



## Survey of Nebraska Landowner Attitudes on Mountain Lions

Matthew Gruntorad, Natalia Hagen, Dusty Schelbitzki, Christopher Chizinski

July 24, 2025

# Contents

|   |          |
|---|----------|
| <b>Executive Summary</b>  | <b>1</b> |
| <b>General Information</b>  | <b>1</b> |
| Nebraska Landowner-Mountain Lion Project Objectives . . . . .   | 1        |
| Mode Selection . . . . .  | 1        |
| <b>Survey Responses</b>   | <b>2</b> |
| 1) In which Mountain Lion Management Unit is the majority of your land located? . . . . .   | 2        |
| 2) About how many acres do you operate (own or lease) for agricultural or rangeland purposes? . . . . .   | 3        |
| 3) What county is the majority of your land located? . . . . .  | 4        |
| 4) Have you personally observed a mountain lion on your land? . . . . .   | 5        |
| 5) To your knowledge, how frequently did you have mountain lions on your land in the past 24 months? . . . . .  | 6        |
| 6) How do you feel about the number of mountain lions on your land in the past 24 months? . . . . .   | 7        |
| 7) How positive or negative are your general attitudes towards mountain lions? . . . . .  | 8        |
| 8) What is your perceived risk of mountain lions to people? . . . . .   | 9        |
| 9) Do you believe you experienced livestock depredation from a mountain lion in the past 24 months? . . . . .   | 10       |
| 9a) How acceptable or unacceptable was the level of depredation caused by mountain lions? . . . . .   | 11       |
| 9b) What type of livestock depredation did you experience? . . . . .  | 12       |
| 10) Are you aware that you may kill a mountain lion if it is in the process of stalking, killing, or consuming livestock on your property? . . . . .                                | 13       |
| 11) Are you aware that the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission may remove a mountain lion proven to have inflicted livestock, or may issue a kill permit to the landowner? . . . . . | 14       |
| 12) Have you ever contacted the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission for assistance in reducing mountain lion depredation on your land? . . . . .                                     | 15       |
| 12a) In what year did you last contact the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission concerning depredation caused by mountain lions? . . . . .  | 16       |
| 12b) How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the assistance you received? . . . . .   | 17       |
| 13) Do you yourself plan to hunt mountain lions on your land during the current season? . . . . .   | 18       |
| 14) Who else would you allow to hunt mountain lions on your land during the current season? . . . . .   | 19       |

## Executive Summary

- Respondents most reported owning over 1,000 acres of land within an Mountain Lion Management Unit (61%).
- Most landowners reported that they had personally observed a mountain lion on their land (65%).
- Most landowners reported that they frequently had mountain lions on their property within the last 24 months (47%), with the exception of landowners in the Wildcat Hills who most frequently reported that they did not know (38%).
- Most landowners reported that there were too many mountain lions on their property (57%).
- The most prevalent attitude toward mountain lions was very negative (32%), with a majority seeing mountain lions as a slight risk to people (49%).
- Only 25% of respondents believed they had experienced livestock depredation from a mountain lion, but 69% of those individuals found the damage to be totally unacceptable.
- Of those who believe they experienced mountain lion depredation, 91% reported it was on cattle.
- Majority of landowners were aware they could kill a mountain lion if it is in the process of stalking, killing, or consuming livestock on your property (77%) and that NGPC could remove a mountain lion proven to have inflicted livestock (70%). Most had never contacted NGPC for help with mountain lions (90%).
- Most do not plan to hunt mountain lions (76%).

## General Information

This report describes responses to questions from the 2025 “Survey of Nebraska Landowner Attitudes on Mountain Lions.” This survey was a tool to analyze Nebraska landowner perspectives on the mountain lion populations residing on their land and the depredation caused by mountain lions to their property. 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 Mountain Lion Management Units.

## Nebraska Landowner-Mountain Lion Project Objectives

1. Gather information about Nebraska landowners who own property within Mountain Lion Management Units
2. Assess landowner perceptions about mountain lions
3. Determine perceptions of damage caused by mountain lions to landowner property
4. Gauge landowner interest in hunting and allowing the hunting of mountain lions on their property

## 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 three Nebraska Mountain Lion Management Units. Invitations were distributed on February 5, 2025. A reminder survey was mailed to all landowners on March 7, 2025. A The survey period closed on March 21, 2025.

## Survey Responses

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

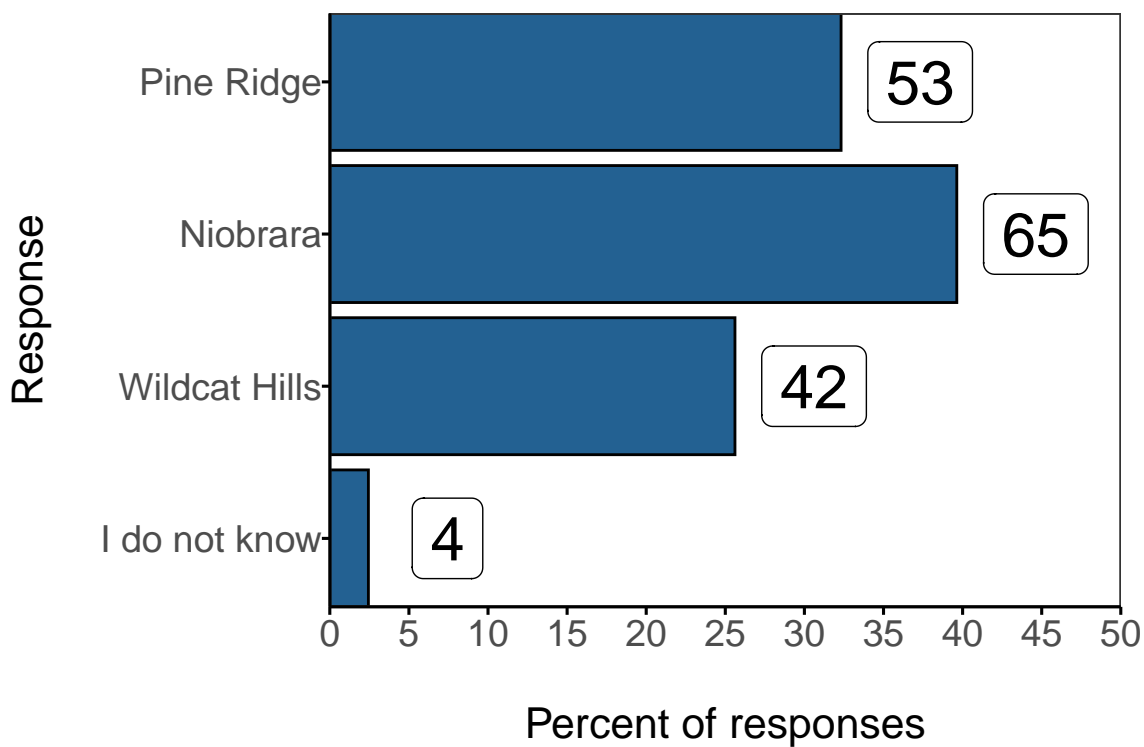


Figure 1: The Nebraska Mountain Lion Management Unit in which respondents of the 2025 Landowner Mountain Lion Survey hold the majority of their land. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal gold bars represents the actual number of respondents (N = 164).

