

Alaska Sheep Hunter Survey

Resident Sheep Hunter Responses



Credit: Steve Arthur

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Group	Subgroup	Population	Sampled²	Valid Responses	Response Rate	Survey Sampling Error at 95% CI
Hunted in last 5 years	Res	5,901	1,889	698	37%	±3.5
	Nonres	1,941	522	269	52%	±5.5
	Total	7,842	2,411	967	40%	±3.0
Did not hunt in last 5 years¹	Res & Nonres	21,177	960	88	9%	±10.4
Total		29,019	3,371	1055	31%	±3.0

Today's Results

● 3 separate analysis required

• Resident hunters

• Nonresident hunters

• Commercial operators

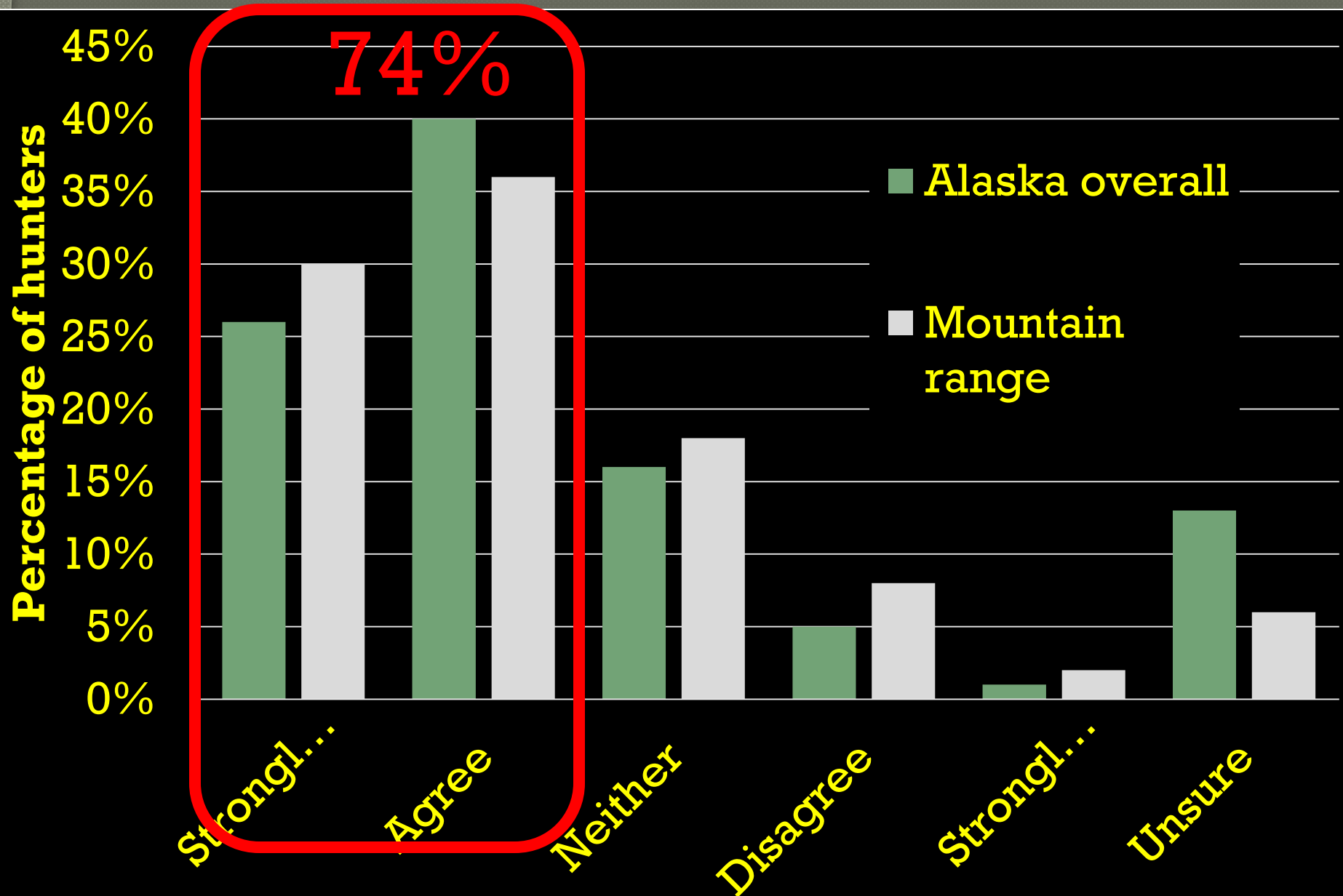
• *Guides*

• *Transporters & Air taxis*

Part 1

● Is there a sheep
hunter problem?

Is there a problem?



Part 2

- Why is there a sheep hunter problem?

Why is there a problem?

- Explore differences in hunter characteristics among groups

1. **Problem Group:** Hunters that agreed or strongly agreed sheep hunter competition and crowding is a problem






2. **No Problem Group:** Hunters that neither agreed or disagreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed, or were unsure if sheep hunter competition and crowding is a problem



Cause of problem?

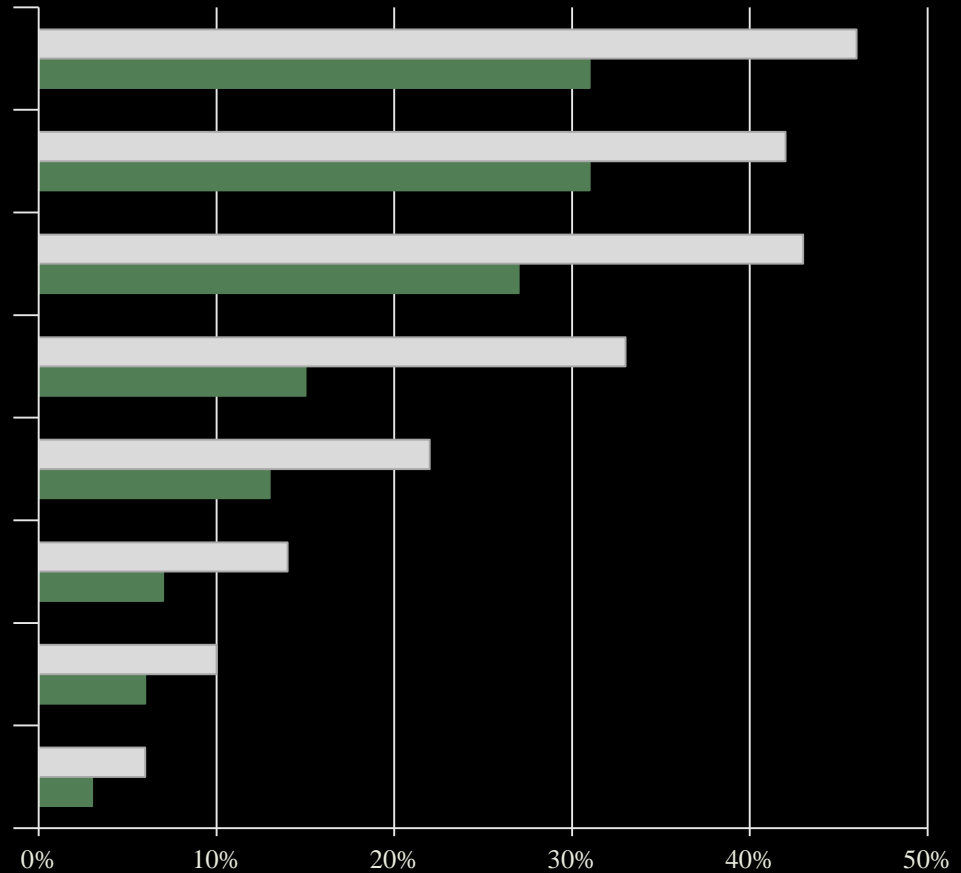


Hunting, Harvest, and Demographic Characteristics?

