

Effectively Targeting New Adult Hunters

Volume 3 of 3: New Hunter Journey Map
Background and Support Materials

Multistate Grant #F21AP00283



This report was funded by the Multistate Conservation Grant Program (#F21AP00283), a program supported with funds from the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program and jointly managed by the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.





This project is a joint effort of The Wildlife Management Institute, Southwick Associates, and DJ Case & Associates to develop a better understanding of new adult hunters in the United States and the journey they take from their first interest in hunting through their entire hunting experience. In addition, it offers R3 practitioners strategies and tactics to support and encourage new hunters along that journey.



1101 14th St NW
Washington, DC 20005
202-371-1808
www.wildlifemanagement.institute



SOUTHWICK
ASSOCIATES

23 S 3rd St
Fernandina Beach, FL 32034
904-277-9765
www.southwickassociates.com



317 E. Jefferson Blvd
Mishawaka, IN 46545
574-258-0100
www.djcase.com

This report is the second volume of a three-volume set described below:

Volume 1—New Hunter Personas & Journey Maps summarizes the entire 2 Phase project. It includes **four new hunter audience personas** with infographics to describe each group and aid in marketing to them. It also includes a **journey map** for the journey each audience takes toward and eventually through hunting. This volume is designed to be very approachable and help the R3 practitioner take advantage of the personas & journey maps without pouring through the data that was required to create them. Volume 1 is meant to be the primary tool used by R3 practitioners.

Volume 2 – New Hunter Personas Background and Support Materials (phase 1) reports on the data that was the foundation of the four new hunter personas in phase 1 of this project. It describes the research process, a summary of focus group discussions, and comprehensive data on each segment's answer to all the survey questions used to develop the four personas. This volume is meant to provide support and additional data for the information depicted in Volume 1

Volume 3 – New Hunter Journey Map Background and Support Materials (phase 2) reports on the data that was the foundation of the journey map developed in phase 2 of this project. It describes the research process, survey, and comprehensive data on each segment's answer to survey questions regarding their journey through hunting. This volume is meant to provide support and additional data for the information depicted in Volume 1.



Executive Summary

What are the actions adults without prior hunting experience (referred to as ‘new adult hunters’) take before and during their first hunt? What kind of imagery might be most influential to them? As an extension of previous research which developed a series of motivation-based segments within the new adult hunter population (Family first, Self-sufficients, Locavore, and Recreationalists), this project defines each segment’s ‘consumer journey’ then identifies appropriate marketing approaches for recruiting and engaging new adult hunters. Many of the marketing and communications recommendations that follow are consistent with current R3 outreach practices known to reverse the downward trend in hunting license sales and others serve to highlight the unique characteristics and needs of the new adult hunter:

- Focus marketing messages on the enjoyment derived from being outdoors and use imagery inclusive of younger females. Imagery alluding to memories made between an adult and child while engaging in a pastime was also very motivational within and across segments.
- Friends and family members who already hunt were the greatest source for generating interest in hunting among new adult hunters. Encourage constituents who already hunt to share their passion by bringing someone new to the sport and make new outdoor memories in the process.
- Be mindful that messages geared toward supporting conservation and being part of a hunting tradition do not resonate as well with this audience as it may have in the past or as it does with other sub-segments of the hunting population.
- Most new adult hunters first pursue and continue hunting big game and, as such, messaging specific to those species will be relevant to a large proportion of this population.
- Overall satisfaction with their first hunting experience was high among new adult hunters and interest in continuing to hunt was strong; still, new adult hunters face the common challenge of finding someone to hunt with them. Programs such as IHEA’s LearnHunting.org should be supported, while state agencies and nonprofits could spearhead efforts to create, advertise, and operate localized social media groups. These would create a safe space for new adults to connect or to seek someone more experienced to hunt with or to ask questions of.
- Support new adult hunters by providing relevant information in easy-to-use ways:
 - Two existing pathways present opportunities: 1) hunter education courses and 2) online license sales platforms and apps, as most new adult hunters buy their licenses here. Use both to provide new adult hunters access to hunting resources, to collect email addresses to stay in touch with them, and to help build new adult hunter communities.
 - Most requested information includes processing game; where to hunt; regulations, seasons, and licensing; and opportunities to learn more about scouting. Work with existing NGOs to access existing educational resources or develop new videos and online how-to guides.
- The knowledge needed to become an independent hunter, as shown in other recent studies, is not gained from one course or the first hunt but is gained over time and many experiences. State



agencies should focus on providing informal learning opportunities from experienced hunters via social networks among new hunters and developing independent learning resources over online or face-to-face classes. No one step or effort will unilaterally solve this need.

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS..... 4

LIST OF TABLES..... 5

LIST OF FIGURES..... 5

INTRODUCTION..... 7

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES 7

APPROACH AND METHODS..... 8

 IDENTIFYING THE TARGET AUDIENCE..... 8

National survey effort 8

RESULTS 12

 NATIONAL SURVEY RESULTS..... 12

Segments..... 12

Considering learning to hunt as an adult 15

Motivation of imagery during consideration phase 17

Preparation activities of the new adult hunter 23

First time and continuing hunting experiences as a new adult hunter 33

Behaviors of continued new adult hunters..... 38

Communication opportunities, pathways, and effectiveness..... 39

APPENDICES 44

 APPENDIX A: LEARN MORE IMAGERY BY SEGMENT 45

 APPENDIX B: SURVEY AND IMAGERY 50



List of Tables

Table 1. Nationwide and participating state hunter distributions	10
Table 2. Respondent and collective ‘new adult’ hunter	11
Table 3. New adult hunter characteristics: Collectively and by self-assigned segments	13
Table 4. Self-assigned new adult hunter segments by region.	14
Table 5. As best as you can recall, how long had you considered hunting prior to your first hunting experience?	15
Table 6. Which of the following increased your interest in hunting for the first time? Select all that apply.	16
Table 7. During the time you considered going on a hunt, did anyone you know influence your decision to hunt, whether directly or indirectly? Select all that apply.	16
Table 8. As you were considering going hunting, which of the following topics did you want to learn more about? Select up to three topics.	17
Table 9. How did you prepare for your first hunting experience? Select all that apply.	23
Table 10. Did you know that your state agency offers resources to support your interest in learning to hunt?	24
Table 11. How much of a challenge were the following as you prepared for your first hunt?	31
Table 12. Before your first hunt, how confident were you handling the following equipment?	32
Table 13. Currently, which of the following most appeals to you about hunting? Select up to three. ...	33
Table 14. What equipment did you use on your first hunt?	34
Table 15. Why were you satisfied with your first hunting experience? Select up to three reasons.	36
Table 16. Why were you not satisfied with your first hunting experience? Select up to three reasons.	36
Table 17. After your first hunt, did you want to continue hunting?	37
Table 18. Since your first hunt, have you hunted again?	37
Table 19. Do you intend to continue hunting?	38
Table 20. How did you purchase your first hunting license?	40
Table 21. Are any of the following issues for you when considering continuing to hunt? Select all that apply.	42
Table 22. Prior to your first hunt, which would have helped you become a better prepared hunter? Select all that apply.	43
Table 23. Looking to the future, which would be most effective to support your continued learning about hunting? Select all that apply.	43

List of Figures

Figure 1. Map of states participating in the survey effort.	8
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Figure 2. Prior to your first hunt, which of the following was your primary motivation to hunt? Please select one. 12

Figure 3. Enjoy the Outdoors: Learn more about hunting image..... 18

Figure 4. Influence of the ‘Enjoy the Outdoors’ image: Overall and by self-assigned segment. 18

Figure 5. Lower your Carbon Footprint: Learn more about hunting locally image..... 19

Figure 6. Influence of the ‘Lower Your Carbon Footprint’ image: Overall and by self-assigned segment. 19

Figure 7. Save a Trip to the Grocery Store: Learn more about hunting image. 20

Figure 8. Influence of the ‘Save a Trip to the Grocery Store’ image: Overall and by self-assigned segment. 20

Figure 9. Spend Time with Family: Learn more about hunting image #1..... 21

Figure 10. Influence of the ‘Spend Time with Family’ image #1: Overall and by self-assigned segment. 21

Figure 11. Spend Time with Family: Learn more about hunting image #2. 22

Figure 12. Influence of the ‘Spend Time with Family’ image #2: Overall and by self-assigned segment. 22

Figure 13. Learn about Hunting Regulations: Enroll in our class today image 25

Figure 14. Influence of the ‘Learn about Hunting Regulations’ image: Overall and by self-identified skill-based needs 25

Figure 15. Learn about Where to Hunt: Enroll in our class today image 26

Figure 16. Influence of the ‘Learn about Where to Hunt’ image: Overall and by self-identified skill-based needs..... 26

Figure 17. Learn about Firearm Skills: Enroll in our class today image 27

Figure 18. Influence of the ‘Learn about Firearm Skills’ image: Overall and by self-identified skill-based needs..... 27

Figure 19. Learn How to Hunt: Enroll in our class today image 28

Figure 20. Influence of the ‘Learn How to Hunt’ image: Overall and by self-identified skill-based needs 28

Figure 21. Learn about Game Processing: Enroll in our class today image 29

Figure 22. Influence of the ‘Learn about Game Processing’ image: Overall and by self-identified skill-based needs 29

Figure 23. On your first hunt as an adult, which did you pursue? Select all that apply..... 34

Figure 24. On your first hunt as an adult, who did you hunt with? Select all that apply. 35

Figure 25. Were you satisfied with your first hunting experience overall? 35

Figure 26. How would you rate your confidence level hunting... 37

Figure 27. What game have you hunted since your first hunt? Select all that apply..... 38

Figure 28. Since purchasing your hunting license, have you received follow-up communication about hunting or licenses from your state agency?..... 39

Figure 29. Have you found the topic(s) covered in follow-up communication interesting and helpful? 39

Figure 30. How would you rate your hunting license purchase experience? 40

Figure 31. Which of the following topics did you want to know more about after your first hunt? 41



Introduction

State fish and wildlife agencies depend on license dollars from hunters and anglers to fund the important conservation work they do. Unfortunately, more and more hunters are aging out of the sport. Together, the R3 community is working to reverse this downward trend in license sales.

This project focuses on understanding the journey adults without prior hunting experience (referred to as 'new adult hunters') take to become a hunter. By understanding the new adult hunter journey, state agencies and their partners can enhance the journey so new hunters have encouraging experiences. Results from this study can also inform more effective marketing plans for distinct hunting segments and support the creation of robust educational programs.

Goals and objectives

As part of a 2021 Multistate Conservation Grant, Wildlife Management Institute (WMI), DJ Case & Associates, and Southwick Associates conducted qualitative and quantitative research to identify adult audience segments most likely to become hunters. Through that research, four segments of potential new hunters emerged:

1. **Family Firsts** – Family Firsts hunt to spend more time with their families. Their motivation for hunting is social.
2. **Self-sufficients** - Self-sufficients hunt for the meat - to make themselves and their families less dependent on stores and big agriculture. Self-sufficients hunt to increase their lifestyle independence.
3. **Locavores** - Locavores hunt because they believe it is a more environmentally sustainable source of protein. Their goal is to lower their environmental footprint by only eating food that was raised and processed within 100 miles of their home, reducing the fossil fuels, chemicals, and preservatives required to feed their families.
4. **Recreationalists** - Recreationalists hunt for the enjoyment of the activity. They like being outdoors and the challenges of hunting more than other segments, and that enjoyment is their primary motivation for hunting.

The goal of this project is to understand the journey an inexperienced adult follows to become a hunter and to inform the creation of strategic, effective marketing plans for those segments. The objectives for reaching this goal are:

1. Gain deep insights and details about the journey adults take toward hunting through focus group discussions,
2. Validate the journey through a survey of new adult hunters, which will allow us to test and verify each segment's journey across a much larger, representative audience, and

3. Provide recommendations to target new adult hunter segments more effectively.

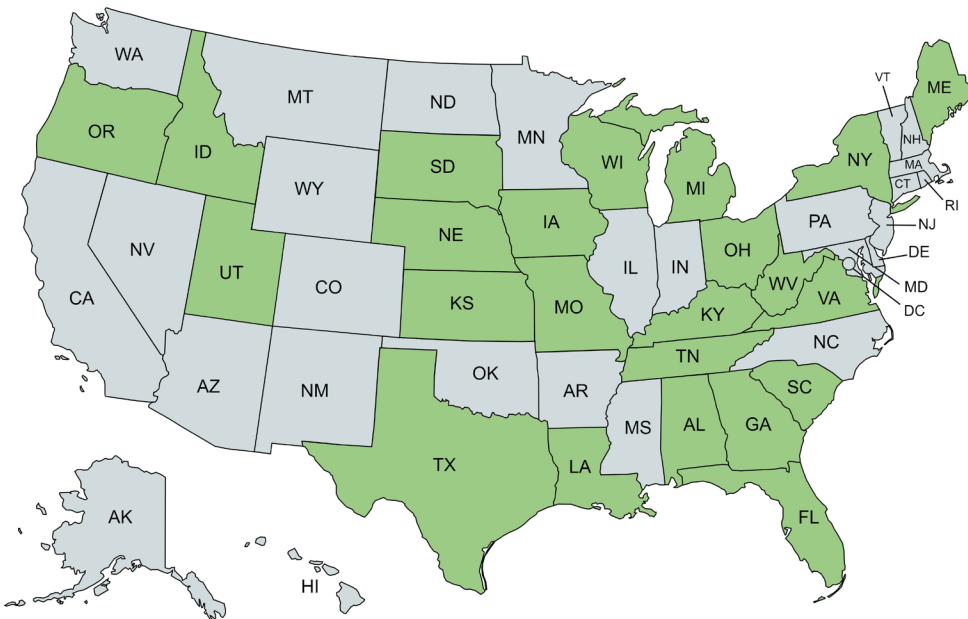
Approach and methods

Identifying the target audience

As an extension of prior work exploring a specific sector of the hunting population, the target audience for this project mirrored the previous effort. It specifically identified hunting license holders who started hunting as adults and who did not have substantial exposure to the sport as a child. This particular target audience is examined given their likelihood to reflect other adults with a higher propensity towards hunting as an outdoor recreational opportunity.

National survey effort

To validate and further explore the focus group findings, Southwick Associates conducted a comprehensive survey of licensed hunters across 23 participating states (Figure 1).



Created with mapchart.net

Figure 1. Map of states participating in the survey effort.



With a few exceptions, annual hunting license databases shared by each of the participating states span from 2013 through 2022. Database files were synchronized at the state level to create one harmonized database of individuals along with their hunting license purchasing behavior over the period.

Processing the raw databases revealed a variety of challenges due to the limitations of the data and the purchasing history duration under evaluation. In most cases, state-level electronic license databases are an effective and accurate means of tracking a hunter's purchasing behavior. However, there are instances that arise, such as shifts in license structure at the state level, the consistency of data collected and associated with a particular license type, or the consistency of unique customer numbers. These instances can challenge the ability to link the purchases of an individual from year to year over a decade, and in turn can impact the ability to harmonize an individual's purchase history. Every effort was made to achieve the highest level of accuracy when characterizing an individual's purchasing behavior.

The focus of this project was understanding the journey that an individual follows to become a new hunter when taking up the activity as an adult. The sampling frame therefore included only license holders who were over the age of 17 years old and were classified as 'new' based on their purchase history. Using the license purchase history, an individual was identified as purchasing within a particular year if they are on record as having purchased any type of hunting license (either annual or short-term) during a particular year or held a multi-year license which was effective during that year. License holder populations were further filtered to identify license holders who had not purchased a hunting or combination license during 2013-2017 but had purchased at least one hunting or combination license during 2018-2022. The definition of new is conditional on the license-purchase history in the target state. Some customers identified as "new" may have hunted in other states, but that history cannot be known through the license sales databases. Additional questions were included in the survey to further filter the license holder sample population to the target audience.

The project goal was twofold. First, to produce results which are reflective of new adult hunters nationally. Second, to provide state-level feedback whenever possible; as a result, the sample was stratified by state. Table 1 displays the geographic and demographic distribution of hunters among participating states relative to nationwide distributions based on the 2016 Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation survey produced by the U.S. Census and Fish and Wildlife Service, available at the time of this study's reporting. The participating states provided this research effort with a slightly skewed hunter population.

**Table 1. Nationwide and participating state hunter distributions**

	Participant state hunter distributions	Nationwide hunter distributions
Regions		
Midwest	31.2%	35.8%
Northeast	5.9%	10.3%
Southeast	53.0%	39.5%
West	9.8%	14.3%
Age categories		
18-24	11.0%	9.0%
25-34	18.0%	15.9%
35-44	17.7%	14.3%
45-54	16.4%	22.6%
55-64	16.6%	24.1%
65+	20.4%	14.1%
Gender		
Female	16.2%	9.7%
Male	83.8%	90.3%

The survey instrument investigated specific aspects of the new adult hunter’s journey, factors influencing them at decision nodes to continue or stop, and the influence of various types of imagery to motivate the new hunter to act. The full survey instrument is provided in [Appendix B](#).

Prior to launch, the survey was circulated among state partners for input and revised accordingly. Surveys were distributed via email through Qualtrics and included an initial invitation to participate as well as three reminders over the course of roughly three weeks in August.

A total of 14,825 respondents entered the survey. After adjusting for undeliverable or bounced emails, the effort achieved a 5.0% response rate. In total, 12,917 respondents completed the survey. Table 2 reports respondent distributions and resulting ‘new adult’ hunter population distribution. It is not possible to know with certainty what the composition of the new adult hunter population is and, therefore, the degree that the new adult survey respondent group is reflective of the nation’s new adult hunters. Given that the hunter population from within participating states is skewed from our current understanding of the national hunter population, and after evaluating the distribution of the respondent population, weights were applied to the overall survey respondent population.



As mentioned previously, an important role of the survey was to further refine the sample audience down to our target audience. This was accomplished through the inclusion of three screening questions:

- Have you hunted at least one time in any state within the last 5 years?
- Did you hunt as a child (younger than 18 years old) and, if so, how often?
- How many years have you hunted as an adult (older than 18 years)? Include any years you hunted at least one time.

Only respondents who confirmed hunting in the past 5 years, who had hunted fewer than 5 days in total as a minor and had hunted fewer than 5 years as an adult continued on to complete the survey. The final target audience consisted of 2,963 respondents.

Table 2. Respondent and collective ‘new adult’ hunter

Characteristics	Hunter respondent population (unweighted)	Hunter respondent population (weighted)	Collective ‘new adult’ hunter (weighted)
Region			
Northeast	9.8%	10.0%	12.1%
Southeast	43.7%	40.0%	24.8%
Midwest	28.6%	36.0%	45.1%
West	17.9%	14.0%	18.0%
Total	N=12,900	N=12,900	N=2,437
Age categories			
18 to 24	1.0%	9.0%	18.7%
25 to 34	15.6%	16.0%	29.9%
35 to 44	19.8%	14.0%	19.4%
45 to 54	19.8%	23.0%	19.5%
55 to 64	22.6%	24.0%	9.6%
65 and older	21.2%	14.0%	2.9%
Total	N=12,894	N=12,895	N=2,436
Gender			
Male	82.8%	89.0%	78.8%
Female	16.0%	9.9%	20.0%
Non-binary / other	1.2%	1.1%	1.2%
Total	N=12,900	N=12,900	N=2,437

Note: Respondents were not required to provide answers to the survey’s demographic questions. In those cases where respondents did not, demographics associated with their license record were referenced if available. Not all states provided demographic information, however. As a result, the resulting count of new adult hunters in this table (2,437) is below the count of all new adult hunter respondents (2,963). All respondents are incorporated in the results presented in the body of this report.



Results

National Survey Results

Segments

Four motivation-based segments within the new adult hunter population were identified in an earlier research phase. Because the purpose of this effort was not to define those segments but rather to determine the journey of each segment and the imagery most influential to them, respondents were asked to self-identify into a segment that best defines their primary motivation to hunt. The response option which describes each segment are as follows:

- **Recreationalists:** To enjoy outdoor activities/spend time outdoors
- **Family firsts:** To spend time with family
- **Self-sufficient:** To become more self-sufficient regarding food
- **Locavores:** To obtain locally sourced and processed food

Within the group of new adult hunters, Recreationalists comprise the largest proportion (42.8%) and Locavores the smallest (10.7%) (Figure 2).

