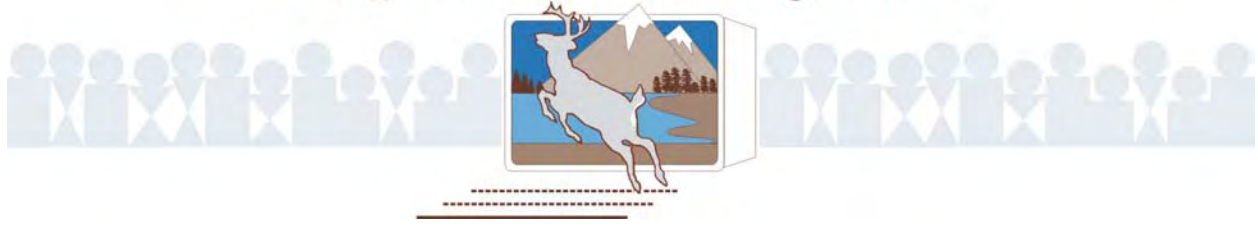


# Responsive Management



## WASHINGTON BOATER NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### DATA COMPENDIUM

**An independent assessment of Washington State boaters' needs submitted  
to the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office**

**by Responsive Management**

**2007**

# **WASHINGTON BOATER NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

## **DATA COMPENDIUM**

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## **Acknowledgements**

Responsive Management would like to thank the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office for providing information requested by the researchers for this project.

Additionally, Responsive Management would like to thank the members of the steering committee:

Recreational Boating Association of Washington - David Kutz  
Boating Issues Study Group - Steve Greaves  
Northwest Marine Trade Association - Michael Campbell  
Washington State Parks - Rita Cooper  
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife - Steve Sherlock  
Washington Department of Natural Resources - Blain Reeves  
Washington Sheriffs - Sheriff Bill Cumming (San Juan Co.)  
Washington Public Ports - Charla Skaggs

Responsive Management would also like to thank the boating professionals who participated in the focus groups and telephone survey.

Finally, Responsive Management would like to thank the boaters of Washington who took the survey.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION

This study was conducted for the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) to determine the needs of Washington boaters and to help determine priorities for allocating resources. The Washington State Legislature (60<sup>th</sup> Legislature, 2007 Session) authorized the needs assessment in Substitute House Bill 1651. The RCO commissioned Responsive Management to conduct the needs assessment. The study entailed focus groups of boating services providers, a telephone survey of boating services providers, a telephone survey of the general public in Washington, and a telephone survey of registered boaters in Washington.

The analysis included some crosstabulations of data by region in which the boater most often boated. The five regions of the state are as follows:

- Peninsula and Coast Region (Clallam, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Kitsap, Mason, Pacific, and Wahkiakum Counties) (abbreviated Pen./Coast)
- Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region (Island, King, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom Counties) (abbreviated Is./Seattle/W.N.Cascades)
- East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region (Chelan, Ferry, Kittitas, Okanogan, Pend Oreille, Spokane, and Stevens Counties) (abbreviated E.N.Cascades/N.E.)
- Southwest Region (Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Lewis, Pierce, Skamania, and Thurston Counties) (abbreviated S.W.)
- South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region (Adams, Asotin, Benton, Columbia, Douglas, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Lincoln, Walla Walla, Whitman, and Yakima Counties) (abbreviated S.C./Columbia/Pal.)

## BOATING SERVICES PROVIDERS SURVEY RESULTS

### RATINGS OF STATE BOATING PROGRAMS, SERVICES, AND FACILITIES

#### Ratings of Programs and Services Overall

- Boating service providers gave fairly positive ratings of the effectiveness of boating programs and services in their service area at meeting the needs of recreational boaters: 93% rated them effective. However, by more than 2:1, they rated them *somewhat* effective over *very* effective.
- Most commonly, those who feel that boating programs and services are not at all effective attribute this to either insufficient knowledge and awareness of boating

programs and services or inadequate structures and facilities for boating programs and services.

**Boating Programs, Services, and Facilities: Ratings of Importance, Performance, Amount of Resources Directed Toward Them, Quality, and Availability**

- The survey asked boating service providers to rate the importance of 15 boating programs and services in the provider's area of service. Note that all were fairly highly rated—the lowest having a mean of 6.40, well above the midpoint of 5. Highly rated were boating safety (mean rating of 9.40), public access (8.98), provision of recreational boating opportunities (8.81), and education (8.74). The lowest rated were development of new marinas (6.40), development of new boat launch ramps (7.38), and administration (7.42).
  
- The survey asked boating service providers to rate the performance of the same 15 programs and services. All were positively rated, with means ranging from 6.14 to 7.36, with two exceptions: the development of new marinas (mean rating of 3.63) and the development of new boat launch ramps (4.20) had very low ratings. Note that navigation aids topped the ranking.
  
- The survey then asked boating service providers to indicate whether more or less time and money should be spent on the same 15 programs and services. Demand for programs and services is high, as 9 of the 15 programs/services had a majority of providers saying that more time and money should be spent on it. Leading the list are boater safety (74% say more time and money should be spent on it), education (71%), public access (70%), and development of new boat launch ramps (70%). Note that 4 of the 15 programs/services had relatively low demand: administration (23% want more time and money spent on this), registration and titling (29%), management of existing marinas (32%), and navigation aids (36%).

- Boating service providers rated the quality of 16 boating facilities and services in their area of service in Washington.
  - There were 6 facilities and services that were notably better rated than the other facilities and services: marinas (55% rated them excellent or good), boating safety courses (54%), law enforcement on the water (52%), information and publications on boat launch ramps and marinas (52%), docks (51%), and restrooms at marinas (47%).
  - On the other hand, those facilities and services with high percentages rating them fair or poor include parking at boat launch ramps (69% rated it fair or poor), restrooms at boat launch ramps (63%), boat launch ramps themselves (55%), courtesy tie-ups (54%), pumpout stations (51%), and fish cleaning stations (51%)—all with a majority giving a rating of fair or poor.
  
- The survey asked boating service providers to indicate whether they want more or fewer of the same 16 facilities or services that they previously rated for quality.
  - Note that 11 of the 16 facilities or services had a majority of boating providers who want more of them. At the top of the list are parking at boat launch ramps (72% want more of this), boat launch ramps themselves (69%), boating safety courses (68%), and law enforcement on the water (66%). At the bottom of the list is restrooms at marinas (36%).
  
- After the series of question discussed immediately above, the survey asked boating service providers if there are any other facilities or services in their service area that they would like to see built. A majority (59%) indicated that there were other facilities or services in their service area that they would like to see built.
  - The most commonly mentioned things that they said they wanted to see built were boat launch ramps, marinas, mooring buoys and docks, public access, restrooms at marinas, sanitary pumpouts, and restrooms at boat launch ramps.
  
- The survey asked boating service providers whether there were any facilities or services in their area that they would like to see improved. A majority (66%) answered yes. In follow-up, they most commonly mentioned boat launch ramps (by far the top answer), mooring buoys and docks, and parking at boat launch ramps and marinas.

### **Issues Associated with Boating Programs, Services, and Facilities**

- Pollution and water quality were most commonly named in response to the question about what are the most important environmental issues related to recreational boating. Also with many responses was the habitat impact of recreational boating.

### **Boating Access Locations and Crowding**

- The majority of boating service providers (71%) are satisfied with the locations of boat launch ramp sites in their service area, but a substantial percentage (19%) are dissatisfied.
- Compared to the previous question, satisfaction is not as high for the locations of mooring buoys in the respondent's service area: 48% are satisfied, while 18% are dissatisfied (the remainder answering, "Don't know," or giving a neutral answer).
- Boating service providers were asked how much of a problem is crowding on the water in their service area, and the majority (63%) say it is a problem, but with most of those saying *minor* problem.
- Boating service providers were asked how much of a problem is crowding at boat launch ramps in their service area, and the overwhelming majority (85%) say it is a problem, about evenly divided between saying *major* problem and *minor* problem.

### **Organizational Structure of Boating Programs and Services**

- Satisfaction among boating service providers is high with the current structure of boating programs and services management in Washington: 75% are satisfied, while 16% are dissatisfied. However, most satisfaction is *moderate*.
- The majority of boating service providers (63%) agree that there should be a single state agency or organization that is responsible for boating programs and services in Washington.

## **INFORMATION ABOUT BOATING IN WASHINGTON**

- Boating service providers were asked to name the types of information on boating that they provide for recreational boaters. Seven types of information were commonly mentioned: boating rules and regulations, information on access at launch ramps and marinas, information on Washington boating programs, information on boating safety courses, maps and charts, fishing information, and wildlife information.
  
- In a related question, the survey asked about the mediums used for providing information. The Internet was most commonly named, followed by information made available through license agents and at sporting goods stores and marinas; brochures, pamphlets, and handouts; and direct mail.

## **GENERAL POPULATION AND BOATER SURVEY RESULTS**

### **TYPE OF BOATER (REGISTERED BOAT OWNER, NON-REGISTERED BOAT OWNER, NON-OWNER)**

- Based on several questions about boat use and ownership, a breakdown of the population of boaters is as follows: 44% are registered boat owners, 14% are non-registered boat owners, and 42% are non-owners.

### **NUMBERS AND TYPES OF BOATS OWNED, REGISTERED, AND USED**

- Boaters were asked to name all the types of boat ownership of the boats that they had boated on in the past 2 years in Washington: 66% used a boat (or boats) that they owned, 45% boated on a friend's boat (or boats), 8% rented a boat (or boats), and 5% chartered a boat (or boats) with a skipper.
  
- The survey then asked boaters about the boat that they most often used. Among all boaters, 60% owned the boat they used most often in the previous 2 years, while 29% indicated being a guest on a friend's boat. The remainder rented, chartered, or cannot be categorized. Currently, 58% of boaters overall own a boat.
  - In the crosstabulation by region, boaters from the Peninsula and Coast Region and from the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region were less likely to say that



the boat they used most often was a boat they owned than were boaters from the other regions. The Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region also had a slightly lower rate of current boat ownership.

- Boat owners were asked to name the type(s) of boat(s) that they own: 75% own a motor boat, 19% own a hand-powered boat other than canoe or kayak, 14% own a kayak, 12% own a canoe, 8% own a sailboat, and 5% own a personal watercraft.
  - The crosstabulation by type of owner found that registered boat owners more often own a motor boat than do non-registered boat owners; this latter group more often own other hand-powered boats, kayaks, and canoes.
  
- Of boat owners, the majority (53%) own a single boat; nonetheless, 26% own two boats, and 21% own three or more. A breakdown of this question by types of boats is as follows:
  - Motor boats (75% of *all* boat owners own at least one motor boat): 71% of *motor* boat owners have a single motor boat, while 29% own multiple motor boats.
  - Sailboats (8% of all boat owners own at least one sailboat): 85% of sailboat owners have a single sailboat, while 15% own multiple sailboats.
  - Canoes (12% of all boat owners own at least one canoe): 85% of canoe owners have a single canoe, while 15% have multiple canoes.
  - Kayaks (14% of all boat owners own at least one kayak): 47% of kayak owners have a single kayak, 34% have two kayaks, and 20% have more than two kayaks.
    - The canoe/kayak breakdown among paddlers is shown. Just about half of paddlers—defined as those who most often use a canoe or kayak—own a canoe (47%), while about two-thirds of paddlers (67%) own a kayak. Obviously, some own both types of boats.
  - Hand-powered boats, other than canoes and kayaks (18% of all boat owners own at least one hand-powered boat other than a canoe or kayak): 80% of these owners have a single (other) hand-powered boat, while 20% have multiple boats of this type.
  - Personal watercraft (5% of all boat owners own at least one personal watercraft): 48% of personal watercraft owners have a single personal watercraft, 46% have two of them, and 6% have more than two personal watercraft.

- The survey asked boat owners to indicate which of the boats that they own they most often use: motor boat was, by far, the top answer among boaters overall (68%) (the next nearest was kayak with 8%).
  - There were notable regional differences on the type of boat used most often, with the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region having the highest rate of boaters saying their most-used boat was a motor boat. Kayak use was relatively high in the Peninsula and Coast Region, canoe use was relatively high in the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region, and sailboat use was relatively high in the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region.
  
- The majority of boat owners (64%) most often use a boat from 16 to 25 feet in length. Only 10% most often use a boat of 26 feet or more.
  - Not surprisingly, non-registered boat owners generally had smaller boats compared to registered boat owners.
  - The Peninsula and Coast Region and the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region had more boaters whose most-used boat was 26 feet or more in length, when compared to the other regions.
  
- Nearly three-fourths (73%) of boat owners indicate that the boat they most often use is registered in Washington.

### **COUNTIES IN WHICH BOATS ARE REGISTERED, COUNTIES IN WHICH RESPONDENTS BOATED, AND PREFERRED BOATING LOCATIONS**

- The survey asked boaters to name the county in which they boated the most days in the previous 2 years, and the leading county by far (more than double the next nearest county) was King County (18.4% boated the most days there), followed by Pierce (8.2%), Snohomish (6.6%), Clark (4.4%), and San Juan (4.3%). An analysis of where boaters boat the most days relative to the county in which they live found that 62% of boaters boat the most days in their county of residence. In the regional breakdown, the Islands, Seattle/King, and West

Northern Cascades Region is the most popular region (41%), followed by the Southwest Region (24%).

- In the crosstabulation of county in which the respondent boated the most days by the type of boat most often used:
  - King, Pierce, and Snohomish are the most boated counties among motor boaters.
  - King, San Juan, and Thurston are the most boated counties among sailboaters.
  - King, Snohomish, Spokane, and Kitsap are the most boated counties among paddlers.
  - King, Snohomish, Clark, and Pierce are the most boated counties among other hand-powered boat users.
  
- Among the counties of registration, King, Pierce, Spokane, and Snohomish lead the list.
  
- The survey asked boaters to name their most preferred county of boating: King County led the list (14.8%), followed by Pierce (7.0%), San Juan (5.7%), and Snohomish (5.6%). An analysis of responses regarding preferred county and responses regarding where boaters most often boat found that 82% of boaters boat the most in the county where they prefer to boat. In the regional breakdown, the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region is the most popular region (36%), followed by the Southwest Region (19%).
  - In the crosstabulation of county that the respondent most prefers by the type of boat most often used:
    - King, Pierce, and San Juan are the most preferred counties among motor boaters.
    - San Juan, King, and Thurston are the most preferred counties among sailboaters.
    - King, Snohomish, and Kitsap are the most preferred counties among paddlers.
    - King, Snohomish, Pierce and Thurston are the most preferred counties among other hand-powered boat users.
  
- The survey asked boaters to name the body of water in which they boated the most days in the previous 2 years: the Puget Sound led the list (25.0%), which was about twice the percentage naming any other body of water. Following the Puget Sound on the list was the

Columbia River (12.7%), Lake Washington (8.7%), Lake Roosevelt (3.5%), and the Snake River (2.2%).

- There are some marked differences in the body of water in which the respondent boated the most days when crosstabulated by the type of boater.
  - Among motor boaters, the Puget Sound, the Columbia River, Lake Roosevelt, Lake Washington, and the Snake River were the top bodies of water.
  - Among sailboaters, the Puget Sound, Lake Washington, the Columbia River, and the Strait of Juan de Fuca were the top bodies of water.
  - Among paddlers, the Puget Sound, the Columbia River, Lake Washington, and the Spokane River were the top bodies of water.
  - Among those who most often used a hand-powered boat other than canoe or kayak, the Puget Sound, Lake Washington, and the Columbia River were the top bodies of water.
  
- The survey asked boaters to name their preferred body of water on which to boat: the Puget Sound led the list (25.5%), followed by the Columbia River (11.2%), Lake Washington (6.5%), Lake Roosevelt (3.5%), the Snake River (2.3%), and the Strait of Juan de Fuca (2.2%).
  - There are some marked differences in the body of water in which the respondent prefers to boat when crosstabulated by the type of boater.
    - Among motor boaters, the Puget Sound, the Columbia River, and Lake Roosevelt were the most preferred bodies of water.
    - Among sailboaters, the Puget Sound (the top choice by far), Lake Washington, and the Columbia River were the most preferred bodies of water.
    - Among paddlers, the Puget Sound, the Columbia River, and the Spokane River were the most preferred bodies of water.
    - Among those who most often used a hand-powered boat other than canoe or kayak, the Puget Sound, Clear Lake, and the Columbia River were the most preferred bodies of water.

## AVIDITY MEASURES

- Among all boaters, nearly half (46%) boated 10 days or less; nonetheless, nearly a quarter (23%) boated for more than 30 days per year.
  - In the mean days boated among various types of boaters, sailboaters were the most avid, closely followed by motor boaters. Those whose primary boating was in a large motor boat were more avid than those whose boating was in a smaller motor boat. Paddlers were the least avid, measured in days boated.

## ACTIVITIES WHILE BOATING AND MOTIVATIONS FOR BOATING

- Fishing was the most common activity in which boaters participated while boating in Washington in the previous 2 years: 53% of boaters fished. Other common activities included sight-seeing/fish and wildlife viewing (34%), water skiing (19%), relaxing or entertaining friends (17%), being with family and friends (17%), and water tubing (15%).
  - There were some regional differences in the results to this question:
    - Fishing had the *lowest* rate in the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region.
    - Sight-seeing was the highest in the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region and the Peninsula and Coast Region.
    - Water tubing and water skiing were the highest in the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region and the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region.
  - There were some differences in the results to this question when crosstabulated by the type of boat most often used.
    - Fishing participation was highest among motor boaters and those using a hand-powered boat; it was *lowest* among sailboaters.
    - Sight-seeing was highest among sailboaters and paddlers.
    - Relaxing was highest among sailboaters.
- When asked to say what motivates them to boat, boaters most commonly answer for relaxation (49% gave this as a reason for boating), followed by to fish (29%), to be with friends and family (26%), for general recreation (14%), and to be close to nature (11%).
  - The most notable regional difference in the results to this question regarding the motivations for boating is that the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades

Region has a low percentage of boaters who do so to fish; this region has a relatively high percentage who boat for relaxation.

- There are large differences by boater type.
  - For relaxation as a motivation is higher among sailboaters and paddlers than among the other types of boaters.
  - To fish as a motivation is higher among operators of hand-powered boats and motor boats than among the other types of boaters.
  - To be with friends and family as a motivation is higher among motor boaters and sailboaters than among the other types of boaters.
  - To be close to nature as a motivation to boat is higher among paddlers than among the other types of boaters.

## **CONSTRAINTS TO BOATING**

- A majority of boaters overall (62%) indicated that there are things that take away from boating satisfaction or cause them not to boat as much as they would like.
  
- In follow-up to the question about things that take away from boating satisfaction or cause boaters not to boat as much as they would like, boaters most often cited cost of boating, work obligations, weather, lack of or poor access, crowding on the water, and family obligations.
  - The crosstabulation by boater type on the question about things that take away from boating satisfaction or cause boaters not to boat as much as they would like found some differences in the results.
    - Cost was cited more often by motor boaters than by any other type of boater.
    - Poor access was cited more often by paddlers and motor boaters than by the other types of boaters, but the differences were small.
    - Crowding on the water was rarely cited by sailboaters.
    - Crowding at boat launch ramps was higher among motor boaters than among any other type of boater.
  
- The survey specifically asked about crowding on the water. A majority of boaters (55%) say crowding is not a problem; however, 43% say that it is a problem, albeit, for most of them, just a minor problem. The survey also asked about crowding at the boat launch ramp where

the boater boats most often, and crowding is more of a problem: only 25% say it is not a problem, while 64% say crowding at boat launch ramps is a problem, although most of those say *minor* problem rather than *major* problem.

- Regionally, the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region has the highest percentage of boaters saying that crowding on the water is a problem. The Peninsula and Coast Region has the lowest percentage of boaters saying that crowding on the water is a problem. Regarding crowding at boat launch ramps, the Southwest Region and the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region have the highest percentages of boaters saying that crowding at boat launch ramps is a problem.
- Sailboaters are less likely to say that crowding on the water is a problem, compared to the other types of boaters. Regarding crowding at boat launch ramps, motor boaters are the most likely to say it is a *major* problem; paddlers are the most likely to say it is *not* a problem; and sailboaters are the most likely to say that they do not know.

## **RATINGS OF STATE BOATING PROGRAMS, SERVICES, AND FACILITIES**

### **Ratings of Programs, Facilities, and Services Overall**

- The survey asked boaters to say how effective boating programs and services are in Washington at meeting the needs of recreational boaters. The positive news is that the majority of boaters (76%) said the programs and services are effective; however, *somewhat* effective led *very* effective by about 2 to 1. Only 6% said that programs and services are not at all effective.
- Those who said that boating programs and services in Washington are not at all effective were asked to give their reasoning. They most commonly said insufficient law enforcement presence, lack of awareness of the programs among boaters, lack of education requirements for boaters, poor boating access, and poor allocation of boating funding.
- A substantial percentage of boaters (42%) indicated that there are boating facilities or services in the county in which they boat most often that they would like to see improved.

Additionally, 32% of boaters said that there are facilities or services that they would like to see built.

- In the crosstabulation by type of boater, motor boaters were the most likely to say that there are facilities and services in the county in which they most often boat that they would like to see improved; paddlers were the least likely. Motor boaters were the most likely to say that there are facilities and services in the county in which they most often boat that they would like to see built; paddlers were the least likely.
- In follow-up, those who indicated that there are aspects of facilities or services that need to be improved were asked to name the aspects. Most commonly, they named boat launch ramps, distantly followed by restrooms at boat launch ramps, more public access, mooring buoys or docks, and parking areas at boat launch ramps.
  - There were some differences among the regions.
    - Boat launch ramps was named more often by Southwest Region boaters and Peninsula and Coast Region boaters than boaters from the other regions.
    - Marinas was mentioned more often by Peninsula and Coast Region boaters than by any other region's boaters.
  - There were some differences among the boater types.
    - Boat launch ramps was named more often by motor boaters than by any other type of boater.
    - Mooring buoys and docks was cited more often by sailboaters and motor boaters than by the other two types of boaters.
    - Marinas was cited more often by sailboaters than by any other type of boater.
    - Sanitary pump-outs and courtesy tie-ups were cited by sailboaters more often than by any other type of boater.
- In follow-up, those who indicated that there are facilities or services that need to be built were asked to name the facilities or services. Most commonly, they named boat launch



ramps, distantly followed by mooring buoys or docks, more public access, restrooms at boat launch ramps, marinas, parking areas at boat launch ramps, and camping areas.

- There were regional differences, with the most notable discussed below.
  - Boat launch ramps was named more often by Southwest Region and South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region boaters.
  - Marinas was mentioned more often by Peninsula and Coast Region boaters than by any other boaters.
- There were some differences among the boater types.
  - Boat launch ramps was named more often by motor boaters than by any other type of boater; sailboaters mentioned boat launch ramps the least.
  - Mooring buoys and docks was cited more often by operators of hand-powered boats than by the other types of boaters.
  - More public access was cited by paddlers more often than by any other type of boater.
  - Restrooms at launch ramps was cited the *least* often by sailboaters relative to the other types of boaters.
  - Marinas was cited more often by sailboaters than by any other type of boater.
  - Camping areas was cited by paddlers much more often than by any other type of boater.
  - Sanitary pump-outs and courtesy tie-ups were cited by sailboaters more often than by any other type of boater.

### **Programs, Services, and Facilities: Ratings of Importance, Performance, Amount of Resources Directed Toward Them, and Quality**

- The survey asked respondents to rate the importance of 12 boating programs and services on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being “not at all important” and 10 being “extremely important” (note that “don’t know” answers were removed from the calculation of means). The results produced a ranking of programs and services, with access issues topping the ranking. Public access was the top answer (mean rating among all boaters of 8.64), closely followed by management of *existing* boat launch ramps in second place (mean of 8.33) and management of *existing* marinas in fourth place (mean of 7.86). Education was also high on the ranking (mean of 8.04), in third place, as was navigation aids (mean of 7.83), in fifth place. Note that

development of *new* launch facilities is low on the ranking (development of new boat launch ramps was fourth from the last, and development of new marinas was next to last).

- There were some notable regional differences in the rating of importance of programs and services.
    - Navigation aids were slightly *less* important to boaters of the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region than to boaters from other regions.
    - The development of new boat launch ramps had the highest importance ratings in the Southwest Region and the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region.
  - In the crosstabulations by type of boat used most often, there are marked differences in ratings of importance of various boating programs and services.
    - Motor boaters gave notably higher ratings (relative to the other types of boaters) for development of new boat launch ramps and for registration and titling. Also, they gave high ratings for the importance of navigation aids (along with sailboaters).
    - Sailboaters collectively gave a much higher mean rating for navigation aids relative to the other types of boaters.
    - Paddlers and those using mostly other hand-powered boats gave *low* importance ratings to navigation aids and development of new marinas. However, law enforcement is important to these two types of boaters, particularly among those using other hand-powered boats.
- The survey asked respondents to rate the performance of the same boating programs and services that they rated for importance above (on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 was “a poor performance” and 10 was “an excellent performance”). Access issues were *not* at the top, as they were in importance ratings. This means that the issues thought to be the most important are not thought to be performed at a commensurate level. The top three programs and services were registration and titling (mean of 7.13), navigation aids (6.79), and provision of recreational boating opportunities (6.63). The development of new boat launch ramps and new marinas were the two items at the bottom of the ranking, with a markedly lower mean rating than the other programs and services.
- The most notable difference among the regions in the rating of performance of programs and services concerns navigation aids: boaters from the East Northern Cascades and

Northeast gave a lower mean rating for navigation aids relative to boaters of all the other regions.

- Performance ratings differed by boat type, with the notable differences discussed below.
  - Motor boaters and sailboaters gave higher ratings of the performance of registration and titling than did the other types of boaters.
  - Motor boaters and sailboaters gave higher ratings of the performance of navigation aids than did the other types of boaters.
  
- Again, using the same list of 12 programs and services, respondents were asked if more, the same, or less time and money should be directed towards each program or service. Public access tops the list of items for which respondents said more time and money should be directed (60% of respondents said that more time and money should be directed toward public access), followed closely by education (56%) and development of *new* boat launches (54%)—the only three programs or services with a majority wanting *more* time and money spent on them. Interestingly, both boat launch questions (development of new boat launches and management of existing boat launches) garnered more boaters who want more time and money directed toward them than did the similar questions about marinas. On the bottom of the list were registration and titling, as well as administration.
  
- There were many marked differences among the three types of boaters regarding the amount of time and money that should be directed toward various boating programs and services.
  - Registered boat owners were more likely than were the other types of boaters to want more time and money spent on development of new boat launch ramps, management of existing boat launch ramps, and development of new marinas.
  - On the other hand, non-owners were more likely than were the other types of boaters to want more time and money spent on law enforcement.
  
- There are some regional differences in perceptions of whether more, the same amount, or less time and money should be directed toward various programs and services.
  - Relative to boaters from other regions, those from the Southwest Region and the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region have a greater likelihood to

- want more time and money directed toward development of new launch ramps and management of existing boat launch ramps.
- Boaters from the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region are less likely, relative to boaters from other regions, to say that more time and money should be directed toward development of new boat launch ramps, navigation aids, and development of new marinas.
  - Differences emerged in the perception of the amount of time and money that should be directed to programs and services according to boat type.
    - Motor boaters want public access, launch ramps (both new and maintenance of existing), and education. Motor boaters have the greatest percentage, relative to other boater types, wanting more time and money directed toward development of new boat launch ramps, management of existing boat launch ramps, (with sailboaters) development of new marinas, and (again with sailboaters) management of existing marinas.
    - Sailboaters want to see more education, public access, and development of new marinas and launch ramps—the top facilities and services of which they want more.
    - Paddlers’ desires include more education and public access especially, and also more boating opportunities.
    - Among those operating other hand-powered boats, education and public access lead the list of facilities and services of which they want more. Law enforcement for this group is near the top of the ranking, as well.
- The survey asked respondents to rate the quality of 16 facilities and services in the county in which they boat most often. In looking at excellent and good ratings—the two highest ratings—three facilities/services stand out with high ratings: law enforcement on the water (54% gave an excellent or good rating), docks (50%), and boat launch ramps (49%). On the other end of the scale, two facilities/services have high percentages rating them fair or

poor—the two lowest ratings: restrooms at boat launch ramps (52% gave a fair or poor rating) and parking at boat launch ramps (49%).

- There were regional differences in the results. Only where notable differences occur are the results discussed below.
  - Marinas: The highest excellent or good ratings were in the Peninsula and Coast Region and the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region.
  - Boating safety courses: The highest excellent or good ratings were in the Peninsula and Coast Region and the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region.
  - Boat launch ramps: The highest excellent or good ratings were in the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region and the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region.
  - Camp sites or refuge sites: The highest excellent or good ratings were in the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region and the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region.
  - Parking at boat launch ramps: The highest excellent or good ratings were in the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region and the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region.
  - Parking at marinas: The highest excellent or good ratings were in the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region.
  - Courtesy tie-ups: The highest excellent or good ratings were in the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region and the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region.
  - Restrooms at boat launch ramps: The highest excellent or good ratings were in the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region and the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region.
- There were differences in the results according to the type of primary boat used by respondents.
  - In general, sailboaters were more generous than other types of boaters in giving excellent ratings, particularly for law enforcement, boat launch ramps, parking at boat launch ramps, boating safety courses, information and publications on boating launch

- ramps and marinas, marinas themselves, restrooms at marinas, and parking at marinas.
- Motor boaters had a high percentage, relative to other boaters, giving a rating of poor for the quality of fish cleaning stations, courtesy tie-ups, mooring buoys, boat launch ramps themselves, pumpout stations, docks, and dump stations.
- The survey asked respondents whether they would like to have more, the same amount, or less of the facilities and services in their county. These are the same 16 facilities and services that respondents previously rated for quality. Seven facilities or services had nearly half or slightly more than half of respondents saying more were needed, with the top five of them used by those who tow their boats from place to place and who do not appear to have their own permanent dock and slip. These top five are parking at boat launch ramps, boat launch ramps themselves, courtesy tie-ups, restrooms at launch ramps, and docks. Note that facilities pertaining to marinas are low on the list, including marinas themselves, restrooms at marinas, and parking at marinas. Also low are pumpout stations and dump stations.
- There were many differences among the regions on this series of questions about whether boaters would like to see more, the same, or less of the various facilities and services. Some of the notable differences are discussed below.
    - Parking at boat launch ramps varied greatly among the regions, with boaters from the Southwest Region having the highest percentage wanting more parking at boat launch ramps.
    - Regarding the boat launch ramps themselves, boaters from the Southwest Region and from the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region had a greater likelihood to want more of them than did boaters from the other regions.
    - Similar to above, boaters from the Southwest Region and from the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region had a greater likelihood to want more docks and more mooring buoys than did boaters from the other regions.
    - Boaters from the Southwest Region and from the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region also wanted more camp sites and refuge sites than did boaters from the other regions.

- The East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region had the *lowest* percentage, relative to the other regions, of boaters wanting more parking at boat launch ramps, parking at marinas, marinas themselves, and pumpout stations.
- Boaters from the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region had a *low* percentage wanting more parking at marinas (only boaters from the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region had a lower demand for more parking at marinas).
- Boaters from the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region had the *lowest* percentage of all the regions wanting more fish cleaning stations.
- The crosstabulation of amount of desired facilities and services by type of boat most often used found major differences between the different types of boaters.
  - Among motor boaters, four facilities/services have a majority wanting more of them: boat launch ramps, docks, parking at boat launch ramps, and courtesy tie-ups. Marinas and associated facilities/services are low on the ranking for motor boaters.
  - Among sailboaters, courtesy tie-ups and mooring buoys top the list of facilities/services of which they want more. Marinas take precedence over boat launch ramps among sailboaters. Education is important to this group, as well, as evidenced by nearly half wanting more boating safety courses in their county.
  - Among paddlers, more camp sites and refuge sites tops the list, followed by boating safety courses, boat launch ramps and restrooms therein, and information and publications on boat launch ramps and marinas.
  - Among those operating other hand-powered craft, a majority want to see more boat launch ramps, boating safety courses, and restrooms and parking at boat launch ramps.

### **Registration of Boats**

- Ratings of the process of registering boats in Washington are mostly positive: the overwhelming majority of those who registered a boat in Washington (83%) describe the process as excellent or good, and only 2% rate it as poor.
- Boaters who registered a boat were also asked to name any aspects about the registration process that they would like to see improved. A majority (59%) said that nothing needs

improvement. Otherwise, the most common complaints were cost (18%) and the timeliness of the registration process (4%)—having multi-year registrations, having registrations of boat and trailer at the same time, or some other aspect of the timing of registrations.

### Access and Crowding

- The survey specifically asked about crowding on the water. A majority of boaters (55%) say crowding is not a problem; however, 43% say that it is a problem, albeit, for most of them, just a minor problem. The survey also asked about crowding at the boat launch ramp where the boater boats most often, and crowding is more of a problem: only 25% say it is not a problem, while 64% say crowding at boat launch ramps is a problem, although most of those say *minor* problem rather than *major* problem.
- Boaters overall are satisfied with the locations of boat launch ramps in the county in which they boat most often: 76% of them are satisfied (29% *very* satisfied, and 47% *moderately* satisfied). Only 10% expressed dissatisfaction.
- Boaters overall are satisfied with the locations of mooring buoys in the county in which they boat most often: 45% of them are satisfied (12% *very* satisfied, and 33% *moderately* satisfied), much more than the percentage who expressed dissatisfaction (12%). Note that the relatively low rate of satisfaction—less than a majority—is because a relatively large percentage (34%) did not know how to rate their satisfaction with mooring buoys or gave a neutral answer.

### INFORMATION ABOUT BOATING IN WASHINGTON

- Boaters are most interested in access information on boat launch ramp sites and marina locations, maps and charts, boating safety, boating rules and regulations, fishing information, wildlife information, and State boating programs. In follow-up, boaters most commonly said that their preferred way to receive information on boating would be direct mail or the Internet.



## DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

- About two-thirds (66%) of boaters overall are male, while 34% are female.
  - Registered boat owners are predominantly male, but non-registered boat owners and non-owners are more evenly split regarding gender.
  - Males predominate among motor boaters and sailboaters, while a more even gender distribution occurs among the other types of boaters.
  
- Regarding the ages of boaters, the older age groups—those consisting of boaters 45 years old or older—predominate. The mean age is 50.6 years.
  - Registered boat owners are slightly older, in general, than non-registered boat owners and non-owners, the latter group being the youngest.
  - Sailboaters tend to be older than the other three types of boaters. Motor boaters tend to be older than the remaining two types of boaters.
  
- The mean number of years of residency of boaters is 35.9 years. Overall, boaters tend to have a fairly long residency in the state.
  - Registered boat owners have slightly longer residency, in general, compared to non-registered boat owners and non-owners.
  - The Peninsula/Coast Region and the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region tend to have boaters with fewer years of residency in Washington State, compared to the other regions.
  - Paddlers tend to have fewer years of residency, compared to the other types of boaters.
  
- In the results regarding counties of residency of boaters, King County leads all other counties, followed by Pierce, Snohomish, Spokane, Kitsap, and Clark.
  
- The majority of households of boaters (67%) consist of two people. The majority of households of boaters (59%) contain *no* children 17 years of age or younger, while 36% contain at least one child.
  - Non-owners, compared to registered boat owners and non-registered boat owners, have smaller households, in general. Additionally, a lower percentage of non-owners, relative

to registered boat owners and non-registered boat owners, have children living in their household.

- The number of people in the respondent's household varies only slightly by boater type, with those who most often operate a hand-powered boat other than canoe or kayak being the most likely to live alone. Sailboaters are the least likely to have children living at home.
- Regarding education levels of boaters: 75% have at least some college or trade school coursework, and 44% have a Bachelor's degree (with or without a higher degree also).
- Sailboaters and paddlers are much more likely to have degrees than are the other types of boaters.
- Regarding incomes of boaters, 47% have a pre-tax household income of \$50,000 or more.
- There are slightly higher incomes in the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region, compared to the other regions.

## **IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **CONSIDER THIS ASSESSMENT DATA AND BALANCE NEEDS**

This assessment provides a large amount of data regarding the needs of a diverse range of groups involved with recreational boating in Washington. The breadth of this needs assessment necessitates a careful review and evaluation of the data before important decisions are made. From providers of programs and services essential to boating (including the operators of sites and facilities as well as law enforcement personnel representing numerous agencies) to the boaters themselves (including the operators of motorboats, sailboats, paddlers, and personal watercraft, among others), a substantial range of interests is represented in the results of the study. It is recommended that future policies be developed by carefully balancing the needs of the various groups and by focusing on the findings within this report. With this in mind, the data suggest that the following recommendations should be considered, categorized into 11 topic areas.

## 1. LACK OF FUNDING

There is a clear, immediate need for additional funding for boating programs and services in Washington. In the survey and focus groups of boating providers, lack of resources for boater safety, access, launch ramps and facilities, law enforcement, and education were the top priorities in meeting the needs of boaters in Washington. In the survey of boaters, large majorities of boaters indicated needs for increased law enforcement and education, as well as for additions and improvements to boating facilities. These included access, launch ramps, parking at launch ramps, and improved docks, restrooms, fish cleaning stations, and other features currently in disrepair. As Washington's population and the number of boaters in the state continue to grow, the lack of resources to meet the demands for boating programs and services will only become more pronounced.

Inadequate funding for boating programs and services in Washington manifests itself in several ways, the first and most important of which is in boating safety. Washington in recent years has ranked in the top tier of states in boating-related fatalities per 100,000 registered boats. In 2006, there were 96 boating-related accidents and 21 boating-related fatalities in Washington.<sup>1</sup> Additional resources for an improved law enforcement presence as well as the dissemination of safety education (through courses, publications, etc.) will very likely reduce the number of boating-related fatalities.<sup>2</sup> In short, additional funding for boating programs in Washington would save lives.

Inadequate funding of recreational boating programs and services also manifests itself in the economy of the State. It is estimated that recreational boaters contribute nearly \$100 million each year directly to the economy of the State through vessel registration fees, watercraft excise taxes, vessel sales taxes, gas taxes, fishing licenses, grants and assistance from the federal government, and other miscellaneous fees.<sup>3</sup> However, the indirect financial contribution to the State from recreational boating can be understood as a much larger figure after taking into

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<sup>1</sup> Source: 2006 U.S. Coast Guard Boating Statistics Report.

<sup>2</sup> Source: *Recreational Boating Safety in Washington: A Report on Methods to Achieve Safer Boating Practices*, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, 2003.

<sup>3</sup> Source: M. Campbell and S. Greaves, Northwest Marine Trade Association.

account the “ripple effect” of Washington’s boating industry.<sup>4</sup> It follows that increased funding for recreational boating would only enhance this major economic contribution to the State; indeed, increasing funding support for Washington’s boating programs and services ought to be viewed as an investment in the State’s economy.

Finally, inadequate funding for boating programs and services in Washington reduces the quality of the boating experience for Washington boaters. Another study has estimated that between 350,000 and 400,000 Washington residents of all ages boat for recreation, either owning a boat directly, renting or chartering a boat, or accompanying friends and family on a boat.<sup>5</sup> It would be remiss not to reinvest the funds that are generated from boating back to these constituents, especially when numerous needs for improvements to boating programs and services currently exist among the State’s boaters.

## **2. ADDITIONAL AND ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF FUNDING**

In order to meet some of the numerous recreational boating needs identified in this assessment, additional funding will be required. It is recommended that a study be undertaken to examine potential funding alternatives, starting with a review of the analysis of tax preferences by the legislative commission that was formed to study tax preferences in Washington State.

Though the issue of alternative funding warrants significant additional examination, the assessment identified—particularly through the focus groups of boating providers—several preliminary possibilities for funding the needs of the State’s boaters. One option is for a larger share of the State’s general fund; with boaters contributing nearly \$100 million to the State annually in taxes and fees, it would seem reasonable for the State to reinvest a greater share of this money with the boating community.

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<sup>4</sup> Southwick Associates’ explanation of multiplier relationships between industries is particularly useful in this context: Once a boater makes a purchase, the retailer buys more merchandise from wholesalers, which buy more from manufacturers, which, in turn, purchase new inputs and supplies. In addition, the salaries and wages paid by these businesses stimulate more benefits: the first purchase creates numerous rounds of purchasing, generating substantial economic benefit to the state. [Source: Southwick Associates]

<sup>5</sup> Beckwith Associates, statewide recreation participation survey, results published in *An Assessment of Outdoor Recreation in Washington State*, IAC, 2002.

Several issues connected to taxes and user-based fees paid by Washington boaters prevent these from constituting more viable funding sources for recreational boating. For example, boat operators in Washington pay a tax on fuel, the proceeds from which are then placed in the State's Motor Vehicle Fund. But a cap on the amount returned from this fund to recreational boating means that boating grant money is roughly 40% less than some believe it should be. (As mentioned previously, the issue has been studied by a legislative commission on tax preferences.) In addition, a number of boating providers discussed user-based fees as a possible means of funding programs and services (particularly maintenance of access sites). However, as with the fuel tax, proceeds from user-based fees are not always funneled back into recreational boating. Alternatively, the user fees themselves may not be adequate sources of funding to begin with. (On this point, several boating providers referred to an annual \$10 launch ramp parking fee which was deemed insufficient to cover the costs of necessary access maintenance.)

In the focus groups, a number of boating providers suggested that Washington consider the mandatory registration of all watercraft in the State (the current policy allows boats under 16 feet with less than 10 horsepower that are not used on navigable waters to remain unregistered). According to the US Coast Guard, at least four states (North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, and South Carolina) and the District of Columbia currently require all watercraft to be registered. In exploring the feasibility of mandatory boat registration, it should be noted that several practical reasons support such a measure. First, based on the results of the survey of Washington boaters, unregistered boats comprise at least one-quarter (25%) of the fleet. Providers noted that unregistered boats utilize many of the same resources as registered boats, including launch ramps, law enforcement services, campsites, and moorage space, as well as many other things. Further, several boating providers referred to the difficulties faced by enforcement personnel charged with investigating the theft of unregistered boats (in which case verifying the theft is virtually impossible). Finally, it should be noted that 44% of boating fatalities in Washington occur in non-powered boats (it is highly likely that such non-powered boats are unregistered).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Source: *Recreational Boating Safety in Washington: A Report on Methods to Achieve Safer Boating Practices*, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, 2003.

Requiring the mandatory registration of all watercraft could prove to be an important step in receiving additional funds to meet the growing needs of Washington's boating constituents.

### **3. BOATER SAFETY**

Among providers, boater safety was the top rated program or service, as well as being the top area in which providers would like to direct more time and money. Washington's current boating safety statistics suggest room for improvement: as previously mentioned, the State has recently ranked relatively high in boating fatalities per 100,000 registered boats. In the focus groups, boating providers expressed considerable support for the mandatory boater education legislation enacted in 2005; however, the now-required boater education, a significant step towards improving boating safety, should be viewed as merely a starting point for improving overall boater safety in the State. As previously mentioned, boater safety is to some extent dependent upon funding: with adequate support, agencies in Washington involved in enforcement of boating laws and regulations will be able to provide an enforcement presence sufficient for the consistent performance of safety checks, enforcement of alcohol- and drug-related boating laws, provision of on-site safety information and practical education to boaters, and the continued reduction of boating accidents and fatalities in Washington.

### **4. BOATING ACCESS**

Providers and boaters alike consider access to be one of the central needs affecting recreational boating in Washington. The most important issue related to access is the need for additional or improved boat launches: 72% of boaters who indicated that access issues had taken away from their boating satisfaction cited boat launch ramps as the specific reason. Similarly, majorities of boating providers indicated that more time and money should be directed toward public access (70%), including the development of new boat launch ramps (70%) and the management of existing boat launch ramps (55%). Over two-thirds of providers (69%) said they would like to see more boat launch ramps in their areas in Washington.

The data suggest that boaters are generally satisfied with the location of existing boat launches: 76% indicated being satisfied with the location of launch ramps in the counties in which they boat most often. Similarly, boater frustration with crowding on the water is not nearly as

pervasive an issue as frustration with crowding at boat launch ramps: 24% of boaters consider crowding at boat launch ramps to be a major problem, compared with just 10% of boaters who consider crowding on the water to be a major problem (among boating providers, 45% believe crowding at boat launch ramps to be a major problem). At the same time, boaters gave poor mean ratings to Washington's management of existing boat launch ramps (6.15 on a scale of 0 to 10) as well as to the development of new boat launch ramps (4.45 on a scale of 0 to 10), suggesting that efforts to improve access limitations at launches have been inadequate.

Exacerbating the issue of overcrowding at launch ramps is a growing need for improvements to parking at launch ramps and access sites (essentially a second aspect of overcrowding). The survey results indicate that inadequate parking is recognized by both providers and boaters as being a major deterrent to boating in Washington: 72% of providers and 55% of boaters would like to see more parking at boat launch ramps (the top rated item of services the groups would like to see more of in their respective areas).

The survey results illustrate the highest priority locations for additional or improved boat launches, with the majority of these corresponding with the counties and bodies of water most frequented by boaters. Again, the implication of these findings suggests that while boaters are generally satisfied with the locations they choose for boating, their experiences could be greatly improved if the problem of access were to be alleviated. The primary means of doing so would be the development of new access sites or maintenance and/or expansion of existing access sites; both areas are discussed below.

## **5. LAUNCHES AND FACILITY UPKEEP**

As stated above, the improvement of access is by far the most pressing need for Washington boaters. However, the data reflect that both providers and boaters feel strongly that the maintenance of existing access sites and launch ramps is as important a concern as the development of new sites and launch ramps; indeed, management of existing ramps ranked ahead of the development of new launch ramps in the majority of importance ratings in the surveys of both providers as well as boaters.

Upkeep and maintenance extend beyond improvements to the launch ramps themselves. In the survey, boaters indicated that restrooms at boat launch ramps (22%) and parking at launch ramps (21%) are in poor condition, while the top facilities and services cited by providers as being in poor condition in their areas were parking at launch ramps (35%), fishing cleaning stations (26%), restrooms at launch ramps (25%), mooring buoys (24%), pumpout stations (22%), and dump stations (20%). Among the facilities and services boaters would like to see improved in the areas in which they most often boat, launch ramps (45%) top the list, followed by restrooms at launch ramps (19%), mooring buoys or docks (16%), and daytime parking areas (15%).

In the focus groups, providers blamed the RCO's grant process as being partly responsible for the general lack of facility maintenance in Washington. The providers' perceptions were that the RCO's selection of projects for funding favored the development of new sites and launch ramps over facility maintenance; in short, they believe that funds for maintenance of facilities are simply not available from the RCO (see the discussion on providers' perceptions under "RCO Grant Process" below). Although these focus group participants are perhaps demonstrating a lack of understanding about the types of available funding and legislative mandates on how various funds are spent (e.g., funding for capital improvements versus funding for maintenance and operation), the bottom line for them is that they want to see more maintenance funding available. (Perhaps there is an outreach opportunity here to inform boating service providers of potential sources of maintenance funding.) Again, it cannot be overstated that upkeep, maintenance, and efforts to improve existing access sites and increase their capacity, especially boat launch ramps and their adjoining parking areas, are important means of facilitating access in Washington.

## **6. LAUNCHES AND FACILITY DEVELOPMENT**

Whether the needs are satisfied by adding to existing access sites or developing new ones, there are numerous facilities and services that both boaters and providers would like to see more of in their respective areas. Parking at launch ramps (72%) and launch ramps themselves (69%) were the top items providers would like to see more of, followed by docks (63%), pumpout stations (63%), restrooms at launch ramps (62%), courtesy tie-ups (62%), dump stations (58%), mooring buoys (53%), and campsites (52%).



In addition to boat launch ramps (at 48%, by far the top need), boaters would particularly like to see mooring and docks (23%) and restrooms at launch ramps (17%) built in the counties in which they most often boat. Parking at launch ramps (55%) and launch ramps themselves (54%) are the top facilities and services boaters would like to see more of in the counties in which they most often boat; following these, boaters would like to see more courtesy tie-ups (51%), restrooms at boat launch ramps (50%), docks (50%), and campsites (50%).

Note that, in general, the only instance of both providers and boaters ranking the development of new boat launch ramps ahead of the management of existing boat launch ramps was when the two groups were asked about areas in which to direct more time and money: among boaters, 54% said that more time and money should be directed towards new development, compared to 47% in favor of more time and money toward management of existing ramps; similarly, 70% of providers said that more time and money should be directed towards new development, compared to 55% in favor of more time and money toward management of existing ramps. This may be due to the perception, at least among boaters, that maintenance is an assumed part of the boating budget, and that *additional* time and money should be directed at new development; note that in virtually all other rankings in the two surveys, management of existing boat launch ramps topped the development of new launch ramps in terms of importance.

The data suggest that providers are, to some extent, skeptical about the development of new access and boat launch ramps due to the difficulties in locating and purchasing property in Washington on which to develop water access. Many of the focus group participants cited pressure from homeowners' associations for boaters to avoid private waterfront property, leading to a gradual decline in available public access. According to providers, environmental regulations in Washington constitute a further hindrance to the development of new access sites and ramps. Many providers viewed as frustrating the process of applying for necessary environmental permits and adhering to ecological protocols while developing on the water; it was also noted that boating interests have not consolidated into a lobbying group sufficient to counter environmental interests in opposition to new development. For these reasons, the development of new access facilities and launch ramps should be carefully balanced with the maintenance of existing sites and ramps.

## 7. AGENCY ADMINISTRATION AND COORDINATION OF BOATING IN WASHINGTON

The Revised Code of Washington directs the State Parks and Recreation Commission to administer the state's boating safety program and gives the Commission primary responsibility in many boating-related efforts, but there are multiple entities administering various aspects of boating and boating-related programs and services in Washington.

- The State Parks and Recreation Commission and all local county sheriff's offices and police departments are charged with the enforcement of boating regulations, boater safety, and numerous environmental mandates, such as those pertaining to the administration of boat sewage pumpout grants and boater environmental education.
- The Department of Fish and Wildlife enforces fishing laws and environmental regulations including those related to invasive species (by legislative mandate). Note that it plays a role in enforcement of boating laws simply because its officers are on the water in the performance of their duties (not mandated, but a role that became necessary simply because a game officer *not* enforcing an apparent boating violation when he is checking for fishing licenses, for instance, makes the boater perceive that the boating violation is unimportant).
- The Department of Natural Resources manages aquatic lands and invasive species and salmon recovery programs.
- The RCO administers the marine motor fuel tax access grant program and assists in salmon recovery.
- The Department of Ecology provides water quality administration, including personnel to respond to oil spills.
- The Department of Licensing oversees the registration of boats.
- The Department of Revenue is responsible for boat excise taxation.

This multiple-agency involvement may have led to the perception among both providers and various agency employees that boating services and boating programs are fragmented. For instance, state agency employees whose responsibilities include law enforcement on both the land *and* water in Washington stated that enforcement emphasis was often inadequately divided between the two areas—terrestrial and water. It was also acknowledged that the administration

of boater safety in the field (such as patrols, safety and PFD checks, the enforcement of laws and regulations) is frequently performed by multiple entities that are not always in adequate communication with one another. Furthermore, there was discussion in the provider focus groups about the lack of consistency in carrying out boating programs and the possibility of consolidating boating programs, and in the provider survey, two-thirds of boating service providers indicated that one state agency or organization, instead of multiple agencies, should be responsible for boating programs and services in the state.

It is interesting to note that, for their part, boaters did not view the administration of boating and boating-related programs by multiple agencies as a major problem. Nonetheless, they have the perception that there could be better coordination. For instance, whether the perception is correct or not, they indicated that the lack of enough access sites and launch ramps is partly a result of poor administrative coordination.

Although better coordination and communication among boating stakeholders has been and is fostered through the State Parks and Recreation Commission's Boating Safety Council, there is still some perception in Washington that boating services are fragmented. There may be need for an interagency coordinating body (the Council has no state agency members outside of the State Parks and Recreation Commission—who are non-voting). Certainly, the assessment results suggest that both the *perception* of piecemeal delivery, as well as the actual piecemeal delivery where it exists, be addressed.

It may be that this requires changes to the actual way that some boating services are provided, or it may be that better communication among agency personnel and better communication to providers and boaters would adequately address the problem. (As an example that pertains to this communication problem, see the discussion about a single website in the section later in the text titled "Increase Information and Education Programs.") Nonetheless, because there was feelings among some boaters and many boating services providers that a single agency is needed, it may be that Washington's boating programs could be better served if a multi-agency coordinating body were established consisting of all agencies involved in administering and providing boating services. While governmental responsibilities pertaining to boating are

delineated in the Revised Code of Washington (and Washington Administrative Code that sets forth the specific ways the code is administered), the coordination among the agencies involved was seen as a problem among boating stakeholders. A coordinating body, if it helps improve the delivery of services, could become a permanent part of the structure of the administration of boating services in Washington. If, however, coordination problems persist, the suggestion of many boating stakeholders that a “State of Washington Department of Boating” be created could be explored.

## **8. INCREASE LAW ENFORCEMENT PRESENCE AND ENSURE THAT ALL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS RECEIVE STANDARDIZED TRAINING**

While boater safety and law enforcement had high ratings of importance among providers (with safety being ranked consistently as the top area for importance), majorities of boating providers indicated that more time and money should be directed to them. Further, the majority of all providers (both survey respondents and focus group participants) would like to see an increase in the law enforcement presence on Washington’s waters. As mentioned previously, it is generally accepted that an increased level of law enforcement personnel on the water corresponds with a general decline in boating accidents and fatalities. Among boaters who consider boating programs and services in Washington to be ineffective, the top reason cited (34%) is insufficient law enforcement presence on the water.

The focus groups identified several issues affecting the staffing of enforcement personnel in Washington. Funding was repeatedly cited as an overarching issue, while other participants stated that general understaffing of enforcement personnel frequently led to employees working overtime, thereby reducing their energy levels and overall effectiveness in carrying out enforcement activities. A second issue connected to staffing concerned employees rotating in and out of jobs within agencies or across counties; as an example, it was noted that a county employee well-trained in the environmental issues of one area would not necessarily possess the knowledge required in another area that placed a high emphasis on boating safety patrols.

As a result of the turnover of and transfers within enforcement staffing in many counties, many providers indicated that enforcement officers are not always adequately trained in boating enforcement. While the state’s training programs and protocols for boating law enforcement are

standardized (in particular through the Criminal Justice Training Commission agency course titled, *Basic Marine Law Enforcement*, designated CJTC 0460, which is designed for all law enforcement personnel in the state and which meets U.S. Coast Guard requirements), many providers expressed the need for coordinated and consistent training of officers in order to maintain a knowledgeable staff equipped to respond to an array of enforcement issues. This appears to be an issue of providing all officers with the *opportunity* to receive the training—some are put into enforcement duties before they have had all the training they may wish they had—not with the training programs themselves, which are indeed standardized, despite focus group participants’ perceptions to the contrary. In discussions with stakeholders, the researchers found that boating accident investigation is an example of where officers’ actually may be, of necessity, put into situations prior to their having received training in investigating boating accidents. Bettering the *opportunities* for law enforcement officers to receive training would be a vital step toward the larger objective of reinforcing boater safety on the waters.

## **9. INCREASE INFORMATION AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

In general, the development of boating information and education programs should be treated as an ongoing process of providing boaters beneficial information, with mandatory boater safety education serving as the beginning. More than half of providers (52%) indicated that more time and money should be spent on the provision of information and publications. It is instructive to remember that boater safety was the top rated issue of importance among providers; in that sense, safety on Washington’s waters is likely to improve following the increased exposure of boaters to information on boat operation, the environmental effects of boating, navigation practices, and the regulations governing recreation on the State’s waters, as well as information on safety.

By all accounts, the State Parks and Recreation Commission effectively manages the production of informational materials related to boating. However, multiple agencies are involved—whether legislatively mandated to do so or not—in the actual dissemination of boating information. For this reason, it is recommended that boating information be available at various points in the field, including through contact with enforcement personnel. There were two recurring suggestions in the focus groups for a more efficient delivery of boating information.

The first was a centralized website, with frequent updates and the ability for agencies to add or edit information as necessary. In discussions with stakeholders, the researchers learned that such a website was discussed, with preliminary designs produced, in Washington in recent years, but that the site did not meet state standards for a “.gov” domain name (the “.gov” part of the domain name is considered essential for the public’s perception of credibility). A single, comprehensive state boating website with a “.gov” domain name should again be explored to better serve the public’s need for one authoritative and credible source of information on boating in the state, boating regulations, and state boating programs.

The second recurring suggestion in the focus groups was for making a greater amount of boating information available at the sites of recreation, such as at boat ramps and marinas on the water. Safety information, in particular, should be made available in a variety of formats, including pamphlets and handouts (kiosks were cited as a potentially effective method of providing boaters with information—many providers noted that the need for information among boaters is greatest in the field, and not in a classroom). Agency-sponsored campaigns may target the most important issues in terms of boater needs; the assessment indicated that boaters are most interested in receiving information on ramps and marinas (34%), maps and charts (32%), general safety (32%), boating rules and regulations (32%), fishing (27%), wildlife (22%), and boating programs in Washington (22%).

Information and education efforts should be evaluated periodically through surveys of boater knowledge and evaluated through boating accident statistics.

## **10. RCO GRANT PROCESS**

It is recommended that the RCO use the results of this study to set priorities for the Boating Facilities Program and Boating Activities Program. The information in this report—particularly the data on improvement priorities and the preferred locations for service additions—is presented to assist the RCO in its decision-making and review of proposals.

There is a problem in that boating services providers do not always understand that the RCO is constrained by state law from using capital funds for maintenance. This results in the

oversimplified belief among providers that the RCO favors building new facilities over projects designed to perform maintenance, upkeep, or other improvements to existing access sites and launch ramps. As stated above in the discussions on access issues, there is a clear unmet need in Washington for improved boat launch ramps and parking opportunities, as well as numerous other repairs and additions; each of these represents an important means of providing access to Washington's waters. To this end, the data suggest that the maintenance of existing access sites and launch ramps is just as important in working to alleviate crowding issues caused by the overall deficit in access. Additionally, providers need to be better informed about the grant process, the constraints on what can be funded, and where and how maintenance funding can be obtained (if possible) under the current funding processes in the state, including the RCO grant process.

At the same time, many boating providers indicated being uncertain about the RCO's proposal requirements, with some remarking on the complexity of the grant application process. The larger issue may be that these perceptions represent fundamental gaps in sufficient knowledge of the RCO's grant program. To address some of these concerns, the RCO may wish to consider issuing Requests for Proposals for grant projects in order to better outline the Office's objectives, and to more efficiently publicize project needs with the needs identified in the results of this assessment.

## **11. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

In general, boating providers show a greater concern for environmental issues in Washington than do the boaters themselves. This, however, should not detract from the importance of educating both enforcement personnel and boaters on environmental issues before the onset of a crisis (e.g., a zebra mussel outbreak in Washington waters). As previously mentioned, agency responsibilities regarding issues such as invasive species are potentially sketchy, often because multiple steps are required to sufficiently address the issue: the prevention of invasive species depends on both an enforcement and an educational component. Water quality, technically listed as a responsibility of the Department of Ecology, was a major concern among all providers (note that water quality is the top natural resource concern among Americans). In particular, providers voiced concern about the potential for boaters to act indirectly as sources of pollution, such as

through fuel spillage, the use of copper bottom painted boats, or by spreading contamination from pumpout and dump stations.

In the survey, a majority of providers (60%) cited marine sanitation as an area of particular importance. In the focus groups, participants named milfoil, stormwater regulations, boat emissions, beach and shoreline erosion, sediment management, and over-fishing as areas to include in environmental training programs for personnel and educational materials for boaters. Finally, note that fishing was the top activity among boaters (53% had fished in the past two years in Washington), thereby demonstrating latent concern among boaters over issues potentially affecting fishing, such as invasive species and water quality.

The data suggest that agencies directly involved in environmental education and information dissemination (the State Parks and Recreation Commission and the Department of Ecology) may wish to increase information and education efforts focusing on the environmental impacts of boating, including ways for boaters to mitigate their environmental impacts. Issues of particular importance may be evaluated through a communications plan that could also address methods for informing boaters on the issues. If possible, a component for enforcement personnel and marina operators could be included.



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## INTRODUCTION

This study was conducted for the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) to determine the needs of Washington boaters and to help determine priorities for allocating resources. The Washington State Legislature (60<sup>th</sup> Legislature, 2007 Session) authorized the needs assessment in Substitute House Bill 1651, which amended the Revised Code of Washington, Title 79A (Public recreation lands), Chapter 79A.60 (Regulation of recreational vessels), by adding 79A.60.680 as follows:

### **Study of boater needs – funding recommendations.**

(1) By December 1, 2007, the interagency committee for outdoor recreation shall complete an initial study of boater needs and make recommendations to the appropriate committees of the legislature on the initial amount of funding that should be provided to the commission for boating-related law enforcement purposes under RCW 79A.60.670(2)(a)

(2) The interagency committee for outdoor recreation shall periodically update its study of boater needs as necessary and shall make recommendations to the governor and the appropriate committees of the legislature concerning funding allocations to state parks and other grant applicants.

The RCO commissioned Responsive Management to conduct the needs assessment. The study entailed focus groups of boating services providers, a telephone survey of boating services providers, a telephone survey of the general public in Washington, and a telephone survey of registered boaters in Washington. Specific aspects of the research methodology are discussed in the section of this report titled, “Methodology.”

## **A NOTE ABOUT THE DATA ANALYSIS AND LAYOUT OF THE REPORT**

In reporting the results of the survey of registered boaters and the survey of the general population, these two data sets were combined (hereinafter referred to as the “amalgamated data”) and weighted so that all boaters were represented in one analysis (registered boat owners, non-registered boat owners, and non-owners—the latter two groups exclusively from the general population sample). In Washington, all boats 16 feet or more in length or with 10 or more horsepower are required to be registered; for boats under those thresholds not used on navigable waters, registration is not required.

In addition to the analyses of the amalgamated data statewide, crosstabulations of the amalgamated data were run to determine results of subgroups within the total population of boaters. Four crosstabulations were run on the data:

1. Crosstabulation by registration/ownership status: registered boat owners, non-registered boat owners, and non-owners.
2. Crosstabulation by region in which boater most often boated.
3. Crosstabulation by type of boat most often used: motor boats, sailboats, paddlers (i.e., canoes and kayaks), and other hand-powered boats.
4. Crosstabulation by size of motor boat most often used (of those who most often used a motor boat): under 16 feet (Class A), 16 feet to 25 feet (Class 1), 26 feet or more (Classes 2 and 3), and personal watercraft.

For each question or series of questions, the report first discusses the results on the amalgamated data as a whole. It then discusses the crosstabulations in the order shown above. The graphs of the crosstabulations specifically indicate which subgroup(s) is(are) shown. Graphs that do *not* indicate a subgroup are for the results overall.

## RESEARCH RESULTS

### BOATING SERVICES PROVIDERS FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

#### MAJOR NEEDS AND ISSUES FACING RECREATIONAL BOATING

Focus group participants were initially asked what they considered to be the major needs and issues facing recreational boating in Washington.

- Without influence from the moderator, and without a topic being named by the moderator prior to his asking the question, focus group participants overwhelmingly responded that access is a major issue facing recreational boating in Washington State. Discussion on access largely centered on the lack of available funds for *maintaining* existing access sites, as opposed to a lack of access sites in general. Indeed, although some participants voiced a need for new sites in their areas, the majority of participants asserted that maintenance of *existing* sites is more important than the addition of *new* sites.
  
- Additionally in this initial discussion, focus group participants frequently discussed the need for a greater law enforcement presence on Washington's waters. Focus group participants commonly attributed the perceived insufficient law enforcement presence to a general lack of available funding for boating programs in the state. Several focus group participants noted that, although multiple agencies are actively involved in boating law enforcement (e.g., State Parks, Department of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Division, local sheriff's offices), not all dimensions of enforcement are being addressed adequately (one example given was the generally infrequent nature of registration and titling checks due to a lack of enforcement personnel). This was attributed to enforcement officers' time constraints in that they are expected to balance a number of varying responsibilities.
  
- Some focus group participants in this initial discussion viewed the permitting process for the development of access sites as too complex, with current regulations and requirements favoring environmental interest groups over boating interests. Similarly, it was noted in one of the focus groups that a 6-year waitlist preceded access to one particular marina. Indeed, overcrowding of access sites was a major issue of discussion in the focus groups.

*“It’s one thing to build a ramp. But maintenance [is a real issue]. It’s all about having enough money.”*

*“We’re in an area that’s growing, and we’ve got to have access. Our area has grown so much and we have so much demand, but just having the access is [integral to successful recreational boating].”*

*“Some of these boat launches and moorage areas for boaters were built twenty-five and thirty years ago. But as time has gone on, these docks are degrading and [maintenance is being deferred] in favor of newer projects.”*

*“Launch sites, to say the least, have a lot to be desired as far as upkeep. Within our agency, the maintenance budgets on those are pretty slim. Consequently, a lot of large boaters can’t get into those sites because they haven’t been maintained.”*

*“The ramps haven’t been improved for years, the concrete slabs are broken, the toilets are in disrepair. A lot of the areas don’t have adequate handicapped access. A lot of the docks have broken down.”*

*“It’s probably a three-pronged approach: the enforcement, the staffing, and the access areas. People need clean bathrooms, a place to park, and the garbage picked up. That’s a large part of what the boating public wants to see.”*

*“Along Moses Lake we have probably five or six boat launches...that are jam-packed all summer long, as far as access to the lake [and] parking. We have boating events and races throughout the summer, which makes all the people who want to launch there go elsewhere [because the lake becomes significantly closed off during these events]. So access is a big thing.”*

*“[Fish and Wildlife] is the biggest entity in terms of enforcement, just because of the sheer size of our program. We don’t want to take money from the counties, but it would help our budgets significantly if we had some money to help do the law enforcement.”*

*“If you don’t have somebody there to keep it safe, why have a park? We have the same problem with all of our areas, in terms of having enough people. We’re going to be getting an additional \$31,000 from the new fund created this year. And that’s a third of what it takes to put on a full-time officer in our department.”*

*“The law enforcement component [is a major issue of need]. Originally when the state was establishing formalized law enforcement programs, [boating enforcement] was offered to the Department of Fish and Wildlife, like most states. At that time, due to some administrative decisions, the agency elected not to assume that responsibility. State Parks assumed that responsibility, and enforcement ended up being parceled out to various parts of the county. Fish and Wildlife has reevaluated that decision and would like to take a more active role. We are out on the water more than any other agency.”*

## OVERALL ADMINISTRATION OF STATE BOATING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Focus group participants were asked to rate and discuss the overall administration of recreational boating and boating programs in Washington State.

- Although focus group participants generally supported the overall administration of boating in Washington (i.e., they expressed satisfaction with the structure of responsibilities—which agency does what—of the various agencies involved in boating, as well as the policies and regulations governing recreational boating), the issue of insufficient personnel for enforcement purposes was brought up numerous times as a deterrent to capable boating administration.
  
- Among issues connected to personnel needs, focus group participants commonly discussed ineffective enforcement stemming from the necessity of having officers work overtime (with two negative aspects of overtime work: first, it costs more per hour of service, and second, the officers used in this capacity may be performing work outside their area of expertise); a lack of expertise among enforcement officers who are new to the job or who have been rotated into a department from another division; and a decreased emphasis on boating safety education (itself largely viewed as a worthwhile preventive measure) because of the need to address law enforcement violations.

*“There isn’t enough full-time dedicated staff [devoted to the administration of boating programs]. [There seems to be adequate funding for] only five or six months; they do what they can with the funding they have.”*

*“[At our marina], when the fishing season is over, [we] don’t have any more revenue coming in. If our fishing season closes early, we don’t have any revenue for that summer. [As a result], our maintenance goes down, our full-time employees are gone.”*

*“I think that the communication and organization is a big part of it—it would be better to have more communication [between agencies], so people know when things are going on and what others are doing to resolve issues. The enforcement level is what I’m thinking of.”*

*“A lot of the agencies, instead of having personnel that are full-time dedicated to the position, are having to deal with [understaffing] by using regular patrol officers on overtime basis. [The result is a staff] that doesn’t have as developed a level of expertise. In the environment of Grant County, with the amount of boat assist and boat rescue calls, they’ve dedicated at least two guys to deal with these calls. But that’s sort of the exception rather than the norm, if you look at*

*what's going on in most of the areas of the state. So you're getting less benefit from the dollars spent because [they're being allocated to officers] on overtime basis."*

*"There are thirty-nine counties in the state. Four counties do not have a recognized boating program. Some of the rest of them, like Grant County, do an excellent job, but [that is largely] based on the decisions county commissioners and sheriffs have made. Other areas don't place a high emphasis on boating patrols or education because they don't have the staffing to do it. It takes about three years [for staff] to develop a solid boating expertise, [which is impossible] when you're constantly rotating people out to other jobs. It's very fractured."*

*"We have a uniform, statewide program, but our main focus is more on the water for resource violations. We're not that involved with boating safety education."*

*"Overtime is not unlimited. And every time a [rescue or assistance] incident occurs, we're depleting our patrol. And that's reactionary. And the goal, especially with boating, is safety and education. Coming from a prevention end, that's where you'll see the most benefit. And there's just not enough dollars to do that right now. The state needs to reassess where the money is going."*

*"State Parks does an admirable job of administering the programs and parceling out the money for the enforcement component. I'm not familiar with what other funds they use in terms of boater safety. The counties have assumed that boater safety role in terms of education, but it varies across the state."*

*"As far as law enforcement goes, we're a piece of State Parks, and it's pretty inefficient. We're doing as good as we can, and it's being run as efficiently as it can be, but other states do it better [by having boating enforcement directly run as a part of] the state department of natural resources."*

*"[The 144 commissioned staff members are] not adequate to cover the entire state. We're a sales tax state, so we're subject to the economy. But there are 110 lakes we manage in this local area."*

*"The growth of boating has been exponential, and we're seeing that at our launch sites. You have people lined up, and it gets worse every year. The entire northeast portion of the state is seeing that."*



## SPECIFIC PROGRAM AND SERVICE NEEDS AND ISSUES

Focus group participants were asked about various issues associated with specific recreational boating program and service needs.

### Boating Safety Education

Focus group participants were asked about boating safety education in Washington State.

- Some focus group participants expressed concern that a greater level of safety training is not required before an individual is able to purchase a boat (this was briefly contrasted with the purchase of a car). Additionally, some focus group participants expressed skepticism at the issuance of boater safety cards to individuals completing online safety courses, due to the inability to ensure that the card recipient had actually completed the course.
- As previously noted, one of the primary perceived needs for funding is for boating safety education, as well as enforcement related to boater safety (e.g., enforcing laws pertaining to boating under the influence of alcohol or drugs).
- Several focus group participants emphasized the importance of targeting boaters with safety education at recreational boating sites (i.e., having materials and other aids available at access sites and elsewhere in the field).
  - Grant County was viewed as a positive example of introducing effective boating safety education to the school systems (in this case, as early as fourth grade).
  - The State of Oregon was viewed as a positive example of effective statewide boating safety education (as well as a useful example of a state allocating dollars from the state general fund to its boating programs).

*“Eighty percent of our boaters out there have no [safety] education. The [boat] dealers sell the boats, collect the money, and send the [customer] on his merry way. [The customer] doesn’t even know how to start it. The dealers ought to have some responsibility in making sure there’s a minimum amount of knowledge before that boat hits the water. [This contrasts greatly with the auto industry].”*

*“We do boating safety, vessel registrations, lifejacket checks. We issue a lot of citations, a lot of boating safety-type citations.”*

*“The Columbia River is our biggest draw for activity. And we have a huge problem with the garbage, and that’s just a giant mess out there. But it’s also all about the dollars. ... We don’t have the personnel and funding to have [people down there] enforcing things like BUIs [Boating Under the Influence]. We need more enforcement presence, and the only way to do that is to have the money.”*

*“The laws blur together. We look at life vests, we look at registrations. A lot of enforcement has an education component. And we’re the principal agents in the state who do that.”*

*“[The Legislature] has passed a law that you must pass a boating safety program or some kind of education, and that just passed. It follows [hunter education], and there’s a graduated scale when you complete this thing. If you’re in a certain age group, you have to pass a certain course in order to operate a boat.”*

*“I get a lot of boaters who rent [a boat] and then don’t know how to use it. I think it’s very valuable to [know] the basics. I think [Washington State] stepped it up by introducing the education cards.”*

*“Grant County is an example of [boating safety education programs] in the schools. We do about a one-hour safety presentation, which is designed to try to instill some of the basic things, like life jacket use, swim lessons, awareness of small kids around bodies of water. Some of the larger counties with the larger boater programs have been a part of those presentations. State Parks has specific statistics on these programs.”*

*“I’m convinced that you get people interested and aware of boating safety at the boat ramps, not in the evening in some classroom. We have some concerns about people taking safety courses online, because we’re issuing [boater safety] cards to people who may not have taken the test.”*

*“In some counties, like Grant County, [Department of Fish and Wildlife] supplements the sheriff’s office. In other counties, where there isn’t a dedicated [boating enforcement] program, [Department of Fish and Wildlife] is the primary organization [for enforcement].”*

*“Half of Washington boaters have never seen or rarely see a law enforcement officer on the water. It’s a presence issue, like when you’re on the highway and you see the white patrol car with the emblem on the side, everybody slows down to the speed limit.”*

## **Additional Boating Education**

Focus group participants were asked about boating education in addition to safety education.

- Most discussion of additional boating education needs concerned public awareness of aquatic invasive species, with particular attention given to the importance of preventive education.

*“We have an issue with aquatic nuisance species. You’ve probably read the stories about zebra mussels and New Zealand mussels, and all these various invasive species. We are funded, along with the agencies that regulate the ports of entry, to enforce this. We’ve had some educational efforts, statewide, where we checked all the various trailers, vessels, and motors and everything. So that’s a big [issue].”*

*“We’re not adequately able to address [the aquatic nuisance and invasive species] yet. And part of the reason we’re not is that it’s not a crisis yet. It kind of all relates back to us being natural resource/general authority officers of the state, and we’re charged with this broad role and responsibility for all these components.”*

*“I don’t think [boating education] is even being addressed statewide. [Agencies] draw from their patrol sides just to supplement [educational needs].”*

## Recreational Boating Opportunities

Focus group participants were asked about the general availability of recreational boating opportunities in Washington State.

- As previously noted, the majority of focus group participants indicated that overcrowding of access sites is the main hindrance to recreational boating opportunities in Washington.

*“There are cases in smaller lakes where it’s just too crowded. It’s a seasonal thing: early in the spring, summer, it’s pretty crowded. You get fishermen and boaters who want to come out at the same time. Depending on the body of water, the fishing pressure may be pretty high.”*

*“I hear a lot of talk about capacity in parking lots and on launch ramps, but one of my concerns is capacity on the water, particularly for closed systems where there continues to be more and more boats. I’d like some thought given to how you could manage that.”*

*“One other component to boating is that there are a number of areas of [the state’s] waters that are protected for resource issues. There are a lot of federal aquatic reserve areas along the coasts of Washington where there needs to be a presence, particularly by us. It’s also another one of those education issues.”*

*“We’ll have boaters tell us, ‘I can drive from the Seattle area to Vantage, launch, and be on the water quicker than I can get on the water at Lake Sammamish, just because of the line of boaters there.’ So they’re willing to make that two-hour drive just to skip the crowds at their local lake.”*

## Management of Current Access Facilities

Focus group participants were asked about issues related to the management of current access facilities in Washington State.

- The overwhelming majority of focus group participants place a higher priority on the maintenance and consistent management of current access sites than on the development of new access sites. (Note that this is despite acknowledgements that many access sites tend to be overcrowded during much of the year.)
- There appears to be considerable frustration with the RCO's current grant application process, as many focus group participants asserted that access maintenance projects have very little chance of being funded.
- Several focus group participants discussed user fees and the gas tax as potential funding sources for the future maintenance of sites. It was noted, however, that the current allocation of these funds was insufficient, and that a review process would need to precede any change in allocation.

*“One of the big issues when you’re going for a grant application with the Recreation and Conservation Office is that they do not want to hear ‘maintenance’ in there at all. If you have anything [in the grant proposal] about needing money to maintain something, forget it. It’s for either development of new infrastructure [or new boat launches].”*

*“[In order to deal with the issue of maintenance of access sites], we need to be able to get a state grant that’s generous enough to enable us to thoughtfully [maintain] a boat launch.”*

*“The staff that we have, they are so swamped during summer months. Trash, keeping the toilets clean, extra toilet paper. The money to buy [cleaning] chemicals, the repair work that needs to be done. The H.P.A. [Hydraulic Project Approval] stuff that we have to do—we just don’t have the staff.”*

*“Both at access points and substantial destination points, [there is a need] for sanitation facilities. [Rather than new access points], the issue is maintenance.”*

*“[The state] doesn’t have the manpower to maintain these access facilities. In Spokane, I don’t know how many access sites we’re responsible for, but [we don’t have] the equipment and personnel to keep them clean, maintained, and to repair the launches themselves. Some of our*

*slabs are cracked and broken, some boaters tear into protrusions, there's problems with launch pads. We get a lot of comments on our access [sites]. We're trying to get funds for docks, which particularly help older people and the handicapped."*

*"In RCW-77 [Revised Code of Washington, Title 77], it says that the state legislature will allow us expenditures from the state wildlife fund to maintain our [access] sites. And it doesn't happen."*

*"We don't put garbage bins out, for example, because we don't have the people to come and pick up the garbage."*

*"We put in some of these vault toilets but then a lot of our access points still have these [out-of-date] toilets. Gravel, potholes in and around the sites—it would be a great [public relations] opportunity to just get in some funding and some people to maintain [these sites]."*

*"Most of the damage from use of these facilities [are from] non-traditional hunters and fishermen. They're the guys who are chewing them up, leaving garbage. We tried to tax them a little bit, a lousy \$10 fee, which is good for a whole year. But that doesn't cut it."*

*"[In some places], we have these vehicle-use permits. It's \$10, and that's what people pay to use a park or an access facility. And that money is supposed to go toward maintaining these sites."*

*"We have to use our officers' time to go around and check for parking permits. We have so many other items on the table that we're responsible for, bigger issues. But we have to spend time on [parking permit issues] because the agency needs funding to maintain these sites. But [it would help] if they could do something [similar to the snowmobile tax], where, when you go down and get a boat registration, there's a fee tacked onto that automatically, and those funds are sent to the state fish and wildlife agency for a good program."*

## Development of New Access Facilities

Focus group participants were asked about the development of new access facilities in Washington.

- In general, and as noted above, there is a greater perceived need among boating providers for the upkeep of current access sites than for the development of new sites.
  - Some focus group participants expressed a need for more kayak and canoe access sites.
  
- Several focus group participants expressed skepticism about the feasibility of developing many new access sites, given the rising property values of waterfront homes in Washington and the corresponding pressures from homeowners to limit boating around their properties.
  
- It was noted that boating entities in Washington have failed to coalesce into a formidable lobbying interest in terms of land acquisition for access sites. This was contrasted with the Nature Conservancy, which is frequently able to purchase land when it becomes available in order to effectively prevent future development.

*“[Access] is a Catch-22: We’re always struggling for more access sites, but if we get them, we don’t have the operating and maintenance money to maintain them.”*

*“Canoeing and kayaking are becoming more popular, and I think instead of looking at launches solely for motorized boating, we need to start paying attention to facilities for canoes and kayaks.”*

*“A lot of these access sites are overcrowded, and having extra areas where boaters can launch their vessels would be nice. But I imagine that [new access sites] would be pretty expensive.”*

*“Some of the access here is federal access, and some of it is state Fish and Wildlife access. The primary access to a lot of these lakes here is state Fish and Wildlife access. A lot of [boaters] have a county park but no boat access, like at Liberty Lake.”*

*“People own the property around the [lakes], and we manage the area for fishing. We have a little chunk of property, [which] we turn into public access, and then it’s private property all the way around it. And that’s why there’s more and more pressure, what with all the people boating.”*

*“There are pressures around a lot of [Washington’s] waters that have been urbanized with high-end homes, [whose owners] take umbrage to our access sites where the common man gets access to the lake. [High-end homeowners] are constantly petitioning our agency to close our access site, other than to them. That’s common. [Liberty Lake is an example of this.]”*

*“[Access] all depends on what specific destination areas you’re talking about. Some places are [in terrible condition]. It’s more about what we can do to the access sites, in terms of maintaining and improving. There is just no money for that.”*

*“The access points that are [used] are [over-used]. And then the distant, remote ones are probably okay. And, of course, the [access points] on the west area, there’s nothing you can do. What with the price of property, the development on the lakes..., I don’t think in the future you’re going to see more access sites. Not unless they’re on public lands.”*



## Boating Law Enforcement

Focus group participants were asked about major law enforcement issues associated with recreational boating in Washington State.

- Many of the discussions on law enforcement were framed by the need for more personnel. A substantial number of focus group participants again asserted the importance of having a visible, constant law enforcement presence on Washington's waters.
- Other recurring law enforcement issues included the enforcement of laws pertaining to boating under the influence of alcohol and drugs, negligent boat operation (the latter frequently mentioned alongside inadequate boating training and education), and the need for law enforcement patrolling of certain access sites.
- One focus group also discussed the fact that, while Homeland Security directives and responsibilities were sometimes assigned to recreational boating officers, Homeland Security funds were almost never allocated to agencies involved in boating enforcement.

*"There're some critical access sites around the state that ought to be closed down, because they're just not safe. There's drug dealing going on, vandalism. We've set up in some of these areas, but our staffing is so low that we can't put a uniformed officer in each of these [places long-term]. There are access sites where people don't feel safe; there are a lot of issues. There's got to be some component of enforcement [to provide for] maintaining these sites adequately, and to put an enforcement presence [at these sites]."*

*"[Some of the issues associated with law enforcement are] drunk boaters, fatalities that need investigations. If you want safer boating, part of what we do already is [making] PFD and safety checks on the water. Citations are good because they get people to comply a lot faster."*

*"Life jackets, safety issues, reckless and negligent operation [are all major law enforcement issues]."*

*"[To provide the most effective law enforcement on the water], it's going to take more people."*

*"We don't have the ability to enforce the laws and provide the safety education because we don't have the funding or the personnel."*

*“You really need officers and equipment. I’ve got three guys, and our primary job is not boating enforcement—we cover land and water. We may be on the water, we may not; it depends on the season.”*

*“Registration and reckless operation, especially with personal watercraft use, [are some of the major law enforcement violations we see].”*

*“Really, the reckless operation, which endangers people on the water, is where the issue is.”*

*“Not only personnel, but you also have to deal with [the lack of] equipment. And..., through grants in the past, State Parks had helped a number of agencies with equipment. Those grants had gone away for a number of years, [although State Parks] just received about \$500,000 for the next few years that will be targeted at competitive grants for the individual agencies dealing with aging boats, and that sort of thing. There hasn’t been money dedicated to equipment replacement.”*

*“There’s also been a substantial impact on boating recreation from the standpoint that Homeland Security missions have been assigned to the recreational boating officers because they and the Department of Fish and Wildlife were the only resources there. So if there were Homeland Security issues on the water, the only agencies that had the ability to address those were the folks already out there doing recreational boating enforcement.”*

## Registration and Titling

Focus group participants were asked about issues related to the registration and titling of boats in Washington.

- Several focus group participants expressed frustration that many Washington boaters apparently register their vessels out-of-state. Most focus group participants believed that Washington ought to require boaters to register their vessels in the county in which they are most used. Additionally, out-of-state registration was viewed as frustrating due to a resulting lack of revenue.
- Some focus group participants expressed the need for all vessels in Washington to be registered, noting some of the state's cutoffs and exemptions that prevent higher registration rates (such as the exemptions for boats under 16 feet in length and for boats under ten horsepower not used on navigable waters).

*“The way our [vessel registration] is set up now is that we have a program where people who are Washington State residents don't have to register their boats in Washington. They have to register it where the principle use [of the boat] is going to be. So, for instance, we have lots of people who register their boats in Idaho [and] Oregon who are Washington State residents. It's cheaper [for people to register their boats out of state]. [But boat registration] should be the same as vehicle registration: if you're going to use it here, if you have it parked here, you better have it registered in the State of Washington. And the State is losing out on a lot of revenue by doing it this way.”*

*“We get the Oregon people at our launch. I get folks who ask, ‘Why do I have to pay here, too?’”*

*“We don't require registration of all the vessels in the state. We have a 16-foot cutoff, or a 10-horsepower cutoff. Personal watercraft do have to be registered, but small boats less than 10 horsepower don't have to be registered. So in comparison to other states across the nation, we show [in registration records fewer] boaters than we actually have, because of that exemption.”*

*“I think education [about registrations could improve]. People pay their \$10 but then come down to our marina and think they can launch for free, but it isn't the case.”*

*“I think boats should be registered in their county of primary use. But I also think that all boats should be registered.”*

*“Most boat thefts involve small kicker boats. For law enforcement, how do we determine if that boat has been stolen if it hasn’t been registered? Washington doesn’t require small boats to be registered. And I think the State’s missing out on a lot of revenue, too.”*

## Navigation Aids

Focus group participants were asked about the status and importance of navigation aids on Washington's waters.

- Participants of the Spokane focus group were more likely to voice a need for additional navigation aids on waters than were participants of the Moses Lake group. Indeed, several Moses Lake focus group participants indicated that, although navigation aids are undoubtedly necessary in certain areas, the primary component of safe boating is ensuring that boaters are familiar with the waters on which they boat and understand the dynamic nature of the waters (e.g., seasonal changes).
- Participants of the Vancouver group expressed satisfaction with the current navigation aids along Washington's waters, although it was noted that buoys are fairly expensive and that funding would continue to be limited in the future.

*"We have a need [for more navigation aids, because they currently are] not adequate. A lot of times someone just puts out a milk jug or a Clorox jug or something like that, painted orange or white. The county is supposed to do that, but it's pretty variable across the state."*

*"I don't know if State Parks is responsible for maintaining navigational aids. I don't know who is responsible."*

*"The [navigation aids seem to be a part of] a program that is well-maintained. Very seldom is one of out of line or a light off at night. They seem to do an excellent job."*

*"Multiple jurisdictions are responsible [for navigation aids on the water]. The State has implemented a statewide marking system, which counties and cities are required to follow, but it's up to them to come up with the funding and find a way to mark their waters."*

*"I have followed navigation aids for fifty years, and I've never run aground. I think they're indispensable."*

*"We could have signs every 300 feet on the Yakima River and still not cover all [the hazard areas. The hazards of some bodies of water] dynamically change every year."*

*"There's been a lot of debate about [three recent drownings]. And people want to know why the sheriff's office isn't out there marking those hazards. And the sheriff's response is that it is inherently dangerous, and we can't be marking everything. Rivers are dynamic, and they're always changing."*

## Boating Information and Publications

Focus group participants were asked about the availability of and/or the need for additional boating information and publications in Washington.

- In general, the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission was credited with providing a wide variety of boating information and publications.
  
- While the vast majority of focus group participants approved of the amount and quality of available boating information and publications, there were two recurring suggestions for a more efficient delivery of said information: a centralized website, coordinated by State Parks and/or the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, with frequent updates and the ability for agencies to add or edit information as necessary; and more boating information and publications available at the sites of recreation, such as at access sites and marinas.

*“[Boating information and publications] are handled by State Parks. They supply us [with literature] and we hand [it] out as well. But people call us before they call State Parks. People expect our customer service staff to answer all the questions [that should instead be directed to State Parks]—they look at us as the administrative authority.”*

*“The counties are getting the majority of the funds, so [Fish and Wildlife] is probably not going to spend a lot of money on the materials.”*

*“State Parks do a pretty good job of putting out information on where you can go, overnight facilities, where there’s fuel. My experience has been pretty good [with State Parks information].”*

*“State Parks has taken the lead on boating information. They received a federal Coast Guard grant to take that role. They don’t provide specific location information, but I believe there is a website that summarizes ramps and facilities at the ramps. As far as charts and specific areas, I don’t believe there are any public agencies providing that information. [You have to purchase that kind of information based on the area you’re in.]”*

*“It’d be nice to see the State put up a centralized website where we could add information. Fish and Wildlife has one, where, if you were a boater coming from Oregon, you might not know to come to the website. You could Google ‘Washington boating’ or something, to see which sites are closed, [for example]. Just a centralized location [on-line] would be good.”*

*“[In general], the jurisdiction that owns or operates the boat ramp would be the source for [ramp and access location information]. I think there’s some website that covers all the boat ramp access points—I’m not positive that it’s a State Parks website.”*

*“I don’t know that there’s a need for more information [so much as there is] a need for a better delivery. State Parks develops and maintains the materials and gets them out, but it’s still the officers in the field that are distributing that on contact. You can put a kiosk up at the boat ramps, but it’s up to the person whether they want to use [the boat publication] as a resource or as toilet paper, because the outhouse is out of paper.”*

*“[The amount and quality of the available information] is good.... [The real issue is] getting it into the hands of the people and getting them to take the responsibility of actually looking at it.”*

## ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH BOATING

Focus group participants were asked what they considered to be the major environmental issues associated with recreational boating in Washington.

- Overwhelmingly, focus group participants recognized aquatic invasive species as a primary environmental issue associated with recreational boating. Most commonly, focus group participants named zebra mussels and New Zealand mussels as the top invasive species threatening Washington's waters. Additionally, there was widespread agreement that education ought to be a vital component of preventing the spread of invasive species (specifically, reinforcing awareness of the ability for invasive species to be easily transported on vessels and equipment).
- Some focus group participants expressed the need for all boating enforcement officers to receive thorough and consistent environmental training; it was further noted that employees transferring into a division or department may miss out on such training if it is not repeated frequently enough.
- Some focus group participants commented that agencies such as the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife are generally unable to restrict boating in areas deemed environmentally sensitive without the approval of local jurisdictions and/or county ordinances. This was viewed as a source of frustration, since a timely response is essential to preventing damage to such areas.
  - Damage to salmon spawning areas and eelgrass beds caused by personal watercraft and other vessels was given as an example of boaters disrupting environmentally sensitive areas.

*“People don't like to recreate in sewers. If you have foul water, you're not raising fish. Aquatic invasive species are a concern: zebra mussels, and things that are transported between areas on vessels.”*

*“The national conversion to four-cycle engines [is an environmental concern]. That's an issue considering fish populations, water pollution. Jet skis, because they're so maneuverable getting into these sensitive areas, are an issue, particularly in salmon rivers. We've got boaters roaring through salmon spawning areas, stirring up turbidity.”*



*“Personal watercraft are getting more and more popular. But just with the aesthetics of certain areas and the noise—you have complaints from people who live in these areas [that] it’s getting to be constant noise. People [are] getting into coves where they wouldn’t ordinarily be getting into. I think it also has an impact on our [anglers]—when [personal watercraft] start buzzing around, fishermen go somewhere else. They don’t want to have to deal with watercraft running all around them when they’re trying to fish.”*

*“We don’t have any authority to restrict boating in certain areas. The county has that authority. If they wanted to close an area down, if they had enough public comments and complaints, [the county could close the area down]. But we can’t do it under our authority.”*

*“We’ve tried to restrict things like motor types on lakes, and we’ve been challenged. We’ve tried to mandate things like if people are fishing on a certain trip, they can’t use motors. But county ordinances have to be used for regulations to really apply.”*

*“Invasive species and moving aquatic vegetation from place to place... has a negative effect. One of the bigger concerns is the zebra mussel, and [what will happen] when that’s introduced into the Columbia River system, [especially] if you look at the impacts [the zebra mussel] will have on irrigation [and] hydroelectric power, not only in this state, but in other states—that is,...look at what [the zebra mussel] is doing on the east coast and states east of the Mississippi [River]. It’s a matter of time.”*

*“If [zebra mussels] get into a hydroelectric dam, they’ll plug it up. So the maintenance costs for replacing turbines, irrigation pipes, screens, it’s just unbelievable.”*

*“State Parks has held in past years a yearly boating officer conference. Last year was the first year they didn’t, but nearly every year before that they’ve had a presentation from the Department of Fish and Wildlife or a person dealing with invasive species to all the boating officers in the state. But as you have new officers rotating in, they may not have seen some of those presentations, and that’s where you start losing some of that expertise—from the turnover.”*

*“We work with the counties or whoever has jurisdiction over the water to get sites designated [as environmentally sensitive areas]. If we have an access site, we’ll limit certain uses. [For example], we won’t issue permits for boat races for certain lakes. We have to work with the local jurisdictions and county commissioners [to designate areas as environmentally sensitive].”*

## BOATING SERVICES PROVIDERS SURVEY RESULTS

### A NOTE ABOUT THE SURVEY WORDING

When administering the survey, providers were asked about the area they serve. Some had a service area that is statewide, while others had more localized service areas. Based on their answers, the survey automatically inserted the proper wording into each subsequent question.

The four wording choices were as follows:

- Washington (for those whose service area is statewide)
- the region you serve (for those who indicated a multi-county service area)
- the county you serve (for those who indicated a single-county service area)
- the area you serve (for those who answered, “Don’t know,” re: service area)

Throughout the survey, the computer inserted the proper wording, depending on the service area of the respondent. For instance, the computer code in the survey for Question 17 is as follows:

17. In general, how effective would you say boating programs and services in #13 are at meeting the needs of recreational boaters? Would you say the boating programs and services are very effective, somewhat effective, or not at all effective?

The proper wording was automatically inserted by the computer in place of “#13” when the interviewer read the question (#13 was the question number in the computer code where the proper wording substitution was determined). For instance, for a boating service provider whose service area is statewide, the question was read as follows:

17. In general, how effective would you say boating programs and services in *Washington* are at meeting the needs of recreational boaters? Would you say the boating programs and services are very effective, somewhat effective, or not at all effective?

On the other hand, for a boating service provider whose service area is a single county, the question was read as follows:

17. In general, how effective would you say boating programs and services in *the county you serve* are at meeting the needs of recreational boaters? Would you say the boating programs and services are very effective, somewhat effective, or not at all effective?

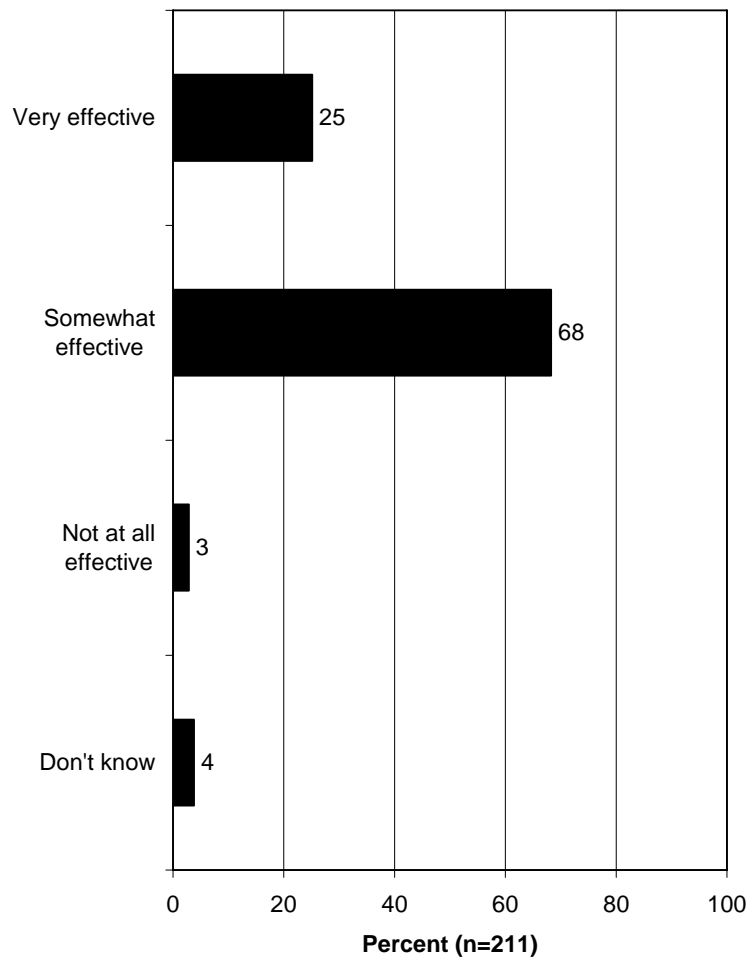
In this report, the wording substitution is indicated by “[area]” in the graphs.

## RATINGS OF STATE BOATING PROGRAMS, SERVICES, AND FACILITIES

### Ratings of Programs and Services Overall

- Boating service providers gave fairly positive ratings of the effectiveness of boating programs and services in their service area at meeting the needs of recreational boaters: 93% rated them effective. However, by more than 2:1, they rated them *somewhat* effective over *very* effective.

**Q17. In general, how effective would you say boating programs and services in [area] are at meeting the needs of recreational boaters? Would you say the boating programs and services are very effective, somewhat effective, or not at all effective?**



- In follow-up to the previous question, those who said that boating programs and services in their service area is not at all effective at meeting the needs of recreational boaters were asked for their reasoning for thinking that way.
  - Most commonly, those who feel that boating programs and services are not at all effective attribute this to either insufficient knowledge and awareness of boating programs and services (“I don’t see any programs going on”), or inadequate structures and facilities for boating programs and services. In some cases the inadequacy is due to the small size of existing structures (“We need to double the size of our buildings”), while in other cases the problem is the limited number of available facilities and services (“There are not enough facilities and services”). Note that no graph of these results is shown.