	Problem	No problem
Number of times hunted during the last 5 years*	1.8 years	1.5 years 
Number of sheep harvested during last 5 years	0.7 sheep	0.6 sheep
Harvest success rate during last 5 years	0.35	0.33
Year started sheep hunting	1998	1999
Number of years sheep hunted*	10 yrs	7 yrs 
Age of respondent*	46 yrs old	49 yrs old 
Length of Alaska residency	26 years	26 years
Household income in 2013	\$75-\$100K	\$75-\$100K

Mountain range hunted? (same between groups)

Alaska Range
Brooks Range
Wrangell Mountains
Chugach Mountains
Talkeetna Mountains
Kenai Mountains
Tanana Hills
White Mountains



■ During lifetime

■ Last 5 years

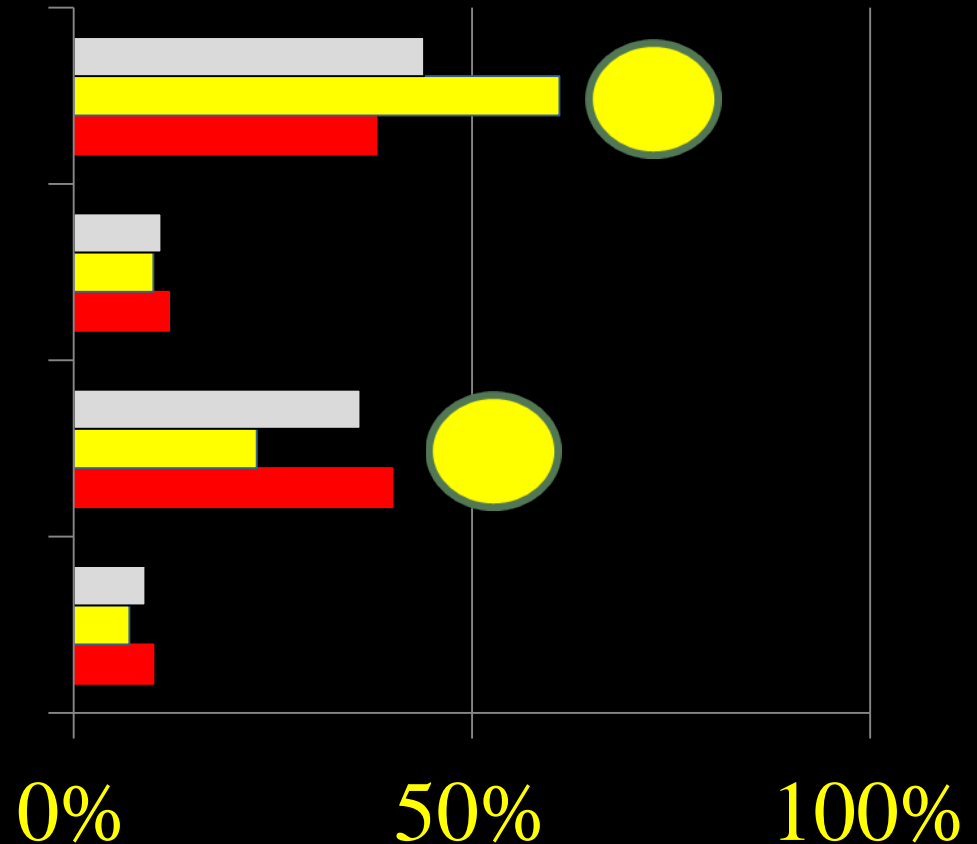
Switch mountain ranges for sheep hunting?

