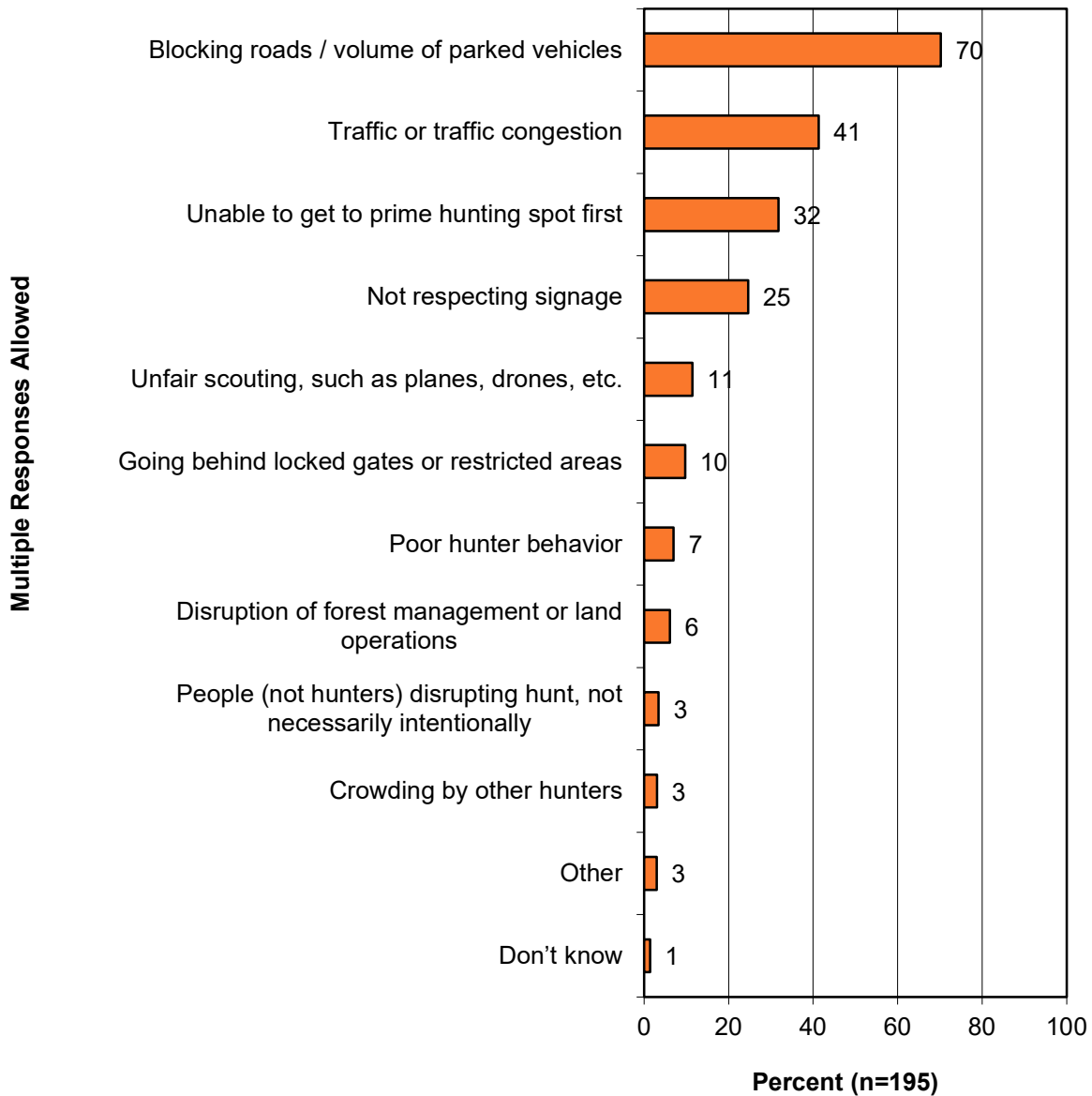
- **In general, although conflict was still low, the WMDs in which there is the most conflict during moose hunting season are WMDs 1 through 6 and 8 and 9.**
- WMD 1 had high rates of conflict among hunters, recreationists, and guides.
 - Of hunters who experienced conflict, it most often occurred in WMDs 1, 4, 5, and 8.
 - Of recreationists who experienced conflict, it most often occurred in WMDs 1, 3, 4, and 28.
 - Of guides who experienced conflict, it most often occurred in WMDs 1 through 5 and 8.
 - In the following table, the WMDs with the highest percentages having conflicts are shown in dark red, moving to lighter red with decreasing conflict. (The percentages in the first three data columns are among those who had conflict. The next three columns show percentages out of all survey respondents.) This table appears on the next page.
 - Qualitative findings: Businesses had more conflicts in WMDs 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 than elsewhere.

In which WMDs did you experience conflict? (Asked of those who experienced a conflict during moose season; table shows both the percentages out of those who had conflict and the percentages out of all.) (Percentage giving response)						
WMD in which conflict occurred	Survey group with robust sample					
	Among those who had conflict			Among all		
	Hunters	Recreationists	Guides	Hunters	Recreationists	Guides
WMD 1	21	26	32	2.06	1.47	9.56
WMD 2	12	13	27	1.24	0.75	7.93
WMD 3	4	16	16	0.41	0.89	4.66
WMD 4	23	16	32	2.29	0.91	9.56
WMD 5	22	5	20	2.18	0.30	6.06
WMD 6	8	11	13	0.82	0.63	3.96
WMD 7	4	6	7	0.40	0.32	2.10
WMD 8	19	7	19	1.87	0.38	5.59
WMD 9	7	12	5	0.66	0.66	1.40
WMD 10	1	9	5	0.14	0.52	1.40
WMD 11	3	7	4	0.25	0.42	1.17
WMD 12	3	13	2	0.28	0.72	0.47
WMD 13	1	11	2	0.06	0.62	0.70
WMD 14	2	14	2	0.15	0.80	0.70
WMD 15	3	7	0	0.25	0.42	0.00
WMD 16	2	3	0	0.24	0.17	0.00
WMD 17	4	2	5	0.38	0.12	1.63
WMD 18	2	12	4	0.24	0.65	1.17
WMD 19	3	2	4	0.27	0.12	1.17
WMD 27	0	1	1	0.01	0.08	0.23
WMD 28	0	16	2	0.01	0.88	0.47
Key	1-5			0.00-0.50		
	6-10			0.51-1.00		
	11-15			1.01-1.50		
	16-20			1.51-2.00		
	20+			2.00+		

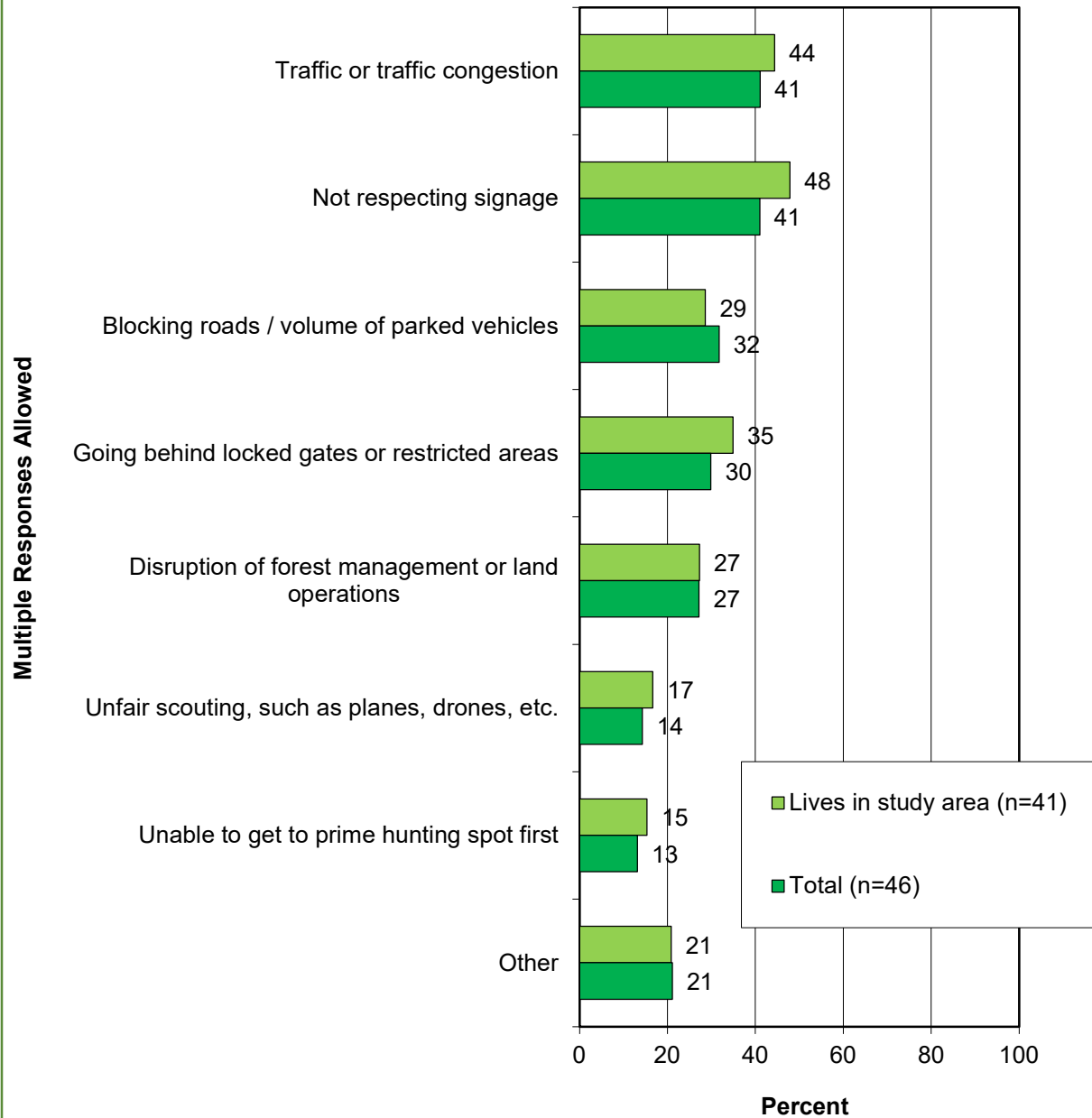
The darker red cells identify where conflicts are worse, moving to a lower rate of conflict with the lighter red cells. Anglers, landowners, and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table. Resident data are wholly incorporated in the recreationist data for this question.

- **When conflicts occur during the moose season, they are often associated with the blocking of roads, traffic congestion at access areas, and other hunters already taking hunters' desired locations to hunt. Other people not respecting signage is also a common conflict.**
 - Because this is such an important aspect of this report, graphs are included on the following pages showing the types of conflict that occurred. These were open-ended questions asked of those who experienced conflict.

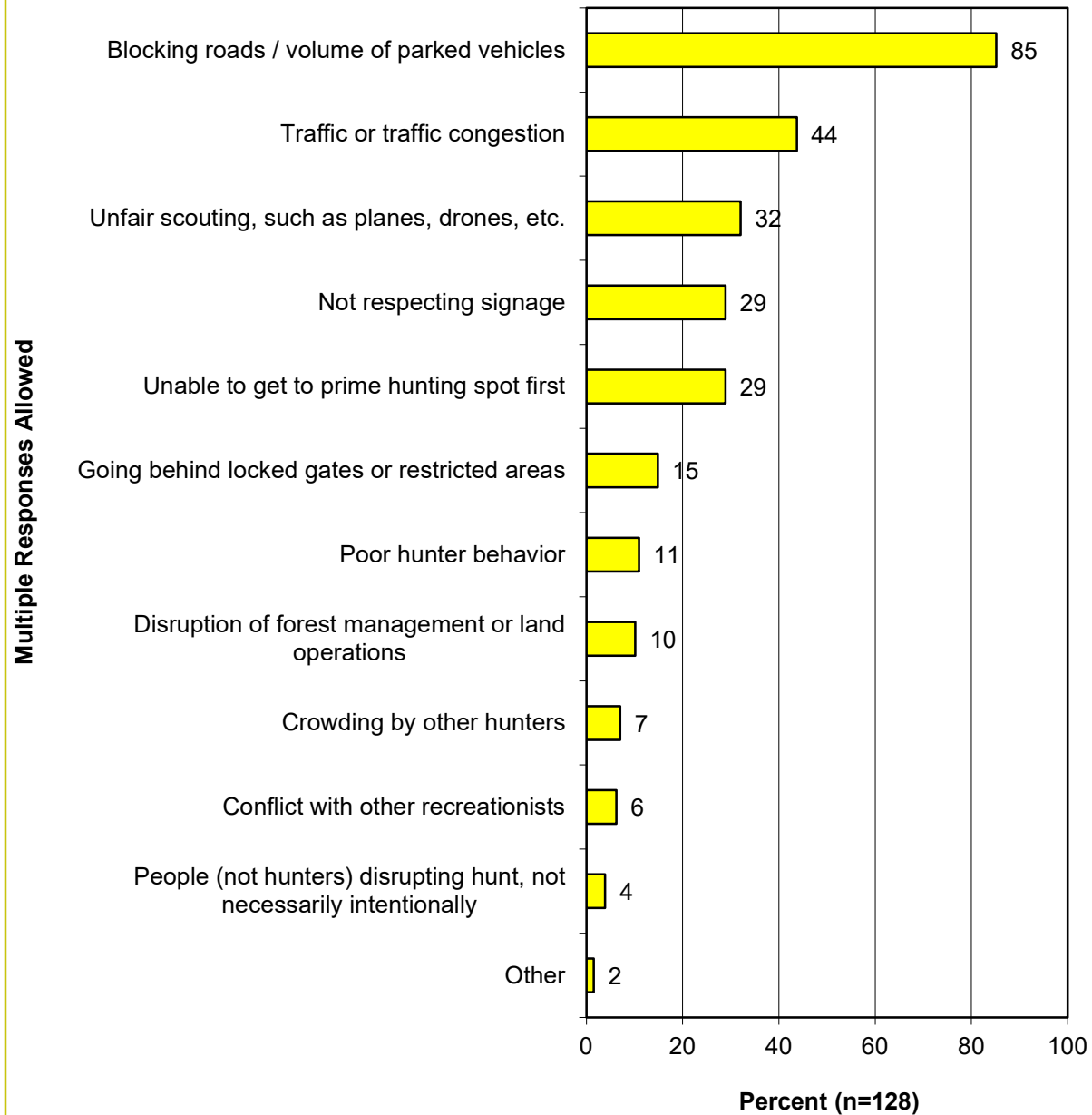
What type of conflict did you experience? (Asked of those who experienced a conflict during moose season.) (Hunters)



What type of conflict did you experience? (Asked of those who experienced a conflict during moose season.) (Recreationists)



What type of conflict did you experience? (Asked of those who experienced a conflict during moose season.) (Guides)



OPINIONS ON MOOSE HUNTING SEASONS

- **Most residents, hunters, recreationists, anglers, and guides indicated that they want the season structure to remain the same.**
- The majority of residents, hunters, recreationists, anglers, and guides indicated *the same* when asked if they want fewer, the same, or more seasons; earlier, the same, or later seasons; and shorter, the same, or longer moose hunting seasons.
 - Although most guides (57%) want *the same* number of moose hunting seasons, guides are the most likely to want *fewer* seasons of all the groups shown in the table (22% of guides versus 9% to 14% of the other groups in the table).
 - Guides and anglers are also the most likely to want *more* seasons (each at 15% versus 7% to 12% of the other groups in the table).
 - Although most guides (66%) want the timing of the moose seasons to be *the same*, they are the most likely to want *earlier* seasons.
 - Although the majority of both residents and recreationists want the moose season length to be *the same*, they are the most likely of the groups in the table to want *shorter* seasons, followed fairly closely by guides. Meanwhile, hunters are the most likely to want *longer* seasons.
 - Qualitative findings: There is no consensus among landowners on these questions. Most commonly, businesses want the number, timing, and length of moose seasons to be *the same*, but there were a few dissenters wanting *fewer* or *more* seasons, wanting *earlier* or *later* seasons, and wanting *shorter* or *longer* seasons.

Should Maine have fewer, the same, or more moose hunting seasons? (Percentage giving response)				
Survey group with robust sample	Fewer	The same	More	Don't know
Residents	14	66	7	13
Hunters	9	66	12	13
Recreationists	14	66	7	13
Anglers	11	53	15	22
Guides	22	57	15	7

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

Should Maine's moose seasons occur earlier, the same, or later? (Percentage giving response)				
Survey group with robust sample	Earlier	The same	Later	Don't know
Residents	4	68	10	18
Hunters	6	69	10	15
Recreationists	3	69	10	18
Anglers	6	57	11	26
Guides	17	66	9	8

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

Should Maine's moose season length be shorter, the same, or longer? (Percentage giving response)				
Survey group with robust sample	Shorter	The same	Longer	Don't know
Residents	13	60	12	15
Hunters	5	62	21	12
Recreationists	13	60	12	15
Anglers	7	58	17	18
Guides	11	66	16	7

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

The survey asked five support/oppose questions regarding potential changes to the moose seasons, detailed below. **These questions were asked regardless of whether respondents had said that they want the moose seasons to be the same or to be changed.**

- **Most residents, hunters, recreationists, anglers, and guides supported the current moose season framework; nonetheless, if there were to be changes made, support exceeds opposition to the potential changes to the moose seasons. Hunters, anglers, and guides give the most support, in general, to the potential changes, while residents and recreationists give the least support. Although exceeded by support, opposition is generally higher among residents, recreationists, and guides than among hunters and anglers.**
 - Because guides have relatively low percentages in the neutral responses (*neither support nor oppose* and *don't know*), they have higher percentages available to either support or oppose each potential season change compared to the other groups in the tables.
 - Qualitative findings: Landowners are generally supportive on all these potential changes. Among businesses, support generally exceeds opposition, but the support is well mixed between *strong* and *moderate* support.
 - In these tables, green shading shows relatively high support, while red shading shows relatively high opposition (relative to the other groups). Note that two questions asked specifically about September seasons; the other three questions asked about the moose seasons in general.

Support for or opposition to allowing upland bird hunting during moose season. (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Strongly support	Moderately support	Overall support (sum)	Neither	Moderately oppose	Strongly oppose	Overall oppose (sum)	Don't know
Residents	20	20	40	25	13	12	25	10
Hunters	51	17	68	14	7	9	16	2
Recreationists	20	21	42	24	13	11	24	10
Anglers	42	27	70	15	7	6	13	2
Guides	34	24	58	14	13	14	27	1

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

Support for or opposition to an additional moose 6-day season in all WMDs that currently have moose hunting. (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Strongly support	Moderately support	Overall support (sum)	Neither	Moderately oppose	Strongly oppose	Overall oppose (sum)	Don't know
Residents	17	26	43	21	15	14	28	7
Hunters	29	25	54	20	11	10	21	5
Recreationists	18	25	43	21	15	14	29	7
Anglers	27	26	53	22	12	9	22	4
Guides	21	26	48	17	17	17	34	2

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

Support for or opposition to adding a 6-day September moose season in the Western Mountains region. (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Strongly support	Moderately support	Overall support (sum)	Neither	Moderately oppose	Strongly oppose	Overall oppose (sum)	Don't know
Residents	15	22	38	25	14	14	29	9
Hunters	26	26	52	22	9	10	19	7
Recreationists	15	23	38	24	14	14	29	9
Anglers	26	21	47	27	12	8	20	6
Guides	28	24	52	21	13	10	23	4

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

Support for or opposition to adding a 6-day September moose season in the Moosehead region. (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Strongly support	Moderately support	Overall support (sum)	Neither	Moderately oppose	Strongly oppose	Overall oppose (sum)	Don't know
Residents	15	24	39	25	14	13	27	9
Hunters	29	25	54	22	9	9	18	6
Recreationists	15	24	39	24	14	14	27	9
Anglers	27	23	50	25	12	8	20	6
Guides	29	25	54	20	9	12	21	4

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

Support for or opposition to an additional moose 6-day season in several, but not all, WMDs. (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Strongly support	Moderately support	Overall support (sum)	Neither	Moderately oppose	Strongly oppose	Overall oppose (sum)	Don't know
Residents	14	29	44	21	14	14	28	8
Hunters	27	30	57	18	11	9	20	5
Recreationists	14	30	45	20	13	14	27	8
Anglers	29	24	53	23	12	8	20	5
Guides	21	33	53	15	14	15	29	2

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

ATTITUDES TOWARD THE DEPARTMENT

- **The overwhelming majority of residents, hunters, recreationists, anglers, and guides trust the Department to manage moose and to set the appropriate framework for the moose hunting seasons. And although the vast majority of guides trust the Department, higher percentages of guides than the other groups do not trust the Department.**
 - Specifically, trust (agreeing with the statement) to manage moose is at 71% among guides but ranges from 84% to 87% among the other survey groups; trust to set the moose hunting framework is 71% among guides but is 87% or 88% among the other survey groups.
 - Likewise, lack of trust (disagreeing with the statement) to manage moose is 19% among guides but 4% to 10% among the other survey groups, and lack of trust on the framework question is 22% among guides but 5% to 8% among the other survey groups.
 - Qualitative findings: In general, landowners and businesses trust the Department, but there are a few who do not trust the Department.
 - Graphs of results among residents and hunters are included in addition to the tables.

I trust the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to manage moose in the state. (Do you agree or disagree with this statement?) (Percentage giving response)

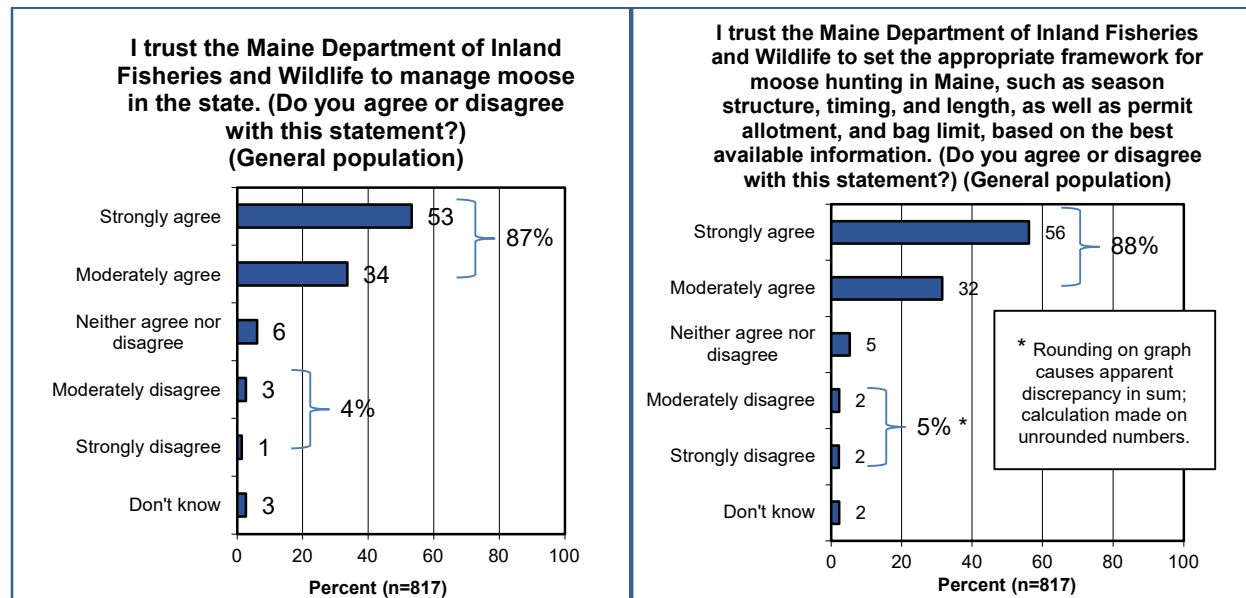
Survey group with robust sample	Strongly agree	Moderately agree	Overall agree (sum)	Neither	Moderately disagree	Strongly disagree	Overall disagree (sum)	Don't know
Residents	53	34	87	6	3	1	4	3
Hunters	58	27	84	7	5	2	7	1
Recreationists	53	34	87	6	3	2	5	2
Anglers	63	22	84	5	6	4	10	1
Guides	38	32	71	10	12	6	19	0

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

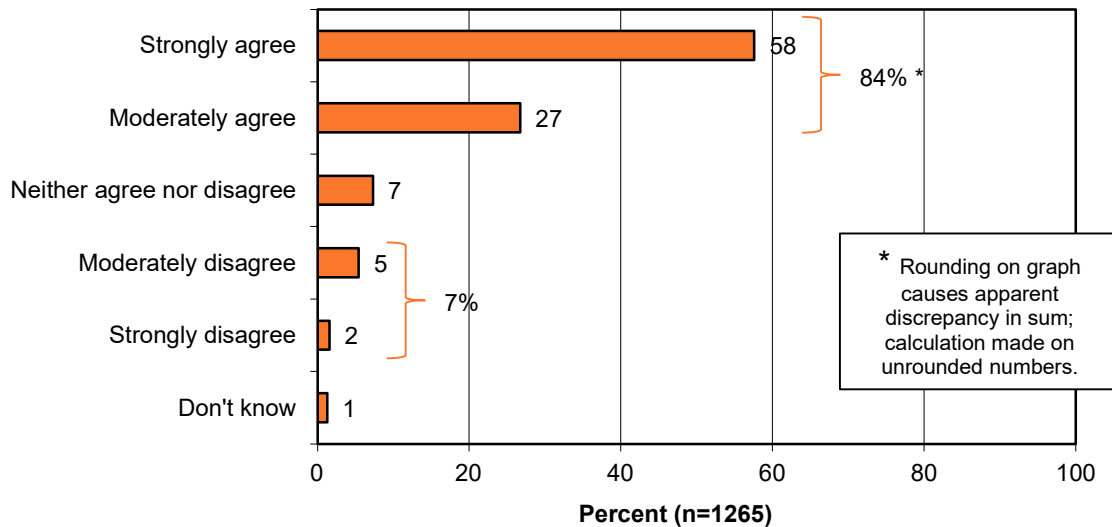
I trust the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to set the appropriate framework for moose hunting in Maine, such as season structure, timing, and length, as well as permit allotment, and bag limit, based on the best available information. (Do you agree or disagree with this statement?) (Percentage giving response)

Survey group with robust sample	Strongly agree	Moderately agree	Overall agree (sum)	Neither	Moderately disagree	Strongly disagree	Overall disagree (sum)	Don't know
Residents	56	32	88	5	2	2	5	2
Hunters	57	30	87	5	6	2	8	1
Recreationists	56	31	88	5	3	2	5	2
Anglers	61	26	87	5	3	5	8	1
Guides	37	34	71	7	13	8	22	1

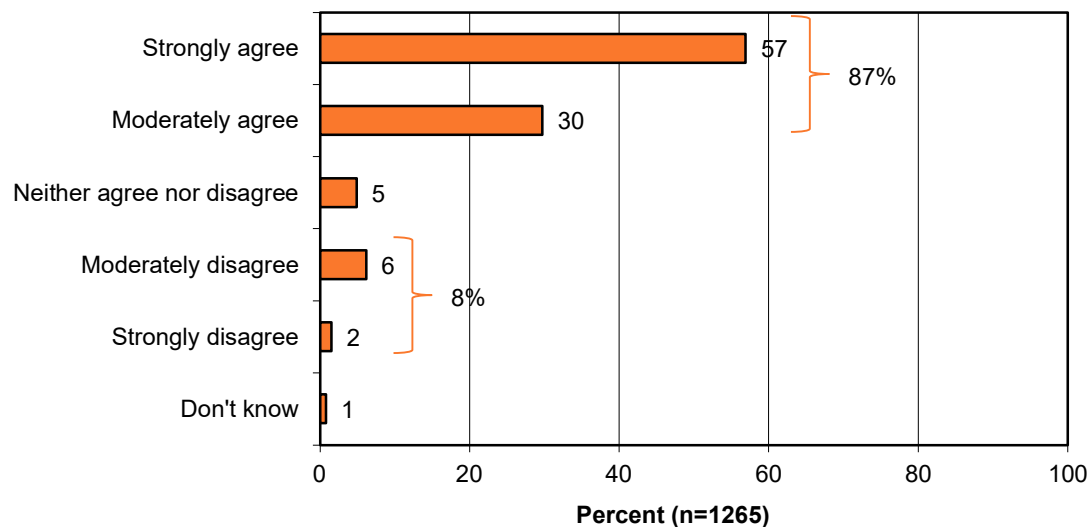
Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.



I trust the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to manage moose in the state. (Do you agree or disagree with this statement?) (Hunters)



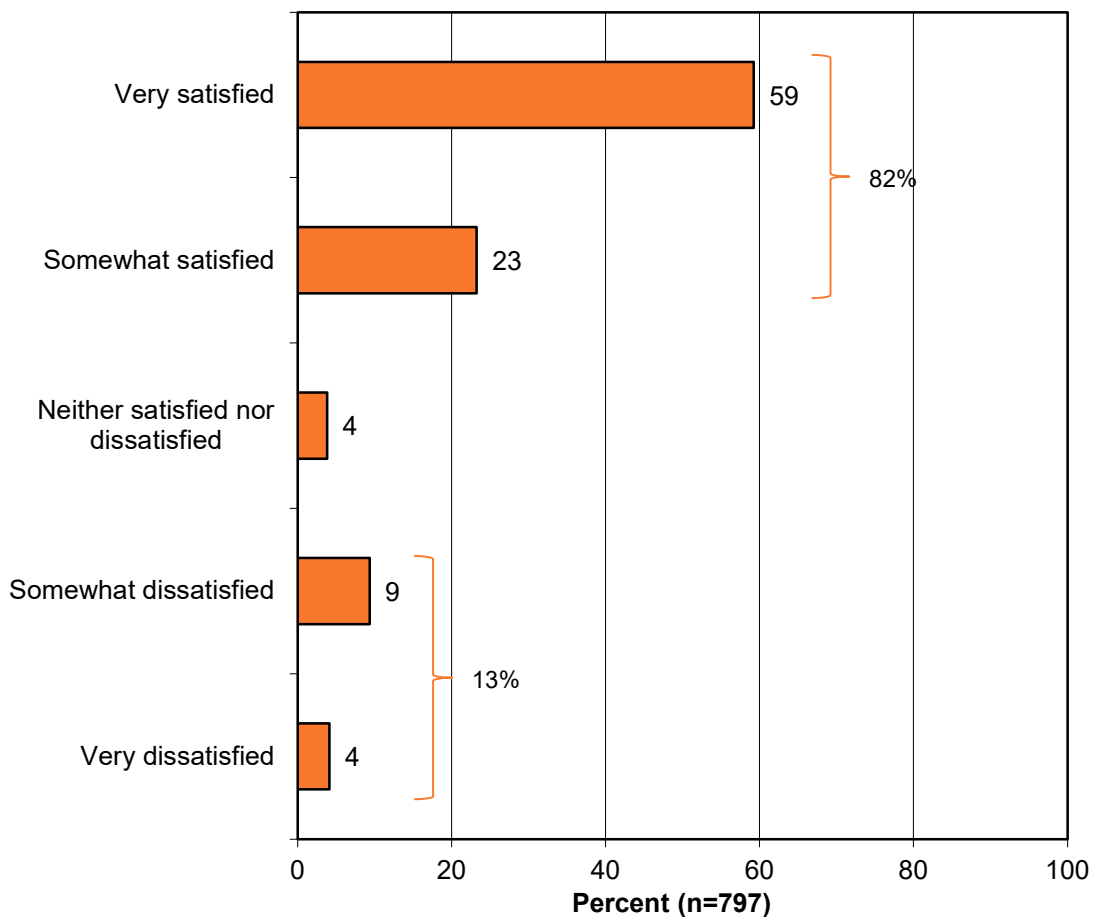
I trust the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to set the appropriate framework for moose hunting in Maine, such as season structure, timing, and length, as well as permit allotment, and bag limit, based on the best available information. (Do you agree or disagree with this statement?) (Hunters)



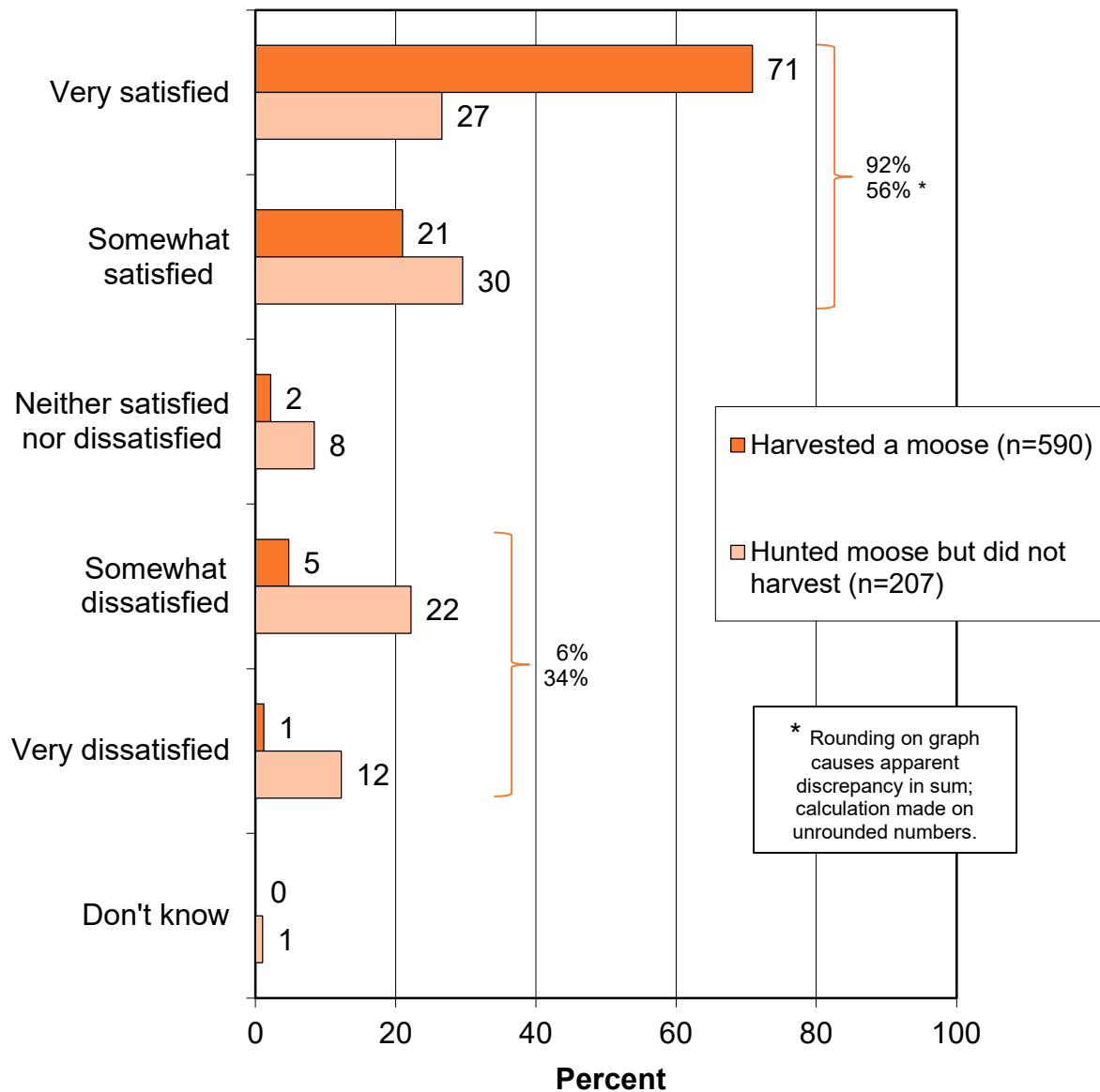
MOOSE HUNTING SATISFACTION

- **Satisfaction among moose hunters is relatively high overall, but it is higher among those who have harvested a moose.**
 - Satisfaction with moose hunting far exceeds dissatisfaction: 82% are satisfied (including 59% being *very* satisfied), while 13% are dissatisfied.
 - Those who have not harvested a moose report lower levels of satisfaction, as shown on the following page.

In general, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your moose hunting experiences in Maine in the past 5 years? (Asked of those who hunted moose in the past 5 years in Maine.) (Hunters)



In general, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your moose hunting experiences in Maine in the past 5 years? (Asked of those who hunted moose in the past 5 years in Maine.) (Hunters)



INFORMATION TOPICS

Moose hunters were asked which topics or types of information would make their moose hunting more enjoyable or successful: moose research data led the list. Five topics were presented to respondents (the top five in the graph), but they could add any other that came to mind in an open-ended option. Ticks as a topic was the top added item.

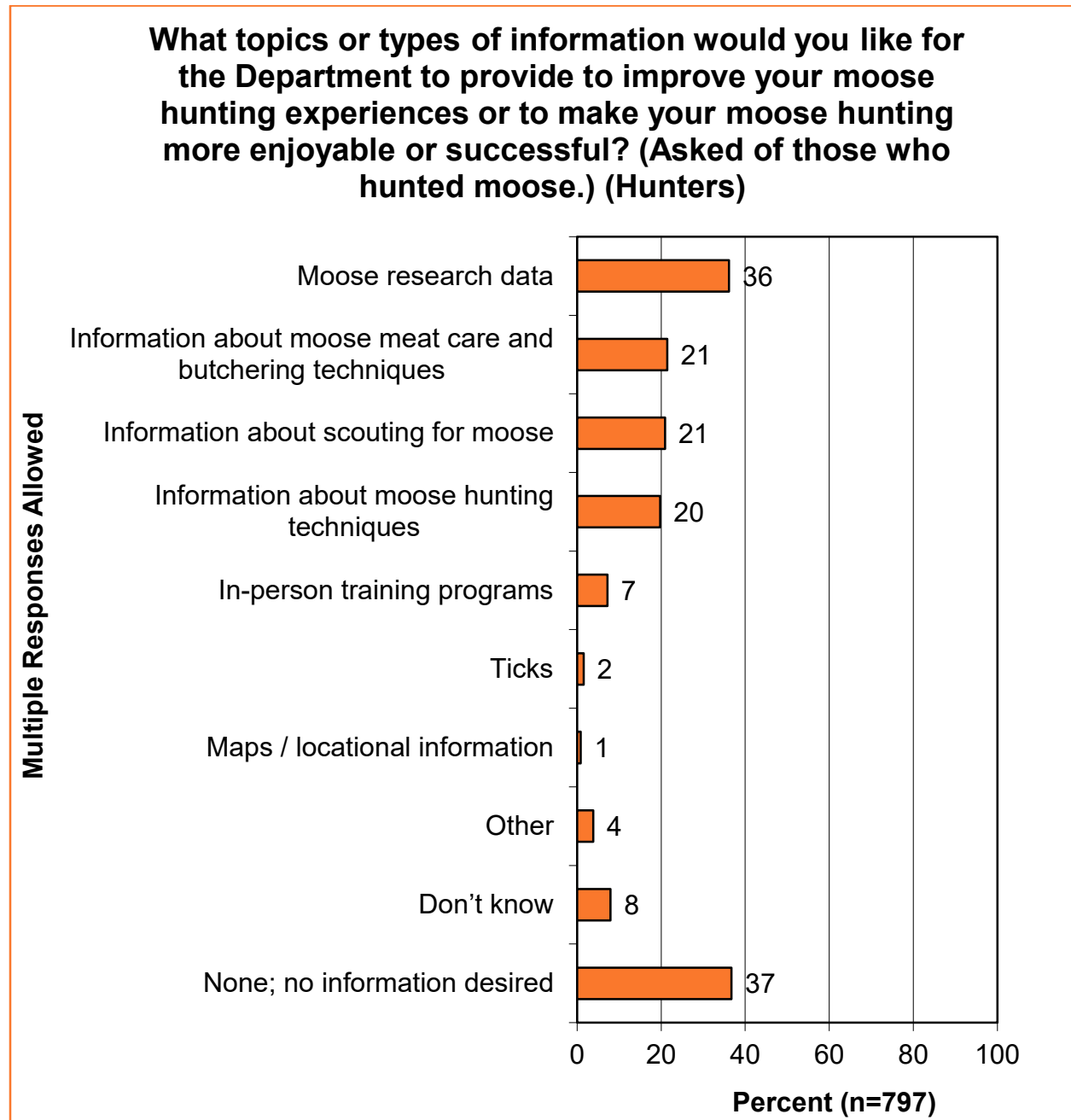


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INTRODUCTION

Maine's moose season structure has remained unchanged for roughly 20 years. Recently, however, there has been renewed interest in revisiting the moose season structure and timing to determine whether changes would help to better meet the preferences of hunters, guides, non-consumptive recreationists such as tourists and wildlife viewers, and other groups.

Following the recommendation of the LD831 stakeholder group, the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (the Department) sought to implement scientific research to determine the extent of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with the current moose season structure and timing as well as support for or opposition to various alternative options under consideration. The research will assist in decision-making that may impact changes to the moose season implemented by fall 2025.

Specifically, the research examined opinions on the current season structure and timing, potential user conflicts related to the moose season, and the opinions on moose and moose management in general. It included scientific surveys of residents, hunters, recreationists, guides, landowners, and businesses. The research component also allowed for public input outside of the surveys.

The methods used for this project are detailed in the next chapter. That chapter is then followed by the data chapters for each of the groups of interest.

METHODOLOGY

This chapter details the survey methods and the online townhall forum methods. The chapter starts with an overview of the study area and an explanation of the structure of the chapters in the report and how they relate to the various groups of interest that were studied.

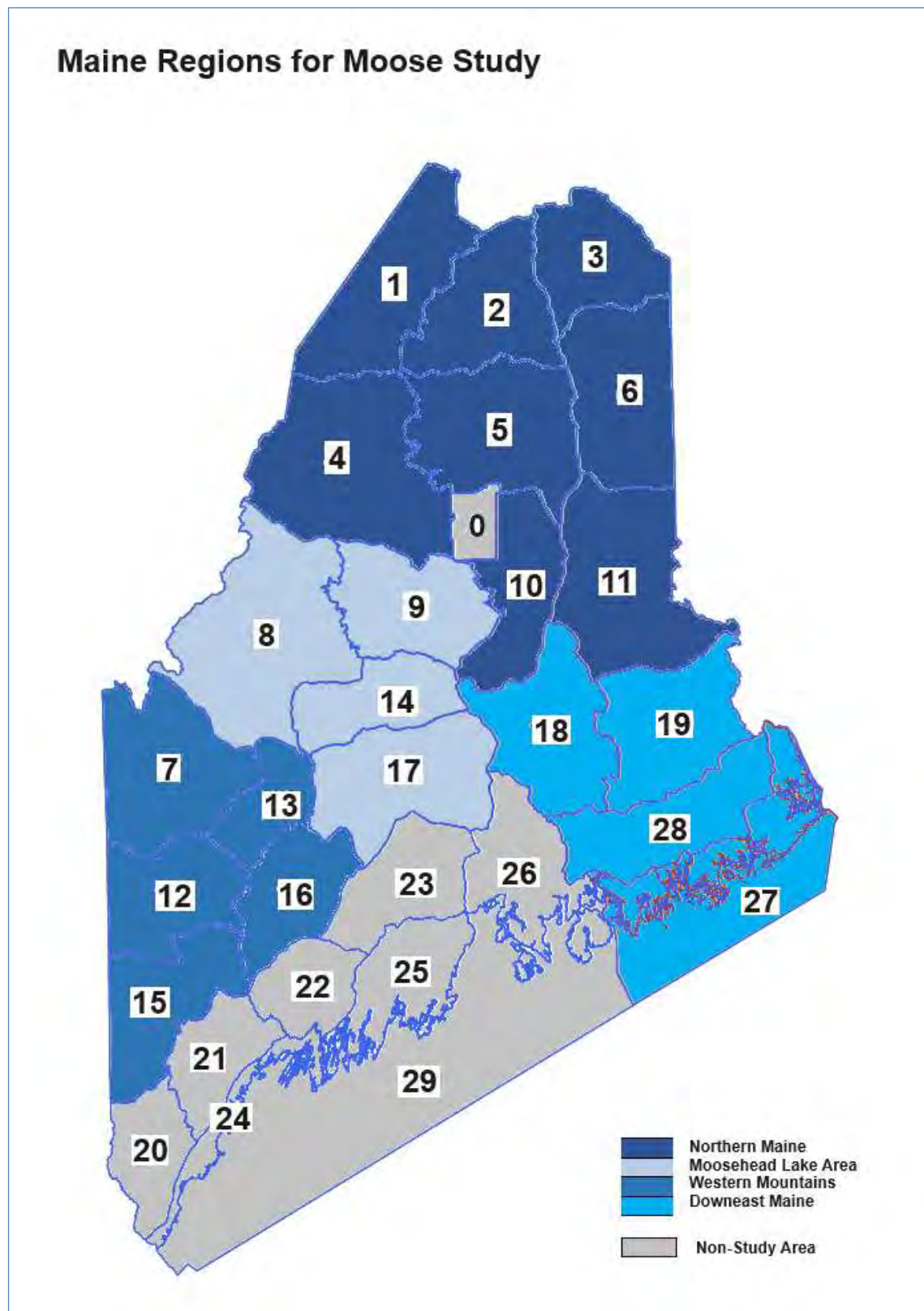
OVERVIEW OF SURVEY SAMPLING AND REPORT CHAPTERS

The sampling plan was based, in part, on the regions, so an explanation of the regions is necessary for an understanding of the sampling plan. The study pertained to most, but not all, of Maine. Specifically, the study area included Northern Maine, the Moosehead Lake Area, the Western Mountains, and Downeast Maine (see the table below and map on the following page). The study excluded Southern Maine and Central Maine. The regions and the Wildlife Management Districts (WMDs) on which they are based are delineated on the map. These regions were developed by the Department and the researchers based on where there was a high potential for conflict among and by moose hunters.

	REGION	REGION DESCRIPTION	MOOSE HUNTING WMDs	NO MOOSE HUNTING WMDs
STUDY AREA	Northern Maine	Includes most of the North Maine Woods and the Route 1 corridor from Van Buren to Houlton.	1-6, 10, 11	N/A
	Moosehead Lake Area	This also includes areas like Jackman, Seboomook, and Sebec Lake.	8, 9, 14, 17	N/A
	Western Mountains	This includes areas like Bethel, the Rangely Lakes, Carrabassett Valley, and Eustis.	7, 12, 13, 15	16 (Included for analysis of non-moose hunters and other recreationists.)
	Downeast Maine	This includes Grand Lake Stream, Routes 6 and 9, Studmill Road, and Machias and surrounding areas.	18, 19, 27, 28	N/A
NON-STUDY AREA	Central Maine		No moose hunting	0
	Southern Maine		No moose hunting	20-26, 29

Note that WMD 16 is included in the Western Mountains Region and is, therefore, within the study area. However, it is the single WMD in the study area that does not have moose hunting. It was included in the study area because it is largely surrounded by areas where moose hunting occurs. Also note that hereinafter the report will use the terminology, *study area* and *non-study area*.

In the survey itself, questions were asked about “Northern, Western, or Eastern Maine.” These areas had been defined early in the survey as the study area, as shown in the previous table.



Based on the study area and the non-study area, there were six groups of interest. The report has six survey data chapters, but the samples and the report chapters are not exactly the same because some of the groups of interest were derived from multiple samples. The samples and report chapters are shown below.

Samples:

- General population sample, divided into:
 - Those who live in the study area.
 - Those who live in the non-study area but engage in recreation in the study area.
- Licensed hunters. To be included, they had to hunt in the study area.
- Licensed anglers. To be included, they had to fish, hunt, or engage in other recreation in the study area.
- Guides. They had to provide guiding services in the study area.
- Landowners. To be included, they had to have a tract of land in the study area.
- Businesses. They had to serve customers in the study area.

Survey Report Chapters:

- General population who live or recreate in the study area.
- Hunters who hunt in the study area.
- Outdoor recreationists who engage in recreation in the study area. This sample includes:
 - Those from the general population sample who engage in recreation in the study area, which includes:
 - Those who live in the study area and engage in recreation there.
 - Those who live in the non-study area but engage in recreation in the study area.
 - Anglers from the licensed angler sample who fish or engage in any other recreation in the study area.
- Guides.
- Landowners.
- Businesses.

There is a seventh data chapter consisting of the results of questions in common to all groups. An eighth data chapter consists of the results of the online public forum that was held as part of this project; those results are qualitatively rather than quantitatively analyzed.

The specific details of the survey sampling are explained in the following section.

SURVEY SAMPLING

This section discusses each of the six survey samples separately, as there were different sources for most of them.

General Population Sample

The general population sample consisted of a probability-based wireless telephone sample, a landline telephone sample, an email sample, and an online panel that was used to supplement the overall sample. All of these were obtained from MSG, a firm that provides scientifically valid

samples for survey research. These four samples were then combined in the weighting to be representative of the overall population consisting of residents of the study area and those who live in the non-study area but engage in recreation in the study area.

Licensed Hunter Sample

The Department provided all of the license data for the years 2021 to 2023. The database specifically included general license holders, bear hunting permit holders, moose hunting permit holders, and those with a moose registration.

Licensed Angler Sample

The Department also provided a database of fishing license holders for 2021 through 2023.

Guide Sample

The Department provided its database of current licensed guides active in guiding hunting, fishing, and/or outdoor recreation.

Sample of Large Landowners

This sample consisted of a listing of large landowners initially developed through input from Department staff, Maine Woodland Owners, and the Maine Forest Products Council. This list was periodically updated and added to by Responsive Management staff based on contacts made during other studies in Maine. That listing was further supplemented this year with help from Michael McLellan of North Maine Woods, as well as through input from the Department.

Sample of Businesses

The Maine Office of Tourism provided a listing of businesses in the tourism and outdoor recreation industries to the Department, which the Department then passed along to the research team. Staff at Responsive Management then updated the list through internet searches, in part to obtain current telephone numbers and email addresses of those on the list provided. Responsive Management also identified businesses that had closed and removed them from the list.

DESIGN OF QUESTIONNAIRE

Responsive Management developed the survey questionnaire with input from the Department and the LD831 stakeholder group. It was based in part on previous moose-related surveys that had been conducted, both in Maine and elsewhere. There were two versions of the questionnaire: one for telephone surveying and the second for online surveying. There were slight differences between the telephone and online versions of the questionnaire to accommodate each survey mode, but otherwise the versions were identical. One survey questionnaire was used for all the groups, with different pathways for the different samples taking the survey.

The survey was coded for integration in Responsive Management's computer-assisted telephone interviewing system as well as for the online survey platform. An important aspect of the telephone surveying effort was that the computer controlled which questions were asked, but the surveys were conducted by live interviewers. Additionally, for both the telephone and

online 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 questionnaire included screeners to ensure that each respondent met the parameters to be included in the study.

ADMINISTRATION OF SURVEYS

The surveys were conducted in August and September 2024. Each survey had its own procedures, as detailed below.

General Population Survey

The surveys of the general population were conducted by telephone and online.

For those contacted by telephone, the interviews were conducted Monday through Friday from noon to 9:00 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, as well as surveys pertaining to Maine. 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 resident 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 Maine resident.

Those with a cellular number who could not be reached after five attempts were sent a text message from a Maine phone number inviting them to participate in the survey online. Those who did not respond to the text were called at least one more time, and then a reminder text was sent to nonrespondents approximately a week after the initial text invitation. The text message (shown below) provided a link to the online survey.

Text Message Sent to Cellular Phone Respondents in the General Population Survey

Hi [name]. This is Amanda with Responsive Management. The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife would like your input on wildlife management in the state. Please consider using this link to participate in the survey: [link].

All residents in the email sample were sent an initial email invitation jointly from the Department and Responsive Management, shown on the following page. After the initial email was sent, at least two reminder emails were sent to nonrespondents approximately 4 days apart after the original email invitation. As shown in the example that follows, a support email address at Responsive Management was provided for email recipients who needed assistance with the survey.

Initial Email Invitation to the General Population to Take the Survey

Dear Maine Resident,

The [Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife](#) is conducting a study of Maine residents about their opinions on wildlife-related issues in Maine.

Please consider responding today:

[Click Here to Start the Survey](#)

We value your input and your feedback is needed to evaluate wildlife management efforts in Maine. Please be assured your answers will be kept completely confidential and will never be associated with your name or contact information.

[Click Here to Start the Survey](#)

Please consider taking the survey now—it will only be open for a couple weeks.

You may also copy and paste the following link to access the survey:

[invite([survey_link](#))]

Responsive Management, an independent research firm that specializes in natural resource and fish and wildlife issues, has been contracted by MDIFW to conduct this study. If you need technical assistance with the survey, please contact Responsive Management via email at research@responsivemanagement.com.

Thank you for your time and willingness to participate.

Sincerely,
Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife
and
Responsive Management

Licensed Hunter Survey

For the survey of licensed hunters, Responsive Management first pulled a sample representative of the entire database in that the sample matched the percentage of contacts in the database with only a telephone number, with only an email address, and with both a telephone number and email address. After the sample was pulled, the method of contact depended on the contact information available.

The survey started by contacting those with an email address, sending the initial email invitation and two reminders (as was done for the email portion of the general population survey). A copy of the email invitation to hunters is shown on the following page. Again, the email included a support email address at Responsive Management for email recipients who needed assistance with the survey.

Initial Email Invitation to Hunters to Take the Survey

Hello [contact("first name")] [contact("last name")],

The [Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife](#) is conducting a study of licensed hunters about their hunting experiences and opinions on hunting and wildlife-related issues in Maine.

[Click Here to Start the Survey](#)

We value your input as a hunter, and your feedback is needed to evaluate wildlife management efforts in Maine. Please be assured your answers will be kept completely confidential and will never be associated with your name, license, or contact information.

[Click Here to Start the Survey](#)

Please consider taking the survey now—it will only be open for a couple weeks.

You may also copy and paste the following link to access the survey:

[invite([survey link](#))]

Responsive Management, an independent research firm that specializes in natural resource and fish and wildlife issues, has been contracted by MDIFW to conduct this study. If you need technical assistance with the survey, please contact Responsive Management via email at research@responsivemanagement.com.

Thank you for your time and willingness to participate.

Sincerely,
Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife
and
Responsive Management

Meanwhile, those in the sample with only a telephone number, as well as nonrespondents to the email invitation who also had a telephone number available, were called by Responsive Management interviewers. The interviews were conducted Monday through Friday from noon to 9:00 p.m. and Saturday from noon to 7:00 p.m., local time. A five-callback design was used in this survey, as well. When a hunter 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 Maine hunter.

The same cellular procedures that were used in the general population survey were used for contacting hunters. This included sending nonrespondents with a cellular number a text message from a Maine phone number, then another call if warranted, followed by a final text. The text message provided a link to the online survey and was worded exactly like the text message in the general population survey effort, with one exception. The exception was for nonrespondents to the email invitation who were moved into the telephone calling effort. For them, the text message below was used.

Text Message Sent to Cellular Phone Respondents in the Hunter Survey

Hi [name]. This is Amanda with Responsive Management. The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife would like your input on wildlife management in the state. You may have received an email asking you to participate in this important study. If you have not completed the survey via email, please consider using this link to participate in the survey: [link].

Licensed Angler Survey

The survey of licensed anglers was conducted in the same way as the survey of licensed hunters: the sample was pulled proportionally regarding telephone and email contacts, those with emails were contacted first, then those with telephone numbers were contacted (with the same moving of email nonrespondents into the telephone surveying effort). The wording of the email invitation differed (it is shown below). The text message was the same.

Initial Email Invitation to Anglers to Take the Survey

Dear [contact("first name")] [contact("last name")],

The Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife is conducting a study of Maine residents and recreationists, including licensed hunters and anglers, about their opinions on wildlife-related issues in Maine. Please consider responding to our survey to provide your feedback.

[Click Here to Start the Survey](#)

We value your input as a Maine resident and licensed angler, and your feedback is needed to evaluate wildlife management efforts in Maine. Please be assured your answers will be kept completely confidential and will never be associated with your name, license, or contact information.

[Click Here to Start the Survey](#)

Please consider taking the survey now—it will only be open for a couple weeks.

You may also copy and paste the following link to access the survey:

[invite([survey link](#))]

Responsive Management, an independent research firm that specializes in natural resource and fish and wildlife issues, has been contracted by MDIFW to conduct this study. If you need technical assistance with the survey, please contact Responsive Management via email at research@responsivemanagement.com.

Thank you for your time and willingness to participate.

Sincerely,
Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife
and
Responsive Management

Guide Survey

For guides, Responsive Management made numerous attempts to reach and complete the survey with all contacts on the list of guides that was provided for the survey. Attempts included multiple contacts via email as well as by telephone and text. Each guide received up to 3 emails with valid email addresses. Those with a telephone number (even if previously attempted via email) were contacted using a 7-callback procedure. In addition, unlike other telephone surveys, Responsive Management left messages on all voicemails that were reached. The voicemails included a call-back number and a link they could use to complete the survey.

In addition, the survey effort included an attempt to contact any guides with cellular numbers using text messages that included links to the survey.

The email invitation to guides that was used is shown below. The text was the same as the one for hunters previously shown.

Initial Email Invitation to Guides to Take the Survey

Hello [contact("first name")] [contact("last name")],

The [Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife](#) is conducting a study on outdoor recreation and wildlife-related issues in Maine. For this study, we are asking for feedback from several groups, including those who provide guide services for wildlife, fishing, hunting, and outdoor recreation in Maine, about their experiences and opinions on outdoor recreation and wildlife-related issues in Maine.

[Click Here to Start the Survey](#)

We would greatly value and appreciate your input as a Maine guide. Your feedback is needed to evaluate wildlife management efforts in Maine. Please be assured your answers will be kept completely confidential and will never be associated with your name, service, business, or contact information.

Please consider taking the survey now—it will only be open for a couple weeks.

You may also copy and paste the following link to access the survey:

[invite([survey_link](#))]

Responsive Management, an independent research firm that specializes in natural resource and fish and wildlife issues, has been contracted by MDIFW to conduct this study. If you need technical assistance with the survey, please contact Responsive Management via email at research@responsivemanagement.com.

Thank you for your time and willingness to participate.

Sincerely,
Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife
and
Responsive Management

Survey of Large Landowners

Contact was attempted to all 14 large landowners (100,000 acres or more) by Responsive Management. Methods included contact by email and telephone. First, they were contacted by email with a request to participate in the survey. Those who did not respond to the email were then called, which included leaving messages on voicemails. These voicemail messages included a telephone number landowners could use to contact Responsive Management if they had any issues or wished to take the survey by telephone. Subsequent follow-up calls were made to those who had not taken the survey to try to encourage their participation. The initial email invitation is shown on the following page.

Initial Email Invitation to Landowners to Take the Survey

Hello [first name],

The [Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife](#) (MDIFW) is conducting a NEW STUDY on moose management in Maine. We want to hear Maine landowners' opinions on important moose management issues in Maine. Your input is vital and will help MDIFW with future management decisions.

As a landowner or land manager of a large number of acres in Maine, we are asking you to please share your experiences and opinions with us regarding the land you own or manage for [your organization].

For this study, MDIFW has contracted with Responsive Management, a survey research firm specializing in natural resource and outdoor recreation issues, to conduct a survey of Maine residents, hunters, outdoor recreation guides, tourism- and outdoor recreation-related businesses, and landowners. Your participation in the survey is entirely voluntary, and your response will never be shared with an outside party or linked to your name. The survey should take around 10 minutes.

We value your time and therefore we would like to offer several options for completing the survey. You can click on the link below and take the survey whenever is most convenient for you, or if you prefer, you can set up a time to take the survey with one of our professional telephone interviewers. Please contact us at 888-810-4460 or respond to this email to schedule the survey.

If you prefer to pass this email on to someone who manages the land you own or to someone you feel may be able to answer the questions on your behalf, please feel free to do so.

[Click Here to Start the Survey](#)

Thank you in advance for your time and participation. We look forward to your feedback.

Sincerely,

Amanda Center
Responsive Management

And

Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

Survey of Businesses

The procedures for the survey of businesses matched those for guides. However, an additional effort on this survey was made. That final part of the surveying effort entailed using the websites of the listed businesses as well as internet searches to attempt to find alternative telephone numbers and other contact information for the businesses, then making contact according to the information obtained. In this effort, many contacts were obtained, but many of the businesses on the original list were found to be closed or no longer in operation.

The initial email invitation and the text message sent to businesses are shown below.

Initial Email Invitation to Businesses to Take the Survey

Hello,

The [Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife](#) is conducting a study on outdoor recreation and wildlife-related issues in Maine, particularly issues related to MOOSE. For this study, we are asking for feedback from several groups, including tourism and recreation-related businesses, about their experiences and opinions on recreation, wildlife, and moose-related issues in Maine.

PLEASE RESPOND ASAP!

[Click Here to Start the Survey](#)

We would greatly value and appreciate your input as a business that may provide services or opportunities in nature, the outdoors, or recreation. Your feedback is needed to evaluate recreation and wildlife management efforts in Maine. Please be assured your answers will be kept completely confidential and will never be associated with your name, service, business, or contact information.

Responsive Management, an independent research firm that specializes in natural resource and fish and wildlife issues, has been contracted by MDIFW to conduct this study. If you need technical assistance with the survey, please contact Responsive Management via email at research@responsivemanagement.com.

Thank you for your time and willingness to participate.

Sincerely,
Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife
and
Responsive Management

Text Message Sent to Cellular Phone Respondents in the Business Survey

Hi [name]. This is Amanda with Responsive Management. As a provider of tourism and outdoor-recreation services, the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife would like your input on wildlife management in the state. You may have received an email asking you to participate in this important study. If you have not completed the survey via email, please consider using this link to participate in the survey: [link].

Landing Page

The links on all of the text messages sent respondents to a landing page, which was unique for each type of sample contacted. This landing page is shown below.

Landing Page From Links Sent in Text Messages to Take the Survey

This study is being conducted for the [Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife](#) to better understand Maine [residents'/guides'/businesses'/landowner and land managers'/hunters'/outdoor recreationists'] opinions on some wildlife-related issues. Your feedback is needed to evaluate wildlife management efforts in Maine. Your answers are very important to the Department and will help make improvements for the [residents'/guides'/landowners and land managers'/hunters'/outdoor recreationists] of Maine.

Please be assured your answers will be kept completely confidential and will never be associated with your name, license, or contact information.

This survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete, depending on your level of participation in different areas of the state.

Thank you for your time and participation.

[Responsive Management](#), an independent research firm specializing in outdoor recreation and natural resource issues, has been contracted to conduct this study. If you need technical assistance with the survey, please contact Responsive Management via email at research@responsivemanagement.com.

Please click "Next" or ► below to begin the survey.

QUALITY CONTROL

For both the telephone and online versions of the questionnaire, error checkers and computation statements ensured that quality and consistent data were obtained. Additionally, for quality control, Survey Center managers monitored the telephone interviews in real time and provided feedback to the interviewers.

To ensure the integrity of the telephone survey data, Responsive Management has interviewers who have been trained according to the highest industry standards established by the American Association for Public Opinion Research. Methods of instruction included lectures 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.

Additionally, analysts reviewed all individual survey responses to identify potential invalid submittals, such as online surveys that were completed in an unrealistically brief timeframe, which suggests that respondents were clicking through responses without reading and evaluating the questions. Analysts also checked for the related issue of "straight-lining" of responses, which is when respondents select (for example) the first or same response options throughout the survey. Also, open-ended responses to the final question asking for additional comments were used to identify and remove invalid respondents. All completed surveys of questionable quality were removed prior to data analysis.

ANALYSES OF SURVEY DATA

The analysis of data was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics as well as proprietary software developed by Responsive Management.

Weighting was applied to the general population sample based on gender and age to match known demographic characteristics from U.S. Census data. Weighting was also applied to the general population sample based on hunting and fishing participation. This ensured that the final general population sample was representative of the full population, which consisted of residents of the study area and those living in the non-study area who engaged in recreation in the study area.

The recreationists were taken from the general population sample and so, therefore, were also weighted based on gender, age, and participation in hunting and fishing.

Weighting was applied to the licensed hunters in the final data based on participation in moose hunting and for resident/nonresident licenses. Moose hunters had to be weighted down in the final data because they had been purposely oversampled to ensure a robust sample size for the opinions of moose hunters. Because so many questions pertained specifically to moose hunting, a large enough sample was needed to ensure accurate results. They were then put into their proper proportion for any overall hunter results.

No weighting was applied to the licensed anglers, guides, landowners, or businesses.

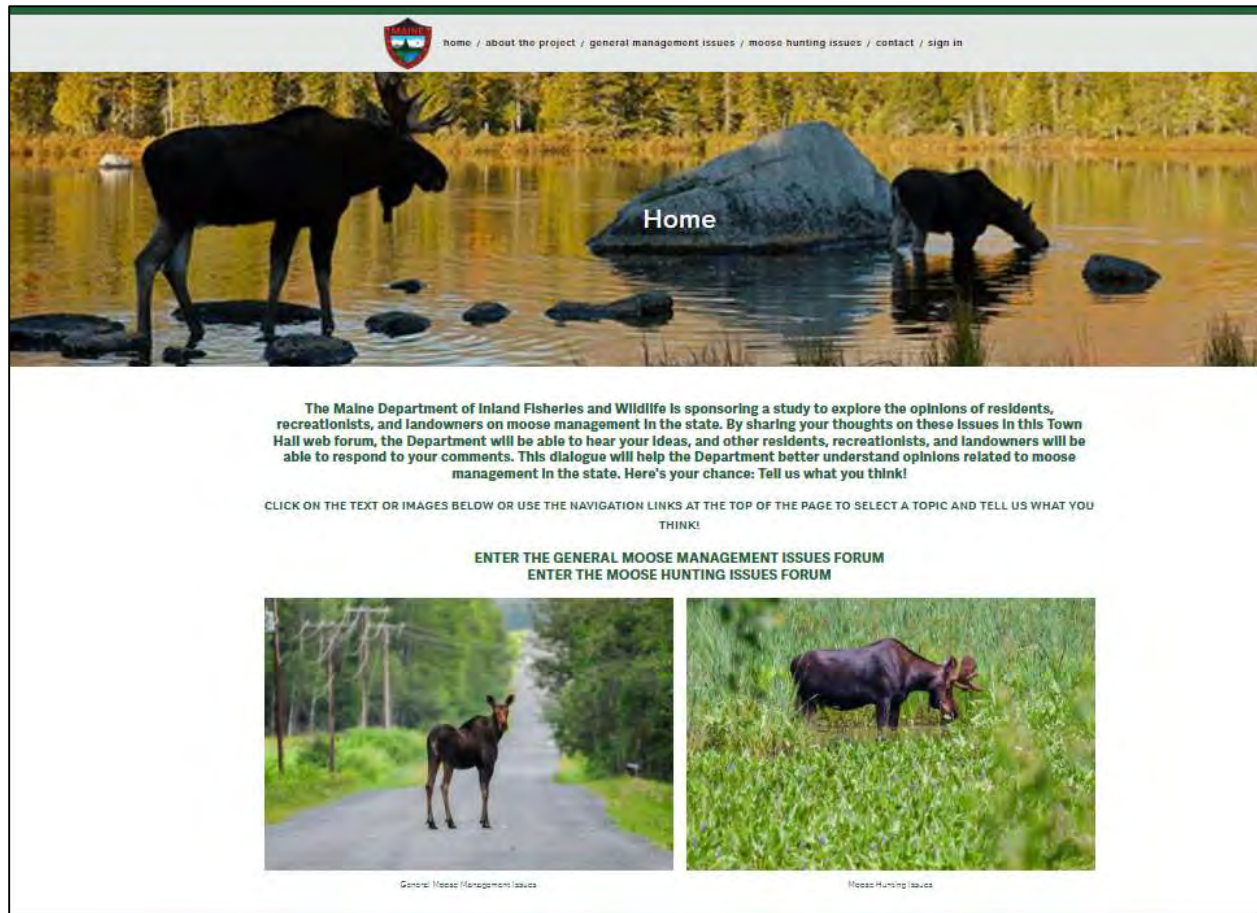
The analysis of open-ended questions (those questions for which no answer set was provided) entailed having the analysts examine each verbatim response. Specifically, the analysts read through all of the verbatim open-ended responses and assigned them into response categories, at which point the responses could be quantified and presented in “Multiple Responses Allowed” graphs. Overall, analysts categorized several hundred open-ended responses.

ONLINE TOWN HALL FORUM AND THE ANALYSES OF THE COMMENTS RECEIVED

To gather qualitative data and to provide the opportunity for all Maine residents to contribute their opinions and provide input on moose management, the researchers developed an online public forum featuring open-ended discussion threads. The primary purpose of the online forum was to allow the public to provide input. Responsive Management worked collaboratively with the Department to formulate the questions and content in the forum. The forum was advertised on MDIFW social media to encourage participation. The online forum was available to the public July to August 2024.

The forum was maintained on a dedicated website (www.mainemoose.org). The forum homepage (shown on the following page) explained that the research was being conducted by Responsive Management and explained other elements of the project. The online forum was live prior to the administration of the survey, and the *About the Project* page included information about the survey.

Forum Homepage

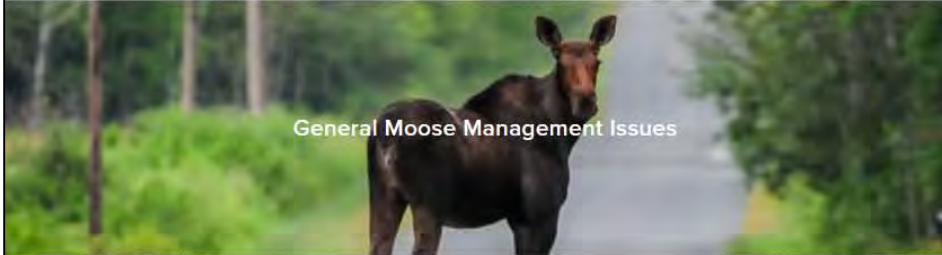


Questions were rolled out such that the forum started with broader questions about moose hunting and management in general and then, as conversation slowed down, the forum posed more specific questions. Reminders about the forum were posted through the Department's social media when new content was added.

The overall forum website included sub-forum pages on specific aspects of the issues. The sub-forum themes were general moose management issues and moose hunting issues. Hereinafter, the term "forum" will be used to refer to any one of these two sub-forums. Each forum posed questions as a way to facilitate discussion and comments on the page. Both of these forum pages are shown on the following page.

Sub-Forum Topic Pages


[home](#) / [about the project](#) / [general management issues](#) / [moose hunting issues](#) / [contact](#) / [sign in](#)



General Moose Management Issues

Please consider the following questions.

- What are your thoughts about the status of Maine's moose population?
- What do you think are the primary issues facing moose in Maine?
- Do you feel you know enough about the status of Maine's moose population?

HOW TO COMMENT AND FORUM RULES

Please click on the "Comment" link below to post a comment.

Commenters have the option of posting anonymously by typing "anonymous" or another preferred name in the name field and then clicking "Comment as Guest." Note that you are not required to enter an email address or URL in order to post a comment in the forum.

Forum comments are moderated by Responsive Management. Please review the below forum rules before commenting.

Please remember to keep the discussions civil and stay on topic, or your comment may be deleted.

While we understand that disagreements may arise in the course of discussion, please remember to be respectful and courteous when disagreeing with others. Debate on differing opinions is encouraged, but any personal attacks, threatening statements, or inflammatory comments will be removed from the forum. We want to maintain a civil discussion about moose management issues in the state.

Please respect the privacy of others. Do not give out or re-post ANYONE'S personal information such as names, phone numbers, addresses, email addresses, or any other identifying information.


[home](#) / [about the project](#) / [general management issues](#) / [moose hunting issues](#) / [contact](#) / [sign in](#)



Moose Hunting Issues

Please consider the following questions.

CONFLICTS AMONG HUNTERS, RECREATIONISTS, LANDOWNERS/MANAGERS, FOREST OPERATORS

- If you hunt moose, what have you experienced as the primary sources of conflict among moose hunters, other hunters, other outdoor recreationists, landowners/managers, or forest operators?
- If you are a landowner/manager, forest operator, hunter not hunting moose, guide, or outdoor recreationist, what have you experienced as primary sources of conflict during the moose hunting season and among what user groups?
- How do you think conflict could be minimized or reduced?
 - Among moose hunters? Between moose hunters and other outdoor recreationists? Between moose hunters and other hunters? Between moose hunters and landowners or forest workers?

HOW TO COMMENT AND FORUM RULES

Please click on the "Comment" link below to post a comment.

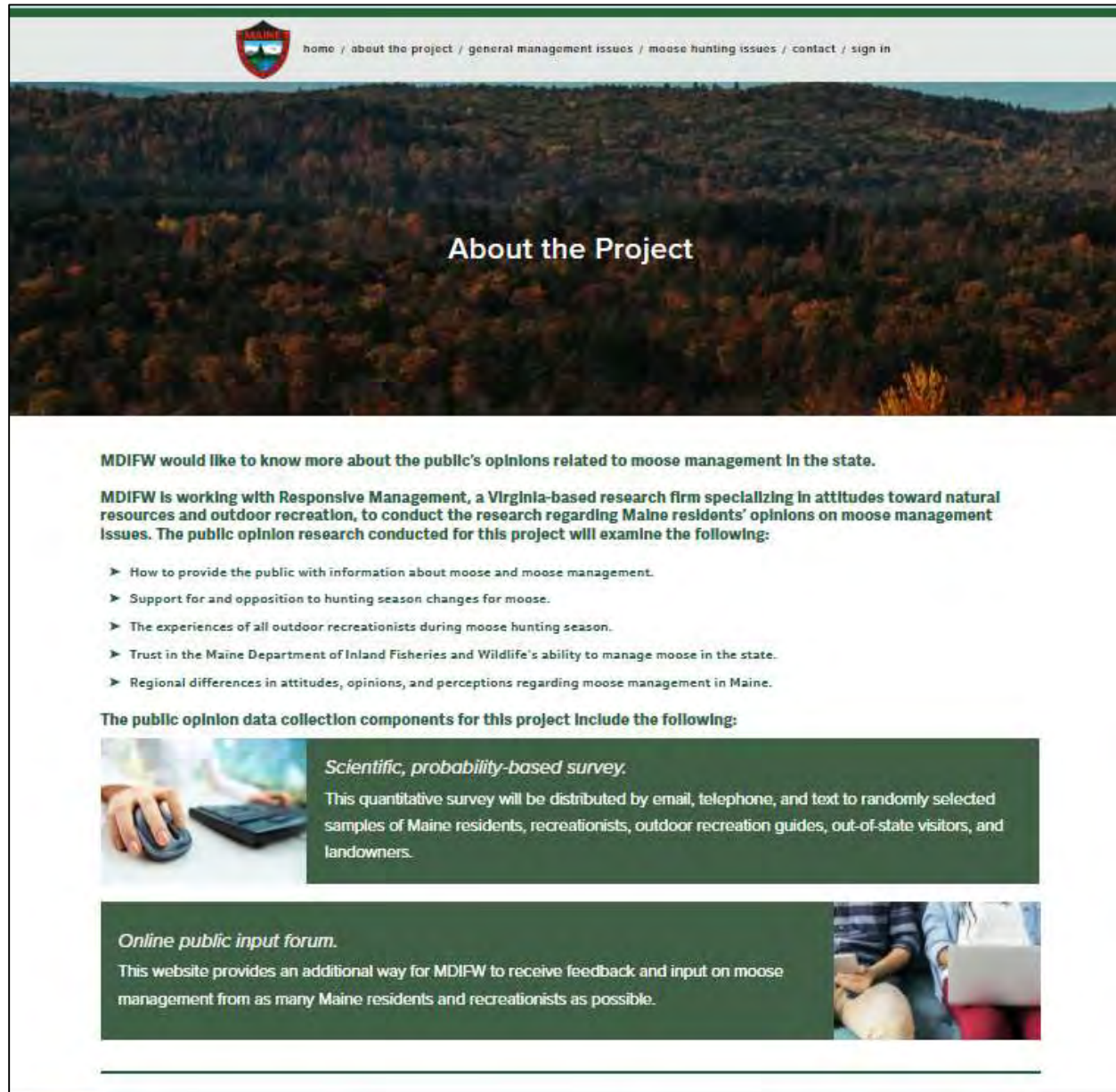
Commenters have the option of posting anonymously by typing "anonymous" or another preferred name in the name field and then clicking "Comment as Guest." Note that you are not required to enter an email address or URL in order to post a comment in the forum.

Forum comments are moderated by Responsive Management. Please review the below forum rules before commenting.

Please remember to keep the discussions civil and stay on topic, or your comment may be deleted.

An *About the Project* page was included that explained that the Department was interested in finding out more about the public's opinions related to moose management in the state, thus putting the project in context. This page listed the information being sought from the study. It is shown below.

About the Project Page



home / about the project / general management issues / moose hunting issues / contact / sign in

About the Project

MDIFW would like to know more about the public's opinions related to moose management in the state.

MDIFW is working with Responsive Management, a Virginia-based research firm specializing in attitudes toward natural resources and outdoor recreation, to conduct the research regarding Maine residents' opinions on moose management issues. The public opinion research conducted for this project will examine the following:

- How to provide the public with information about moose and moose management.
- Support for and opposition to hunting season changes for moose.
- The experiences of all outdoor recreationists during moose hunting season.
- Trust in the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife's ability to manage moose in the state.
- Regional differences in attitudes, opinions, and perceptions regarding moose management in Maine.

The public opinion data collection components for this project include the following:



Scientific, probability-based survey.

This quantitative survey will be distributed by email, telephone, and text to randomly selected samples of Maine residents, recreationists, outdoor recreation guides, out-of-state visitors, and landowners.

Online public input forum.

This website provides an additional way for MDIFW to receive feedback and input on moose management from as many Maine residents and recreationists as possible.

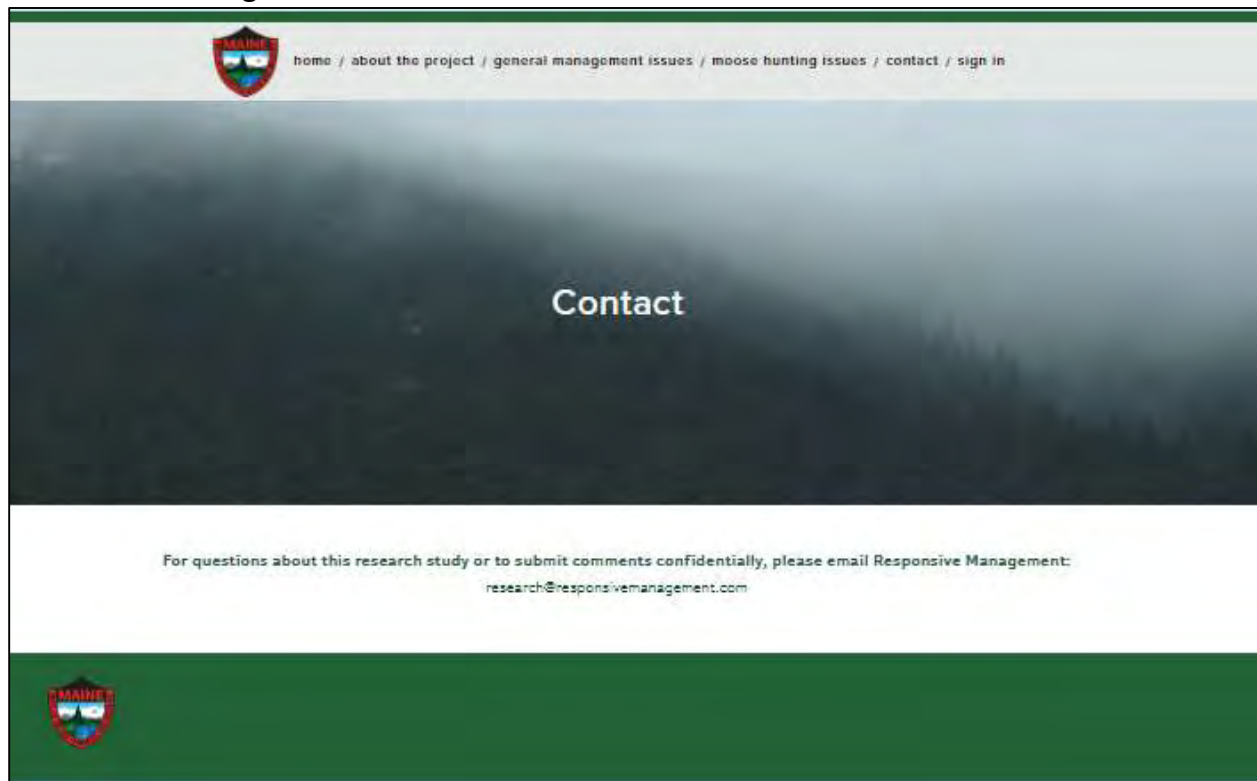


Contributors to the forum could comment anonymously or include personal information. As indicated previously, within each forum, specific questions about current and possible future moose management strategies were posed to get the discussion started; however, although questions and potential topics were offered by the researchers, contributors were encouraged to discuss other topics, as long as they pertained to moose management in the state. Forum visitors had the opportunity to engage with one another in a typical online discussion format, as well. Responsive Management maintained a moderating presence in each forum (e.g., removing comments that violated forum rules, such as those that included personal

information or mentioned specific individuals by name) but otherwise did not engage with forum participants in any way. Two comments were removed by the forum moderator; however, every comment deleted from the public forum was saved by Responsive Management and later included in the *analysis* of forum content although not shown in the appendix.

Finally, a contact page (shown below) within the forum provided an email address at which to contact Responsive Management for any questions that contributors might have or to send completely confidential comments. A few such comments were received, analyzed, and included in the appendix.

Forum Contact Page



Responsive Management coordinated with the Department to launch the online forum. The Department distributed releases and several reminders to a variety of social media outlets in an effort to ensure widespread awareness of the forum opportunity among Maine residents, hunters, outdoor recreationists, guides, landowners, and businesses. The releases included information on the forum purpose, website address, launch date, and active dates.

The forum was active in July and August 2024. Once all the comments had been submitted and the forum was deactivated, a qualitative analysis was conducted. Researchers at Responsive Management tabulated the results, reviewed the comments, and made qualitative observations. Because this report is, in part, a data compendium, the full verbatim comments are included in the appendix so that readers can make their own observations as well.

THE MAINE MOOSE PERMITTING PROCESS

To fully understand the results presented in this report, it is useful to know about the moose permitting process. To hunt for moose in Maine, hunters need a permit. These permits are allocated in four ways:

1. Through three chance lottery drawings: resident, non-resident, and the adaptive management zone.
2. Through a competitive auction.
3. Through a controlled moose hunt for disabled veterans.
4. Through a hunting lodge moose lottery.

In apportioning the permits, at least 90% of all permits in Maine's 20 eligible WMDs are allocated to residents, no more than 8% to nonresidents, and no more than 2% to hunting lodges.

PRESENTATION OF SURVEY DATA

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

- Single response questions: Some questions allowed only a single response.
- Multiple response questions: Other questions allowed respondents to give more than one response or choose all that apply. Those that allowed more than a single response are indicated on the graphs with the label, "Multiple Responses Allowed."
- Closed-ended questions had an answer set from which to choose.
- Open-ended questions are those in which no answer set was presented to the respondents; rather, they responded with anything that came to mind from the question.
- Scaled questions: Some closed-ended questions (but not all) were in a scale, such as those asking if the moose population was too high, about right, or too low.
- 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.

Graphs typically show results rounded to the nearest integer; however, all data are stored in decimal format, and all calculations were performed on unrounded numbers. For this reason, some graphs may not sum to 100% because of this rounding on the graphs. Additionally, on some graphs, the "don't know" responses are not shown for legibility, particularly at percentages of 1% or less, although they remain in the data. The sum of all the percentages shown may not total to 100% on some of these graphs because of this.

Within the report chapters, the following overall graphs and crosstabulation graphs are included:

General population.

- Overall results.
- Crosstabulations for most questions by region in which respondents live; for a few questions, crosstabulations by region in which respondents had participated in recreation.

Hunters.

- Overall results.
- The following crosstabulations:
 - Moose hunter/non-moose hunter.
 - Hunts deer.
 - Hunts bear.
 - Hunts upland birds.
- On a few questions, the analysis looked at successful moose hunter (i.e., harvested)/not successful moose hunter.

Study area outdoor recreationists.

This chapter includes data from two of the samples: general population sample and licensed angler sample. The two samples were not put together into a “total” because there was no feasible way to combine and weight the two samples. Therefore, the chapter shows the two samples separately with the following subsamples:

- Outdoor recreationists from the general population sample overall and then divided into:
 - Those who live in the study area and engage in recreation in the study area.
 - Those who live outside of the study area but engage in recreation in the study area.
- Outdoor recreationists from the licensed angler sample who engage in recreation in the study area. Results from this group are shown as follows:
 - Licensed anglers who also hunt.
 - Licensed anglers who do not hunt.
 - Total among the licensed angler sample.

Guides.

- Overall results.
- The following crosstabulation:
 - Those who guide moose hunting.
 - Those who guide hunting, but not moose hunting.
 - Those who guide other activities and do not guide hunting.

Landowners.

- Overall results, tabulated rather than in graphs.

Businesses.

- Overall results, tabulated rather than in graphs.

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSES GRAPHS

In addition to graphs depicting the results of the individual survey questions, the report includes special graphs that show how various demographic groups (e.g., males) respond to certain questions, hereinafter referred to as demographic analyses graphs. In addition to demographic variables, these graphs also include groups defined by participation in activities (e.g., participated in fishing) and opinions (e.g., thinks the moose population in the state is too low). Not all the questions were analyzed in this way; questions chosen for these analyses are those deemed to be of the most interest or utility. They are in the general population and hunter chapters. The example on the following page explains how to interpret these demographic analyses graphs.

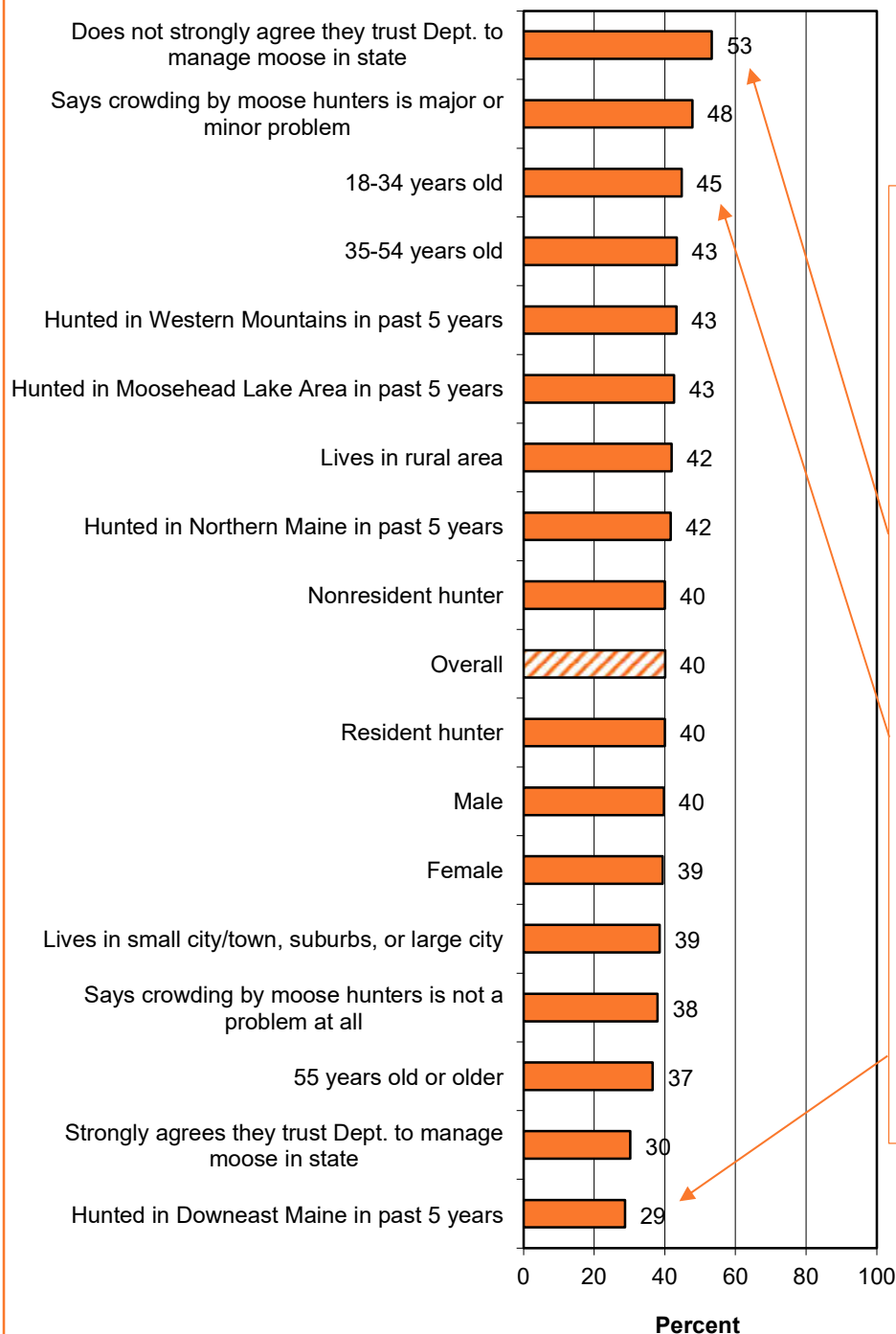
This example shows the percentage of various Maine hunter groups who think the moose population in the state is too low. Among Maine hunters overall, 40% think that the moose population is too low, as shown by the patterned bar. Those hunter groups shown above the overall bar have a higher percentage who think this, compared to Maine hunters overall. Meanwhile, those groups below the overall bar have a lower rate of thinking that the moose population is too low, compared to Maine hunters overall.

When one group is above the overall bar (for instance, in this example, hunters who are 18 to 34 years old), its counterpart or one of its counterparts (in this instance, hunters who are 55 years old or older) will be below the overall bar. For some variables, the counterpart is not shown in the graph. For instance, for these demographic analyses, the location of hunting was used as a variable. Therefore, the variable, "Hunted in Downeast Maine in past 5 years" is included in the variables. Its counterpart would be "Did not hunt in Downeast Maine in past 5 years"; however, this counterpart is not shown because it was deemed to be of less importance and would needlessly clutter the graph. This is why both male and female are below the overall bar. Their counterpart consists of those who selected don't know, prefer not to say, or refused on the gender question (2.4%), which is too small of a group to include in the demographic analyses graphs. If this group were included on this graph, they would be above the overall bar (53% of them say that the moose population is too low).

The distance from the overall bar matters, as well. If a group is close to the overall bar (for instance, nonresident 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.

Note that the characteristics are not meant to describe a single person or a person that has all the traits. Rather, the analysis looks at each group defined by the individual characteristic on its own and then looks at the next group, and the groups are sometimes mutually exclusive.

Percent of the following groups who say the moose population in Maine is too low. (Hunters)



This demographic analyses graph shows the percentages of various hunter groups who say that the moose population in Maine is too low, as shown by the patterned bar.

Those groups above the overall bar have a greater percentage who think that the moose population is too low. For instance, 53% of hunters who do not strongly agree that they trust the Department to manage moose in the state think that the moose population is too low, much higher than hunters overall. Additionally, 45% of hunters who are 18 to 34 years old think that the moose population is too low in the state, also markedly higher than hunters overall.

Conversely, those groups below the overall bar are less likely to think that the moose population is too low. This includes hunters who hunted in Downeast Maine (29% of them say the moose population in Maine is too low).

RESULTS AMONG THE GENERAL POPULATION

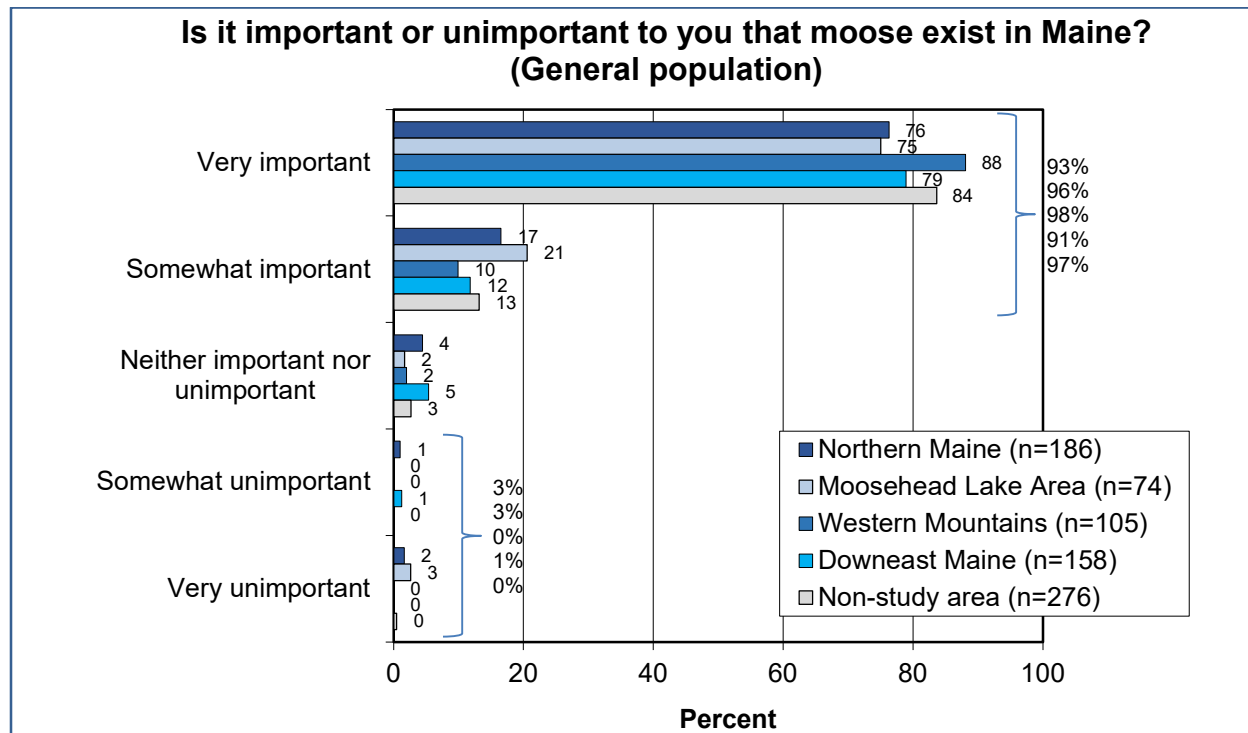
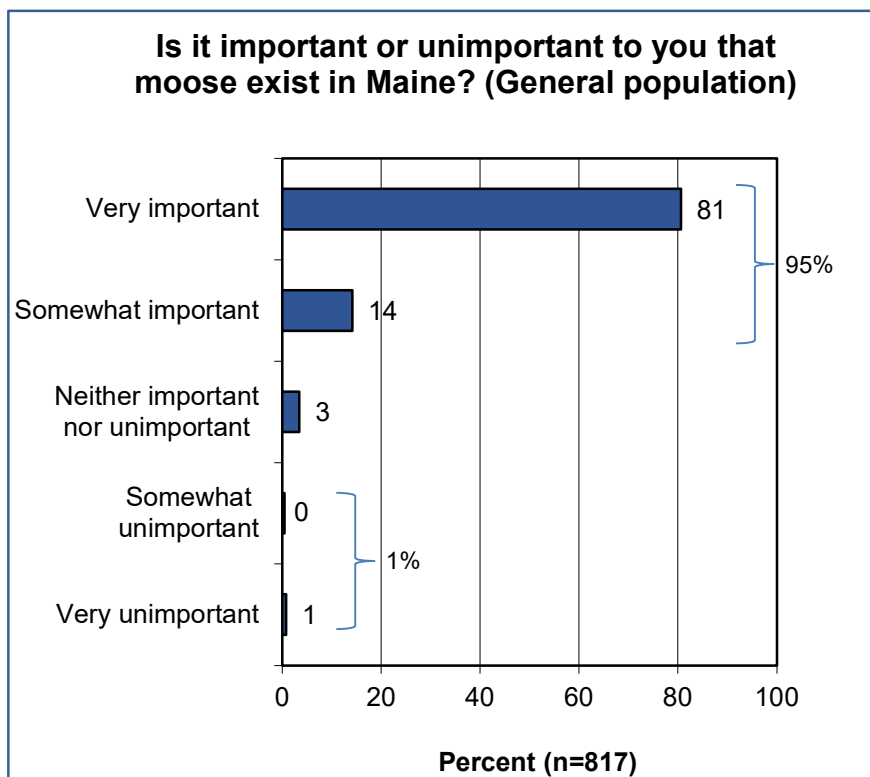
As explained in the methods, the general population for this survey consisted of residents of the study area (whether or not they also participated in outdoor recreation in that area) and residents of the non-study area who participated in outdoor recreation in the study area. Although referred to in the graphs and text as the general population or Maine residents, keep in mind it is not the population of the entire state. For the data runs on some questions, the results show only those who live in the study area—always clearly labeled on the graphs.

This chapter shows overall results followed by a crosstabulation by region of residence, as previously defined in the Methods chapter. In a few instances, which are noted in the text, the region crosstabulation is by the location where the respondents most often engaged in recreation.

The graphs in this chapter on the general population are in shades of blue. The exceptions are graphs of series questions, which use a stoplight theme of red, yellow, and green to indicate more negative responses, middle responses, and more positive responses. For instance, graphs of questions that used a support-oppose scale show support as green, neutral as yellow, and oppose as red.

ATTITUDES TOWARD MOOSE AND MOOSE MANAGEMENT

Almost unanimously, the general population of Maine feel that having moose exist in Maine is important: 95% say this is important, including 81% saying it is *very* important. In the regions, the percentage saying this is important ranges from 98% in the Western Mountains to 91% in Downeast Maine.



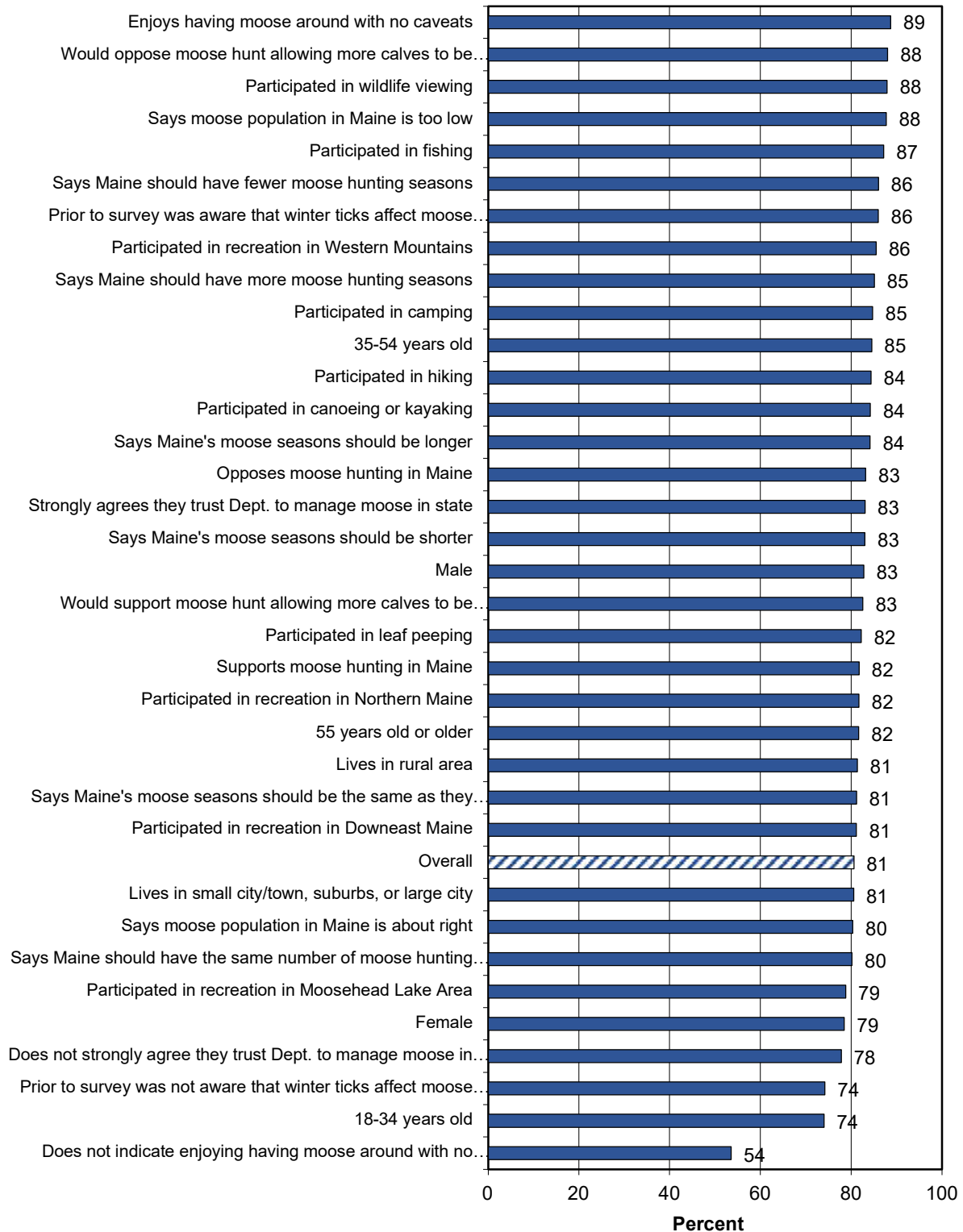
Demographic analyses were conducted on the importance of moose existing in the state. Those saying it is *very* important that this is so are associated with several opinions on other questions: enjoying having/seeing moose around with no caveats, opposing a moose hunt allowing calves to be harvested, thinking the moose population is too low, and thinking Maine should have fewer moose hunting seasons. This opinion on moose existing is also associated with participation in wildlife viewing and fishing, being aware of the winter tick problem, and participation in recreation in the Western Mountains.

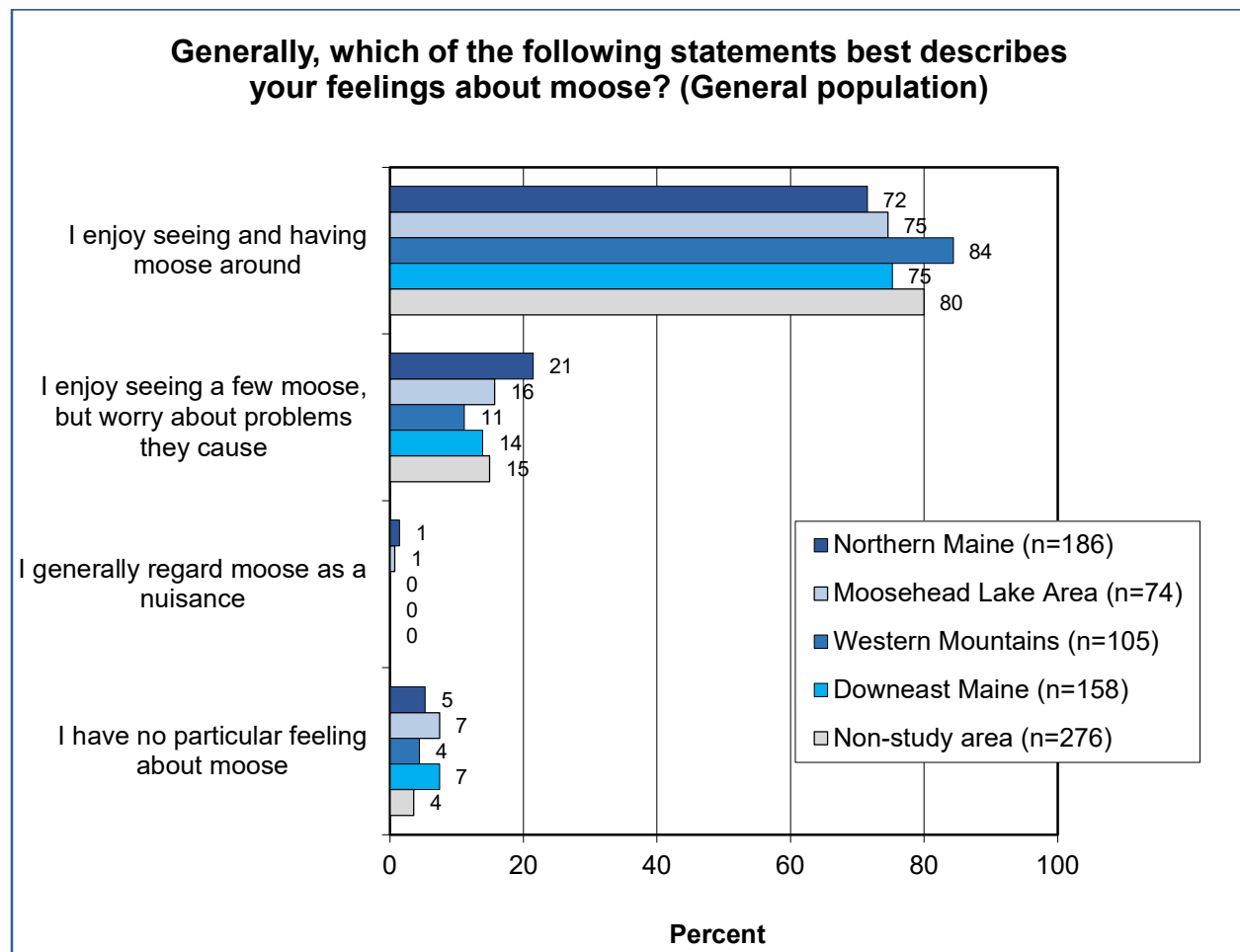
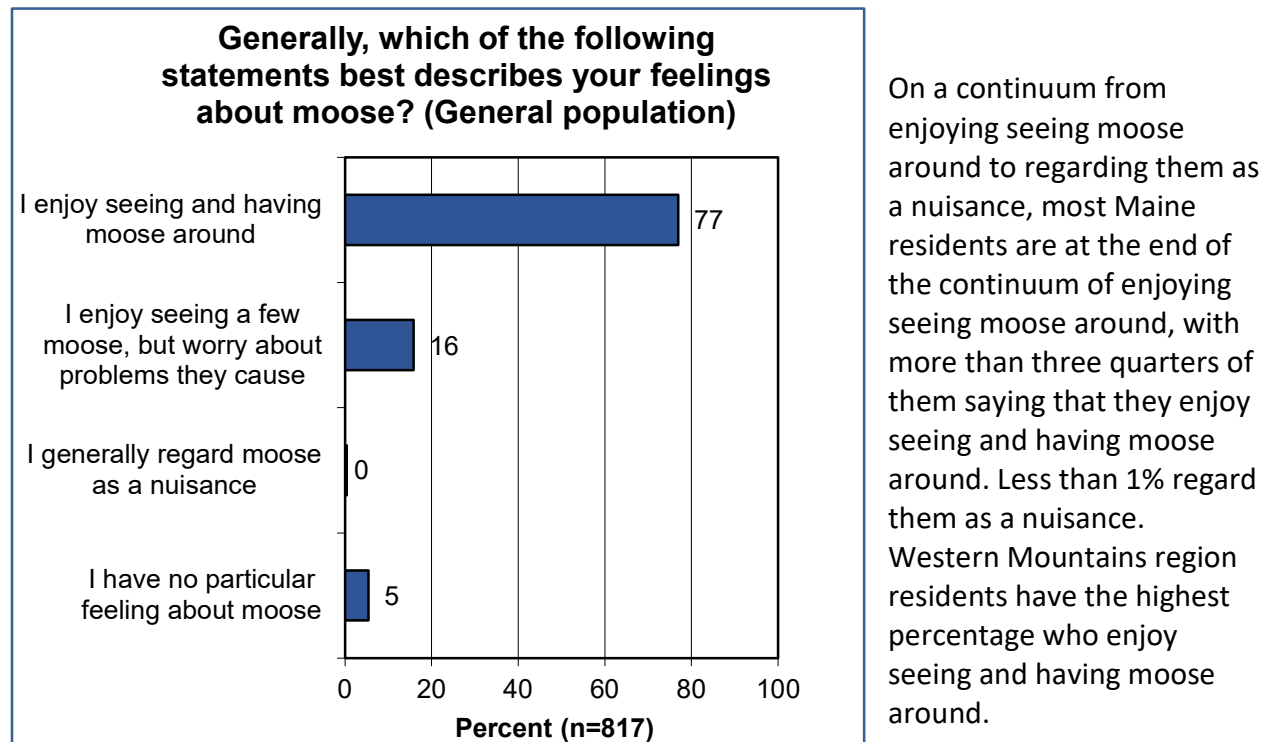
The bottom of the graph shows the opinions and characteristics associated with *not* saying that it is very important that moose exist. This includes those who did not indicate that they enjoy having/seeing moose around with no caveats, young people, and those who were unaware prior to the survey that winter ticks are affecting moose populations.

The graph is shown on the next page, as it requires a full page for display. Also note that some labels were necessarily truncated for them to fit on the graph. Those that were truncated are shown in full below:

- Does not indicate enjoying having moose around with no caveats
- Says Maine's moose seasons should be the same as they currently are in length
- Says Maine should have the same number of moose hunting seasons
- Would support moose hunt allowing more calves to be harvested
- Would oppose moose hunt allowing more calves to be harvested
- Prior to survey was aware that winter ticks affect moose population
- Prior to survey was not aware that winter ticks affect moose population
- Does not strongly agree they trust Dept. to manage moose in state

**Percent of the following groups who say that it is very important that moose exist in Maine.
(General population)**





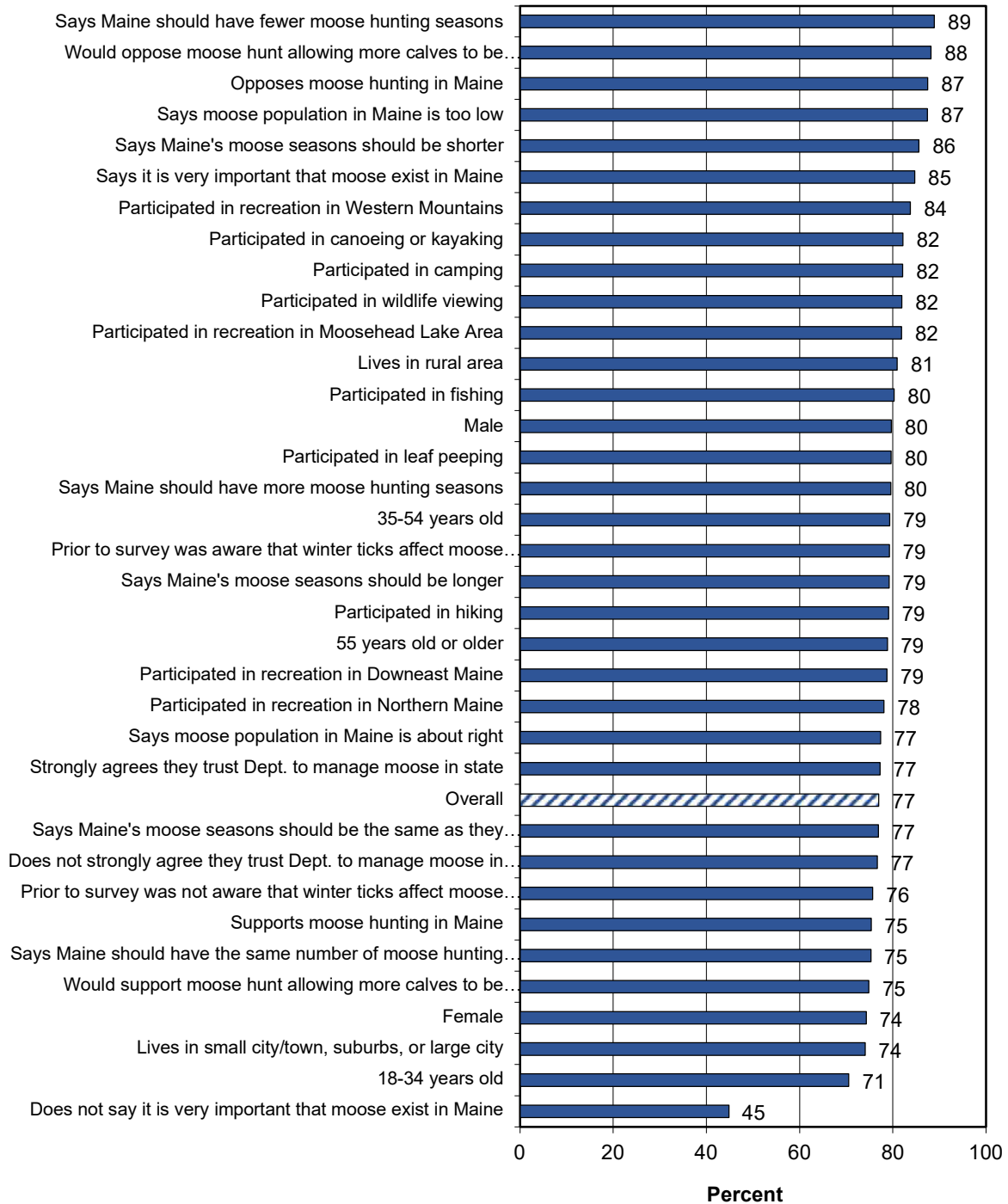
In the demographic analyses, the characteristics most associated with enjoying seeing/having moose around with no caveats are several of the other opinions, namely thinking Maine should have fewer and shorter moose seasons, opposing moose hunting in general and a moose hunt allowing the harvesting of calves, thinking that the moose population is too low, and saying that it is *very* important that moose exist in Maine. It is also associated with participation in outdoor recreation in the Western Mountains or the Moosehead Lake Area, as well as with participation in canoeing/kayaking, camping, and wildlife viewing.

The bottom of the graph shows the opinions and characteristics associated with *not* enjoying having/seeing moose around with no caveats. This includes those who do not say that it is very important that moose exist in Maine and young people.

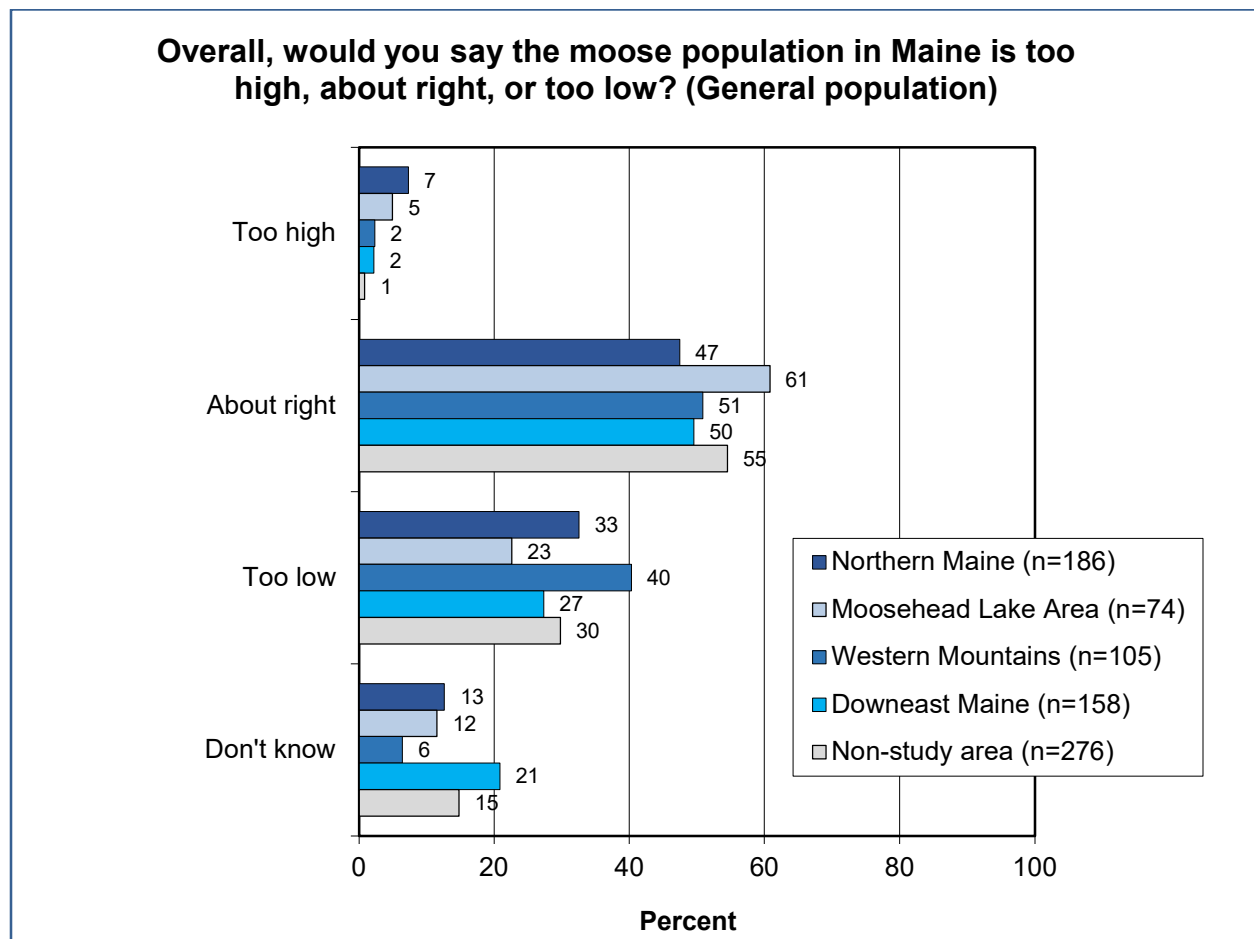
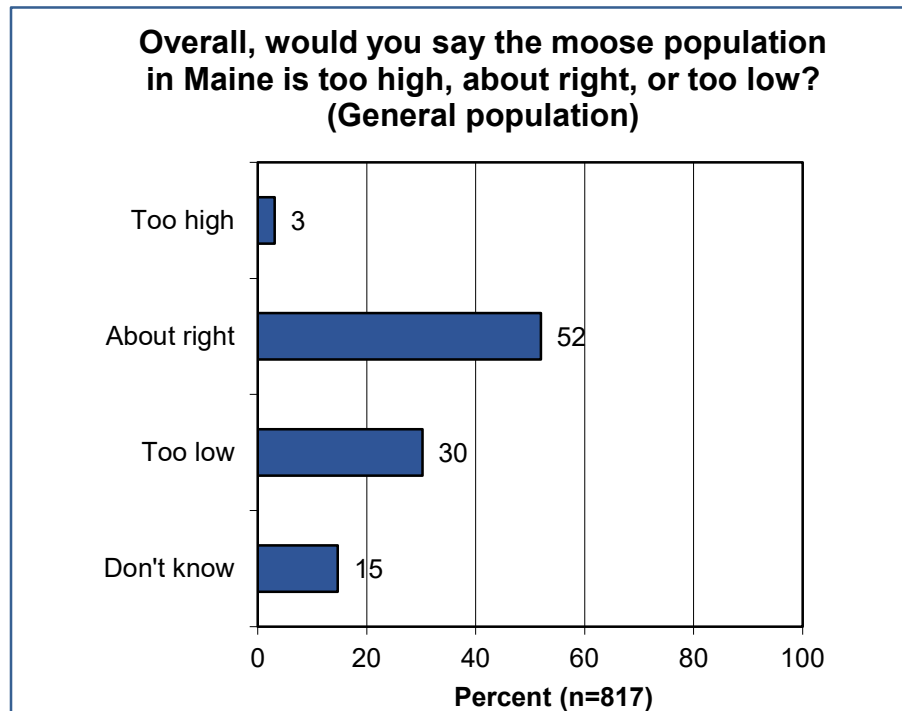
The graph is shown on the next page, as it requires a full page for display. Also note that some labels were necessarily truncated for them to fit on the graph. Those that were truncated are shown in full below:

- Says Maine's moose seasons should be the same as they currently are in length
- Says Maine should have the same number of moose hunting seasons
- Would support moose hunt allowing more calves to be harvested
- Would oppose moose hunt allowing more calves to be harvested
- Prior to survey was aware that winter ticks affect moose population
- Prior to survey was not aware that winter ticks affect moose population
- Does not strongly agree they trust Dept. to manage moose in state

Percent of the following groups who enjoy seeing and having moose around. (General population)



About half of the general population think the moose population in the state is *about right*. Otherwise, they are about 10 times more likely to say the population is *too low* than to say it is *too high*. Northern Maine residents are the most likely to say the population is *too high*, while Western Mountains residents are the most likely to say the population is *too low*.



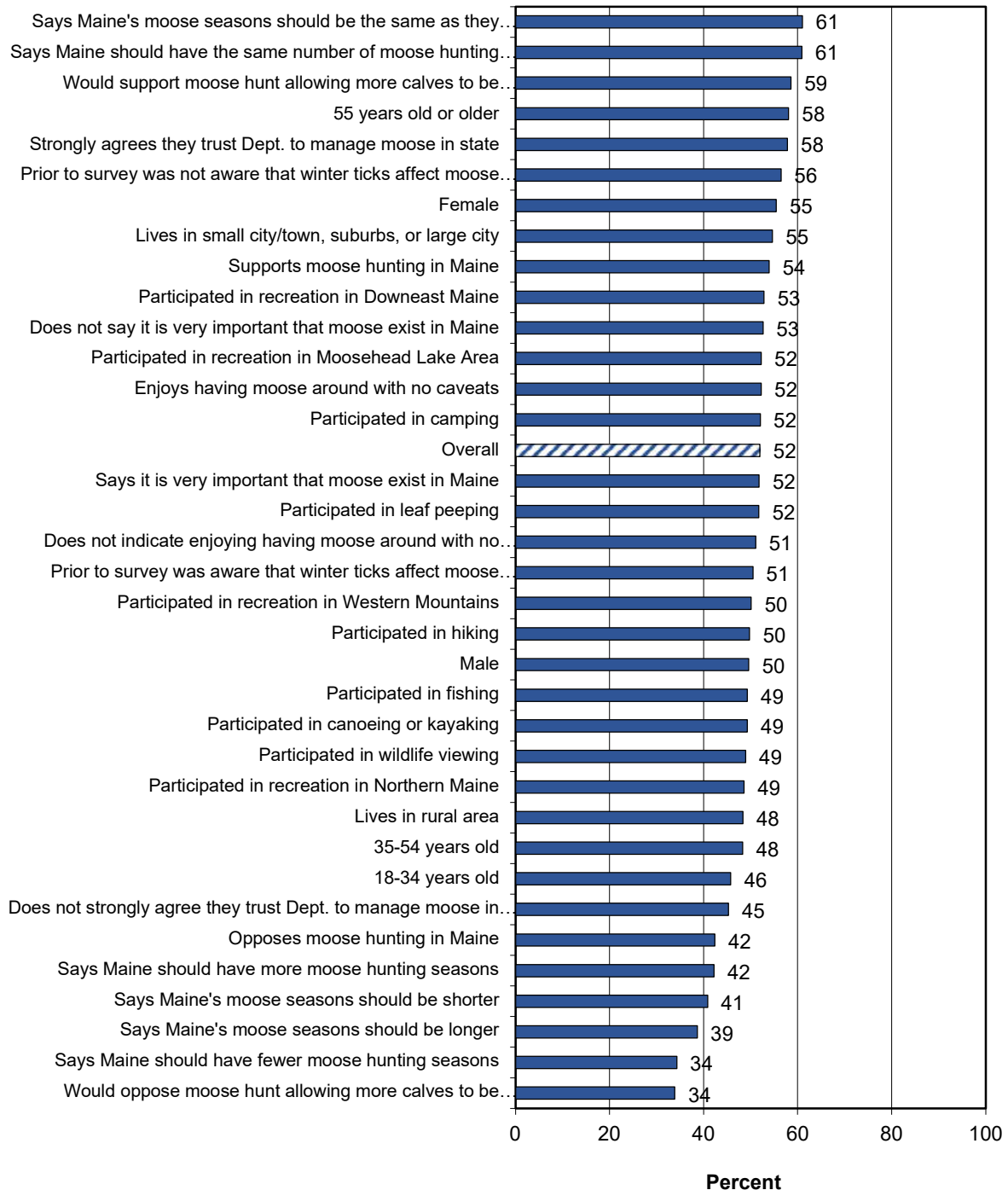
The demographic analyses graph on the next page shows the characteristics most associated with thinking that the moose population in Maine is about right. This includes thinking that Maine's moose seasons should be the same as they currently are in length and that the state should have the same number of moose hunting seasons, supporting a moose hunting season allowing calves to be harvested, and *strongly* agreeing that they trust the Department to manage moose in the state. Being an older resident is also associated with thinking that the moose population in Maine is about right.

Following the graph of the demographic analyses of those thinking that the moose population is about right is the demographic analyses of those who think the moose population in the state is too low. This opinion is associated with wanting fewer and shorter moose seasons, not supporting a moose season allowing the harvest of calves, and opposing moose hunting in Maine. It is also associated with wanting longer seasons (this is possible because the "same" response on that question is negatively associated with thinking the moose population is too low). Also associated with thinking that the moose population is too low is being male and being young, as well as participation in fishing and canoeing/kayaking.

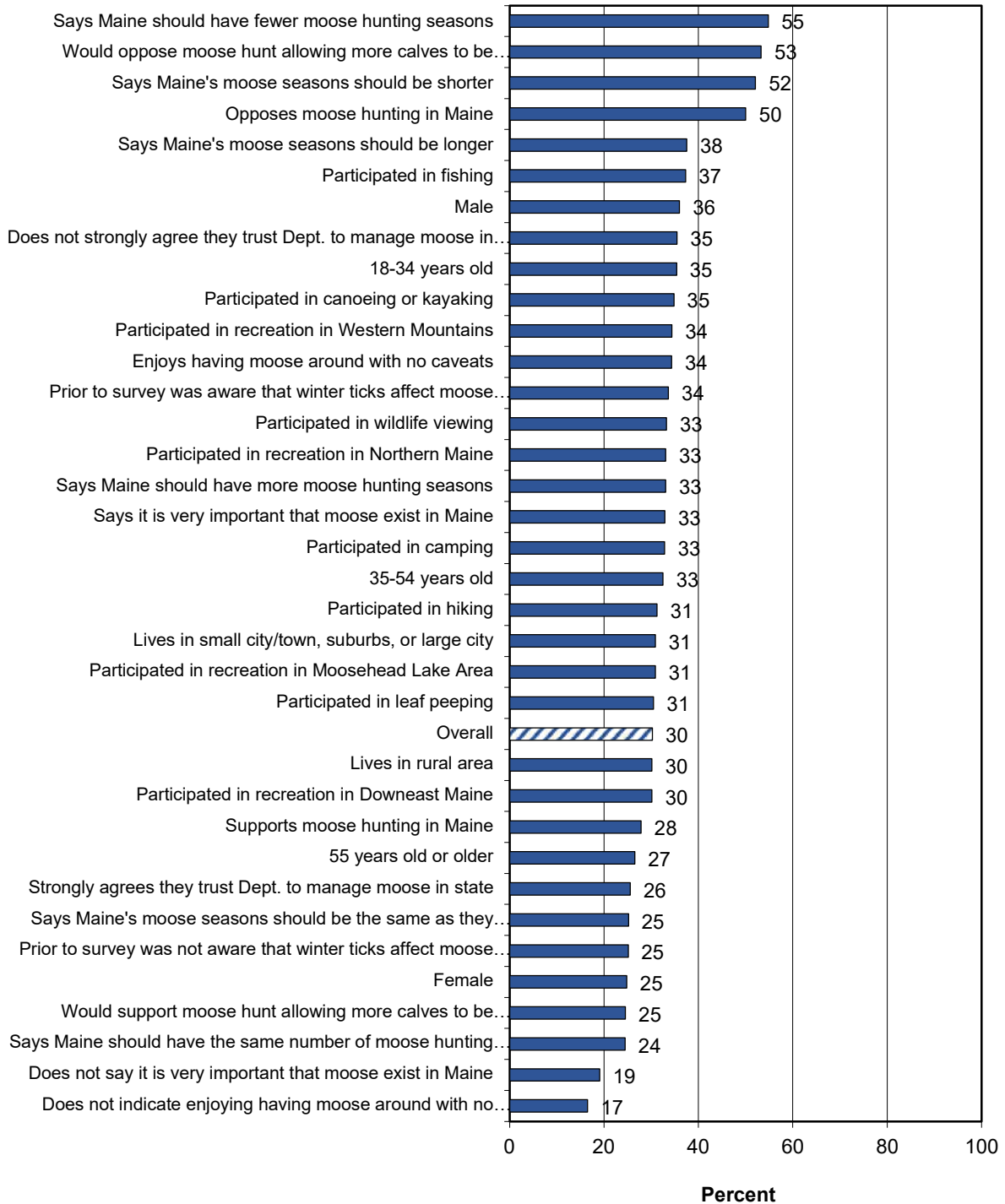
These graphs are shown on the next two pages, as each requires a full page for display. Also note that some labels were necessarily truncated for them to fit on the graph. Those that were truncated are shown in full below:

- Does not indicate enjoying having moose around with no caveats
- Says Maine's moose seasons should be the same as they currently are in length
- Says Maine should have the same number of moose hunting seasons
- Would support moose hunt allowing more calves to be harvested
- Would oppose moose hunt allowing more calves to be harvested
- Prior to survey was aware that winter ticks affect moose population
- Prior to survey was not aware that winter ticks affect moose population
- Does not strongly agree they trust Dept. to manage moose in state

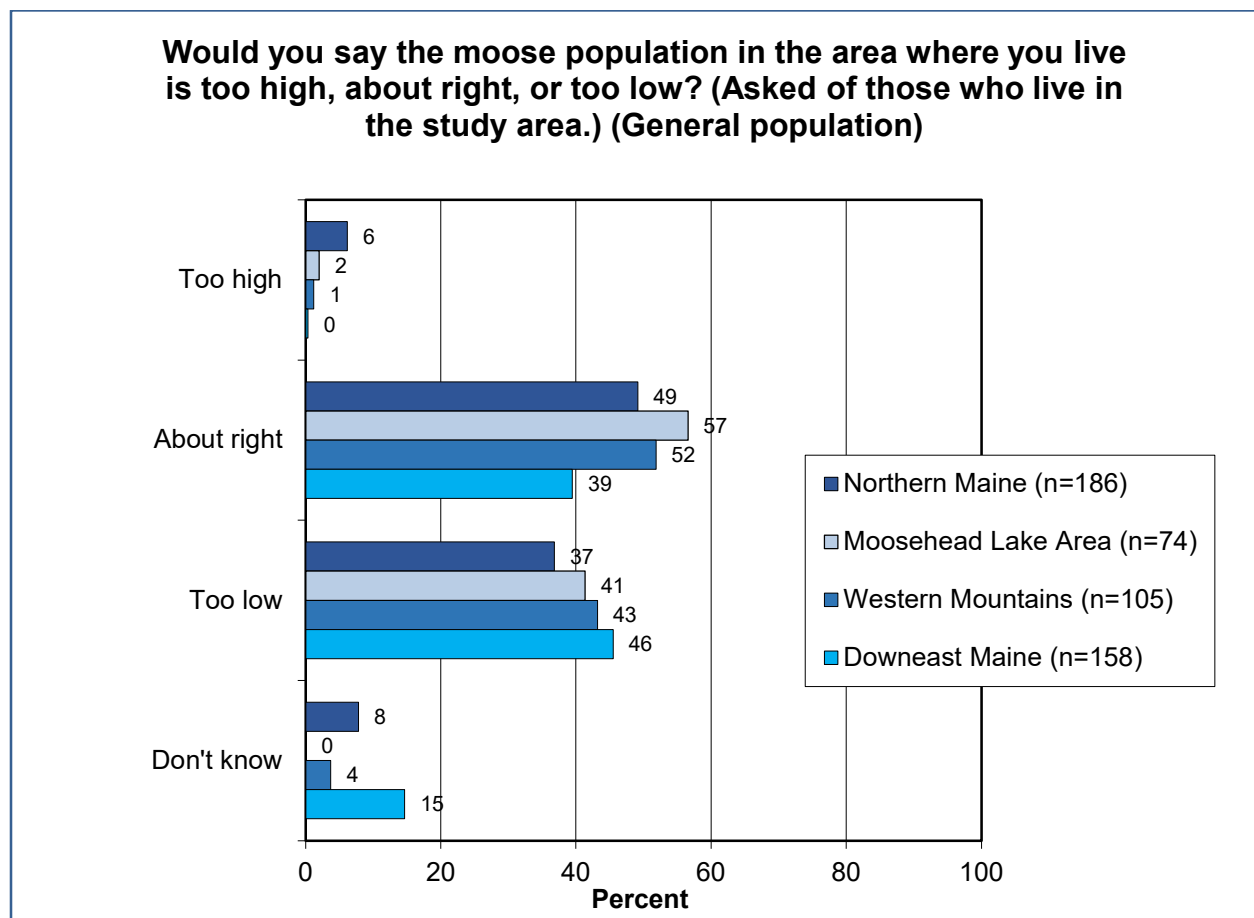
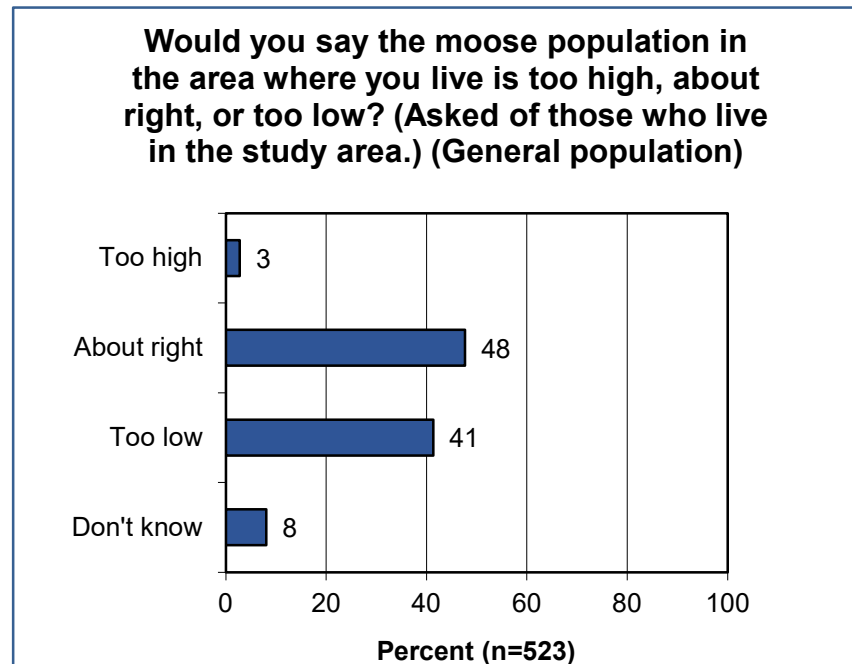
Percent of the following groups who say the moose population in Maine is about right. (General population)



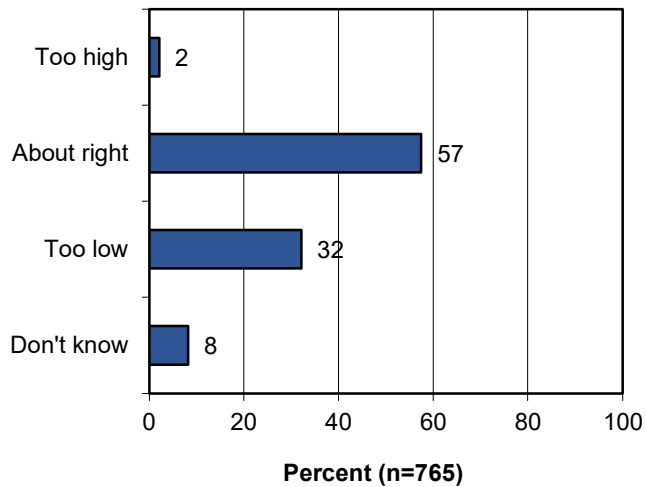
Percent of the following groups who say the moose population in Maine is too low. (General population)



The previous question asked about the state as a whole. This question asked residents about the moose population where the residents live (asked only of those who live in the study area). While just under half say the population is *about right*, the split between *too high* and *too low* is even wider than in the question about the state as a whole. Regarding where people live, 41% say the moose population is *too low*, compared to only 3% saying it is *too high*.

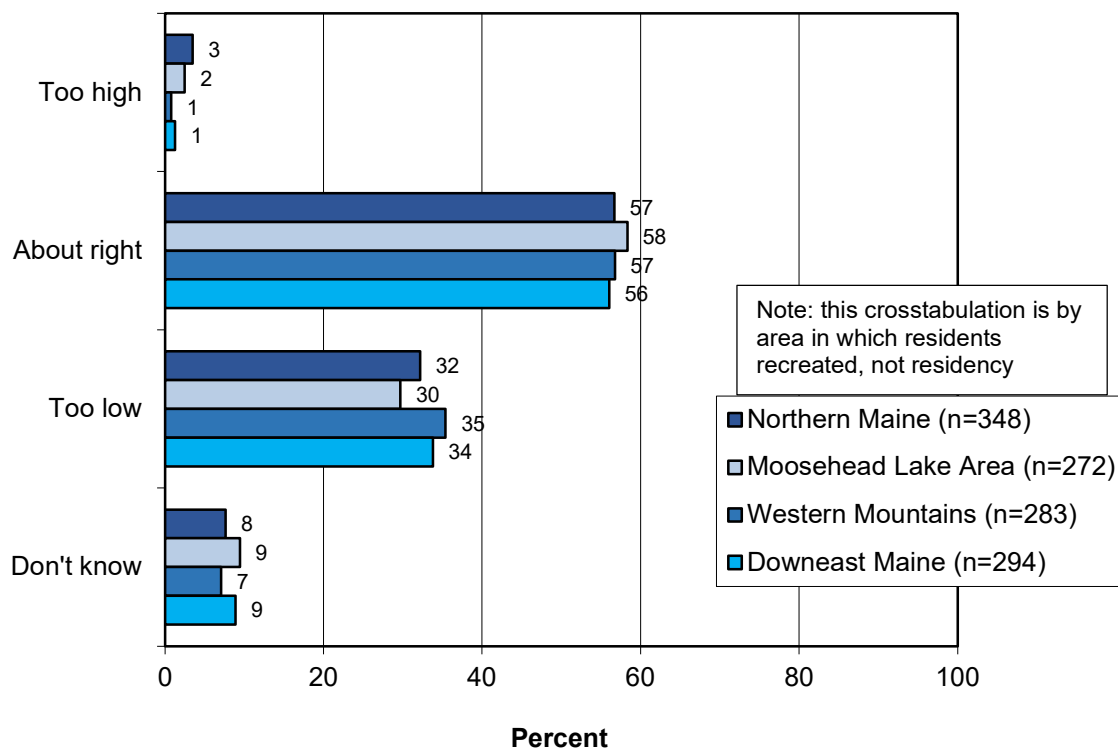


Would you say the moose population in the area where you participate in outdoor recreation is too high, about right, or too low? (Asked of those who participated in an activity in the study area.) (General population)



Finally, those who participated in recreation in the study area were asked about the moose population where they engage in recreation. The results are similar to the previous questions: more than half of these recreationists say that the population is *about right* (57%), and a much greater percentage say it is *too low* (32%) than say it is *too high* (only 2%). (In this crosstabulation, the region is based on the area in which residents engaged in recreation. This differs from the other regional crosstabulations shown in this report, which are based on residency.)

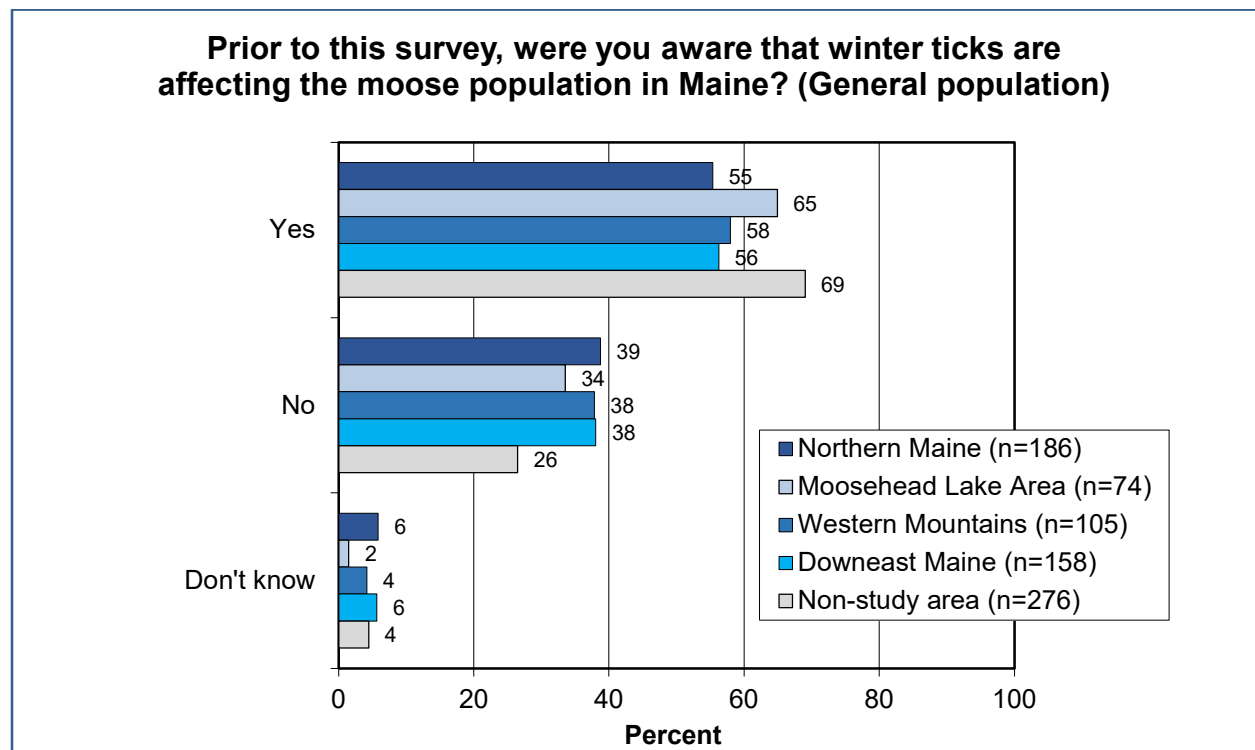
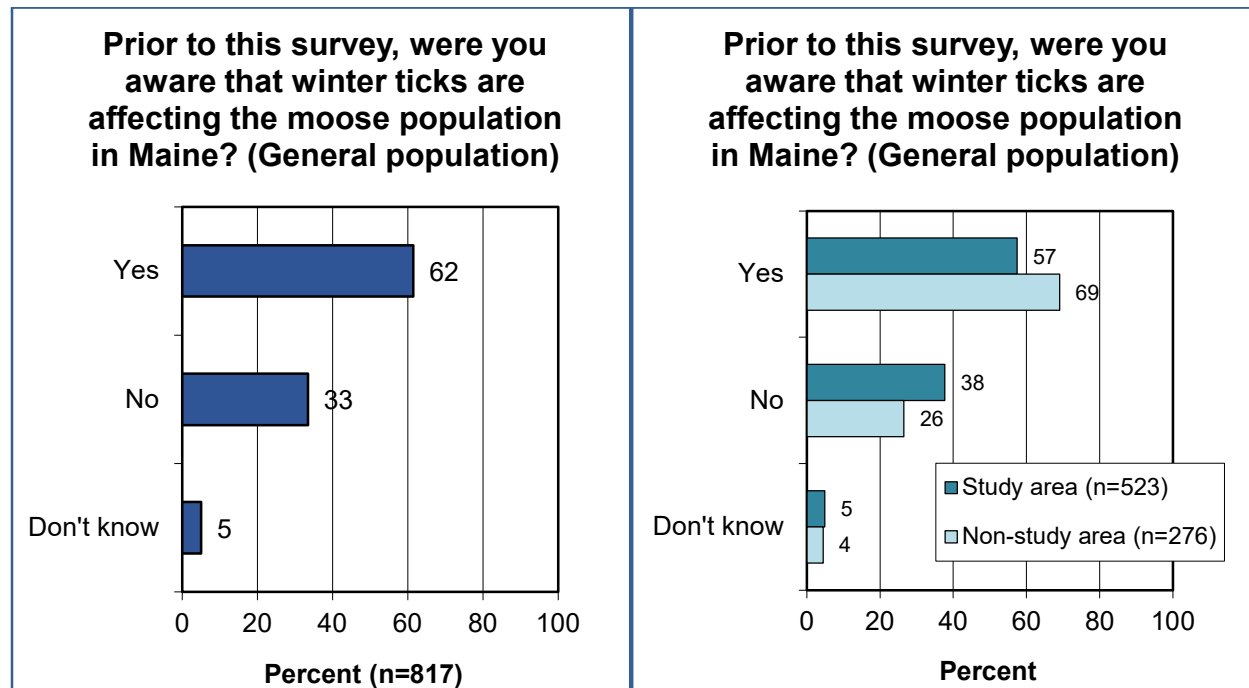
Would you say the moose population in the area where you participate in outdoor recreation is too high, about right, or too low? (Asked of those who participated in an activity in the study area.) (General population)



For the reader's convenience, these results regarding the moose population are summarized in the table below. The overall results are shown first, followed by results by region.

Area Asked About	Results Among	Too high	About right	Too low	Don't know
In Maine	All	3	52	30	15
Where residents live	Those who live in study area	3	48	41	8
Where residents recreate	Those who recreated in the study area	2	57	32	8
In Maine	Northern Maine residents	7	47	33	13
Where residents live	Northern Maine residents	6	49	37	8
Where residents recreate	Those who recreated in Northern Maine	3	57	32	8
In Maine	Moosehead Lake Area residents	5	61	23	12
Where residents live	Moosehead Lake Area residents	2	57	41	0
Where residents recreate	Those who recreated in the Moosehead Lake Area	2	58	30	9
In Maine	Western Mountains residents	2	51	40	6
Where residents live	Western Mountains residents	1	52	43	4
Where residents recreate	Those who recreated in the Western Mountains	1	57	35	7
In Maine	Downeast Maine residents	2	50	27	21
Where residents live	Downeast Maine residents	0	39	46	15
Where residents recreate	Those who recreated in Downeast Maine	1	56	34	9
In Maine	Non-study area residents	1	55	30	15

The majority of the general population (62%) were aware prior to the survey that winter ticks are affecting the moose population in Maine. This percentage is slightly lower among those who live in the study area (57%). As shown in the regional analysis, non-study area residents (keep in mind it is those who engage in recreation in the study area) and Moosehead Lake Area residents are the most likely to be aware.



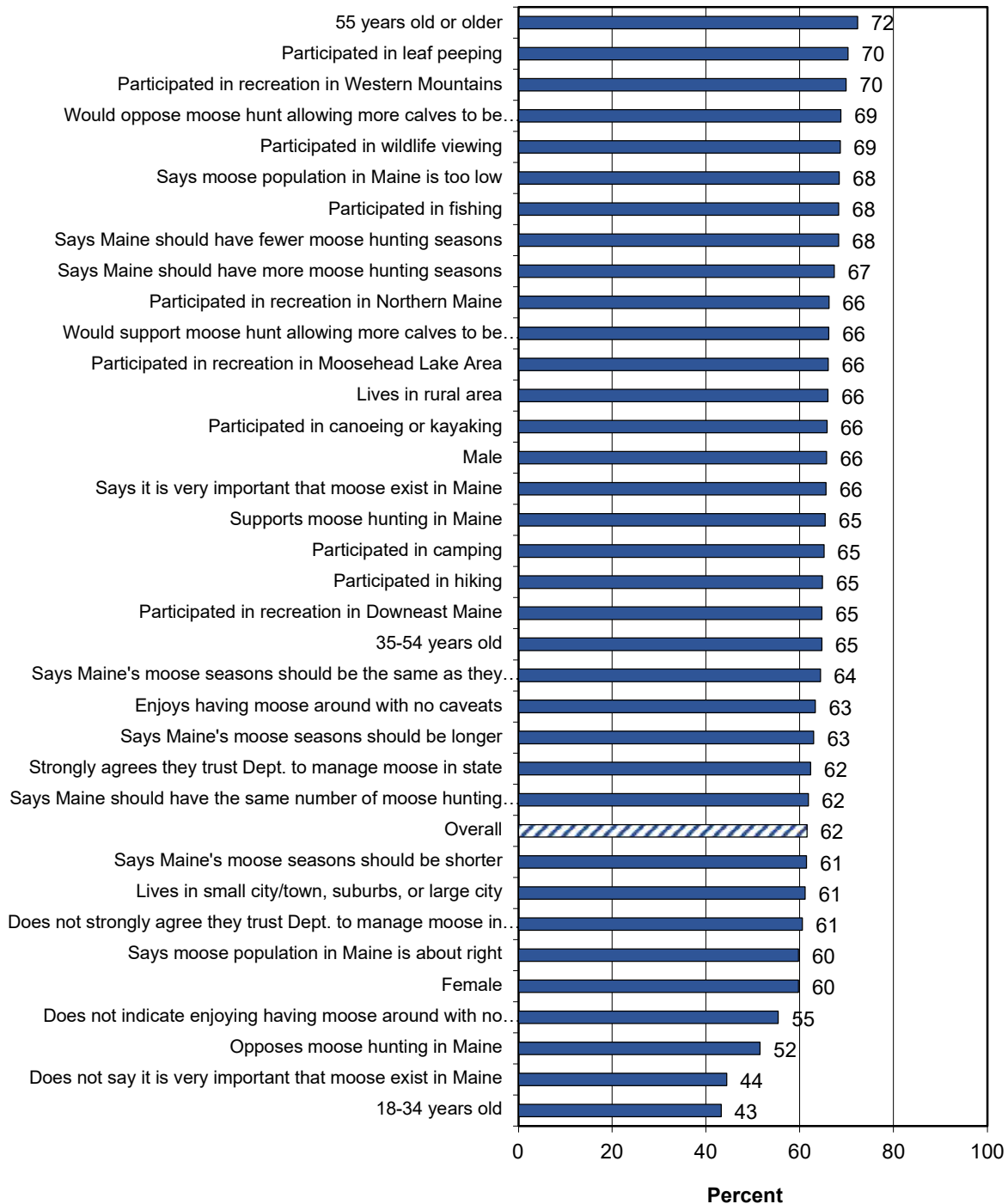
Awareness that winter ticks are affecting the moose population in Maine, as shown in the demographic analyses, is associated with being 55 years old or older; participating in leaf peeping, wildlife viewing, and fishing; participating in outdoor recreation in the Western Mountains; opposing a moose hunt that allowed the harvest of calves; and thinking Maine should have fewer or more moose hunting seasons. (This latter finding in which two opposite views are both associated with the variable being analyzed, which at first glance seems impossible, happened because the counterpart to these two opinions—wanting Maine to have the same number of moose hunting seasons—is near the overall bar in the graph and those who gave the *don't know* response—not shown on the graph—had a percentage lower than the overall percentage.)

Meanwhile, the characteristics associated with not being aware (at the bottom of the graph) include being young, not thinking it is very important that moose exist in Maine, opposing moose hunting in Maine, and *not* saying that they enjoy having moose around with no caveats.

The graph is shown on the next page, as it requires a full page for display. Also note that some labels were necessarily truncated for them to fit on the graph. Those that were truncated are shown in full below:

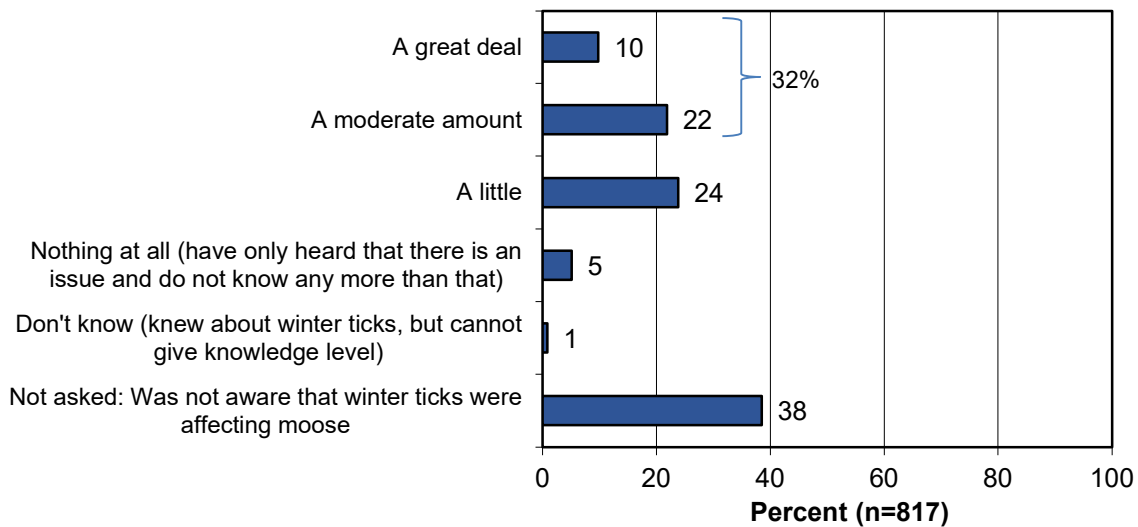
- Does not indicate enjoying having moose around with no caveats
- Says Maine's moose seasons should be the same as they currently are in length
- Says Maine should have the same number of moose hunting seasons
- Would support moose hunt allowing more calves to be harvested
- Would oppose moose hunt allowing more calves to be harvested
- Does not strongly agree they trust Dept. to manage moose in state

Percent of the following groups who were aware prior to the survey that winter ticks are affecting the moose population in Maine. (General population)

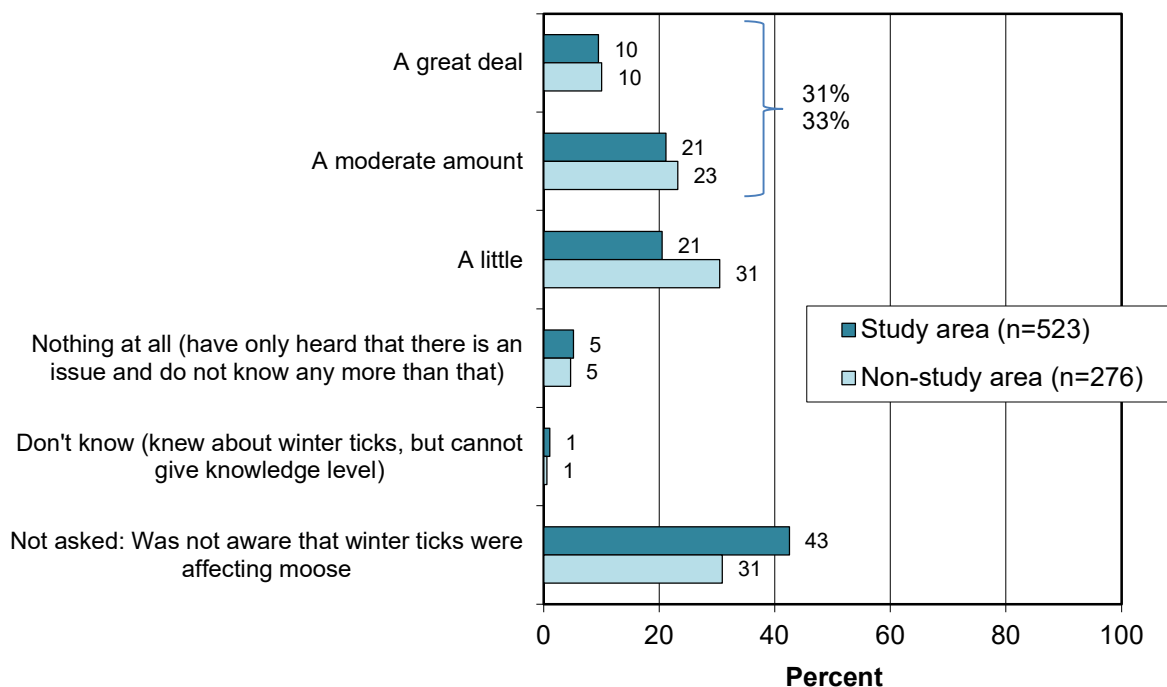


About a third of residents overall say that they know *a great deal* or *a moderate amount* about winter ticks and their impacts on moose; this holds true when looking at just those living in the study area.

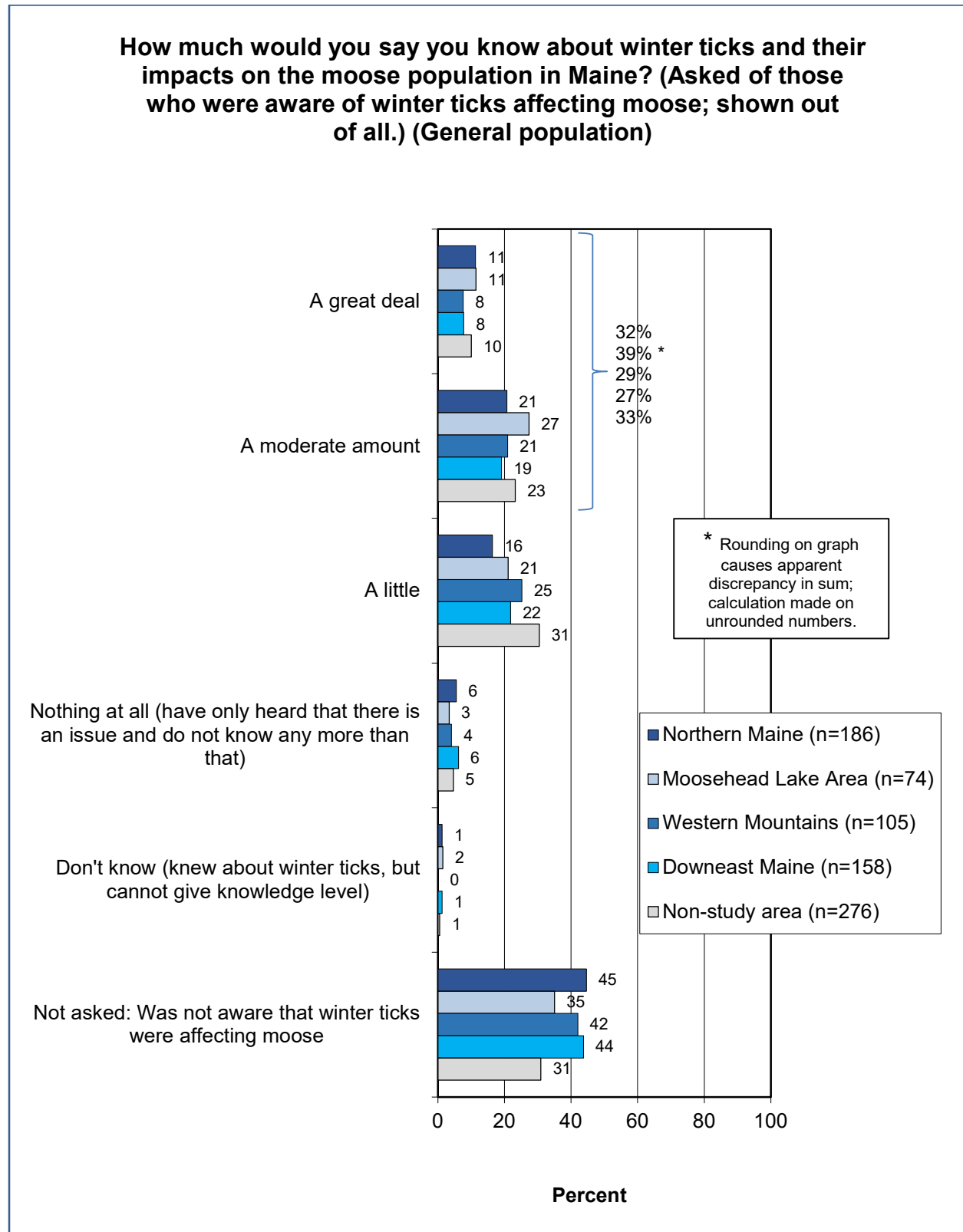
How much would you say you know about winter ticks and their impacts on the moose population in Maine? (Asked of those who were aware of winter ticks affecting moose; shown out of all.) (General population)



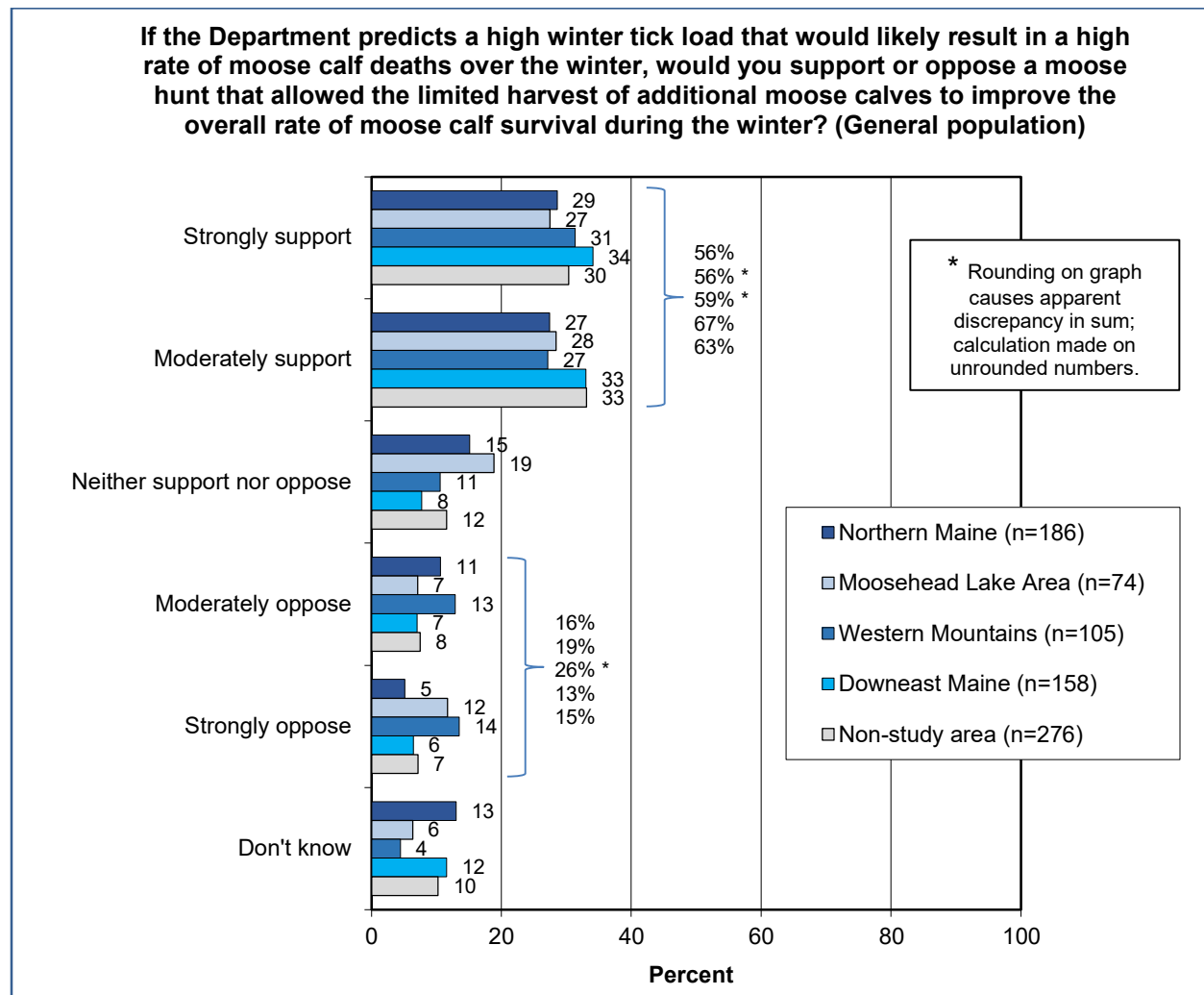
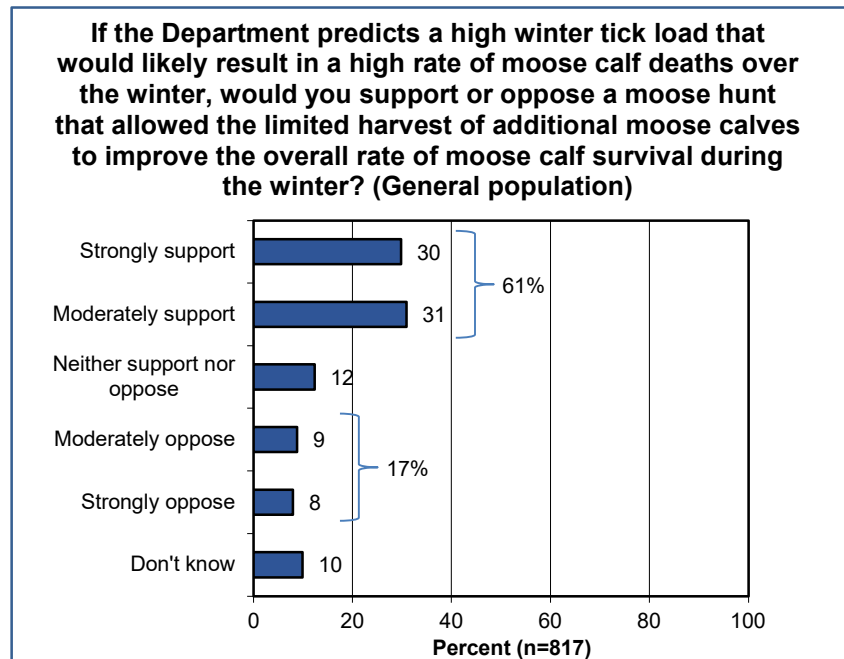
How much would you say you know about winter ticks and their impacts on the moose population in Maine? (Asked of those who were aware of winter ticks affecting moose; shown out of all.) (General population)



Regionally, the highest awareness (measured by the percentage saying *a great deal* or a *moderate amount*) is among residents of the Moosehead Lake Area.



Among the general population, support for (61%) far exceeds opposition to (17%) a moose hunt allowing the limited harvest of additional moose calves to improve the overall rate of moose calf survival during the winter, if winter tick loads will result in high mortality of calves. While support is highest among Downeast Maine residents, opposition is highest among residents of the Western Mountains region.



Demographic analyses were run on both the support and oppose positions on the question about a moose hunt that allows, if warranted, the harvest of calves.

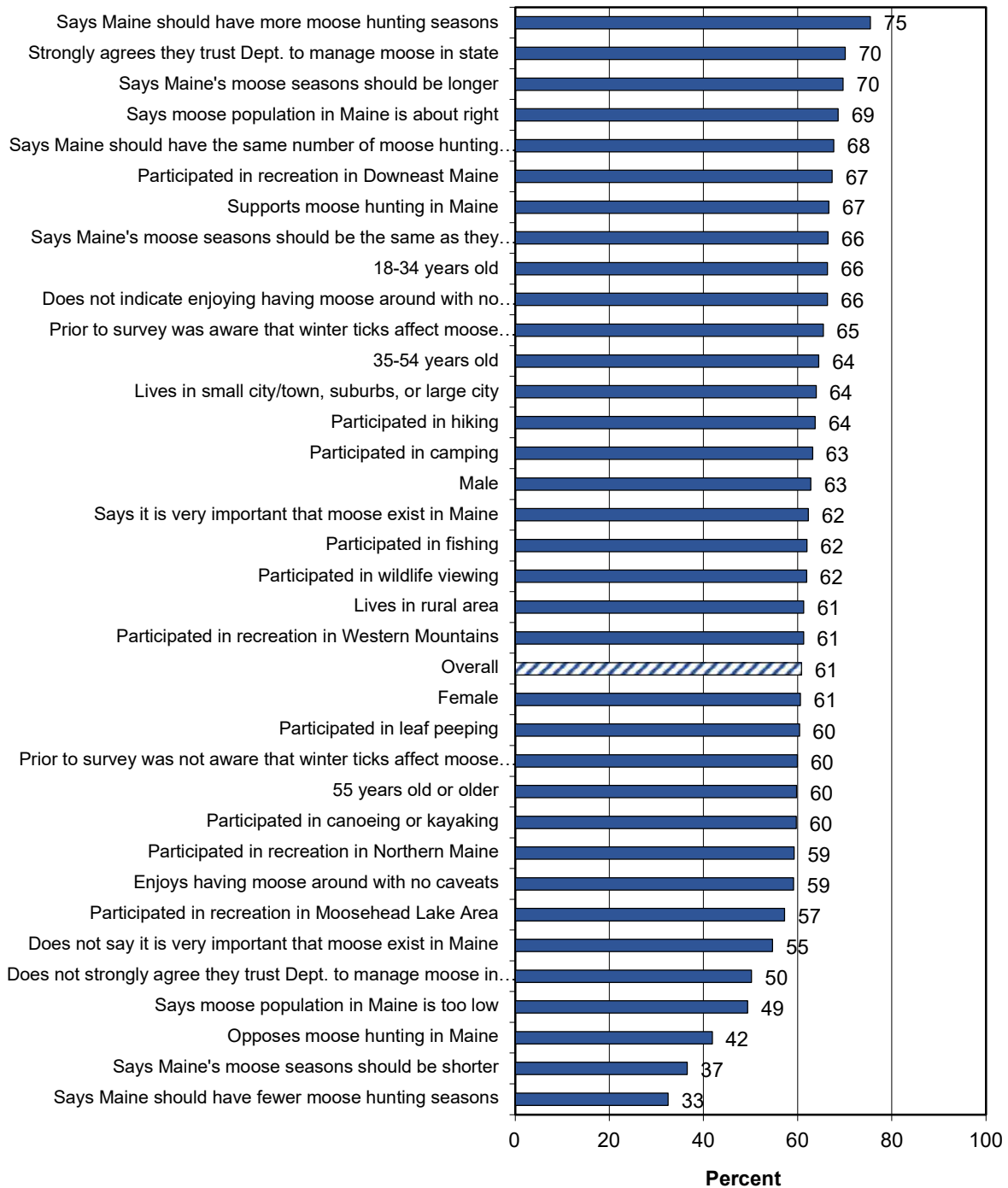
Support for such a season is associated with several opinions, including thinking that Maine should have longer seasons and more or the same (rather than fewer) number of seasons, trusting the Department to manage moose, thinking that the moose population is about right, and not saying that they enjoy having moose around with no caveats. It is also associated with participation in outdoor recreation in Downeast Maine and being young.

Opposition to a moose hunt that allows, if warranted, the harvest of calves is associated with thinking that Maine should have shorter and fewer moose seasons, opposing moose hunting in general, thinking that the moose population in Maine is too low, and not strongly agreeing that they trust the Department to manage moose in the state.

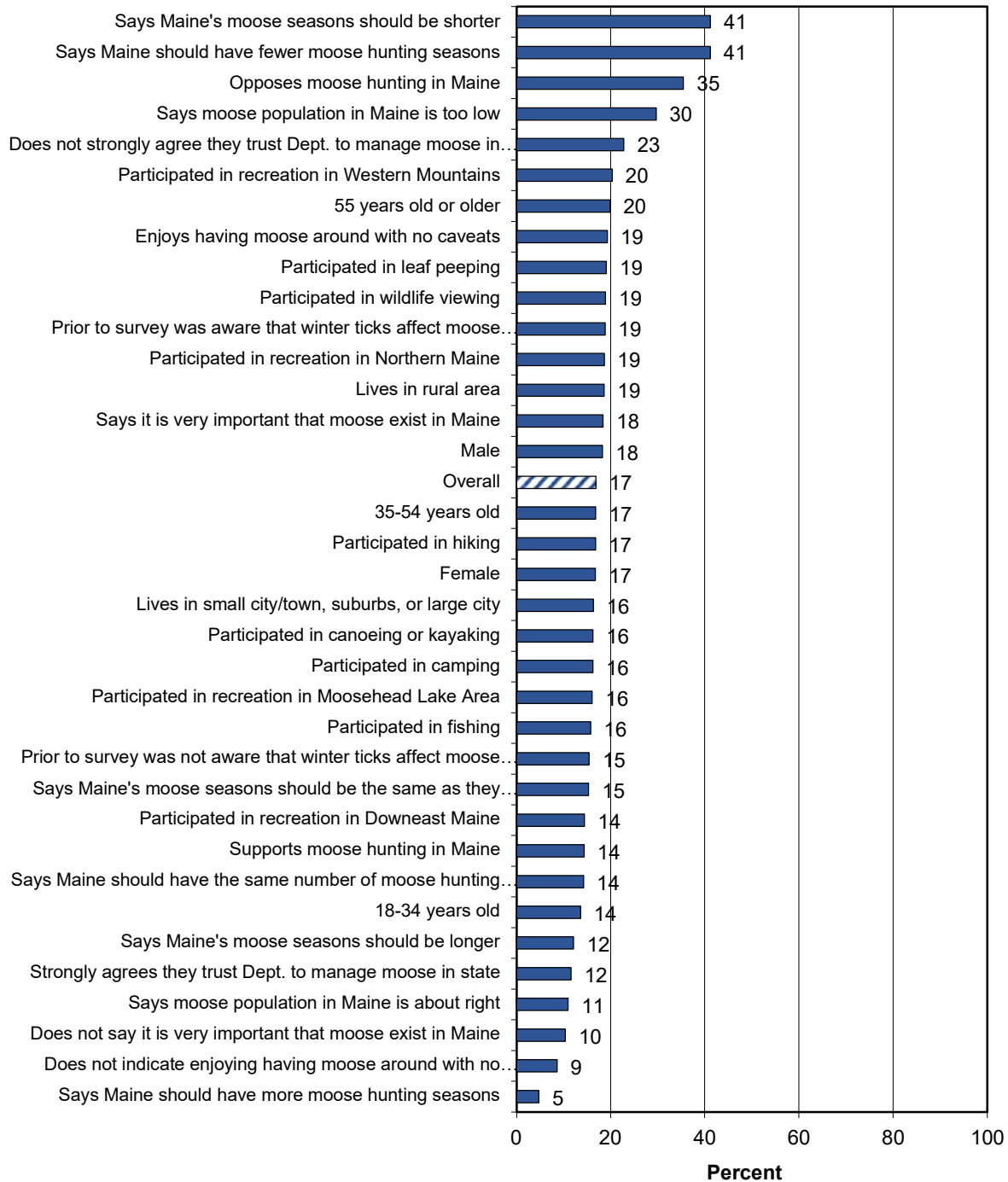
These graphs are shown on the next two pages, as each requires a full page for display. Also note that some labels were necessarily truncated for them to fit on the graph. Those that were truncated are shown in full below:

- Does not indicate enjoying having moose around with no caveats
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- Prior to survey was aware that winter ticks affect moose population
- Prior to survey was not aware that winter ticks affect moose population
- Does not strongly agree they trust Dept. to manage moose in state

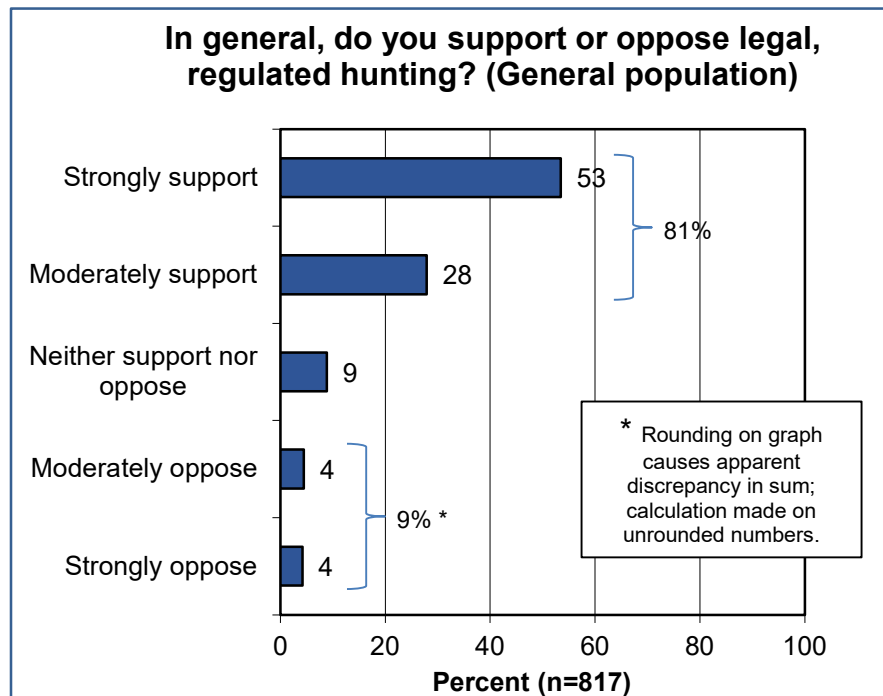
Percent of the following groups who would strongly or moderately support a moose hunt allowing additional calves to be harvested. (General population)



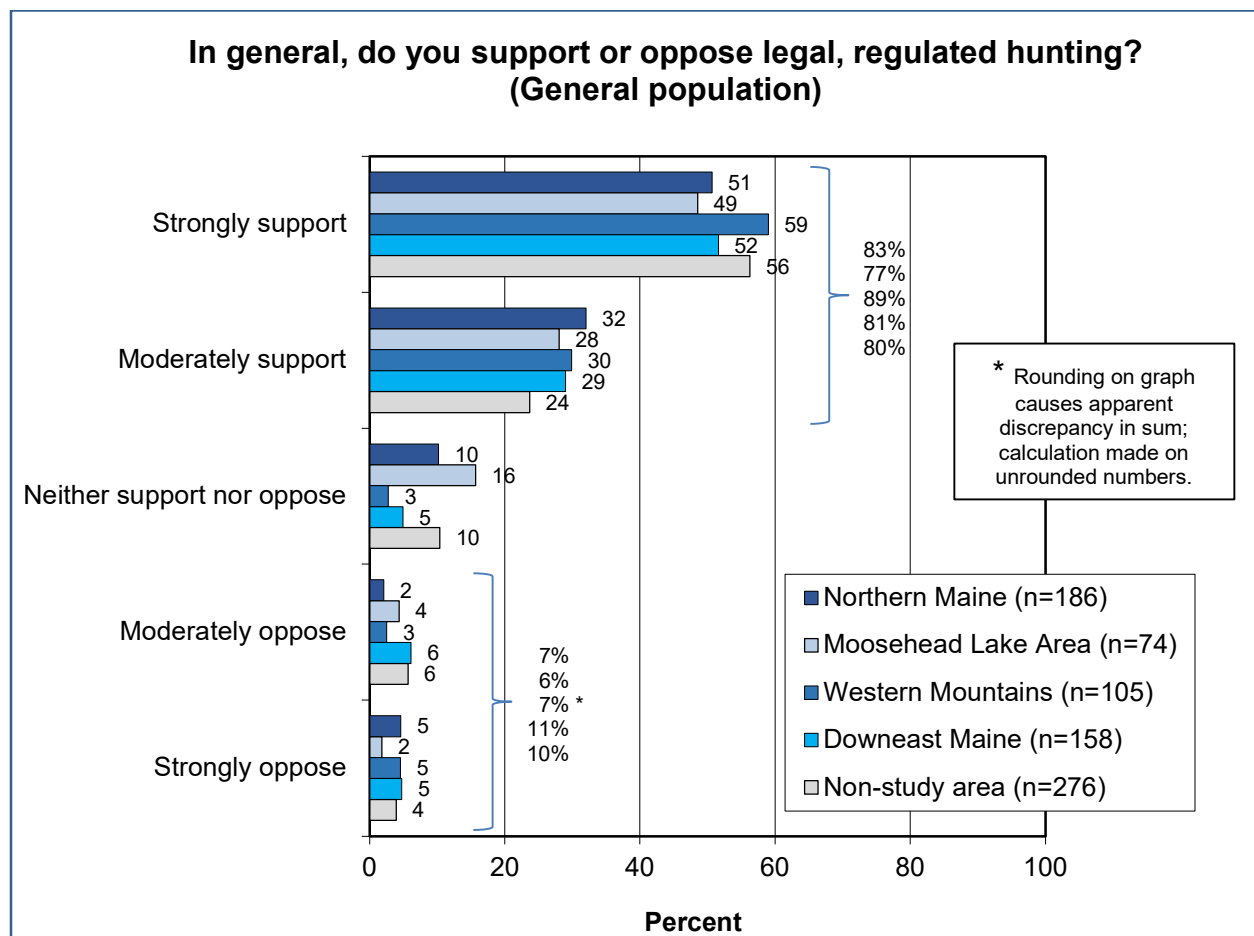
Percent of the following groups who would strongly or moderately oppose a moose hunt allowing additional calves to be harvested. (General population)

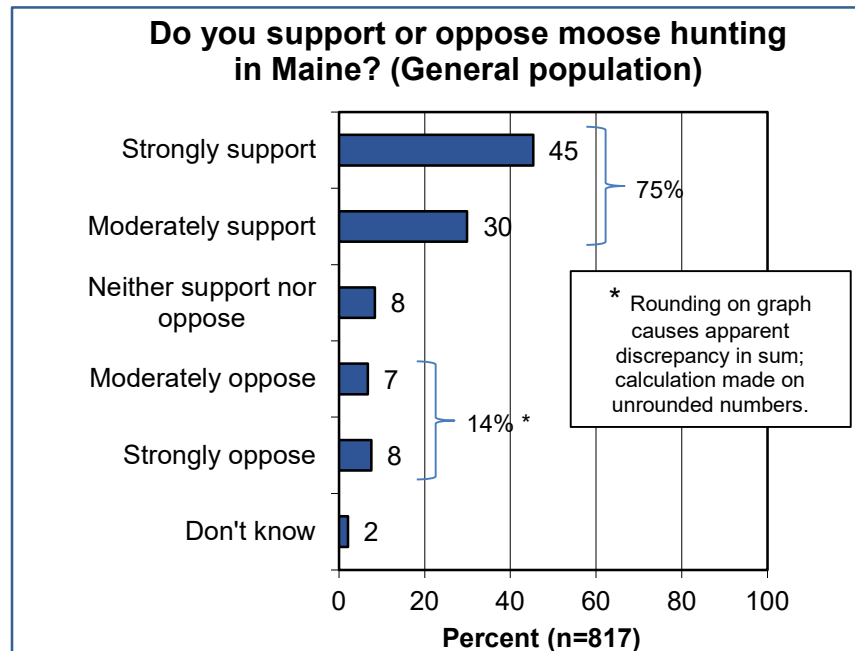


ATTITUDES TOWARD HUNTING

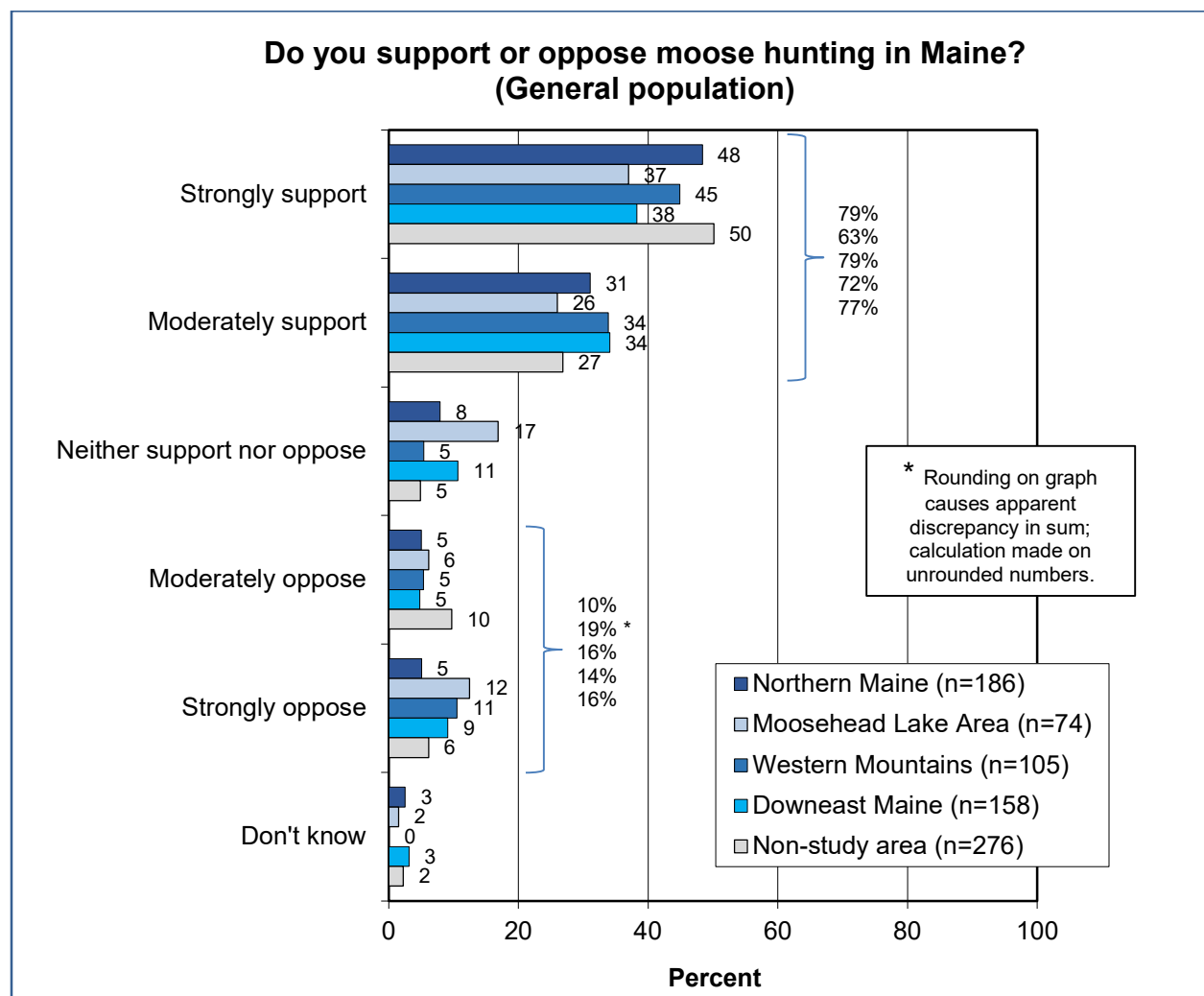


Among the general population overall, support for hunting (81%) far exceeds opposition to it (9%). Regionally, support is highest in the Western Mountains; only two regions have opposition at 10% or higher: Downeast Maine and the non-study area.





When asked about support for or opposition specifically to *moose* hunting in Maine, support (75%) again far exceeds opposition (14%). Regionally, support is relatively low in the Moosehead Lake Area. Note that support for *moose* hunting is slightly lower than support for hunting overall, as previously shown.



Demographic analyses on the question about support for or opposition to *moose* hunting specifically were run, as detailed below.

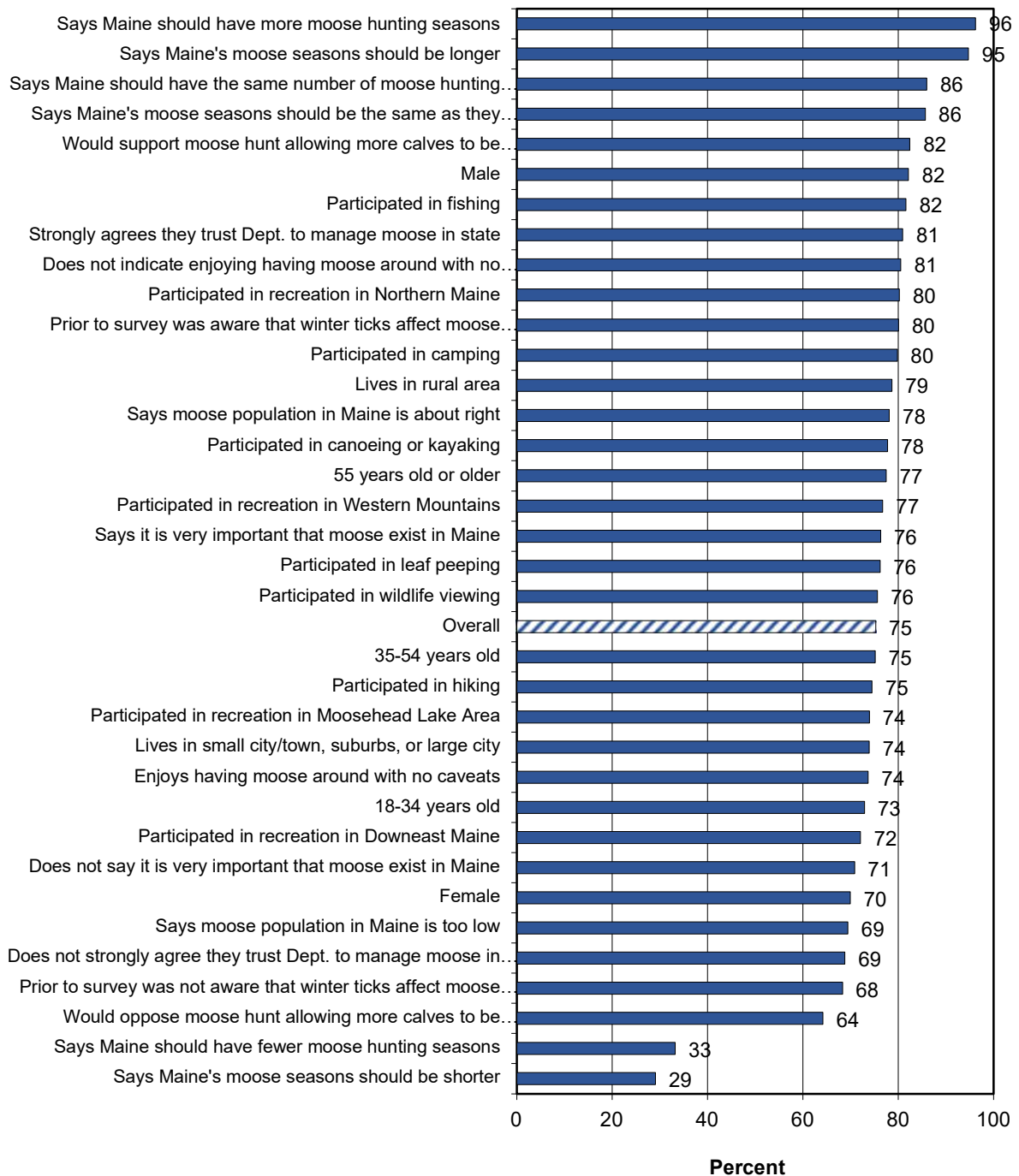
Support for moose hunting is highly associated with two opinion questions: thinking that Maine should have the same or more seasons (rather than fewer) and that they should be the same length or longer (rather than shorter). It is also associated with supporting the aforementioned season that would allow calves to be hunted. Other characteristics associated with support include being male and participation in fishing.

Opposition to moose hunting is most highly associated with thinking that Maine should have shorter and fewer moose seasons. It is also associated with opposing a moose hunt that would allow calves to be hunted, thinking that the moose population in Maine is too low, not strongly agreeing that they trust the Department to manage moose in the state, and not knowing prior to the survey about the effects of winter ticks on the moose population.

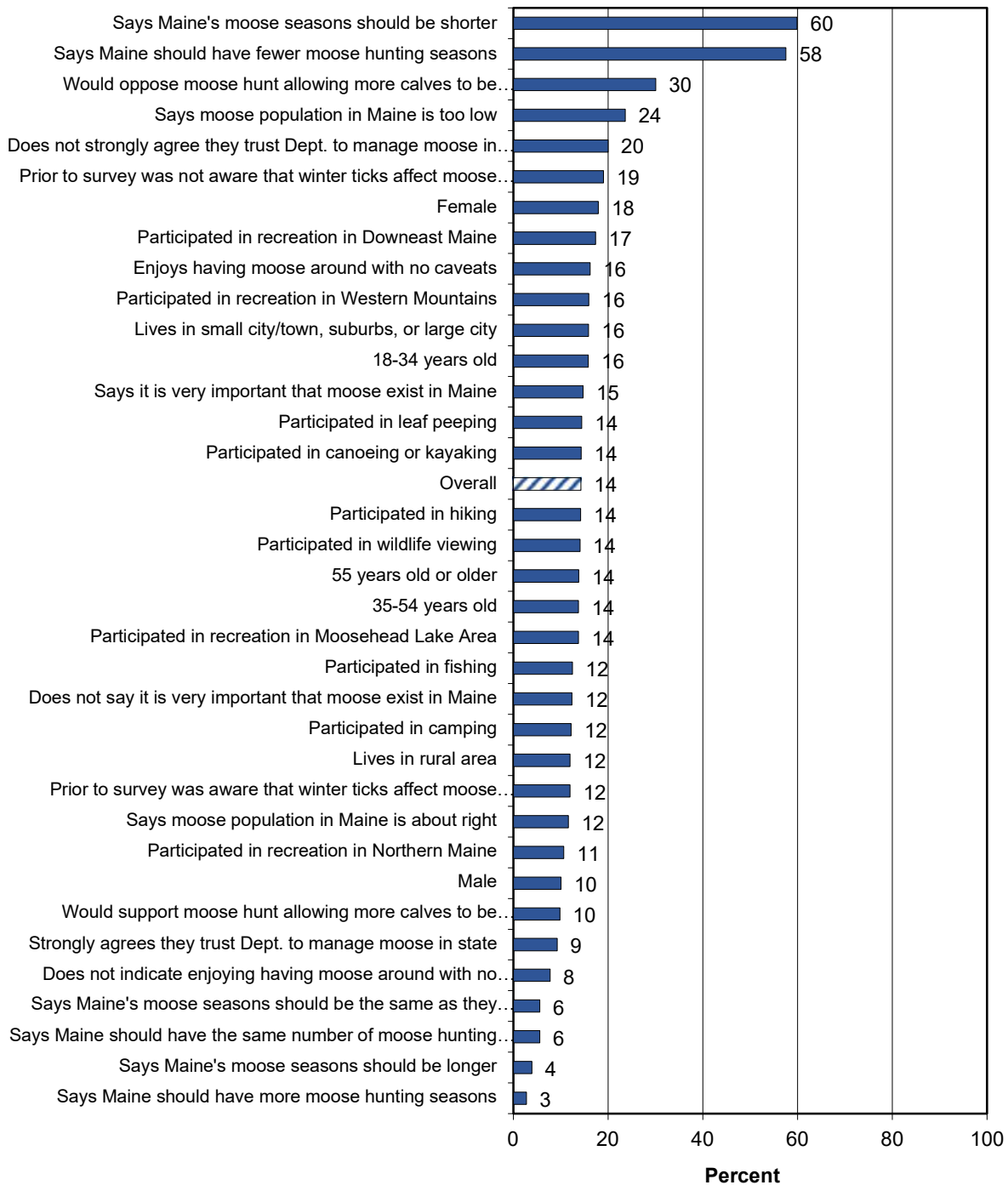
These graphs are shown on the next two pages, as each requires a full page for display. Also note that some labels were necessarily truncated for them to fit on the graph. Those that were truncated are shown in full below:

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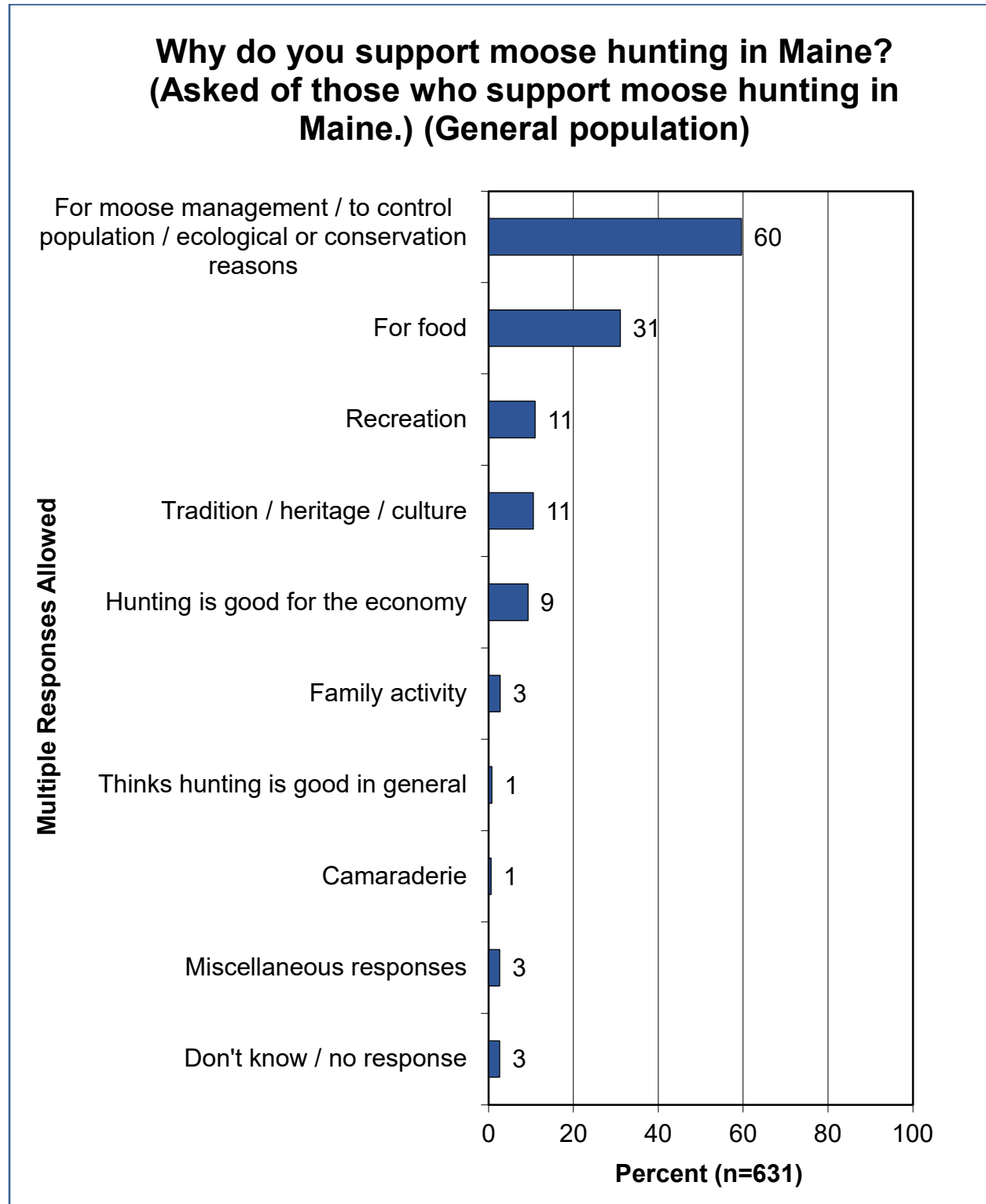
**Percent of the following groups who strongly or moderately support moose hunting in Maine.
(General population)**



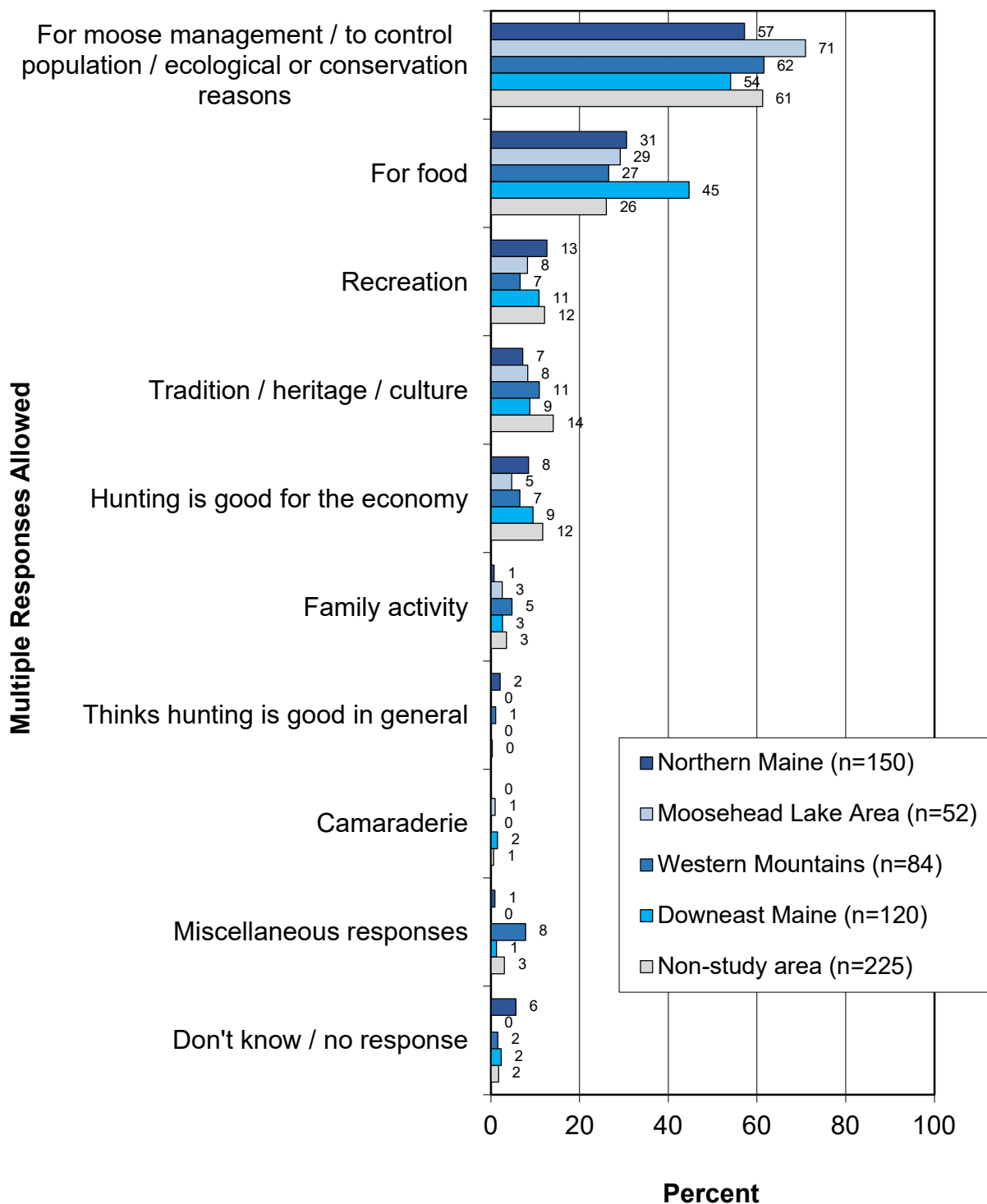
**Percent of the following groups who strongly or moderately oppose moose hunting in Maine.
(General population)**



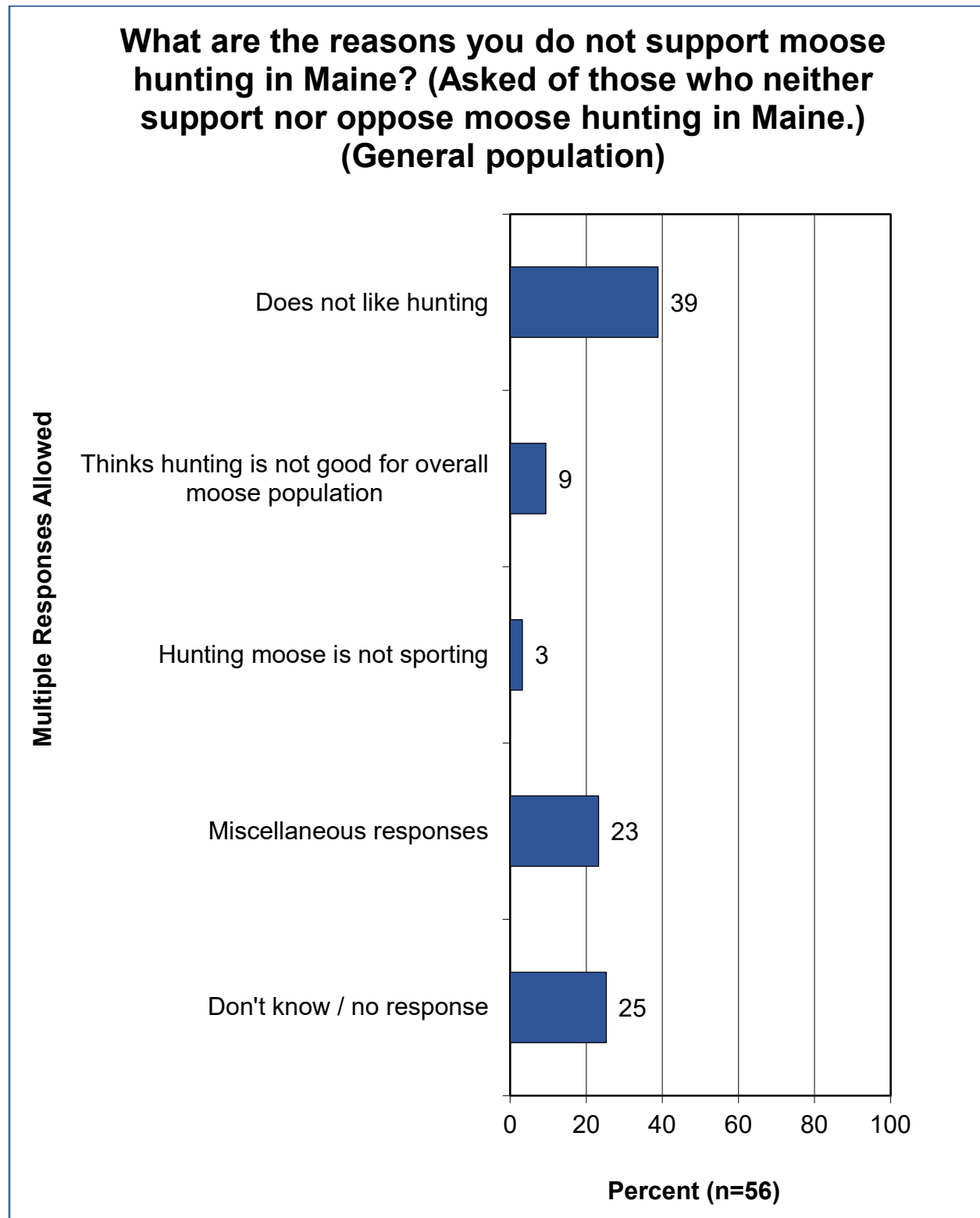
The most common reasons for supporting moose hunting are for moose management (60% of those who supported it gave this reason) and for food (31%). Other reasons are shown in the graph. Of note in the regional results (next page) is that hunting moose for food is particularly supported in Downeast Maine.



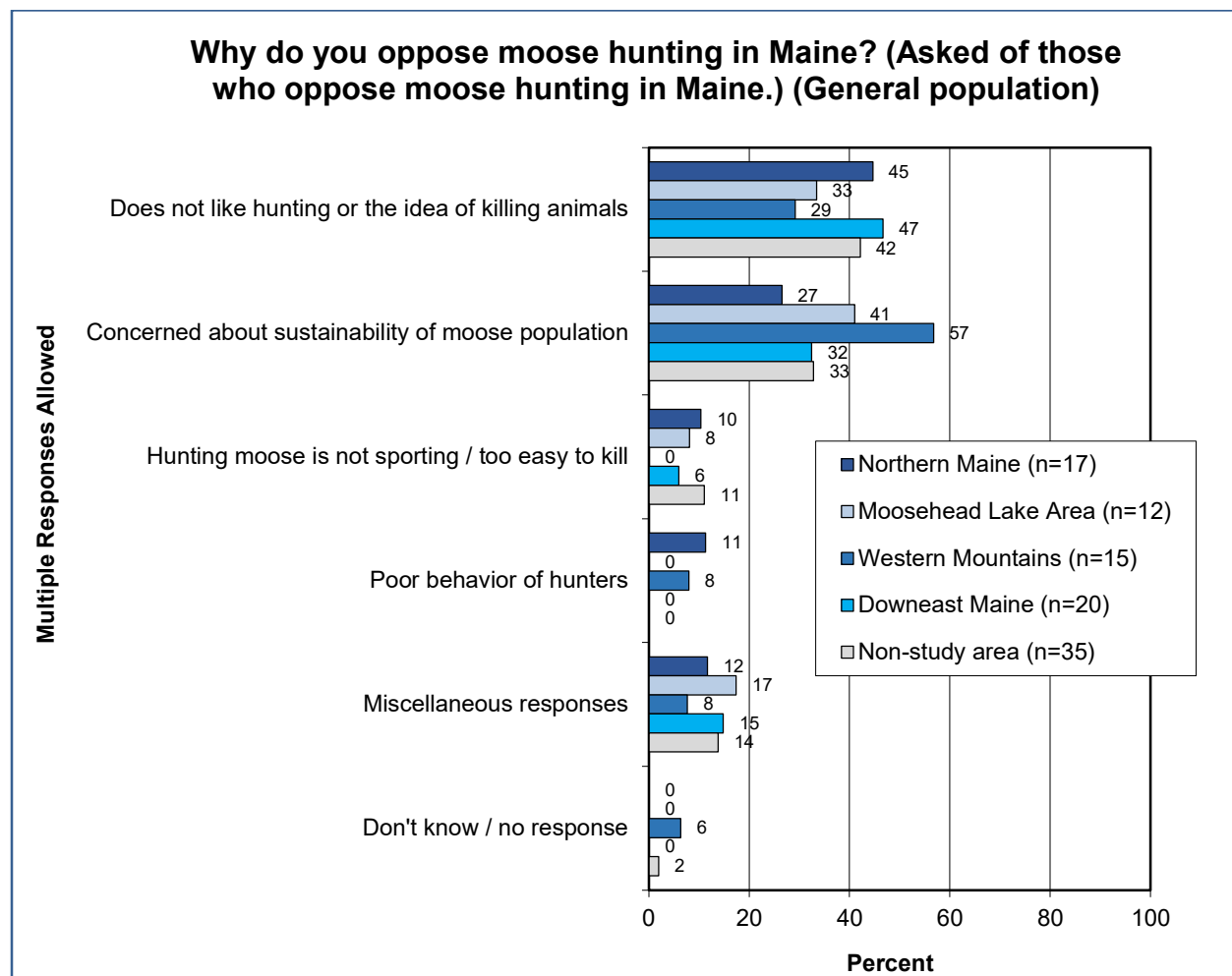
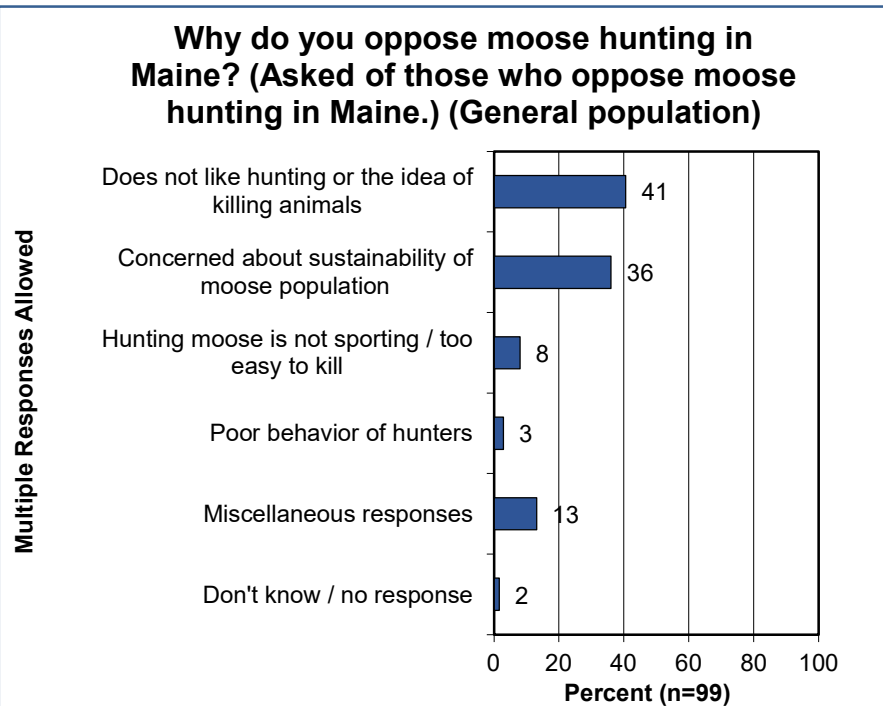
Why do you support moose hunting in Maine? (Asked of those who support moose hunting in Maine.) (General population)



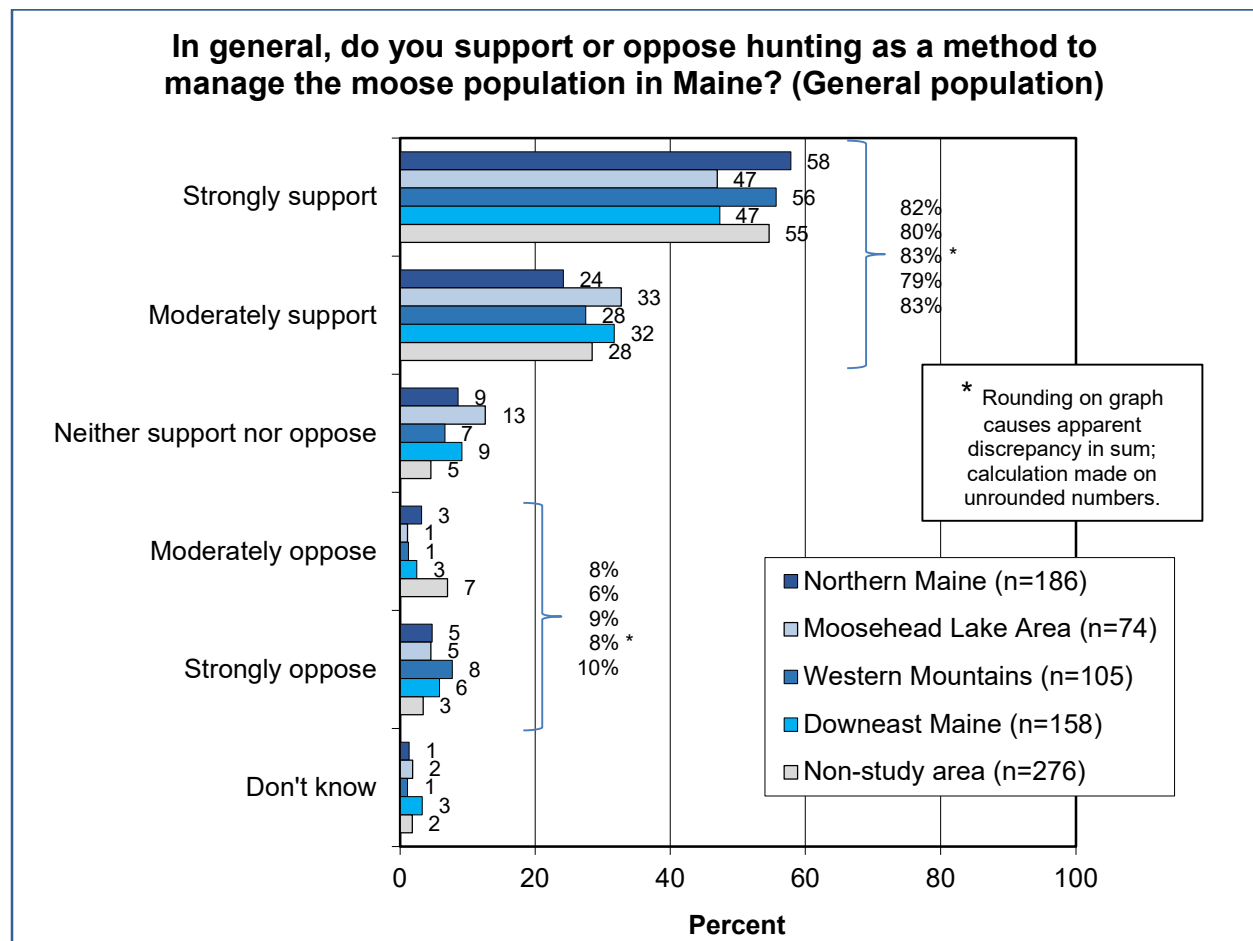
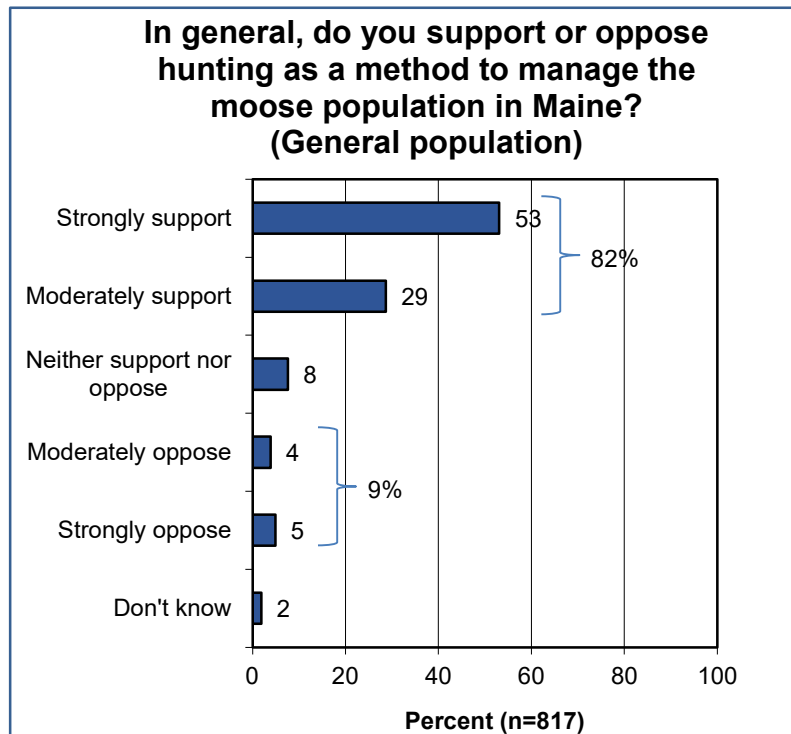
Those who answered neutrally—neither supporting nor opposing—were asked why they did not support moose hunting in Maine. Most commonly, they do not like hunting in general. (As this was a follow-up question that few received, there is no regional crosstabulation.)



