



# **ISSUES RELATED TO HUNTING ACCESS IN THE UNITED STATES**

## **NATIONAL RESULTS**

**Responsive Management  
and the  
National Shooting Sports Foundation**

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**2009**

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## NATIONAL RESULTS

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The views contained in this report do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or any of the above agencies and/or people.

Although numerous people assisted with this project, any errors, omissions, or typographical mistakes in the report are the sole responsibility of Responsive Management.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY**

The purpose of this study is to better understand issues related to hunting access. Research indicates that difficulty with access to lands for hunting has become a constraint to recruiting and retaining sportsmen. Adequate access to land is one of the fundamental issues affecting the future of hunting today, but it is, fortunately, an issue over which agencies and organizations have some influence.

This project entailed a nationwide survey of hunters that included detailed questions about access to hunting lands. The study identifies and quantifies an array of access issues that hunters face today, and it provides in-depth baseline data with which to compare conditions in the future. The study assesses the effectiveness of access programs and acquires data for future programs, and the results can help guide the future use of funding for access programs.

The overall project entailed analyzing data obtained from a series of focus groups conducted in 2008 (which were also used in developing the survey instrument), a nationwide telephone survey with an oversampling in 16 states where a variety of access programs are currently under way, 16 state reports for those oversampled states (an additional state was oversampled, and a report was produced for it as well), a cumulative national report of the results, and a final report with recommendations for implementing effective access programs. This report discusses the national results only. Specific aspects of the research methodology for the survey are discussed below.

For the survey, telephones were selected as the preferred sampling medium because of the near universality of telephone ownership. Additionally, telephone surveys, relative to mail or Internet surveys, allow for more scientific sampling and data collection, provide higher quality data, obtain higher response rates, are more timely, and are more cost-effective. Telephone surveys also have fewer negative effects on the environment than do mail surveys because of reduced use of paper and reduced energy consumption for delivering and returning the questionnaires. The telephone survey questionnaire was developed cooperatively by Responsive Management, the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), and the participating state agencies. The survey questionnaire was reviewed by numerous university professors and staff with knowledge of

surveying methods, as well as many fish and wildlife agency personnel with knowledge of hunting access issues. The questionnaire included some “screener” questions; those who had *not* hunted at least once in the past 5 years were not interviewed.

The survey instrument included questions about the following national hunting programs/resources that are used throughout the United States (descriptions of the programs/resources are included as Appendix A):

- The Open Fields program
- The Conservation Reserve Program
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Waterfowl Production Areas
- The wheretohunt website
- The huntinfo website
- The huntandshoot website

To ensure that the researchers would know which species were associated with various results, the survey asked respondents to answer most questions about the species *they primarily hunt*. In these questions, QPL inserted the respondent’s primary species name into the question so that answers would be specific to a particular species. Keep in mind that the many questions, such as ratings of access, are specific to a particular species rather being about hunting overall.

Interviews were conducted Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Saturday from noon to 5:00 p.m., and Sunday from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., local time. The survey was conducted from April through November 2009. Responsive Management obtained a total of 14,317 completed interviews throughout the United States.

The software used for data collection was Questionnaire Programming Language. The analysis of data was performed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) as well as proprietary software developed by Responsive Management.

### **SPECIES HUNTED, HUNTING AVIDITY, AND TRENDS IN HUNTING PARTICIPATION**

- The majority of licensed hunters nationwide primarily hunted white-tailed deer (57%) in the past 12 months, distantly followed in popularity by waterfowl (9%), upland game birds (8%), wild turkey (5%), and elk (5%). Note that the question asked respondents to name the *single*

species they *primarily* hunt, not all species they hunt. When considering any type of deer (white-tailed, mule, black-tailed, and axis), 61% primarily hunted some type of deer, broken down as follows: 57% primarily hunted white-tailed deer, 3% primarily hunted mule deer, and less than 1% primarily hunted black-tailed deer or axis deer.

- There was some regional variation in the results. In general, white-tailed deer is the top choice in the eastern part of the U.S., while elk and mule deer are the most popular in the western part of the U.S.
- The survey asked about the typical number of days that hunters hunt annually in their state: the median is 20 days.
  - Hunters in the survey were asked to indicate how long they have been hunting: the mean is 36.2 years.
  - Hunters in the survey were asked to indicate how many of the past 5 years they had hunted. The large majority of those hunters nationwide (84%) are quite avid, having hunted all 5 of the past 5 years.
  - Hunters nationwide were asked to indicate whether their hunting participation has increased, remained the same, or decreased over the past 5 years. They most commonly say that it has stayed the same (45%); otherwise, the percentage who say it has decreased (31%) exceeds the percentage who say it has increased (23%).

## **LOCATIONS OF HUNTING ACTIVITIES**

- Hunters nationwide more often hunt their primary species on private land (54% hunt on private land mostly, and 77% do so at least half the time) than public land (23% hunt on public land mostly, and 46% do so at least half the time).
  - A crosstabulation found that elk and mule deer hunters have the greatest propensity to hunt mostly on public land. On the other hand, those with the greatest propensity to hunt mostly on private land are white-tailed deer, upland game bird, and waterfowl hunters. Overall, the differences on this question are statistically significant.

- Two questions asked those who hunt their primary species at least half the time on private land about the ownership of that land. Most commonly, those private land hunters indicate that they hunt mostly on land owned by a friend or family member (35% do so) or hunt on their own land (19%).
- Another question has implications regarding how much hunters need to find access to hunting lands. Hunters more commonly say that they mostly hunt their primary species on the same land each year (65%) than say that they hunt it on different lands each year (9%).
- In a crosstabulation of hunting on public/private lands and hunting on the same/different lands (the questions discussed above), the sample could be divided into 9 groups (as shown in the matrix below), with the largest portion being those who primarily hunt on private/same lands (42.6%), followed by public/same lands (13.3%).

|   | <b>Hunts mostly on<br/><i>public</i> land<br/>(22.9%)</b> | <b>Hunts public and<br/>private lands both<br/>about <i>equally</i> (22.9%)</b> | <b>Hunts mostly on<br/><i>private</i> land<br/>(54.2%)</b> |
|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Hunts mostly on the<br/><i>same</i> land each year<br/>(65.8%)</b>           | Public/Same<br>13.3%                                      | Both/Same<br>9.9%   | Private/Same<br>42.6%                                      |
| <b>Hunts same and<br/>different lands both<br/>about <i>equally</i> (25.3%)</b> | Public/Both<br>6.5%                                       | Both/Both<br>9.8%   | Private/Both<br>8.9%                                       |
| <b>Hunts mostly on<br/><i>different</i> lands each<br/>year (8.9%)</b>          | Public/Different<br>3.1%                                  | Both/Different<br>3.1%  | Private/Different<br>2.6%                                  |

- The survey asked hunters to indicate how far they typically travel from home to hunt their primary species: the median distance is 30 miles.
- Another question explored the modes of transportation that hunters use to access the land on which they hunt: 70% use a car or truck (by far the top mode), followed by walking (51%) and ATV (16%). Note that hunters could name more than one mode.

## FACTORS CONSIDERED IN CHOOSING LANDS ON WHICH TO HUNT

- The survey asked 11 questions about the importance of various factors in hunters' decisions regarding where to hunt their primary species (shown in Text Box 1 below). For each factor, they were asked if it is *very* important, *somewhat* important, or *not at all* important.
  - One factor stands out markedly more important than the rest in the ranking by the percentage saying the factor is *very* important: that the land is *not* crowded with other sportsmen (82% say this is *very* important). This is followed by a middle tier: that they are familiar with the land (58%), that the land is easy to access by foot (51%), and that the land is owned by somebody they personally know (47%). Of interest in these findings is that the land being private (43%) ranks above the land being public (29%).
  - At the bottom is that ATVs/off-road vehicles are allowed on the land (21%), that the land has well-maintained roads (20%), and that hunting dogs are allowed (20%).

### TEXT BOX 1

#### Factors in hunters' decisions regarding where to hunt that were asked about in the survey:

- That the land is public land
- That the land is private land
- That the land is owned by someone the respondent knows personally
- That the land is familiar to the respondent
- That the land is close to the respondent's home
- That the land is easy to access by foot
- That the land is easy to access by car or truck
- That the land is not crowded with other sportsmen
- That the land has well-maintained roads
- That the respondent can use ATVs or off-road vehicles
- That the land allows hunting with dogs

- After the series of questions discussed above, the survey asked hunters if there are any other factors that are important in their decision-making regarding where to hunt. An additional factor was commonly mentioned: the availability and quality of game. Another factor of importance is good habitat/good wildlife management.

## CONSTRAINTS TO HUNTING PARTICIPATION

- A direct question asked hunters whether lack of hunting access had caused them *not* to hunt a particular species as much as they would have liked in the past 5 years. Almost half of them (46%) agreed that it had done so. In follow-up, the top-named access problems were private

land being posted (40% of those who agreed to the lead-in question) and no land to hunt on (30%). These two reasons were markedly more important than the rest, and they were more distantly followed by the land being leased to others (13%), public land being closed (10%), development closing lands (8%), and the cost of access (8%).

- Also in follow-up, hunters were asked to name the species that they had *not* hunted as much as they would have liked because of access problems. The top-named species is white-tailed deer (46% among those who agreed to the above question), followed by upland game birds (26%), waterfowl (16%), wild turkey (13%), rabbit (10%), elk (9%), and mule deer (8%). In total, 53% named a type of deer. Note that hunters could name more than one species on this question.
- The survey asked a series of 25 questions about possible hunting access constraints (shown in Text Box 2 on the following page). For each possible constraint, the survey asked hunters if it had been, over the past 5 years, a *major* problem, a *moderate* problem, a *minor* problem, or *not at all* a problem.
- The potential constraints that had the highest percentage of hunters saying that the constraint was a *major*, *moderate*, or *minor* problem were less land to hunt on because of private land ownership changes (51%), less land on which to hunt because the land use has changed (48%), finding previously open private land sold and posted by the new landowner (47%), the cost of gas (47%), housing or other development making land not huntable (47%), finding previously open private land now posted by the landowner (45%), less land to hunt on due to development (43%), being denied permission to hunt on somebody else's land (41%), and finding previously open private land closed because a club has now leased it (41%). Each of these had more than 40% of respondents saying it was a *major*, *moderate*, or *minor* problem.

**TEXT BOX 2****Possible constraints to hunting access that were asked about in the survey:**

Road closures  
Less land on which to hunt  
Less land on which to hunt because the land use has changed  
Less land on which to hunt due to private land ownership changes  
Not having enough information about where to hunt  
The information about where to hunt being inaccurate  
Not having ATV access in general  
Not being able to retrieve the hunt harvest because of ATV restrictions  
Having maps that show huntable land but being unable to locate that land on the ground  
Being unable to locate a road or other access route to huntable land  
Not being sure of the boundaries of huntable land  
Having to travel too far to hunt  
Being denied permission to hunt on somebody else's land  
Not being able to find the landowner to ask permission  
Finding previously open private land posted or closed by the landowner  
Finding previously open private land sold and posted or closed by the new landowner  
Finding previously open private land closed because a club has now leased it  
Private land blocking access to public land for hunting  
Poor maintenance of roads or trails  
The cost of gas  
Not being able to find a good place to park the vehicle  
Not being able to find a place to launch a boat  
Housing or other development making land not huntable  
Information from the [state agency] being out of date  
Access or leasing fees being expensive

- A follow-up question to one of the questions within the aforementioned series asked those who indicated that road closures had been a problem to indicate how the road had been closed. Most commonly, the road was closed by a gate, although a few indicated that the road was closed by a berm or dirt pile, by a “No trespassing” sign posted by a landowner, or by a lack of maintenance.
  - Most commonly, the road closures were perceived to be permanent rather than seasonal/temporary.
  - Another follow-up question asked for the location/type of the closed road. Most commonly, the roads were public—National Forest roads, BLM roads, or other public roads.
  
- Another follow-up question within the above series was asked of those who indicated that not being able to retrieve their harvest because of ATV restrictions had been a problem (11% of

hunters overall indicated that this was a problem). The follow-up question asked if they agreed or disagreed that not being able to retrieve game with an ATV had caused them to hunt less than they would otherwise have liked to do, and 51% of those who got the follow-up question agreed (6% of hunters overall), while 45% disagreed.

- A final follow-up question within the above series was asked of those who indicated that private land blocking access to public land had been a problem (29% indicated that this was a problem). The follow-up question asked how much of a problem was *intentional* blocking of public land by a private landowner, and 77% of those respondents indicated that private landowners *intentionally* blocking access was a problem (22% of hunters overall).
  
- After the above series of questions, the survey then presented hunters a list of 16 problems with actions hunters may have had to take because of the problem (e.g., leaving a hunt area because of crowding from other recreationists). The list of problems is shown in Text Box 3 on the following page. For each possible problem, the survey asked hunters if it had been, over the past 5 years, a *major* problem, a *moderate* problem, a *minor* problem, or *not at all* a problem.
  - In looking at the ranking by the percentage saying the problem was *major*, *moderate*, or *minor*, the top problems are leaving an area because of crowding from other hunters (55%), leaving an area because the respondent felt unsafe because of other hunters (40%), and leaving an area because of the irresponsible behavior of other hunters (35%). A middle tier consists of leaving an area because of crowding from other recreationists (28%), not being sure whether they were on private or public land (25%), not going on a hunt or changing locations because of access problems (24%), and not being sure whose land they were on (24%)—all with about a quarter saying it had been a problem. As a whole, the results suggest that access itself is not as great a problem as is access to *uncrowded* lands—the four top problems relate to other people being on the land on which the hunter wanted to hunt.

**TEXT BOX 3****Possible problems regarding hunting access that were asked about in the survey:**

Not going on a hunt or changing locations because of access problems  
Not going on a hunt or changing locations because the respondent felt that a leasing fee was too expensive  
Not going on a hunt or changing locations because map information was wrong  
Not going on a hunt or changing locations because access for those with disabilities was not available  
Leaving an area because of crowding from other hunters  
Leaving an area because of crowding from other recreationists  
Leaving an area because respondent felt unsafe because of other hunters  
Leaving an area because of the irresponsible behavior of other hunters  
Not being sure whether he/she was on private or public land  
Not being sure whose land he/she was on  
Not hunting somewhere because of ATV restrictions  
Not hunting somewhere because ATV use is allowed or not restricted  
Being in an area where he/she was not sure which hunting regulations applied  
Being confused by a state agency map that was hard to follow  
Discontinuing a hunting club membership because he/she felt the fees were too expensive  
Trying to join a hunting club that was already full

- The survey asked hunters a series of 10 questions about factors that may or may not influence access to hunting land nationwide in general, regardless of whether their own participation is affected by it (shown in Text Box 4 below). For each factor, the survey asked hunters if they think it is a *major* problem, a *moderate* problem, a *minor* problem, or *not at all* a problem.
- In looking at the ranking by the percentages saying the factor is a *major*, a *moderate*, or a *minor* problem, 3 of the 10 factors have a majority saying it is a problem: private land posted or closed because the landowner is specifically concerned about liability (56%), housing and commercial development (54%), and public or private land tracts being broken up when sold or leased (52%).

**TEXT BOX 4****Factors that may or may not influence hunting access that were asked about in the survey:**

Poor management or allocation of uses of public land  
Lack of or unclear signs marking public hunting lands  
Restrictions on public land  
Closures of public land by government agencies  
Not enough access to public lands for those with disabilities  
Housing and commercial development  
Gas and oil extraction on public lands  
Public or private land tracts being broken up when sold or leased  
Private land posted or closed because the landowner is specifically concerned about liability  
Management of land for purposes other than hunting, such as timber cutting

- When asked in an open-ended question if there were any things that had taken away from their enjoyment of hunting, even if those things did not prevent them from actually going, hunters most commonly named some type of access problem (14%), a regulation-related answer, such as season timing (10%), and/or not enough game (9%).
  - Note that the analysis breaks down the “access-related problems” category into specific access problems as subsets of access-related problems overall. Primary among those access problems are the posting of private land, a simple lack of land to hunt on, land being closed because of development, land being leased to others, and public land being closed.

### **RATINGS OF ACCESS TO HUNTING LANDS**

- A basic question asked hunters to rate access to hunting land in their state overall. They are more positive than negative: 56% give a rating of excellent or good, while 42% give a rating of fair or poor.
  - In a related question, ratings of the state agency’s management of access to hunting lands are more positive than negative: 55% give an excellent or good rating, while 34% give a fair or poor rating (the remainder answering “don’t know”).
  
- Those who hunted their primary species on public land at least half the time were asked to rate access to public lands in their state. Excellent and good ratings (65% give one of the two responses) exceed fair and poor ratings (31%).
  - Top reasons for rating public land access as fair or poor are a simple lack of land on which to hunt, road closures, land being too crowded with other hunters, public land being blocked by private land, lack of quality land or land with plenty of game, and access problems in general to public land.

- Those who hunted their primary species on private land at least half the time were asked to rate access to private land in their state, and they are evenly split: 47% give an excellent or good rating, and 48% give a fair or poor rating.
  - The most common reason for giving a fair or poor rating to private land access is land being posted—the top reason by far. This is followed by land being leased to others, the cost of access, and/or a simple lack of land on which to hunt.

## FACTORS THAT MAY POSITIVELY AFFECT ACCESS

- The survey asked 15 questions about things that would make hunting access easier (shown in Text Box 5 below). For each item, the survey asked hunters if it would be *very* effective, *somewhat* effective, or *not at all* effective at making it easier to access land on which to hunt.
  - In looking at the ranking by the percentage saying that the items would be *very* effective at making access easier, 6 of the 15 items stand out—each with a majority saying it would be *very* effective: having signs that clearly mark boundaries of huntable land (71%), having a list of landowners with telephone numbers where the respondent could call to ask to hunt on their land (62%), having up-to-date information on a website showing lands where hunting is allowed (58%), having paper maps of hunting lands for their primary species (55%), having their state agency acquire more land for hunting (55%), and having maps of hunting lands for their primary species on a website (54%).

### TEXT BOX 5

#### Things that might make hunting access easier that were asked about in the survey:

- Having a list of landowners with telephone numbers where the respondent could call to ask to hunt on their land
- Having signs that clearly mark boundaries of huntable land
- Having up-to-date information on a website showing lands where hunting is allowed
- Having paper maps of hunting lands
- Having maps of hunting lands on a website
- Being able to find hunting lands using GPS
- Having timely information about any road closures
- Having more ATV access
- Having more lands with ATV restrictions
- Being able to pay a user fee to hunt restricted public land
- Being able to pay a user fee to hunt private land
- Being able to pay extra to increase the chances of getting a license issued through a lottery
- A state agency acquiring more land for hunting
- Having easements or public “rights-of-way” on private land to access adjacent public land
- Having easements or designated public sections of leased and private lands preserved for public hunting

## POTENTIAL REASONS THAT LANDOWNERS MAY CLOSE THEIR LAND TO HUNTING

- The survey asked eight questions about possible reasons that landowners may close their land to public hunting (shown in Text Box 6 below). For each possible reason, the survey asked hunters if they think it is a *very important* reason, a *somewhat important* reason, or a *not at all* important reason that landowners close their land to the public for hunting.
  - Five items stand out above the rest in the ranking by the percentage saying the reasons are *very important*, the top three of which relate to misuse of the land: irresponsible shooting, alcohol use, or similar behavior by hunters (72% say this is a *very important* reason that landowners close their land), property damage caused by hunters (excluding litter) (67%), litter (64%), the landowner wanting to allow only personal/family use of the land (64%), and liability concerns (58%).

### TEXT BOX 6

**Possible reasons that landowners may close their land to public hunting that were asked about in the survey:**

- Liability concerns
- Irresponsible shooting, drinking alcohol, or similar behavior by hunters (excluding property damage or litter)
- Property damage caused by other hunters (excluding litter)
- Litter
- Land being too crowded
- The landowner wanting to allow only personal or family use of the land
- The landowner not making enough money from hunters
- The landowner not receiving enough compensation or incentives from the state

- The overwhelming majority of hunters (80%) think that a program that provides landowners with compensation or incentives for opening their lands to the public for hunting would be *very* or *somewhat* effective at improving hunting access in their state.
- The overwhelming majority of hunters (90%) are *not* aware of any laws in their state that reduce the liability of landowners who open their lands to the public for hunting; meanwhile, 9% are aware of such laws.
  - In a related question, the overwhelming majority of hunters (82%) support laws to reduce landowner liability for landowners who open their lands to the public for hunting; only 7% oppose (the remainder give neutral answers).

- Another related question found that an overwhelming majority of hunters (80%) think that legislation reducing landowner liability would be *very* or *somewhat* effective at improving hunter access to private lands in their state; only 12% think it would be *not at all* effective.
- Finally, the large majority of hunters (68%) agree that legislation reducing landowner liability would significantly increase the number of landowners who would open their lands to the public for hunting.

## **PARTICIPATION IN AND USE OF VARIOUS PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES**

- The survey asked about six national programs/resources nationwide that pertain to hunting access. The programs/resources about which the survey asked are shown in Text Box 7 below.
  - A basic line of questioning asked hunters about their awareness of the programs/resources, and two of the six national programs/resources had awareness levels near the halfway mark: the Conservation Reserve Program (45% are *very* or *somewhat* aware of it) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas or WPAs (45%). The other programs/resources have awareness levels of 10% or lower.
  - Another series of questions asked hunters about their participation in or use of the six access programs/resources. Those programs/resources with the highest rates of use/participation are the Conservation Reserve Program (18%) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas or WPAs (13%).

### **TEXT BOX 7**

#### **Hunting access programs that were asked about in the survey:**

The Open Fields program  
The Conservation Reserve Program  
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas or WPAs  
The wheretohunt.org website  
The huntinfo.com website  
The huntandshoot.org website

- For each program of which a hunter was aware, the survey asked him/her to rate it at making hunting access easier.
  - Of the six national programs, the programs with the highest percentages of hunters giving an *excellent* or *good* rating, each at more than a third, are the Conservation Reserve Program (40%) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas (35%).
  
- The survey included a very specific question about use of private lands enrolled in any walk-in access program in their state. Just under a fifth of hunters (18%) hunt their primary species *often* or *sometimes* on such lands. On the other hand, the majority (70%) *never* do so.

### **SOURCES OF INFORMATION USED IN DECIDING WHERE TO HUNT**

- In the broadest question about sources of information, hunters were asked in an open-ended question where they got information on places to hunt and hunting access in their state. The most popular source is friends/family/word of mouth (53%), by far the top answer. Other notable answers include a state agency other than its website (9%), a specific site on the Internet (8%), the Internet in general/a search engine (6%), magazines (6%), and pamphlets/brochures (5%).
  
- The survey asked hunters if they had visited the websites of four agencies (their state's fish and wildlife agency, the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Land Management). About a third of hunters had visited their state agency site (35%). Lower amounts (from 11% to 17%) had visited the other sites.
  - Follow-up questions asked hunters to rate the usefulness of the websites' information on places to hunt and hunting access in planning hunting trips. Ratings are positive: each site (with all of the individual state agency sites being considered together in these results) has a majority rating the usefulness of information on the site as excellent or good.

- The survey asked six questions about actions that hunters may take in deciding where to hunt (shown in Text Box 8 below). For each action, the survey asked hunters if they always, sometimes, rarely, or never do it when deciding where to hunt.
  - A majority of hunters *always* or *sometimes* do two things in deciding where to hunt: 54% ask a friend or family member where to hunt, and 54% scout or physically look for a place. Additionally, about a third use paper maps to find a place (36%) and/or knock on a landowner's door to ask permission to hunt (32%).

**TEXT BOX 8****Actions hunters may take in deciding where to hunt that were asked about in the survey:**

- Ask a friend or family member where to hunt
- Knock on a landowner's door to ask permission to hunt
- Use paper maps to find a place to hunt
- Use GPS to locate hunting land
- Find available hunting lands on the Internet
- Scout or physically look for land on which to hunt

- Within the above series of questions was a question asking how often hunters scout or physically look for land on which to hunt. In follow-up, they were asked how many days they typically spend scouting for hunting locations. The median number of days they typically spend annually scouting for hunting land is 6 days, among those who scout for land.
- Another question in this section asked hunters who had hunted on land owned by somebody they did not previously know how they had obtained permission to hunt on the land. They most commonly leased the land from the landowner and/or contacted the landowner in advance.

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## **INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY**

The purpose of this study is to better understand issues related to hunting access. Research indicates that difficulty with access to lands for hunting has become not just a point of frustration, but a very real barrier to recruiting and retaining sportsmen. Adequate access to land is one of the most fundamental issues affecting the future of hunting today. Indeed, access is the *most* important factor associated with hunting participation that is not a time-related or demographic factor<sup>1</sup>—in other words, the most important factor over which agencies and organizations can have an important influence.

While hunting is an important historic, social, and cultural activity in the United States, it is also important to the economy and to conservation. Hunters are avid conservationists who donate more money to wildlife conservation, per capita, than do non-hunters or the general population as a whole in the United States.<sup>2</sup> Their hunting license fees and the excise taxes they pay on sporting goods and ammunition fund state fish and wildlife agency activities and provide Federal Aid monies. Hunters also contribute large amounts of money to the economy through the pursuit of their sport. In fact, hunters spend several billion dollars on their sport annually.<sup>3</sup>

However, participation in hunting is declining. Research shows that there has been a general decline in hunting participation for the past two decades.<sup>4</sup> Consequently, much research has been devoted to assessing the decline in hunting participation and hunting dissatisfaction. One reason that hunters increasingly report as a cause of dissatisfaction is poor hunting access. Access problems negatively affect hunters by taking away from their enjoyment of hunting and/or causing them to hunt less often. Previous research has shown that access is a leading reason for hunter dissatisfaction, and that not enough available hunting access is a significant factor that influences hunters' decisions to stop hunting.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Responsive Management/National Shooting Sports Foundation. 2008. *The Future of Hunting and the Shooting Sports: Research-Based Recruitment and Retention Strategies*. Produced for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under Grant Agreement CT-M-6-0. Harrisonburg, Virginia.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/U.S. Census Bureau. 2007. *2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation*. Washington, D.C.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*

In addition to an in-depth look at hunting access issues at the national and regional levels to obtain baseline data, this project assesses the success of many initiatives and programs related to access that have already been implemented. This assessment identifies which programs and program elements are most effective, and which are not, by assessing a sample of states (in addition to the nationwide survey). This includes the following 16 states: Alabama, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Michigan, Nebraska, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

By acquiring baseline data on access issues and assessing the effectiveness of programs designed to improve hunting access, this project provides research-based information to assist in efforts to reduce hunting access conflicts and improve and increase access to lands for hunting. This research also helps to more effectively utilize the millions of dollars of future funding for implementing access programs by indicating which programs and program elements are having the greatest impact and by providing data to guide and increase the success of the efforts of new and current programs.

There is an important need for this project because 1) access to lands for hunting has become a very real barrier to hunter recruitment and retention; 2) previous studies have shown that access is a leading reason for hunter dissatisfaction and that not enough available hunting access is a significant factor that influences hunters' decision to stop hunting; 3) most previous studies were conducted on a state-by-state basis rather than a regional or national basis and are not comparable across states; 4) the effectiveness of numerous initiatives and programs related to access that have already been implemented on the ground needs to be evaluated; and 5) the results will help to ensure the most effective utilization of funding for access programs in the future. In short, there is a strong need for information and strategies upon which to build hunting programs that create, improve, and facilitate access to lands for hunting, which will ultimately positively affect hunting participation as well.

This project entailed a nationwide survey of hunters to accomplish several major objectives. The study identified and quantified the full array of access issues that hunters face today, and it provided in-depth baseline data with which to compare conditions in the future at a national

level. In addition, the study included individual state surveys to assess the effectiveness of access programs currently in place in 16 states and acquired data for future programs, and the results can help guide the future use of funding for access programs.

The overall project entailed analyzing data obtained from a series of focus groups conducted in 2008 (which were also used in developing the survey instrument), a nationwide telephone survey with an oversampling in 16 states where access programs are currently under way, 16 state reports for those oversampled states (an additional state was oversampled, and a report was produced for it as well), a national report of the results, and a final report with recommendations for implementing effective access programs. This report discusses the national results only. Specific aspects of the research methodology are discussed below.

For this survey, telephones were selected as the preferred sampling medium because of the near universality of telephone ownership among hunters in the sample. Additionally, telephone surveys, relative to mail or Internet surveys, allow for more scientific sampling and data collection, provide higher quality data, obtain higher response rates, are more timely, and are more cost-effective. Telephone surveys also have fewer negative effects on the environment than do mail surveys because of reduced use of paper and reduced energy consumption for delivering and returning the questionnaires. A central polling site at the Responsive Management office allowed for rigorous quality control over the interviews and data collection. Responsive Management maintains its own in-house telephone interviewing facilities. These facilities are staffed by interviewers with experience conducting computer-assisted telephone interviews on the subjects of natural resources and outdoor recreation.

To ensure the integrity of the telephone survey data, Responsive Management has interviewers who have been trained according to the standards established by the Council of American Survey Research Organizations. Methods of instruction included lecture and role-playing. The Survey Center Managers and other professional staff conducted project 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 instrument, reading of the

survey instrument, skip patterns, and probing and clarifying techniques necessary for specific questions on the survey instrument. The Survey Center Managers and statisticians monitored the data collection, including monitoring of the actual telephone interviews without the interviewers' knowledge, to evaluate the performance of each interviewer and ensure the integrity of the data.

The telephone survey questionnaire was developed cooperatively by Responsive Management, the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF), and the participating state agencies and organizations represented in the listing on the acknowledgments page. The survey questionnaire was reviewed by numerous university professors and staff with knowledge of surveying methods, as well as many fish and wildlife agency personnel with knowledge of hunting access issues. Responsive Management conducted a pre-test of the questionnaire to ensure proper wording, flow, and logic in the survey. The questionnaire included some "screeener" questions; those who had *not* hunted at least once in the past 5 years were not interviewed.

The survey instrument included questions about the following national hunting programs/resources that are used throughout the United States (descriptions of the programs/resources are included as Appendix A):

- The Open Fields program
- The Conservation Reserve Program
- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas
- The wheretohunt website
- The huntinfo website
- The huntandshoot website

The surveys for the oversampled states included each state's programs/resources in the questions about programs/resources. Each state's programs/resources are shown in the tabulation below.

| <b>STATE PROGRAMS/RESOURCES USED IN THE OVERSAMPLED STATES</b> |
|--|
| <b>ALABAMA</b>   |
| The Outdoor Alabama Interactive Map on the ADCNR website       |
| The Forever Wild Land Trust Program                            |
| The Hunt Outdoor Alabama Program                               |
| Alabama's Youth Dove Hunts                                     |
| Alabama's physically disabled hunting locations                |
| <b>ARIZONA</b>   |
| Arizona's Heritage Access Program                              |
| Arizona's Adopt-A-Ranch Program                                |

| <b>STATE PROGRAMS/RESOURCES USED IN THE OVERSAMPLED STATES</b>   |
|--|
| <b>CALIFORNIA</b>  |
| California's Private Lands Management Program  |
| California's SHARE Program   |
| California's Delta Island Hunting Program  |
| California's Game Bird Heritage Special Hunts Program  |
| California's Game Bird Heritage Special Hunts Program Apprentice Hunts   |
| <b>HAWAII</b>  |
| Hawaii's lease agreements to use agricultural lands for public hunting areas   |
| Hawaii's Statewide GIS Map Program   |
| Public hunting area maps in the Game Mammal or Game Bird Hunting Guide   |
| <b>IDAHO</b>   |
| Idaho's Access Yes! program  |
| Idaho's Accessible Idaho program   |
| <b>KANSAS</b>  |
| The Kansas Special Hunts on Public Lands program   |
| The Kansas Walk-In Hunting Access program  |
| Controlled Shooting Areas, or CSAs   |
| <b>MICHIGAN</b>  |
| Michigan's Hunting Access Program  |
| Michigan's Commercial Forest Lands   |
| The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, or CREP  |
| Michigan's efforts to provide disability access for recreation   |
| <b>NEBRASKA</b>  |
| Nebraska's CRP Management Access Program, or CRP-MAP   |
| Nebraska's Passing Along the Heritage (PATH) Program   |
| <b>NEVADA</b>  |
| Nevada Department of Wildlife's Interactive Map Service on the Department website                                      |
| Nevada Department of Wildlife's Hunt Information Sheets  |
| <b>OHIO</b>  |
| Ohio's cooperative hunting program   |
| <b>PENNSYLVANIA</b>  |
| Maps of hunting lands on the PA Game Commission's website  |
| Pennsylvania's Cooperative Farm-Game Program   |
| Pennsylvania's Cooperative Forest-Game Program   |
| Pennsylvania's Cooperative Safety Zone Program   |
| Pennsylvania's Deer Management Assistance Program  |
| <b>SOUTH DAKOTA</b>  |
| South Dakota's Walk-In Hunting Areas   |
| South Dakota's Controlled Hunting Access Program   |
| South Dakota's Volunteer Antlerless Deer Hunter Program  |
| South Dakota's Lower Oahe Waterfowl Access Program   |
| South Dakota's Game Production Areas, or GPAs  |
| South Dakota's Interactive South Dakota Public Lands Maps and Information system on the Division of Wildlife's website |
| The printed South Dakota Hunting Atlas   |
| The South Dakota Hunting Atlas on the SDDGFP's website   |
| South Dakota Office of School and Public Lands program   |

| <b>STATE PROGRAMS/RESOURCES USED IN THE OVERSAMPLED STATES</b>                               |
|--|
| <b>VIRGINIA</b>  |
| Virginia's Quota and Managed Hunts   |
| Public Access Lands for Sportsmen, or PALS   |
| Virginia's special youth hunts   |
| The Find Game GIS Mapping System or FindGame.org website                                     |
| Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries' Outdoor Report                             |
| <b>WASHINGTON</b>  |
| The Feel Free to Hunt program  |
| The Register to Hunt program   |
| The Hunt by Written Permission program   |
| The Landowner Hunting Permit program   |
| The GoHunt GIS Mapping System  |
| Washington's Quality Hunting Areas   |
| The Accessing Washington's Outdoors program  |
| The Disabled Hunter Road Access Entry program  |
| <b>WISCONSIN</b>   |
| Wisconsin's Damage and Abatement Claims Program's Hunting Access During Open Seasons Program |
| Wisconsin's Agricultural Deer Damage Shooting Permit Program                                 |
| Wisconsin's leased public hunting grounds  |
| <b>WYOMING</b>   |
| Wyoming's Hunter Management Area program   |
| Wyoming's Walk-In Area program   |
| Wyoming's Hunter/Landowner Assistance program  |

The sample was of hunting license holders representative of hunters in the United States overall. The sample was obtained from each state's agency, where legal to do so; otherwise, the sample was obtained from Chilcutt Marketing, a company that has scientifically valid samples of hunters throughout the United States. Once the sample of hunters was obtained, Responsive Management conducted a telephone match to determine the telephone numbers of the hunters (the sample often contained only their name and address, but not their telephone number).

Interviews were conducted Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Saturday from noon to 5:00 p.m., and Sunday from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., local time. A five-callback design was used to maintain the representativeness of the sample, to avoid bias toward people easy to reach by telephone, and to provide an equal opportunity for all to participate. When a respondent could not be reached on the first call, subsequent calls were placed on different days of the week and at different times of the day.

Responsive Management obtained a total of 14,317 completed interviews. This includes 12,773 completed interviews in the oversampling of the states, as well as an additional 1,544 completed interviews throughout the rest of the United States, as shown in the tabulation that follows.

| State          | Sample in Oversampled Statewide Survey | Sample in National Survey | Total Sample for State* |
|----------------|--|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Alabama        | 810                                    |                           | 810                     |
| Alaska         |  | 9                         | 9                       |
| Arizona        | 811                                    |                           | 811                     |
| Arkansas       | 673                                    |                           | 673                     |
| California     | 805                                    |                           | 805                     |
| Colorado       |  | 29                        | 29                      |
| Connecticut    |  | 31                        | 31                      |
| Delaware       |  | 8                         | 8                       |
| Florida        |  | 40                        | 40                      |
| Georgia        |  | 77                        | 77                      |
| Hawaii         | 447                                    |                           | 447                     |
| Idaho          | 357                                    |                           | 357                     |
| Illinois       |  | 58                        | 58                      |
| Indiana        |  | 11                        | 11                      |
| Iowa           |  | 55                        | 55                      |
| Kansas         | 807                                    |                           | 807                     |
| Kentucky       |  | 41                        | 41                      |
| Louisiana      |  | 64                        | 64                      |
| Maine          |  | 36                        | 36                      |
| Maryland       |  | 36                        | 36                      |
| Massachusetts  |  | 14                        | 14                      |
| Michigan       | 804                                    |                           | 804                     |
| Minnesota      |  | 107                       | 107                     |
| Mississippi    |  | 47                        | 47                      |
| Missouri       |  | 124                       | 124                     |
| Montana        |  | 41                        | 41                      |
| Nebraska       | 807                                    |                           | 807                     |
| Nevada         | 804                                    |                           | 804                     |
| New Hampshire  |  | 13                        | 13                      |
| New Jersey     |  | 29                        | 29                      |
| New Mexico     |  | 26                        | 26                      |
| New York       |  | 33                        | 33                      |
| North Carolina |  | 60                        | 60                      |
| North Dakota   |  | 33                        | 33                      |
| Ohio           | 808                                    |                           | 808                     |
| Oklahoma       |  | 42                        | 42                      |
| Oregon         |  | 49                        | 49                      |
| Pennsylvania   | 807                                    |                           | 807                     |
| Rhode Island   |  | 11                        | 11                      |
| South Carolina |  | 40                        | 40                      |
| South Dakota   | 808                                    |                           | 808                     |
| Tennessee      |  | 52                        | 52                      |
| Texas          |  | 240                       | 240                     |
| Utah           |  | 28                        | 28                      |
| Vermont        |  | 17                        | 17                      |
| Virginia       | 804                                    |                           | 804                     |
| Washington     | 806                                    |                           | 806                     |
| West Virginia  |  | 43                        | 43                      |
| Wisconsin      | 807                                    |                           | 807                     |
| Wyoming        | 808                                    |                           | 808                     |
| <b>TOTAL</b>   | <b>12,773</b>                          | <b>1,544</b>              | <b>14,317</b>           |

\*For the national results, the data were weighted so that all of the states were properly proportioned.

The software used for data collection was Questionnaire Programming Language (QPL). The survey data were entered into the computer as each interview was being conducted, eliminating manual data entry after the completion of the survey and the concomitant data entry errors that may occur with manual data entry. The survey instrument was programmed so that QPL branched, coded, and substituted phrases in the survey based on previous responses to ensure the integrity and consistency of the data collection.

Because the survey contained a large number of questions, and no single respondent could feasibly go through all the questions that would apply to him/her, some questions were asked only of a randomized portion of the sample. In other places, only certain respondents received some questions because the questions applied only to specific respondents (e.g., only those who were aware of a given program were asked to rate its effectiveness).

After the surveys were obtained by the interviewers, the Survey Center Managers and/or statisticians checked each completed survey to ensure clarity and completeness. The analysis of data was performed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) as well as proprietary software developed by Responsive Management.

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

- Open-ended questions are those in which no answer set is read to the respondents; rather, they can respond with anything that comes to mind from the question.
- Closed-ended questions have an answer set from which to choose.
- Some questions allow only a single response, while other questions allow respondents to give more than one response or choose all that apply. Those that allow more than a single response are indicated on the graphs with the label, "Multiple Responses Allowed."
- Many closed-ended questions (but not all) are in a scale, such as excellent-good-fair-poor.
- 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).

The research team sought to learn about access problems of hunters, but conjectured that hunting access problems could vary from species to species. To ensure that the researchers would know

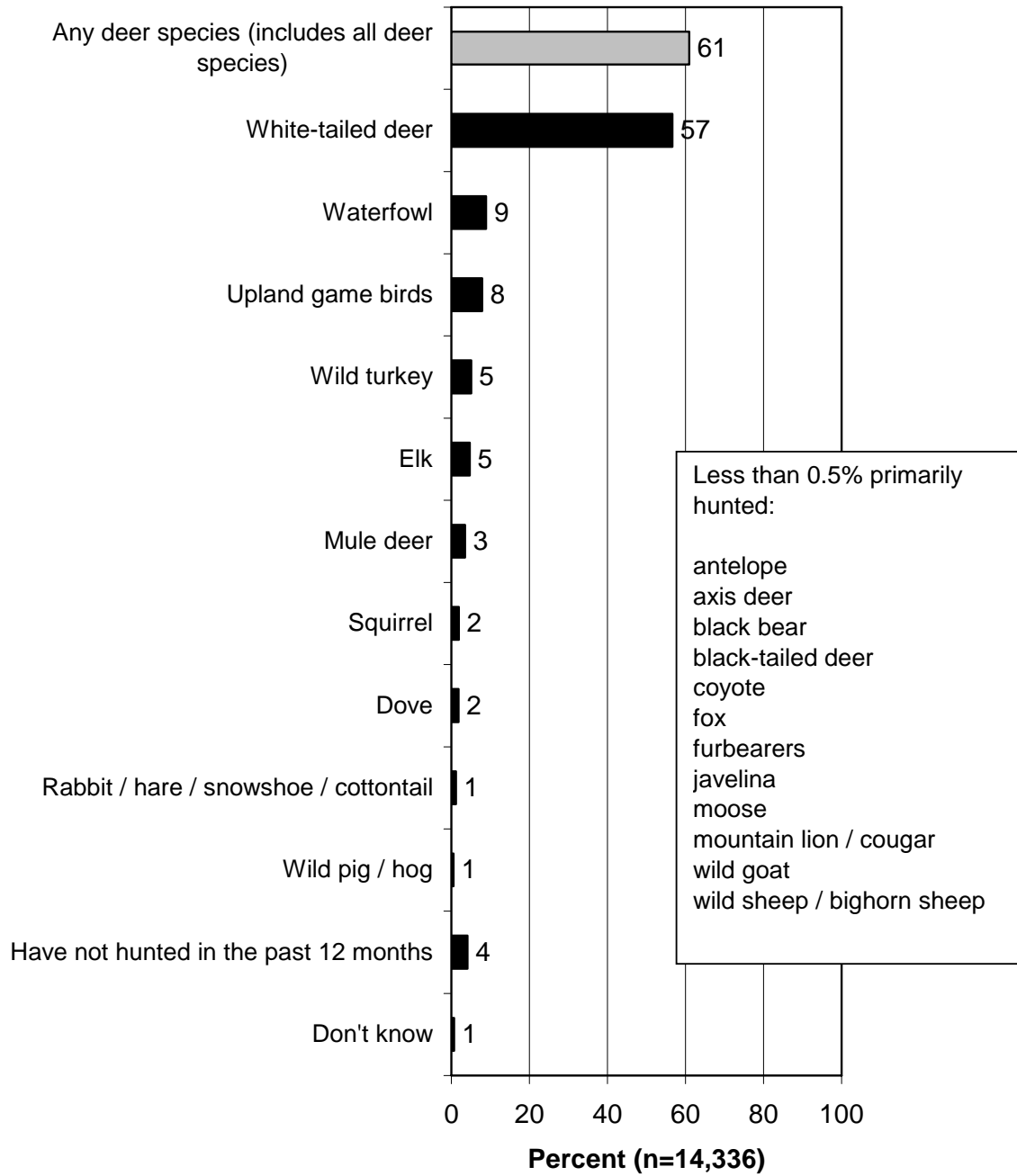
which species were associated with various results, the survey asked respondents to answer most questions about the species *they primarily hunt*. For applicable questions, QPL inserted the respondent's primary species name into the question as well as the state. For instance, Question 55 would have been "Overall, how would you rate access to hunting lands in Washington for hunting mule deer?" for Washington hunters who primarily hunt mule deer, and it would have been "Overall, how would you rate access to hunting lands in Washington for hunting waterfowl?" for those Washington hunters who primarily hunt waterfowl. In the graphs, the questions show where the species name and state would be automatically inserted into the question by the QPL program. For instance, the graph for Question 55 is shown as "Overall, how would you rate access to hunting lands in (State) for hunting (species)?"

Occasionally, results may not sum to exactly 100% because of rounding. Additionally, rounding on the graphs may cause apparent discrepancies of 1 percentage point between the graphs and the reported results of combined responses (e.g., when "strongly support" and "moderately support" are summed to determine the total percentage in support).

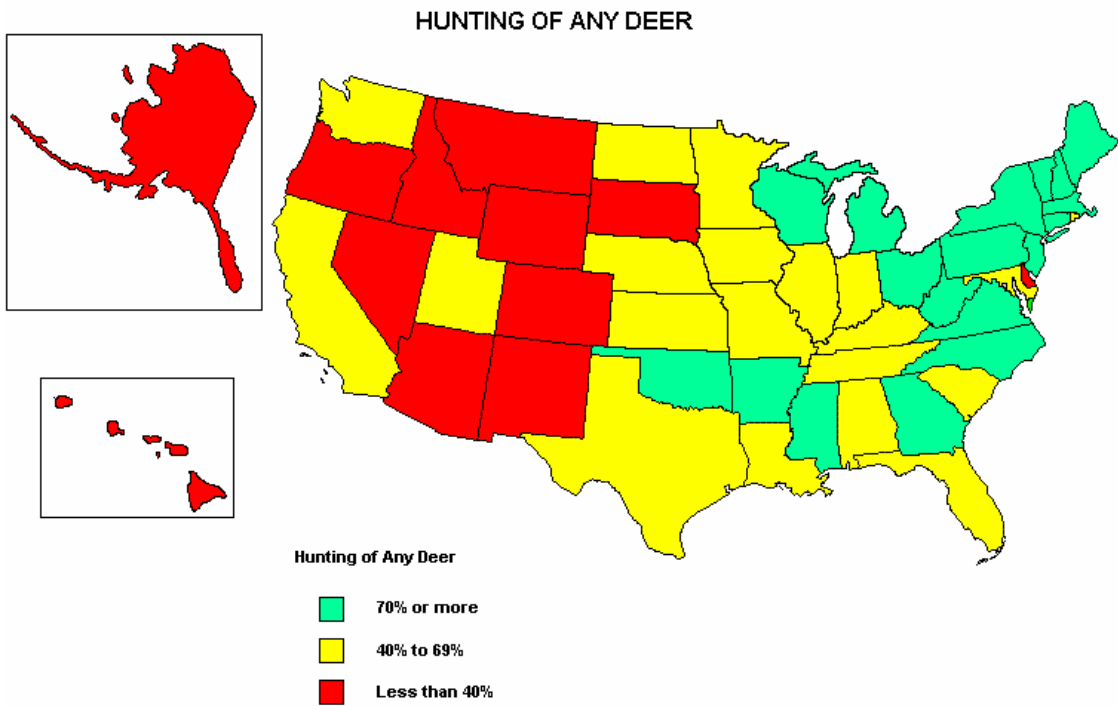
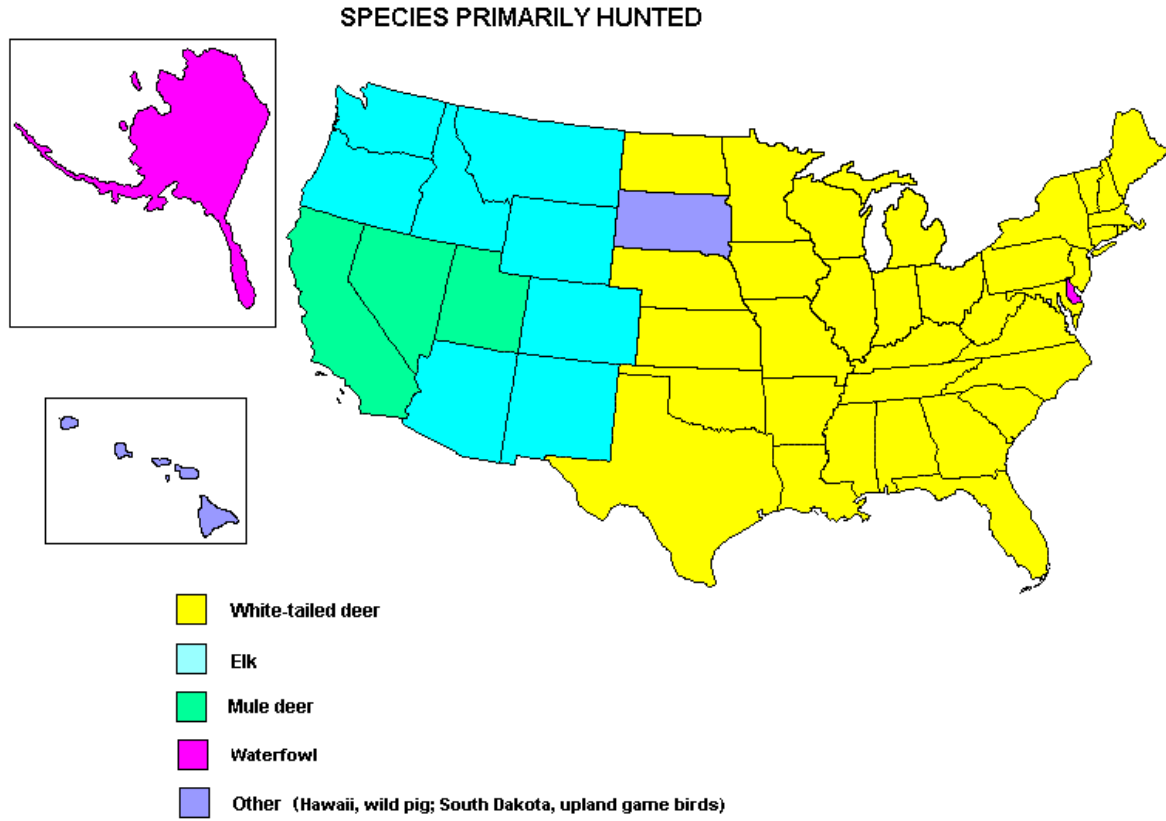
## SPECIES HUNTED, HUNTING AVIDITY, AND TRENDS IN HUNTING PARTICIPATION

- The majority of licensed hunters nationwide primarily hunted white-tailed deer (57%) in the past 12 months, distantly followed in popularity by waterfowl (9%), upland game birds (8%), wild turkey (5%), and elk (5%). Note that the question asked respondents to name the *single* species they *primarily* hunt, not all species they hunt. When considering any type of deer (white-tailed, mule, black-tailed, and axis), 61% primarily hunted some type of deer.
  - The 61% who hunted any deer consists of the sum of the following: 57% hunted white-tailed deer, 3% hunted mule deer, and less than 1% hunted black-tailed deer or axis deer.
  - There was some regional variation in the results, as shown in the map that follows the graph for the species hunted in this section. In general, white-tailed deer is the top choice in the eastern part of the U.S., while elk and mule deer are the most popular in the western part of the U.S. Another map shows the percentage who hunt any deer.
  
- A graph shows the typical number of days that hunters hunt annually in their state. The median is 20 days.
  
- Hunters in the survey were asked to indicate how long they have been hunting. Responses are well-distributed among the number of years, as shown in the graph; the mean is 36.2 years.
  
- Hunters in the survey were asked to indicate how many of the past 5 years they had hunted. The large majority of those hunters nationwide (84%) are quite avid, having hunted all 5 of the past 5 years.
  
- Hunters nationwide were asked to indicate whether their hunting participation has increased, remained the same, or decreased over the past 5 years. They most commonly say that it has stayed the same (45%); otherwise, the percentage who say it has decreased (31%) exceeds the percentage who say it has increased (23%).

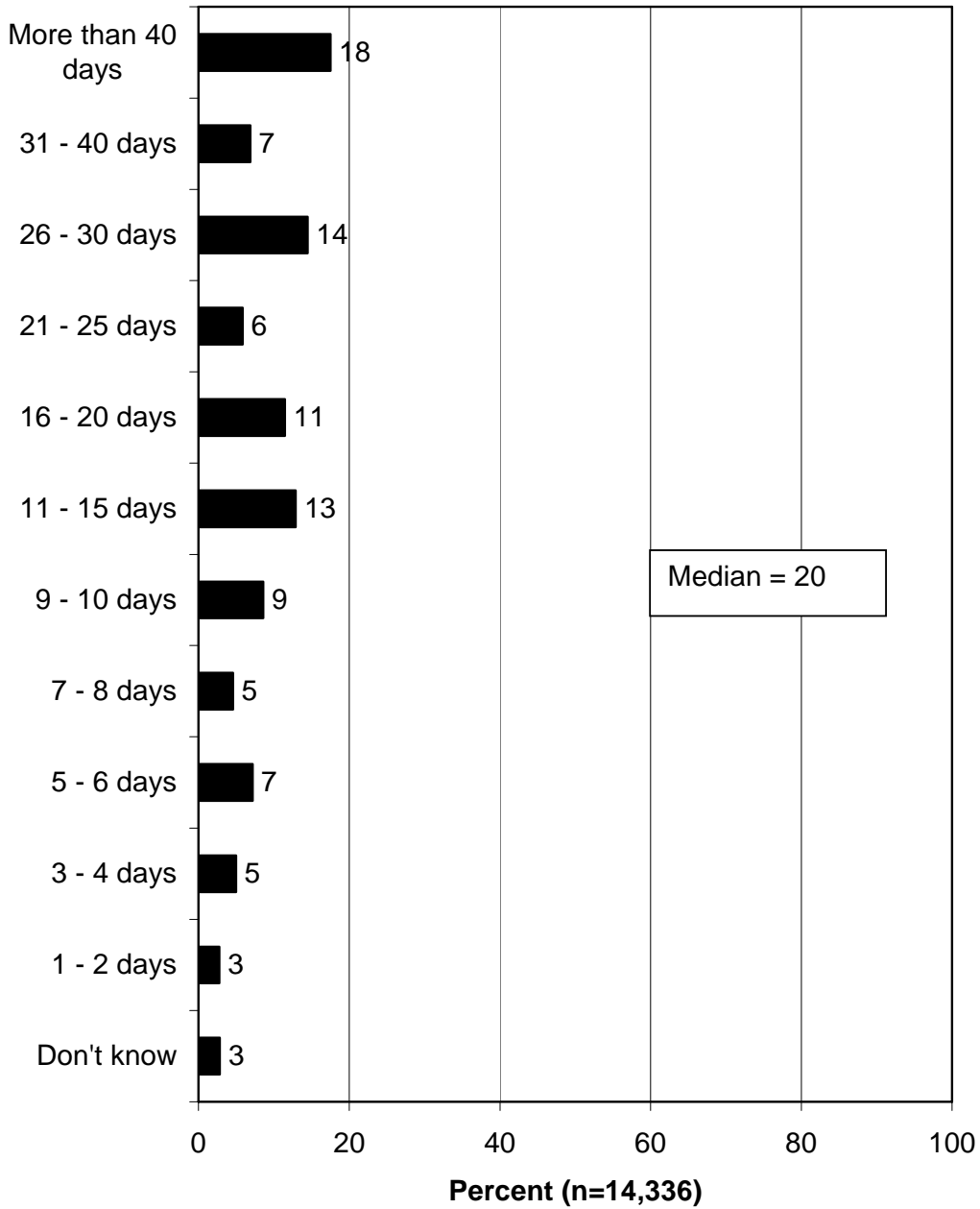
### Q23. What single species did you primarily hunt in your state in the past 12 months?