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

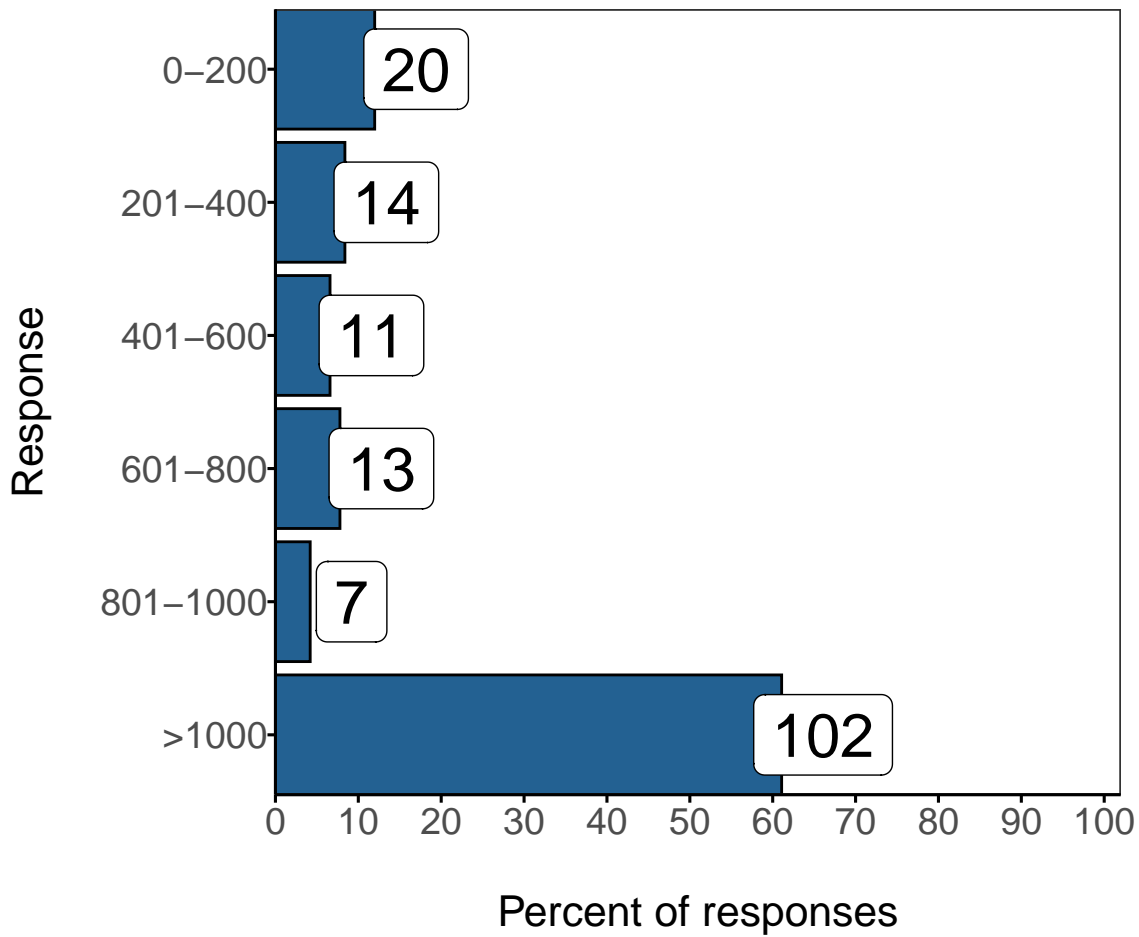


Figure 2: The approximate number of acres owned or leased by landowners as indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Mountain Lion Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal blue bars represents the actual number of respondents ( $N = 167$ ).

3) What county is the majority of your land located?

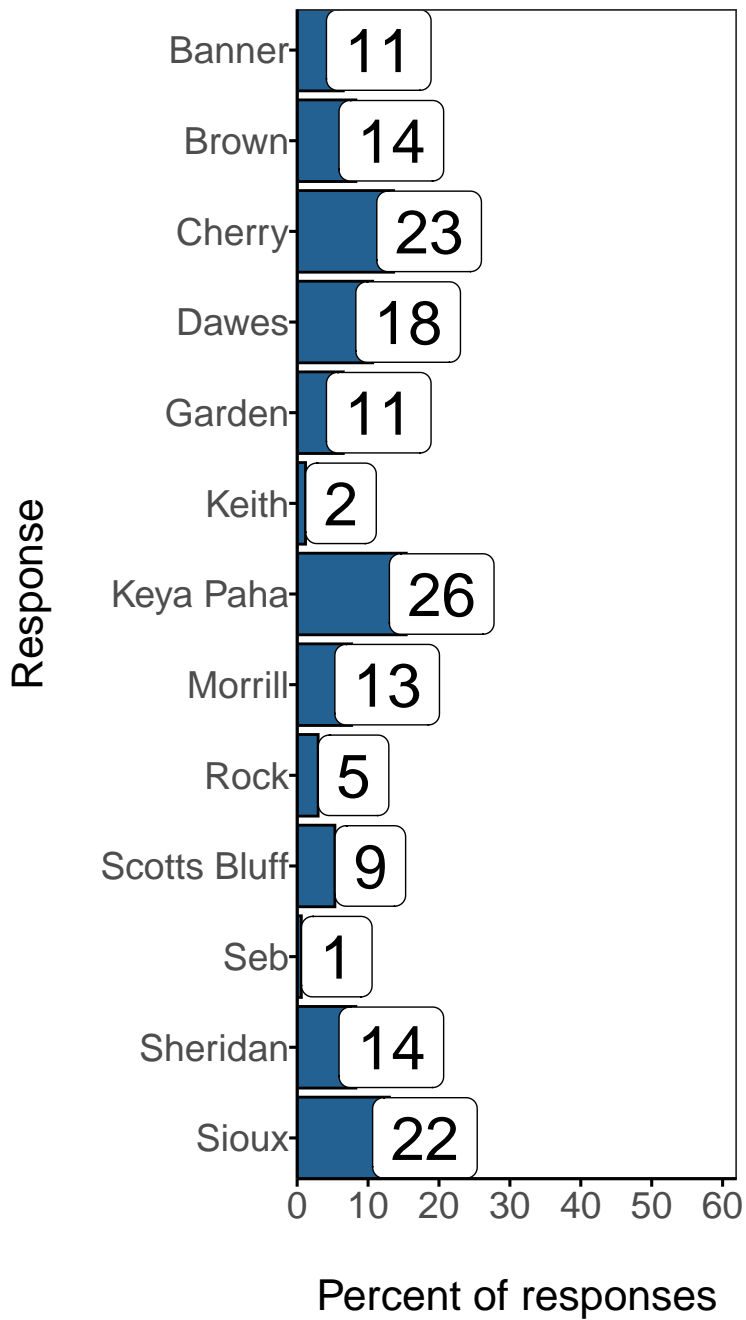


Figure 3: County where the majority of respondent land is located as indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Mountain Lion Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal blue bars represents the actual number of respondents (N = 169).

## 4) Have you personally observed a mountain lion on your land?

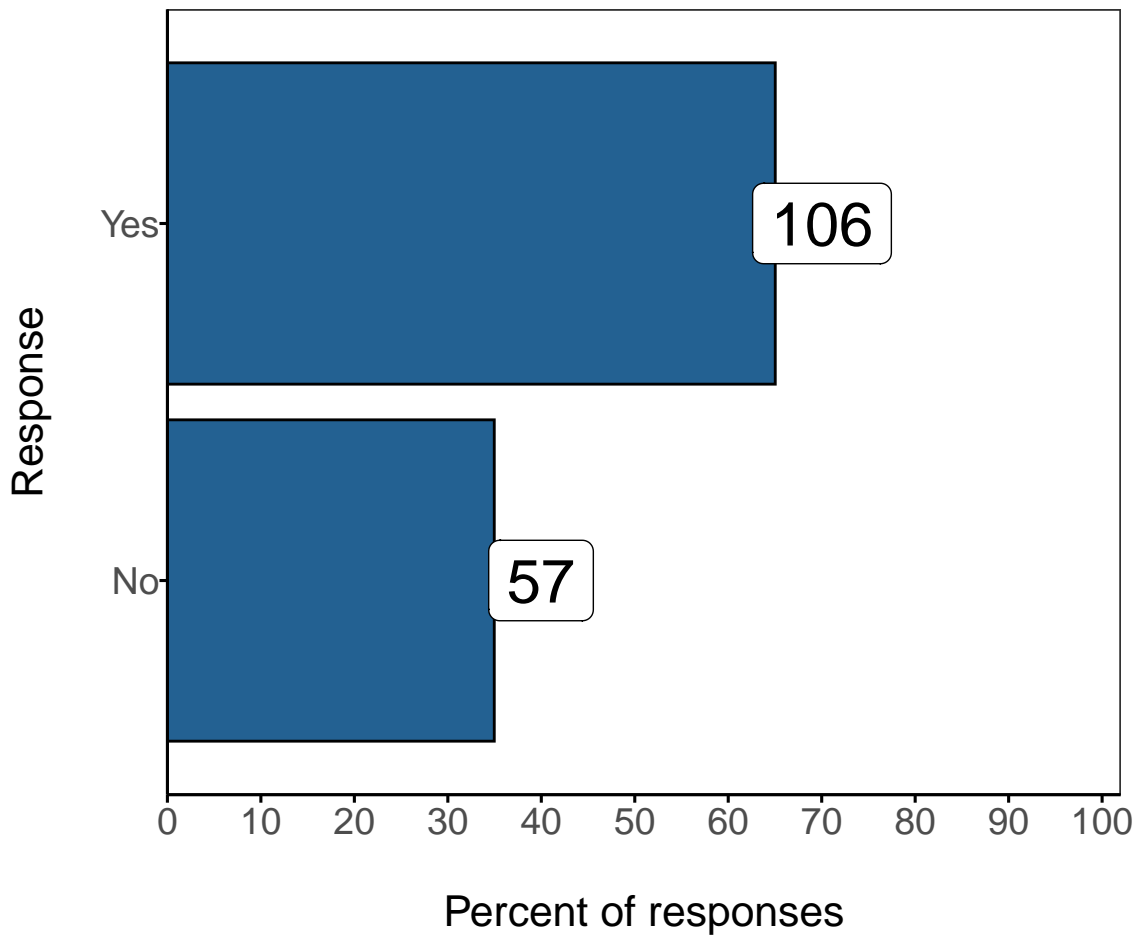


Figure 4: Whether a mountain lion was personally observed on land as indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Mountain Lion Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the blue bars represents the actual number of respondents ( $N = 163$ ).

