



## Survey of Nebraska Landowner Attitudes on Deer Damage

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## Executive Summary

- Most Nebraska landowners reported that white-tailed deer had caused some level damage to their property in the past 24 months (70%), “light damage” was the most frequent response (43%).
- Just under half of Nebraska landowners, who reported having mule deer on their land, reported any damage due to mule deer (49%).
- Damage caused by white-tailed and mule deer to landowner property was most frequently reported as “Somewhat unacceptable” (31% and 29%, respectively) by the survey respondents.
- A greater proportion of respondents reported that they “frequently” had whitetail and mule deer on their property (69% and 38%, respectively) compared to the response options of “never” (3% and 25%, respectively), “occasionally” (24% and 27%, respectively), and “don’t know” (3% and 10%, respectively).
- A large majority of respondents had never contacted Nebraska Game and Parks Commission for help addressing deer damage (93%).
- A majority of respondents reported that deer hunting took place on their land (83%).
- Most respondents reported that they did not hunt deer themselves (64% white-tailed; 81% mule) but were most likely to allow access to family (70%) or friends (49%) for hunting permission.
- Most landowners indicated that the number of white-tailed deer on their land was “about what they preferred” (41%), but the number of mule deer was too few (35%).
- Most landowners reported that they had no preference as to the structure of the November firearm season (45%) and preferred the length of the season as it is now (42%).
- Most landowners stated they already have enough hunters on their land when asked what might influence them allow more deer hunters access to their property (62%).

## General Information

This report describes responses to questions from the 2025 “Survey of Nebraska Landowner Attitudes on Deer Damage.” This survey was a tool to analyze Nebraska landowner perspectives on the deer herds residing on their land, the damage caused by deer herds, how landowners might be encouraged to allow deer hunting on their land, and how much deer-hunting landowners are currently allowing on their land. We provide information regarding the design and implementation of the survey as well as summarized responses to questions from the overall respondent pool and responses from individual Deer Management Units.

## Nebraska Landowner-Deer Project Objectives

1. Gather information about Nebraska landowners who own property within Deer Management Units
2. Assess landowner perceptions about deer population size
3. Determine severity of damage caused by deer to landowner property
4. Gauge landowner acceptance of property damage caused by deer
5. Gain a better understanding about how landowners respond to prospective deer hunters and evaluate landowner response to techniques aimed at encouraging landowners to allow more access to deer hunters

## Mode Selection

Biologists at the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and the University of Nebraska held several meetings to design the survey instrument that would properly meet the objectives. A postal survey was used to determine the views of Nebraska landowners. Using this vehicle to collect information allows researchers to generalize results to a larger population. Surveys were mailed to a sample of landowners who owned property in at least one of the 18 Nebraska Deer Management Units. Invitations were distributed on February 5, 2025. A reminder survey was mailed to all landowners on March 7, 2025. The survey period closed on March 21, 2025.

## Survey Results

1) In which Deer Management Unit is the majority of your land located?

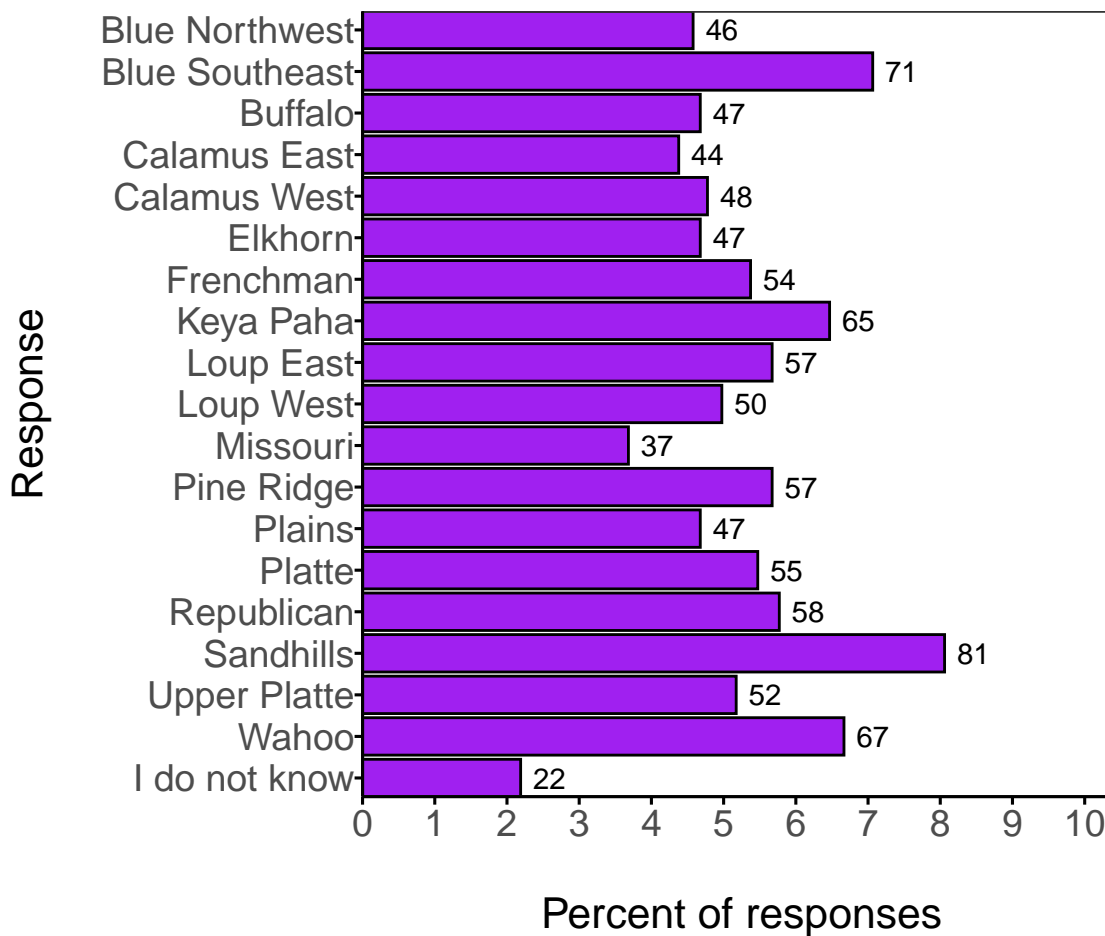


Figure 1: The Nebraska Deer Management Unit in which landowners hold the majority of their land as indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey (N = 1,005). The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

## 2) About how many acres do you operate (own or lease) for agricultural purposes?

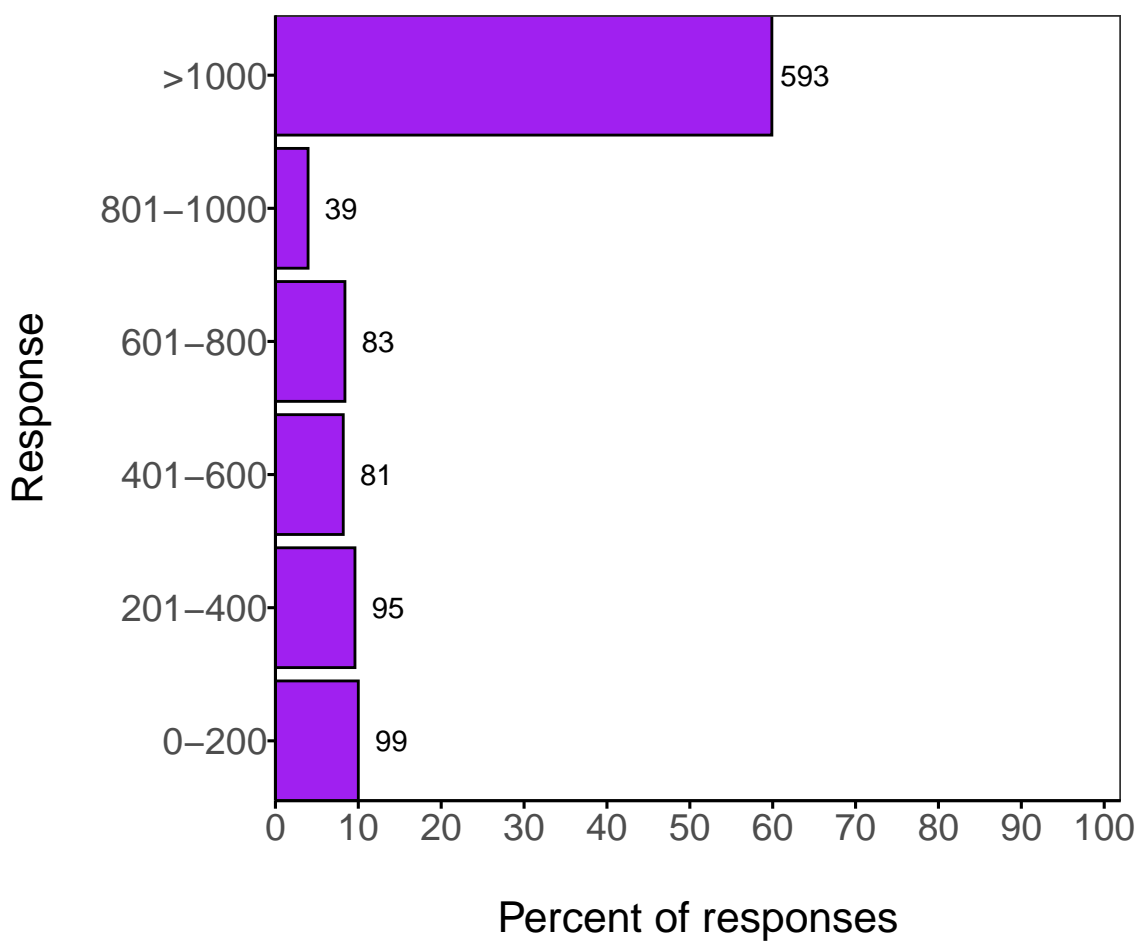


Figure 2: The approximate number of acres owned or leased by landowners as indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey (N = 990). The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

3) To your knowledge, how frequently did you have either of the following deer species on your land in the past 24 months?

White-tailed deer

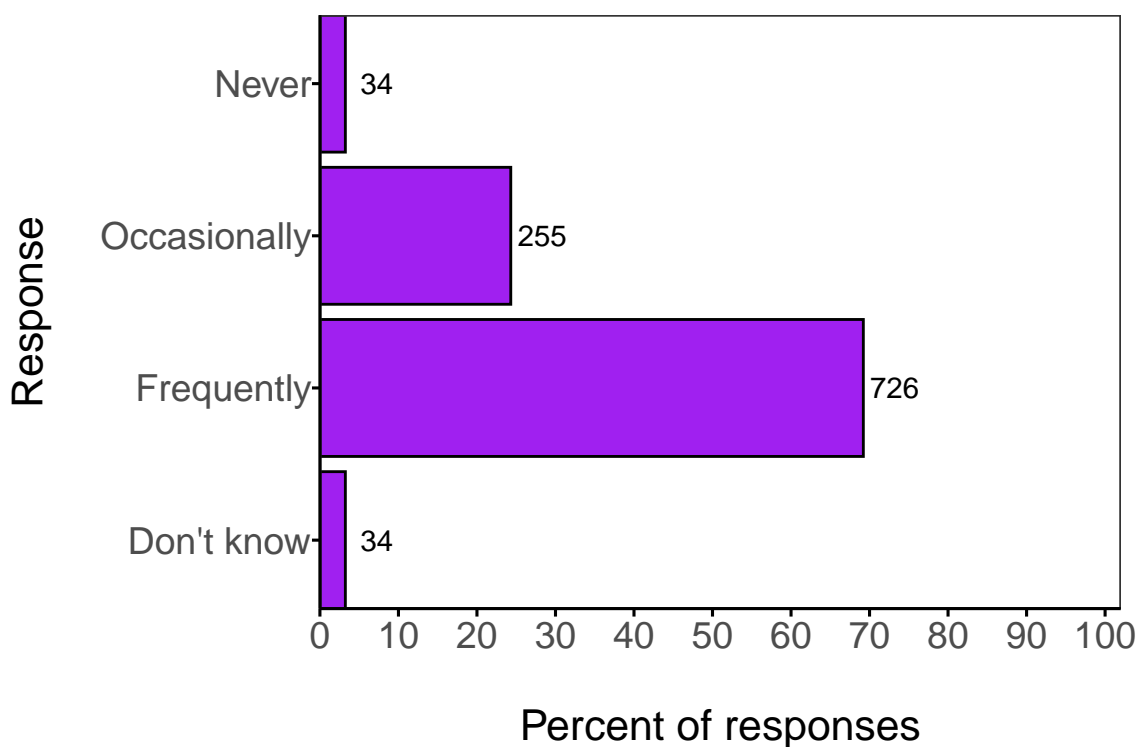


Figure 3: The frequency in which landowners had white-tailed deer on their land as indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey (N = 1,049). The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