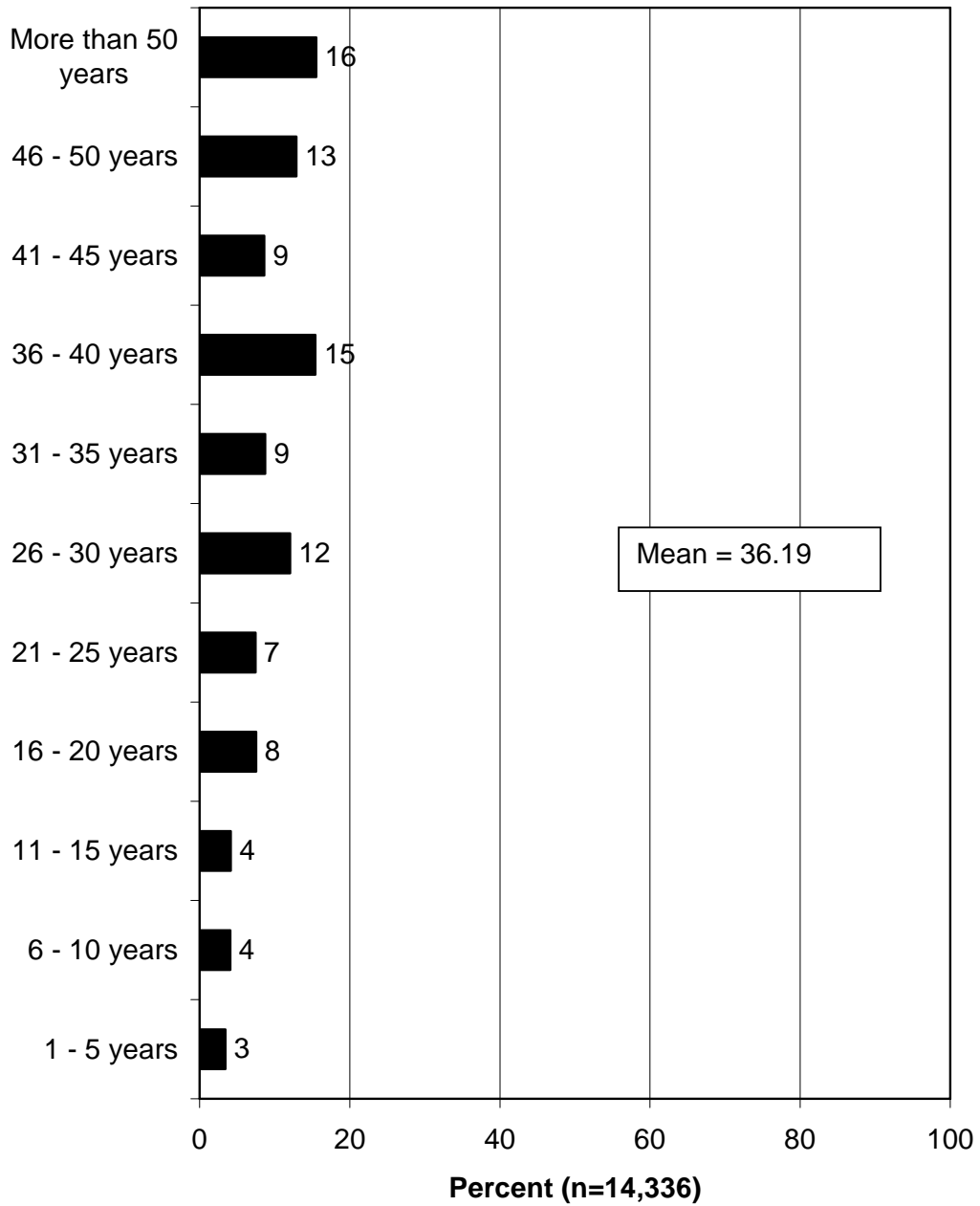


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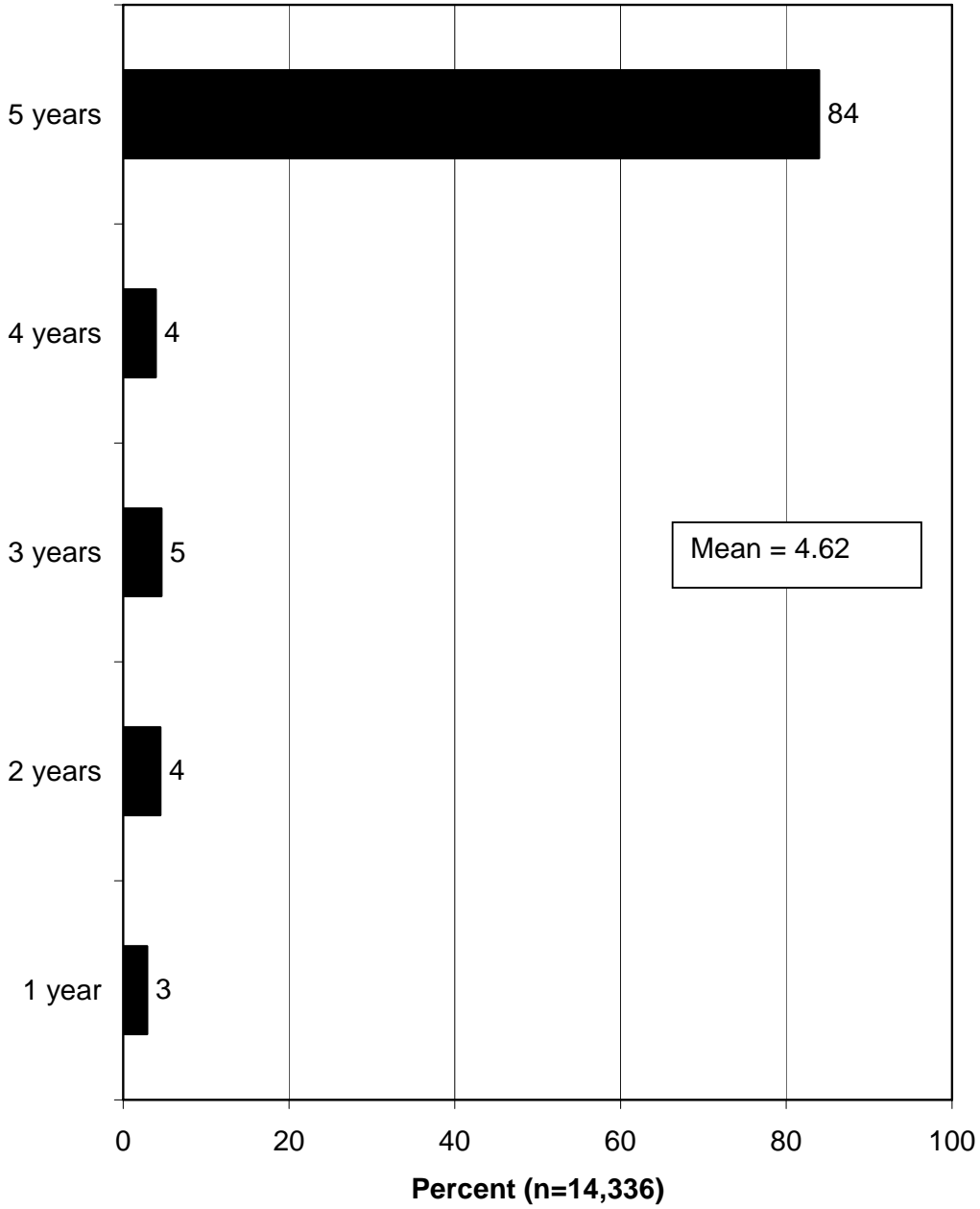


**Q26. About how many days do you usually hunt each year in your state?**

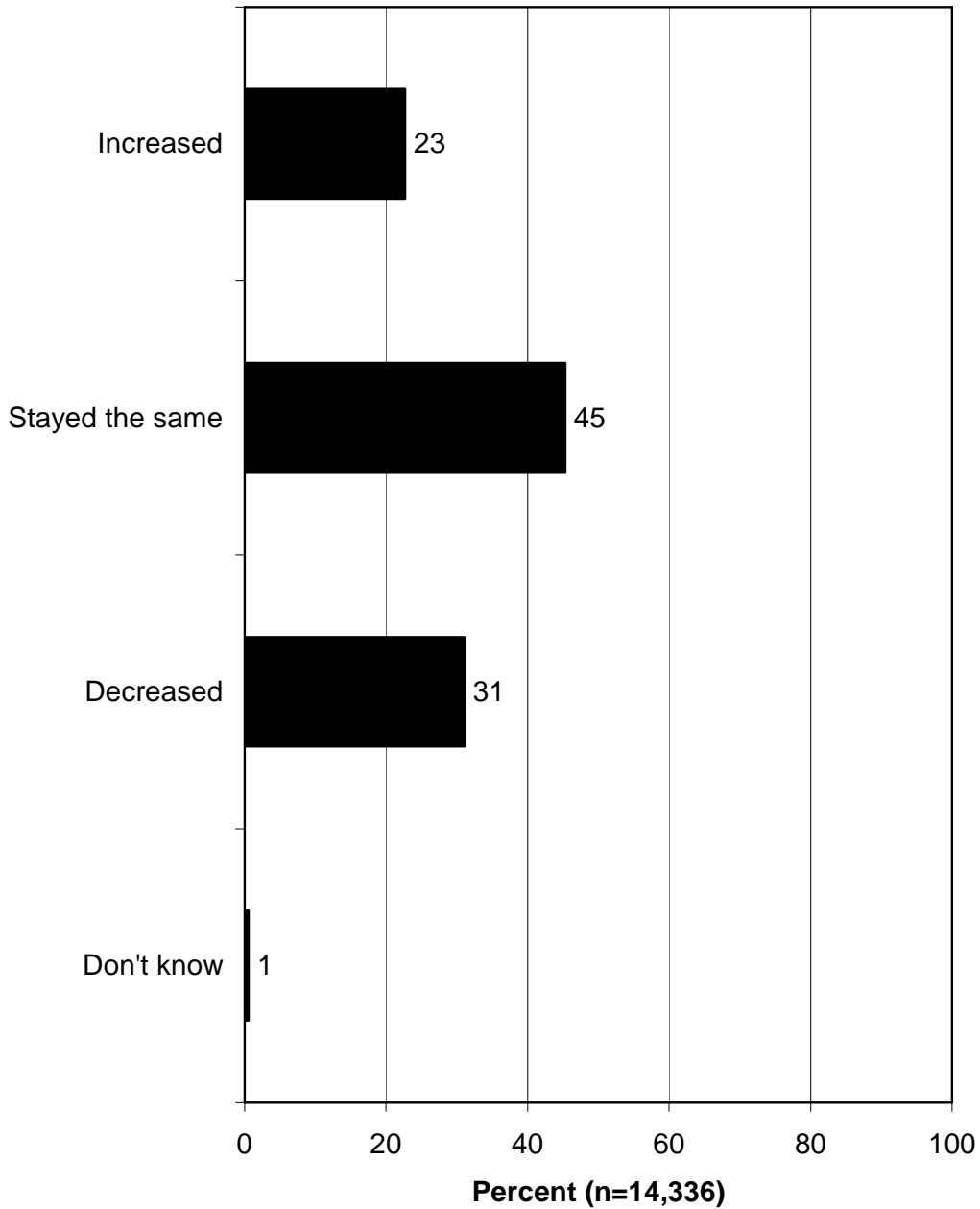


**Q15. How many years have you hunted?**

**Q19. How many of the past 5 years have you hunted in your state?**



**Q30. Would you say your hunting participation in your state has increased, stayed the same, or decreased over the past 5 years?**



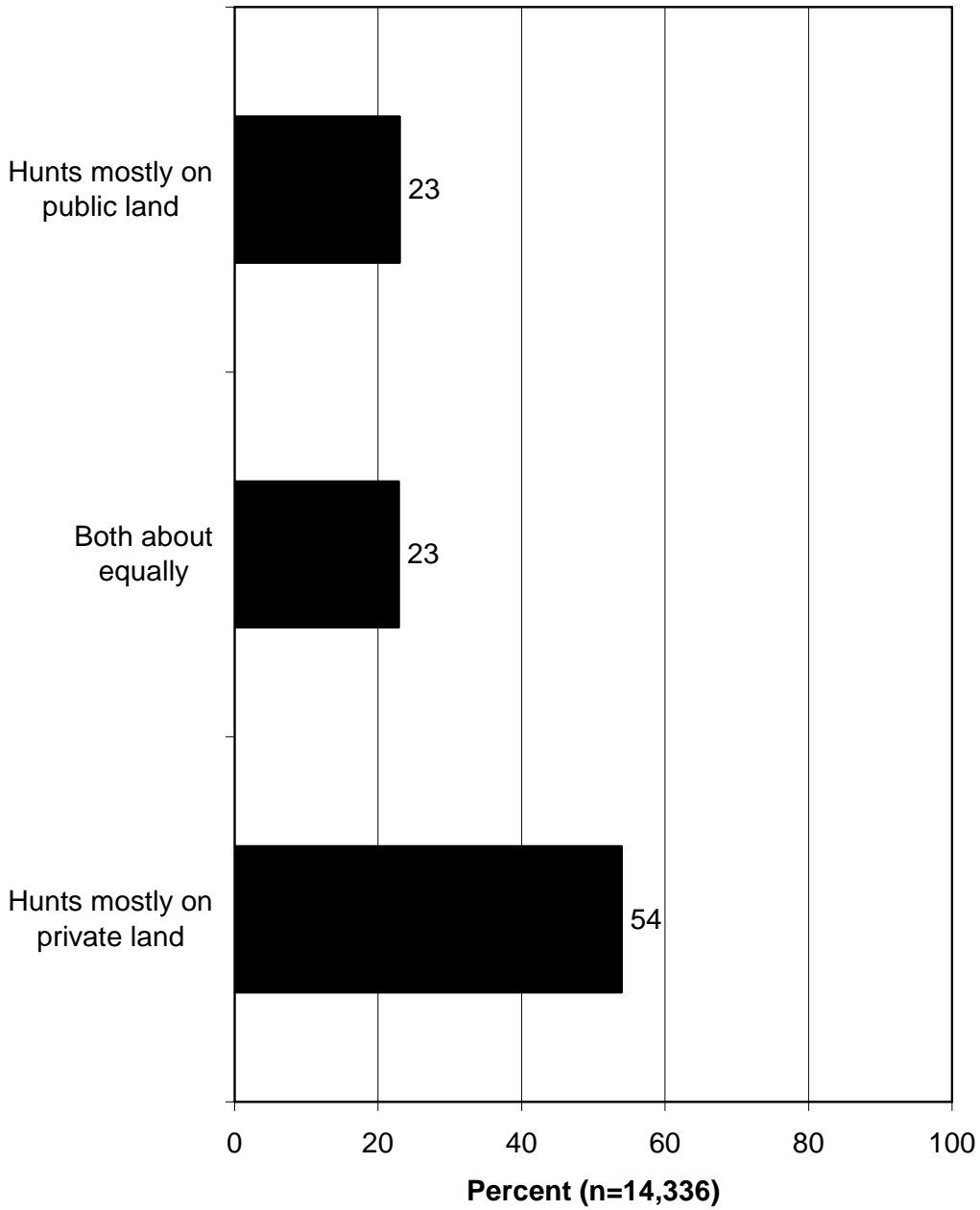
## **LOCATIONS OF HUNTING ACTIVITIES**

- Hunters nationwide more often hunt their primary species on private land (54% hunt on private land mostly, and 77% do so at least half the time) than public land (23% hunt on public land mostly, and 46% do so at least half the time). However, the results on this question vary greatly from state to state, as shown in the maps in this section.
  - A crosstabulation found that elk and mule deer hunters have the greatest propensity to hunt mostly on public land. On the other hand, those with the greatest propensity to hunt mostly on private land are white-tailed deer, upland game bird, and waterfowl hunters. Overall, the differences on this question are statistically significant.
  - Two questions asked those who hunt their primary species at least half the time on private land about the ownership of that land. Most commonly, those private land hunters indicate that they hunt mostly on land owned by a friend or family member (35% do so) or hunt on their own land (19%). These results are shown in two graphs: the first shows the results of the two questions as they were asked in the survey; the second shows all the results together.
  
- Another question has implications regarding how much hunters need to find access to hunting lands. Hunters more commonly say that they mostly hunt their primary species on the same land each year (65%) than say that they hunt it on different lands each year (9%).
  
- In a crosstabulation of hunting on public/private lands and hunting on the same/different lands (the questions discussed above), the sample could be divided into 9 groups (as shown in the matrix on the following page), with the largest portion being those who primarily hunt on private/same lands (42.6%), followed by public/same lands (13.3%). For this analysis, those who answered “don’t know” on either question were excluded. (For readability, the data presented in the matrix on the following page are also shown in a graph in this section of the report, with the size of the bars representing their proportion of the whole sample.)

|   | <b>Hunts mostly on<br/><i>public</i> land<br/>(22.9%)</b> | <b>Hunts public and<br/>private lands both<br/>about <i>equally</i> (22.9%)</b> | <b>Hunts mostly on<br/><i>private</i> land<br/>(54.2%)</b> |
|---|---|---|--|
| <b>Hunts mostly on the<br/><i>same</i> land each year<br/>(65.8%)</b>           | Public/Same<br>13.3%                                      | Both/Same<br>9.9%   | Private/Same<br>42.6%                                      |
| <b>Hunts same and<br/>different lands both<br/>about <i>equally</i> (25.3%)</b> | Public/Both<br>6.5%                                       | Both/Both<br>9.8%   | Private/Both<br>8.9%                                       |
| <b>Hunts mostly on<br/><i>different</i> lands each<br/>year (8.9%)</b>          | Public/Different<br>3.1%                                  | Both/Different<br>3.1%  | Private/Different<br>2.6%                                  |

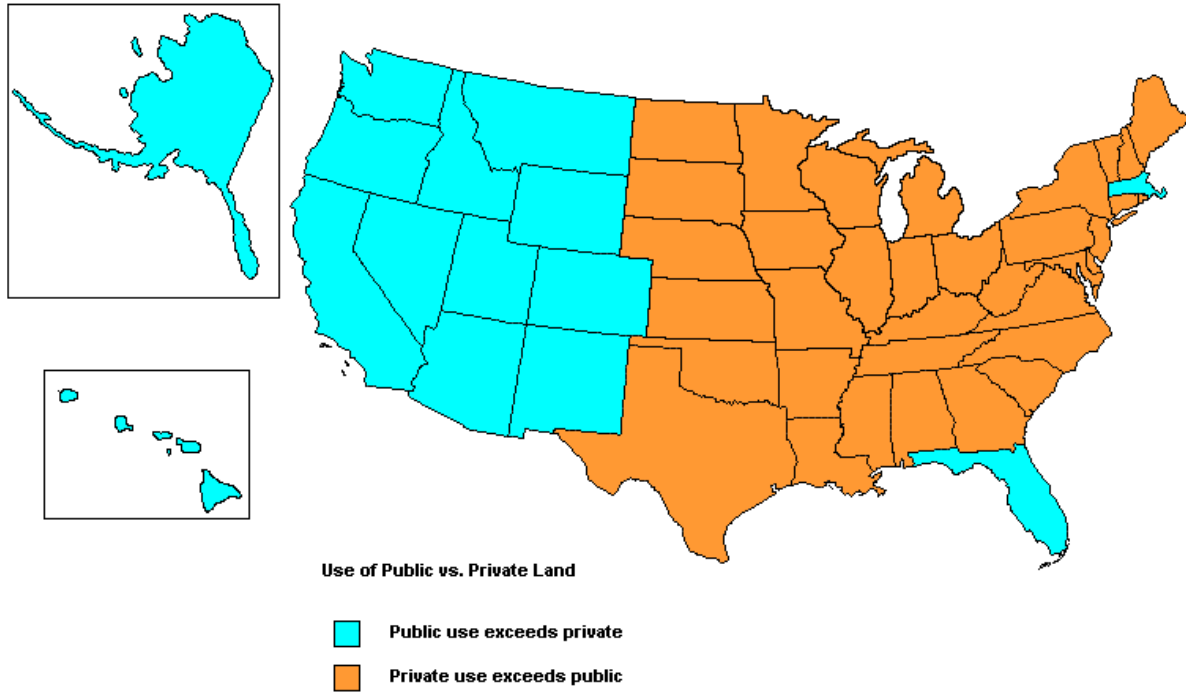
- The survey asked hunters to indicate how far they typically travel from home to hunt their primary species: 40% travel no more than 20 miles to do so; however, nearly the same percentage (36%) travel more than 50 miles. The median distance is 30 miles. Again, there is much variation from state to state.
  - Another question explored the modes of transportation that hunters use to access the land on which they hunt: 70% use a car or truck (by far the top mode), followed by walking (51%) and ATV (16%). Note that hunters could name more than one mode.

**Q58. For (species) hunting, would you say you hunt mostly on public land, mostly on private land, or on both about equally in your state?**

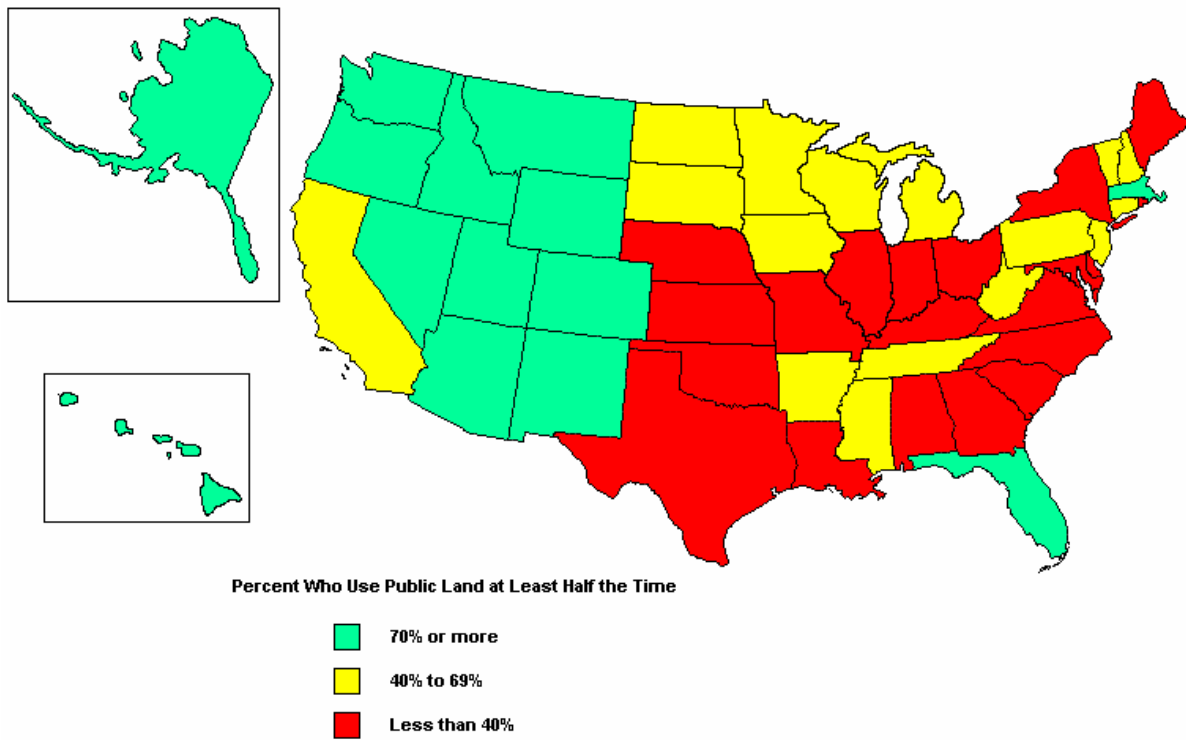


(Note: These maps are in color; they may not reproduce well in black and white printing.)

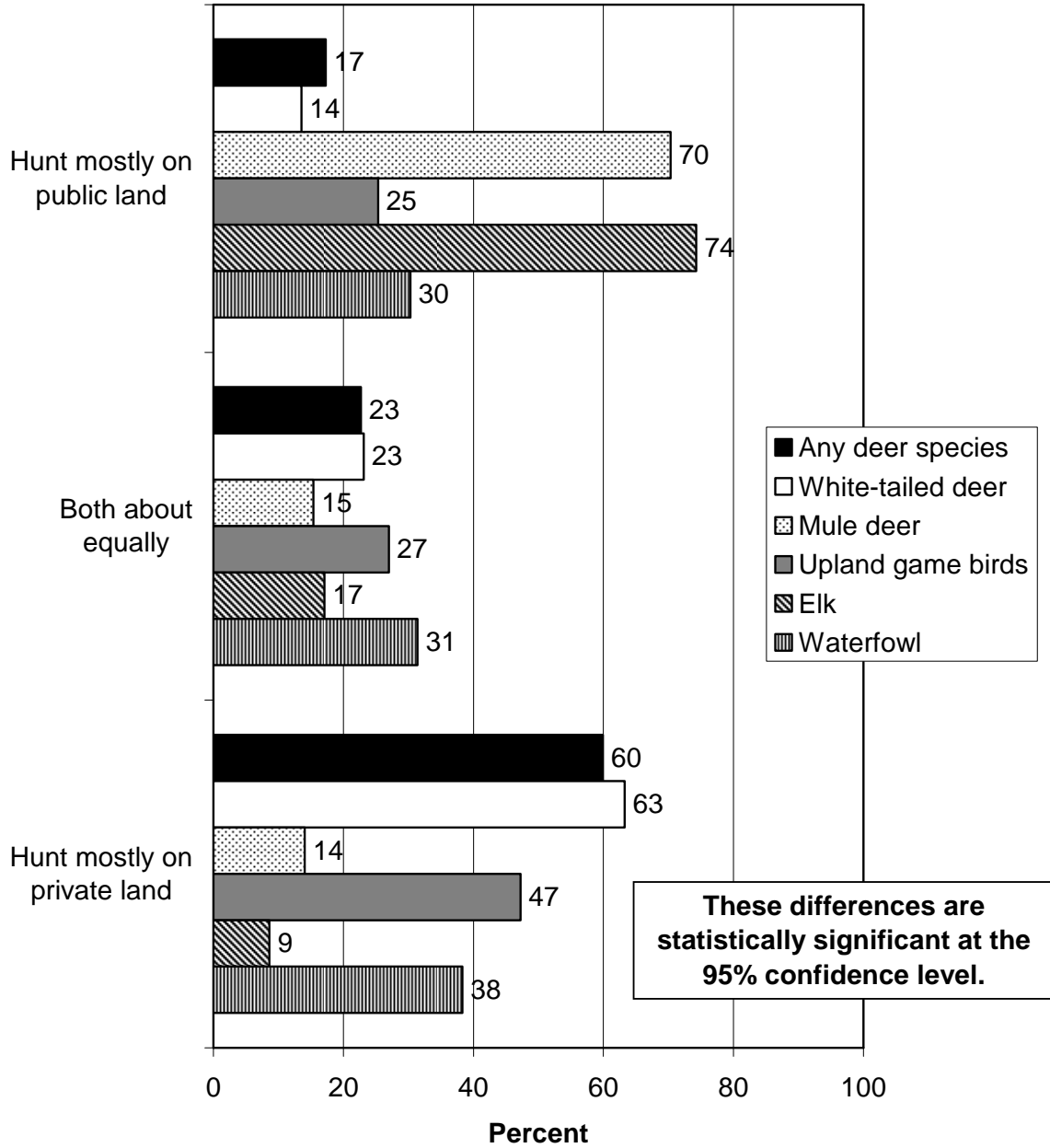
### PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE LAND FOR HUNTING



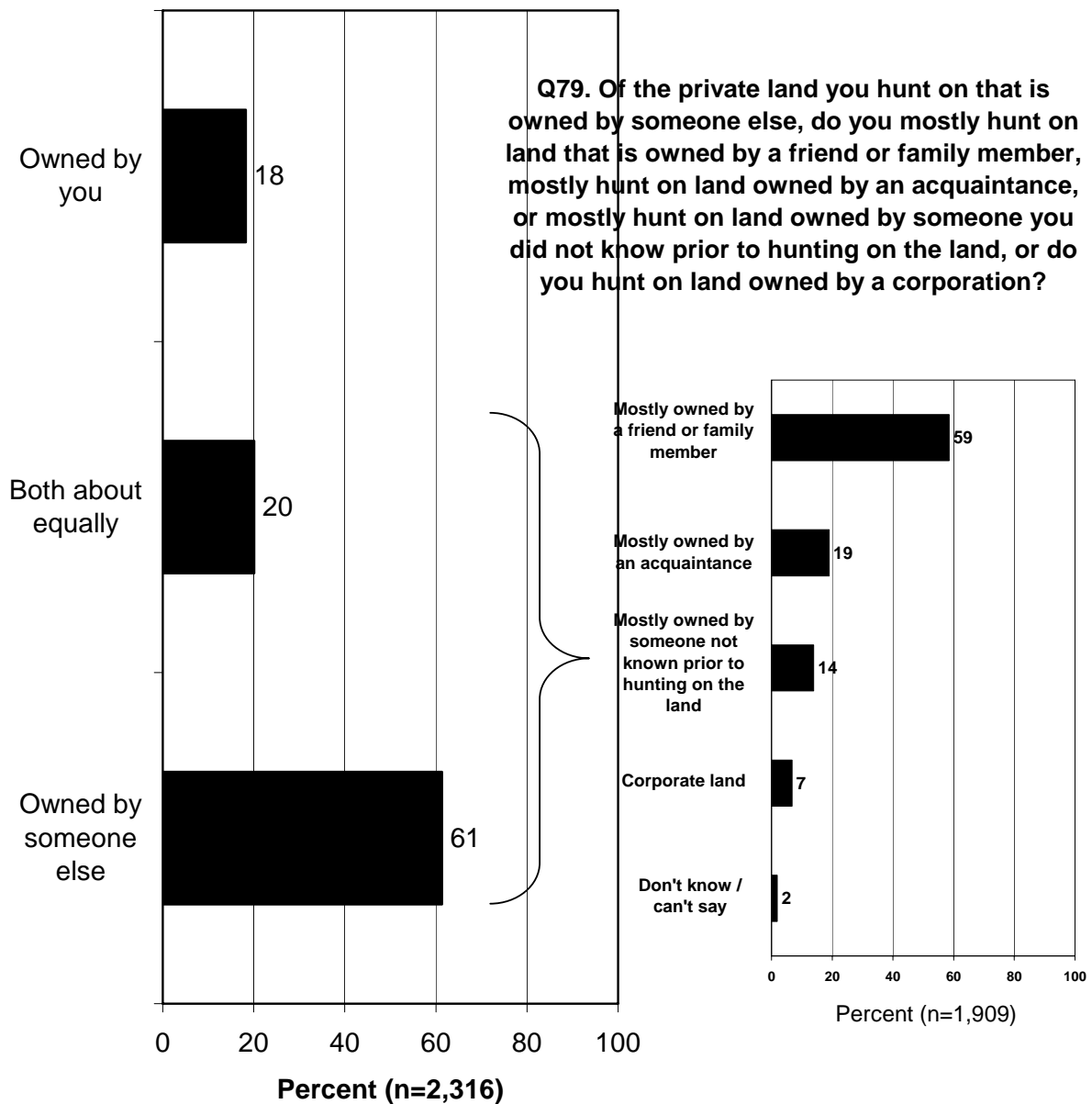
### HUNTING ON PUBLIC LAND



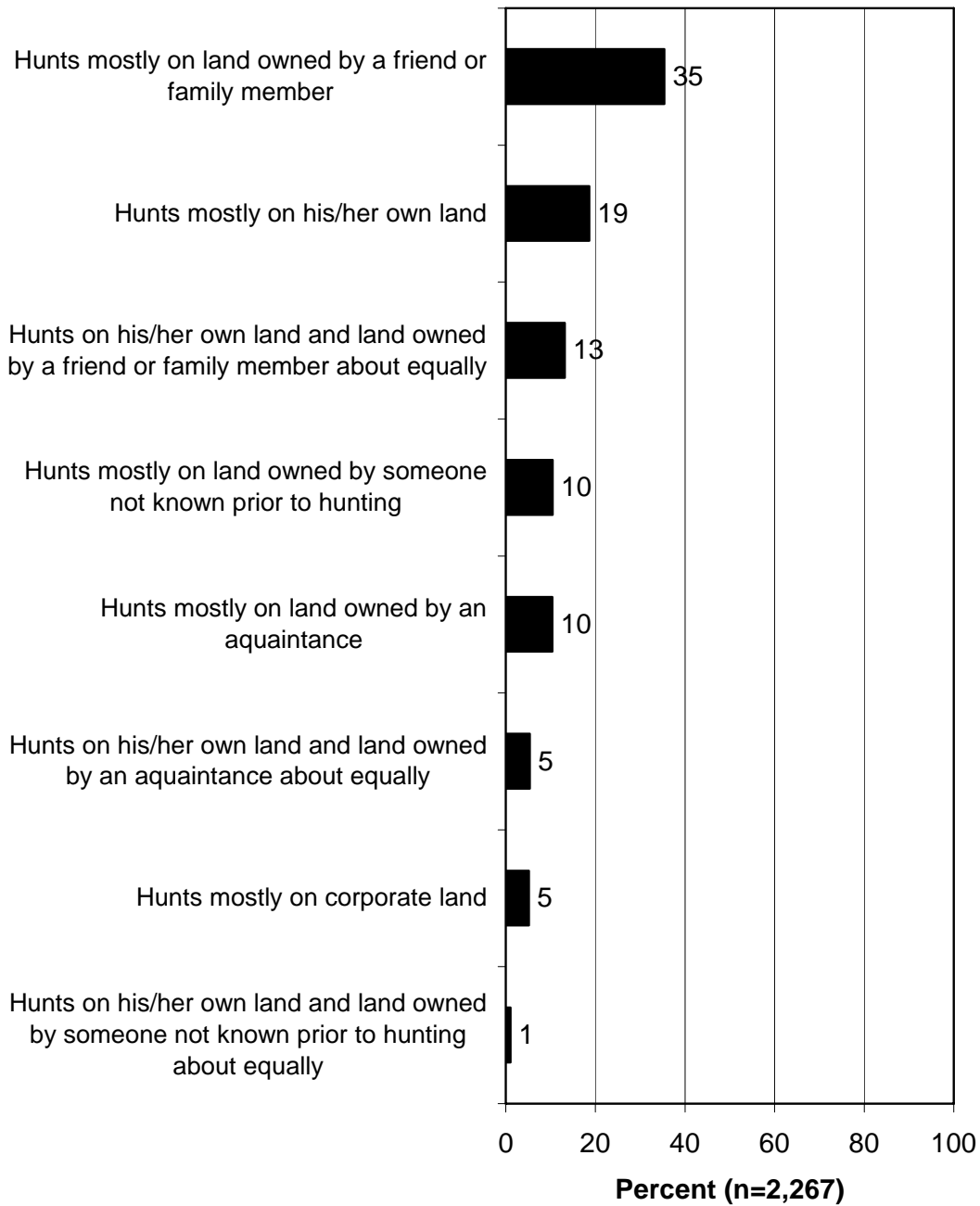
**Q58. For (species) hunting, would you say you hunt mostly on public land, mostly on private land, or on both about equally in your state?**



**Q78. Previously you indicated that you hunt (species) on private land in your state. Do you mostly hunt on private land that is owned by you, mostly hunt on private land that is owned by someone else, or both about equally? (Asked of those who hunted their primary species on private lands at least half the time.)**

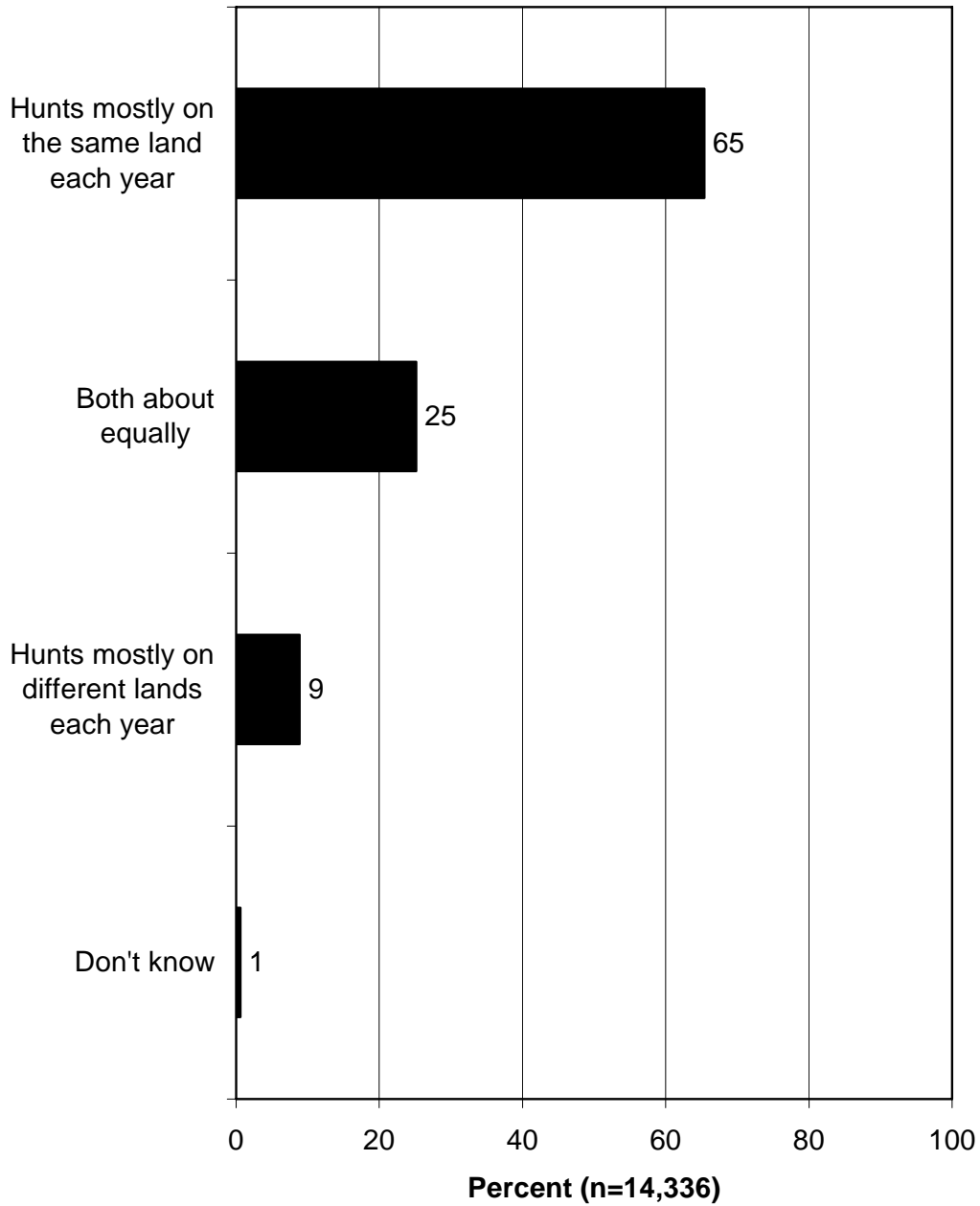


**Q78/79. Hunts mostly on... (Among those who hunted their primary species at least half the time on private lands.)**



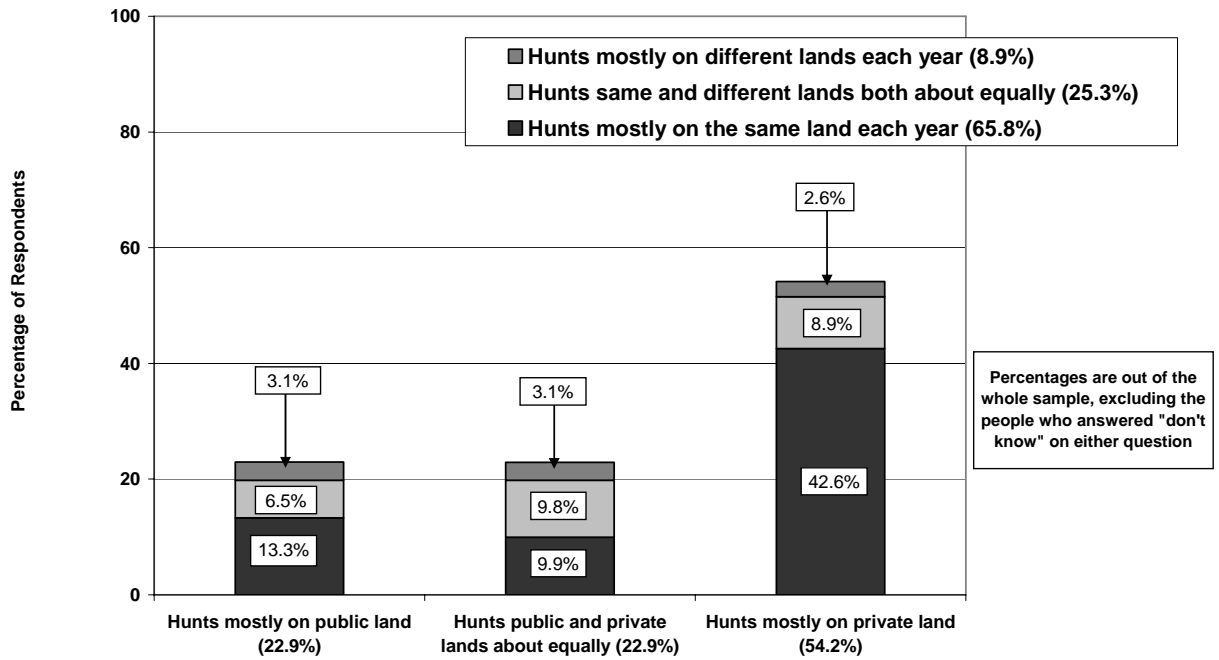
(Note that the “don’t know” responses were removed to make this cumulative graph.)

**Q57. When hunting in your state for (species), do you mostly hunt on the same land each year, mostly hunt on different lands each year, or both about equally?**

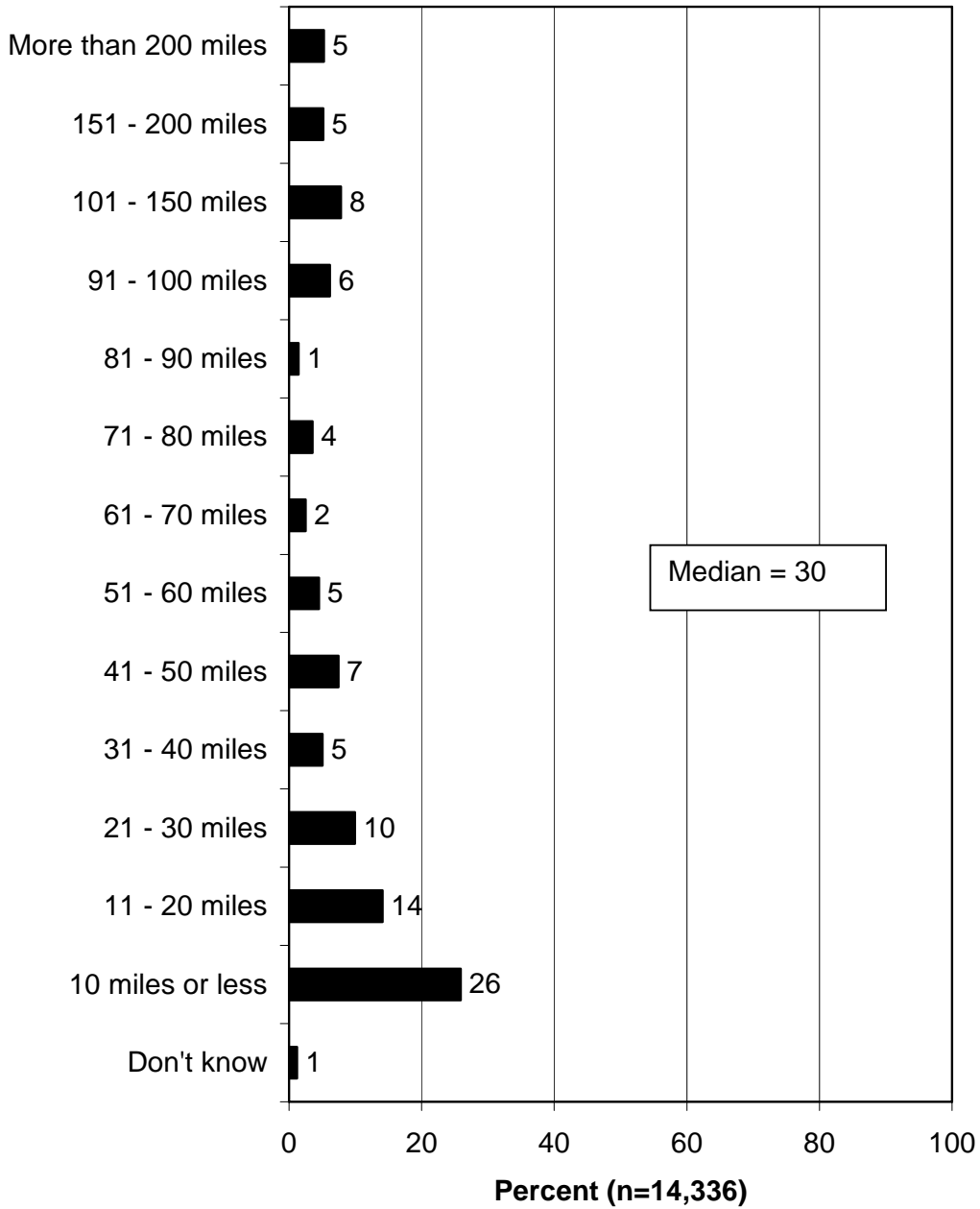


- The graph below shows a combination of Question 57 (hunts on same or different lands) and Question 58 (hunts on public or private lands).

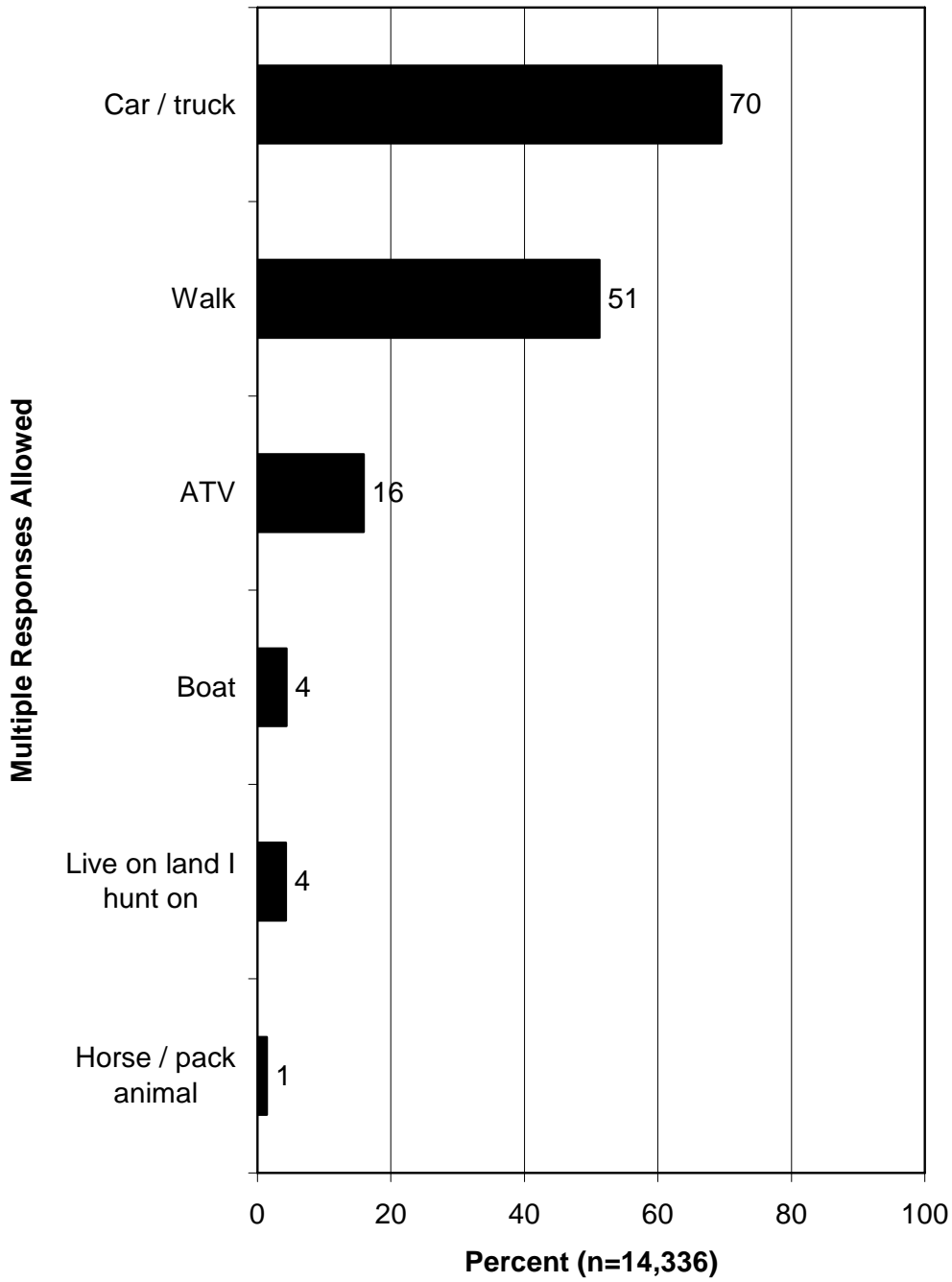
**Q57/58. Hunting on public versus private lands and hunting on same versus different lands.**



**Q85. How far do you usually travel from home, one way, in miles, to hunt in your state?**



**Q89. Which modes of transportation do you use to access the land you hunt on?**



## FACTORS CONSIDERED IN CHOOSING LANDS ON WHICH TO HUNT

- The survey asked 11 questions about the importance of various factors in hunters' decisions regarding where to hunt their primary species (shown in Text Box 1 below). For each factor, they were asked if it is *very* important, *somewhat* important, or *not at all* important. Note that the starting point in going through the list in each interview was randomized. The results of the series of questions were then ranked.
  - One factor stands out markedly more important than the rest in the ranking by the percentage saying the factor is *very* important: that the land is *not* crowded with other sportsmen (82% say this is *very* important). This is followed by a middle tier: that they are familiar with the land (58%), that the land is easy to access by foot (51%), and that the land is owned by somebody they personally know (47%). Of interest in these findings is that the land being private (43%) ranks above the land being public (29%).
  - At the bottom is that ATVs/off-road vehicles are allowed on the land (21%), that the land has well-maintained roads (20%), and that hunting dogs are allowed (20%).
  - Other graphs show the ranking by the percentage saying the factors are *very* or *somewhat* important, as well as the ranking by *not at all* important.

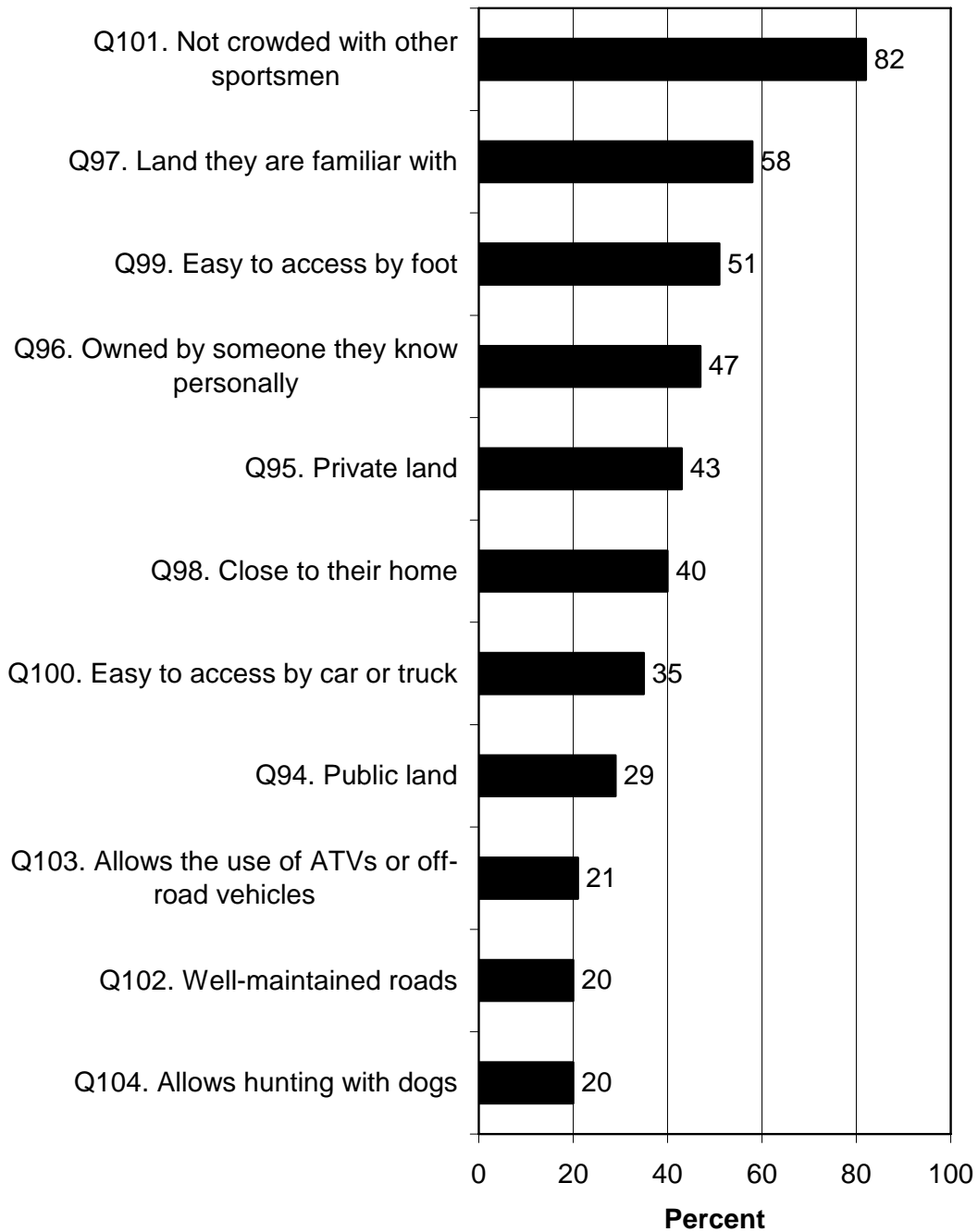
### TEXT BOX 1

#### Factors in hunters' decisions regarding where to hunt that were asked about in the survey:

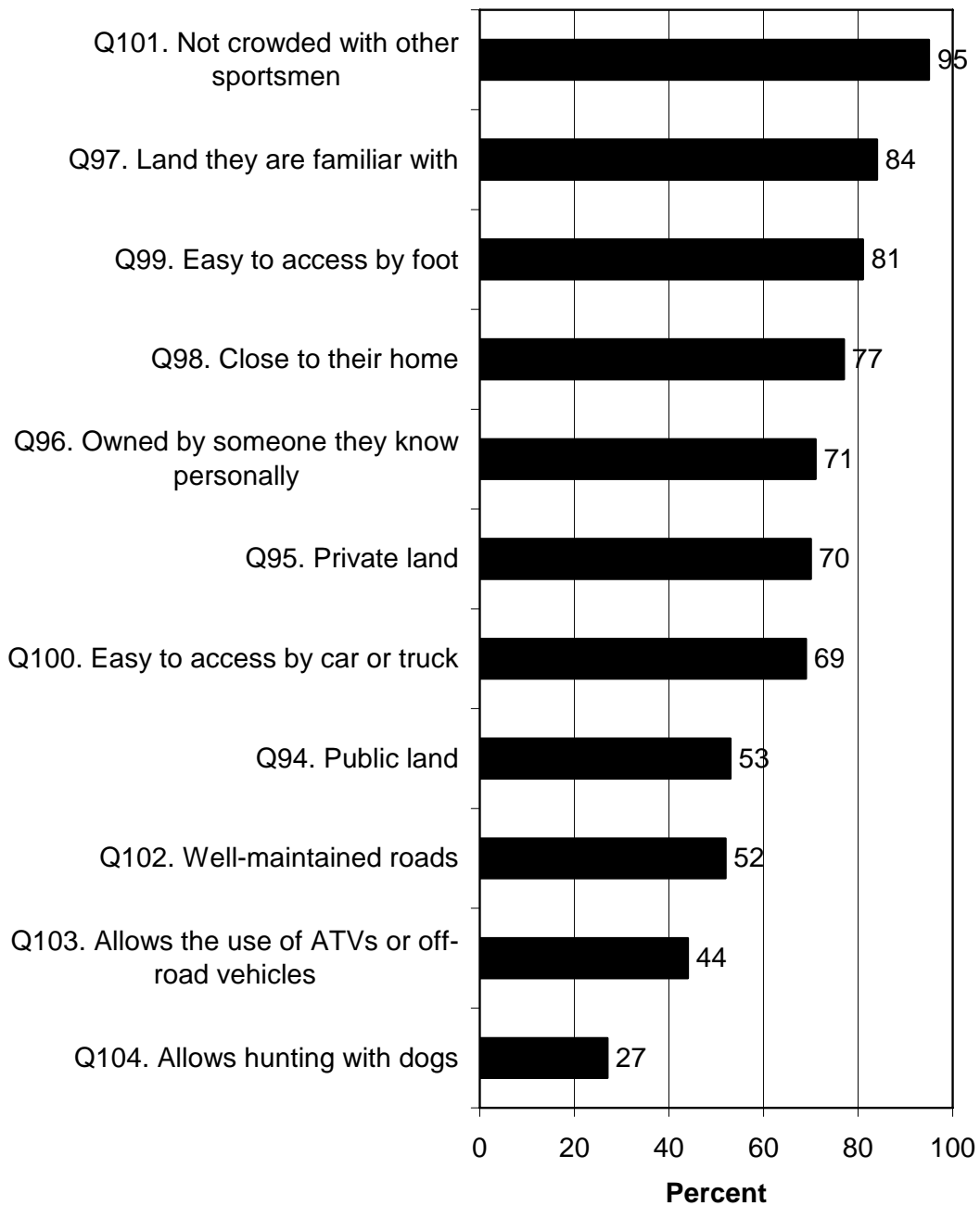
- That the land is public land
- That the land is private land
- That the land is owned by someone the respondent knows personally
- That the land is familiar to the respondent
- That the land is close to the respondent's home
- That the land is easy to access by foot
- That the land is easy to access by car or truck
- That the land is not crowded with other sportsmen
- That the land has well-maintained roads
- That the respondent can use ATVs or off-road vehicles
- That the land allows hunting with dogs

- After the series of questions discussed above, the survey asked hunters if there are any other factors that are important in their decision-making regarding where to hunt. An additional factor was commonly mentioned: the availability and quality of game. Another factor of importance is good habitat/good wildlife management.