Top reasons for opposing moose hunting in Maine is a simple dislike of hunting in general and concern about the sustainability of the moose population if moose are hunted. In particular, those from the Western Mountains are concerned about the sustainability of the moose population.

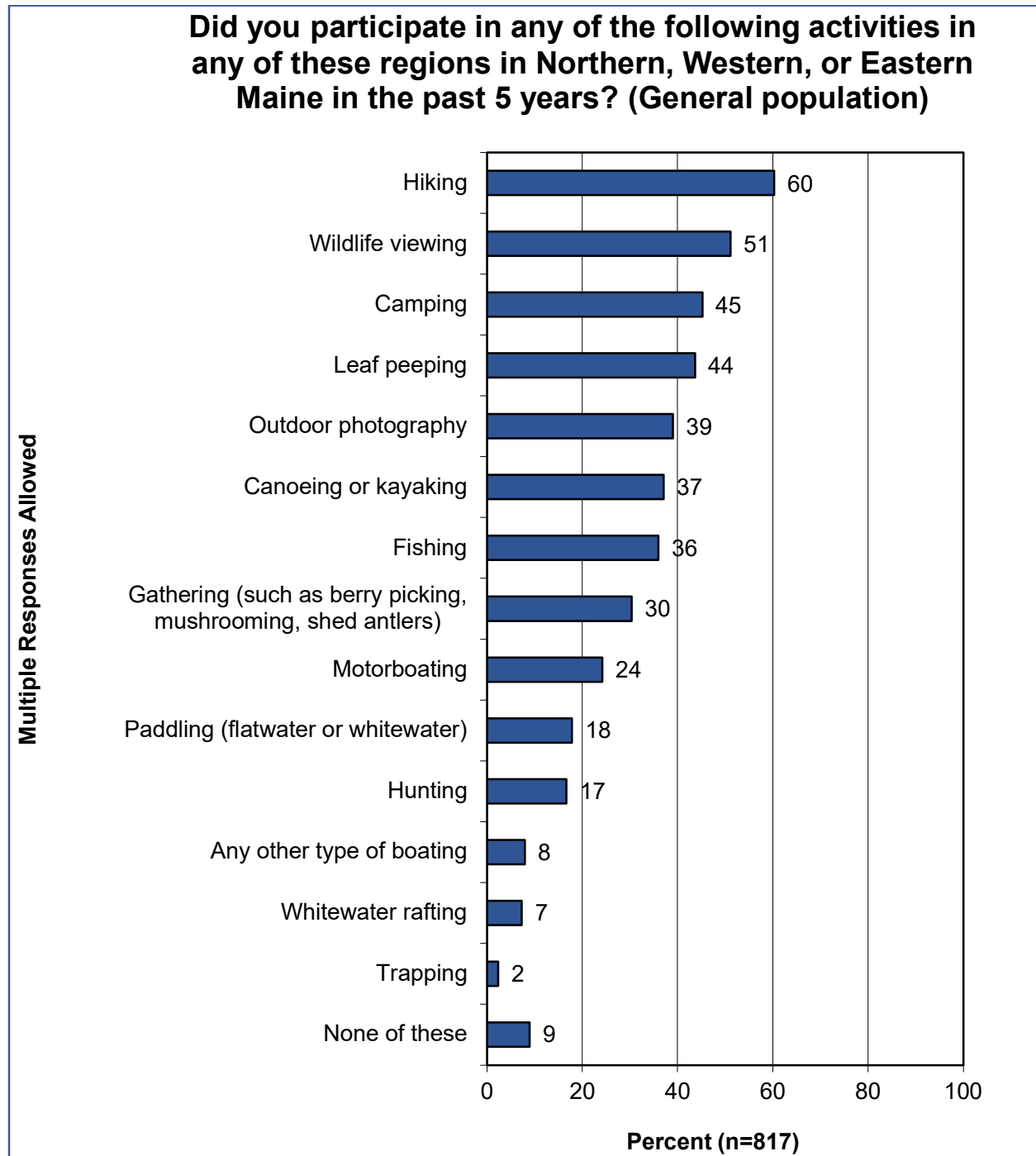


Finally regarding support for or opposition to hunting, among the general population, support for hunting as a method to manage the moose population in Maine far exceeds opposition to it: 82% support while 9% oppose. Support and opposition are both fairly consistent across the regions, with support ranging from 79% to 83% and opposition ranging from 6% to 10%. The most marked regional differences are in the *strong* support response, with lower *strong* support among residents of the Moosehead Lake Area and Downeast Maine.

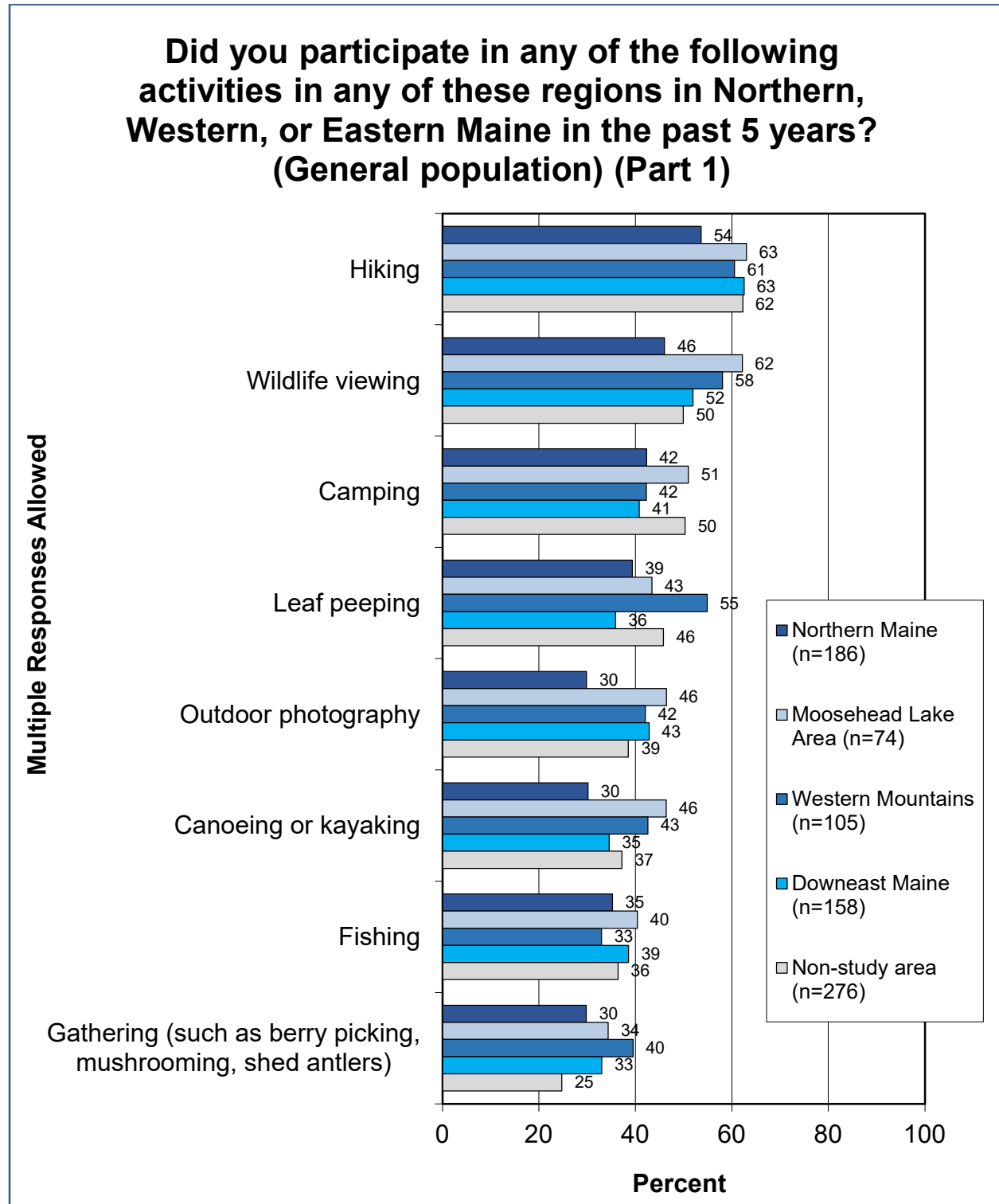


PARTICIPATION IN OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

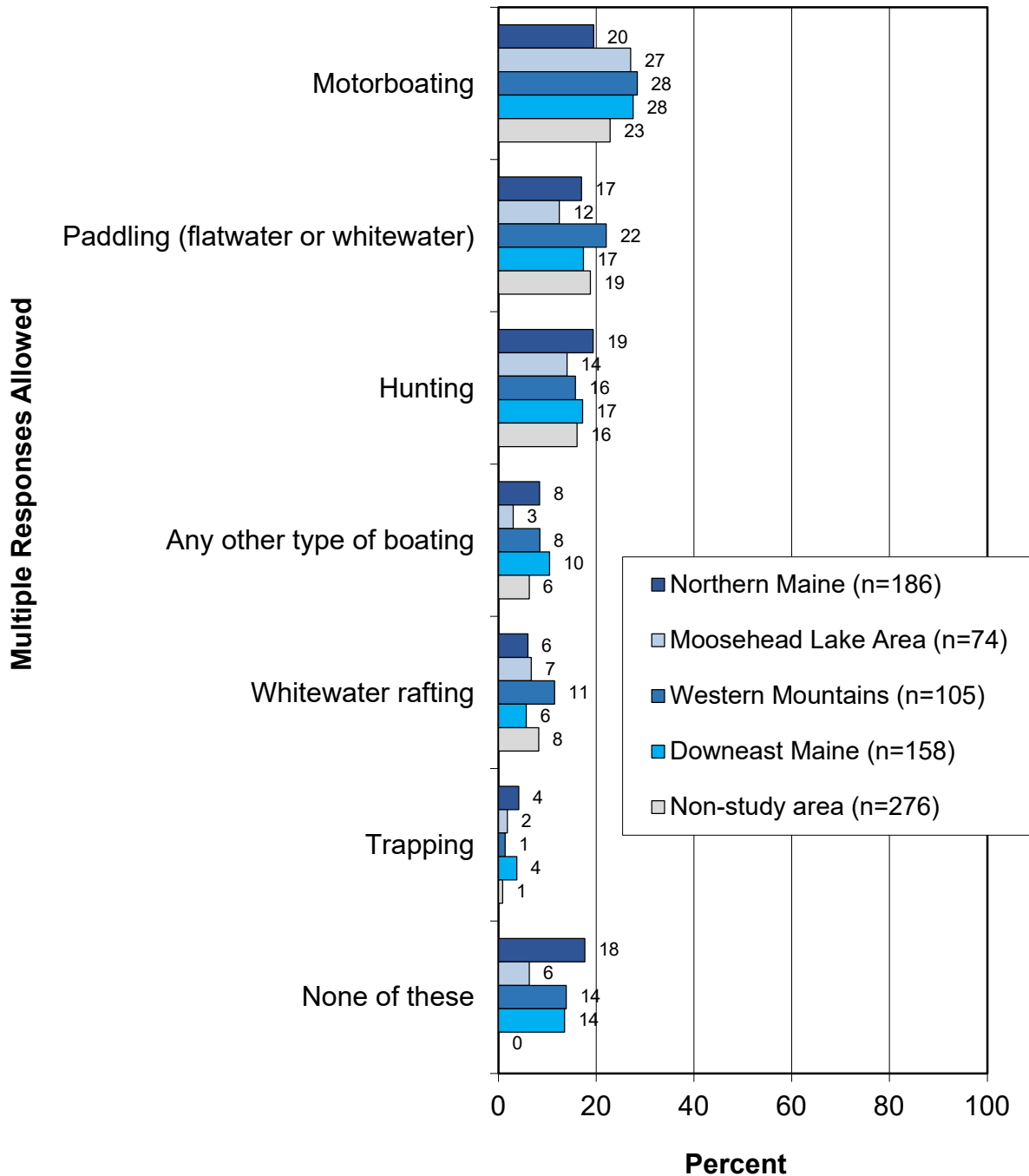
Among the general population, hiking and wildlife viewing are the two most popular outdoor activities in the study area. A second tier of activities includes camping, leaf peeping, outdoor photography, canoeing/kayaking, and fishing. (Regarding hunting, note that some people will think of themselves as being participants even if they did not carry a weapon or actually hunt; they may be camp participants or may simply help butcher and cook meats. Participation was self-defined in the survey.)



Note that this crosstabulation is by where the resident lives. It shows, for instance, that 62% of those living in the non-study area who participated in a recreational activity in the study area went hiking. (By definition—as a requirement to be in the survey—residents of the non-study area had to participate in an outdoor activity in the study area.)

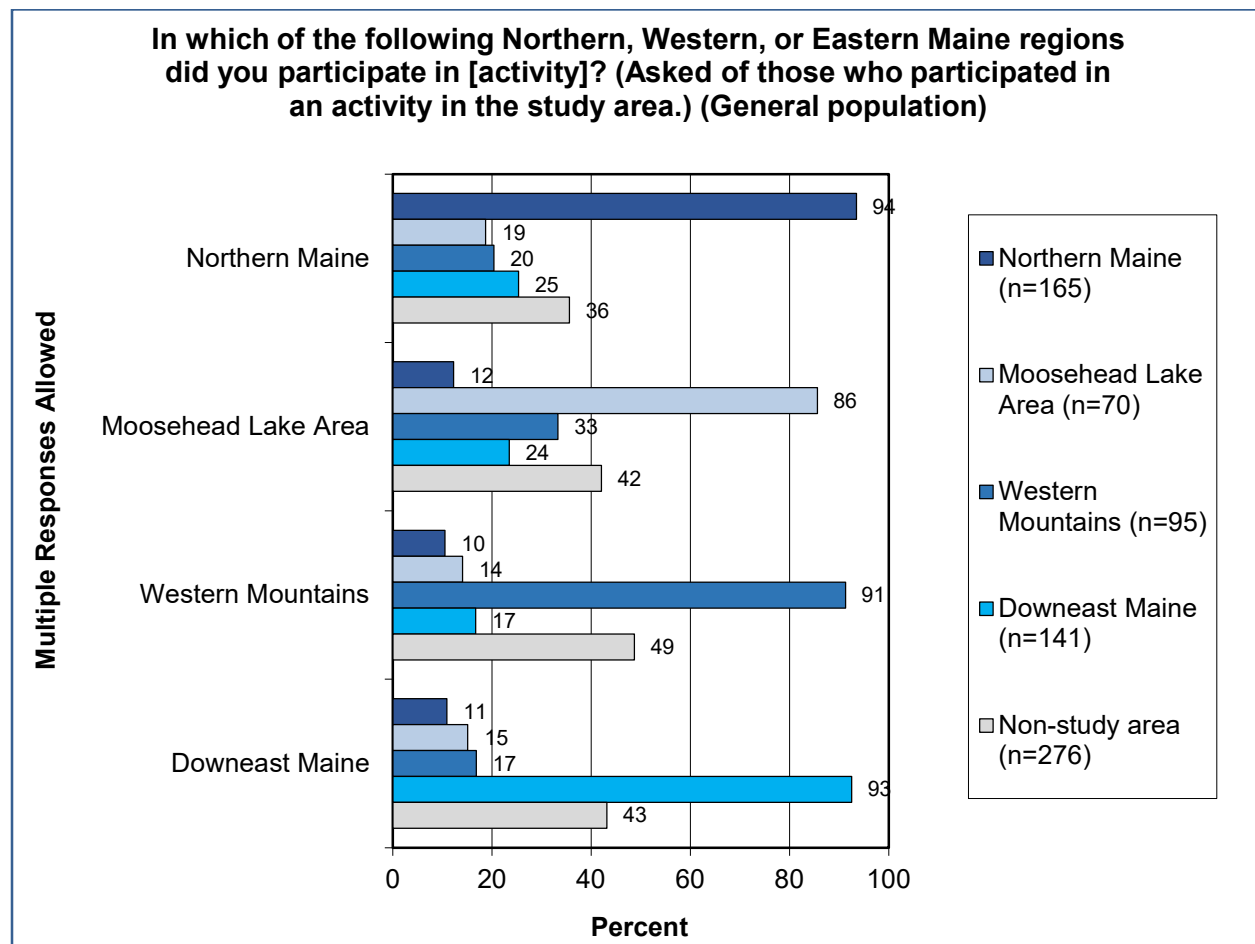
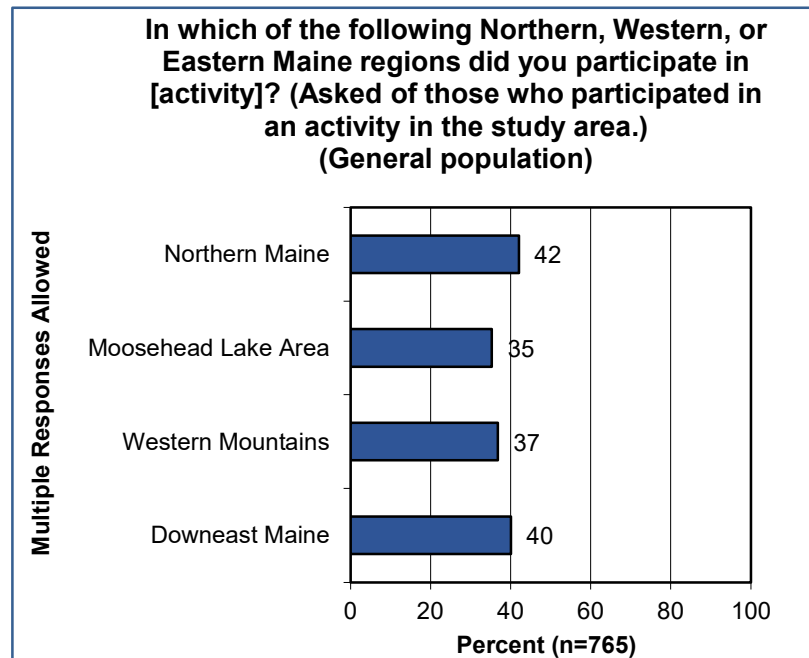


Did you participate in any of the following activities in any of these regions in Northern, Western, or Eastern Maine in the past 5 years? (General population) (Part 2)



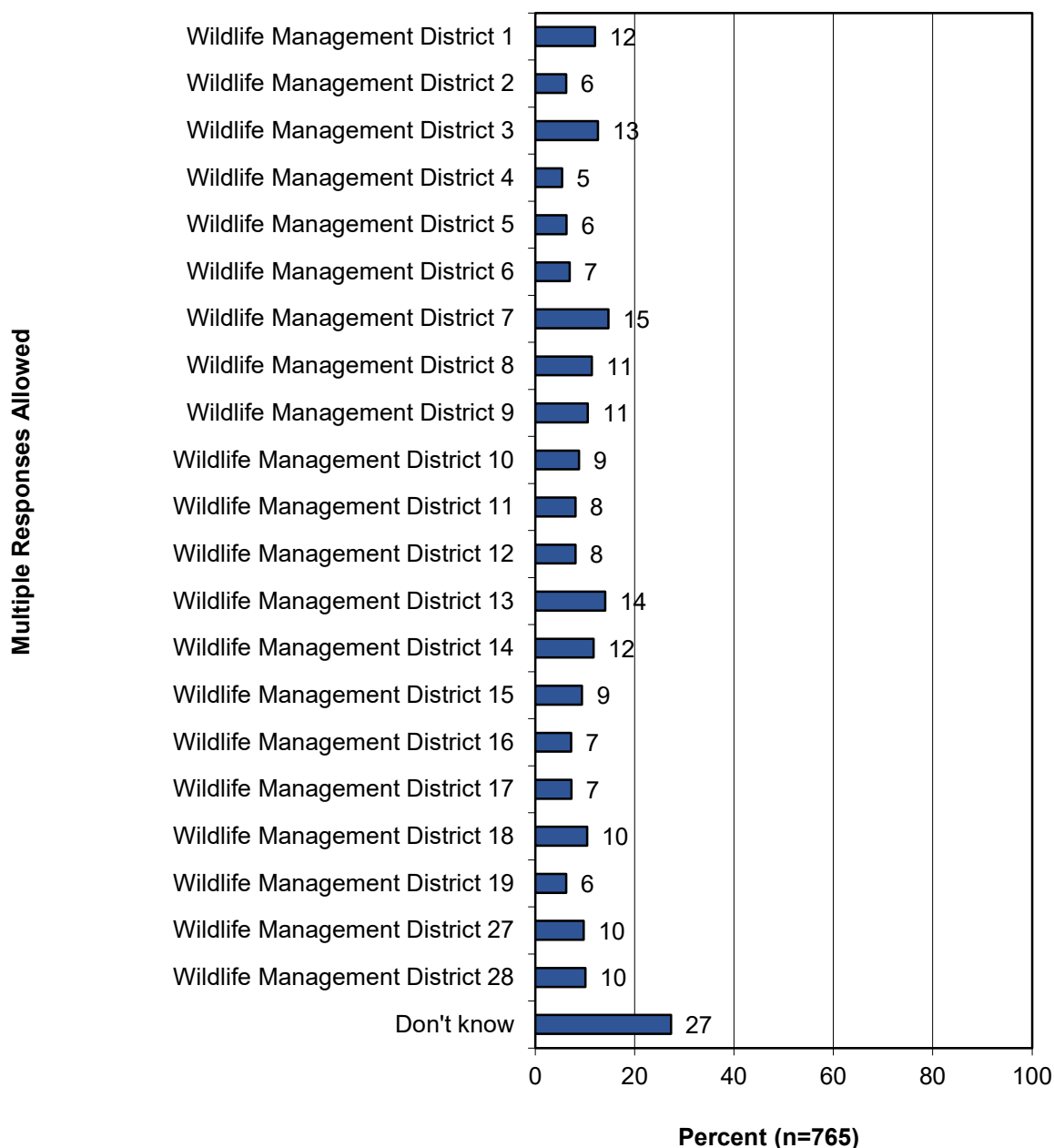
LOCATIONAL INFORMATION

Participation is fairly spread out among the study area regions. Although region residents overwhelmingly engage in recreation in the region in which they live, substantial percentages go to other regions in the study area, as well. The crosstabulation by region of residence is of particular interest to see where non-study area residents go to recreate. They are also spread fairly evenly in their destinations.

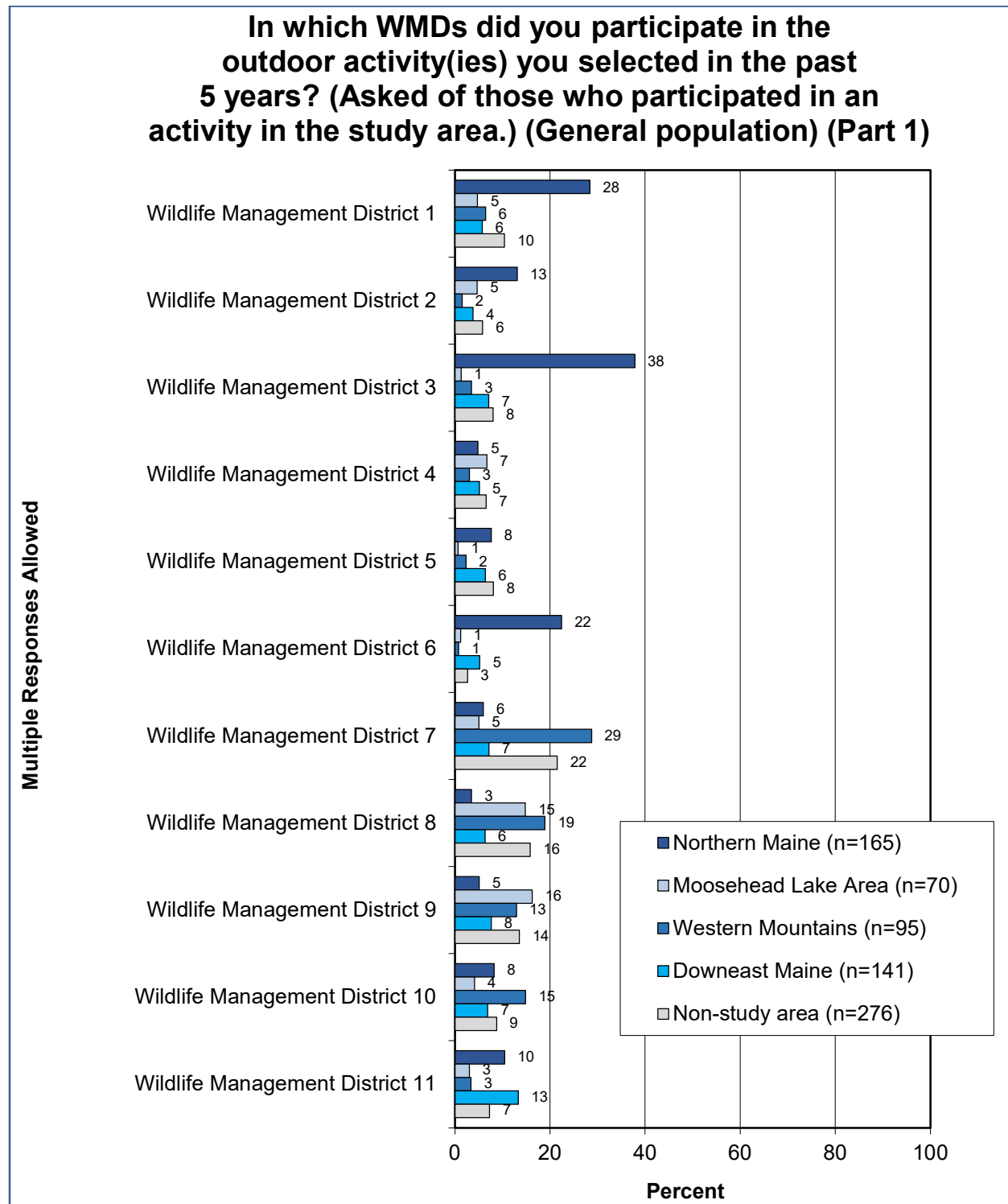


The next graphs show the WMDs in which people engaged in recreation overall (this page) and regionally (next pages). No WMD had less than 5% visiting it for recreation, and none had more than 15%. Following the graphs is a table showing the descriptions of the WMDs that were used in the survey.

In which WMDs did you participate in the outdoor activity(ies) you selected in the past 5 years? (Asked of those who participated in an activity in the study area.) (General population)

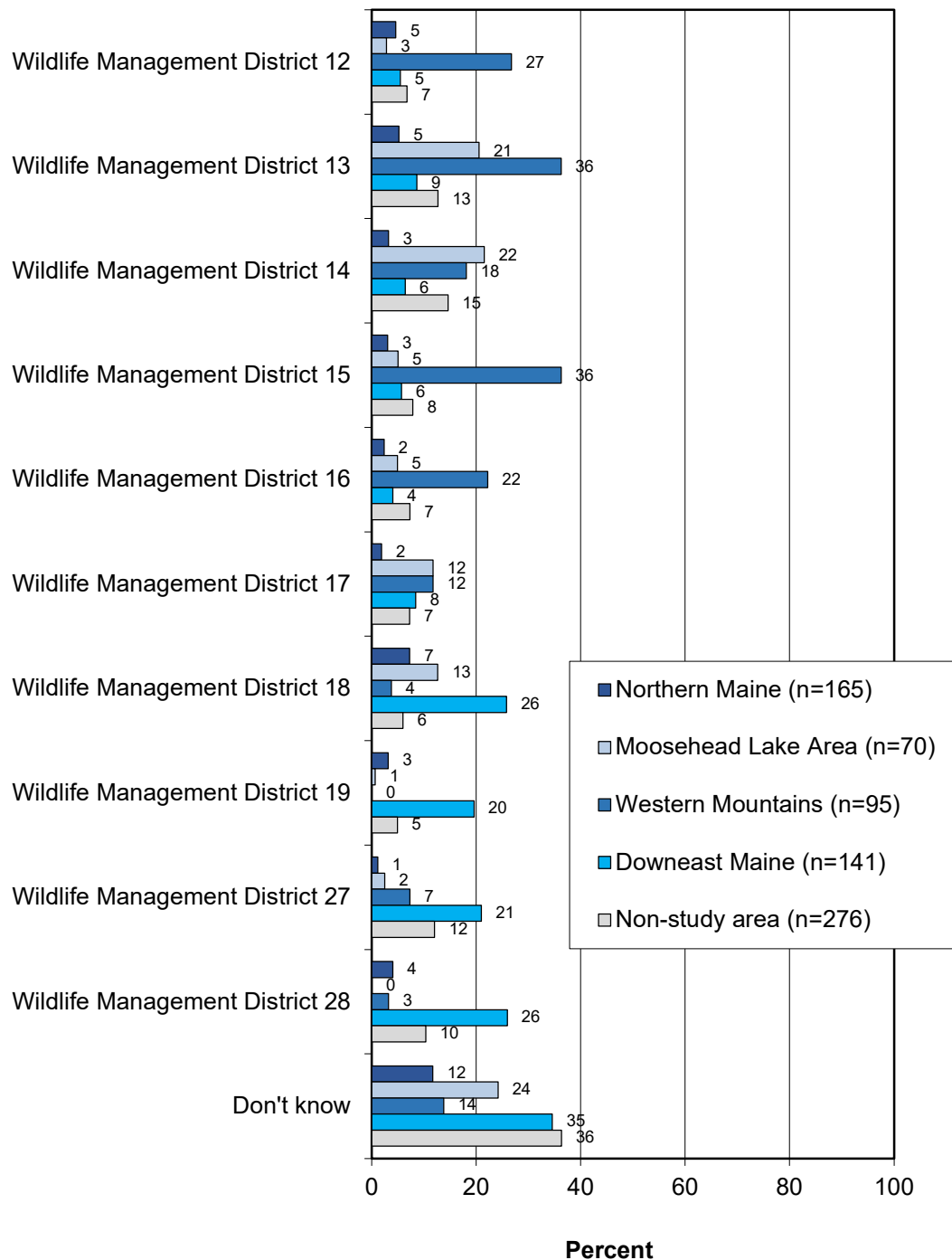


Note that this shows where people travel to recreate, as the crosstabulation is by where the resident lives. While the region in which the WMD is located plays a part, residents from all across the state can visit a specific WMD. As an example of how to interpret the graph, it shows, for instance, that 28% of recreationists who live in Northern Maine went to WMD 1. Meanwhile, only 5% of recreationists who live in the Moosehead Lake Area went to WMD 1.



In which WMDs did you participate in the outdoor activity(ies) you selected in the past 5 years? (Asked of those who participated in an activity in the study area.) (General population) (Part 2)

Multiple Responses Allowed

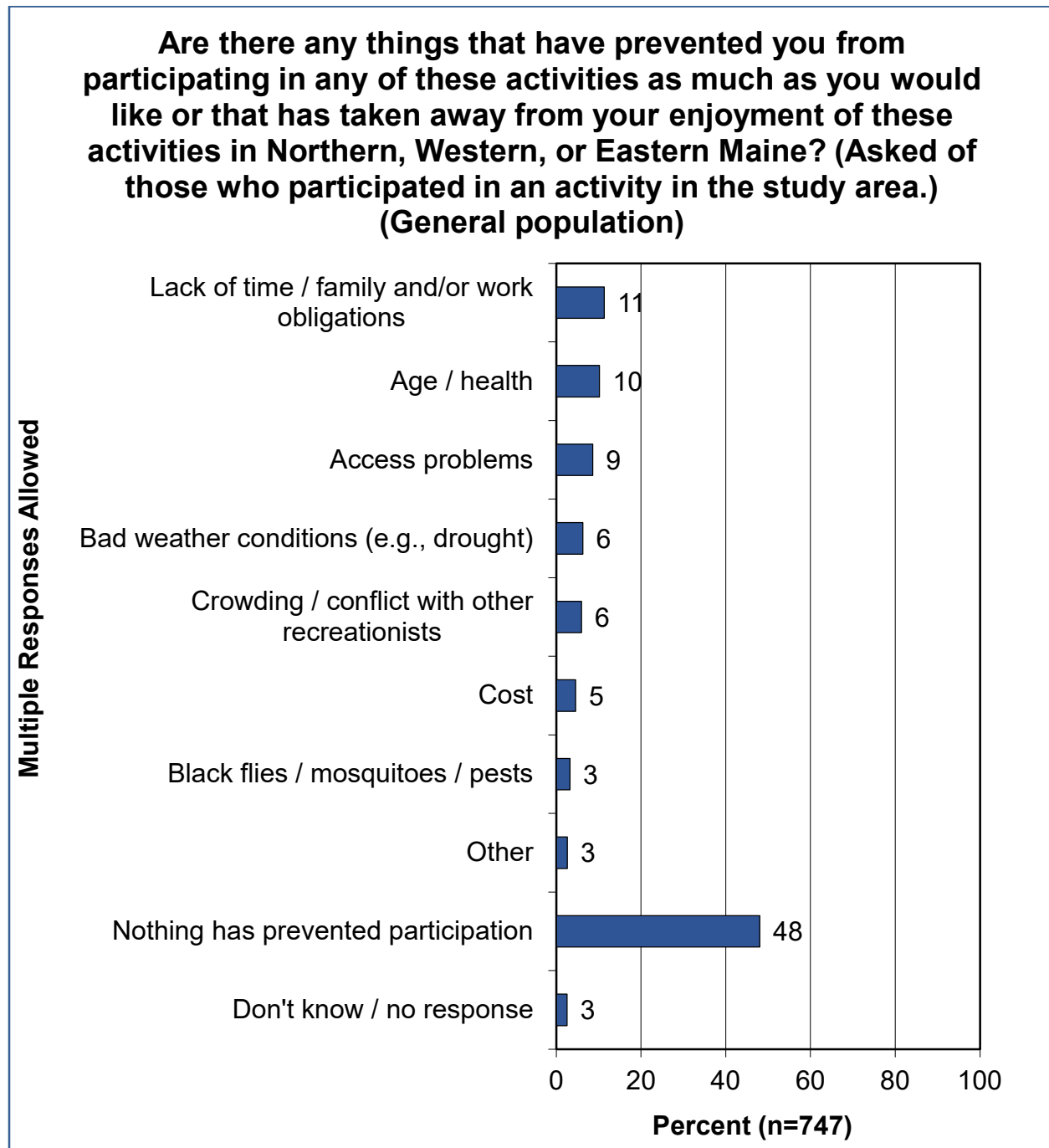


The WMDs were described in the survey as follows:

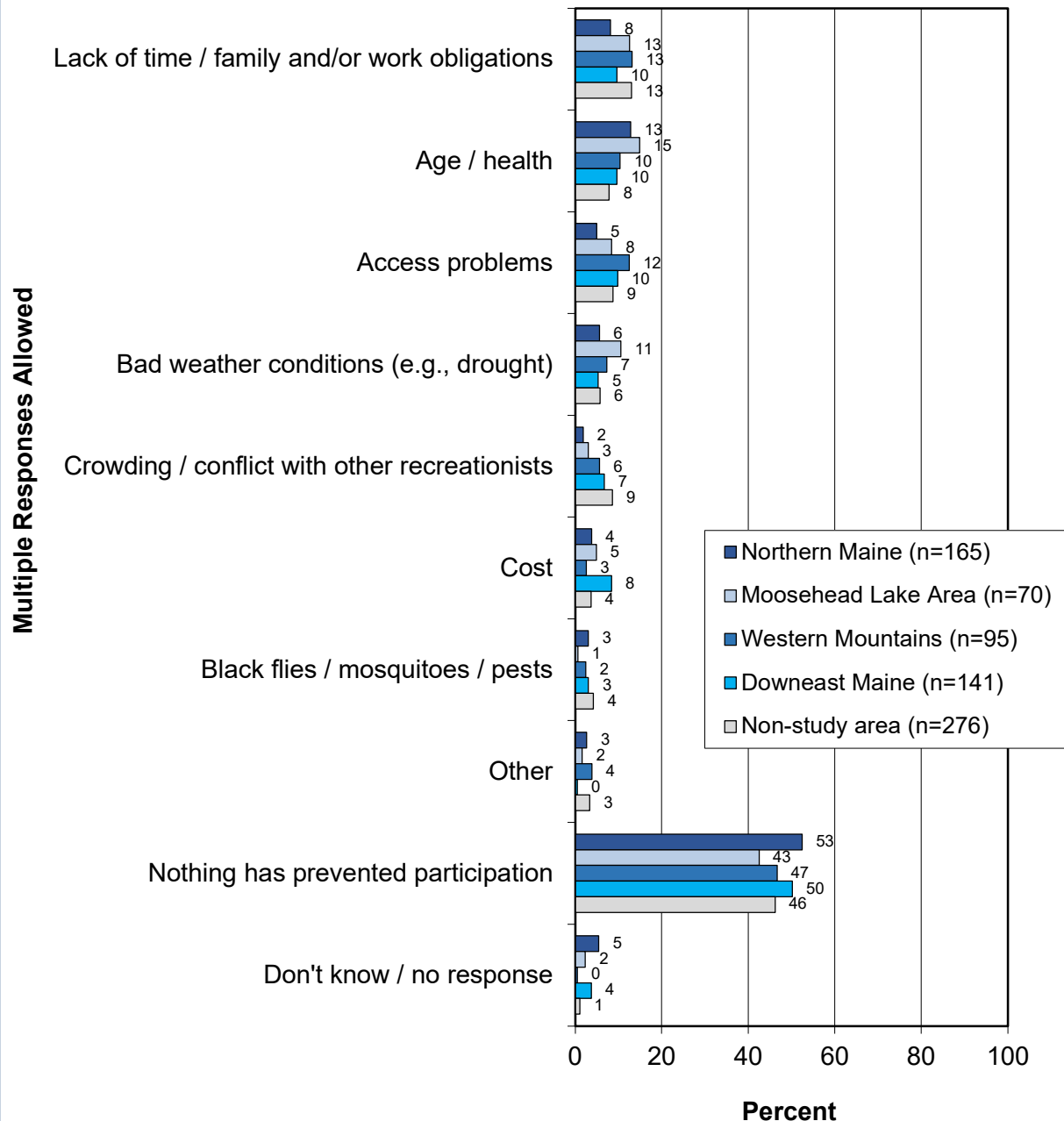
Wildlife Management District 1 (North Maine Woods - Upper St. John River Valley)
Wildlife Management District 2 (North Maine Woods - Clayton Lake to St. Francis)
Wildlife Management District 3 (Northern Aroostook County Farmland)
Wildlife Management District 4 (North Maine Woods - Chesuncook Lake to Daaquam)
Wildlife Management District 5 (North Maine Woods - Matagamon to Big Machias River)
Wildlife Management District 6 (Central Aroostook County Farmland)
Wildlife Management District 7 (Western Maine Mountains - Rangeley Area)
Wildlife Management District 8 (Western Maine Mountains - Eustis to Jackman Area)
Wildlife Management District 9 (Western Maine Mountains - East of Moosehead Lake)
Wildlife Management District 10 (Western Maine Mountains - Foothills East of Baxter Park)
Wildlife Management District 11 (South Aroostook, North Penobscot, North Washington County Farm - Woodlands)
Wildlife Management District 12 (Western Mountains Foothills - Upper Androscoggin Valley)
Wildlife Management District 13 (Western Mountains Foothills - Franklin and Somerset County Areas)
Wildlife Management District 14 (Western Mountains Foothills - South and East of Moosehead Lake)
Wildlife Management District 15 (Oxford County Foothills)
Wildlife Management District 16 (Belgrade Lakes Area)
Wildlife Management District 17 (North-Central Maine Farm - Woodlands)
Wildlife Management District 18 (Mid-Penobscot River Valley)
Wildlife Management District 19 (Eastern Maine Woodlands - North of the Airline)
Wildlife Management District 27 (Eastern Coastal Plain)
Wildlife Management District 28 (Eastern Maine Woodlands - South of Route 9 (the airline))

CONSTRAINTS TO PARTICIPATION IN OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES IN THE STUDY AREA

The top constraints to recreation among those who engaged in recreation are social: lack of time and age/health. However, access is also a problem to some, and it is a problem over which agencies and organizations have some influence. Likewise, crowding/conflicts with other recreationists is also a common problem over which agencies and organizations may be able to ameliorate. Regional results are shown on the next page.



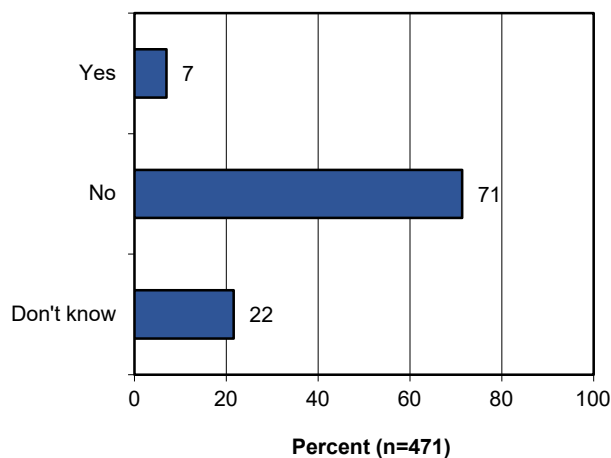
Are there any things that have prevented you from participating in any of these activities as much as you would like or that has taken away from your enjoyment of these activities in Northern, Western, or Eastern Maine? (Asked of those who participated in an activity in the study area.) (General population)



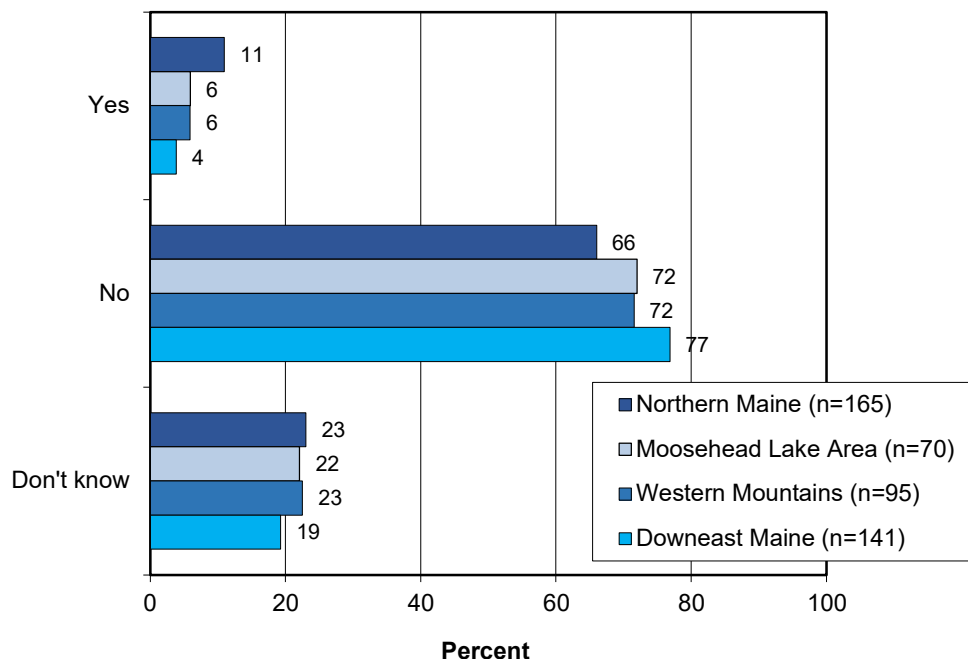
CONFLICTS WHERE RESIDENTS LIVE

Some parts of the survey discussed conflicts with hunters and other recreationists where people engage in recreation, and these results are in the chapter, “Results Among Outdoor Recreationists.” The survey then asked those who live in the study area (and who engaged in recreation there) if they had experienced conflicts where they live: 7% had experienced conflicts during moose hunting season. The highest rate of conflict was in Northern Maine. A follow-up question asked about the nature of the conflict; not enough received the question to be shown in a graph, but the conflicts primarily involved poor hunter behavior.

We've asked about conflicts you have experienced in the areas where you participate in outdoor recreation. In addition to those conflicts you experienced while recreating, have you experienced conflicts with anyone else at all during moose hunting season in the area where you live? (Asked of those who live in the study area and participated in one of the listed activities in the study area.) (General population)

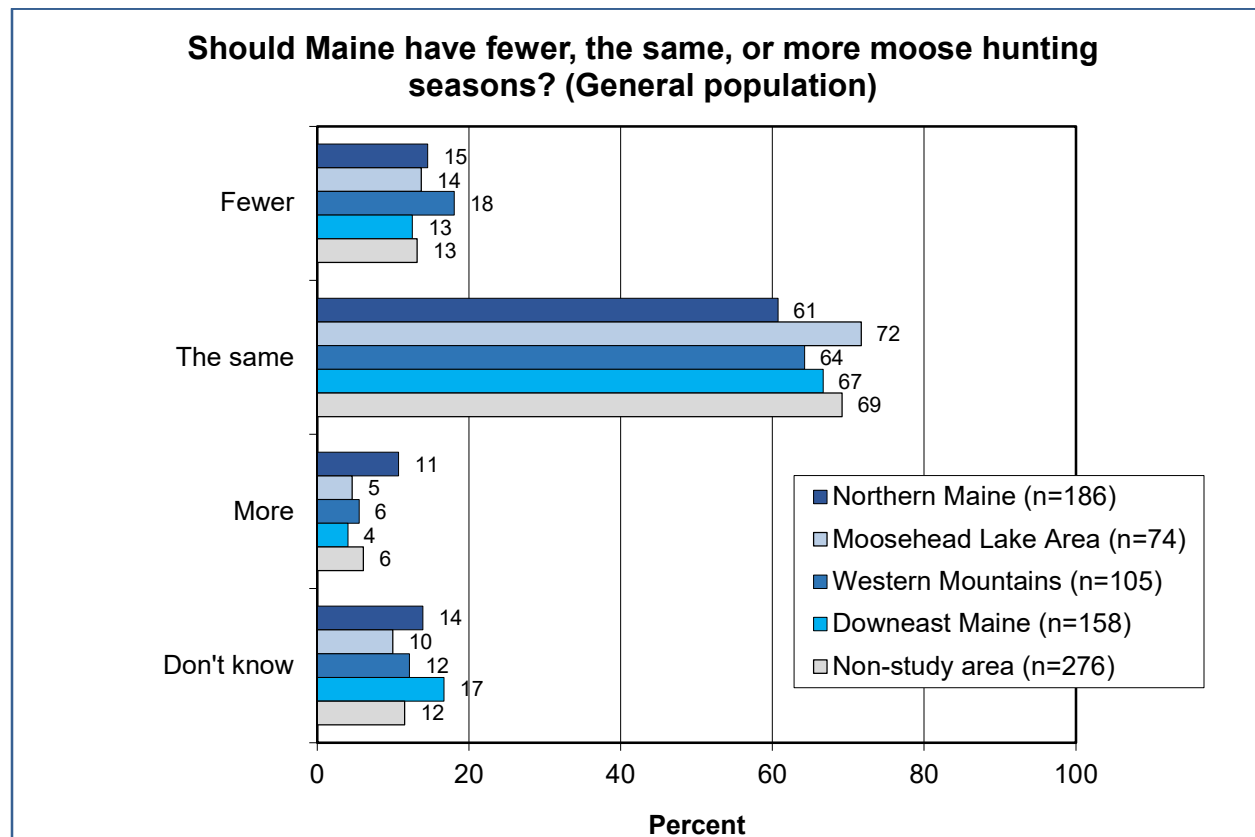
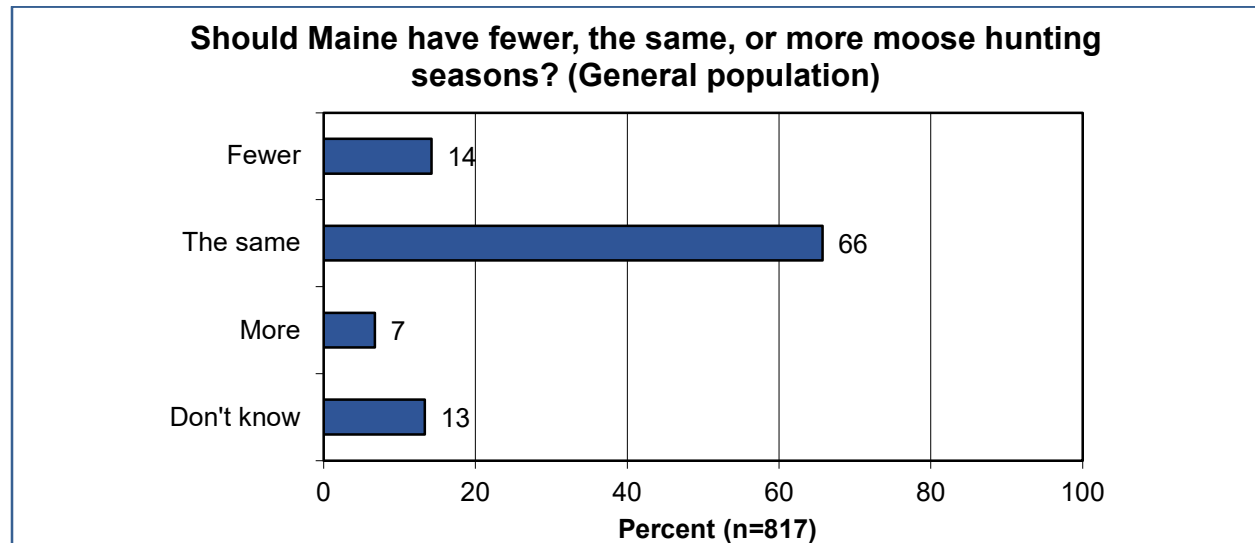


We've asked about conflicts you have experienced in the areas where you participate in outdoor recreation. In addition to those conflicts you experienced while recreating, have you experienced conflicts with anyone else at all during moose hunting season in the area where you live? (Asked of those who live in the study area and participated in one of the listed activities in the study area.) (General population)

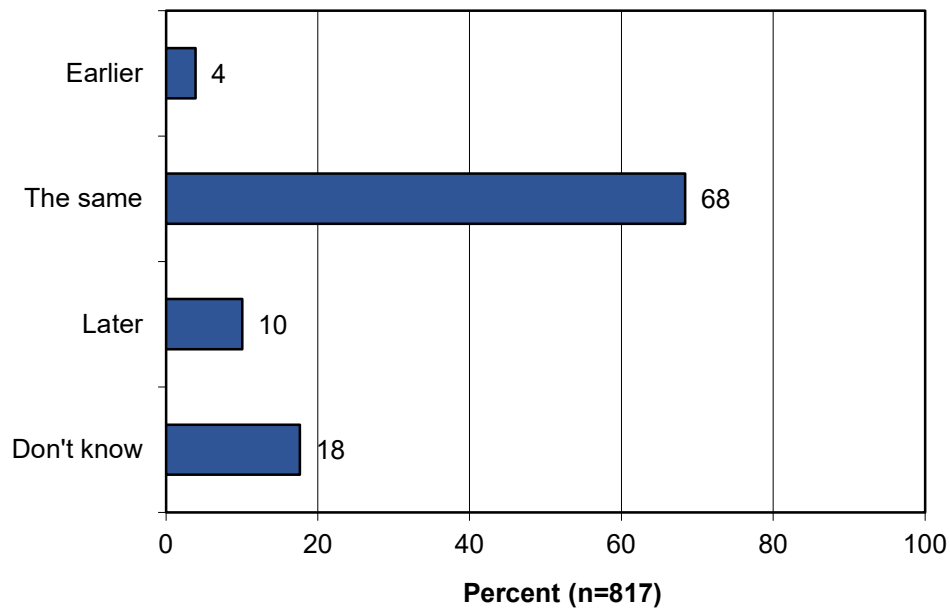


OPINIONS ON MOOSE HUNTING SEASONS

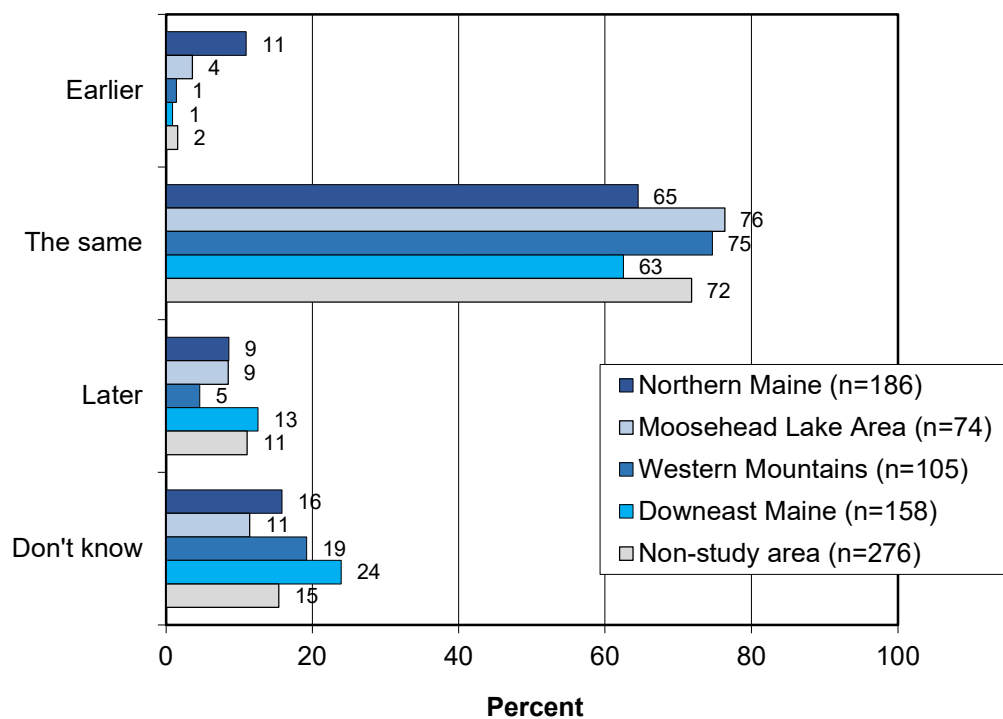
Residents were asked about their opinions on the number and timing of moose hunting seasons. Majorities want the same number of moose seasons (66% do), the same timing of moose seasons (68%), and the same lengths of moose seasons (60%). Otherwise, a greater percentage of them want fewer than more seasons and a greater percentage of them want later than earlier seasons. They are evenly split regarding wanting longer or shorter seasons. These graphs are shown below and on the next couple of pages, along with regional results.



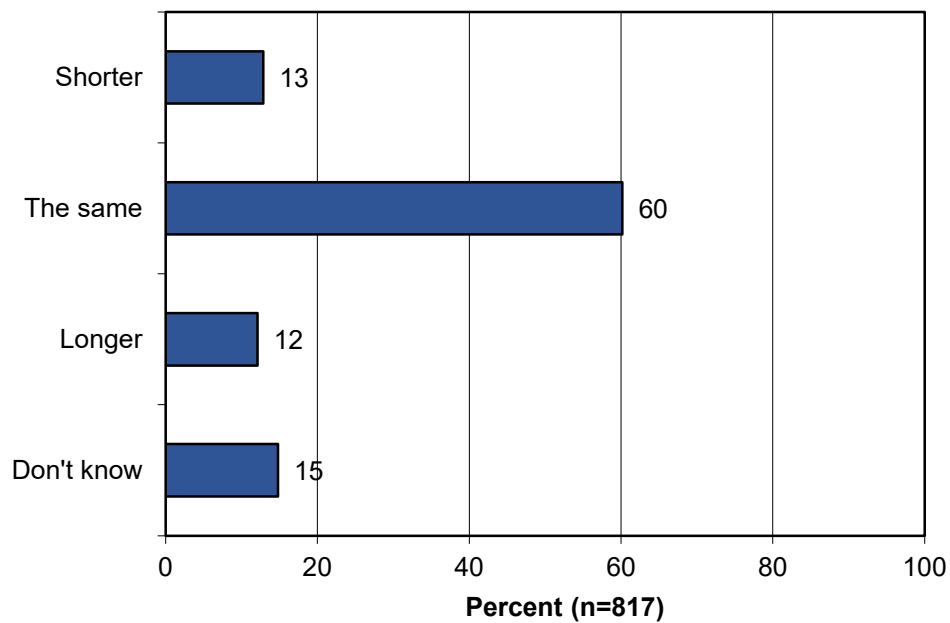
Should Maine's moose seasons occur earlier, the same, or later? (General population)



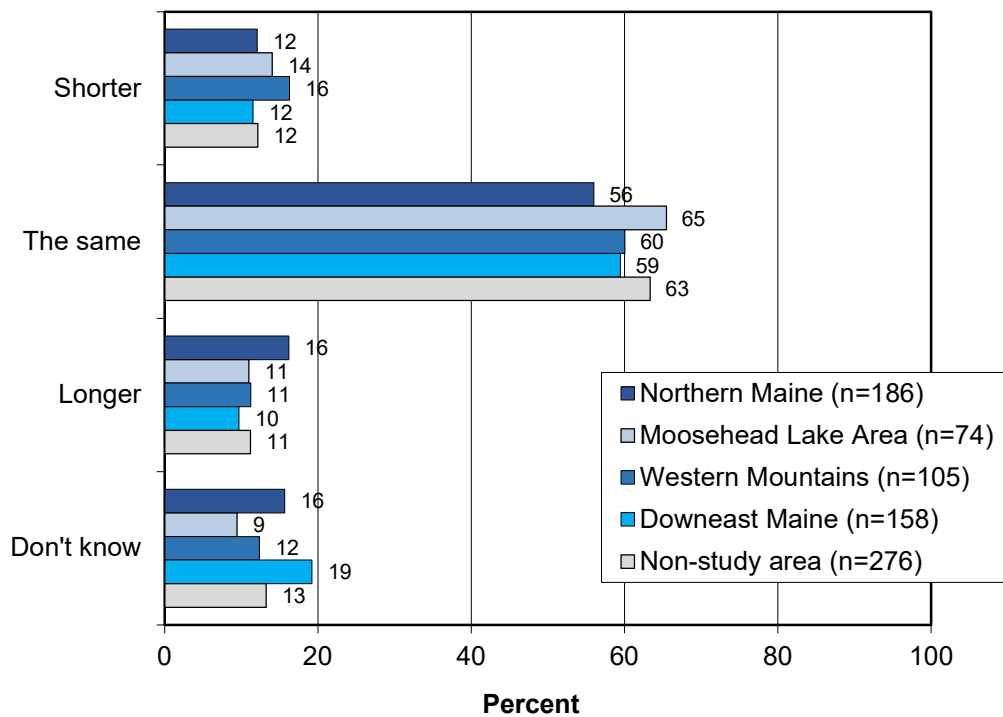
Should Maine's moose seasons occur earlier, the same, or later? (General population)



Should Maine's moose season length be shorter, the same, or longer? (General population)



Should Maine's moose season length be shorter, the same, or longer? (General population)



Two of the three aforementioned questions were included in the demographic analyses: opinion on the number of moose seasons and the length of moose seasons. This produced the six demographic analyses graphs that follow. To summarize them:

Wanting fewer moose hunting seasons is associated with:

- Wanting shorter moose seasons.
- Opposing moose hunting and a hunt that would allow calves to be hunted.
- Thinking the moose population in Maine is too low.
- Not strongly agreeing that they trust the Department to manage moose.

Wanting the same number of moose hunting seasons is associated with:

- Wanting the length of the seasons to be the same.
- Supporting moose hunting and a season that would allow calves to be hunted.
- Thinking the moose population is about right.
- Strongly agreeing that they trust the Department to manage moose.

Wanting more moose hunting seasons is associated with:

- Wanting the length of the seasons to be longer.

The associations with wanting shorter moose hunting seasons are essentially the same as for wanting fewer moose hunting seasons (the exception being that trust in the Department is *not* markedly associated with this opinion, although it is close).

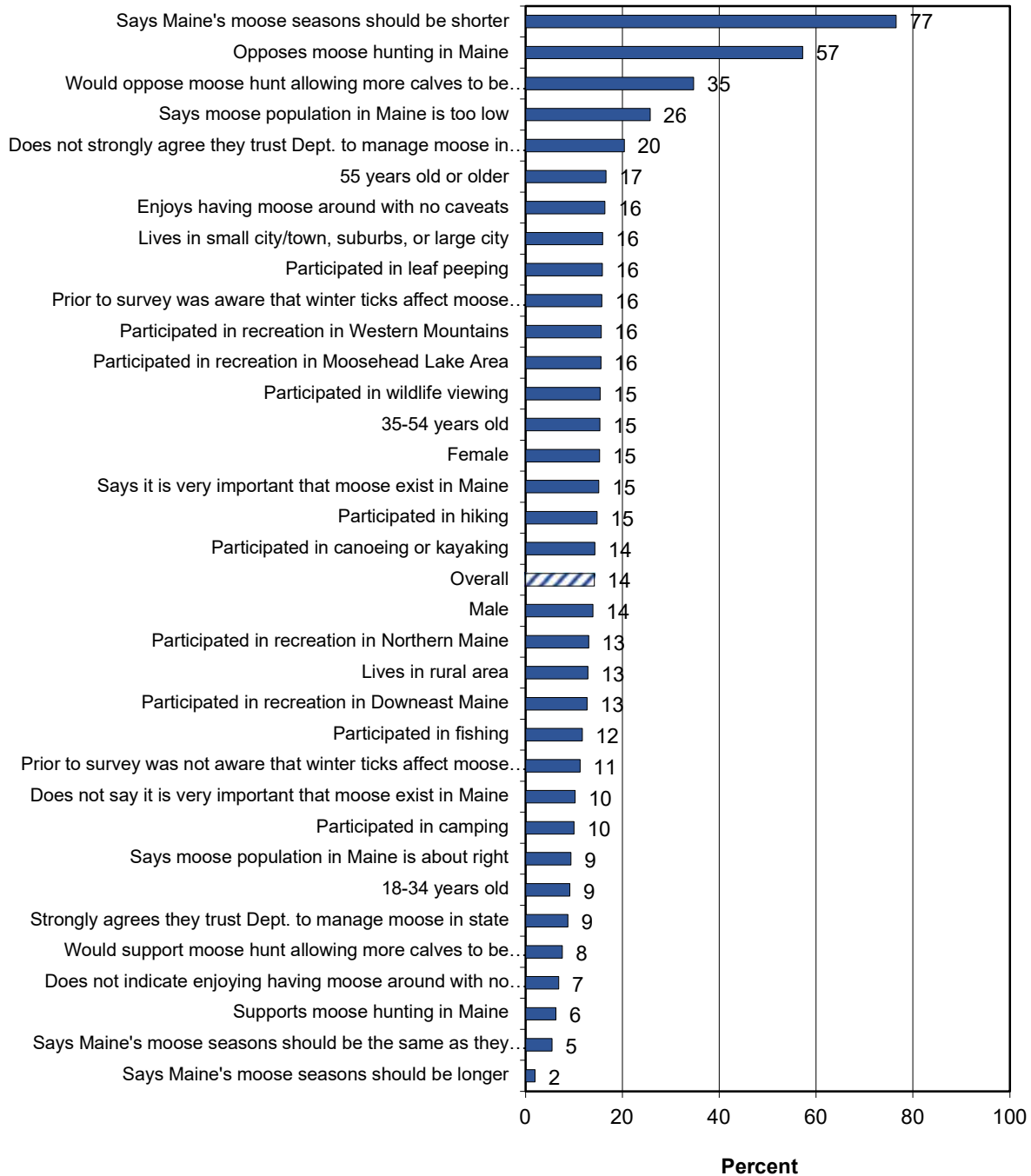
The associations with wanting the seasons to be the same length are exactly like those for wanting the same number of moose hunting seasons.

The association with wanting longer seasons parallels the association with wanting more seasons: those who want longer seasons also want more seasons.

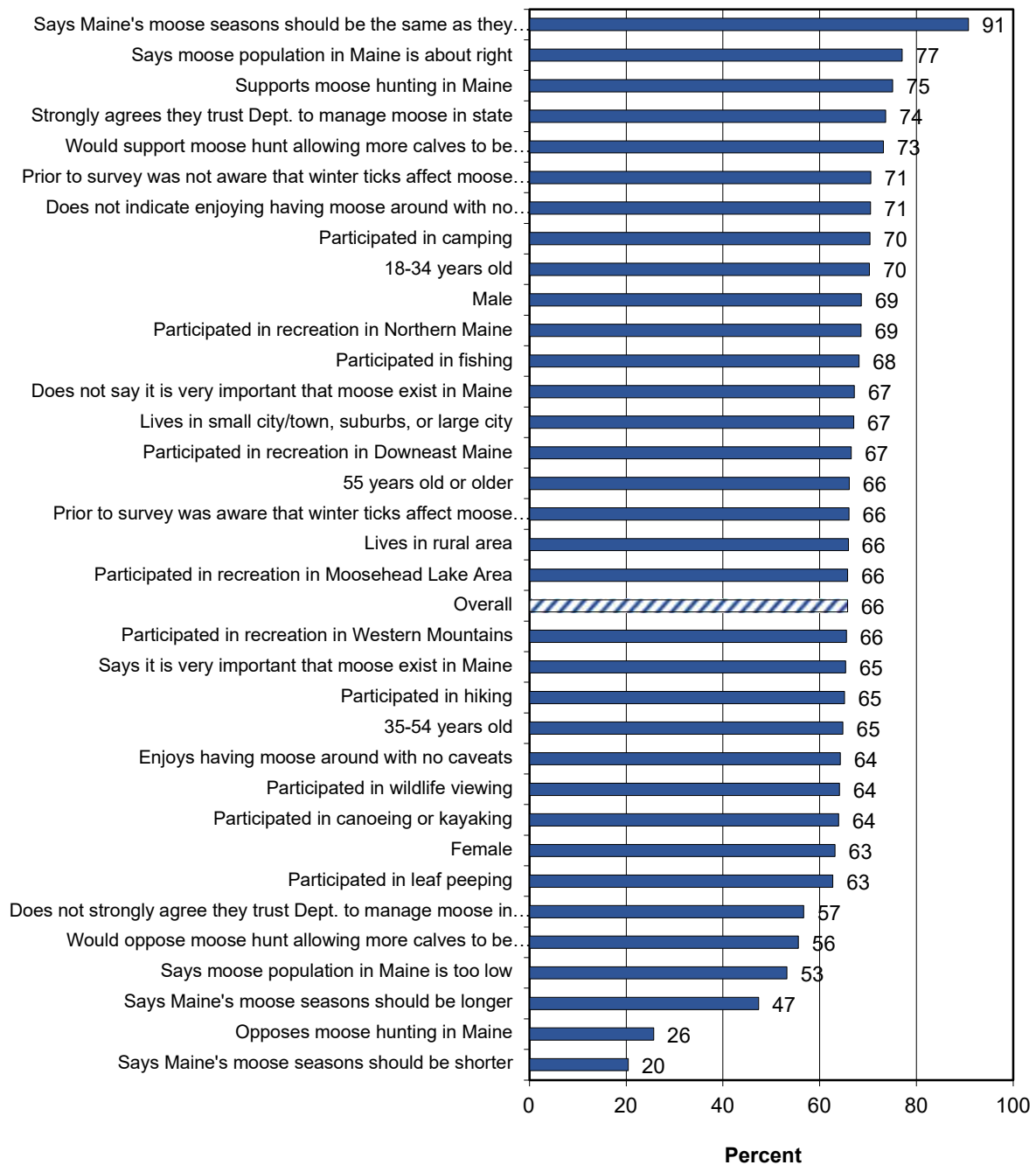
These graphs are shown on the next six pages, as each requires a full page for display. Also note that some labels were necessarily truncated for them to fit on the graph. Those that were truncated are shown in full below:

- Does not indicate enjoying having moose around with no caveats
- Says Maine's moose seasons should be the same as they currently are in length
- Says Maine should have the same number of moose hunting seasons
- Would support moose hunt allowing more calves to be harvested
- Would oppose moose hunt allowing more calves to be harvested
- Prior to survey was aware that winter ticks affect moose population
- Prior to survey was not aware that winter ticks affect moose population
- Does not strongly agree they trust Dept. to manage moose in state

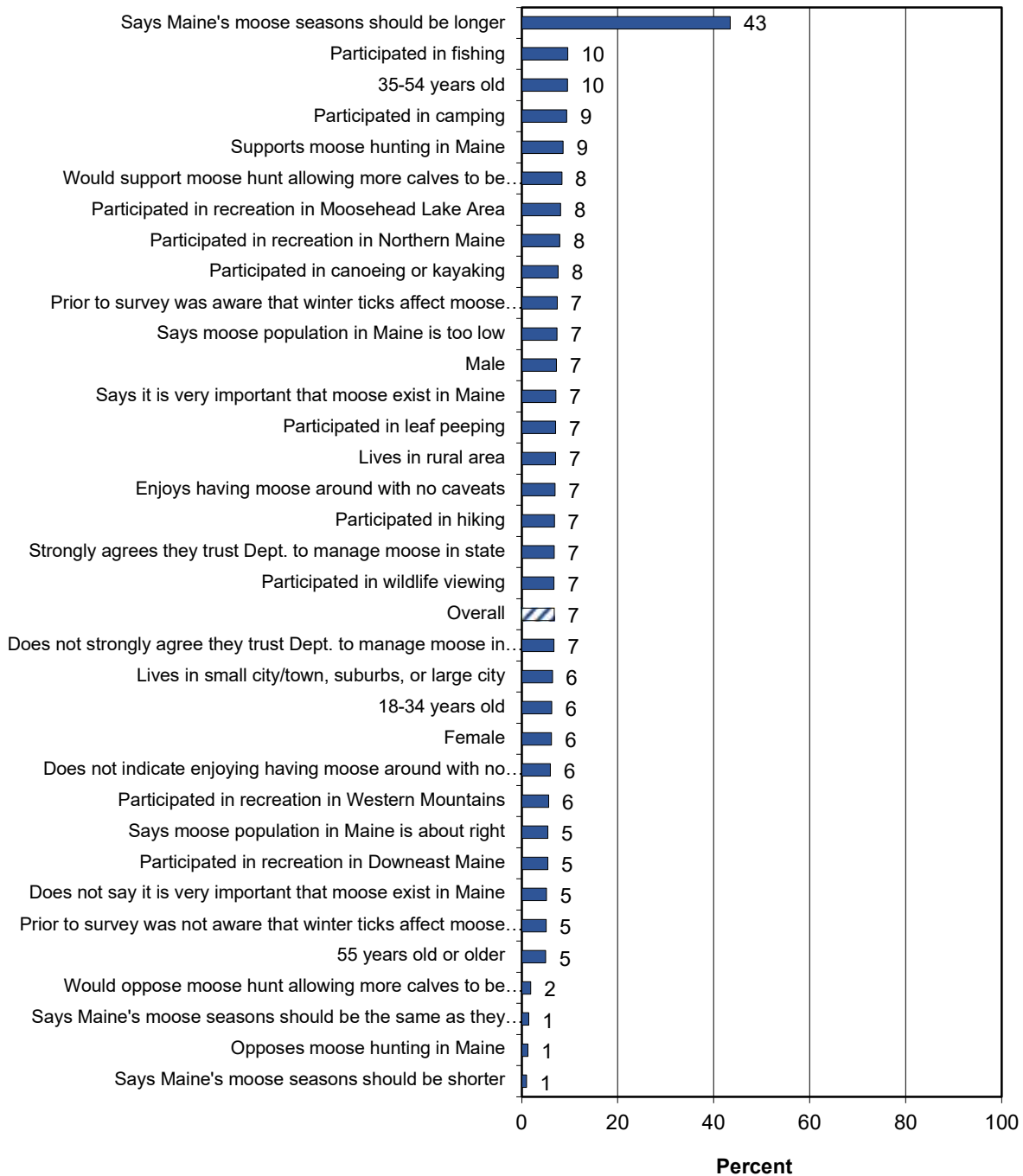
**Percent of the following groups who say that Maine should have fewer moose hunting seasons.
(General population)**



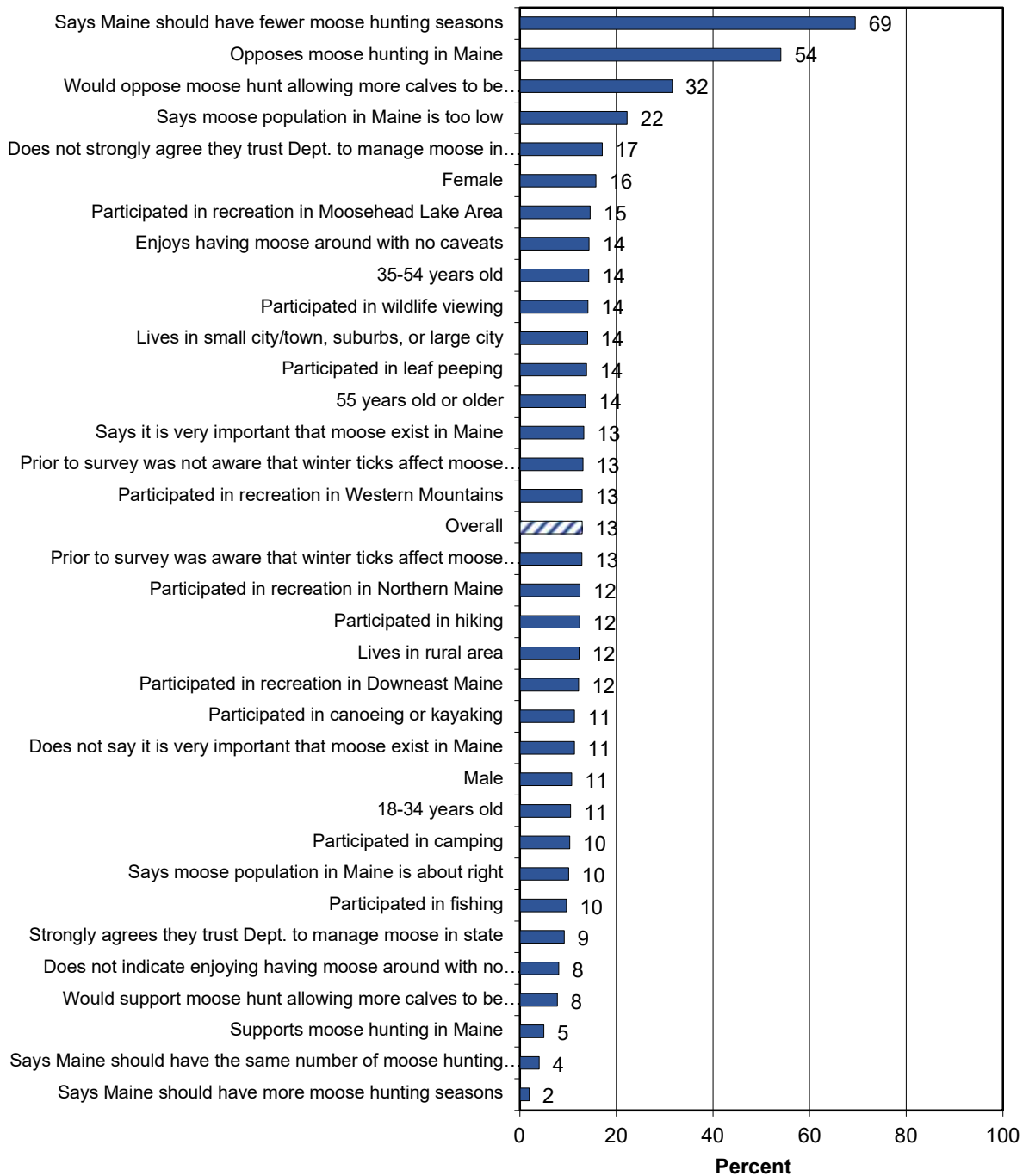
Percent of the following groups who say that Maine should have the same number of moose hunting seasons. (General population)



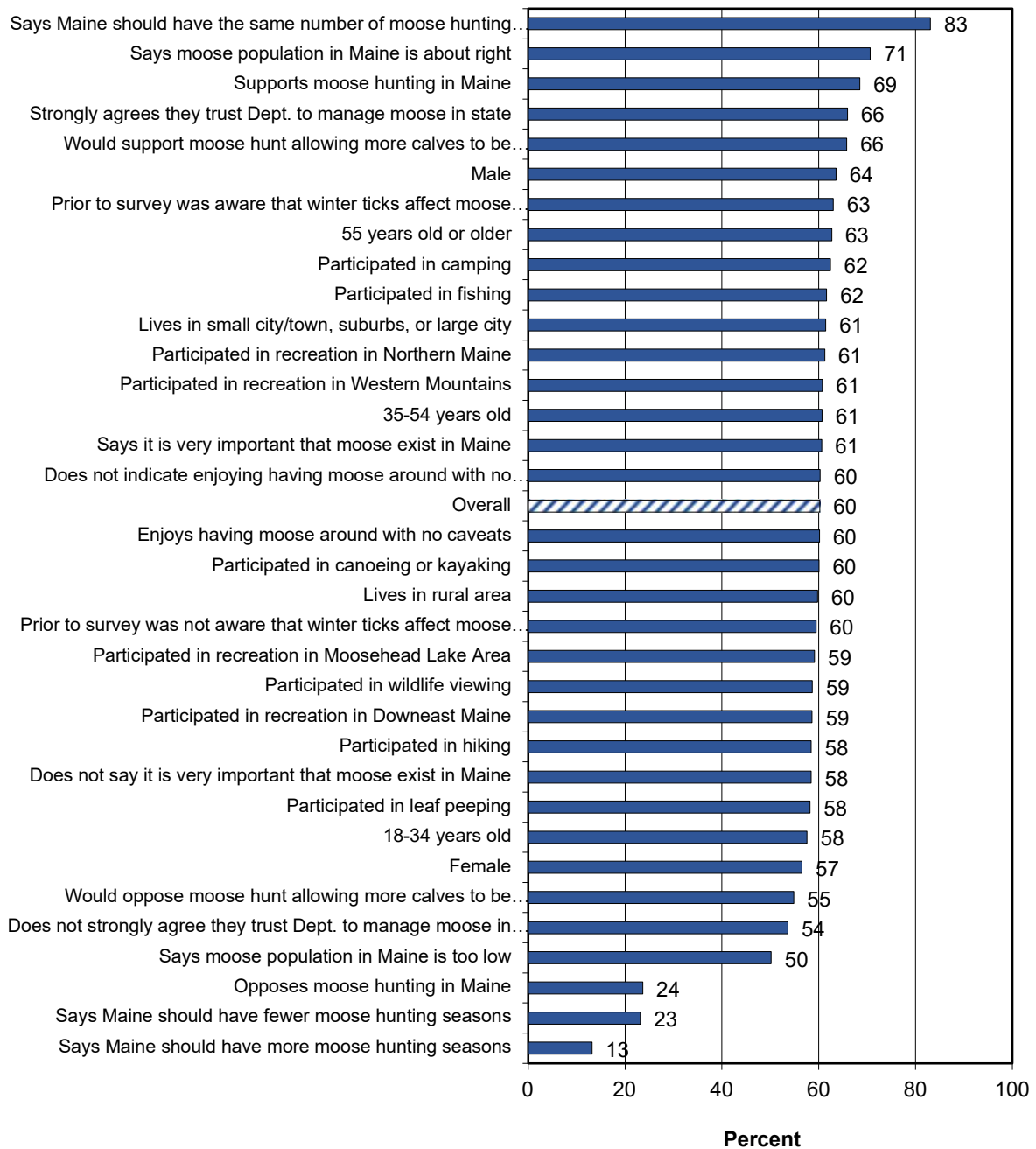
**Percent of the following groups who say that Maine should have more moose hunting seasons.
(General population)**



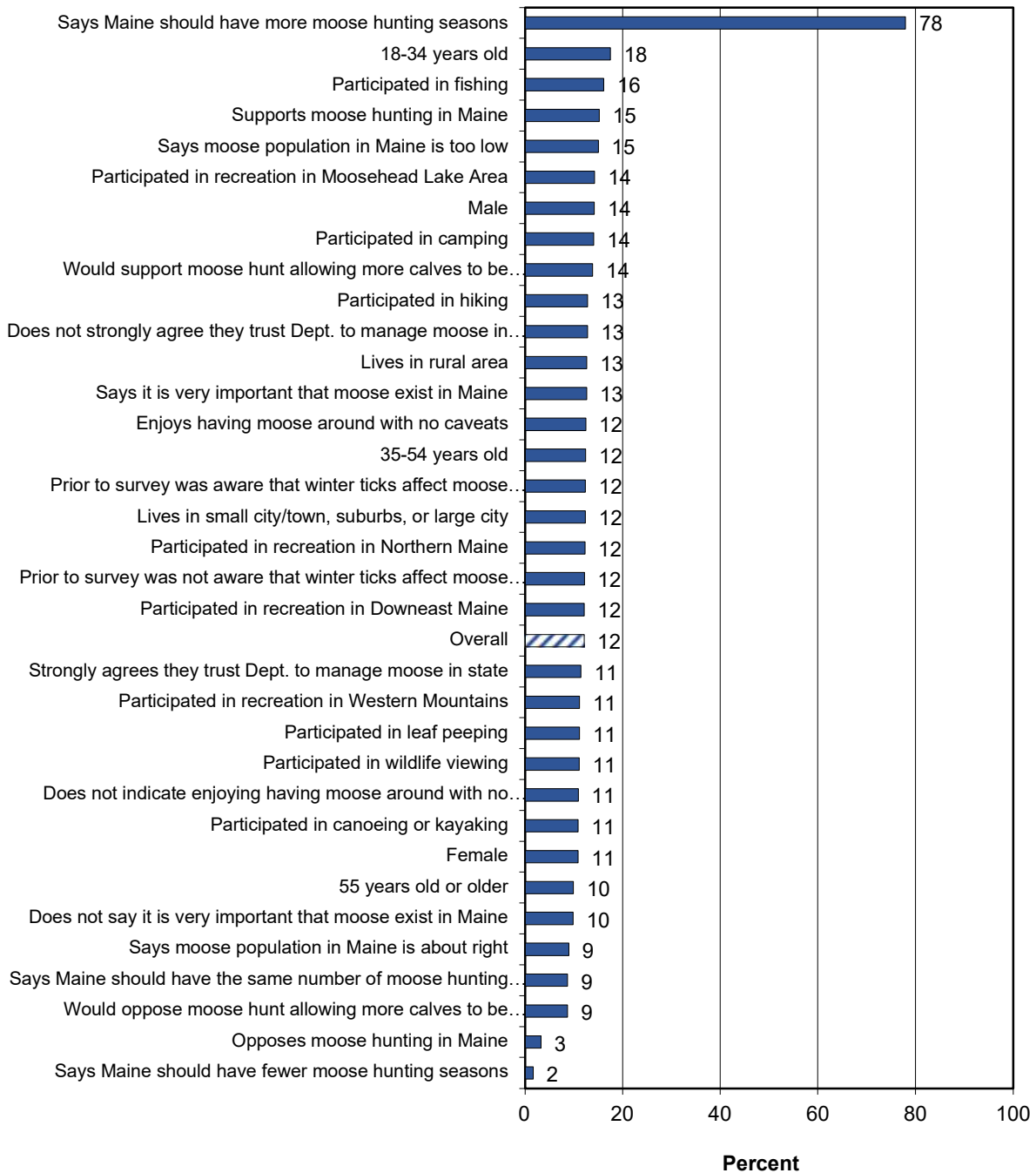
**Percent of the following groups who say that Maine's
moose seasons should be shorter.
(General population)**



Percent of the following groups who say that Maine's moose seasons should be the same length as they currently are. (General population)



Percent of the following groups who say that Maine's moose seasons should be longer. (General population)



These next questions about the moose season were asked of the general population as well as of hunters (see the chapter, “Results Among Hunters,” for those latter results). Prior to the question, the following information was given:

Next, we would like to know if you support or oppose some potential moose hunting season changes. These potential changes would be in an effort to reduce any potential conflict between residents, moose hunters, other hunters, other recreationists, guides, visitors, tourists, and landowners in Northern, Western, and Eastern Maine during moose hunting season. Each of the potential changes would occur without increasing the total number of moose permits issued to hunters each year.

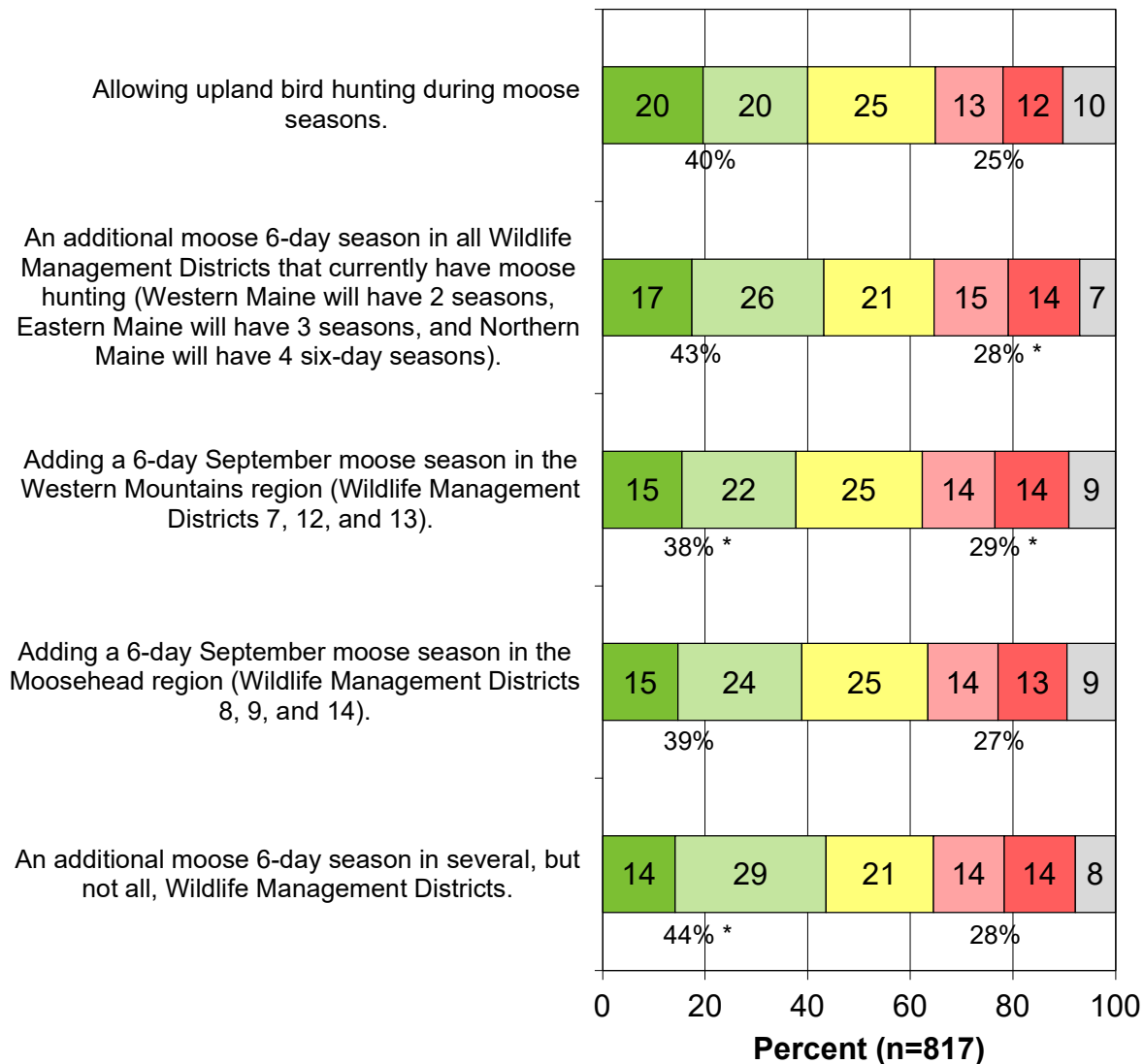
General population residents, which include both hunters and non-hunters, are fairly divided on the questions, with relatively robust percentages in support and in opposition. The results do not markedly differ from one potential hunting season change to the next. Regional results follow.

These graphs start on the next page, as each graph needs a full page for display. The potential changes are ranked by the *strongly* support percentage. Sums of support and oppose are shown below each bar, summed on unrounded values.

* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

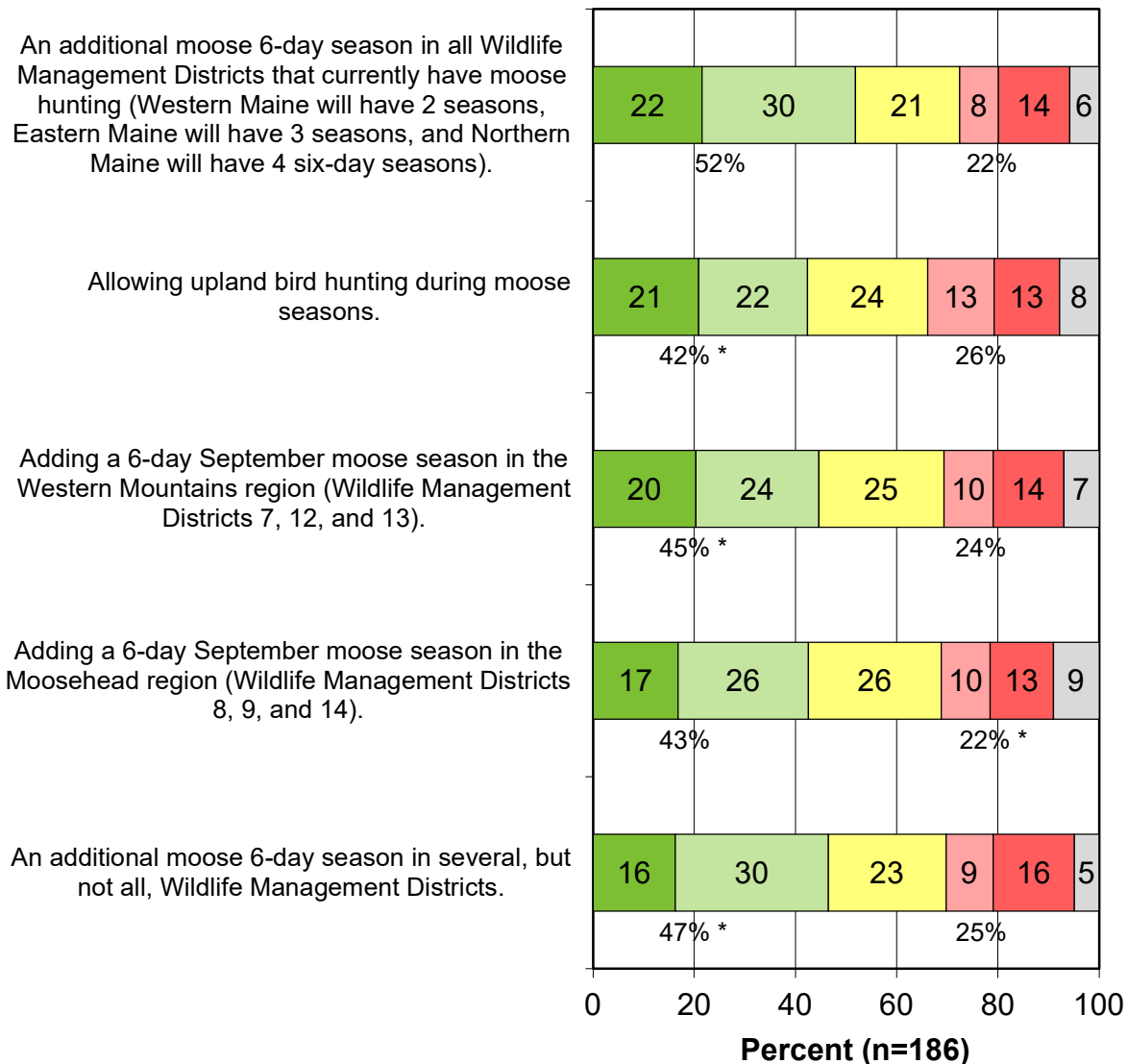
Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes. (Overall) (General population)

Strongly support Moderately support Neither Moderately oppose Strongly oppose Don't know



Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes. (Northern Maine) (General population)

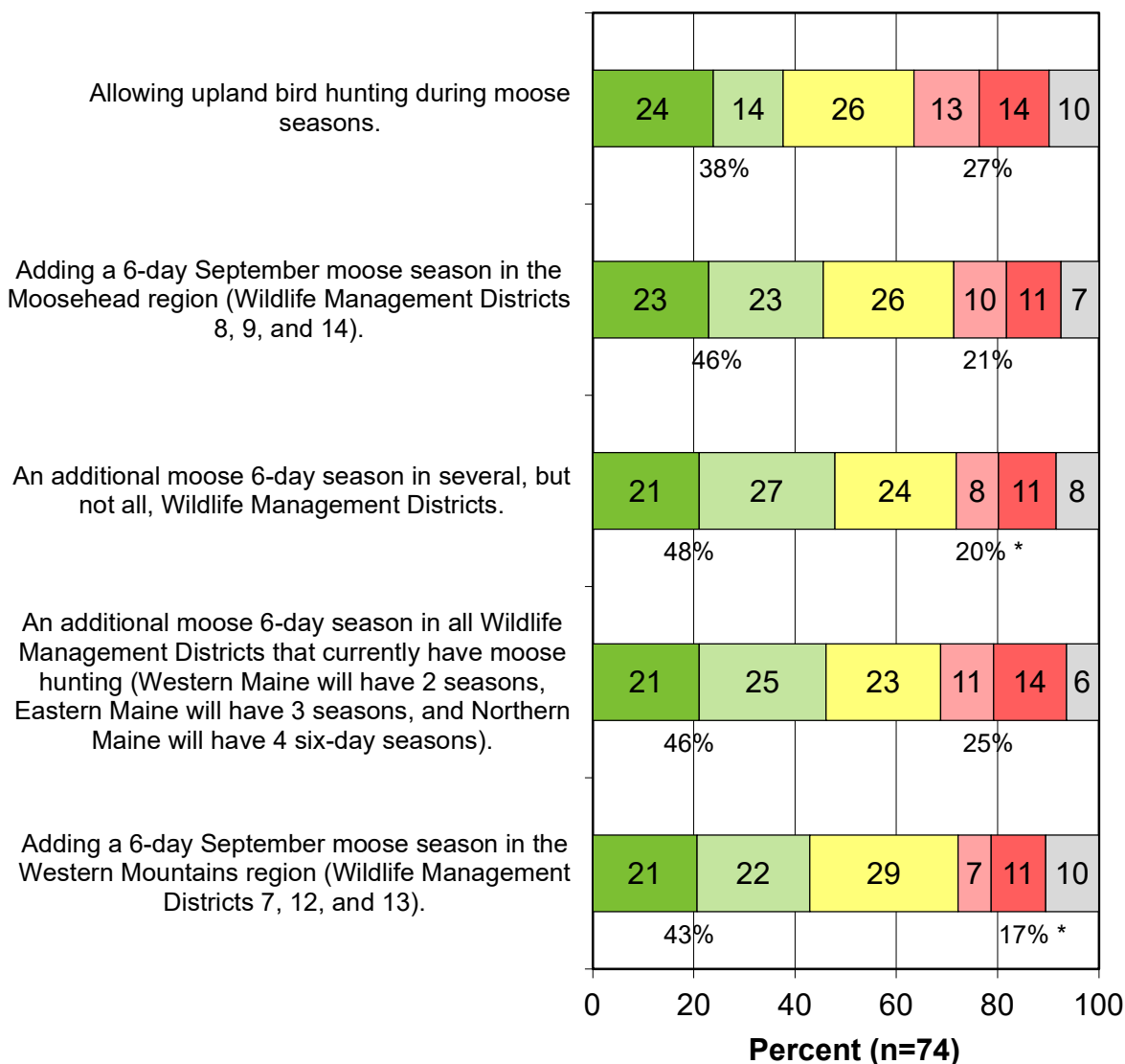
■ Strongly support
 ■ Moderately support
 ■ Neither
 ■ Moderately oppose
 ■ Strongly oppose
 ■ Don't know



* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes. (Moosehead Lake Area) (General population)

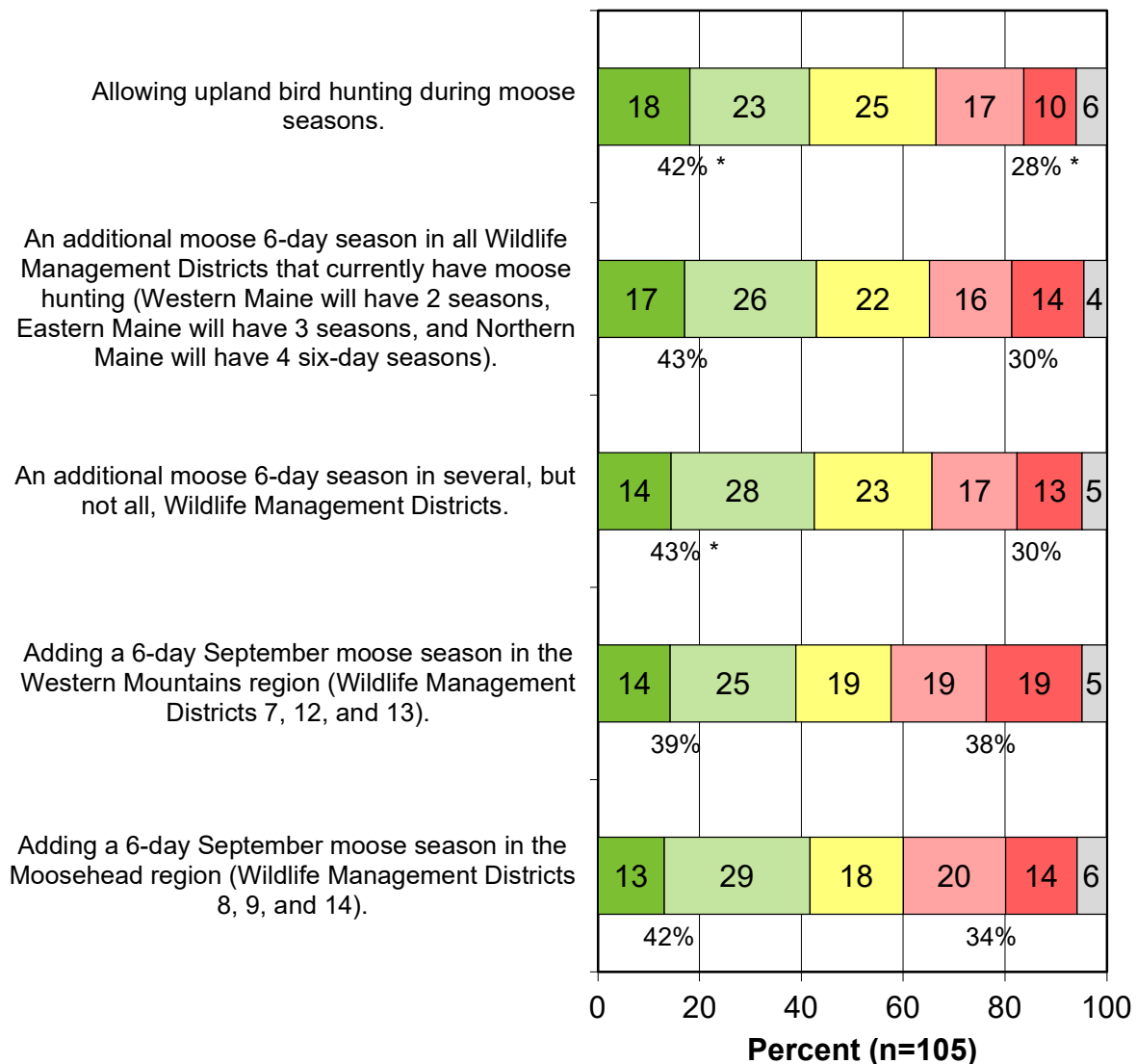
■ Strongly support ■ Moderately support ■ Neither ■ Moderately oppose ■ Strongly oppose ■ Don't know



* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes. (Western Mountains) (General population)

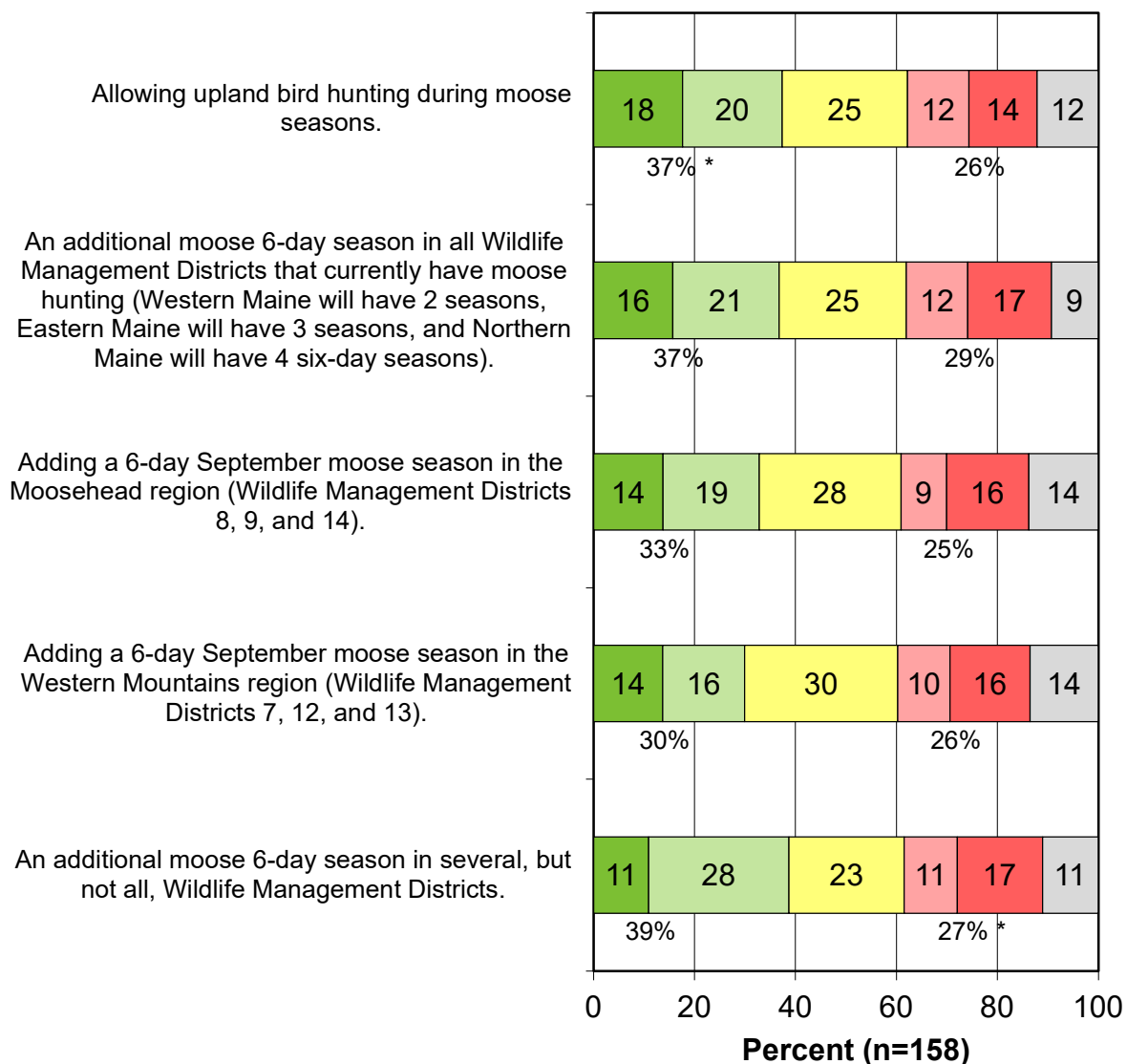
Strongly support Moderately support Neither Moderately oppose Strongly oppose Don't know



* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes. (Downeast Maine) (General population)

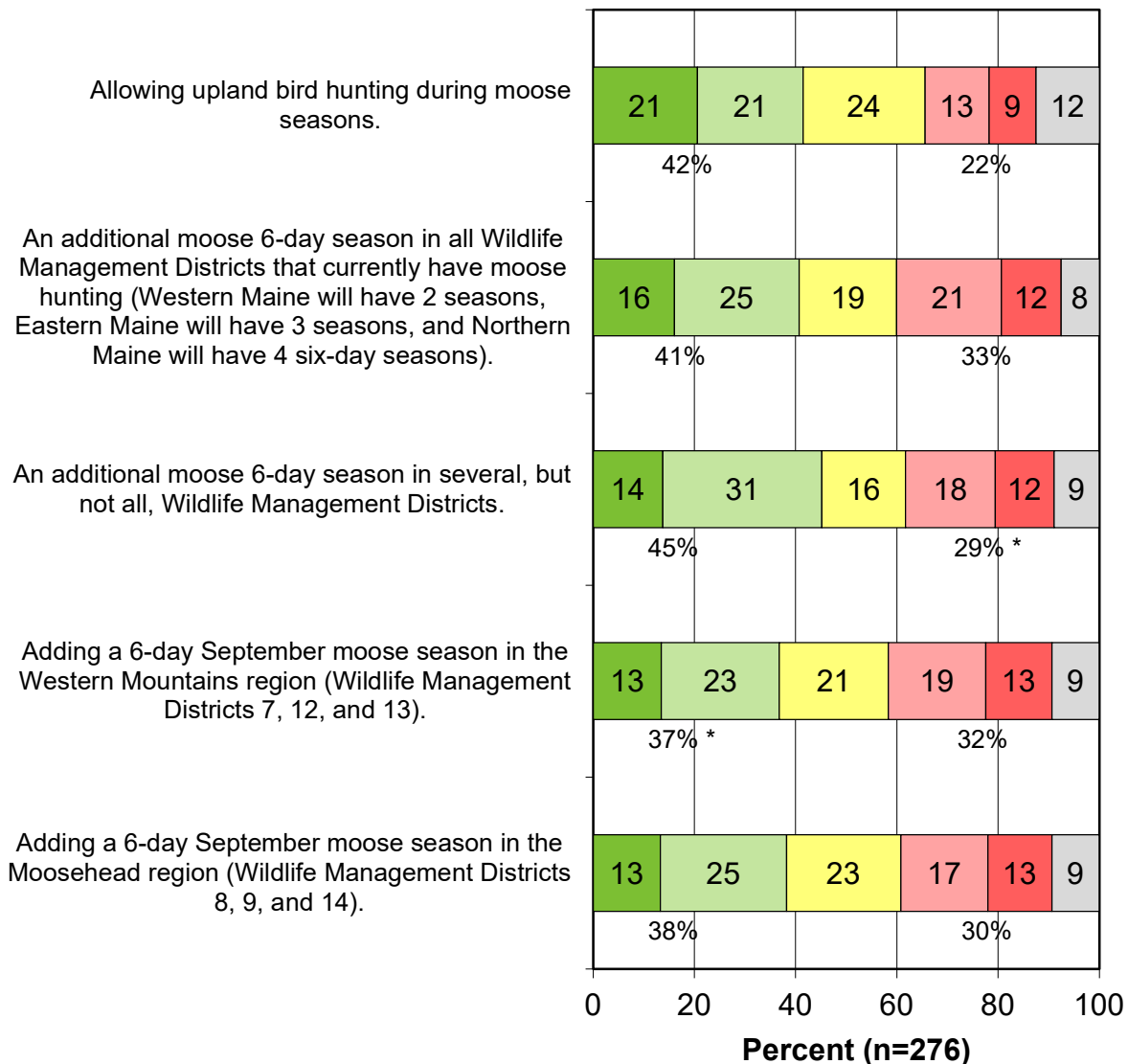
■ Strongly support ■ Moderately support ■ Neither ■ Moderately oppose ■ Strongly oppose ■ Don't know



* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

**Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes.
(Non-study area) (General population)**

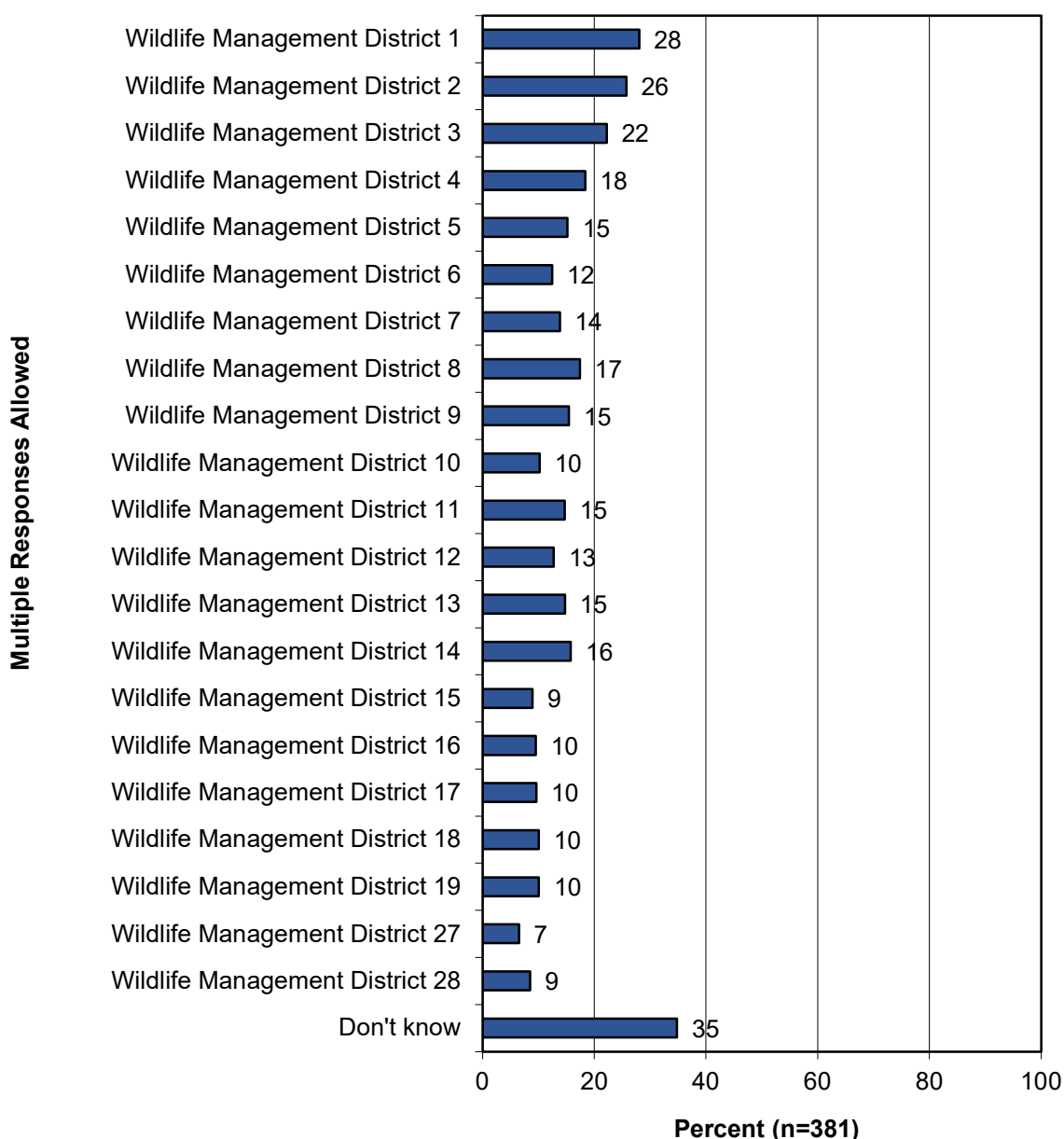
Strongly support Moderately support Neither Moderately oppose Strongly oppose Don't know



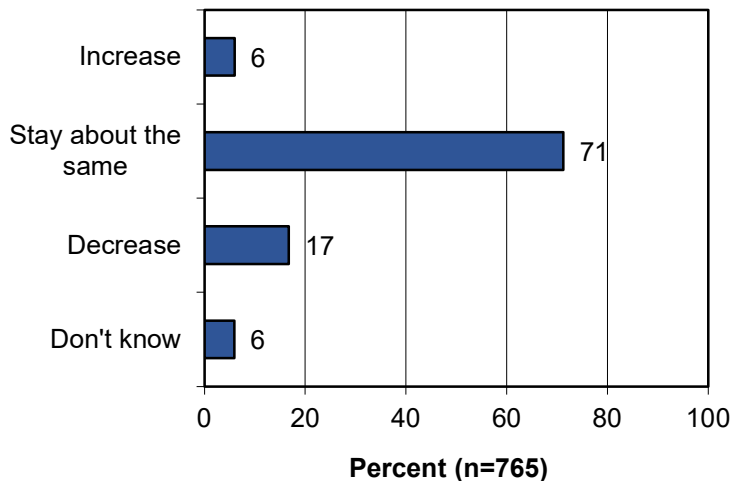
* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

As a follow-up to one of the questions in this series, those who supported adding an additional moose 6-day season in several, but not all, WMDs were asked to name the WMDs in which they would want an additional season. These results are shown below, with responses well spread among WMDs.

Specifically, in which Wildlife Management Districts would you prefer to have an additional 6-day moose season? (Asked of those who support having an additional season in several, but not all, WMDs.) (General population)

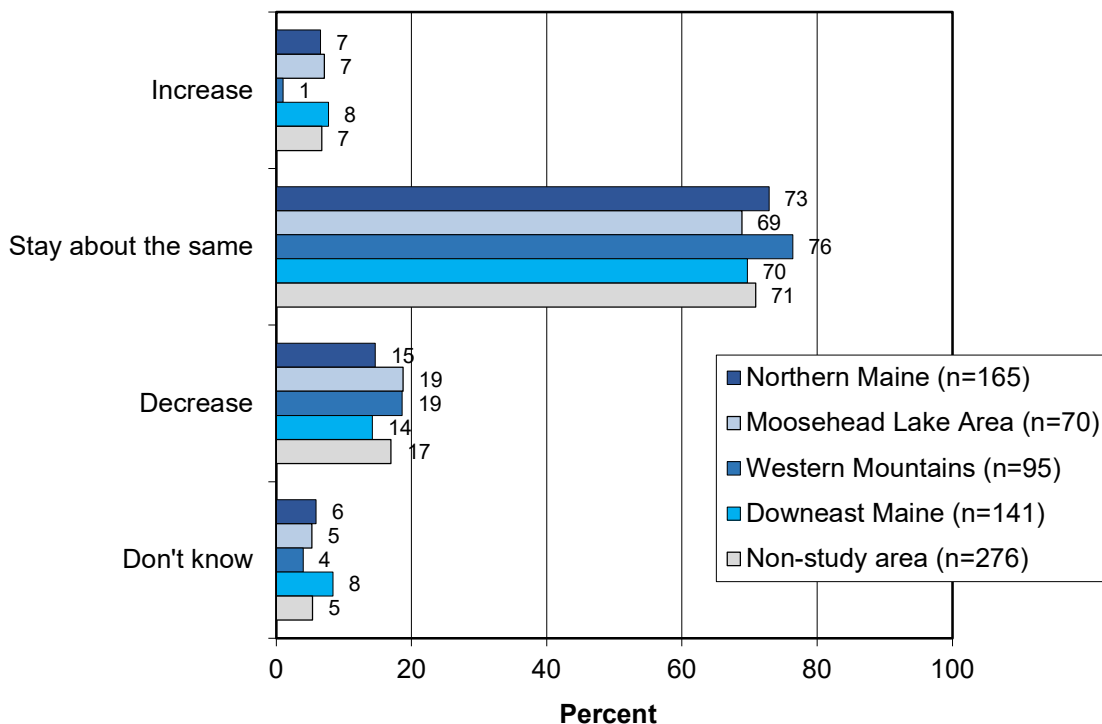


Earlier you indicated that you have participated in [activities]. If an additional week of moose season was implemented, do you think your participation in these activities in Northern, Western, and/or Eastern Maine would increase, stay about the same, or decrease? (Asked of those who participated in an activity in the study area.) (General population)



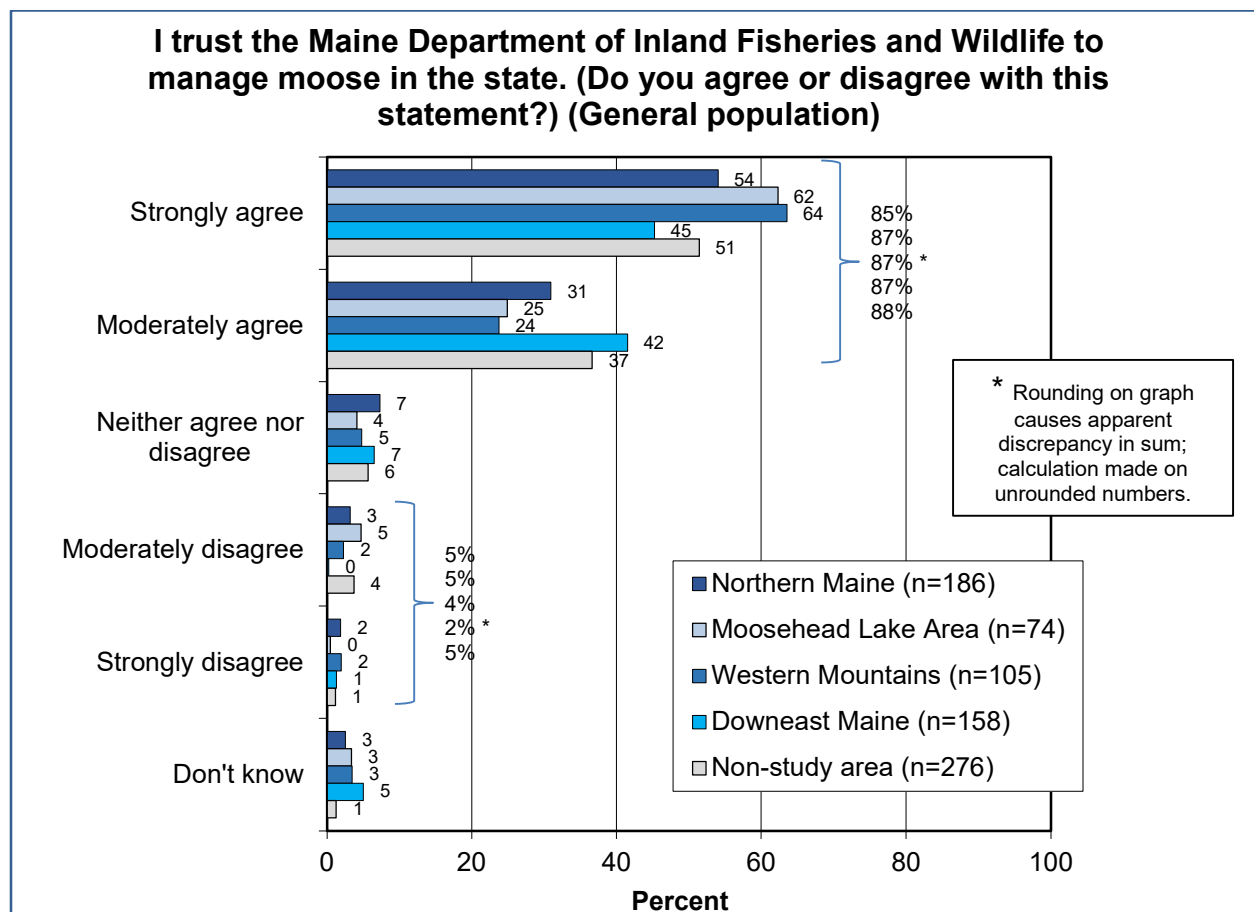
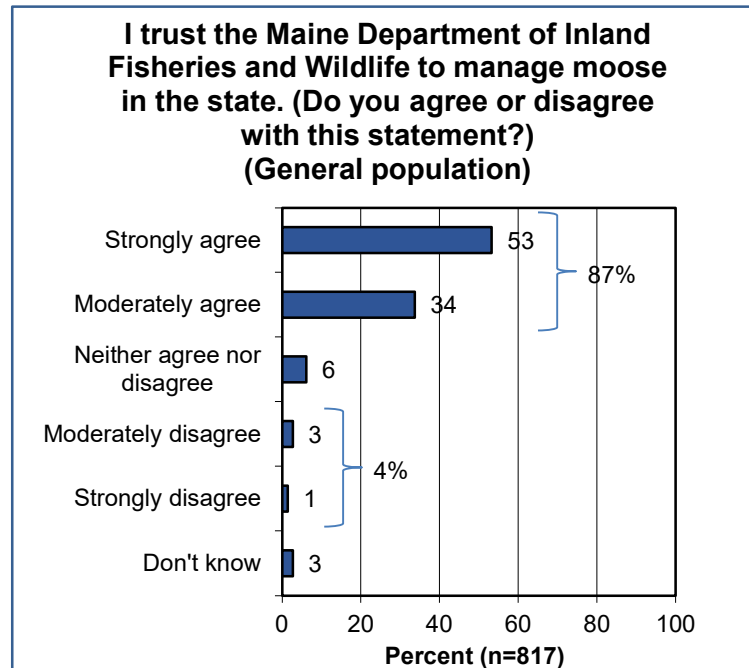
While the majority of those who participate in recreation in the study area say that they would participate at the same level they do now if an additional week of moose hunting was implemented, more of them say their participation would decrease than say it would increase. In particular, Western Mountains residents are much more likely to say that their participation would decrease than increase.

Earlier you indicated that you have participated in [activities]. If an additional week of moose season was implemented, do you think your participation in these activities in Northern, Western, and/or Eastern Maine would increase, stay about the same, or decrease? (Asked of those who participated in an activity in the study area.) (General population)

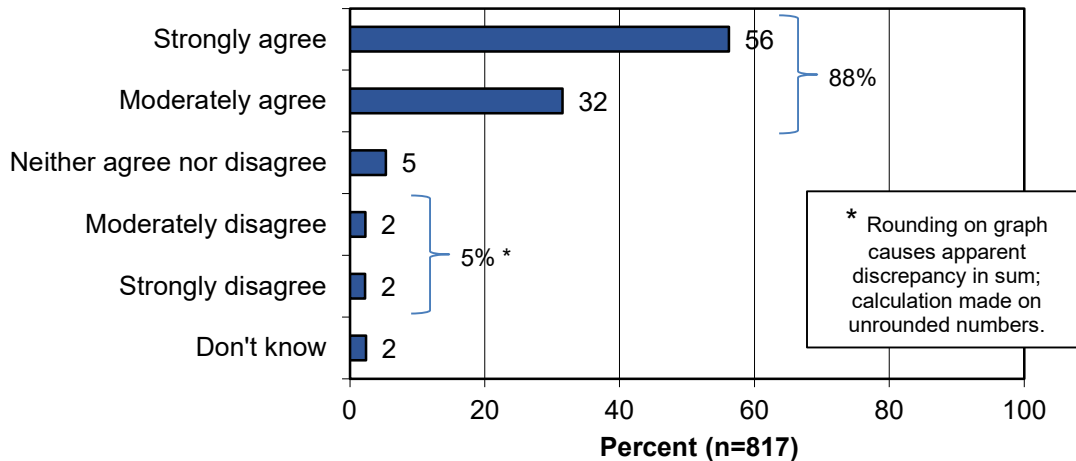


ATTITUDES TOWARD THE DEPARTMENT

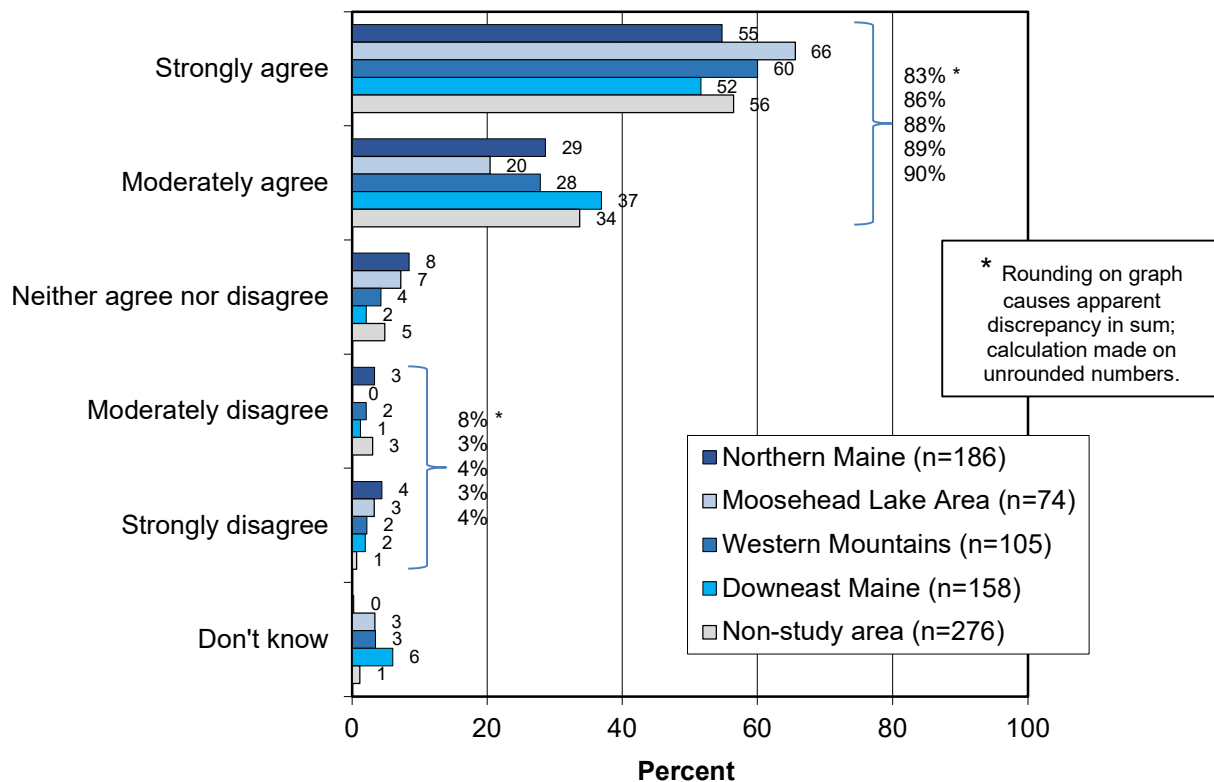
The large majority of the general population (87%) agree with the given statement on trusting the Department to manage moose in the state; only 4% disagree. While overall agreement is similar among regions, ranging from 85% to 88%, strong agreement is highest among residents of the Western Mountains and the Moosehead Lake Area. Likewise, agreement is high in trusting the Department to set the appropriate framework for moose hunting in Maine (88% agree; only 5% disagree), and strong agreement is highest in the Moosehead Lake Area and Western Mountains—in that order (shown on the next page).



I trust the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to set the appropriate framework for moose hunting in Maine, such as season structure, timing, and length, as well as permit allotment, and bag limit, based on the best available information. (Do you agree or disagree with this statement?) (General population)



I trust the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to set the appropriate framework for moose hunting in Maine, such as season structure, timing, and length, as well as permit allotment, and bag limit, based on the best available information. (Do you agree or disagree with this statement?) (General population)



The demographic analyses were run on *strongly* agreeing that they trust the Department to manage moose in the state. Note that the variable examined is *strongly* agreeing; those who only moderately agreed are not included.

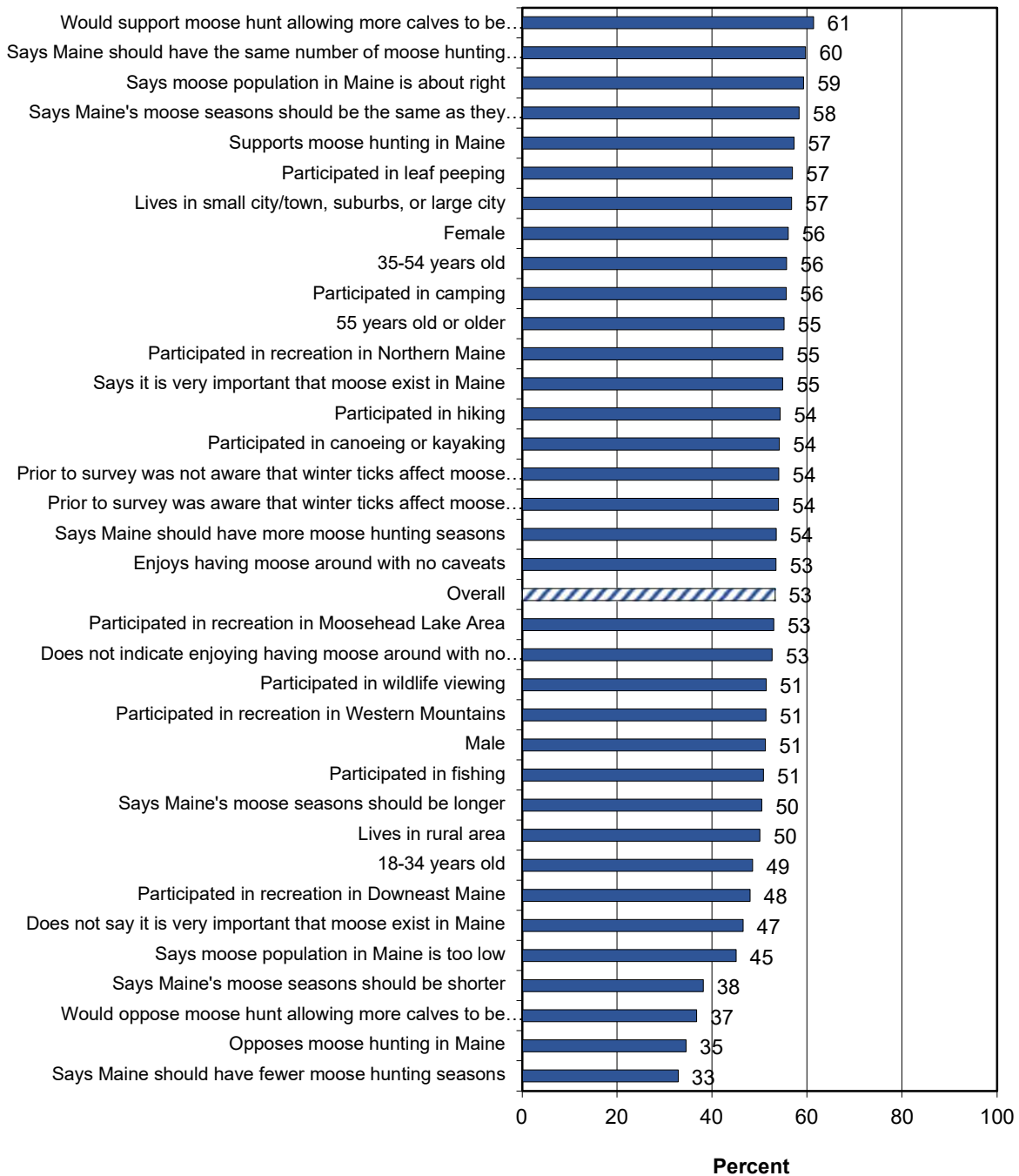
Strong agreement is associated with support for allowing a hunt that allows the harvest of calves, thinking the state should have the same number and length of moose hunting seasons, and thinking the population is about right.

The bottom of the graph shows the associations with not *strongly* agreeing that they trust the Department to manage moose in Maine (i.e., this includes *moderate* agreement, both disagreement options, the neutral option, and don't know). Not *strongly* agreeing is associated with thinking Maine should have fewer and shorter seasons, opposing moose hunting in general and moose hunting that allows calves to be harvested, thinking the moose population is too low, and *not* thinking that moose exist is *very* important. (Note that the *very* important variable was looked at in the same way as this variable. The analysis examined *very* important against any other response, which included *somewhat* important, both unimportant responses, and the neutral and don't know responses.)

The graph is shown on the next page, as it requires a full page for display. Also note that some labels were necessarily truncated for them to fit on the graph. Those that were truncated are shown in full below:

- Does not indicate enjoying having moose around with no caveats
- Says Maine's moose seasons should be the same as they currently are in length
- Says Maine should have the same number of moose hunting seasons
- Would support moose hunt allowing more calves to be harvested
- Would oppose moose hunt allowing more calves to be harvested
- Prior to survey was aware that winter ticks affect moose population
- Prior to survey was not aware that winter ticks affect moose population

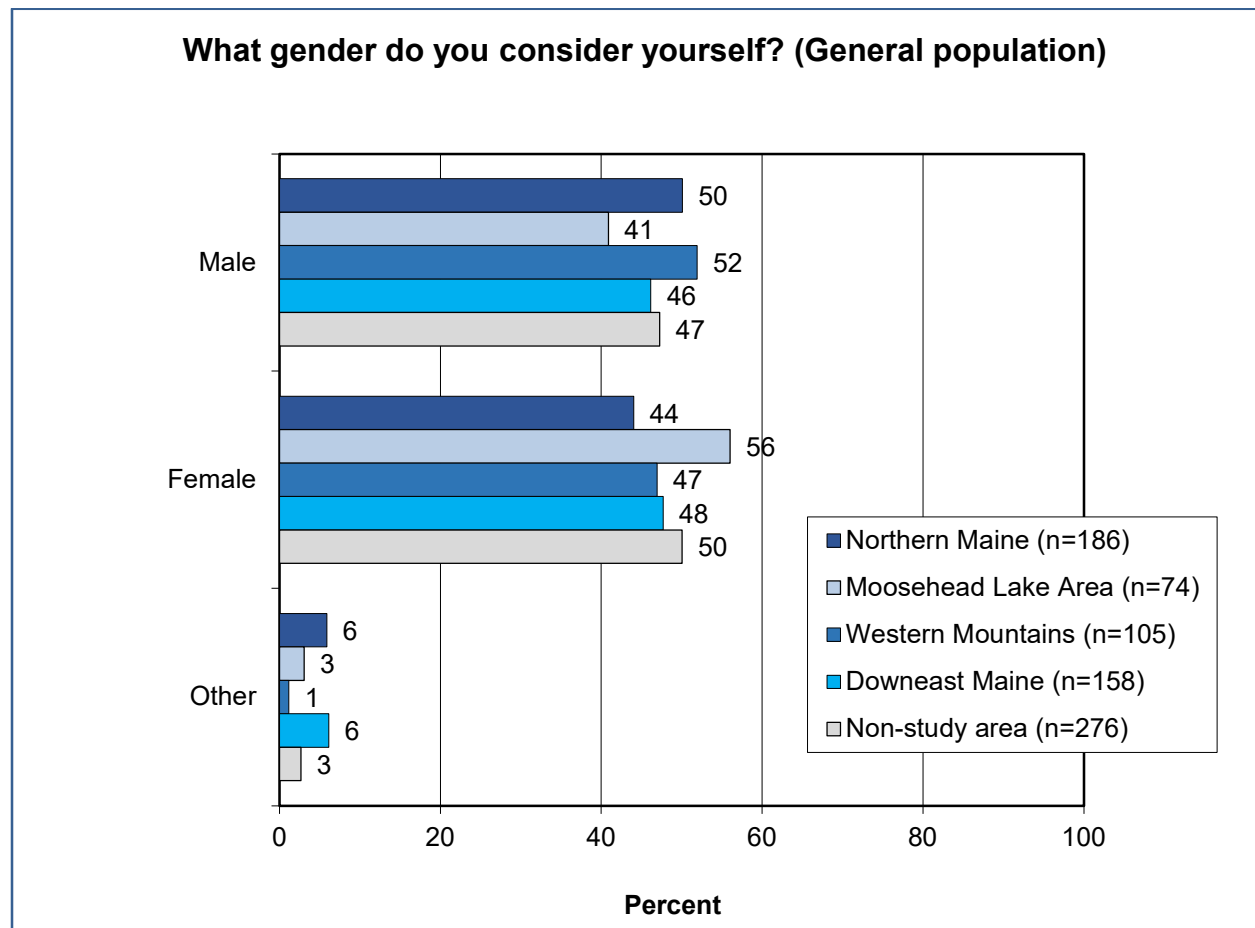
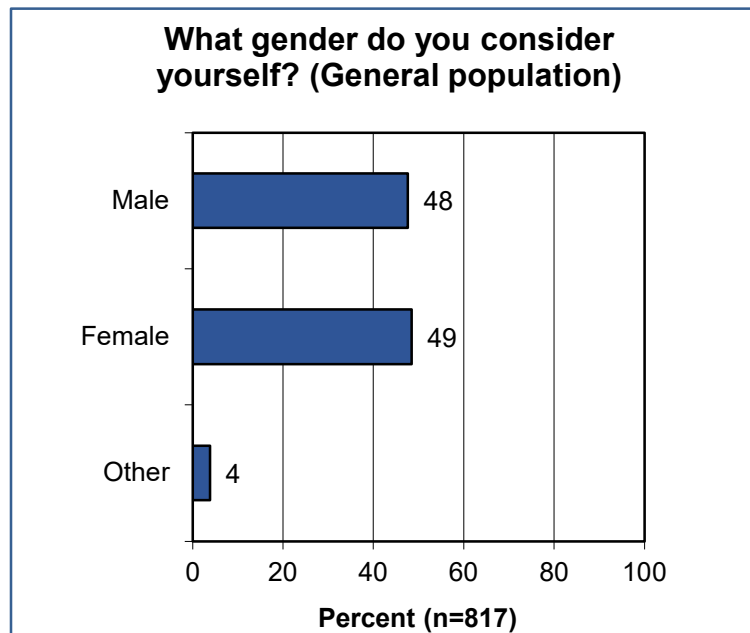
Percent of the following groups who strongly agree that they trust the Department to manage moose in the state. (General population)

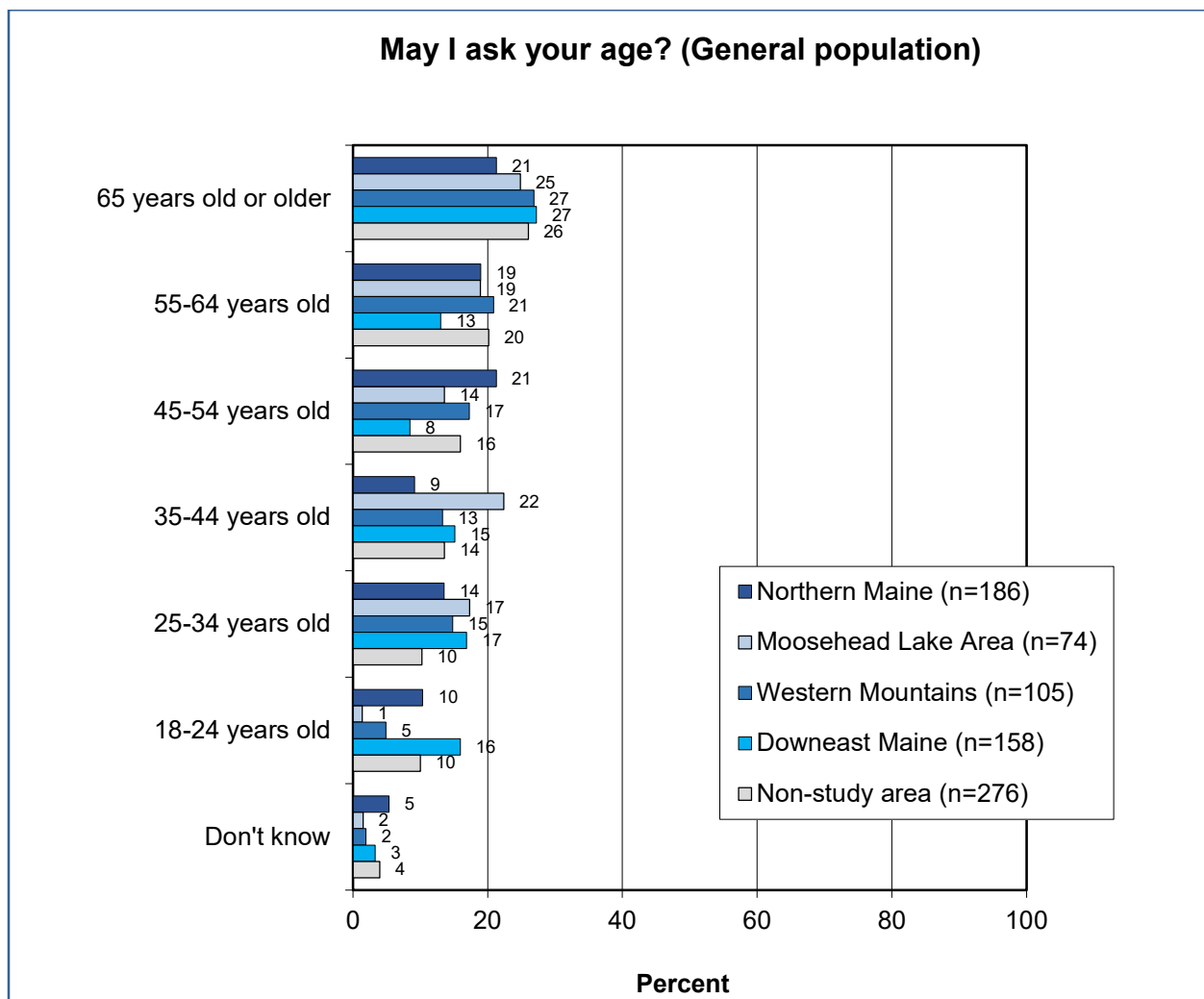
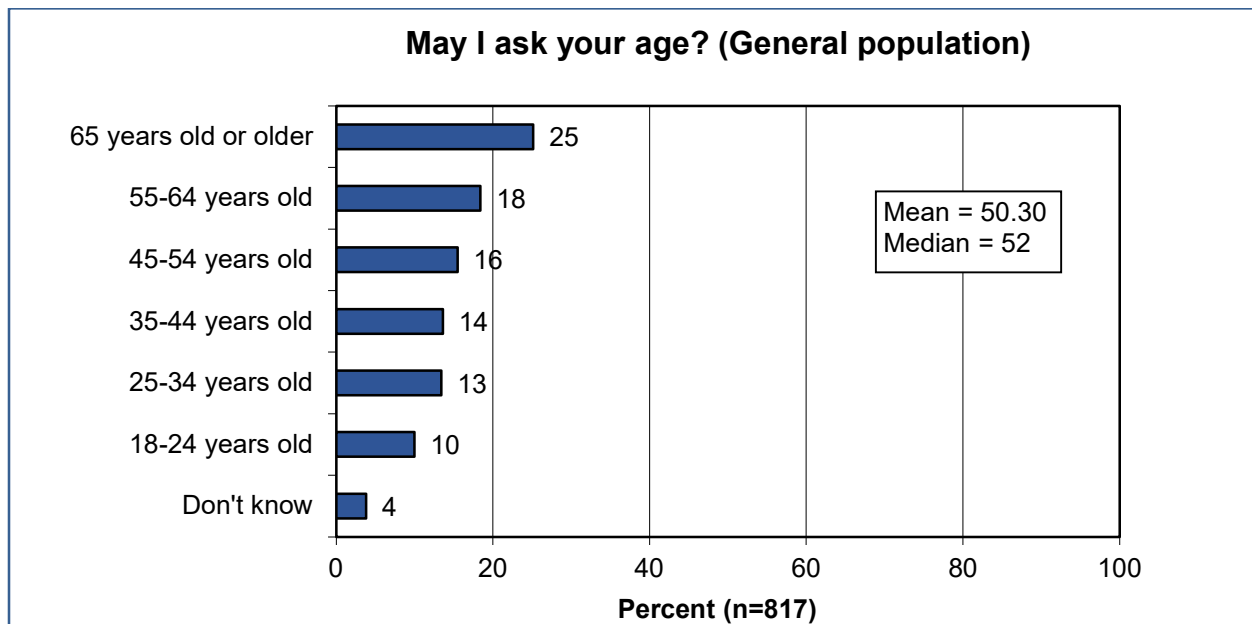


DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

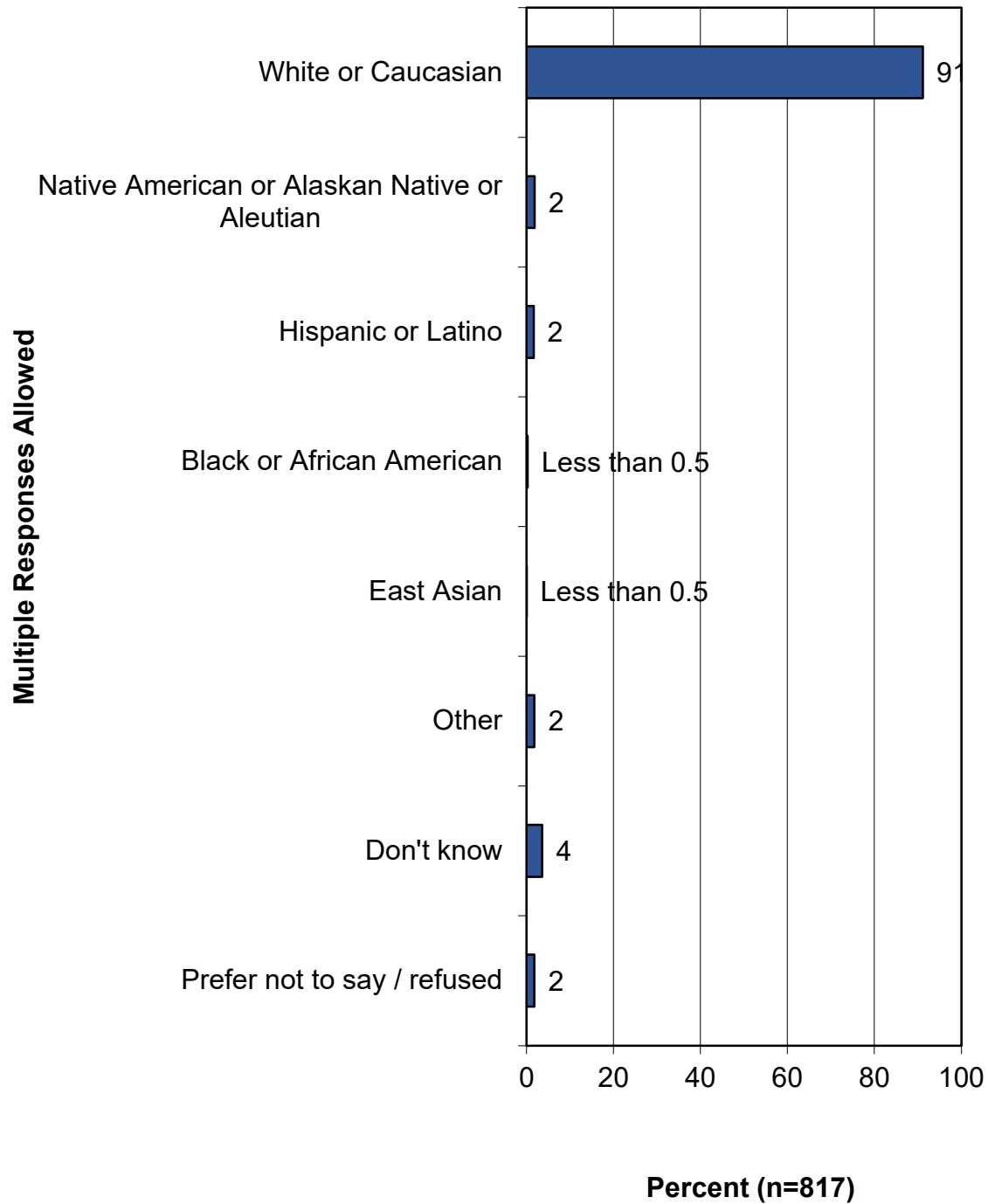
The following demographic information was obtained for crosstabulations and further analyses:

- Gender.
- Age.
- Ethnicity.
- County and region of residence; WMD of residence of those in the study area.
- Residential area (urban vs. rural).

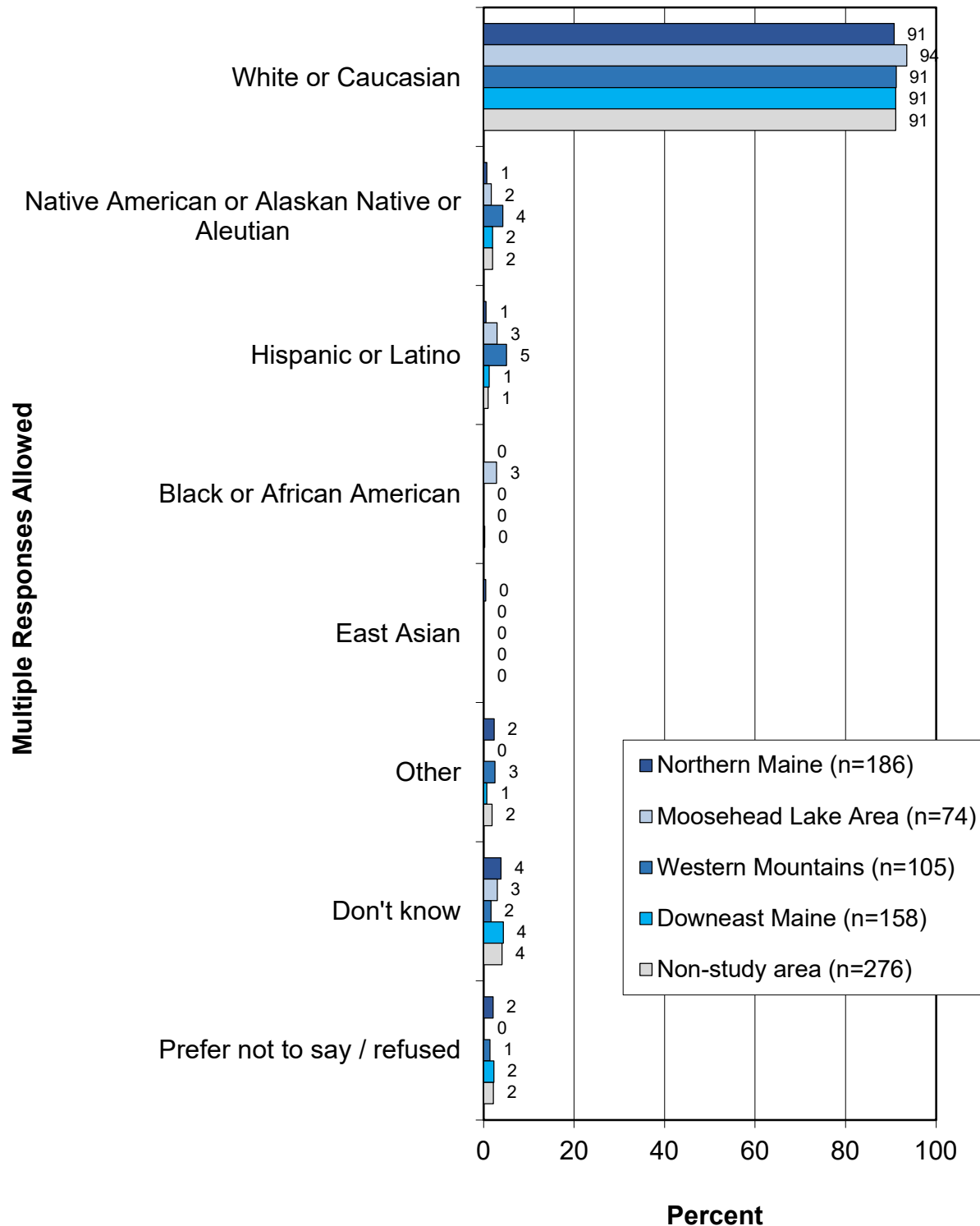


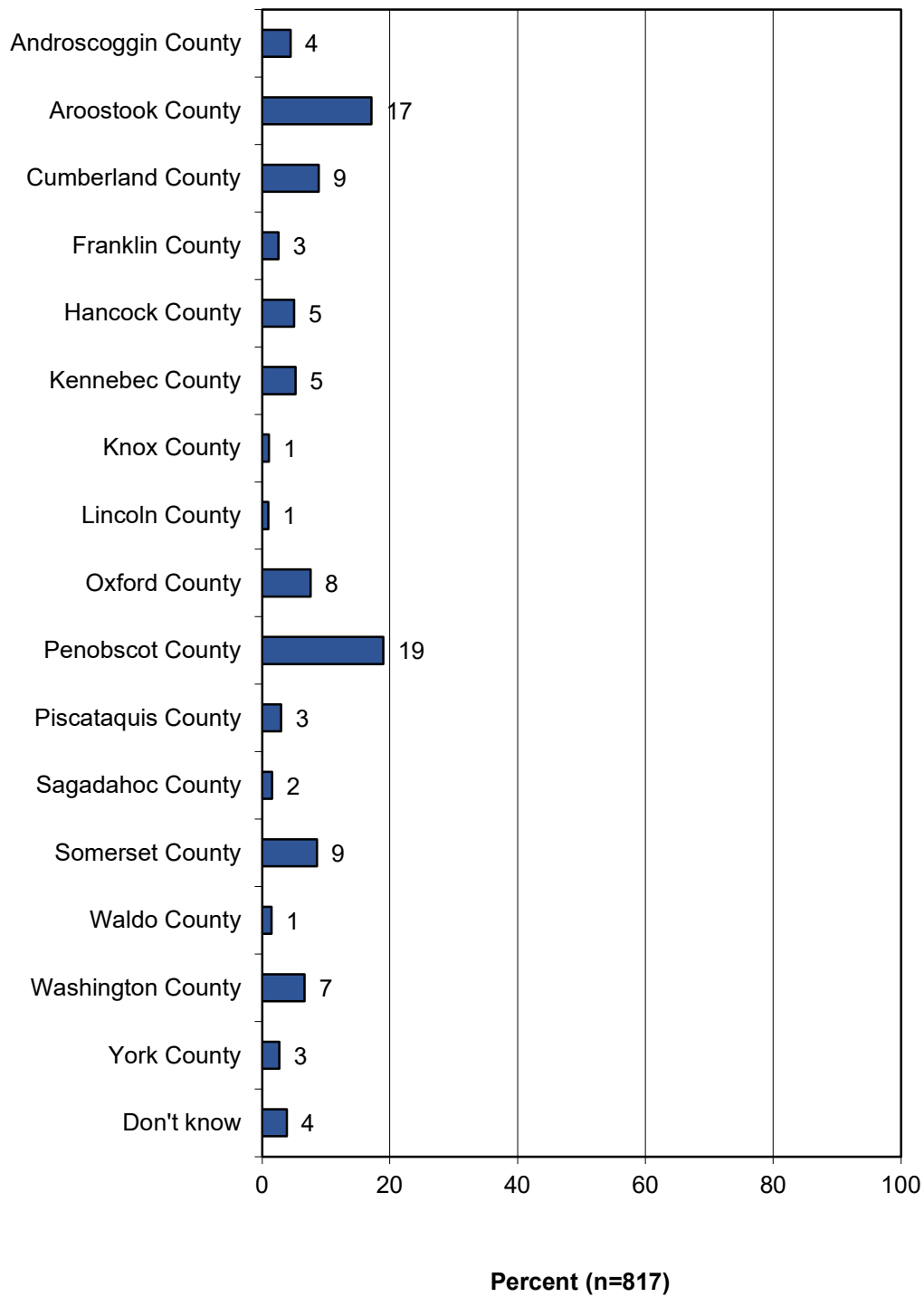


What races or ethnic backgrounds do you consider yourself? (General population)

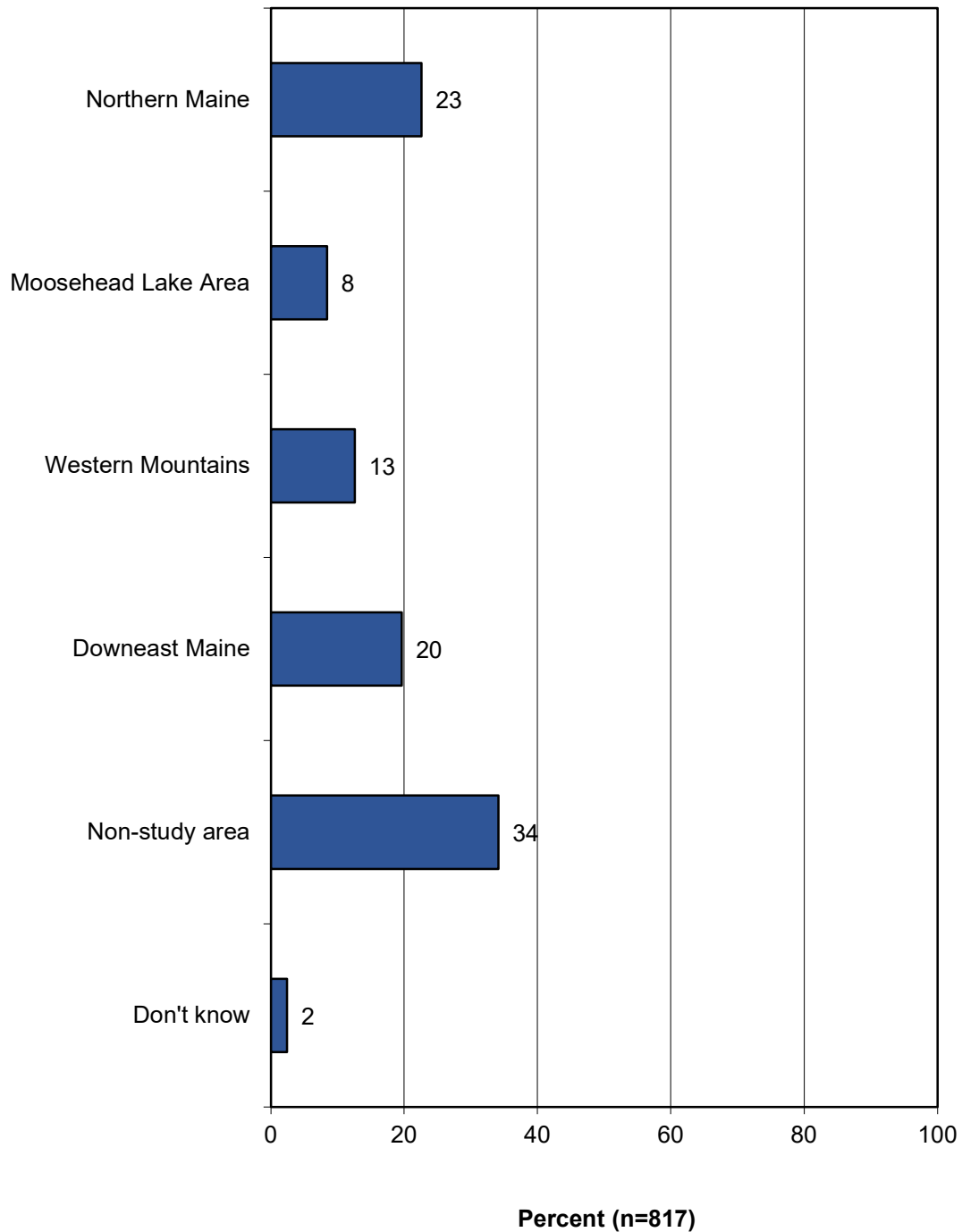


What races or ethnic backgrounds do you consider yourself? (General population)

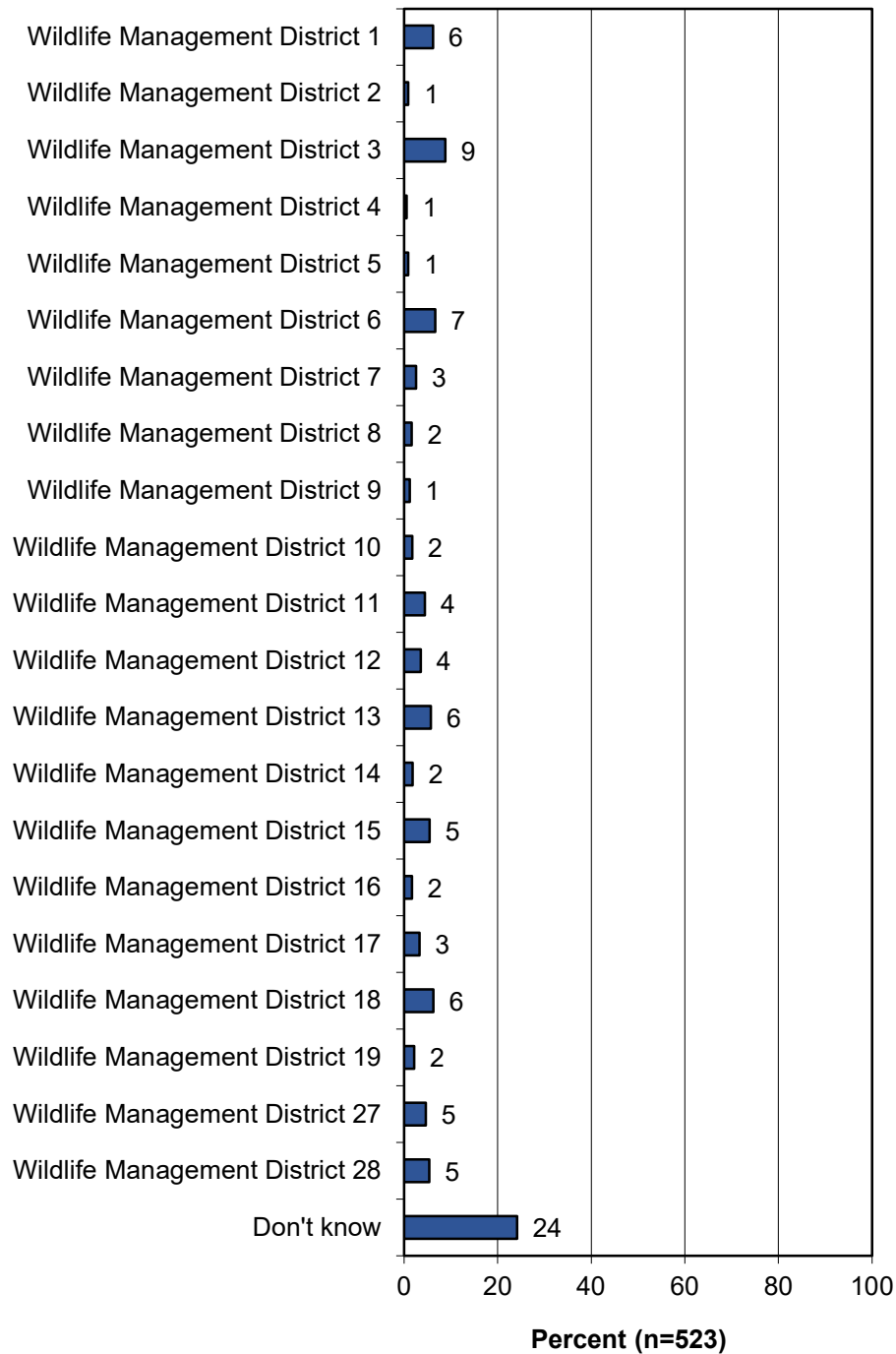


What county do you live in? (General population)

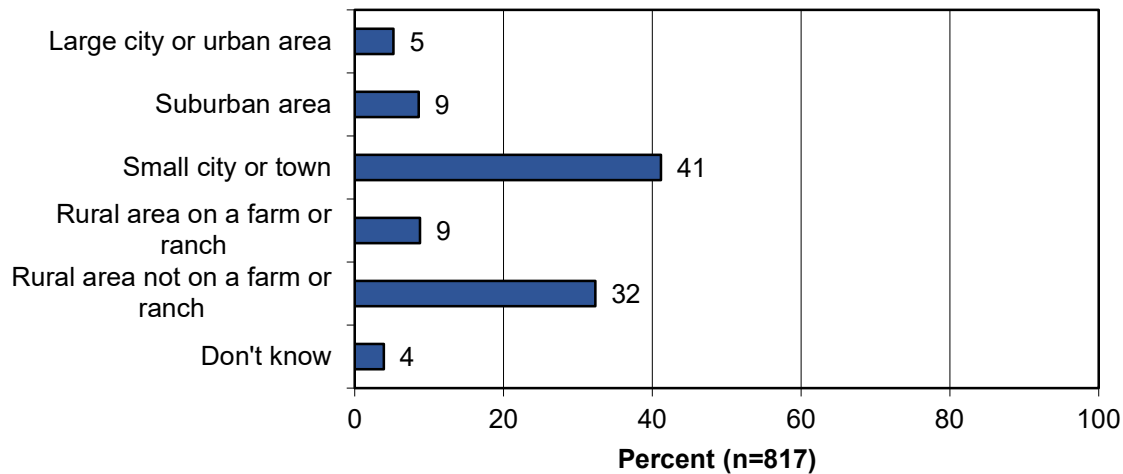
Next, we would like to know if you currently live in one of the following regions in Northern, Western, or Eastern Maine. (Regions were fully explained.) (General population)



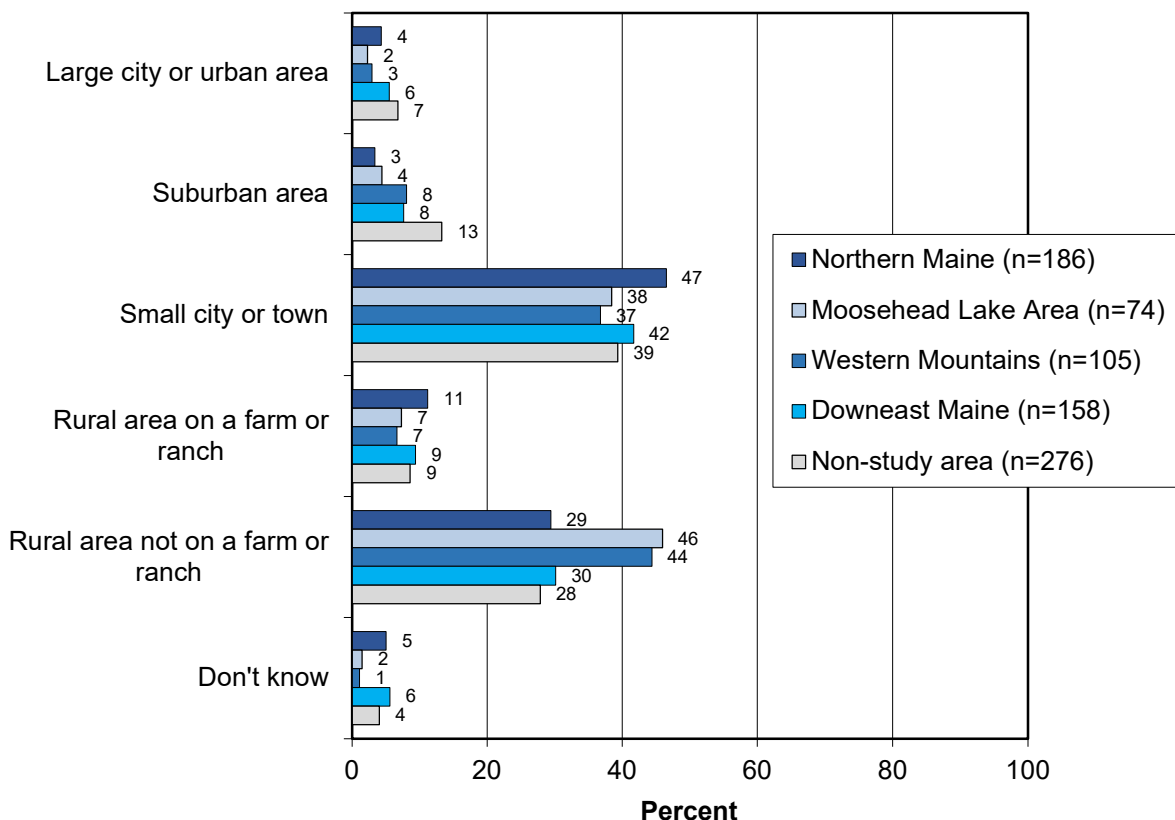
**In which Wildlife Management District (WMD) do you live?
(Asked of those who live in the study area.) (General population)**



**Do you consider your place of residence to be a large city or urban area, a suburban area, a small city or town, a rural area on a farm or ranch, or a rural area not on a farm or ranch?
(General population)**



**Do you consider your place of residence to be a large city or urban area, a suburban area, a small city or town, a rural area on a farm or ranch, or a rural area not on a farm or ranch?
(General population)**



RESULTS AMONG HUNTERS

This chapter looks at results of the survey of licensed hunters. This includes an examination of hunters overall, moose hunters specifically, non-moose hunters, and hunters of other species (regardless of whether they also hunted moose): deer, bear, and upland game bird hunters.

For each question, the results show hunters overall, the crosstabulation by moose hunters/non-moose hunters, and then a graph showing species crosstabulations (moose, deer, bear, and upland game birds). Note that moose hunters in the first crosstabulation is exactly the same as moose hunters in the species crosstabulation; however, they are included in the latter crosstabulation for the convenience of the reader in making comparisons of the species hunters.

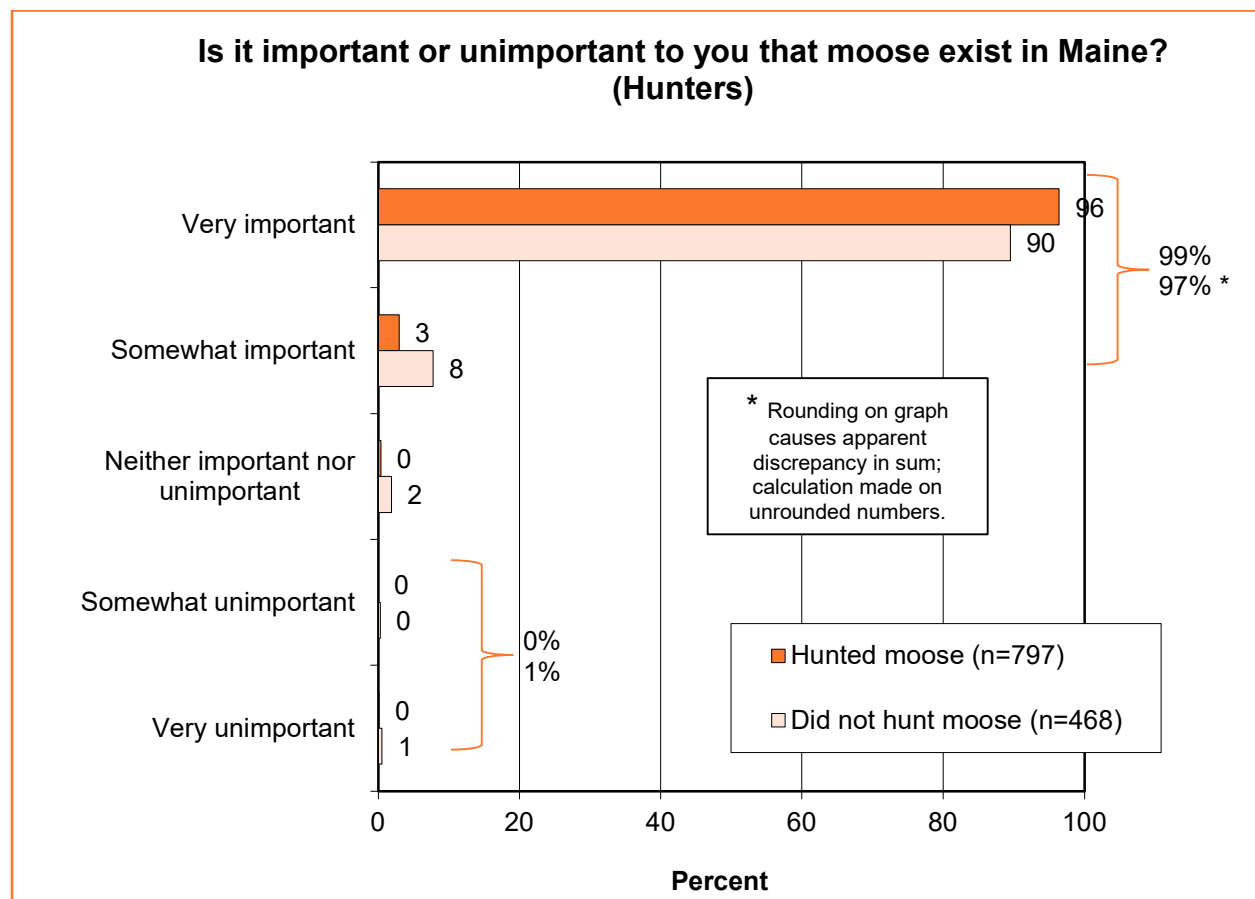
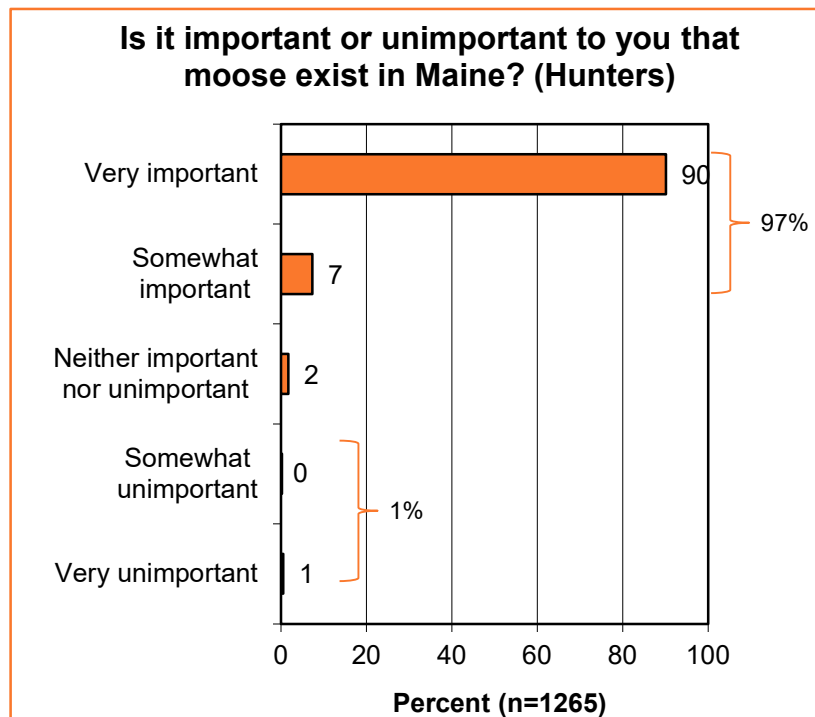
In the species crosstabulation, the hunter groups are not mutually exclusive. In other words, moose hunters represented by the first of the four bars may include those who also hunted deer, bear, and/or upland game birds. Each bar simply represents all hunters who hunted that particular species, regardless of overlap with the other groups.

A word of caution when looking at sample sizes (n-values) in the crosstabulations: moose hunters were intentionally oversampled (as fully explained in the methodology), and then they were weighted down to be in their proper proportion in the overall sample. Overall, 8.5% of hunters hunted moose. In the graphs that show moose hunters compared to those who do not hunt moose, there are 797 who hunted moose and 468 who did not (1,265 overall). This does not mean that 63% of hunters overall hunted moose ($797/1265$); as indicated, this portion was weighted to represent 8.5% of hunters overall. This is also why the results among those who did not hunt moose are closer to the overall results than are those who hunted moose.

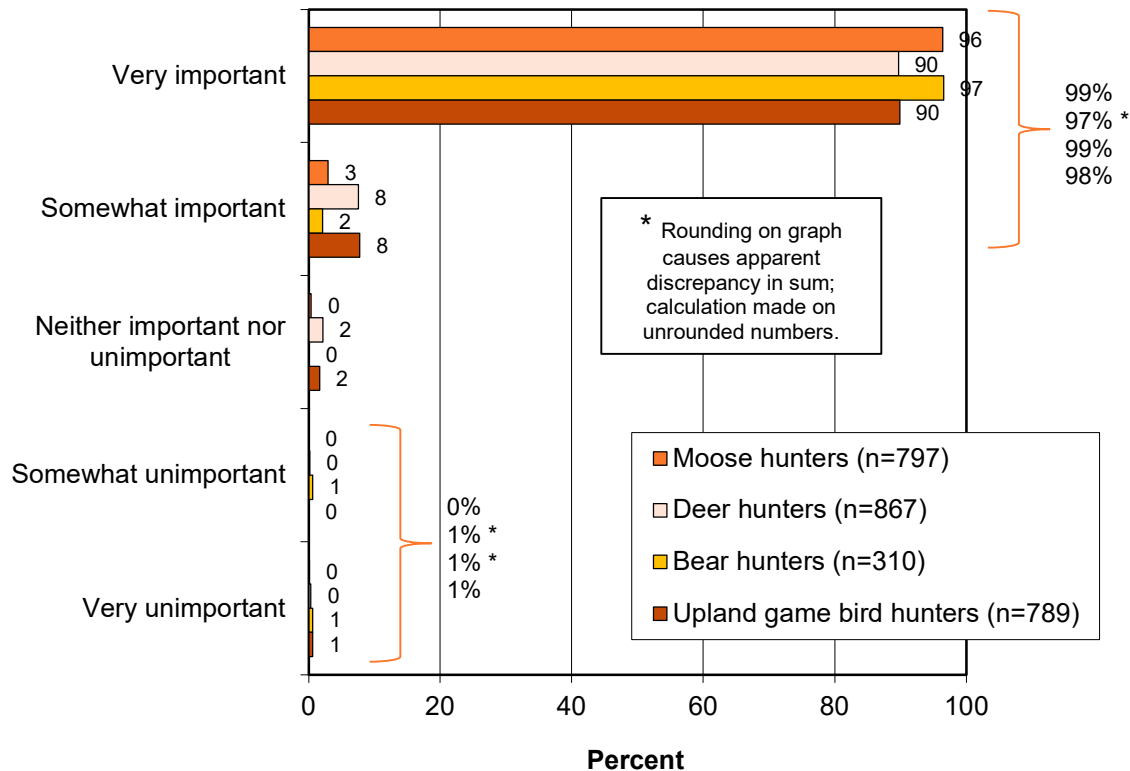
The graphs in this chapter on hunters are in shades of hunter orange. The exceptions are graphs of series questions, which use a spotlight theme of red, yellow, and green to indicate more negative responses, middle responses, and more positive responses. For instance, graphs of questions that used a support-oppose scale show support as green, neutral as yellow, and oppose as red.

ATTITUDES TOWARD MOOSE AND MOOSE MANAGEMENT

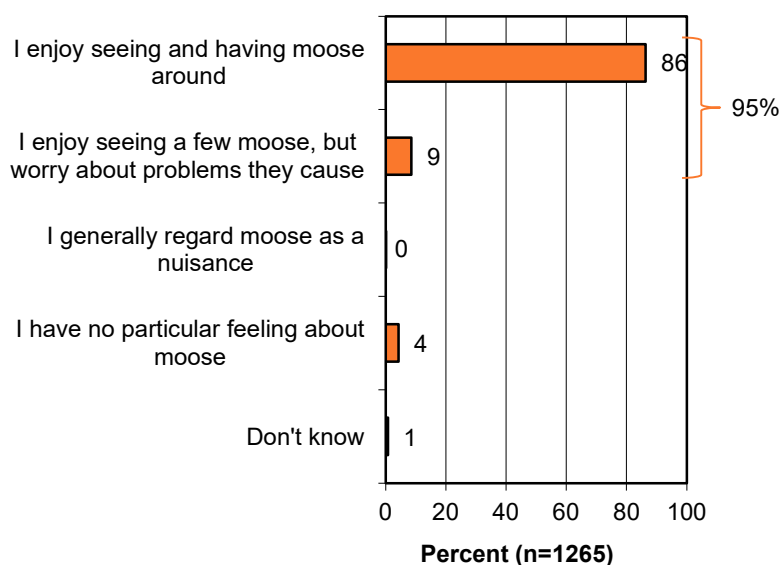
Across all hunter groups, almost unanimous majorities think that it is important that moose exist in Maine: no lower than 90% think it to be *very* important, and from 97% to 99% think it to be *very* or *somewhat* important.



Is it important or unimportant to you that moose exist in Maine? (Hunters)

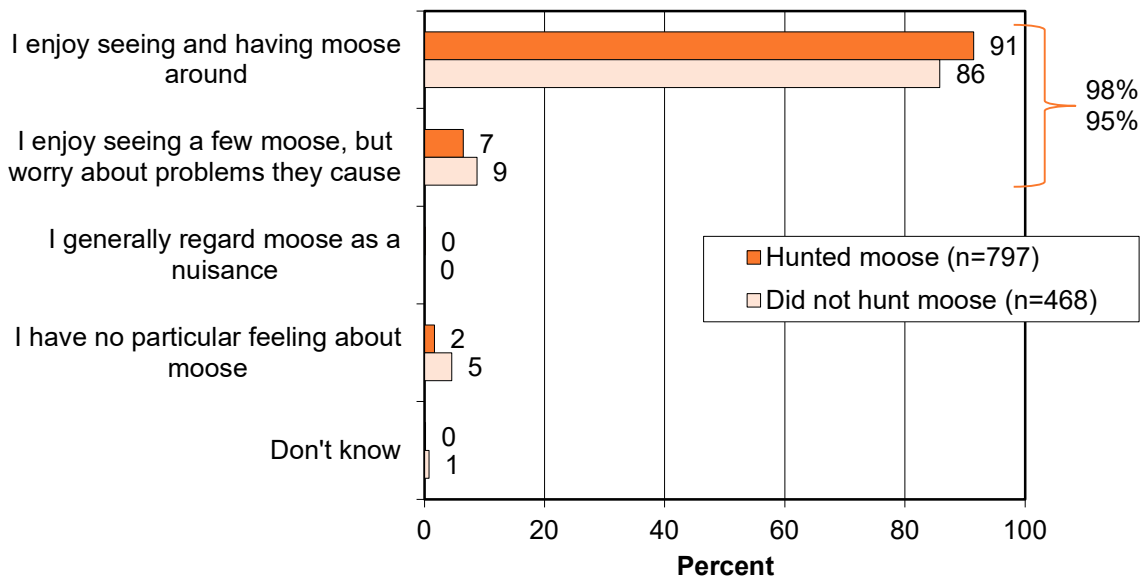


Generally, which of the following statements best describes your feelings about moose? (Hunters)

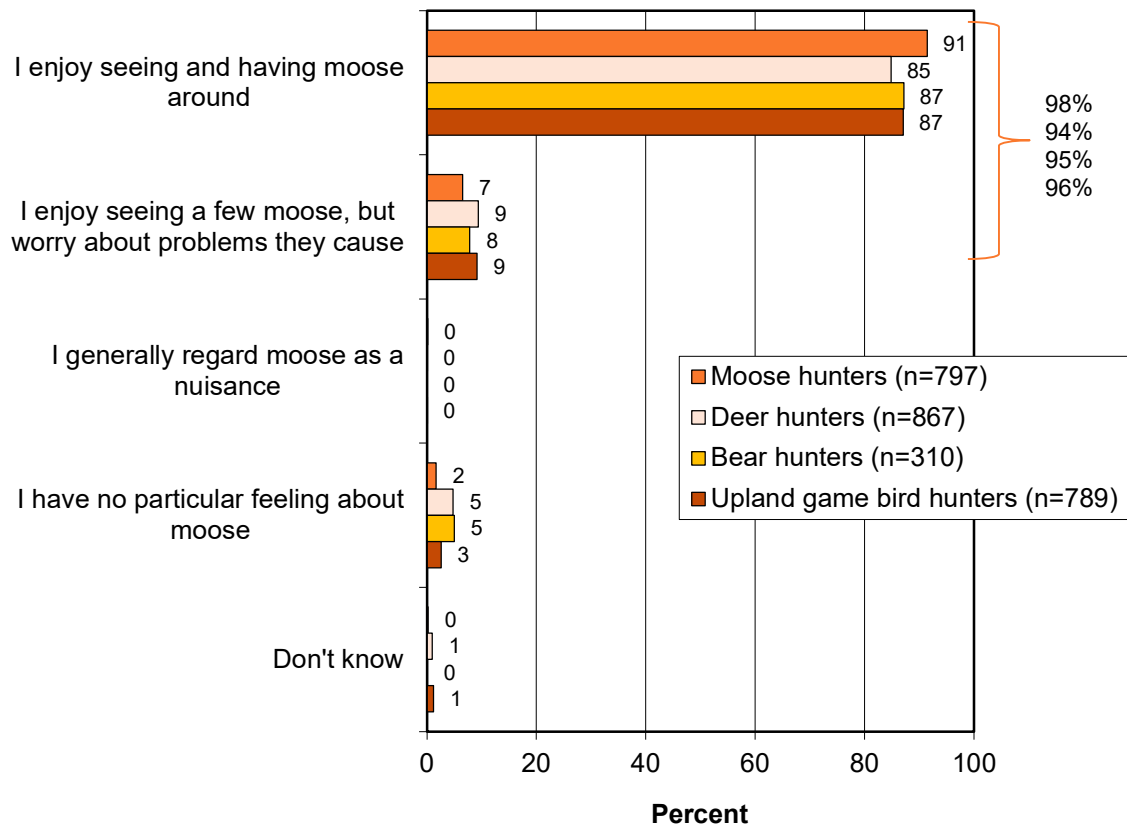


On the continuum of feeling, hunters overwhelmingly enjoy seeing moose around with no caveats. Add to that those who enjoy them but worry about problems, and no less than 94% of the hunter groups are in that part of the continuum. Almost none regard moose as a nuisance.

Generally, which of the following statements best describes your feelings about moose? (Hunters)

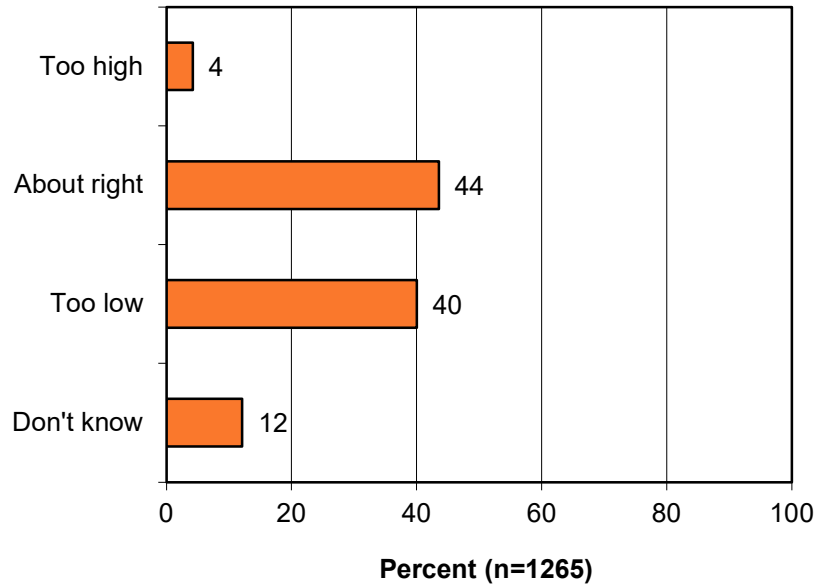


Generally, which of the following statements best describes your feelings about moose? (Hunters)

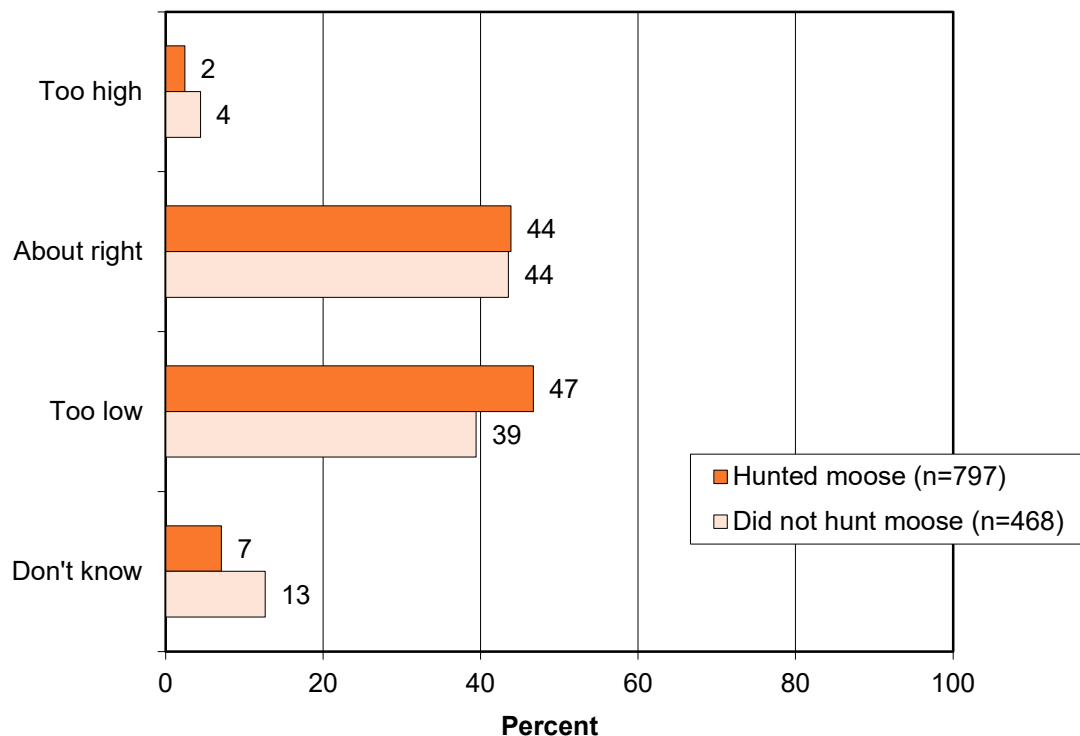


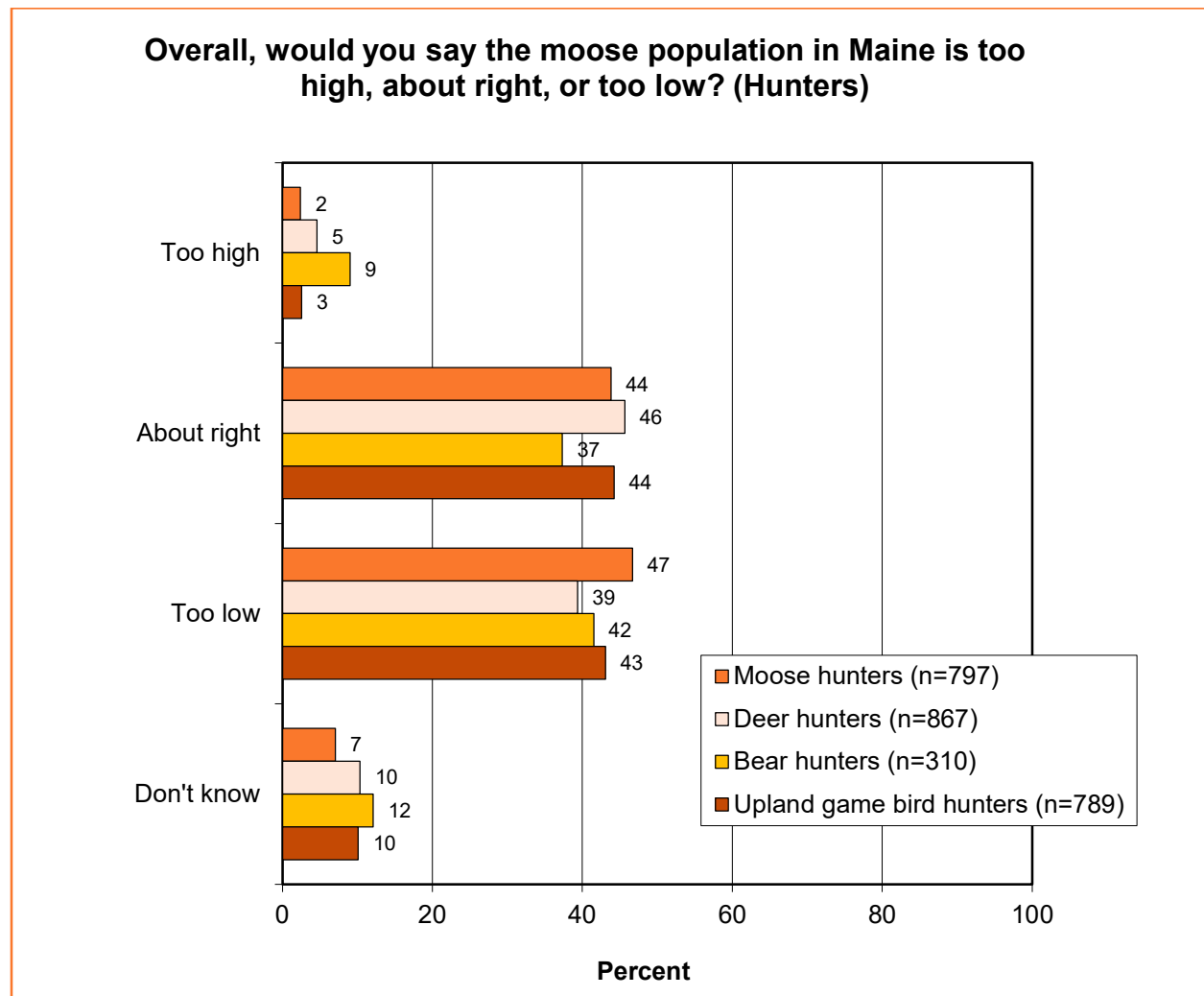
Hunters are primarily divided between those who think the moose population is *about right* and those who think it is *too low*. Low percentages think it is *too high* or *don't know*. This finding holds steady across all the hunter groups.

Overall, would you say the moose population in Maine is too high, about right, or too low? (Hunters)



Overall, would you say the moose population in Maine is too high, about right, or too low? (Hunters)

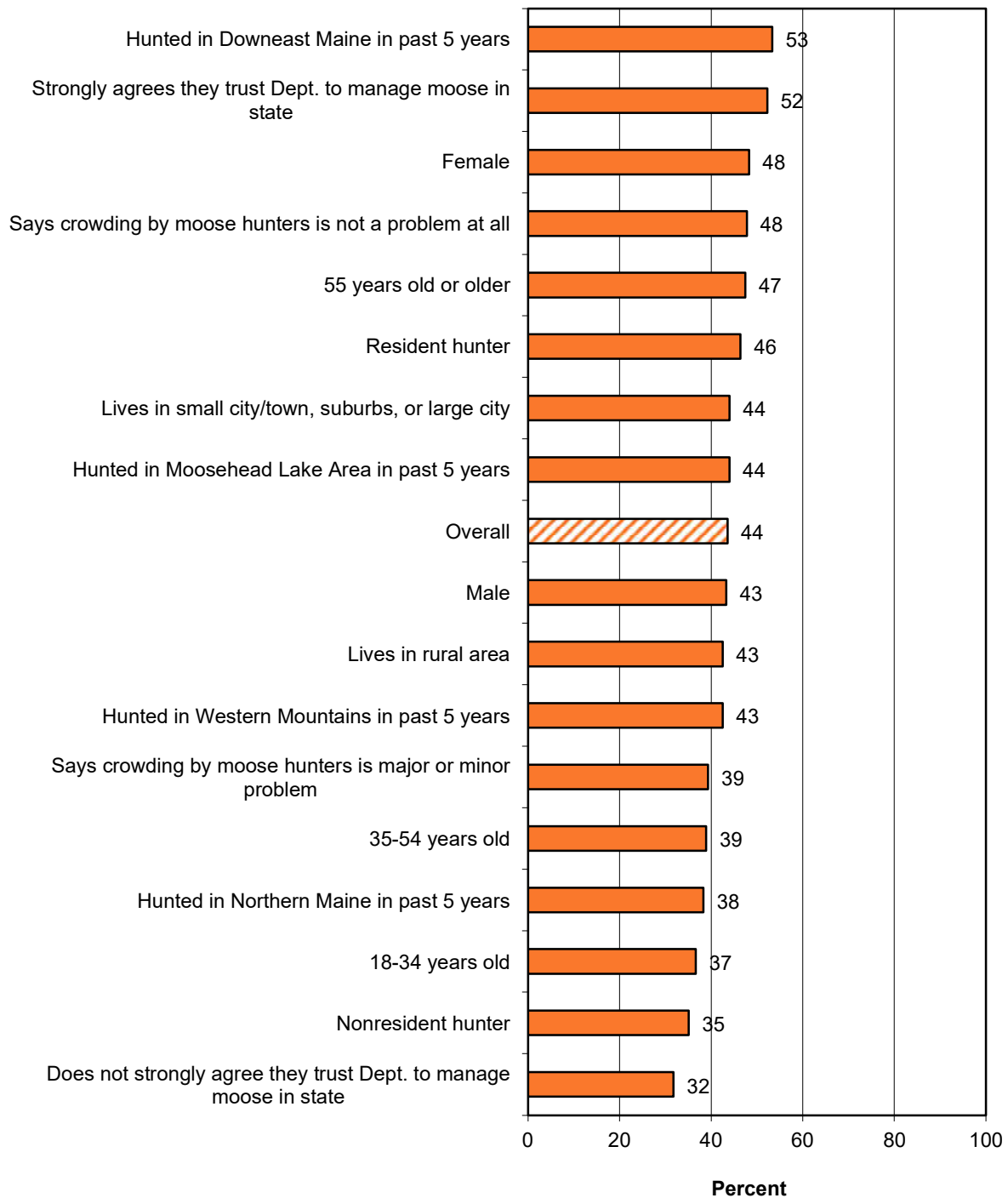




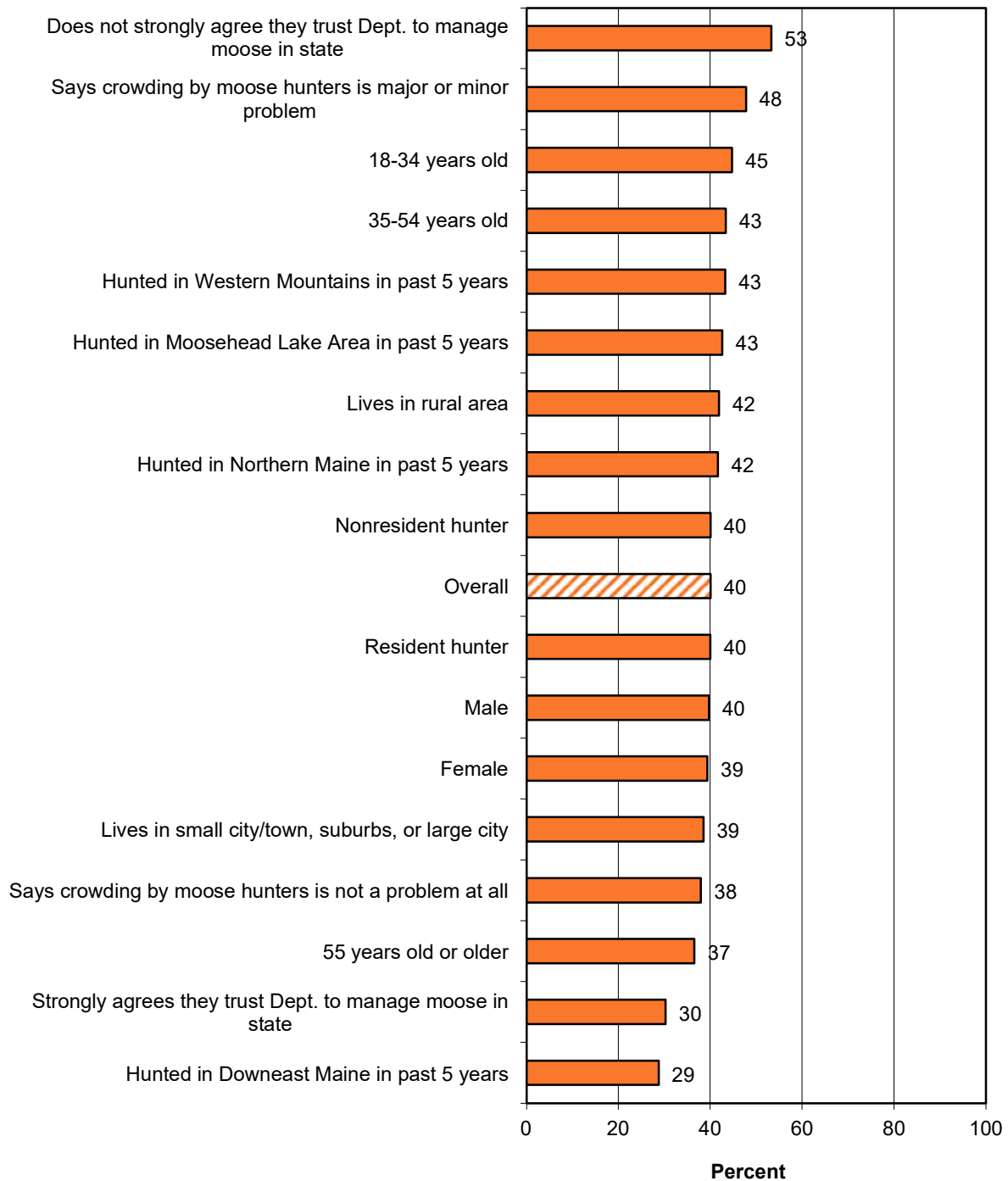
The demographic analyses were run on this question. The analyses found that those hunter groups most likely to think the moose population is about right in Maine are those who hunted (anything, not just moose) in Downeast Maine and those who strongly agree that they trust the Department to manage moose in the state.

A second demographic analyses graph shows that the hunter groups most likely to think that the moose population in Maine is too low are those who do not strongly agree that they trust the Department to manage moose in the state, those who say crowding by moose hunters is a problem, and young hunters.

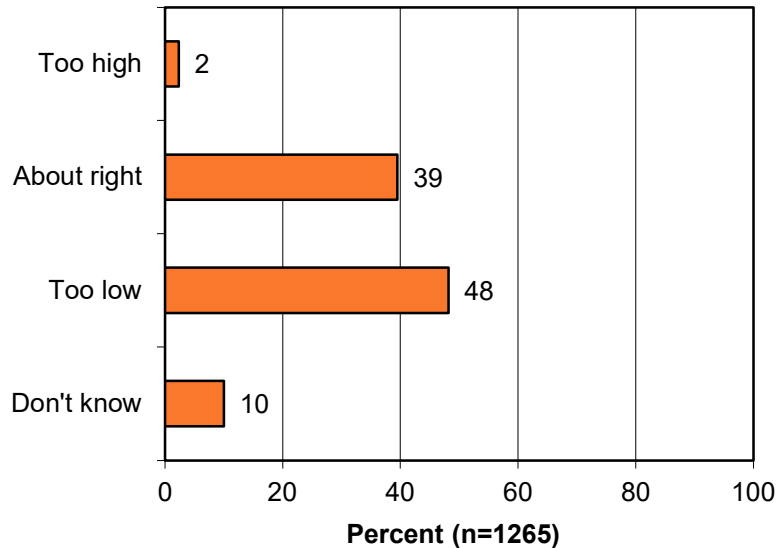
Percent of the following groups who say the moose population in Maine is about right. (Hunters)



Percent of the following groups who say the moose population in Maine is too low. (Hunters)

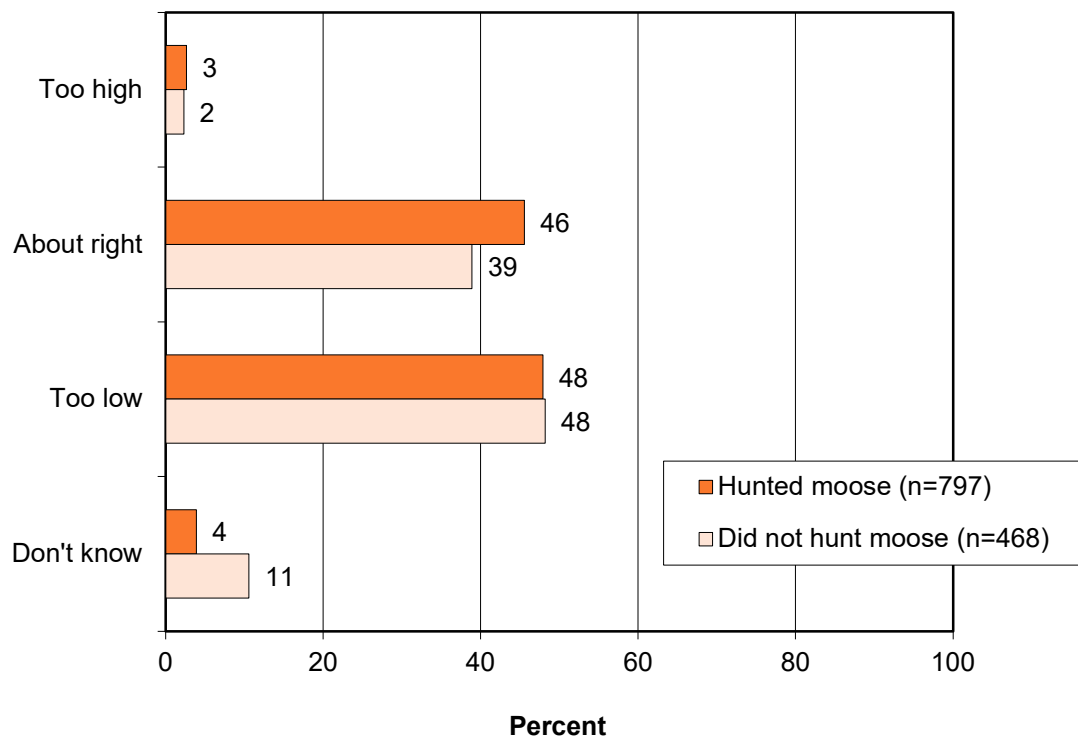


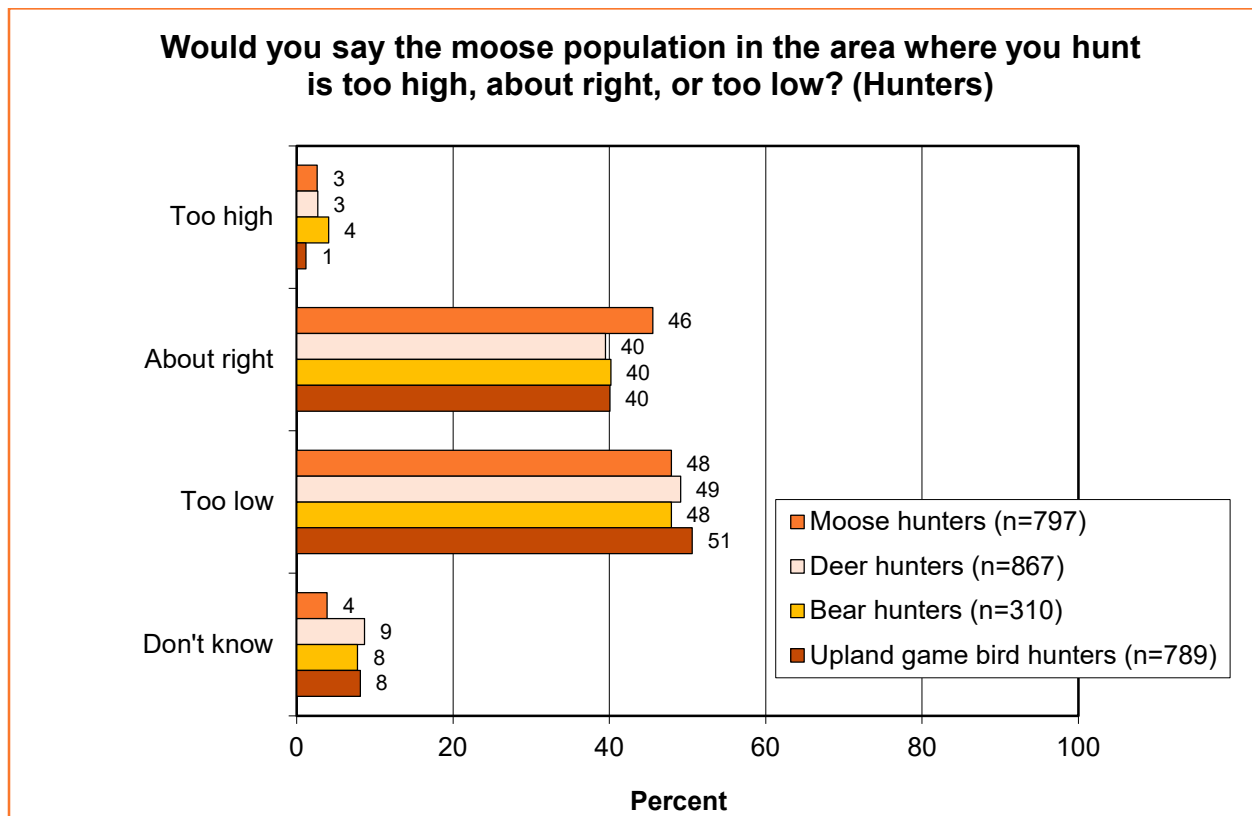
Would you say the moose population in the area where you hunt is too high, about right, or too low? (Hunters)



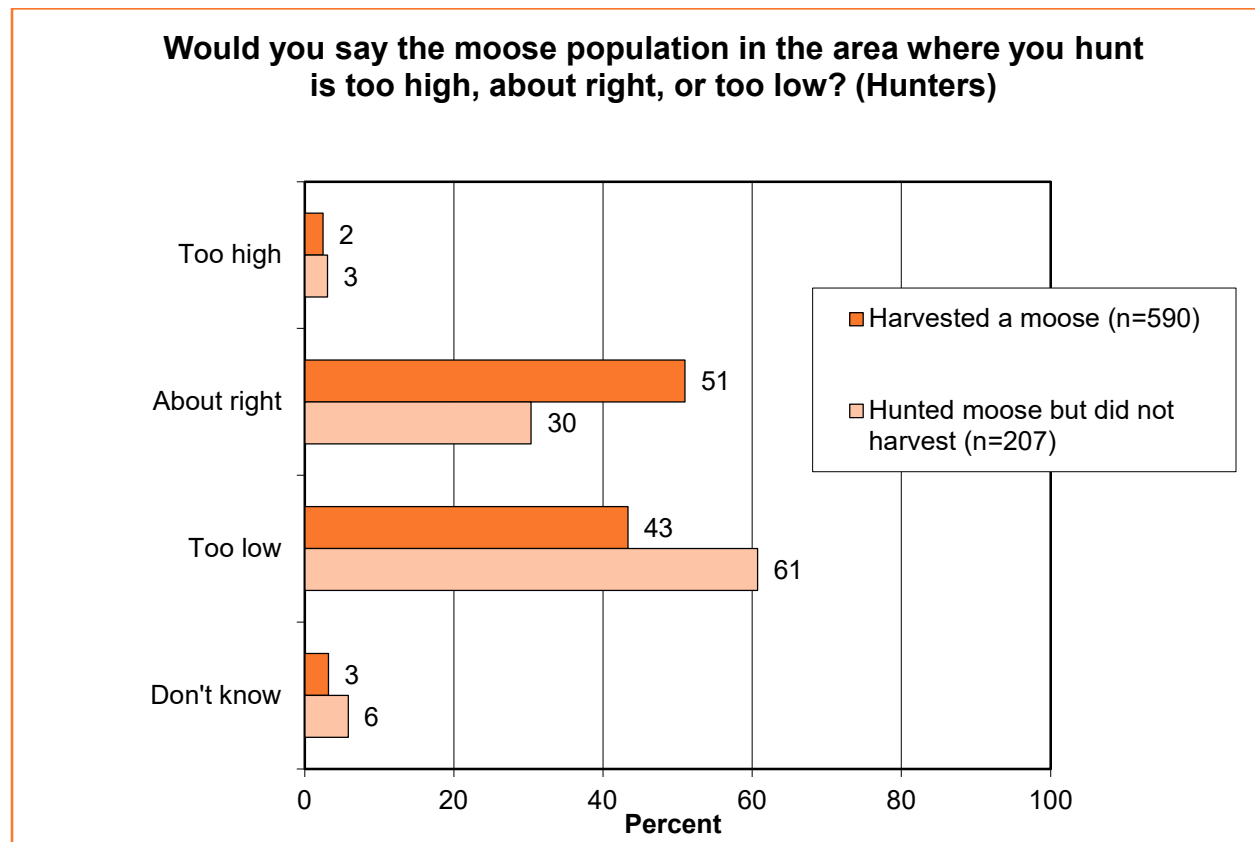
Hunters were asked about the moose population where they typically hunt, and it was asked of those hunters who hunt moose as well as those who do not do so. The results are quite similar to those questions asking about the state as a whole: hunters are primarily divided into those thinking the moose population is *about right* and those thinking it is *too low*.

Would you say the moose population in the area where you hunt is too high, about right, or too low? (Hunters)

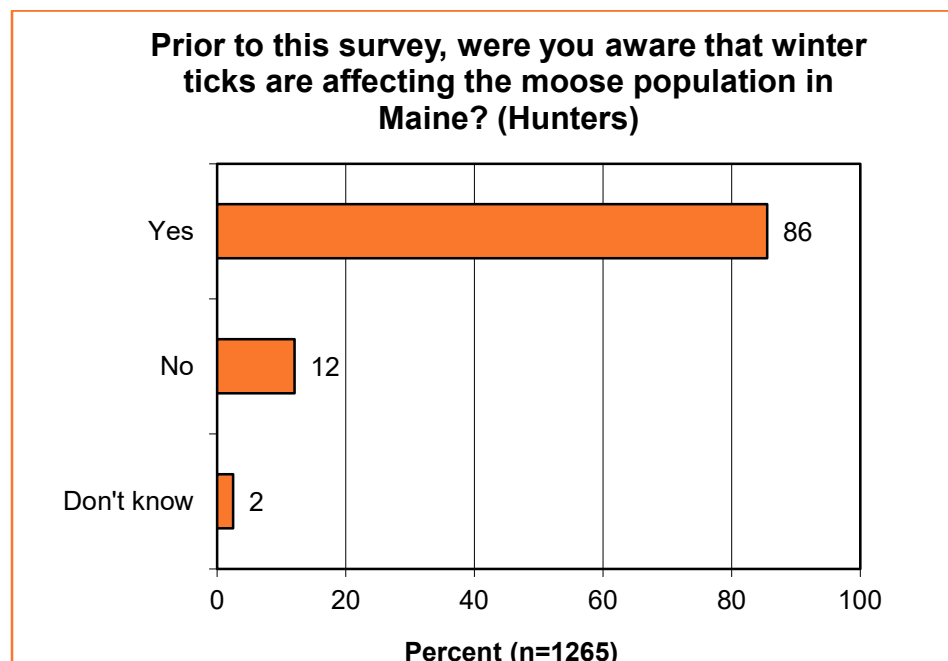




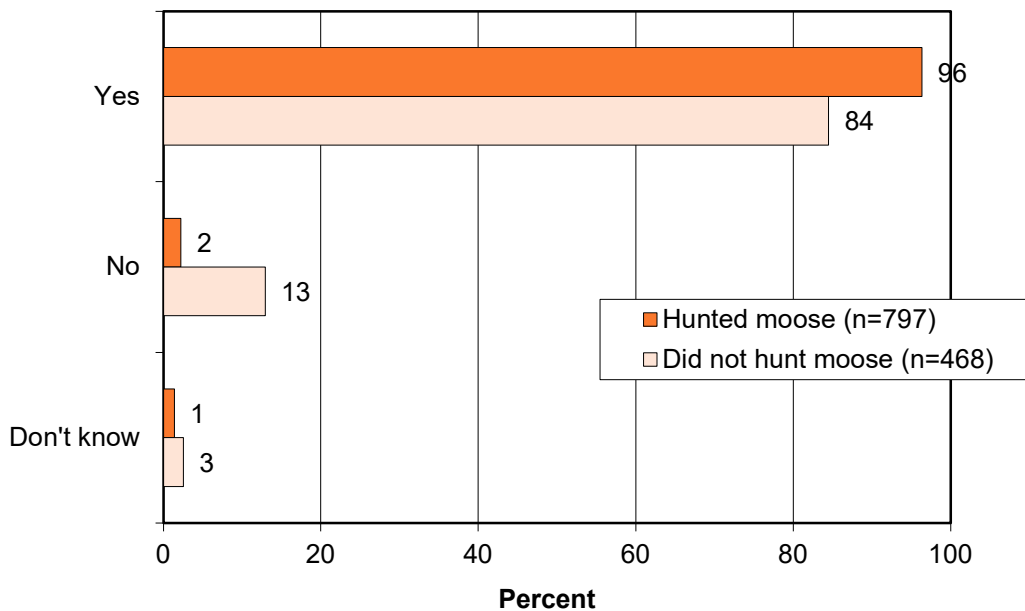
This question was also crosstabulated according to moose harvest success. Not surprisingly, those who did not harvest have a much higher percentage who say that the moose population where they hunt is too low. Among those who harvested a moose, 43% think the moose population in the area where they hunt is too low. Meanwhile, 61% of those who hunted moose but did not harvest one think that the moose population where they hunt is too low. Clearly, harvest success influences the results of this question. This graph is shown on the next page.