5) To your knowledge, how frequently did you have mountain lions on your land in the past 24 months?

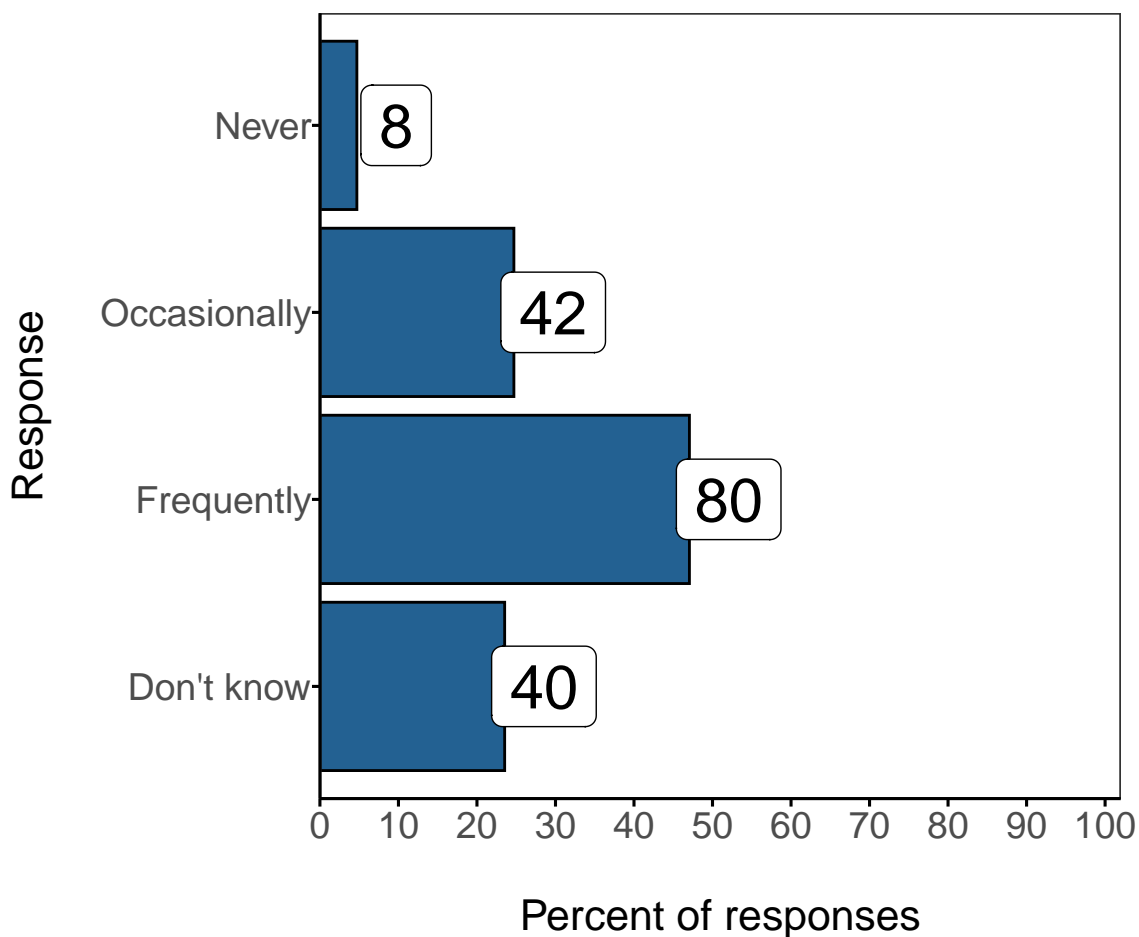


Figure 5: The frequency in which landowners had mountain lions on their land as indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Mountain Lion Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the blue bars represents the actual number of respondents ( $N = 170$ ).



6) How do you feel about the number of mountain lions on your land in the past 24 months?

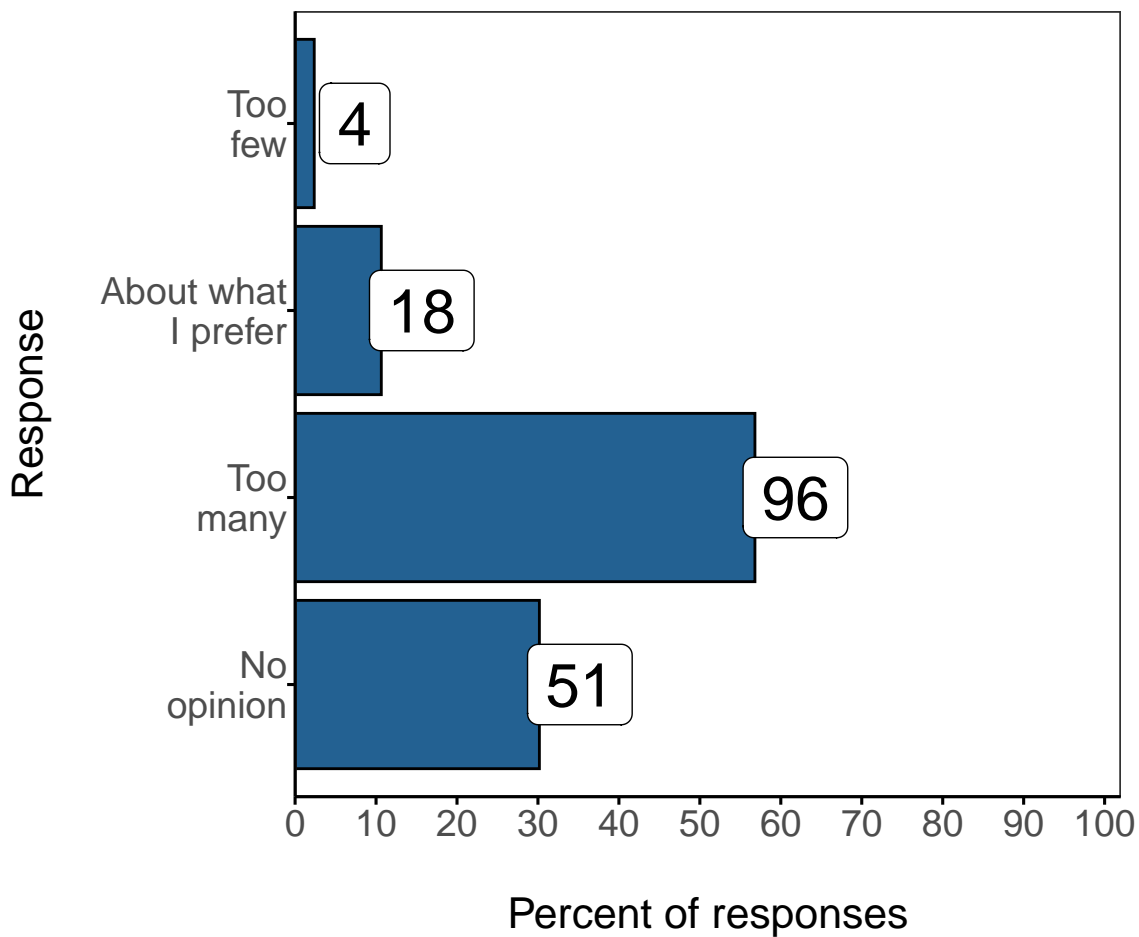


Figure 6: Attitude about the number of mountain lions that were present on the landowners' property in the previous 24 months indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Mountain Lion Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the blue bars represents the actual number of respondents ( $N = 169$ ).