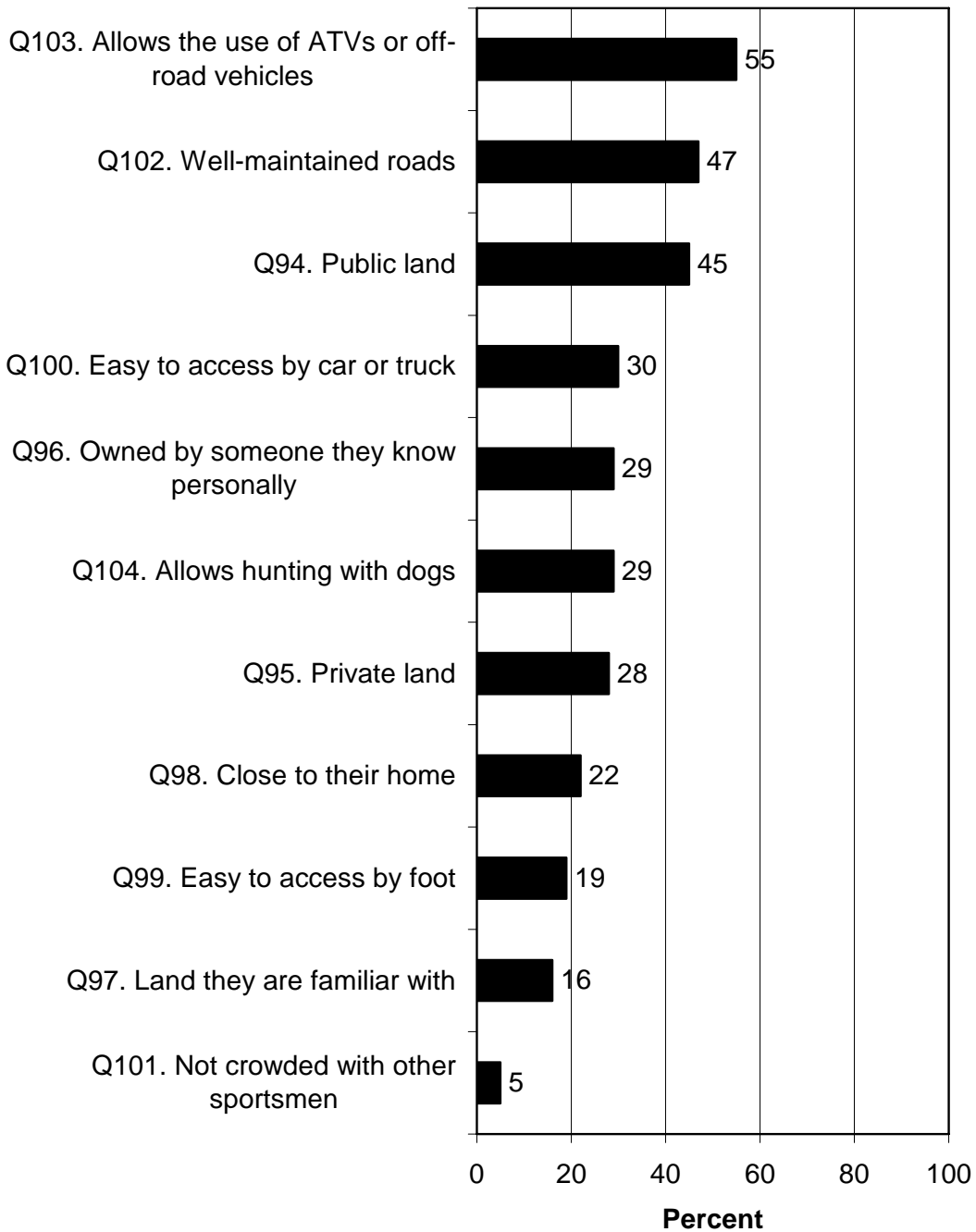
**Percent who indicated that the following are very important when deciding where to hunt (species) in (state).**



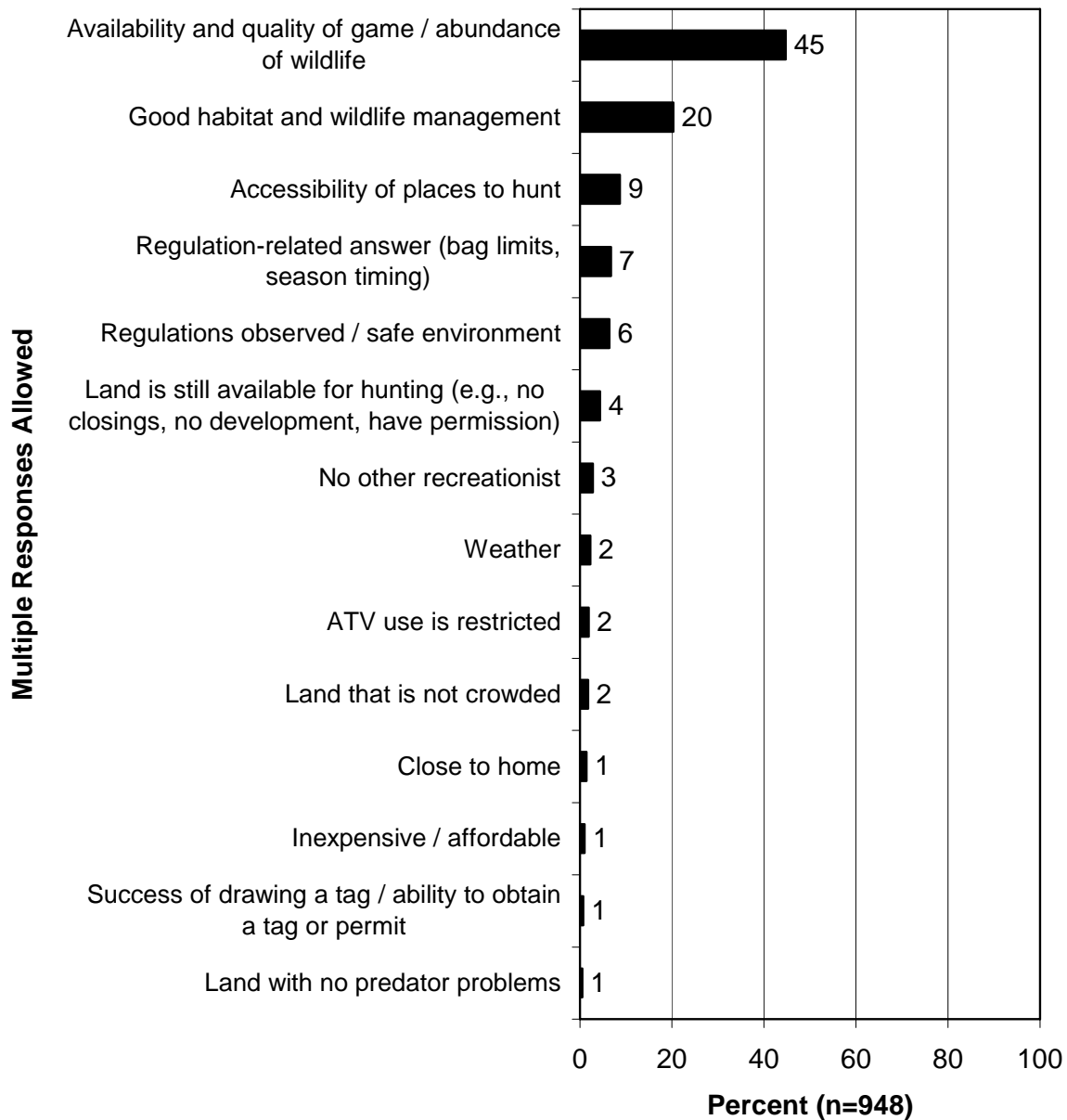
**Percent who indicated that the following are very or somewhat important when deciding where to hunt (species) in (state).**



**Percent who indicated that the following are not important at all when deciding where to hunt (species) in (state).**



**Q106. What other factors are important to you when deciding where to hunt in your state? (Asked of those who said that there are other factors that are important to them when deciding where to hunt in their state.)**



## CONSTRAINTS TO HUNTING PARTICIPATION

- A direct question asked hunters whether lack of hunting access had caused them *not* to hunt a particular species as much as they would have liked in the past 5 years. Almost half of them (46%) agreed that it had done so. In follow-up, the top-named access problems were private land being posted (40% of those who agreed to the lead-in question) and no land to hunt on (30%). These two reasons were markedly more important than the rest, and they were more distantly followed by the land being leased to others (13%), public land being closed (10%), development closing lands (8%), and the cost of access (8%).
  - Also in follow-up, hunters were asked to name the species that they had *not* hunted as much as they would have liked because of access problems. The top-named species is white-tailed deer (46% among those who agreed to the above question), followed by upland game birds (26%), waterfowl (16%), wild turkey (13%), rabbit (10%), elk (9%), and mule deer (8%). In total, 53% named a type of deer. Note that hunters could name more than one species on this question.
  
- The survey asked a series of 25 questions about possible hunting access constraints (shown in Text Box 2 on the following page). For each possible constraint, the survey asked hunters if it had been, over the past 5 years, a *major* problem, a *moderate* problem, a *minor* problem, or *not at all* a problem. The starting point in going through the list in each interview was randomized. The results of the series of questions were then ranked.
  - The potential constraints that had the highest percentage of hunters saying that the constraint was a *major*, *moderate*, or *minor* problem were less land to hunt on because of private land ownership changes (51%), less land on which to hunt because the land use has changed (48%), finding previously open private land sold and posted by the new landowner (47%), the cost of gas (47%), housing or other development making land not huntable (47%), finding previously open private land now posted by the landowner (45%), less land to hunt on due to development (43%), being denied permission to hunt on somebody else's land (41%), and finding previously open private land closed because a club has now leased it (41%). Each of these had more than 40% of respondents saying it was a *major*, *moderate*, or *minor* problem.

- Other graphs in this series are shown consisting of the ranking by the percentage saying the constraint was a *major* problem and the ranking by those saying the constraint was not a problem at all.

**TEXT BOX 2**

**Possible constraints to hunting access that were asked about in the survey:**

Road closures  
 Less land on which to hunt  
 Less land on which to hunt because the land use has changed  
 Less land on which to hunt due to private land ownership changes  
 Not having enough information about where to hunt  
 The information about where to hunt being inaccurate  
 Not having ATV access in general  
 Not being able to retrieve the hunt harvest because of ATV restrictions  
 Having maps that show huntable land but being unable to locate that land on the ground  
 Being unable to locate a road or other access route to huntable land  
 Not being sure of the boundaries of huntable land  
 Having to travel too far to hunt  
 Being denied permission to hunt on somebody else's land  
 Not being able to find the landowner to ask permission  
 Finding previously open private land posted or closed by the landowner  
 Finding previously open private land sold and posted or closed by the new landowner  
 Finding previously open private land closed because a club has now leased it  
 Private land blocking access to public land for hunting  
 Poor maintenance of roads or trails  
 The cost of gas  
 Not being able to find a good place to park the vehicle  
 Not being able to find a place to launch a boat  
 Housing or other development making land not huntable  
 Information from the [state agency] being out of date  
 Access or leasing fees being expensive

- A follow-up question to one of the questions within the aforementioned series asked those who indicated that road closures had been a problem to indicate how the road had been closed. Most commonly, the road was closed by a gate, although a few indicated that the road was closed by a berm or dirt pile, by a “No trespassing” sign posted by a landowner, or by a lack of maintenance.
  - Most commonly, the road closures were perceived to be permanent rather than seasonal/temporary.
  - Another follow-up question asked for the location/type of the closed road. Most commonly, the roads were public—National Forest roads, BLM roads, or other public roads.

- Another follow-up question within the above series was asked of those who indicated that not being able to retrieve their harvest because of ATV restrictions had been a problem (11% of hunters overall indicated that this was a problem). The follow-up question asked if they agreed or disagreed that not being able to retrieve game with an ATV had caused them to hunt less than they would otherwise have liked to do, and 51% of those who got the follow-up question agreed (6% of hunters overall), while 45% disagreed.
- A final follow-up question within the above series was asked of those who indicated that private land blocking access to public land had been a problem (29% indicated that this was a problem). The follow-up question asked how much of a problem was *intentional* blocking of public land by a private landowner, and 77% of those respondents indicated that private landowners *intentionally* blocking access was a problem (22% of hunters overall).
- After the above series of questions, the survey then presented hunters a list of 16 problems with actions hunters may have had to take because of the problem (e.g., leaving a hunt area because of crowding from other recreationists). The list of problems is shown in Text Box 3 on the following page. For each possible problem, the survey asked hunters if it had been, over the past 5 years, a *major* problem, a *moderate* problem, a *minor* problem, or *not at all* a problem. The results of the series of questions were then ranked.
  - In looking at the ranking by the percentage saying the problem was *major*, *moderate*, or *minor*, the top problems are leaving an area because of crowding from other hunters (55%), leaving an area because the respondent felt unsafe because of other hunters (40%), and leaving an area because of the irresponsible behavior of other hunters (35%). A middle tier consists of leaving an area because of crowding from other recreationists (28%), not being sure whether they were on private or public land (25%), not going on a hunt or changing locations because of access problems (24%), and not being sure whose land they were on (24%)—all with about a quarter saying it had been a problem. As a whole, the results suggest that access itself is not as great a problem as is access to *uncrowded* lands—the four top problems relate to other people being on the land on which the hunter wanted to hunt.

- Also shown is the graph in this series showing the ranking by the percentage saying the given item had been a *major* problem, as well as the ranking by the percentage saying the given item had been *not* a problem at all.

**TEXT BOX 3**

**Possible problems regarding hunting access that were asked about in the survey:**

Not going on a hunt or changing locations because of access problems  
 Not going on a hunt or changing locations because the respondent felt that a leasing fee was too expensive  
 Not going on a hunt or changing locations because map information was wrong  
 Not going on a hunt or changing locations because access for those with disabilities was not available  
 Leaving an area because of crowding from other hunters  
 Leaving an area because of crowding from other recreationists  
 Leaving an area because respondent felt unsafe because of other hunters  
 Leaving an area because of the irresponsible behavior of other hunters  
 Not being sure whether he/she was on private or public land  
 Not being sure whose land he/she was on  
 Not hunting somewhere because of ATV restrictions  
 Not hunting somewhere because ATV use is allowed or not restricted  
 Being in an area where he/she was not sure which hunting regulations applied  
 Being confused by a state agency map that was hard to follow  
 Discontinuing a hunting club membership because he/she felt the fees were too expensive  
 Trying to join a hunting club that was already full

- The survey asked hunters a series of 10 questions about factors that may or may not influence access to hunting land nationwide in general, regardless of whether their own participation is affected by it (shown in Text Box 4 on the following page). For each factor, the survey asked hunters if they think it is a *major* problem, a *moderate* problem, a *minor* problem, or *not at all* a problem. The starting point in going through the list in each interview was randomized. The results of the series of questions were then ranked.
  - In looking at the ranking by the percentages saying the factor is a *major*, a *moderate*, or a *minor* problem, 3 of the 10 factors have a majority saying it is a problem: private land posted or closed because the landowner is specifically concerned about liability (56%), housing and commercial development (54%), and public or private land tracts being broken up when sold or leased (52%).
  - Also shown is the graph in this series showing the ranking by the percentage saying the given factor is a *major* problem, as well as the ranking by the percentage saying the given factor is *not* a problem at all.

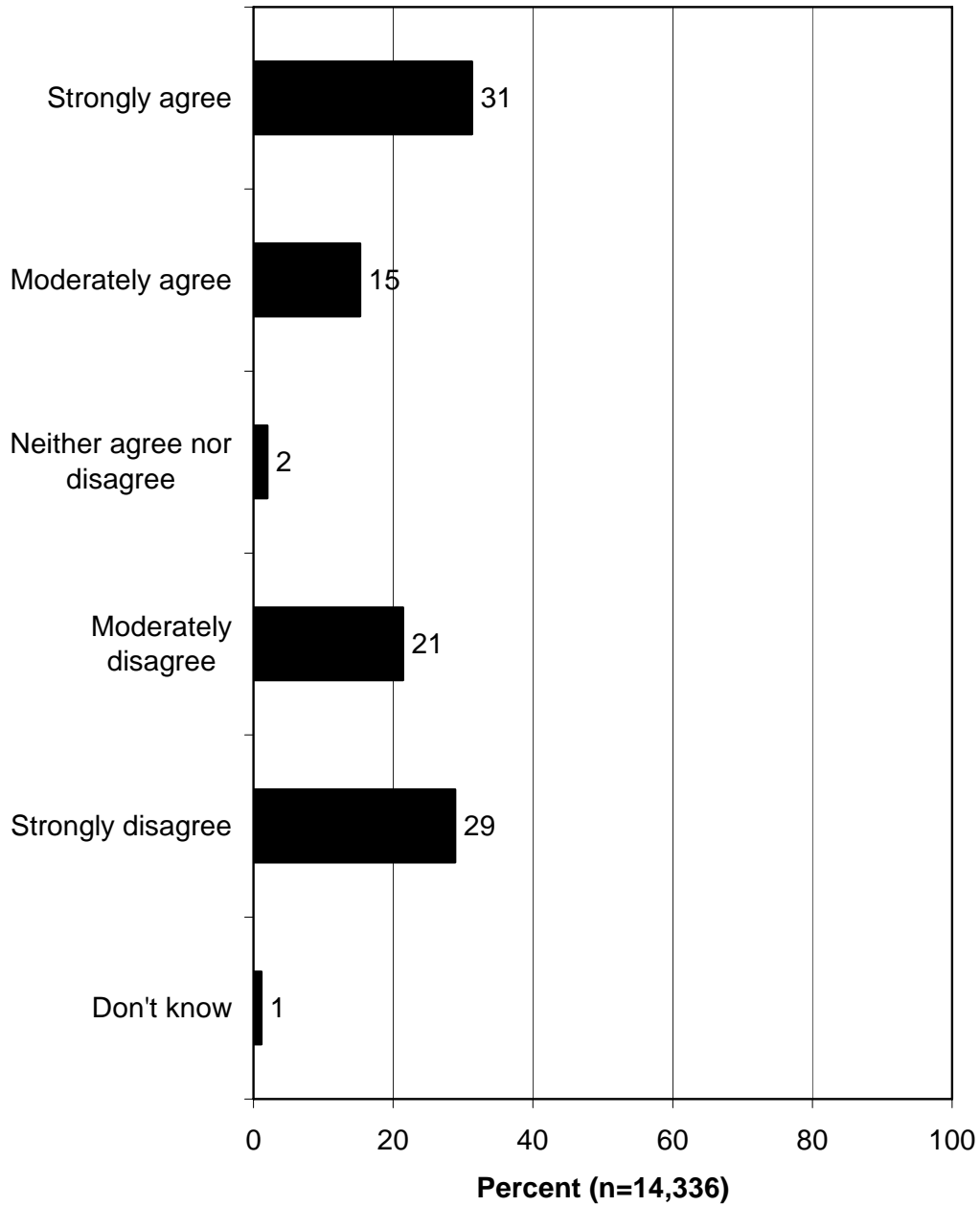
**TEXT BOX 4**

**Factors that may or may not influence hunting access that were asked about in the survey:**

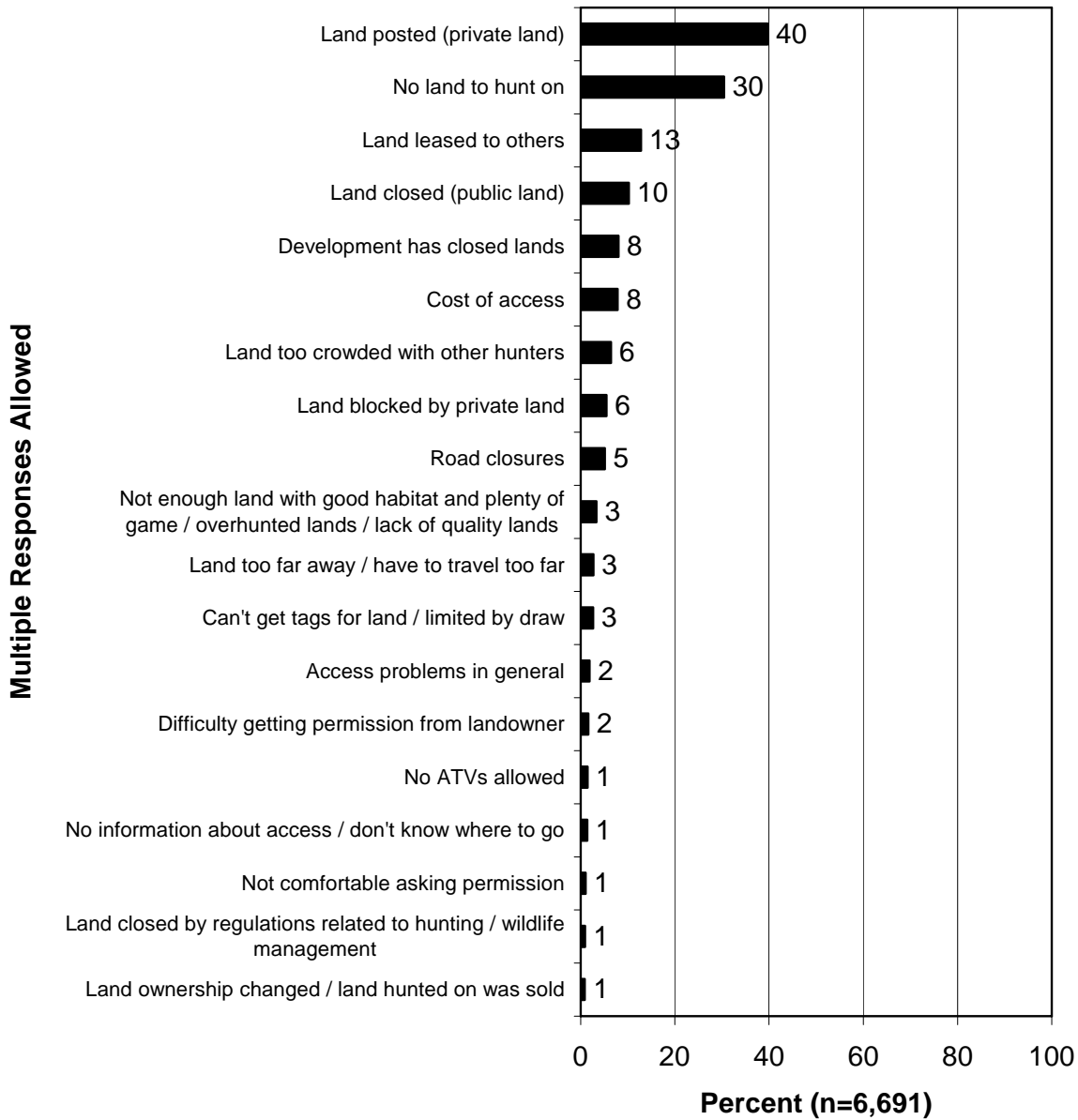
- Poor management or allocation of uses of public land
- Lack of or unclear signs marking public hunting lands
- Restrictions on public land
- Closures of public land by government agencies
- Not enough access to public lands for those with disabilities
- Housing and commercial development
- Gas and oil extraction on public lands
- Public or private land tracts being broken up when sold or leased
- Private land posted or closed because the landowner is specifically concerned about liability
- Management of land for purposes other than hunting, such as timber cutting

- When asked in an open-ended question if there were any things that had taken away from their enjoyment of hunting, even if those things did not prevent them from actually going, hunters most commonly named some type of access problem (14%), a regulation-related answer, such as season timing (10%), and/or not enough game (9%).
  - Note that the analysis breaks down the “access-related problems” category into specific access problems as subsets of access-related problems overall. Primary among those access problems are the posting of private land, a simple lack of land to hunt on, land being closed because of development, land being leased to others, and public land being closed.

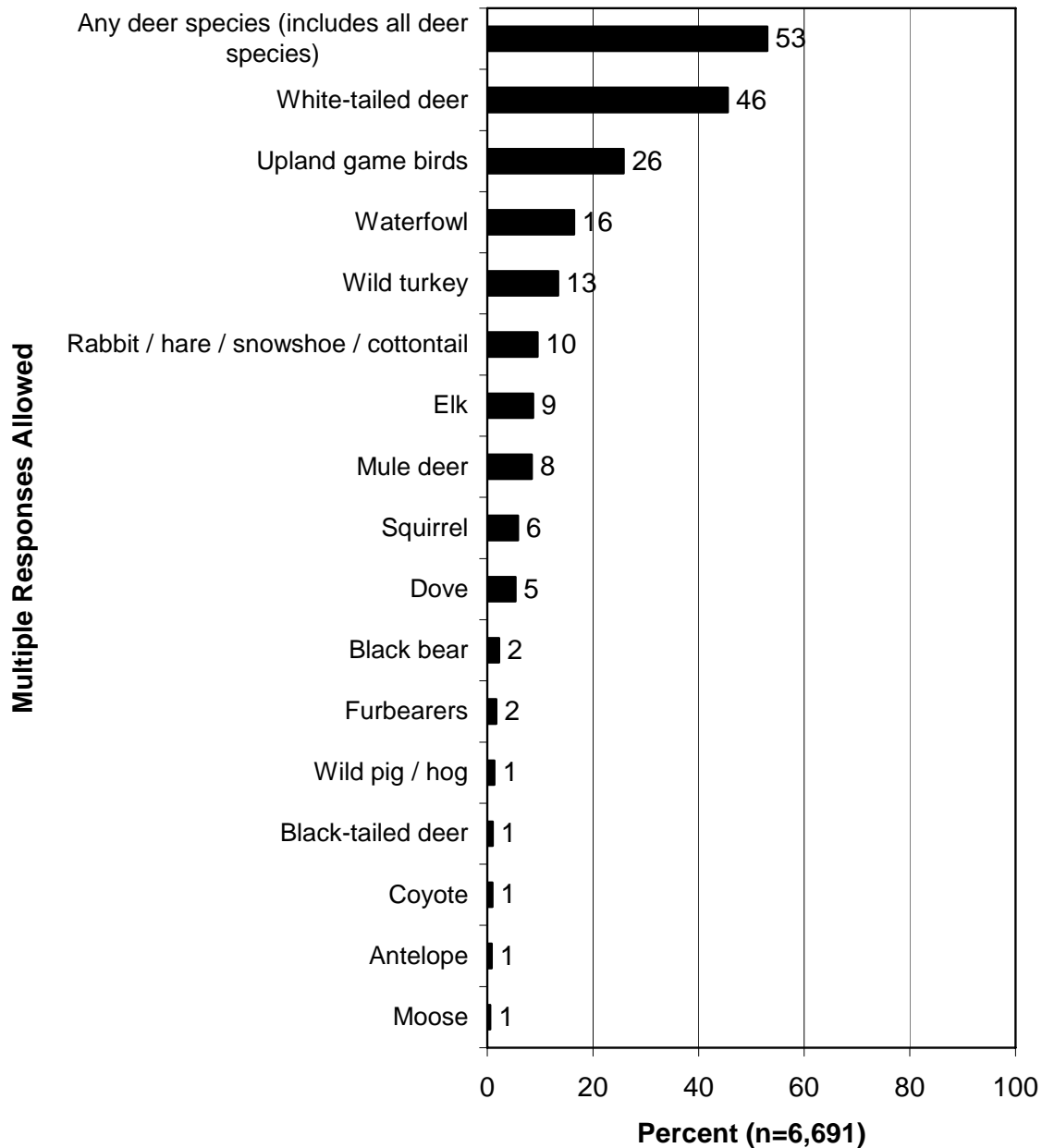
**Q40. Do you agree or disagree that a lack of access to hunting lands in your state has caused you to not hunt any species as much as you would have liked in the past 5 years?**



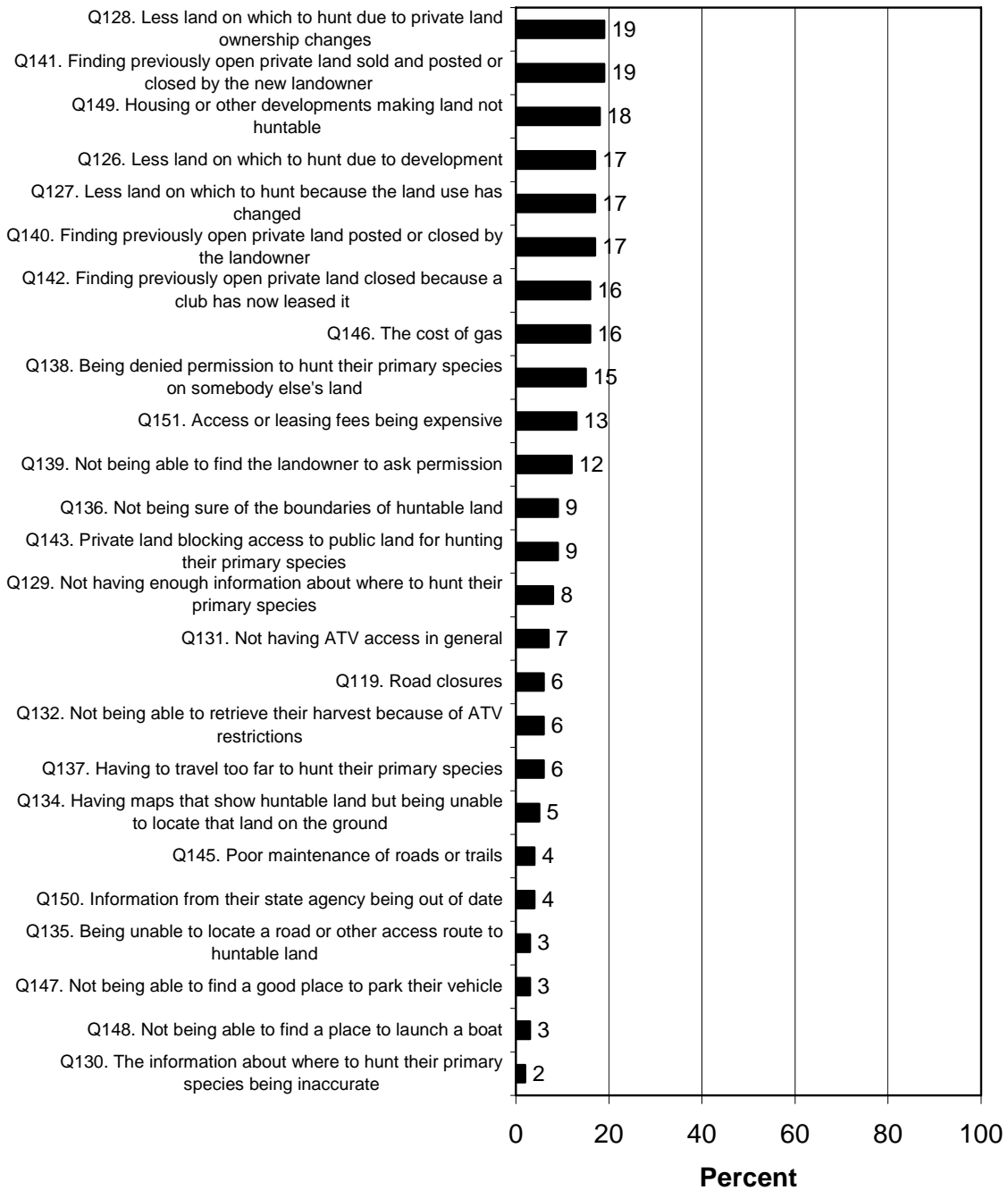
**Q48. What are the specific access problems that have caused you not to hunt this/these species as much as you would have liked? (Asked of those who agree that lack of access to hunting lands in your state has caused them not to hunt a species as much as they would have liked in the past 5 years.)**



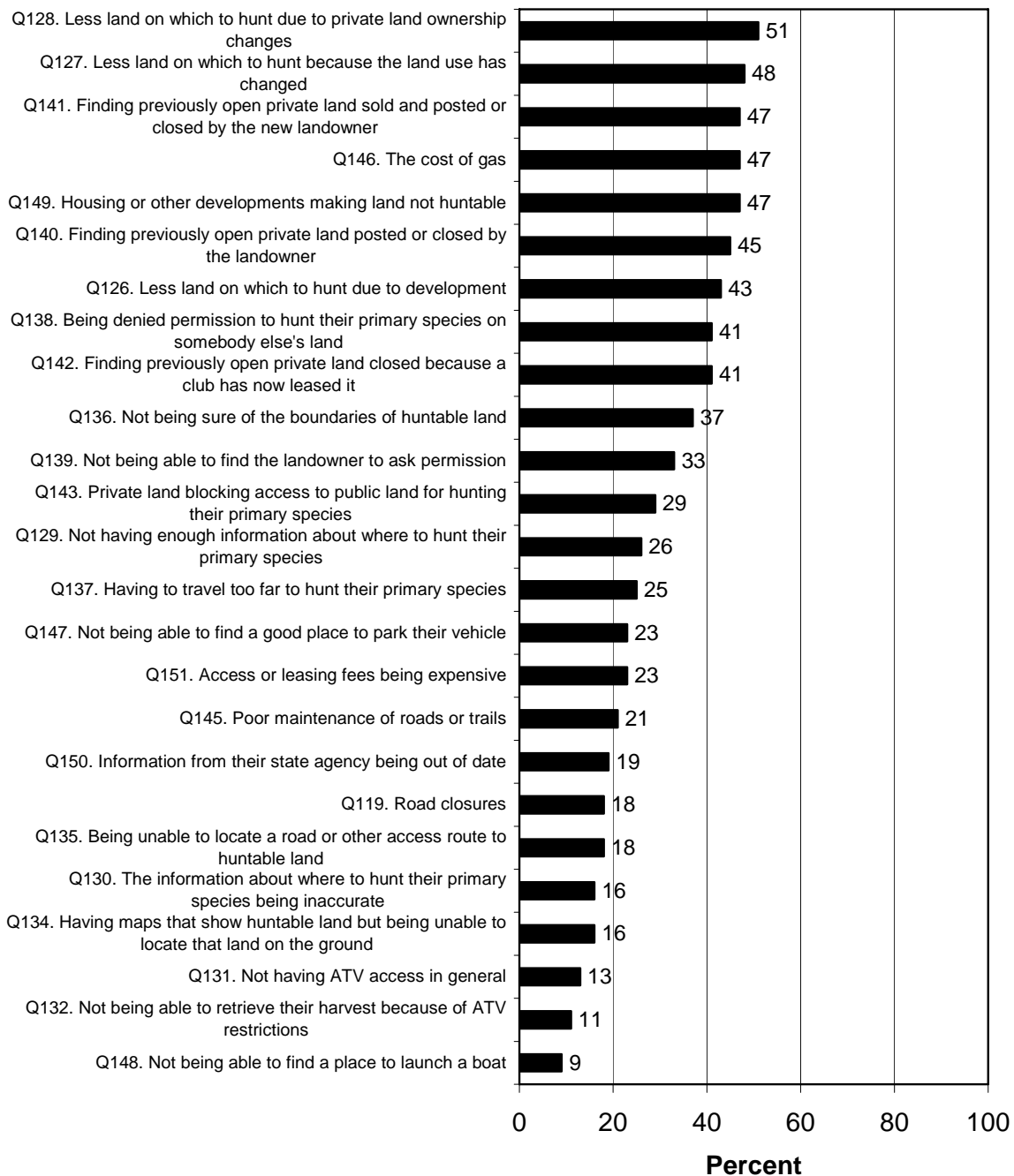
**Q43. What species have you not hunted as much as you would have liked as a result of access problems? (Asked of those who agree that lack of access to hunting lands in your state has caused them not to hunt a species as much as they would have liked in the past 5 years.)**



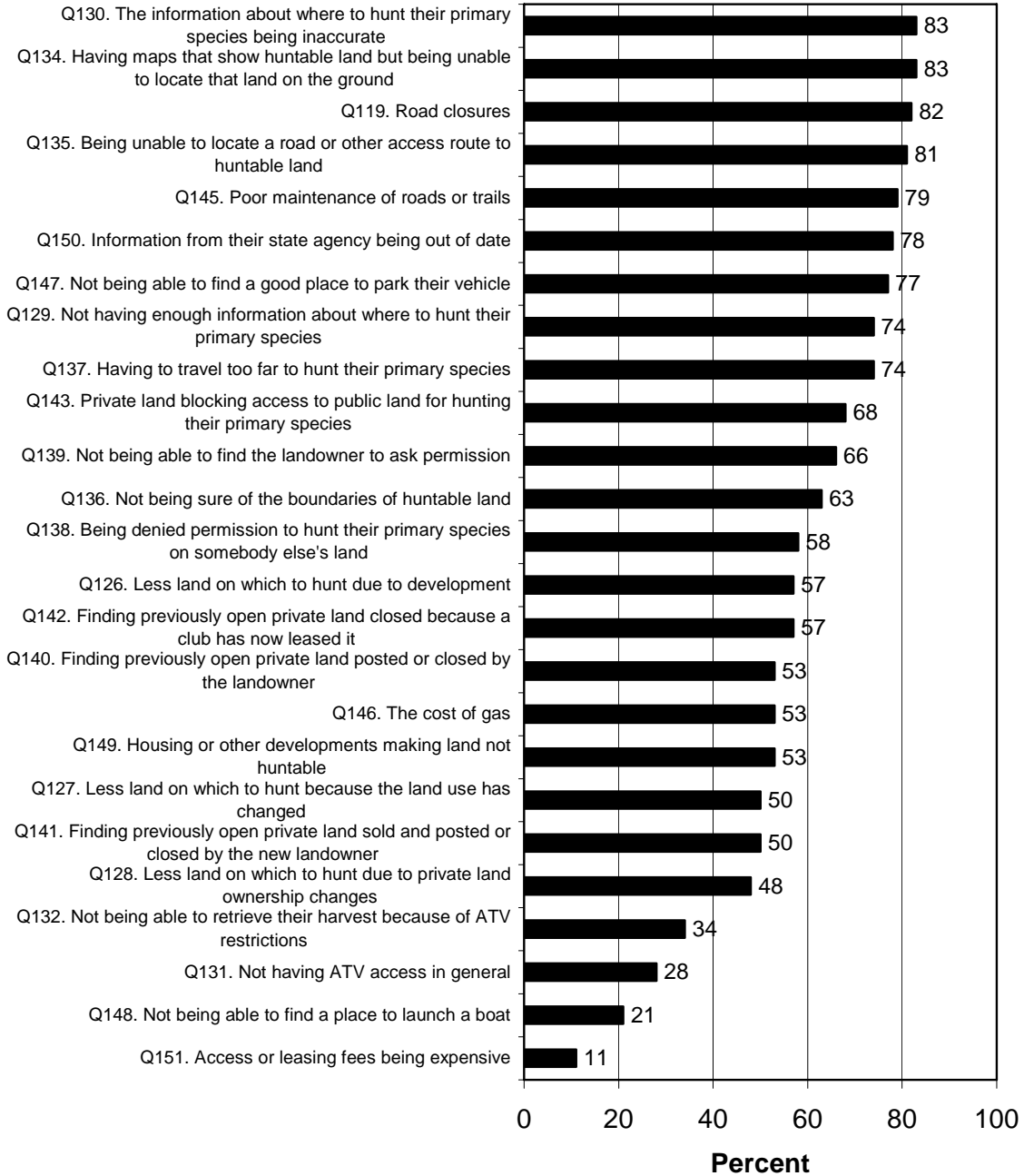
**Percent who indicated that the following hunting access problems have been major in the past 5 years when hunting (species).**



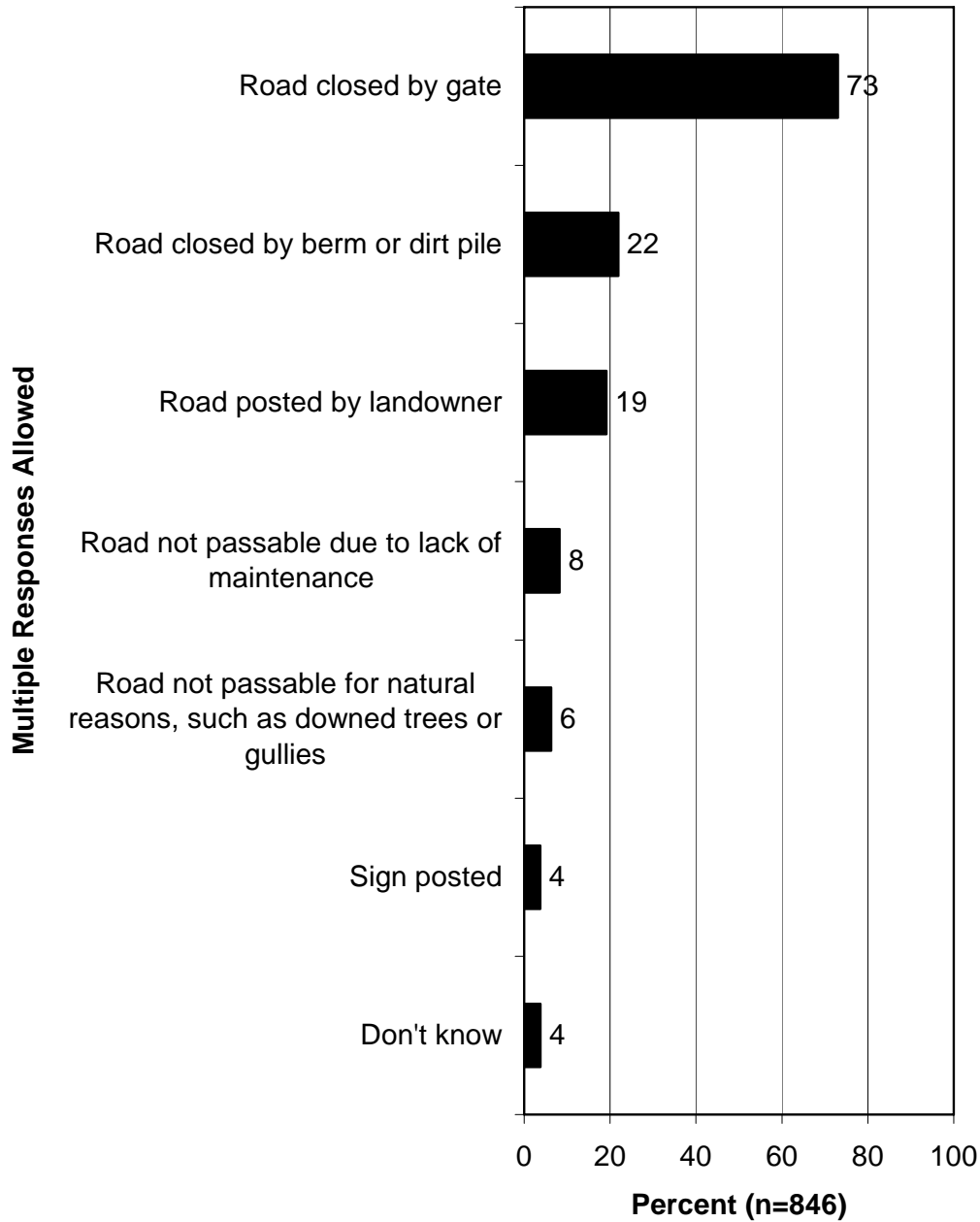
**Percent who indicated that the following hunting access problems have been major, moderate, or minor in the past 5 years when hunting (species).**



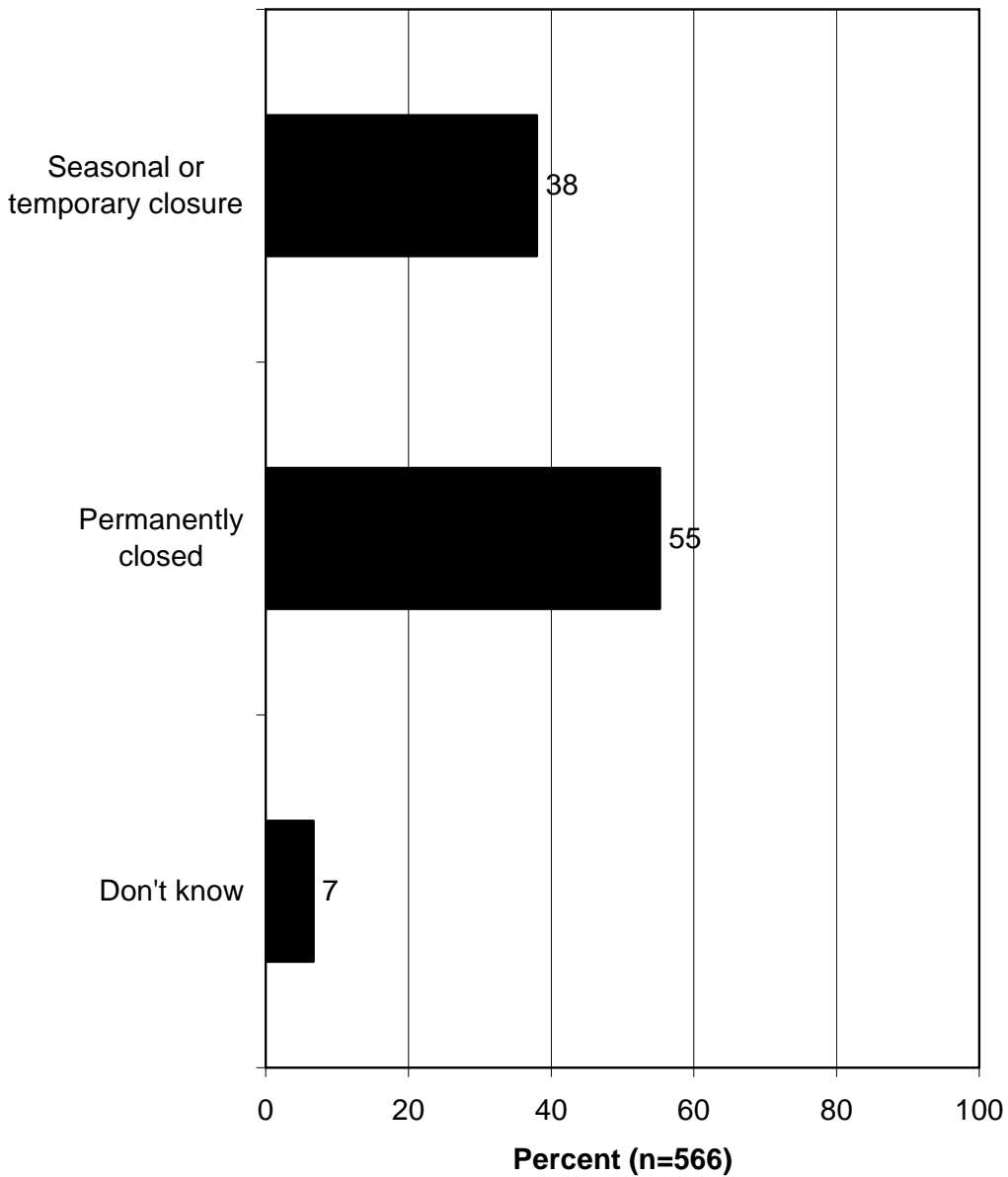
**Percent who indicated that the following potential hunting access problems have not been problematic at all in the past 5 years when hunting (species).**



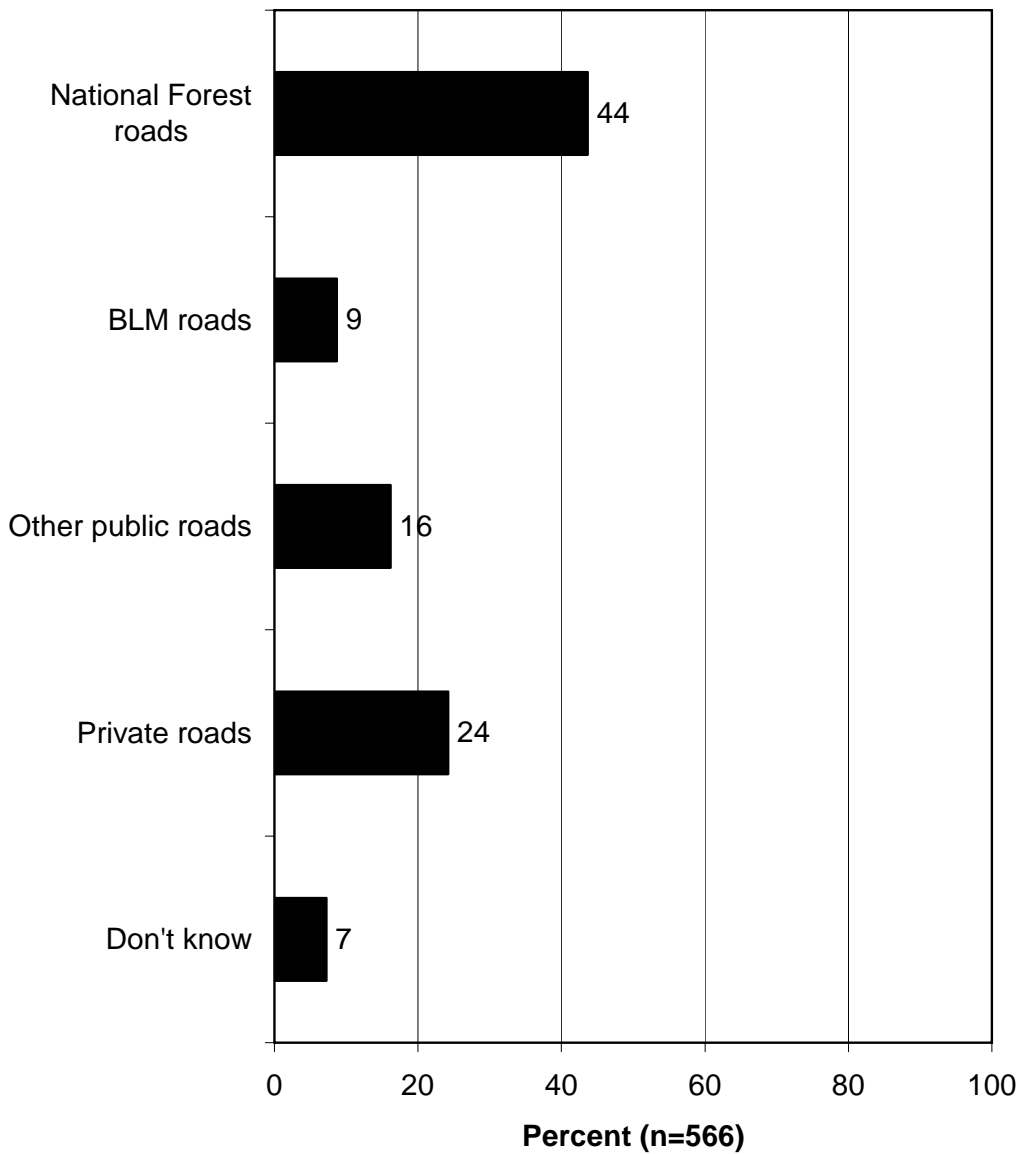
**Q122. How were the roads closed? (Asked of those who said road closures have been a problem when they were hunting their primary species.)**



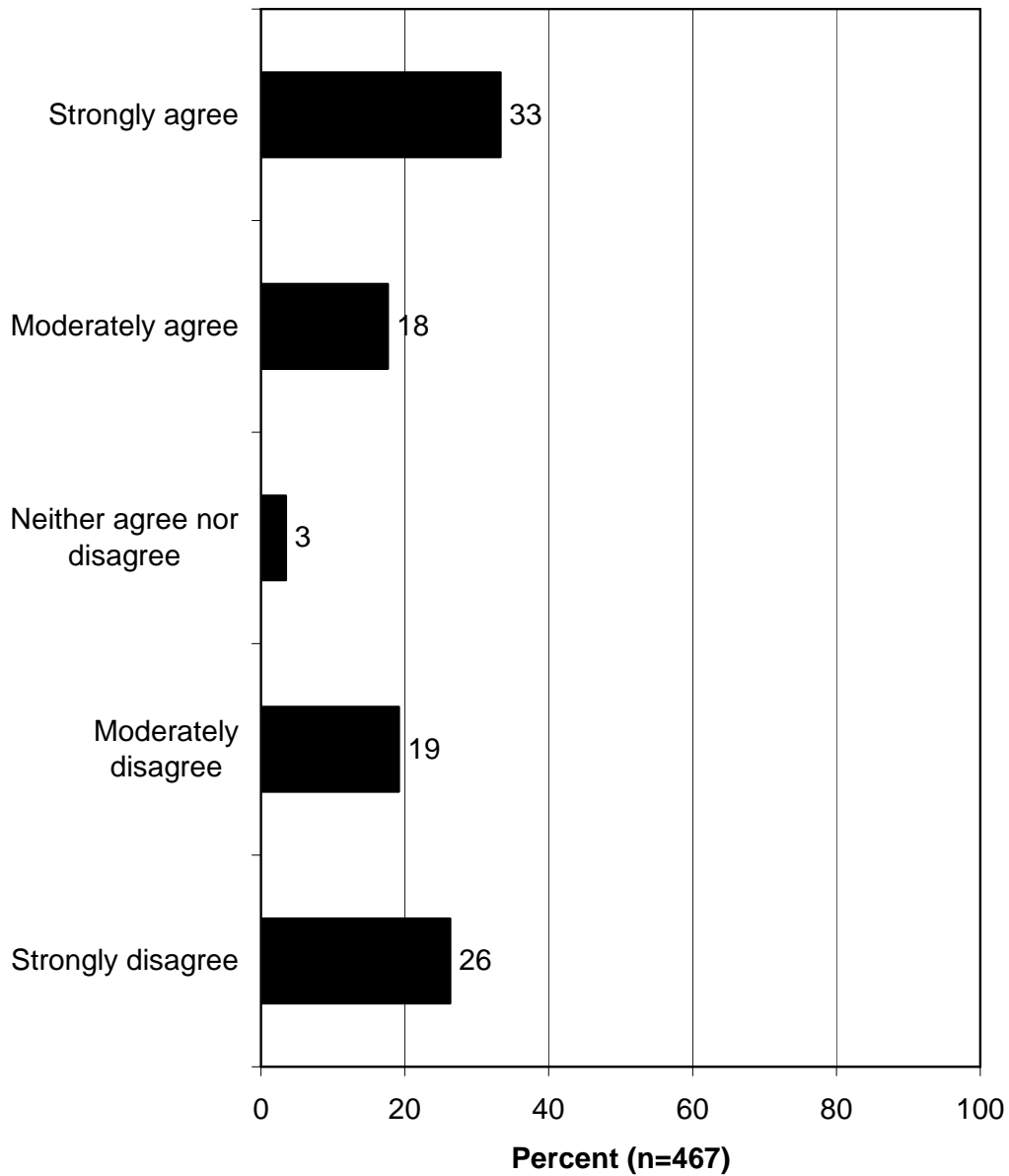
**Q124. Was this a seasonal or temporary closure, or was it permanently closed? (Asked of those who said road closures have been a problem when they were hunting their primary species and who said the road was closed by a gate.)**