## Mule deer

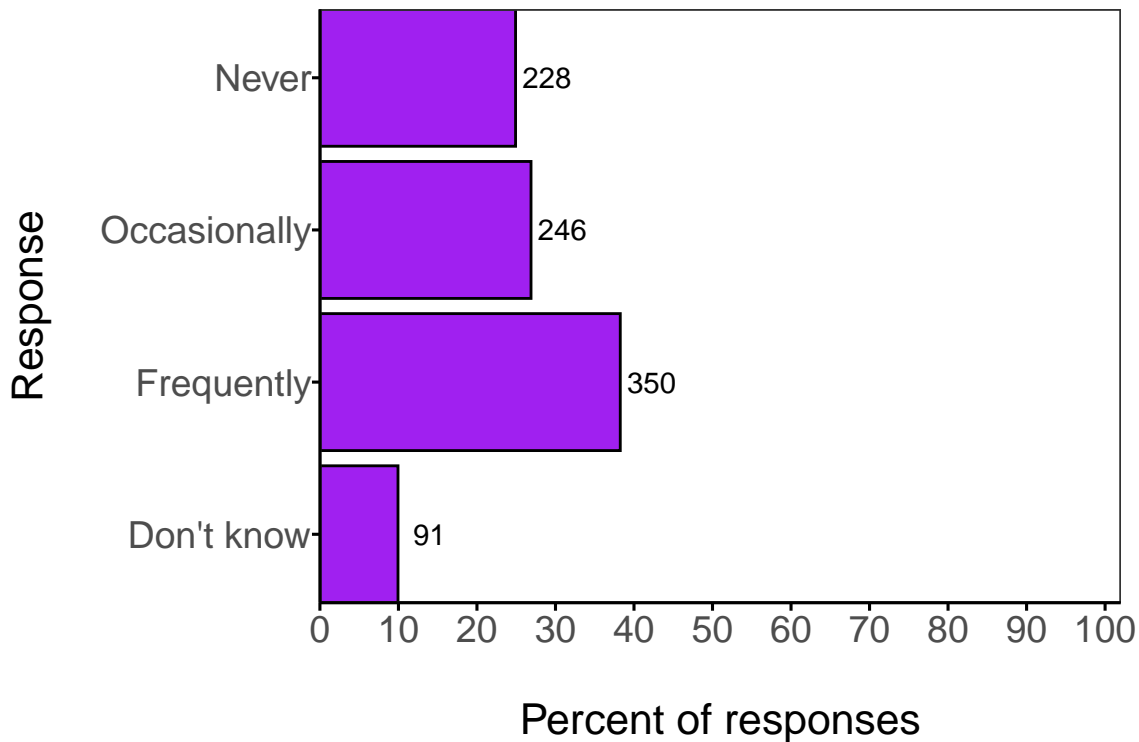


Figure 4: The frequency in which landowners had mule deer on their land as indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey (N = 915). The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents.



4) How much, if any, damage from white-tailed deer occurred on your land during the past 24 months?

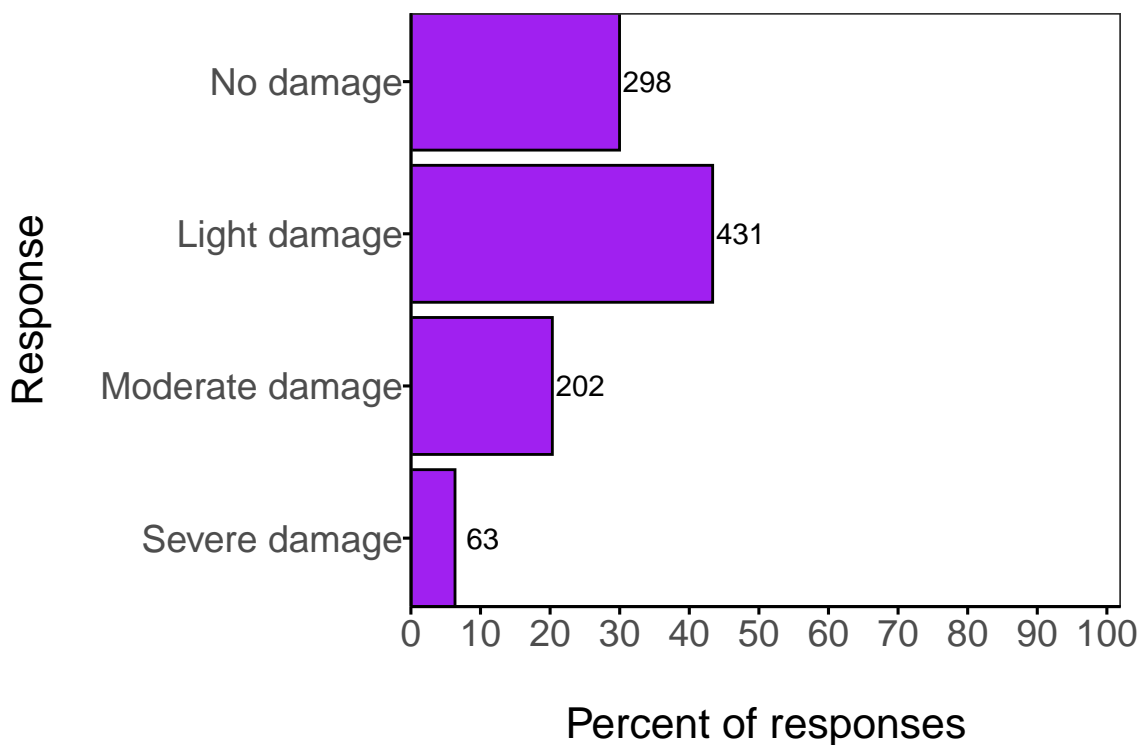


Figure 5: The severity of damage caused by white-tailed deer to landowner property in the previous 24 months indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey (N = 994). The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents. Responses are limited to individuals who reported having white-tailed deer on their property.

4a) How acceptable or unacceptable is the amount of damage inflicted by white-tailed deer in the past 24 months?

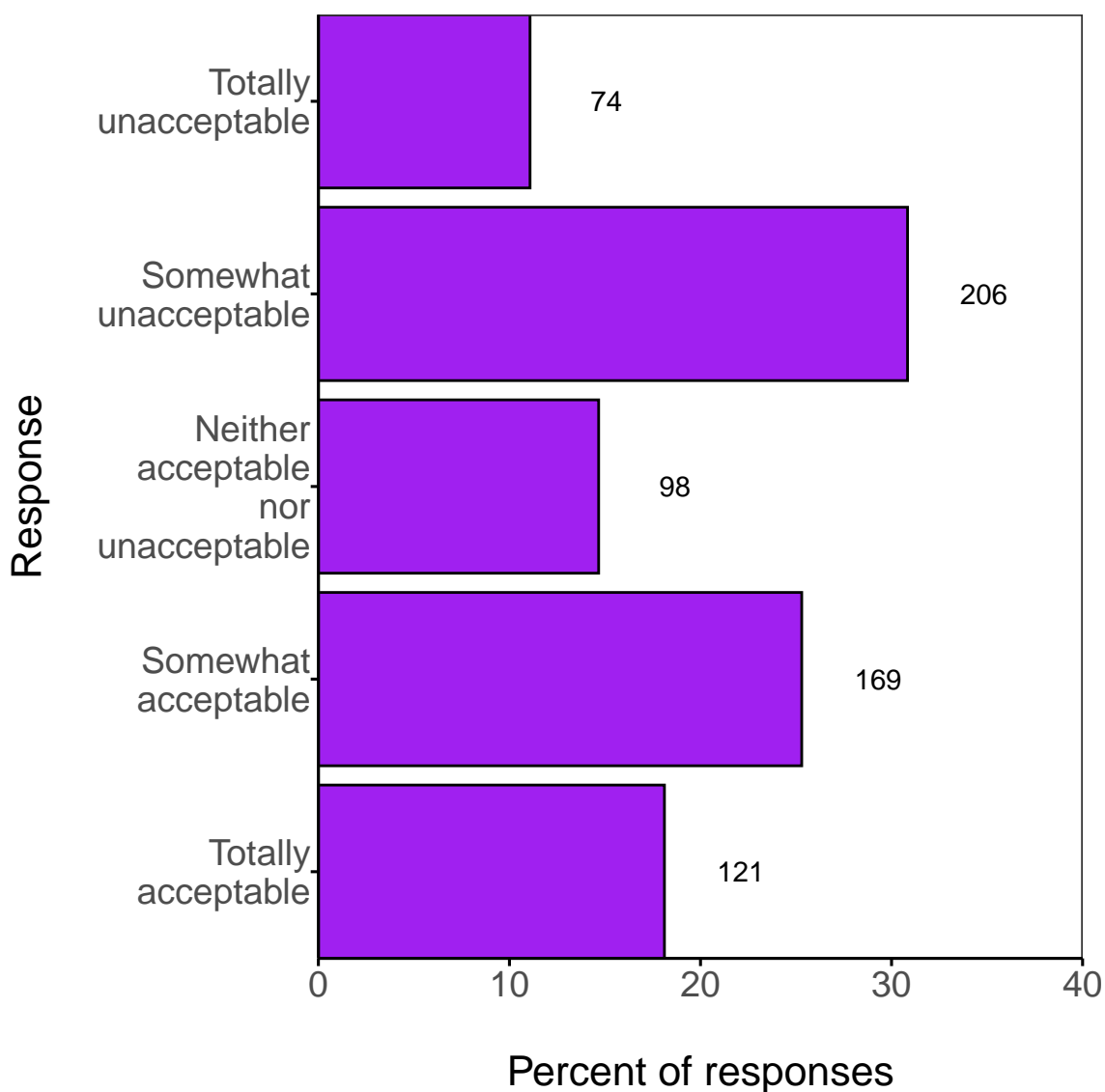


Figure 6: The level of acceptability of damage caused by white-tailed deer to landowner property in the previous 24 months indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey (N = 668). The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents. Responses are limited to individuals who reported having white-tailed deer on their property and reported some level of white-tailed deer damage.