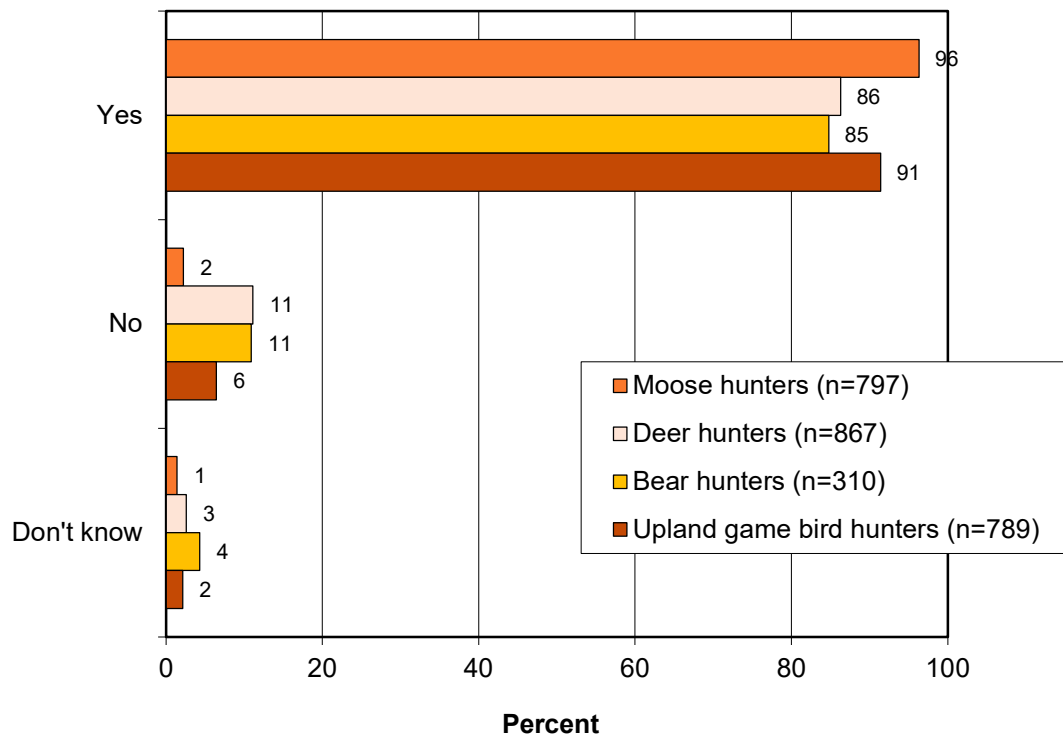
A large majority of hunters (86%) were aware, prior to the survey, that winter ticks are affecting the moose population in Maine. Among moose hunters, that percentage is considerably higher: 96% were aware (see the following page).



Prior to this survey, were you aware that winter ticks are affecting the moose population in Maine? (Hunters)

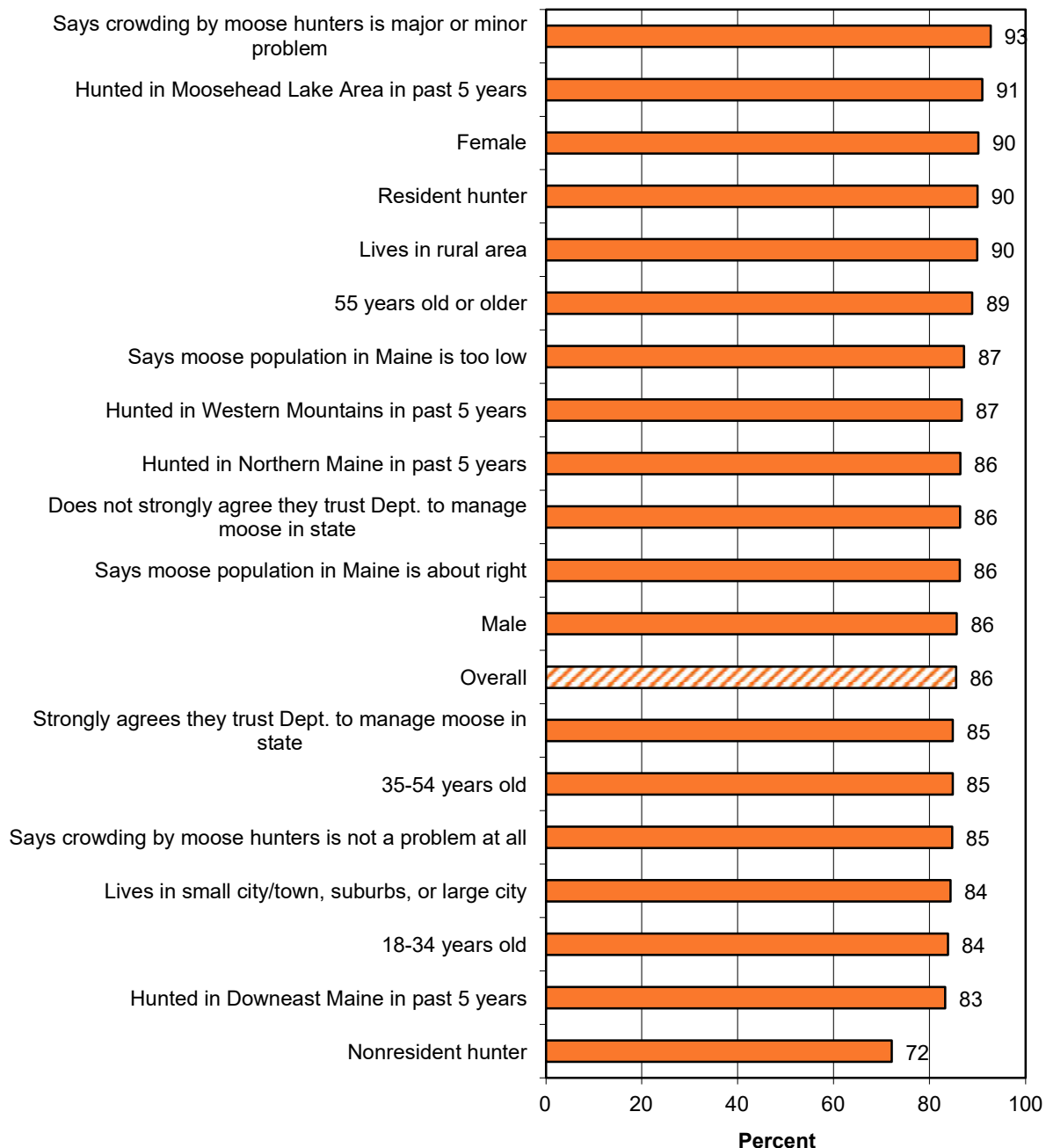


Prior to this survey, were you aware that winter ticks are affecting the moose population in Maine? (Hunters)

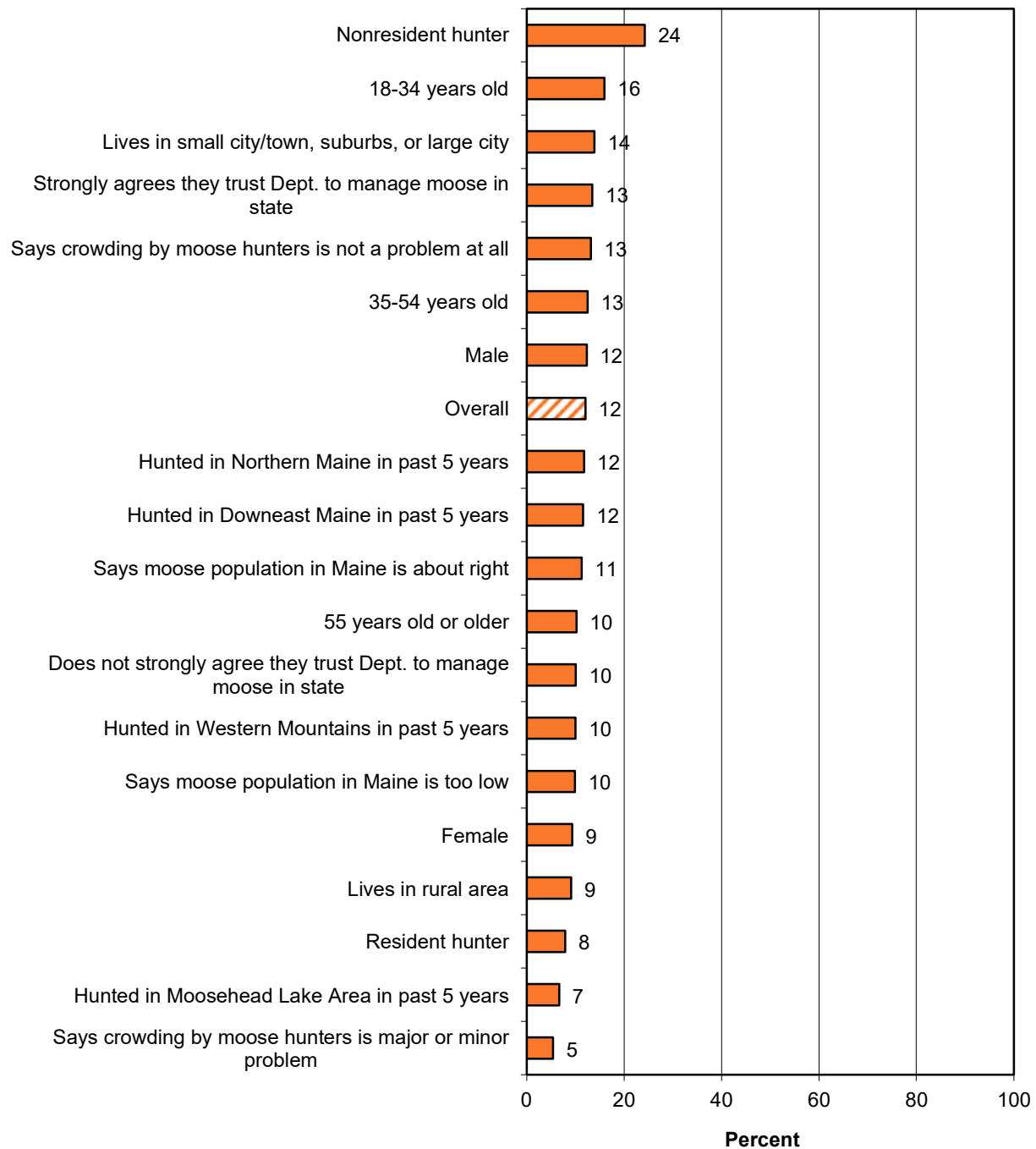


The demographic analyses found two groups markedly more aware than hunters overall: those who say that crowding by moose hunters is a problem and those who hunted in the Moosehead Lake Area in the past 5 years (hunted anything, not necessarily moose). On the other hand, those least aware are nonresident hunters (see the graph on the next page).

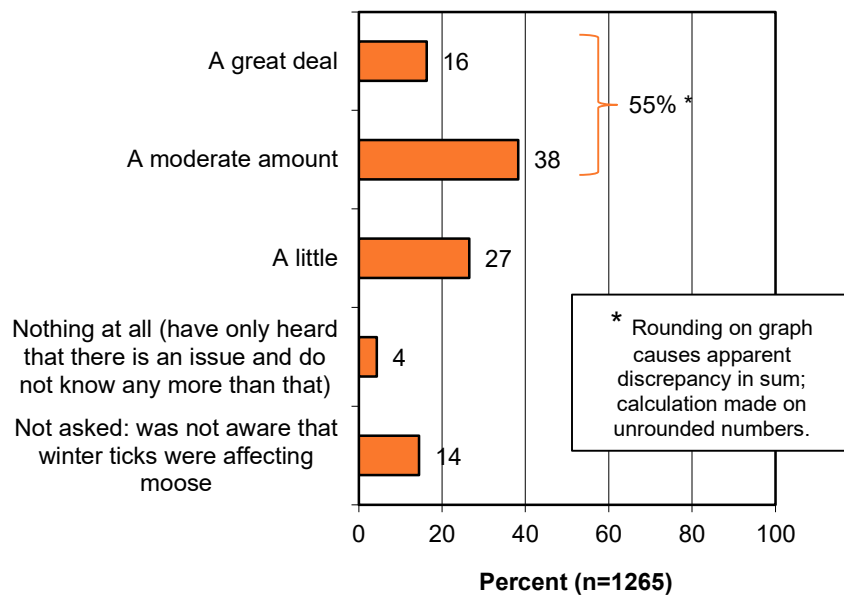
Percent of the following groups who were aware prior to the survey that winter ticks are affecting the moose population in Maine. (Hunters)



Percent of the following groups who were not aware prior to the survey that winter ticks are affecting the moose population in Maine. (Hunters)

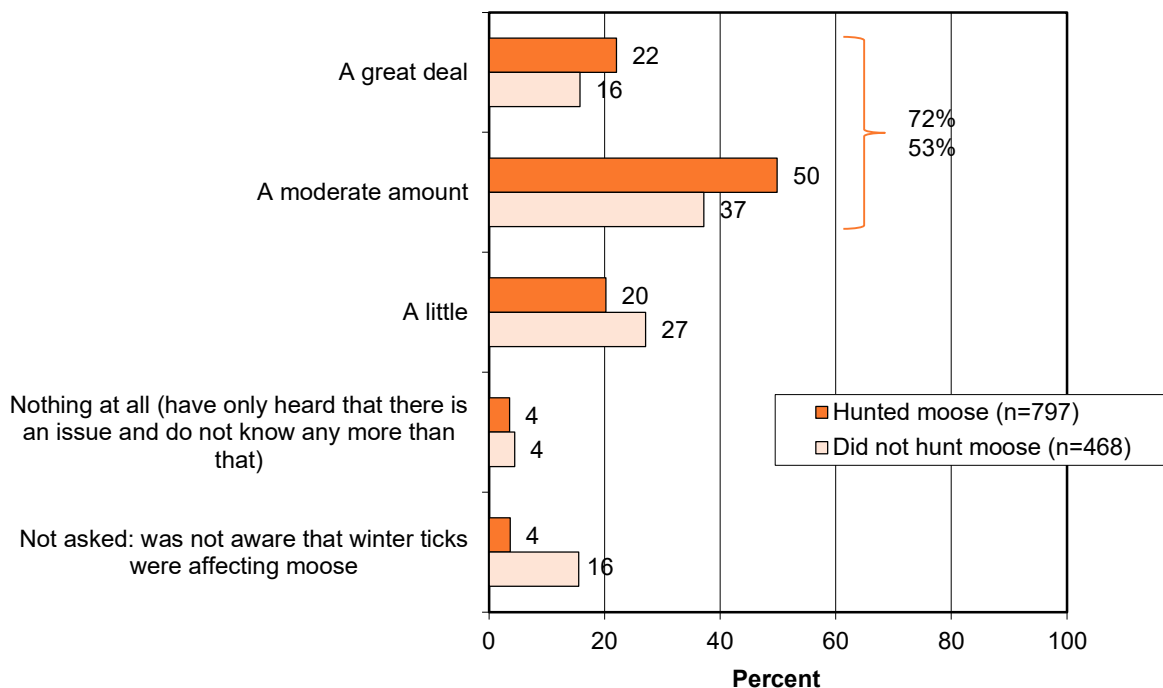


How much would you say you know about winter ticks and their impacts on the moose population in Maine? (Asked of those who were aware of winter ticks affecting moose; shown among all.) (Hunters)

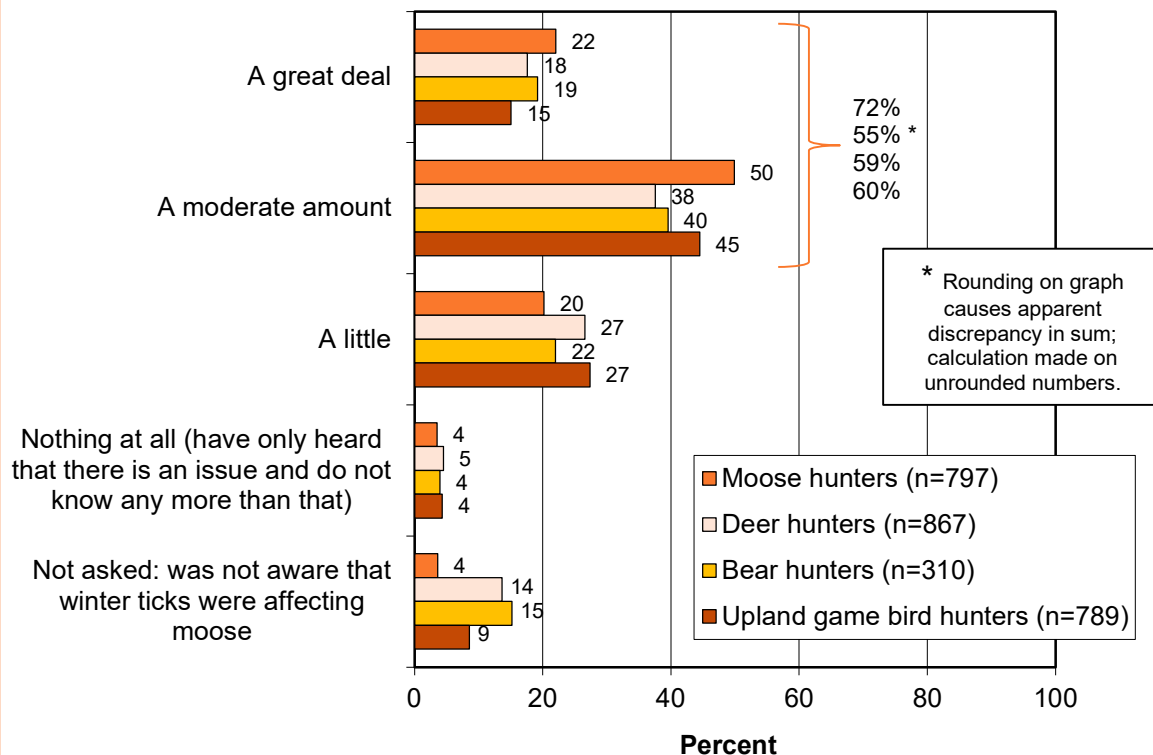


A slight majority of hunters (55%) know a great deal or a moderate amount about winter ticks and their impacts on the moose population. Moose hunters, as might be expected, have a higher knowledge level than do those who did not hunt moose.

How much would you say you know about winter ticks and their impacts on the moose population in Maine? (Asked of those who were aware of winter ticks affecting moose; shown among all.) (Hunters)

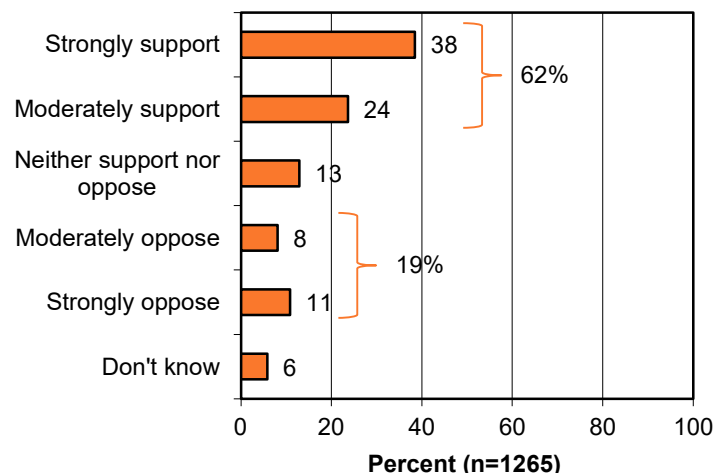


**How much would you say you know about winter ticks and their impacts on the moose population in Maine?
(Asked of those who were aware of winter ticks affecting moose; shown among all.) (Hunters)**



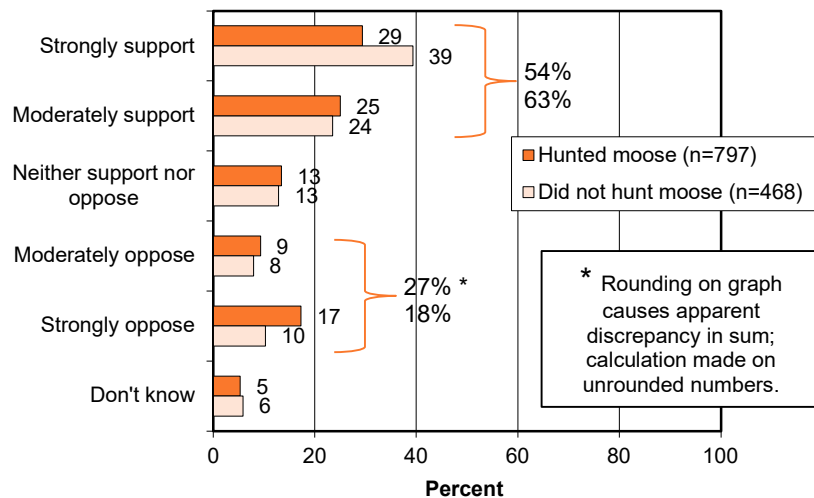
Support is about three times higher than opposition to a moose hunt that allows the limited harvest of additional moose calves to improve the overall rate of moose calf survival during the winter, in situations where the Department predicts a high winter tick load will likely result in a high rate of moose calf deaths over the winter: 62% would support compared to 19% who would oppose.

If the Department predicts a high winter tick load that would likely result in a high rate of moose calf deaths over the winter, would you support or oppose a moose hunt that allowed the limited harvest of additional moose calves to improve the overall rate of moose calf survival during the winter? (Hunters)

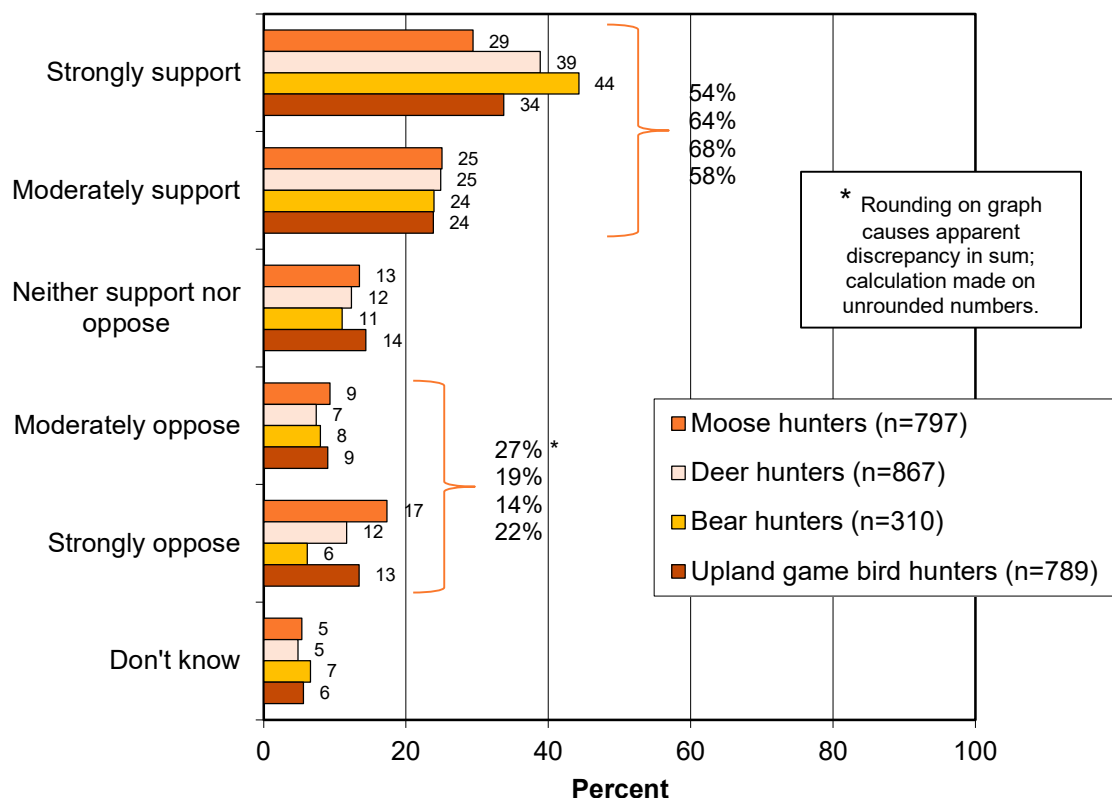


Support is higher among those who did *not* hunt moose in the past 5 years than it is among those who hunted moose in that time. Also, support is higher among bear and deer hunters than among moose and upland bird hunters.

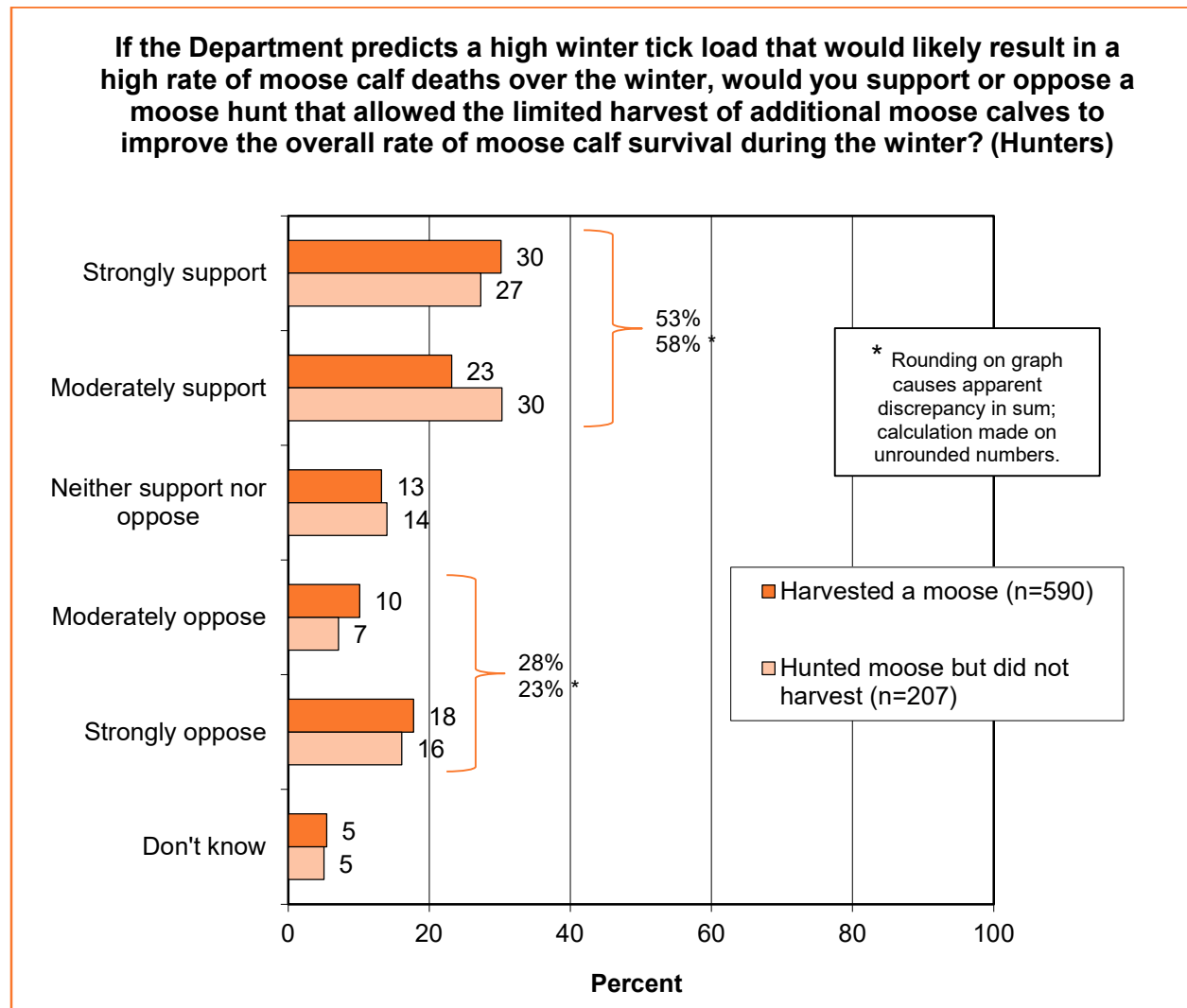
If the Department predicts a high winter tick load that would likely result in a high rate of moose calf deaths over the winter, would you support or oppose a moose hunt that allowed the limited harvest of additional moose calves to improve the overall rate of moose calf survival during the winter? (Hunters)



If the Department predicts a high winter tick load that would likely result in a high rate of moose calf deaths over the winter, would you support or oppose a moose hunt that allowed the limited harvest of additional moose calves to improve the overall rate of moose calf survival during the winter? (Hunters)

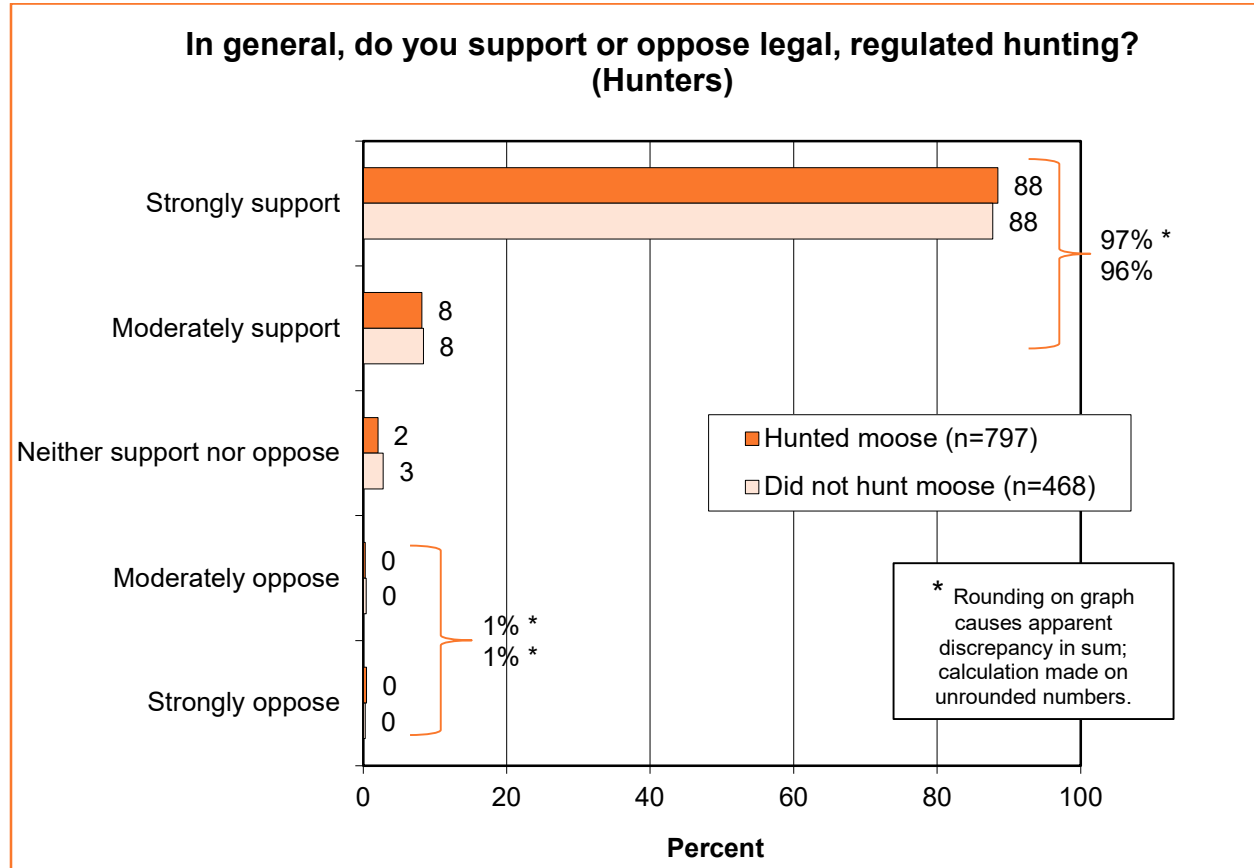
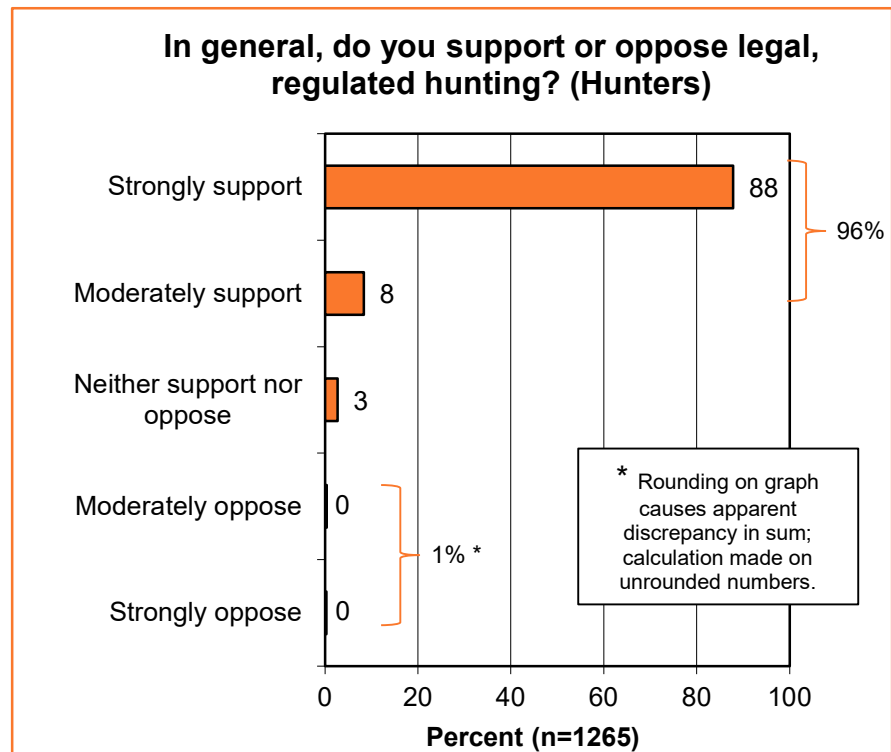


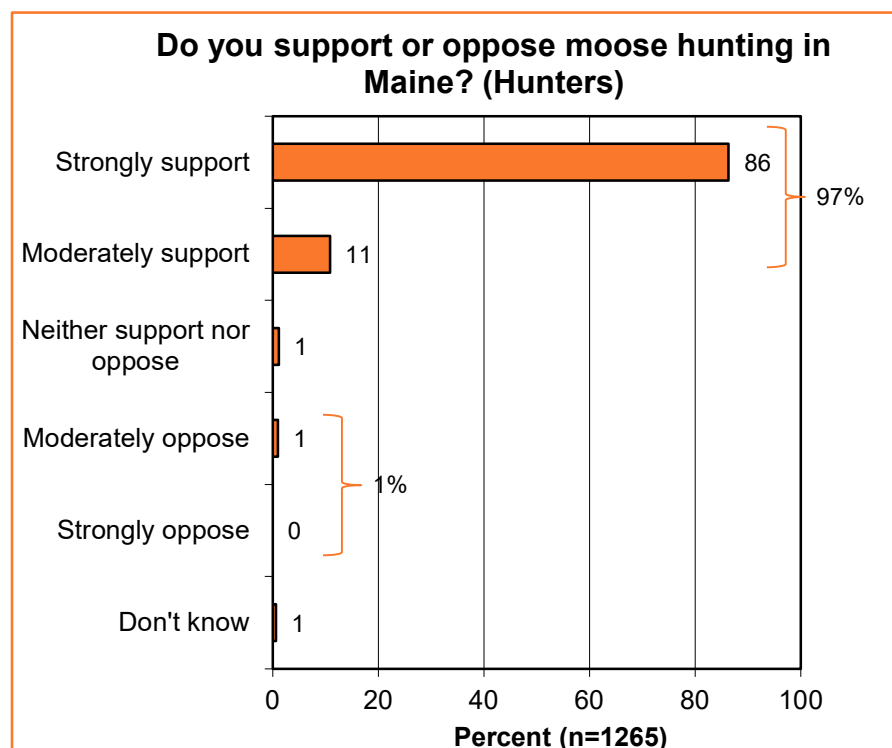
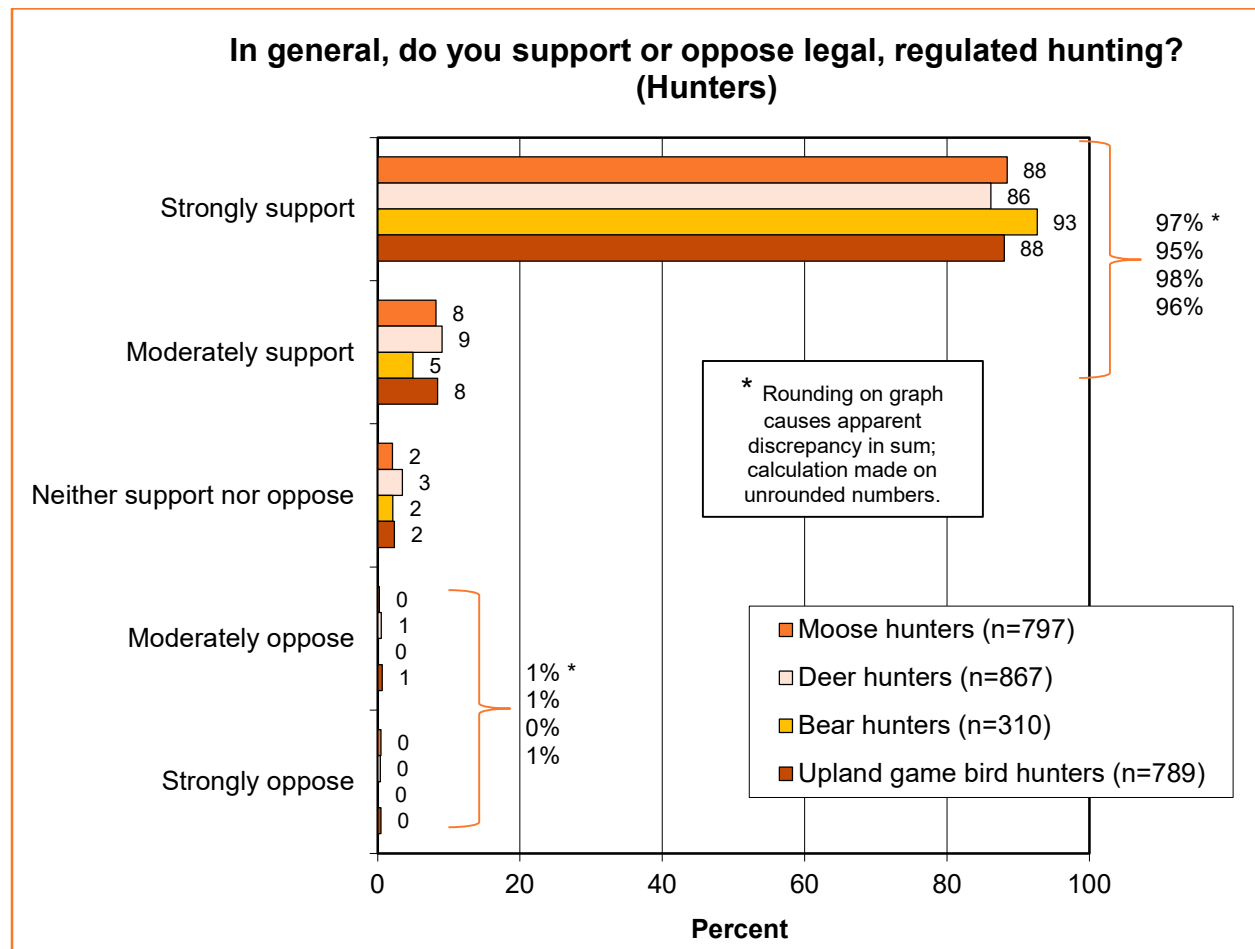
The crosstabulation by harvest success does not show a large difference between those who harvested a moose and those who hunted moose but did not harvest, although there is a slight difference. Among those who harvested, 53% support, while among those who did not harvest, 58% support—a little higher, but not by much. Opposition is at 28% among harvesters and 23% among non-harvesters.



ATTITUDES TOWARD HUNTING

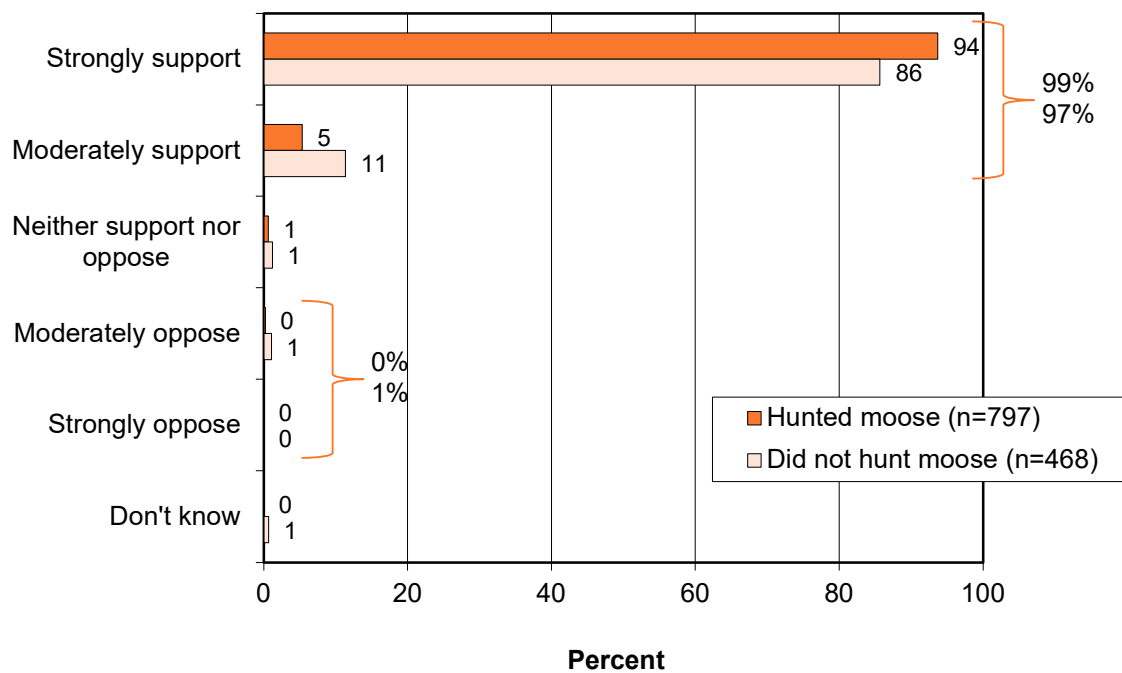
The overwhelming majority of hunters overall and of each hunter group in the crosstabulations *strongly* support hunting. Nearly unanimously, they *strongly* or *moderately* support hunting. Although all hunter groups in the species crosstabulation are quite similar, bear hunters are the most supportive.



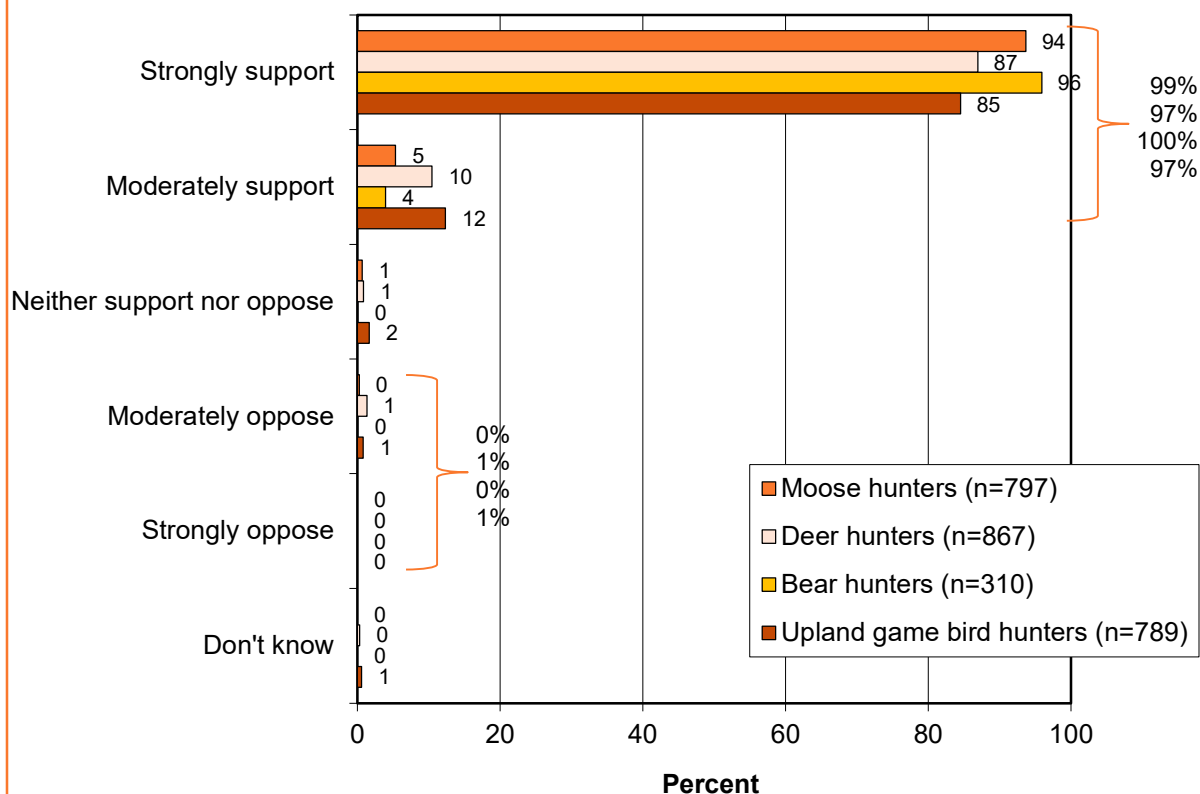


Support specifically for moose hunting is as high as for hunting in general. *Strong* support is just slightly lower among upland bird hunters and deer hunters than it is among moose hunters (and bear hunters, as well).

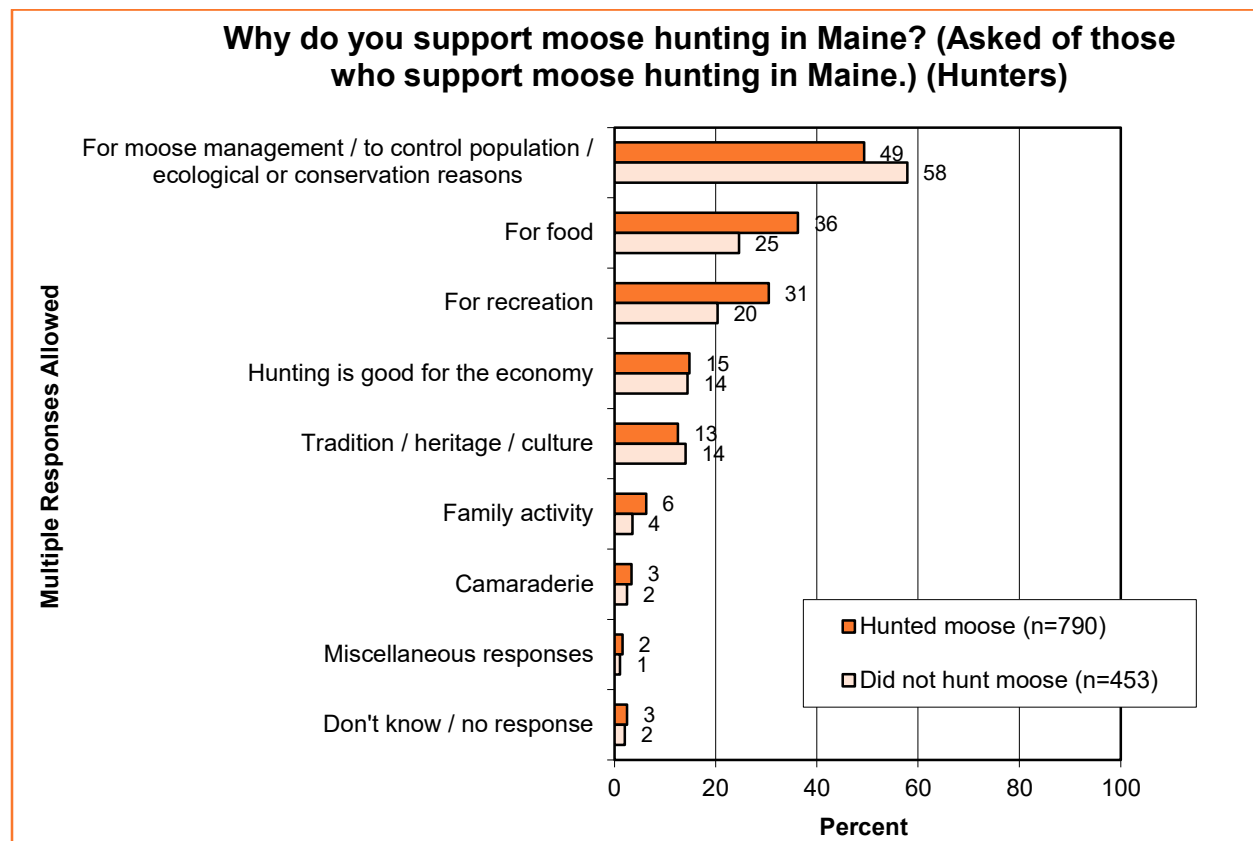
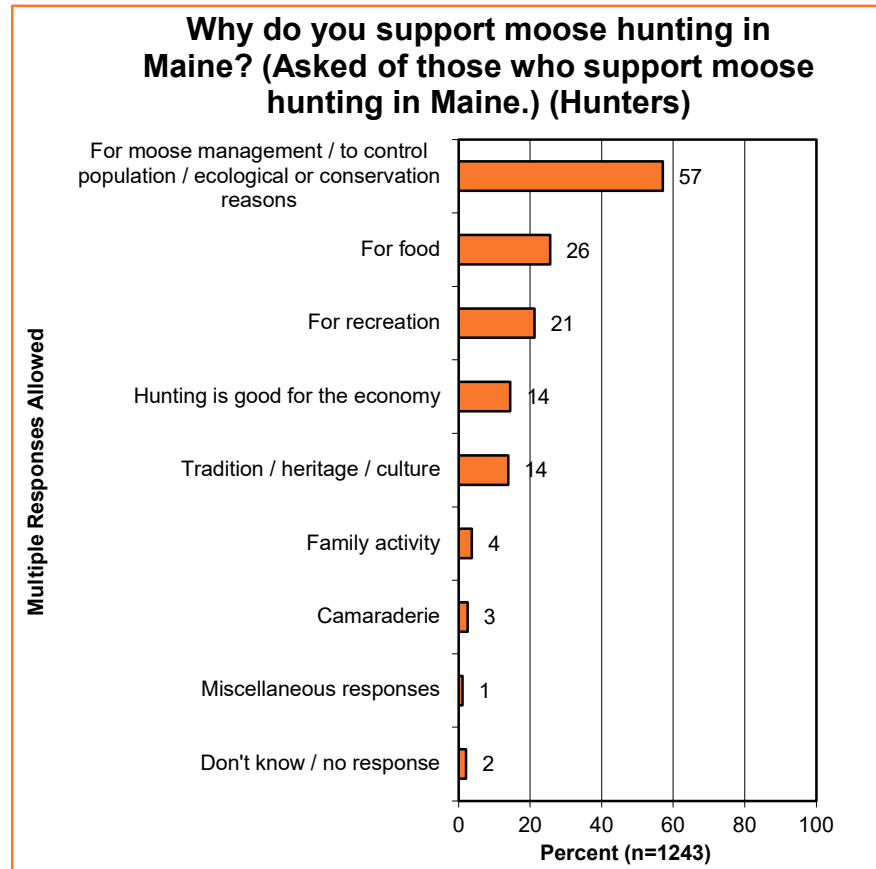
Do you support or oppose moose hunting in Maine? (Hunters)



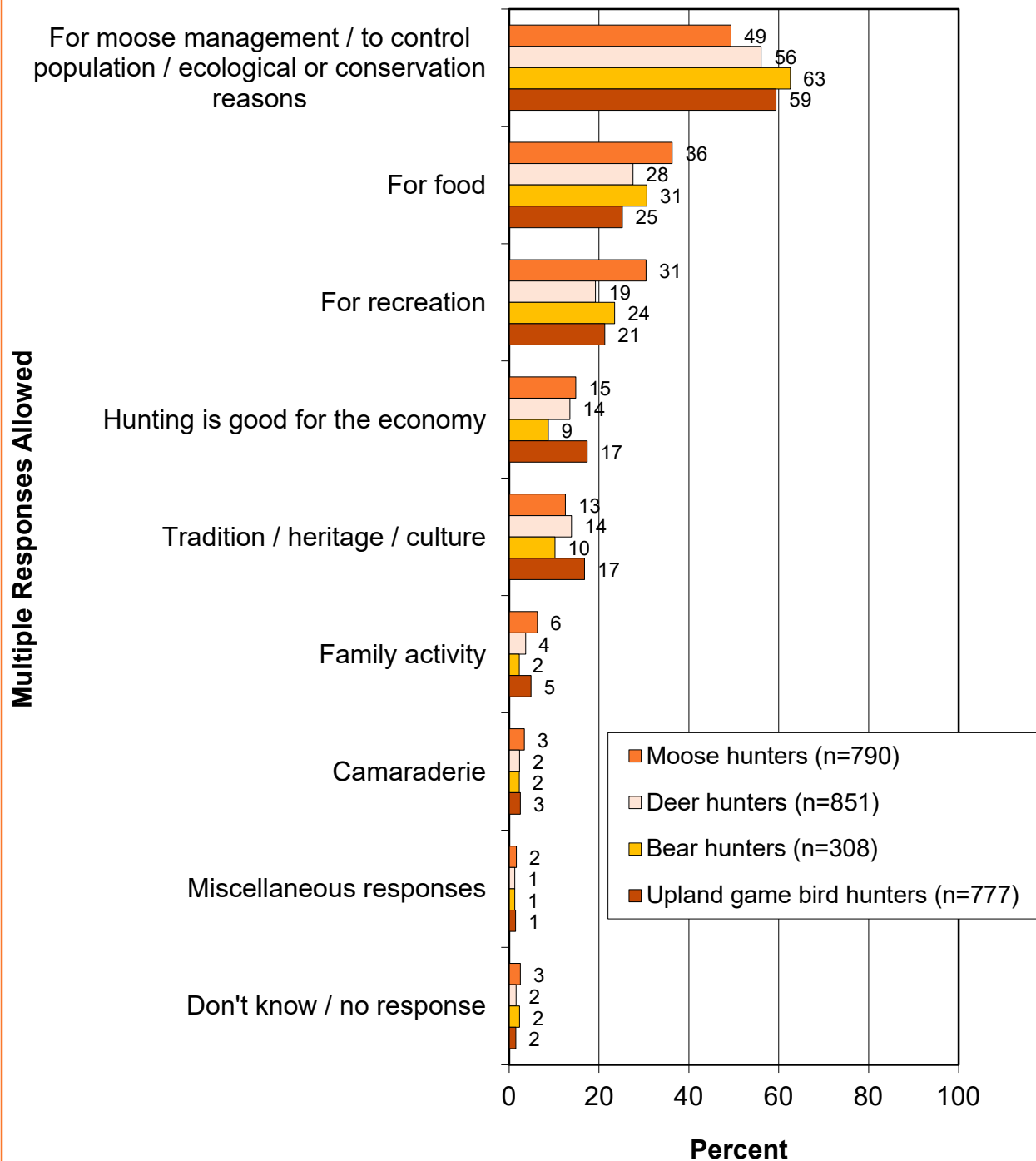
Do you support or oppose moose hunting in Maine? (Hunters)



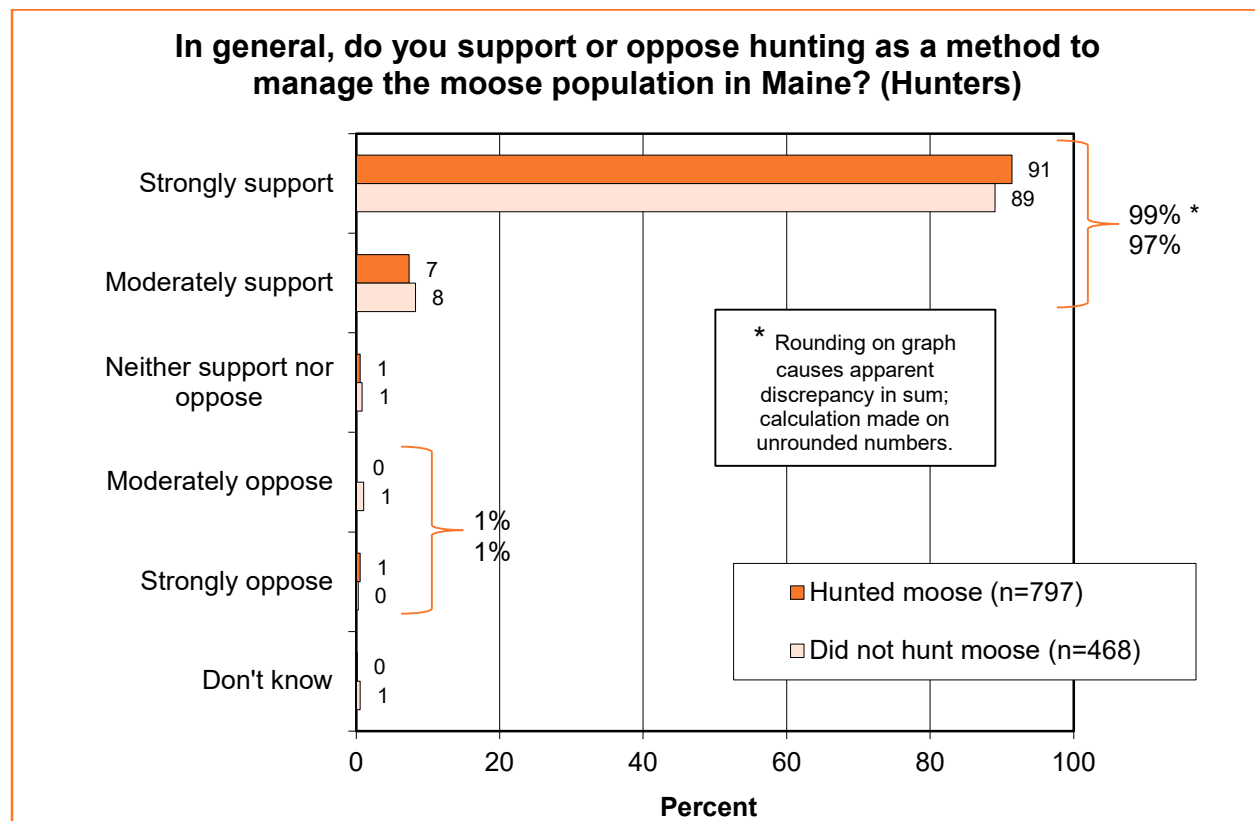
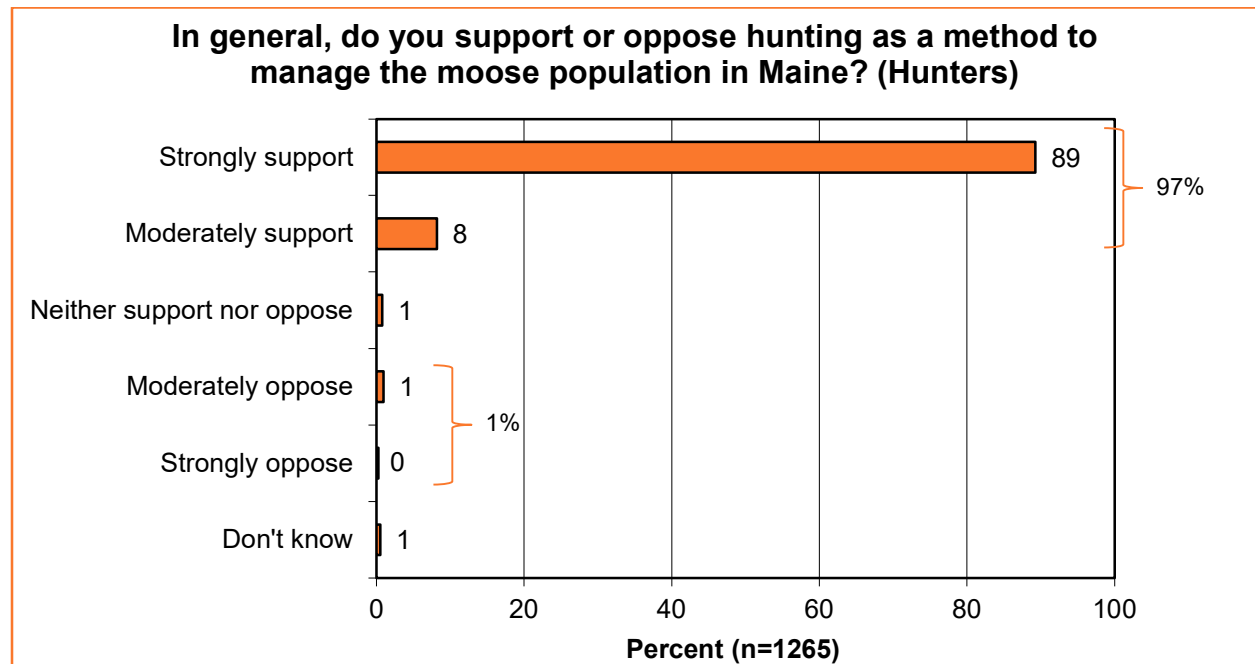
The top reason for supporting moose hunting is for moose management and conservation—by far the highest percentage. Other reasons given by more than a fifth are hunting moose for food and doing so for recreation. The graph shows the entire list of responses to this open-ended question. Moose hunters, compared to those who did not hunt moose, have higher percentages who support it for food and recreation.

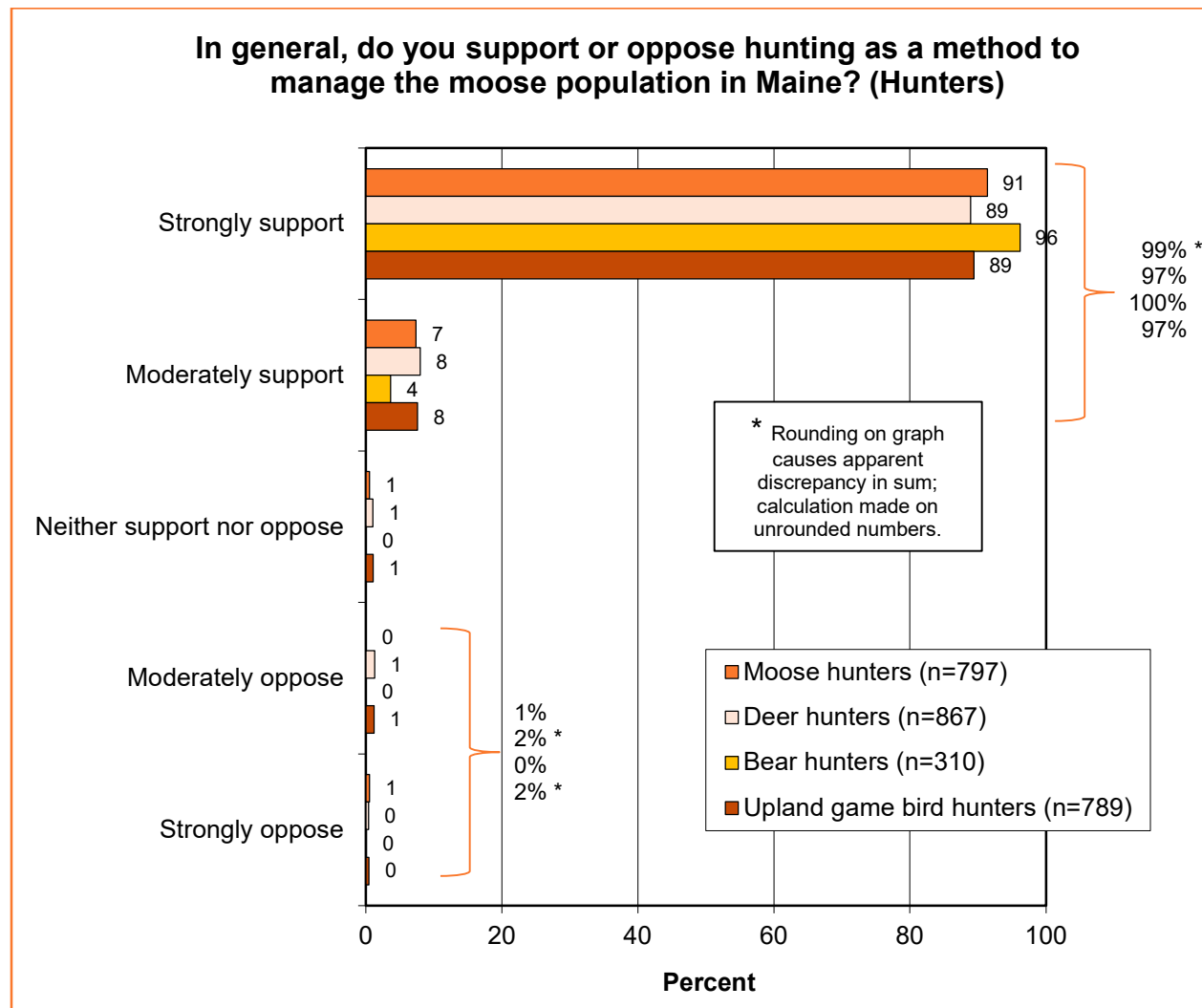


Why do you support moose hunting in Maine? (Asked of those who support moose hunting in Maine.) (Hunters)



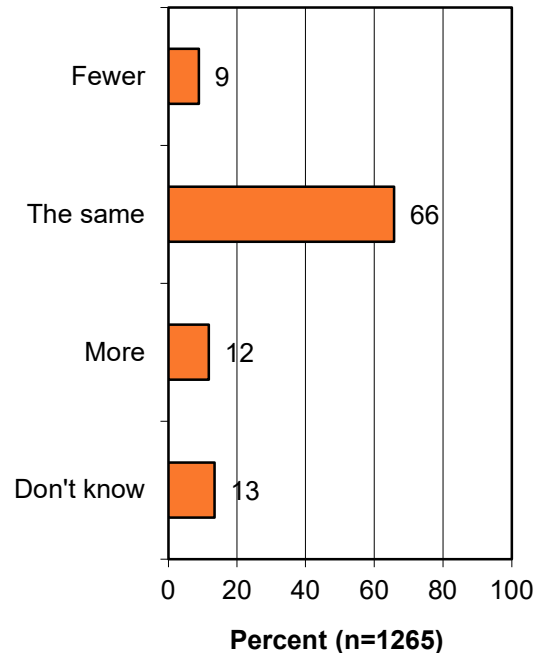
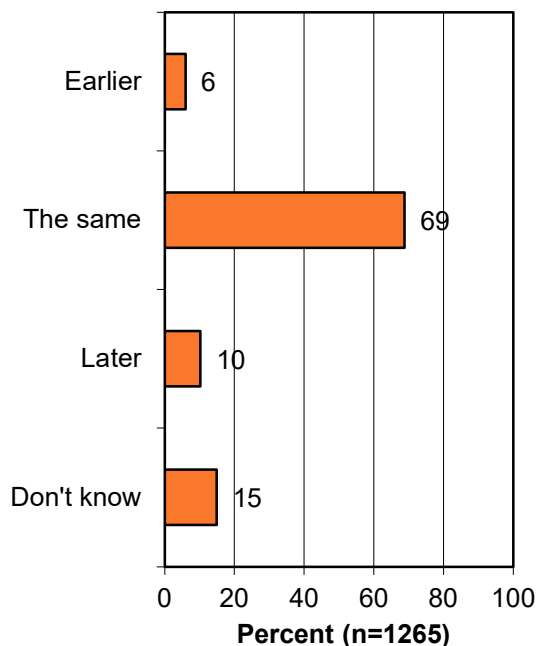
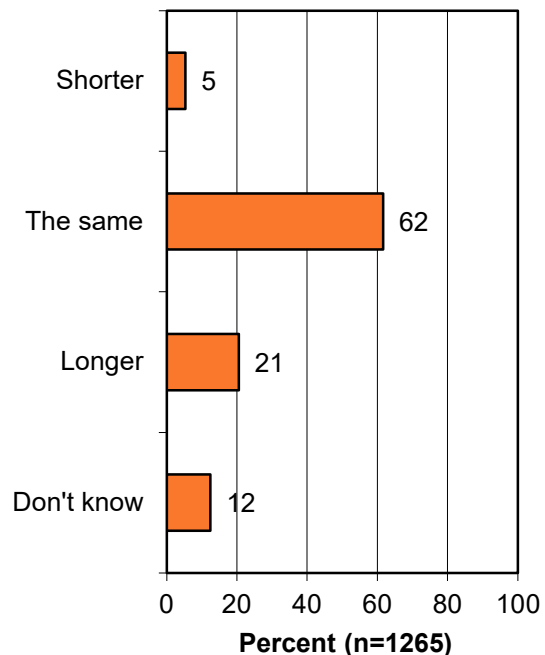
The graphs that follow show high support for hunting as a method to manage the moose population in Maine. These graphs mirror those previously shown about support for/opposition to hunting in general and hunting moose specifically.



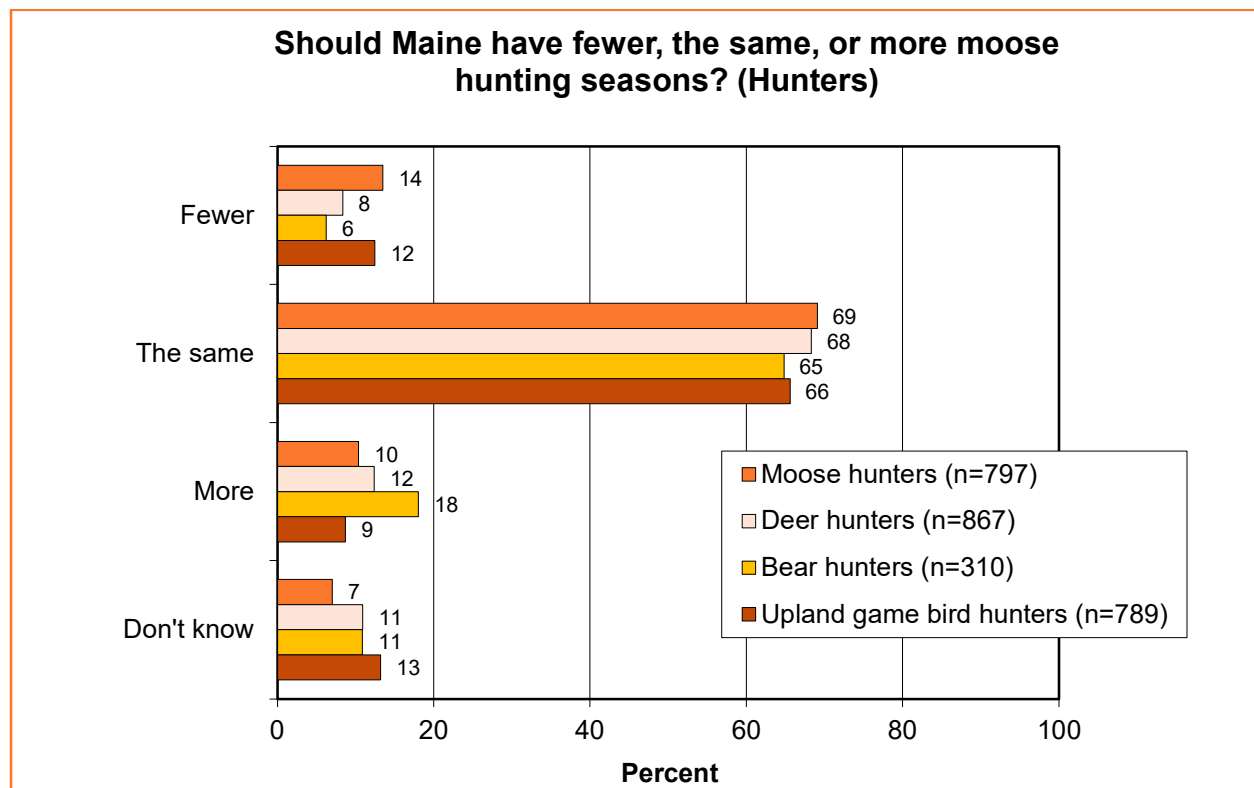
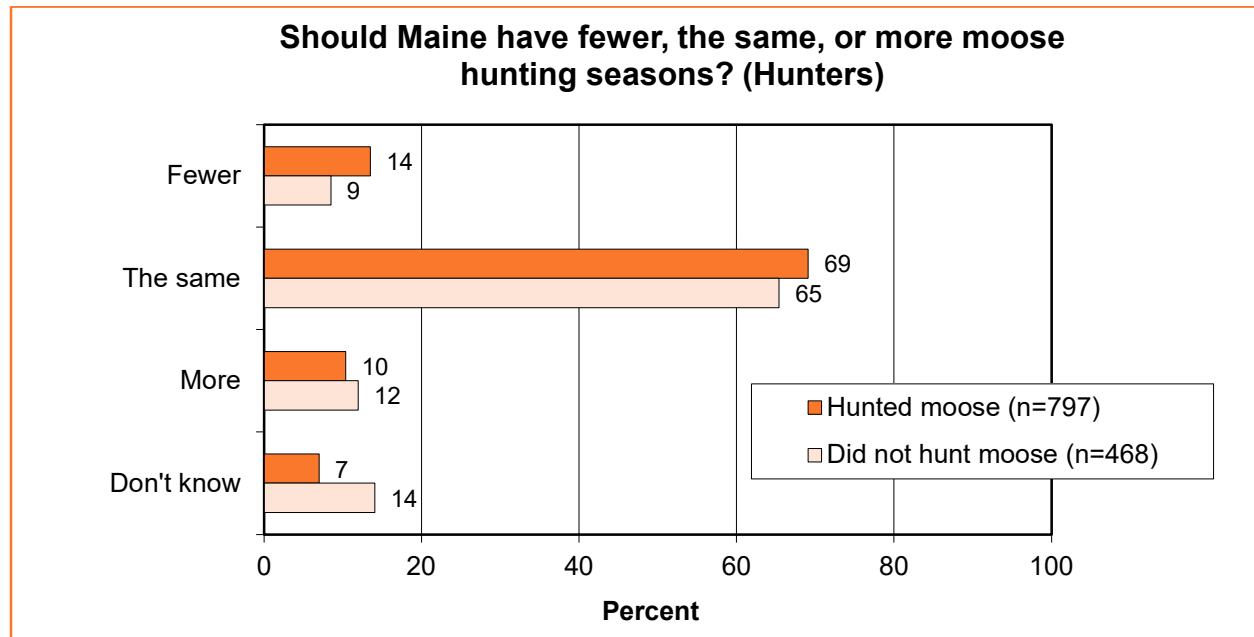


OPINIONS ON MOOSE HUNTING SEASONS

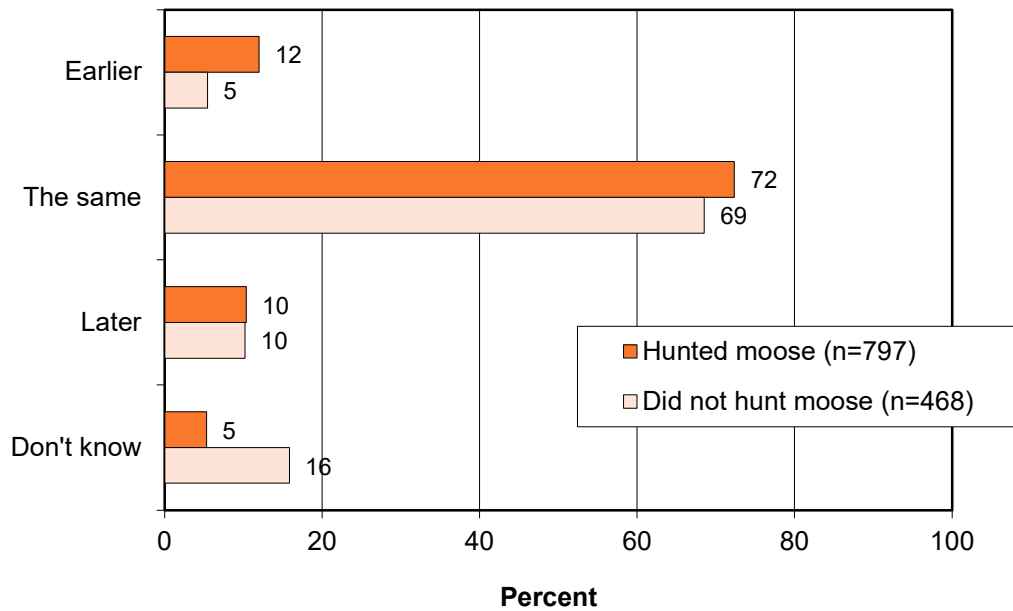
Three questions about moose seasons asked if Maine should have fewer or more moose seasons, if they should occur earlier or later, and if the seasons should be shorter or longer. All three questions also had a middle option for the *same* as the seasons currently are, and a majority of hunters on all three questions chose the *same*. Otherwise, hunters are fairly evenly divided between wanting fewer (9%) or more (12%) moose hunting seasons and between wanting earlier (6%) or later (10%) seasons. However, on the third question, a much greater percentage want longer seasons (21%) than want shorter seasons (5%).

Should Maine have fewer, the same, or more moose hunting seasons? (Hunters)**Should Maine's moose seasons occur earlier, the same, or later? (Hunters)****Should Maine's moose season length be shorter, the same, or longer? (Hunters)**

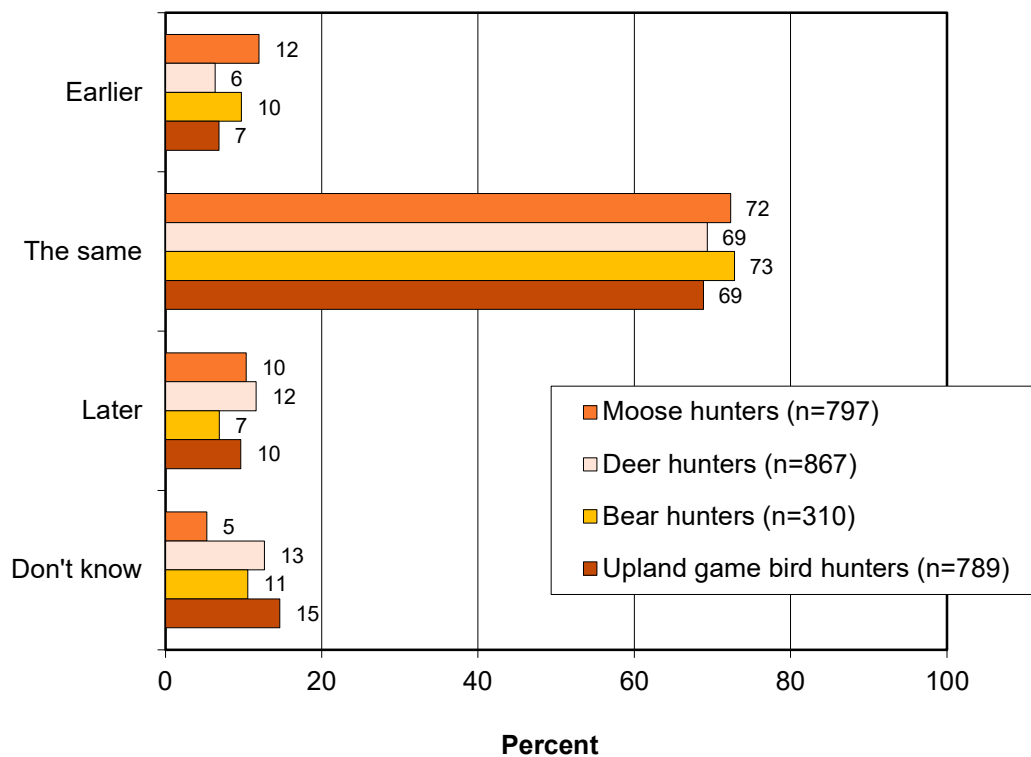
For each question, those who hunted moose have lower percentages answering that they do not know, compared to those who did not hunt moose. This means that those who hunted moose have higher percentages elsewhere than do those who did not hunt moose. In particular, 14% of those who hunted moose want fewer seasons, compared to 9% of those who did not hunt moose, and 12% of moose hunters want earlier seasons, compared to 5% of those who did not hunt moose.



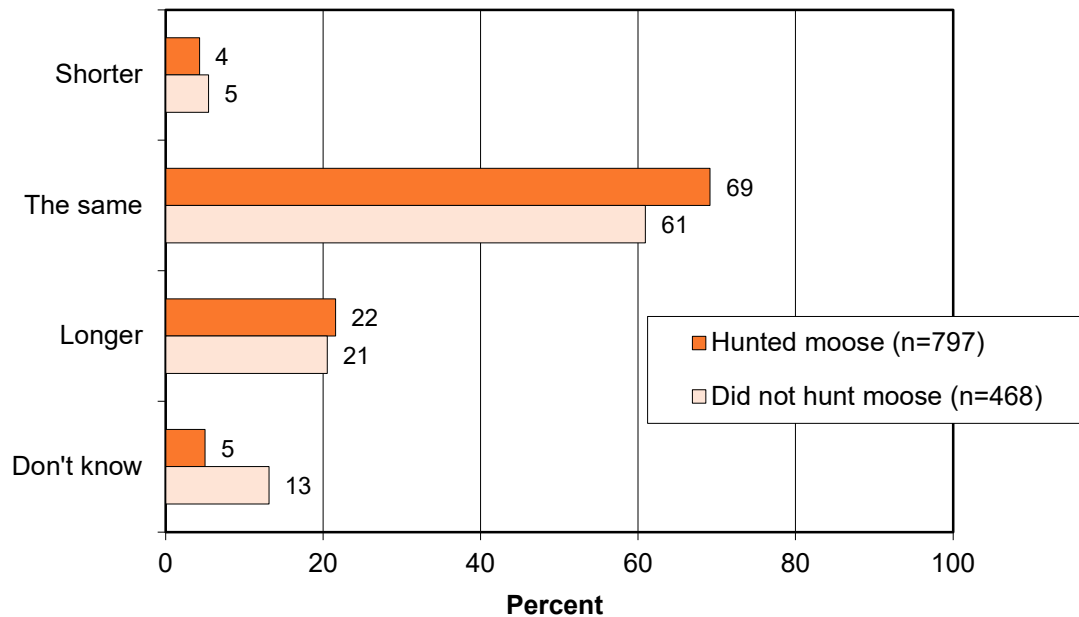
Should Maine's moose seasons occur earlier, the same, or later? (Hunters)



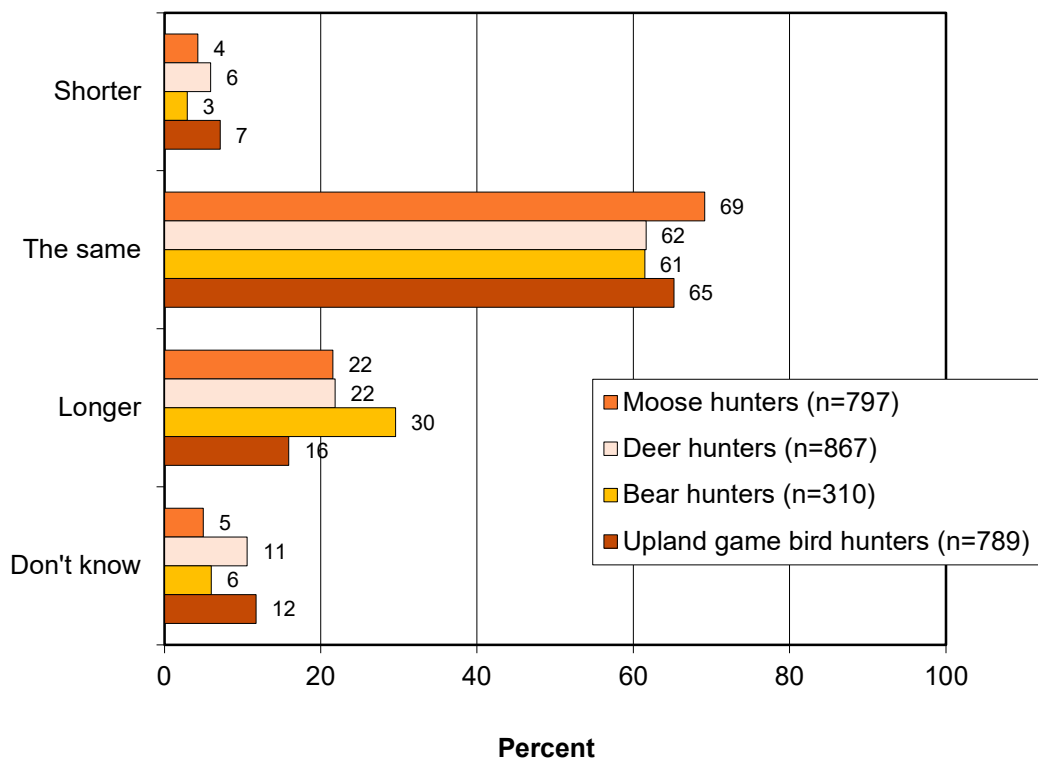
Should Maine's moose seasons occur earlier, the same, or later? (Hunters)



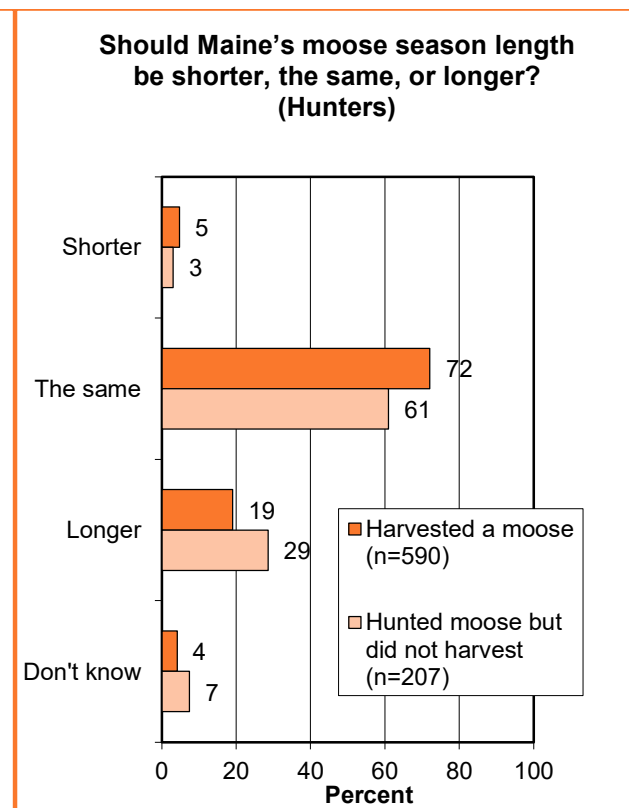
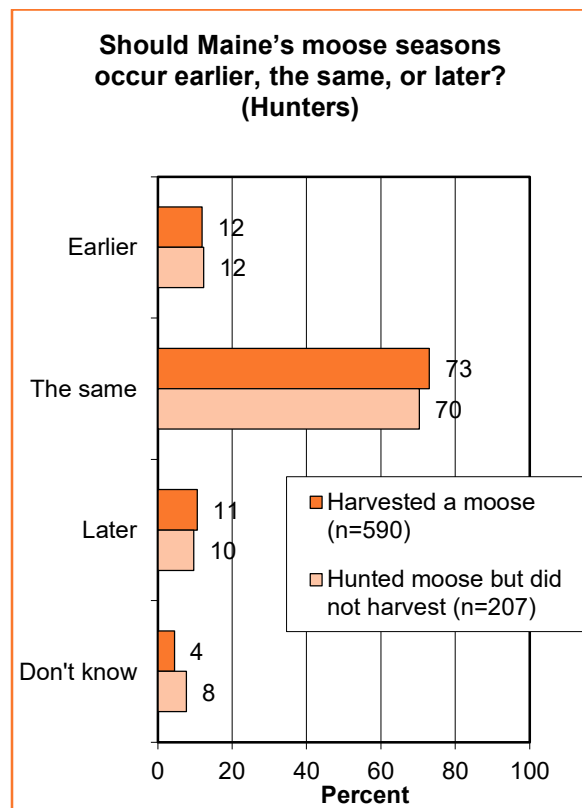
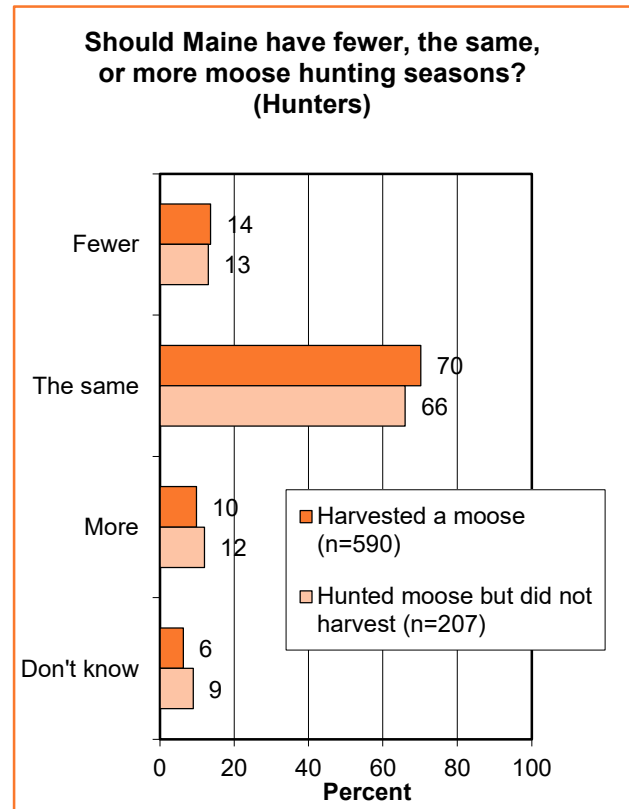
Should Maine's moose season length be shorter, the same, or longer? (Hunters)



Should Maine's moose season length be shorter, the same, or longer? (Hunters)



The crosstabulation by harvest success was run on these three questions. The two groups are quite similar regarding their opinion on the number of seasons and the timing of seasons. They differ in their opinion on the length of seasons, with non-harvesters being more likely than harvesters to want a longer season.



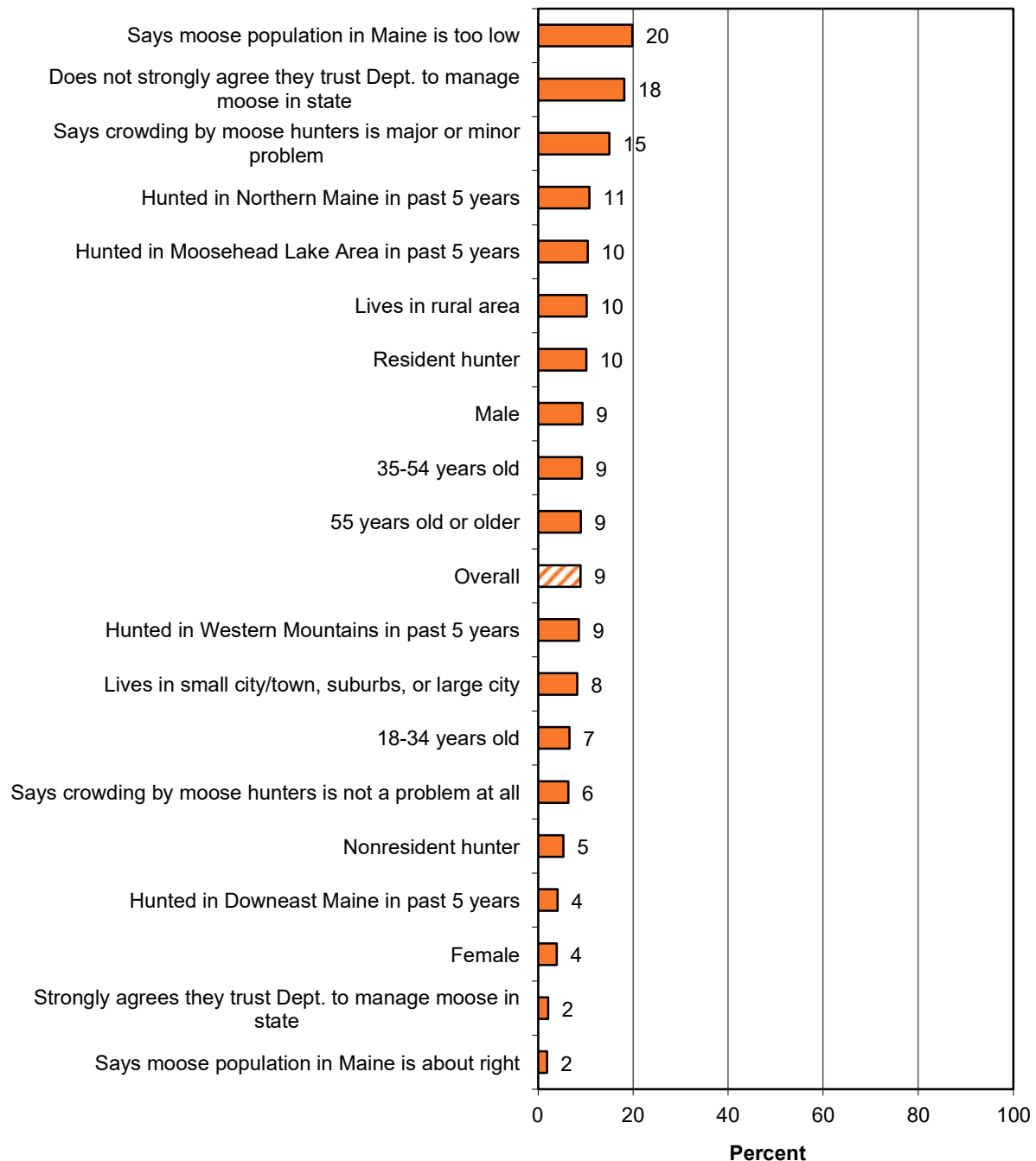
Nine demographic analyses were run on the responses to the three questions about the number, timing, and length of moose seasons. The graphs start on the next page; the table below summarizes the results. Among the findings:

- The hunter groups wanting fewer seasons are the same groups wanting shorter seasons: those saying the moose population is too low, those saying crowding by moose hunters is a problem, and those who do *not* strongly agree that they trust the Department to manage moose.
- Five hunter groups are associated with selecting *the same* on these questions: those who say that the moose population is about right, those who say that crowding by moose hunters is *not* a problem at all, Downeast Maine hunters, female hunters, and young hunters. (Although note that female hunters are associated with wanting longer seasons instead of the same length on that question.)

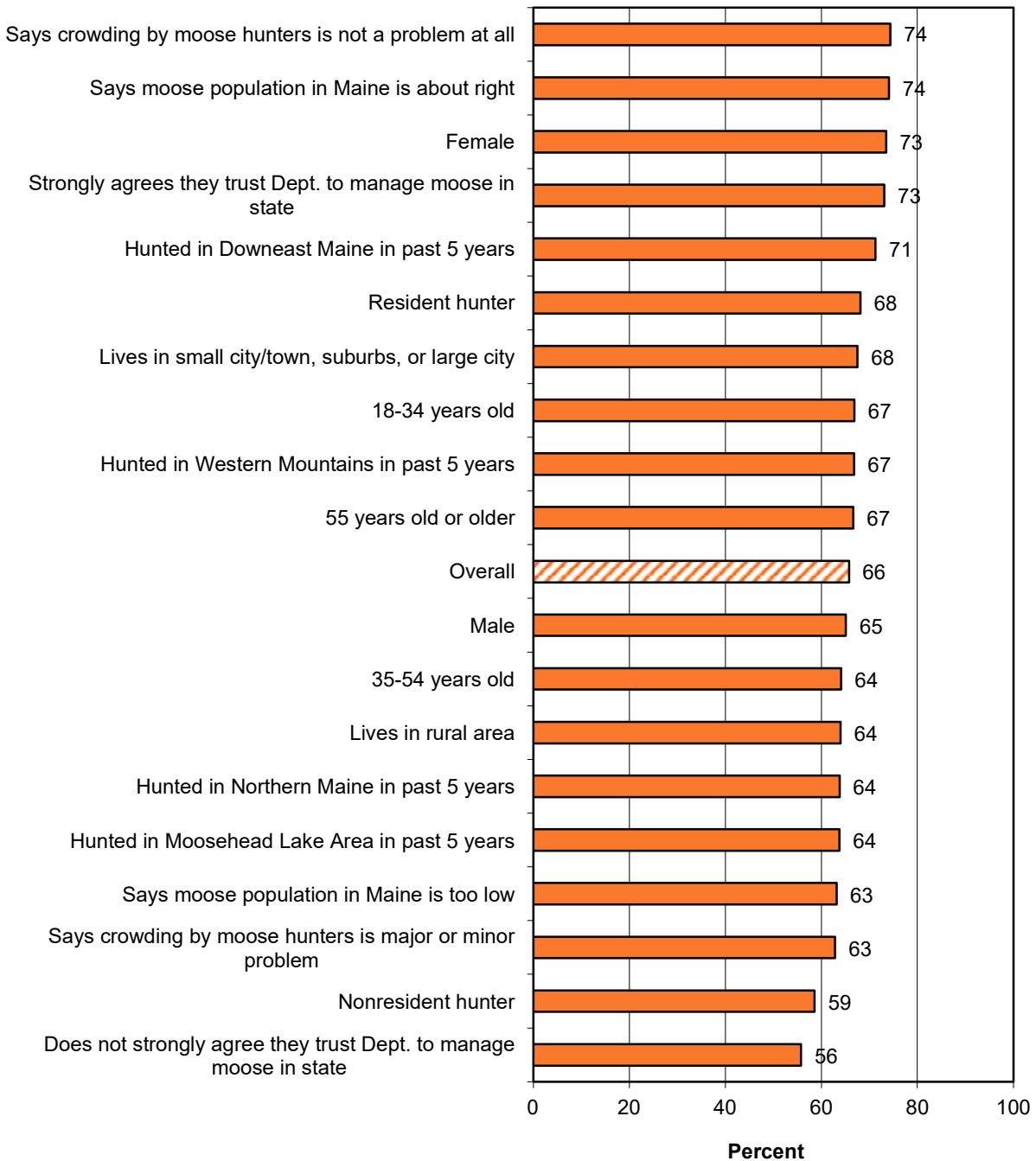
Summary of Demographic Analyses on Three Questions on Moose Seasons (Hunters)									
	Says Maine should have fewer, the same, or more moose seasons			Says Maine's moose seasons should occur earlier, the same, or later			Says Maine's moose seasons should be shorter, the same, or longer		
Demographic analyses group	Fewer	Same	More (none)	Earlier (none)	Same	Later (none)	Shorter	Same	Longer
Says moose population in Maine is about right		X						X	
Says moose population in Maine is too low	X						X		
Strongly agrees they trust Dept. to manage moose in state		X							
Does not strongly agree they trust Dept. to manage moose in state	X						X		
Says crowding by moose hunters is major or minor problem	X						X		
Says crowding by moose hunters is not a problem at all		X			X			X	
Hunted in Downeast Maine in past 5 years		X			X				
Female		X			X				X
18-34 years old					X				
An "X" in the cell indicates that the group identified is markedly more likely to give the response compared to hunters overall. For example, hunters who say that the moose population in Maine is about right are more likely than hunters overall to say that they want the same number of moose seasons and the same length of seasons.									

The nine demographic analyses graphs start on the next page.

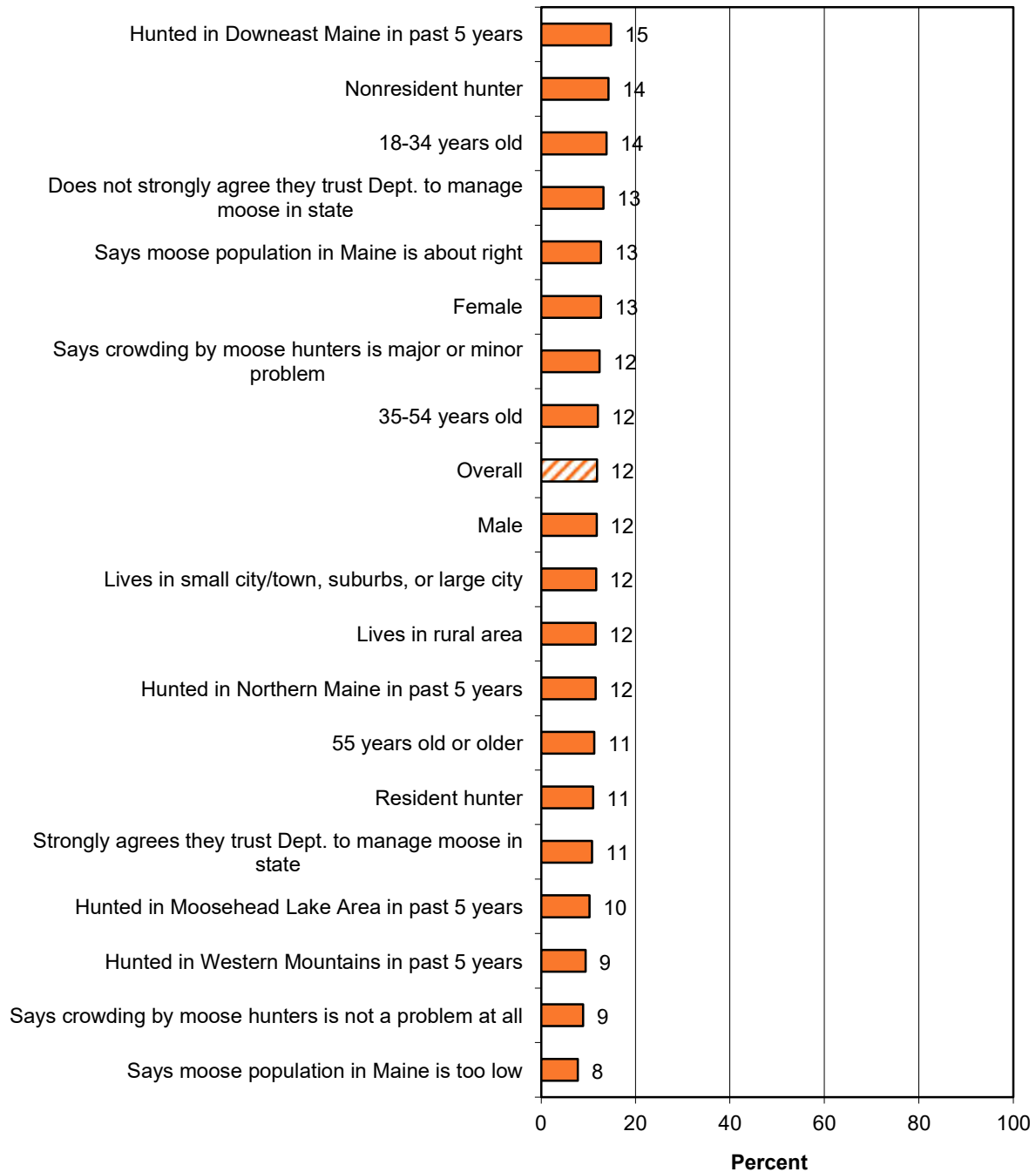
Percent of the following groups who think that Maine should have fewer moose hunting seasons. (Hunters)



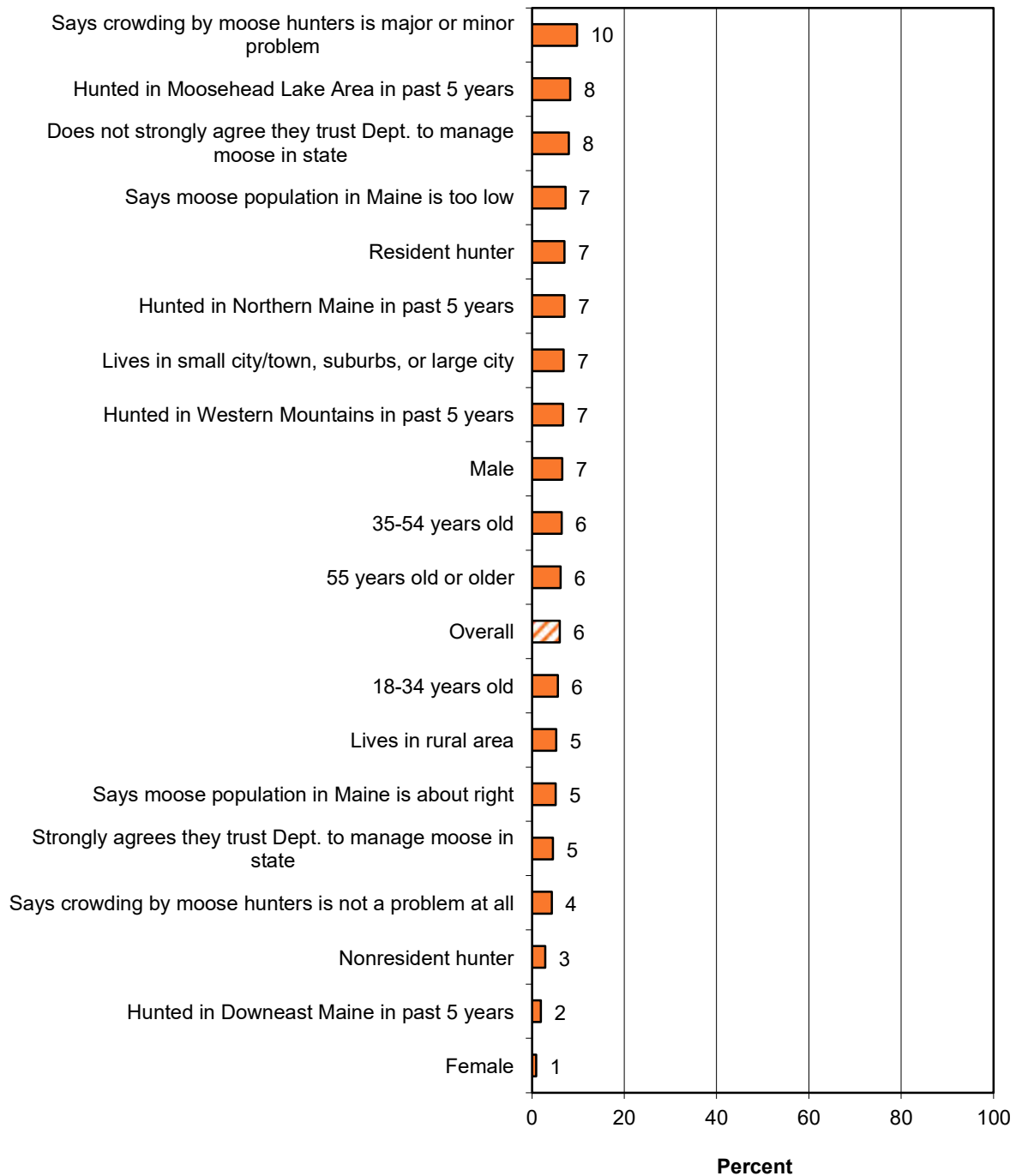
Percent of the following groups who think that Maine should have the same number of moose hunting seasons. (Hunters)



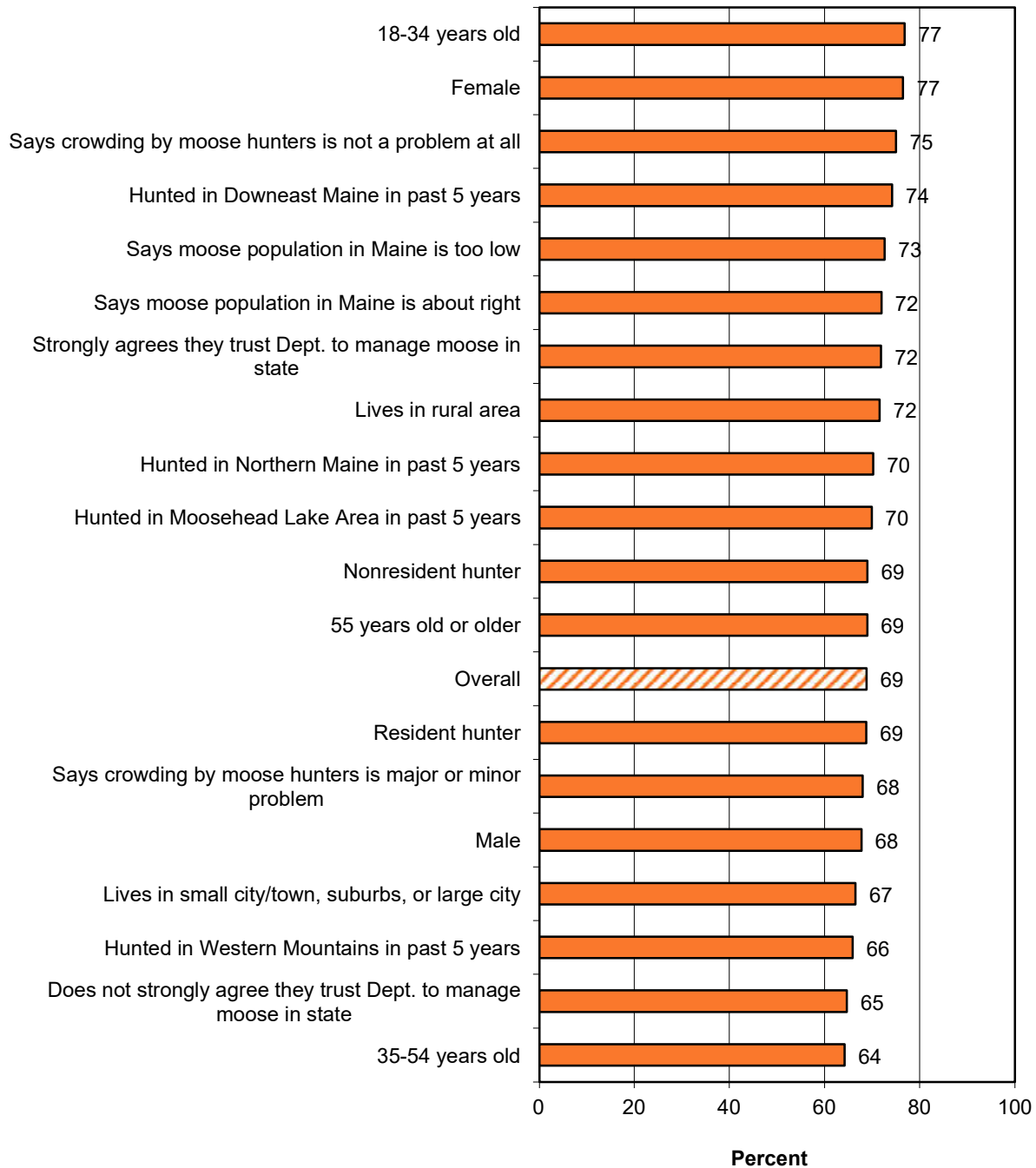
Percent of the following groups who think that Maine should have more moose hunting seasons. (Hunters)



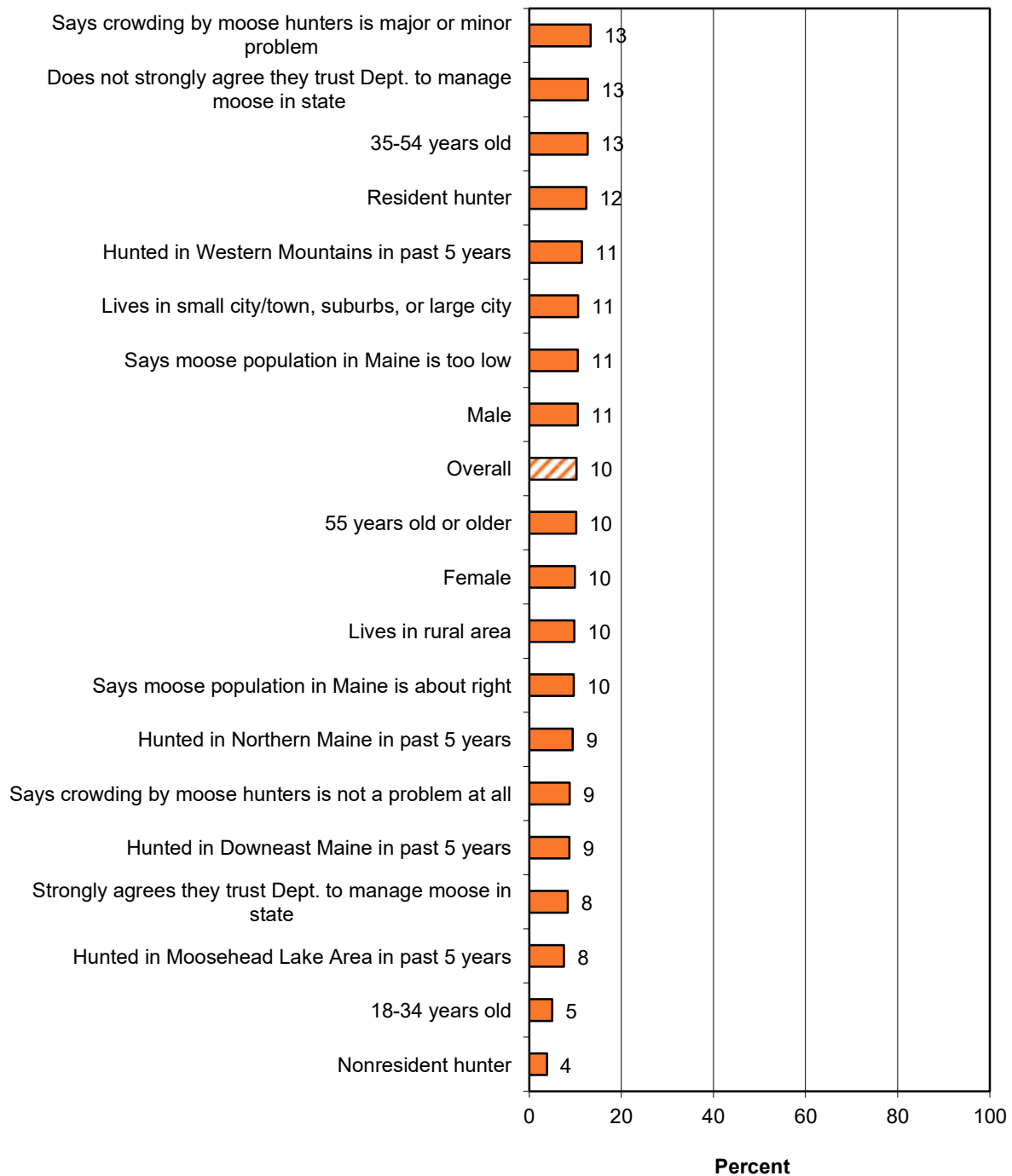
Percent of the following groups who think that Maine's moose hunting seasons should occur earlier. (Hunters)



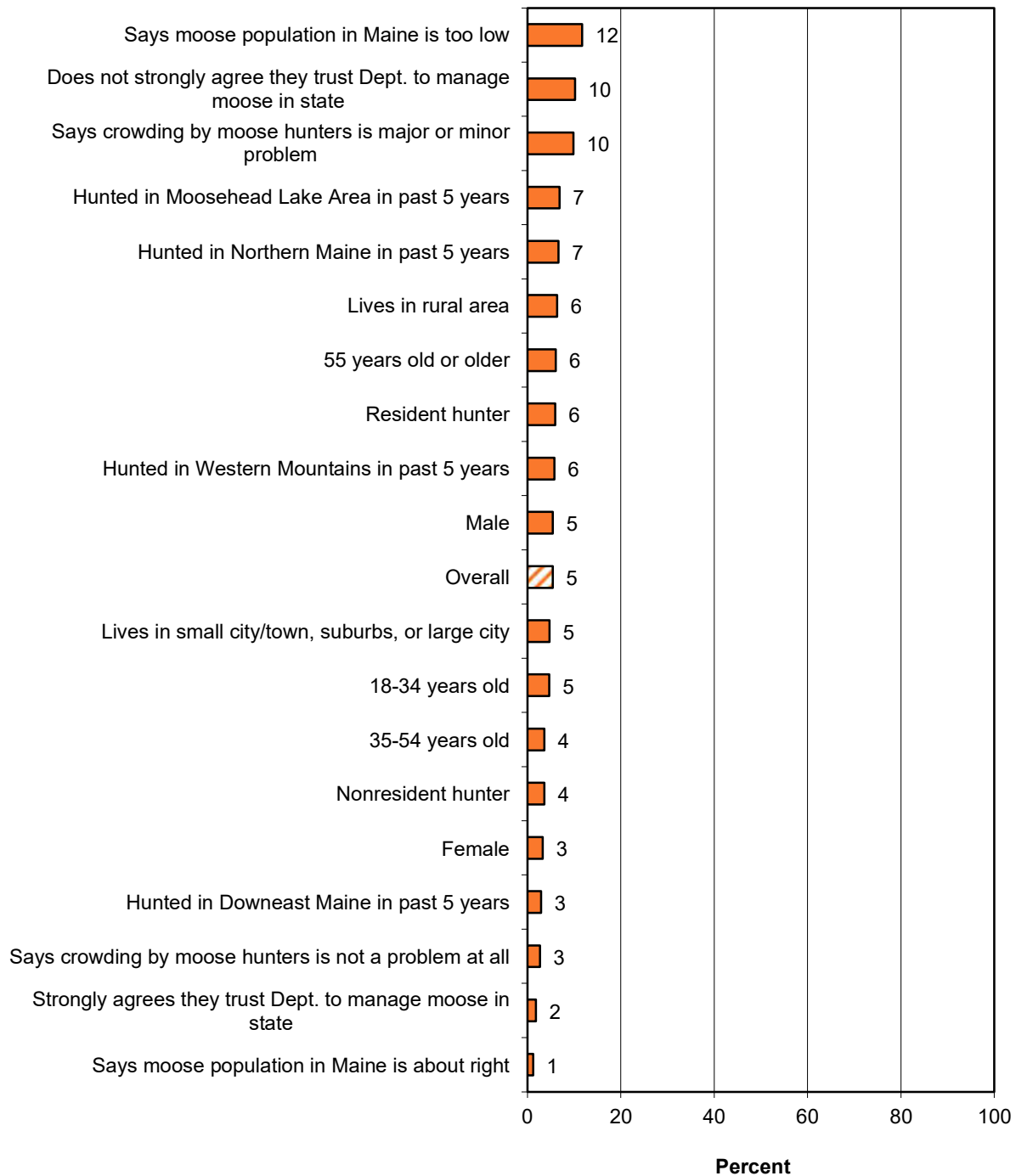
Percent of the following groups who think that Maine's moose hunting seasons should occur at the same time as they currently are. (Hunters)



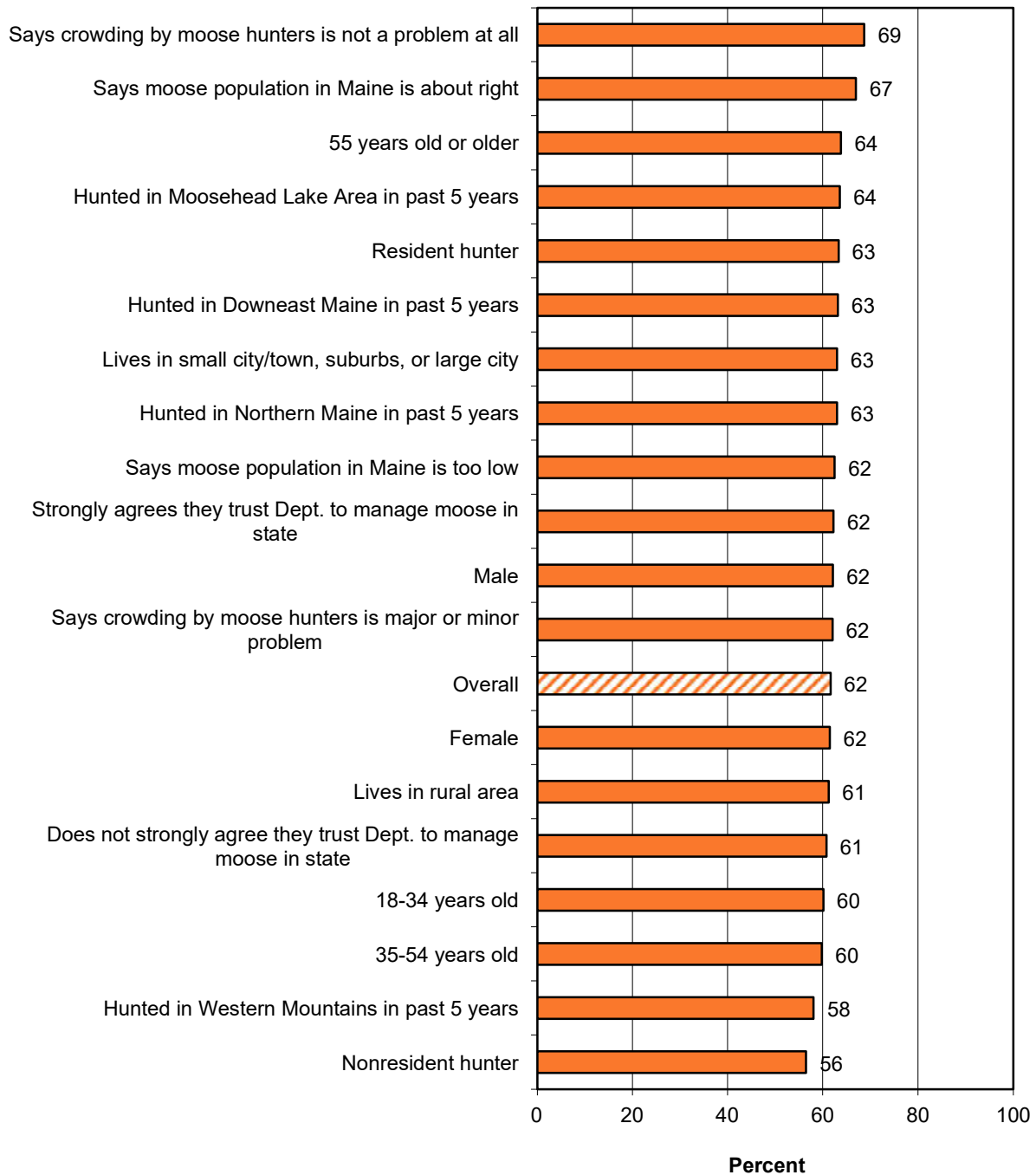
Percent of the following groups who think that Maine's moose hunting seasons should occur later. (Hunters)



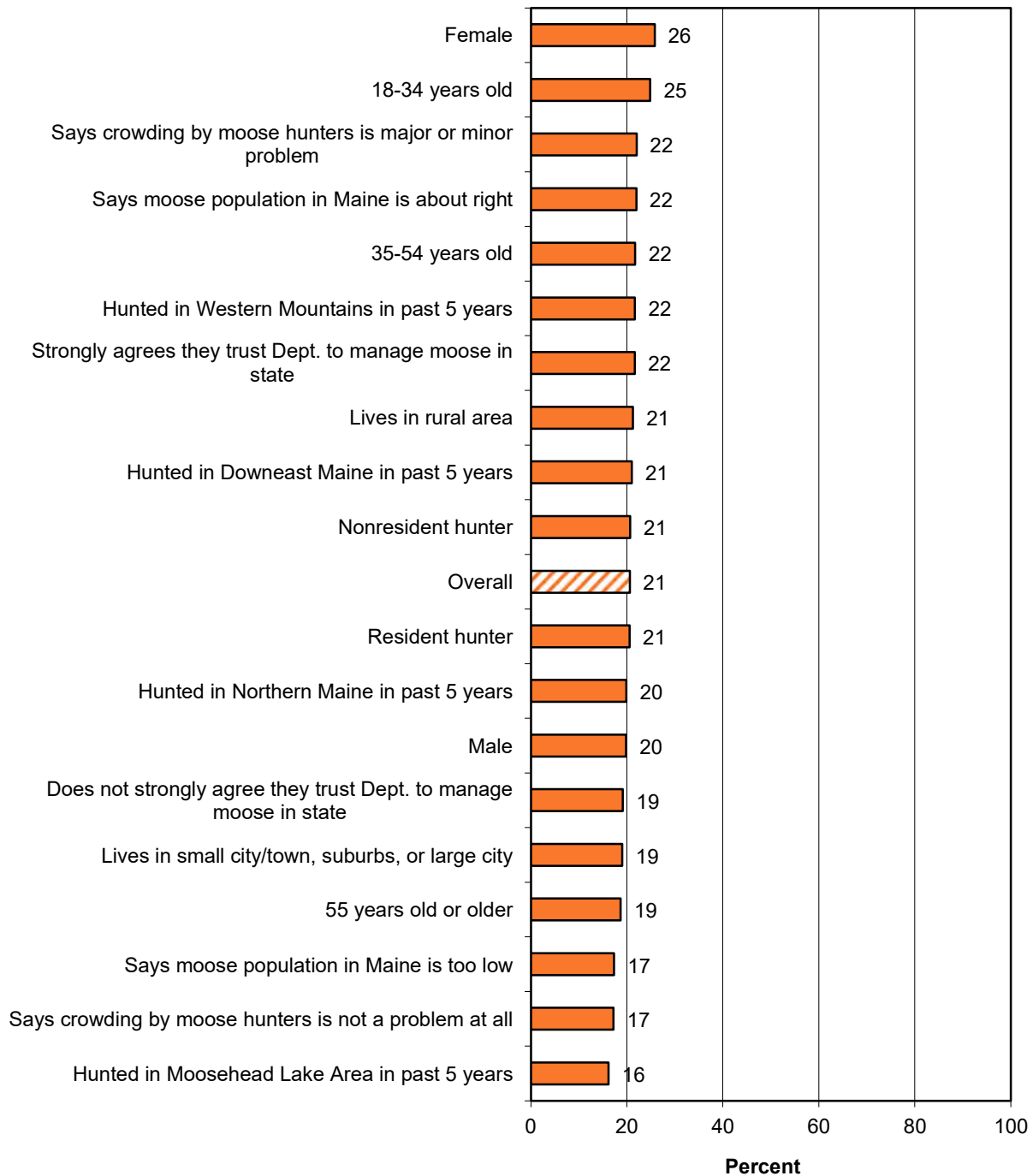
Percent of the following groups who think that Maine's moose hunting seasons should be shorter. (Hunters)



Percent of the following groups who think that Maine's moose hunting seasons should be the same length as they currently are. (Hunters)



Percent of the following groups who think that Maine's moose hunting seasons should be longer. (Hunters)



Five questions asked about support for or opposition to changes to the moose hunting seasons. Prior to the question, the information below was given.

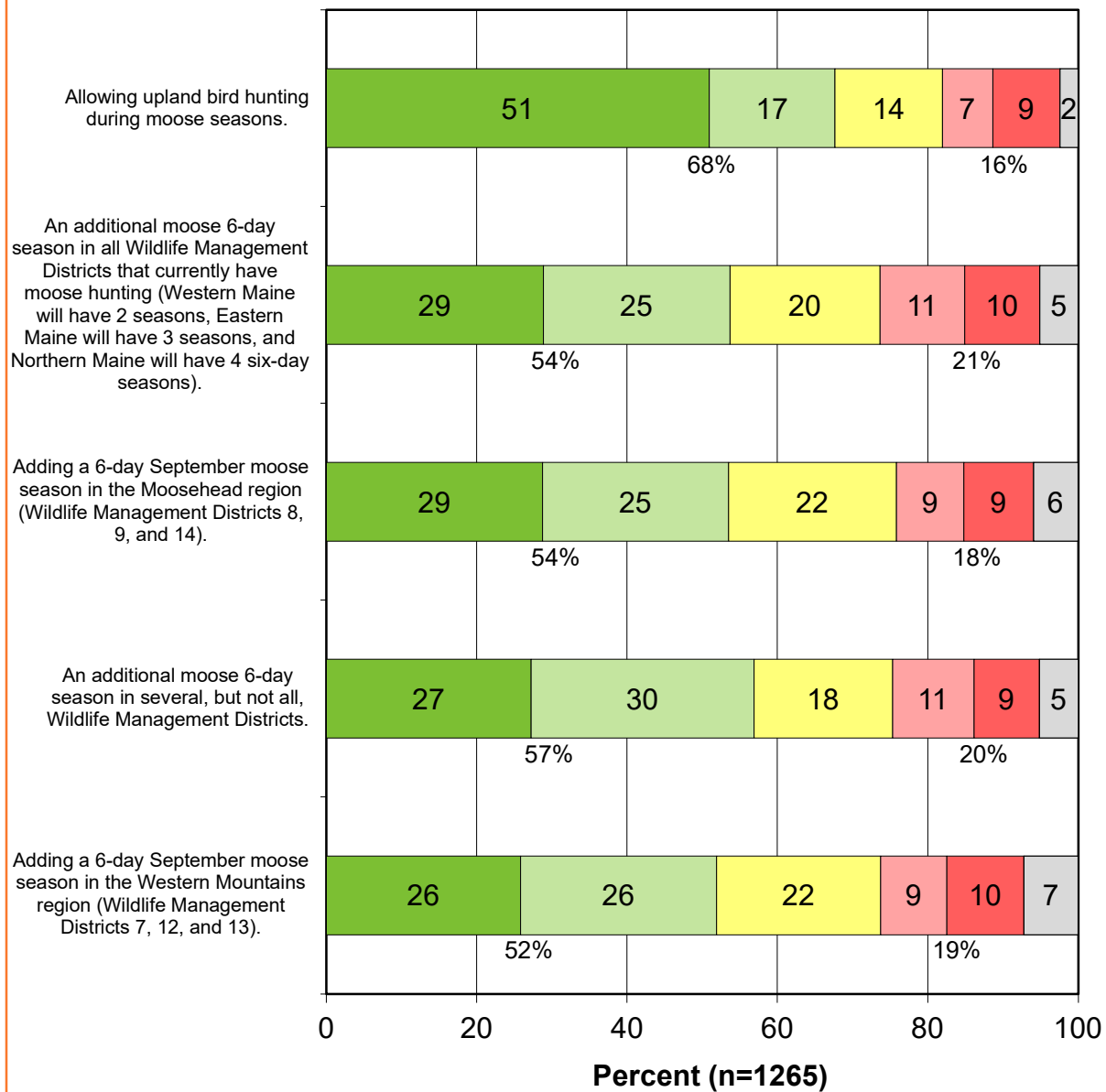
Next, we would like to know if you support or oppose some potential moose hunting season changes. These potential changes would be in an effort to reduce any potential conflict between residents, moose hunters, other hunters, other recreationists, guides, visitors, tourists, and landowners in Northern, Western, and Eastern Maine during moose hunting season. Each of the potential changes would occur without increasing the total number of moose permits issued to hunters each year.

Support was highest among hunters overall for allowing upland bird hunting during moose seasons: a slight majority (51%) *strongly* support, and 68% support in total (i.e., the sum of *strongly* support and *moderately* support). All four other changes have about the same results, with *strong* support ranging from 26% to 29% and total support ranging from 52% to 57%. This pattern holds true for the crosstabulations (shown on the following pages).

These graphs start on the next page, as each graph needs a full page for display. Each graph is ranked by *strongly* support; sums of both support responses and both oppose responses are shown below each bar.

**Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes.
(Overall) (Hunters)**

■ Strongly support
 ■ Moderately support
 ■ Neither
 ■ Moderately oppose
 ■ Strongly oppose
 ■ Don't know

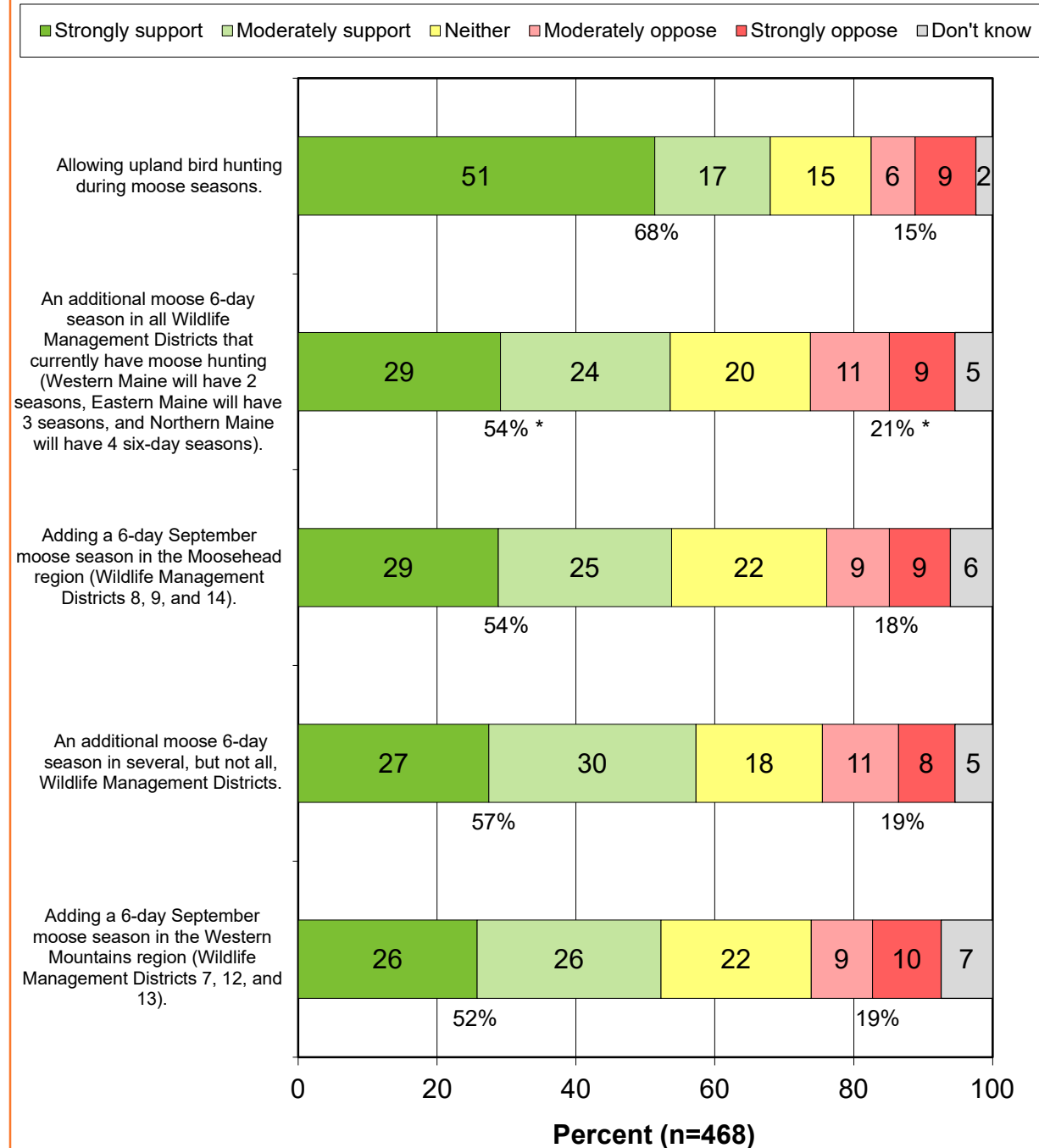


**Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes.
(Hunted moose) (Hunters)**



* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

**Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes.
(Did not hunt moose) (Hunters)**



* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes (Deer hunters) (Hunters)



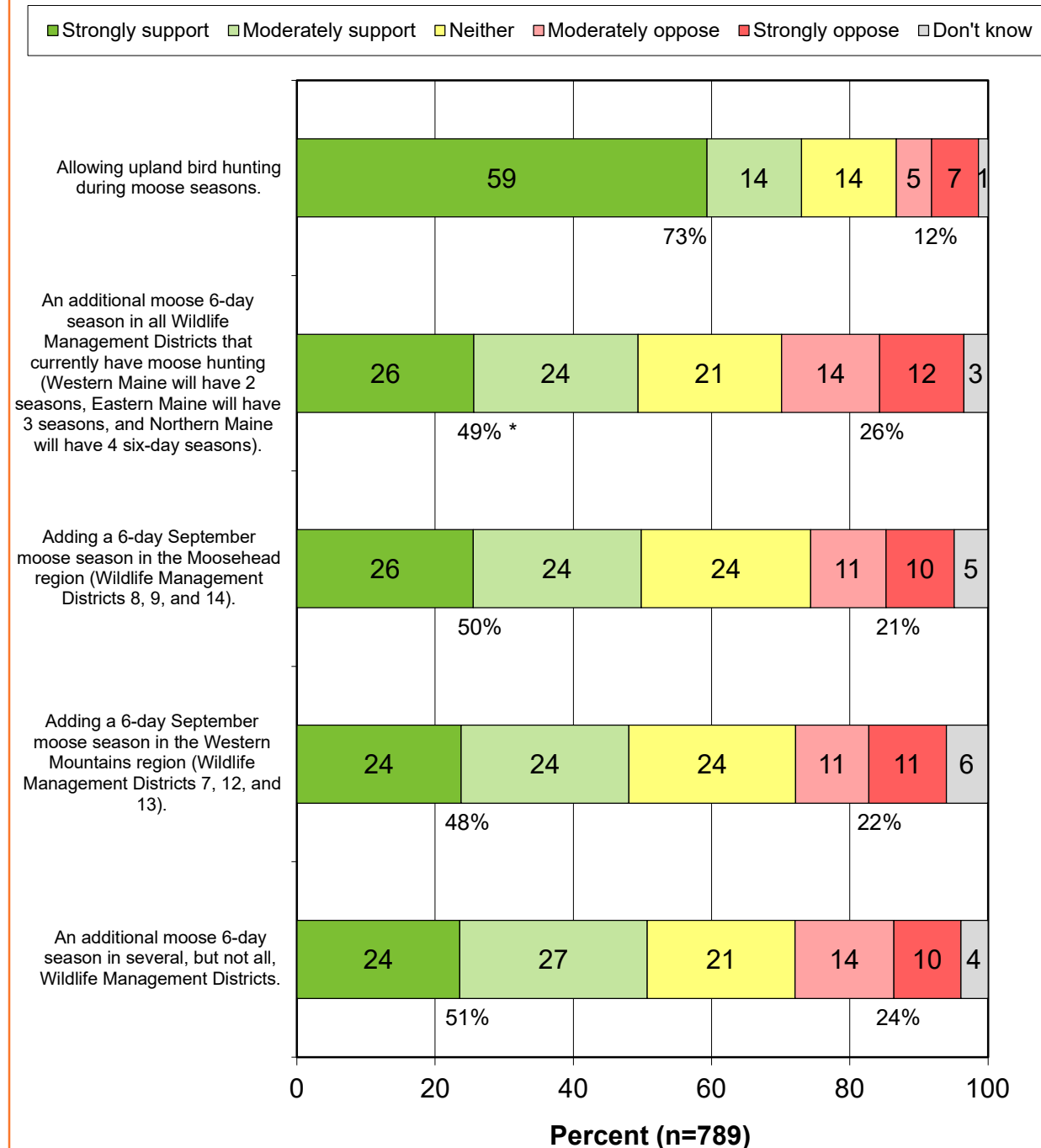
* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes (Bear hunters) (Hunters)



* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes (Upland game bird hunters) (Hunters)



* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

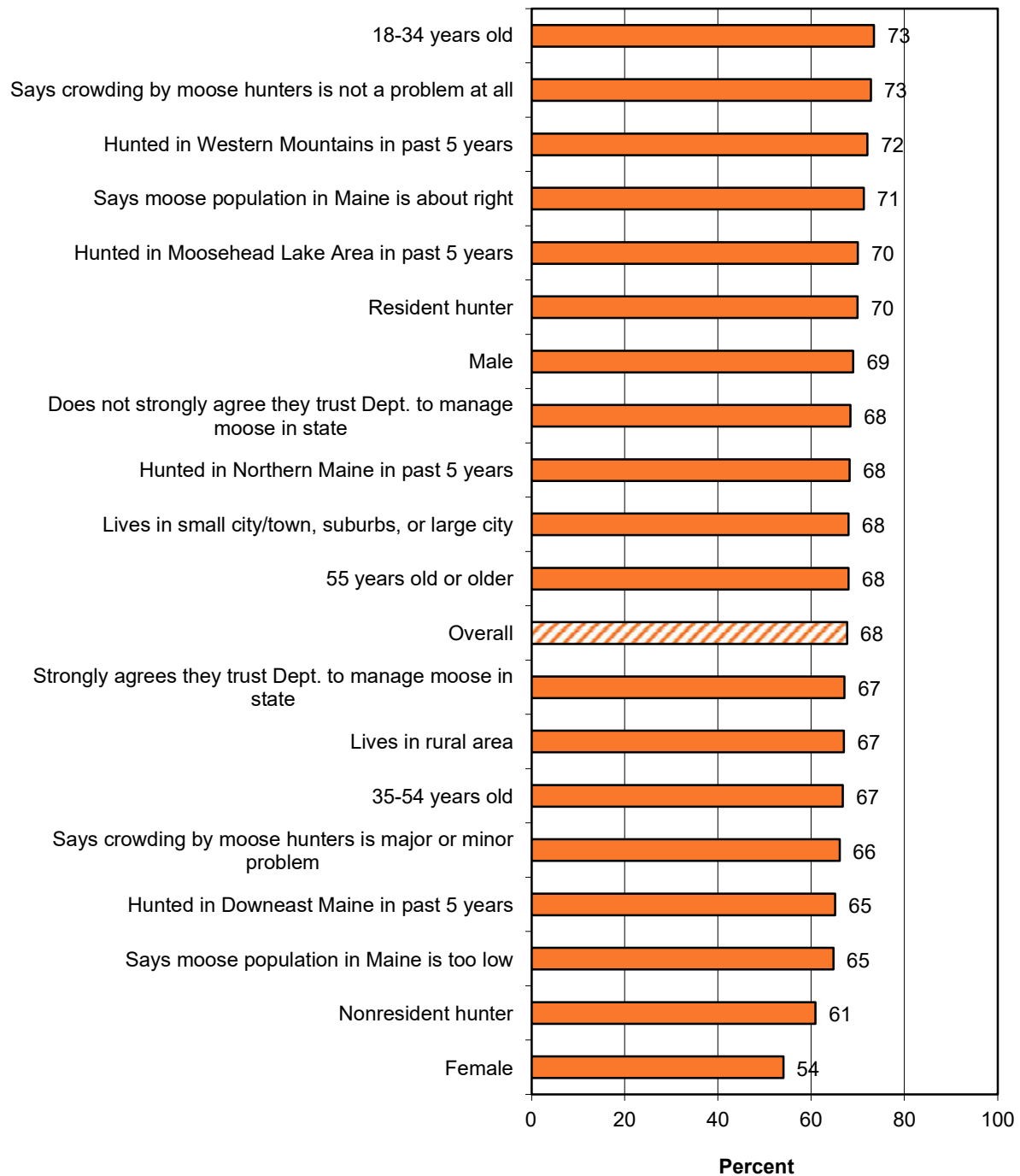
The demographic analyses were run on these five support/oppose questions. The graphs start on the next page; the table below summarizes the results. Among the findings:

- Young hunters (18 to 34 years old) had markedly more support, compared to hunters overall, on all five questions.
- Women hunters opposed at a higher rate than hunters overall on all five questions.
- Support on the various questions was often associated with thinking the moose population is about right, strongly agreeing that they trust the Department to manage moose, and hunting in the Western Mountains. These are in addition to being a young hunter.
- Opposition was often associated with thinking the moose population is too low, not strongly agreeing that they trust the Department to manage moose, and saying crowding by moose hunters is a problem (although this latter group is associated with supporting adding a moose season in the Western Mountains). These are in addition to being a female hunter.

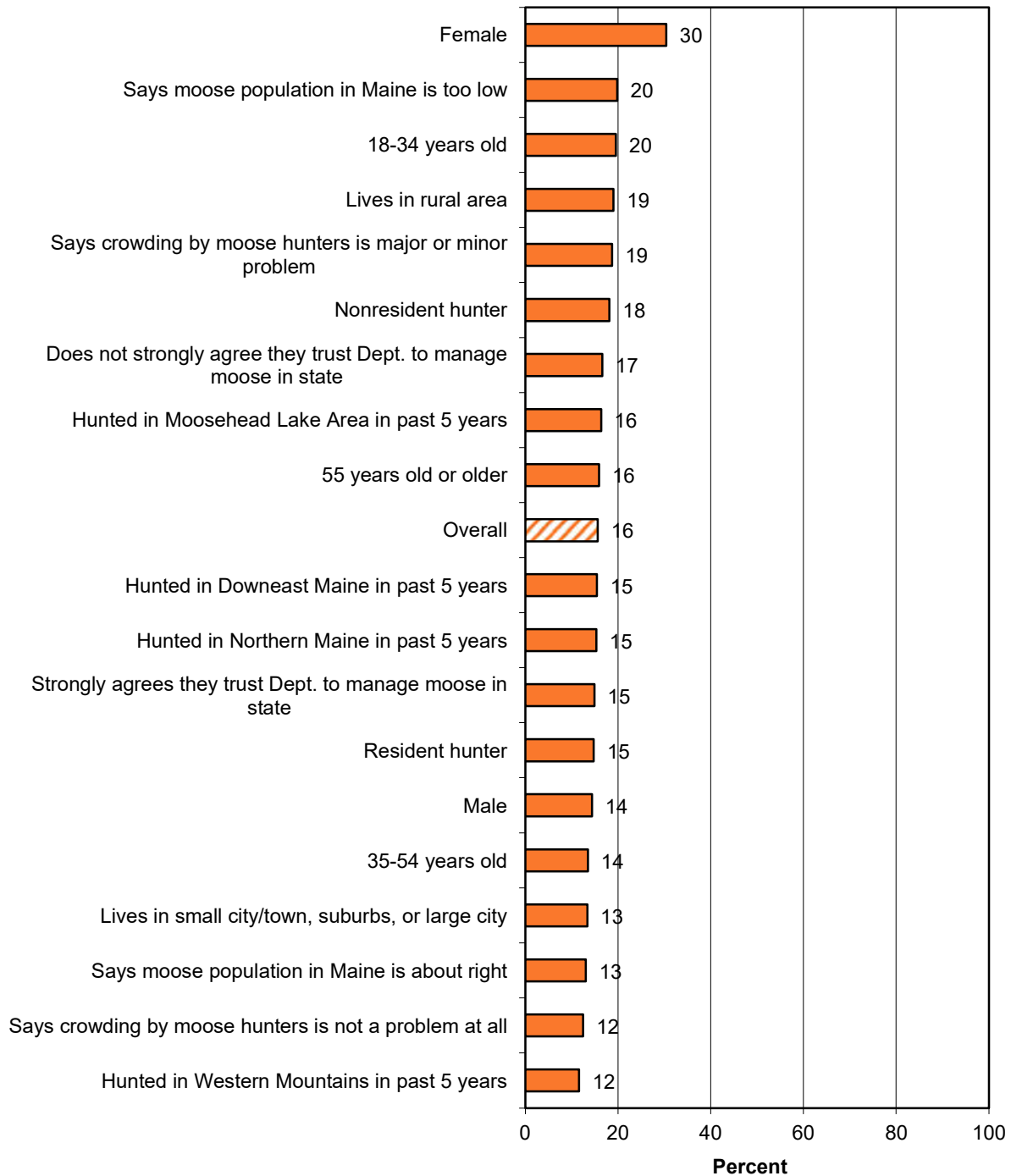
Summary of Demographic Analyses on Five Questions on Changes to the Moose Hunting Seasons (Hunters)										
Demographic analyses group	Allowing bird hunting		Add currently have		Moosehead		Add several		Western Mountains	
	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose
Says moose population in Maine is about right					X		X		X	
Says moose population in Maine is too low				X		X		X		X
Strongly agrees they trust Dept. to manage moose in state					X		X		X	
Does not strongly agree they trust Dept. to manage moose in state				X		X		X		X
Says crowding by moose hunters is major or minor problem				X				X	X	
Says crowding by moose hunters is not a problem at all	X									
Hunted in Western Mountains in past 5 years			X		X				X	
Female		X		X		X		X		X
18-34 years old	X		X		X		X		X	
An "X" in the cell indicates that the group identified is more likely to support or oppose compared to hunters overall. For example, hunters who say that the moose population in Maine is about right are more likely than hunters overall to support on the "Moosehead," "add several," and "Western Mountains" questions.										
Key to Column Headers										
Allowing bird hunting = Allowing upland bird hunting during moose seasons										
Add currently have = An additional moose 6-day season in all Wildlife Management Districts that currently have moose hunting										
Moosehead = Adding a 6-day September moose season in the Moosehead region										
Add several = An additional moose 6-day season in several, but not all, Wildlife Management Districts.										
Western Mountains = Adding a 6-day September moose season in the Western Mountains region										

The ten demographic analyses graphs start on the next page.

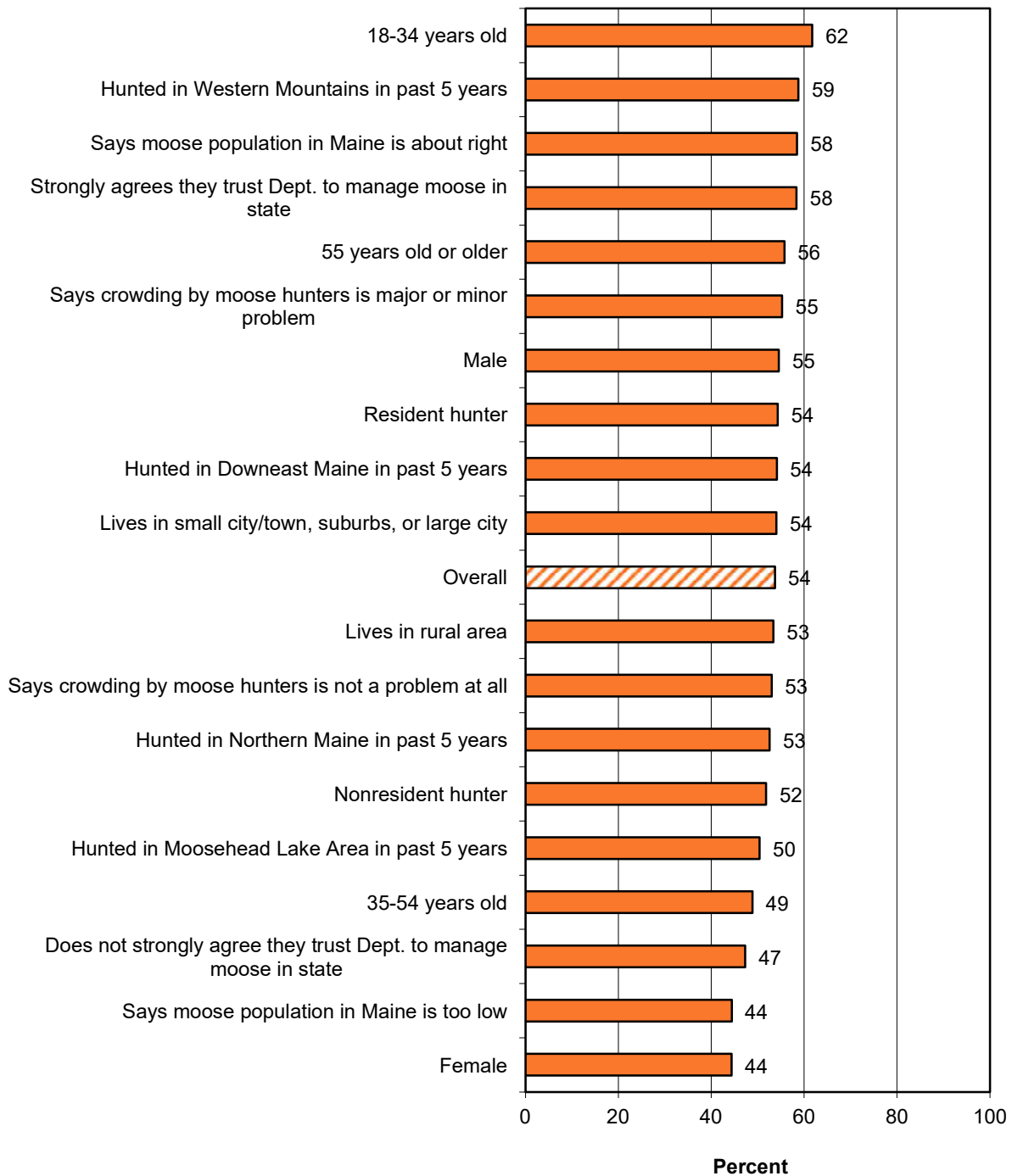
Percent of the following groups who strongly or moderately support allowing upland bird hunting during moose seasons. (Hunters)



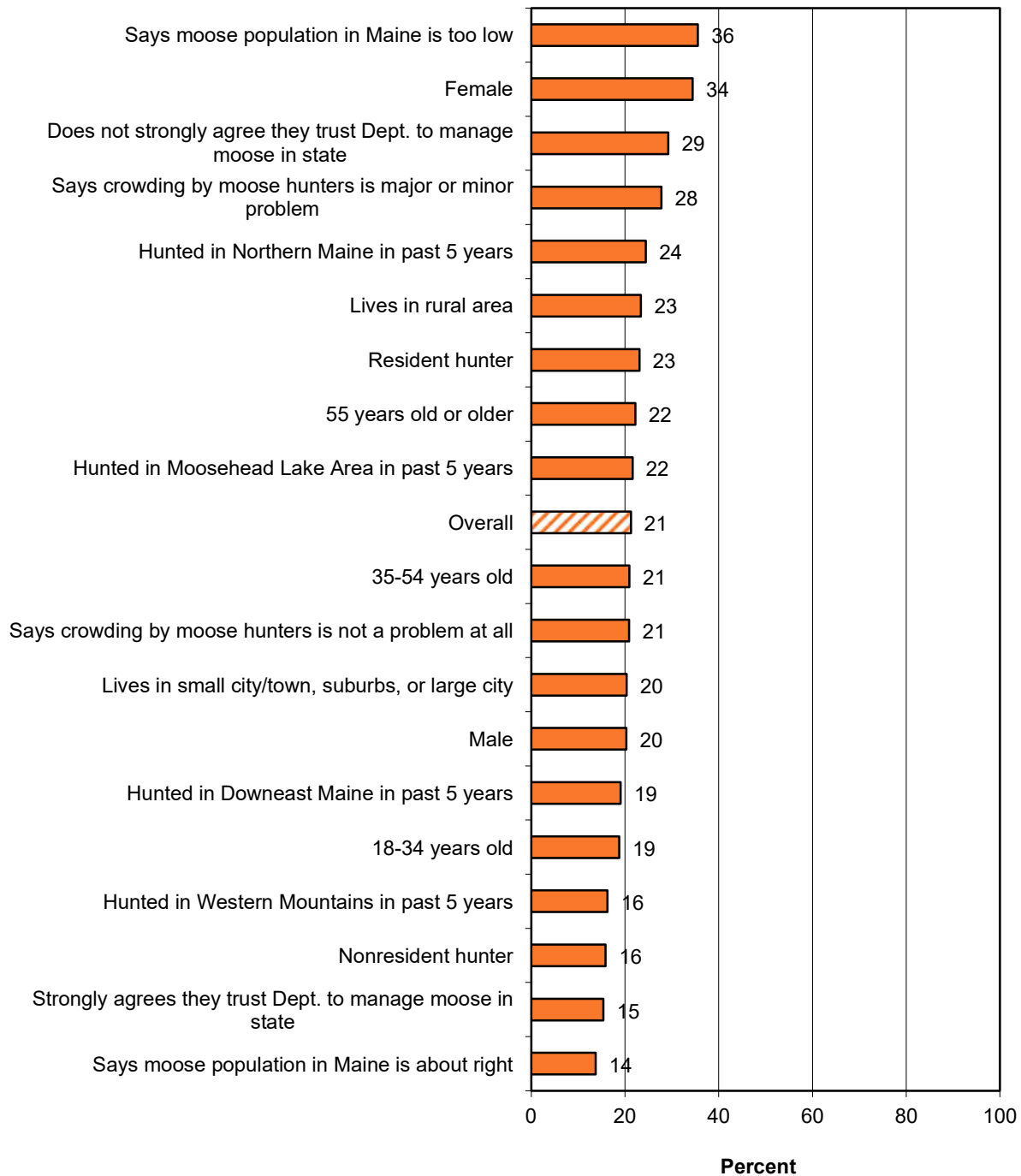
Percent of the following groups who strongly or moderately oppose allowing upland bird hunting during moose seasons. (Hunters)



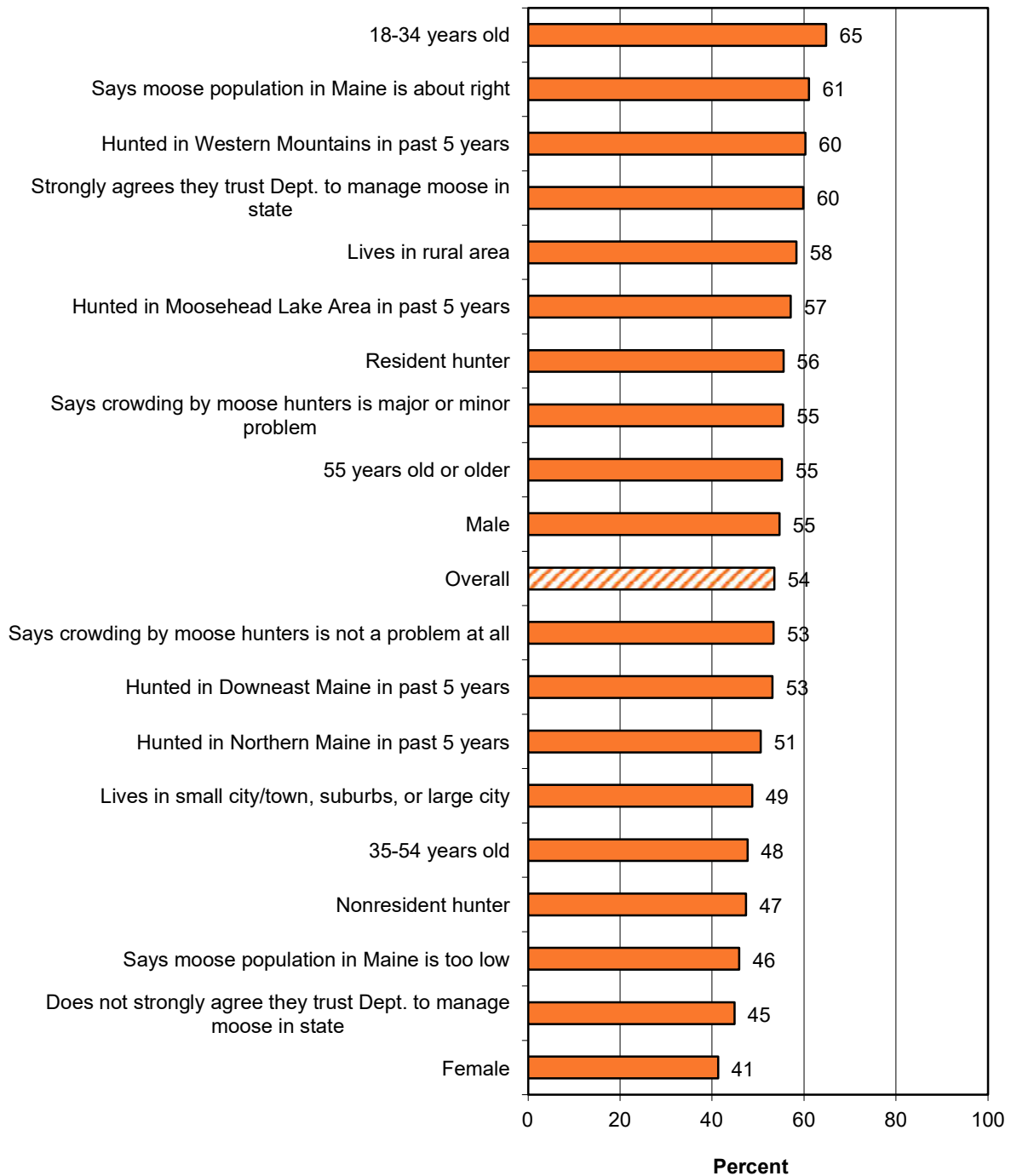
Percent of the following groups who strongly or moderately support adding a 6-day moose season in all WMDs that currently have moose hunting. (Hunters)



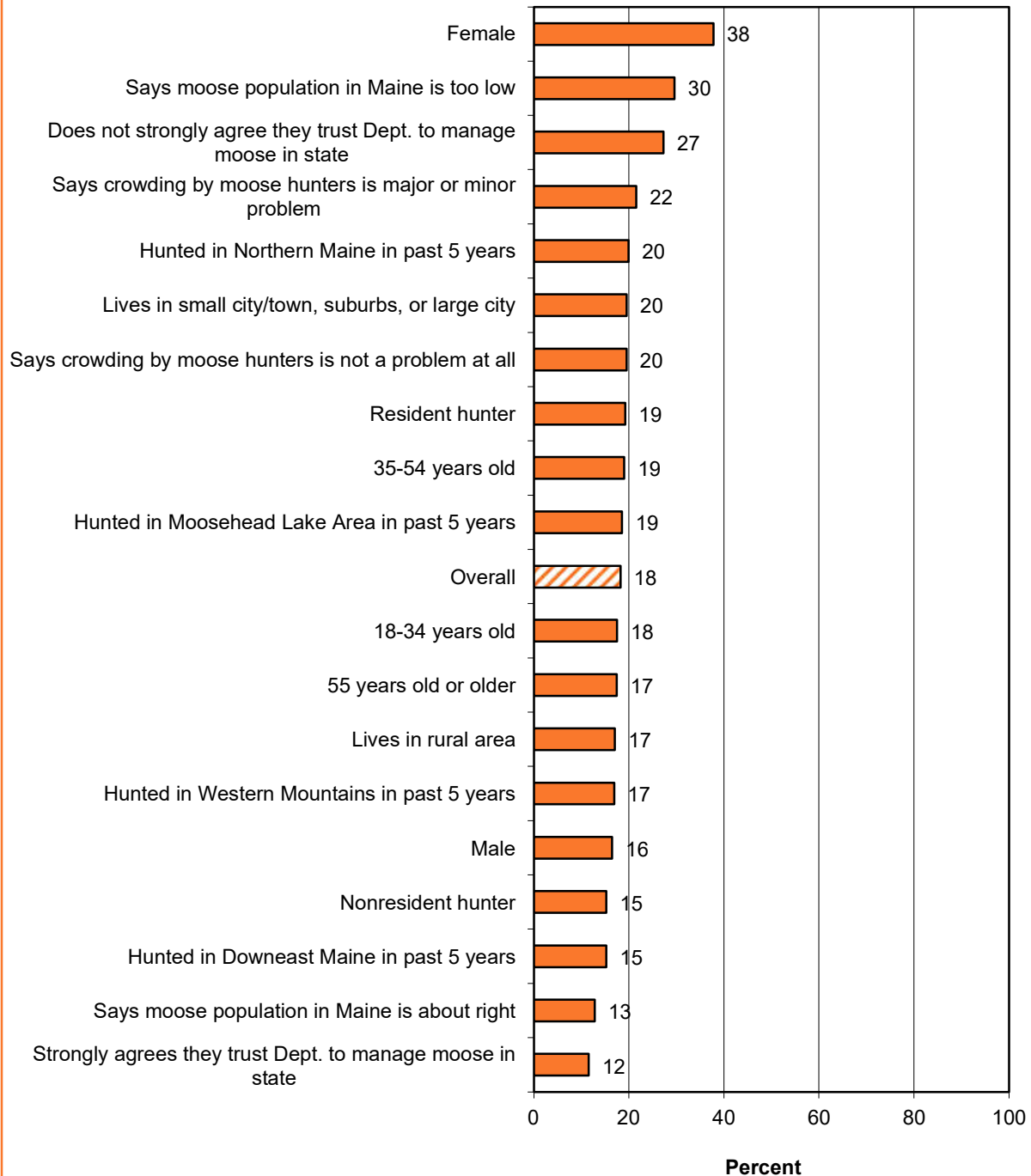
Percent of the following groups who strongly or moderately oppose adding a 6-day moose season in all WMDs that currently have moose hunting. (Hunters)



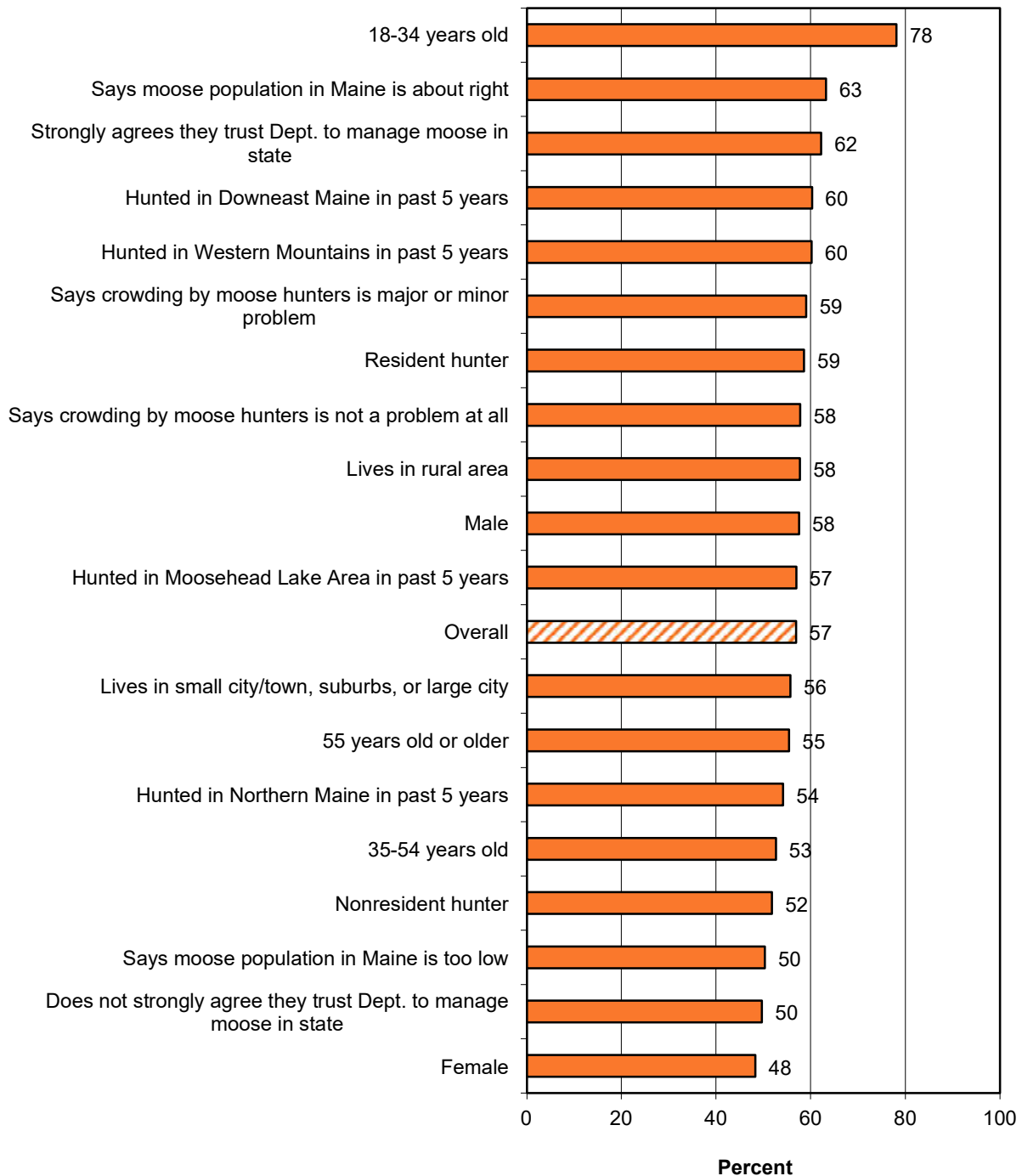
Percent of the following groups who strongly or moderately support adding a 6-day September moose season in the Moosehead regions. (Hunters)



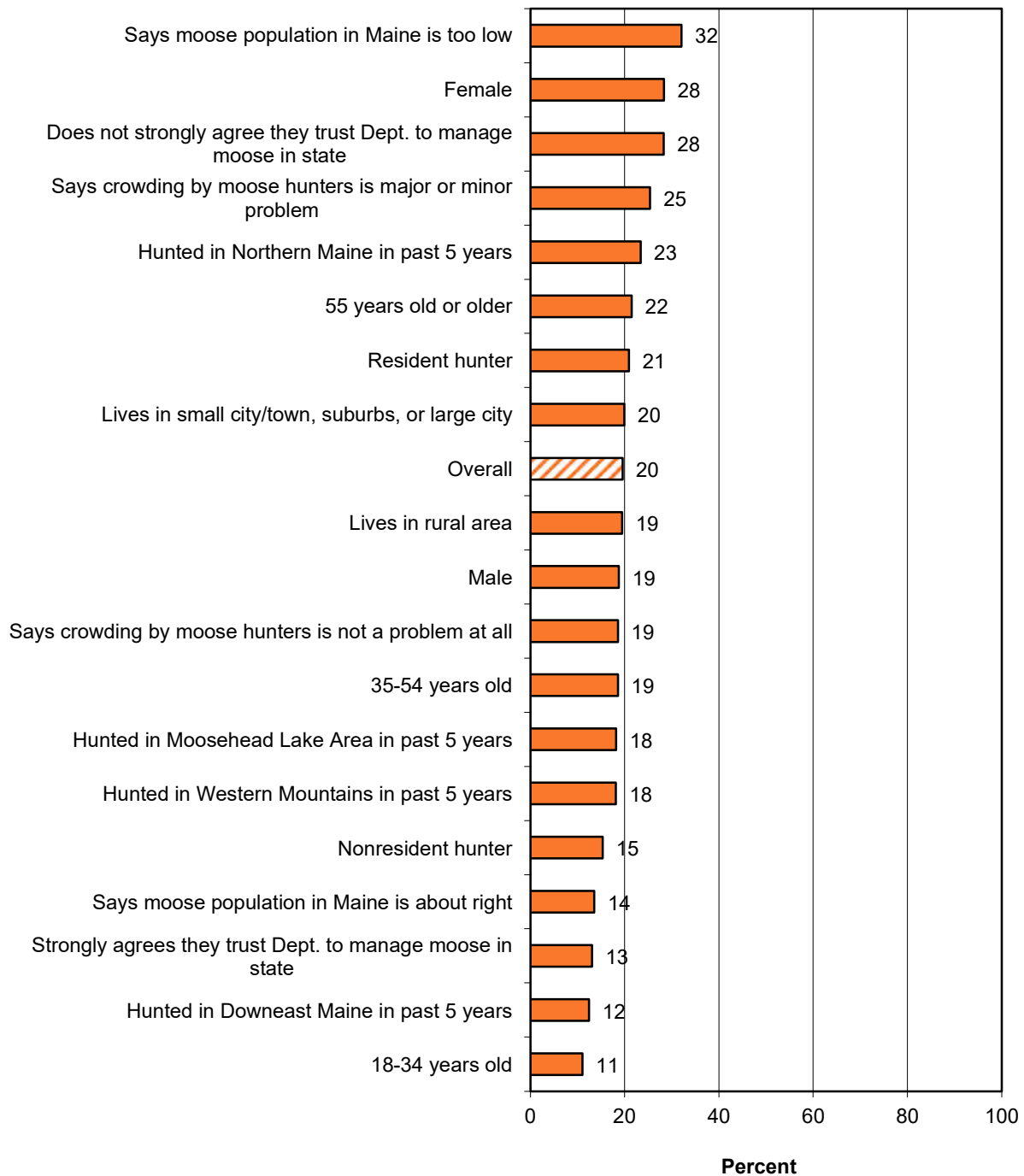
Percent of the following groups who strongly or moderately oppose adding a 6-day September moose season in the Moosehead regions. (Hunters)



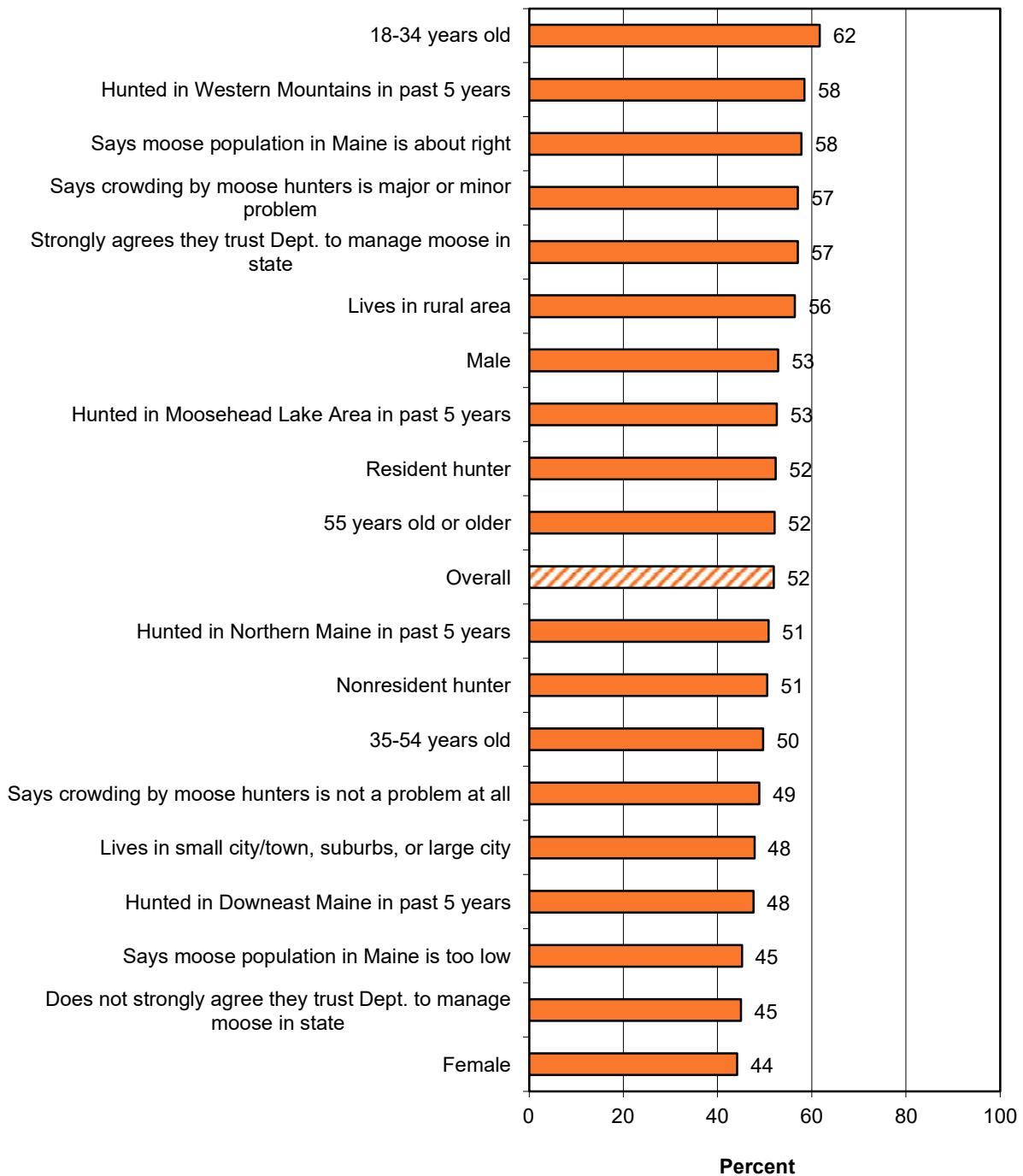
Percent of the following groups who strongly or moderately support adding a 6-day moose season in several, but not all, WMDs. (Hunters)



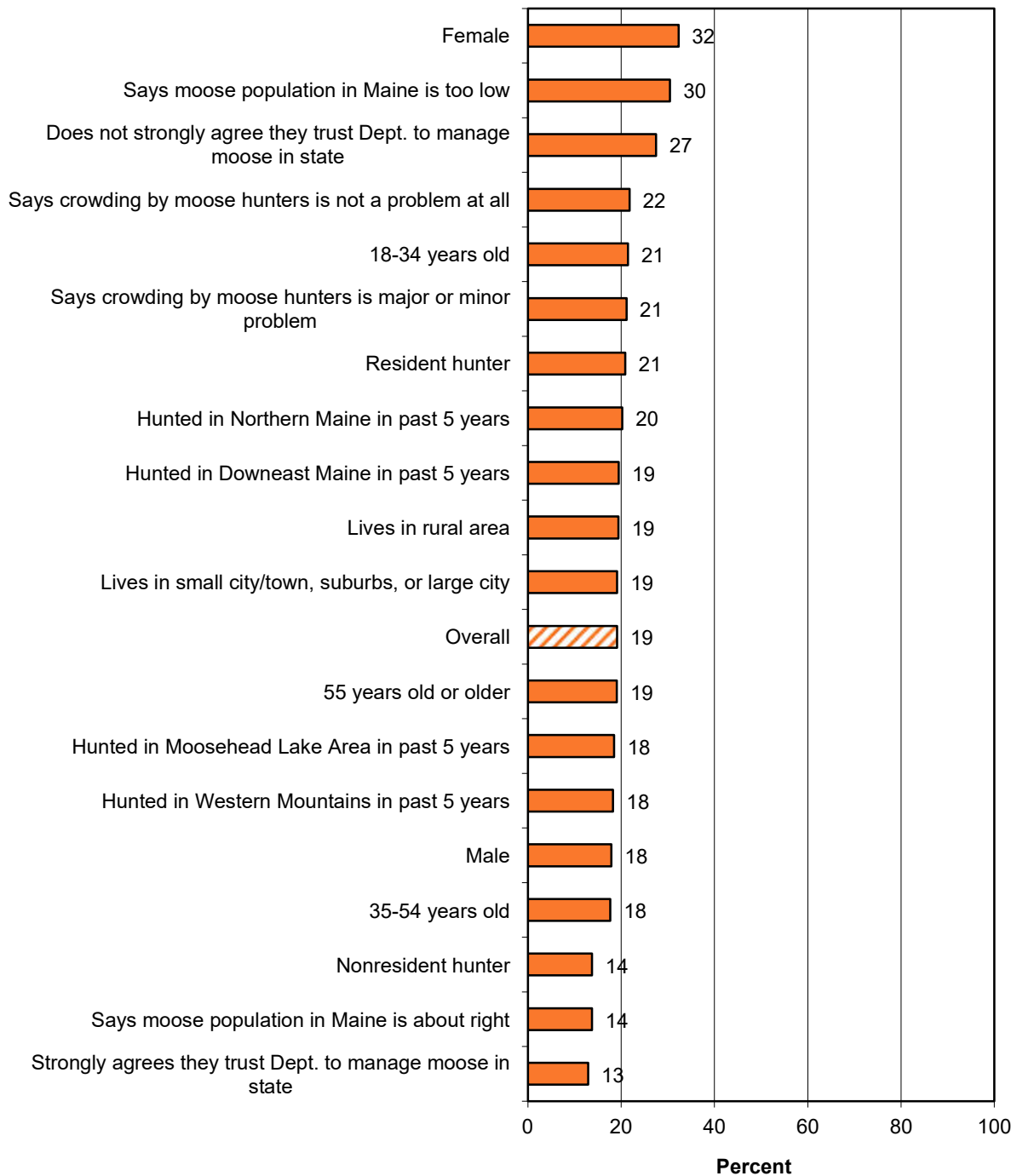
Percent of the following groups who strongly or moderately oppose adding a 6-day moose season in several, but not all, WMDs. (Hunters)



Percent of the following groups who strongly or moderately support adding a 6-day September moose season in the Western Mountains region. (Hunters)



Percent of the following groups who strongly or moderately oppose adding a 6-day September moose season in the Western Mountains region. (Hunters)



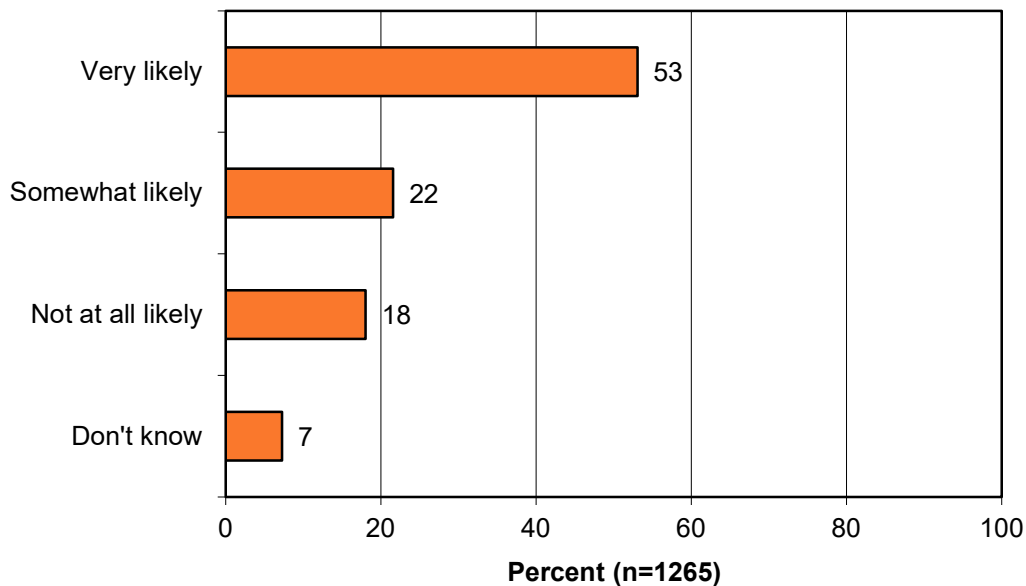
In follow-up to one of the questions in the aforementioned series of questions about potential season changes, those who supported adding 6 days of moose hunting in some WMDs were asked to name which ones. The answers are well spread among the WMDs.

Specifically, in which Wildlife Management Districts would you prefer to have an additional 6-day moose season? (Asked of those who support having an additional season in several, but not all, WMDs.) (Hunters)

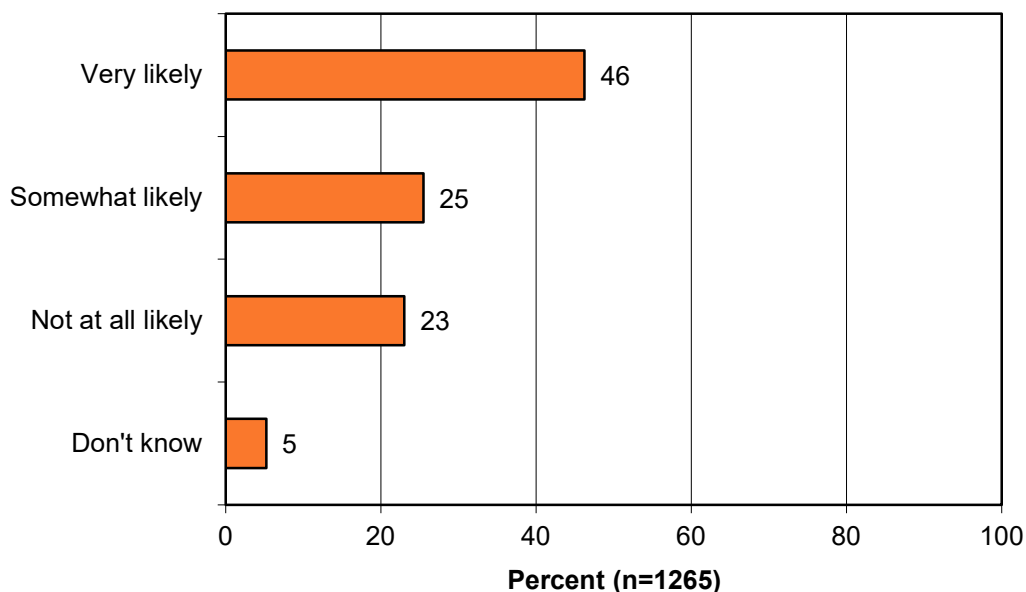


Two questions then asked hunters the likelihood that they would hunt deer (in the first question) and upland birds (in the second question) in the study area if an additional week of moose season was to be implemented. In both cases, around half of hunters indicate being *very* likely to do so (53% would be *very* likely to hunt deer, 46% would be *very* likely to hunt upland birds).

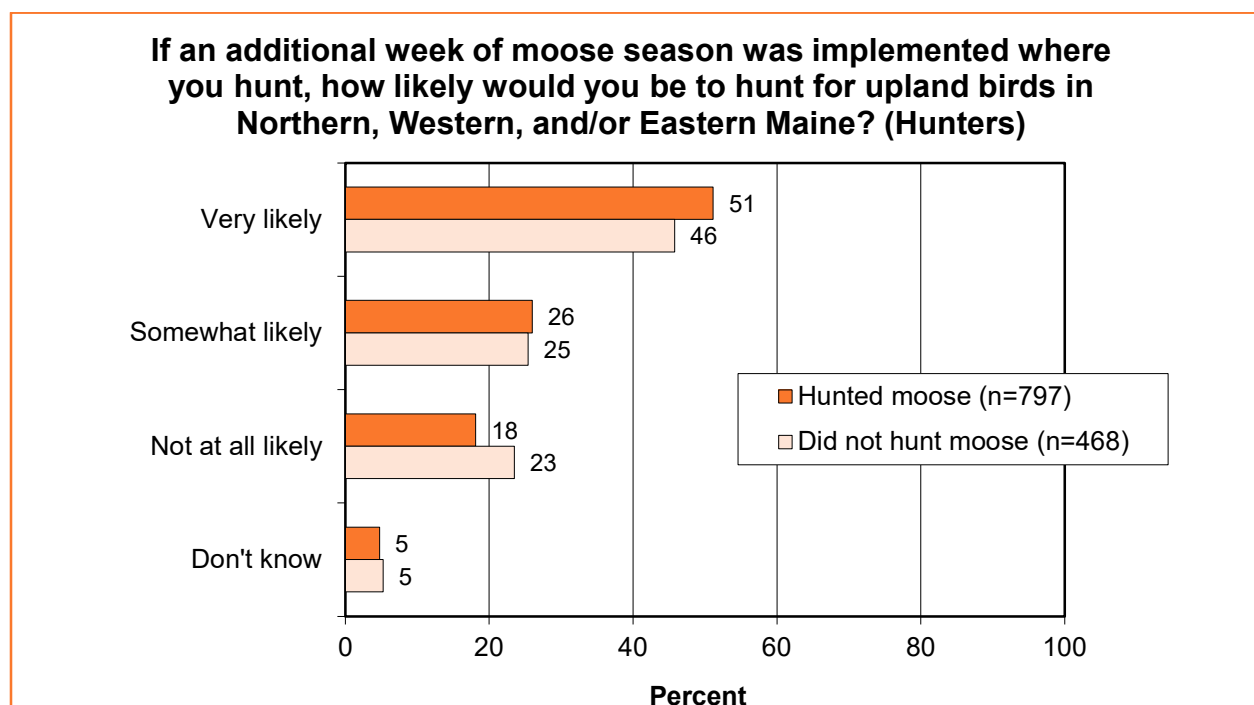
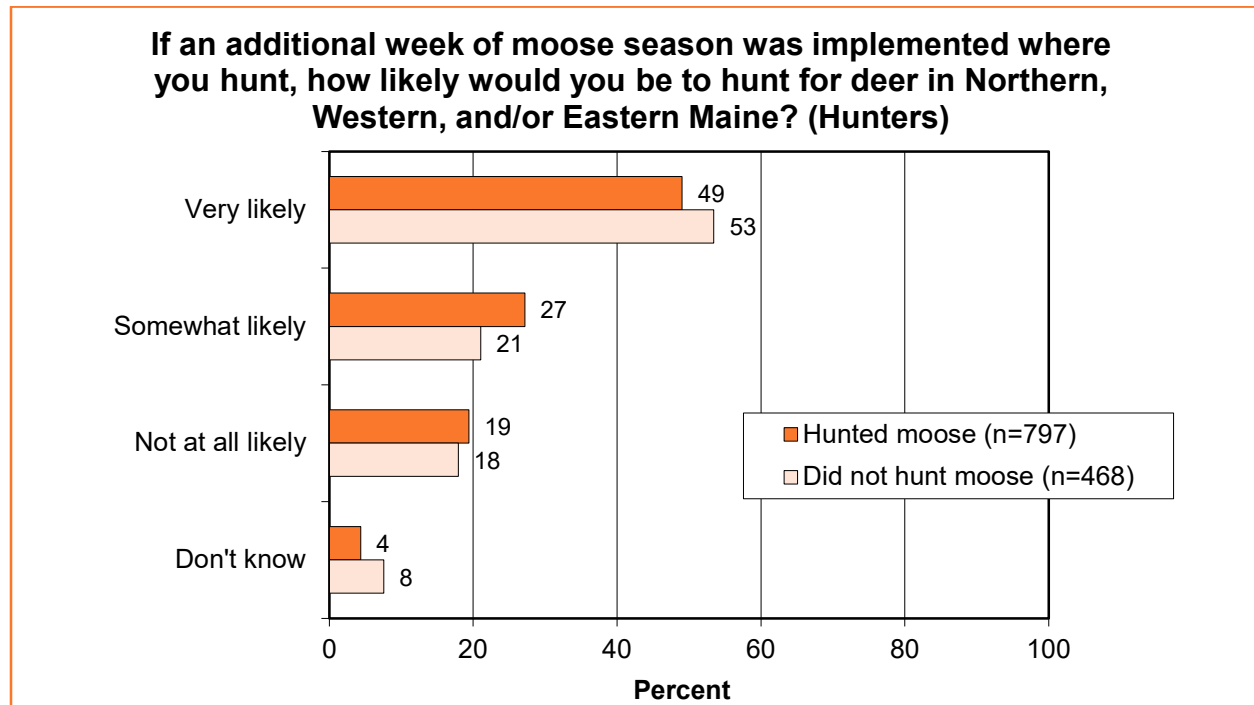
If an additional week of moose season was implemented where you hunt, how likely would you be to hunt for deer in Northern, Western, and/or Eastern Maine? (Hunters)



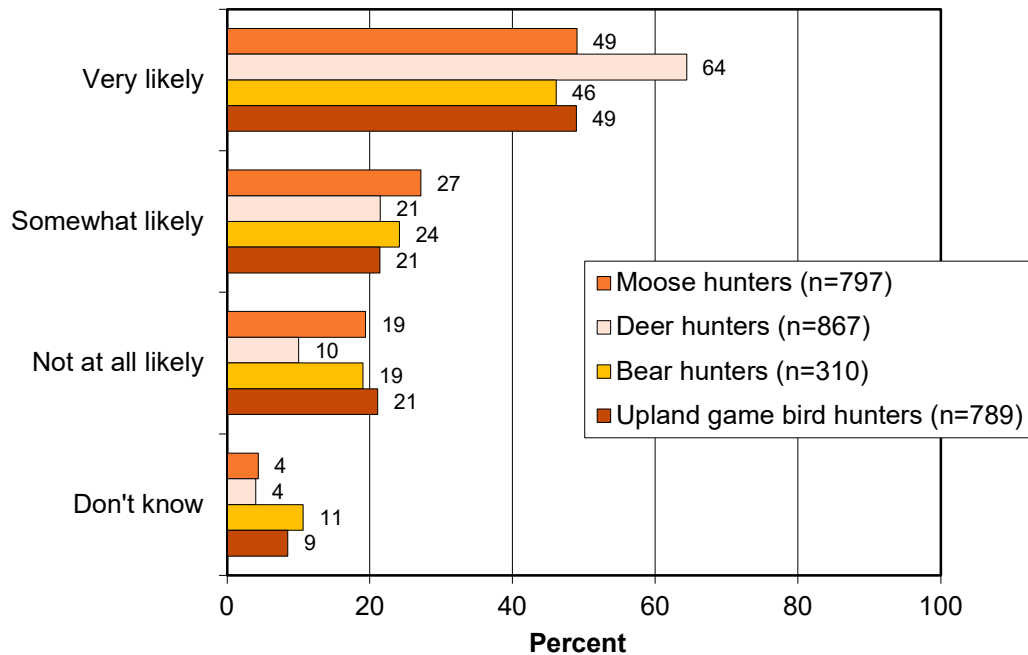
If an additional week of moose season was implemented where you hunt, how likely would you be to hunt for upland birds in Northern, Western, and/or Eastern Maine? (Hunters)



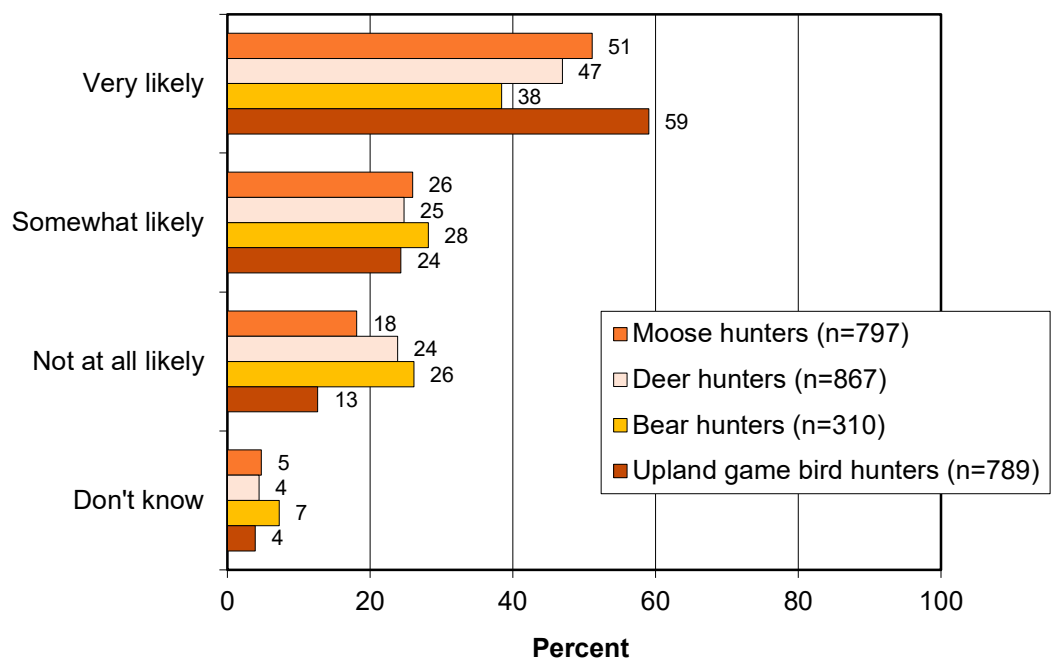
In the crosstabulations for these two questions, moose hunters are very much like those who did not hunt moose in their responses to the questions. In the species crosstabulations, deer hunters are the most likely to hunt deer with this additional week of moose season, and upland bird hunters are the most likely to hunt upland birds with the additional week of moose season—in short, the additional week of moose season does not appear to hinder other hunters.



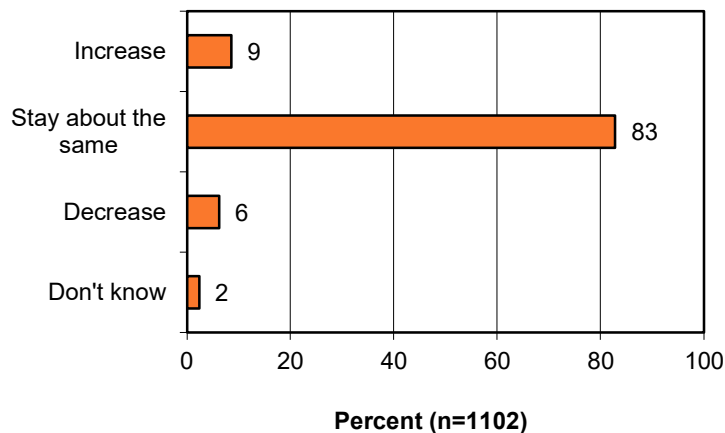
If an additional week of moose season was implemented where you hunt, how likely would you be to hunt for deer in Northern, Western, and/or Eastern Maine? (Hunters)



If an additional week of moose season was implemented where you hunt, how likely would you be to hunt for upland birds in Northern, Western, and/or Eastern Maine? (Hunters)

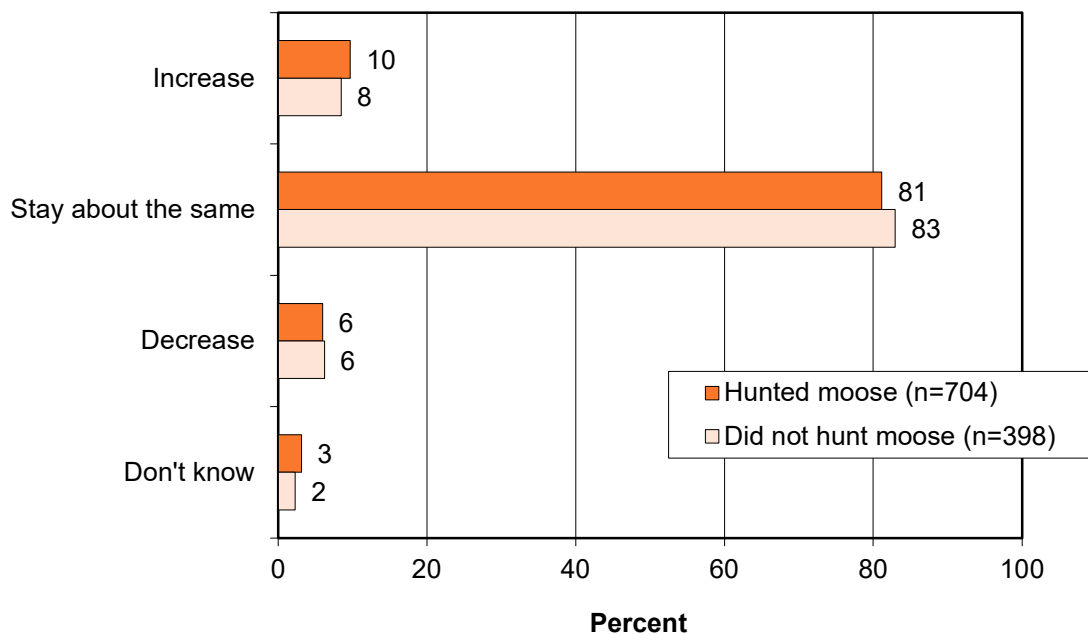


Earlier you indicated that you have participated in [activities]. If an additional week of moose season was implemented, do you think your participation in these activities in Northern, Western, and/or Eastern Maine would increase, stay about the same, or decrease? (Asked of those who participated in other activities in the study area in addition to hunting.) (Hunters)

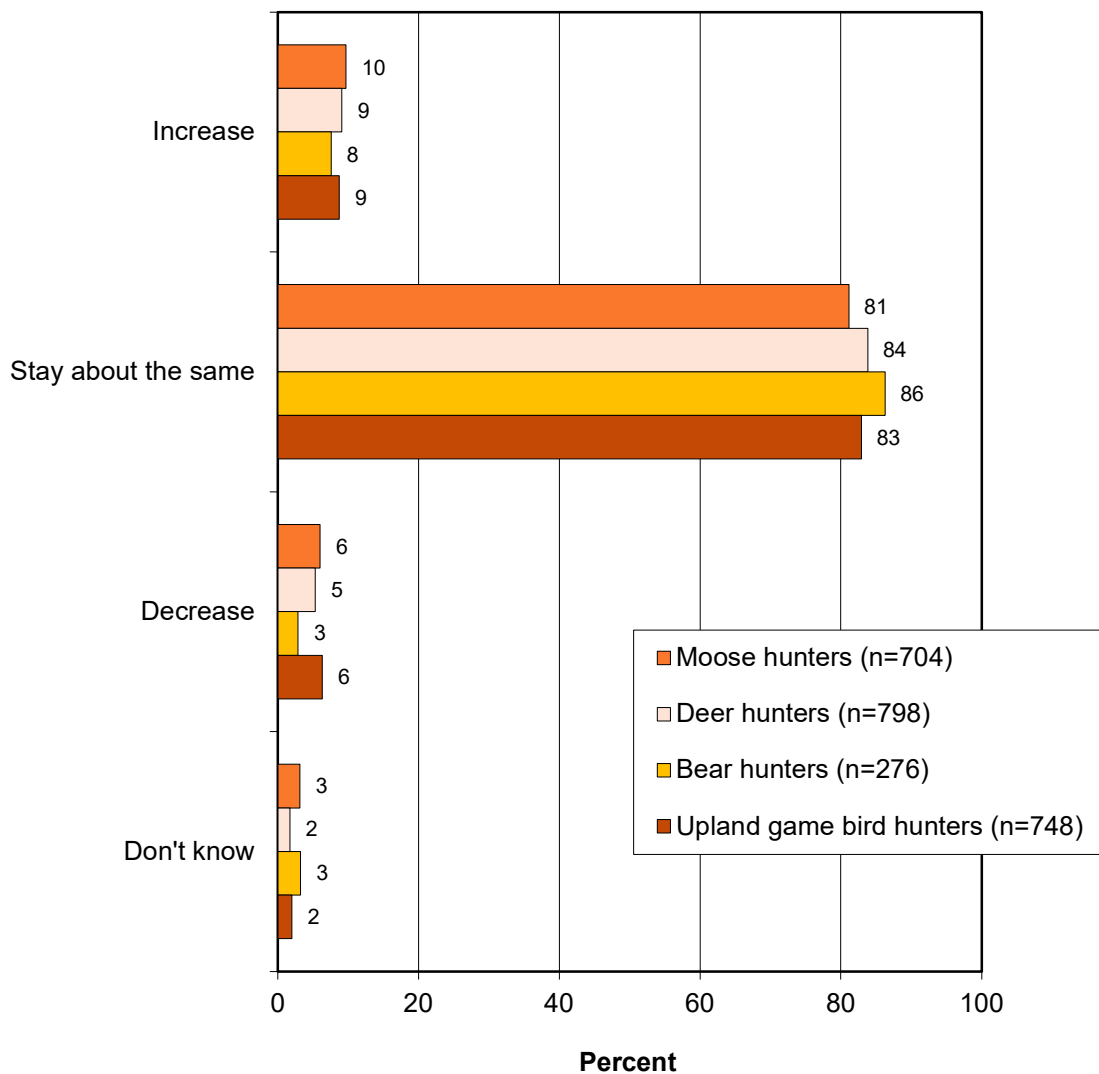


In the final question examined in this section, hunters were asked about their non-hunting activities and whether their participation in these other activities would be affected if Maine added another week of moose season. The overwhelming percentage indicate that their participation would be unaffected, and they are otherwise about evenly split on whether their participation would increase or decrease. There are no marked differences in the crosstabulations.

Earlier you indicated that you have participated in [activities]. If an additional week of moose season was implemented, do you think your participation in these activities in Northern, Western, and/or Eastern Maine would increase, stay about the same, or decrease? (Asked of those who participated in other activities in the study area in addition to hunting.) (Hunters)

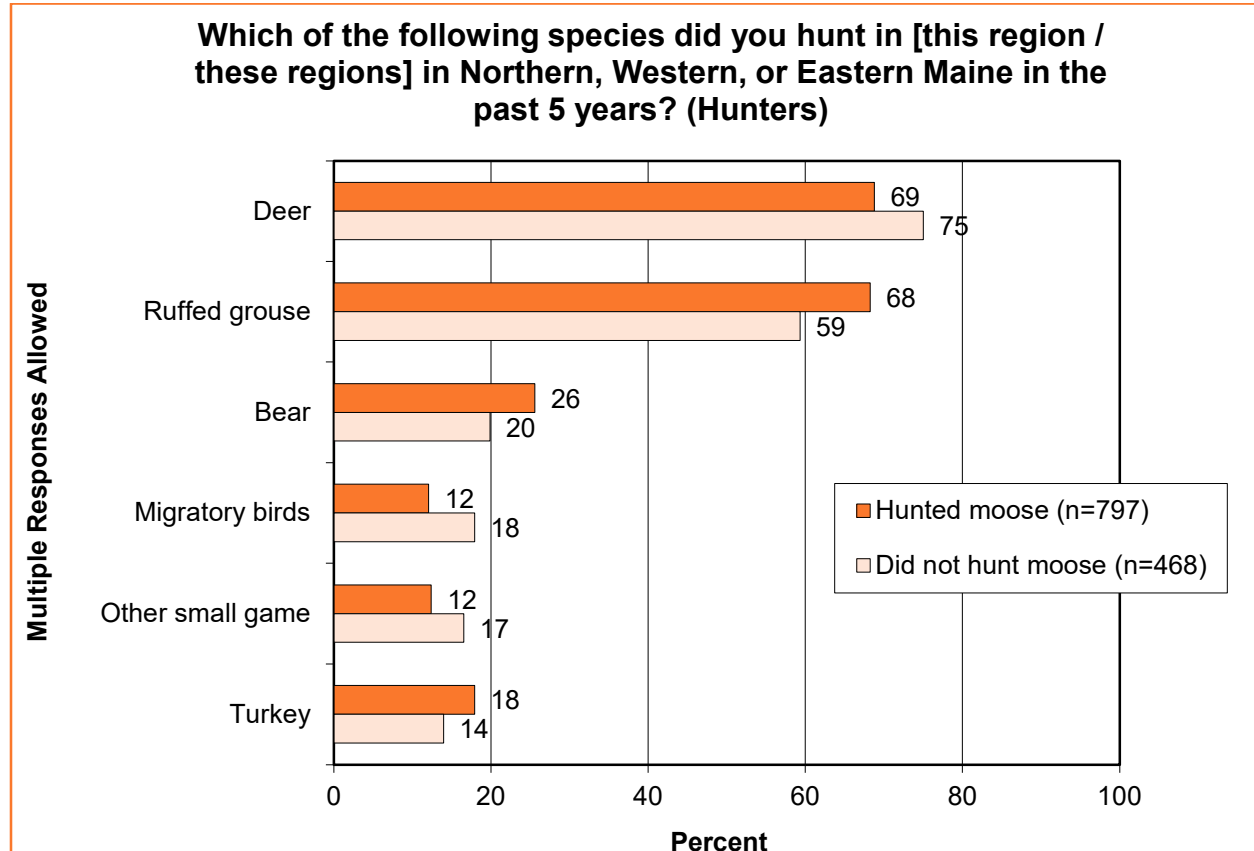
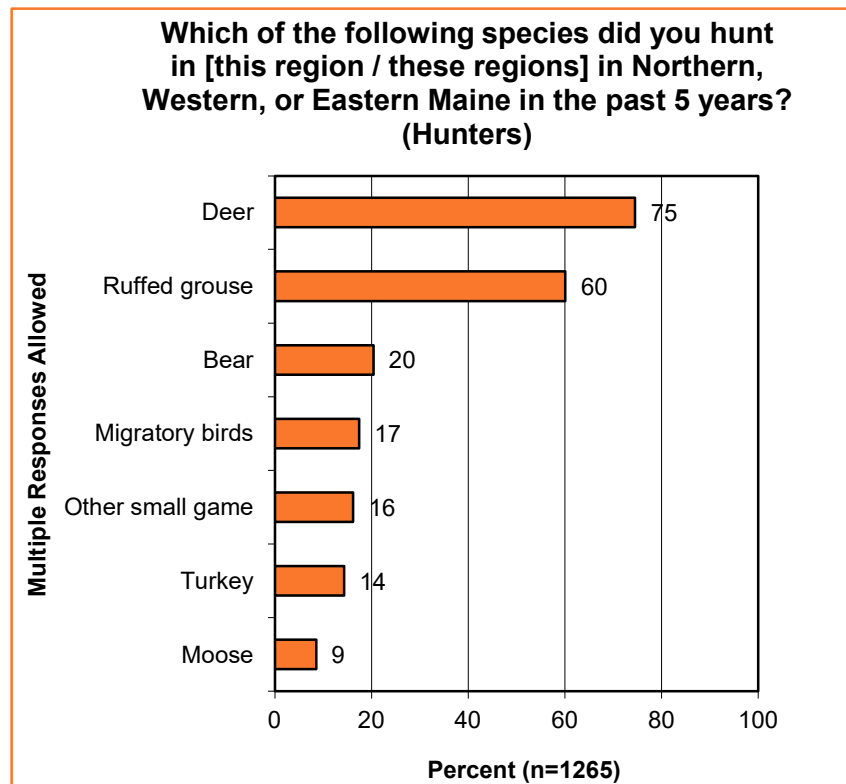


Earlier you indicated that you have participated in [activities]. If an additional week of moose season was implemented, do you think your participation in these activities in Northern, Western, and/or Eastern Maine would increase, stay about the same, or decrease? (Asked of those who participated in other activities in the study area in addition to hunting.) (Hunters)

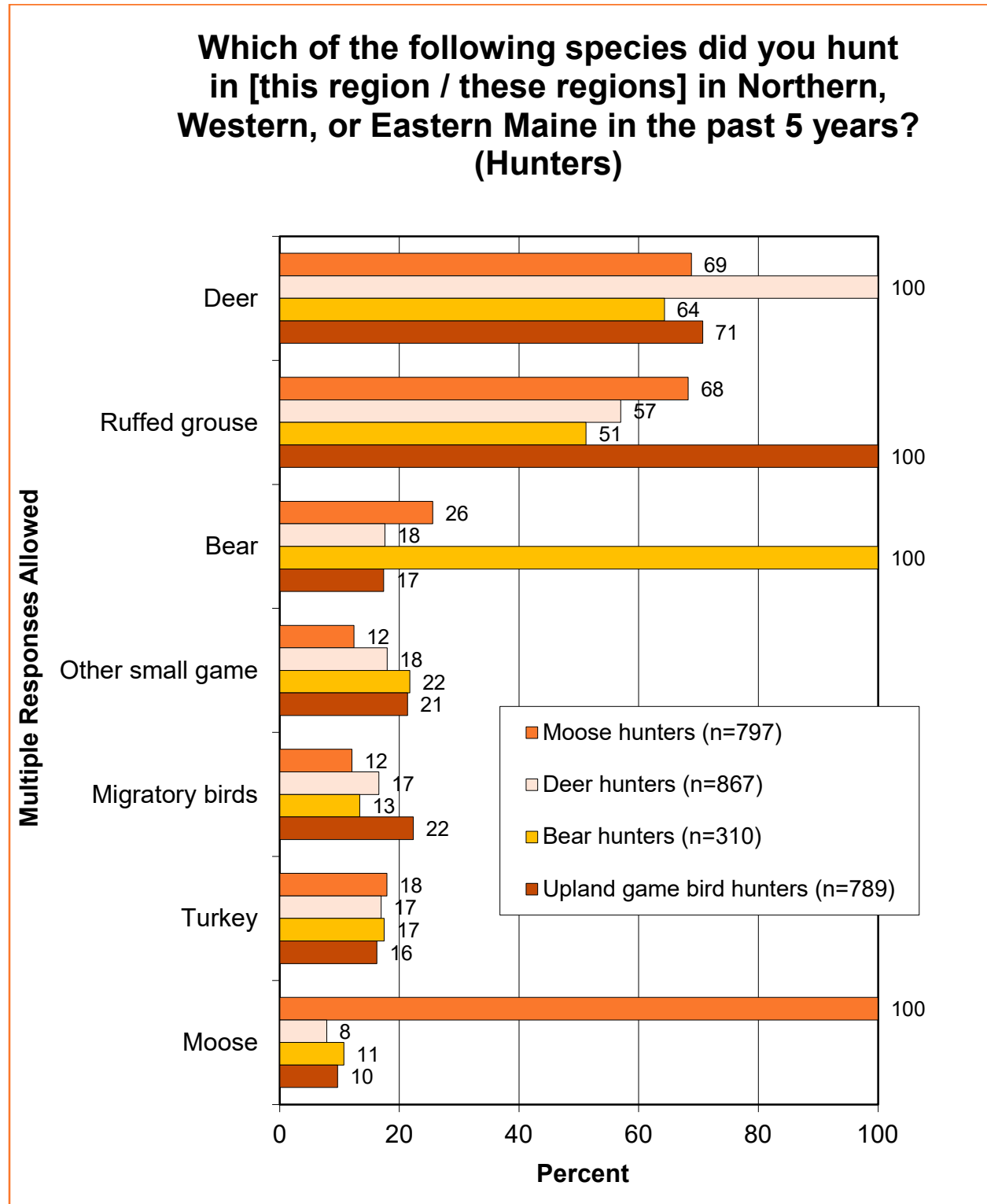


SPECIES HUNTED AND HARVESTED IN MAINE

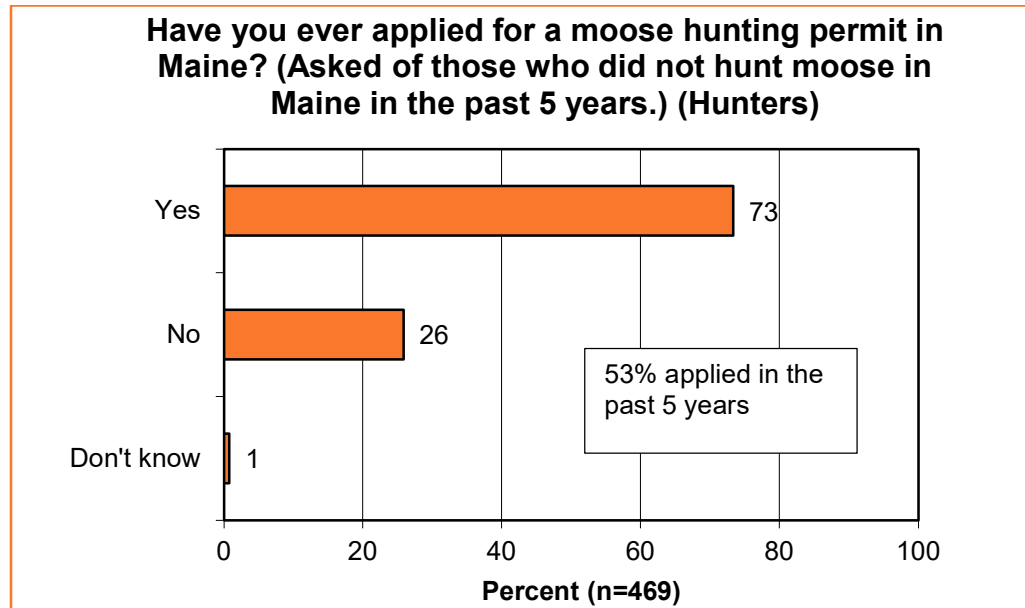
Among hunters as a whole, deer is the most sought species in the study area: 75% hunted deer. Close behind is ruffed grouse, with 60% hunting them. The other species or species groups asked about had much lower percentages hunting them, with moose at the bottom, hunted by 9% of all hunters in the study area. The crosstabulation by hunted moose/did not hunt moose shows that moose hunters are a little less likely than their counterparts to have hunted deer, but they are more likely to have hunted ruffed grouse.