## 7) How positive or negative are your general attitudes towards mountain lions?

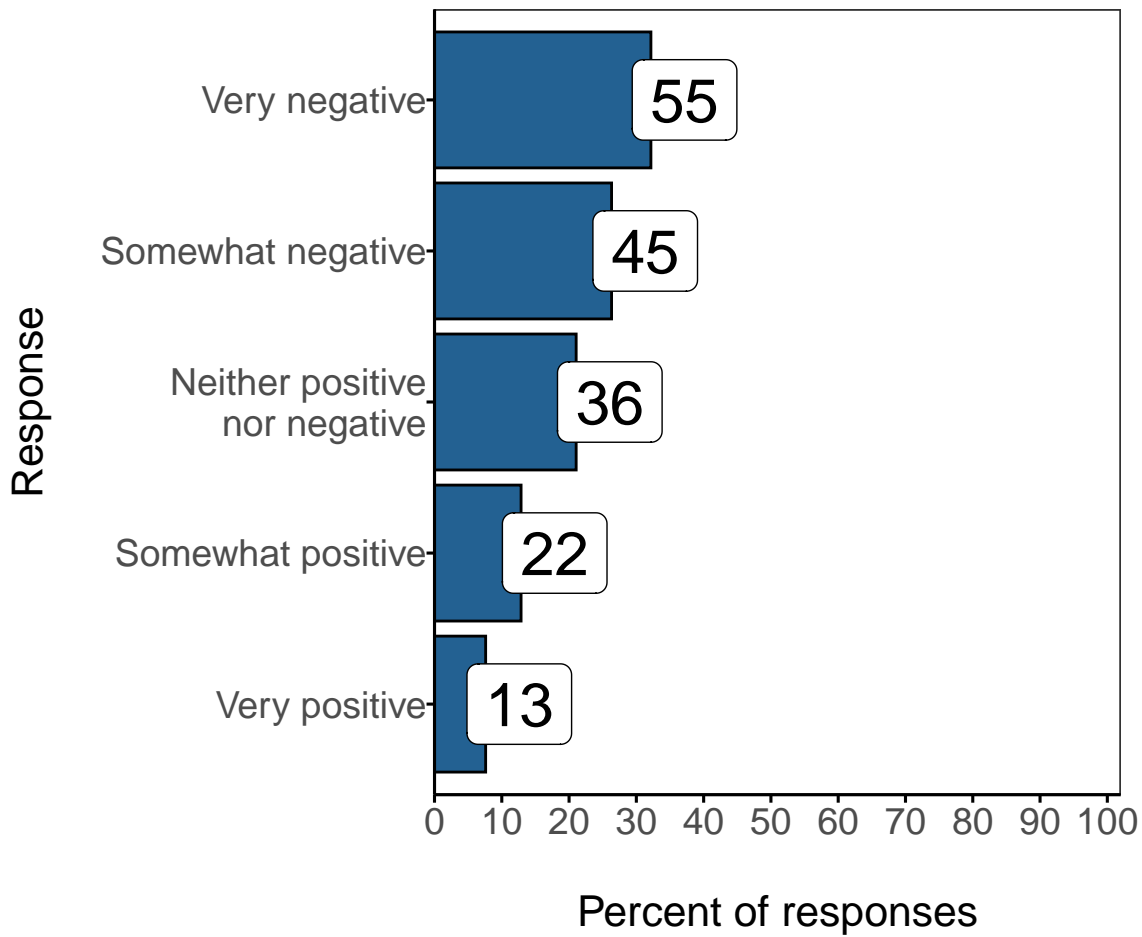


Figure 7: General attitude toward mountain lions indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Mountain Lion Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the blue bars represents the actual number of respondents ( $N = 171$ ).

## 8) What is your perceived risk of mountain lions to people?

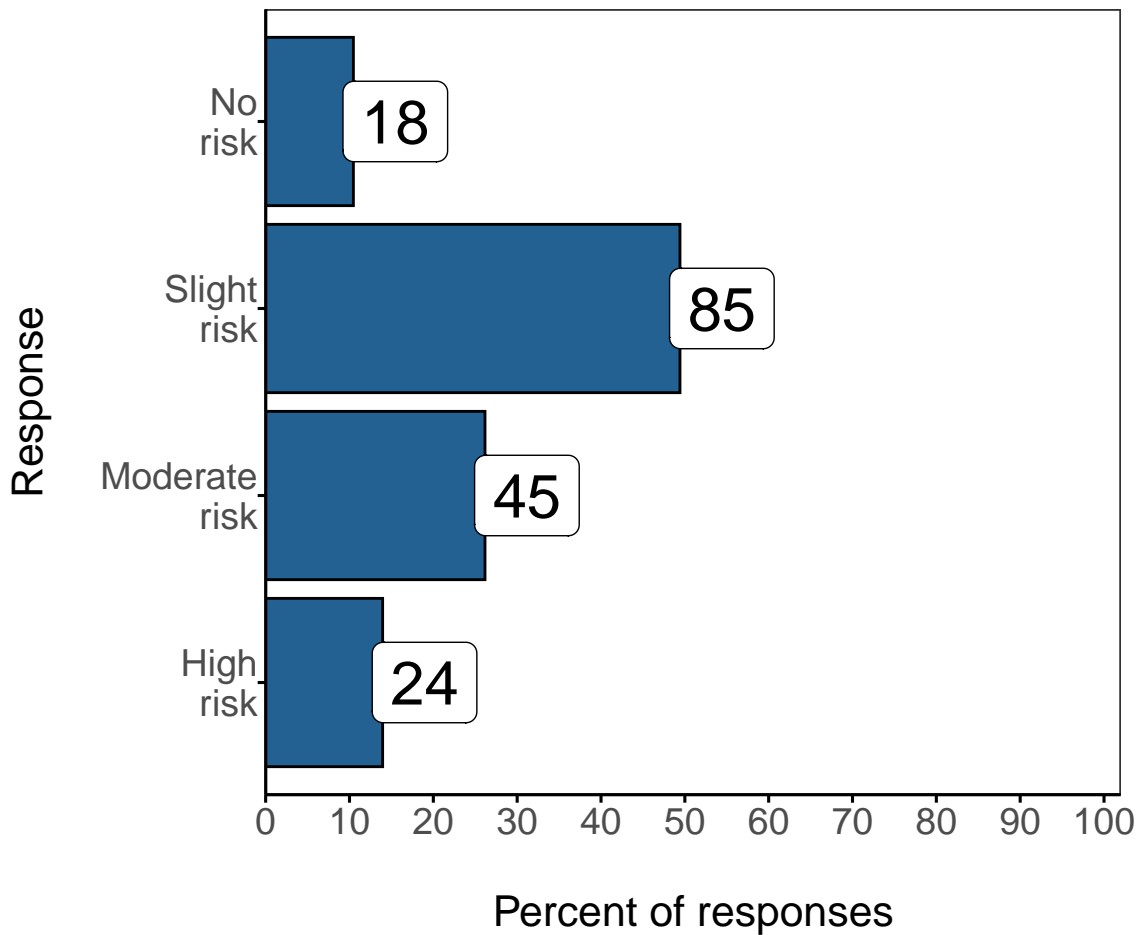


Figure 8: Perceived risk of mountain lions to people indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Mountain Lion Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the blue bars represents the actual number of respondents ( $N = 172$ ).

9) Do you believe you experienced livestock depredation from a mountain lion in the past 24 months?

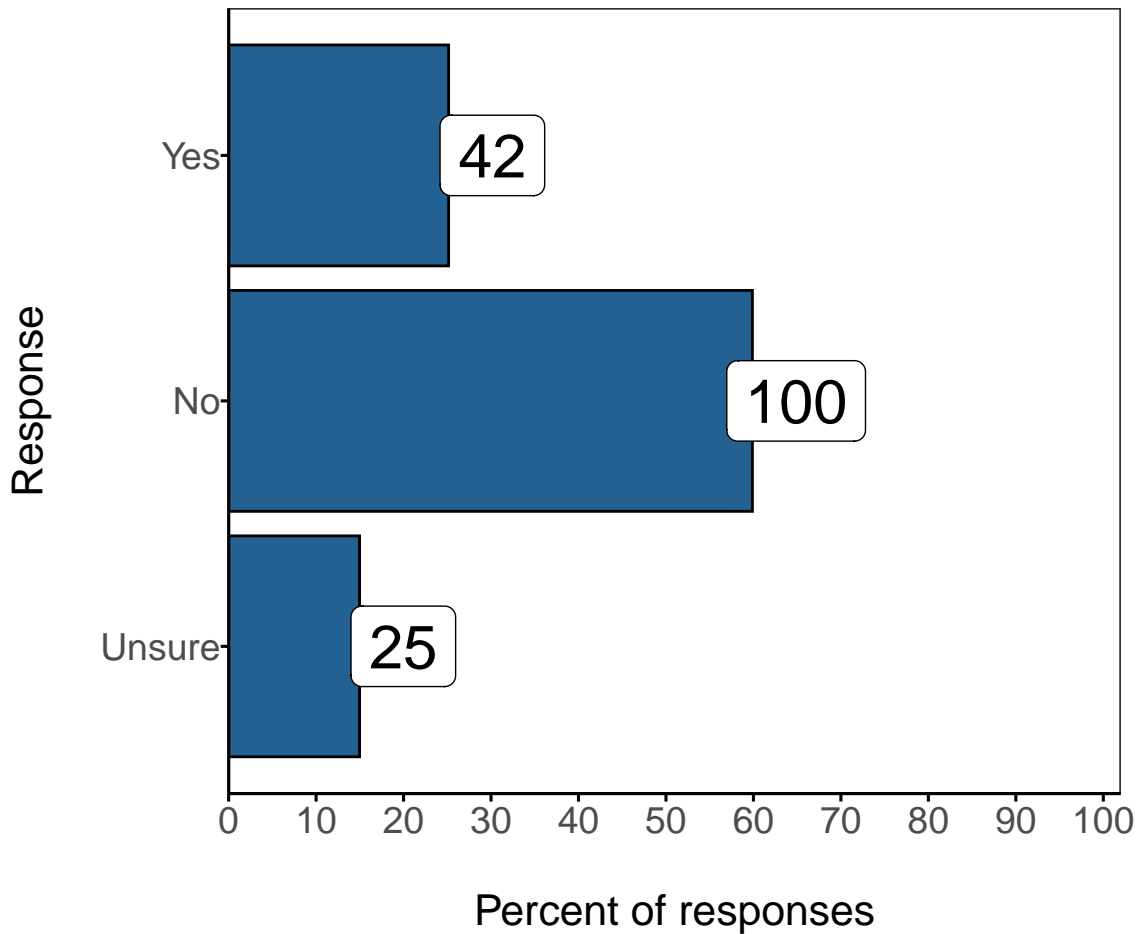


Figure 9: Whether there was perceived livestock depredation from a mountain lion as indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Mountain Lion Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the blue bars represents the actual number of respondents ( $N = 167$ ).