**Boating Programs, Services, and Facilities: Ratings of Importance, Performance, Amount of Resources Directed Toward Them, Quality, and Availability**

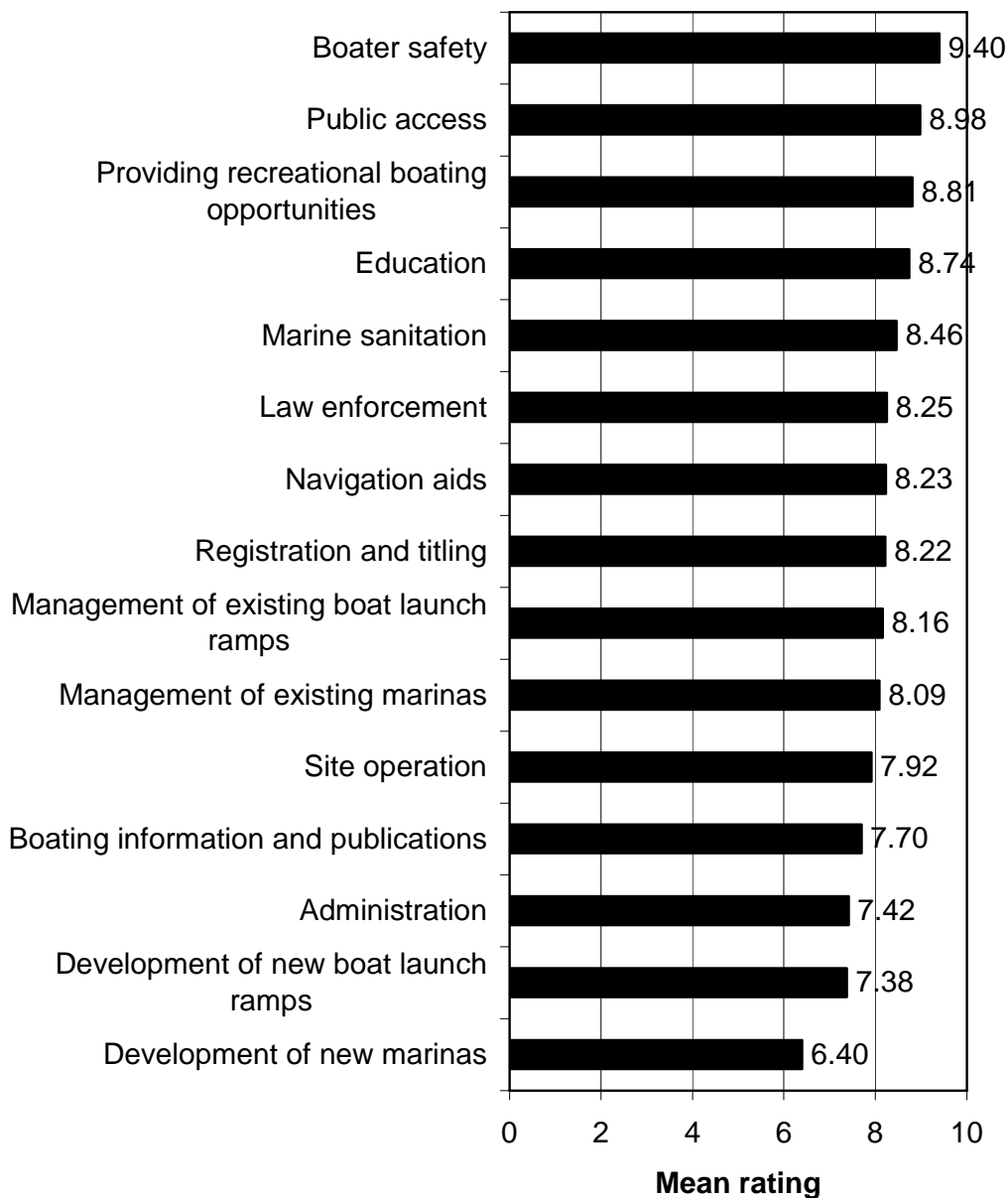
- The survey asked boating service providers to rate the importance of 15 boating programs and services in the provider's area of service. Note that all were fairly highly rated—the lowest having a mean of 6.40, well above the midpoint of 5. Highly rated were boating safety (mean rating of 9.40), public access (8.98), provision of recreational boating opportunities (8.81), and education (8.74). The lowest rated were development of new marinas (6.40), development of new boat launch ramps (7.38), and administration (7.42). Also shown are the percentages who rated the program or service at a 9 or 10, which reiterate the results discussed above.
  
- The survey asked boating service providers to rate the performance of the same 15 programs and services. All were positively rated, with means ranging from 6.14 to 7.36, with two exceptions: the development of new marinas (mean rating of 3.63) and the development of new boat launch ramps (4.20) had very low ratings. Note that navigation aids topped the ranking.
  
- A scatterplot of the results of the two previous bullets shows importance ratings as they relate to performance ratings. On one axis is importance; on the other is performance. A diagonal line shows where importance and performance are equal. Ideally, boating management should strive to have all items lie near the line in the upper right quadrant. Items that fall to the left of the line are higher rated in importance than performance, indicating that their performance should be made commensurate with importance ratings. Items that fall to the right of the diagonal line have a performance rating that is higher than their importance rating, suggesting that the item's importance should be emphasized so that providers better realize its importance.
  - Five programs or services have importance ratings that are markedly higher than their performance ratings: development of new marinas, development of new boat launch ramps, marine sanitation, public access, and boating safety.

- The survey then asked boating service providers to indicate whether more or less time and money should be spent on the same 15 programs and services. Demand for programs and services is high, as 9 of the 15 programs/services had a majority of providers saying that more time and money should be spent on it. Leading the list are boater safety (74% say more time and money should be spent on it), education (71%), public access (70%), and development of new boat launch ramps (70%). Note that 4 of the 15 programs/services had relatively low demand: administration (23% want more time and money spent on this), registration and titling (29%), management of existing marinas (32%), and navigation aids (36%).
  
- Boating service providers rated the quality of 16 boating facilities and services in their area of service in Washington.
  - There were 6 facilities and services that were notably better rated than the other facilities and services: marinas (55% rated them excellent or good), boating safety courses (54%), law enforcement on the water (52%), information and publications on boat launch ramps and marinas (52%), docks (51%), and restrooms at marinas (47%).
  - On the other hand, those facilities and services with high percentages rating them fair or poor include parking at boat launch ramps (69% rated it fair or poor), restrooms at boat launch ramps (63%), boat launch ramps themselves (55%), courtesy tie-ups (54%), pumpout stations (51%), and fish cleaning stations (51%)—all with a majority giving a rating of fair or poor.
  
- The survey asked boating service providers to indicate whether they want more or fewer of the same 16 facilities or services that they previously rated for quality.
  - Note that 11 of the 16 facilities or services had a majority of boating providers who want more of them. At the top of the list are parking at boat launch ramps (72% want more of this), boat launch ramps themselves (69%), boating safety courses (68%), and law enforcement on the water (66%). At the bottom of the list is restrooms at marinas (36%).
  
- After the series of question discussed immediately above, the survey asked boating service providers if there are any other facilities or services in their service area that they would like

to see built. A majority (59%) indicated that there were other facilities or services in their service area that they would like to see built.

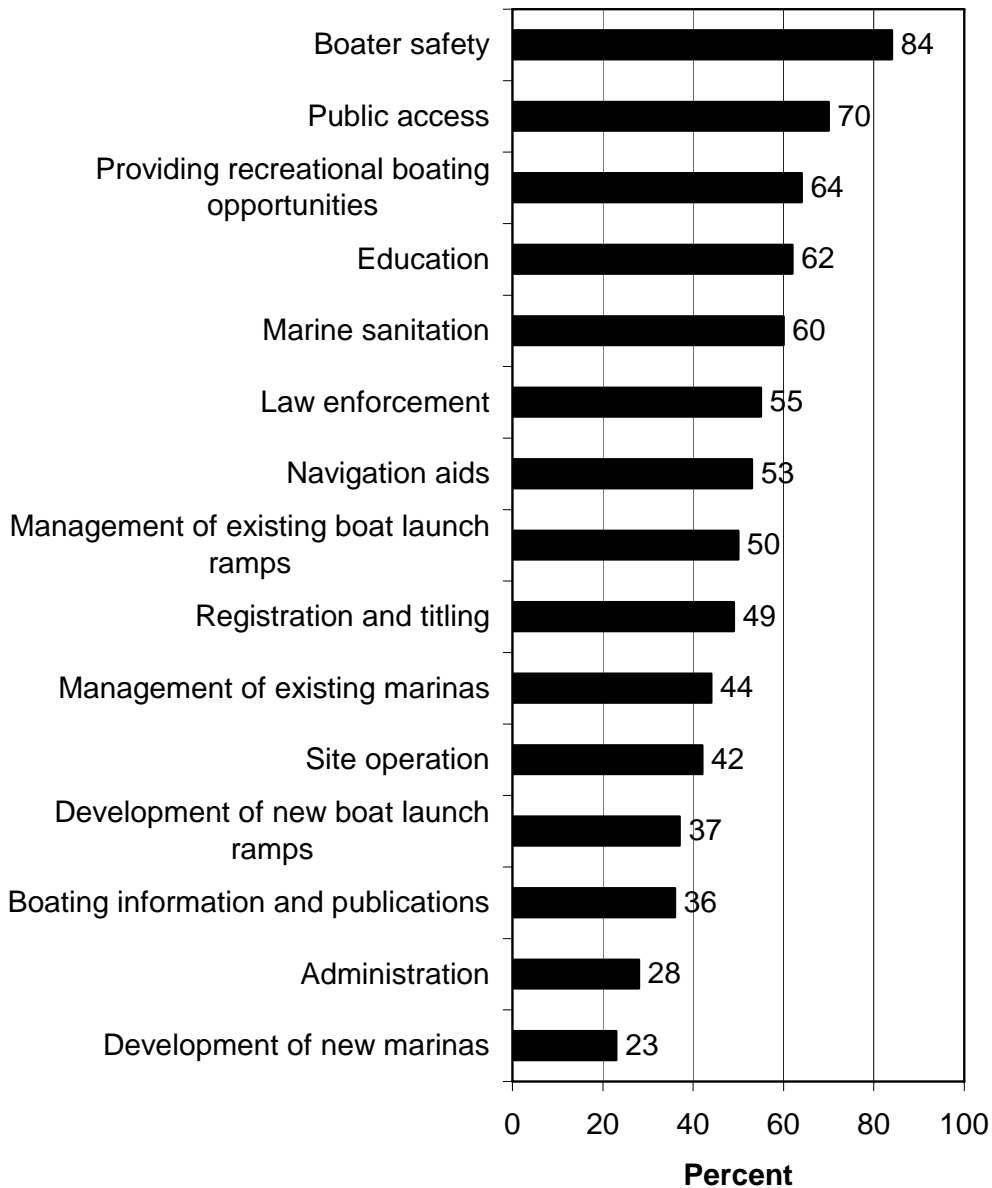
- The most commonly mentioned things that they said they wanted to see built were boat launch ramps, marinas, mooring buoys and docks, public access, restrooms at marinas, sanitary pumpouts, and restrooms at boat launch ramps.
- The survey asked boating service providers whether there were any facilities or services in their area that they would like to see improved. A majority (66%) answered yes. In follow-up, they most commonly mentioned boat launch ramps (by far the top answer), mooring buoys and docks, and parking at boat launch ramps and marinas.

**Q25-53. On a scale of 0 - 10 where 0 is "not at all important" and 10 is "extremely important," the mean rating of importance of the following boating programs and services managed and provided in his/her area of service in Washington.**

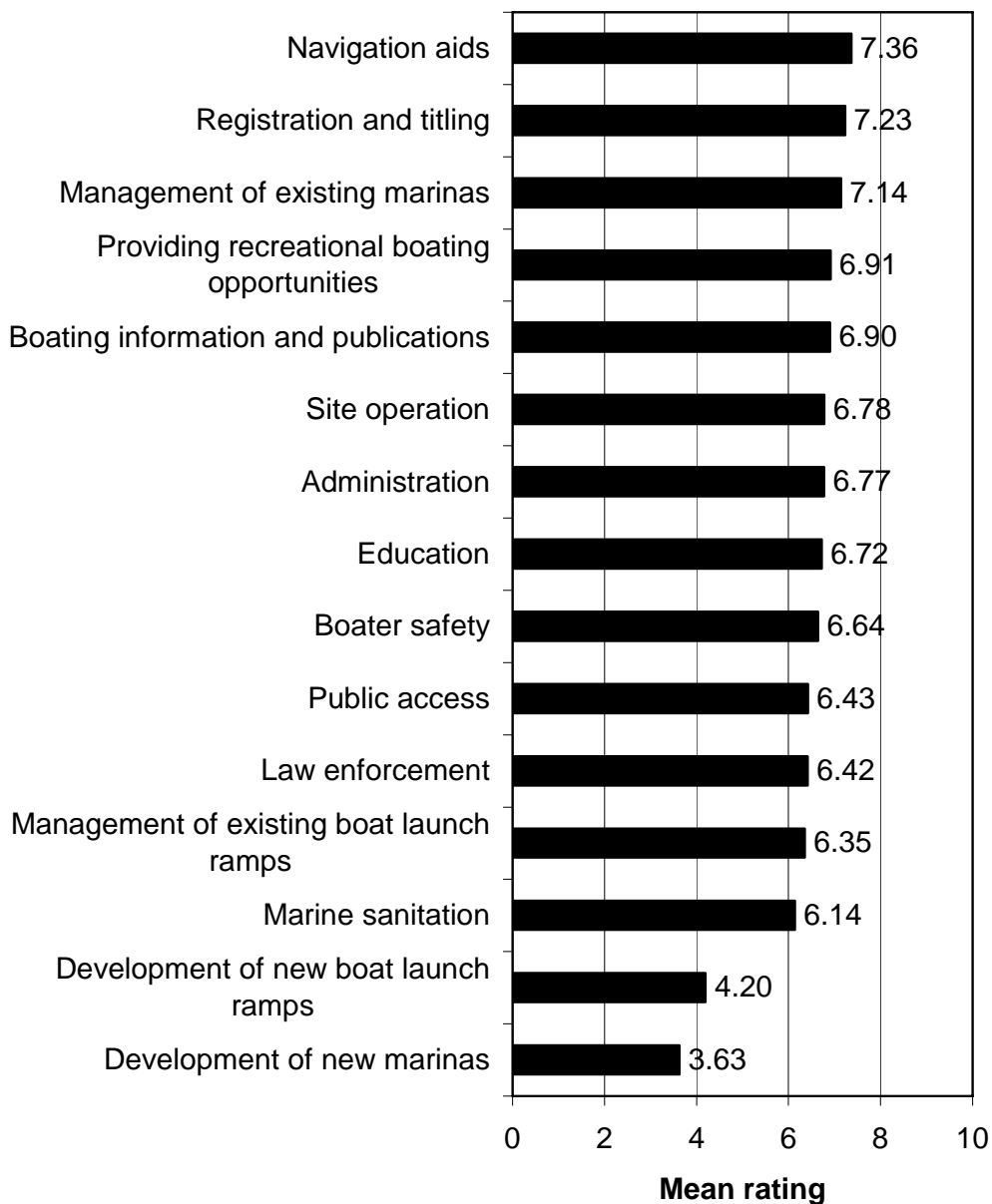




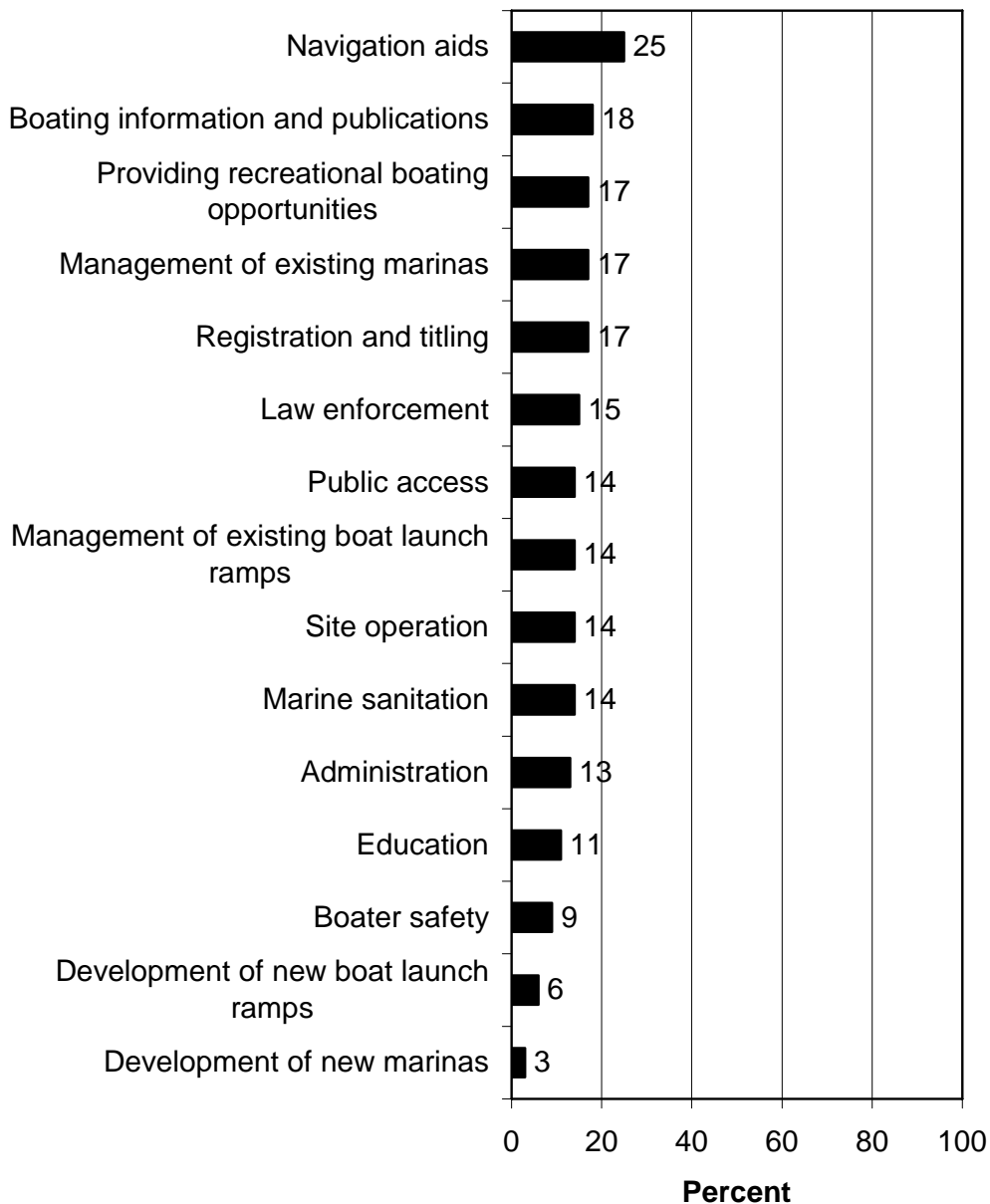
**Q25-53. On a scale of 0 - 10 where 0 is "not at all important" and 10 is "extremely important," the percent who rated the importance of following boating programs and services managed and provided in his/her area of service in Washington as a 9 or 10.**



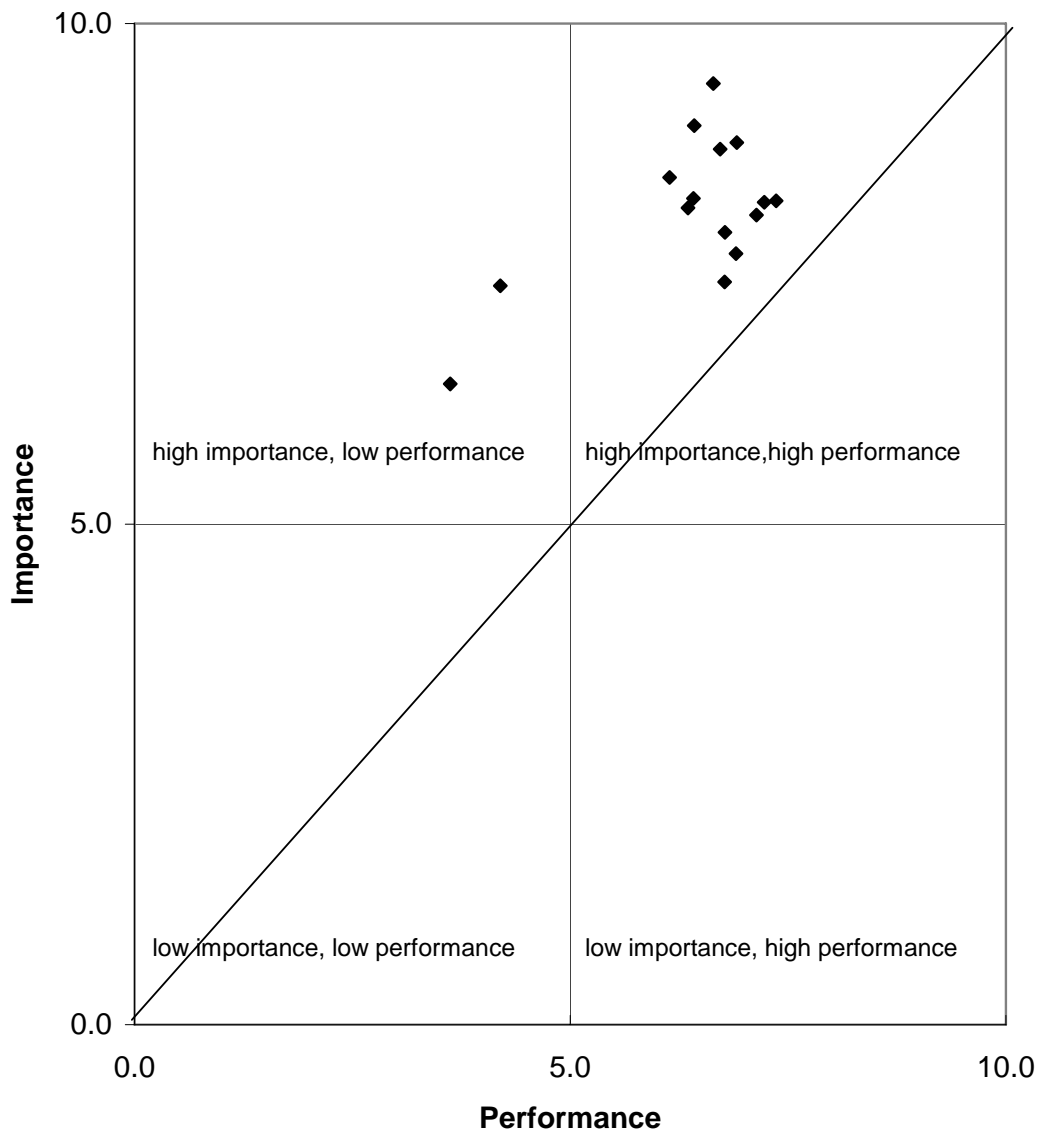
**Q57-71. On a scale of 0 - 10 where 0 is "poor performance" and 10 is "excellent performance," the mean rating of performance of the following boating programs and services managed and provided in his/her area of service in Washington.**



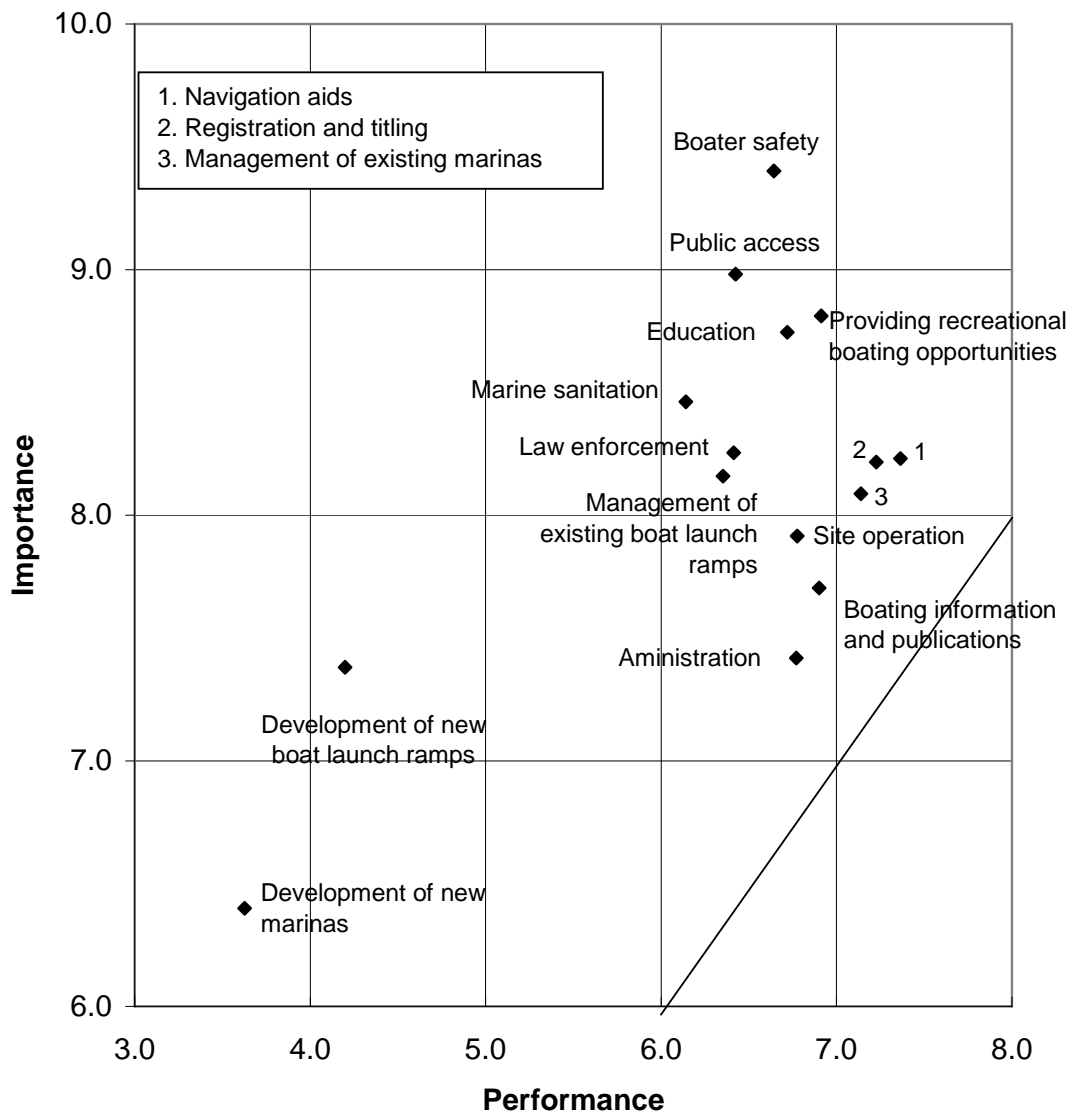
**Q57-71. On a scale of 0 - 10 where 0 is "poor performance" and 10 is "excellent performance," the percent who rated the performance of the following boating programs and services managed and provided in his/her area of service in Washington as a 9 or 10.**



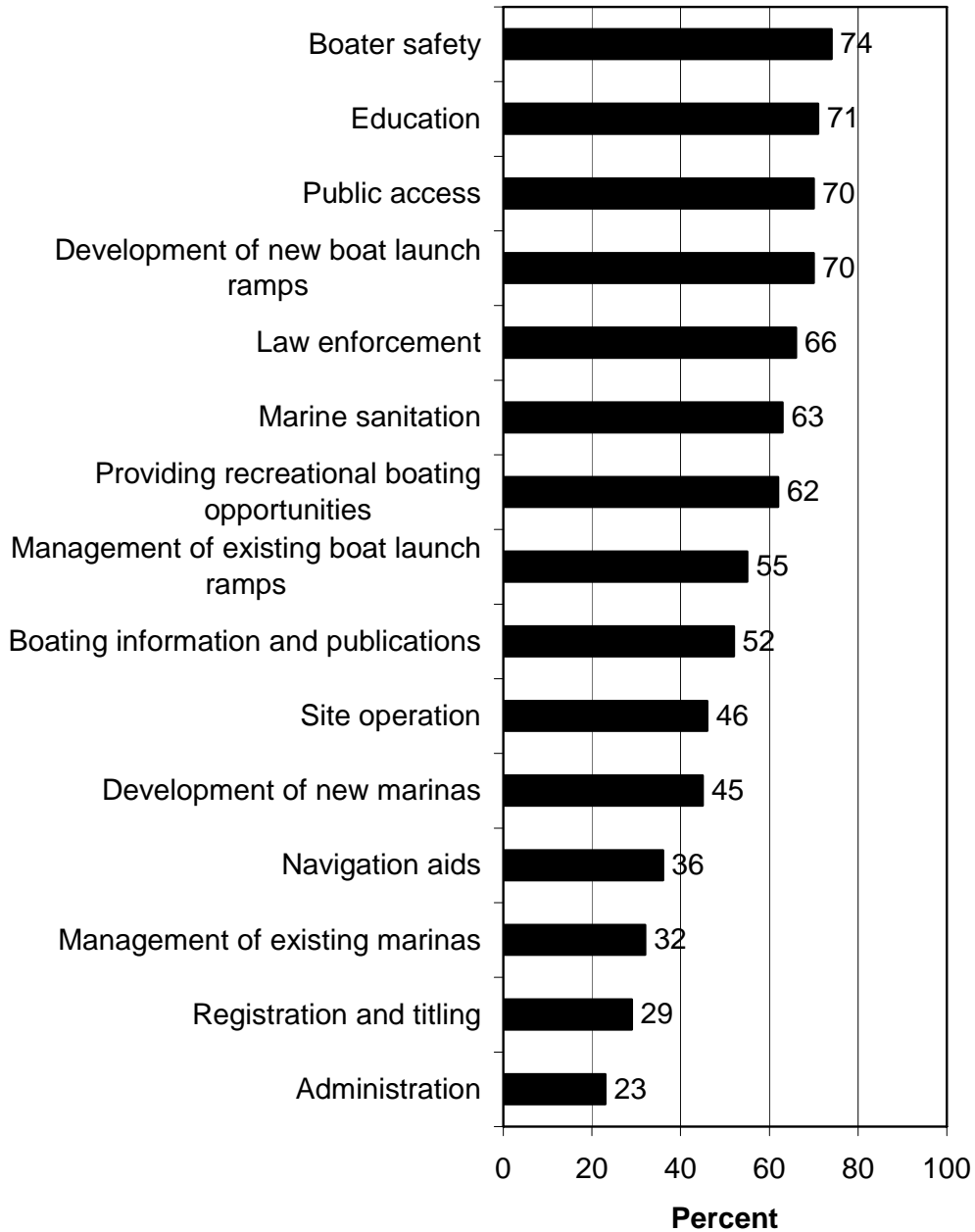
**Comparison of ratings of importance and performance of boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**



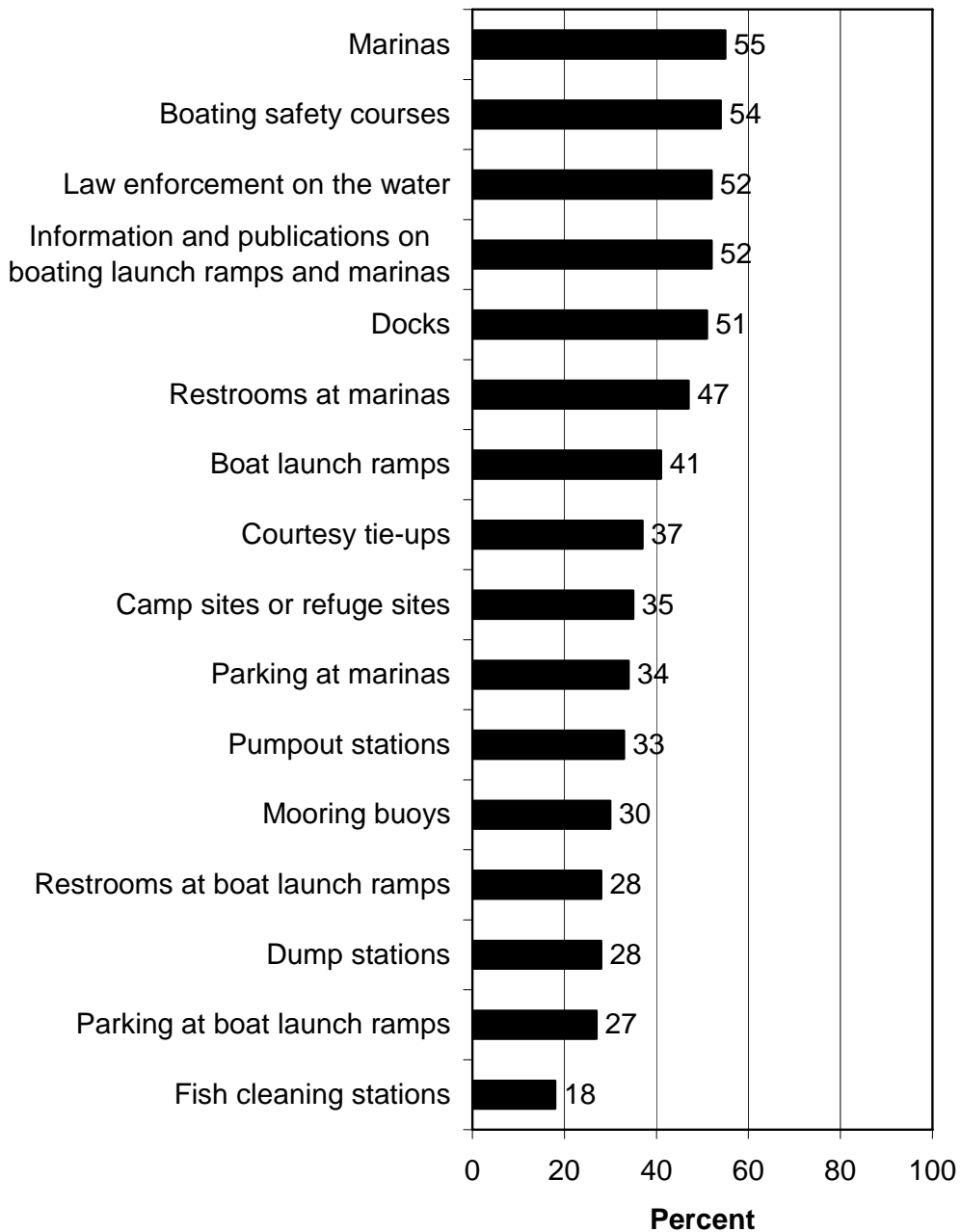
### Comparison of ratings of importance and performance of boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.



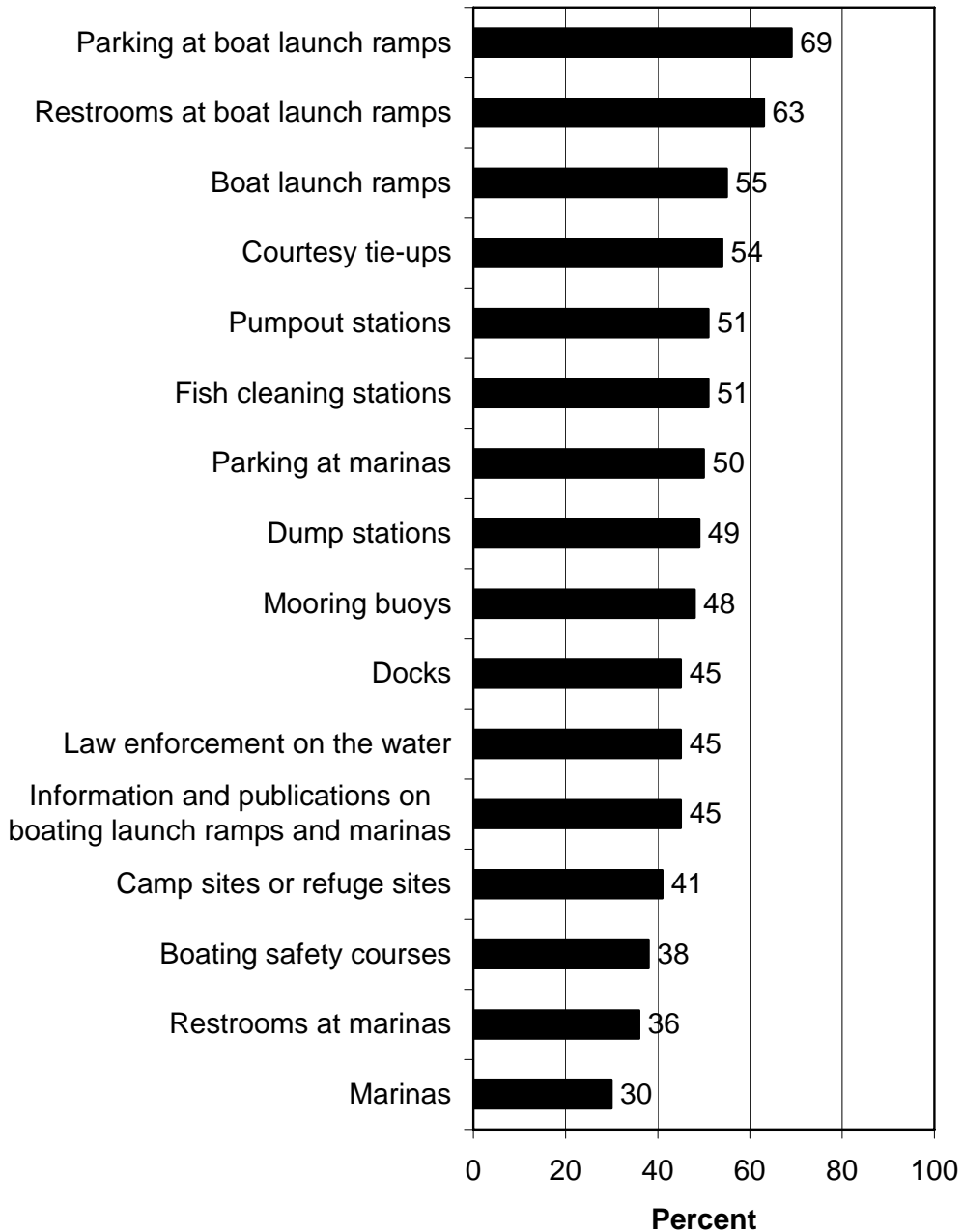
**Q74-88. Percent who indicated that more time and money should be directed toward the following boating program and services in his/her area of service in Washington.**



**Q91-106. Percent who rated the quality of the following facilities and services in his/her area of service in Washington as excellent or good.**

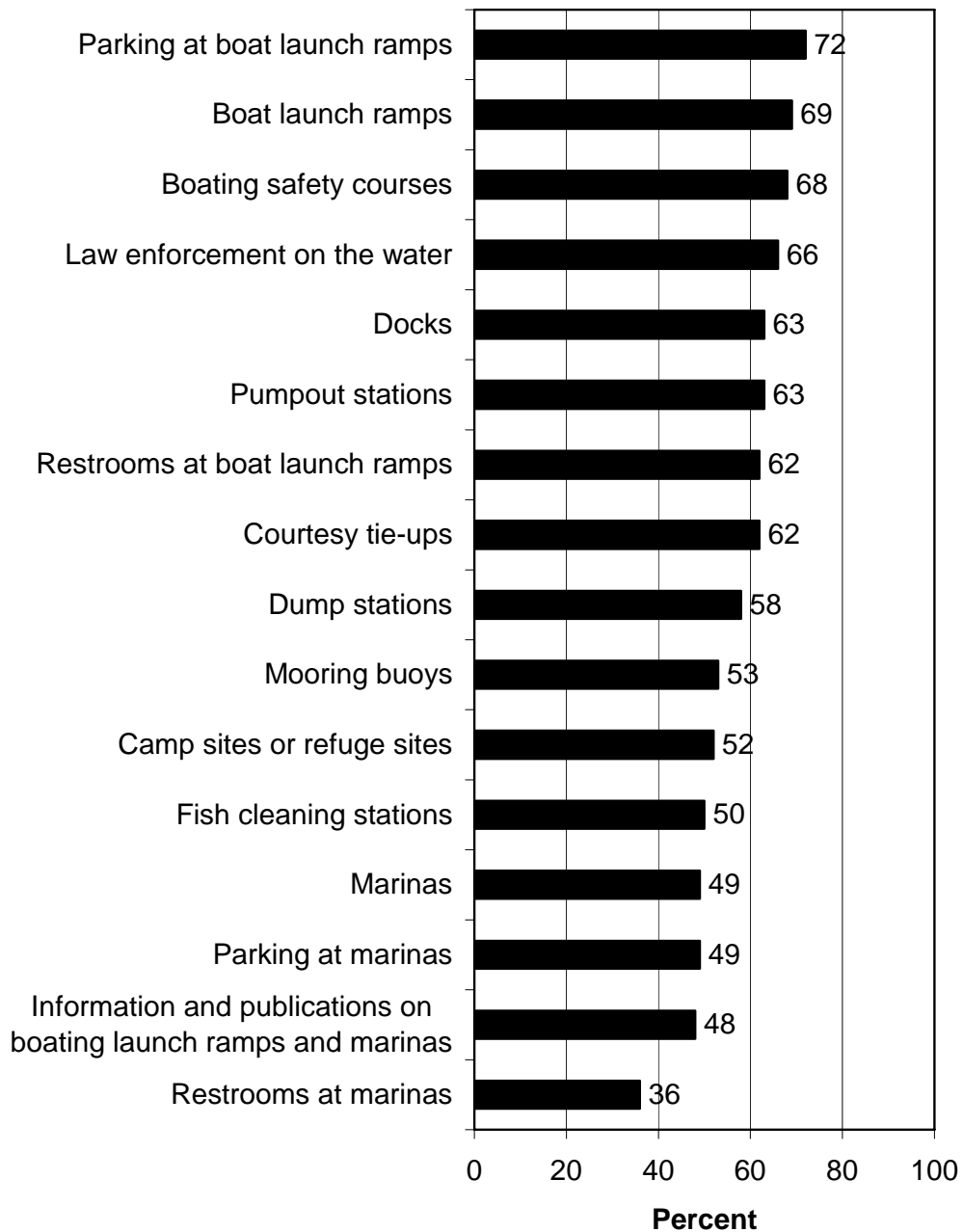


**Q91-106. Percent who rated the quality of the following facilities and services in his/her area of service in Washington as fair or poor.**

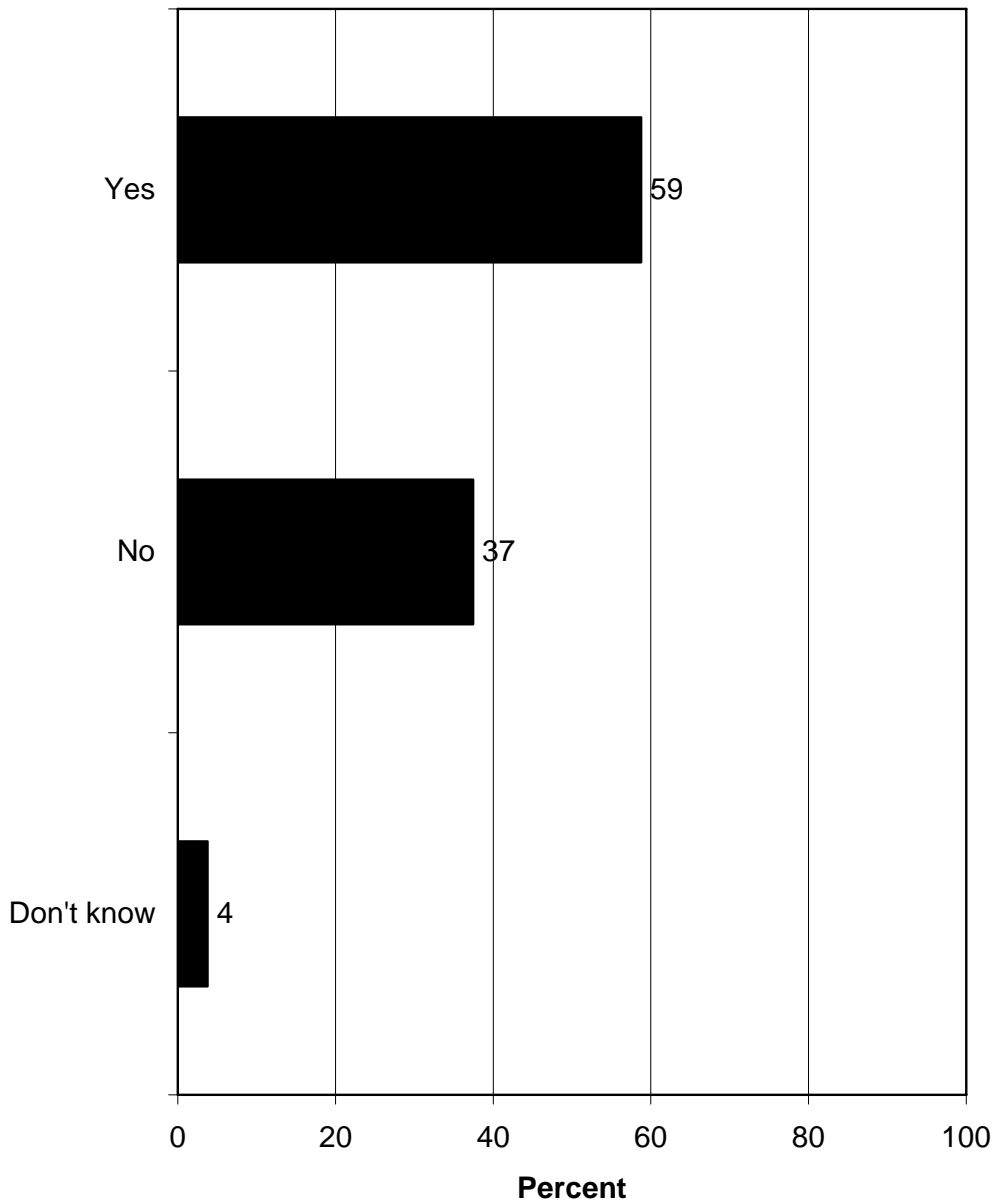




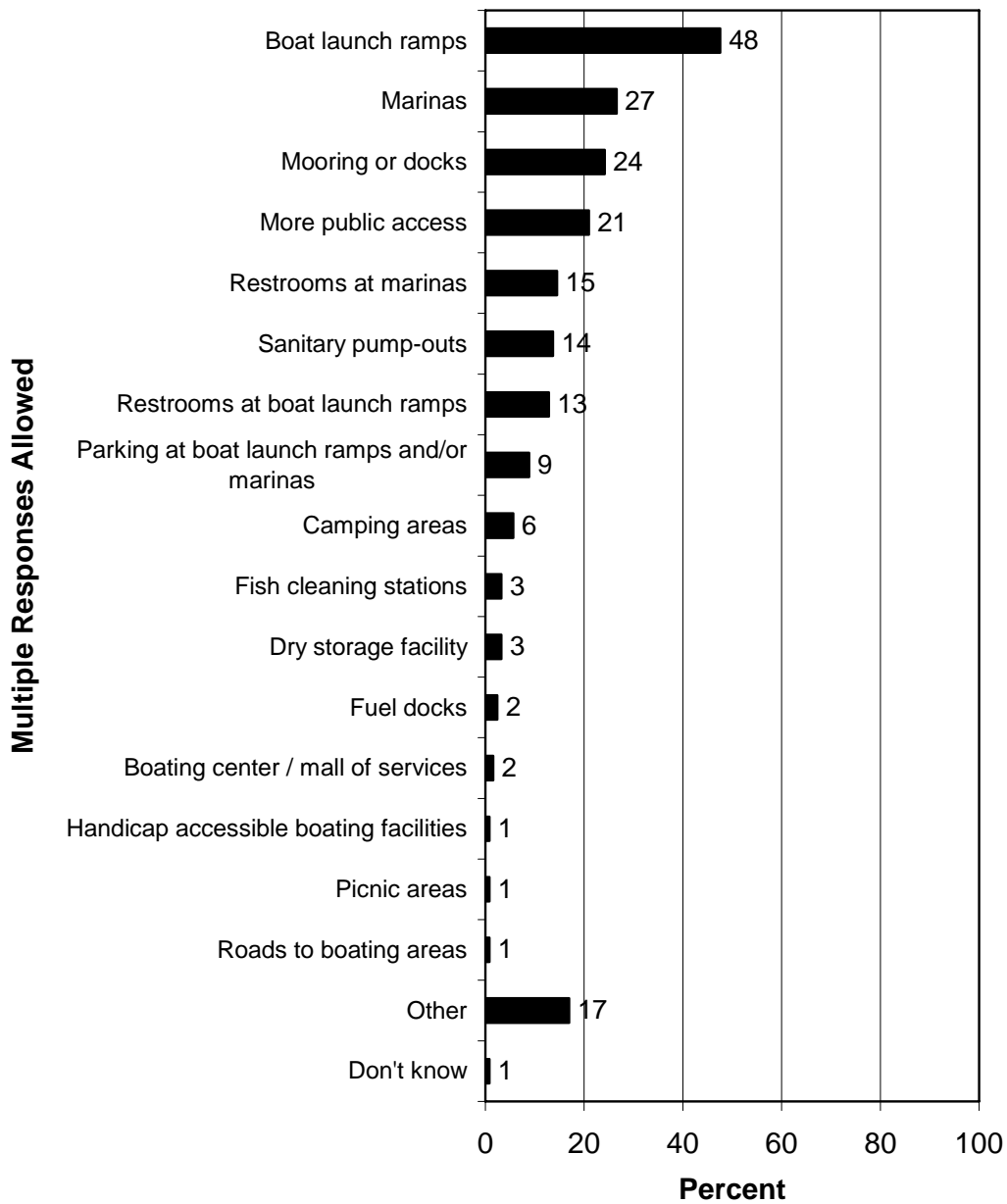
**Q114-129. Percent who indicated that he/she would like to see more of the following facilities and services in his/her area of service in Washington.**



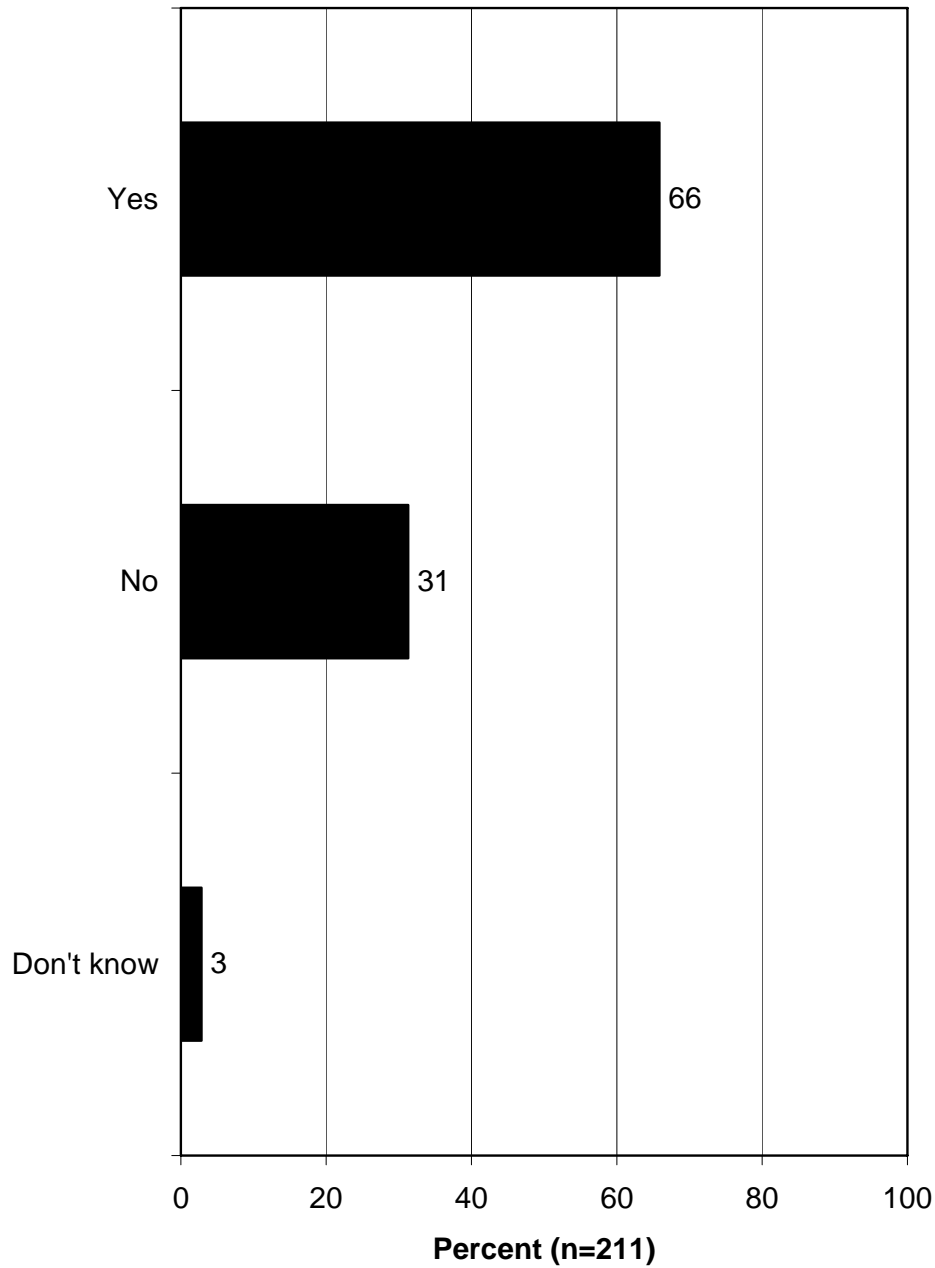
**Q130. Are there any facilities or services in the [area] that you would like to see built?**



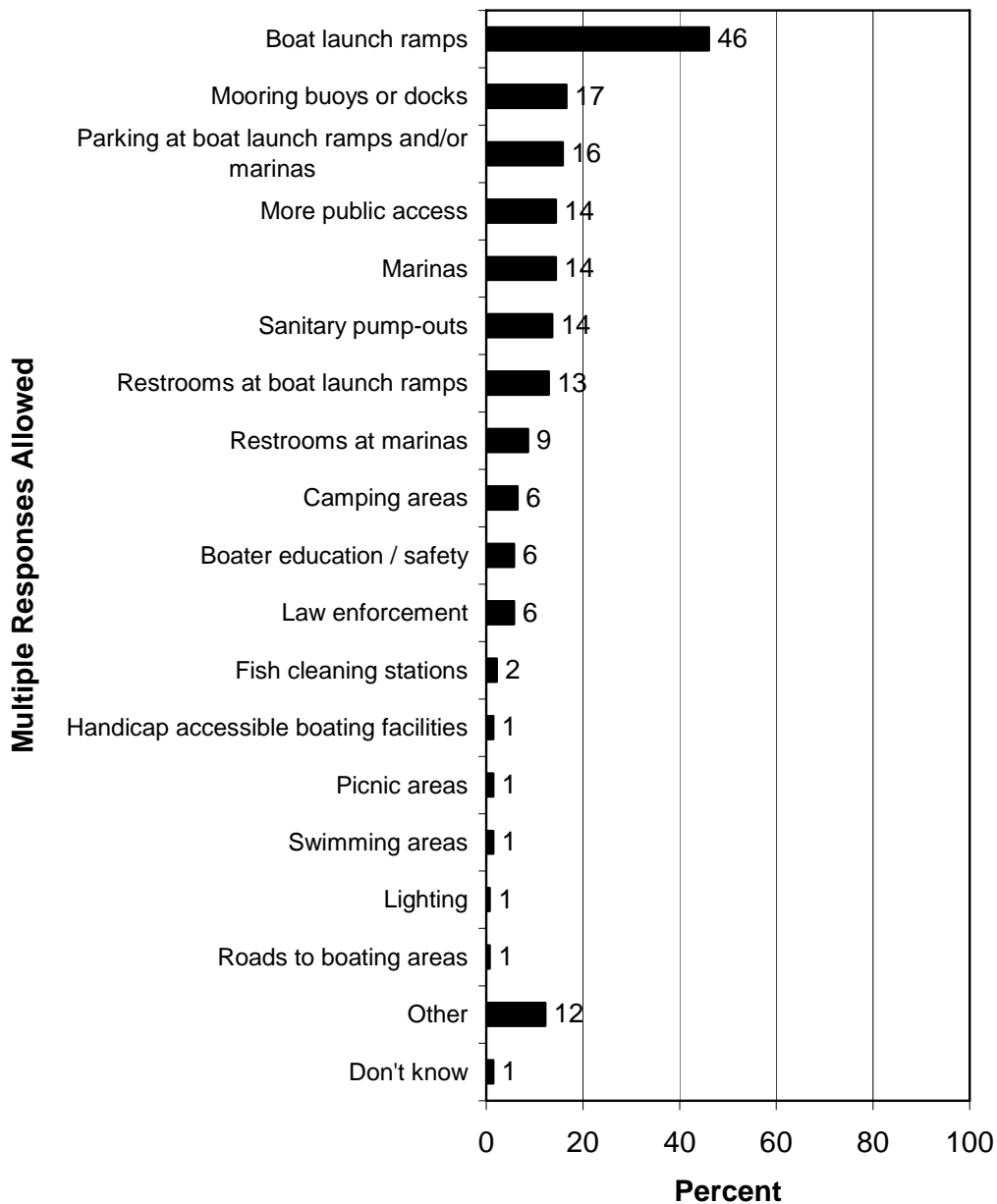
**Q133. What would you like to see built? (Asked of those who would like to see facilities or services in their [area] built.)**



**Q107. Are there any facilities or services in [area] that you would like to see improved?**



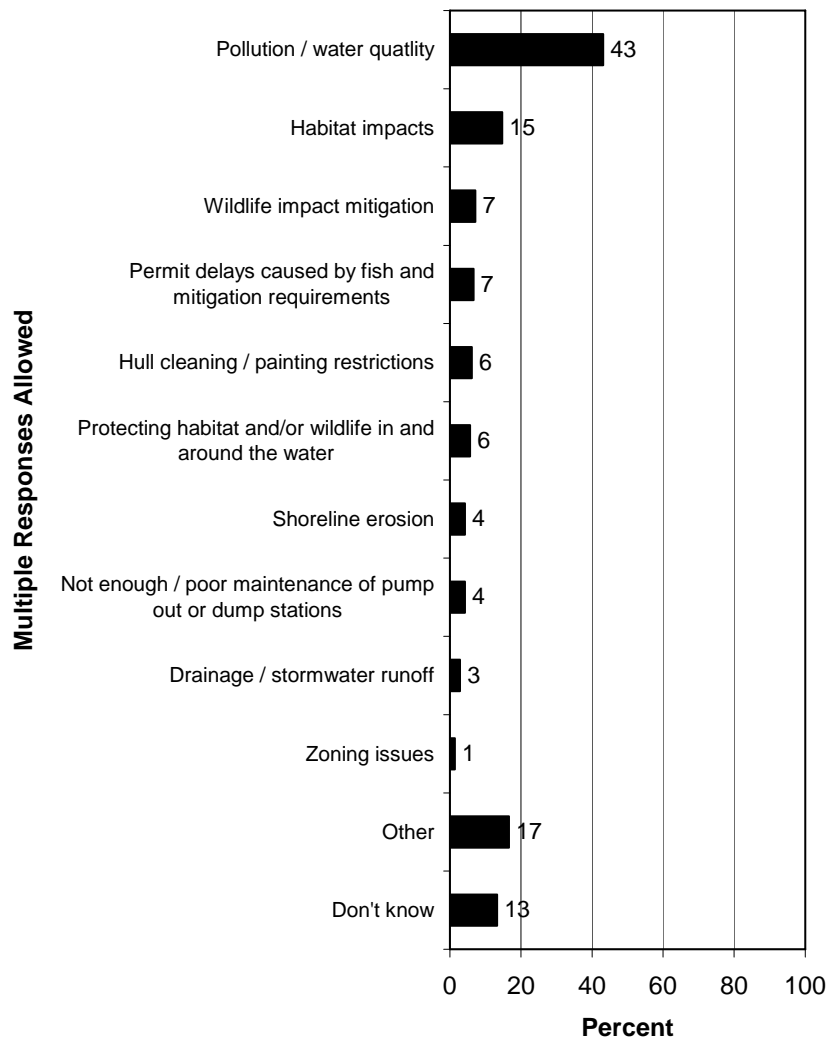
**Q110. What aspects of the facilities or services need to be improved? (Asked of those who would like to see some facilities or services in their [area] improved.)**



### Issues Associated with Boating Programs, Services, and Facilities

- Pollution and water quality were most commonly named in response to the question about what are the most important environmental issues related to recreational boating. Also with many responses was the habitat impact of recreational boating.

#### Q21. In your opinion, what are the most important environmental issues related to recreational boating in [area] today?



➤ In follow-up to each question about the importance of the 15 boating programs and services in the provider's area of service, the survey asked about the specific issues or challenges related to each program or service. For instance, Question 37 asked about the importance of the development of new boat launch ramps for boating in the provider's area of service. This was followed in Question 38 with, "What are the specific issues or challenges related to development of new boat launch ramps for meeting recreational boaters' needs in [area]?" For each of these follow-up questions, which were open-ended (meaning that no answer set was read; respondents could give any answer that came to mind), a qualitative analysis is included below.

- **Q26. What are the specific issues or challenges related to administration for meeting recreational boaters' needs in [area]?**
  - Communication/interaction/coordination between administrating agencies, understaffing, and under-funding were the most commonly named issues related to boating administration. Strong leadership and a limited bureaucracy, education of staff and boaters (as well as sufficient staff training), and the implementation of well-publicized regulations were also named as issues affecting boating administration.
  
- **Q28. What are the specific issues or challenges related to education for meeting recreational boaters' needs in [area]?**
  - Most commonly, respondents cited the need to overcome apathy among boaters toward education, as well as the need for boaters to effectively absorb educational information and materials, and to ensure that boaters know where to find educational information and materials. Funding and staffing for educational purposes were also cited as concerns, as was ensuring that information reaches all age groups and making rules and regulations clear and concise.
  
- **Q30. What are the specific issues or challenges related to providing recreational boating opportunities for meeting recreational boaters' needs in [area]?**
  - Access issues topped the responses of challenges related to recreational boating opportunities. Specifically, "access" responses tended to address the insufficient

number of boat launches as well as the current poor condition of many existing launches, inadequate ramps, a lack of moorage space for boats, limited parking opportunities at access sites, and the need for increased property/land areas from which boats may access Washington's waters (e.g., private waterfront properties limiting public access). Additionally, several respondents cited the lack of available funding for the maintenance and upkeep of access sites as a challenge related to recreational boating. Shoreline regulatory issues and permit processes affecting potential access additions were also named as challenges to boating opportunities.

- **Q32. What are the specific issues or challenges related to public access for meeting recreational boaters' needs in [area]?**
  - In large part, responses to public access challenges echoed the items listed in the previous question ("challenges related to recreational boating opportunities"), with many of the same issues being named. These included both the insufficient number of current access sites (including ramps, docks, and launches), the poor condition of existing access sites, the inadequate and inconsistent funding sources to maintain and improve access sites, and the limitations on public access because of private waterfront properties. Insufficient parking opportunities at many sites and permit processes discouraging launch development and maintenance were also cited as challenges.
  
- **Q34. What are the specific issues or challenges related to management of existing boat launch ramps for meeting recreational boaters' needs in [area]?**
  - Many respondents indicated that funding for launch maintenance is particularly low ("funding" being the most-repeated word among responses to the question), and that environmental regulations make the actual maintenance of ramps fairly difficult. Vandalism and boater conflicts over parking issues were also cited as issues associated with the management of existing launch ramps, as were staffing issues (both the availability of staff and consistency of staffing presence), and the importance of providing an enforcement presence at ramps with particularly high volumes of people. Finally, design and construction of ramps were named as



- challenges (despite that these concerns would seem to pertain to the development of future ramps rather than the management of existing ramps).
- **Q36. What are the specific issues or challenges related to management of existing marinas for meeting recreational boaters' needs in [area]?**
    - Some of the recurring issues and challenges related to the management of existing marinas included security issues (such as the prevention of property damage), the increasing need (in certain areas) to provide services for large numbers of boaters, and the general lack of marinas in other areas. Other concerns included compliance with environmental regulations and sanitation issues (such as garbage disposal, fuel spills, and debris in surrounding waters), assistance with funding for dredging and the disposal of derelict vessels, and general funding for marina maintenance. A number of responses addressed the need to publicize marina locations for the convenience of boaters.
  
  - **Q38. What are the specific issues or challenges related to development of new boat launch ramps for meeting recreational boaters' needs in [area]?**
    - The top issue related to the development of new boat launch ramps was the acquisition of land/property on which boat launches can be developed. The majority of responses addressed both the problematic cost of such land (“funding”) as well as difficulties stemming from environmental regulations (particularly the permitting process), homeowners’ association policies, and real estate pressures due to the high value of waterfront properties. By all accounts, available waterfront access in Washington is extremely limited.
  
  - **Q40. What are the specific issues or challenges related to development of new marinas for meeting recreational boaters' needs in [area]?**
    - As with development of boat launch ramps, a permitting process made difficult by environmental regulations was the leading challenge related to the development of new marinas. Many respondents cited the difficulties in arranging approval for new marinas (again, citing environmental concerns). In addition, land acquisition was

(again) mentioned as a major challenge to new marinas. Several responses addressed the need to maintain existing marinas, while others mentioned that challenges for marina development were “the same as [those affecting the development of] boat launches.”

- **Q42. What are the specific issues or challenges related to law enforcement for meeting recreational boaters’ needs in [area]?**
  - Numerous responses addressed funding mechanisms for law enforcement, both in terms of equipment and staffing (again, “funding” was the most-repeated word among responses to the question). Similarly, understaffing was mentioned several times, frequently alongside the fact that when enforcement personnel are needed on land, attention is diverted from the water (in turn, leading to poor response times when enforcement services are needed on the water). Security at launch ramps, alcohol and drug use by boaters, and boater adherence to general rules and regulations (such as speeding and overloading boats) were among the other concerns related to law enforcement. Finally, jurisdictional issues and the breakdown of duties and responsibilities among local agencies were listed as additional law enforcement challenges.
  
- **Q44. What are the specific issues or challenges related to registration and titling for meeting recreational boaters’ needs in [area]?**
  - One of the top issues related to registration and titling is the inconsistency of registered vessels throughout the state. Addressing this issue, several responses referred to the large number of Canadian boaters of whom boating registrations are not required. Additionally, respondents indicated that a number of boaters (as well as enforcement personnel) are unfamiliar with the registration requirements, while other boaters fail to properly apply the registration decals to their vessels. Providing basic education and enforcement of registrations was cited as a further difficulty (again relating to understaffing). Many responses articulated the need for all vessels to be registered, including non-motorized vessels and canoes and kayaks.

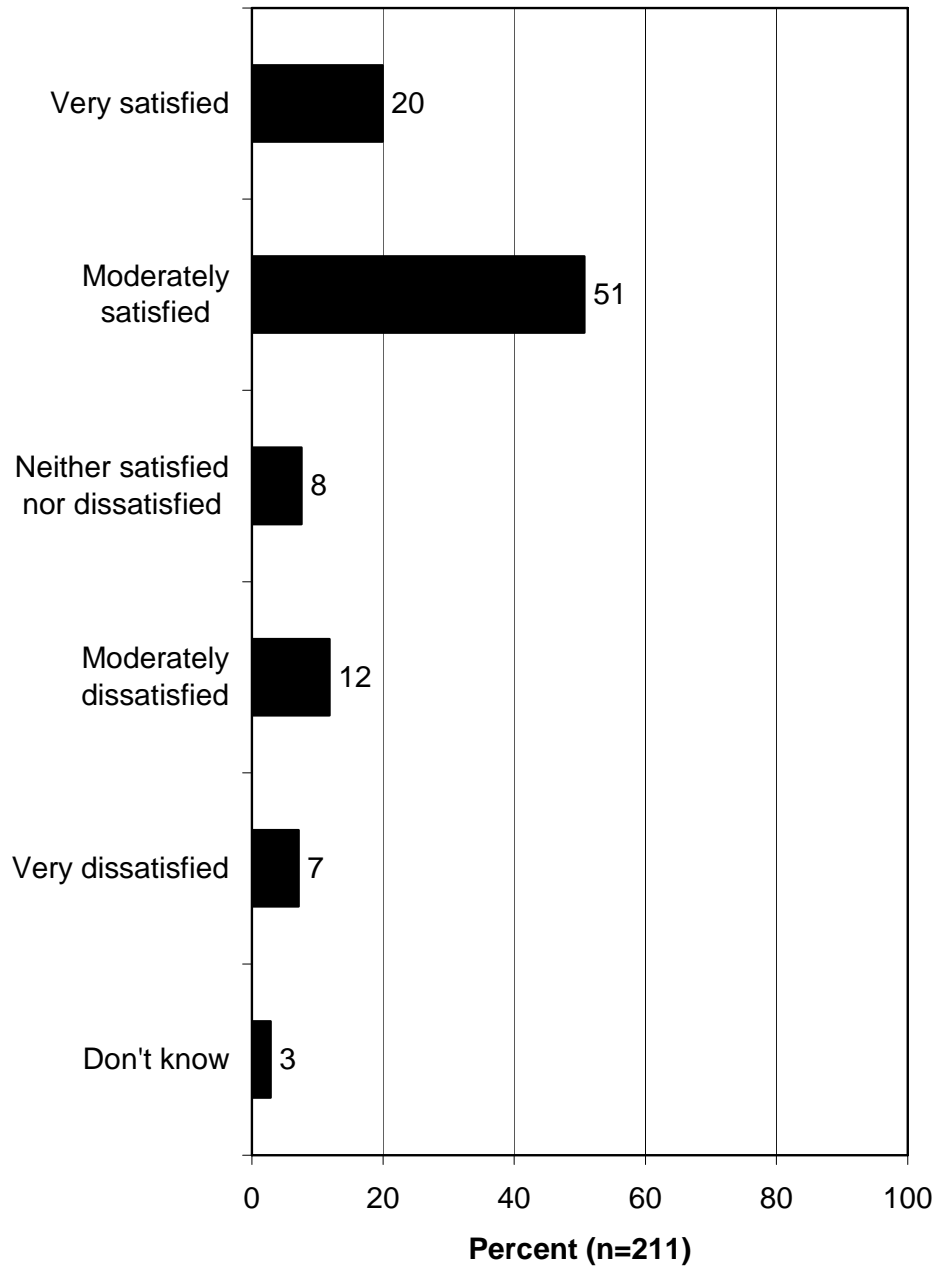
- **Q46. What are the specific issues or challenges related to navigation aids for meeting recreational boaters' needs in [area]?**
  - The main issues related to navigation aids included the need for general boater education (in order to know the meanings associated with navigation symbols and signage), as well as a basic awareness of where to find navigation aids on individual bodies of water. Respondents also referenced the need to prevent theft and damage to navigation aids, as well as the difficulties in securing funding to replace stolen or damaged navigation aids.
  
- **Q48. What are the specific issues or challenges related to boating information and publications for meeting recreational boaters' needs in [area]?**
  - Delivery/distribution methods (as well as the funding involved) and the ability to ensure that boating information would be absorbed by boaters were among the top concerns related to boating information and publications. Respondents were also concerned with determining suitable venues for the dissemination of boating information, and with creating publications that contain clear, easily understood, and current information on boating and related issues.
  
- **Q50. What are the specific issues or challenges related to site operation for meeting recreational boaters' needs in [area]?**
  - As before, the majority of respondents addressed the need to maintain existing access sites (particularly those in poor condition), as well as the need to secure funding for both new equipment and the presence of enforcement personnel at crowded access sites. Regarding improvements or additions to sites, respondents cited lighting (especially as a means of reducing theft and vandalism), ramps, launches, marinas, properly maintained boatyards, consistent dredging of small ports, and parking lot additions or improvements. “Maintenance” and “upkeep” were repeatedly mentioned in reference to site operation.

- **Q52. What are the specific issues or challenges related to boater safety for meeting recreational boaters' needs in [area]?**
  - Familiarity with Washington's boating rules and regulations and the need for mandatory boater education (particularly among the boating youth) were commonly cited as issues related to boater safety. Additionally, respondents cited the need for greater enforcement of alcohol-related laws, the need to enforce the use of personal flotation devices, and the need for cooperating agencies (state and county, as well as the Coast Guard) to improve coordination and communication with regard to law enforcement efforts. Finally, several respondents expressed the need for new boaters to become familiarized with regulations and to receive proper safety education before actively taking part in boating.
  
- **Q54. What are the specific issues or challenges related to marine sanitation for meeting recreational boaters' needs in [area]?**
  - The top issues related to marine sanitation were the need for more pumpout stations along Washington's waters (as well as the upkeep of pumpout stations), the need to more effectively prevent runoff (urban and rural), the need to provide more restroom facilities along Washington's shores, and the need for continued education and enforcement of environmental regulations.

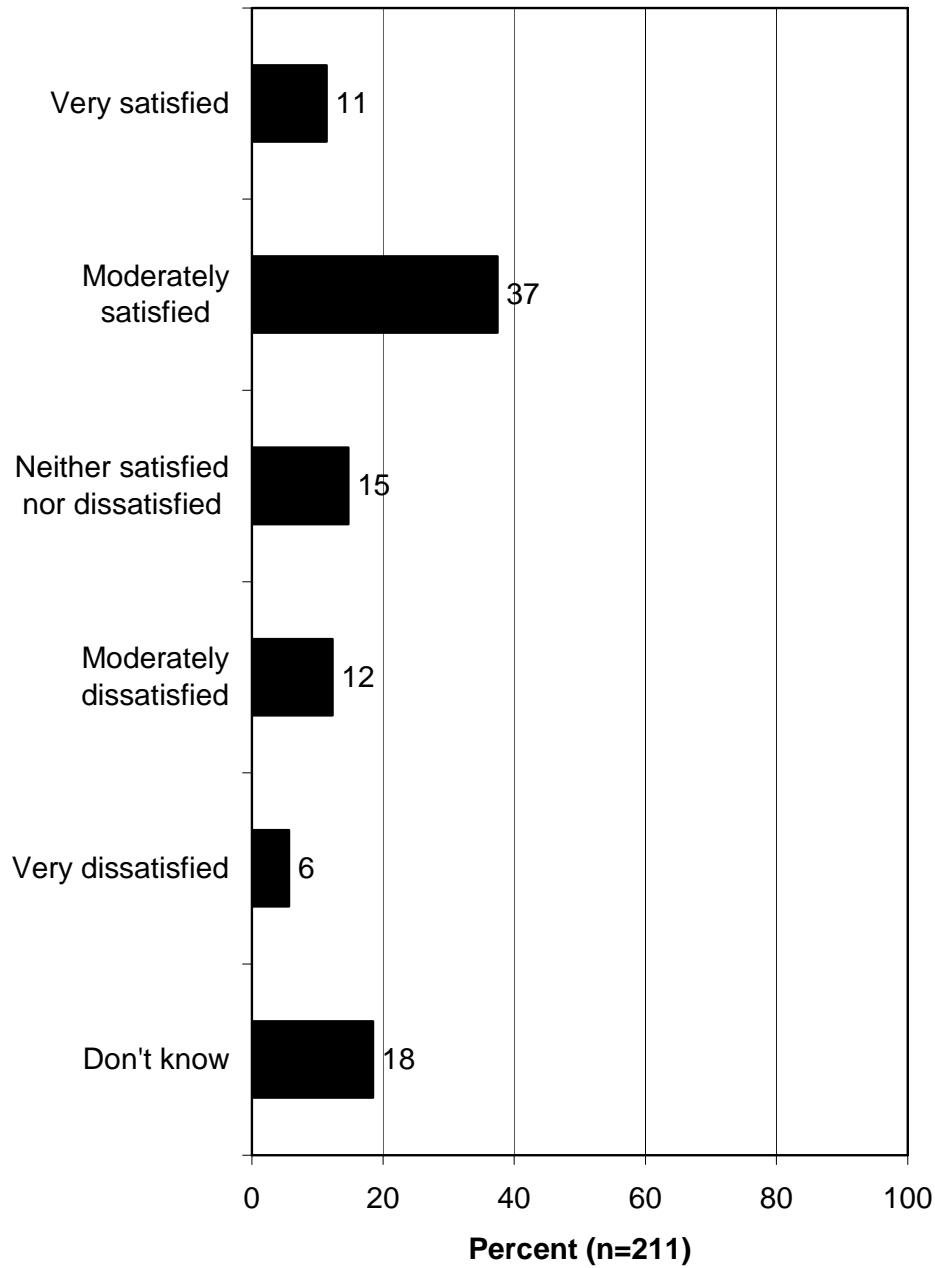
### **Boating Access Locations and Crowding**

- The majority of boating service providers (71%) are satisfied with the locations of boat launch ramp sites in their service area, but a substantial percentage (19%) are dissatisfied.
  
- Compared to the previous question, satisfaction is not as high for the locations of mooring buoys in the respondent's service area: 48% are satisfied, while 18% are dissatisfied. Note that this question had a higher percentage (18%) who answered, "Don't know," compared to the question about locations of boat launch ramp sites.
  
- Boating service providers were asked how much of a problem is crowding on the water in their service area, and the majority (63%) say it is a problem, but with most of those saying *minor* problem.
  
- Boating service providers were asked how much of a problem is crowding at boat launch ramps in their service area, and the overwhelming majority (85%) say it is a problem, about evenly divided between saying *major* problem and *minor* problem.

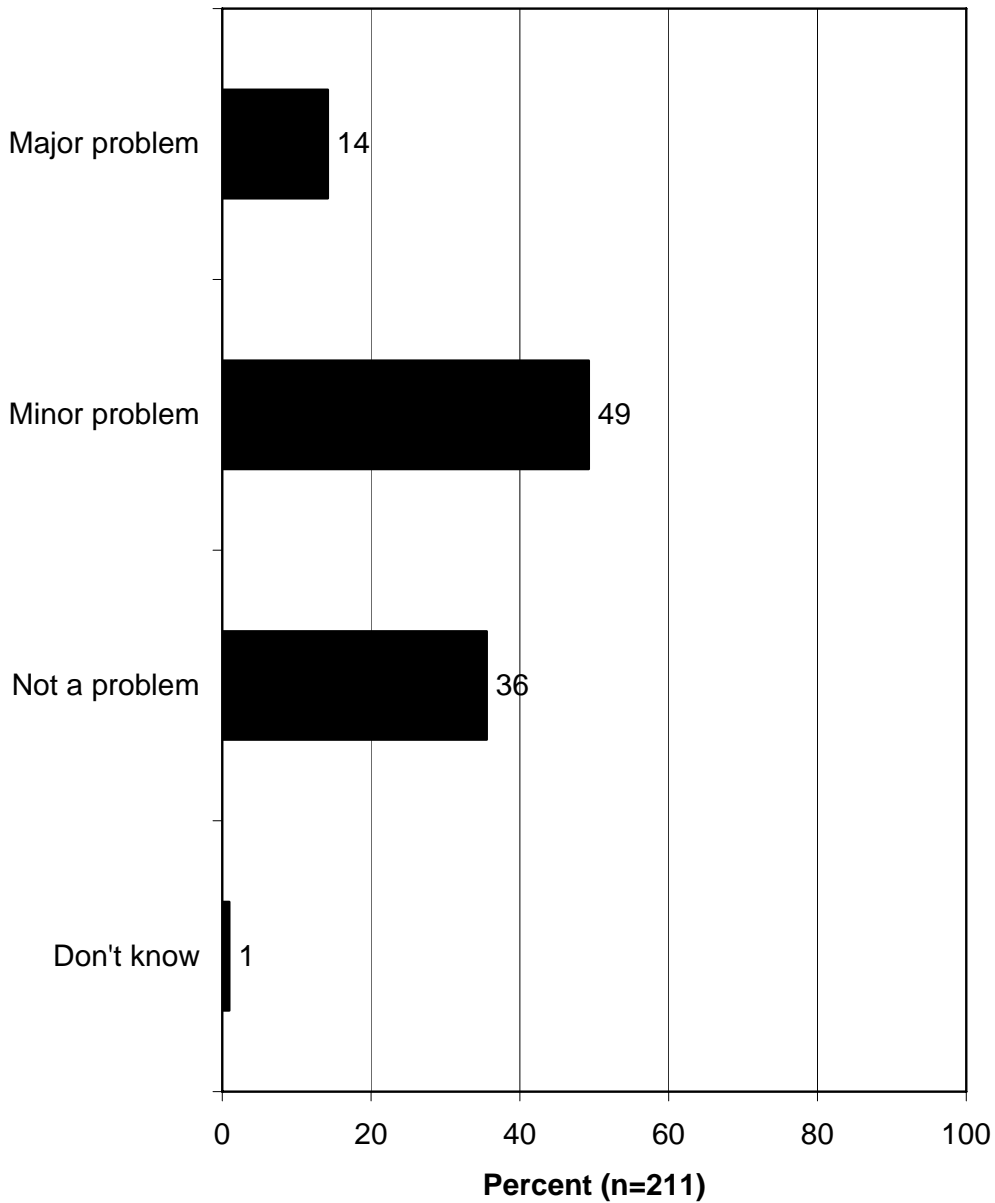
**Q135. How satisfied are you with the locations of boat launch ramp sites in [area]?**



**Q137. How satisfied are you with the locations of mooring buoys in [area]?**

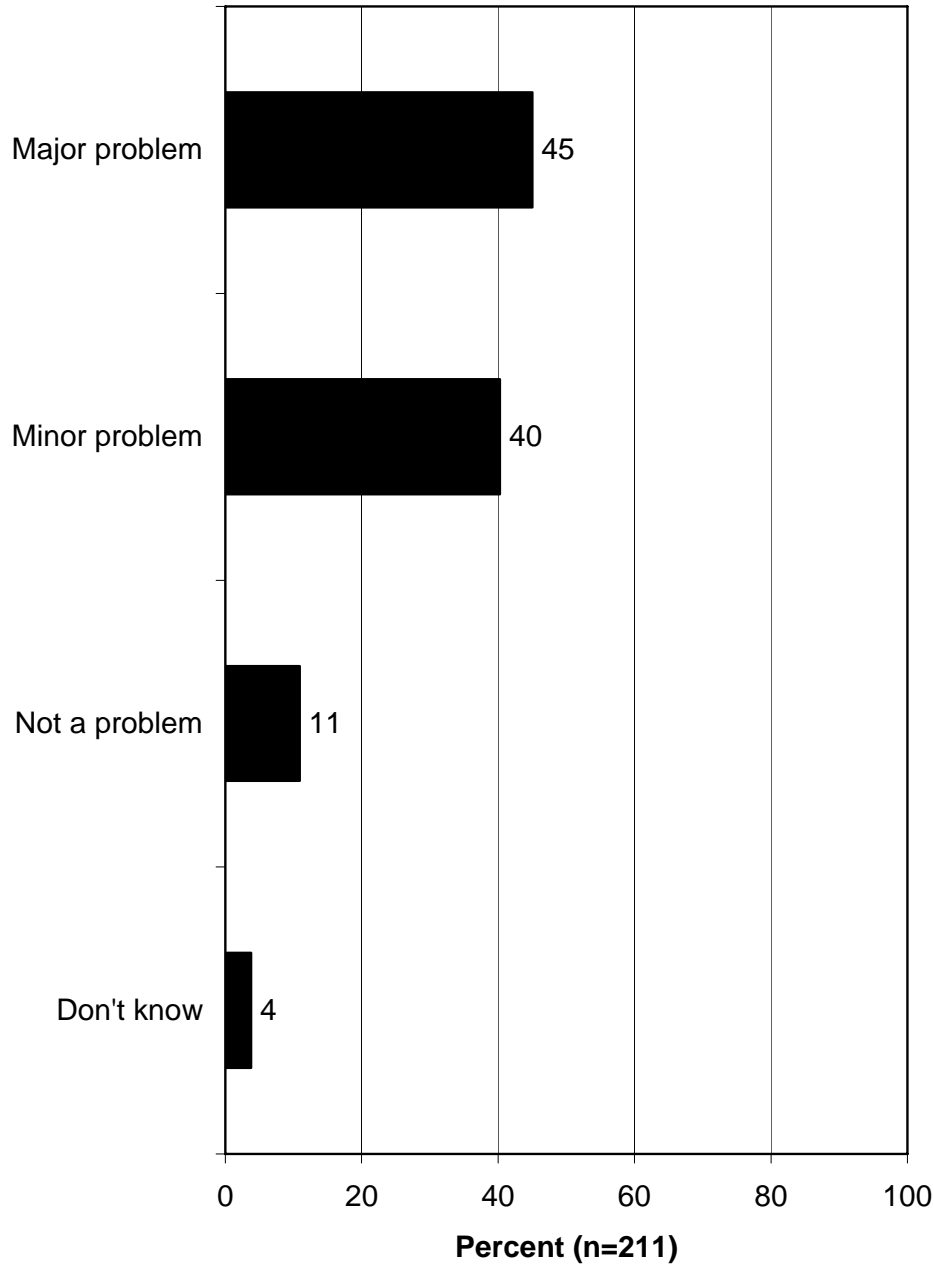


**Q139. Would you say that crowding on the water in [area] is a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem in Washington?**





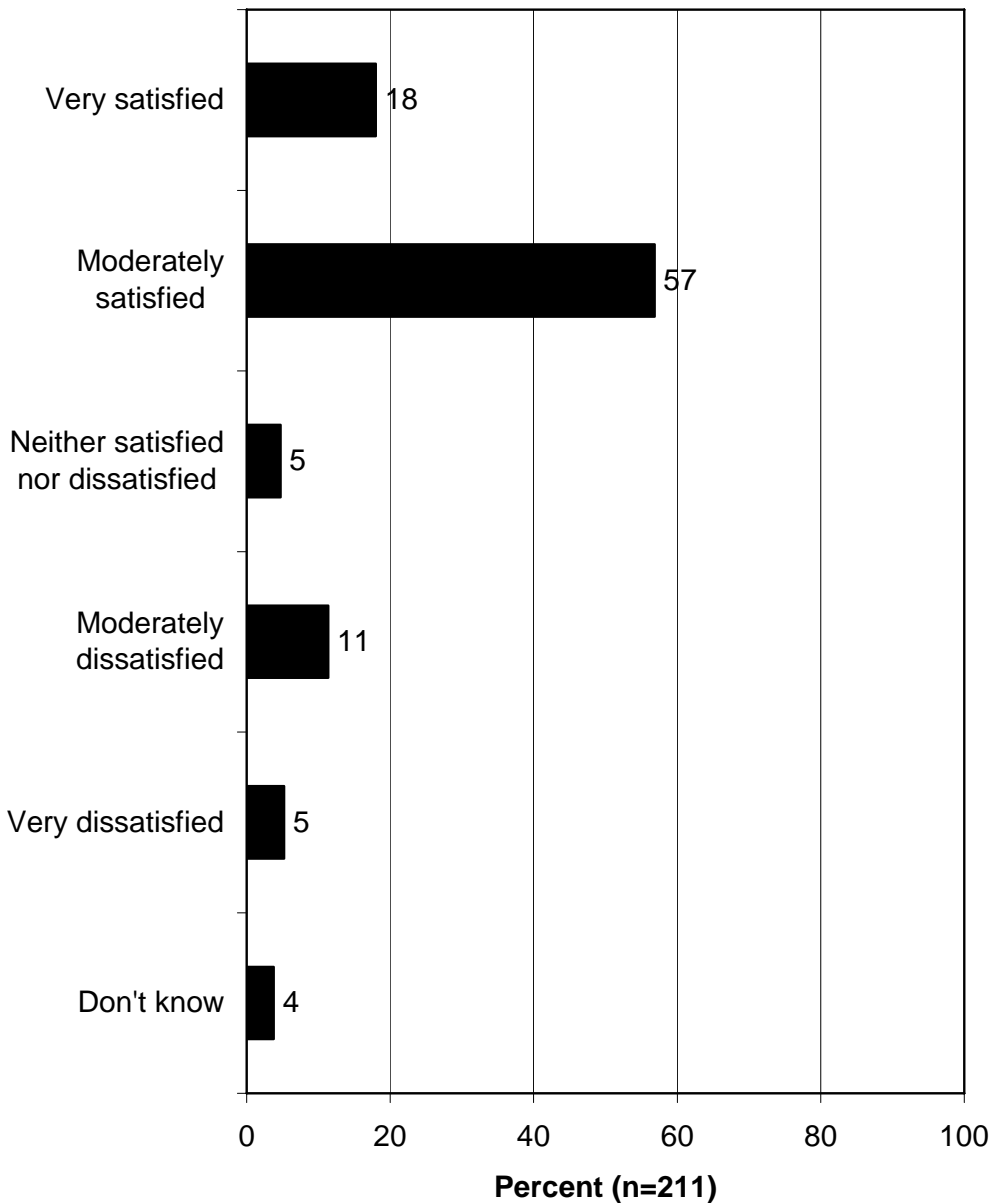
**Q140. Would you say that crowding at boat launch ramps in [area] is a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem in Washington?**



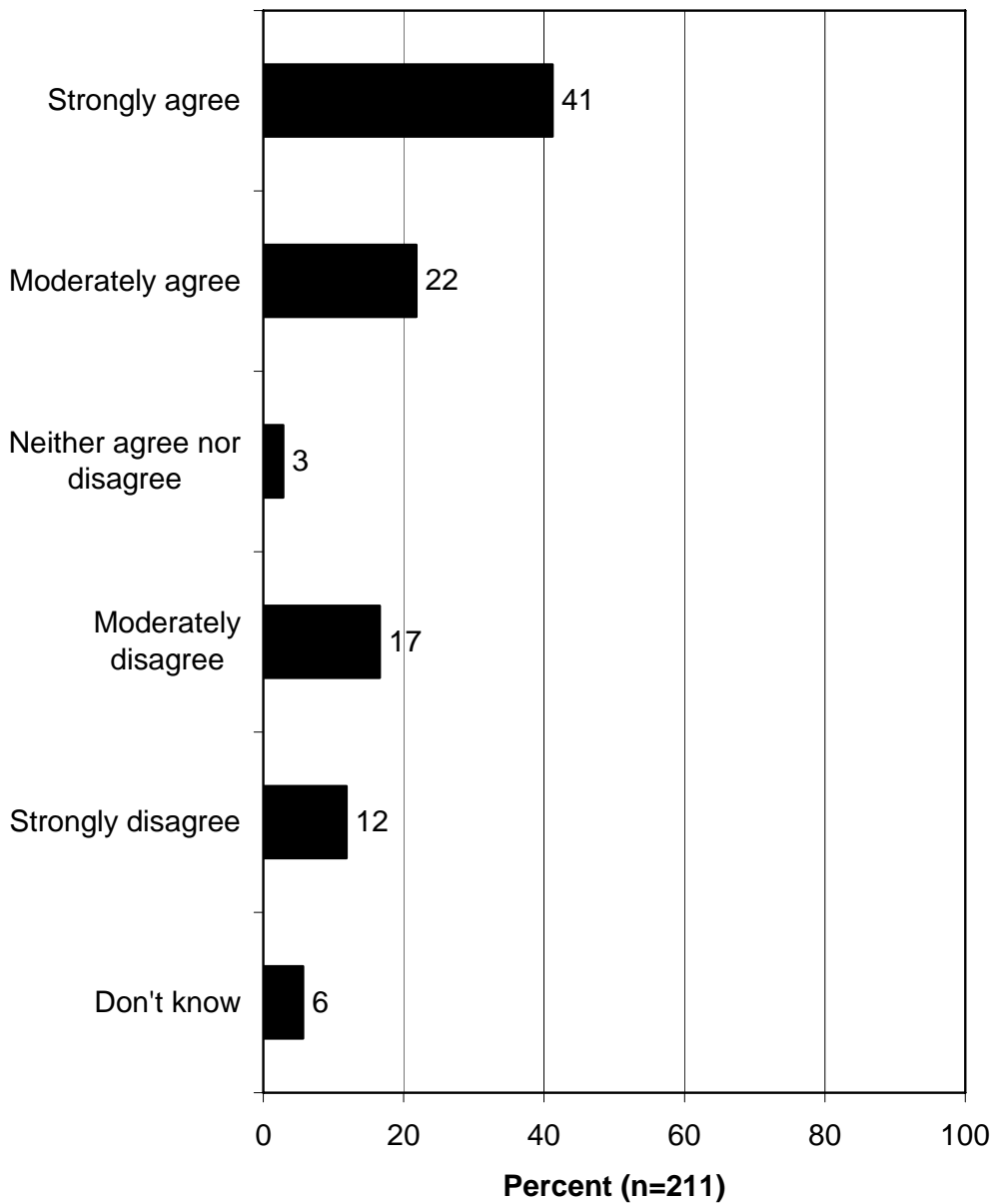
### **Organizational Structure of Boating Programs and Services**

- Satisfaction among boating service providers is high with the current structure of boating programs and services management in Washington: 75% are satisfied, while 16% are dissatisfied. However, most satisfaction is *moderate*.
  
- Despite the previous question's results that showed a high level of satisfaction with the current structure of boating programs and services management in Washington, the majority of boating service providers (63%) agree that there should be a single state agency or organization that is responsible for boating programs and services in Washington. Based on the numbers, some respondents obviously indicated being satisfied in the above question while agreeing that only a single agency should be responsible for boating programs and services.

**Q141. Currently, public boating programs and services, such as education, public access, and law enforcement, are administered by various state and local agencies and organizations in Washington. How satisfied are you with the current structure of boating programs and services management in Washington?**



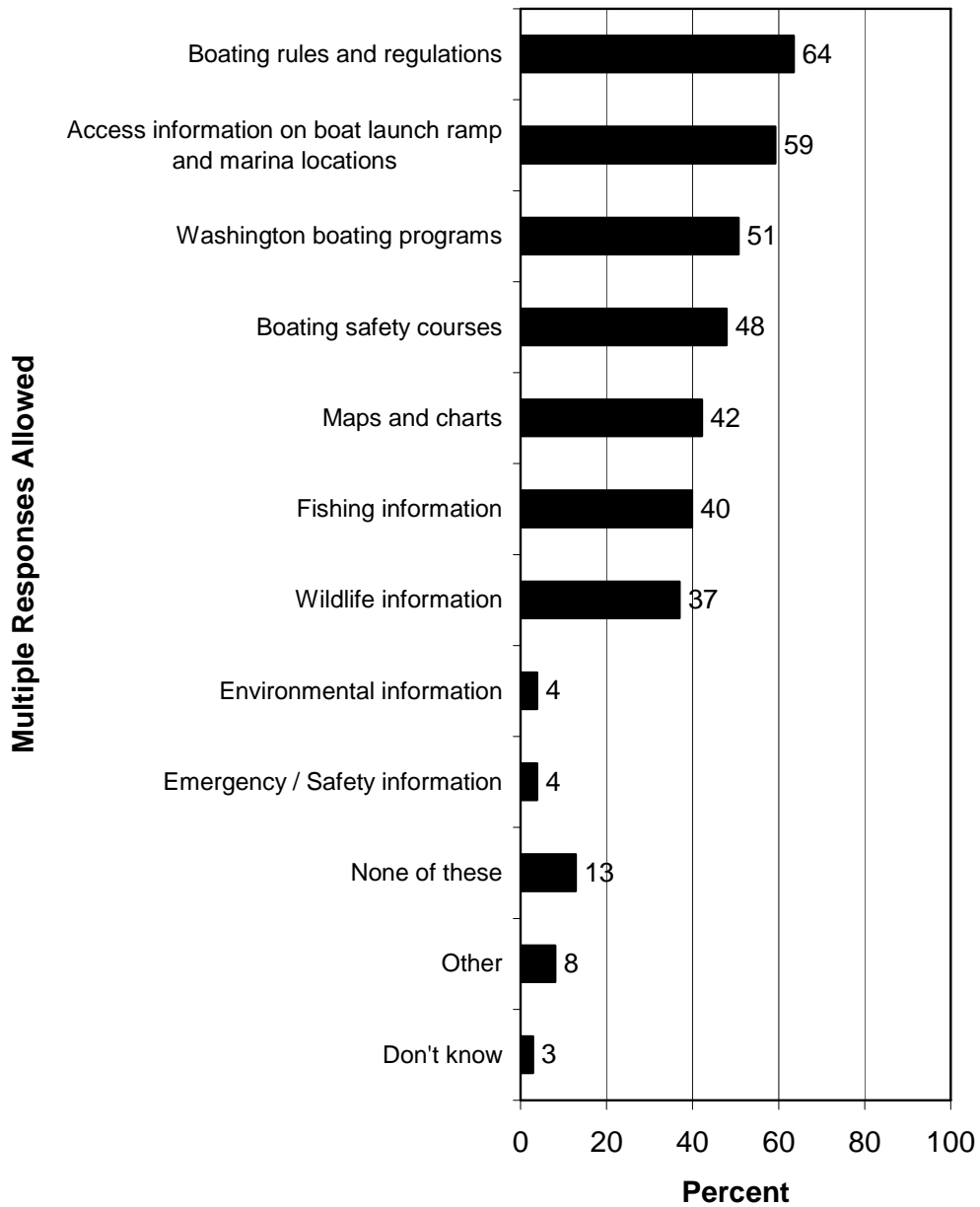
**Q142. Do you agree or disagree that there should be one state agency or organization responsible for boating programs and services in Washington?**



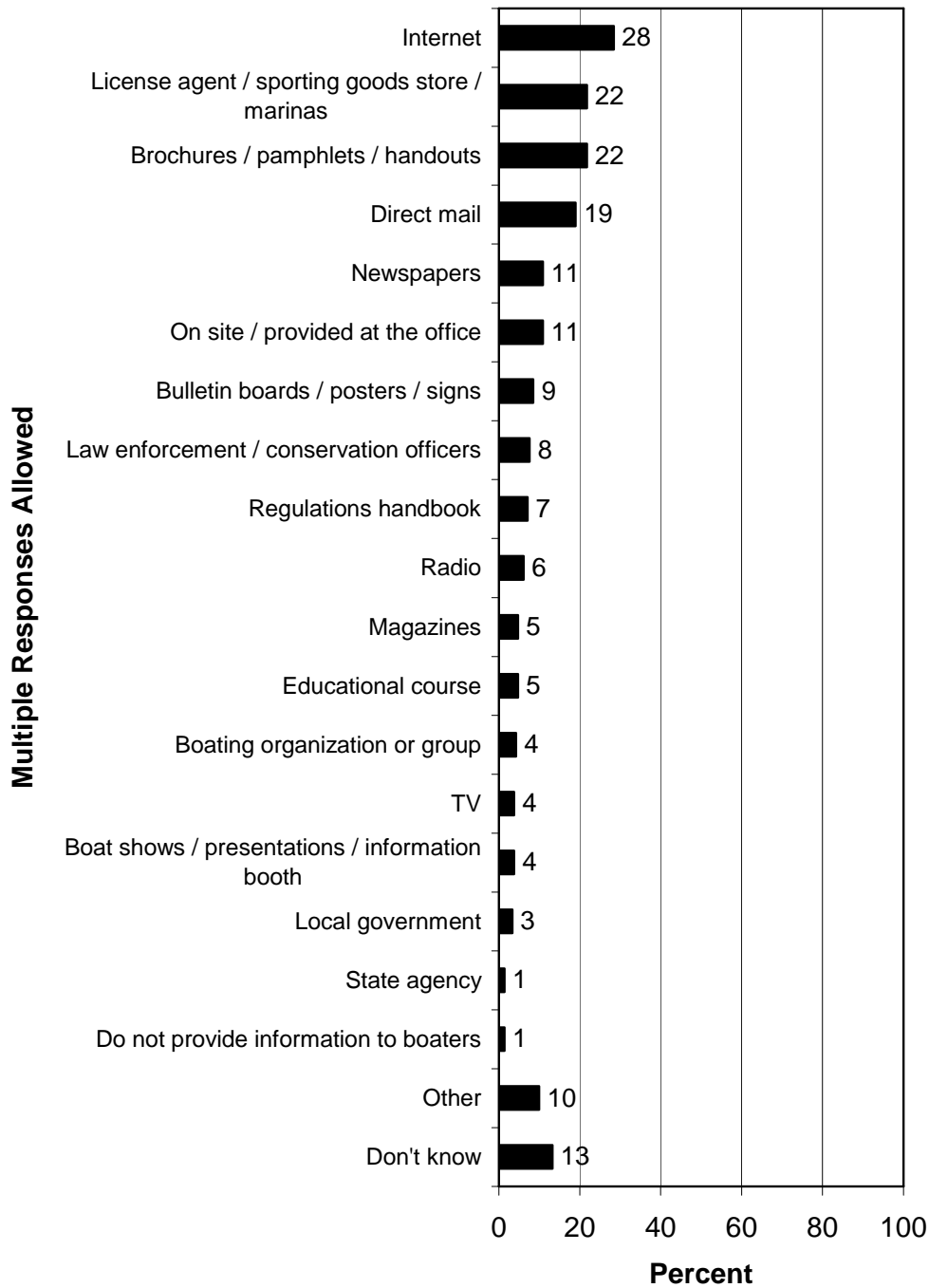
## **INFORMATION ABOUT BOATING IN WASHINGTON**

- Boating service providers were asked to name the types of information on boating that they provide for recreational boaters. Seven types of information were commonly mentioned: boating rules and regulations, information on access at launch ramps and marinas, information on Washington boating programs, information on boating safety courses, maps and charts, fishing information, and wildlife information.
  