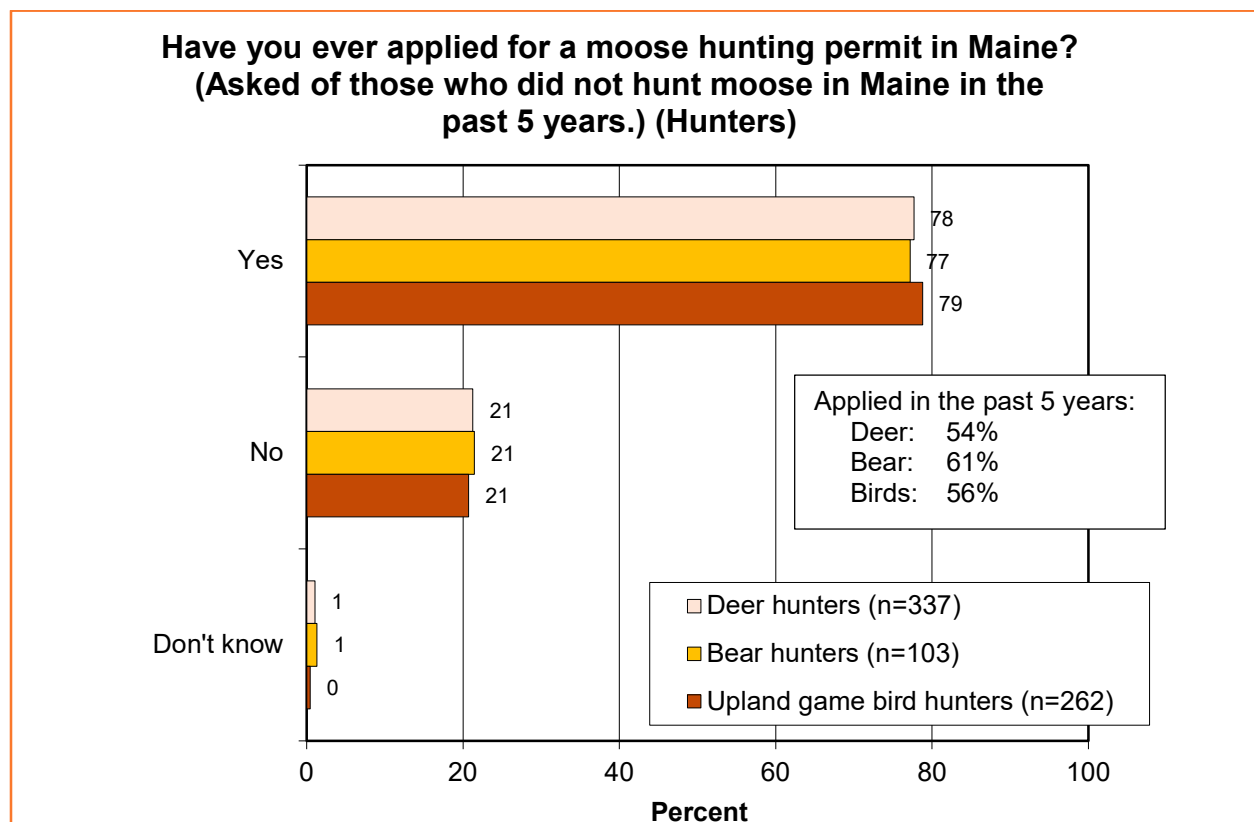
The crosstabulation by species hunted is useful to see the other species that hunters had hunted in addition to moose, deer, bear, and upland game birds. The graph shows, for instance, that most moose hunters also hunted deer (69% of moose hunters did so) and ruffed grouse (68%), while about a quarter of moose hunters also hunted bear (26%).



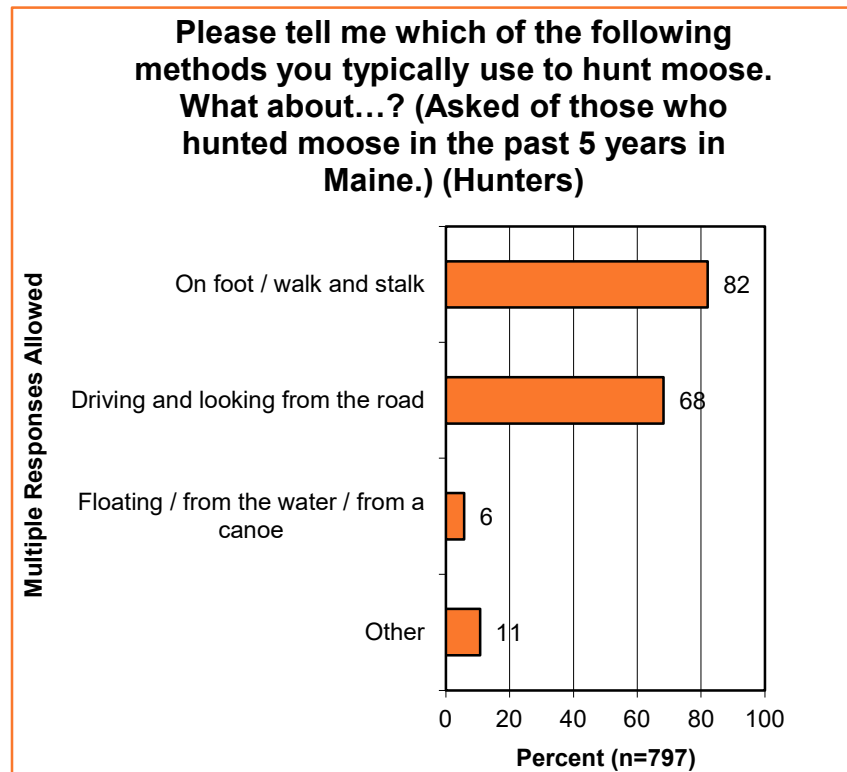
Among those who did not moose hunt in the past 5 years, there is strong enthusiasm for doing so: 73% of these hunters (those who did not hunt moose in the past 5 years) have ever applied for a moose permit, with 53% having done so in the past 5 years.



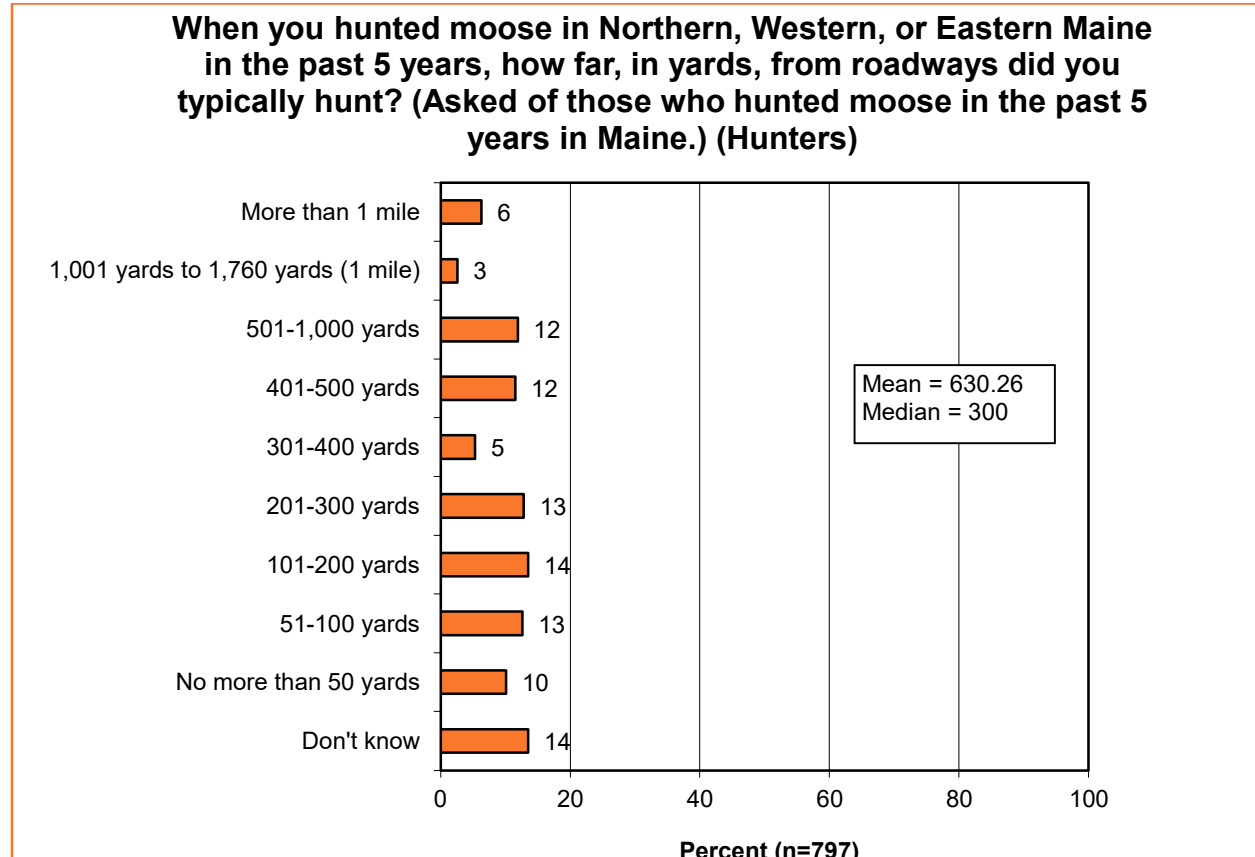
In the crosstabulation by species, a majority of each type of hunter—albeit those who hunted that species but did not hunt moose—applied for a moose hunting permit in the past 5 years.



CHARACTERISTICS OF MOOSE HUNTING

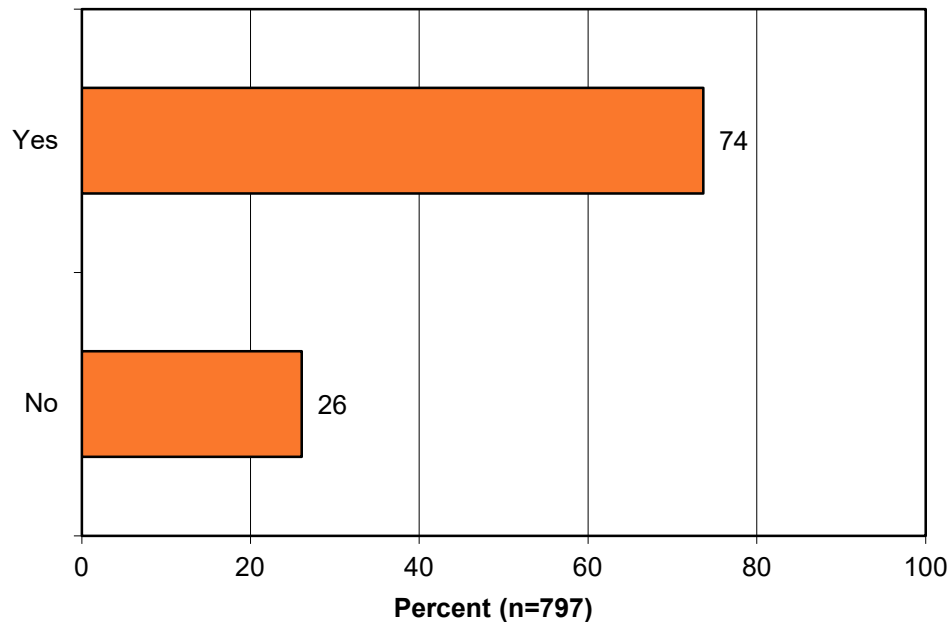


Several aspects of hunting moose are explored in this section of the report. To start is the graph showing the methods that hunters use for hunting moose. They overwhelmingly hunt moose on foot in a walk and stalk manner (82% of moose hunters do this), and a large majority also drive around and look from the road to find moose (68% of moose hunters do this). The second graph shows the distance from roadways that moose hunters typically hunt. The median is 300 yards.

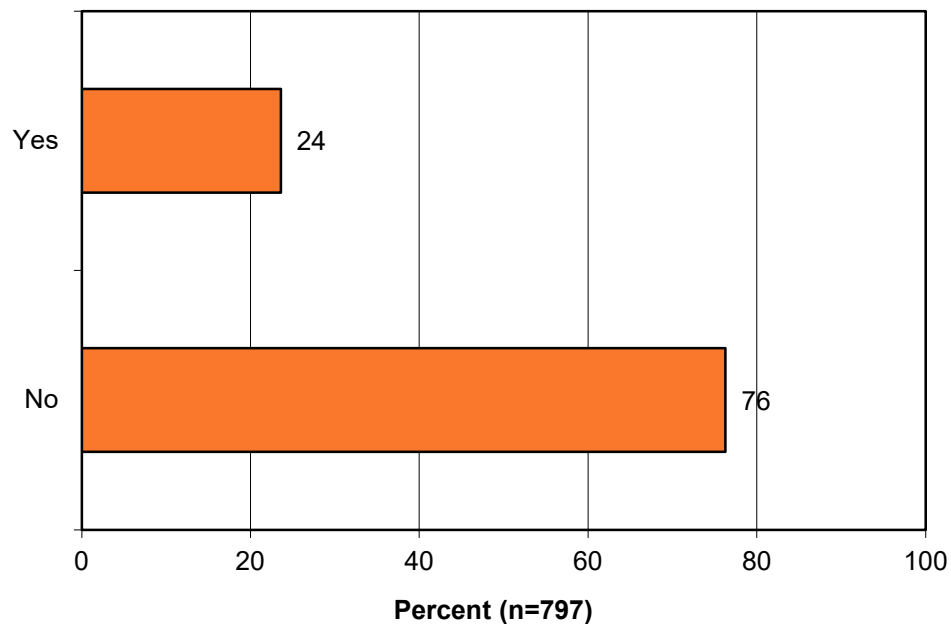


Approximately three quarters of moose hunters (74%) harvested a moose in the past 5 years. Meanwhile, about a fourth have quartered a moose in Maine to retrieve it from the woods.

Did you harvest a moose in Northern, Western, or Eastern Maine in the past 5 years? (Asked of those who hunted moose in the past 5 years in Maine.) (Hunters)

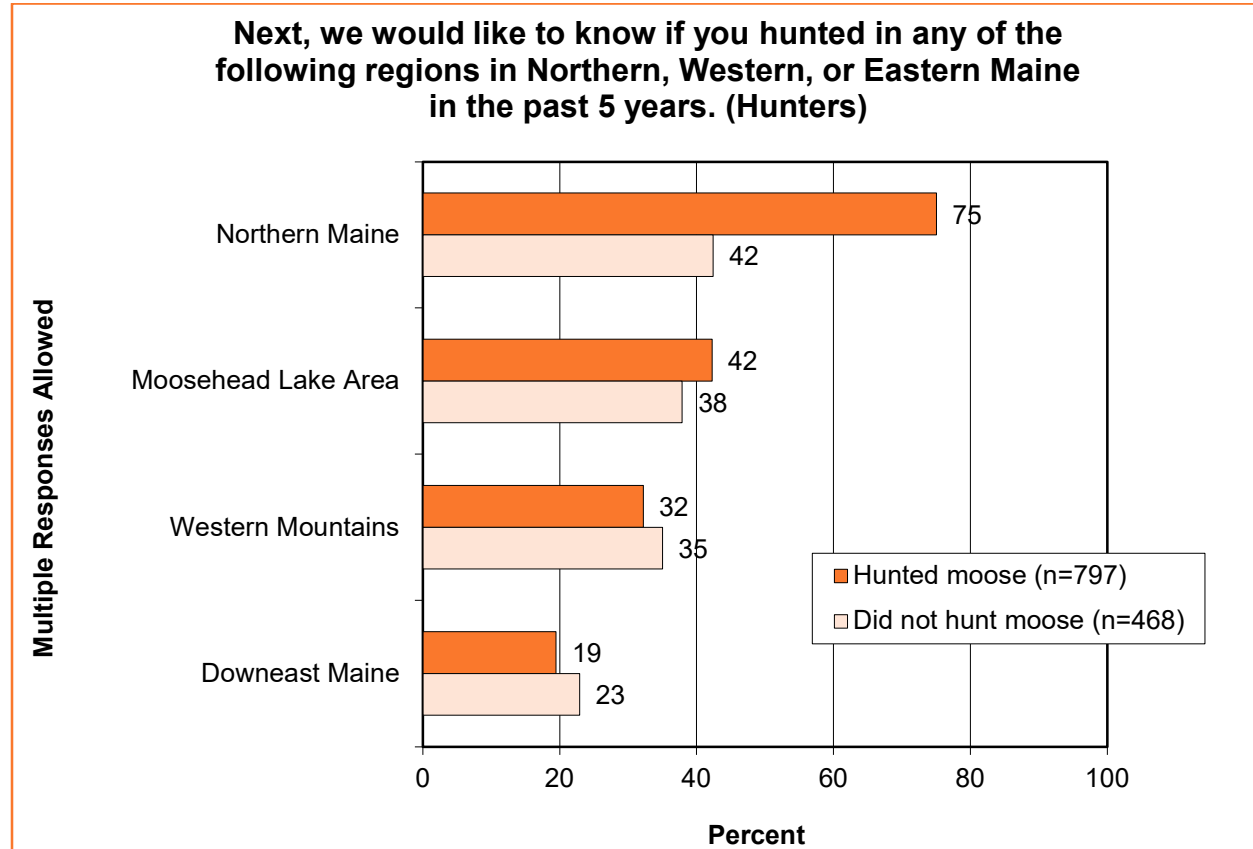
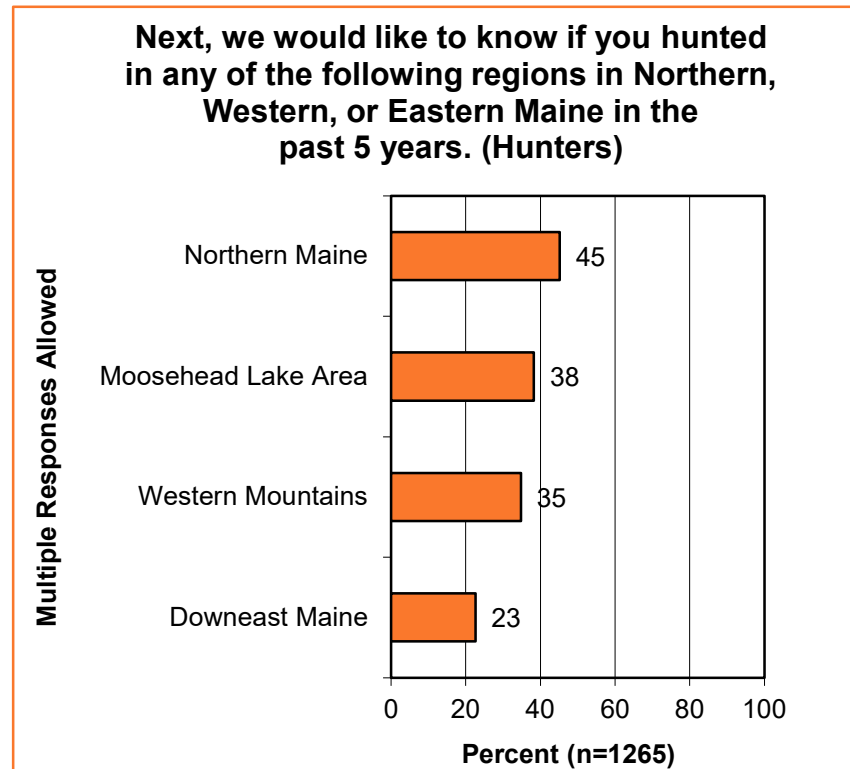


Have you quartered a moose in Maine to get it out of the woods? (Asked of those who hunted moose in the past 5 years in Maine.) (Hunters)

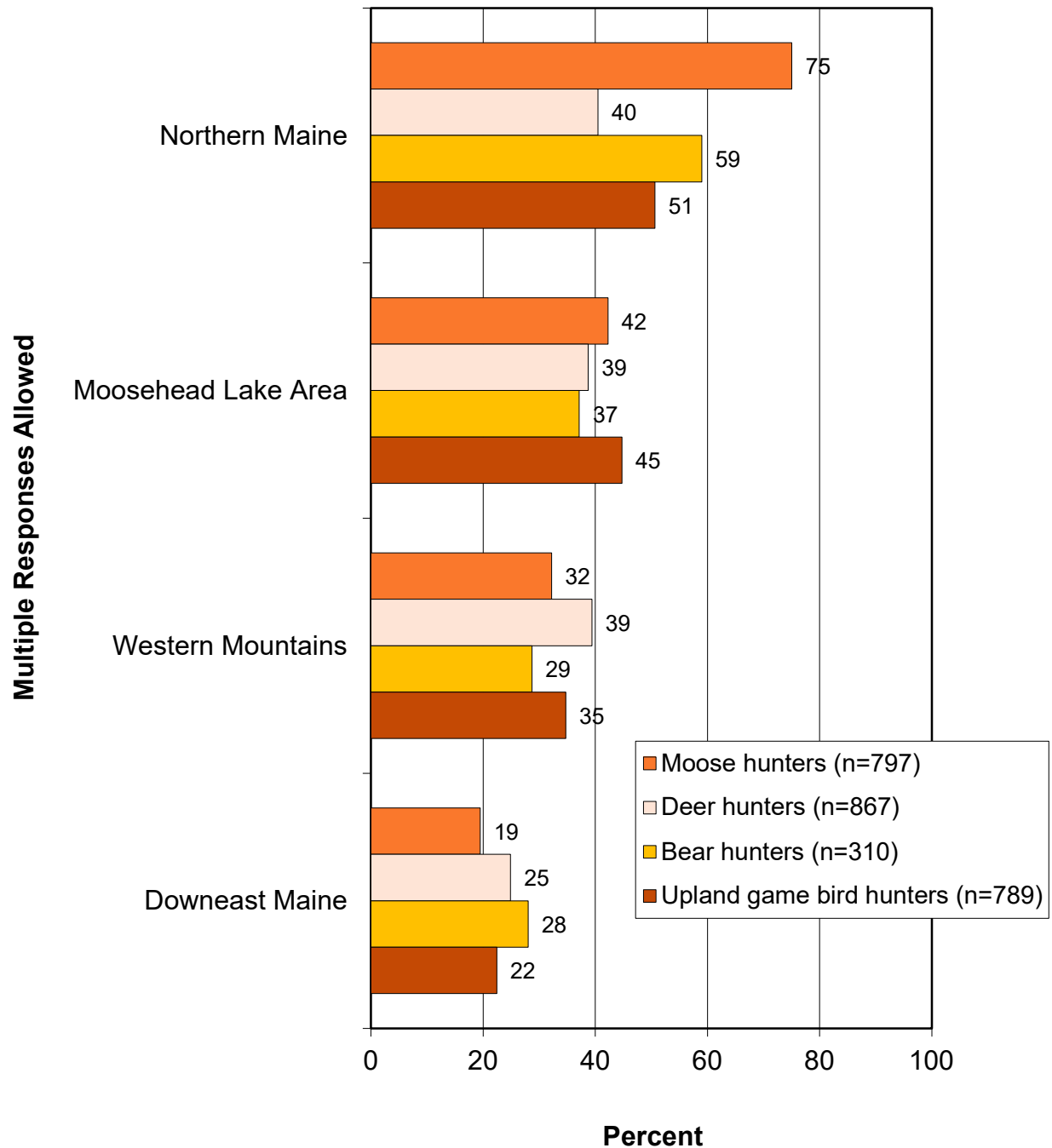


LOCATIONAL INFORMATION

Northern Maine is the most popular of the four study area regions (nearly half of study area hunters hunted there), followed by the Moosehead Lake Area and the Western Mountains. Downeast Maine is the least popular of the four study area regions. The differences between moose hunters and those who did not hunt moose are large concerning one region: 75% of moose hunters hunted Northern Maine, but only 42% of hunters who did not seek moose did so. In the other regions, the results are about the same.



Next, we would like to know if you hunted in any of the following regions in Northern, Western, or Eastern Maine in the past 5 years. (Hunters)



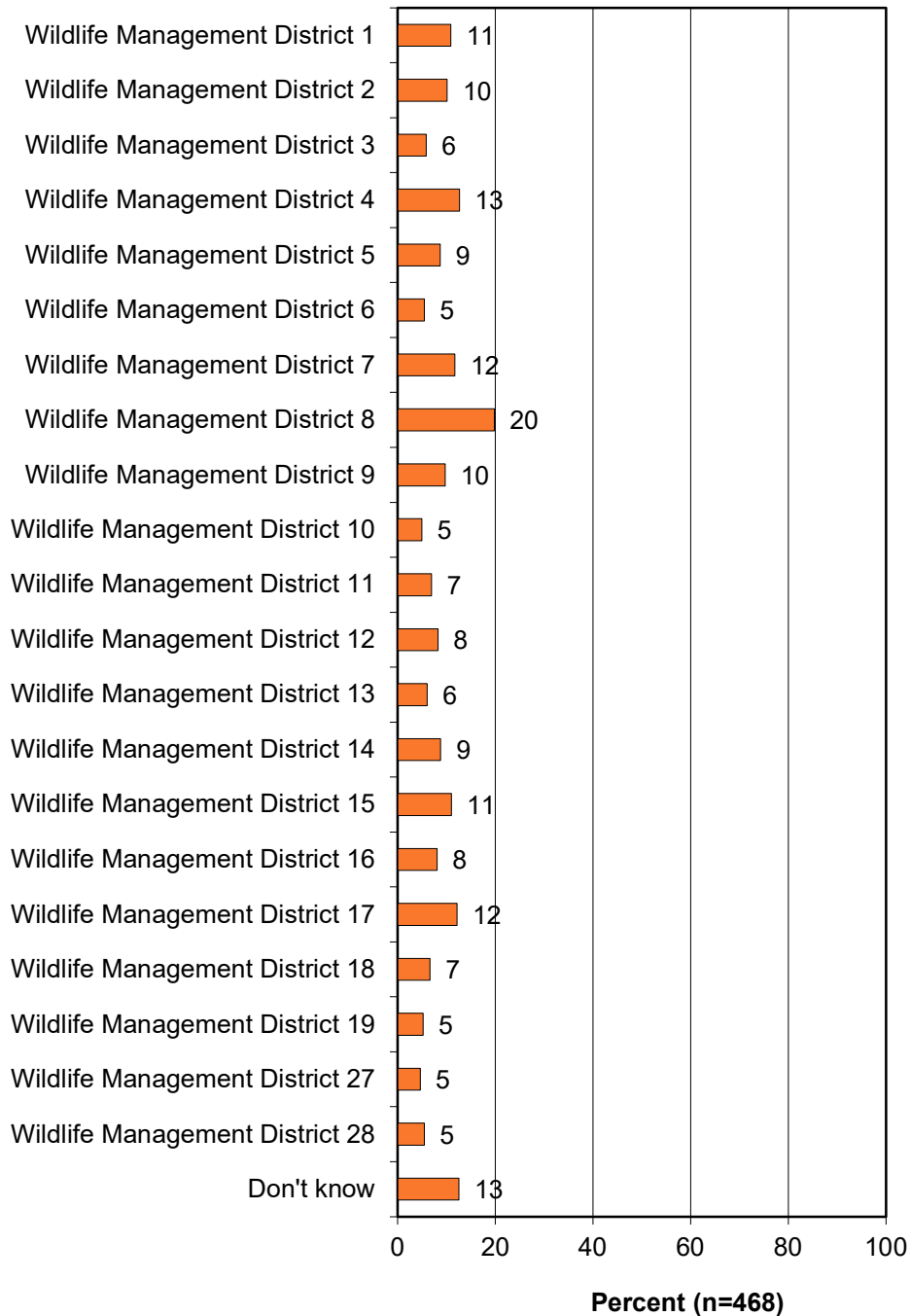
The WMDs in which hunters had hunted are shown in these next two graphs. The questions were separated by whether the hunter had hunted moose or not. Moose hunting was quite popular in WMDs 4, 1, and 8. WMD 8 was also popular among hunters who did not hunt moose.

**In which Wildlife Management District(s)
(WMDs) did you hunt moose in the past
5 years? (Asked of those who hunted moose in
the past 5 years.) (Hunters)**



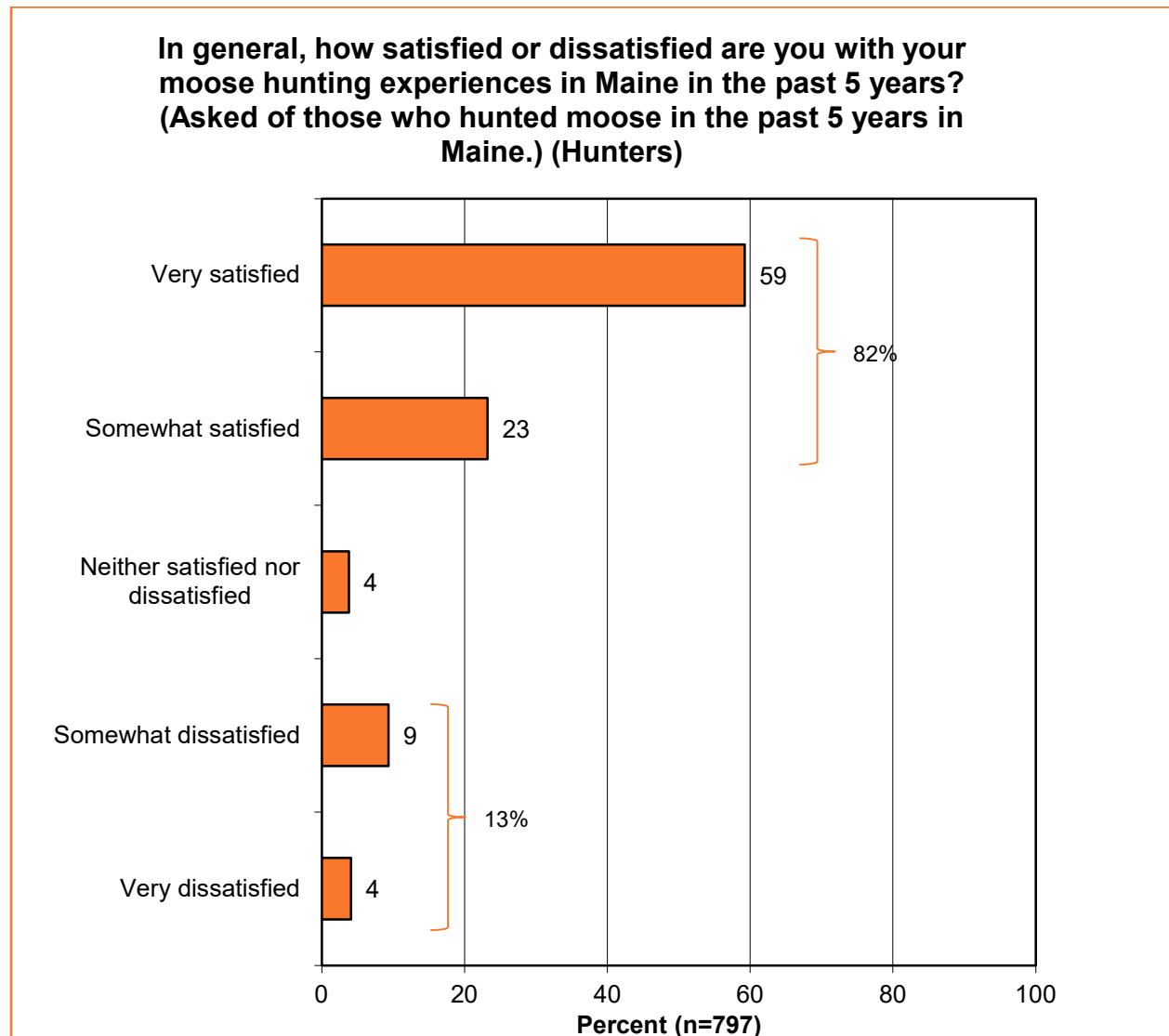
**In which Wildlife Management District(s) (WMDs) did you hunt in the past 5 years?
(Asked of those who did not hunt moose in the past 5 years.) (Hunters)**

Multiple Responses Allowed



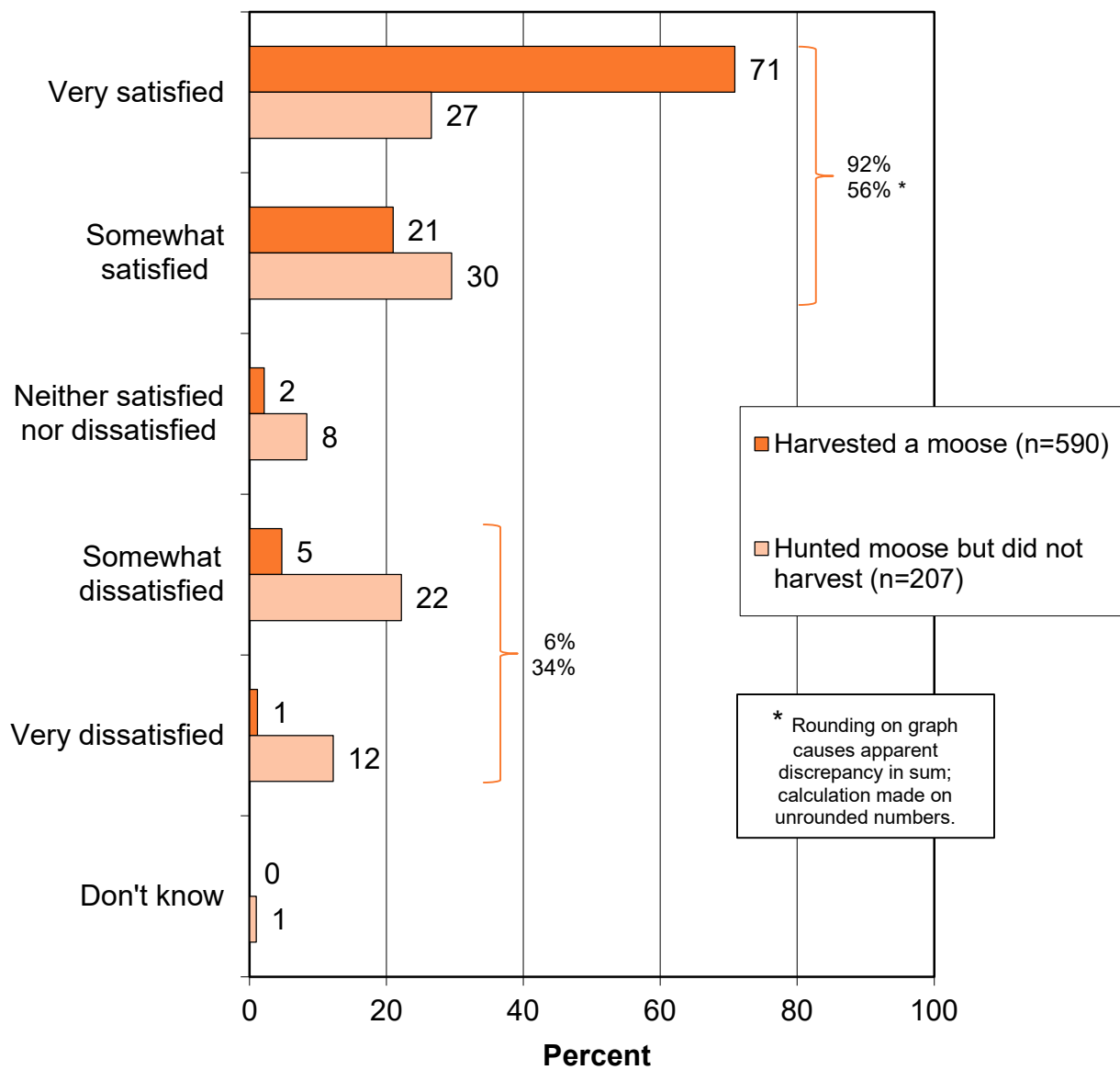
SATISFACTION WITH HUNTING

Satisfaction with moose hunting far exceeds dissatisfaction: 82% are satisfied (including 59% being very satisfied), while 13% are dissatisfied.



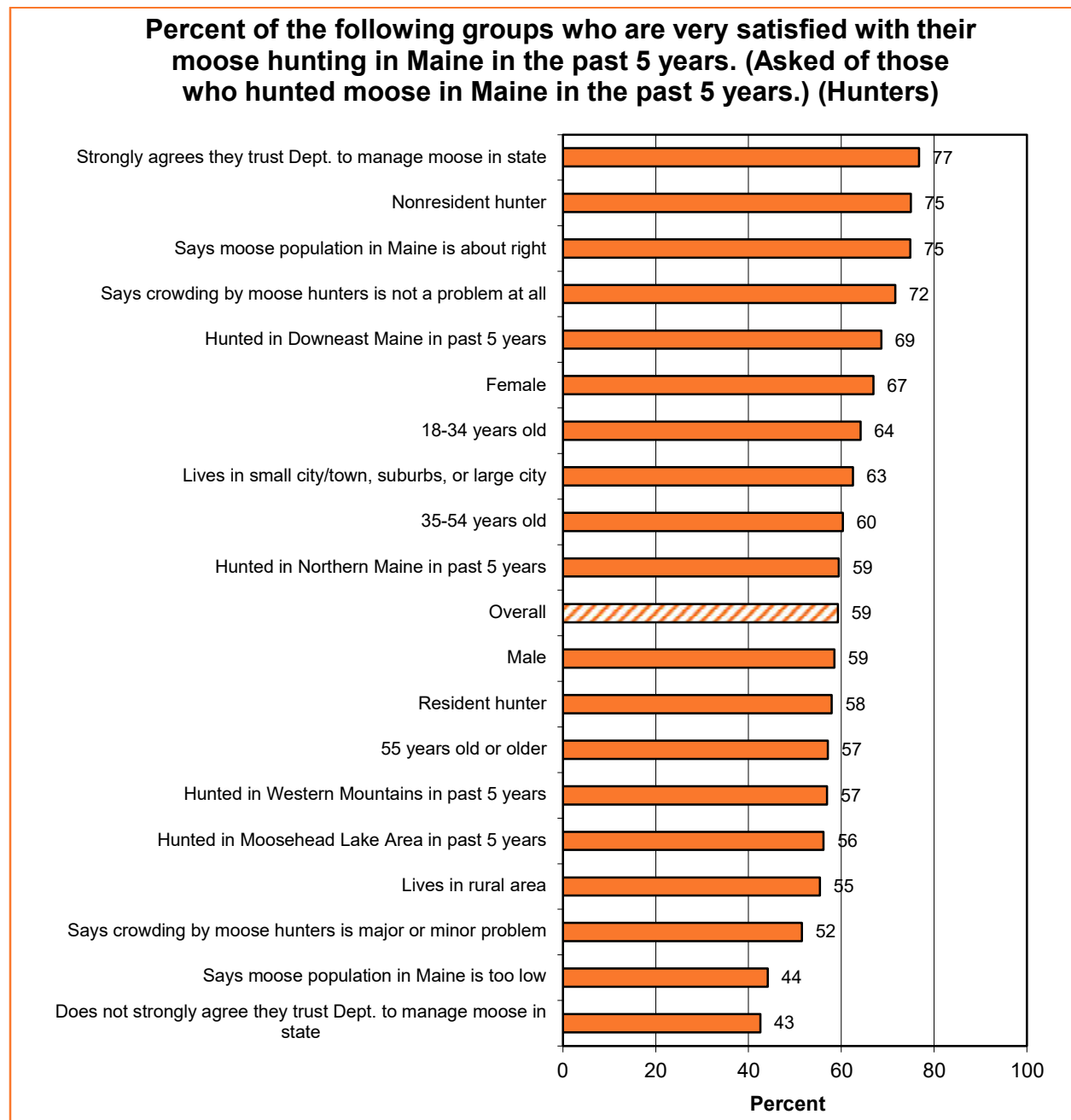
Harvest success plays a huge role in satisfaction with moose hunting. Those who harvested are nearly unanimously satisfied with their moose hunting (92% are satisfied), while only a little more than half of non-harvesters are satisfied (56%). Dissatisfaction also drastically differs, with only 6% of harvesters dissatisfied and 34% of non-harvesters dissatisfied.

In general, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your moose hunting experiences in Maine in the past 5 years? (Asked of those who hunted moose in the past 5 years in Maine.) (Hunters)



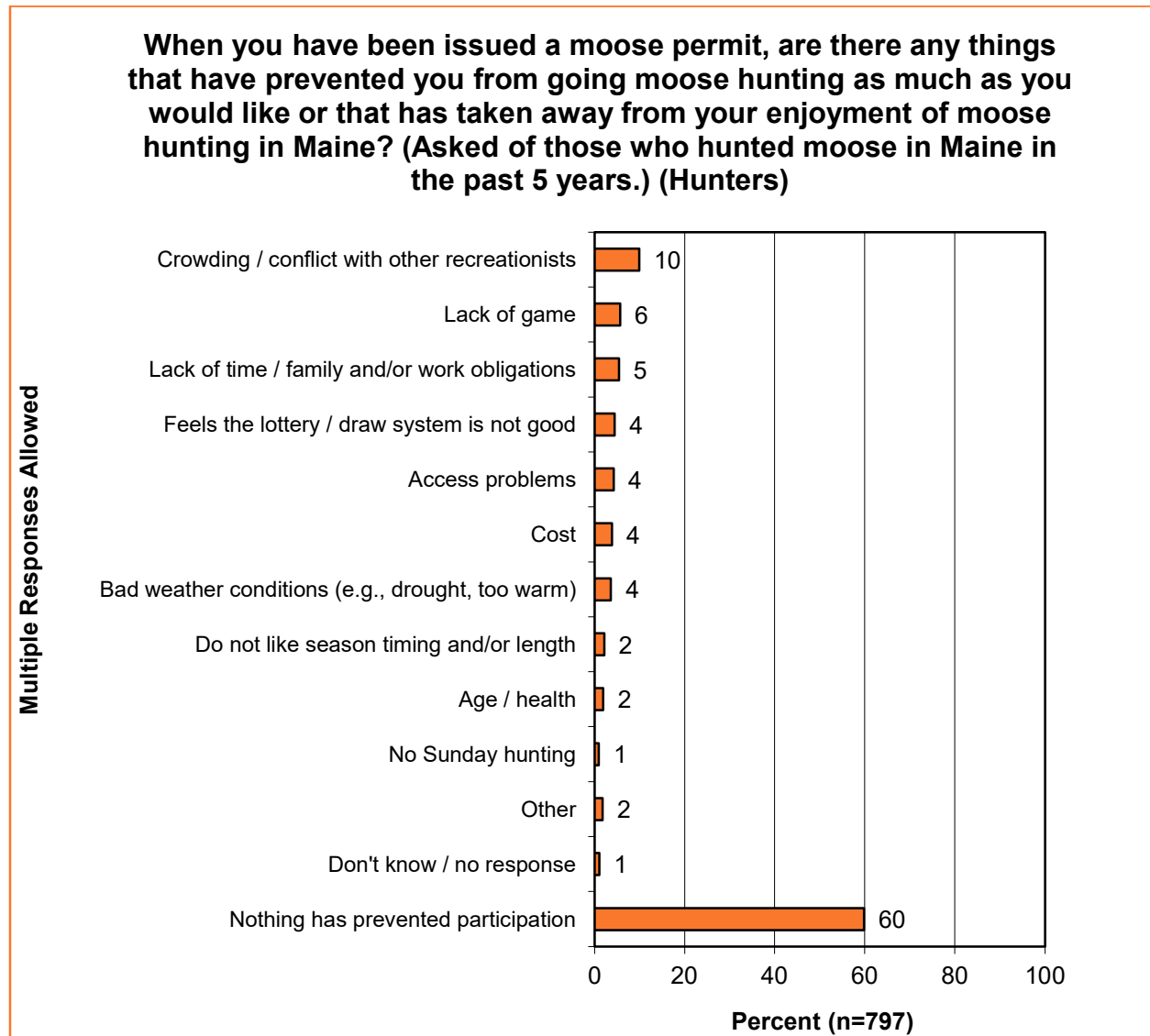
Being very satisfied with moose hunting is associated with three opinions (strongly agreeing that they trust the Department to manage moose, saying the moose population is about right, and saying that crowding by moose hunters is not a problem at all), with being a nonresident hunter, with hunting in Downeast Maine, and with two demographic characteristics (female and young).

The bottom of the graph shows those groups *not* associated with being very satisfied: not strongly agreeing that they trust the Department to manage moose, thinking the moose population is too low, and saying that crowding by moose hunters is a problem.

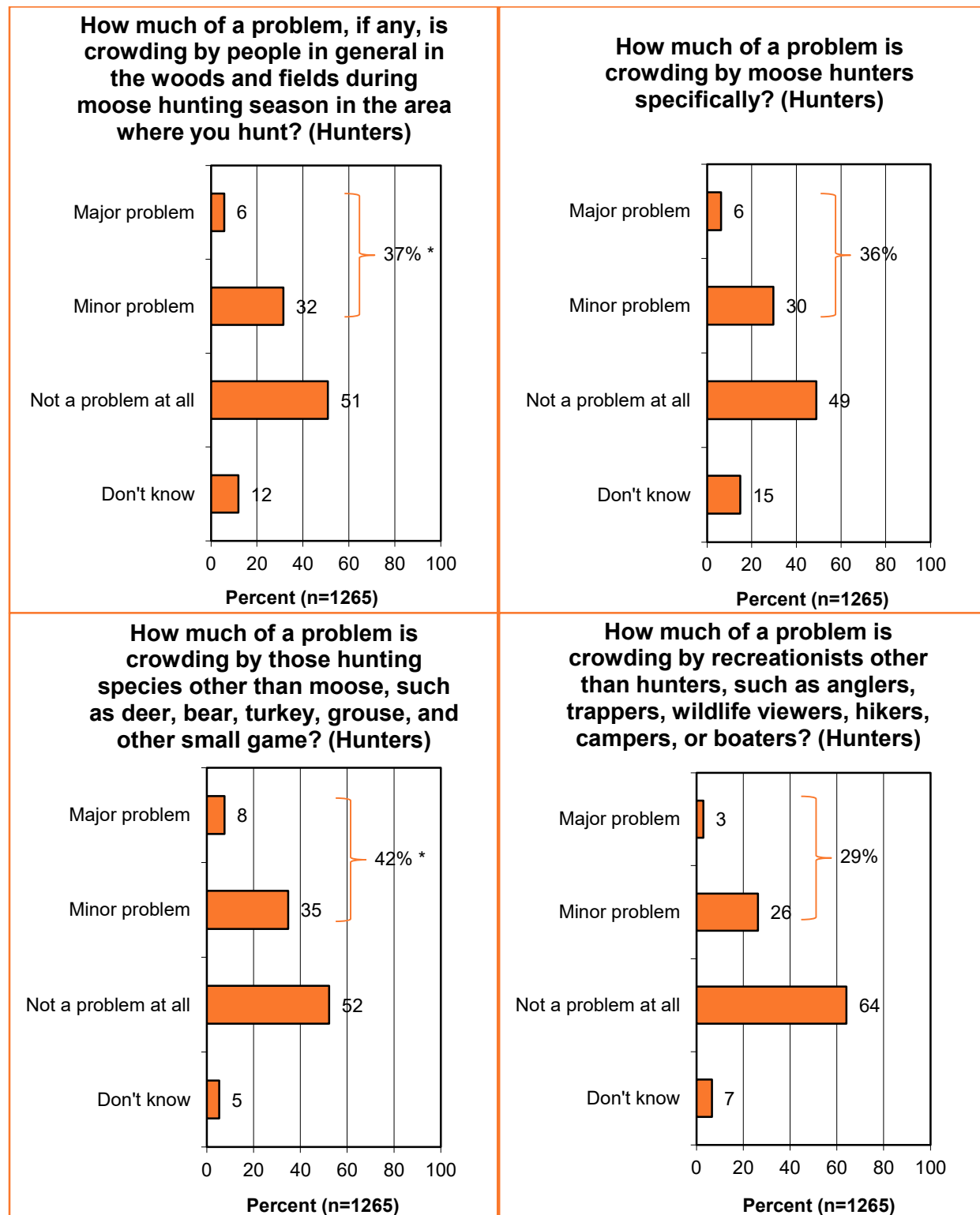


CONFLICTS AND CONSTRAINTS TO HUNTING

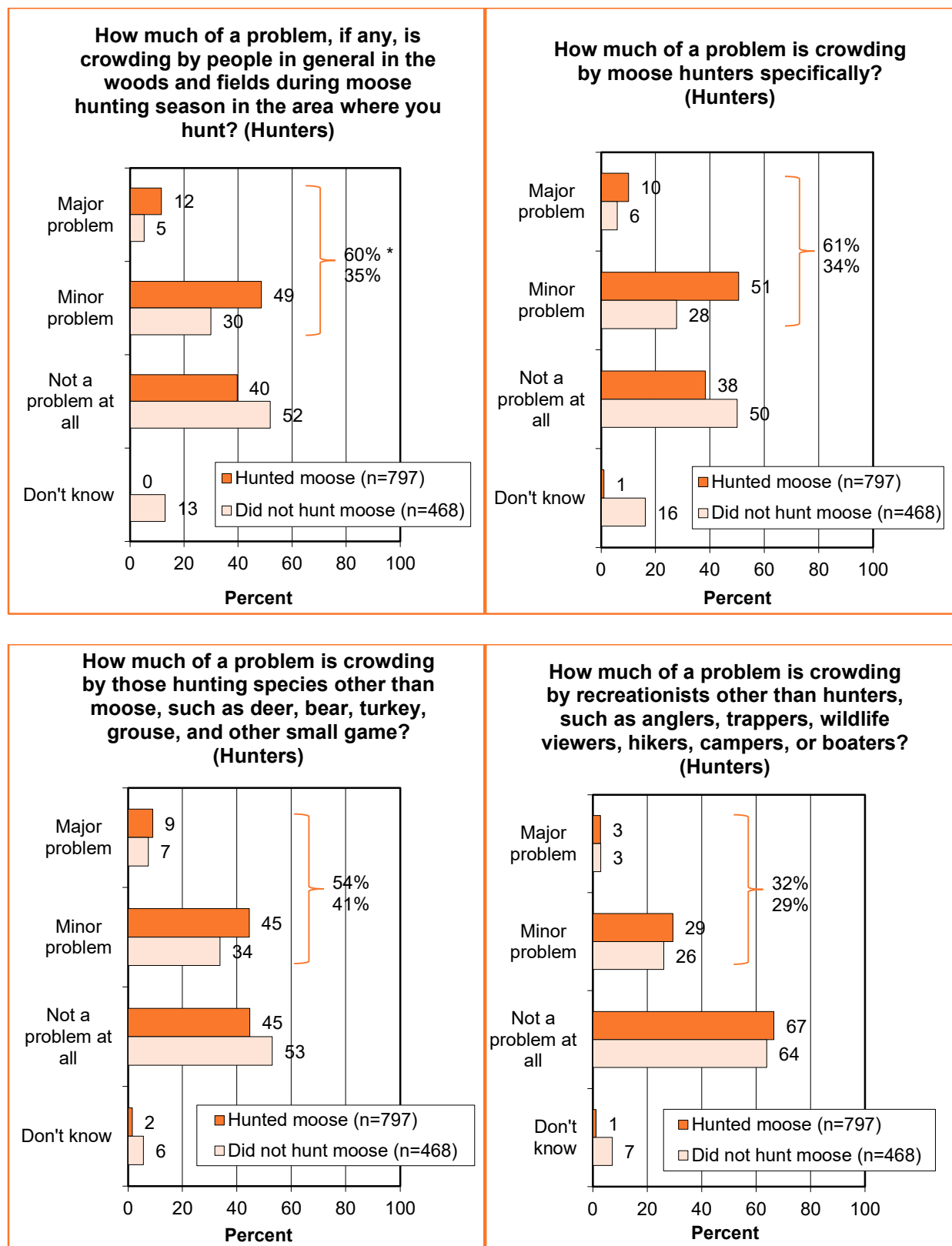
The survey explored constraints to or dislikes about moose hunting *other than not getting a draw*. The top response in this open-ended question was crowding/conflicts with other recreationists (given by 10% of moose hunters). Other constraints/dislikes of note are a lack of game (6%) and access problems (4%). The graph shows the full range of responses.



The survey explored crowding during moose season from people in general, from moose hunters specifically, from hunters of other species, and from other recreationists. Note that the time period was specific to moose season, but the question was asked of all hunters, even those not hunting moose. Although only 3% to 8% think crowding is a *major* problem, nearly a third or more in each question indicated that crowding is a *major* or *minor* problem. Crowding by recreationists other than hunters is not as bad as crowding from hunters. The crosstabulations show that moose hunters are much more likely to cite crowding as a problem than are those who did not hunt moose. All of these graphs appear on the following pages.

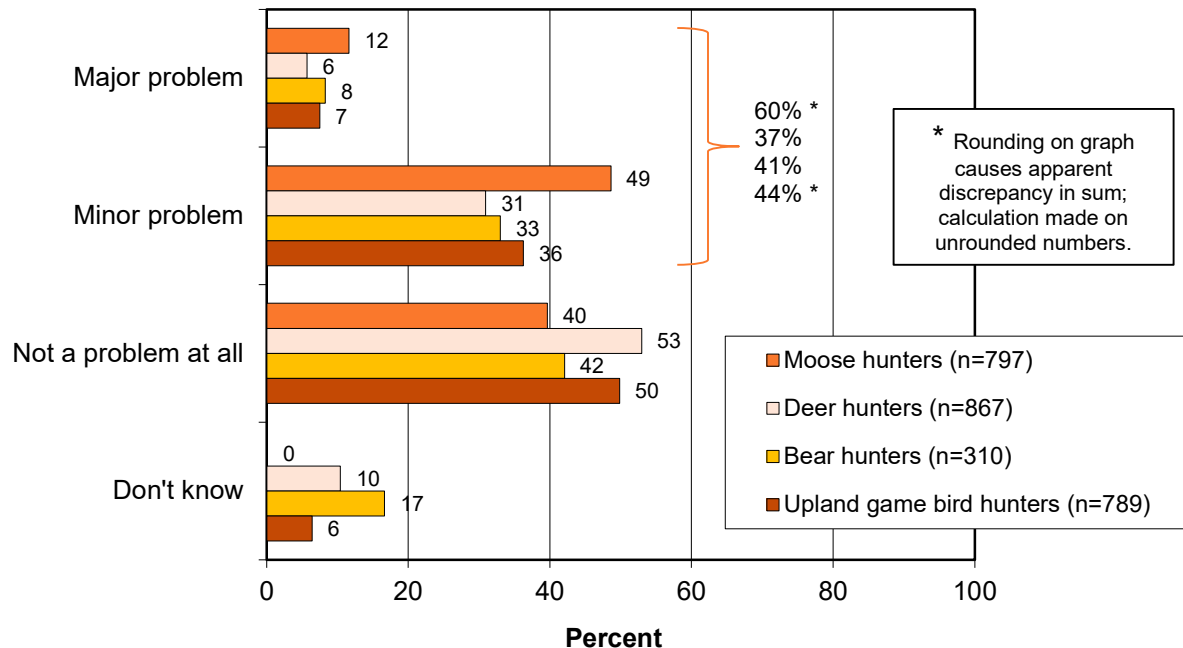


* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

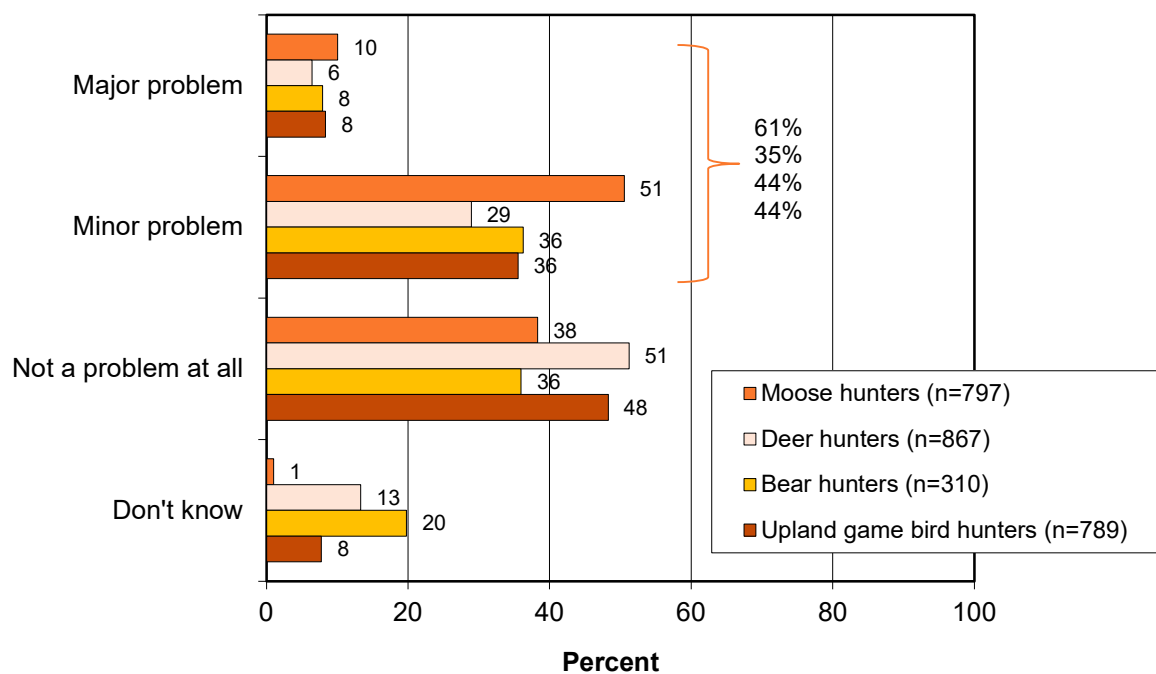


* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

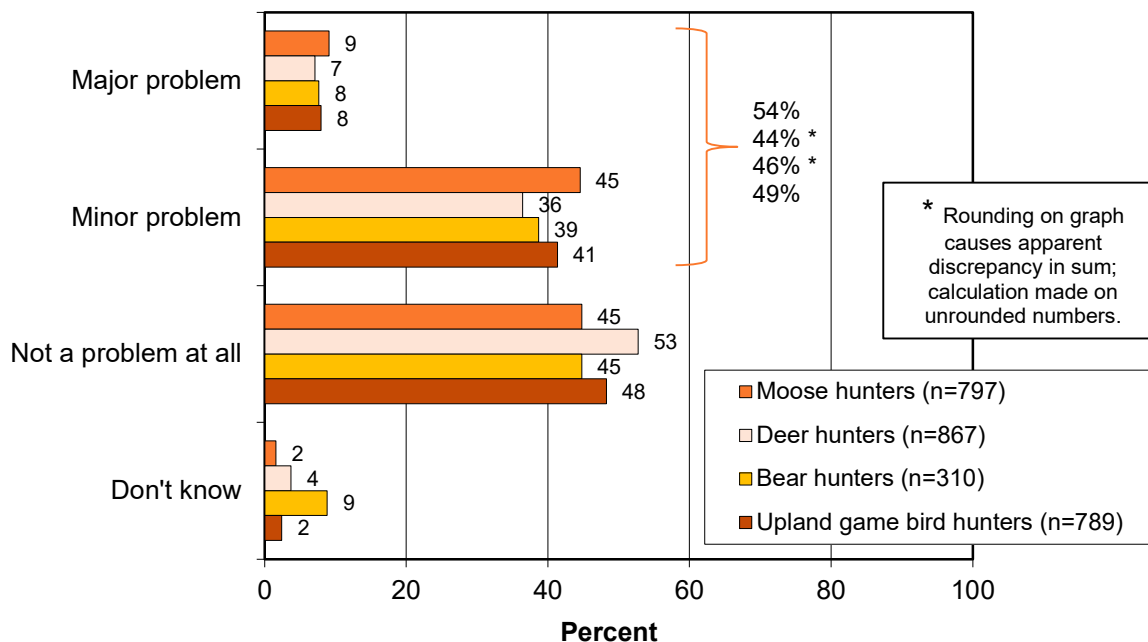
How much of a problem, if any, is crowding by people in general in the woods and fields during moose hunting season in the area where you hunt? (Hunters)



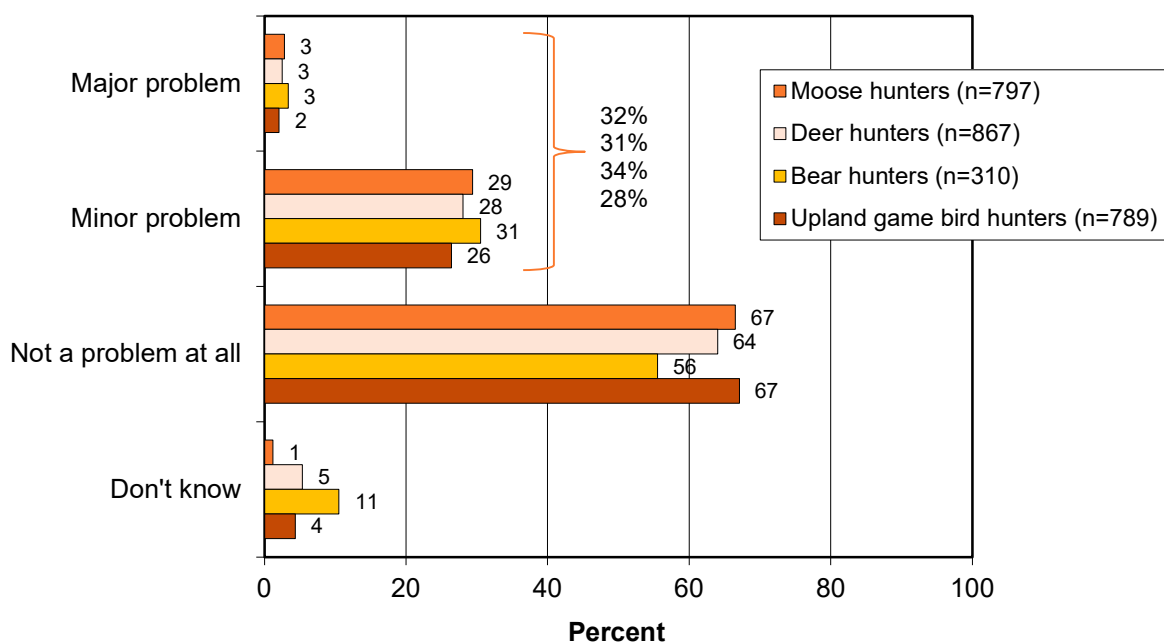
How much of a problem is crowding by moose hunters specifically? (Hunters)



How much of a problem is crowding by those hunting species other than moose, such as deer, bear, turkey, grouse, and other small game? (Hunters)

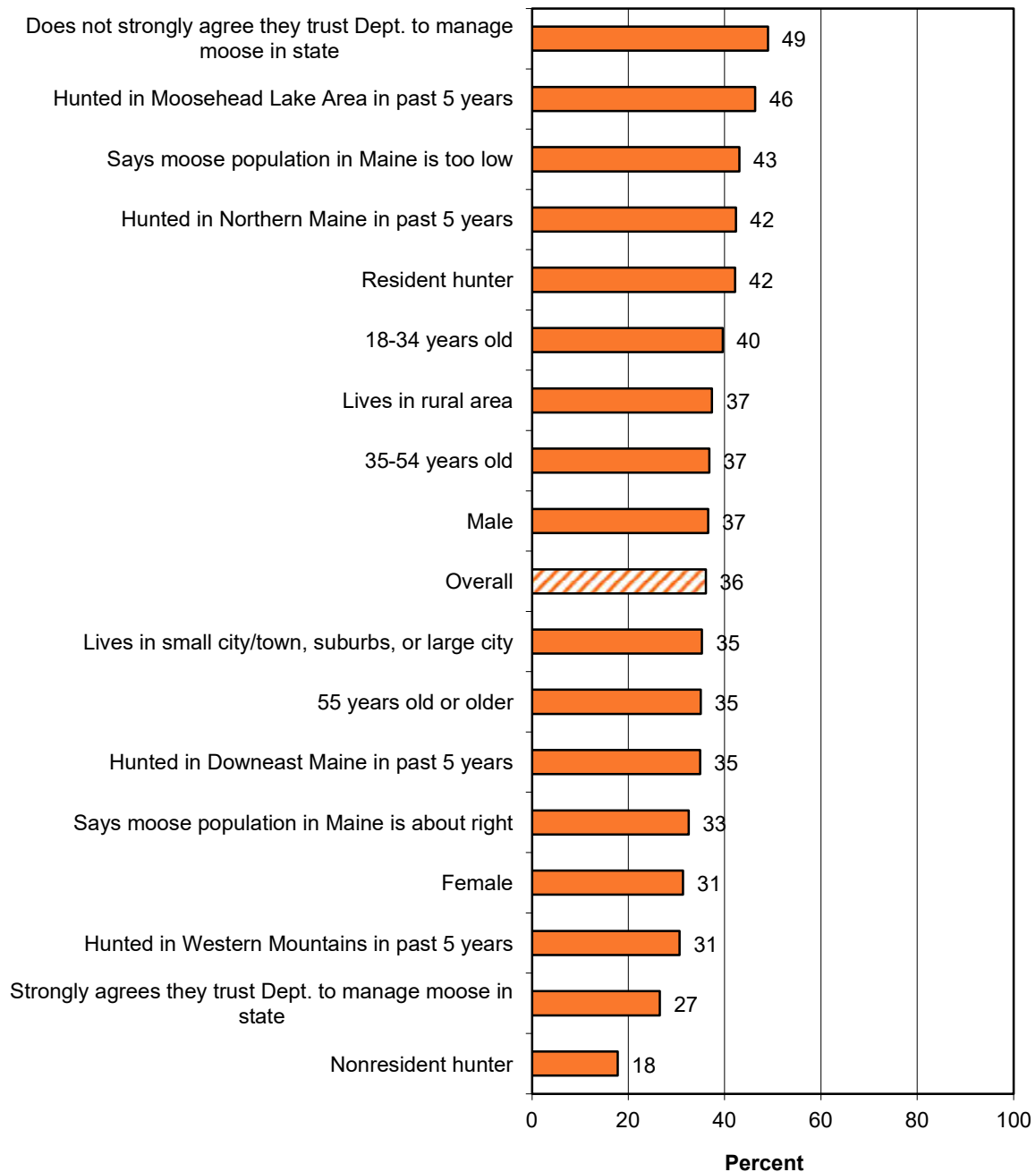


How much of a problem is crowding by recreationists other than hunters, such as anglers, trappers, wildlife viewers, hikers, campers, or boaters? (Hunters)

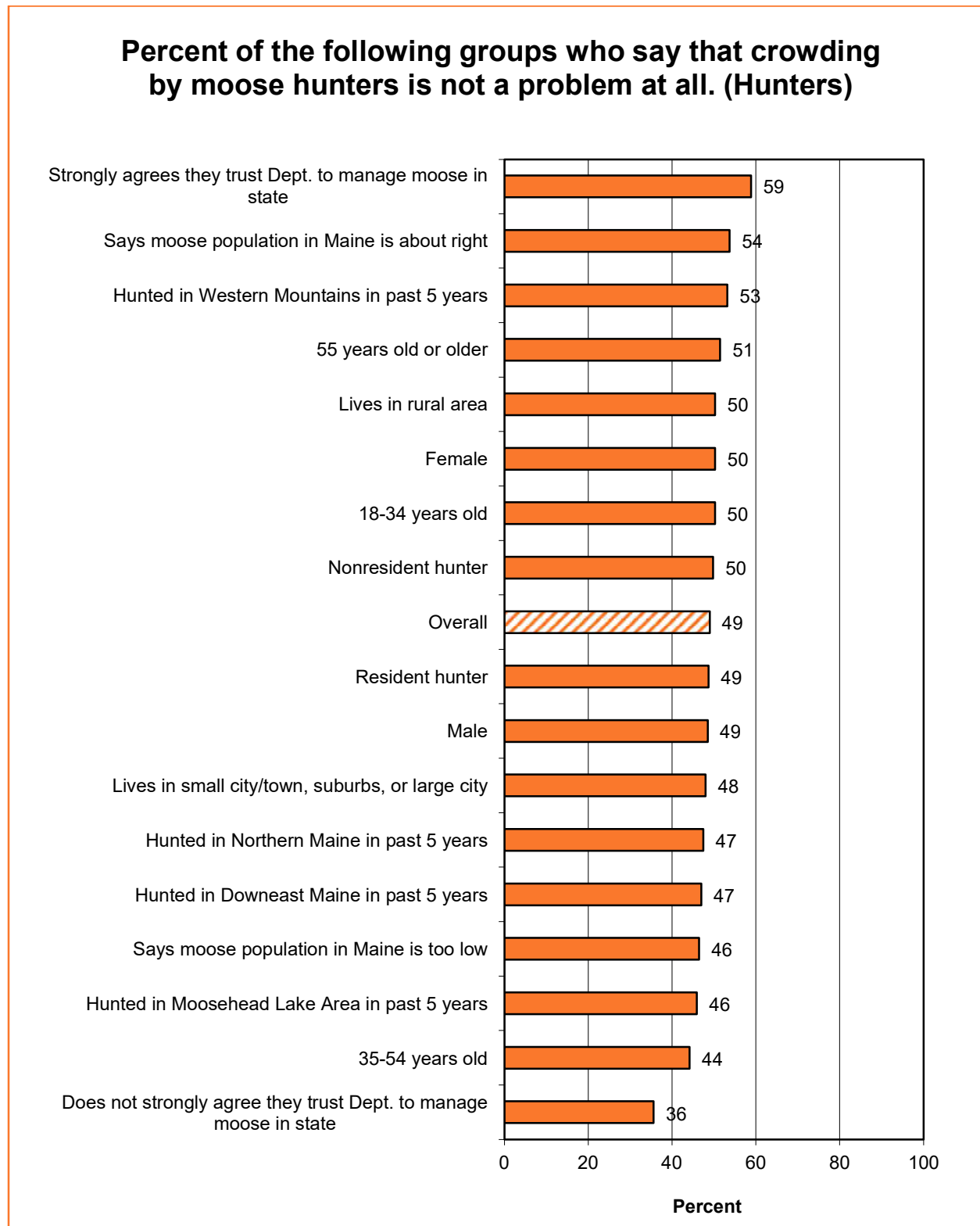


Demographic analyses were run on the question about crowding by moose hunters. Feeling that crowding is a problem is associated with not strongly agreeing that they trust the Department to manage moose, hunting in the Moosehead Lake Area or in Northern Maine, thinking the moose population is too low, and being a resident hunter.

**Percent of the following groups who say that crowding by moose hunters is a major or minor problem.
(Hunters)**

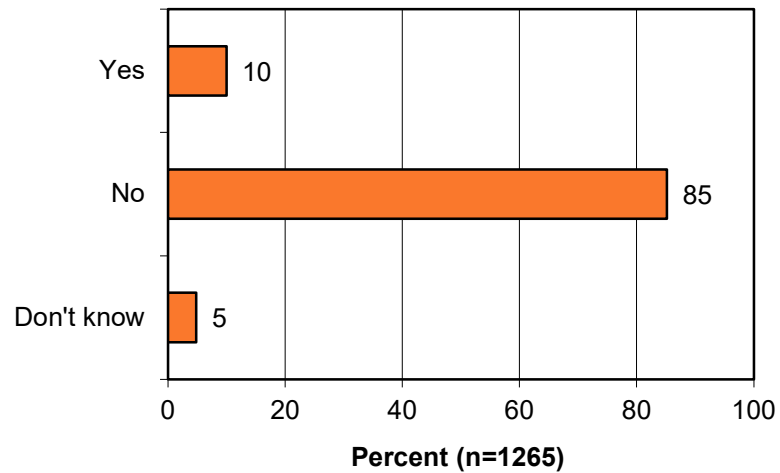


On the other hand, feeling that crowding by moose hunters is not a problem at all is associated with strongly agreeing that they trust the Department to manage moose and thinking the moose population is about right.

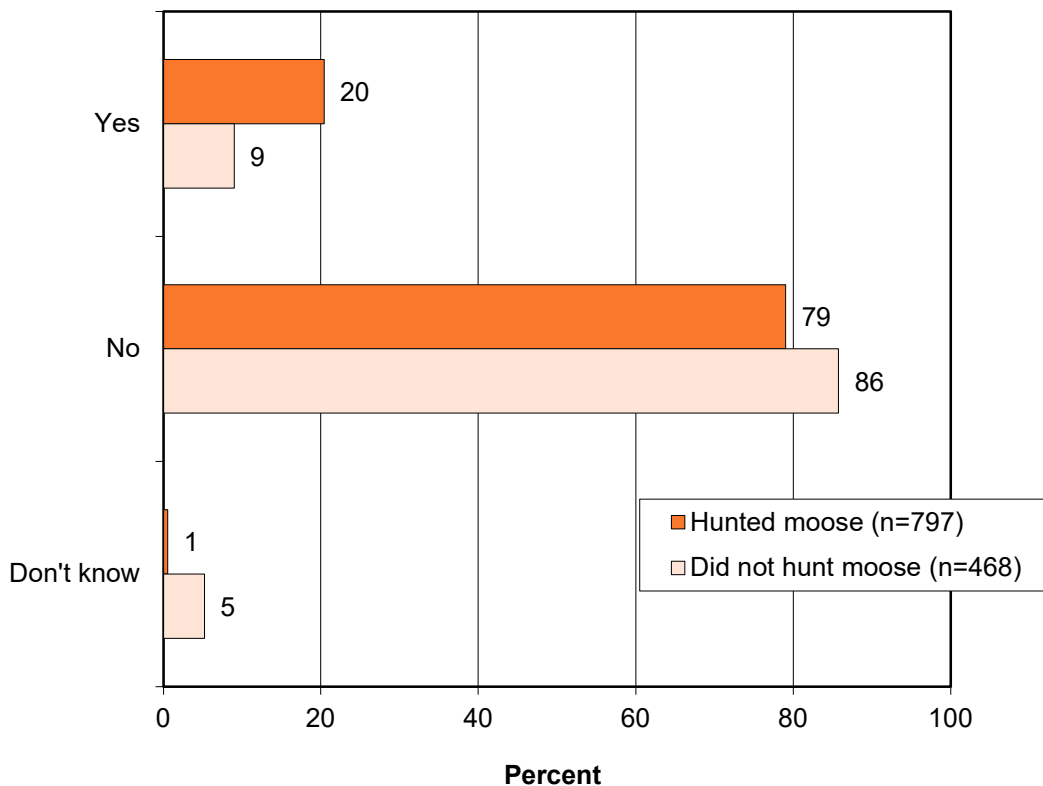


The survey then addressed conflicts in addition to crowding, asking hunters if they had experienced conflict with anyone else during moose hunting season (whether they were hunting for moose or not). Among hunters overall, 10% had experienced conflict, but among moose hunters, 20% had experienced conflict. This is more, by far, than the hunters of other species or species groups.

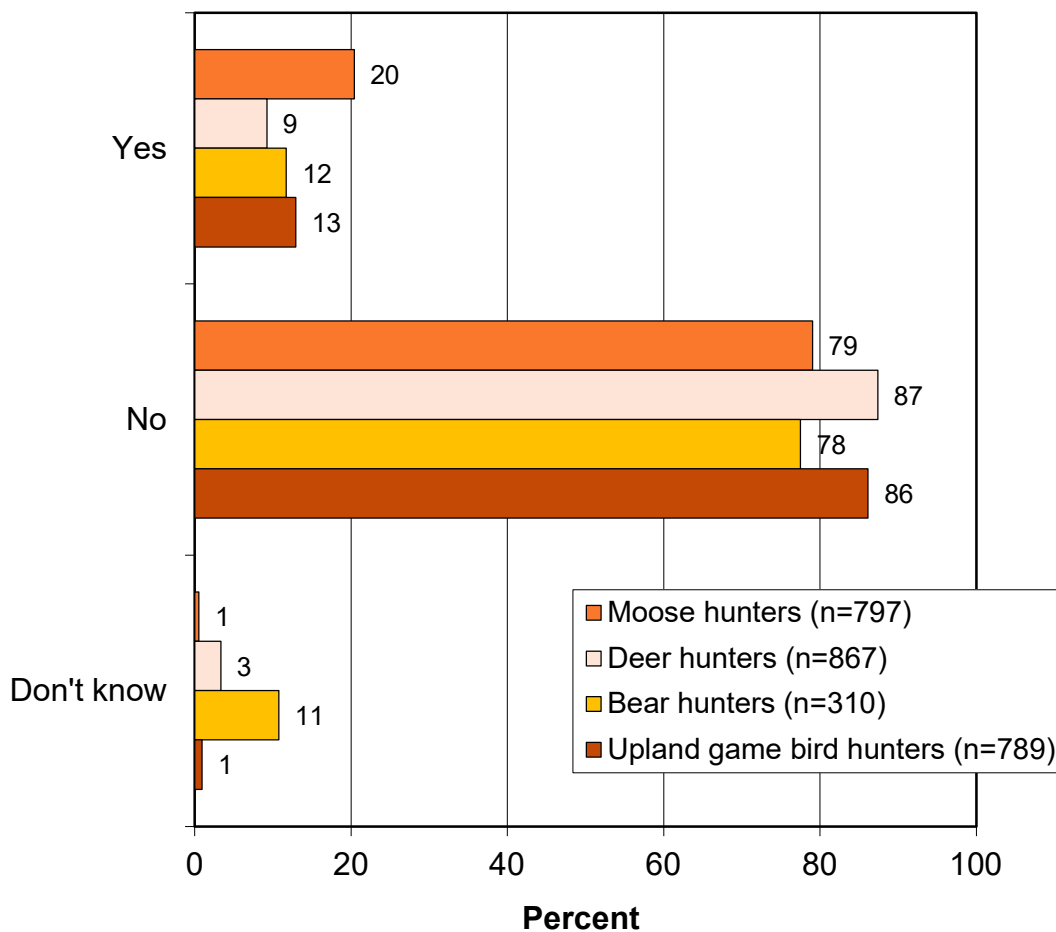
Again, moose hunting seasons occur primarily in late September and again from mid-October through the first week of November, depending on the Wildlife Management District. Have you experienced conflicts with anyone else at all during moose hunting season in the area where you hunt? (Hunters)



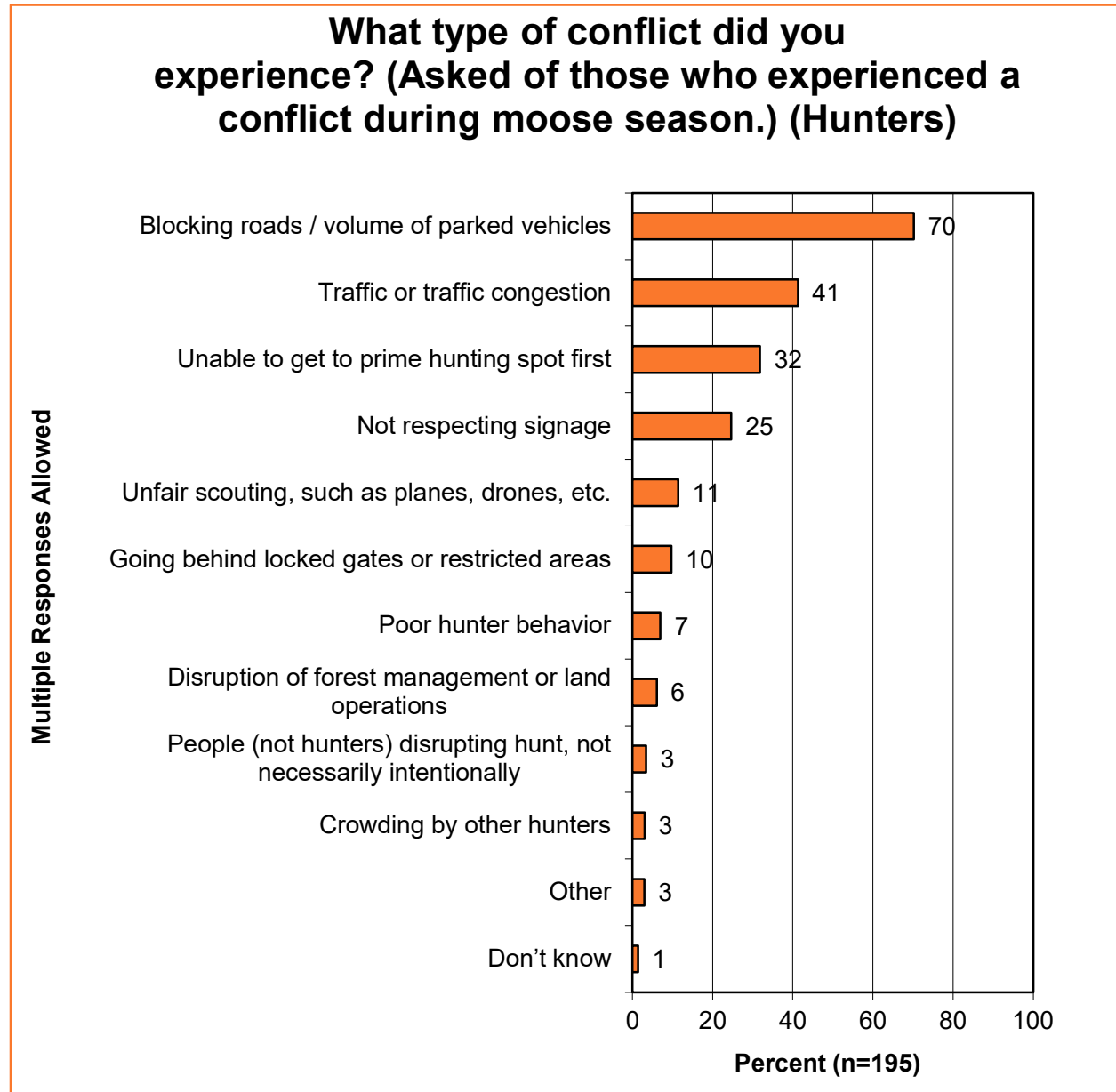
Again, moose hunting seasons occur primarily in late September and again from mid-October through the first week of November, depending on the Wildlife Management District. Have you experienced conflicts with anyone else at all during moose hunting season in the area where you hunt? (Hunters)



Again, moose hunting seasons occur primarily in late September and again from mid-October through the first week of November, depending on the Wildlife Management District. Have you experienced conflicts with anyone else at all during moose hunting season in the area where you hunt? (Hunters)

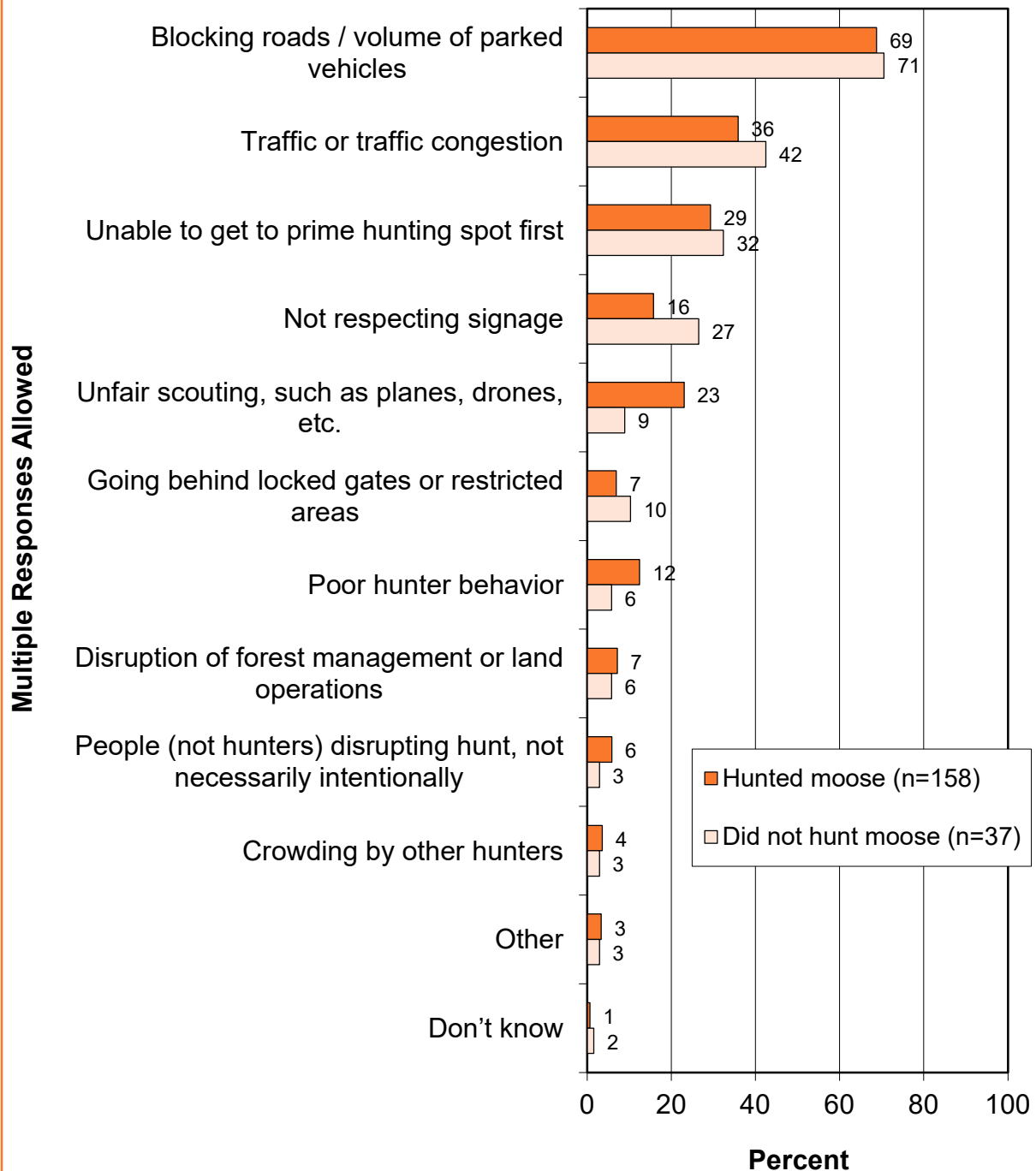


Those who experienced conflict were asked, in an open-ended question, to indicate the type of conflict that they had experienced. Blocking roads was the top type of conflict, by far. Also in the top tier are traffic congestion, being unable to get to their hunting spot first, and people disrespecting signage.

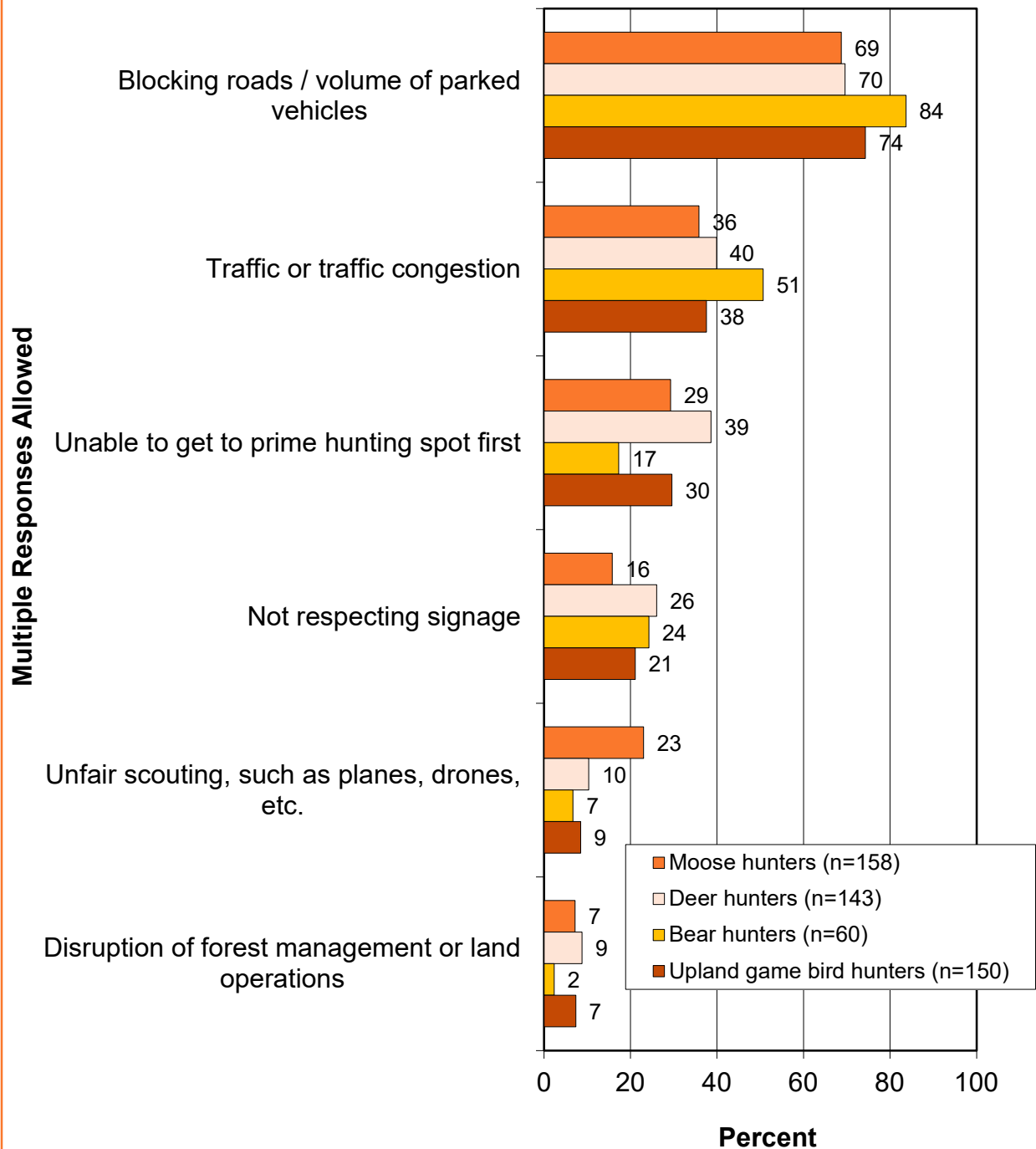


The crosstabulations appear on the following pages. Among moose hunters, add unfair scouting practices by other hunters to the top tier of conflicts along with those named above. On the other hand, moose hunters are less concerned than their counterparts about not respecting signage.

What type of conflict did you experience? (Asked of those who experienced a conflict during moose season.) (Hunters)



What type of conflict did you experience? (Asked of those who experienced a conflict during moose season.) (Hunters) (Part 1)



What type of conflict did you experience? (Asked of those who experienced a conflict during moose season.) (Hunters) (Part 2)



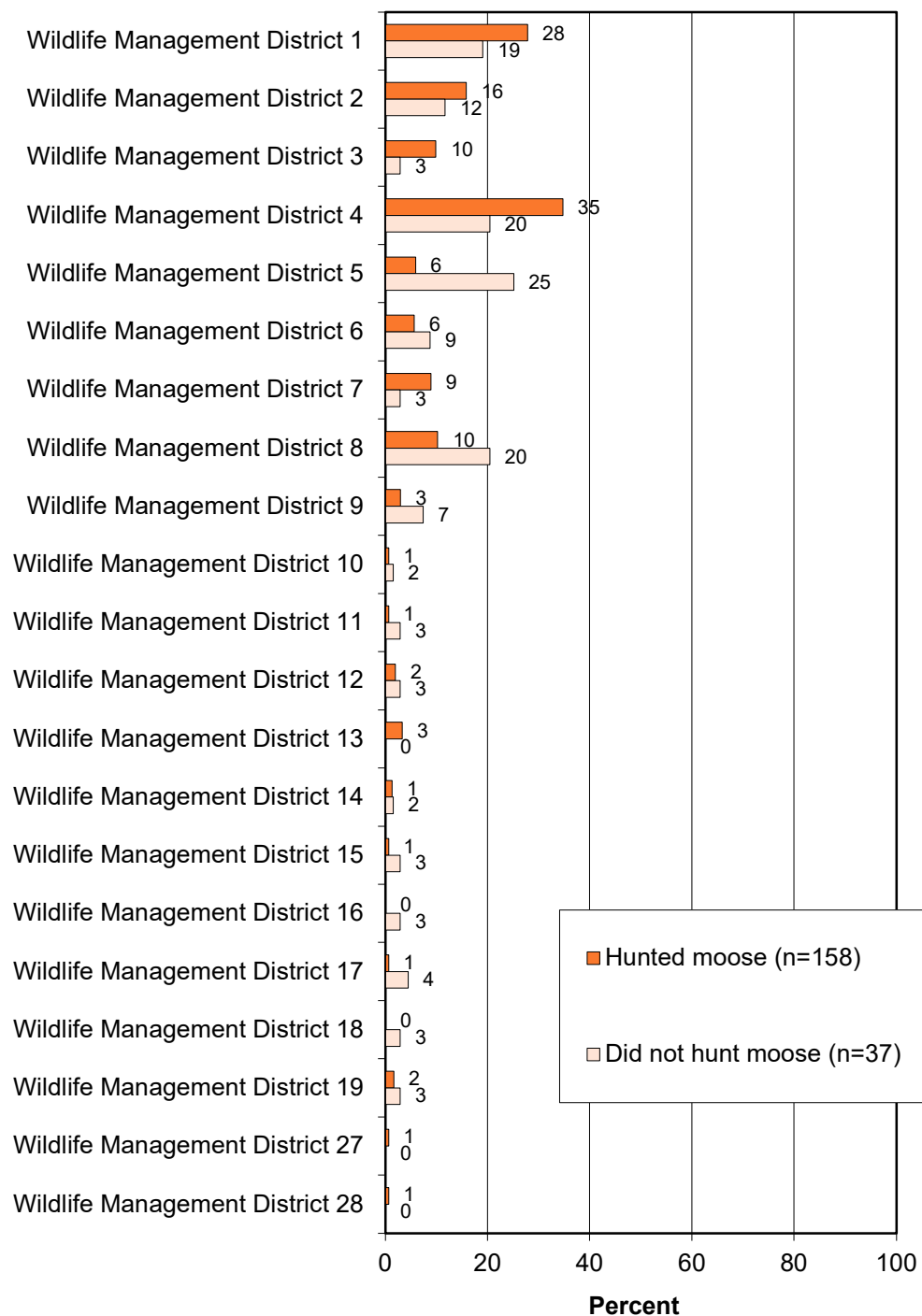
Regarding where the conflicts occurred, WMDs 4, 5, 1, 8, and 2 (in that order) account for most of the conflicts. The following page shows that substantial percentages of moose hunters have conflicts in WMDs 1 through 8 (not in that order, however). After that are the crosstabulations by species hunted.

**In which WMDs did you experience conflict?
(Asked of those who experienced a conflict
during moose season.) (Hunters)**

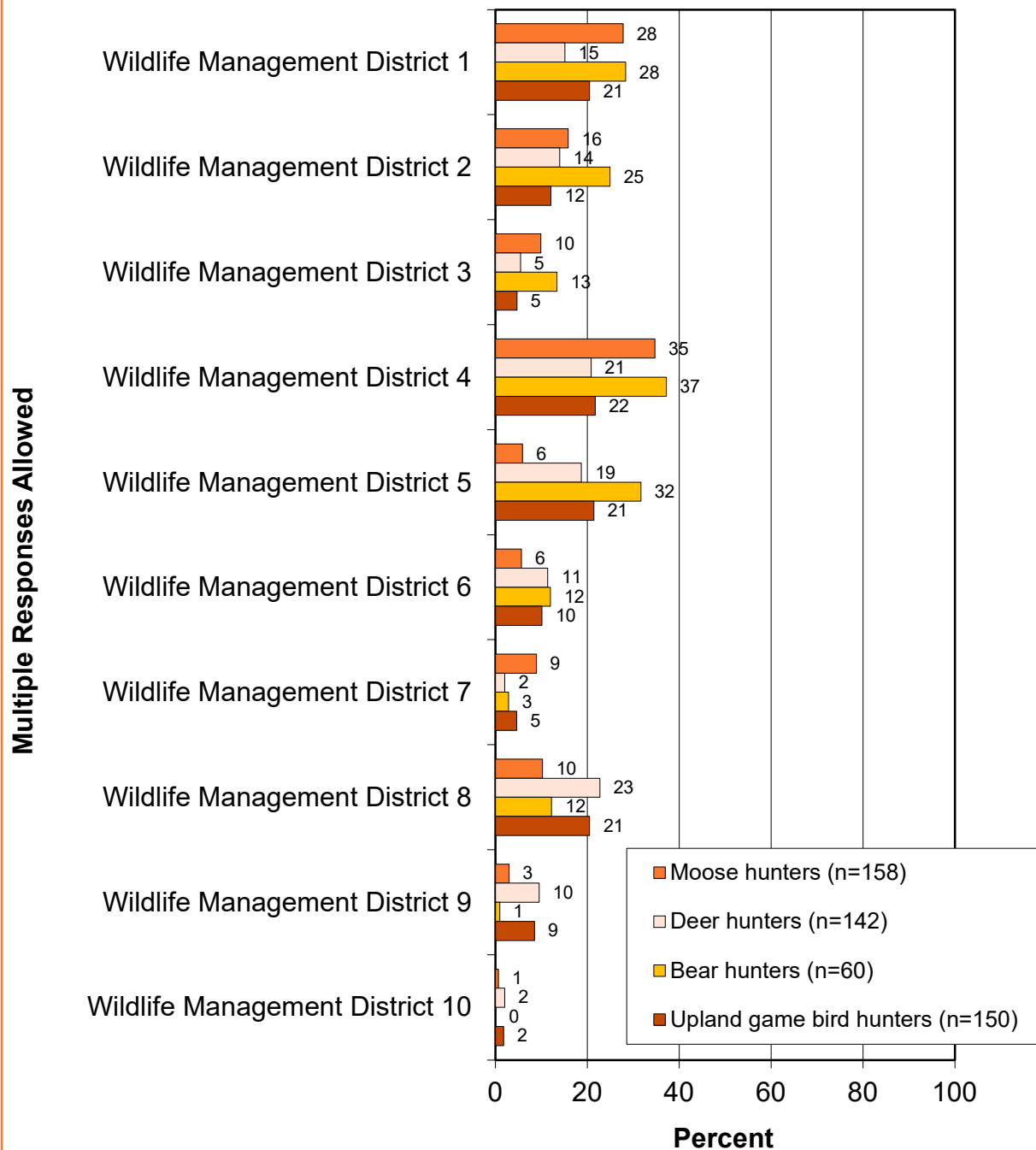


**In which WMDs did you experience conflict?
(Asked of those who experienced a conflict
during moose season.) (Hunters)**

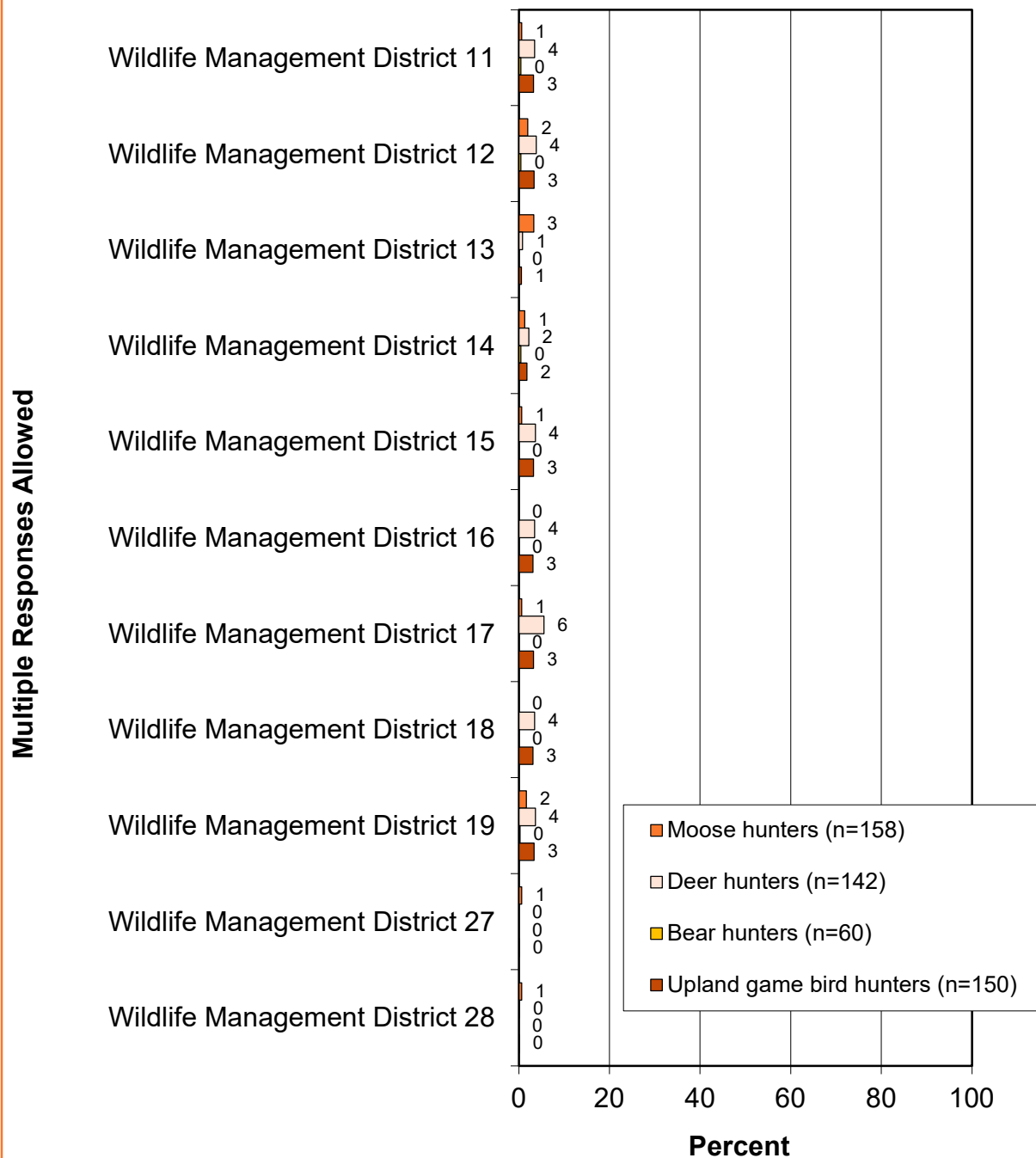
Multiple Responses Allowed



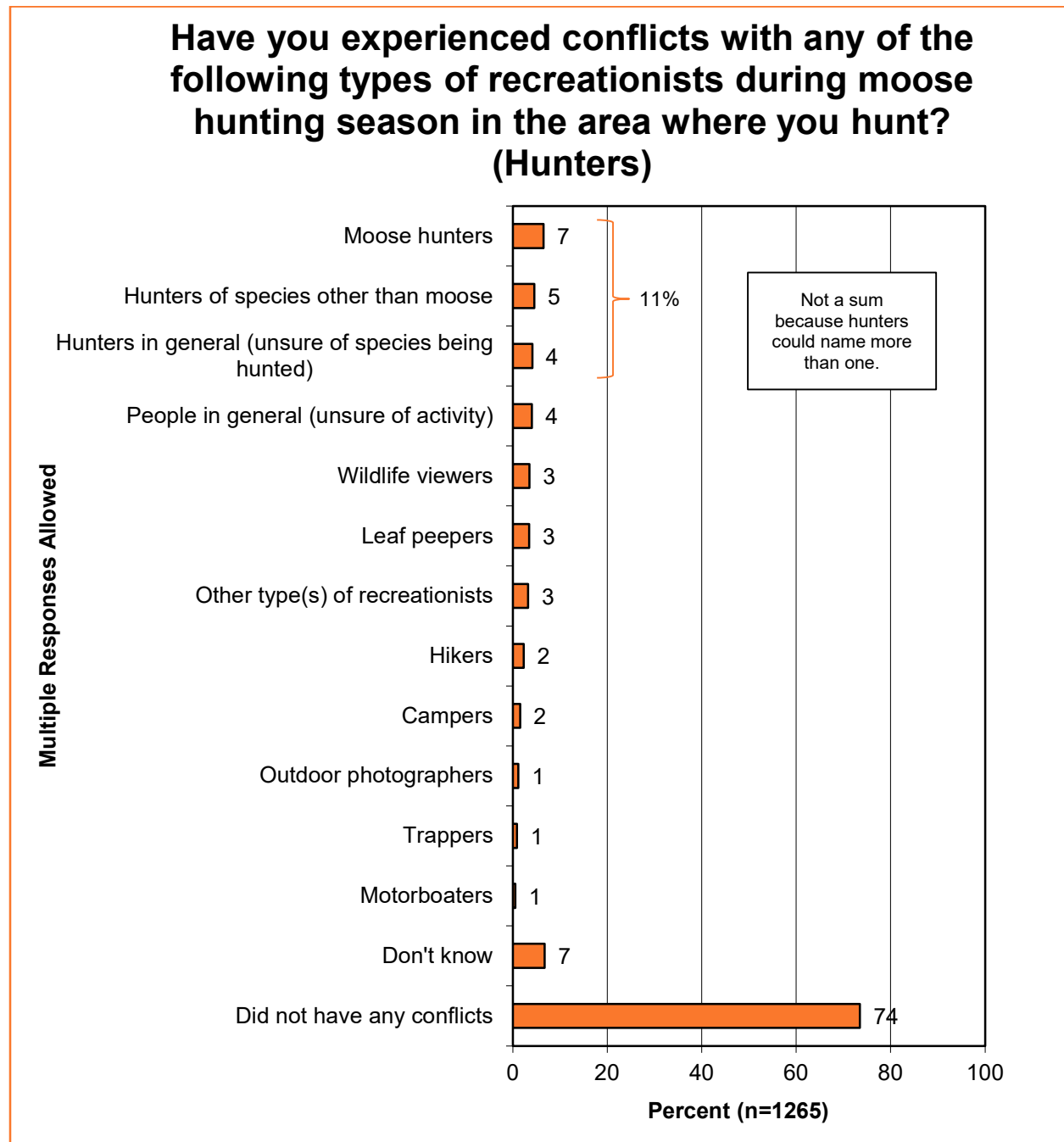
**In which WMDs did you experience conflict?
(Asked of those who experienced a conflict
during moose season.) (Hunters) (Part 1)**



**In which WMDs did you experience conflict?
(Asked of those who experienced a conflict
during moose season.) (Hunters) (Part 2)**

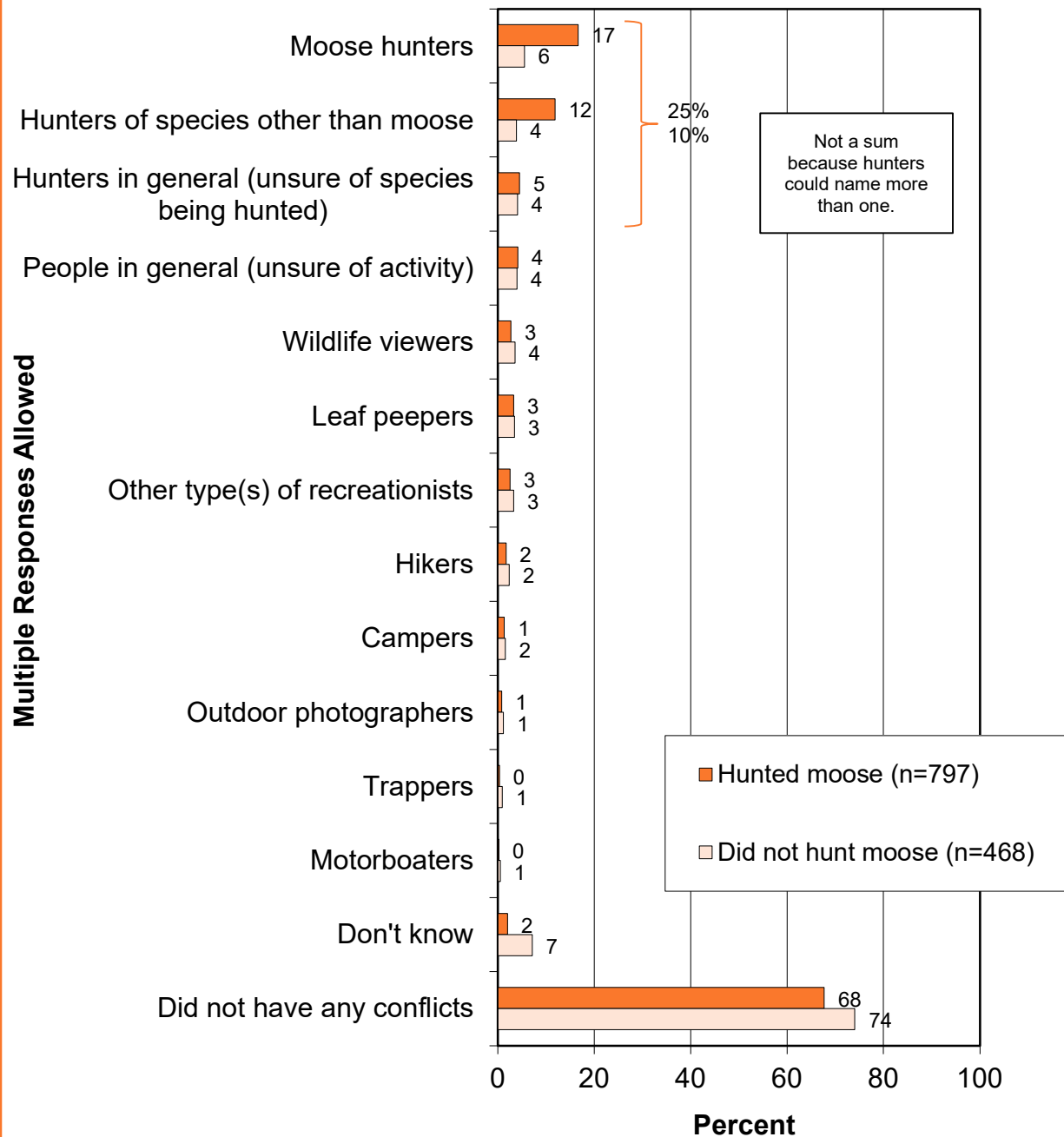


The survey also asked all hunters directly about specific recreationists with whom they may have had conflict. Most commonly, hunters had conflicts with other hunters (moose hunters, hunters of other species, or hunters in general). Others with which substantial percentages of hunters had conflicts are people in general, wildlife viewers, leaf peepers, and other types of recreationists.

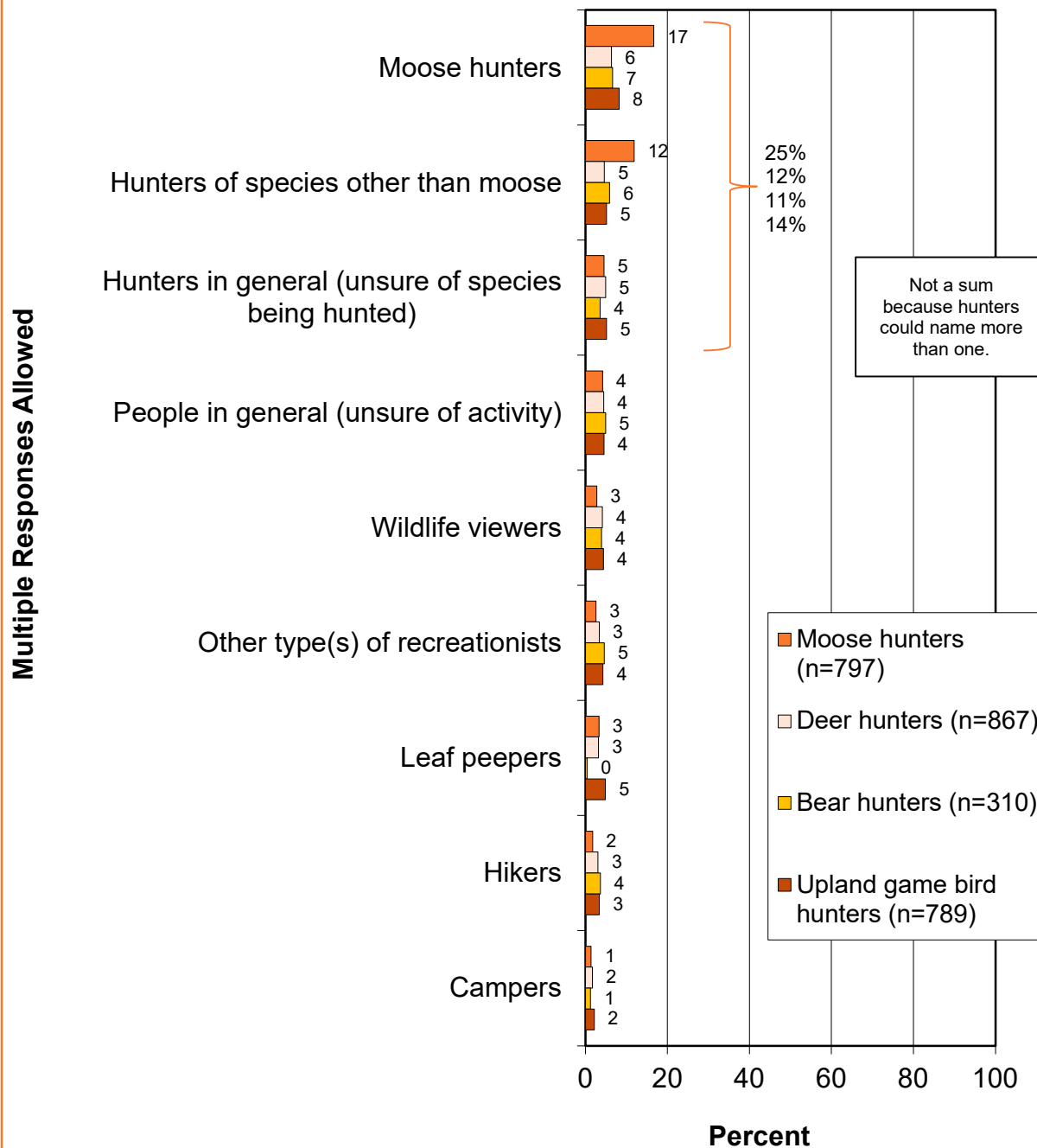


As shown on the crosstabulation on the next page, moose hunters in particular had conflicts with other hunters—more so than did hunters who did not hunt moose. Indeed, moose hunters had more conflict than did those who did not hunt moose.

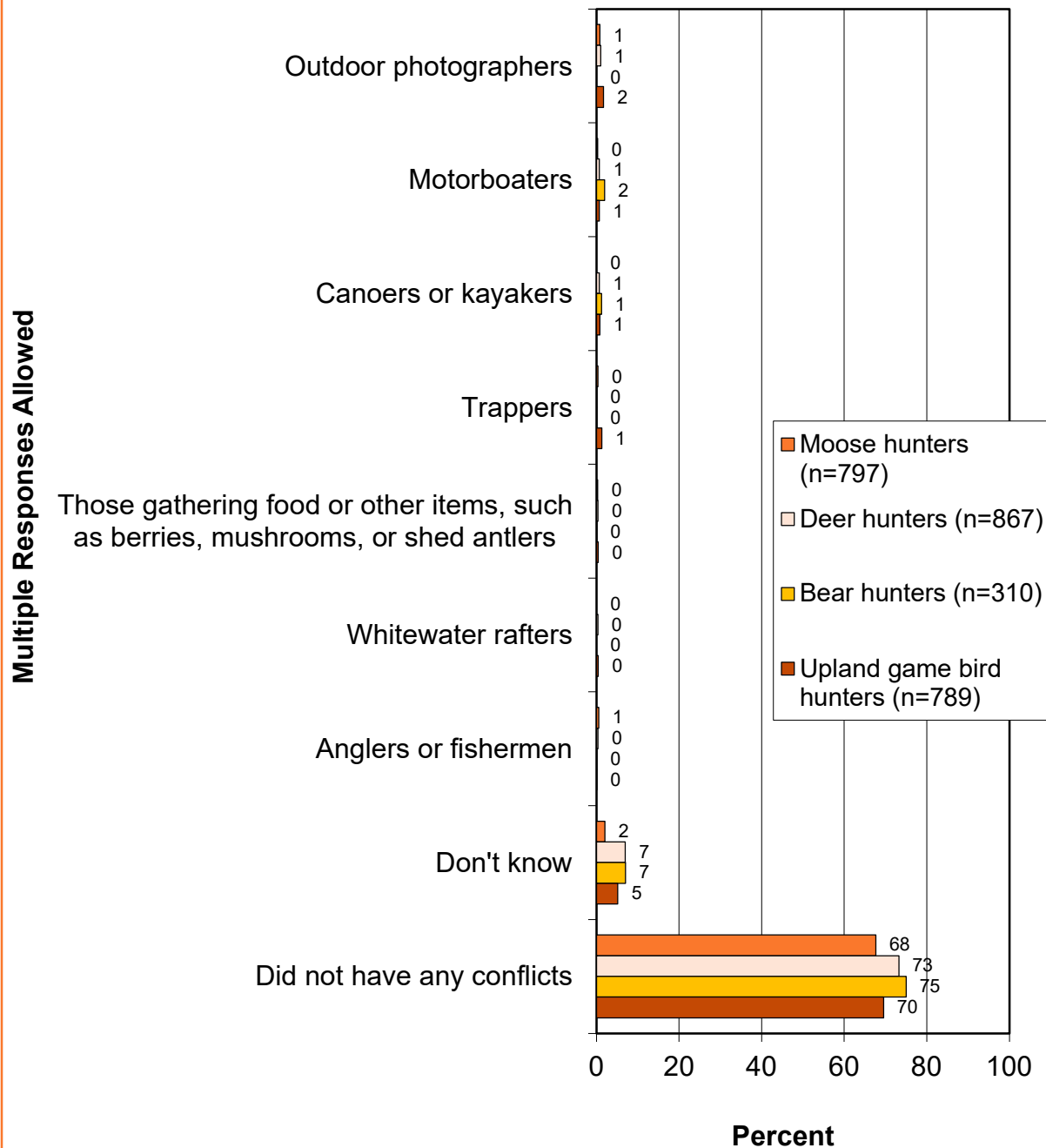
**Have you experienced conflicts with any of the following types of recreationists during moose hunting season in the area where you hunt?
(Hunters)**



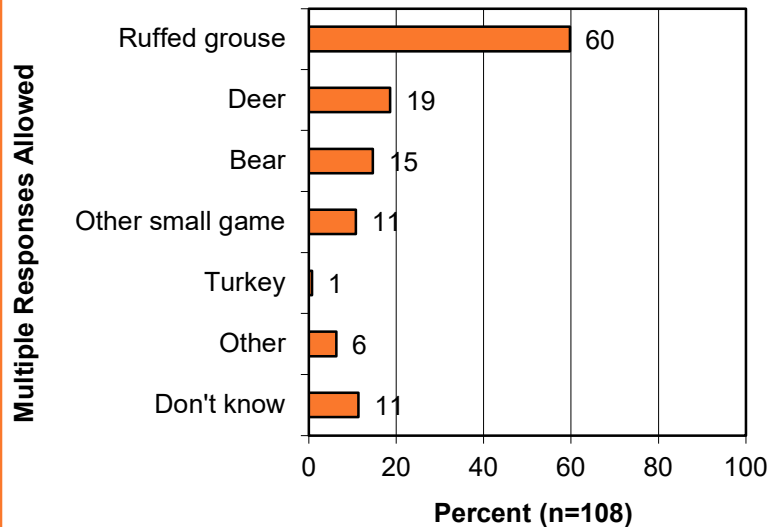
**Have you experienced conflicts with any of the following types of recreationists during moose hunting season in the area where you hunt?
(Hunters) (Part 1)**



**Have you experienced conflicts with any of the following types of recreationists during moose hunting season in the area where you hunt?
(Hunters) (Part 2)**

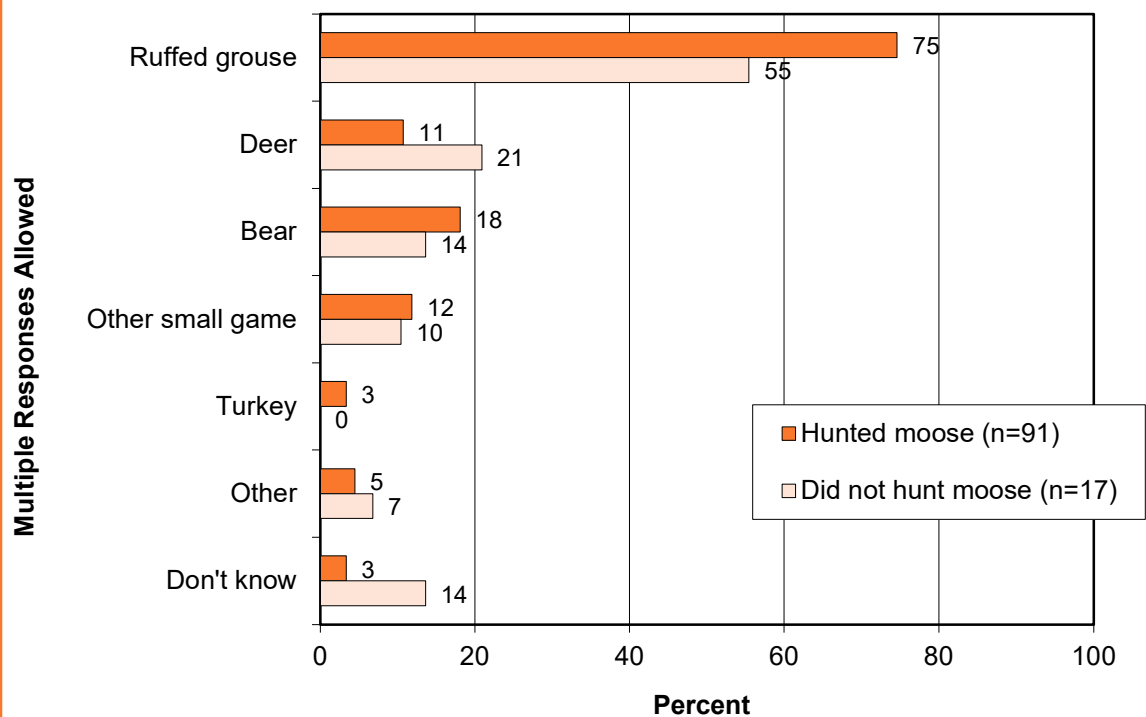


You indicated that you experienced conflict with hunters of species other than moose. Which species were being hunted by those hunters? (Asked of those who experienced conflict with hunters of species other than moose.) (Hunters)



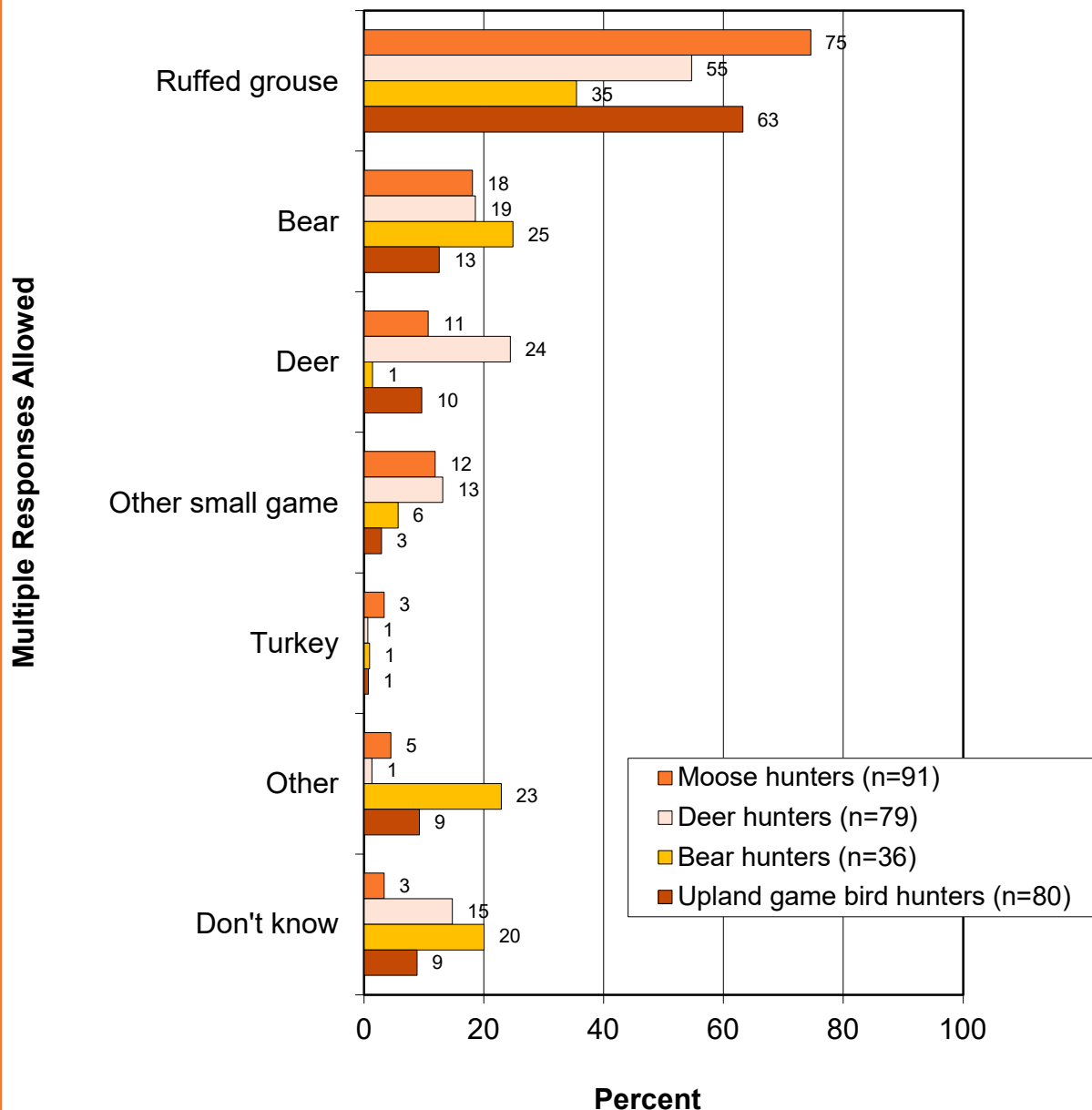
Those who had conflict with other hunters (other than moose) named those types of hunters. The most conflict was with ruffed grouse hunters (60% of those who had conflict with a non-moose hunter), with deer and bear hunters far behind. Moose hunters in particular had much conflict with ruffed grouse hunters.

You indicated that you experienced conflict with hunters of species other than moose. Which species were being hunted by those hunters? (Asked of those who experienced conflict with hunters of species other than moose.) (Hunters)



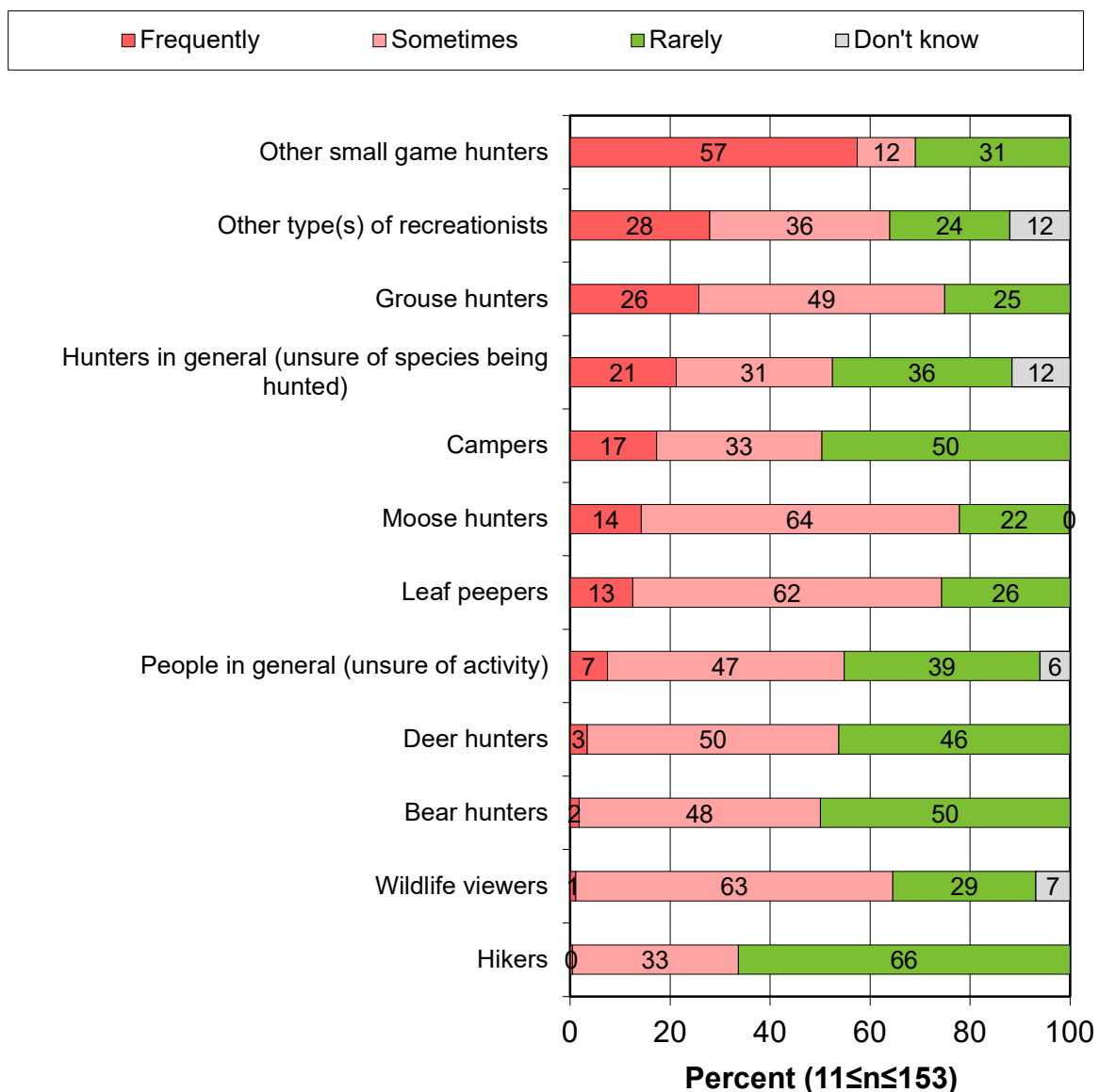
Hunters of all four of the species or species groups most commonly had conflicts with ruffed grouse hunters.

You indicated that you experienced conflict with hunters of species other than moose. Which species were being hunted by those hunters? (Asked of those who experienced conflict with hunters of species other than moose.) (Hunters)

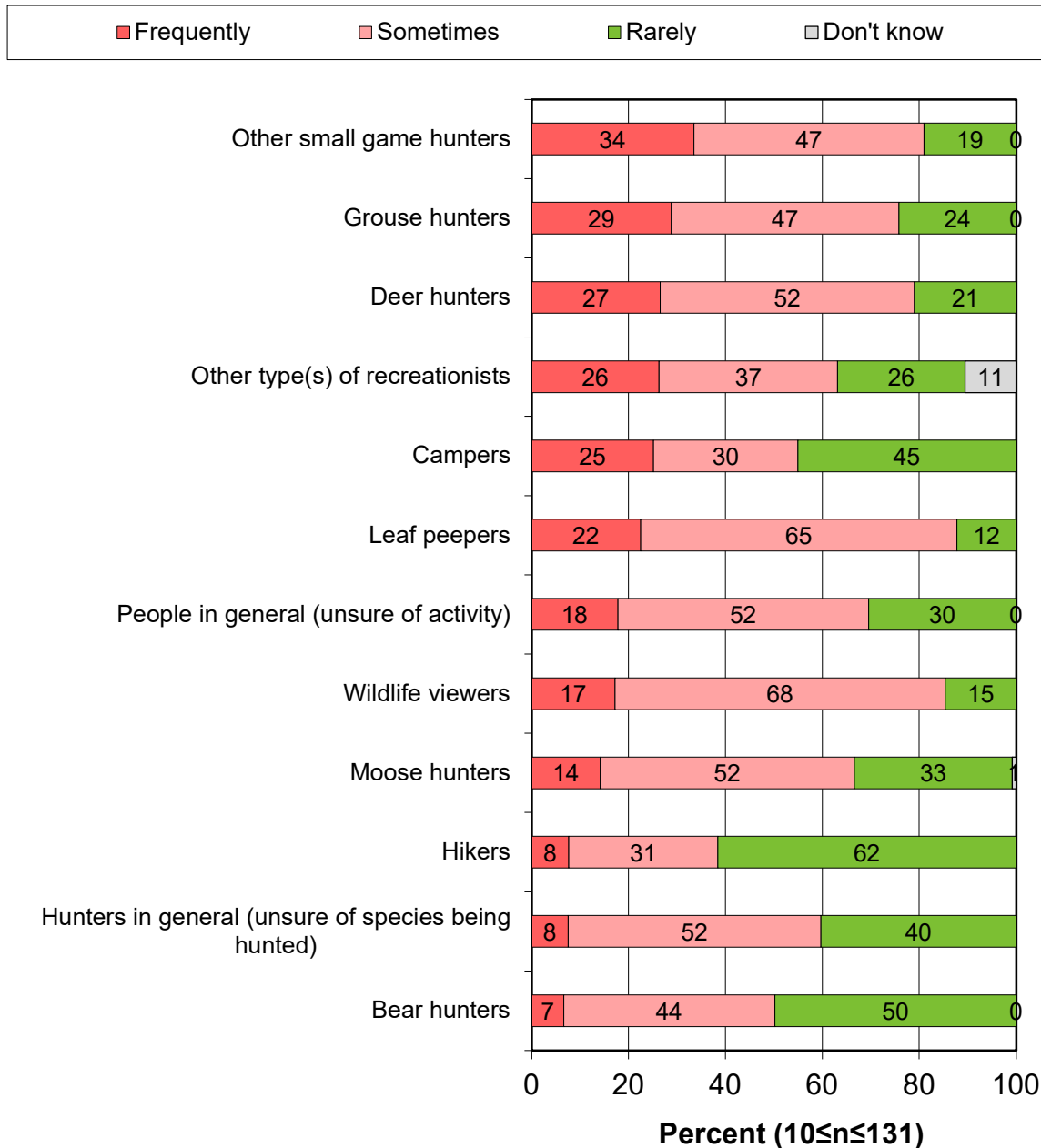


Two series of questions followed up on these conflicts. For each group named as someone with whom hunters had experienced conflict, the survey asked about the frequency of conflict and the severity of conflict. Only those who said that they had conflict with a particular group got the follow-up questions. For this reason, the sample size was low for some follow-up questions, which therefore could not be included in the series. (For instance, conflict was so rare with whitewater rafters that whitewater rafters are not included in the follow-up series.)

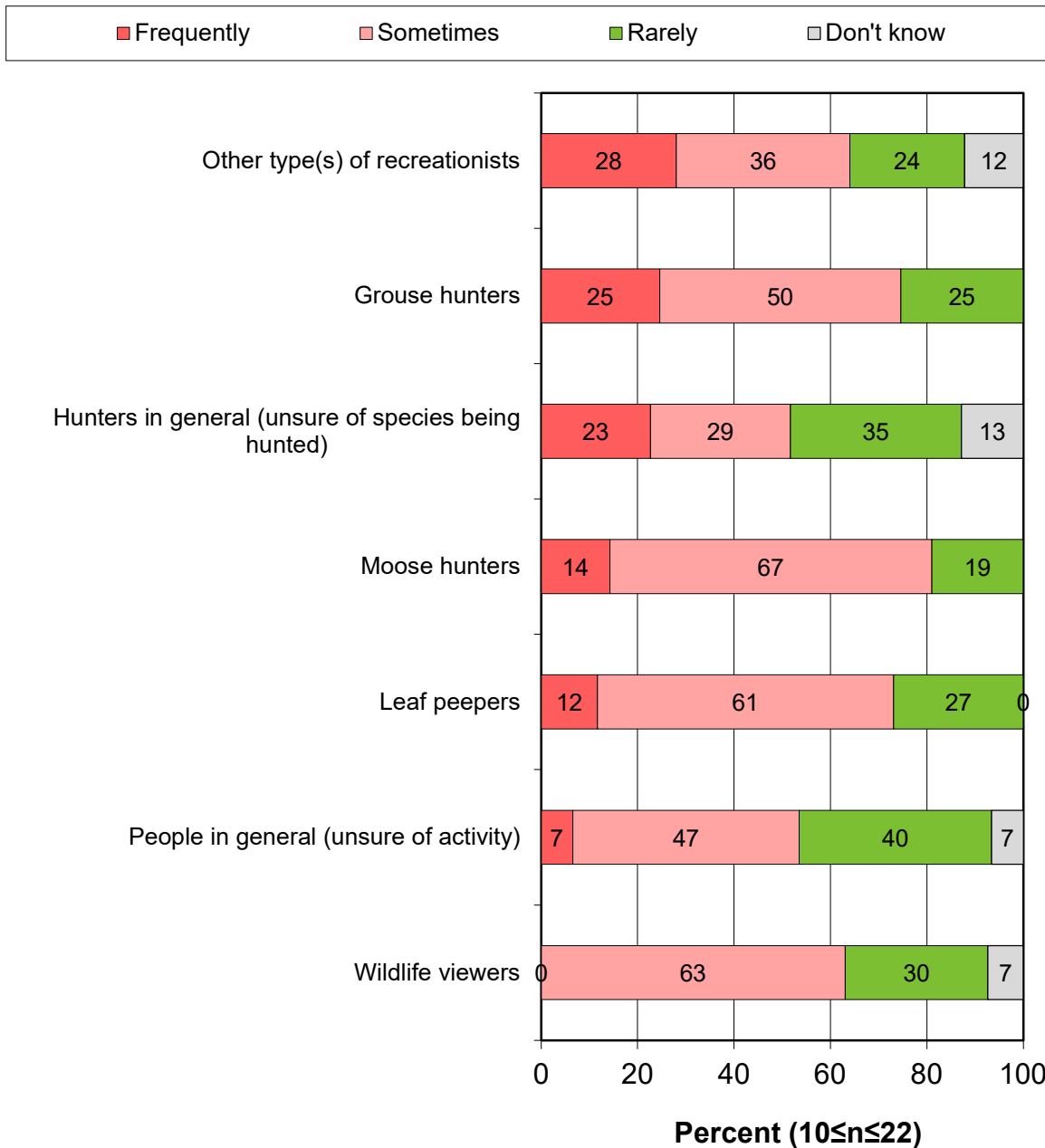
For those groups with whom you experienced conflict during moose hunting season, please tell me if the conflict with each group has occurred frequently, sometimes, or rarely, during moose hunting season over the past 5 years. (Overall) (Hunters)



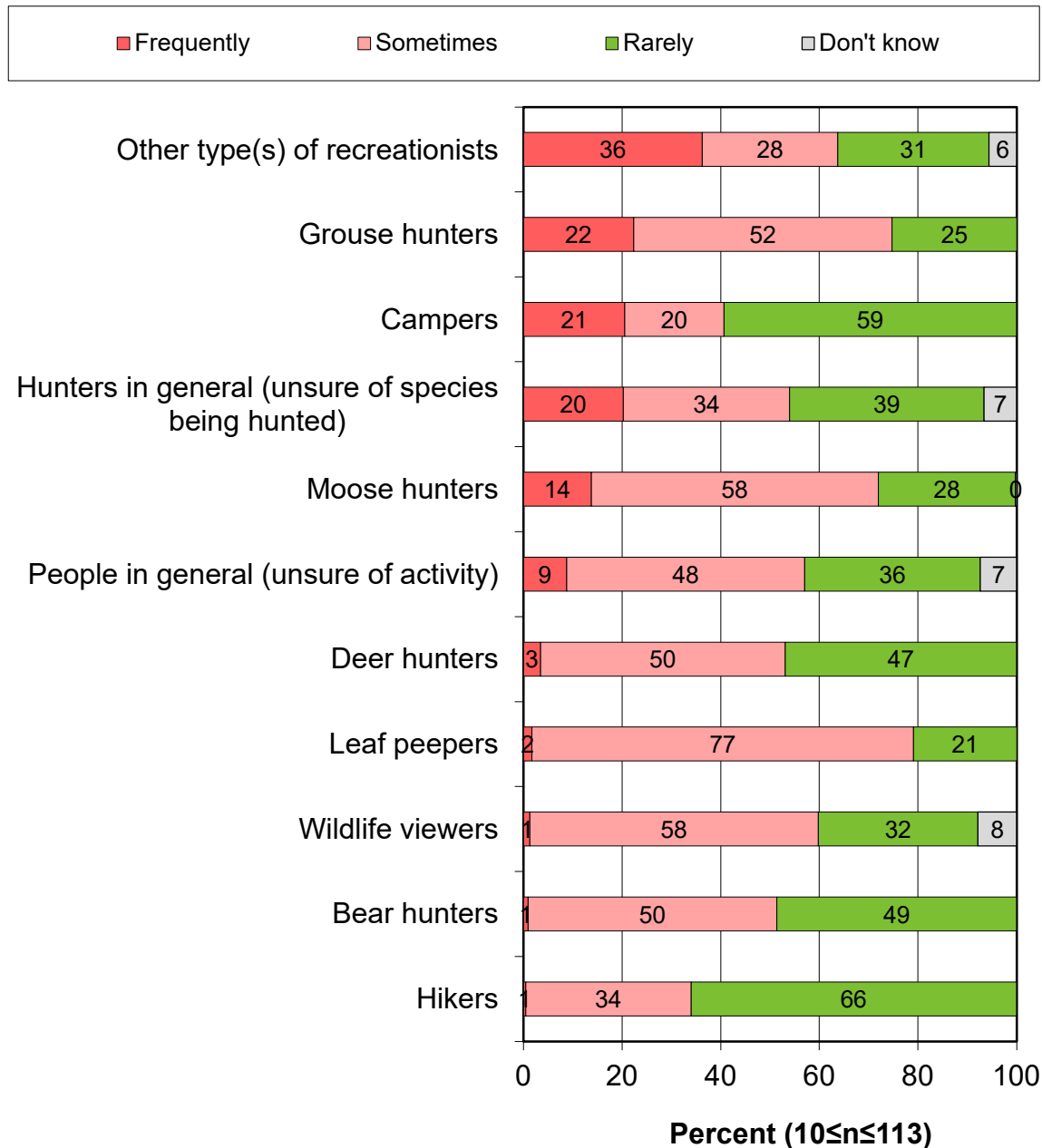
For those groups with whom you experienced conflict during moose hunting season, please tell me if the conflict with each group has occurred frequently, sometimes, or rarely, during moose hunting season over the past 5 years. (Hunted moose) (Hunters)



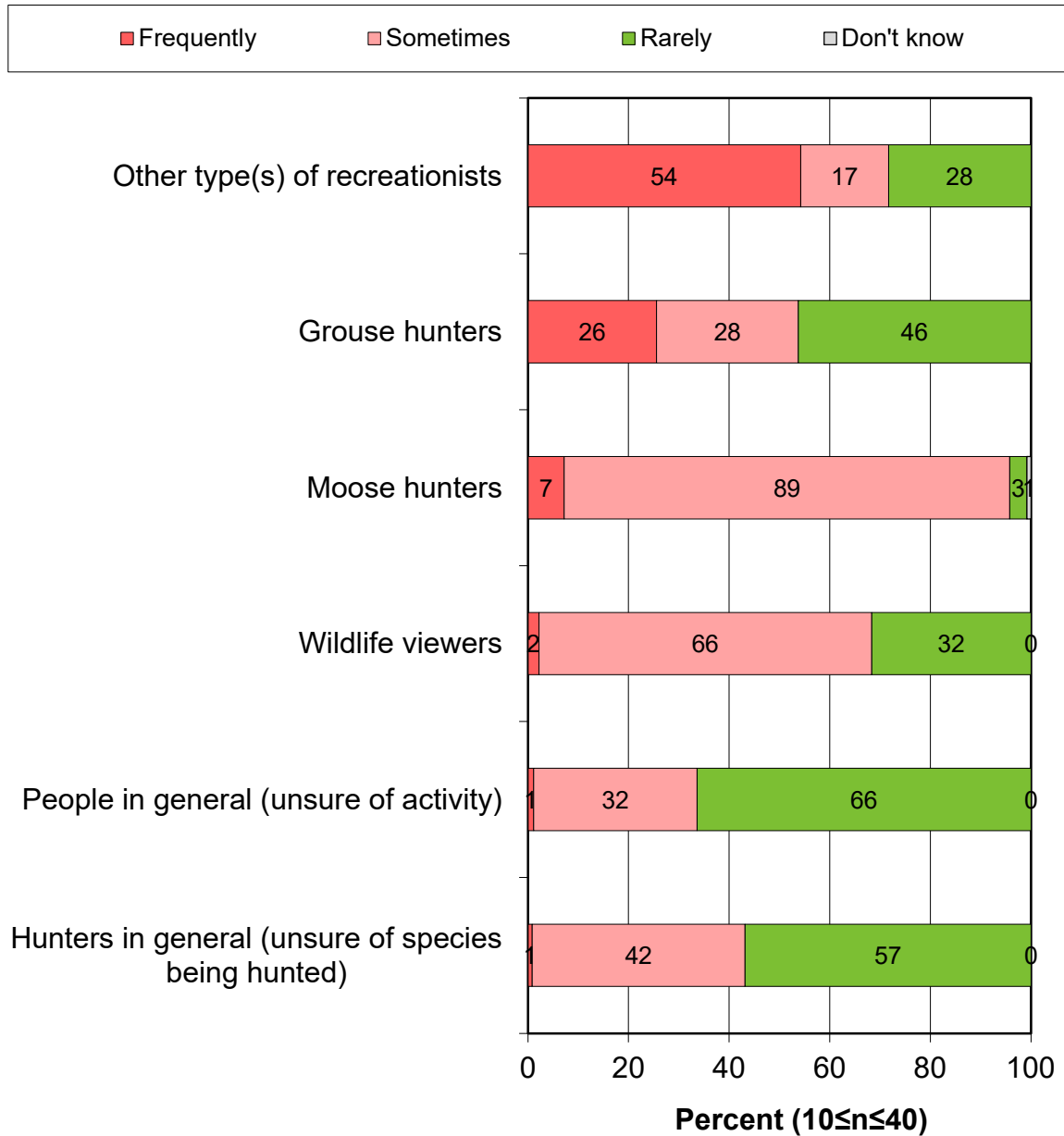
For those groups w/ whom you experienced conflict during moose hunting season, please tell me if the conflict with each group has occurred frequently, sometimes, or rarely, during moose hunting season over the past 5 years. (Did not hunt moose) (Hunters)



For those groups with whom you experienced conflict during moose hunting season, please tell me if the conflict with each group has occurred frequently, sometimes, or rarely, during moose hunting season over the past 5 years. (Deer hunters) (Hunters)



For those groups with whom you experienced conflict during moose hunting season, please tell me if the conflict with each group has occurred frequently, sometimes, or rarely, during moose hunting season over the past 5 years. (Bear hunters) (Hunters)

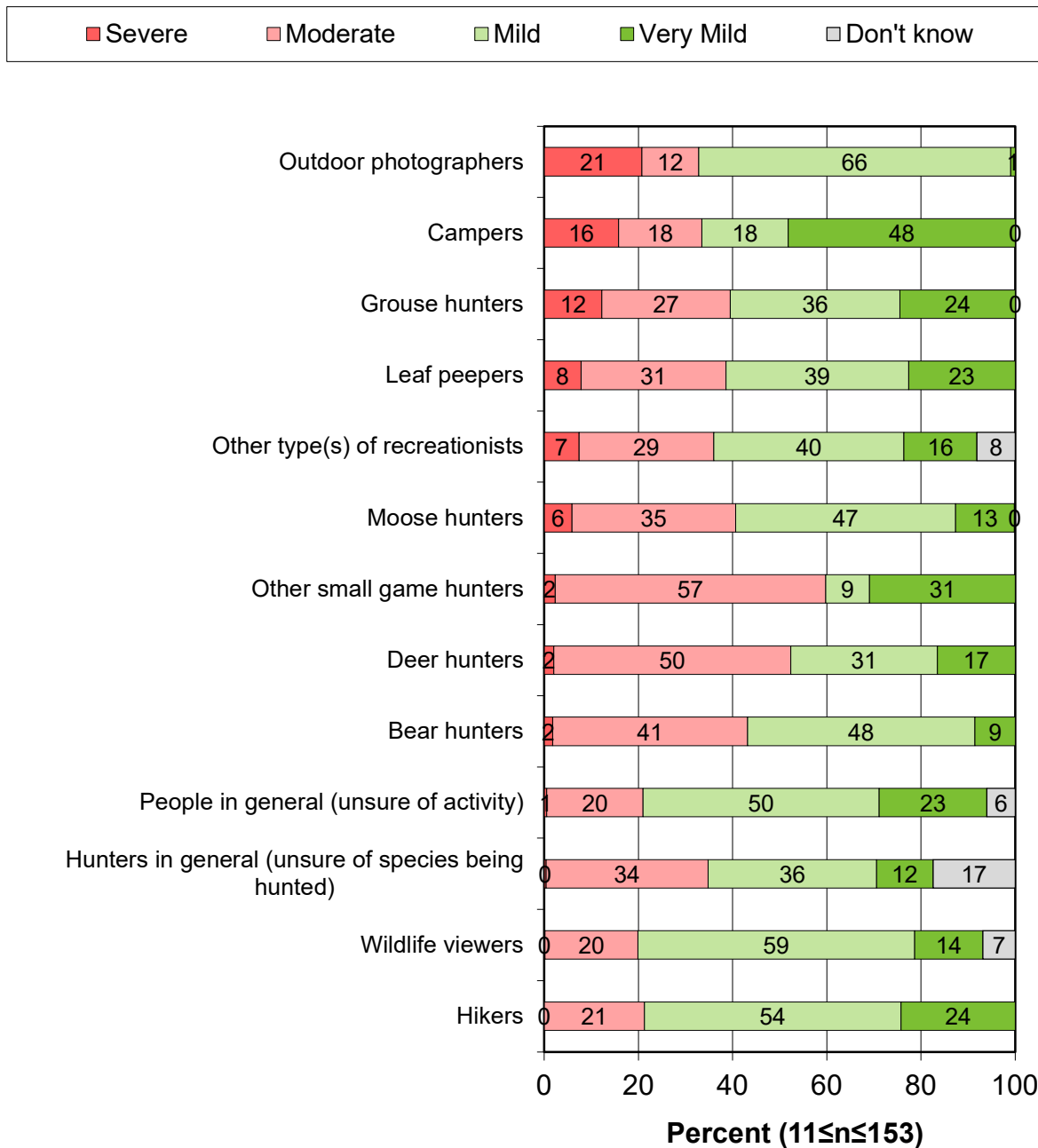


For those groups w/ whom you exp. conflict during moose hunting season, please tell me if the conflict with each group has occurred frequently, sometimes, or rarely, during moose hunting season over the past 5 years. (Upland game bird hunters) (Hunters)



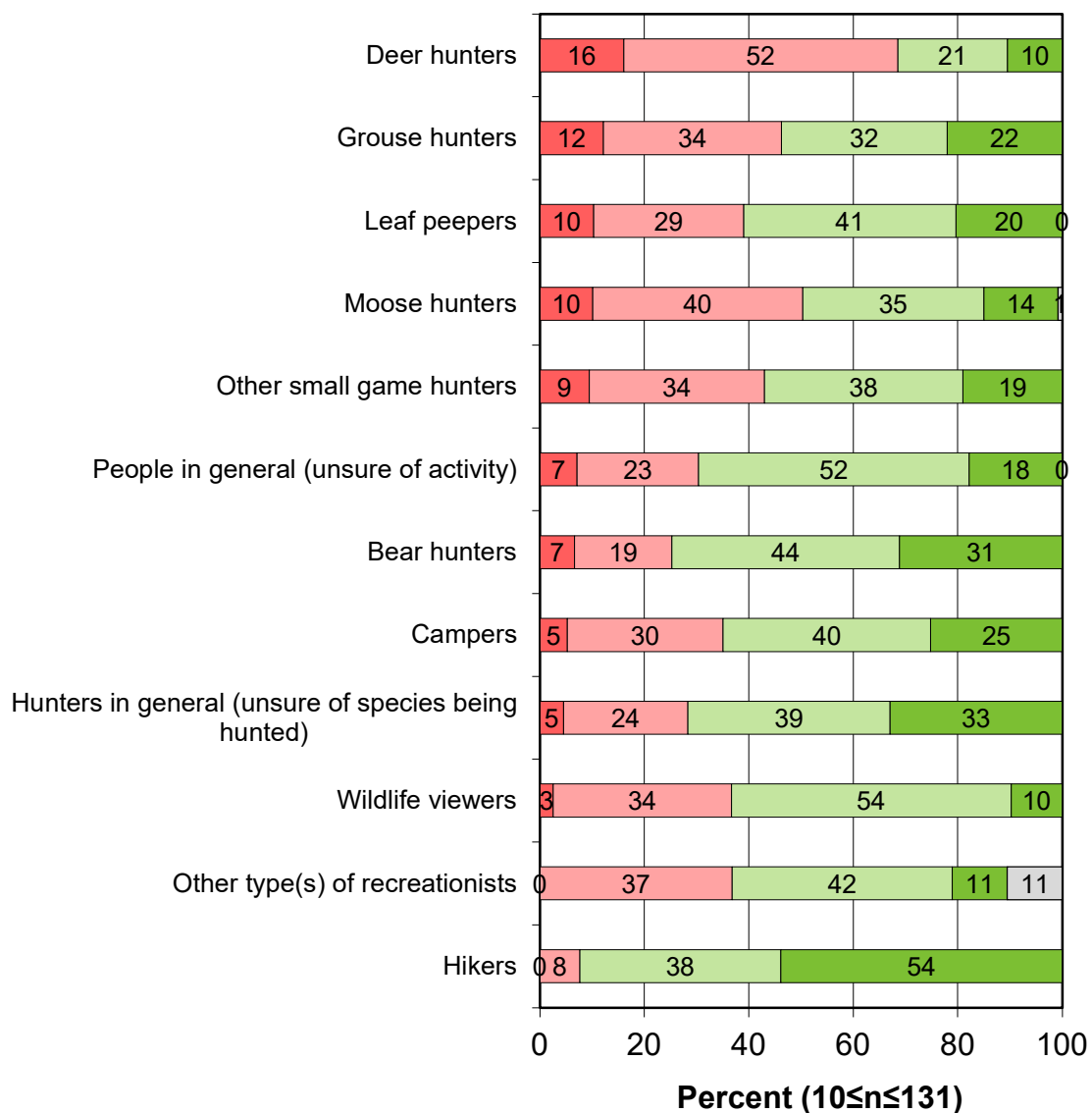
The graphs regarding severity of conflicts start here.

Would you describe the conflict you typically experienced with each group during moose hunting season over the past 5 years as severe, moderate, mild, or very mild? What about conflict with...? (Overall) (Hunters)

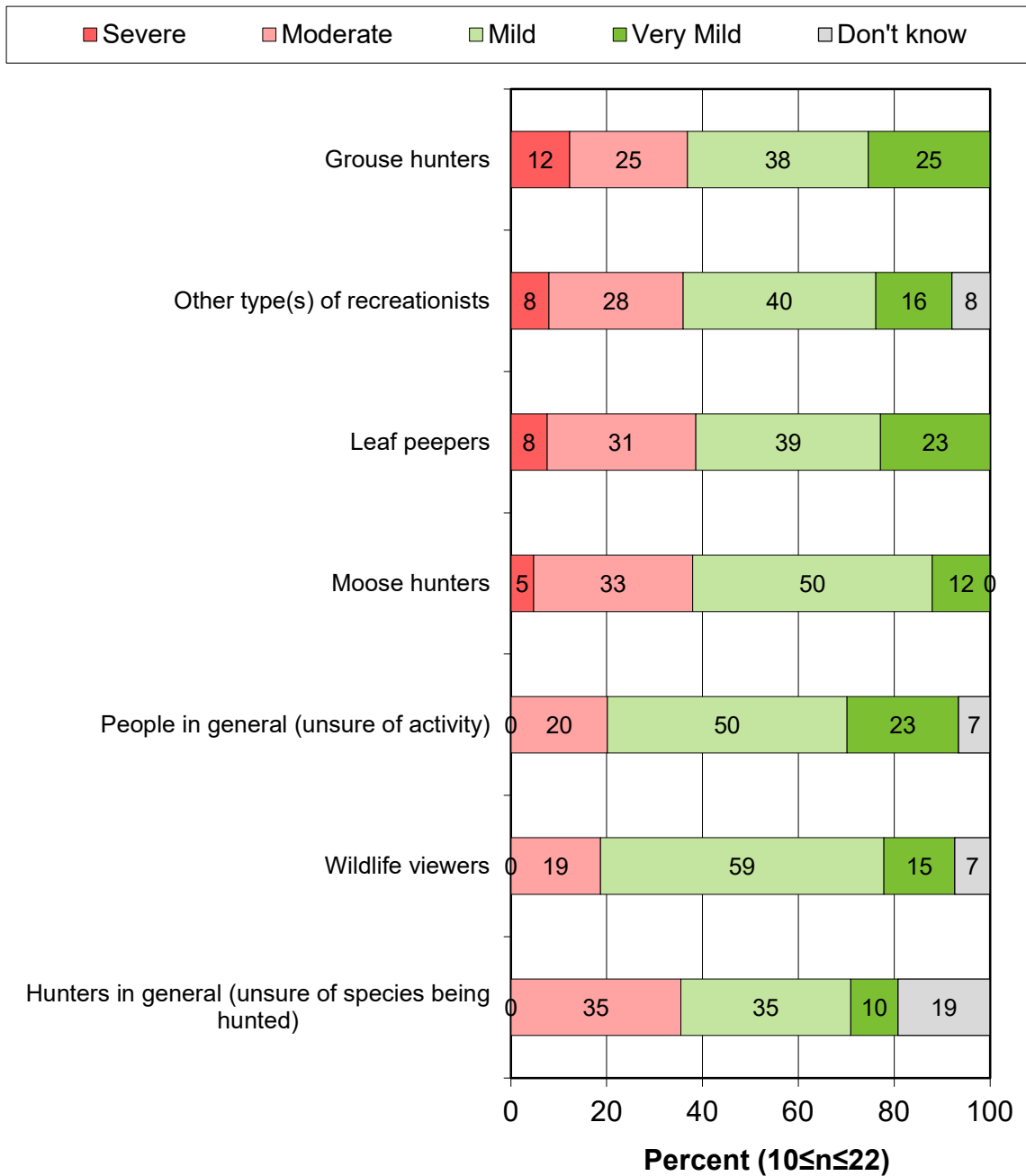


Would you describe the conflict you typically experienced with each group during moose hunting season over the past 5 years as severe, moderate, mild, or very mild? What about conflict with...? (Hunted moose) (Hunters)

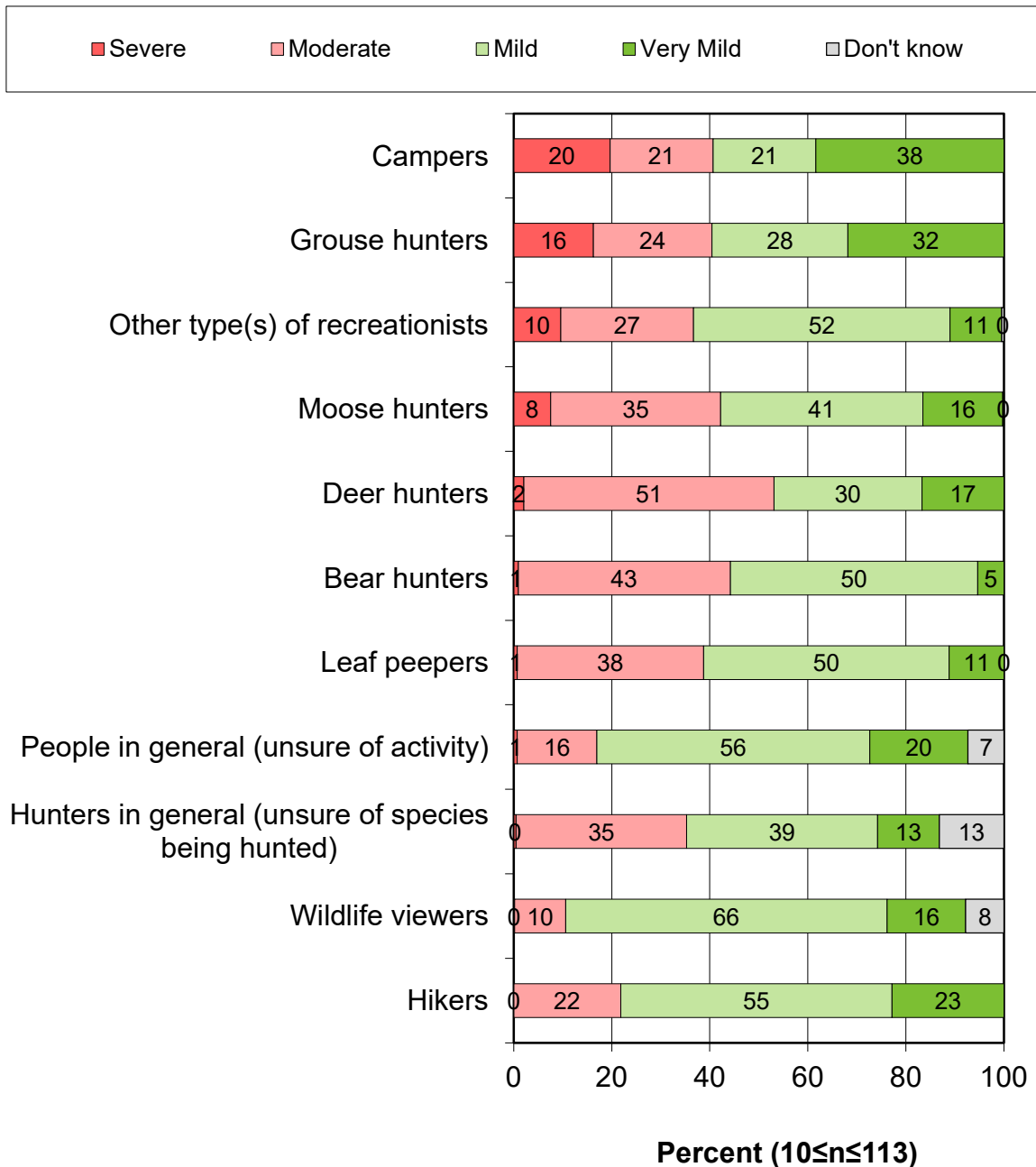
Severe Moderate Mild Very Mild Don't know



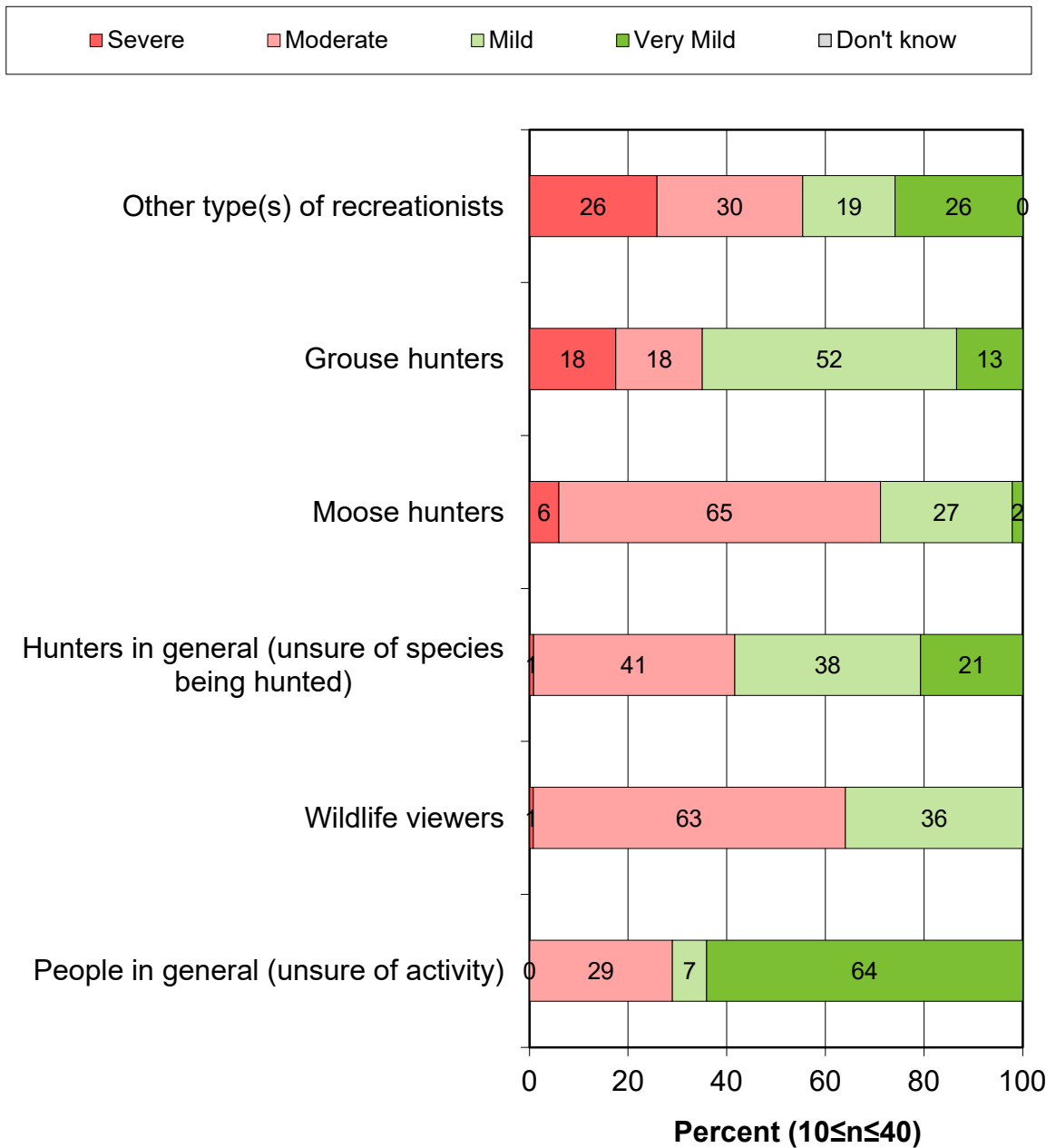
Would you describe the conflict you typically experienced with each group during moose hunting season over the past 5 years as severe, moderate, mild, or very mild? What about conflict with...? (Did not hunt moose) (Hunters)



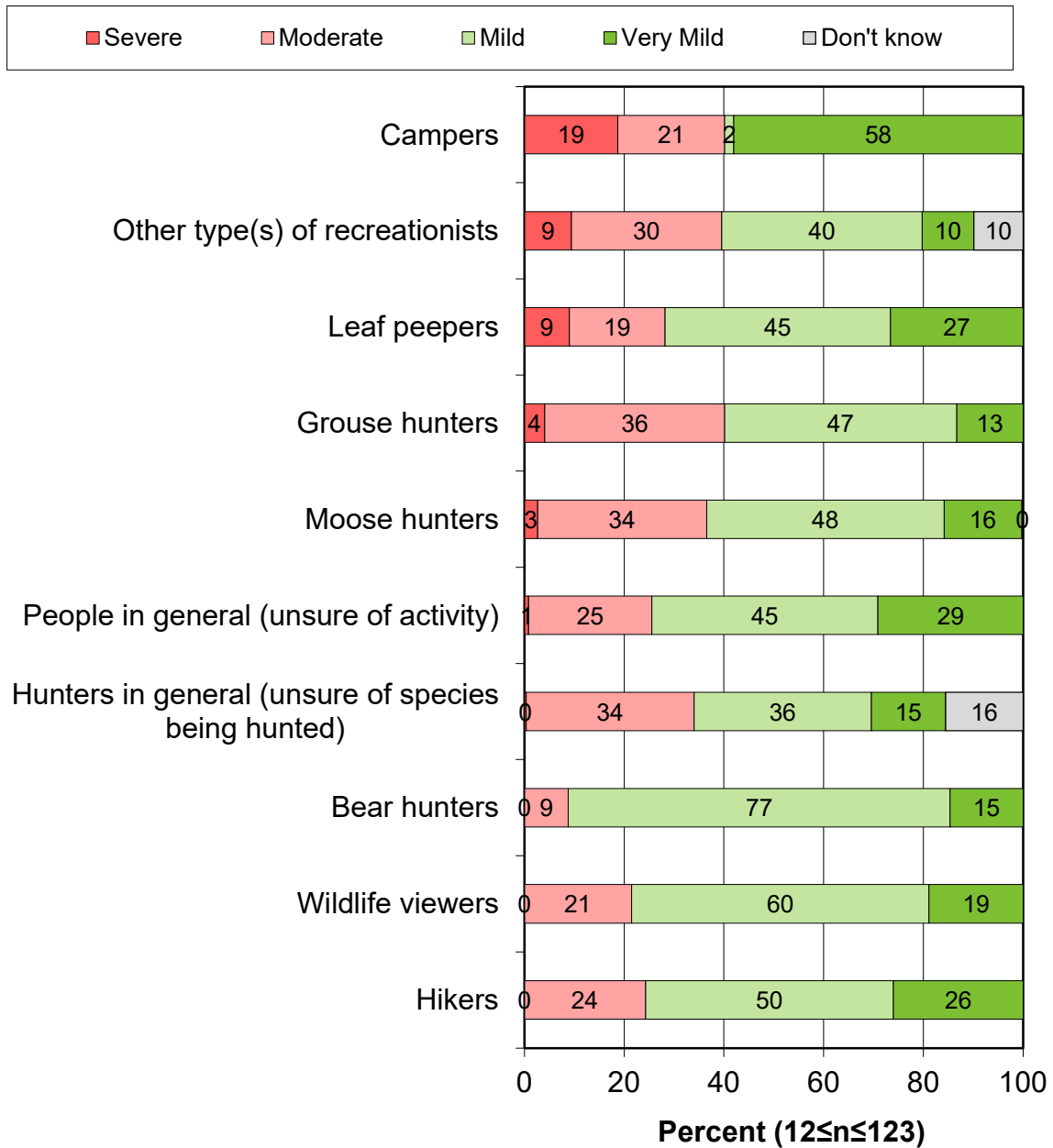
Would you describe the conflict you typically experienced with each group during moose hunting season over the past 5 years as severe, moderate, mild, or very mild? What about conflict with...? (Deer hunters) (Hunters)



Would you describe the conflict you typically experienced with each group during moose hunting season over the past 5 years as severe, moderate, mild, or very mild? What about conflict with...? (Bear hunters) (Hunters)

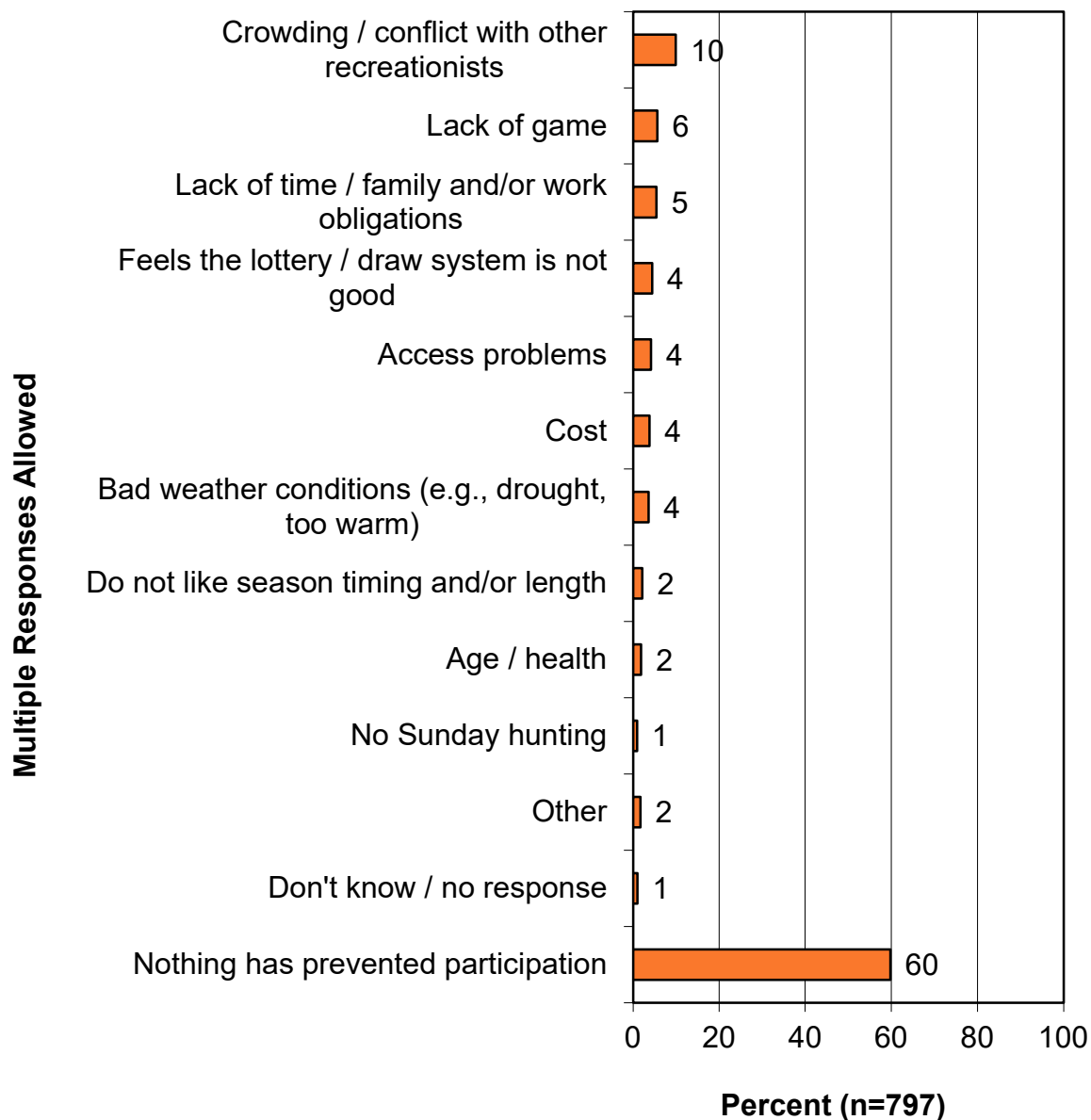


Would you describe the conflict you typically experienced with each group during moose hunting season over the past 5 years as severe, moderate, mild, or very mild? What about conflict with...? (Upland game bird hunters) (Hunters)



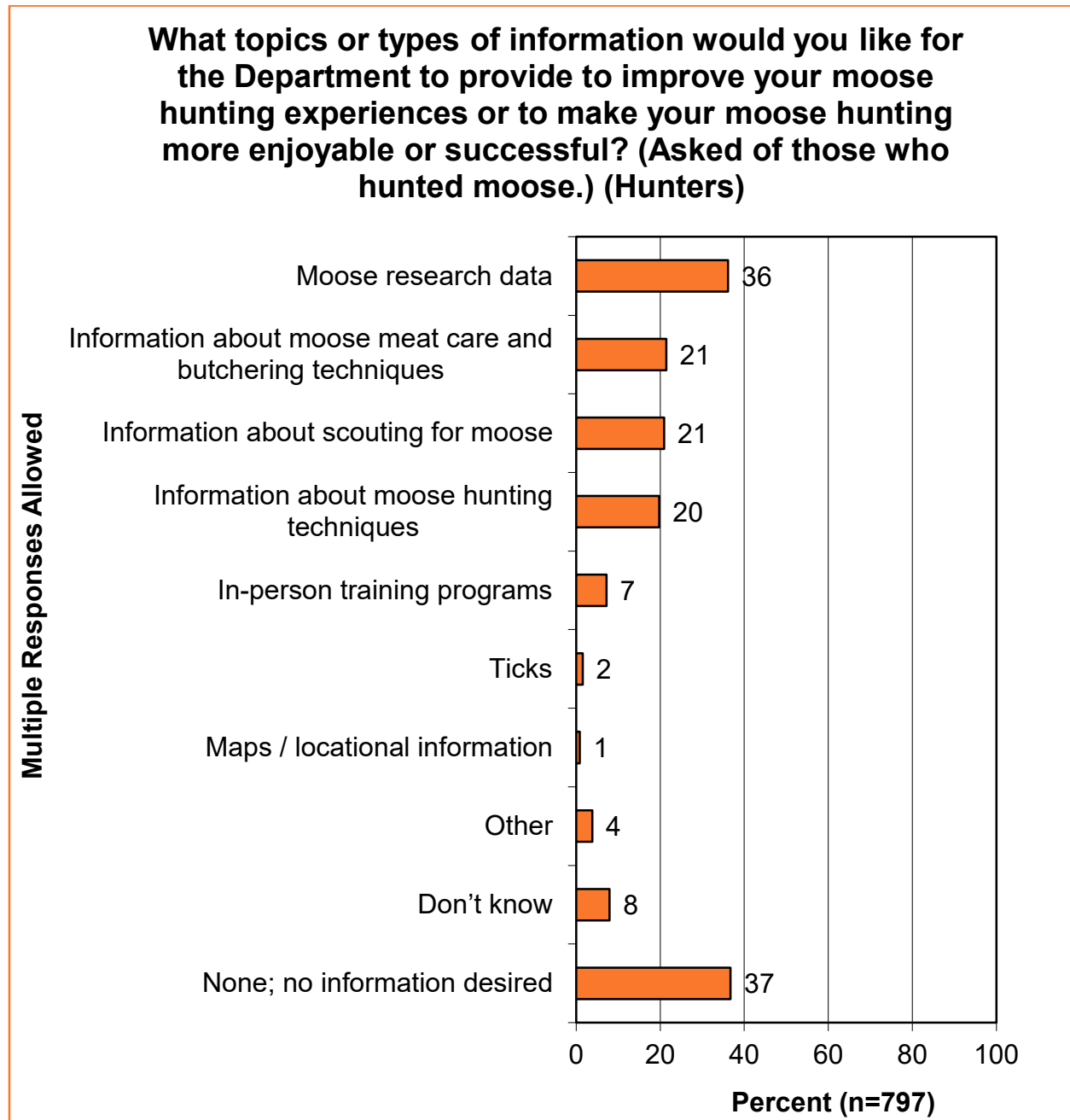
Finally in this section, this graph shows the results of the open-ended question about anything that might have prevented moose hunting (other than not getting drawn for a moose permit) or that might have taken away from enjoyment. Crowding is the top constraint or dislike, followed by lack of game.

**When you have been issued a moose permit, are there any things that have prevented you from going moose hunting as much as you would like or that has taken away from your enjoyment of moose hunting in Maine?
(Asked of those who hunted moose.) (Hunters)**



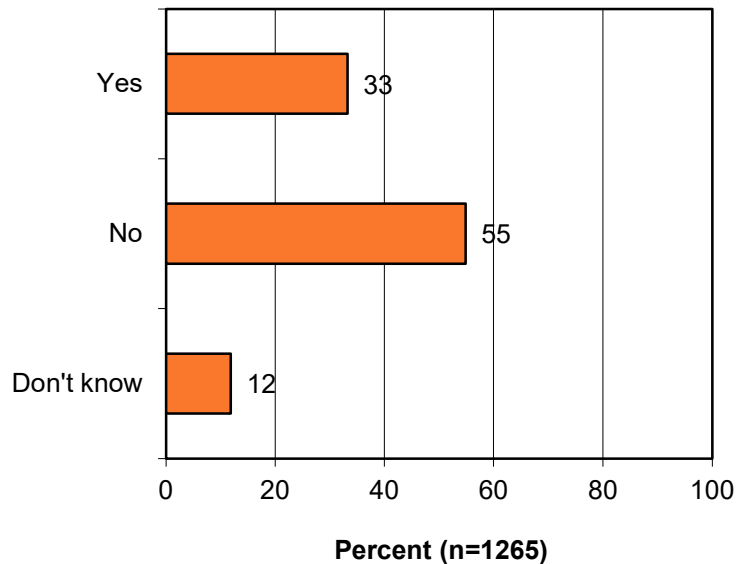
INFORMATION TOPICS AND EDUCATION COURSES

Moose hunters were asked which topics or types of information would make their moose hunting more enjoyable or successful: moose research data led the list. Five topics were presented to respondents (the top five in the graph), but they could add any other that came to mind in an open-ended option. Ticks as a topic was the top added item.

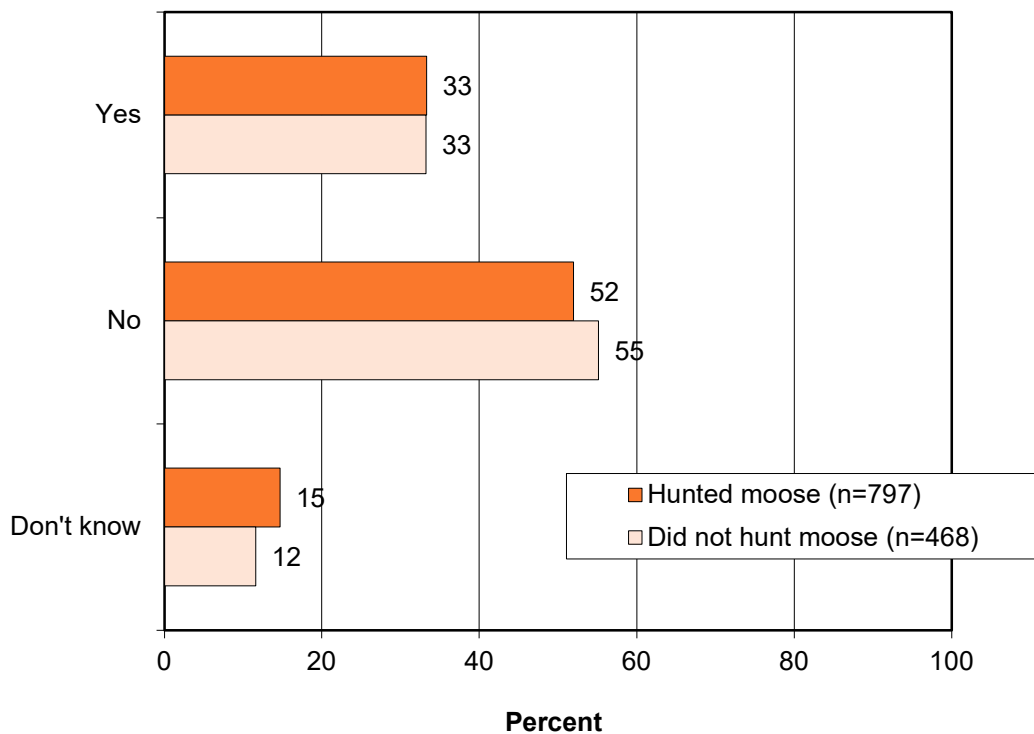


A third of hunters say that they would be interested in taking a voluntary supplemental education course specific to moose hunting. There is no marked difference between moose hunters and those who do not hunt moose. The only difference in the crosstabulation by species hunted occurs among bear hunters, who are slightly more likely than the other groups to say that they would be interested in such a course.

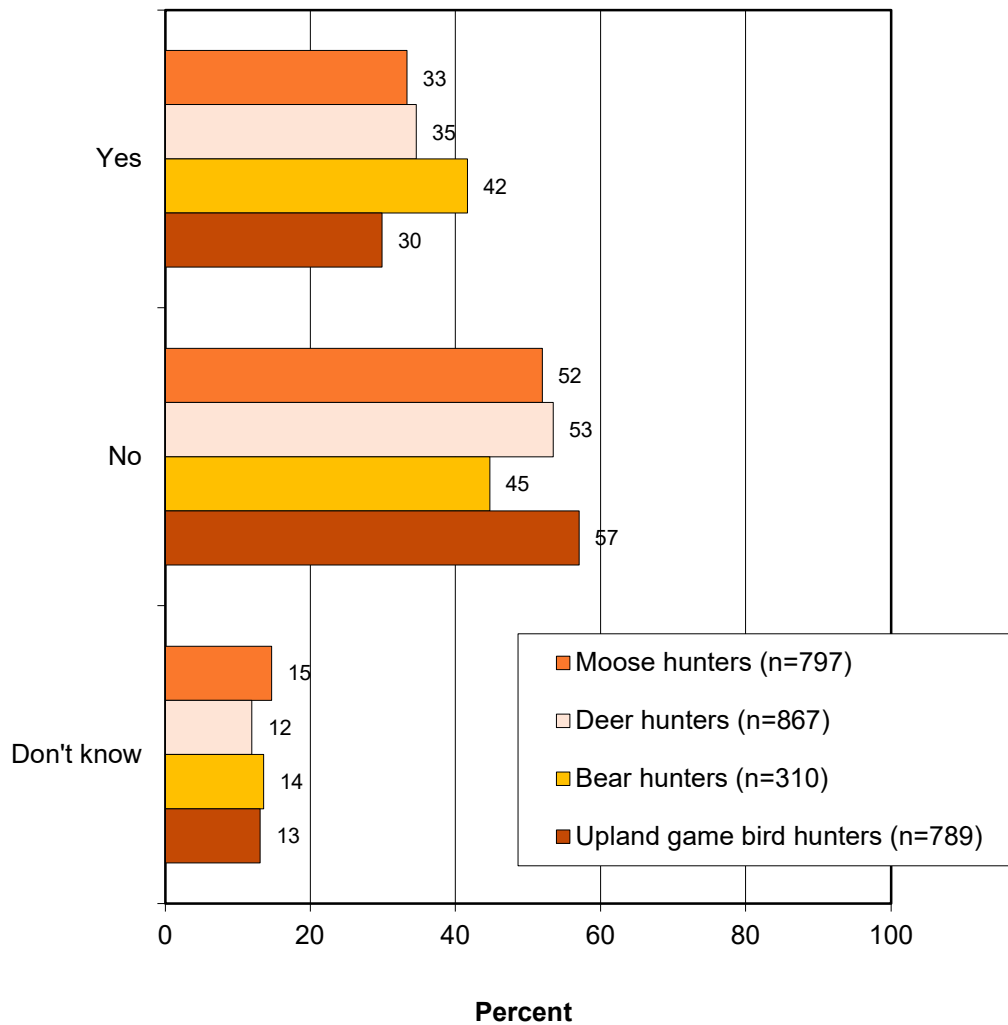
Would you be interested in taking a voluntary supplemental education course specific to moose hunting? (Hunters)



Would you be interested in taking a voluntary supplemental education course specific to moose hunting? (Hunters)

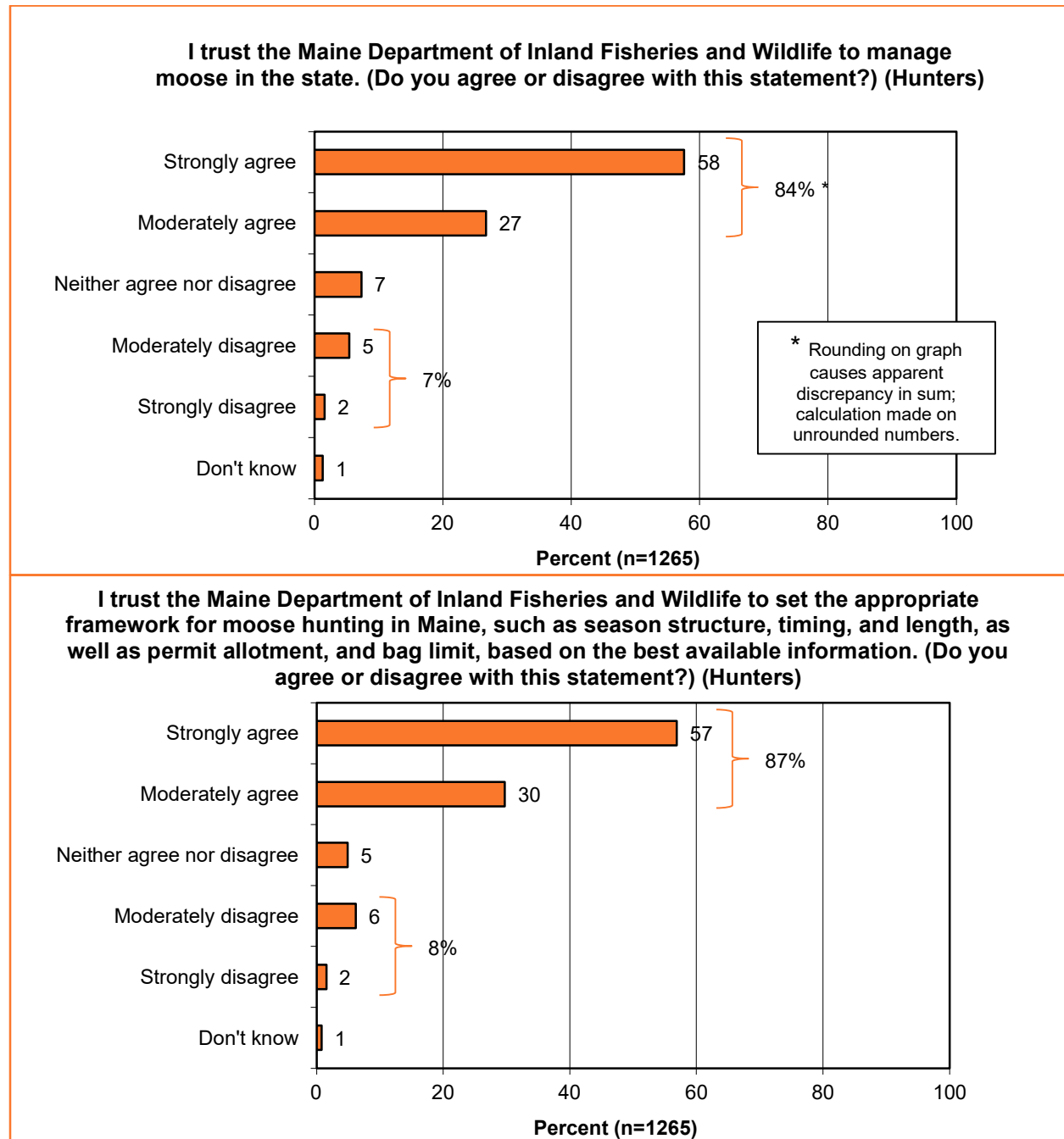


Would you be interested in taking a voluntary supplemental education course specific to moose hunting? (Hunters)



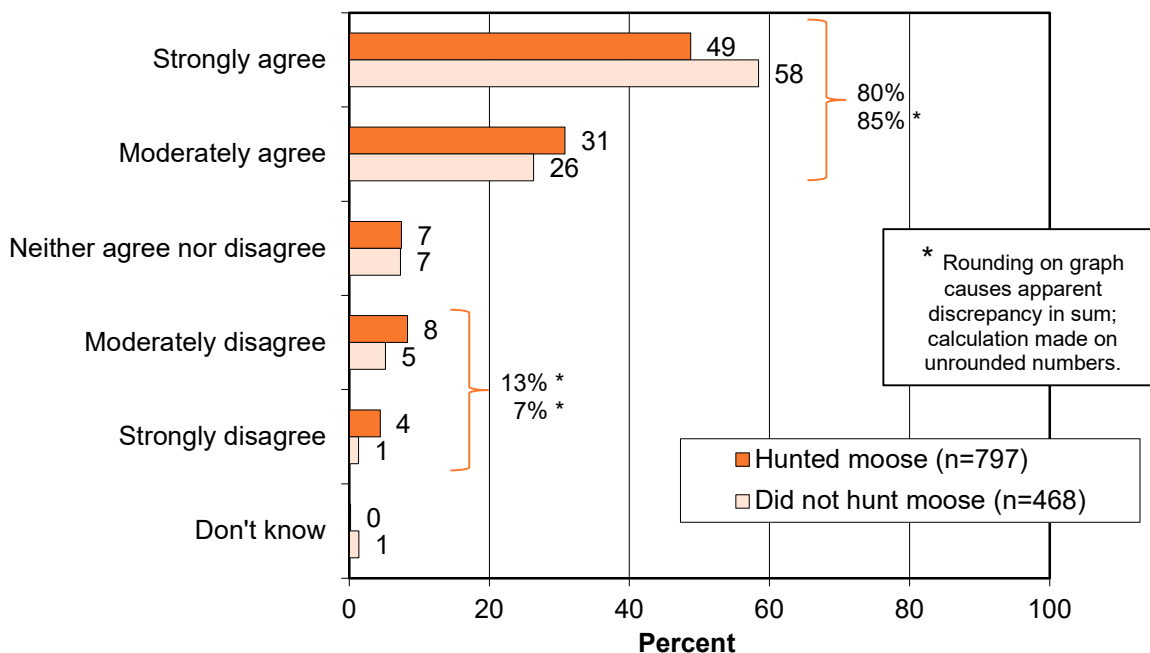
ATTITUDES TOWARD THE DEPARTMENT

Among hunters, agreement (84%) far exceeds disagreement (7%) that they trust the Department to manage moose in the state. The results on whether they trust the Department to set the appropriate framework for moose hunting in the state are almost identical: 87% agree while 8% disagree.

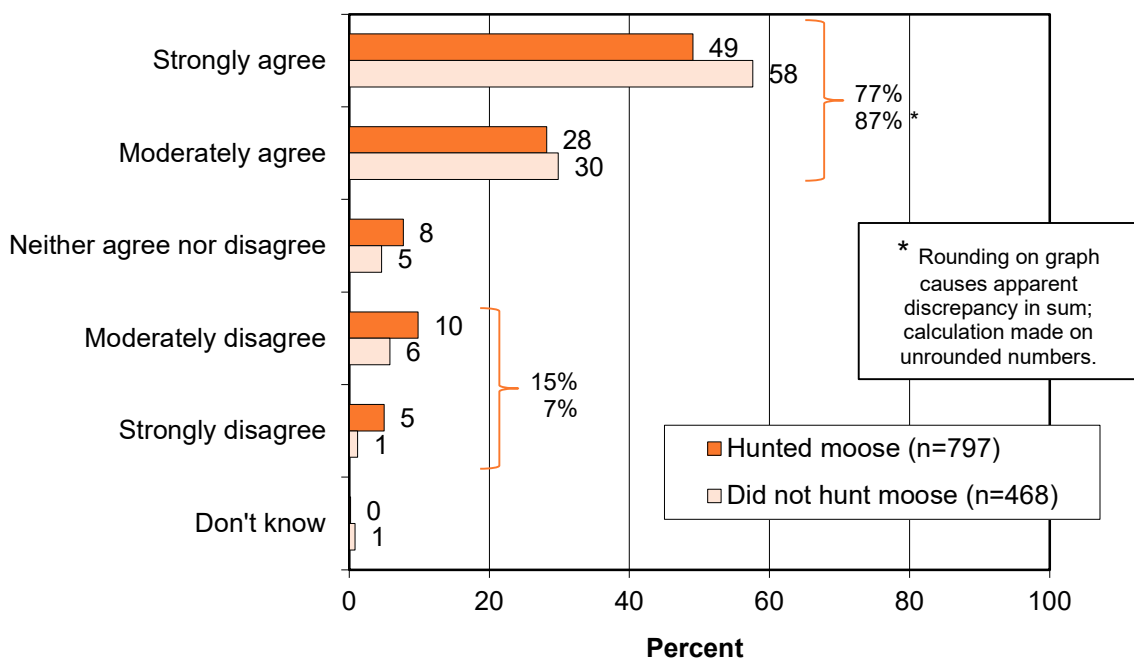


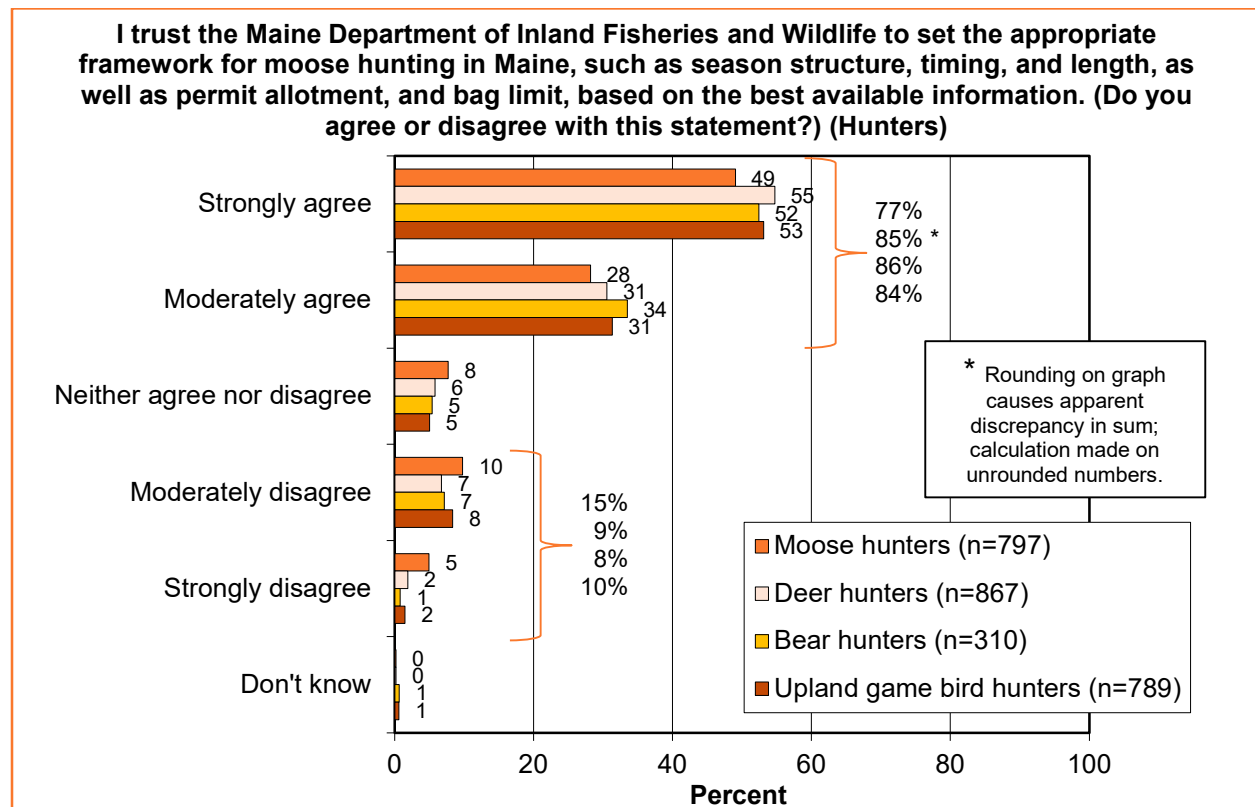
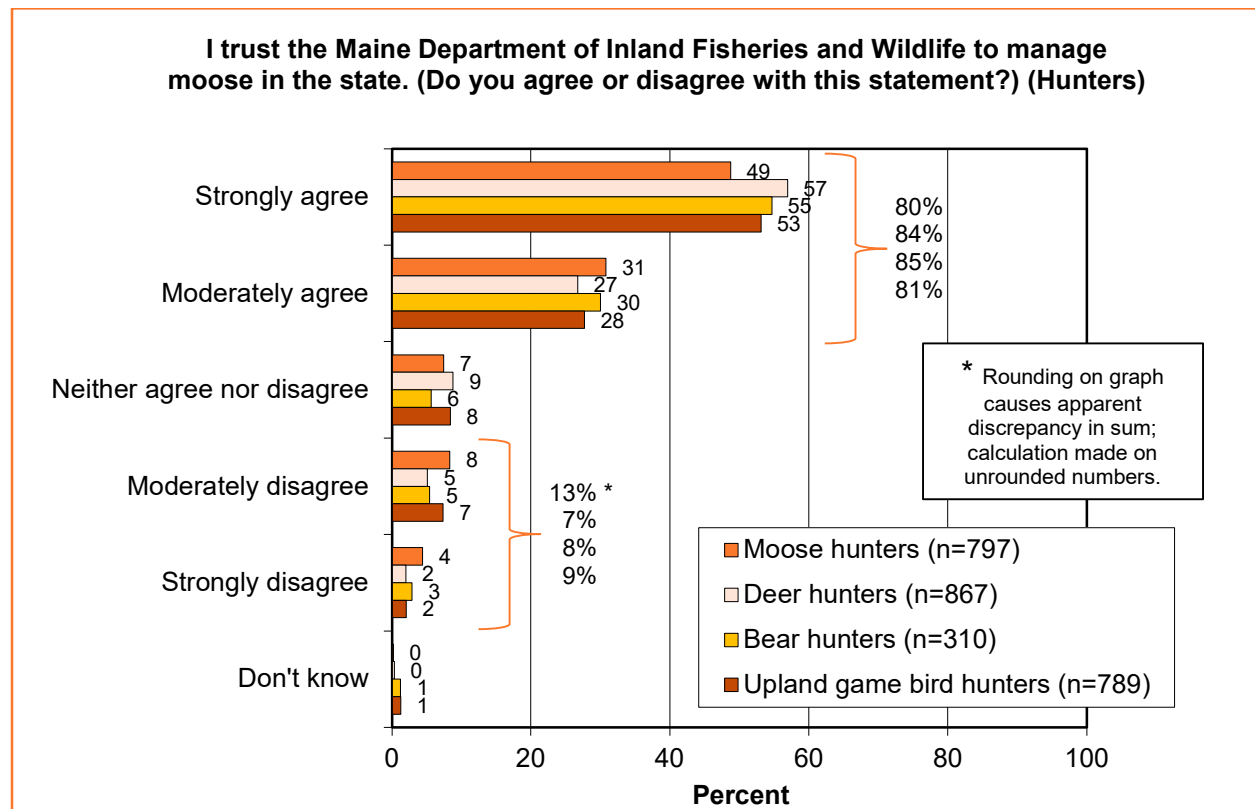
In the crosstabulations on the next pages, agreement is slightly higher on both questions among those who did not hunt moose than it is among those who hunted moose. Bear hunters have the highest agreement on both questions.

I trust the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to manage moose in the state. (Do you agree or disagree with this statement?) (Hunters)

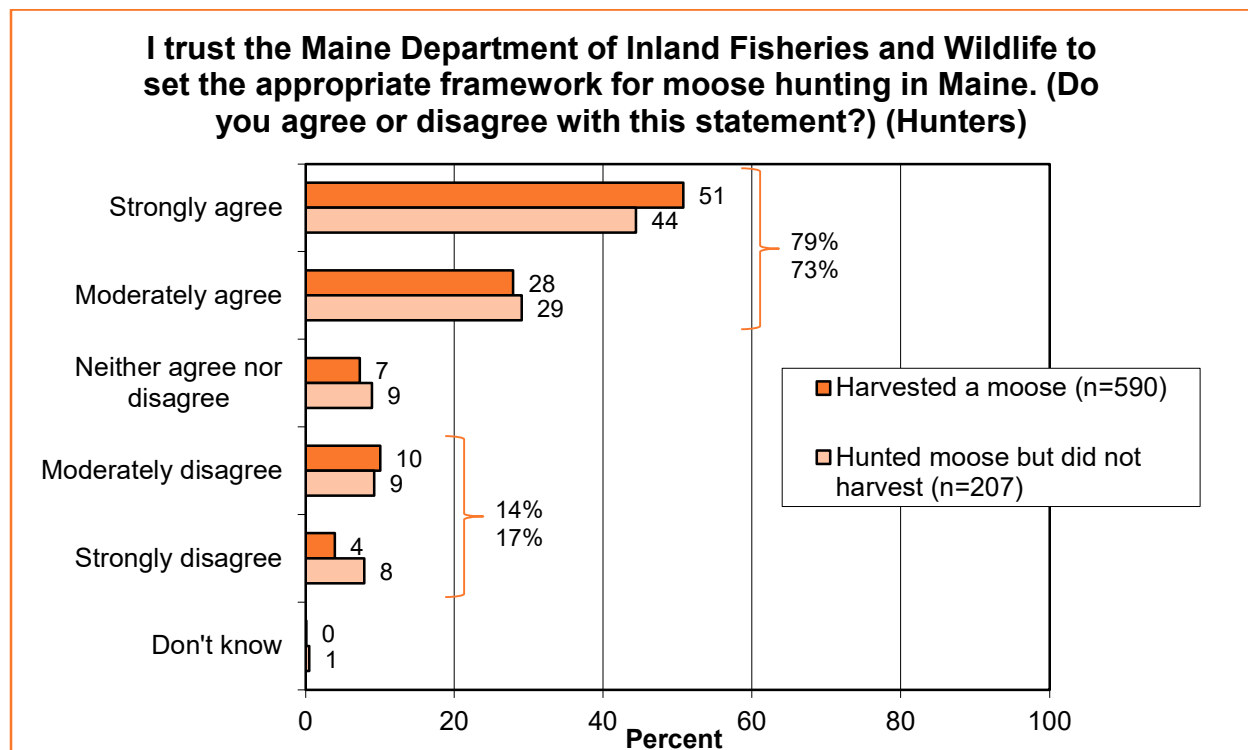
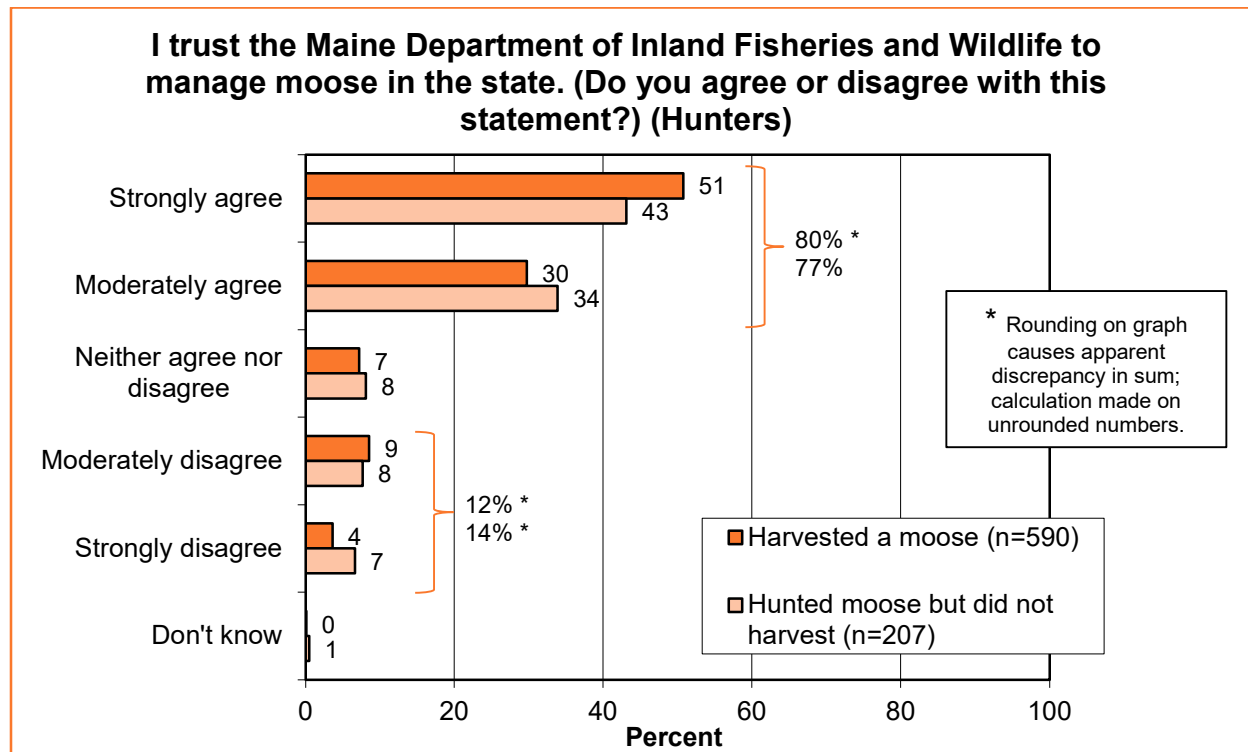


I trust the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to set the appropriate framework for moose hunting in Maine, such as season structure, timing, and length, as well as permit allotment, and bag limit, based on the best available information. (Do you agree or disagree with this statement?) (Hunters)





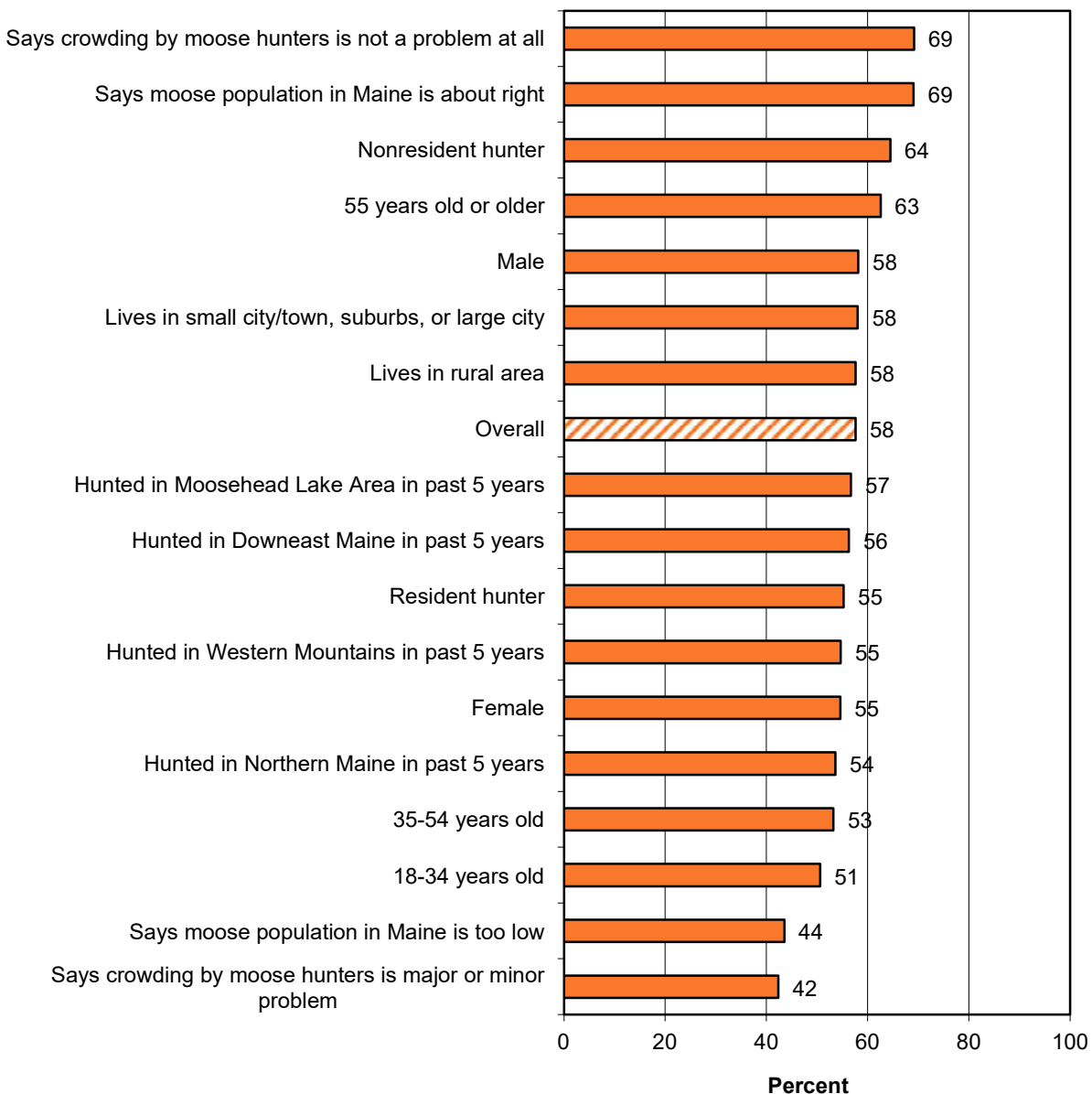
Those who harvested a moose are more likely than those who did not to *strongly* agree on both questions. However, overall agreement is not largely different between the two groups on the first question; it is on the second. Overall disagreement does not greatly differ on either question, although *strong* disagreement is higher among those who did not harvest.



In the demographic analyses graphs that follow, the top of the graph shows the groups associated with strongly agreeing on each question, while the bottom of the graph shows the groups *not* associated with strongly agreeing (meaning they could have only moderately agreed, disagreed, or have given the neutral response or don't know).

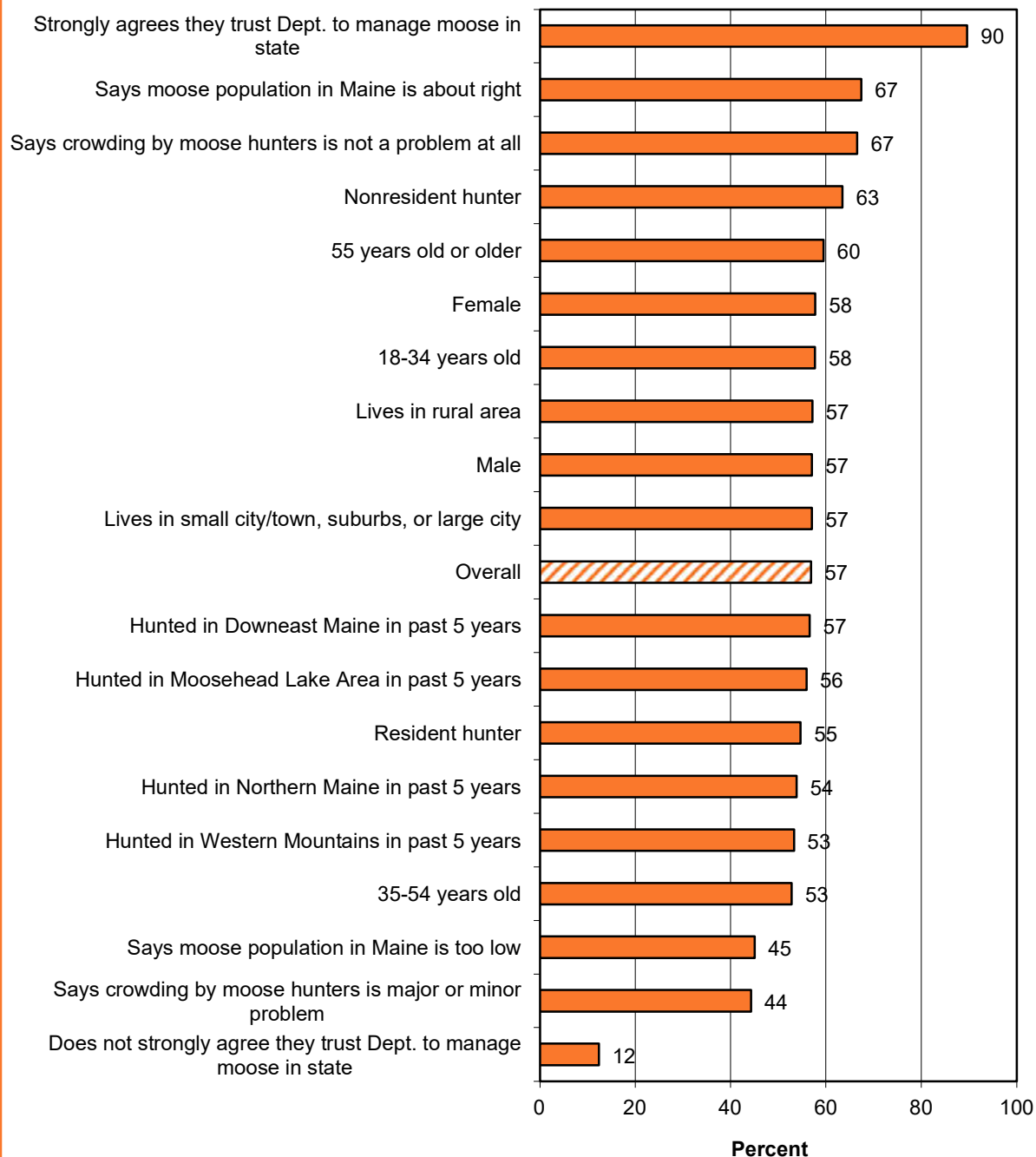
Strong agreement that they trust the Department to manage moose is associated with saying that crowding is not a problem at all, thinking the moose population is about right, being a nonresident hunter, and being an older hunter.

Percent of the following groups who strongly agree that they trust the Department to manage moose in Maine. (Hunters)



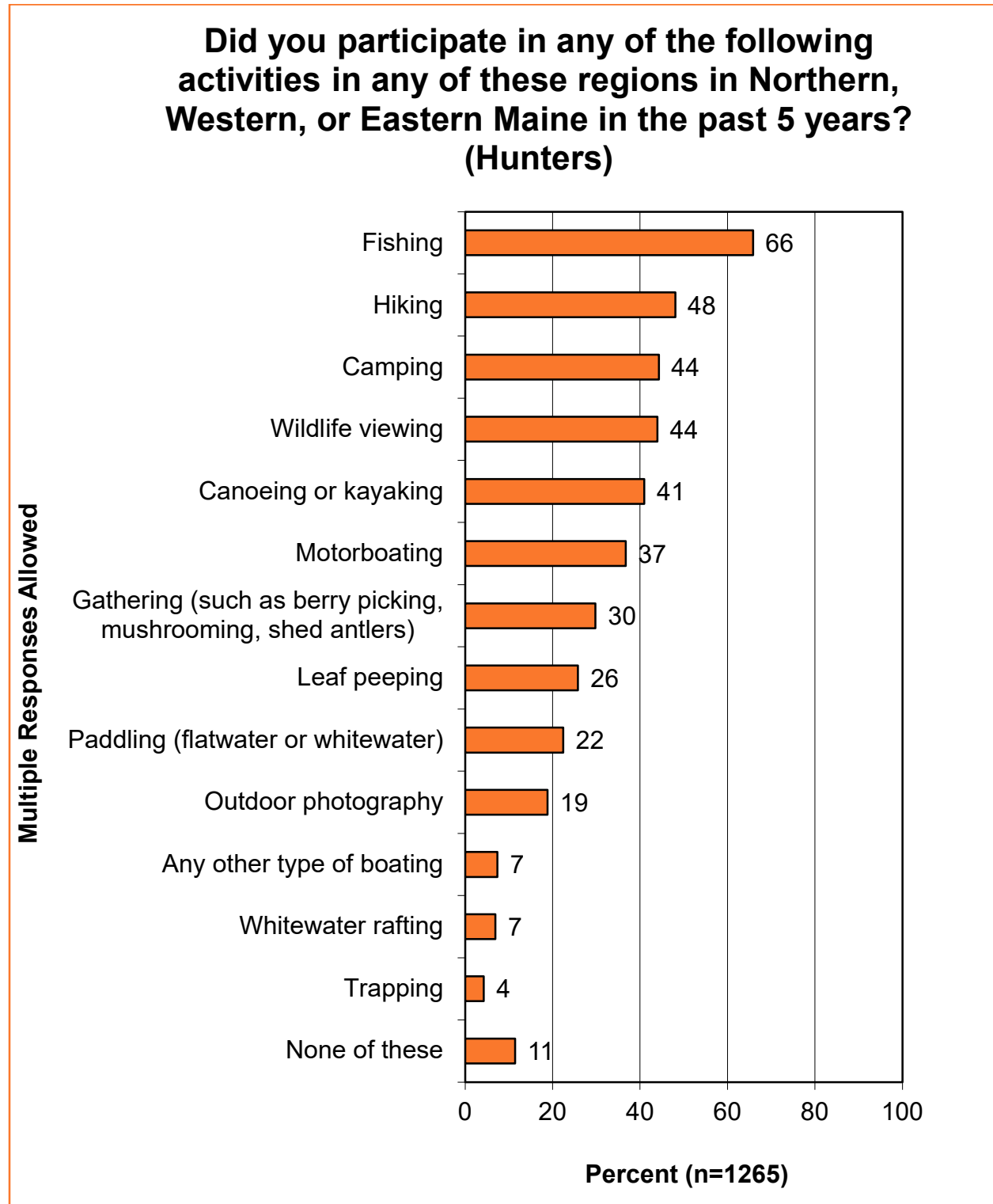
Strongly agreeing that they trust the Department to set an appropriate framework for moose hunting is associated with strongly agreeing that they trust the Department to manage moose, thinking that the moose population is about right, saying that crowding by moose hunters is not a problem at all, and with being a nonresident hunter.

