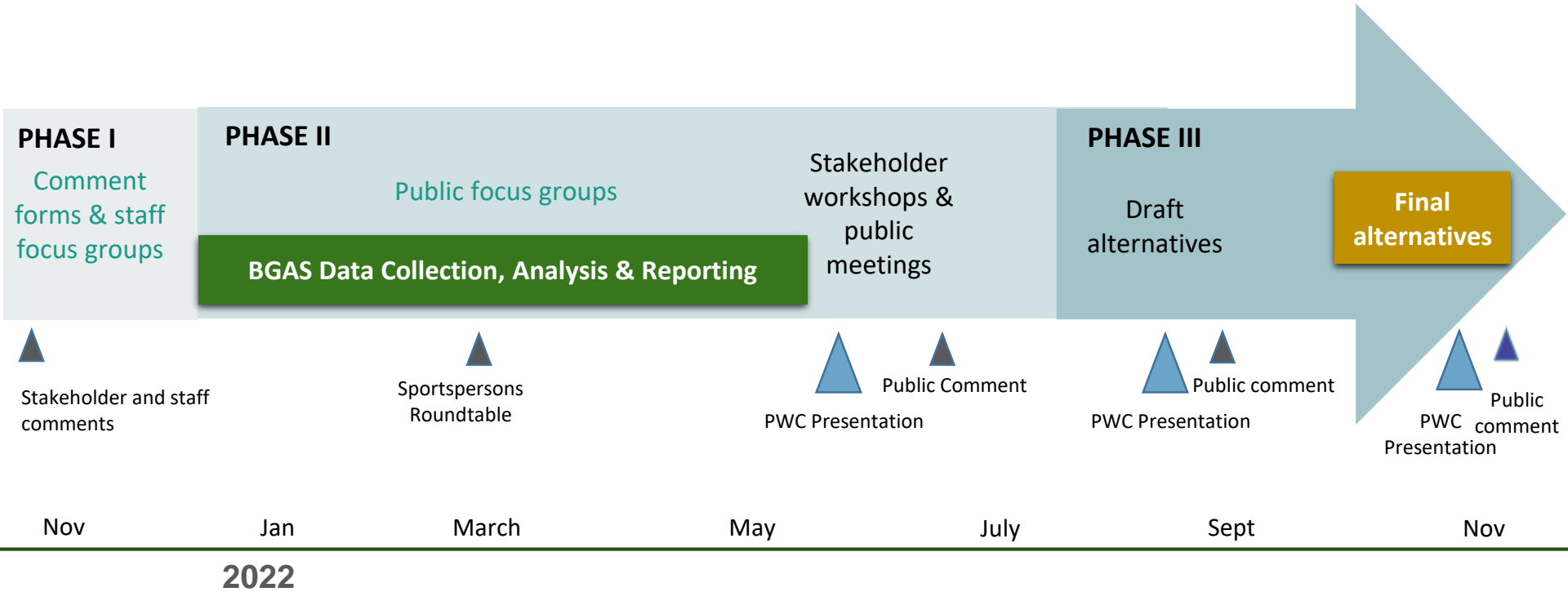




# **Big Game License Distribution Public Engagement Update**

June 2022 Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission Meeting

# License Distribution Public Involvement



# Big Game Attitude Survey

Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission  
Buena Vista, CO  
June 1-2, 2022



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Michael Quartuch, Ph.D.  
Human Dimensions Specialist/Researcher  
Policy and Planning

# Purpose

1. To identify resident and nonresident hunters' perspectives about license allocation, preference points, season structure, over-the-counter hunting opportunities, and fair chase principles.
2. To track and monitor resident and nonresident hunters' preferences, motivations, experiences and satisfaction as indicators of activity participation and long-term retention.