4b) What kind of damage from white-tailed deer occurred on your land? (select all that apply)

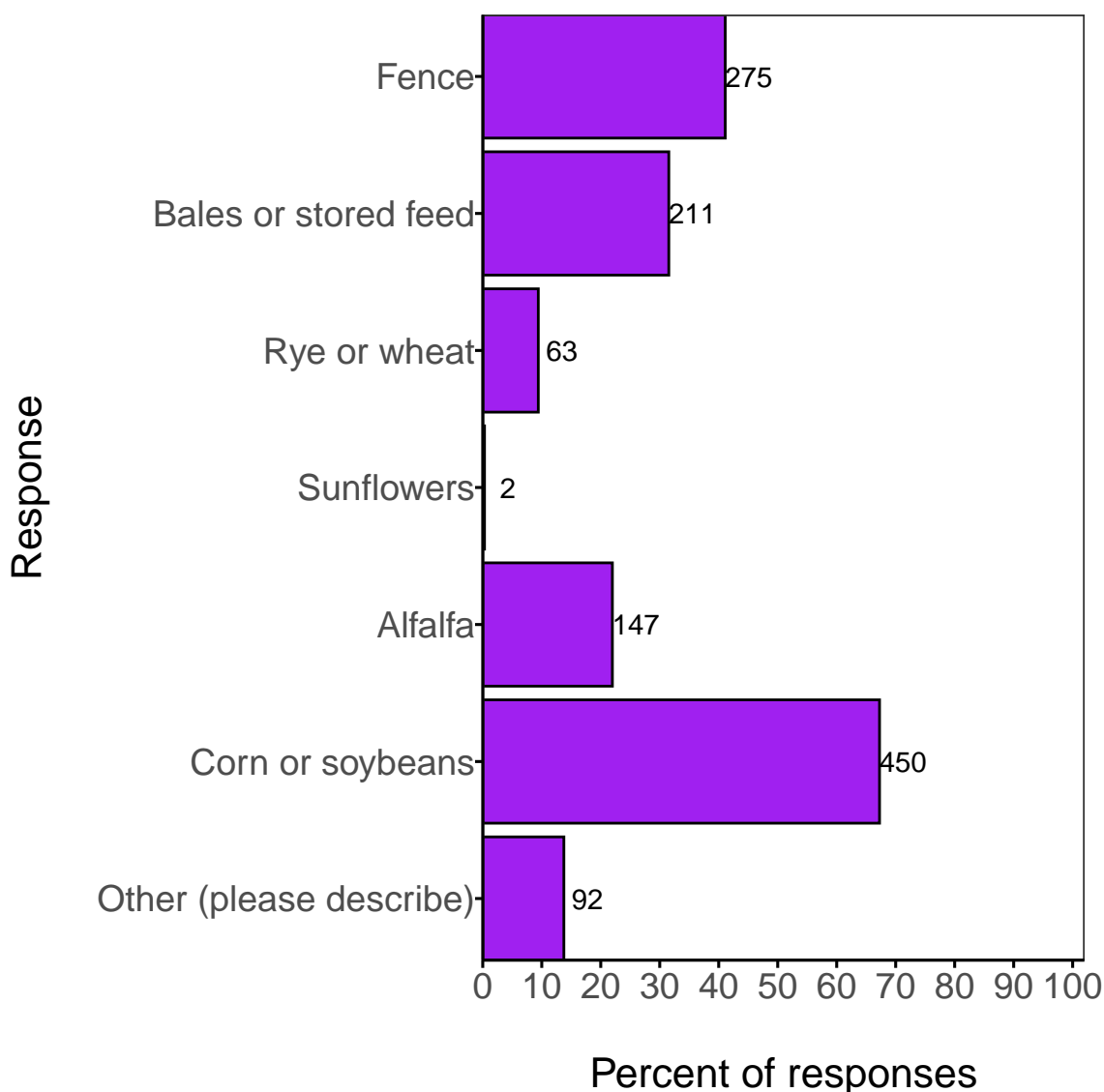


Figure 7: The type of damage caused by white-tailed deer to landowner property in the previous 24 months indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents. Responses are limited to individuals who reported having white-tailed deer on their property and reported some level of white-tailed deer damage (N = 669). Sum of response percentages exceed 100% as respondents could select multiple types of damage.

5) How much, if any, damage from mule deer occurred on your land during the past 24 months?

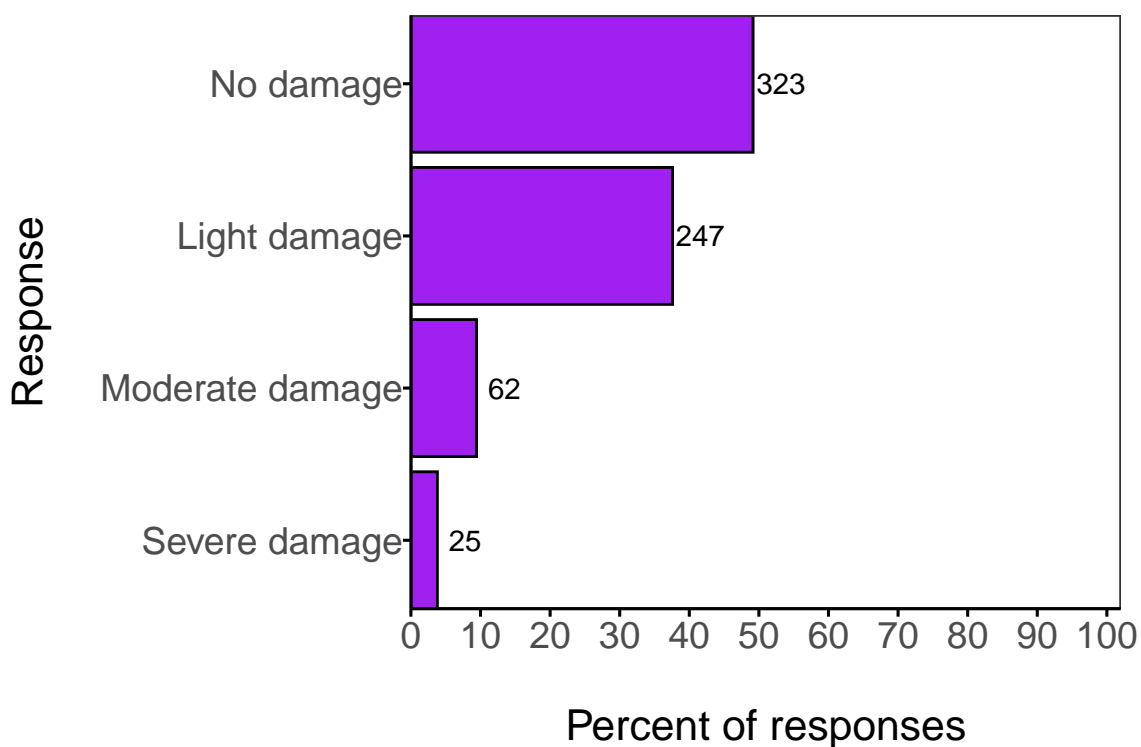


Figure 8: The severity of damage caused by mule deer to landowner property in the previous 24 months indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents. Responses are limited to individuals who reported having mule deer on their property (N = 657).

5a) How acceptable or unacceptable is the amount of damage inflicted by mule deer in the past 24 months?

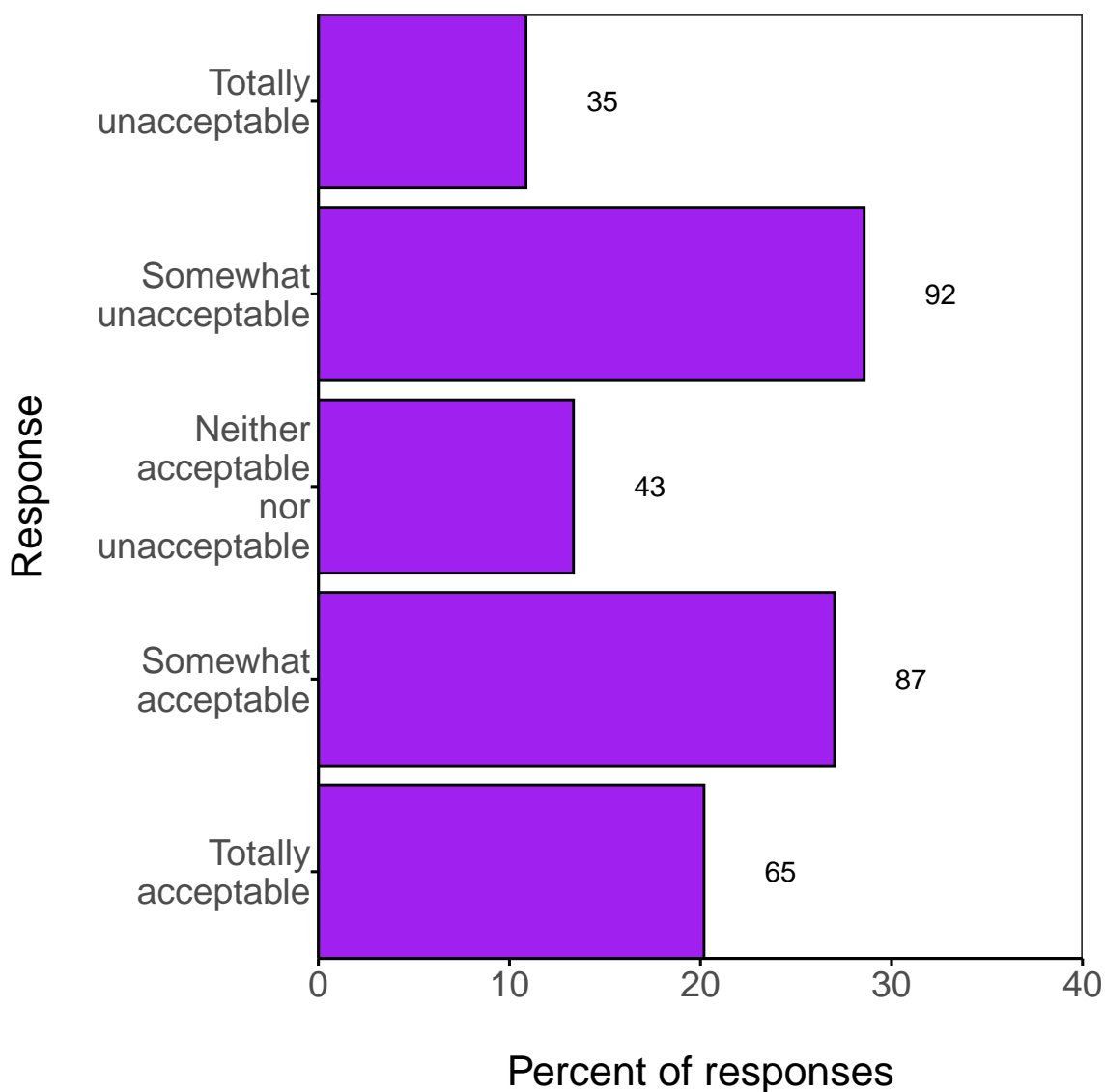


Figure 9: The level of acceptability of damage caused by mule deer to landowner property in the previous 24 months indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents. Responses are limited to individuals who reported having mule deer on their property and reported some level of mule deer damage (N = 322).