Percent of the following groups who strongly agree that they trust the Department to set an appropriate framework for moose hunting. (Hunters)

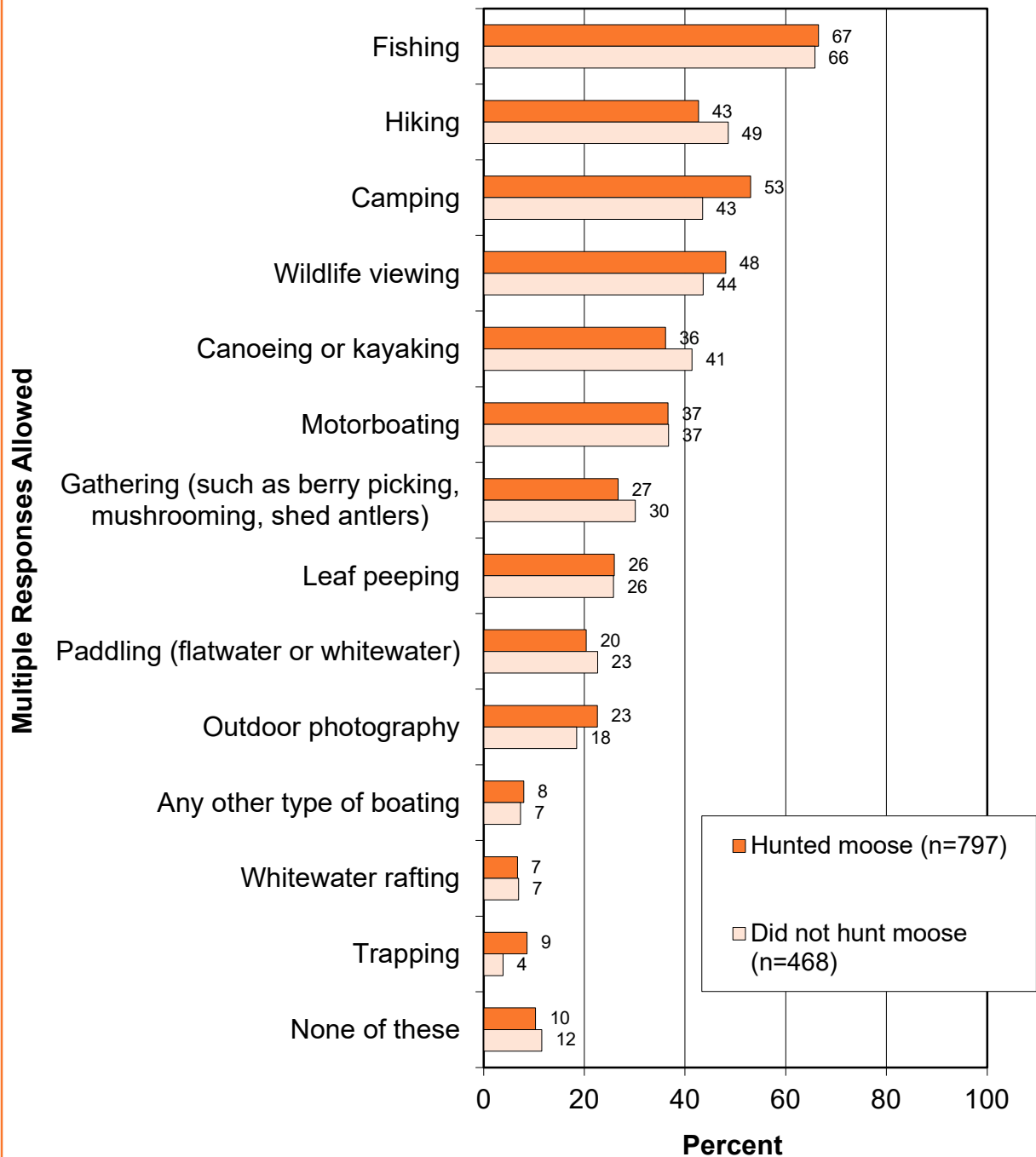


OTHER OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES OF MAINE HUNTERS

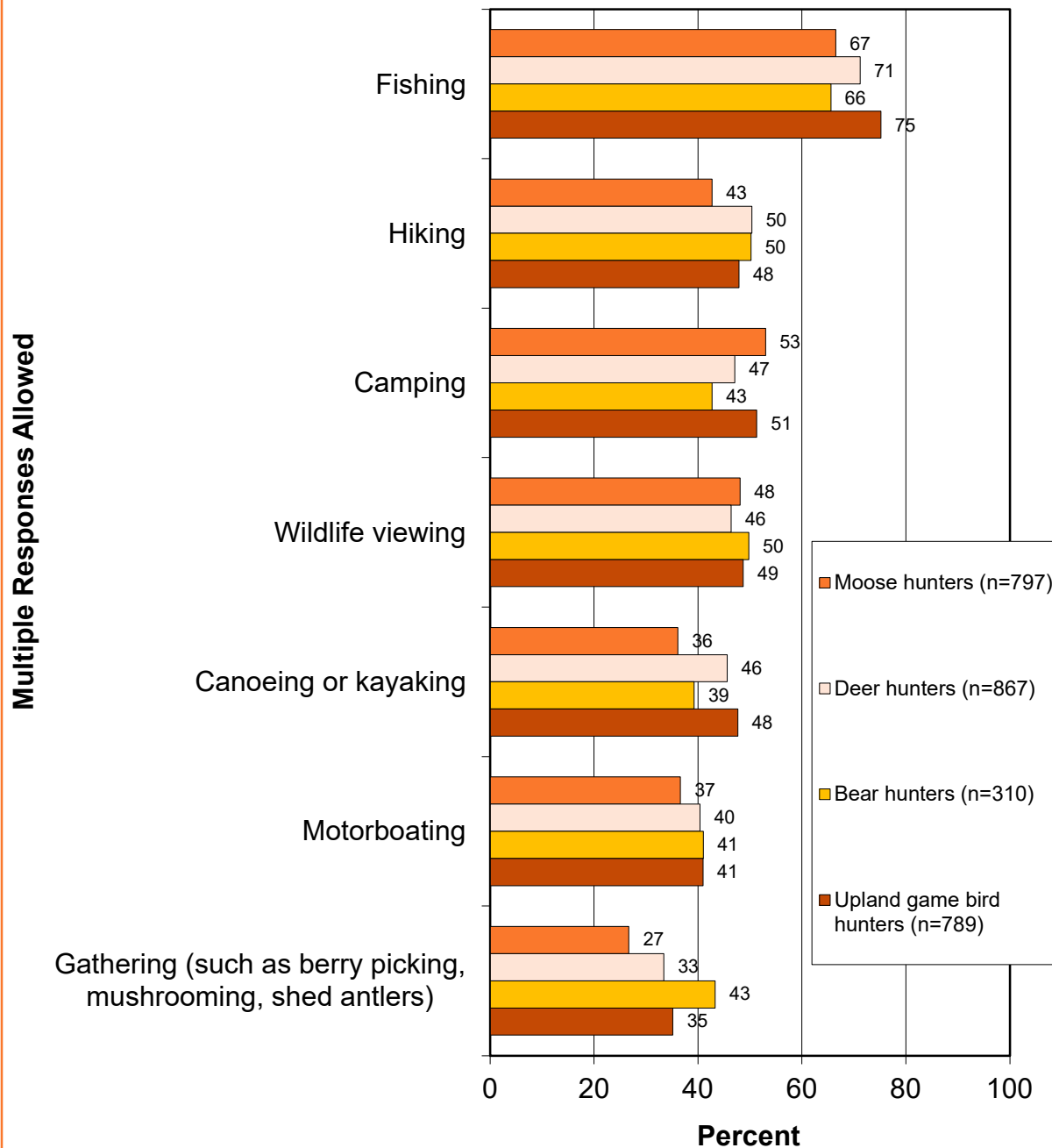
Hunters' most popular non-hunting activity is fishing: a majority of hunters (66%) had also fished. Other popular activities are hiking, camping, wildlife viewing, and two types of boating. The crosstabulations show minor differences among the various groups.



**Did you participate in any of the following activities in any of these regions in Northern, Western, or Eastern Maine in the past 5 years?
(Hunters)**



**Did you participate in any of the following activities in any of these regions in Northern, Western, or Eastern Maine in the past 5 years?
(Hunters) (Part 1)**

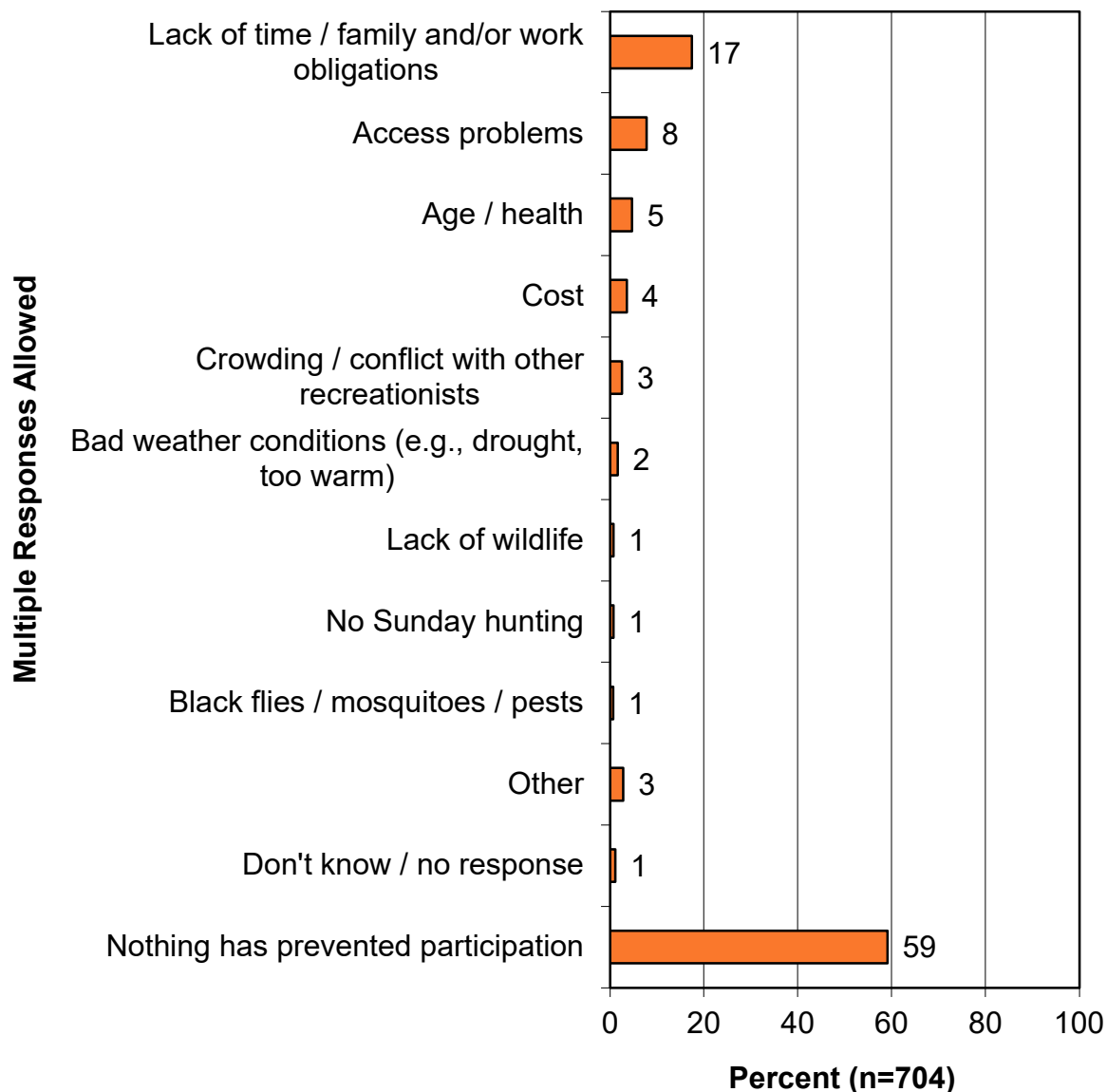


**Did you participate in any of the following activities in any of these regions in Northern, Western, or Eastern Maine in the past 5 years?
(Hunters) (Part 2)**



Those who hunted moose were asked about any constraints to participation in those other activities: after the social problem of lack of time because of family or work obligations, access is the next most common problem with participation in those other activities.

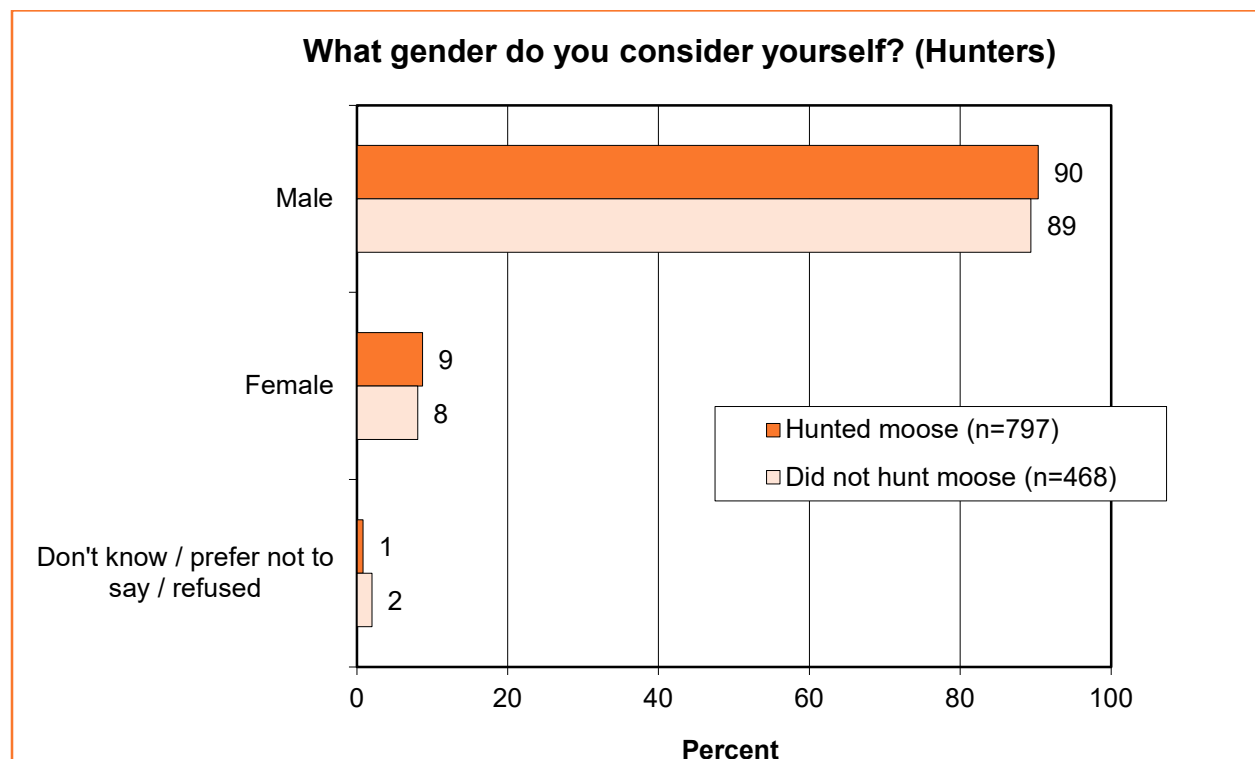
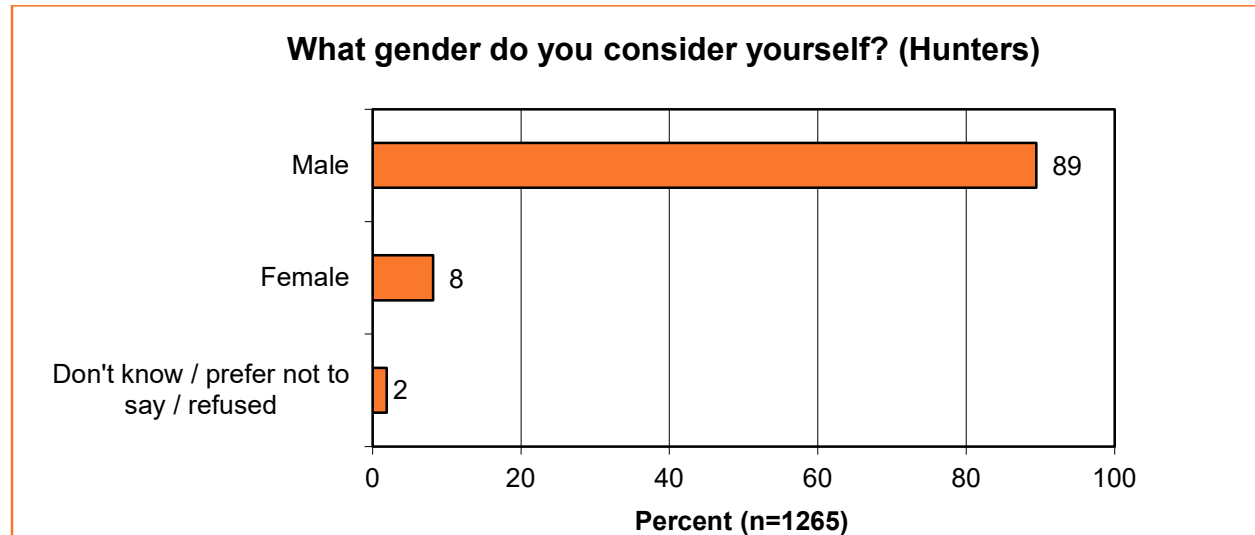
You indicated that you participated in activities other than moose hunting in Northern, Western, and/or Eastern Maine in the past 5 years. Are there any things that have prevented you from participating in any of these activities as much as you would like or that has taken away from your enjoyment of these activities in Northern, Western, or Eastern Maine? (Asked of those who hunted moose in the past 5 years in Maine.) (Hunters)

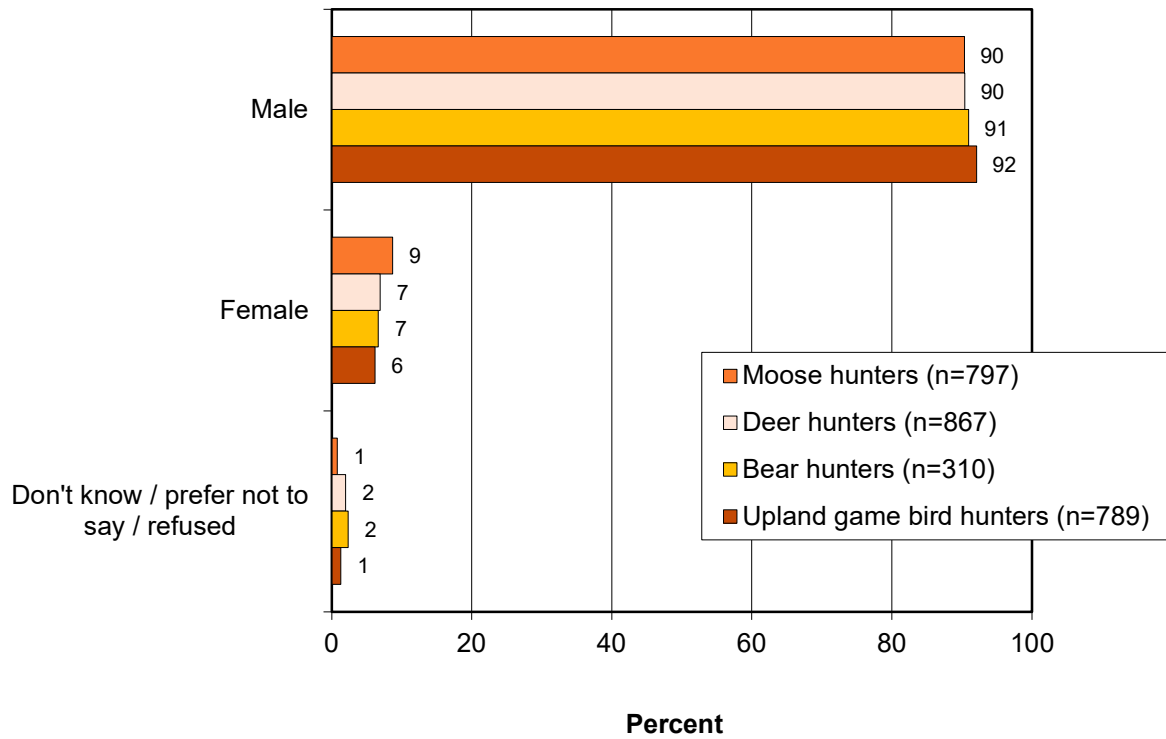
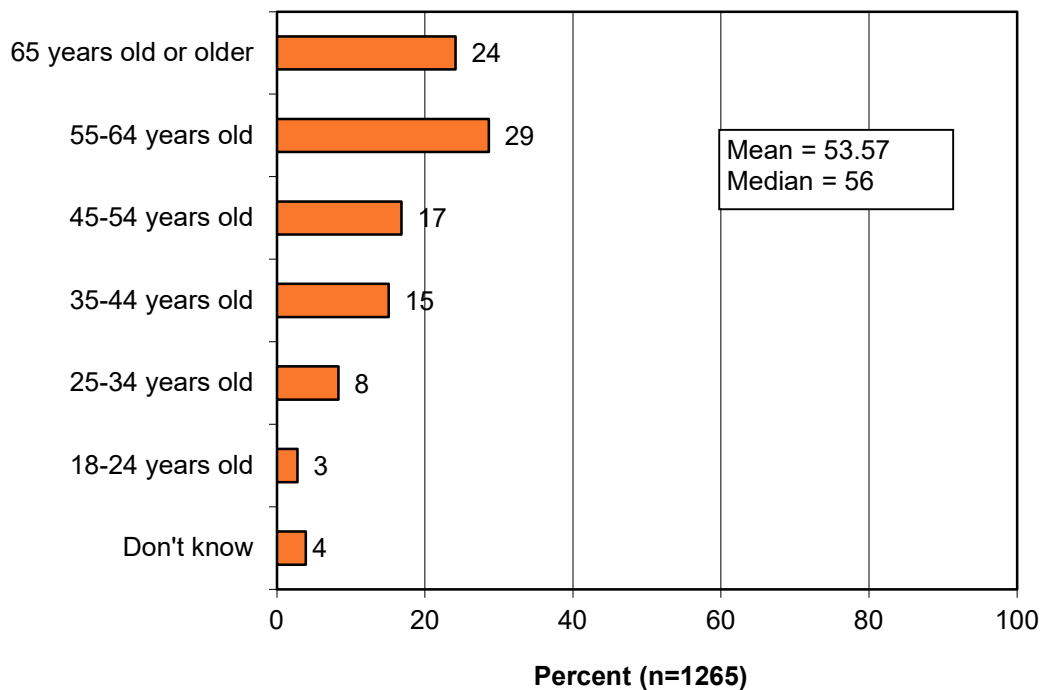


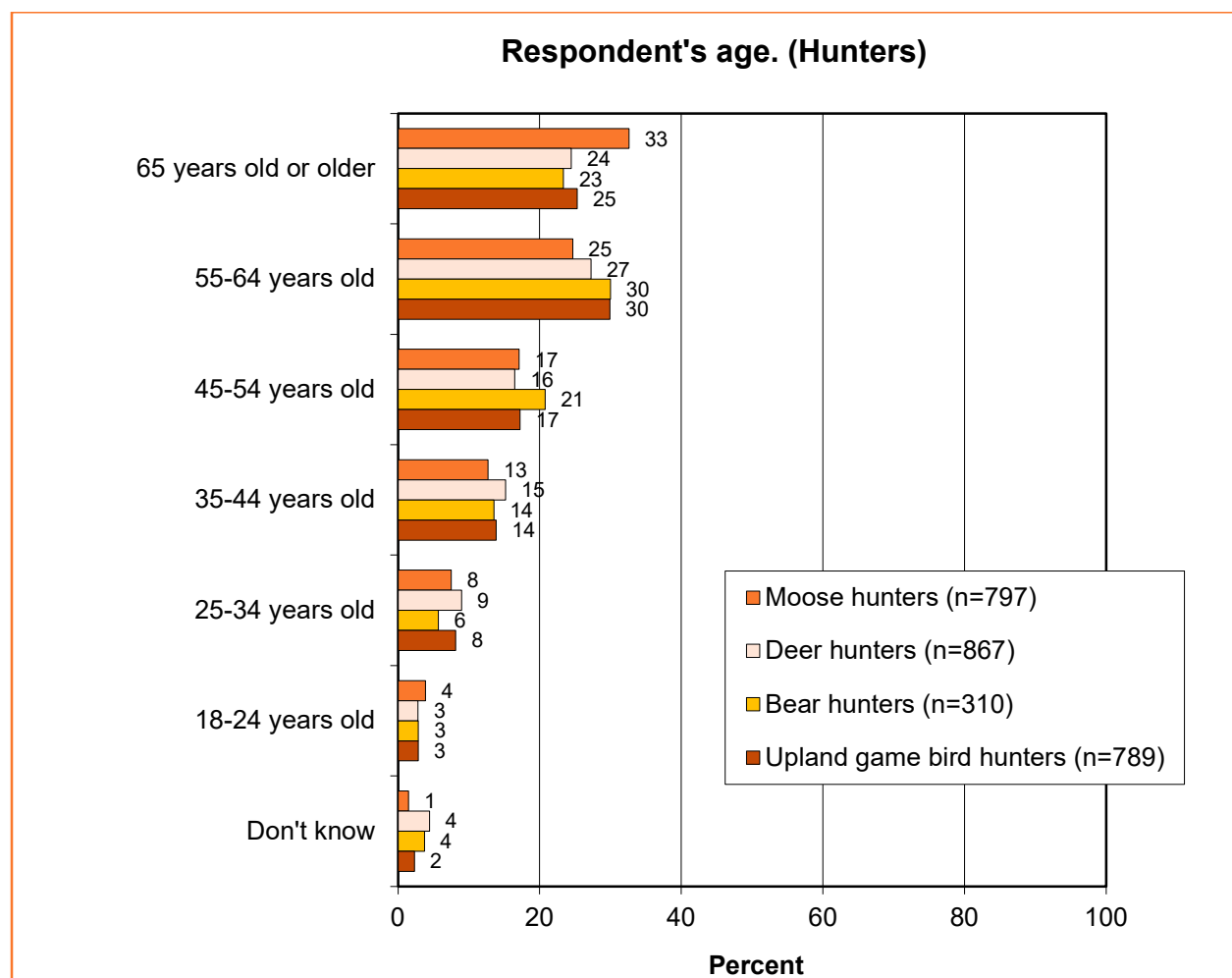
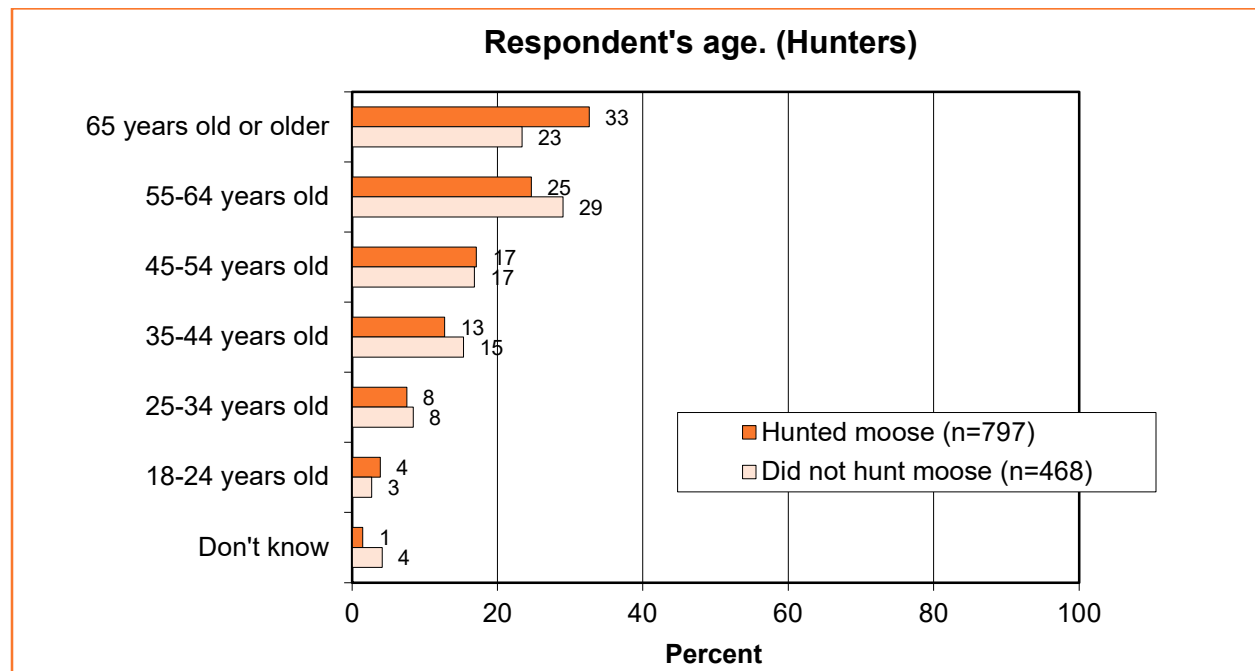
DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Demographic information was obtained primarily for crosstabulations and further analyses. The information obtained included:

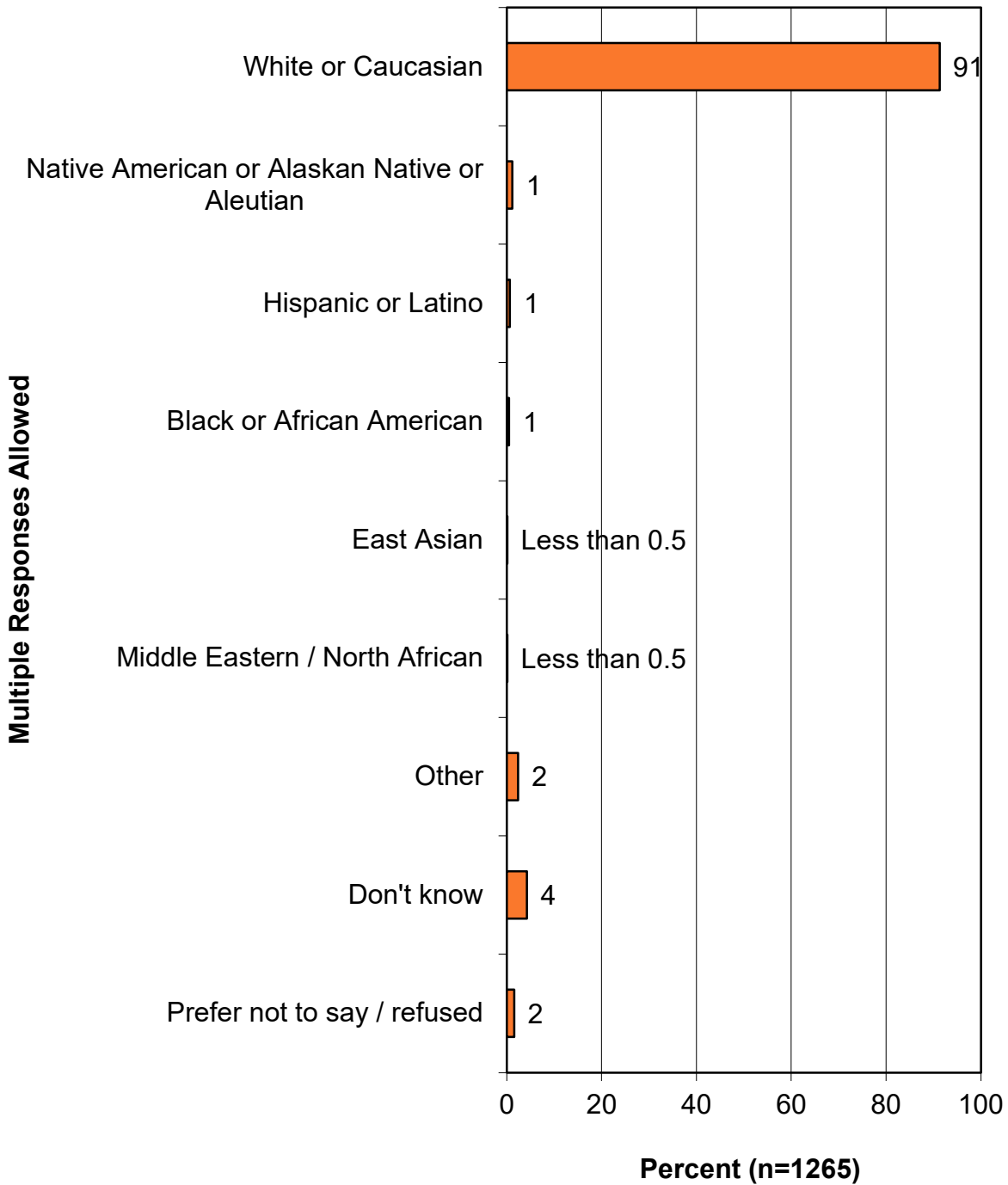
- Gender.
- Age.
- Ethnicity.
- County of residence.
- Character of residential area (urban-rural continuum).



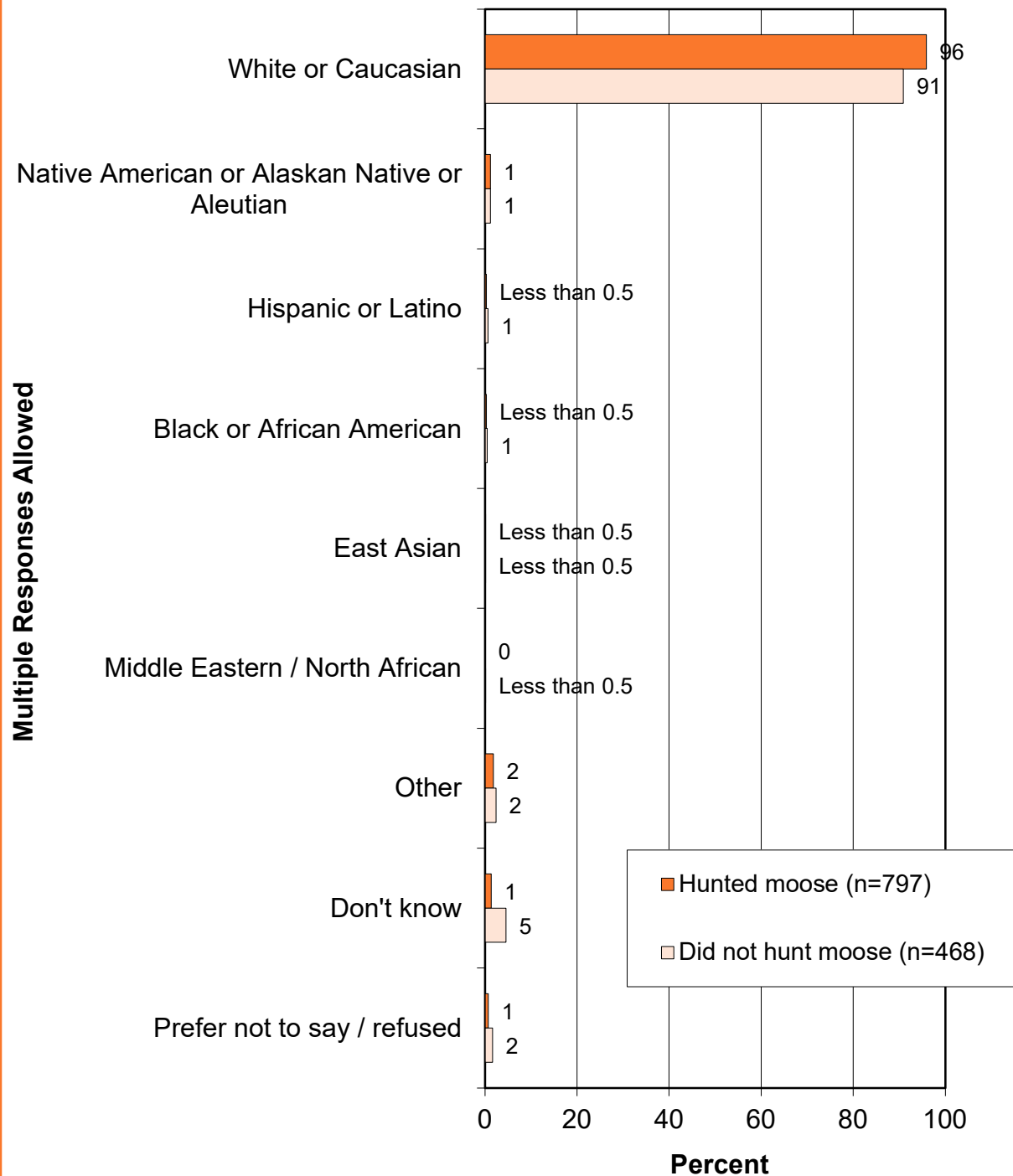
What gender do you consider yourself? (Hunters)**Respondent's age. (Hunters)**



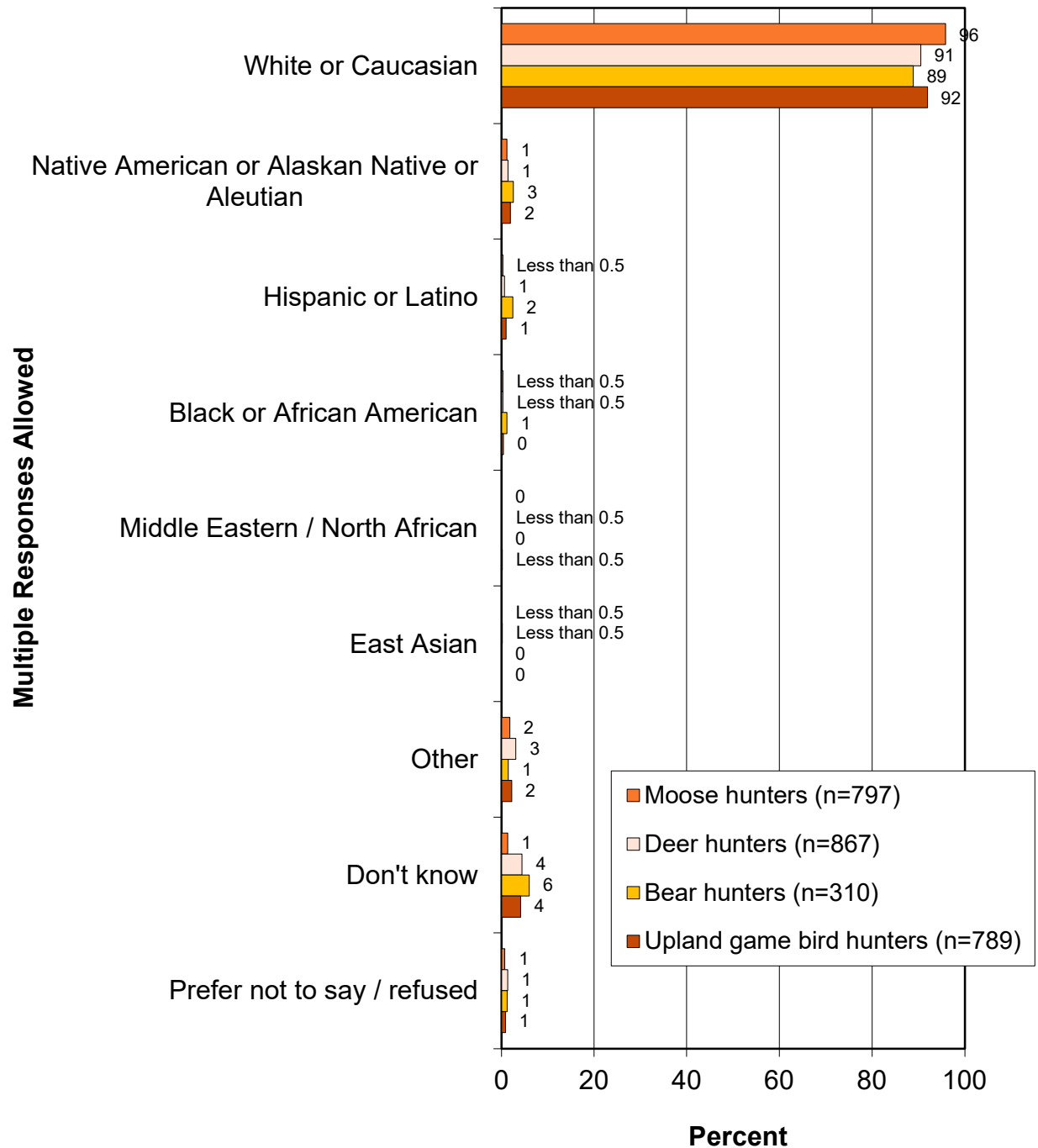
What races or ethnic backgrounds do you consider yourself? (Hunters)



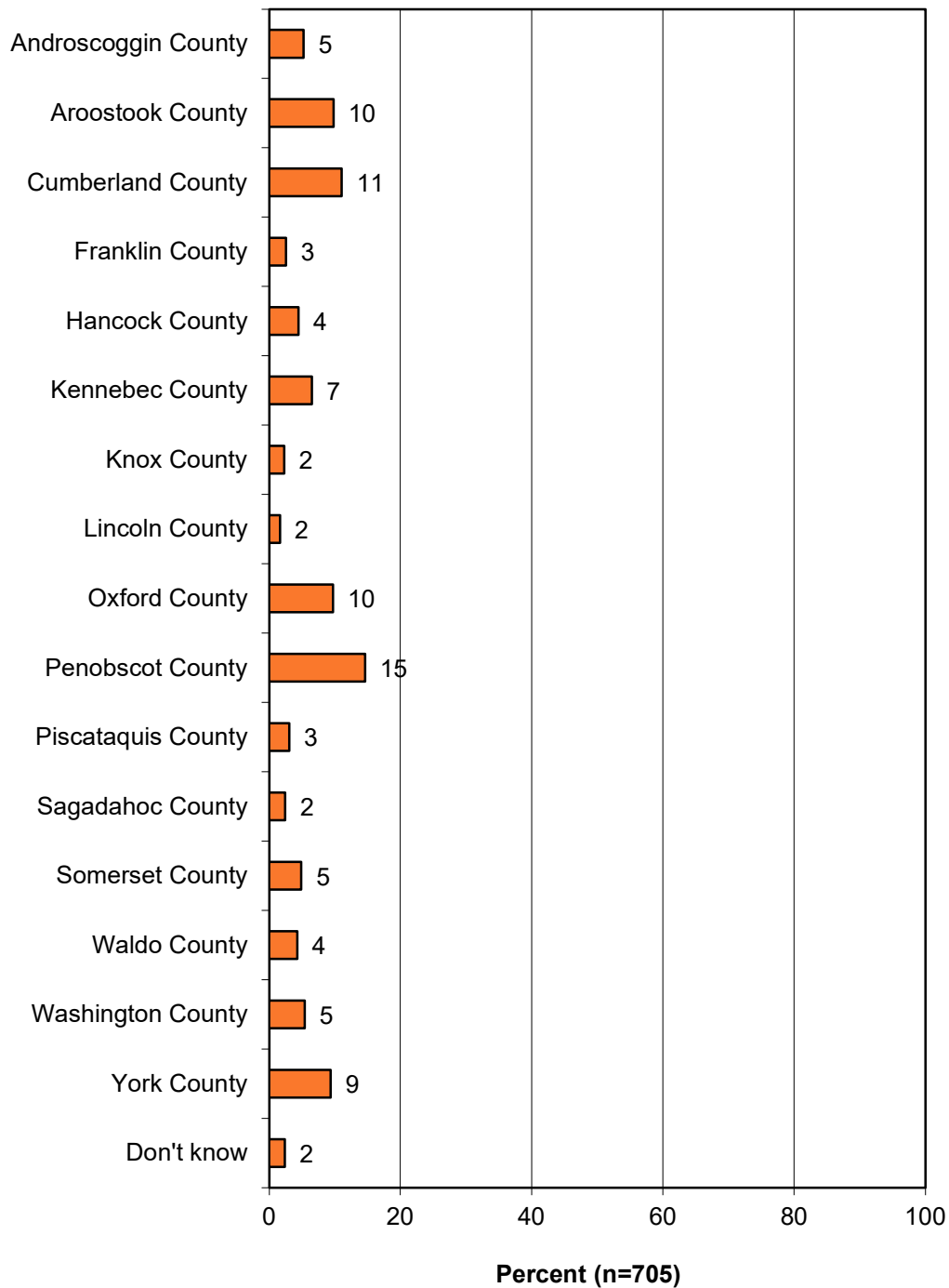
What races or ethnic backgrounds do you consider yourself? (Hunters)



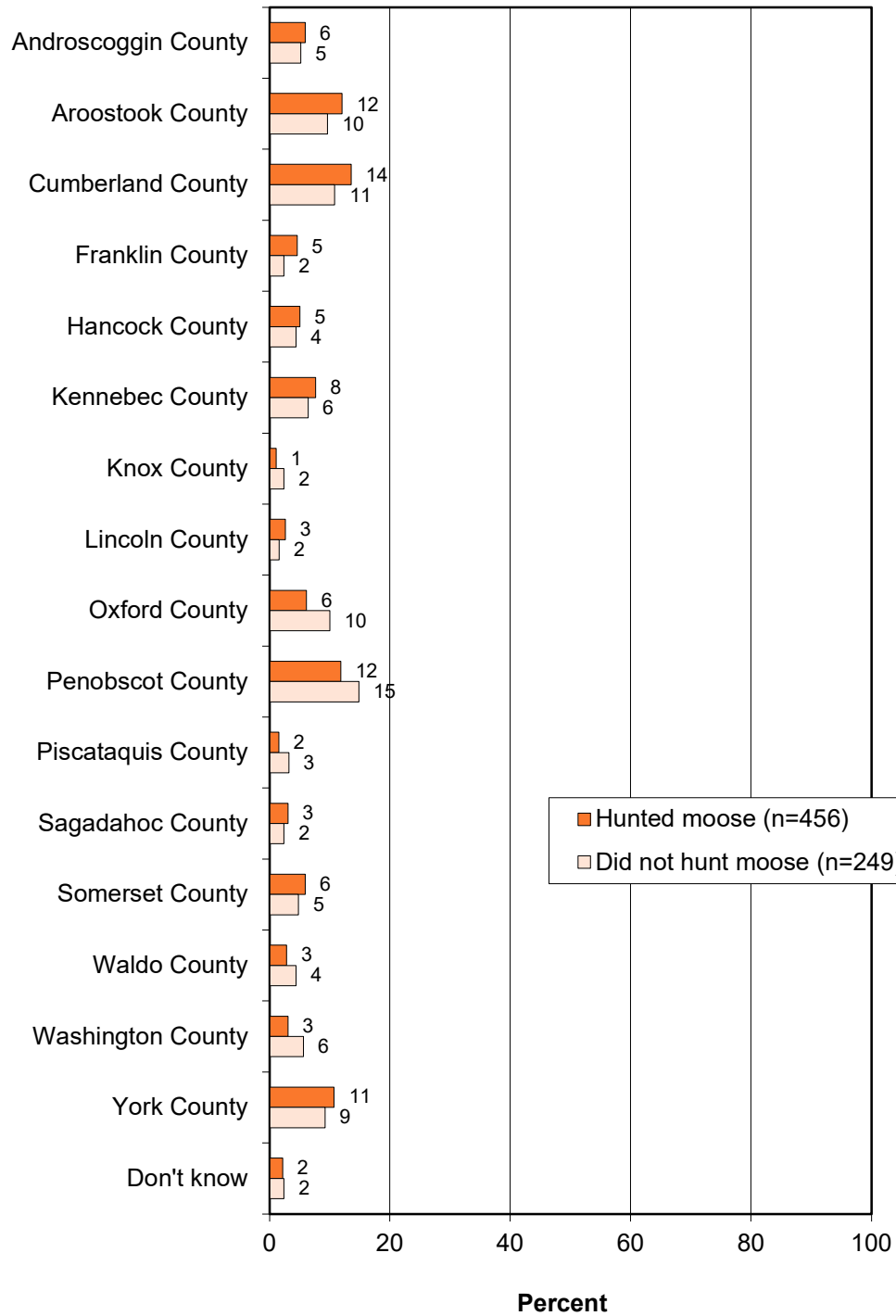
What races or ethnic backgrounds do you consider yourself? (Hunters)



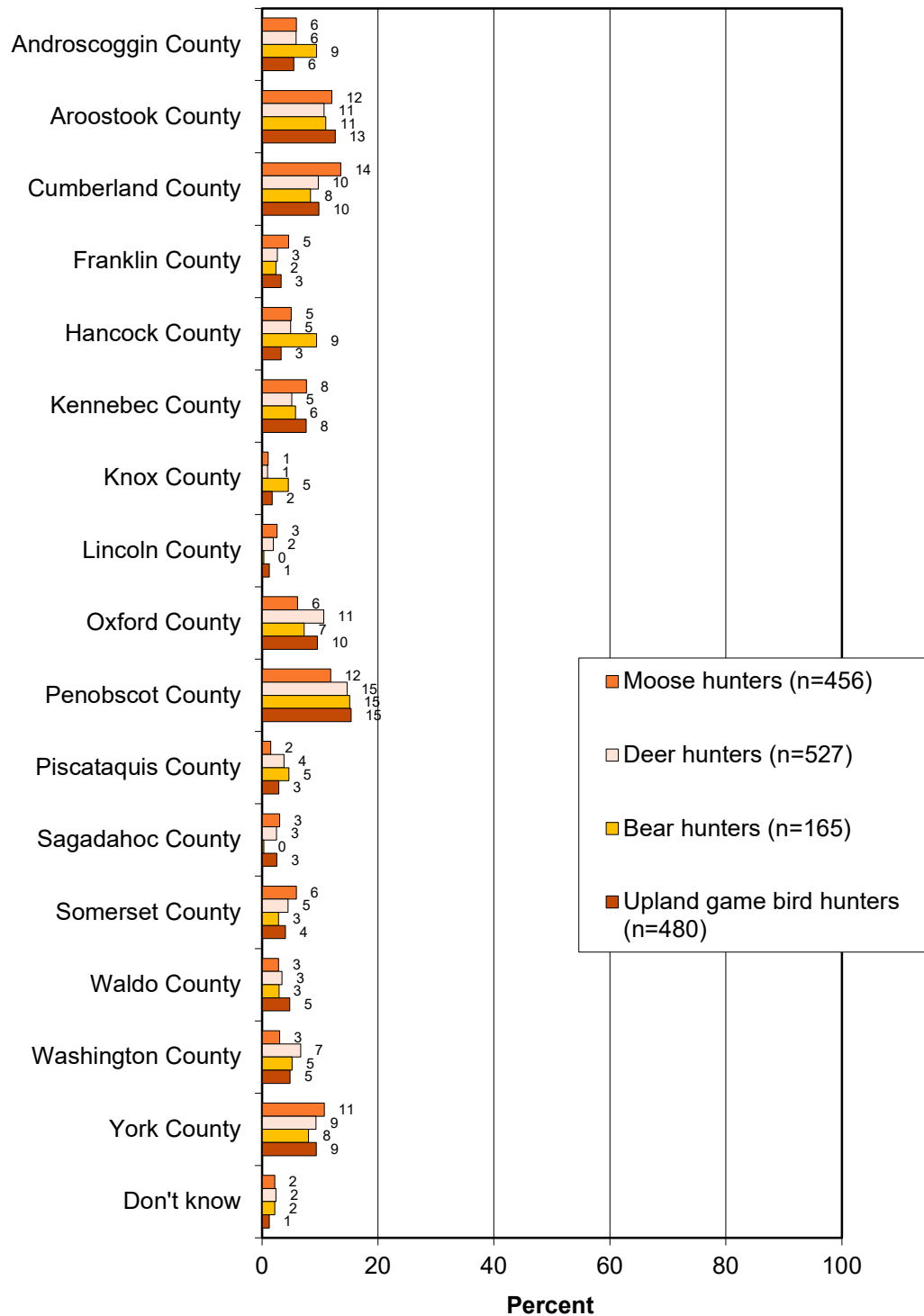
What county do you live in? (Among resident license holders who answered the question.) (Hunters)



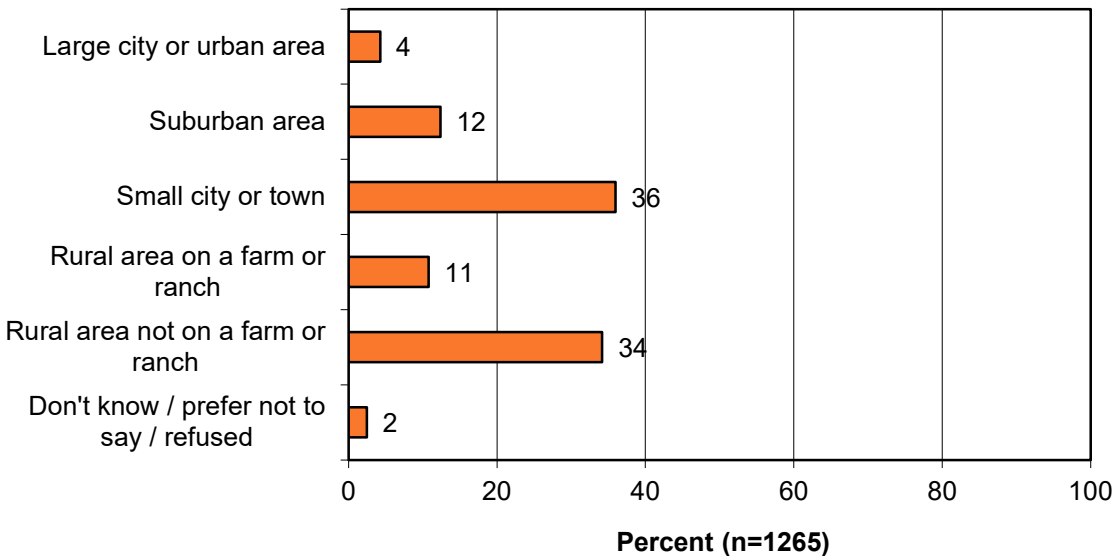
What county do you live in? (Among resident license holders who answered the question.) (Hunters)



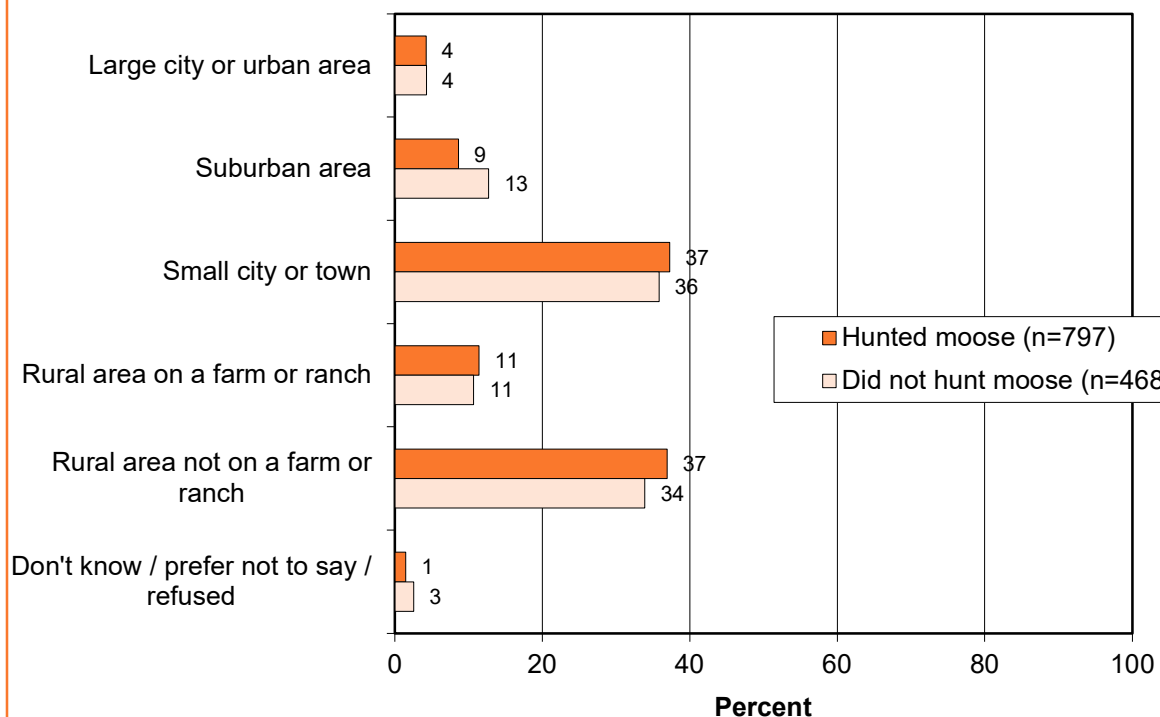
What county do you live in? (Among resident license holders who answered the question.) (Hunters)



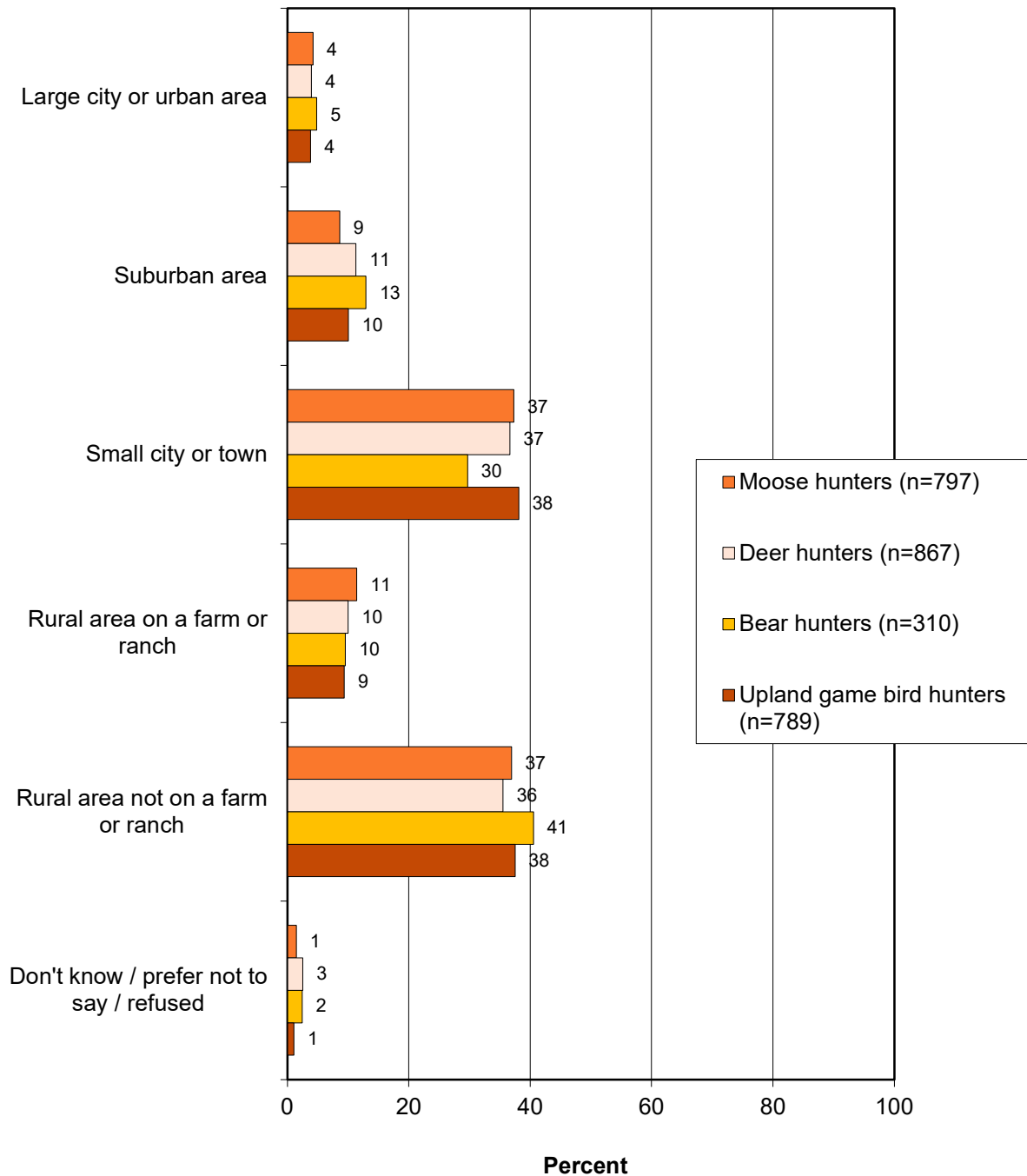
**Do you consider your place of residence to be a large city or urban area, a suburban area, a small city or town, a rural area on a farm or ranch, or a rural area not on a farm or ranch?
(Hunters)**



**Do you consider your place of residence to be a large city or urban area, a suburban area, a small city or town, a rural area on a farm or ranch, or a rural area not on a farm or ranch?
(Hunters)**



**Do you consider your place of residence to be a large city or urban area, a suburban area, a small city or town, a rural area on a farm or ranch, or a rural area not on a farm or ranch?
(Hunters)**



RESULTS AMONG OUTDOOR RECREATIONISTS

Two samples are examined in this chapter: general population residents who engaged in outdoor recreation in the study area and licensed anglers who engaged in outdoor recreation in the study area. As fully explained in the *Methods* chapter, these groups are not combined in the data analysis. Instead, they are shown separately in this chapter.

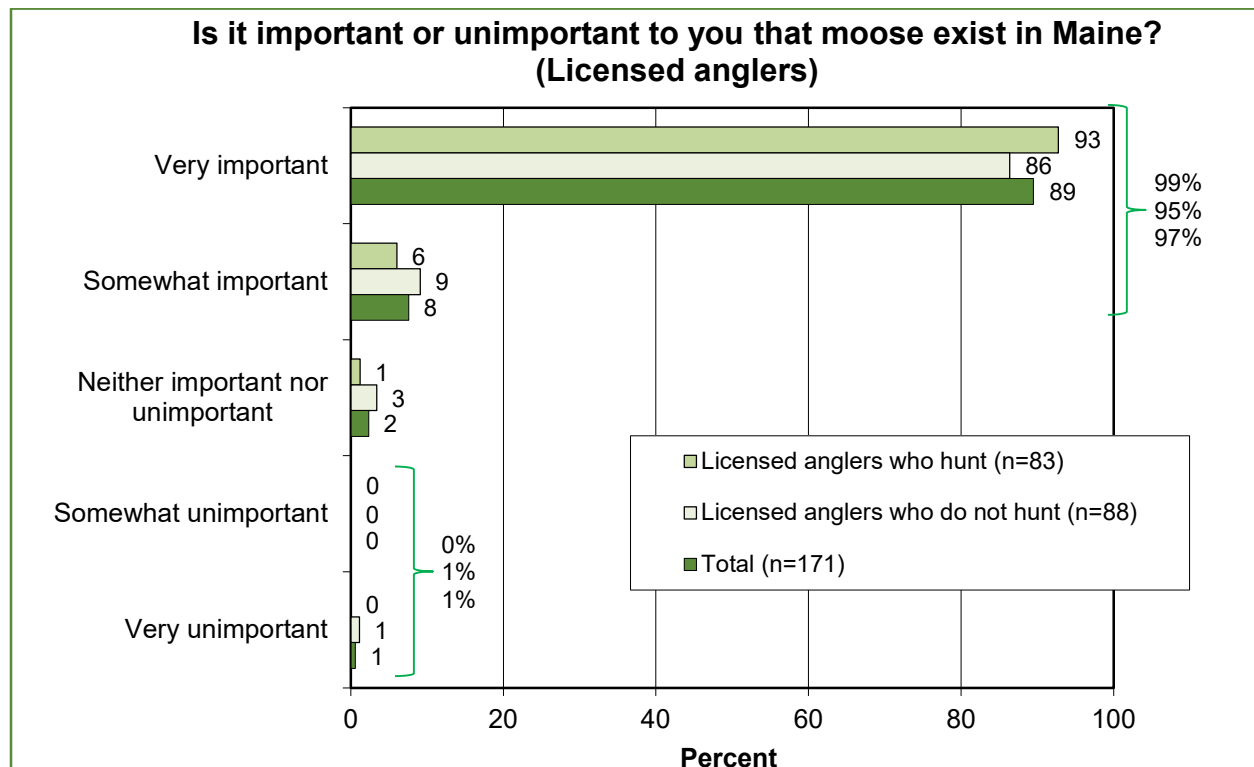
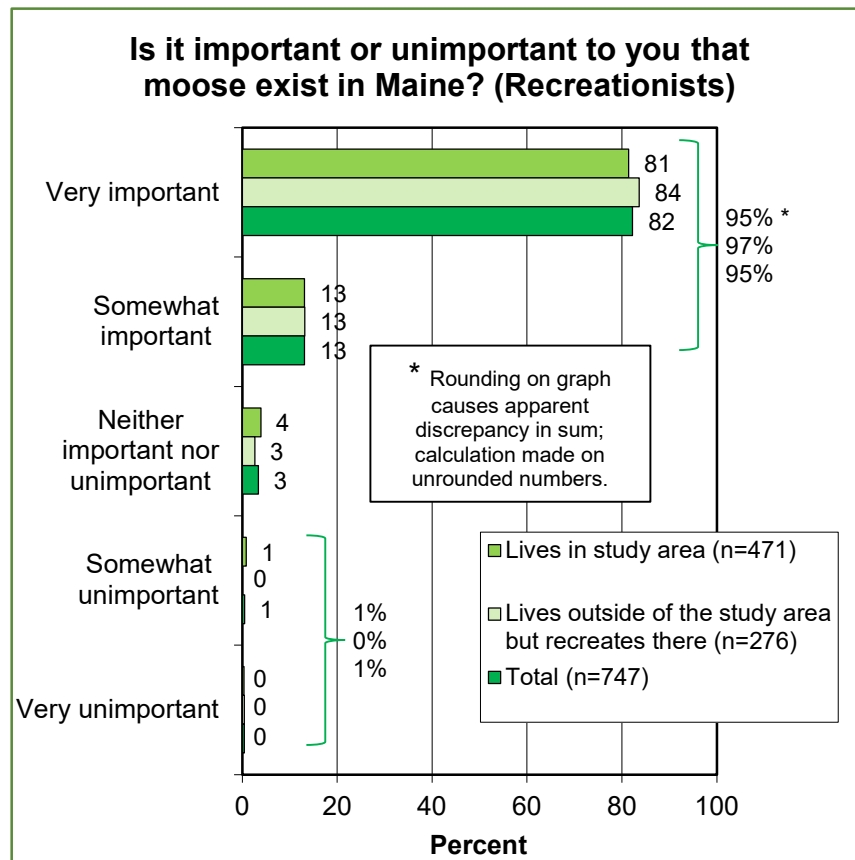
For recreationists in this chapter, their graphs are labeled “Recreationists.” These graphs have three bars: the first for recreationists who live in the study area, the second for recreationists who live in Maine but outside the study area, and the third for the total (all recreationists).

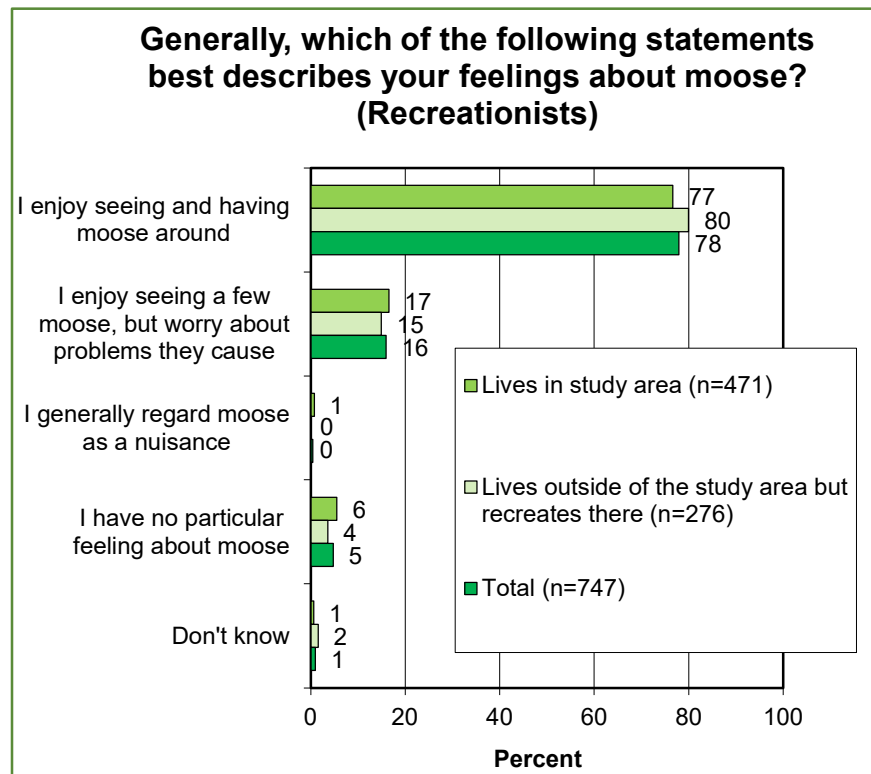
The licensed anglers are labeled as such on their graphs. These graphs also have three bars: one for anglers who also hunt, anglers who do not also hunt, and the total.

The graphs in this chapter on recreationists are in shades of green. The exceptions are graphs of series questions, which use a stoplight theme of red, yellow, and green to indicate more negative responses, middle responses, and more positive responses. For instance, graphs of questions that used a support-oppose scale show support as green, neutral as yellow, and oppose as red.

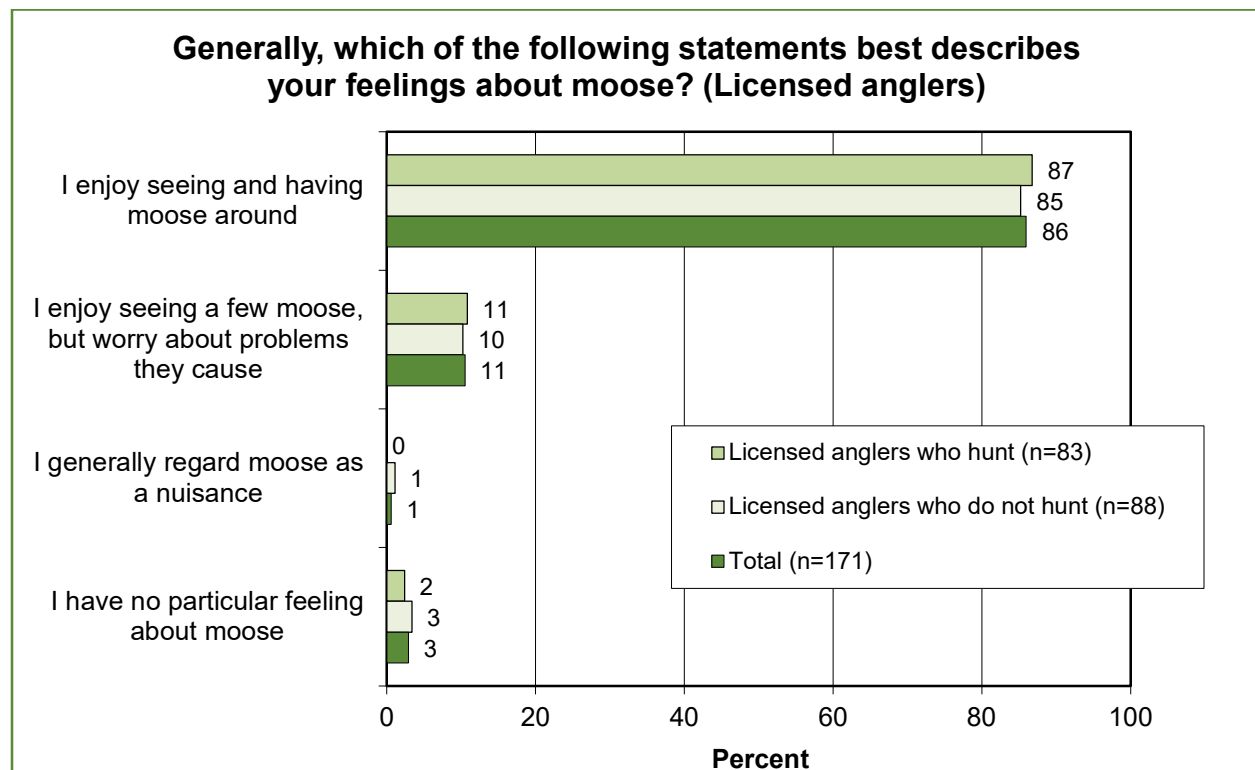
ATTITUDES TOWARD MOOSE AND MOOSE MANAGEMENT

Recreationists nearly unanimously think that it is important that moose exist in Maine: 95% to 97% of recreationists and 95% to 99% of licensed anglers think moose existing is *very* or *somewhat* important.

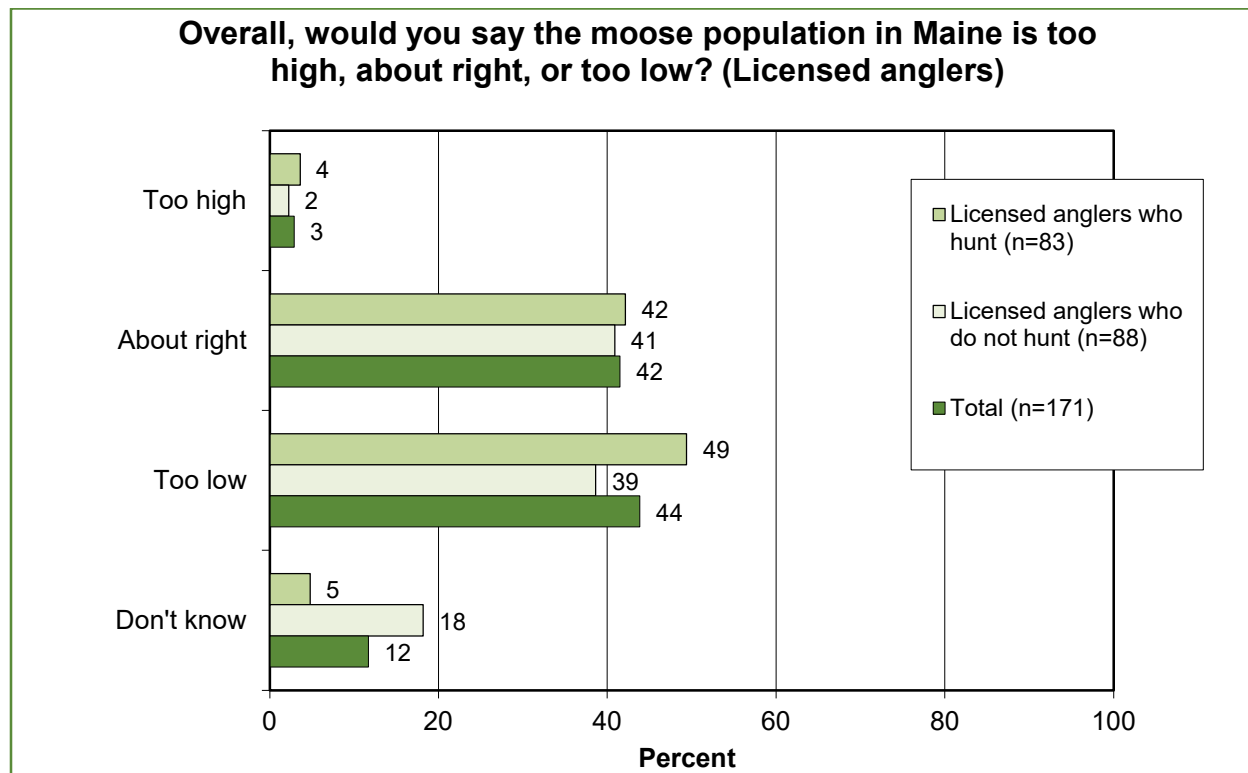
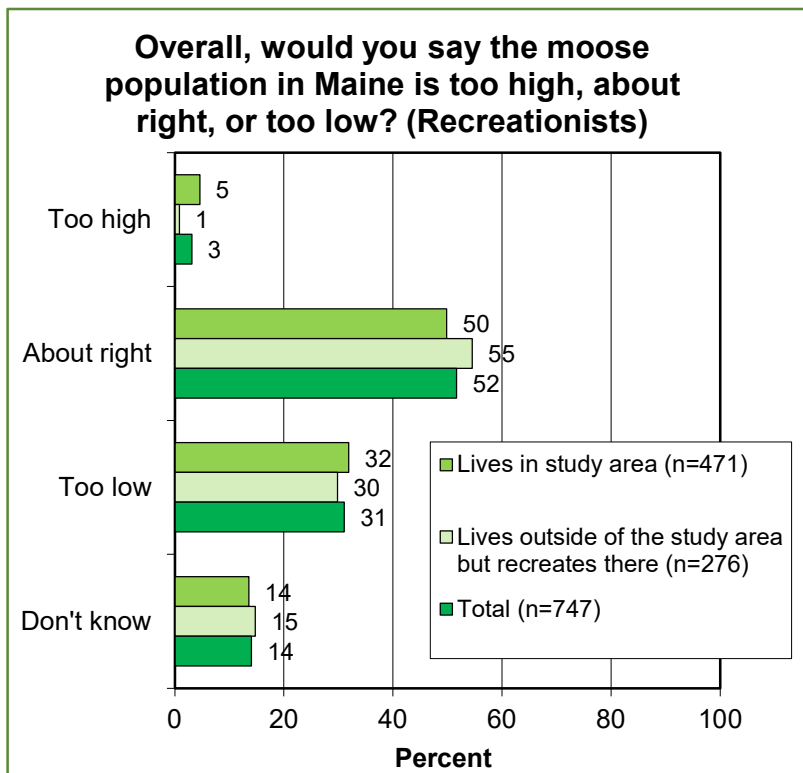




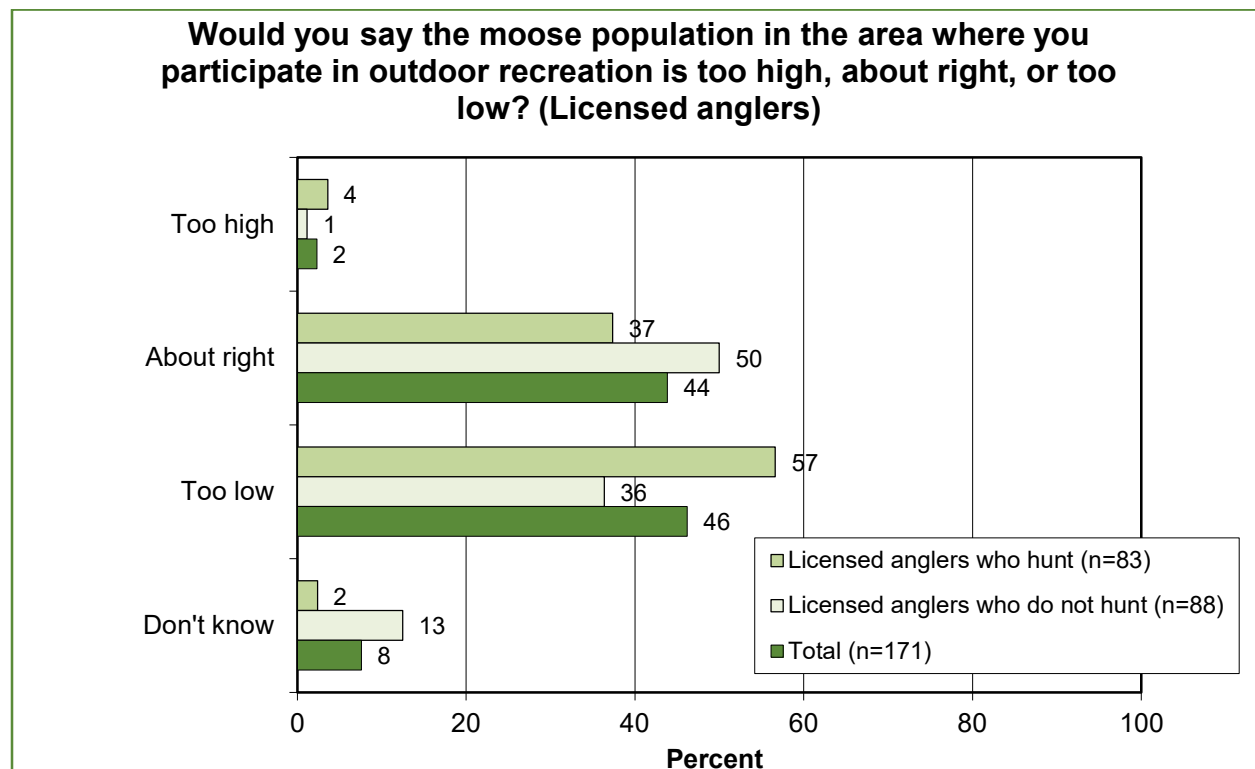
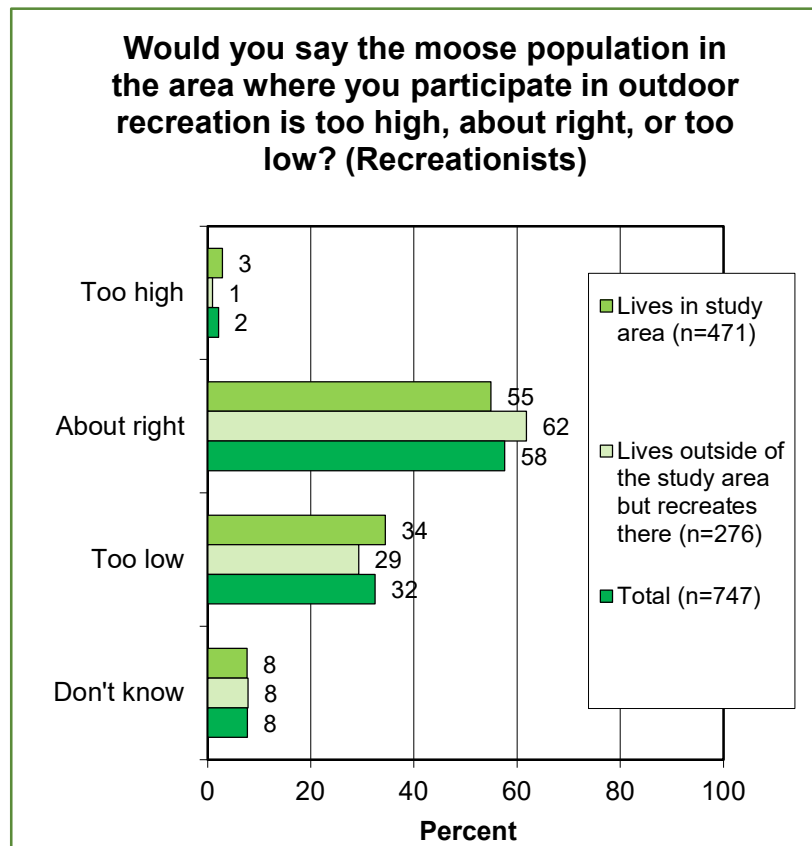
More than three quarters of recreationists, and an even higher percentage of licensed anglers, say without any caveats that they enjoy seeing and having moose around. Almost none think of them as a nuisance.



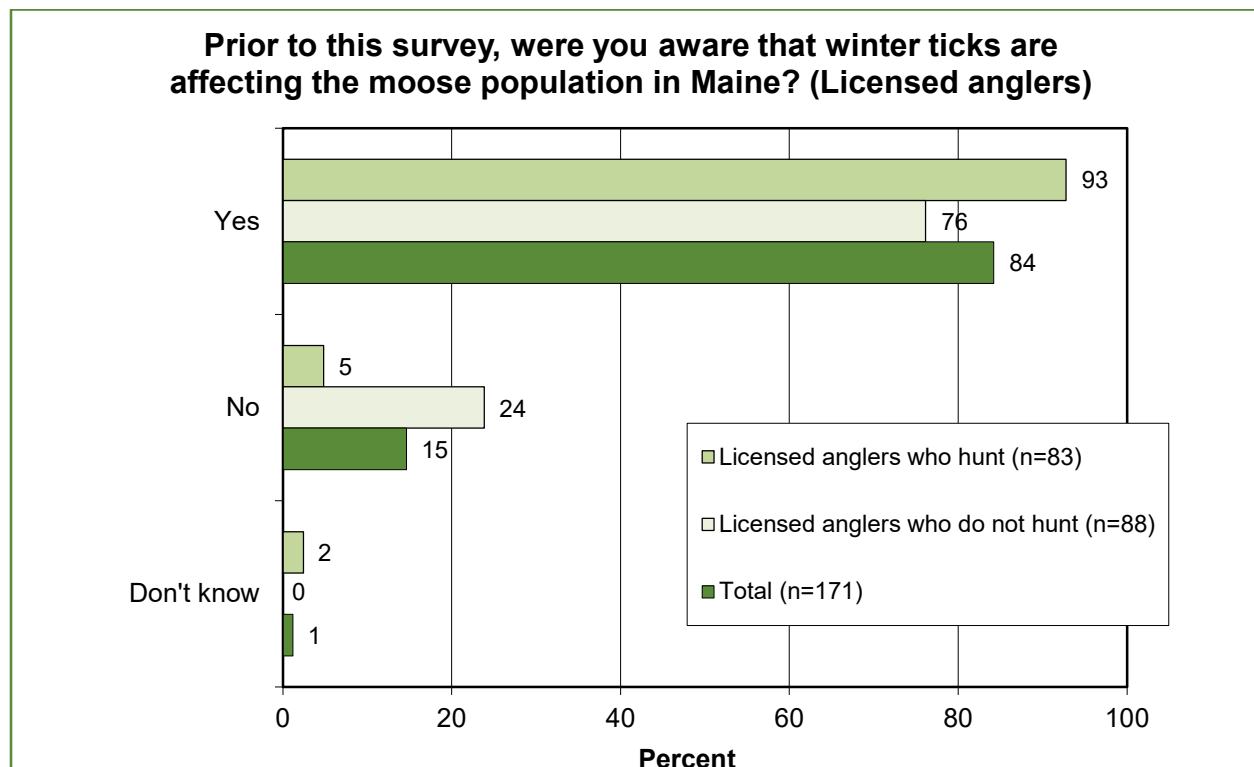
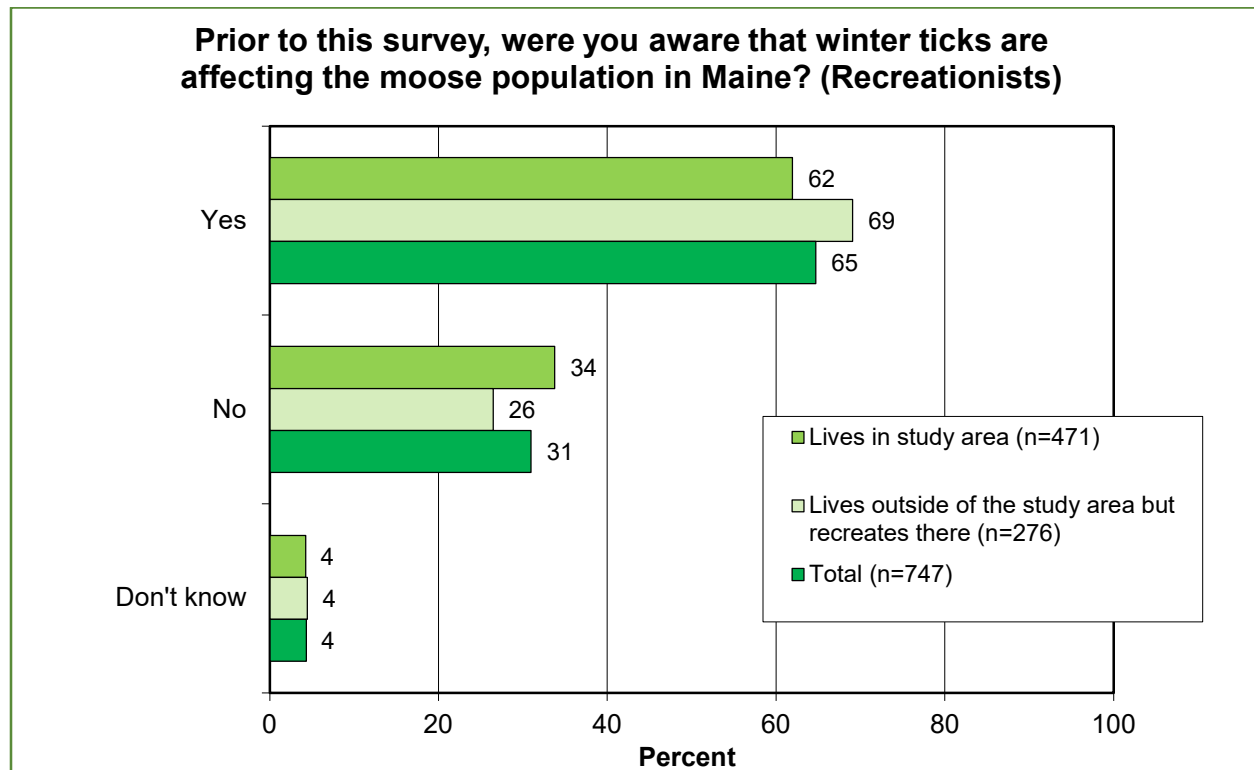
Just over half of recreationists (50% to 55%) think that the moose population in Maine is *about right*, while 41% to 42% of licensed anglers feel that way. Otherwise, they are much more likely to think the population is *too low* than to think it is *too high*.



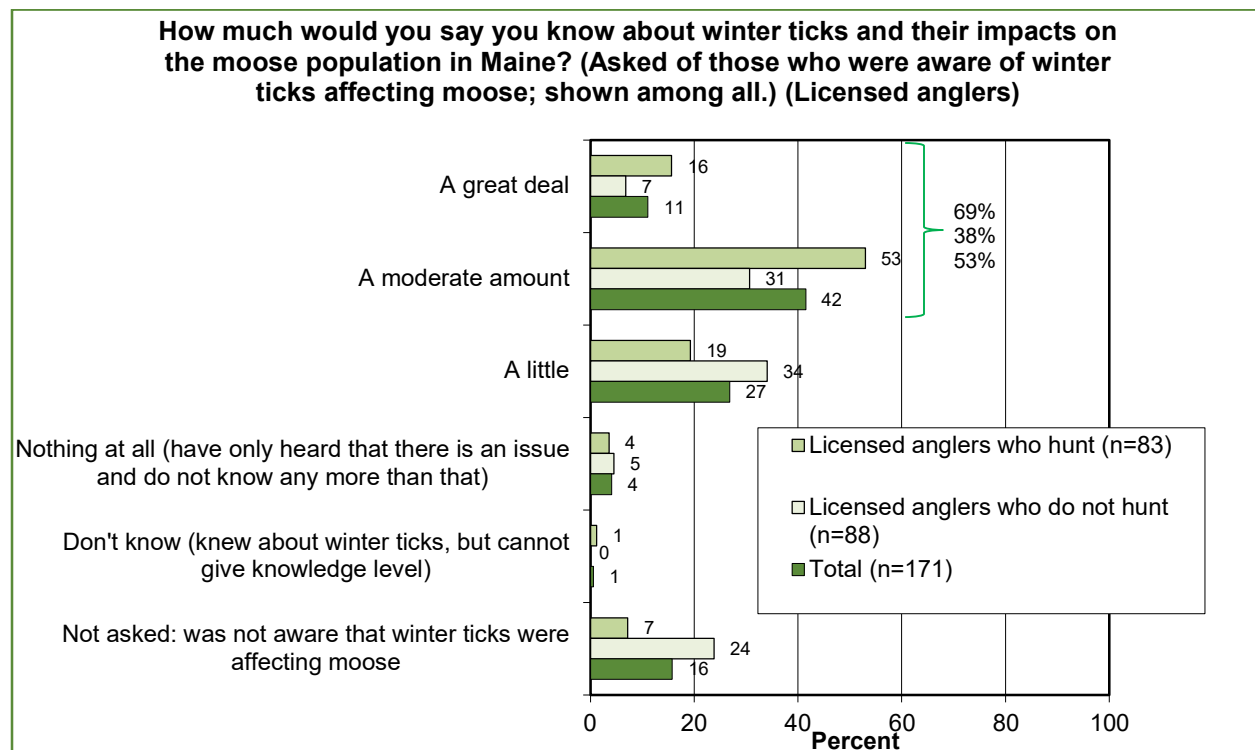
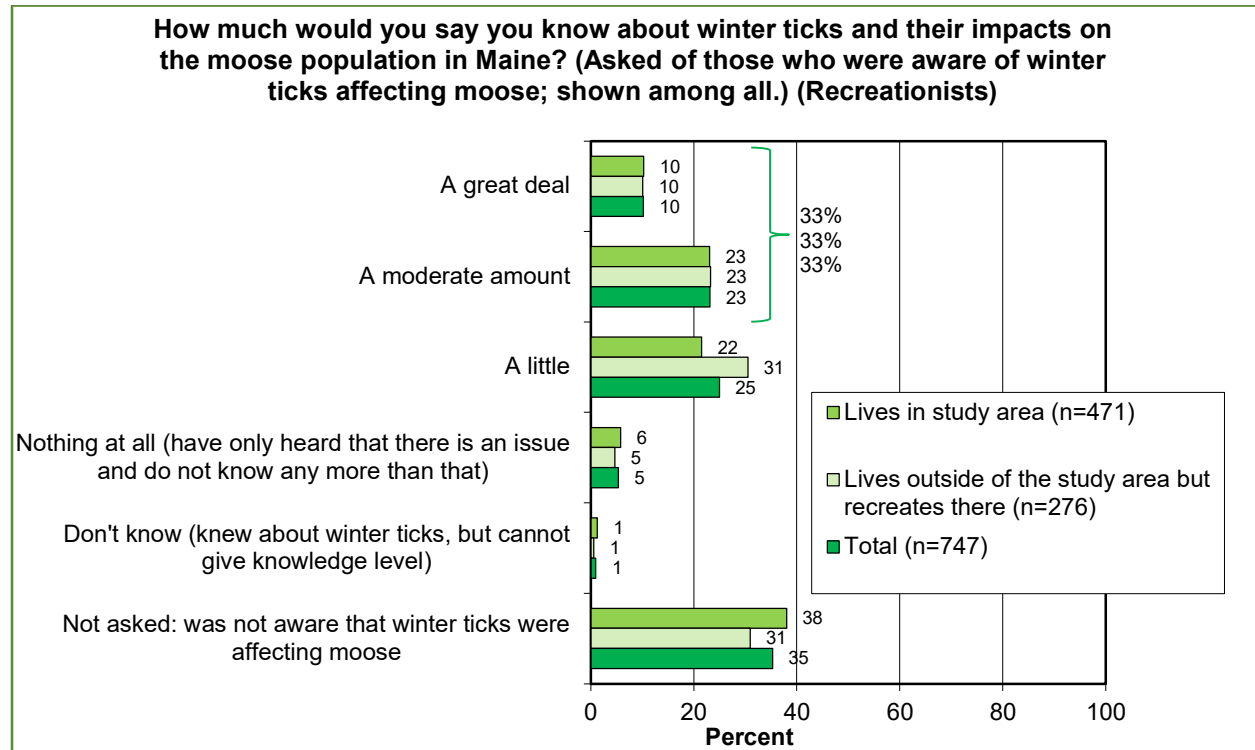
The survey also asked about the moose population where people engage in recreation. Majorities of recreationists (55% to 62%) think it is *about right*. Otherwise, they are much more likely to say it is *too low* than to say it is *too high*. Among licensed anglers, those who hunt are more likely to say it is *too low* than to say it is *about right*, while licensed anglers who do not hunt are more likely to say it is *about right* than to say it is *too low*. Very low percentages of licensed anglers say it is *too high*.



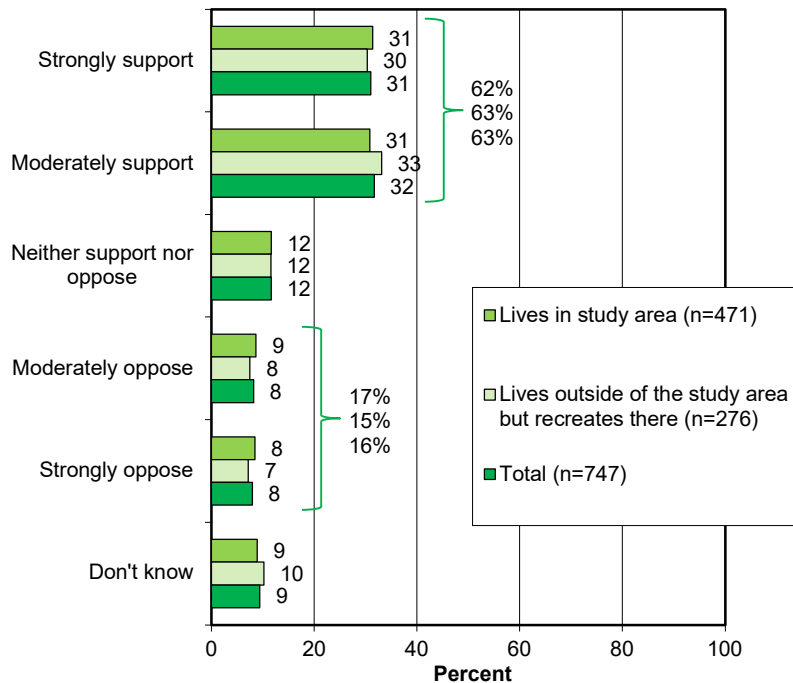
Licensed anglers are much more likely than recreationists to be aware of the winter tick problem. While about two thirds of recreationists (62% to 69%) were aware of it prior to the survey, from 76% to 93% of licensed anglers were aware.



Approximately a third of recreationists know *a great deal* or *a moderate amount*, with no difference between the crosstabulated groups. Among licensed anglers, knowledge is higher among those who also hunt than it is among licensed anglers who do not hunt. The majority of licensed anglers who hunt know *a great deal* or *a moderate amount*.

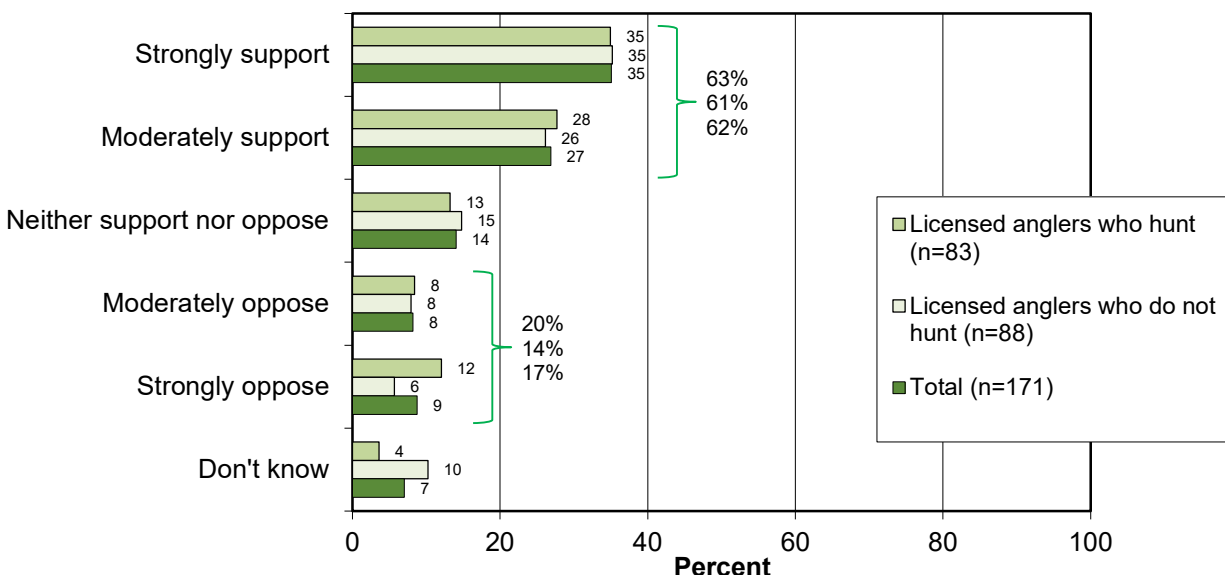


If the Department predicts a high winter tick load that would likely result in a high rate of moose calf deaths over the winter, would you support or oppose a moose hunt that allowed the limited harvest of additional moose calves to improve the overall rate of moose calf survival during the winter? (Recreationists)



Among recreationists, support for (62% to 63%) is three to four times higher than opposition to (15% to 17%) a moose hunt that allows the limited harvest of additional moose calves to improve the overall rate of moose calf survival during the winter, if conditions warrant it. The results among licensed anglers are quite similar: 61% to 63% would support it, while 14% to 20% would oppose.

If the Department predicts a high winter tick load that would likely result in a high rate of moose calf deaths over the winter, would you support or oppose a moose hunt that allowed the limited harvest of additional moose calves to improve the overall rate of moose calf survival during the winter? (Licensed anglers)

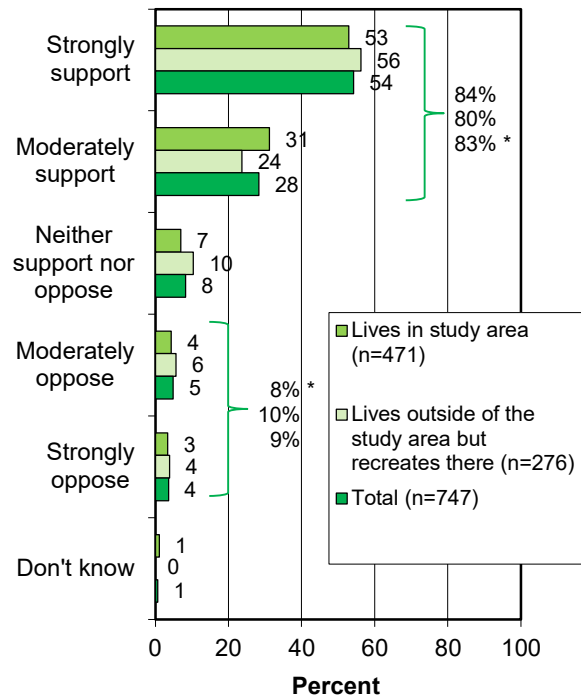


ATTITUDES TOWARD HUNTING

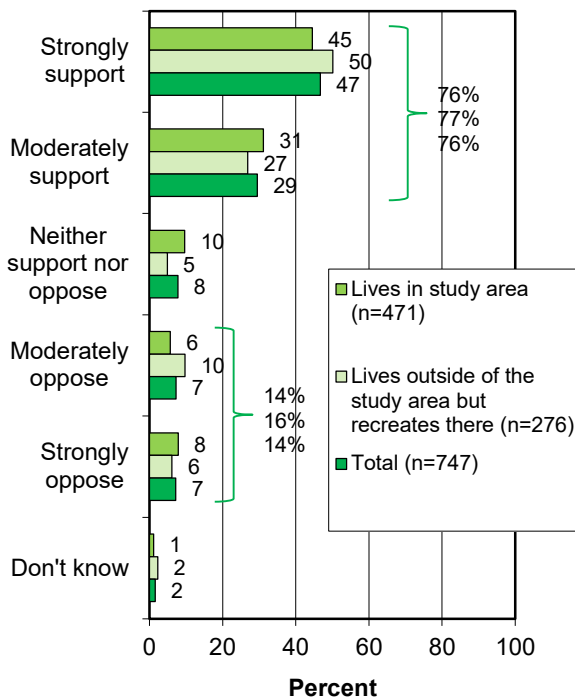
Among both recreationists and licensed anglers, support for exceeds opposition to legal, regulated hunting, to moose hunting specifically, and to moose hunting as a tool for moose management. Support is slightly higher for hunting in general than for moose hunting specifically among recreationists. Also, support is higher among licensed anglers than among recreationists on all three questions. These graphs are on this page and the next.

* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

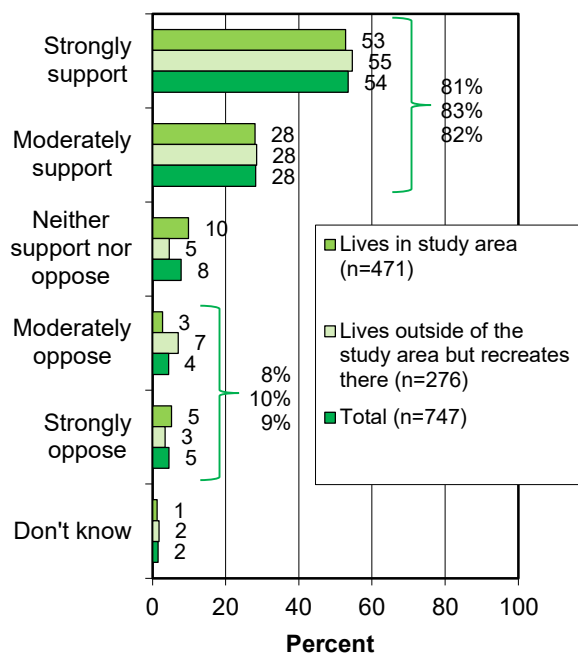
In general, do you support or oppose legal, regulated hunting? (Recreationists)

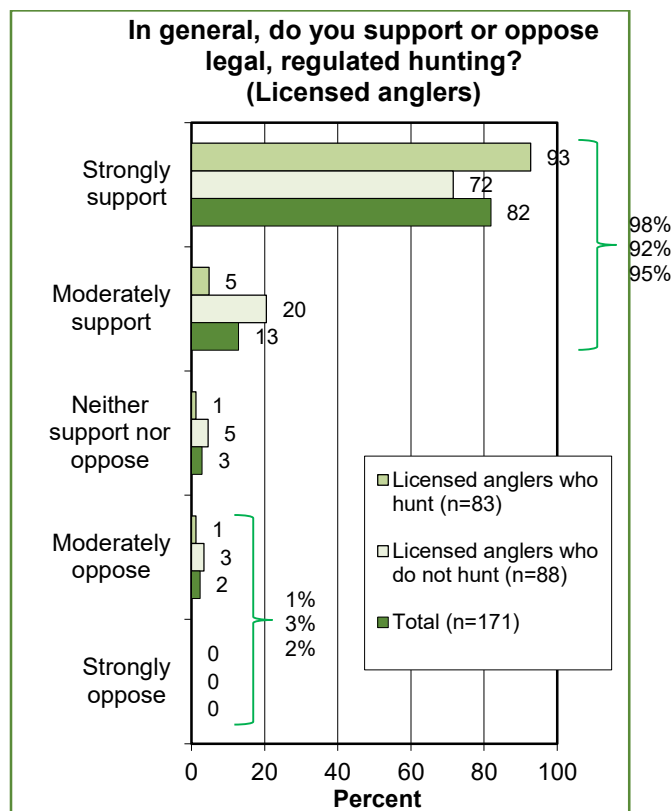


Do you support or oppose moose hunting in Maine? (Recreationists)

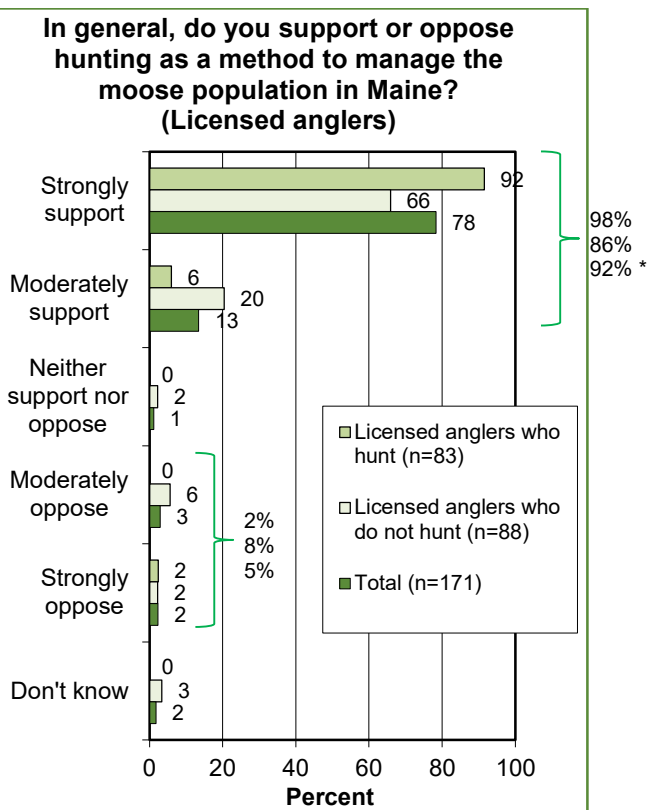
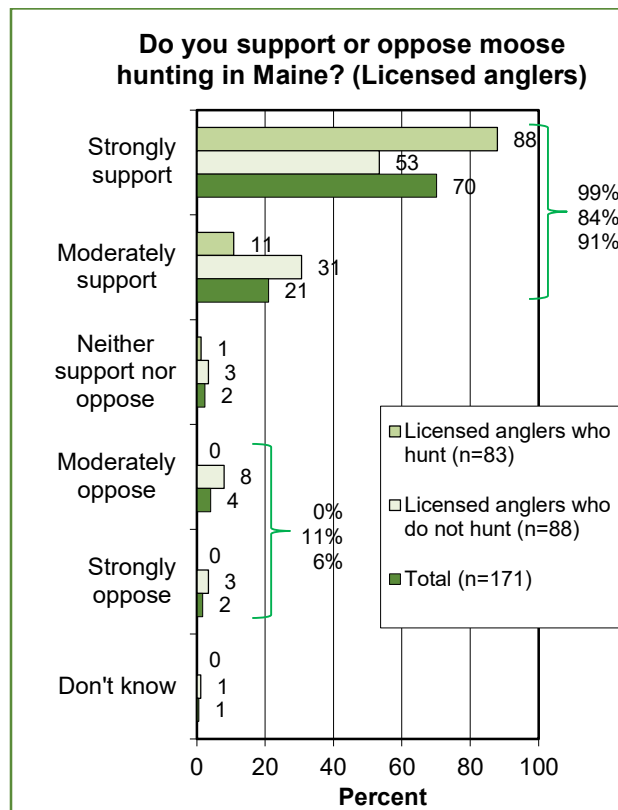


In general, do you support or oppose hunting as a method to manage the moose population in Maine? (Recreationists)

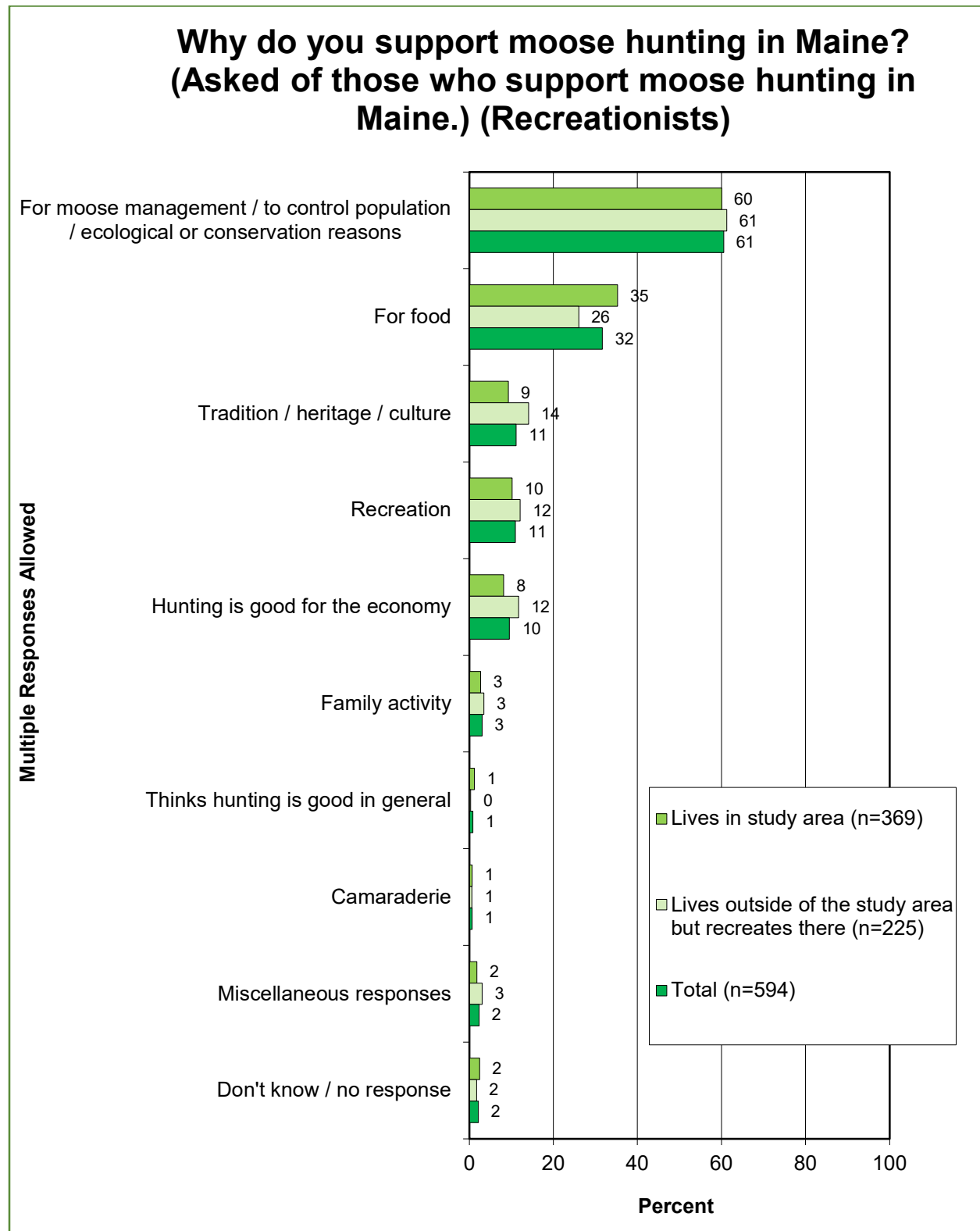




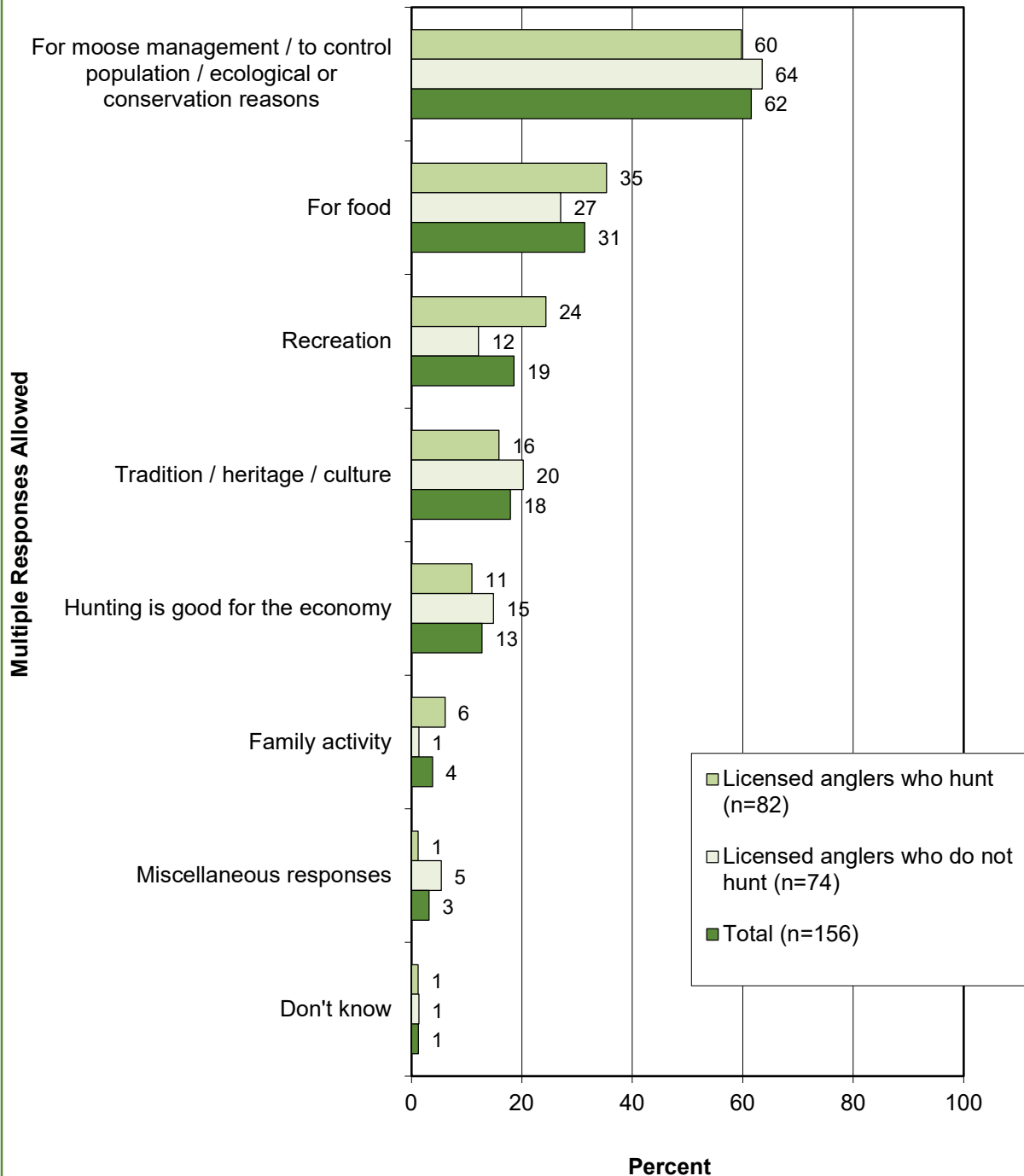
* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.



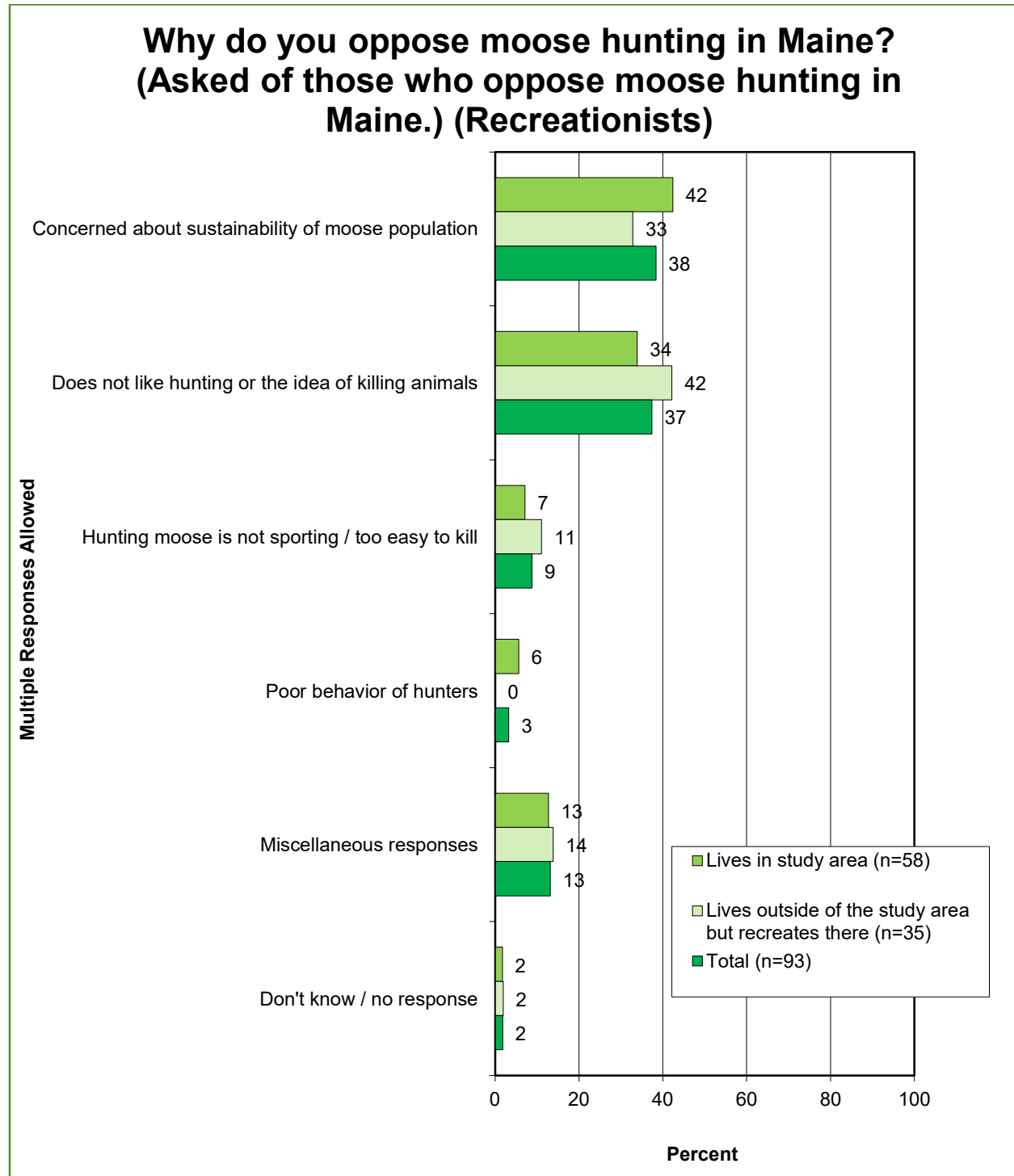
A follow-up question, which was open-ended, asked those who support moose hunting to say why they support it. Hunting as part of moose management and hunting for food are the top reasons that recreationists and licensed anglers support hunting.



Why do you support moose hunting in Maine? (Asked of those who support moose hunting in Maine.) (Licensed anglers)

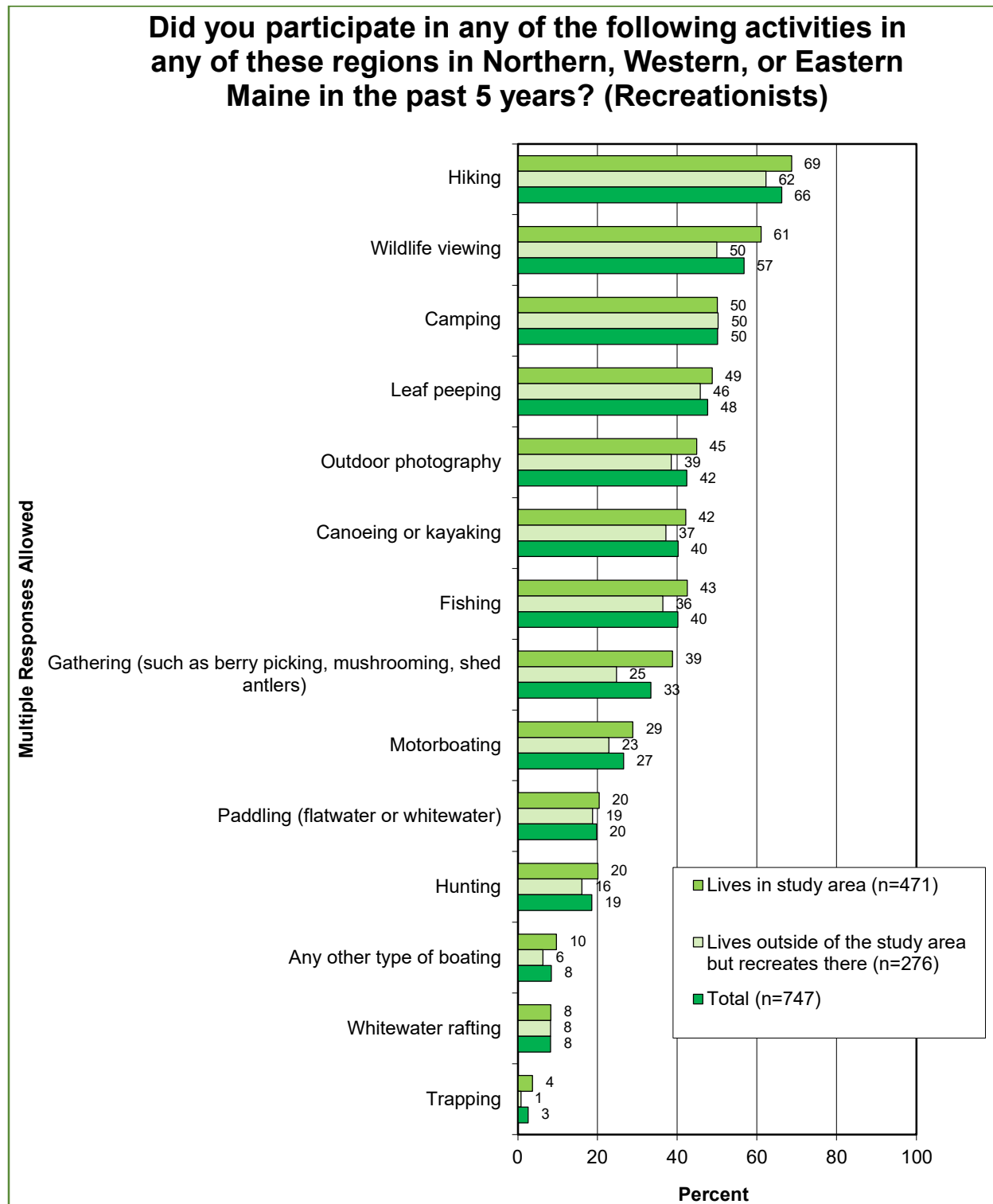


On the other end of the scale, the survey asked for reasons, in an open-ended question, that people oppose moose hunting. Concerns about the sustainability of the moose population and a simple dislike of killing animals are the top reasons for opposition among recreationists. Not enough licensed anglers opposed for the results to be shown in a graph.

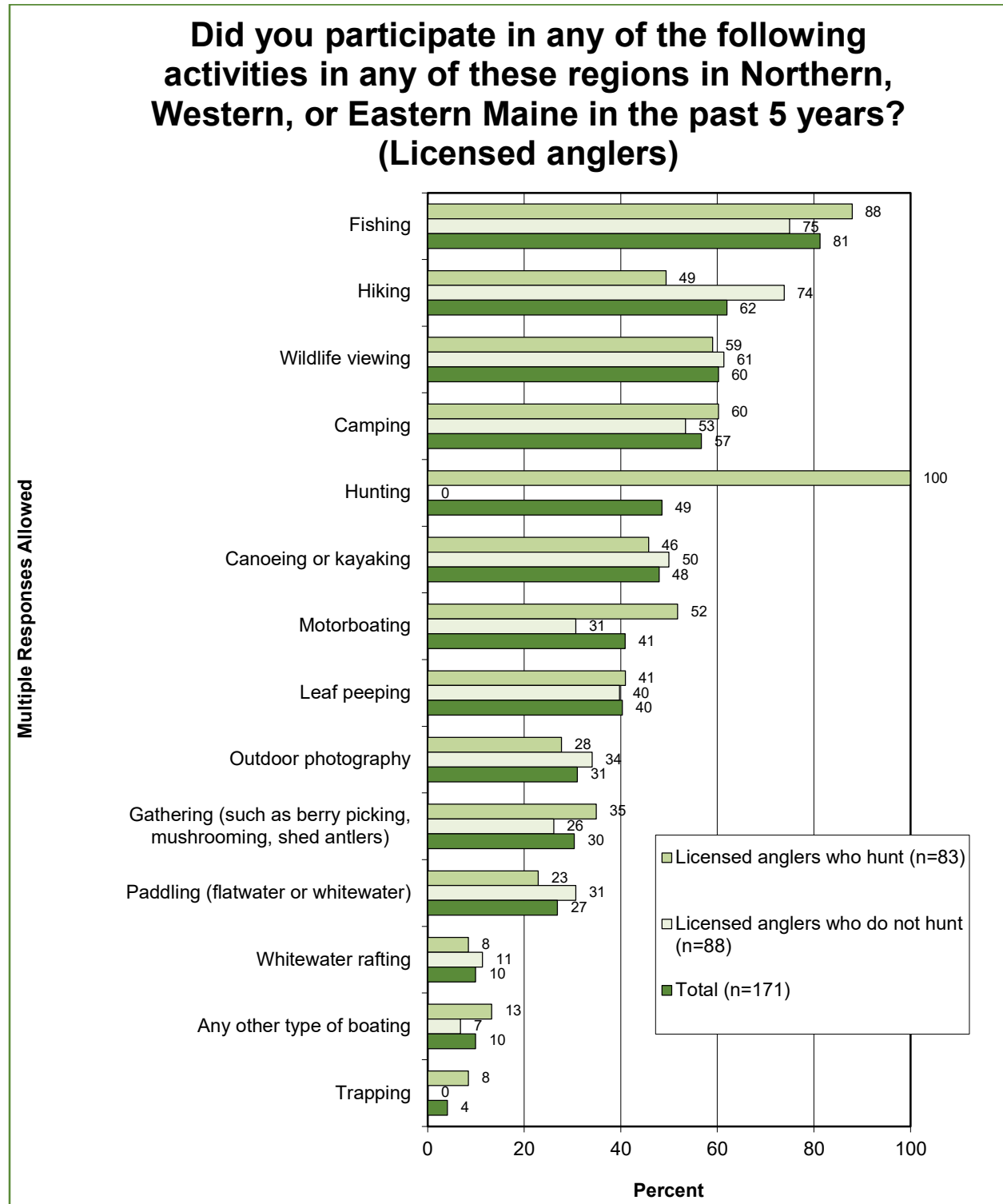


PARTICIPATION IN OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

Hiking, wildlife viewing, camping, and leaf peeping are the most popular outdoor activities in the study area. These are the four most popular activities among those living in the study area as well as recreationists visiting the study area.

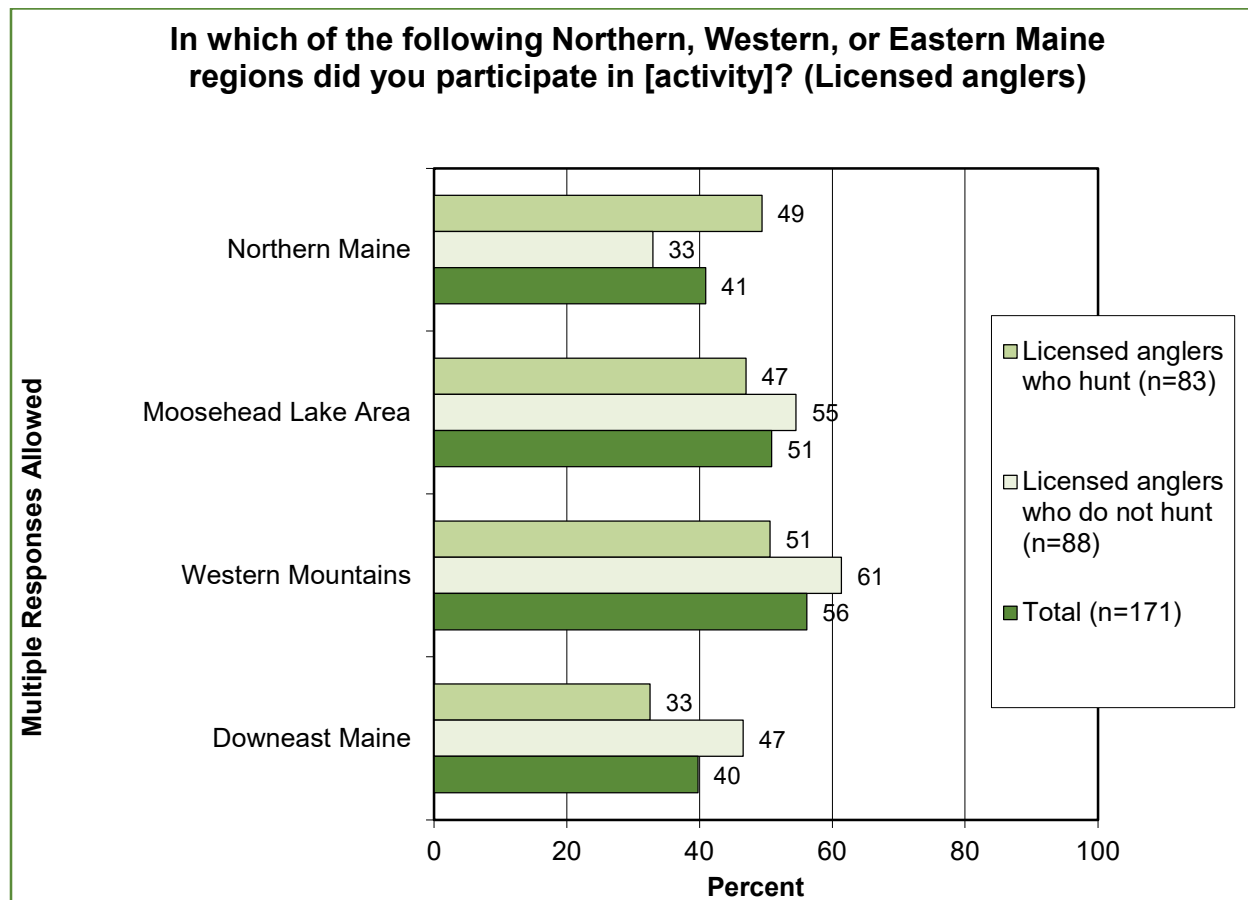
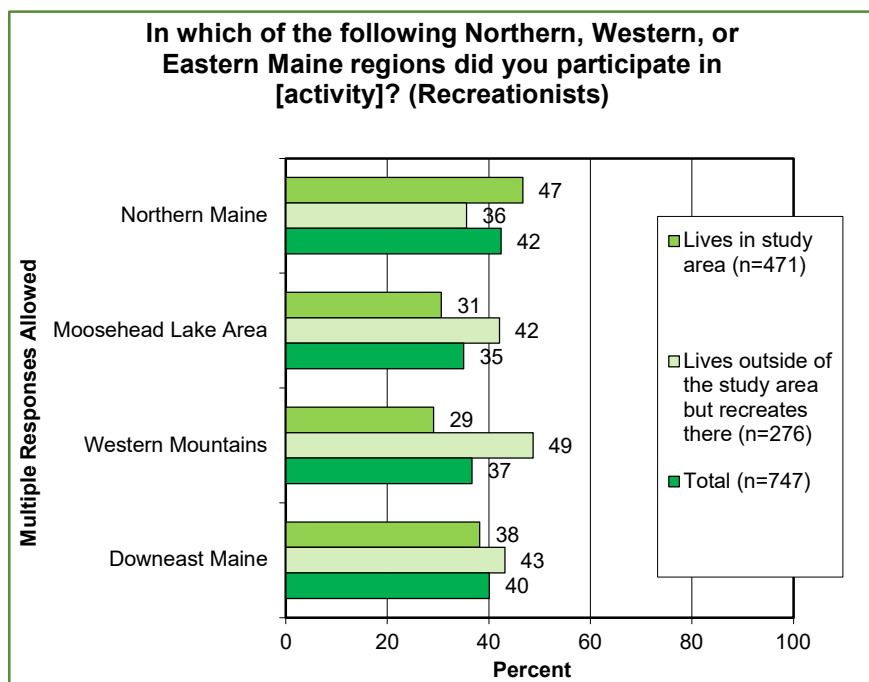


Among licensed anglers who hunt, the most popular non-hunting outdoor activities are fishing, camping, wildlife viewing, and motorboating—done by a majority of all licensed anglers who also hunt. Among non-hunting licensed anglers, the most popular outdoor activities are fishing, hiking, wildlife viewing, camping, and canoeing/kayaking—done by 50% or more.



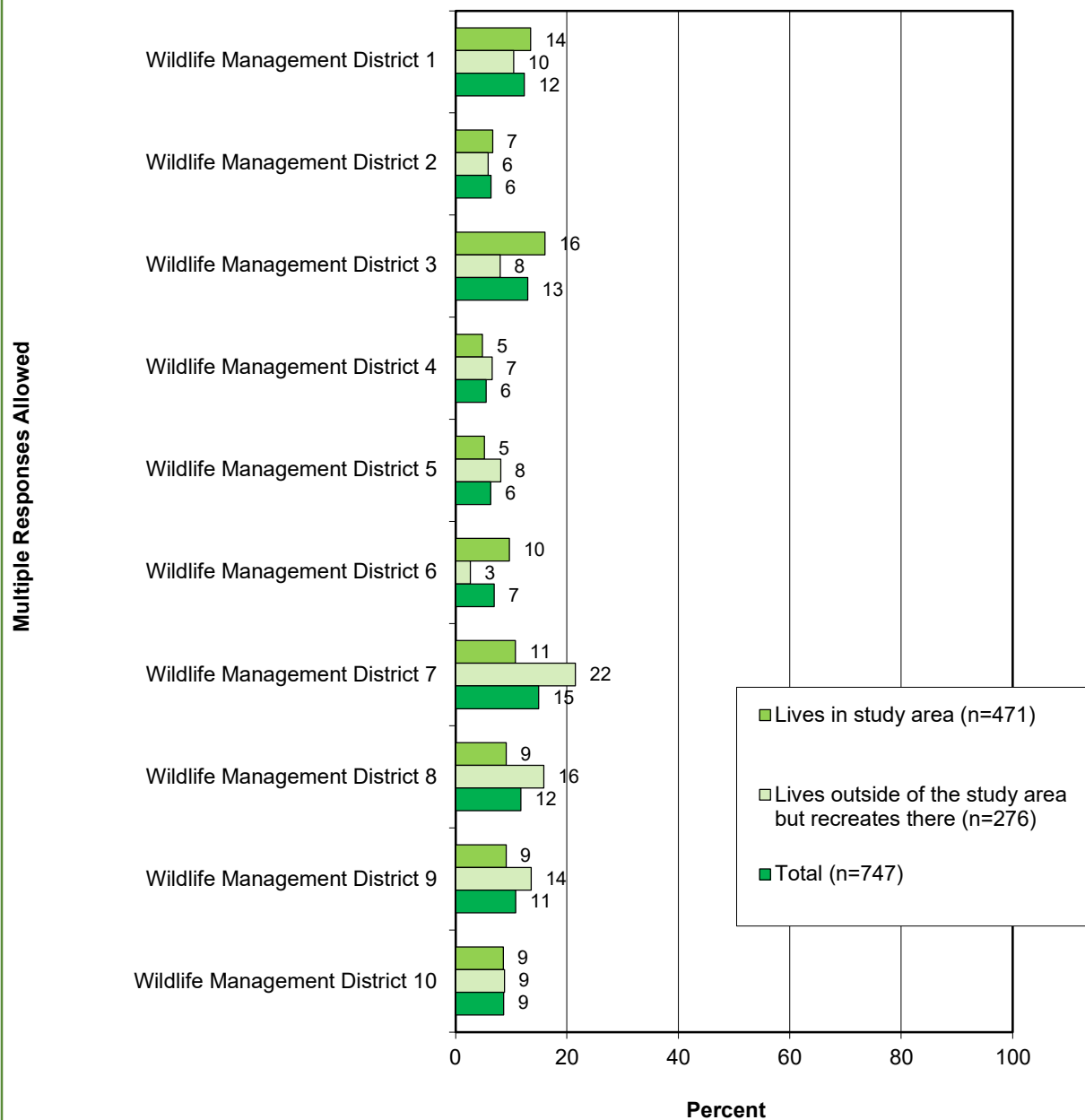
LOCATIONAL INFORMATION

Recreationists are fairly evenly spread among the regions when they engage in outdoor activities: from 35% to 42% participate in the regions. Those who live outside the study area most commonly go to the Western Mountains for recreation. Meanwhile, licensed anglers' most popular regions are the Western Mountains and the Moosehead Lake Area. The graph shows some differences, though, by whether anglers also hunt or not.

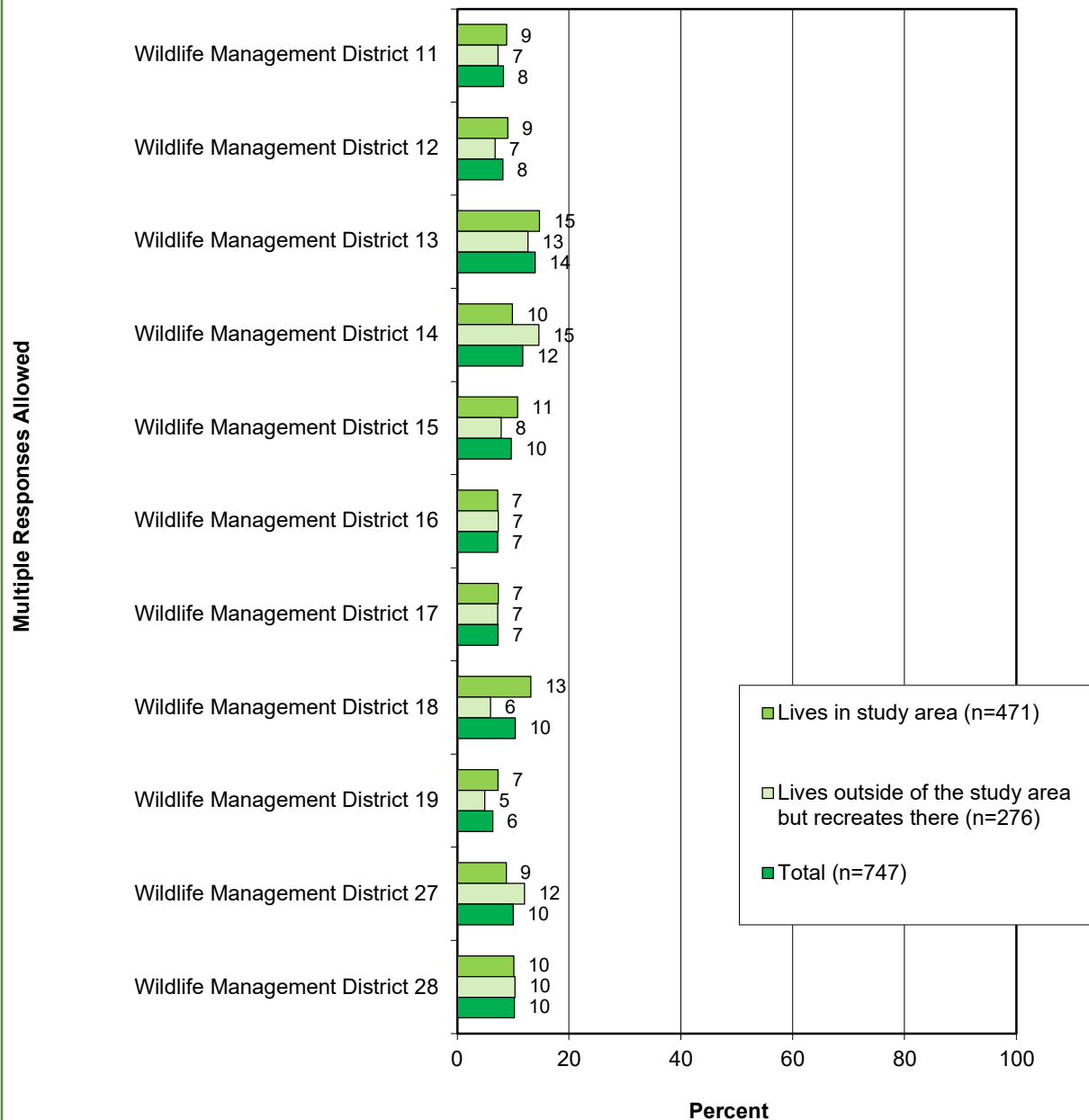


The four graphs that follow show the WMDs in which recreationists and licensed anglers recreate.

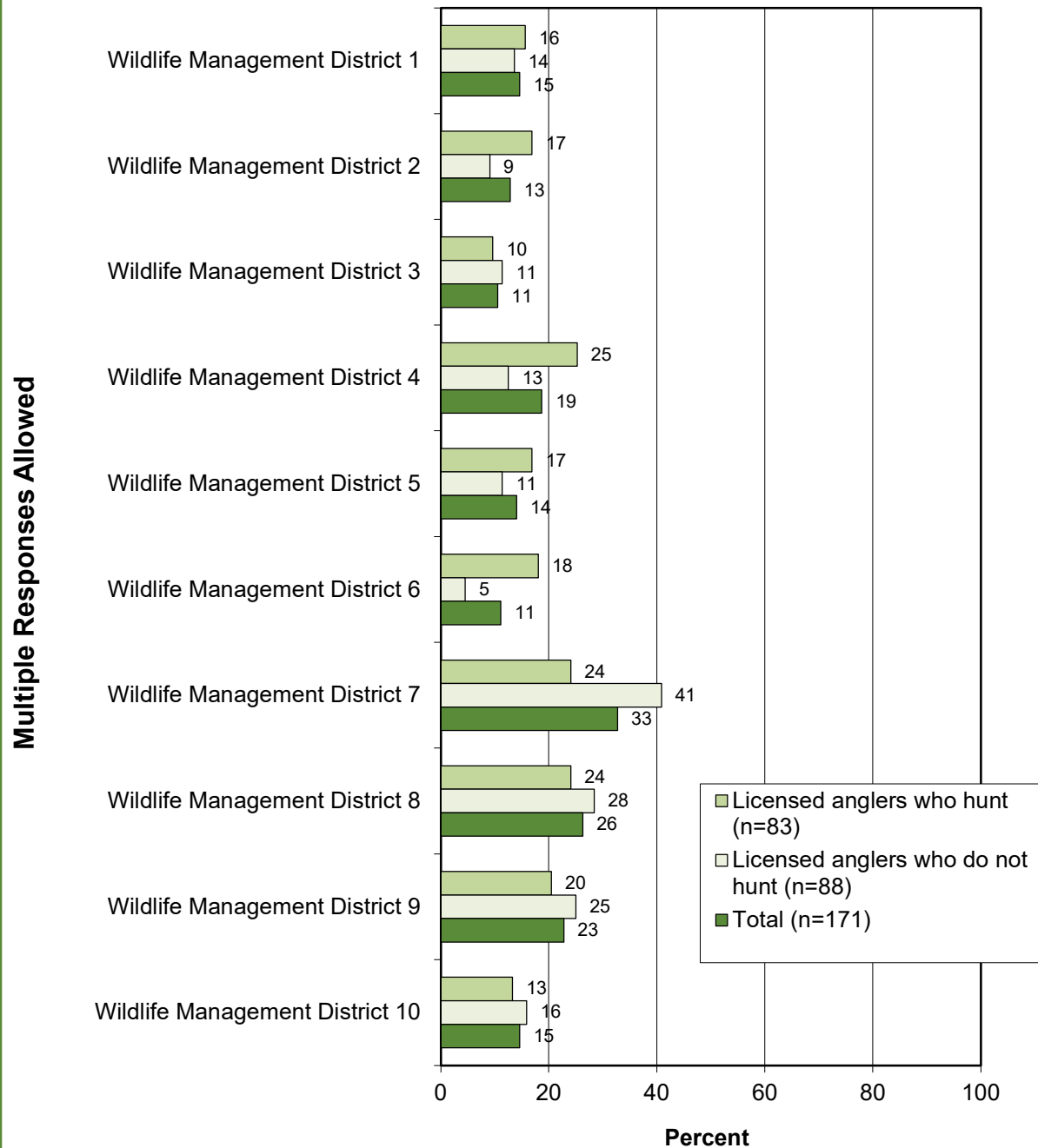
**In which Wildlife Management District(s)
(WMDs) did you participate in the outdoor
activity(ies) you selected in the past 5 years?
(Recreationists) (Part 1)**



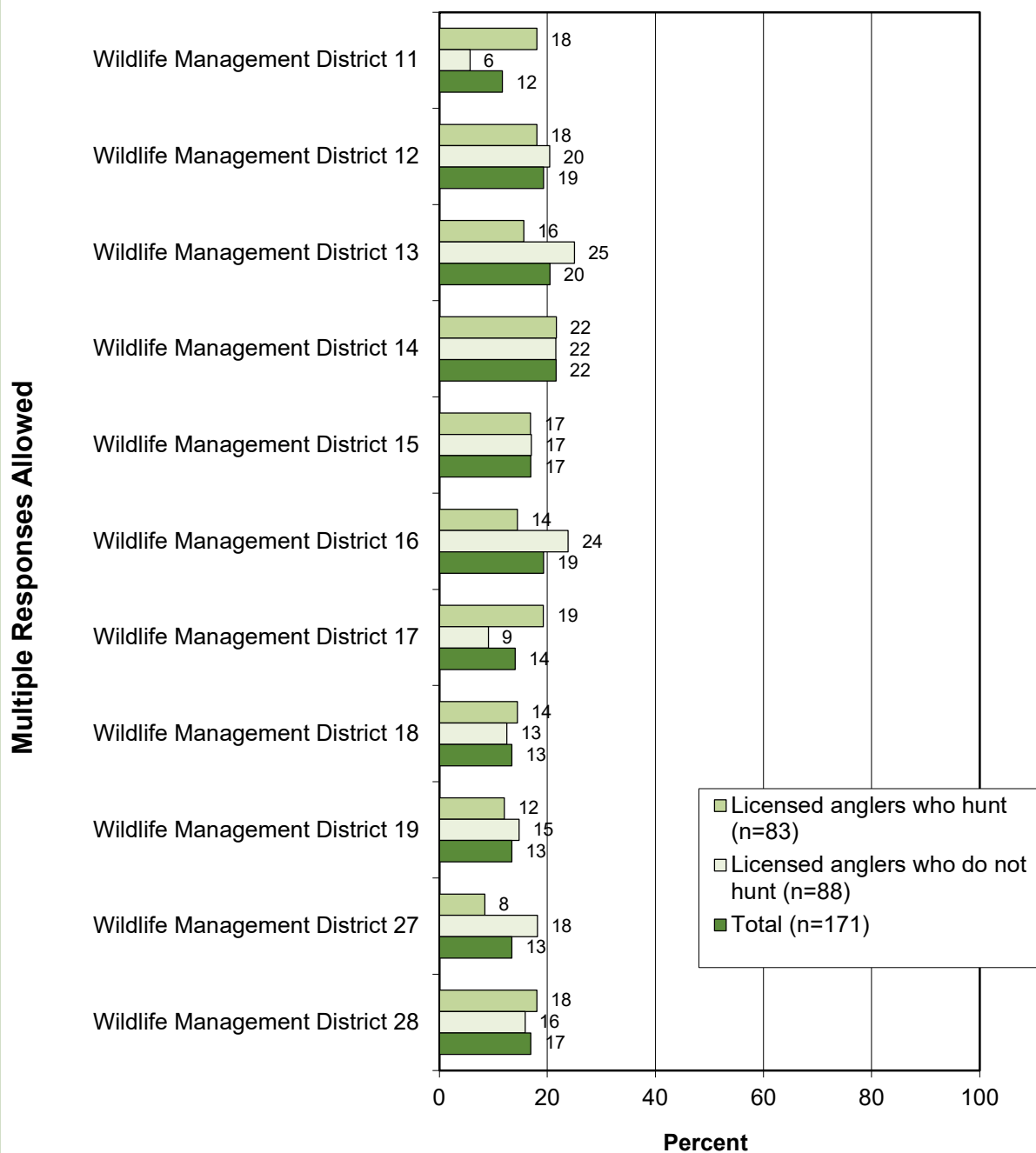
**In which Wildlife Management District(s)
(WMDs) did you participate in the outdoor
activity(ies) you selected in the past 5 years?
(Recreationists) (Part 2)**



**In which Wildlife Management District(s)
(WMDs) did you participate in the outdoor
activity(ies) you selected in the past 5 years?
(Licensed anglers) (Part 1)**

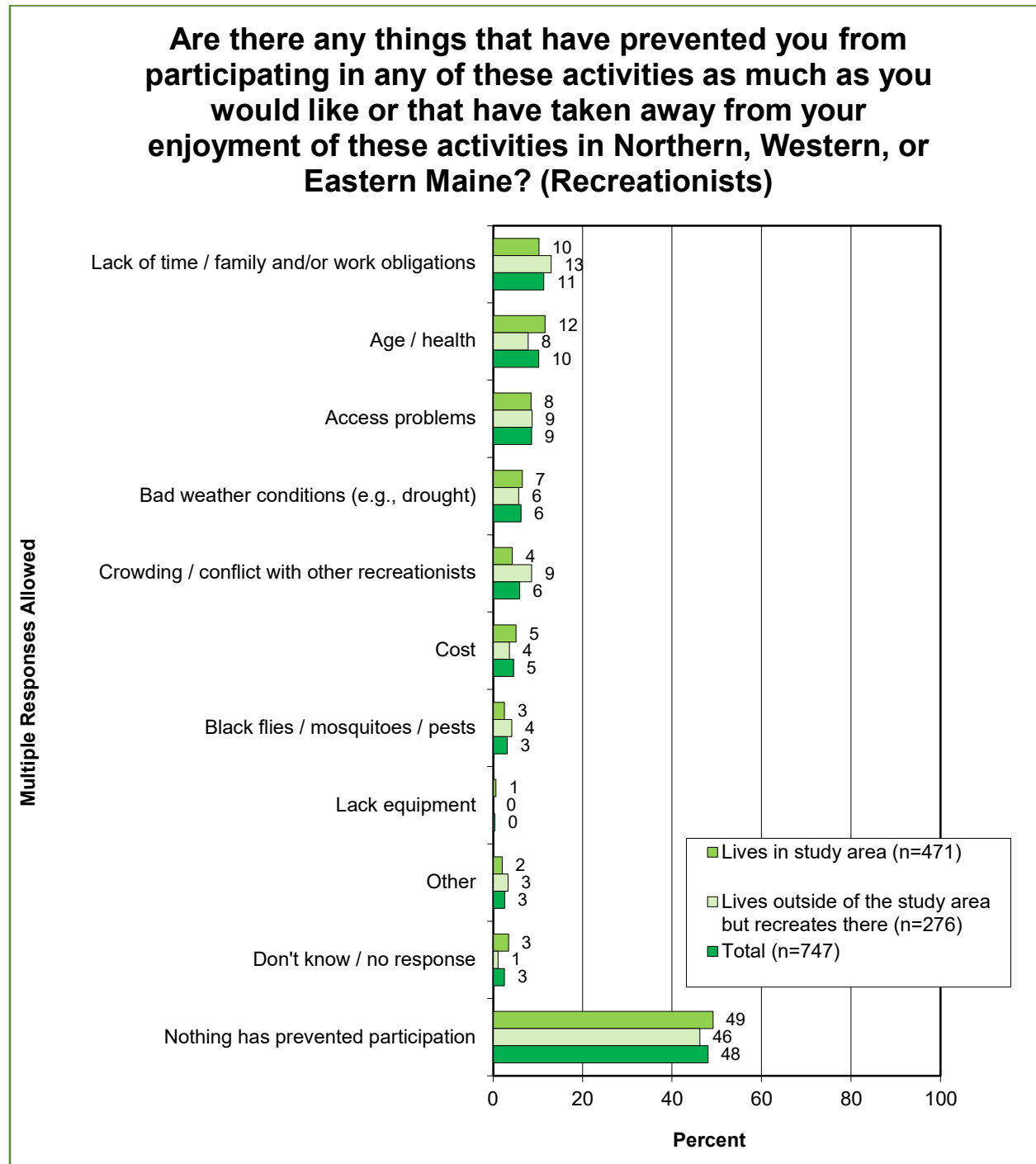


**In which Wildlife Management District(s)
(WMDs) did you participate in the outdoor
activity(ies) you selected in the past 5 years?
(Licensed anglers) (Part 2)**

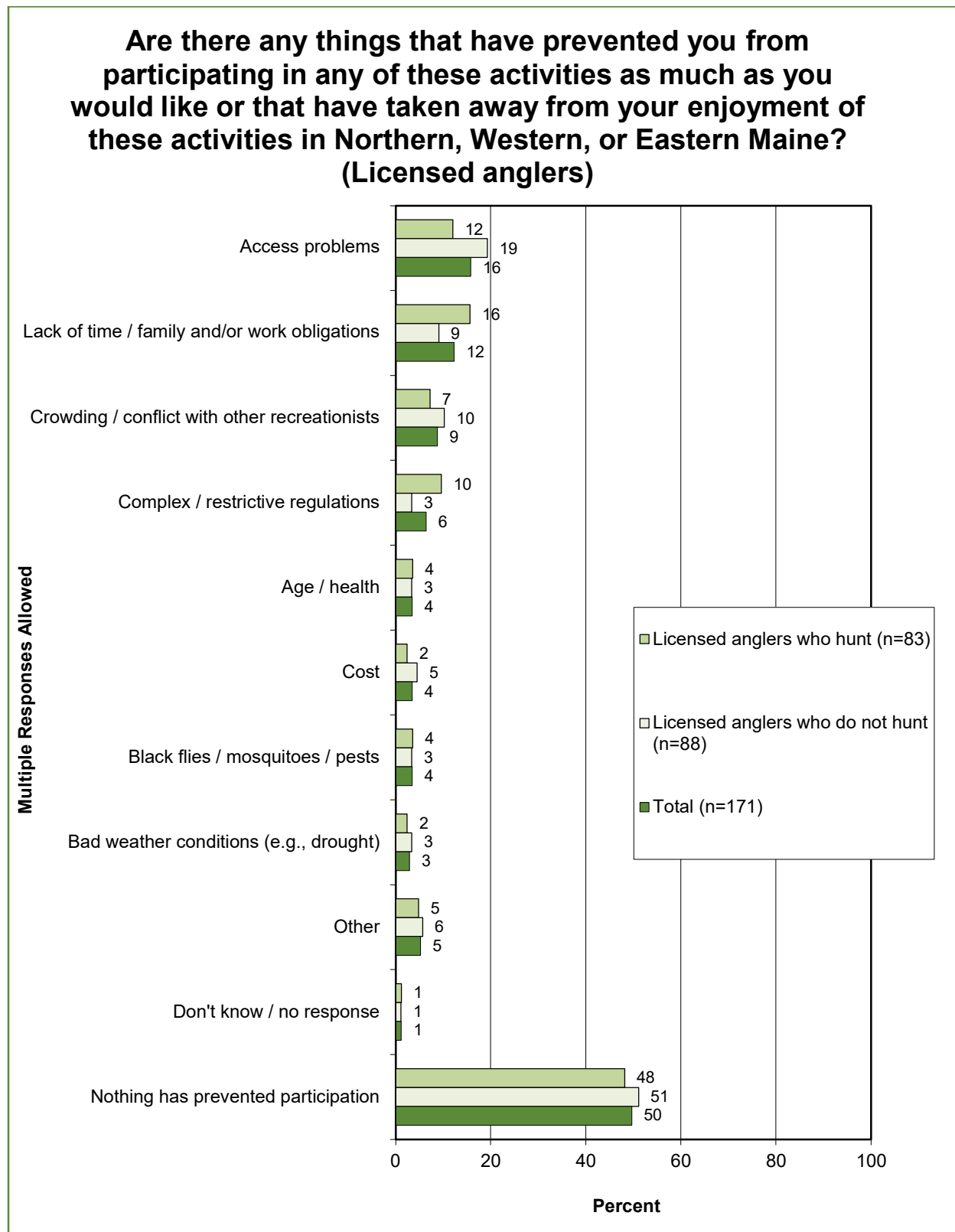


CONFLICTS AND CONSTRAINTS TO PARTICIPATION

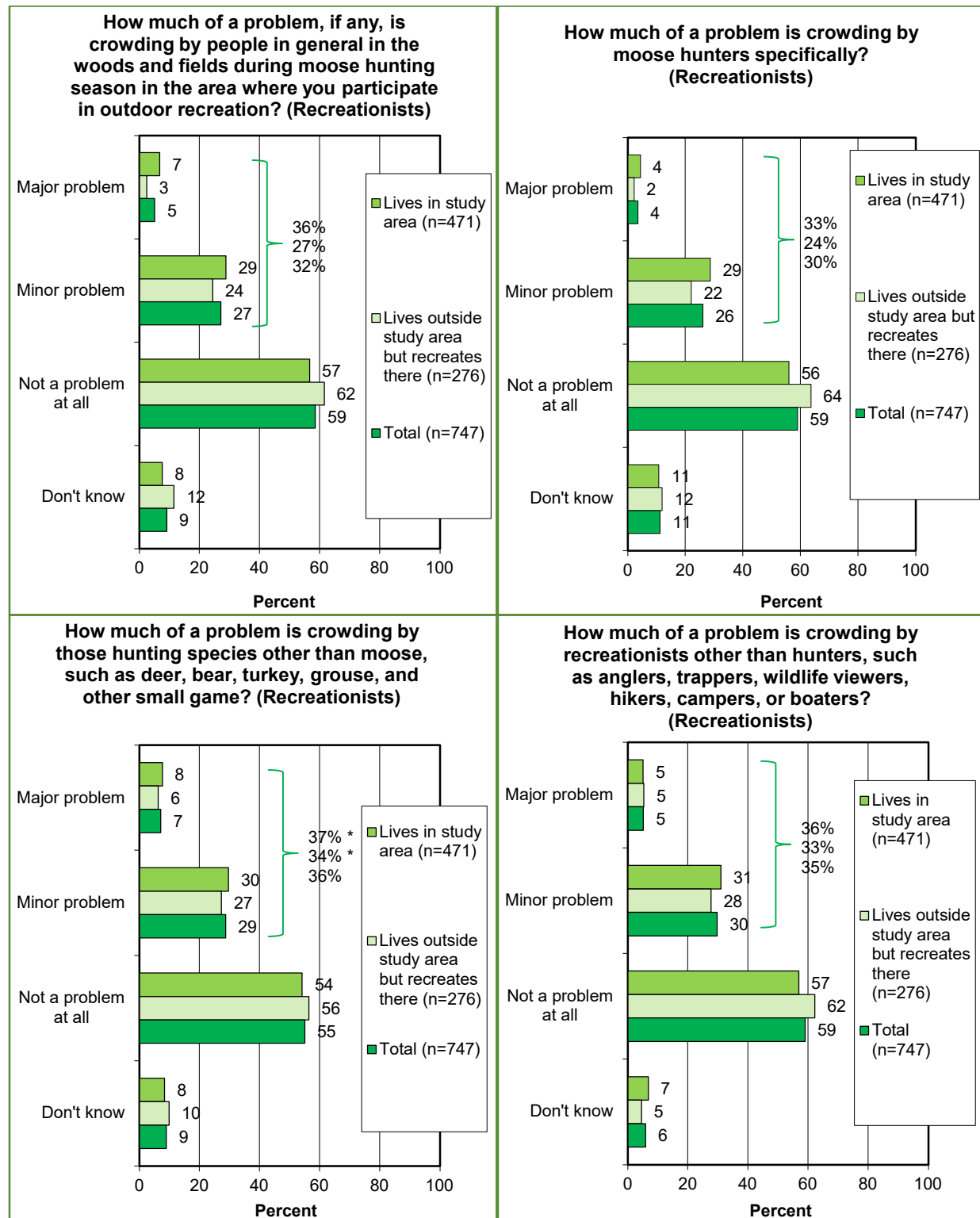
A basic question simply asked, in an open-ended format, if there were any things that prevented participation in outdoor recreation or that detracted from the experience. Lack of time and age/health were the top two problems among recreationists—social issues. The third most common problem was access.



Among licensed anglers, access is the top constraint/detractor, and crowding is also in the top tier. Lack of time rounds out the top tier.

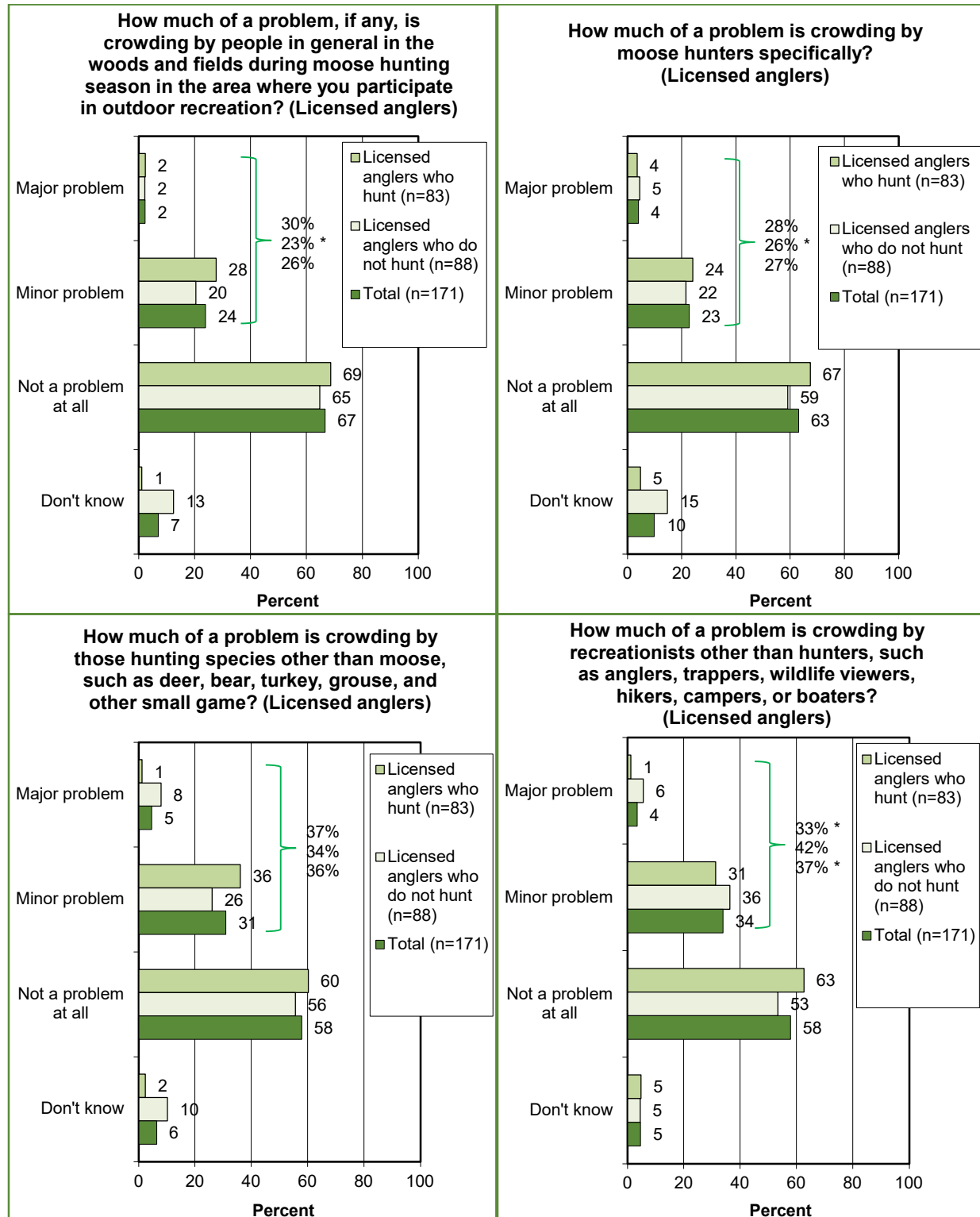


Approximately a third of recreationists say that crowding is a problem—crowding by people in general, by hunters, and by other recreationists. However, the problem is more *minor* than *major* on all four questions.



* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

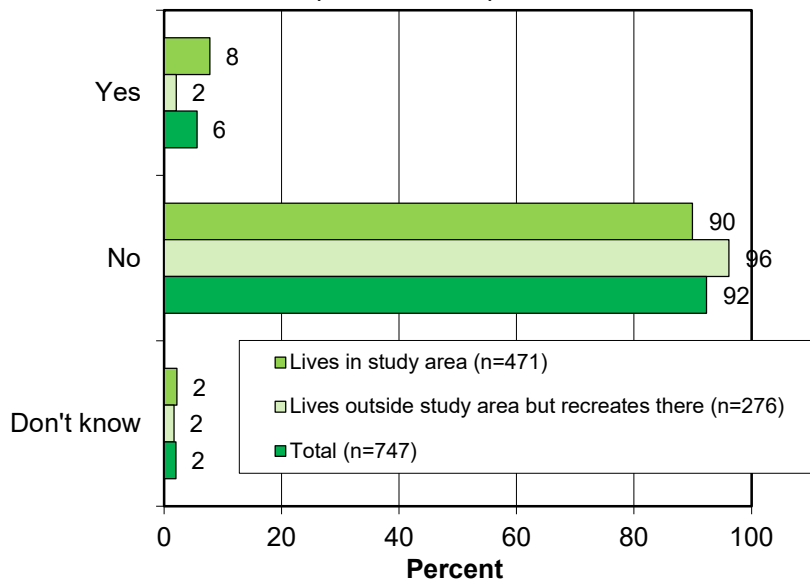
Among licensed anglers, approximately a third say that crowding is a problem (mostly minor rather than major) by people in general, by hunters other than moose hunters, and among other recreationists. Regarding moose hunters, approximately a quarter say crowding by them is a problem.



* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

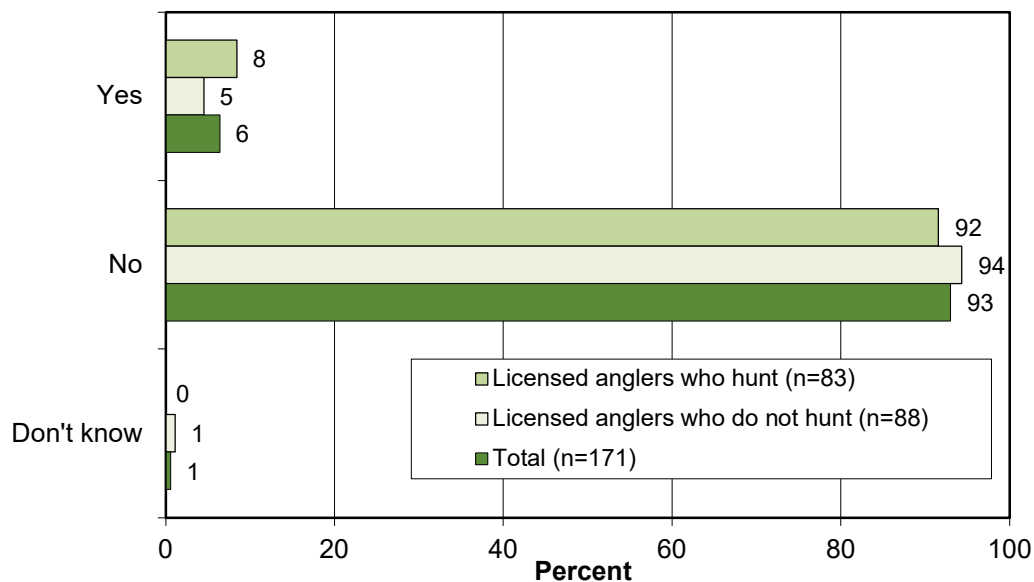
Again, moose hunting seasons occur primarily in late September and again from mid-October through the first week of November, depending on the Wildlife Management District. Have you experienced conflicts with anyone else at all during moose hunting season in the area where you participate in activities?

(Recreationists)

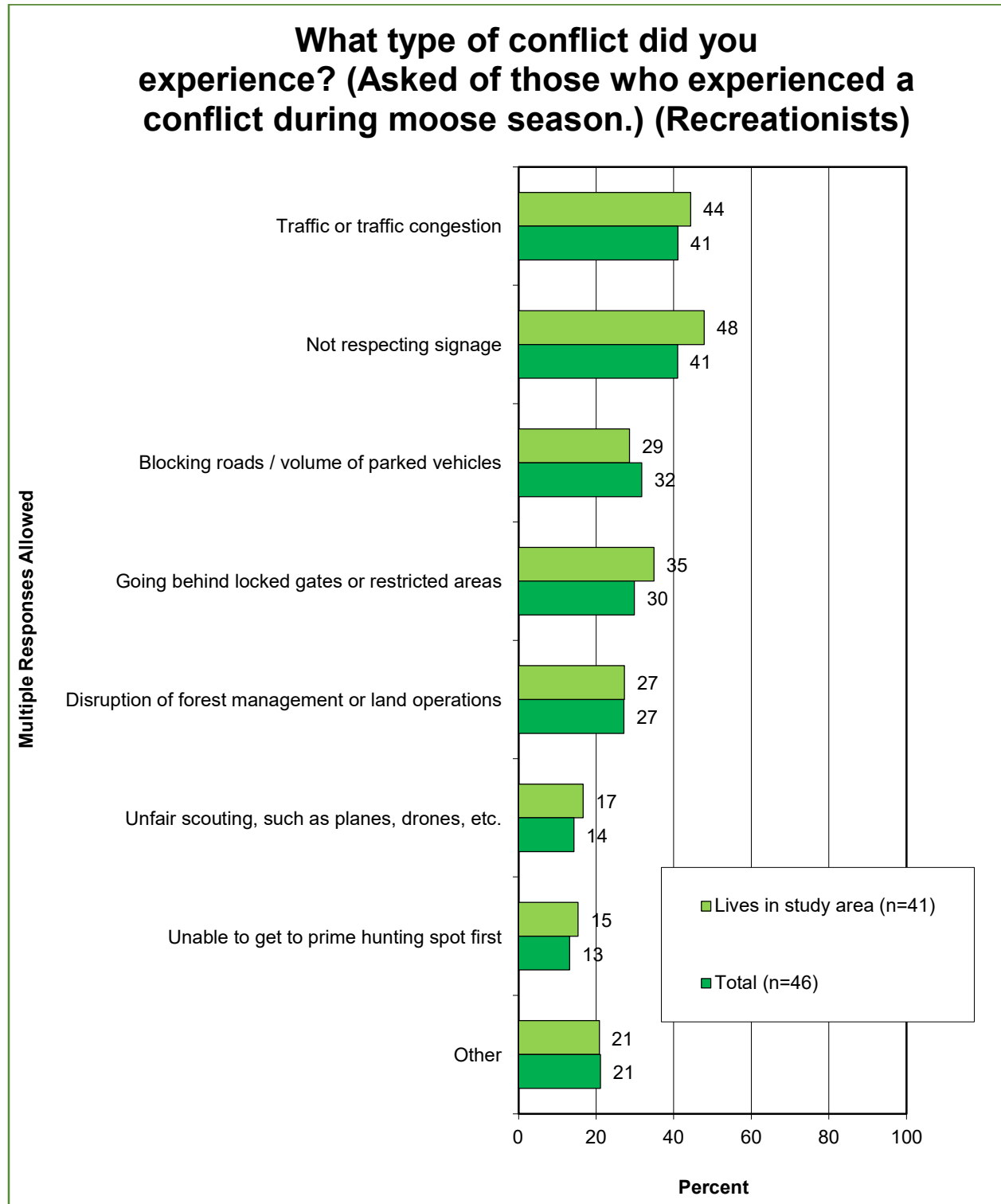


Among both recreationists and licensed anglers, the rate of conflict was from 2% to 8%, being highest among recreationists who live in the study area and anglers who also hunt.

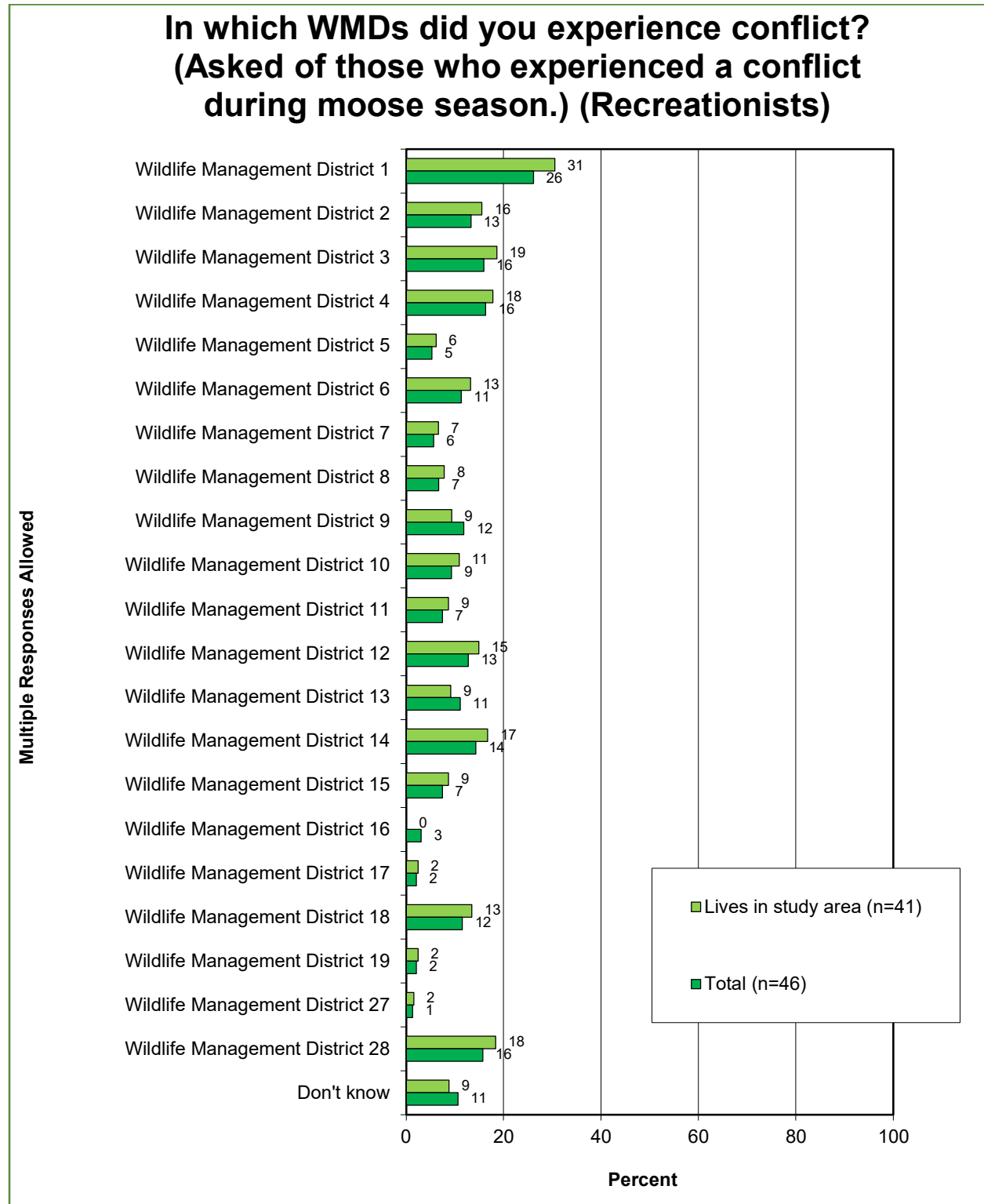
Again, moose hunting seasons occur primarily in late September and again from mid-October through the first week of November, depending on the Wildlife Management District. Have you experienced conflicts with anyone else at all during moose hunting season in the area where you participate in activities? (Licensed anglers)



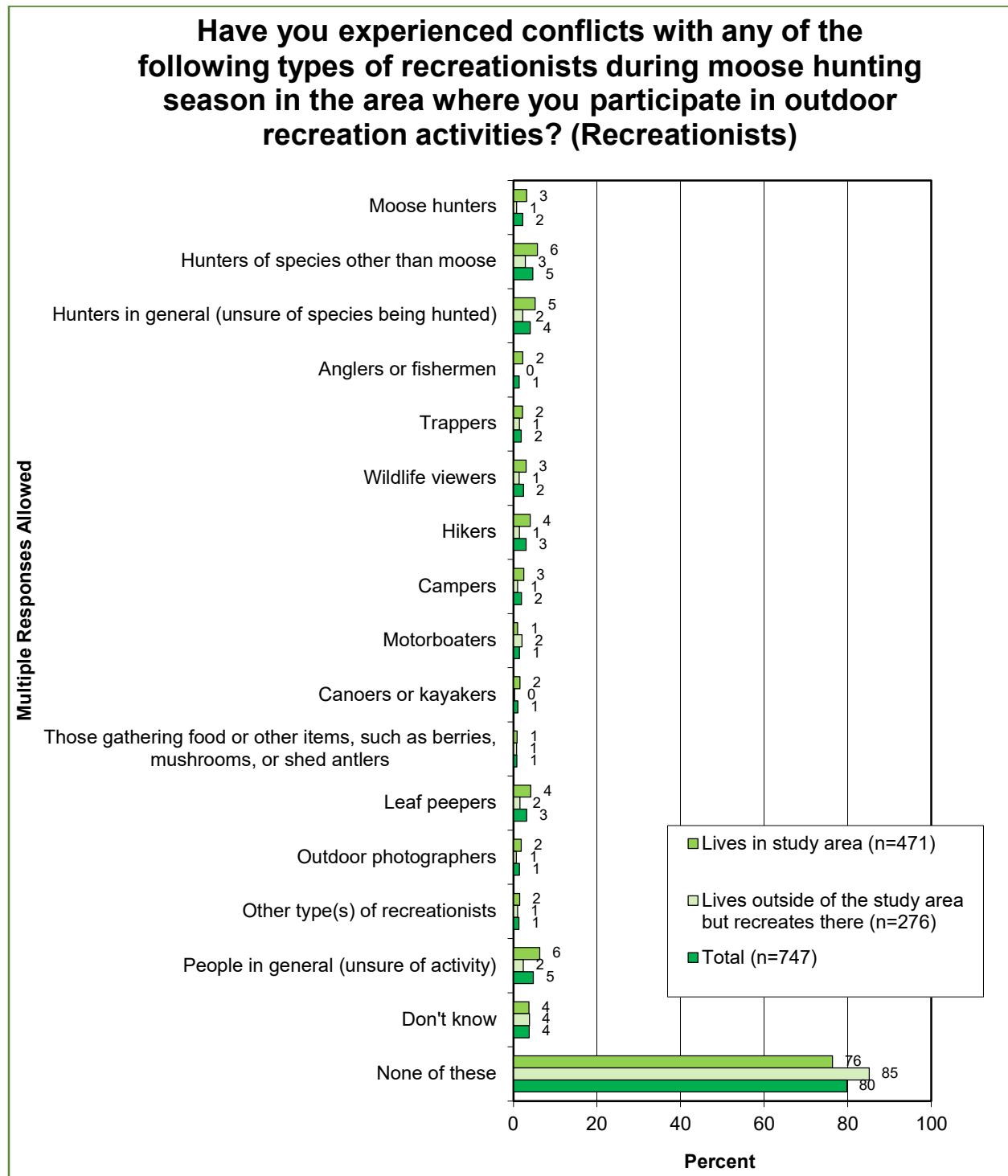
The types of conflict are shown in the accompanying graph. Traffic/congestion and not respecting signage are the most common problems. Not enough recreationists who live outside of the study area but recreate in the study area got the question to be included in the graph. Not enough licensed anglers got the question for their results to be graphed.



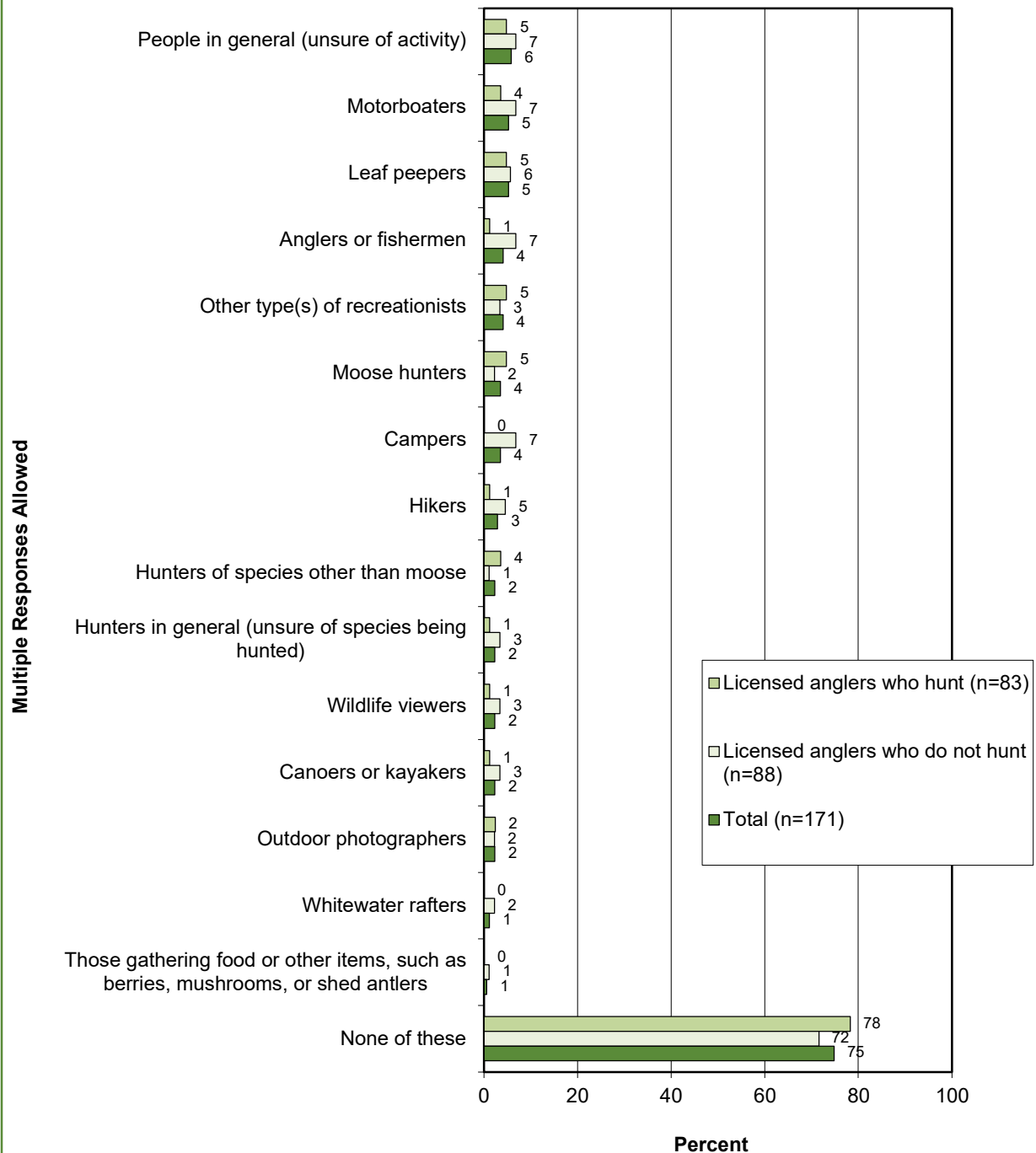
The WMDs in which conflict occurred are shown in this graph, with WMD 1 leading the list. Again, not enough recreationists who live outside of the study area but recreate in the study area got the question to be included in the graph, and not enough licensed anglers got the question for their results to be graphed.



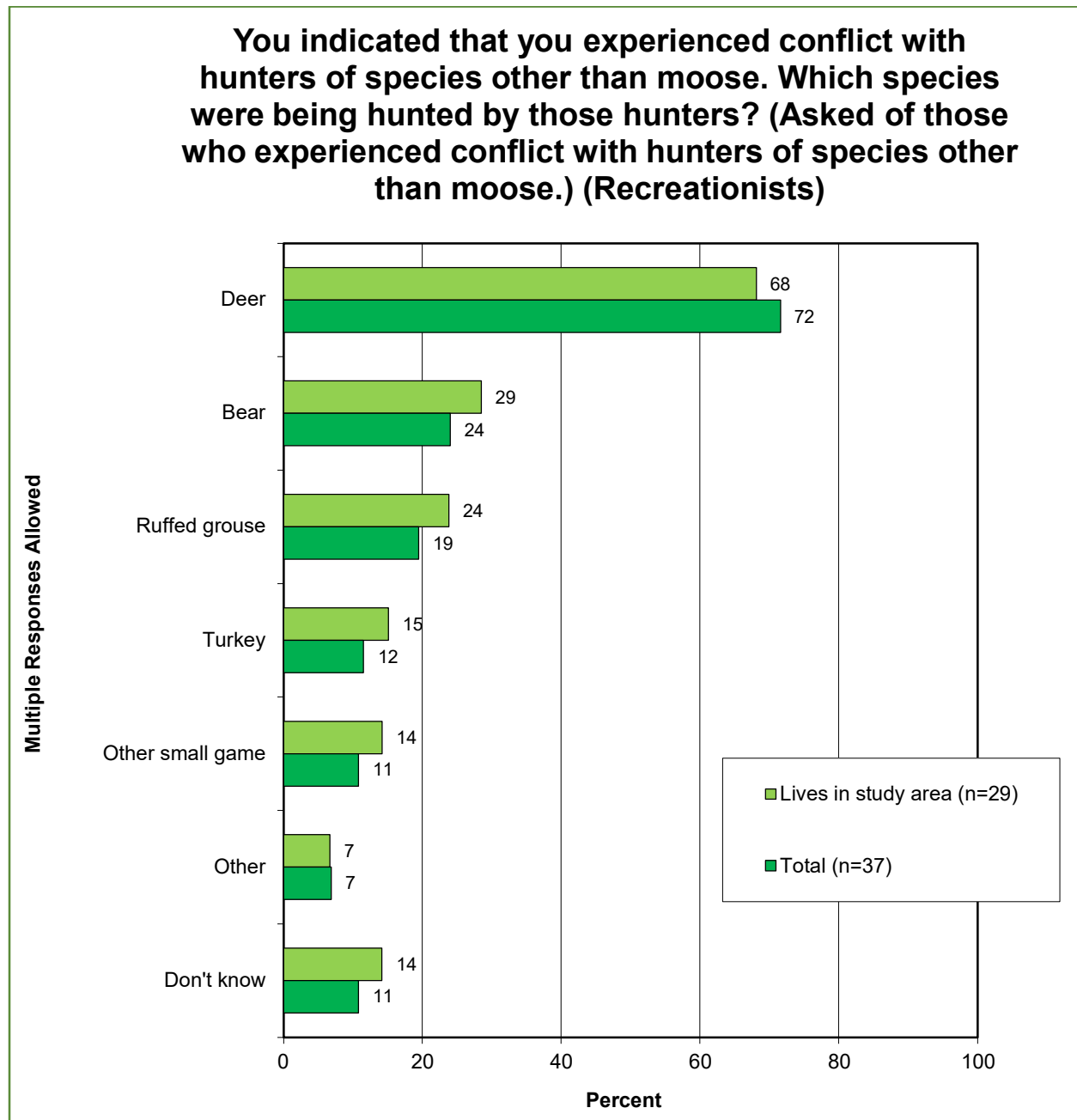
The survey presented all recreationists and licensed anglers with a list of potential recreationists with which they may have had conflict, asking them to select all that applied. No type of recreationist had a large percentage, with the highest being the 7% of licensed anglers who do not hunt having conflict with people in general, motorboaters, other anglers, and campers. The recreationists' graph is on this page; licensed anglers' graph is on the next page.



Have you experienced conflicts with any of the following types of recreationists during moose hunting season in the area where you participate in outdoor recreation activities? (Licensed anglers)

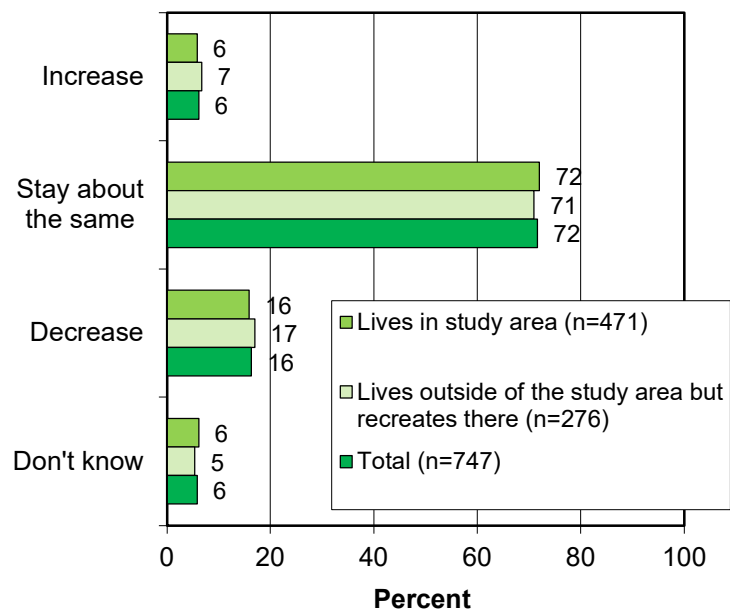


A follow-up question of those who said that they had experienced conflict with hunters other than moose hunters shows that deer hunters are the most common culprits. Not enough recreationists who live outside of the study area but recreate in the study area got the question to be included in the graph, and not enough licensed anglers got the question for their results to be graphed at all.

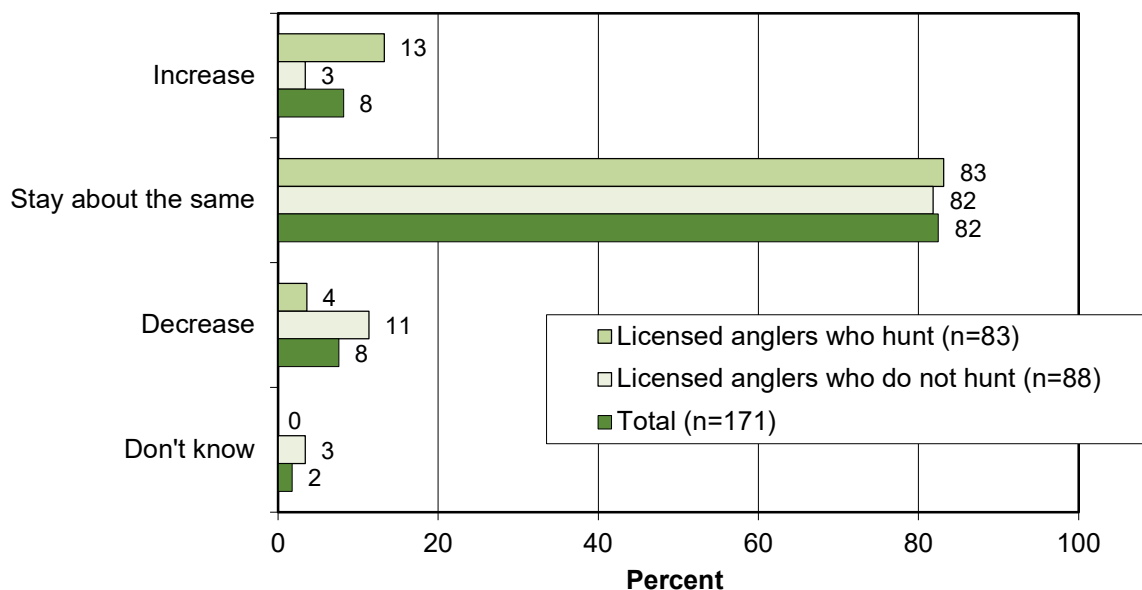


Conflict with moose hunters does not appear to be a large problem among recreationists or licensed anglers, as the large majority of both (71% or higher) say that their level of participation in outdoor activities in the study area would not be affected by an additional week of moose hunting. Nonetheless, as much as 17% of recreationists say that their level of participation would decrease. Among anglers, those who do not hunt have the highest percentage who would decrease their participation.

If an additional week of moose season was implemented, do you think your participation in these activities in Northern, Western, and/or Eastern Maine would increase, stay about the same, or decrease? (Recreationists)

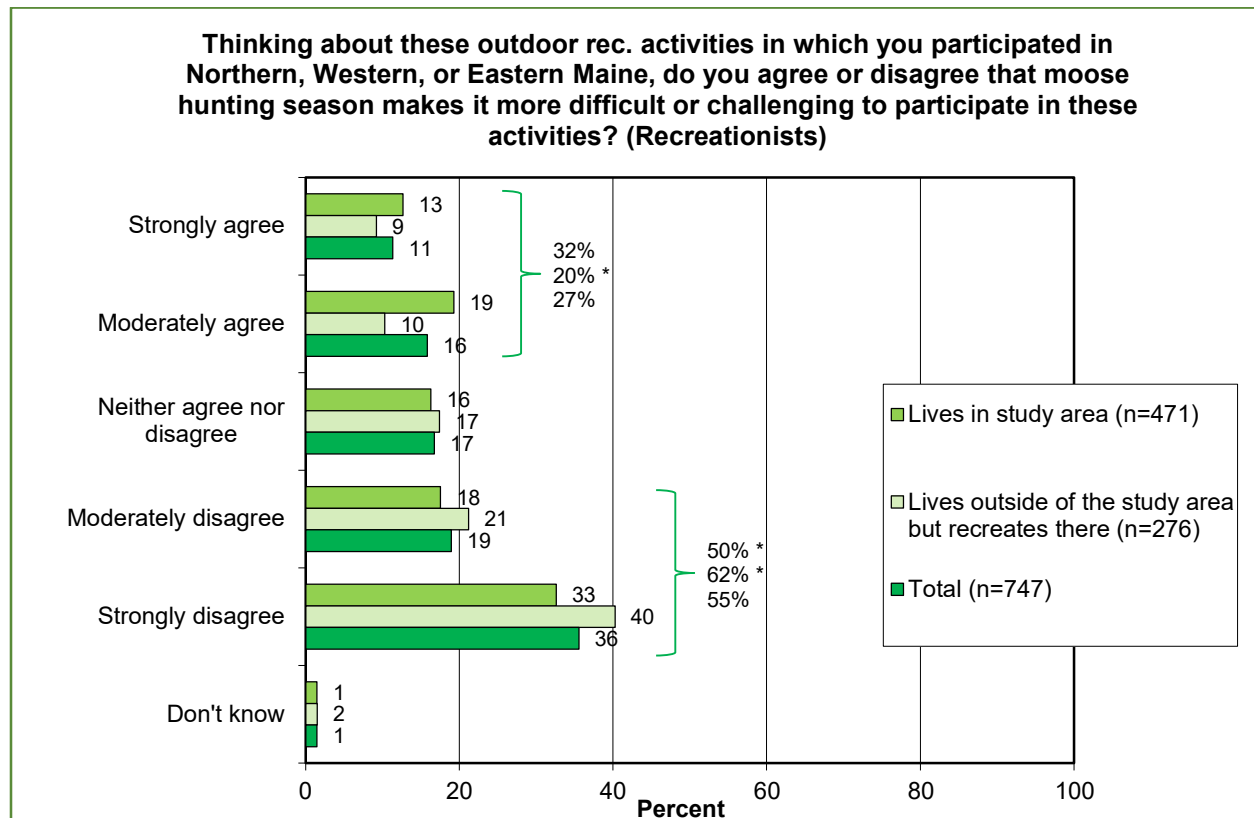
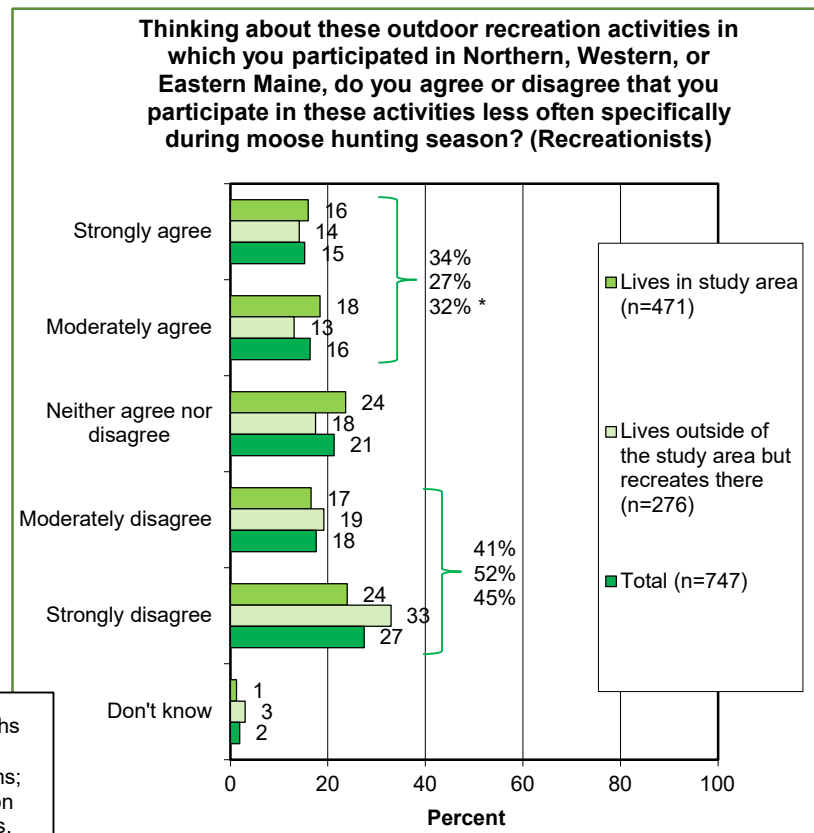


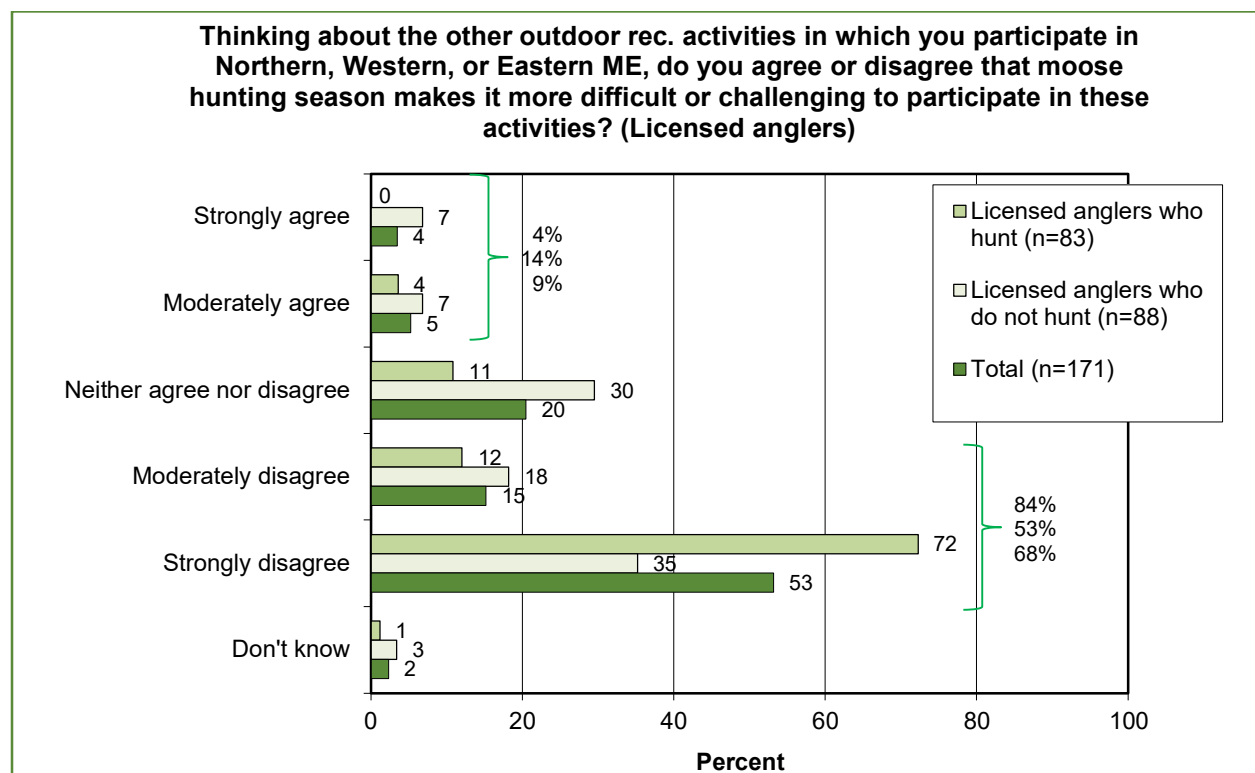
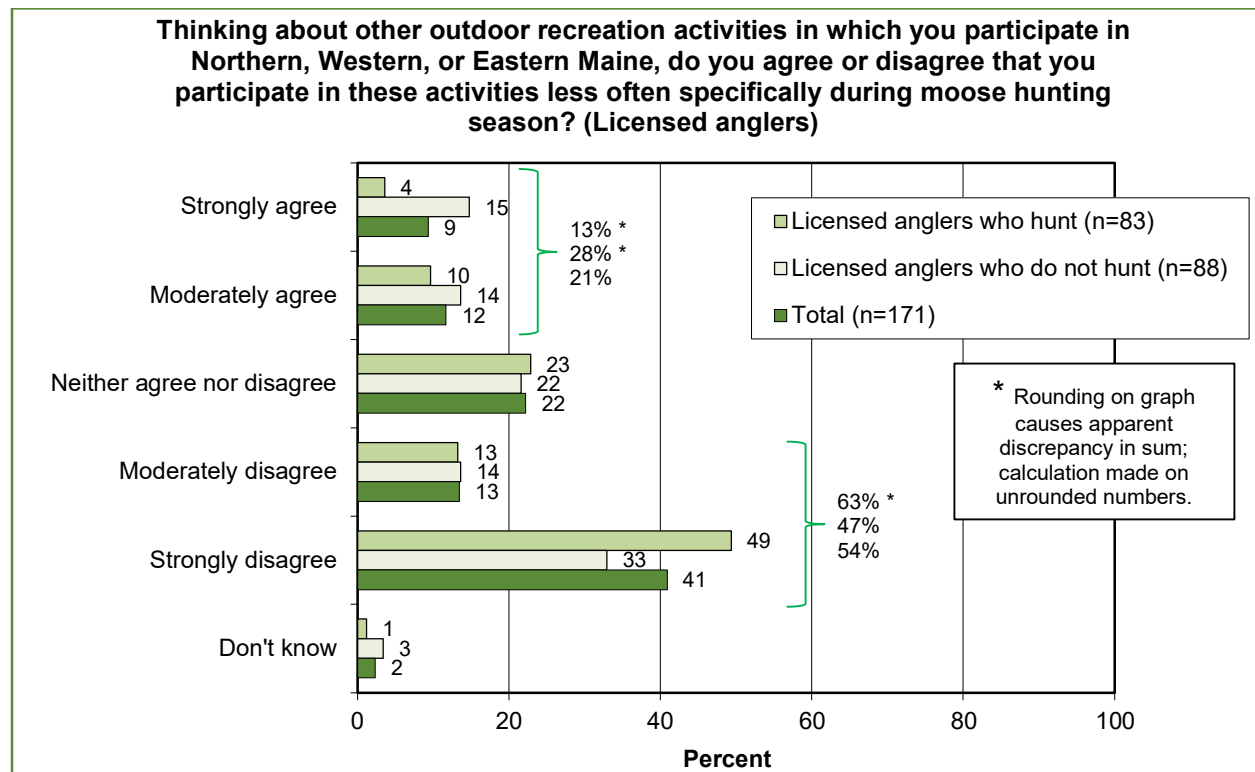
If an additional week of moose season was implemented, do you think your participation in these activities in Northern, Western, and/or Eastern Maine would increase, stay about the same, or decrease? (Licensed anglers)



Reiterating the previous findings, the majority of recreationists (this page) and licensed anglers (next page) indicate that they do *not* participate less in their outdoor activities during moose hunting season (i.e., they are not inhibited from participating because of moose hunting), and the majority do not say it makes participating in their outdoor activities more difficult. Nonetheless, a not insubstantial percentage agree (as much as 34%).

* Rounding on graphs causes apparent discrepancies in sums; calculations made on unrounded numbers.

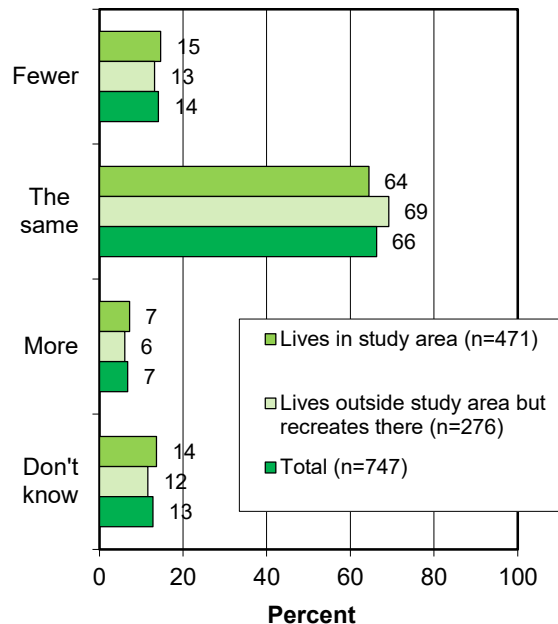




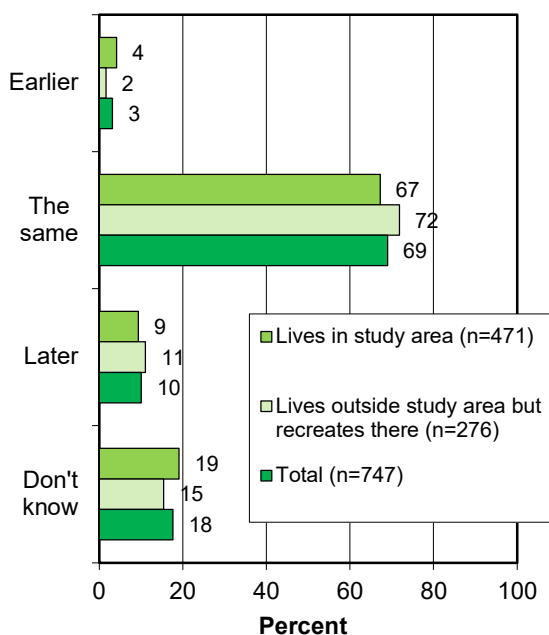
OPINIONS ON MOOSE HUNTING SEASONS

On the three questions about moose hunting seasons, large majorities of recreationists respond that they want them to be the same: the same number, the same timing, and the same length. Otherwise, a slightly higher percentage want fewer rather than more seasons and want later rather than earlier seasons. Regarding the length of seasons, they are fairly evenly split between wanting shorter or longer seasons.

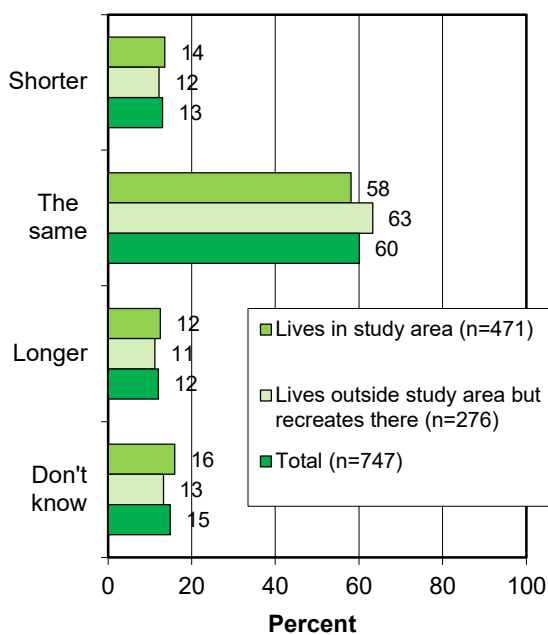
Should Maine have fewer, the same, or more moose hunting seasons? (Recreationists)

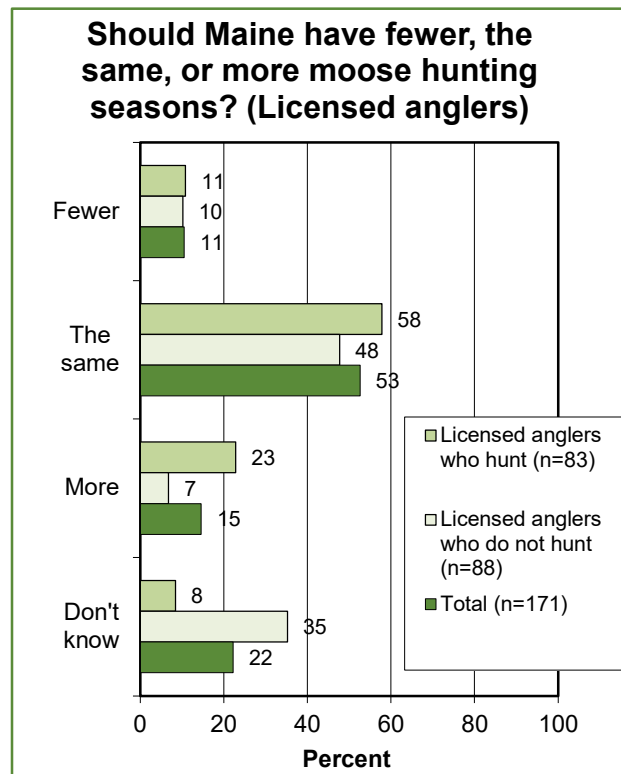


Should Maine's moose seasons occur earlier, the same, or later? (Recreationists)



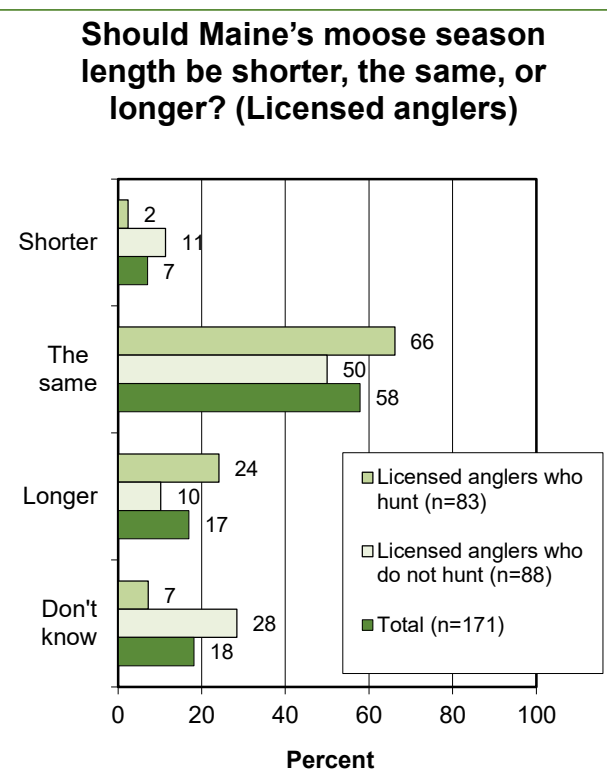
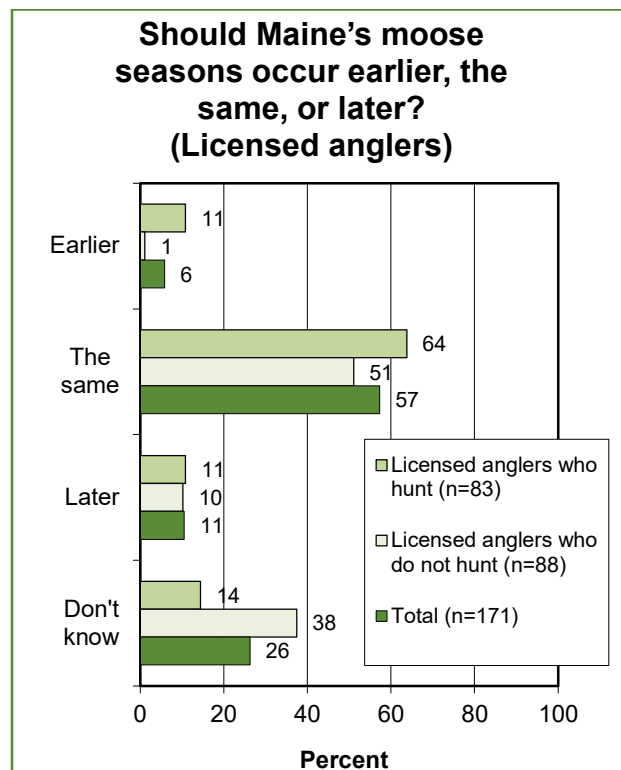
Should Maine's moose season length be shorter, the same, or longer? (Recreationists)





Among licensed anglers, they most commonly respond with the same on all three questions. There are marked differences in the groups, however. Licensed anglers who hunt much more often want more seasons rather than fewer, and they want longer seasons rather than shorter seasons. They are evenly split regarding earlier or later seasons.