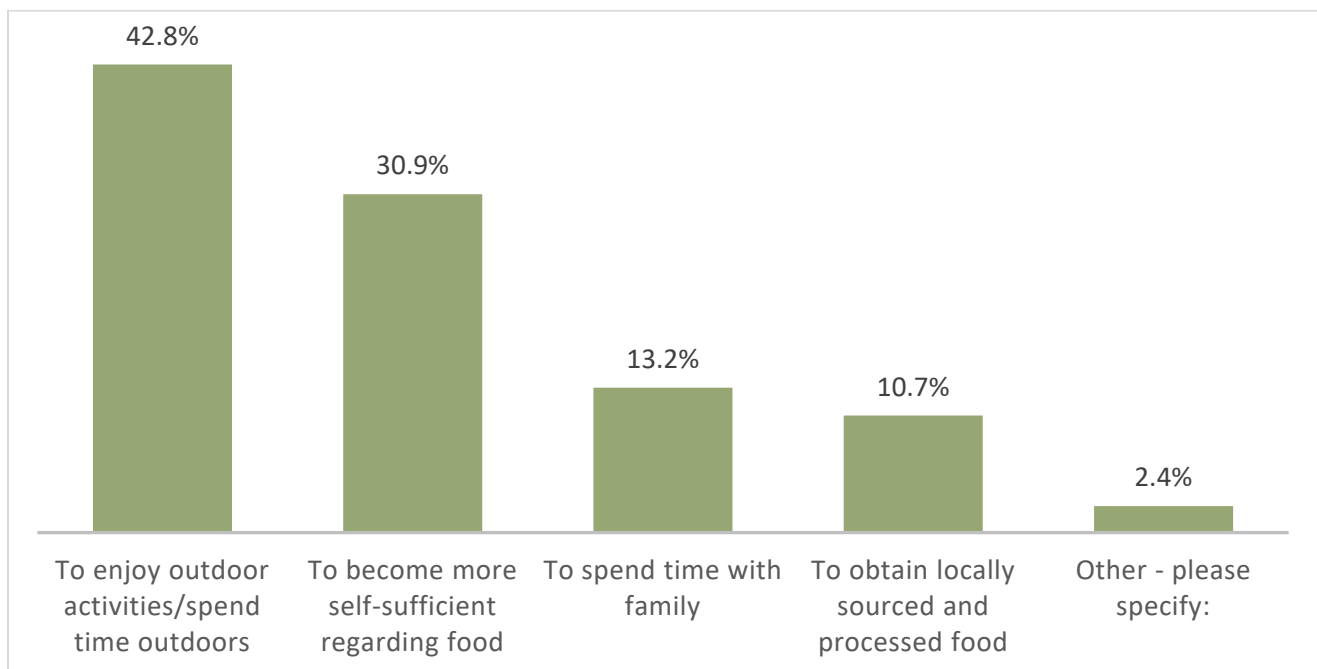


Figure 2. Prior to your first hunt, which of the following was your primary motivation to hunt? Please select one.



Table 3 presents detailed demographic characteristics of the collective new adult hunter population as well as for each segment individually. Relative to the national hunter population, new adult hunters, in general, are proportionally more female, younger, and reside in the Midwest. Family firsts are proportionally more female whereas the food-motivated segments of Self-sufficients and Locavores tend to be proportionally younger compared to the other segments.

Table 3. New adult hunter characteristics: Collectively and by self-assigned segments

	Collective	Recreationalists	Family firsts	Self-sufficients	Locavores
Age category					
18 to 24	18.7%	23.8%	10.7%	20.5%	15.6%
25 to 34	29.9%	28.1%	20.6%	32.8%	38.9%
35 to 44	19.4%	17.4%	19.3%	19.6%	23.2%
45 to 54	19.5%	17.9%	31.8%	17.6%	13.3%
55 to 64	9.6%	9.5%	14.2%	8.0%	6.2%
65 and older	2.9%	3.4%	3.4%	1.5%	2.8%
Total	N=2,436	N=958	N=288	N=696	N=243
Gender					
Male	78.8%	86.2%	64.9%	79.3%	77.1%
Female	20.0%	13.4%	33.1%	19.4%	20.7%
Non-binary / other	1.2%	0.5%	2.0%	1.3%	2.2%
Total	N=2,437	N=958	N=288	N=696	N=243
Highest level of education					
Some high school	2.1%	2.5%	2.1%	1.4%	1.5%
High school or equivalent	15.4%	11.7%	14.0%	23.1%	6.1%
Some college	20.5%	18.1%	18.1%	24.0%	17.5%
Associate's or technical degree	14.8%	15.7%	20.1%	13.3%	12.0%
Bachelor's degree	29.9%	31.0%	29.7%	26.3%	42.8%
Advanced or graduate degree	17.3%	21.0%	16.1%	11.9%	20.1%
Total	N=2,437	N=958	N=288	N=696	N=243
Household income					
Less than \$10,000	1.4%	.6%	.5%	1.6%	4.1%
\$10,000 to \$24,999	2.5%	1.3%	.1%	4.5%	1.9%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	12.6%	11.1%	7.9%	15.9%	11.2%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	19.3%	19.6%	18.9%	19.1%	18.4%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	15.8%	15.6%	15.4%	16.7%	17.4%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	20.4%	20.3%	18.0%	21.1%	23.8%
\$150,000 to \$200,000	9.9%	10.5%	12.6%	8.9%	8.6%
More than \$200,000	8.9%	11.1%	11.2%	6.2%	8.3%
Prefer not to say	9.4%	9.8%	15.4%	6.1%	6.4%
Total	N=2,414	N=944	N=285	N=694	N=241



Table 3 cont. New adult hunter characteristics: Collectively and by self-assigned segments

	Collective	Recreationalists	Family firsts	Self-sufficients	Locavore
Race & ethnicity					
White or Caucasian	85.6%	82.8%	90.0%	87.8%	85.1%
Black or African American	1.9%	1.5%	1.1%	2.0%	3.2%
Asian or Pacific Islander	3.3%	5.5%	1.4%	1.9%	1.9%
Hispanic or Latino	5.9%	6.4%	2.1%	4.9%	10.4%
American Indian	1.2%	0.7%	1.6%	1.1%	1.5%
Other	1.6%	2.0%	1.1%	1.3%	1.3%
I prefer not to say	3.9%	4.0%	4.2%	4.5%	2.5%
Total	N=2,437	N=958	N=288	N=696	N=243
Marital status					
Married	64.6%	64.1%	68.2%	64.3%	64.5%
Single, never married	16.7%	20.3%	11.1%	13.6%	21.5%
Living with a partner	13.2%	11.0%	13.7%	16.6%	10.8%
Divorced/Separated/Widowed	5.5%	4.6%	7.0%	5.5%	3.2%
Total	N=2,422	N=950	N=287	N=695	N=241
Community of residency					
Urban area (large city)	13.2%	11.7%	9.3%	15.3%	15.4%
Suburban area (area surrounding a large city)	40.3%	46.6%	43.7%	34.4%	36.3%
Rural area	44.5%	37.6%	45.8%	49.9%	48.3%
Not sure	2.1%	4.0%	1.2%	.4%	0.0%
Total	N=2,417	N=954	N=285	N=691	N=241

Various sections of the report will provide collective results as well as segmentation-based results, highlighting any substantive differences across the groups. The proportion of individuals in each self-assigned segment did not vary substantially across regions so regional results are not presented (Table 4).

Table 4. Self-assigned new adult hunter segments by region.

Self-assigned segments	Northeast	Southeast	Midwest	West
Recreationalist	45.2%	47.0%	44.0%	32.1%
Family firsts	12.4%	13.3%	12.6%	13.1%
Self-sufficients	27.7%	27.0%	31.8%	36.9%
Locavore	12.7%	9.9%	9.3%	14.7%



Considering learning to hunt as an adult

Recall that this population of new adult hunters is defined as a hunting license holder with limited hunting experience as an adult as well as limited to no exposure hunting when younger. This population of hunters includes folks who have had a long-term interest in the sport (34.1%) as well as those who were more spur of the moment, so to speak (19.3%) (Table 5). Those identifying as Self-sufficients were proportionally more likely (38.2%) to have spent more time in the consideration phase while Family firsts were more likely (32.7%) to have the shortest consideration phase. Conversations with friends and family are by far the most influential on a new adult’s interest to hunt (Table 6). Roughly 20% of respondents indicated “Other;” most of the “Other” write-ins were father figures, uncles, and other family members. These individuals may or may not hunt, and so could not be placed into the “Conversations with friends, families, and/or coworkers who hunt” response option. Other responses also included Becoming an Outdoors Woman classes and veteran organizations. Within that influential friends and family cohort, friends and coworkers are most likely to be an influence for the largest proportion of hunters within a segment except for the Family firsts segment (Table 7). For the majority of the Family firsts segment, a non-spousal family member was influential in their decision.

Table 5. As best as you can recall, how long had you considered hunting prior to your first hunting experience?

Duration of consideration	Collective	Recreationalist	Family firsts	Self-sufficients	Locavores
I have been interested in hunting for as long as I can remember	34.1%	35.1%	23.9%	38.2%	33.7%
I’d been considering learning to hunt for a year or two before my first hunt	24.6%	21.8%	24.8%	26.7%	24.9%
I’d been considering learning to hunt for more than two years before my first hunt	22.0%	23.5%	18.6%	22.4%	26.1%
I decided to try hunting and went out on my first hunt within the same year	19.3%	19.6%	32.7%	12.7%	15.3%



Table 6. Which of the following increased your interest in hunting for the first time? Select all that apply.

Factor increasing interest	Collective	Recreationalist	Family firsts	Self- sufficients	Locavores
Conversations with friends, families, and/or coworkers who hunt	76.2%	80.6%	81.3%	73.9%	65.2%
An outdoor show I watched	18.1%	19.3%	8.3%	21.2%	23.6%
A podcast I listened to	6.3%	5.8%	1.8%	6.8%	12.7%
Something on social media that I saw from someone I didn't know (influencer, stranger, organization, etc.)	5.1%	6.5%	1.7%	3.8%	8.5%
Something on social media that I saw from someone I knew	4.3%	6.2%	0.7%	4.1%	2.4%
A blog or article I read	3.2%	3.2%	0.9%	3.3%	7.1%
An advertisement I saw	0.4%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%
Other - please specify:	19.0%	14.3%	19.4%	20.9%	23.4%

Table 7. During the time you considered going on a hunt, did anyone you know influence your decision to hunt, whether directly or indirectly? Select all that apply.

Personal influence	Collective	Recreationalist	Family firsts	Self- sufficients	Locavores
Yes, a friend or coworker	46.1%	55.3%	16.4%	49.1%	49.6%
Yes, another family member (not spouse or significant other)	34.8%	32.8%	54.9%	32.7%	30.8%
Yes, a spouse or significant other	21.3%	15.2%	34.8%	21.6%	22.2%
No	10.8%	9.5%	4.2%	13.8%	11.8%
Yes, someone else – please specify:	2.6%	2.4%	2.4%	2.2%	1.8%

As with any new activity, one of the first steps to hunting is to educate oneself about various facets of the sport. When asked to select up to three topics most relevant to an individual’s learning, the most commonly selected were: Regulations, seasons, licensing, etc. (63.2%), Where to hunt (52.6%), and How to process meat if harvested (45.4%). This ordering holds true for all segments except for Family firsts, whose third highest selected topic was Firearm handling/safety (39.8%) (Table 8). In fact, the Family firsts segment were the least likely to select processing meat, which could be indicative of the social aspect dominating the importance of the harvest.



Table 8. As you were considering going hunting, which of the following topics did you want to learn more about? Select up to three topics.

Topics	Collective	Recreationalist	Family firsts	Self- sufficients	Locavores
Regulations, seasons, licensing, etc.	63.2%	67.4%	60.8%	61.4%	61.7%
Where to hunt	52.6%	56.6%	49.4%	49.9%	54.1%
How to process meat if you harvested	45.4%	40.1%	26.6%	56.5%	65.1%
Prey behavior and scouting	27.8%	25.6%	21.4%	34.2%	28.1%
Firearm handling/safety	27.3%	28.5%	39.8%	23.2%	19.9%
Equipment and apparel selection	18.0%	21.2%	22.7%	12.1%	17.4%
General outdoor skills	17.9%	17.9%	20.6%	18.1%	10.3%
How to cook game meat	12.5%	11.3%	12.3%	13.1%	14.9%
None of these	0.9%	0.2%	2.2%	0.9%	0.2%
Other – please specify:	1.4%	1.3%	0.6%	1.6%	2.0%

Motivation of imagery during consideration phase

During the focus group discussions, facilitators received feedback about the appeal of images intended to encourage people to learn more about hunting. Prior to the survey implementation, adjustments were made to the ad imagery in response to that feedback. The new images are provided in the next few pages as small versions and in [Appendix A](#) (full size).

To avoid priming their self-selected segment assignment and skewing the influence of any one image on their behavior, respondents were asked about their motivations to hunt after seeing the series of questions specific to the imagery.

Results confirm a priori expectations. At the segment level, images developed to speak specifically to a particular segment, such as saving a trip to the grocery store, were most motivational for the self-sufficient and locavore segments. Detailed results for each image and the motivational influence of each to each segment are provided in the following pages.

It is typically not possible to know which segment a potential hunter identifies as, therefore the motivational influence across all segments is considered. Of all ads developed to engage would-be hunters to learn more, there are two that resonate most broadly. Messages that convey the enjoyment of being outdoors and that allude to the memories made between an adult and child when engaging in a pastime together are reported to be motivational by more than 50% of new adult hunters. Messaging linking hunting to beneficial environmental impacts resonated with the smallest proportion of new adult hunters (26%).



Figure 3. Enjoy the Outdoors: Learn more about hunting image.

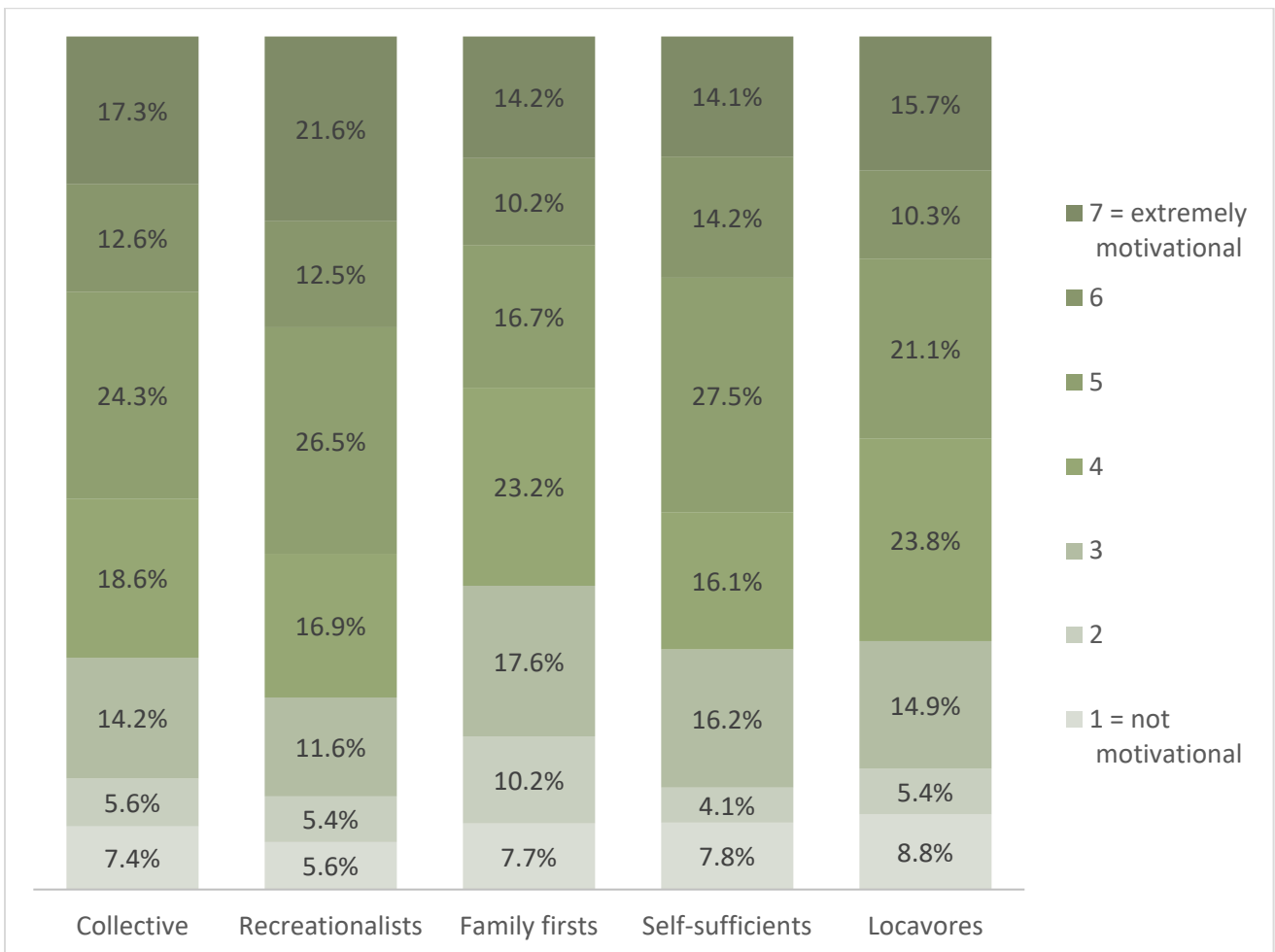


Figure 4. Influence of the 'Enjoy the Outdoors' image: Overall and by self-assigned segment.



Figure 5. Lower your Carbon Footprint: Learn more about hunting locally image.

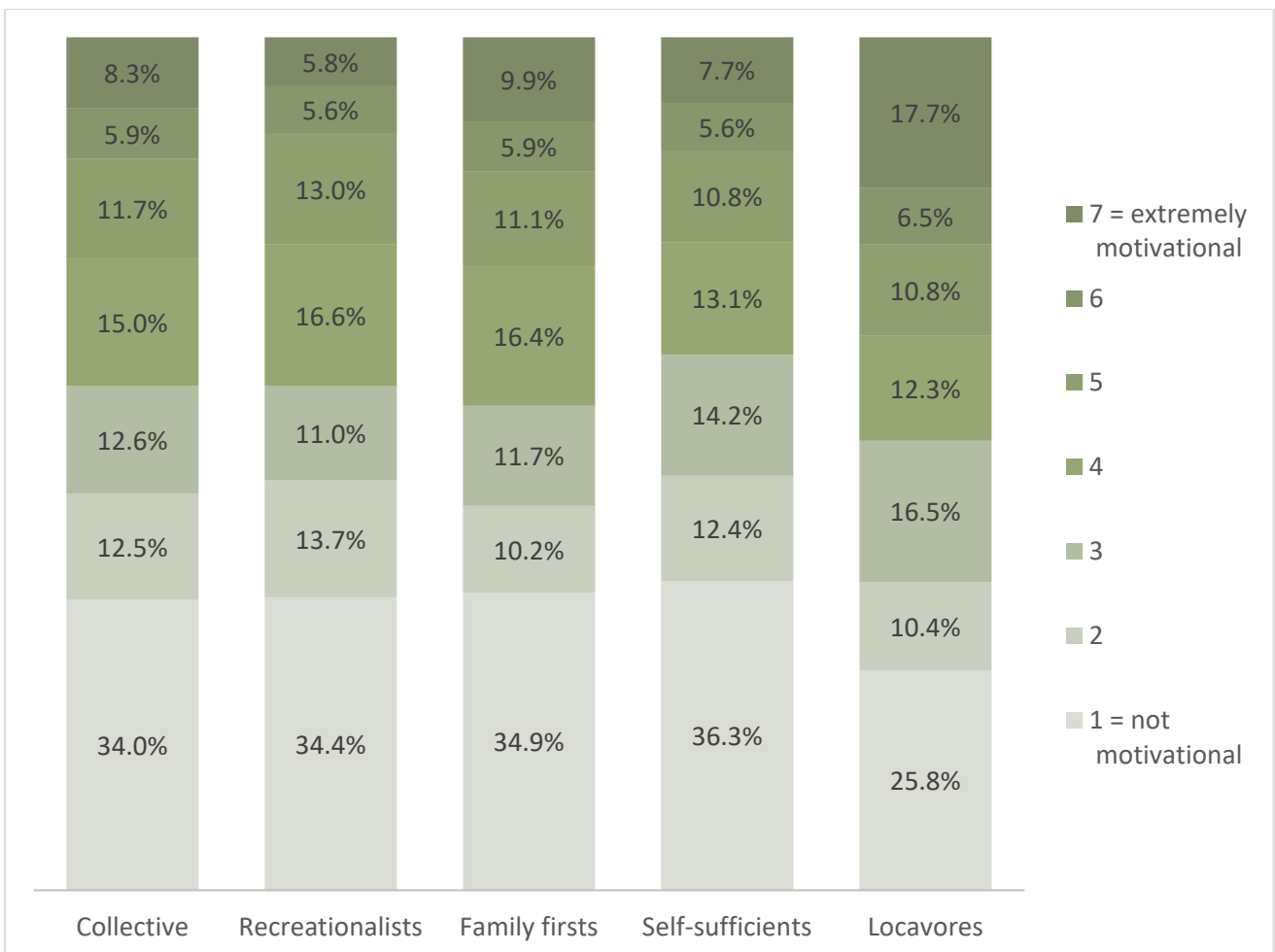


Figure 6. Influence of the 'Lower Your Carbon Footprint' image: Overall and by self-assigned segment.