- In a related question, the survey asked about the mediums used for providing information. The Internet was most commonly named, followed by information made available through license agents and at sporting goods stores and marinas; brochures, pamphlets, and handouts; and direct mail.

### Q145. What types of information on boating do you provide for recreational boaters?



**Q149. What types of delivery methods do you use to provide recreational boaters with this information?**



## END COMMENTS

➤ **Q152. That’s the end of the survey. Thanks for your time and cooperation. If you have any additional comments, I can record them here.**

- Most commonly, additional comments addressed the need for increased funding for boating programs in Washington. Other comments addressed the need for improvement to existing facilities along Washington’s waters, the need for a hotline to report injured sea life, and miscellaneous enforcement concerns, such as providing a greater enforcement presence on the waters, and that law enforcement programs be managed by an enforcement entity, rather than the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission. Several comments mentioned allocation of boating funds (e.g., that excise taxes should be used for boating programs). The verbatim comments are tabulated below.

Fires on boats are an important issue (electrical issues, oversight and education), as well as education on stray currents, and parking with alternate transportation.
Funding for better roads to get to the state parks.
Get more money for us.
Getting permits to build things is very hard. They need to expand the marinas and boat launch ramps. And our area does not have pump-out stations or dump stations (not to be confused with marinas).
Good survey, thank you so much.
I appreciate your doing this and am glad the Recreation and Conservation Office is doing this.
I have to look at the balance of resources, not just for the boating culture.
Would like to see an increased presence of USCG and USCG Aux, as well as the Recreation and Conservation Office making information known.
Maintenance and taking care of facilities is the most important thing; with current dollar allotments, this is not possible. We would like to be proud of the facilities we offer.
We need more funding from the state for law enforcement, administration and help from the Coast Guard to make boating safer and for more boater awareness in all areas.
We need to spend more money—the excise taxes for boating should go back to boaters.
We need better prioritization of funds disbursement for projects.
Private marinas don’t have money to remove derelict boats that have been abandoned.
Recreation needs ought to have a higher priority statewide.
Ramps, their restrooms, and their parking situations vary in quality across the state.
There is a lack of fueling stations; most boating is day boating, where boats are taken out at night. Marinas and boat launch sites are not as necessary.
There is a requirement for floats for the acquisition of certain funds, and funds for float maintenance are limited; installation of floats is not possible. We would also prefer more primitive access facilities.
We need to find a way for boaters to use facilities and restrooms without polluting the rivers and destroying property.
We definitely need better pump stations. The program is good but needs to promote grant money to marina operators.

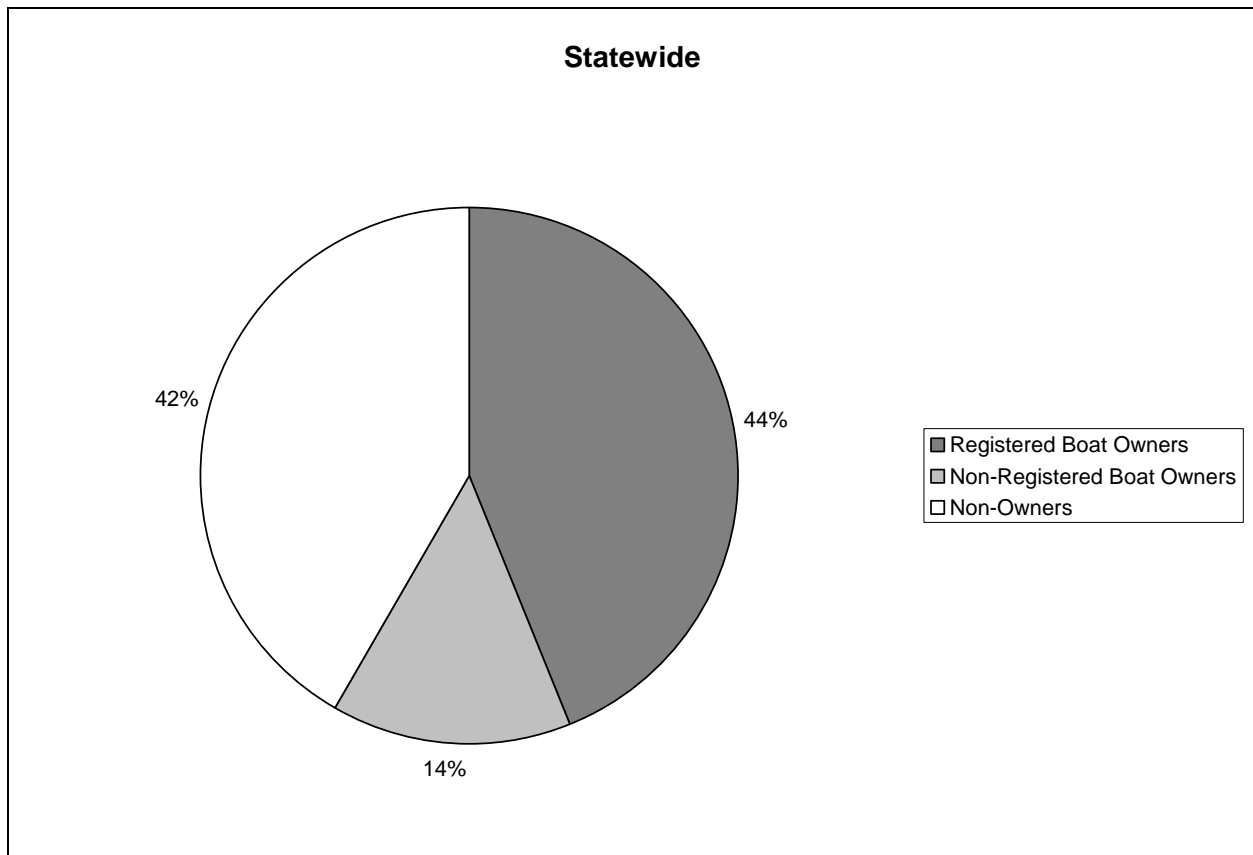


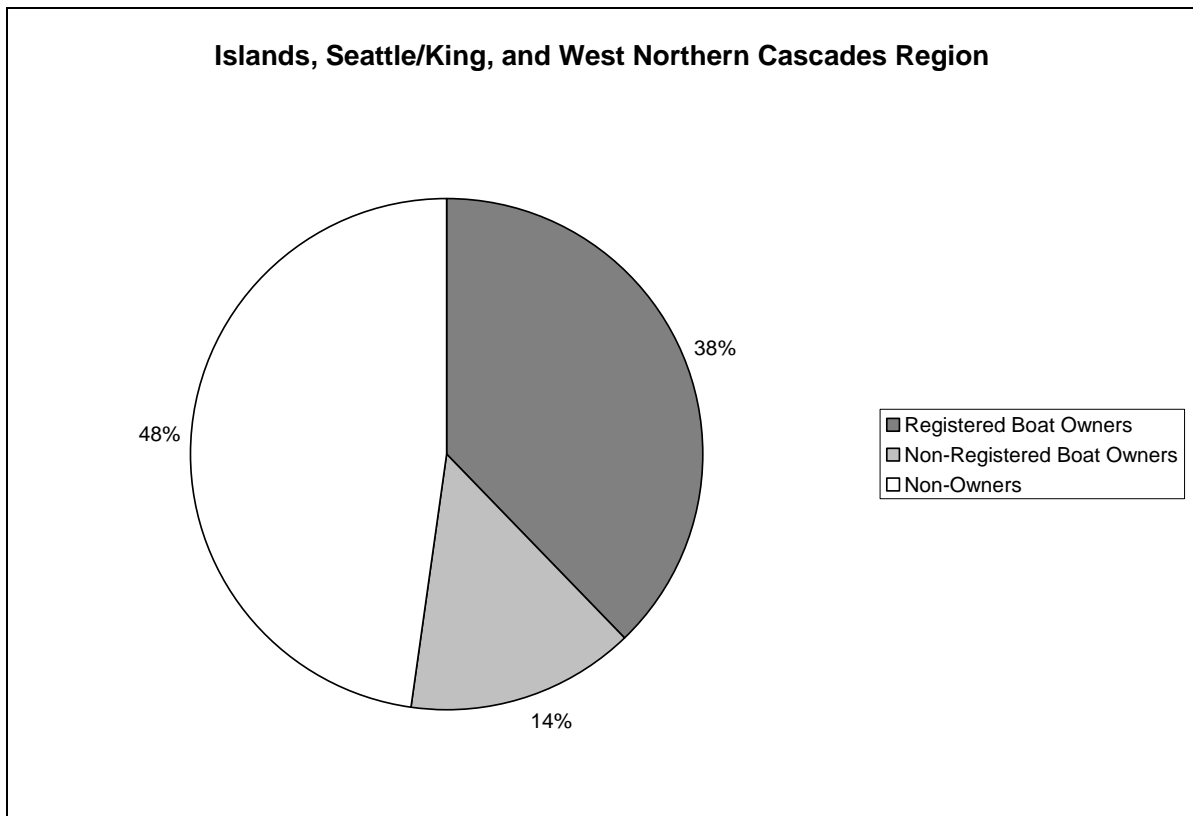
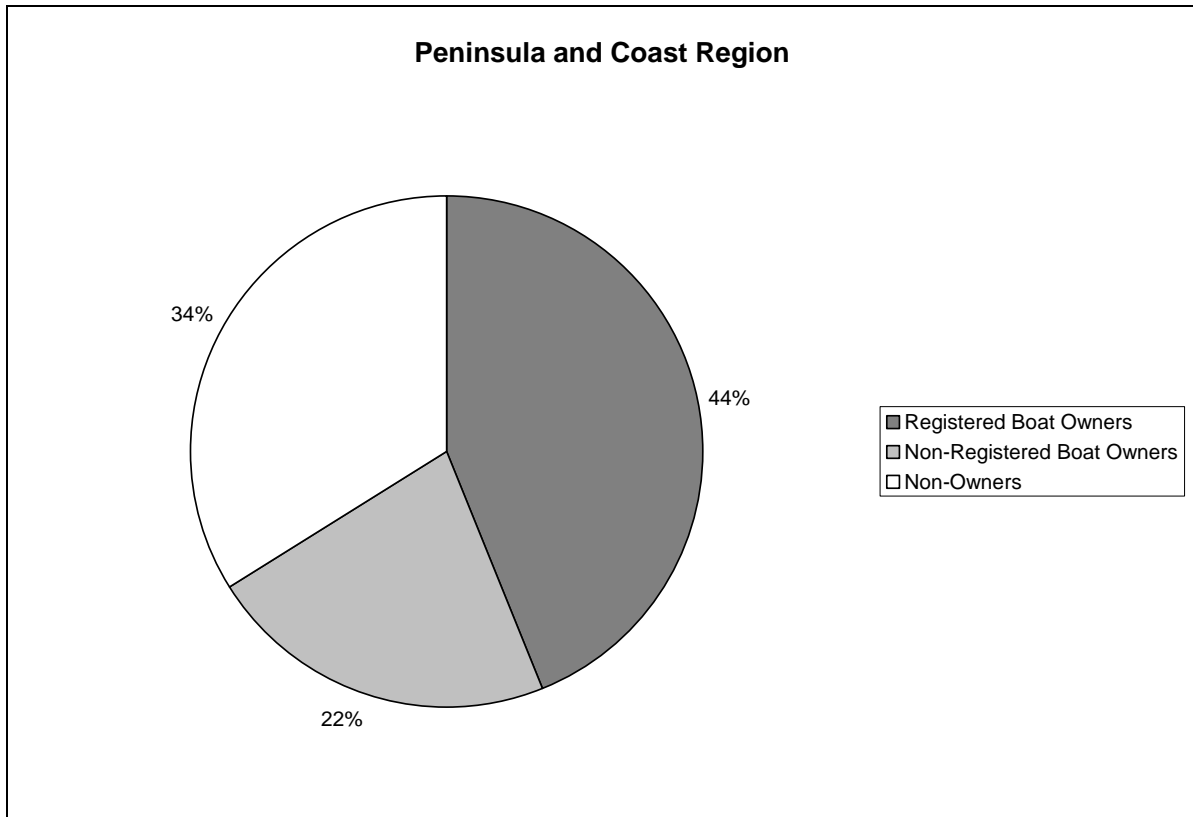
<p>We need improvement of existing facilities and infrastructure. We don't need any new facilities or infrastructure.</p>
<p>We need to maximize our existing facilities; we can do a better job if we maximize our existing marinas before building new ones. We want to use all of our existing water. We need easier dredging permits.</p>
<p>We strongly disagree that the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission should manage law enforcement programs; they should be managed by state patrol or another state law enforcement entity.</p>
<p>When somebody finds an injured sea life mammal, there is no hotline or specialized organization to contact. We need to create a hotline or specialized contact method for these situations.</p>

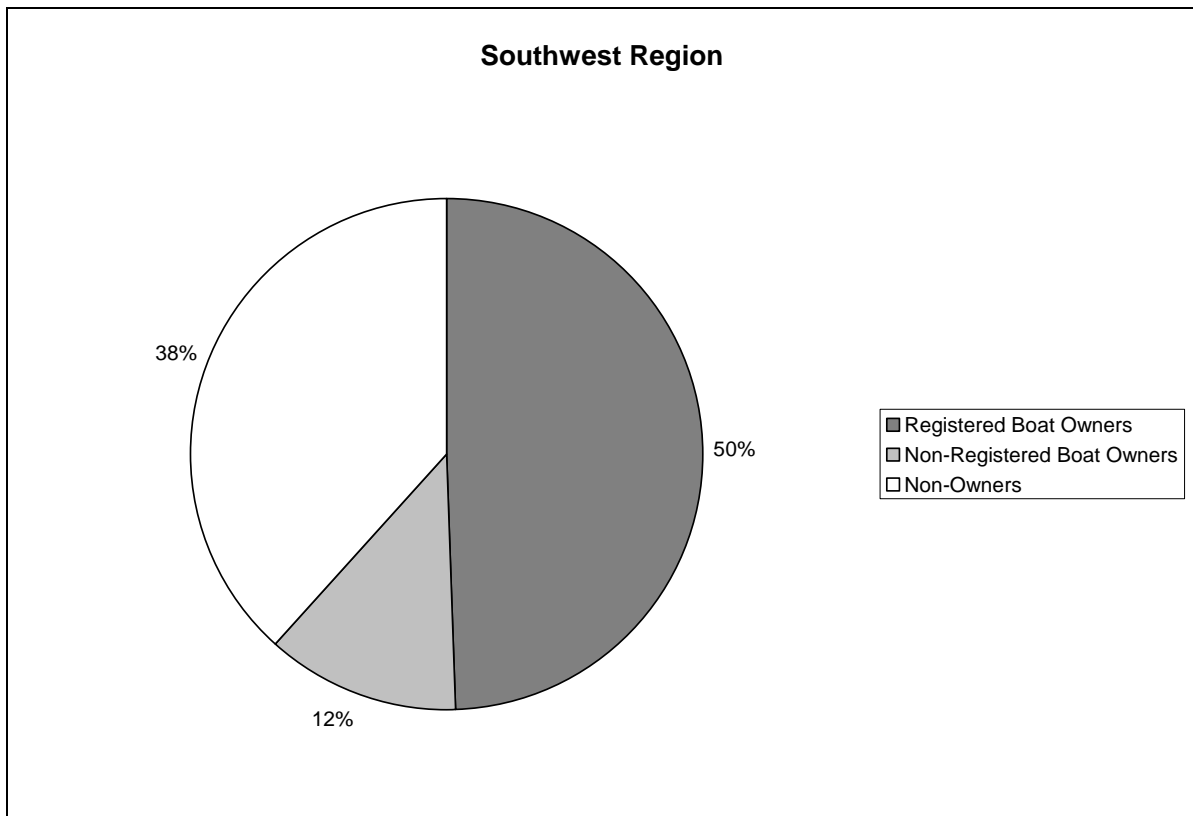
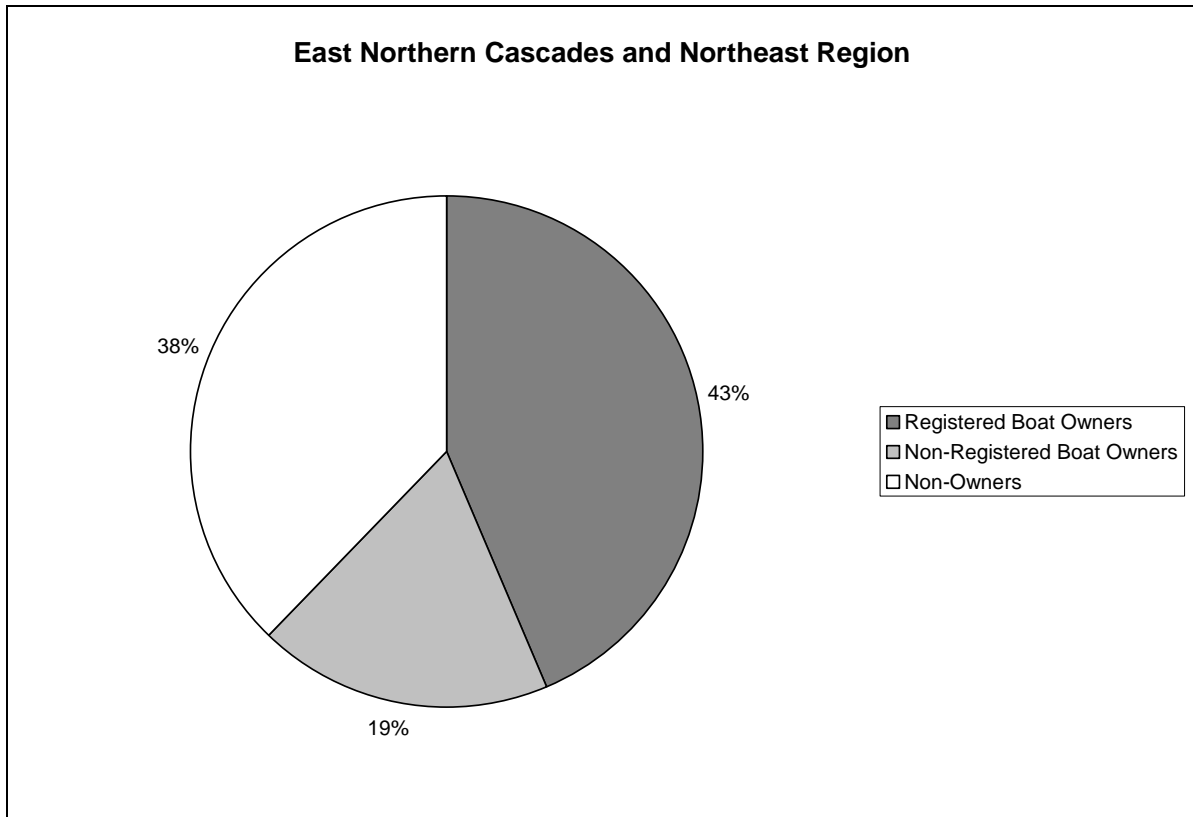
## GENERAL POPULATION AND BOATER SURVEY RESULTS

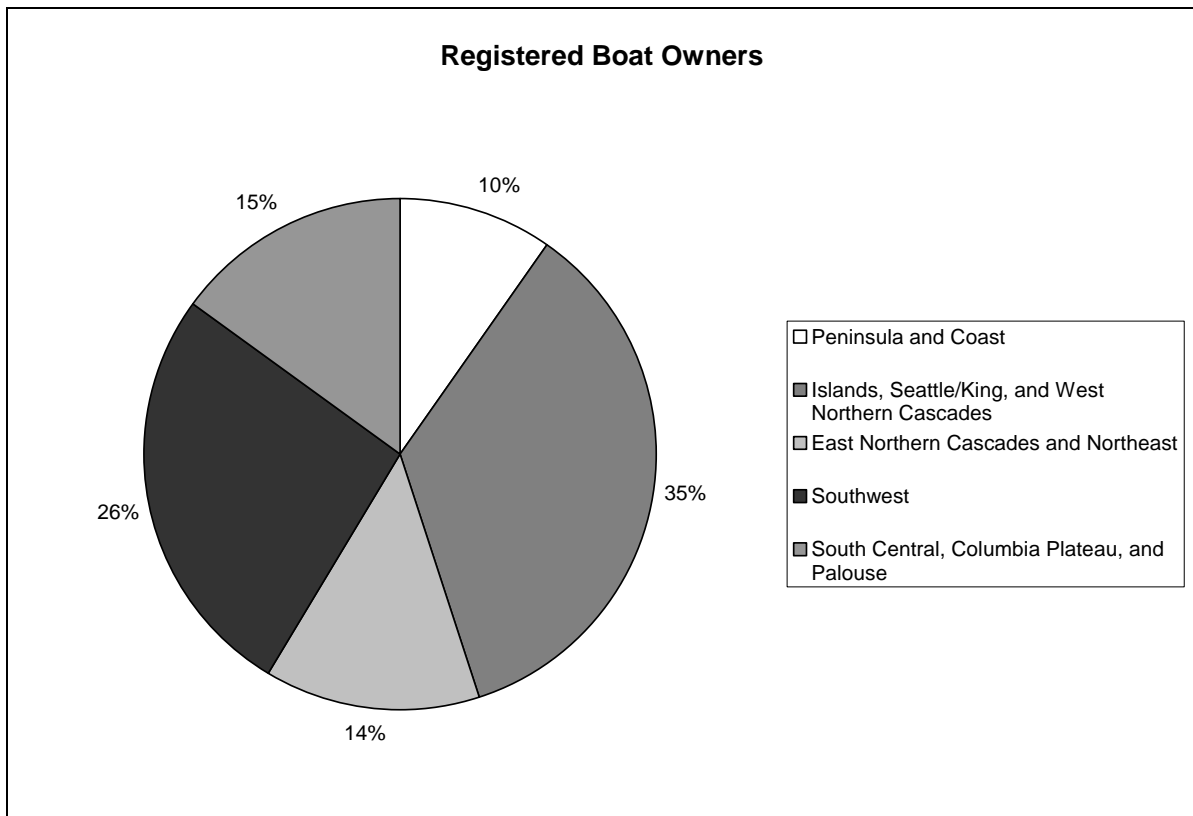
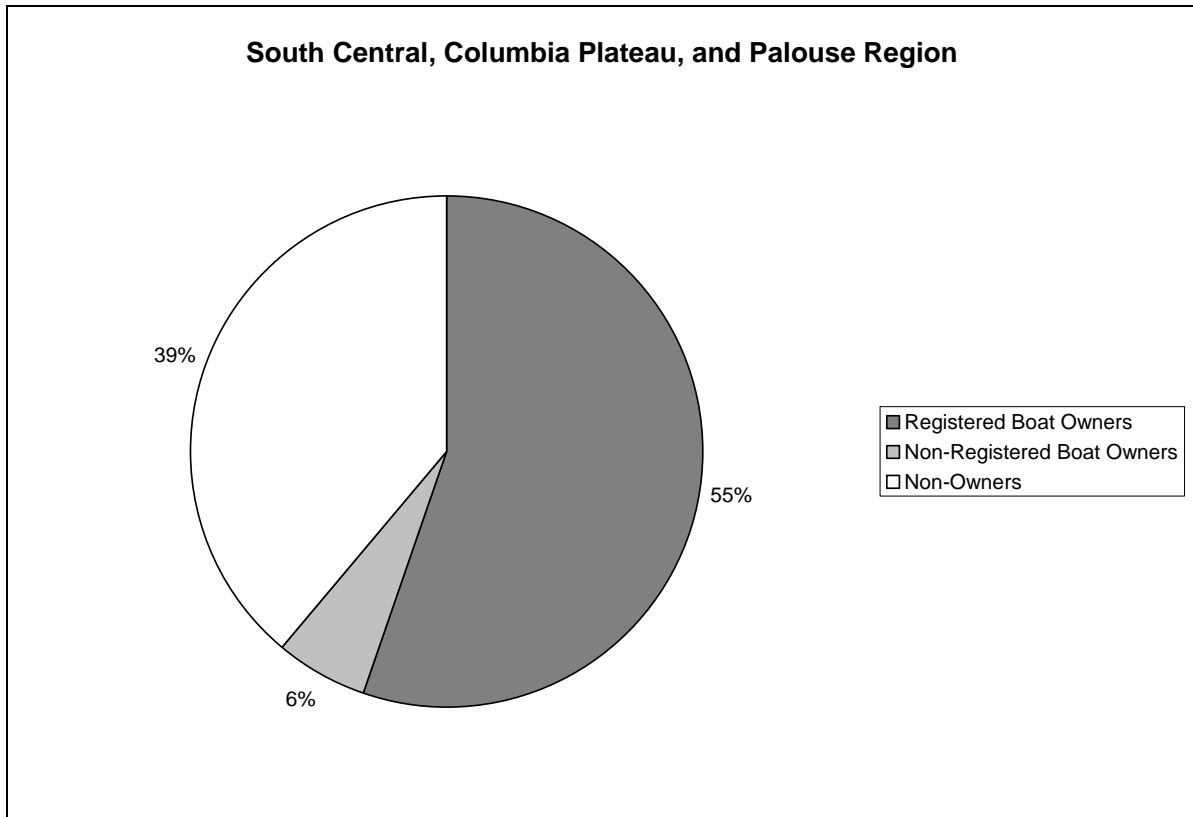
### TYPE OF BOATER (REGISTERED BOAT OWNER, NON-REGISTERED BOAT OWNER, NON-OWNER)

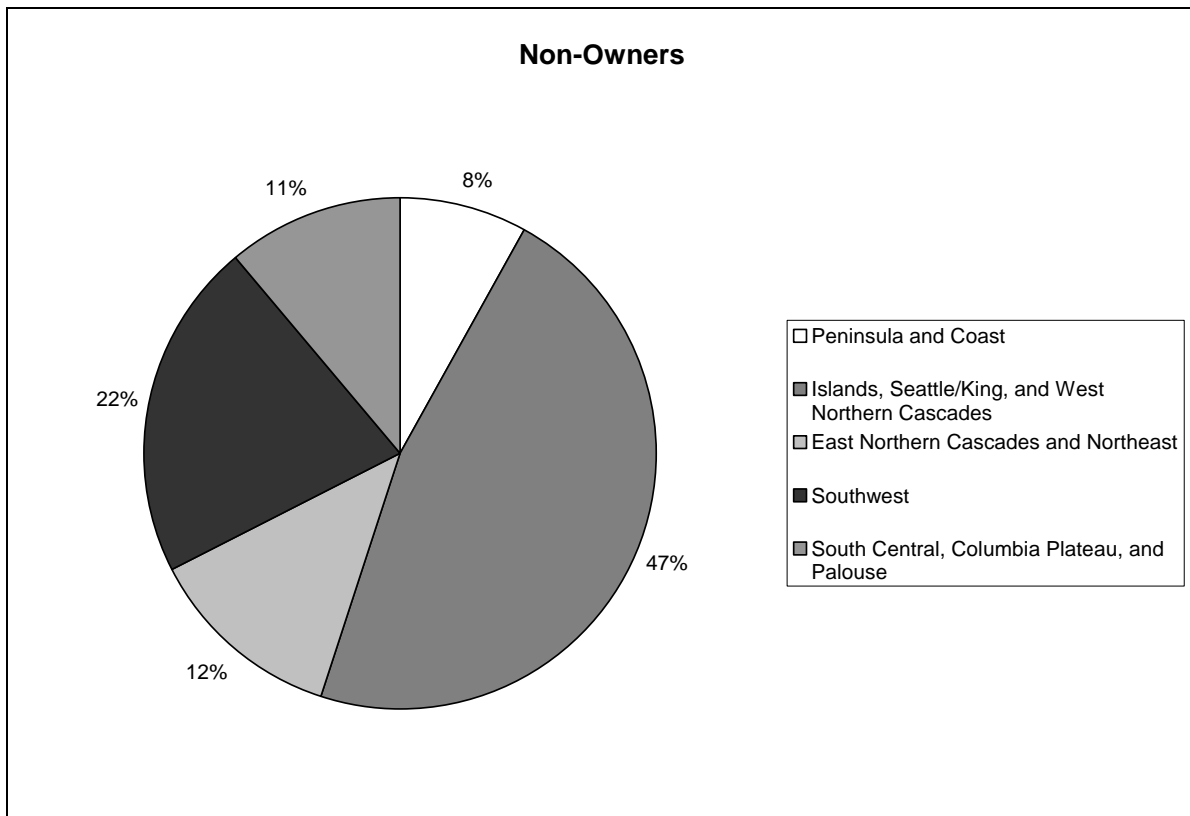
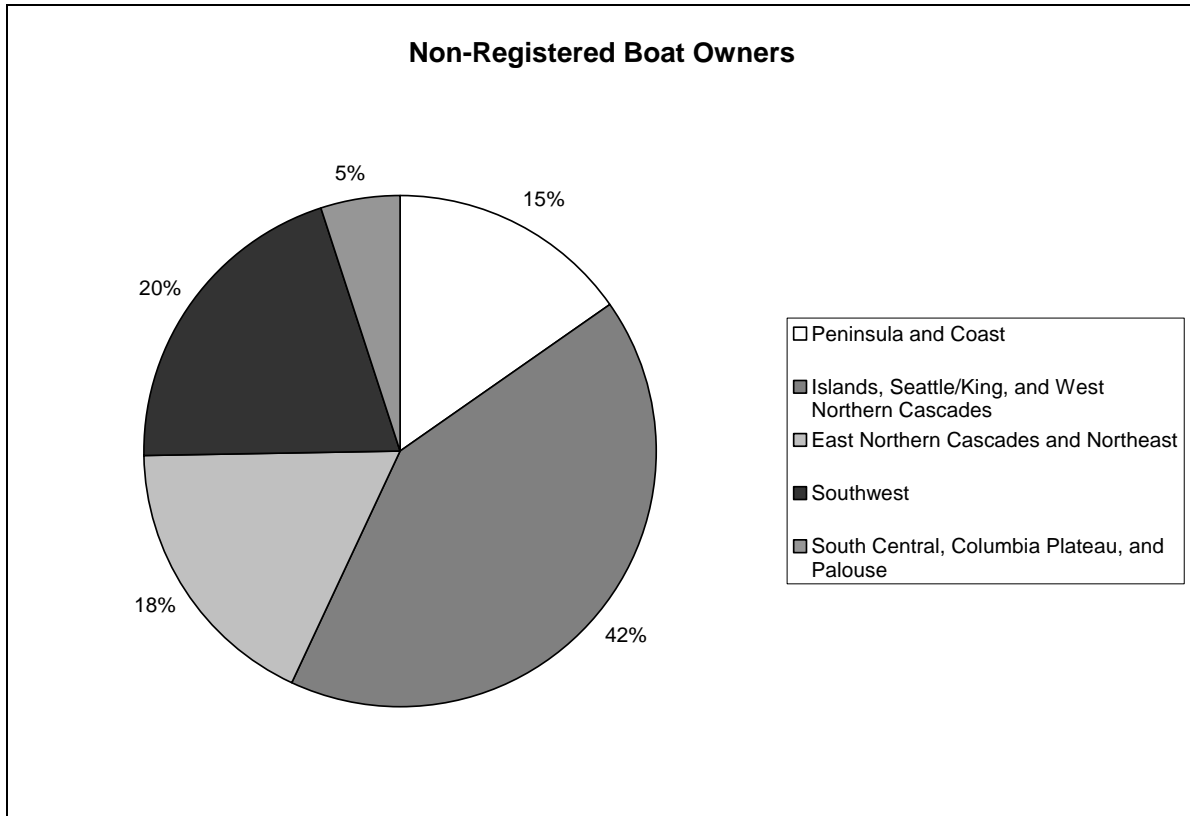
- Based on several questions about boat use and ownership, a breakdown of the population of boaters is as follows: 44% are registered boat owners, 14% are non-registered boat owners, and 42% are non-owners.
- Each region's breakdown by type of boater is shown, as well.
  - Additionally, each type of boater's regional breakdown is shown.











## NUMBERS AND TYPES OF BOATS OWNED, REGISTERED, AND USED

- Boaters were asked to name all the types of boat ownership of the boats that they had boated on in the past 2 years in Washington: 66% used a boat (or boats) that they owned, 45% boated on a friend's boat (or boats), 8% rented a boat (or boats), and 5% chartered a boat (or boats) with a skipper.
  - The regional crosstabulation found that boaters who primarily boat in the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region were the *least* likely to own the boat they used the most; they have a high percentage, relative to the other regions, who boat on a friend's boat, rent, or charter.
  - In the crosstabulation by the type of boat used most often, those who most often used a hand-powered boat had the highest percentage who used a friend's boat, while motor boaters had the lowest percentage who used a friend's boat. Note that the answers were not limited to the respondent's most-used boat; for instance, a boater who is primarily a paddler may have also at some time chartered a motor boat.
  
- The survey then asked boaters about the boat that they most often used. Among all boaters, 60% owned the boat they used most often in the previous 2 years, while 29% indicated being a guest on a friend's boat. The remainder rented, chartered, or cannot be categorized. Currently, 58% of boaters overall own a boat.
  - In the crosstabulation by region, boaters from the Peninsula and Coast Region and from the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region were less likely to say that the boat they used most often was a boat they owned. The latter region had a high percentage of boaters saying that they rented a boat or chartered a boat with a skipper, relative to the other regions. The Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region also had a slightly lower rate of current boat ownership.
  - Paddlers and those using other hand-powered boats are the most likely to rent or charter a boat or to use a boat owned by a friend, compared to motor boaters and sailboaters.
  - Motor boaters using the smallest motor boats are the most likely to use a boat owned by a friend, relative to motor boaters using the other sizes boats or using personal watercraft.

- Boat owners were asked to name the type(s) of boat(s) that they own: 75% own a motor boat, 19% own a hand-powered boat other than canoe or kayak, 14% own a kayak, 12% own a canoe, 8% own a sailboat, and 5% own a personal watercraft.
  - The crosstabulation by type of owner found that registered boat owners more often own a motor boat than do non-registered boat owners; this latter group more often own other hand-powered boats, kayaks, and canoes.
  - There were some differences in the regional crosstabulation:
    - Motor boat ownership was the highest in the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region; lowest in the Peninsula and Coast Region.
    - Ownership of other hand-powered boats was highest in the Peninsula and Coast Region; it was lowest in the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region.
    - Kayak ownership was highest in the Peninsula and Coast Region; it was lowest in the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region.
    - Canoe ownership was the highest in the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region; it was lowest in the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region.
    - Sailboat ownership was the highest in the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region.
    - Personal watercraft ownership was the lowest in the Peninsula and Coast Region and the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region.
- Of boat owners, the majority (53%) own a single boat; nonetheless, 26% own two boats, and 21% own three or more. A breakdown of this question by types of boats is as follows:
  - Motor boats (75% of *all* boat owners own at least one motor boat): 71% of *motor* boat owners have a single motor boat, while 29% own multiple motor boats.
  - Sailboats (8% of all boat owners own at least one sailboat): 85% of sailboat owners have a single sailboat, while 15% own multiple sailboats.
  - Canoes (12% of all boat owners own at least one canoe): 85% of canoe owners have a single canoe, while 15% have multiple canoes.
  - Kayaks (14% of all boat owners own at least one kayak): 47% of kayak owners have a single kayak, 34% have two kayaks, and 20% have more than two kayaks.

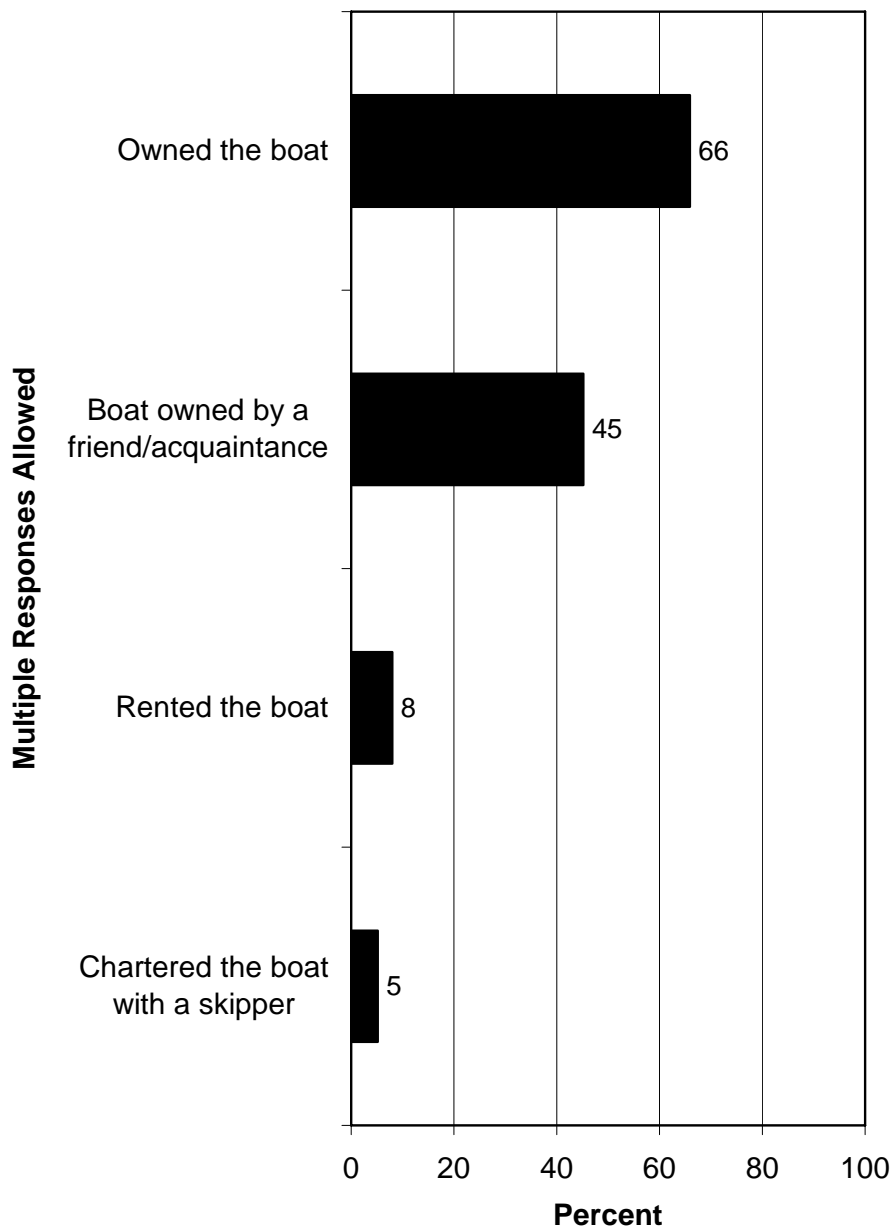


- The canoe/kayak breakdown among paddlers is shown. Just about half of paddlers—defined as those who most often use a canoe or kayak—own a canoe (47%), while about two-thirds of paddlers (67%) own a kayak. Obviously, some own both types of boats.
  - Hand-powered boats, other than canoes and kayaks (18% of all boat owners own at least one hand-powered boat other than a canoe or kayak): 80% of these owners have a single (other) hand-powered boat, while 20% have multiple boats of this type.
  - Personal watercraft (5% of all boat owners own at least one personal watercraft): 48% of personal watercraft owners have a single personal watercraft, 46% have two of them, and 6% have more than two personal watercraft.
- Data on the number of boats owned was crosstabulated, as discussed below.
- The number of boats owned was analyzed in the crosstabulation by boater type, with little difference between registered boat owners and non-registered boat owners in the number of boats that they own.
  - The Peninsula and Coast Region had the highest rate of multiple ownership, while the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region had the lowest rate of multiple ownership.
  - Paddlers and those who most often use a sailboat are the most likely to own multiple boats, compared to motor boaters and those most often using a hand-powered boat.
  - Those motor boaters whose most-used boat is motor boat of 26 feet or more in length or whose most-used boat is a personal watercraft are the most likely to own more than a single boat of any type.
- The survey asked boat owners to indicate which of the boats that they own they most often use: motor boat was, by far, the top answer among boaters overall (68%) (the next nearest was kayak with 8%).
- In looking at the crosstabulation by type of boater, registered boat owners had a much greater likelihood of saying that the boat that they use most often is a motor boat, when compared to non-registered boat owners: 85% of registered boat owners said that a motor boat was their most-used boat. Non-registered boat owners most commonly

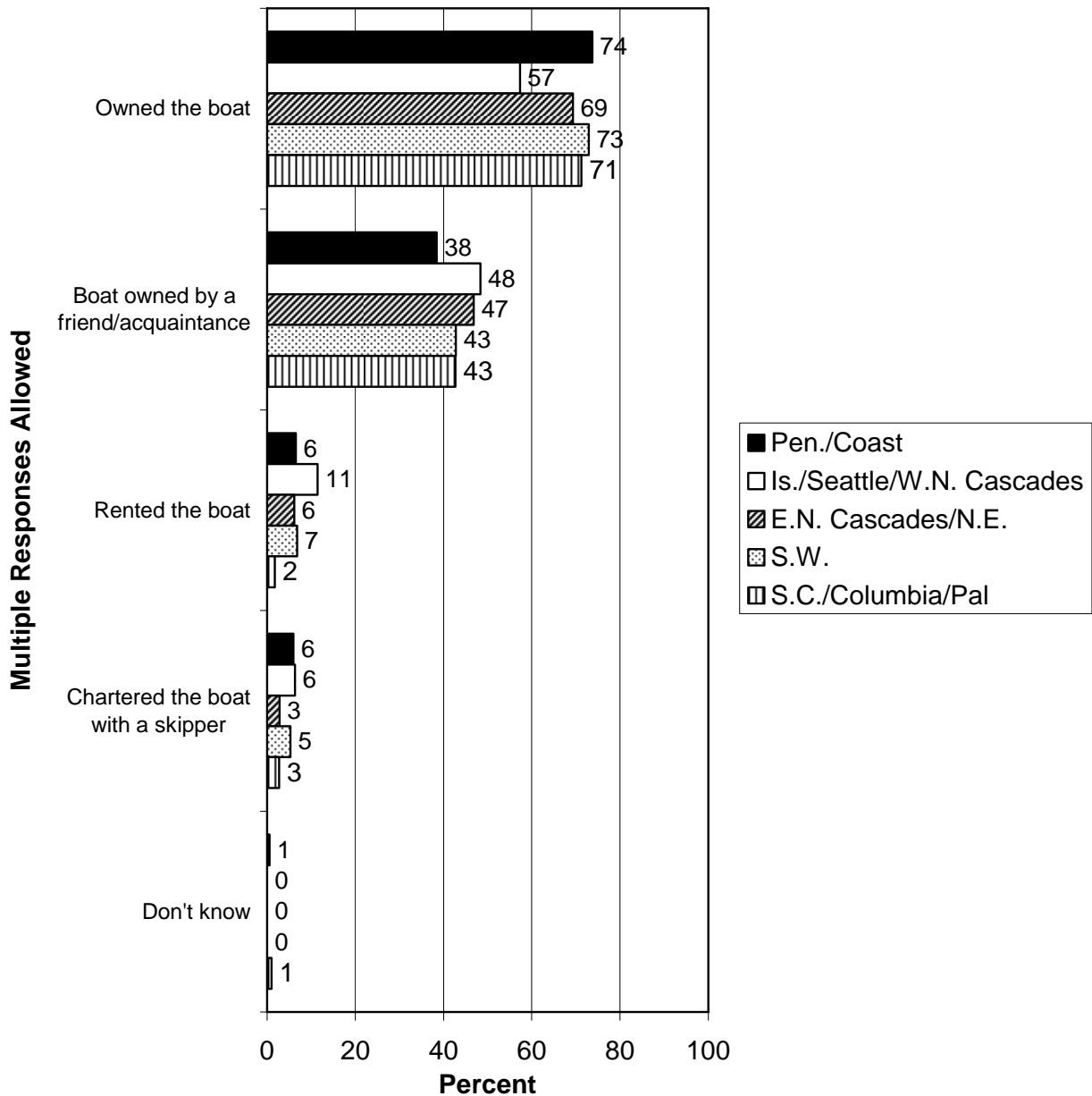
- indicated that a kayak (30%) was their most-used boat, followed by other hand-powered boat (20%), canoe (18%), and motor boat (16%).
- There were notable regional differences on the type of boat used most often, with the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region having the highest rate of boaters saying their most-used boat was a motor boat. Kayak use was relatively high in the Peninsula and Coast Region, canoe use was relatively high in the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region, and sailboat use was relatively high in the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region.
- Those whose most-used boat was rented were asked in follow-up to name the type of boat they rented: kayaks led the list, followed by Class 1 motor boats, canoes, other hand-powered boats, and Class A motor boats.
- Those whose most-used boat was a friend's boat were asked in follow-up to name the type of boat on which they were a guest: Class 1 motor boats led the list, followed by Class 2 and 3 motor boats, Class A motor boats, and sailboats.
- There was great regional variation in the results to this question regarding the type of boat on which boaters were guests. The most notable differences are discussed below.
    - Class A motor boats: The Peninsula and Coast Region led all other regions in this type of boat for guests.
    - Class 1 motor boats: The South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region led all other regions.
    - Class 2 and 3 motor boats: The Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades led all the other regions, but the differences among regions were small.
    - Sailboats: The Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region led all other regions.
- The majority of boat owners (64%) most often use a boat from 16 to 25 feet in length. Only 10% most often use a boat of 26 feet or more.
- Not surprisingly, non-registered boat owners generally had smaller boats compared to registered boat owners.

- The Peninsula and Coast Region and the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region had more boaters whose most-used boat was 26 feet or more in length, when compared to the other regions.
  - In looking at the crosstabulation by type of boat in which boater most often boats, the longest boats are the sailboats, followed by motor boats. Paddlers and those who most often use a hand-powered boat (other than canoe or kayak) have the shortest boats.
- Nearly three-fourths (73%) of boat owners indicate that the boat they most often use is registered in Washington.
- In the crosstabulation by the type of boat most used, registration is highest among motor boaters and sailboaters, as these types of boats more commonly need to be registered compared to canoes, kayaks, and other hand-powered boats.
  - In the crosstabulation by size of motor boat, the largest motor boats are the most likely to be registered; personal watercraft are the least likely to be registered in Washington State.

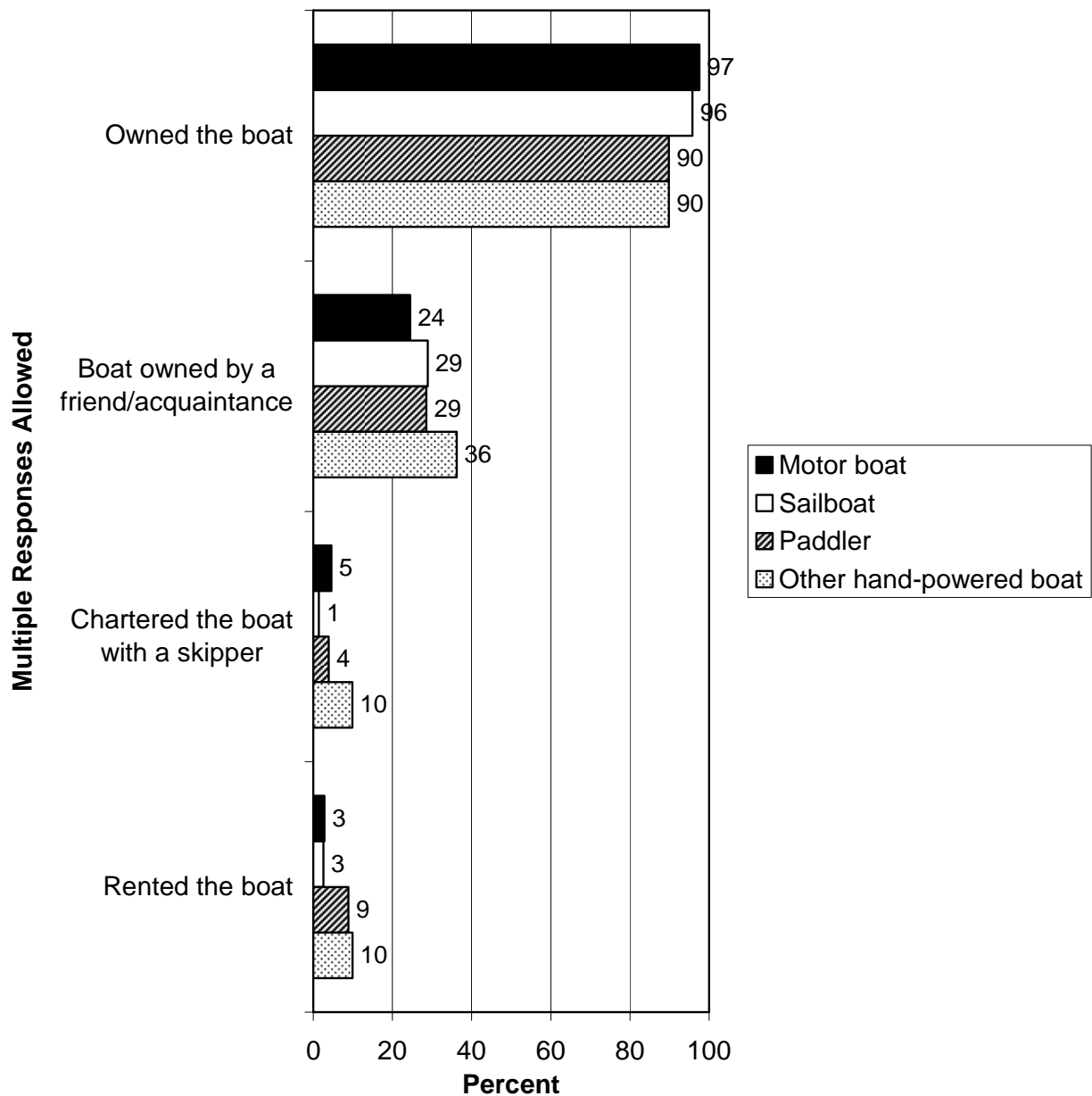
**Q16. You said you have been boating in the past 2 years. Were you using a boat that you or your family owned, did you or a member of your party rent a boat, did you or a member of your party charter a boat with a skipper, or were you a guest on a boat owned by a friend or acquaintance?**



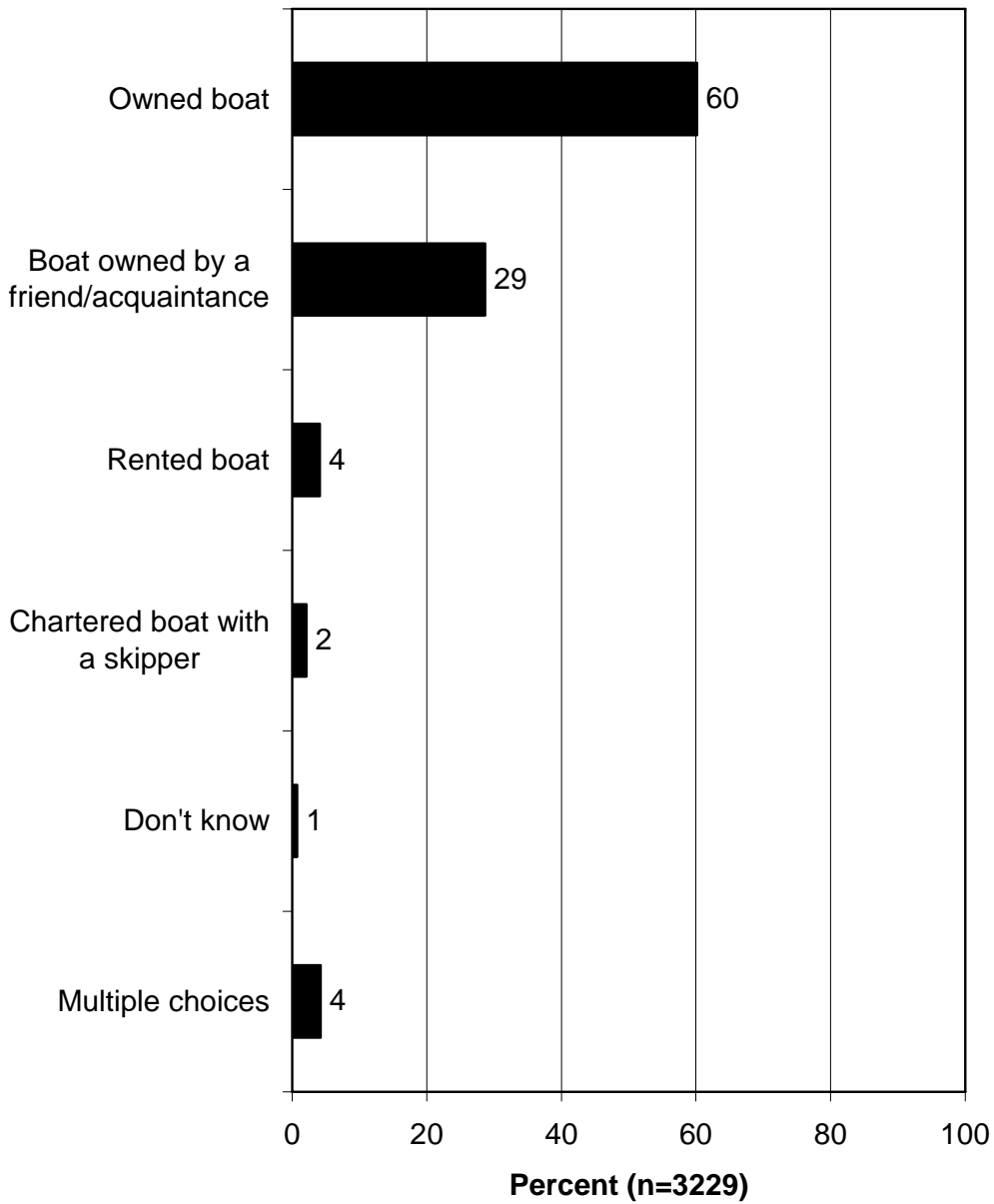
**Q16. You said you have been boating in the past 2 years. Were you using a boat that you or your family owned, did you or a member of your party rent a boat, did you or a member of your party charter a boat with a skipper, or were you a guest on a boat owned by a friend or acquaintance?**



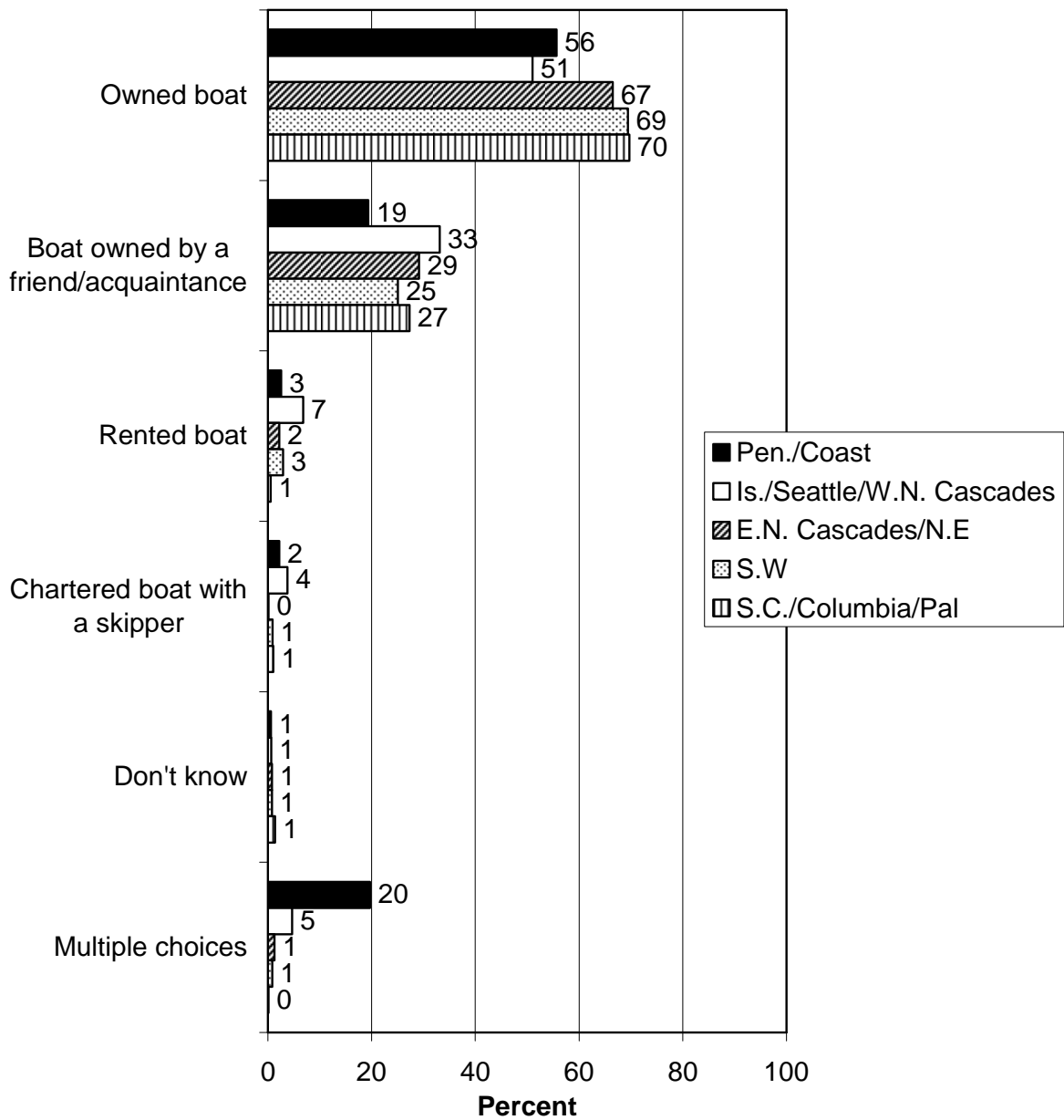
**Q16. You said you have been boating in the past 2 years. Were you using a boat that you or your family owned, did you or a member of your party rent a boat, did you or a member of your party charter a boat with a skipper, or were you a guest on a boat owned by a friend or acquaintance?**



**Q18. Which of these boats did you use most often in the past 2 years?**

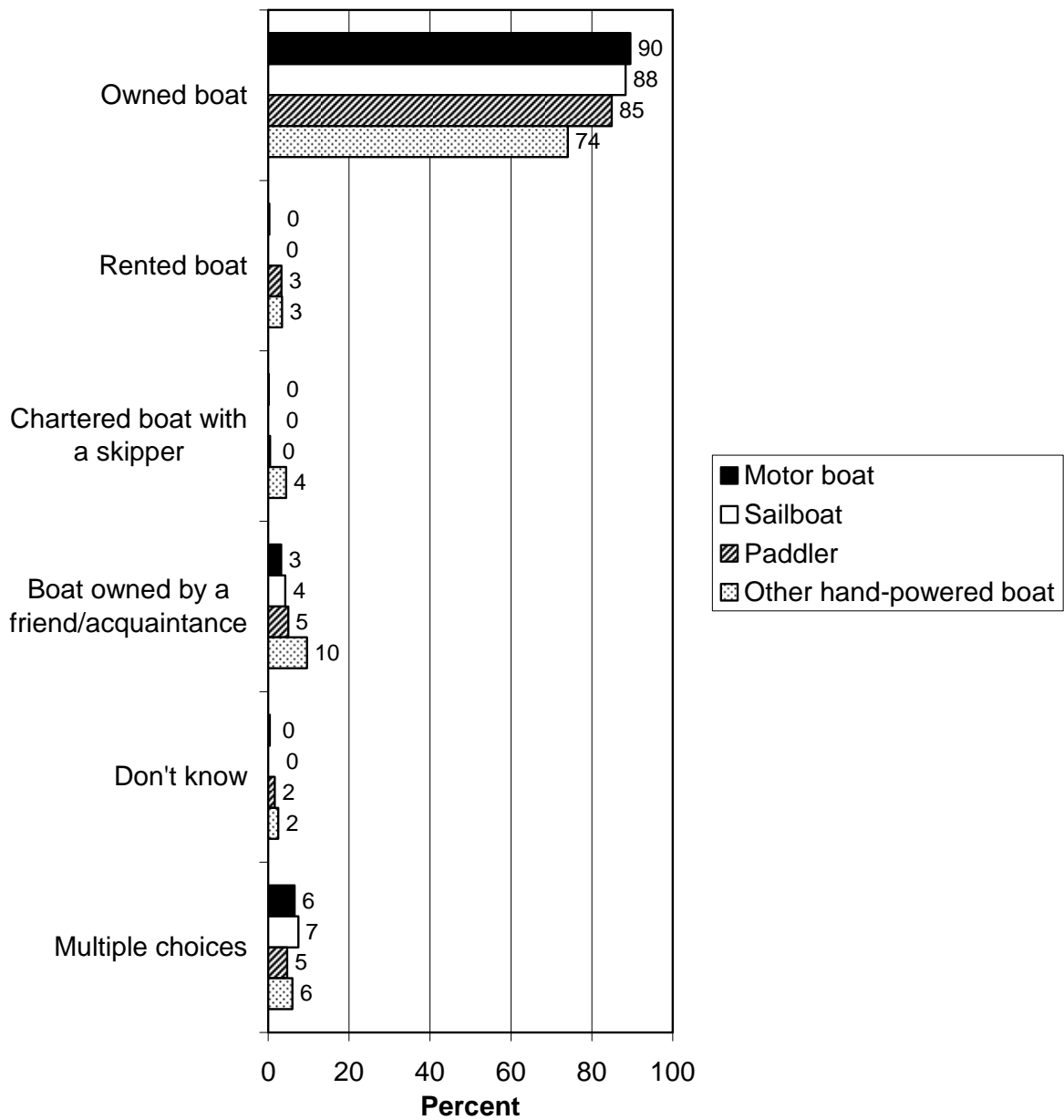


**Q18. Which of these boats did you use most often in the past 2 years?**

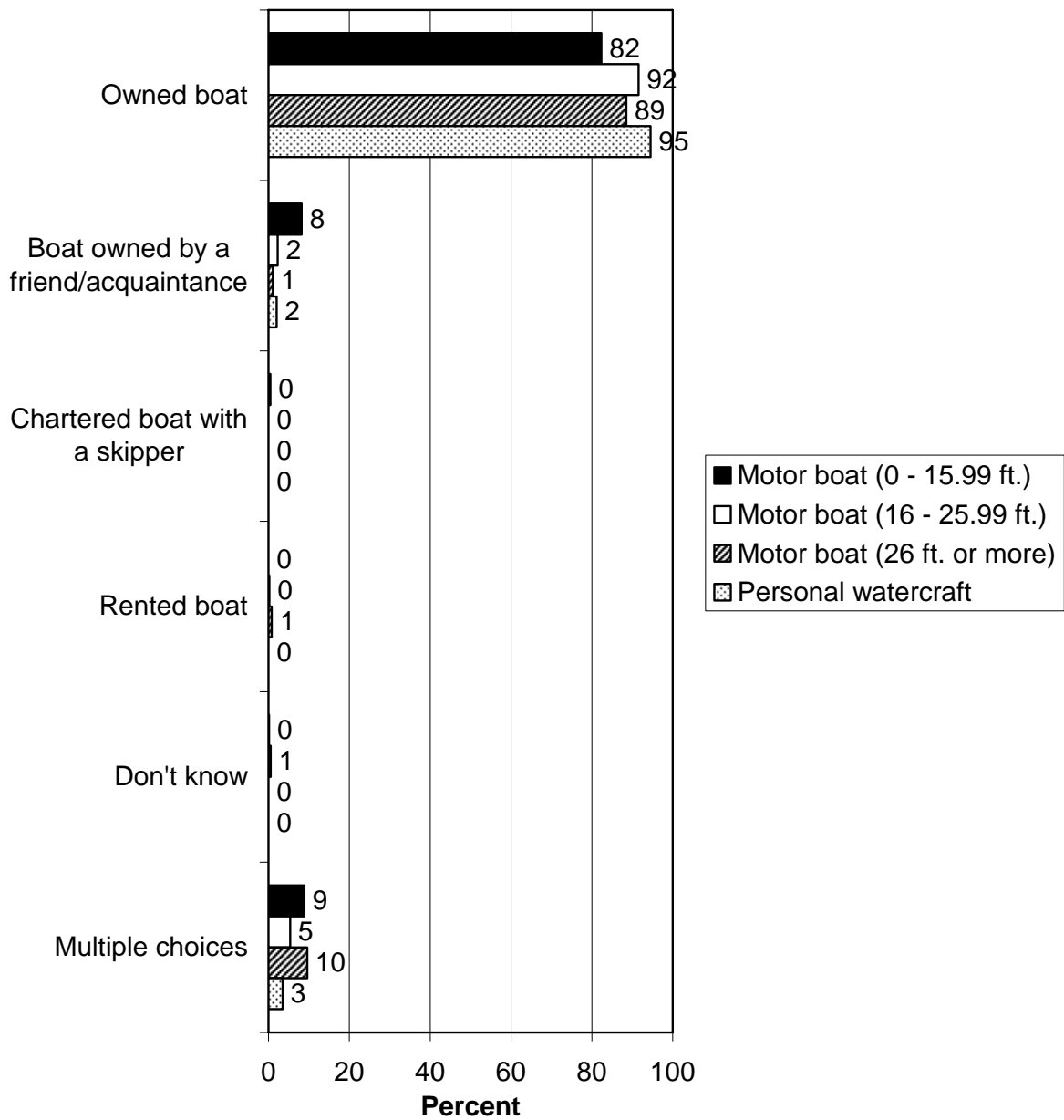




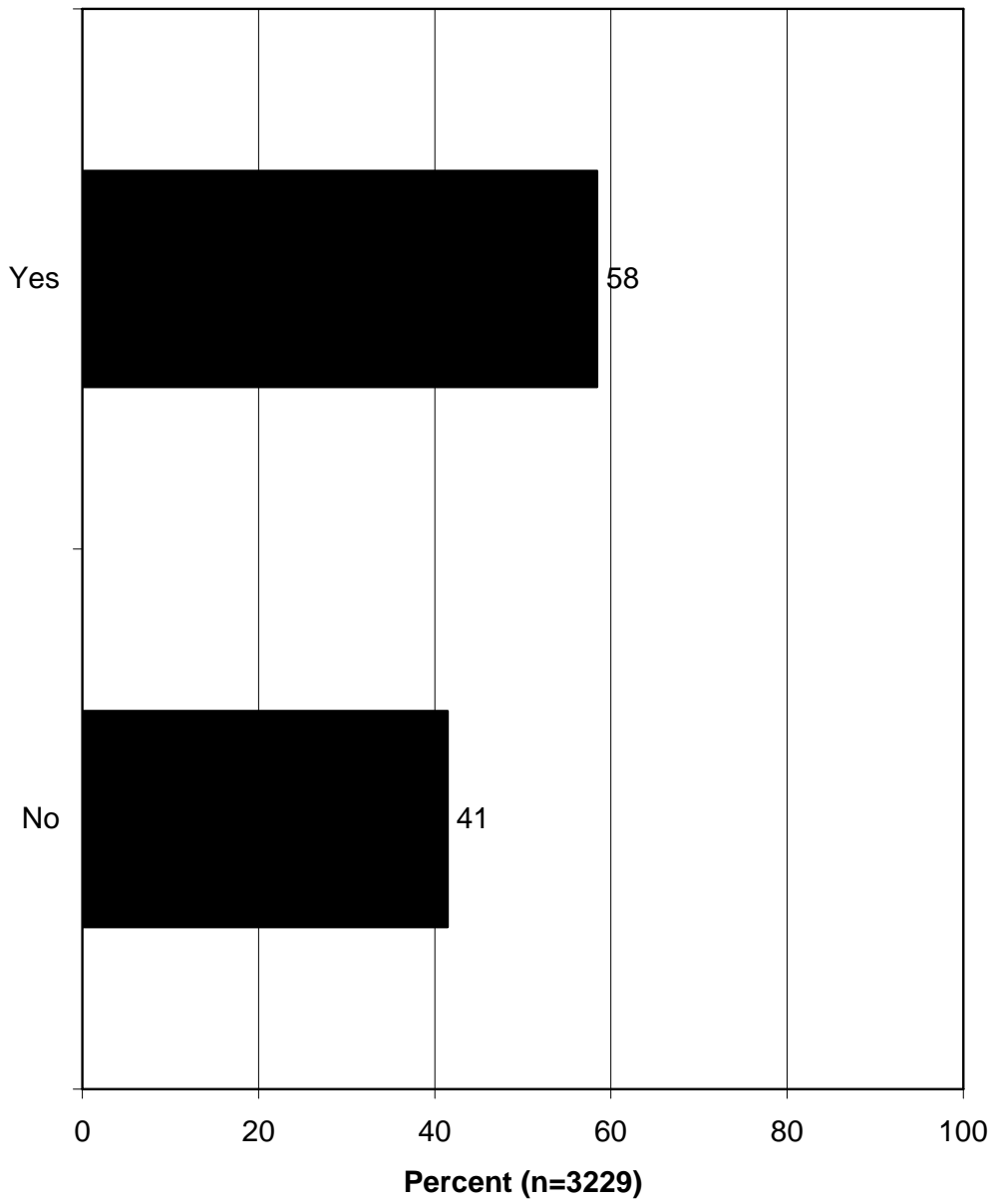
**Q18. Which of these boats did you use most often in the past 2 years?**

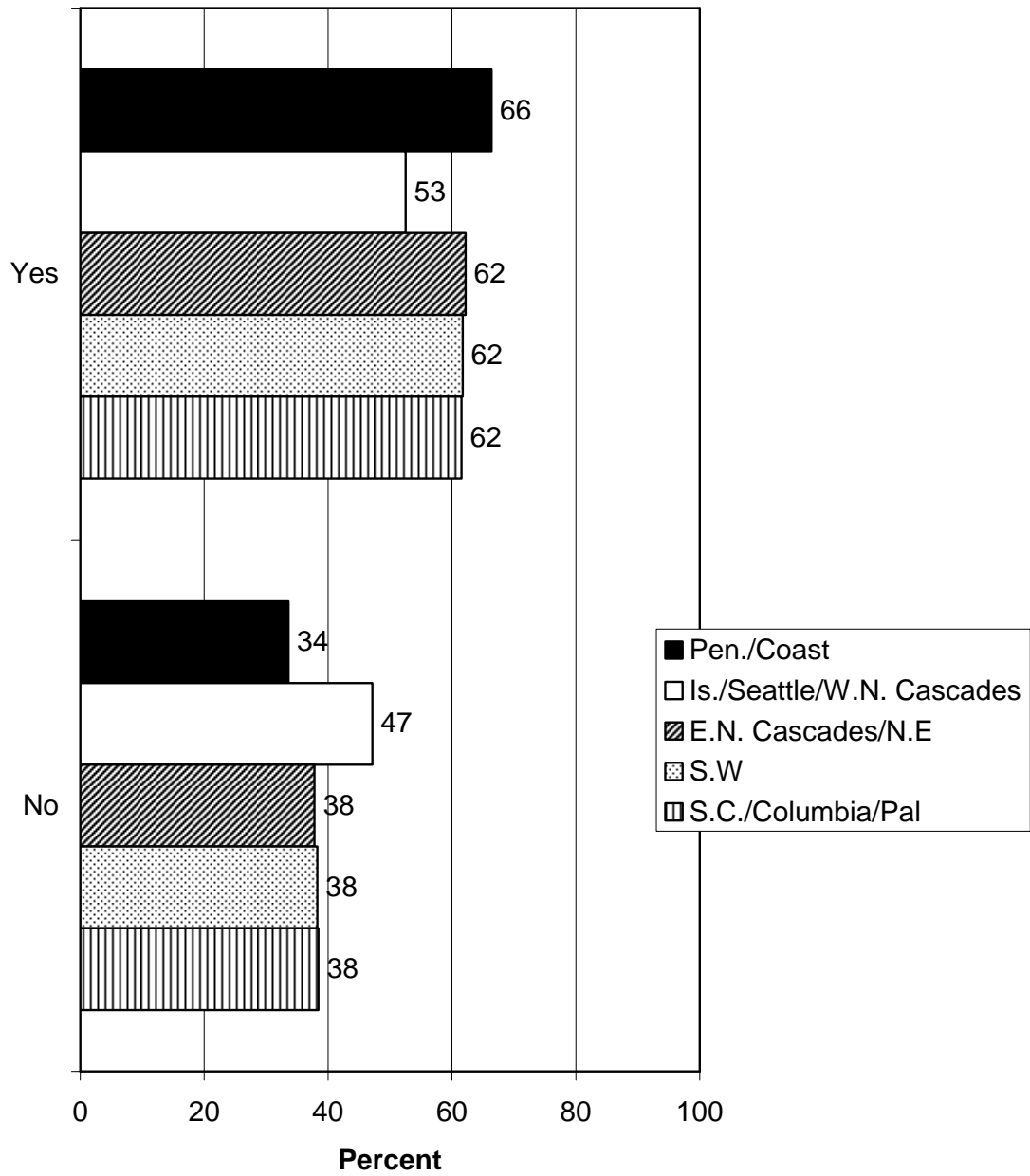


**Q18. Which of these boats did you use most often in the past 2 years?**

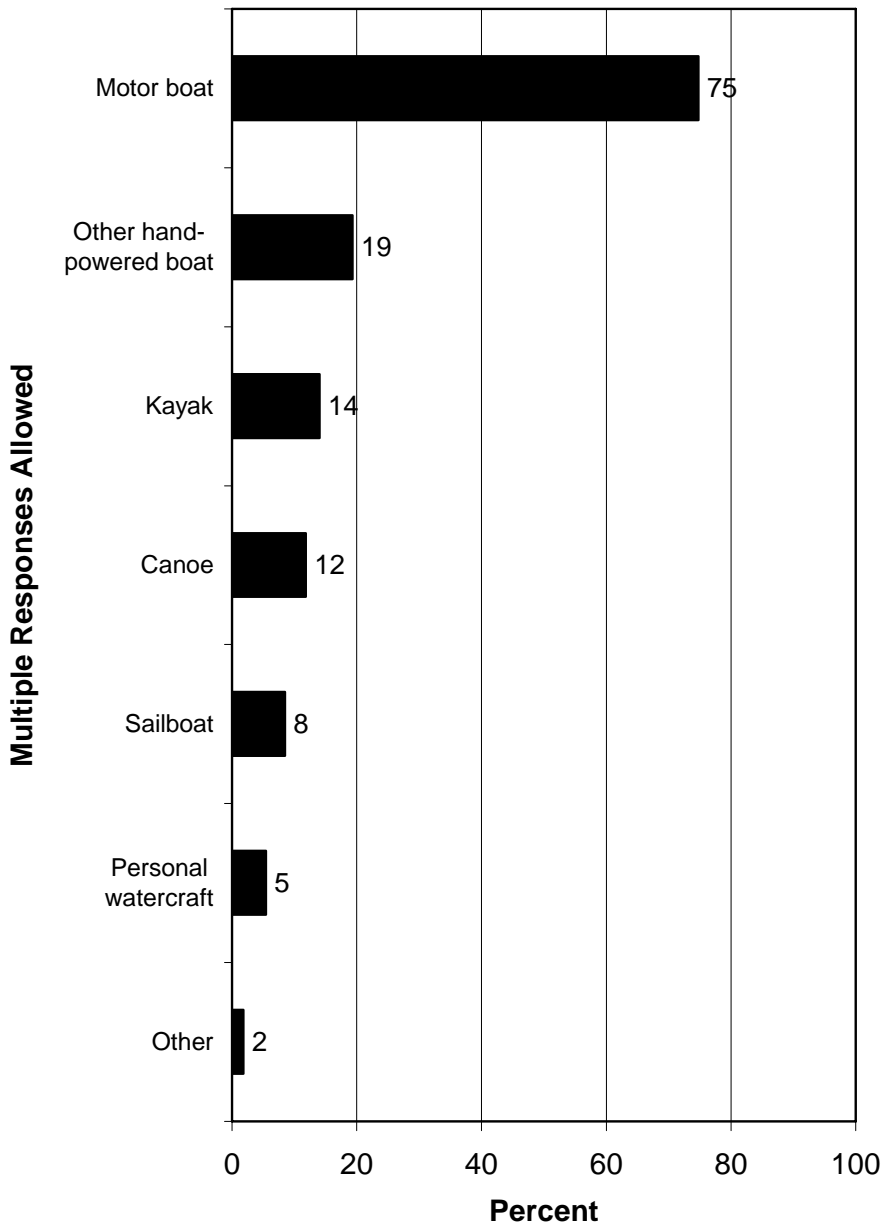


**Q19. Are you currently a boat owner?**

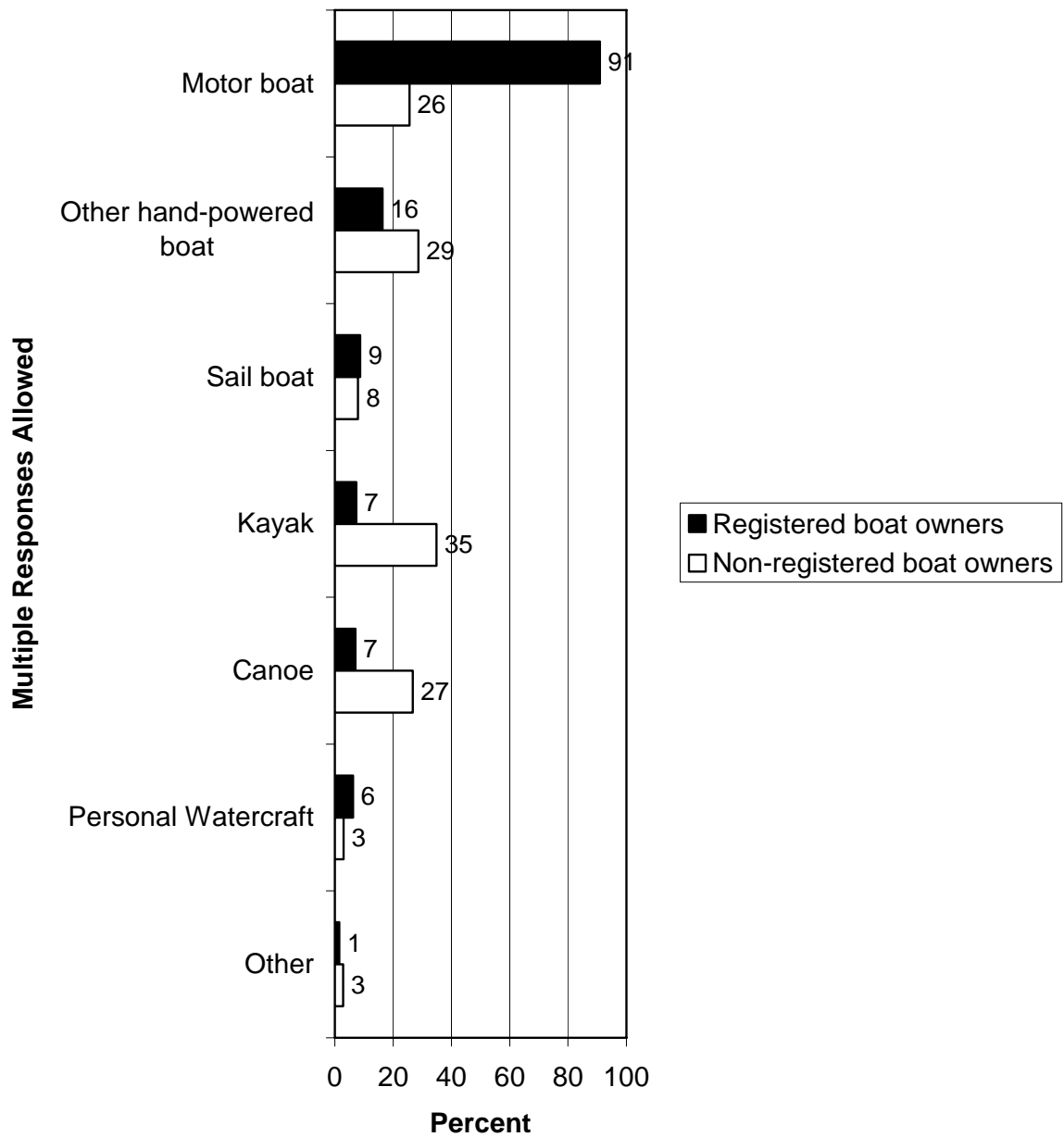


**Q19. Are you currently a boat owner?**

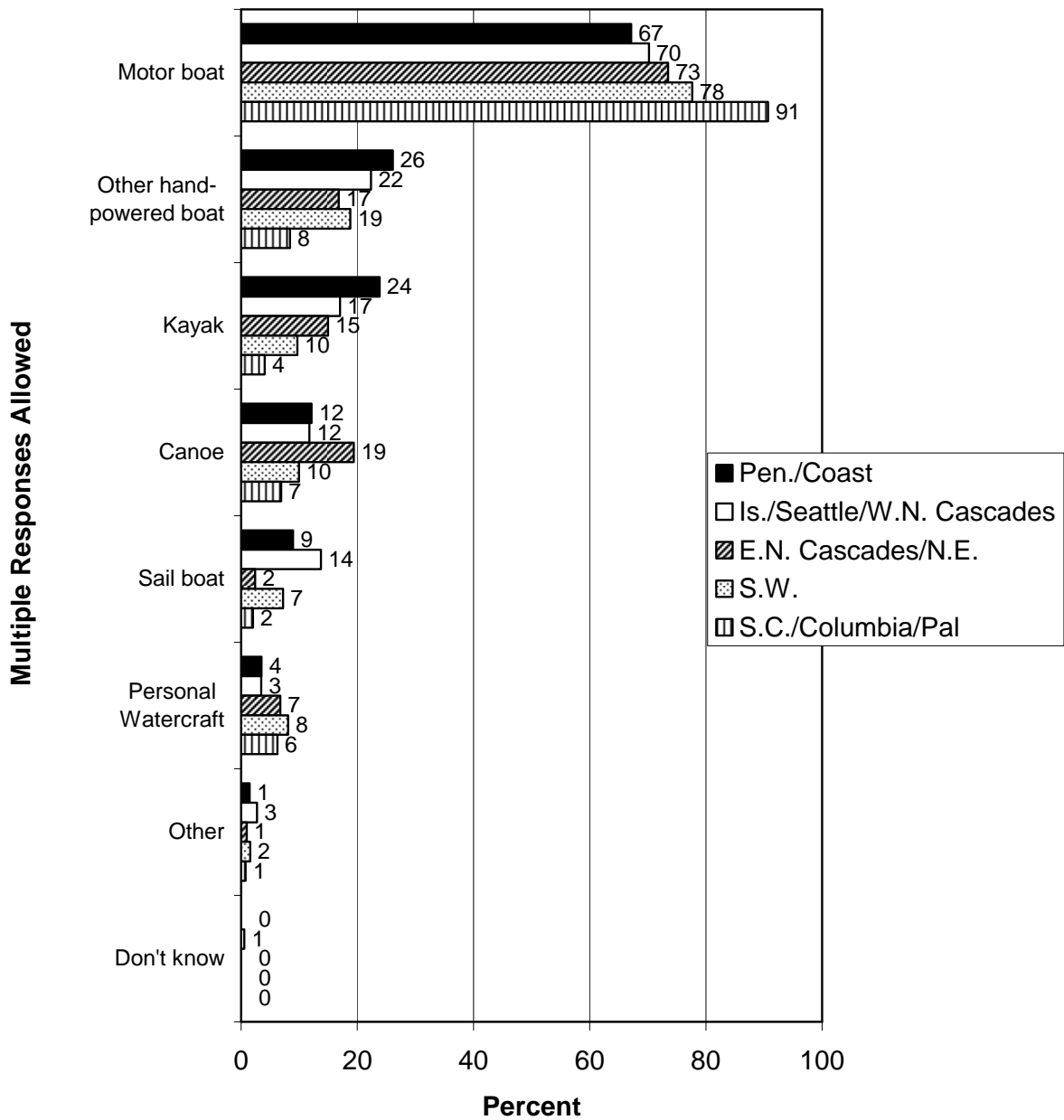
**Q24. What type of boat do you own? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**



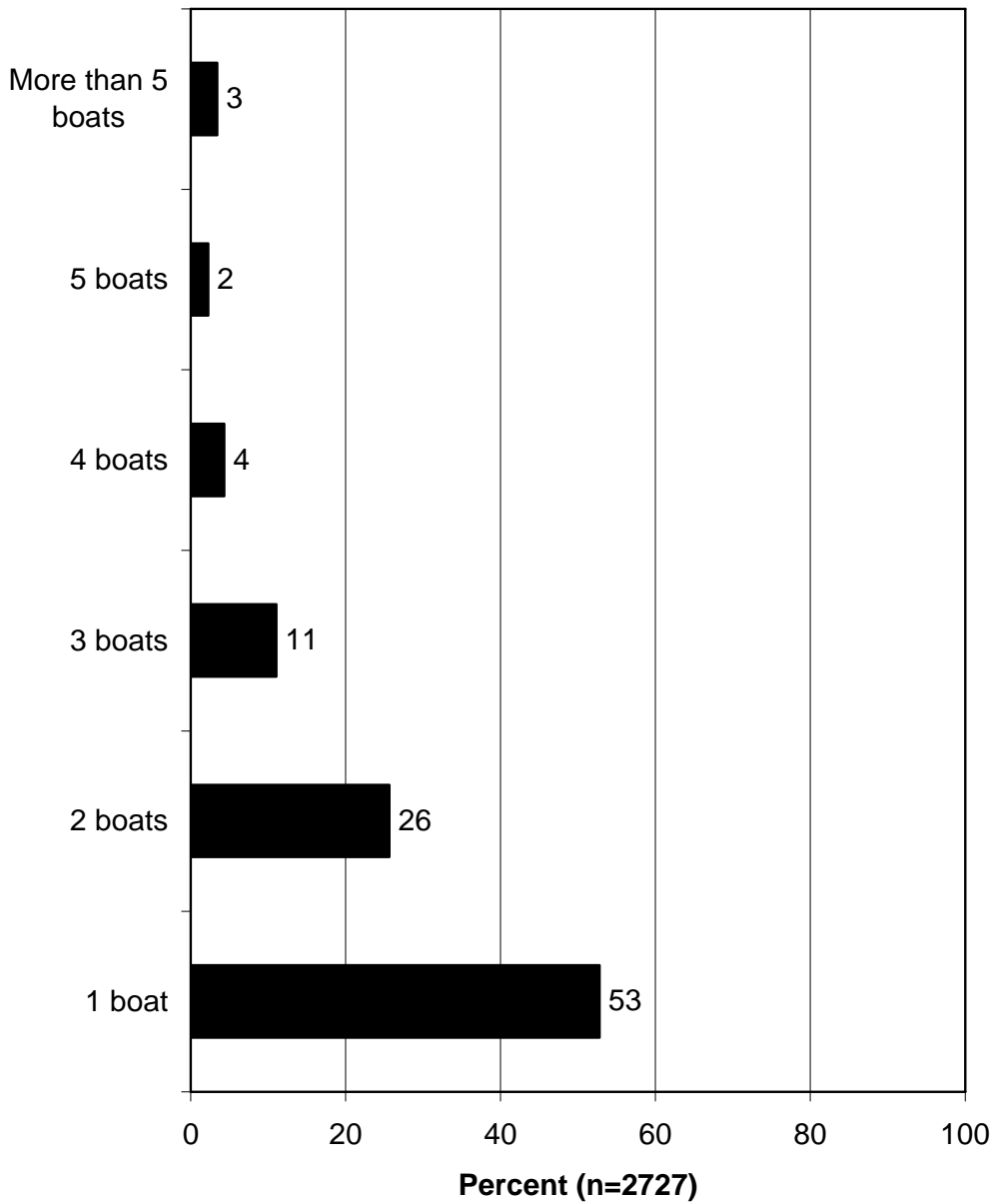
**Q24. What type of boat do you own? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**



### Q24. What type of boat do you own? (Asked of those who own a boat.)

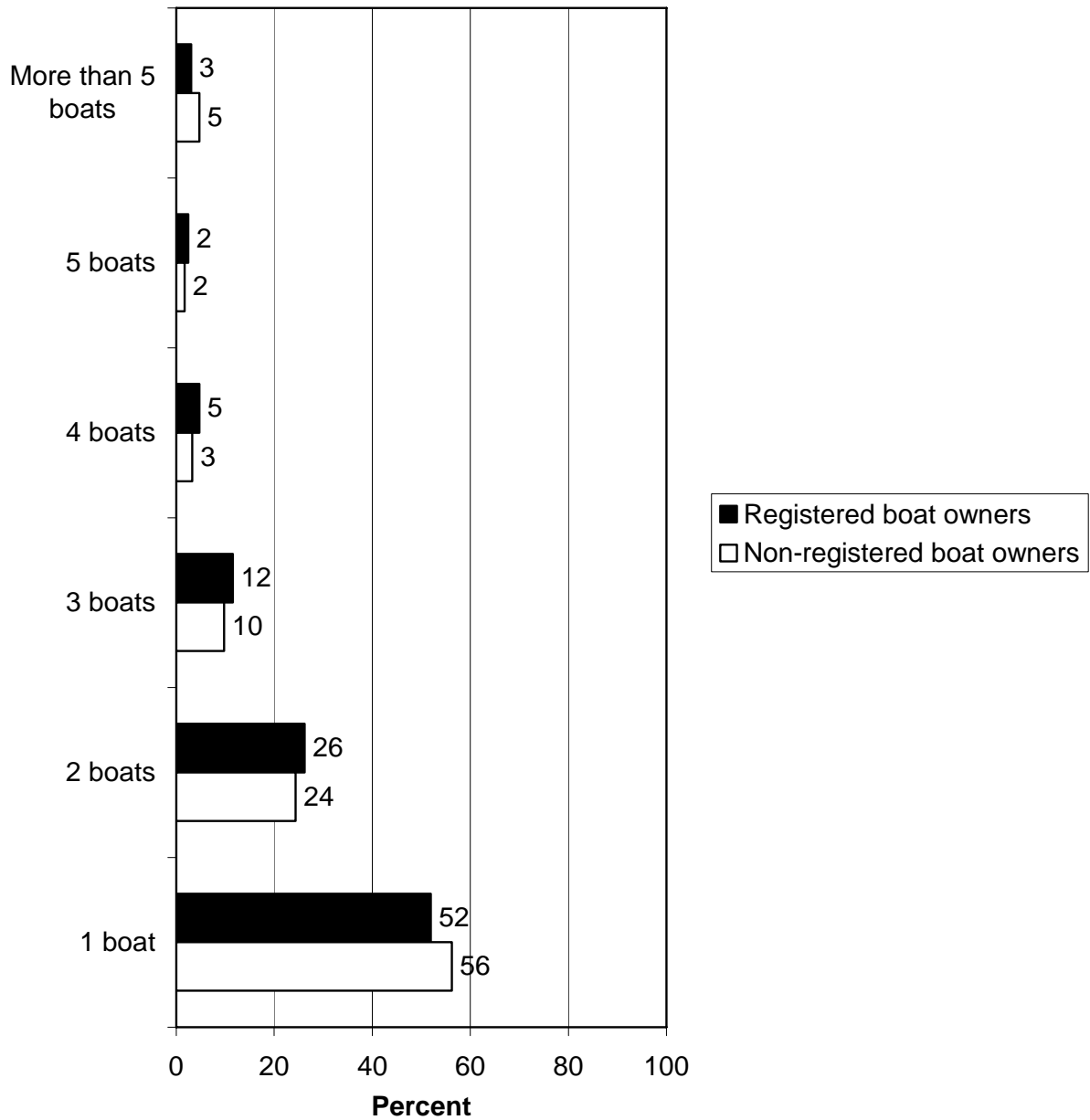


**Q20. How many boats do you own? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**

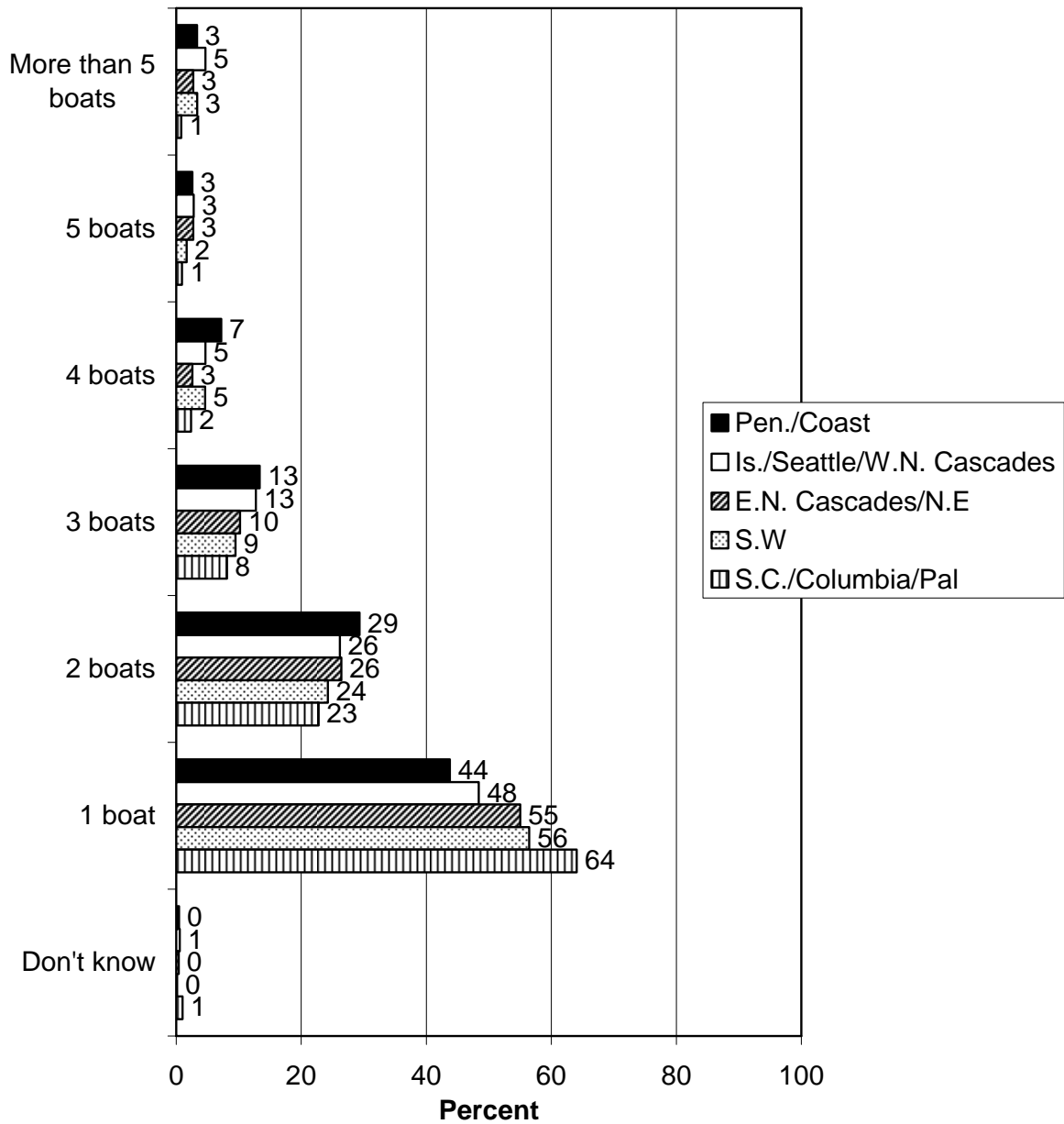




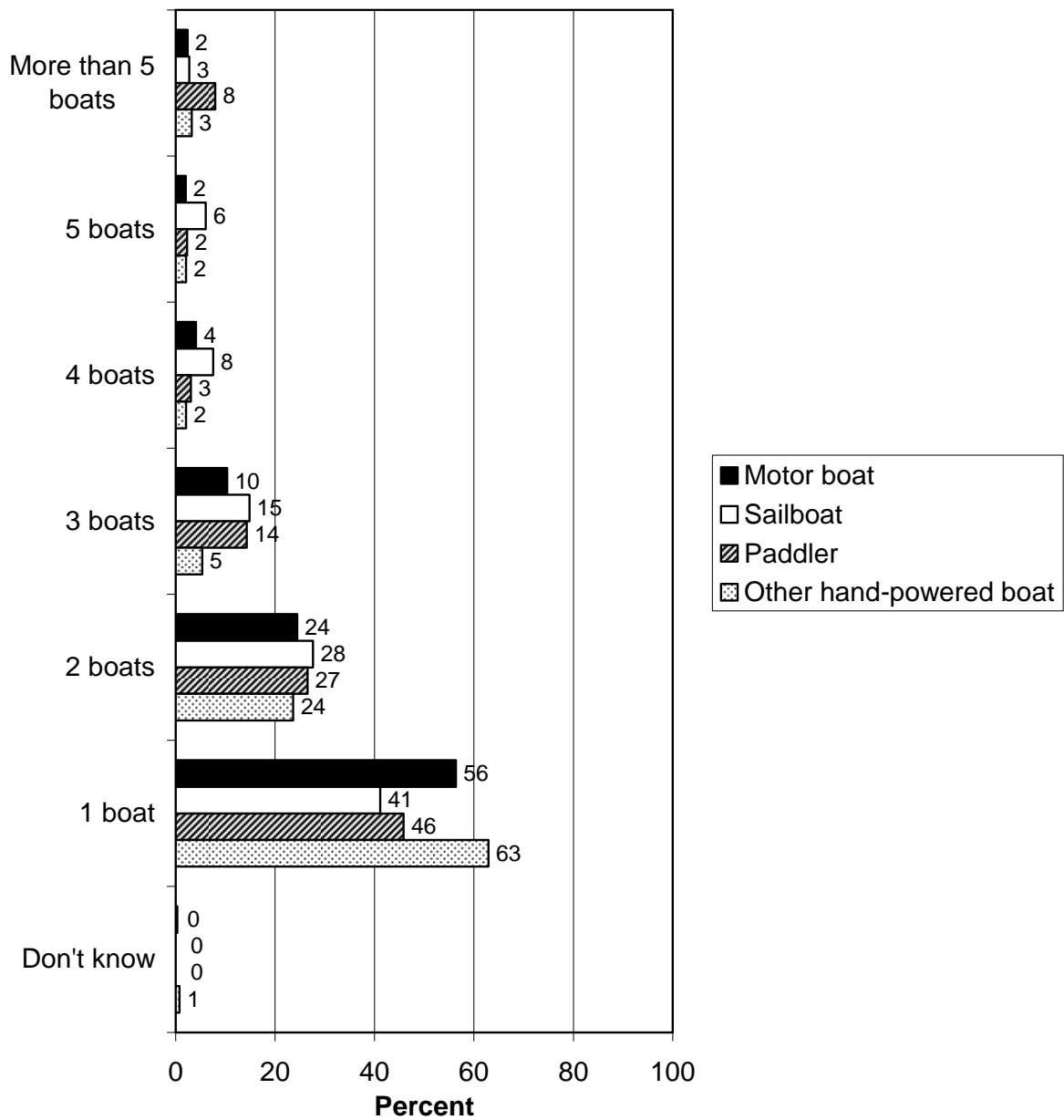
**Q20. How many boats do you own? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**