9a) How acceptable or unacceptable was the level of depredation caused by mountain lions?

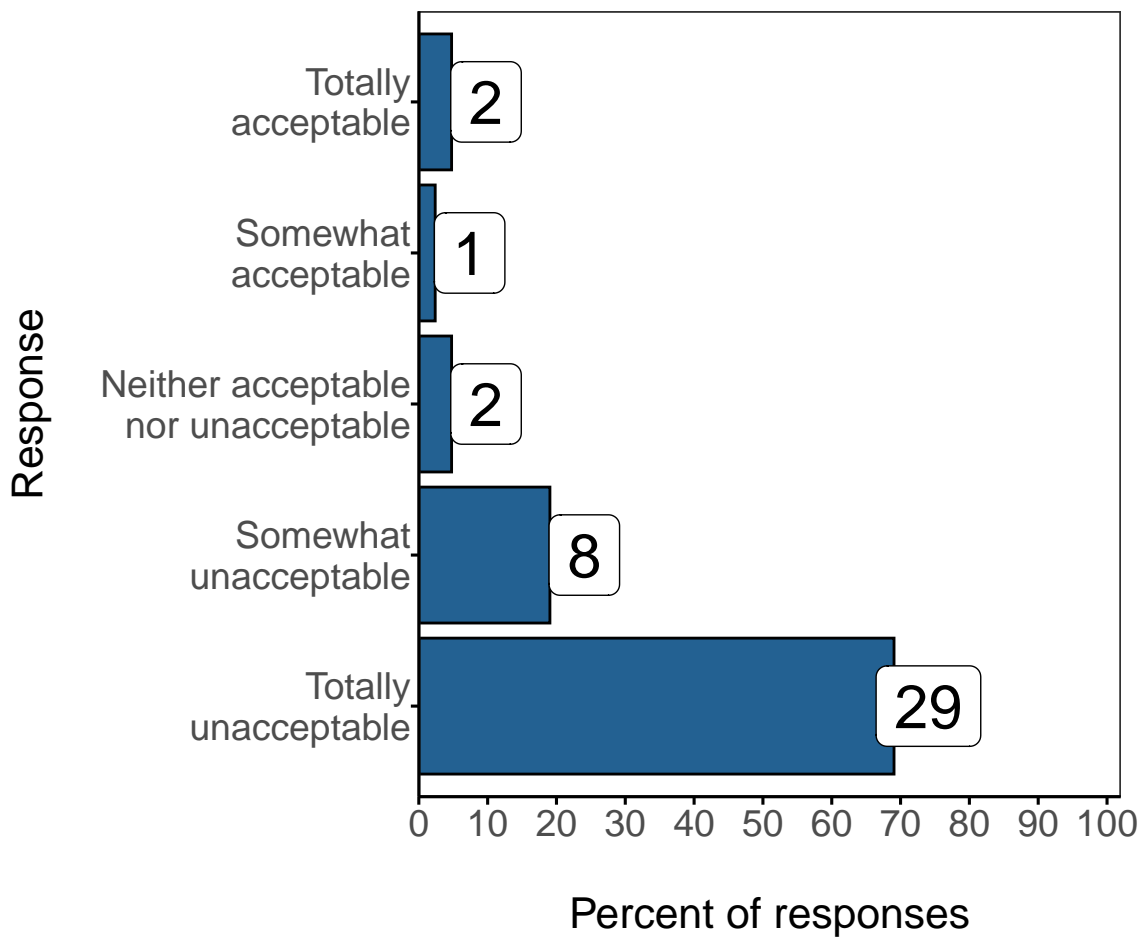


Figure 10: Acceptability of depredation caused by mountain lions as indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Mountain Lion Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the blue bars represents the actual number of respondents. Responses are limited to who reported livestock depredation from mountain lions (N = 42).

## 9b) What type of livestock depredation did you experience?

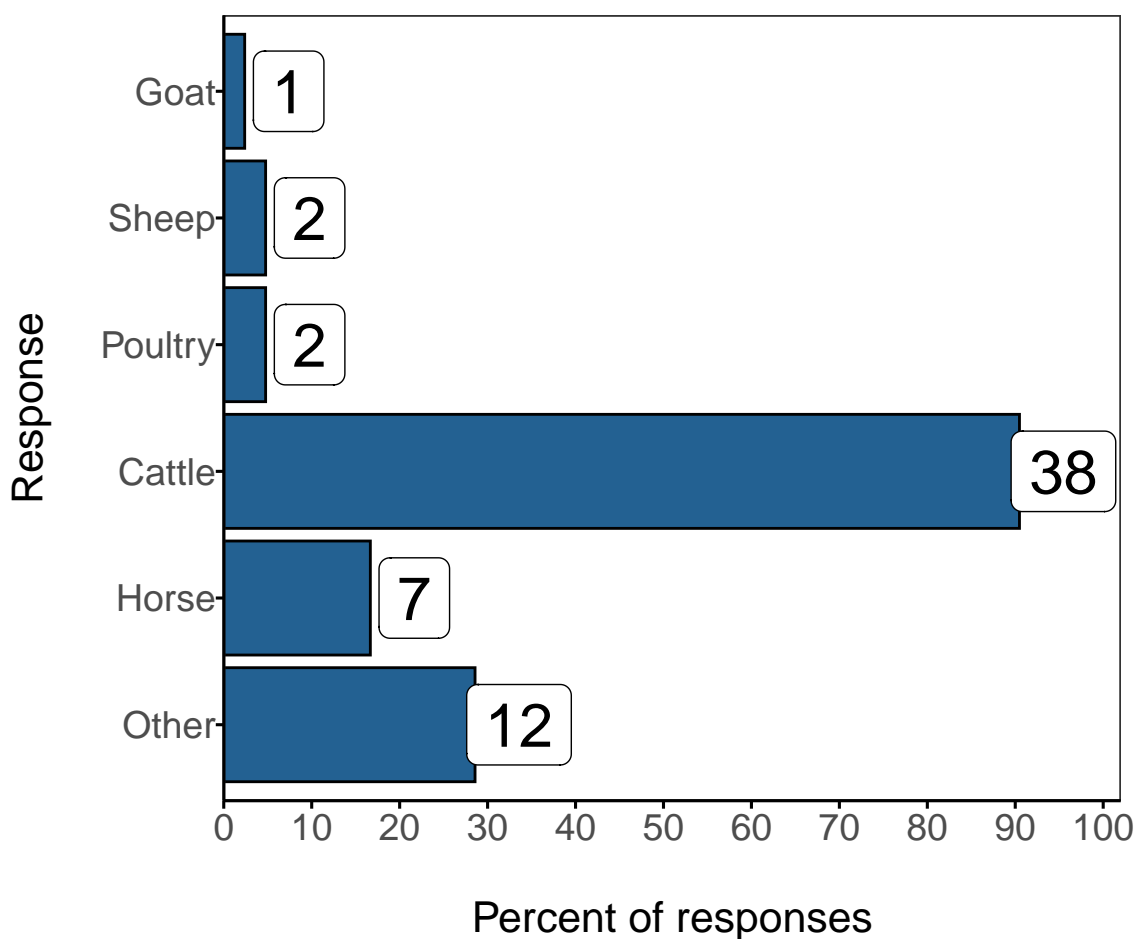


Figure 11: The kind of livestock depredation caused by mountain lions indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Mountain Lion Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the blue bars represents the actual number of respondents. Responses are limited to those who reported livestock depredation from mountain lions ( $N = 42$ ). Percentage totals may exceed 100% as respondents could have chosen multiple responses.

10) Are you aware that you may kill a mountain lion if it is in the process of stalking, killing, or consuming livestock on your property?