5b) What kind of damage from mule deer occurred on your land? (select all that apply)

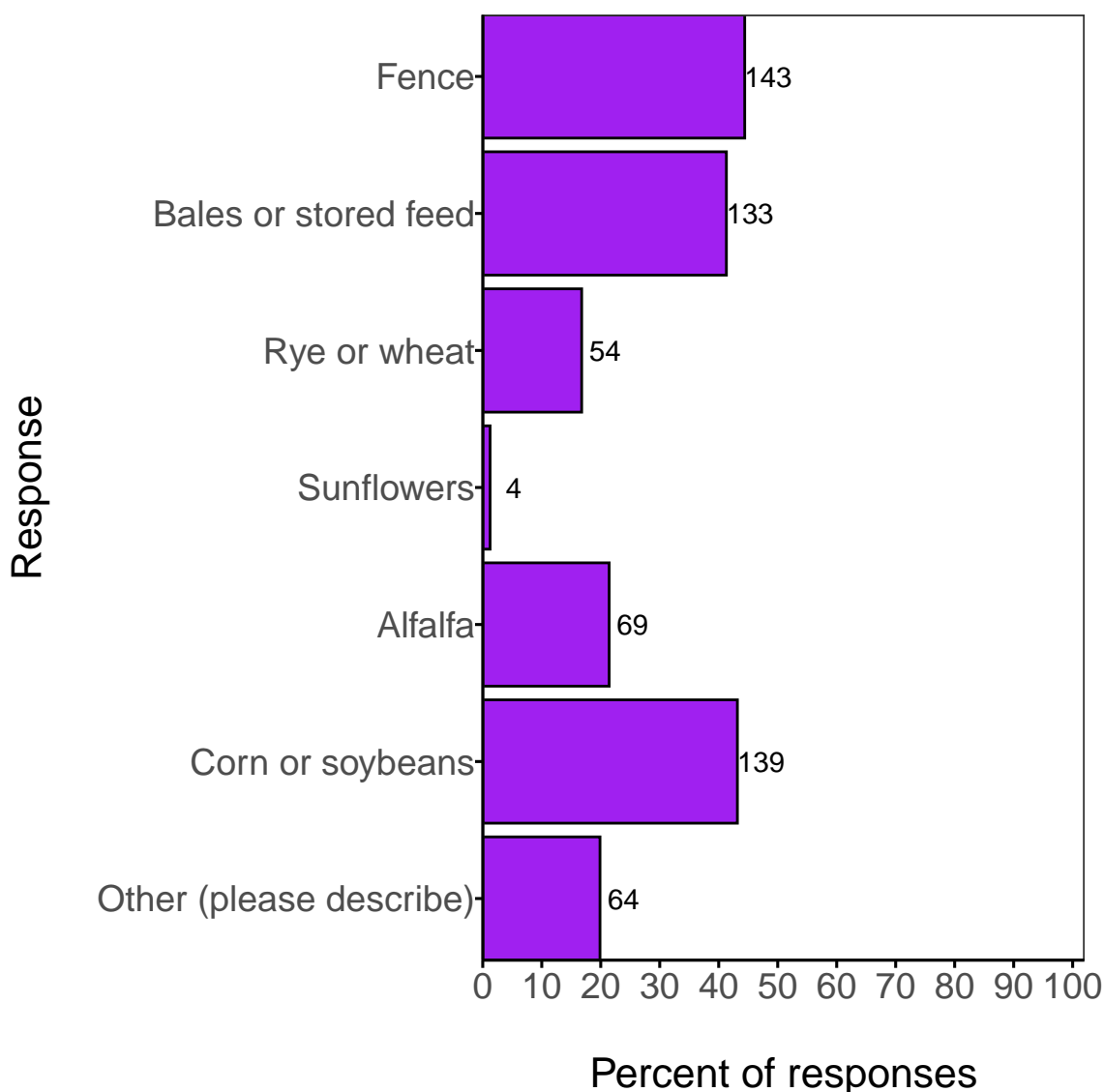


Figure 10: The type of damage caused by mule deer to landowner property in the previous 24 months indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents. Responses are limited to individuals who reported having mule deer on their property and reported some level of mule deer damage (N = 322). Sum of response percentages exceed 100% as respondents could select multiple types of damage.

6) Have you ever contacted the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission for assistance in reducing deer damage on your land?

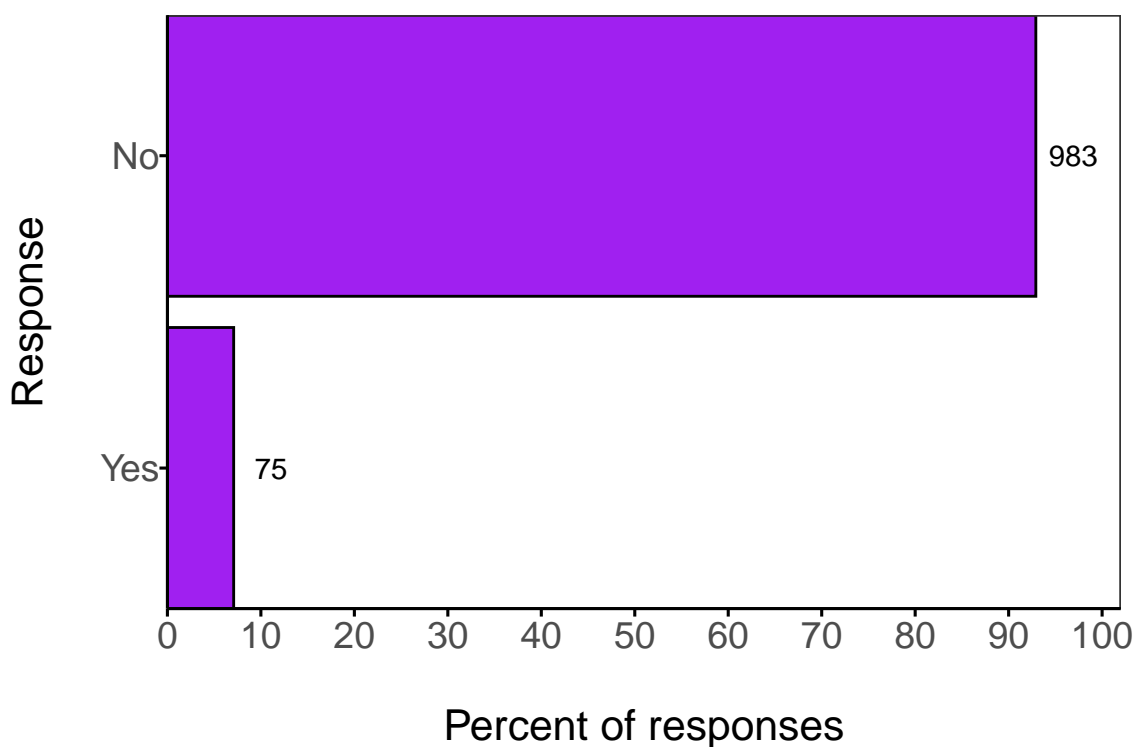


Figure 11: Whether or not landowners ever contacted Nebraska Game and Parks Commission for assistance in reducing deer damage indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey ( $n = 1,058$ ). The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

6a) In what year did you last contact the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission concerning damage caused by deer

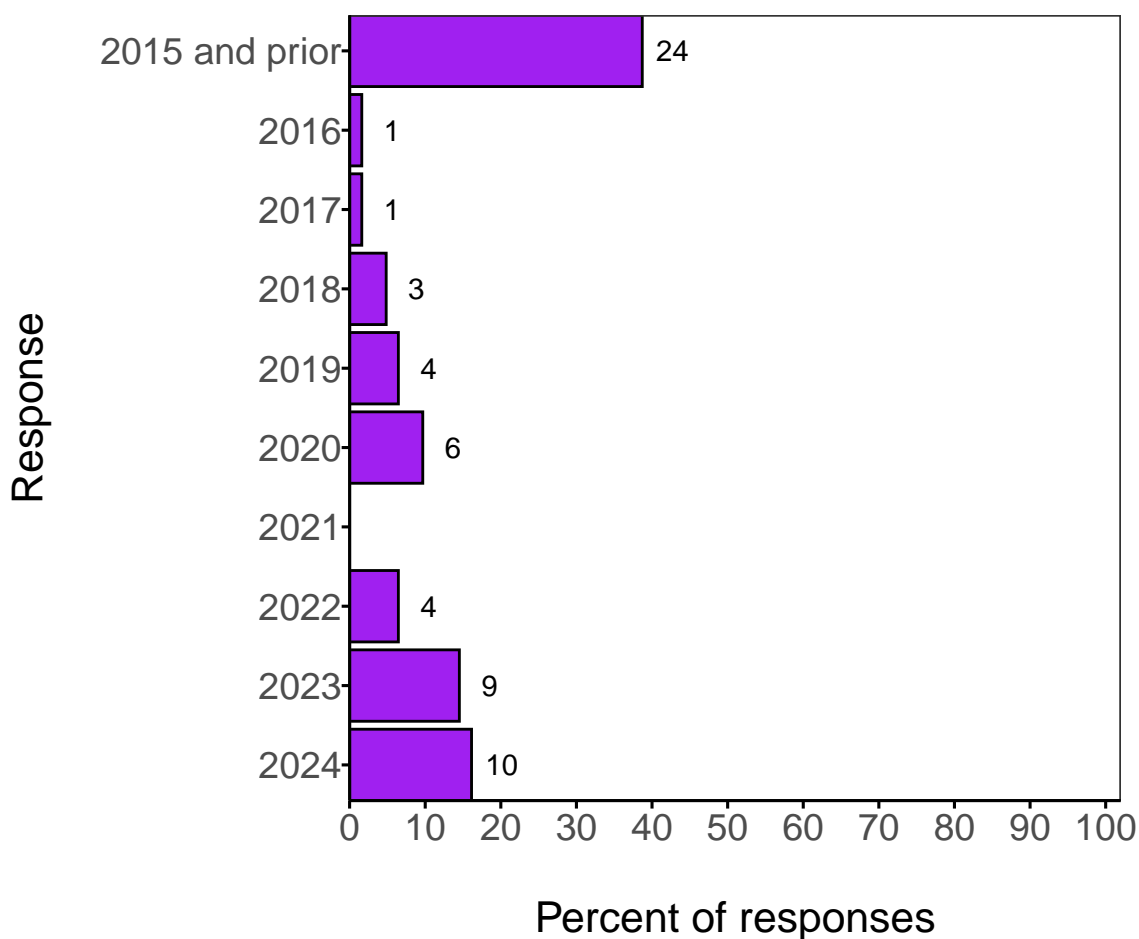


Figure 12: Year in which landowners most recently contacted NGPC concerning damage caused by deer indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey (N = 62). The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents.



6b) How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the assistance you received?

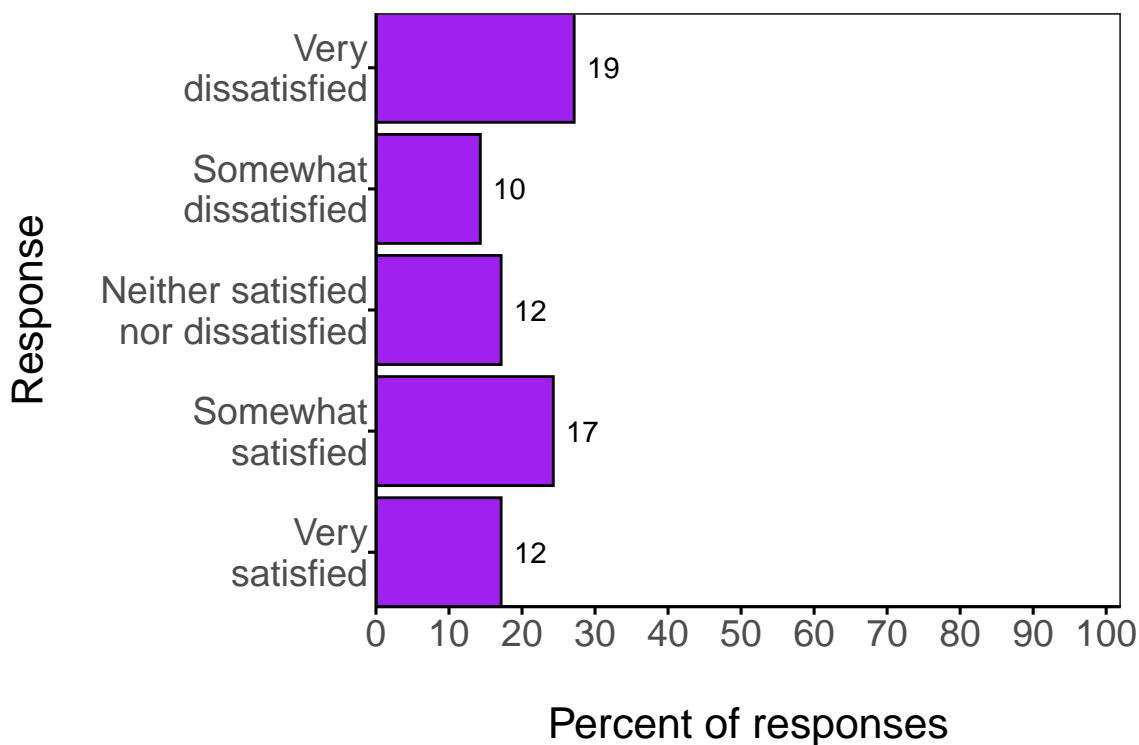


Figure 13: Level of satisfaction by landowners who sought assistance from NGPC concerning assistance with deer damage indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey (N = 70). The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

7) Are you aware that the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission may issue permits to landowners to kill deer outside the hunting season to help reduce damage to their property?