Figure 7. Save a Trip to the Grocery Store: Learn more about hunting image.

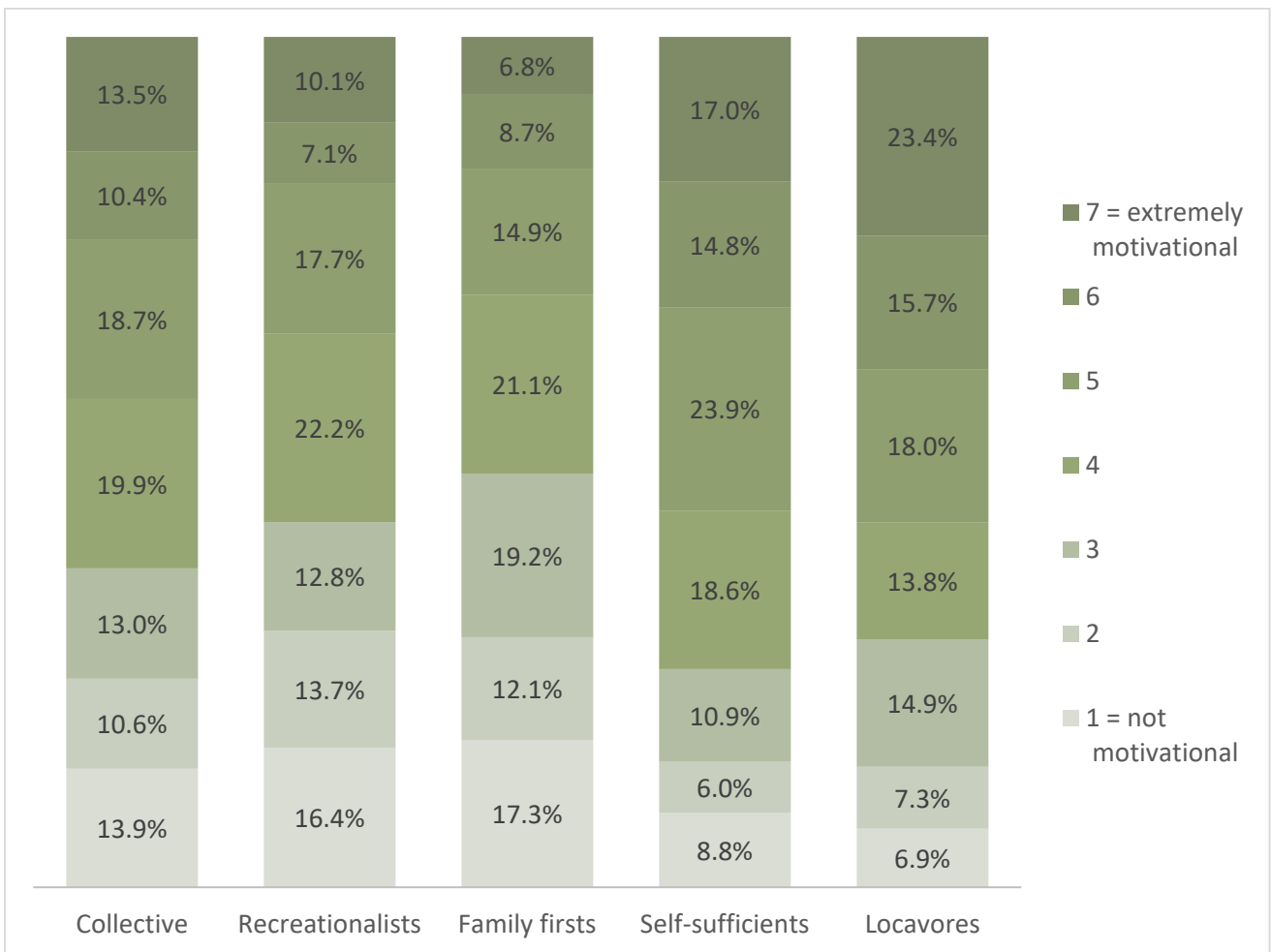


Figure 8. Influence of the 'Save a Trip to the Grocery Store' image: Overall and by self-assigned segment.



Figure 9. Spend Time with Family: Learn more about hunting image #1.

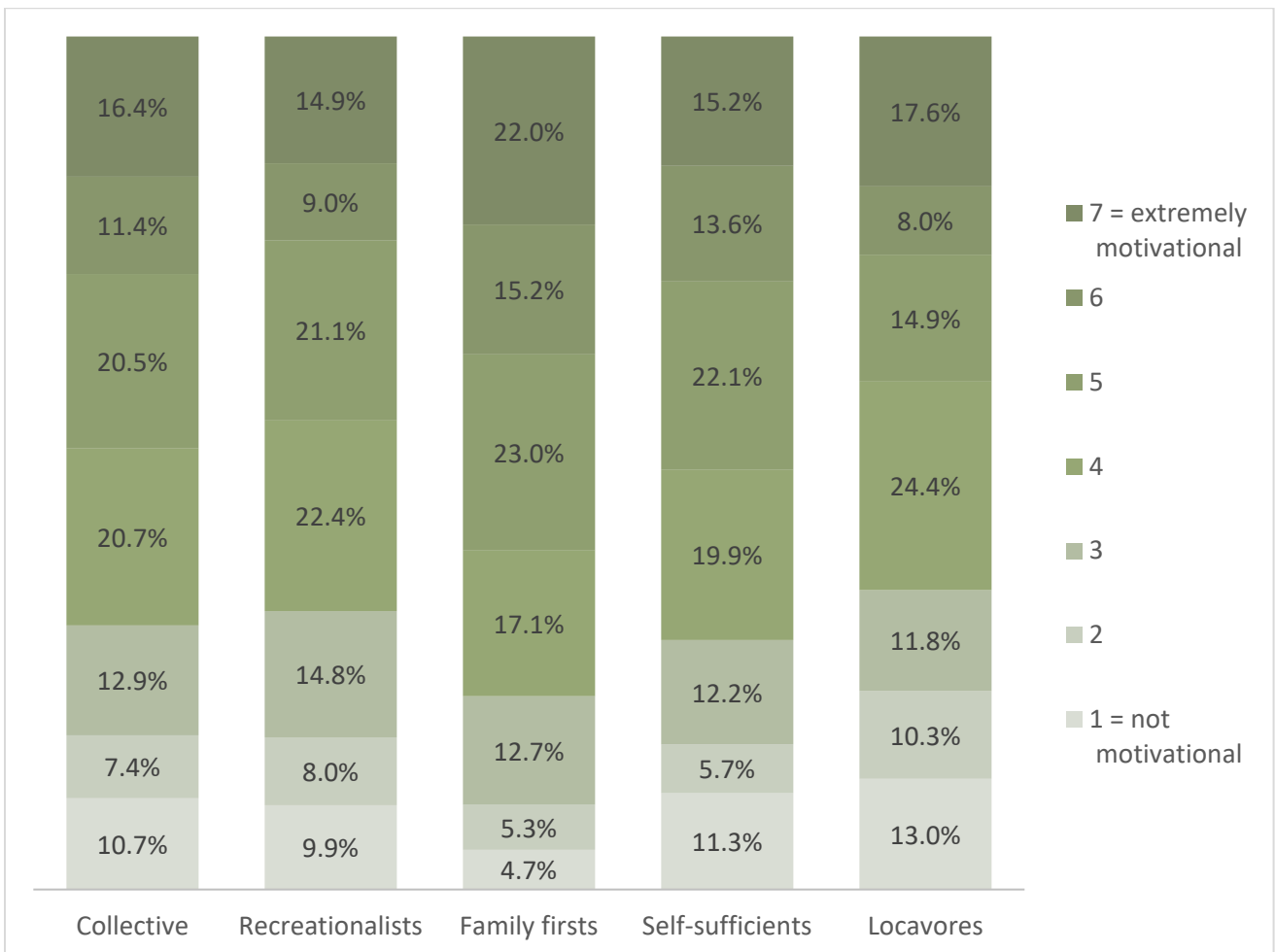


Figure 10. Influence of the 'Spend Time with Family' image #1: Overall and by self-assigned segment.



Figure 11. Spend Time with Family: Learn more about hunting image #2.

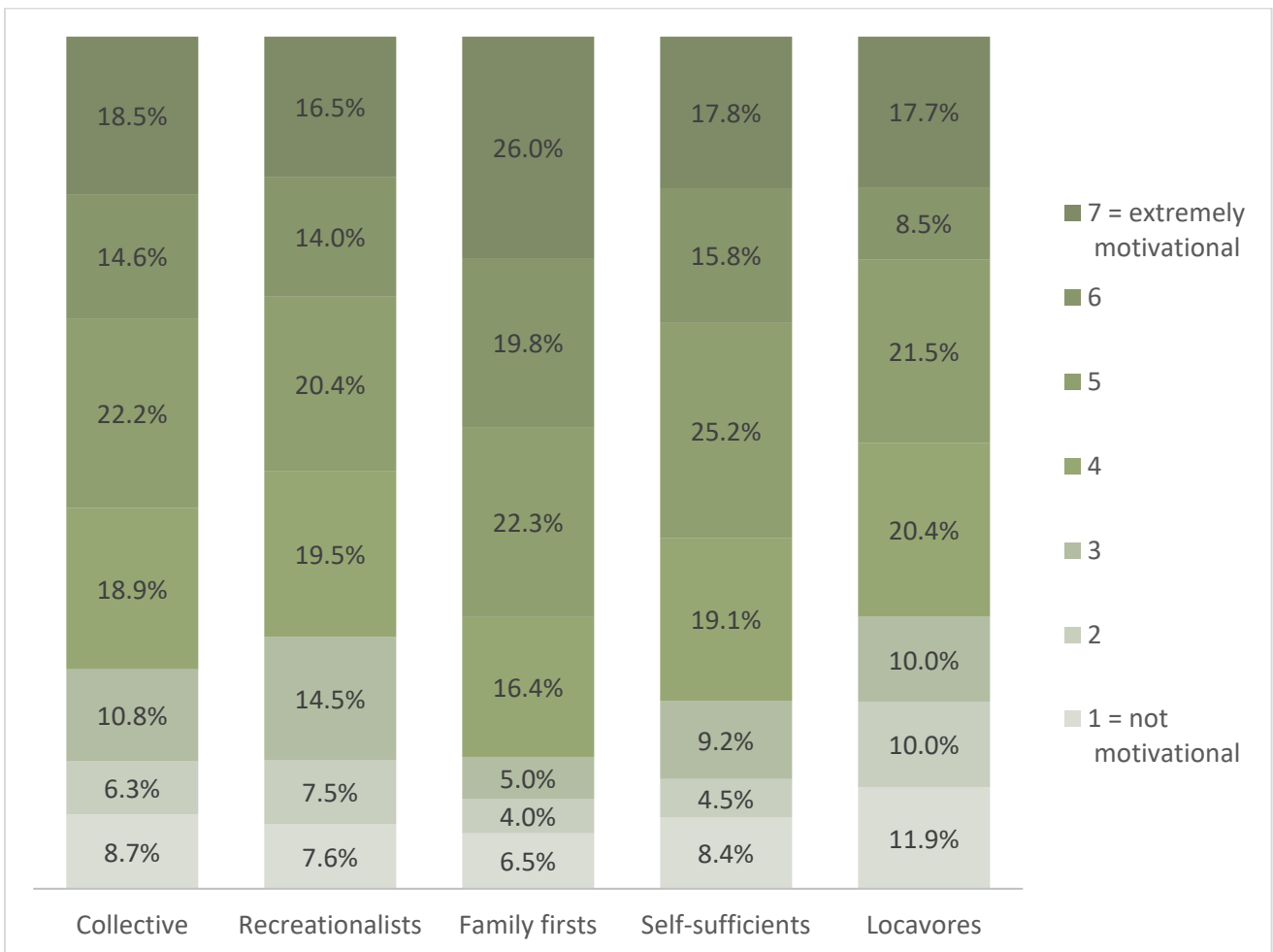


Figure 12. Influence of the 'Spend Time with Family' image #2: Overall and by self-assigned segment.



Preparation activities of the new adult hunter

Would-be hunters began actively preparing for their first hunt through discussions with others who already hunt or mentor others, hands-on practical experience like sighting in, and instructional videos or hunting-related programs (Table 9).

Table 9. How did you prepare for your first hunting experience? Select all that apply.

	Collective	Recreationalists	Family firsts	Self- sufficients	Locavores
Talked with others I know who already hunt (friends, family, coworkers) or mentor people like me	75.9%	76.6%	73.8%	77.8%	76.9%
Sighted in and/or practiced with my equipment (firearm, bow, crossbow)	61.5%	61.5%	49.5%	67.2%	68.4%
Took a hunter education class	55.1%	58.4%	47.2%	54.3%	58.3%
Went into the field with an experienced hunter to observe and learn	43.7%	40.6%	50.5%	44.8%	43.9%
Watched instructional videos online (YouTube, etc.)	42.5%	45.9%	24.5%	44.0%	53.7%
Watched hunting programs on TV or through streaming services (Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime, etc.)	34.9%	35.5%	23.4%	39.1%	39.0%
Explored resources from my state agency (regulation guides, videos about how to hunt, advertisements, website, etc.)	29.4%	32.3%	21.4%	29.3%	32.4%
Visited hunting websites or blogs	28.3%	32.5%	14.2%	28.7%	31.5%
Talked with others I know who were interested in learning to hunt (friends, family, coworkers)	22.0%	22.9%	20.4%	18.9%	26.9%
Took an outdoor recreation/safety class offered by a state agency	5.5%	4.6%	6.5%	4.6%	12.0%
Took an outdoor recreation/safety class offered by a club or other non-profit	2.5%	2.8%	3.1%	1.6%	2.8%
Other – please specify:	1.5%	1.8%	0.9%	1.0%	0.7%
None of these	0.3%	0.2%	1.4%	0.1%	0.0%

A minority of new adult hunters turned to their state agency’s website for resources with which to prepare for their hunt. Of the roughly 70% not utilizing the agency’s website, more than one third indicated they did not know their state wildlife agency was a resource offering support during the learning process (Table 10).



Table 10. Did you know that your state agency offers resources to support your interest in learning to hunt?

	Collective	Recreationalists	Family firsts	Self-sufficients	Locavores
Yes	61.8%	60.5%	57.1%	68.3%	55.1%
No	38.2%	39.5%	42.9%	31.7%	44.9%

In addition to exploring imagery to motivate potential new adult hunters to want to learn more about hunting, the project sought to identify which imagery increased their likelihood of enrolling in a class to prepare for a hunt. The images aligned with self-identified skills-based needs. The images are provided on the next few pages in small size and in [Appendix A](#) (full size) alongside results based on the four motivational segments.

Again, results confirm a priori expectations. Within the skills-based needs groups, images developed to speak specifically to a need, such as learning firearm skills, were most motivational for those who wanted to know more about firearm handling and safety while they were considering going to hunt. Detailed results for each image and the motivational influence of each on each skills-based need are provided in the following pages.

It is typically not possible to know which segment a potential hunter would identify as; therefore, the motivational influence across all groups is considered. Of all images developed to engage new adult hunters to enroll in a class, there are two that resonate most broadly. Messages that target learning about Where to hunt and How to process harvested game are reported to be motivational by more than 50% of the new adult hunter population. While attention is called to the success of the firearm skills ad as most successful within that particular skills-based need group (above), this ad’s messaging in fact resonated with the smallest proportion of new adult hunters overall (39%).

Recall back to Table 8 where we learned that the topic most new adult hunters wanted to learn more about when considering learning to hunt was regulations, seasons, and licensing. Interestingly, the particular ad was not found to be motivational by a majority of the new adult population.



Figure 13. Learn about Hunting Regulations: Enroll in our class today image

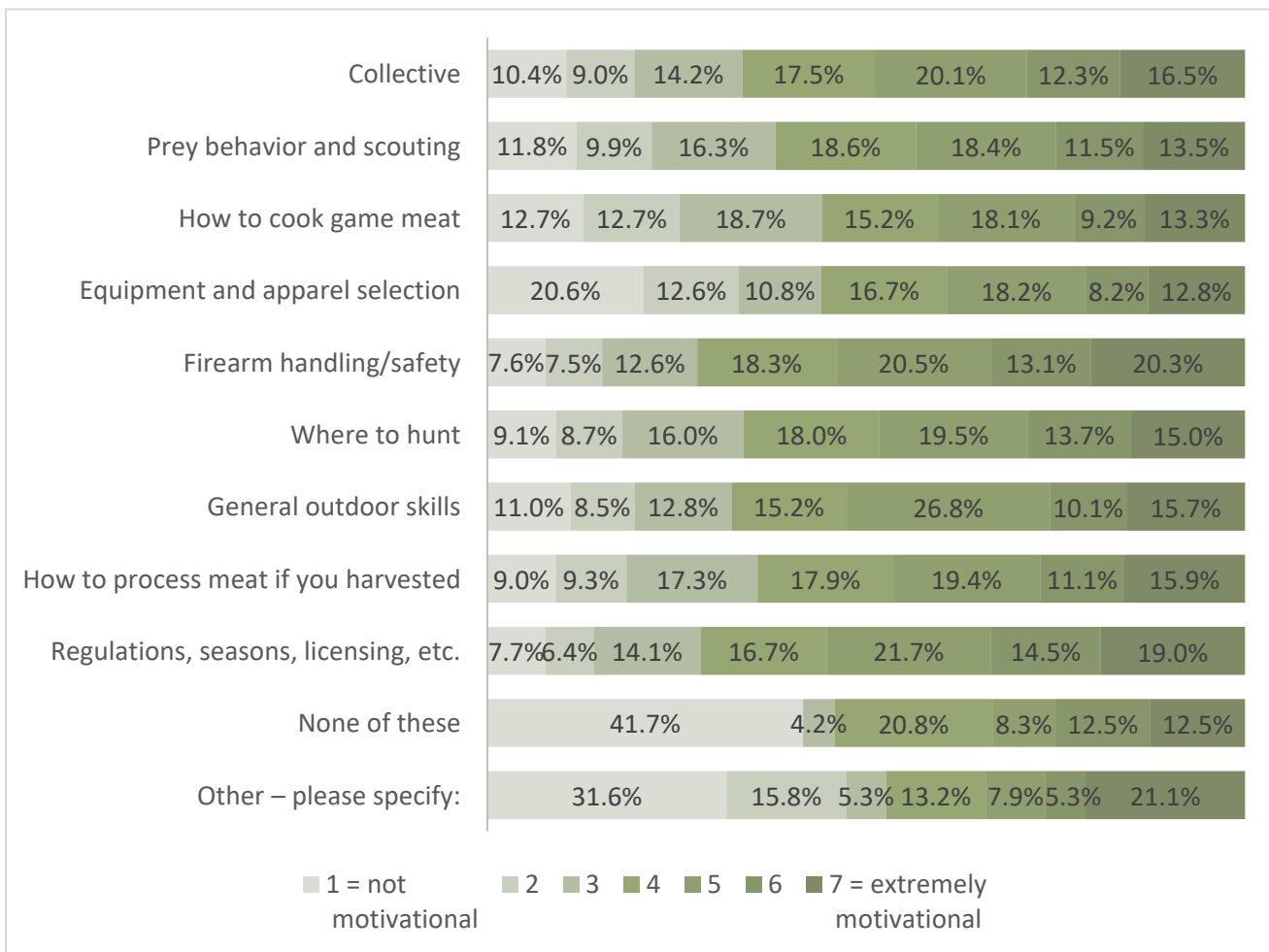


Figure 14. Influence of the 'Learn about Hunting Regulations' image: Overall and by self-identified skill-based needs