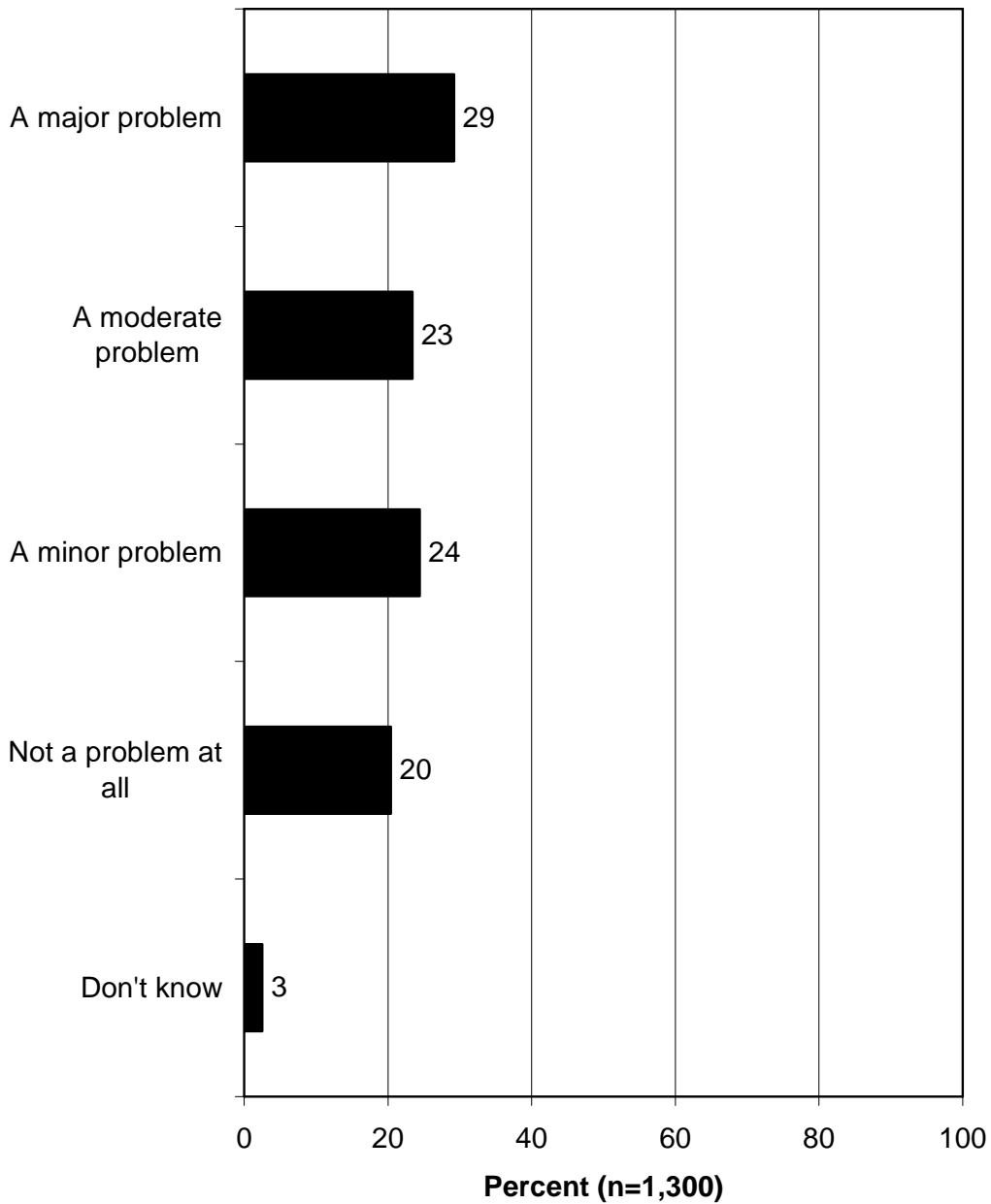
**Q125. Were the closed roads National Forest roads, BLM roads, other public roads, or private roads? (Asked of those who said road closures have been a problem when they were hunting their primary species and who said the road was closed by a gate.)**



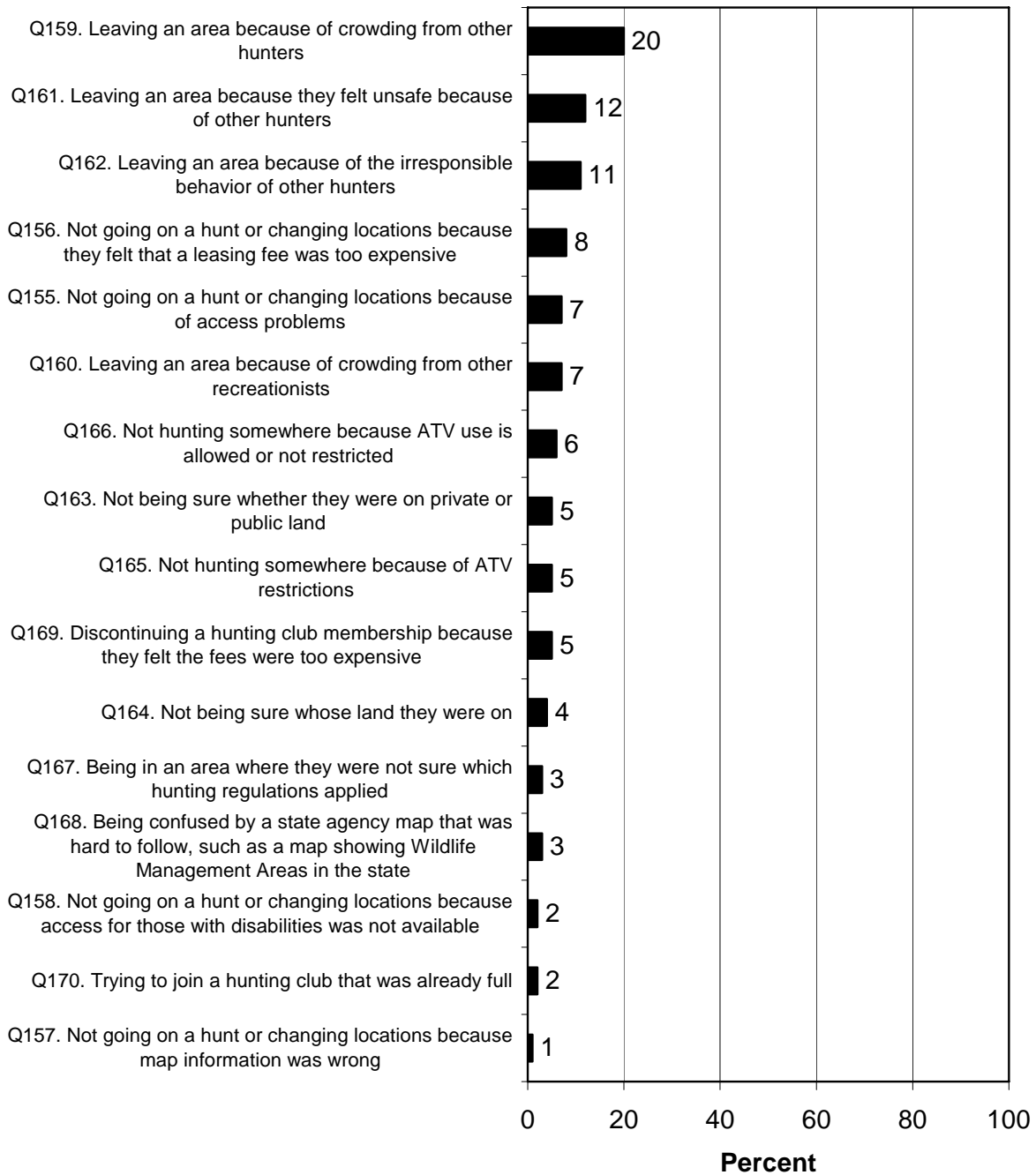
**Q133. Do you agree or disagree that not being able to retrieve your harvest with an ATV has caused you to hunt less in the past 5 years? (Asked of those who said that not being able to retrieve their harvest because of ATV restrictions has been a problem when they were hunting their primary species.)**



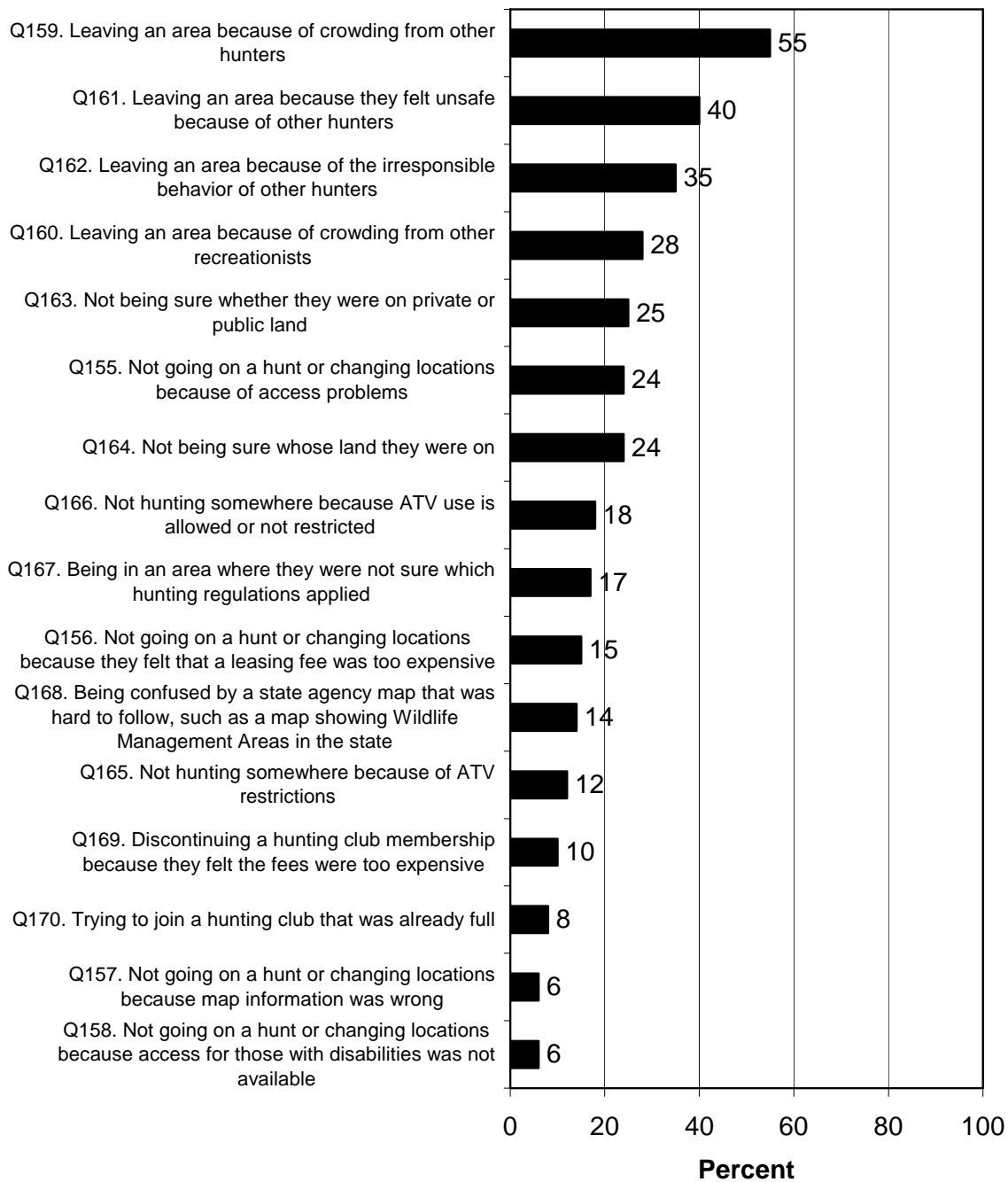
**Q144. How much of a problem were landowners intentionally blocking or making it difficult to physically access public land? (Asked of those who said that private land blocking access to public land has been a problem when they were hunting their primary species.)**



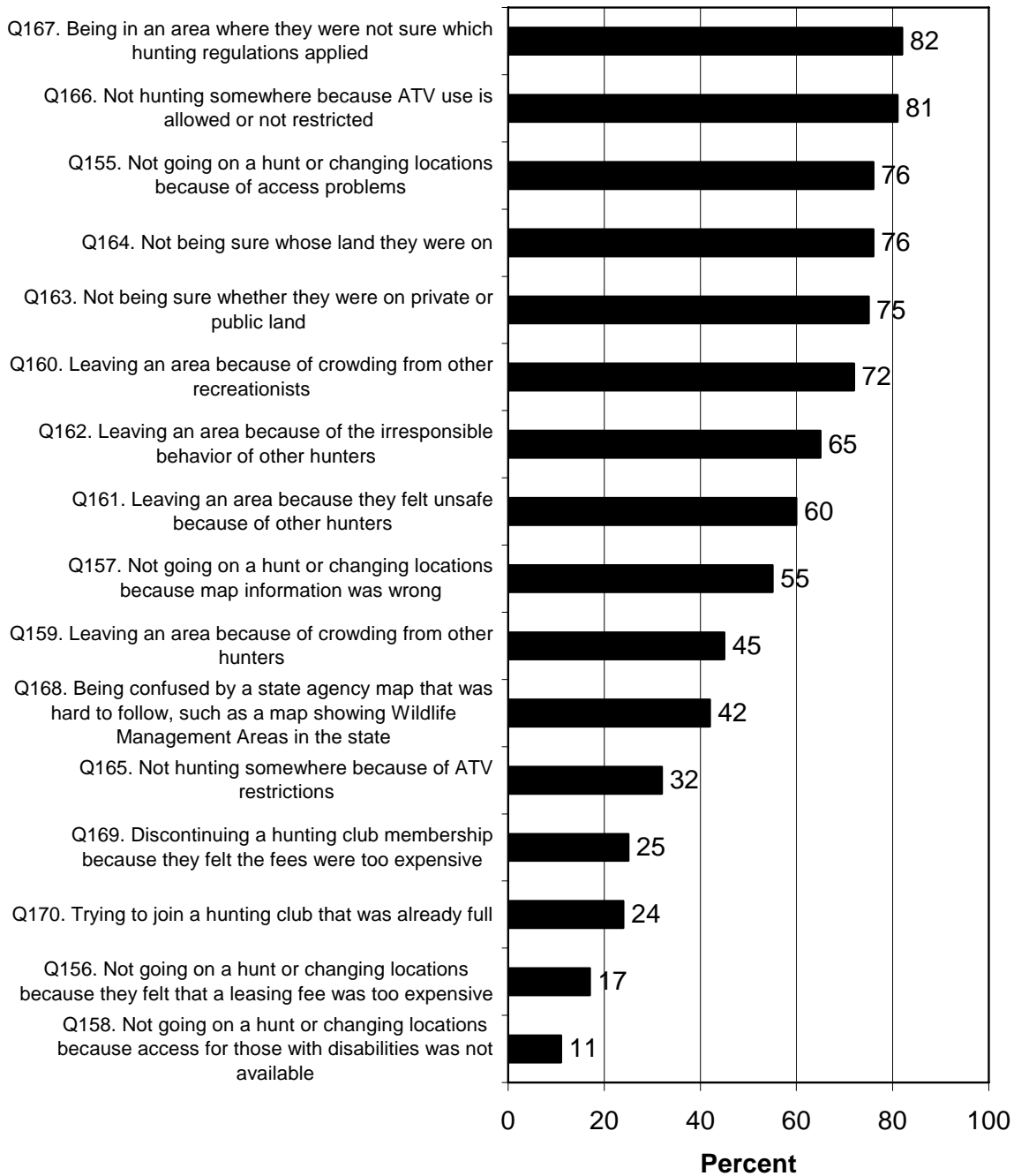
**Percent who indicated that the following have been a major problem in the past 5 years when hunting (species).**



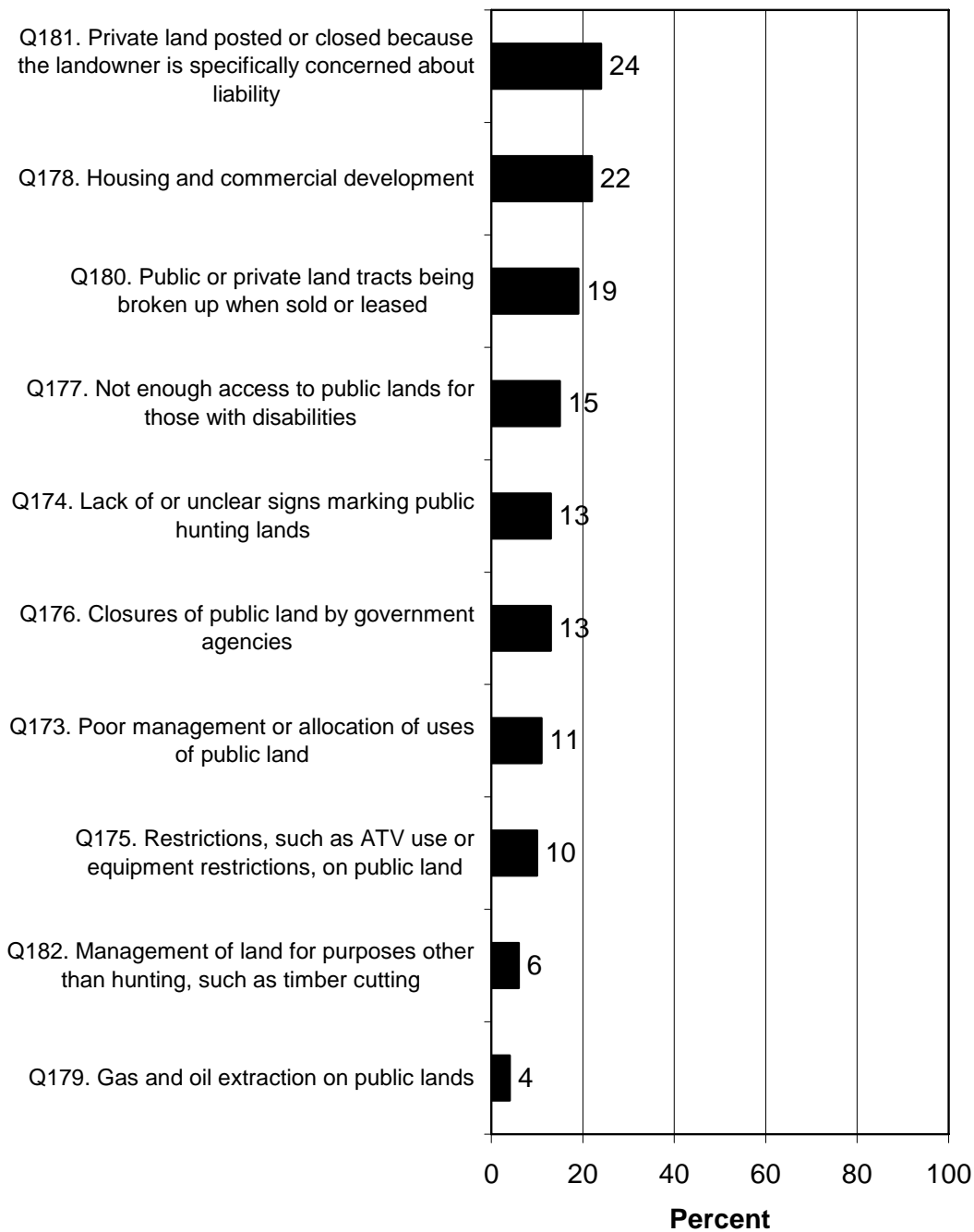
**Percent who indicated that the following have been a major, moderate, or minor problem in the past 5 years when hunting (species).**



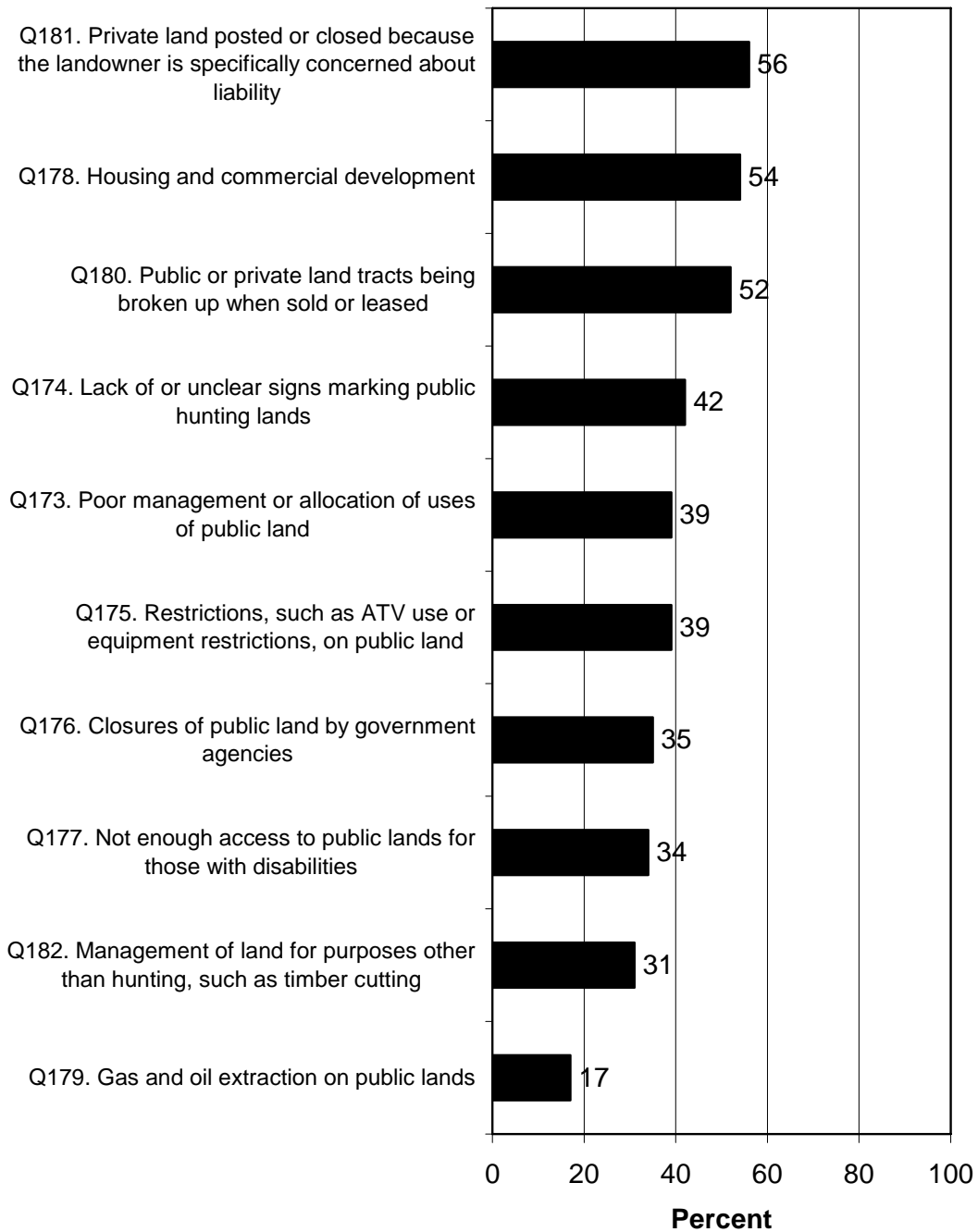
**Percent who indicated that the following have not been a problem at all in the past 5 years when hunting (species).**



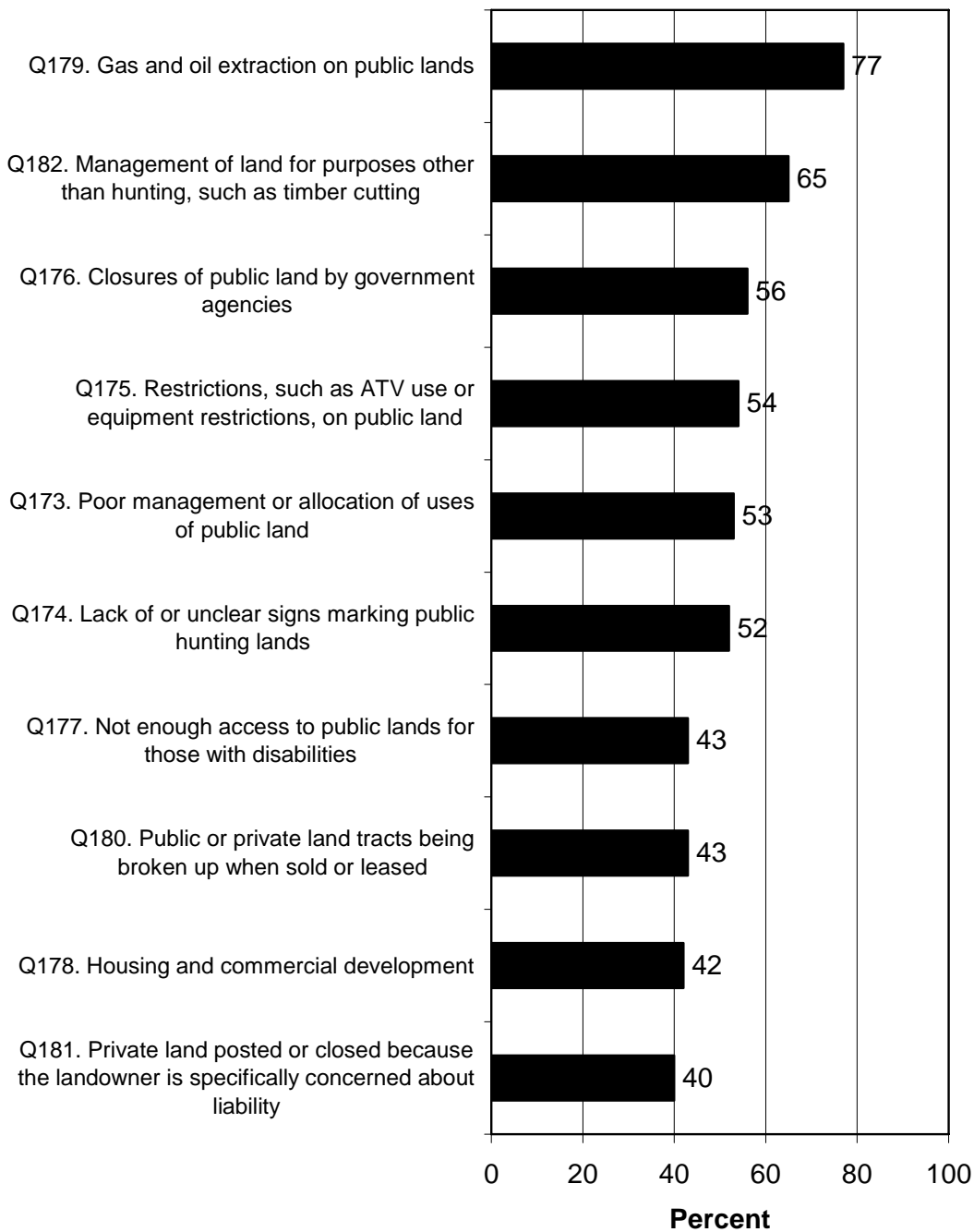
**Percent who indicated that the following factors have been a major problem in accessing hunting land in (state) in general.**



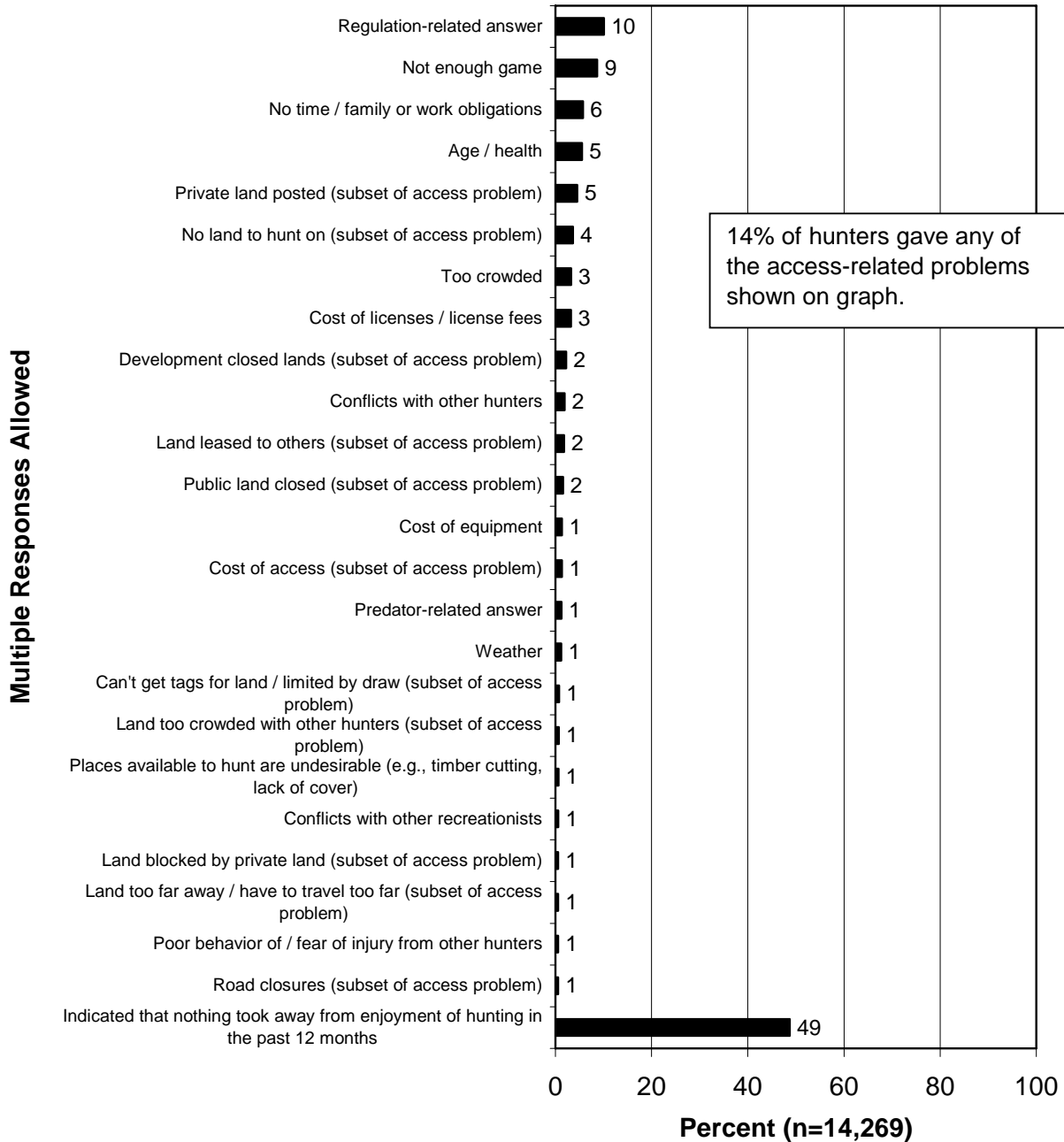
**Percent who indicated that the following factors have been a major, moderate, or minor problem in accessing hunting land in (state) in general.**



**Percent who indicated that the following factors have not been a problem at all in accessing hunting land in (state) in general.**



**Q31/34/38. Are there any things that have taken away from your enjoyment of hunting in your state, even if they didn't prevent you from actually going? If yes, what are they? (Shows only those items with a response rate of 0.5% or higher)**

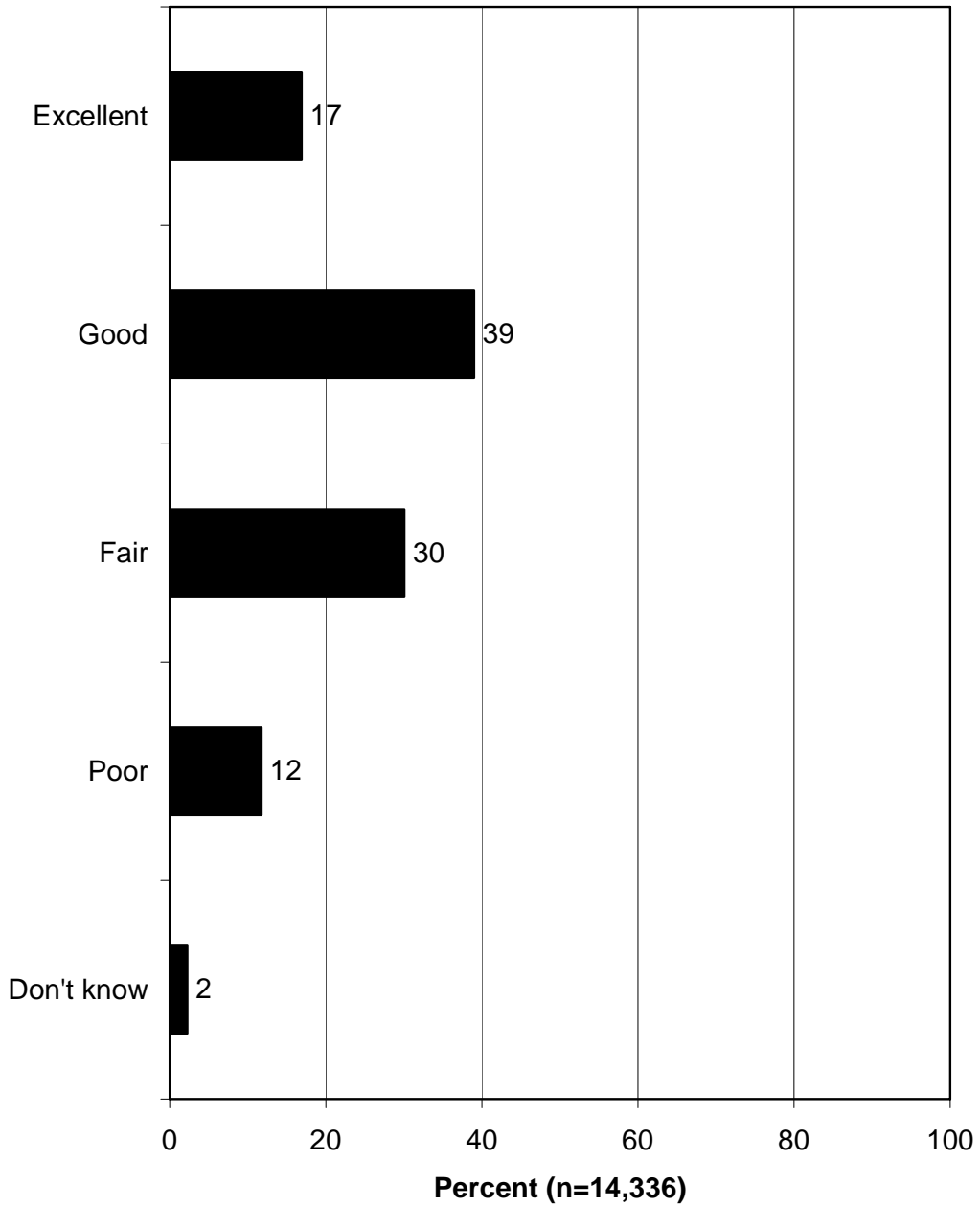


## RATINGS OF ACCESS TO HUNTING LANDS

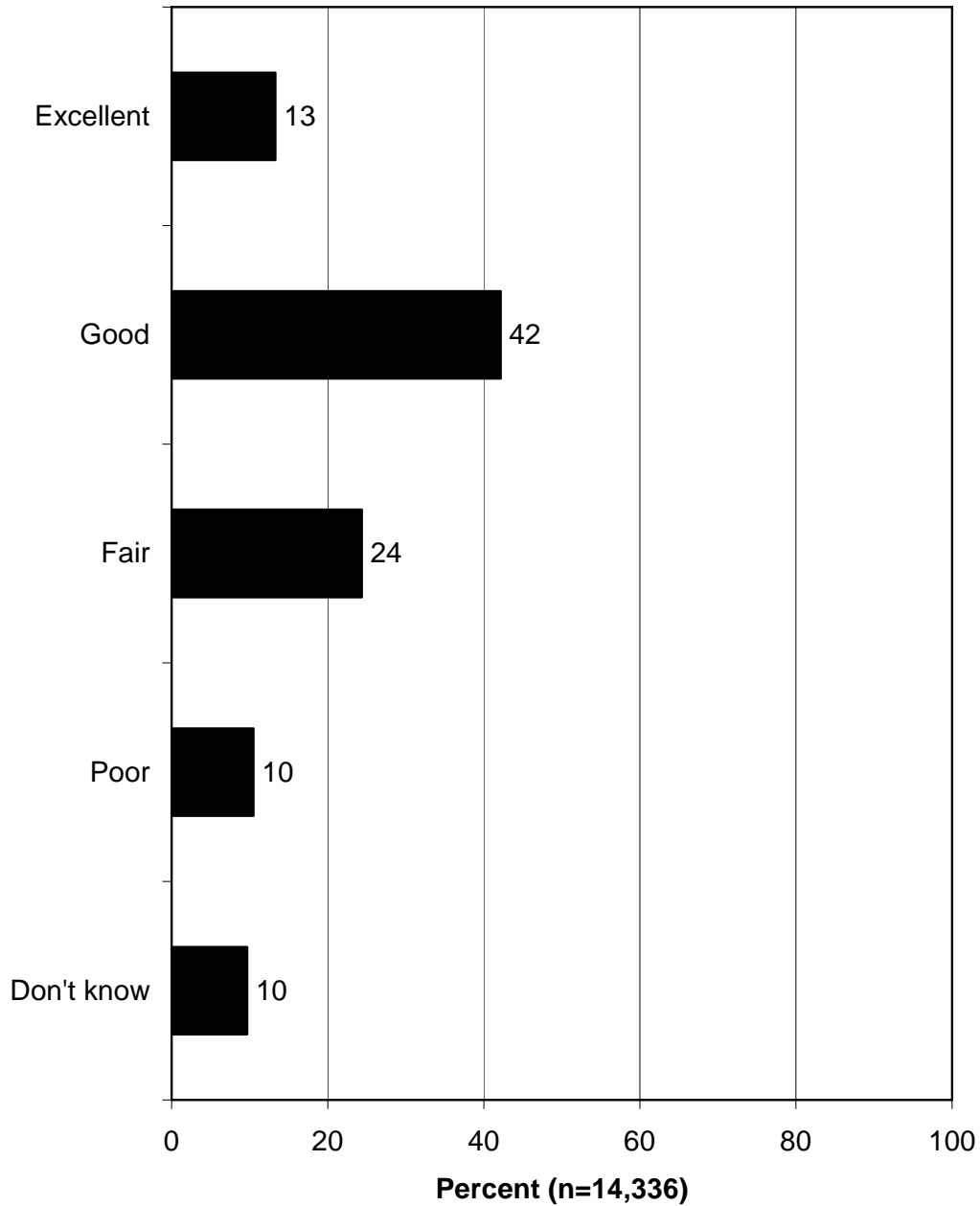
- A basic question asked hunters to rate access to hunting land in their state overall. They are more positive than negative: 56% give a rating of excellent or good, while 42% give a rating of fair or poor. Note that the moderate answers (good and fair) far exceed the extreme answers (excellent and poor).
  - In a related question, ratings of the state agency's management of access to hunting lands are more positive than negative: 55% give an excellent or good rating, while 34% give a fair or poor rating (the remainder answering "don't know").
  
- The ratings of access were crosstabulated by various other questions to see if any important differences among respondents emerged. Positive ratings in this context are those in the top half of the scale (excellent or good), and negative ratings are those in the lower half (fair or poor).
  - In the crosstabulation by number of years of hunting experience, ratings are about the same, although the slight differences that exist are, nonetheless, statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.
  - Access ratings are not markedly different when crosstabulated by primary species hunted. Overall, the slight differences on this question are, however, statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.
  - The question about ratings of the state agency's *management* of access to hunting lands was also crosstabulated by primary species hunted. Again, the differences are not markedly different when crosstabulated by primary species hunted. Nonetheless, these slight differences are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.
  - Those hunters who hunt mostly on the same land each year are more positive in their access ratings compared to those who hunt mostly on different lands each year. Overall, these differences are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.
  - Access ratings are slightly more positive among those who hunt mostly on public land, compared to those who hunt mostly on private land. The differences are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

- There was little difference in access ratings when crosstabulated by the distance the hunter typically travels. Nonetheless, the differences that exist are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.
  
- Those who hunted their primary species on public land at least half the time were asked to rate access to public lands in their state. Excellent and good ratings (65% give one of the two responses) exceed fair and poor ratings (31%).
  - Top reasons for rating public land access as fair or poor are a simple lack of land on which to hunt, road closures, land being too crowded with other hunters, public land being blocked by private land, lack of quality land or land with plenty of game, and access problems in general to public land.
  
- Those who hunted their primary species on private land at least half the time were asked to rate access to private land in their state, and they are evenly split: 47% give an excellent or good rating, and 48% give a fair or poor rating.
  - The most common reason for giving a fair or poor rating to private land access is land being posted—the top reason by far. This is followed by land being leased to others, the cost of access, and/or a simple lack of land on which to hunt.

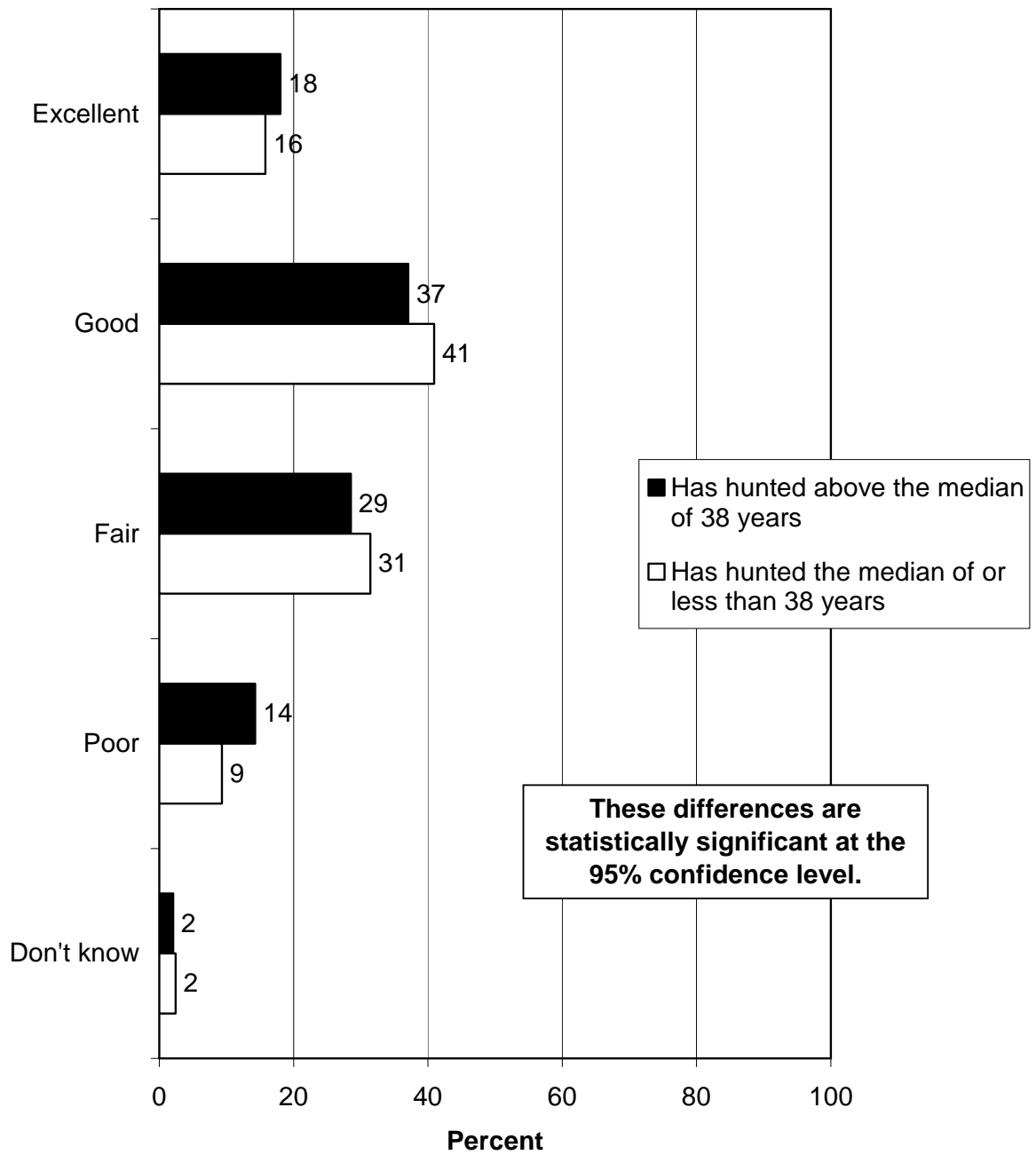
**Q55. Overall, how would you rate access to hunting lands in your state for hunting (species)?**



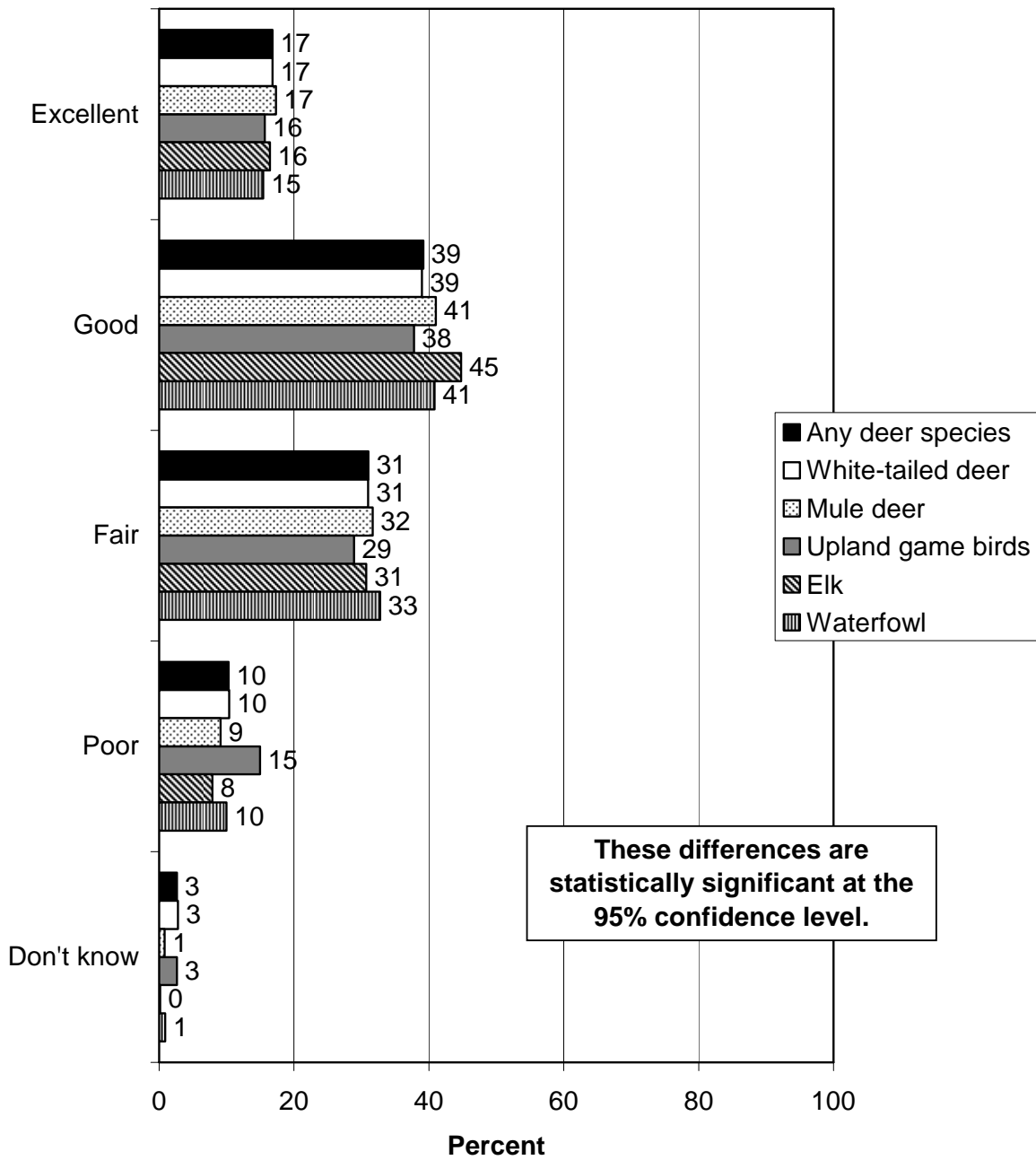
**Q56. How would you rate your state agency's management of access to hunting lands in your state for hunting (species)?**



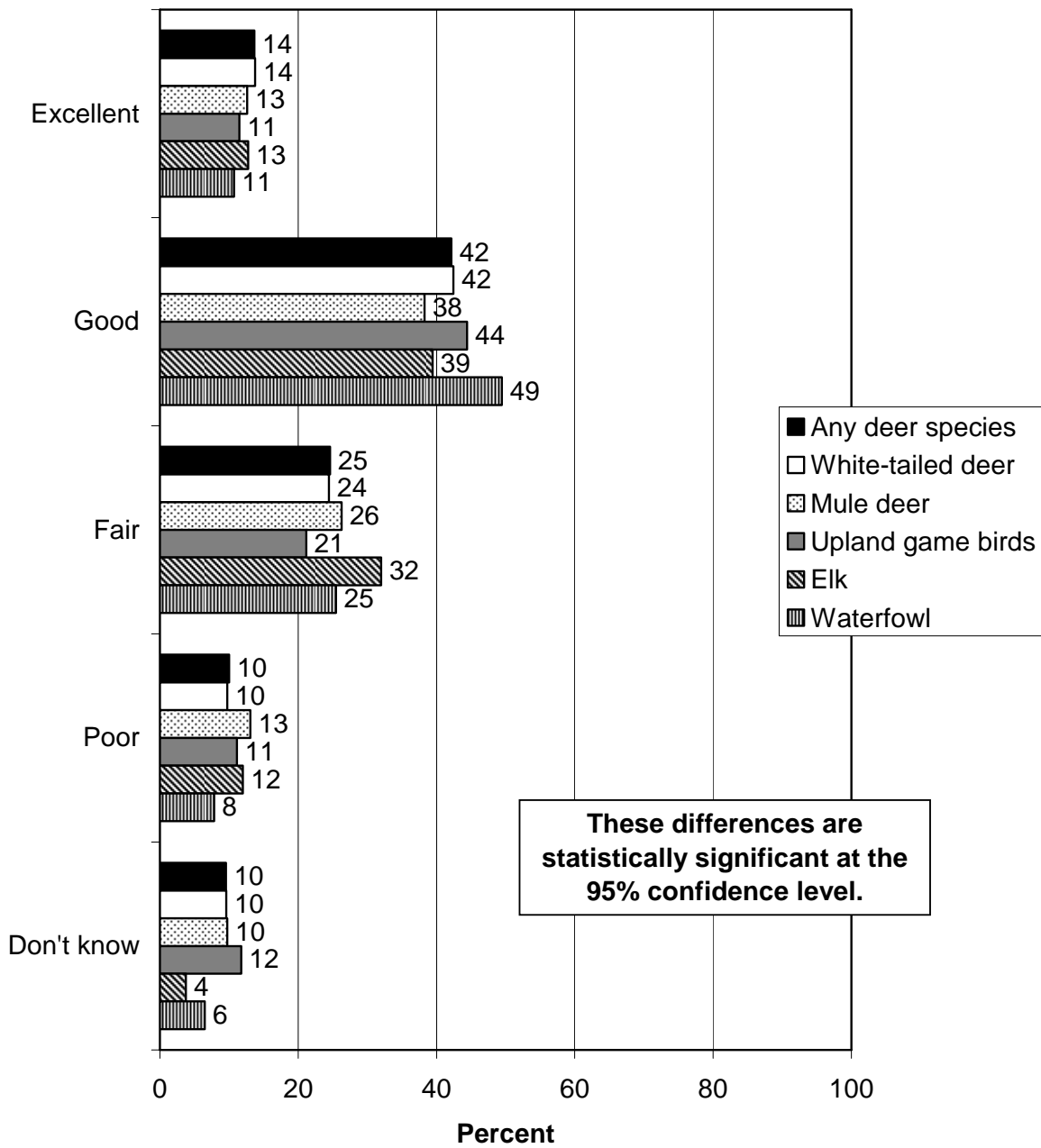
**Q55. Overall, how would you rate access to hunting lands in your state for hunting (species)?**