Only hunted one range*

Every 6-10 times

Every 2-5 times*

Every time

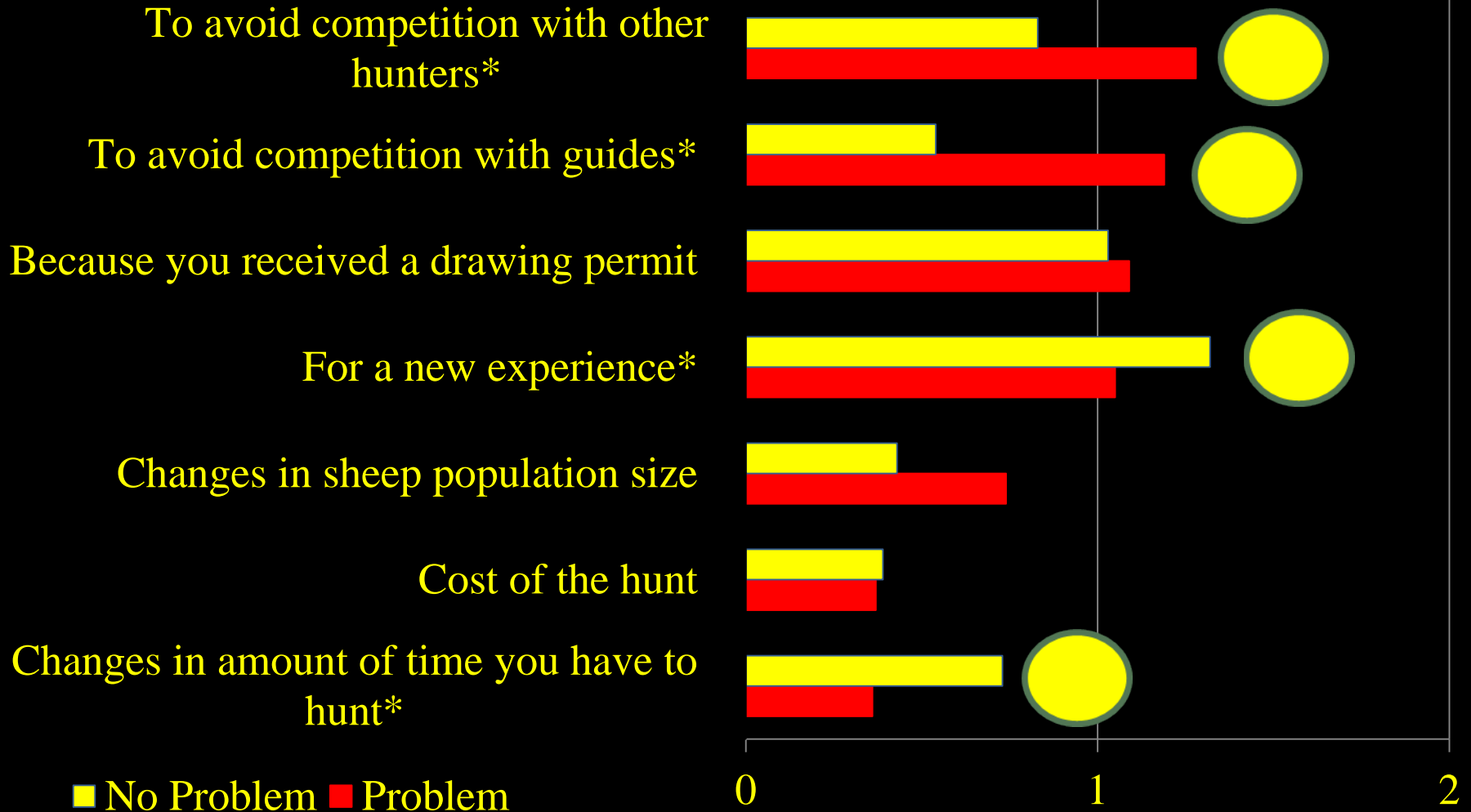


■ All hunters

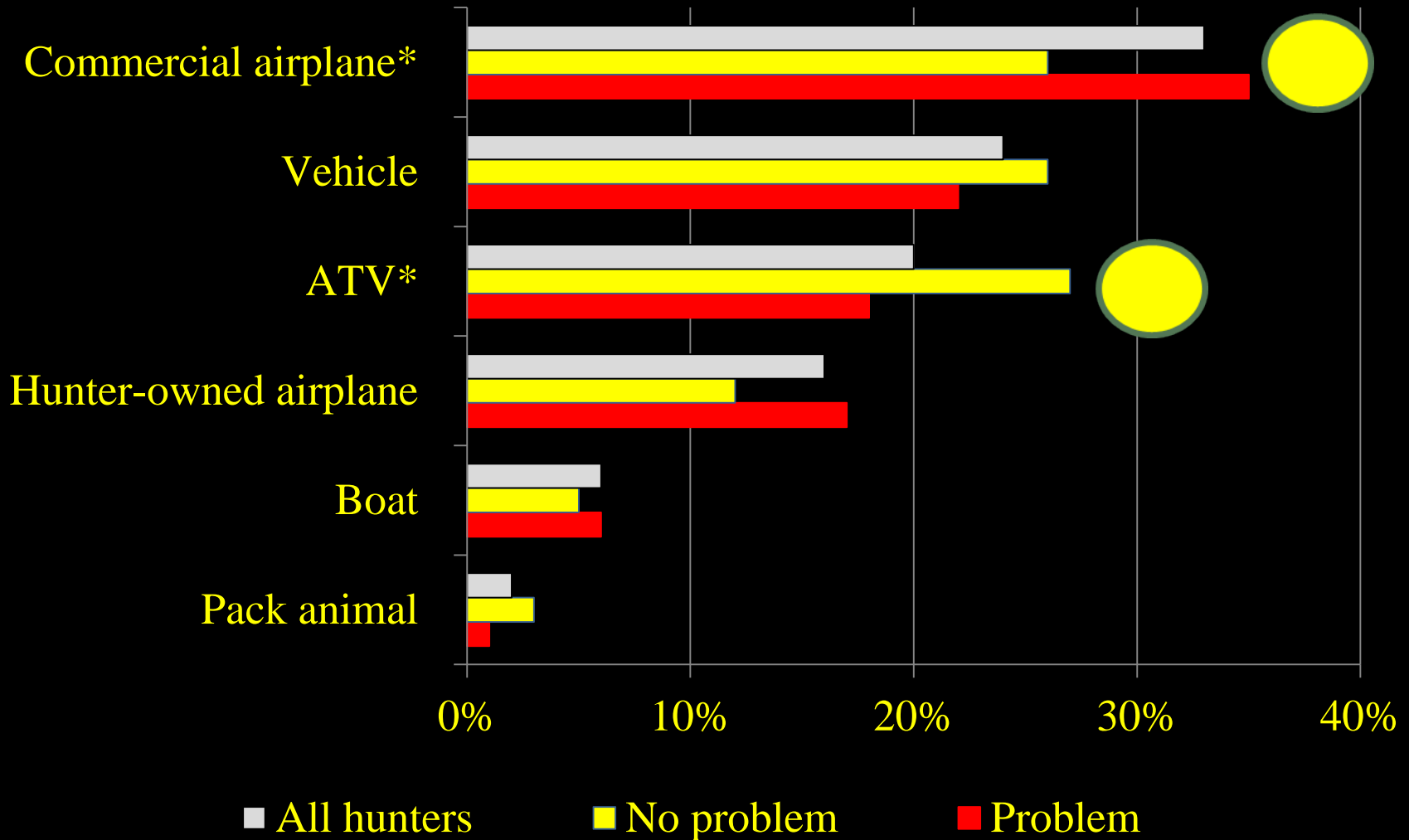
■ No Problem

■ Problem

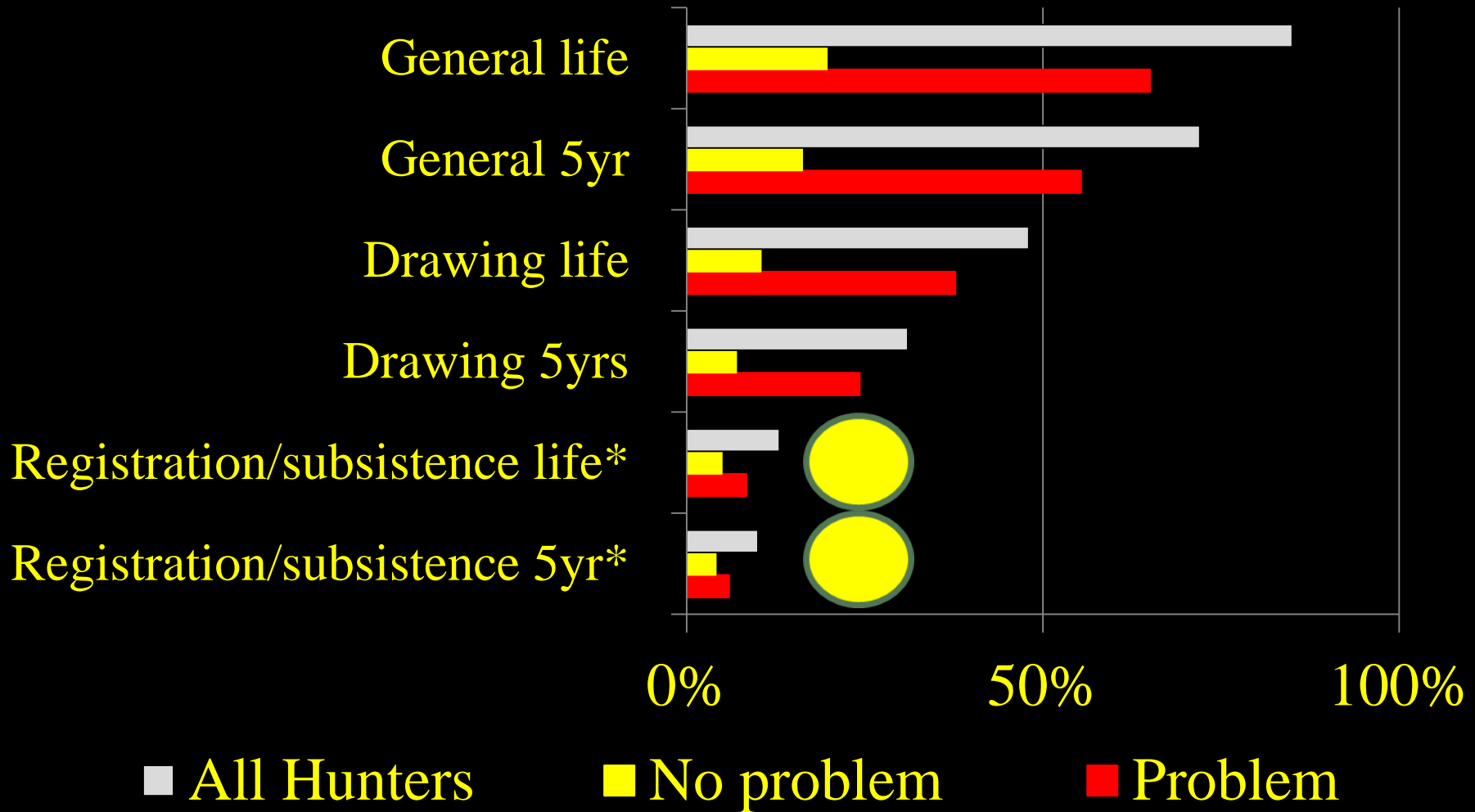
Why switch mountain ranges?