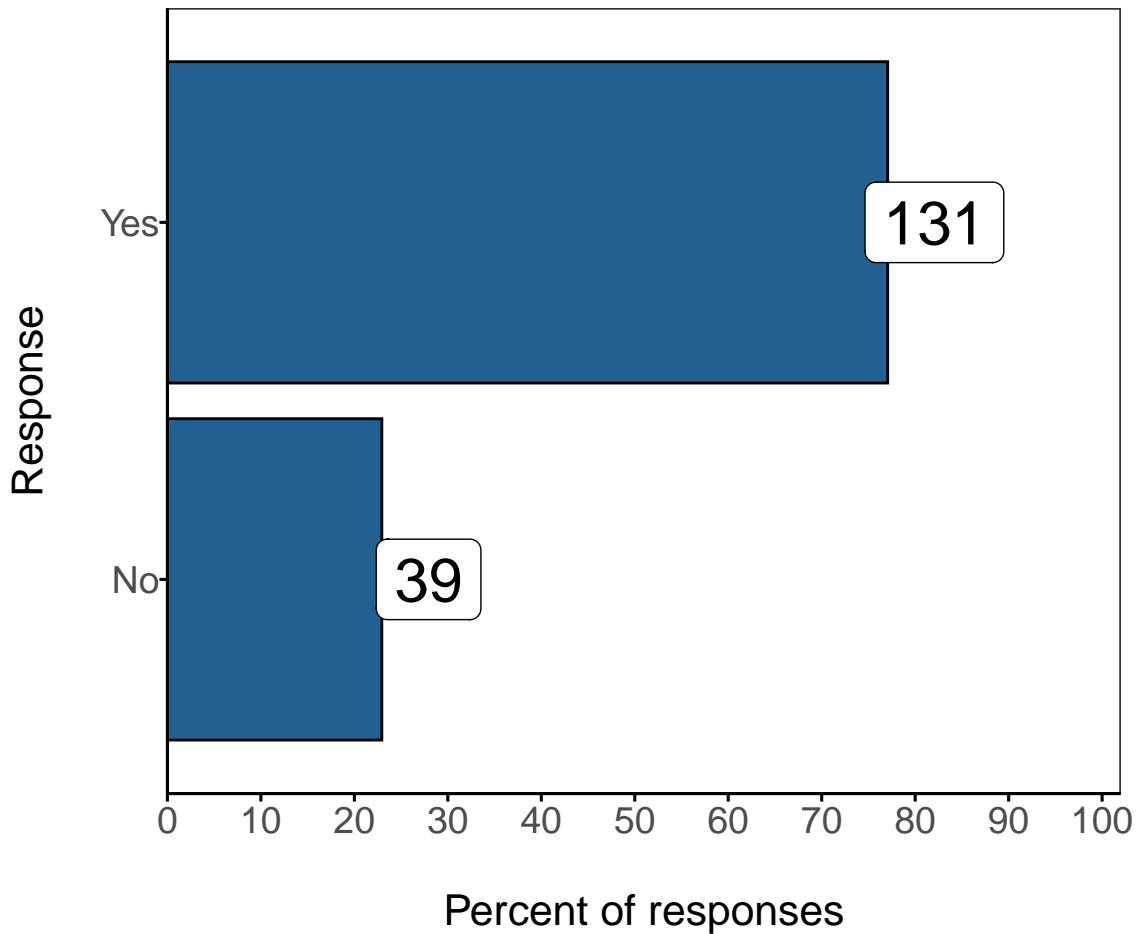


Figure 12: Awareness that mountain lions can be killed if in the process of stalking, killing, or consuming livestock indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Mountain Lion Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the blue bars represents the actual number of respondents (N = 170).

11) Are you aware that the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission may remove a mountain lion proven to have inflicted livestock, or may issue a kill permit to the landowner?

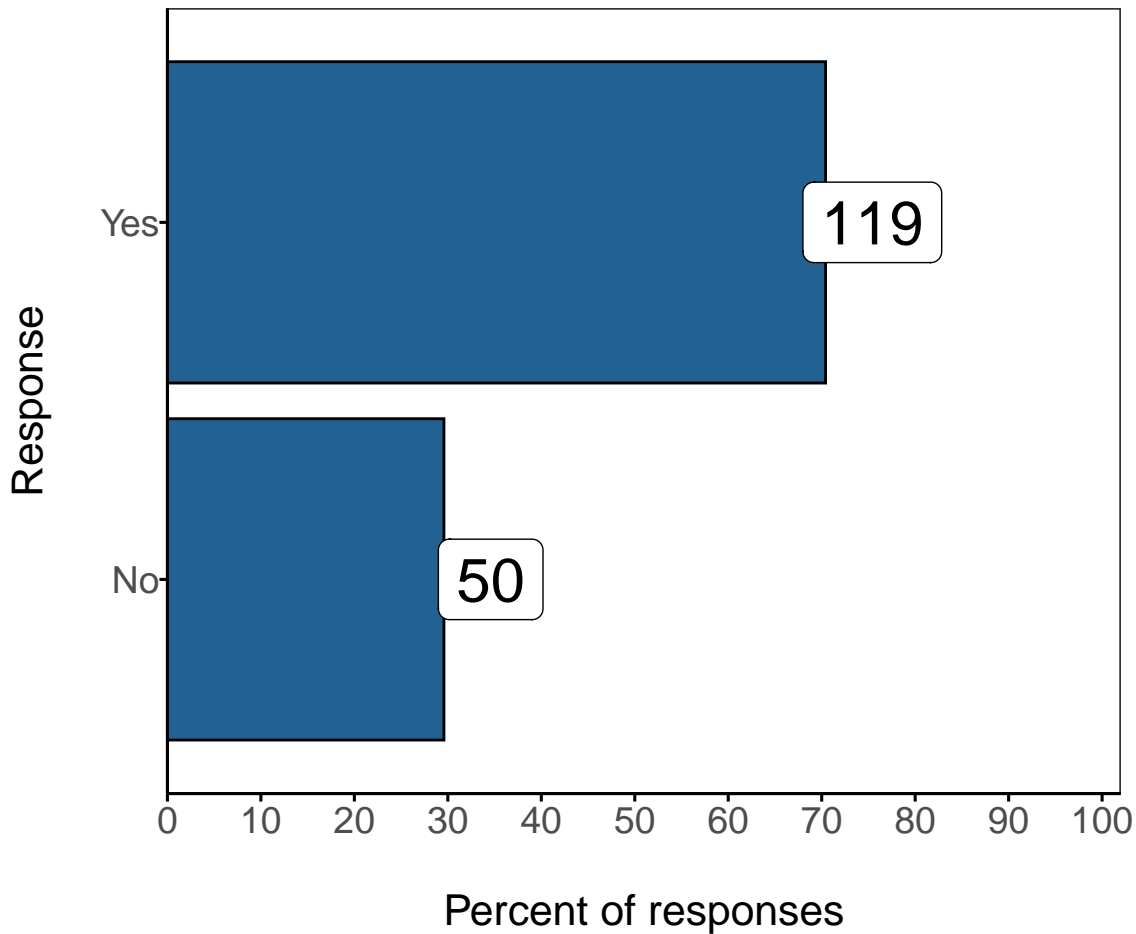


Figure 13: Awareness that Nebraska Game and Parks Commission may remove a mountain lion proven to have inflicted livestock, or may issue a kill permit indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Mountain Lion Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the blue bars represents the actual number of respondents (N = 169).



12) Have you ever contacted the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission for assistance in reducing mountain lion depredation on your land?