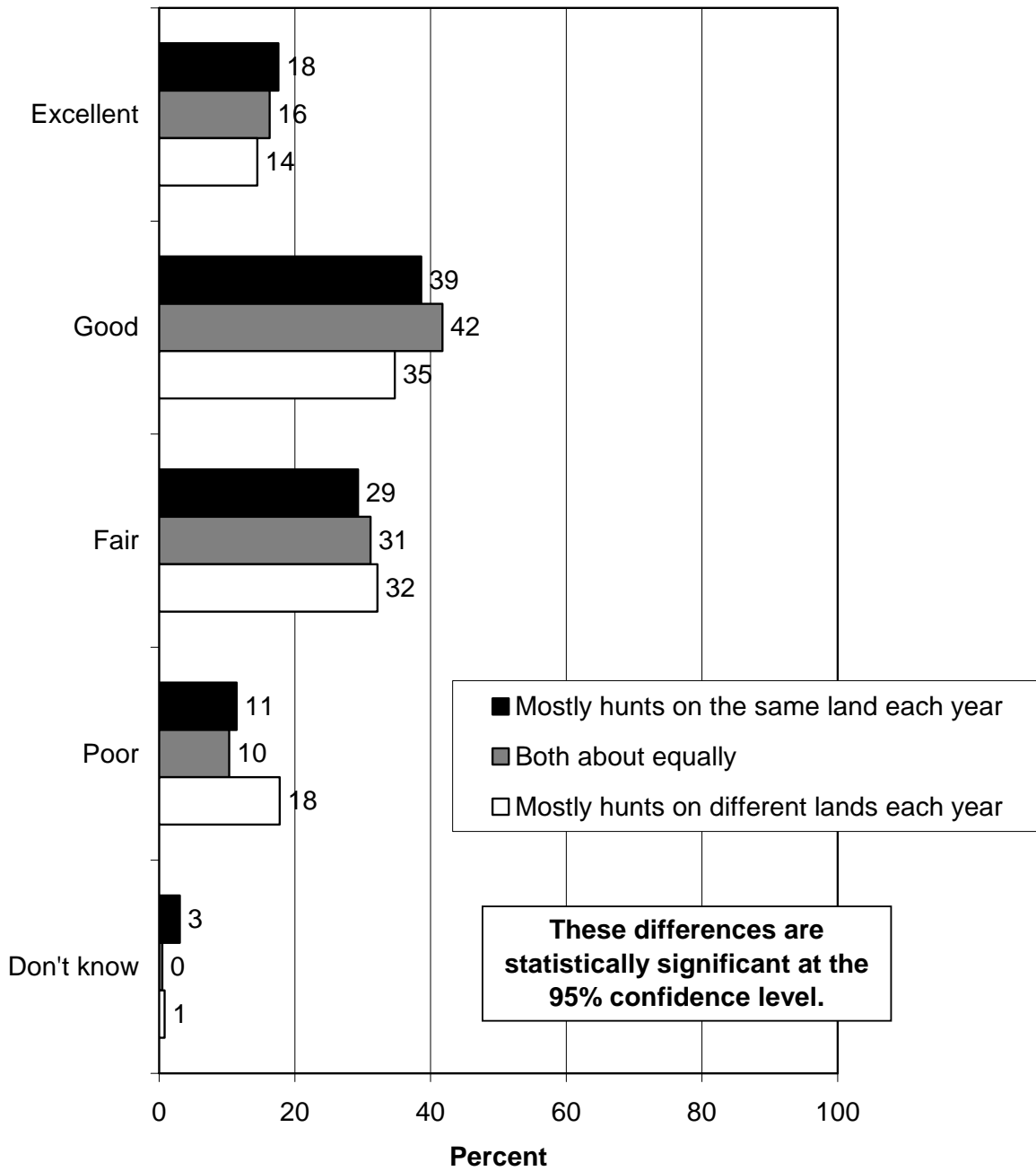
**Q55. Overall, how would you rate access to hunting lands in your state for hunting (species)?**



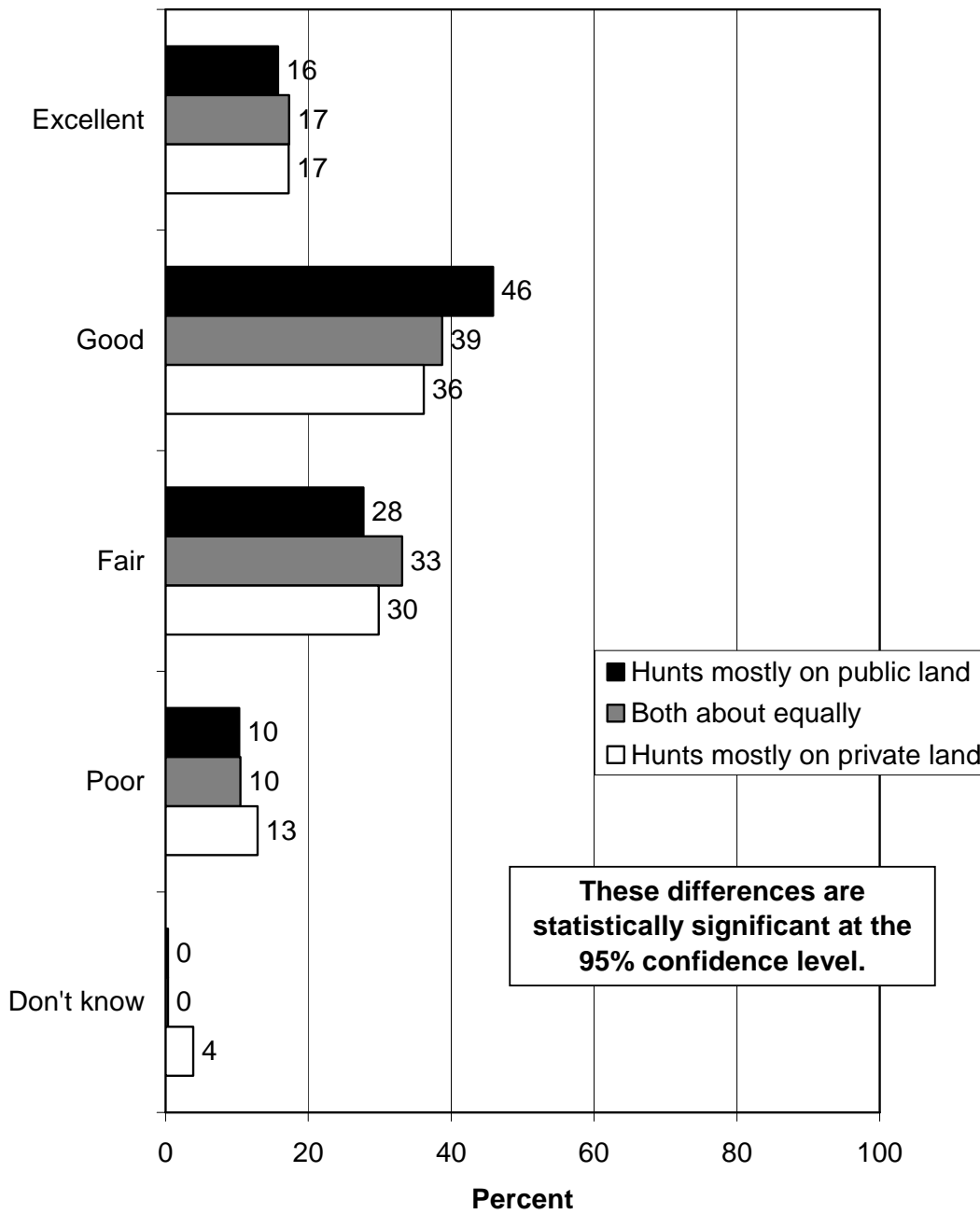
**Q56. How would you rate your state agency's management of access to hunting lands in your state for hunting (species)?**



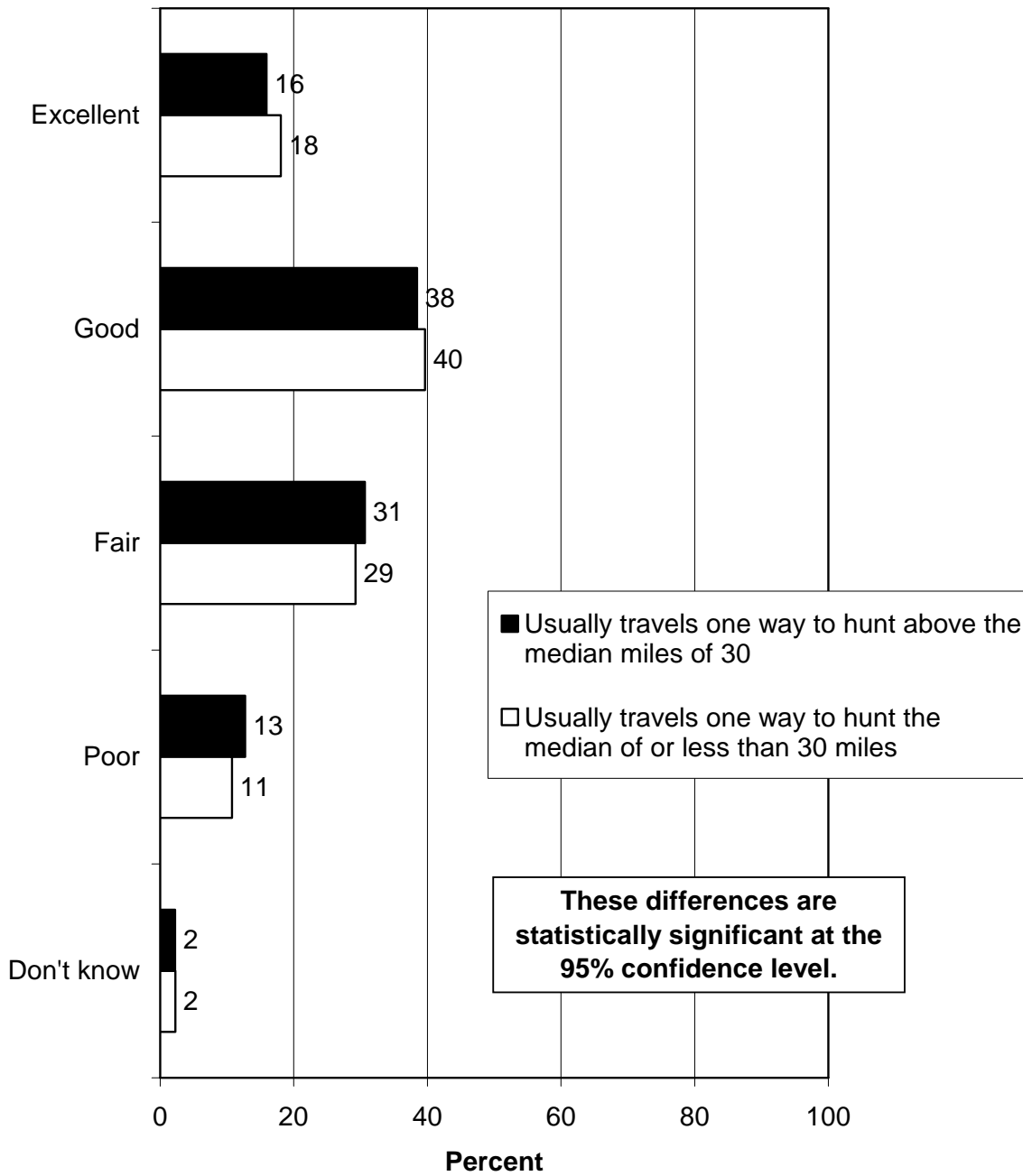
**Q55. Overall, how would you rate access to hunting lands in your state for hunting (species)?**



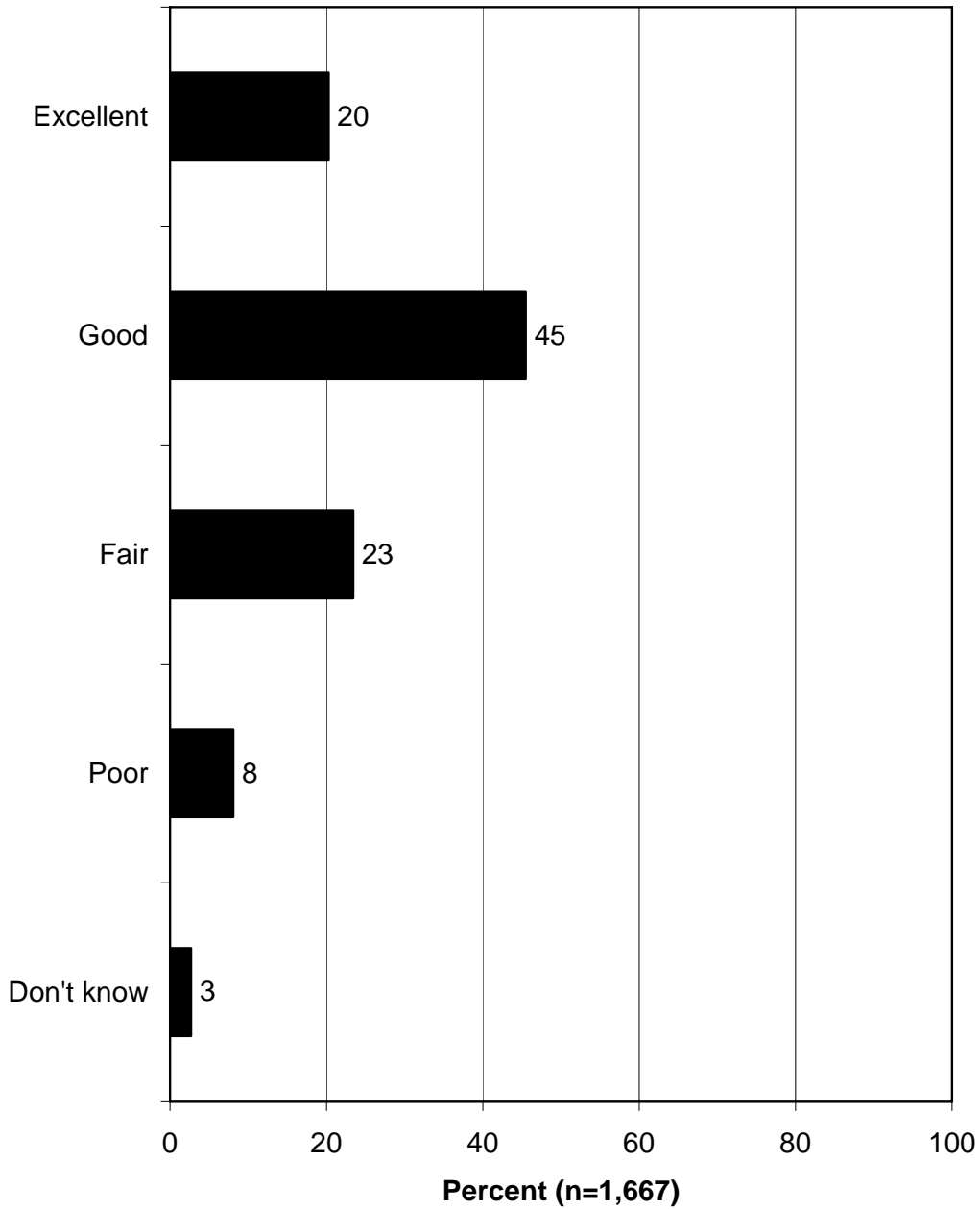
**Q55. Overall, how would you rate access to hunting lands in your state for hunting (species)?**



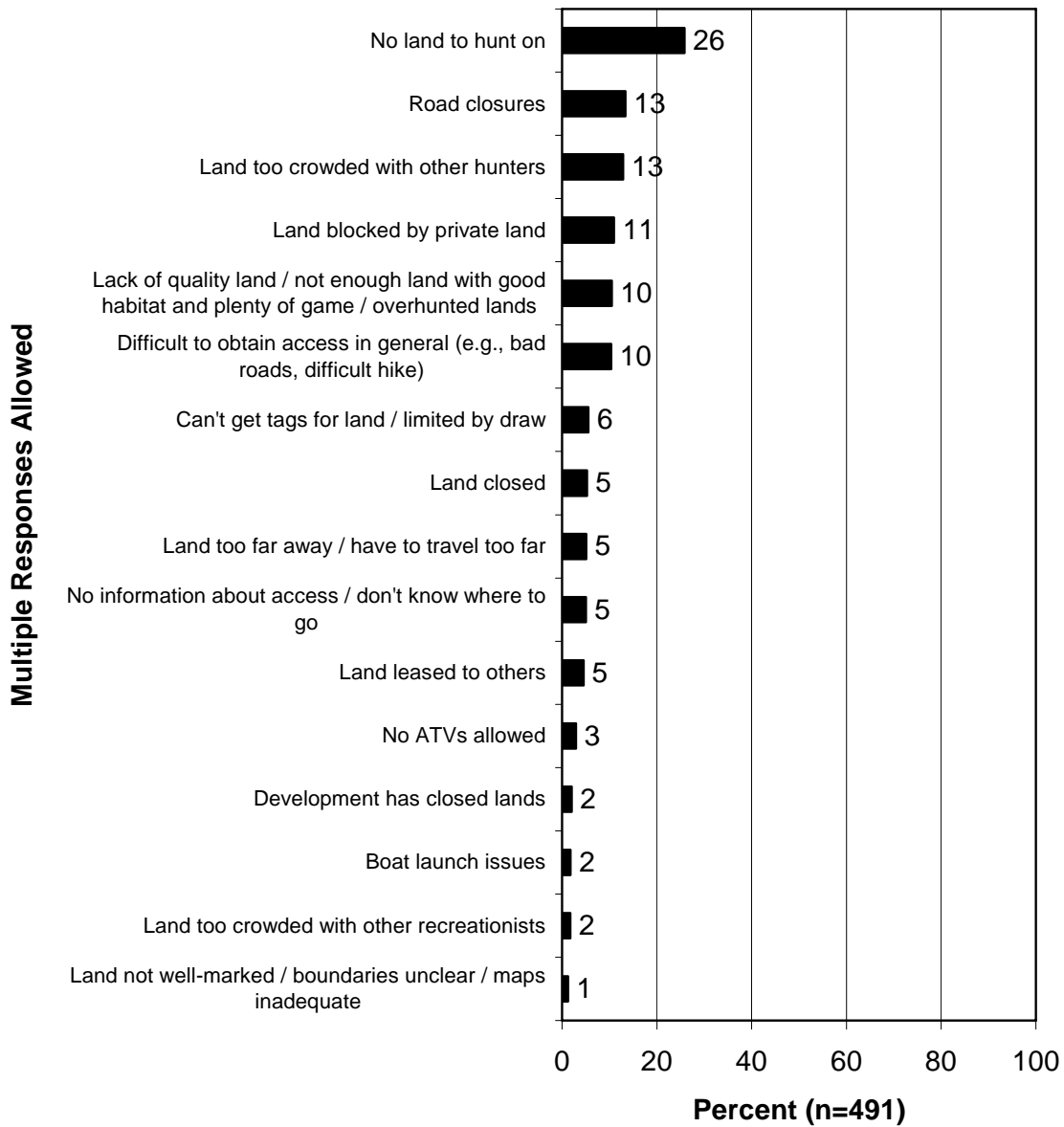
**Q55. Overall, how would you rate access to hunting lands in your state for hunting (species)?**



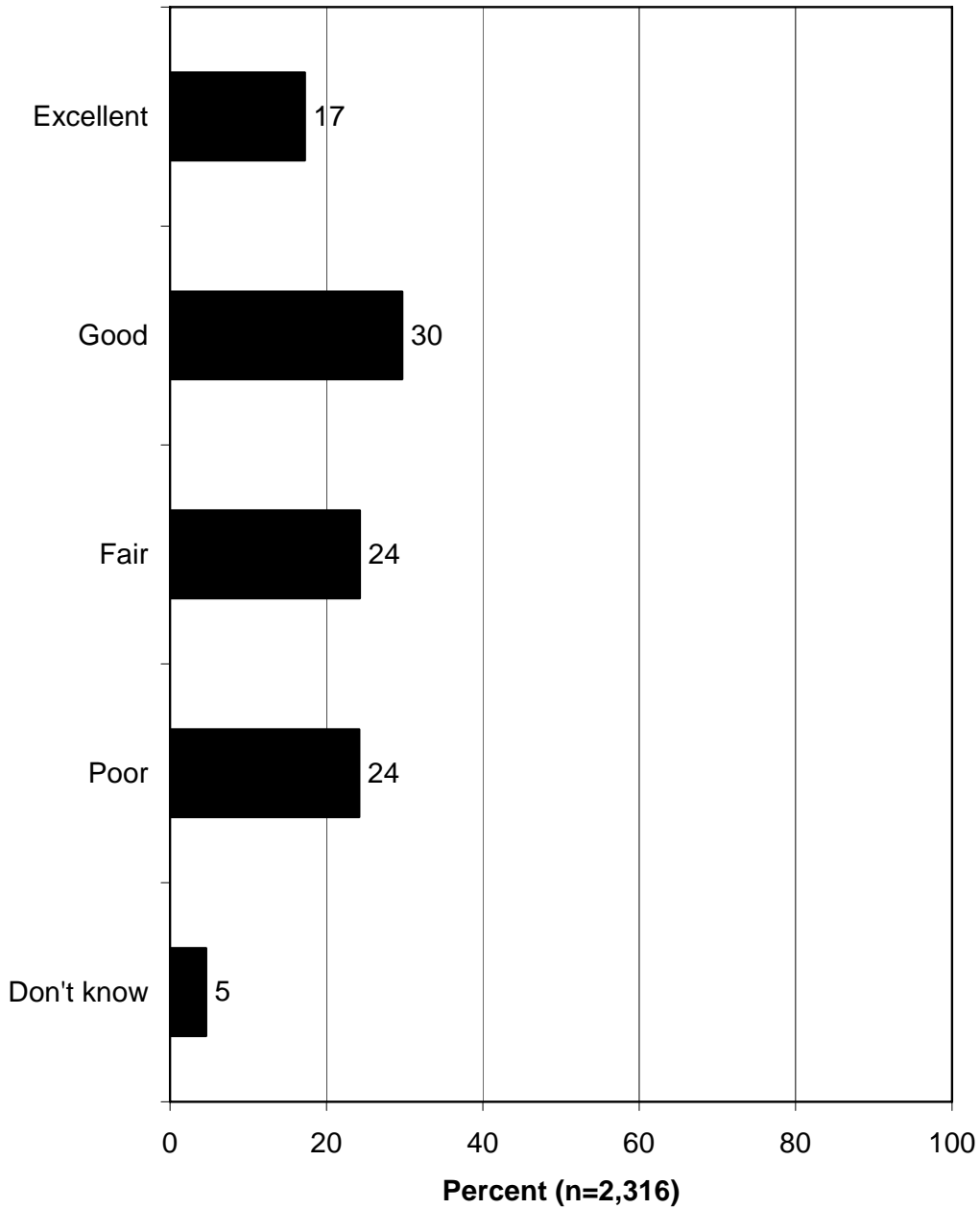
**Q63. How would you rate access to public lands for hunting (species) in your state? (Asked of those who hunted their primary species on public lands at least half the time.)**



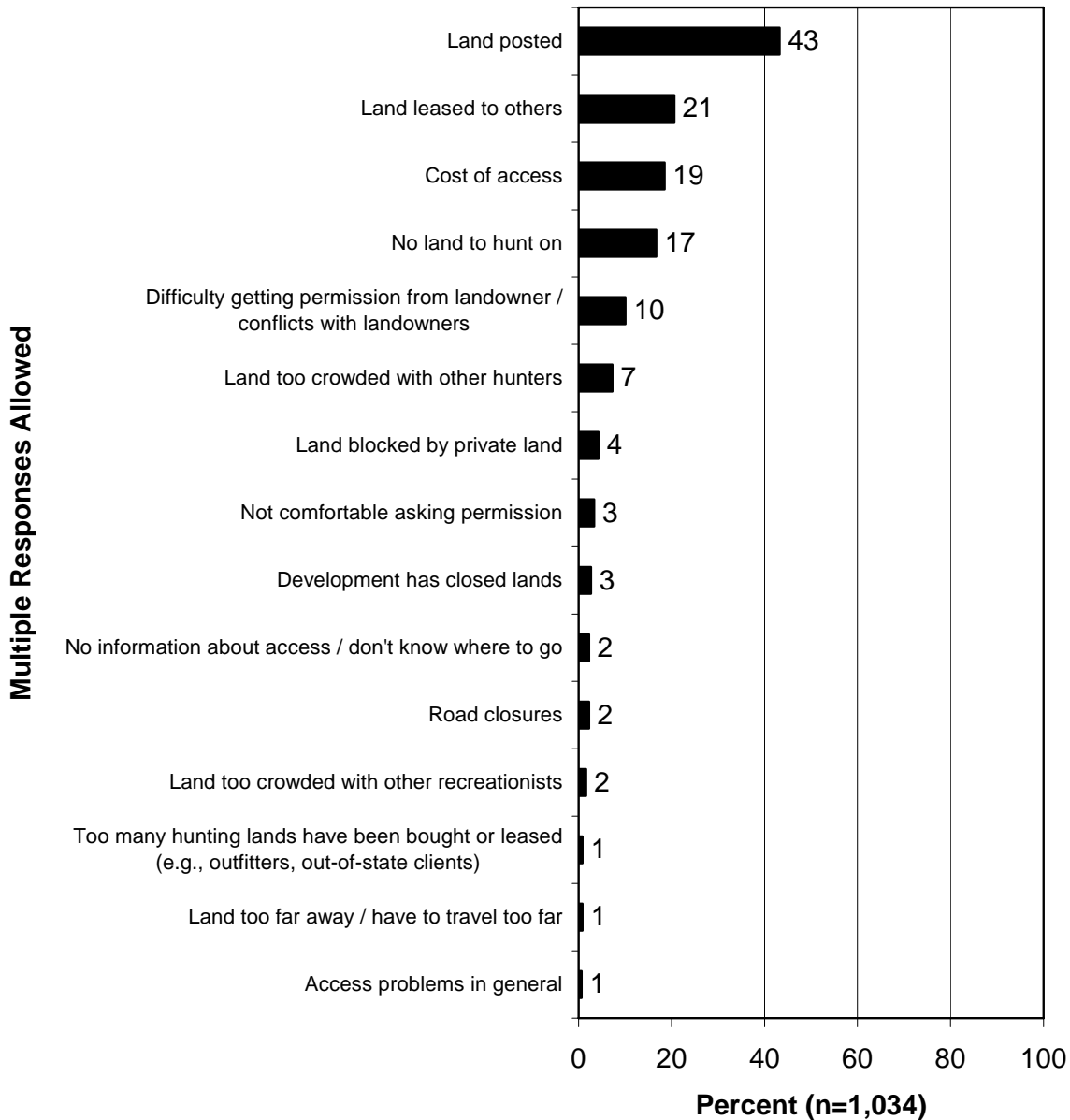
**Q66. What are the specific reasons you rate access to public land to hunt on in your state as (fair/poor)? (Asked of those who hunted their primary species on public lands at least half the time and rated the access to public land as fair or poor.)**



**Q69. How would you rate access to private lands for hunting (species) in your state? (Asked of those who hunted their primary species on private lands at least half the time.)**



**Q72. What are the specific reasons you rate access to private land to hunt on in your state as (fair or poor)? (Asked of those who hunted their primary species on private lands at least half the time and rated the access to private land as fair or poor.)**



## FACTORS THAT MAY POSITIVELY AFFECT ACCESS

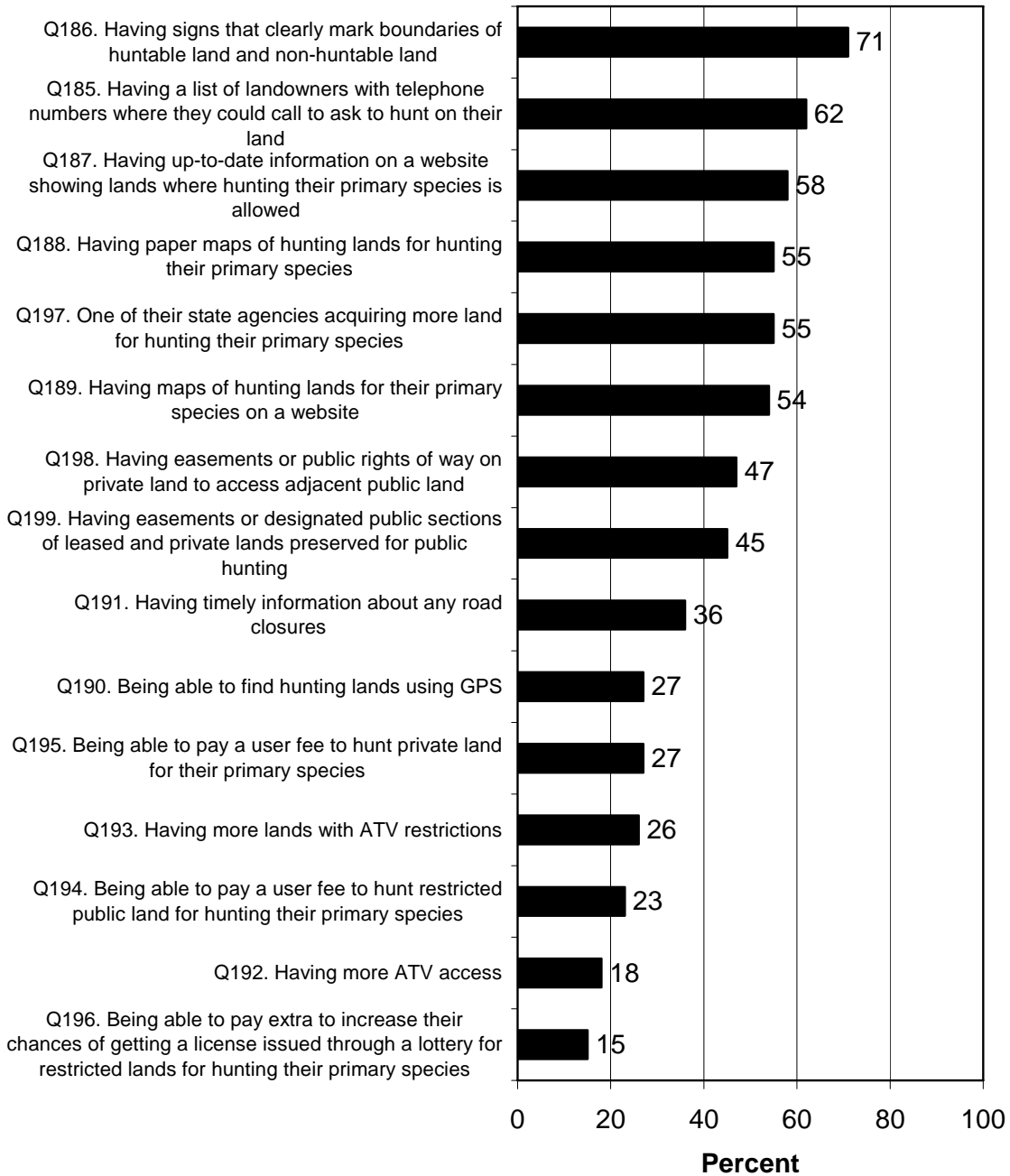
- The survey asked 15 questions about things that would make hunting access easier (shown in Text Box 5 below). For each item, the survey asked hunters if it would be *very* effective, *somewhat* effective, or *not at all* effective at making it easier to access land on which to hunt. The starting point in going through the list in each interview was randomized. The results of the series of questions were then ranked.
  - In looking at the ranking by the percentage saying that the items would be *very* effective at making access easier, 6 of the 15 items stand out—each with a majority saying it would be *very* effective: having signs that clearly mark boundaries of huntable land (71%), having a list of landowners with telephone numbers where the respondent could call to ask to hunt on their land (62%), having up-to-date information on a website showing lands where hunting is allowed (58%), having paper maps of hunting lands for their primary species (55%), having their state agency acquire more land for hunting (55%), and having maps of hunting lands for their primary species on a website (54%).
  - Other graphs in this series are shown consisting of the ranking by the percentage saying the item would be *very* or *somewhat* effective as well as not at all effective at making access easier.

### TEXT BOX 5

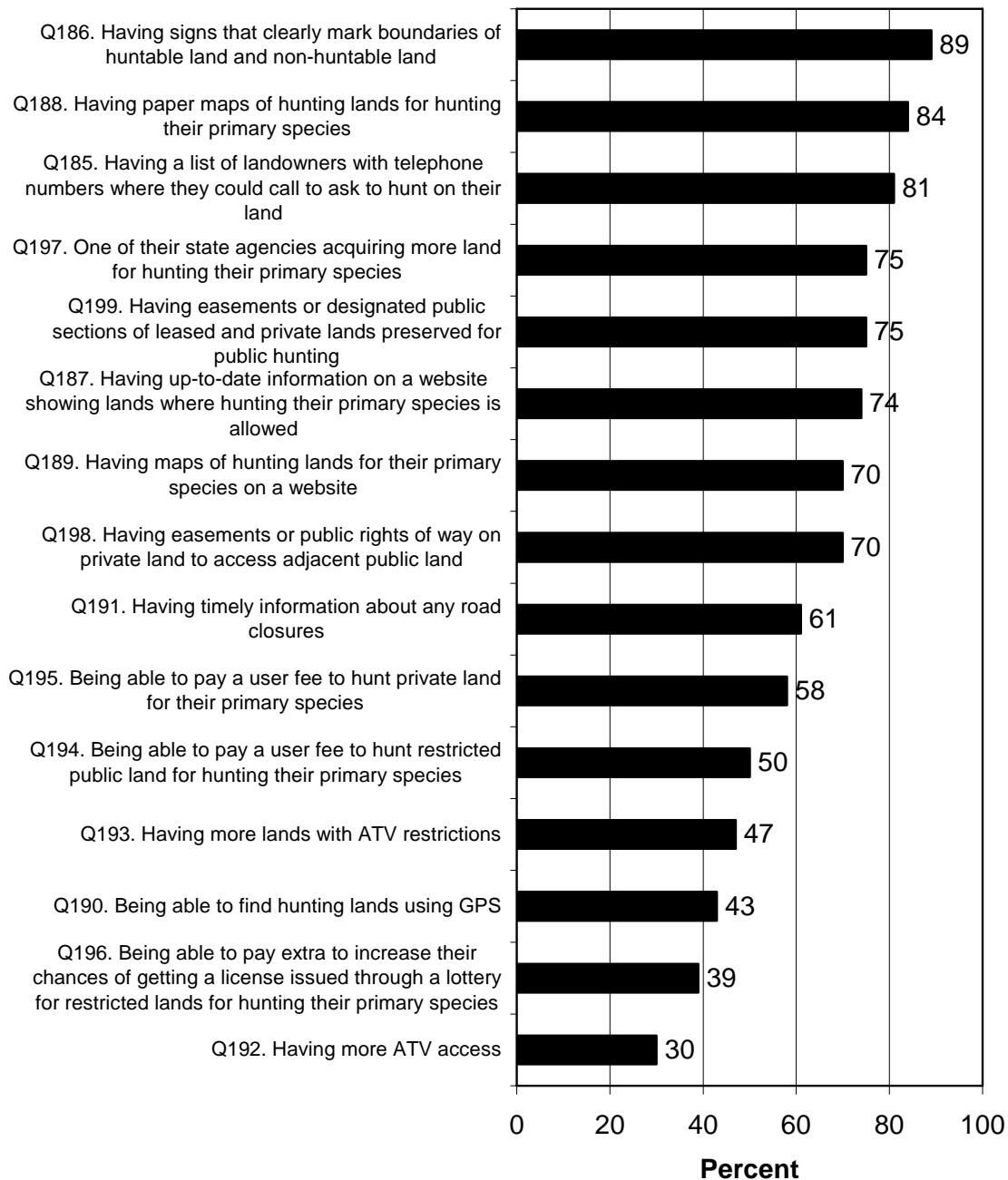
#### Things that might make hunting access easier that were asked about in the survey:

- Having a list of landowners with telephone numbers where the respondent could call to ask to hunt on their land
- Having signs that clearly mark boundaries of huntable land
- Having up-to-date information on a website showing lands where hunting is allowed
- Having paper maps of hunting lands
- Having maps of hunting lands on a website
- Being able to find hunting lands using GPS
- Having timely information about any road closures
- Having more ATV access
- Having more lands with ATV restrictions
- Being able to pay a user fee to hunt restricted public land
- Being able to pay a user fee to hunt private land
- Being able to pay extra to increase the chances of getting a license issued through a lottery
- A state agency acquiring more land for hunting
- Having easements or public “rights-of-way” on private land to access adjacent public land
- Having easements or designated public sections of leased and private lands preserved for public hunting

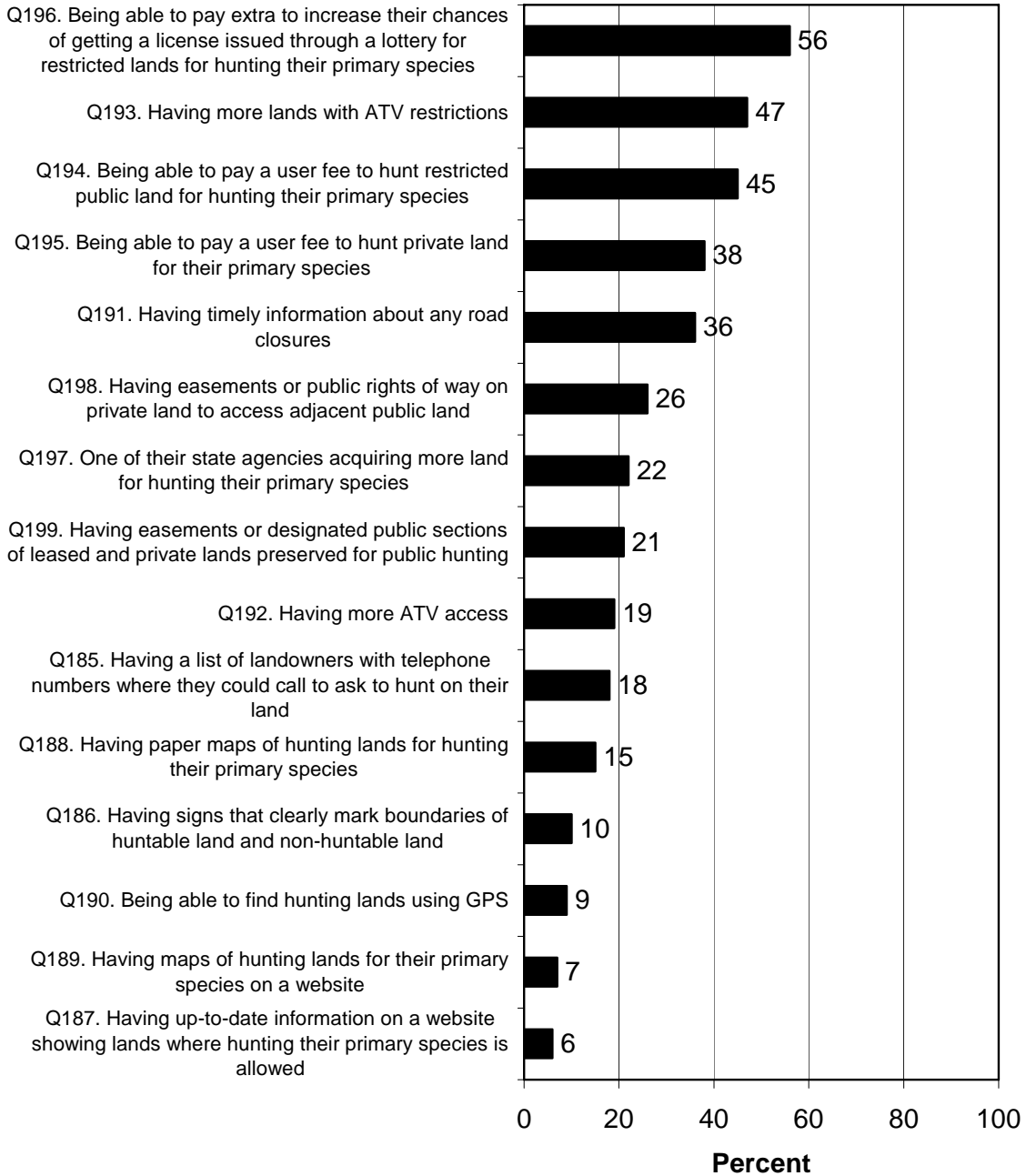
**Percent who indicated that the following would be very effective at making it easier for them to access land to hunt (species), including lands they don't currently hunt.**



**Percent who indicated that the following would be very or somewhat effective at making it easier for them to access land to hunt (species), including lands they don't currently hunt.**



**Percent who indicated that the following would not be effective at all at making it easier for them to access land to hunt (species), including lands they don't currently hunt.**



## POTENTIAL REASONS THAT LANDOWNERS MAY CLOSE THEIR LAND TO HUNTING

- The survey asked eight questions about possible reasons that landowners may close their land to public hunting (shown in Text Box 6 below). For each possible reason, the survey asked hunters if they think it is a *very important* reason, a *somewhat important* reason, or a *not at all* important reason that landowners close their land to the public for hunting. The starting point in going through the list in each interview was randomized. The results of the series of questions were then ranked.
  - Five items stand out above the rest in the ranking by the percentage saying the reasons are *very important*, the top three of which relate to misuse of the land: irresponsible shooting, alcohol use, or similar behavior by hunters (72% say this is a *very important* reason that landowners close their land), property damage caused by hunters (excluding litter) (67%), litter (64%), the landowner wanting to allow only personal/family use of the land (64%), and liability concerns (58%).
  - Other graphs in this series are shown consisting of the ranking by the percentage saying the reasons are very or somewhat important and the ranking by the percentage saying the reasons are not at all important.

### TEXT BOX 6

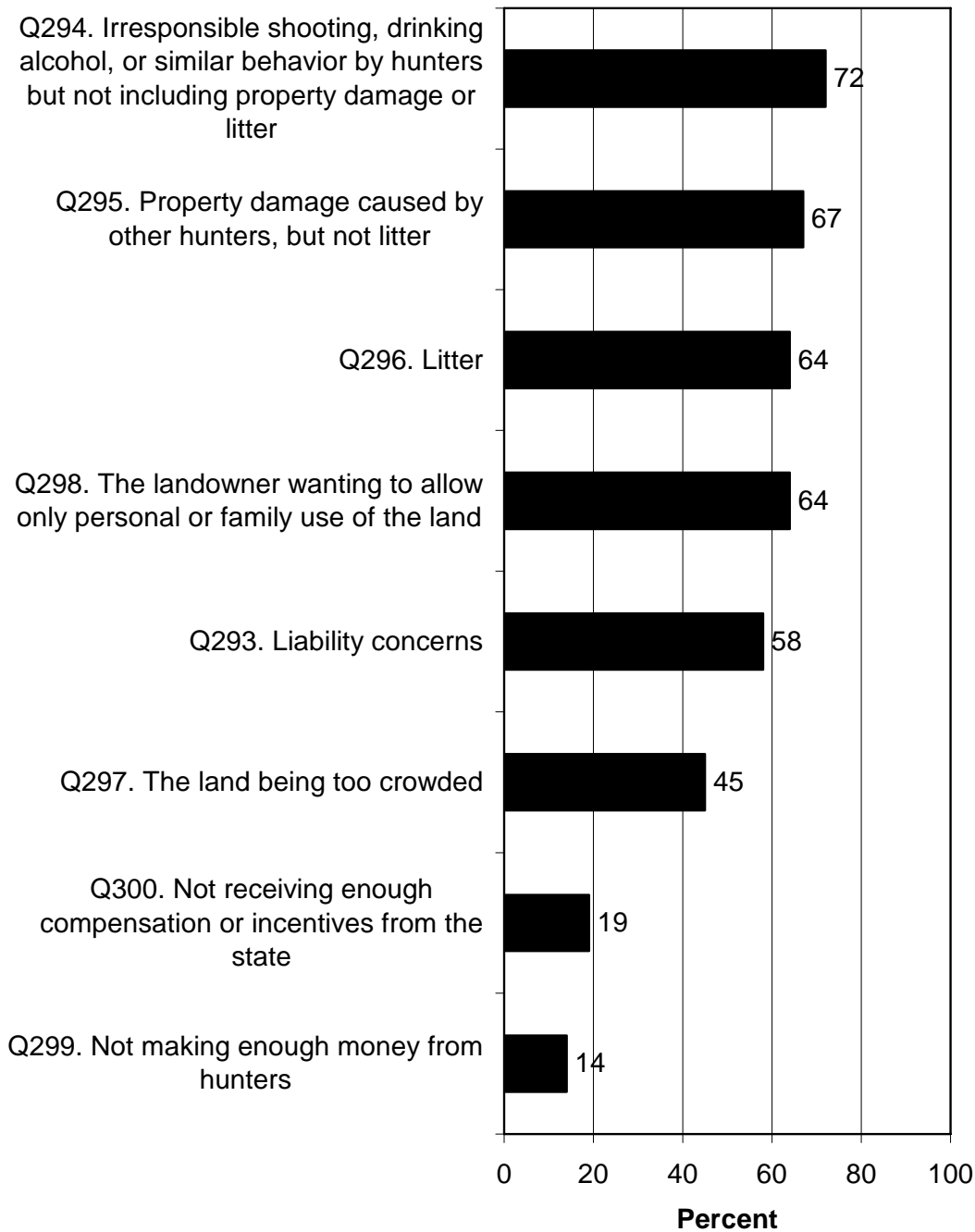
**Possible reasons that landowners may close their land to public hunting that were asked about in the survey:**

- Liability concerns
- Irresponsible shooting, drinking alcohol, or similar behavior by hunters (excluding property damage or litter)
- Property damage caused by other hunters (excluding litter)
- Litter
- Land being too crowded
- The landowner wanting to allow only personal or family use of the land
- The landowner not making enough money from hunters
- The landowner not receiving enough compensation or incentives from the state

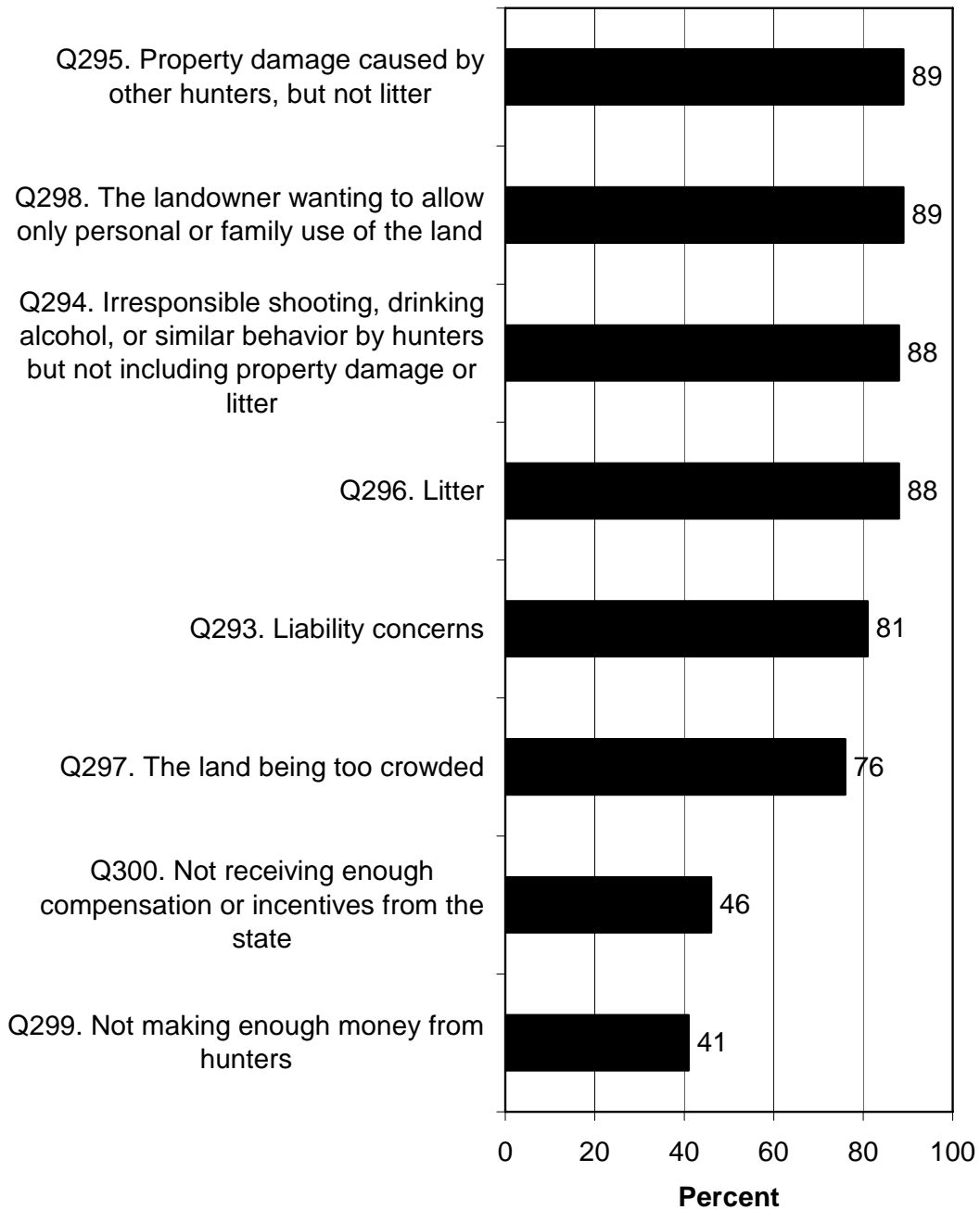
- The survey asked those hunters who gave a low rating to hunting access on private land because of a lack of land or the posting of land to indicate why they think that landowners are posting their land. Four reasons rank above the rest: liability concerns, to allow only personal or family use of the land, the poor behavior of hunters (excluding property damage), and/or property damage caused by hunters.

- The overwhelming majority of hunters (80%) think that a program that provides landowners with compensation or incentives for opening their lands to the public for hunting would be *very* or *somewhat* effective at improving hunting access in their state.
  
- The overwhelming majority of hunters (90%) are *not* aware of any laws in their state that reduce the liability of landowners who open their lands to the public for hunting; meanwhile, 9% are aware of such laws.
  - In a related question, the overwhelming majority of hunters (82%) support laws to reduce landowner liability for landowners who open their lands to the public for hunting; only 7% oppose (the remainder give neutral answers).
  - Another related question found that an overwhelming majority of hunters (80%) think that legislation reducing landowner liability would be *very* or *somewhat* effective at improving hunter access to private lands in their state; only 12% think it would be *not at all* effective.
  - Finally, the large majority of hunters (68%) agree that legislation reducing landowner liability would significantly increase the number of landowners who would open their lands to the public for hunting.