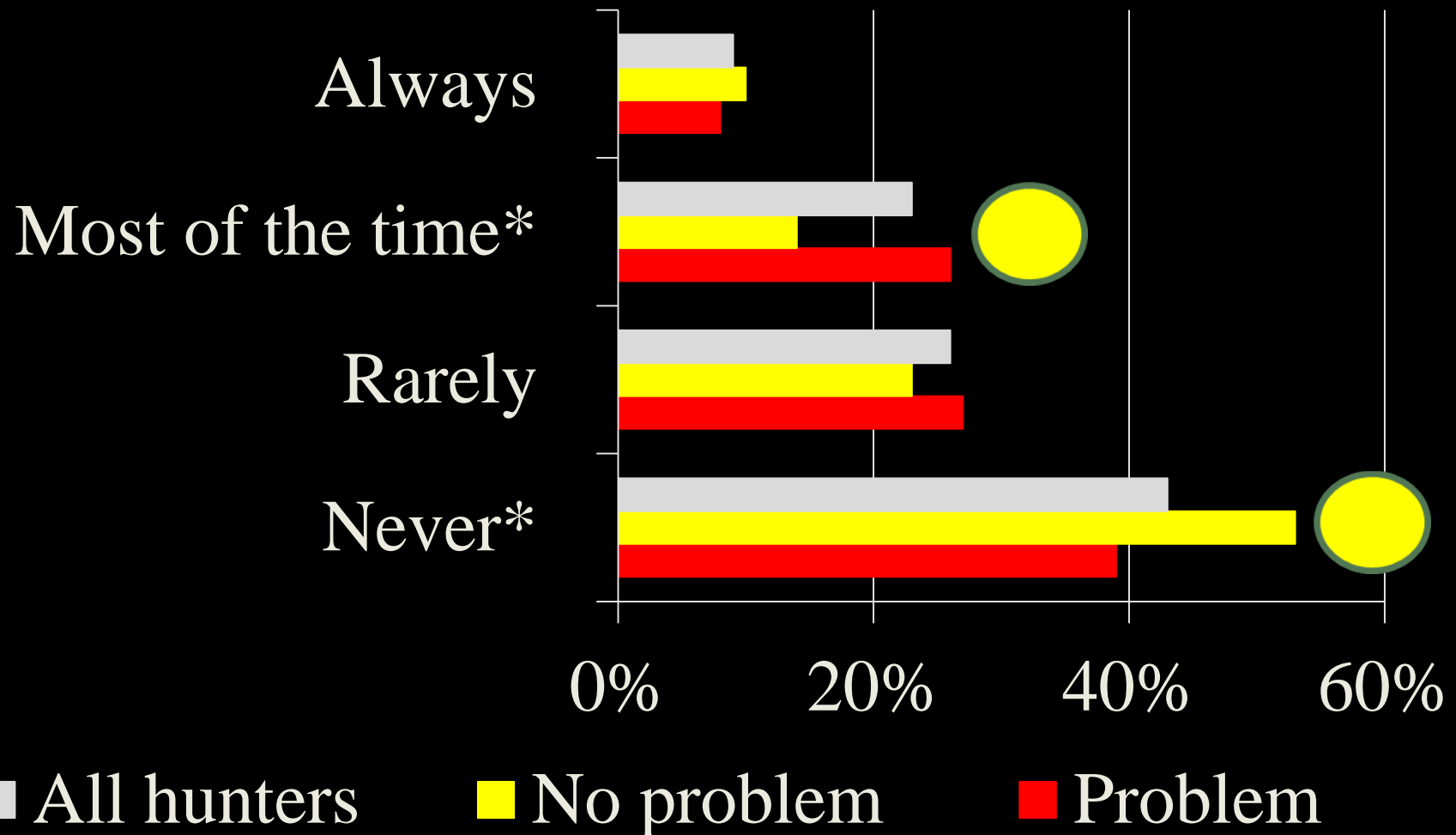
Mode of transportation to hunting area?



Type of permit?



Transporter & air taxi use?



Crowding tolerance levels?

Other hunters interrupt my stalk on a sheep*

I can't get away from other hunters*

I see multiple hunters and camps while hunting*

I have to change where I hunt to avoid other hunters*

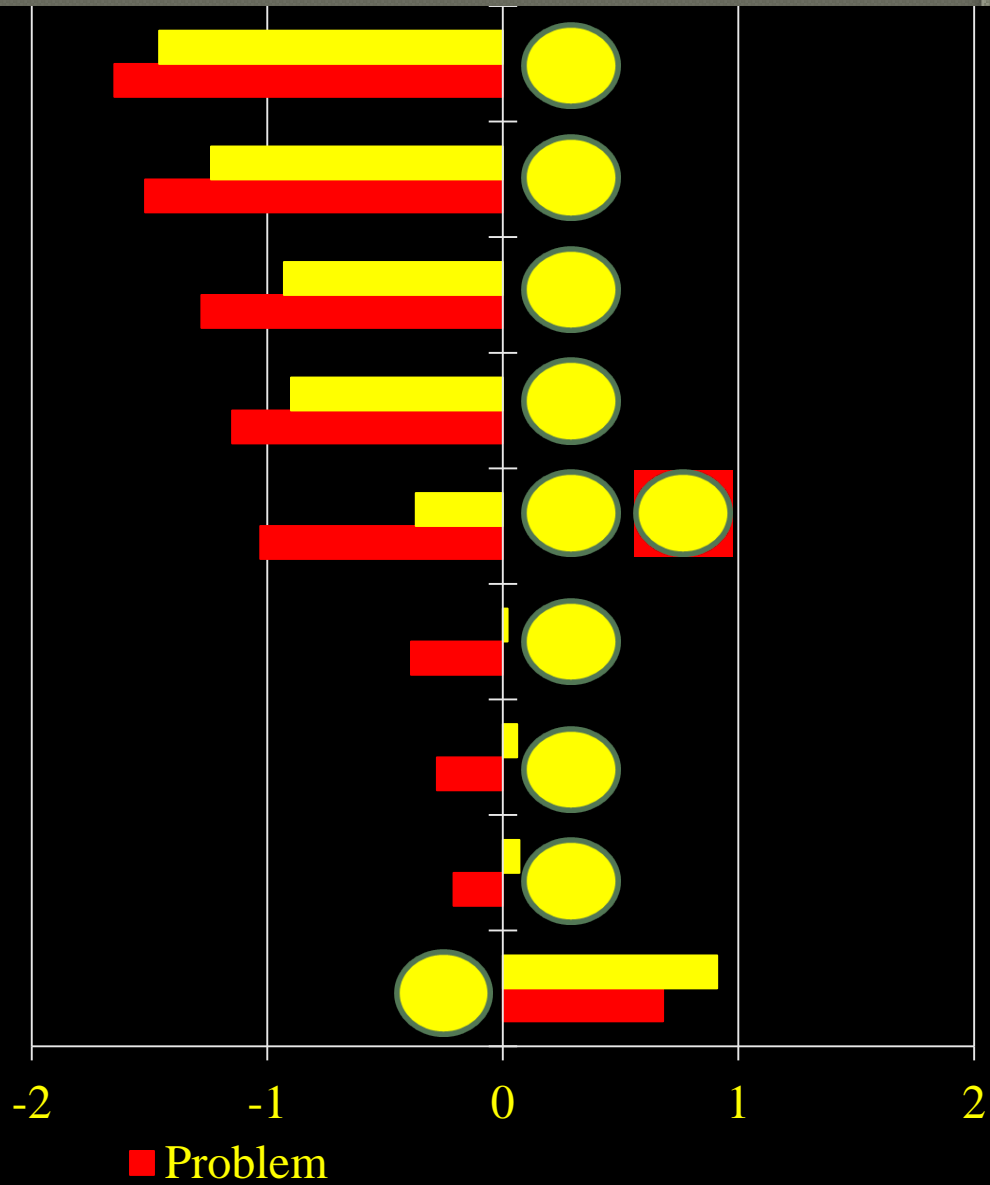
I see a small plane searching for sheep in the area I'm hunting*

I see a small plane on the ground in the area I'm hunting*

I see another hunter camp while hunting*

I see another hunter while hunting*

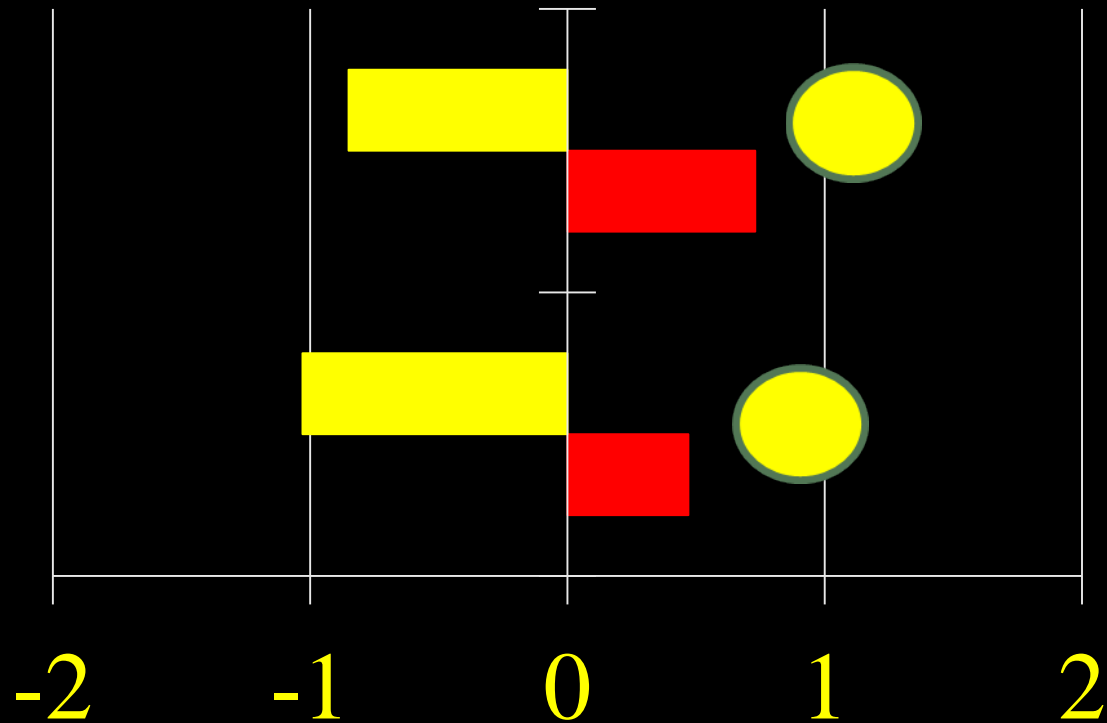
I see a small plane in the air passing over the area I'm hunting*