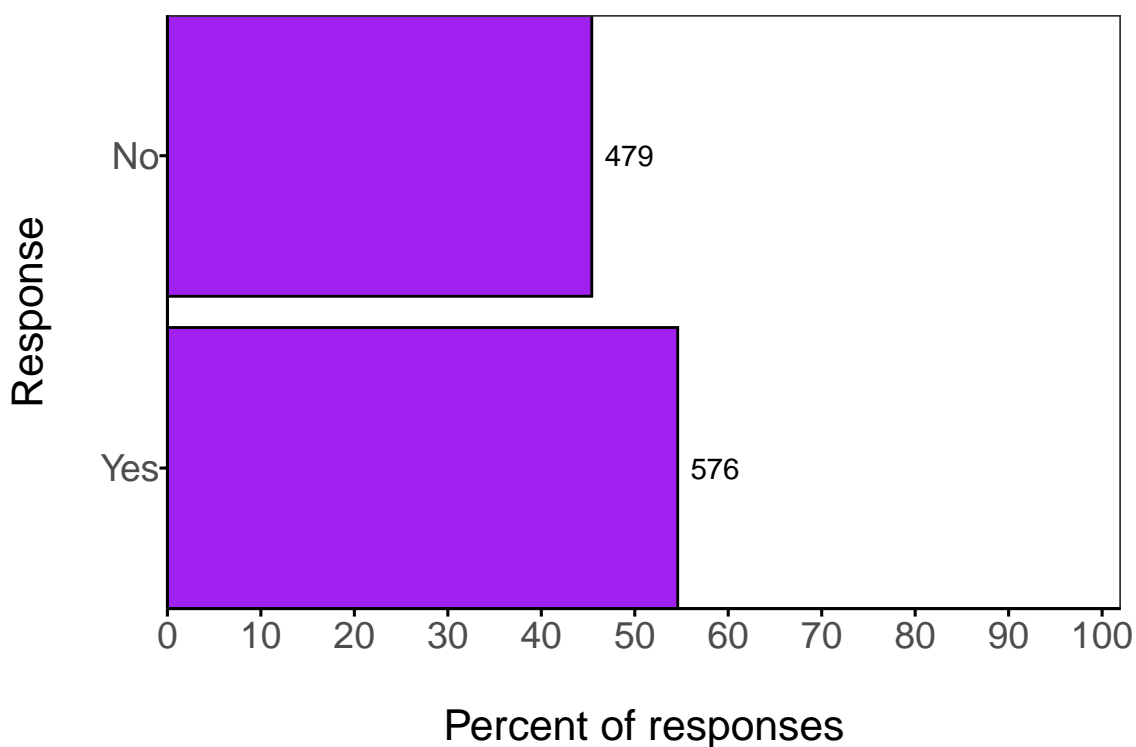


Figure 14: Knowledge of permit availability for landowners to kill deer outside of the hunting season to help reduce damage to property indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey (N = 1,055). The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

8) Did anyone (including yourself) hunt deer on your land during the past 24 months?

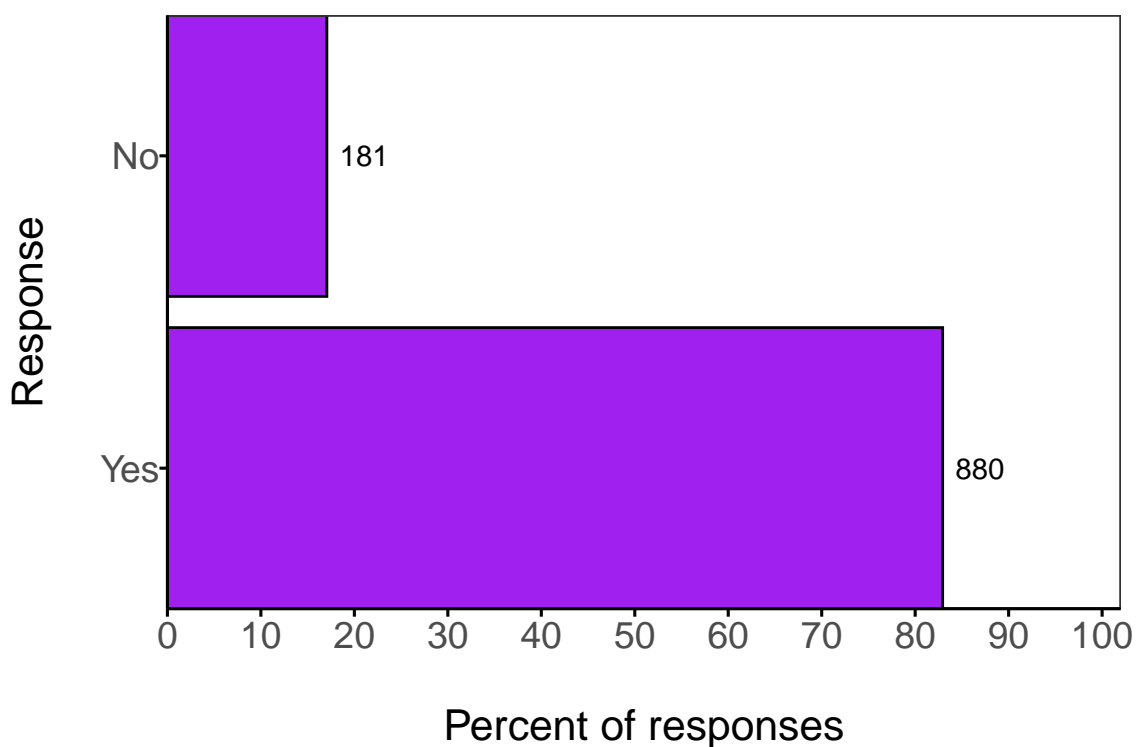


Figure 15: Whether or not any deer hunting occurred on landowner property in the previous 24 months indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey (N = 1,061). The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

8a) Did you yourself hunt white-tailed deer on your land? (select all that apply)

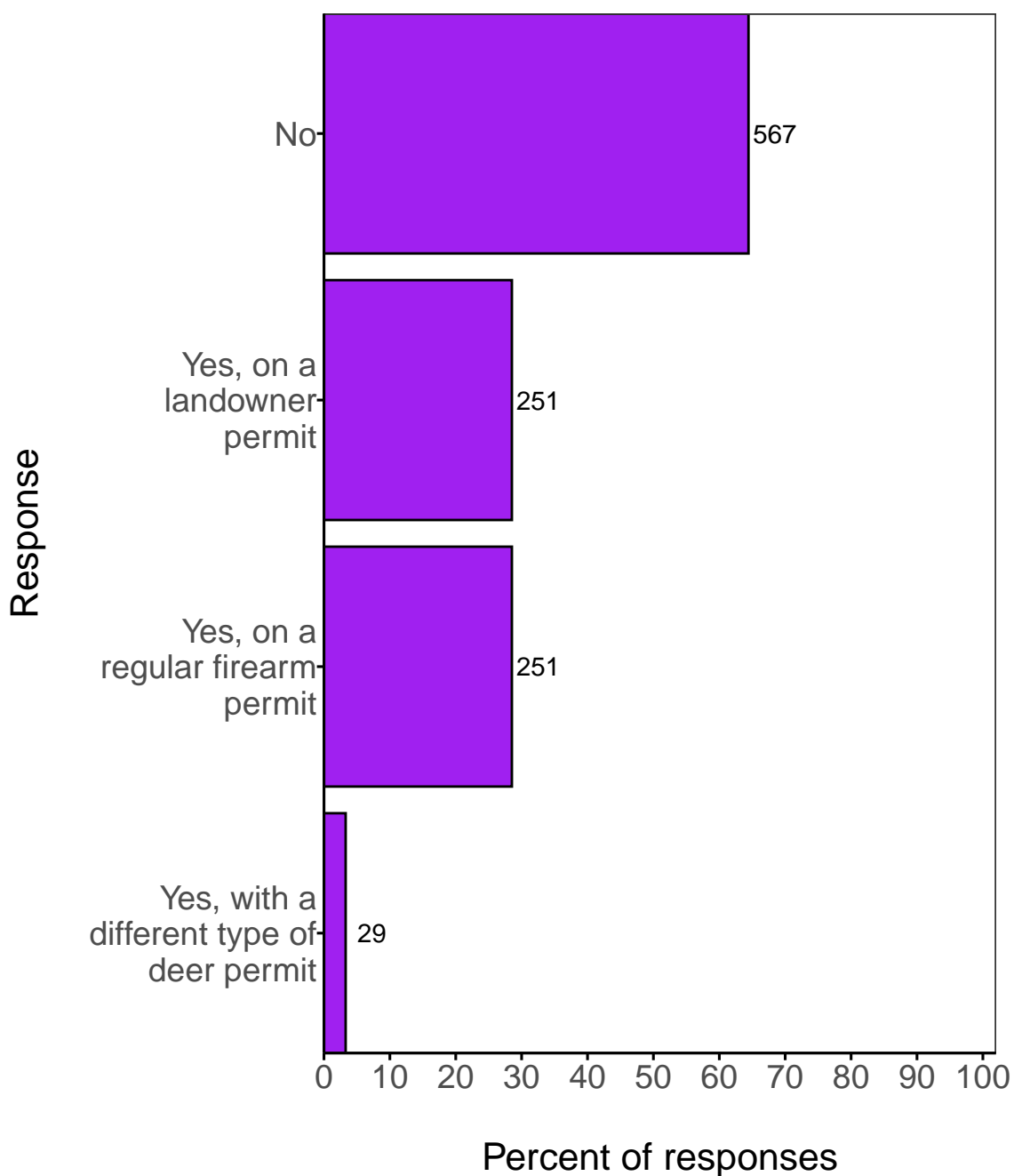


Figure 16: Whether or not the landowner personally hunted white-tailed deer on their land indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey (N = 880). The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

8b) Did you yourself hunt mule deer on your land? (select all that apply)