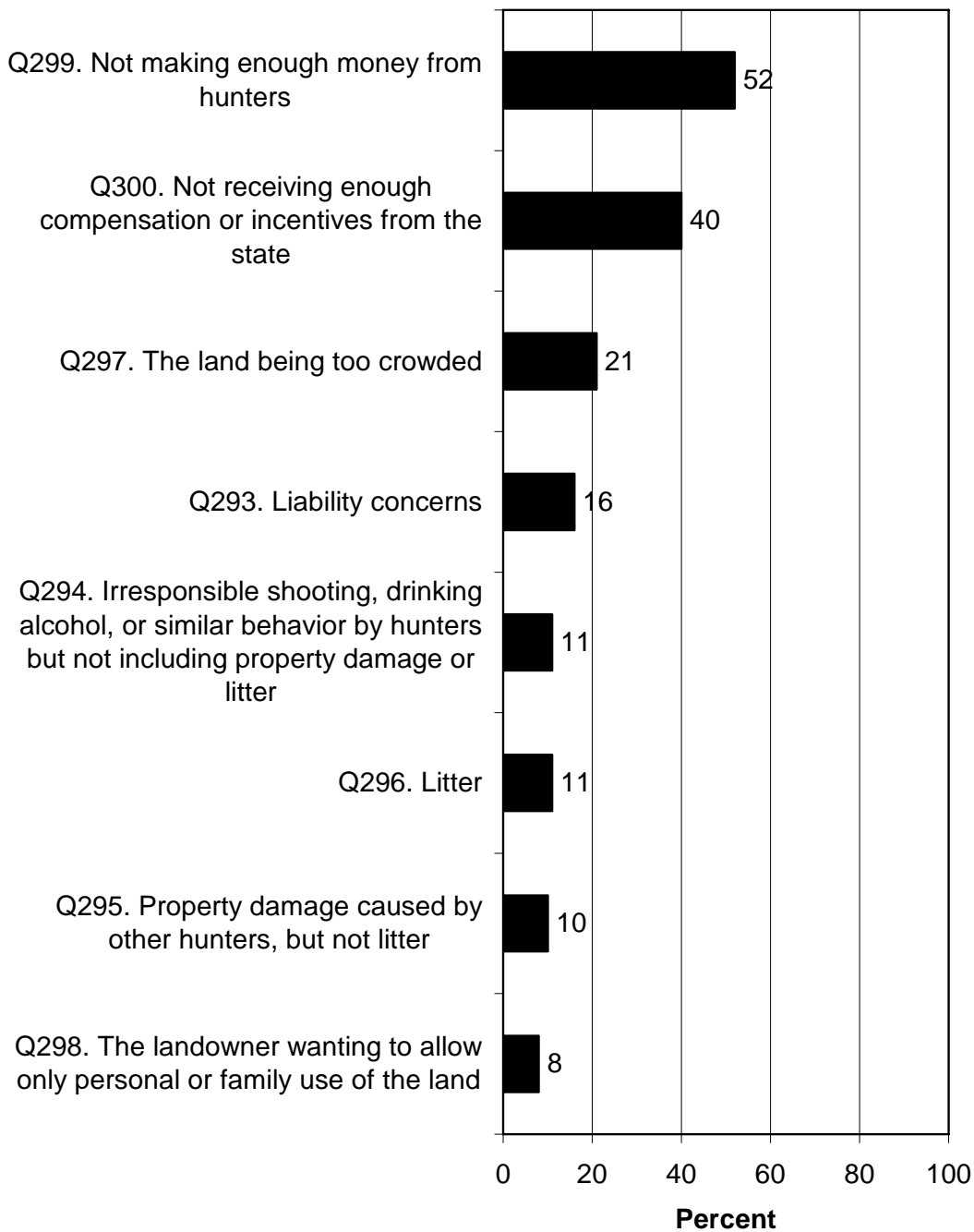
**Percent who think the following reasons are very important to landowners in (state) who close their lands to the public for hunting.**



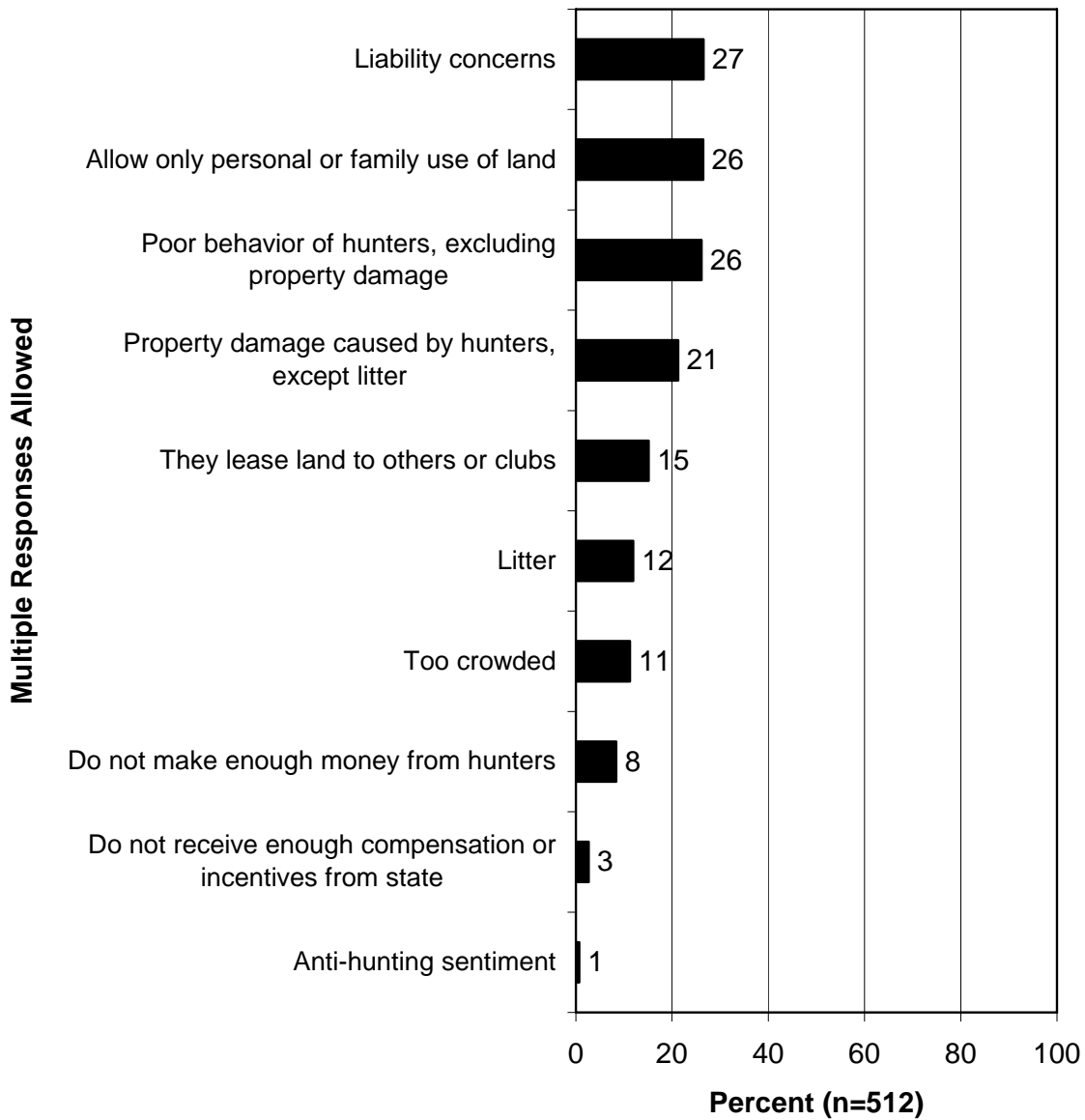
**Percent who think the following reasons are very or somewhat important to landowners in (state) who close their lands to the public for hunting.**



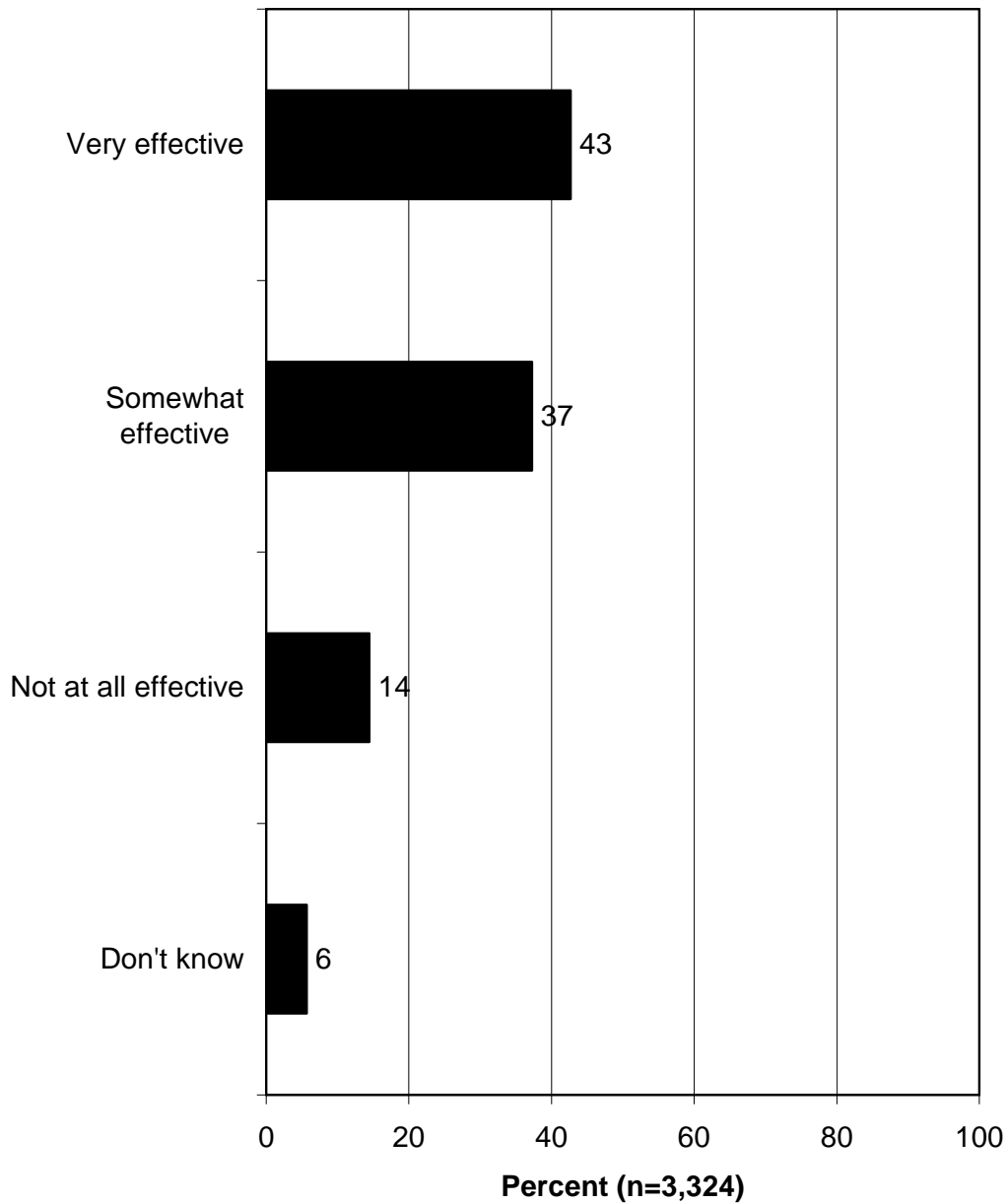
**Percent who think the following reasons are not important at all to landowners in (state) who close their lands to the public for hunting.**



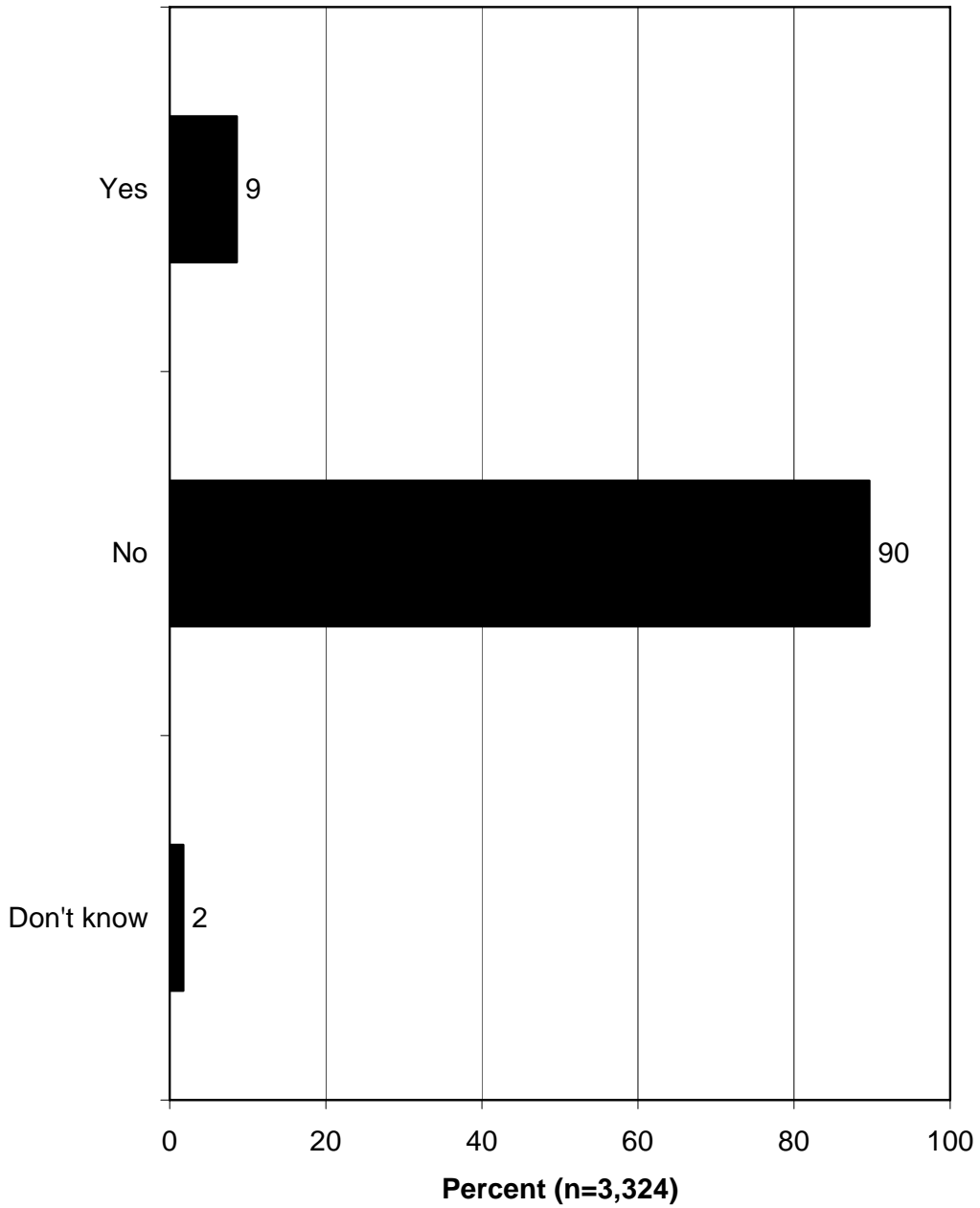
**Q76. You gave a low rating to hunting access on private land because of land being posted or because of a lack of land. Why do you think landowners are posting their land? (Asked of those who hunted their primary species on private lands at least half the**



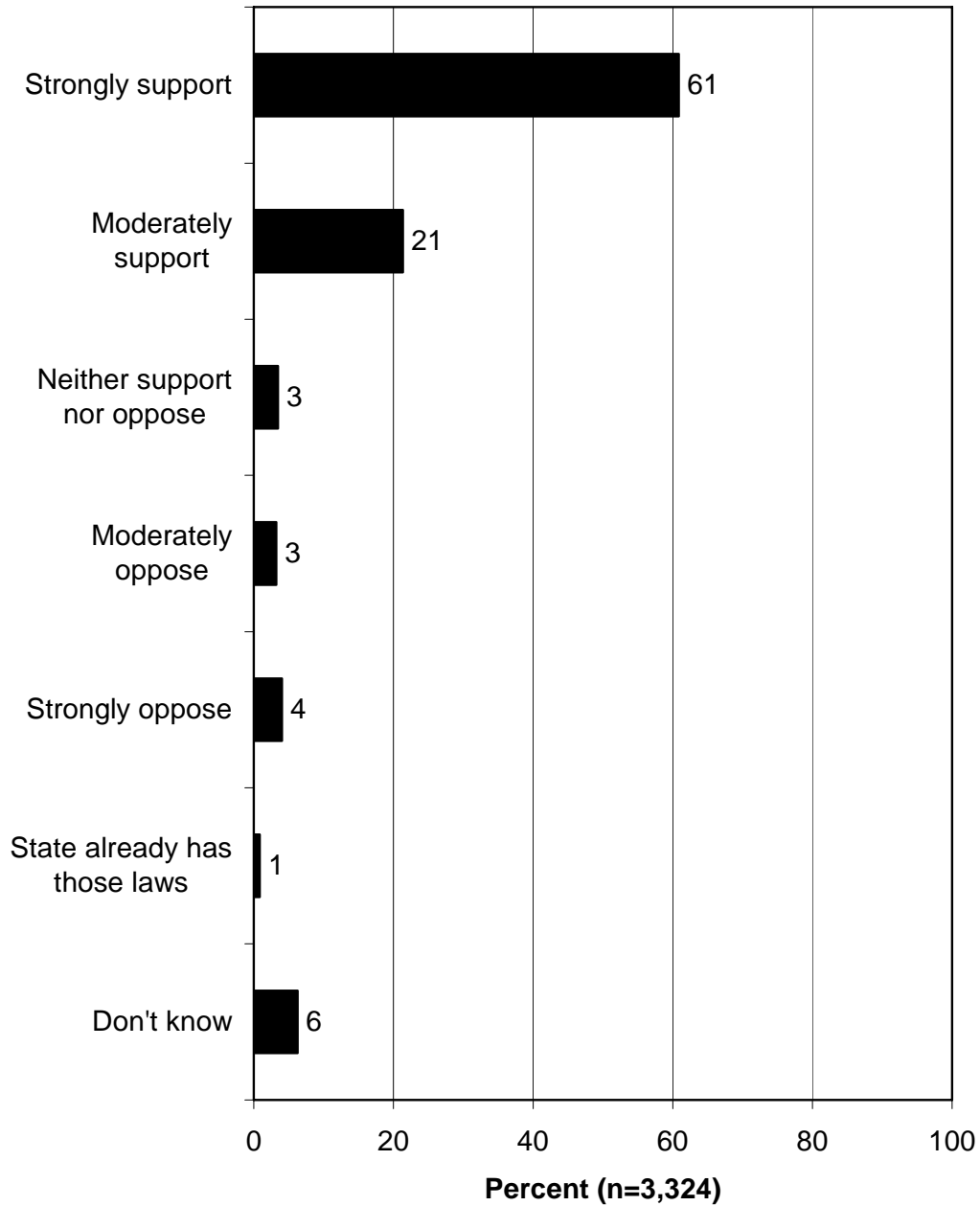
**Q217. In your opinion, how effective do you think a program providing landowners compensation or incentives for opening their lands to the public for hunting would be at improving hunting access to private lands in your state?**



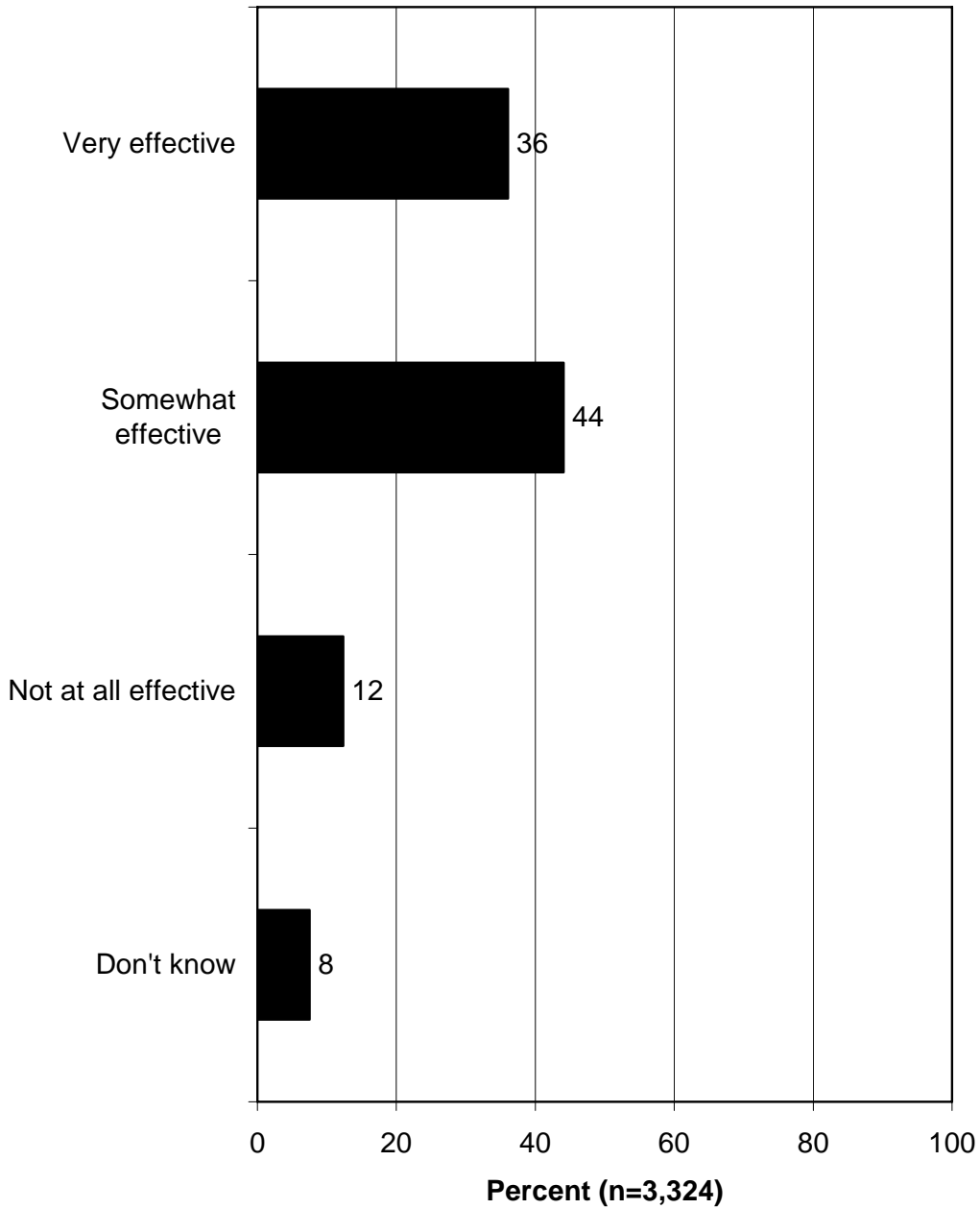
**Q218. Are you aware of any laws in your state that reduce landowner liability for landowners who open their lands to the public for hunting?**



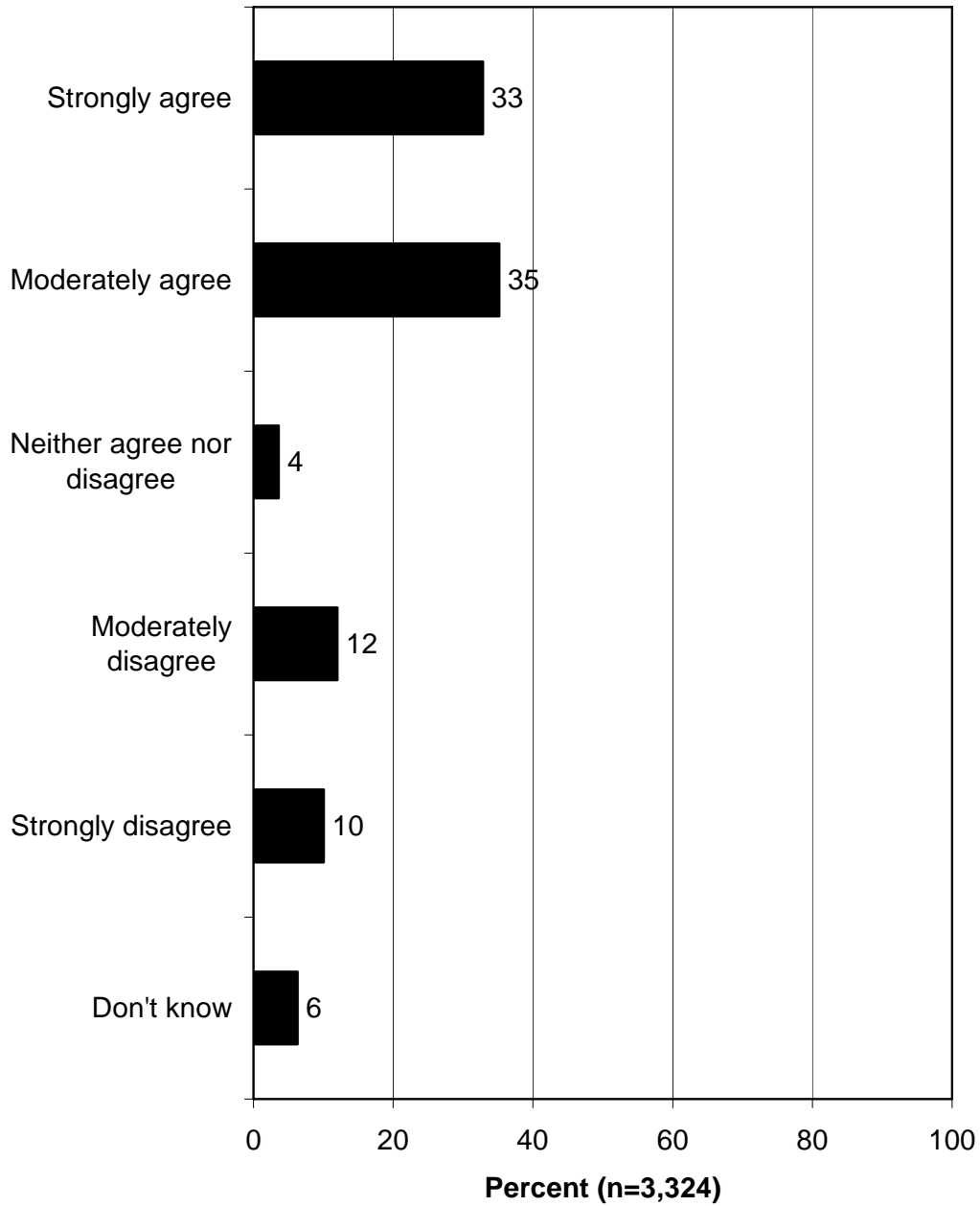
**Q219. Do you support or oppose your state laws to reduce landowner liability for landowners who open their lands to the public for hunting?**



**Q220. In your opinion, how effective do you think legislation reducing landowner liability is or would be at improving hunting access to private lands in your state?**



**Q224. Do you agree or disagree that legislation reducing landowner liability would significantly increase the number of landowners who open their lands to the public for hunting?**



## PARTICIPATION IN AND USE OF VARIOUS PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES

- The survey asked about six national programs/resources nationwide that pertain to hunting access. The programs/resources about which the survey asked are shown in Text Box 7 below. In addition, each of the 16 oversampled states had additional programs about which the survey asked. Specific state programs were asked about only in the applicable state.
- A basic line of questioning asked hunters about their awareness of the national programs/resources, and two of the six national programs/resources had awareness levels near the halfway mark: the Conservation Reserve Program (45% are *very* or *somewhat* aware of it) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas or WPAs (45%). The other programs/resources have awareness levels of 10% or lower.
  - A tabulation shows the awareness levels of the individual state programs among the oversampled states; the awareness levels varied greatly from program to program among the states. The tabulation includes the six national programs in each state's listing as well to allow comparisons.
  - Another series of questions asked hunters about their participation in or use of the six access programs/resources. Those programs/resources with the highest rates of use/participation are the Conservation Reserve Program (18%) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas or WPAs (13%). The tabulation of individual state programs includes the percent who used or participated in each program as well.

### **TEXT BOX 7**

#### **Hunting access programs that were asked about in the survey:**

The Open Fields program  
The Conservation Reserve Program  
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas or WPAs  
The wheretohunt.org website  
The huntinfo.com website  
The huntandshoot.org website

| <b>PROGRAMS/RESOURCES USED IN THE OVERSAMPLED STATES (including the six national programs)</b> | <b>Very Aware</b> | <b>Very or Somewhat Aware</b> | <b>Have Used</b> |
|--|-------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>ALABAMA</b>   |                   |                               |                  |
| The Outdoor Alabama Interactive Map on the ADCNR website                                       | 20                | 35                            | 23               |
| The Conservation Reserve Program   | 22                | 47                            | 20               |
| Alabama's Youth Dove Hunts   | 25                | 59                            | 16               |
| The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas                                | 17                | 46                            | 14               |
| The Forever Wild Land Trust Program  | 21                | 54                            | 12               |
| The Hunt Outdoor Alabama Program   | 8                 | 28                            | 5                |
| Alabama's physically disabled hunting locations  | 10                | 37                            | 4                |
| The huntinfo website   | 3                 | 8                             | 4                |
| The wheretohunt website  | 3                 | 10                            | 3                |
| The huntandshoot website   | 1                 | 4                             | 2                |
| The Open Fields program  | 2                 | 6                             | 1                |
| <b>ARIZONA</b>   |                   |                               |                  |
| Arizona's Adopt-A-Ranch Program  | 9                 | 32                            | 8                |
| The wheretohunt website  | 4                 | 14                            | 7                |
| The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas                                | 10                | 50                            | 6                |
| The huntinfo website   | 2                 | 12                            | 6                |
| The Conservation Reserve Program   | 9                 | 40                            | 5                |
| Arizona's Heritage Access Program  | 6                 | 39                            | 5                |
| The huntandshoot website   | 1                 | 7                             | 2                |
| The Open Fields program  | 2                 | 11                            | 1                |
| <b>CALIFORNIA</b>  |                   |                               |                  |
| The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas                                | 15                | 40                            | 8                |
| The Conservation Reserve Program   | 11                | 36                            | 5                |
| California's Private Lands Management Program  | 8                 | 31                            | 5                |
| California's Game Bird Heritage Special Hunts Program  | 7                 | 24                            | 4                |
| California's Game Bird Heritage Special Hunts Program Apprentice Hunts                         | 7                 | 19                            | 3                |
| The wheretohunt website  | 2                 | 10                            | 3                |
| The huntinfo website   | 1                 | 9                             | 3                |
| California's Delta Island Hunting Program  | 4                 | 15                            | 2                |
| The Open Fields program  | 1                 | 8                             | 2                |
| California's SHARE Program   | 1                 | 8                             | 1                |
| The huntandshoot website   | 1                 | 4                             | 1                |

| <b>PROGRAMS/RESOURCES USED IN THE OVERSAMPLED STATES (including the six national programs)</b> | <b>Very Aware</b> | <b>Very or Somewhat Aware</b> | <b>Have Used</b> |
|--|-------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>HAWAII</b>  |                   |                               |                  |
| Public hunting area maps in the Game Mammal or Game Bird Hunting Guide                         | 25                | 57                            | 38               |
| Hawaii's lease agreements to use agricultural lands for public hunting areas                   | 6                 | 16                            | 7                |
| Hawaii's Statewide GIS Map Program   | 5                 | 16                            | 6                |
| The Conservation Reserve Program   | 4                 | 26                            | 5                |
| The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas                                | 6                 | 25                            | 5                |
| The wheretohunt website  | 1                 | 7                             | 1                |
| The Open Fields program  | 2                 | 5                             | 1                |
| The huntinfo website   | 0                 | 4                             | 1                |
| The huntandshoot website   | 1                 | 4                             | 1                |
| <b>IDAHO</b>   |                   |                               |                  |
| Idaho's Access Yes! program  | 32                | 64                            | 28               |
| The Conservation Reserve Program   | 33                | 56                            | 24               |
| The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas                                | 21                | 46                            | 18               |
| Idaho's Accessible Idaho program   | 6                 | 22                            | 4                |
| The huntinfo website   | 3                 | 9                             | 4                |
| The wheretohunt website  | 3                 | 9                             | 3                |
| The Open Fields program  | 2                 | 6                             | 1                |
| The huntandshoot website   | 1                 | 3                             | 1                |
| <b>KANSAS</b>  |                   |                               |                  |
| The Kansas Walk-In Hunting Access program  | 56                | 84                            | 58               |
| The Conservation Reserve Program   | 45                | 72                            | 43               |
| Controlled Shooting Areas, or CSAs   | 26                | 58                            | 15               |
| The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas                                | 18                | 52                            | 12               |
| The Kansas Special Hunts on Public Lands program   | 14                | 45                            | 8                |
| The wheretohunt website  | 5                 | 17                            | 6                |
| The huntinfo website   | 3                 | 9                             | 3                |
| The Open Fields program  | 3                 | 11                            | 2                |
| The huntandshoot website   | 1                 | 6                             | 2                |
| <b>MICHIGAN</b>  |                   |                               |                  |
| The Conservation Reserve Program   | 23                | 58                            | 19               |
| Michigan's Commercial Forest Lands   | 14                | 41                            | 17               |
| The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas                                | 18                | 49                            | 13               |
| Michigan's Hunting Access Program  | 9                 | 40                            | 11               |
| The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, or CREP  | 6                 | 22                            | 4                |
| The Open Fields program  | 3                 | 13                            | 3                |
| The wheretohunt website  | 3                 | 11                            | 3                |
| Michigan's efforts to provide disability access for recreation                                 | 6                 | 35                            | 2                |
| The huntinfo website   | 1                 | 6                             | 2                |
| The huntandshoot website   | 0                 | 3                             | 1                |

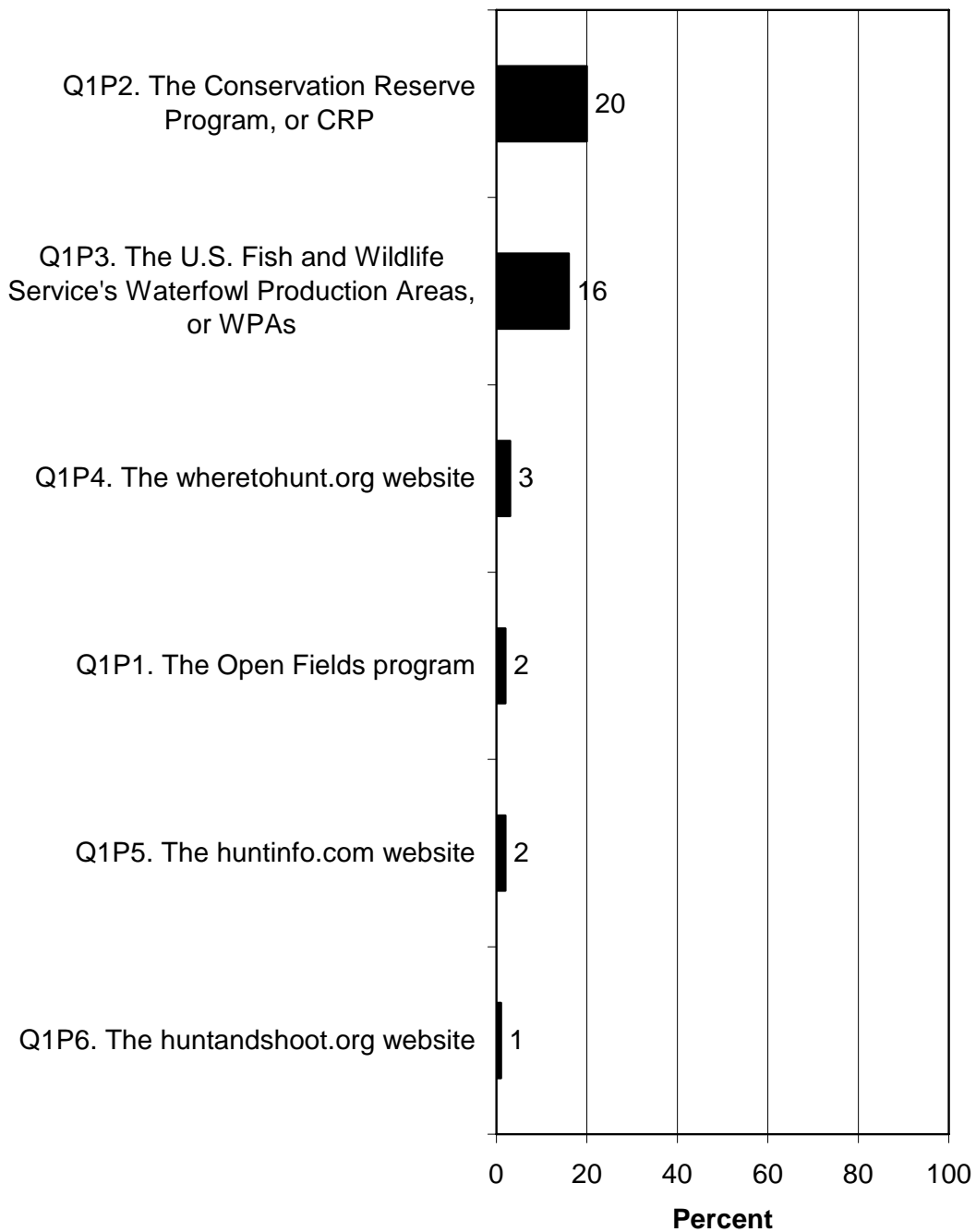
| <b>PROGRAMS/RESOURCES USED IN THE OVERSAMPLED STATES (including the six national programs)</b> | <b>Very Aware</b> | <b>Very or Somewhat Aware</b> | <b>Have Used</b> |
|--|-------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>NEBRASKA</b>  |                   |                               |                  |
| The Conservation Reserve Program   | 40                | 71                            | 39               |
| Nebraska's CRP Management Access Program, or CRP-MAP   | 25                | 56                            | 28               |
| The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas                                | 21                | 51                            | 14               |
| The Open Fields program  | 4                 | 15                            | 4                |
| The wheretohunt website  | 5                 | 14                            | 4                |
| The huntinfo website   | 2                 | 7                             | 3                |
| Nebraska's Passing Along the Heritage (PATH) Program   | 4                 | 18                            | 2                |
| The huntandshoot website   | 1                 | 4                             | 2                |
| <b>NEVADA</b>  |                   |                               |                  |
| Nevada Department of Wildlife's Hunt Information Sheets  | 32                | 56                            | 39               |
| Nevada Department of Wildlife's Interactive Map Service on the Department website              | 20                | 42                            | 27               |
| The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas                                | 12                | 45                            | 9                |
| The huntinfo website   | 4                 | 11                            | 5                |
| The Conservation Reserve Program   | 6                 | 29                            | 4                |
| The wheretohunt website  | 5                 | 13                            | 4                |
| The Open Fields program  | 1                 | 6                             | 1                |
| The huntandshoot website   | 1                 | 5                             | 1                |
| <b>OHIO</b>  |                   |                               |                  |
| The Conservation Reserve Program   | 11                | 36                            | 9                |
| The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas                                | 9                 | 37                            | 7                |
| The wheretohunt website  | 3                 | 11                            | 5                |
| Ohio's cooperative hunting program   | 4                 | 23                            | 3                |
| The Open Fields program  | 2                 | 9                             | 2                |
| The huntinfo website   | 2                 | 6                             | 2                |
| The huntandshoot website   | 1                 | 4                             | 1                |
| <b>PENNSYLVANIA</b>  |                   |                               |                  |
| Maps of hunting lands on the PA Game Commission's website                                      | 19                | 41                            | 27               |
| Pennsylvania's Deer Management Assistance Program  | 18                | 45                            | 17               |
| Pennsylvania's Cooperative Farm-Game Program   | 13                | 42                            | 12               |
| Pennsylvania's Cooperative Safety Zone Program   | 14                | 38                            | 10               |
| The Conservation Reserve Program   | 13                | 37                            | 10               |
| The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas                                | 8                 | 35                            | 8                |
| Pennsylvania's Cooperative Forest-Game Program   | 5                 | 18                            | 4                |
| The wheretohunt website  | 2                 | 9                             | 3                |
| The Open Fields program  | 2                 | 10                            | 2                |
| The huntinfo website   | 1                 | 6                             | 2                |
| The huntandshoot website   | 0                 | 3                             | 1                |

| <b>PROGRAMS/RESOURCES USED IN THE OVERSAMPLED STATES (including the six national programs)</b>                         | <b>Very Aware</b> | <b>Very or Somewhat Aware</b> | <b>Have Used</b> |
|--|-------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>SOUTH DAKOTA</b>  |                   |                               |                  |
| The printed South Dakota Hunting Atlas   | 48                | 69                            | 57               |
| South Dakota's Walk-In Hunting Areas   | 44                | 73                            | 54               |
| South Dakota's Game Production Areas, or GPAs  | 40                | 69                            | 48               |
| The Conservation Reserve Program   | 42                | 69                            | 47               |
| The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas  | 46                | 73                            | 43               |
| The South Dakota Hunting Atlas on the SDDGFP's website   | 14                | 25                            | 15               |
| South Dakota's Interactive South Dakota Public Lands Maps and Information system on the Division of Wildlife's website | 12                | 26                            | 14               |
| South Dakota Office of School and Public Lands program   | 9                 | 28                            | 9                |
| South Dakota's Volunteer Antlerless Deer Hunter Program  | 12                | 30                            | 7                |
| South Dakota's Lower Oahe Waterfowl Access Program   | 6                 | 16                            | 6                |
| South Dakota's Controlled Hunting Access Program   | 6                 | 18                            | 5                |
| The Open Fields program  | 4                 | 15                            | 5                |
| The huntinfo website   | 1                 | 6                             | 3                |
| The wheretohunt website  | 3                 | 8                             | 2                |
| The huntandshoot website   | 0                 | 3                             | 1                |
| <b>VIRGINIA</b>  |                   |                               |                  |
| Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries' Outdoor Report   | 17                | 42                            | 21               |
| Virginia's special youth hunts   | 16                | 47                            | 10               |
| Virginia's Quota and Managed Hunts   | 10                | 40                            | 7                |
| The wheretohunt website  | 5                 | 16                            | 6                |
| The Conservation Reserve Program   | 10                | 37                            | 5                |
| The Find Game GIS Mapping System or FindGame.org website   | 3                 | 12                            | 5                |
| The huntinfo website   | 2                 | 9                             | 4                |
| The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas  | 10                | 39                            | 3                |
| Public Access Lands for Sportsmen, or PALS   | 3                 | 20                            | 3                |
| The huntandshoot website   | 1                 | 7                             | 2                |
| The Open Fields program  | 2                 | 9                             | 1                |

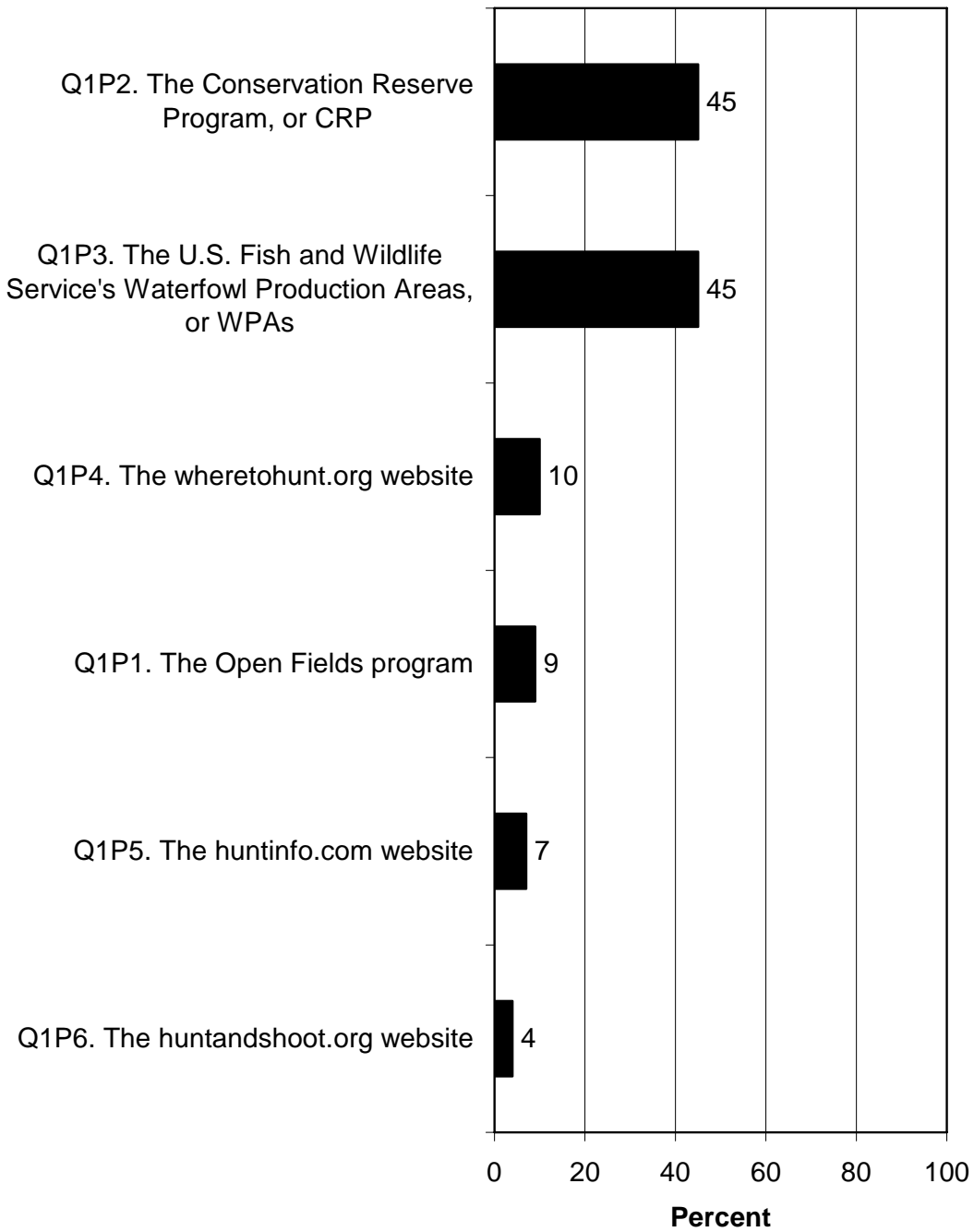
| <b>PROGRAMS/RESOURCES USED IN THE OVERSAMPLED STATES (including the six national programs)</b> | <b>Very Aware</b> | <b>Very or Somewhat Aware</b> | <b>Have Used</b> |
|--|-------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>WASHINGTON</b>  |                   |                               |                  |
| The Feel Free to Hunt program  | 11                | 30                            | 13               |
| The Conservation Reserve Program   | 12                | 39                            | 11               |
| The Hunt by Written Permission program   | 14                | 37                            | 11               |
| The GoHunt GIS Mapping System  | 7                 | 19                            | 9                |
| The Disabled Hunter Road Access Entry program  | 12                | 51                            | 8                |
| The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas                                | 9                 | 38                            | 7                |
| The wheretohunt website  | 7                 | 21                            | 7                |
| The Landowner Hunting Permit program   | 7                 | 35                            | 6                |
| The Register to Hunt program   | 6                 | 20                            | 5                |
| Washington's Quality Hunting Areas   | 4                 | 16                            | 4                |
| The huntinfo website   | 3                 | 12                            | 4                |
| The Accessing Washington's Outdoors program  | 3                 | 21                            | 3                |
| The Open Fields program  | 2                 | 11                            | 2                |
| The huntandshoot website   | 1                 | 5                             | 1                |
| <b>WISCONSIN</b>   |                   |                               |                  |
| Wisconsin's leased public hunting grounds  | 9                 | 33                            | 30               |
| The Conservation Reserve Program   | 24                | 56                            | 27               |
| The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas                                | 23                | 52                            | 22               |
| Wisconsin's Agricultural Deer Damage Shooting Permit Program                                   | 19                | 58                            | 19               |
| Wisconsin's Damage and Abatement Claims Program's Hunting Access During Open Seasons Program   | 6                 | 26                            | 15               |
| The wheretohunt website  | 3                 | 9                             | 3                |
| The Open Fields program  | 2                 | 7                             | 2                |
| The huntinfo website   | 2                 | 6                             | 2                |
| The huntandshoot website   | 1                 | 3                             | 1                |
| <b>WYOMING</b>   |                   |                               |                  |
| Wyoming's Walk-In Area program   | 48                | 81                            | 51               |
| Wyoming's Hunter Management Area program   | 24                | 57                            | 29               |
| The Conservation Reserve Program   | 15                | 43                            | 11               |
| The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas                                | 11                | 45                            | 8                |
| Wyoming's Hunter/Landowner Assistance program  | 12                | 35                            | 7                |
| The wheretohunt website  | 3                 | 13                            | 3                |
| The huntinfo website   | 1                 | 9                             | 3                |
| The Open Fields program  | 3                 | 11                            | 1                |
| The huntandshoot website   | 1                 | 5                             | 1                |

- For each program of which a hunter was aware, the survey asked him/her to rate it at making hunting access easier.
  - Of the six national programs, the programs with the highest percentages of hunters giving an *excellent* or *good* rating, each at more than a third, are the Conservation Reserve Program (40%) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas (35%).
  - The graphs for this series of questions also include the percentages giving a rating of *excellent*, giving a rating of *fair* or *poor* combined, and giving a rating of *poor*.
  - Follow-up questions asked hunters to indicate why they did not rate the program higher (for those they rated as good, fair, or poor). These graphs are shown.
  
- The survey included a very specific question about use of private lands enrolled in any walk-in access program in their state. Just under a fifth of hunters (18%) hunt their primary species *often* or *sometimes* on such lands. On the other hand, the majority (70%) *never* do so.

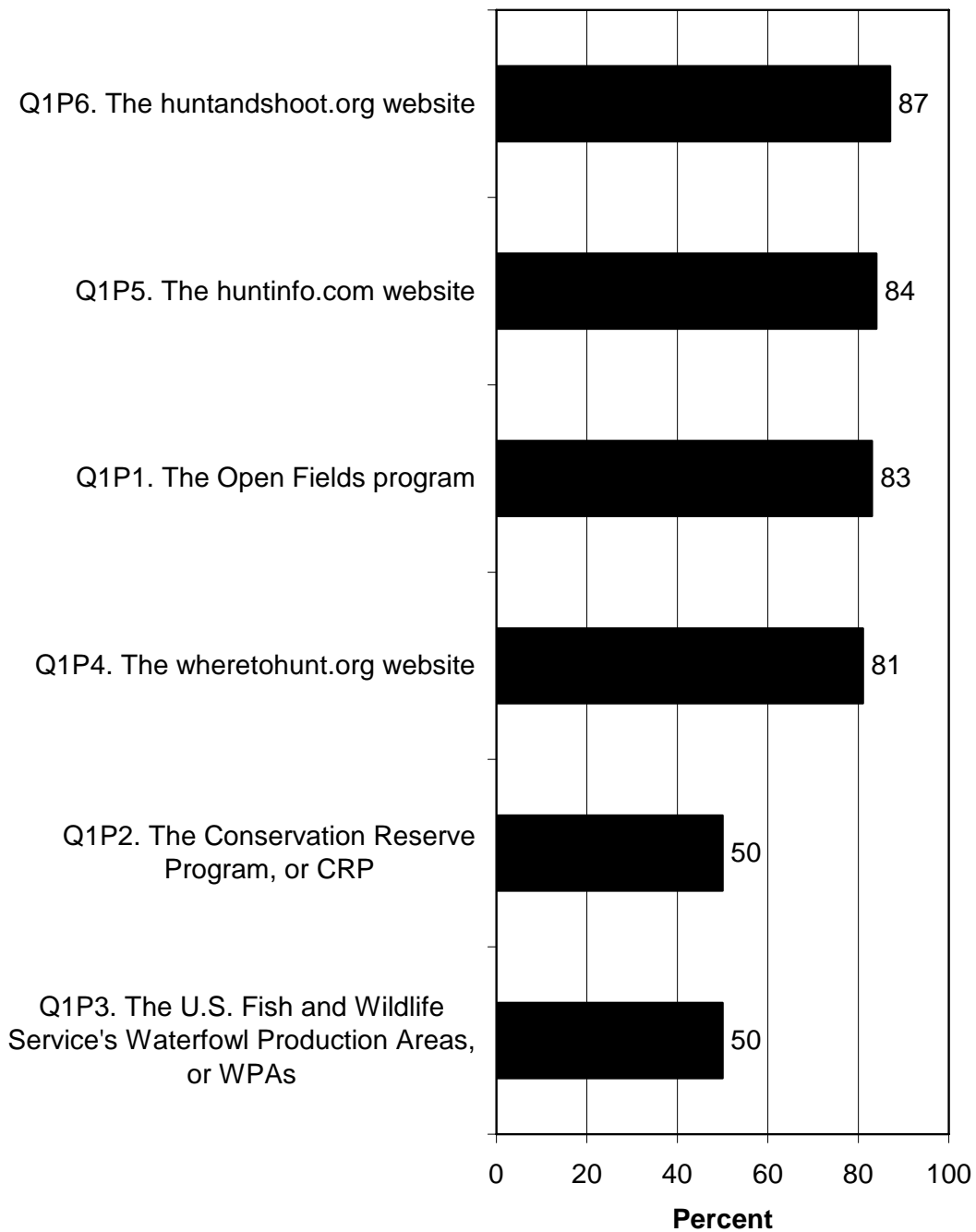
**Percent who are very aware of the following  
hunting-related programs and resources.**



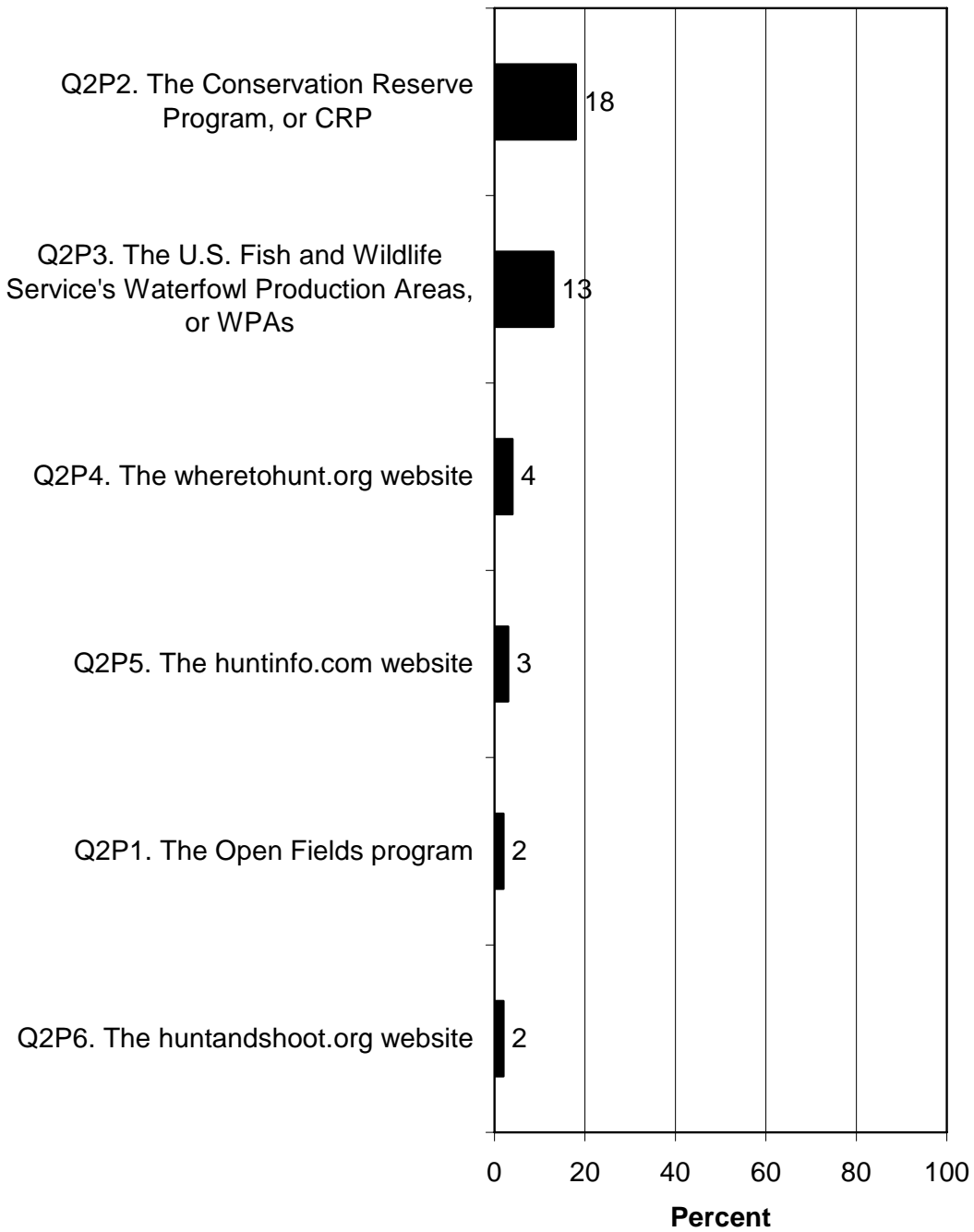
**Percent who are very or somewhat aware of the following hunting-related programs and resources.**



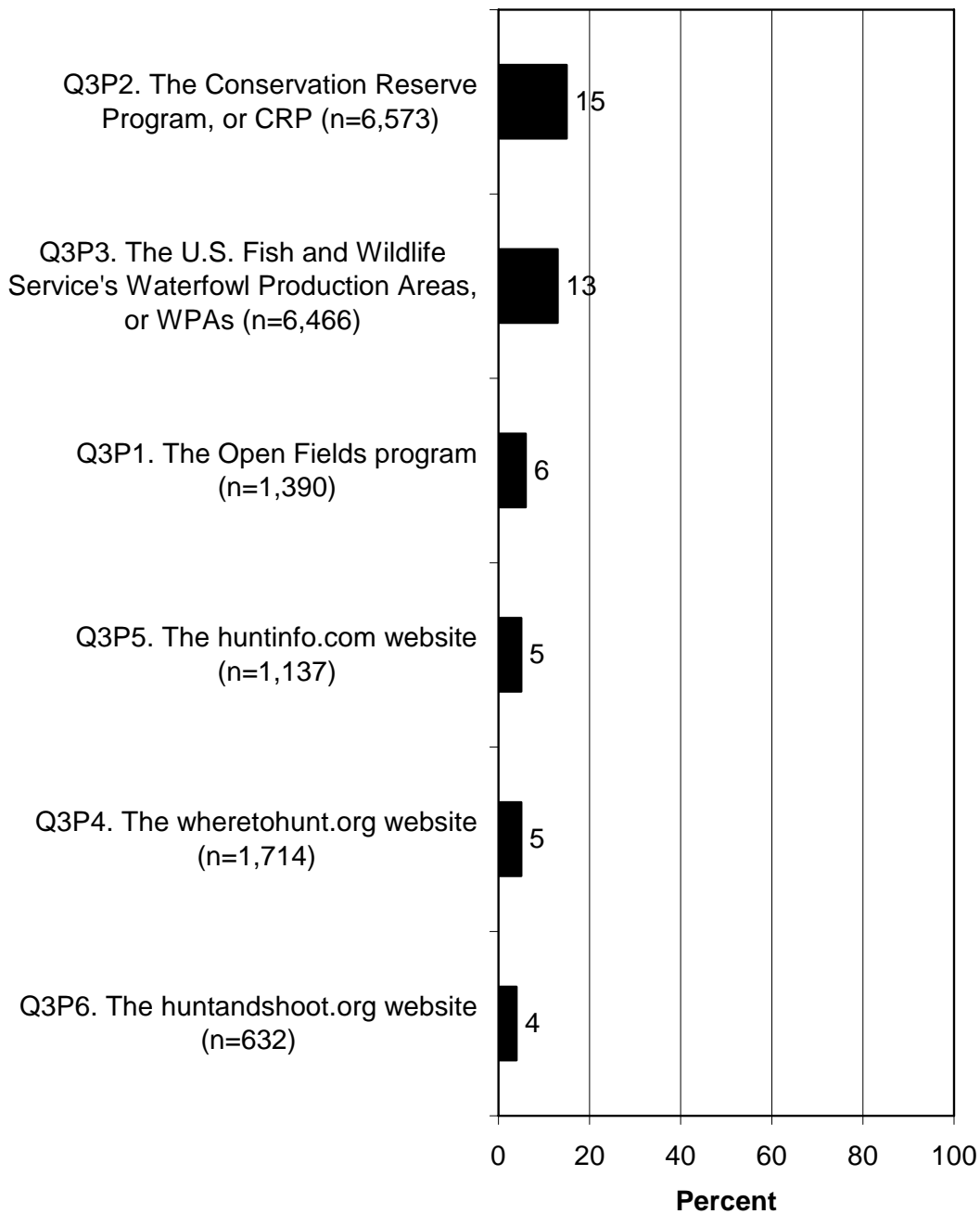
**Percent who are not at all aware of the following  
hunting-related programs and resources.**