Too much harvest pressure on sheep populations

In the range most important to you*

In Alaska overall*



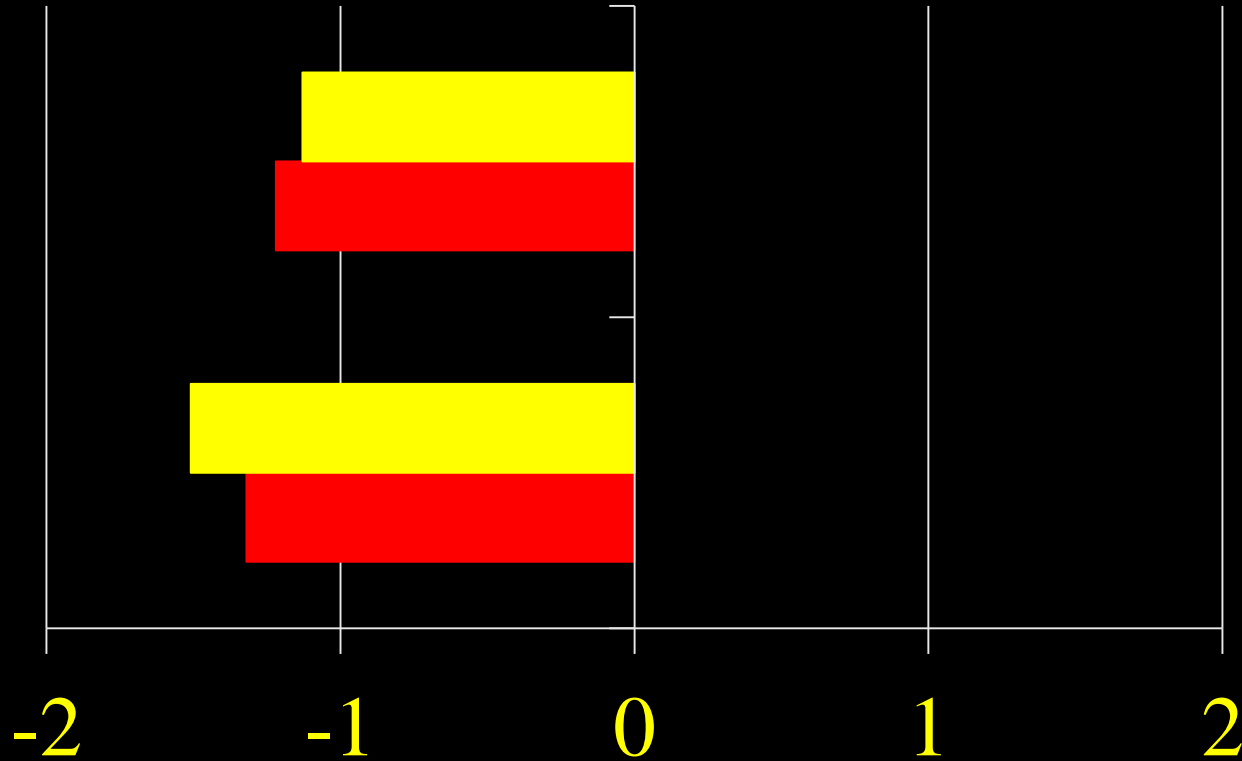
■ No problem

■ Problem

Perceptions of sheep population change

In the range most important to you

In Alaska overall



■ No problem

■ Problem

What is right or wrong with the current hunting system?

Statute requiring nonresidents to hire guides*

Length of sheep hunting season (Aug. 10 – Sep. 20)