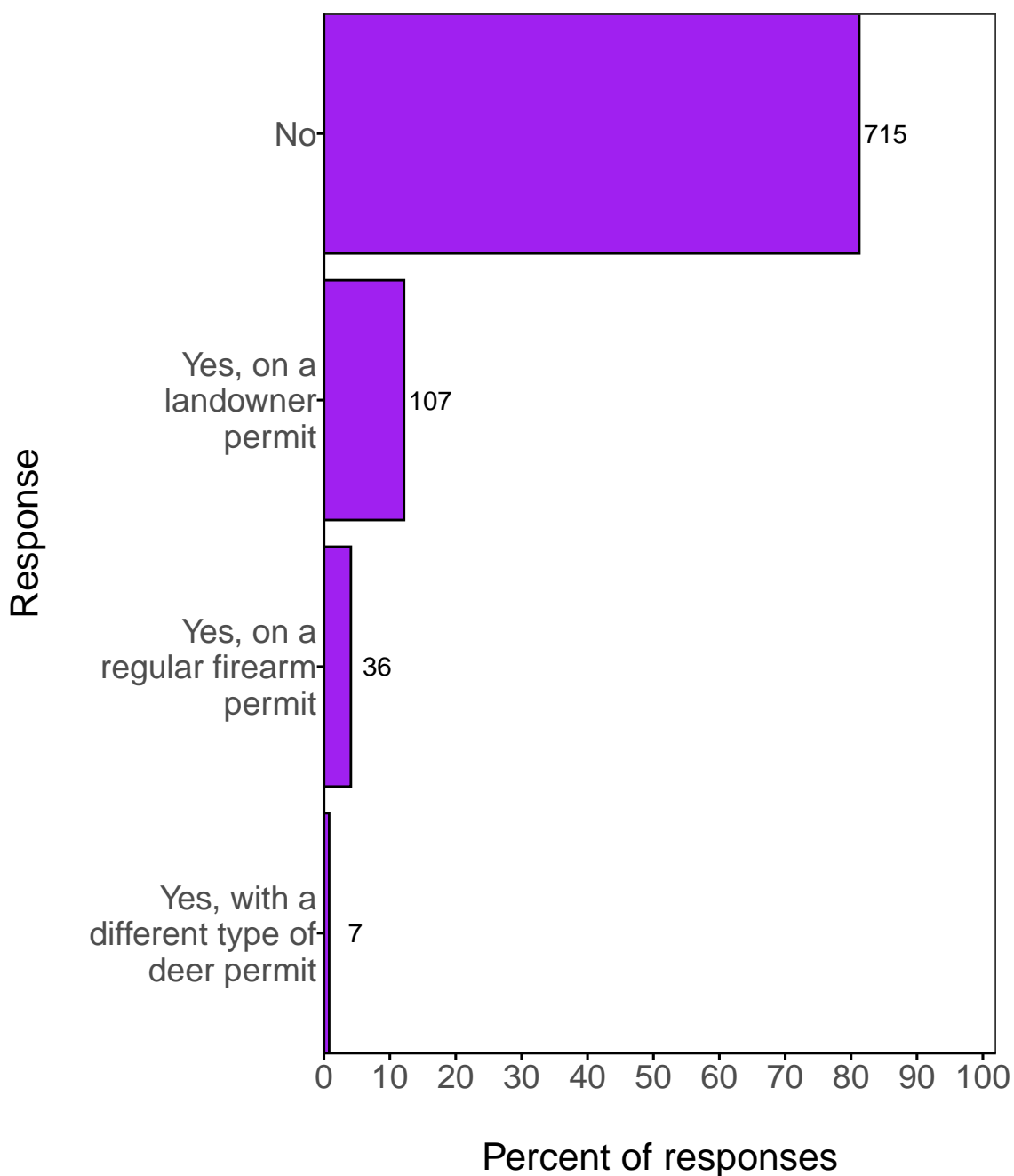


Figure 17: Whether or not the landowner personally hunted mule deer on their land indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey (N = 880). The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

**8c) Who else did you allow to hunt deer on your land? (select all that apply)**

Overall, 79% of respondents allowed deer hunting by others on their land.

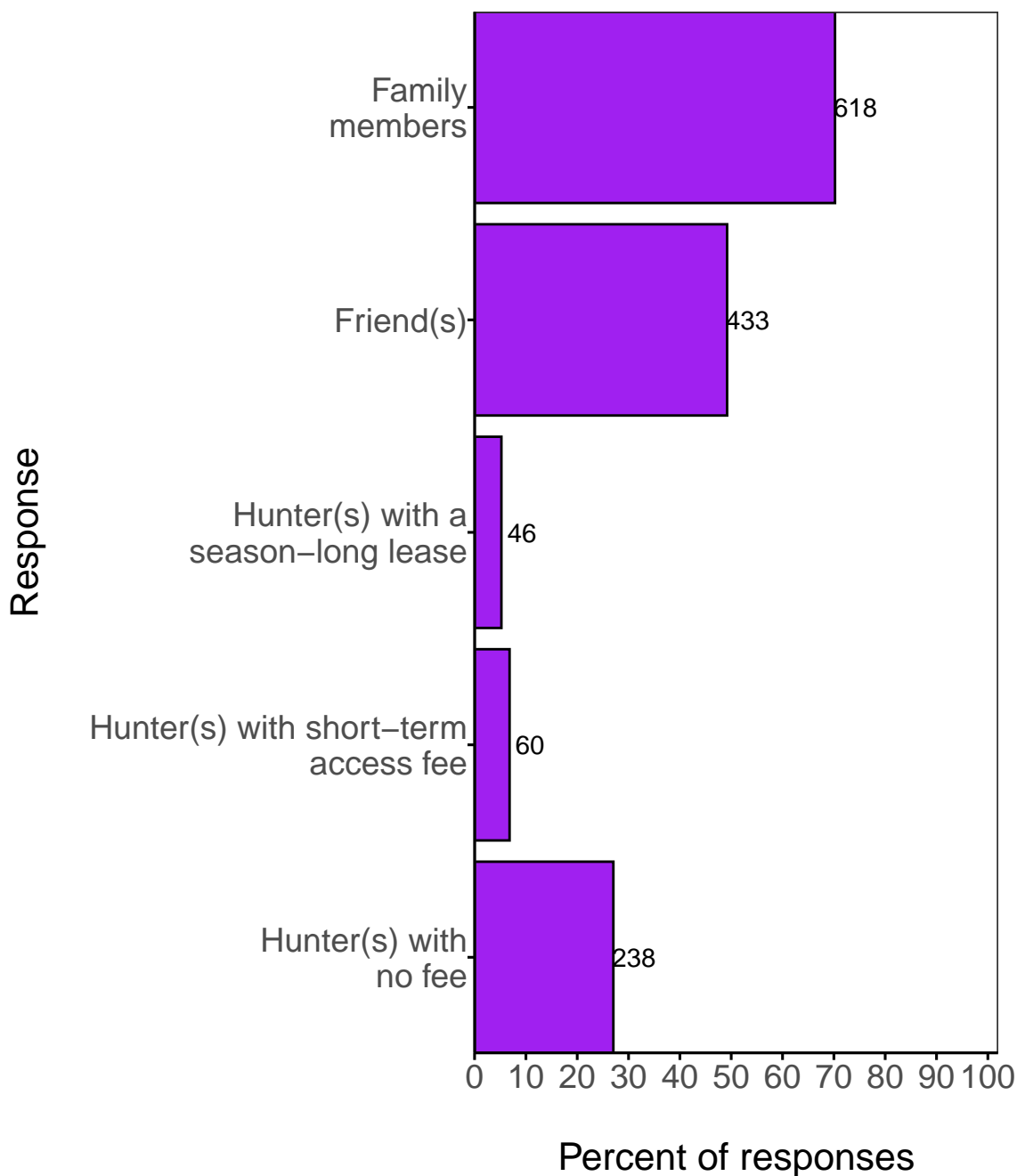


Figure 18: Persons other than the landowner who hunted deer on the landowner's property indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey (N = 880). The x-axis indicates the percentage of all responses and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of responses. Responses limited to those who indicated that someone hunted their land.

**8d) Which deer did you allow other hunters to harvest on your land? (select all that apply)**

Of the landowners who allowed hunting on their land (79% of all respondents), 75% allowed hunters to harvest does and/or bucks with no restrictions (60% of all respondents) and 85% allowed harvest of bucks in some fashion (68% of all respondents).

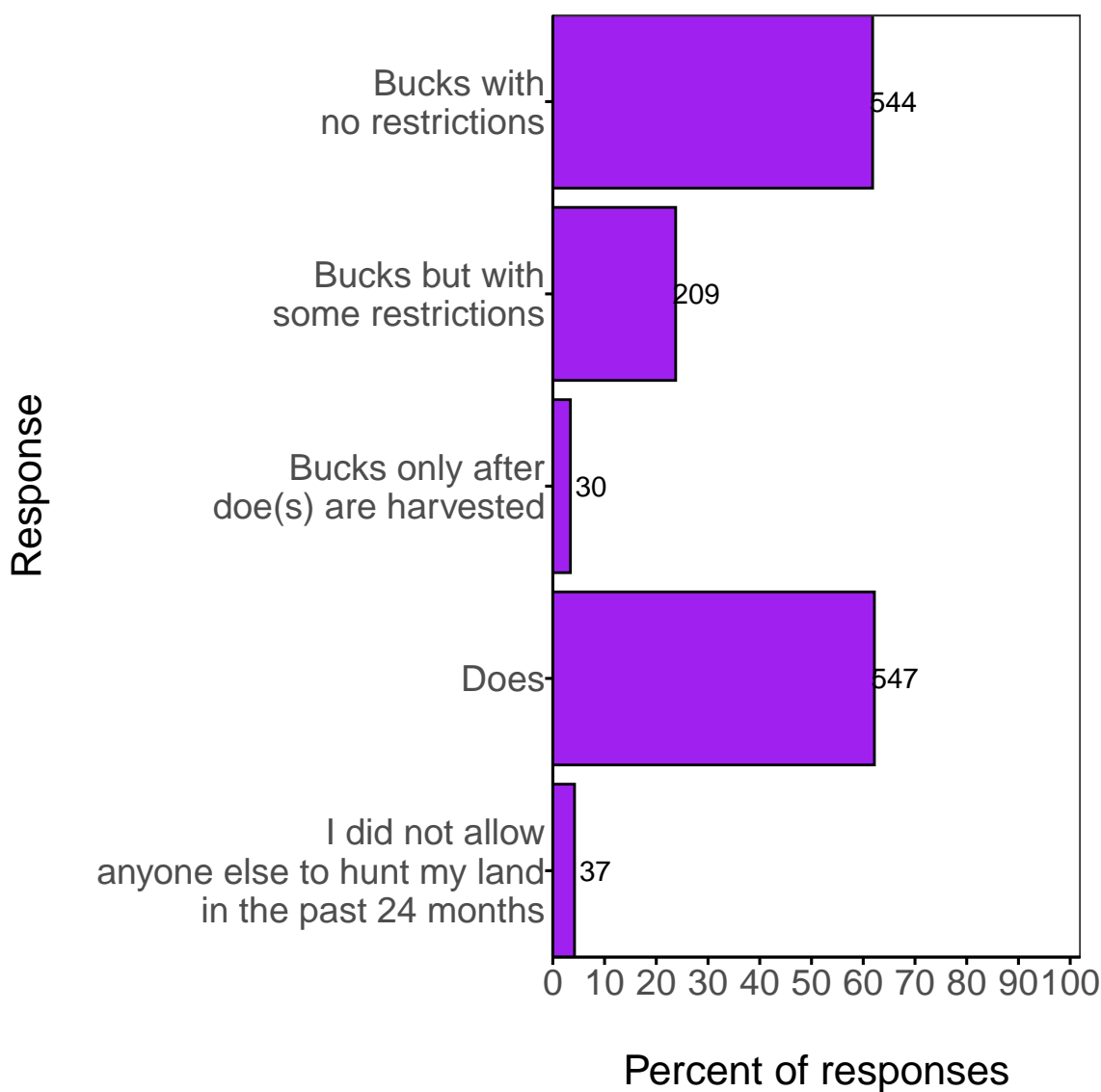


Figure 19: The type of deer landowners allowed others to harvest on their property indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey (N = 880). The x-axis indicates the percentage of all responses and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of responses.

8e) How many total individuals (including yourself) hunted deer on your land in the 2024 deer hunting season?