Among licensed anglers who do not hunt, they are fairly evenly split between fewer or more seasons and shorter or longer seasons. On the timing, however, they much more often want later seasons rather than earlier seasons.



Five questions asked about support for or opposition to changes to the moose hunting seasons. Prior to the question, the information below was given.

Next, we would like to know if you support or oppose some potential moose hunting season changes. These potential changes would be in an effort to reduce any potential conflict between residents, moose hunters, other hunters, other recreationists, guides, visitors, tourists, and landowners in Northern, Western, and Eastern Maine during moose hunting season. Each of the potential changes would occur without increasing the total number of moose permits issued to hunters each year.

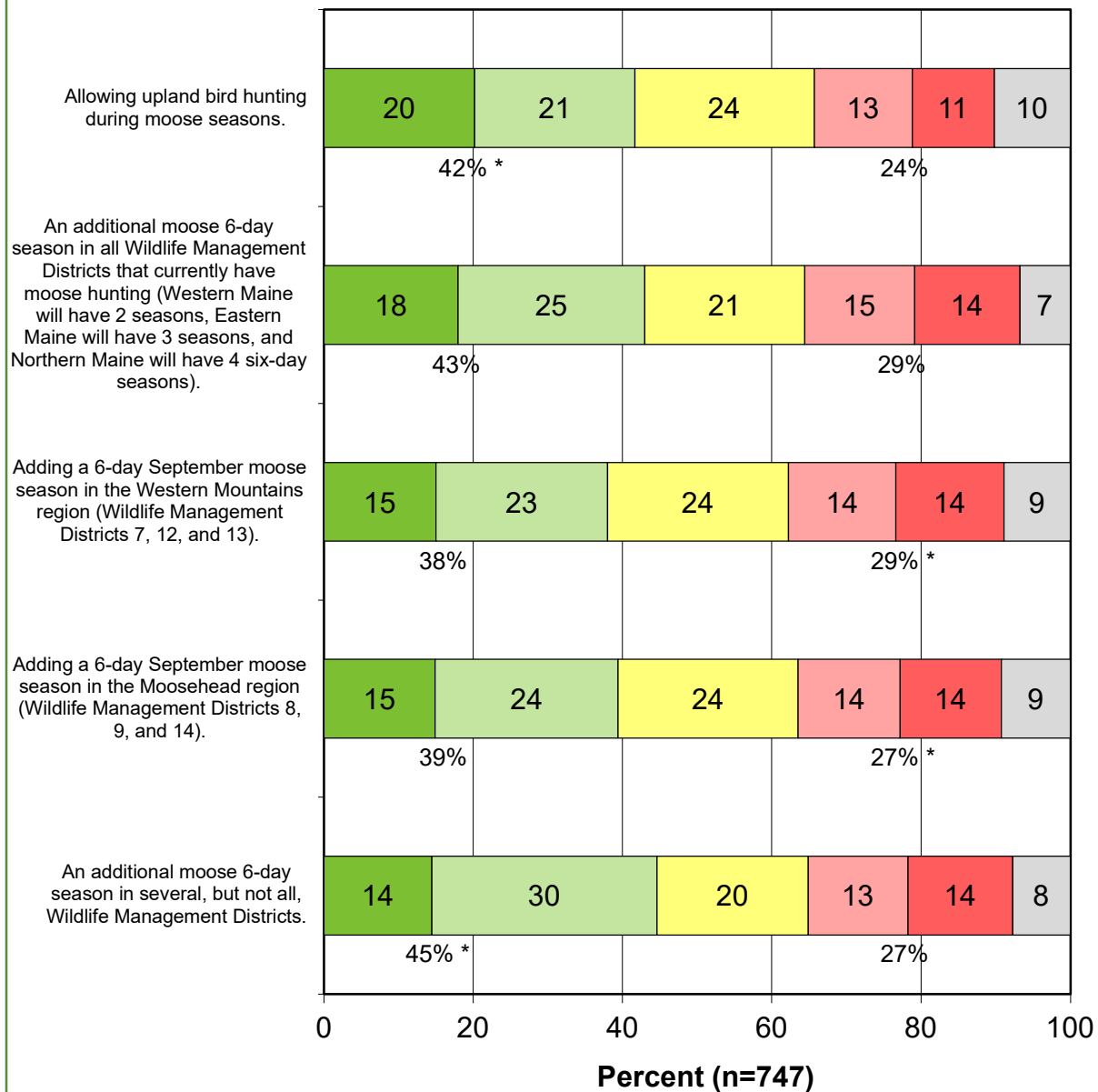
Overall support did not greatly vary for the potential season changes, ranging from 38% to 45% among recreationists. This support was about the same regardless of whether the recreationist lived or did not live in the study area.

In general, support was higher among licensed anglers than among recreationists for all of the potential changes. Furthermore, licensed anglers' support varied widely for the different potential changes, ranging from 70% support down to 47%. The highest percentage of support was for allowing upland bird hunting during moose seasons (70% support overall, 80% support among licensed anglers who hunt, and 60% support among licensed anglers who do not hunt). Also of note, support among licensed anglers who hunt (ranging from 58% to 80%) was markedly higher than among licensed anglers who do not hunt (ranging from 36% to 60%), the latter group being more like recreationists.

These graphs start on the next page, as each graph needs a full page for display. Each graph is ranked by *strongly* support; sums of both support responses and both oppose responses are shown below each bar.

**Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes.
(Overall) (Recreationists)**

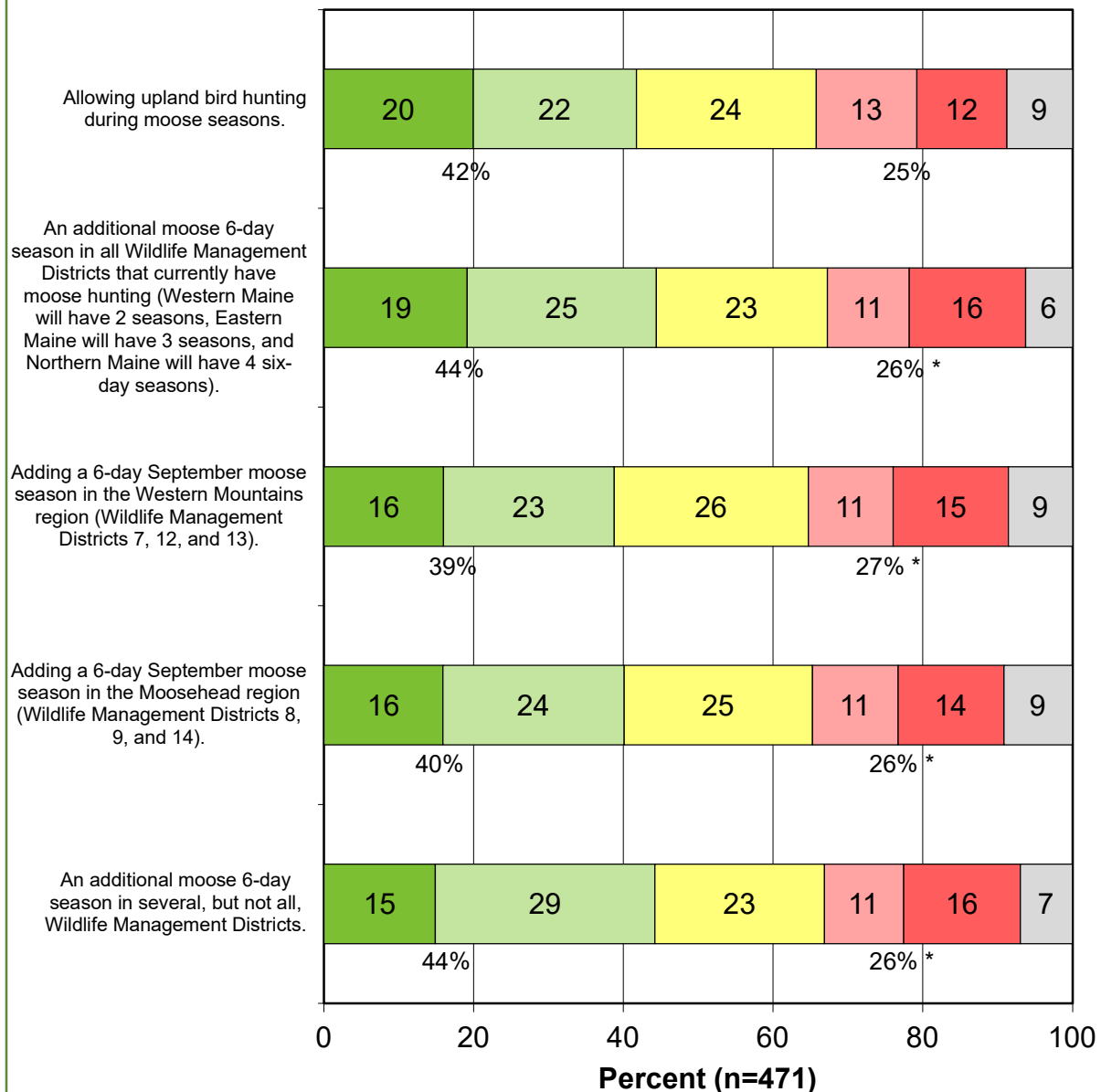
Strongly support Moderately support Neither Moderately oppose Strongly oppose Don't know



* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

**Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes.
(Lives in study area) (Recreationists)**

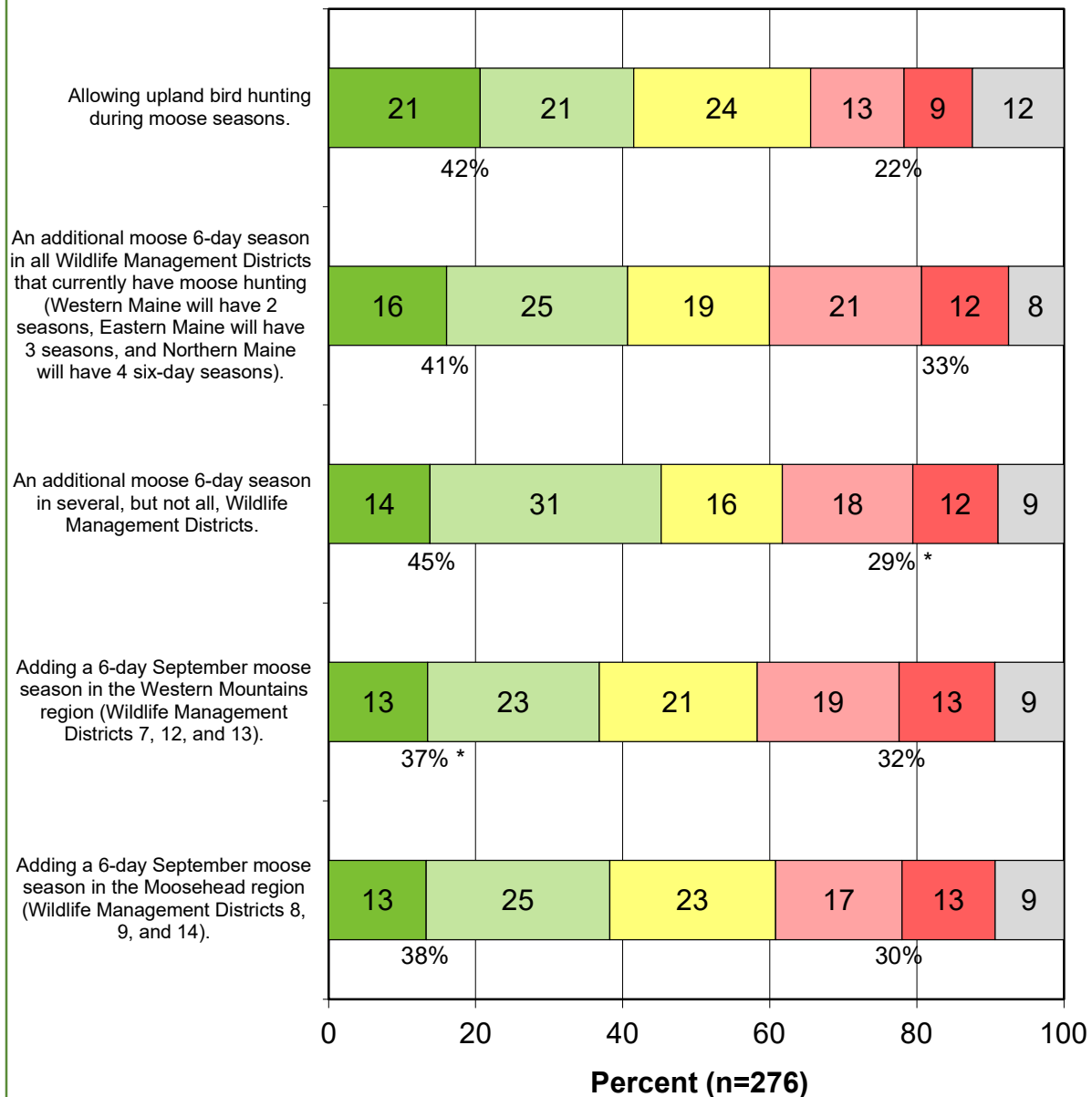
■ Strongly support ■ Moderately support ■ Neither ■ Moderately oppose ■ Strongly oppose ■ Don't know



* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

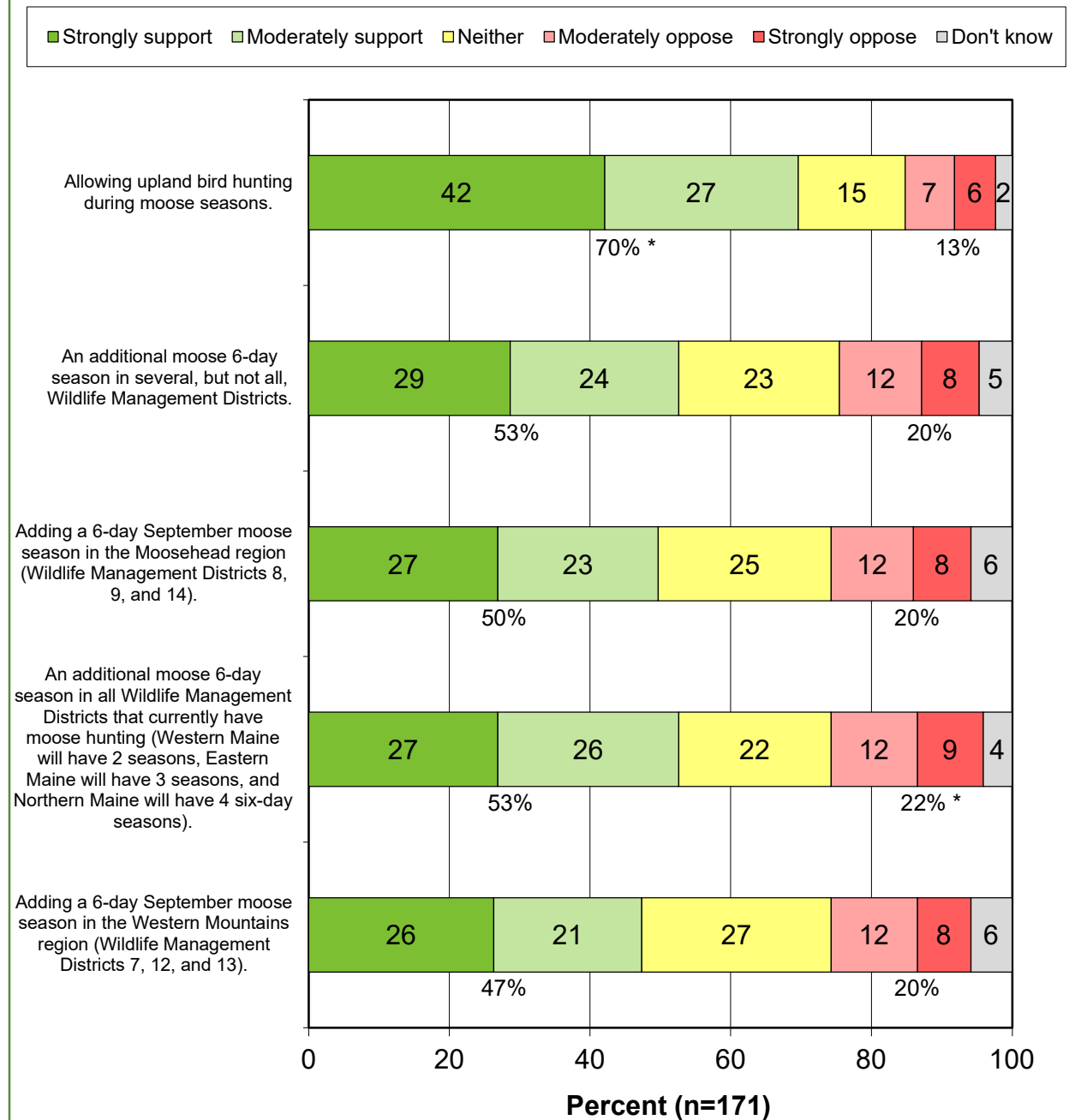
**Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes.
(Lives outside of the study area but recreates there) (Recreationists)**

Strongly support Moderately support Neither Moderately oppose Strongly oppose Don't know



* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

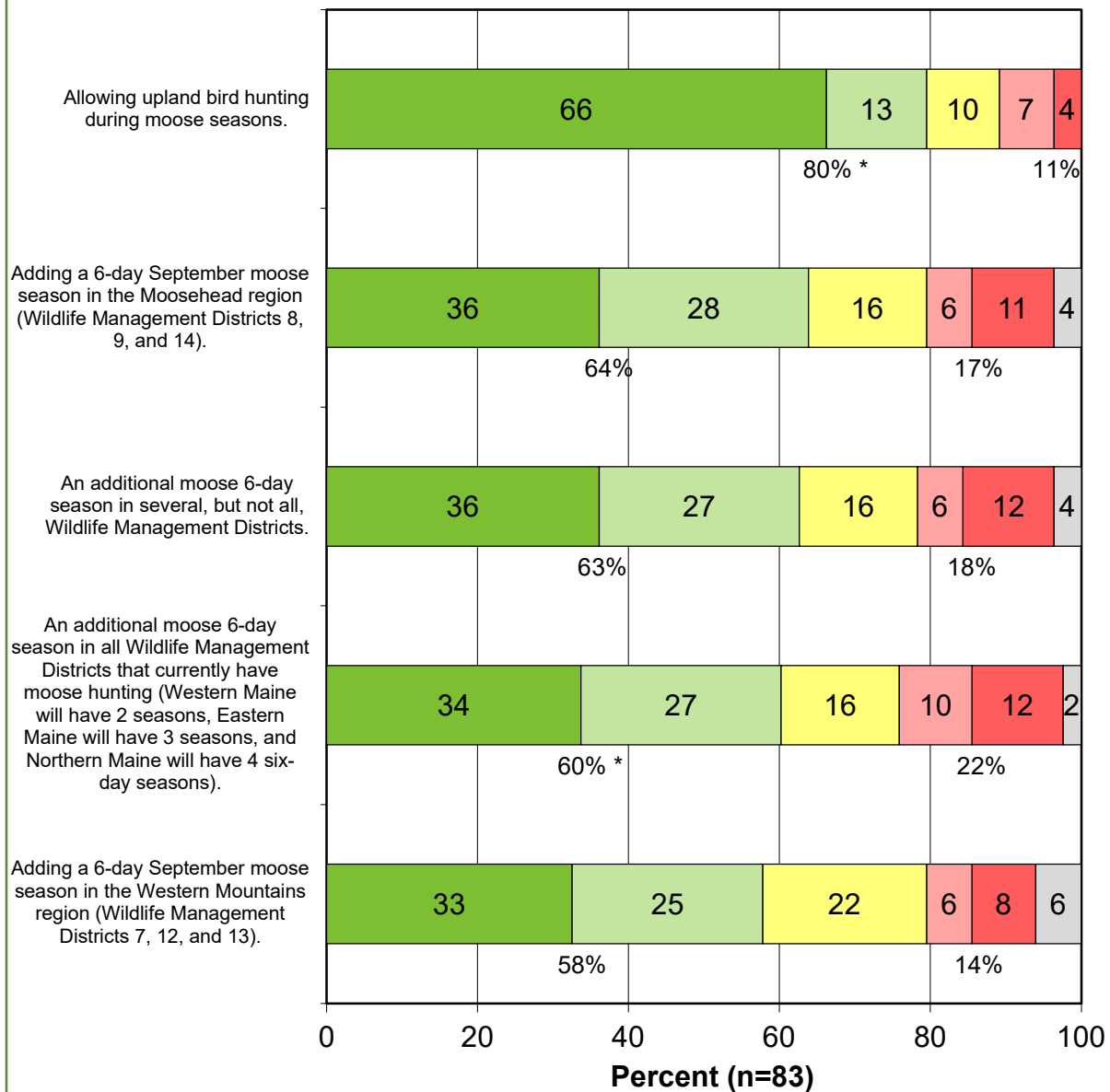
**Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes.
(Overall) (Licensed anglers)**



* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

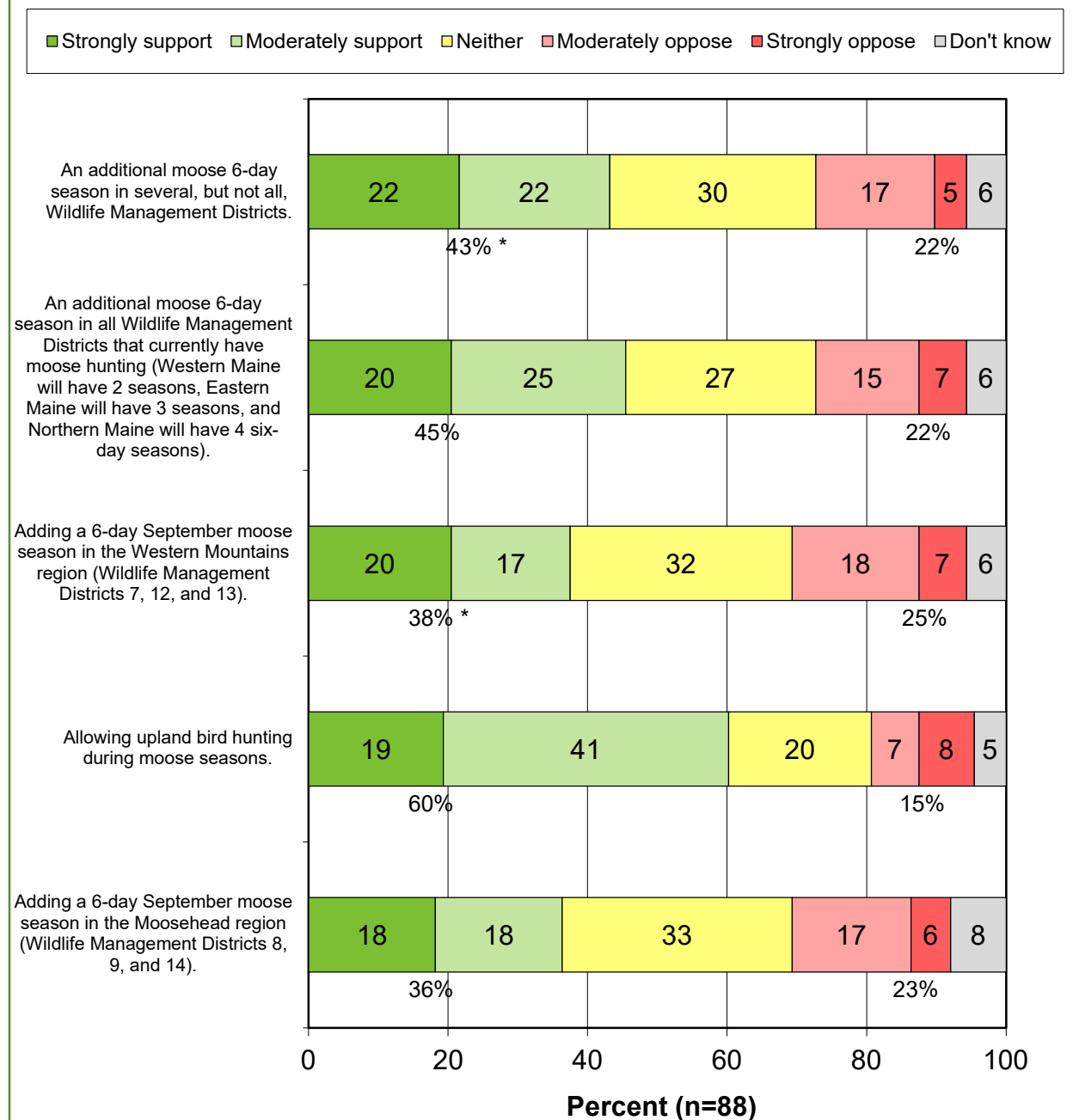
**Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes.
(Licensed anglers who hunt) (Licensed anglers)**

Strongly support Moderately support Neither Moderately oppose Strongly oppose Don't know



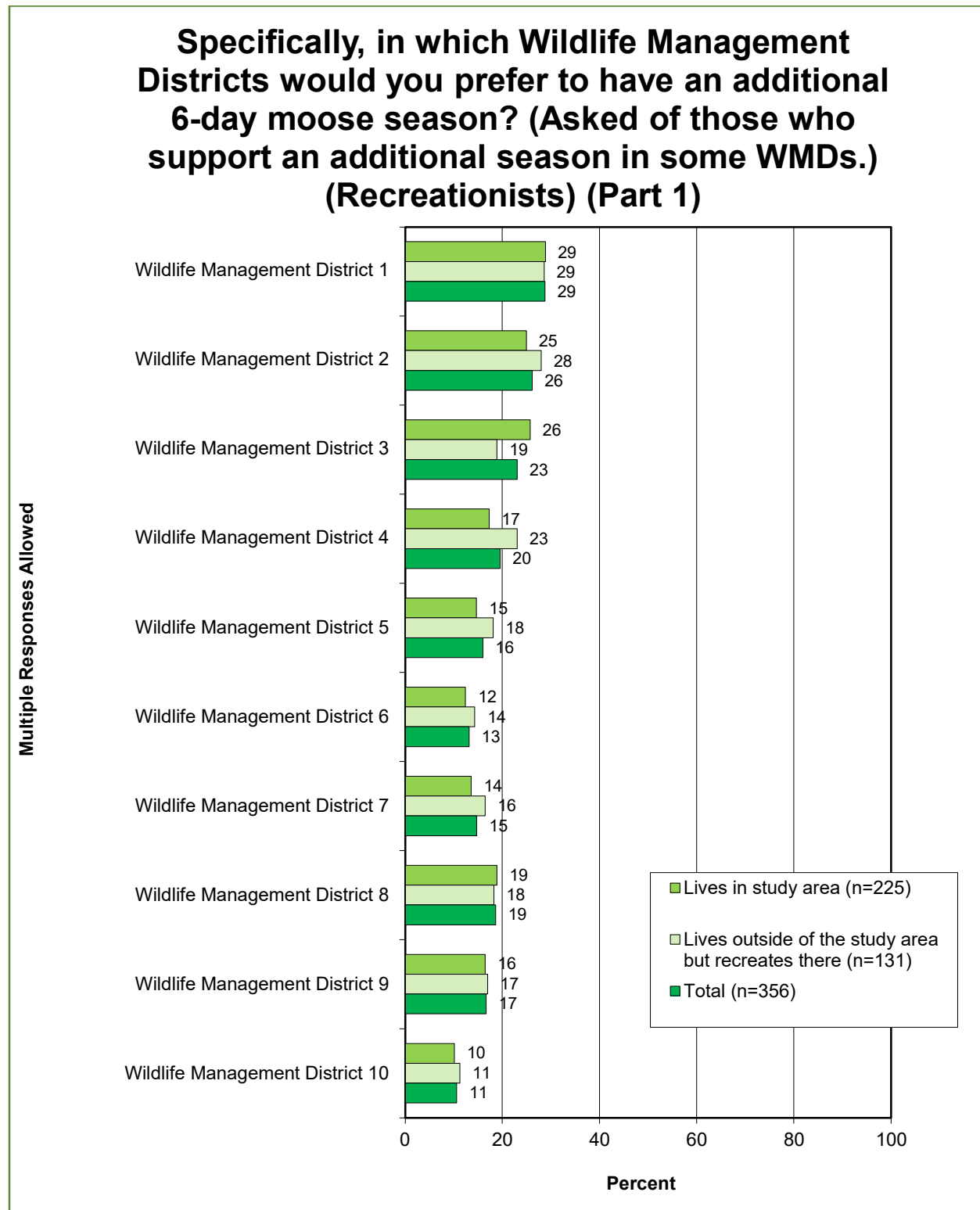
* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

**Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes.
(Licensed anglers who do not hunt)
(Licensed anglers)**

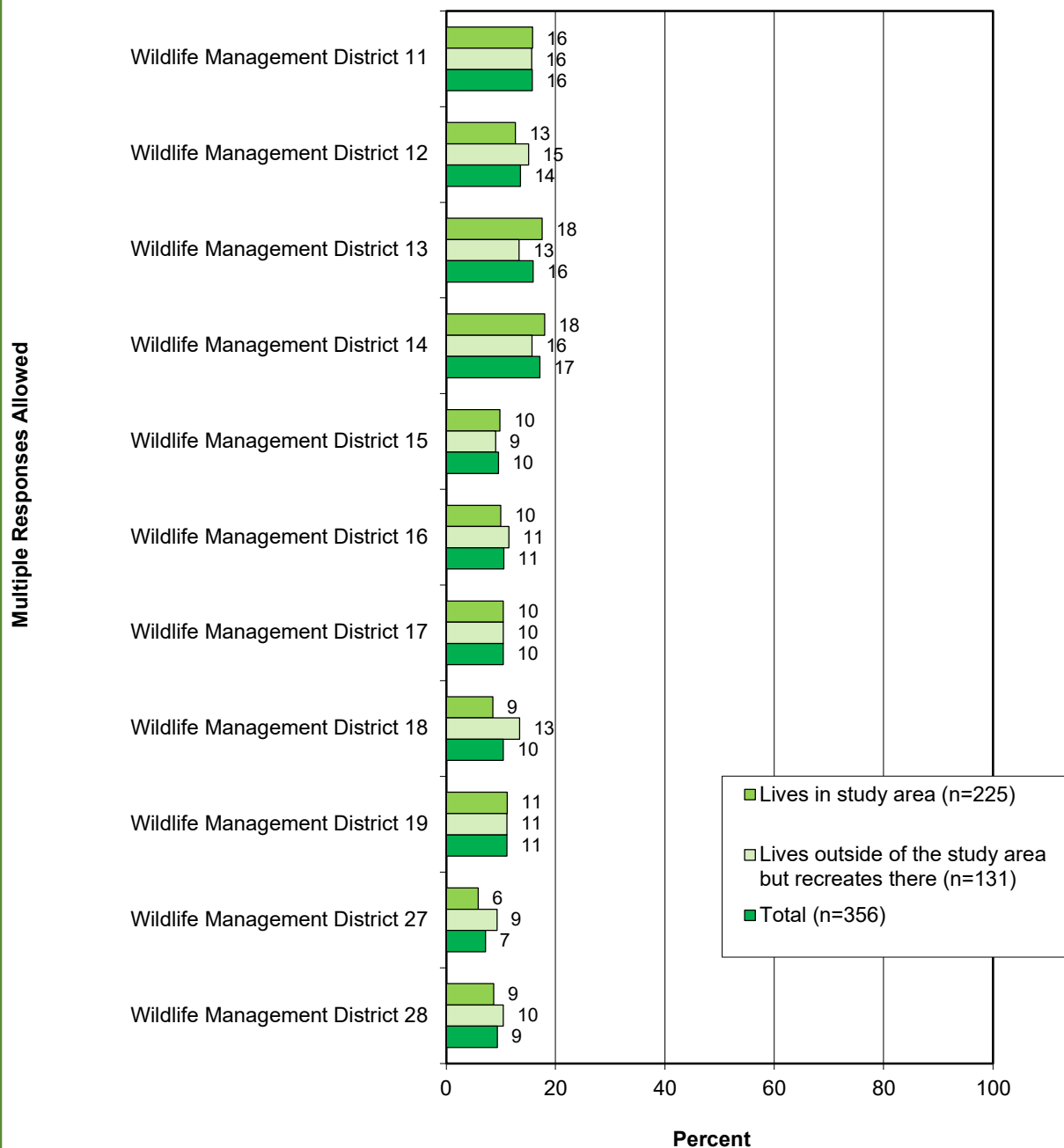


* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

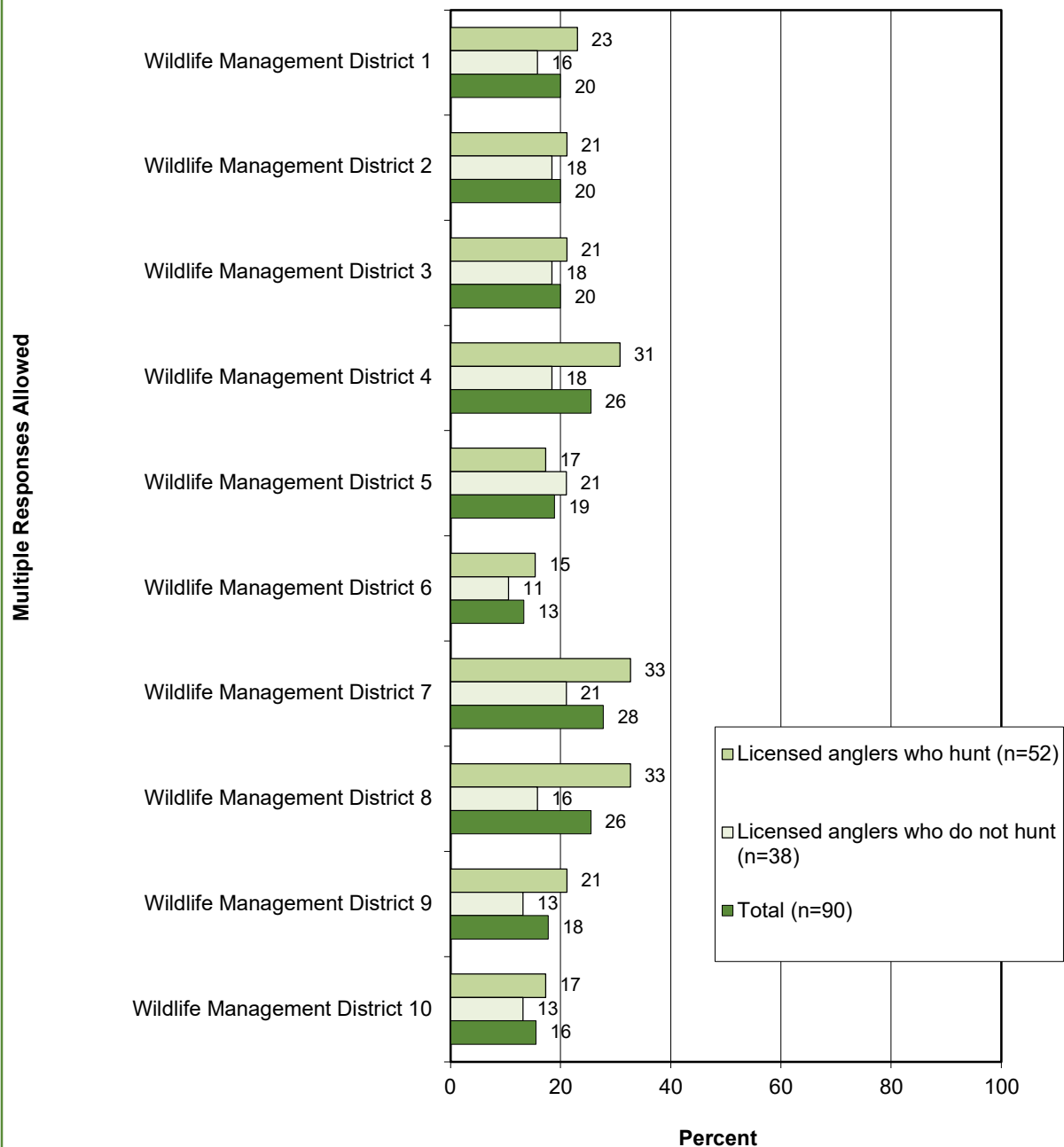
As a follow-up to one of the questions in this series, those who supported adding an additional moose 6-day season in several, but not all, WMDs were asked to name the WMDs in which they would want an additional season. These results are shown below.



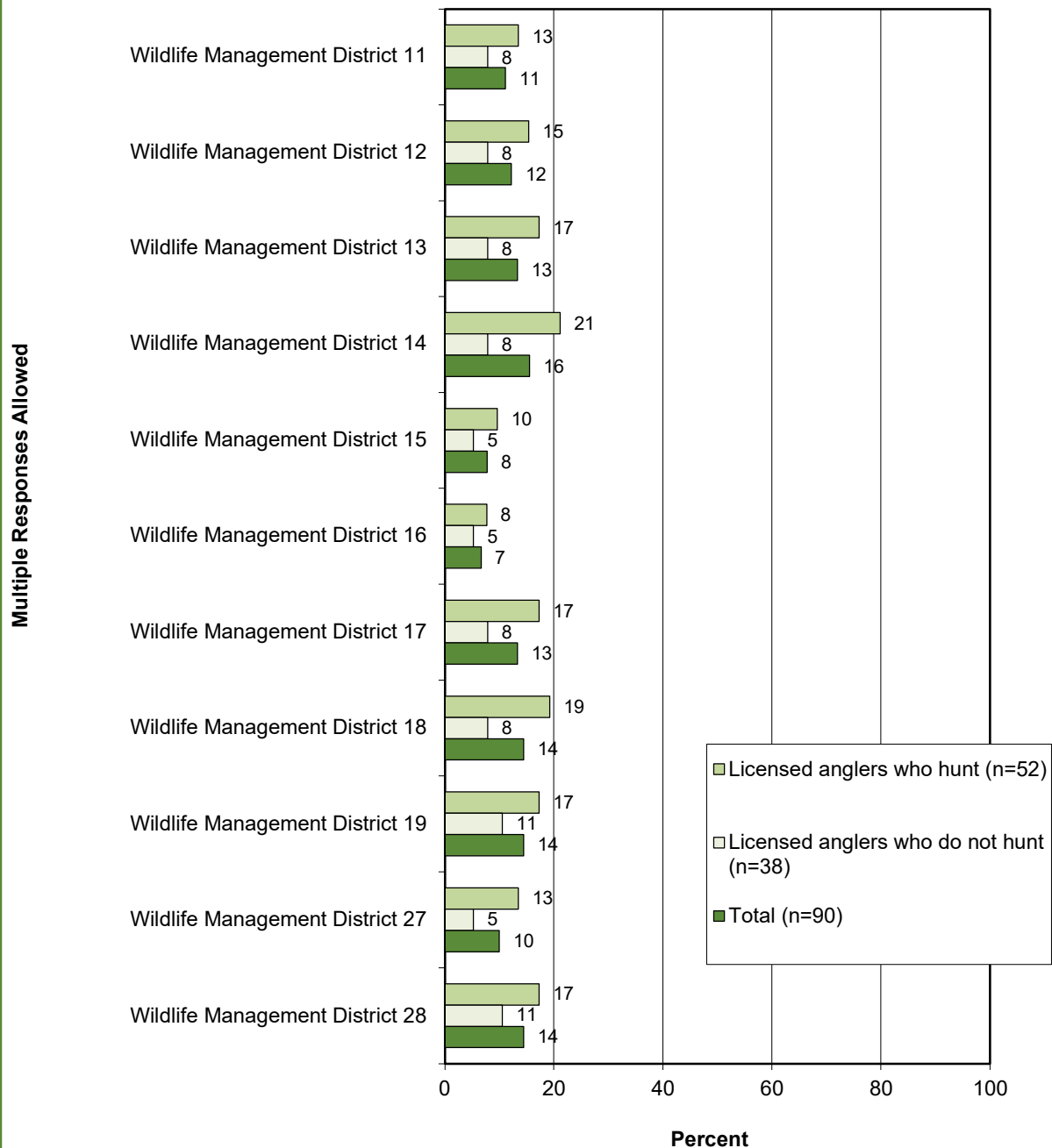
Specifically, in which Wildlife Management Districts would you prefer to have an additional 6-day moose season? (Asked of those who support an additional season in some WMDs.) (Recreationists) (Part 2)



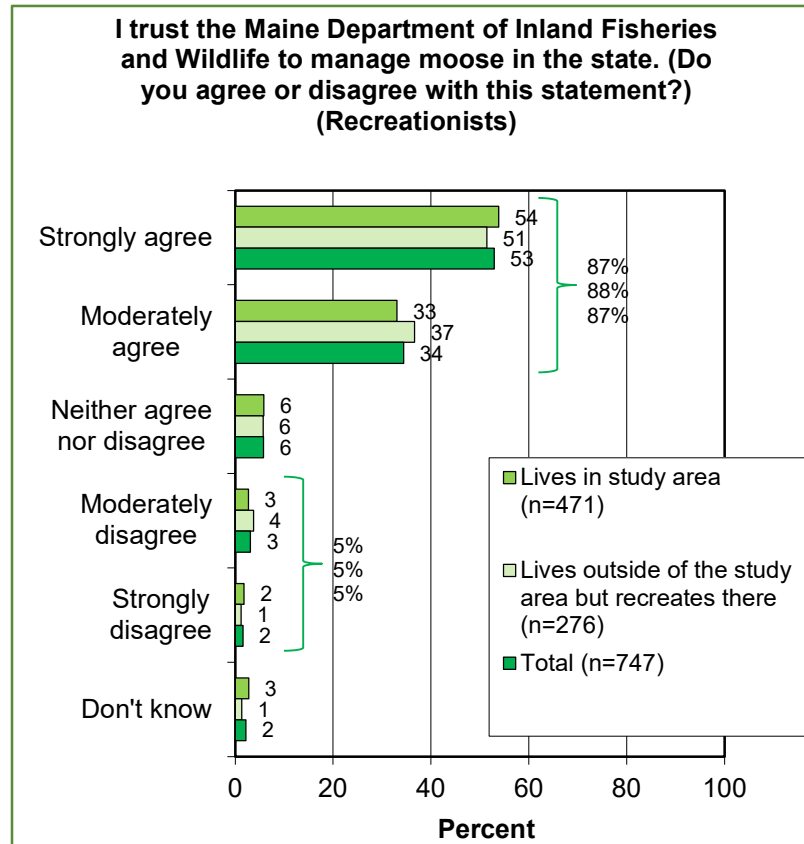
Specifically, in which Wildlife Management Districts would you prefer to have an additional 6-day moose season? (Asked of those who support an additional season in some WMDs.) (Licensed anglers) (Part 1)



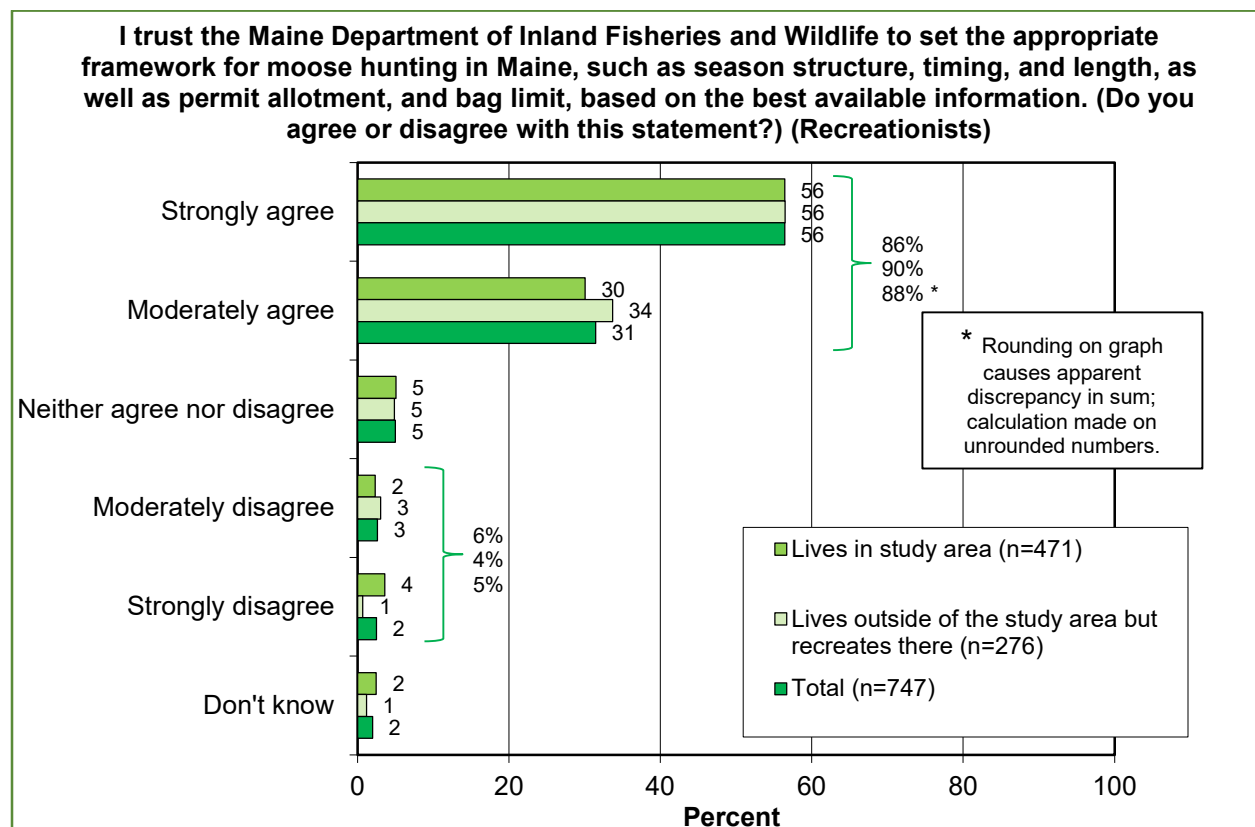
Specifically, in which Wildlife Management Districts would you prefer to have an additional 6-day moose season? (Asked of those who support an additional season in some WMDs.) (Licensed anglers) (Part 2)



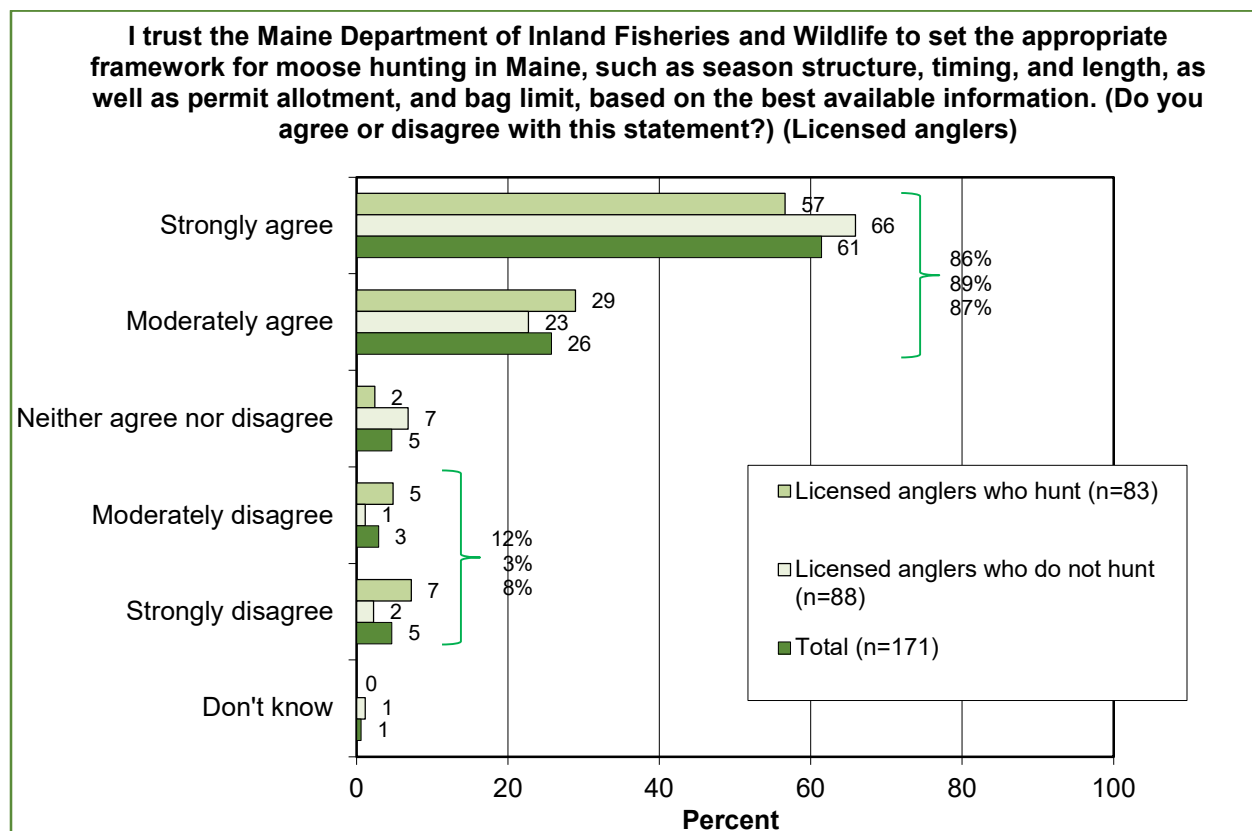
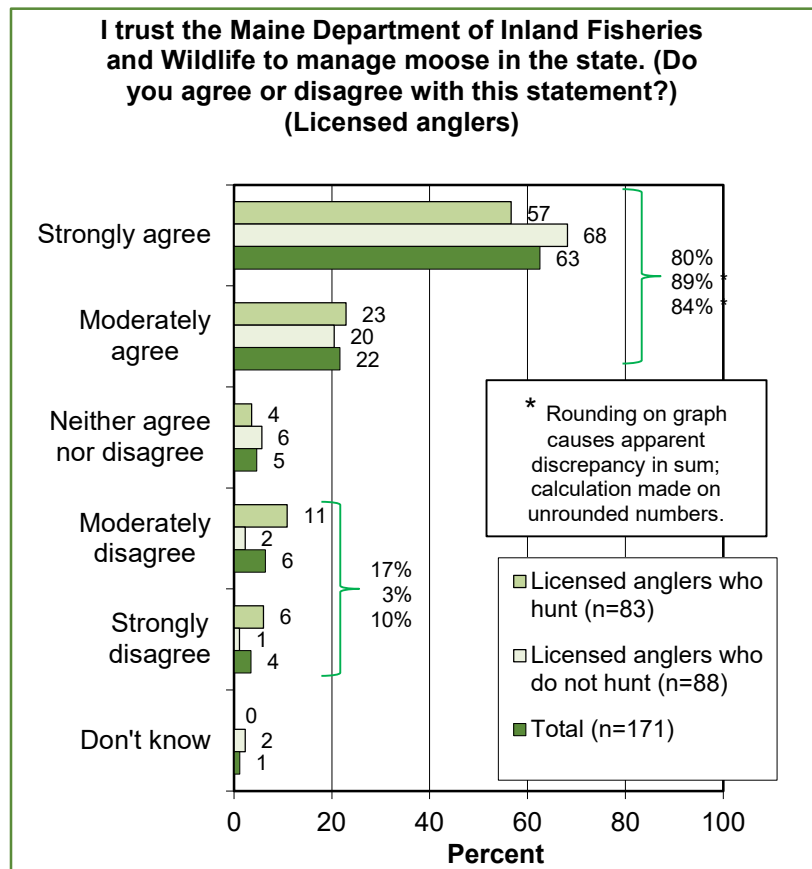
ATTITUDES TOWARD THE DEPARTMENT



Large majorities of recreationists (86% or higher) agree that they trust the Department on both questions related to this theme—trust the Department to manage moose in the state and trust the Department to set the appropriate moose hunting framework. Disagreement is no higher than 6%.



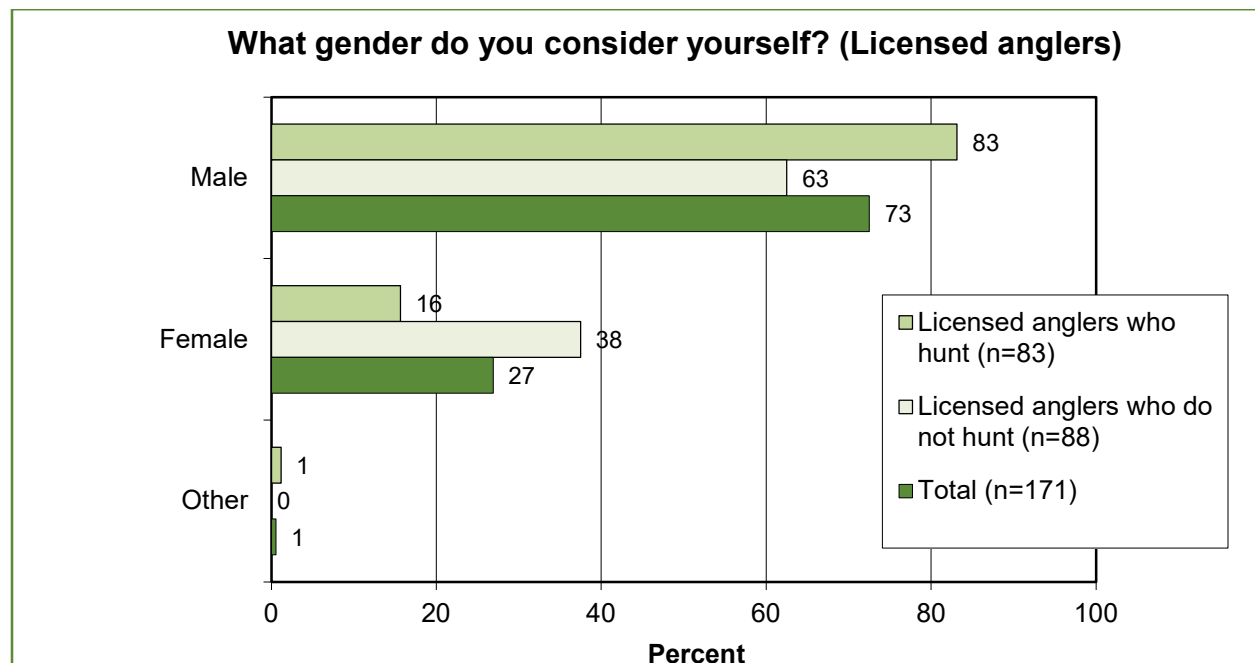
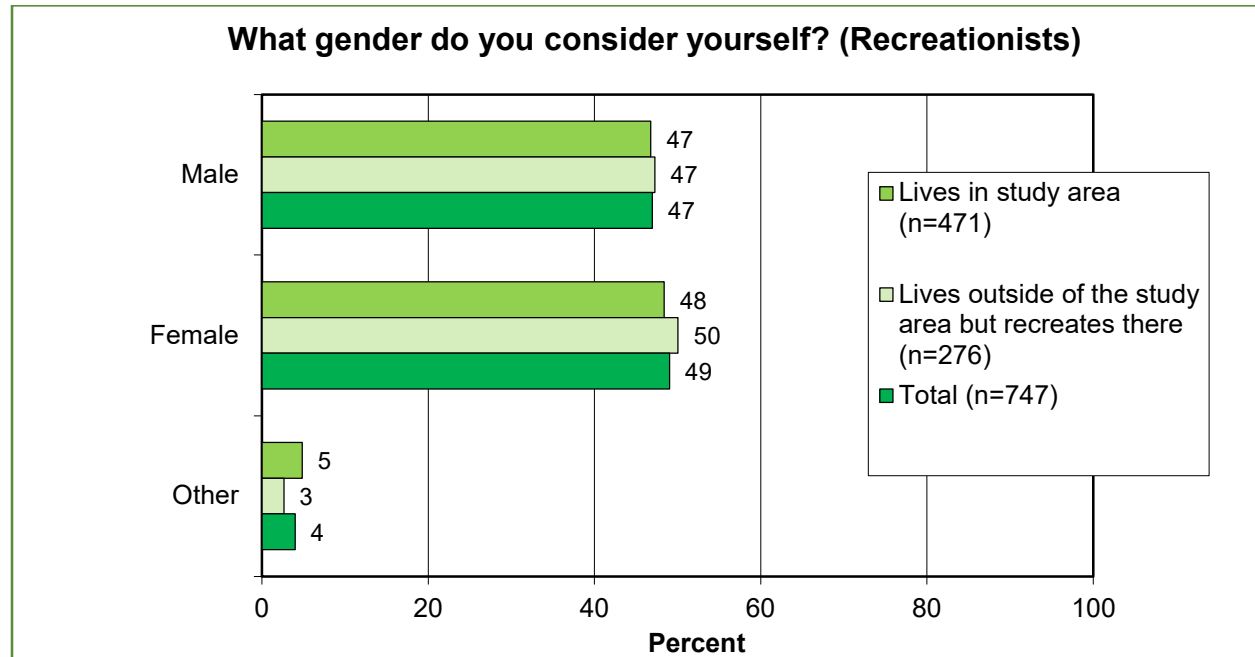
Likewise, large majorities of licensed anglers (80% or higher) agree that they trust the Department on both questions—to manage moose in the state and to set the appropriate moose hunting framework. Among licensed anglers, disagreement is 17% among licensed anglers who hunt regarding trusting the Department to manage moose; in all other instances, disagreement is lower than that.

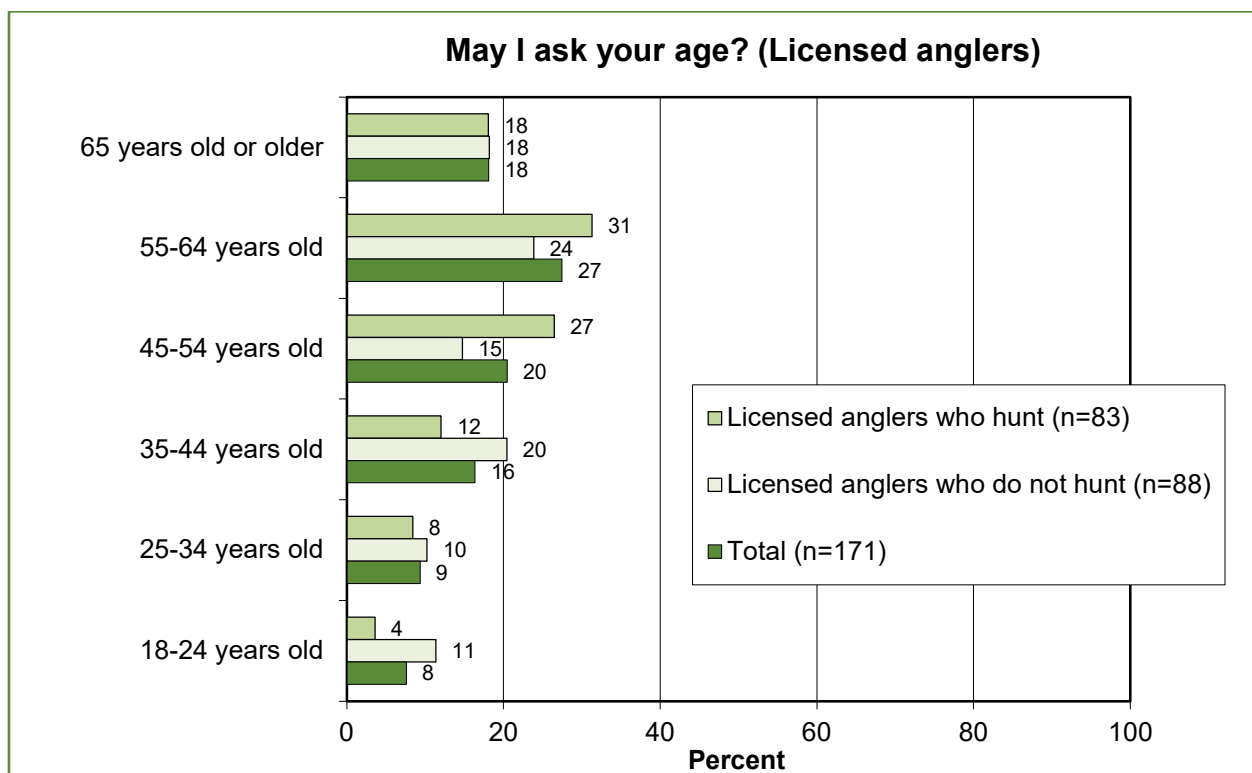
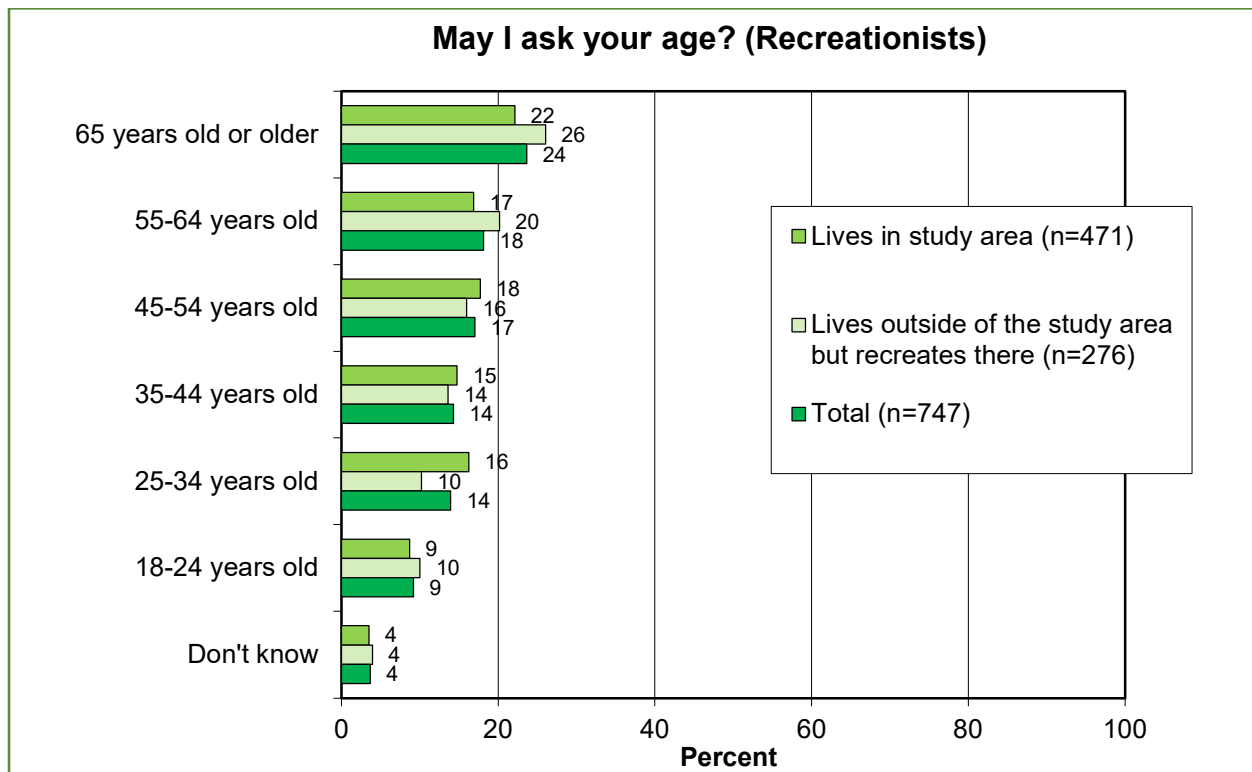


DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

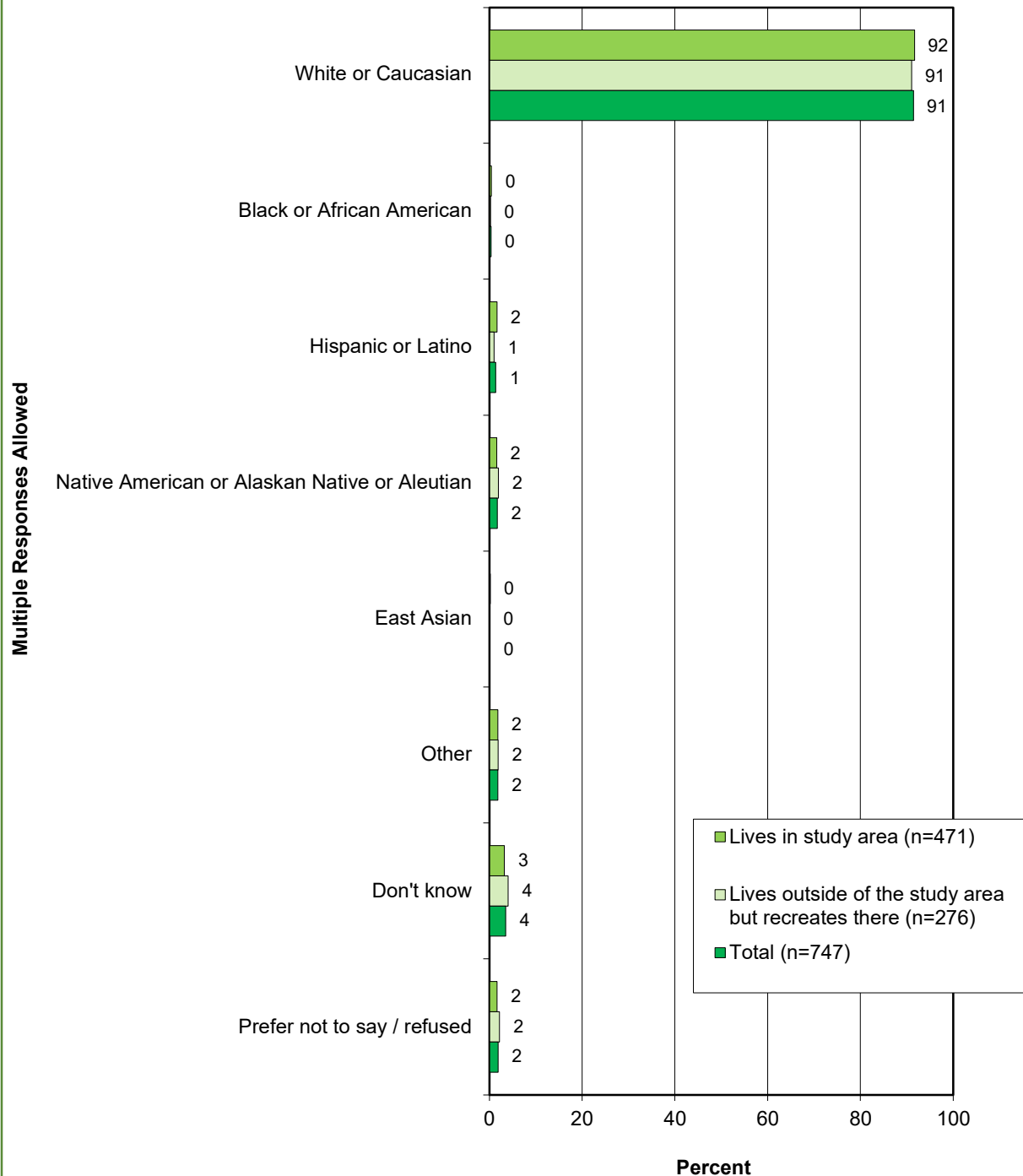
Demographic information was obtained primarily for crosstabulations and further analyses. The information obtained included:

- Gender.
- Age.
- Ethnicity.
- County of residence.
- Character of residential area (urban-rural continuum).

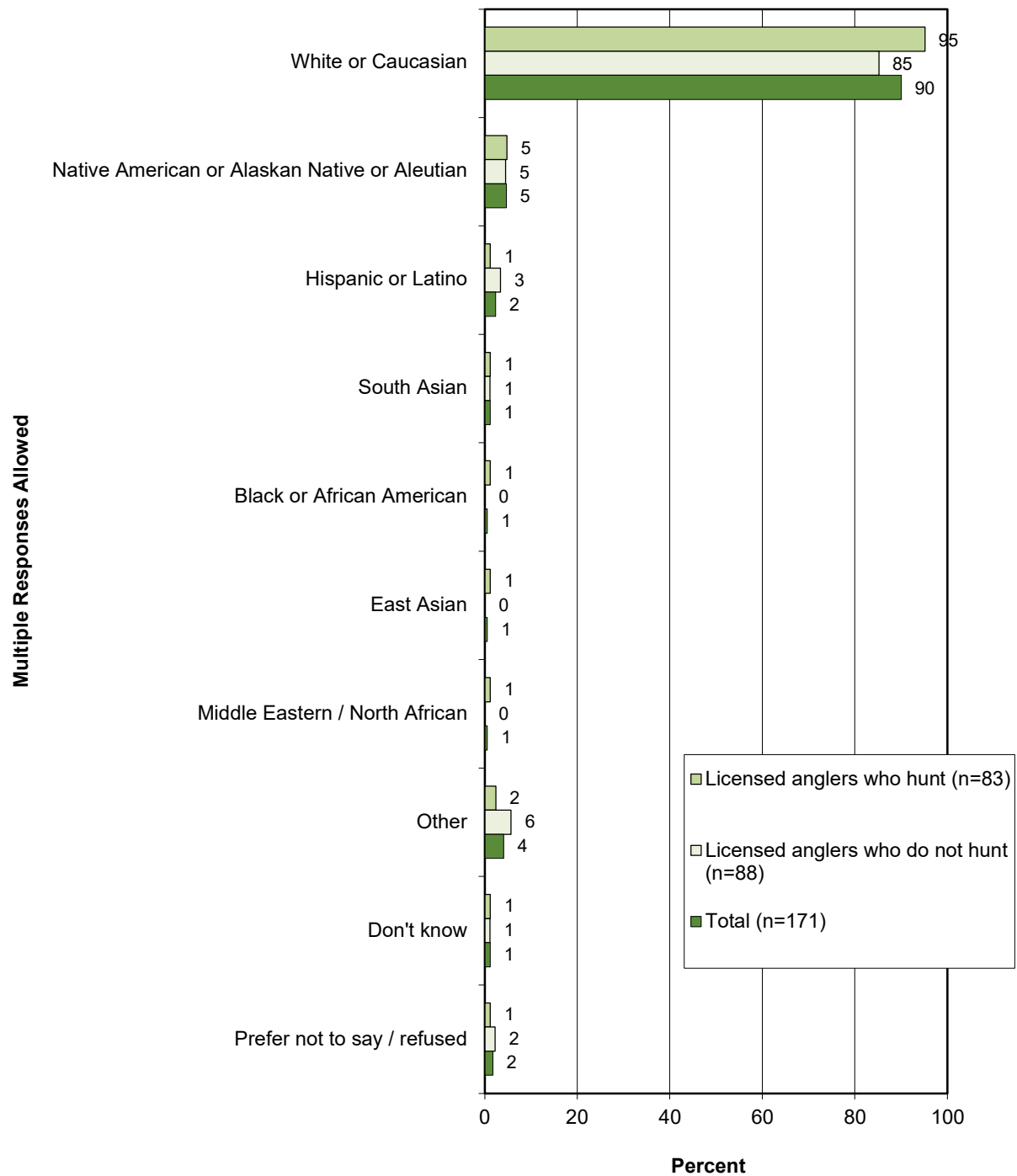


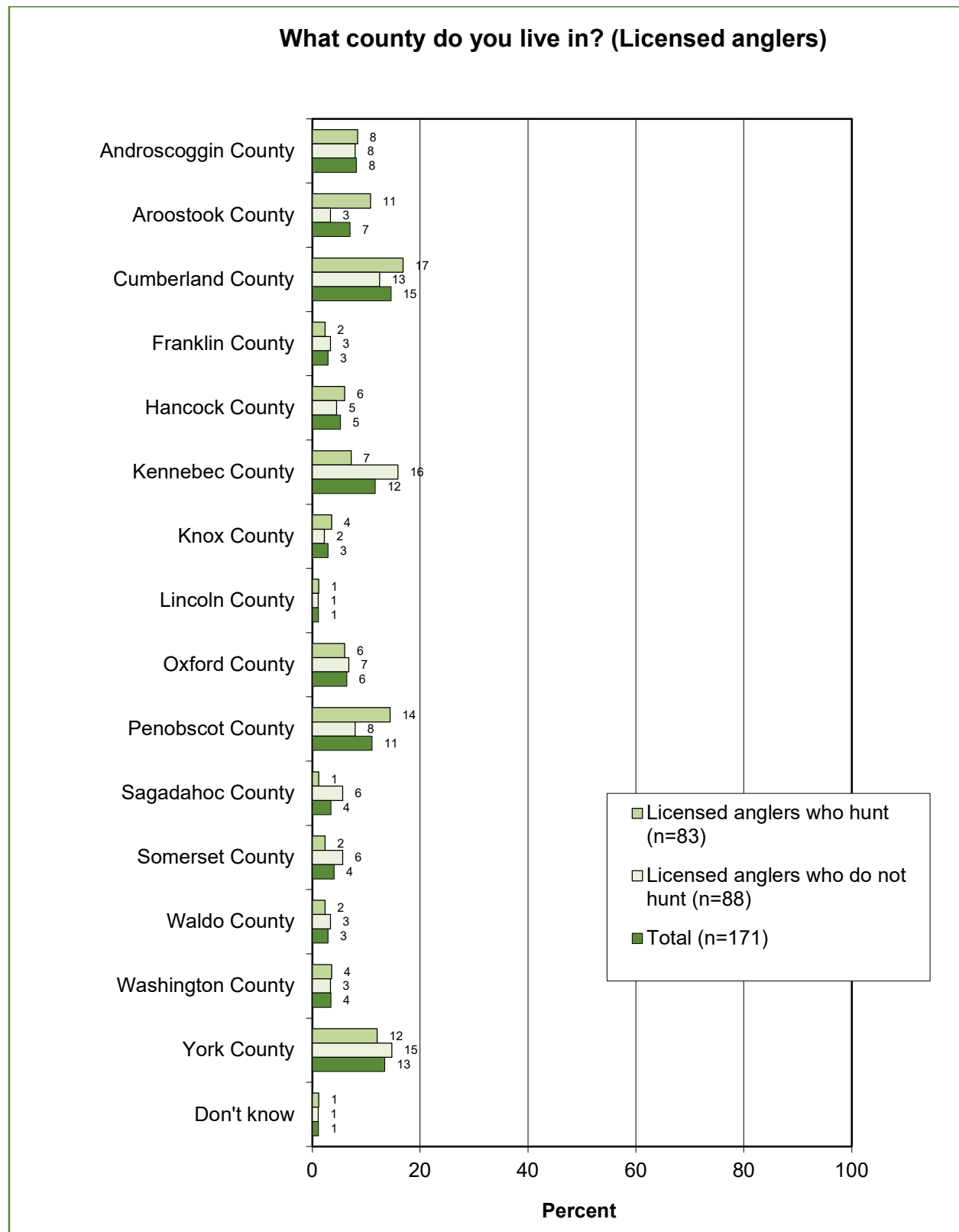


What races or ethnic backgrounds do you consider yourself? (Recreationists)

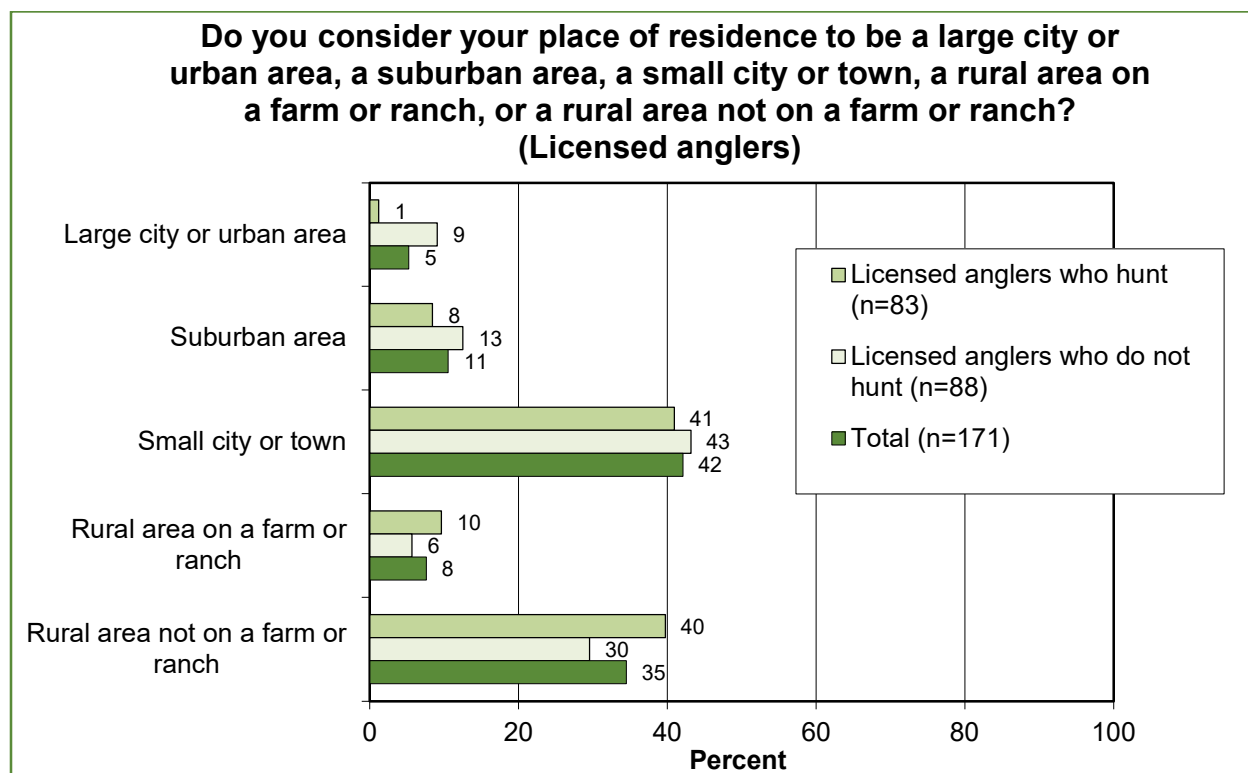
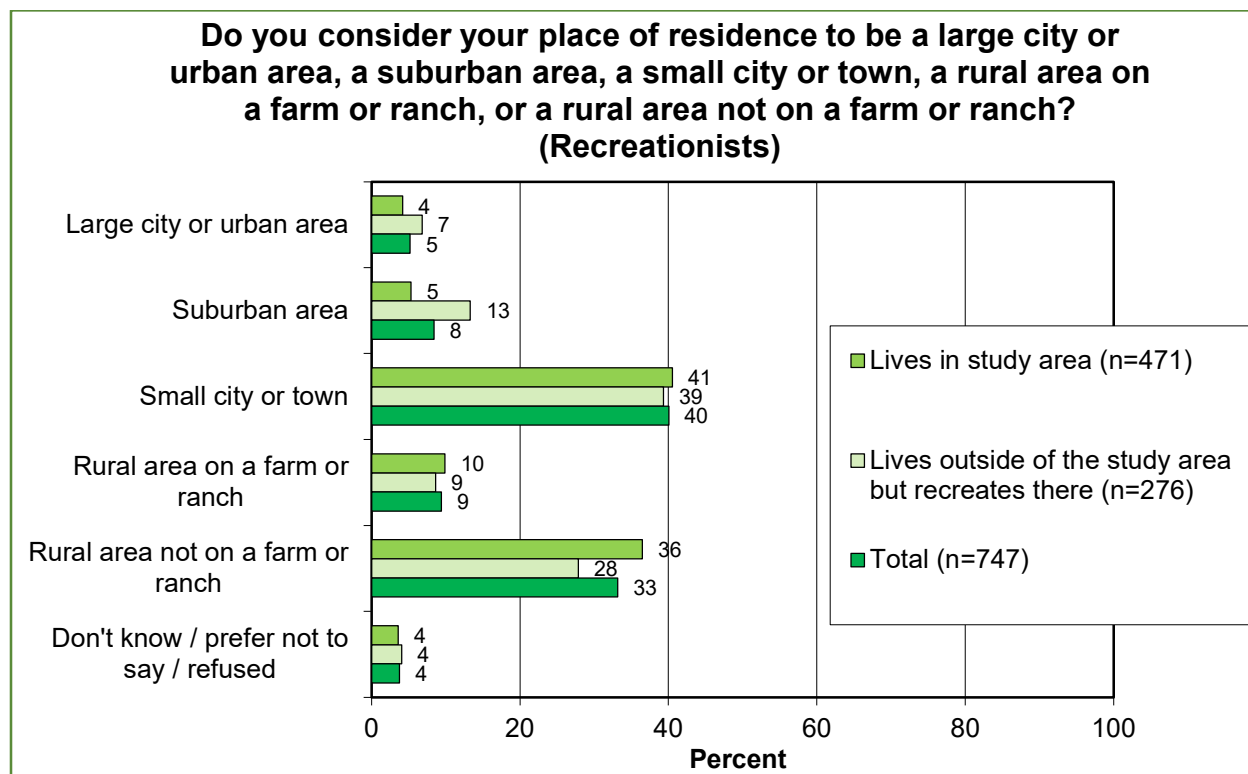


What races or ethnic backgrounds do you consider yourself? (Licensed anglers)





Note: no graph for county of residence is included for the recreationist sample because the crosstabulation was based on location—they lived in the study area or outside it.



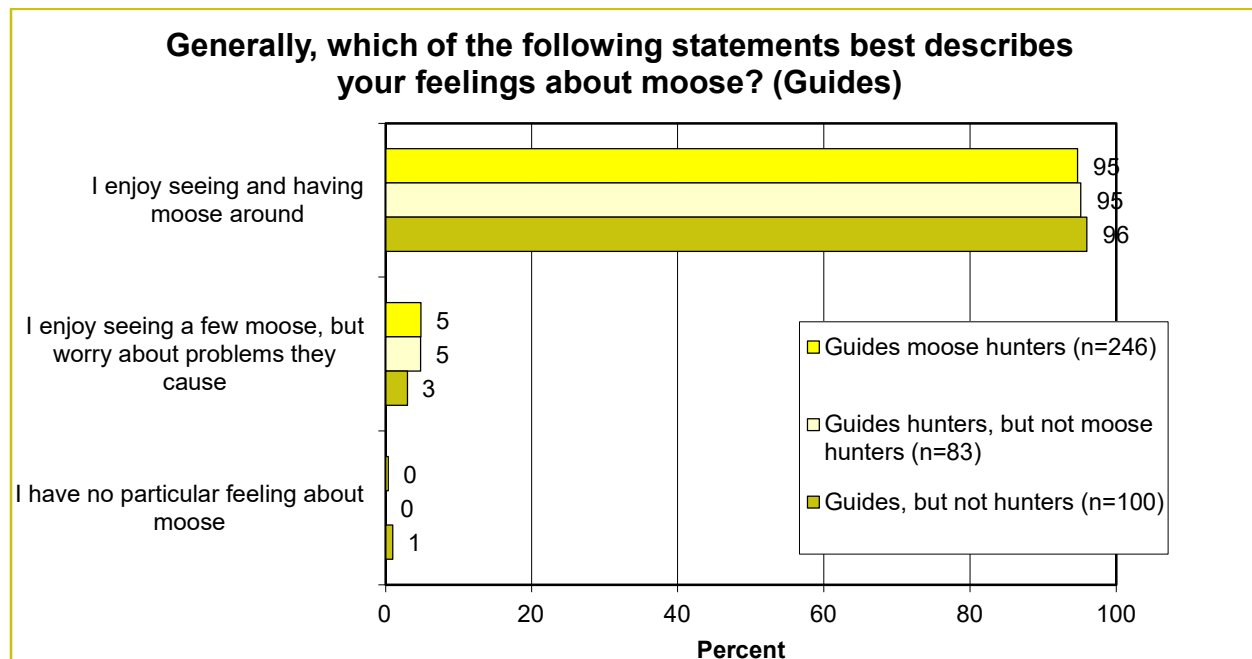
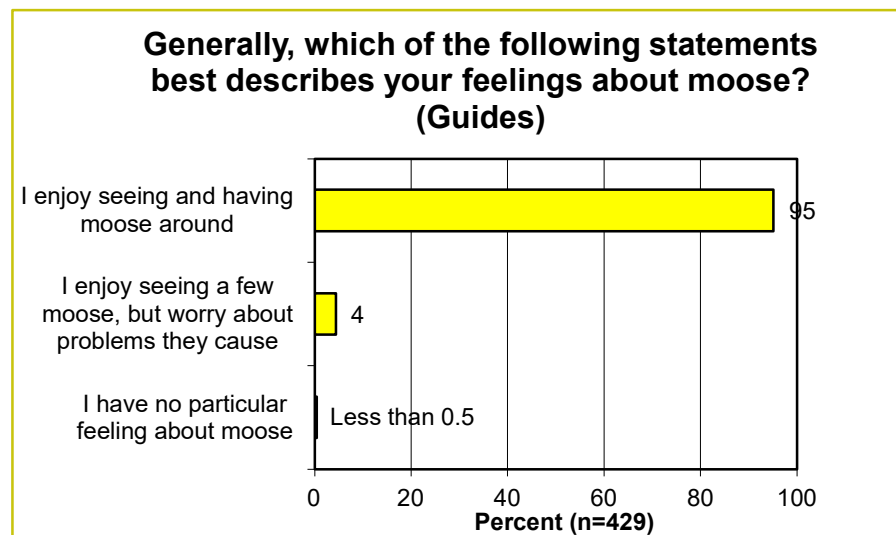
RESULTS AMONG MAINE GUIDES

This chapter shows the results among guides. Overall results are shown followed by crosstabulation graphs on all questions based on whom they guide. They are categorized as those whose guiding includes moose hunting, those whose guiding includes hunting but not moose hunting, and those whose guiding does not include any hunting.

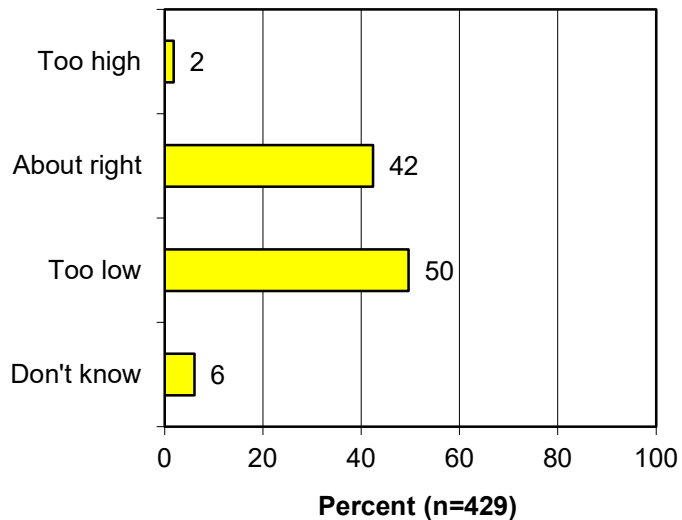
The graphs in this chapter on guides are in shades of yellow. The exceptions are graphs of series questions, which use a stoplight theme of red, yellow, and green to indicate more negative responses, middle responses, and more positive responses. For instance, graphs of questions that used a support-oppose scale show support as green, neutral as yellow, and oppose as red.

ATTITUDES TOWARD MOOSE AND MOOSE MANAGEMENT

Guides almost unanimously enjoy seeing and having moose around with no caveats. There are no marked differences between types of guides in the crosstabulation.

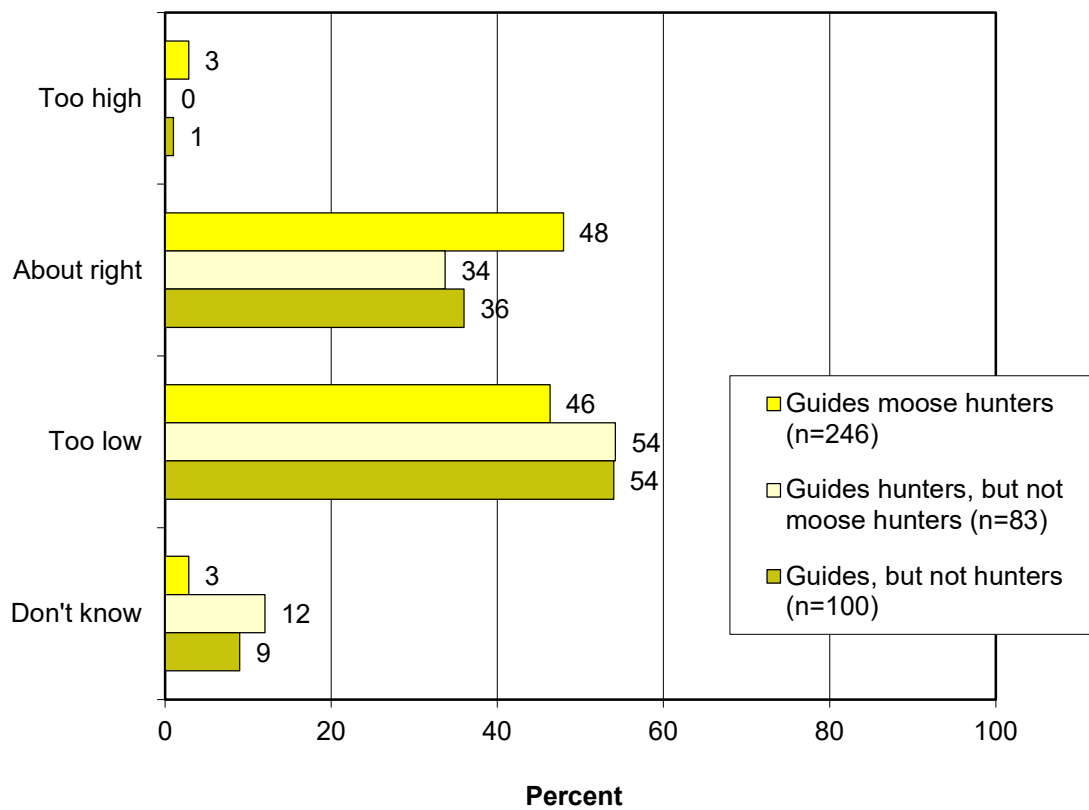


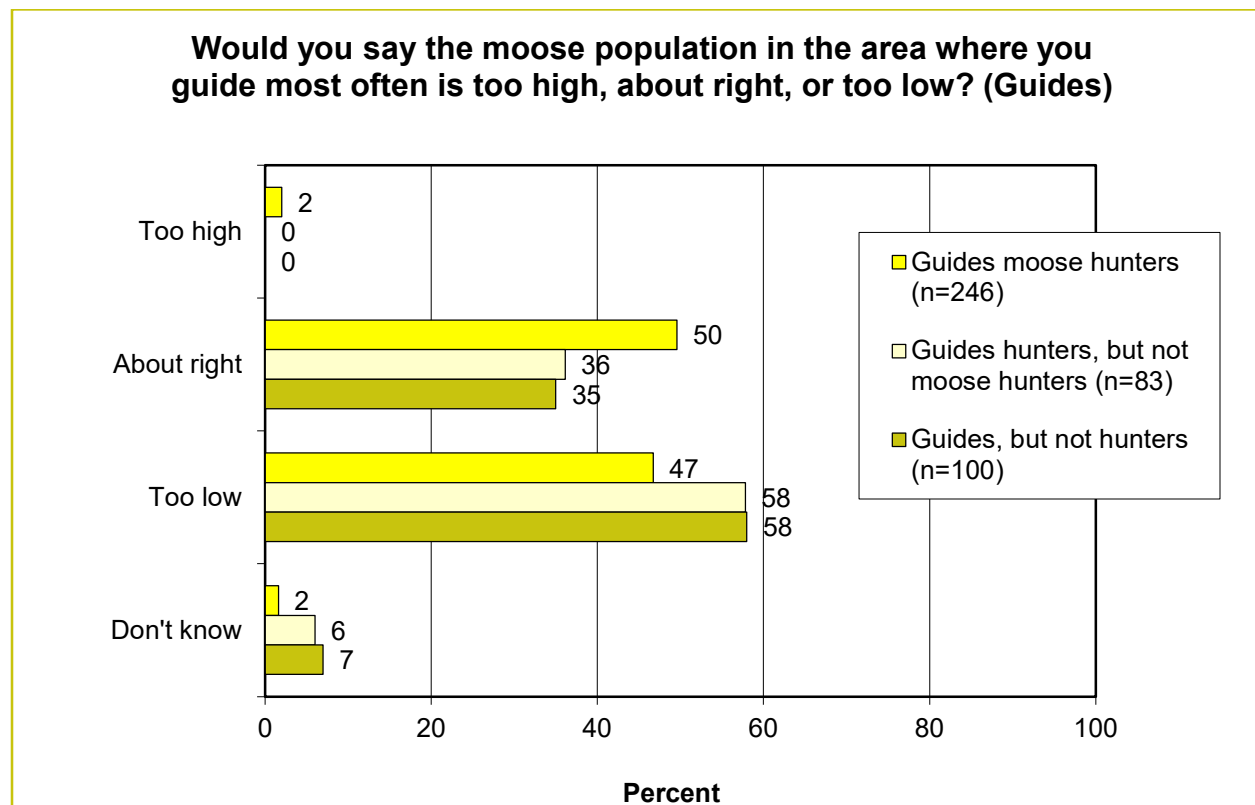
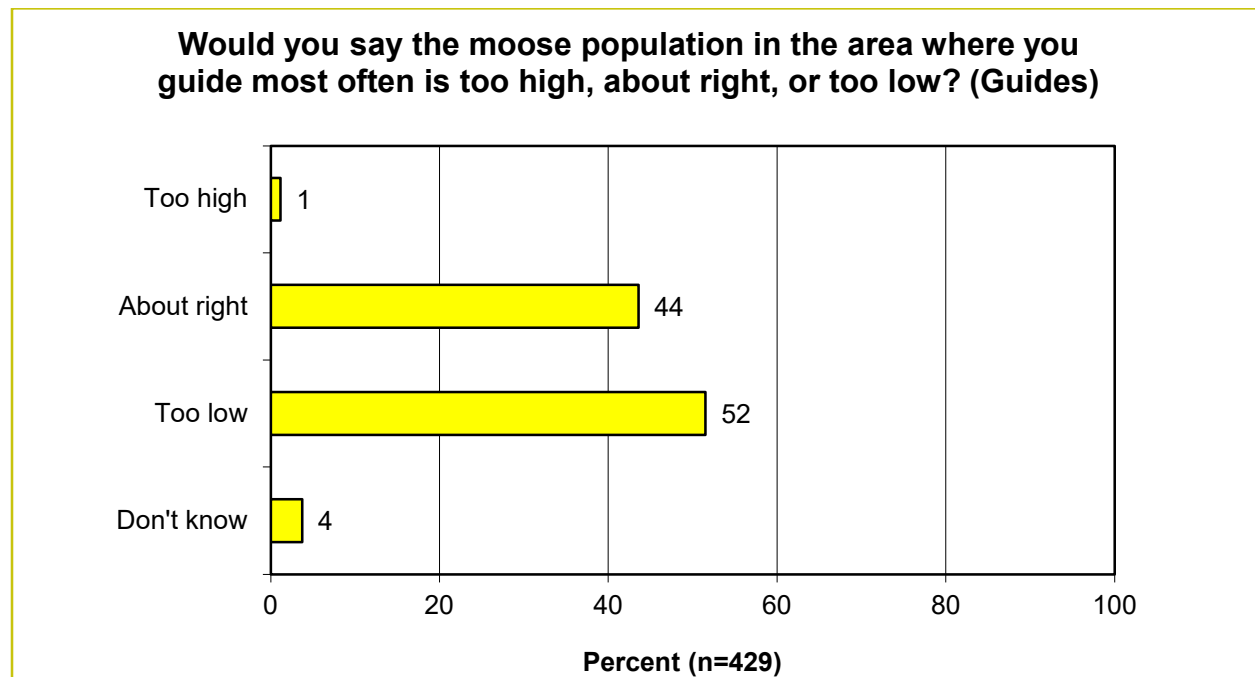
Overall, would you say the moose population in Maine is too high, about right, or too low? (Guides)



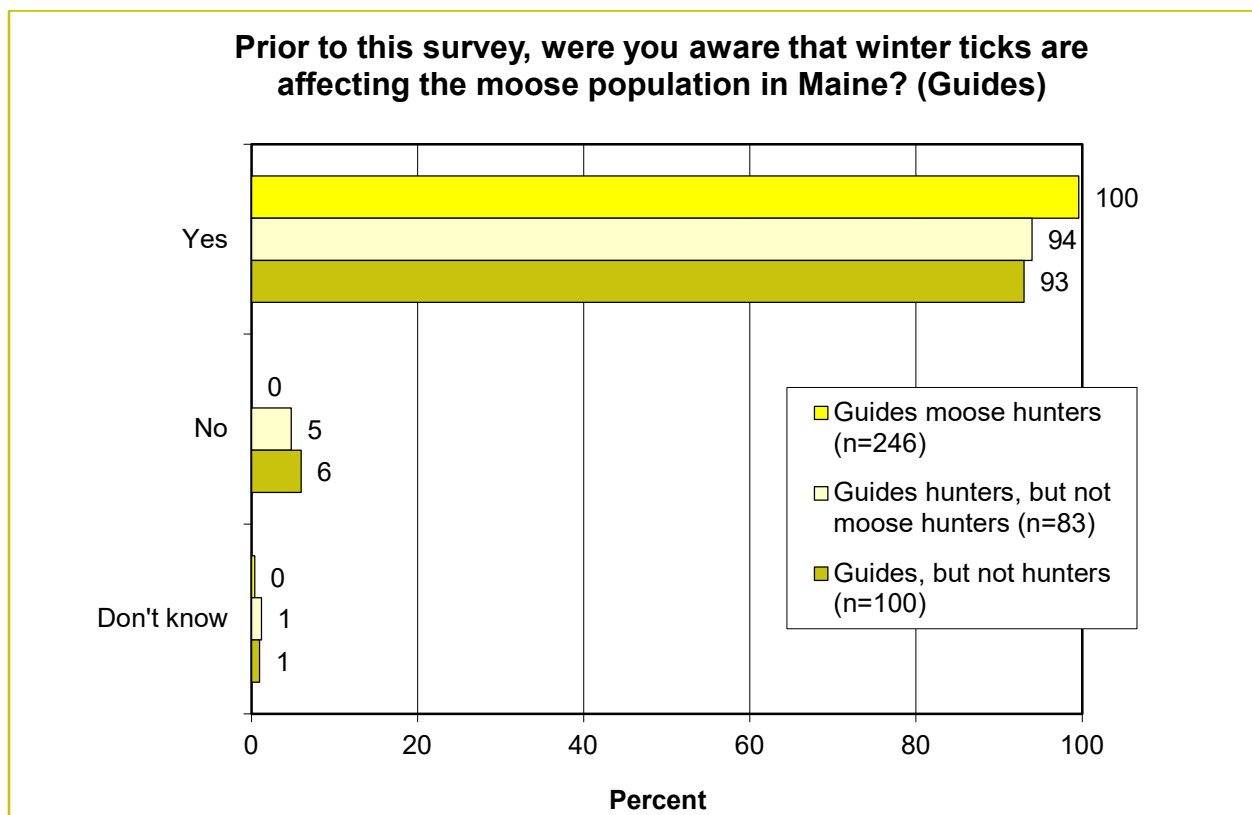
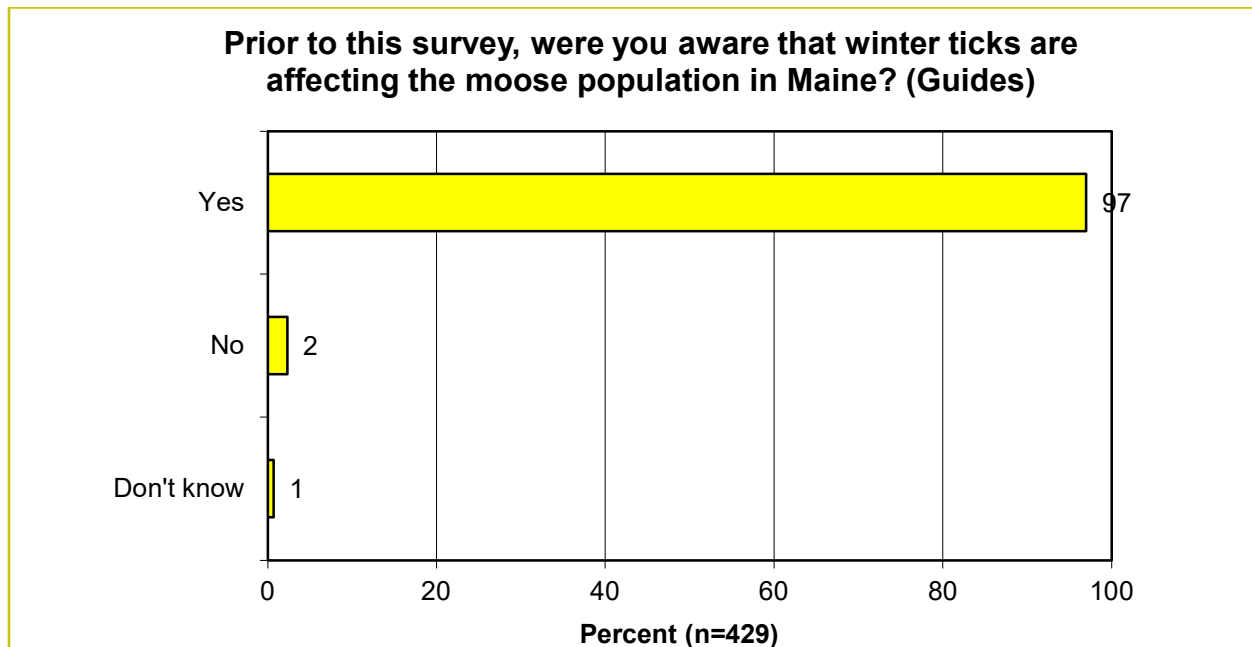
Guides are fairly evenly split between thinking that the moose population in Maine is *about right* and thinking it is *too low*. Almost none think it is *too high*. Hunting guides who do not guide moose hunters and guides who do not guide hunters at all, compared to moose hunting guides, are more likely to think that the moose population is *too low*. The same holds true regarding the moose population where guides most often do their guiding, as shown on the next page.

Overall, would you say the moose population in Maine is too high, about right, or too low? (Guides)

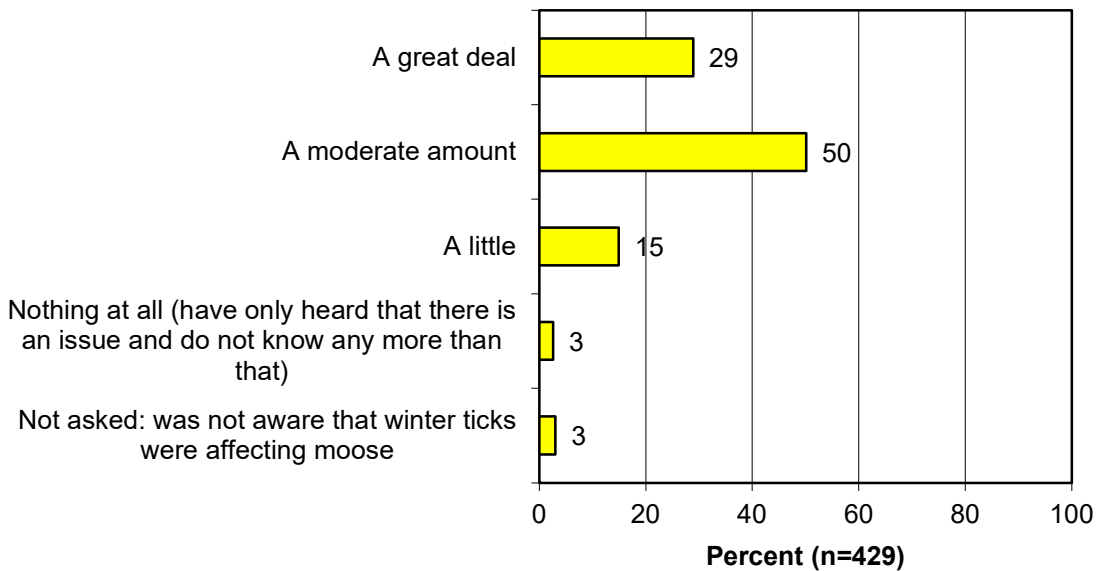




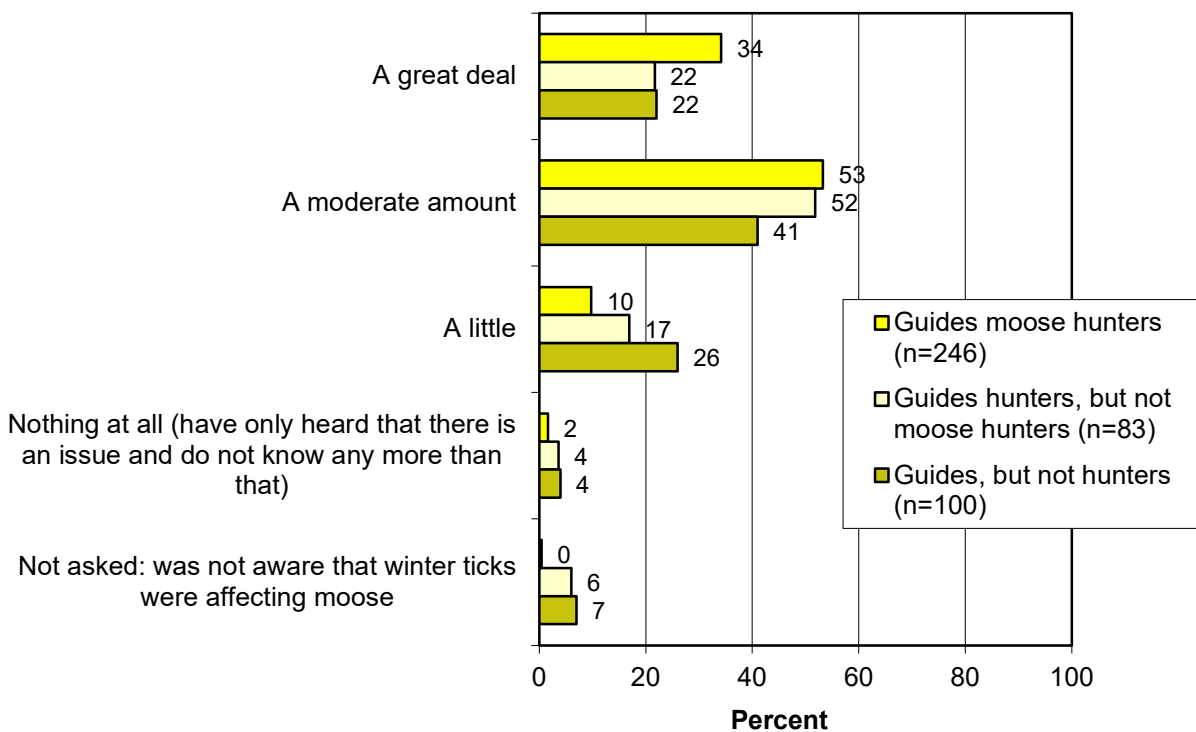
Almost all guides were aware, prior to the survey, of the winter tick problem. Moose hunting guides have the highest awareness rate. Guides' overall knowledge of winter ticks is shown on the next page; moose hunting guides are the most knowledgeable.



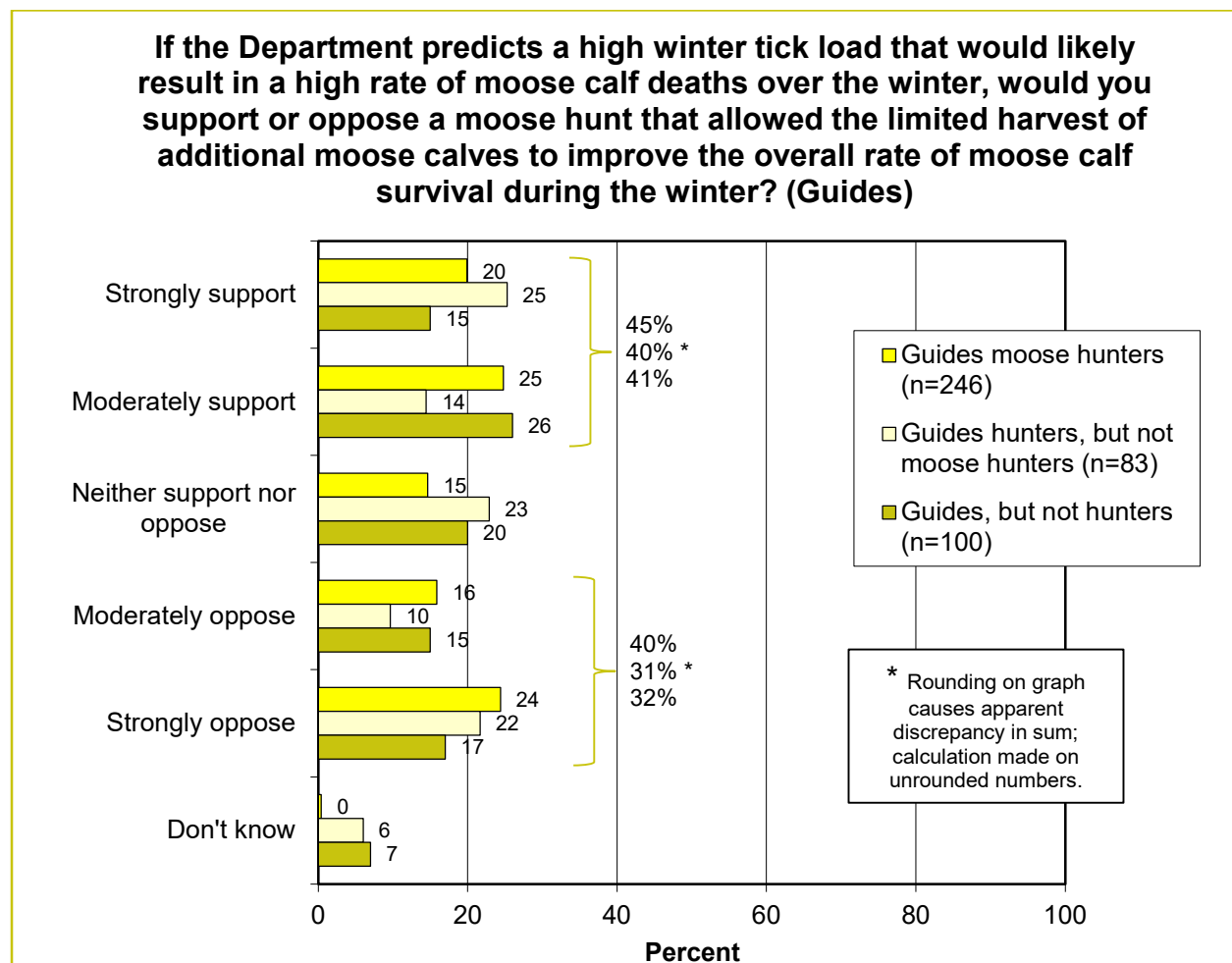
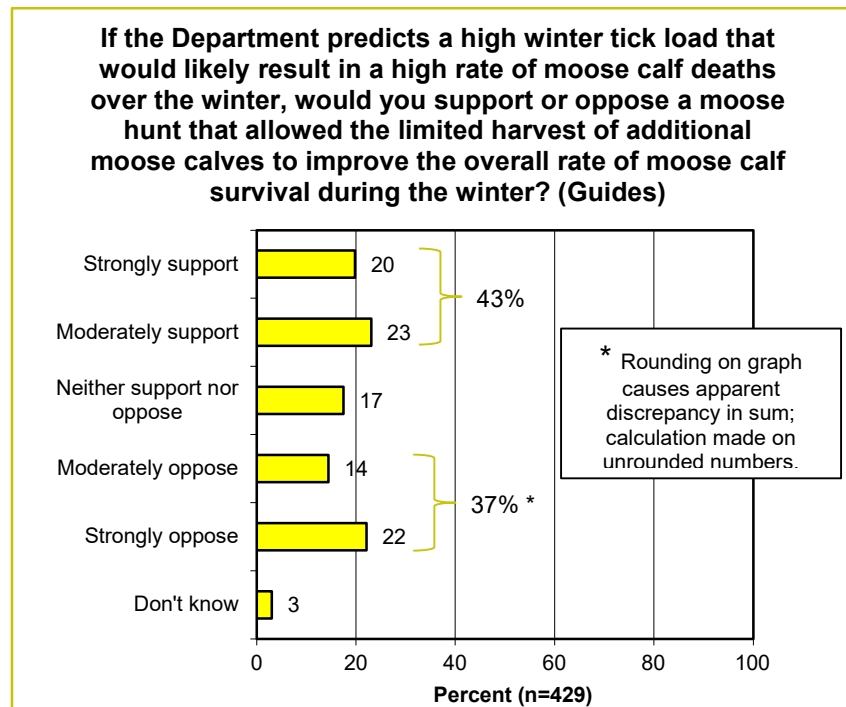
How much would you say you know about winter ticks and their impacts on the moose population in Maine? (Asked of those who were aware of winter ticks affecting moose; shown among all.) (Guides)



How much would you say you know about winter ticks and their impacts on the moose population in Maine? (Asked of those who were aware of winter ticks affecting moose; shown among all.) (Guides)

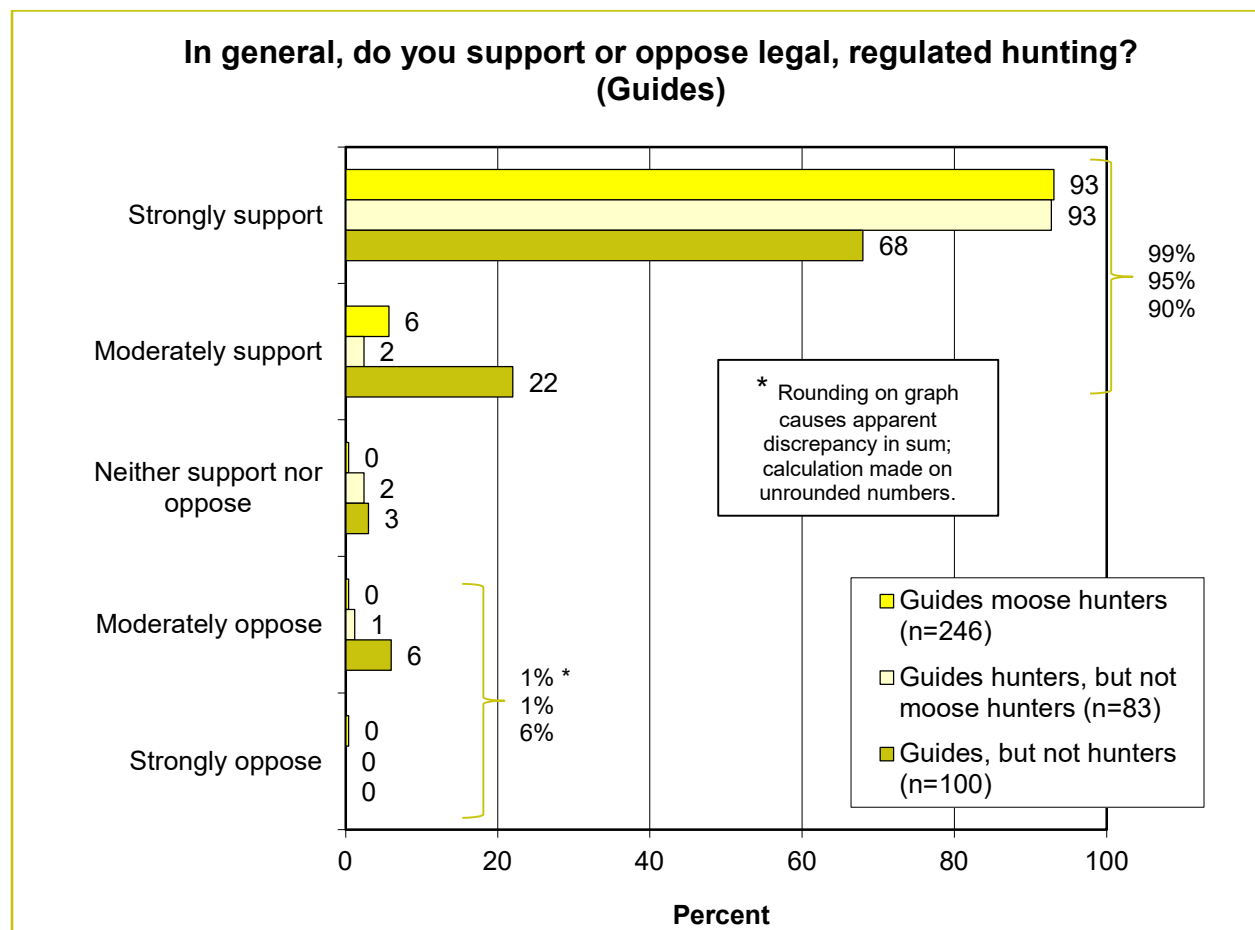
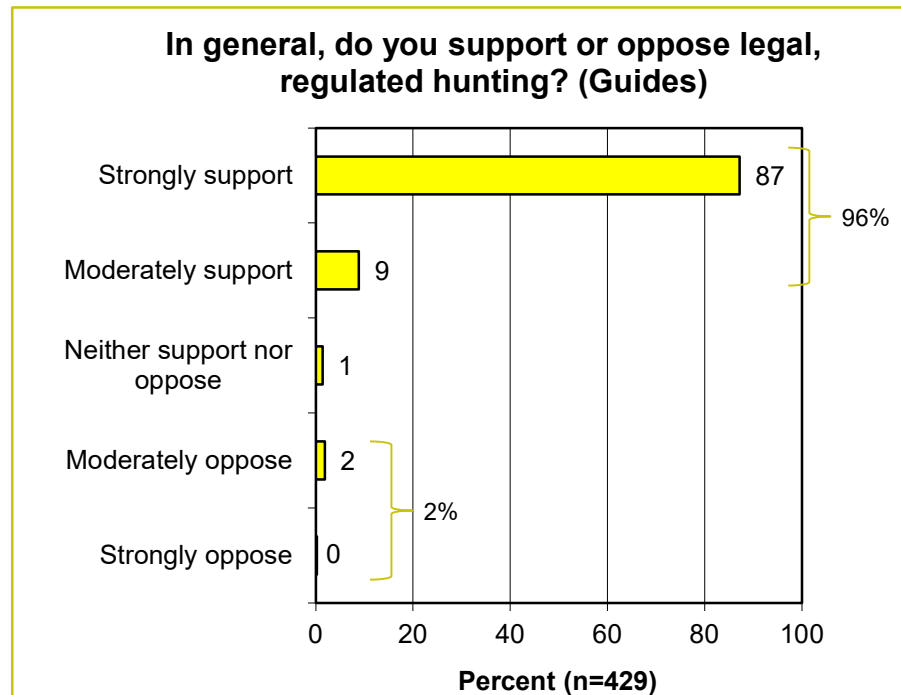


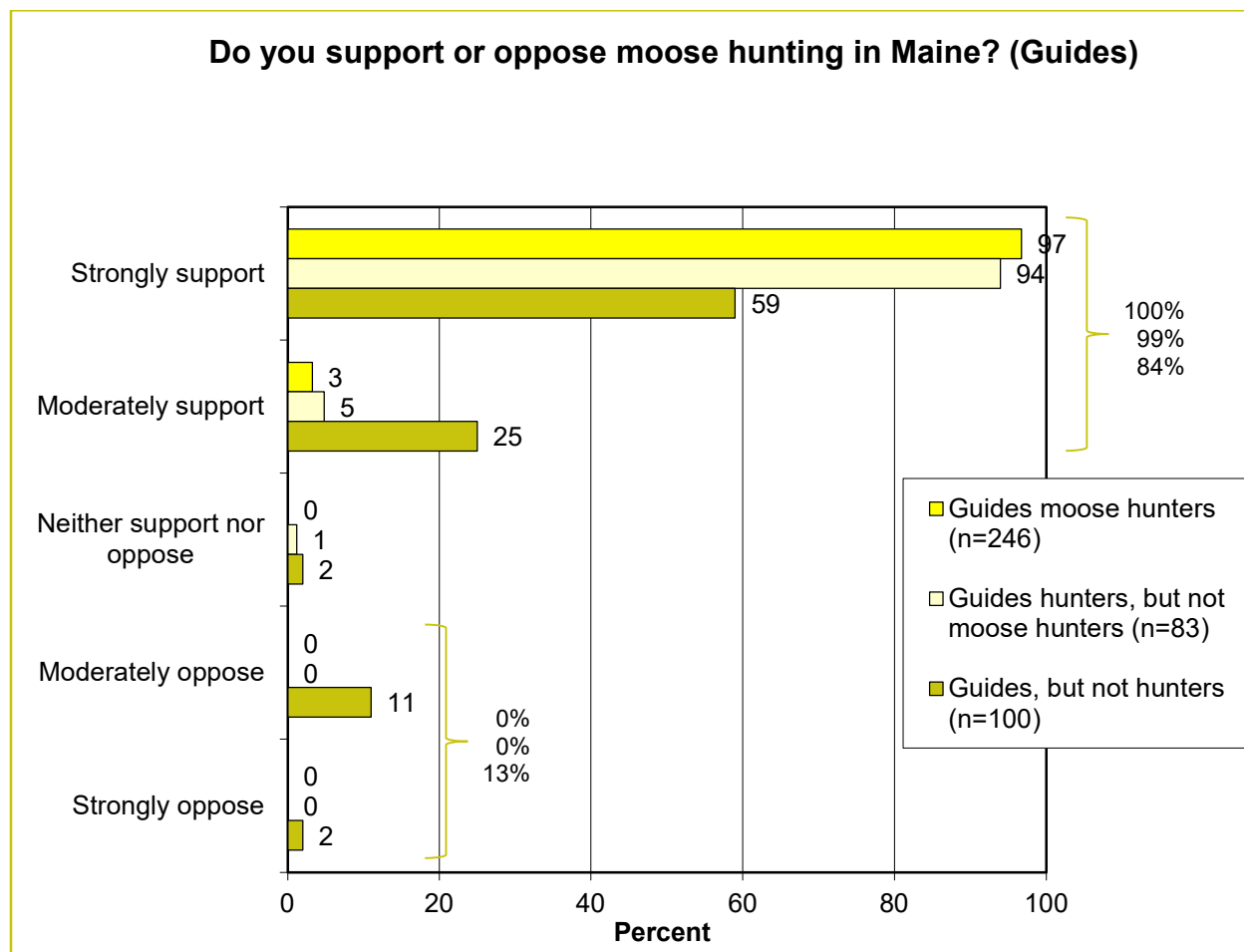
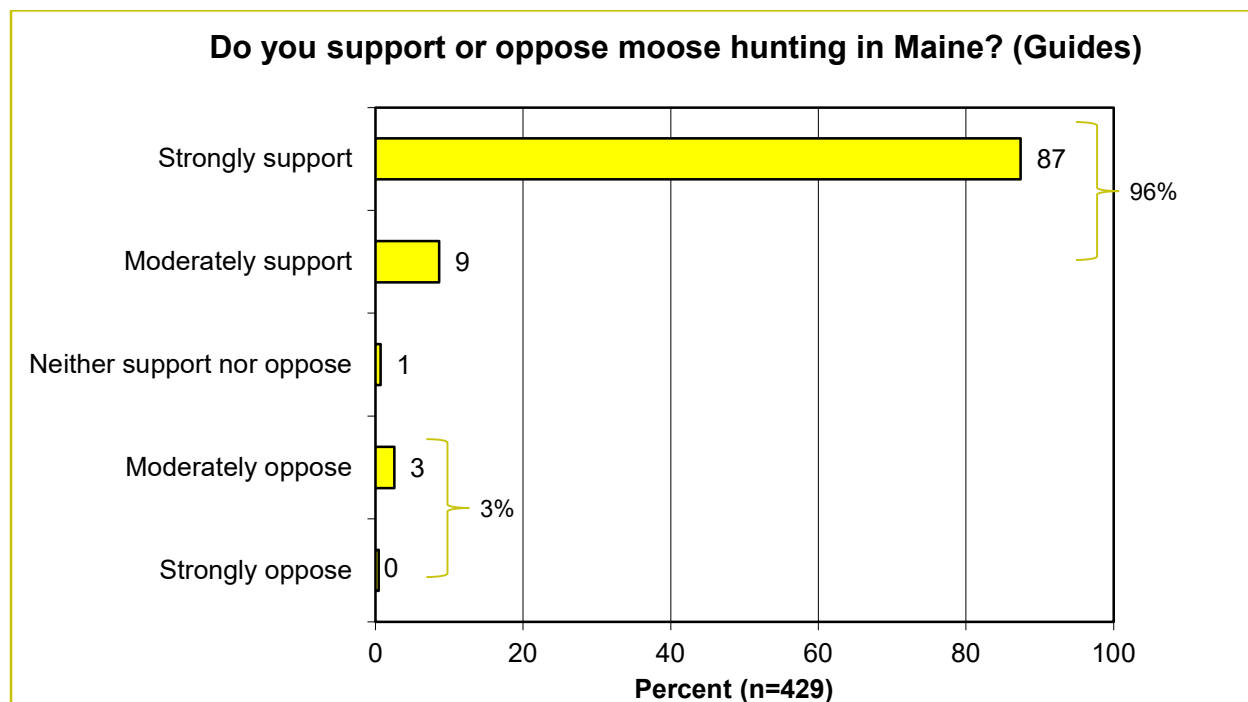
Guides are about evenly split on support for (43%) or opposition to (37%) a moose hunt that allowed the limited harvest of additional moose calves to improve the overall rate of moose calf survival during the winter, if winter tick loads warrant such a change. Moose hunting guides have a higher percentage, compared to the other types of guides, who support and who oppose simply because they have lower percentages in the *neither* and *don't know* responses.



ATTITUDES TOWARD HUNTING

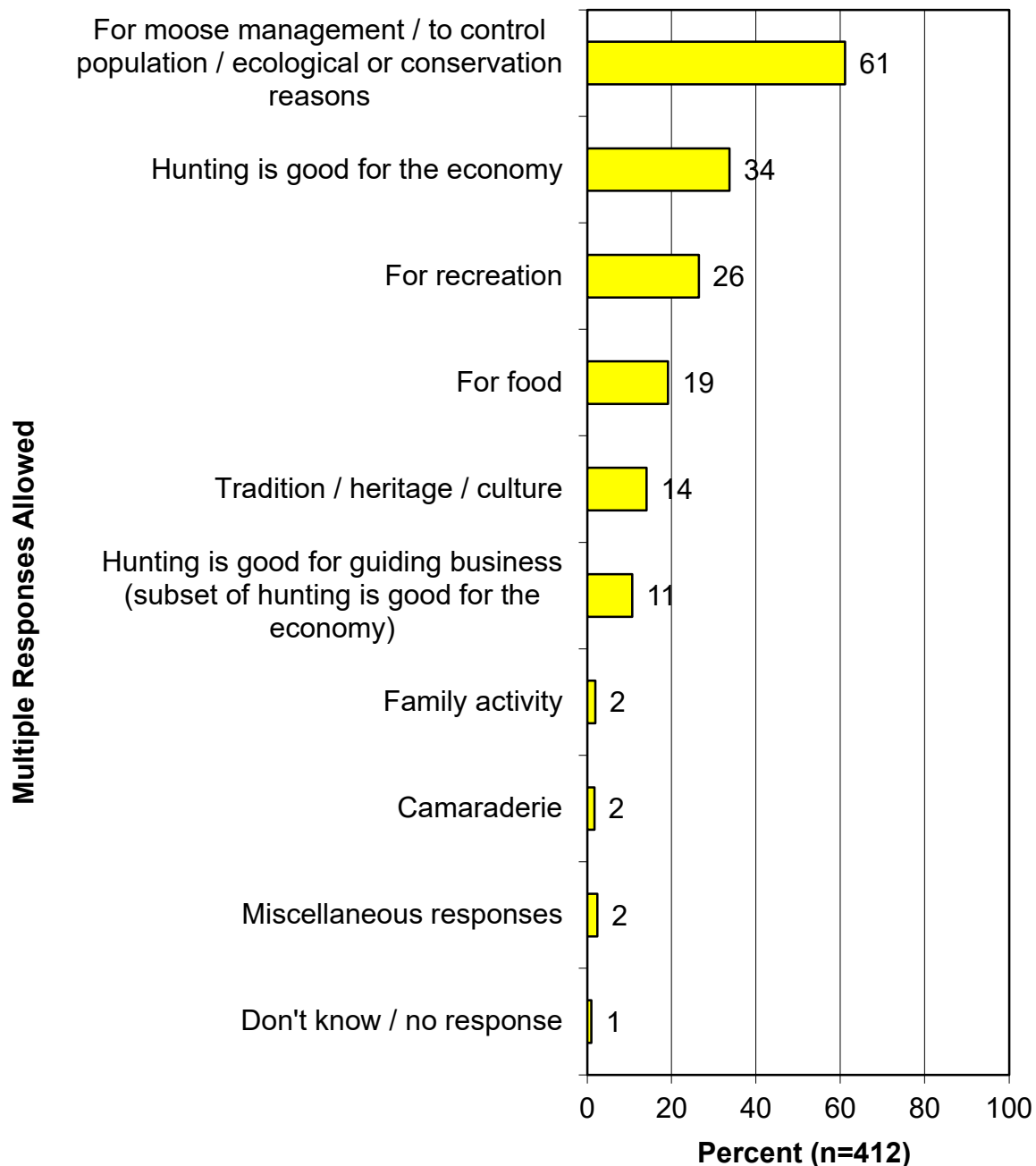
Guides overwhelmingly support legal, regulated hunting, even those who do not guide moose hunting. The most marked difference in the crosstabulation is that non-hunting guides have less *strong* support than their counterparts, but higher *moderate* support, making their overall support nearly the same. The results regarding moose hunting specifically are about the same (see next page).



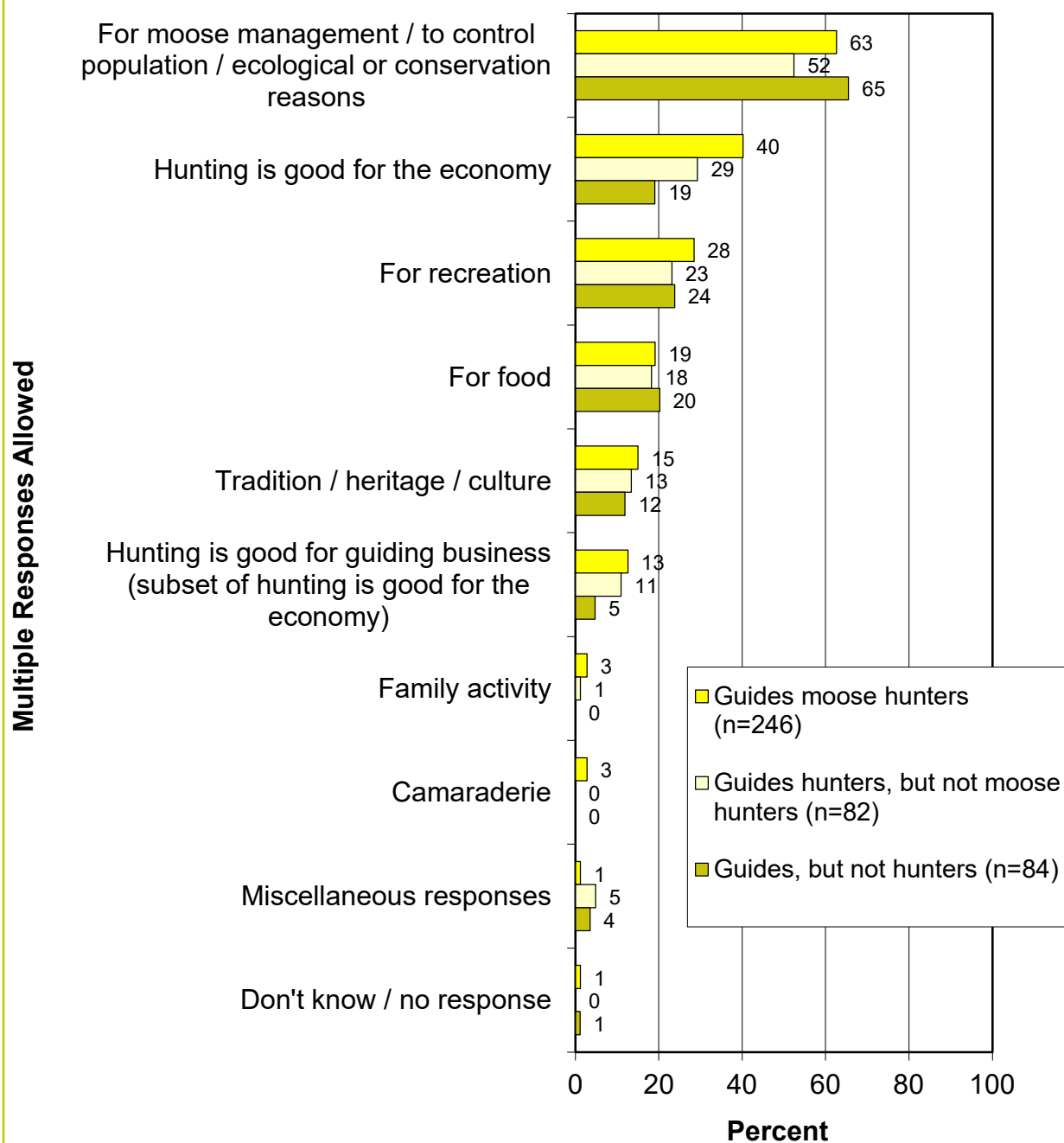


Reasons for supporting moose hunting are shown. The top reasons are for moose management and because hunting is good for the economy. In the crosstabulation, moose management is the top reason among all three types of guides.

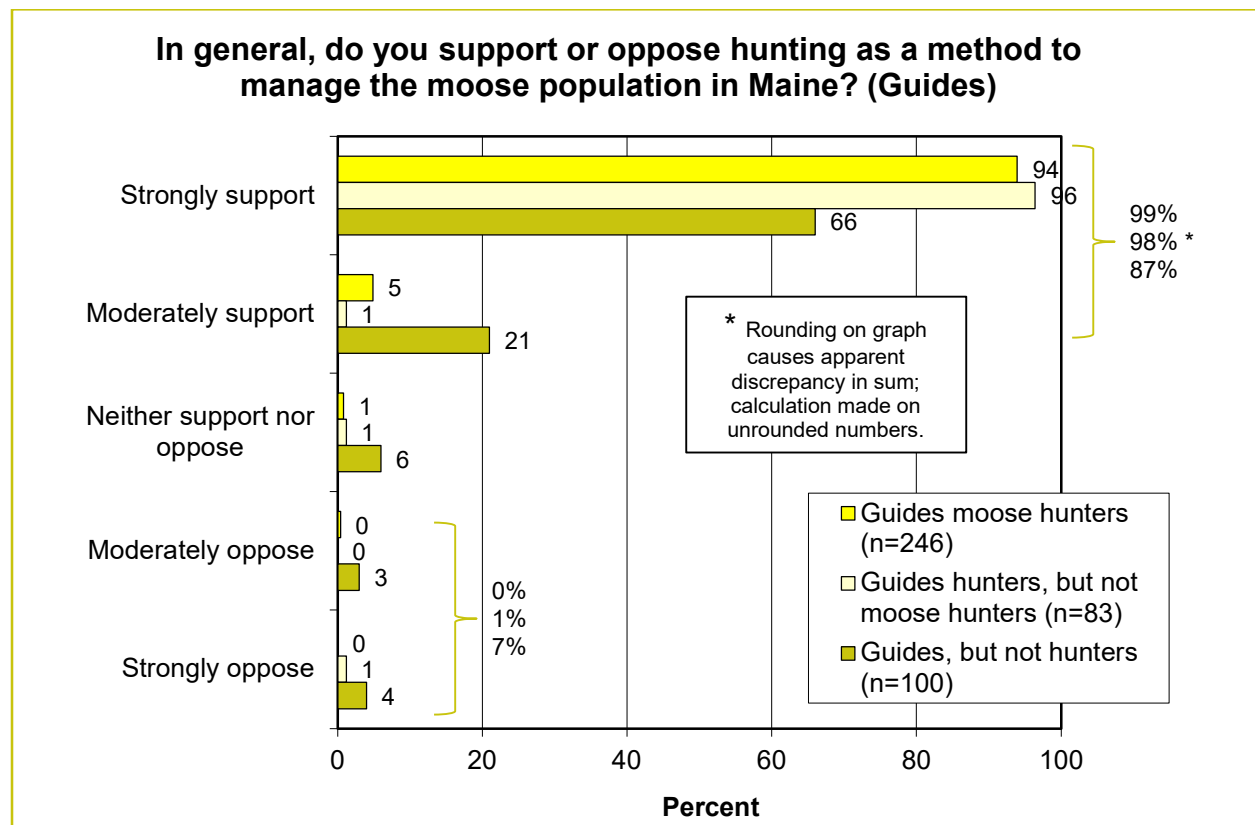
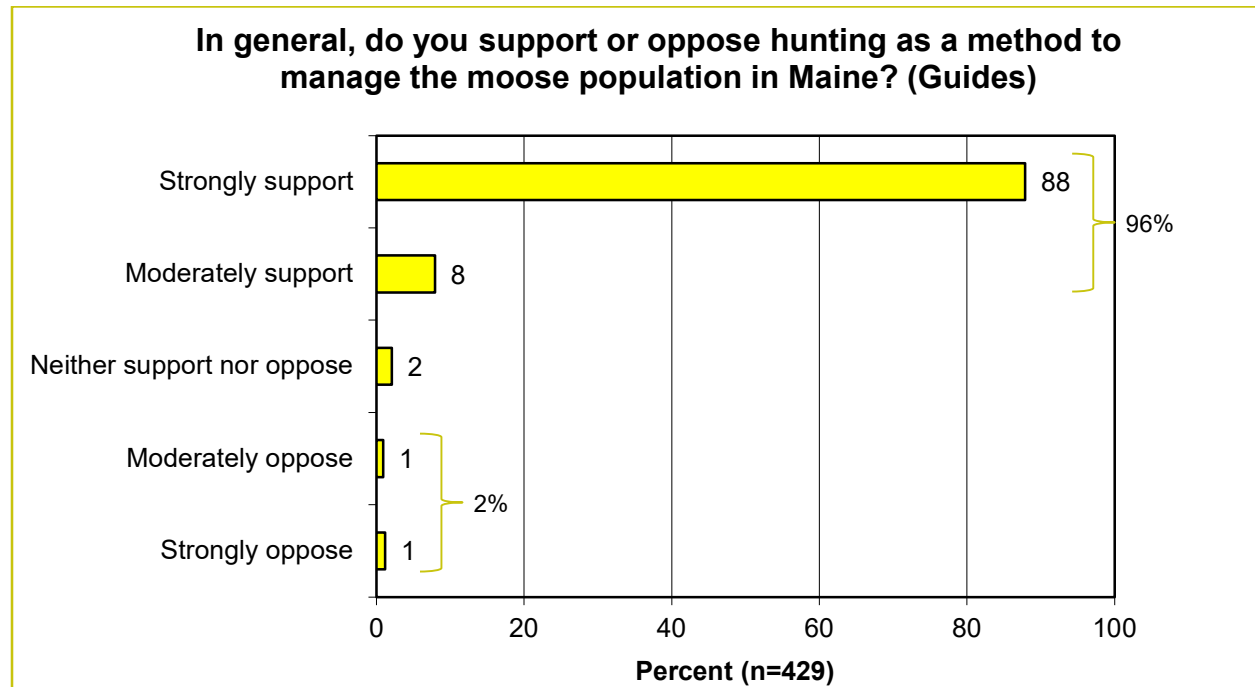
Why do you support moose hunting in Maine? (Asked of those who support moose hunting in Maine.) (Guides)



Why do you support moose hunting in Maine? (Asked of those who support moose hunting in Maine.) (Guides)

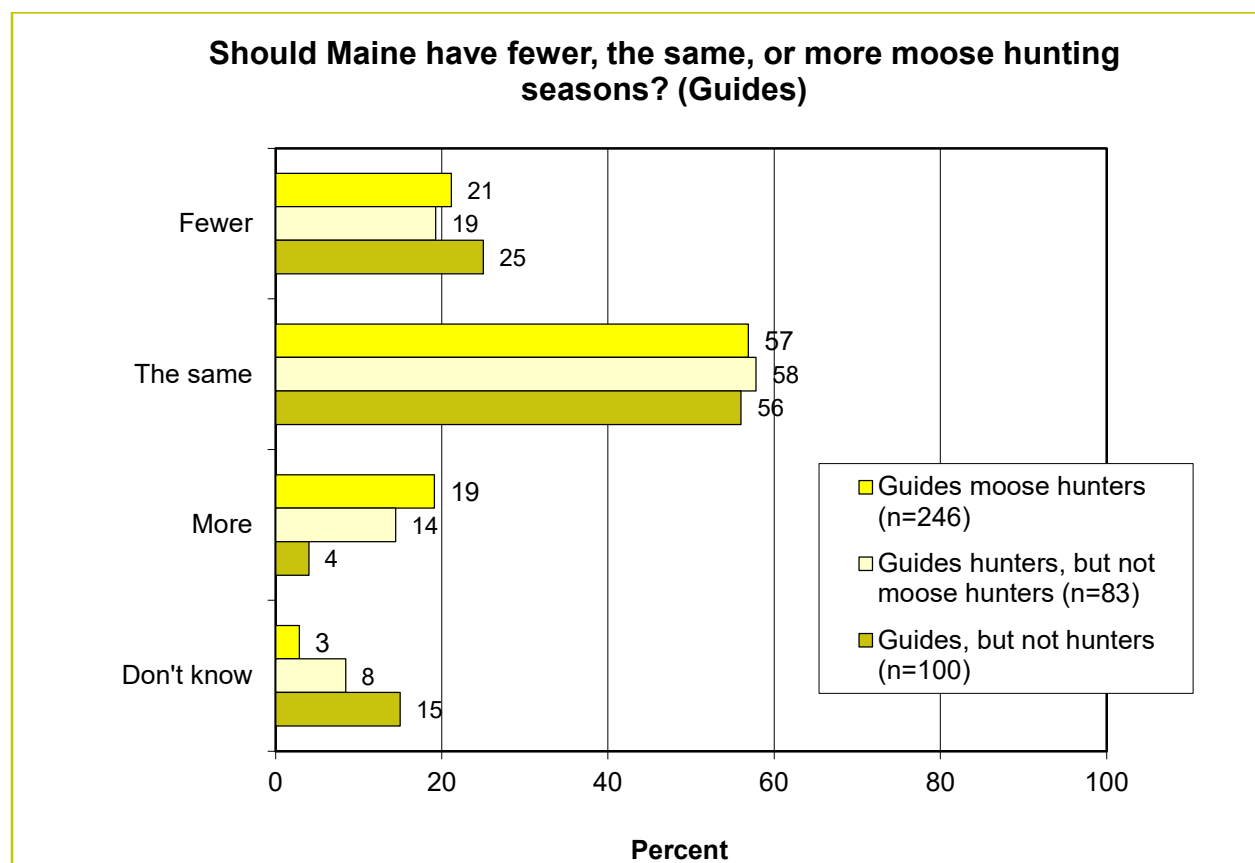
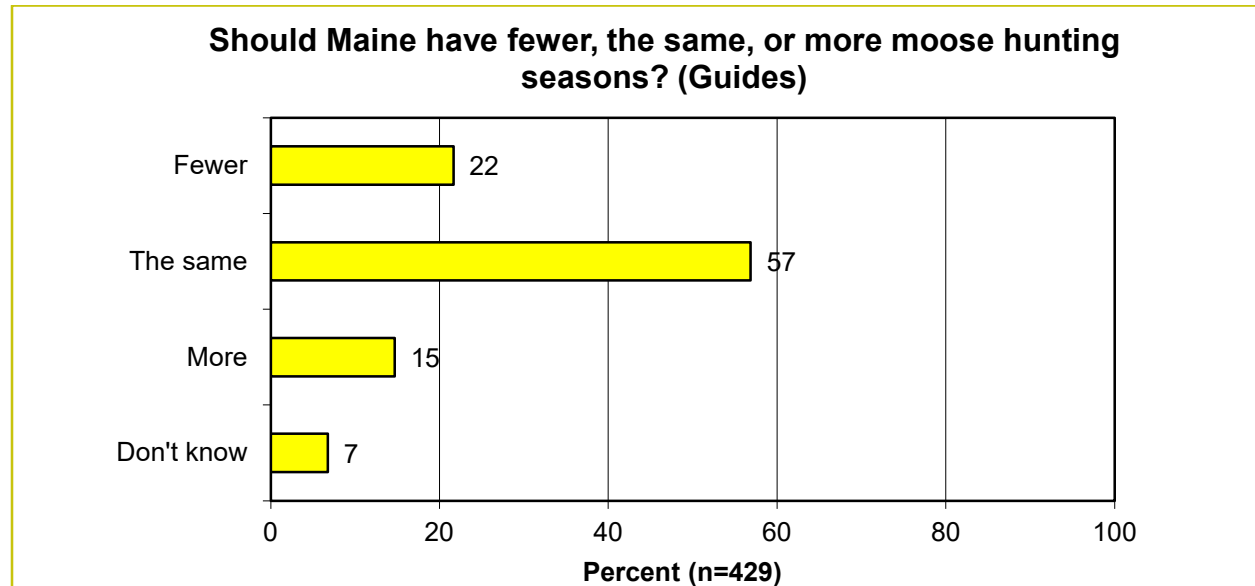


As with support for hunting in general and moose hunting specifically, support is high for moose hunting as a method to manage the moose population.

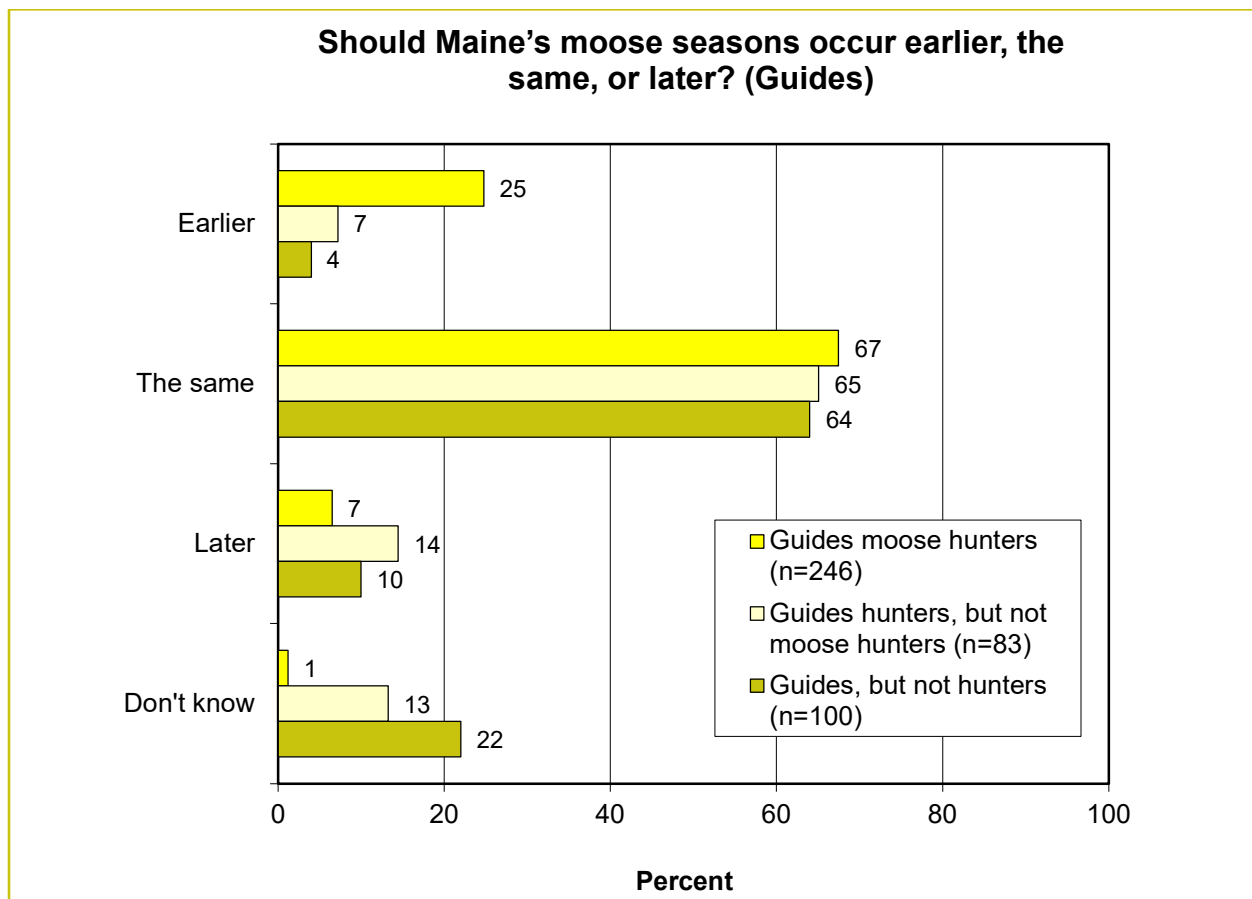
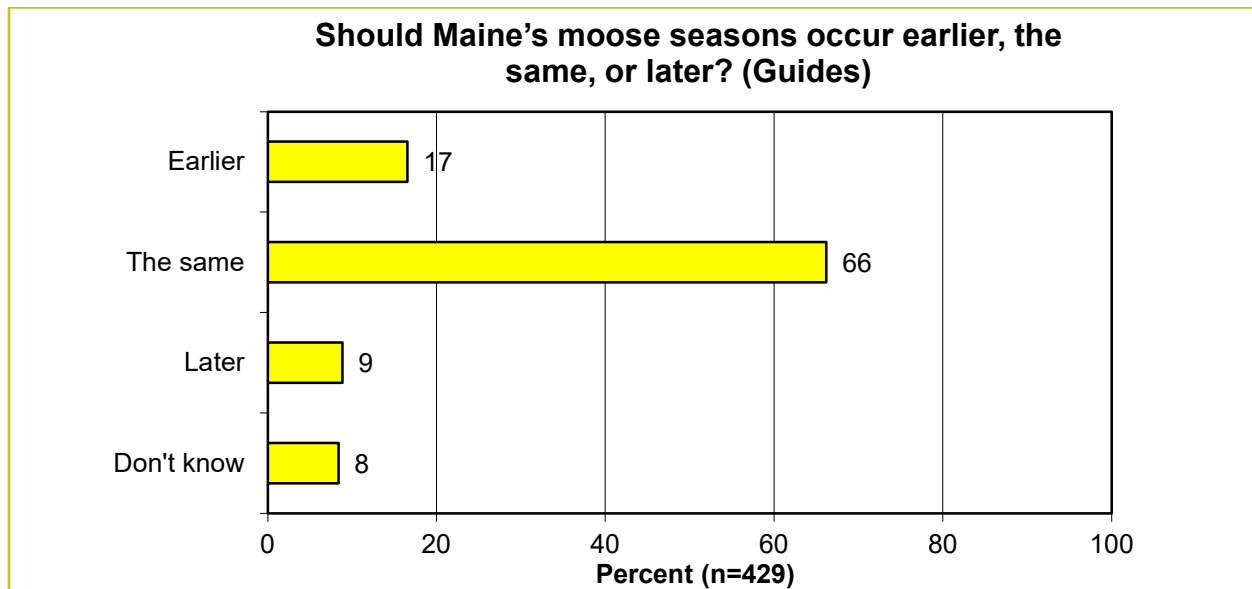


OPINIONS ON MOOSE HUNTING SEASONS

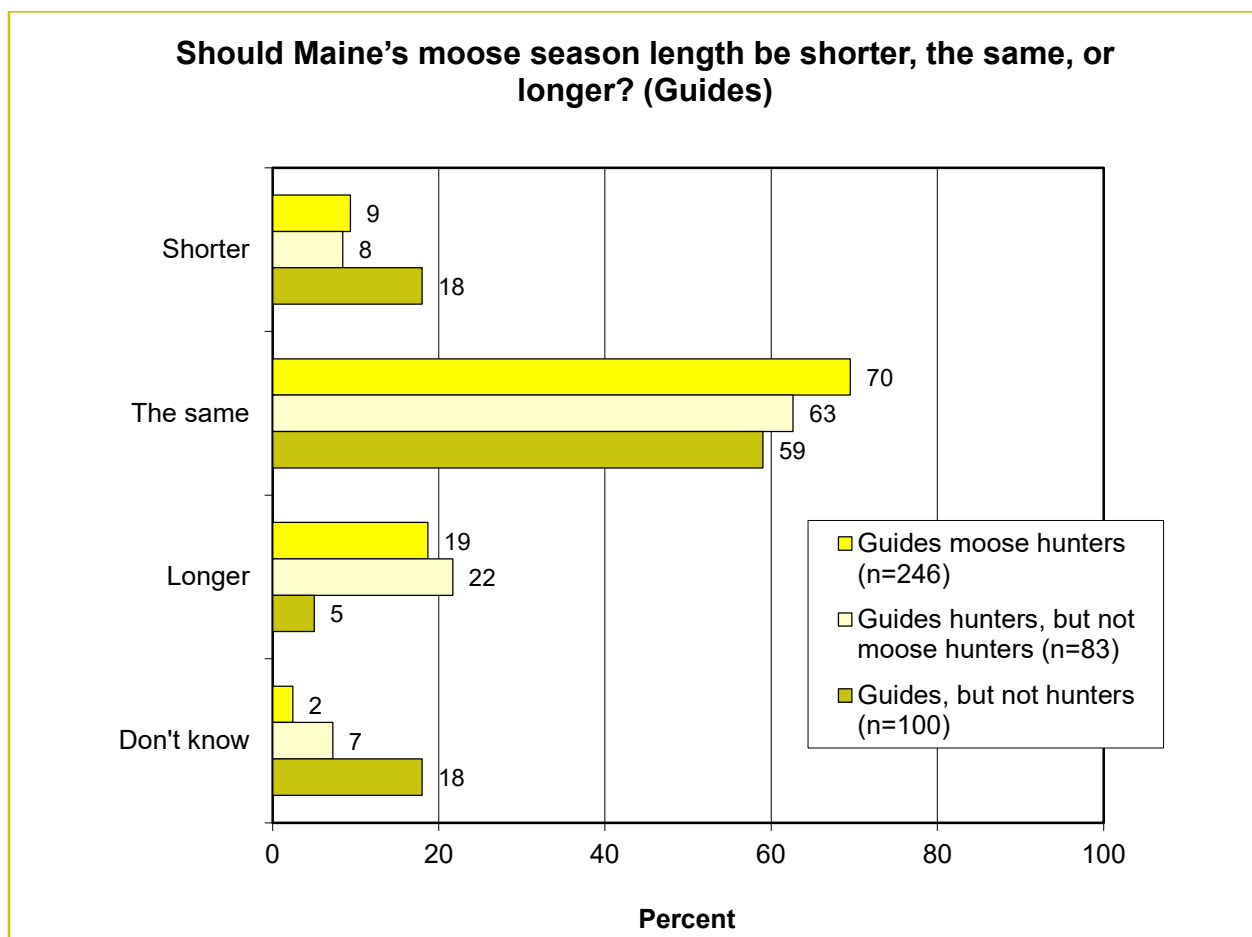
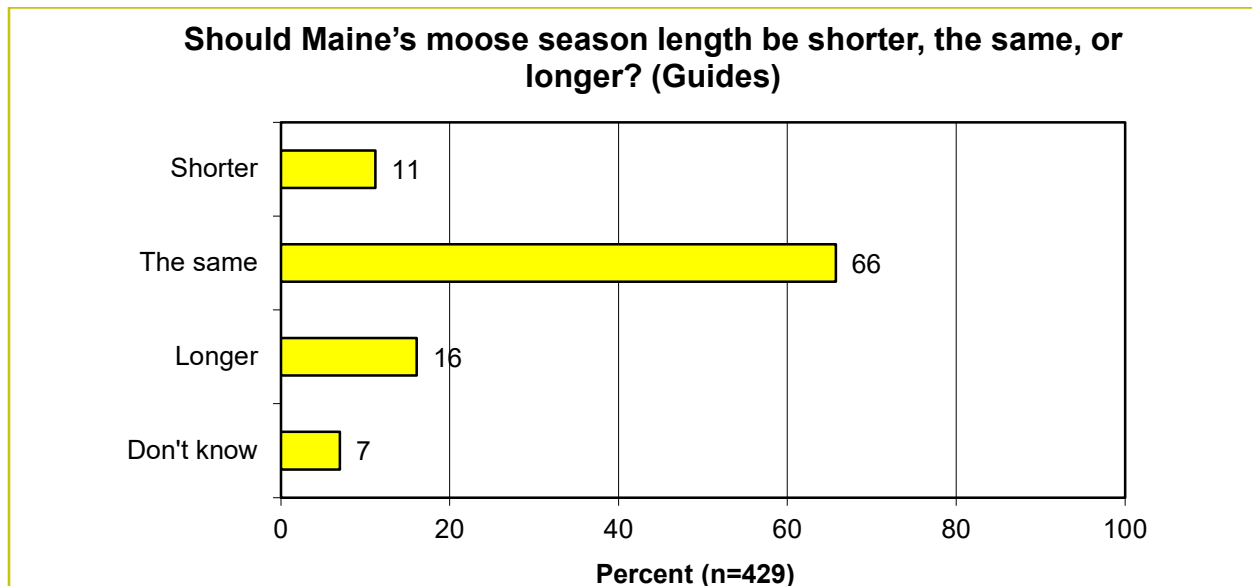
While the majority of Maine guides want the same number of moose hunting seasons (57%), they are otherwise fairly evenly split, with 22% wanting fewer and 15% wanting more. Non-hunting guides are markedly less likely to want more moose hunting seasons.



The majority of guides (66%) want the same timing of moose seasons. Otherwise, more of them want the seasons to be earlier (17%) than want them to be later (9%). Moose hunting guides have the highest percentage wanting earlier seasons.



Regarding the length of moose seasons, about two thirds of guides (66%) want them to be the same. They otherwise are evenly split, with 11% wanting them to be shorter and 16% wanting them to be longer.



Five questions asked about support for or opposition to changes to the moose hunting seasons. Prior to the question, the information below was given.

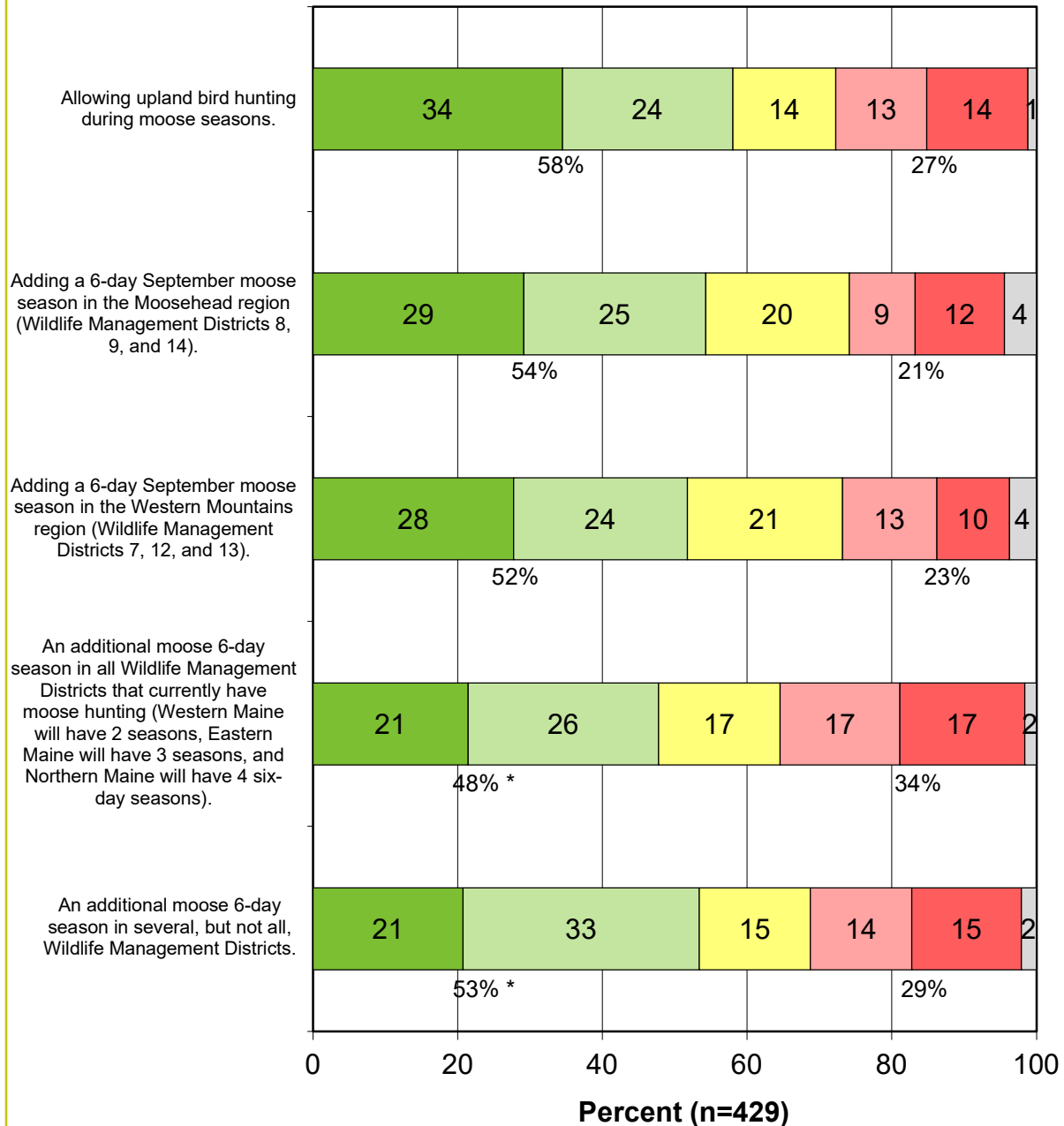
Next, we would like to know if you support or oppose some potential moose hunting season changes. These potential changes would be in an effort to reduce any potential conflict between residents, moose hunters, other hunters, other recreationists, guides, visitors, tourists, and landowners in Northern, Western, and Eastern Maine during moose hunting season. Each of the potential changes would occur without increasing the total number of moose permits issued to hunters each year.

The most overall support and the most *strong* support is for allowing upland bird hunting during moose seasons. All potential changes have more support than opposition, although opposition is not insubstantial. Support ranges from 48% to 58%, while opposition ranges from 21% to 34%. In general, of the three types of guides, support is lowest among non-hunting guides.

These graphs start on the next page, as each graph needs a full page for display. Each graph is ranked by *strongly* support; sums of both support responses and both oppose responses are shown below each bar.

**Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes.
(Overall) (Guides)**

■ Strongly support
 ■ Moderately support
 ■ Neither
 ■ Moderately oppose
 ■ Strongly oppose
 ■ Don't know



* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes. (Guides moose hunters) (Guides)

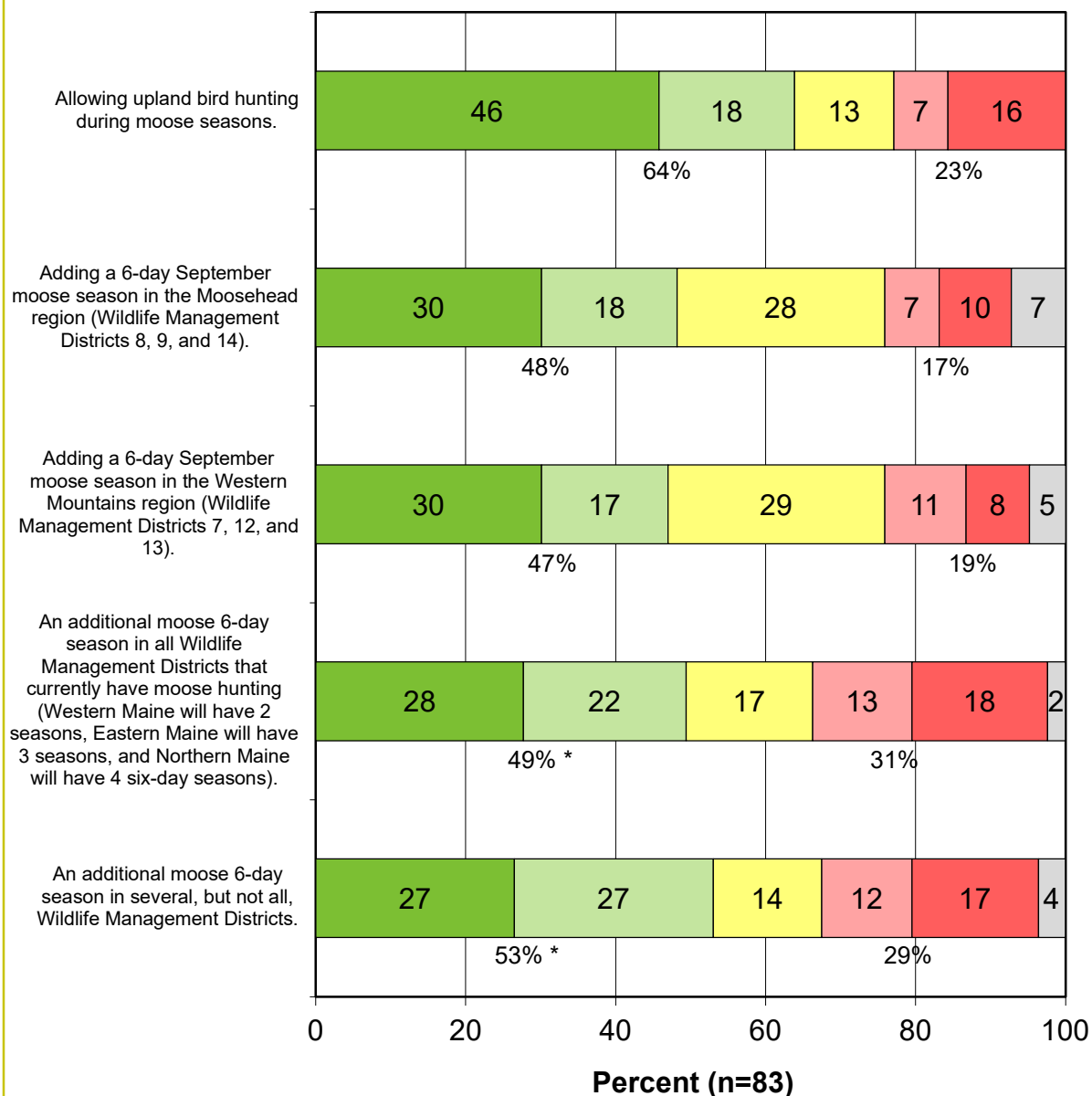
Strongly support Moderately support Neither Moderately oppose Strongly oppose Don't know



* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

**Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes.
(Guides hunters, but not moose hunters)
(Guides)**

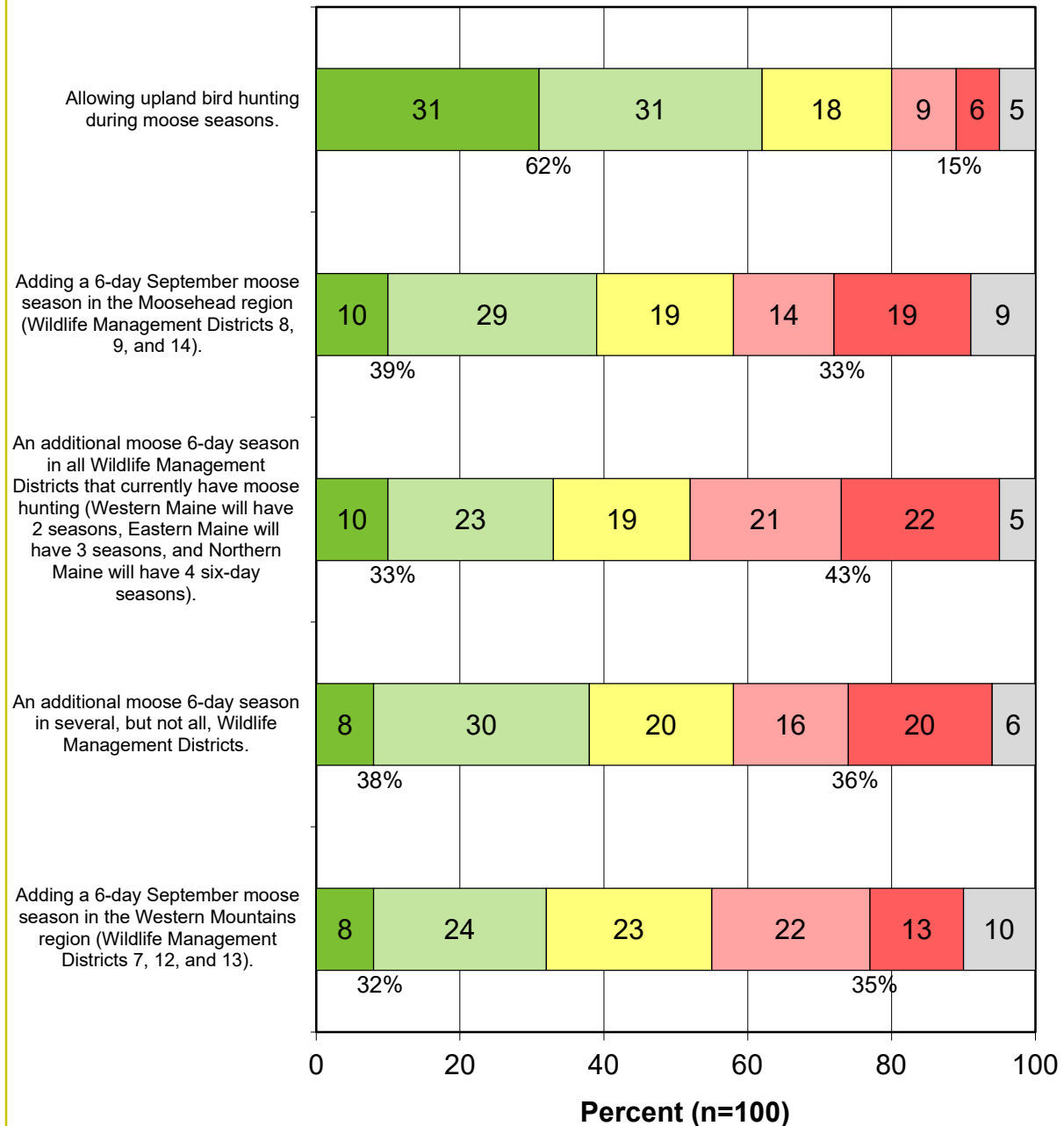
Strongly support Moderately support Neither Moderately oppose Strongly oppose Don't know



* Rounding on graph causes apparent discrepancy in sum; calculation made on unrounded numbers.

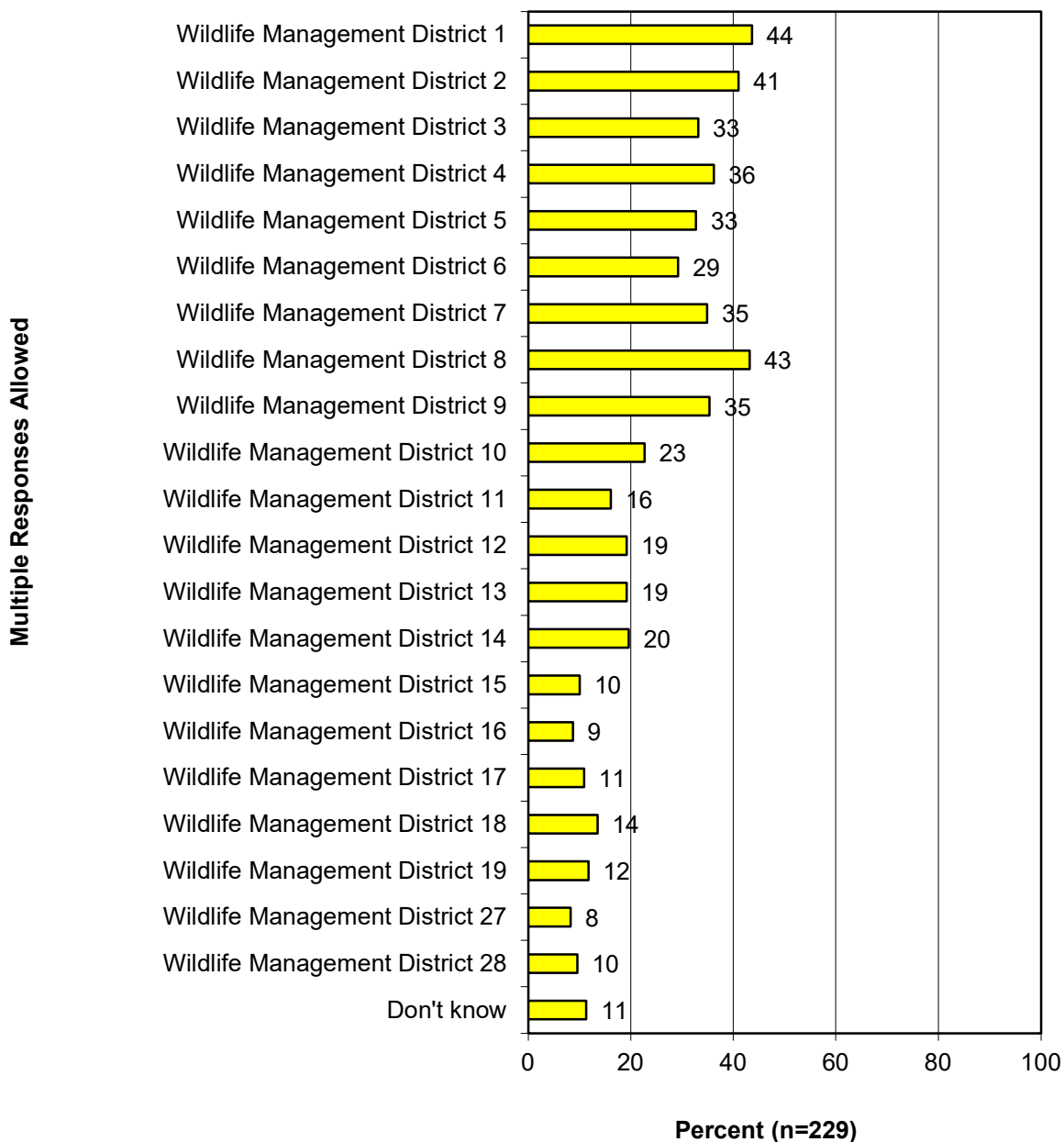
**Knowing this, please tell me if you would support or oppose each of the following potential moose hunting season changes.
(Guides, but not hunters) (Guides)**

Strongly support Moderately support Neither Moderately oppose Strongly oppose Don't know

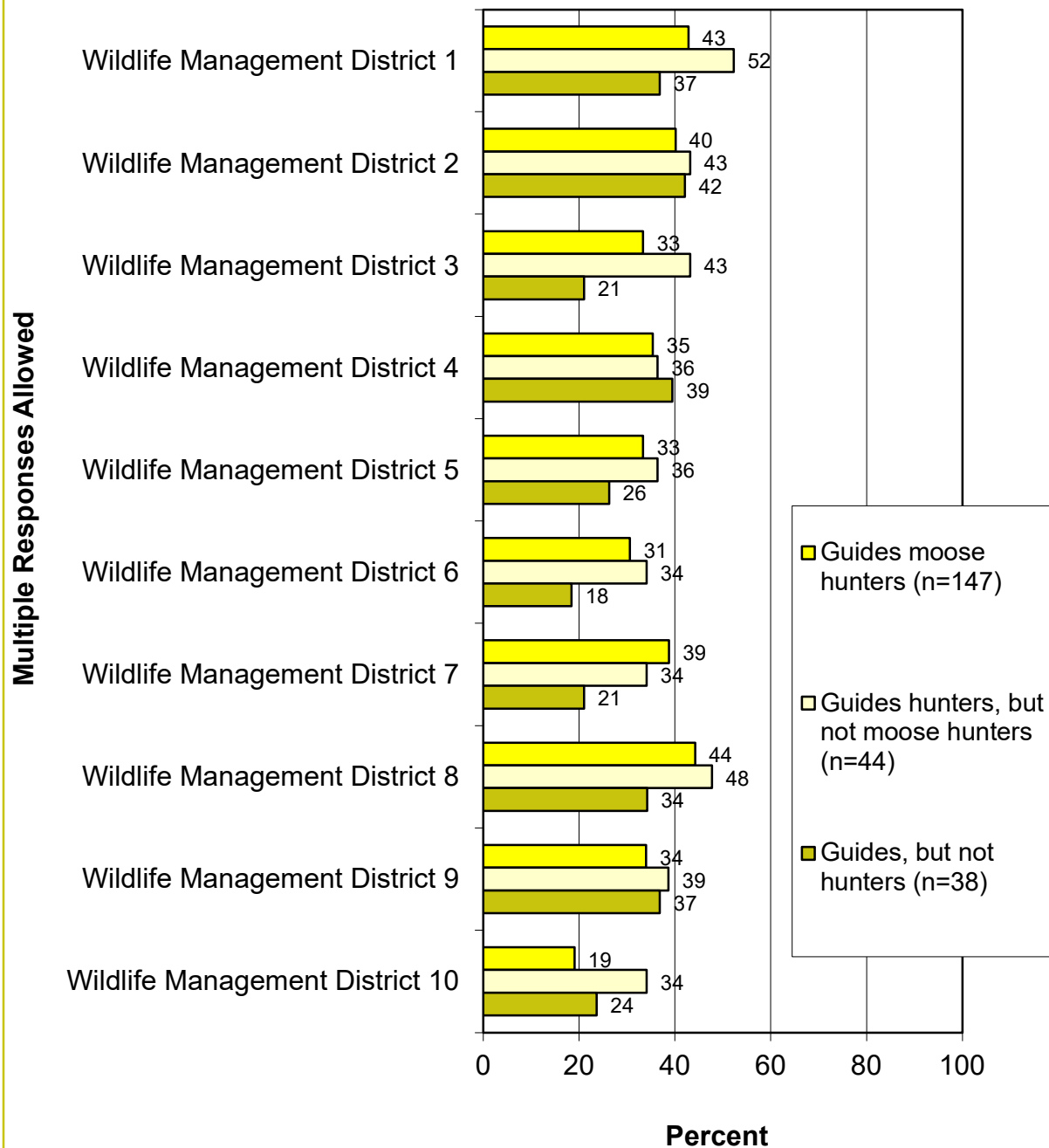


As a follow-up to one of the questions in this series, those who supported adding an additional moose 6-day season in several, but not all, WMDs were asked to name the WMDs in which they would want an additional season. These results are shown below; WMDs 1 through 9 are named more often than the other WMDs.

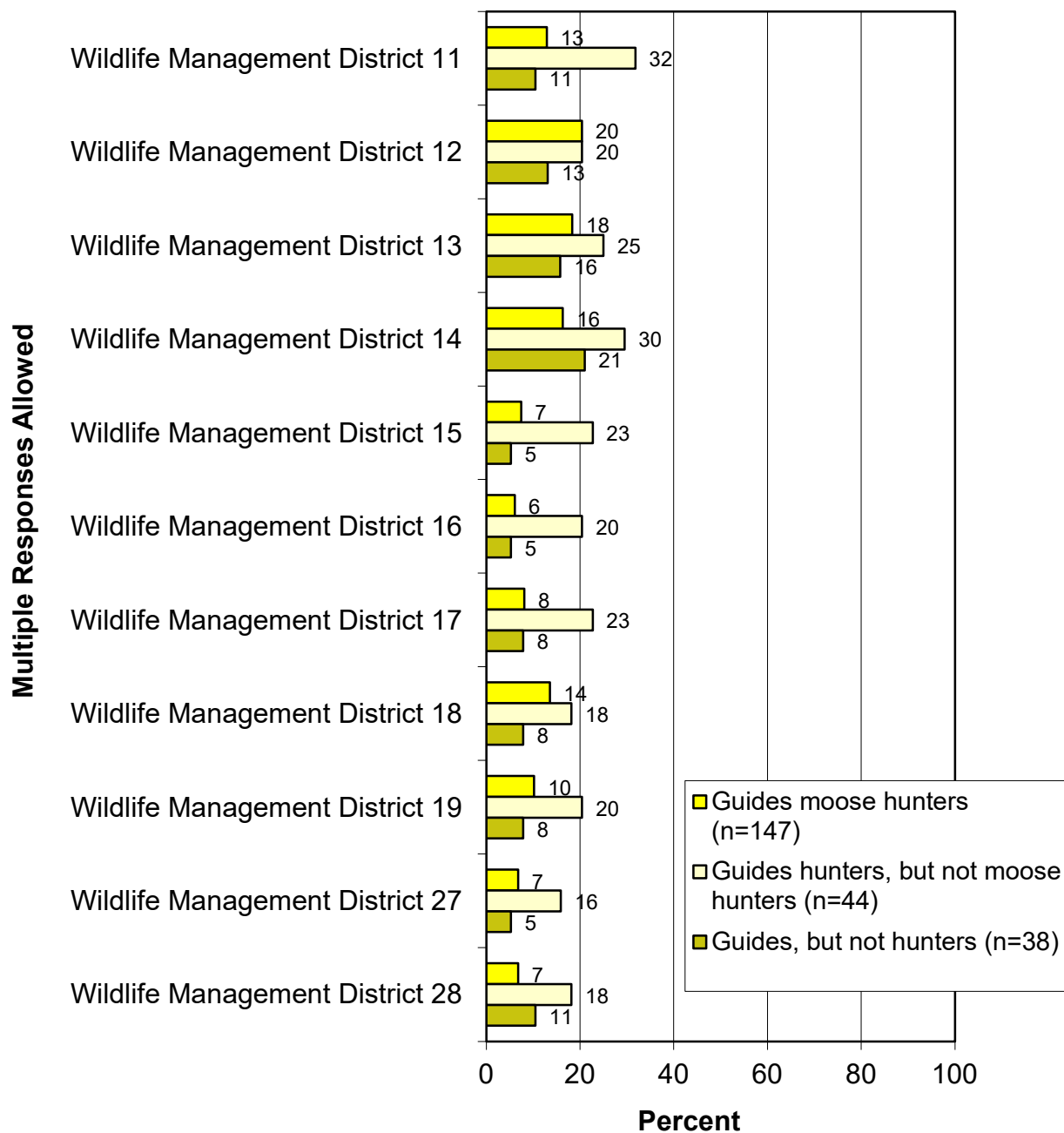
**Specifically, in which Wildlife Management Districts would you prefer to have an additional 6-day moose season?(Asked of those who support having an additional season in several, but not all, WMDs.)
(Guides)**



Specifically, in which Wildlife Management Districts would you prefer to have an additional 6-day moose season?(Asked of those who support having an additional season in several, but not all, WMDs.) (Guides) (Part 1)

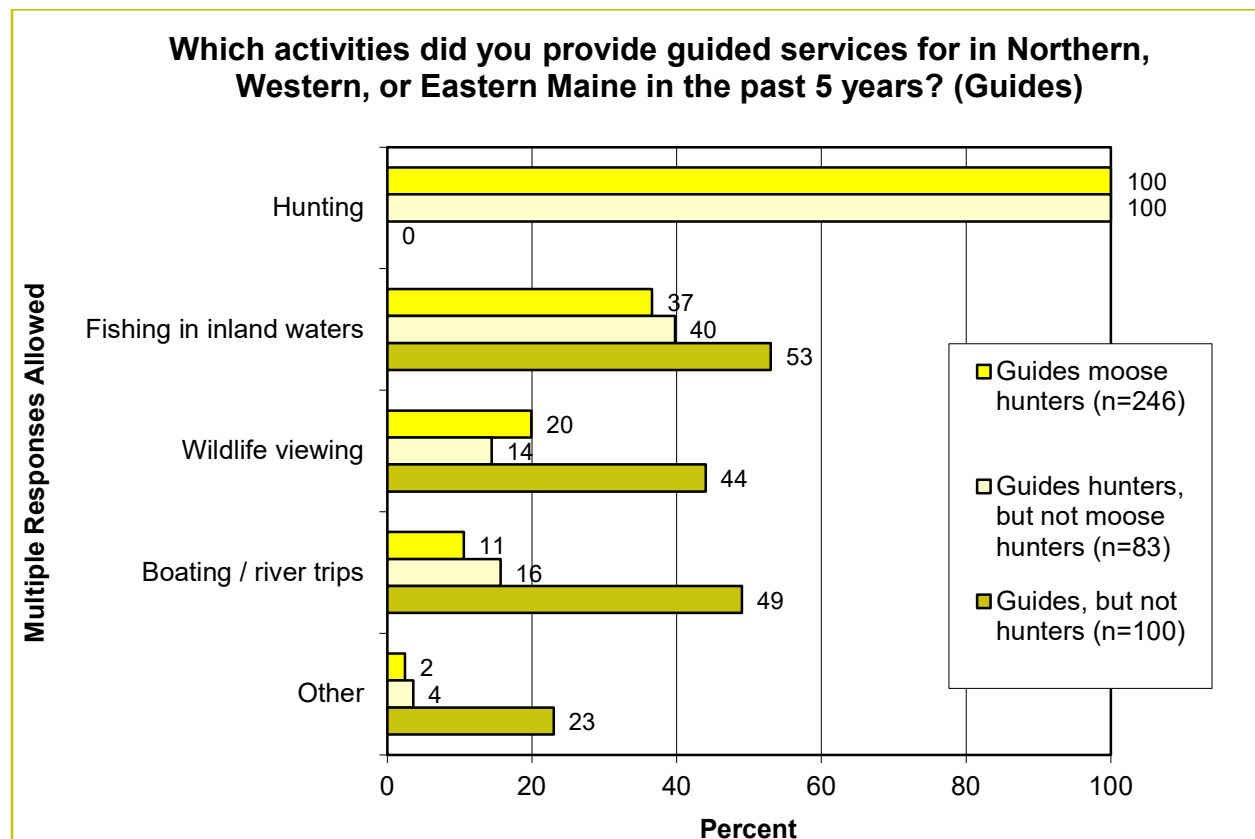
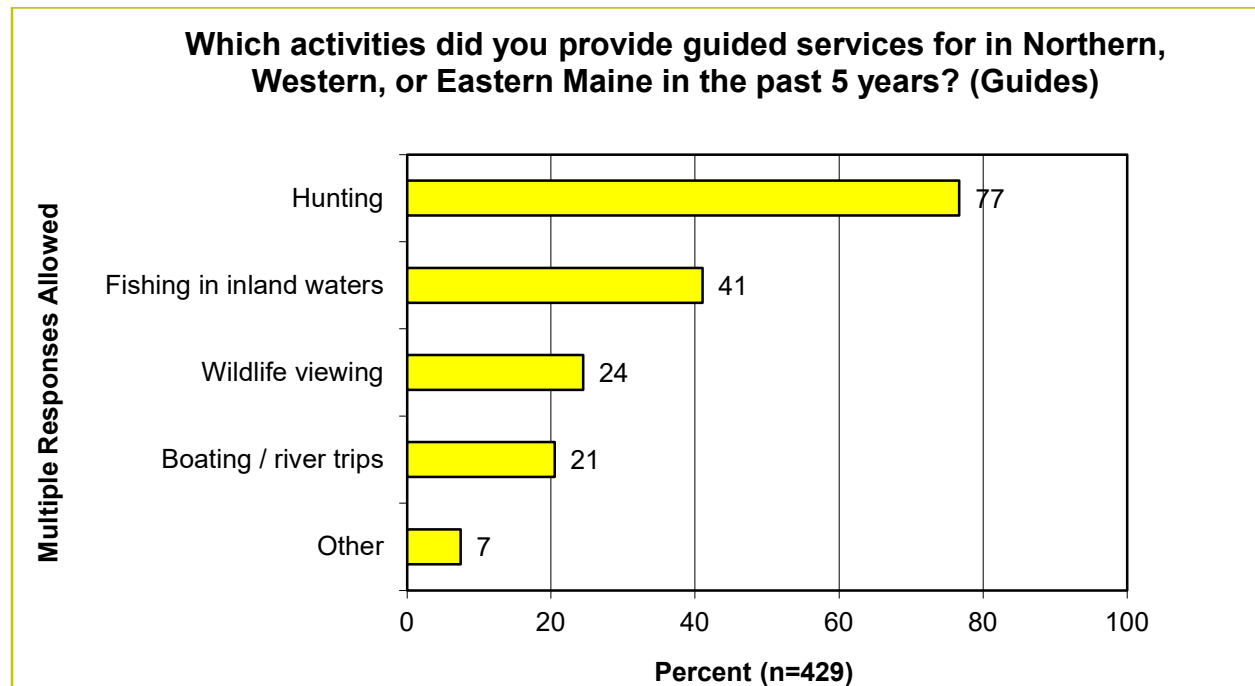


Specifically, in which Wildlife Management Districts would you prefer to have an additional 6-day moose season?(Asked of those who support having an additional season in several, but not all, WMDs.) (Guides) (Part 2)

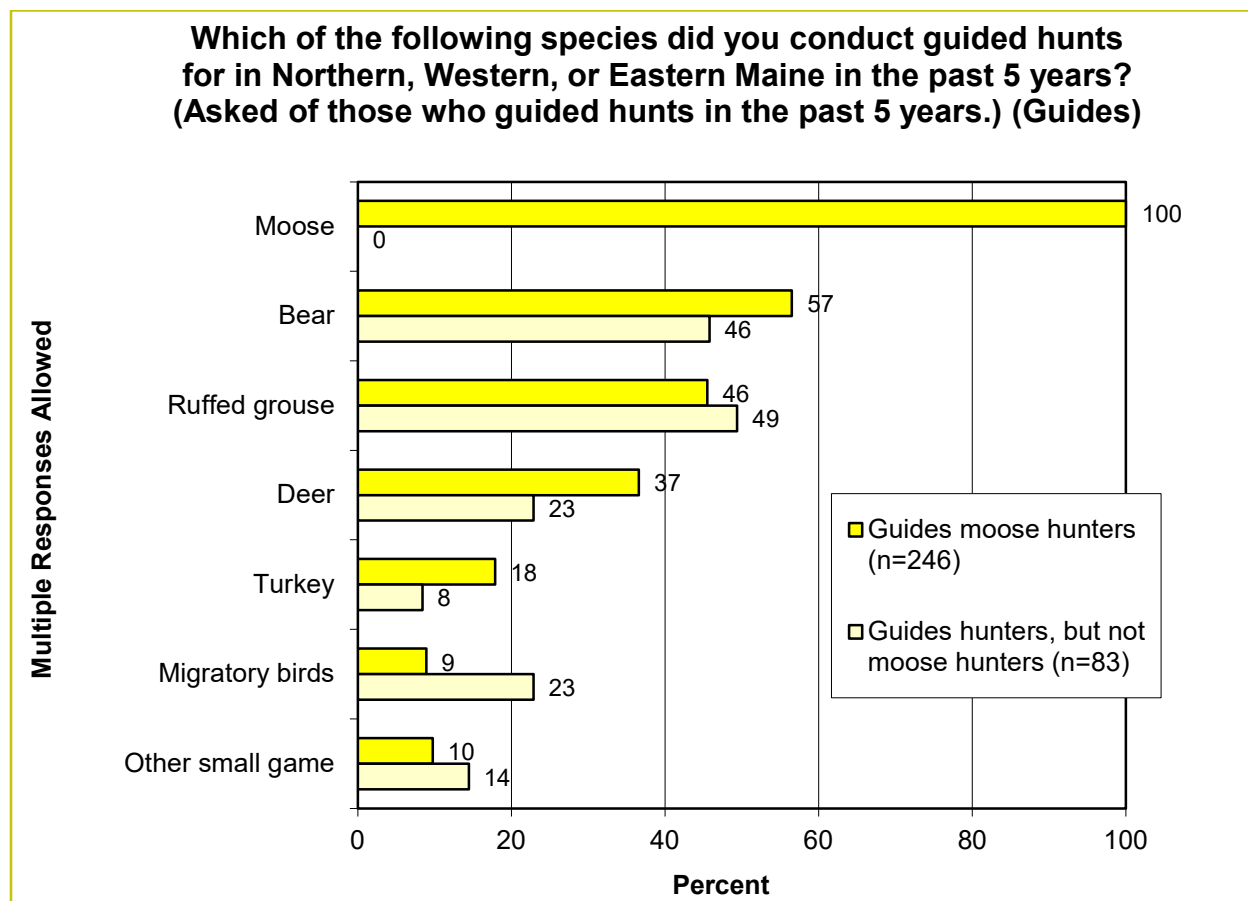
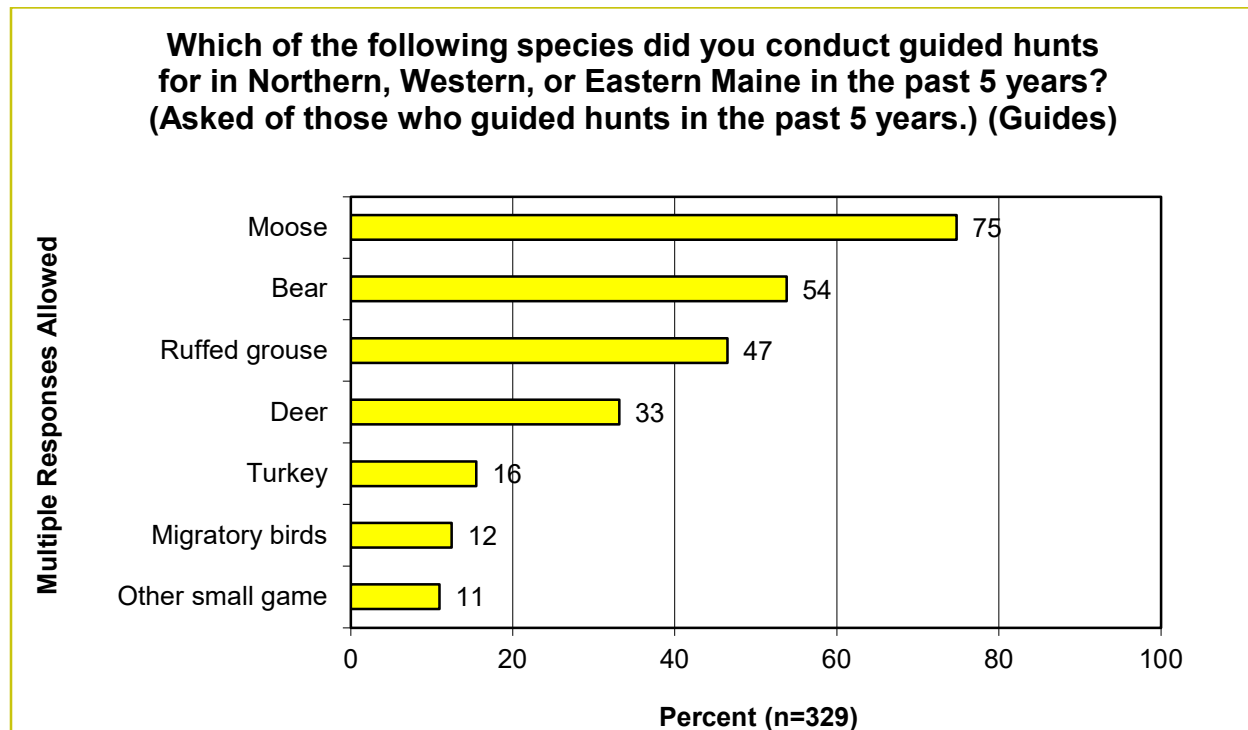


OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES GUIDED AND SPECIES

Other activities guided by a substantial percentage of guides are fishing, wildlife viewing, and boating. The “other” responses mostly consist of hiking, trapping, and shed antler hunting.

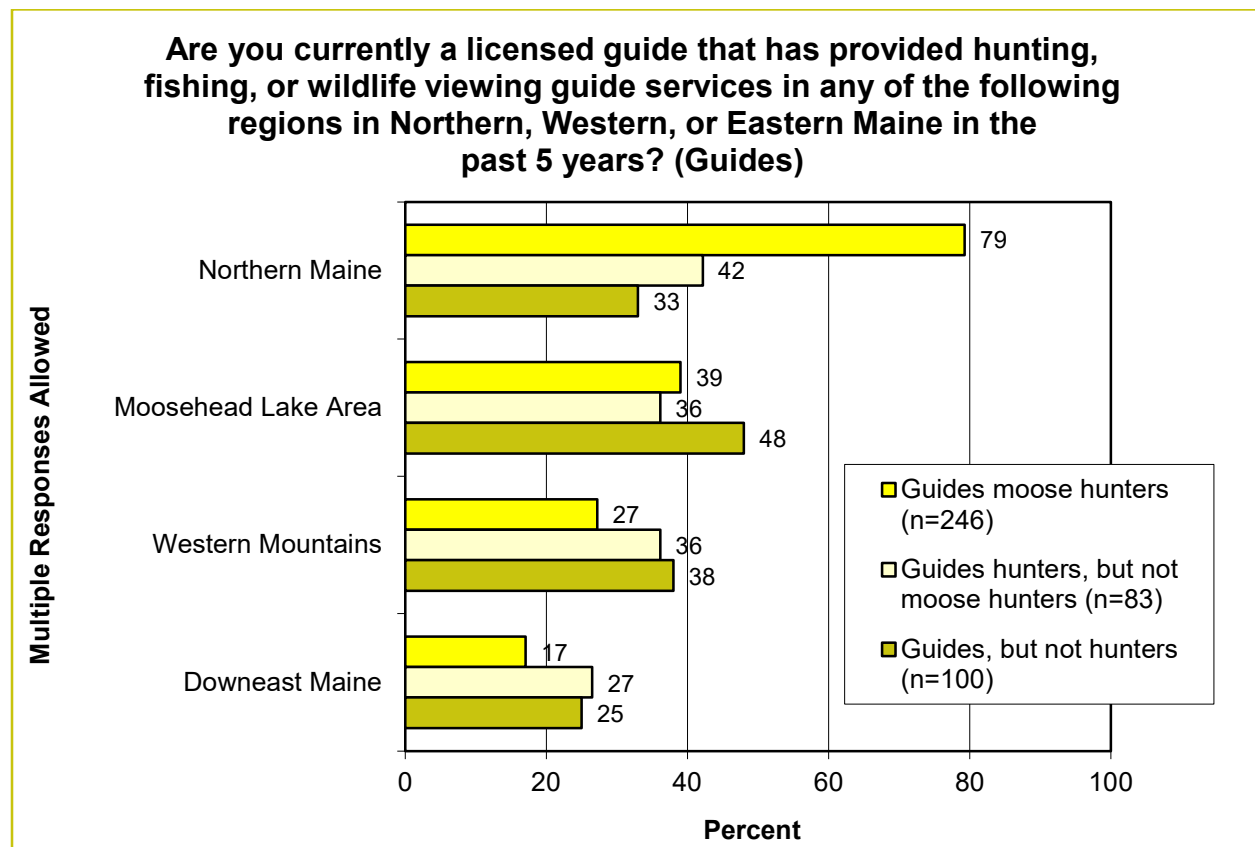
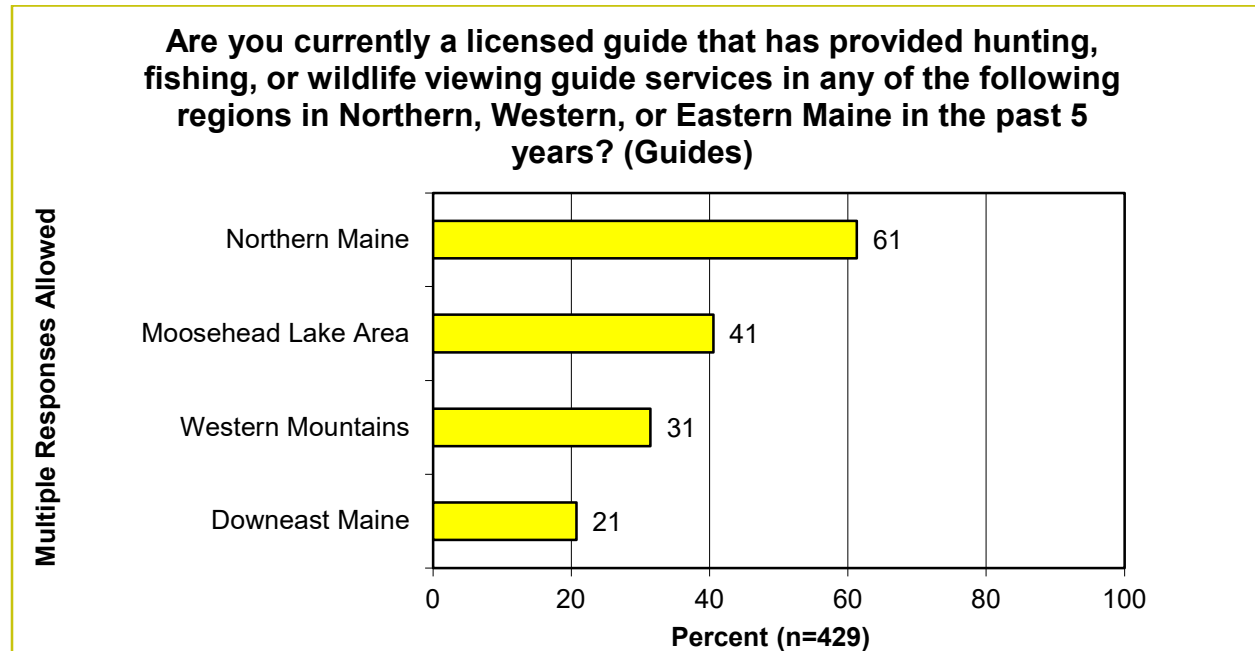


In addition to moose, hunting guides also often guide hunters seeking bear and ruffed grouse.



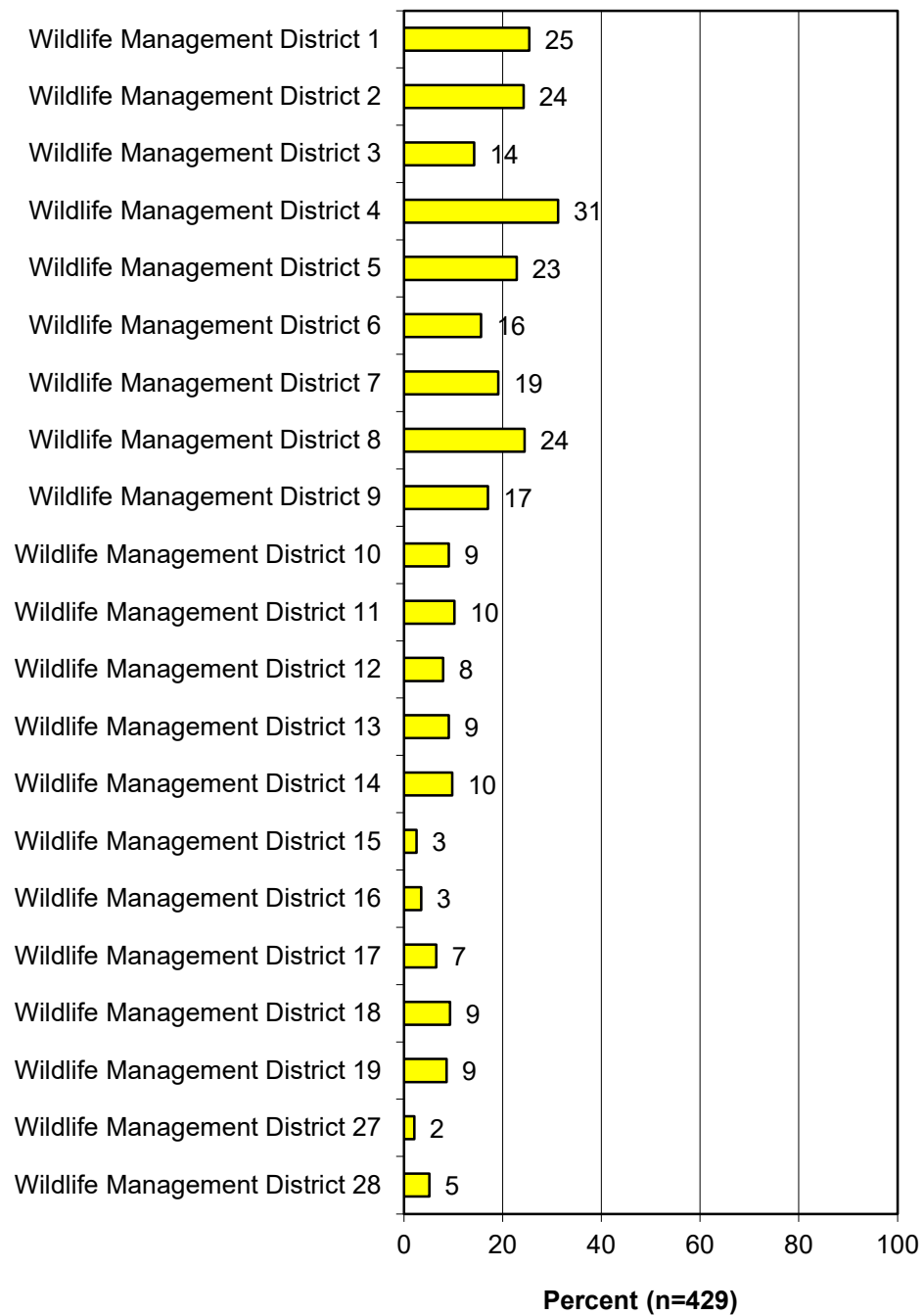
LOCATIONAL INFORMATION

Guides in the survey most commonly guided in Northern Maine, although all regions are well represented. Moose hunting guides in particular are associated with Northern Maine. Subsequent pages show the WMDs in which guides do their guiding.



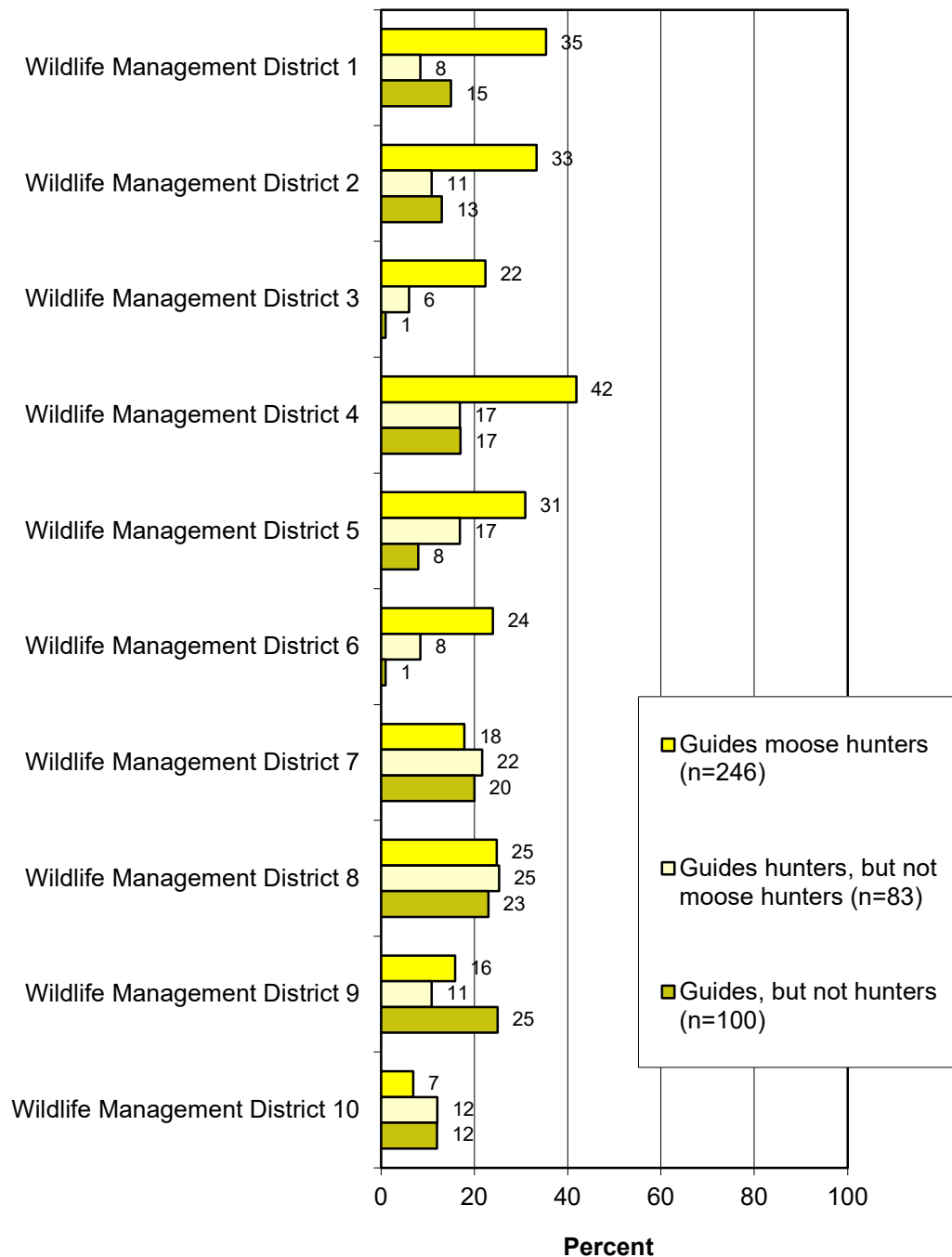
**In which Wildlife Management District(s) (WMDs) did you conduct your guide services in the past 5 years?
(Guides)**

Multiple Responses Allowed



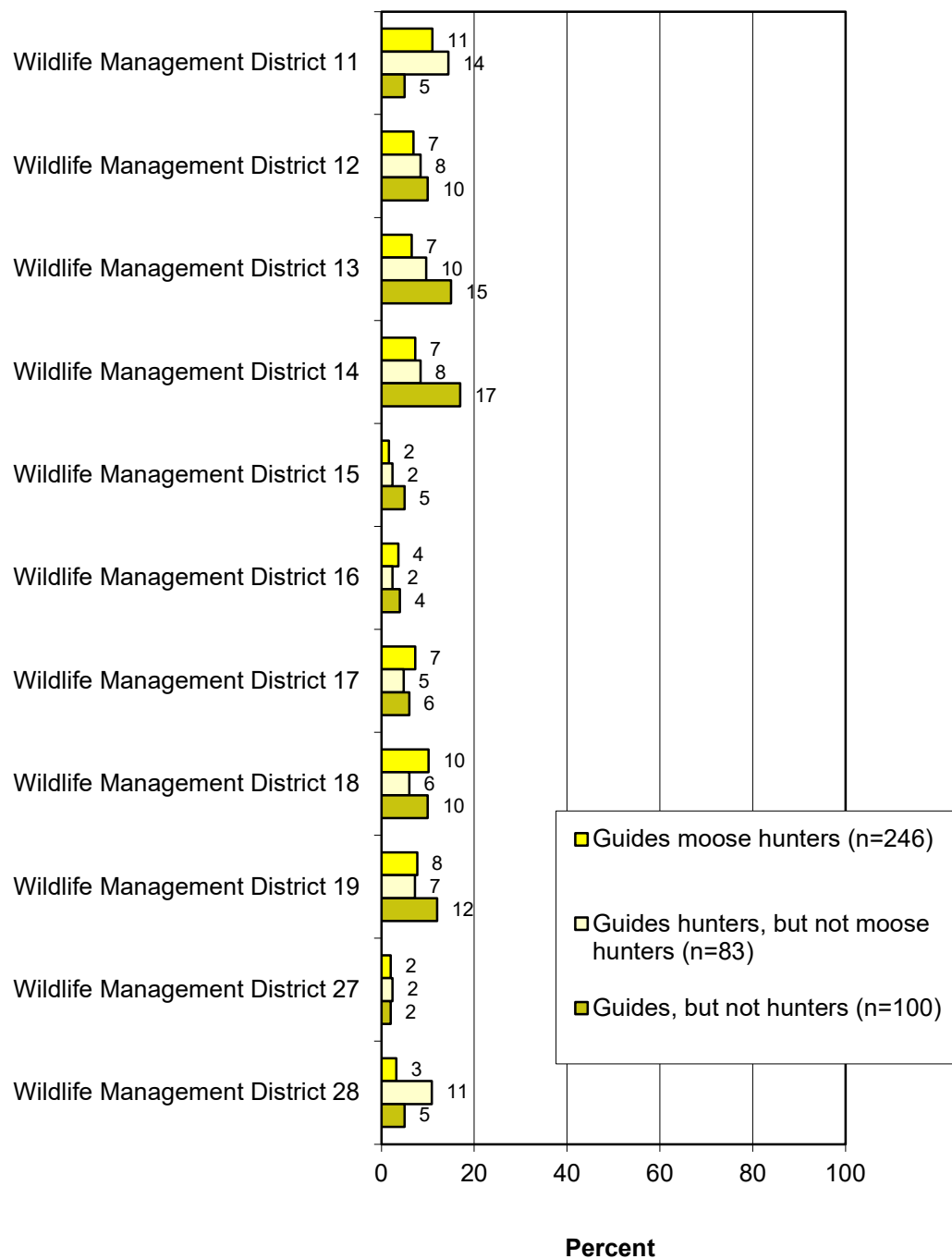
In which Wildlife Management District(s) (WMDs) did you conduct your guide services in the past 5 years? (Guides) (Part 1)

Multiple Responses Allowed



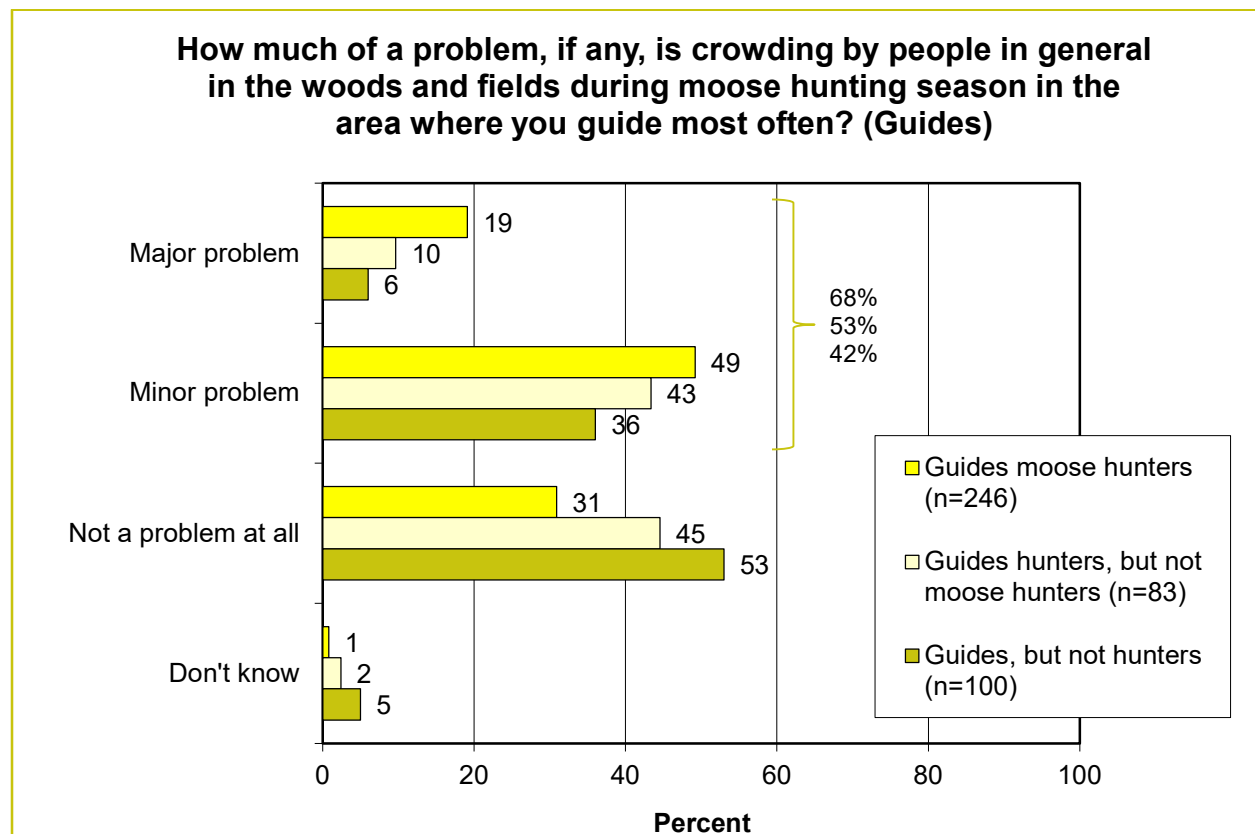
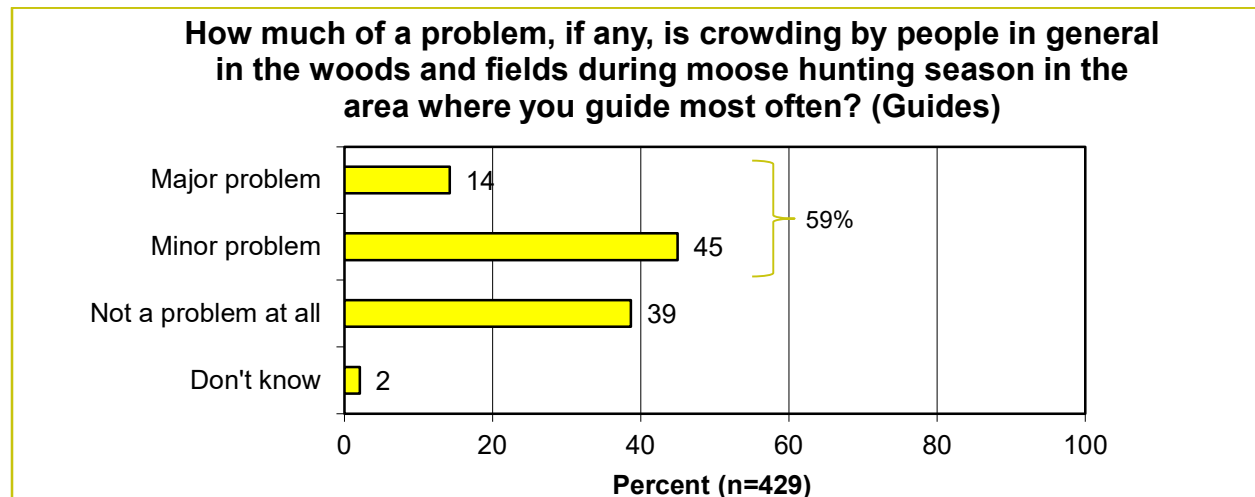
In which Wildlife Management District(s) (WMDs) did you conduct your guide services in the past 5 years? (Guides) (Part 2)

Multiple Responses Allowed

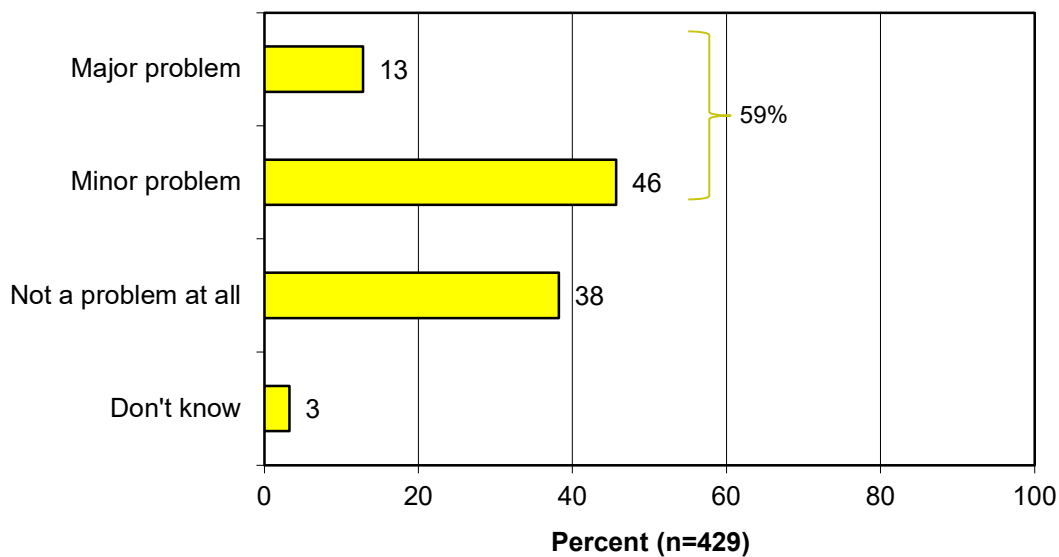


CONFLICTS

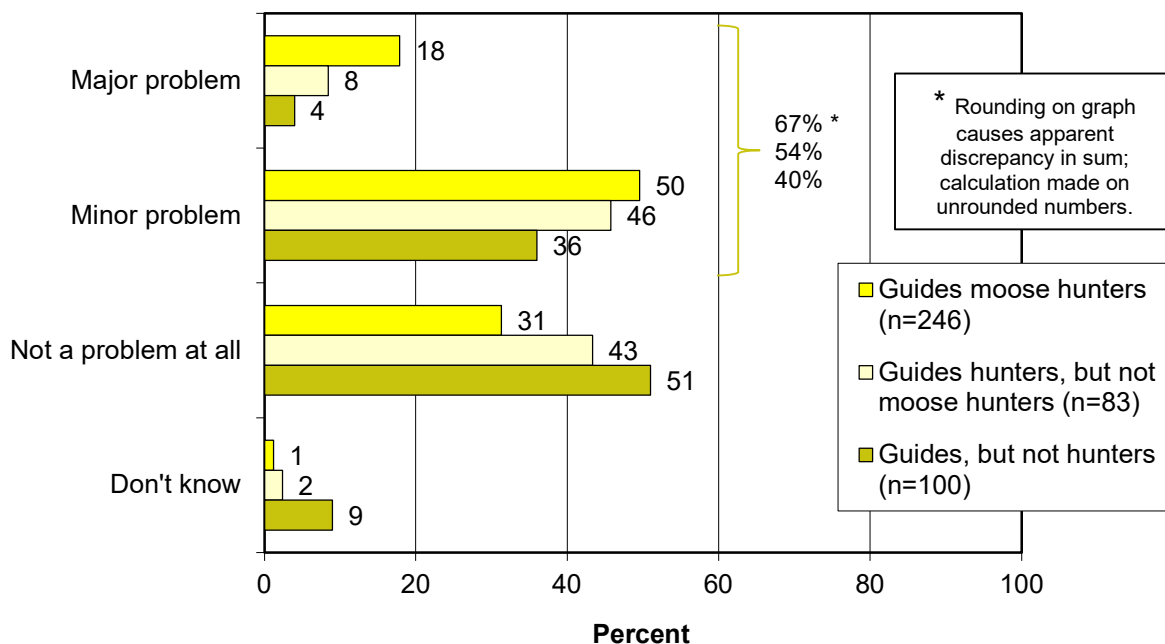
The survey explored crowding during moose season with people in general, with moose hunters specifically, with hunters of other species, and with other recreationists. The results are similar for the first three: well more than half of guides say that crowding is a problem with people in general, with moose hunters, and with other hunters (from 56% to 59% say crowding is a major or minor problem). However, only about a third (34%) say that crowding by other recreationists is a problem. On most of the questions, moose hunting guides are the most likely to say that crowding is a problem, compared to the other types of guides.