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# Approach

Survey Sample  
(n ≈ 6,000)

Resident  
(n = 3,000)

Non-resident  
(n = 3,000)

Archery

Rifle

Muzzleloader

Archery

Rifle

Muzzleloader

## Big Game Attitude Survey



Photo Credit: Wayne Lewis



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# Survey Participation

Sample	%
<b>Resident</b> (n = 1,036)	
<i>Archery</i>	38
<i>Muzzleloader</i>	42
<i>Rifle</i>	34
<b>Nonresident</b> (n = 1,041)	
<i>Archery</i>	39
<i>Muzzleloader</i>	44
<i>Rifle</i>	37

## Big Game Attitude Survey



Photo Credit: Wayne Lewis



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# **Preliminary Findings: Important Considerations**

## **Substantive differences in opinion regarding allocation splits**

- Somewhat similar perceptions about fairness of other allocation approaches

## **Slight differences about importance of preference point system**

- Over half of hunters are satisfied with the way preference points are used

## **Very different attitudes about OTC licenses**

## **Most hunters would prefer to hunt elk and deer every 2-4 years**

- Majority are okay with status quo season length



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# Big Game License Allocation

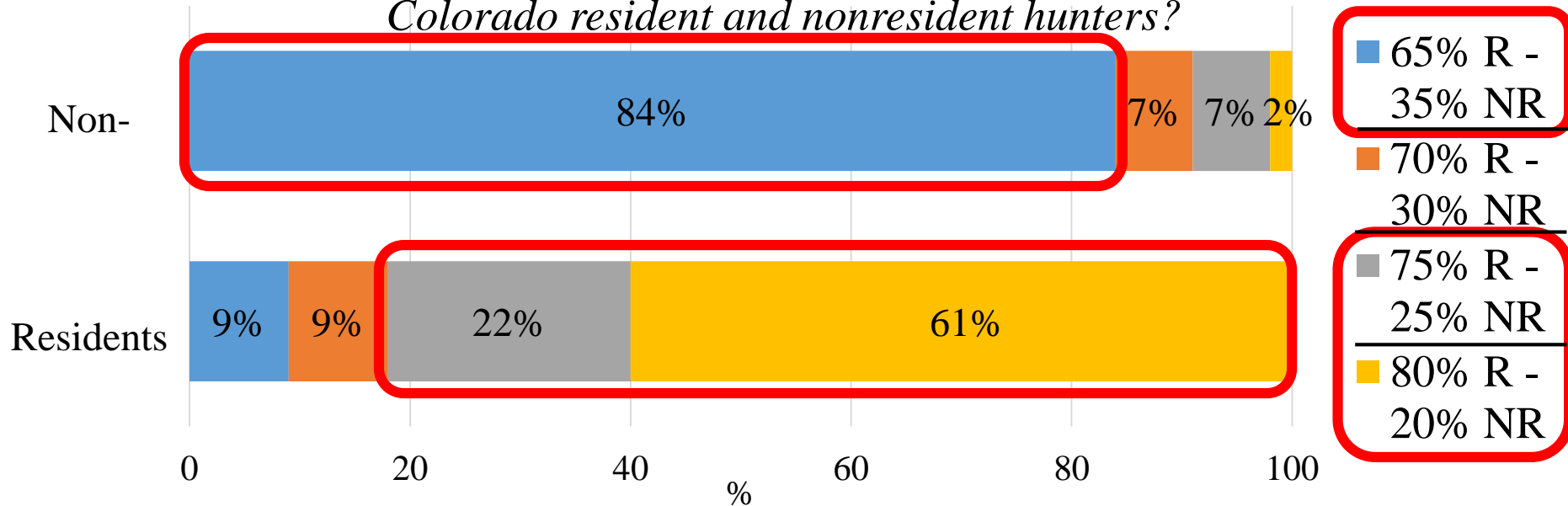


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# Potential License Allocation Alternatives