Figure 15. Learn about Where to Hunt: Enroll in our class today image

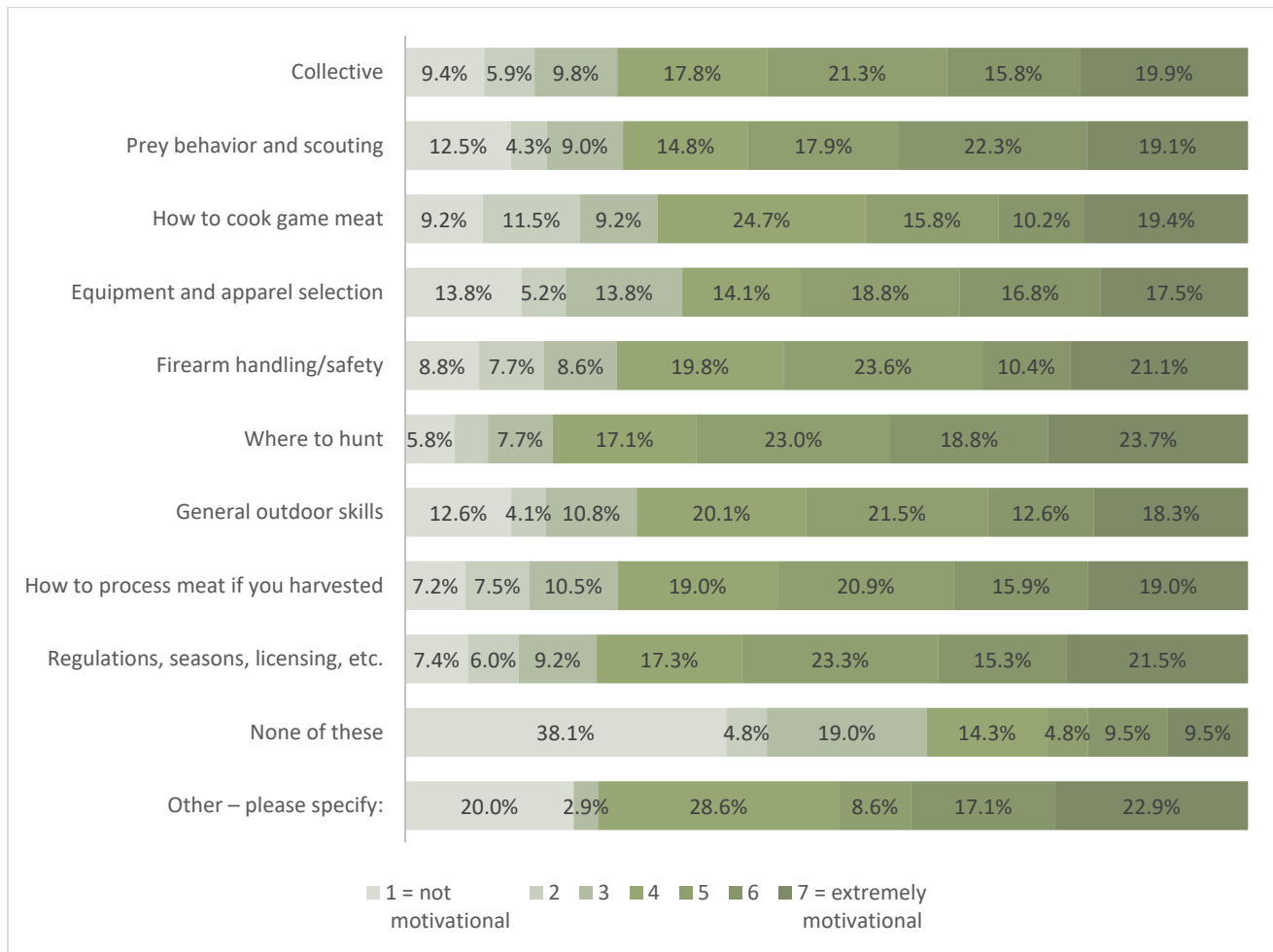


Figure 16. Influence of the 'Learn about Where to Hunt' image: Overall and by self-identified skill-based needs



Figure 17. Learn about Firearm Skills: Enroll in our class today image

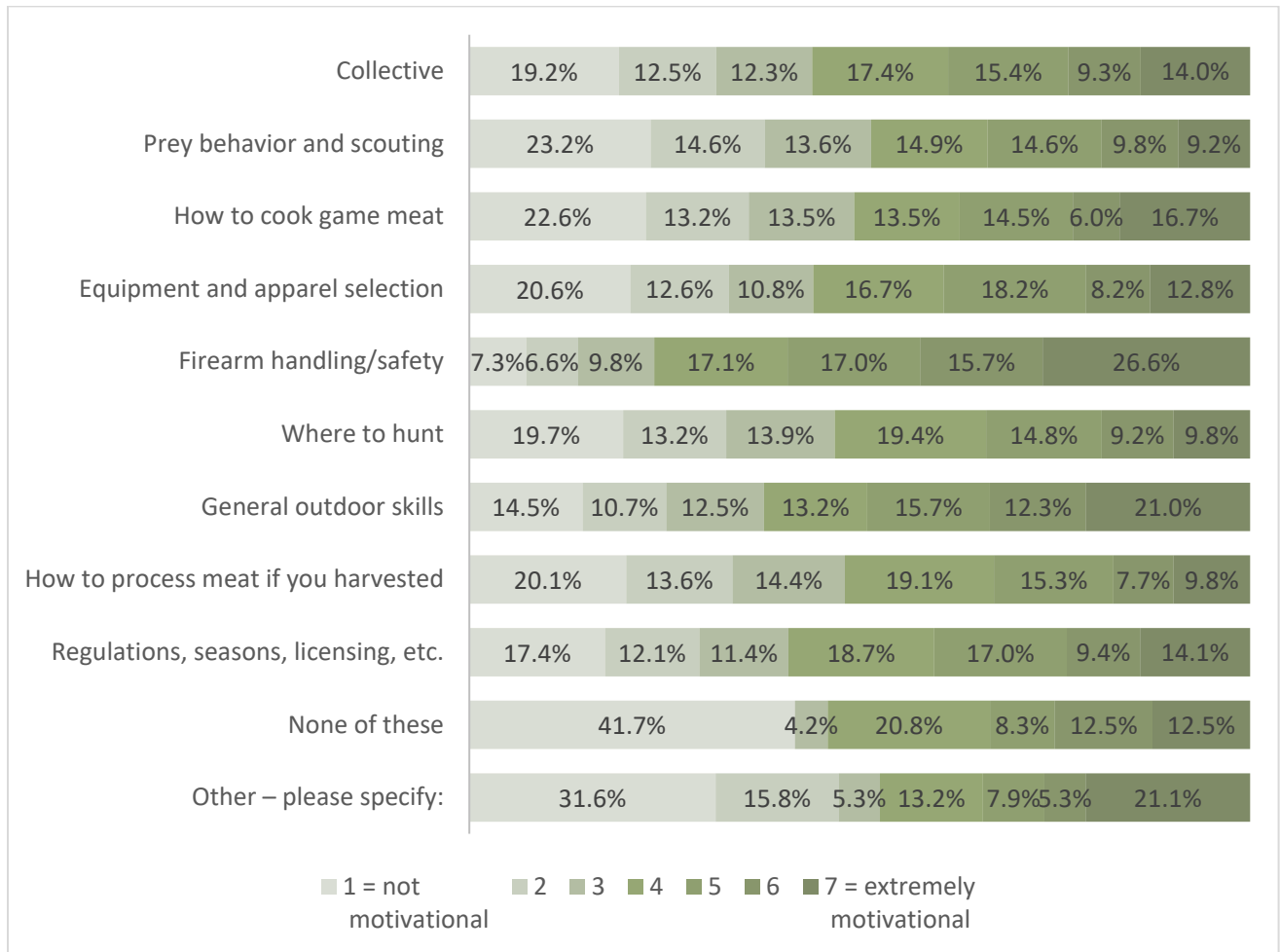


Figure 18. Influence of the ‘Learn about Firearm Skills’ image: Overall and by self-identified skill-based needs



Figure 19. Learn How to Hunt: Enroll in our class today image

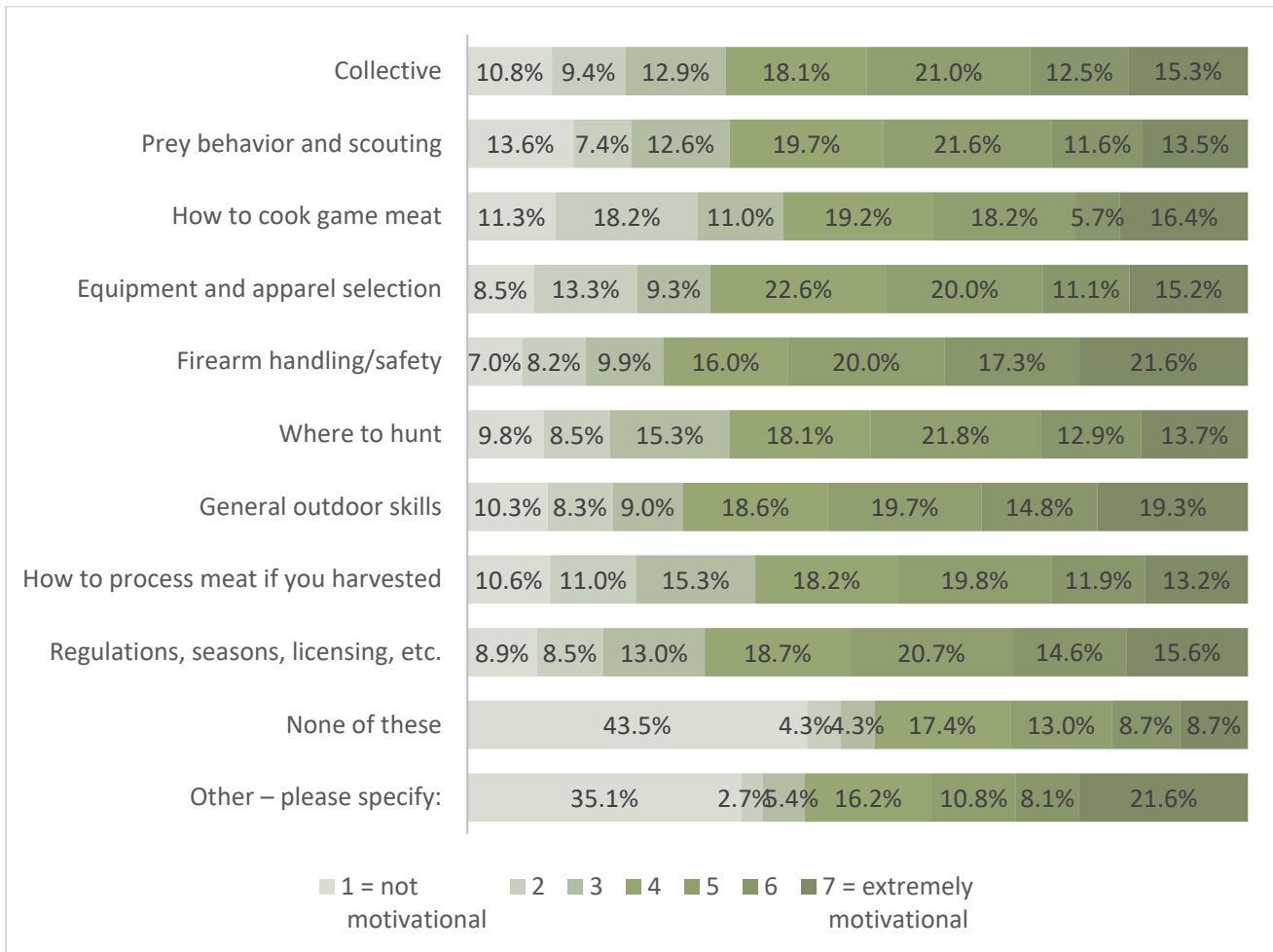


Figure 20. Influence of the 'Learn How to Hunt' image: Overall and by self-identified skill-based needs



Figure 21. Learn about Game Processing: Enroll in our class today image

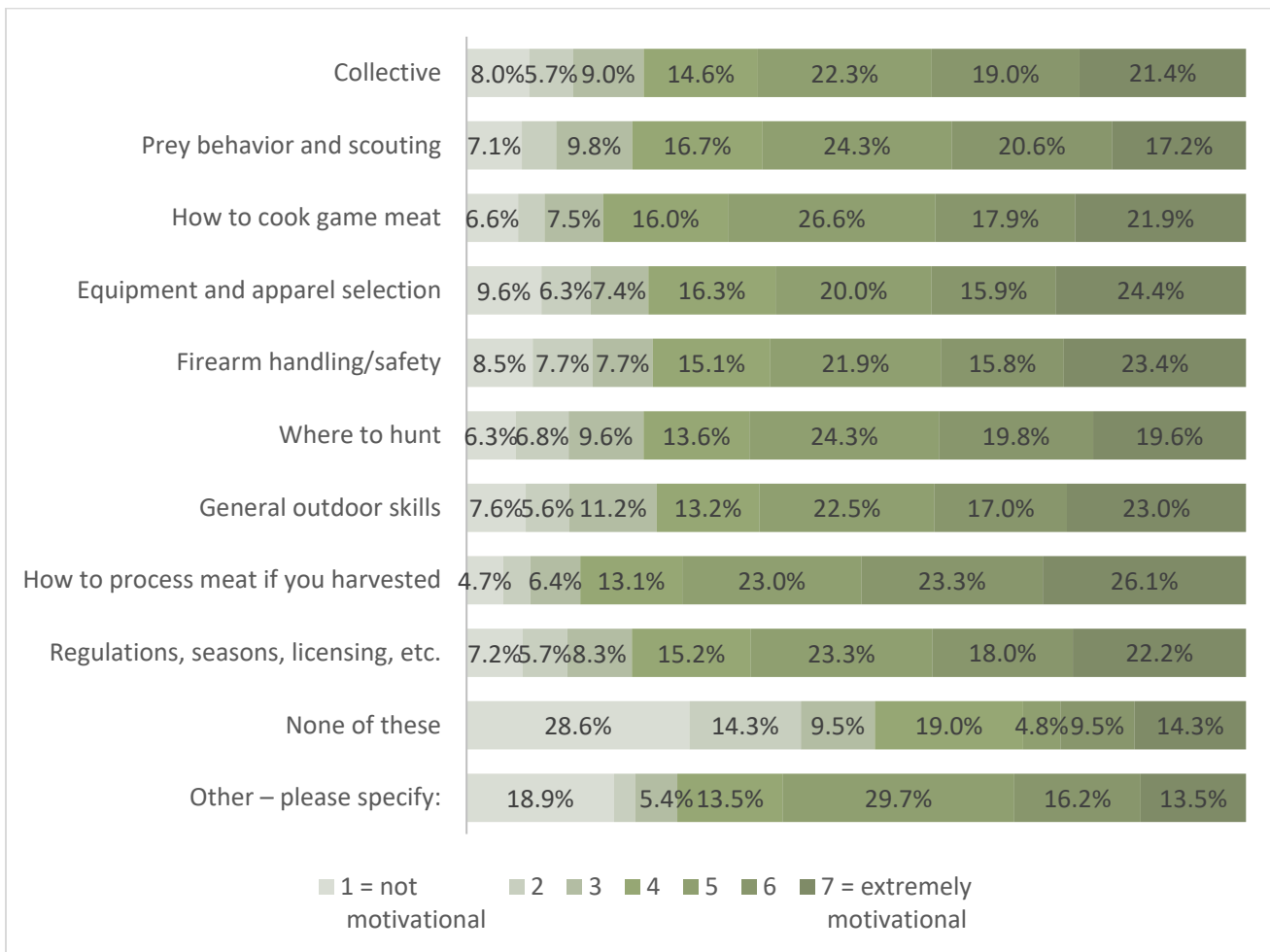


Figure 22. Influence of the ‘Learn about Game Processing’ image: Overall and by self-identified skill-based needs



New adult hunters were asked to reflect on a variety of aspects related to a hunt, indicate if any posed a challenge to them, and the relative intensity of that challenge on a scale of 'somewhat', 'moderate', and 'extreme'. That scale was then converted to a three-point scale (somewhat = 1, moderate = 2, extreme = 3) and a weighted average intensity value is reported for the proportion of respondents indicating the particular aspect was a challenge. Results are provided in Table 11. By and large, no one factor stood out as an extreme challenge for one group relative to another and the aspects most identified as a challenge were consistent with a priori expectations of a particular segment. Having a successful hunt was identified more often as a challenge by Self-sufficients or Locavores while finding someone to hunt with was identified less often as a challenge by Family firsts. The results can be interpreted as follows:

- 46% of all new adult hunters indicate finding someone to go hunting with was a challenge and the relative intensity is calculated at 2.2, indicating most generally rated it as a moderate challenge.
- 37% of all new adult hunters indicate having the right equipment was a challenge and the relative intensity is calculated at 1.5, indicating most generally rated it as between somewhat and moderate challenge.

Though having the right equipment was a challenge for many, new adult hunters are most likely to hunt with either a shotgun or rifle and feel fairly to extremely comfortable with those firearms (Table 12). Muzzleloaders and crossbows are less commonly utilized weapons and bring a lower level of confidence with them when used.



Table 11. How much of a challenge were the following as you prepared for your first hunt?

	Collective		Recreationists		Family firsts		Self-sufficients		Locavores	
	Percent saying it was a challenge	Relative intensity of challenge	Percent saying it was a challenge	Relative intensity of challenge	Percent saying it was a challenge	Relative intensity of challenge	Percent saying it was a challenge	Relative intensity of challenge	Percent saying it was a challenge	Relative intensity of challenge
Knowing where to hunt	47.7%	2.2	49.1%	2.2	33.6%	2.0	51.8%	2.1	51.2%	1.9
Having a successful hunt (harvesting an animal)	47.4%	1.9	45.3%	1.9	39.9%	1.8	55.6%	2.0	44.9%	2.1
Feeling like I knew enough about hunting	45.6%	1.9	47.5%	1.8	39.1%	1.8	46.0%	1.9	46.0%	1.6
Having the right equipment (firearm, bow, apparel, etc.)	38.2%	1.5	43.3%	1.5	28.5%	1.5	34.4%	1.5	41.1%	1.6
Not sure how to process and handle the meat	34.0%	2.1	29.3%	2.1	19.9%	2.2	43.3%	2.1	44.2%	2.3
Having somebody to go with	29.7%	2.2	32.5%	1.8	19.8%	1.8	29.1%	1.9	32.3%	2.1
Humanely killing an animal	29.2%	2.0	23.0%	2.0	27.4%	2.2	35.7%	2.0	36.4%	2.0
Having enough time to learn or go out	28.2%	2.0	30.7%	2.0	16.0%	1.9	29.8%	2.1	30.4%	1.7
Safety and others in the field	22.2%	2.1	21.4%	2.0	26.5%	2.0	21.2%	2.1	21.7%	2.2
Knowing where to practice shooting or sight in my equipment	18.3%	2.1	21.0%	2.0	10.7%	1.8	18.0%	2.0	18.9%	2.6
Taking any animal's life	14.6%	2.1	13.2%	1.9	17.3%	2.2	14.4%	2.2	16.5%	2.2
Concern about how others might perceive me	10.8%	1.7	9.6%	1.8	13.6%	1.4	10.9%	1.7	8.6%	2.1
Using firearms	8.2%	1.9	7.1%	2.1	12.0%	2.0	6.9%	1.6	9.6%	2.3
Other - please specify:	3.1%	2.4	1.3%	2.3	1.5%	2.5	4.5%	2.5	4.9%	2.1

Note: The relative intensity scale was converted to a three-point scale from a qualitative response option as follows: somewhat = 1, moderate = 2, extreme = 3.



Table 12. Before your first hunt, how confident were you handling the following equipment?