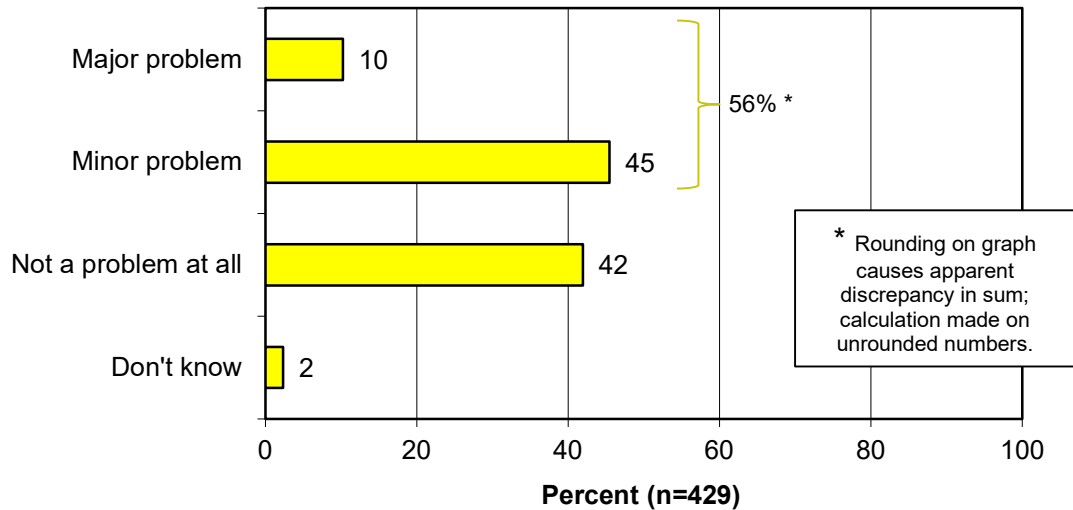
How much of a problem is crowding by moose hunters specifically? (Guides)



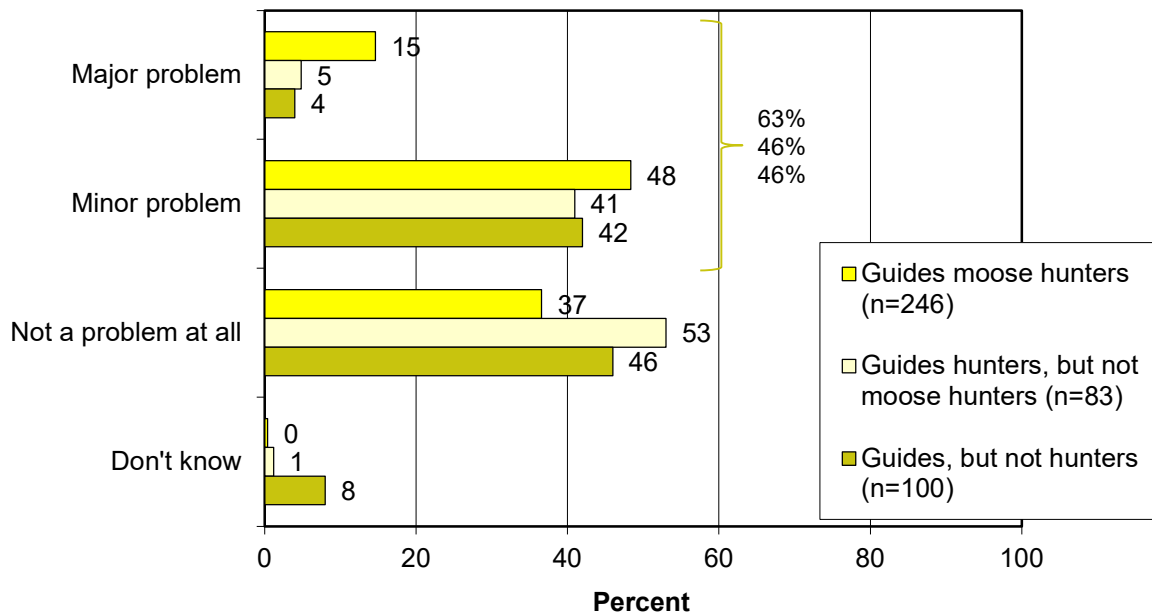
How much of a problem is crowding by moose hunters specifically? (Guides)



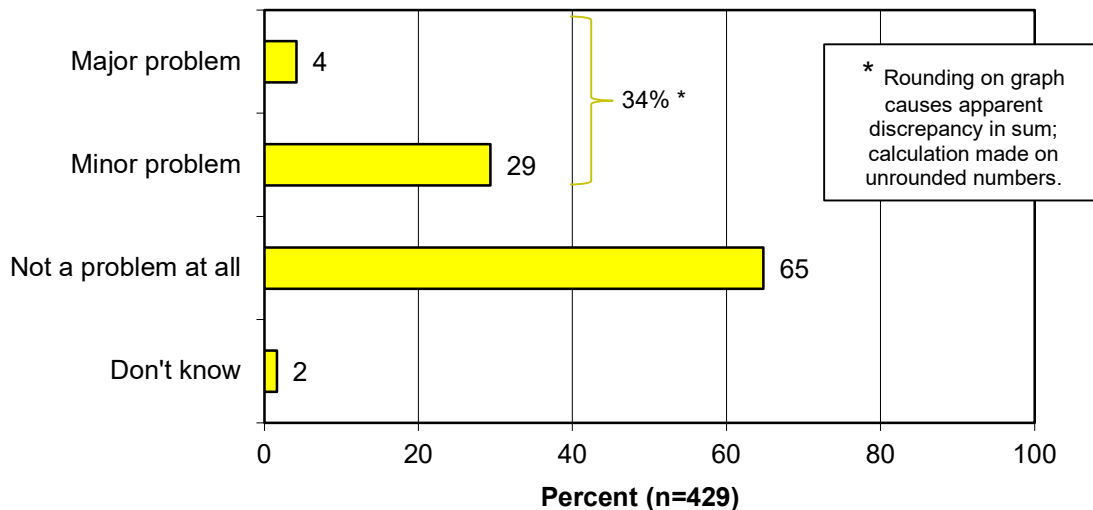
How much of a problem is crowding by those hunting species other than moose, such as deer, bear, turkey, grouse, and other small game? (Guides)



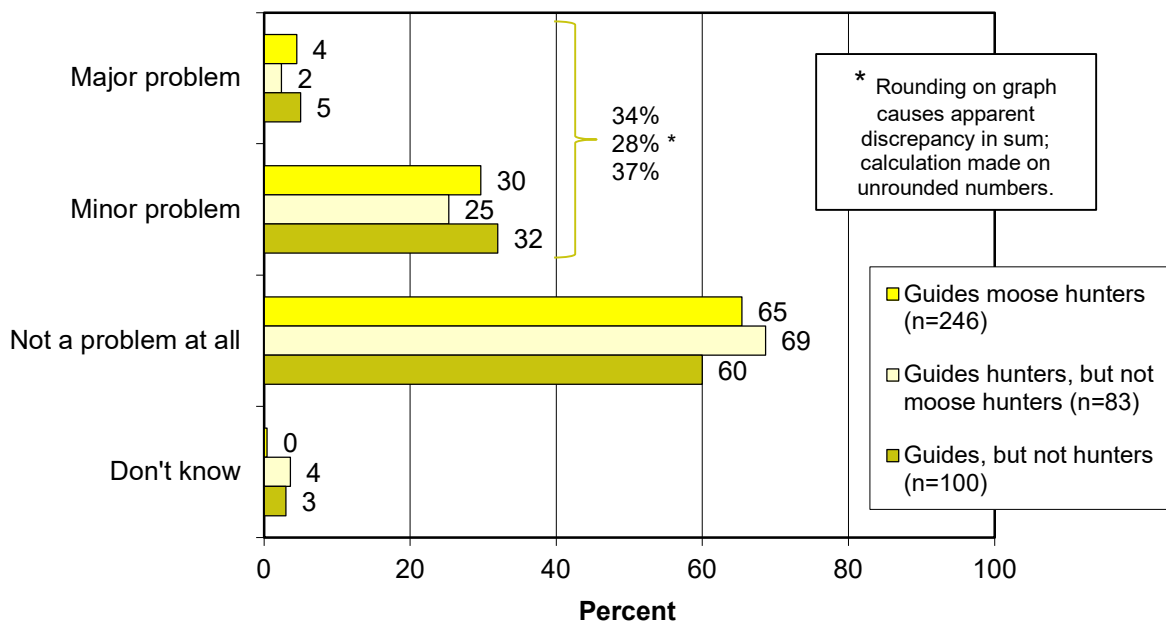
How much of a problem is crowding by those hunting species other than moose, such as deer, bear, turkey, grouse, and other small game? (Guides)



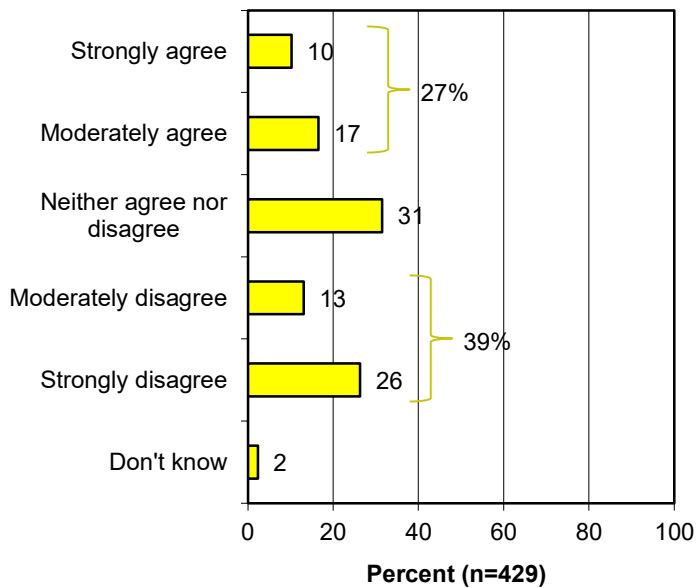
How much of a problem is crowding by recreationists other than hunters, such as anglers, trappers, wildlife viewers, hikers, campers, or boaters? (Guides)



How much of a problem is crowding by recreationists other than hunters, such as anglers, trappers, wildlife viewers, hikers, campers, or boaters? (Guides)

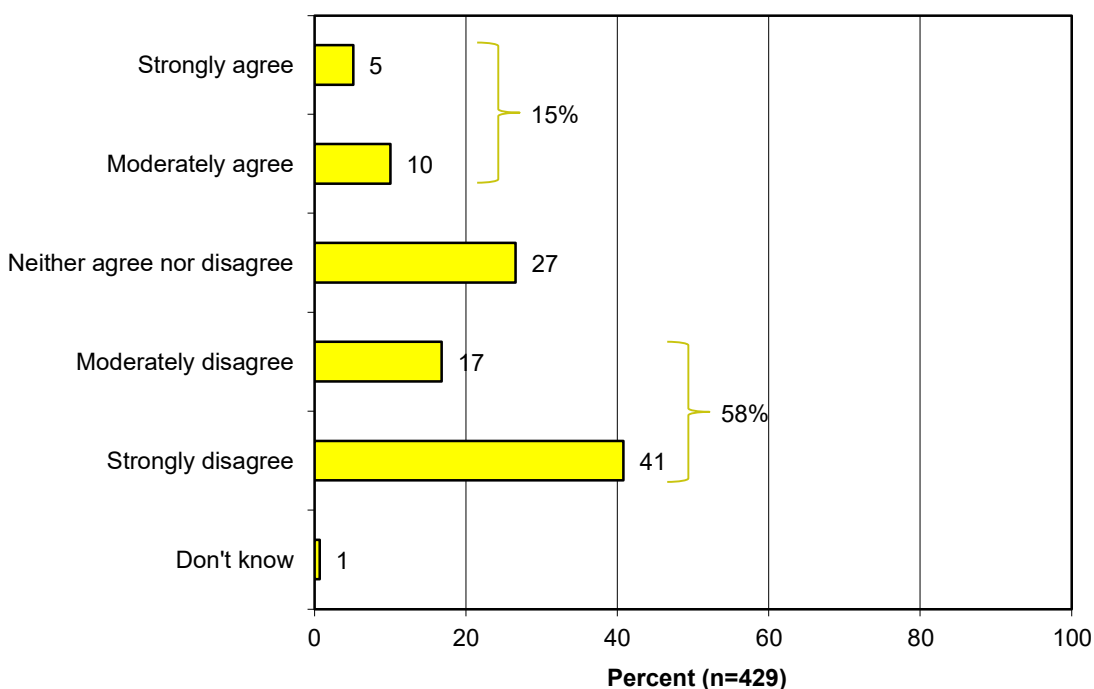


Thinking about the guide services you provided in Northern, Western, or Eastern Maine, do you agree or disagree that you provide services less often specifically during moose hunting season? (Guides)

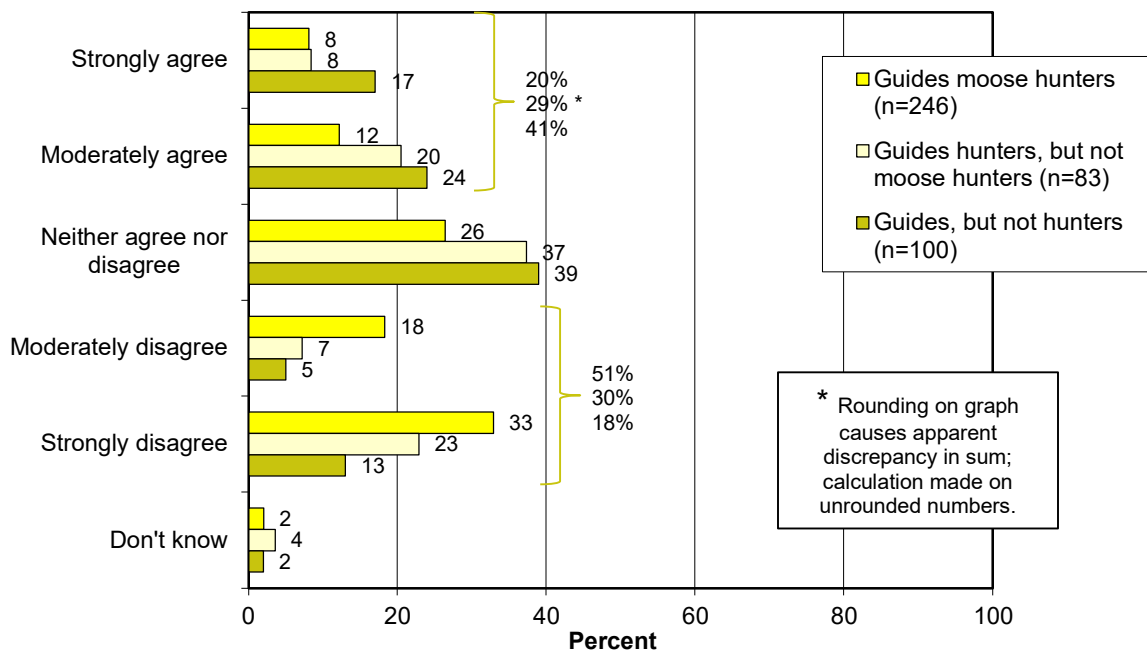


Guides have more disagreement (39%) than agreement (27%) that they provide services less often specifically during moose hunting season; in the crosstabulation on the next page, non-hunting guides have the most agreement. In the second question in this theme, guides have much more disagreement (58%) than agreement (15%) that moose hunting season makes it more difficult or challenging to provide services. Agreement is about the same among the three types of guides to this question.

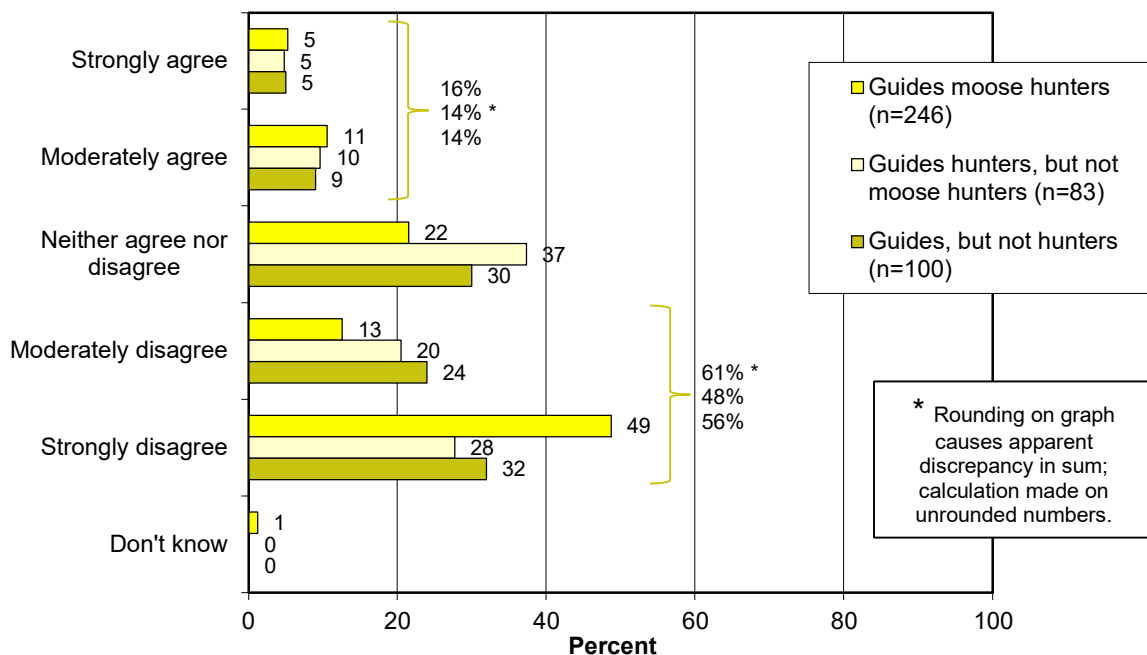
Thinking about the guide services you provided in Northern, Western, or Eastern Maine, do you agree or disagree that moose hunting season makes it more difficult or challenging to provide services? (Guides)



Thinking about the guide services you provided in Northern, Western, or Eastern Maine, do you agree or disagree that you provide services less often specifically during moose hunting season? (Guides)

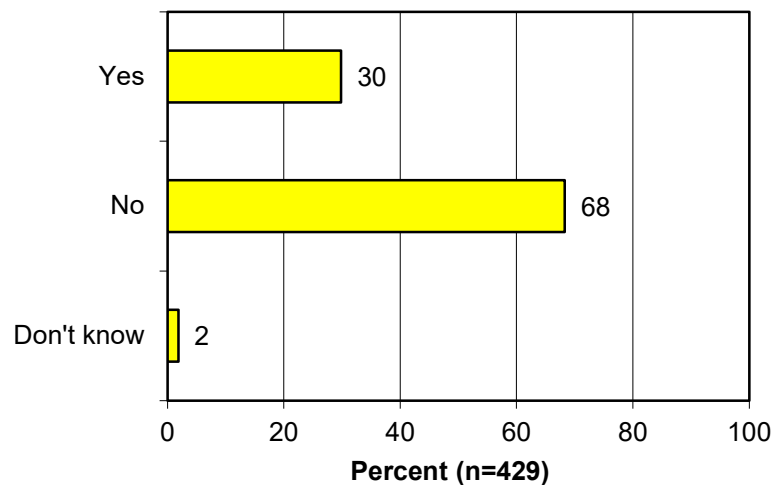


Thinking about the guide services you provided in Northern, Western, or Eastern Maine, do you agree or disagree that moose hunting season makes it more difficult or challenging to provide services? (Guides)

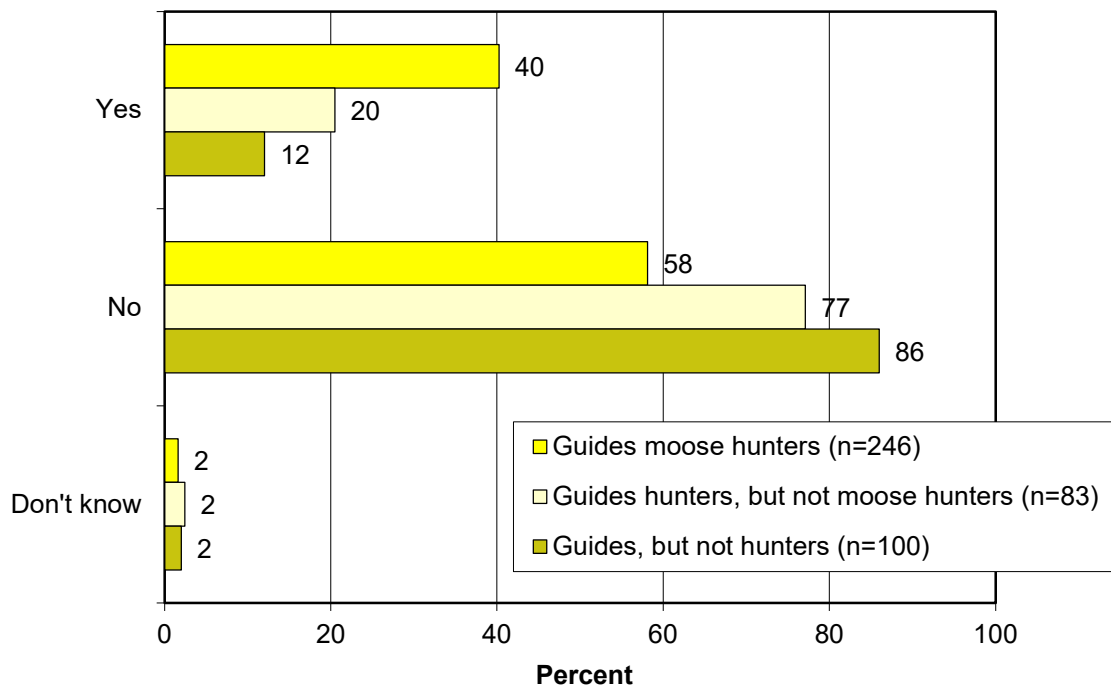


The survey asked about conflicts in addition to crowding. About a third of guides (30%) had experienced conflict with someone else during moose hunting season. This percentage is higher among moose hunting guides, with 40% experiencing conflict.

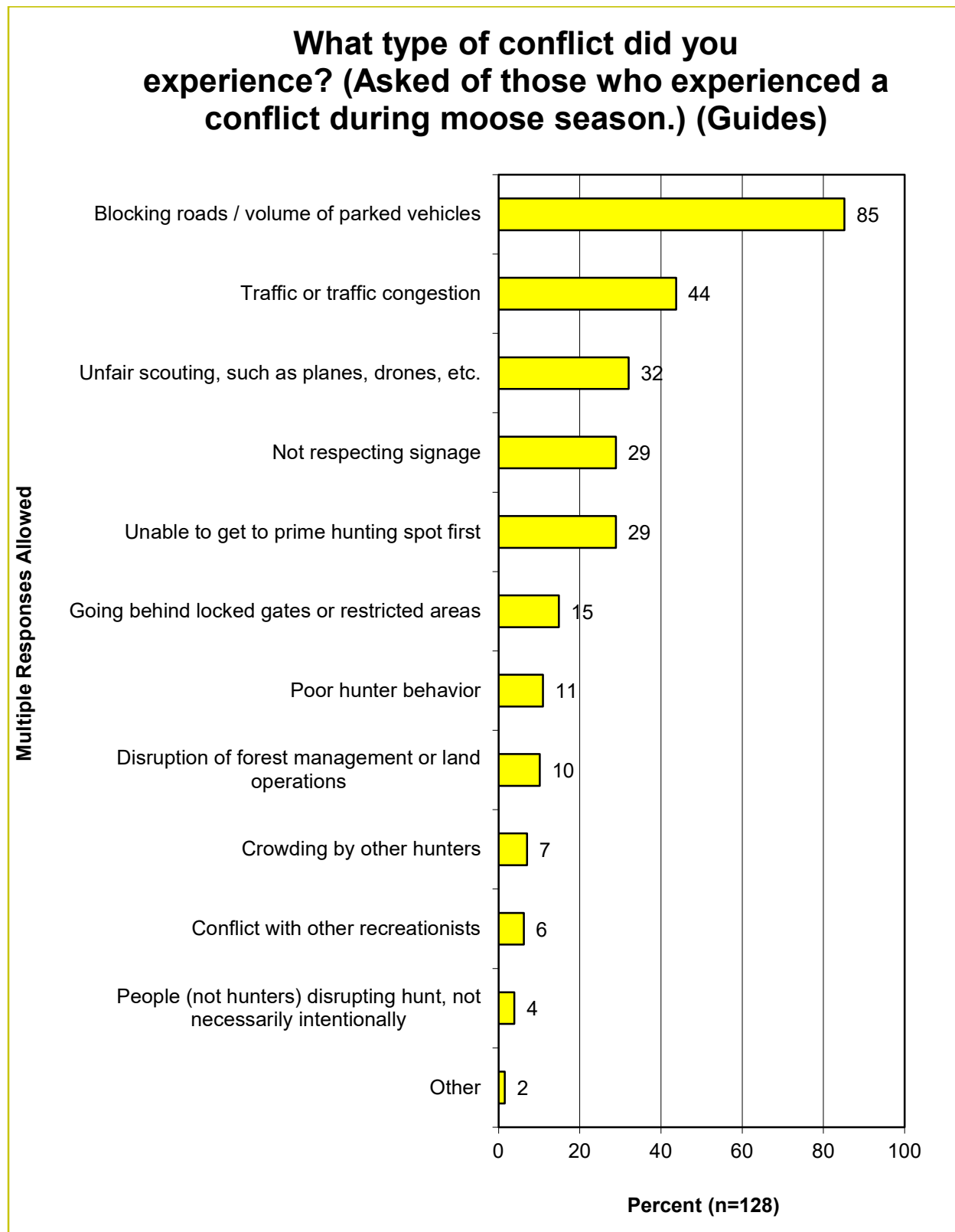
Again, moose hunting seasons occur primarily in late September and again from mid-October through the first week of November, depending on the Wildlife Management District. Have you experienced conflicts with anyone else at all during moose hunting season in the area where you guide most often? (Guides)



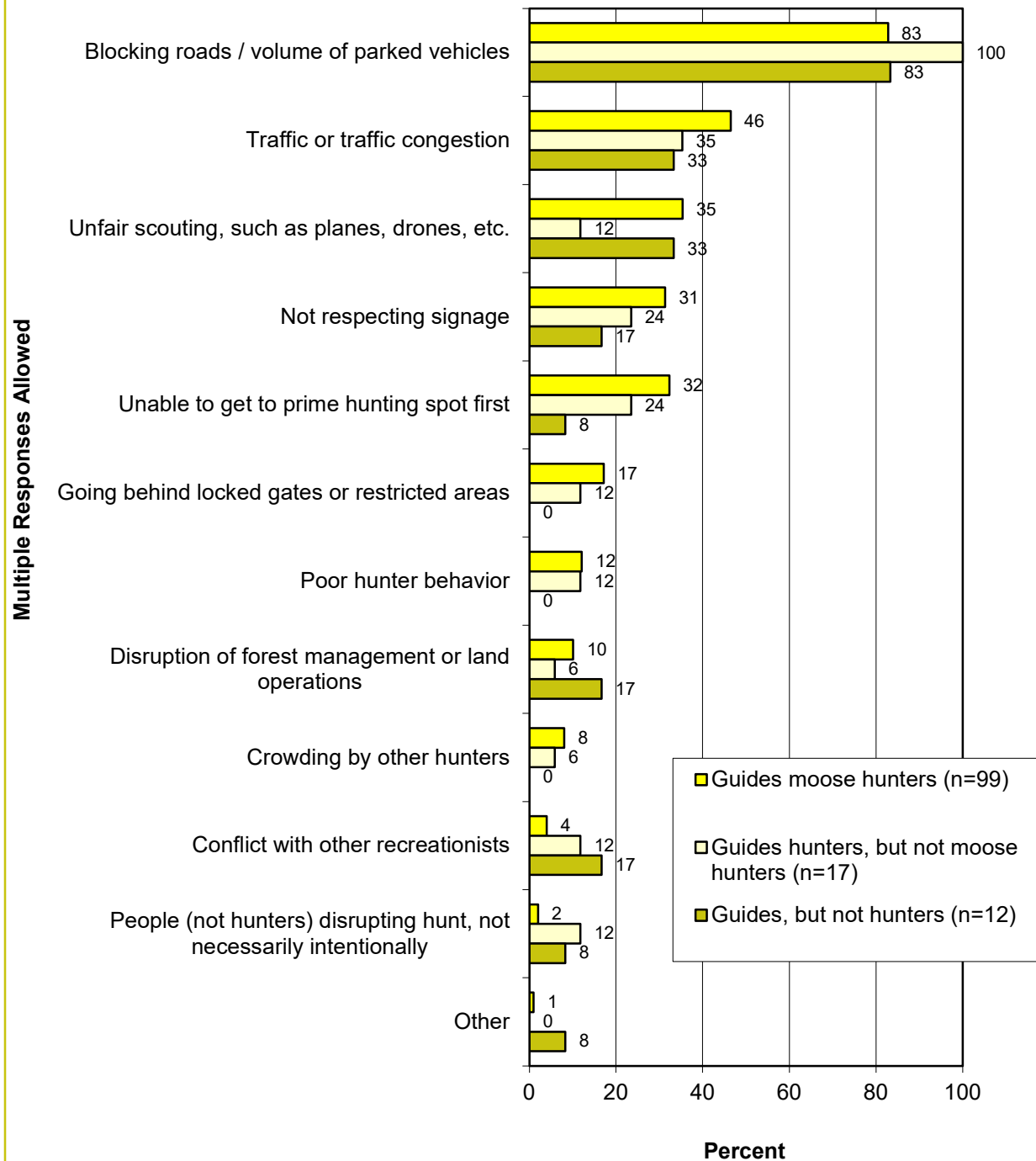
Again, moose hunting seasons occur primarily in late September and again from mid-October through the first week of November, depending on the Wildlife Management District. Have you experienced conflicts with anyone else at all during moose hunting season in the area where you guide most often? (Guides)



Blocking roads was the top-named problem. Because this was a follow-up question asked only of those who indicated experiencing a conflict, the crosstabulation has small sample sizes.



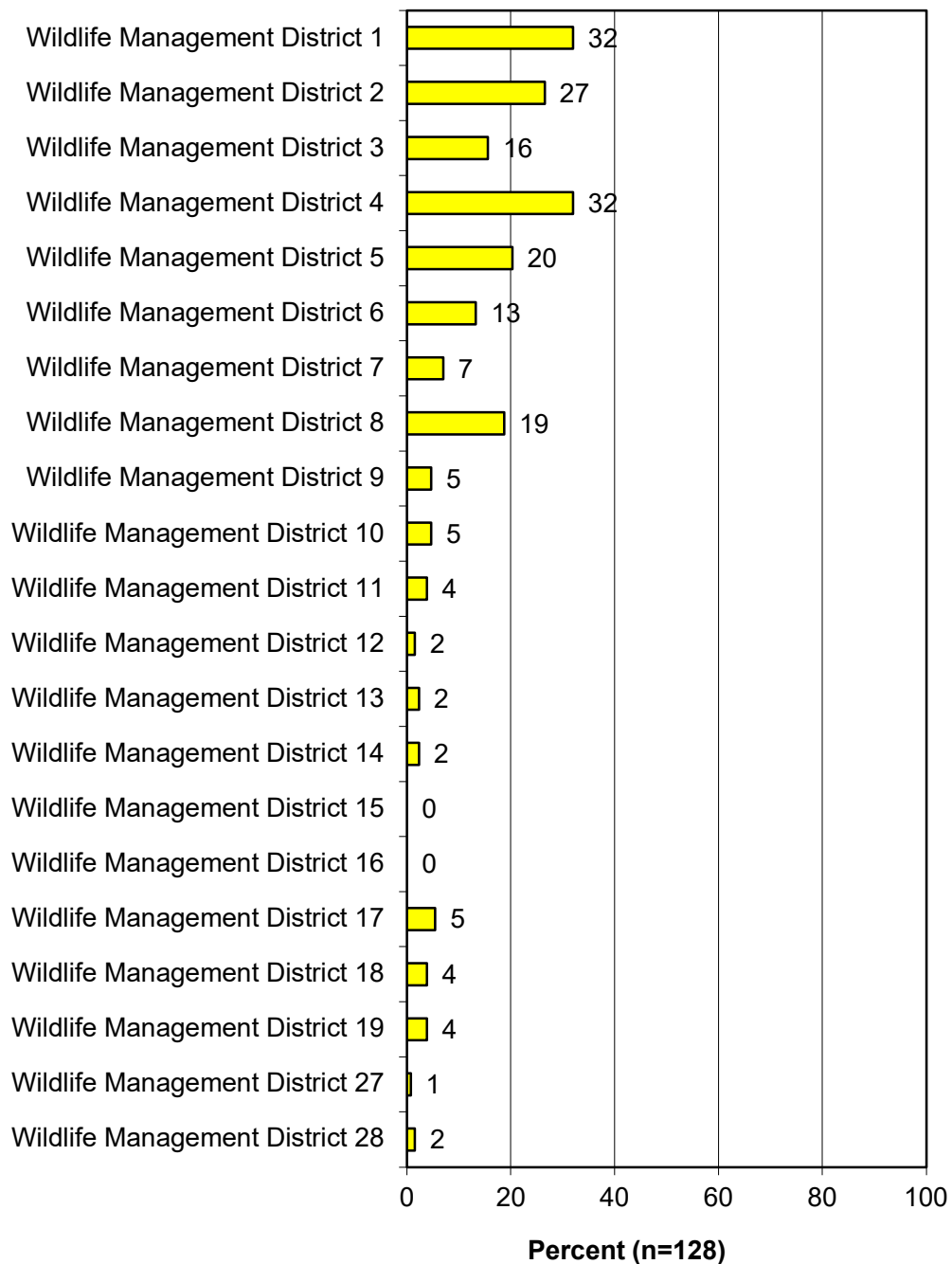
What type of conflict did you experience? (Asked of those who experienced a conflict during moose season.) (Guides)



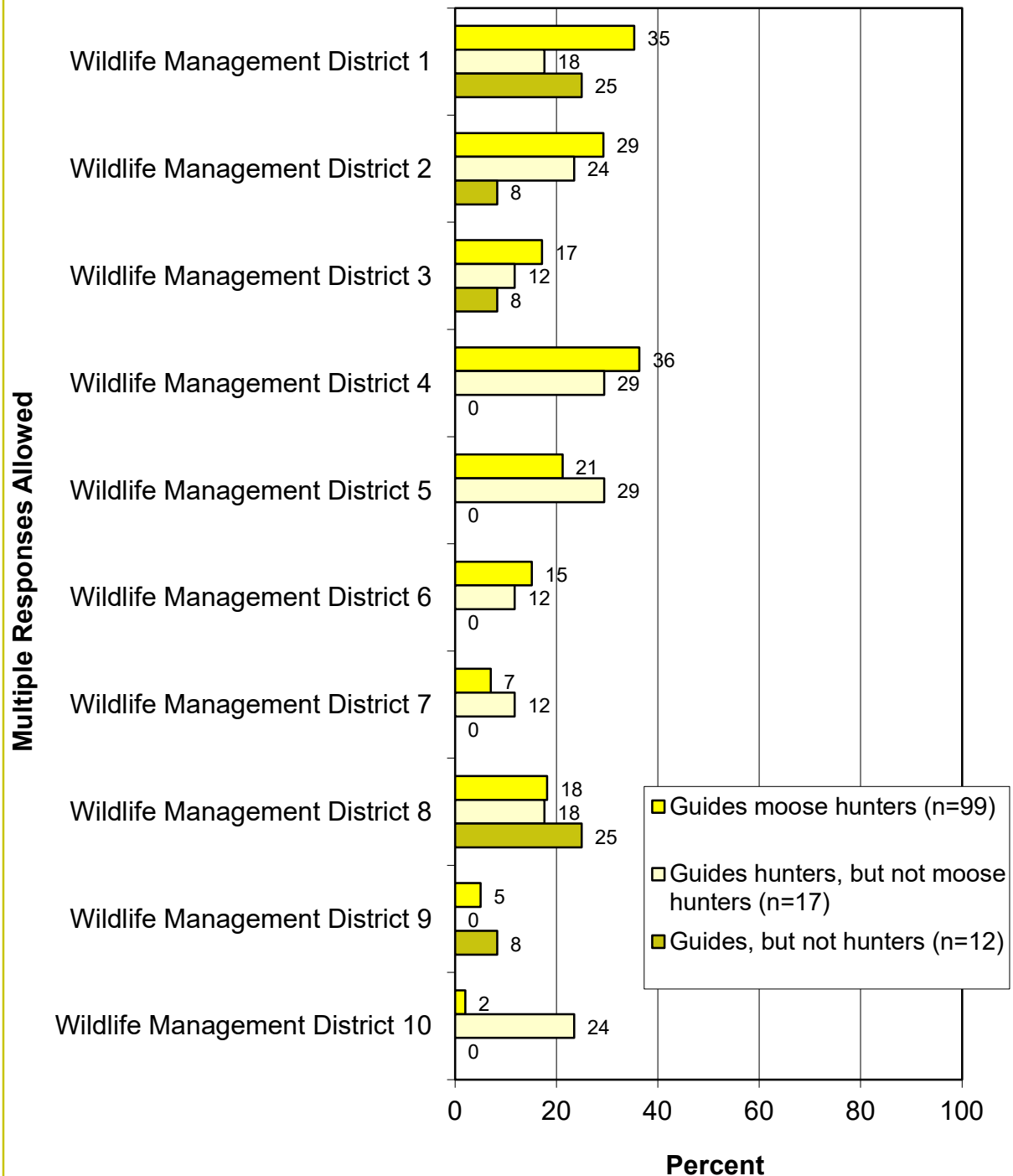
WMDs 1, 4, and 2 have the most conflicts among guides.

**In which WMDs did you experience conflict?
(Asked of those who experienced a conflict
during moose season.) (Guides)**

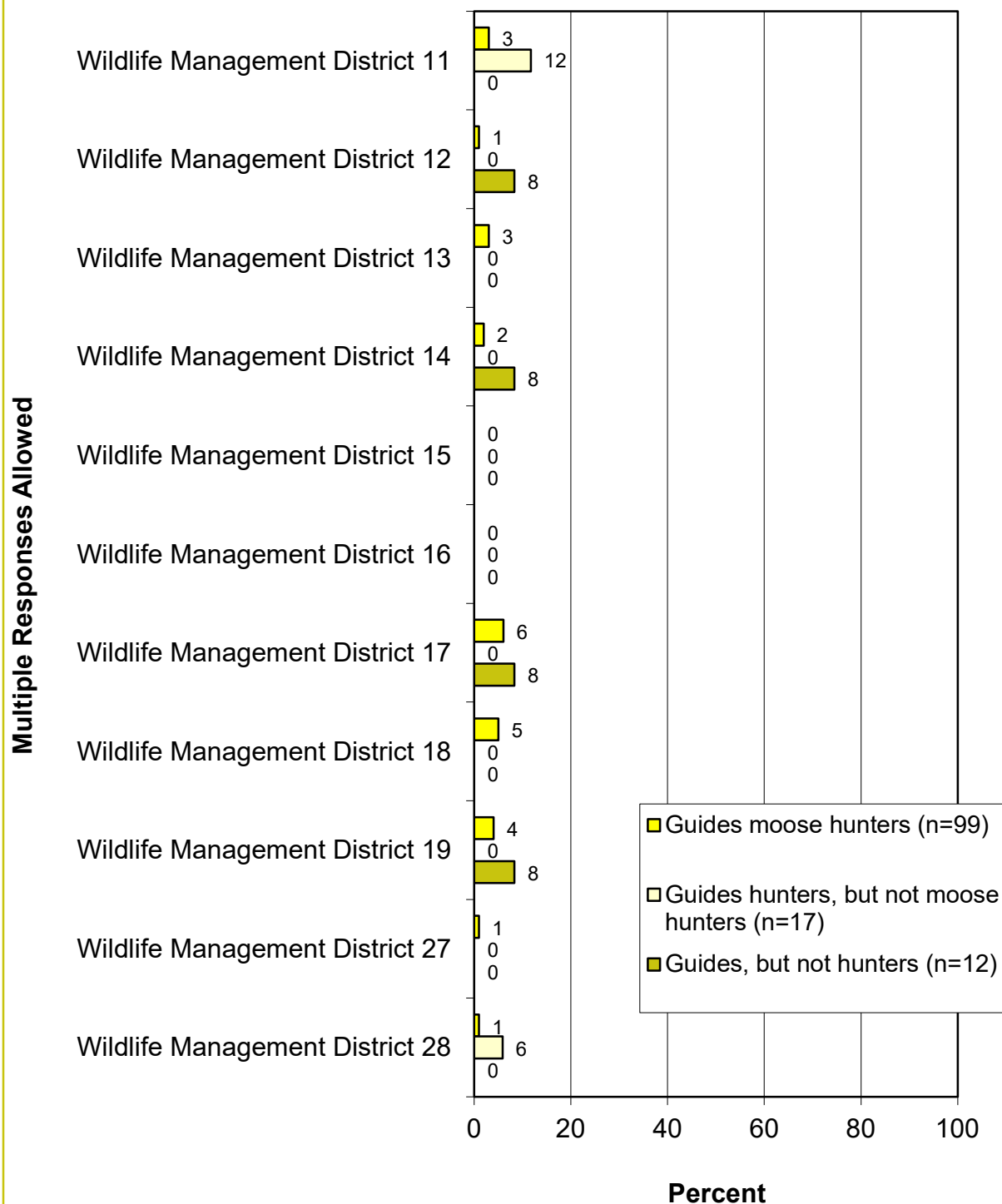
Multiple Responses Allowed



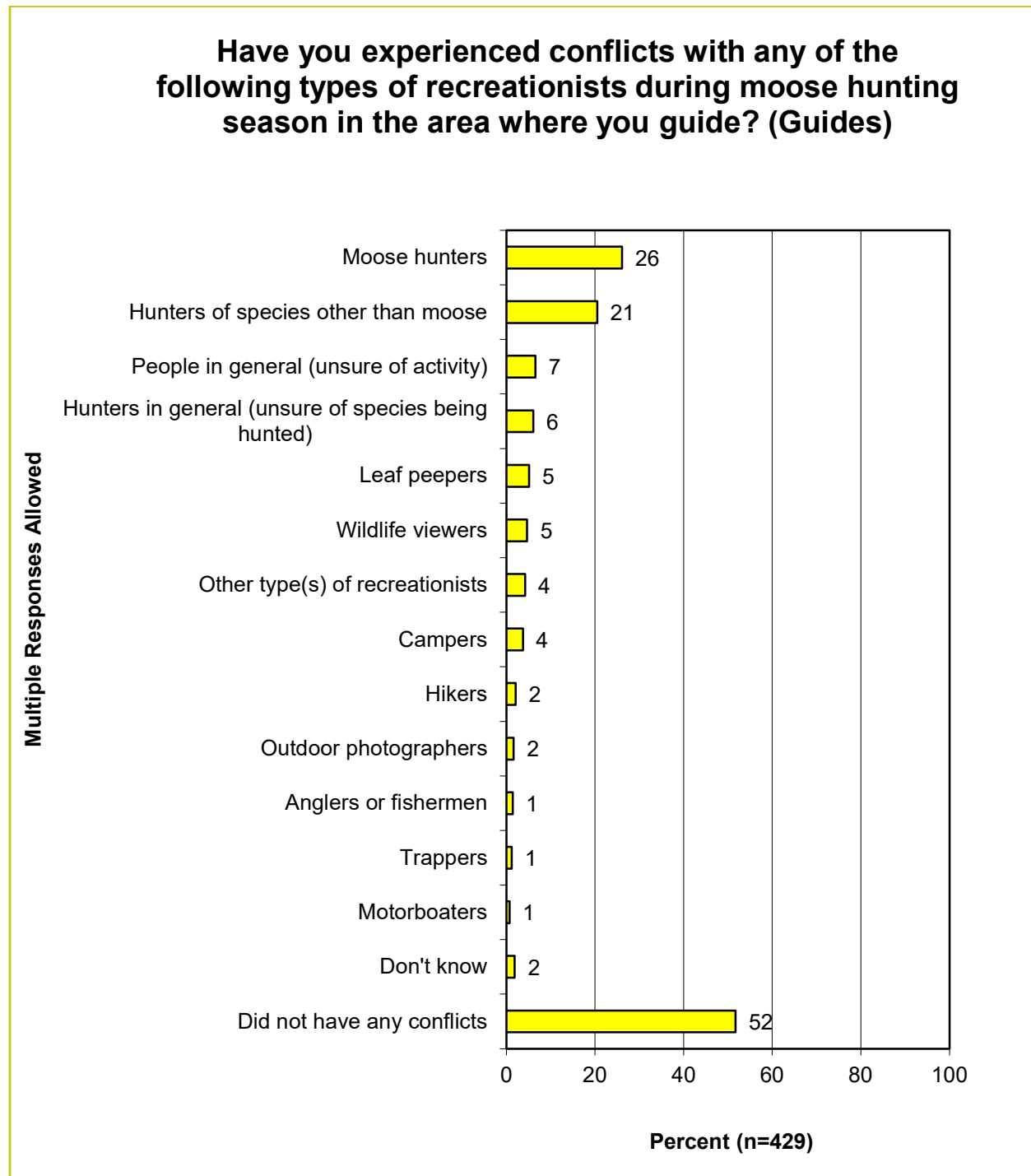
**In which WMDs did you experience conflict?
(Asked of those who experienced a conflict
during moose season.) (Guides) (Part 1)**



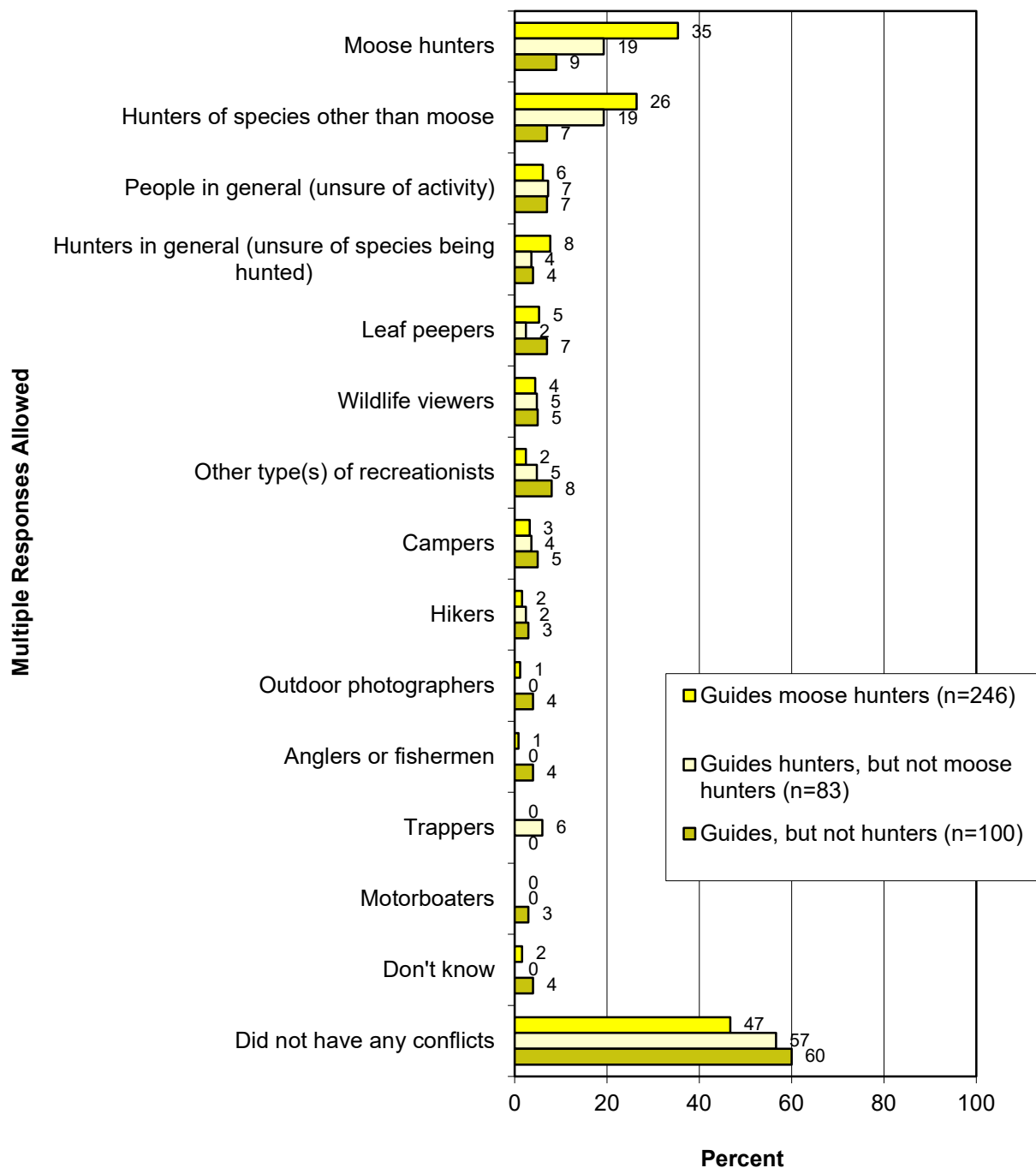
**In which WMDs did you experience conflict?
(Asked of those who experienced a conflict
during moose season.) (Guides) (Part 2)**



The survey also asked all guides directly about specific recreationists with whom they may have had conflict, presenting a list of recreationists and asking if guides had experienced conflict with each type of recreationist. Most commonly, guides had conflicts with other hunters (moose hunters, hunters of other species, or hunters in general). A little more than half experienced no conflicts with any of the recreationists listed.

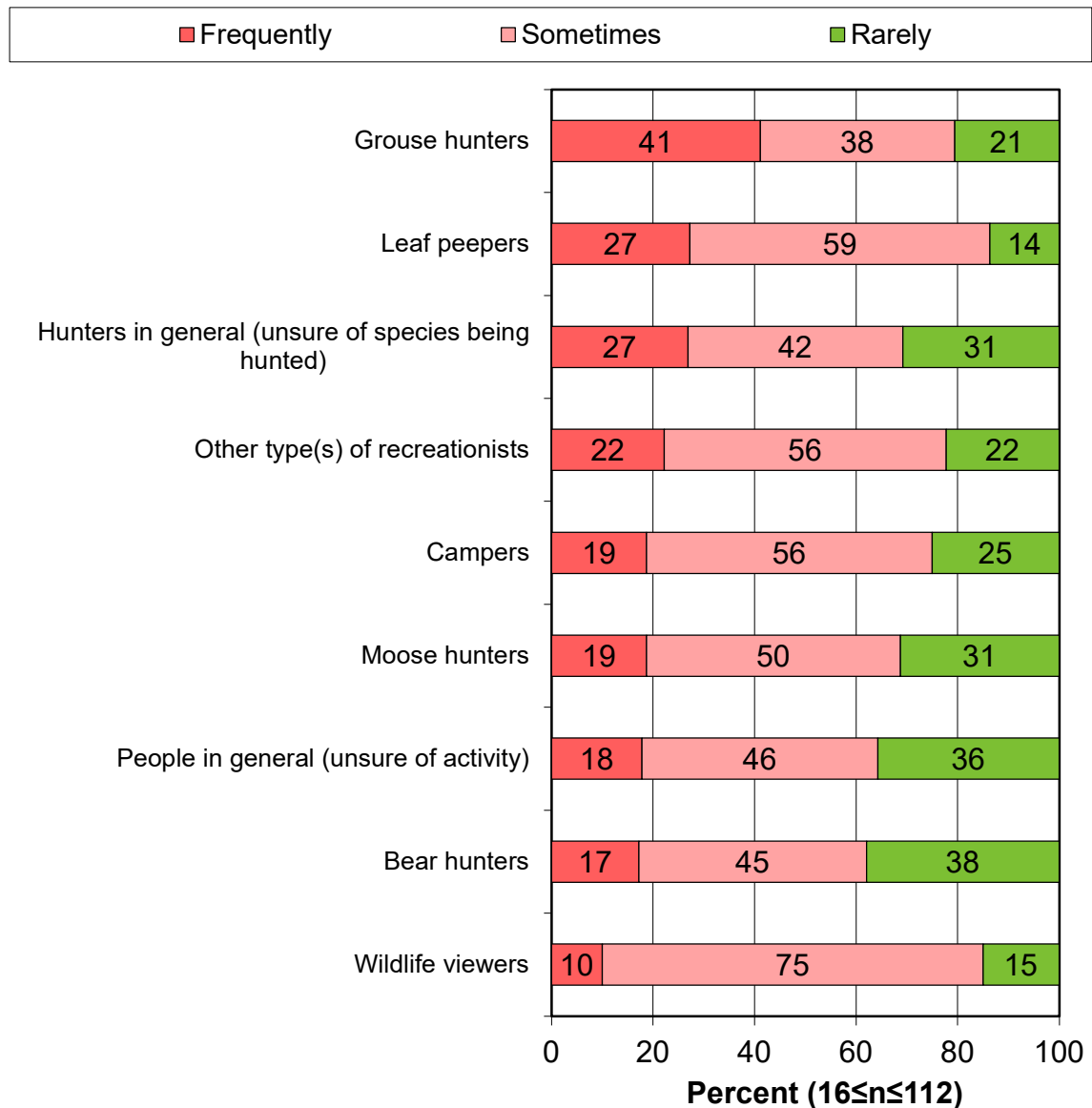


Have you experienced conflicts with any of the following types of recreationists during moose hunting season in the area where you guide? (Guides)

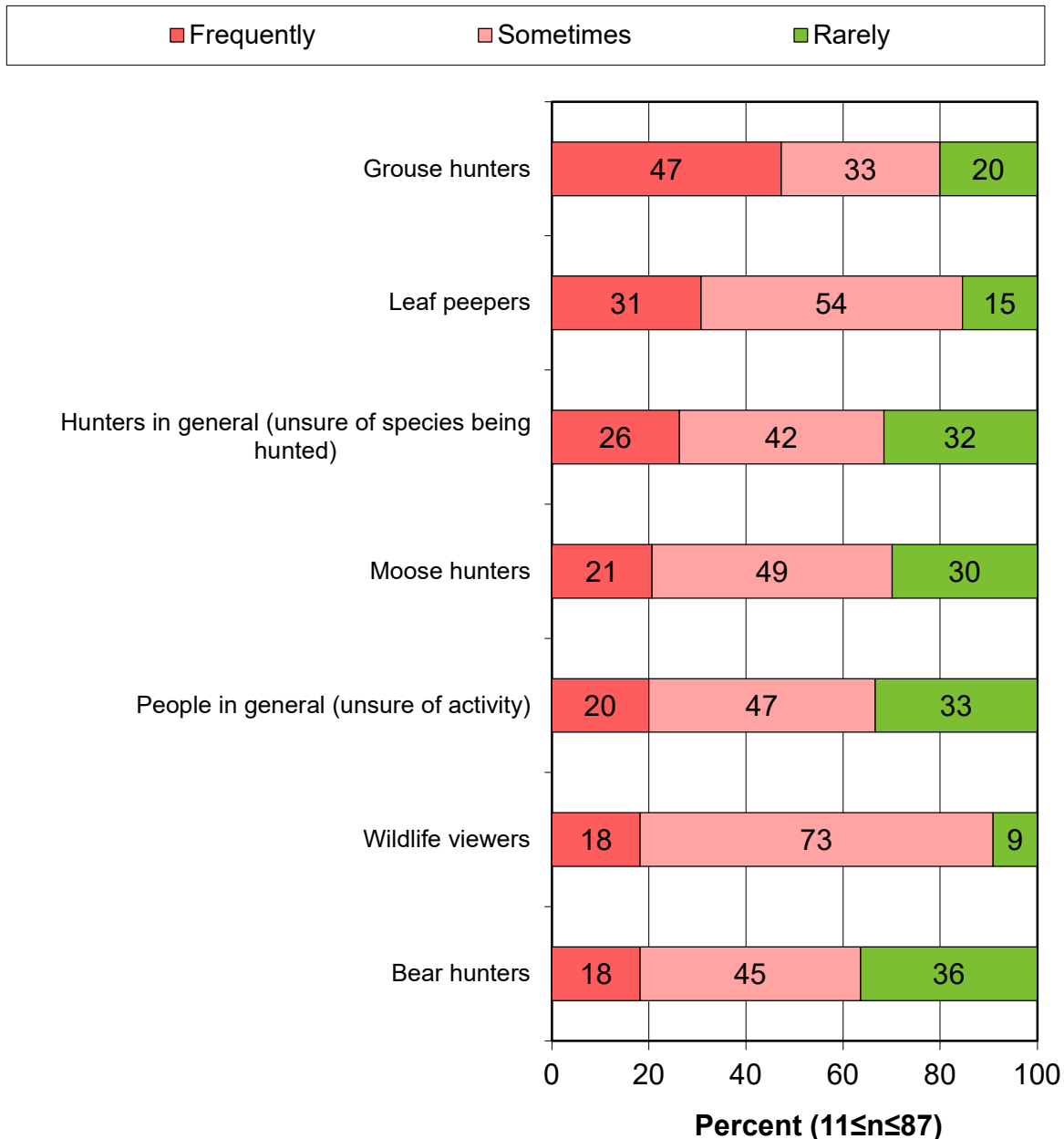


For each type of recreationist named as being in conflict with guides, follow-up questions asked about the frequency and severity of the conflicts. Only those with enough sample size are shown. No graphs are shown for hunting guides of species other than moose and for non-hunting guides because not enough were in the follow-up questions. (The graphs are ranked by the *frequently* response.)

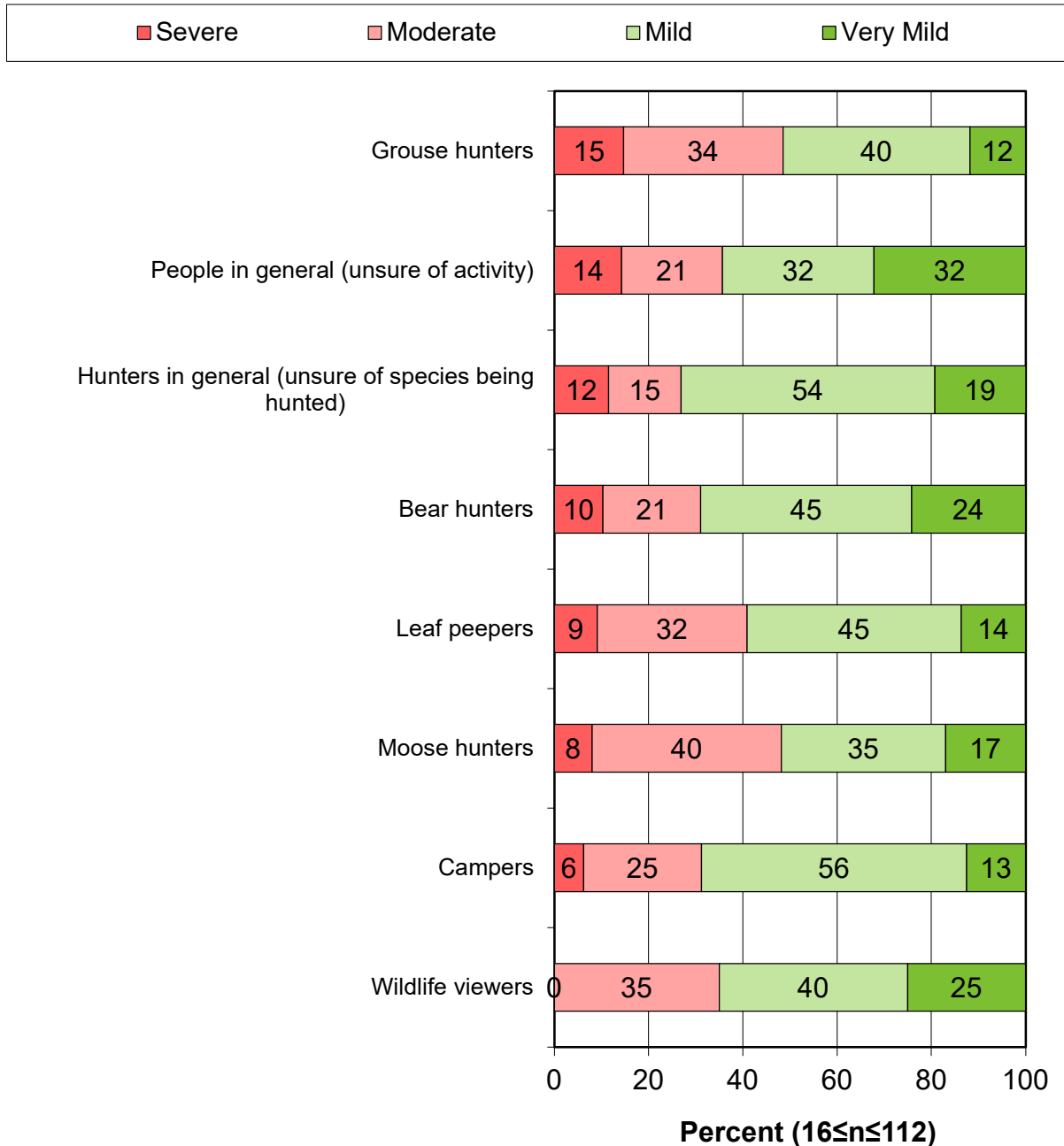
For those groups with whom you experienced conflict during moose hunting season, please tell me if the conflict with each group has occurred frequently, sometimes, or rarely, during moose hunting season over the past 5 years. (Overall) (Guides)



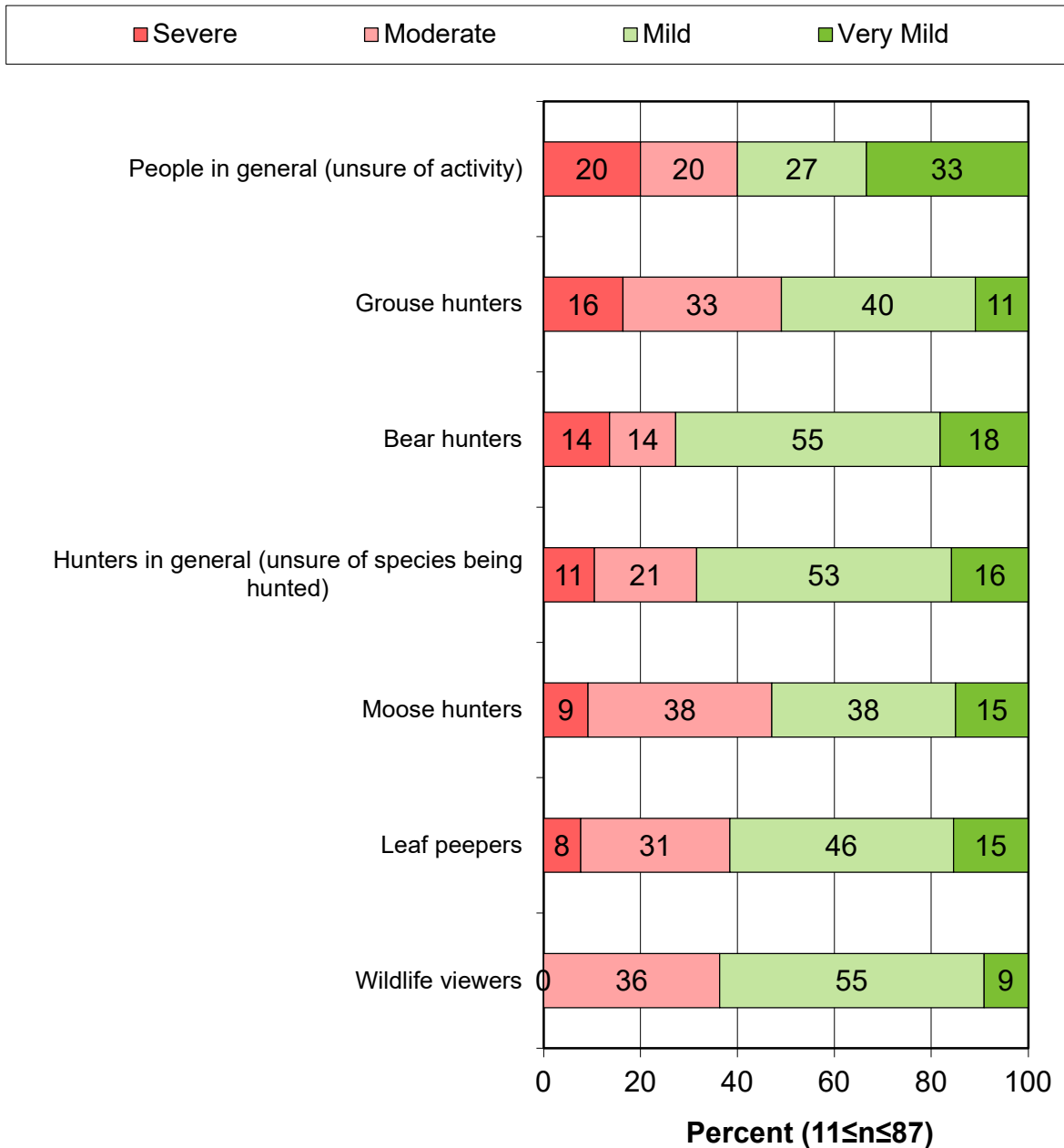
For those groups w/ whom you experienced conflict during moose hunting season, please tell me if the conflict with each group has occurred frequently, sometimes, or rarely, during moose hunting season over the past 5 years. (Guides moose hunters) (Guides)



Would you describe the conflict you typically experienced with each group during moose hunting season over the past 5 years as severe, moderate, mild, or very mild? What about conflict with...? (Overall) (Guides)

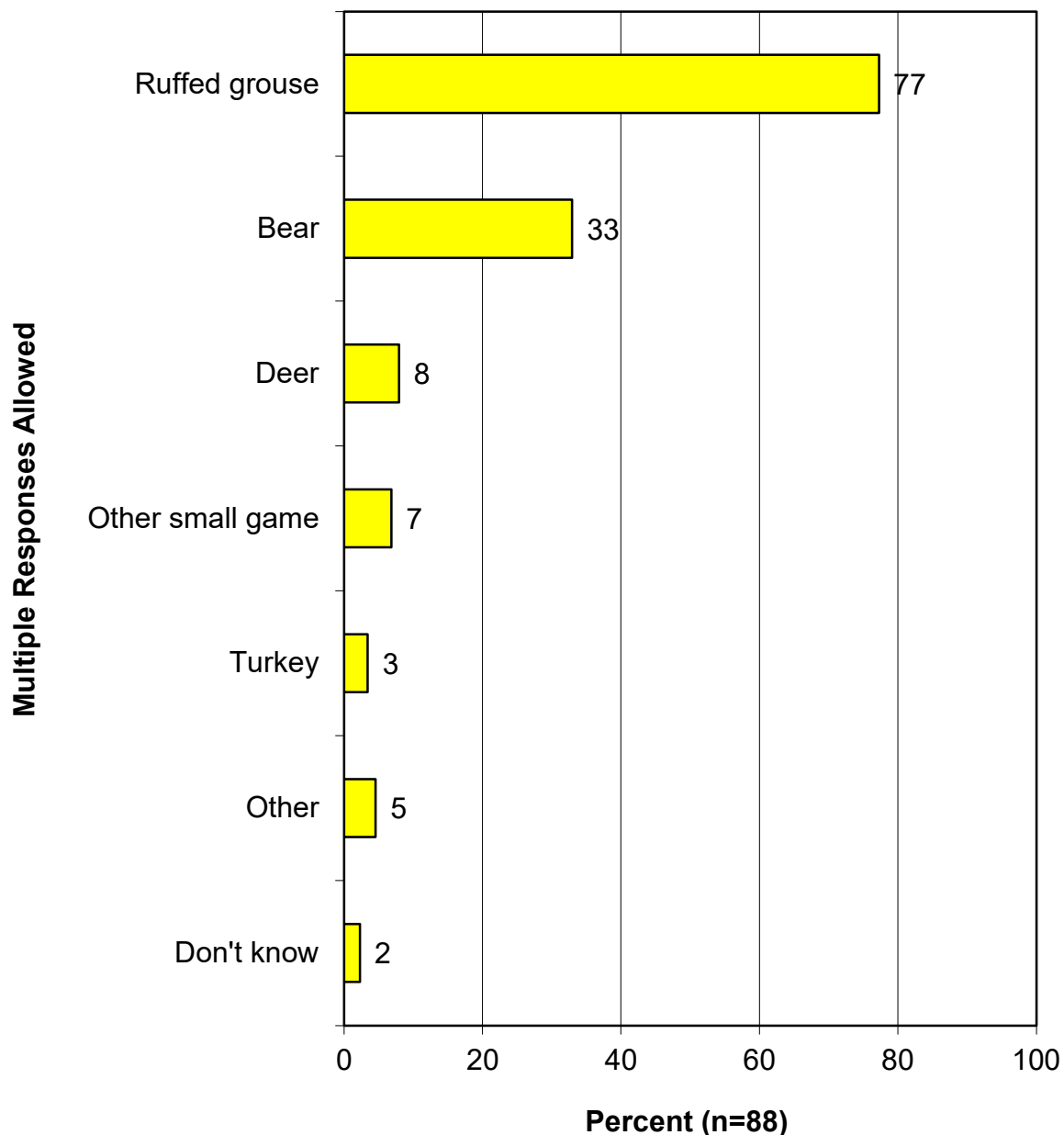


**Would you describe the conflict you typically experienced with each group during moose hunting season over the past 5 years as severe, moderate, mild, or very mild? What about conflict with...? (Guides moose hunters)
(Guides)**



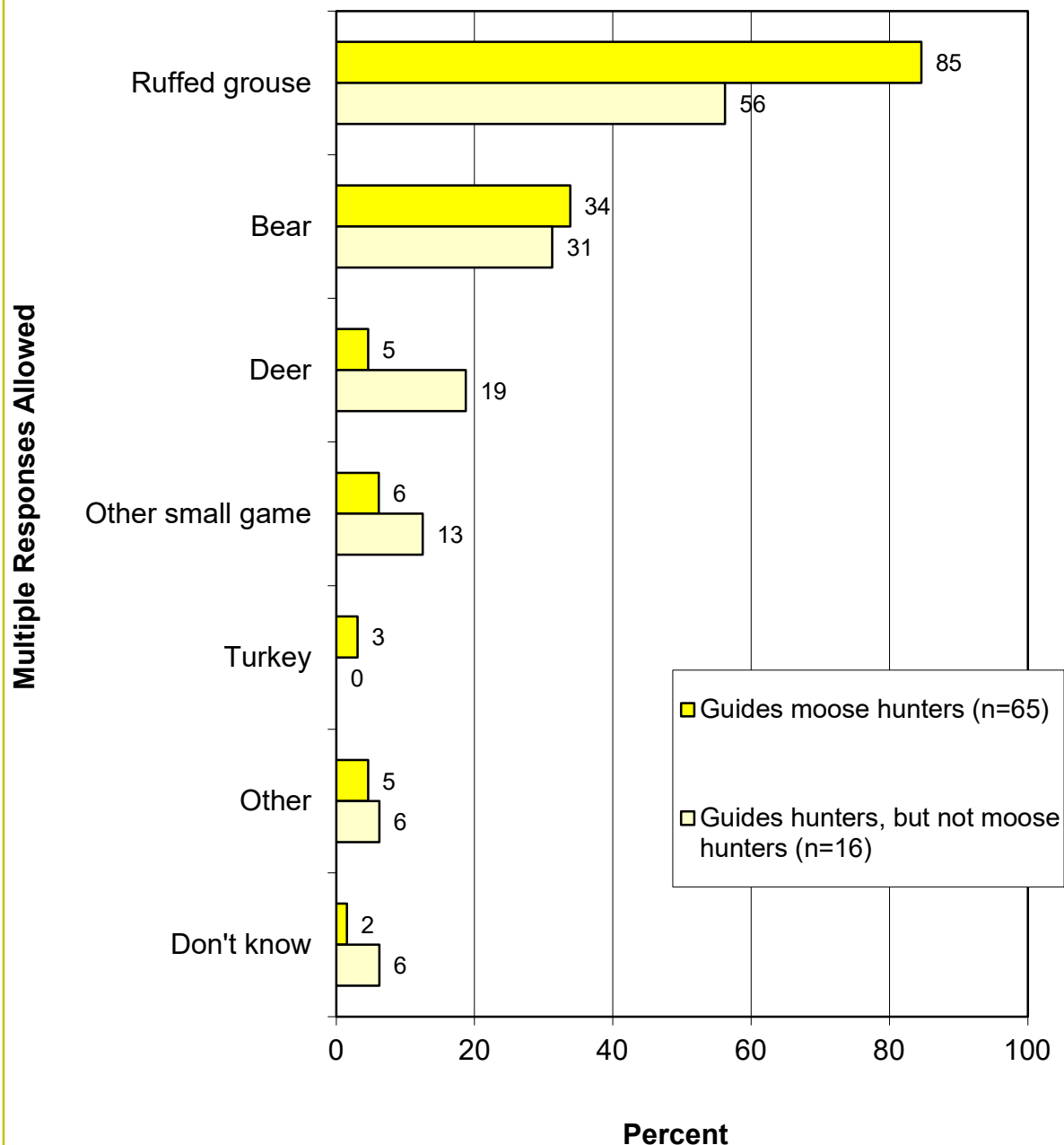
Those who experienced conflict with hunters of species other than moose most commonly indicated that those hunters were hunting ruffed grouse.

You indicated that you experienced conflict with hunters of species other than moose. Which species were being hunted by those hunters? (Asked of those who experienced conflict with hunters of species other than moose.) (Guides)



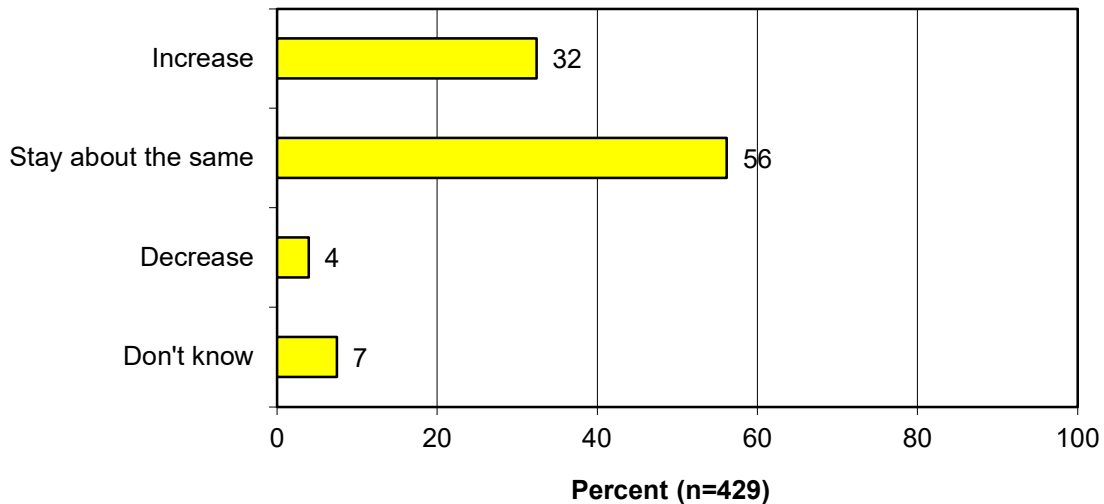
The sample size was too small among non-hunting guides on this question for results to be shown.

You indicated that you experienced conflict with hunters of species other than moose. Which species were being hunted by those hunters? (Asked of those who experienced conflict with hunters of species other than moose.) (Guides)

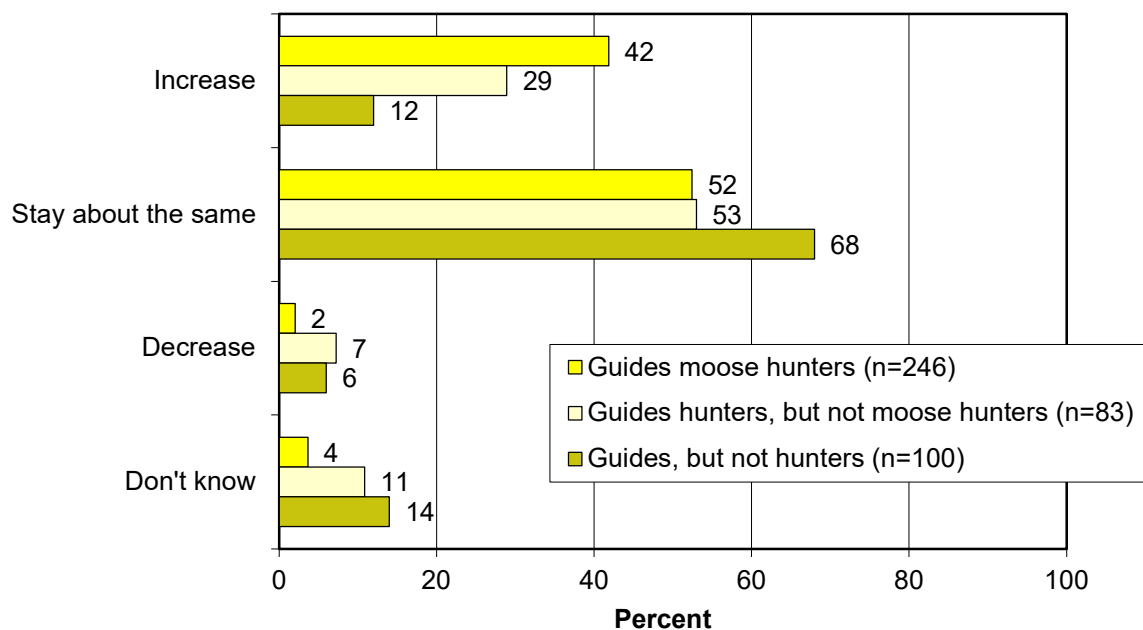


An additional week of moose season would prompt about a third of guides to increase their guiding in the study area. Hunting guides would increase their guiding more than non-hunting guides in such a scenario.

If an additional week of moose season was implemented, do you think the guide services you provide in Northern, Western, and/or Eastern Maine would increase, stay about the same, or decrease? (Guides)

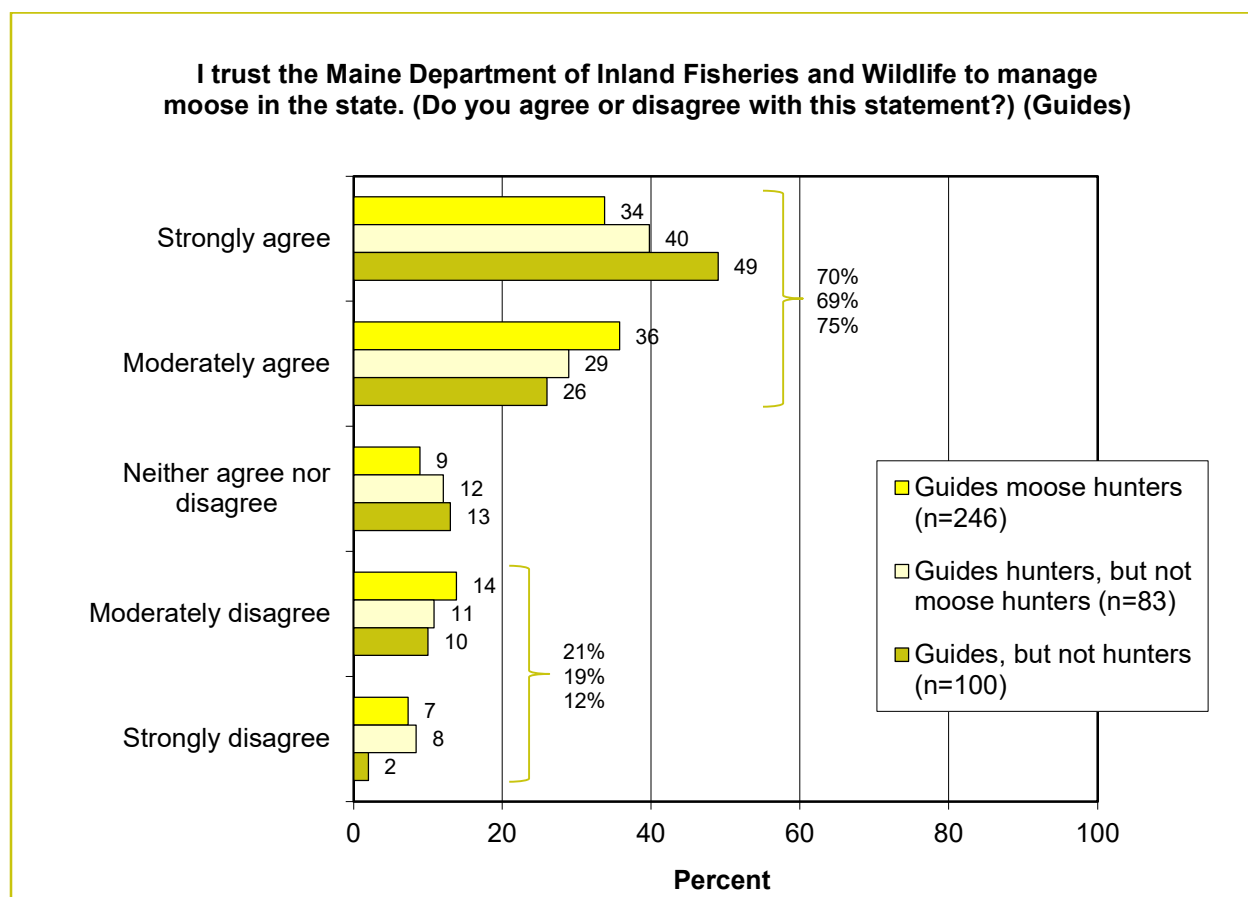
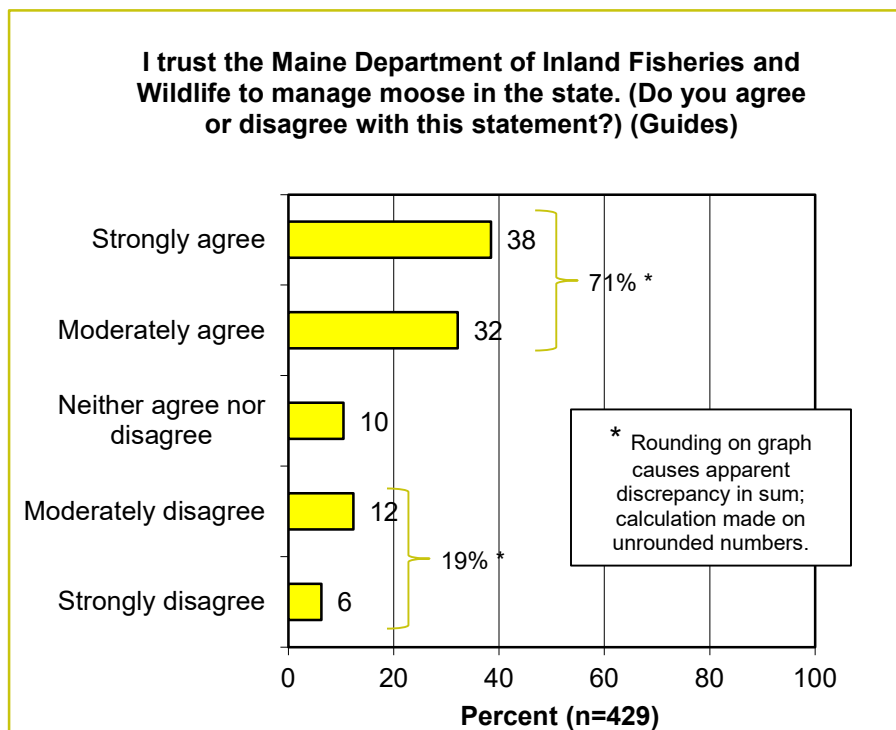


If an additional week of moose season was implemented, do you think the guide services you provide in Northern, Western, and/or Eastern Maine would increase, stay about the same, or decrease? (Guides)

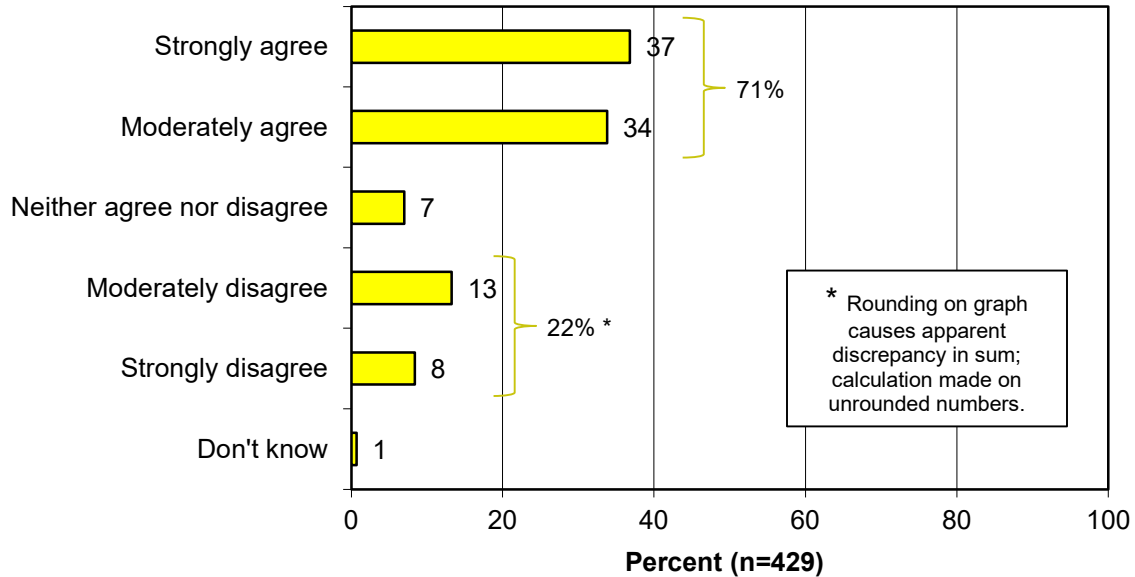


ATTITUDES TOWARD THE DEPARTMENT

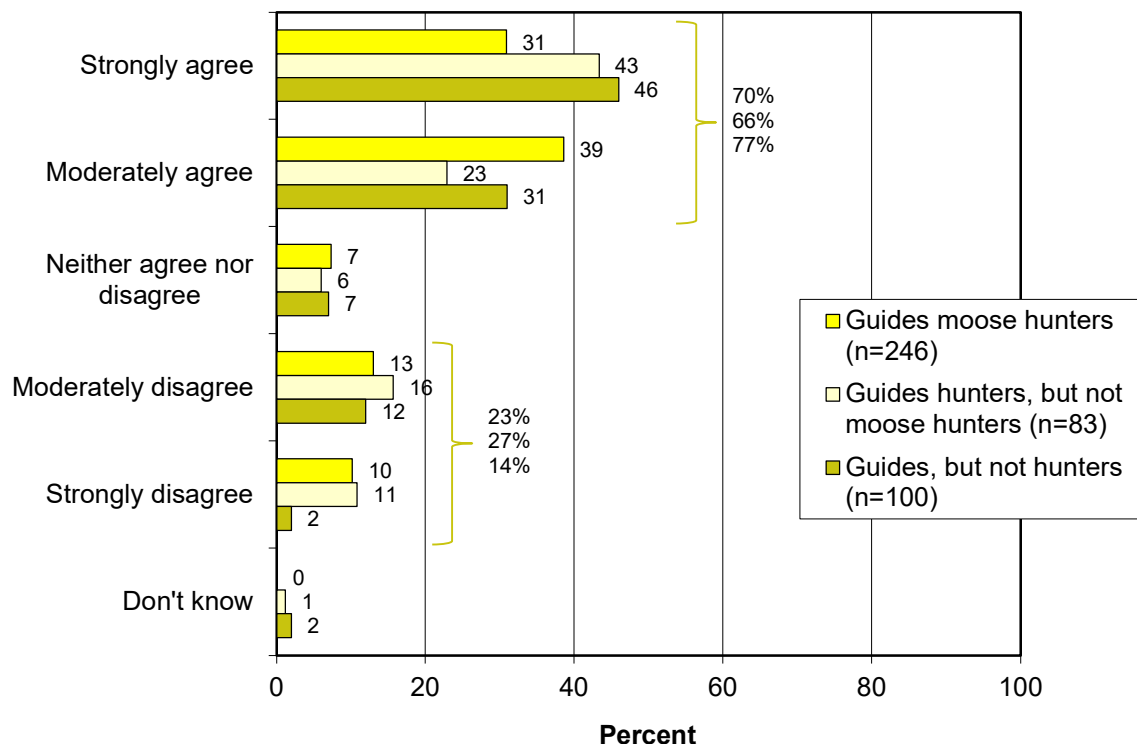
On both of the trust questions, a large majority of guides agree that they trust the Department to manage moose in the state (71% agree) and to set an appropriate framework for moose hunting (also 71% in agreement). Non-hunting guides have the highest agreement on both questions.



I trust the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to set the appropriate framework for moose hunting in Maine, such as season structure, timing, and length, as well as permit allotment, and bag limit, based on the best available information. (Do you agree or disagree with this statement?) (Guides)

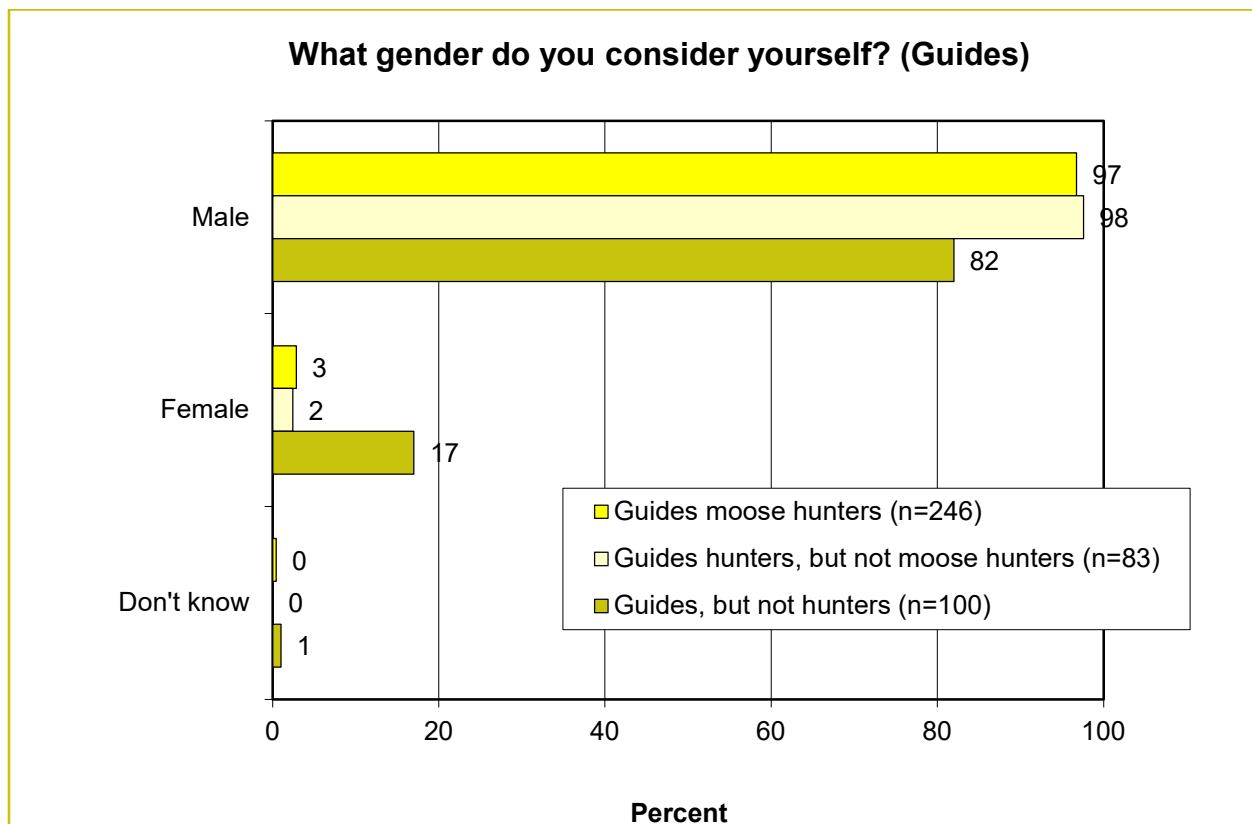
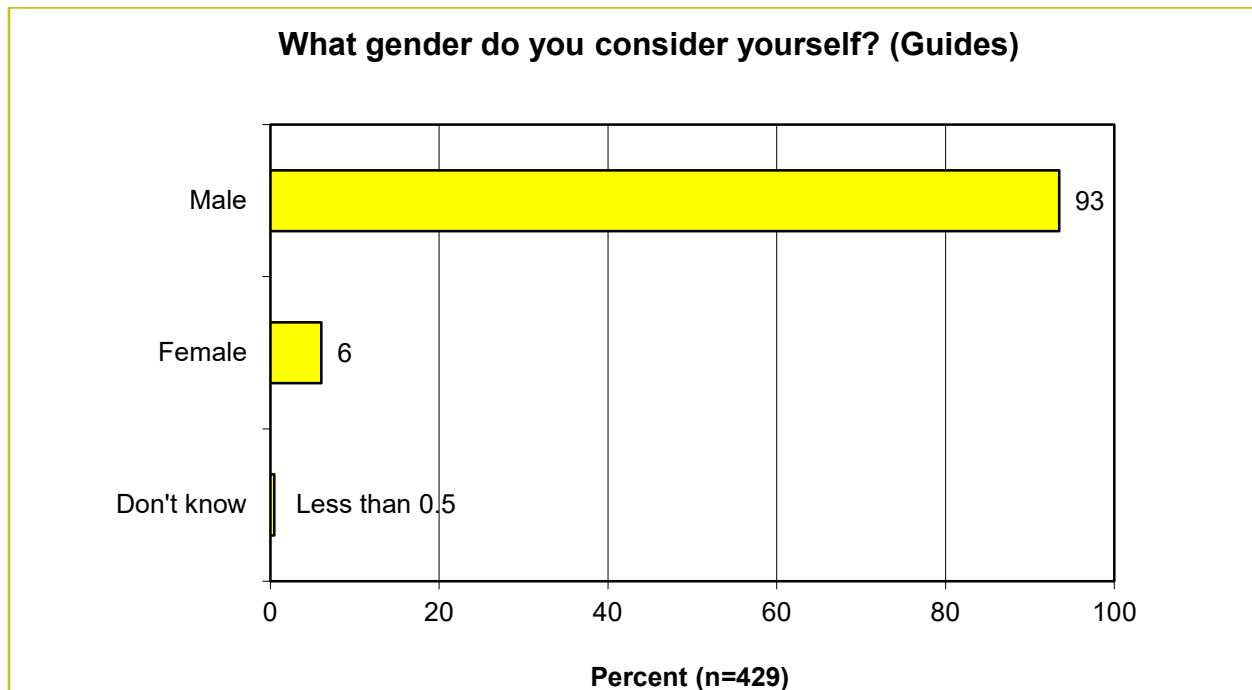


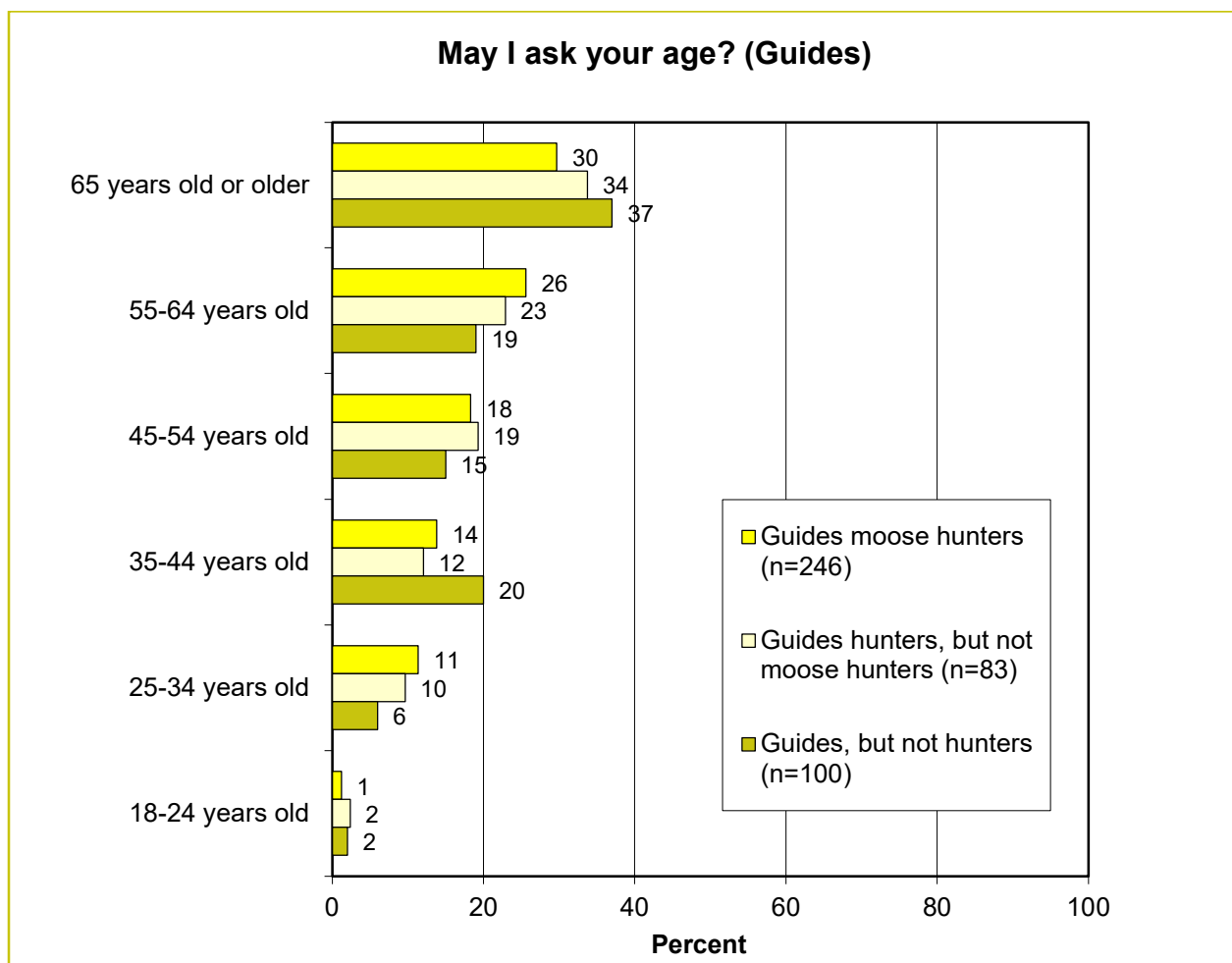
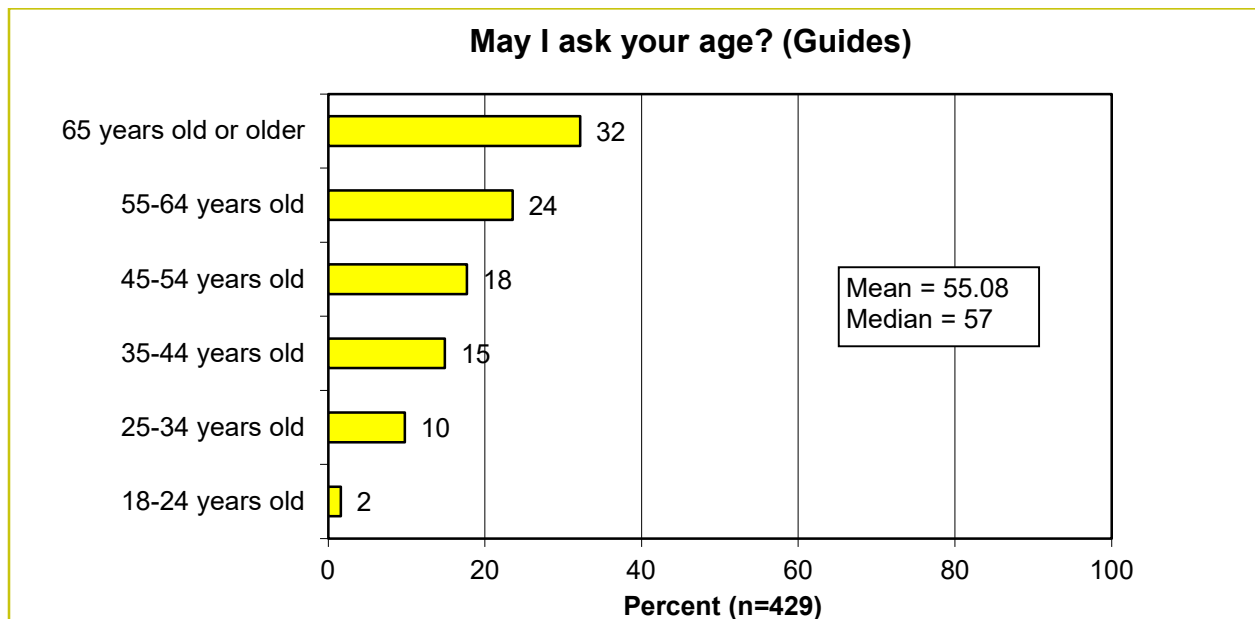
I trust the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to set the appropriate framework for moose hunting in Maine, such as season structure, timing, and length, as well as permit allotment, and bag limit, based on the best available information. (Do you agree or disagree with this statement?) (Guides)



DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Among guides, gender and age were asked. Guides are overwhelmingly male, and the majority are over 55 years old.





RESULTS AMONG LARGE LANDOWNERS

Six large landowners, each owning or managing more than 100,000 acres, provided input to the moose management study. The results are presented in the same thematic sections as the other survey results. Rather than give percentages in graphs, the results are tabulated and show the number of responses.

Questions that allowed only a single response show the total that were asked the question. On the other hand, questions that allowed multiple responses do not show a total, as the sum of the responses may be greater than the number of responses. These latter tables indicate that the question allowed multiple responses.

ATTITUDES TOWARD MOOSE AND MOOSE MANAGEMENT

Is it important or unimportant to you that moose exist in Maine? (Landowners)	
Response	Frequency
Very important	5
Somewhat important	1
Total	6

Generally, which of the following statements best describes your feelings about moose? (Landowners)	
Response	Frequency
I enjoy seeing and having moose around	4
I enjoy seeing and having moose around, but worry about problems they cause	2
Total	6

Overall, would you say the moose population in Maine is too high, about right, or too low? (Landowners)	
Response	Frequency
Too high	1
About right	3
Too low	1
Don't know	1
Total	6

Would you say the moose population in the area where you are located is too high, about right, or too low? (Landowners)	
Response	Frequency
Too high	2
About right	2
Too low	2
Total	6

Prior to this survey, were you aware that winter ticks are affecting the moose population in Maine? (Landowners)	
Response	Frequency
Yes	6
Total	6

How much would you say you know about winter ticks and their impacts on the moose population in Maine? (Asked of those who were aware of winter ticks affecting moose; shown among all.) (Landowners)	
Response	Frequency
A great deal	1
A moderate amount	4
A little	1
Total	6

If the Department predicts a high winter tick load that would likely result in a high rate of moose calf deaths over the winter, would you support or oppose a moose hunt that allowed the limited harvest of additional moose calves to improve the overall rate of moose calf survival during the winter? (Landowners)	
Response	Frequency
Strongly support	3
Moderately support	2
Neither support nor oppose	1
Total	6

ATTITUDES TOWARD HUNTING

In general, do you support or oppose legal, regulated hunting? (Landowners)	
Response	Frequency
Strongly support	6
Total	6

Do you support or oppose moose hunting in Maine? (Landowners)	
Response	Frequency
Strongly support	6
Total	6

Why do you support moose hunting? (Landowners)
Response
Good use of a resource and helps with keeping the population in check I believe it is an appropriate management tool to regulate the population, but that hunting seasons and bag limits should be driven by science and biologist recommendations and NOT by politics.
We support conservation in all forms.
To control the population in areas in which browsing is having an impact to forest management.
Population management tool.
An effective management tool to regulate desired population levels.

In general, do you support or oppose hunting as a method to manage the moose population in Maine? (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Strongly support	6
Total	6

OPINIONS ON MOOSE HUNTING SEASONS

Should Maine have fewer, the same, or more moose hunting seasons? (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Fewer	1
The same	3
More	1
Don't know	1
Total	6

Should Maine's moose seasons occur earlier, the same, or later? (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Earlier	2
The same	4
Total	6

Should Maine's moose season length be shorter, the same, or longer? (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
The same	2
Longer	4
Total	6

PRIOR TO THESE QUESTIONS, THIS INFORMATION WAS GIVEN:

Next, we would like to know if you support or oppose some potential moose hunting season changes. These potential changes would be in an effort to reduce any potential conflict between residents, moose hunters, other hunters, other recreationists, guides, visitors, tourists, and landowners in Northern, Western, and Eastern Maine during moose hunting season. Each of the potential changes would occur without increasing the total number of moose permits issued to hunters each year.

An additional moose 6-day season in all Wildlife Management Districts that currently have moose hunting (Western Maine will have 2 seasons, Eastern Maine will have 3 seasons, and Northern Maine will have 4 six-day seasons). (Knowing this, do you support or oppose this?) (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Moderately support	5
Moderately oppose	1
Total	6

An additional moose 6-day season in several, but not all, Wildlife Management Districts. (Knowing this, do you support or oppose this?) (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Strongly support	1
Moderately support	4
Moderately oppose	1
Total	6

Specifically, in which Wildlife Management Districts would you prefer to have an additional 6-day moose season? (Asked of those who supported an additional season in some WMDs.) (Landowners)

Response (Multiple Responses Allowed)	Frequency
Wildlife Management District 1	5
Wildlife Management District 2	4
Wildlife Management District 3	2
Wildlife Management District 4	5
Wildlife Management District 5	4
Wildlife Management District 6	1
Wildlife Management District 7	3
Wildlife Management District 8	4
Wildlife Management District 9	2
Wildlife Management District 10	1
Wildlife Management District 11	0
Wildlife Management District 12	1
Wildlife Management District 13	1
Wildlife Management District 14	1
Wildlife Management District 15	1
Wildlife Management District 16	0
Wildlife Management District 17	1
Wildlife Management District 18	1
Wildlife Management District 19	1
Wildlife Management District 27	1
Wildlife Management District 28	1

Adding a 6-day September moose season in the Moosehead region (Wildlife Management Districts 8, 9, and 14). (Knowing this, do you support or oppose this?) (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Moderately support	4
Neither support nor oppose	2
Total	6

Adding a 6-day September moose season in the Western Mountains region (Wildlife Management Districts 7, 12, and 13). (Knowing this, do you support or oppose this?) (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Moderately support	4
Neither support nor oppose	2
Total	6

Allowing upland bird hunting during moose seasons. (Knowing this, do you support or oppose this?) (Landowners)	
Response	Frequency
Strongly support	3
Moderately support	2
Neither support nor oppose	1
Total	6

LOCATIONAL INFORMATION

Do you currently own or help manage land in any of the following regions in Northern, Western, or Eastern Maine? (Landowners)	
Response (Multiple Responses Allowed)	Frequency
Northern Maine	5
Moosehead Lake Area	4
Western Mountains	2
Downeast Maine	3

CONFLICTS WITH RECREATIONISTS

How much of a problem, if any, is crowding by people in general in the woods and fields during moose hunting season in the area where you are located? (Landowners)	
Response	Frequency
Minor problem	4
Not a problem at all	2
Total	6

How much of a problem is crowding by moose hunters specifically? (Landowners)	
Response	Frequency
Minor problem	3
Not a problem at all	3
Total	6

How much of a problem is crowding by those hunting species other than moose, such as deer, bear, turkey, grouse, and other small game? (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Minor problem	3
Not a problem at all	3
Total	6

How much of a problem is crowding by recreationists other than hunters, such as anglers, trappers, wildlife viewers, hikers, campers, or boaters? (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Minor problem	2
Not a problem at all	4
Total	6

Again, moose hunting seasons occur primarily in late September and again from mid-October through the first week of November, depending on the Wildlife Management District. Have you experienced conflicts with anyone else at all during moose hunting season in the area where you are located? (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Yes	2
No	4
Total	6

What type of conflict did you experience? (Asked of those who experienced a conflict during moose season.) (Landowners)

Response (Multiple Responses Allowed)	Frequency
Not respecting signage	2
Blocking roads / volume of parked vehicles	1
Traffic or traffic congestion	1
Going behind locked gates or restricted areas	1
Unfair scouting, such as planes, drones, etc.	1
Disruption of forest management or land operations	1

In which WMDs did you experience conflict? (Asked of those who experienced a conflict during moose season.) (Landowners)

Response (Multiple Responses Allowed)	Frequency
Wildlife Management District 1	0
Wildlife Management District 2	0
Wildlife Management District 3	0
Wildlife Management District 4	2
Wildlife Management District 5	1
Wildlife Management District 6	0
Wildlife Management District 7	1
Wildlife Management District 8	0
Wildlife Management District 9	1
Wildlife Management District 10	1
Wildlife Management District 11	1
Wildlife Management District 12	0
Wildlife Management District 13	0
Wildlife Management District 14	0
Wildlife Management District 15	0
Wildlife Management District 16	0
Wildlife Management District 17	0
Wildlife Management District 18	0
Wildlife Management District 19	1
Wildlife Management District 27	0
Wildlife Management District 28	0

Have you experienced conflicts with any of the following types of recreationists during moose hunting season in the area where you [manage land]? (Landowners)

Response (Multiple Responses Allowed)	Frequency
Moose hunters	2
People in general (unsure of activity)	2
Hunters of species other than moose	1
Hunters in general (unsure of species being hunted)	1
Campers	1
Those gathering food or other items, such as berries, mushrooms, or shed antlers	1
Other type(s) of recreationists	1
Did not have any conflicts	1

You indicated that you experienced conflict with hunters of species other than moose. Which species were being hunted by those hunters? (Asked of those who experienced conflict with hunters of species other than moose.) (Landowners)	
Response (Multiple Responses Allowed)	Frequency
Deer	1

Thinking about your land management efforts in Northern, Western, or Eastern Maine, do you agree or disagree that you engage in land management efforts less often specifically during moose hunting season? (Landowners)	
Response	Frequency
Moderately agree	1
Moderately disagree	1
Strongly disagree	4
Total	6

Thinking about your land management efforts in Northern, Western, or Eastern Maine, do you agree or disagree that moose hunting season makes it more difficult or challenging to engage in land management efforts? (Landowners)	
Response	Frequency
Moderately agree	5
Strongly disagree	1
Total	6

These next questions were asked of those who had conflict with each group that they named. For each group named, follow-up questions asked about the frequency of conflict and the severity of conflict.

Please indicate if the conflict with moose hunters has occurred frequently, sometimes, or rarely, during moose hunting season over the past 5 years. (Landowners)	
Response	Frequency
Sometimes	1
Rarely	1
Total	2

Please indicate if the conflict with deer hunters has occurred frequently, sometimes, or rarely, during moose hunting season over the past 5 years. (Landowners)	
Response	Frequency
Rarely	1
Total	1

Please indicate if the conflict with hunters in general (unsure of species being hunted) has occurred frequently, sometimes, or rarely, during moose hunting season over the past 5 years. (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Rarely	1
Total	1

Please indicate if the conflict with campers has occurred frequently, sometimes, or rarely, during moose hunting season over the past 5 years. (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Sometimes	1
Total	1

Please indicate if the conflict with those gathering food or other items, such as berries, mushrooms, or shed antlers, has occurred frequently, sometimes, or rarely, during moose hunting season over the past 5 years. (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Sometimes	1
Total	1

Please indicate if the conflict with other type(s) of recreationists has occurred frequently, sometimes, or rarely, during moose hunting season over the past 5 years. (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Sometimes	1
Total	1

Please indicate if the conflict with people in general (unsure of activity) has occurred frequently, sometimes, or rarely, during moose hunting season over the past 5 years. (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Sometimes	2
Total	2

Would you describe the conflict you typically experienced with moose hunters during moose hunting season over the past 5 years as severe, moderate, mild, or very mild? (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Moderate	1
Very Mild	1
Total	2

Would you describe the conflict you typically experienced with deer hunters during moose hunting season over the past 5 years as severe, moderate, mild, or very mild? (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Very Mild	1
Total	1

Would you describe the conflict you typically experienced with hunters in general (unsure of species being hunted) during moose hunting season over the past 5 years as severe, moderate, mild, or very mild? (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Very Mild	1
Total	1

Would you describe the conflict you typically experienced with campers during moose hunting season over the past 5 years as severe, moderate, mild, or very mild? (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Mild	1
Total	1

Would you describe the conflict you typically experienced with those gathering food or other items, such as berries, mushrooms, or shed antlers, during moose hunting season over the past 5 years as severe, moderate, mild, or very mild? (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Mild	1
Total	1

Would you describe the conflict you typically experienced with other type(s) of recreationists during moose hunting season over the past 5 years as severe, moderate, mild, or very mild? (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Very Mild	1
Total	1

Would you describe the conflict you typically experienced with people in general (unsure of activity) during moose hunting season over the past 5 years as severe, moderate, mild, or very mild? (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Mild	1
Very Mild	1
Total	2

ATTITUDES TOWARD THE DEPARTMENT

I trust the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to manage moose in the state. (Do you agree or disagree with this statement?) (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Strongly agree	4
Moderately agree	1
Moderately disagree	1
Total	6

I trust the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to set the appropriate framework for moose hunting in Maine, such as season structure, timing, and length, as well as permit allotment, and bag limit, based on the best available information. (Do you agree or disagree with this statement?) (Landowners)

Response	Frequency
Strongly agree	3
Moderately agree	2
Moderately disagree	1
Total	6

END COMMENTS

Landowners were provided the opportunity at the end of the survey to provide any final thoughts.

End comments. (Landowners)

I believe that for a long time the moose population was way over carrying capacity and caused untold \$ in damage to the forest industry. Politics of moose permit #'s and success rates took precedent over moose health and I saw nature take over as taught in Bio 101 and watching a moose die of tick bites is a horrible thing to see. I said in survey I didn't think the moose hunt was handled properly but I have faith in the biologists if they are given the ok to look after the moose and land base first not the politics of the hunt.

I think IFW should consider one moose season, but have a month long season to provide hunters a longer window of opportunity (similar to deer season). This would spread out hunting pressure and increase opportunities for related businesses (lodges, restaurants, etc.)

It does appear that moose numbers are rebounding some what in WMD's 11 and 19. We are still observing a few winter tick calf mortalities as well as moose with what we can only guess is the brain worm parasite on our ownership.

Primary concerns around moose hunting and population levels as a land manger in the North Maine Woods are limited to browsing of regeneration and vehicle traffic - environmental and safety impacts (hunters using 2 season roads in the fall and using main haul roads without radios).

The state does a fantastic job of managing Maine's moose population - keep up the great work!

RESULTS AMONG TOURISM BUSINESSES

In total, Responsive Management obtained completed questionnaires from 31 businesses. These are businesses involved in outdoor recreation and tourism in the study area that can be affected by moose and moose hunting seasons. The results are presented in the same thematic sections as the other survey results. Rather than give percentages in graphs, the results are tabulated and show the number of responses.

Questions that allowed only a single response show the total that were asked the question. On the other hand, questions that allowed multiple responses do not show a total, as the sum of the responses may be greater than the number of responses.

ATTITUDES TOWARD MOOSE AND MOOSE MANAGEMENT

For the most part, business representatives in the survey think that moose are *very* important, and all say that they enjoy having moose around. They mostly say that there is about the right number of moose or that the population is too low.

Is it important or unimportant to you that moose exist in Maine? (Businesses)	
Response	Frequency
Very important	29
Somewhat important	2
Total	31

Generally, which of the following statements best describes your feelings about moose? (Businesses)	
Response	Frequency
I enjoy seeing and having moose around	31
Total	31

Overall, would you say the moose population in Maine is too high, about right, or too low? (Businesses)	
Response	Frequency
Too high	4
About right	14
Too low	11
Don't know	2
Total	31

Would you say the moose population in the area where you are located is too high, about right, or too low? (Businesses)	
Response	Frequency
Too high	3
About right	11
Too low	17
Total	31

Business representatives are generally aware and knowledgeable of the winter tick problem, but they are divided on support for a season that would allow the harvest of calves to address the tick problem.

Prior to this survey, were you aware that winter ticks are affecting the moose population in Maine? (Businesses)	
Response	Frequency
Yes	29
No	2
Total	31

How much would you say you know about winter ticks and their impacts on the moose population in Maine? (Asked of those who were aware of winter ticks affecting moose; shown among all.) (Businesses)	
Response	Frequency
A great deal	17
A moderate amount	7
A little	3
Nothing at all (have only heard that there is an issue and do not know any more than that)	2
Not asked: were not aware that winter ticks are affecting the moose population	2
Total	31

If the Department predicts a high winter tick load that would likely result in a high rate of moose calf deaths over the winter, would you support or oppose a moose hunt that allowed the limited harvest of additional moose calves to improve the overall rate of moose calf survival during the winter? (Businesses)	
Response	Frequency
Strongly support	6
Moderately support	9
Neither support nor oppose	3
Moderately oppose	4
Strongly oppose	9
Total	31

ATTITUDES TOWARD HUNTING

Support for far exceeds opposition to hunting, moose hunting, and moose hunting as a management tool.

In general, do you support or oppose legal, regulated hunting? (Businesses)	
Response	Frequency
Strongly support	27
Moderately support	3
Neither support nor oppose	1
Total	31

Do you support or oppose moose hunting in Maine? (Businesses)	
Response	Frequency
Strongly support	27
Neither support nor oppose	1
Moderately oppose	2
Strongly oppose	1
Total	31

Why do you support moose hunting? (Asked of those who support it.) (Businesses)
Response
A valuable resource
Because I think it's good for population control because it does need to be managed, I just have strong concerns about the current management. We rent to moose hunters so we hear what they're seeing in the woods, especially the cow hunt (pregnant moose abandoning their young who then don't survive the winter). Plus there are too many weeks of moose hunting, especially the September hunt that overlaps other hunting seasons, the herd has dropped drastically in our area. All of our guests year round want to see moose. Fishermen, other types of hunters, outdoor recreationists, and people around here have just noticed that they're not here like they used to be. Our deer hunters come back and see piles of moose guts on the side of the road and it's left behind a baby moose that's lost its mother and making this terrible sound. One bullet during a cow hunt can kill potentially up to five moose.
Because it is good management and because of the economic impact that it has on this area and the impacts they have on the landowners property. Because we guide to hunt them, conservation and management, and tourism, and to sustain a population which the habitat can support. For the sport and the tourism it brings to Maine. Form of sustainable protein, unique sport to Maine. I do guided canoe trips as my business and I guide moose hunts and tours to see the moose.
I hate to see the moose become overpopulated and go hungry and get sick. With all the solar farms being built they are being pushed to smaller areas of living and food sources.
In our area I think that there are too many tags given out but I do think in general that you need to control the population a little bit through hunting.
It is part of the management of moose.
It's healthy for the herd and it provides benefits for the state It's important as a management tool. It supports economic growth It's important for the economy and it's also important for the management of the species managing population managing population Moose hunting is a valuable tool for management of a healthy moose population. The resource provides an exceptional outdoor experience for sportsmen.
People enjoy the hunt of them in Maine.
The economic benefits it brings to the state, keeping the population healthy. The economy and it's needed. The way of life in Maine, to manage and support the health of the wildlife populations--same with deer and bear. As long as it keeps the herd healthy.
Tradition, economy, species management.
Wildlife management!

In general, do you support or oppose hunting as a method to manage the moose population in Maine? (Businesses)	
Response	Frequency
Strongly support	25
Moderately support	2
Neither support nor oppose	2
Moderately oppose	1
Strongly oppose	1
Total	31

OPINIONS ON MOOSE HUNTING SEASONS

On the opinion questions about moose hunting seasons, business representatives most commonly want the same number, timing, and length of moose hunting seasons.

Should Maine have fewer, the same, or more moose hunting seasons? (Businesses)	
Response	Frequency
Fewer	3
The same	17
More	8
Don't know	3
Total	31

Should Maine's moose seasons occur earlier, the same, or later? (Businesses)	
Response	Frequency
Earlier	5
The same	20
Later	4
Don't know	2
Total	31

Should Maine's moose season length be shorter, the same, or longer? (Businesses)	
Response	Frequency
Shorter	4
The same	19
Longer	7
Don't know	1
Total	31

PRIOR TO THESE QUESTIONS, THIS INFORMATION WAS GIVEN:

Next, we would like to know if you support or oppose some potential moose hunting season changes. These potential changes would be in an effort to reduce any potential conflict between residents, moose hunters, other hunters, other recreationists, guides, visitors, tourists, and landowners in Northern, Western, and Eastern Maine during moose hunting season. Each of the potential changes would occur without increasing the total number of moose permits issued to hunters each year.

An additional moose 6-day season in all Wildlife Management Districts that currently have moose hunting (Western Maine will have 2 seasons, Eastern Maine will have 3 seasons, and Northern Maine will have 4 six-day seasons). (Knowing this, do you support or oppose this?) (Businesses)	
Response	Frequency
Strongly support	9
Moderately support	13
Moderately oppose	3
Strongly oppose	6
Total	31

An additional moose 6-day season in several, but not all, Wildlife Management Districts. (Knowing this, do you support or oppose this?) (Businesses)	
Response	Frequency
Strongly support	7
Moderately support	11
Neither support nor oppose	4
Moderately oppose	1
Strongly oppose	6
Don't know	2
Total	31

Specifically, in which Wildlife Management Districts would you prefer to have an additional 6-day moose season? (Asked of those who support an additional season in some WMDs.) (Businesses)	
Response (Multiple Responses Allowed)	Frequency
Wildlife Management District 1	7
Wildlife Management District 2	7
Wildlife Management District 3	5
Wildlife Management District 4	5
Wildlife Management District 5	3
Wildlife Management District 6	4
Wildlife Management District 7	5
Wildlife Management District 8	6
Wildlife Management District 9	6
Wildlife Management District 10	3
Wildlife Management District 11	1
Wildlife Management District 12	3
Wildlife Management District 13	3
Wildlife Management District 14	4
Wildlife Management District 15	1
Wildlife Management District 16	1
Wildlife Management District 17	1
Wildlife Management District 18	1
Wildlife Management District 19	1
Wildlife Management District 27	1
Wildlife Management District 28	1
Don't know	4

Adding a 6-day September moose season in the Moosehead region (Wildlife Management Districts 8, 9, and 14). (Knowing this, do you support or oppose this?) (Businesses)

Response	Frequency
Strongly support	11
Moderately support	10
Neither support nor oppose	1
Moderately oppose	2
Strongly oppose	5
Don't know	2
Total	31

Adding a 6-day September moose season in the Western Mountains region (Wildlife Management Districts 7, 12, and 13). (Knowing this, do you support or oppose this?) (Businesses)

Response	Frequency
Strongly support	10
Moderately support	8
Neither support nor oppose	5
Moderately oppose	2
Strongly oppose	5
Don't know	1
Total	31

Allowing upland bird hunting during moose seasons. (Knowing this, do you support or oppose this?) (Businesses)

Response	Frequency
Strongly support	8
Moderately support	8
Neither support nor oppose	3
Moderately oppose	2
Strongly oppose	8
Don't know	2
Total	31

LOCATIONAL INFORMATION

Northern Maine and the Moosehead Lake Area were the most common regions in which businesses were providing services.

Do you manage a business that provides services related to tourism or outdoor recreation in one of the following regions in Northern, Western, or Eastern Maine? (Businesses)	
Response (Multiple Responses Allowed)	Frequency
Northern Maine	21
Moosehead Lake Area	11
Western Mountains	3
Downeast Maine	5

If you can, please tell me in which Wildlife Management District(s) (WMDs) your services are provided. (Businesses)	
Response (Multiple Responses Allowed)	Frequency
Wildlife Management District 1	7
Wildlife Management District 2	10
Wildlife Management District 3	8
Wildlife Management District 4	5
Wildlife Management District 5	6
Wildlife Management District 6	8
Wildlife Management District 7	0
Wildlife Management District 8	3
Wildlife Management District 9	2
Wildlife Management District 10	2
Wildlife Management District 11	4
Wildlife Management District 12	0
Wildlife Management District 13	4
Wildlife Management District 14	2
Wildlife Management District 15	0
Wildlife Management District 16	0
Wildlife Management District 17	2
Wildlife Management District 18	2
Wildlife Management District 19	3
Wildlife Management District 27	0
Wildlife Management District 28	1
Don't know	5

CONFLICTS WITH RECREATIONISTS

The results regarding conflicts are shown in the tables that follow. In all four questions, *major* problem was only sparsely selected. When looking at *minor* problem, as well, businesses appear to be split with substantial numbers saying there was a problem and substantial numbers saying that there was no problem.

How much of a problem, if any, is crowding by people in general in the woods and fields during moose hunting season in the area where you are located? (Businesses)	
Response	Frequency
Major problem	4
Minor problem	11
Not a problem at all	14
Don't know	2
Total	31

How much of a problem is crowding by moose hunters specifically? (Businesses)	
Response	Frequency
Major problem	3
Minor problem	7
Not a problem at all	19
Don't know	2
Total	31

How much of a problem is crowding by those hunting species other than moose, such as deer, bear, turkey, grouse, and other small game? (Businesses)	
Response	Frequency
Major problem	4
Minor problem	10
Not a problem at all	16
Don't know	1
Total	31

How much of a problem is crowding by recreationists other than hunters, such as anglers, trappers, wildlife viewers, hikers, campers, or boaters? (Businesses)	
Response	Frequency
Major problem	2
Minor problem	2
Not a problem at all	26
Don't know	1
Total	31

Again, moose hunting seasons occur primarily in late September and again from mid-October through the first week of November, depending on the Wildlife Management District. Have you experienced conflicts with anyone else at all during moose hunting season in the area where you are located? (Businesses)

Response	Frequency
Yes	11
No	20
Total	31

What type of conflict did you experience? (Asked of those who experienced a conflict during moose season.) (Businesses)

Response (Multiple Responses Allowed)	Frequency
Traffic or traffic congestion	5
Blocking roads / volume of parked vehicles	4
Going behind locked gates or restricted areas	3
Not respecting signage	2
Unable to get to prime hunting spot first	1
Unfair scouting, such as planes, drones, etc.	1
Disruption of forest management or land operations	1
Other	7

In which WMDs did you experience conflict? (Asked of those who experienced a conflict during moose season.) (Businesses)

Response (Multiple Responses Allowed)	Frequency
Wildlife Management District 1	3
Wildlife Management District 2	4
Wildlife Management District 3	3
Wildlife Management District 4	3
Wildlife Management District 5	2
Wildlife Management District 6	4
Wildlife Management District 7	0
Wildlife Management District 8	1
Wildlife Management District 9	1
Wildlife Management District 10	1
Wildlife Management District 11	0
Wildlife Management District 12	0
Wildlife Management District 13	0
Wildlife Management District 14	0
Wildlife Management District 15	0
Wildlife Management District 16	0
Wildlife Management District 17	0
Wildlife Management District 18	0
Wildlife Management District 19	0
Wildlife Management District 27	0
Wildlife Management District 28	0

Have you experienced conflicts with any of the following types of recreationists during moose hunting season in the area where you operate? (Businesses)

Response (Multiple Responses Allowed)	Frequency
Hunters of species other than moose	8
Moose hunters	6
Other type(s) of recreationists	6
Wildlife viewers	2
People in general (unsure of activity)	2
Trappers	1
Did not have any conflicts	14

You indicated that you experienced conflict with hunters of species other than moose. Which species were being hunted by those hunters? (Asked of those who experienced conflict with hunters of species other than moose.) (Businesses)

Response (Multiple Responses Allowed)	Frequency
Ruffed grouse	7
Other small game	1
Turkey	1

ATTITUDES TOWARD THE DEPARTMENT

On both of the trust questions, many more business representatives agreed than disagreed.

I trust the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to manage moose in the state. (Do you agree or disagree with this statement?) (Businesses)

Response	Frequency
Strongly agree	16
Moderately agree	8
Moderately disagree	4
Strongly disagree	2
Don't know	1
Total	31

I trust the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to set the appropriate framework for moose hunting in Maine, such as season structure, timing, and length, as well as permit allotment, and bag limit, based on the best available information. (Do you agree or disagree with this statement?) (Businesses)

Response	Frequency
Strongly agree	15
Moderately agree	8
Moderately disagree	4
Strongly disagree	4
Total	31

END COMMENTS

Businesses were provided the opportunity at the end of the survey to provide any final thoughts.

End comments. (Businesses)
An additional season would solve many crowding/lodging issues.
During the bull season give hunters the option to take either sex, my reasoning that some hunters want a bull but would be happy to accept a cow. They may shoot smaller bull and affect the trophy quality for other hunters looking for trophies.
I believe the Dept. is doing a great job and I appreciate taking a survey like this.
I believe the moose population has declined significantly in the past 40 years. As a result, I think we should discontinue moose hunting in Maine for a trial period of 3 years.
I feel without proper management of all Maine wildlife there would be more or an increase in conflicts with man. This includes dogs, cats and motor vehicle accidents.
I had a moose tag in unit 9 and the tag began on Columbus weekend Monday, and it was a total crazy mess. So many people and bird hunters and moose hunters. After the first day, Monday, we didn't have this problem. I would suggest not starting on the Monday of Columbus weekend, especially in an area that is primarily based on tourism.
I know they're targeting zone 4 the cow hunt I don't think that's a very good thing they are bombarding zone 4 and are messing with the cow population and hurting the farmers and herd. I'm not in favor of that. I think zone 1 and zone 4 in between should be spread out to reduce conflict. People say we are killing all the moose but they are doing like the white-tail deer and are not showing themselves as much as they used to since the late 80s because they are becoming wiser and hiding over the decades and reducing viewing of the big bulls. We aren't seeing them not because they're being killed but because they are in hiding.
I think the Department is doing a great job and they should continue doing what they're doing and eliminate grouse hunts during moose weeks.
It would be nice if they could attack the winter tick by going to places where moose go often and give them prednisone and get a few moose like that.
Moose hunting is considered a once in a lifetime event for most. Calling and interacting with moose, particularly bulls, is a what makes this such a special experience. The continued usage of electronic calls and pre season usage of electronic calls has a very negative impact on the experience by causing moose to become non vocal for everyone. Bird hunters unintentionally have a negative impact. The sheer volume of bird hunters cause moose to become very recluse. Additionally shots fired by bird hunters on the road frequently cause moose to become silent and stop coming to the call even 500 or more yards into the woods. It would be nice to have at least the first bull season free of bird hunters. It would also be nice to allow all bull seasons to be timed when moose are responsive to calling. After September 23 and prior to October 10.
No physical location, but in T8 I think these conflicts are being overblown. There are a number of outfitters or guides that want the woods to themselves and that is unnecessary and unfair. It is not as big a deal as people are making it.
Non-resident moose hunters are important to our business and the rural economy.
Non-resident moose hunters provide needed economic stimulus to our local area and benefit all people of Maine by providing tax dollars. Plus they contribute to conservation through their purchases. More tags should be made available to non-residents.
The moose population has already collapsed, taking additional in hopes to kill the ticks will not help.
They should not be shooting or harvesting any cow moose. There's certain areas they should not be harvesting any of those. They should open up either or instead of doing only one or only the other.
Would approve of upland bird hunting in September only. Hunters should have the option of shooting either bull or cow. Because they can't take cows, they shoot smaller bulls, which then leaves fewer trophy moose for trophy hunters.

RESULTS OF ALL SURVEY GROUPS ON COMMON QUESTIONS

Many questions in the survey were given to all or most of the groups, and the results are shown here across all the groups that got the question (except for landowners and businesses, which did not have sample sizes that were large enough to be shown in the tables—showing these groups as percentages is not statistically valid).

Note that all sums are on unrounded numbers and may appear to be off by a percentage point. For instance, among hunters, 16% know a great deal about winter ticks, and 38% know a moderate amount, which sums to 55% on unrounded numbers. As integers, they would sum to 54%. (Note that columns for sums are in bold for ease of reading.)

Again, note that large landowners and businesses are not included in the tabulated results because their sample sizes did not allow for statistically valid percentages to be reported.

ATTITUDES TOWARD MOOSE AND MOOSE MANAGEMENT

- **Most people want to see moose, and it is important to an overwhelming majority of Mainers that moose exist.**
 - Among residents, hunters, recreationists, and anglers, moose existing in Maine is considered important—from 95% to 97% say that this is important.

Is it important or unimportant to you that moose exist in Maine? (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Very important	Somewhat important	Overall important (sum)	Neither	Somewhat unimportant	Very unimportant	Overall unimportant (sum)	Don't know
Residents	81	14	95	3	0	1	1	0
Hunters	90	7	97	2	0	1	1	0
Recreationists	82	13	95	3	1	0	1	0
Anglers	89	8	97	2	0	1	1	0

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table. Guides did not get the question.

- **The large majority of residents, hunters, recreationists, anglers, and guides are in the most accepting end of the continuum on acceptance of moose—no less than 77% of any of those groups are at the most accepting level.**
 - Although acceptance was high, residents and recreationists had the lowest percentages on the most accepting end of the continuum. Hunters, anglers, and guides had higher acceptance of moose.
 - Almost no residents, hunters, recreationists, anglers, or guides generally regard moose as a nuisance.

Generally, which of the following statements best describes your feelings about moose? (Percentage giving response)					
Survey group with robust sample	I enjoy seeing and having moose around	I enjoy seeing a few moose, but worry about problems they cause	I generally regard moose as a nuisance	I have no particular feeling about moose	Don't know
Residents	77	16	0	5	0
Hunters	86	9	0	4	1
Recreationists	78	16	0	5	1
Anglers	86	11	1	3	0
Guides	95	4	0	0	0

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

- **Opinions about the status of the moose population statewide are more often that the population is about right, but too low often rivals the about right response.**
 - Among residents, hunters, recreationists, anglers, and guides, opinion is generally split between *about right* and *too low* regarding the moose population in the state.
 - The first table below summarizes opinion on the moose population statewide, and the second table summarizes opinion more locally.

Overall, would you say the moose population in Maine is too high, about right, or too low? (Percentage giving response)				
Survey group with robust sample	Too high	About right	Too low	Don't know
Residents	3	52	30	15
Hunters	4	44	40	12
Recreationists	3	52	31	14
Anglers	3	42	44	12
Guides	2	42	50	6

The most common response for each group (i.e., across the rows) is shaded green.

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

Overall, would you say the moose population where you [live/hunt/participate in outdoor recreation/guide most often] is too high, about right, or too low? (Percentage giving response)				
Survey group with robust sample	Too high	About right	Too low	Don't know
Residents (where lives)	3	48	41	8
Hunters (where hunts)	2	39	48	10
Recreationists (where recreates)	2	58	32	8
Anglers (where recreates)	2	44	46	8
Guides (where guides)	1	44	52	4

The most common response for each group (i.e., across the rows) is shaded green.

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

- **A lot of Mainers are knowledgeable about winter ticks—a majority of residents, hunters, recreationists, anglers, and guides were aware of winter ticks prior to the survey.**
- Awareness of winter ticks and their effects on moose is highest among guides, hunters, and anglers. It is lowest among residents and recreationists (see the next table below).
 - As shown in the table at the bottom of this page, self-assessed knowledge of winter ticks is highest among guides (three quarters of them know *a great deal or a moderate amount*), followed by hunters and anglers in a second tier (about half are at that knowledge level). Recreationists and residents are the least knowledgeable (about a third know *a great deal or a moderate amount*).

Prior to this survey, were you aware that winter ticks are affecting the moose population in Maine? (Percentage giving response)			
Survey group with robust sample	Yes	No	Don't know
Residents	62	33	5
Hunters	86	12	2
Recreationists	65	31	4
Anglers	84	15	1
Guides	97	2	1

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

How much would you say you know about winter ticks and their impacts on the moose population in Maine? (Percentage giving response)							
Survey group with robust sample	A great deal	A moderate amount	A great deal and a moderate amount combined (sum)	A little	Nothing at all	Don't know	Was not aware at all prior to survey (no or don't know in previous question)
Residents	10	22	32	24	5	1	38
Hunters	16	38	55	27	4	0	14
Recreationists	10	23	33	25	5	1	35
Anglers	11	42	53	27	4	1	16
Guides	29	50	79	15	3	0	3

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

- **The majority of residents, hunters, recreationists and anglers (but not guides) support moose hunting that allows calves to be taken to help address the winter tick problem.**
 - Support is consistent across four of the groups named above (from 61% to 63% support among residents, hunters, recreationists, and anglers), as is opposition (from 16% to 19%).
 - Guides, however, have much lower support (only 43% support) and much higher opposition (37% oppose).

If the Department predicts a high winter tick load that would likely result in a high rate of moose calf deaths over the winter, would you support or oppose a moose hunt that allowed the limited harvest of additional moose calves to improve the overall rate of moose calf survival during the winter? (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Strongly support	Moderately support	Overall support (sum)	Neither	Moderately oppose	Strongly oppose	Overall oppose (sum)	Don't know
Residents	30	31	61	12	9	8	17	10
Hunters	38	24	62	13	8	11	19	6
Recreationists	31	32	63	12	8	8	16	9
Anglers	35	27	62	14	8	9	17	7
Guides	20	23	43	17	14	22	37	3

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

ATTITUDES TOWARD HUNTING

- **Support for hunting, as well as moose hunting, and hunting as a way to control populations is high among residents, hunters, recreationists, anglers, and guides.**
 - Support for legal, regulated hunting is markedly higher among hunters, anglers, and guides than it is among residents and recreationists. The same holds true for moose hunting specifically and for hunting as a method to control moose populations.
 - Overall opposition is never higher than 14% among any group in the three questions tabulated below and on the next page.

In general, do you support or oppose legal, regulated hunting? (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Strongly support	Moderately support	Overall support (sum)	Neither	Moderately oppose	Strongly oppose	Overall oppose (sum)	Don't know
Residents	53	28	81	9	4	4	9	0
Hunters	88	8	96	3	0	0	1	0
Recreationists	54	28	83	8	5	4	9	1
Anglers	82	13	95	3	2	0	2	0
Guides	87	9	96	1	2	0	2	0

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

Do you support or oppose moose hunting in Maine? (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Strongly support	Moderately support	Overall support (sum)	Neither	Moderately oppose	Strongly oppose	Overall oppose (sum)	Don't know
Residents	45	30	75	8	7	8	14	2
Hunters	86	11	97	1	1	0	1	1
Recreationists	47	29	76	8	7	7	14	2
Anglers	70	21	91	2	4	2	6	1
Guides	87	9	96	1	3	0	3	0

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

In general, do you support or oppose hunting as a method to manage the moose population in Maine? (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Strongly support	Moderately support	Overall support (sum)	Neither	Moderately oppose	Strongly oppose	Overall oppose (sum)	Don't know
Residents	53	29	82	8	4	5	9	2
Hunters	89	8	97	1	1	0	1	1
Recreationists	54	28	82	8	4	5	9	2
Anglers	78	13	92	1	3	2	5	2
Guides	88	8	96	2	1	1	2	0

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

CONFLICTS DURING MOOSE HUNTING SEASON

- Although 56% to 59% of guides and 26% to 42% of hunters, recreationists, and anglers say that crowding by other people and crowding by hunters is a problem during moose season, they most commonly say it is a *minor* problem rather than a *major* problem. Only 10% to 14% of guides and 2% to 8% of hunters, recreationists, and anglers say crowding is a *major* problem.
 - Crowding by people in general is highest among guides and is lowest among anglers. The same holds true for crowding by moose hunters. On these questions (on this page and the next), more than half of guides rated them as problems during moose hunting season, and about a third of hunters and recreationists did so. Among anglers, about a quarter to a third rated them as problems.
 - Crowding by non-moose hunters is worse, in general, than crowding by moose hunters specifically during moose season.

How much of a problem, if any, is crowding by people in general in the woods and fields during moose hunting season in the area where you [hunt/participate in recreation/guide most often]? (Percentage giving response)					
Survey group with robust sample	Major problem	Minor problem	Overall problem (sum)	Not a problem at all	Don't know
Hunters	6	32	37	51	12
Recreationists	5	27	32	59	9
Anglers	2	24	26	67	7
Guides	14	45	59	39	2

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table. Resident data are wholly incorporated in the recreationist data for this question.

How much of a problem is crowding by moose hunters specifically? (Percentage giving response)					
Survey group with robust sample	Major problem	Minor problem	Overall problem (sum)	Not a problem at all	Don't know
Hunters	6	30	36	49	15
Recreationists	4	26	30	59	11
Anglers	4	23	27	63	10
Guides	13	46	59	38	3

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table. Resident data are wholly incorporated in the recreationist data for this question.

How much of a problem is crowding by those hunting species other than moose, such as deer, bear, turkey, grouse, and other small game? (Percentage giving response)					
Survey group with robust sample	Major problem	Minor problem	Overall problem (sum)	Not a problem at all	Don't know
Hunters	8	35	42	52	5
Recreationists	7	29	36	55	9
Anglers	5	31	36	58	6
Guides	10	45	56	42	2

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table. Resident data are wholly incorporated in the recreationist data for this question.

- **Finally, crowding by other recreationists is less than crowding by people in general and crowding by hunters.**
 - Although most did not find crowding to be a problem by other recreationists, about a third of hunters, recreationists, anglers, and guides say that crowding by other recreationists is a problem during moose season, but only very small percentages think it is a *major* problem.

How much of a problem is crowding by recreationists other than hunters, such as anglers, trappers, wildlife viewers, hikers, campers, or boaters? (Percentage giving response)					
Survey group with robust sample	Major problem	Minor problem	Overall problem (sum)	Not a problem at all	Don't know
Hunters	3	26	29	64	7
Recreationists	5	30	35	59	6
Anglers	4	34	37	58	5
Guides	4	29	34	65	2

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table. Resident data are wholly incorporated in the recreationist data for this question.

- **Asked about it in a direct question, most respondents indicated that they did not experience a conflict with anyone during moose season. However, guides were more likely than any other group to indicate that they experienced a problem with anyone during the moose season.**
 - Guides had the most conflict, by far, at 30%, while no more than 10% of the other groups had experienced conflicts with others during the moose season.

Again, moose hunting seasons occur primarily in late September and again from mid-October through the first week of November, depending on the Wildlife Management District. Have you experienced conflicts with anyone else at all during moose hunting season in the area where you [hunt/participate in activities/guide most often]? (Percentage giving response)

Survey group with robust sample	Yes	No	Don't know
Hunters	10	85	5
Recreationists	6	92	2
Anglers	6	93	1
Guides	30	68	2

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table. Resident data are wholly incorporated in the recreationist data for this question.

- **As the next table shows, guides had more conflict during moose season with the various types of recreationists than did hunters, recreationists, and anglers. Among hunters, recreationists, and anglers, 74% or more did *not* have problems.**
 - This question was asked of all respondents and was not based on any previous question about conflicts.

Have you experienced conflicts with any of the following types of recreationists during moose hunting season in the area where you [hunt/participate in recreation activities/guide]? (Percentage giving response)

Those with whom the survey groups had conflict	Survey group with robust sample			
	Hunters	Recreationists	Anglers	Guides
Moose hunters	7	2	4	26
Hunters of species other than moose	5	5	2	21
Hunters in general	4	4	2	6
People in general	4	5	6	7
Anglers	0	1	4	1
Wildlife viewers	3	2	2	5
Leaf peepers	3	3	5	5
Outdoor photographers	1	1	2	2
Hikers	2	3	3	2
Campers	2	2	4	4
Motorboaters	1	1	5	1
Canoers and kayakers	0	1	2	0
Whitewater rafters	0	0	1	0
Food gatherers	0	1	1	0
Trappers	1	2	0	1
Other types of recreationists	3	1	4	4
None of these / no conflict	74	80	75	52

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table. Resident data are wholly incorporated in the recreationist data for this question.

- **In general, although conflict was still low, the WMDs in which there is the most conflict during moose hunting season are WMDs 1 through 6 and 8 and 9.**
- WMD 1 had high rates of conflict among hunters, recreationists, and guides.
 - Of hunters who experienced conflict, it most often occurred in WMDs 1, 4, 5, and 8.
 - Of recreationists who experienced conflict, it most often occurred in WMDs 1, 3, 4, and 28.
 - Of guides who experienced conflict, it most often occurred in WMDs 1 through 5 and 8.
 - In the following table, the WMDs with the highest percentages having conflicts are shown in dark red, moving to lighter red with decreasing conflict. (The percentages in the first three data columns are among those who had conflict. The next three columns show percentages out of all survey respondents.)

The use of two decimal places is not to imply that the survey is accurate to that level; rather, it prevents most of the cells from rounding to 0 at the integer level, which would reduce the utility of the table.

In which WMDs did you experience conflict? (Asked of those who experienced a conflict during moose season; table shows both the percentages out of those who had conflict and the percentages out of all.) (Percentage giving response)						
WMD in which conflict occurred	Survey group with robust sample					
	Among those who had conflict			Among all		
	Hunters	Recreationists	Guides	Hunters	Recreationists	Guides
WMD 1	21	26	32	2.06	1.47	9.56
WMD 2	12	13	27	1.24	0.75	7.93
WMD 3	4	16	16	0.41	0.89	4.66
WMD 4	23	16	32	2.29	0.91	9.56
WMD 5	22	5	20	2.18	0.30	6.06
WMD 6	8	11	13	0.82	0.63	3.96
WMD 7	4	6	7	0.40	0.32	2.10
WMD 8	19	7	19	1.87	0.38	5.59
WMD 9	7	12	5	0.66	0.66	1.40
WMD 10	1	9	5	0.14	0.52	1.40
WMD 11	3	7	4	0.25	0.42	1.17
WMD 12	3	13	2	0.28	0.72	0.47
WMD 13	1	11	2	0.06	0.62	0.70
WMD 14	2	14	2	0.15	0.80	0.70
WMD 15	3	7	0	0.25	0.42	0.00
WMD 16	2	3	0	0.24	0.17	0.00
WMD 17	4	2	5	0.38	0.12	1.63
WMD 18	2	12	4	0.24	0.65	1.17
WMD 19	3	2	4	0.27	0.12	1.17
WMD 27	0	1	1	0.01	0.08	0.23
WMD 28	0	16	2	0.01	0.88	0.47
Key	1-5			0.00-0.50		
	6-10			0.51-1.00		
	11-15			1.01-1.50		
	16-20			1.51-2.00		
	20+			2.00+		

The darker red cells identify where conflicts are worse, moving to a lower rate of conflict with the lighter red cells. Anglers, landowners, and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table. Resident data are wholly incorporated in the recreationist data for this question.

OPINIONS ON MOOSE HUNTING SEASONS

- **Most residents, hunters, recreationists, anglers, and guides indicated that they want the season structure to remain the same.**
- The majority of residents, hunters, recreationists, anglers, and guides indicated *the same* when asked if they want fewer, the same, or more seasons; earlier, the same, or later seasons; and shorter, the same, or longer moose hunting seasons.
 - Although most guides (57%) want *the same* number of moose hunting seasons, guides are the most likely to want *fewer* seasons of all the groups shown in the table (22% of guides versus 9% to 14% of the other groups in the table).
 - Guides and anglers are also the most likely to want *more* seasons (each at 15% versus 7% to 12% of the other groups in the table).
 - Although most guides (66%) want the timing of the moose seasons to be *the same*, they are the most likely to want *earlier* seasons.
 - Although the majority of both residents and recreationists want the moose season length to be *the same*, they are the most likely of the groups in the table to want *shorter* seasons, followed fairly closely by guides. Meanwhile, hunters are the most likely to want *longer* seasons.

Should Maine have fewer, the same, or more moose hunting seasons? (Percentage giving response)				
Survey group with robust sample	Fewer	The same	More	Don't know
Residents	14	66	7	13
Hunters	9	66	12	13
Recreationists	14	66	7	13
Anglers	11	53	15	22
Guides	22	57	15	7

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

Should Maine's moose seasons occur earlier, the same, or later? (Percentage giving response)				
Survey group with robust sample	Earlier	The same	Later	Don't know
Residents	4	68	10	18
Hunters	6	69	10	15
Recreationists	3	69	10	18
Anglers	6	57	11	26
Guides	17	66	9	8

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

Should Maine's moose season length be shorter, the same, or longer? (Percentage giving response)				
Survey group with robust sample	Shorter	The same	Longer	Don't know
Residents	13	60	12	15
Hunters	5	62	21	12
Recreationists	13	60	12	15
Anglers	7	58	17	18
Guides	11	66	16	7

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

The survey asked five support/oppose questions regarding potential changes to the moose seasons, detailed below. **These questions were asked regardless of whether respondents had said that they want the moose seasons to be the same or to be changed.**

- **Most residents, hunters, recreationists, anglers, and guides supported the current moose season framework; nonetheless, if there were to be changes made, support exceeds opposition to the potential changes to the moose seasons. Hunters, anglers, and guides give the most support, in general, to the potential changes, while residents and recreationists give the least support. Although exceeded by support, opposition is generally higher among residents, recreationists, and guides than among hunters and anglers.**
 - Because guides have relatively low percentages in the neutral responses (*neither support nor oppose* and *don't know*), they have higher percentages available to either support or oppose each potential season change compared to the other groups in the tables.
 - In these tables, green shading shows relatively high support, while red shading shows relatively high opposition (relative to the other groups). Note that two questions asked specifically about September seasons; the other three questions asked about the moose seasons in general.

Support for or opposition to allowing upland bird hunting during moose season. (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Strongly support	Moderately support	Overall support (sum)	Neither	Moderately oppose	Strongly oppose	Overall oppose (sum)	Don't know
Residents	20	20	40	25	13	12	25	10
Hunters	51	17	68	14	7	9	16	2
Recreationists	20	21	42	24	13	11	24	10
Anglers	42	27	70	15	7	6	13	2
Guides	34	24	58	14	13	14	27	1

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

Support for or opposition to an additional moose 6-day season in all WMDs that currently have moose hunting. (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Strongly support	Moderately support	Overall support (sum)	Neither	Moderately oppose	Strongly oppose	Overall oppose (sum)	Don't know
Residents	17	26	43	21	15	14	28	7
Hunters	29	25	54	20	11	10	21	5
Recreationists	18	25	43	21	15	14	29	7
Anglers	27	26	53	22	12	9	22	4
Guides	21	26	48	17	17	17	34	2

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

Support for or opposition to adding a 6-day September moose season in the Western Mountains region. (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Strongly support	Moderately support	Overall support (sum)	Neither	Moderately oppose	Strongly oppose	Overall oppose (sum)	Don't know
Residents	15	22	38	25	14	14	29	9
Hunters	26	26	52	22	9	10	19	7
Recreationists	15	23	38	24	14	14	29	9
Anglers	26	21	47	27	12	8	20	6
Guides	28	24	52	21	13	10	23	4

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

Support for or opposition to adding a 6-day September moose season in the Moosehead region. (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Strongly support	Moderately support	Overall support (sum)	Neither	Moderately oppose	Strongly oppose	Overall oppose (sum)	Don't know
Residents	15	24	39	25	14	13	27	9
Hunters	29	25	54	22	9	9	18	6
Recreationists	15	24	39	24	14	14	27	9
Anglers	27	23	50	25	12	8	20	6
Guides	29	25	54	20	9	12	21	4

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

Support for or opposition to an additional moose 6-day season in several, but not all, WMDs. (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Strongly support	Moderately support	Overall support (sum)	Neither	Moderately oppose	Strongly oppose	Overall oppose (sum)	Don't know
Residents	14	29	44	21	14	14	28	8
Hunters	27	30	57	18	11	9	20	5
Recreationists	14	30	45	20	13	14	27	8
Anglers	29	24	53	23	12	8	20	5
Guides	21	33	53	15	14	15	29	2

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

ATTITUDES TOWARD THE DEPARTMENT

- **The overwhelming majority of residents, hunters, recreationists, anglers, and guides trust the Department to manage moose and to set the appropriate framework for the moose hunting seasons. And although the vast majority of guides trust the Department, higher percentages of guides than the other groups do not trust the Department.**
- Specifically, trust (agreeing with the statement) to manage moose is at 71% among guides but ranges from 84% to 87% among the other survey groups; trust to set the moose hunting framework is 71% among guides but is 87% or 88% among the other survey groups.
 - Likewise, lack of trust (disagreeing with the statement) to manage moose is 19% among guides but 4% to 10% among the other survey groups, and lack of trust on the framework question is 22% among guides but 5% to 8% among the other survey groups.

I trust the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to manage moose in the state. (Do you agree or disagree with this statement?) (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Strongly agree	Moderately agree	Overall agree (sum)	Neither	Moderately disagree	Strongly disagree	Overall disagree (sum)	Don't know
Residents	53	34	87	6	3	1	4	3
Hunters	58	27	84	7	5	2	7	1
Recreationists	53	34	87	6	3	2	5	2
Anglers	63	22	84	5	6	4	10	1
Guides	38	32	71	10	12	6	19	0

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

I trust the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to set the appropriate framework for moose hunting in Maine, such as season structure, timing, and length, as well as permit allotment, and bag limit, based on the best available information. (Do you agree or disagree with this statement?) (Percentage giving response)								
Survey group with robust sample	Strongly agree	Moderately agree	Overall agree (sum)	Neither	Moderately disagree	Strongly disagree	Overall disagree (sum)	Don't know
Residents	56	32	88	5	2	2	5	2
Hunters	57	30	87	5	6	2	8	1
Recreationists	56	31	88	5	3	2	5	2
Anglers	61	26	87	5	3	5	8	1
Guides	37	34	71	7	13	8	22	1

Landowners and businesses did not have sufficient sample sizes to be shown in the table.

RESULTS OF THE ONLINE TOWN HALL FORUM

The results of the town hall forum are not quantitatively analyzed—the survey covers that part of the data gathering. Rather, the town hall provides more detailed opinions on issues. The forum also ensures that all Mainers are given the opportunity to provide input to the management of moose.

The results are not quantitative. Rather, the various thoughts that were imparted in the forum are shown with no quantification of whether each thought is one that belongs to most residents of the state. This also ensures that there will not be any undue influence from forum participants or from some group flooding the comments. This addresses the comment of one forum participant, “Who is monitoring this forum to ensure participants are genuine and not anti-hunters trying to influence regulations based on out-of-state agendas?”

The full comments are included as an appendix to this report.

GENERAL ATTITUDES TOWARD MOOSE AND THE VALUE OF MOOSE

Maine forum participants, for the most part, place a high value on having moose in the state. This includes both ecological value (or just aesthetic value) as well as economic value. The economic value comes through hunting as well as moose viewing. The value was seen to accrue to hotels, lodges, guides, restaurants, and other businesses.

ATTITUDES TOWARD THE AMOUNT OF MOOSE BEING SEEN

For the most part, forum participants report seeing fewer moose. Some take this to mean that there are actually fewer moose around, while others say this is not necessarily so, as there could instead be changes that make moose less visible. For instance, one forum participant said that moose are avoiding roads because of road hunters, and they are now less visible because of that. One forum participant believes that fewer moose are being seen because they are moving north prompted by climate change. Another noted that hotter temperatures from climate change may cause moose to move around less, thereby reducing moose sightings. On the whole, though, many assert that the moose population is declining, and they feel that they have seen evidence to back up their assertion.

Several forum participants offered a similar explanation for fewer moose sightings nowadays. They indicated that clear cutting in the 1970s and 1980s led to more moose habitat and a corresponding increase in moose, but then the clear cut areas grew back up, reducing the amount of habitat, thereby leading to fewer moose being seen.

Others note that seeing fewer moose around does not mean that the herd is less healthy; they noted that seeing too many moose suggests an overpopulation, which is not good for the overall moose population.

PROBLEMS THAT MOOSE FACE

Many indicate that the herd is healthy, even when acknowledging problems with the health of moose, such as problems with ticks. Others feel that they see signs that the moose are not healthy in the state. The following are seen as problems:

- Ticks. Many forum participants stated that ticks are the *main* problem with high moose mortality. (Because there were so many comments about ticks, tick problems are explored on their own in another subsection further below.)
- Climate change. Elements of this include more ticks (“winter ticks will continue to be a problem thanks in large part to climate change”) as well as less flora that the moose eat. One forum participant mentioned wearing t-shirts in October during a hunt where no moose were seen. Some forum participants indicated that climate change is the root of all the other problems—such as ticks and habitat degradation.
- Habitat loss. Development, such as construction of housing or wind turbines, was mentioned as one element of this problem. In addition to simple development, forest practices were seen by some as a problem. (See the separate section on habitat and forest practices, as there was much discussion about habitat loss.)
- Predators. A few forum participants mentioned this as being a problem for the moose population. (Conversely, some indicated that a lack of predators is a problem and that more predators would be good to thin the herd for the benefit of the moose population as a whole.)
- Vehicle accidents. These are seen as a problem affecting the moose population. (They are of course a huge problem for humans.) One forum participant called for wildlife overpasses to be built. Another discussed the approach in New Brunswick, where highway fences have one-way passages all along them that let moose off the highway but do not let them on.
- Crowding and disruption of wildlife. People in the woods are seen as a problem, disrupting wildlife in general. Some feel that they see more people in the woods nowadays than they saw in the past.
- Diseases of white-tailed deer being passed to moose, such as the meningeal worm, also called brain worm. Some called for a hunting season structure to reduce the white-tailed deer population to thereby help the moose population—primarily to stop brain worm from being transmitted to moose. Prion disease was also mentioned (prions are the agent that causes mad cow disease and chronic wasting disease). One forum participant wanted “mandatory tissue samples taken at tagging (liver, brain, heart, kidney, and lymph node) to be sent to a qualified lab to be tested with histopath, and PCR tests for prion disease.”
- Over-hunting. One forum participant does not think the current amount of hunting will allow for a sustainable herd.

SOME ADDITIONAL COMMENTS REGARDING CLIMATE CHANGE AND MOOSE HEALTH

Climate change and the associated warming of the seasons in Maine was often mentioned. A sampling of these comments is presented below:

- “Climate change is the issue I think about most especially with respect to the outdoors. It’s not just the ticks and declining moose populations. I notice the reduced snowpack from when I was a kid just a decade and a half ago, less reliable ice, muggy summers, warmups, and torrential flooding in recent years. Anyone who spends time outside doesn’t need to see the supporting data to tell that things are changing fast, and it will be more than just the moose who are affected.”
- “As the temps go up, 500 plus pound animals in dark fur will not move around as much; it’s undeniable that it is much warmer out now in the summer and fall than it used to be. Anyone that’s been on moose hunts either in October or September have likely run into temps during those weeks of 70 plus, that’s not ideal temps for seeing moose.”

COMMENTS REGARDING MOOSE HEALTH

While some forum participants have seen moose that look healthy, many saw moose that were emaciated, had patches on their fur, and/or exhibited odd behavior (e.g., not moving from a site for multiple days). One participant compared healthy moose seen decades ago with moose seen today, commenting that “the moose in Maine I have seen are looking for a doctor or a physical exam.”

HABITAT AND FOREST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Many ideas were mentioned on the best way to manage forests to benefit conservation and moose in particular.

- The timber industry is seen as having an important effect on habitat, as cutting schedules and replanting strategies play a role in the types of habitat available to moose.
- One forum participant wanted an “alternative to all the spraying that kills everything but spruce and fir trees” because that monoculture was harmful to the moose habitat (and that of other animals such as grouse). Another decried that tree “harvests are now followed by spraying growth retardants that kill everything to brown.” Another said, “Black spruce monoculture with herbicide spraying is turning the North Woods into a one species desert.” There were some comments that mentioned glyphosate as being harmful to the moose population. Several forum participants wanted to ensure that some of the clear cut areas have native species growing back.
- Another participant noted that good land managers in the past had “left large tracts of wintering areas.” The participant said that, alas, newer landowners in the past few years have not been doing this.

- One forum participant thought that multi-owner management plans were needed. This participant noted that some large tracts owned by timber companies had been subdivided and sold to multiple owners, which led to a lack of cohesion in land management to benefit conservation and moose—each smaller landowner was managing land without regard to the management practices of neighbors. The forum participant felt that a plan was needed so that these landowners would be working together.
- Some felt that there is simply too much tree harvesting, reducing the amount of good habitat. (Others, however, noted that clear areas within the forest are good habitat for moose and other species.)

WAYS TO ADDRESS TICK PROBLEMS

Opinions on how to address the tick problem vary quite widely. Some suggestions include:

- Putting out salt blocks with tick repellent or tick insecticide in it.
- Feed stations with treated food.
- Spraying for ticks. (Even while acknowledging that some birds may die from eating the ticks; the death of the birds was seen as a necessary tradeoff for addressing the problem of ticks.)
- Introducing a species, such as the guinea hen, that eats the ticks.
- Set up paint ball guns loaded with tick killer and have them tripped by camera. Another forum participant wanted to issue paint ball guns to select hunters.
- Shooting moose with darts filled with a tick killing formula.
- Providing permethrin-soaked mouse bedding materials in known moose winter yarding areas.
- Air drop treated baits (as is done to combat rabies in raccoons and small game).
- One forum participant looked to techniques ranchers use: “Ranchers hang a treated spongelike tube at a particular height over head of trails that cattle use. It is treated with a chemical that kills ticks and other parasites. When the cattle walk through the trail, they duck under the tube and it follows in contact along the back of the cattle thus treating it every time it walks under it. If you found an area that had moose with high concentrations of winter ticks, then you could deploy something like this on the trails they use.”
- One commenter indicated the possibility that “a control project that uses genetically modified ticks to produce non-viable eggs would be highly effective in rapidly reducing tick population densities across the state. Similar projects in the southern U.S. and South America have been utilized to reduce and eliminate invasive mosquito populations to prevent the spread of mosquito-borne diseases, and have proven to be highly successful.”
- One participant advocated a hands-off approach: “just wait it out and hope the ticks decline like they have in my area.”

- Determining the effect that other species (non-moose) have on the proliferation and transmission of ticks. A forum participant noted that ticks can infest more than just moose.
- Some are skeptical that reducing the moose herd will reduce the tick population. As one forum participant said, “Can’t ticks survive in the environment for quite a while without a moose host? Seems like more studies/info needs to be obtained [before] killing off moose in order to save them.”

SOME ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT TICKS

Ticks are quite small, but some forum participants do not realize how small they are. One forum participant (who did recognize how small they are) described watching a game warden use “extremely fine forceps” to pick ticks, including larvae and/or nymphs, from a moose the participant had tagged. He noted, “I asked to see what he was sampling and could barely see them in the slender bottle.” Another forum participant said, “I’ve yet to personally see a single tick on any moose shot.” Together, the comments make one wonder if some hunters are not seeing ticks (or larvae or nymphs) that are actually present.

Nonetheless, many forum participants did see ticks. For instance, one forum participant described a hunting experience: “I have been on a moose hunt and bagged a big cow. She was covered with hundreds of ticks. Would I go after another one? No thanks.”

OPINIONS ON THE MOOSE POPULATION AND POTENTIAL METHODS OF CONTROL

Opinions varied on whether the moose population needed to be controlled or not. The following reasons were given for each position:

- Controlled: Because of vehicle accidents. There were many examples of roads that were particularly dangerous for moose accidents, such as Route 201 from Bingham to Jackman and up to the Canadian Border, Route 16 from Bingham to Greenville, and Route 151 from Athens to Bingham.
- Controlled: To reduce the tick problem by thinning the herds (and thereby lessening moose-to-moose transmission). One forum participant noted, “Seeing large numbers of moose from the road is not indicative of a healthy population. In most cases it would suggest that we are exceeding our carrying capacity.”
- Controlled: Because moose are overbrowsing their habitat. This, in turn, is harming the health and diversity of the forest.
- Not controlled: Because the population is declining.
- Not controlled: Because moose are currently over-hunted.

Methods of controlling the moose population were discussed. The following are the methods that were mentioned:

- Hunting. One forum participant felt that hunters are strong “advocates for respect of the moose population, land conservation, and resources.”
- Reintroducing apex predators into Maine. Wolves, for instance, will cull the sick and vulnerable moose.

Finally regarding the size of the moose population, there are some who are not necessarily against controlling (or managing) the moose population, but they feel at this time that the population needs to be allowed to increase. In other words, while not being anti-control overall, at this moment they do not want the population controlled (i.e., reduced).

OPINIONS ON THE MOOSE HUNTING SEASON

There were many comments about the regulations pertaining to the moose seasons in Maine. These comments pertained to the number of permits, how the lottery is conducted, possible moratoriums, limits, season timing, and so forth. All of these comments are discussed in this section, with subsections for the common themes.

Permits, Lottery, and Moratoriums

Adjustments to moose season permitting that were discussed in the forum include:

- Many comments were in favor of having fewer permits be issued, with several permutations on how to do this, such as simply issuing fewer permits each year or issuing permits only some years (e.g., every other year). Regarding fewer permits, one participant expressed the wish that pre-2010 harvest goals be re-instituted.
- There were several calls to expand the lottery waiting period (one suggestion was to 10 years) to improve the chance that a hunter can draw a tag (a forum participant had the comment, “A moose hunt is described as ‘a hunt of a lifetime’—so be it”). Others want to expand the period to 5 years, also in part to increase any one individual’s chance of drawing a permit. Many forum participants felt disappointed that they had never been selected in the lottery while other hunters had been selected multiple times.
- A moratorium was also often mentioned regardless of other adjustments to moose hunting seasons once they are resumed after the moratorium. Most suggestions were for the moratoriums to be from 1 to 3 years.

More specific suggestions on permitting and the lottery system are included below.

- One suggestion was to issue permits every 3 years for bulls and every 6 years for cows. It was felt that this would increase the moose population, which (this person felt) is being over-hunted.
- There were many who wanted to stop harvesting cows altogether.
- One suggestion was to increase the number of permits and have a 2-week hunt but make each permit valid for 1 week (like the old turkey permit system).
- Some did not want to allow nonresidents to enter the moose lottery. This would, it was felt, allow the moose population to increase but would also increase chances that Maine hunters would be able to hunt moose.
- Others had the opposite view regarding nonresidents, saying that Maine should continue to include nonresidents in the moose lottery, as the income from nonresidents, they felt, is of value to the state. It was noted that many nonresidents formerly lived in Maine and/or own land in the state even though they do not reside in the state. It was also noted that nonresidents are important for local economies more than they are for the state as a whole.

- Others did not want to ban nonresidents altogether but wanted adjustments made to the proportion of permits that they are allotted. There were also calls for adjusting proportions of other permitted groups, such as lodges.
- One participant stated, “Maybe the hunt needs to be every other year, and off years wildlife researchers and veterinarians be employed to help the babies thrive.”
- In setting harvest goals, one participant stated that mortality rates in the previous winter should be considered and further stated, “Encourage Maine outdoors people to report moose carcasses when found.”
- A forum participant indicated that the sub-permittee system and permit swaps should be ended. This person felt that “buying and selling of sub-permittee permits and/or traded permits is unethical.”
- A hunter said, “I think all tags should go to hunters, not lodges and special groups.”

Limits and Size Restrictions

Adjustments to moose season timing that were discussed in the forum include:

- There was a suggestion to make antler restrictions of 10-point plus for bulls.
- One forum participant wanted “no spikes or 4 points.”
- There was a comment about making a limit based on “3 brow tines.”
- One suggestion was to mirror Alaska’s approach with a 40- to 50-inch spread.
- On the other hand, some opposed such restrictions: “Do not implement a trophy or rack size system. Many people prefer the hunt for the meat and may prefer the first legal animal they can get.”

Timing of Season and Overlap With Other Seasons

Adjustments to moose season timing that were discussed in the forum include:

- One comment was not to allow moose to be hunted during the rut.
- Other forum participants wanted to institute longer moose seasons. This was felt necessary to increase hunter opportunities. One hunter in the forum said, “All moose seasons should be a month long, not just 6 days.” One said, “Lengthening the season would disperse hunters which is the source of most of the conflicts.”
- There were calls to institute September moose seasons where there are currently not such seasons. There were also requests for earlier seasons in general, in part to better take advantage of the rut.
- Regarding earlier seasons, however, some talked about a disadvantage of having seasons in warmer weather (such as September seasons) because “It’s warm enough in October that it’s a challenge to get the moose gutted, hauled out of the woods, checked in, and taken to get processed before it begins to spoil.”
- One commenter asked that efforts be made to limit the overlap of the September moose seasons with grouse seasons.
- A comment made by one forum participant concerned bird seasons: “I have heard rumors of an initiative to delay or shorten bird season to satisfy the moose guiding community’s complaint that bird hunting disrupts the moose hunt. A very bad idea.” Another commenter stated that “Bird hunters just drive the woods non-stop.”
- There was some concern about interference of moose hunting by bear hunters using dogs: “Bear hunters using dogs before a moose hunt should also stop two weeks before

a moose hunt in that zone or only start after the moose hunt has ended.” One comment was that “We have had more issues from bear hunters running dogs that were cutting off vehicles.” Another forum participant wanted no overlap of moose and bear hunting seasons at all.

- A commenter supported the current season length and noted that “A shorter season is going to make for a lot more stupid mistakes made by hunters in a hurry to get the task done.”

Other Comments Pertaining to the Moose Seasons

Other comments that were made pertaining to the moose hunting season are shown below:

- One comment suggesting making some areas no-hunting zones.
- One forum participant stated that, “adaptive management is a disaster.” In addition to the alleged harm to the moose herd, this also was leading to high hunter dissatisfaction.
- There was a call to strengthen the state law regarding blocking access roads and hunting areas, including having fines imposed, and many of the hunter forum comments pertained to road blocking. One comment was for allowing “video by complainants as prima facie evidence of a violation.” (Although one forum participant said, “good luck trying that with us this year, a full crew of former marines, that should be pretty funny.”) Another comment about that said, “Title 12 Subsection 9602 Obstruction of discontinued woods roads it is illegal to block any road that can be used for the prevention or suppression of forest fires. Only the forest landowner has the right to block or gate said roads.” The Maine Legislative website shows this specifically as follows:

Title 12: Conservation

Part 11: Forestry

Chapter 807: Forest Fire Control

Subchapter 6: Fire Prevention Practices

9602: Obstruction of discontinued woods roads prohibited

A person, unless authorized by the director, may not obstruct any improved woods road or way used for the removal of forest growth, upon the discontinuance from use or abandonment of the road or way, if it may be reasonably utilized for preventing or suppressing forest fires. This provision does not prohibit a landowner from exercising the landowner's right to close or cause to be closed woods roads or ways by chains or gates.

- One commenter decried a loophole where a hunter wounds a moose and cannot locate it, leaving it to die, but then still having a valid permit to harvest a moose—in essence taking two moose, albeit one that is left to rot. The forum participant said that “a ‘Blood Law’ being enacted would help the moose population” where “if you draw blood you have to punch your tag.”
- One forum participant said that “the concept of no hunting on Sunday should also be re-evaluated as this may be antiquated causing out of state hunters to avoid Maine all together.”
- One forum participant felt that the state does not have the right to sell moose permits because the state does not own the moose (in the person’s opinion), saying that this constituted theft by the state. The participant felt that the landowners, such as large timber companies, would own the moose and should be able to sell the moose permits. (This of course completely contravenes the North American Model of Wildlife

Management, which stipulates that wildlife are owned by the states, not by landowners.)

OPINIONS ON THE DEPARTMENT

Some expressed trust that the Department will do the best things for conservation in general and moose in particular. One participant noted that the Department needs to be given time to do its work, stating, "Change cannot happen overnight; ask a forester." Others had less confidence in the Department itself (not very commonly) or less confidence that the Department would be allowed to do its work (more commonly), with reasons such as those below given:

- The biologists' advice is overruled or ignored.
- Emotions of some residents and decision makers are given too much weight at the expense of biological data. One person cautioned against listening to "'experts' on Facebook."
- Monetary factors are given too much weight at the expense of ecological factors.
- Politicians' opinions are given more weight than ecological factors. The state legislature tries to take the control away from the Department.
- Logging companies have too much sway over decisions made at the expense of ecological factors.
- The Department is biased toward hunting. Related to this, some feel that guides' opinions and wants are given too much weight.
- Out-of-state hunters are given too much sway over moose management decisions.
- Lack of critical thinking by Maine residents in general is a problem, with one forum participant noting, "I see many comments here that are based on opinions not supported by facts."

APPENDIX: COMMENTS FROM THE TOWN HALL FORUM

These results have been only lightly edited to correct obvious misspellings and to make capitalization generally consistent (e.g., changing comments entirely in ALL CAPS to lower case). Although participants could choose to use their names when participating in the forum, and the forum itself showed their names when they did so, in the report the names have been removed. No comment breaks across pages; the font size was reduced on those that were too long for a single page.

This first table shows the comments from the general forum. Following this table is the table of hunter forum comments. In addition to the forum, comments sent by email were considered in this study. Those comments not in either of the forums but submitted by email make up the final table.

GENERAL FORUM COMMENTS

You cant solve the winter tick problem by taking more females, we should be finding a tick repellent that we could add to salt blocks that we could distribute in highly populated areas.

Maine has the healthiest population of moose left in the East, though it has still declined noticeably the last few decades.

Winter tick and diseases spread from white-tailed deer are top issues for moose. However, new infrastructure and habitat loss/degradation also play a role in population declines. The timber industry can increase available moose foraging through rotational cutting and allowing native seedlings and brush to grow back for foraging. Climate change is also an issue, though the state can only individually mitigate this problem, it will create international solutions to be implemented. Habitat loss and disease is the major issue and is the fairly controllable at a state level.

I am interested in ways to implement medication to moose for ticks. Is it possible to leave a salt lick or feed station in areas of high moose density that contains a similar tick medication to what you may give your dog? Obviously, you couldn't get all moose in an area.

I trust MIF&W to make the best decisions they can for moose; it is in everyone's best interest to support the population for hunting, wildlife viewing, and the ecosystem. I think it would be helpful to do a study on the possible impact of reintroducing native apex predators into Maine, because the primary industry is forestry. Certain western states have seen an increase in elk populations when reintroducing wolves, and predators generally consume the sick and vulnerable of a population.

I like how the moose hunt is set up! I believe that we should give it a few years to let the moose repopulate without any hunts! Or if there are any hunts for moose, that they won't be during peak rut and/or give out as many permits! Also I think we should spray for ticks! The moose in Maine are struggling with ticks and I don't think killing the moose off is going to help the population! I think it'd be best to spray for ticks! We have 50,000 moose in the state! I've heard people talk about the birds eating the ticks after they get sprayed and the birds will end up dying! I think the risk of a bird eating a tick that is poisoned, or dead from the chemicals that'll kill the ticks is a much lower risk then losing the moose population in Maine!

What are your thoughts about the status of Maine's moose population? The population of moose has undoubtedly declined in the last 20-25 years. I live in the Shin Pond area, where moose used to be abound. That is not the case anymore. I own a [type of establishment redacted to protect anonymity], and have the pleasure of conversing with many hunters/fishermen. We all concur that there are way too many permits awarded, and the cows shot after being bred is wrong.

What do you think are the primary issues facing moose in Maine? #1 over hunting. There are too many permits issued. When it was 1000 permits for 1 week of hunting, that seemed to keep a healthy population. Way too many permits have been issued over, at least, the last 15 years. Money and emotions (from the board) seem to govern the amount issued. To bring the population back up, and maintain a healthy herd, permits should be issued every 3 years for bulls and every 6 years for cows.

Do you feel you know enough about the status of Maine's moose population? Yes. I have seen it from the ground and air. I was involved with getting the first lottery started and have done moose surveys from the air.

Do you trust the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to make decisions about moose in the state, including setting the hunting season framework? Why or why not? If you let them do their job, maybe. Instead, it's money driven. Moose seasons and the lottery overall bring in a lot of money to the state. Plus, there are people making decisions, and keep the biologists hands tied, who are emotionally driven. They might have been in a moose/car accident or had a loved one affected by one, now they want to eliminate them.

Adding a comment to the last question. Yes, I do trust IFW to make decisions that are in the best interest of moose populations and the citizens of Maine, including hunters. I trust that they will collect scientifically sound data on moose and people (human dimensions) and will conduct necessary research to advance their knowledge. What I distrust is how politicians will meddle in management to force IFW to do what data and science along with sound reasoning does not support. I continue to be concerned that a lack of critical thinking skill and lack of knowledge will adversely impact moose. I see many comments here that are based on opinions not supported by facts.

Way less moose nowadays!

Reason 1. Too many licenses have been and continue to be issued.

Reason 2. Forest Practices.

Reason 3. Predators.

The Maine Sporting Camp Association (MSCA) was represented on a 2023 stakeholder committee led by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IFW) to address many of the questions presented in this public forum. MSCA's position is that a scientific approach to managing the moose population for both viewing and hunting should continue and that broad discretion should be given to IFW regarding hunting seasons, permit numbers, and permit type. The IFW has a budget and dedicated funds for scientific research and hiring trained professionals to help with the decision making. MSCA understands changing forest habitat affects policies and requires changes now and then. IFW has demonstrated it is willing to make tough decisions, and handle criticism, such as the Adaptive Cow Hunt and a big reduction in permits a few years ago. Their management approach should continue.

That being said, as long as it does not have a detrimental impact on the outcome of IFW management efforts, MSCA supports a longer moose hunting season, a September season in Wildlife Management Districts (MWDs) with only an October season, and efforts to limit overlap of the September moose season with grouse hunting season. IFW public outreach has improved in recent years with educational programs related to hunting on private land and hunter ethics. This outreach should continue. MSCA members too are addressing the landowner and hunter ethics with their clients in the ordinary course of business.

Regarding the moose lottery, MSCA's position is that the lottery is a reasonable and fair way to allocate moose permits. It is unfortunate that some must wait years to draw a tag. But that is the reality of a lottery, and hunters do have other ways to acquire a tag or participate as a sub-permittee. Non-residents are an important part of the lottery, and their allocation of tags should not be reduced. Some non-residents were former Maine residents and own property in Maine. All make monetary contributions to conservation through hunting related federal excise taxes which support wildlife management efforts. Moreover, non-resident hunter revenues have a material impact on rural economies and tax revenues collected as they travel around Maine. These tax revenues benefit all the citizens of Maine.

I see a definite decline in the moose population. I spend most of my time in zones 4, and 10 but also travel through several northern zones. Here are a few things that I think are the causes of the decline. 1. Forest practices, most of the large forest owners are allowed to clear cut large tracks of land which was a good thing for moose population in the past because of the re-growth of hardwood, and soft wood species. The diversity of the trees and ground cover is very important to most of these animals, moose, deer, bear, and grouse. I would like to see a better alternative to all the spraying that kills everything but spruce and fir trees. 2. Maybe we are allowing too many permits in the large zones? I spend a lot of time looking for moose antlers and cover a lot of ground. It is rare that I come across any winter tick kills anymore. I'm not sure why that is, maybe because of the lack of heavy snow pack in the past several years, you don't see the moose and deer herding up like you used too. 3. I also think that the large land owners are not interested in wildlife management like the previous owners were. They always left large tracts of wintering areas that benefit all animals.

I spend a lot of time in the Maine woods every year. Particularly in zones 8, 14, 16 and 23. In Zone 14, I used to see a lot more Bulls and a lot more Cows with Calves. In the past 5-10 years, I have seen less Bulls and less Calves. A lot of the bulls I do see appear younger. I have seen a lot of Cows in Zone 14. I estimate that I see 1 bull to every 6 or 7 Cows that I see. I am concerned that zone 14 has a larger population of Cows than Bulls and that makes it harder to sustain the population because there are fewer Bulls trying to breed the Cows. In zone 8, I do see Moose but I see a lot more signs of Bulls and a lot more signs of Calves. I also see bigger Bulls which tells me they are older. I see some sign of Moose in Zone 16 but it's rare. In Zone 23, I see Moose. I see signs of Moose and I see big bulls. I do not understand why Zone 23 has no hunting season. Just in my Deer hunting area in zone 23, there are a number of Bulls hanging around year after year and they are decent sized bulls. Overall, I think the Moose population is declining in some areas while it thrives in others.

I think the main issues facing Moose are Predation, Vehicle Accidents and Development. In Zone 14 where the wind turbines and CMP corridor have gone, the Moose in those areas have seem to mostly move away from those areas. Just in the Bingham area along the CMP corridor, that corridor went over prime Moose habitat where I used to encounter a lot of Moose. After they began developing the land for the corridor, I began noticing less and less Moose. The same can be said for areas where the wind turbines went. I also think predation is taking a larger toll on Moose because I see a lot more sign of Bear and Coyotes in both zones 8 and 14. I've encountered a number of dead Moose who appeared to be taken down by Coyotes or brought down by Bear. Route 201 from Bingham to Jackman and up to the Canadian Border is a sketchy road to travel in the dark simply because there has been so many Moose struck by vehicle and they come out of nowhere. Route 16 from Bingham to Greenville is another sketchy road to travel in the dark. Route 151 from Athens to Bingham is the same. It should be noted that the Moose I do see appear healthy but young.

I first started visiting Maine about 30 yrs. ago with my wife and our 3 young sons, to visit her extended family in the Oxford, ME area. We would see moose in their fields bordering the Andro regularly. And on our weeks-long vacations to the Rangeley area we would see moose almost daily - in essentially any area around Mooselook or Rt. 16, or driving up to Height of Land on Rt. 17. In the 2010 - 2020 era, there was a noticeable decline in sightings for us each year in the more populated areas of the western lakes. In addition to hearing and reading about the tick infection problem, we were chalking it up to noticeable land development expansion in many remote areas.

In 2022 we were fortunate to be able to buy a cabin property on Mooselook, and have been making frequent visits year-round driving up from the mid-Atlantic region, where we routinely drive into the Rangeley lakes region of Maine from the VT-NH western border on Rt. 16. We are seeing moose now on every trip into the state (Spring - Summer - Fall), and every moose we've seen looked beautiful and healthy with shiny coats. Our last trip in June we saw 8 moose in 2 weeks (2024 tally about 16 now) from NH border to Rt. 16 north to Eustis, and our neighbor on Mooselook reported seeing a mother and calf on a camp road near the lake (first we've heard of that in years). Maybe this is a positive trend - at least we're hoping that's the case -- but can't offer any scientific or controlled basis to explain it -- just our observations over the years.

Regarding hunting of moose, all I can share is our experience meeting our neighbor's group of dedicated Mainer conservationist hunters at our camp next door. If this group of elderly gentlemen are any example, they are the strongest advocates for respect of the moose population, land conservation, and resources to preserve a highly cherished tradition of (rarely) winning the moose permit lottery and being able to hunt moose in the wilds of western Maine. The dedication and effort of their organized moose scouting and hunting preparedness and time spent in the wild to hunt moose for the prized (they tell me delicious - I've never had it) meat - and not for just a trophy mount - is nothing like I've ever seen. Maine should do everything to preserve this long-standing tradition and keep up the intensity of research and field funding, and broad regional sustainability practices, to sustain moose populations through strong science, collaboration with wildlife management peers in western and regional states, etc. This would include steering every moose permit and related licensing dollar taken into state coffers into these efforts.

There is definitely a decline in moose population state wide. I remember as a kid in the 90's early 2000's I'd see moose all the time right at my house in Readfield (10 mins from Augusta) last time I saw a moose in Kennebec County was 2 years ago and it was found dead a few weeks later. I spend a lot of time traveling around the state fishing and hunting my camp is in zone 8/9 I've seen a drastic drop off in moose numbers heading into camp I have 30 miles of dirt roads to get in, I used to see a few a night I've only seen 4 this summer 3 cows 1 bull, my record was 12 in one night a few years back. I have seen quite a bit of sign in the woods but not like it used to be. It's hard to say what to do I think reducing the cow permits might help but idk I'm not a scientist. I think a more in depth study needs to happen, from my personal experience is a lot of the cows look sickly and the bulls more or less seem ok. I know I am all over the place typing this, I can't say if it's global warming, winter ticks, over hunting, or human encroachment I can say there's a lot more people in the Maine woods than ever before.

I personally don't feel like the state has any right to sell the moose permits they don't own the moose. The moose aren't on the state's property they are on private property mostly owned by timber companies. Therefore why aren't the landowners selling the permits? It's theft by the state in my opinion.

When the large paper companies closed mills, moved out and sold much, if not all their properties, most of that property is now privately owned. To my knowledge there is not a documented management plan for large swaths of land, and owners can pretty much do what they wish as long as it doesn't violate shoreline zoning laws. It is neither good for the forest not to have a plan, and the primary impact is on wildlife habitat, notably moose.

There is no question that the clear cutting that occurred in the 70's, 80's and beyond created ideal habitat for the moose population to explode. Huge vine and young growth communities took over the landscape. They are important habitat for moose deer and grouse. Today's harvests are now followed by spraying growth retardants that kill everything to brown.

Who is overlooking the science behind this approach? Who is education current landowners on how to keep the forest balanced and healthy?

It appears to me that the status quo is a huge risk to the future. If the Maine forest turns into an instant cash crop of low quality growth (fence posts, and 2" x 4"s), it is hard to imagine anything up there not suffering from the practice.

Keeping the moose herd healthy is about the only way to diminish the tick mortality that is now well documented.

I worry about climate change issues with moose -- I've heard most often that the increase in the tick population is extremely harmful, and I know other vectors of illness for the animals as well as for possible changes to the flora they rely upon are projected to continue into the future. I don't know very much about moose conservation efforts, and would love to hear more. I do trust IFW to make decisions, and would appreciate some increased publicity around your efforts. Also, I am not a hunter myself, but hunters I know and even those I just chat with in passing, are all very passionate about moose hunting and therefore the conservation of the species.

Black spruce monoculture with herbicide spraying is turning the North Woods into a one species desert. Moose have no winter feed and will be largely gone based on my opinion of the habitat collapse

Although I do not profess to have any specific experience or expertise in the biology and management of moose, but while traveling in western, Downeast and the Northwoods of the State to hunt and fish, I have observed dramatically fewer moose than 5-10 years ago. This is true even in places like Rt. 16 between Rangeley and Straton, Baxter State Park, or the Katahdin Lake region where you could count on seeing moose as part of the enjoyment of your trip.

Winter ticks' impact on mortality rates, especially of young and pregnant moose, appears to be one of the primary drivers of this population decline. Mild winters due to climate change of course underlies the spread of winter ticks. I support the trial reduction of moose in a NW Maine management area to see if winter tick spread among a localized population can be reduced and therefore mortality be reduced. Obviously winter ticks will continue to be a problem thanks in large part to climate change and the resulting milder winters.

IF&W needs to look at other possible causes of the apparent contraction of the distribution of moose and the reduction in its population beyond winter ticks. Has habitat loss or change been a factor, including timber harvesting practices. What about whitetail deer populations, management and meningeal worm? The first moose I ever saw in Maine was leaning against the sign of the then Howard Johnson motel in Bangor near the airport.

Lastly I do not [support] one of the objectives of IF&W's moose management plan to return the spread of the moose population to central and southern Maine as occurred in the 1980s, only to retract in the 1990s and early 2000s. As fun as it was to see numerous moose on our property in Belgrade, I doubt this is feasible given climate change and loss of woodland habitat to development.

Do you currently live in Belgrade? I live in Mt Vernon. I remember in the 90's early 2000's seeing plenty of moose in the area; I found some droppings and tracks last summer. I'm just wondering why you think it would be a bad idea for moose to be in the Vienna, Rome, Mt Vernon area, as there's definitely habitat.

It's generally acknowledged that the tick issue is at the center of the decline in moose population. The adaptive hunting zone is an experiment to determine whether a lower concentrated moose population will reduce the tick population. I view this approach as a proactive effort by the IFW to understand the relationship between moose as hosts to the increase/decrease in tick population. However, any ground animal is a potential host to ticks. The question: Is the IFW researching alternative means to reduce the tick population beyond just the moose? Are there studies planned or underway to focus on collapsing the tick population overall? Moose are the obvious candidate because it is a highly sought after harvest. However, other specie populations have to be affected by ticks. The Maine congressional delegation should be seeking funds to assist in expanding Maine's research and studies to develop a comprehensive, holistic approach to managing the complexities of the tick population. I am not aware of how the IFW department is funded by the state. All monies collected through licensing and fees should go directly to the department and not added to the general fund with a fraction being funded to the IFW as done in neighboring states. Hunting, fishing and trapping are a facet of recreation that brings in \$\$\$\$ millions to the state annually. The IFW department should receive an apportionment of state recreational funding. The suggestion that have merit, in my opinion, are: eliminate the Cow harvest altogether until there is an obvious sustainable increase in the moose population; eliminate the sub-permittee altogether (that way a non-hunting family members don't get a permit and sit in a truck while the "subs" are hunting; ; expand the lottery waiting period to 10-years (A moose hunt is described as "a hunt of a lifetime." - so be it); Do not eliminate non-resident permits (the revenue generated on the state level is minuscule as reaped to state revenue, but crucial to local remote economies); enhance the state law regarding blocking access roads and hunting areas (allow video by complainants as prima facia evidence of a violation).

Yes- I 100% trust the department to make decisions regarding Maine's moose population, seasons, etc. And that trust goes far beyond just this specific species into others as well. We are fortunate to have the dedicated staff, professionals, scientists, etc. that make up the department.

Moose population is in decline in southern Maine. Loss of Habitat , climate change and winter tick seem to be the biggest factors. I hunt, fish and work outdoors in southern Maine , and spend time each year in the North Woods.

I do trust IFW to manage Moose and other species , provided politics stay out of the department.

I think the winter tick is the main issue of concern for our moose population. I think that managing the population is crucial to the survival of calves and I think the number of permits given out should increase to make the calves less likely to be killed by the winter ticks.

I believe that they need to increase the number of years to at least 5 years once you get a Moose permit before you are eligible to reapply. I've been putting in for over 30 years and not drawn, but yet know people that have been picked 3 to 4 times, really questioning the drawing processes.

IN 2022 I had a moose permit for WMD3. We hunted hard from Frenchville all the way down Rt 161 to Rt162. We did not see a moose for the whole week of hunting. Being handicapped I wasn't able to walk far or travel easily. I think there were moose in some of the areas but was frustrating to go all week and not see one. We did see a few hunters that were in the same situation as us. The weather was a big factor, it was hot, wearing t-shirts a few days of the week of Oct.

I know there are people that have never got a moose permit and I feel after a certain amount of time they should get a chance at a moose. I feel the IFW has done a pretty good job of setting the amounts of moose permits but not sure if they are actually getting the kills that they want.

One thing that I do not agree with is parts of the lottery. They say that the lottery is just luck when 3-5 people in 1 family get permits. It seems very weird to me how a whole family can get permits for the moose lottery. I personally have been very lucky and my husband also has had 3 permits. I feel over the years in WMD 19 where our camp is the moose count has dropped considerably over the last 20 years. When we first bought our small lot and built a camp and rode around fishing or hunting we use to see moose almost every time we rode around. Now we might see 1 moose in a whole year of driving the Stud Mill Rd and surrounding roads off from the Stud Mill Rd. If the moose are there they are back in the woods more then the open roads.

My response to the status of the moose population is I can only respond to the info that is given out from IFW or state about the winter tick problem up in the northern part of the state. I read people complaining about "why are you giving out cow permits if you want to increase the moose population"? I do feel that there are certain areas that can be less moose permits. I see the state has lowered a few areas of permits and not sure if that has helped or not. No matter how the IFW sets the rules or seasons of the moose permits they will always have people complain either way.

The first question is what is the right number of moose. Right number for who/what? For people wanting to see moose? wanting to hunt moose(me), the forest ? the moose ? back in the early 1900's there were very few moose due to unregulated hunting and lack of optimum habitat. Fast forward to the 1970's and 1980's the timber companies started utilizing clear cuts to salvage timber during the last outbreak of the spruce budworm. This created thousands of acres of clear cuts and optimum habitat for moose. This continued until the public outrage over clearcuts resulted in the forest practices act in the mid 1990's to protect the forest, wildlife and everything else from clearcutting. This resulted in far less clearcutting as land owners looked to avoid the permitting process required to create a clear cut. Lots of wood was still cut, just not clear cuts. This resulted in moose habitat being reduced in quantity and quality.

Meanwhile the moose population had grown to the highest levels in recorded history due to optimum habitat and a very conservative harvest regulated by the legislature and later IF&W. Tourists clamored to watch these great animals, easily seen from the car across the rolling clear cuts. Hunters clamored for the opportunity to win a tag and the chance to hunt the spectacular animal. And IF&W started raking in a substantial income from the lottery and harvest supporting a disproportionately large part of their annual budget. And it was positive for the economies of many smaller rural northern towns. Who wasn't happy having a gazillion moose around. The more moose the better !!!! Better for the economy selling moose.

But what is the optimum number of moose for the forest and for the moose themselves?

Those record number of moose on the land scape resulted in extremely heavy browsing.

Browsing that would remove or substantially reduce a number of species of the land scape.

How can that be good for the forest and the biodiversity of it. That over browsed forest

certainly wasn't providing the good nutrition it was twenty years before. Combine low habitat quality with an extremely inflated moose population that public demands and helps support IF&W.

It is biology 101 that overpopulated organisms are weakened due to lack of resources and are prone to attack by disease and parasites. The disease and parasites are nature's blunt instruments to reduce the population of the host back to more sustainable levels with the environment.

If society would have accepted reducing the moose population back in the 80's and 90's it likely could have been sustained. But because it wasn't, nature is going to crush the population to get the number of individual moose to a sparse enough number where disease and parasites are not easily transferred between animals and the forest has enough brows and resources so each individual moose is fat and healthy.

So my opinion is the moose herd needs some tough love. The herd needs some serious reduction for the good of the remaining animals and the health and diversity of the forest. Politically it will be a damn hard sell as every hunter will cry as it becomes harder to find a moose in the woods and finally there are so few animals tag numbers are reduced. Tourists will be upset. Local businesses relying on moose will have it tough. IF&W will take it on the chin and have to restructure their operating budget.

I am a consulting forester. These are my observations having worked across Maine from the late 1980's through about 2015 contract cruising. I have worked from the eastern edge of Washington County on the GP land around Princeton and Grand Lake stream, IP land around Lincoln, Land in Katahdin Iron Works, around the Moosehead Lake area, and up in Saint Aureli. As well as across northern NH and VT and NY.

I only made it through 50 or so comments before needing to quit so forgive me if what I type now duplicates something already stated: The biggest problem the moose herd is facing right now is a peak in winter tick activity in response to over population of moose stemming from over abundance of prime moose habitat. Each of those 3 components is intertwined and they all shift VERY gradually over decades. In my experience from talking with other moose hunters, regular citizens, guides, and even game wardens over the past few years, there is an enormous misunderstanding out there of just how unique the winter tick is. I didn't 'get it' until I watched a state biologist picking the nymphs or larvae off my moose being tagged using extremely fine forceps. I asked to see what he was sampling and could barely see them in the slender bottle. The winter tick biology is vastly different from the biology of the deer tick and rabbit tick we hear much more about. I think that if more effort was made to educate everyone on how this tick is so different the public might better understand why there is no easy and quick fix to achieve fewer ticks and more moose.

That being said, I do trust IFW with the decisions it needs to make relative to attempting to intervene in Mother Nature's management of Maine's moose herd.

I grew up hunting in the North Maine Woods. Seeing moose was common throughout our days of family bird hunting adventures. Over the years, we have seen less and less moose. I've yet to personally see a single tick on any moose shot. I think that the numbers for permits is driven by landowners, logging companies and people who have no experience in hunting or in going into the woods to see these amazing creatures. The combination of those interests equates to us killing too many moose for various reasons other than the actual management of the population. We need to lessen the amount of permits given out. Shooting cows, and in the numbers that have been issued over the last several years is detrimental to the population. There's a reason why the state moved to the doe permit lottery. A bull will breed multiple cows, cows have multiple calf's. Keeping cows is how we sustain the population, it's also how interests hurt the population as has been observed over the last decade. I urge the state to stop the adaptive hunts and to not just look at data. Go into the woods, see the population with your own eyes. Us sportsman have, and it's alarming.

I'll speak for zones 1-2-3-4, I've been an avid hunter and fisher and outdoors men my whole life. I've lived in Allagash, St. Francis and Fort Kent. Over harvest of these zones since 2010 because of what some biologists have said about ticks have devastated the herd. We do not have a sustainable population of moose this way. Example, the herd usually gathers in the winter time, making it a lot easier for young to cope through the winter, more adult moose to pack the snow, so the young don't use up all their fat storage. The young moose this way have been perishing in drastic numbers come spring time. We know this because we shed hunt up here and this is what we see while gathering the sheds. The state has to go back to pre 2010 hunting numbers for these zones, and definitely get rid of the cow hunt. If this don't happen the states once highest number of moose per mile will not be there for the future of Maine's outdoorsmen or women. I do not trust the way Maine inland and fisheries are conducting business this way. But in the all mighty dollar, they look the other way. A very few of us hunters have voiced our concerns to the Maine inland and fisheries, all to have fallen on deaf ears. These zone once held the largest number of moose from here to Alaska, this is not true anymore. I have no stake in guiding or making any money from moose, so I'll tell it how I see it. There are a lot of people dependent on these moose to make a living so they're not really going to say there is a actual problem, they want the folks from down south to keep coming up here to spend more money. What will eventually happen is that the last moose will be shot and there will not be any further for moose hunting, moose scouting, moose anything. I really urge the inland and fisheries to reconsider next year and ongoing hunts, to pre 2010 numbers.

I feel the moose population is in dire need of a massive reduction in permits we used to see moose daily driving now its maybe every few WEEKS, over hunting with the killing of cow/calf greatly reduces numbers should be antler restrictions 10 pt plus for bulls.

The population of Moose near/on my property located between Bangor and Millinocket seems to be holding steady. I have Cows with calves every year on camera in my driveway. Some very large bulls as well. I can only speculate on the primary issue in my area would be calf predation with Coyotes. I hear Coyotes almost on a daily basis and started hunting them last year. The coyotes left a deer fawn leg in my driveway and I assume a small Moose calf could easily fall victim. I have also been on 6 Moose hunts in the last 7 years. My personal experience has been very successful locating and seeing Moose in many different WMD's but of course, We get out of the truck.

I do feel I know enough about the Moose population but it would be due to my experiences outdoors, talking with locals and guides and not the info provided by any agency. I don't believe it is necessary for IF&W to provide a Moose population report of any kind, due to political reasons.

I do trust the biology department as a whole. I know many biologists here in Maine and they are well educated, dedicated and factual. Most people probably don't realize how under paid and under appreciated they are.

(Bio) Avid hunter and fisherman all over the State Of Maine since I was 10 years old. (57 now)
You haven't lived life until you hear two bull Moose fighting in the woods....

Sub-permittee system and permit swaps should end. Buying and selling of sub-permittee permits and/or traded permits is unethical.

I am a Maine licensed forester and spend quite a bit of time in Zones 5, 6, 10, 11, 18, 19, and 28. I'm a consultant so I travel a lot. I feel the herd is doing well, with hot spots of higher densities than in others which may be explained by browse quality and soil types. Biggest issue in my opinion is winter tick stress as I've seen mortality as far south as Topsfield and north to Millinocket over the past few years.

I trust IF&W to set season dates and overall framework. We have a team of professionals doing this work and they should be given time and flexibility in a difficult opinion environment and dynamic climate swings. Change cannot happen overnight, ask a forester!

Our family has a sporting camp in zone 4 and in the southern adaptive zone we feel this whole adaptive management is a disaster. We had a very strong and healthy moose population with only 2 out of the last 12 years did we see a high tick infestation hardly a need to go to this extreme to reduce the population, The moose herd will have cycles up and down but was very stable until the lead moose biologist got involved in this insane mismanagement of the herd. Not only is it a disaster for the moose herd but hunter conflicts and dissatisfaction is on the rise to many hunters in an area many hunters giving up early and conflicts with other hunters are ruining their hunting experience. Our success rate went from over 90 % before the adaptive hunt to 50 % and under, we feel its just a matter of time that the moose permits will be severely reduced because of this poor management.

I have a camp in district 11 well off the road and beaten path, which I frequent all times of the year. It has been 3 years since I have seen a moose in the district. Yes, I get out of the truck putting in 70+ hrs. a year deer hunting. The population has drastically been reduced by over harvesting and natural occurrence. Cow permits should be stopped and I think a 3 year stoppage on all moose hunting should take place. The IF&W should take that time to reevaluate the moose population and what can be done to help with the tick population. My father said 20 years ago that if there was 1 moose left in the state they would raffle it off because it's about the money and not about a healthy moose population

We have a camp in Eustis and also see less moose than in the past. When we do see a moose, they are usually sickly, with white and bald patches all over their body, Assume is from ticks. Very sad to see.

The moose population here has greatly reduced over the past decade or so. We used to be able to ride into camp or any field/side road and have a great chance of seeing a moose, now, you're lucky to see a couple-handful a year. The ticks and brain disease have been big issues and a continuing, growing issue, as well as mass deforestation and loss of habitat. I trust the IF&W in Maine on most everything, but I just can't understand why the number of moose permits is continuously increasing while the moose population is continuously decreasing. The population is not nearly as healthy as it used to be even 5-10 years ago. I think, and have been saying for years, we need to shut down the hunting for a year or two and reduce the number of permits after to let the population recover and grow more before it's too late. The same go for deer, especially here in the Northern Regions of Maine for each animal.

The biggest threat to the moose population currently is the winter tick load. That as well as winter range is taking a toll on the entire moose population but especially young moose calves. The State should close the season for a few years and let the population rebound. Or maybe an every other year season? I know a lot of people will pay to come to Maine to see a moose in the wild. Tourism dollars could be improved by more sightings. The hotels, lodges, guides and restaurants would see an increase and possibly be able to extend their season past the leaf peepers. Large land owners are still doing large scale clear cuts and removing the winter habitat for deer and moose alike. I have been on a moose hunt and bagged a big cow. She was covered with hundreds of ticks. Would I go after another one? No thanks.

I have already answered the first three questions. So here is my input on the new question. While I don't always agree with IF&W on the decisions they make concerning moose and the moose hunting seasons, if IF&W does not do it, then who is going to? I fought the fight to get the moose herd out of the control of the Legislature it and it was hard battle but we won and got control turned over to IF&W. Are you going to hand the decisions to a handful of guides, many of them not having hunted for 10 years and they think they are the best representation of what we have for a moose herd? I've been doing this since 1980, while not happy some years, it takes professionals or at least quasi-professionals to make decisions about a living creature.

I believe the moose population in Maine has been hurt considerably by ticks and disease in recent years. Far fewer moose are seen from the road during trips north. I do not think I know enough about the status Maine's moose population. I trust the management capabilities of the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to make decisions for the benefit of the Maine moose population and would appreciate ongoing progress reports.

Concur. I was on a bear hunt in Aroostook in 2016 and the guide alleged that the wildlife biologist was politically biased to undercount moose to reduce the number of available tags. He was extremely knowledgeable and had credibility to me, but may have been biased because he's a guide and wants more tags. More animals means more animal parasites including winter ticks which survive freezes and worse, the animals rub their fur off in an effort to remove the ticks. He says he saw moose covered with visible "white marbles" especially under their legs with bald patches on uninfested areas resulting from unsuccessful aggressive rubbing to remove the ticks and the result was numerous carcasses the next spring, especially calves, that couldn't survive without the blood and fur. That's less economic activity for the state and is cruel to the effected animals that suffer before freezing. It is imperative that the wildlife biologist be scientifically factual with the census and determine accurate tag numbers by zone depending on the carrying capacity of that habitat. Moose watchers virtue signaling by sabotaging accurate moose censuses are corrupting the system and creating over population leading to more parasites.

If the state wants more moose watching habitat then perhaps they should purchase moose habitat along rivers that handrail roads, so tourists in cars can see them. Maine has relatively little public land and most the moose are in private forests. Those river systems could be sanctuaries or maybe bow only and adjacent private forests could sell hunting leases for tags for overpopulated animals coming out of the sanctuaries.

I never understood the necessity of a sub-permittee, it just allows 2 people to capitalize on one license, and in reality allows someone with a lot of willing friends and relatives to participate in more hunts than the waiting period suggests by participating as the sub-permittee for years, effectively end running the lottery. Eliminate sub-permittees and move up the re-application window to 10 years, that would put everyone entering the lottery on a more equal footing. Hunting the largest game animal in Maine should be great opportunity for everyone interested with an equal chance of drawing a license. If you win a tag, take whoever and how many you want on the hunt to help out, but only the licensed tag holder should carry a firearm to shoot a moose.

A decline in population doesn't mean the moose herd is not healthy. Over population is almost always followed by disease or illness. (i.e., brain worm, ticks, etc.). A change in moose habits limiting road exposure has given the perception of a barren moose landscape. Seeing large numbers of moose from the road is not indicative of a healthy population. In most cases it would suggest that we are exceeding our carrying capacity.

The state of Maine needs to focus on less permits and Letting the population rebuild. The State of Maine also needs to address the Brain worm and tick population. Most of these species are not native to this state. They need to look at the health of the cow and calf's population with this. The calf are dying due to the tick infestation., which is not helping rebuilding the population. I am a Mainer and I know that

Maine should greatly reduce the number of moose permits for at least five years, and let the population rebuild itself to higher numbers.

Hello, I live on a large property. Old farmland in (zone 26), I have yet to even see a moose on this land. I did see one this year - however it was because all the locals knew where it was. It was acting strange and staying in the same spot for over a week. I am curious as to if these animals are being over hunted. That with the number of ticks some have on them, could be a viable explanation to the population decreasing. Then you have the brain worm, to sum this up. Are we researching the brain worm, ticks and the amount that are being shot? Are there a lot of these moose being found dead and being researched? I love hunting, but we need to manage the population. It may come in a way that doesn't affect hunting but researching diseases in these animals and figuring out ways to help it.

Hello all, To the new question about trusting IFW about the moose...

I guess this is a question that should be answered after all the feedback has been submitted and reviewed and acted upon. I hope this forum isn't about a feel good moment. That this is truly a meeting of the minds to move forward and address issues while acting upon them. So 100 % trust is no, until I can see some real action taken that removes revenue from sales. I know there is a cost and a budget but that all moved to the general fund years ago. So let's not pretend that there isn't any money to work on remedies. The state spends lots of money on things less important. Just sayin....

I commented earlier but wanted to add a question of my own; what is the prevalence of brain worm in moose? I encountered a cow moose with brain worm in western Maine, she was in the exact same spot every day for a week when I ran my dog team down that trail. Later that winter I found her while snowshoeing, she was wedged up on the mountain in between several trees, and had been dead for quite a while. The area warden educated me about brain worm. I've heard stories recently about moose acting strange and needing to be shot because they were "daffy in the head". I live up in Fort Kent now, don't know if brain worm (which is transmitted via snails in pond water, I think) is an issue here in northern Maine.

I do think moose calves need their mothers for a full year for protection from predators and for breaking trail in deep snow, and cow moose shouldn't be shot if there are calves with them, but they probably are because the calves aren't always at their side. Maybe stop issuing cow permits and put out salt licks year round laced with tick paracitide well away from the black roads. It would be a terrible thing for Maine to lose its moose.

Good ideas. You control populations through the female of the species, so if you want more moose reduce the number of cow tags. The state can still issue bull tags. One bull can easily impregnate a dozen or more cows. In an average fall eight of ten cows are pregnant but by summer only one or two still have a surviving calf.

It's my understanding that brainworm is common to whitetail deer who are not impacted by it and spread it to moose (and elk and caribou) when their ranges overlap with high density whitetail populations. To reduce brainworm in moose, reduce the whitetail population by issuing more tags generally and particularly more doe or "antlerless" tags.

I am a Mainer, outdoorsman, hunter etc. The Maine Moose population has been declining over the past 20 years and everyone knows this. I agree managing the moose population is important, but feel they have been over harvested, and that is not helping their survival rate. Seeing these creatures has become rarer than ever before. The health of the animals as witnessed over the past 2 decades has remained the same in regard to ticks etc., however the size of the animals seems to have dropped, "trophies" are uncommon, not from lack of habitat as their habitats in the areas I hunt are the same, I feel it is from poaching and over harvesting. The Maine Fish and Game dept. has in my opinion been focused on revenue, not conservation and protection and it is clear when you interact with the representatives or those who represent the organization. I would like to see less permits issued statewide, also add a restriction requiring harvesting only quality trophy animals. I would encourage as well that to be applied to the white tail deer hunting, make a requirement on Bucks to be 6 point or larger....Creating rules to harvest only trophy animals will create better hunting for all, will spark the interest of hunters worldwide and give the local guides something to offer and compete with globally, all while still limiting bag limits, permit fees, license fees the State will get their piece of the pie. Being a local, conservation and protection of our resource's is ultimately my goal always.

I live in Zone 6 and notice a fair amount of moose on my cameras but even less than there were 3 years ago. The lack of snow last year and the winter ticks are contributing I believe. I don't think culling more moose will solve the problem. I think it will continue to reduce the population as cows that can potentially reproduce are being hunted. I think they may be over hunted given the population reduction. I think thinking outside the box to do something about the winter ticks is crucial at this point and time is of the essence. Introducing a species that can eat them may be a possibility if it does not disrupt the ecosystem. Also the huge amount of tree harvesting of old growth is causing less natural food sources for bears which in turn I think are now preying on calves. Too much private tree harvesting without regard for how it affects wildlife and the food chain.

I spend most of my time in zones 5 and 6. The number of moose in those two zones has diminished significantly in the past twenty years. The number one predator of moose is bears. A moose has one calf her first year as a mother and then typically has two every year after. A cow moose and two calves used to be a common sight, but now they are rare. If a cow can get one calf to winter she is doing well. If they make it through the winter, they have to survive April. In April, the bears wake up and have not eaten in 6 months; there is very little to eat for almost a month until things start greening up. Yearling moose pay the price.

I do not know where the population stands, but after going on a "moose safari" with a Maine guide recently and only seeing 1 solo cow with 8 hrs. of driving in and around Baxter, Millinocket and other communities - it was surprising to me. Logging road, ponds, and bogs, all devoid of moose. This is concerning. I am not convinced the IFW will do the right thing. Clearly hunting should probably be curtailed- but research needs to be done. How do we control the ticks?? Maybe introduce a species that eats them, but is not a predator of moose. Ticks are also a threat to humans to a degree. Why isn't the state doing more with out of control species, like ticks, brown tail moth, etc. maybe the hunt needs to be every other year, and off years wildlife researchers and veterinarians be employed to help the babies thrive. Maybe do this for 6-10 years until the population recovers. 20-30 years ago we used to hear about car vs moose accidents. You hardly hear about any. And regarding that, we should have wildlife underpasses like Florida and other states have to prevent wildlife crossing high speed roads- especially in areas where they tend to be crossing. In other states its interesting to see how wildlife learns to use these crossings. There are ways to promote safety, too. Definitely a multifaceted approach to help them thrive and survive.