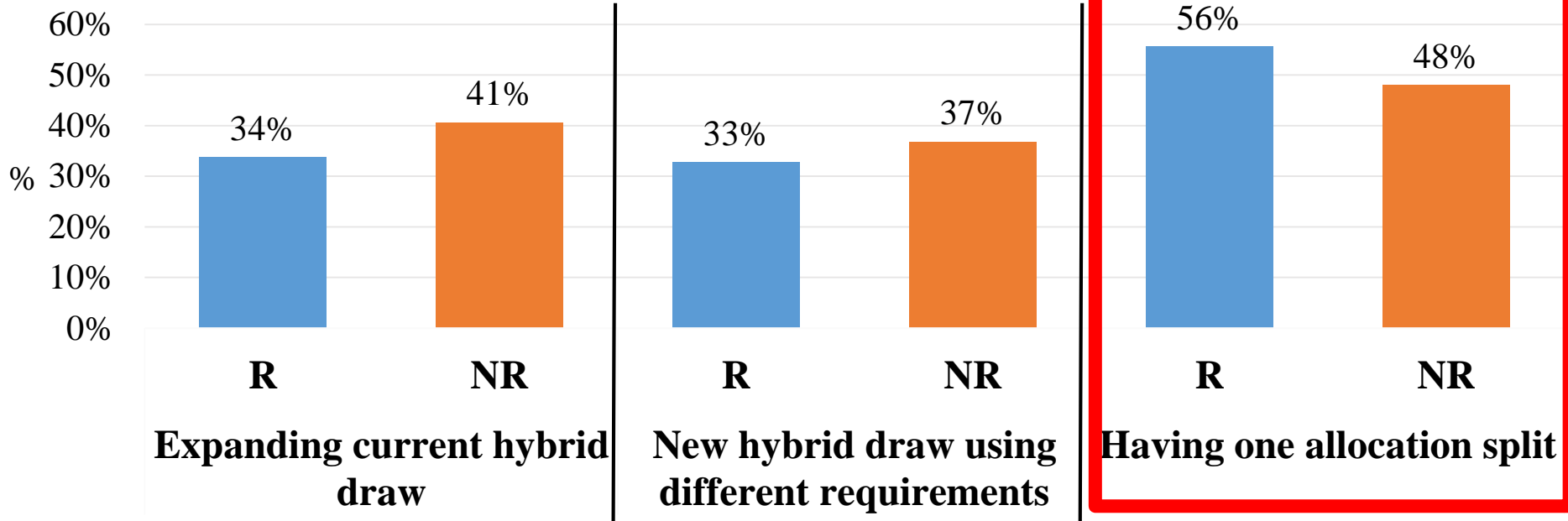
*Which of the following alternatives would be the fairest way to determine how big game licenses should be allocated between Colorado resident and nonresident hunters?*



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# Support for Other Allocation Preferences

*Please indicate how much you would oppose or support the following alternatives if license allocation rules and policies were modified*



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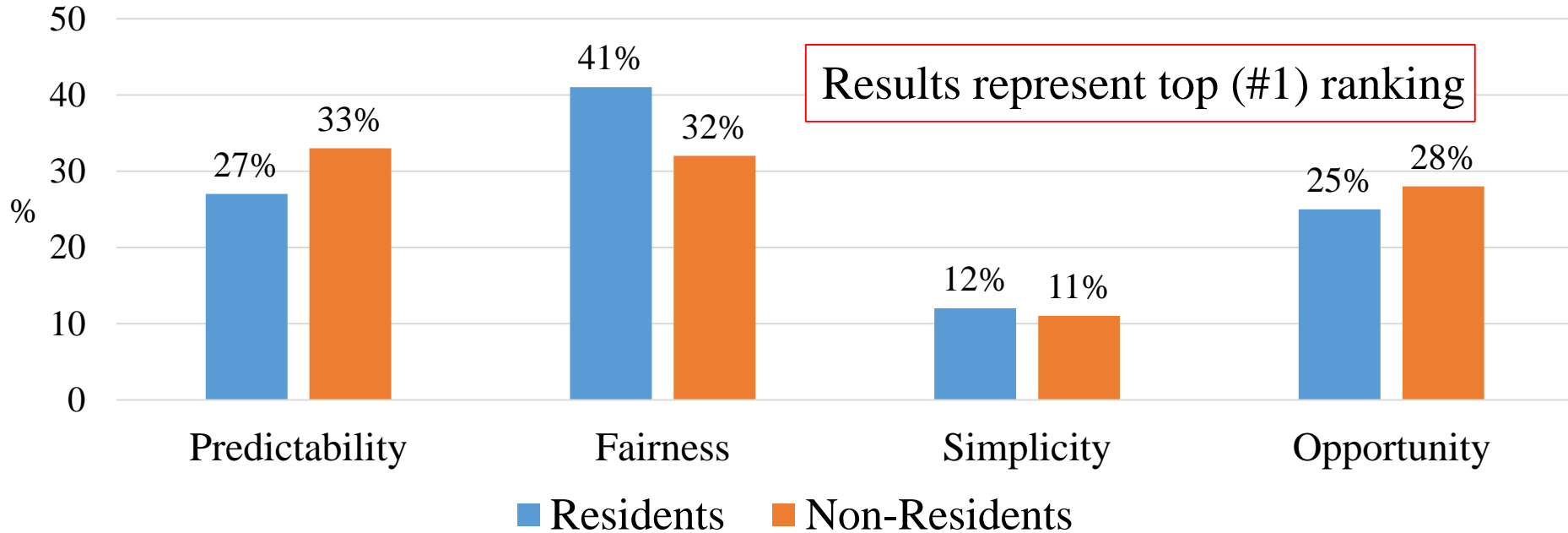
# Preference Point System