Full-curl regulation

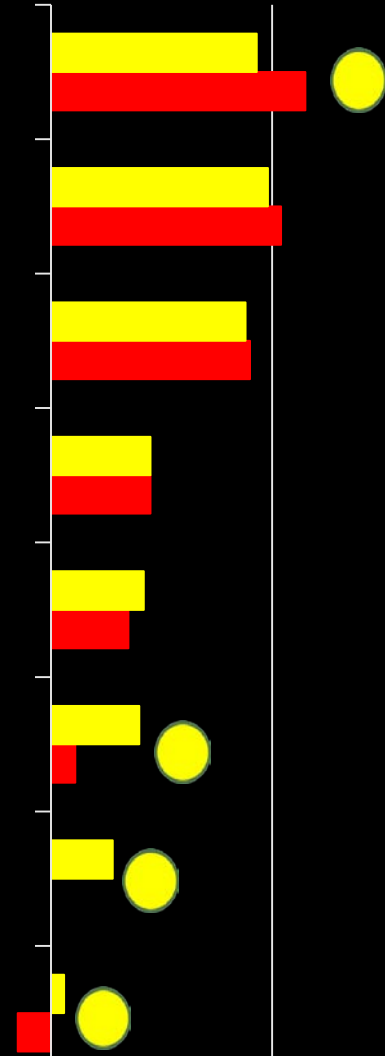
Horn sealing requirements

Number of general harvest hunts

Level of enforcement in the field*

Number of drawing hunts*

Number of registration/subsistence hunts*



Number of drawing hunts*

Number of registration/subsistence
hunts*

Sheep population size*

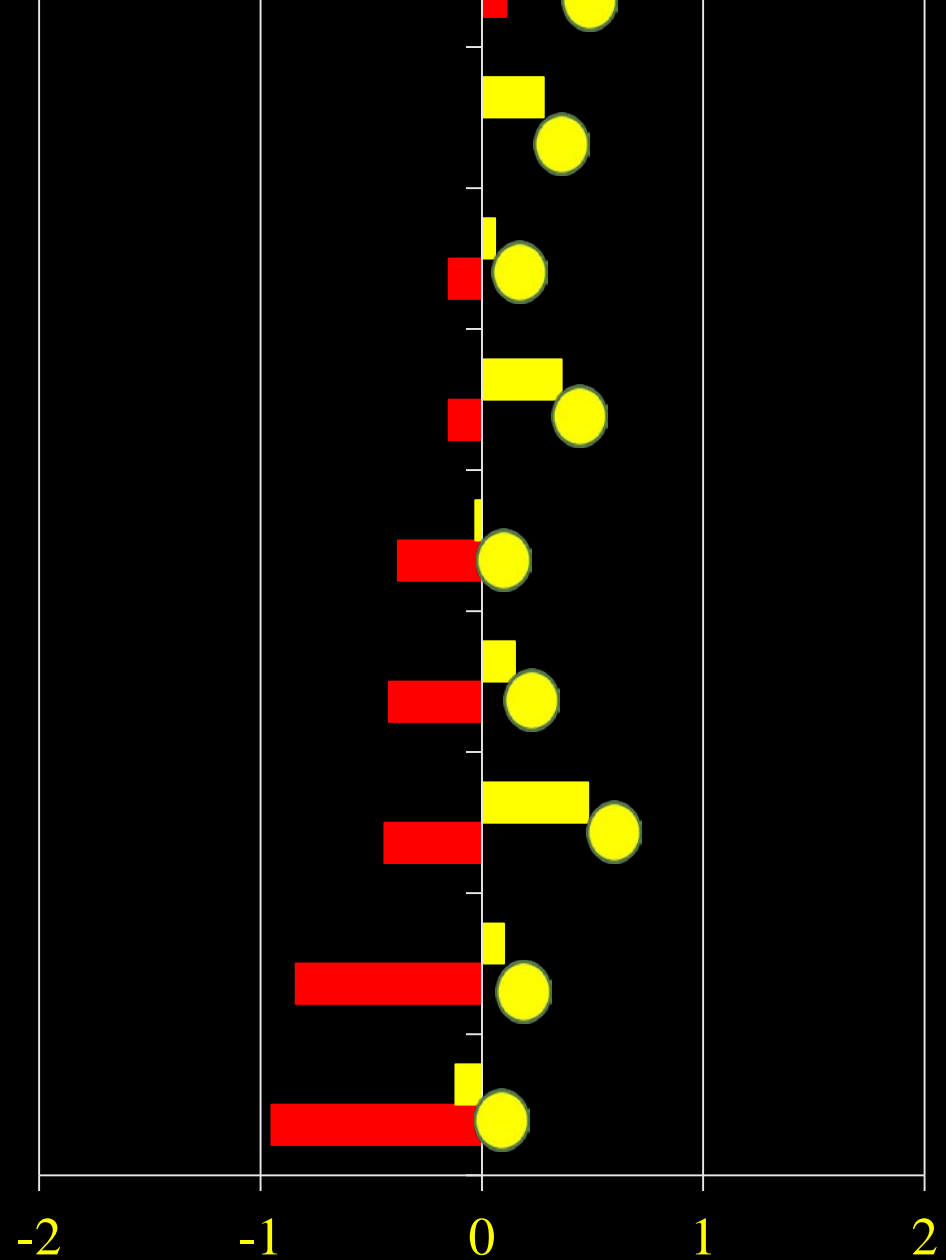
Allocation of tags to nonresident kin*

Regulation of professional transporters*

Number of other hunters seen while
sheep hunting*

Regulation of professional guides*

Allocation of tags to nonresident
hunters*



■ No problem

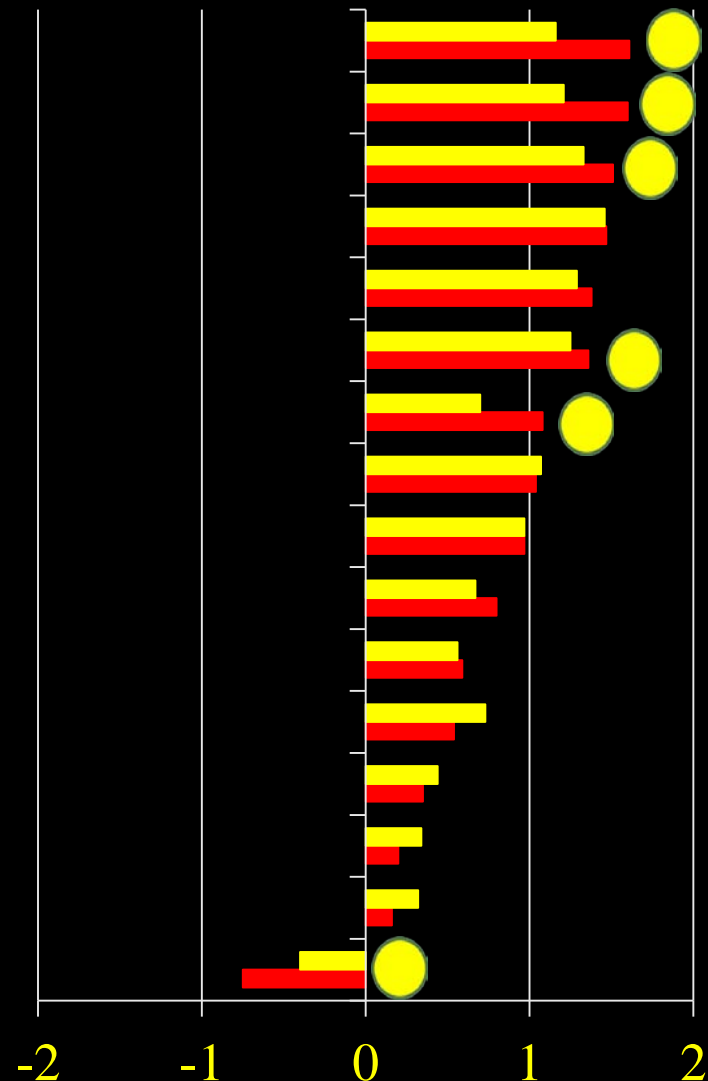
■ Problem

Most important to sheep hunter satisfaction?

- Level of crowding and competition*
- Seclusion from other hunters*
- Number of legal rams seen*
- Opportunity to hunt sheep every year
- Number of sheep seen
- Opportunity to harvest a full-curl ram*
- Seclusion from plane traffic*
- Opportunity for walk-in hunts in non-motorized areas
- Harvest success
- Opportunity to harvest a very large (>40 inch) ram
- Size of ram harvested
- Cost of a sheep hunt
- Weather
- Physical difficulty of the hunt
- Opportunity to harvest a sheep (any ram)
- Opportunity to hire transporters or guides*

■ No Problem

■ Problem



Part 3

● How might sheep hunting be improved?

Hunters where asked about approval or disapproval of potential changes to:

- Timing and length of the sheep hunting season
- Same-day airborne regulation
- Special hunts
 - Non-motorized, youth, trophy, etc...
- Characteristics of drawing hunts
- Permit allocation and tag fees