I am a guide in Western Maine. Between spring fishing, summer hiking/ scouting, hunting in the fall, snowmobiling, and shed hunting, I spend a lot of time in the woods of zones 8 and 4. In my opinion there are way more moose than most people realize. Everywhere I go, there is tons of moose sign. I think the best thing that could happen for my area is to give us a September hunt in zone 8. I also think the antlerless permits could go up in zone 8. I acknowledge that there are less moose than back in the 90s and 2000s. But I think there were way too many then. More moose does not equal a healthier population.

If not already being considered, the moose harvest or permit numbers should directly relate to the estimated mortality rate of the previous winter. Regional mortality rate should also come into play. Encourage Maine outdoors people to report moose carcasses when found. After 4 days canoeing the Moose River in June I saw 2 live moose and 2 dead moose (1 adult, 1 subadult both in the river).

I'm from "away" but have been visiting the Moosehead Lake area several times/year, every year for over 20 years. The moose population is in decline and the animals are getting harder and harder to view. As a wildlife photographer and naturalist, this concerns me over the future health of the herd.

Manage the moose for the moose. Not for people. Hunter's are just one of the many tools for wildlife biologists. I am a hunter. I am a conservationist. Manage the moose for the overall health of that resource. Period.

What are your thoughts about the status of Maine's moose population? I am very concerned. Very frankly, I do not want to live in a world where there are few or no moose in Maine. What do you think are the primary issues facing moose in Maine? There are many issues, but all are rooted in the fact that our climate is changing contributing to, for example, the biggest threat to the moose population which appears to be winter ticks. I don't believe that hunting is the root cause of the decline in moose population. However, if/if there is scientific, versus emotional, evidence that a stoppage of the moose hunt for a few seasons would likely result in a rebound of the moose population, then I would be supportive of a hunting pause (note that I have successfully hunted and harvested a Maine bull moose and am an avid hunter).

Do you feel you know enough about the status of Maine's moose population? I do not. cursory research seems to indicate that the moose population is stable, but there are sufficient numbers of Mainers noting that "they just don't see as many moose as they used to" that it concerns me. One person saying that is an anecdote, hundreds of Mainers saying that make it evidence of a decline.

In addition to the initial questions posed here, please consider responding to the following: Do you trust the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to make decisions about moose in the state, including setting the hunting season framework? Why or why not? At this point I 100% trust ME Dept of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife as long as the Department continues to make decisions based on the science and what's best for the moose population. What I am most concerned about is that Maine goes the way of other states where decisions on game management are made by what's popular versus what's best for wildlife management (e.g. bear hunting in NJ - thankfully reversed and mountain lion hunting in CA - not reversed).

I have been recreating and guiding in Maine since the early 2000's. In that time the number of Moose encountered has been greatly reduced. On a canoe trip these days I occasionally see a Moose when I used to routinely see 12 or more when in Maine Woods for several weeks. This has changed in the 10-12 years.

As many have said climate change and ticks impact the population. I'm skeptical of the plan to cull part of the population to decrease the tick population.

I'm undecided if I trust IF&W. I think population management decisions need to be made based on science. Sounds conservation science is based on inquiry, research, and consideration of positive/negative consequences (short and long term) for all stakeholders-including human and non-human.

I would want to see evidence that many aspects of a decision have been considered/researched/tested to a reasonable standard prior to acting on a major population management decision, such as culling.

I live in the zone 5 & 10 area. My lot is a 160 acre lot. I've noticed a decline over the past 10 years in moose activity in this whole area.

I travel zones 1 and 4 frequently and have done so since 2002 and notice MUCH less sign of moose whether it is droppings in roads or browsing. Also less sightings by a lot. Not only driving, but walking old unmaintained roads bird hunting. My observation is way less moose population and continued high volume of permits. This begs the question if the estimated count by biologists are accurate and where does the ratio of animals to permits fall now, compared to 2006 ? or 2000 or 2010.

I understand concern with tick kill and have observed real time that ugly scene but feel population /permits is a bigger issue.

I live in the Lake Region of Maine and have a camp in The County. I used to see moose or a sign of moose quite often in the Denmark area. Not so much anymore. I do still moose near camp but not as many. I'm no expert but I fail to see how reducing moose numbers can reduce tick numbers. Can't ticks survive in the environment for quite a while without a moose host? Seems like more studies/info needs to be obtained be running out and killing off moose in order to save them. Has this method been used before with positive results? Are any other methods being taken into consideration or is that just the easiest (cheapest) method available?

Who is monitoring this forum to ensure participants are genuine and not anti-hunters trying to influence regulations based on out-of-state agendas?

Every time I travel north, whether for hunting, fishing, or camping with the family, we encounter moose. These sightings are most common when traveling the roads at dawn and dusk. The more remote the location, the more moose we see. According to scientists, the moose population in Maine is increasing year over year. It seems there's an agenda against hunting here, not an objective discussion about wildlife management.

The moose population in Maine is closely monitored by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (MDIFW). According to their reports, the moose population is estimated to be around 60,000 to 76,000 animals, making it the largest moose population in the lower 48 states. These estimates are based on various monitoring techniques, including aerial surveys and GPS collaring of moose calves to track survival rates.

Since the tick infestation has a detrimental effect on moose populations. Why don't you think out of the box and set up paint ball guns loaded with tick killer , same as they use on dogs and have them tripped by camera. Post these motion detection devices on main trails set to proper height to fire paint ball which contains the tick killer. This stuff works great on dogs and will be absorbed into skin and kill the ticks. It will not affect meat for human consumption. It lasts like one month only. This will immediately kill any ticks infesting the young moose as well as adults. You would need to determine the correct dose before making paintballs. I tried this on an orphaned white tail deer that was infested with couple hundred ticks put some on fur rubbed it in and a week later she was free of ticks. It's just a thought to fix a problem I really think it will work and will curb the decline in moose populations. It just requires simple technology, cheap paint ball guns and I am sure you can get someone to mfg. the paintballs loaded with the tick killer. One paintball connected with insecticide kills tick and saves moose. Simple I think

Like any complex issue or situation there rarely is a single answer or a single reason that is going to magically solve the problem. If there was a simple answer to the issue then the State would have done it already. The most likely scenario is that it is a combination of things from loss of habitat, changing logging practices, climate change, hunting permit numbers, ticks, etc. all have combined to negatively affect the moose population. I think it safe to assume just based upon everyone's own two eyes that the population seems down by a lot. It is also somewhat concerning that over the last couple of years there has been many articles written about how New Hampshire's moose population is plummeting and how Canada's moose population is plummeting, while at the same time there are articles that Maine's is booming, I'm always skeptical of things that don't pass the eye test or common sense test.

In my opinion, climate has a large impact on the moose population visibility to the public and the overall numbers of living moose. As the temps go up, 500 plus pound animals in dark fur will not move around as much, it's undeniable that it is much warmer out now in the summer and fall than it used to be. Anyone that's been on moose hunts either in October or September have likely run into temps during those weeks of 70 plus, that's not ideal temps for seeing moose. Additionally for the non-moose hunters spectating moose in the summertime with temps being above 80 with lows in the upper 60's is almost impossible. With a changing climate this also causes things like ticks to boom causing all sorts of problems long term. Climate is not something IFW is going to be able to policy and rule make away so that leaves the question of what can we do about it, its probably a combination of things (no more cow hunting permits, habitat preservation and restoration, adaptive hunts, etc. try anything), I would encourage IFW to think out of the box. To me before you try and solve a problem you have to understand what you are dealing with and the biggest threat to moose at this point is the young moose mortality rate. They base the mortality rate of the young moose off of the moose the collar, perhaps do a study where half the animals you collar you treat with a non toxic tick treatment just to see what that does for mortality rates for a year. It would be interesting to understand why the mortality rates are so high in young moose, perhaps it shows ticks aren't as big of a problem as we thought or maybe its an even bigger problem. Either way I do trust IFW is trying very hard to get a handle on this and wish them luck!

I live in Bangor, but spend a lot of time in the North Maine Woods and also Aroostook and Hancock Counties. I enjoy seeing moose in the wild, but also support continued moose hunting and management. My impression and experience is that moose numbers are declining in Maine. That does not surprise or alarm me, but I do wonder if current moose harvest levels are a bit high. In addition to the hunt, I believe that the moose population is being stressed by habitat change, climate change, and winter ticks. I generally trust the Department and wildlife professionals to consider these factors along with survey and harvest data in the future. Perhaps slightly lower harvest numbers may be needed in the near future?

I am a hunter and look forward to being drawn for the moose lottery at some point. I trust the population estimates the MDIFW post and that they will continue to manage the moose herd in Maine effectively. Despite anecdotal evidence, hunting is a proven means to manage wildlife. What I will comment on is the adaptive program. My son drew an adaptive antlerless permit last year and I was his sub. If you want to cull the herd in this zone to determine if this will affect the winter tick kill-off you need to make the season earlier in the season, closer to the rut. This was an extremely frustrating hunt. Needless to say, we didn't get one. Also, doesn't it stand to reason that if you want to see if culling the herd will help, wouldn't you go to regions in the south, perhaps even NH and VT, where the herd has already been seriously reduced to see if this has helped??

I've lived in southern Maine for over 30 years and have yet to see a moose. I've also been north many times to what some call "moose country". It is quite disappointing to realize that moose sightings are becoming more obscure. While I do understand there are more factors at work here besides hunting, I strongly feel moose hunting should be put into a moratorium until the numbers can be increased once again. As others have stated I would like to say I trust MDIFW to make the best decisions for this state but I simply cannot as far to many hunting issues have been raised across the board and the favor always falls to the hunters.

I fly regularly to remote areas of central and Northern Maine and have witnessed a significant decrease in the population. I do not agree with IFWs proposed method of culling the population to save it. Ectoparasites are only one part of the problem. I would like more funding going into research, as I suspect there is something else responsible. I would recommend biennial moose hunt with a much smaller lottery. I would also like mandatory tissue samples taken at tagging (liver, brain, heart, kidney and lymph node) to be sent to a qualified lab to be tested with histopath, and PCR tests for prion disease.

I think random culling is contraindicated because that one individual culled, might be the one individual that has resistance to whatever is actually causing the weakening in Maine's herd.

I live in Andover and would say that all signs point to less moose than there were 25 or 30 years ago. Fewer sightings on roads, fewer vehicle-moose collisions. Fewer signs in the woods, both fewer tracks and less scat in places that used to be trampled and loaded with moose poop. However, I do feel that 25 or 30 years ago there was an overpopulation, at least in this area. I have know idea what the moose population is or what it should be and I'm not confident that the MDIFW know either. While I generally trust the MDIFW to make good decisions I do think they are naturally biased towards hunting.

It is disappointing to head to the Big Woods and rarely see a moose. I have spent a lot of time fishing in the western mountains and paddling the St. John and Allagash. We used to regularly see moose. Now we are lucky to see one. I don't have concrete data, just experiential observations over 15+ years. So either the moose are just more wary of humans, or their numbers are down. I would hope management practices could keep the herd at a size that allows people to see them on more than the very rare occasion.

I have heard rumors of an initiative to delay or shorten bird season to satisfy the moose guiding community's complaint that bird hunting disrupts the moose hunt.

A very bad idea.

I think as many people have noticed the moose population has immensely gone down. I think a potential resolution could be one of two things. Every other year /bi-yearly moose lotteries, makes it even more exciting for people that get a tag and also helps the population or every couple few years it skips a year almost like a leap year something to help bump the population. Or making certain areas non hunting areas, not sure this would be a great solution but it would still help in some capacity. Look at Moosehead Lake for example closing off areas for ice fishing to help with the brook trout population, it seems to be helping with that. Obviously hunting is a huge part of Maine and tourism however would you rather lose a little money here and there or potentially lose it forever? Climate change and ticks also have a large impact on the moose and those are out of our control...at least hunting regulations are in our control. I always go by the theory control what you can control and the rest is for the most part out of your hands.

I think the population has obviously gone down over the past decade or so, but not as much as most people think. I think the moose have recognized humans as more of a threat and that they don't come to the high traffic areas as much as before. I still see big bachelor groups as winter begins and when I go further away from roads it is still easy to find signs and sightings of moose. I think the ticks have definitely effected the young moose population in recent years, but with the past 2 winters being mild I'm still seeing lots of young moose. I also think that the forestry practices (mainly spraying after cutting) has made finding feed more difficult which isn't setting the young ones up for a strong chance to make it through their first winter with a heavy tick load. I would like to see more easily found information on the current population research being done. Most of the reports found are outdated and there hasn't been a lot of up to date info pushed out so we see a lot of opinions from people just driving the roads and seeing moose crossing. I think the department has done a good job of at least trying to do something to halt the spread of ticks with its adaptive hunts. I do worry about knocking the population down too far to the point where a few extended winters could be hard to recover from but I completely understand the theory behind it and I would agree it seems like a logical solution to decrease the parasitic load. I don't know that this is a viable solution state-wide as it has many risks related to uncontrollable things such as having enough feeding areas and weather to be able to rebound the population when the ticks are at a lower level. I do trust the biologists are trying to do what's best for the moose though and I respect that they are trying to do something that doesn't involve chemicals or treatments. I think the ideas of spraying to kill ticks is bad because it will inevitably effect other species and treating moose directly seems impossible and would also taint the best organic meat you can get.

Subjectively, it seems the population has decreased in the past 5 - 10 years. I have frequented the Moosehead Lake region for the past 40 years. Before the hunt started, it was a non-issue to see 10+ moose in a day. 10 years into the hunt, you could still see 2 - 5 moose in an evening driving from Lily Bay to Lazy Tom Bog and back. Now, it is a rare night you see a single moose. I have even driven around First Roach Pond at Sunset and not seen a single moose.

I understand that the hunt brings revenue to the state through hunting, but there also is significant tourism value for the state from people seeing moose "on the hoof" in summer. Balancing these needs will help. With the tick loads, and the mortality rates as of late, I suspect the harvest rates are no longer sustainable. I am not saying to "shoot from the hip" and decrease the hunt, but something needs to happen.

Someone below suggested introducing guinea fowl. I'd be cautious of this approach. However, I could see adding permethrin soaked mouse bedding materials in known Moose winter yarding areas. This is a known effective method of tick management. If we could utilize mice to decrease the tick load, we might be able to improve the mortality rate of calves and improve the herd as a whole. Just a thought. Maybe try one or two known areas to start and see what happens. It would not be a super-expensive experiment. Worth a try, in my opinion.

Maine moose population is dwindling. I DO NOT trust Inland Fisheries and Wildlife's ability to manage the population. Anyone who has traveled to the Greenville area in the last 5 years can attest to the lack of moose in the area. The state should consider a moratorium on moose hunting in some area to replenish the population.

Sadly, I've seen less and less moose over my past 10 years in the north woods.

In the area around Moosehead Lake I have personally stumbled upon more moose skeletons articulated off trail than I have living moose. I've seen plenty of moose sign; however, it's clear something has changed.

Please trust the biologists and leave things the way they are.

I think the Maine inland and fisheries has done a really good job managing the population. I will say that the last two years I have seen more moose each time I have spent time in the county than I did in the previous 4-5 years combined. The ticks are definitely a concern but the state has done a really good job managing the population.

When you consider we are experiencing a near 80% mortality rate for yearling calves, and brain worm... this is a non-sustainable hunting practice.

Cut your licenses in half, and flood the state with Guinea hens (don't laugh, voracious tick eaters)

The herd has definitely been severely reduced, in my opinion. In the very late 1990's, at our deer hunting camp in Whiting (Zone 27) we would see so many moose during the deer season that we couldn't remember how many we saw. The last day of deer season one year, we saw 13 in one afternoon. Two to four years later, they were gone. Now we can't remember the last time we saw a moose. If you look at the moose kill in Zone 27, it is comprised of 2 to 4 moose almost always shot in Cutler. The reason for that is two local men who know exactly where the moose hangout in Cutler and help the hunters , who are usually local hunters because nobody else in their right mind would choose Zone 27, find a moose. They do this because they love to hunt moose. They also do not receive one red penny for their help. I believe there are too many cows being harvested. It appears to be a money game as usual. The difference between an 80% success rate and a 40% success rate is that you can sell twice as many permits and kill the same number of moose. I don't believe anything can be done about the ticks. Maybe, medicine can be put in salt licks. I have good friends in Canada who guide for moose and who hunt for moose, and they put out a lot of salt blocks, beginning in June. The herbicides sprayed to kill hardwood saplings in Northern Maine is certainly a factor. The feel good referendum of the 70's that eliminated clearcuts is also a factor. The vast majority of people don't realize that a clearcut grows up evenly, provides habitat for moose and snowshoe hares and the Canada Lynx that prey on them which is the reason that Maine had a record population of Lynx many years ago. Finally, NO I do not trust MDIFW to manage the any population because money is too important to them.

First of all, ninety percent of Mainers do not hunt. Of those that do, only a small percentage hunt moose. Nevertheless, IFW's publicly stated top priority is to increase hunting opportunities. Maine's entire system of fish and wildlife management is "rigged" to benefit consumptive use and users. Non-consumptive users do not have a seat at the table. For example, all members of the IFW Advisory Council are supposed to represent the public, not IFW, yet all are hand-picked by IFW and rubber stamped by the governor and the legislature. Most Mainers have no idea of how rigged the system is and therefore, trust IFW. As a retiree with nearly thirty years in state government and as one who has tried to effect positive change in Maine's system of fish and wildlife management, I am very familiar with how rigged the system is. There is not even a requirement for IFW to consider-that's right-to consider science in its "management". This town hall has no legal basis and no legal effect on IFW's policies. It is intended to give the appearance that they are considering everyone's opinion through this "feel good" exercise. We are paying Responsive Management for this. As far as your questions are concerned, my thoughts about the status of Maine's moose population is that its numbers are declining and its range is shrinking northward. Years ago I tried but failed to get the legislature to approve a Bill Silliker [a famous Maine wildlife photographer and writer] moose watching area where moose would be protected from hunting. Of course the legislative committee voted it down unanimously. Maine needs to set aside areas where moose thrive and are protected from hunting. These areas can serve as population sources for designated hunting areas-which would likely be population sinks. The primary issues facing moose in Maine are a lack of natural predators (e.g. gray wolves), overhunting, hunting/permit numbers which have no scientific basis, lack of science in moose "management", clearcutting which destroys habitat and promotes unethical shooting of moose from motor vehicles, climate change, natural parasites, disease, etc. No one knows enough about the status of Maine's moose population. Estimated population numbers are a joke used to defend the large number of permits issued. Overnight the moose population grew from 30,000 to 70,000 with nothing to back it up. Moose numbers are a joke-based on a flyover of a particular WMD every few years. There is effectively no science used to estimate Maine's moose population and range. The so-called "adaptive moose hunt" is nothing more than a means to get federal dollars and to expand the moose hunt. It has no scientific basis whatsoever. Anyone with a science background knows that it failed to even consider the scientific method. It was not necessary. All IFW had to do was look at winter tick abundance in areas of higher and lesser moose density. Of course, that would not have resulted in "providing more hunting opportunities". No one knows enough about the status of Maine's moose population-particularly IFW. Where are the millions of dollars collected from the moose lottery going? It's certainly not going to science based moose management. I do not trust IFW in anything-as far as I can throw them. I wonder how many IFW employees have commented on this questionnaire. My distrust is based on decades of trying to work with them and trying to build bridges. Maine's bear feeding program and misinformation and false claims about the need to feed bears is just one reason to distrust IFW. Quite a few years ago, IFW decided to expand the moose hunt to southern Maine. I attended and spoke at a public outreach meeting where they conducted a bogus attempt to solicit public comments. It is important to note that this public outreach also had no basis in the law or any connection to Maine's Administrative Procedures Act. Therefore, there were no rules or guidelines and had no force of law-just like this process. I spoke out in opposition to expanding the moose hunt to southern Maine. The report that IFW issued was written to support its decision to expand the moose hunt. It contained no mention of any opposition expressed at the meeting at which I spoke. IFW cannot be trusted with anything. I have seen it first hand. This is why we refuse to divulge the location of the wolf we documented. during our wolf scat research. We asked IFW to provide us with their wolf files and they told us it would cost us \$90,600 to review files of an animal they claim doesn't exist. They have used Maine's Freedom of Access Act to deny public access to public documents. We asked IFW to sponsor us for a Maine Outdoor Heritage Fund grant to look for wolves in Maine. IFW refused to even allow us to apply, and had the nerve to ask us where we documented a wolf. I encourage the people of Maine to look into this agency, to do your homework, and perhaps you will come up with the same conclusion.

Managing any wildlife resource is a complex issue. Many variables such as predator kill, birth mortality, ticks (shorter and warmer winters), auto collisions and many other conditions affect populations. The populations are definitely down from the highs during the 1980s and 90s. However, I remember with there was no moose hunt in the State. According to IF&W records, Maine moose populations had dropped to close to 2,000 during the early 1900s due to unrestricted hunting. We experienced a population boom in the late 1970s and 80s most likely do to forest practices and hunting laws which were enacted in the early 1900s. We are fortunate to have a dedicated IF&W team of biologist in Maine working to maintain the moose herd for both hunting sportsman and the viewing public. I believe they are doing the best they can with what tools, resources and goals they currently have. It might be time for another "Big Game Workshop" to establish new goals and objectives.

We went from managing for a 90% success rate in the moose hunt. To the current moose biologist saying we should be happy with 40%. We always have had moose ticks. Four years ago we'd find dead ones every winter. We quadrupled the permits. It's no wonder the population is way down. Please don't "opportunity" (\$\$\$\$) them into oblivion.

The primary issues facing moose are loss of habitat and ticks. Yes the population peaked in 2000 (according to IFW's own website) but that does not inherently mean that hunting is causing an additive mortality. Moose are already at their southern extent of their habitat range in Maine to begin with. That being said, I would totally understand if IFW lowered the number of moose permits.

I do trust IFW in making decisions about moose in Maine; that's why we pay them. They are the experts. I commend them for trying to lower moose density in zone 4A to see if that helps the tick load. Though it seems a bit counterintuitive, we have to try something! Please leave the power up to experts, not legislatures or even citizens.

I think the moose hunt should be reduced. I think the moose population is clearly struggling due to many factors; from ticks, development, to climate change. Decisions need to be made regarding the moose hunt based on factors such as these and not what is needed for a good hunting economy. I've lived and hiked in Maine my entire life; moose sign used to be prevalent, it is now a novelty to see moose poop and moose tracks.

The lottery system appears to be broken. The results are statistically impossible year after year. The same people get picked over and over. Multiple people from the same family get picked over and over. All while most people may go 20 years accumulating points and never get picked. The State needs to engage a 3rd party objective data specialist to validate the lottery. It is not working as advertised and it hasn't for a long time. Lets find the bug and get it fixed. Seriously people, validate your algorithm so it works as advertised or go back to pulling names by hand.

Moose populations are on the decline in Maine. If you have lived here any length of time you'd observe and agree. The experimental hunt in zone 4 has been a complete failure and resulted in more conflict with hunters, loggers, and land owners. Maine had a good manageable moose hunt for decades we should go back to that. It appears IFW has tried to expand the hunt for capital gain and to put a feather in the cap of biologists. Lets go back to doing it right with sustainable permit numbers that don't increase conflicts in the North Maine woods.

Hello again. Somewhere I came across a comment that moose do not herd during the winter. I just wanted to add that I have personally seen them in a herd during the winter. It was many years ago while snowmobiling, we went down an old skid road. It was a group of about 15 or more. We were very surprised to see them bedding in the sun. Now I feed deer in the winter and they herd around here in groups of 7 to 13. And one group will not tolerate another group coming around. They move out and/or sometimes they fight, does and bucks. So it seems to me that moose would be the same way. Family groups don't like other groups. No, they don't herd like Alaska animals that move for food. The moose have food nearby. Deer move for food and away from predators.

Information provided by MDIFW seems adequate to get a general understanding of moose populations and factors affecting the moose herd.

I have 100% faith in the judgement of MDIFW biologists who are in the field to make the right decisions.

Definitely should not be influenced by our State's legislature.

15 years ago I could drive from Errol NH to Rangeley to Stratton where I live and see numerous moose each afternoon. My record for this hour long drive was 32 moose. Now I'm lucky to see a few moose each summer. The population has declined tremendously. It seems to me that its time to take a pause of moose hunting for a couple of years or even longer. Minnesota had the same problem with the moose population and unfortunately it went from 400,000 to 40,000 to 4,000 over a decade. Now they hope they still have 400 moose left in the state to rebuild the population. We will soon get to the point of no return in Maine. So sad.

I am an avid hiker and former hunter. I am not anti hunting by any stretch but I believe the Moose hunt should be suspended for a few years. I hike a lot in the White mountains and Baxter State Park. Fifteen years ago we would see Moose signs everywhere and occasionally see them. Now even in places like Chimney pond, you see very few signs of them. Last week I hiked to Sawyer pond in NH and saw zero signs, in a place that should be infested with Moose! It's my understanding that the calves are having a difficult time surviving winter because they're covered with ticks. They become so anemic that they succumb to it. I'm not a scientist but I know what I'm seeing or not seeing! I know hunting is important for local economies but what good is it if they go extinct? Give the Moose a break and a chance!

Thanks for listening!

The number of permits should probably be reduced. Seeing a moose around Moosehead Lake is a rare treat. Not long ago it was a common occurrence.

The wildlife-watching component of Maine's economy is clearly growing rapidly - both for residents and visitors. Although difficult to quantify, it likely far surpasses the economic and quality of life contributions of hunting these days. It often seems Maine IF&W refuses to recognize this, as dedicated and easily measurable quantifiers (like taxes and permit fees) are few. It's time for fish and game departments to modernize and realize the positive impacts (economic as well as mental and physical health) of non-consumptive wildlife users. Therefore, since so few visitors and residents get to see moose these days - and they have definitely become harder to find in places that are easily visited save for a few locations like Baxter State Park - increasing accessible populations should be a greater priority. Whether by reducing permits, establishing no-hunting reserves (actual "refuges), or by other management techniques, live moose are "worth more" than a dead moose.

Climate change (especially Winter Tick populations), habitat fragmentation, and likely other factors are the primary causes of the apparent and perceived decline of moose - not hunting - but I believe management goals need to move away from having more moose to shoot. I am not opposed to hunting, nor to moose hunting as a management tool, but the emphasis on what the department's priorities are needs to shift to the majority: us non-consumptive wildlife watchers.

In my opinion the overall moose population is down. I believe the current plan to control ticks by eliminating the host is misguided. Based on what a friend saw in the records of the Fort Kent tagging station last fall, it would appear that way too many cows were dry which would indicate that possibly Mother Nature has taken over and aborts the fetuses to save the mother. We must find a way to control the ticks.

To question #1, I don't believe the population is as strong as it was just a few years ago. I believe there are too many permits offered. The State seems to be more concerned with income than with health of the species.

To question # 2. As stated above, too many permits. Too many ticks, and climate change.

To question #3, I am not an expert. So I am sure I don't know as much as the Dept. I just think that money enters into decisions way too often.

The biggest issue that I most concerned about at this point with moose, is the tick population and how they have affect the moose population. We have found several young moose over the years dead from ticks and it just seems to be getting worse. I have heard a lot of non-scientific feedback about why we have so many more ticks than we used to, i.e. turkeys, global warming, coyote population, etc. would like to know more about what is going on with that and what could be done to keep the tick population down to help keep our animals healthier...nothing worse than finding a young dead moose covered in ticks in the spring...

We live in Northeast Carry and own the store there. The moose population is down, and many hunters last year never saw any. Cut the permits back, let the population recover.

Stop issuing so many moose hunting permits. There are barely any moose left.

I live in the north where we should have a lot of moose. I haven't seen one in years. They have been over-hunted and the lottery is a joke, allowing out-of-staters unlimited chances to enter. We should not sell off our state's beloved wildlife in the name of "tourism." Moose exist for their own reasons. They are not ours to use or kill for entertainment. They should be protected. We'd attract so much more tourism if we promoted moose sight-seeing tours instead of moose killing tours. There are so many more people who want to SEE wildlife instead of killing and dismembering it. We should be preserving our dwindling moose population for the long-term health and identity of our state, not short-term gains based on hunting fees from a few people.

The amount of moose being killed is too high. I remember when it was illegal to shoot a moose. Moose are a natural resource and they will go the way of the Caribou eventually if this high kill rate continues.

Stop selling our wildlife to the highest bidders. Seems like Inland Fisheries and Wildlife is catering way too much to Guides and out of state sports at the expense of locals

I believe the MDIFW is doing a great job with Moose management. The greatest issue regarding Maine Moose is winter tick. The MDIFW has implemented some new hunting regulations and zoning to see if lowering the density of moose in an area decreases the abundance of winter tick. They are still in the process of this study but I believe it is a great start to dealing with this issue. I think more habitat management would be great for the species as their primary habitat are becoming less and less available as the logging industry decreases in Maine. Regarding Maine's moose population I believe it is healthy and stable at the moment and as more moose hunters hunt from the road, moose get pushed back deeper into the woods making it seem like the population is less. This is why moose hunting success rate are becoming less and less. Some hunters aren't willing to endure the grueling trek to quarter a moose miles out of the woods. The biologists of the MDIFW should continue what they are doing for the management of Maine moose and the public should continue to trust them with the wildlife of Maine.

I think it is time to take a break from moose hunting. There seems to be a lot less moose now and everyone talks about how they seldom see them anymore.

There are Plenty of moose, as I saw on a moose hunt last year and as several Maine guides have told me, they are simply becoming accustomed to being harvested from the road. Therefore you don't see as many driving down the dirt roads as you used too. They are becoming more aware that a vehicle equals danger, similar to bear and whitetail.

As a non-resident who's been coming to your great state for 50 years, specifically zones 7& 8 there are plenty of moose, however one must get off the main roads now as opposed to early years

Non-residents contribute much appreciated \$\$\$ to local economy

I help a resident guide with the recovery process of moose his clients have harvested and the moose hunt is an event his clients will cherish for the rest of their years

Most clients are residents who end up with hundreds of pounds of range free-steroid free protein

Extend the waiting period from drawing a permit to applying again to 5 years

Four of your residents I know have drawn tags twice or three times and there are those in their 70's who have been applying for years with no luck

The big western states with moose are one and done when drawing a tag

Listing to your biologist at the check stations tell me that the tick problem can be solved but no one wants to hear it (hunters/wildlife viewers/tourist), reducing the number of moose separates them reducing the spread from moose to moose

Your Fish n Game Department does a super job and your Warden Service is one of the best in the country,(having hunted in 17 different states)

Listen to your biologists and wardens and not the "experts?" on Facebook

Moose hunting should be scientifically managed to maintain a sustainable herd for hunting and viewing. The management plan has to consider impacts, however, of all sources including development plans that degrade moose habitat (such as through mining or road construction), and also the effects of tick infestation. If there is a management plan that can reduce the number of ticks that plague moose, the entire ecosystem would benefit. How would one do that? Food augmentation? Spraying? Introduce an additional ten thousand wild turkeys?

I think moose hunting should be outlawed all together! The fact that I've lived in Maine for 29 years and have only seen 1 moose in that time span tells me there aren't enough of them out there!

As a lifelong and 9th generation Mainer, I think moose management should solely be left to state biologists as well as recommendations from outfitters and guides. We must remember that moose populations are still very high, 75 thousand. If you look at the history of the last century, there were actually far fewer moose until Maine started a hunting season on moose. If we restrict moose hunting, it could end up doing long term damage to the moose population. Winter ticks thrive in high density moose areas. Managing moose should not be a matter of anything but statistics and acknowledging how prior and current management plans have helped benefit our moose populations in Maine.

Lots of great comments. I've been going up to the big woods for 40+ years, viewing, picking up sheds, snowmobiling and hunting. Lots has changed. I even went up last week. Over the years this is what I have seen and understand.

- * a lot less moose both sexes and younger. I think the overall amount of them is much, much less than what IFW thinks.

- * the moose have moved away from all those wind towers and high tension power lines. So less area to live.

- * more bear than ever before so more hunters with dogs in the woods. This push the moose deeper in the forest.

- * deer are coming back. More ticks.

- * moose eat both hardwood and softwood so the spraying needs to stop, regardless!

- * more big cats but mostly the coyote/wolf hybrids. I never saw them before. Now the coyote/wolves have footprints following moose and even us. Sleep up there overnight and you'll hear them. I have seen them and a pup. Huge! They can easily take out a moose calf and carry the ticks away with them

- * too many permits. Go to cows only every 10th year and I hate to say it...but stop the hunt for 2 years. Reopen for bulls only with half the permits if, only if, the herd rebounds.

- * do something about the ticks. You could have done this year's ago. What are we all waiting for.

- * tourist see less moose because many are afraid of humans now. Yes there are less but the moose are wiser. Now and then some have never seen us and are curious, few and far between.

- * much, much bigger fines for poachers. The little fines don't deter them. They just don't care. Start at 10k per animal. Why is their life less than ours.

- * no more special hunts for anyone anywhere. One permit for one person only! No groups, no guides, no buddies, no high bidders, no cleaning out zones or islands. None of that stuff! Only 100 permits for out of state residents. Not more than 2000 permits and only after the herd recovers.

We are really only one bad winter away from losing more than half of the existing population.

Given the estimated 60,000 moose in Maine and 4,100 permits, with a 100% success rate (which doesn't happen) means a reduction in the herd of .06%. I don't think hunting can be attached to a reduction in moose. There's only food, water and appropriate shelter on the landscape for a certain amount of any species. Overpopulation is bad for moose. Let's not ignore that. Carrying capacity must reach homeostasis for any species to flourish. Maine's moose are no exception. As consumers and non consumers we need to accept that flourish does not correlate to overpopulation and abundance.

I Think you significantly miscalculated the loss its roughly 100x larger than your number; If we assume the 60,000 herd number you quoted is correct the math would actually be. $(100/60000) * 4100 = 6.833\%$ if you were to assume 70% success rate it would be 4.7833%. Either way a 5ish percent reduction in all cause mortality from a singular issue in any population in a single year is very high unless the animal has a extremely high fertility rate. Also how are we determining carrying capacity? Because I haven't seen a single area in northern Maine where moose have excessively exceeded carrying capacity to the point the population has a mass collapses due to starvation or mass animal sickness cause deaths. Realistically due to weight one could assume they would have the same carrying capacity of a cow which is 1 AU per acre. Even if we go crazy and say its 20x that just the Allagash could support 90k moose with each one on a 20 acre plot. Not saying lets not hunt them as I like to moose hunt and have many fond memories of hunting them and hope to make more but I think we are at a time where we need to work on supporting the herd for future generations even if it means a lost decade.

I feel like the moose management is only done for moose hunters, even though they only represent 10% of Maine population. For the rest of the population that want to see a live moose, out of staters that come to Maine to see moose, the options are very limited, especially in the fall. You go to Baxter (if you are lucky enough to get a reservation 4 months in advance, and even there the chances to see a moose in the fall are very slim) or you go to Greenville / Kokadjo. But , you go there during the rut, the dirt roads are full of hunters looking for moose; if you see a bull you are wondering if it will drop dead in front of you because a hunter got him, you see a lot of trucks driving back and fourth with dead moose in their trucks beds. Is this what tourists want to see? is this what moose lovers want to see ? is this what photographers want? No, no, and no! Why do I have to think about going to spend money in Colorado, Wyoming or Alaska to see moose during the rut when Maine has the biggest moose population in the lower 48. The conclusion is, Maine should have some areas (other than Baxter State Park) where tourists can go and enjoy seeing moose all year round. Kokadjo is a good area to start, there are already a lot of moose businesses there, so not allowing hunting on a 20-30 miles radius will be something beneficial to the local economy, Maine tourism also. We should have people coming from Colorado, Wyoming and Alaska to see moose here, in Maine and not vice versa.

- 1) I like the 3 year waiting period for the next draw.
- 2) Out of Staters keep our economy going - don't banish them
- 3) The last week of the Moose Hunt is very frustrating and only for the committed hunters.
- 4) The Anti-Hunters don't need to hunt - let them buy a permit to show their commitment to not hunting the moose.
- 5) Last but not Least - It is a wonderful Family Tradition!!

Restrict the permit numbers. And spread out the lottery by being eligible to participate say, 10 years after being lucky enough to obtain one. Give priority to residents.

As an active member of Maine's outdoor community, I have seen a large decline in sightings on my adventures into the north woods. 30 years ago you could go for a drive on any given evening and have numerous sightings in several areas in Maine, 2 years ago I drove through the woods from Bingham to Rockwood, then up past 20 mile gate, through the woods to the Canadian end of the golden road then around the top of eagle lake and down to Millinocket. I saw only one moose on the whole drive. Many years ago I would have seen dozens of moose on that trip, and most likely would have had to wait to have one or more move out of the road. I do realize that the balance between a healthy moose population and the safety on Maine's roads must be difficult however, I do believe that we have over hunted the moose population and a reduction of the number of moose permits should happen for a few years. I'm not against hunting for moose I think we have harvested enough for now.

Tourist and Mainers alike enjoy seeing the moose, not just the flashing signs where they use to cross the road.

I spend most of the fall in the northern part of Maine guiding bear hunters as well as Moose hunting. In my observation's in ZONE 4 that the Cow population is dwindling and is not able to support the number of Cow tags allocated. In ZONE 8 I also believe the population is dwindling and in harvesting Cows will not help in keeping Maine's population from declining. ZONE 8 has become a harder ZONE to locate moose in as the population has been falling. I know numerous outfitters/sportsman that have been struggling to locate Moose during the past few hunting seasons.

I think the moose population is in great shape overall.

My concern is all the anti hunters pushing to end moose hunting here in Maine.

I Strongly believe it should be severely reduced or eliminated. I live in a very rural area of Maine and have not seen one for many many years. The surrounding area has been severely logged, so their habitat has been greatly reduced. In addition, huge solar farms have popped up, also reducing where they can roam. Thank you for the opportunity to express my opinion

Driving daily on back woods roads, I have seen an improvement in the number of moose early spring and summer. There are more sightings of bulls but younger ones...few mature, older ones. All moose have looked healthier than in the past few years - less tick infestation. I have seen a decrease in sightings along the Allagash but this has been due to extreme high water levels. Primary issues affecting the population are climate change, ticks, habitats near highways (collisions), and expanded hunting of cows. I try to stay up-to-date on recovery of the moose population but can always learn more.

There should be a moratorium on the hunting of moose until we have a better understanding of how to help their calves survive their first year, reduce the tick population and what role climate change plays into this. We're seeing wetter, hotter summers and warmer winters. We need to give the moose a short break to allow them to recover and develop strategies to help them thrive in the dynamic environment these ancient and sacred animals find themselves in.

I have been very happy to receive two opportunities to hunt Moose. With that being said I would like to see most of the permits going to Maine residence but still allowing out of staters to receive permits in a limited number. The state of Maine is managing our moose population very well especially with all of the private property. I believe our biggest threat against our most population is the influence of misinformation from out of staters that are moving into our state and outside influences trying to stop our way of living both hunting and management. Please keep the moose hunt going I hope my children just soon receive their permit and have the opportunity. Thank you very much for this opportunity

One issue the land. We are building more and more. Heavy population of people and power instead of animals. The ticks are terrible. Climate change is another big one. I don't feel we know enough about the moose population but also not sure many people care enough.

The moose population is down due to over hunting and ticks.

I have heard that Canada gives moose tick medication like we give our dogs. They put the medication in salt licks. Maybe Maine should try this.

Make hunting on Sundays legal. This is more for deer related. Rifle deer season is less than 30 days. Long. Which I believe turns into 24 days of hunting. If you work M-F 7-4 you do not get a chance to hunt. Leaving you 4 Saturdays a year to hunt. Keep giving out more tags each year in hopes to drive the population down. If you made hunting legal for the weekend. You would have more deer harvested. Hikers and people in the woods can stay close to the trails which gives them legal protection. Also they do it the other 6 days during the week. Make Saturdays legal.

-I feel like Maine's moose population is dwindling and without intervention will be a critically low levels.

-Warmer winters and hotter summers means more moose will be lost to diseases from a booming tick population, hunting stress should only be used when populations are stable.

-I feel like the moose population is only ever talked about in terms of being overcounted by parties directly involved benefiting hunting. A 3rd party population study should be conducted honestly.

I have been up North where as a kid where I would see several moose a day, I've only seen two moose on few trips last year, only one this year. In my opinion, all moose hunting should be stopped for a period of time until the moose population can come back no matter how many years it takes. I know people make money off the moose hunting, but if there are no moose, there will be no money to be made off it eventually if there are no moose to hunt in the future.

Reduce the number of permits issued by several thousand. Eliminate the lodge permits.

Reduce or eliminate cow permits. Eliminate any type of monetary auction of permits. Prevent harvesting of young bulls.

We need a comprehensive plan to save our moose.. We need stricter hunting laws, mostly less permits given to kill moose. I am ALL for hunting, but I think we all see less moose than ever, and I think we all could say we need less killing right now, in order to save the species. I live in central Maine, Moosehead region.. we used to see moose all the time. Now we don't. They are rare it seems.. I'm all for bringing these majestic animals back! We also need new legislature/funding and solutions to the tick problem! I would be all for any feasible solutions which are safe.

Some here is like zone four have been hit hard by the tick population, has anything been done to try to combat this, such as tranquilizing an animal with a heavy tick and applying substance like once (used on dogs and cats)

The state unfortunately loves to make big money from selling the herd, MOOSE AND DEER are getting killed off just so the state has more money to waste. Implement a 8PT rule for Deer / Moose and don't kill the females. We used to see moose and deer any day of the week with a simple drive now it's a couple times a yr.

Stop killing all the females. Without the females the moose population is going to continue to drop. Issuing too many permits also.

I think its clear reading the comments there is a consensus on several things.

-Loss of faith in Institution.

--IFW needs to get in front of this as many people whether correct or incorrect are extremely disappointed on the understanding of population numbers and overall herd health in the 80's-mid 00's. IFW should talk to those concerns and explain if its a wrongful associated concern and clearly explain why it is; as well as any concerns on management that were justified and how IFW is or will be address that management practice going forward. This should be done in a mini series televised manner as we need more open transparency. This should not be done in a manner that only sheds a good image on the institution and those who previously worked there it should be a honest review by the current staff and start the conversation on how we move forward and the processes we plan to use.

--In light of more recent events IFW also need to address the enforcement side to address as well due to what seems to be a loss of faith in the institution. There isn't just a bad apple but many people have complained about Wardens not complying with Terry stop requirements when detaining them in boats, hunting, fishing etc..

- Permit Allocation

- Stopping the Adaptive hunt.

- Lodge Sales of Permits should be revoked and there should be no profiting off of the sale of permits. note: Peoples comments are not against hiring a guide once someone is drawn. Many feel like Guides and other economic beneficiaries have been given to much priority over the last 2 decades and their voice is disproportionately weighted in there favor.

- IFW needs to do review/investigate of concerning practices of some registered guides.

- Reduce Permits. Many feel we should be drastically reduced with many people feeling at a minimum cows should not be hunted for the foreseeable future and possibly even a several year moratorium on moose hunting state wide.

- many want the Stopping the competitive auction all-together unless the permit numbers are very low and all funds go directly to moose management not other projects or the states general fund.

- Addressing Tick issues

- Its overwhelmingly supported in the comments that the people want the state to look into possible air drop or placed mineral blocks with Anti-Tick additive. With the understanding that any additive should not contaminate the environment or render the animals unsafe for eating.

-Environmental & Population management

-- State as a whole should be looking into the negative wildlife impacts of Monocropping of Forestry and Agricultural land and stop allowing bad environmental and wildlife practices to have economic advantage. For example remove tax incentives for forestry and Agriculture operations that have these practices. This should also apply in toxic herbicides being applied.

-- State should launch study programs on all species with citizen cooperation to place game cameras to help identify animal populations. This should also revise the Game Camera Laws to allow it for easier placement of marked cameras on non-posted property when they are set a specified distance from residential dwellings.

1- I feel as though the population is dwindling and if we aren't careful they'll be on the endangered species list before we know it.

2- ticks are an issue to our population but so are hunters. The moose need a chance to repopulate and we also need to stop issuing so many out of state licenses. I understand it's a tourist attraction etc. but how about the people that live in this state year round? Or, have just never been lucky enough to be called.

Over hunting is a huge issue, Maine is giving out too many tags to residents and especially non-residents. There are fewer bulls, I haven't seen a bull on my land in two years (I have two hundred acres in Aroostook with 4 trail cameras spread out). Let the population recover other they'll disappear like caribou and elk did.

I spend a lot of time in the woods, back roads and some hot spots in and around Katahdin/Moosehead regions. This year so far has been a good year for moose sightings, at least 30 since May, mostly cows with calf's. I have lived in the Katahdin region all my life and have noticed moose change their habits constantly, 30 years ago you could not drive by River and Compass ponds without seeing 6, 8, 10 and even a dozen moose. Now if you see 1 or 2 that's a good day. With our temps rising it would not surprise me to here, as one commenter mentioned, there are great numbers of them in the north. If temps continue to rise I think southern Maine will become like NH, less moose. I also believe like others the state is not doing enough to control Winter ticks. Ticks are managed on all our domesticated animals why not moose and deer. I think this can be achieved by issuing a select few paintball guns with repellent in the paintballs, just a thought. Anyways keep us posted

Stop looking at Maine's moose population as a source of sport revenue, and do whatever it takes to bring the population back. It's all about the money at this point and that is sad. The population has been decimated and while some of this is because of ticks (another mismanaged issue) most of it stems from overhunting. Way to many permits are issued in general but the state needs to take a couple years off all together to let the moose repopulate. We spend our lives in the woods and we don't see a fraction of the moose that we used to. Regarding moose collisions on the highways, take a ride through coastal New Brunswick and see how they prevent this. Their highway fences have one way passages all along them that let moose off the highway but don't let them on. Maine can and should do better but so far have chosen not to because that doesn't pay as well.

Do you realize that it was extensive clear cutting that provided the habitat that resulted in the moose population booming? And the limiting of that practice combined with the natural maturing of those clear cut areas that have logically resulted in a reduction of the moose population? In addition the moose that are there (and there are still a good number of them if one looks for them and gets off the roads) are much less visible in the type of cuts that are now being practiced.

I spend many weekends all year long in the north woods because I own a camp in Zone 2, I hunt fish and trap and my family has for more than 25 years. The greatest failure in managing the moose herd revolves around one issue,

1. The November Cow hunt, when you are killing 2 moose with every tag. Ever since this began smaller herd numbers have been seen decreasing. Along with much smaller bulls. This is certainly unneeded, and should absolutely be stopped, especially in areas which are not high traffic areas. There are many zones this is not a good practice. Less than 15 years ago it was not uncommon to go for a simple ride and see 1 to 5 moose, large bulls cows and calves. Today is lucky to see 1 moose. I am not sure exactly how the determination is made to say we are managing the herd. To me it seems much more like we are exterminating the herd.

I totally understand reducing numbers in high travel corridors, but what are we doing killing cows in November 50 to 100 miles from hot top this makes ZERO sense

I visit northern Maine at least 20 times a year (Jackman ,Greenville ,Allagash, golden road) hunting, fishing, snowmobiling , ATViing, places where we used to see moose frequently. now we are lucky to see any at all. I really think it is a combination of ticks, over hunting and the need for the almighty dollar. We kill less moose and increase the number of permits. I talked to a Maine guide in jackman last winter who told me he found 36 dead moose from ticks alone. I really think Maine is trying to eradicate the moose all together. when they succeed in that there will be no hunters or tourists coming to our state which leads to less revenue for everyone. why not try suspending the hunt for 2 or 3 years or even every other year. let the population come back a little, it would benefit everybody. (hunters ,tourist ,sporting camps and most of all the state its self.

I believe the population is decreasing. We have a cabin in zone 3. 15 years ago moose were seen all over the place. Now we only see a few.

I believe there are multiple issues facing moose in Maine. The climate seems to be warming allowing ticks to populate all of Maine. The moose may be migrating north where it's cooler. I also believe too many cow tags are issued. It seems to me that the moose population will not grow without more cows having babies.

I don't think any of us know enough. Conditions change and we are slow to adapt. I do know that moose are beautiful and cherished animals, we need to do all that we can to keep a healthy population of them in Maine.

What are your thoughts about the status of Maine's moose population?

-I think as a hunter there is over hunting and the adaptive hunt is a disaster. In the 90's I would regularly see world class bulls and good Cow and Calf populations every weekend. Now I see a fraction of Cows with Calves and the bulls are quite small and don't reach their potential

What do you think are the primary issues facing moose in Maine? - We humans are the primary problem; we have encroached on their environment with our infrastructure. This Infrastructure is causing more accidental collisions with moose and some think the rise in collisions mean populations are too high and the overall population needs to be reduced so less human/moose accidents occur instead of addressing the problem of human encroachment. We need to understand that human development and "Economic Progress" will have largest effect on populations for the better or worse.

Do you feel you know enough about the status of Maine's moose population? -Not sure the population measurements were accurate enough in the past to accurately use the current data.

IFW has tried an adaptive hunt. We should also try the opposite and have a hands off approach by completely closing a similar zone for several years and doing periodic health checks on the population. This will be unpopular with Guides and business that make income off these hunts but the economy should not be considered in this study. I worry the economic values have been put first for too long and its about time we take pressure off the animals and put them first. We shouldn't just have Current hunting vs more hunting study the study should also include a similar zone that hunting is closed in.

I used to see many moose on a 30 minute drive around Greenville but now I can drive around for hours and not see any. It's sad that people care more about hunting than the wellbeing of a species. With ticks killing moose and their numbers declining, I don't think they should be hunted.

Moose are learning to avoid people and auto. Hunting or crashes are deadly for moose. We need hunting to control moose population near roads. Last week a jeep hit a moose and through out the year people die. Balance in our attitude will help the moose survive.

Killing cow moose will do little or nothing to reduce tick population.. every warm blooded animal can and will host ticks.. the adaptive hunt is ridiculous..

Further more, if you have drawn 3 permits you should be out for life.. there's folks that have applied for 20 plus years and have never been drawn.

Being on a moose hunt is an life time experience for kids and adults. Combine the hunt with a camping adventure and canoeing. Bring cameras and smartphones. You will see Maine's beauty off road. You can go on adventures every where in a state that everything.

I haven't seen a moose in years, and I'm out in moose territory all the time. I used to see them all the time growing up. From what I hear, ticks are devastating them in the winter months, in addition to the ongoing vehicle crash fatalities. We shouldn't be hunting them while their population is suffering so much from other threats.

I have seen more moose in the early morning up above Rangely. Their population fluctuates because of deep snow and ticks. Also Moosehead has tour buses. Once saw 28 moose between Jackman and Rangely.

I have lived in Maine for 22 years. When I first moved to Maine I could travel to Rangeley and Greenville area and see moose every time I went. Now, I have traveled to both areas numerous times in the last 10 years and have not seen a single moose. I feel that we, as a state, are not doing enough to protect these creatures. The moose lottery and revenue is trumping our desire to protect this creature. Factor on top of this that ticks are now a big problem for moose. Please, do more to help the moose and less to pad Maine wallet.

I have extensively hiked, camped, hunted and fished zones 4, 8, 9, and 14 for over 40 years. A primary observation is the intense pressure on the herd by professional guides. Dozens of guides in my zones competing for favored feeding areas disrupting natural feeding and bedding. The competition going so far as to block roads and encircle a bedded bull before sunrise creating a Mexican Firing Squad. Time to return a level of sportsmanship. Regarding tick mortality, consider for Ivermectin infused salt licks. Same principle as rabies vaccine bait air dropped around northern new England. What do we have to loose?

We need more Moose and fewer people killing them. Period. Lower the number of Moose hunting permits to....ZERO.

I hope you see moose up close. They like to lick road salt off the sides of our cars.

I personally think we don't have enough around here over the passed couple of years we have seen a huge drop off of the population especially towards our local touring areas for them like Moosehead. Maybe we are giving out too many permits ? Or maybe to many of them are getting hit. Hopefully in the next couple of years we can see that number go up I love driving down the road and just seeing them off to the side in a marsh or bog.

I am concerned about the moose population. I live in the Moosehead region and have noticed a marked drop off in the number of moose. The moose also don't look as healthy. I am aware of the ticks killing off the calves and that clearly must be impactful. I am trusting the state biologists are paying close attention and are making needed adjustments/ policy changes in order to have our moose population thrive.

Less permits and other tick management options besides killing off what moose are left. There is no fence around zone 4 that I know of.

It seems like Maine uses the moose hunt as a huge money maker. Are all these funds put directly back in to moose management?

If you spend any time in the woods it's plain to see the moose population in Central Maine has declined substantially in the last few years. In some areas they're gone completely. I'm convinced the moose herd is managed to raise money for our Fish and Game agencies not for the benefit of the moose herd or the public. We need to take a hard look at these policies, and take away any, and all financial incentives to the management of Maine's wildlife.

The number of permits need to be scaled back or halted all together and the State should instead focus on addressing tick mortality. We aren't going to have any moose left in 10 years if we keep issuing 4,000+ permits per year and let the ticks continue to decimate our herd. The Maine moose is iconic and should be viewed as such... not as a revenue source.

I do not agree with killing the moose population due to ticks! This does not work. There are drops for rabies for racoons, fox etc. why can't the state drop salt licks with tick medication for the moose and deer?? And instead of collaring moose which ends in death due to so much stress on the animal, use something to get tick medication on them...it works for dogs and cats etc. it would work on moose. killing off the moose is not the answer!

I agree with [name redacted].

As I was reading comments up to this comment; most are tick related.

I started to think why not start shooting Moose with darts filled with a Tick killing formula; like what we give to dogs and cats.

Or perhaps drop licking blocks by air scented with Moose attractant with a tick killing formula.

Or just wait it out and hope the ticks decline like they have in my area. I can now walk my dog in the woods without picking up any ticks between the dog and I.

At least this would be one avenue to reduce the Moose slaughter by ticks.

I've said the same thing for years. Even emailed the state about it. I also called merc. They'd be willing to work with the state on a treatment.

Out of state residents should not qualify for a moose hunt in any way, and we should not allow huge dollar amount moose tag sales. They can opt to do a giveaway that's paid to enter. It should always be closed to non-residents. We have residents waiting their whole lives for this hunt.

I think the commodification of moose in Maine is very one sided. Hunting is on a decline and ecotourism is on an upswing. IFW should focus more on increasing population, removing hunting pressure and promoting moose VIEWING rather than hunting.

4a adaptive hunt should be limited to calf only or cows without calves. If a hunter kills a cow with calf or calves odds are the young will die throughout that following winter. The IF&W should better inform hunters on the progress of the adaptive areas i.e.: winter tick to winter kill information, Is the actual experiment trending in a positive direction. The smaller WMD's need to cut back on permits or open them up to a September season. From my understanding zones 7,8,and 9 are one week season due to leaf peeping and areas being a tourist destination when in reality all the same activities are going on throughout the Oct season.

Resident in zone 3, grew up hunting/fishing in zones 3,6, 1, and 2. I cannot speak for those in other areas especially central/southern Maine, but up north I cannot agree with anyone saying our population is "hurting" in northern Maine. I've spent hundreds of hours and put on hundreds of foot miles shed hunting the past few years and I can say there's still a lot of moose in the woods and I have found very few dead moose in the spring. As many as 20 years ago, no. Our population had declined but it's still healthy up here.

Our biggest issue we face is #1, our wildlife biologists in Aroostook county can't get out of their own way and have not a clue about our deer or moose population. They are simply Augusta puppets and need more time out in the woods where the animals they study actually are. Secondly, if Inland Fisheries and Wildlife think burning 300 acres at a time with glyphosate is not contributing to our moose population decline, I'm not sure if there's much hope for change. We need to continue to harvest the north Maine woods because it certainly benefits wildlife. But defoliating township size parcels to turn into black and white spruce plantations has gotten completely out of control.

I love hunting and grew up here in Maine. These are my thoughts!

-Less permits.

- More research on a possible tick deterrent that could be given to moose.

The Maine Fish & Game Department is responsible for the greatest mismanagement of any game species. For 30 years the fish & game department said there was 30,000 moose in Maine with no evidence, just the ole dart throw! The state of Maine use the moose permit to money to fund other projects and not properly manage the moose herd! Once the state of Maine actually used the scientific formula that Alaska had been using to estimate their moose population for 50 years and NH had been using the formula for 20 years the State of Maine figured we had 70,000 moose. Nearly 2.5 times the population the State of Maine said we had. The State that managed the moose hunt for money should have been issuing 12,500 permits a year for the previous 20 years, ironically lost 10's of millions of dollars if they had actually put some of the funds into actually managing the moose herd!

The moose population exploded in the 1980's due to the spruce bud worm infestation which resulted in major land owners to clear cut their lands. Twenty years later the tree huggers got the clear cuts banned and then those same people started complaining that there were no more moose. The moose were there but they couldn't see them from the road because the clear cuts had grown up and no more allowed. The State then appeased the tree huggers with no factual evidence the moose herd was decreasing cut the number of permits. Then the State of Maine finally spent the funds to actually use a proven scientific formula to get a good estimate of the moose herd. Opps, we found there were 70,000 moose instead of 30,000 like they said fir 30 years.

All of what I stated if fact! I have had a cabin in Zone 4 for 34 years and have been a registered Maine guide and have guided moose hunts for over 30 years in the heart of zone 4.

Now we have ticks and moose in southern Maine! Why??? Due to the overpopulation of the moose herd caused by the Fish & Game Dept. The primary reason animals expand their range is due to over population. What is natures way to correct over population?? Disease!!!!

I'm not a biologist but I have been a guide for over 30 years and an Engineer for 35 years. As an engineer I solve problems for a living and this is an easy problem to solve.

The State of Maine once had the best moose hunting in the world and the State of Maine mismanaged this wonderful resource!

Agree with nearly all of your facts. Habitat is the key to any species population status. Clear cuts caused the boom and restricting that practice did result in less ideal habitat and consequently fewer moose. And like you said, the perception was that there were even less moose than there actually was due to the limited visibility of those maturing clear cuts and the switch to different wood cutting practices. Could the state have done a better job? Probably, but 20/20 hindsight is great. Maine still has a pretty decent moose population and though the success rate for the hunt is down form the boom years it is still one of the most successful places to see and hunt moose in North America.

Less permits being issued. We've gone overboard with the number of permits issued since it opened. It's not just ticks hurting the population it's bullets too. It would be nice to see the next generations get to go on moose hunts too.

Protect the herd, seems like having a later cow season this year is really going to decrease them! Let's review other options for ticks, not the moose! 🦌

Don't see the need for cow hunts every year. Protect the herd more then offer a hunt. True conservationists (like most hunters are) want a healthy herd when we get the luck of the draw in the lottery.

The Moose population is hurting and way overestimated. The hunt needs a moratorium or a huge shrinkage in permits that affects only a few districts. The adaptive hunt was not peer reviewed and quite frankly absurd. The mid state areas such as Abbot, Bingham, Pierce Pond area have seen a reduction of outrageous proportion. The ticks began to lessen several years ago and district five around the Mooseeuk Lake area has never shown any great loss due to their predation , but numbers have dropped drastically. The permit Guide option should cease and should have never been implicated. Allowing a citizen to auction off a Moose is egregious at best. I have spent 30 years as a Master Guide in the North Woods. My wife's Uncle was a warden pilot, her father a warden, her other Uncle a 35 year timber cruiser out of Comstock. They all are very aware of the population drop and very disappointed at the management. The Moose is iconic and economically speaking worth far more alive. Hunting needs to stop until the numbers rise and the numbers have never been too high for the habitats I've witnessed. Mooseeuk and the Russel stream areas at their peak were never carrying too many as was the western areas between Greenville, Jackman and the Enchanted. There is tons of habitat virtually barren.

My understanding is that moose in southern Maine are increasingly dying from ticks. So maybe we consider reducing hunting permits for moose and raise their numbers. Ticks are only going to get worse.

I have been a Maine resident all my life. I have been putting in for the moose hunt since I was 10 and now I'm 25 and still have yet to win. The point is as much as I really would love to win a permit I agree with everyone on here this hunt needs to be less permits handed out and the cow hunt needs to be shut down or the entire moose hunt needs to be for a while. Growing up I've been on 2 moose hunts that my relatives have won my first was back in 2007 and the amount of bills that we seen was awesome we were confident we could pass on small bills and wait for a bigger bill with the amount of moose we were seeing! My next one was in 2018 and we hunted all week and only saw 2 and we had to shoot the second one because we didn't dare risk not seeing another. This may not be the solution we need but we need to try something and not by killing as much cows in zone 4 as possible it is very counterproductive. Then again I'm not a biologist but as a Maine guide and a wild game butcher I would hate to see this awesome animal get to the point where we can't even see them or hunt them anymore!

My belief is that the number of moose permits definitely needs to be reduced, and I would go so far as to even say that the hunt should be stopped for a few years. I would love to see the numbers on how much revenue the state takes in for the moose hunt, and I'm concerned that the potential loss of that revenue biases management practices. I am not coming at this from an anti-hunting standpoint; I am an avid hunter and love seeing a bull come to a call. We are told the moose numbers are still strong, and that decreased success rates over the last few years are due to moose being further back in the woods and away from the roads. I walk many miles each spring in search of sheds, and get pretty deep into woods, and, at least in the areas that I see, which should be prime wintering areas, usually there is very little moose sign, especially compared to just a few years ago. Winter tick is obviously a problem for our herd, but the driving force behind the ticks is climate change, and while I understand the reasoning behind the state's management plan, I am becoming more and more skeptical that it will be effective in the long run. If there is not a monetarily feasible way to treat the moose for ticks, then I say let nature take its course. They will survive, or they won't. I've seen death by ticks firsthand many times, and it's not pretty, but it is natural. I am familiar with the compensatory mortality theory, but at this stage in the game, it's hard to know how many might survive ticks without hunting pressure, and we are taking away any chance for natural selection to occur.

I am an avid hunter and own/rent a camp in Northern Maine. I have had the privilege hunting in the North Maine Woods since I've been old enough to carry a gun and have never missed a fall partridge hunt in 40+ years. I've been on many moose hunts, and was a successful season permit holder in 2018 (Bull-Zone 2). The first moose I ever saw up close was in '84 when I was 16 yrs. old and called a in a beautiful bull for my dad on my grandfather's hunt (dad was sub-permittee). I've kept sighting records since 1999 of every moose I've seen and thought it might be helpful to show the numbers. For context, the average days in the NMW varies between 4-8 days, with an average of 6 covering most every road in zones 2 and 5. The numbers speak for themselves.

1999- 7

2000- 10

2001 -10

2002 - 8

2003- 18

2004 -34

2005 - 26

2009 - 14

2010 - 19

2013 - 17

2014 - 10

2015 - 5

2017 - 8

2020 - 8

2022 - 9

2023 - 5

I left out some years when the days in the woods were below 4 and therefore not a good sample.

The way I see it there are three options. One, kill the ticks. Two, stop killing cows. Three, lower the permits issued. I trust the biologists numbers for permits being issued. We are not over hunting moose in my opinion. If the state is unable/unwilling to kill the ticks then we must go the way of the deer hunt and harvest bulls only. If the permits being allowed keeps shrinking then the out of state permits must first stop. Listen to the guides, they know what they are talking about.

One thing that hasn't been discussed much in this forum and that is the chemical spraying that is being done by paper companies. Could it have an impact? Any studies to disprove this? A discussion for another day.

I speak for everyone when I say the State has a valuable resource in its moose population and we need to do more to protect it. The population is in the balance and I fear if nothing is done the moose we all enjoy will slowly disappear.

Forgot to say this, we need to lower the amount of permits given out —I say that just based on Being resident and I don't see nearly the moose that I used to see and sadly many of them are very sick.

I think you all do a great job... And thank you. I'm not a wildlife biologist so I don't have the answers, but we need to find a solution to the tick infestation that is cruelly killing our moose. I don't know what it would look like... But I envision helicopters blow darting a tick repellent into moose. Of course, this is not practical, but something has to be done. It would be great if we could cover our state with some kind of harmless pesticide and to end ticks that wouldn't harm anything in our beautiful environment, but that's not the answer. Tick tick tick control is my main concern. But the answer is?

New Hampshire and Maine have shared the same issue with the winter tick. Yet both states have taken a different approach to dealing with the issue at hand. I don't believe that we should give more moose tags out to kill more moose because of the ticks. I understand the logic behind it. If you kill all the moose than the ticks won't be an issue. However I believe if you did the opposite and gave less tags out giving the herd a natural chance and opportunity to beat the winter ticks rather than thinning the herd

I think that the moose hunt was a good idea when it first started but I think it's long past its prime I think it's time to stop for a few years and do some research and find out where the herd stands between hunting and the ticks the species has taken quite a hit I sometimes wonder at this point is it just a money grab for the state or is it really about management of a species

Get rid of the zone 4 adaptive hunts for starters. Killing perfectly healthy cows in November after they have been bred is so counterproductive to the issue it is literally mind blowing. Yes I agree winter ticks kill a vast majority of calf and yearlings. But combating the tick by killing the moose and the possible offspring that those moose will have is the reason zone 4 is becoming a less and less desired location where it once was one of the upper echelon zones. I have had permits in that zone and have been visiting that area north of the golden road for 15 years now and is on a severe decline. I believe the way to combat the loss of moose by winter ticks is actually attacking it at the problem themselves. I think there definitely are ways to combat them other than killing its host. Out west I have read different articles that ranchers hang a treated spongelike tube at a particular height over head of trails that cattle use. It is treated with a chemical that kills ticks and other parasites. When the cattle walk through the trail they duck under the tube and it follows in contact along the back of the cattle thus treating it every time it walks under it. If you found an area that had moose with high concentrations of winter ticks then you could deploy something like this on the trails they use. I feel like this kind of treatment could be used year round and would develop significant support and volunteers to help cover the areas. Just spit balling I guess but there has to be other options to explore than killing cow moose.

How many people killed in the last week because of moose I believe that is why the moose hunt started

Stop handing out cow tags like it's candy. Reduce the number of tags only let Maine residents draw. Have earlier season for cows only one week. Go back to the moose seasons like it was 20 years ago. This new system isn't designed to help with the tick issue only destroying the moose population. Stop the cow hunt for a few years and reduce the bull tags for a few years.

There has definitely been an intentional over harvest of moose here in Maine. The moose population is hurting and it seems to be just a money grab nowadays. They need to stop the cow hunt for the next 10 years minimum and limit the bull harvest until the population can become sustainable again. I would say to also get rid of lodge permits because they take away permits from people that could actually use the meat and give them to the elite people that can buy whatever they want whenever they want that only want a trophy. Limit the permits to Maine residents until the population can rebound to sustainable levels.

Cow hunts are to late in the season shoot a mature cow chances are she's pregnant so your not only killing one your killing 2 if not 3. Killing more moose isn't solving the tick problem at all only making less and less moose each year. Have two weeks of moose hunting early and that's it give out some either tags like the state used to go back to how it always was. The system at this rate the way it's going we won't have any moose in 10 years.

It makes no difference from a population perspective when cows are harvested. Yes they are bred when taken in November, but take that same cow in September before being bred and the result is the same. Come spring neither will produce a calf.

You should have a forum on why people shouldn't be drawn multiple times before someone who has never been drawn their entire life. Your point system is ineffective

Black spruce monoculture causing habit loss has to be the #1 issue. Everything else if an effect of monoculture.

I am in Western Maine around the Wilson Mills/Rangeley/Eustis/Coburn Gore areas nearly every weekend including several long weekends and vacation weeks in the summer AND winter. Back before the Moose hunt began in the 80's we were able to ride across Rt 16 between Eustis and Rangeley at ANY time during the day and see 2 or 3 moose MINIMUM, but possibly 10 or 15 if it were early morning or evening. Gradually that changed and we would see less and less. Today, we can ride for days on end in the evening and never see hide nor hair of a moose. Early morning rides seems to be more productive when looking for them....but it's my opinion that the current numbers in that area are more than reasonable for safety currently.

With that said, I hunt deer in the Burnham area. I've been hunting a 10K acre segment for more than 30 years there, and there were ALWAYS moose in those woods. I've walked up on them in their beds. I've seen them on the hunting trails and in the swamps etc. Then, moose hunting was expanded to that area. I'm not sure exactly when, but I know it's been 10 to 15 years AT LEAST since I've seen even a single moose track in those woods. They completely wiped out the herd and they've never come back. Moose permits are still allowed in that area too. The point of the moose hunt wasn't to decimate the herd, but rather to reduce the numbers to prevent disease and interactions with vehicles on the roads. I've lived in the Oakland, Fairfield area my whole entire life and spent countless hours hunting and fishing here. The last time I saw a moose in central Maine was MANY years ago. Yet DIF&W keeps giving permits to kill whatever we have left here. I have no idea the actual numbers of moose in any given area other then where I hunt. But I know where I hunt...there is absolutely ZERO. I think it's time the moose hunt was revised top to bottom to better suit the WMD and NOT consider the monetized value of the hunt/permits etc. when making the decisions for the populations that are acceptable. I don't think ZERO moose, in prime habitat for more than 15 years is a sign of good management practices.

I don't understand why the allotted permits keep being upped and upped and the population is literally dwindling. The ticks are killing them. Get rid of the cow permit for a few years or down the permits or Maine residents only. It shouldn't be a money grab for the state, like it is. I understand the tourism and money it brings in for the state. But this is an animal that will soon be gone if someone doesn't step up and change something. It's not all about the money!

Our moose population has suffered because of the winter tick.

I believe calves were /are darted to tranquilize, ticks counted and blood drawn and then they are released. How about doing something to treat them for ticks and help give them a chance to survive.

My feeling is that our wildlife is generally looked at as a way to bring money into the State. Moose hunting isn't hunting. Basically they stand and look at the person and then they are shot.

I love seeing moose in the wild and I believe many others do as well. Through the years the times I have seen them has decreased drastically.

Let's at least give them a chance to rally and survive.

The moose population is nothing like it used to be. A ride to Jackman on 201 or route 16 from Rangeley to Eustis will confirm any doubts. There used to be moose all over the place. Now you are lucky to see one. Ticks seem to be a major growing problem. Hunting seems to be reasonably well managed by the permit process but there's more work to do. I'd like to see how a reduced number of permits for a couple years might impact the herd.

Winter tick seems to be the most devastating to our moose population. Though the population is still strong I believe there could be a day where this isn't the case if something more isn't done about the ticks. The zone 4 adaptive hunts are combating this I would like to see an article about the progression. The best thing the folks of Maine can do is to trust our biologists! Maybe a create a database where hunters, trappers, fisherman, loggers, and other land users can report winter kills they've found with photographic evidence and a description of where it was found along with township and WMD. These are the people putting boots on the ground day in and day out and see all of these things first hand. I think this data could help our biologists in a lot of ways. And again TRUST OUR BIOLOGISTS! Our biologists are the ones setting up the hunting/trapping/fishing seasons, bag limits, etc. Without some sort of legal take all of our fish and animal species will be way out of whack. I believe they are doing their job the best way they know how.

Our moose herd is one of the most valuable natural resources Maine has to offer. Our moose herd is dying off from the hoards of ticks that invade their bodies. If you can airdrop rabies vaccines for raccoons. You can treat these moose for ticks. To cover the cost, most Mainer and vacationers would most likely pay a small fee for this. To lose the herd over ticks would be such a shameful black mark against Maine's heritage.

Stop killing our cow moose it's going to kill the herd management hunts are one thing but slaughter hunts are another. Find a way to combat the winter ticks I don't have the answers but together with our sportsman my fellow guides and the biologists I'm sure we can come up with someway, the outfitter tags are the best thing IF&W ever did there being sold to help the guides keep in business. IF&W needs to look very hard at what will happen if the moose herd looks like our neighbors in NH after their big slaughter hunts took their herd to almost absolute extinction. If it means shutting it down to medicate as many as we can so be it if it means a 3 to 5 year shut down we need to look at every option so we have moose in our future

Moose hunting for MAINE RESIDENTS ONLY

They are being hunted to death! Tourists come here to see them. Big money in that. Ticks are also devastating their numbers. They are our state animal. Leave them alone.

I don't think moose should be hunted at all. It's too easy, and we are losing our moose population.

The moose population seems down considerably, but that is based on the fewer and fewer sightings verses any first hand knowledge or actual head count. To me, winter ticks are the biggest issue. It's not popular to say, but I trust the biologists on this. By continuing the moose hunt and reducing the population down to pre 1980 levels, the thought is we can reduce the quantity of hosts and therefore lower tick transfer. We'd thus have lower tick mortality rate and increase survival rates and herd health. We'll have fewer moose but a healthier herd with greater calf survival. I'd rather try this path than let the ticks decimate the herd altogether. Let's put the scientists to work on treating the tick issue somehow.

Twenty five years ago when I got together with my husband, one of the first places he took me was to the Goldenroad up to Baker Lake. At that time, there were numerous clear cuts (which I thought were horrible looking). My husband explained to me, that a clear cut is good for the forest and the wildlife. He said take a look at all the trees beside the road. I did and they were scrawny cramped firs not getting any sunlight or allowed any room to grow. He said when you cut the forest such as a clear cut, you are actually regenerating that land and withing a year, there will be raspberry and blackberry bushes for deer, bear, moose. Also new poplar for the animals. After he told me that I understood the importance of clear cutting. That year 1996 we saw over 18 moose in the week we were up there. You would see them plodding along the road or you could see them browsing in 1, 2 and 3 year old clear cuts. I understood how important it was to have those clear cuts. Another problem is the tick population. He also told me that many years ago we had another tick problem. We had lots of moose. He said when the moose population was almost depleted so would the ticks and thus the moose population would rebound. Which it did. Now we are back in that cycle again. I don't understand why salt lick blocks couldn't be put out in a lot of the areas that have a medication in them which would kill the ticks when they attach themselves to the moose. I also would like to see the state do more clearcutting again on these unhealthy forest areas to allow more new and young vegetation for the animals. I'd also like to see that the Great Northern Maine Woods remain as wild as it can with the campgrounds and places people can camp at. Yes it is always a treat to see a moose, and more fun when my husband would call one in. I think the state knows what they are doing when it comes to issuing the number of permits, but I think also educating the public as to why and how a moose population decreased is also important and what you do to encourage the regrowth of a healthy moose population. thank you

I believe there should be a 2 year moratorium on the moose hunt to allow the moose herd to replenish.

Came here 22 years ago to Penobscot county , and compared to today a noticeable decline in moose sightings. Personally between 4 maybe 5 not sure moose season, personally I would like two go back to two seasons end of September and 2nd week in October predation, ticks, harsh winters and clear cutting the pressure the moose is extreme, really don't understand the last season which cows only can be taken, isn't some of those Moose potentially pregnant so it's like killing multiple Moose with that one shot. Has greed taken a front seat before the welfare of the moose population, just asking. For me it never gets old seeing these Majestic animals and my hope is it will always be there for all to enjoy. An avid hunters opinion.

I believe that there are fewer moose than 30 years ago. However, 30 years ago with the first hunts, it was possible to simply ride the roads and shoot the moose you wanted. Now it takes more time and effort. I.e., calling, scouting, and patience. Our family is blessed to be batting 100% with someone, including distant cousins and family friends, getting a permit each fall and filling the tag. Sometimes it was not a large animal, but always good eating. In northern Maine we have not seen the tick problem that is prevalent in the southern WMD's, however they are here and I suspect will get worse with climate change. In summary, I think that IF & W has done a decent job in reducing the moose population along the Rte. 11 corridor although many can be seen (hopefully before hitting them) just before dark on some of the more remote stretches of road.

I have lived in Maine all my life, have traveled to Greenville and other northern territories faithfully for the past 17 or so years. I can count on one hand how many moose I have seen. I am not a moose hunter. I feel that there are way too many permits issued. I would say not hunt them for a year or even two and let the herd grow. Then limit the permits given to a certain amount of bulls in specific areas.

Leave the cows alone, let them build the population back up, take whatever amount of bull tags a year and go with that. The population has declined. In fact it is half the population back almost 15 years ago. It is not true that the more moose there are the more ticks there are. The ticks are very driven by weather. The population of babies survival is all depending on how harsh the winter are and ticks. Also too we need to look at how many acres are of tree plantations vs habitat. Just my 2 cents

Moose population decline is something I think about often. I am originally from NH where the decline is more dramatic in my understanding due to the presence of brainworm and ticks. I do worry that by the end of my life one of the iconic animals of my home might become a rarity, or disappear entirely the way the woodland caribou did a century before. As for Maine I think that moose will always be here in some capacity, but I am more concerned about the quality of forest in which they inhabit. Some of the forests in the state managed for paper seem almost like fir monocrops. The north woods seemed like an untouched wilderness at first, but when looking closer one realizes it is not as wild and healthy it first seems. The difference was especially noticeable after visiting some of the last remaining old growth forest in the state. I am not personally a moose hunter and they are animals I personally revere too much to consider harvesting. However, I respect the importance of the tradition to Mainers and have some friends who sustain their families with moose meat. I can't speak on the quality of the bulls in recent years so I would defer to experienced moose hunters on this issue. From statistics I have seen, road collisions kill multiple times as many each year as are hunted. This may be more of a transportation issue than a lot of people consider from heavy traffic in moose-dense areas. Most dead moose I have seen were from collisions. Perhaps something could be done about road design or transit to alleviate this threat.

I also wonder about the connection between the deer and moose populations, especially in regards to brainworm. My understanding is with the absence of wolves and the declining popularity of deer hunting the deer population is at an all time high in the northeast which could be affecting the moose population. Perhaps changes to deer management could benefit moose. Of course the most visible threat is the ticks. Most moose I see have ticks or missing hair from rubbing on trees. Climate change is the issue I think about most especially with respect to the outdoors. It's not just the ticks and declining moose populations. I notice the reduced snowpack from when I was a kid just a decade and a half ago, less reliable ice, muggy summers, warmups, and torrential flooding in recent years. Anyone who spends time outside doesn't need to see the supporting data to tell that things are changing fast, and it will be more than just the moose who are affected.

I am young and grew up in NH I don't have as much time observing moose in my life as older Mainers. In the past 15 or so years since I saw a moose for the first time, it does seem harder to spot them in some of the same areas like Rt. 3 in Pittsburg which used to be essentially guaranteed. They also seem to be less common further south. In the MNW where I have spent a lot of time in the past 5 years there seem to be plenty around (once saw over a dozen moose in a single day a bit southwest of Allagash). My understanding is that since they feed on young trees they do well in recently logged areas which explains their abundance in the state of Maine. Habitat loss from logging activity/etc. I would imagine is more of a concern for small mammals that rely on the older forests. I am very curious about the moose population and appreciate the public resources for more information. NH Fish and Game did an online talk about moose populations I attended which was really informative. I will be looking out for any resources and information I can find in the future.

I have a camp in Blanchard and spend time up to Chesuncook Lake. Traveling up I have stopped counting at 25 moose the last several years if you see one you are lucky. With the added pressure the ticks are putting on the herd it makes sense to reduce the number of permits.

People travel from far away to get to see a moose and to see a bull is a real prize. Sightseeing is an important business. At the rate the herd is being depleted that business will suffer. Years ago the logging industry provided a great habitat for moose and that has changed. I believe to help save the moose hunting permits needs to be reduced drastically!

Used to see a bunch of moose in the Bingham area 20 years ago now we are lucky to see a few cows a summer and almost never see one in October while bird hunting. Ticks haven't really been a problem till recently (last 8 years) and in zone 4 we used to see tons of moose and now it's definitely a lot harder to find them. They definitely shouldn't be killing off all the cows that just seems dumb in my opinion. I also used to see moose near my house in zone 16 fairly often in the 90's and now haven't seen one in 15 maybe 20 years but up until a few years ago they were still giving permits out for zone 16. (I feel like it was to burn up people's points knowing they wouldn't shoot a moose).

I have been involved in 7 moose hunts and was fortunate enough to harvest a trophy bull in 2013. My observation has been that those quality bulls have been greatly reduced by over harvesting - i.e. giving out far too many permits.

The majority of moose seen by many have been younger and smaller bulls which indicates that more bulls are not reaching full maturity thereby having a negative impact on our mature and overall population of moose.

I wholeheartedly feel that we should be paying attention to this before we diminish the population.

Overhunting is the first issue we should address followed by ticks.

The first can be fixed immediately while the second needs serious attention...as to how you can reduce ticks without being harm to wildlife.

It's very presumptuous to assume that we as humans need to "manage" wildlife populations (aside from preservation from us destroying natural orders of ecosystems.) Instead of focusing so much on lotteries and hunting, we should be focusing on conservation. Moose are listed in some sort of endangered category in four states. As many have listed here due to climate change and as a result, the tick population, I feel like the Moose population will decline further if we don't take action. It seems like perhaps the state should recognize the consensus from all Mainers, not just hunters. Don't believe me? Put it on a referendum.

I have seen a decline in the Rangeley area. Up until this year, we put a salt block out for the moose and the numbers coming to it had dropped the last few years. Less bulls and calves. A couple years ago we had two moose dying from the ticks. I panicked and called the biologist at the time but there was nothing that could be done. We also ride the back roads and visit places where we've seen moose, signs aren't what we use to see. Recently there have been 3 moose hits in the Rangeley area. Which seems like a lot for the few moose we've seen but we have a lot more people in the area and speed limits seem to be just suggestions now. The moose who have come this spring checking to see if we put the block out, looked healthy, thin but not ghosts. We stopped putting salt out because of hunting. I do not believe I know enough about the population of moose and look forward to any education.

I have been going to the North Maine Woods for over 40 years and am shocked as to how few moose we see now. Been told it's due to ticks but I feel they are over hunted.

I have been hunting the North Woods for over 50 years. In the "old days" I can recall many, many moose encounters while hunting and while traveling the logging roads above Moosehead Lake. One time, I recall seeing 27 Moose in various places, along and in the road between Caribou lake and Kokadjo while traveling home from camp. Those days are long gone!

The moose herd is in serious decline. I still hunt and travel the same places I always did, it is now a rare occasion when I see, or encounter a moose. I believe winter ticks are primarily responsible for the decline. We use to frequently have winter night time temperatures in the north woods of -40 to -45 degrees, now it doesn't get anywhere near that cold. Temperature change has made it possible for the ticks to survive and prosper throughout the state. It is sad to see moose beds in the snow covered with blood of infected moose being drained of their life giving blood by thousands of winter ticks! Anemia sets in and the animal is doomed.

Something must be done to control the ticks.

In my opinion, IF&W needs to significantly reduce the number of Moose permits issued each year, or discontinue the hunt for a couple of years. I know this would result in a serious decline in revenue for the Department, but it is the morally, and ethically the right thing to do at this point in the decline of a resource so valuable to the State of Maine.

Here I go again. I had told myself yesterday that I would stand back from further comment. Instead, as I read all of the thoughtful comments, I am reminded of another threat to Maine moose. That threat is a general lack of understanding of Maine moose, how agencies like IFW manage species, and for that matter what IFW does. We have too much anti-science bias in this country as a whole which leaks into every crack in our society and is largely due to our education which does not foster critical thinking. Years ago we were supposed to be improving the knowledge of children on nature. Instead, here we are, 50 years later dealing with the problem of lack of knowledge and CT skill. Covid helped us realize it. So, IFW, you have your work cut out for you because mistrust, misconception, and misunderstanding gets translated into action that does an end run on the best agency efforts. Trust me, I've been there!

I'm concerned that the moose population is in decline. My understanding is that the primary causes are ticks and climate change. However, I hope that the number of hunting permits is developed based on accurate and up-to-date data. As hunting is one of the few things in Maine's control, hunting should be paused or reduced if the population is falling.

Maine Moose population is in serious decline.

The main contributors to the Maine moose population decline, in my opinion, is ticks, habitat lose(the cutting down of Maine Northern forests) and motor vehicle collisions.

I would like to know more about the health and wellbeing of the Maine Moose population from leading experts.

I forgot to add in my other comment that we really need to stop doing the cow specific hunts (exception of adaptive zones possibly where there is high mortality rates due to winter ticks and/or over population). If we want to manage the cow population in certain zones, then allow some permits to be given as bull or cow permits and allow the hunters to harvest either or. This can be done with trial years in certain zones to see how well it works.

I have owned a camp in zone 3 for 13 years and have witnessed a steady decline in moose sightings in the area. I am an avid hunter and have gone on 6 or 7 moose hunts during that time so have good idea of the changes that have happened. In the early 2000's, the moose sightings were by far higher than they have been in recent years, even though permits to hunt have steadily increased over that same period. I know some claim the sightings are down due to moose getting smarter or going deeper into the woods during daylight and while some of that may be true, I do venture off the beaten path and still say the population has declined a bit more than it should be. Many folks do not come to hunt when they visit northern Maine, they come more to witness the wildlife we have. Due to the decline in population, many are not even able to see a moose when they come and that is very unfortunate. And of course, the hunters who are lucky enough to get a permit, are having a much tougher time than they used to. I think that this may end up hurting more than helping if we do not try and get the population a bit higher than it is now.

The population does seem to be less and I think we should manage the population in a more sustainable way!

I believe there are areas that should be shut down for hunting I used to see a moose every day I'm in the woods now I'm. Lucky if we see one a month. The population of moose are not what people think I spent a week in zone 5 which used to be the best zone for moose seen nothing the whole week and that not just driving around we did a lot of walking in the woods.

Sad to moose succumbed to tick infestation. As ticks are a growing problem in our state is anything being done to mitigate the problem?

Moose hunting is big business. 5k-10k for a guided trip. Political pressure to ignore the reality of our current cougar/wolf/ ticks/ disease situation and the shrinking population of our moose. I used to see a moose every time we went to camp bogs woods wherever. Now it's more of a treat. Once there gone there gone

I have owned a camp for 20 years in zone 1. Have seen the results of winter ticks on calves every spring. Tough thing to witness. This year is the first spring that I have seen calves that made it through the winter in awhile. I believe it was from the lack of usual snow amount. The ticks are still there. When the snow is deep the calves become anemic from blood loss from the ticks and don't have enough energy to get through the snow. They stay in a small area, eat everything in that area and can be found dead there. I'm not sure I agree with the plan to kill more moose to get rid of the ticks. Even the regular cow hunt I have never agreed with. I understand the need to control numbers but has to be done responsibly by hunters. It is recommended to only harvest cows without calves or harvest the calf but who does that. If that calf is orphaned in the fall it is a death sentence. Snow comes early in the north country and with out a cow to break trail for the calf they are done. Good luck.

We need to stop killing cows. If we kill all the cows then there will be no more moose.

I have been applying for a Moose permit since the beginning, receiving a permit in 2012 in zone 11 where my camp is. Since 2013 only 50 permits have been allocated for zone 11. I don't understand why because there are moose everywhere and more every year. My question, why 50 permits in zone 11?

All wildlife populations need to be monitored and controlled. It seems that too many permits are granted every year. Knowing that is a big money maker for the state and the communities where moose hunting is allowed maybe the state should allocate 20% fewer permits and see if the population changes. There seems to be fewer young hunters every year for many social reasons. Maybe that should be taken into consideration. I am seeing mor moose in WMD 23 compared to the past 15 years. Fewer hunters hunting in Maine, increased population, diseases, vehicle deaths to moose, and weather swings all should be taken into consideration when doing a moose study.

Close moose hunting for 5 years and then open hunting every other year under lottery rules. Charge accordingly to make up the revenue loss that this 5 year closure will incur and what the every other moose hunt system would cause. Moose population would increase and success rate for hunters would be much better. If you have concerns about vehicle moose crashes, lower the speed limits in problem areas.

It would help most hunters if was a map of problem areas and accidents that are open to hunters I think I saw one years ago but haven't lately

I'll keep it short and to the point as there's lots of perspectives already on here that are similar to mine. From my perspective the moose population is fair. The decline I'm sure due to numerous reasons such as ticks, climate changes, human population/interactions. Though I am curious as to what us people can do to help the population be better and healthier. Humans cause so much damage to nature, but any effort made to change things makes such a big difference.

I believe the status of Maine moose hunt is in the balance, I don't agree with killing so many cow moose, I believe that his hurts the over all moose herd and it could be done differently limit the cow hunts a lot more and save some moose. I think there should be more research on keeping the moose population abundant because once it's gone that's it. Theres no where close to the numbers there used to be

I believe the primary issues facing moose in Maine are the following

Killing cow moose. Logging practices no where near the cuts their used to be, land access being shut down all over the state. Ticks , and just lots more road traffic even in the north woods, have pushed moose out deeper into the woods. I feel I'm a pretty good judge of Maine's moose herd however we typically don't hear a lot about it from IF&W but I can say your pretty lucky if you see a moose now a days if your not looking for one. It's nothing like when we were younger and you'd see them everywhere. Safer yes but would be nice to see them like we used to.

I have no problem with the way fish and game is handled moose management. I have been on a number of moose hunts and have been very successful every time. The hunters that have not need to get off the road out of their cars and HUNT. Do your homework, scouting is key. I cooperate with fish and game studying the zones where they need more moose taken and that's where I apply for. Also if you really want to help if you draw a cow permit get the kit that the biologist send out and take the time to complete their request filling the samples and turn them in when you tag your moose. It really helps moose management.

This is a second post from me and mostly stimulated by some comments. Having been a wildlife biologist for 50 years, semiretired now, I can say that it is rare for agencies to set license costs purely as a chase after the almighty dollar. Agencies, and I have worked for 4 counting IFW, carefully weigh costs of license issuance, the costs of the management program, and socioeconomic factors in setting prices. The price is ultimately determined by political entities after agency analysis. The permit price is never determined by maximizing the amount of money the agency derives as though it were seeking profit. In addition, management program costs are often offset by federal funds from the Pittman Robertson program. If profit rather than partial coverage of costs were the motive, you would see license/permit costs considerably higher. Additionally, harvest quotas are determined by population and harvest data and not by how much money can be generated for the agency.

I get what the plan is in zone 4. I totally understand the premise. But I am a guide here, and I care about the moose herd and it concerns me that you're only conducting half of the experiment. I have a science degree in a somewhat parallel field (horticulture) and from my experience...there should be a control method zone. Take a zone with similar moose numbers that shares no borders with zone four... And allocate zero permits for that zone for the same amount of time you're doing the experiment in zone four. Then you have something to compare to down the road... Which zone is doing better ultimately? And also it helps with optics/PR for those that say what is happening in zone four is all about money.

I don't know enough to say. I have read articles that report the population is declining due to warming temperatures and tick issues, but I don't know.

Though our moose population remains stable, with some slight declines in overall population numbers, there are a number of threats that our herd may face in the relatively near future. Shorter and warmer winters are allowing for ticks' expansion and population growth, which needs to be urgently controlled. Looking into a control project that uses genetically modified ticks to produce non-viable eggs would be highly effective in rapidly reducing tick population densities across the state. Similar projects in the southern US and South America have been utilized to reduce and eliminate invasive mosquito populations to prevent the spread of mosquito-borne diseases, and have proven to be highly successful. Doing so here in Maine would be an ideal means of greatly reducing tick populations in the state, and as a result, reducing tick-based mortality in moose each year.

Additionally, changes in habitat and species structure in Maine have allowed for an expansion of whitetail deer further north and Downeast than they were historically present. Whitetail deer are a known carrier of the brainworm (*Parelaphostrongylus tenuis*) which is lethal to other cervids such as moose and caribou. In states such as Minnesota for example, increased populations of whitetail deer have led to the higher transmission of brainworm, which has caused a major population collapse of moose within the state, going from over eight thousand in the early 2000s to less than three and a half thousand today. Preventing such a major population collapse of Maine's moose is of utmost importance. Allowing for higher antlerless deer tag quotas in northern and Downeast WMDs as well as increasing the length of the muzzleloader season for whitetail deer in these areas can help to reduce their populations, and further protect our moose herd.

Combating these two threats will only help protect our moose population, while at the same time reducing tick-borne diseases, as well as provide increased opportunities for whitetail deer harvest. As someone who was fortunate enough to go on a successful bull moose hunt here in Maine last October, I want to ensure that our moose population remains stable, and can increase to historic levels. For others to have the ability to hunt moose, these two threats need to be addressed with measures taken to reduce their impacts on moose.

First of all, I don't take issue with hunting responsibly. I don't like the way in which it is permitted here in the state. I understand it's a source of revenue and the state is counting on that money, however the state should rely on input of professionals who know the environment and population of the moose. I understand the population is supposedly monitored and that's how the number of permits are generated each year. Seems like 4K permits are a bit much, I think 1k-2k should be the range, unless we enter a place where moose are attacking people and become an issue. A master guide told me he stopped taking moose hunts because they are being over hunted. In addition to that you have people who are inexperienced who will shoot a cow who's pregnant and nursing. Now you're killing three moose and crippling the future of the population. He said taking a boat out on moose head for a tour 10years ago, he was certain to spot a moose. Now it's no where near a certainty. I think the permits should be non transferable (let's stop the secondary auction market), reduce the permits to bulls only and only bulls clearly over a minimum size... with a sizable fine per 10lbs under or per inch under(not sure how best to measure). They should raise the permit fee also, and this will be unpopular but it should be much higher...\$1000 plus. I'm no expert on the matter but that's my two cents.

I see three problems, first there's the logging practices that are being used now, then there is the tick problem and we are managing this resource like we do all of the others. Revenue first! The herd is in decline and that can't be disputed at this point, the DIFW should have reacted to this 5 or 10 years ago. This isn't or should really be that hard to figure out and correct, but tough decisions will need to be made. With that, a lot of disgruntled folks. First the state needs to do a better job with the logging land owners so that don't kill off new growth after cutting an area. If they won't then ban spraying all together, this practice is also hurting your northern deer herds.

Second you have to cut back on the allotment of tags that are being issued, I would start with cutting them in half! If they truly care about a quality vs quantity herd this needs to happen now. Along with that, you need some how protect the young bulls so that can reach maturity we are over hunting them!!

Now the tick problem is something that we just might have to accept and put in the management plan going forward. They are here to stay unless you scorch the earth with fire. No amount of spraying or treating them is going to make them go away. Start there and see what happens.

I apologize for a second post. It's intended to address a comment about non-resident moose permit distribution.

As a non-resident, it took 18-years to get my moose permit. Apportioning 4% of the total Permits issued during any given year is incredibly low. An apportionment of 10-15% would be more fair. As already mentioned, non-residents contribute to local economies that many guides, fueling stations, hotel/motel/bed n breakfast operators, taxidermy, meat cutters, etc. rely upon as necessary annual income augmentation.

The moose population appears healthy with the exception of the winter tick issue affecting reproducing females and young moose. Maine IFW seems to perform a credible job in managing the moose population. Statistically, I understand the current moose population to be around 60,000 - is that a sustainable healthy level. I would like an in depth understanding of why we are experiencing tick activity in the colder climes of New England weather. Someone suggested introducing an anti tick agent in feed at feeding stations. My concern is will that create a habit that leads moose to rely of feed vs natural browsing? Has the special Adaptive hunting zone yielded any useable information thus far? If it has, has it been published? If so, where? If not, when is it anticipated to be released? Understanding the modality of the tick life cycle, propagated by moose and other species like deer and ground critters as hosts, would be beneficial to determine if the study needs broadening into a holistic study.

Anecdotaly, I do believe the moose population is declining, but I also will fully leave that determination to biologists. Like everyone else, I want to keep the moose population healthy as long as possible. I do not know the best answer, but I would fully support the following course of action:

- 1) Reduce hunting permits annually
- 2) Eradicate ticks.

I do not support reducing non-resident tags. Many registered guides rely on outsiders to come and pay good money for moose and bear hunts. I would actually support increasing non-resident tags, but I know a bunch of residents who have been waiting years for tags and would call that unfair.

As a life long wildlife professional I am positive that there are two fronts that the moose population is fighting and loosing. 1: The pesticides and chemicals used in the forestry and agricultural businesses are taking lives and stopping reproduction. The chemicals can easily be stopped but that decision is financially hard on the operations using them and their political voice very powerful. That is a very hard bone to chew for the departments making decisions on the wildlife. 2: "moose ticks" are killing adult moose and devastating calves. Tick control while not absolute can be controlled somewhat by feeding stations distributing permethrin or other equivalent insecticides.

I agree with others on stopping cow permits temporarily or even pausing the entire season for a year or two. What I totally disagree with is the only give permits to Maine residence's mentality. As a long time very large non resident landowner whom has never disallowed hunting on my properties I would absolutely post all my land if that was to come about.

I appreciate your post. I fully agree with your second point, and also with your kindness towards non-resident landowners. I do not disagree with your first point about pesticides and chemicals, except I have only ever heard rumors about this and never any hard data. Do you know of any studies showing the impact of the logging/forestry industry?

I remember seeing my first moose at 6 years old. (I am 64 now) My Great-grandfather who grew up hunting them with his brothers before deer were common in Northern told me "someday you'll be hunting them again". Fast forward to 1980 and I guided my first moose hunt. 1982 I drew my own tag. I guided moose hunts up until 2021. I have seen the population drop to where I am telling youngsters someday they are going to end moose hunting. Hunters tell me you have to get off the road. I wrote the only book ever written about moose hunting. Back in the 80's people asked me why hunted in the woods? Because it was hunting to me the way my Great-grandfather talked about it. I saw the population take a serious downturn in the early 2000's. This was confirmed to me by Karen Morris who said it was the ticks. At this time I was working for a wildlife research center that had a captive moose herd and we had to treat them every September for the winter tick. So to me the one of the biggest problems we have is the winter tick. Killing off the moose is not going to make the winter tick problem go away as our biologist thinks. That is kinda like saying we need to destroy the village in order to save it. We found during our research the only thing that will destroy the winter tick population is DDT and I don't see that coming back into play. When you couple the ticks with over hunting we are not doing much to increase the moose herd. On one hand, I say better for hunters to take them. Unfortunately the we are taking breeding females in unprecedented numbers. One notable study we did was intentionally infecting moose with ticks. Heavy infestations only killed young of the year. Adults might get weak but they bounced back by early summer. The only problem we saw with adults was pregnant adult females with a heavy infestation would naturally abort. One other problem I see is cutting practices done by one particular landowner. When they clear cut, they go back in and plant a mono-culture. Then they use sprays to rid the plantations of hardwoods. I realize it is their land. They do get their wood to market quicker but the costs are high for not only moose but other woodland creatures. So what do we do? Take the moose out before the ticks do or find a away to control the ticks (which by the way can't be done). The other helpful practice would be to end the mono-culture replanting of clear cuts.

I completely agree with your thoughts on this. It is very clear that the mono-culture replanting is killing needed food for many wildlife species. Cow permits need to be stopped completely.

Northwestern Maine, like the rest of the state saw a decrease in moose. As we exceeded carrying capacity, forestry practices changed and visibility decreased, moose sightings decreased. We lost a portion of our herd to parasites. The WMDs in northwestern Maine took a significant hit. The moose were abundant and the hunting opportunities (tags) were few. Mother Nature took over and did her thing. Kept the carrying capacity where it should be. It's still pretty easy to see some moose if you go for an evening ride. The amount of healthy yearlings has increased in the area I invest a significant amount of time. Suggesting an increase survival rate. Time will tell. We need to ensure the herd is kept healthy. A slight reduction in tags in 7,8,12 and split season sept and oct would help the harvest efficiency and reduce the amount of hunters in the forest at the same time.

One of the effects of climate change that I've noticed is that the temperature is considerably warmer during the start of the hunting season. I'd like to ask IFW biologists if these higher temperatures are changing the peak timing of the rut? If so, should the start of the hunting season be scheduled for a later date to adapt to these changes?

I feel it is critical to remember that 1970 is not when time began in the history of this state. In my opinion what many of us remember in the 80s/90s was a population on the verge of collapse due to over-population. We should have been harvesting 4X the amount of moose that we were through those years, however we didn't and as a result disease and parasitism grew as moose densities exceeded carrying capacities. I see many moose and honestly this year I'm seeing more than I have seen in recent years including some of the more "non-moosey" areas such as Bangor. I feel one key management items that is long overdue and needed is the establishment of a September moose season in zones 7,8 & 9. I strongly suggest the state review the data and lower the permit count from the October hunt in those zones and put that portion of the permits in September. Knowing how the statistical harvest rates tend to run higher in September versus October the data would likely suggest a slightly smaller overall permit allocation for those zones however I strongly feel that would benefit many by lowering potential user conflict between hunters, hikers, wildlife viewers, etc. in those areas during what is normally Columbus Day week and a very popular time in the woods.

In Zone 1 and 2 , in which I have hunted since 1979 for deer , bear, moose and birds, the forestry management practice of herbiciding the broad leafed regeneration , after planting none edible softwood in their clearcuts , by the Irving Corp. controlled lands, has directly led to the loss of herbivore habitat and thus the decline moose numbers. Who knows what other irreparable harm this practice has done to the environment.

I see a lot of moose around the north west edge of Lake Umbagog, mainly bull and cow, yet not overly populated. They all seem pretty healthy and I've yet to see one that is tick sick.

While I realize ticks have been the biggest moose problem of late, I don't think hunting & killing healthy moose is helping them. If it is all for selling licenses and permits so can get revenue for agency survival, there must be another way. We bring many guests to central Maine woods who all buy fishing licenses and also enjoy trying to spot a moose in a bog or by a pond and luck into a photo. We and they hate seeing a dead moose on a truck. This is especially true if viewed as only wanting it as a trophy and not as a need to put meat in the freezer. Offer awards for great photos rather than praise for biggest moose weight/rack.

Hi all,

I've been coming the Moosehead Lake area since I was 10, I'm now 76.

In 1958 we didn't see many moose at all. The deer population was exploding. You could drive the road from Rockwood to Jackman and see several hundred deer at night. Gradually the moose population increased because of the hunting moratorium. By the 70s moose were everywhere. They walked unafraid through Rockwood. It was a joy to see them but it was clear that there was an over population.

So the hunt was reinstated.

Now it is very rare to see a moose even riding the logging roads, used to be a real joy to see this magnificent animal. Those who come to the area now will be disappointed. That is a fact. The moose lottery became a cash cow for the state, so the moose population paid a steep price for this.

In my humble opinion the moose hunt numbers should be drastically reduced. Between, ticks, warmer weather, we are in danger of losing this great animal.

As an avid hunter and guide, it is truly disheartening to see the moose herd decline. And still, more and more permits are given out. What will eventually happen is that fewer and fewer non residents will apply, as well as fewer residents once they realize the odds of harvesting a moose is poor. Once the state realizes the loss of revenue, only then, will they put the proper controls in place to keep the population healthy. By that time, I am afraid it will be too late. At this point there are only "pockets" of moose left in very few protected areas around streams, bogs, and rivers in the Northern, and North Western Zones. Killing more moose to control ticks is like eliminating all flowering plants to control bees.

I am concerned about the effects of climate change on the future of the moose population and the possibility of a push to introduce wolves to northern Maine that will prove long-term to be disastrous to the deer population and negative at best for the moose population. This is based on existing science. Wolves existed with moose in times when suitable habitat was greater and human footprint was far less than at present. I recommend that IFW continue to use the latest and best science, and to fund its own science to inform all future decisions for managing the moose population. I believe it is doing so now, but hope that it can resist any actions to reduce or eliminate rather than expand research. Moose are very important to Maine's economy because there are many from away that come here to see them in the wild natural beauty of our state. Expansion of hunting opportunity, or even the maintenance of hunting opportunity, must follow sound knowledge of population demography and careful consideration for impacts of harvest on each sex and age class. While some tourism involves the moose hunt, and it is important to the economies of some of our northern Maine communities, watching moose is far more important and occurs year around. This dictates careful balance between consumptive vs. nonconsumptive impacts on the population.

Our moose population continues to dwindle as the years go by. Like many other have said, our moose have been hunted too much. We need to give them time to repopulate and come up with solutions to aid in their overall health. I suggest stopping the moose hunt for the time needed so we can build the population back up. This way proper officials can focus on a positive way forward.

Also, the last week of the moose hunt for the cows needs to desist. People could be killing potentially two moose. As the years go by, people get more and more greedy about hunting, regardless if its right or wrong. Another aspect to address is that out of state folks have a better opportunity for a moose permit just because of the money that comes with it. I get moose hunts are prized, but let's keep the prized possessions to our folks.

Moose seem to be in fairly rapid decline here. I would appreciate having a better understanding of the ticks (and appropriate management) and decreased hunting to help them rebound.

I think the moose population has dropped severely in the last 10 years, I have been on several hunts in several districts and seen less moose each year. I also have seen a large amount of ticks on the moose we shot. All this being said I feel Maine should limit the amounts to very few for a few years and also cut down on the amount of bull permits given...let the population build up for a while...all being said, I have seen the warden service out on our last several hunts and want to give thanks for jobs well done, we have seen several roads blocked and laws being broken and they seem to really appreciate the people who are trying to make the hunts as easy as possible, thanks wardens.....

The money the state makes from the annual moose hunt has encouraged the increase in the number of permits allowed annually. This increase has gotten to the point where the herd can no longer sustain its numbers. Cut the number of permits in half until the numbers rebound. Ticks kill nearly 70% of the new calves annually. Introduce a supplement program to the moose that includes something to control ticks that is not harmful. This alone would immediately start the rebound in numbers.

Thoughts about the moose population:

I've watched / searched for Moose in Maine for the last 20 years. 20 years ago, the moose were easily viewed and there were many. The massive decline in the population is evident in all zones now - but when you continually increase the number of tags for hunting to sustain the state finances, and when you hunt cows in fall (which kills the cow, kills 1-2 unborn calves and sentences her this-year's calves to death without a parent to guide them through their first winter), a massive decline is inevitable. I've seen many moose this year -- much fewer than previous year, but still, with diligent searching, seen many -- none of which were covered with ticks and most of which looked quite healthy. Moose watching is one of Maine's draws for tourism -- the decline in moose leads to a decline in tourism dollars.

Primary issues facing moose in Maine:

-- over hunting, chemical toxins... not ticks

Reduce the number of tags for hunting, severely limit the out of state tag availability, eliminate or severely reduce tags in the tourism zones and maybe, just maybe the population will recover. Ceasing glyphosate spraying (it's already outlawed in most countries) would also go a long way toward healthier moose -- if you look at the moose in sprayed areas, you can see visible tumors -- it's a known carcinogen.

Monitor the tourism aspects - there are moose safari's offered by talented registered guides who take care to not scare the animals, and there are moose safari's offered by guides who don't seem to care at all -- not if their clients get a glimpse of a moose and not at all about whether they scare the moose. Some are so reckless as to place their clients on bridges posted with 'no loitering' signs (meaning the people are in a place where logging trucks cannot see them before they mow them down). Some aren't even registered guides -- which begs the question why IF&W requires some of us to go through the work to be a registered guide and doesn't seem to care if others are not.

What do I know about the moose population in Maine?

What I see is generally more credible than what I read on a website sponsored by a department that is financially supported by selling and auctioning more tags. Moose MANAGEMENT is not an excuse for decimating a species -- it is much more than just selling more tags to augment a state department's finances. It means doing what is best for the moose -- in terms of stress put on the animals by hunting, tourism, and natural predators and by providing good habitat. It requires getting out in the woods and actually looking at and knowing the animals in the zones. There are people at IF&W who do this, but they aren't the ones making the decisions. Looking at a spreadsheet, picking data that supports an agenda and discarding the rest is not management of wildlife.

Look at what we actually do to these creatures. Hunting has a place and most hunters I know are very conscientious about when, what and how they hunt. Many refuse to participate in the cow hunt because it isn't ethical. Tourism has a place when the moose safari's are managed well -- when the guide is registered, knowledgeable and careful not to stress the moose (nor block posted roadways) and takes the time to search out likely viewing spots before and during the season. When the guide is not registered, drives recklessly, has a van load of people standing on a single lane bridge posted with 'no loitering' signs, screeches into a spot with a moose and scares it -- that is just as wrong as overhunting.

I haven't seen a moose around where I live in years. (Bowdoin)

The ticks are bad for both moose and human populations. I don't understand killing more moose to have less ticks. I don't think that would work on the human population either.

I think that the moose population will continue to decline because of the amount of people moving into Maine which creates more collisions with moose and allowing so many tags during hunting season. It would be nice to see less tags being handed out to help sustain the population because we know that we cannot control the influx of new residents moving here that are not familiar with coexisting with moose at night on the road. Ticks don't seem to be as big of a problem by me but brain worm is something that we commonly see. I'm in Burlington



I've lived in Fort Kent on the edge of the Big Woods stretching toward Allagash for over twenty years. Moose numbers are down considerably. I used to see them almost daily on runs with my dog team on logging roads through the Irving cuttings and on the smaller trails. Their biggest hurdles are not feed related, there's plenty of browse, but poaching is a real concern, as are the winter ticks. I found a big snow bed right beside my driveway (it's remote) that was coated with blood four springs ago. I saw the mother and her two calves not far away. She did not look well. The mother was well known to me. I haven't seen her since that spotting. The calves were a common sight for a year or, still traveling together, but haven't seen them in two years now. Commutes down Route 11 were routine every other week for me. Number of moose sightings on that road has dropped considerably. IMO number of permits issued and hunting season dates should be changed so that out of staters who are dumb enough to pack a whole moose home to show off to their friends won't be wasting an animal's life and spoiling all that meat. Way too warm. It's too bad tick meds can't be laced into salt blocks and placed by the wardens in remote areas far from the roads.

Everyone saying there is a noticeable decline is absolutely correct. I have spent a LOT of time around Moosehead Lake for 30+ years, in all seasons, and we always saw moose even 10 years ago, and more the further back you go in time. Now, we will go partridge hunting 10 times between sightings. I also work in the woods all over Maine and have seen moose sign all over, but not so much in recent years.

If this is due in any part to the number of permits being issued and a cut-back is being contemplated, I will step on the 3rd rail and say that the out-of-state permits should be limited first. The excitement and memories surrounding a moose hunt for those of us who are residents, FAR outweigh the money that comes in from visiting hunters.

I scored and filled a permit 5 years ago or so right by Moosehead - my only one in nearly 30 years of trying, and it was the hunt of my lifetime. I will note that the critter was on the small side, and did not have ticks. I do see 2-3 moose (2 bulls and 1 cow) on trail cams we have set up on land we own up north, but I have yet to see them with my own eyes.

I want the Department to follow the science to make the best decision, not the feelings of any one group. If population is declining, identify all key sources, limit their impacts, take proactive measures. I am an avid deer/waterfowl hunter in ME. My ethic is to only hunt animals with level or increasing populations. There are too many pressures on wildlife to do it any other way in my opinion. If hunter harvest is driving down populations, back it off. If it's other factors, like ticks, work on a solution.

I think IF&W has a tough job trying to figure out how to manage the moose herd. My understanding ticks are major killer of young moose. I have seen pictures and they are awful. I also understand there is not yet a solution to this tick problem and how to combat it. I understand the one WMD is trying out a higher moose kill to see if they are perhaps passing it to each other. I have confidence in the Me IF&W's scientific approach.

Over the last 30 years, I have only seen two moose in my area, Auburn/Lewiston, and few moose elsewhere in my extensive hiking in rural areas in Oxford, Androscoggin, Franklin and Sagadahoc counties. I understand that moose are under pressure from ticks. Years ago I understood that the moose were relatively tame and seen more frequently. Moose are iconic to Maine and perhaps we should stop hunting them so that we could see them more. There are plenty of deer for hunting.

I have lived in Maine for 8 years, and have been visiting Maine for 20 years, and have only seen moose two times in my life. They have enough problems to deal with like climate change driven ticks. Why do we also want to allow humans to kill them on purpose? I think the amount of tags per year should be reduced significantly, and there should be two year periods with no hunting to allow their population to grow.

I think between ticks, sprawling towns and a good amount of hunting, the Maine moose population deserves to be monitored fairly closely. Technology allows us to implant and track all kinds of parameters but it takes funds and know how. In collaboration with the Univ. of Maine system IF&W should be able to come up with solid management plans that allows us to get more solid information re. health, productivity and lifespan. That information should help with hunting limits and tracking the movement north if any.

Population is declining. Moose hunting very common for Allagash and Fort Kent Populations inviting outsiders the experience as well. We see minimal moose when we travel north to visit Allagash. Every now and then there will be one crossing the road in fort Kent area. I think if you use the moose hunting camps they certainly give you a guide and the experience to see and catch a moose. There should be another way for non hunters though.

As a state resident who has been going up into the heart of the state my whole life, I have seen a staggering and obvious decline in the moose population. Every year for the last 30 years the number of moose that were around has dropped. Over hunting combined with an ever changing climate that has brought new problems for the moose has caused an extreme reduction in the moose population. We have watched it go from seeing 15-20 in a week to 10-15 a week, to 5-10 a month, to 1 or 2 in six month and now we are lucky if we see a moose in a whole calendar year let alone a week. I am glad you are allowing this conversation, I just hope it isn't too late to help them rebound.

Throughout the past ~10 years I've only seen two moose(one up north, one raiding an apple orchard while traveling), and seen tracks of a couple in my area, but the population is definitely on the decline.

I'm no biologist, and I'm a fisher not a hunter, but I'd recommend giving less permits out for a few years (especially in the more populated/less forested areas of Maine) to allow population rebound.

What are your thoughts about the status of Maine's moose population?

I think the population has been declining. I don't see near as many moose now as I did 10-15, even 20 years ago

What do you think are the primary issues facing moose in Maine?

Too many tags are awarded during the moose hunting season and winter ticks.

Do you feel you know enough about the status of Maine's moose population?

I follow it on the IF&W website. If what they say is true, then I guess I'm informed as much as the state wants me to be.

I will add dangers to moose as I understand them -

1) humans. We are the #1 danger. Deforestation, provocation, climate, etc. I am not anti-hunting but do think limits are important.

2) ticks and other pests that cause disease - I believe this is probably the most worrisome biological threat right now.

3) predators (besides humans). Bears, wolves, etc. not as concerned. Around 50% of moose calves don't survive the first year of life and often become food for other animals. That's not a bad thing- can feed and sustain many different species.

Well it all started back when ten years ago I was fishing and sweating season and the blackflies were out and out popped this moose here see. Now I ain't never seen a moose in my life before my papa shot one down in the Allagash. Boy she was long.

While I am not a biologist, it certainly feels as though the population is much lower than it has been historically. This is the trend in other northeast states as well. Winter ticks and loss of habitat seem to be the primary drivers. I am an avid grouse hunter and often find that where there are grouse, there are moose. Finding grouse habitat (and moose) in the southern part of the state has gotten harder and harder. I believe the State should promote logging practices that create the successional habitat that helps sustain moose. I think the State should also take a long term view on the population and aggressively manage the number of tags with the primary goal of maintaining a healthy moose population, rather than happy hunters in the short term.

I have come to Maine every year since the mid 1970s. In the 70s we saw moose every year. In the past six years the moose seem to have disappeared. Whatever programs have been put in place it seems that the result has been a significant reduction in the moose population. Maybe there are too many moose licenses being issued. Maybe there are too many cows being killed.

Regulations need to be put in place to restore the traditional moose sightings for visitors - both tourists and fishermen.

It's time to stop the adaptive hunts in Zone 4. I hunted zone 4 last year. I had a Bull tag and spent 3 and a half days and hundreds of miles and saw 1 bull. The one I tagged. We only saw 2 cows. Let the zone grow back to what it once was please! Yes we spend many hours also walking and scouting. Not saying it should be easy but the moose population has definitely taken a huge dive down the last few years and those adaptive hunts are not helping. Didn't see any ticks on myself or any members of my party. Moose was very healthy and we didn't see any ticks on him. I prob will never be drawn again but I do hope someday to do it again. I know it's all about the money but it may be time to cut back a year or 3 on permits to let the population rebound.

I am a medical student and naturalist from Vermont who grew up in southern Maine. As evidenced by a weekend trip to the Rangeley area last week, if I am actively looking for moose, I will find them. Over the course of two days, my partner and I located and photographed approx. 18 moose. Highest density at dusk in July from my experience. I think fellow Mainers/some out of staters drive too fast on roads with high moose counts and are putting their lives and the lives of others (incl. moose) at risk. I drive at least 15mph under the speed limit once it begins to get dark, and I'm sure that is unpopular to a lot of folks (I was passed multiple times by cars going 60-70 mph in a 50 mph zone). Amazingly, there weren't even any moose alert signs at this particular area. 5-7 moose were in the middle of the road and required me stopping my vehicle, sometimes with only the glow of their eyes in the distance as warning. It is no doubt in my mind that folks who think the moose population has declined are not actively searching. Moose are generally solitary, isolated creatures. However, if you are actively searching for them under the right conditions, you will likely be rewarded.
Moose populations in my area have definitely declined. As someone who walks hundreds of miles a year in zones 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6, there are nowhere near the number of moose or even moose sign as there was 10 years ago. Ticks and, as much as I hate to say it, over permitting have taken their toll. I believe this was IF&W's strategy with the adaptive hunt, special Aroostook County hunts, and the high number of permits along zones with major transportation corridors (reduce moose/vehicle collisions). I don't know if I know enough about the status of Maine's moose population but I do know what I have seen with my own eyes during the last 40 years.
While I think its important to continue harvesting moose due to a lack of large predators, I also think restricting the harvest somewhat over the next few years would allow the population to increase. While I've seen moose over the past few years, I feel like there aren't as many as there used to be.
It is very sad to see the moose population diminish so much over the years. I used to see them while camping/hiking/off-roading frequently, but now you have to wake up really early and go out to specific spots to look for them and it's still difficult. I don't understand why more can't be done to help them with tick infestations and to lower the limit on how many moose are hunted per year until the population makes a comeback. I also think that out of state hunting permits should be reduced significantly as well. Moose are such a staple in Maine and it would be wise to protect them and help them repopulate before it's too late.
I'm 78 years old and have hunted all my life. Use to rabbit hunt and there were always moose around. Now there are no moose. Save the moose, stop the hunting. Let them recover.
I am not an avid hunter; I walked the entire AT Appalachian Trail in 2010 finishing at Mt. Katahdin. I saw Moose up close; they are very tall animals that look right at you when you are encountered. The shock is horrifying; but you must continue walking away and do not stare too long. I would never stop and take pictures of a Moose while hiking. The Moose in Maine I have seen are looking for a doctor or a physical examine. I think our Moose that are still around need some vitamins and supplements honestly. The Moose in Maine I have seen this year are a little thin and scruffy looking.
Winter tick or moose tick is really hurting these great creatures. Not sure how that can be combated ?

I saw two last fall while hunting one cow in New Sharon and a small bull in Jackman the both looked really healthy big round and shiny they looked like they were eating good they weren't afraid of me at all

I think ticks are a serious threat to the moose population. When we drive past moose, we can see from a distance that they're infested with ticks. It's so sad.

There is no question that Maine's moose population has been in decline for at least a decade. I can't understand why the state hasn't stopped harvesting cows until the population comes back.

There not to many Moose around anymore. I think Maine can better get some regulations in place to protect Moose.

Note that some comments had been removed prior to the finalization of the forum because the participants in those instances violated the rules that were stated in the directions for participating in the forum (e.g., personal attacks). They are not shown in this table.

HUNTER FORUM COMMENTS

Lots of good posts. I myself have never had a problem with other moose hunters as they all seem to give space when they see you there or your camp site. Bird hunters just drive the woods non-stop. That should stop the week before any hunt in each zone. Bear hunters using dogs before a moose hunt should also stop two weeks before a moose hunt in that zone or only start after the moose hunt has ended.

One week is long enough! Do your homework and shoot only to kill. I'm afraid more time for a hunt will only lead to more miss shots and more moose dying needlessly.

Never, never kill off calves because of ticks. I can't believe that was even a consideration. Work on killing ticks instead.

I personally would like to go back to mailing in your moose zone pick and go back to the big bingo drum you had with kids pulling out the cards. We all knew that was never rigged. I don't think the computer draw is all that good. You can put the "over so many points" in another drum if that makes people feel better.

I only put in for one zone and only bulls. Let the cows die of old age or predation. They help the younger moose out anyway especially during the winter. Let's find a way to get rid of ticks!

First of all, the moose are in such decline that we need to stop the moose hunt for a couple of years, or quarter the amount of permits awarded. A two week hunt with 1000 permits would bring the herd back, while still allowing hunters to harvest a moose. Bulls could be hunted every 3 years and cows every 6, is another way to bring the herd back to healthy numbers. Cows being shot after being bred doesn't make sense. You end up killing one, potentially two or three, moose by doing so.

Hunters really need to be educated on WMD boundaries. Too many moose shot in the wrong zone. Also, education on more than one cow bedding down together. One standing cow shot, goes down, another stands up and gets shot, too.

Zone 8 and 9 need to have a 2 week season like all the other zones. Bird hunters, bear hound hunters, rabbit hunters and moose hunters over crowd the zone and ruin the hunter experience. This issue has been brought up many time and no action has been taken. A few moose safari businesses complain and the 2 week hunt is shot down. They get 5 months of business and guides, lodges and outfitters get 1 week. My business generates income for the town and tax revenue for the state just like theirs do.

Anyone killing a moose and having it spoil should be convicted on Maine animal waste law.

Hunters should have to be no less than 100 yards from any roadway-public or private. Tourists and others who are anti-hunting are kept out of the north woods by the moose hunting season. While driving through the woods, I had to stop while a hunter got out of his truck with his rifle and proceeded to shoot a moose while he (the hunter) was standing just a few feet from the road. I refused to watch the animal being gunned down. This activity only adds to anti-hunting sentiment among the public.

I have moose hunted many times since 2001, the hunt in Maine has dramatically changed from what it has been. In my opinion there are too many permits being issued in every zone especially zone especially 1,2 and 4.

I believe there should be a requirement that a guide or lodge owner has a facility that actually exists in the zone that they put in for a lodge tag for otherwise they don't get a lodge tag or are not eligible for the drawing.

The season dates are fine and if there are enough moose and less tags the issue of the season length would not be a discussion because there would be moose to see again.

I also have talked to many sportsman that would agree and feel that a "Blood Law" being enacted would help the Moose population. We have all heard the story's and witnessed a hunter unload on a "legal" moose at last light and "wound" it and not be able to find it because they are shooting way over their capacity at a moose 500 yards away in a clearcut and the animal just goes off and dies somewhere instead of being harvested. So if you draw blood you have to punch your tag and if you don't and the wardens locate blood then you forfeit your chances at the lottery for 10 years and license suspended for a year.

We are in zone 1 it's terrible to see this much traffic and road blocking just too many people. The zone could use a little break not much for nature bulls anymore a lot of young

I live in zone 3. Zone 6 is across the road. I have 80 acres I own and live on. The moose on my property have been in decline over the last 10 years and I blame it on harvesting pregnant cows and calves. We need to cut back the number of cows being killed and put an antler restriction on. Also cut the number of all permits for a couple years and let the herd rebound. I have yet to see a moose on my property this year. Not a track or nothing on my cameras. I have 2 wet holes that always had moose in them. The numbers of moose visiting these holes have been declining over the years to nothing this year. I have been on numerous moose hunts from riding the roads during the early years of the hunt to hiking and calling in the last 10 years and have noticed a steady decline in the herd. I trust the biologists knowledge in maintaining a healthy herd. I just hope the department isn't using the hunts as a money grab.

I have been on 4 moose hunts in the past 8 years. We have successfully harvested bulls all four hunts and had a great memorable hunt without issues with other hunters or outdoor users. We hunted near active logging operations and they were friendly and even helpful as long as we gave them the right of way like we are supposed to do. I imagine some zones may have more conflict, but if you avoid the crowds and do your scouting that should not be an issue. Winter tick is of course a big challenge facing Maine's moose and if the science and biologists believe that reducing the population will help Maine's moose population then that is what should be done. One week is an appropriate timeframe to hunt a moose. Do your homework before you go and a week is plenty of time to give it your best effort. Moose hunts should be the priority over other species during the hunting season as they are hunts of a lifetime; People have 3 months to bird hunt every year but may only have one week to hunt moose. Some people do seem to get more permits than others, and it seems to be the applicants who are willing to put in for multiple zones rather than just a few. The 3 year waiting period should be extended to give those who have not had a permit a better chance.

All moose seasons should be a month long not just 6 days.

For example a September month long season, an October month long season, and a November month long season.

The Maine Sporting Camp Association (MSCA) was represented on a 2023 stakeholder committee led by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (IFW) to address many of the questions presented in this public forum. MSCA's position is that a scientific approach to managing the moose population for both viewing and hunting should continue and that broad discretion should be given to IFW regarding hunting seasons, permit numbers, and permit type. The IFW has a budget and dedicated funds for scientific research and hiring trained professionals to help with the decision making. MSCA understands changing forest habitat affects policies and requires changes now and then. IFW has demonstrated it is willing to make tough decisions, and handle criticism, such as the Adaptive Cow Hunt and a big reduction in permits a few years ago. Their management approach should continue.

That being said, as long as it does not have a detrimental impact on the outcome of IFW management efforts, MSCA supports a longer moose hunting season, a September season in Wildlife Management Districts (MWDs) with only an October season, and efforts to limit overlap of the September moose season with grouse hunting season. IFW public outreach has improved in recent years with educational programs related to hunting on private land and hunter ethics. This outreach should continue. MSCA members too are addressing the landowner and hunter ethics with their clients in the ordinary course of business.

Regarding the moose lottery, MSCA's position is that the lottery is a reasonable and fair way to allocate moose permits. It is unfortunate that some must wait years to draw a tag. But that is the reality of a lottery, and hunters do have other ways to acquire a tag or participate as a sub-permittee. Non-residents are an important part of the lottery, and their allocation of tags should not be reduced. Some non-residents were former Maine residents and own property in Maine. All make monetary contributions to conservation through hunting related federal excise taxes which support wildlife management efforts. Moreover, non-resident hunter revenues have a material impact on rural economies and tax revenues collected as they travel around Maine. These tax revenues benefit all the citizens of Maine.

In western Maine I'd like to see the hunt earlier. Also do not increase the number of permits but go to a two week hunt and make each permit good for one week (like the old Turkey permit system). This would help mitigate the conflict I see so much discussion about. Guess I've been fortunate not to have experienced any significant conflict.

Guides blocking a road without land owner permission: revoke their guides license. What I have seen are trucks parked off the side of a road with a sign in the truck active moose hunt in progress most people will honor that. Unfortunately we cannot legislate, commons sense and courtesy of the few who don't seem to care.

Lottery system: after 10 yrs without a permit, you get 5 bonus points.

I'm curious as to why certain zones like 7 and 13 have been co-mingled. More communication on that.

Do not implement a trophy or rack size system. Many people prefer the hunt for the meat and may prefer the first legal animal they can get.

Western Maine could definitely use a September hunt. There would likely be a higher success rate by hitting the time when bulls are more susceptible to calling. It would alleviate some of the traffic overlap with bird hunters. Lengthening the season would disperse hunters which is the source of most of the conflicts and it should increase the success rate. If the number of permits allowed is an acceptable harvest, this should help the department meet management goals and not be a problem. The moose hunt of today is effectively a once in a lifetime hunt for most. You get drawn, you have a longer period in the fall to kill your one moose. This should alleviate some of the conflicts between hunters and stress. In Western Maine in particular, more land use has been restricted the last few years, which lends itself to crowding hunters together. Longstanding gate parcels, new gate closures on Tribal Land and Nature Conservancy land, and storm damaged roads that are not going to be repaired anytime soon, plus whatever current logging activity is going on, all contribute to hunters having a few certain road systems to work with. The department may need to enlist more help from wildlife students or per diem people to collect data if the season is extended but the benefits would be worth it.

I personally don't think that the population of the moose hunt is declining, it's becoming more manageable. When they started the hunt the moose population was well overpopulated... the states goal was to control the population which I feel they have. With more and more people riding on ATVs, trucks and just enjoying the great outdoors today compared to 40 years ago I believe the moose now are more aware and are staying off the roads. They hear a vehicle coming they re-enter the woods. The only gripe I have with the lottery is the waiting period between re-entering the lottery after being drawn. Feel it should be 5 not 2

See lots of comments on guides and others blocking woods roads for moose hunting. Bottom line is under Title 12 Subsection 9602 Obstruction of discontinued woods roads it is illegal to block any road that can be used for the prevention or suppression of forest fires. Only the forest landowner has the right to block or gate said roads.

too many permits not enough moose. Zone 9 should be half sept hunt and half oct hunt. get rid of adaptive hunt. stop shooting calves and spikes. Should only be 2 weeks. One September week and one October week. Combine cows and bulls to first week during the rut more success less chance of shooting pregnant cow. So if you win megabucks once you can never buy another ticket?? Its a lottery, luck of the draw, you don't like it don't participate. The state is money hungry though. You shouldn't loose points for missing a year. The 3 year wait period is sufficient but subs should be made to wait the same duration. Moose are there just back in the woods off the roads, (no clear cutting like the old days). Get out and walk. I have called in 5 in the last 2 years last day of September week not a hunter in the area. I was 100 yards in the woods took 5 minutes and they came right to the call.

Have people who are entering the moose lottery to have purchased a big game license before applying for the drawing like we already do for the doe permit lottery.

I have hunted my entire life, and started as a child with my father and grandfather teaching me ethics, safety, and respect for others. I am a Registered Maine Guide and I train and hunt with pointing dogs. I have been on moose hunts several times. I don't feel that "conflicts" are necessarily due to bird hunters or moose hunters. I feel that it's more of an issue of ethics and respect for other hunters, and I find it's more an issue with people road hunting. If I was going hunting and showed up to a favorite cover and a truck was parked there I would go somewhere else. Road hunters will ride in there knowing that someone is already hunting there. I've had both moose hunters and bird hunters do this to me a lot. The common denominator is they were road hunting. I was on a hunt last fall up north and my truck was parked out at the end of a grown in tote road (one that I wouldn't expect someone to drive as that is what people hunting with dogs look for), and a crew cab truck with 5 people came tearing in the road hunting moose and almost ran over my dog. I was bird hunting, but what if I was set up in there calling moose?? They would've messed up my hunting. It's a respect for others issue. What makes one group of hunters more important than another?? Are you going to shut down bear hunting during moose season also? I had a moose permit several years back and bear hunters running hounds were causing an issue where I was, and I had to go somewhere else. I wasn't happy about it but they were there first and it wasn't my land. If changes are made based on the proposals I've seen on here, I will literally only have 1 week to hunt with dogs that I train all year and have thousands of dollars invested in. Please do not close bird season for moose hunting! How about stopping road hunting?

There needs to be a September season in 7,8,9 and 12.

I firmly believe that all the zones should start in September solely to allow the moose hunters some time to hunt without bird hunters running around. For example there is only a finite number of open to the public places to hunt in zones like 7, 8 and 9 and having bird hunters running the roads with dogs at the same time in October causes a tremendous amount of congestion. In an ideal world everyone would be respectful and courteous of each others time and space, but given the number of comments below about people blocking roads and other reported less than decent behavior I think that time is long gone. I suppose another solution would be to add a week of bird hunting elsewhere and pause it during the moose hunting weeks, I don't know what the correct answer is, but I do think IFW should not be afraid to try things for a year or two and see what works and what doesn't.

I agree with some of the other commenters here that breaking the hunts into multiple weeks in both September and October would help alleviate congestion. IFW could break the permits out so half are the first week and half are the second week to further reduce congestion.

Enforce the laws against blocking roads.

2nd moose hunting week in Zones 8 and 9 to spread out use.

Consider a third week in Zones 1-5 to spread out use.

Move bird hunting start date back to October 1st.

Department should consider having public Q and A sessions in towns located near moose hunting centers to gather information for possible moose hunting changes.

I would like to see the September moose hunt be a two week season. And would also like the October two week season to follow up the September season with no brakes in-between. They are all ready promoting a cast and blast that sometimes starts in late September. I know there's Complaints by the bird hunters not having a moose hunt during the first week of October. Also if non successful hunters could have a chance one more time later in October for a week to try and fill there empty tag that was not filled their previous hunt.

One more thing. Could we have a September hunt in Zone 8, 7 and 12 possibly or the first week of October. All in all would like to see more opportunities to harvest a moose. Had a bull permit in 2021 zone one Oct hunt and never saw a legal bull to shoot. We hunted a lot of key areas and walked a ton in the woods that had plenty of sign. The weather was 80's for a good part of the week. If I had an opportunity to hunt the following week when it was cooler out, I may have had better sighting, possibly.

We have had very little conflict with other hunters while we have been bird hunting or moose hunting during the moose seasons. One year there were 3 vehicles blocking a long road we were planning to go down. There was no access to the area except that one road. We have had more issues from bear hunters running dogs that were cutting off vehicles.

I believe the moose season could change, somewhat have cows and bull permits in certain areas together. Other areas shut cow permits off completely. We do not see moose hardly ever when riding the Stud Mill Rd in WMD 19. I do like the idea of giving a moose lottery winner 2 weeks to try and get a moose.

I do think more seasons could be beneficial in certain WMDs.

I do think in certain WMDs where the moose numbers are down the DIFW could stop hunting for them in those low numbers WMDs.

In WMDs that are allowed 100 moose for Sept and 100 for Oct. I would prefer to hunt in Sept because the rut is beginning in Sept more so then Oct. As this year there are 2 weeks between seasons for bulls and the rut could be close to done in mid to late Oct. IMO.

The Sept only hunting season for Western Me. I would not choose to go along with because we see moose moving around in Sept more so then Oct. when we are bird hunting. We do hunt in the eastern part of the state and not up in the Rangeley area or Greenville.

If the DIFW wants to get more moose I believe they should shut down the lottery for cow permits. If you kill one cow then you are most likely killing 2 or 3 moose IMO.

My only issue/conflict when I drew a tag was an unethical group that drove around us on a short dead end road to get ahead of us to the best spot. We were going to walk in a 1/4 mile. They drove past in a truck blaring an electronic call. Another person recommended trying to hire extra help to patrol for road blocking and similar problems and I second the idea.

I think all tags should go to hunters, not lodges and special groups. If the hunter wants to use a lodge or guide so be it.

lastly, I wish IF&W would figure out how to allow you to apply for all the units you would accept a tag in. Currently you can rank ten zones or have to accept any one of them. There are two or three zones I absolutely don't want. Why should I have to limit my self to ten choices just because I don't want to get stuck with two or three zones I don't like out of all the choices. Some of us unlucky people wait years and years to get drawn and don't want to get stuck with that one bad zone! There has to be a bunch of computer geeks out there that could program some code to fix this little problem for short money.

-The DIF&W should go the way of a "Quality Moose Management" system in the northern most zones 1-5, and manage those WMD's as trophy moose areas, just like they do with classifying certain ponds as "Trophy Brook Trout" waters, laws and restrictions mimicking Alaska's management system should be put in place like a 40-50" spread requirement, or at least three brow lines on one side.

-It should be a requirement that out of state hunters need to hunt with a registered Maine guide, or must be accompanied by a Maine resident. The percentage of out of state hunters that are already allocated permits is low enough, no need to go lower.

-The use of drones should be outlawed during ALL hunting seasons within the North Maine Woods. There have been instances of "non-hunters" using drones to locate moose and relay that information to guides or other hunting parties. This is not fair chase hunting. The same thing is done with float planes but that would be harder to enforce. If it is found that a hunter/guide is using a drone/aircraft to locate moose during the hunting week(s) their license should be revoked, fined, and their hunt should end there.

-In a perfect world, the sub-permittee would go by the wayside. There are multiple people that game the lottery system by getting everyone they know to apply for a moose permit and have them or someone in their family listed as the sub-permittee on that permit entry. This results in families getting a for sure permit almost every year, it's a nice loophole, but it should end. If there is no feasible end to the sub-permittee system, then it should only be an immediate family member listed as a sub-permittee on any permit - (father, mother, son, daughter). Also, only one moose permit per household per year should be implemented.

-A permit holder should have to wait up to five years before being eligible to apply for a permit again. (Should still be able to buy bonus points within those five years). Sub-permittee regardless of the success of the moose hunt should have to wait a period of two years before being eligible to apply for a permit. (Sub-permittee should keep all their prior accrued bonus points prior to the hunt, as well as being able to purchase bonus points within that two year waiting period).

-The moose season dates and lengths are fine the way they are now. Moose can be found anywhere during any point during the hunting weeks, you just have to put in the work, get away from people and get off of the roads. If you take time during the lead up to the season to scout you will have a high probability of being successful once the season comes. You can't expect to be successful if you only hunt within a 20 minute drive from whatever campsite you are staying at with no prior knowledge of the area. If you can't "make time" to take at least a couple weekends to scout, then you should hire a guide for your week long hunt that you made time for.

Blocking of roads by all hunters and sense of entitlement from certain guides/outfitters has always been an issue. I would hate to see it go this way, but it's been common practice in New Brunswick to post up to a total of two dead-end roads per hunter with their name, permit number, and license information prior to the season. When I've encountered trucks blocking roads, I've just left a nice note on the hood of the truck and pivoted from "Plan A" to "Plan B" because "Plan B" is just as good as "Plan A". Usually a note on the truck spooks whoever it is enough that you won't see that truck in that area the following days.

Seasons are good as is.

Reduce/ eliminate the cow moose harvest.

Set an antler restriction. Doesn't have to be like Alaska but we need to let the yearling bulls go.

No spikes or 4 points. 30 in minimum with palmation.

Investigate what the herbicide spraying by the timber companies is doing to the moose. I know it's there land and we are lucky to have the access but they are spraying poison directly on the moose feed!

Please consider no permits for WMD 12. Been in the Forest industry for 45 years and have never seen so few moose in my travels. Logging jobs. Truck roads. Swamps. Ponds. No moose left in 12.

My issue with the Moose Hunt is the simple fact that for many years I faithfully put for a permit and was never chosen. I missed one years deadline and lost all my points. I seen several people who have been chosen multiple times for permits while there are others like myself who have never been selected. I know it is supposedly the luck of the draw, but there needs to be some oversight there that if your name has been selected multiple times over many years and there are people who haven't been... I don't know it just somehow doesn't seem right and I am sure that this is going to tick off some of those who have been fortunate enough to have been selected multiple times. It still just doesn't seem right somehow.

The only issues I have run into concerning moose hunters is them blocking roads. I get it. If I am bird hunting, I just move on but they should not be blocking roads. Being a guide myself in the past I did not want to be told by another guide I was in "his area". Let's not even go there. Landowners, managers, and loggers have the "right of way". They don't want you there, time to move. I get why loggers don't want hunters in the their cutting areas. I have heard stories from my logger friends that they were told they could not start cutting until the outfitter told them it was OK. Now most of these situations involve one particular outfitter and his guides, but the issue is there and needs to be dealt with. The conflicts between moose hunters and other outdoor users or non-moose hunters should be based on ethics as to how you were brought up. This "mine, mine, mine" mentality has to end somehow. Not sure how to do it. As far as seasons go it is OK as it is now. The one thing my friends want to see is the zones that have only the October hunt should get the early peak season as well. Either split the permits or just move everyone to peak season.

6 days is enough for a hunt. I would not shorten it. A shorter season is going to make for a lot more stupid mistakes made by hunters in a hurry to get the task done. After 43 years we are all use to the time frame. Making it longer....Most people can't or don't have two weeks off to devote to the hunt. Those that do usually make the most of the week before the hunt scouting.

I am very satisfied with the current system that is in place. The rules and regulations are fair. The wardens, biologists, the tagging station personal have all been doing a fine job, in my interactions with all of them over the years I have no complaints. I have never had an issues with anyone blocking a back road while I was hunting. have been on 4 unguided moose hunts over the past 20+ years; as both a permit holder 1x, and as a sub-permittee 3x. I have successfully harvested 2 bulls and 1 cow. On these self-guided hunts myself and two/three friends come along. We enjoy bird hunting alongside moose hunting; we do both when we drive on the back roads. When we park the truck(s), we are always able to pull off the path or back road so as not to block it. When we go into the woods the moose hunters (permit & sub-permittee holders) strictly moose hunt. Please Do Not Change Anything !!!

I'd hesitate to change the Western season to September. It's warm enough in October that it's a challenge to get the moose gutted, hauled out of the woods, checked in and taken to get processed before it begins to spoil. In September you get a number of 70 degree plus days.

Western Maine needs an earlier season. Very few years do we even catch the very end of the rut. Cow tags need to be reduced statewide as we have way less moose sightings than we did even 5 years ago. This is off road sights also. I have hunted 4 different zones recently and although successful, we need to change things up and adapt

I have harvested a total of 3 Maine moose, as a nonresident. Recently you changed from 10% of the tags to nonresidents, to 8%, which significantly reduces our chance of success, which is already small. I would like Maine to consider managing the bull harvest utilizing a QMM (Quality Moose Management) strategy which would put age/size limits on legal bulls. At least a 50" spread or 3 brow tines, similar to what Alaska does. Some states have done this, and it produces a higher percentage of older age class bulls, instead of all the road hunters killing every spike/fork they see. You should try it in one or two zones, or subzones, and make them "Trophy Moose Management Zones", and allow the average age (and size) of the bulls to increase. Very few bulls are harvested at full antler potential. The Maine Game Warden Service is the best in the US. Have always had positive interaction with them. Thanks.

You should do away with the antlerless season, you are probable killing 2-3 moose if the cows have be bread during the rut time period. . I would recommend some common sense be used.

I was lucky enough last year to get my first moose tag. Unfortunately, wasn't lucky to harvest one. My biggest complaint was the bird hunters. I feel they shouldn't be allowed to hunt the same weeks as moose hunting. There were very few who respected my hunting party. They stopped and actually hollered at us asking if we'd seen any moose. Also, a guide did the same thing. I know it was a guide because the next day as we went out to get into a spot early, he blocked miles and miles of roads! We couldn't go around him. Had I known, we would have gotten his license plate number and reported him.

I have been on quite a few hunts, twice as permit holder, multiple times as sub and many times as support crew. All hunts have been successful but have had to work for them. The days of just riding the roads and expecting to see one are gone all though it does still happen. I see plenty of moose on game cameras and plenty of sign in the woods but would like to see the cow permits either ended or reduced. I do not see blocking of the roads as much of an issue , if someone there before you move on and get up earlier the next day. Treat other hunters as you expect to be treated. A lot of the roads are dead end roads and if hunters in there calling all ready why bust there hunt so you can drive by. I would like to see side by sides and 4 wheelers be allowed to retrieve downed animals, not to just ride around in but to offload from trailer ,go in get moose and reload. Thanks for reading

This was the 14 year I have applied for a moose tag. Once again my name was not drawn. It is difficult to comment on a subject that you have not been able to enjoy. From NOT A MOOSE HUNTER YET, 76 years old and frustrated, Thanks for letting me comment!

I would like to see Hunter Education on the ethics of busting by someone set up to call- especially if the encounter provides info on optional routes to the same destination. Perhaps recommended signage to indicate "hunters ahead".

I personally tried diligently to pull the ovaries, but simply was not successful! State teams to help ...?

Fewer permits or more weeks in 1 and 2. Too crowded.

With Moose lottery should make it 10 years before you can reapply for permit for both permittee and subpermittee after being drawn. People go their whole life without being drawn and we all know a bunch of people that go ever year like clock work. Make it so Non resident hunters who are drawn for Moose permit have to hire a resident Maine guide to hunt Moose. If your on public access land get along with other people hunting we are all lucky to have access to that land. Don't block roads !

I would like to see a more controlled lottery. I know a guy that's been on the hunt the last three years in a row I've known him. This year he's on two separate hunts. How is that a fair system? Those of use that never been picked would like the opportunity to go on a moose hunt. I think once picked that's it for a specified number of years. Meaning you can not go again because your son or wife or whoever get picked. When I was in Alaska I saw game farms where they would raise moose, elk, bear and other animals than they would place them in low population zones to be hunted for subsistence.

I think Maine strikes the best balance between biologist's data, funding general wildlife as well as moose specific conservation, and opportunity for hunters. People who complain they haven't been drawn should remedy that by learning more about tag allocations in different lottery systems, and how their WMD choice may impact their odds...

There have complaints about guide and hunting parties blocking roads and access points..... there are laws on the books about blocking roads. Problem is it's rarely enforceable due to scarce resources in the warden service to cover the vast amount of territory. Solution - change the law to allow video evidence of the perpetrators blocking roads. Include plate numbers and faces and when dragged into court, stiff fines are levied to the amount of \$1000 or more and suspension lance got 3-yrs. Escalated the fines to a criminal level upon 2nd infraction... sound tough? it ought to be as it seems entitled people need to understand they don't own the state's natural resources - and can not restrict access for other licensed hunters.

Blocking roads I believe is the biggest issue that I have seen and I believe there should be a fine imposed. Blocked roads are a safety and fire issue. Forest rangers when they were called Fire Wardens years ago used to issue summons when roads were blocked unless it was a forest management issue with landowners but then they would have a key made available to the Warden. I have had more than a few confrontations with this issue while guiding in the northern WMD's.

Although I have not been drawn for the moose hunt yet I do feel the seasons and dates and rules are adequate.

I just wish there was a lifetime limit on the amount of moose a hunter is allowed to obtain. I have been putting in for 15 years now and have not been drawn once and I have known or worked with others that have had at least 3 successful moose hunts and one with 5, over their life time.

If there was a limit or at least a longer waiting period to get into the moose lottery after being selected, successful or not successful hunt say 5 - 10 years I think this would allow a better chance for more Maine sportsmen to be successful in the lottery.

Over the last 50+ years, Maine's landowners have changed their timber harvesting practices, to move roadways away from stream, lake or other water sources, in an attempt to lessen the environmental impact to fisheries. With whole tree harvester, this equipment can venture at least a mile into the woods, hauling back their load to the yard. With selective or row cutting, moose and other game can be so far off road that getting a general idea where game is can be nearly impossible. This change has lessened the visibility of moose within all hunting ranges, as they no longer need to move outside of their feeding habitat. Even the mating process has changed with more congregation occurring in the remaining old growth by waterways, requiring hunters to change their hunting process and hone those calling skills. Perhaps it is time to re-evaluate the three hunting periods and change to two hunting periods throughout the state, encompassing 1 1/2 to 2 weeks each or a somewhat hybrid approach. Then of course the concept of no hunting on Sunday should also be re-evaluated as this may be antiquated causing out of state hunters to avoid Maine all together.

It has never happened to me but seeing comments on Guides/poachers blocking roads like they own it? good luck trying that with us this year, a full crew of former marines, that should be pretty funny, if the wardens are allowing this, then they need to be investigated, I actually hope this occurs with us, and I am with a lot of people here, a lot of the same families get chosen year after year, my family is one of them, I am not complaining, but it isn't fair, I will be the first one to admit it, I have been on 12 hunts, and this year will be 13, and I have been chosen 3 times, all successful hunts, let my son shoot the last one, now he has a permit and he's letting his sister shoot this time, I work with a guy that has had someone in his family chosen for the last 26 years in a row, and they always get their hometown zone of Millinocket, so I am not sure how the lottery works, but it clearly isn't fair. It is a great time when you get drawn and experience it, but if the moose population wasn't down, then why did they go bulls only in Zone 8 for a few years? Yes I also believe the moose are getting smarter and are not going into the roads when they hear vehicle traffic, you actually have to hunt them now, the first 10 years it was like shooting a fish in a barrel, we only care about the meat it provides, and we are not trophy hunters, but that's 2 years of meat, so I won't complain about getting drawn multiple times, but if we never get chosen again, I am thankful for all the times we could go, and have had some great memories.

Q1: I've been on 6 hunts within our family, all successful in zones 23, 16 and 5. The only conflict was a rogue hunter shooting off his gun in our direction, with no sense of safety. Other than that, a few bird hunters out with their dogs and a mentality that we couldn't drive the road until they were done. All of the moose hunters, you learn who they are after seeing them for a few days and all were courteous. We did not experience forest operations directly, but on the roads in the NMW we did encounter trucks, which was an adventure...the only gripe is one idled parked for an hour or more right where we were hunting at sunrise...couldn't hear a thing!

Q2: N/A

How do you think conflict could be minimized or reduced? A: People just need to be more tolerant and courteous to one another.

Among moose hunters? Hunters need to be courteous and if someone is there first, then let them hunt, just move on. That's what we do.

Between moose hunters and other outdoor recreationists? We didn't encounter any. If anyone had tried to interfere with our hunts, I would report them immediately. I have little to no tolerance for confrontations. We made a point to hunt as remote as possible so we didn't have issues some others may encounter. Purposely steered clear of hiking trails, canoe launches etc., where possible anti-hunters may be.

Between moose hunters and other hunters? A: Hunters are usually courteous unless they're jackasses in general. Luckily I haven't had any issues.

Between moose hunters and landowners or forest workers? A: Forest workers actually are a great resource to find out where moose have been hanging out. I respect their need to work and they respect my goal to get a moose...perfect!

Would you like to see more moose seasons in specific WMDs? (Currently, it ranges from one to three separate 6-day seasons in September and/or October.) Why or why not? I personally don't understand the gap from the September bull only hunt and the October bull only hunt...why not have October hunt sooner or another one in between? Have a quota for each zone, and when the quota is met, the hunts stop.

Would you like to see shorter moose seasons (currently 6 days) or longer moose seasons (up to 2 weeks for each permittee)? Why or why not?

A:NOOOO...You need those days if you DIY, and I don't have the funds for a RMG. We've gotten moose on day 1 and on day 5...Two weeks is longer than I want to take to hunt; I can't carry that much stuff into the NMW nor could I afford to stay that long. It's too hard with pets and work to take that long off if you still work.

Are you supportive of a September moose hunt in WMDs where there currently is not one available? Why or why not?

A: Maybe, depends on how many moose are in each WMD. This is when I leave it up to the scientists to make that determination...not my "feelings". I'm no armchair scientist. :-)

Would you be supportive of a September-only season in western Maine (Rangeley Lakes, Moosehead and surrounding areas—WMDs 7-9, 12-15, 17)? Why or why not?

A: Two seasons would be better...less congestion of hunters if the permit numbers don't coincide with the seasons. I call in moose in zone 8 all the time in September, but I also call in outlying areas and don't concentrate on Rangeley, Eustis and Moosehead, where everyone automatically goes. I would prefer bull hunt, of course. I would like to see an early October hunt as well as a Sept. hunt. Where we go to see moose, they seem really healthy this year. We've seen cows with calves, bull moose and cast-off yearling moose and none have had winter tick as in year's past.

I live in zone 16 and am happy to report that we saw a moose this week! There were much more abundant, but are slowly making a return.

I have had a few permits and always enjoyed the hunt. I have found that sometimes during the first week of October the bird hunters don't always appreciate the moose hunters traveling the same paths and vice versa. Neither the moose hunters or bird hunters know which are which and some are a little protective of territory. I will say when I was moose hunting many bird hunters will tell you where they have seen moose.

I usually hunt zone 8 where we have a camp though I have hunted different zones. Usually I have a good idea where the moose are from frequent scouting trips. Sometimes I have found guide believe they own the woods blocking roads etc. My last trip out was unsuccessful despite scouting a few bulls but while hunting seeing cows. I have been close when someone shot a moose close to where we were lucky for them I say. I believe when the season was the last week of September moose were much more responsive to calling. So far this summer I have seen a few moose but not like in the old days in the early 2000 years but no doubt due to the ticks. I will be a sub on a hunt this year and hope for better luck. Either way it is a great time to be out with friends and enjoying the hunt. I think bringing back the last week of September hunt would be good for moose hunting and the bird hunters would have less competition with moose hunters shooting the easy birds on the roads. Our cow permit is during the last weekend in October into the first week of deer season. It will be interest as I have seen deer while moose hunting and moose while deer hunting best of both worlds we will see how it plays out. I think Fish and Wildlife does a pretty good Job of game management.

I think there should be more opportunities to hunt moose for Maine residents compared to out of staters. I don't put in for the lottery but I'd like to some day when I can afford it. I think the season should be longer because people usually only get picked once and with a six day season doesn't give much opportunity.

I would like to see a 5-year wait for successful permittees. This will allow more first-timers to have a chance.

I would not worry about "population decline." It makes sense that the most popular (read easiest) hunting areas will have reduced populations but there are plenty of moose in other, more difficult-to-hunt areas. Maine covers 30,000 square miles. Find another spot!

I'm not a fan of the combination of 12/15 7/13 etc. If the moose populations are to low in zones like 13 and 15 to have a successful harvest rate these zones then permits shouldn't be allocated in those zones... All it is doing is putting more pressure in zones like 12 that have limited hunting space as it is.

As an avid shed hunter that has looked for sheds for the last 35 years the population is definitely on the decline... We used to average 200ish moose sheds every winter and spring now we are lucky to get 75 id like to see the # of cow permits reduced drastically...

The adaptive hunt should be stopped immediately... Makes little to no sense to me, if 5 guys are all sitting in a car and they all have live and you were to remove 3 of those guys the other 2 will still have lice, something needs to be done to reduce the tick population without the elimination of the moose.

Many of the southern zones are becoming increasingly hard to hunt due to only having an October season, often times the rut is over, or it is at the tail end of the rut making it difficult to effectively call, you could keep the same # of permits and split the season or move the season ahead a week and still have effective rut activity.

All out of staters should be required to have a guide.

Many complain but I have no problem with lodge tags... They provide much needed income to these outfitters who are struggling to keep the iconic " Maine hunting camps" alive.

It would be nice to see some sort of antler restriction put in place to allow these young juvenile bulls that are often shot in the road a chance to grow.

I think the State should stop if the Moose hunt continues to be for financial gain only. Once you have been drawn that's it your done. The purpose for the hunt was to allow Maine hunters resident and non Resident to have the chance to bag the largest big game animal in Maine. It's turned into a financial circus. Oh and by the way I have hunted in Maine since I was 10 I'm 61now and have never been drawn. The state should view that as a shameful program.

I'd like to see folks that haven't received a permit provide some more context. Are you applying for a specific zone, or several zones? Are you applying only for bulls and not cows? Did you miss any years and lose your preference points?

Exactly what I'm saying Preference points is a draw to financially make more money by suckering you in. It's like a scam. I would like to see the total numbers. Money and people vs tags etc. we are being scammed. You don't need points just one permit if you tag out you are DONE. If you don't tag out then you can reapply next year.

Hugh LeMaster -I would like to see two weeks not one. It's harder to find Moose then years ago and if you get a few days of bad weather, it limits the possibly of success greatly. Also, I'm not sure what if anything IF&W or the State can do but sporting camps cater almost 100% to moose lottery winners. Bird hunters are the black sheep. When you try to rent a cabin or rooms from sporting camps, they just want the weeklong folks. I realize the big money is the long renter but its major frustration for bird hunters. Maybe a tax break for sporting camps that rent to Bird hunters with no Moose permit in the group?

I have hunted moose in Maine twice before - once as a sub permittee (successful) and once as the permit holder (unsuccessful). I have not applied for a permit in well over a decade out of concern for the moose population. I would like to see the hunting weeks shifted a little later to get into some cooler weather for the hunts, and spread out geographically to have less congestion (add a third week in October perhaps). It can be frustrating for other recreationists to find campsites during the hunting weeks.

No rule should favor one group of hunters over another. Upland, Deer, Moose, Turkey, waterfowl, bear..... guided or not, all have a right to hunt.
All should be respectful of the others.

As someone who used to see moose multiple times a year on our 100 acres and now hasn't seen one in six years, I think humans have been focused on their recreational desires more than conservation. In a world where humans don't actually need to kill animals and only do so for fun, I would like to see conservation rely more on a well rounded ecosystem and less on men killing wild things for the funsies.

I have had property in the Moosehead region for over 30 years. The moose population has significantly declined. Hunting as well as tick and other issues are no doubt the cause. I would say changing the hunting of moose to every other year or even two year intervals would help replenish the population. Anyone that thinks the moose population is fine hasn't really studied it over the last 10 years.

I have participated in three moose hunts in the last 5 years, two were successful, all were memorable fun outdoor experiences. For me all three hunts started the day the permit was issued I spent every weekend in the zone exploring and learning how the animals used the areas.

This was quite a commitment as two permits were in zone 1 one was in zone 13. It was the scouting that I enjoyed most, I explored hundreds of locations, walked miles and paddled remote waterways. This was an exciting and peaceful experience in the woods of Zone #1. Then the weekend before the hunt came, these peaceful woods became a shit show of 250 hunters and crews amounting to thousands of people with only 6 days to fill the tag. What a change for the area and not for the better.

The one thing I would like to see, that will make the moose hunt better for everyone is a longer season with fewer hunters per week.

When I say a longer season, I'm suggesting you have the current draw weeks but extend the moose season for all permit holders through the deer season, you issue tags you would like to have filled, and this will spread out the pressure. It will also offer different hunts for all, from the rut to the transition to winter grounds.

A longer season would be helpful due to the inclement weather conditions that sometimes occur.

I would like to see the (3) year wait period restrictions for entering the draw be lifted.

I live in zone 6 and I haven't seen a moose in over 15 years, we own about 150 acres. I think there is too much moose hunting, I think it should be reduced to e/o year.

I have concerns with the combining of zones that was done very late in the game last year and will be in effect this year as well. Zone 15 is allowed to hunt Zone 12 and this did create some conflict due to the small area that is now limited by NWT large purchase in Grafton. I hunted it with my 12 permit and had to work hard to avoid people blocking roads and walking in on my hunt. Zone 17 can hunt Zone 14 and Zone 13 can Hunt Zone 7 if I am not mistaken. What this has done is just push more people into the more popular zone. Why would I want to hunt 17 when the best moose are in 14? Same with 13 and its lack of access with gates from Wagner and Indian land. If these zones are not so popular then look at a November hunt in these areas. Another thought is consider revisiting the boundaries of the current zones. Large landownership has changed and created access issues that lower the moose kill success rates. For instance a portion of Zone 7 can only be reached by going into the B and C pond area and the majority of 7 is only the other side of South Arm. Could this portion be added to 12? I know Zone 13 has similar limitations around the northern boundaries.

It would be nice to see the second season a week earlier for calling purposes.

Love being able to defer the permit to the next season. One moose per year is plenty.

I have only been on one moose hunt and it was in zone 27 where very few permits are given out. For that reason, I did not experience any conflict there. However, I have heard a lot of complaints from moose hunters up north that they have conflicts with the upland hunters. The moose hunters pay a lot of money and expect a trophy moose hunt, only to constantly hear traffic and gun shots from upland hunters. I have also heard complaints about the lodge tag system- giving tags to every lodge with a kitchen, whether they guide moose or not, and then they sell them to a guide and one guide ends up with 5 lodge tags. I have also heard about people blocking roads.

I do not know if the moose hunting season dates should be changed; that should be up to IFW. Perhaps upland hunting can start during the "gap week" up north.

Nothing wrong with the moose lottery; perhaps better education about how it works from IFW would satisfy some of the naysayers? Nothing wrong with the few tags that go to nonresidents either in my opinion, though I guess y'all could decrease it to give more to residents.

Question 1 ; only conflict I have experienced is with bird hunting. Not anyone specifically just the amount of bird hunters in an area. Overall I have not experienced any other issues. Most everyone is very respectful and courteous .

Question 2 N/A

Question 3 I think longer seasons would help. Many zones that only allow October hunting should have a September season as well. 7,8,9,12,14 etc. As far as lodge tags go, I think they should become outfitter tags. They were originally intended to help lodge's in the northern parts of the state to help offset losses due to the whitetail herds severe decline after several severe winters and loss of winter cover and predation. I know the state has addressed some issues with this program but it needs more attention. There are many outfitters who don't own a lodge but that put on a heck of a moose camp and deserve a shot at one of those tags. You can't tell me that the majority of the people who pay for the lodge tags are staying in the lodge's that make it possible for the outfitter to be eligible to even apply in the first place. I believe that the state is doing a good job overall and I appreciate all they do. The success rate is still better than most big game hunting nation wide. I fear that the moose hunt is becoming very expensive and I'm fearful that a lot of deserving people will miss out due to \$\$\$ if things continue

Though it may require fewer permits, the duration of the moose hunt should be increased significantly to increase the quality of the hunt and help to mitigate factors such as poor weather for extended periods during the time allotted. I feel that this would not only increase the quality of the moose hunting experience but also help to alleviate some of the conflicts alluded to in the questions.
Hey guess what they don't care about you the hunt is so political now. It's about the money they don't care what you think. This is just a feel good gesture. Guides and out of state sports bring in more money! Inland Fisheries works for the guide services. Same as the bear hunt. They make it all most impossible to do a hunt of your own.
I think some of the logging and bear hunting could be put on pause for the week of moose hunting in each zone. Bear hunting is every year for multiple weeks, a year and moose hunting can be just once in a lifetime. We could also try working with landowners to limit logging operations during moose hunting weeks. Also, would be good to maybe hire some part-time wardens during the busy hunt periods to help keep an eye on roads being blocked off. Nothing worse than showing up to a 13 mile dead end road network at 3 a.m. just to have a guide or someone else tell you they are hunting there and don't want to let you anywhere in there. Even trying to work with them and have a conversation to avoid each other doesn't seem to go anywhere, most just say, "oh, that's where we are going to go, sorry." That is why we usually have about 5 solid spots pre-season and try to get as many away from the road as possible so we are always able to go somewhere else. But others might not plan that far ahead and feel stuck, resulting in conflict. Better education could help with this, but some people know and don't care that much and maybe more part-time seasonal enforcement is needed?
I had a 10/30 thru 11/4 permit in the Zone 4 Adaptive Unit last year, never saw a live moose the whole time. Seemed to be too many hunters on too small an area for that week, and there was still another week of hunting after mine.
Reduce out of state tags by 50% and increase wait time between in state permits to at least 10 years. Keep up the great management
conflicts are mostly with guide's and moose hunters blocking roads. Need to have a Sep. hunt in zone 12, 13, 15 and 17 and take them out of zone 7, 8 and 14. Need to spread the number of permits out in other zones to reduce the conflicts. Need to reduce the number of cow permits. Need to make the wait 5 years between permits.
Adjusting the system to allow long time resident applicants to obtain a permit should be a top priority change. Adjustments for any gaps long time applicants may have had through the years and give more bonus chances to them. The waiting period between permits should remain the same. It already increased to 3 years. Swapping permits is out of control. Too many applicants put in for whatever they can get in the hopes they can swap if needed and throw money around for a better zone or week. Abolish this so applicants put a little more thought into a zone they would actually hunt vs. a shotgun and pray approach.
The moose have adapted as tourism and development the Northwoods skyrocketed in the early 2000's. I can assure everyone, the moose are doing quite well in most zones. I think we should leave everything the way it is. Hunting is under attack, and hunting for meat is a renewable resource and we put our trust in state biologists to decide how many moose and deer we can sustainably harvest and allow the wildlife to thrive as a result!
Moose hunters that draw first choice tags should not be eligible to draw another tag for 10 years. Too many people get drawn over and over and some never get drawn.

If the state were to remove the roughly 328 non resident tags and 82 lodge tags from availability, would Maine residents be in agreement to be excluded from any other big game hunts in other states or provinces?

Just my two cents, I have been on several moose hunts over the years (never drawn myself, but helping family) mostly in southern zones 7 and 8 so around Jackman to Ranglely. The last two times I've noticed a dramatic increase in bird hunters just hammering the roads with tons of dogs running up and down the roads loose. We spent a lot of time dodging dogs and bird hunters, made it a lot less enjoyable. Everyone we dealt with was respectful and no one was angry, but with dogs in the woods moose hunting is harder. I agree with a couple other comments about the hunt changing and requiring less road running and more traditional hunting techniques. Unfortunately for most people it's hard to put in enough time in especially in the northern zones due to how far away it is to successfully hunt requiring people to have to use guides and lots of people cant afford guides.

I agree with several other comments here that permits should not be given to non-residents, when there are so many resident hunters that have never been drawn for a permit. I understand that the income from non-residents is important to the state, but resident hunters often spend just as much on these hunts. Expand the auction to maybe 5 permits total and let the non-residents pay the state BIG money that way, while leaving more permits available to Maine residents.

I had a successful cow hunt in 2022 in zone 4A, and the biggest issue we had while hunting moose, was a non-resident (CT license plate) bird hunter. Tailgated down every road we drove, even turned their bird dogs loose right in front of us after we finally parked to watch a clear cut. I thought after the fact that maybe we should have had a sign on our truck to let others know that we were actively moose hunting. Yes, we could have let the other hunter pass us and drive ahead, we weren't blocking a road and preventing others from hunting, we were just driving slow looking for moose. When we were finally able to pull off the road, so the other hunter could continue, this is when they parked 100ft down the road from us and turned their dogs loose, walked toward our truck, went about 100ft further then turned around and walked back to their vehicle. It felt very much like harassment. I don't know if a sign or other indication that we were moose hunting would have helped, but it seems like that might keep other hunters from following certain vehicles.

Personally I used to hunt and put in for a moose license for years I finally gave up after never getting my name called, I no longer hunt but being born in the Kathadin Region I seen to many changes to hunting and more angry hunters, I longer see any live moose which was a common to see riding the back woods roads. Limit the moose hunt and add more licenses for in state people. It's getting to be a common thing for the state to forget about its residents and cater to out of state residents

had a successful 2023 Bull Moose hunt in WMD 3 utilizing a guide service. that was costly but well worth it. I went back to Eagle Lake a week later to pick up my processed meat and noticed the large number of vehicles with Harvested Cows. The permits for Cows should be limited or done away with. I realize the need to harvest having come upon a deer herd that had starved to death over the winter but too many Cow permits are being issued. When a Cow is taken you have to keep in mind that the offspring(s) is left to survive the winter without help. That being said the harvested total is not accurate. I hope this input from everyone outweighs the funds generated by the current harvest program. I only say that after totaling up just the taxes I paid for this trip that exceeded \$1,000.00. mike

In my opinion there needs to be an overhaul on our states lottery system for permits. It seems like the same last names are picked year after year. People with uncommon last names or with slightly different spelling seem to be picked significantly less, no matter how many bonus points they have. Some Maine Residents have been putting in since they were old enough to hunt and are reaching retirement age without ever being picked. But again it is a lottery so who knows, maybe you just need a bit of luck on your side. Lastly regarding the lottery I would like to see a Bi or Tri Annual Maine Resident ONLY season. A lottery consisting of Maine Resident permit winners ONLY. Figure out a way to adjust Non Resident permit numbers during the other years even if it means designating a few more up for grabs. Maine residents spend just as much on these "Once In A Lifetime Hunts" as others coming from away to experience a Maine Moose Hunt. I think more should be done to mitigate winter tick infestation as well, At the very least figure out how to raise more funds for research on the topic in order to work towards helping the population during the winter. I don't believe there should be any sort of blocking of roads either unless the property owner is the one doing so and or the individual has permission. Access roads should remain open for all hunters during the season if they are open to hunting and the hunters have permission to be on them. This was a good idea by the way, I really hope some good comes out of these comments and changes are made for the better.

Permanently terminate all moose hunting in Maine.

Unethical harvesting in any form should be punished to the fullest extent to prevent repeat offenders

Guides blocking roads.

The Moose Hunting Permit Lottery is patently unfair and borders on extortion. Why? What is fair about some people being drawn 3,4, even 5 times, While others who have been applying since 1980 have never been drawn because they missed applying for medical, or some other legitimate reasons once or twice. All you have to do to lose all your accumulated points is miss applying one time! That rule is the definition of extortion, in other words, if we don't get your money every year, we are going to punish you! Extortion, greed, call it what you want, but IF&W should be ashamed of this practice. In addition, now that the Moose population have been devastated by winter ticks and over hunting, they are still so hungry for the Permit Application revenue that they won't even substantially reduce the number of permits allocated and are still willing to sell permits to the highest bidders. The Moose population, what's left of them, deserve better consideration!

The waiting time before re-entry after being drawn should be at least 10 years for main and sub shooters.

cut the number of lodge tags and out of state tags WAY DOWN NO MORE THAN 1% of total tags.

Antler restrictions 8pt plus.

No killing of cow/calf.

After shooting at an animal if it doesn't drop right there some "HUNTERS" just keep driving MANY MANY moose are wounded and left every yr, something has to be done about that.

Out of state hunter should have to get a guide.

End the sub permit this loop hole allows people to send in everyone they know if they want with them actually being the shooter massively improving the odds for themselves.

Every 5 yrs have a no hunt yr to let the animals rebuild.

A lot of the problem is that people think moose hunting is how it used to be. You need to actually hunt them now instead of just riding the roads. As far as the lottery goes, it is a lottery. People don't complain to the state about not winning the Powerball. The ones that complain about not getting drawn may be limiting themselves by only applying for maybe 1 or 2 zones and during certain seasons. That limits your odds dramatically. Keep it the way it is. Thank you go IF&W for all the efforts they put in.

If you hunt moose, what have you experienced as the primary sources of conflict among moose hunters, other hunters, other outdoor recreationists, landowners/managers, or forest operators? -- Biggest issue I've seen is bird season starting during the moose hunt.
If you are a landowner/manager, forest operator, hunter not hunting moose, guide, or outdoor recreationist, what have you experienced as primary sources of conflict during the moose hunting season and among what user groups? -- Not Applicable
How do you think conflict could be minimized or reduced?-- Move first day of bird season to a non-moose season date

We should transition to taking pictures of the moose instead of shots. There are already too many factors affecting moose populations without people hunting them for sport. I understand that this brings money to the state, but some things are more important than money. Imagine Maine without Moose. It's happening. Do we continue on this path, or walk another?

Stop the Moose hunt. Period. People who think there are too many Moose are deluded. The Moose hunt exists only for the state to make money, and that's reprehensible!

Non residents should not qualify for this hunt in any way. Not when residents wait decades and still don't get drawn.

Only 1.5% of the permits are awarded to non-residents. Isn't this exclusive enough to residents? These fewer than 400 permits pay a permit fee more than 10X the resident moose permit fee. My opinion is that we already restrict the out of state opportunity enough.

I know this is a huge money maker for the department but I can't stand to see any moose permits go to non residents when there's so many residents that will NEVER have an opportunity to hunt a moose. Doesn't seem right to me. Mainers should be a priority.

I think the state needs to clean up the lodge tags/make more specific requirements to be considered a lodge. There are quite a few loop holes which allow back door sales between lodges to sell/buy. The concept to bring money into the state and to outfitters / guides is great but, in reality the only ones benefiting are the outfitters especially ones that buy multiple tags or know/have people who own other lodges to gain chances into the lodge tag lottery. Also I think that state should easily make public what lodges gained lodge tags.

I'd like to see flying both planes and drones during moose hunt weeks addressed better than the current law. This is hard because its based off of the honor system and we all know how that works... But an outfitter with lodge tags shouldn't be flying during the week of the hunt telling guides where to the next day.

Again an honor system thing, if you shoot at a moose and find blood, but can't find the moose that should be the end of hunt. To my knowledge the IF&W factors in a wounded death rate prior to the allocation of permits. But there is nothing that stops people from wounding multiple moose.

I'd like to see antler restrictions: this would get away from people killing young immature bulls. Would also produce better quality bulls in the long run.

Three year waiting period is too short. In the lower 48 Maine has the shortest turn around. 5,7, or 10 would be better.

Limit the bull only license to twice in a lifetime or even make it a once in a lifetime hunt but allow people to still put in for cow hunts.

All non-residents should require a guide.

Let the state change hunting weeks to avoid a two week off period like this year and upcoming years since they base the weeks off of the calendar.

4a adaptive hunts should only target yearlings or cows without calves. Killing a cow with a yearling or more often leads to the yearling dying in winter, especially if the winter is bad.

Having never had the opportunity to go on a moose hunt, I'd like to see something done to increase the odds of getting picked in the lottery. My father got his moose permit on the 20th year of the lottery (started in the early 80's, I recall) and he put in each and every year. My grandfather applied religiously (and put in for me most years) and only got picked once, and additionally was sub-permittee for my father; again this was over a period of literally 20 years. He was fortunate enough to get a moose, but on year 20 he swore if he didn't get chosen, it would be the last time the State got his money. I have not put in for a permit every year, since I started hunting 37 years ago, but I have applied many times and have never been chosen. As others have mentioned here before, and I know it's all luck, but I know several people who have been on well over a half dozen moose hunts as permittee or sub-permittee.

I think there absolutely needs to be a longer wait before you can put in for a tag after you have been drawn. 10yrs at least. The number of tags available vs the number of people who put in for the lottery supports this need alone.

Significantly reduce the number of tags available to non-residents to no more than 1% of the tags available for any given year, make it a separate drawing, and increase the cost of tags for non-residents. As Maine residents we are invested in our wildlife management, our communities, our land, and continuing on our hunting traditions with future generations for years to come. Non-residents do not care about these things, they just want to hunt big game. There needs to be a big push towards dealing with the ticks and the vitality of young moose. Tick management also benefits people and multiple species.

To allow the growth of the moose population, maybe considered a "no hunt" year, every 5th year or so.

No special permits for guides and outfitters. This feels like a slimy back door loophole that lets you "cut in line" and takes away from the sportsmanship and purpose of a lottery to begin with

I recommend spreading out the yearly allocation of moose hunting permits over a 4-week period. This would decrease the number of hunters in the woods and vehicles that are on the roads any given week, compared to the currently scheduled shorter season. I have been fortunate enough to hunt moose several times over the years, and the number one detractor in my opinion is the sheer number of hunters that congregate into certain areas due to limited lodging/food/fuel/access in some zones (think the town of Allagash, Zone 1). An additional benefit of spreading the moose hunt out over a 4-week period is that it would benefit the guides and lodges that really depend upon the moose hunt for their yearly income.

Two main issues that I have seen and heard from many about.

The first is the amount of land that has been lost to out of staters that close off traditional hunting land to hunters for absolutely no reason. Laws need to change to prevent this as it will cause everyone to have to lease hunting land like many other states do and make it so people that need to hunt to eat cannot afford to hunt.

Second is issues with Maine Guides violating regulations and intentionally blocking people from hunting or in a case just recently harassing moose to force them into an area so they can guide their clients to the moose and gets the moose out of the area of other hunters that did legit scouting. I think the punishments should be harsher on guides to make sure they abide by the laws we have.

Scouted off the K.I. Road last summer. No problems until the hunt when we ran into new gates. They man installing the gates said it was due to theft and vandals. He then told us all the equipment and fuel was locked behind the Merther Road gate. They gated all the roads even though there was no cutting going on and no equipment in the woods. They are not posting all the roads "NO TRESPASSING" you can walk around the gates but, no motorized anything. Old and disabled (me) will not be able to do this.

We've been on several moose hunts with family and friends. I don't recall ever having an issue with land owners, other hunters (who are generally more than willing to help get the moose in the trailer) or whatever. My only concern is the banning of ATV's in some areas. There should be an exception made when the moose is down and you need to get it out of the woods. No other time is as critical to making sure the meat is saved. It would be fine to have major fines for taking advantage of riding around when not retrieving a moose.

Moose numbers and tag allotment aside, I feel that the loss of land access needs to be addressed, before it gets too far out of hand. Every year, more and more gates go up and large tracts of land are closed off. In the area I traditionally hunt in zone 11 close to half of the ground we once hunted is now gated, and I hear this same story from other areas of the State. Also, be cautious with the privatization of our hunting resources, its a slippery slope. The Maine Guide is a long-standing symbol of our outdoor heritage and should be respected as such, but don't push out resident hunters in the process. That privatization has essentially already happened with bear hunting, let's not go down the same path with other big game species.

I think more should be done to include the most people possible as hunters. We should make the waiting period between permits 10 years instead of 3. I have seen so many repeat permit holders and I know so many that have never been drawn.

Wow! OK here we go. First talking point. The only conflicts I have since guiding moose hunters since 1980 is other moose hunters, mainly guides who claim, "this is our spot, we are doing this for money". Ya well I am too.

When I have been bird hunting during the moose season I always give moose hunters a wide birth. This could be a once in a lifetime hunt so let them at it. My other gripe which I have taken up with NMW's is the fact guides set up a campsite for the moose hunt, good for them. But then on the in between week they leave their site set up so no one else can use it. NMW's has told me how to handle it in the future.

There should be no conflicts with wood harvesters. Most post their working area. Yet many of the wood cutters I know will go out of their way to point moose hunters to a moose they might have in an active cut. I have heard of guides telling wood cutters they could not cut until they left because, "we are doing this to make a living". Those guides should loose their license.

One thing I always did was to put a sign on my truck especially if I was using a moose decoy. It read, "moose hunters, decoy in use, use caution". Pretty plain and simple.

In New Brunswick (which requires a guide for Non-residents) a guide or hunter is allowed to post a sign on up to two dead end roads with the hunters name on it. These roads are now off-limits to other hunters. The rule/law states that as soon as you kill your moose the signs have to be removed immediately. Hate to see Maine go to this but it does work there.

In Quebec (which has very little public land) if you are hunting on Public land you can hang a sign before your hunt at all access points to the land you are hunting. The signs are worded, "active hunter". This now makes it illegal for anyone to enter that land. The rule is once you leave for the day or even for lunch, you have to remove the sign. Basically first come, first serve.

The one other item I wish would be addressed more stringently is the use of drones. A guide got popped not to long ago using a drone. To me it was a pretty much open and shut case. Now this guide is using people who are not guides to fly drones for him. When the operator is questioned the answer is, "oh just out flying my drone. Nope not a guide, not working for one, and not hunting".

1st of all I believe Sunday hunting should be allowed -but only during moose season
2nd the number of permits should be decreased a bit-just to make sure we continue a healthy population
3rd no blocking of roads or bridge and culvert repairs during the moose hunt
4th 1 permit allowed per household
5th there should be a 5yr wait after being drawn
6th a sub -permittee must wait out 2yrs
7th no special permits allowed to out fitters
8th being drawn-you will have your own choice of what can be shot BULL/COW when paying the permit fee

Good points. #8 might be a challenge based on zone.. some are Bull only. Some families seem incredibly lucky and get a member drawn year after year. I like the longer wait you suggest.

There is no such thing as a truly random program and that is why certain families get drawn every year and some don't get drawn at all, they have tried to offset that with the point system. I think you should only get one bull tag and then your out of the lottery for good one in a lifetime it's done all over the country for limited tag hunts

I think one of the issues I have with moose hunting and the public is people don't understand that in order to maintain a healthy moose population, they have to be hunted. I know the zones are different during certain times of the fall season in the hopes of not having leaf peepers see someone shooting or dressing out a moose. I think their should be more public information in tourism brochures explaining to those, that we know people love to catch a glimpse of the mighty moose, but in order to maintain a healthy population you have to etc.

I would like to see it be more than a week to get your moose... It is very stressful and hard hunting moose at times, trying to cram in a hunt in just a weeks time is not easy.. Specially towards the end of the week after they have been chased.. I know people say it is because we don't have enough wardens to cover the whole time and that is true, but honestly all the years I have been out moose hunting I have never seen a warden in the woods. I see the biologists at the tagging stations but no wardens. I think most hunters are honest folk and do the right thing, I believe allowing more than 6 days to get it done makes it easier on everyone involved.

It seems to be obvious that the lodge permit is beneficial to guides/outfitters to receive a big payday from out-of-state hunters. That seems to be okay - What isn't okay is specific guides/lodges/outfitters taking advantage of permit swaps to extort the swapping system. A guide/outfitter wanted to swap a permit. The assumption is the hunter was in agreement to do this. Then someone tried to swap with them for their preferred zone but the guide/outfitter said no because they wouldn't receive payment. Did the hunter know they had the option to swap but the guide/outfitter said no because the payment was not met? There is no way to police or regulate any of this.

You should not be able to trade - if you do not want specific zones or seasons, then do not put in for them. The application process should be more specific and customizable so trading would not be needed. For instance, I put in for zone 14 because of my camp. That only has an October season, which arguably is post-rut and not as good as September. Because of wanting to stay at camp etc. I have to select the October season and then I put myself in jeopardy of getting the October season for my other 9 choices which I do not want.

Road blocking is a serious problem as well.

There should not be a full two-week break between the September season and the first October season. That is the prime moose rut - if the goal is to truly get the population under control for the ticks etc. then there should not be this much time between the seasons.

Having spent the last several years grouse hunting in the North Maine Woods, both during the week between the first two moose weeks and during the "Blast & Cast" week for the final week of September during the first moose hunt week, I have never encountered a conflict with moose hunters. A recent stakeholder's group gave recommendations to eliminate the blast and cast season, limiting the blast and cast day to "only" the last Saturday of September. One day, is hardly worth the investment of renting a camp, taking the time off work, and allows no time to do both, one can either hunt for grouse or fish for brook trout in a single day, to do both is highly improbable.

Reducing opportunity for others not lucky enough to draw a moose tag, will not increase opportunity for those who were lucky enough to draw a moose tag. MEDIFW follows science based tag allotments, season lengths/dates and bag limits. Social issues, such as conflicts between hunters, should never be used to regulate hunting seasons. The facts are that the days of riding the roads and harvesting a moose is no longer as successful as it once was. Moose have adapted to being hunted and have moved away from the roads during the seasons for more secluded areas. Hunters now have to put in the hard work of getting out of the truck and finding moose in their natural habitat.

Our moose seasons follow science based approaches, I appreciate that MEDIFW is willing to consider hunter saturation in any given zone as a factor for hunter success. However, hunter conflicts cannot be solved by reducing hunting opportunity for others. Should hunter saturation be a significant factor on success rates, spreading out the seasons and the allocation of tags for each season, can better achieve the goal of lowering hunter saturation in any given area as opposed to limiting hunting opportunity for non-moose hunters, keep Blast & Cast the way it is.

I would like to see more resident permits issued and less non- resident. Unfortunately, the annual moose hunt has become a huge money game for state government and various local businesses which in my opinion overshadows the herd management decisions and forest management decisions. I admittedly do not have the answers to these perceived problems.

I work in the forestry industry in the Rangeley lakes region. Moose season is always looked forward to and dreaded due to the high traffic. I believe the moose population is growing as I see them every day so I don't believe in lowering the tag count. However I do believe that as a logger that the short amount of time a tag holder has to tag out is too short. The season length currently makes it a frantic in some cases once in a life time opportunity especially for the people who are inexperienced or unable to afford a guide. This on top of the high traffic leads to people driving too fast and frantically searching for a moose. If it was longer it would make the stress of finding a good place to hunt and scout take up less time from the whole season. I see a lot of out of state and out of area hunters who are not familiar with the woods have to waste a large portion of their season finding the right spot. This would help forestry workers and loggers by reducing the stress on the hunter providing safer roads and less congestion.

Being a young guide with limited experience, what knowledge I was able to acquire over the few years I was actively guiding, the moose population is still very much rapidly declining, and rather it be from ticks, to being run over or natural causes. The additional cow weeks are only hurting the moose population. Hunting the beautiful animals has become more of a challenge no doubt, you do get the lucky people that can pick them off road side. However if you really want to find a moose now, you're going to have to leave the comfort of your vehicle. I firmly believe that the first week should be either sex and any week's after should be strictly bull. If we truly want to preserve our moose and help bring back the population then we need to find ways that will help them carry on through the winter, such as we can make sure their food supplies aren't being shorted, and bedding areas aren't being cut out and leveled by massive clear cuts. I also believe that Maine should protect its lands and not allowing thousands of acres being bought out by foreign companies and prohibit access to these lands. Also I believe this state should spend more of its research abilities in helping find ways to help our moose population naturally fight off the winter bore tick that kills hundreds if not thousands of moose each year, and postpone seasons if need be to help the population. For our fellow hunters and non hunter I think if you do not have a hunting license then you should not be able to put in for a moose permit. As far as sub permitted persons I'm still conflicted on if we should allow it or not. I do believe that we hunters should be able to retrieve our animals harvested by any means necessary. Allow us to better involve newer technology that can help, not just the hunter but the guide as well. Let's face it there still parts of Maine that are too dangerous to bring in ATVs but not a drone. I also think we should do more in this state to implement wilderness education to our younger generations. As someone had mentioned before no natural resource is unlimited, and it will be up to the younger generations to preserve our rights to hunt, guide, and enjoy our way of life as a true outdoors man or woman. As for the drawing system I've applied a few times and over the years have just given up like many other hunters have. As far as the drawing system if we are to remain using a drawing system I think after 6 years of putting in, you get put on a list of automatic draw, then have to wait 5 years before being able to apply again including any subpermittee. But again I'm not sure how we should handle the subpermittee situation. There's a lot to be said on this situation, and I could probably write a book on it. So I'll stop beating the cow.

I feel that there are way too many permits issued. I have spent many years in the North Maine Woods and have witnessed a decline in the moose population.

Here we go

I lived in Maine most my life and we used to go riding around to see moose anytime of year didn't matter time of year from Brownville to Greenville up to Millinocket back to Brownville you would loose count of how many you see now days do that same loop maybe see three or four.

I love hunting and moose meat but I think it's time to shut it down for 3-5 give the moose a rebound time with the tic problems for the young and it would be nice to hear about a few moose in the 1000+ range like the old days witch wasn't that long ago. This is just my thoughts on the issue you don't have to bash my opinion everyone gets one

Perspectives from a ME Guide (WMDs 2&3)

1) The slippery slope of permit sales began with lodge permits. Now, as soon as winners are announced, swaps with big money attached to them are offered. IMHO, I don't like to see personal financial gain at the expense of the resource.

2) With it being a lottery hunt in high demand and valued by residents and non-residents alike, there are still many playing the lottery for a permit with no success while others have won a permit two, three, and more times. I know how to play the odds. Others don't or won't. No matter the reason, the first time moose hunter is likely on their "hunt of a lifetime." To improve odds for everyone, perhaps increase from 3 to 5 years the wait time to sit out before applying.

3) Not sure how the logistics of the lottery would accommodate it, but how about a "one permit per household" rule?

4) Road blocking is a thing. It is unethical and unnecessary. I have never done it, didn't need to block a road to be successful after to nearly 50 guided hunts but I have stumbled on it too many times. The sad reality is, it's difficult to police and enforce. Unethical moose hunters suck.

5) WMDs 1, 2, & 3 issue a LOT of permits over three hunting weeks and that puts pressure on lodging opportunities. Not sure is a fourth week can be added but it should be considered. Those pulled off the permit wait list are hard pressed to find lodging at the last minute. Just some thoughts on a rainy day as I look forward to another WMD 2 moose hunt in September...

Due to the higher number of permits being issued in recent years, there are, at least in zone 3 where I primarily hunt, far to many hunters out in the same areas at the same time. This not only makes for a less enjoyable hunting experience, racing to get to certain spots, etc., but also really messes with the non-moose hunters, like bird hunters and tourists, due to the high volume of traffic on the back roads. We need to reduce permits given at the same week in a given zone. Possibly add another week to help spread them out although I think an overall reduction is needed. And stop the cow specific hunts. Go to an "either or" hunt for one of the weeks so they can choose a bull or a cow during their hunt.

A 58 year old friend of mine drew his first resident moose permit last year, a bull tag, after applying every year since the hunt began. I was his resident sub-permittee, and we hunted the west Moosehead and Jackman area all day every day, from 10/9 - 10/14. We called in a small, young bull Monday evening, which we did not shoot, then were unable to call in another for the rest of the week, nor did we see another moose, so we were unsuccessful. The other hunters we talked to all shared the same frustrating experience, and many said that the rut had ended on the weekend before our hunt began. Two weeks before our hunt, the hunt had been open in this zone, but the week before our hunt the zone was closed, despite the rut still being "on". So, if the intention is to harvest moose, why did DIF&W close the hunt for an entire week in this zone while the rut was on, and then reopen it after the rut was over? Thank you for an otherwise excellent hunt, though at our age we aren't counting on getting another chance.

I have been on 2 moose hunts with guides. First hunt was a cow hunt. That year IFW drained everyone's built up points. My son and I both got cow tags. I gave up my hunt in zone 4. Took my boy on his hunt in zone 9. I find cows to not be an easy kill. They don't stick around. A bull will pause to see if he wants to kick your butt. A cow especially if they have a calf in tow, will high tail it. I have not had success. And have not applied since.

I also take issue with changing the grouse season to start in September. I hunt grouse with dogs. I rarely will stop to shoot a road bird. Mostly note the area as having grouse. Since the season changed to allow the moose hunters to slaughter all the road birds in that one week. I rarely see a bird on the roads. Some of my friends who only road hunt, haven't seen a bird in years. If you do partake of this moose hunt bird slaughter. Please don't take pictures of your 10 man parties daily take piled up on a tail gate. Nothing is an unlimited resource.

I do t believe there are a ton of conflicts between these scenarios, I think that with the harder it's becoming to hunt moose the more pressure on the hunter, guide, to find places others are not and when they find moose others get there first or block roads. As far as land managers and owners Maine is seeing a lot more loss of access across its entirety whether from hunting , snowmobile issues , ATV issues, etc. it's a lot of a people issue leaving trash ruts etc. people need to be more aware of their actions and losing land. The moose hunt will be over if we become like an out west state with only lease or steal land hunting . Some how enforcement and education need to be ramped up to limit land loss. Or maybe tax breaks and such to private owners that allow access to their lands. Zone 9 has lost thousands of acres of hunt able land to gates and no more access pinning hunters on top of each other for a chance at a moose, I think a lot more education on land respect might help I don't know it's too bad a few bad people ruin it for everyone else.

The cow hunt should be limited more shoot 1 cow that kills 100 moose shoot 1 bull it just kills that bull !

Also look at lowers permit numbers but redo the moose hunt weeks to peak rut you'd have a better success rate and still hit your kill numbers.

I would like to see a Hunter Safety Course taken and a person have a Hunting license purchased at the time a person applies for a moose permit. That way they have a better understanding of hunting and the ethics' of hunting and being safe.

The educating of hunters and people that do not hunt of why it's a very important tool of taken care our moose population.

It does not look good when first time person gets their Hunting License after they have been picked for a moose permit.

I would like to see the law change for using ATVs in logging areas, where they are typically not allowed due to truck traffic. Mainly just to ease retrieval of the harvested animal quicker. I also agree with the majority that say a successful moose tag filled should be a 10-year waiting period for another purchase. I can also see the same family's filling their freezers year after year and me and my family never getting drawn. Another small request would be having Indian Reserve Land being signed better on every access road so people are fully aware they are not trespassing onto Indian Reserve Land. The wardens are not friendly. Especially when you are hunting.

It's called Native American, Tribal or Indigenous land. The word you used is a bit derisive. Unless you are a native conversing with another native the I word is not preferred. They are unfriendly because we don't believe in hunting for sport and definitely not for a declining species.

I would like to see the end of the Subpermitter. I know too many people who put in every one of their relatives, hunter or non hunter for a permit, then treat that permit as their own. As a person who has never received a permit, yet see the same individuals hunt year after year, I think it would be more fair for one hunter, one chance. One in 12 would become 1 in 4 pretty quickly. If your grandmother's sister pulls a permit, give her a .300 Win Mag and let her take the shot.

I have a few comments on moose hunting conflicts:

- I'm thankful that we have professionals managing the moose population and hunting season. IFW's efforts to educate hunters and improve the moose hunting experience should be applauded. Also the large amount of private land available for hunting is very unique and special in Maine.

- There is a heavy reliance on road hunting, which detracted from my moose hunting (and bird hunting) experiences. My first moose hunt was guided and basically consisted of a long day of road hunting, more akin to sitting in traffic than a woods adventure. It wasn't fun and really soured the experience. Each hunt since then has been almost entirely on foot.

- Campsites in the farthest west and north of the North Maine Woods are quite limited. The inability to reserve sites and the practice of claiming sites with camper trailers that shuffle from site to site and never leave the North Woods makes it an iffy proposition to find an adequate campsite and comply with all of the NMW rules. The informal NMW policies of allowing hunting parties to camp at alternate or undesignated sites really aren't clear and don't help to provide reliable options for moose hunters to access these areas.

- The practice of bringing large hunting parties detracted from my experiences. These parties fill campsites while numerous vehicles scour the roads in search of obvious moose, some with "tuna towers" filled with people so you're never that far from traffic or "crowd" noise. If everyone just carved out an area to really explore beyond the road, you wouldn't even know others were out hunting at the same time. There was lots of sign everywhere I went in District 4 within the last 2 years, so there's no apparent shortage of moose.

- The consistently warm temperatures during the season necessitate a change in tactics from some of the "old" methods. Field dressing and at least quartering a moose is basically required to preserve the quality of the meat. The practice of trucking out whole animals for weigh-ins is ruining meat quality. I made lots of ice and borrowed the biggest coolers I could find and it was successful.

- The practice of allowing sub-permittees to actively hunt is unique to Maine and has some advantages, but it also seems problematic. It encourages the practice of "volley firing" at animals, which isn't necessary, and creates the potential for double kills. If the primary permittee is prepared, the hunt can be over with one well-placed shot.

I want to thank IFW for their management of Maine's moose herd, and for allowing for a great hunting opportunity for residents and non-residents alike. As someone who was fortunate to go on their first (and successful) bull hunt back in October of 2023, I was able to experience not only the benefits of our management program and experience a once-in-a-lifetime hunt, but also see a few things that can be improved for future management. I personally believe that the number of cow tags being issued is a bit high in some zones, and exceptionally high in a few others. Each cow harvested represents a decline in reproductive potential of the overall population, and limits population growth. I would like to see cow tags greatly reduced or fully eliminated to reform Maine's moose hunts to bull/antlered only. This would help grow the population, and provide IFW the capability of issuing more bull tags in future hunts as well as increasing harvest success odds as well.

With the mortality rate we've seen over the last decade, it would be responsible to suspend the moose hunt until the population can rebound. Face it, you don't see many moose anymore up north compared to only a short time ago.

Also, any moose permits should be either once in a lifetime or every 10 years. Too many of us have applied since the beginning without ever getting chosen, and I have friends who have had 4+ permits.

I have never been selected and applied for about 20 years. I know people who have been drawn multiple times. That is not fair. Change to the way the west draws elk tags. You are guaranteed a permit after several years.

I gave up years ago and am too old now anyway.

Although I have never been chosen, and have started losing faith that I ever will, I do believe the IFW does a great job and Wardens have done a great job keeping Maine great. Thank you for the opportunity to be part of your survey.

I want to thank IFW for the management of the moose season. I have only hunted moose once, felt very lucky to draw my bull tag and even luckier to fill it. I did experience road blocking of a number of ATV roads in one area by the same group. And as upset as we were, months of scouting blocked by a handful of fools, we went in to the woods and set up between the blockers and the nearby pond. Had a Bull (760 dressed at game butcher) just field dressed to get to tagging station in Andover. Biologist on hand, not a tick on him and they thought he was 3-1/2. On way to game butcher by 9 am, day one of hunt, because of, not in spite of those folks. Don't change a thing.

The moose hunt is a real hunt now. Timber harvests are not generally within viewing distance of commercial roads anymore. Moose have come to treat roads as a dangerous place to hang out. Numbers are good if you go off on foot and look. I'm not a biologist but have to wonder if we are at what the carrying capacity of moose for the current landscape can sustain. Without a doubt it's changed. Hard to say if it's right or wrong though. I personally haven't experienced any of the negatives of road blocking or confrontation. If it's happening it should be enforced. Pointing fingers at guides, non resident and residents alike won't help, all laws should be enforced no matter the offender. Most every WND has enough land for every tag holder. IMO a slight reduction in tags and a split season in the north western zones 7,8 would help disperse the number of hunters and reduce potential conflict. Also remove the recommendation that a moose season must be started on Columbus Day. That week sees an influx in the number of non consumptive users. The seasons should be one week part. Generally the state does as good of a job managing as anyone could ask.

Please avoid Sunday hunting. As a land owner, I want to have some time to wander in the fall without worrying about moose hunting parties AND without having to post my land. Avoiding this 1 day a week is a good compromise.

Can we make that day Wednesday? How about Wednesday, Thursday? I'm ok with losing 2 days during the week for one on the weekend. Strange that I can't hunt my land on Sunday so someone can walk my woods without worrying about hunters, which is one of the safest sports there is. Something to think about

since hunting moose since 1989 to date have not had a problem with hunter or non-hunter. I would like to have less cow permits the chance of hitting more than 1 moose goes up when you hunt cows

They need to do more about people blocking roads during moose season. We have a few in zone 7 and 8 that do it constantly and some day it's going to come to a head and not end well. Wardens need to get after this more than they do

Overall, I believe the IFW does a great job with the moose hunt, We will always have idiots that destroy a good time. With a guide, lodging, processing, and food you are taking about \$15,000, so this is not for the poor man.

I have hunted moose for more than 20 years in Canada and normally get a moose. As a ME resident, I applied 2 years here and last year I drew a cow tag in Zone 1 with 1 point. I am not a trophy hunter. I do not apply in nearby areas for one of the small number of permits available. I apply where the moose population is strongest and where there are a lot of permits--I hunted with a guide in the north Maine woods in 2023. After daylight we saw 10 moose on the first morning and I shot a 712 lb. field dressed cow at about 100 yards at about 8:30 am. I did not see any other hunter or recreationalist during my time in the field. We did not block any roads into the area where we hunted nor did I see any blocked roads on our travels. Because I can not be drawn as a permittee for 3 years, I am again investing in a Canadian moose hunt this year and for the next 2 years (My wife was not drawn this year for a permit on which I might have become a sub permittee). The biggest issue I see with Maine moose hunting is the massive tick problem that is killing so many of the young moose. There needs to be a concerted effort to find a control for those ticks which are hurting the Maine moose herd so badly. The moose I harvested and others at the checking station we went to had tick infestations.

One main issue I see is the very early moose hunt season in September, this is way too early and way too warm, moose are not in rut, plus too many bull permits given ..another issue we see is access to paper company roads, the use of ATVs should be allowed to pull out harvested moose...I agree that we should not be allowed to ride the roads due to truck traffic etc....for the most of our hunting I feel most everyone is very helpful to the hunters...

I've been putting in for a moose permit for over 30 years. I'm a 100% Military wounded combat disabled Marine. I buy extra points every year. What can I do to improve my odds?

As Maine guide I totally get it. Maine IFW has a hard time to please all parties involved, making this moose season as pleasing for all as possible. But let's face it, it has become a over priced sport. It used to be as most will say a Hunt of a Lifetime. But now it drains most peoples pockets to even acquire a tag let alone go on the hunt.

Once you go on the hunt you cannot hunt without bumping into traffic upon traffic, many rude, not all people and guides. Blocked roads, fake signs, airplanes, just totally outrageous acts just to get ahead. Totally unjust, unfair to the people trying to do it the right way. Having a good time, a family affair, a true Maine experience. I know it's hard for wardens to cover every inch, every day. But when you hunt for 6 days and not see a warden somewhere something is wrong. The number of permits given has exceeded the fair hunt numbers. Success rates have fallen considerably and you ask why. Be serious please. Let's go back to the older ways and lower numbers with higher success rates and have many more happy people who are the ones supporting this adventure.

I've applied for years before finally getting a tag the past year and letting my teen age son be the shooter. We had unit 4, which will be the main part of this posting. To those complaining about roads blocked, yep, my own guide did the same complaints (we needed a guide, we are nowhere near unit 4 to do proper scouting). I think the Sunday hunting as always should be brought back, I understand people and the comment below "not getting shot" but frankly when you lived away for awhile, in this case PA WITH OVER 1 MILLION LICENSED HUNTERS in a state about the size of ME, that's a valid worry. The chance of being shot here, nil. But main complaint here is this new tick policy and declaring war on moose in unit 4. No matter how you slice it, it looks bad. The guides/outfitters and locals all blame the state, saying it's reducing the herd there so the Canadians can run their maple industry (everything looks Canuck owned even if it's not, but it just looks bad) and not have their miles of tubing ruined by a moose, and of course others blame other things as well, such as running lumber into Canada from the Maine side, so don't want moose/truck conflict (that does sound ridiculous, not just Canadians needing timber but trucks being worried. They nearly squashed my pickup, they don't worry). The camp we were in, right on the border, had a long time outfitter and for the week a handful of bulls were seen by ~13 hunters. I saw plenty of cows and calves, but it's clear the bull population was hit hard in past years and the guides all brought it up as opposed to the hunters. Then it was going to a special cow hunt the weeks after and due to tick inheritance of Lymes disease on new born calves the thought was to reduce this genetic problem. Course, if the dicks don't go away and merely go to other animals and the moose population rebounds in a few years, what now? Same thing? Don't decimate your moose population in an area, rather use normal takes, not too low, not too high. Just a shame the hunt of a lifetime potentially (20+ years for me to draw a tag) and not remotely see a bull and to know the cows were to take a beating next was hard to take.

Last complain, can't use drones. I get that, fine, sporting and all, but to allow folks to pay a pilot \$500 to spot for 4 hours as if this was charting Salmon in AK seems a bit like horsecrap to me. Planes cover a hell of a lot more ground, and most folks can't even use a small drone properly let alone then go hunt. Ban it all, or allow it "within" reason. And oh, for the millionth time, if you want a good moose population, it does tend to help to not mess around and let the bear population go up 1500 a year (or 2-3%, depends on which biologist is telling you) to the point where the same 35k+ figure used a decade plus ago keeps coming up. Even at its slowest you are approaching 45k at this rate, and being someone whom has 2-3 bears every night go past game cameras 500 feet from the back door of my house, it's time to start thinking about having a 2 bear hunting limit or a spring season. We may think of our state as a big state, at least by New England standards, but compared to say Idaho, we are small, yet have more bears than anyone not named Alaska. Give us a 2 week season in mid to late May before sows with cubs are running all over, and get some of the big cub killers out. Helps outfitters, helps moose, helps corn farmers, just a sound practice and quit worrying about the HSUS and PETA, and allow that second bear (sorry, trapping doesn't count, thank god we allow it still) for hunters. Nobody should have to go to New Hampshire if they want a second bear with hunting.

I am commenting here, as well as on the other thread, because it won't accept the like button. I have seen roads being blocked, but didn't have a tow truck to pull the vehicles aside. I didn't even know that guides got special permits. That's idiotic!!!!

Folks saying there should be a longer gap between permits a person can get are absolutely right. I've scored 1 permit in 30 years of trying, and know people who have gotten many. The one person I know with the most has gotten 5 in those 30 years, and couldn't hunt one year on one of those permits. Her husband has probably gotten 3 in the same timeframe.

I shot a small bull on mine, and my wife and I ate it for 4 years. It was the best wild meat I've had - edging out Elk. The biologists were very helpful during my hunt near Moosehead Lake.

Would like to reinforce some of the comments here about guides blocking roads and using airplanes, and routinely obtaining tags for wealthy clients. None of these qualify as fair chase. I view these as no different from poaching....an absolute embarrassment to the hunting community.

I have applied for a moose permit many times and I have not been lucky enough yet to get one. That being said I have many friends that have and I have also tagged along just for the experience. I have never experienced any conflict in or out of the woods with other hunters or non hunters.

I think the Maine moose hunt should be a once in a lifetime hunt.

I have been applying for a moose permit since the lottery started. I was a sophomore in high school when I started applying and I am 53 now. I have never been picked and have friends that have gone 10 plus times. I am a land owner with close to 300 acres in district 7. I have always applied for this district and district 8 the two closest and the land I know best. When I turned 26 I moved out of the state to New Hampshire. I still apply every year maybe there should be a year for the unlucky only? I wonder how many other people are in the same boat as me?

I have had the same I experience. Except for several years in the 1990s, I enter every year. Never been drawn. I wonder if the time between successful drawing and being able to apply again should be extended to five years. Once in a lifetime seems a little extreme. Another thought is for every unsuccessful year, double the bonus points. 1 point for the first year, 2 for the second, 4 for the third, 8 for the fourth, etc.

Question 1. Other moose hunting parties blocking off/trying to block roads to good hunting areas. Unfortunately, many of these people are usually registered guides/outfitters.

2.n/a

Wardens increasing patrolling and ticketing people blocking roads.

Stop giving away permits to special interests. Guides should have to put in the lottery, Stop the "Adaptive" hunt in the county. Put your name in the lottery if you want a permit like the rest of us. Want to give permits away have a special lottery for landowners who have more than 100 acres and allow hunting. And for the love of god allow Sunday hunting.

First off, I have zero faith in the current Moose lottery system. I believe it is unfair and here's why. Every year after the results are posted, I hear numerous people talking about how they have won multiple permits while other people have applied 10, 20 even 30 plus years without ever being drawn. I also hear of multiple people in the same family and even in the same household winning Moose permits for the same year. I have known people who have changed their name and won a permit within the 3 year waiting period after already being drawn. I also believe the Moose lottery system is designed to provide special treatment to Maine guides because they benefit financially off the Moose hunt and bring more revenue to Maine through out of state hunters and even resident hunters. Guides are allowed to enter a lottery to receive a lodge permit then sell that permit for however much money they want. I have never seen or heard of a lodge permit sold for less than 20,000 dollars. You can but a decent used vehicle in Maine for less than the cost of a lodge permit. I also believe out of states get special treatment because they are allowed to spend as much money as they want in order to get more chances in the Moose lottery versus a Maine resident who is only allowed one chance per year. Why can't Maine residents spend as much money as they want to get better chances in the Moose lottery? A non resident can spend hundreds of dollars for extra chances increasing the likelihood they will be picked and given one of the 10% of non resident permits. A Maine resident is only allowed one chance per year. It feels like Moose are being sold to the highest bidder at the expense of Maine sportsmen and women.

Some of the conflicts I encounter are ATV riders who believe they own the woods and do not want to share the woods with hunters. I have personally encountered ATV riders chasing Moose down logging roads to the point of exhaustion simply because they feel like it. I also encounter people blocking roads and refusing access to large areas of land for hunting simply because they are hunting there and don't want anybody else around. Another issue I find is just the sheer number of people in the Maine woods hunting so many different species. You have Moose, Bear, Turkey, Grouse and Deer all being hunted at the same time. I also believe Bear hounds are a conflict because Moose view Dogs as predators and this keeps the Moose running to avoid Bear hounds.

Some solutions to these conflicts I believe would be beneficial to everybody is to limit the use of ATV during the months of September and October except when used for hunting purposes. ATV's get a few months each year they can ride compared to a Moose hunter who only gets 6 days to harvest a Moose in some instances. Moose Hunts are not even a full 7 day week because Maine will not allow Sunday hunting. Another solution is to limit the number of species being hunted at the same time. I would make it night hunting only for coyotes during the Months of September and October to accommodate Moose hunters. Perhaps, alter Archery season for Deer as well. Combine Archery with Rifle season or combine Archery and Muzzleloader season. I would make it so the only species being hunted at the same time are Bear, Moose and Bird. Instead of having a fall turkey season, add the length of the fall season onto the spring season. The bag limits can remain the same. I would also swap Hound season with Baiting season for Bear so that the hound hunters get their time to hunt before Moose season begins. You could easily alter the seasons so that Hound season ends a week or two prior to the first Moose season. For example, if a zone has a September Moose season. Allow Bear Hounds to hunt until a week before the Moose hunt. Then allow the Moose hunters to have their season and follow that up with bird season leading into Deer season. There are some zones where you could change an October Moose season to September Moose hunting season and it would not really impact Bird hunters. It would benefit both Bird and Moose hunters.

Let's look at Zone 14 for example. You have Bear baiting starting in August then Moose season is the second week of October and Bird season begins the end of September. Why not have Bear Hounds hunting starting in August? This season could continue it's usual timeframe and end before the end of September. Then Moose season could be the last week in September. When Moose season ends on Saturday, bird hunters could begin that Saturday or the following Monday along with Bear Baiting season and Bear Baiting season could go the month of October and be over by opening day for Deer rifle season. Another option is to create spring bear hunting season. Maybe make that the Bear hound season and leave baiting like it currently is.

Another solution is to completely do away with the Moose lottery. I believe the Moose hunt should be a resident only hunt. You could even make the Moose hunt a quota hunt. This would be where Fish and Game determines the number of Moose that need to be harvested each year and designate a particular month such as the month of September to be the Maine Moose hunting season. Fish and Game can easily provide a phone number people would need to call each morning to determine if the harvest number has been met. Once the harvest number has been met, the hunt is over.

For Example, let's say Fish and Game determines 3500 Moose needs to be harvested this year. The month of September could be Moose hunting season for residents only. The hunt ends the last day of September or when the 3500 limit is reached whichever comes quicker. You could easily account for extra Moose harvested the day the 3500 limit is reached. If the limit is not reached by the end of the month, you can add those permits onto the next season. You can also easily take into account the number of Moose harvested through vehicle accidents, disease and predation.

Selfishly, I do not like the fact that IF&W caved into a few and allows partridge hunting during the first moose season.

I have not seen a lot of conflicts in the areas I frequent. I participated in the first adaptive hunt (4N) and a member of my group saw guides blocking major roads. I believe landowners have been very tolerant of moose hunters. Hunters driving jeeps and such into cuts and down winter roads that are mostly blocked off seems rather ignorant to me. Good way to lose access.

Overall IF&W has the difficult job of managing moose and people. I'd think the people part is the toughest. Afterall there are thousands of wildlife biologists out there.

I have never drawn a moose tag in Maine, but have hunted grouse during the moose season. I have not experienced a conflict with moose hunters. The most noticeable impact is the increase in traffic due to moose hunters. I do think that working to eliminated road hunting and encourage good old fashioned boot leather would be beneficial to managing potential conflicts.

I've been putting in for years for a moose and Finally got one last year loved going and the last day of the moose hunt we see a bull and my grandson got to shot it, it was a four pointer. Best experiment I've had with my grandson.

I've seen proposals to allow hunting on Sunday. While I don't hunt, I feel hunting is important for population management, Maine's economy, and as a traditional food source for Mainers. That said, the ban on Sunday hunting should continue to allow for non-hunting recreation one day a week without fear of being shot.

I honestly haven't experienced any conflicts while moose hunting or grouse hunting. I have seen outfitters using airplanes to locate and direct moose to clients.

I also think providing outfitters with special tags is a travesty. Donald Trump Junior or other exceedingly wealthy people should not be able to purchase a tag when a resident can go more than a decade without drawing a tag.

We are also experiencing more posted property and locked gates

Feels like it's a scam to try and pull a tag only say that because I tried for years always buy the super pack to and never helps my odds also watched my brother in law who knows nothing about this system get help applying first time ever and pulled a tag and I've been waiting years lol off topic but they need better deer management rules no reason Maine isn't the premier state for white tail we all destroy the buck population and kill button bucks every year pathetic and we need more then a six inch rule I think the only people who should be shooting 6 inches or less are first time kids to get them in the sport after your first buck should be held to a standard after that but they need to white themself out for money I get it only worked alone side a bunch of wardens I'd be the best one they ever hired if they didn't make the requirements so nazi like

COMMENTS RECEIVED BY EMAIL

Moose numbers are way down in several areas in Maine. Just ask any sportsman who frequents the north Maine woods and they'll all agree that we don't see nearly as many moose as we did years ago. The statistical numbers the state of Maine comes up with isn't a true indicator. If many sportsman are all report seeing 50% or few moose than in years past, then you know the moose numbers are way down.

I also see an incredible amount of trash on the sides of the roads when moose season is in effect. I would like to see a dramatic reduce in moose permits allotted.

10 years ago we used to see groups of bulls that were at least 100 count. Now we drive from Jackman to the deep of the Allagash and we barely see groups of five. You guys are going to eradicate the most. There will be nothing left. The state cuts all the last old growth timber. You might as well give up. You guys are only caring about money. All you care about is licenses coming in from out of state. You have no desire to manage the actual moose population. It makes me sad and sick to my stomach that you don't even take into consideration that each Hunter shoots a moose or two, maybe even three before they actually kill one. There's nothing on the application. There's nothing on any of the information that's filled out by a hunter. How many bullets he put in a moose and how many moves he actually found. We go in the Allagash we find up to 10:15 sometimes 20 moose in a 2 or 3 mile area that was Shaw and not found is sickening. You guys make me sick.

I'm sorry if it's so aggressive, but I feel as though there's so many elements that the state misses when they put out moose permits. Other than greed and money, I mean a lot more to me than just a season of hunt

I guess out of all my rant, the biggest important point that I want to make is that the state doesn't compensate for people shooting a moose and not finding it. And for us that are true. Outdoorsman that have no fear of beating the brush. Find lots of dead moose sometimes the game wardens do not even approach the scene because there's so many and I feel like the state needs to figure out a way to identify how many moose had a bullet put through them that were not found. I guess that's all I can say. The zone 4 was a sad hunt up by the Golden road. There was over four 500 trucks in that area. Hunting and it was sad to see that many moose eradicated from that area. It couldn't handle it. I guess that was the point

I saw where you wanted comments about what to change in reference to the moose hunting season. I couldn't find a comments section, so I'm doing it this way. I am afraid that the State of Maine uses the moose hunt as a way to generate revenue, not as a tool to manage the herd. As I remember, there was 100 permits issued when this hunt started, with no out of state permits issued. Let's go back to this method for 5 years and then reassess the health of the herd.

I've lived in Northern Aroostook County for 20 years, but I am not a Mainer. Please understand that no one in authority could care less what you or I think regarding the sale of hunting permits. They care even less about the moose population or game management in general. The specific individuals, whoever they are, make Game permit sales decisions based on their income goals only. Those decisions have nothing to do with Moose Biologists' studies or recommendations, which are rejected in the process. This is not my opinion. Game animals have literally disappeared from our area in another secretive State Representative effort to eliminate these animals. I'm not referencing the highly invasive tick population. Perhaps the real issues need to be addressed and not hidden from the population who pays for it. These animals need to be left alone and Guides need to be shut down for their invasive year round baiting practices. No wonder Moose permits are now granted in the 24 to 26 thousand dollar range. My property and many friends' properties are now off limits to hunters for their reckless and dangerous hunting practices, inconsideration and damage to property owners, and for the garbage left behind that my wife mostly attends to. We, as prime hunting land property owners, receive no compensation for any use of our private land. You might want to also address the aggressive and out-of-control logging practices that have rapidly depleted these habitats, the published benefits of which are in complete disagreement with the Cornell research land management studies.

Apparently I struck a nerve with someone in the Department with my pointed, but, I believe, accurate assessment of the fairness of the moose lottery system. Too bad! It is what it is, UNFAIR!

I am concerned for the population of moose in the Greenville area. I have seen very few moose there in the past 5-7 years. Also my friends have seen very few or no moose. It is hurting the economy any many people travel to the area to see moose. I am concerned that they have been over harvested in the area. As a hunter I would like to see a moose hunting moratorium for the area to replenish the population.

Thank you for your response.

There were no names, addresses, or phone numbers in my comments. No identifiable individuals were described. I was critical of the Moose management program, as well as the fairness of the permit lottery.

You might consider this whining, but how would you feel if you had applied every year since 1980, with the exception of 2 yrs due to medical reasons and were told that you lost all your points? The salt in this wound is seeing names that been drawn 3, 4 and 5 times! There ought to be a limit on how many moose a person can harvest.

Now that herd is in a diminished state, that is especially true. I no longer care if I get a permit, but I do care about the fairness of the process.

Too many people on the roads. Lots of bird hunters that are with people with moose permits. I had a Maine guide blocking the road which had many miles beyond with many other roads off of it. He said i could go by and I did and then chased me down and harassed me.(I did take a picture of his license plate).Calling out a moose from the woods and truck came and scared the moose away. I saw a moose, got out of my truck and loaded my gun and there was a truck behind and after seeing me also stopped, did not see the moose loaded their gun and followed me.

One morning driving down logging road to hunting spot pulled over for logging truck. I was 2nd of 3 trucks. The last truck sped ahead and passed the two vehicles in front. There use to be respect for other hunters and now its out for yourself.

I think during moose hunting, bird and other hunting should stop and maybe break up the zones into smaller sections.

Best time of my life Moose hunting 2001.

I have drawn a moose permit twice in my lifetime. I was successful bagged a moose each time. However, I have seen a drastic decline in the moose population when going into the woods and friends who visit and want to see a moose have been disappointed repeatedly. I believe we are taking too many and we are losing the resource. Stop hunting in the zones that have few animals, let those remaining be a tourist resource! Thank you.

I would like to make a comment for the moose hunt study that you're currently conducting. When I saw that there would be 4000 moose hunting permits given out this fall, I was shocked. The moose population has been declining for years, and I would think that you would be taking that into account when deciding how many moose to allow to be killed.

I moved to Durham in 1998. Many times in the first few years I would have a moose run through my yard, or see one on the road, but I haven't seen one anywhere in Durham since the early 2000's. I have been camping in Baxter park for the last 15 years or so, and we would routinely see moose on Daicey Pond, Kidney Pond, and sometimes along the park road.

But we have seen almost none there in at least 5 years. Then there's Sandy Stream Pond, a bit further north in the park, that is known for its moose sightings. We would take a walk into the pond every year, and see multiple moose feeding along the edge of it, and even had one meet us on the trail into the pond one year. But, the last couple of years, there have been almost no moose at this spot. Maybe you'll see one, or many times, none.

So I am very concerned with the decline in the Maine moose population.

I know that ticks have been a significant impact, with people finding dead moose in the woods, while hunting for antlers, which are covered with ticks. Being a retired veterinarian, I know that ticks can have this severe an effect on animals. So this is a major issue, and I don't know in what way we can combat the tick population. But I am concerned that keeping the hunting permits at such a high level will also have a significant impact on the population of our treasured moose.

We've all seen healthy moose in Little Kennebago, Big Kennebago area. See 2-3 each visit over 2 days.

ABOUT RESPONSIVE MANAGEMENT

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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.

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