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# Preference Point System Attributes

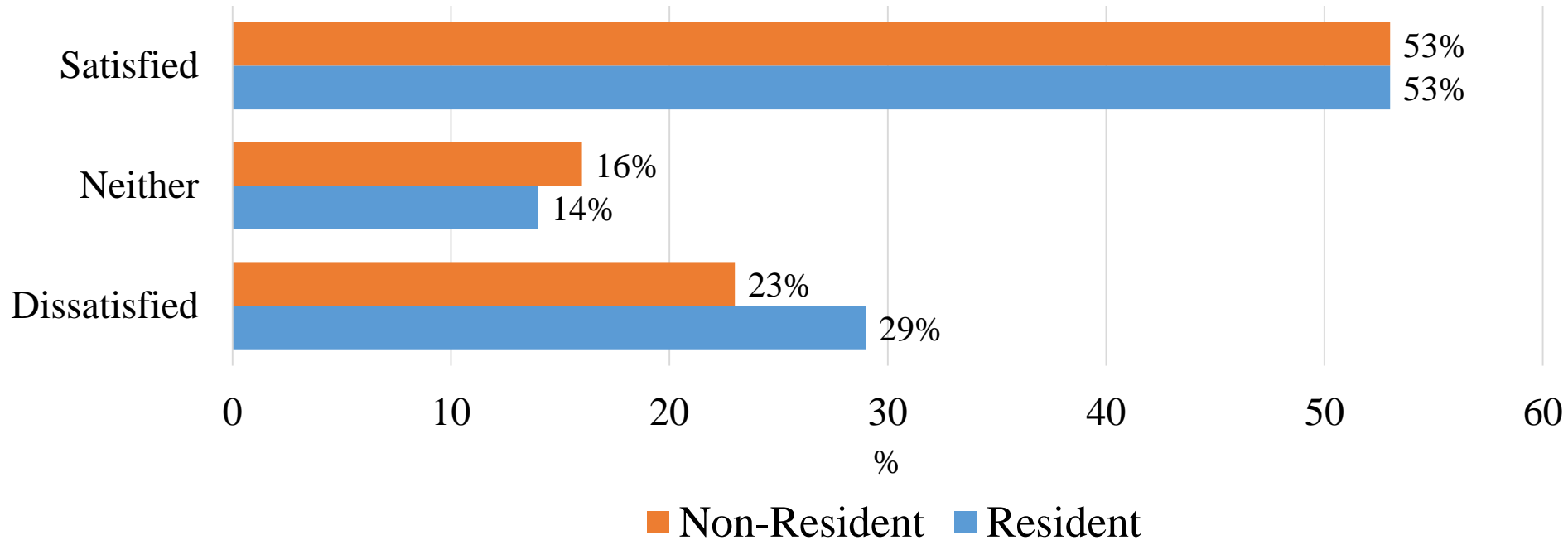
*Which of the following are most important to you when considering gaining or using preference points?*



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# Satisfaction with Preference Point System

*Overall, how satisfied are you with the way preference points are used to award deer, elk, bear, and pronghorn licenses to hunters through CPWs limited license drawings?*