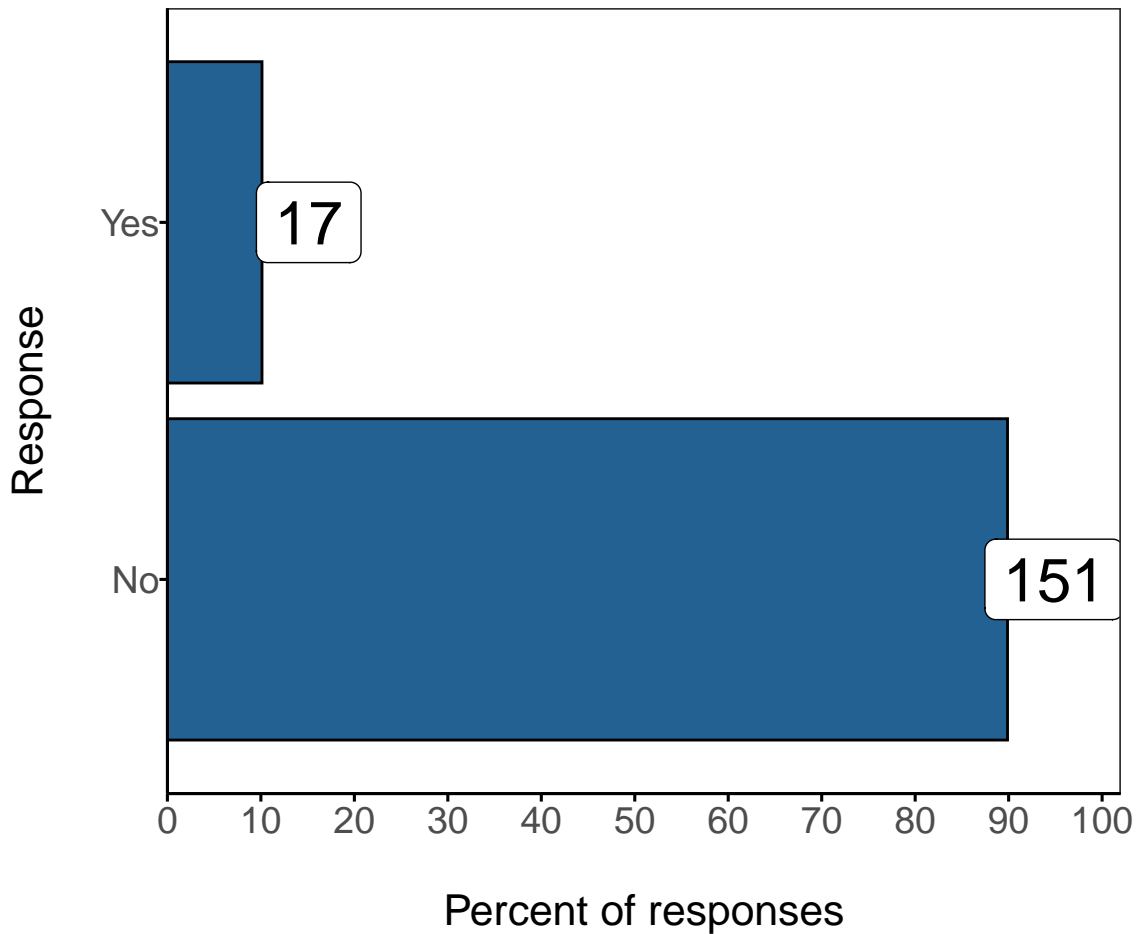


Figure 14: Whether landowner ever contacted the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission for assistance in reducing mountain lion depredation indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Mountain Lion Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the blue bars represents the actual number of respondents ( $N = 168$ ).

12a) In what year did you last contact the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission concerning depredation caused by mountain lions?

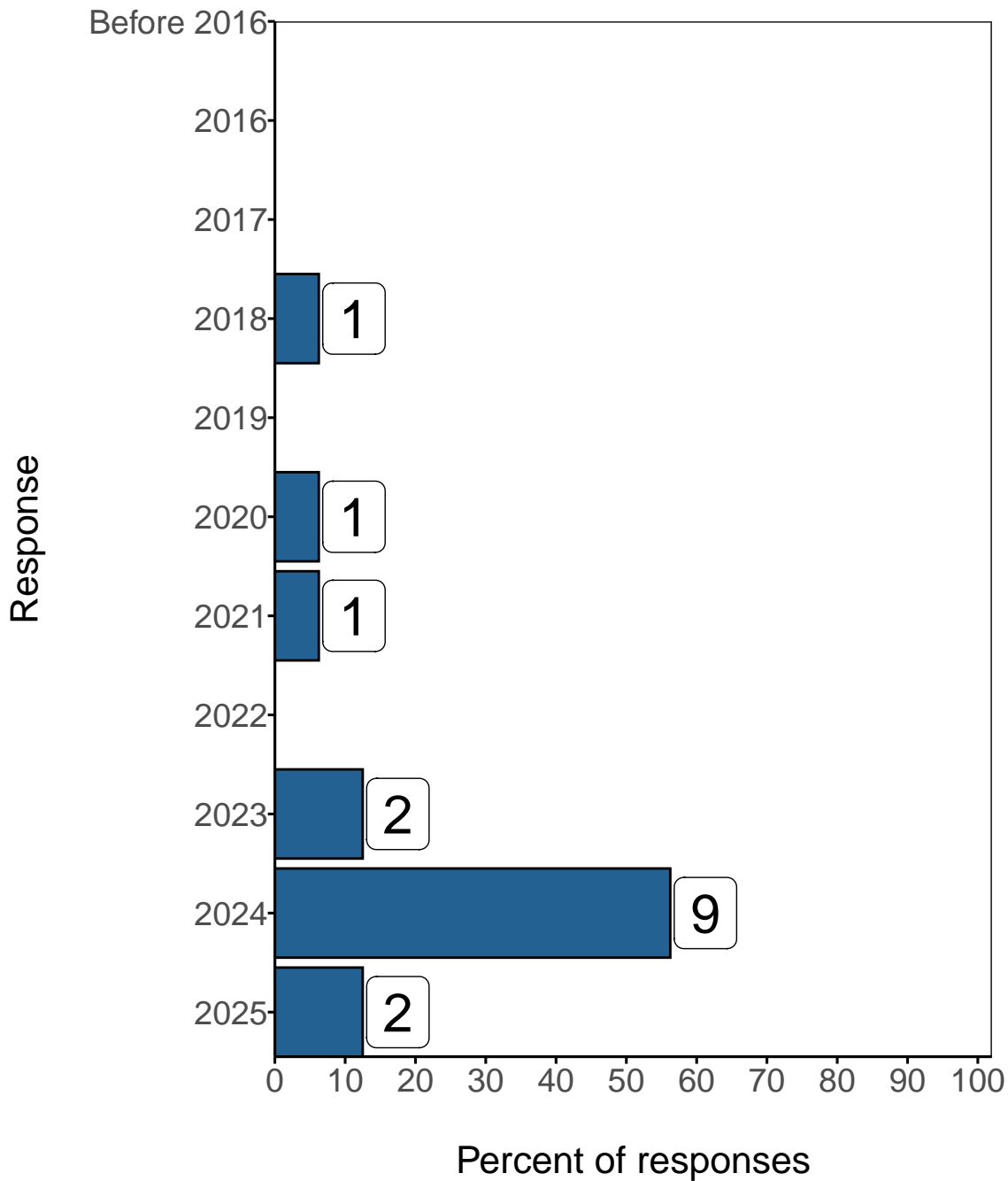


Figure 15: Year in which landowners most recently contacted Nebraska Game and Parks concerning depredation caused by mountain lions indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Mountain Lion Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the horizontal blue bars represents the actual number of respondents. Responses are limited to those who reported that they contacted NGPC (N = 16).

12b) How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the assistance you received?

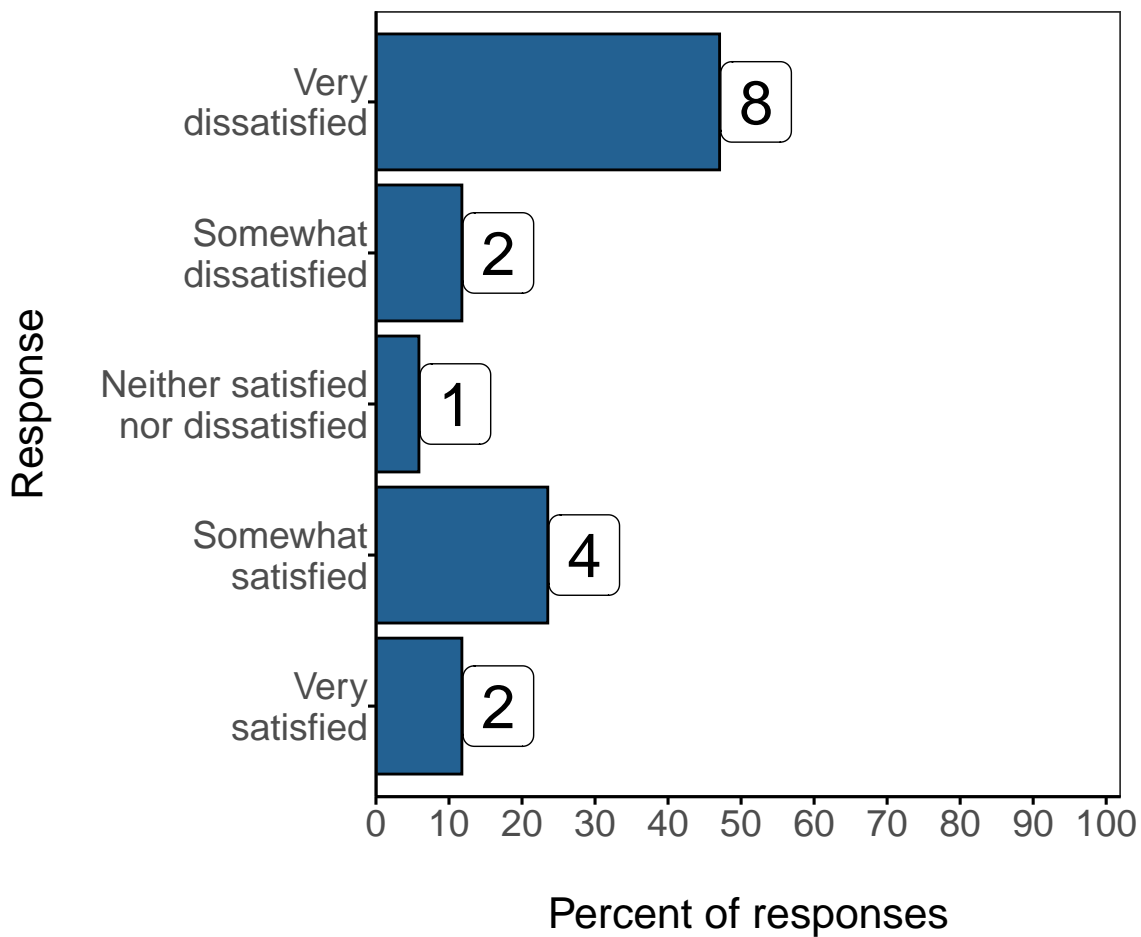


Figure 16: Satisfaction with NGPC indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Mountain Lion Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the blue bars represents the actual number of respondents. Responses are limited to those who reported that they contacted NGPC (N = 17).