Weapon type	Percent reporting confidence level with weapon	Confidence level with handling equipment					Do not use/NA
		Not at all confident	Not very confident	Neither	Fairly confident	Extremely confident	
Bow							
Collective	76.2%	17.1%	20.7%	13.4%	30.7%	18.2%	23.8%
Recreationalists	75.8%	15.8%	25.6%	13.7%	31.8%	13.1%	24.2%
Family Firsts	74.1%	20.5%	26.2%	11.8%	26.2%	15.4%	25.9%
Self-sufficients	76.7%	15.0%	15.4%	14.8%	31.6%	23.1%	23.3%
Locavore	80.3%	21.7%	14.1%	9.8%	28.8%	25.5%	19.7%
Crossbow							
Collective	68.3%	26.2%	17.4%	13.8%	26.0%	16.7%	31.7%
Recreationalists	68.0%	23.4%	20.7%	15.9%	22.1%	17.9%	32.0%
Family Firsts	67.6%	29.0%	17.8%	15.4%	22.5%	15.4%	32.4%
Self-sufficients	69.2%	24.4%	14.0%	10.2%	35.3%	16.1%	30.8%
Locavore	71.3%	36.4%	15.6%	13.0%	20.1%	14.9%	28.7%
Muzzleloader							
Collective	62.9%	42.5%	17.1%	12.6%	14.9%	13.0%	37.1%
Recreationalists	63.2%	44.0%	15.5%	13.7%	12.3%	14.5%	36.8%
Family Firsts	62.3%	42.1%	14.5%	15.1%	21.1%	7.2%	37.7%
Self-sufficients	61.6%	36.7%	21.8%	9.7%	14.3%	17.5%	38.4%
Locavore	69.0%	50.3%	12.9%	12.9%	19.7%	4.1%	31.0%
Pistol							
Collective	84.5%	3.9%	5.0%	8.7%	28.0%	54.5%	15.5%
Recreationalists	85.0%	3.5%	4.3%	7.9%	29.8%	54.5%	15.0%
Family Firsts	80.5%	4.2%	10.7%	13.1%	29.4%	42.5%	19.5%
Self-sufficients	85.9%	2.1%	4.5%	10.6%	22.5%	60.3%	14.1%
Locavore	84.0%	9.8%	3.1%	3.1%	34.0%	50.0%	16.0%
Rifle							
Collective	95.5%	1.7%	4.0%	4.6%	35.3%	54.3%	4.5%
Recreationalists	94.5%	1.9%	5.2%	4.6%	37.3%	51.1%	5.5%
Family Firsts	93.6%	1.9%	7.5%	4.9%	43.8%	41.9%	6.4%
Self-sufficients	97.2%	0.7%	1.4%	3.6%	30.8%	63.4%	2.8%
Locavore	96.0%	2.9%	2.5%	7.6%	31.1%	55.9%	4.0%
Shotgun							
Collective	92.3%	3.0%	4.0%	4.6%	38.5%	49.9%	7.7%
Recreationalists	91.7%	2.6%	4.3%	4.1%	40.9%	48.1%	8.3%
Family Firsts	91.4%	3.3%	4.5%	6.1%	47.2%	39.0%	8.6%
Self-sufficients	93.8%	3.7%	3.5%	4.5%	30.2%	58.0%	6.2%
Locavore	91.1%	1.9%	3.3%	5.6%	40.9%	48.4%	8.9%



First time and continuing hunting experiences as a new adult hunter

Do self-assigned segments prior to hunting still describe new adult hunters most correctly after having completed their first hunt? In short, yes, there is a very high level of consistency of motivation to hunt both pre- and post-first hunt (Table 13). New adult hunters were also presented with additional motivations, allowing us to look a little deeper into a particular segment as well as similarity across segments. The latter is important because a new adult hunter’s segment is typically not known, thus it is important for agencies to understand the reach and resonance of messaging across segments. The one motivation that appeals to the majority of all segments is enjoyment gained from spending time outdoors. The next most appealing motivation is one of being self-sufficient, but only with two segments (Self-sufficients and Locavores). Supporting conservation and being part of a tradition do not resonate as well with adult hunters as they might have in the past.

Table 13. Currently, which of the following most appeals to you about hunting? Select up to three.

	Collective	Recreationalists	Family firsts	Self- sufficients	Locavores
Enjoying outdoor activities/spend time outdoors	77.3%	90.2%	69.7%	67.6%	67.6%
Becoming more self-sufficient regarding food	47.5%	25.4%	28.8%	83.3%	59.5%
Spending time with family	30.6%	26.7%	81.5%	19.5%	18.0%
Engaging in a challenging activity	28.8%	35.5%	16.1%	28.2%	20.1%
Being part of the American outdoor hunting tradition	25.2%	34.4%	19.3%	19.3%	12.8%
Supporting conservation	23.0%	27.0%	15.2%	20.3%	22.4%
Obtaining locally sourced and processed food	21.0%	12.3%	11.3%	23.0%	61.8%
Harvesting any legal animal	12.1%	12.0%	7.5%	13.5%	13.3%
Harvesting a trophy animal	5.6%	6.6%	6.4%	4.5%	3.8%
Other – please specify:	1.9%	2.7%	1.1%	0.5%	0.9%

New adult hunters begin their hunting experience by pursuing big game (Figure 23). Upland game birds and small game fall a distant second and third as type of game pursued. Self-sufficients are more likely to pursue turkey rather than upland game birds. The majority of all segments owned the weapon they used for their first hunt, with a firearm being the most common relative to a bow/crossbow (Table 14). A majority hunted with family, friends, colleagues, or mentors (Figure 24).

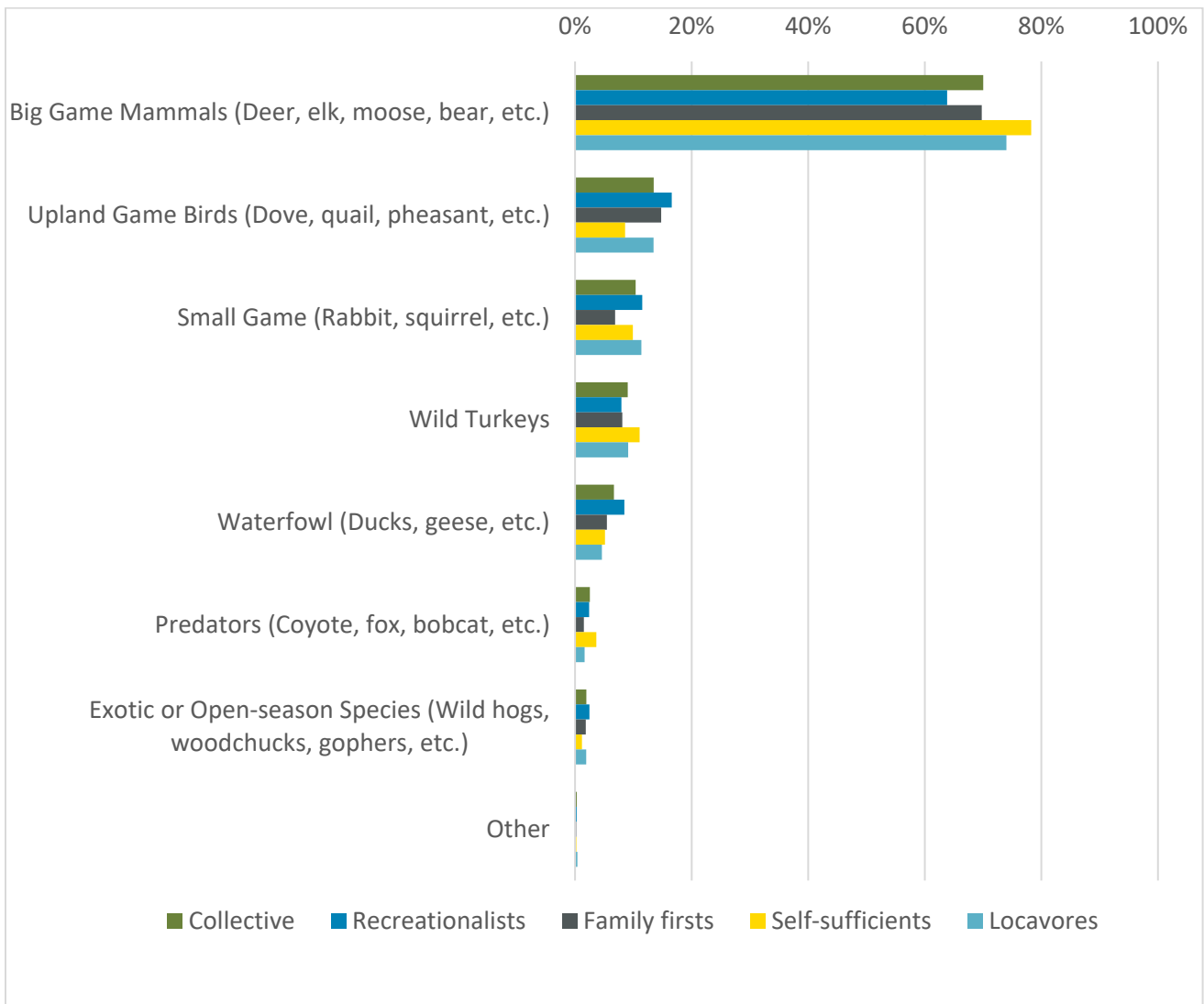


Figure 23. On your first hunt as an adult, which did you pursue? Select all that apply.

Table 14. What equipment did you use on your first hunt?

	Collective	Recreationalists	Family firsts	Self-sufficients	Locavores
A firearm that I owned	57.1%	59.9%	54.0%	56.9%	53.9%
A firearm that I borrowed	24.3%	24.2%	28.9%	21.6%	25.8%
A bow/crossbow that I owned	15.0%	12.9%	10.5%	19.1%	16.4%
A bow/crossbow that I borrowed	2.5%	1.7%	5.2%	1.9%	3.9%
Other – please specify:	1.2%	1.3%	1.4%	0.5%	0.0%

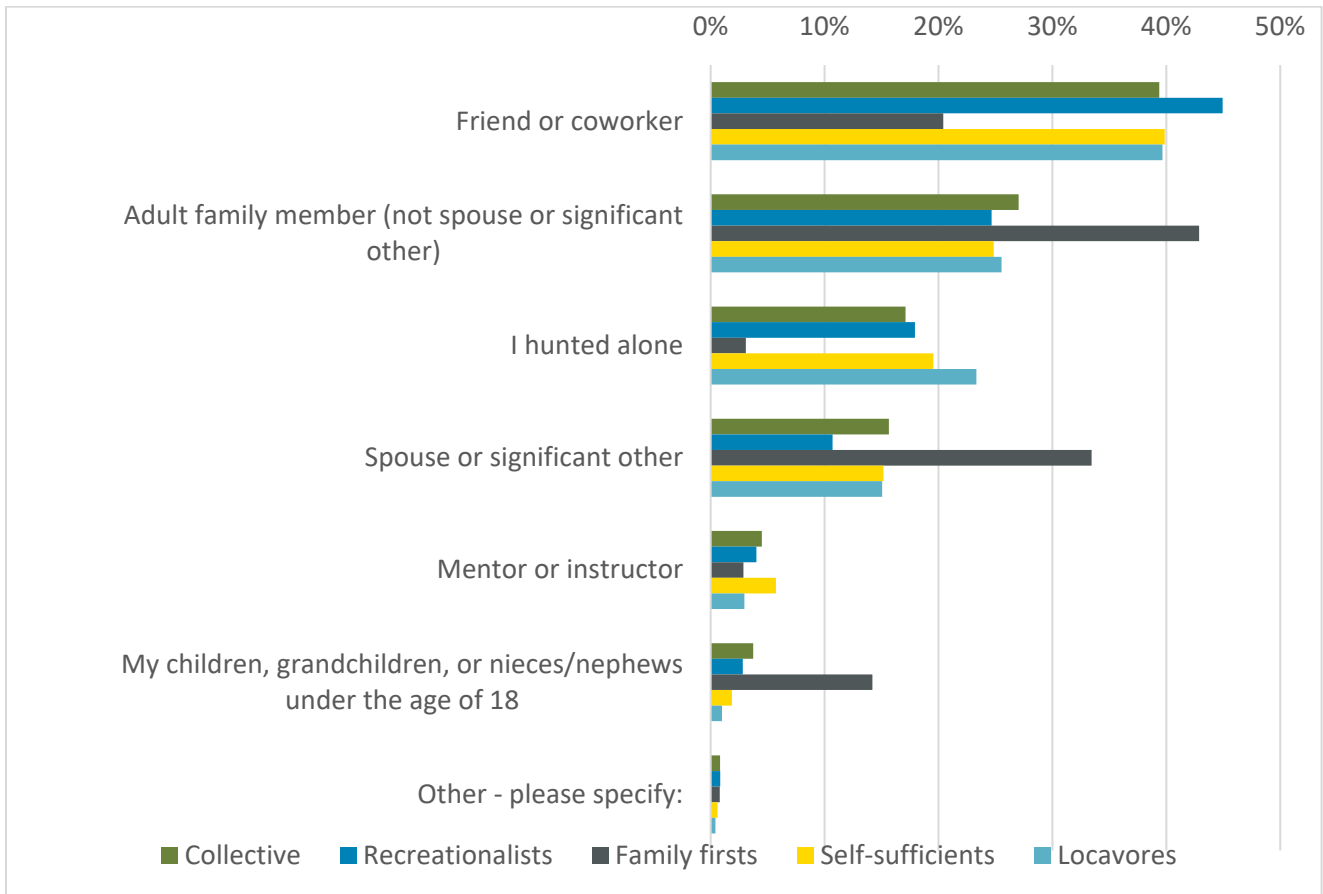


Figure 24. On your first hunt as an adult, who did you hunt with? Select all that apply.

Overall satisfaction with the first hunting experience ran high, with spending time outdoors and with others both being major drivers of that success (Figure 25 and Table 15). Dissatisfaction, while minimal, was largely driven by not harvesting an animal (Table 16).

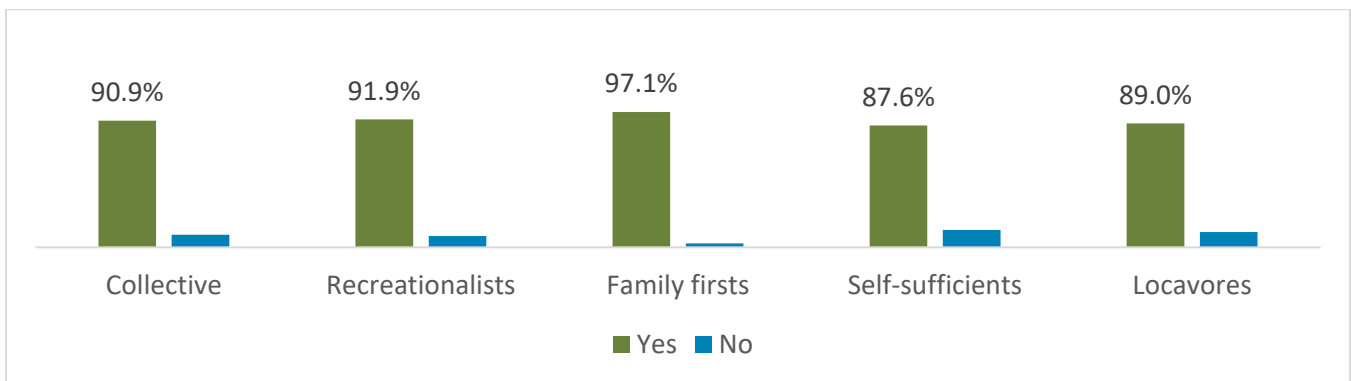


Figure 25. Were you satisfied with your first hunting experience overall?



Table 15. Why were you satisfied with your first hunting experience? Select up to three reasons.

	Collective	Recreationalists	Family firsts	Self- sufficients	Locavores
I enjoyed being outside	65.7%	71.5%	56.6%	62.9%	64.6%
I enjoyed time with others (family, friends, etc.)	53.0%	52.4%	80.2%	48.2%	34.4%
I successfully harvested an animal	37.8%	37.9%	35.0%	38.5%	40.3%
I was well prepared for the experience in terms of equipment and apparel	27.1%	28.6%	24.9%	25.3%	30.2%
It was a beautiful day	21.4%	23.1%	20.2%	20.0%	18.7%
I had access to a nearby hunting location	18.2%	21.5%	12.3%	17.7%	13.3%
I was confident handling my firearm or bow	16.8%	14.1%	13.8%	20.4%	21.2%
I enjoyed eating and/or sharing the wild game from my harvest	14.9%	11.5%	5.8%	18.8%	30.2%
I felt safe	7.5%	6.6%	9.0%	8.7%	6.8%
Other – please specify:	2.7%	1.9%	2.6%	3.6%	1.3%

Table 16. Why were you not satisfied with your first hunting experience? Select up to three reasons.

	Collective	Recreationalists	Family firsts	Self- sufficients	Locavores
I did not successfully harvest and recover an animal	71.5%	53.7%	67.4%	86.9%	73.2%
I did not see a legally huntable animal	45.2%	58.9%	23.1%	39.1%	39.2%
I felt inexperienced or was not sure what I was doing	31.8%	33.4%	31.6%	26.6%	41.0%
The weather was bad and/or some other uncomfortable condition	21.4%	9.3%	10.4%	36.4%	15.6%
I had to travel too far	12.9%	19.0%	16.3%	8.6%	7.8%
It took too much time	12.5%	2.7%	0.0%	19.7%	20.1%
I did not have the right equipment	9.4%	16.5%	0.0%	5.1%	7.3%
I was concerned about safety and others in the field	5.9%	1.5%	21.9%	7.4%	8.8%
I did not know how to process and handle the meat	3.5%	2.9%	0.0%	4.7%	3.2%
I was not confident with my firearm or bow	2.3%	1.6%	8.6%	1.7%	3.8%
I was uncomfortable taking an animal’s life	1.7%	1.4%	0.0%	2.2%	1.8%
Other – please specify:	8.2%	4.9%	0.0%	9.8%	13.1%



Likely due to the high levels of satisfaction, almost everyone (98.1%) had interest in continuing to hunt and many in fact did (92.0%) (Table 17 and Table 18).

Table 17. After your first hunt, did you want to continue hunting?

	Collective	Recreationalists	Family firsts	Self-sufficients	Locavores
Yes	98.1%	98.8%	97.2%	97.3%	98.7%
No, I didn't want to hunt again	1.9%	1.2%	2.8%	2.7%	1.3%

Table 18. Since your first hunt, have you hunted again?

	Collective	Recreationalists	Family firsts	Self-sufficients	Locavores
Yes	92.0%	90.5%	88.4%	89.2%	91.0%
No, but I'd like to go again	7.8%	9.3%	10.9%	10.6%	9.0%
No, I don't want to hunt again	0.2%	0.2%	0.7%	0.2%	0.0%

While not explicitly stated in the tables above exploring reasons for satisfaction and dissatisfaction, one's perceived level of confidence greatly influences the likelihood of continuing with an activity. Confidence in an activity may be even more important than the level of satisfaction with a specific experience. New adult hunters were asked to rate their perceived confidence level currently and prior to their first hunt. Confidence levels prior to the first hunt were fairly equivalent across all segments and averaged a 3.5 on a scale from 1 to 7. Confidence levels averaged two points higher across all segments after the hunt (Figure 26).

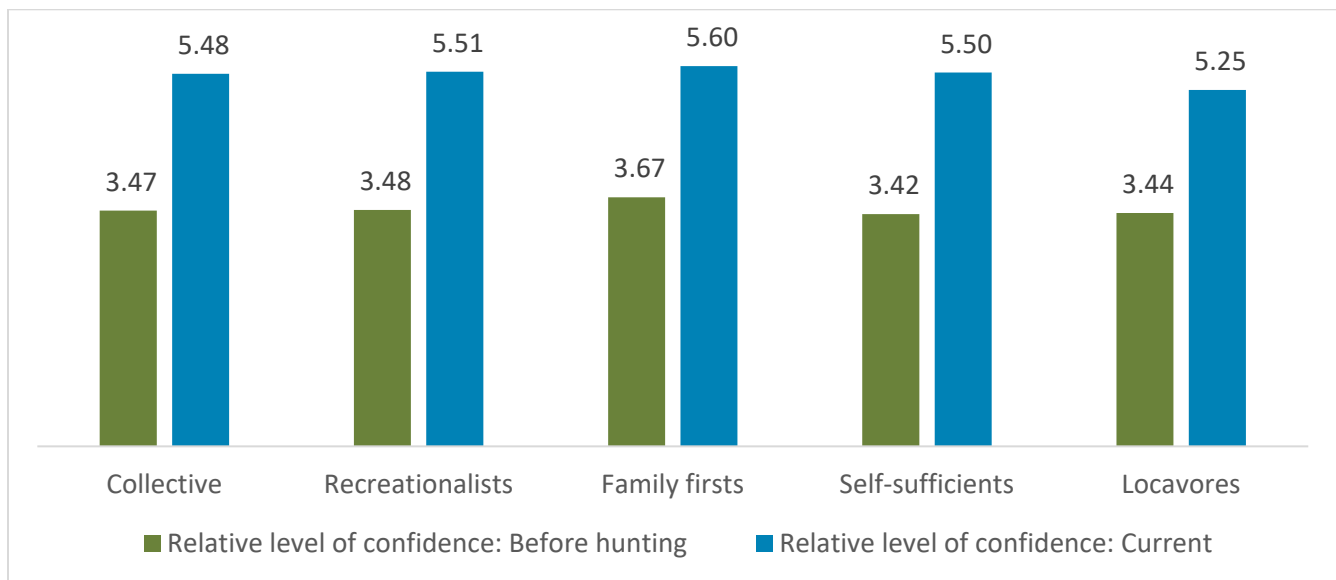


Figure 26. How would you rate your confidence level hunting...