Timing of sheep season

Start a week later for non-residents only*

Seasons should stay the same

Start a week sooner for residents only*

Divide into early and late seasons

Lengthen overall season*

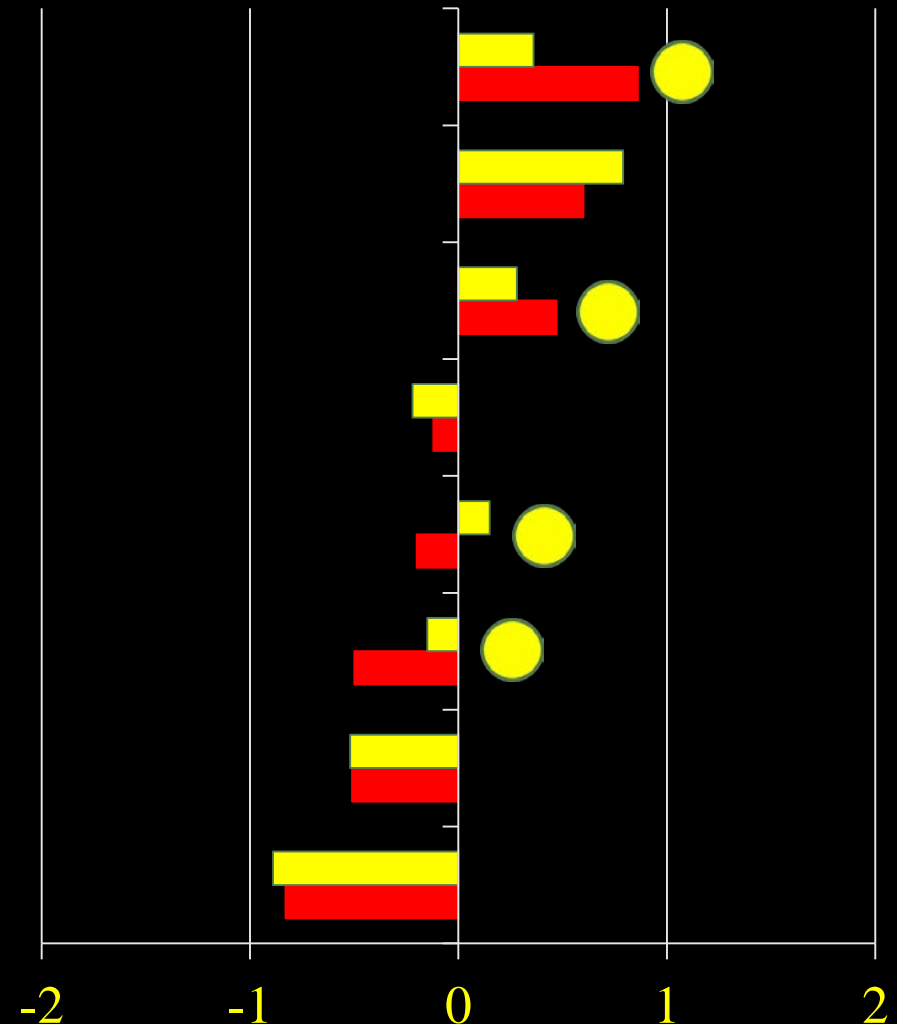
Start a week sooner*

Start a week later

Shorten overall season

■ No problem

■ Problem



Same-day airborne

No plane-spotting sheep during the hunting season*

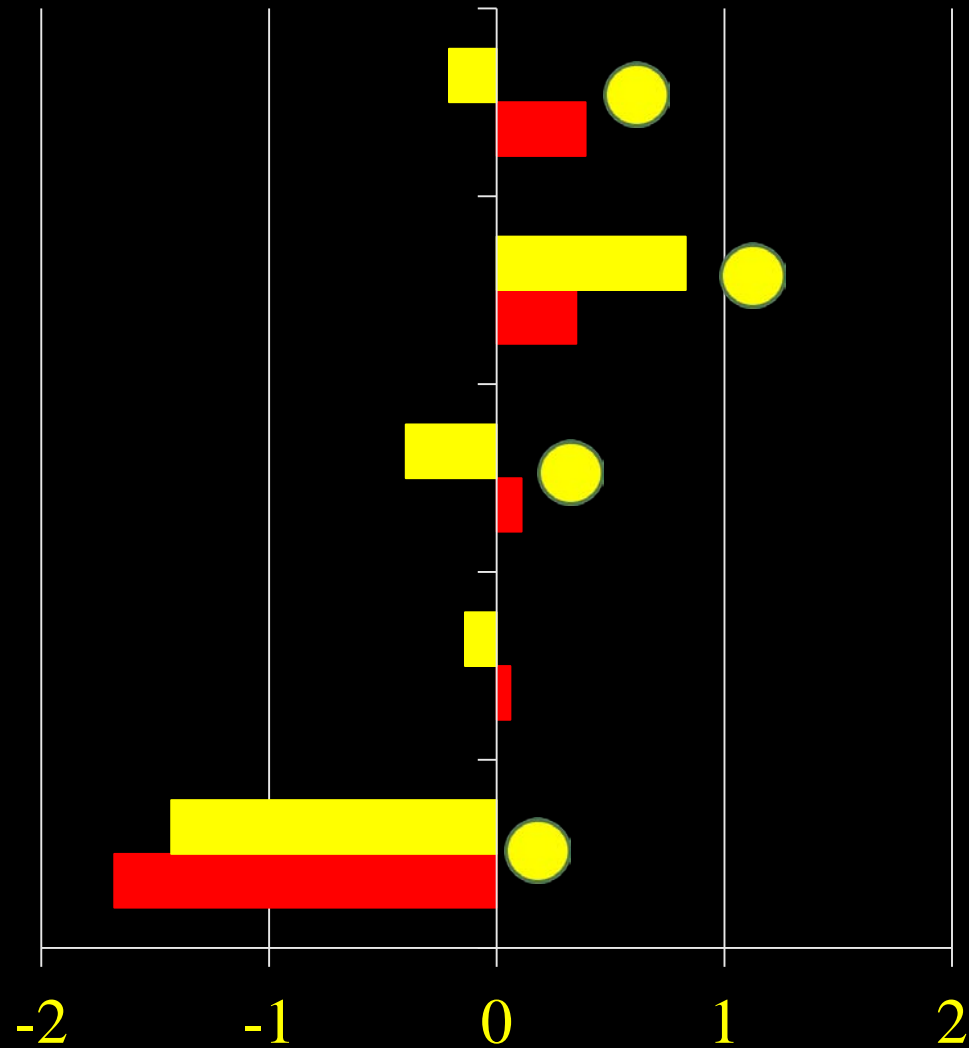
Regulation should stay the same*

No hunting until 24 hours after day flown*

No hunting until 12 hours after day flown

Remove same day airborne regulation*

■ No problem ■ Problem



Special hunts

More non-motorized hunts*

More trophy (large full-curls) hunts

Sheep hunts should stay the same*

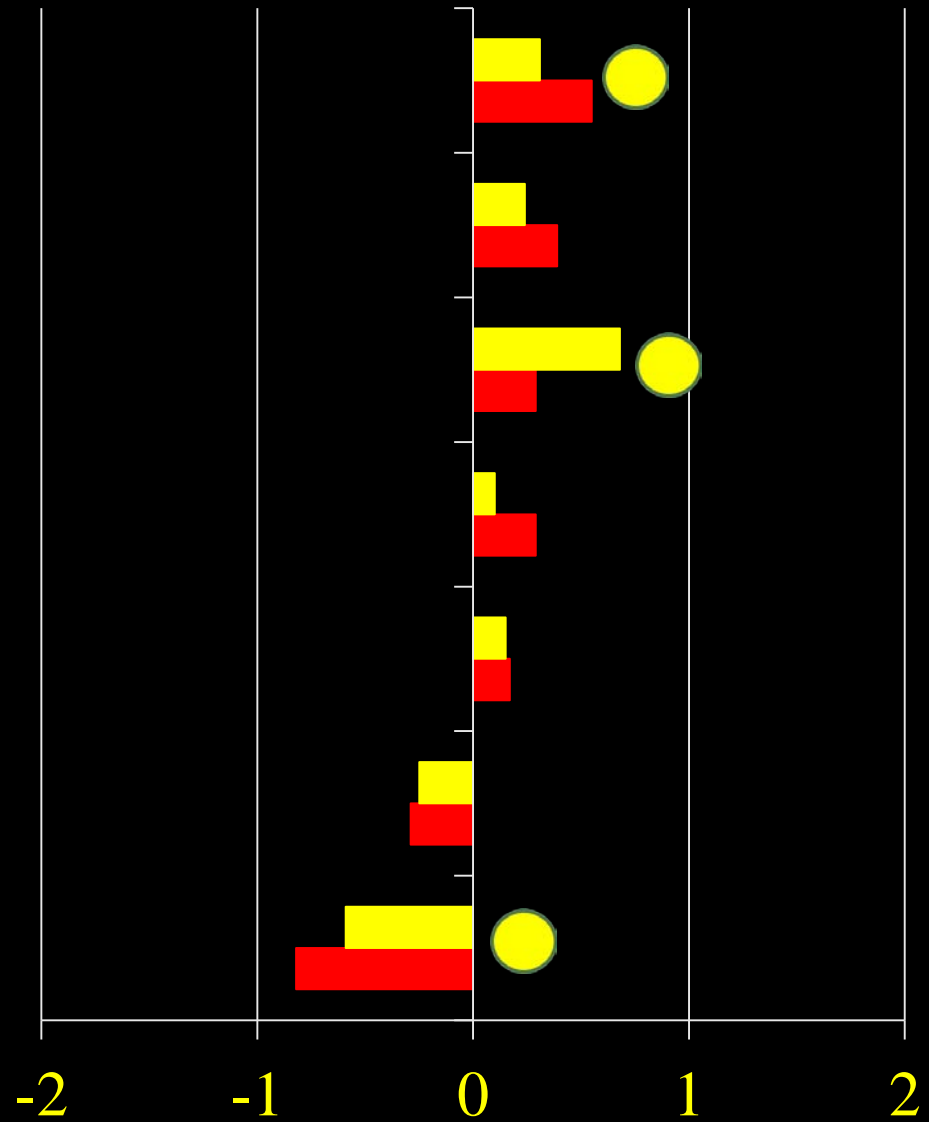
More youth only hunts

More archery only hunts

More muzzleloader only hunts

More subsistence hunts*

■ No problem ■ Problem



Drawing permit characteristics

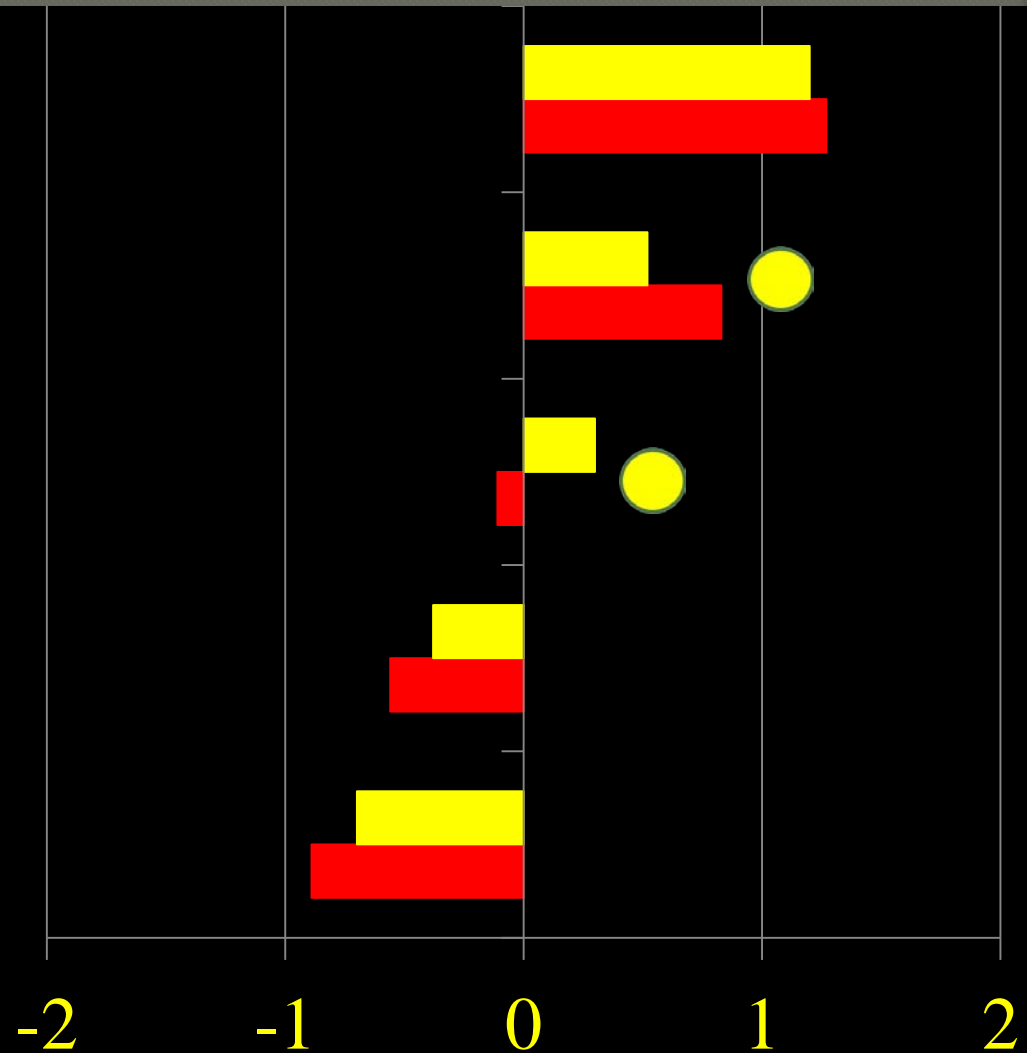
Full curl or bigger

Trophy (large and old full-curl)*

3/4 curl or bigger*

Any ram