13) Do you yourself plan to hunt mountain lions on your land during the current season?

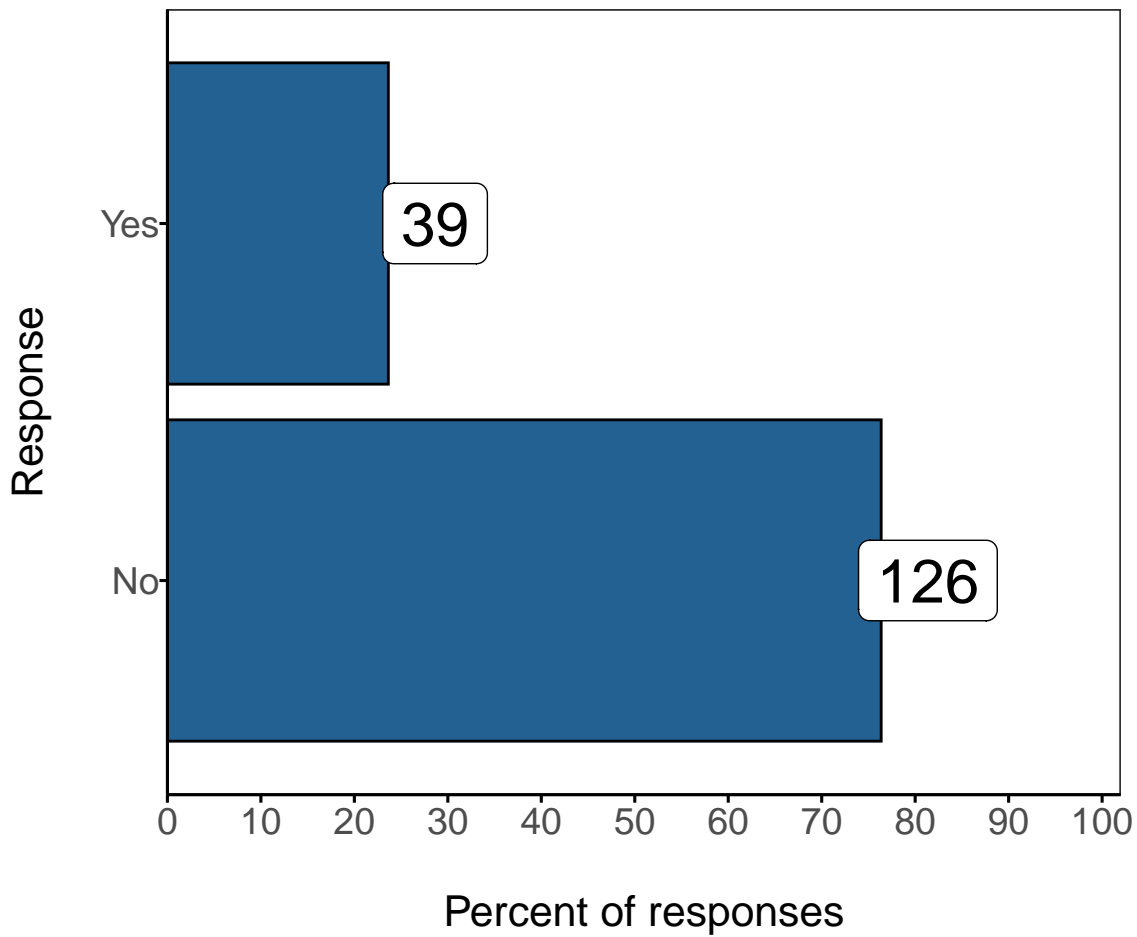


Figure 17: Whether landowners plan to hunt mountain lion on their land in the current season indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Mountain Lion Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the blue bars represents the actual number of respondents (N = 165).

14) Who else would you allow to hunt mountain lions on your land during the current season?

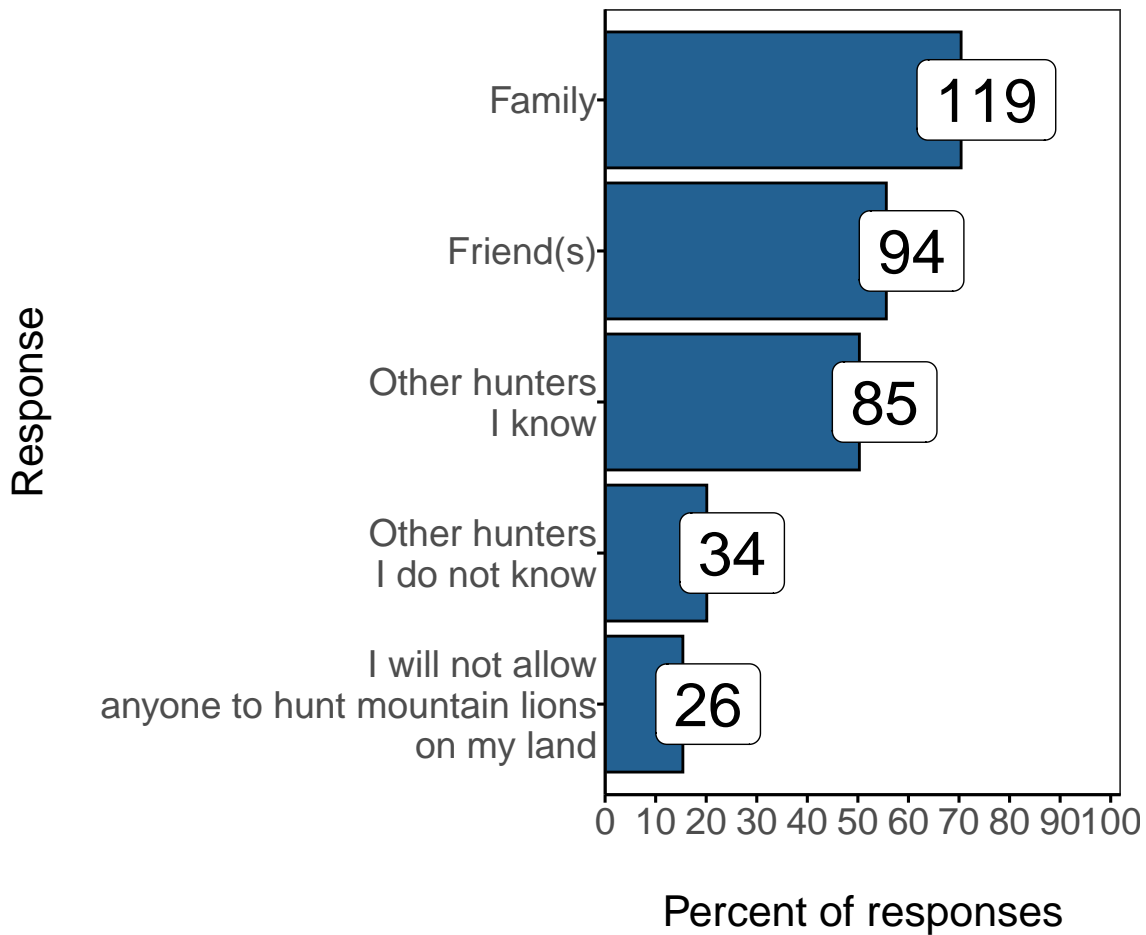


Figure 18: Who landowners would allow to hunt mountain lions on their land indicated by respondents to the 2025 Landowner Mountain Lion Survey. The x-axis indicates the percentage of all respondents and the number to the right of the blue bars represents the actual number of respondents. Percentage totals may exceed 100% as respondents could have chosen multiple responses (N = 166).