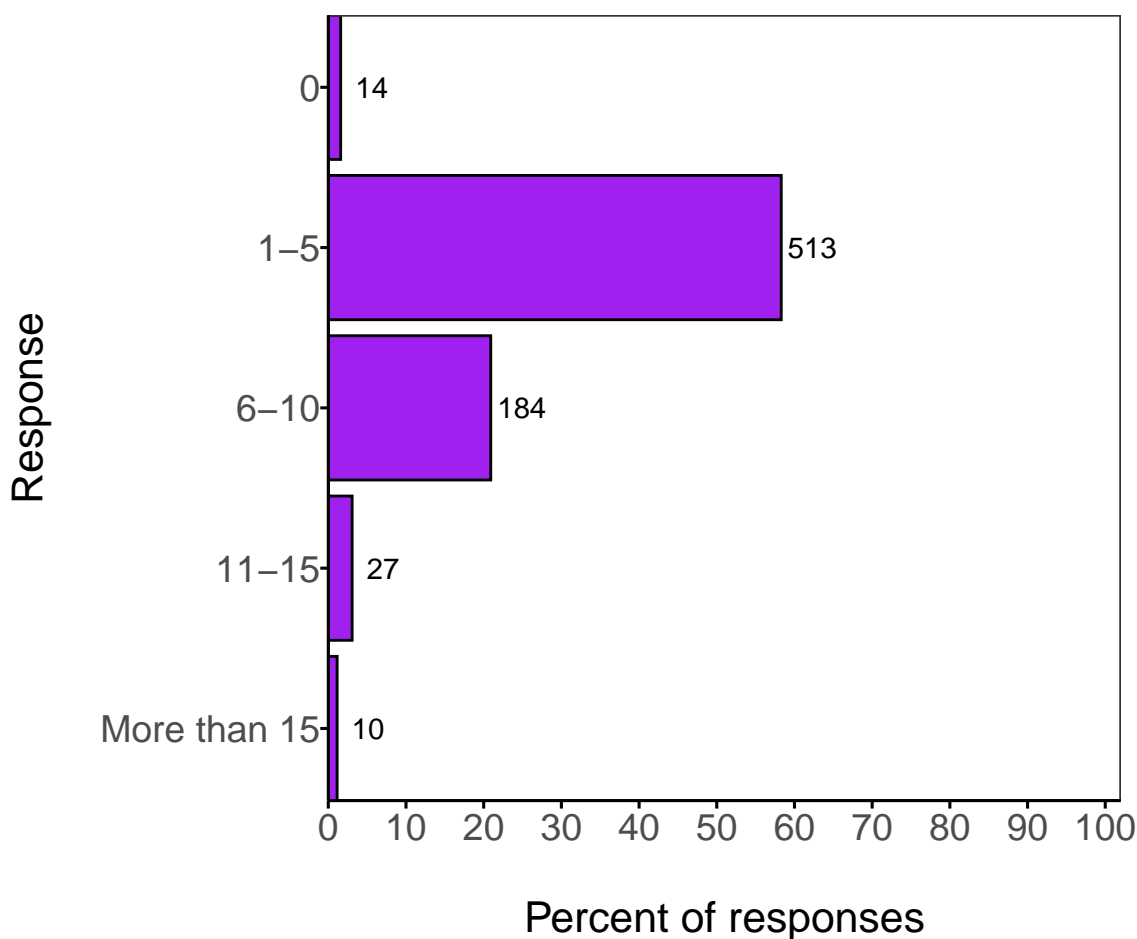


Figure 20: The total number of individuals who hunted deer on the landowners' property in 2019 indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey (N = 880). The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents.



9) How do you feel about the number of white-tailed deer on your land during the past 24 months?

White-tailed deer

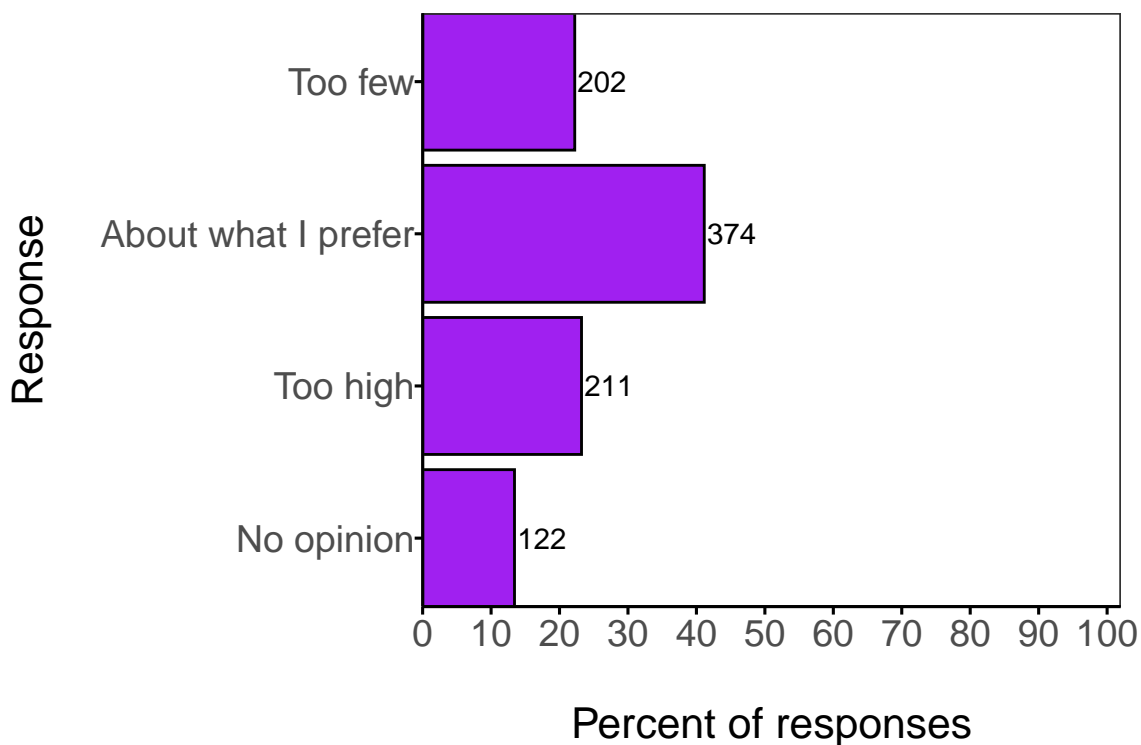


Figure 21: Attitude about the number of white-tailed deer that were present on the landowners' property in the previous 24 months indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey (N = 870). The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents. Responses are limited to those who reported having white-tailed deer on their land.

## Mule deer

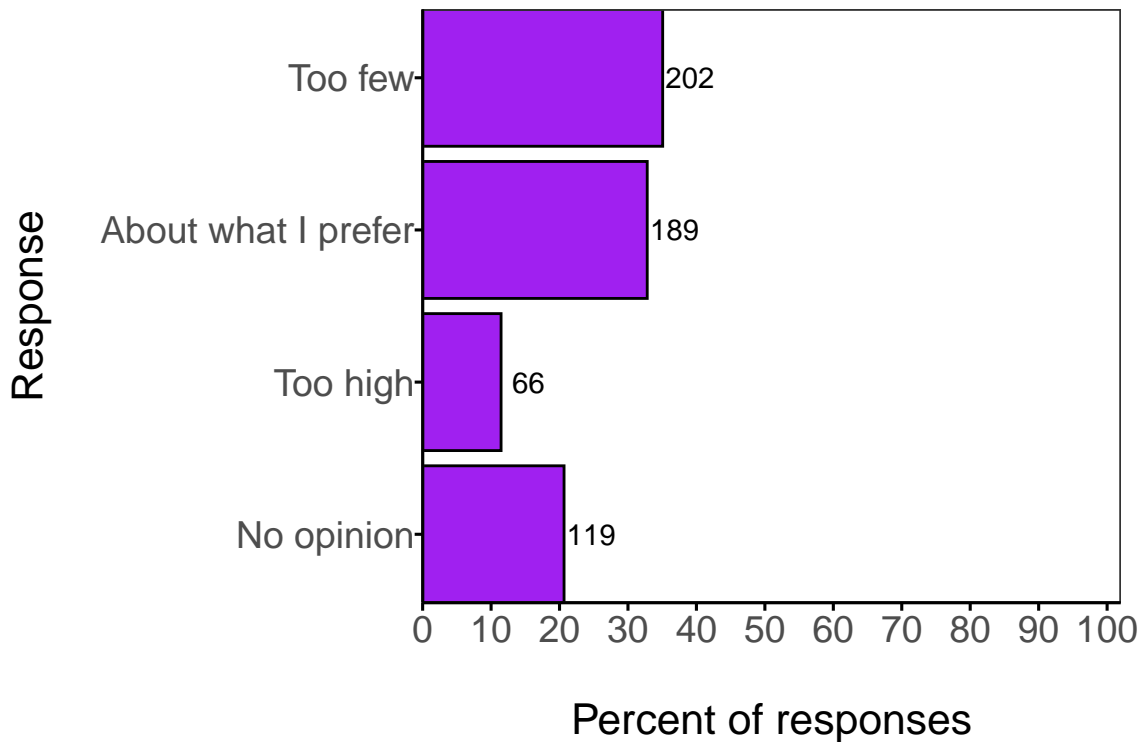


Figure 22: Attitude about the number of mule deer that were present on the landowners' property in the previous 24 months indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents ( $N = 576$ ). Responses are limited to those who reported having mule deer on their land.

10) Have you had problems with hunters during the firearm deer season in the past 24 months?

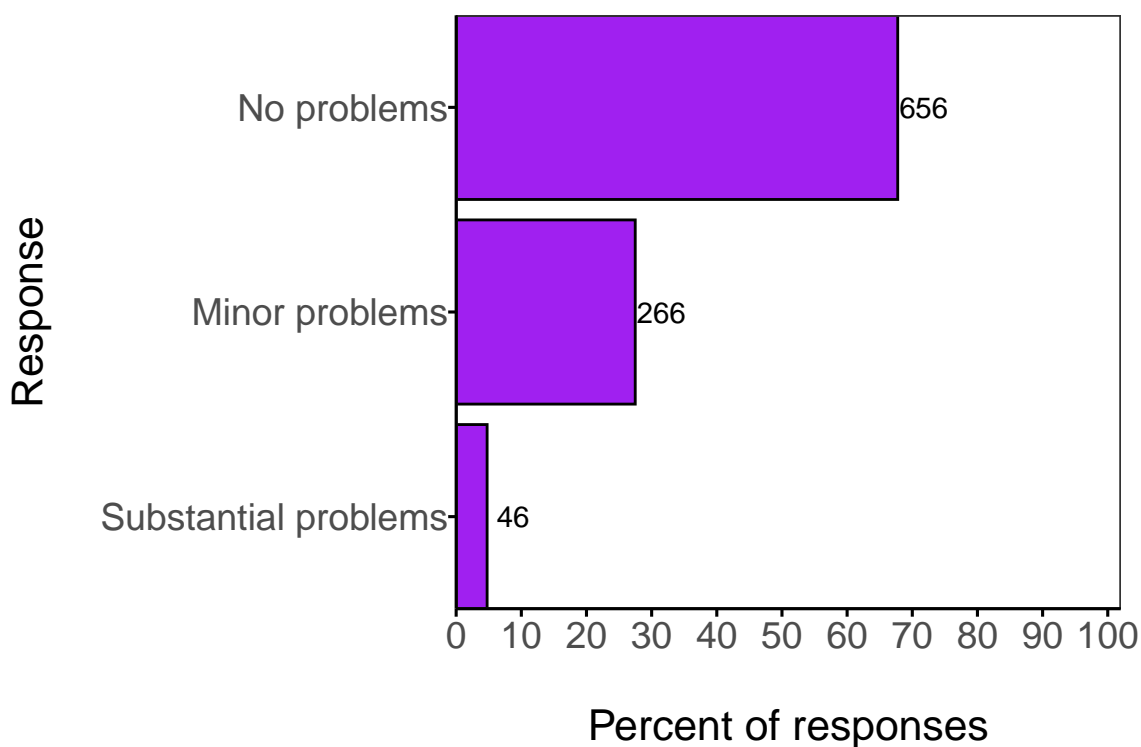


Figure 23: Severity of problems by landowners with hunters during the firearm season in the previous 24 months indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey (N = 968). The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

11) The current nine-day November firearm deer season ends the Sunday before Thanksgiving. When would you prefer the season take place?