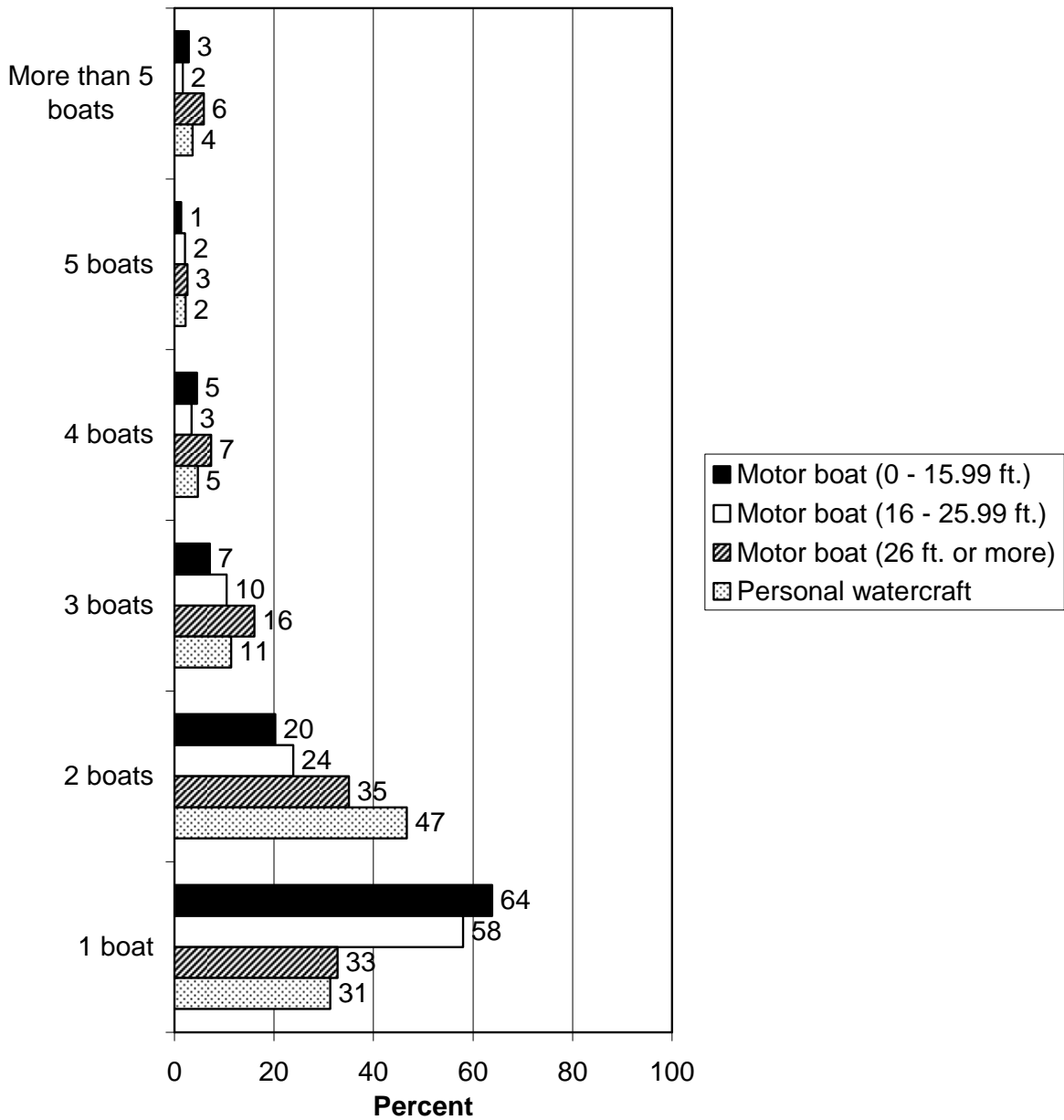
**Q20. How many boats do you own? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**



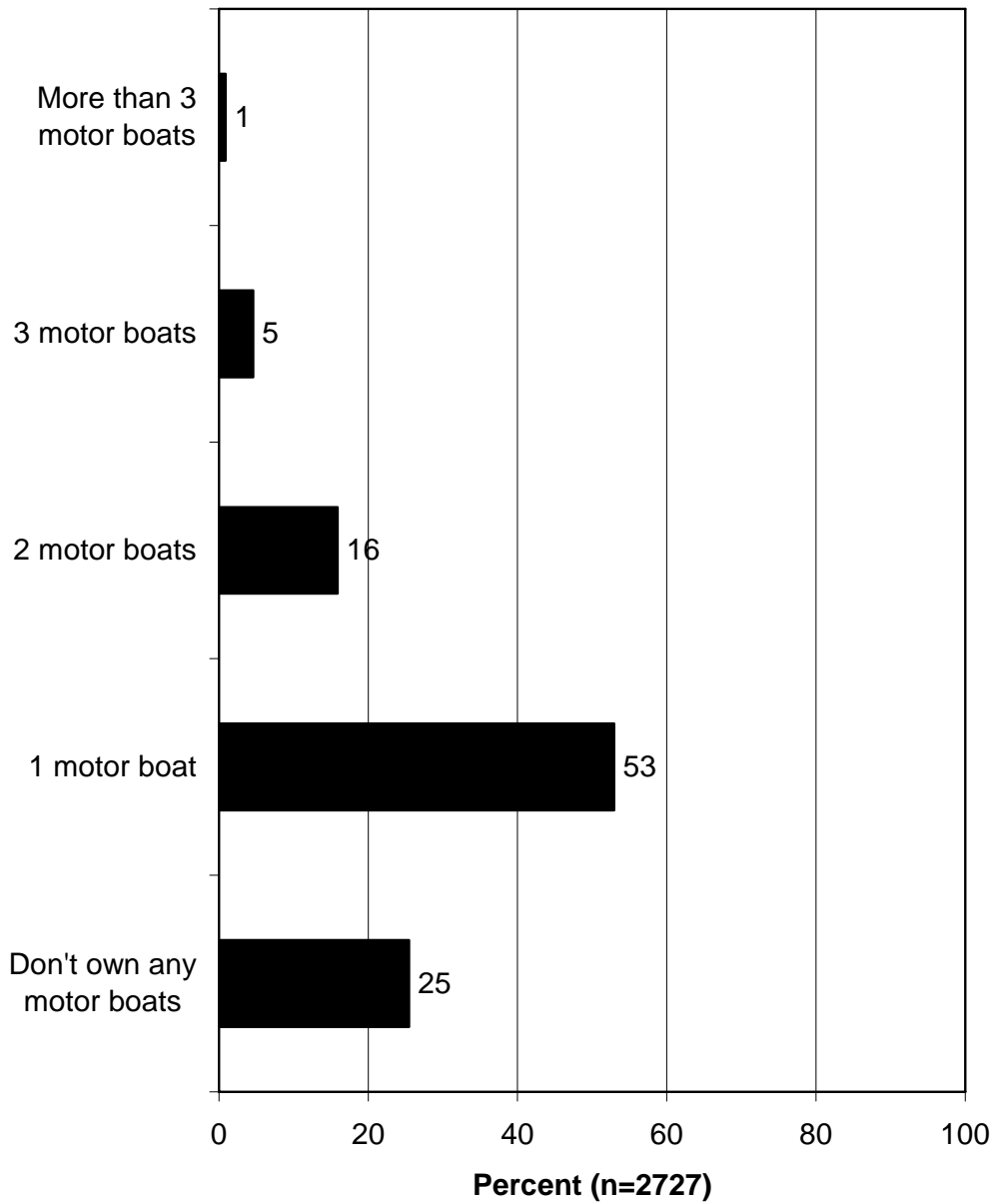
**Q20. How many boats do you own? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**



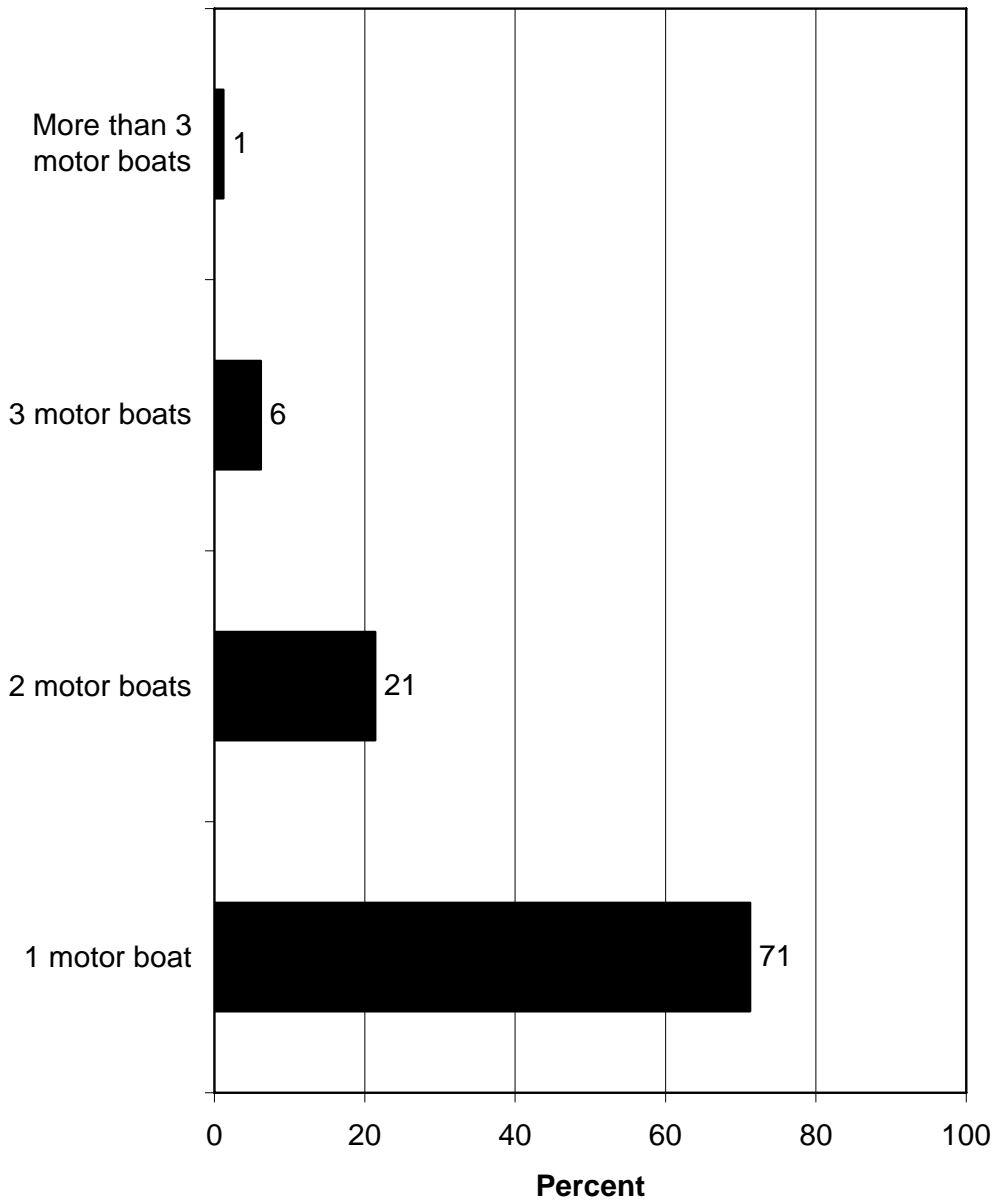
**Q20. How many boats do you own? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**



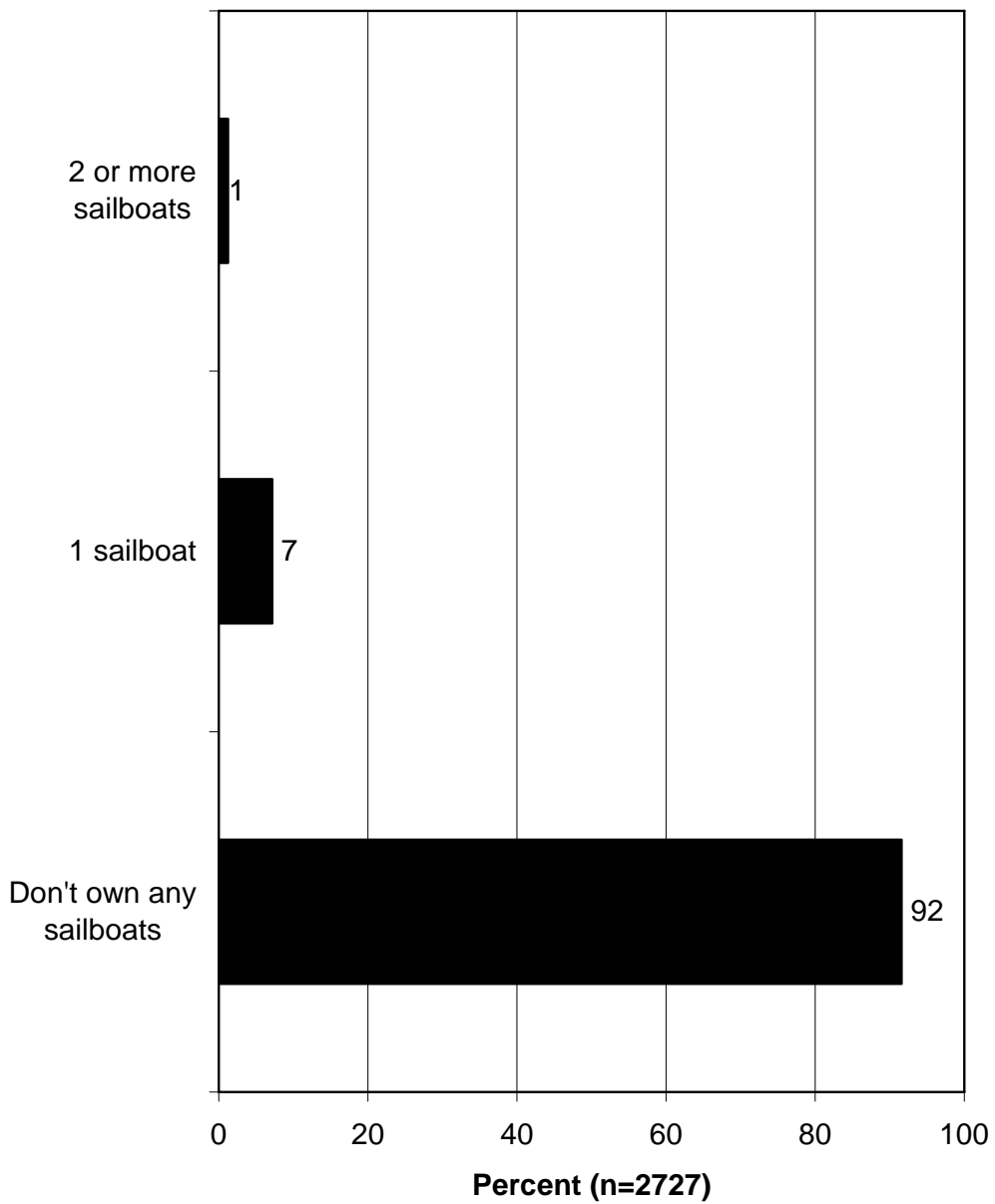
**Q27. How many motor boats do you own? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**



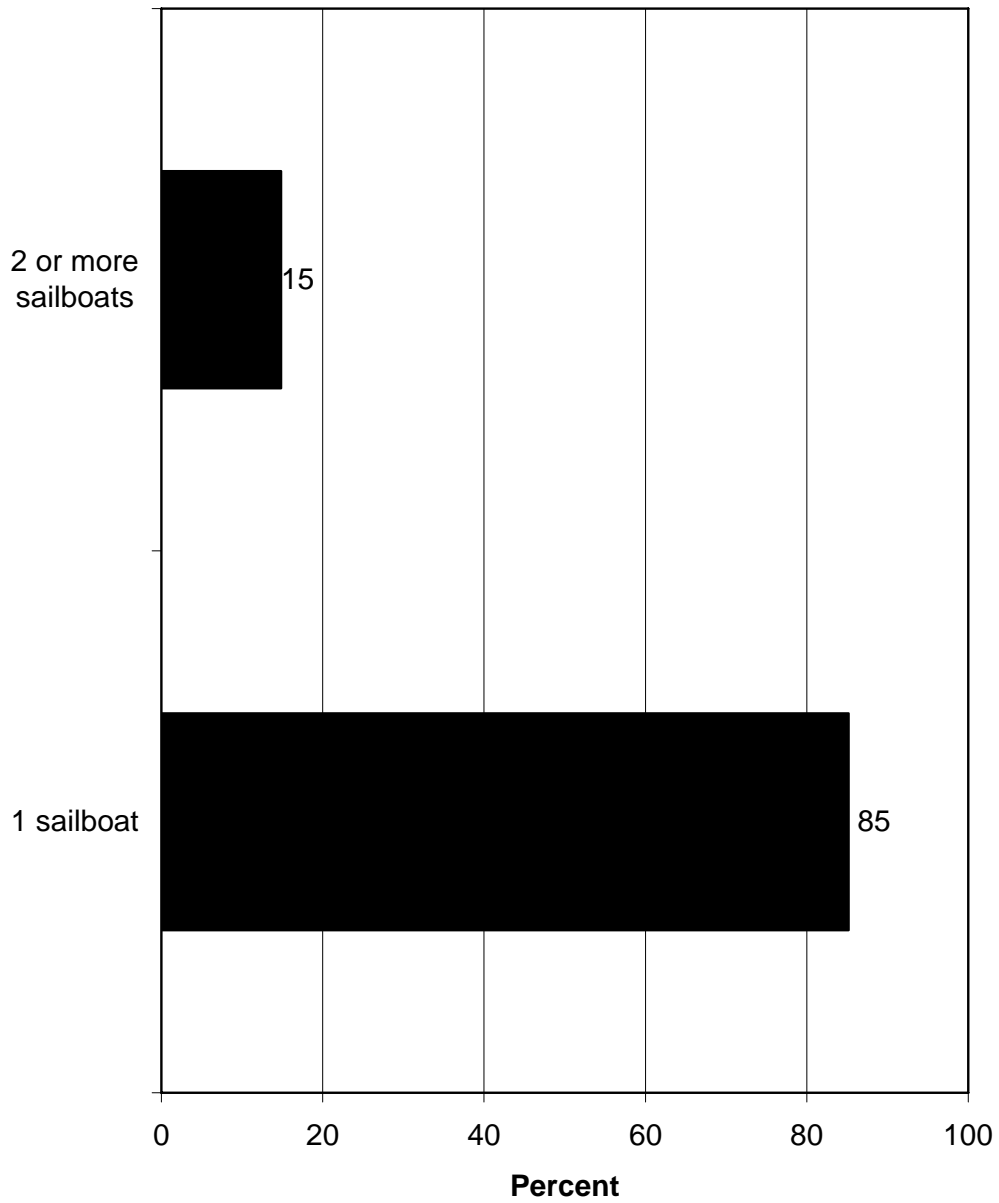
**Q27. How many motor boats do you own?  
(Percentages of those who own a motor boat.)**



**Q30. How many sailboats do you own? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**

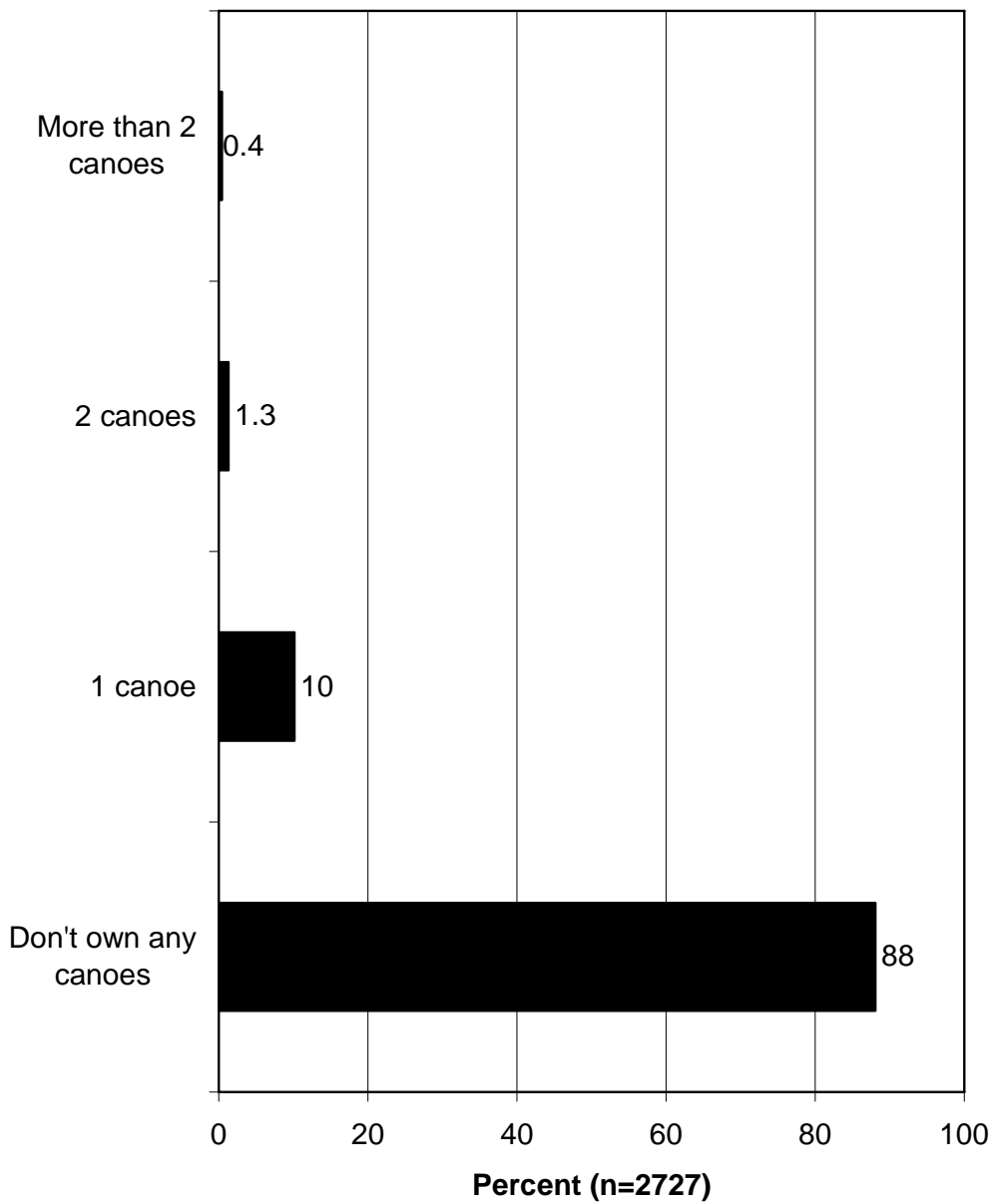


**Q30. How many sailboats do you own?  
(Percentages of those who own a sailboat.)**

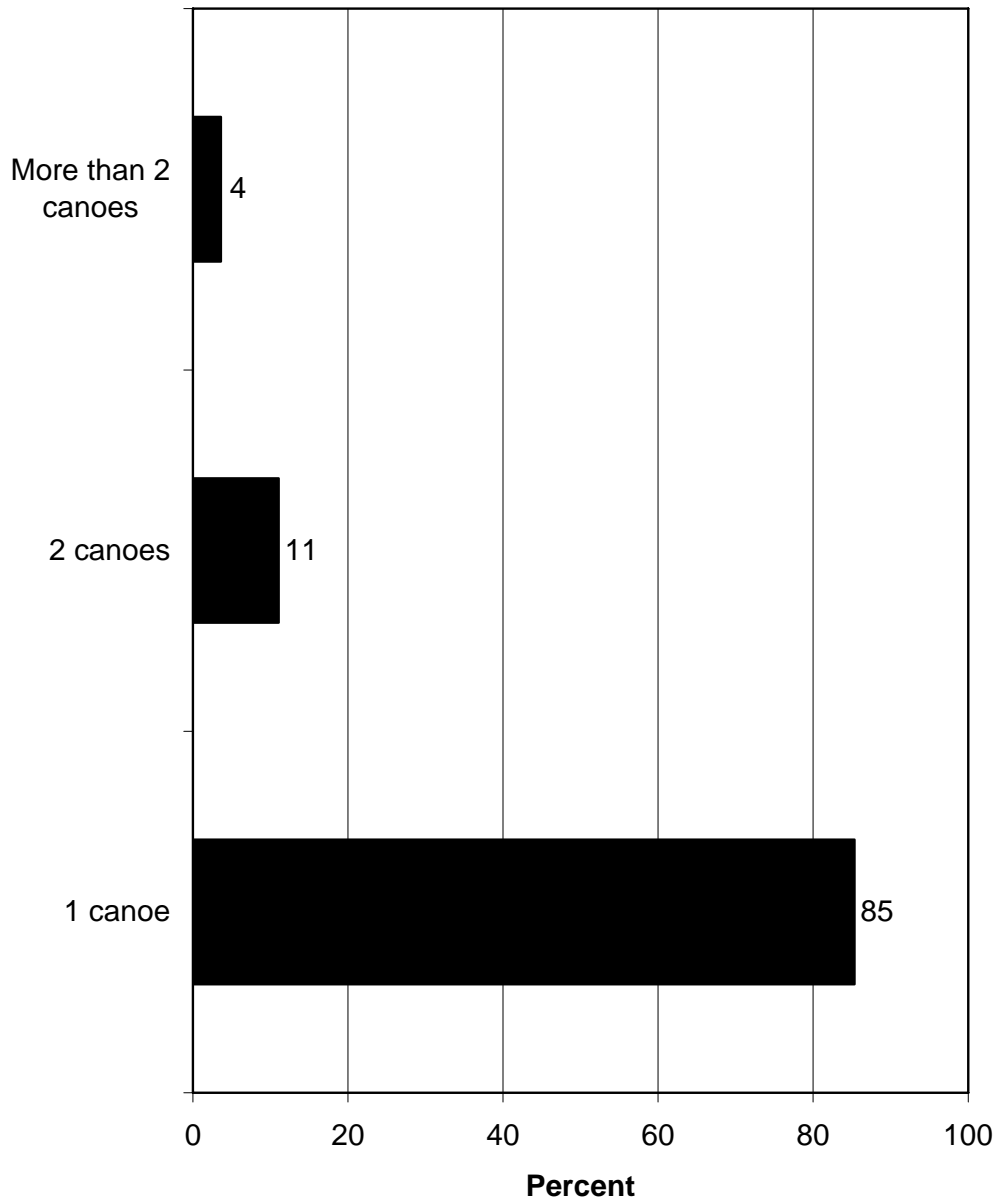




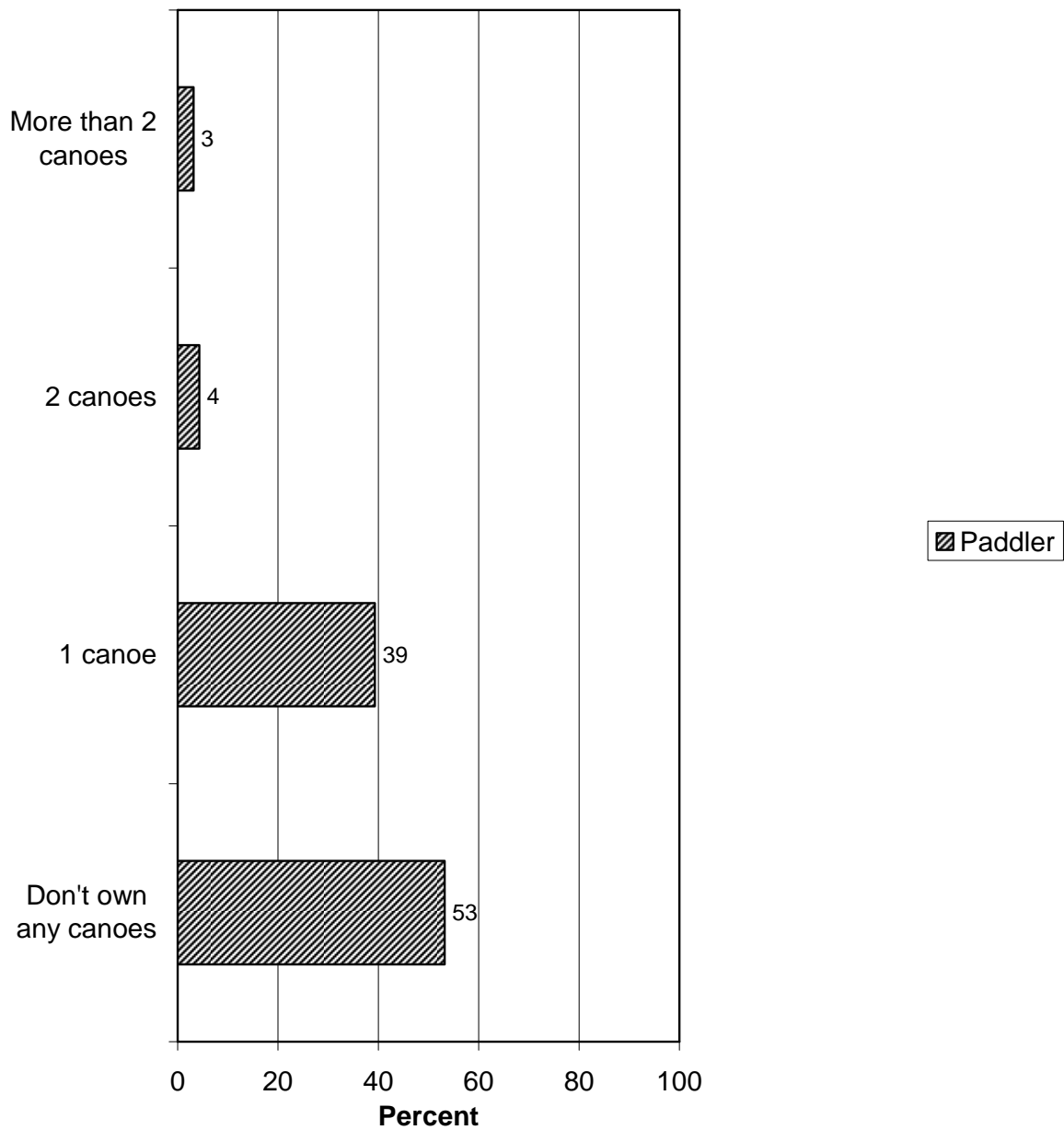
**Q33. How many canoes do you own? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**



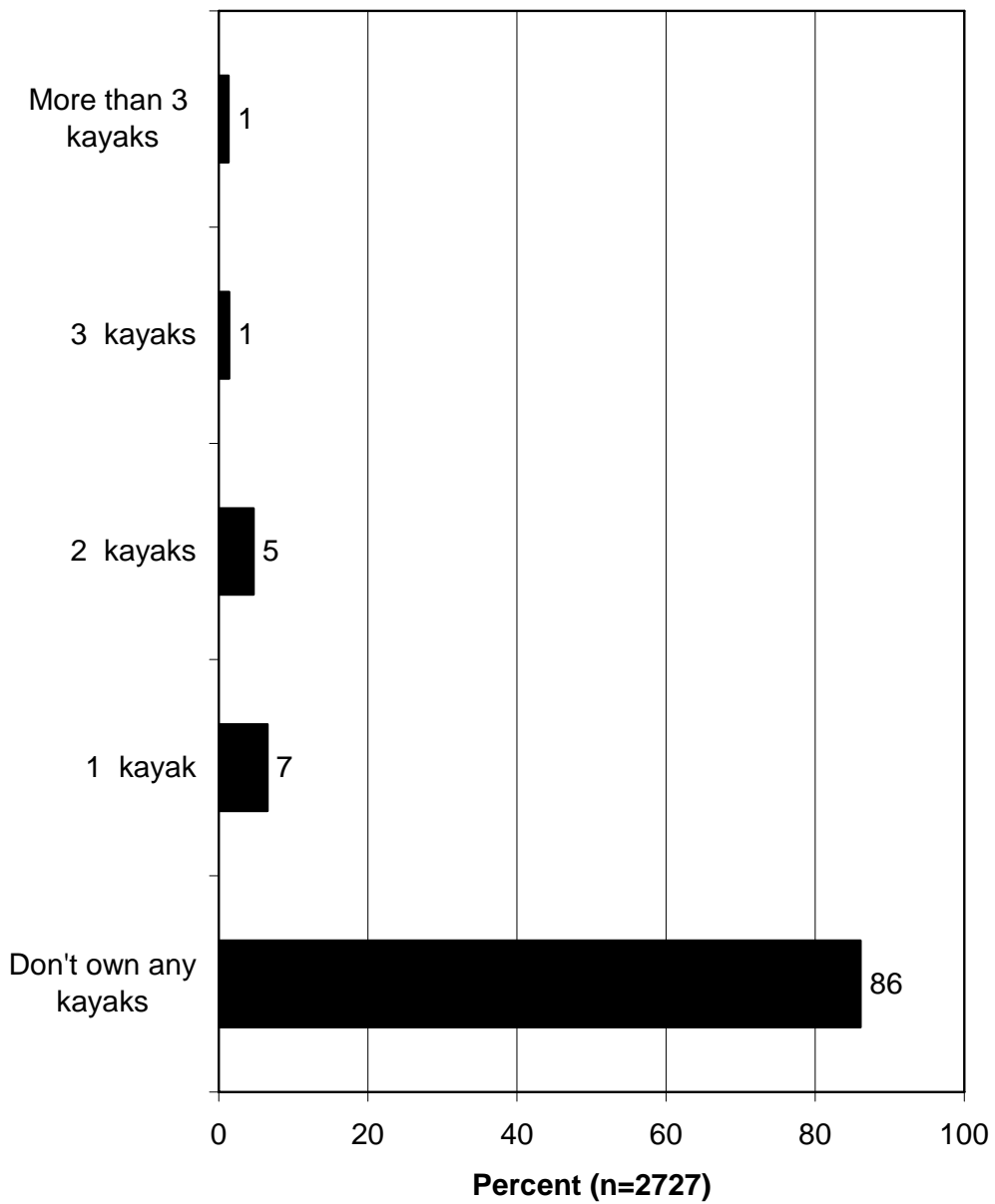
**Q33. How many canoes do you own?  
(Percentages of those who own a canoe.)**



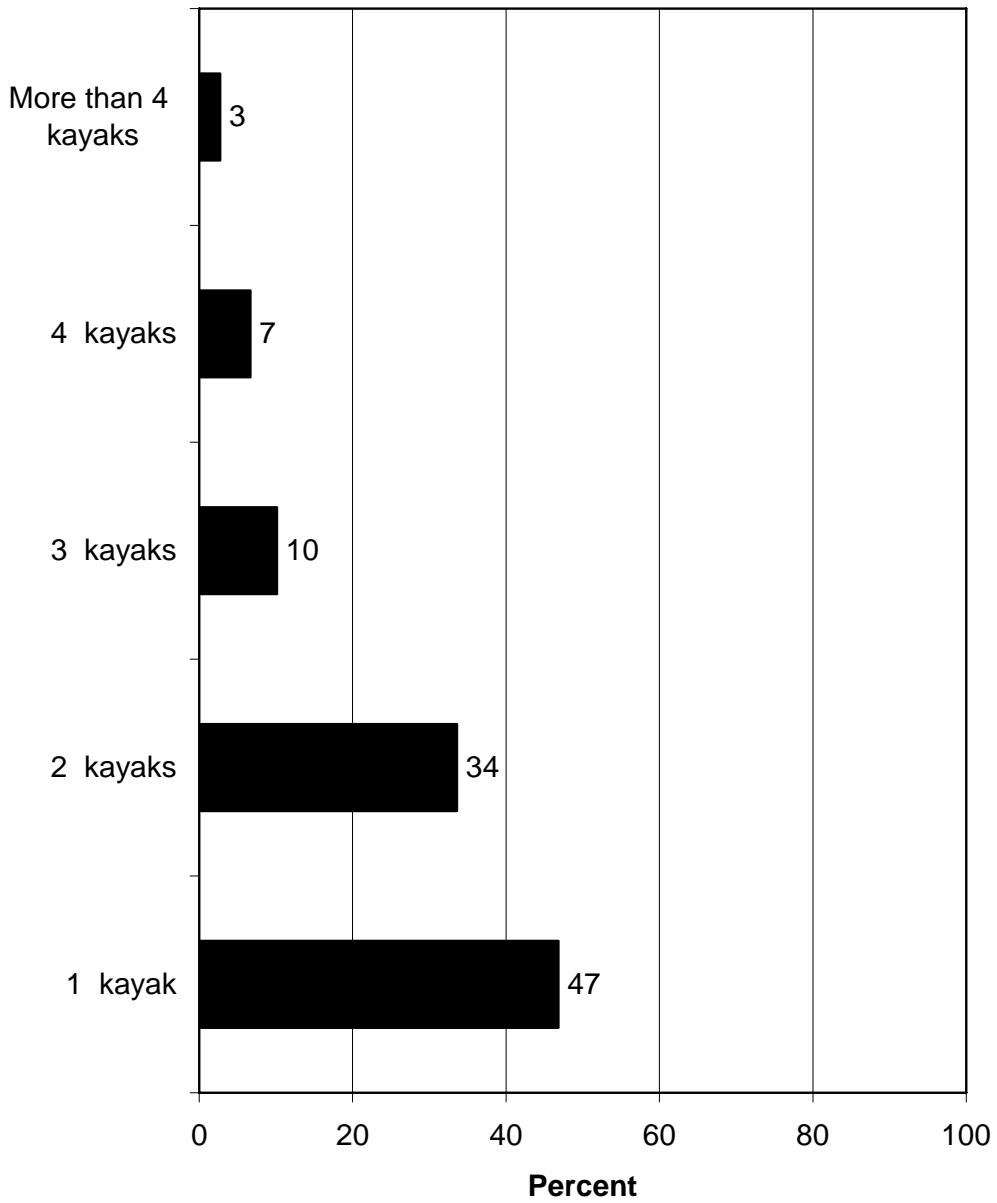
**Q33. How many canoes do you own? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**



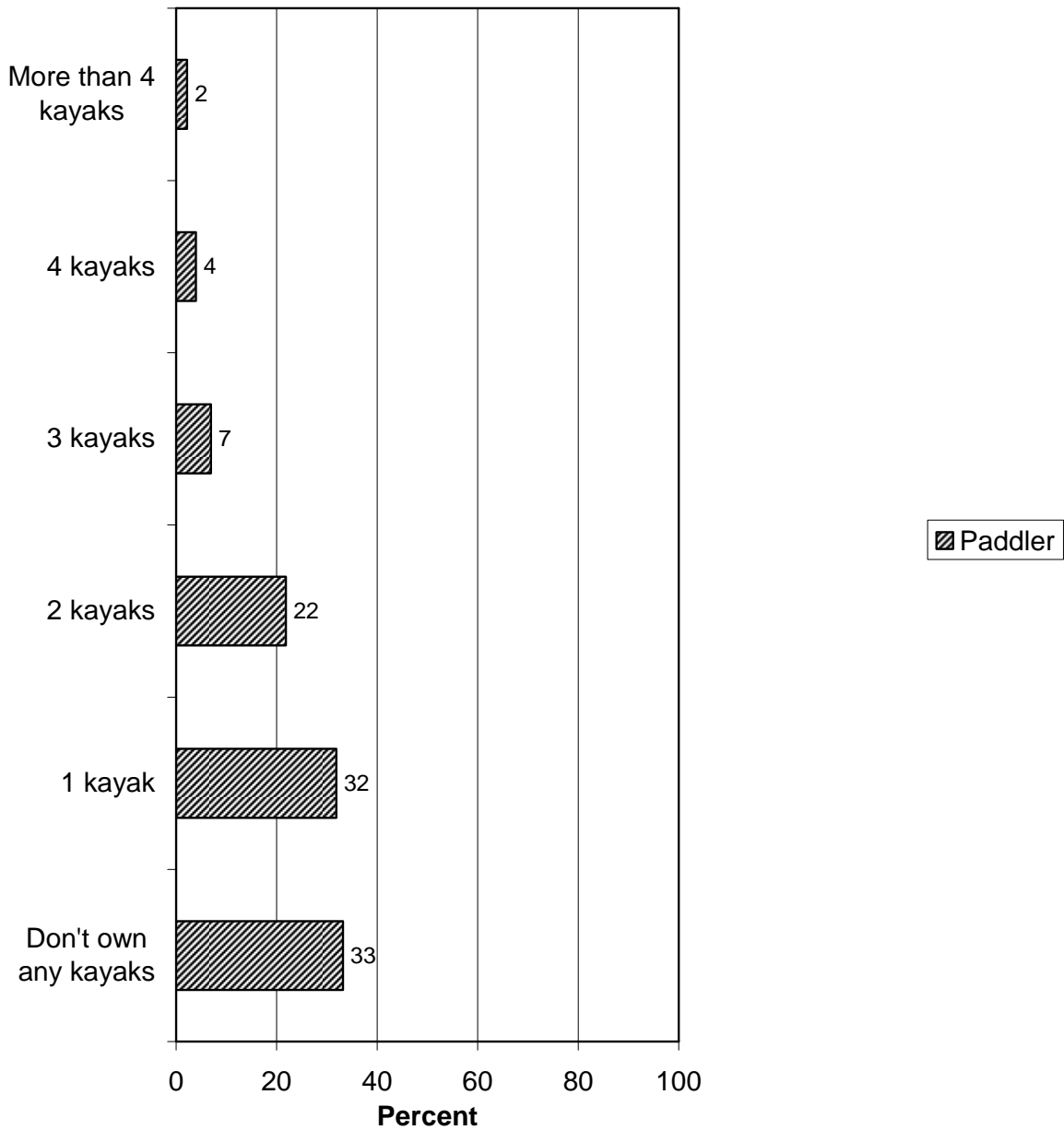
**Q36. How many kayaks do you own? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**



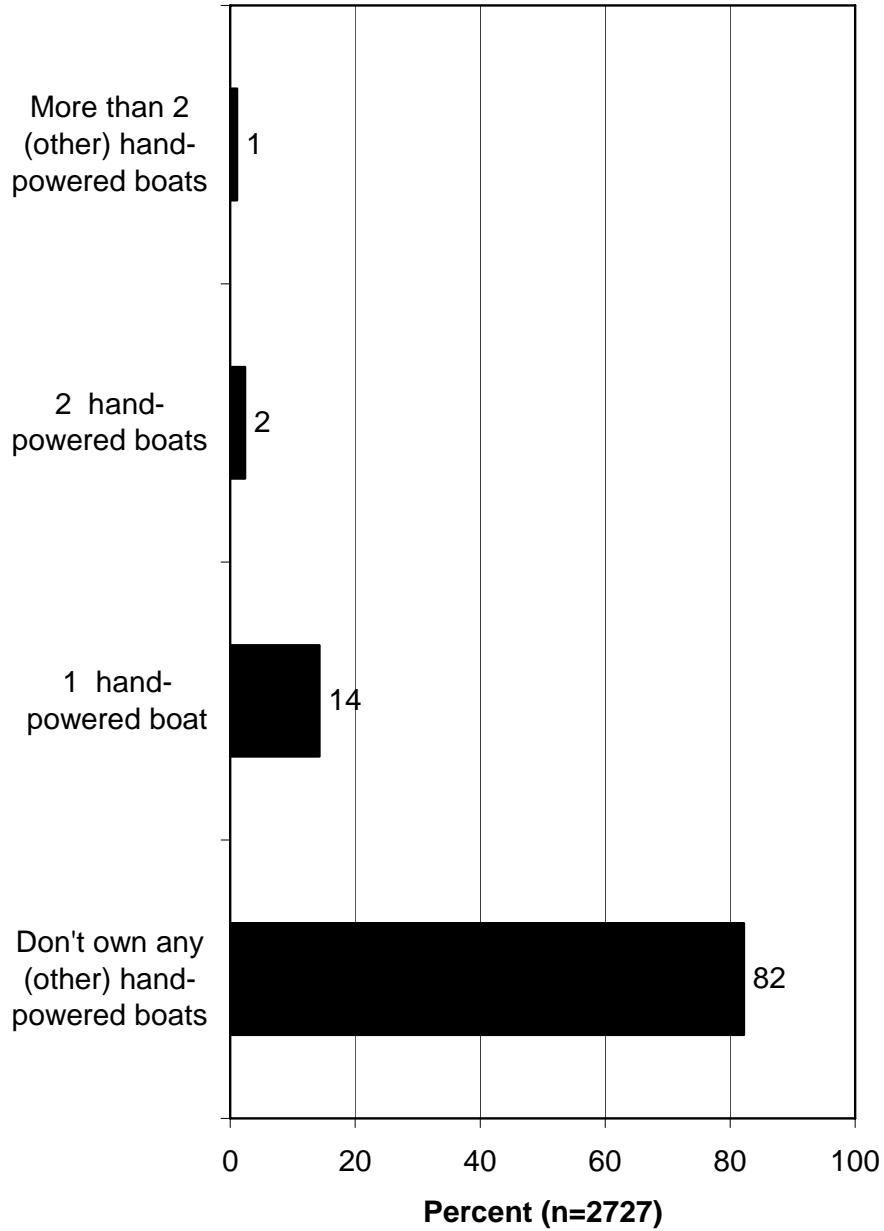
**Q36. How many kayaks do you own?  
(Percentages of those who own a kayaks.)**



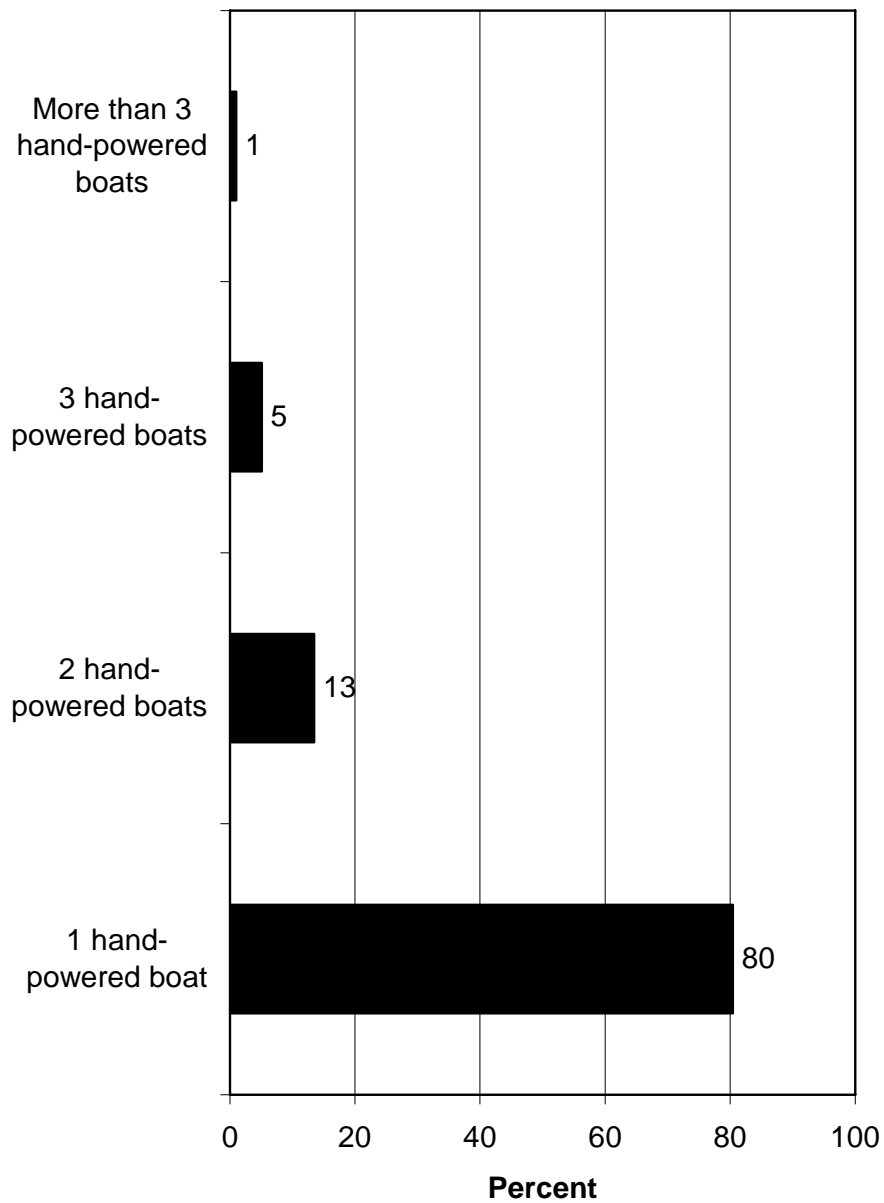
**Q36. How many kayaks do you own? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**



**Q39. How many other hand-powered boats do you own? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**

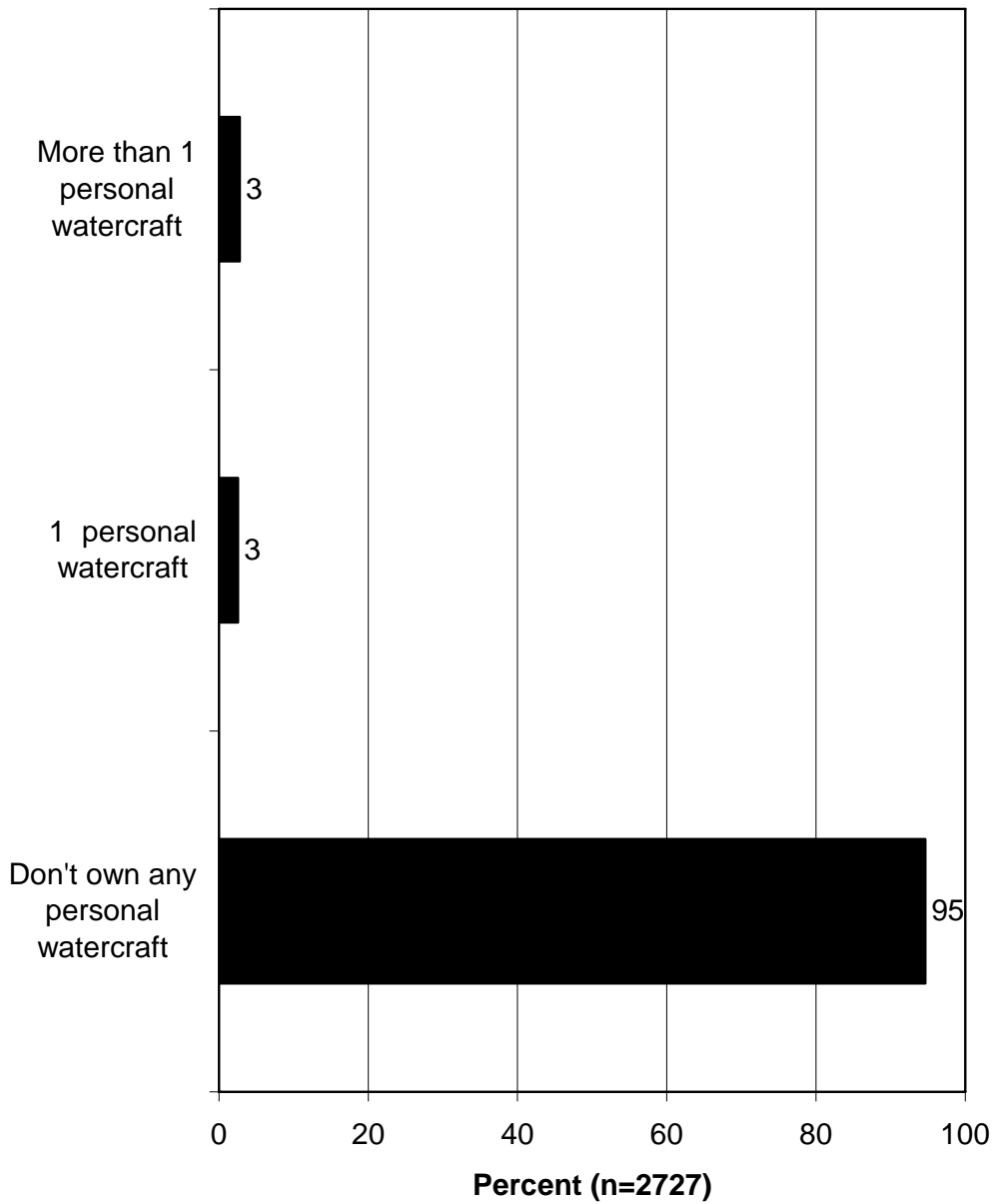


**Q39. How many (other) hand-powered boats do you own?  
own?  
(Percentages of those who own an "other hand-  
powered boat.")**

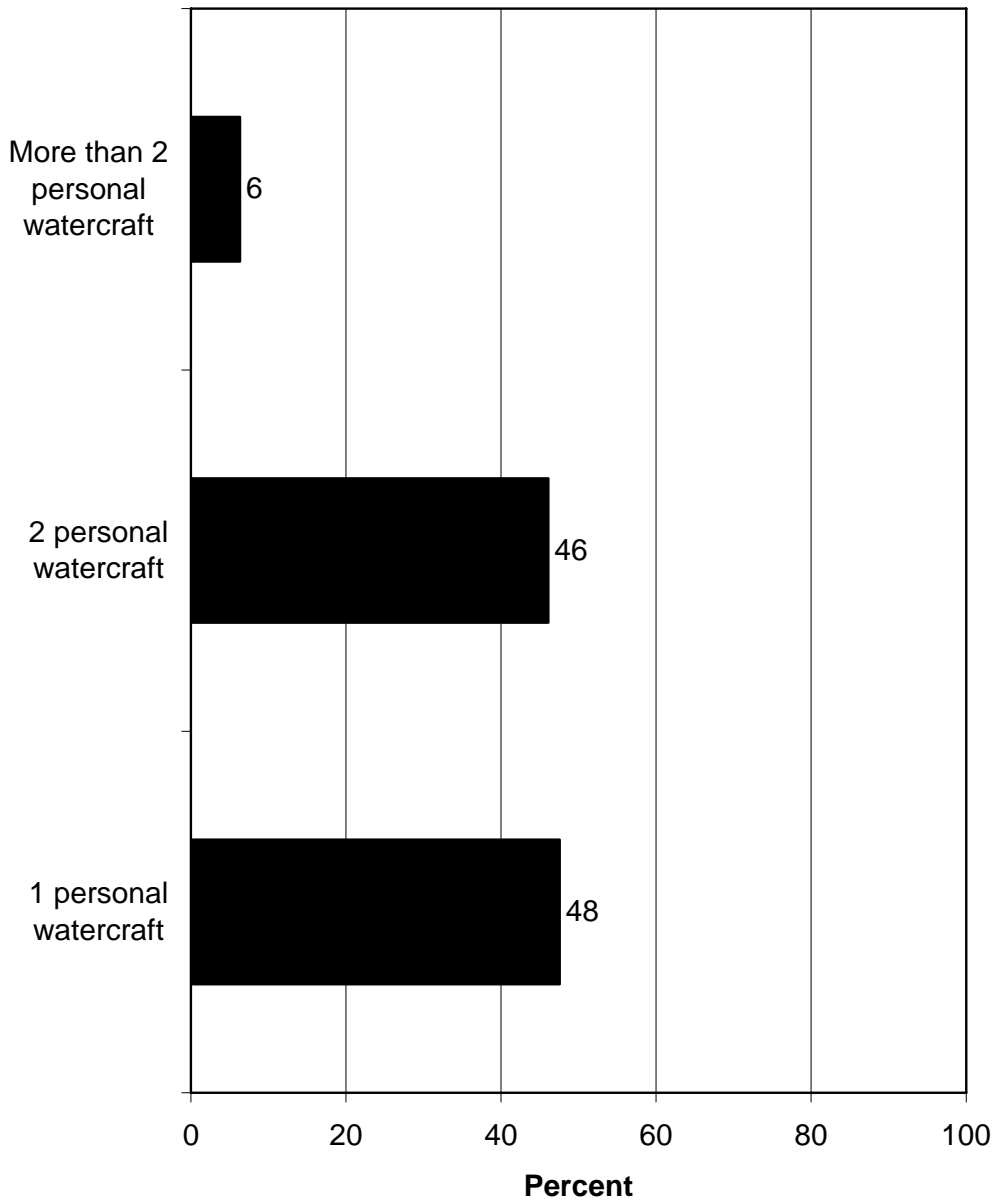




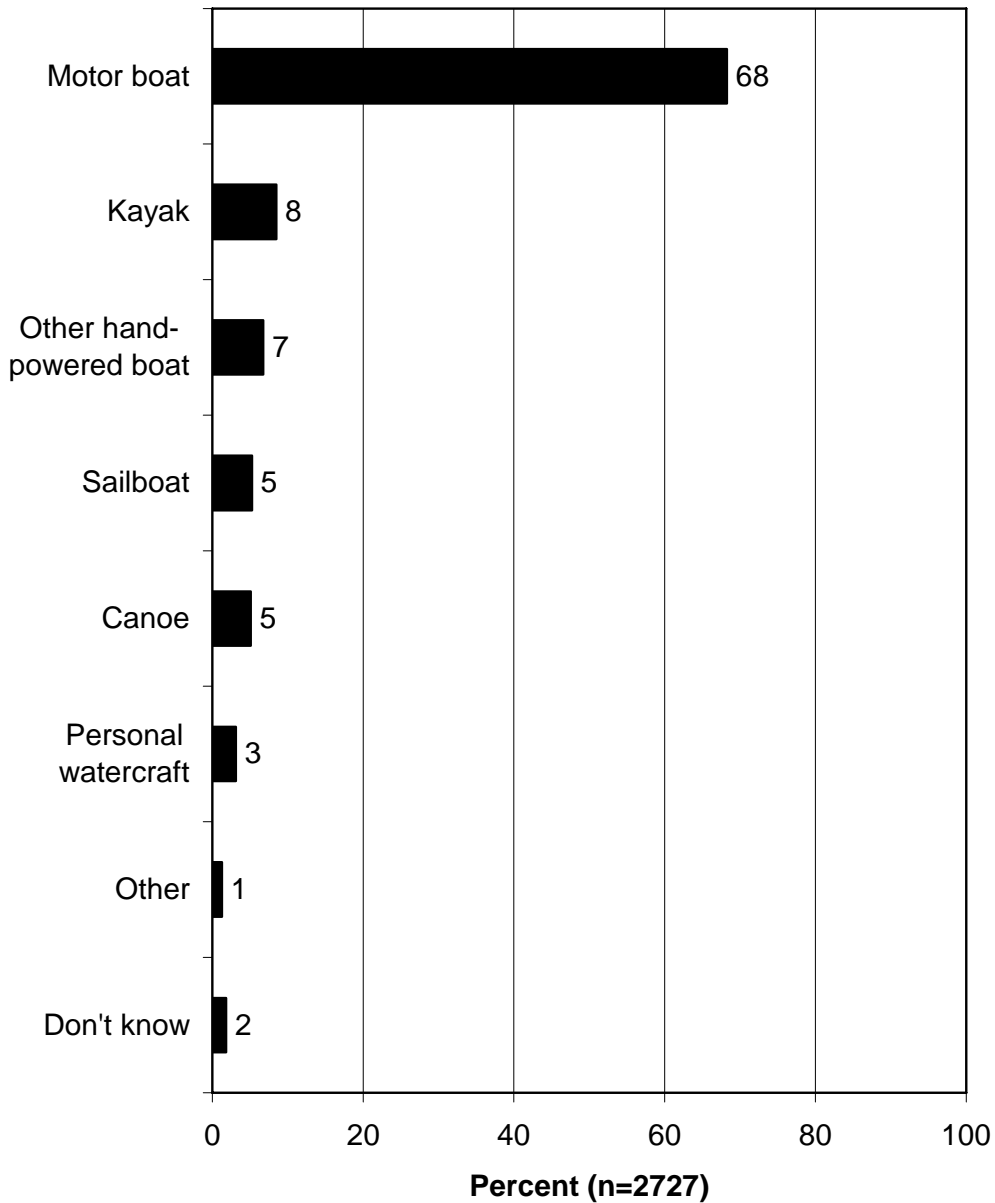
**Q42. How many personal watercraft do you own?  
(Asked of those who own a boat.)**



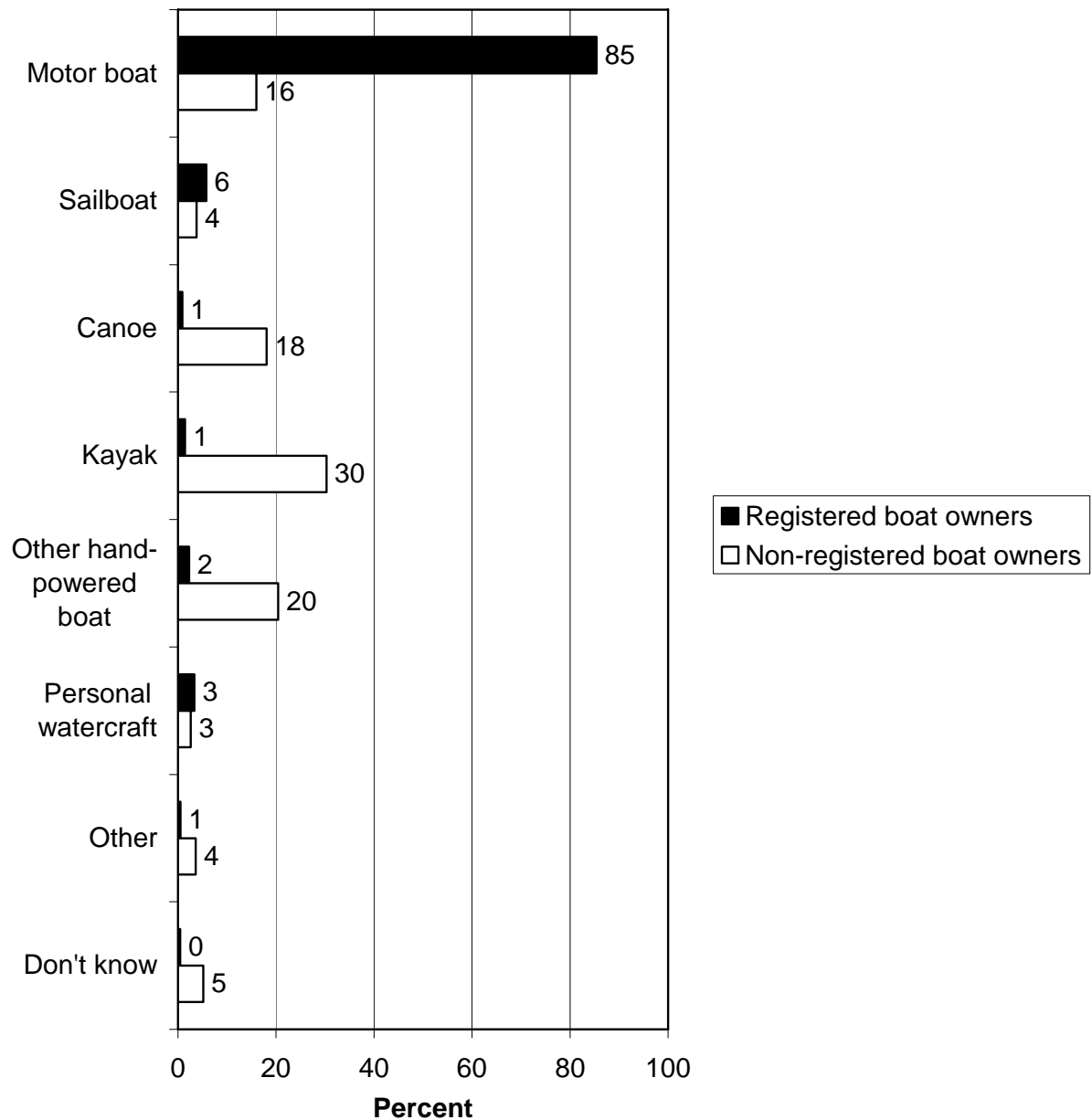
**Q42. How many personal watercraft do you own?  
(Percentages of those who own a personal  
watercraft.)**



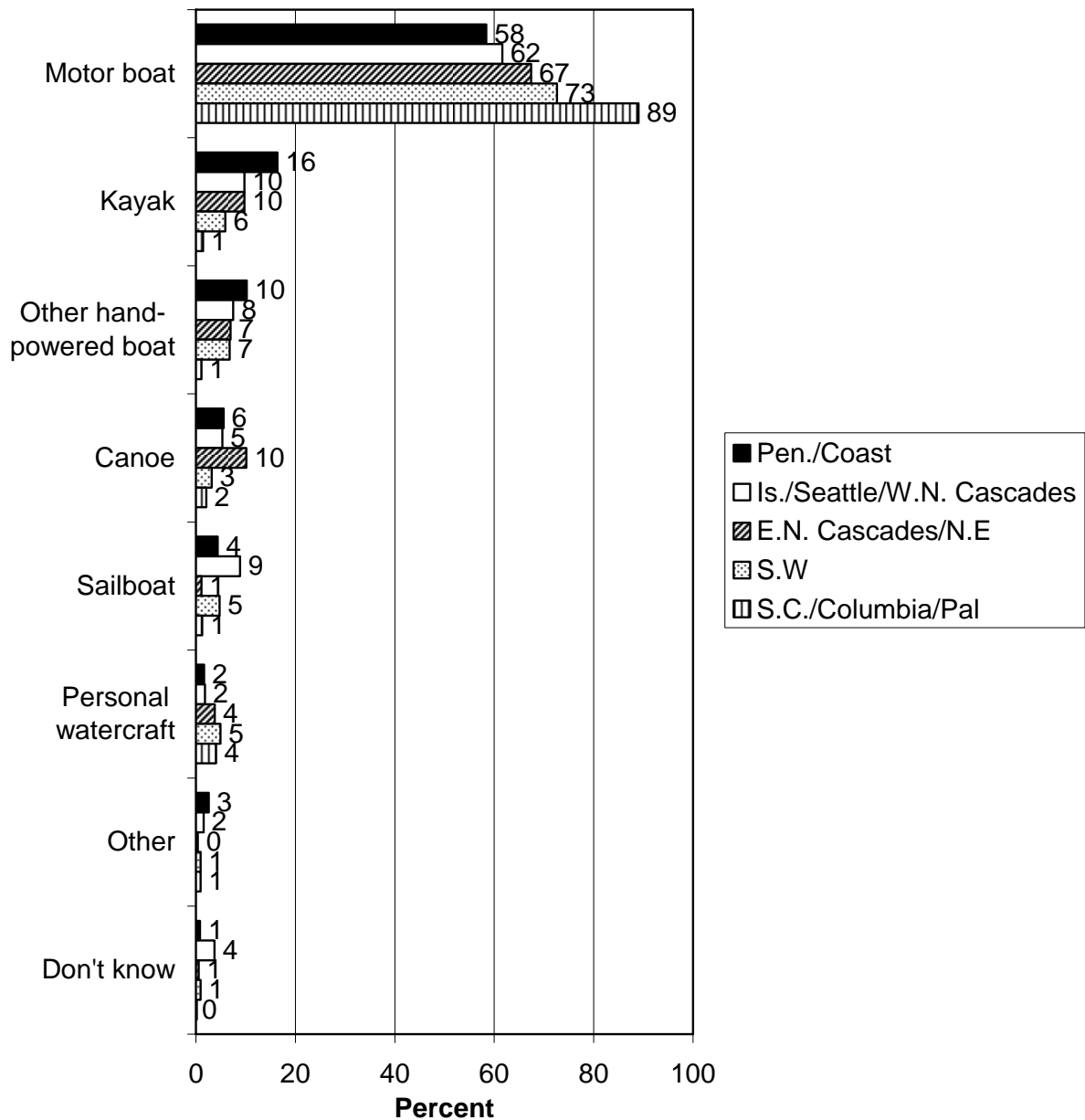
**Q49. Which one of the types of boats you own did you use most often in Washington in the past 2 years? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**



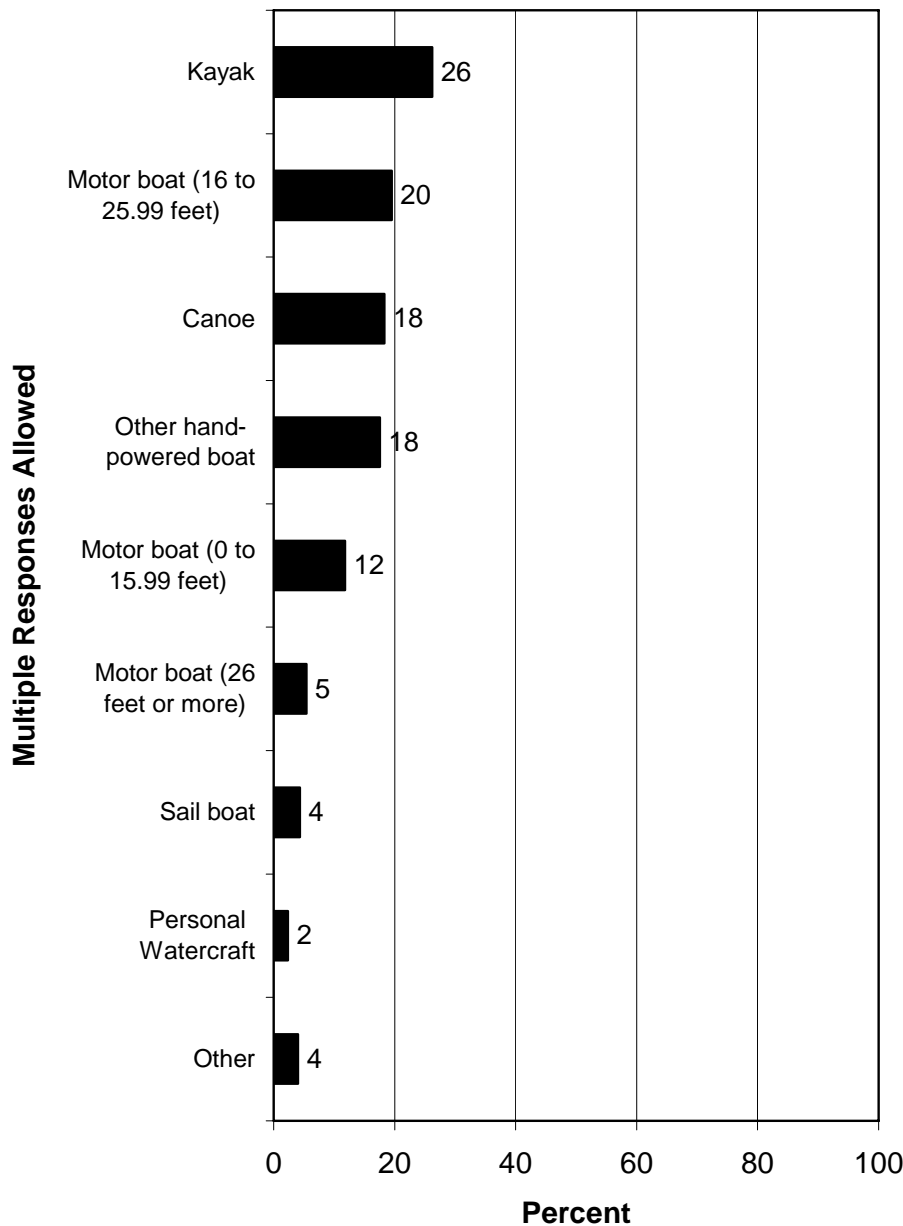
**Q49. Which one of the types of boats you own did you use most often in Washington in the past 2 years? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**



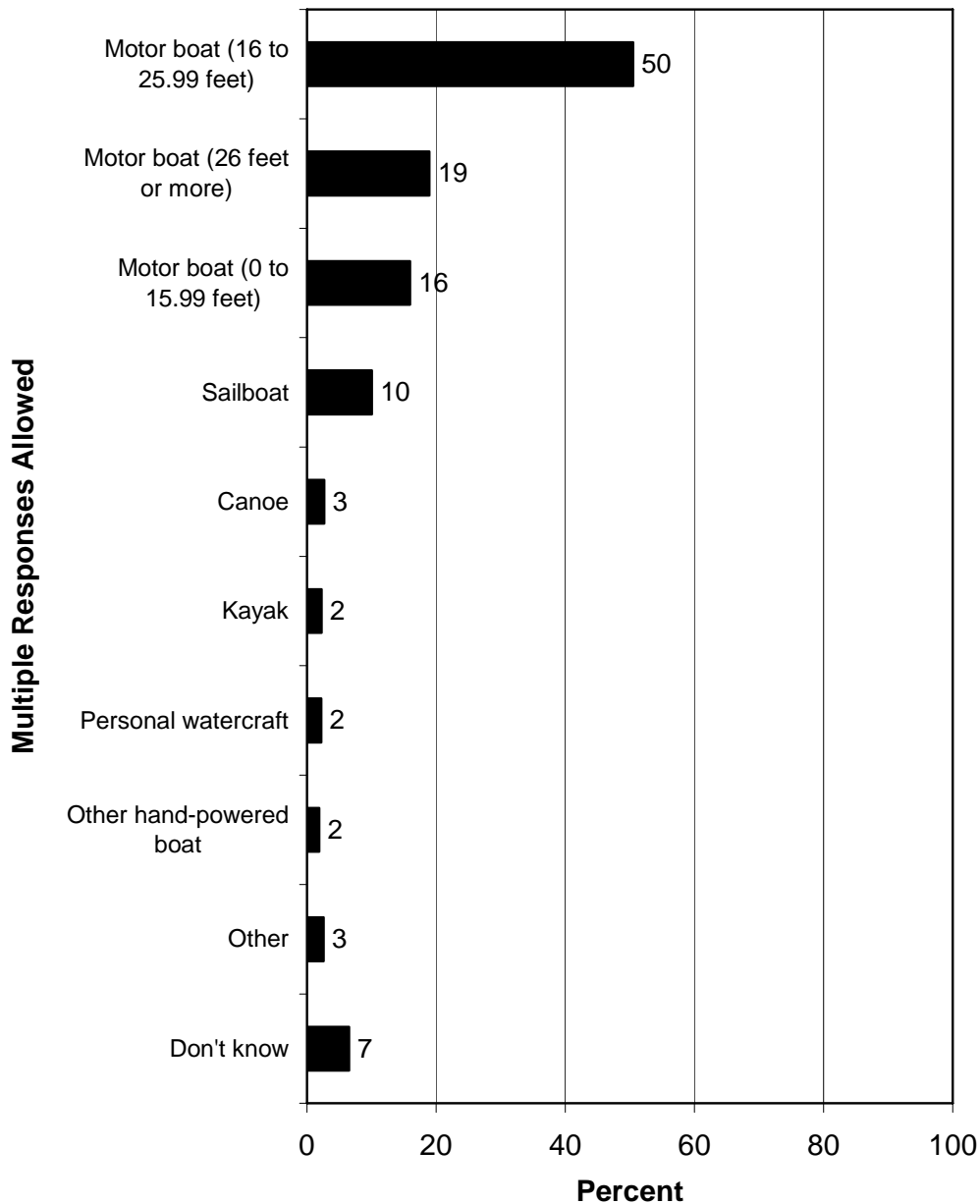
**Q49. Which one of the types of boats you own did you use most often in Washington in the past 2 years? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**



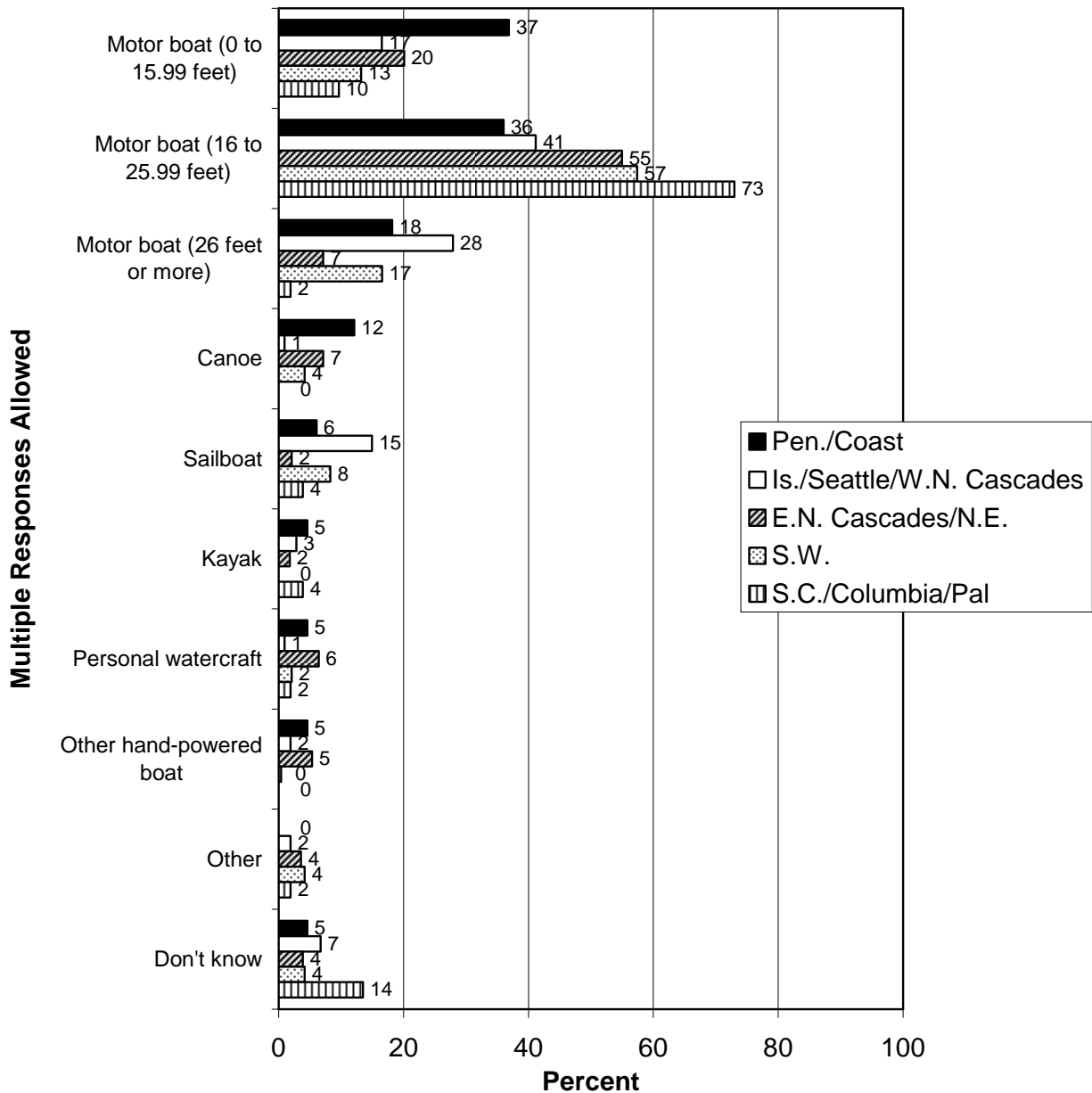
**Q74. You indicated that you or a member of your party rented a boat in Washington in the past 2 years. What type of boat did you rent? (Asked of those who rented a boat most often in Washington in the past 2 years.)**



**Q82. You indicated that you were you a guest on a boat owned by a friend or acquaintance in Washington in the past 2 years. What type of boat were you a guest on? (Asked of those who were a guest on a boat owned by a friend or acquaintance most often in Washington in the past 2 years.)**

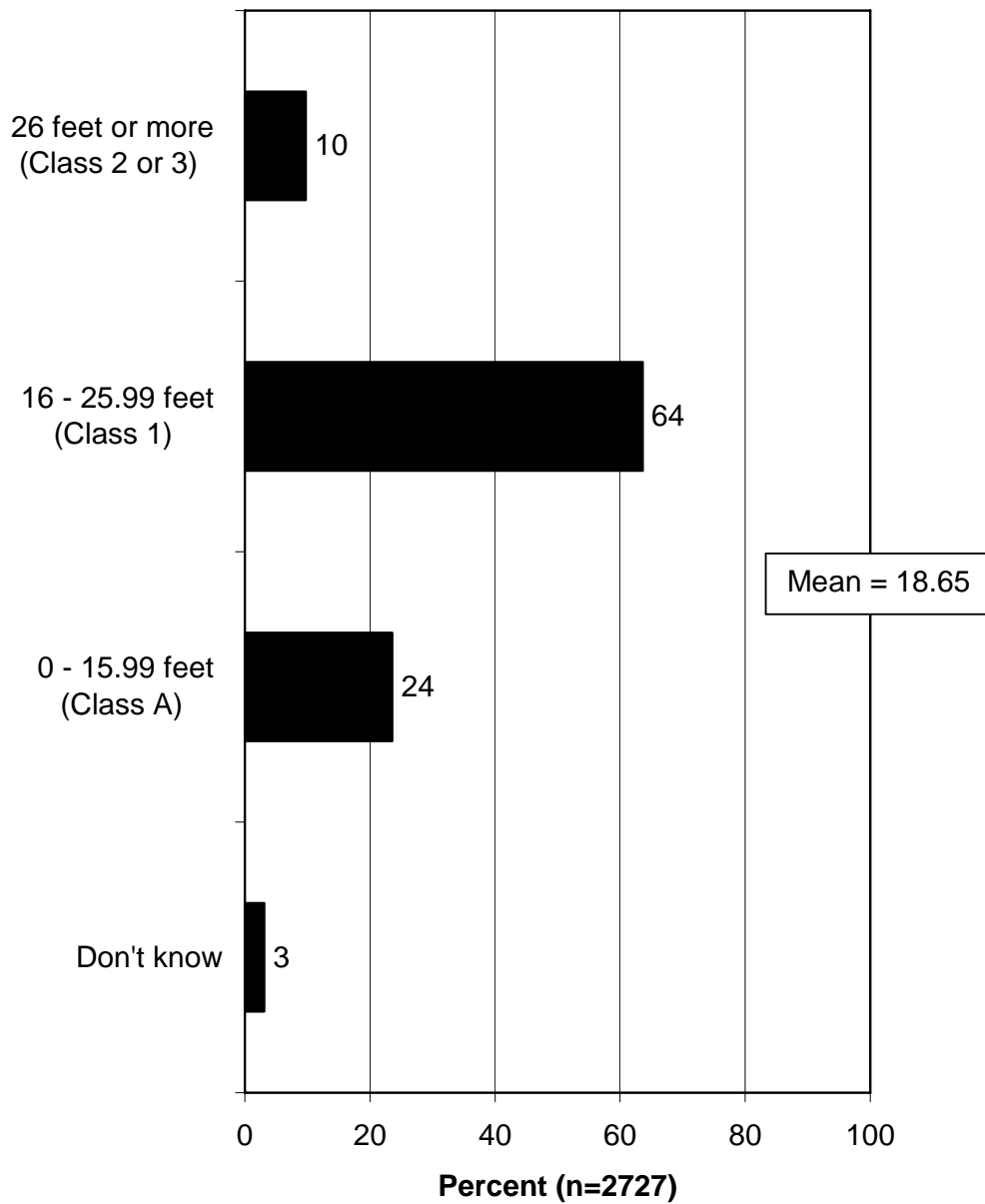


**Q82. You indicated that you were you a guest on a boat owned by a friend or acquaintance in Washington in the past 2 years. What type of boat were you a guest on? (Asked of those who were a guest on a boat owned by a friend or acquaintance most often in Washington in the past 2 years.)**

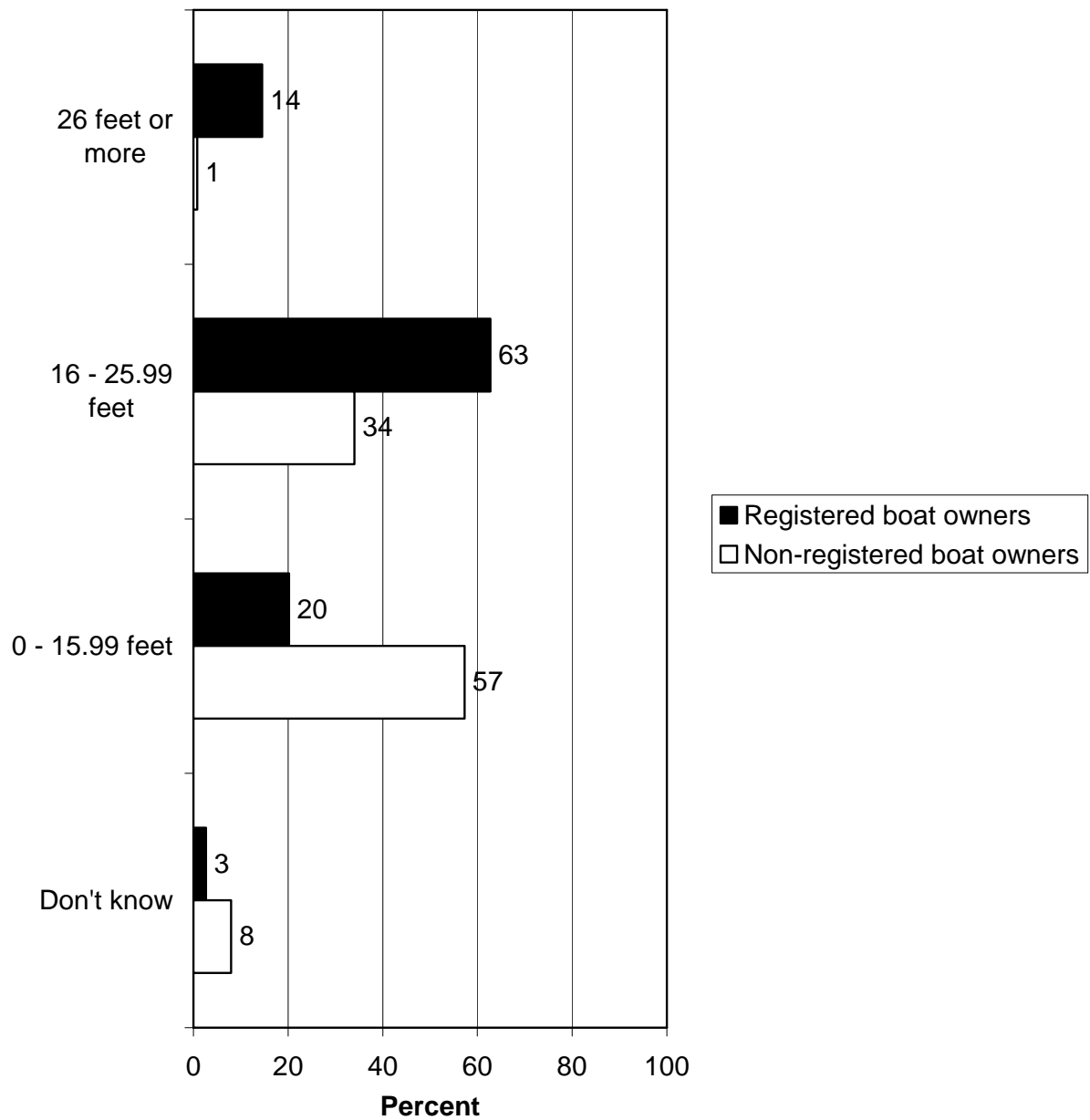




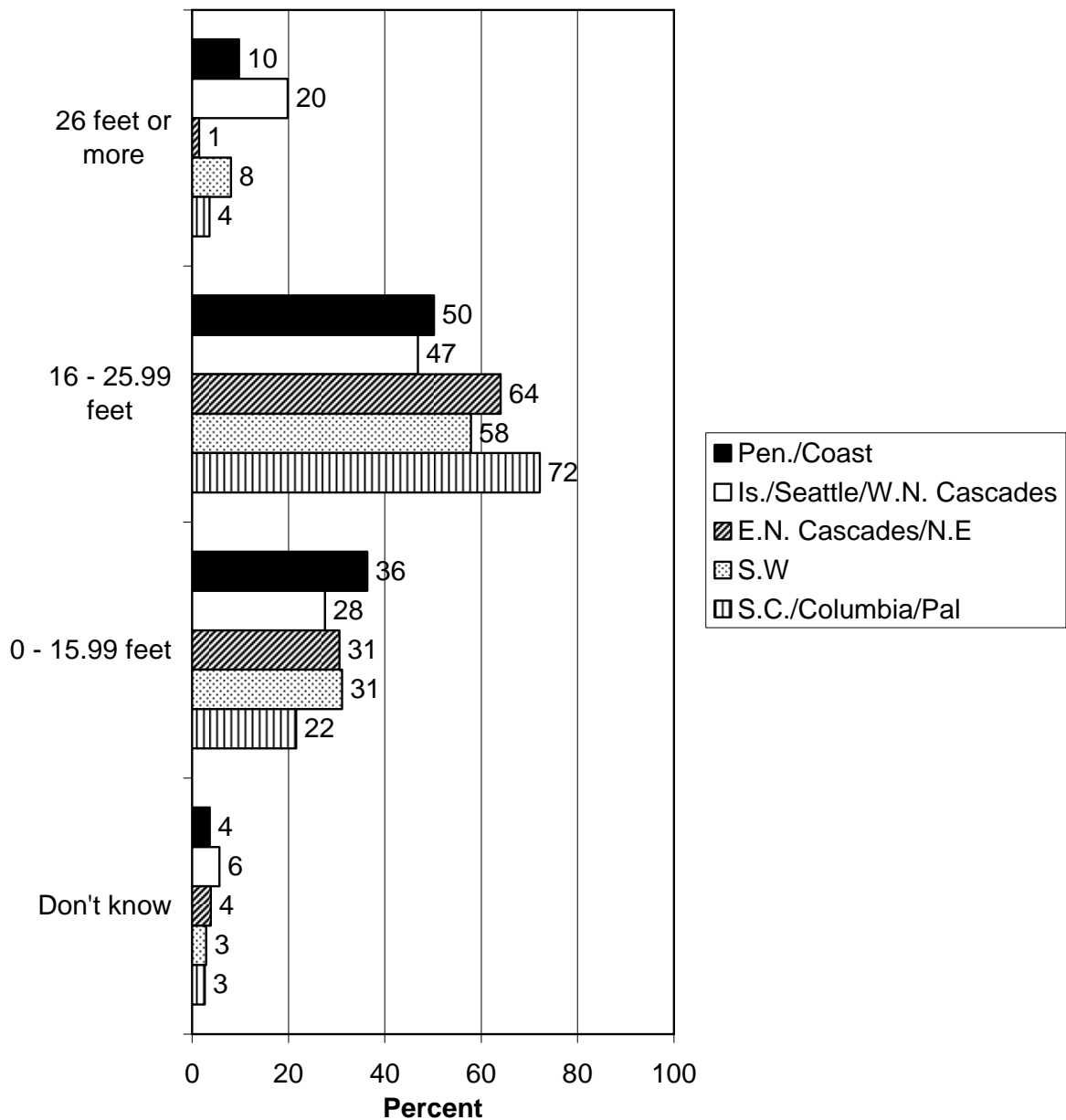
**Q51. In feet, what is the length overall (LOA) of this boat? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**



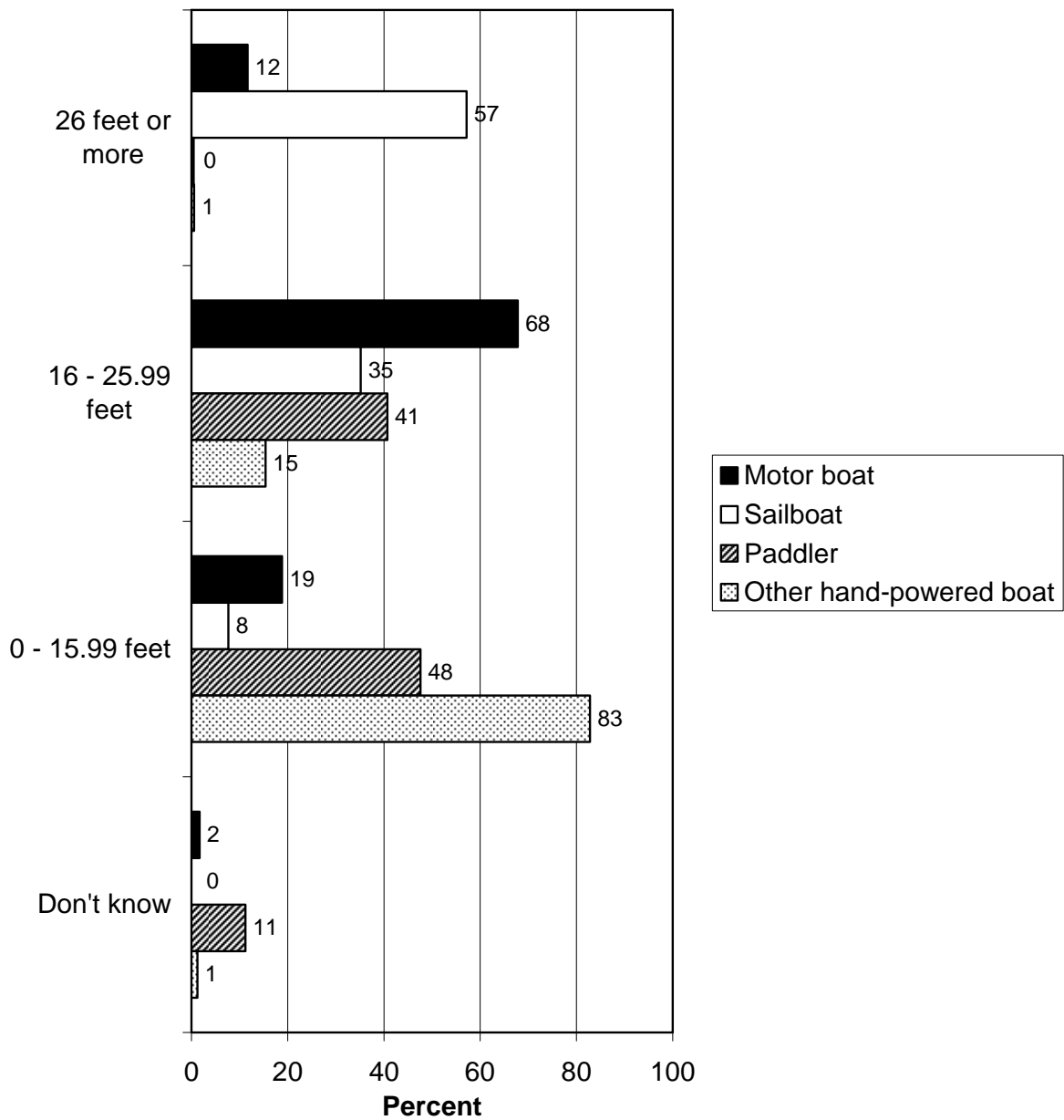
**Q51. In feet, what is the length overall (LOA) of this boat? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**



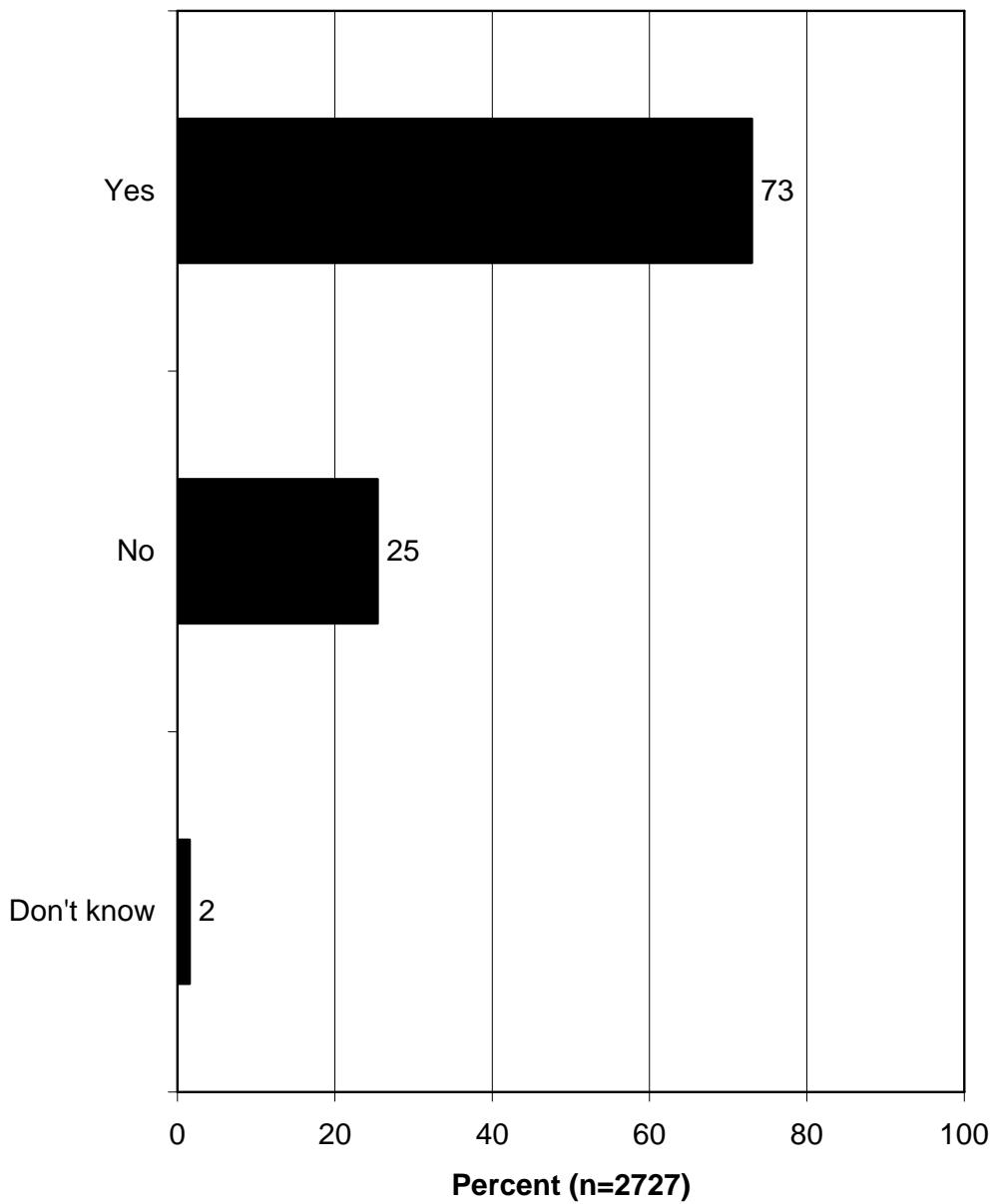
**Q51. In feet, what is the length overall (LOA) of this boat? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**



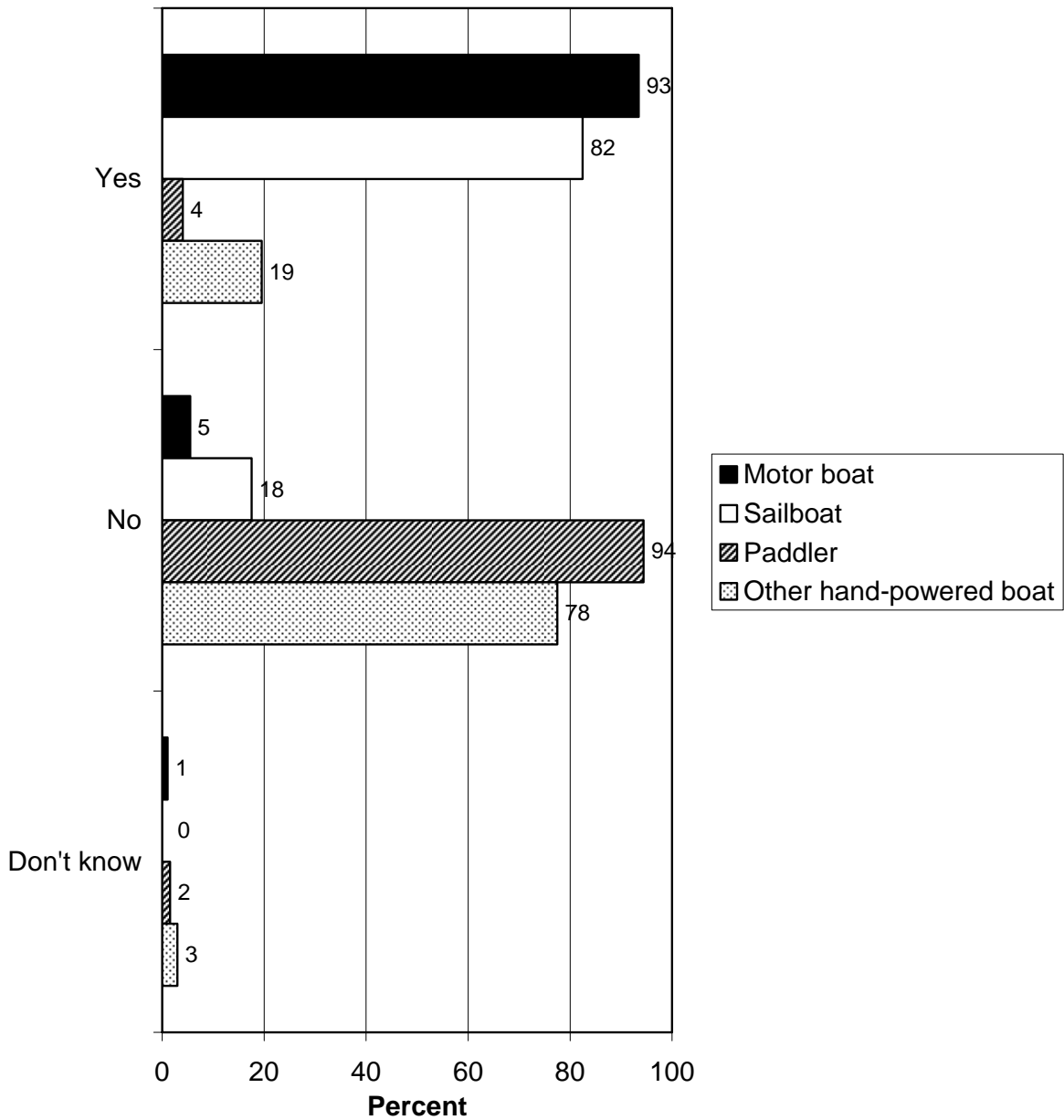
**Q51. In feet, what is the length overall (LOA) of this boat? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**



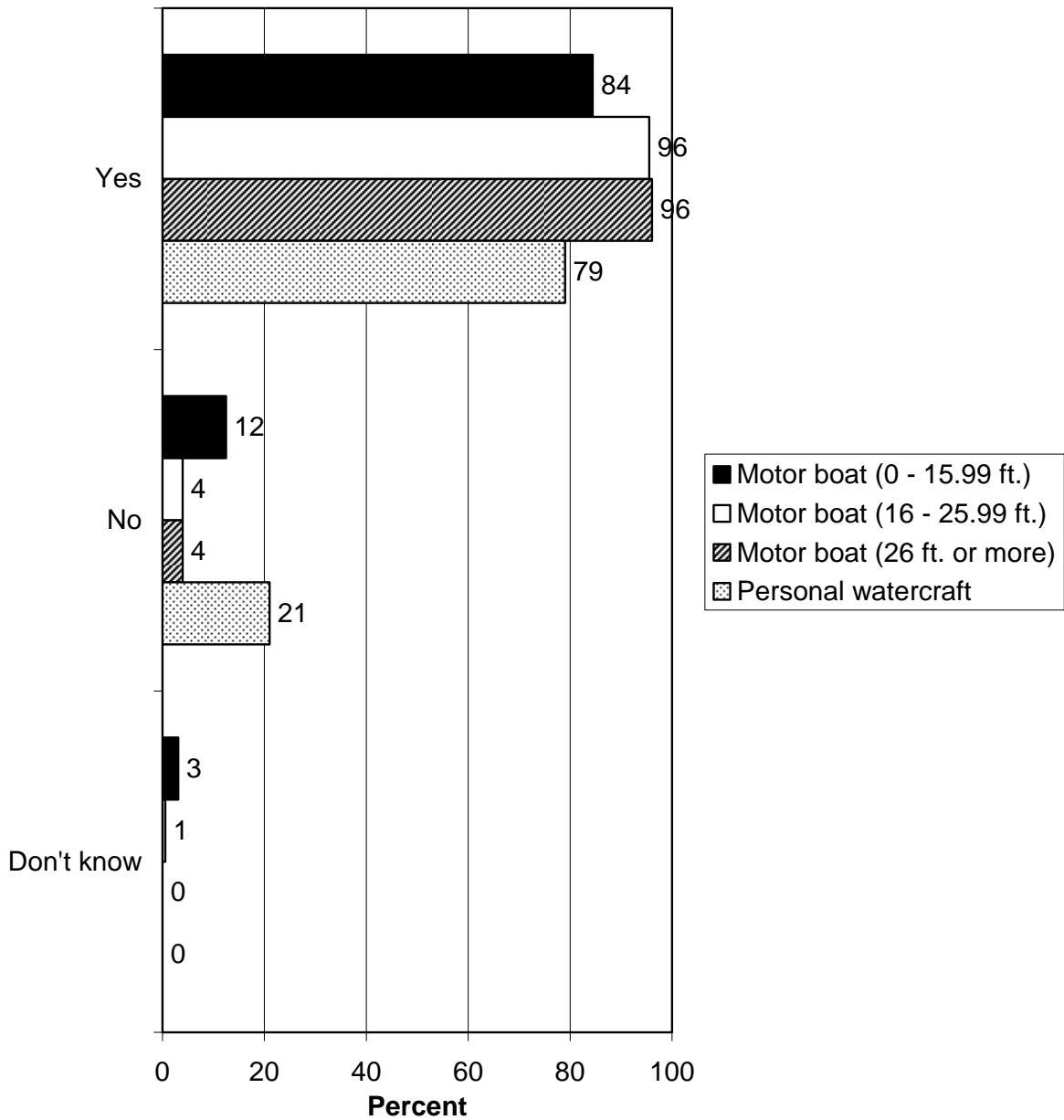
**Q53. Is this boat registered in Washington? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**



**Q53. Is this boat registered in Washington? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**



**Q53. Is this boat registered in Washington? (Asked of those who own a boat.)**



## **COUNTIES IN WHICH BOATS ARE REGISTERED, COUNTIES IN WHICH RESPONDENTS BOATED, AND PREFERRED BOATING LOCATIONS**

- The survey asked boaters to name the county in which they boated the most days in the previous 2 years, and the leading county by far (more than double the next nearest county) was King County (18.4% boated the most days there), followed by Pierce (8.2%), Snohomish (6.6%), Clark (4.4%), and San Juan (4.3%). An analysis of where boaters boat the most days relative to the county in which they live found that 62% of boaters boat the most days in their county of residence. The regional breakdown is shown as well, with the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region being the most popular region (41%), followed by the Southwest Region (24%).
  - The crosstabulation of county in which the respondent boated the most days by the type of boat most often used is shown. Of note is that King County and San Juan County are much more often the most-boated county among sailboaters than among the other boater types. Paddlers show higher percentages of boaters, relative to motor boaters and sailboaters, in Kitsap, Mason, Skagit, Snohomish, and Spokane Counties.
    - King, Pierce, and Snohomish are the most boated counties among motor boaters.
    - King, San Juan, and Thurston are the most boated counties among sailboaters.
    - King, Snohomish, Spokane, and Kitsap are the most boated counties among paddlers.
    - King, Snohomish, Clark, and Pierce are the most boated counties among other hand-powered boat users.
  - The crosstabulation of county in which the respondent boated the most days by the size of motor boat most often used is shown. Among the notable differences by size of motor boat:
    - Clark County: Personal watercraft show a greater proportion in this county than do the other motor boat size groupings.
    - Island County: Large motor boats show a greater proportion in this county than do the other motor boat size groupings.
    - San Juan County: Large motor boats show a greater proportion in this county than do the other motor boat size groupings.