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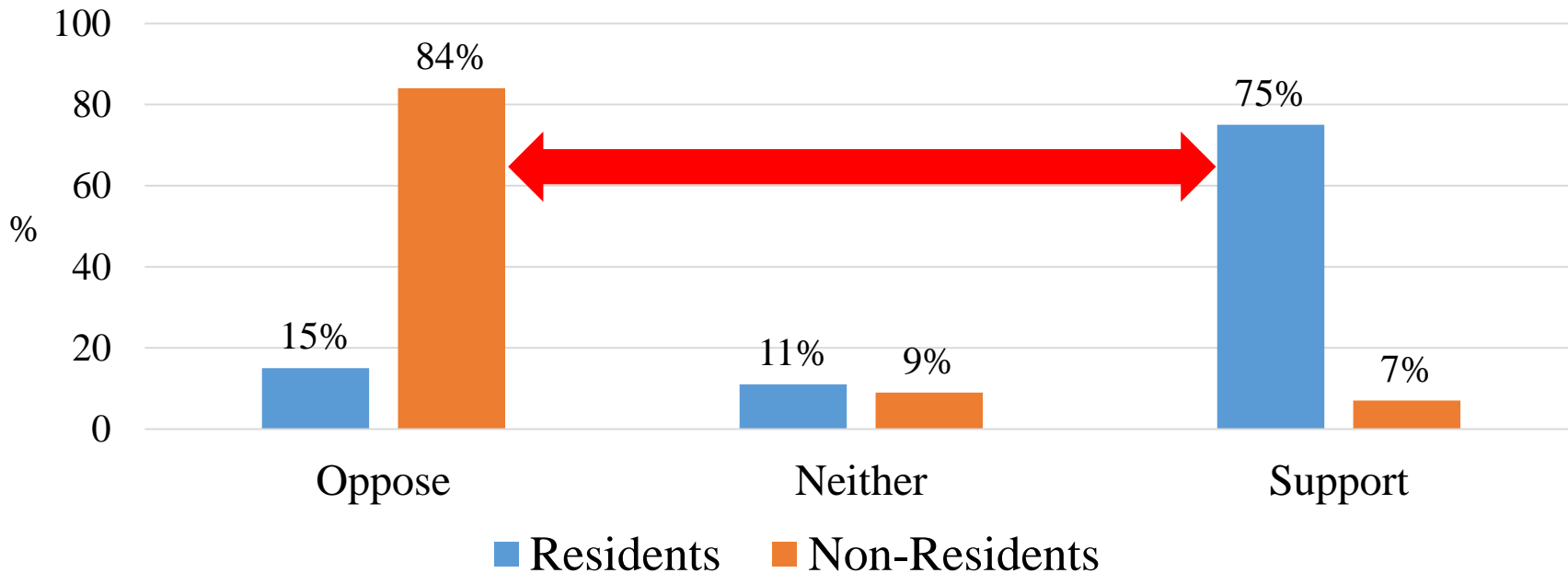
# Over-the-Counter (OTC) Licenses



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# Potential OTC Alternatives: Resident Eligibility Only