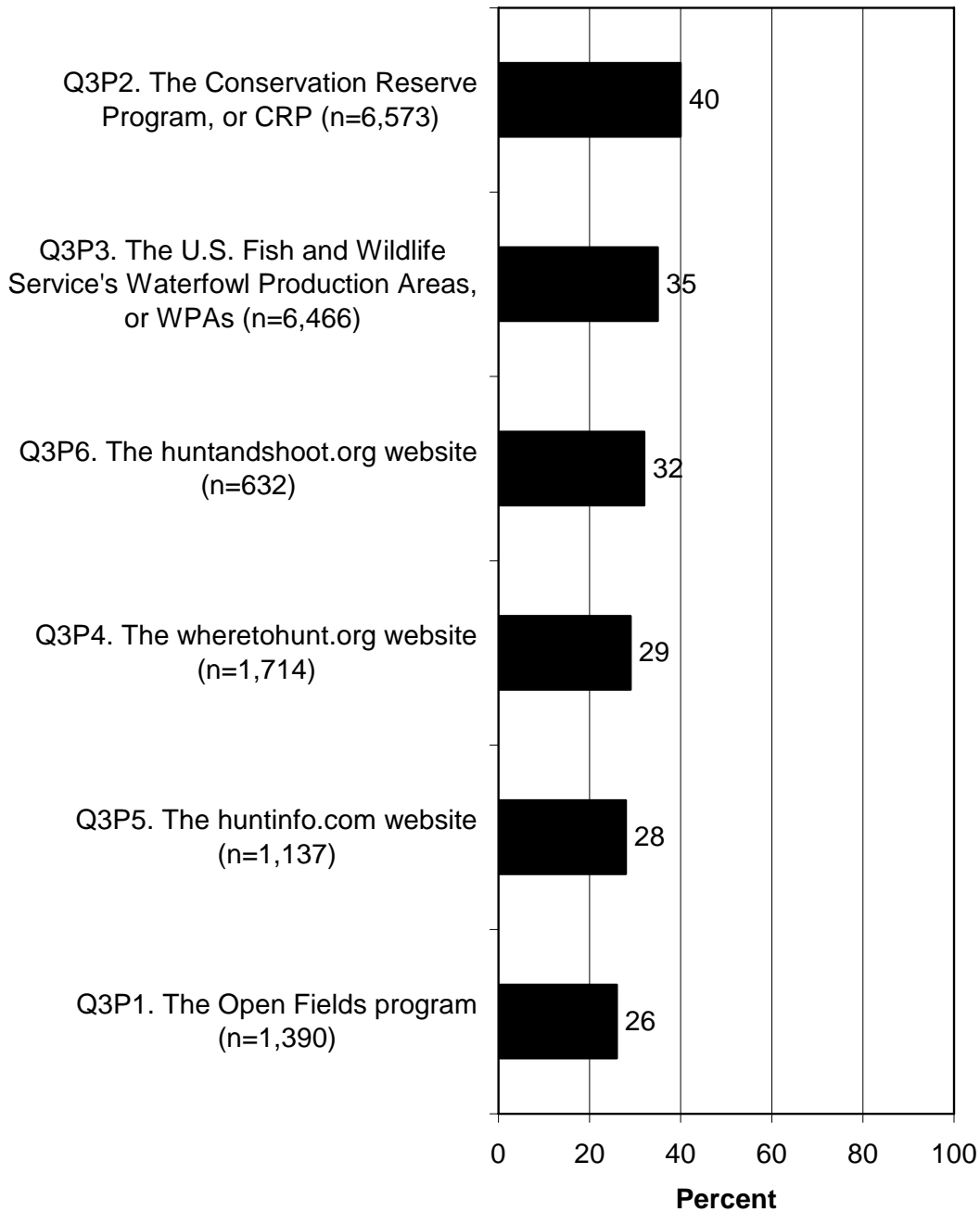
**Percent who have used or participated in the following programs in the past 5 years.**



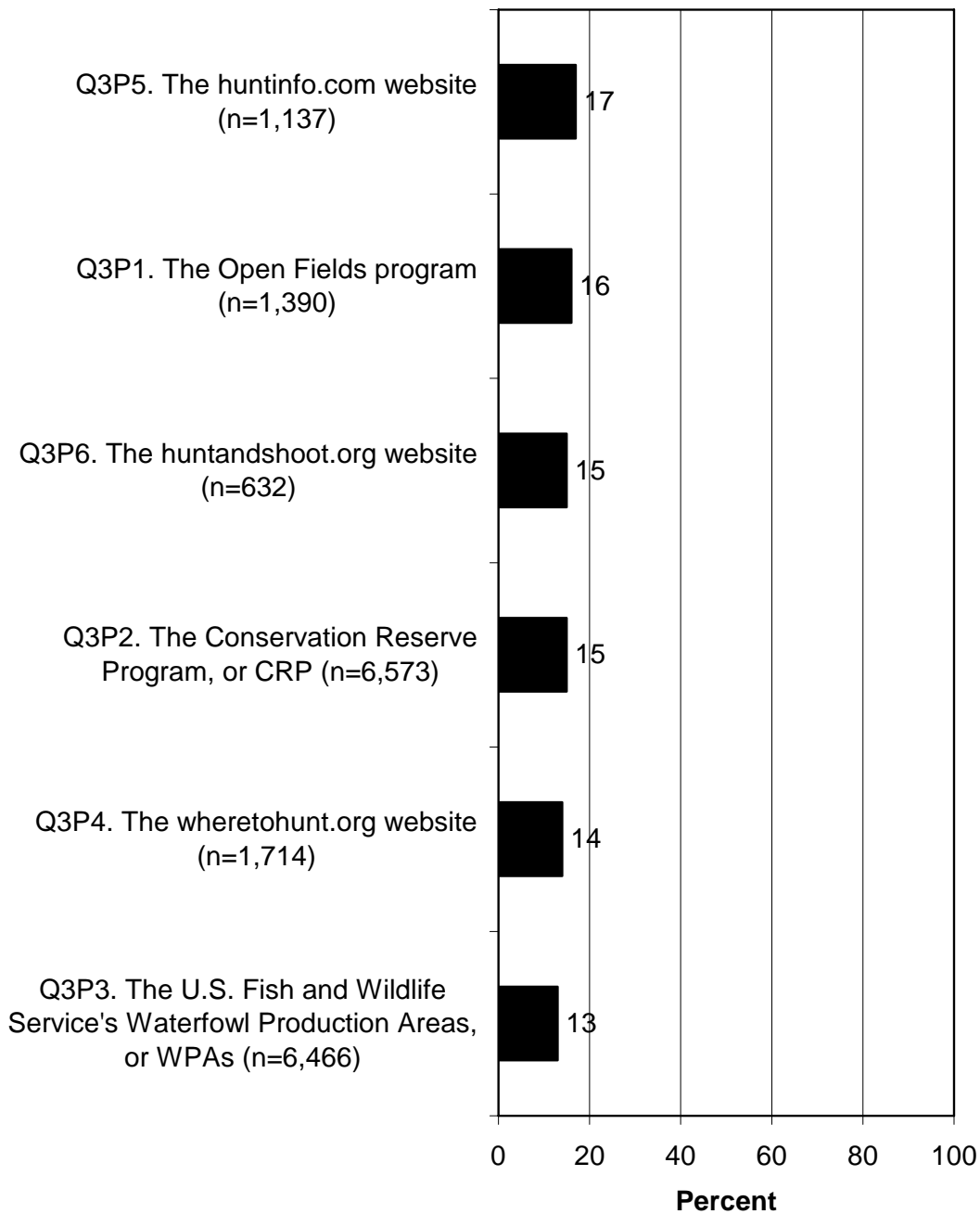
**Percent who rate the following programs /  
resources for making hunting access easier as  
excellent. (Asked of those aware of the  
programs/resources.)**



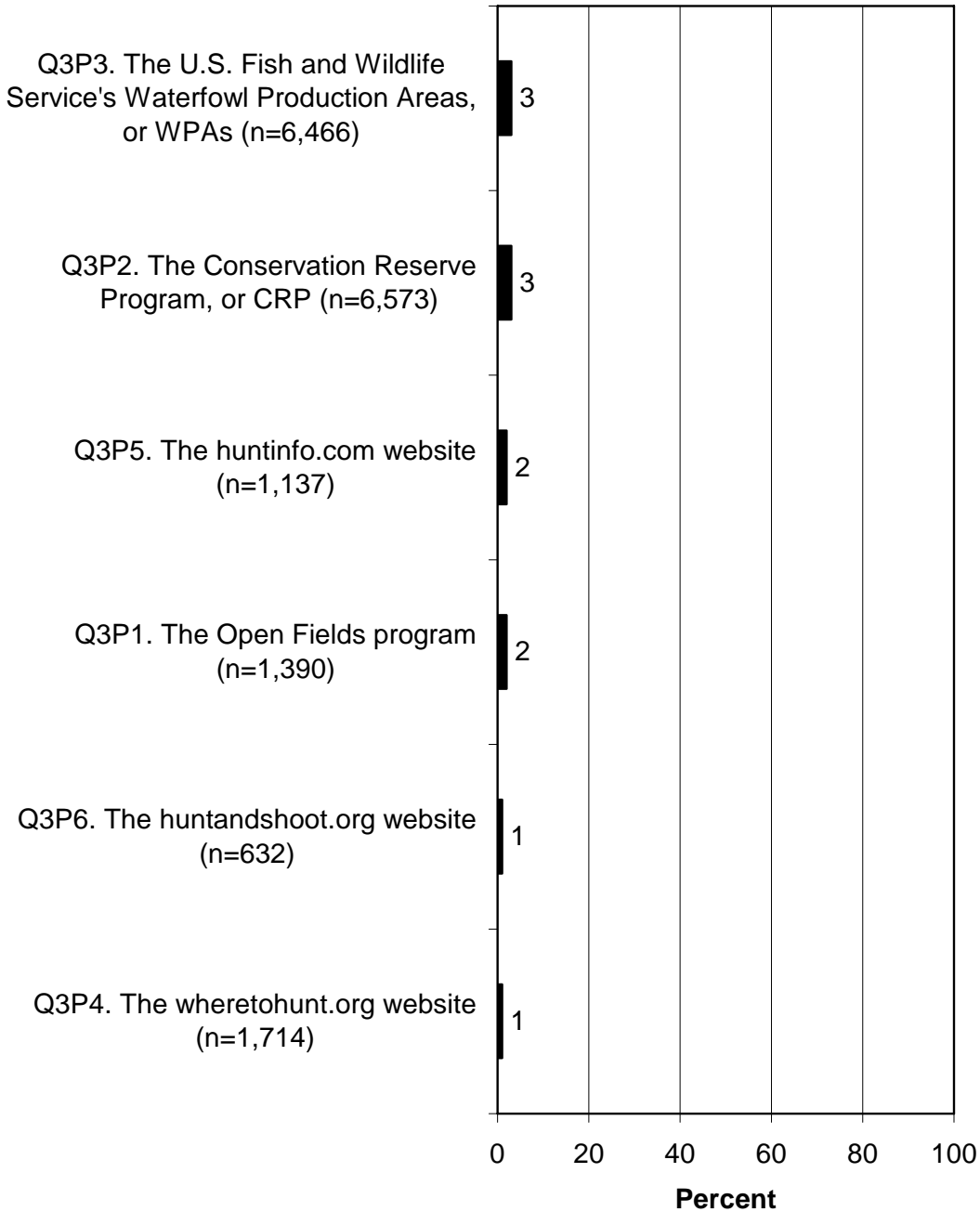
**Percent who rate the following programs / resources for making hunting access easier as excellent or good. (Asked of those aware of the programs/resources.)**



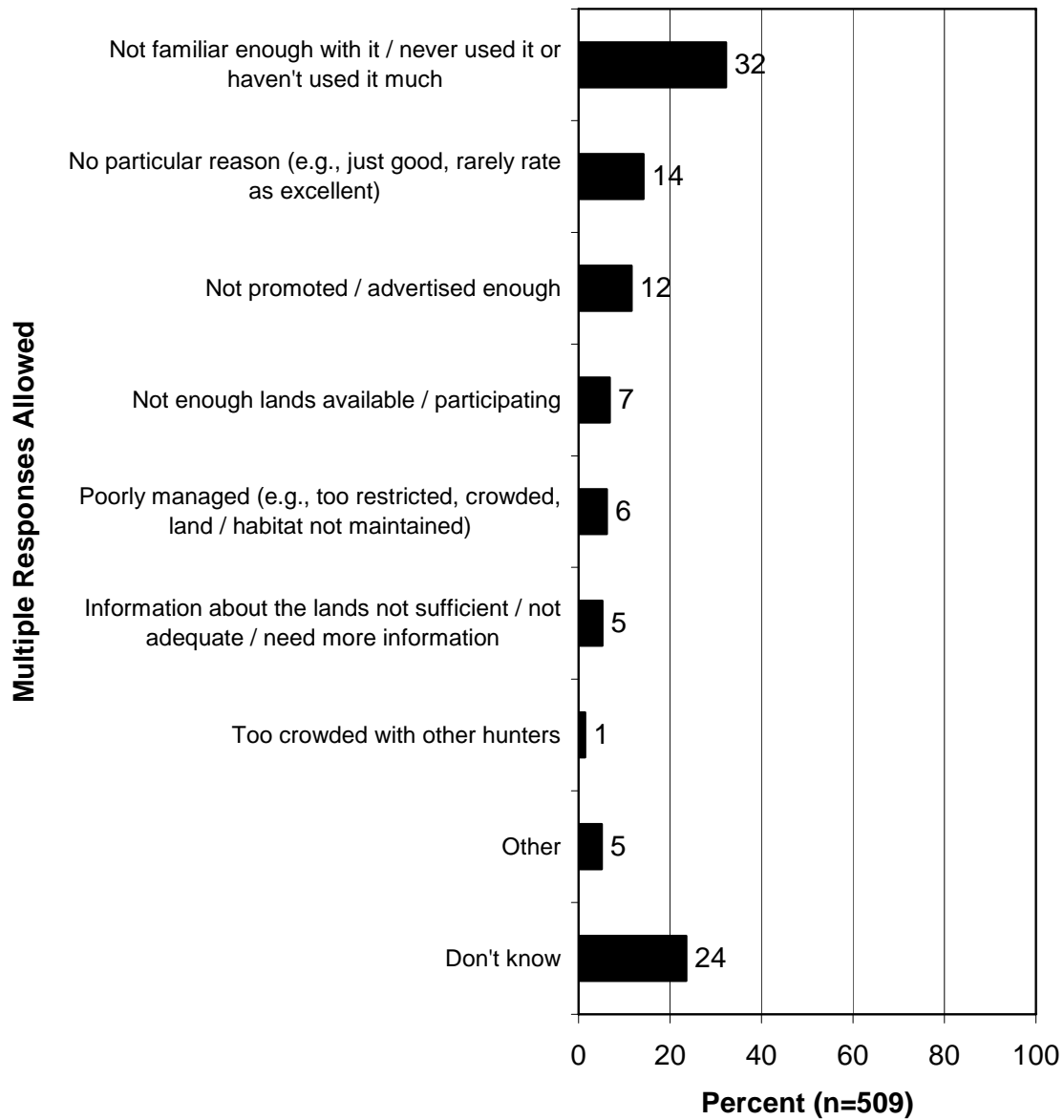
**Percent who rate the following programs /  
resources for making hunting access easier as fair  
or poor. (Asked of those aware of the  
programs/resources.)**



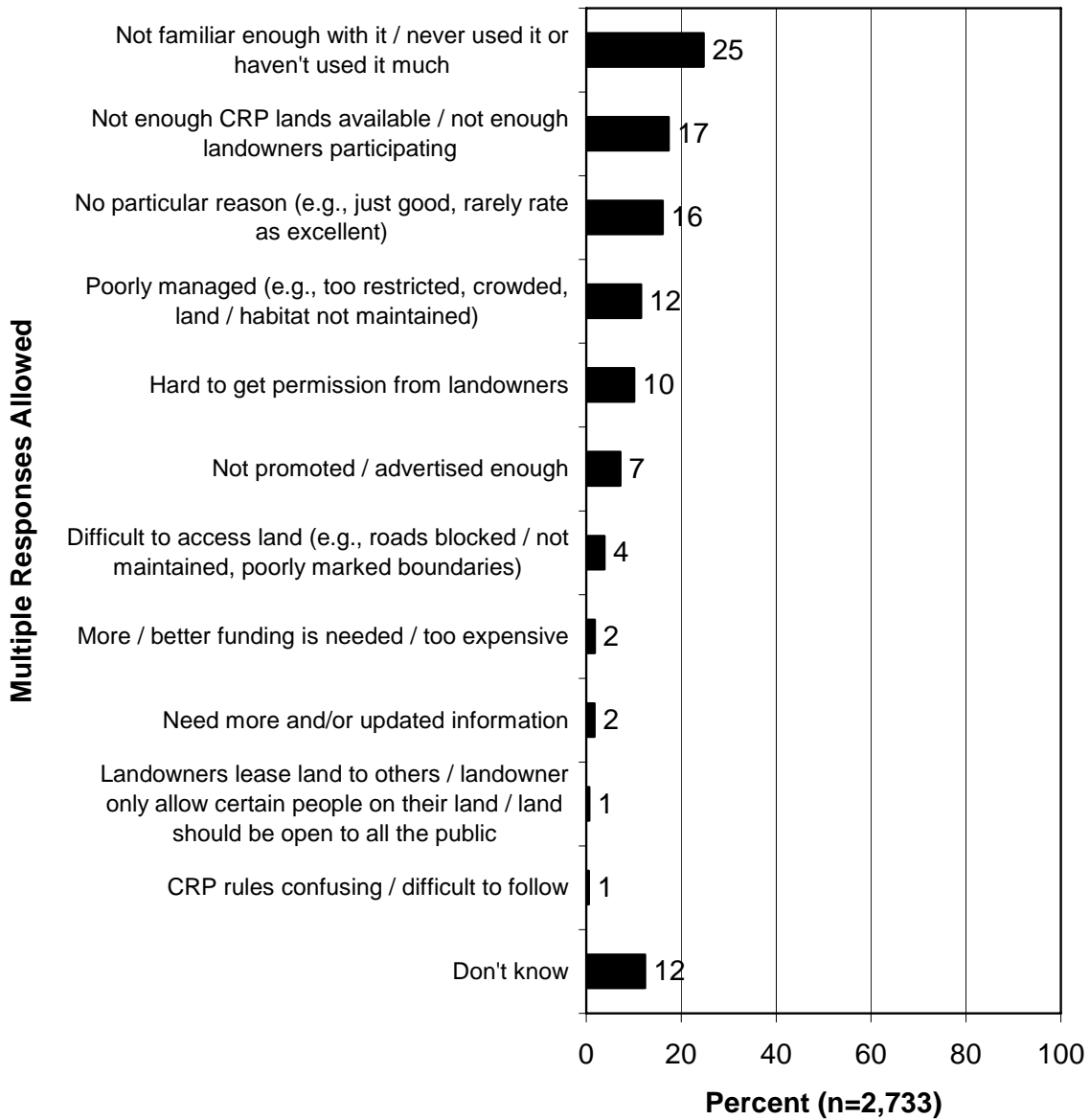
**Percent who rate the following programs / resources for making hunting access easier as poor. (Asked of those aware of the programs/resources.)**



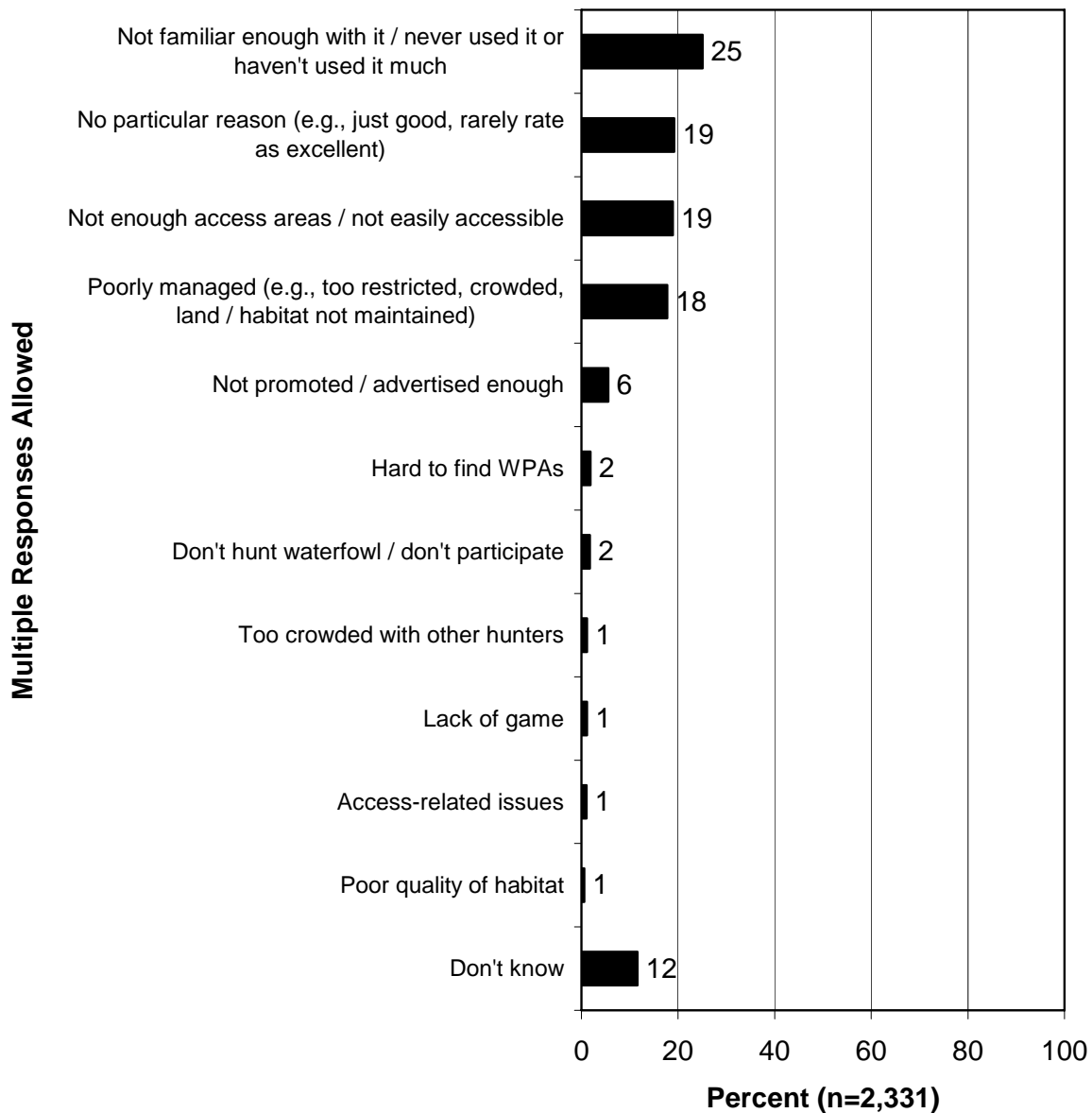
**Q4P1. You rated the Open Fields program as good, fair, or poor at making hunting access easier. In your opinion, what makes the program not deserve a higher rating? (Asked of those who are aware of the program and rated it good, fair, or poor.)**



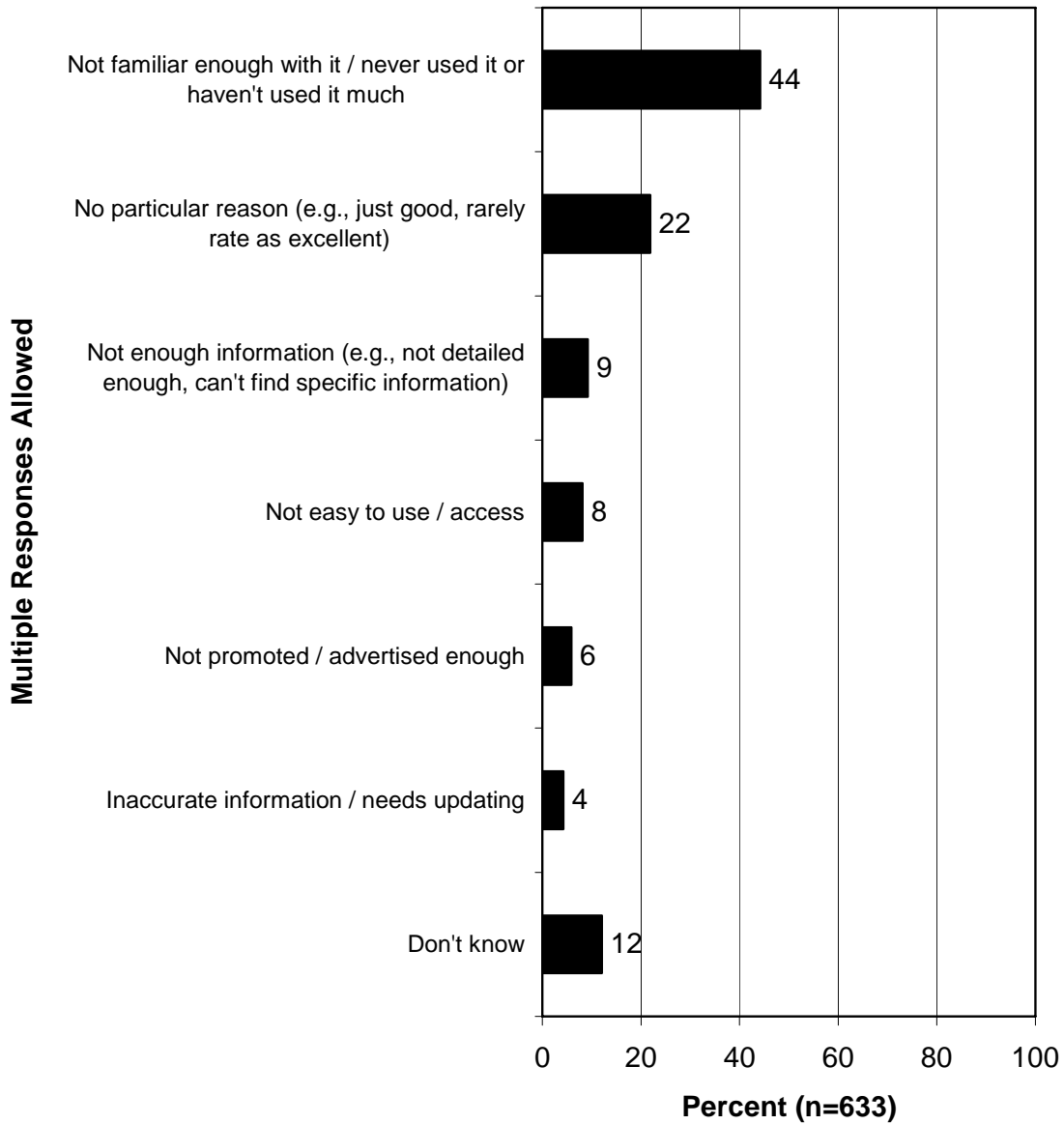
**Q4P2. You rated the Conservation Reserve Program as good, fair, or poor at making hunting access easier. In your opinion, what makes the program not deserve a higher rating? (Asked of those who are aware of the program and rated it good, fair, or poor.)**



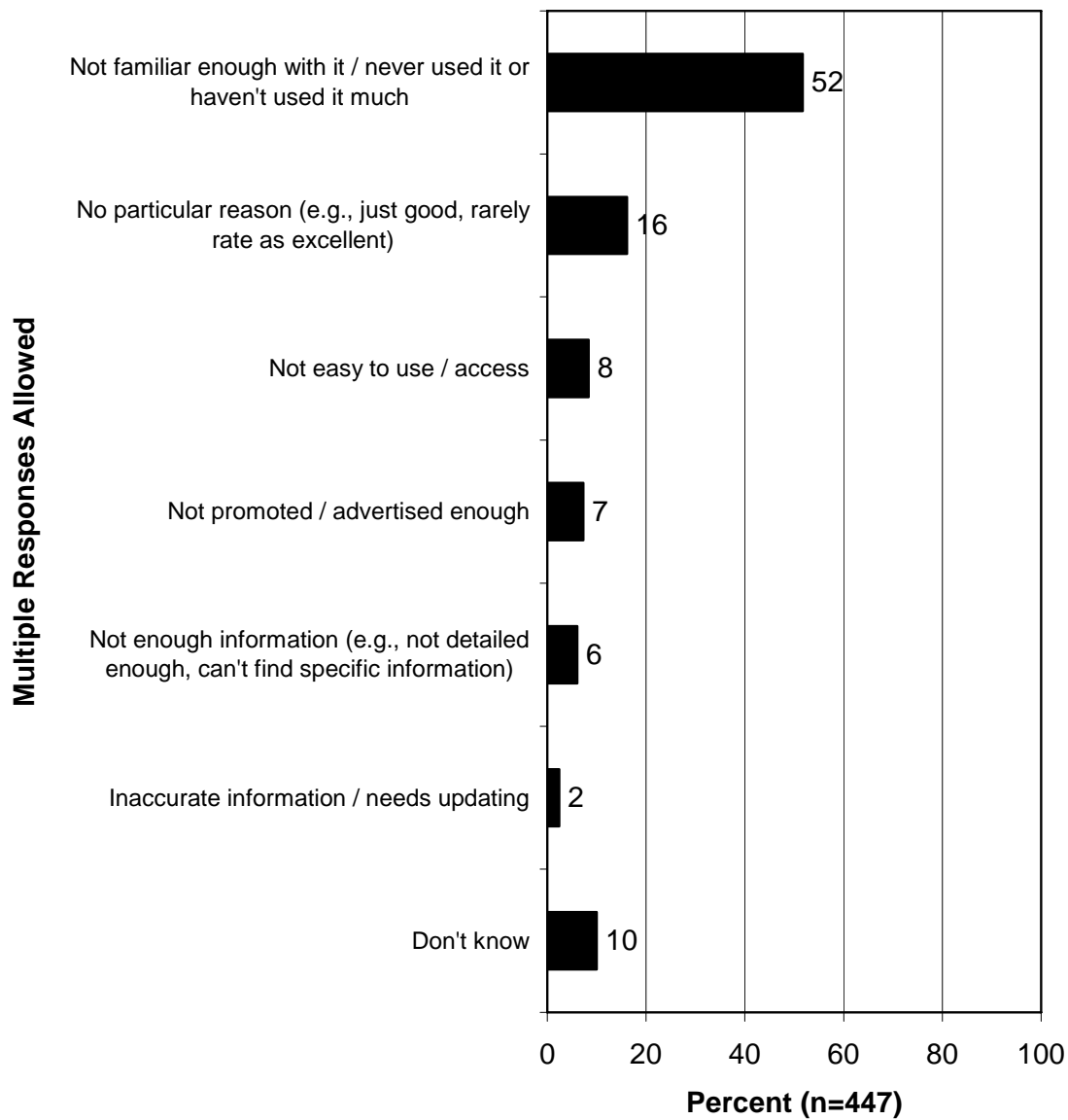
**Q4P3. You rated the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas program as good, fair, or poor at making hunting access easier. In your opinion, what makes the program not deserve a higher rating? (Asked of those who are aware of the program and rated it good, fair, or poor.)**



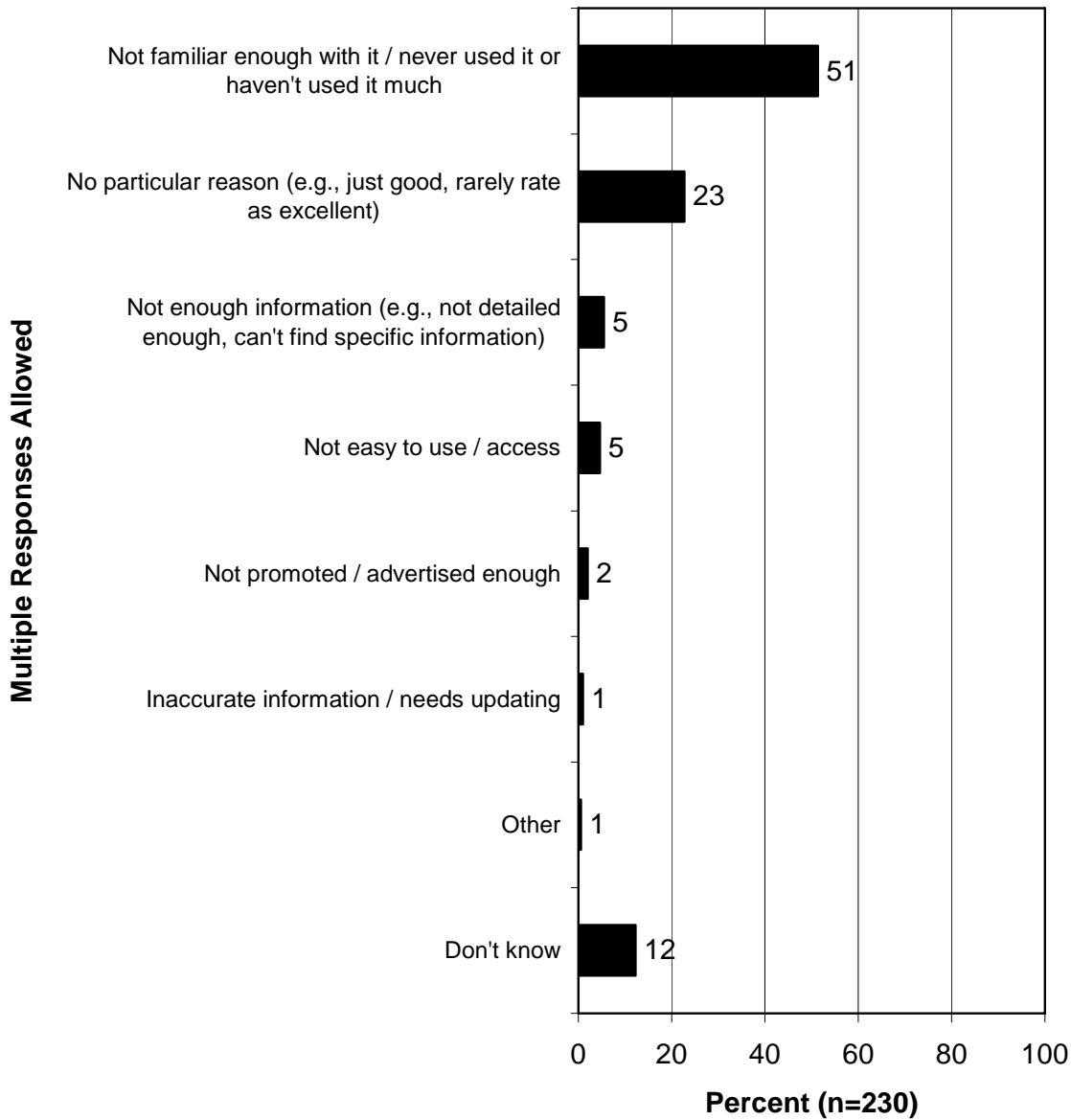
**Q4P4. You rated the wheretohunt.org website as good, fair, or poor at making hunting access easier. In your opinion, what makes the resource not deserve a higher rating? (Asked of those who are aware of the website and rated it good, fair, or poor.)**



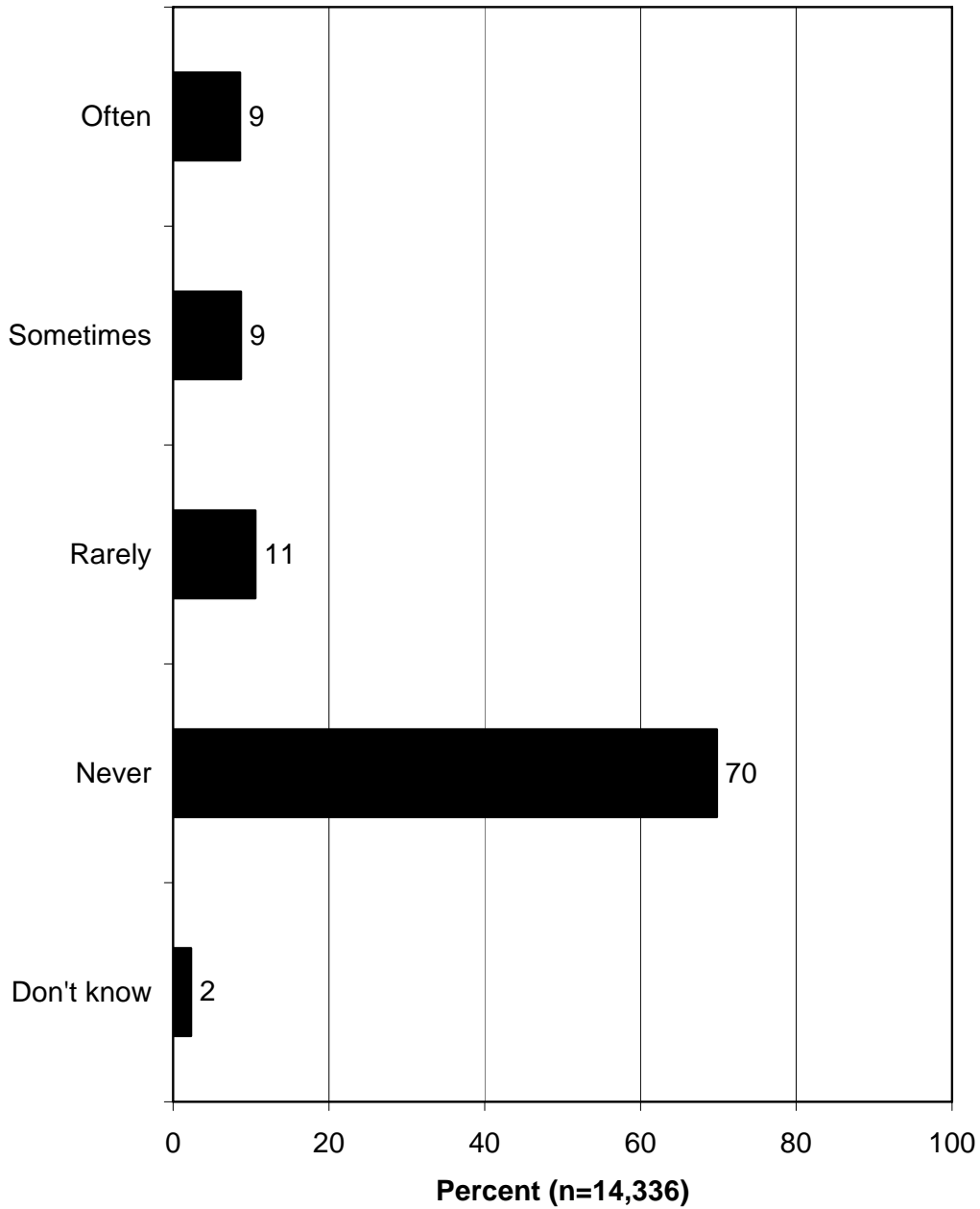
**Q4P5. You rated the huntinfo.com website as good, fair, or poor at making hunting access easier. In your opinion, what makes the resource not deserve a higher rating? (Asked of those who are aware of the website and rated it good, fair, or poor.)**



**Q4P6. You rated the huntandshoot.org website as good, fair, or poor at making hunting access easier. In your opinion, what makes the resource not deserve a higher rating? (Asked of those who are aware of the website and rated it good, fair, or poor.)**



**Q59. How often do you hunt for (species) on private lands enrolled in a walk-in access program or a state-run private land access program in your state?**



## SOURCES OF INFORMATION USED IN DECIDING WHERE TO HUNT

- In the broadest question about sources of information, hunters were asked in an open-ended question where they got information on places to hunt and hunting access in their state. The most popular source is friends/family/word of mouth (53%), by far the top answer. Other notable answers include a state agency other than its website (9%), a specific site on the Internet (8%), the Internet in general/a search engine (6%), magazines (6%), and pamphlets/brochures (5%).
  - In follow-up, hunters are mostly positive in rating the accuracy of the information they receive: while 69% say it is *very* accurate, 29% say it is only *somewhat* or *not at all* accurate. Obviously, this latter group has found enough inaccuracies to *not* rate it *very* accurate.
  
- The survey asked hunters if they had visited the websites of four agencies (their state's fish and wildlife agency, the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Land Management). About a third of hunters had visited their state agency site (35%). Lower amounts (from 11% to 17%) had visited the other sites.
  - Follow-up questions asked hunters to rate the usefulness of the websites' information on places to hunt and hunting access in planning hunting trips. Ratings are positive: each site (with all of the individual state agency sites being considered together in these results) has a majority rating the usefulness of information on the site as excellent or good.
  
- The survey asked six questions about actions that hunters may take in deciding where to hunt (shown in Text Box 8 on the following page). For each action, the survey asked hunters if they always, sometimes, rarely, or never do it when deciding where to hunt. The starting point in going through the list in each interview was randomized. The results of the series of questions were then ranked.
  - A majority of hunters *always* or *sometimes* do two things in deciding where to hunt: 54% ask a friend or family member where to hunt, and 54% scout or physically look for a

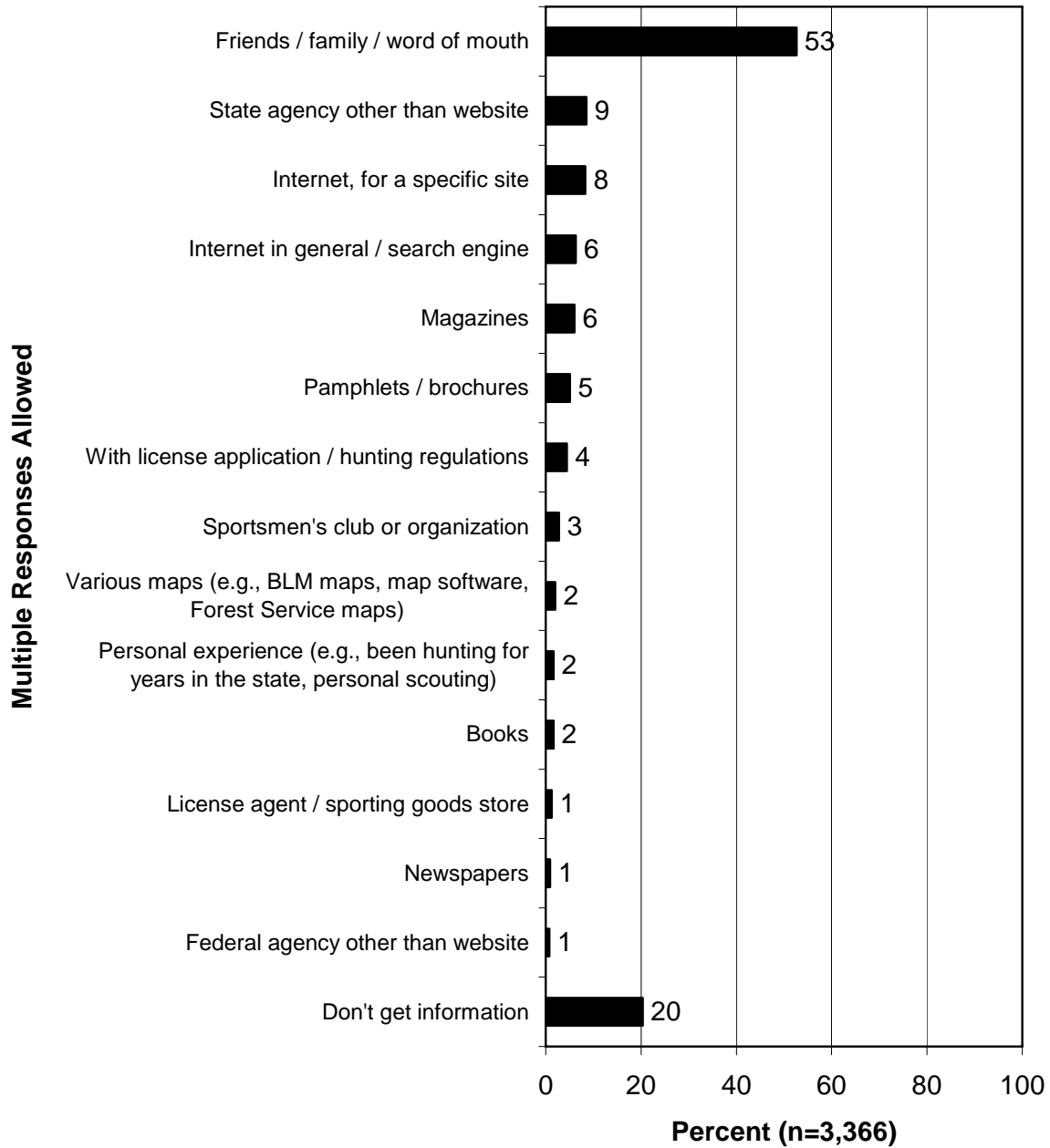
place. Additionally, about a third use paper maps to find a place (36%) and/or knock on a landowner's door to ask permission to hunt (32%).

**TEXT BOX 8****Actions hunters may take in deciding where to hunt that were asked about in the survey:**

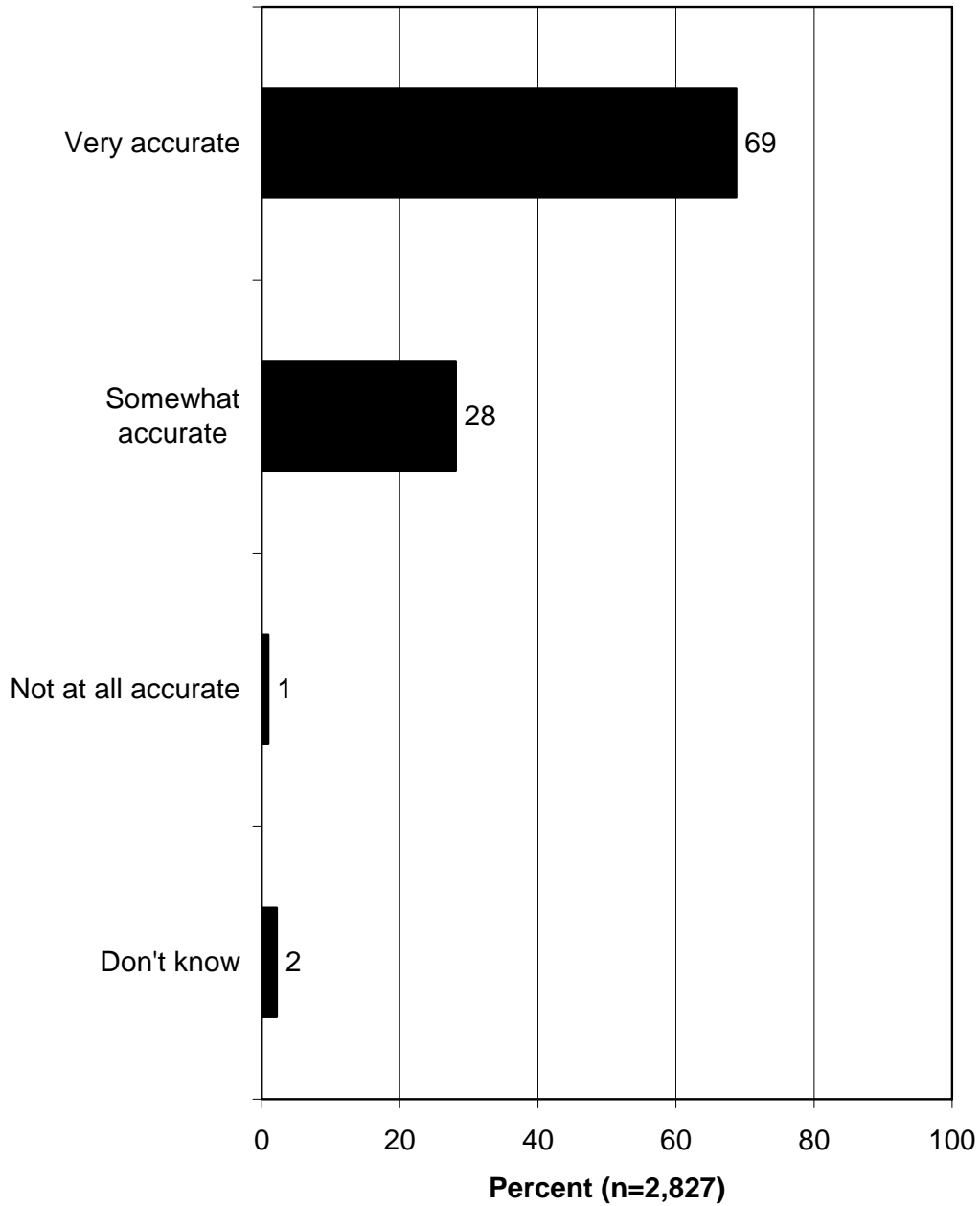
- Ask a friend or family member where to hunt
- Knock on a landowner's door to ask permission to hunt
- Use paper maps to find a place to hunt
- Use GPS to locate hunting land
- Find available hunting lands on the Internet
- Scout or physically look for land on which to hunt

- Within the above series of questions was a question asking how often hunters scout or physically look for land on which to hunt. In follow-up, they were asked how many days they typically spend scouting for hunting locations. The median number of days they typically spend annually scouting for hunting land is 6 days, among those who scout for land.
- Another question in this section asked hunters who had hunted on land owned by somebody they did not previously know how they had obtained permission to hunt on the land. They most commonly leased the land from the landowner and/or contacted the landowner in advance.