Behaviors of continued new adult hunters

The majority of new adult hunters who continued to hunt also continued to pursue big game at approximately the same proportion as their first hunt. Interest in other species increased dramatically. Roughly one third hunted turkey and small game while one quarter hunted upland game birds (Figure 27). The overwhelming majority also intend to continue hunting (Table 19)

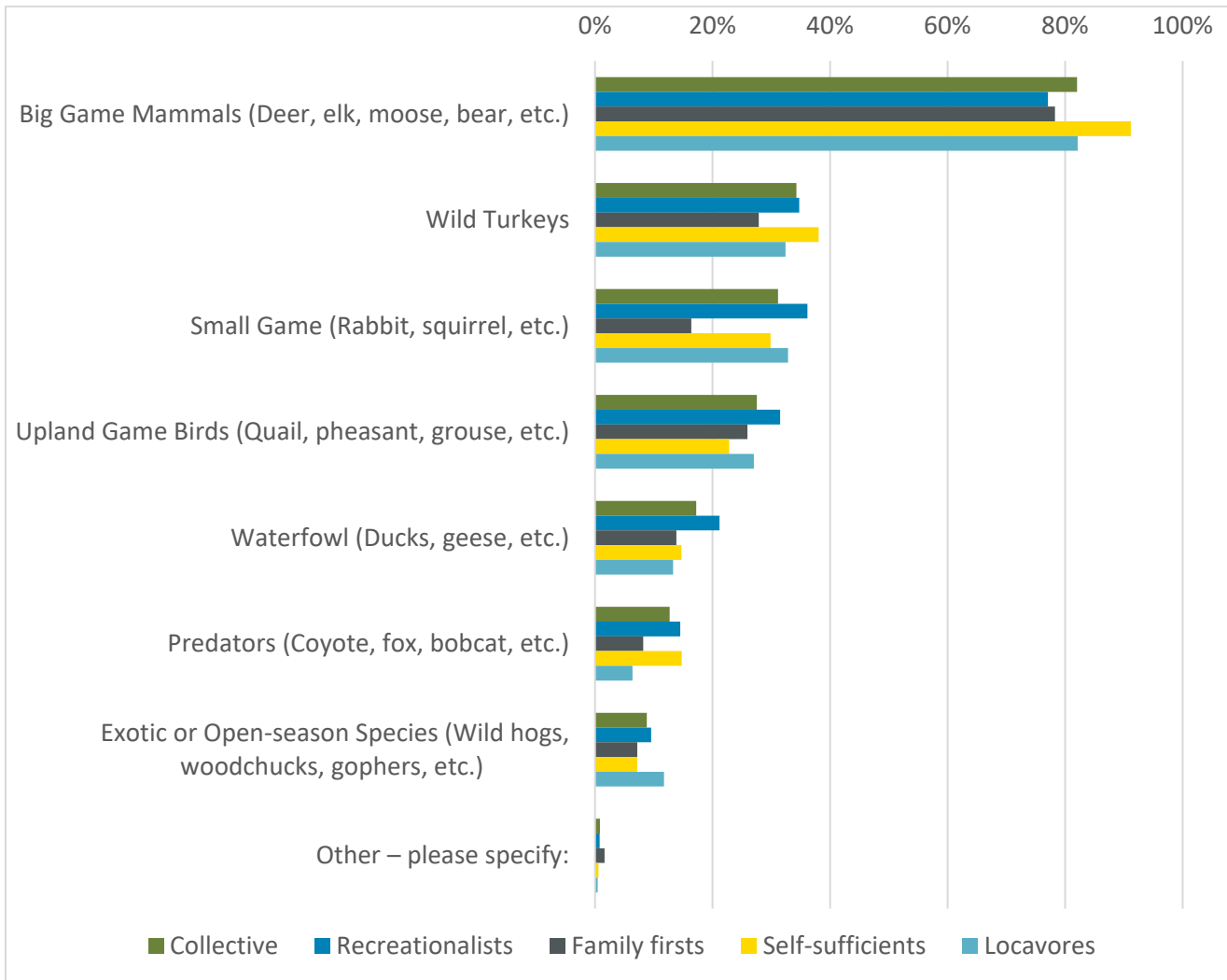


Figure 27. What game have you hunted since your first hunt? Select all that apply.

Table 19. Do you intend to continue hunting?

	Collective	Recreationalists	Family firsts	Self-sufficients	Locavores
Yes	98.9%	98.9%	97.9%	99.4%	99.1%
No	1.1%	1.1%	2.1%	0.6%	0.9%



Communication opportunities, pathways, and effectiveness

Communication with new adult hunters and understanding opportunities to support their learning is essential to their continued participation. Over half of respondents indicated that they had received both hunting and license information from their state agency (Figure 28). More importantly, the vast majority of those who received follow-up communication found it both helpful and interesting (Figure 29). In general, this indicates that states are doing a good job of maintaining contact with new adult hunters and providing useful content in those communications. The roughly quarter of respondents who indicated they have not received follow-up communications from their state represents an opportunity to better engage constituents.

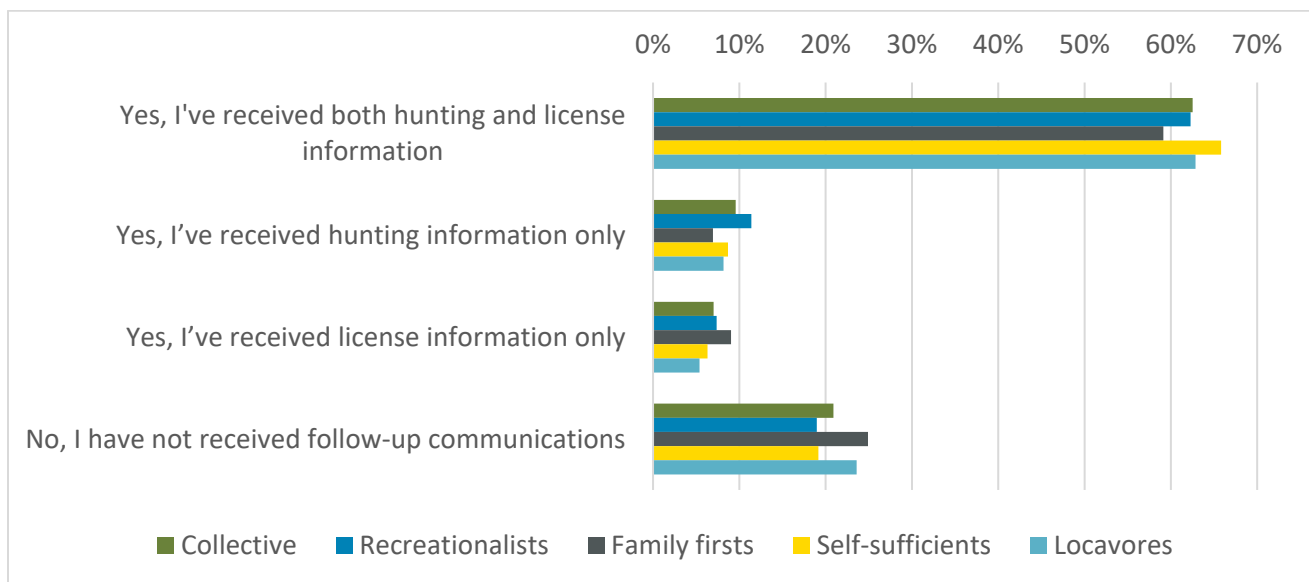


Figure 28. Since purchasing your hunting license, have you received follow-up communication about hunting or licenses from your state agency?

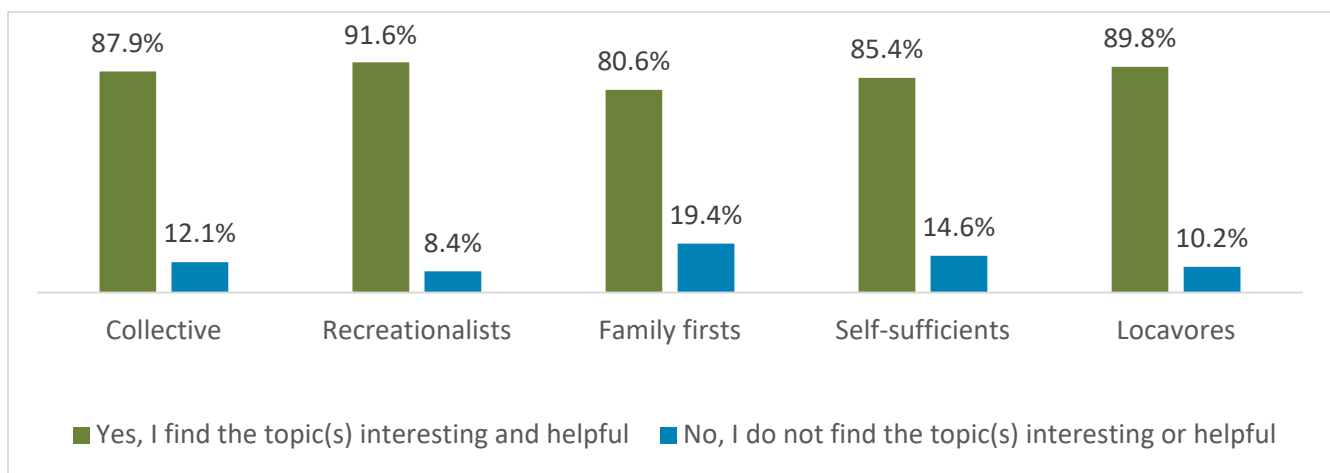


Figure 29. Have you found the topic(s) covered in follow-up communication interesting and helpful?



Over half of first-time licenses are purchased online or through a mobile app, highlighting the importance of easy pathways and efficient online systems for customers to do so (Table 20). Slightly less than half were purchased in person at a store; Family first were more likely to purchase their first license in person compared to the collective and other segments. Interestingly, roughly a quarter of people who purchased in store or in person at a government office, 27.7% and 23.5% respectively, had not received follow-up communications from their state agency. This suggests that that contact information may not be collected as reliably for those who purchase their license in person. Fortunately, regardless of hunter segment, the overwhelming majority of hunters report having a positive license purchasing experience (Figure 30).

Table 20. How did you purchase your first hunting license?

	Collective	Recreationalists	Family firsts	Self-sufficients	Locavores
Online or through a mobile app	54.2%	55.1%	39.5%	60.1%	49.6%
In person at a store	40.1%	40.1%	52.5%	35.3%	42.4%
In person at a government office	3.5%	2.6%	5.2%	3.3%	3.1%
A combination of methods	1.8%	1.8%	1.5%	0.9%	4.6%
By mail	0.4%	0.4%	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%
I have never purchased a hunting license	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	0.4%

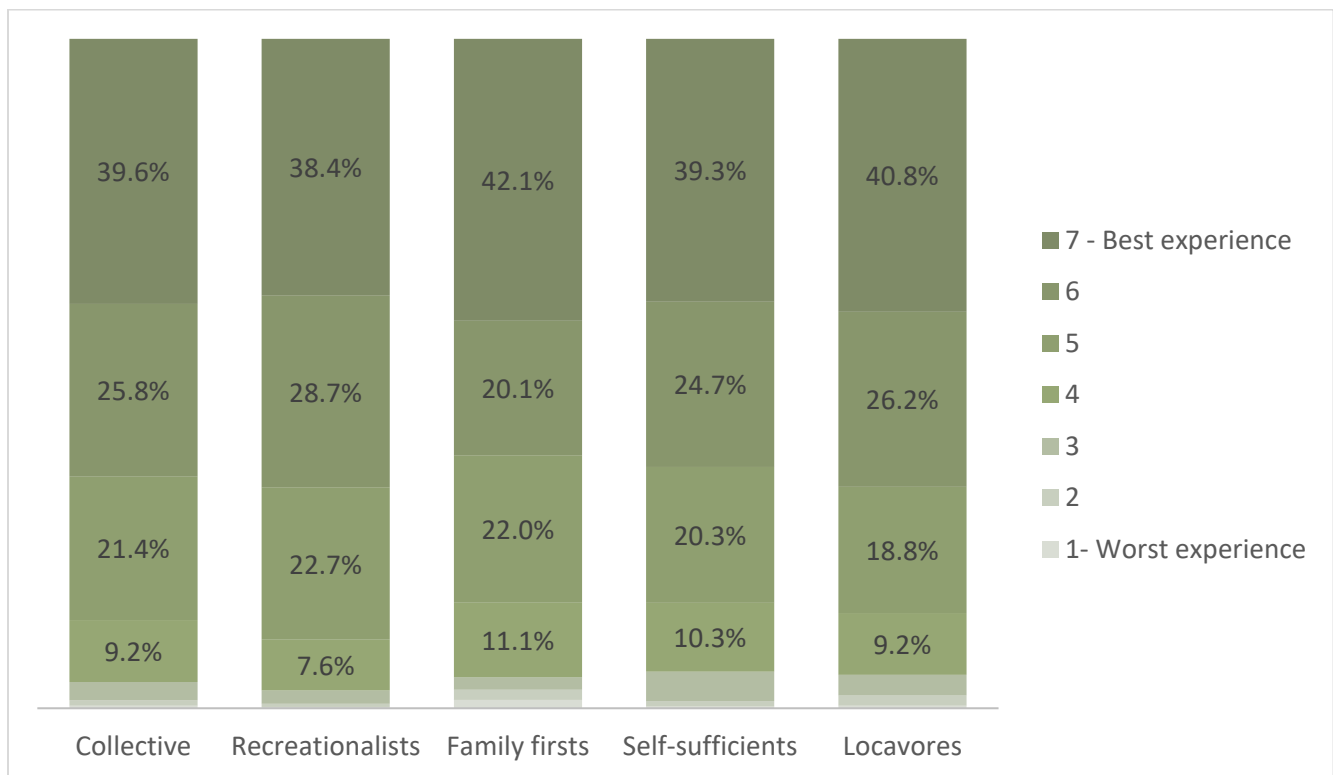


Figure 30. How would you rate your hunting license purchase experience?



Collectively, new adult hunters were most interested in learning about good places to hunt (60.0%), regulations/seasons/licensing (49.7%), and prey behavior and scouting (45.3%) after their first hunt (Figure 31). Recreationalists were most interested in learning good places to hunt (64.4%) whereas Self-sufficients and Locavores were more interested in learning more about how to process meat and how to cook game meat compared to the collective and other segments. This makes sense, given their interest in hunting for food.

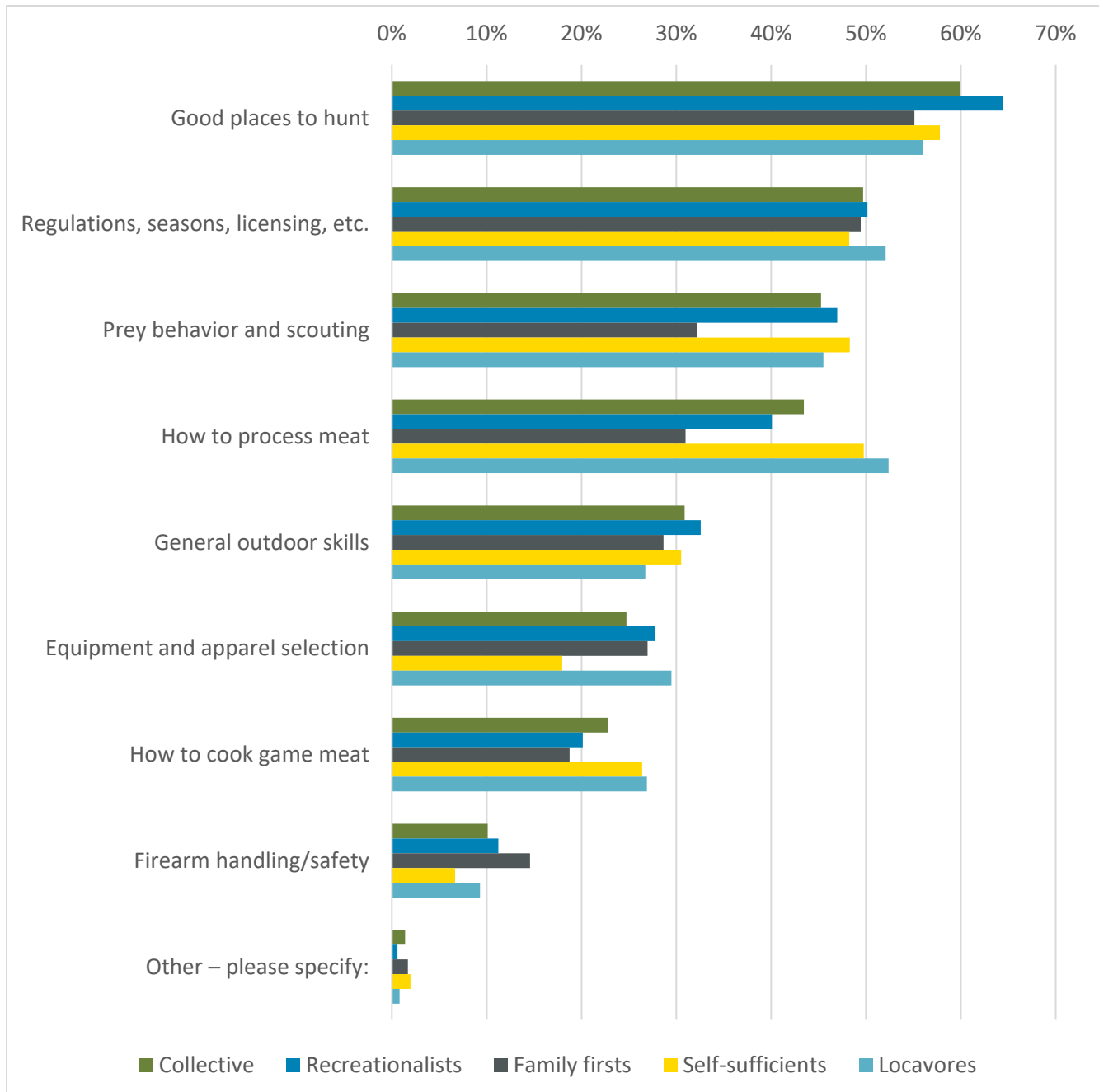


Figure 31. Which of the following topics did you want to know more about after your first hunt?



As they continue hunting, knowing where to hunt and how to process and handle the meat remains an issue for many new adult hunters (Table 21), though having enough time to go out remains the greatest barrier. Locavores are more concerned than other groups about knowing enough about hunting to continue (32.9%) while Self-sufficients are more concerned about having a successful hunt than other groups (31.4%). Collectively, new adult hunters are facing issues related to knowing where to go and what to do when they successfully harvest an animal. Roughly a quarter of all segments are also concerned about having somebody to go with.

Table 21. Are any of the following issues for you when considering continuing to hunt? Select all that apply.