- Of motor boaters primarily using a Class A motor boat (0-15.99 feet), the leading counties in which respondents boated the most days are King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Thurston Counties.
  - Of motor boaters primarily using a Class 1 motor boat (16-25.99 feet), the leading counties in which respondents boated the most days are King, Pierce, Clark, and Snohomish.
  - Of motor boaters primarily using a large motor boat (26 feet or more), the leading counties in which respondents boated the most days are San Juan, King, and Pierce.
  - Of motor boaters primarily using a personal watercraft, the leading counties in which respondents boated the most days are King, Clark, and Pierce.
- Included is a map showing the number of boat launch sites by county, from *Boating Facilities Program Plan*, produced by the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation in November 2003. Note that some of the sites had a larger capacity than other sites, so the map cannot show actual boat launch capacity by county. Nonetheless, it is still instructive to see the number of sites by county, which closely, but not exactly, mirrors the busiest boating counties. One anomaly is Okanogan County, which has a large proportion of the state's sites relative to the proportion of boaters who boat there (on the other hand, it is the largest county in land area).
- Counties of registration are shown. King, Pierce, Spokane, and Snohomish lead the list.
- The survey asked boaters to name their most preferred county of boating: King County led the list (14.8%), followed by Pierce (7.0%), San Juan (5.7%), and Snohomish (5.6%). An analysis of responses regarding preferred county and responses regarding where boaters most often boat found that 82% of boaters boat the most in the county where they prefer to boat. The regional breakdown, based on these county data, is shown as well, with the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region being the most popular region (36%), followed by the Southwest Region (19%).
- The crosstabulation of county that the respondent most prefers by the type of boat most often used is shown. Of note is that San Juan County is much more preferred county

among sailboaters than among the other boater types. Paddlers show high preference, relative to motor boaters and sailboaters, in Kitsap, Mason, Snohomish, and Spokane Counties.

- King, Pierce, and San Juan are the most preferred counties among motor boaters.
- San Juan, King, and Thurston are the most preferred counties among sailboaters.
- King, Snohomish, and Kitsap are the most preferred counties among paddlers.
- King, Snohomish, Pierce and Thurston are the most preferred counties among other hand-powered boat users.
- The crosstabulation of county in which the respondent most prefers to boat by the size of motor boat most often used is shown. Among the notable differences by size of motor boat:
  - Clark County: Personal watercraft show a greater proportion in this county than do the other motor boat size groupings.
  - Island County: Large motor boats show a greater proportion in this county than do the other motor boat size groupings.
  - San Juan County: Large motor boats show a greater proportion in this county than do the other motor boat size groupings.
  - Of motor boaters primarily using a Class A motor boat (0-15.99 feet), the leading counties in which respondents prefer to boat are King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Thurston Counties.
  - Of motor boaters primarily using a Class 1 motor boat (16-25.99 feet), the leading counties in which respondents prefer to boat are King and Pierce.
  - Of motor boaters primarily using a large motor boat (26 feet or more), the leading counties in which respondents prefer to boat are San Juan, Pierce, Island, and King.
  - Of motor boaters primarily using a personal watercraft, the leading counties in which respondents prefer to boat are King, Clark, and Pierce.
- The survey asked boaters to name the body of water in which they boated the most days in the previous 2 years: the Puget Sound led the list (25.0%), which was about twice the percentage naming any other body of water. Following the Puget Sound on the list was the

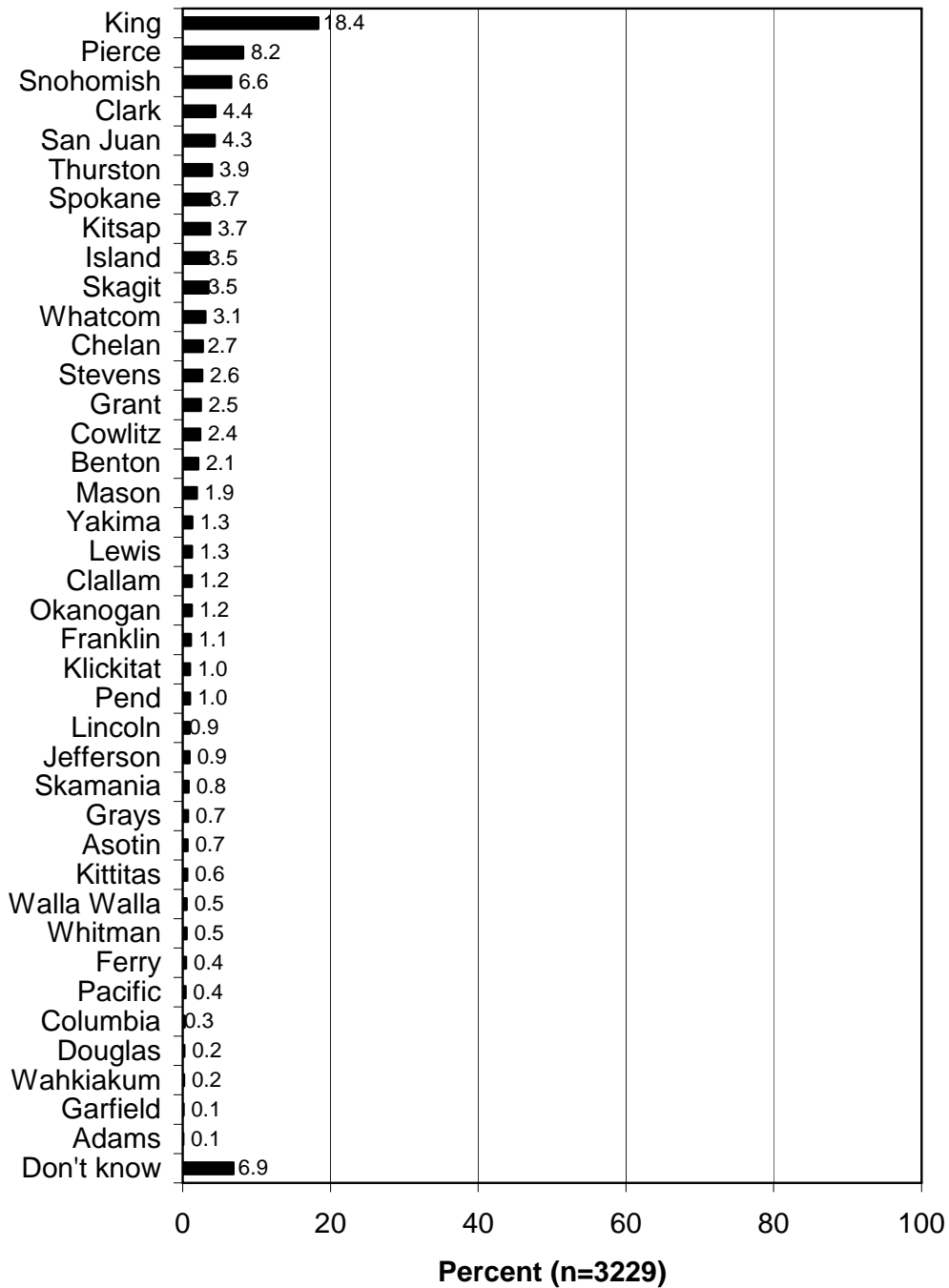
Columbia River (12.7%), Lake Washington (8.7%), Lake Roosevelt (3.5%), and the Snake River (2.2%).

- There are some marked differences in the body of water in which the respondent boated the most days when crosstabulated by the type of boater.
  - Puget Sound: Sailboaters more often boated the most days on this body of water compared to the other boater types.
  - The Columbia River: Motor boaters more often boated the most days on this body of water compared to the other boater types.
  - Lake Washington: Sailboaters more often boated the most days on this body of water compared to the other boater types.
  - Among motor boaters, the Puget Sound, the Columbia River, Lake Roosevelt, Lake Washington, and the Snake River were the top bodies of water.
  - Among sailboaters, the Puget Sound, Lake Washington, the Columbia River, and the Strait of Juan de Fuca were the top bodies of water.
  - Among paddlers, the Puget Sound, the Columbia River, Lake Washington, and the Spokane River were the top bodies of water.
  - Among those who most often used a hand-powered boat other than canoe or kayak, the Puget Sound, Lake Washington, and the Columbia River were the top bodies of water.
- There are some marked differences in the body of water in which the respondent boated the most days when crosstabulated by the size of the motor boat most used.
  - Puget Sound: Large motor boaters more often boated the most days on this body of water compared to the other size groupings.
  - The Columbia River: Operators of mid-sized motor boats and those operating personal watercraft more often boated the most days on this body of water compared to the other size groupings.
  - Lake Washington: Personal watercraft operators more often boated the most days on this body of water compared to the other size groupings.
  - American Lake: Personal watercraft operators more often boated the most days on this body of water compared to the other size groupings.

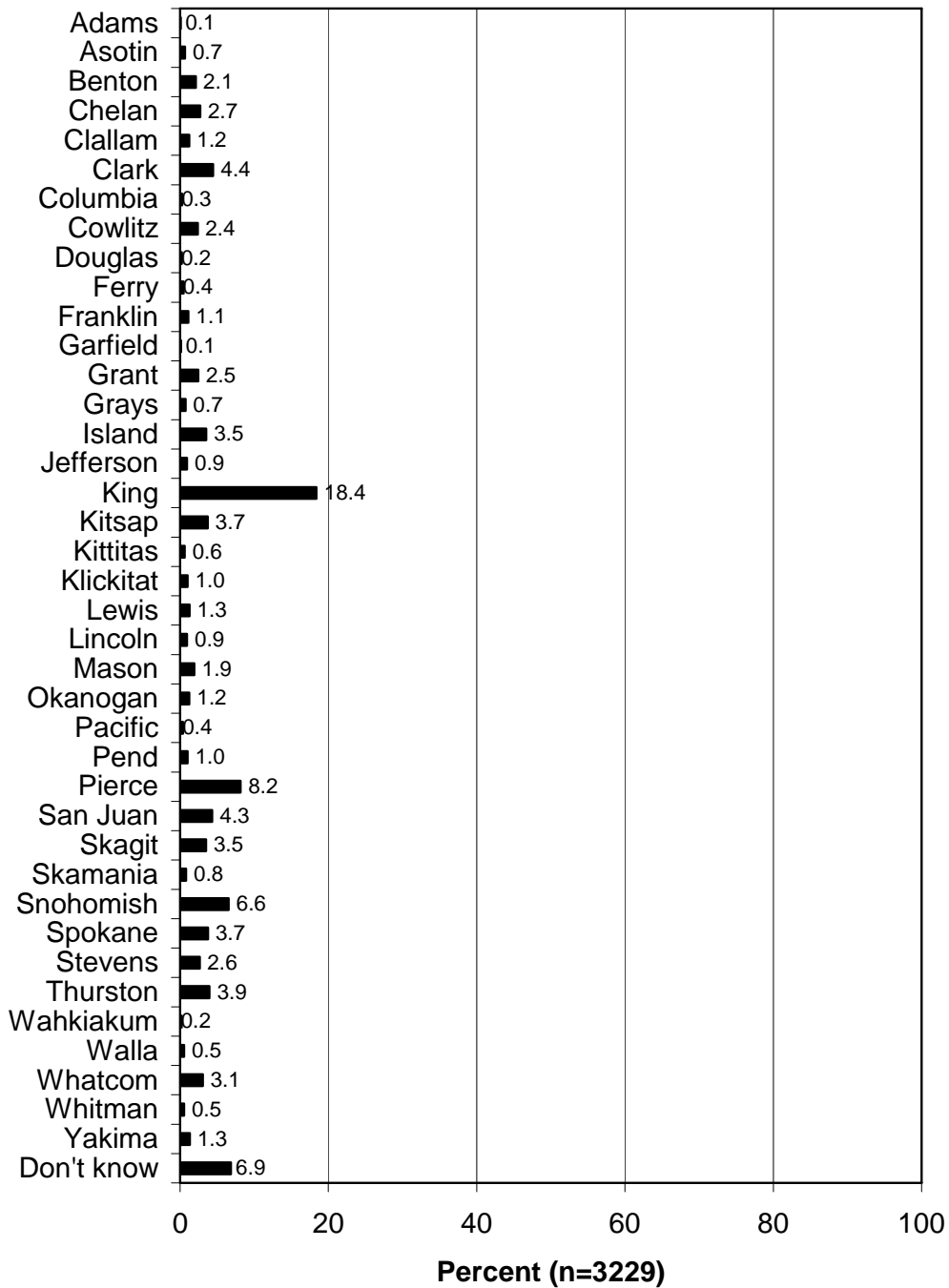
- Among Class A (0-15.99 feet) motor boaters, the Puget Sound, the Columbia River, and Lake Washington were the top bodies of water.
  - Among Class 1 (16-25.99 feet) motor boaters, the Puget Sound, the Columbia River, and Lake Roosevelt were the top bodies of water.
  - Among Class 2 and 3 (26 or more feet) motor boaters, the Puget Sound was by far the top body of water, distantly followed by the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the Columbia River.
  - Among those who most often used a personal watercraft, the Columbia River, Lake Washington, the Puget Sound, and Lake Merwin were the top bodies of water.
- The survey asked boaters to name their preferred body of water on which to boat: the Puget Sound led the list (25.5%), followed by the Columbia River (11.2%), Lake Washington (6.5%), Lake Roosevelt (3.5%), the Snake River (2.3%), and the Strait of Juan de Fuca (2.2%).
- There are some marked differences in the body of water in which the respondent prefers to boat when crosstabulated by the type of boater.
    - Puget Sound: Sailboaters more often preferred this body of water compared to the other boater types.
    - The Columbia River: Motor boaters more often preferred this body of water compared to the other boater types.
    - Lake Roosevelt: Motor boaters more often preferred this body of water compared to the other boater types.
    - Lake Washington: Sailboaters more often preferred this body of water compared to the other boater types.
    - Among motor boaters, the Puget Sound, the Columbia River, and Lake Roosevelt were the most preferred bodies of water.
    - Among sailboaters, the Puget Sound (the top choice by far), Lake Washington, and the Columbia River were the most preferred bodies of water.
    - Among paddlers, the Puget Sound, the Columbia River, and the Spokane River were the most preferred bodies of water.

- Among those who most often used a hand-powered boat other than canoe or kayak, the Puget Sound, Clear Lake, and the Columbia River were the most preferred bodies of water.
- There are some marked differences in the body of water in which the respondent prefers to boat when crosstabulated by the size of the motor boat primarily used.
  - Puget Sound: Operators of large motor boats more often preferred this body of water compared to the other size groupings.
  - The Columbia River: Operators of mid-sized motor boats and personal watercraft more often preferred this body of water compared to the other size groupings.
  - Lake Washington: Operators of personal watercraft more often preferred this body of water compared to the other size groupings.
  - Strait of Juan de Fuca: Operators of large motor boats more often preferred this body of water compared to the other size groupings.
  - Lake Merwin: Operators of personal watercraft more often preferred this body of water compared to the other size groupings.
  - American Lake: Operators of personal watercraft more often preferred this body of water compared to the other size groupings.
  - Among Class A (0-15.99 feet) motor boaters, the Puget Sound, the Columbia River, and Lake Washington were the top preferred bodies of water.
  - Among Class 1 (16-25.99 feet) motor boaters, the Puget Sound, the Columbia River, and Lake Roosevelt were the top preferred bodies of water.
  - Among Class 2 and 3 (26 or more feet) motor boaters, the Puget Sound was by far the most preferred body of water, distantly followed by the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the Columbia River.
  - Among those who most often used a personal watercraft, the Columbia River, Lake Washington, the Puget Sound, and Lake Merwin were the top preferred bodies of water.

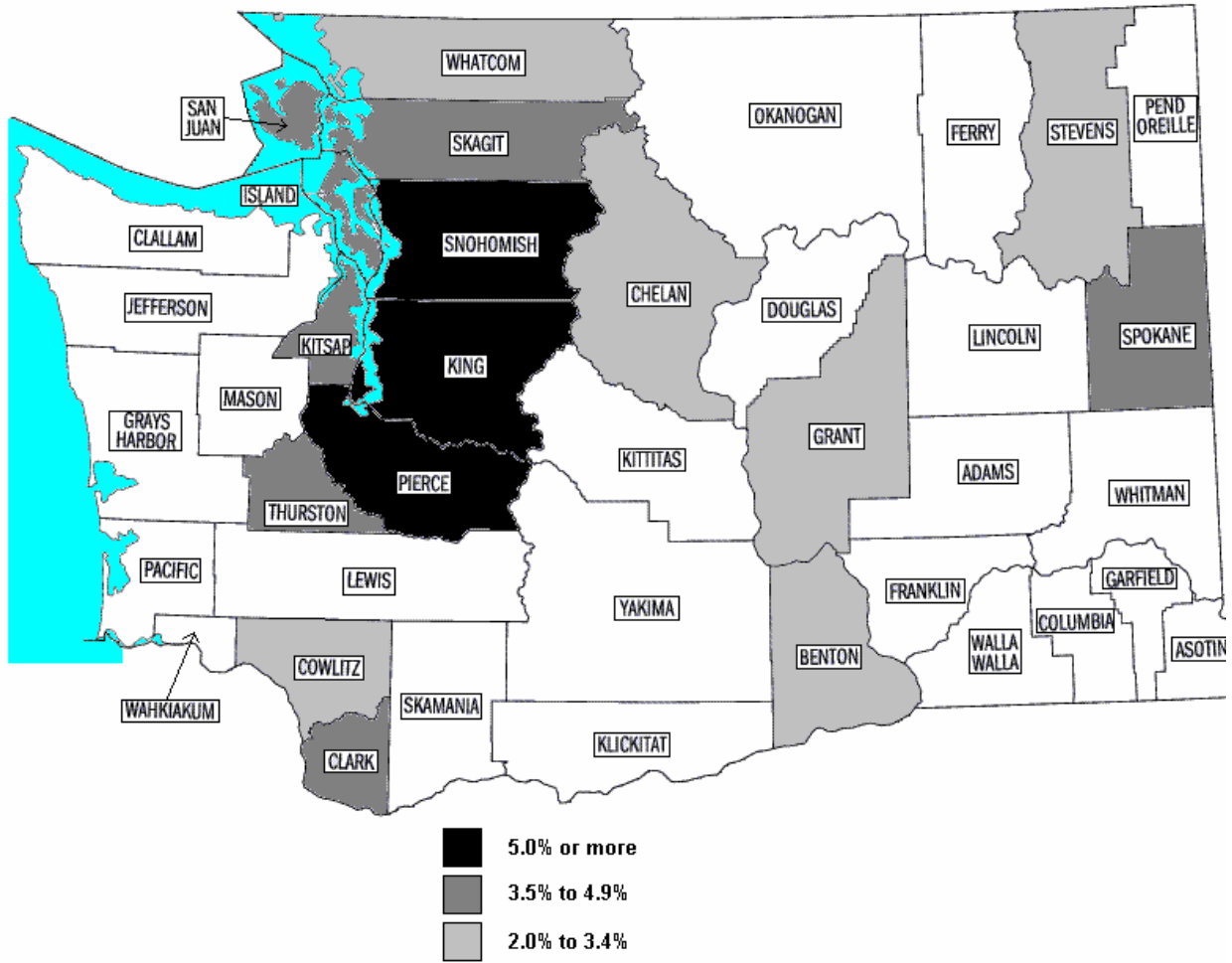
**Q84. In which county did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years?**



**Q84. In which county did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years? (Listed alphabetically.)**



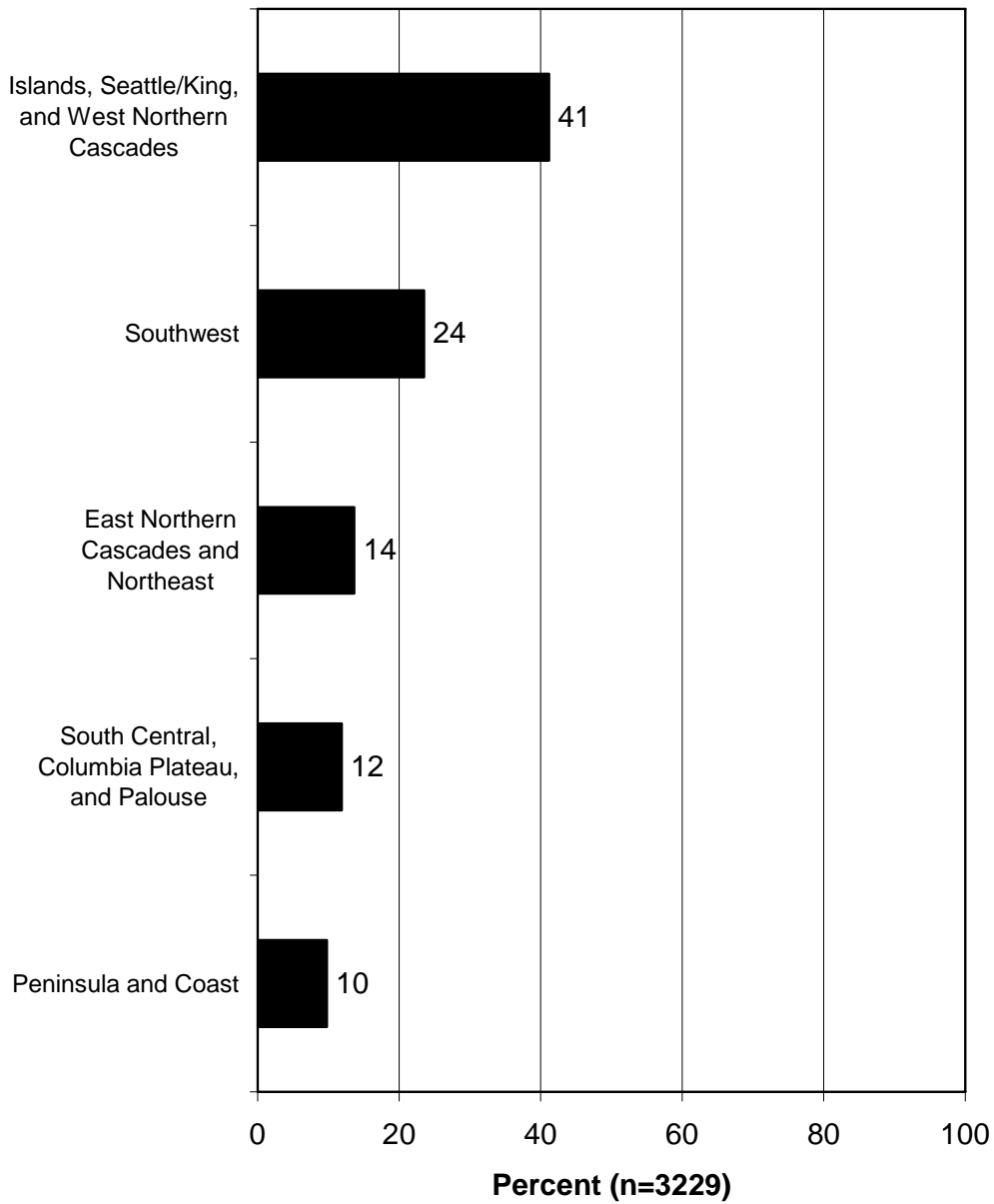
**TOP COUNTIES FOR BOATING**



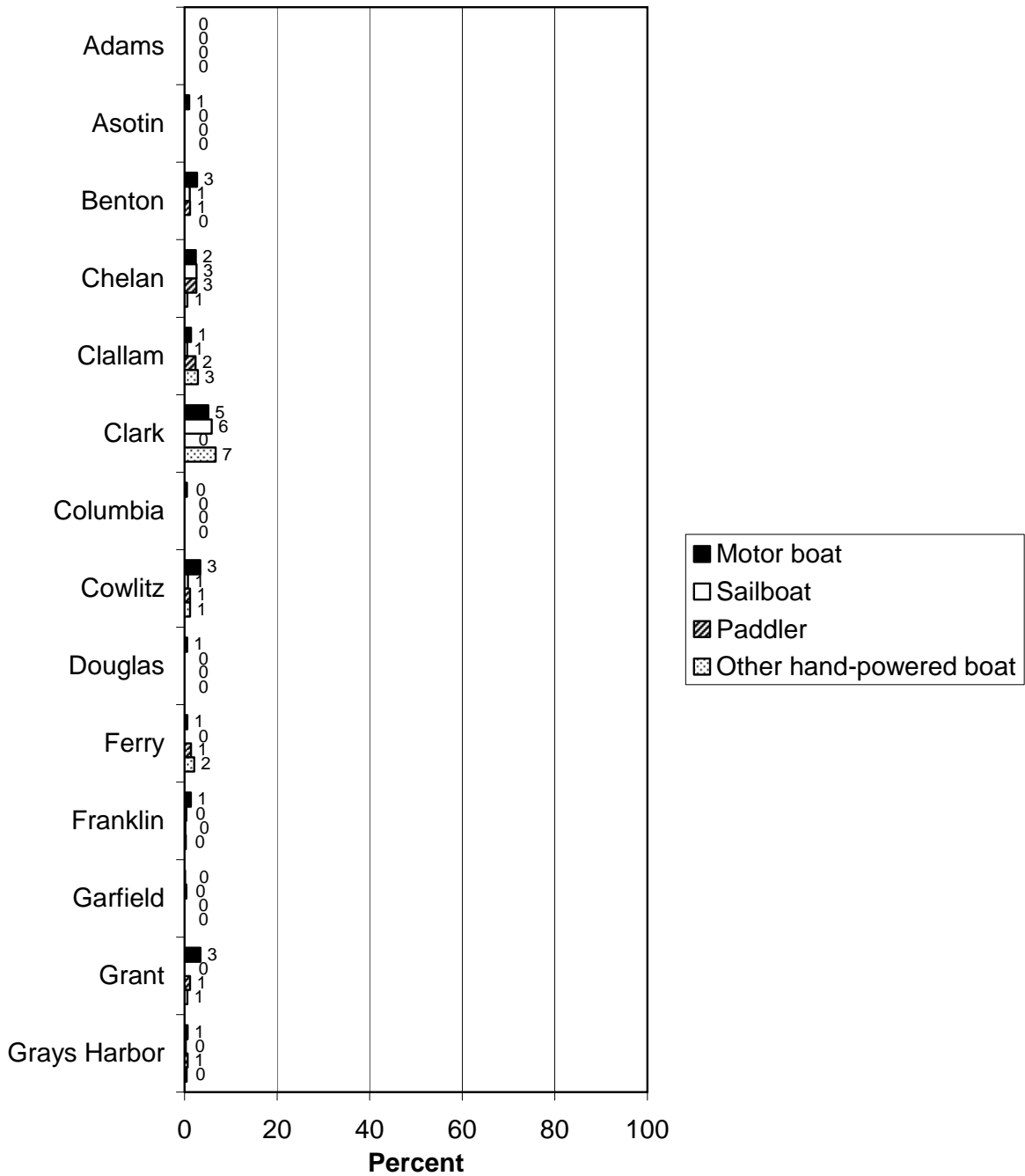
Shows percent of boaters who boat the most days in the given county.



**Washington State region in which respondent boated most days in the past 2 years.**



**Q84. In which county did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years?  
(Part 1.)**



**Q84. In which county did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years?  
(Part 2.)**



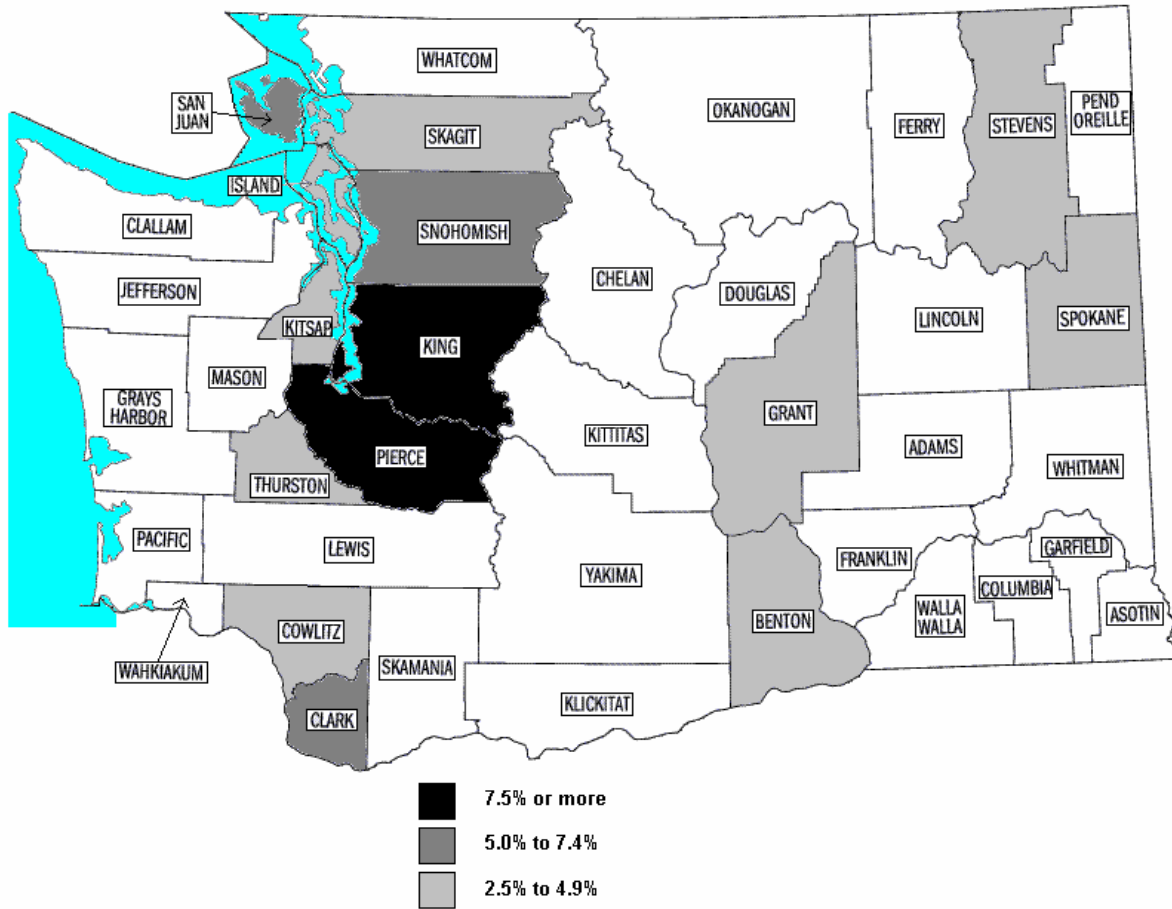
**Q84. In which county did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years?  
(Part 3.)**



**Q84. In which county did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years?  
(Shows only top 10 counties.)**

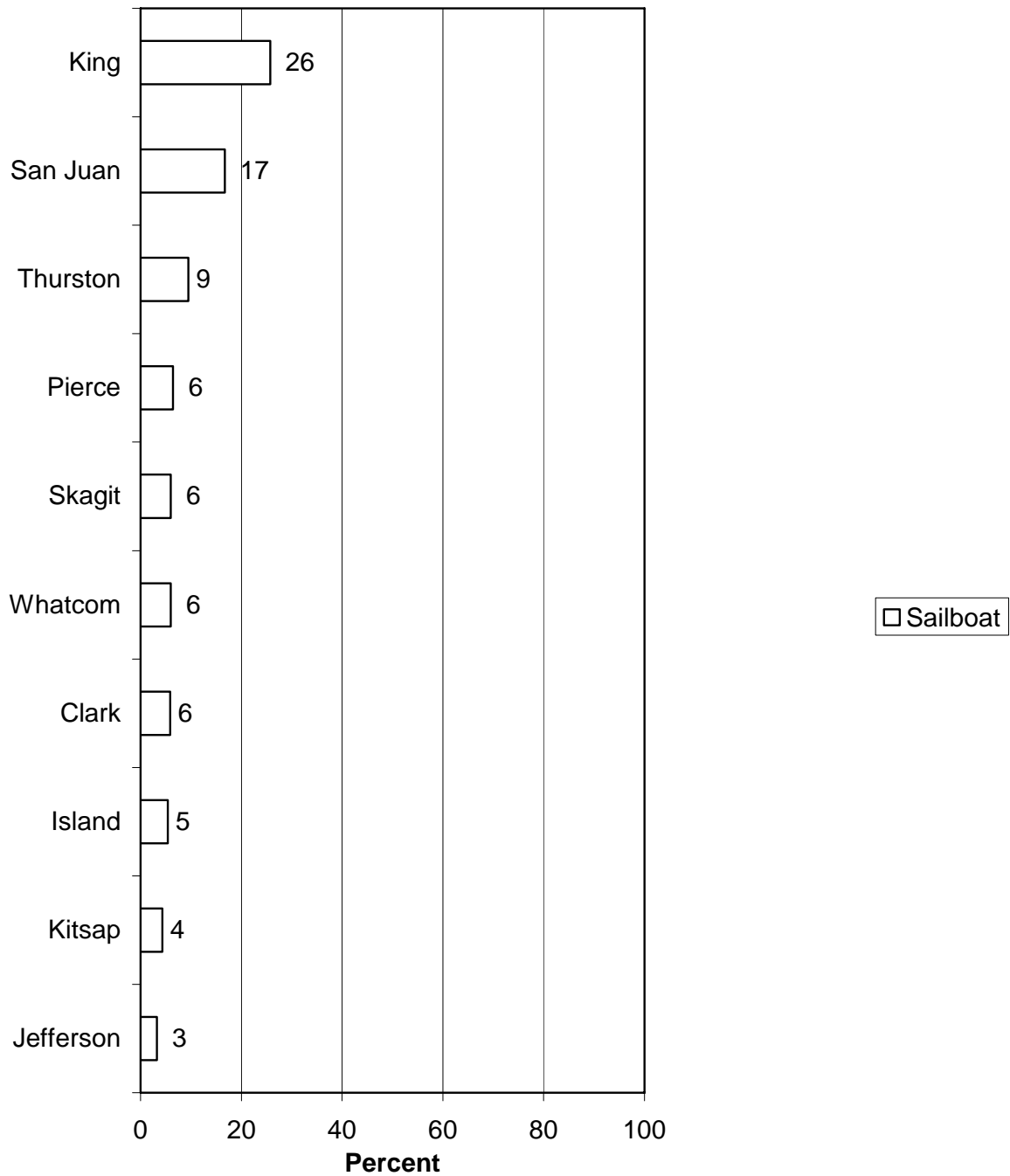


### TOP COUNTIES FOR MOTOR BOATING

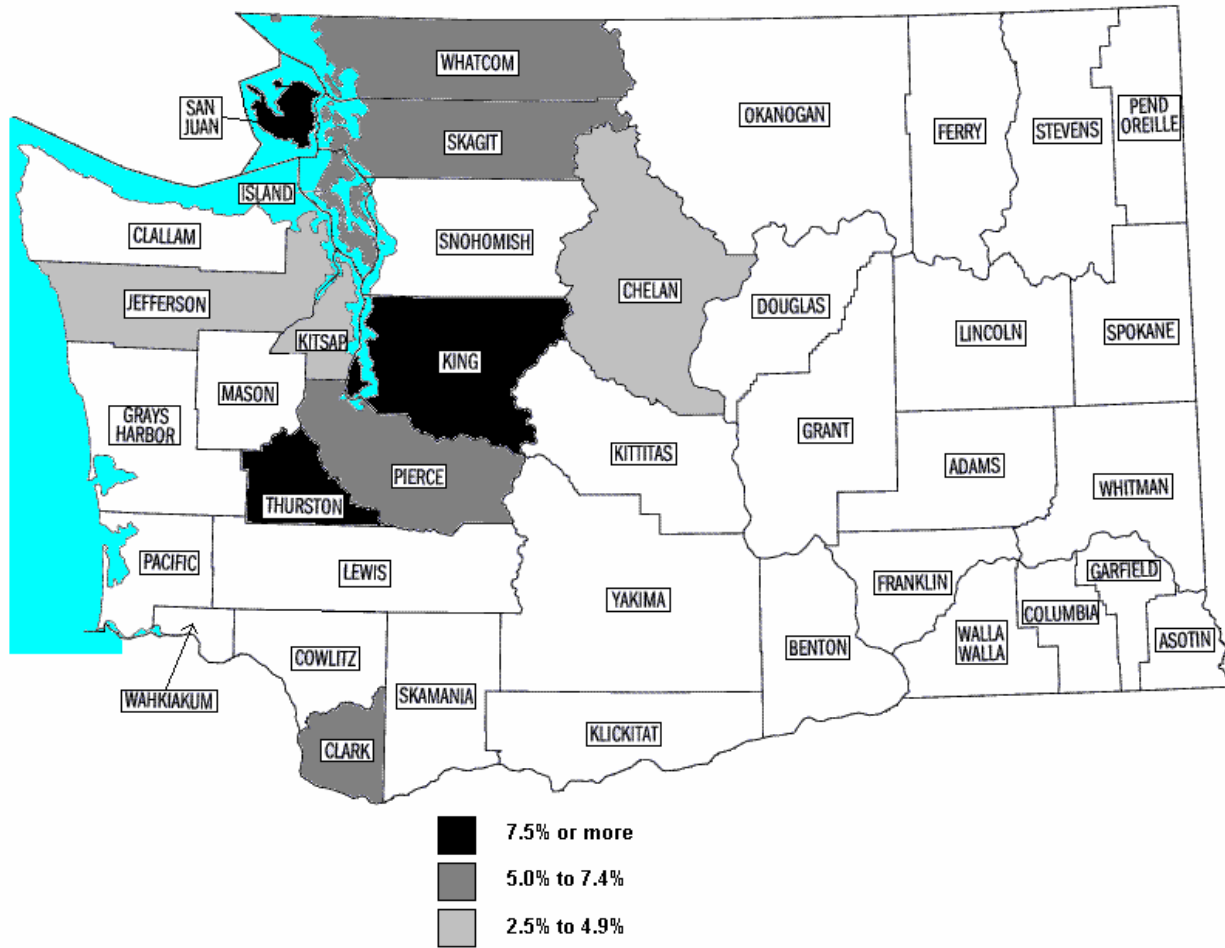


Shows percent of motor boaters who boat the most days in the given county.

**Q84. In which county did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years?  
(Shows only top 10 counties.)**



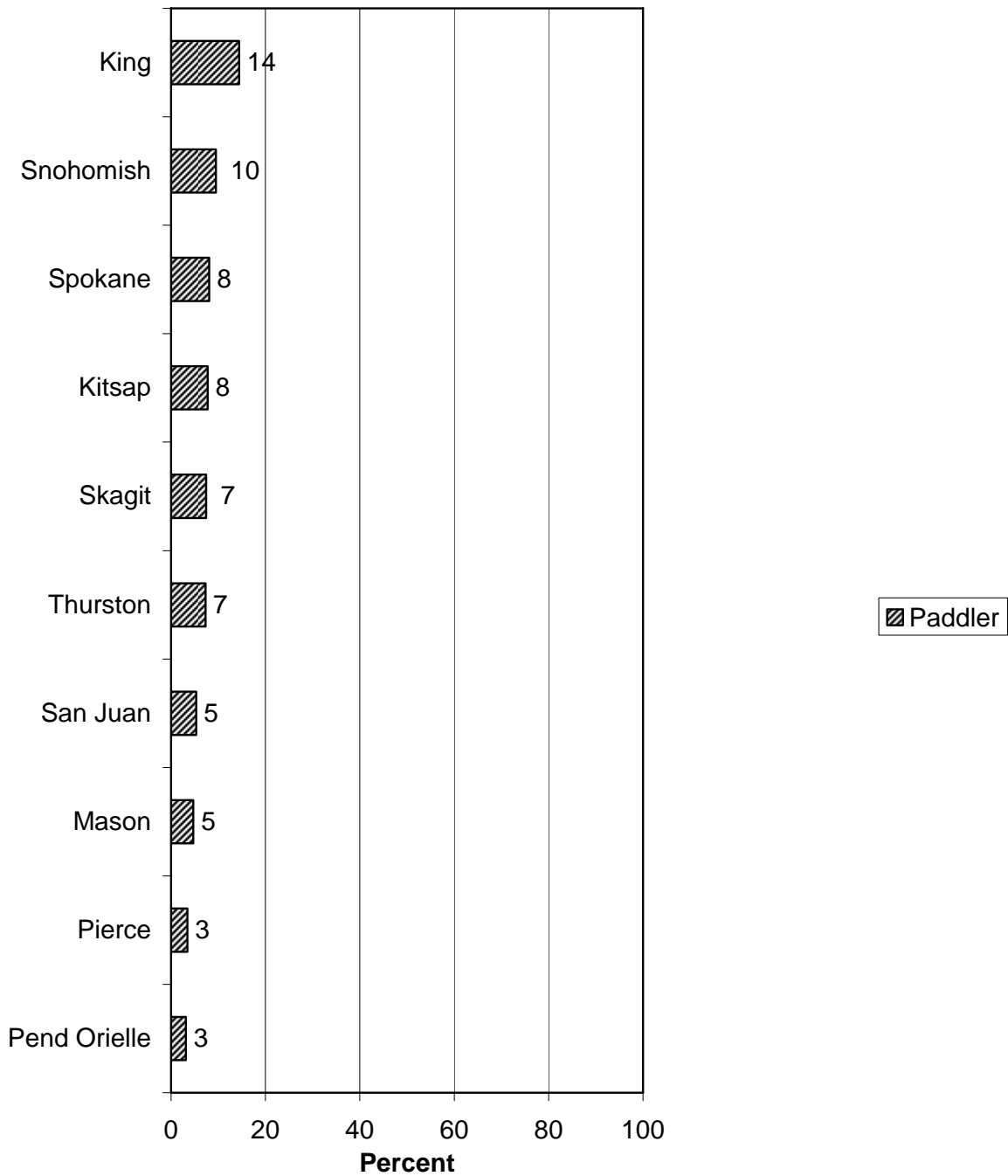
### TOP COUNTIES FOR SAILBOATING



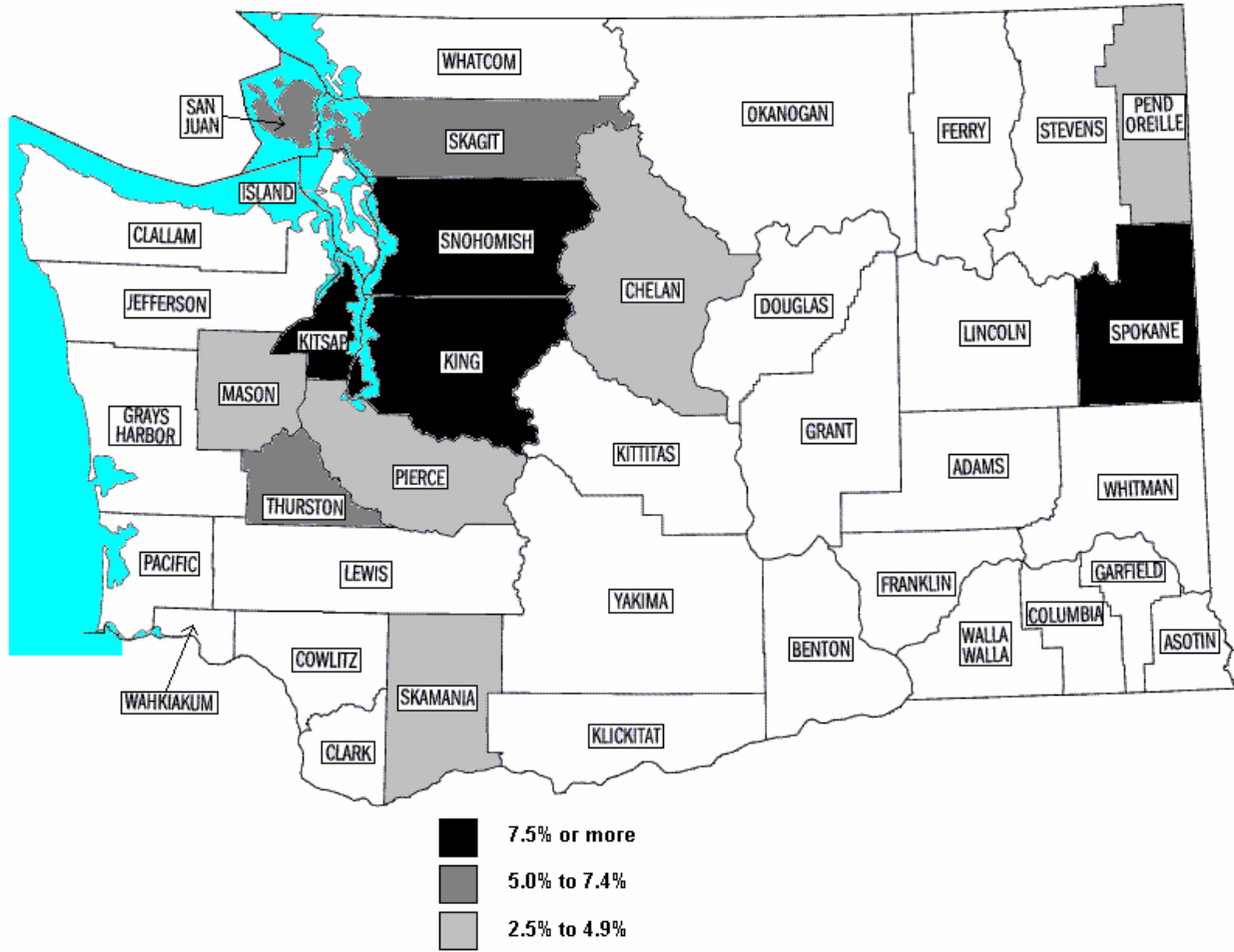
Shows percent of sailboaters who boat the most days in the given county.



**Q84. In which county did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years?  
(Shows only top 10 counties.)**

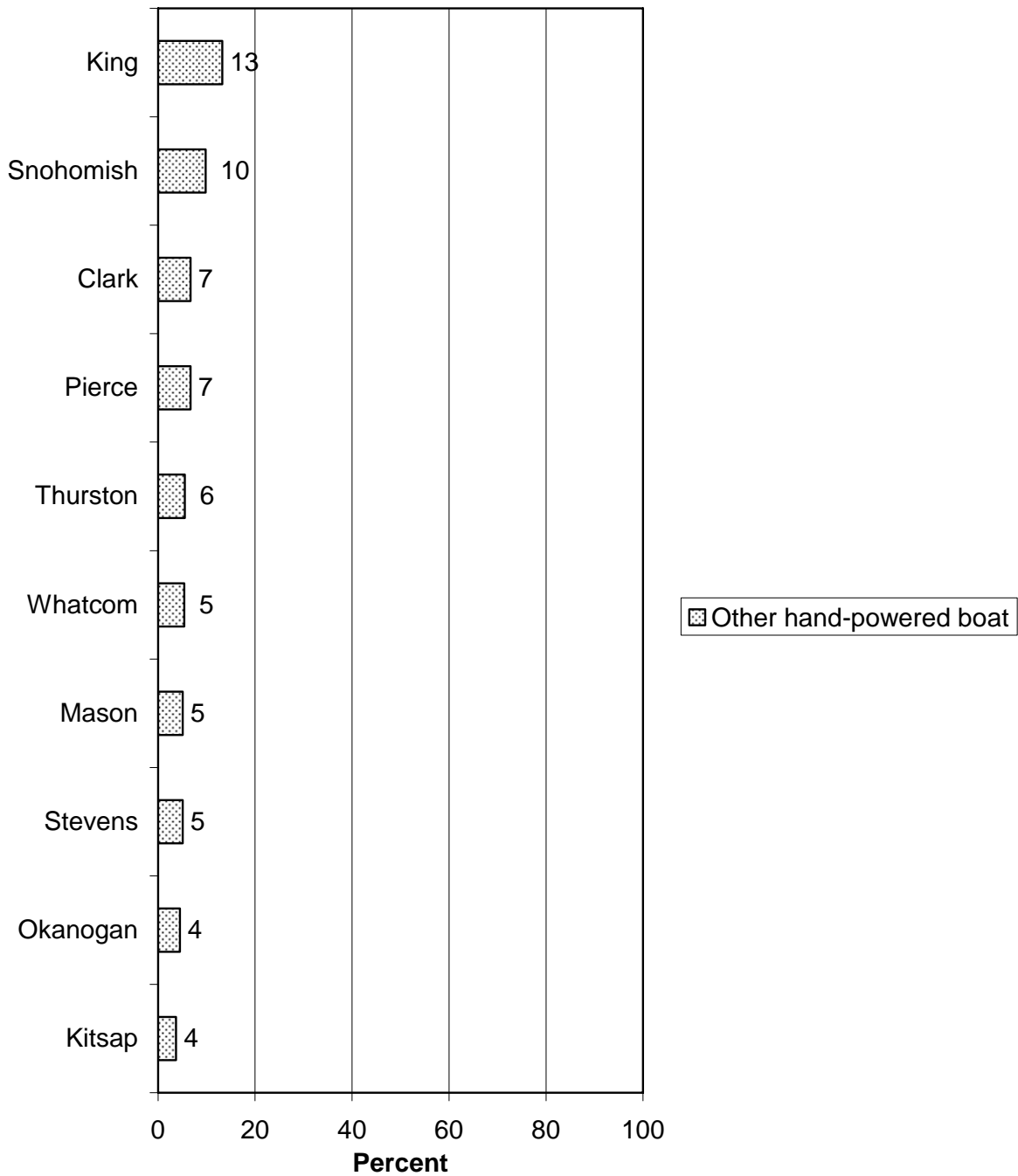


### TOP COUNTIES FOR PADDLERS

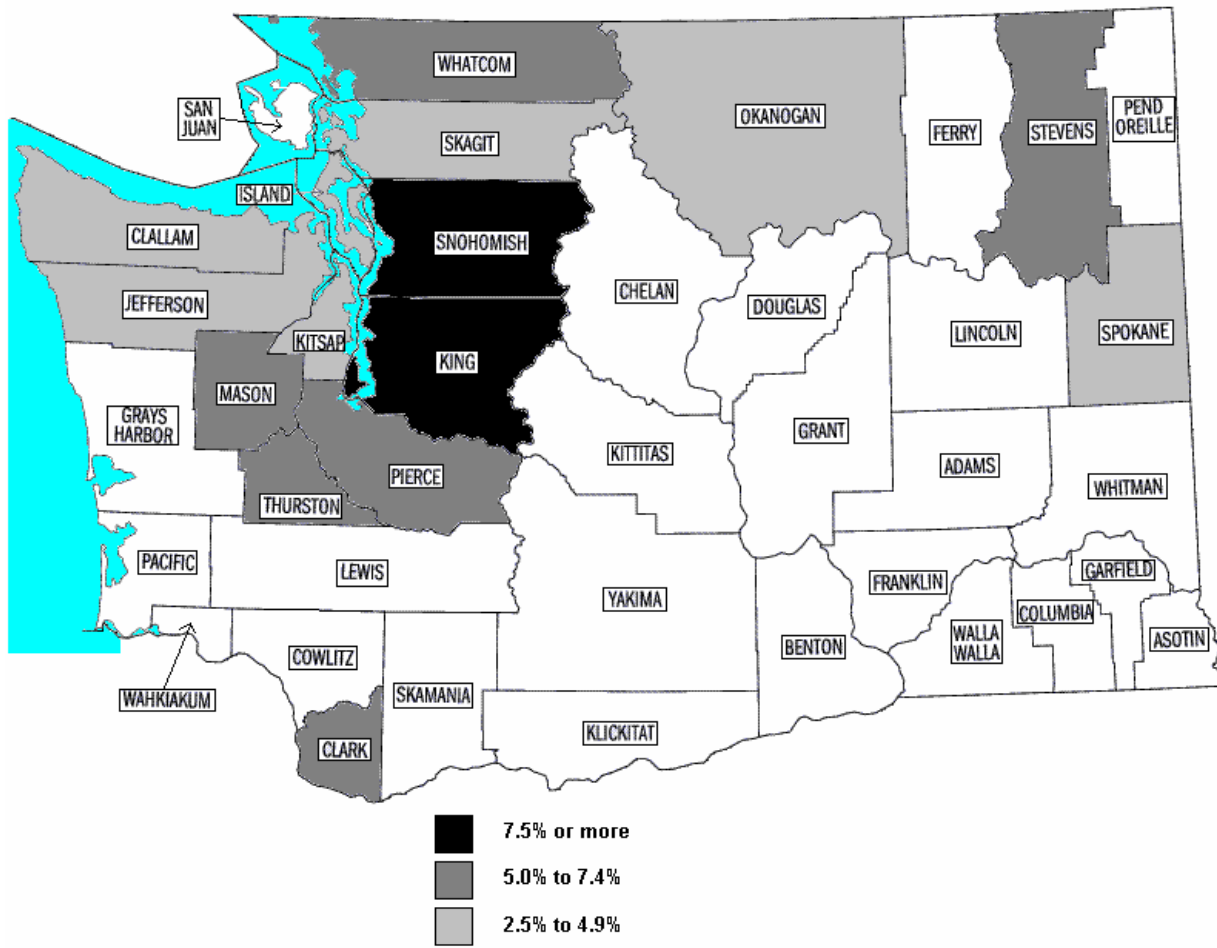


Shows percent of paddlers who boat the most days in the given county.

**Q84. In which county did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years?  
(Shows only top 10 counties.)**

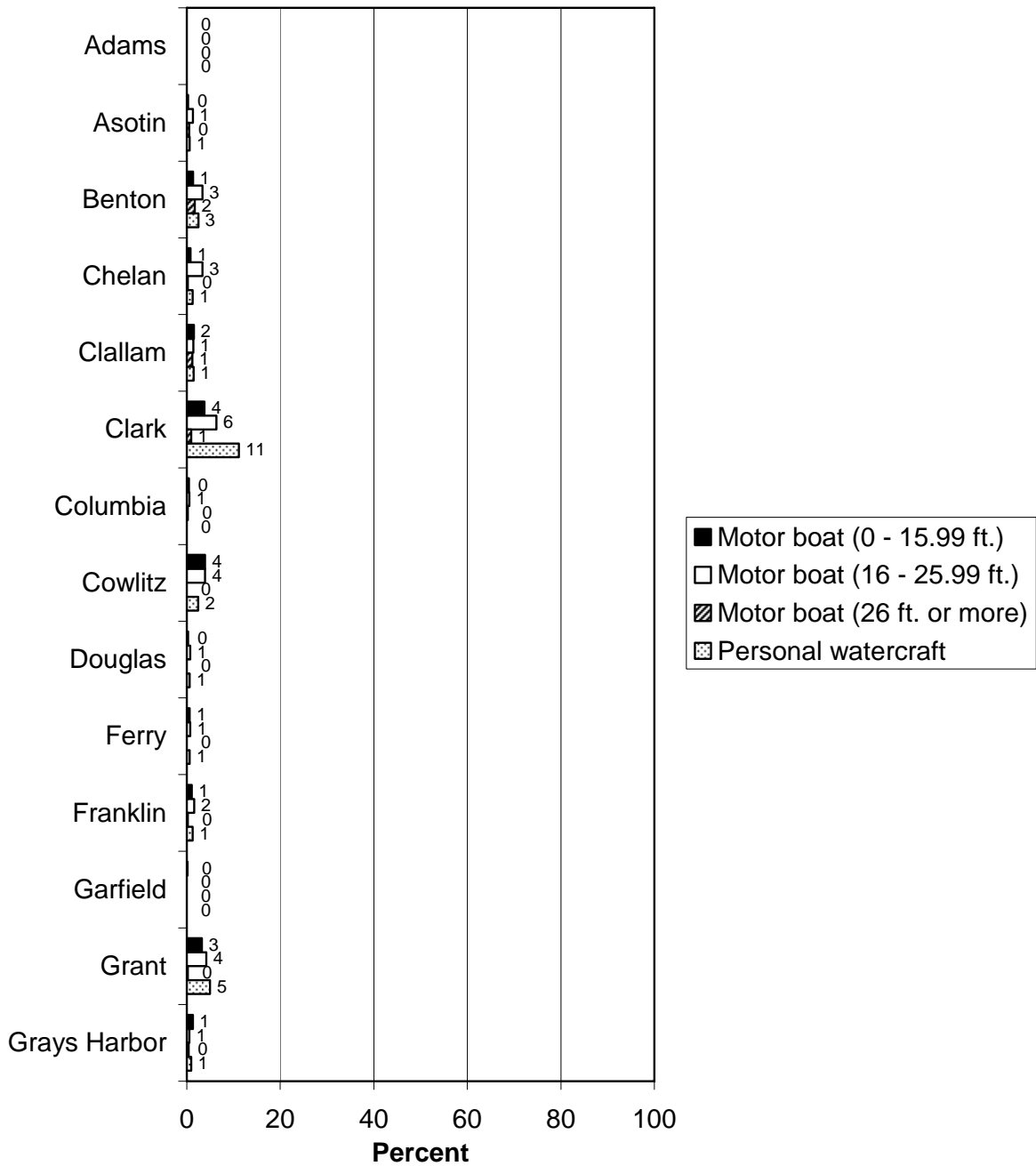


**TOP COUNTIES FOR OTHER HAND-POWERED BOATING**

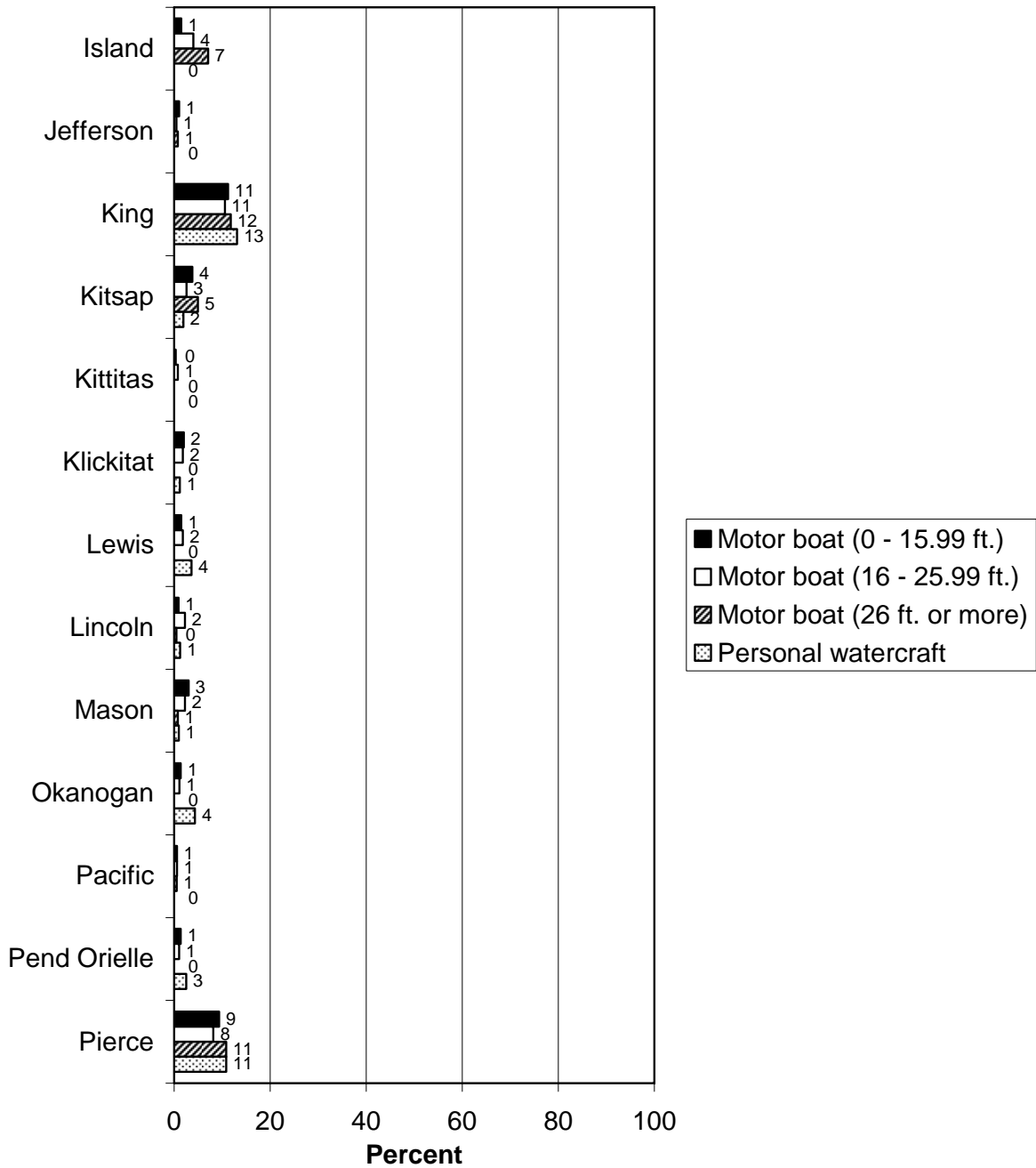


Shows percent of other hand-powered boaters who boat the most days in the given county.

**Q84. In which county did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years?  
(Part 1.)**



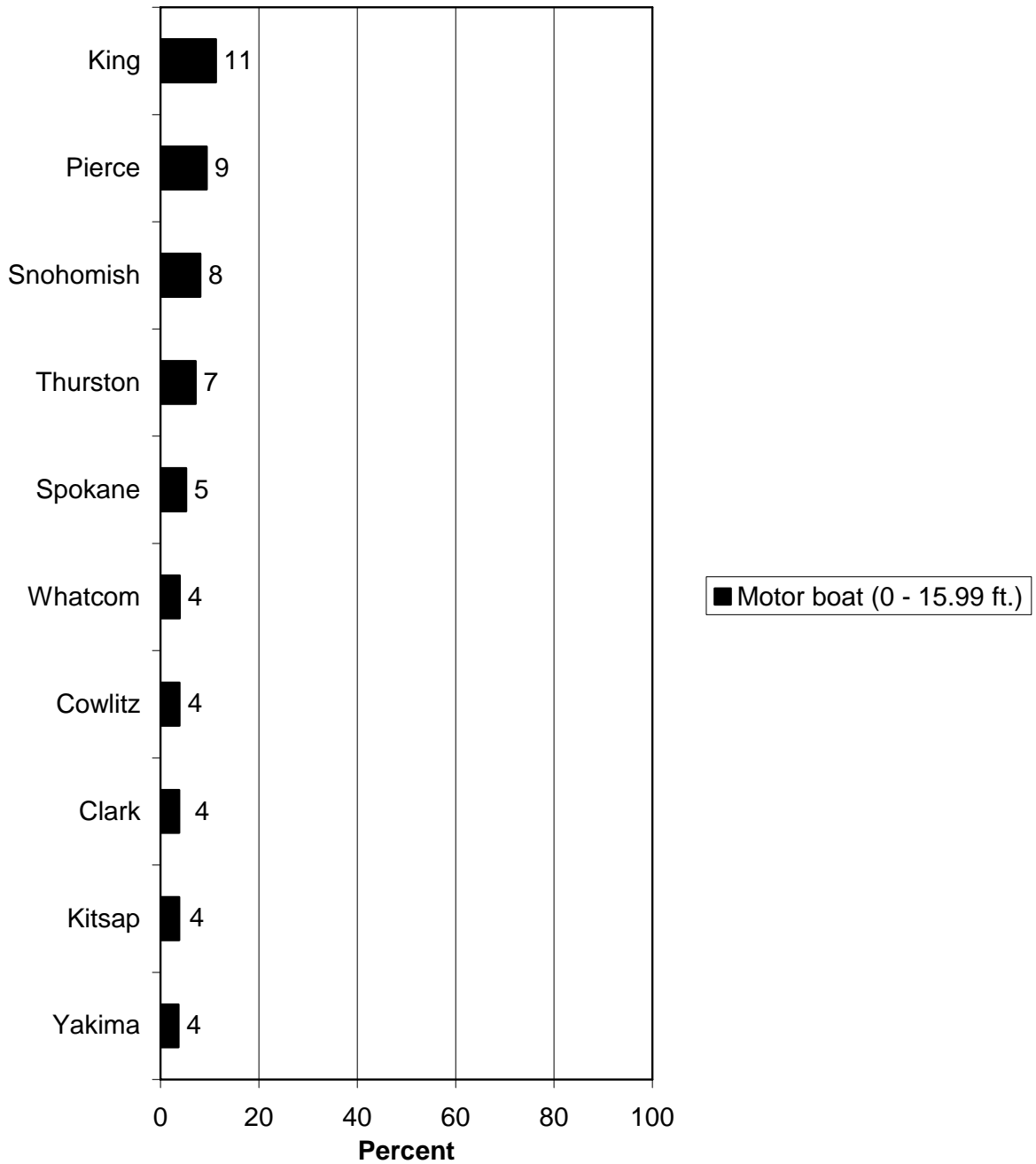
**Q84. In which county did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years?  
(Part 2.)**



**Q84. In which county did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years?  
(Part 3.)**

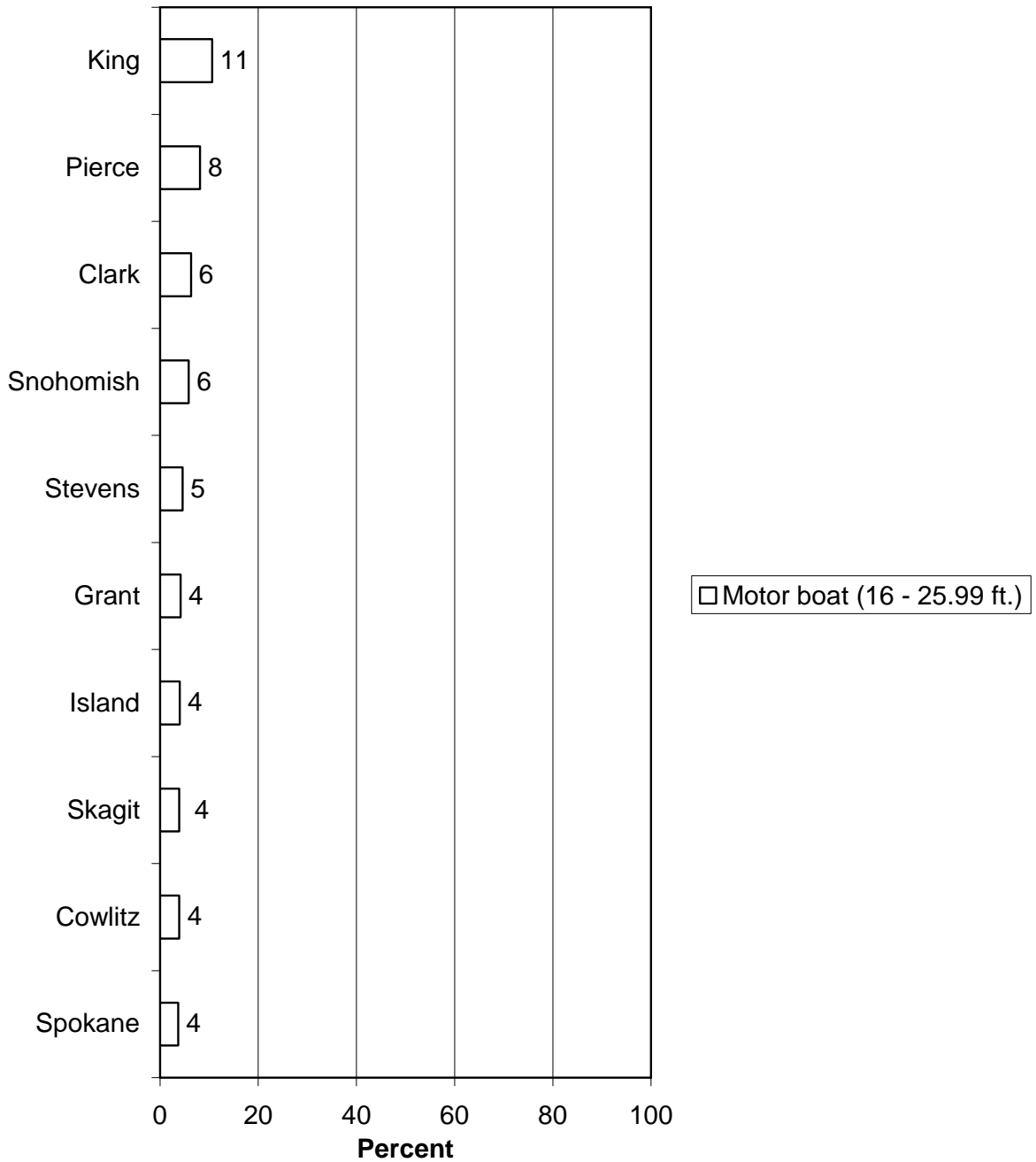


**Q84. In which county did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years?  
(Shows only top 10 counties.)**

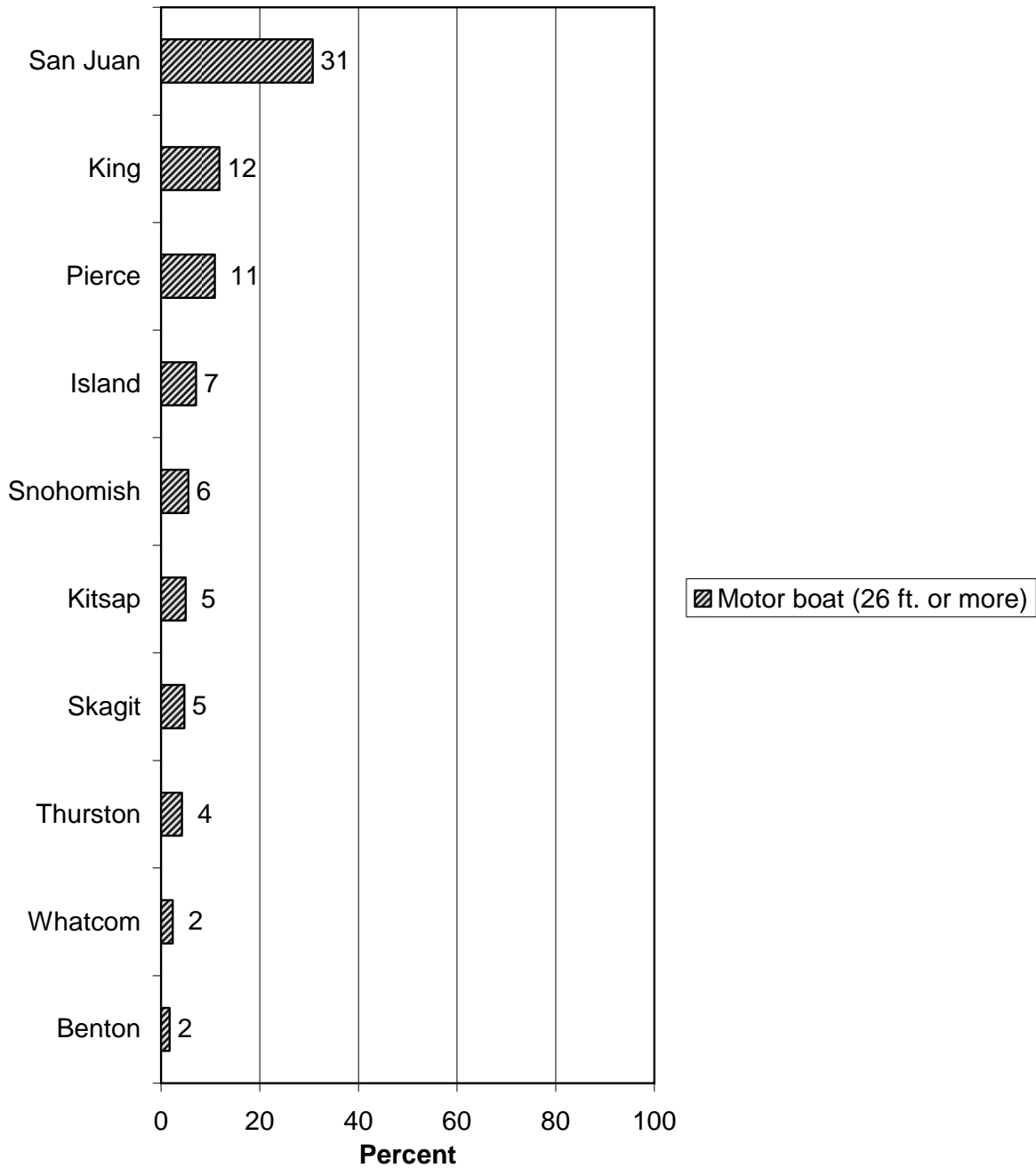




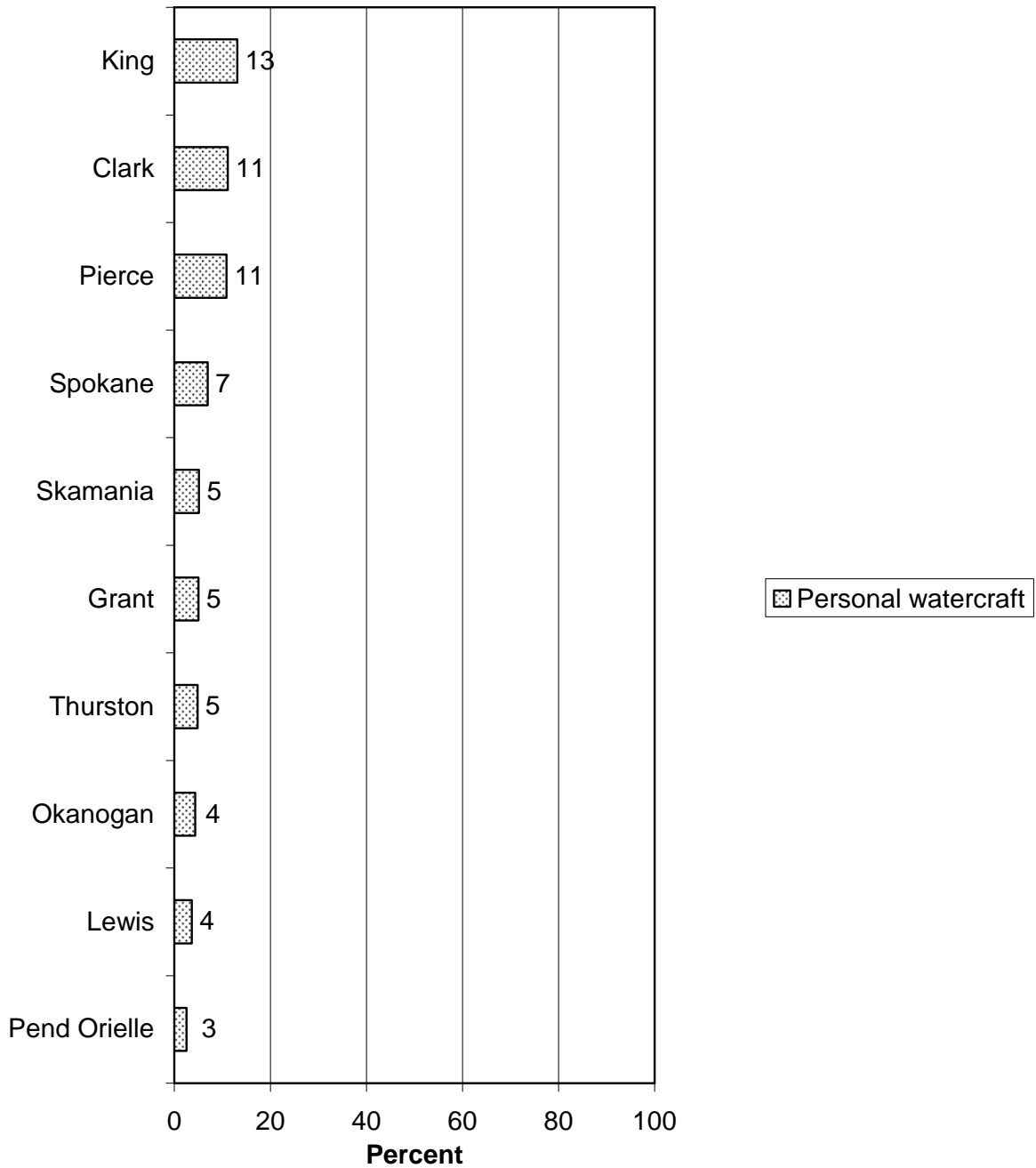
**Q84. In which county did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years?  
(Shows only top 10 counties.)**



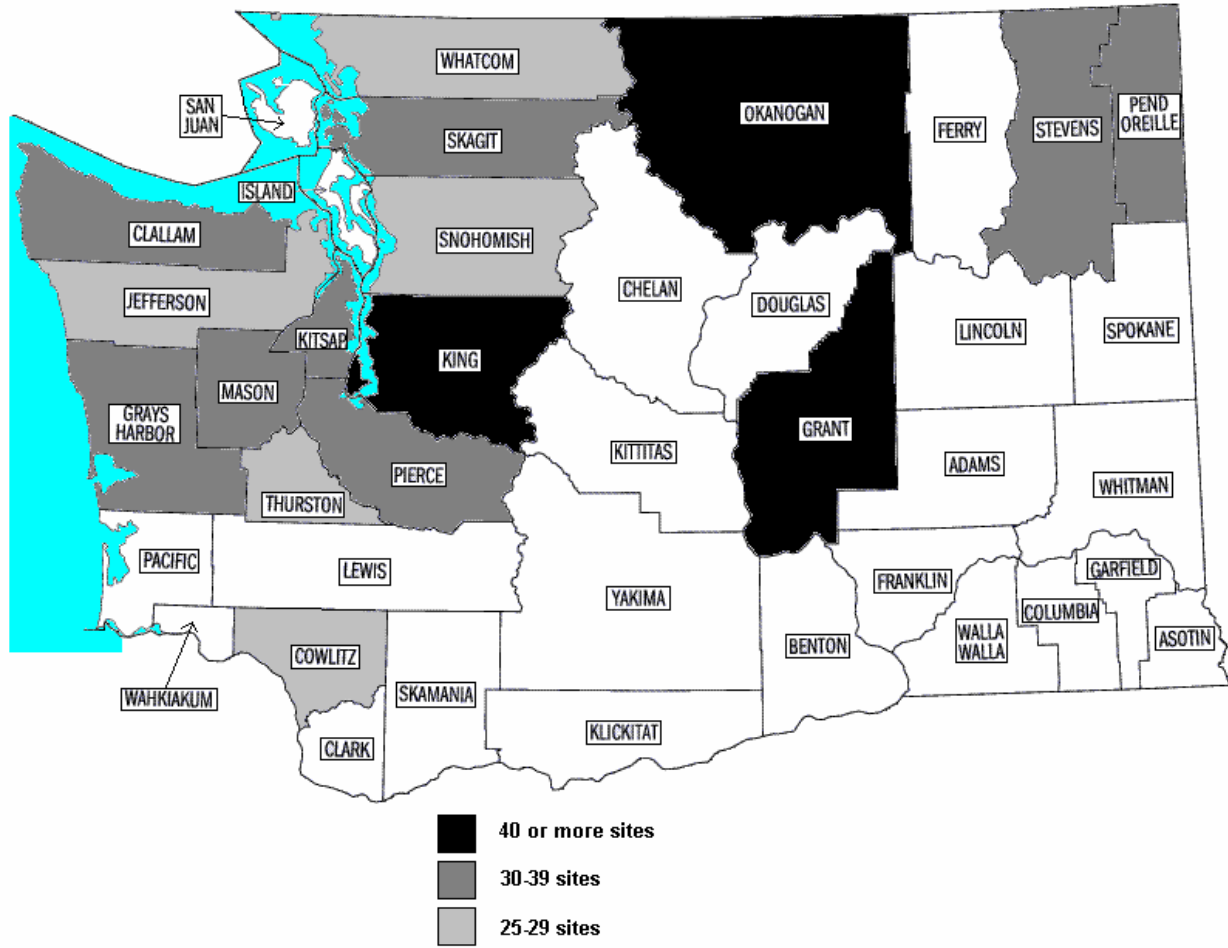
**Q84. In which county did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years?  
(Shows only top 10 counties.)**



**Q84. In which county did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years?  
(Shows only top 10 counties.)**

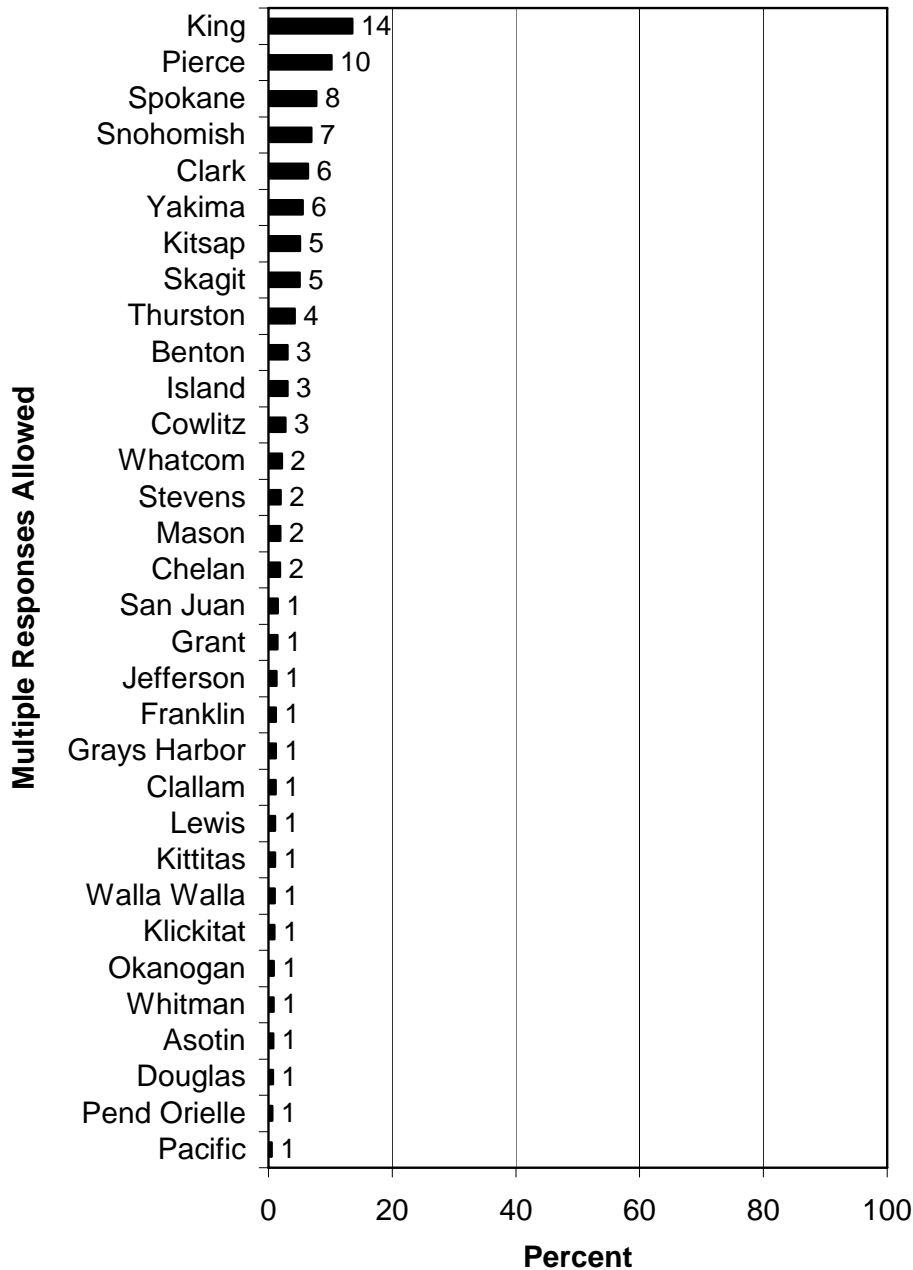


**COUNTIES WITH THE HIGHEST NUMBERS OF BOAT LAUNCH SITES**

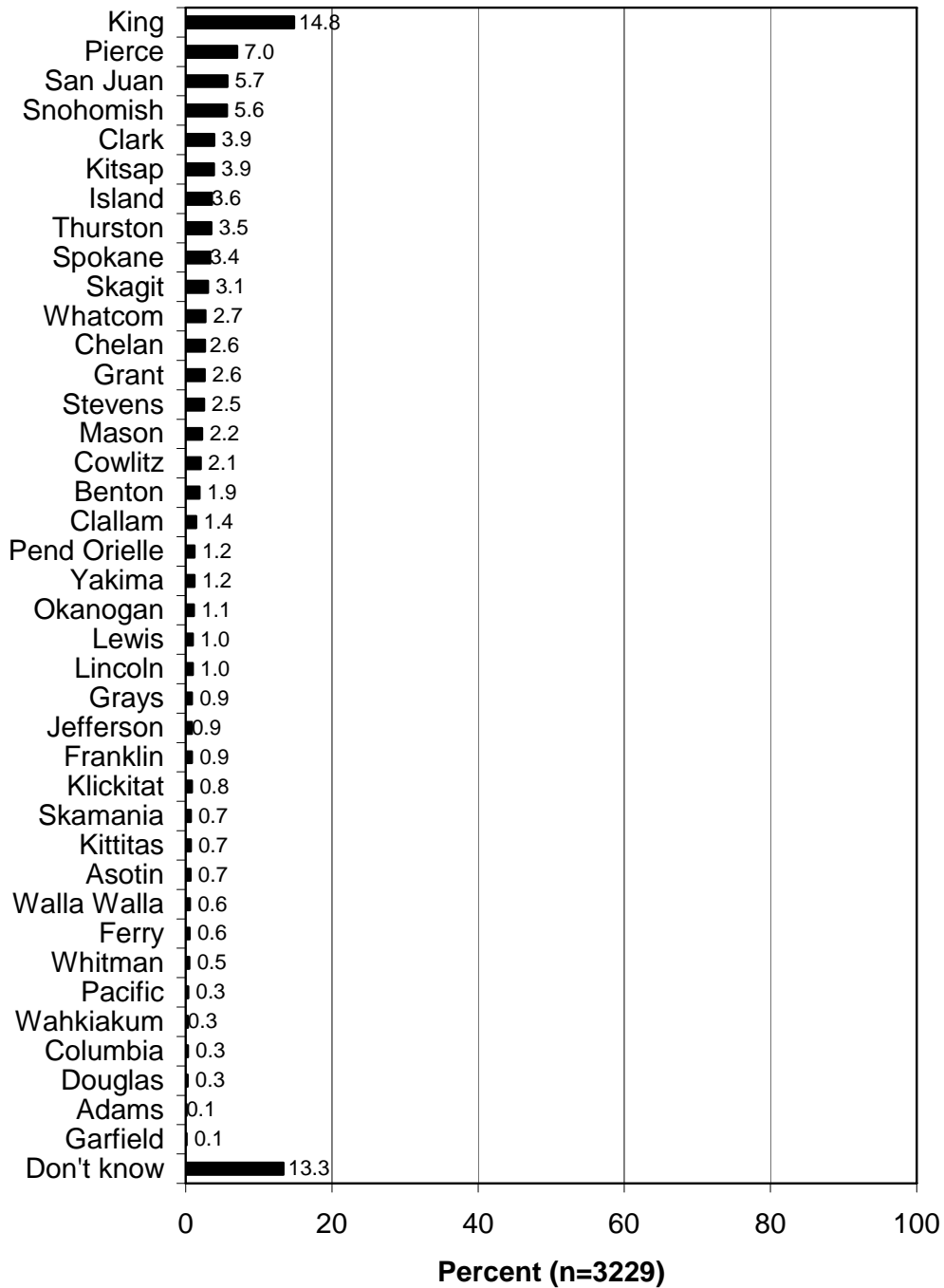


Shows the number of sites in the given county; counties in white had fewer than 25 sites.