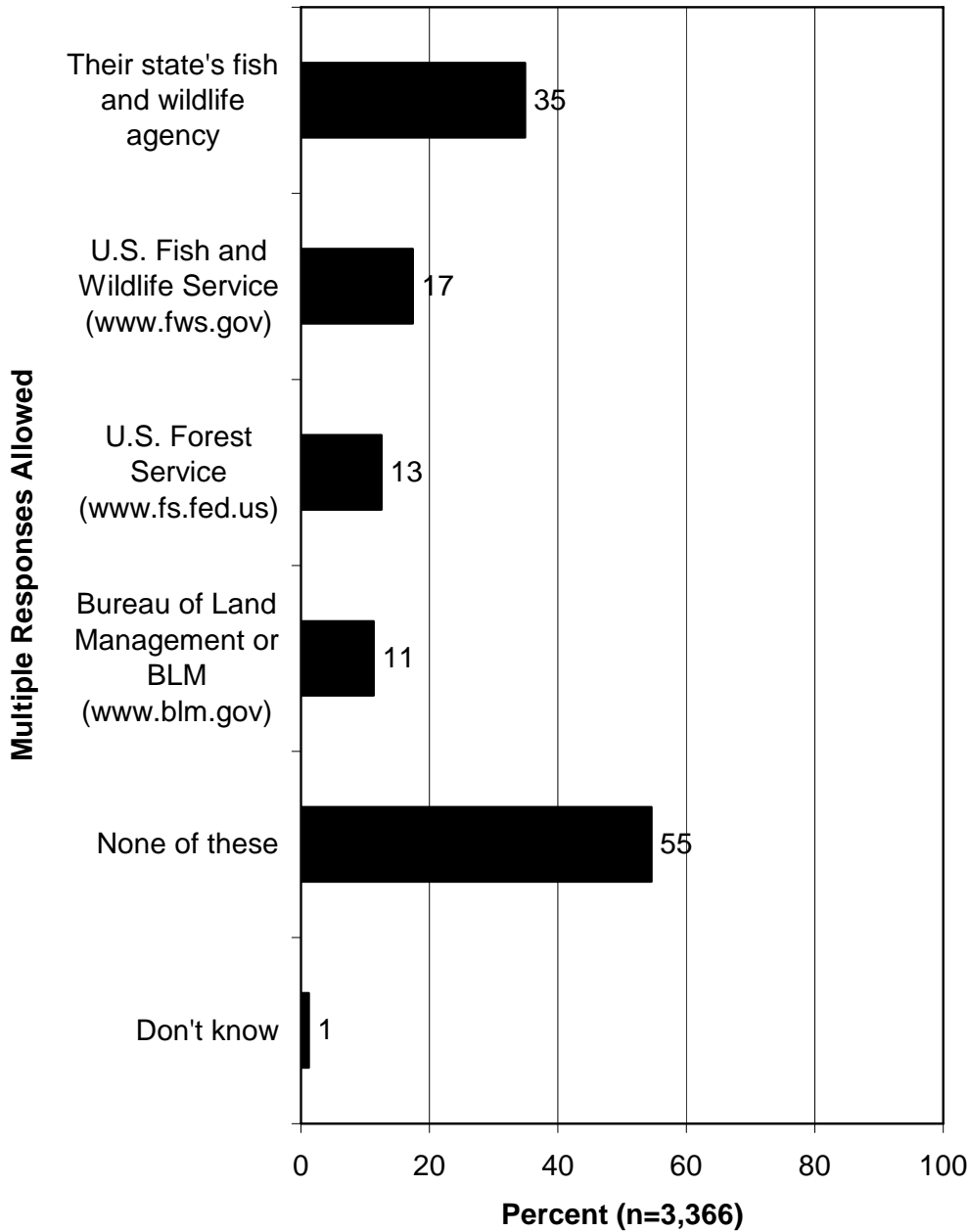
**Q227. Where do you get information on places to hunt and hunting access in your state?**



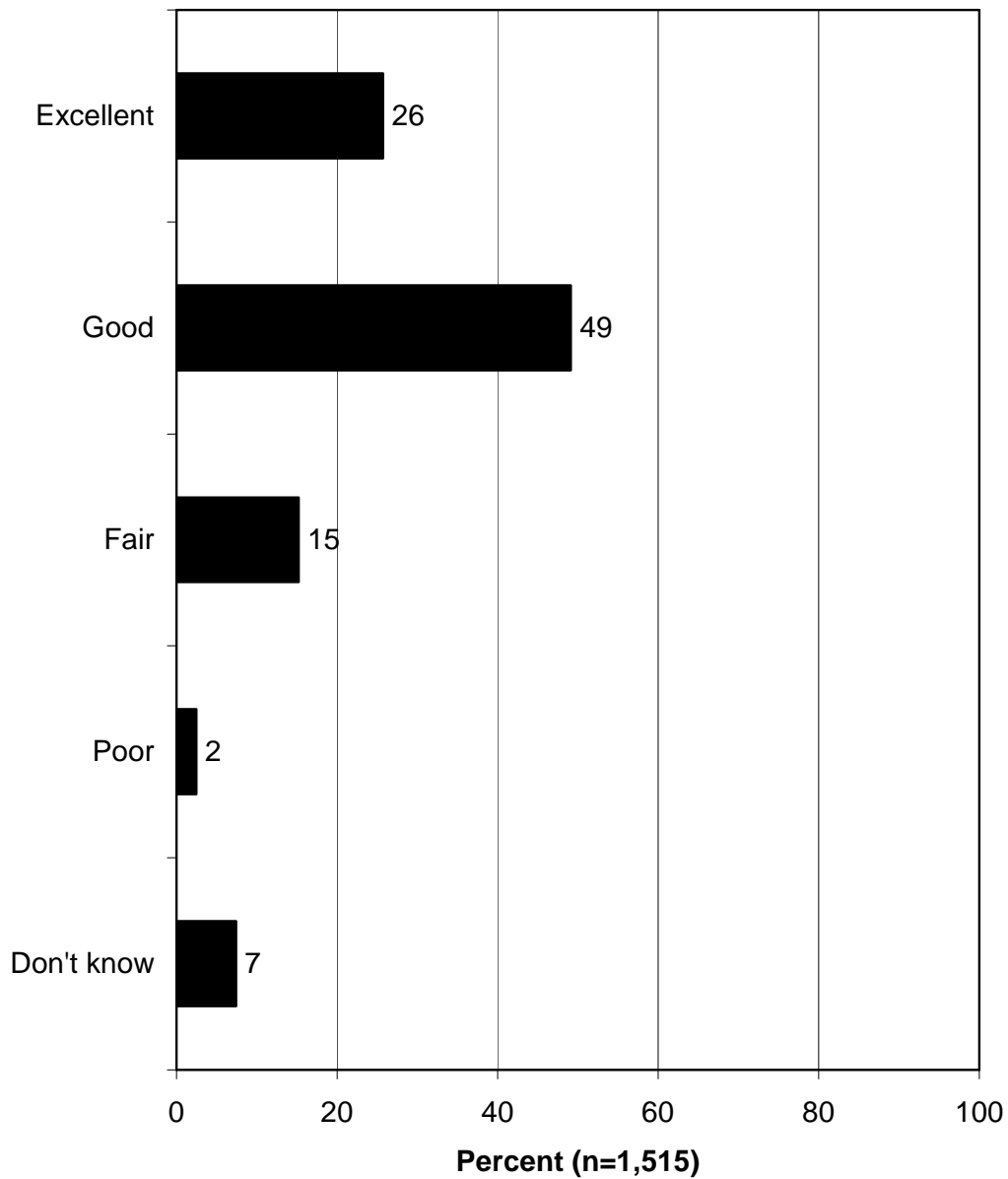
**Q229. In general, how accurate is the information you typically receive?**



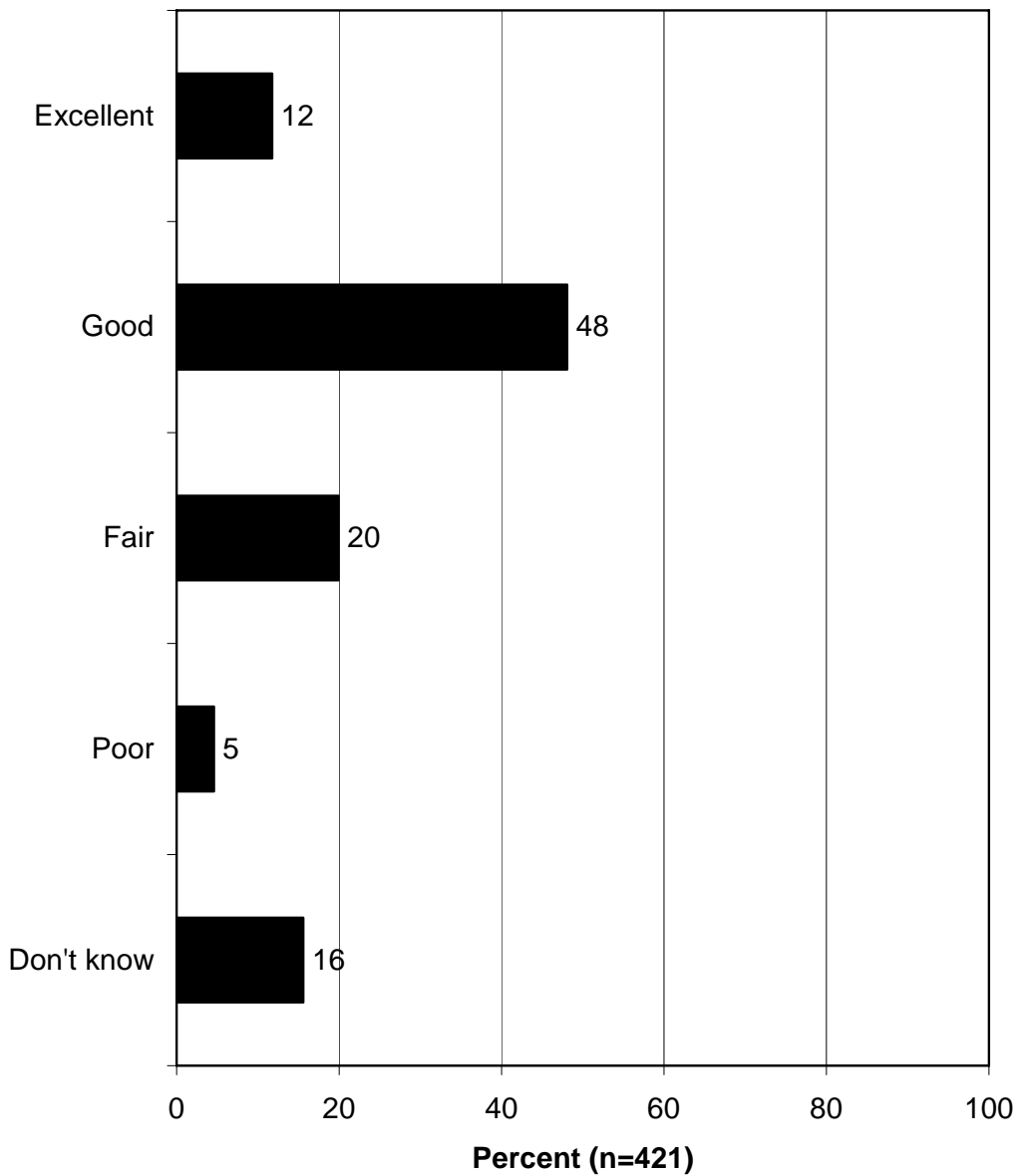
**Q232. Please tell me if you have visited any of the following websites to look for information on places to hunt and hunting access.**



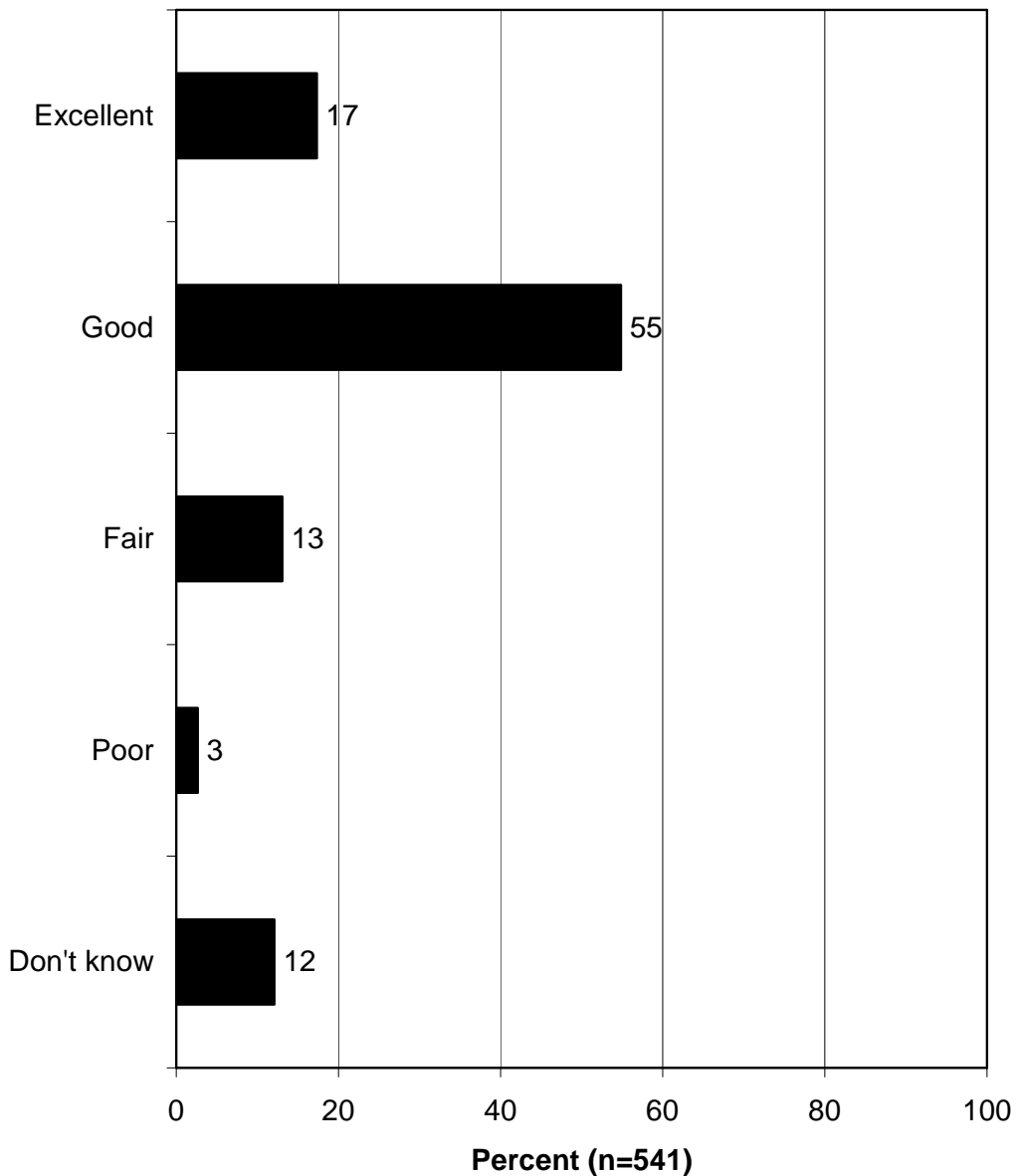
**Q233. How would you rate the usefulness of the information on places to hunt and hunting access on your state agency's website to you personally in planning your hunting trips in your state? (Asked of those who used the website to look for information on places to hunt and hunting access.)**



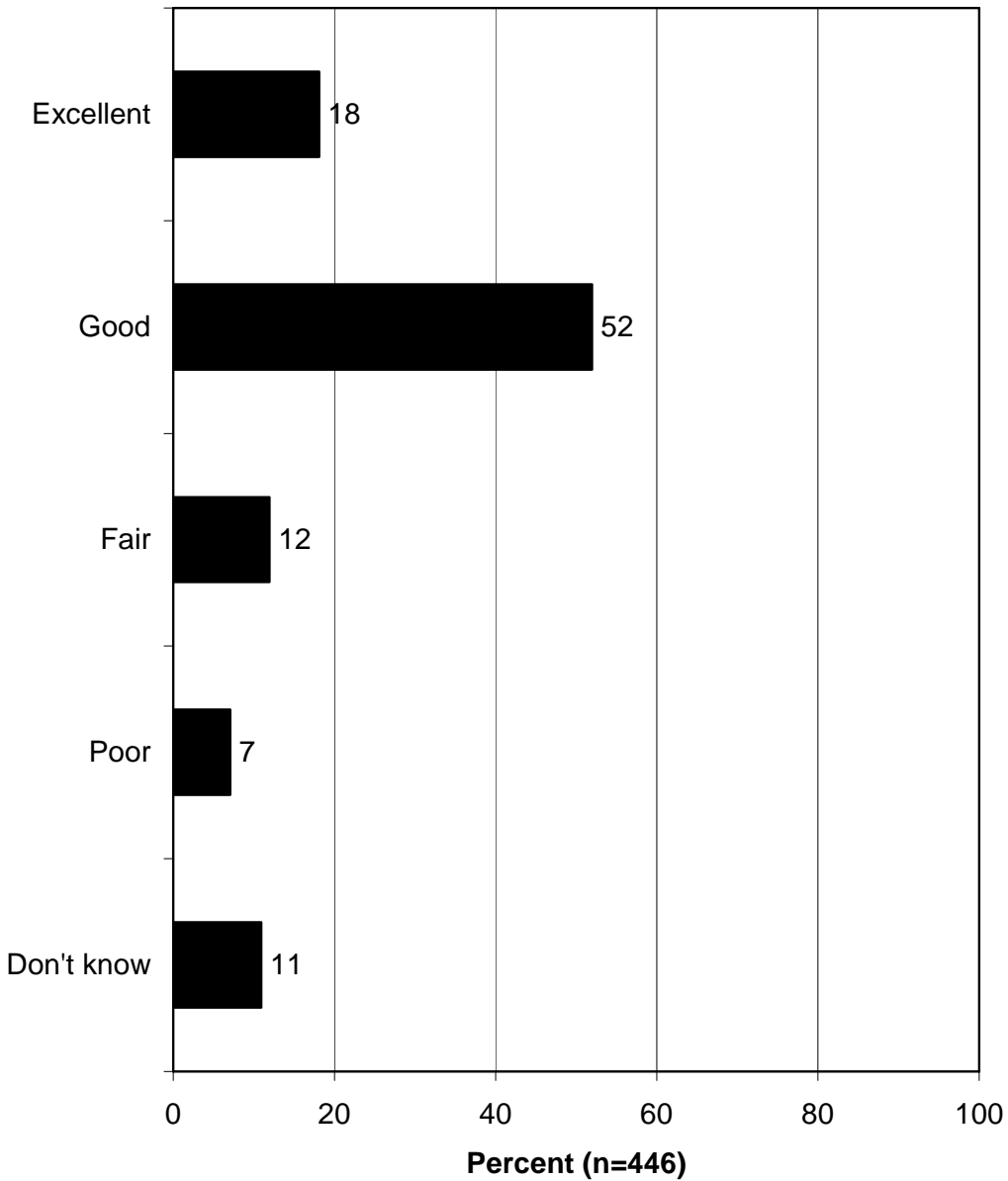
**Q234. How would you rate the usefulness of the information on places to hunt and hunting access on the Bureau of Land Management or BLM website (www.blm.gov) to you personally in planning your hunting trips in your state? (Asked of those who used the website to look for information on places to hunt and hunting access.)**



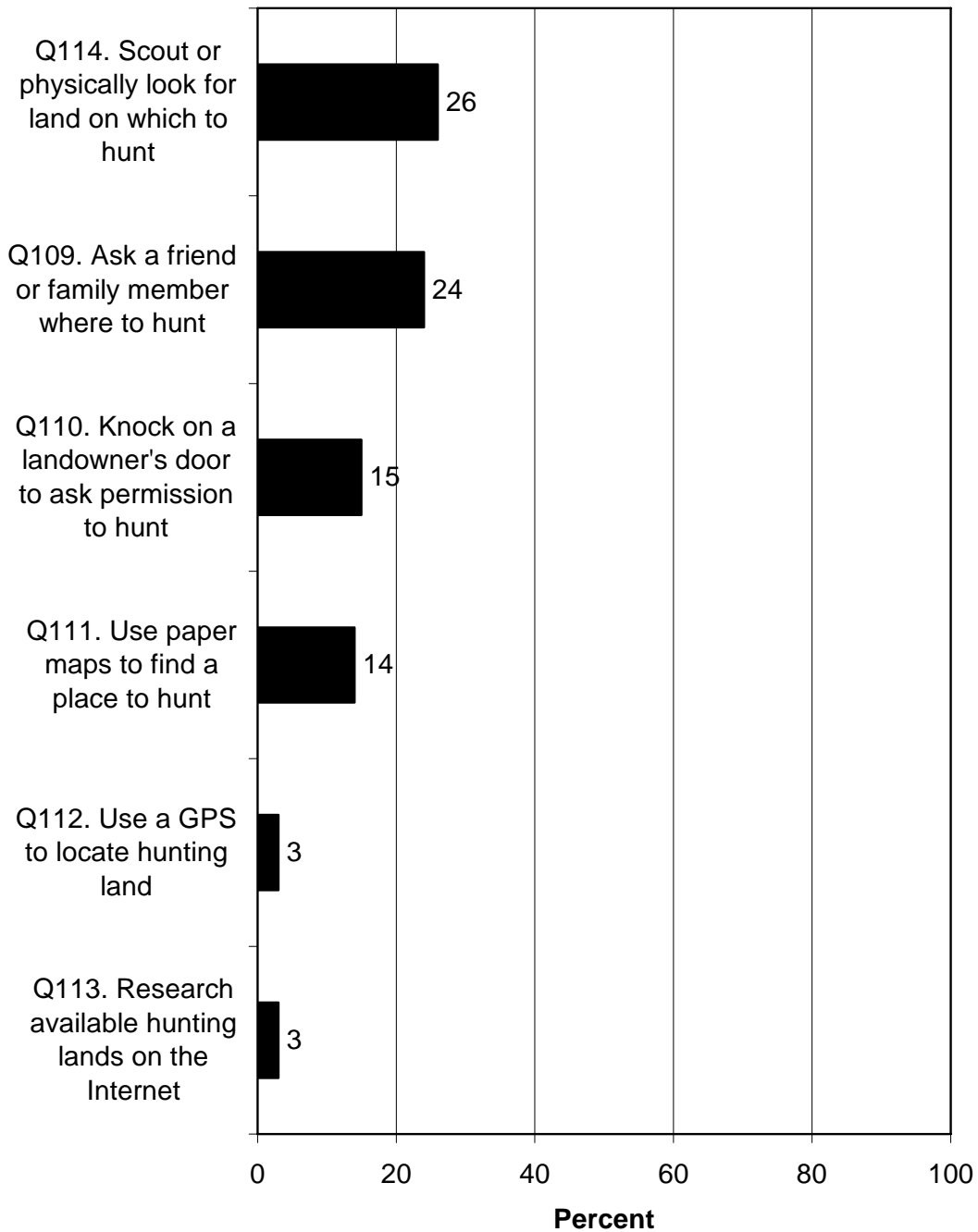
**Q235. How would you rate the usefulness of the information on places to hunt and hunting access on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website ([www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov)) to you personally in planning your hunting trips in your state? (Asked of those who used the website to look for information on places to hunt and hunting access.)**



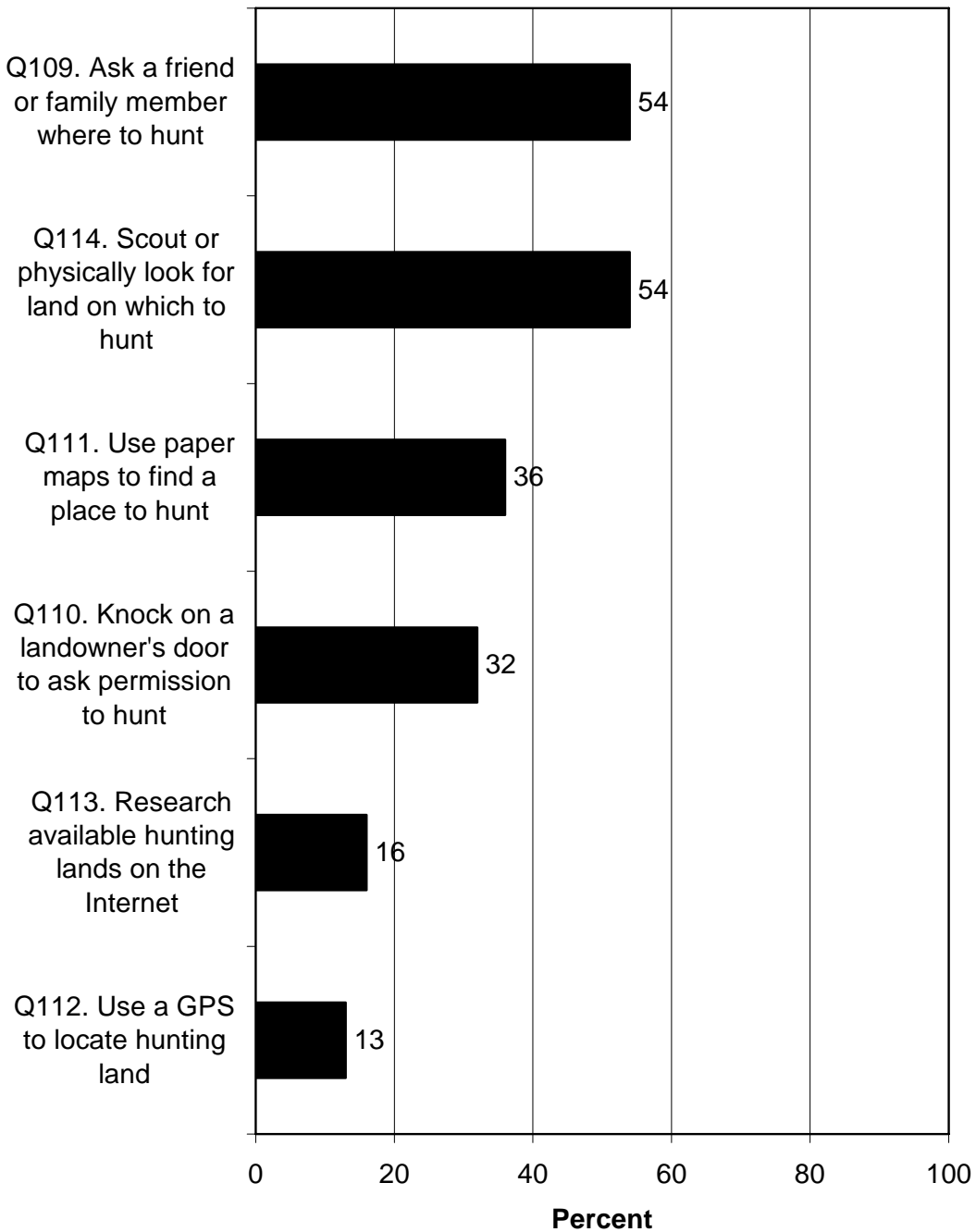
**Q236. How would you rate the usefulness of the information on places to hunt and hunting access on the U.S. Forest Service website to you personally in planning your hunting trips in your state? (Asked of those who used the website to look for information on places to hunt and hunting access.)**



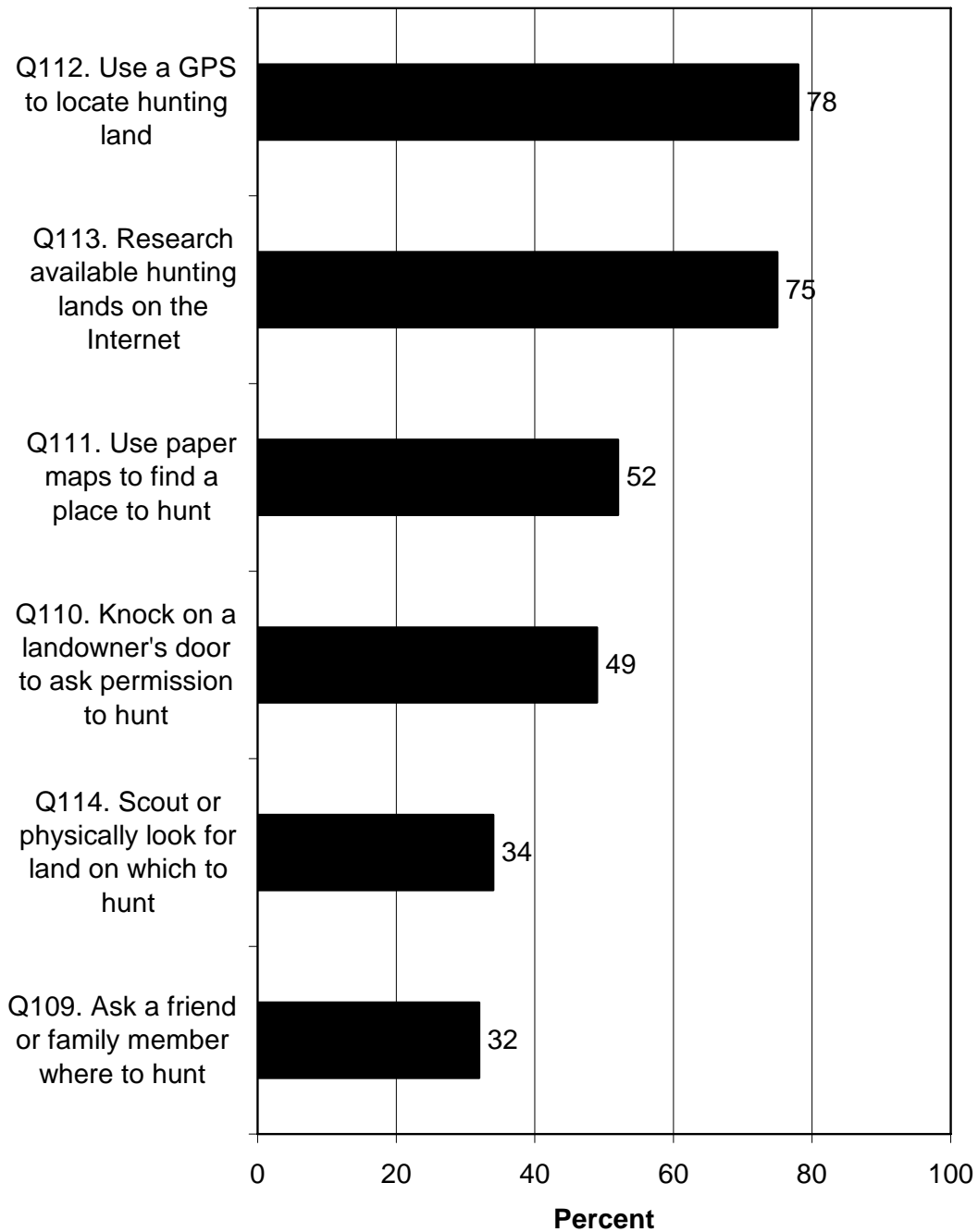
**Percent who always do the following when deciding where to hunt (species) in (state).**



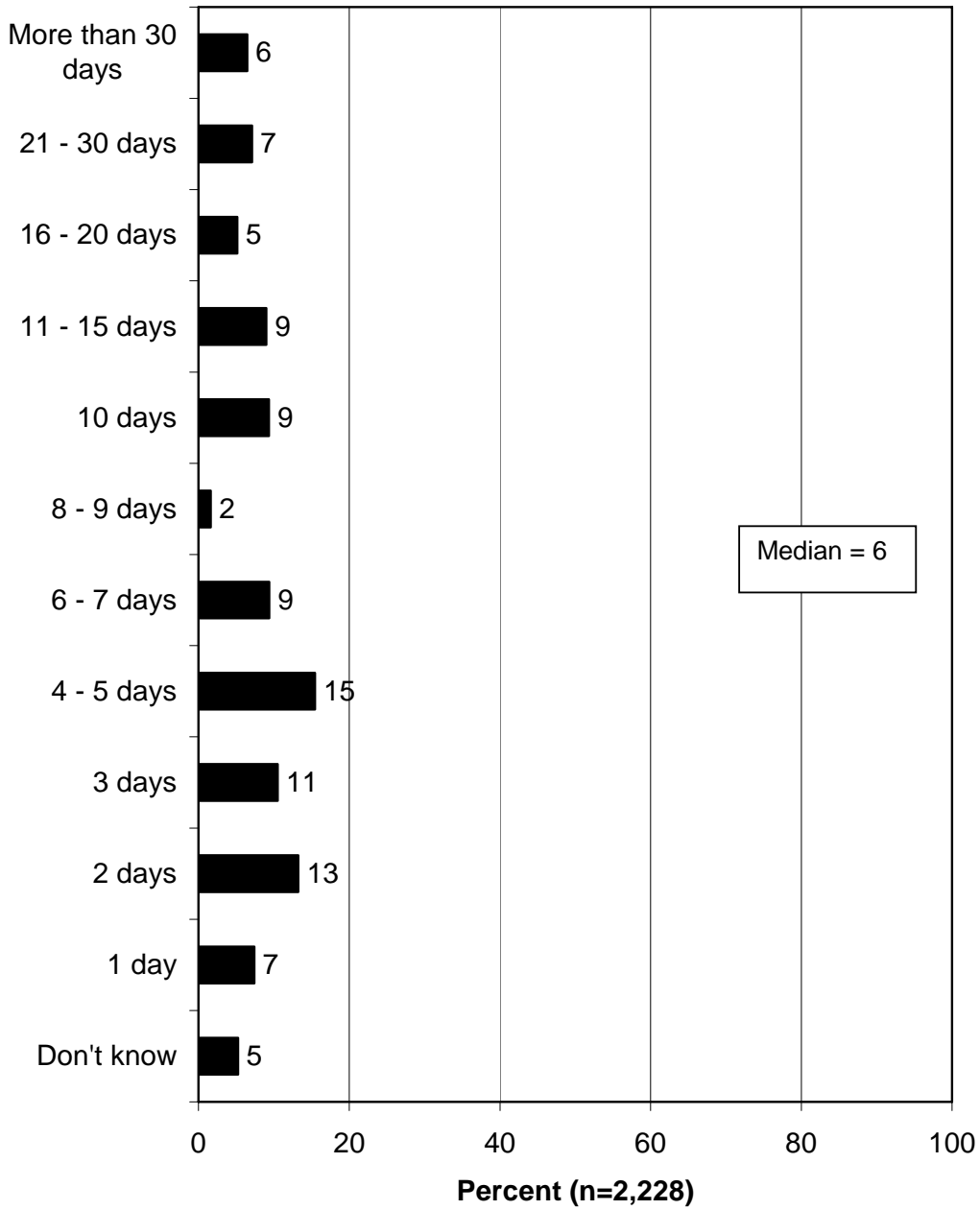
**Percent who always or sometimes do the following when deciding where to hunt (species) in (state).**



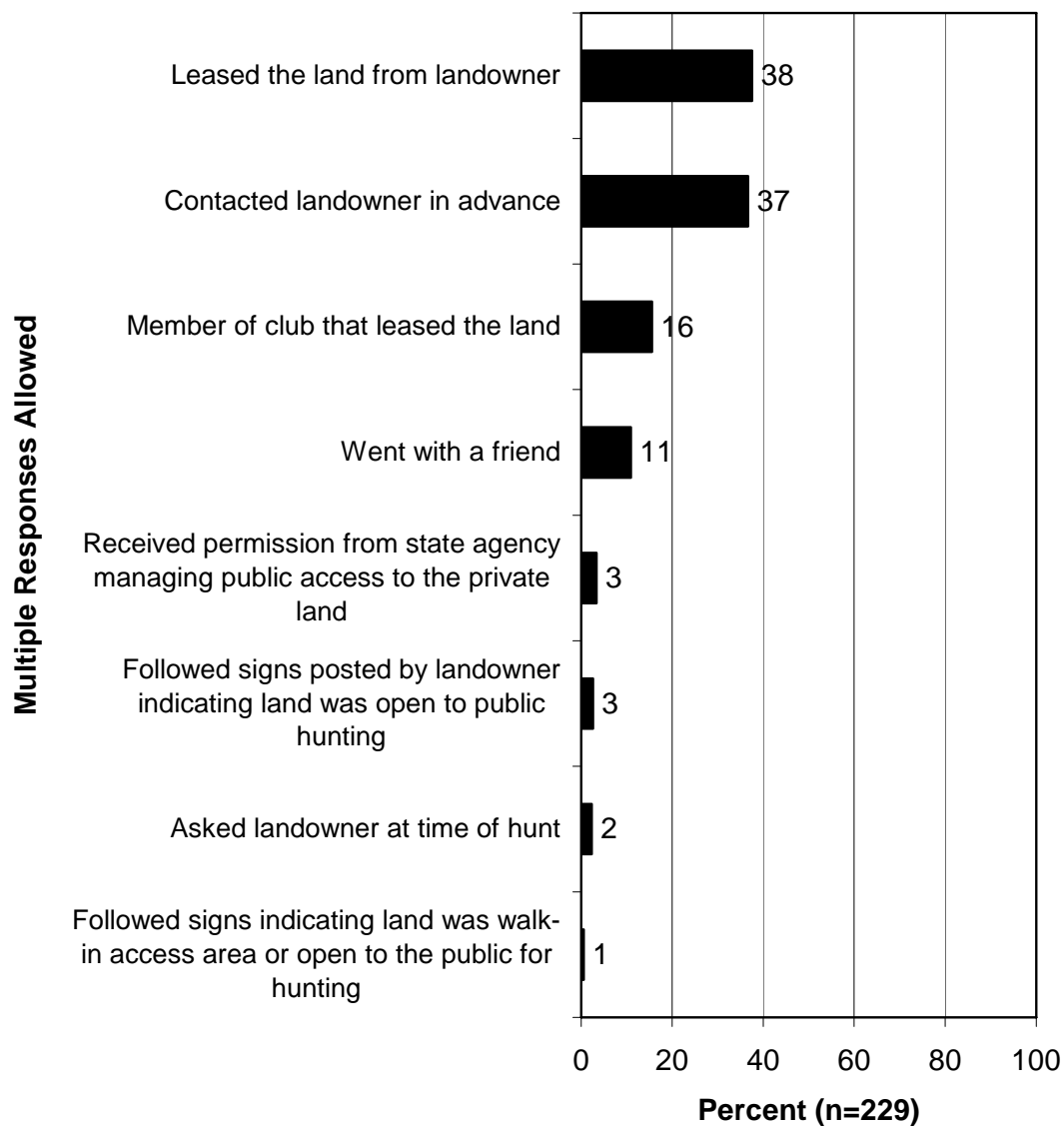
**Percent who never do the following when deciding where to hunt (species) in (state).**



**Q115. About how many days do you usually scout for land on which to hunt for (species) each year in your state?**



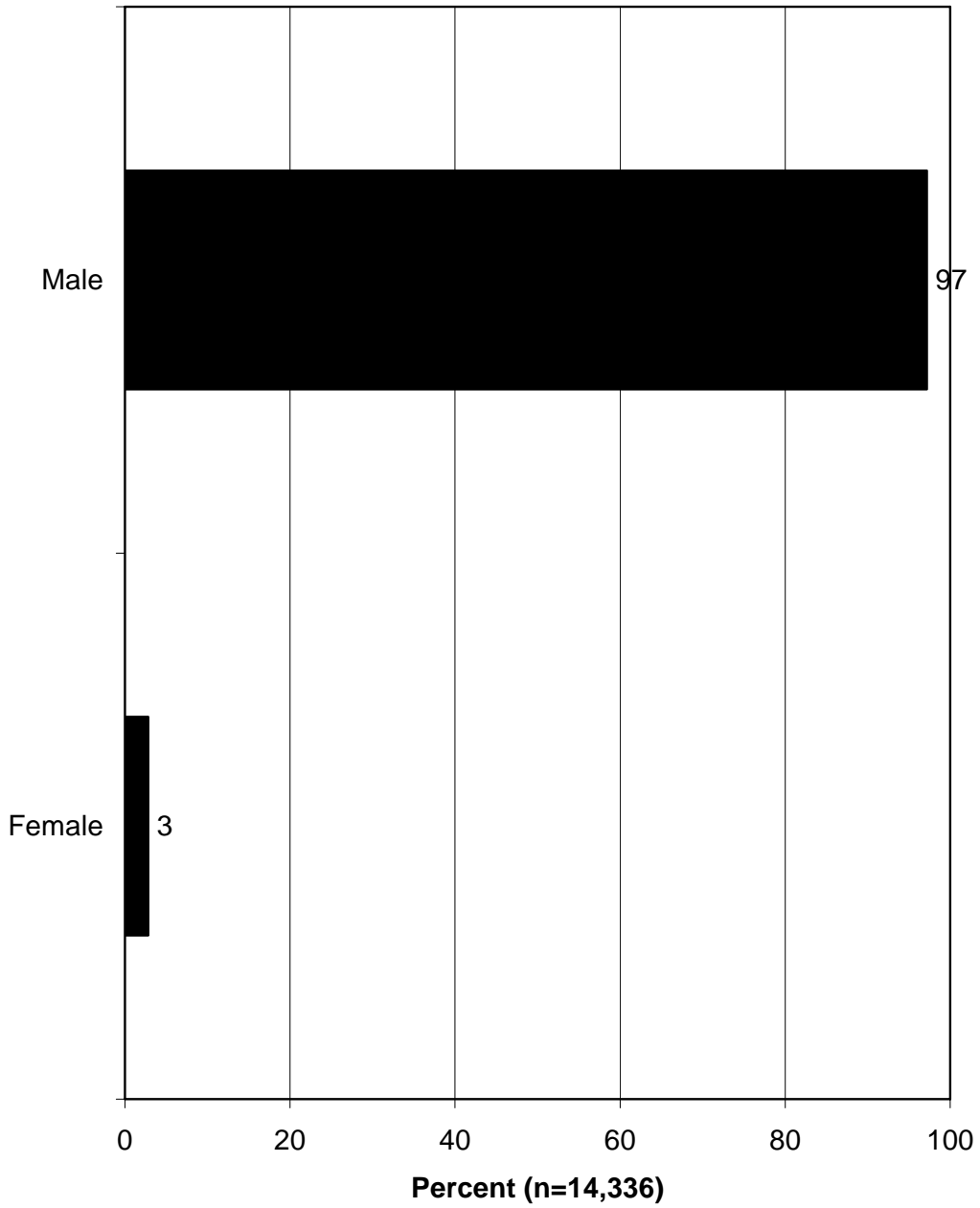
**Q82. In the past 5 years, when you have hunted on private land owned by someone you did not know, how did you get permission to hunt on the land? (Asked of those who hunted their primary species on private lands at least half the time and who indicated that those lands are owned by someone that they did not know prior to hunting on those lands.)**



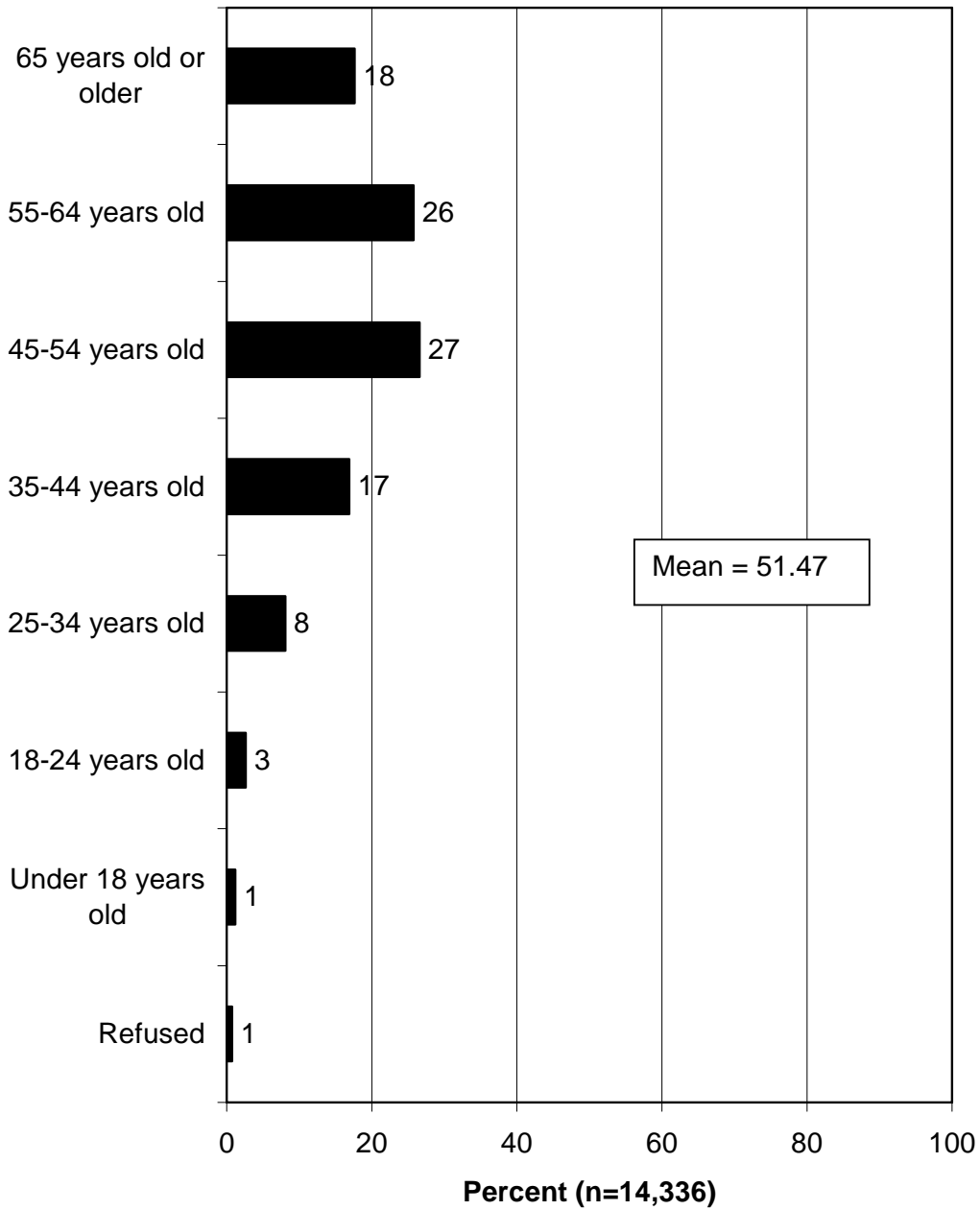
## **DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

- Most hunters nationwide in the survey are male (97%).
  
- The ages of hunters nationwide are shown, which follow a bell-curve. The mean age is 51.5 years old.
  
- The number of years of residency in their state is shown, with the answers well-distributed: the mean is 43.6 years.
  
- Hunters in the survey are predominantly from a rural area (44%), with the rest split between a small city/town (27%) and a large city/urban area or a suburban area (27%).
  
- Educational levels are shown: 63% of hunters nationwide have some college or trade school coursework (with or without a degree), and 46% have at least an Associate's or trade school degree, with or without a higher degree.

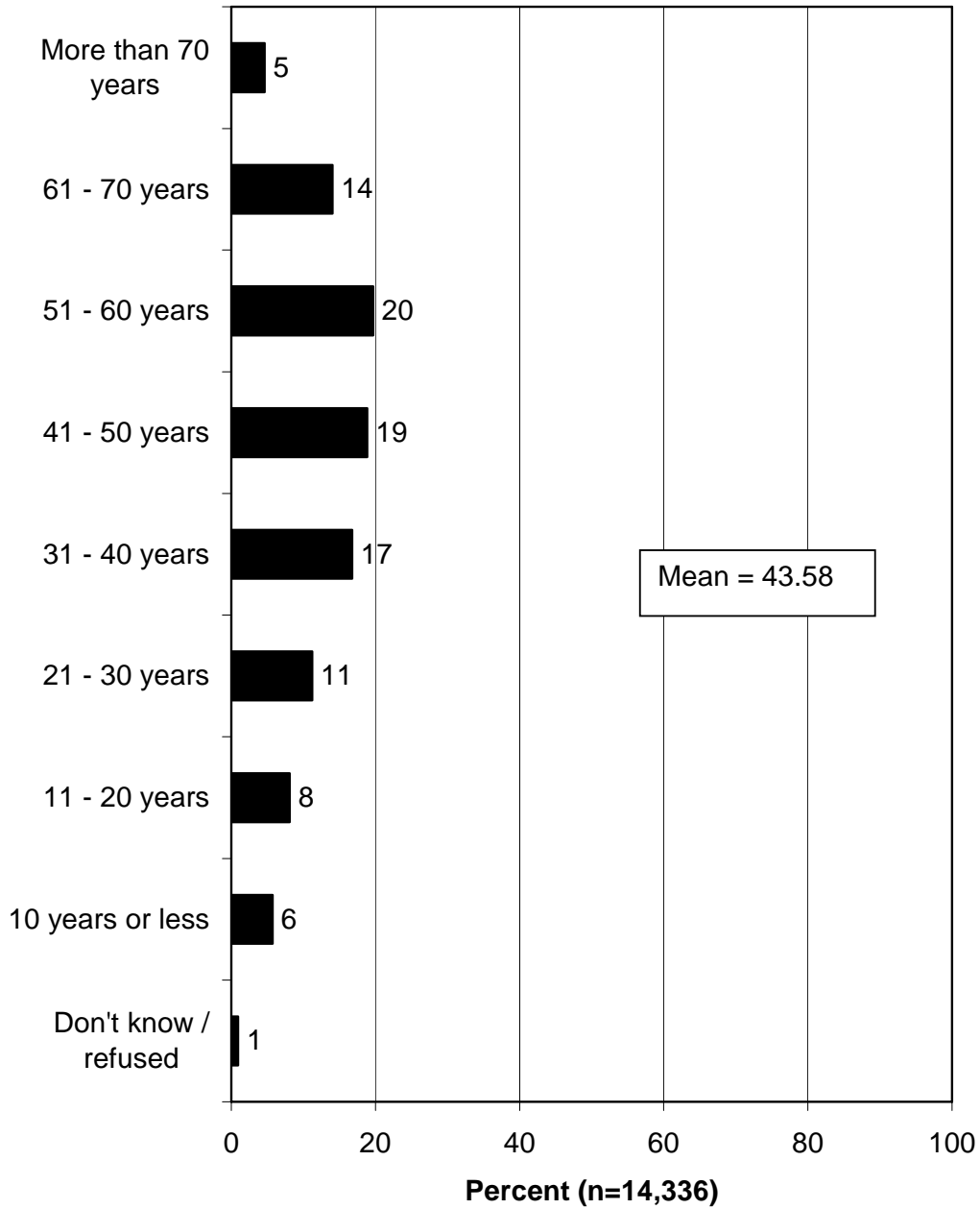
**Q248. Respondent's gender (observed, not asked, by interviewer).**



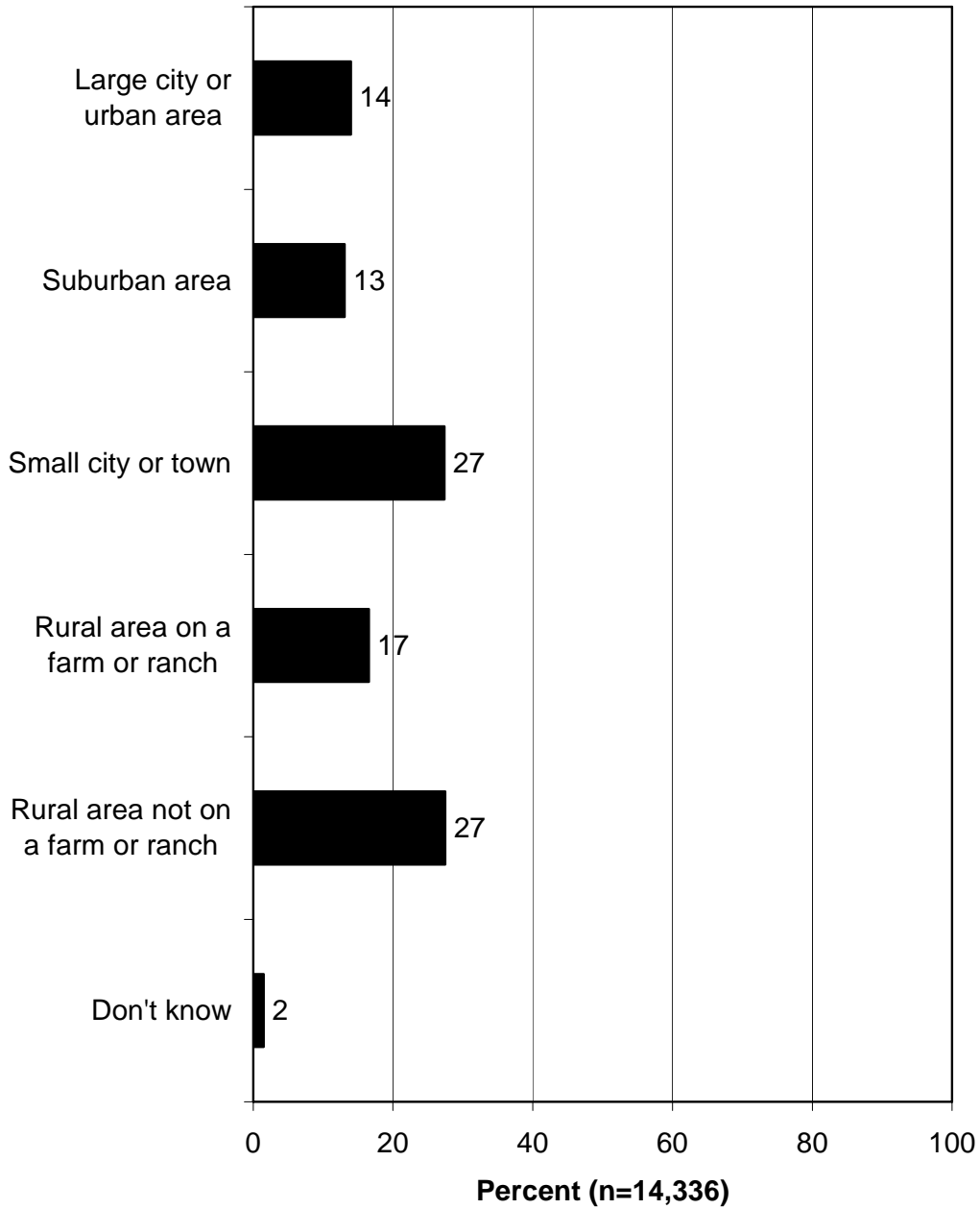
### Q242. Respondent's age.



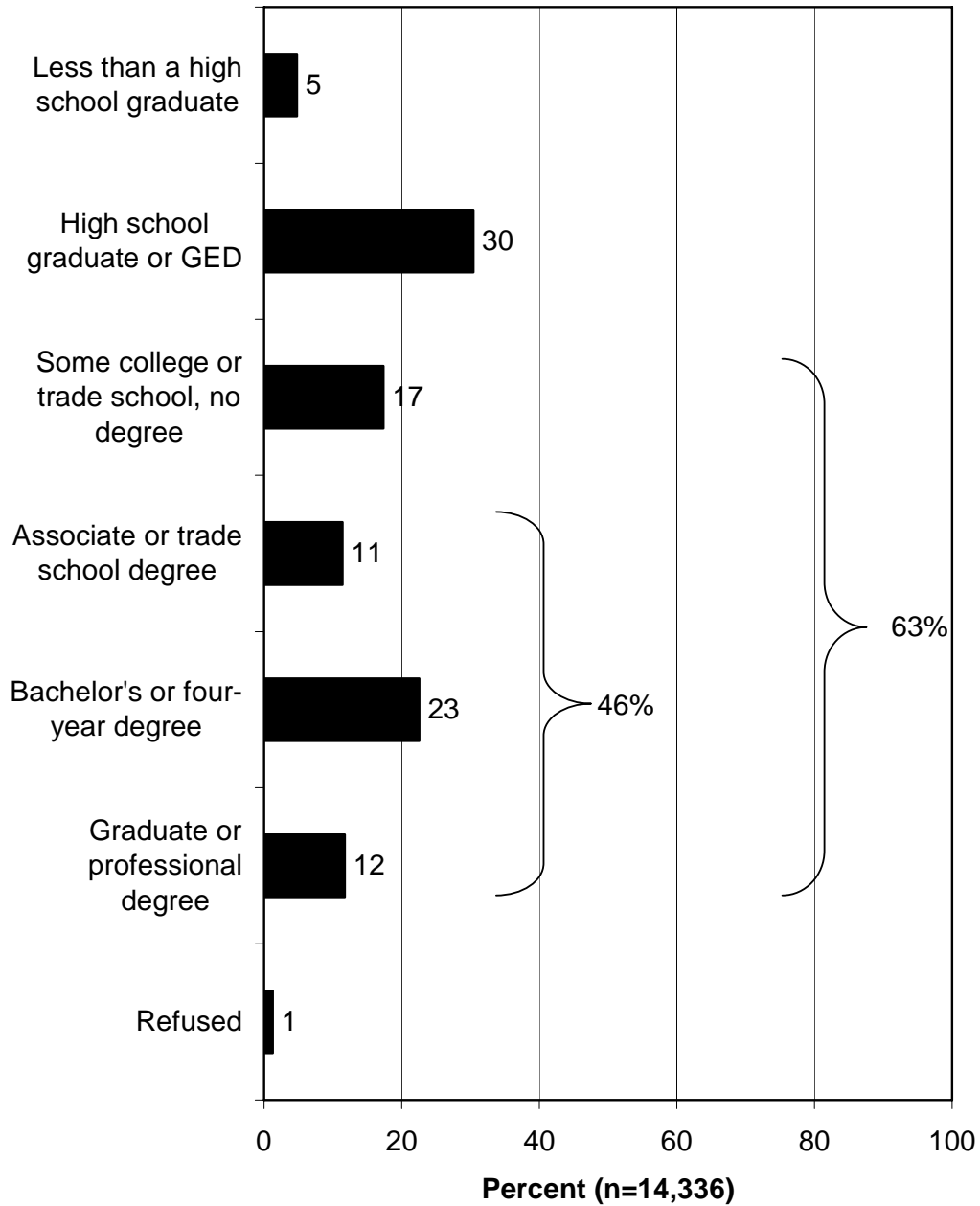
**Q238. How many years have you been a resident of your state?**



**Q240. Which of the following statements best describes where you currently live?**



**Q241. Which of the following statements best describes the highest level of formal education you have completed?**



## **APPENDIX A: DESCRIPTIONS OF HUNTING ACCESS PROGRAMS USED NATIONALLY**

### **Open Fields**

This national program provides incentives to landowners to allow public access for hunting. It is essentially a funding source to help states implement existing programs and/or develop new ones. In exchange for opening their lands for hunting, the state pays landowners a modest fee.

### **Conservation Reserve Program**

The CRP, which is a federal program, pays farmers to take agricultural lands out of production to achieve conservation objectives, including reduced soil erosion and provision of wildlife habitat. This program is purely a habitat enhancement program rather than an access program—there are no requirements that landowners provide access; nevertheless, many hunters use these lands with the landowners' permission.

### **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Waterfowl Production Areas (WPAs)**

WPAs, which are a subset of the lands in the National Wildlife Refuge System, are public lands purchased by the federal government for the purpose of increasing the production of migratory birds, particularly waterfowl. These areas preserve wetlands and grasslands critical to migratory birds including waterfowl. Funding for the acquisition of these areas comes from sales of the Federal Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps (colloquially called "Duck Stamps"). WPAs are open to hunting and fishing.

### **Wheretohunt website / Huntinfo website**

Both of these addresses are for the same site. This website is maintained by the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF). The site provides links to all state hunting agencies.

### **Huntandshoot website**

This site, also maintained by the NSSF, has links to the above sites. This site also includes a listing, state-by-state, of various hunting (and shooting) programs available in that state.

## **ABOUT RESPONSIVE MANAGEMENT**

Responsive Management is a nationally recognized public opinion and attitude survey research firm specializing in natural resource and outdoor recreation issues. Its mission is to help natural resource and outdoor recreation agencies and organizations better understand and work with their constituents, customers, and the public.

Utilizing its in-house, full-service, computer-assisted telephone and mail survey center with 45 professional interviewers, Responsive Management has conducted more than 1,000 telephone surveys, mail surveys, personal interviews, and focus groups, as well as numerous marketing and communications plans, need assessments, and program evaluations on natural resource and outdoor recreation issues.

Clients include most of the federal and state natural resource, outdoor recreation, and environmental agencies, and most of the top conservation organizations. Responsive Management also collects attitude and opinion data for many of the nation's top universities, including the University of Southern California, Virginia Tech, Colorado State University, Auburn, Texas Tech, the University of California—Davis, Michigan State University, the University of Florida, North Carolina State University, Penn State, West Virginia University, and others.

Among the wide range of work Responsive Management has completed during the past 20 years are studies on how the general population values natural resources and outdoor recreation, and their opinions on and attitudes toward an array of natural resource-related issues. Responsive Management has conducted dozens of studies of selected groups of outdoor recreationists, including anglers, boaters, hunters, wildlife watchers, birdwatchers, park visitors, historic site visitors, hikers, and campers, as well as selected groups within the general population, such as landowners, farmers, urban and rural residents, women, senior citizens, children, Hispanics, Asians, and African-Americans. Responsive Management has conducted studies on environmental education, endangered species, waterfowl, wetlands, water quality, and the reintroduction of numerous species such as wolves, grizzly bears, the California condor, and the Florida panther.

Responsive Management has conducted research on numerous natural resource ballot initiatives and referenda and helped agencies and organizations find alternative funding and increase their memberships and donations. Responsive Management has conducted major agency and organizational program needs assessments and helped develop more effective programs based upon a solid foundation of fact. Responsive Management has developed websites for natural resource organizations, conducted training workshops on the human dimensions of natural resources, and presented numerous studies each year in presentations and as keynote speakers at major natural resource, outdoor recreation, conservation, and environmental conferences and meetings.

Responsive Management has conducted research on public attitudes toward natural resources and outdoor recreation in almost every state in the United States, as well as in Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Japan. Responsive Management routinely conducts surveys in Spanish and has also conducted surveys and focus groups in Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Vietnamese.

Responsive Management's research has been featured in most of the nation's major media, including CNN, ESPN, *The Washington Times*, *The New York Times*, *Newsweek*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and on the front pages of *The Washington Post* and *USA Today*.

Visit the Responsive Management website at:

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