	Collective	Recreationalists	Family firsts	Self-sufficients	Locavores
Having enough time to go out	58.1%	57.5%	58.4%	61.0%	52.3%
Knowing where to hunt	45.3%	43.9%	33.8%	49.8%	48.7%
Knowing how to process and handle the meat	29.2%	25.5%	24.0%	34.6%	34.1%
Concern about having a successful hunt (harvesting an animal)	27.2%	24.5%	27.4%	31.4%	27.7%
Having somebody to go with	23.1%	23.0%	20.3%	22.6%	26.5%
Knowing enough about hunting to continue	22.1%	21.4%	20.3%	19.4%	32.9%
Having the right equipment (firearm, bow, apparel, etc.)	19.0%	23.3%	16.5%	14.6%	16.6%
Safety and others in the field	15.4%	15.8%	20.1%	13.8%	12.1%
Humanely killing an animal	13.2%	9.9%	16.2%	14.2%	19.0%
Knowing where to practice shooting or sight in my equipment	12.3%	14.1%	8.7%	10.7%	13.6%
Knowing how to properly cook game meat	9.2%	9.0%	8.3%	8.3%	13.3%
Taking any animal's life	6.6%	6.8%	10.5%	4.7%	7.2%
Concern about how others might perceive me	4.6%	3.1%	3.9%	6.6%	4.3%
Using firearms	2.5%	2.7%	4.2%	1.6%	1.6%

Across the board, new adult hunters prefer informal learning opportunities from other hunters – this may come in the form of going hunting with someone more experienced or just having the opportunities to ask questions of someone more experienced than them. However, the greatest preference is for in-the-field learning opportunities (Table 22). This preference remains even as new adult hunters think about their future learning, with over half still preferring informal leaning from others. Interestingly, when it comes to more structured learning, independent learning such as hands-on learning, videos, and articles or how-to guides are preferred (Table 23). As state agencies think about resources to support new and beginning adult hunters, they should focus attention on ways to



provide informal learning opportunities from experienced hunters and independent learning resources over online or face-to-face classes.

Table 22. Prior to your first hunt, which would have helped you become a better prepared hunter? Select all that apply.

	Collective	Recreationalists	Family firsts	Self- sufficients	Locavores
Someone to take me hunting and share their knowledge and experience in the field	65.1%	69.3%	50.3%	64.0%	71.3%
Ability to ask questions of experienced hunters in an informal way	45.5%	48.2%	30.8%	46.8%	46.4%
Videos	23.2%	22.1%	24.0%	23.5%	25.7%
Article or how-to guide	20.7%	19.8%	19.9%	20.5%	24.6%
Informal connections with others interested in learning to hunt	19.5%	20.0%	18.8%	17.4%	24.7%
Face-to-face class	15.5%	15.0%	16.9%	14.6%	19.2%
Online class	12.9%	10.3%	11.7%	16.1%	15.8%
Other – please specify:	3.4%	1.4%	3.1%	5.5%	1.7%

Table 23. Looking to the future, which would be most effective to support your continued learning about hunting? Select all that apply.

	Collective	Recreationalists	Family firsts	Self- sufficients	Locavores
Someone to take me hunting and share their knowledge and experience in the field	51.0%	52.1%	42.5%	50.0%	58.8%
Ability to ask questions of experienced hunters in an informal way	44.9%	47.7%	38.4%	44.0%	45.6%
Independent hands-on learning	35.1%	33.4%	32.2%	38.6%	36.2%
Videos	27.9%	27.8%	24.7%	30.2%	26.0%
Article or how-to guide	26.6%	25.8%	22.9%	27.7%	30.4%
Informal connections with others interested in learning to hunt	20.9%	21.6%	15.1%	21.2%	24.5%
Online class	14.7%	13.3%	13.9%	16.0%	17.5%
Face-to-face class	12.1%	11.1%	11.4%	11.3%	18.0%
Other – please specify:	1.8%	0.9%	0.9%	2.8%	1.7%
I do not want to continue learning about hunting.	1.4%	0.6%	2.0%	0.8%	5.6%



Appendices



Appendix A: Learn more imagery by segment

Figure A 1. Learn about Hunting Regulations: Enroll in our class today image



Figure A 2. Influence of the 'Learn about Hunting Regulations' image: Overall and by self-identified skill-based needs

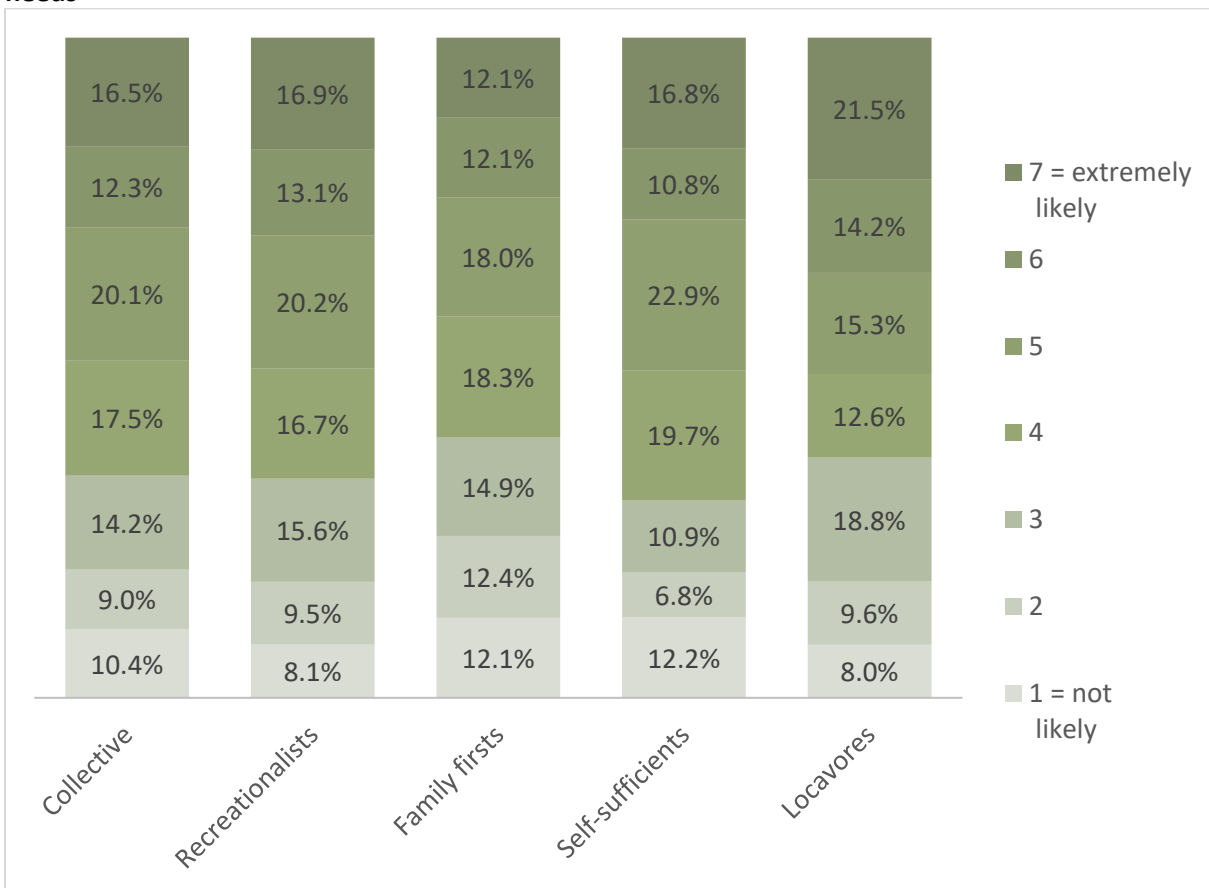


Figure A 3. Learn about Where to Hunt: Enroll in our class today image



Figure A 4. Influence of the Learn about Where to Hunt' image: Overall and by self-identified skill-based needs

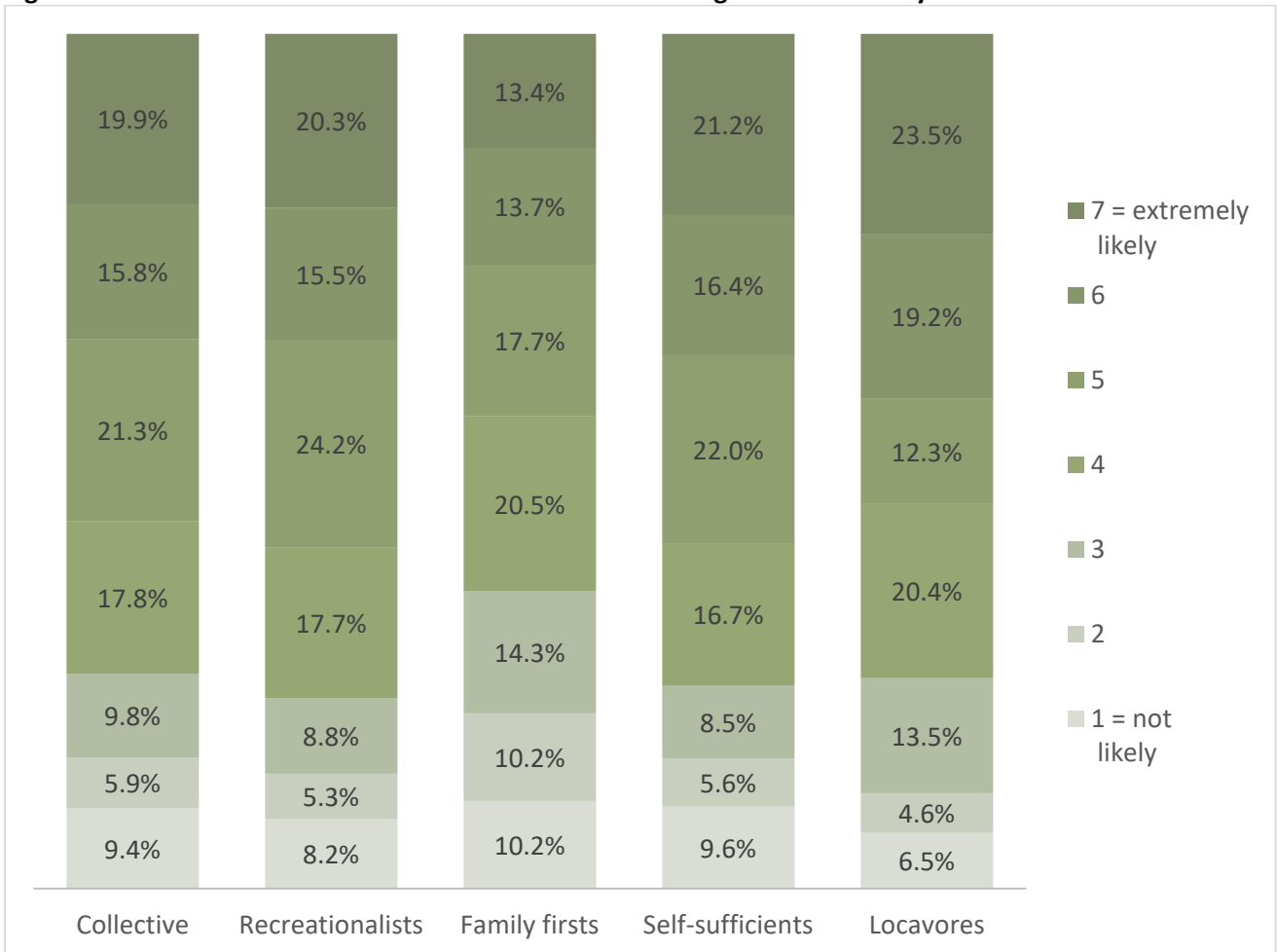


Figure A 5. Learn about Firearm Skills: Enroll in our class today image



Figure A 6. Influence of the 'Learn about Firearm Skills' image: Overall and by self-identified skill-based needs

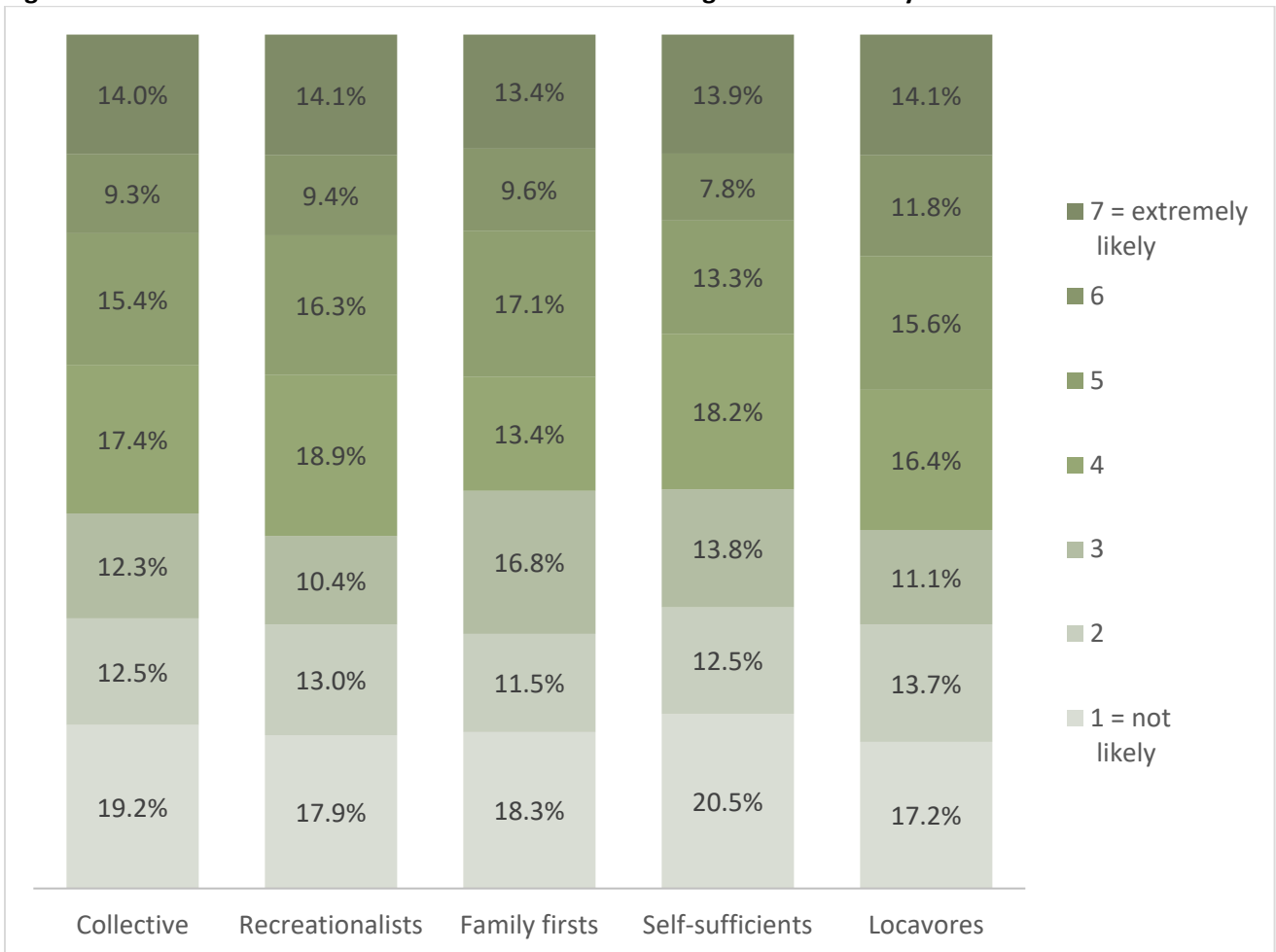


Figure A 7. Learn How to Hunt: Enroll in our class today image



Figure A 8. Influence of the 'Learn How to Hunt' image: Overall and by self-identified skill-based needs

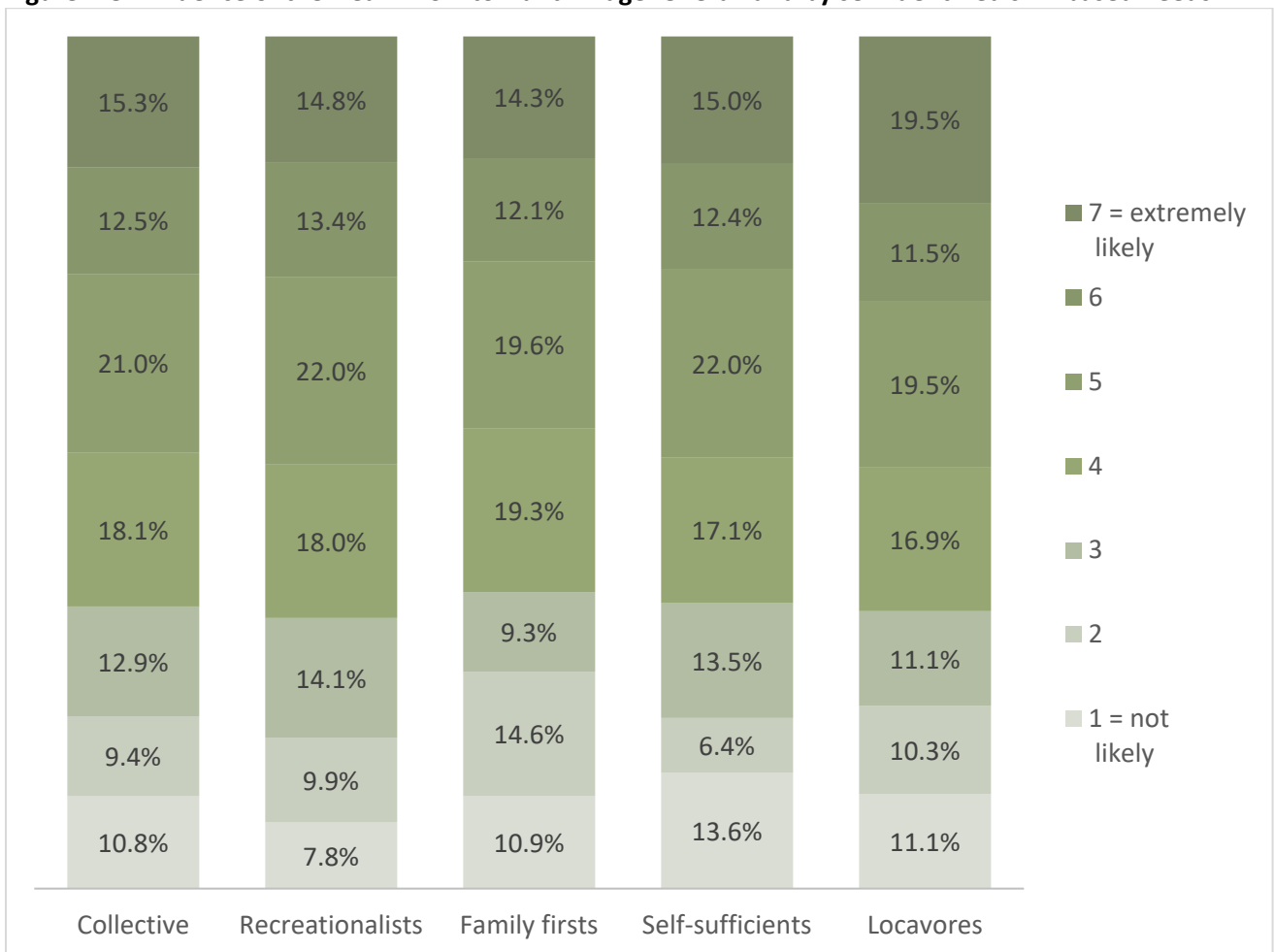
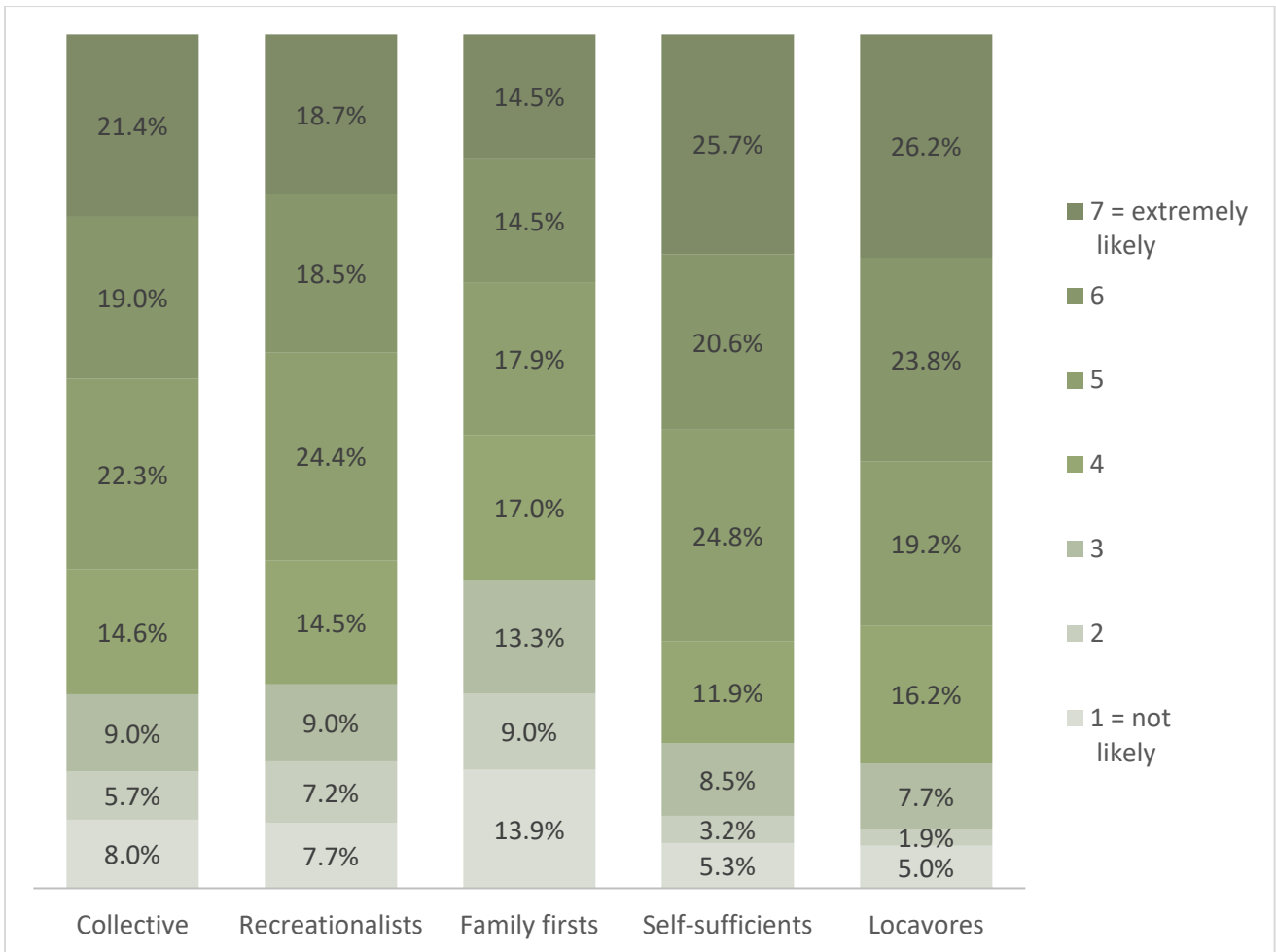


Figure A 9. Learn about Game Processing: Enroll in our class today image



Figure A 10. Influence of the 'Learn about Game Processing' image: Overall and by self-identified skill-based needs





Appendix B: Survey and imagery

WMI-22-01 New Adult Hunter Journey

This survey about interest and participation in hunting is being conducted by Southwick Associates in partnership with $\{e://Field/agency_name\}$ and DJ Case and Associates. You have been randomly selected to participate and the survey should take less than 10 minutes of your time.