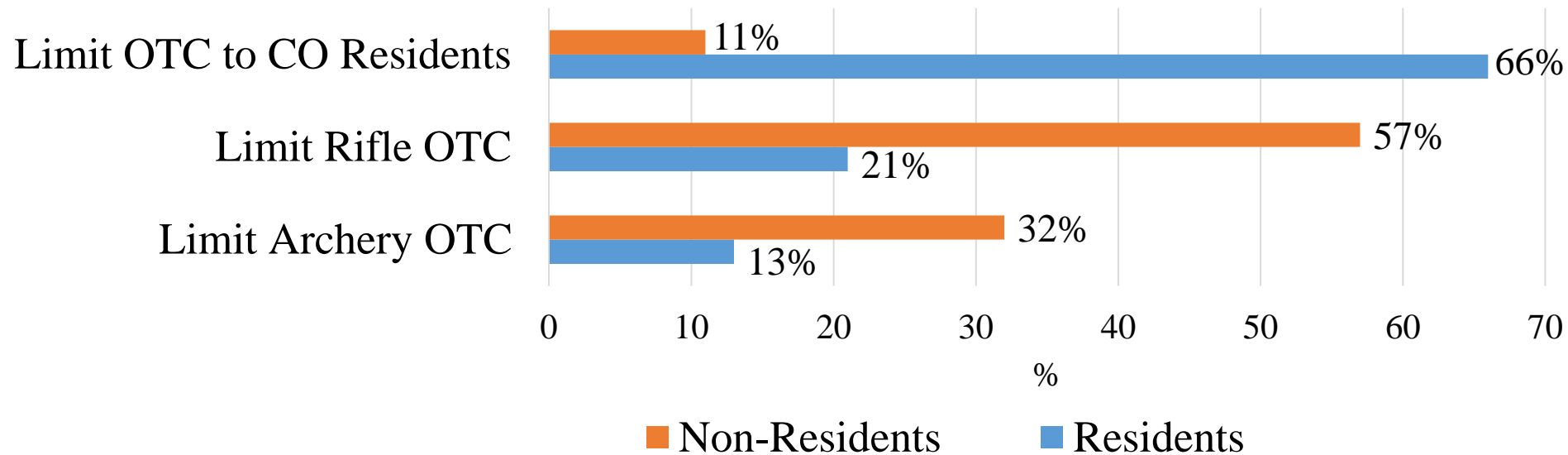
*If CPW were to consider allowing **only Colorado residents** be eligible to obtain over-the-counter licenses, how much would you oppose or support each?*



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# Prioritizing OTC Alternatives

*If CPW were only able to consider one of three options listed above, which would you prefer the agency address first?*



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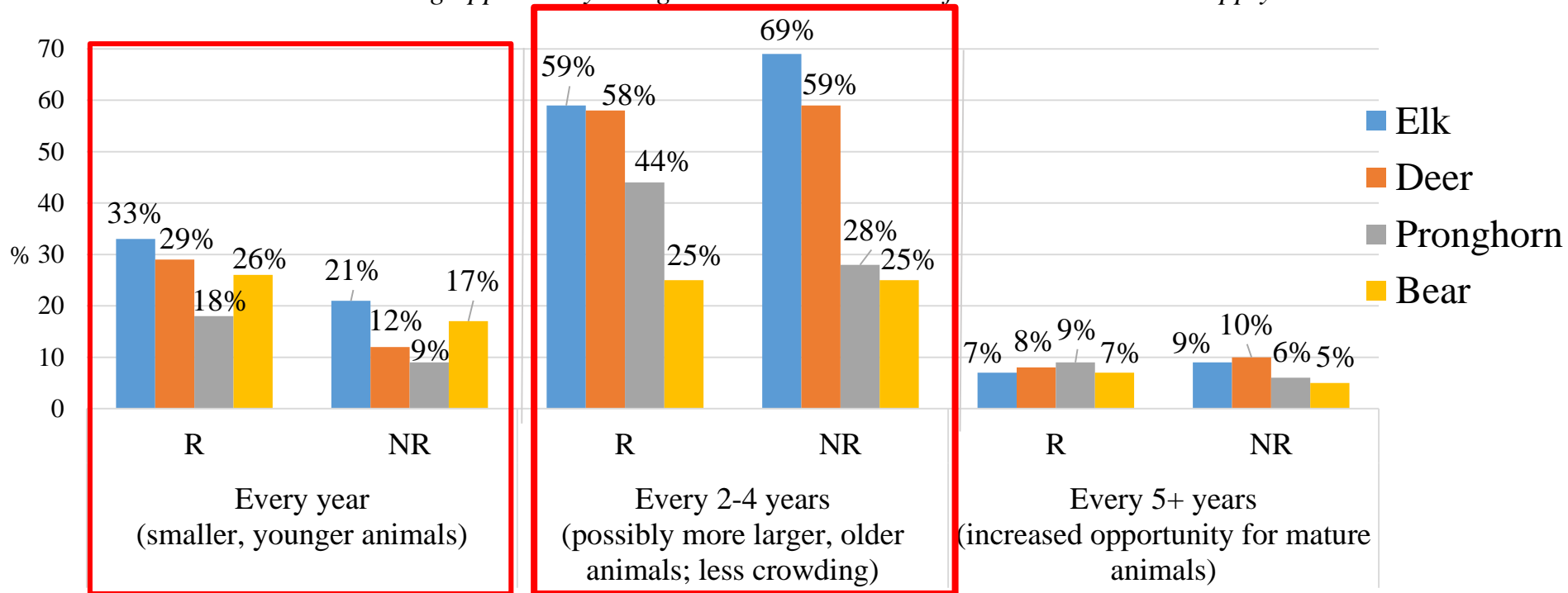
# Big Game Season Structure