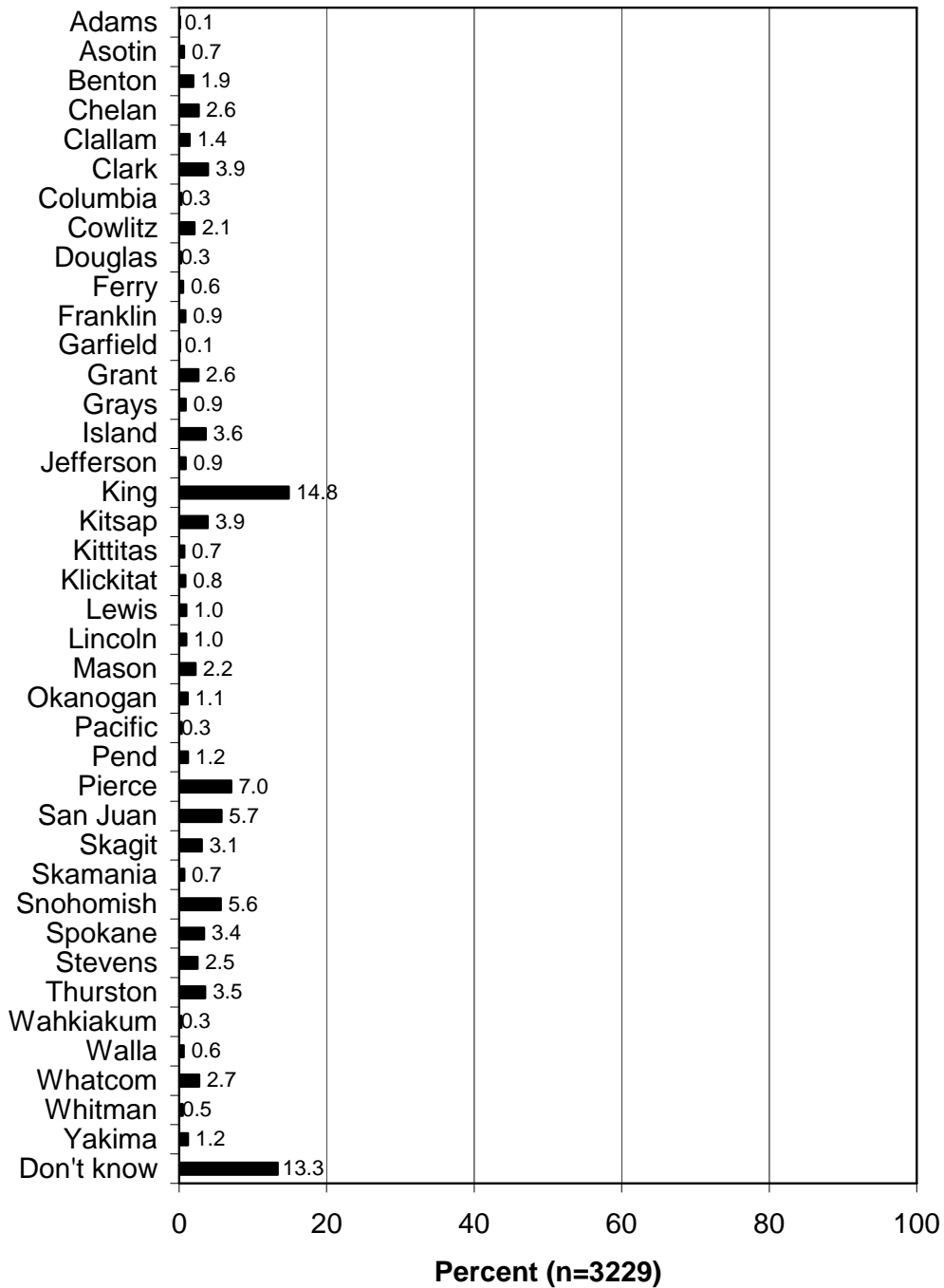
**Q57. In what county(ies) is(are) your boat(s) registered?  
 (Asked of those who own a boat that is registered in  
 Washington.) (Shows only those counties with 0.5% or  
 more.)**



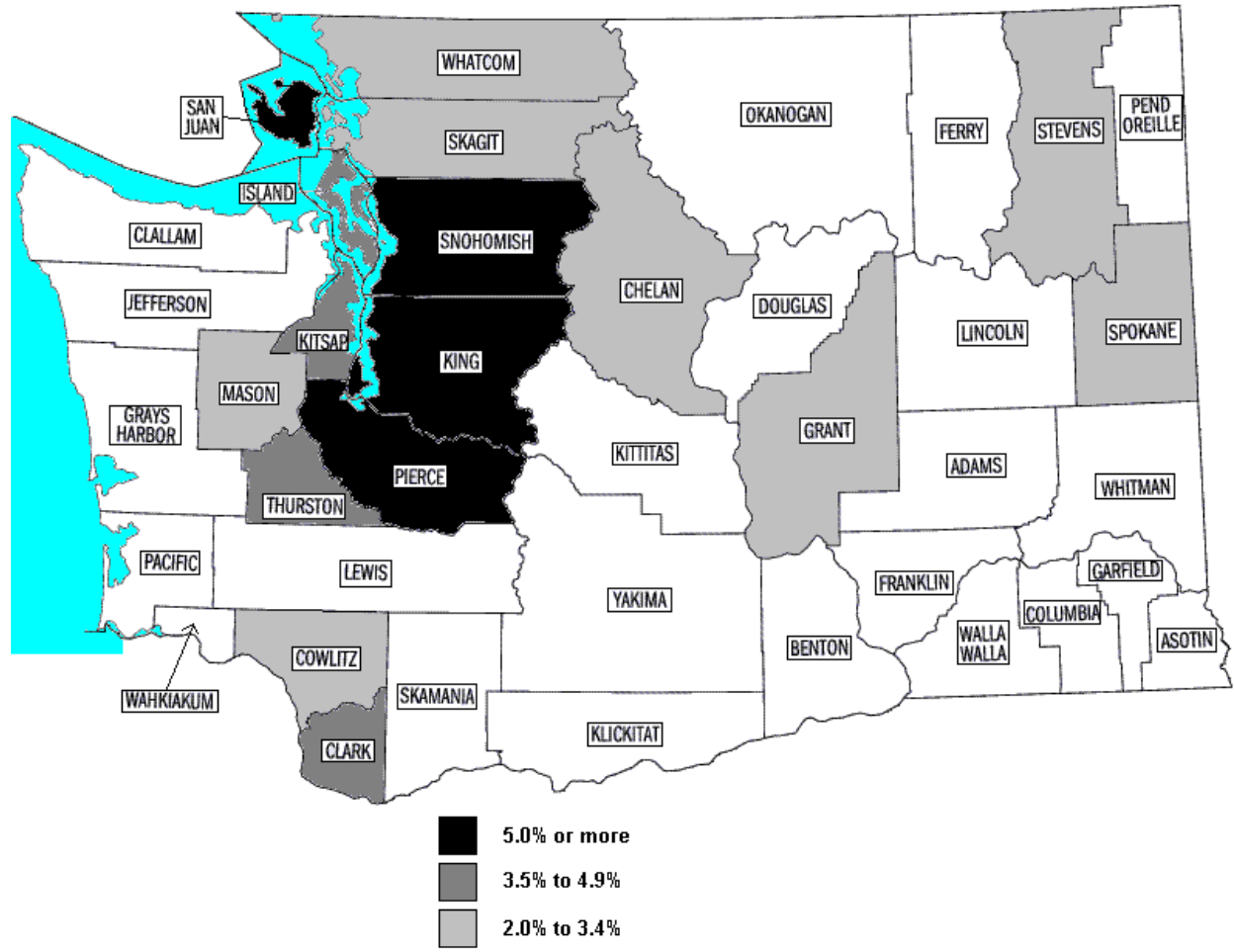
**Q85. In which county do you most prefer to boat in Washington?**



**Q85. In which county do you most prefer to boat in Washington? (Listed alphabetically.)**



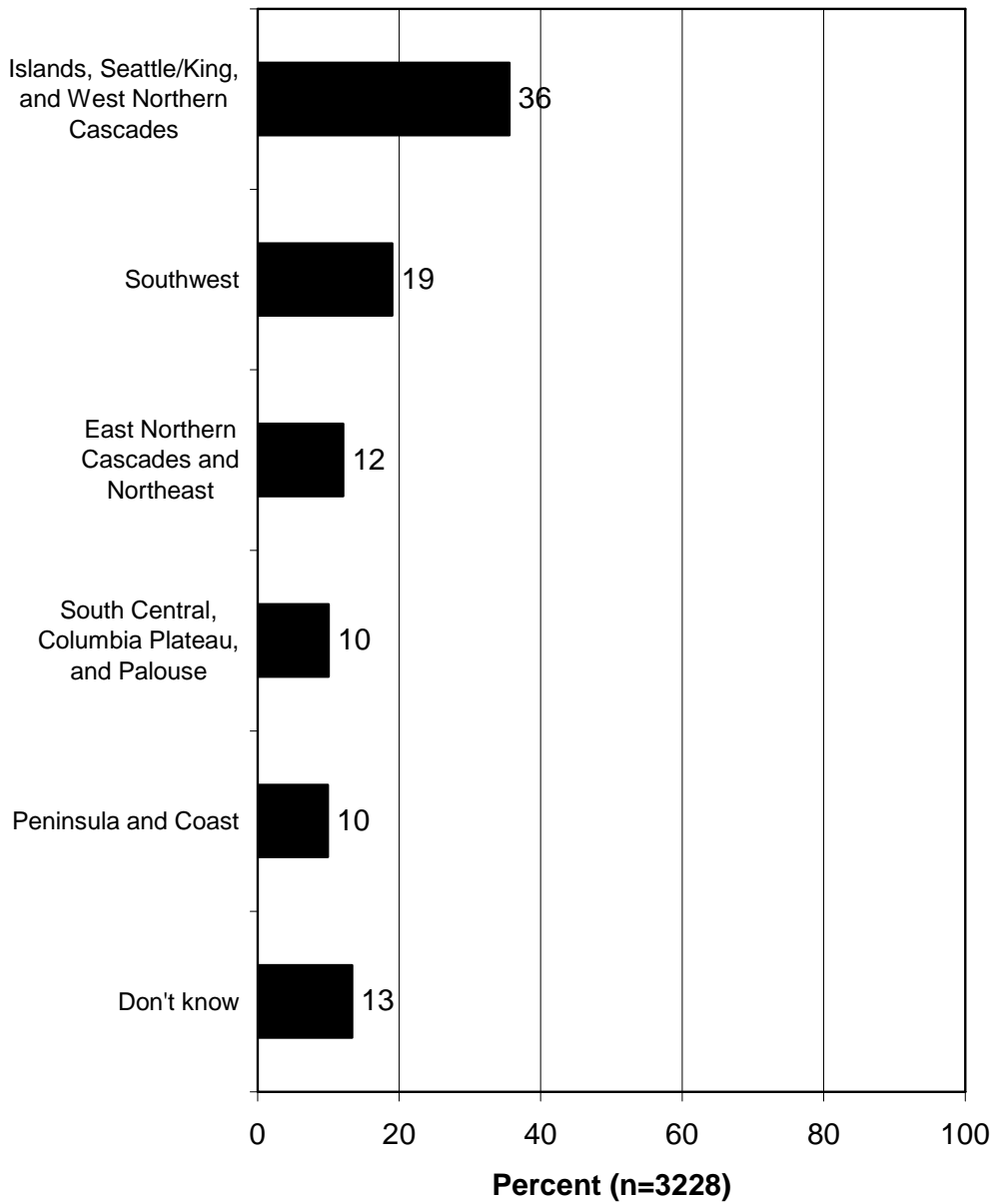
### TOP PREFERRED COUNTIES FOR BOATING



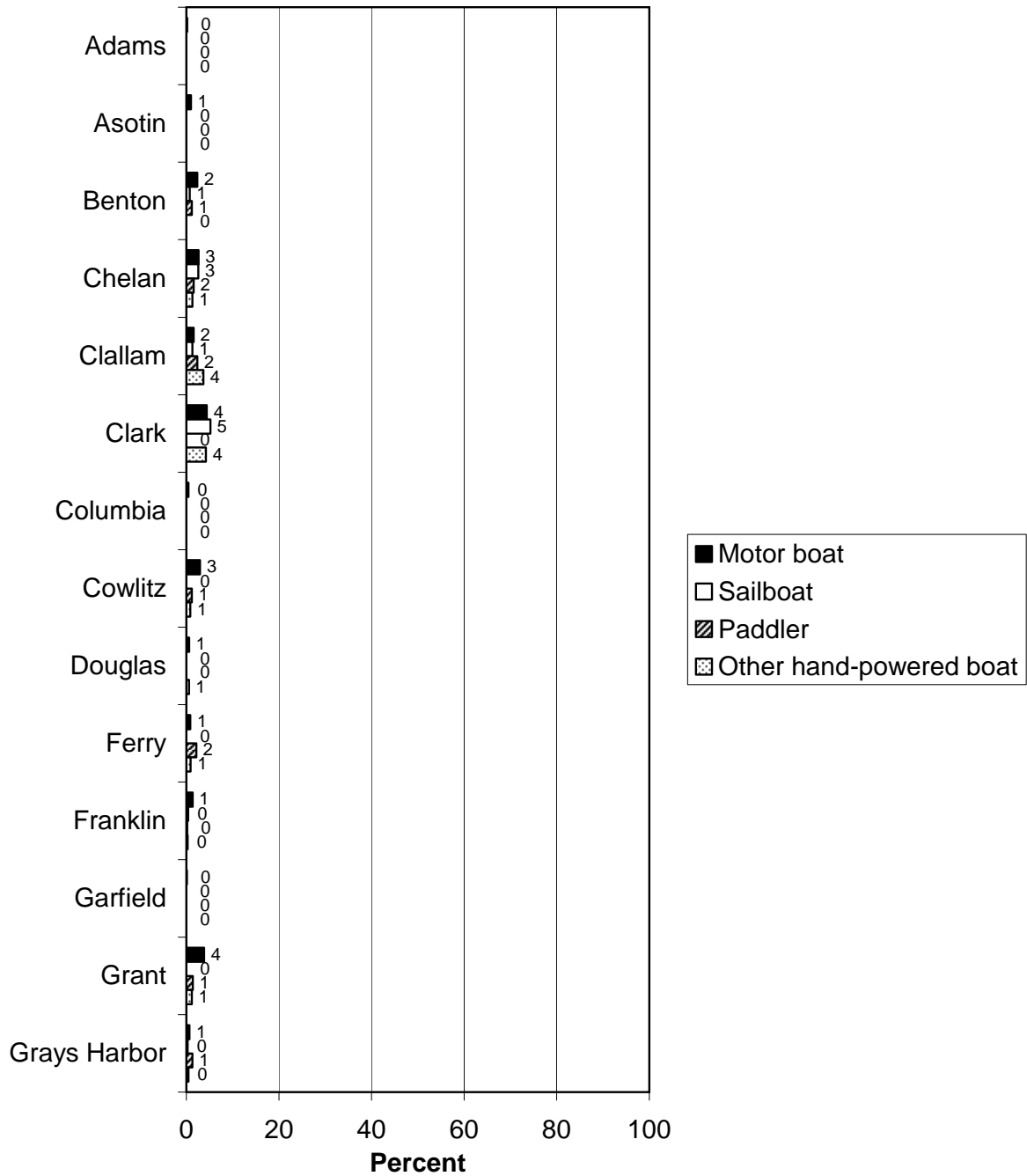
Shows percent of boaters who prefer to boat in the given county.



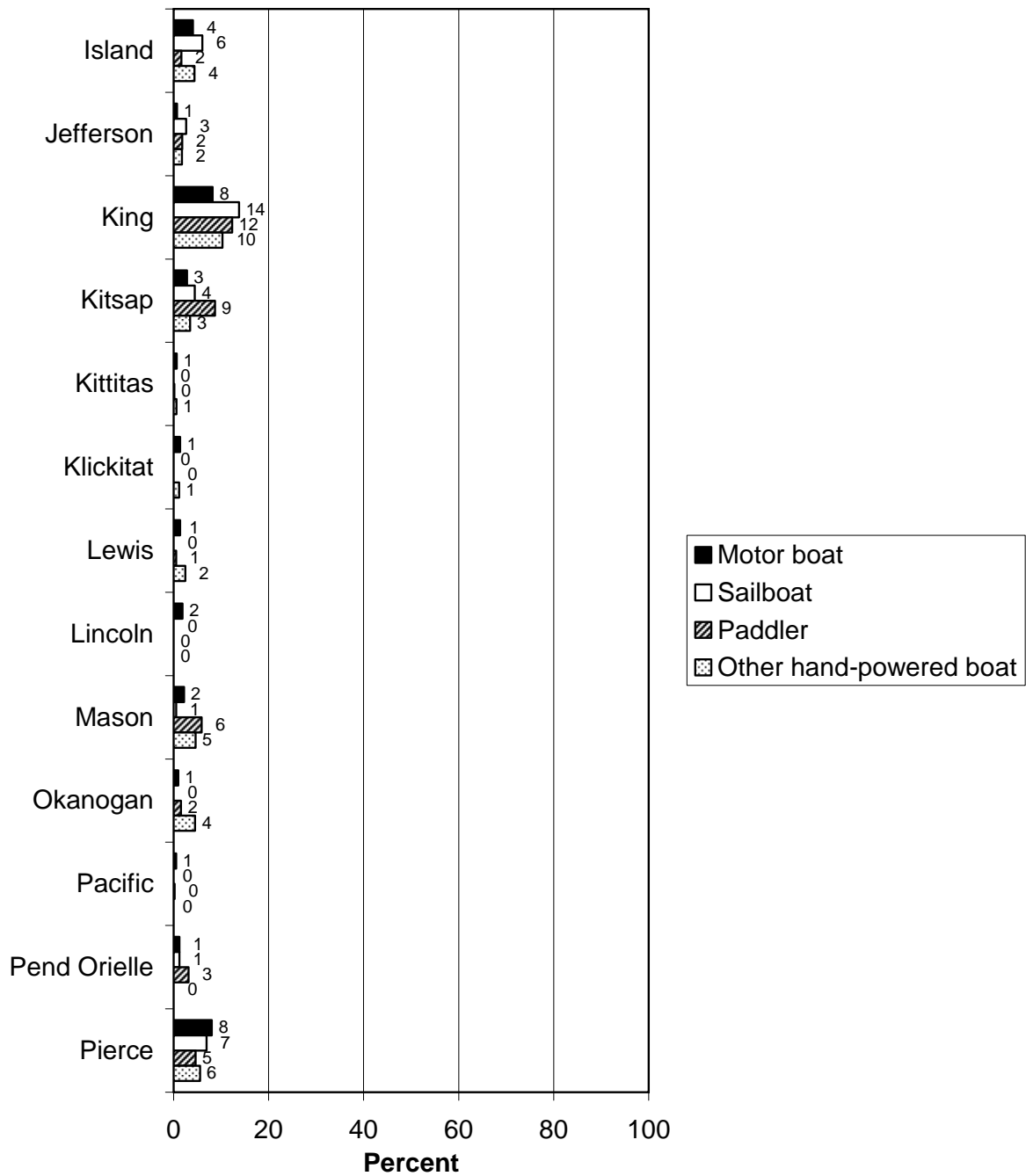
### Washington State region in which respondent prefers to boat.



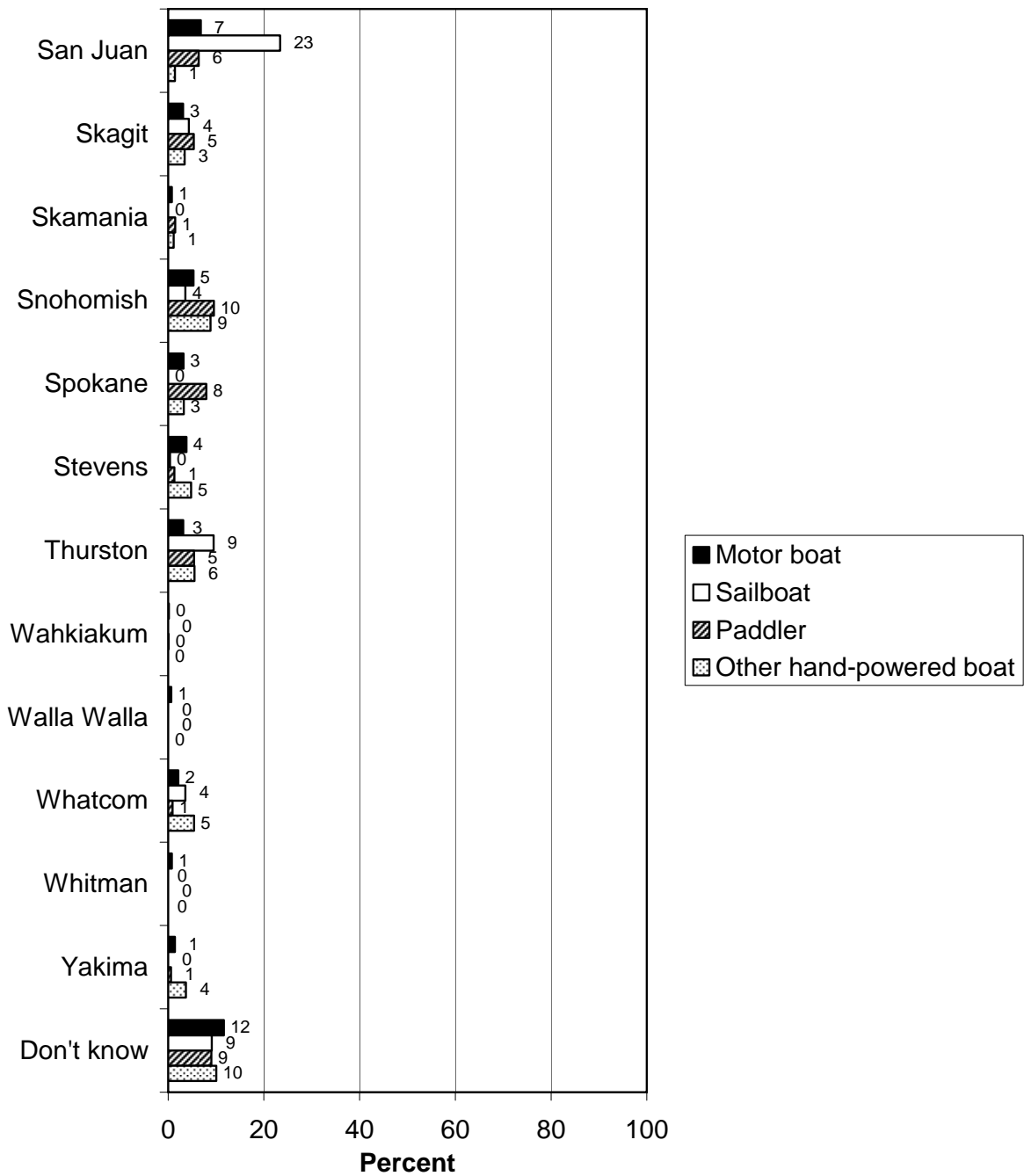
### Q85. In which county do you most prefer to boat in Washington? (Part 1.)



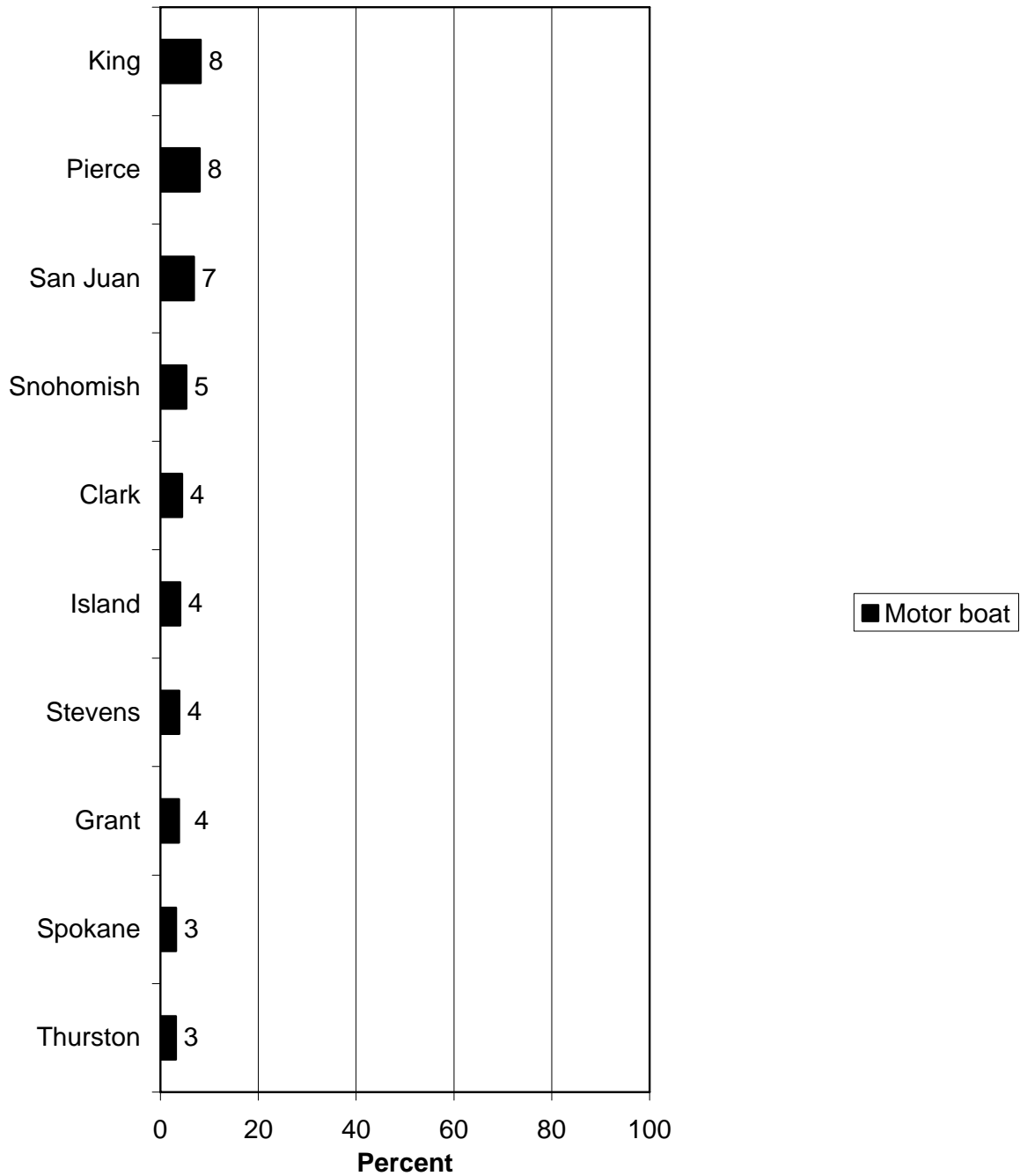
### Q85. In which county do you most prefer to boat in Washington? (Part 2.)



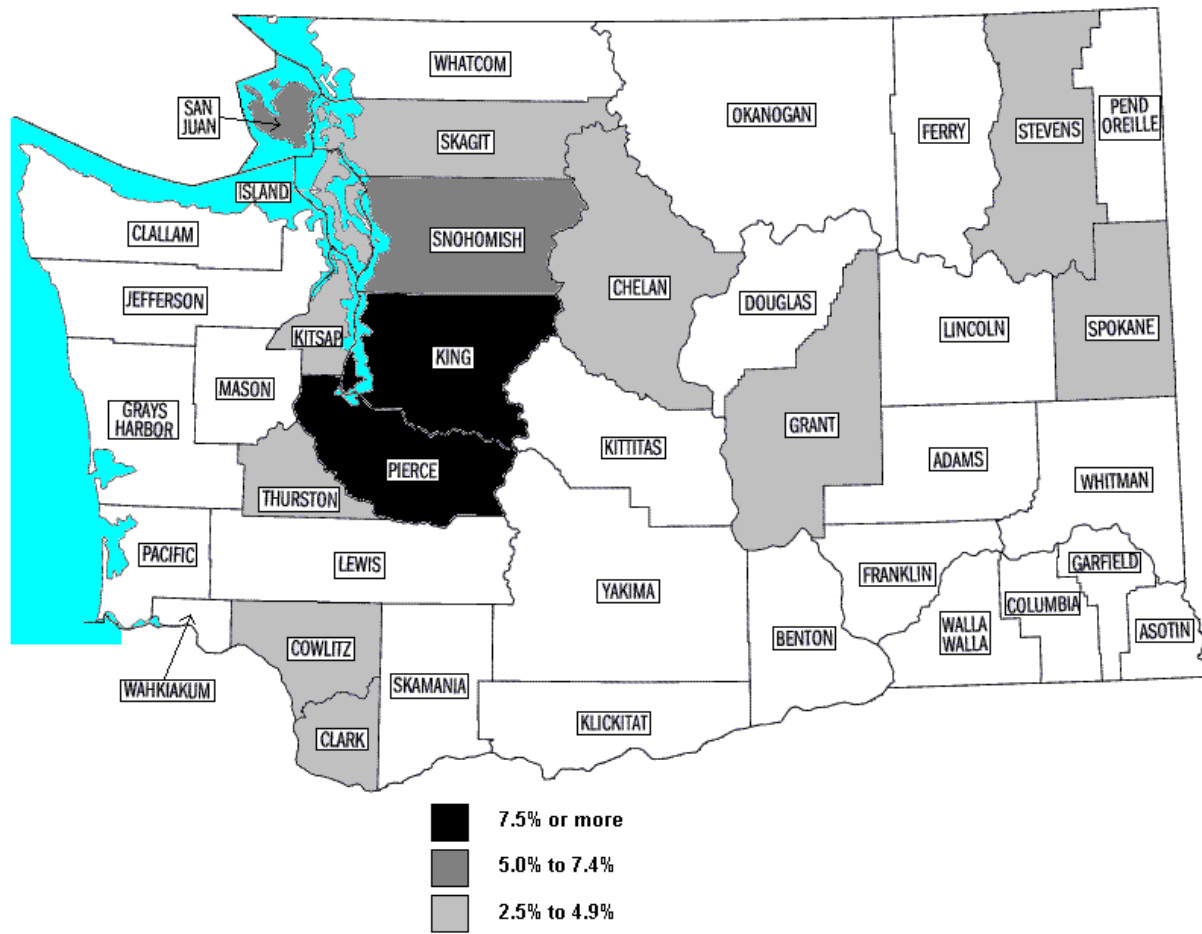
### Q85. In which county do you most prefer to boat in Washington? (Part 3.)



**Q85. In which county do you most prefer to boat in Washington?  
(Shows only top 10 counties.)**

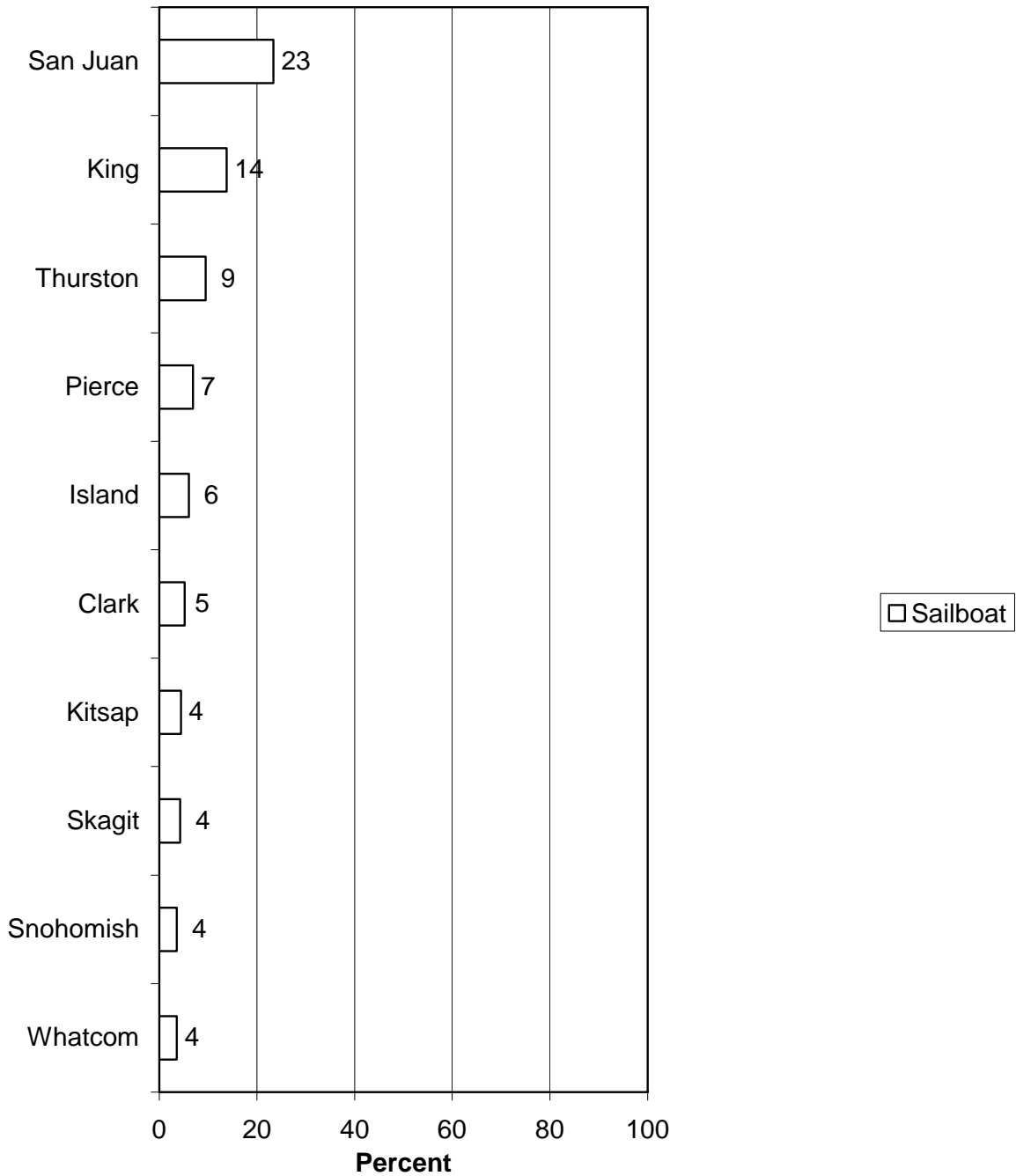


### TOP PREFERRED COUNTIES FOR MOTOR BOATING

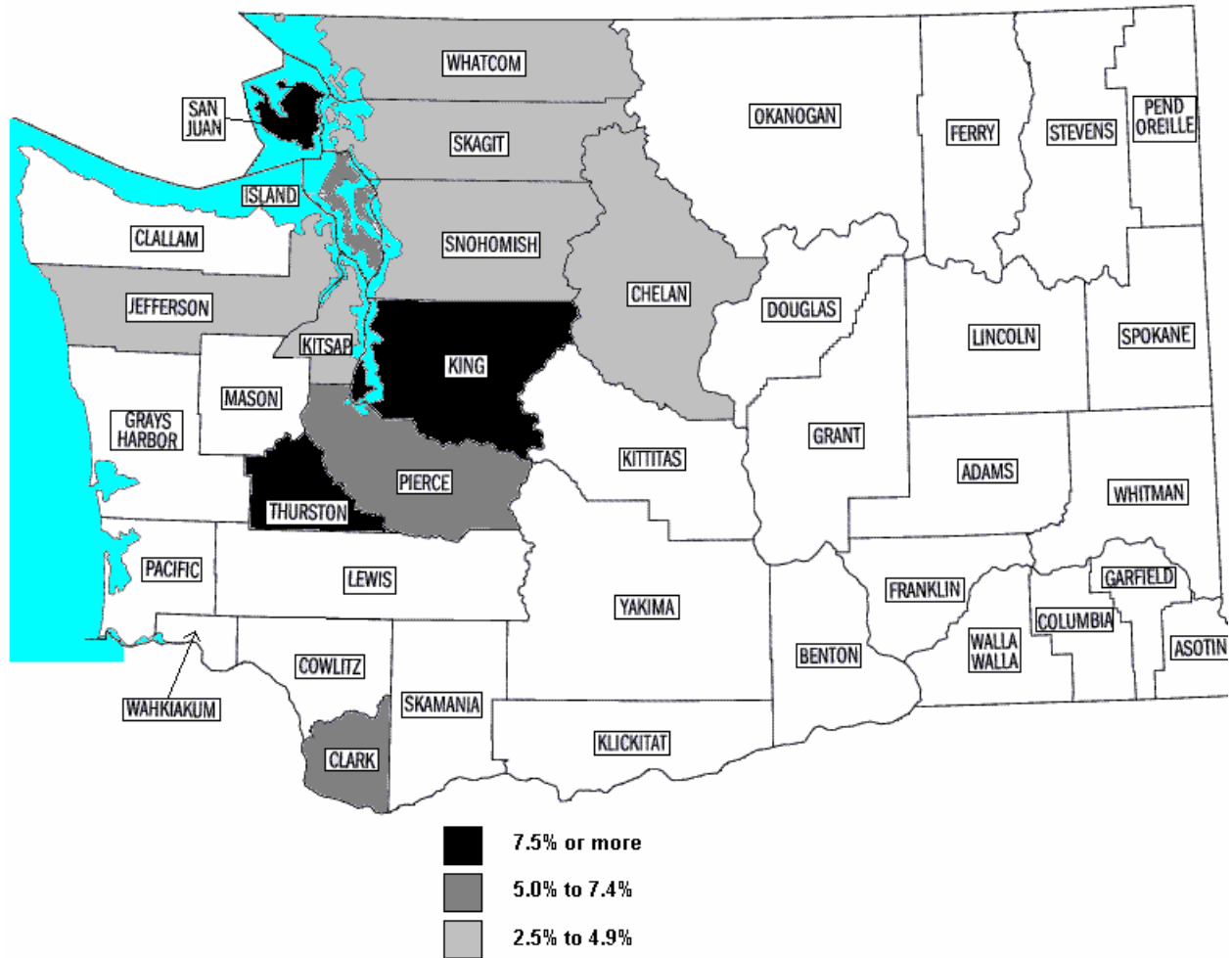


Shows percent of motor boaters who prefer to boat in the given county.

**Q85. In which county do you most prefer to boat in Washington?  
(Shows only top 10 counties.)**



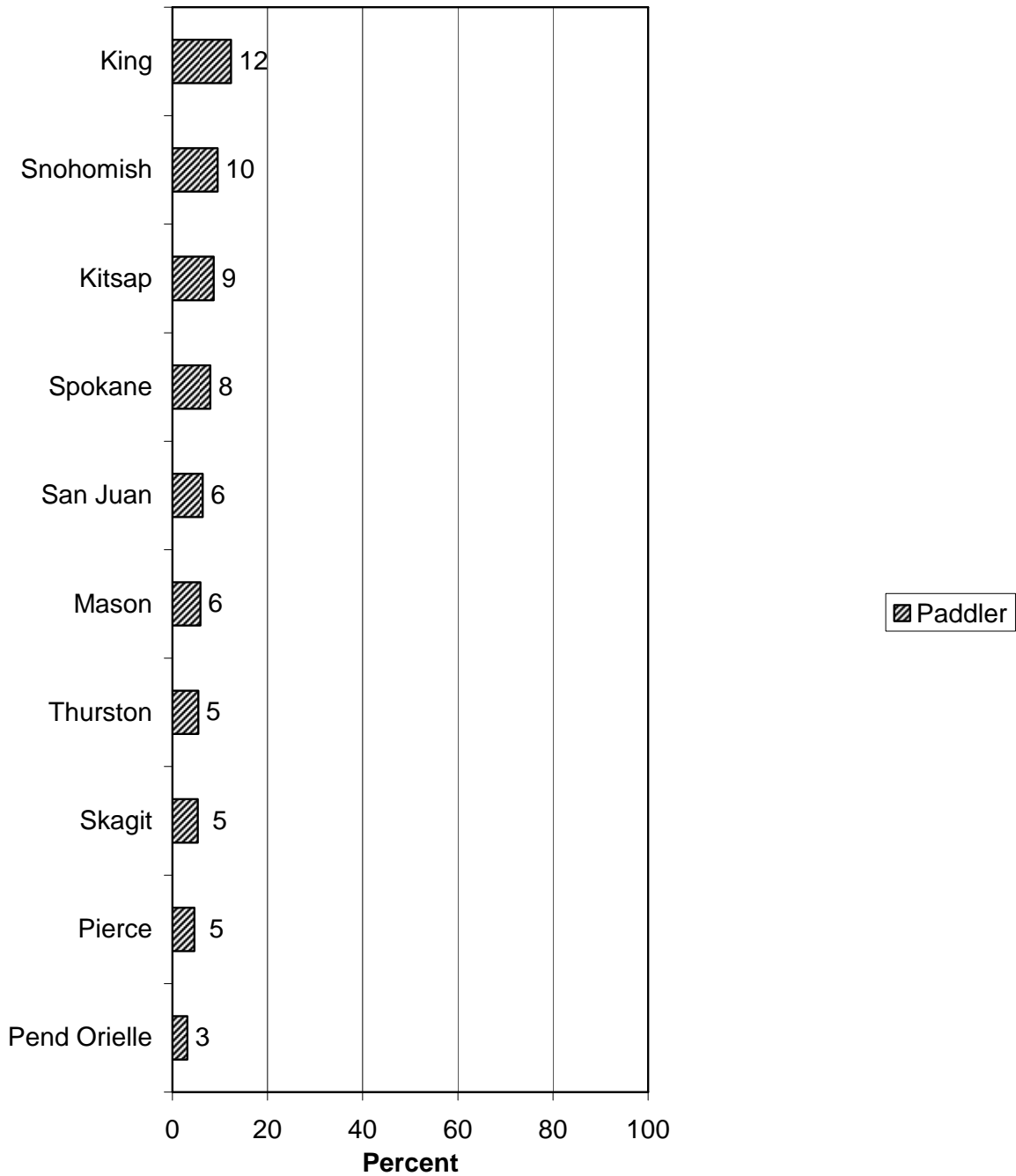
### TOP PREFERRED COUNTIES FOR SAILBOATING



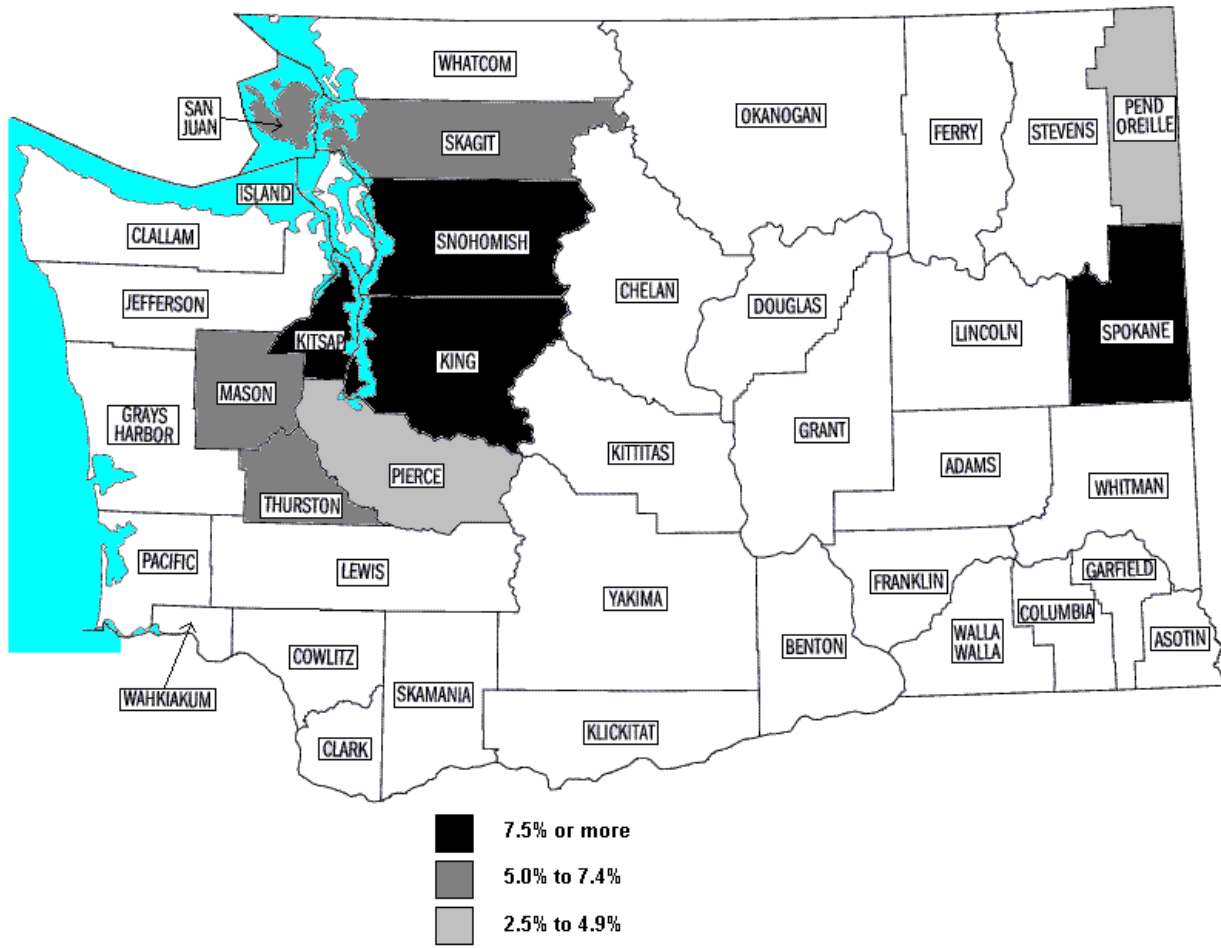
Shows percent of sailboaters who prefer to boat in the given county.



**Q85. In which county do you most prefer to boat in Washington?  
(Shows only top 10 counties.)**

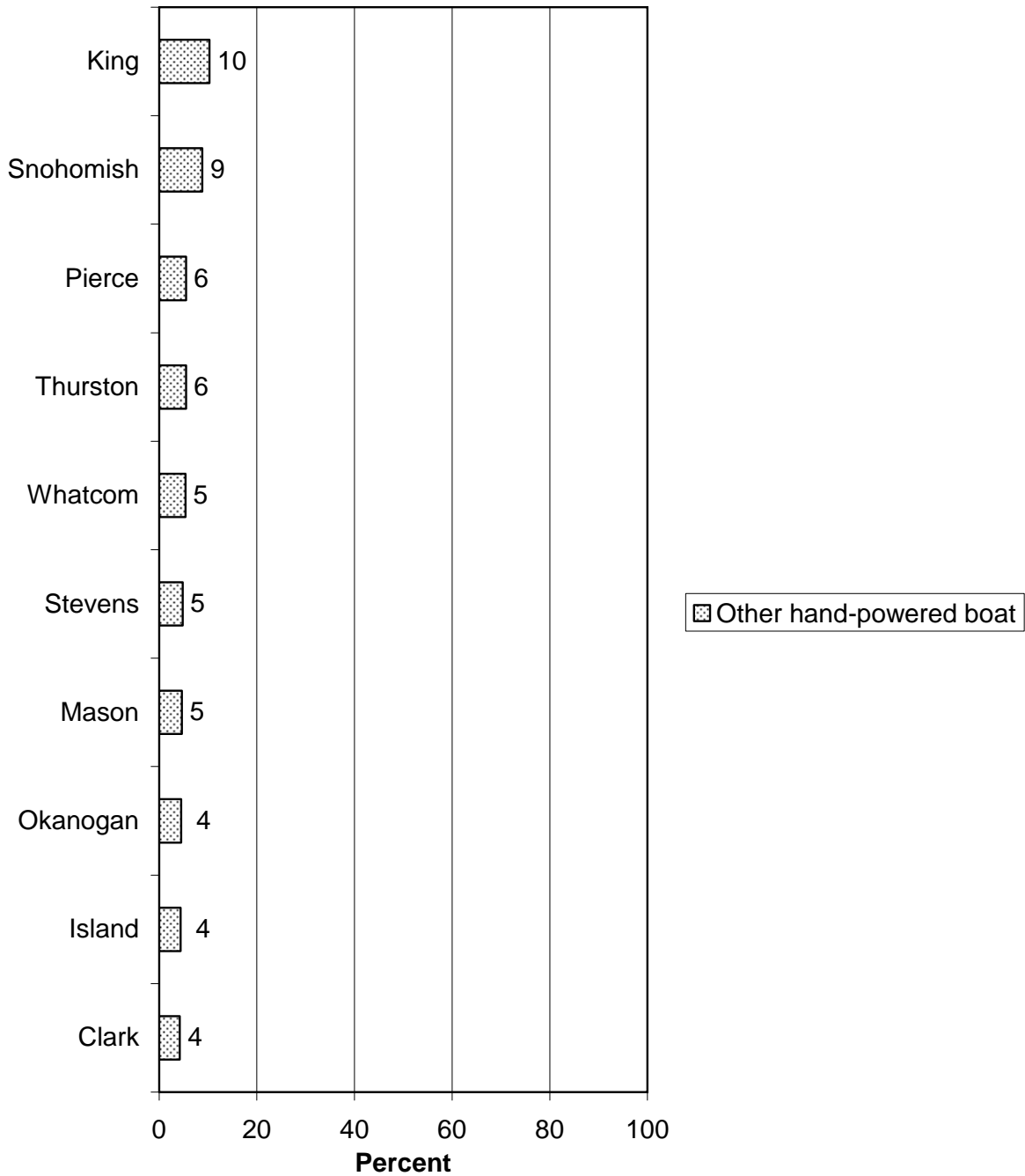


### TOP PREFERRED COUNTIES FOR PADDLERS

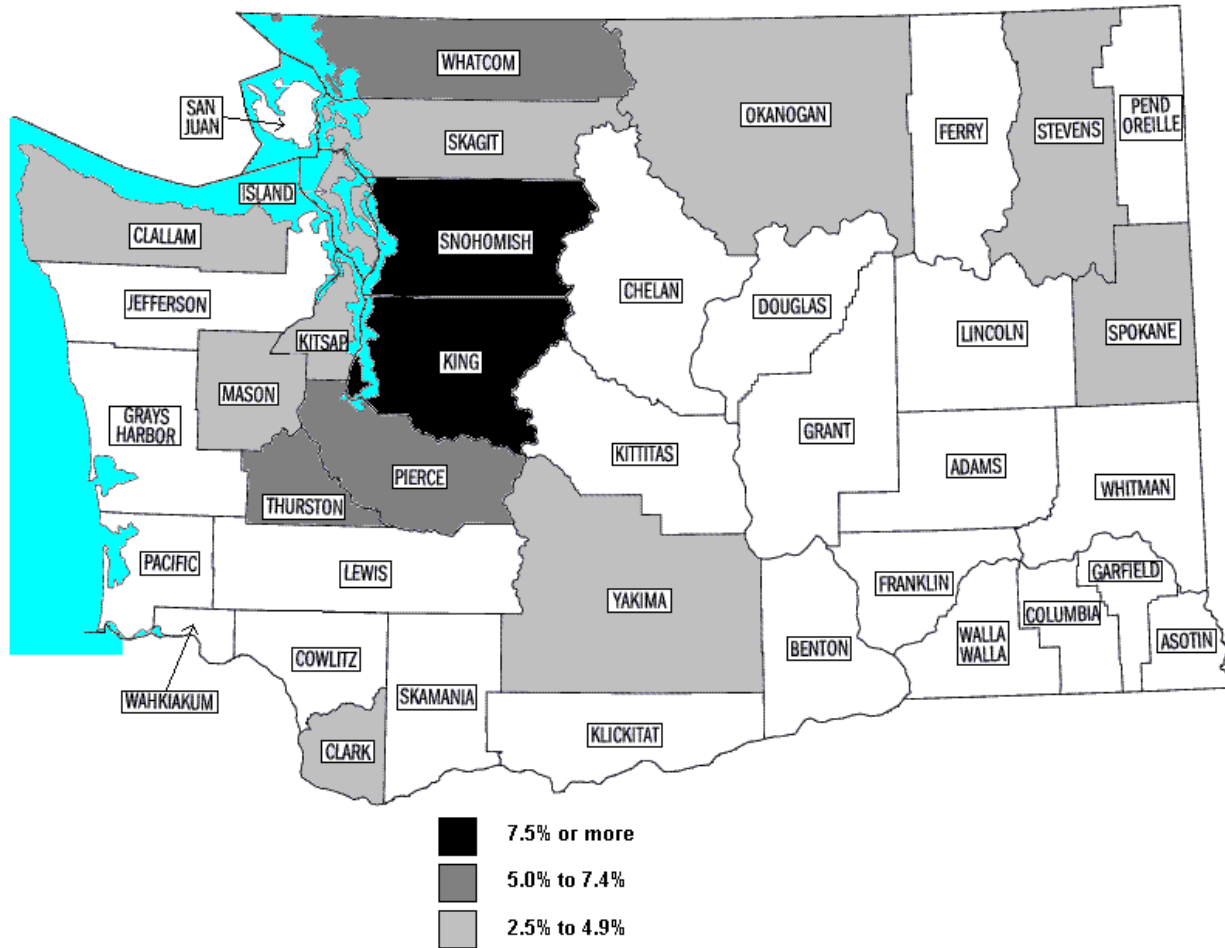


Shows percent of paddlers who prefer to boat in the given county.

**Q85. In which county do you most prefer to boat in Washington?  
(Shows only top 10 counties.)**

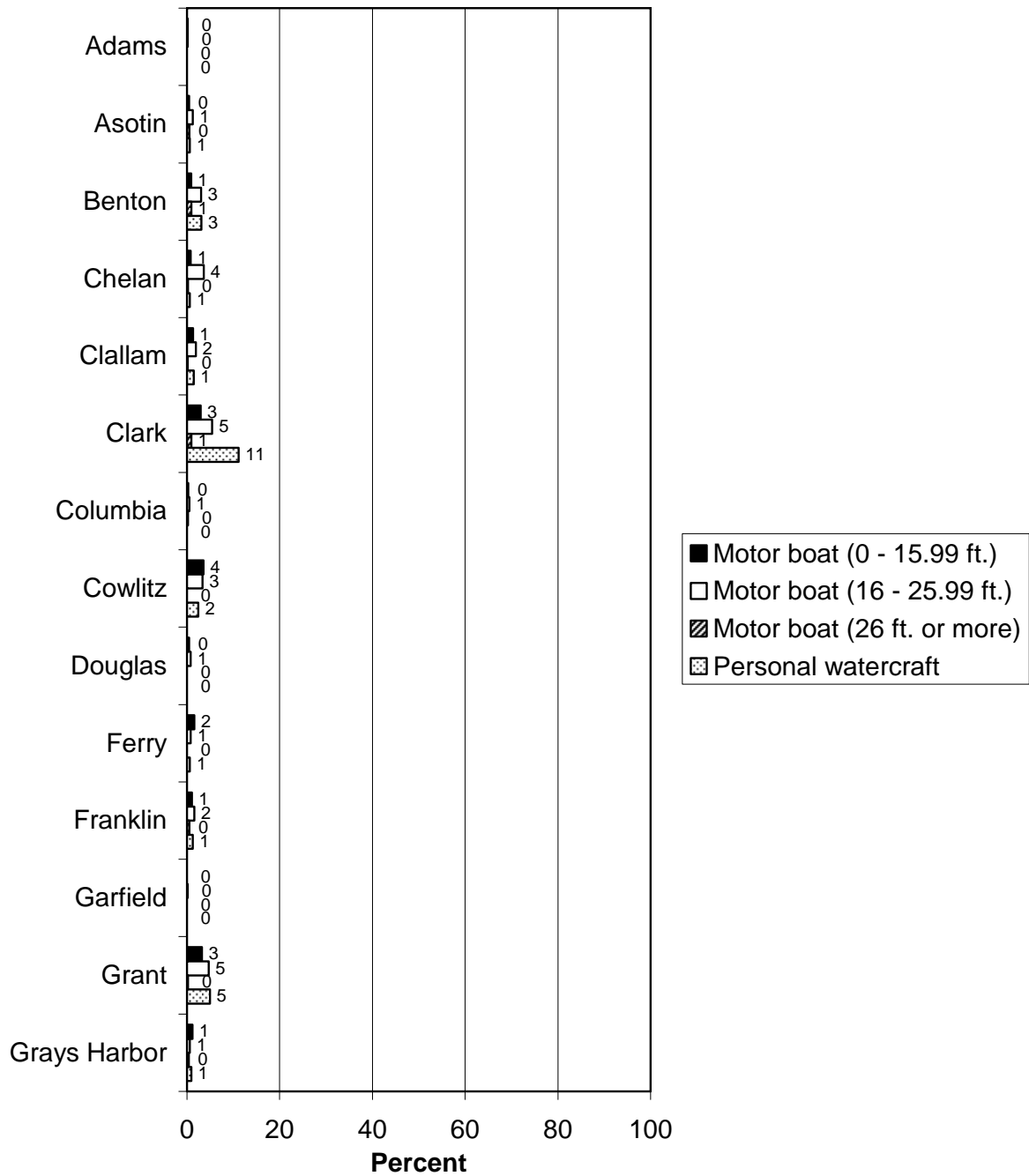


**TOP PREFERRED COUNTIES FOR OTHER HAND-POWERED BOATING  
(EXCLUDING CANOEISTS AND KAYAKERS)**

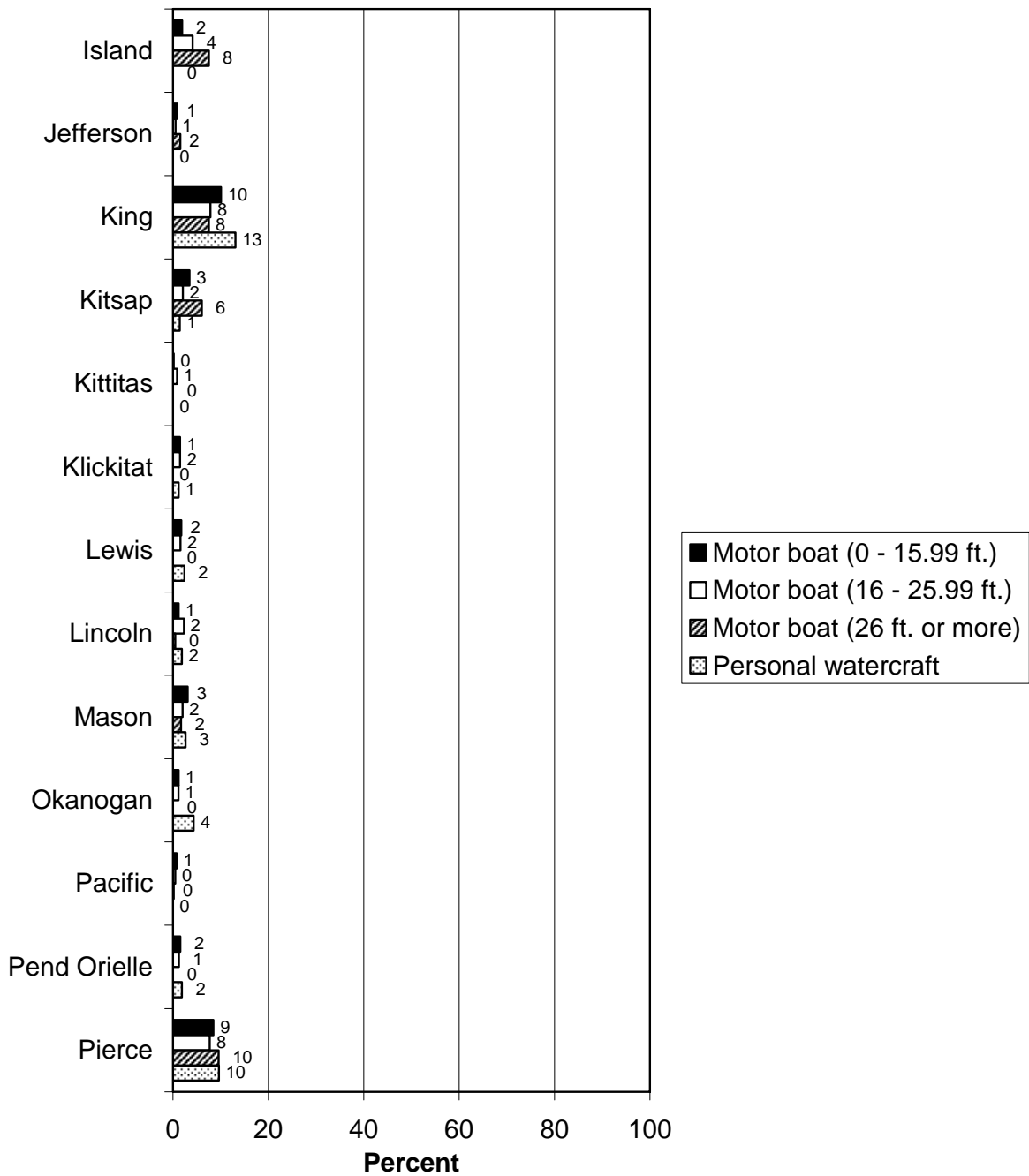


Shows percent of those primarily operating hand-powered boats (other than canoes and kayaks) who prefer to boat in the given county.

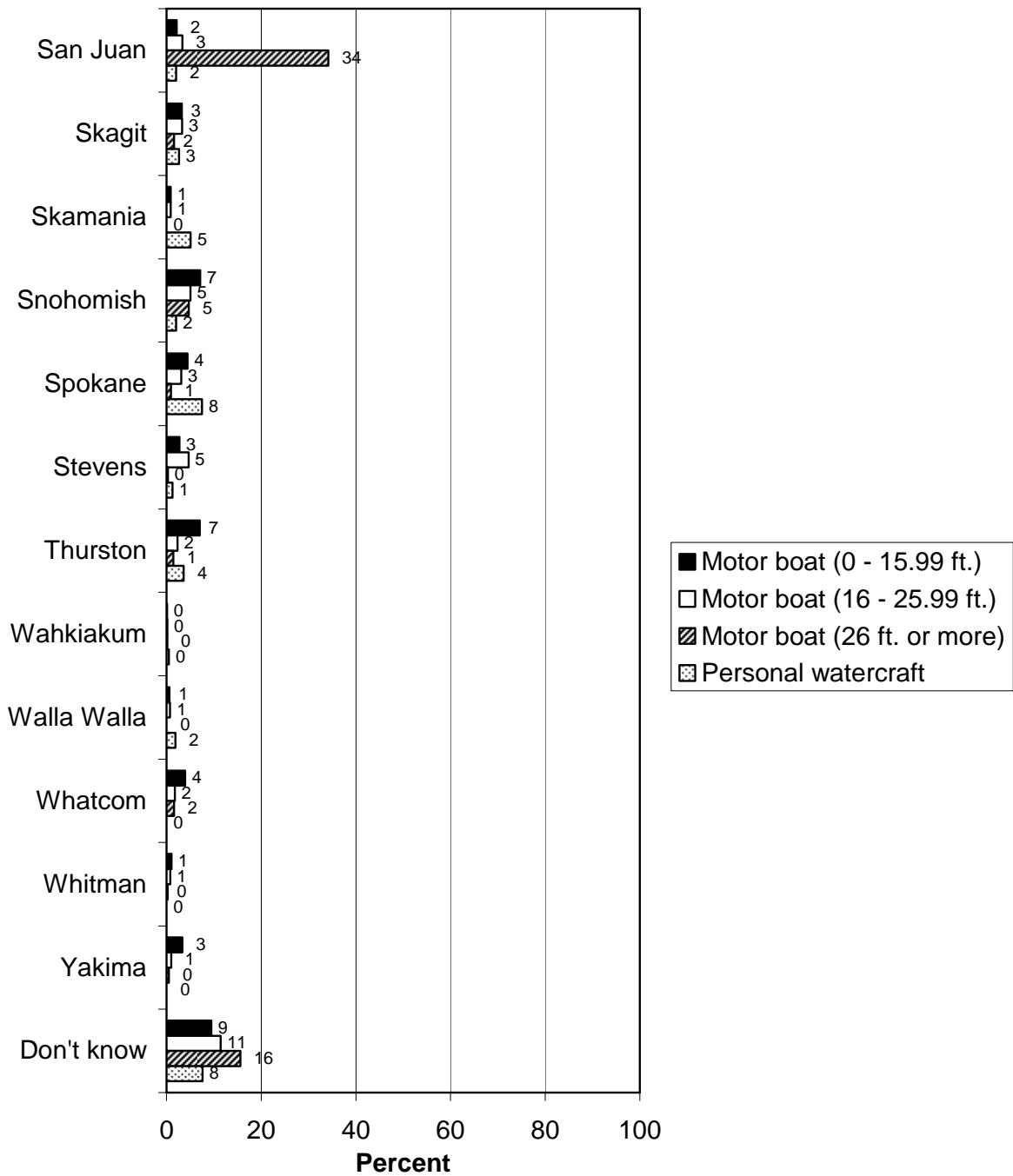
### Q85. In which county do you most prefer to boat in Washington? (Part 1.)



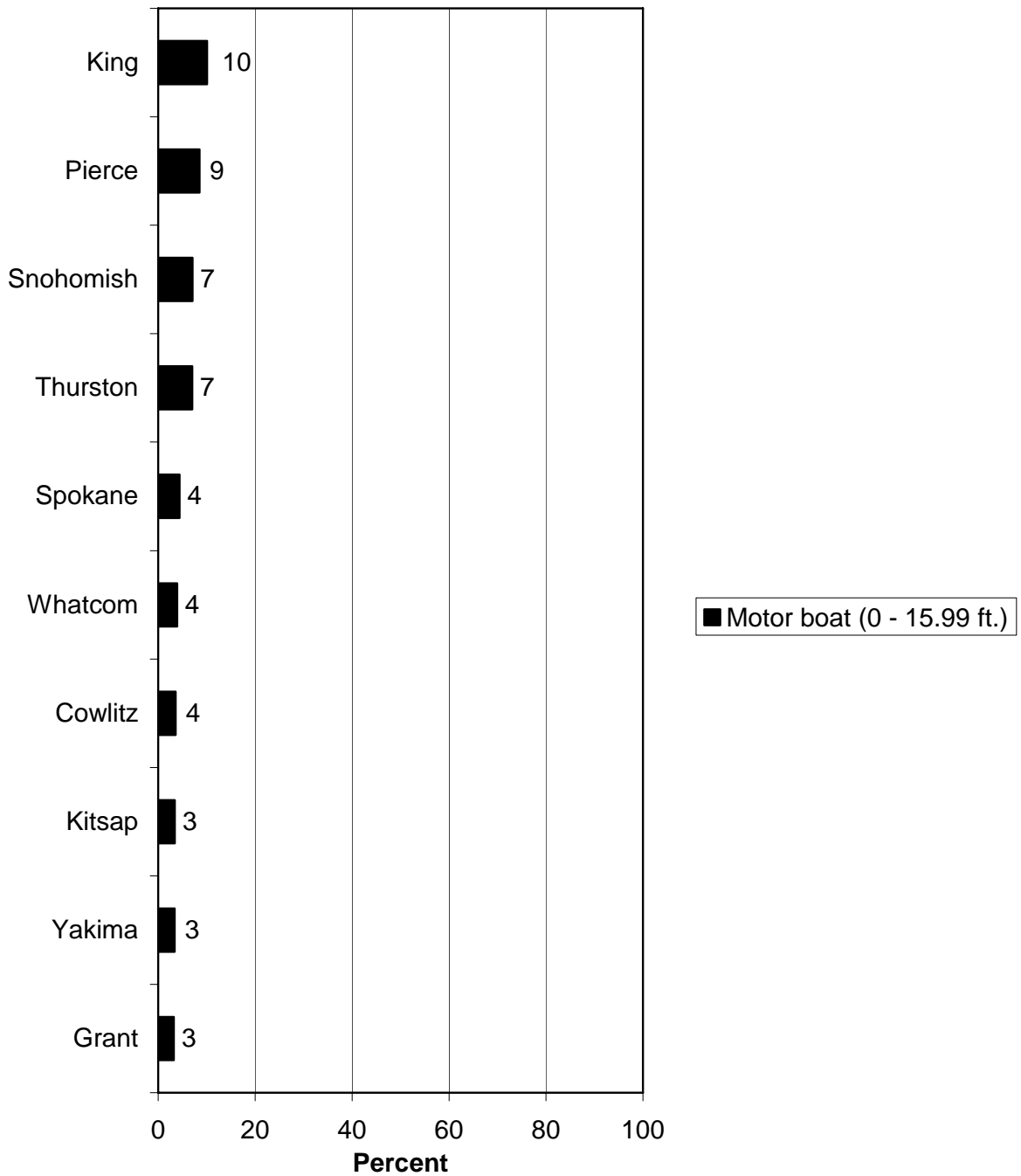
### Q85. In which county do you most prefer to boat in Washington? (Part 2.)



### Q85. In which county do you most prefer to boat in Washington? (Part 3.)

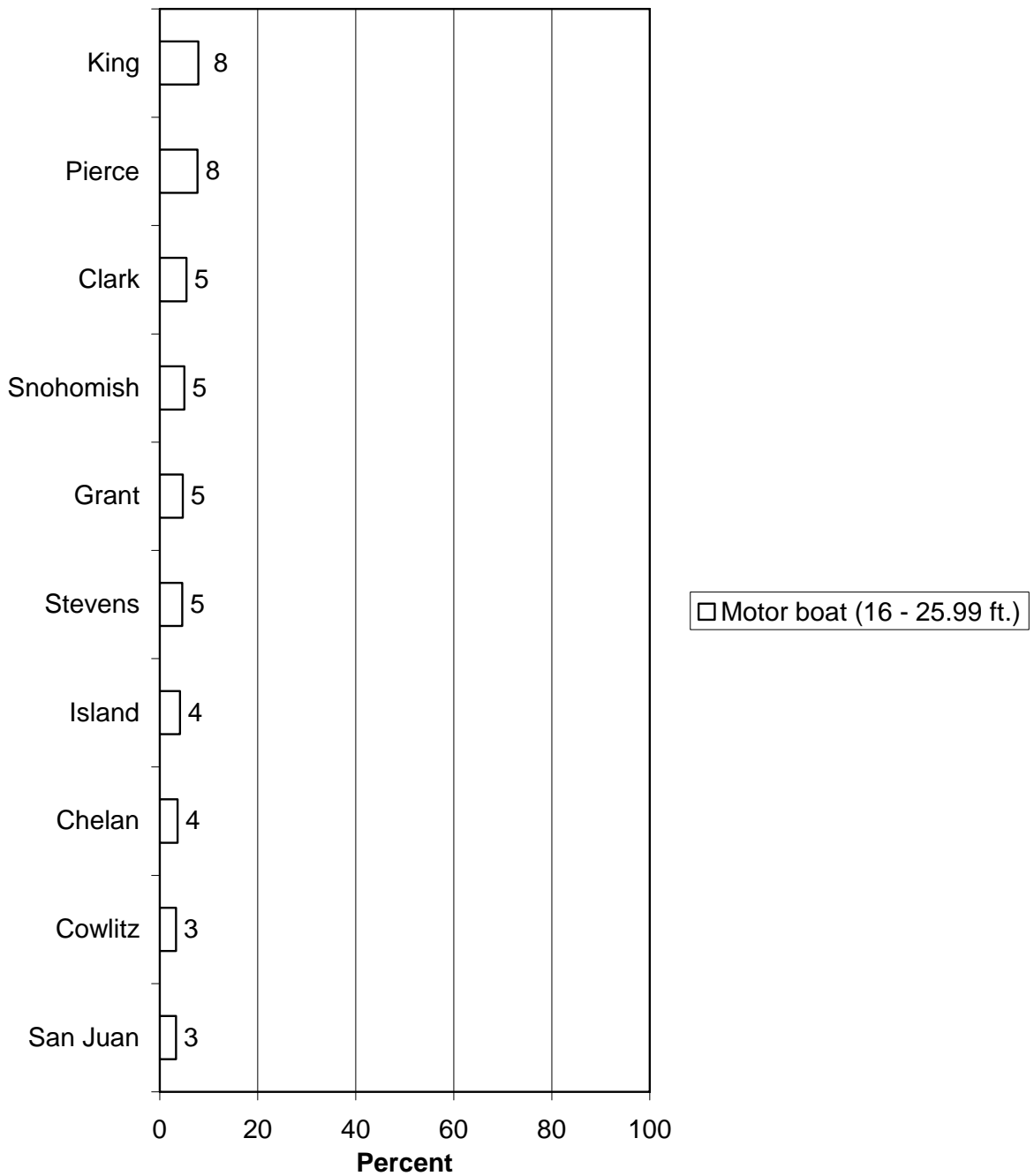


**Q85. In which county do you most prefer to boat in Washington? (Shows only top 10 counties.)**

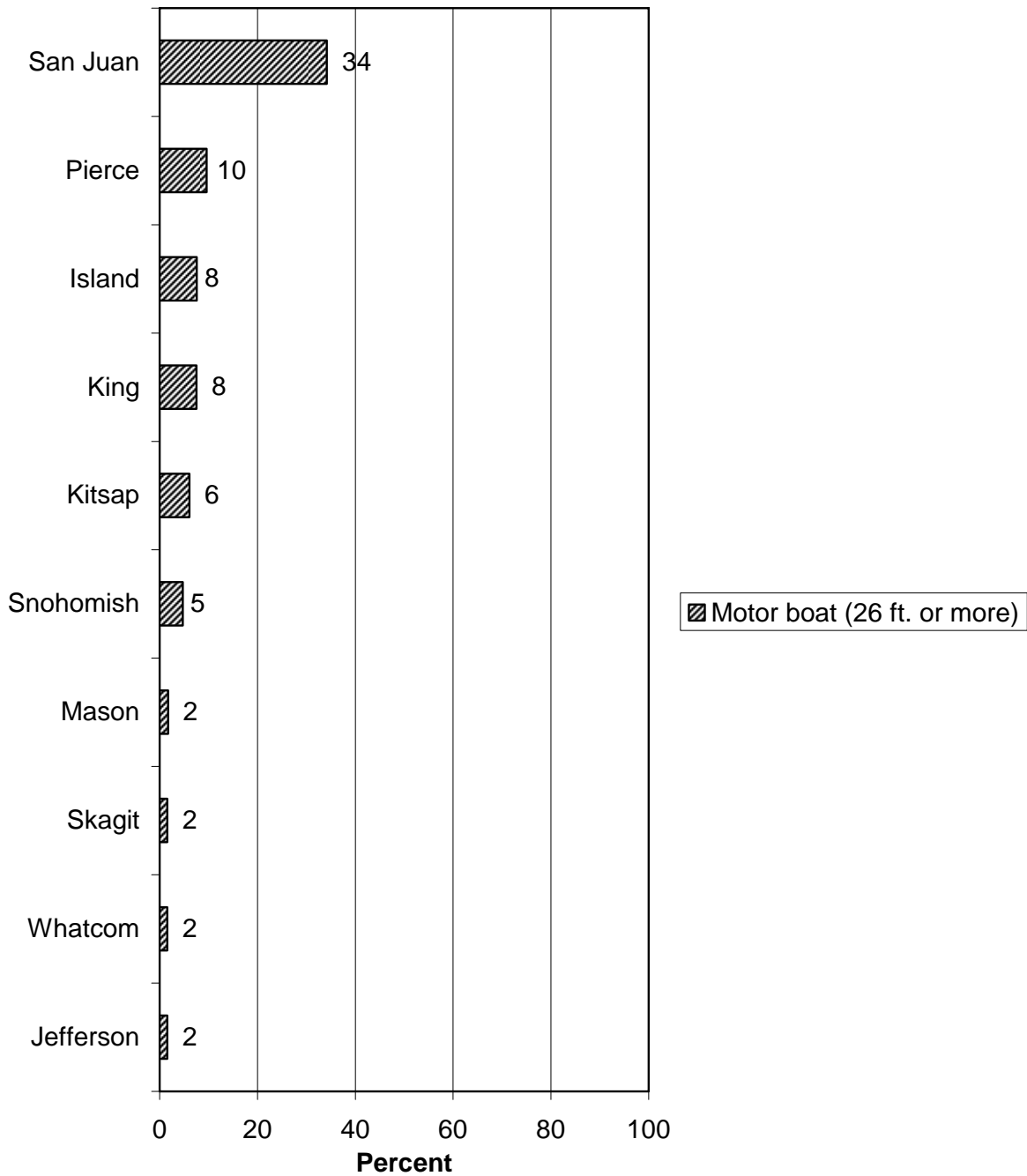




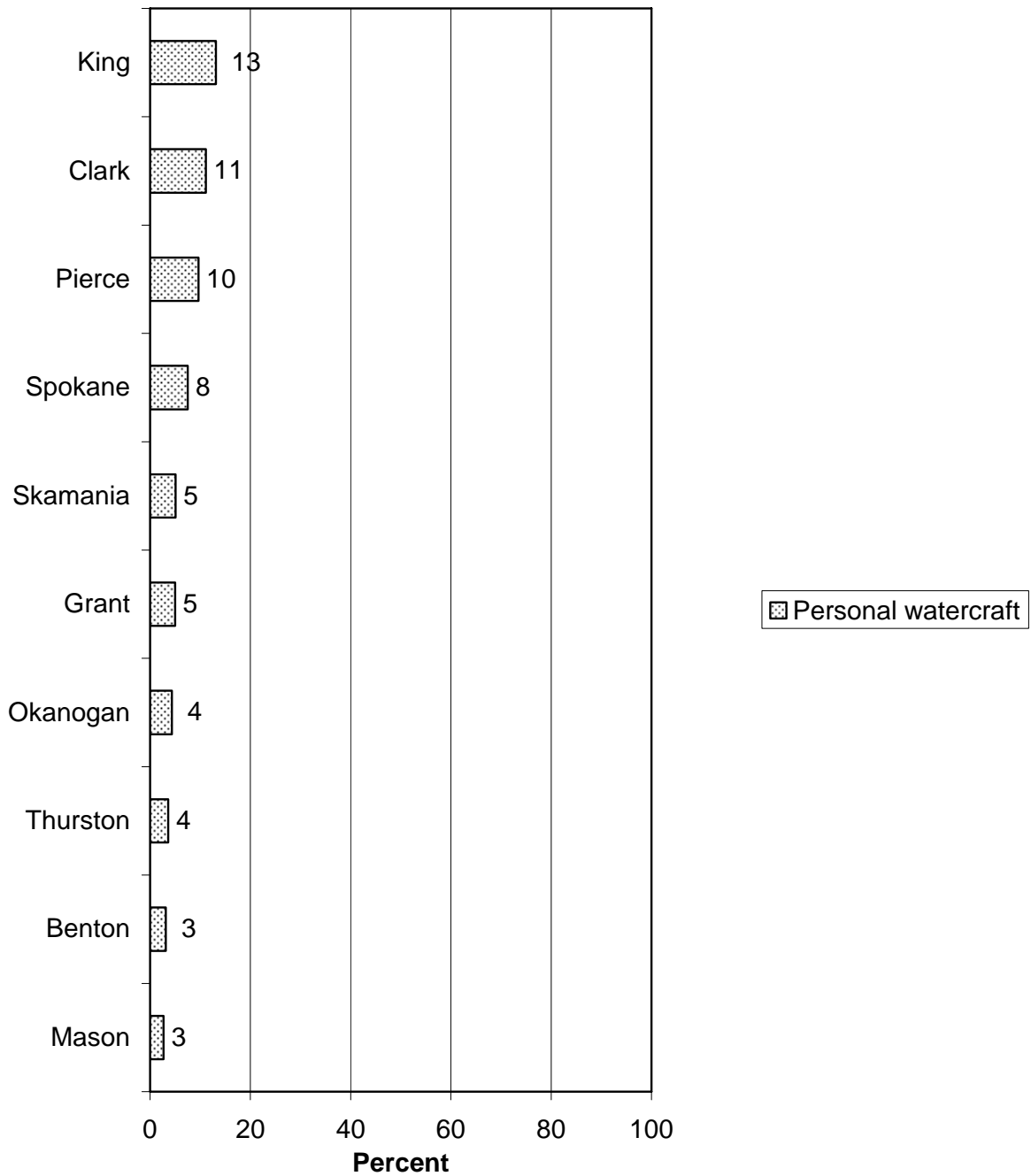
**Q85. In which county do you most prefer to boat in Washington? (Shows only top 10 counties.)**



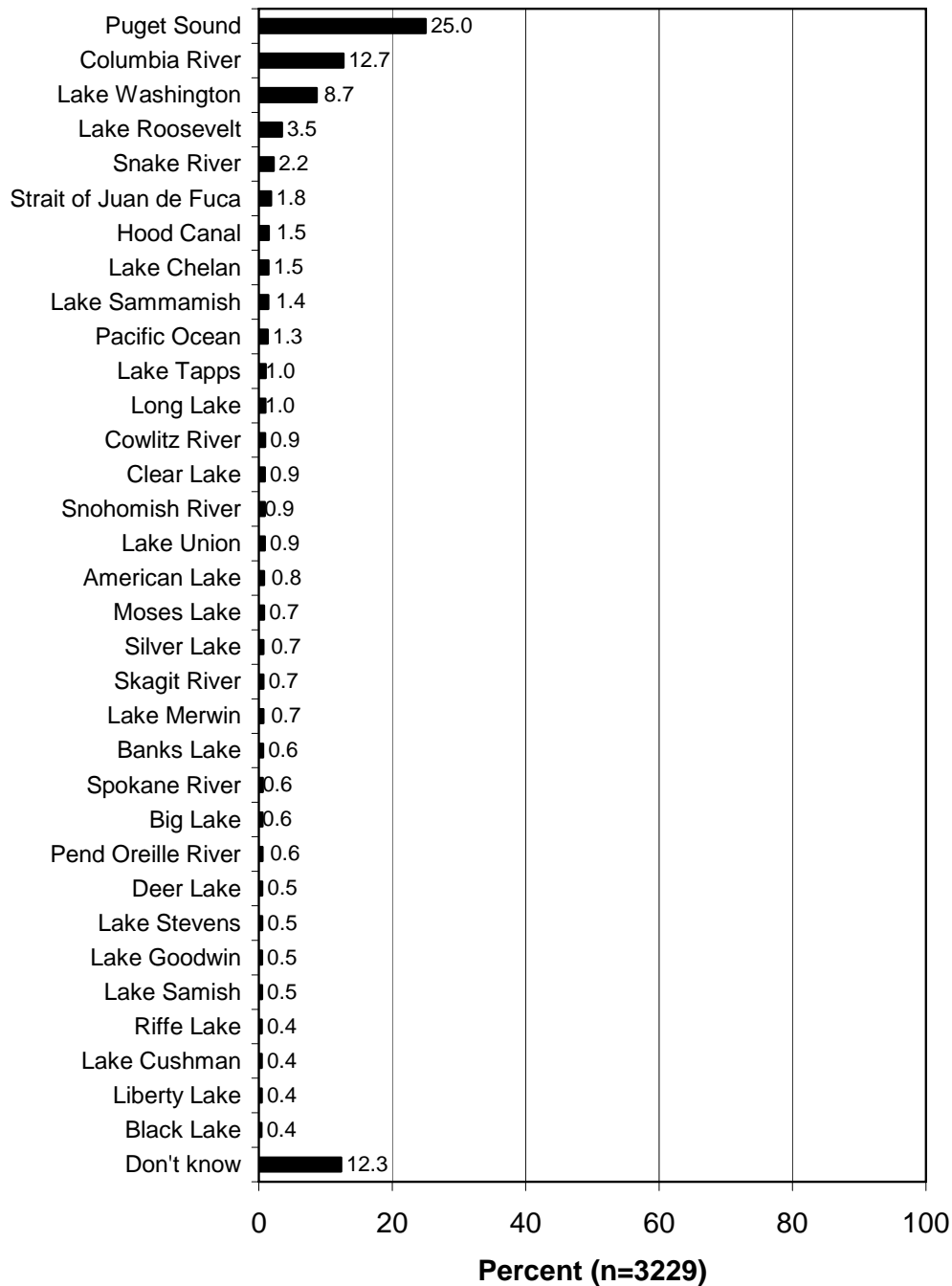
**Q85. In which county do you most prefer to boat in Washington? (Shows only top 10 counties.)**



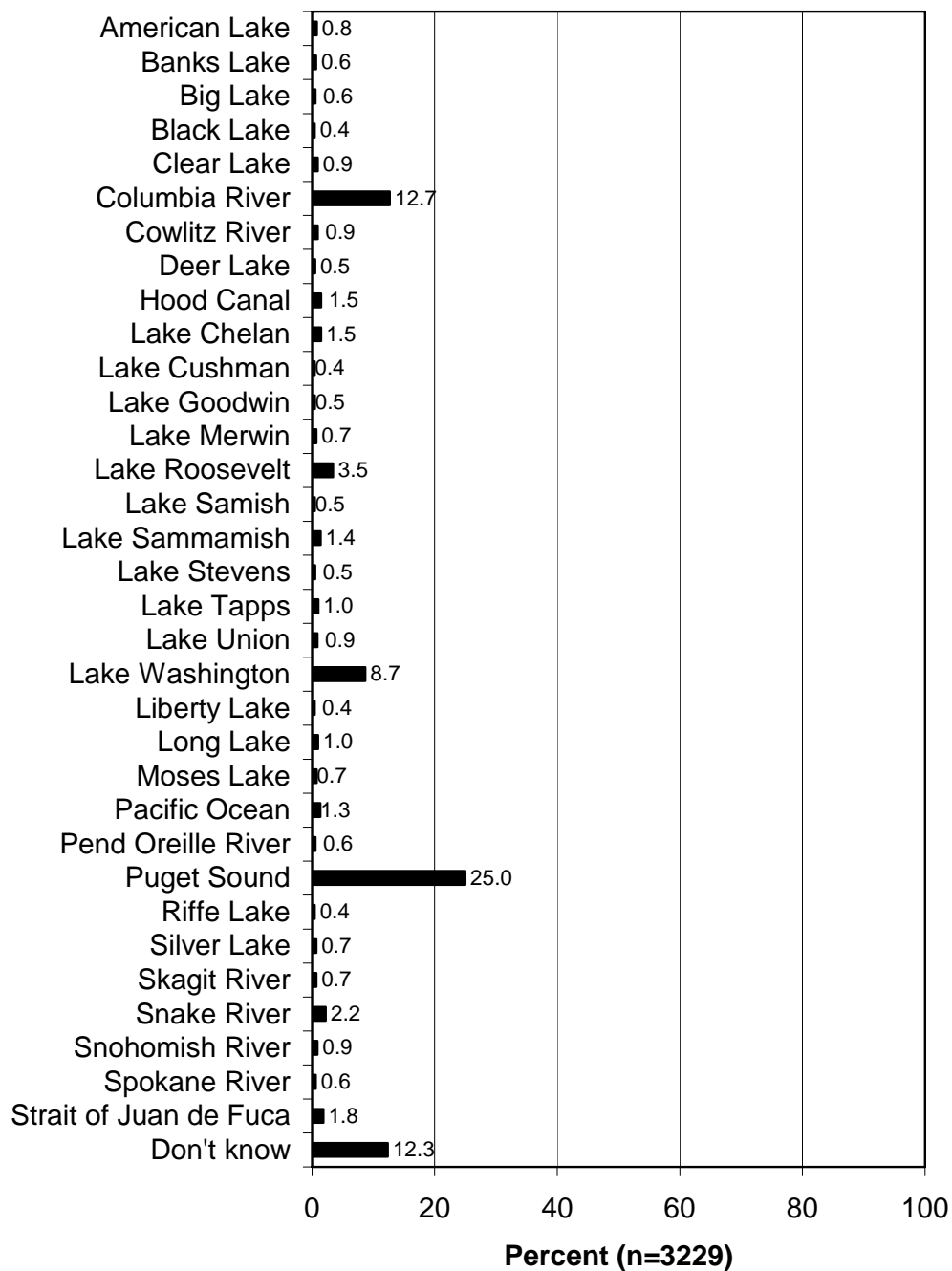
**Q85. In which county do you most prefer to boat in Washington? (Shows only top 10 counties.)**



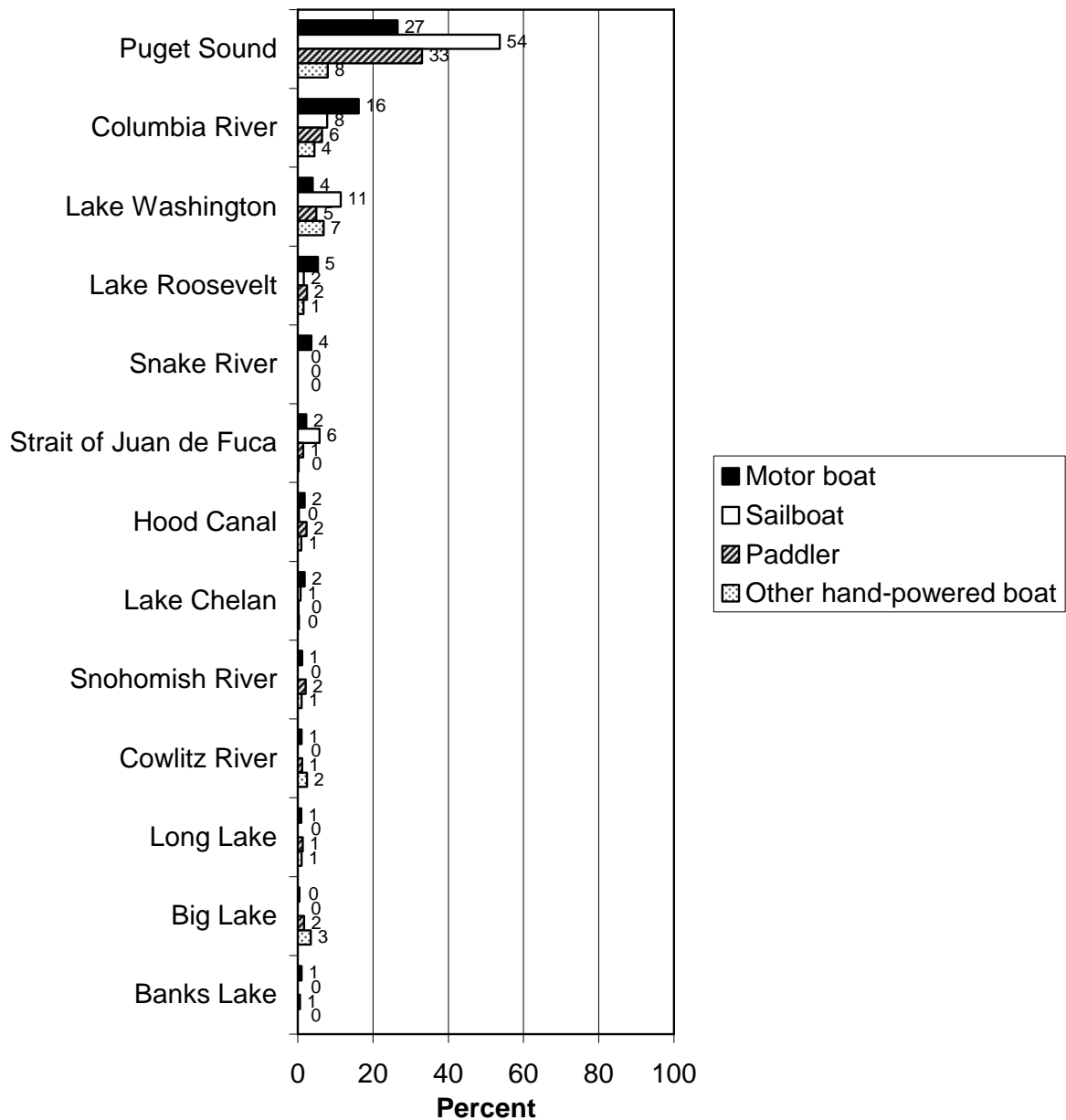
**Q86. On which body of water did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years? (Shows only those with at least 0.4 percent.)**



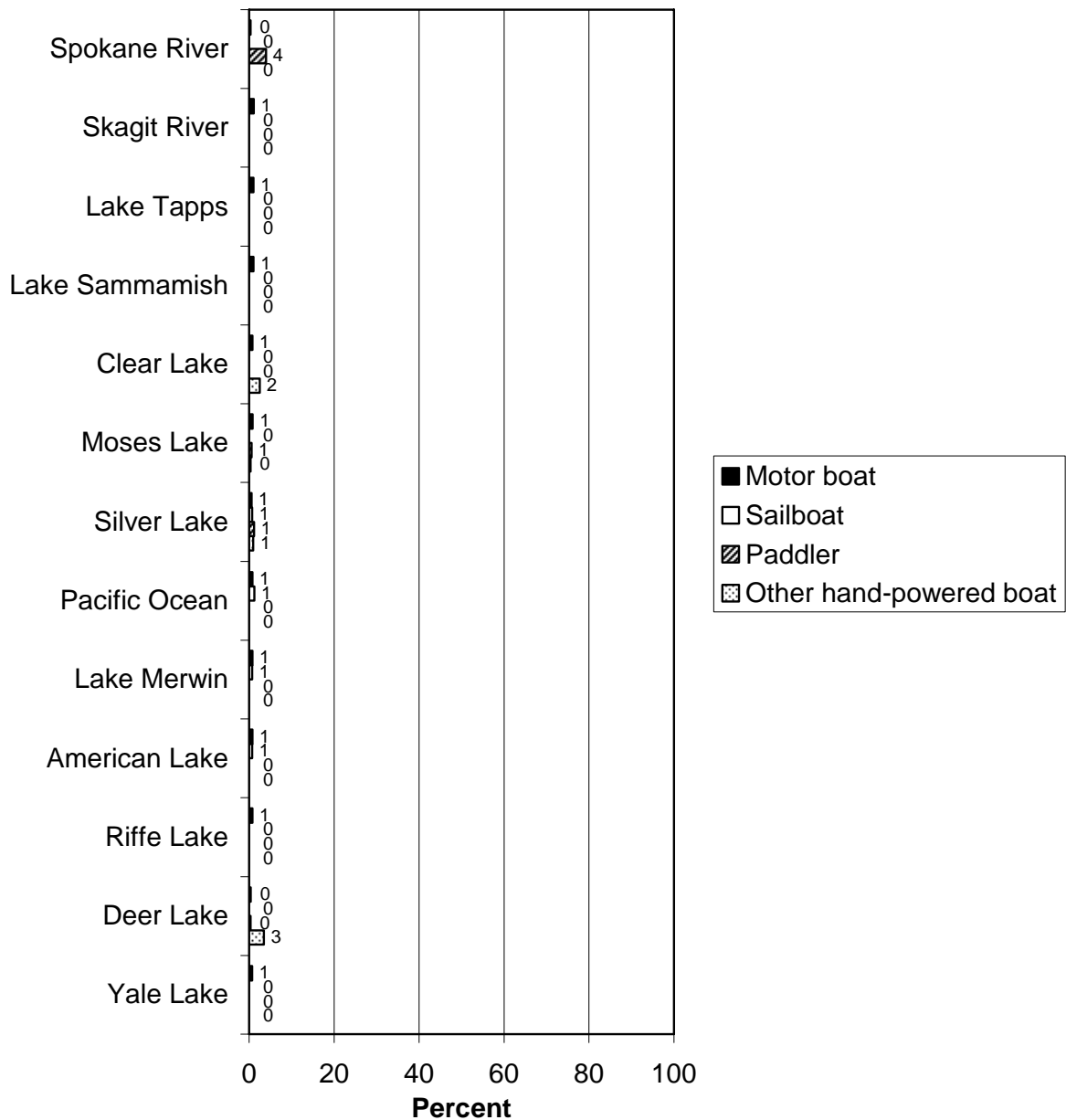
**Q86. On which body of water did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years? (Shows only those with at least 0.4 percent.) (Listed alphabetically.)**