Any sheep

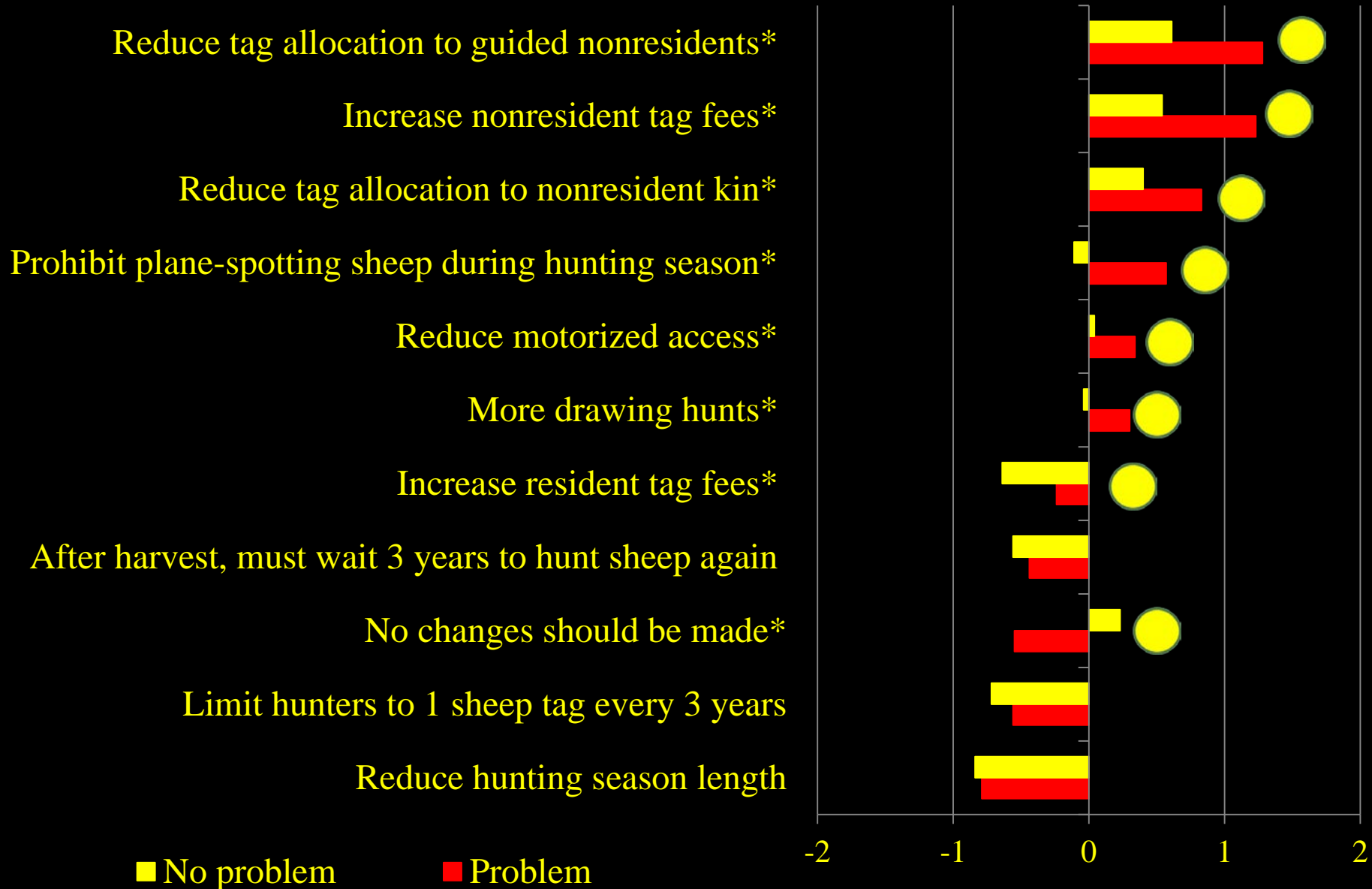


■ No problem ■ Problem

Permit allocation and tag fees

Question	Problem	No problem
Should limits be placed on allocation of sheep tags to nonresidents* ●	Yes 93%	Yes 73%
If yes, what percentage of total allocation should nonresidents receive* ●	10%	15%
Should Alaska residents pay for a sheep tag ●	Yes 45%	Yes 25%
If yes, how much should a resident pay for a sheep tag (median)	\$50	\$38
Should the price of a nonresident sheep tag change* ●	77%	49%
If yes, how much should a nonresident pay for a sheep tag (median)* ●	\$1000	\$750

Approval of potential changes



Resident results summary

- Majority of resident sheep hunters perceive a crowding and competition problem
- Roughly half of hunters feel there is too much pressure on the resource
 - Nearly all hunters felt the sheep population has decreased since they began hunting.
- Levels of crowding and sheep numbers are two of the most important issues hunters
- Reduced allocation to nonresidents and more regulation of commercial operators were the most popular solution