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# Season Structure Preference (cont'd)

Please indicate your preference below for each species that you hunt, specifically when demand for hunting opportunity is higher than the number of licenses CPW can supply.



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# Summary

- Nuance to license allocation
  - Splits are likely contentious but some support for having 1 split
  - Similar perceptions of fairness and support for other approaches
- Predictability and fairness in the preference point system are important
  - Most are satisfied with the system
- Very different opinions about resident only eligibility for OTC licenses
  - Nonresidents would prefer CPW focus on limiting OTC rifle licenses
- More support for hunting every 2-4 years for more and potentially larger animals with less crowding



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## Public Focus Groups

Focus group participants were asked to discuss their experiences with license distribution, challenges with current systems, and potential changes.

- Two focus groups were held in each region—one on allocation and one on preference points—plus two virtual focus groups for nonresidents.
- Small groups with 5-10 individuals.
- Participants volunteered to participate through a comment form and were selected by staff to reflect diverse interests and backgrounds.



## Considerations and Challenges

- Crowding
  - Hunters and other user groups.
  - Pressure moving animals and impacting herd health.
- Importance of Opportunity
  - Increased opportunity to draw high-point units.
  - Ways for new hunters to draw desirable tags.
  - Ability to hunt often, every 1-3 years.



## Top Ideas from Focus Groups - Limiting OTC Licenses

- Capping or eliminating OTC licenses for only nonresidents or residents and nonresidents
  - Potential Benefits: Decreased crowding. Increased resident opportunity. Decreased point creep. Improved data on hunting pressure.
  - Potential Drawbacks: Decreased opportunity for hunters who don't draw a limited license.



## Top Ideas from Focus Groups - Preference Points

- Require preference points to be used for more licenses, e.g. secondary draw, reissued licenses, landowner vouchers, 2<sup>nd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> primary draw choices
  - Potential benefits: Decreased point creep.
  - Potential drawbacks: Influence on point creep might be limited.
- Expand CPW's hybrid draw or use a different split draw model
  - Potential benefits: Improved opportunity for low-point holders and new hunters.
  - Potential drawbacks: Fewer tags drawn by high-point holders.



## Top Ideas from Focus Groups - Preference Points

- Point banking
  - Potential benefits: Decreased point creep for high point hunt codes.
  - Potential drawbacks: More point creep for low to medium point hunt codes.
- Averaging group points
  - Potential benefits: Decreased point creep (high point holders incentivized to use points).
  - Potential drawbacks: Market for buying points. Increase in applications.





## Top Ideas from Focus Groups - Allocation

### Residents Top Ideas:

- Changing the allocation split(s):  
more resident allocation, less nonresident.
  - Some resident pushback
- Updating years in three year average to determine allocation.

### Nonresident Top Ideas:

- Status quo: Maintain allocation splits and ability to buy OTC licenses.



## Key Takeaways from Focus Groups

- Most focus groups identified top ideas that were supported by a majority of participants but complete consensus was rarely reached.
  - Each idea identified had unintended consequences.
- There is no single change that will address all concerns.
- Participants often proposed a suite of changes to be done in tandem.



## Next Steps

- Additional public engagement
  - Public meetings
  - Stakeholder workshops
- Comprehensive reports
  - Fall 2021 comment forms and spring 2022 focus groups (mid-June)
  - Big Game Attitude Survey (late July)
- Potential PWC license distribution workshop in early August?
- September PWC meeting: draft regulatory alternatives
- November PWC meeting: potentially adopt final regulatory changes