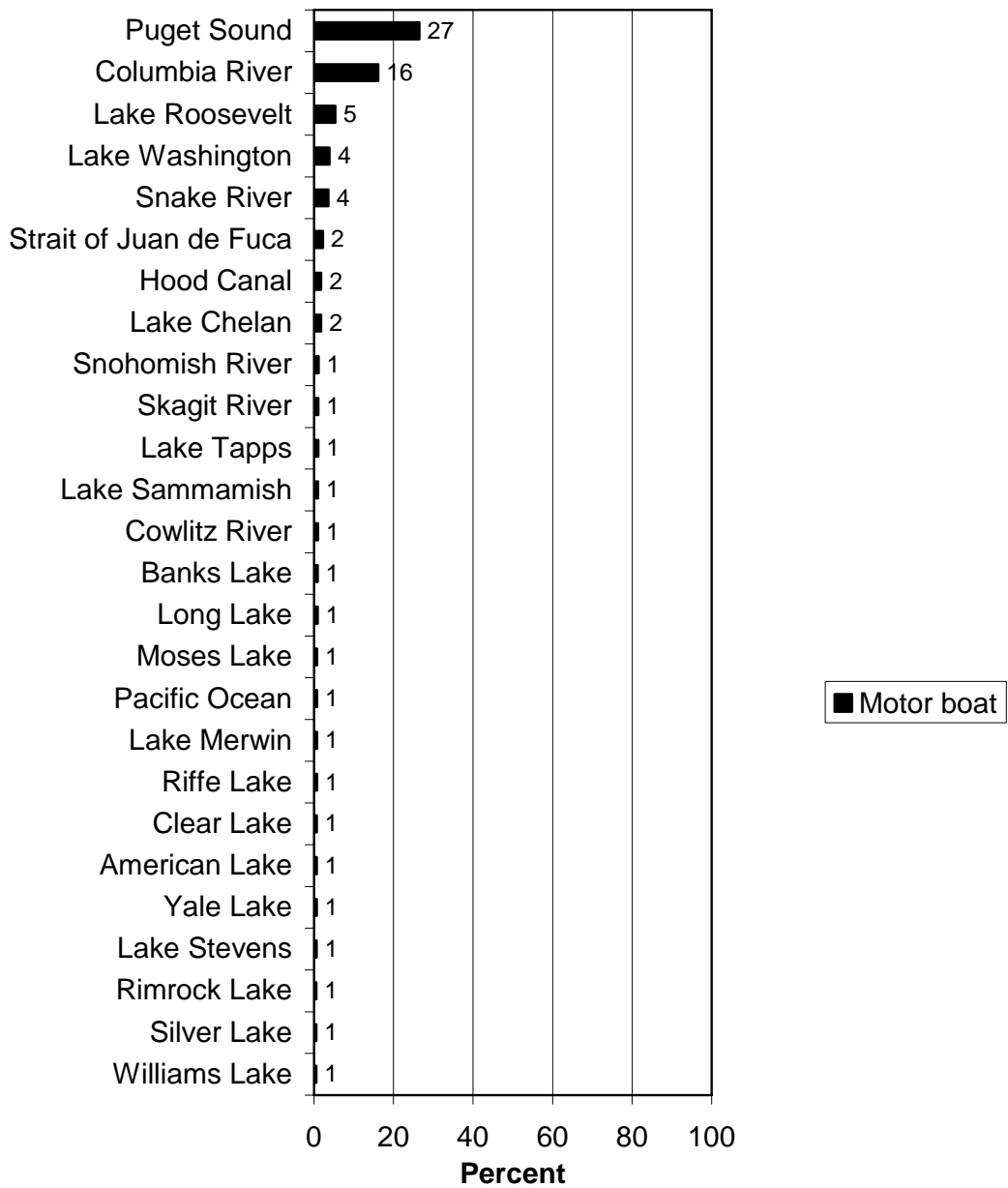
**Q86. On which body of water did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years? (Shows only those bodies of water in which at least 0.5% of all boaters boated.) (Part 1.)**



**Q86. On which body of water did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years? (Shows only those bodies of water in which at least 0.5% of all boaters boated.) (Part 2.)**

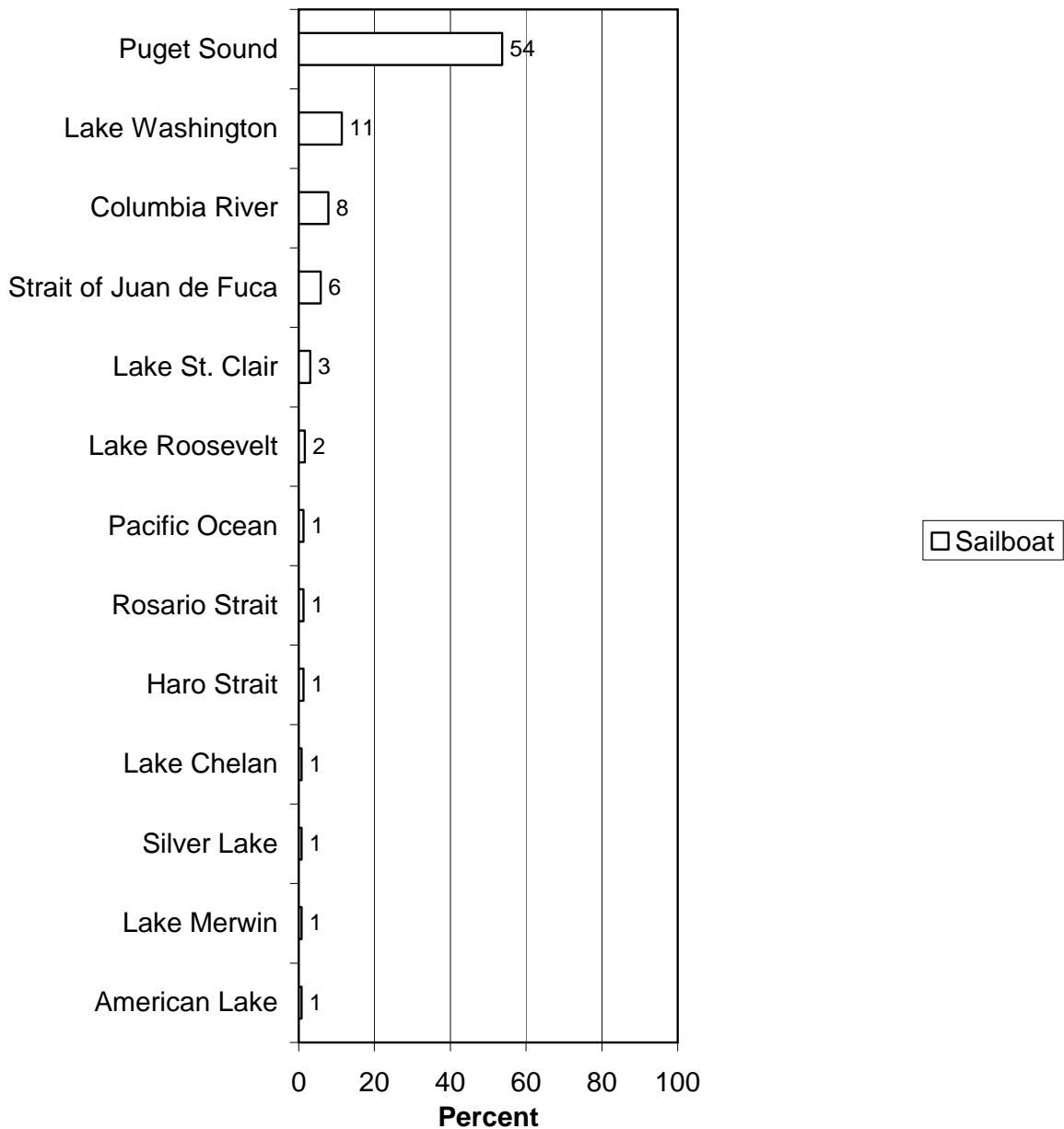


**Q86. On which body of water did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years? (Shows only those bodies of water in which at least 0.5% of motor boaters boated.)**

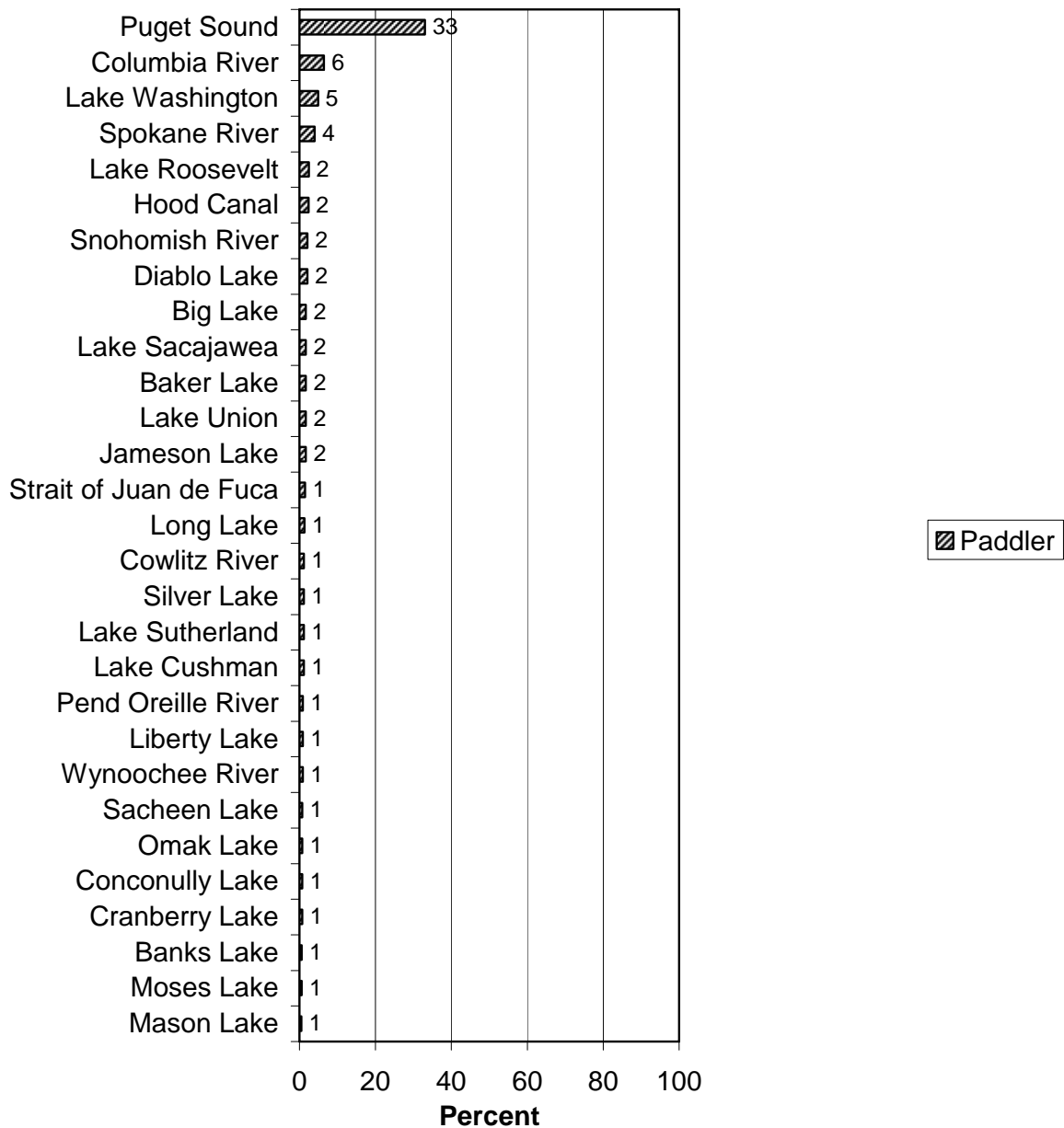




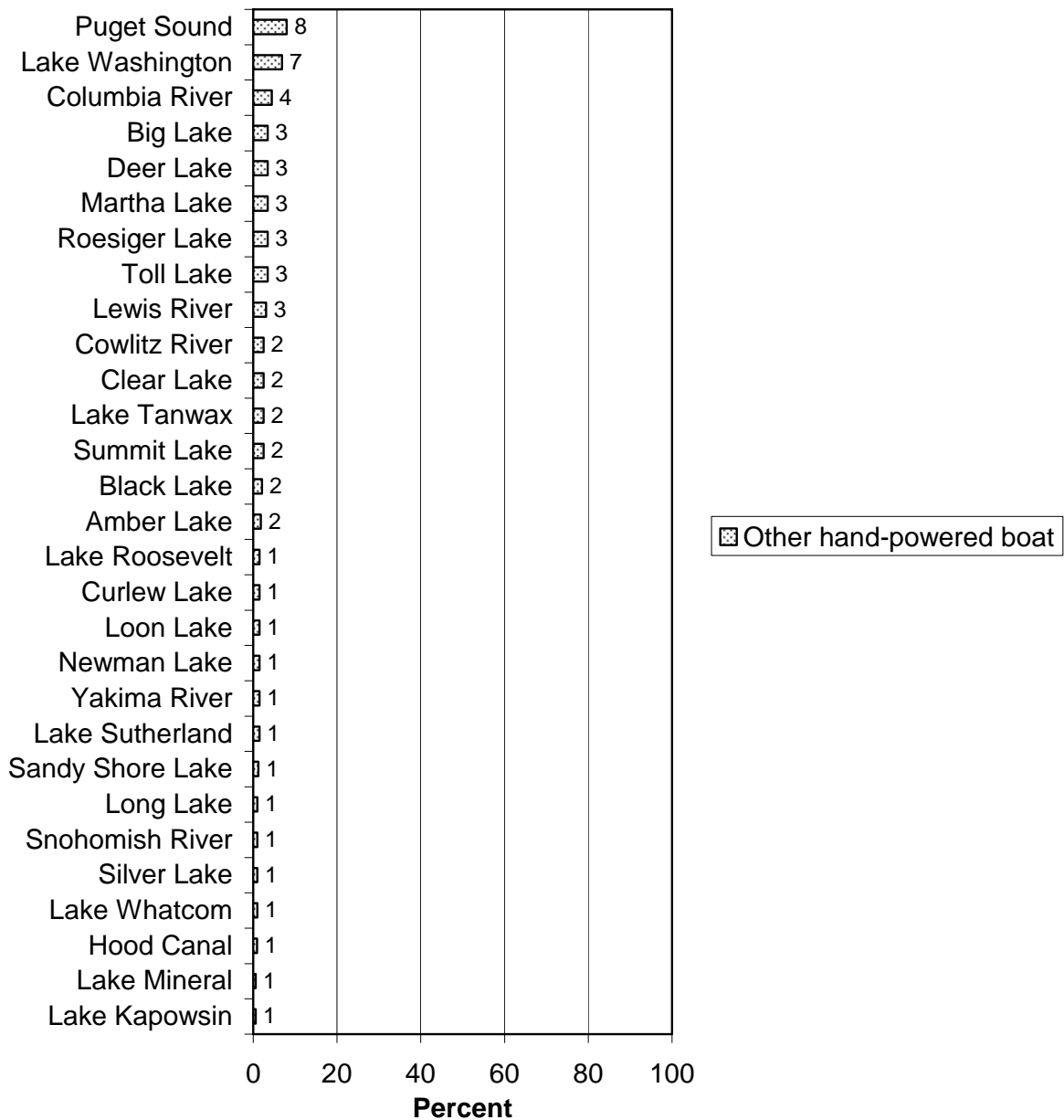
**Q86. On which body of water did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years? (Shows only those bodies of water in which at least 0.5% of sailboaters boated.)**



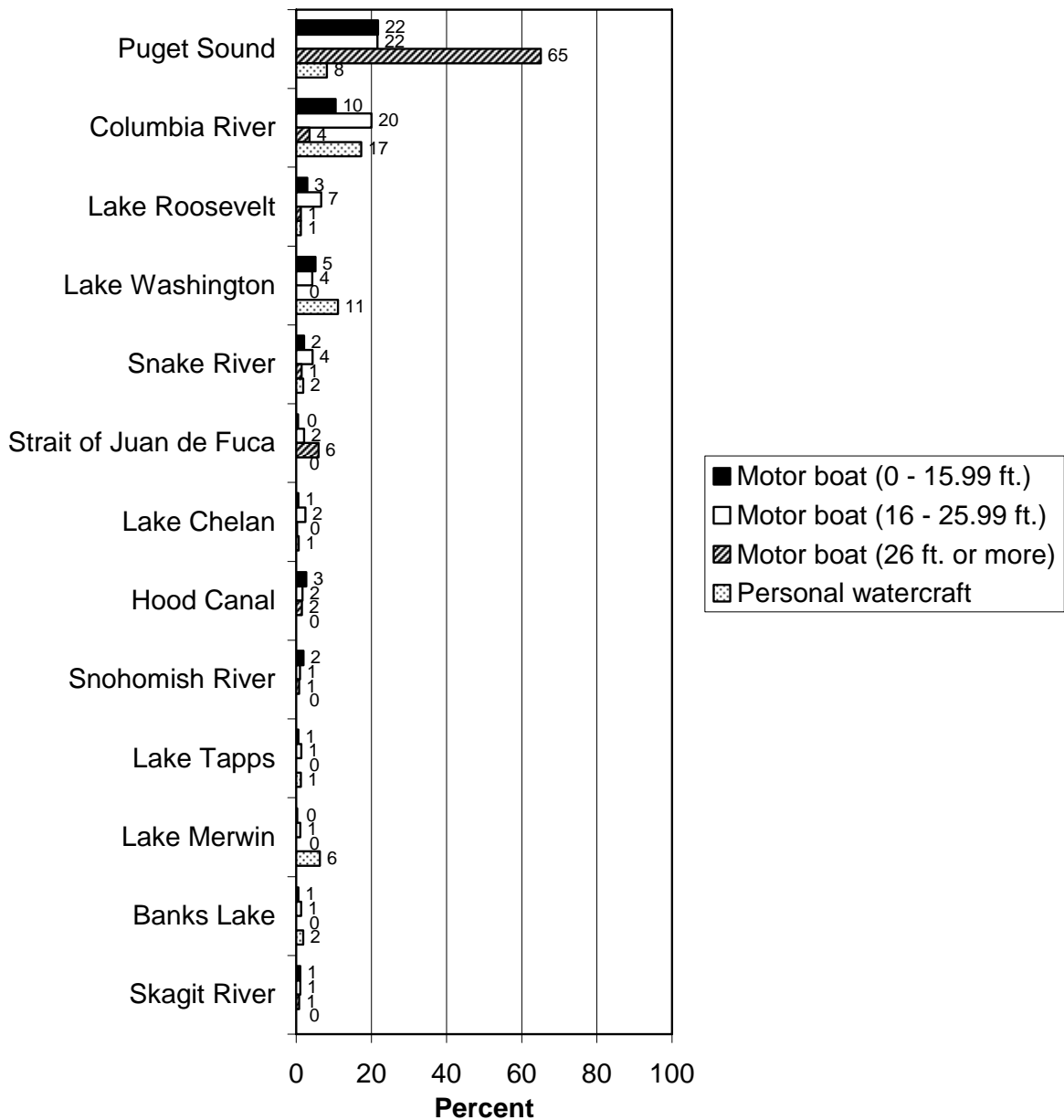
**Q86. On which body of water did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years? (Shows only those bodies of water in which at least 0.5% of paddlers boated.)**



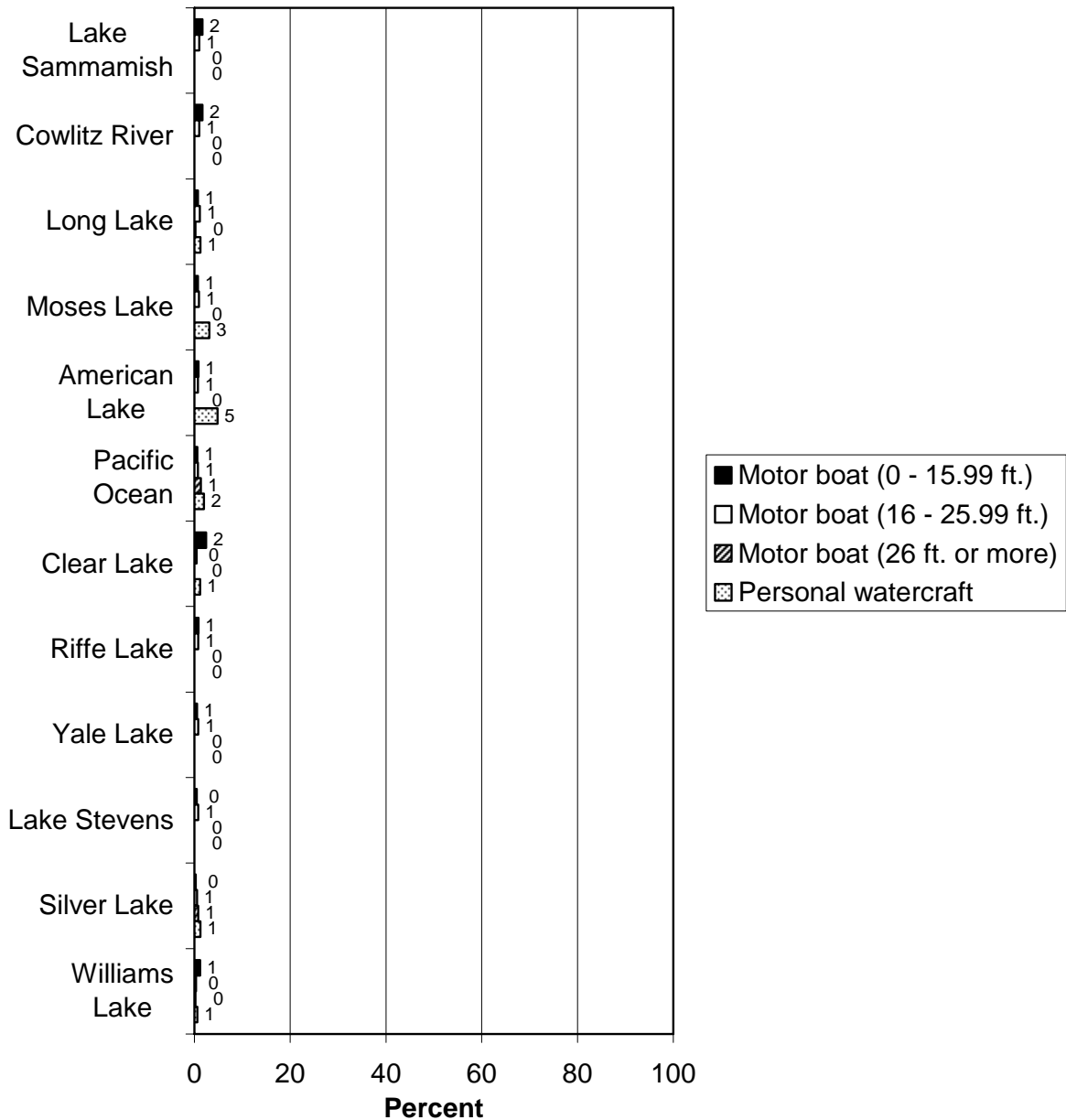
**Q86. On which body of water did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years? (Shows only those bodies of water in which at least 0.5% of operators of other hand-powered boats boated.)**



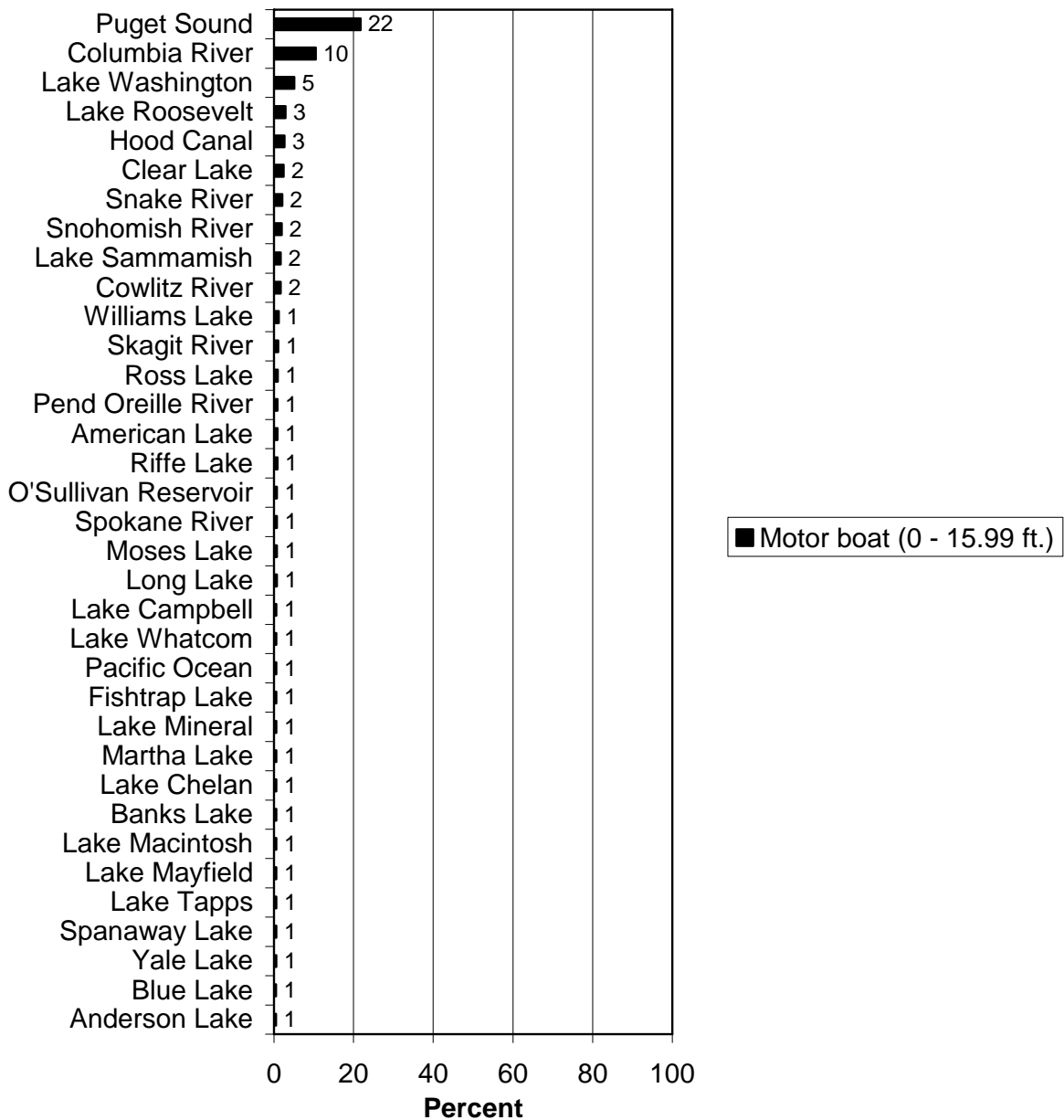
**Q86. On which body of water did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years?  
 (Shows only those bodies of water with at least 0.5% among *all* motor boaters.) (Part 1.)**



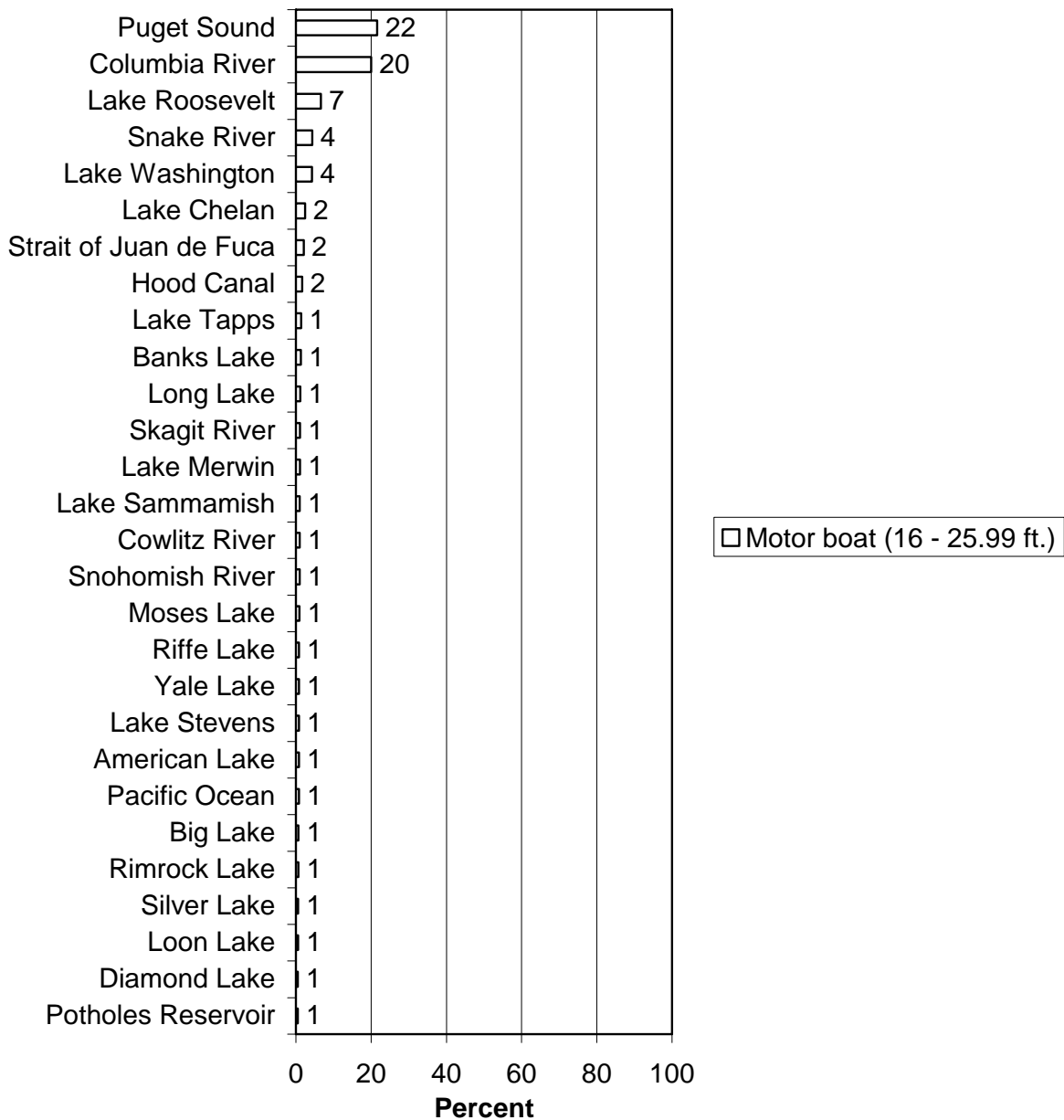
**Q86. On which body of water did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years?  
 (Shows only those bodies of water with at least 0.5% among *all* motor boaters.) (Part 2.)**



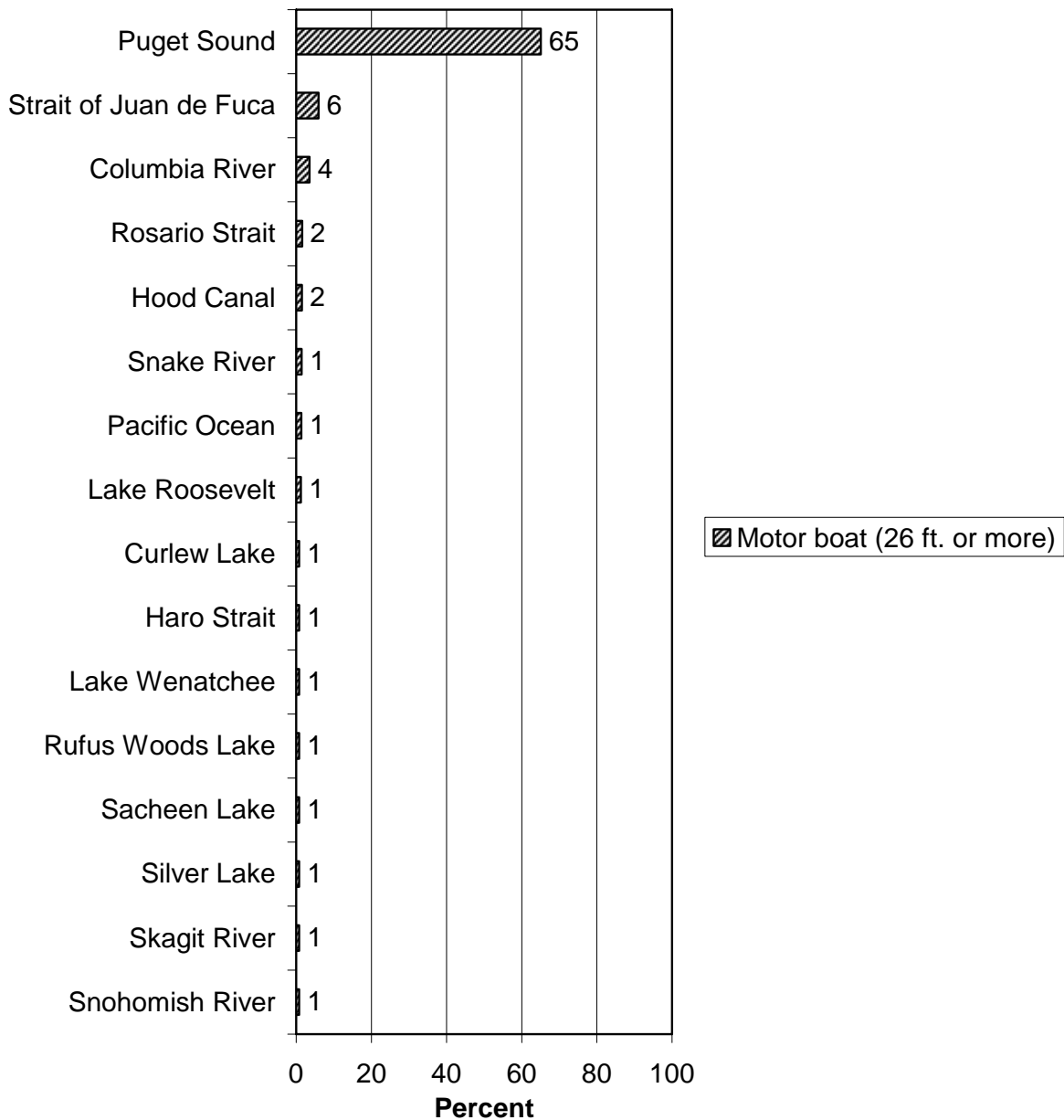
**Q86. On which body of water did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years?  
(Shows only those bodies of water with at least 0.5% among the given group of motor boaters.)**



**Q86. On which body of water did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years?  
(Shows only those bodies of water with at least 0.5% among the given group of motor boaters.)**

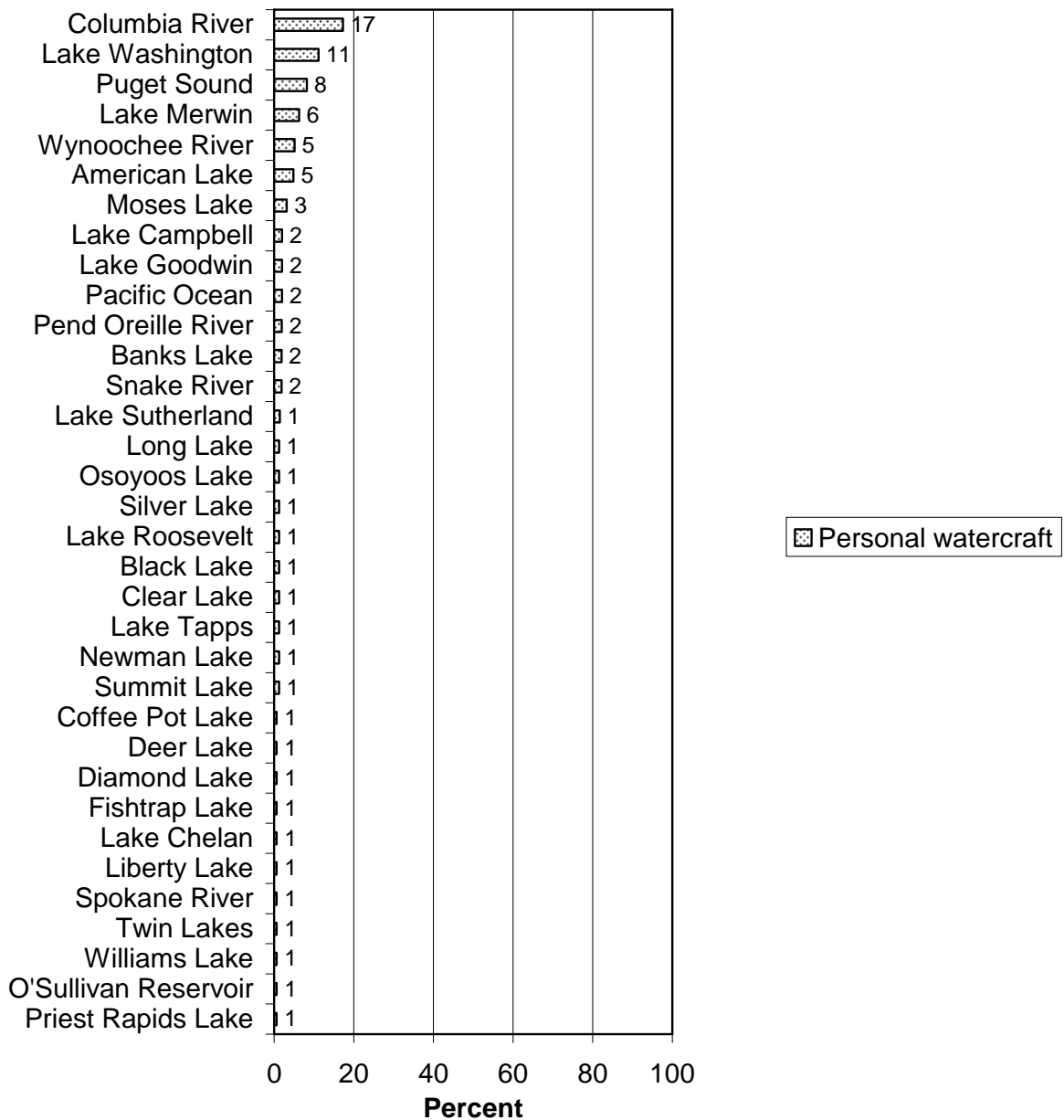


**Q86. On which body of water did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years?  
 (Shows only those bodies of water with at least 0.5% among the given group of motor boaters.)**

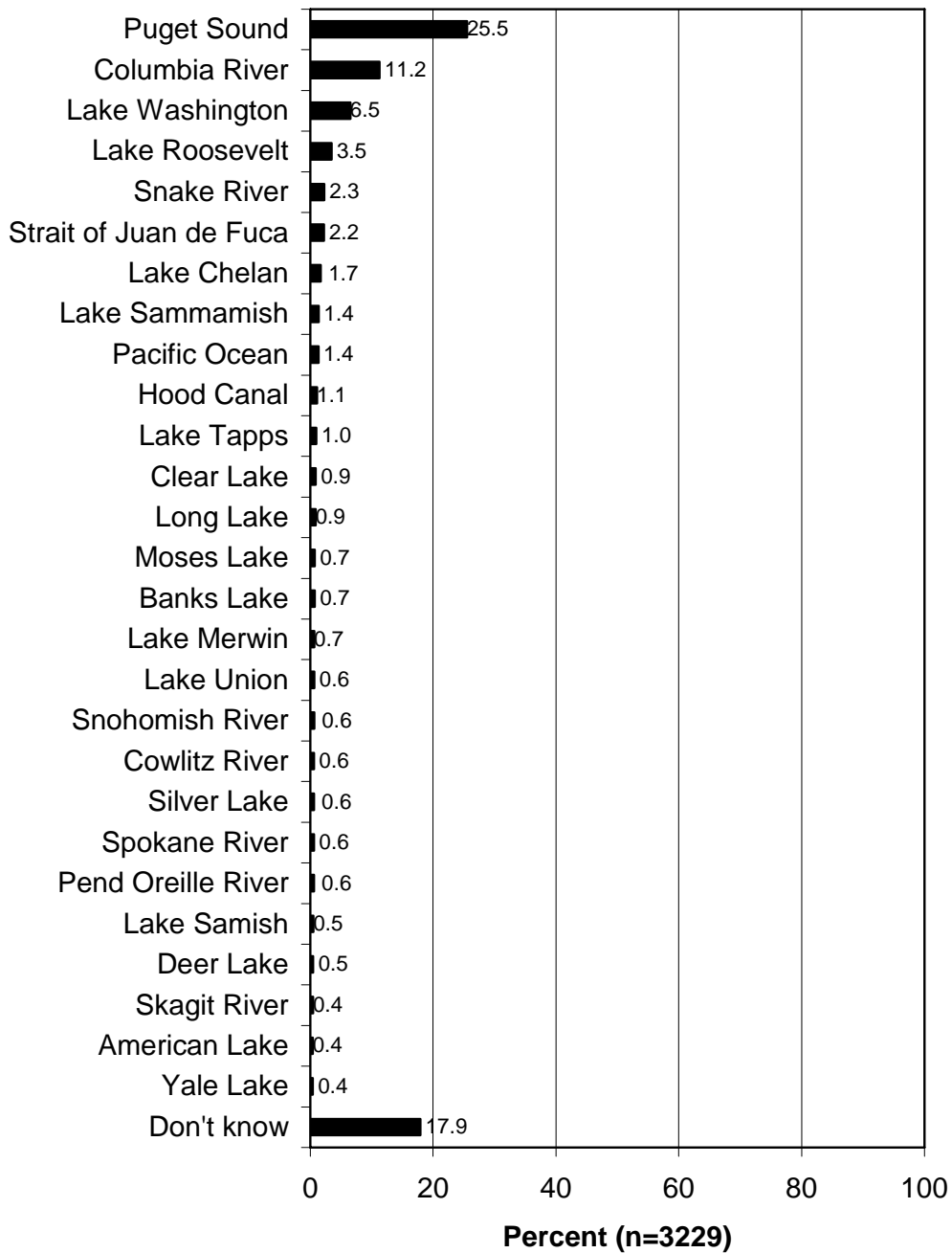




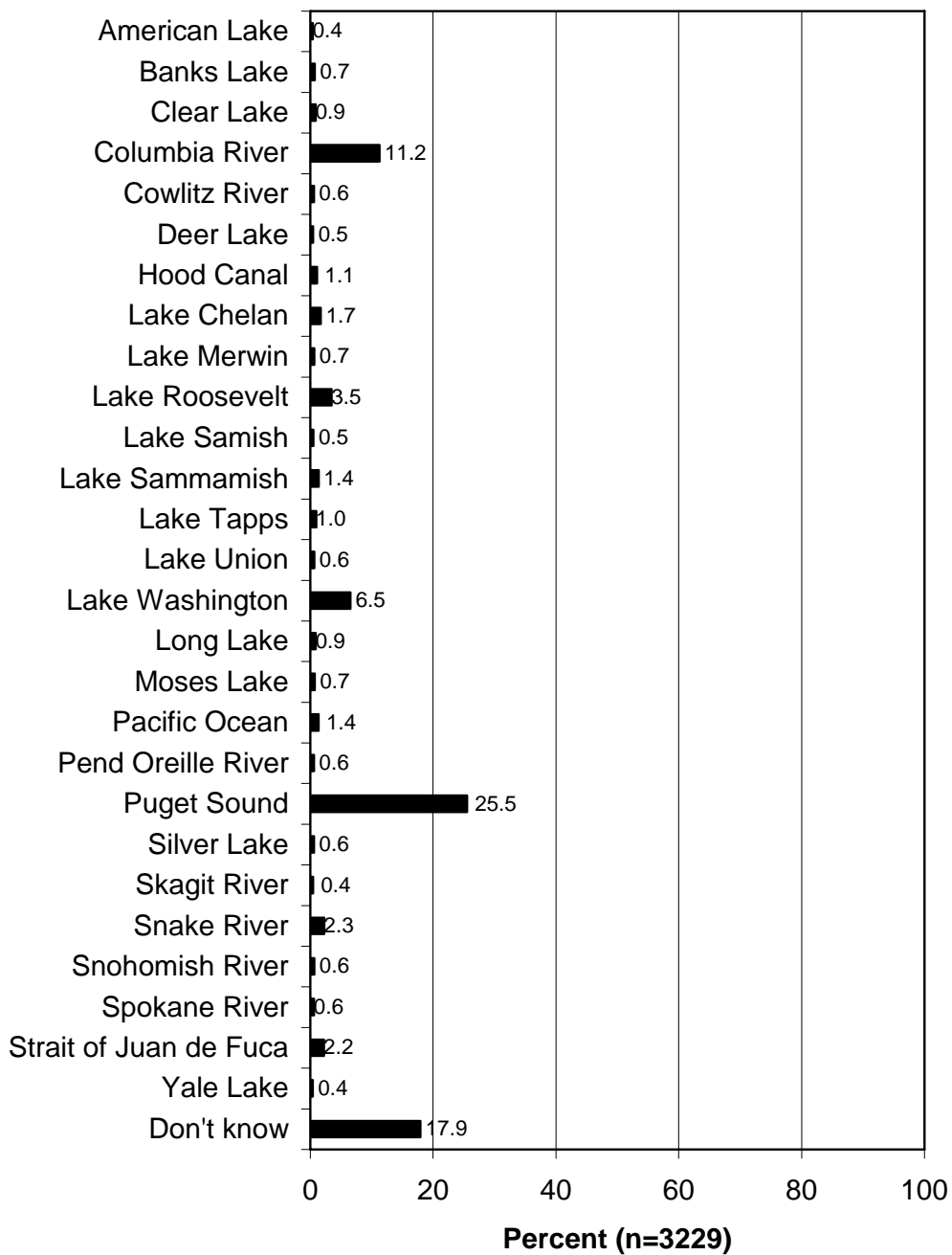
**Q86. On which body of water did you boat the most days in Washington in the past 2 years?  
(Shows only those bodies of water with at least 0.5% among the given group of boaters.)**



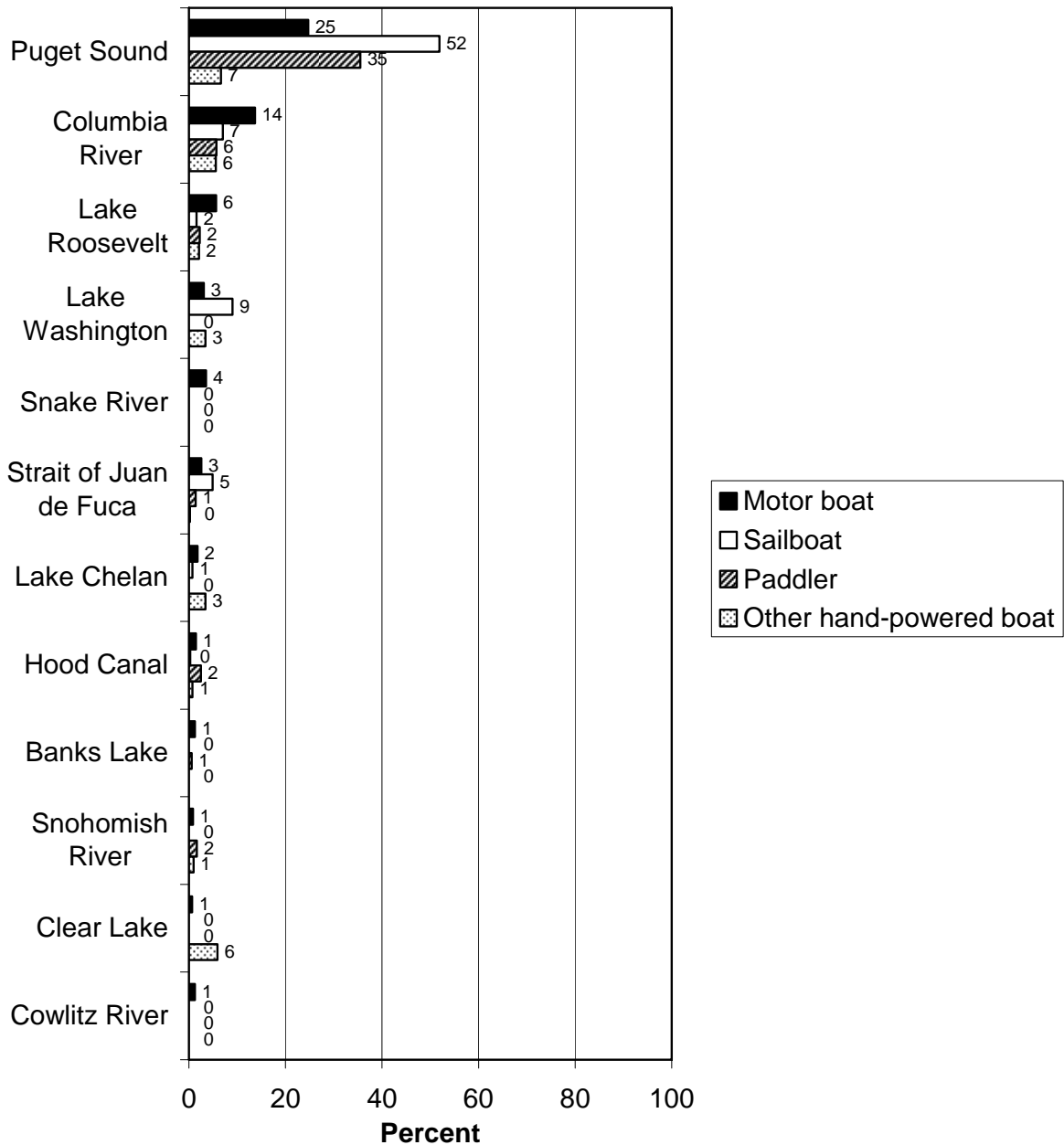
**Q87. On which body of water do you most prefer to boat in Washington? (Shows only those with at least 0.4 percent.)**



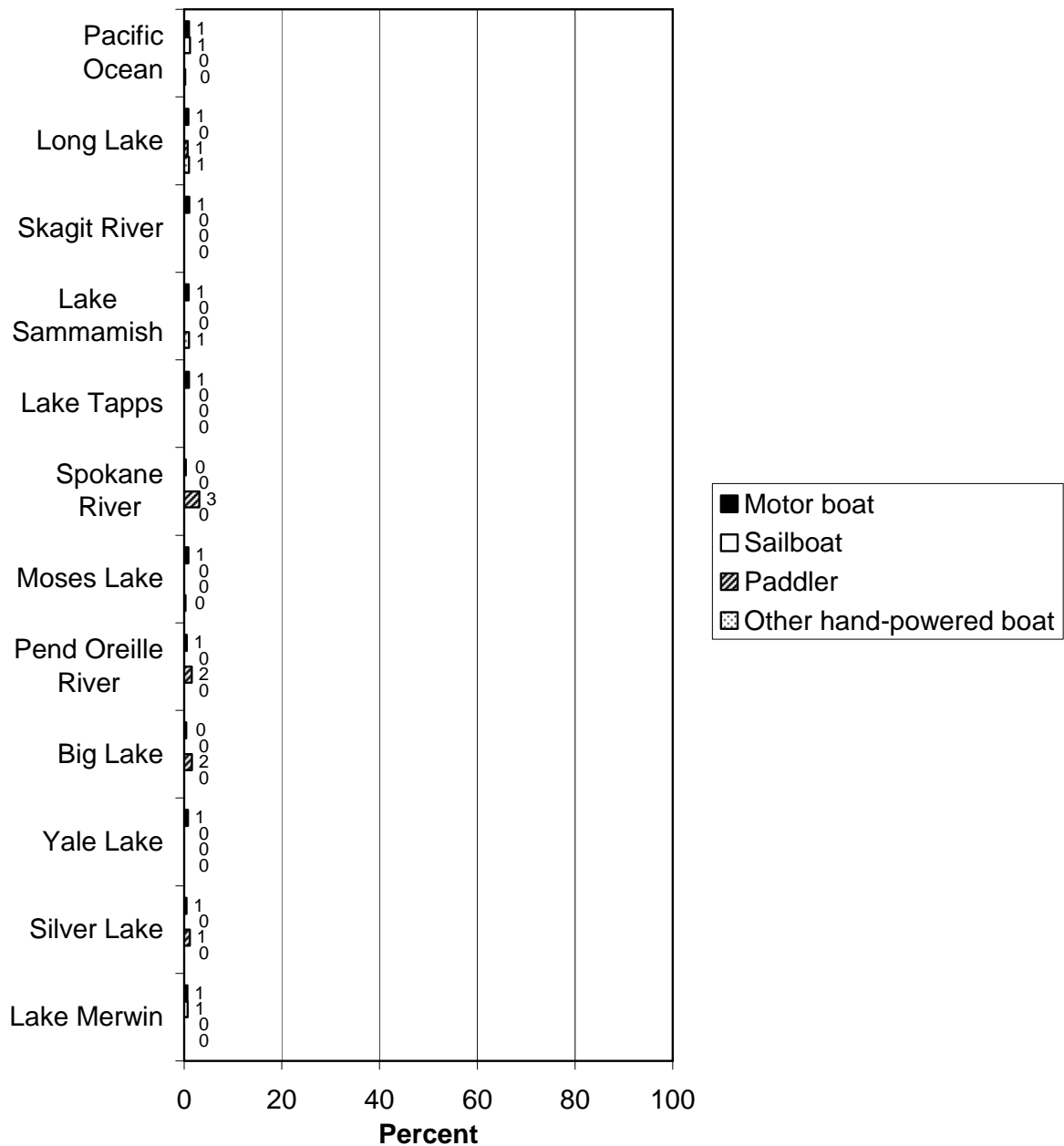
**Q87. On which body of water do you most prefer to boat in Washington? (Shows only those with at least 0.4 percent.) (Listed alphabetically.)**



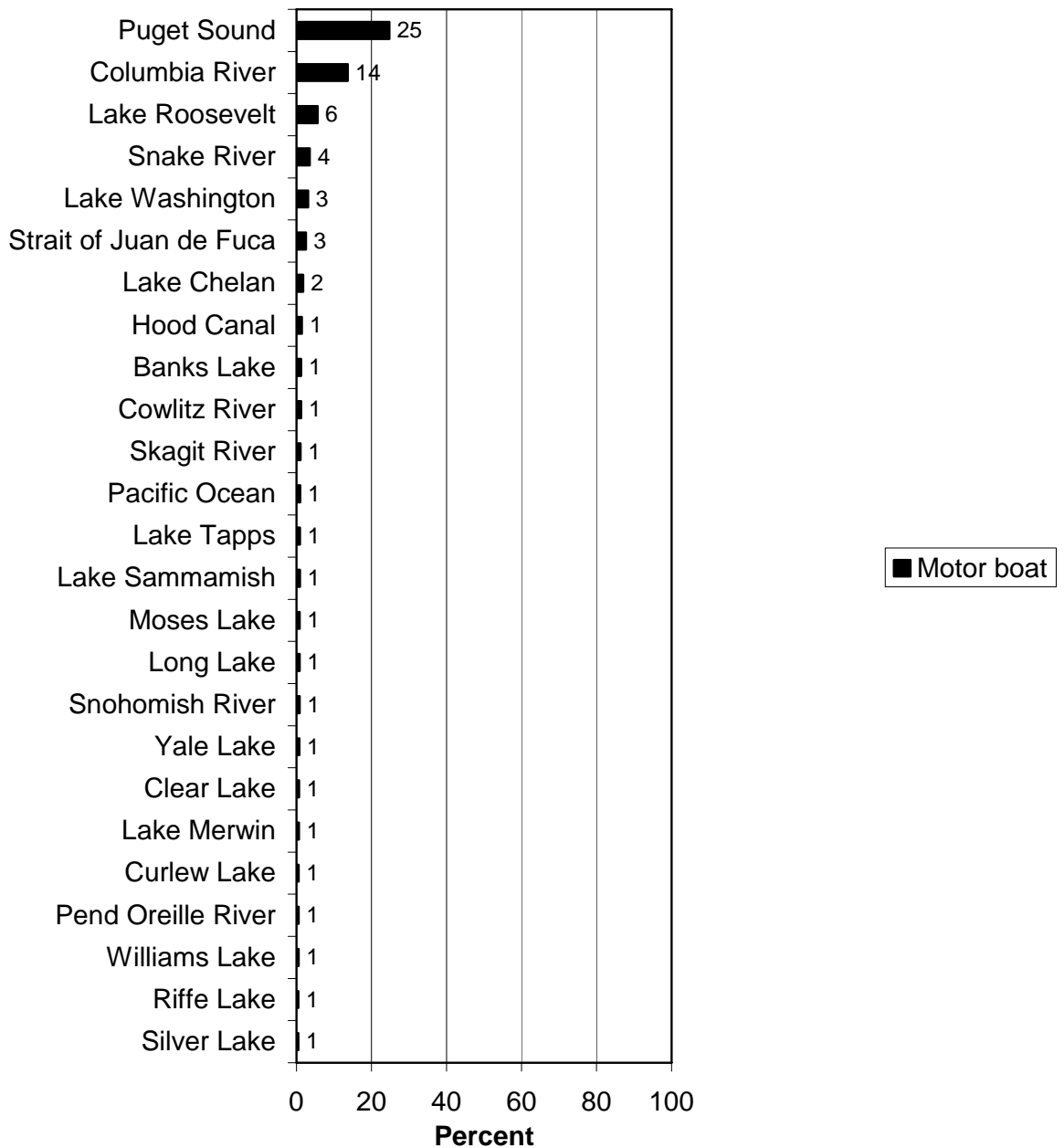
**Q87. On which body of water do you most prefer to boat in Washington? (Shows only those bodies of water in which at least 0.5% of *all* boaters prefer to boat.) (Part 1.)**



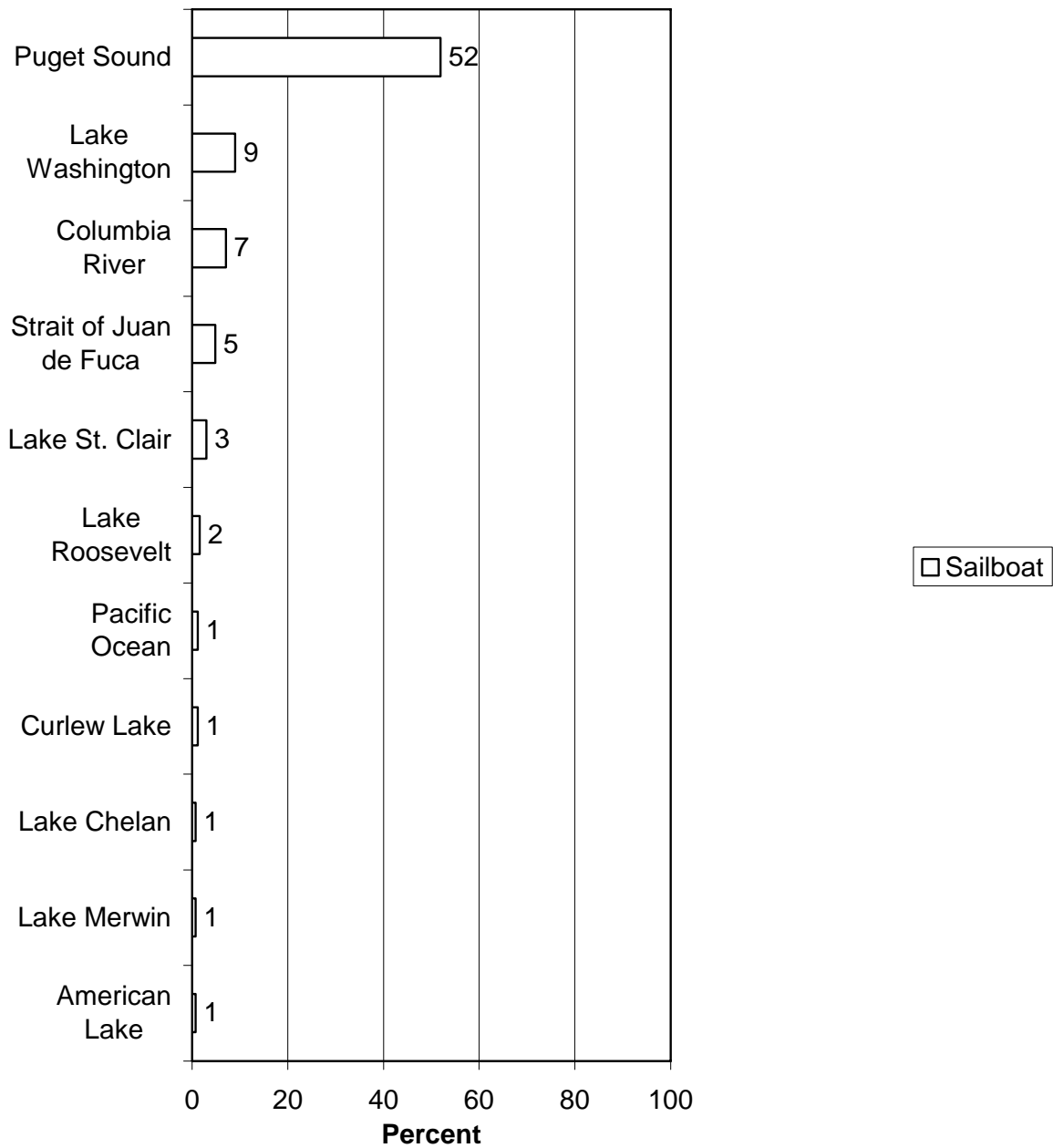
**Q87. On which body of water do you most prefer to boat in Washington? (Shows only those bodies of water in which at least 0.5% of *all* boaters prefer to boat.) (Part 2.)**



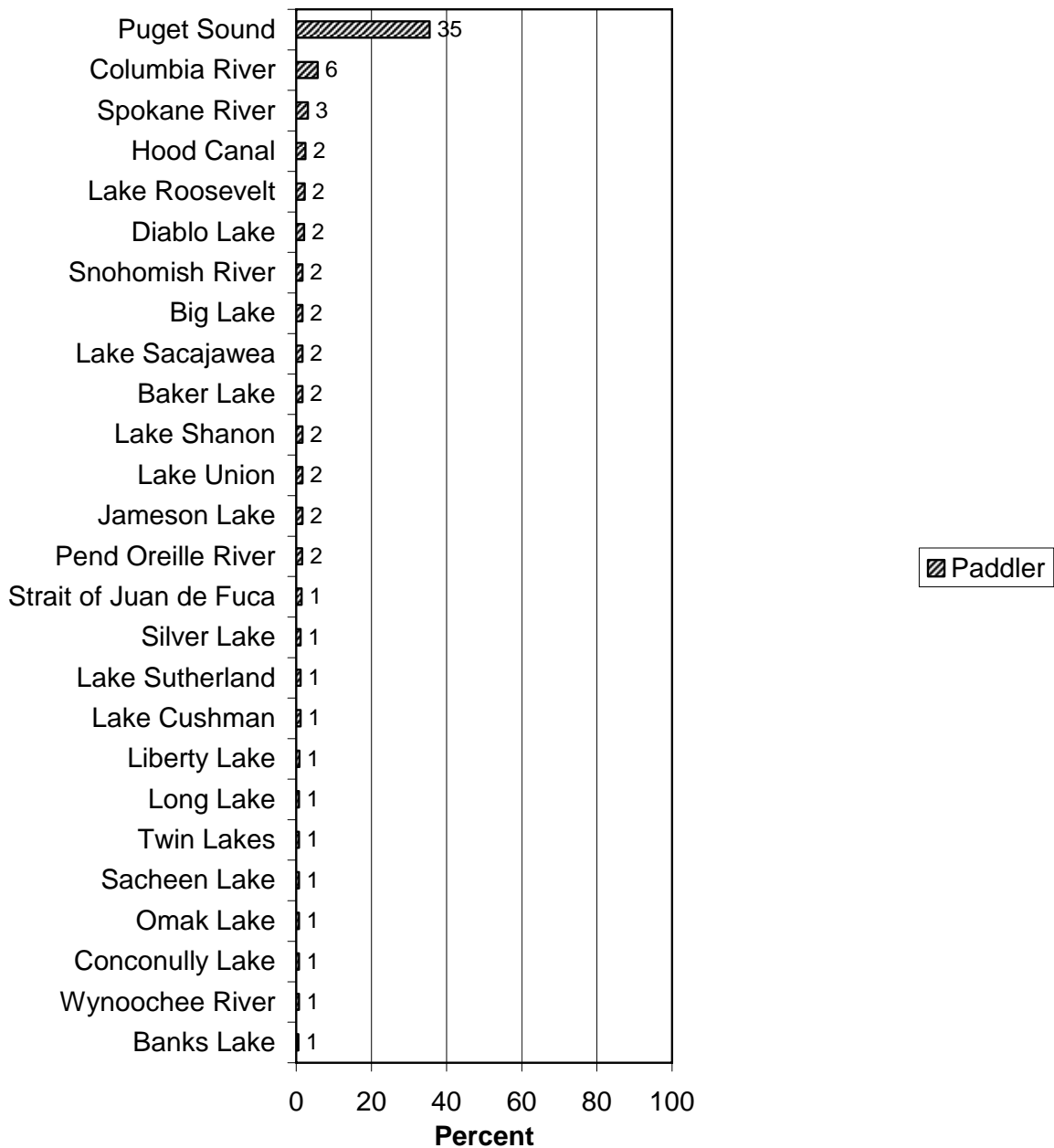
**Q87. On which body of water do you most prefer to boat in Washington? (Shows only those bodies of water in which at least 0.5% of motor boaters prefer to boat.)**



**Q87. On which body of water do you most prefer to boat in Washington? (Shows only those bodies of water in which at least 0.5% of sailboaters prefer to boat.)**

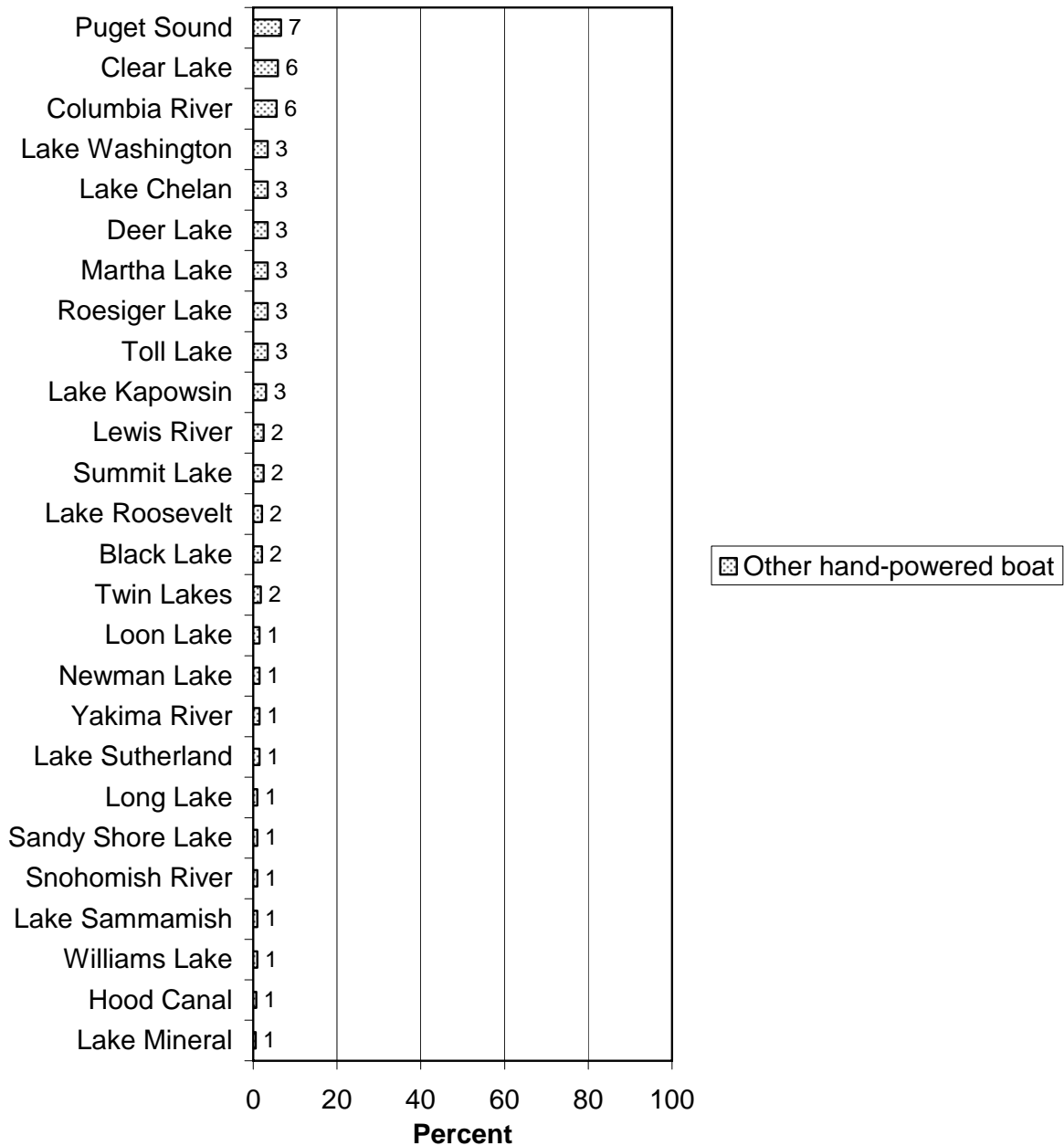


**Q87. On which body of water do you most prefer to boat in Washington? (Shows only those bodies of water in which at least 0.5% of paddlers prefer to boat.)**

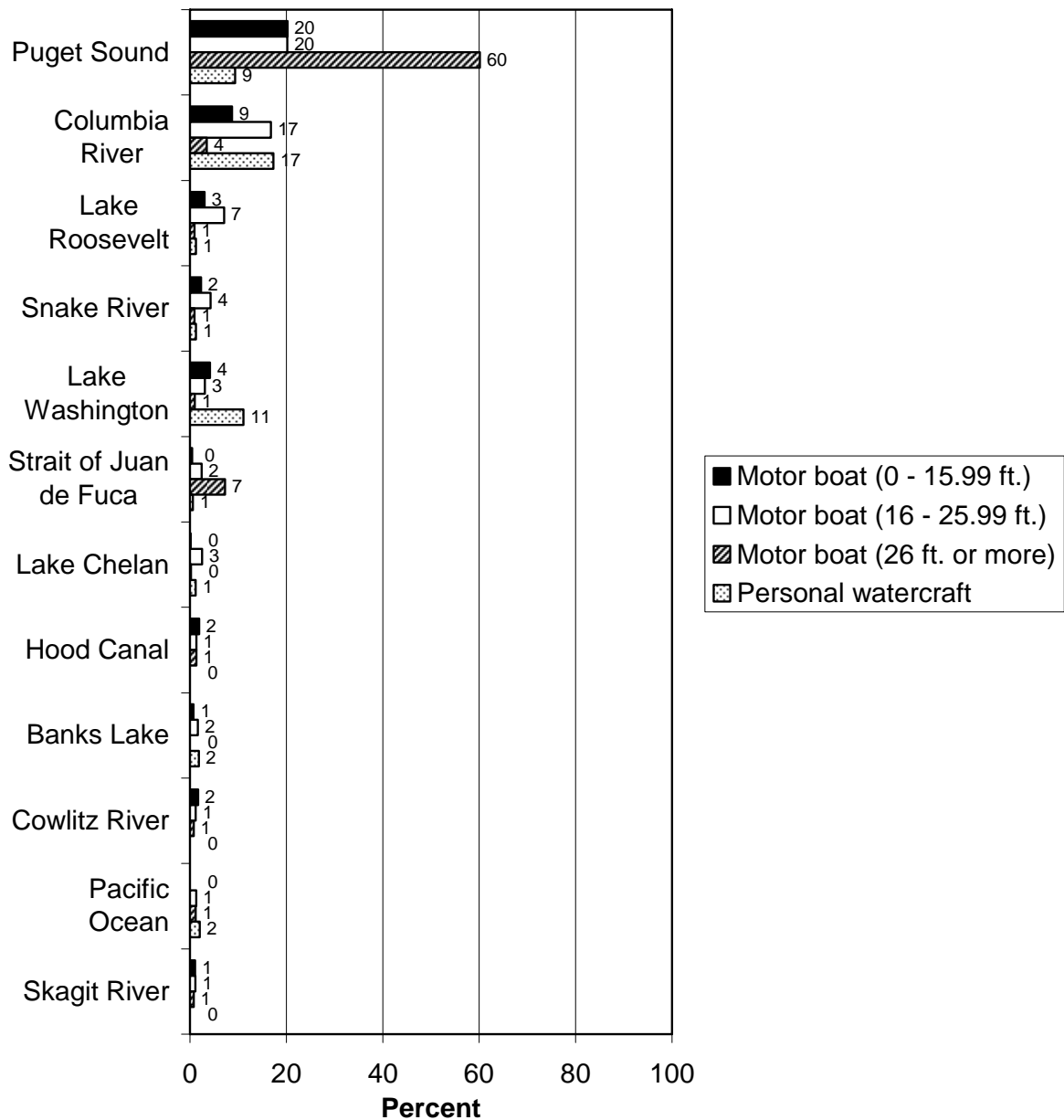




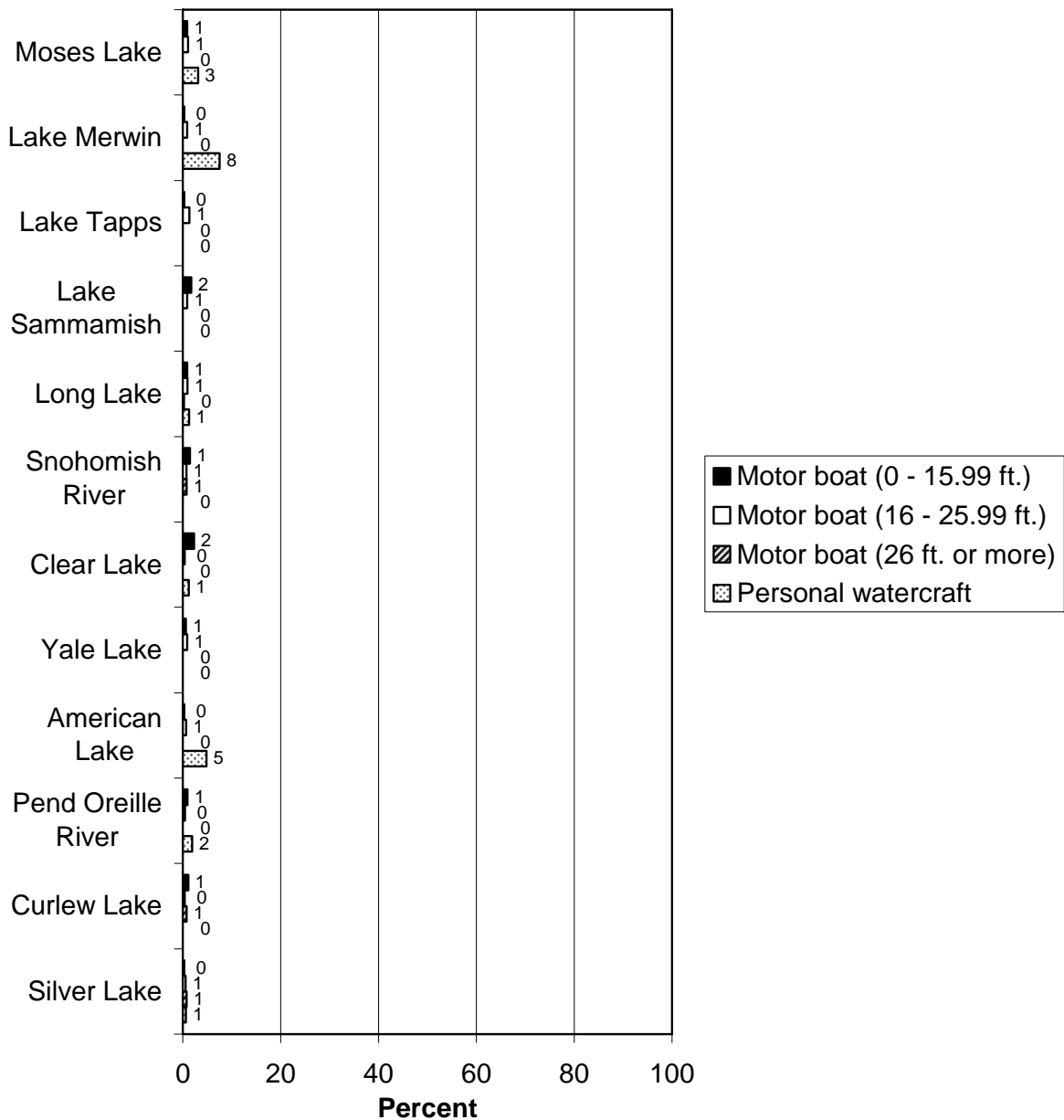
**Q87. On which body of water do you most prefer to boat in Washington? (Shows only those bodies of water in which at least 0.5% of operators of other hand-powered boats prefer to boat.)**



**Q87. On which body of water do you most prefer to boat in Washington?  
(Shows only those bodies of water with at least 0.5% among all motor boaters.) (Part 1.)**

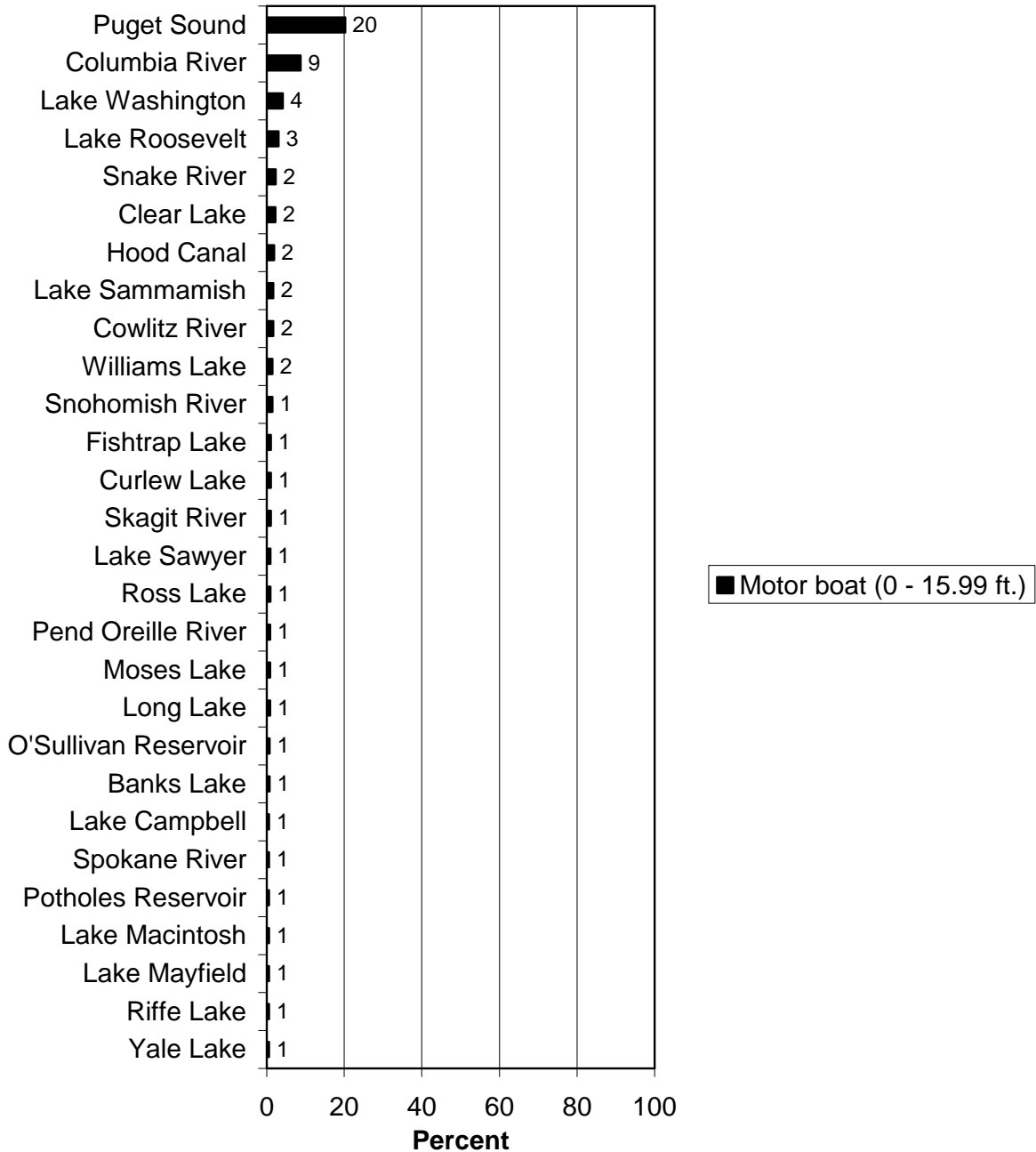


**Q87. On which body of water do you most prefer to boat in Washington?  
(Shows only those bodies of water with at least 0.5% among *all* motor boaters.) (Part 2.)**



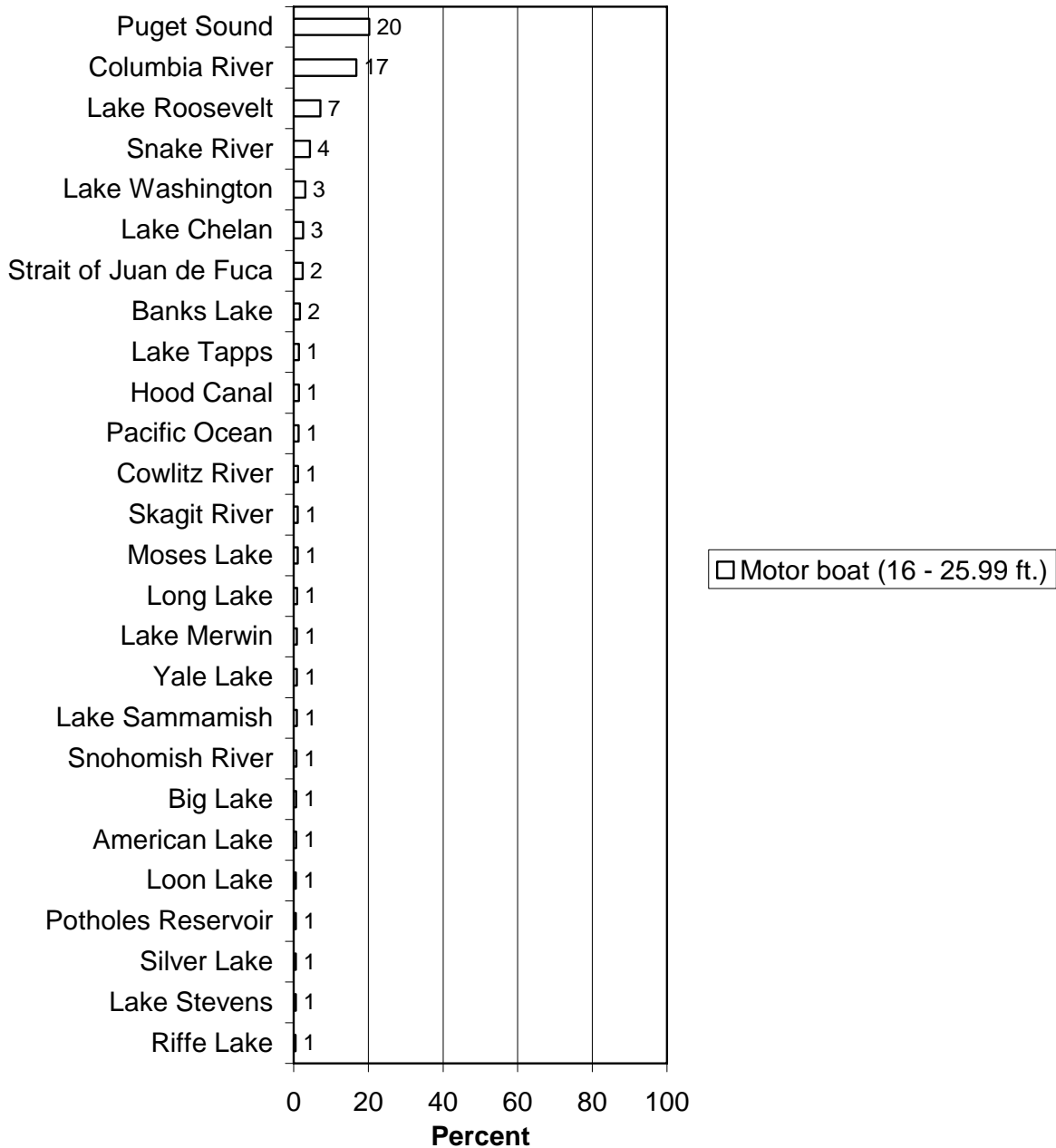
**Q87. On which body of water do you most prefer to boat in Washington?**

**(Shows only those bodies of water with at least 0.5% among the given group of motor boaters.)**

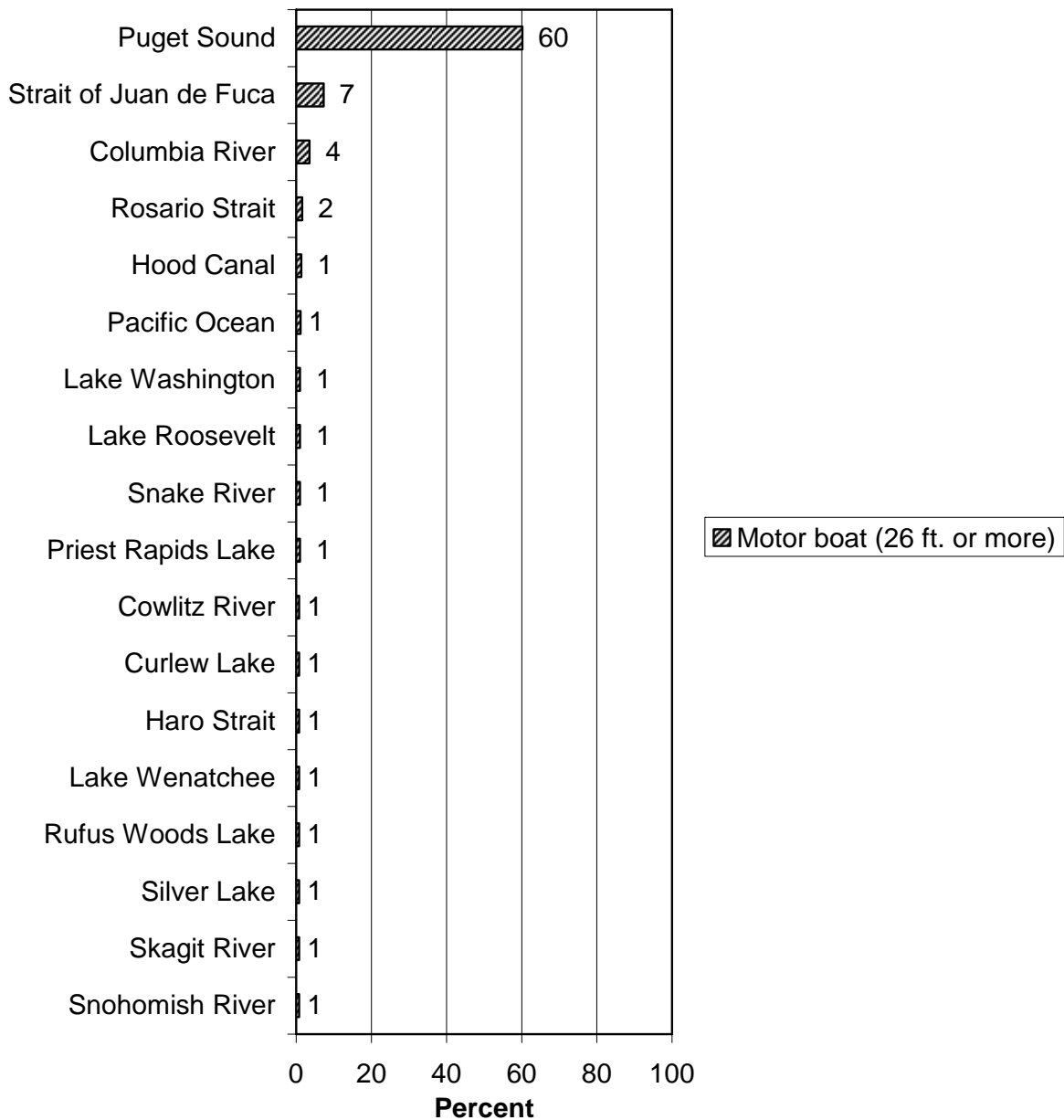


**Q87. On which body of water do you most prefer to boat in Washington?**

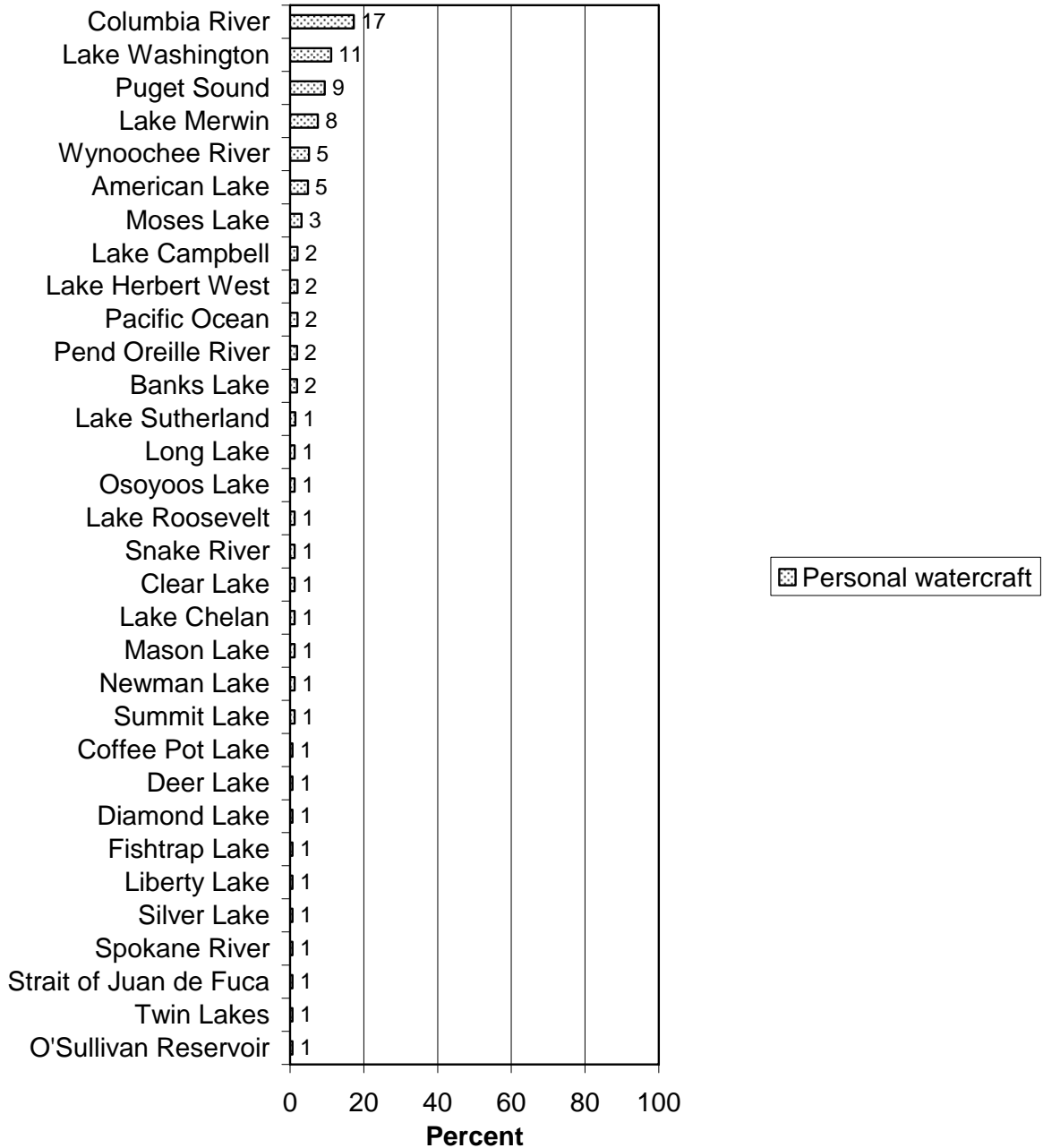
**(Shows only those bodies of water with at least 0.5% among the given group of motor boaters.)**



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(Shows only those bodies of water with at least 0.5% among the given group of boaters.)**

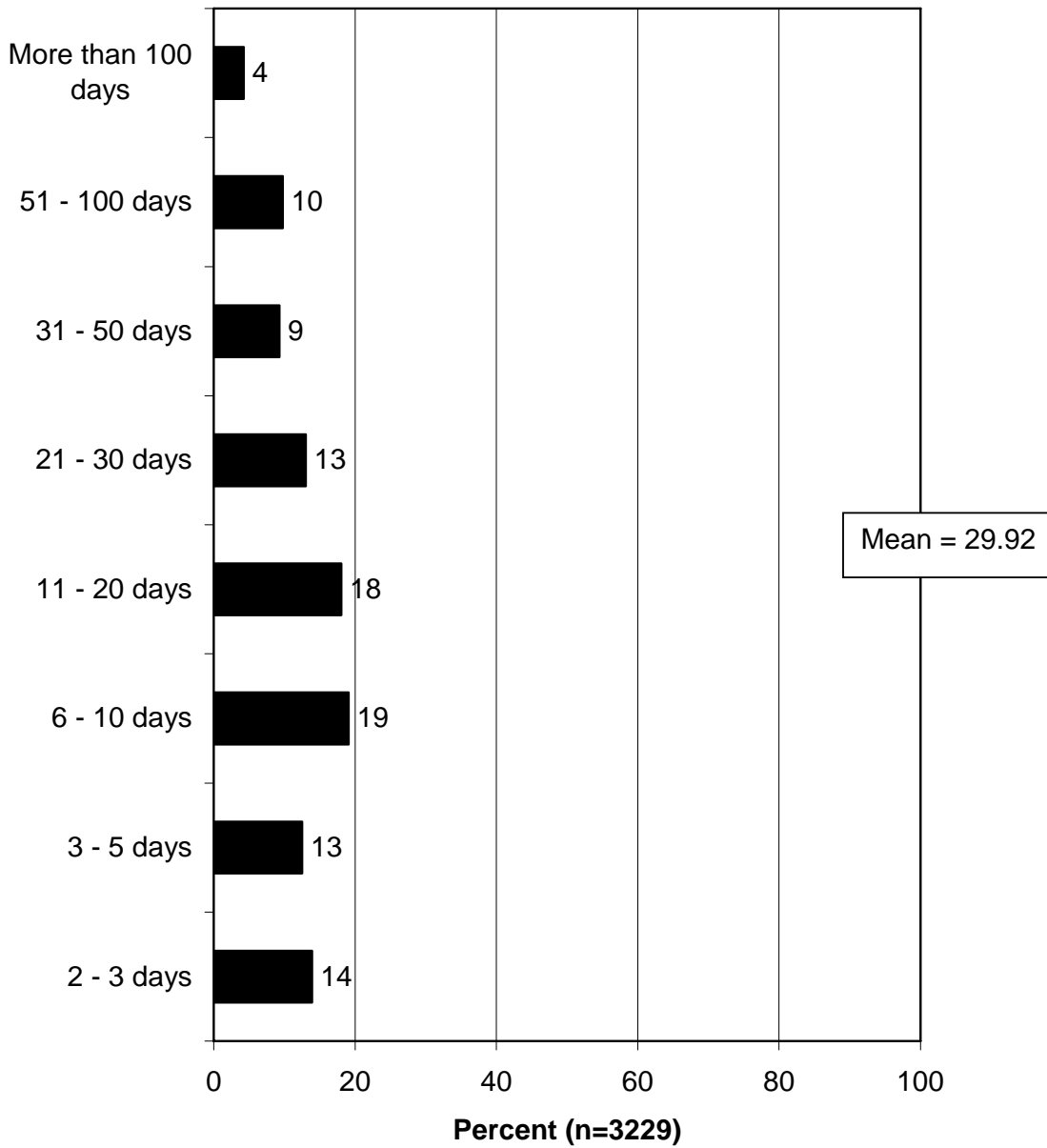


## **AVIDITY MEASURES**

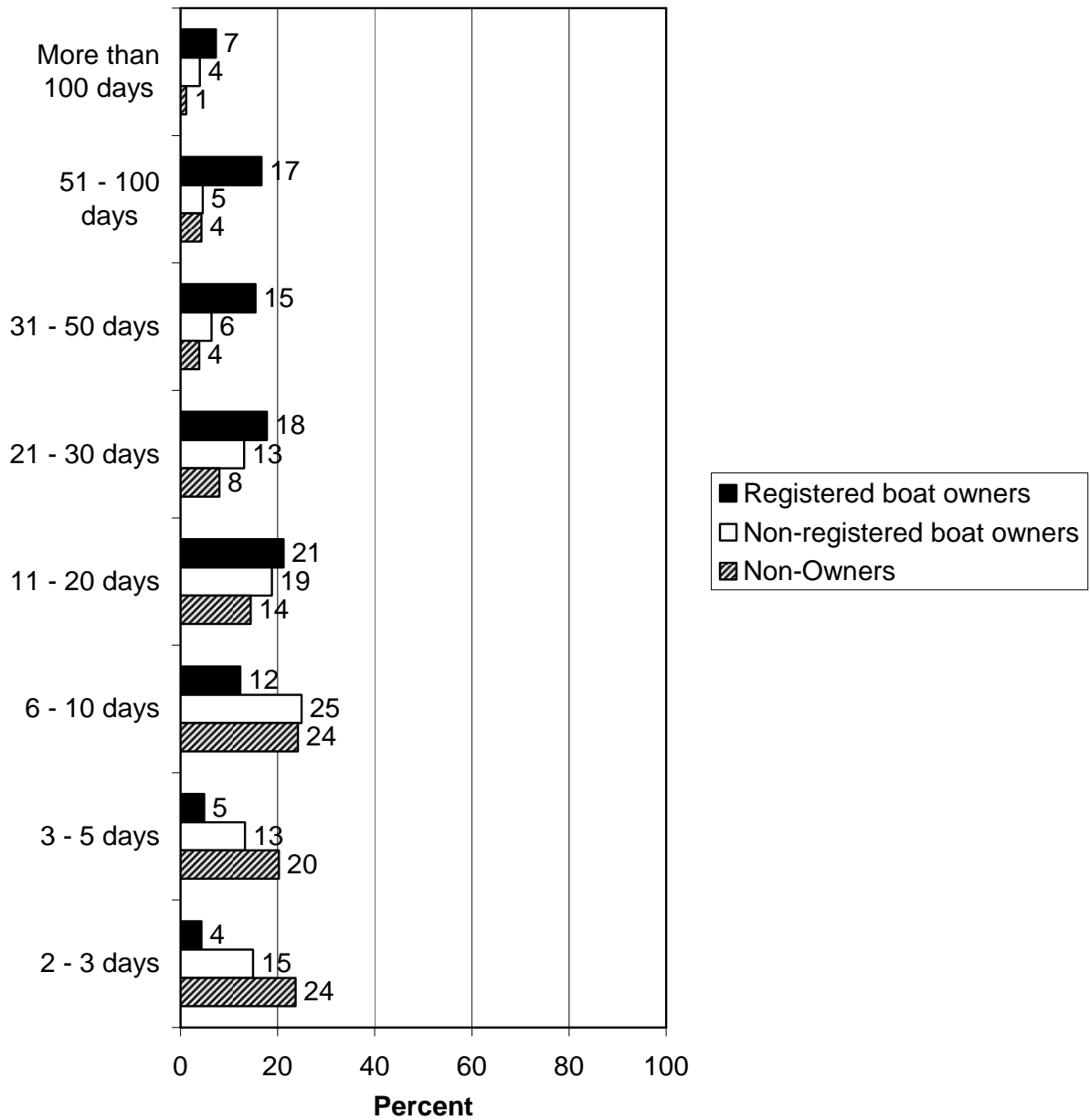
- Among all boaters, nearly half (46%) boated 10 days or less; nonetheless, nearly a quarter (23%) boated for more than 30 days per year.
  - Avidity, as measured by number of days boated, was highest among registered boat owners, followed by non-registered boat owners, with non-owners the least avid.
  - Avidity was not markedly different among the regions.
  - Paddlers tended to boat fewer days than did other types of boaters.
  - Within the group of motor boaters, avidity was greatest among those with the largest boats.
  - The mean days boated among various types of boaters is shown, ranked from most avid to least. It shows that sailboaters were the most avid, closely followed by motor boaters. However, motor boaters whose most-used boat is 26 feet or more were the most avid. Not surprisingly, boat owners were more avid than were those whose most-used boat is owned by a friend, rented, or chartered.