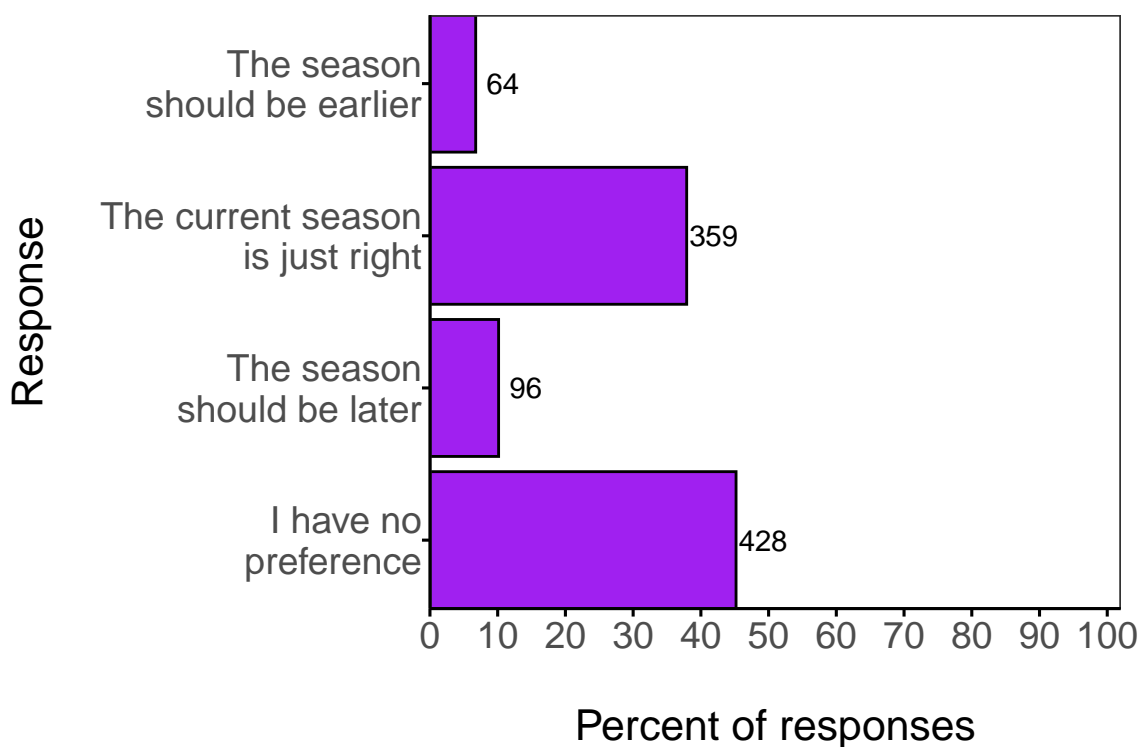


Figure 24: Probability of response as to preference for when the firearm season should take place indicated by those who responded before and after the reminder mailing for the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

12) How do you feel about the length of the nine-day November firearm deer season?

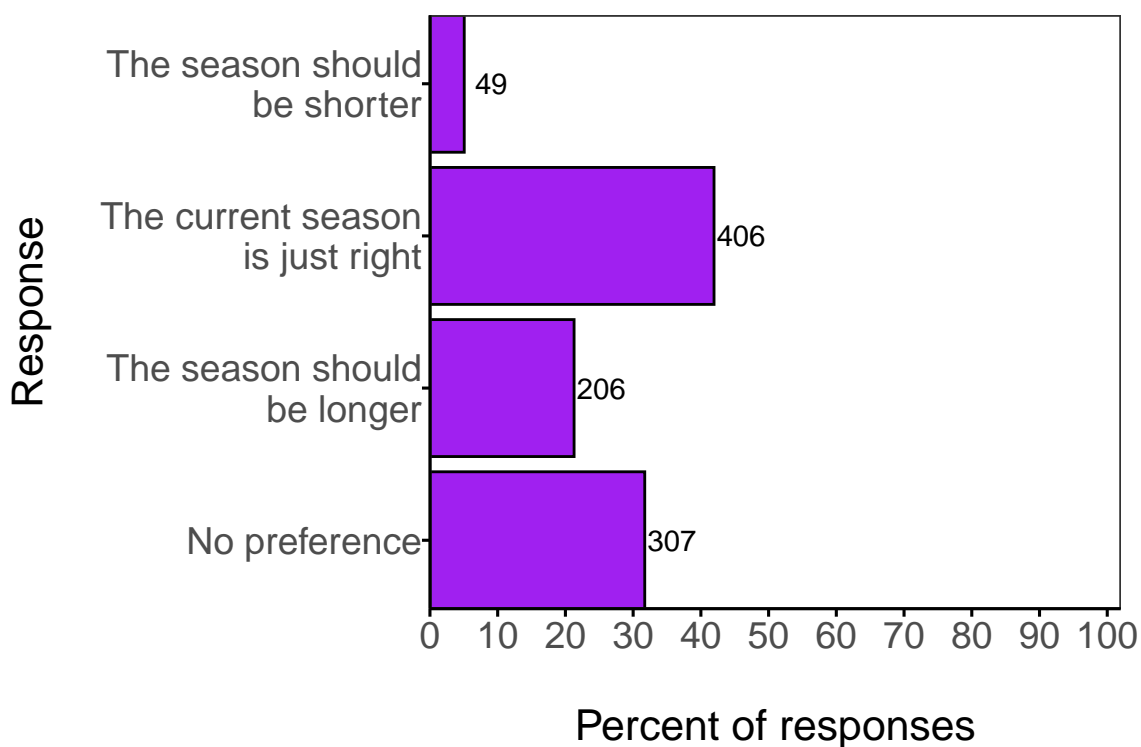


Figure 25: Attitude about the length of the nine-day November firearm deer season indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey (N = 968). The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

13) The late antlerless season currently runs from January 1-15. How do you feel about the length of the late antlerless deer season?

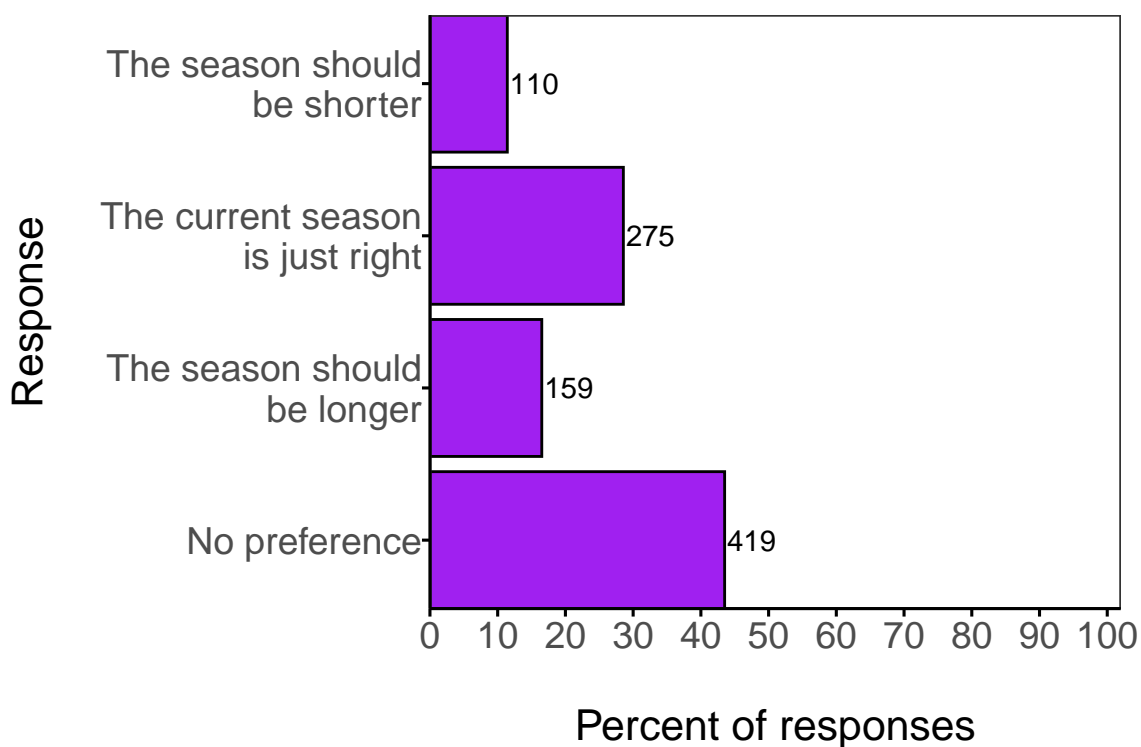


Figure 26: Attitude about the length of the late antlerless deer season indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey (N = 963). The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of respondents.

14) What would influence you to allow more deer hunters access to your property? (check all that apply)

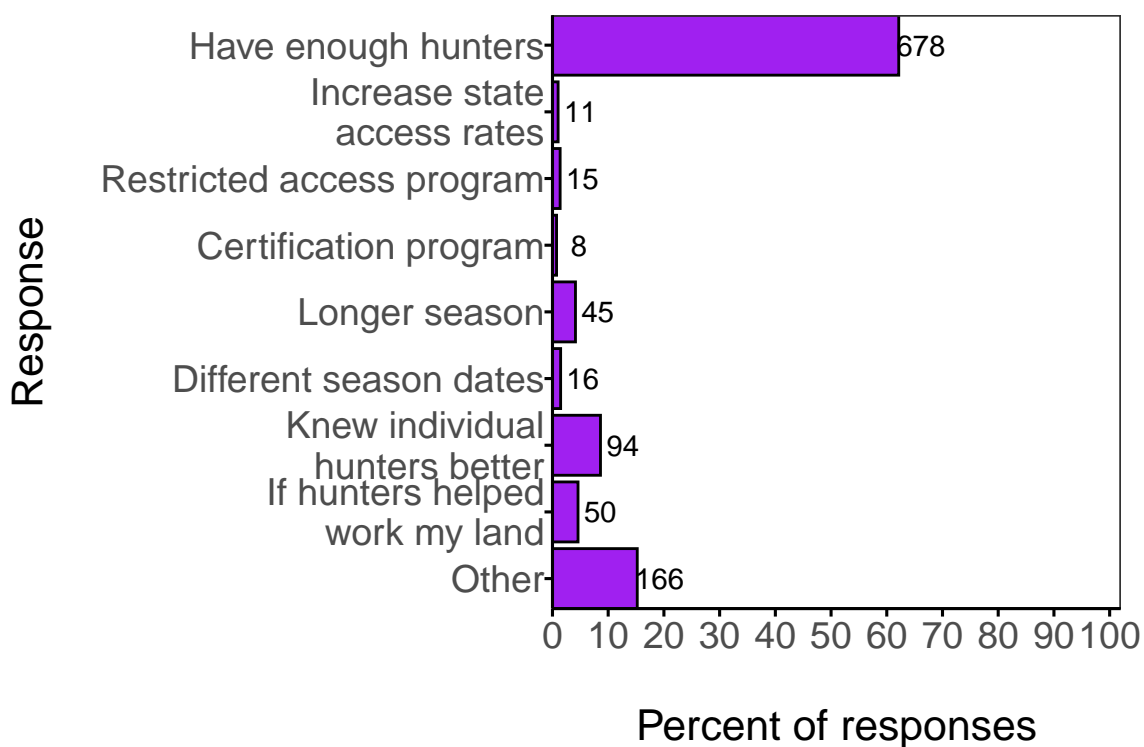


Figure 27: Occurrences which would influence landowners to allow more deer hunters access to their property indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Deer Survey (N = 1,091). The x-axis indicates the percentage of all responses and the number to the right of the horizontal purple bars indicates the actual number of responses.