Your responses will be kept strictly confidential and will not be shared with anyone outside of the research team.

Q1 Are you at least 18 years old?

- Yes
- No [Disqualify and end survey if selected]

Start of Block: Introduction

Q2 Have you hunted at least one time in any state within the last 5 years?

- Yes
 - No [Disqualify and end survey if selected]
-

Q3 Did you hunt as a child (younger than 18 years old) and, if so, how often?

- Never
 - Very little (fewer than 5 days in total)
 - Frequently (more than 5 days in total) [Disqualify and end survey if selected]
-



4 How many years have you hunted as an adult (older than 18 years)? Include any years you hunted at least one time.

- I have never hunted [Disqualify and end survey if selected]
- One year or less
- 2 years
- 3 years
- 4 years
- 5 years
- More than 5 years [Disqualify and end survey if selected]

Q5 Please **do not** select any of the following options: [Disqualify and end survey if any option selected; quality control question]

- Hiking
- Walking
- Playing sports
- Biking
- Jogging
- None of the above

Q6 How many years old were you when you went hunting for the first time as an adult? If you can't remember exactly, please provide your best estimate.

End of Block: Introduction

Start of Block: Awareness & Interest 1

For the following questions, please think about when you were first considering hunting.



Q7 As best as you can recall, how long had you considered hunting prior to your first hunting experience?

- I decided to try hunting and went out on my first hunt within the same year
- I'd been considering learning to hunt for a year or two before my first hunt
- I'd been considering learning to hunt for more than two years before my first hunt
- I have been interested in hunting for as long as I can remember

Q8 Which of the following increased your interest in hunting for the first time? Select all that apply.

- An advertisement I saw
- Conversations with friends, families, and/or coworkers who hunt
- An outdoor show I watched
- Something on social media that I saw from someone I knew
- Something on social media that I saw from someone I didn't know (influencer, stranger, organization, etc.)
- A blog or article I read
- A podcast I listened to
- Other - please specify: _____

Q9 During the time you considered going on a hunt, did anyone you know influence your decision to hunt, whether directly or indirectly? Select all that apply.

- Yes, a spouse or significant other
- Yes, another family member (not spouse or significant other)
- Yes, a friend or coworker
- Yes, someone else – please specify: _____

No



Q10 As you were considering going hunting, which of the following topics did you want to learn more about? Select up to three topics.

- Regulations, seasons, licensing, etc.
- Where to hunt
- How to process meat you harvested
- How to cook game meat
- Firearm handling/safety
- Prey behavior and scouting
- General outdoor skills
- Equipment and apparel selection
- Other – please specify: _____
- None of these

End of Block: Awareness & Interest 1

Start of Block: Ads - Learn more **[THESE ADS WILL DISPLAY IN A RANDOM ORDER]**

Q11 How motivational would you have found the following image when you were first considering hunting?



(Lower your Carbon Footprint; Learn more about hunting locally)

- 1 = not motivational
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 = extremely motivational

Q12 How motivational would you have found the following image when you were first considering hunting?



(Enjoy the Outdoors; Learn more about hunting)

- 1 = not motivational
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 = extremely motivational

Q13 How motivational would you have found the following image when you were first considering hunting?



(Save a Trip to the Grocery Store; Learn more about hunting)

- 1 = not motivational
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 = extremely motivational

Q14 How motivational would you have found the following image when you were first considering hunting?



(Spend Time with Family; Learn more about hunting)

- 1 = not motivational
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 = extremely motivational

Q15 How motivational would you have found the following image when you were first considering hunting?



(Spend Time with Family; Learn more about hunting)

- 1 = not motivational
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 = extremely motivational



Start of Block: Preparation 1 (knowledge gaps, barriers, training)

For the following questions, please think about the days when you were preparing for your first hunt.

Q16 How did you prepare for your first hunting experience? Select all that apply.

- Took a hunter education class
- Talked with others I know who were interested in learning to hunt (friends, family, coworkers)
- Talked with others I know who already hunt (friends, family, coworkers) or mentor people like me
- Went into the field with an experienced hunter to observe and learn
- Explored resources from my state agency (regulation guides, videos about how to hunt, advertisements, website, etc.)
- Took an outdoor recreation/safety class offered by a state agency
- Took an outdoor recreation/safety class offered by a club or other non-profit
- Watched instructional videos online (YouTube, etc.)
- Visited hunting websites or blogs
- Watched hunting programs on TV or through streaming services (Netflix, Hulu, Amazon Prime, etc.)
- Sighted in and/or practiced with my equipment (firearm, bow, crossbow)
- Other – please specify: _____
- None of these

Q17 [Display if “Explored resources from my state agency is NOT selected in previous question] Did you know that your state agency offers resources to support your interest in learning to hunt?

- Yes
- No

End of Block: Preparation 1 (knowledge gaps, barriers, training)

Start of Block: Ad 1 – Enroll **[THESE ADS WILL DISPLAY IN A RANDOM ORDER]**

Q18 As you were preparing to go hunting for the first time, how likely would you have been to click the following image to learn more?



(Learn about Hunting Regulations; Enroll in our class today!)

- 1 = not likely
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 = extremely likely

Q19 As you were preparing to go hunting for the first time, how likely would you have been to click the following image to learn more?



(Learn about Where to Hunt; Enroll in our class today!)

- 1 = not likely
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 = extremely likely

Q20 As you were preparing to go hunting for the first time, how likely would you have been to click the following image to learn more?



(Learn about Firearm Skills; Enroll in our class today!)

- 1 = not likely
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 = extremely likely

Q21 As you were preparing to go hunting for the first time, how likely would you have been to click the following image to learn more?



(Learn How to Hunt; Enroll in our class today!)

- 1 = not likely
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 = extremely likely

Q22 As you were preparing to go hunting for the first time, how likely would you have been to click the following image to learn more?



(Learn about Game Processing; Enroll in our class today!)

- 1 = not likely
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 = extremely likely



Q23 How did you purchase your first hunting license?

- Online or through a mobile app
- In person at a store
- By mail
- In person at a government office
- A combination of methods
- I have never purchased a hunting license

Q24 How would you rate your hunting license purchase experience?

1 star = the
worst



experience; 7
stars = the best
experience

Q25 **[Display if poor experience and purchased online]** Why did you rate your hunting license purchase experience the way you did? Select all that apply.

- I struggled to determine which licenses or permits I needed to buy.
 - I did not know where to buy my license from on the website or in the mobile application.
 - The process to buy a license was cumbersome or confusing.
 - I could not access my online account.
 - It took too long to receive my license after purchase.
 - I did not get the license I wanted due to quotas.
 - I was charged an additional fee for my online purchase.
 - I was charged the incorrect amount or received the wrong license.
 - Other – please specify: _____
-



Q26 [Display if poor experience and purchased in person] Why did you rate your hunting license purchase experience the way you did? Select all that apply.

- I struggled to determine which licenses or permits I needed to buy.
- I did not know where to buy my license from in person.
- The process to buy a license was cumbersome.
- I did not get the license I wanted due to quotas.
- The process to buy a license was confusing.
- Staff were not helpful or were uninformed.
- Other – please specify: _____

Q27 [Display if poor experience and purchased by mail] Why did you rate your hunting license purchase experience the way you did? Select all that apply.

- I struggled to determine which licenses or permits I needed to buy.
- I did not know where to send my license purchase or application.
- The process to buy a license was confusing.
- It took too long to receive my license.
- I did not get the license I wanted due to quotas.
- The process to buy a license by mail was cumbersome.
- I received the wrong license.
- Other – please specify: _____

Q28 [Display if poor experience and purchased at government office] Why did you rate your hunting license purchase experience the way you did? Select all that apply.

- I struggled to determine which licenses or permits I needed to buy.
- I did not know where the license office was.
- The process to buy a license was confusing.
- I did not get the license I wanted due to quotas.
- The process to buy a license was cumbersome.
- Staff were not helpful or were uninformed.
- Other – please specify: _____



Q29 [Display if positive purchasing experience] Why did you rate your hunting license purchase experience the way you did? Select all that apply.

- My state wildlife agency provided adequate instruction for me to purchase my license.
- The process to purchase a license was clear.
- A friend, family member, or coworker helped me with the process.
- An employee helped me with the process.
- The process to purchase a license was easy.
- Other – please specify: _____





Q30 How much of a challenge were the following as you prepared for your first hunt?

	Not at all a challenge	Somewhat of a challenge	Moderate challenge	Extreme challenge
Having the equipment (firearm, bow, apparel, etc.) (x1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feeling like I knew enough about hunting (x2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having enough time to learn or go out (x3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Wondering how others might perceive me (x4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having a successful hunt (harvesting an animal) (x5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having somebody to go with (x6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowing where to hunt (x7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowing where to practice shooting or sight in my equipment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Taking any animal's life (x8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Humanely killing an animal (x9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowing how to process and handle the meat (x10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Safety and others in the field (x11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using firearms (x12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other - please specify: (x13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input checked="" type="radio"/> None of these (x14)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Q31 Before your first hunt, how confident were you handling the following equipment?

	Not at all confident	Not very confident	Neither	Fairly confident	Extremely confident	Do not use/Not applicable
Rifle	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shotgun	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pistol	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bow	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Crossbow	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Muzzleloader	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q32 Prior to your first hunt, which of the following was your primary motivation to hunt? Please select one.

- To enjoy outdoor activities/spend time outdoors
- To spend time with family
- To become more self-sufficient regarding food
- To obtain locally sourced and processed food
- Other – please specify: _____

End of Block: Preparation 2 (knowledge gaps, barriers, training)



Start of Block: First time & Continuing

For the following questions, please think about the first time you went hunting as an adult and the time since.

Q33 Currently, which of the following most appeals to you about hunting? Select up to three.

- Enjoying outdoor activities/spend time outdoors
- Spending time with family
- Becoming more self-sufficient regarding food
- Obtaining locally sourced and processed food
- Being part of the American outdoor hunting tradition
- Engaging in a challenging activity
- Supporting conservation
- Harvesting a trophy animal
- Harvesting any legal animal
- Other – please specify: _____

Q34 What equipment did you use on your first hunt?

- A firearm that I owned
 - A bow/crossbow that I owned
 - A firearm that I borrowed
 - A bow/crossbow that I borrowed
 - Other – please specify: _____
-



Q35 On your first hunt as an adult, who did you hunt with? Select all that apply.

- I hunted alone
- Spouse or significant other
- My children, grandchildren, or nieces/nephews under the age of 18
- Adult family member (not spouse or significant other)
- Friend or coworker
- Mentor or instructor
- Other - please specify: _____

Q36 Were you satisfied with your first hunting experience overall?

- Yes
- No

Q37 [Display if NO is selected in previous question] Why were you not satisfied with your first hunting experience? Select up to three reasons.

- I did not harvest and recover an animal
 - I did not have the right equipment
 - The weather was bad and/or some other uncomfortable condition
 - I did not know how to process and handle the meat
 - I did not know how to cook the meat
 - I was concerned about safety and others in the field
 - I had to travel too far
 - It took too much time
 - I felt inexperienced or was not sure what I was doing
 - I was not confident with my firearm or bow
 - I did not see a legally huntable animal
 - I was uncomfortable taking an animal's life
 - Other – please specify: _____
-



Q38 [Display if YES is selected in Q36 question] Why were you satisfied with your first hunting experience? Select up to three reasons.

- I successfully harvested an animal
- I was well prepared for the experience in terms of equipment and apparel
- It was a beautiful day
- I enjoyed being outside
- I felt safe
- I enjoyed time with others (family, friends, etc.)
- I was confident handling my firearm or bow
- I had access to a nearby hunting location
- I enjoyed eating and/or serving the wild game from my harvest
- Other – please specify: _____

Q39 How would you rate your confidence level hunting...

before your	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
first hunt?							
now?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q40 After your first hunt, did you want to continue hunting?

- Yes
- No, I didn't want to hunt again

Q41 [Display if hunted one year or less] Since your first hunt, have you hunted again?

- Yes
- No, but I'd like to go again
- No, I don't want to hunt again



Q42 [Display if “No, I don’t want to hunt again” in previous question] Why did you not want to hunt again? Select up to three reasons.

- Don’t have the equipment (firearm, bow, apparel, etc.)
 - Don’t feel like I knew enough about hunting to continue
 - Don’t enough time to go out
 - Concerned about how others might perceive me
 - Concerned about being harvesting an animal
 - Don’t have anybody to go with
 - Don’t know where to hunt
 - Don’t know where to practice shooting or sight in my equipment
 - Uncomfortable taking an animal’s life
 - Not confident I can humanely kill an animal
 - Not sure how to process and handle the meat
 - Concerned about safety and others in the field
 - Not confident or uncertain about using firearms
 - Other - please specify: _____
-



Q43 On your **first** hunt as an adult, which did you pursue? Select all that apply.

- Big Game Mammals (Deer, elk, moose, bear, etc.)
- Upland Game Birds (Dove, quail, pheasant, etc.)
- Exotic or Open-season Species (Wild hogs, woodchucks, gophers, etc.)
- Small Game (Rabbit, squirrel, etc.)
- Wild Turkeys
- Waterfowl (Ducks, geese, etc.)
- Predators (Coyote, fox, bobcat, etc.)
- Other

Q44 **[Display if they have hunted since first time]** What game have you hunted since your first hunt? Select all that apply.

- Big Game Mammals (Deer, elk, moose, bear, etc.)
- Upland Game Birds (Dove, quail, pheasant, grouse, etc.)
- Exotic or Open-season Species (Wild hogs, woodchucks, gophers, etc.)
- Small Game (Rabbit, squirrel, etc.)
- Wild Turkeys
- Waterfowl (Ducks, geese, etc.)
- Predators (Coyote, fox, bobcat, etc.)
- Other – please specify: _____

Q45 Do you intend to continue hunting?

- No
- Yes



Q46 [Display if NO is selected in previous question] Why don't you intend to continue hunting? Select all that apply.

- Don't have the equipment (firearm, bow, apparel, etc.)
- Don't feel like I knew enough about hunting to continue
- Don't have enough time to go out
- Concerned about how others might perceive me
- Concern about having a successful hunt (harvesting an animal)
- Don't have anybody to go with
- Don't know where to hunt
- Don't know where to practice shooting or sight in my equipment
- Uncomfortable taking any animal's life
- Not confident I can humanely kill an animal
- Not sure how to process and handle the meat
- Concerned about safety and others in the field
- Not confident or uncertain about using firearms
- Have to travel too far for good opportunities
- Other - please specify: _____

Q47 Since purchasing your hunting license, have you received follow-up communication about hunting or licenses from your state agency?

- Yes, I've received hunting information only
- Yes, I've received license information only
- Yes, I've received both hunting and license information
- No, I haven't received any follow-up communication

Q47a [IF YES to Q47] Have you found the topic(s) covered in follow-up communication interesting and helpful?

- Yes, I find the topic(s) interesting and helpful
- No, I do not find the topic(s) interesting or helpful



Q48 Which of the following topics did you want to know more about after your first hunt?

- Regulations, seasons, licensing, etc.
 - Good places to hunt
 - How to process meat
 - How to cook game meat
 - Firearm handling/safety
 - Prey behavior and scouting
 - General outdoor skills
 - Equipment and apparel selection
 - Other – please specify: _____
-

Q49 Are any of the following issues for you when considering continuing to hunt? Select all that apply.

- Having the right equipment (firearm, bow, apparel, etc.)
 - Knowing enough about hunting to continue
 - Having enough time to go out
 - Concern about how others might perceive me
 - Having a successful hunt (harvesting an animal)
 - Having somebody to go with
 - Knowing where to hunt
 - Knowing where to practice shooting or sight in my equipment
 - Taking any animal's life
 - Humanely killing an animal
 - Knowing how to process and handle the meat
 - Knowing how to properly cook game meat
 - Safety and others in the field
 - Using firearms
 - None of these
-



Q50 Prior to your first hunt, which would have helped you become a better prepared hunter? Select all that apply.

- Someone to take me hunting and share their knowledge and experience in the field
- Ability to ask questions of experienced hunters in an informal way
- Informal connections with others interested in learning to hunt
- Face-to-face class
- Videos
- Online class
- Article or how-to guide
- Other – please specify: _____

Q51 Looking to the future, which would be most effective to support your continued learning about hunting? Select all that apply.

- Someone to take me hunting and share their knowledge and experience in the field
- Ability to ask questions of experienced hunters in an informal way
- Informal connections with others interested in learning to hunt
- Face-to-face class
- Videos
- Online class
- Article or how-to guide
- Independent hands-on learning
- I do not want to continue learning about hunting.
- Other – please specify: _____

End of Block: First time & Continuing

Start of Block: Demographics

Q52 In which state do you currently live?

▼ Alabama ... Puerto Rico (51)



Q53 Where is your home located?

- Urban area (large city)
- Suburban area (area surrounding a large city)
- Rural area
- Not sure

Q54 In what year were you born? _____

Q55 What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary / other
- Prefer not to say

Q56 Which of the following best describes your race or ethnicity? *Select all that apply.*

- White or Caucasian
- Black or African American
- Asian or Pacific Islander
- Hispanic or Latino
- American Indian
- Other
- I prefer not to say

Q56 What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

- Some high school
 - High school or equivalent
 - Some college
 - Associate's or technical degree
 - Bachelor's degree
 - Advanced or graduate degree
-



Q58 Please select the category that best describes your total annual household income (yours plus anyone else's living in the same household as you).

- Less than \$10,000
- \$10,000 to \$24,999
- \$25,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 to \$200,000
- More than \$200,000
- Prefer not to say

Q59 Which best describes your marital status?

- Married
- Single, never married
- Living with a partner
- Divorced/Separated/Widowed

End of Block: Demographics