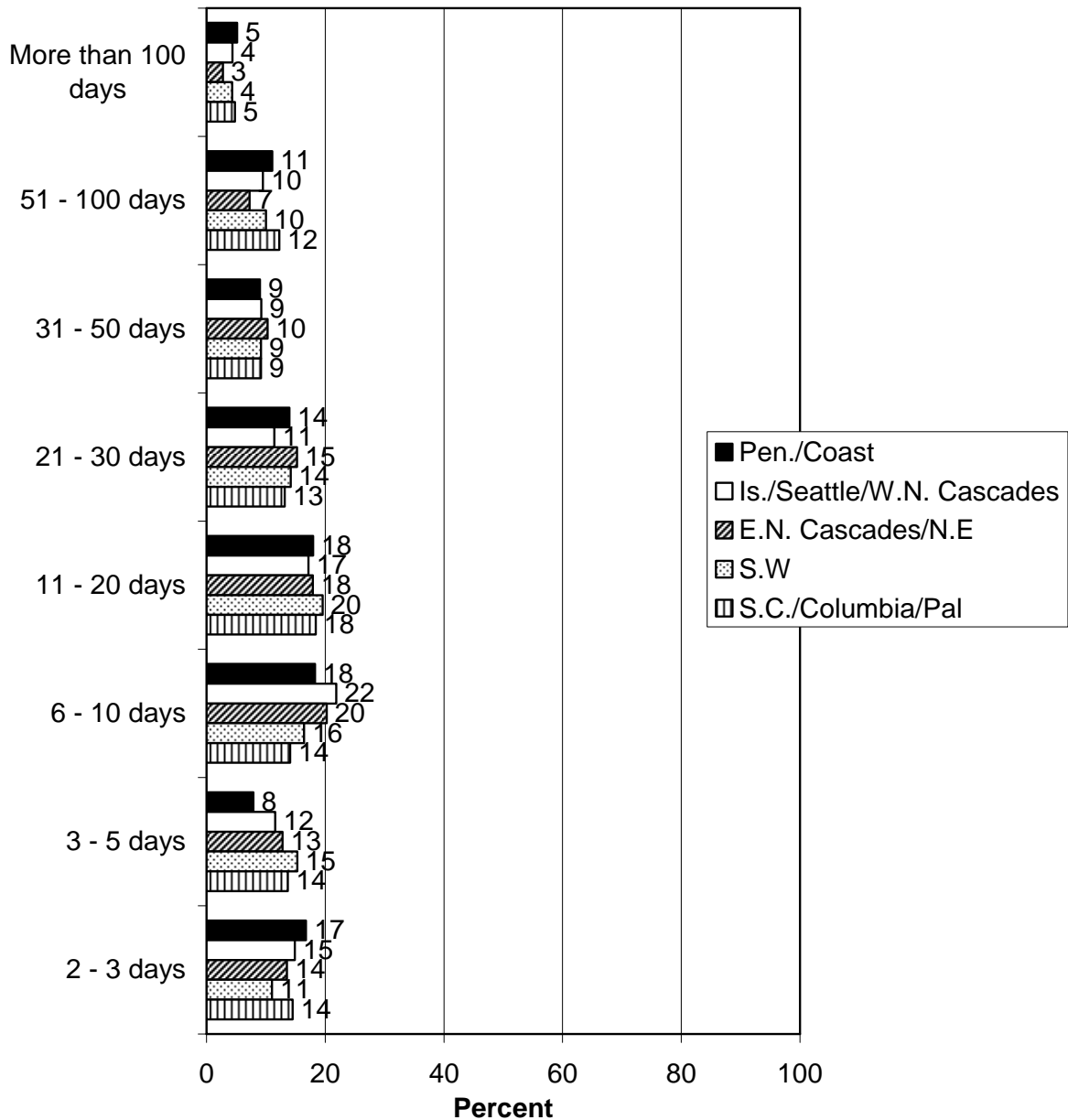
**Q10. How many days total during the past 2 years did you boat in Washington?**



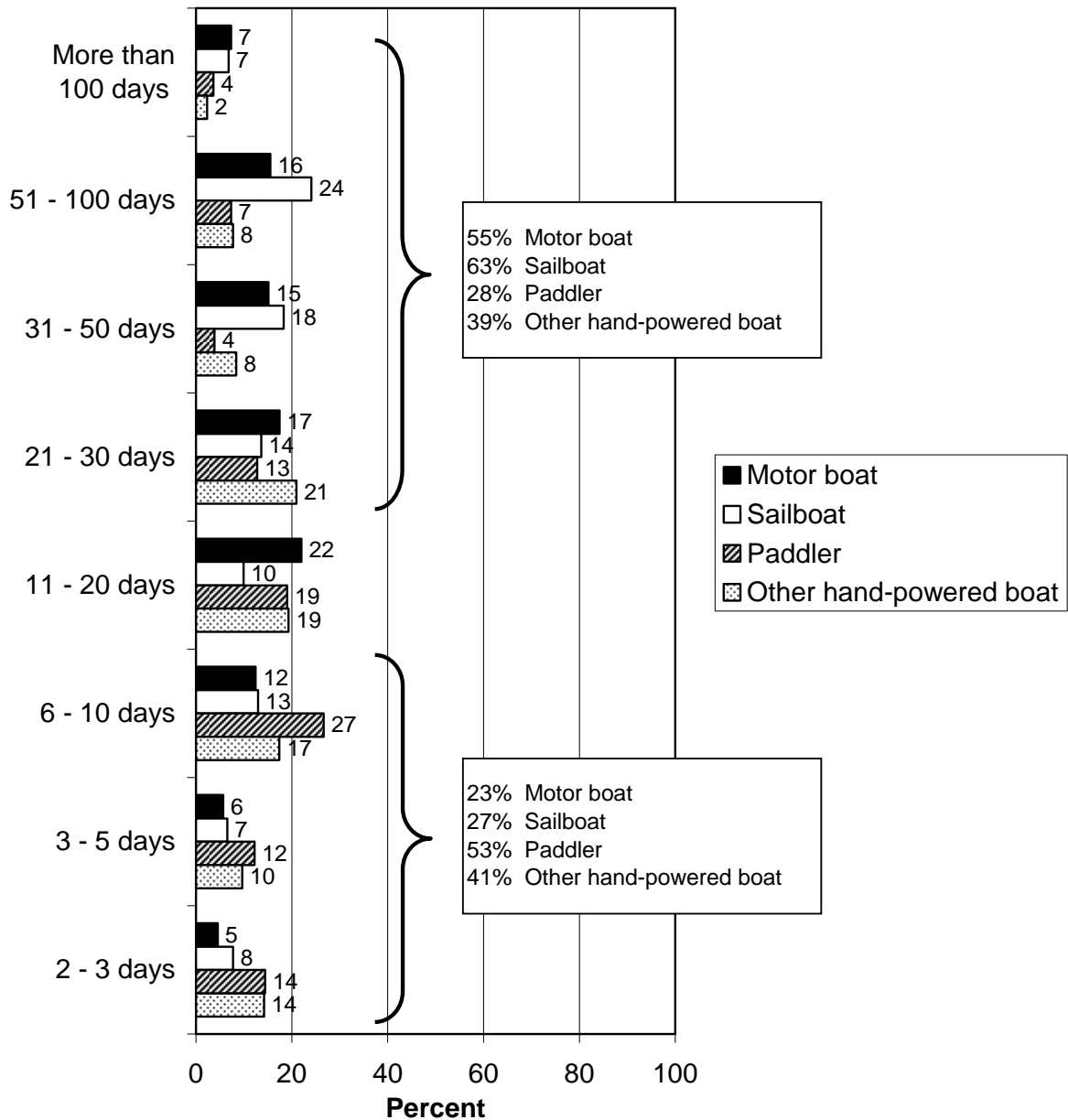
**Q10. How many days total during the past 2 years did you boat in Washington?**



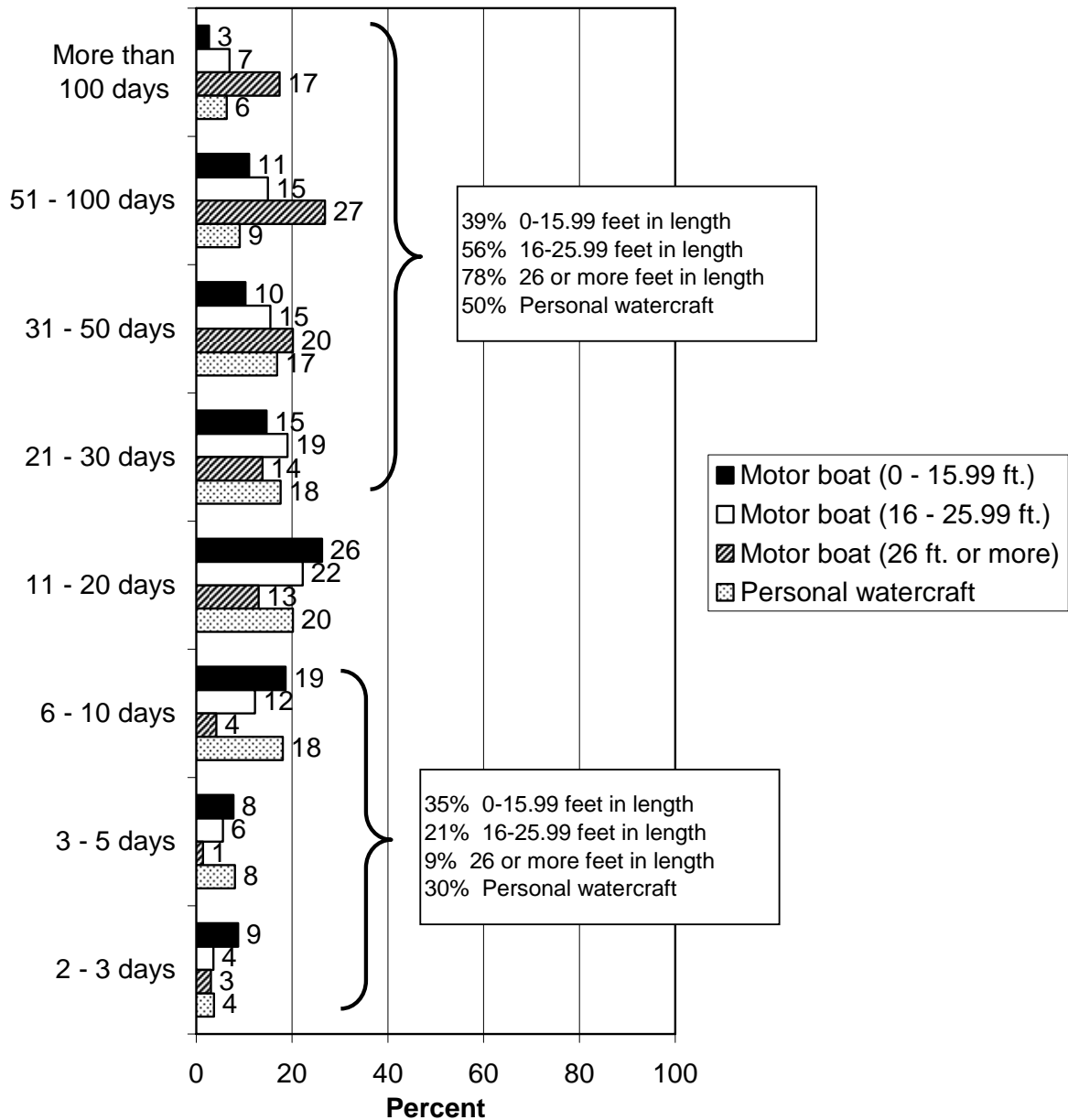
### Q10. How many days total during the past 2 years did you boat in Washington?



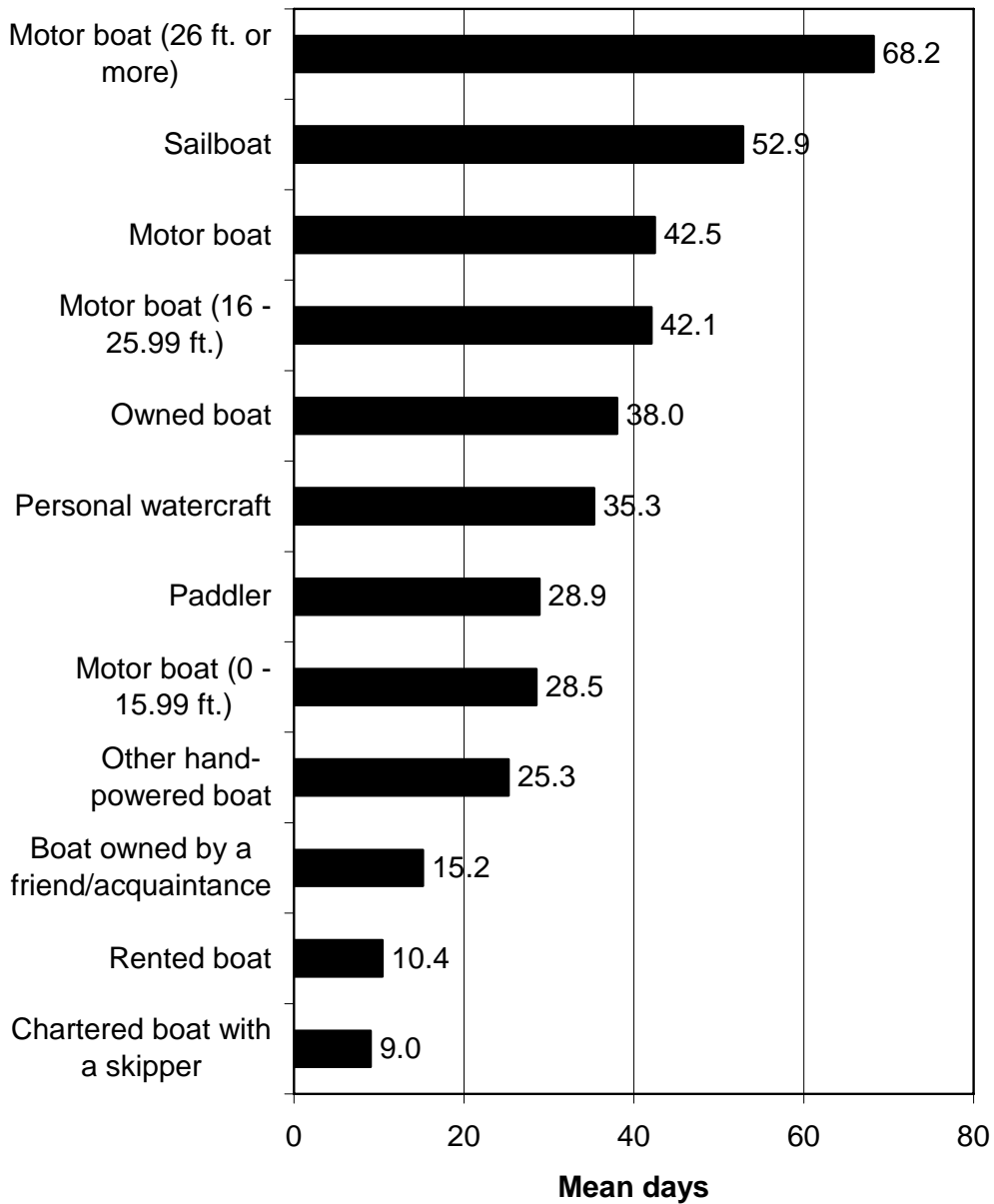
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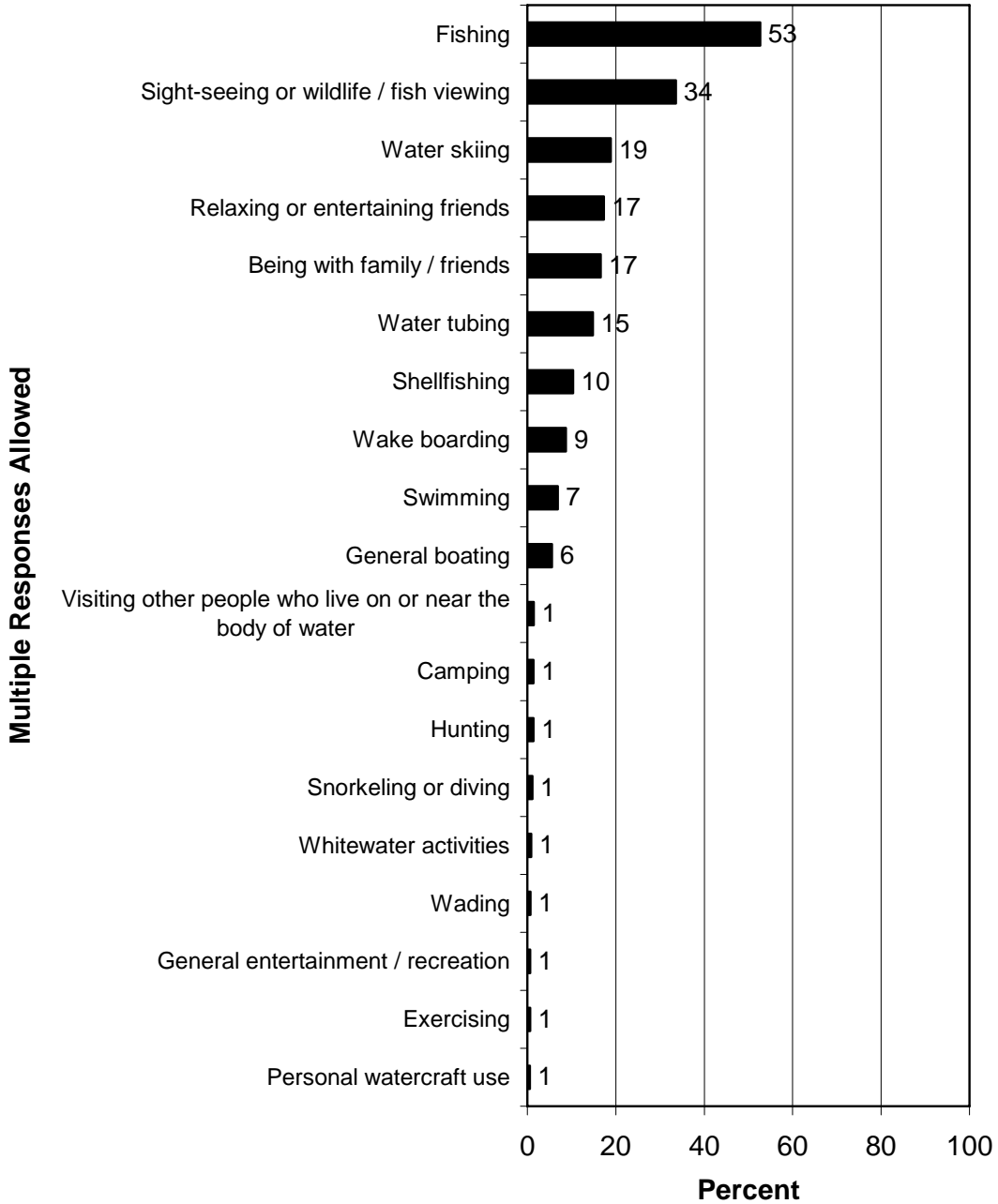
## ACTIVITIES WHILE BOATING AND MOTIVATIONS FOR BOATING

- Fishing was the most common activity in which boaters participated while boating in Washington in the previous 2 years: 53% of boaters fished. Other common activities included sight-seeing/fish and wildlife viewing (34%), water skiing (19%), relaxing or entertaining friends (17%), being with family and friends (17%), and water tubing (15%).
  - There were substantial differences in the results to this question according to the boat owner type:
    - Registered boat owners more often fished than did non-registered boat owners and non-owners.
    - Sight seeing was done more often by non-registered boat owners than by registered boat owners and non-owners.
    - Water skiing and water tubing were done more often by registered boat owners and non-owners than by non-registered boat owners.
  - There were some regional differences in the results to this question:
    - Fishing had the *lowest* rate in the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region.
    - Sight-seeing was the highest in the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region and the Peninsula and Coast Region.
    - Shellfishing was the highest in the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region and the Peninsula and Coast Region.
    - Water tubing and water skiing were the highest in the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region and the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region.
    - Wake boarding was the highest in the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region and the Southwest Region.
  - There were some differences in the results to this question when crosstabulated by the type of boat most often used.
    - Fishing participation was highest among motor boaters and those using a hand-powered boat; it was *lowest* among sailboaters.
    - Sight-seeing was highest among sailboaters and paddlers.
    - Relaxing was highest among sailboaters.
  - There were some differences in the results to this question when crosstabulated by the size of motor boat most often used.
    - Fishing participation was highest among Class A motor boaters.

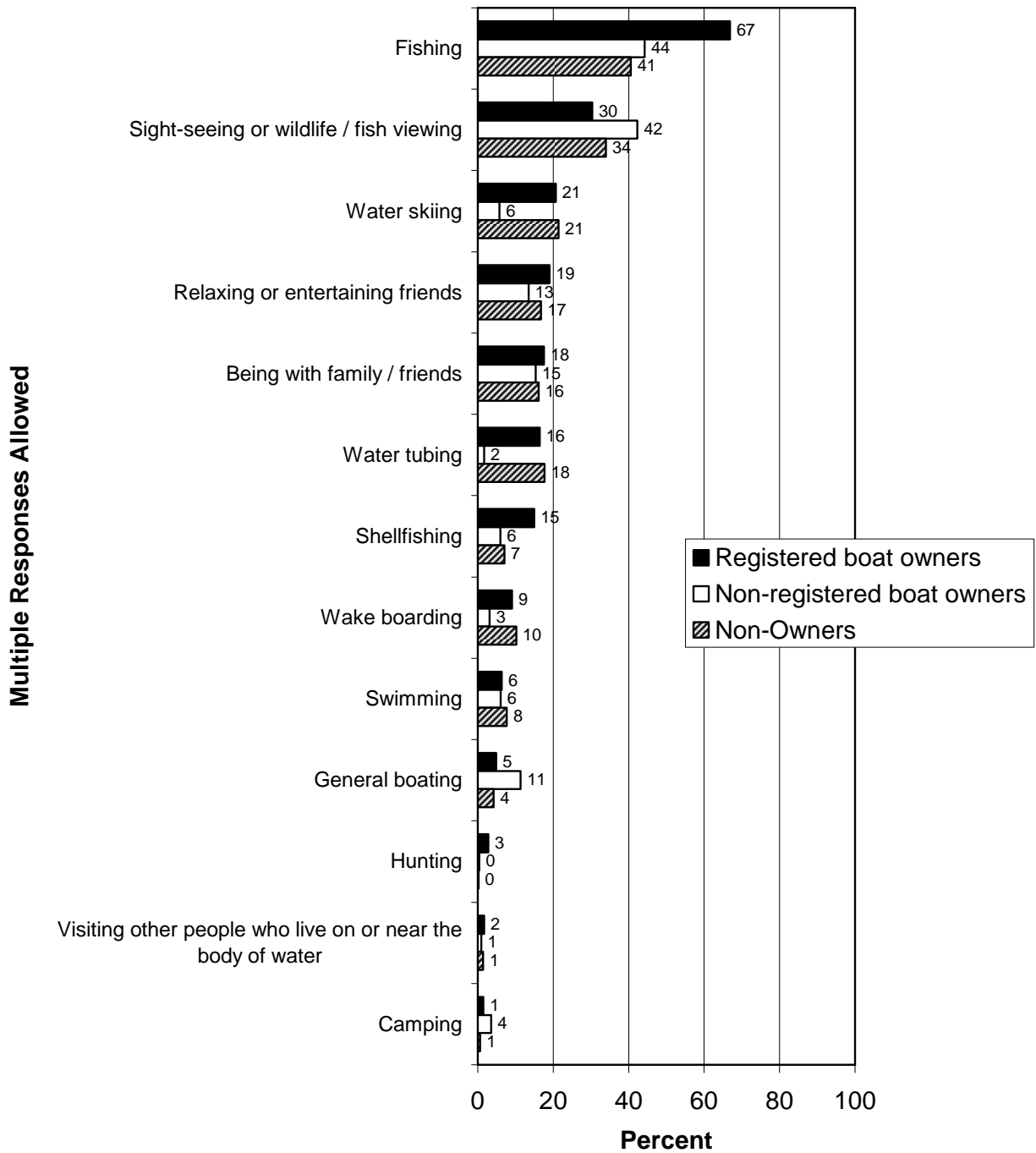
- Sight-seeing, relaxing, and being with family and friends were highest among those operating the largest motor boats.
  - Water skiing, water tubing, and wake boarding were highest among operators of the medium sized motor boats and personal watercraft.
- When asked to say what motivates them to boat, boaters most commonly answer for relaxation (49% gave this as a reason for boating), followed by to fish (29%), to be with friends and family (26%), for general recreation (14%), and to be close to nature (11%).
- Registered boat owners say a motivation for boating is to fish more often than do non-registered boaters and non-owners. Non-owners more often say that a motivation for boating is to be with friends and family, compared to registered boat owners and non-registered boat owners.
  - The most notable regional difference in the results to this question regarding the motivations for boating is that the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region has a low percentage of boaters who do so to fish; this region has a relatively high percentage who boat for relaxation.
  - There are large differences by boater type.
    - For relaxation as a motivation is higher among sailboaters and paddlers than among the other types of boaters.
    - To fish as a motivation is higher among operators of hand-powered boats and motor boats than among the other types of boaters.
    - To be with friends and family as a motivation is higher among motor boaters and sailboaters than among the other types of boaters.
    - To be close to nature as a motivation to boat is higher among paddlers than among the other types of boaters.
    - For the exercise is nearly exclusively a motivation for boating among paddlers and those operating other hand-powered boats.
  - There are differences by size of the motor boat.
    - For relaxation as a motivation is higher among operators of the largest motor boats than among the other types of boaters.
    - To fish was named more often by those operating the smallest motor boats than by the other types of boaters.
    - For the sport as a motivation to boat is higher among those operating personal watercraft than among the other types of boaters.



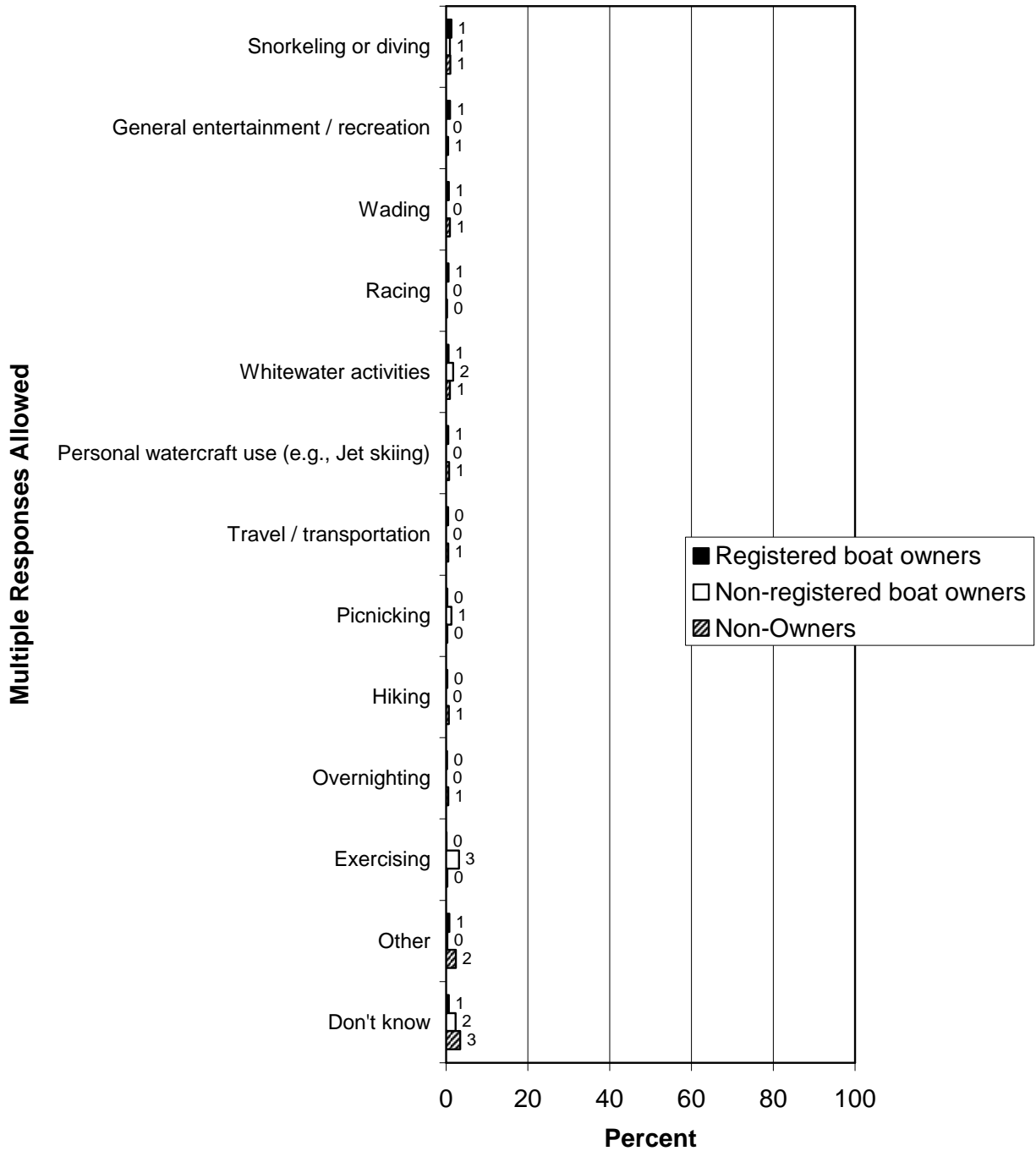
**Q90. What activities did you do while boating in Washington in the past 2 years?**



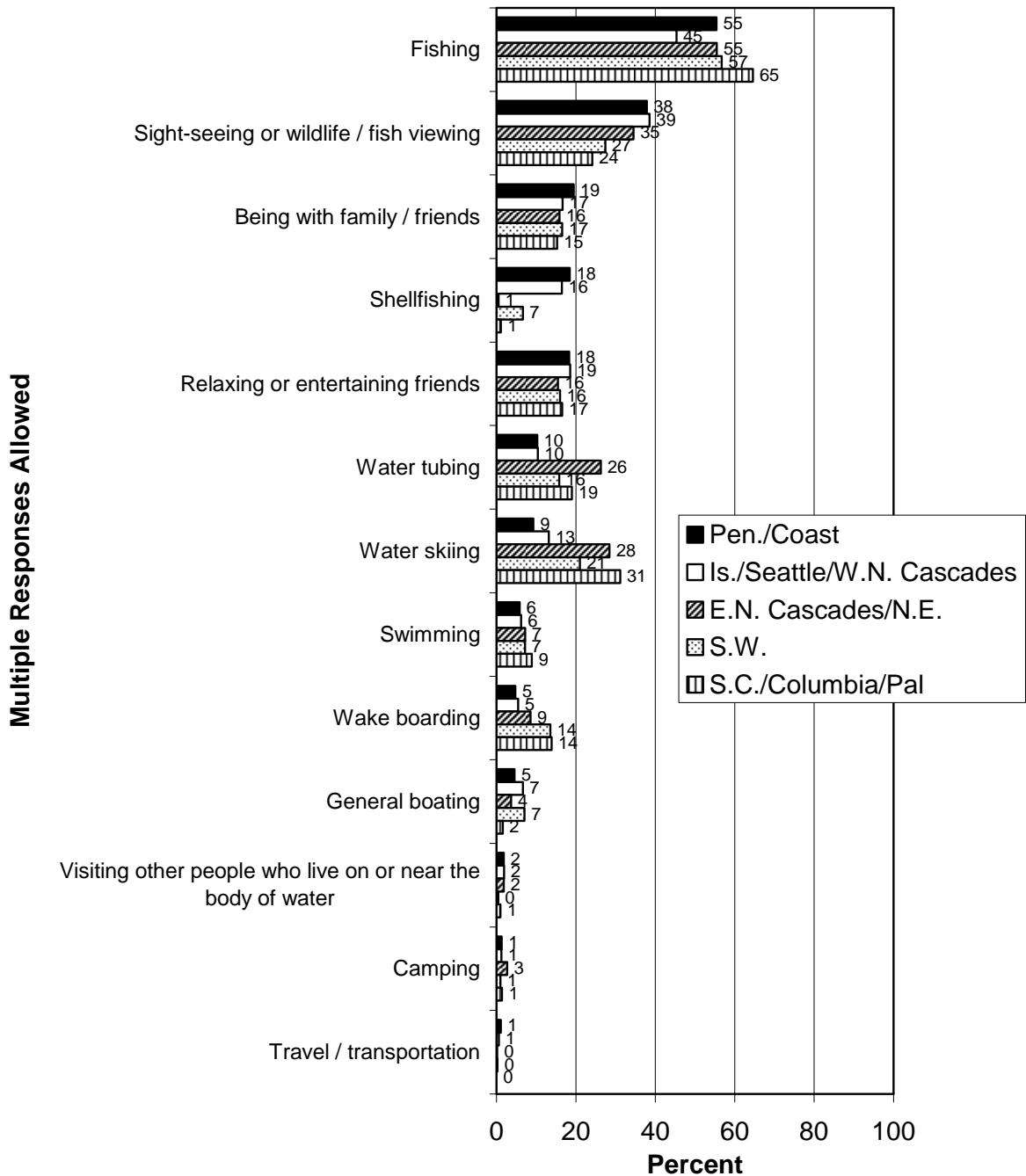
### Q90. What activities did you do while boating in Washington in the past 2 years? (Part 1.)



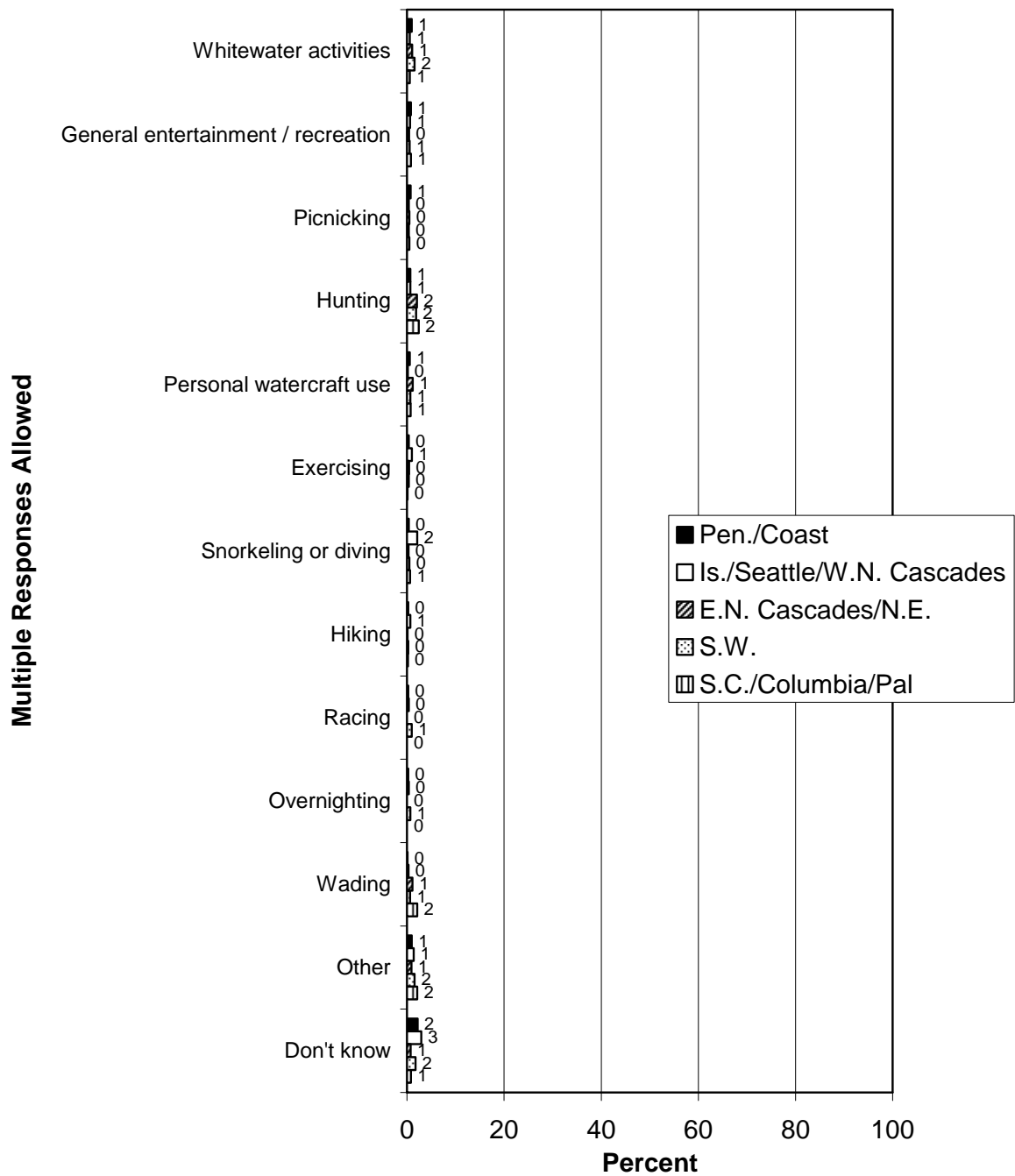
### Q90. What activities did you do while boating in Washington in the past 2 years? (Part 2.)



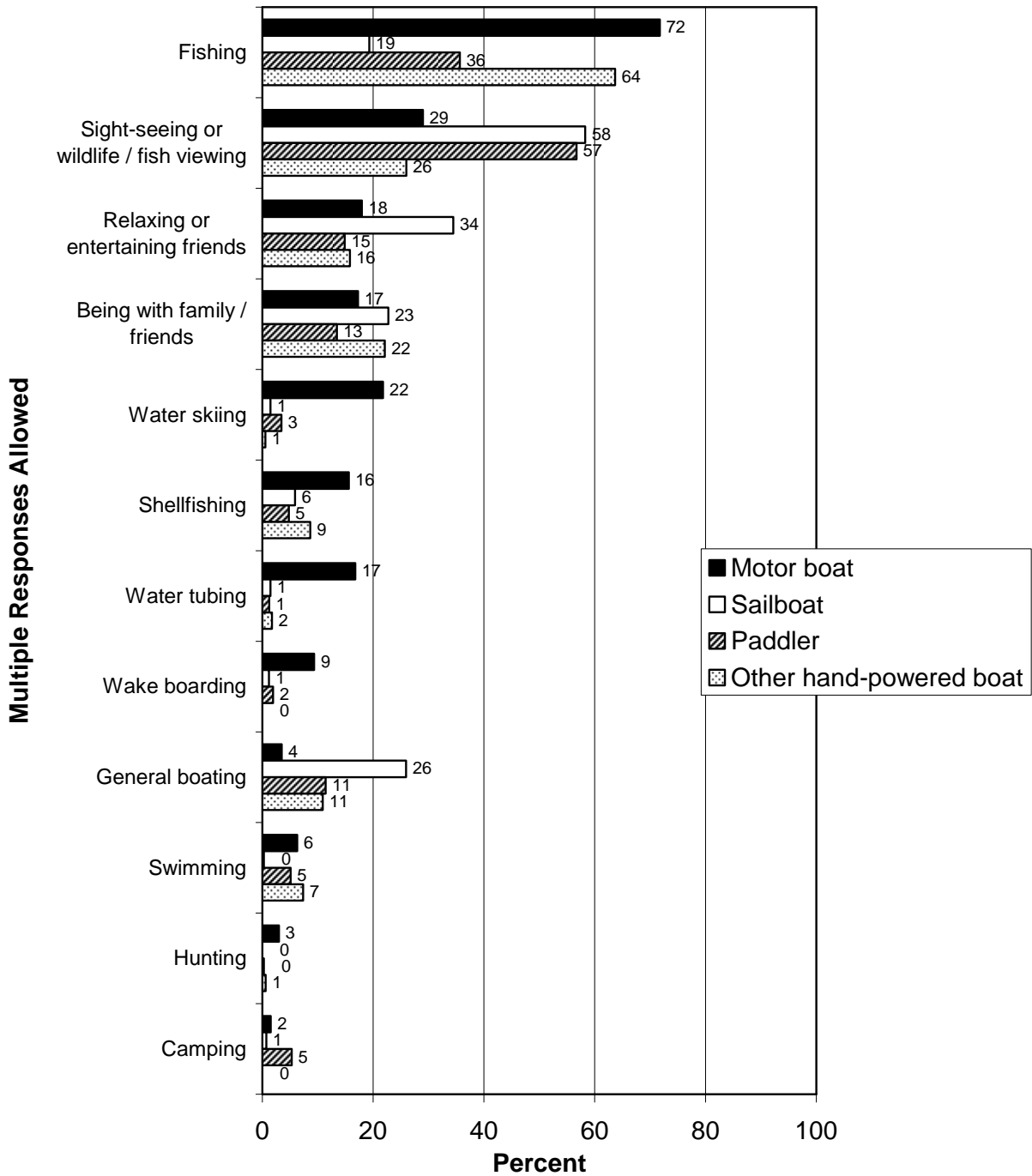
### Q90. What activities did you do while boating in Washington in the past 2 years? (Part 1.)



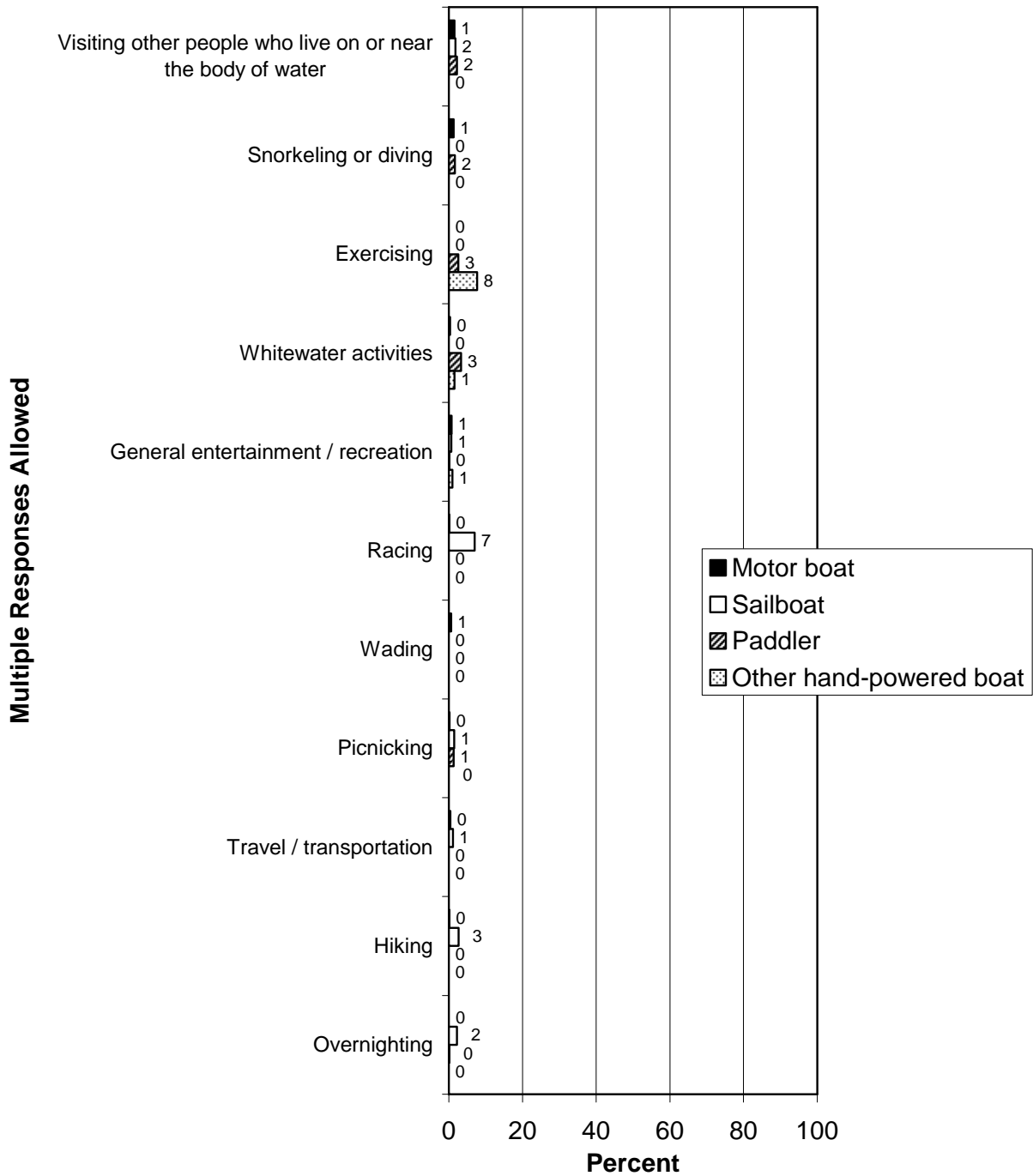
### Q90. What activities did you do while boating in Washington in the past 2 years? (Part 2.)



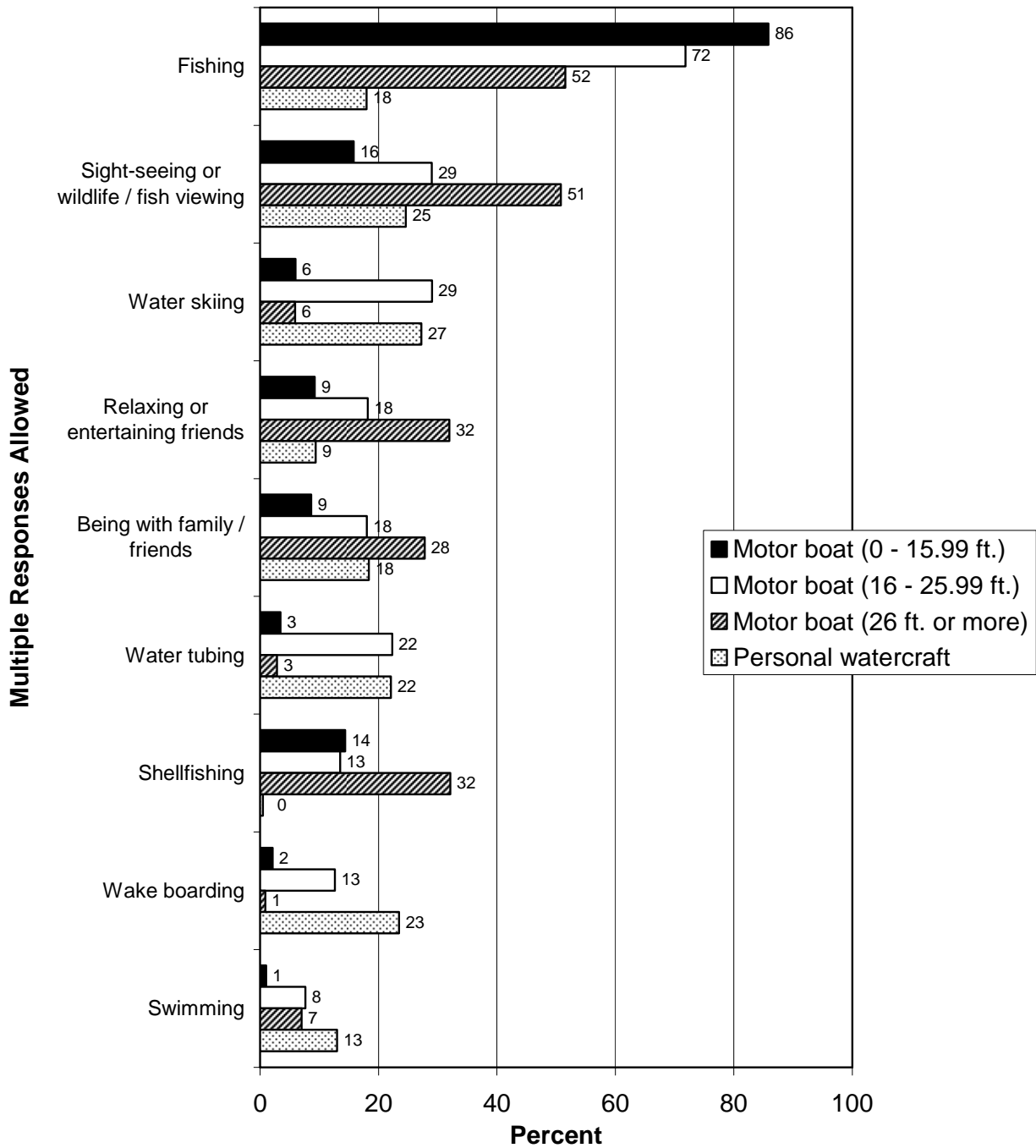
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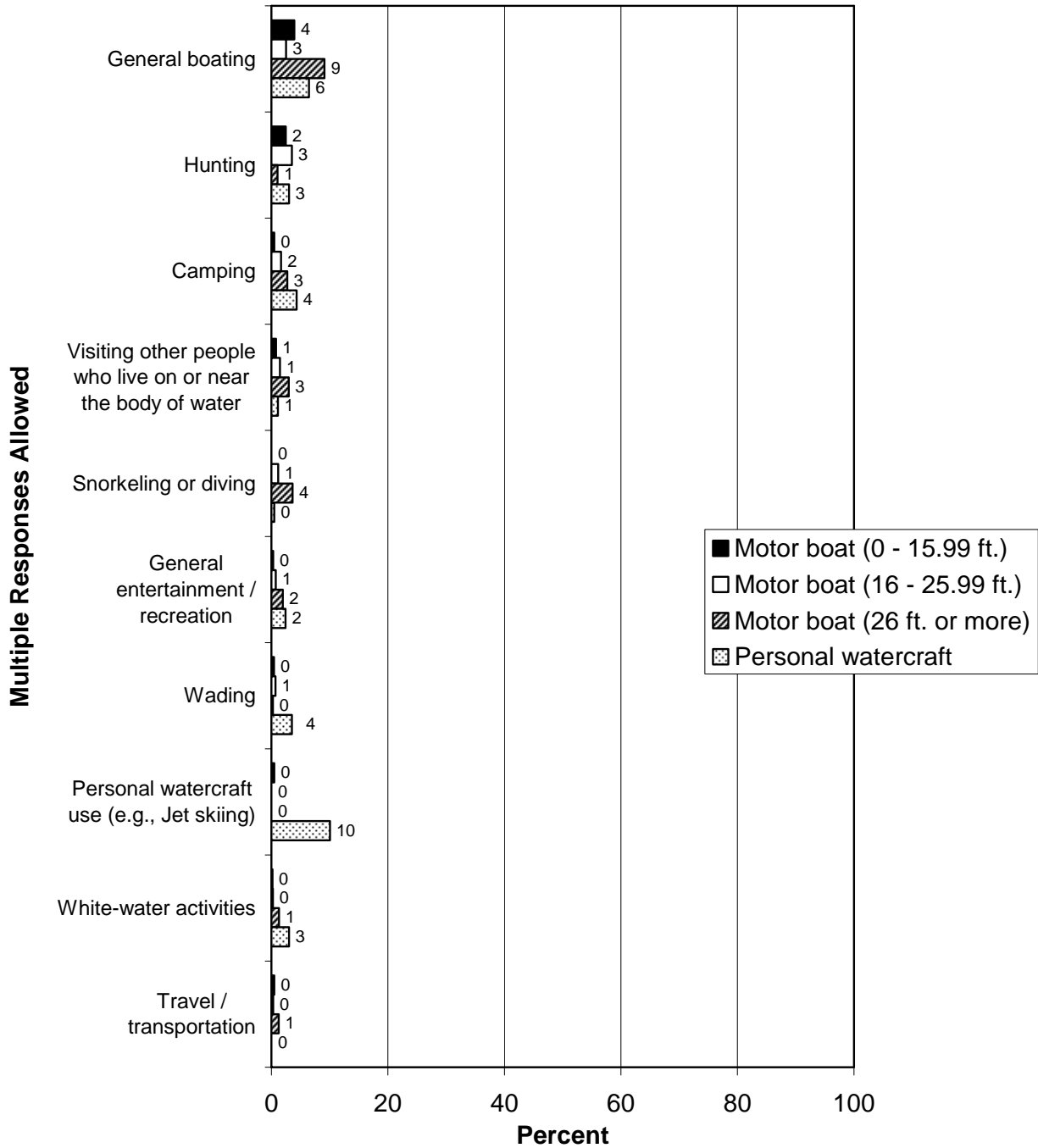


### Q90. What activities did you do while boating in Washington in the past 2 years? (Part 1.)

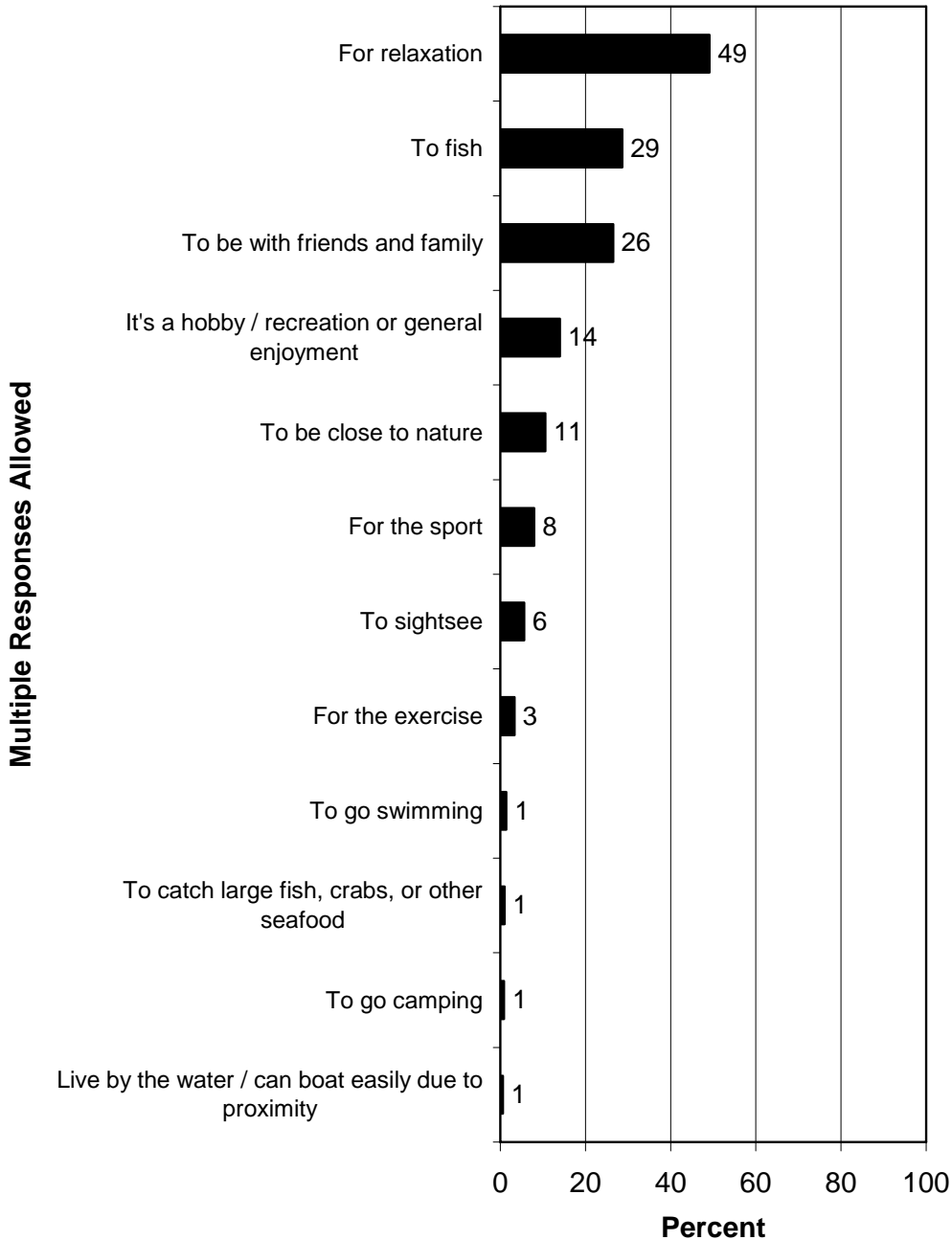




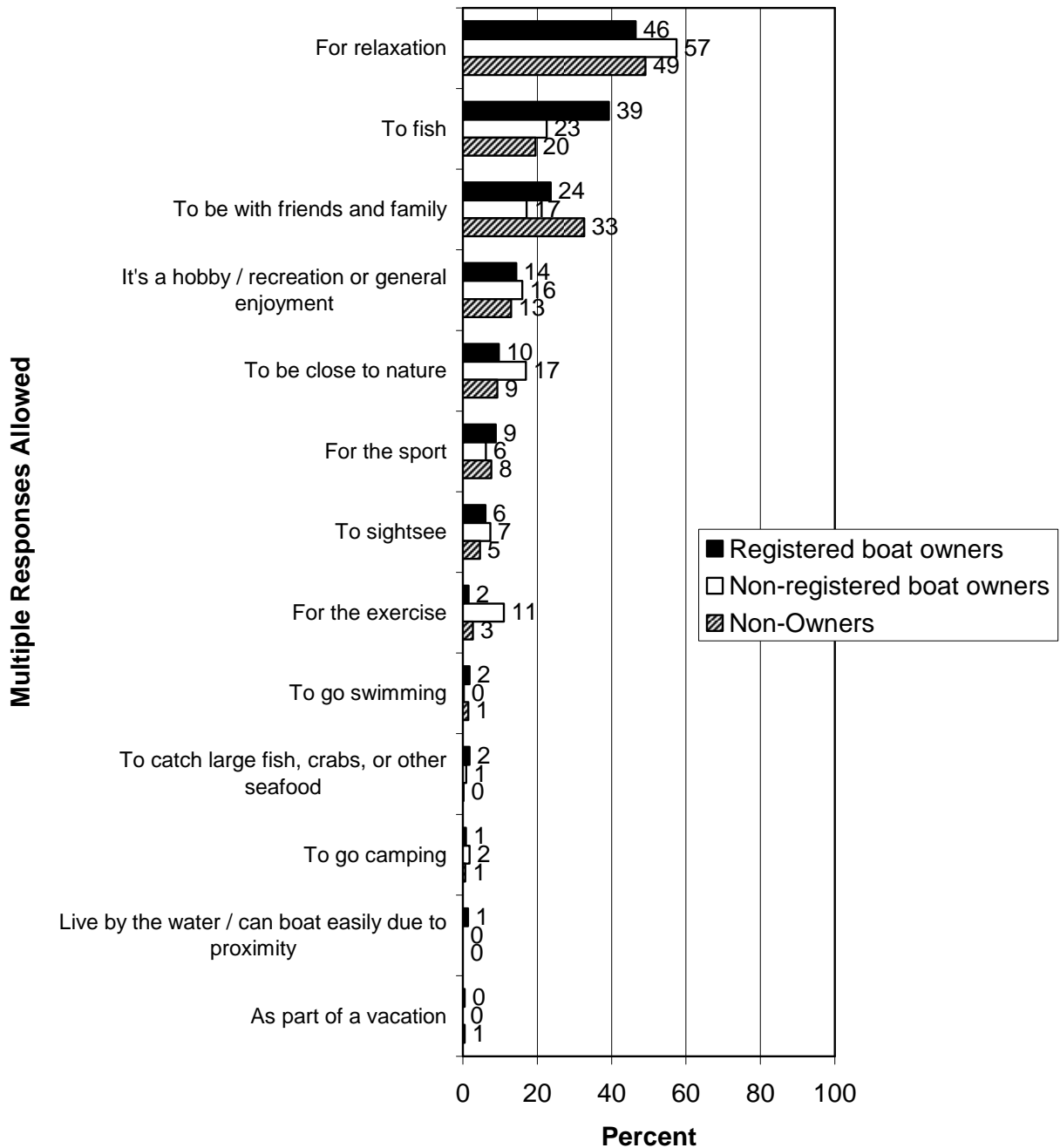
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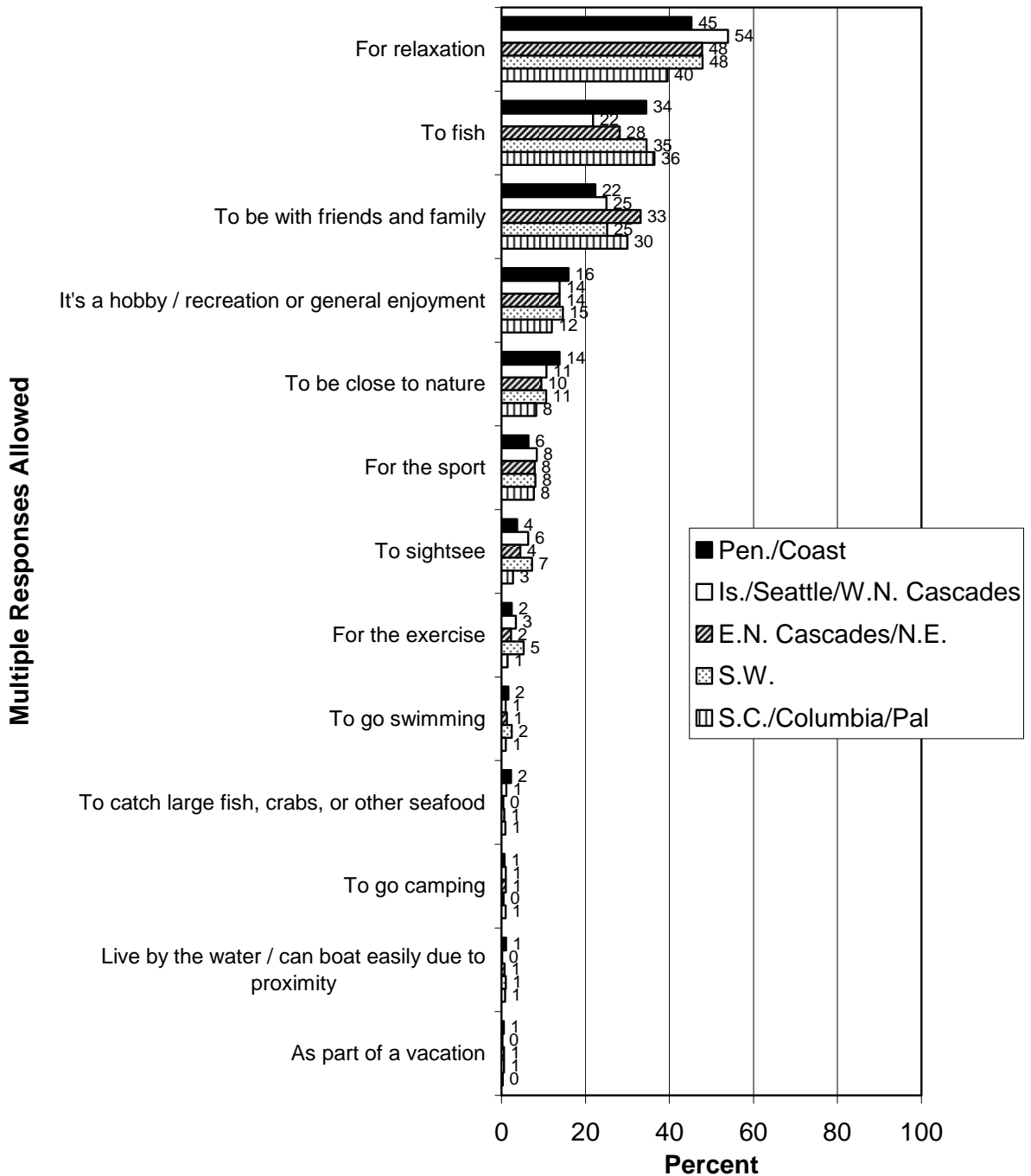
### Q94. What are the important reasons why you boat or participate in boating activities in Washington?



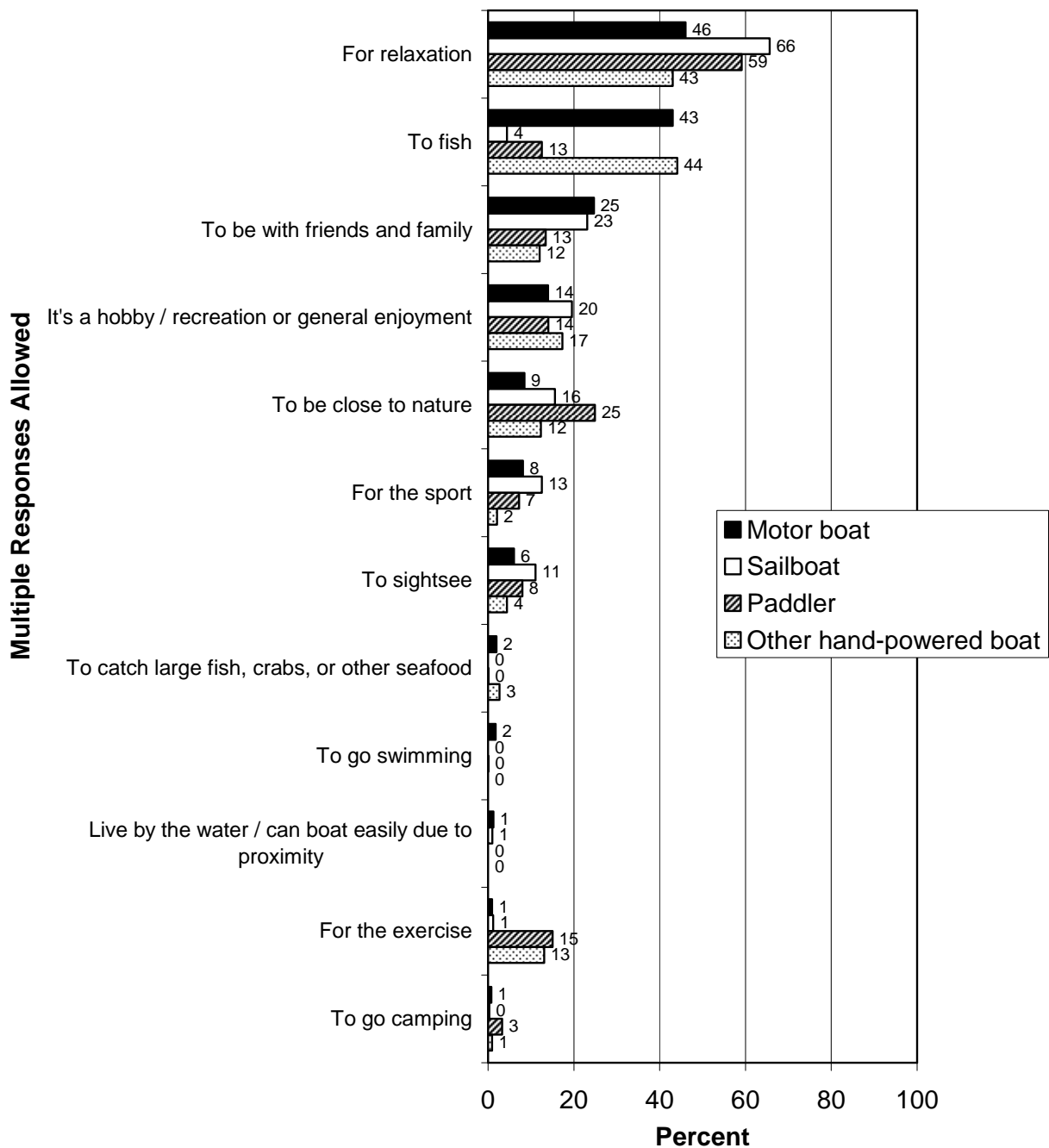
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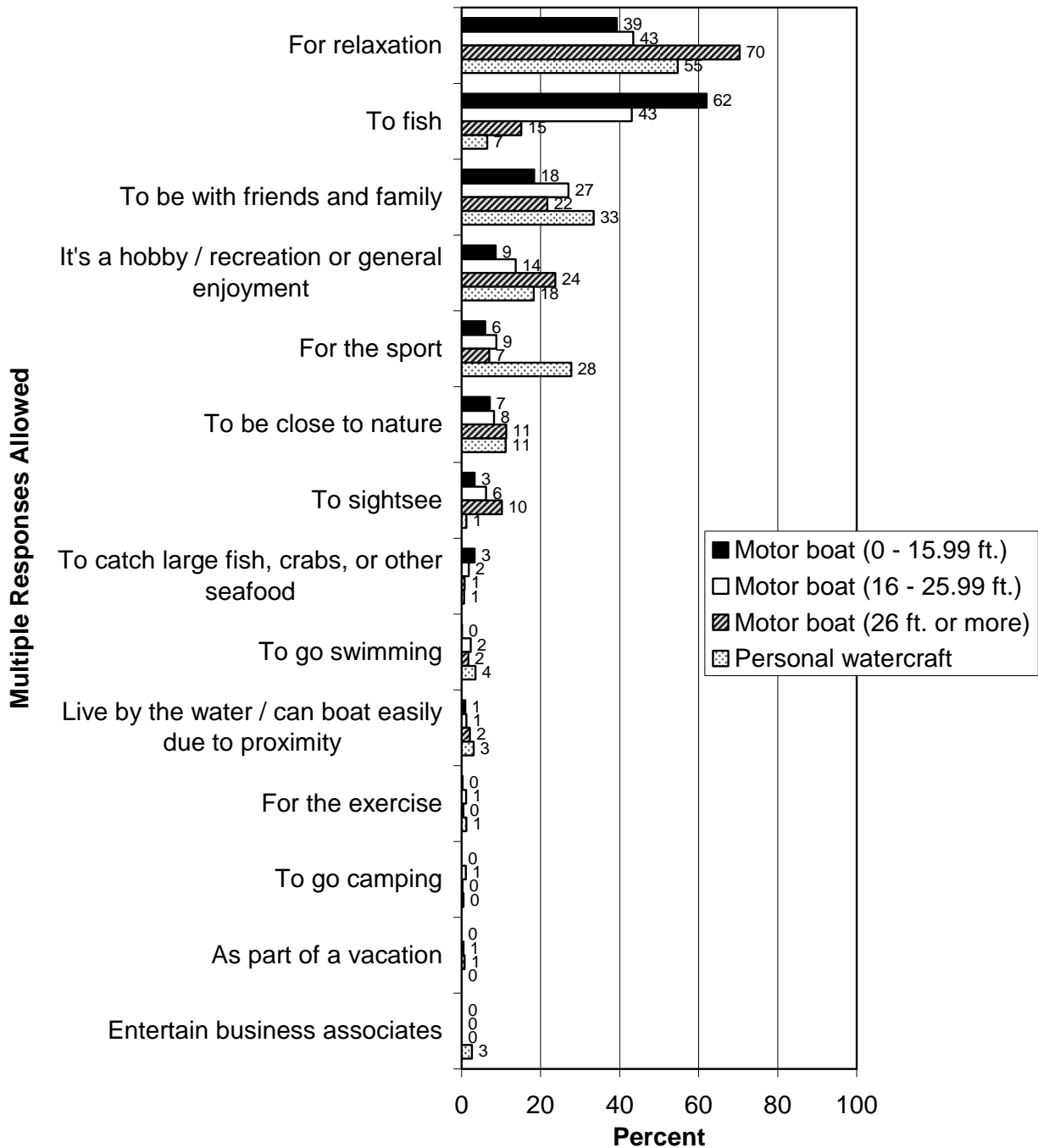
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## CONSTRAINTS TO BOATING

- A majority of boaters overall (62%) indicated that there are things that take away from boating satisfaction or cause them not to boat as much as they would like.
  - In the crosstabulation by type of boater, a greater percentage of registered boat owners (68%) and non-registered boat owners (65%) said that there are things that take away from boating satisfaction or cause them not to boat as much as they would like, compared to non-owners (56%).
  - In the crosstabulation by region, the Peninsula and Coast Region and the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region had the lowest rate of boaters saying that there are things that take away from boating satisfaction or cause them not to boat as much as they would like, but the differences are small.
  - In the crosstabulation by type of boat most often used, there was little difference in the results.
  - In the crosstabulation by size of motor boat, Class 2 and 3 motor boaters (26 feet or more in length) were the most likely to say that something takes away from their boating satisfaction or causes them not to boat as much as they would like; personal watercraft operators and Class A motor boaters were the least likely to say that something takes away from their boating satisfaction or causes them not to boat as much as they would like.
- In follow-up to the question about things that take away from boating satisfaction or cause boaters not to boat as much as they would like, boaters most often cited cost of boating, work obligations, weather, lack of or poor access, crowding on the water, and family obligations.
  - The crosstabulation of the question about things that take away from boating satisfaction or cause boaters not to boat as much as they would like found some differences in the results according to boat owner type.
    - Cost was named by registered boat owners and non-owners more often than by non-registered boat owners.
    - Work obligations was mentioned by non-registered boat owners more often than by registered boat owners or non-owners.

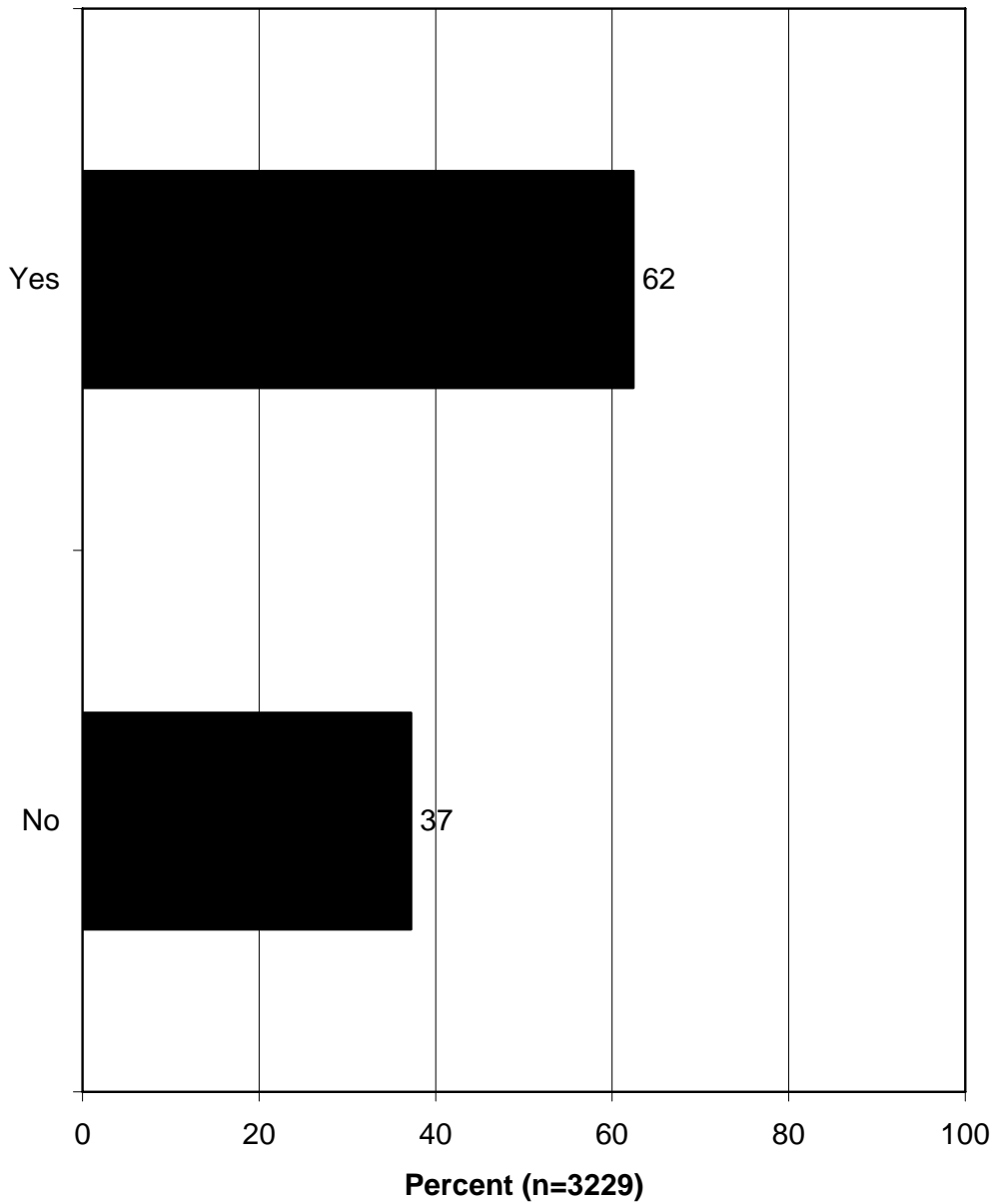
- Weather was mentioned by non-registered boat owners more often than by registered boat owners or non-owners.
- Lack of or poor access was mentioned by registered boat owners and non-registered boat owners much more often than by non-owners.
- Crowding at boat launch ramps and/or marinas was mentioned by registered boat owners more often than by non-registered boat owners and non-owners.
- Family obligations was mentioned by non-registered boat owners more often than by registered boat owners and non-owners.
- The regional crosstabulation of the question about things that take away from boating satisfaction or cause boaters not to boat as much as they would like found some differences in the results.
  - Cost was *not* cited much in the Peninsula and Coast Region and the Southwest Region, relative to the other regions, but the differences were small.
  - Weather was cited by Peninsula and Coast Region boaters and Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region boaters more often than boaters from the other regions.
- The crosstabulation by boater type on the question about things that take away from boating satisfaction or cause boaters not to boat as much as they would like found some differences in the results.
  - Cost was cited more often by motor boaters than by any other type of boater.
  - Work obligations was greater as a constraint among paddlers than among other types of boaters.
  - Weather as a constraint was *lowest* among motor boaters.
  - Poor access was cited more often by paddlers and motor boaters than by the other types of boaters, but the differences were small.
  - Crowding on the water was rarely cited by sailboaters.
  - Crowding at boat launch ramps was higher among motor boaters than among any other type of boater.
- The crosstabulation by size of motor boat on things that take away from boating satisfaction or cause boaters not to boat as much as they would like found some differences in the results.



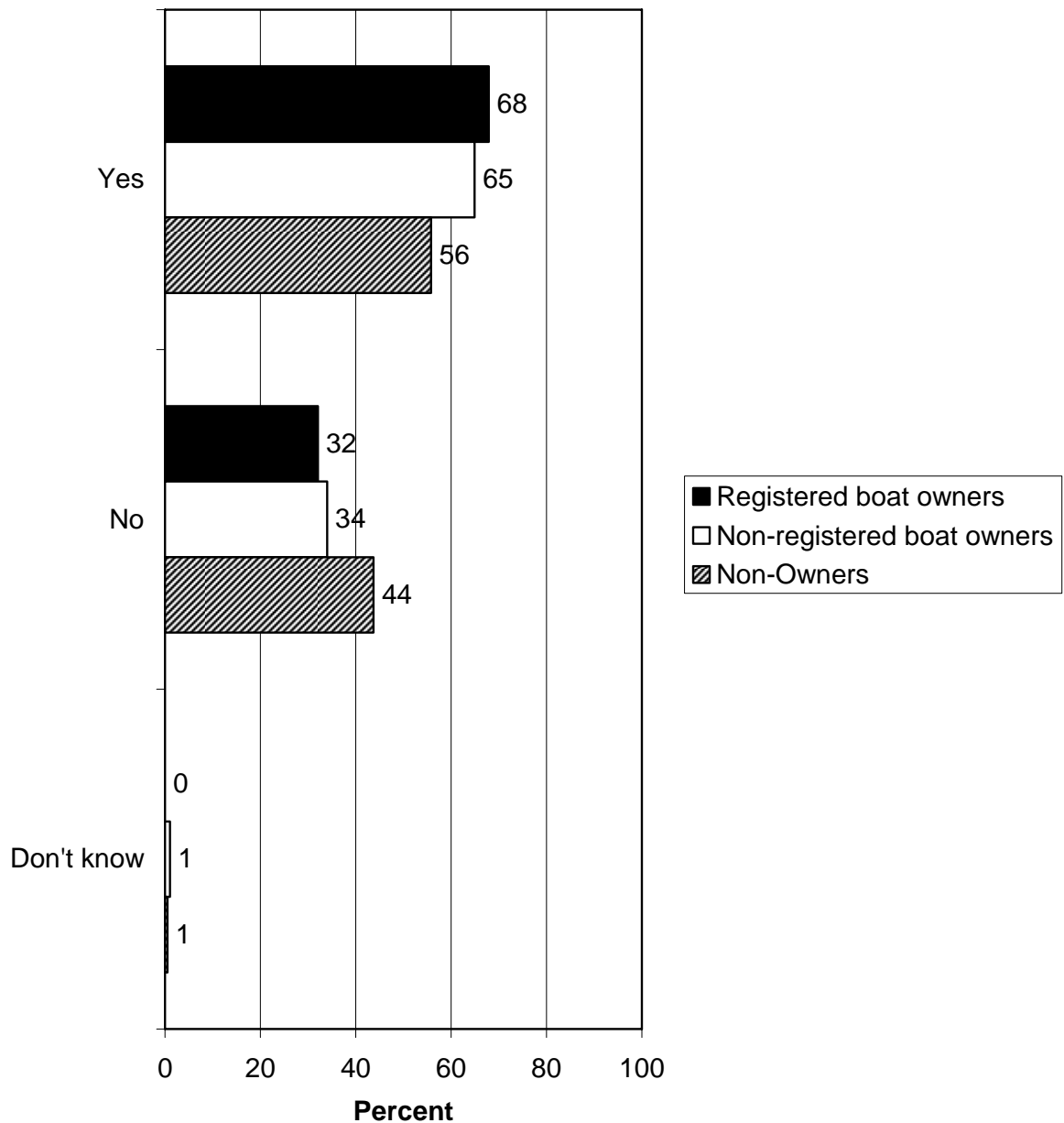
- Cost was cited more often by those operating the largest motor boats, compared to any other motor boat size.
  - Crowding on the water and at boat launch ramps was cited by those operating personal watercraft more often than by those operating any other size of motor boat.
  - In follow-up, those who mentioned access as a something that takes away from boating satisfaction or causes them not to boat as much as they would like were asked to name the specific aspect of access that was problematic. By far, access to boat launch ramps was the most common answer, distantly followed by access to the water in general, access to docks, access to daytime parking, and access to marinas.
- The survey specifically asked about crowding on the water. A majority of boaters (55%) say crowding is not a problem; however, 43% say that it is a problem, albeit, for most of them, just a minor problem. The survey also asked about crowding at the boat launch ramp where the boater boats most often, and crowding is more of a problem: only 25% say it is not a problem, while 64% say crowding at boat launch ramps is a problem, although most of those say *minor* problem rather than *major* problem.
- There is little difference in opinion on crowding on the water among the three types of boaters (registered boat owners, non-registered boat owners, and non-owners). On the other hand, in the question about crowding at boat launch ramps, non-registered boat owners are slightly more likely than are boaters from the other two groups to say that crowding is not a problem at boat launch ramps.
  - Regionally, the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region has the highest percentage of boaters saying that crowding on the water is a problem. The Peninsula and Coast Region has the lowest percentage of boaters saying that crowding on the water is a problem. Regarding crowding at boat launch ramps, the Southwest Region and the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region have the highest percentages of boaters saying that crowding at boat launch ramps is a problem.
  - Sailboaters are less likely to say that crowding on the water is a problem, compared to the other types of boaters. Regarding crowding at boat launch ramps, motor boaters are the most likely to say it is a *major* problem; paddlers are the most likely to say it is *not* a problem; and sailboaters are the most likely to say that they do not know.

- Perceptions of crowding on the water are about the same among the groups of motor boaters according to size of the motor boat, with Class 2 and 3 motor boaters just slightly less likely to say that crowding on the water is a problem. Regarding crowding at boat launch ramps, Class 2 and 3 motor boaters are the least likely to say crowding at boat launch ramps is a problem (they are the most likely to answer “Don’t know”), while personal watercraft operators are the most likely.

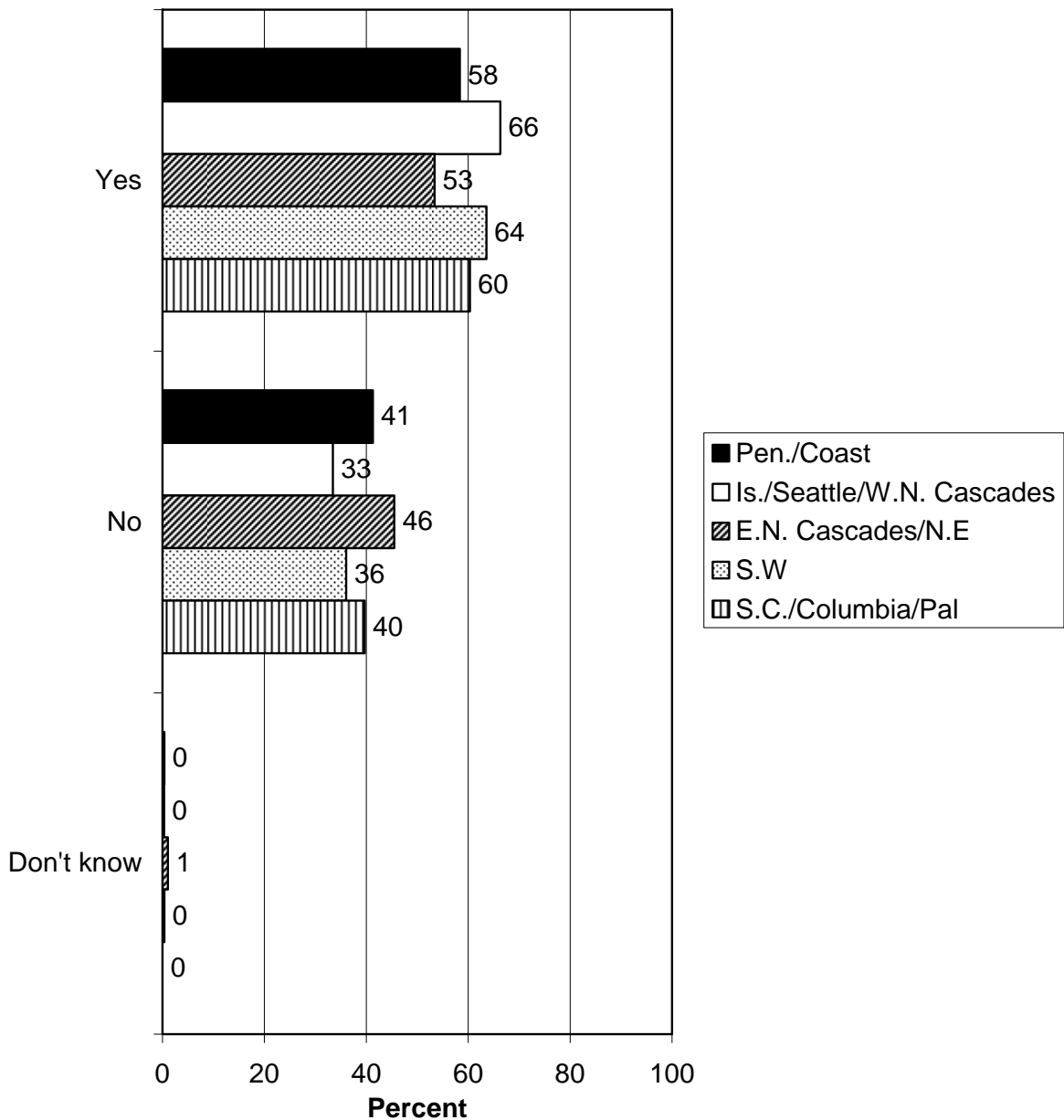
**Q96. In general, are there any things that take away from your boating satisfaction or cause you not to participate in boating as much as you would like in Washington?**



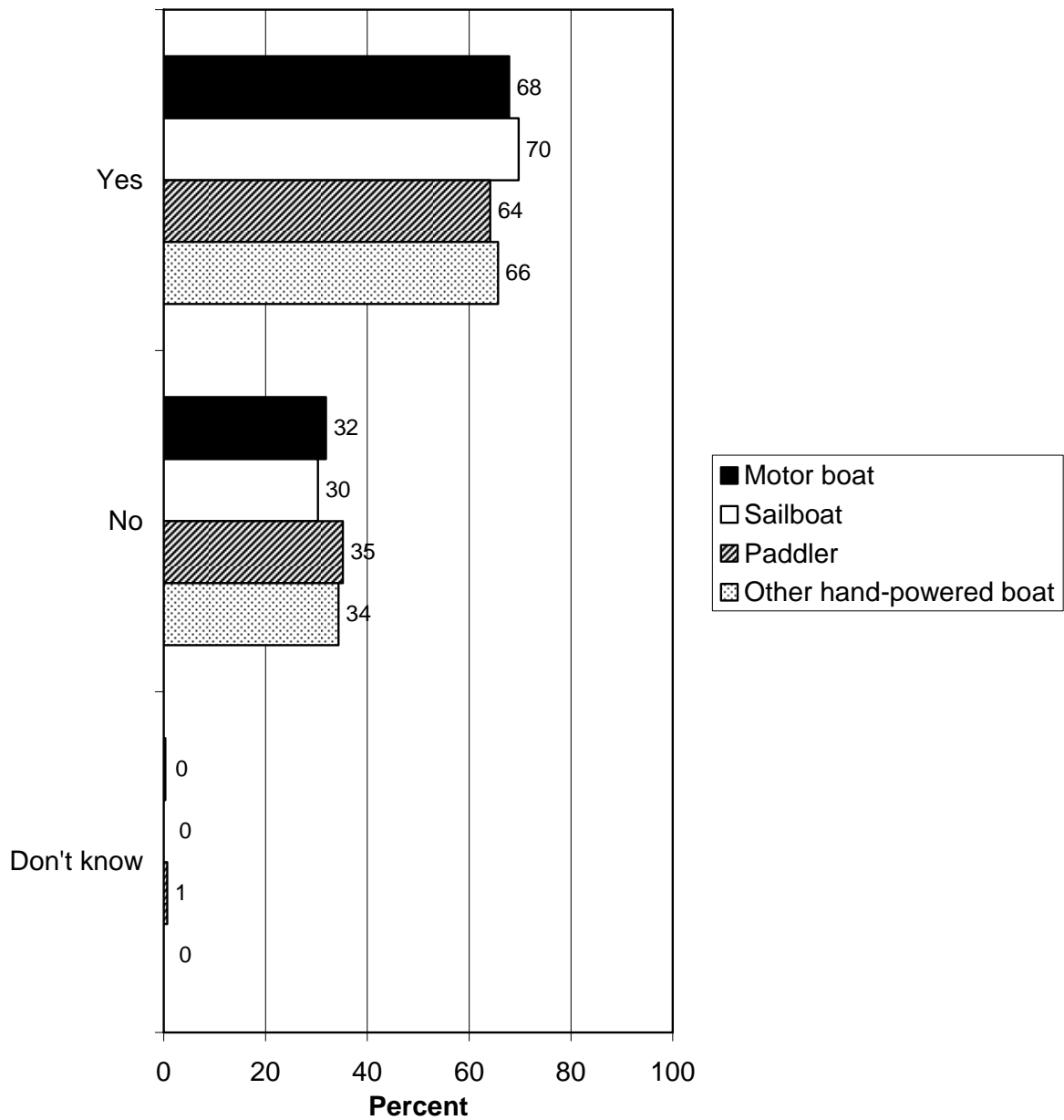
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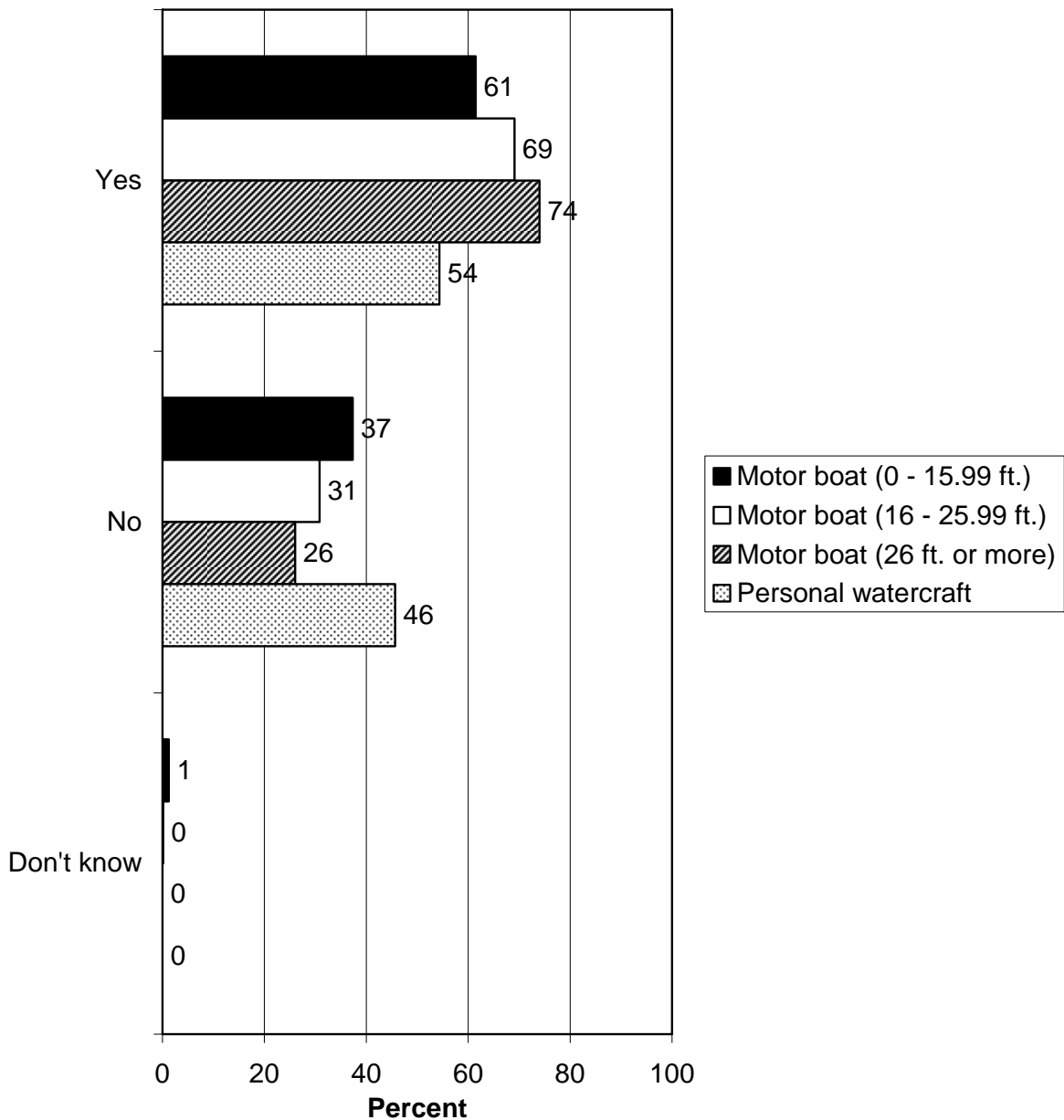
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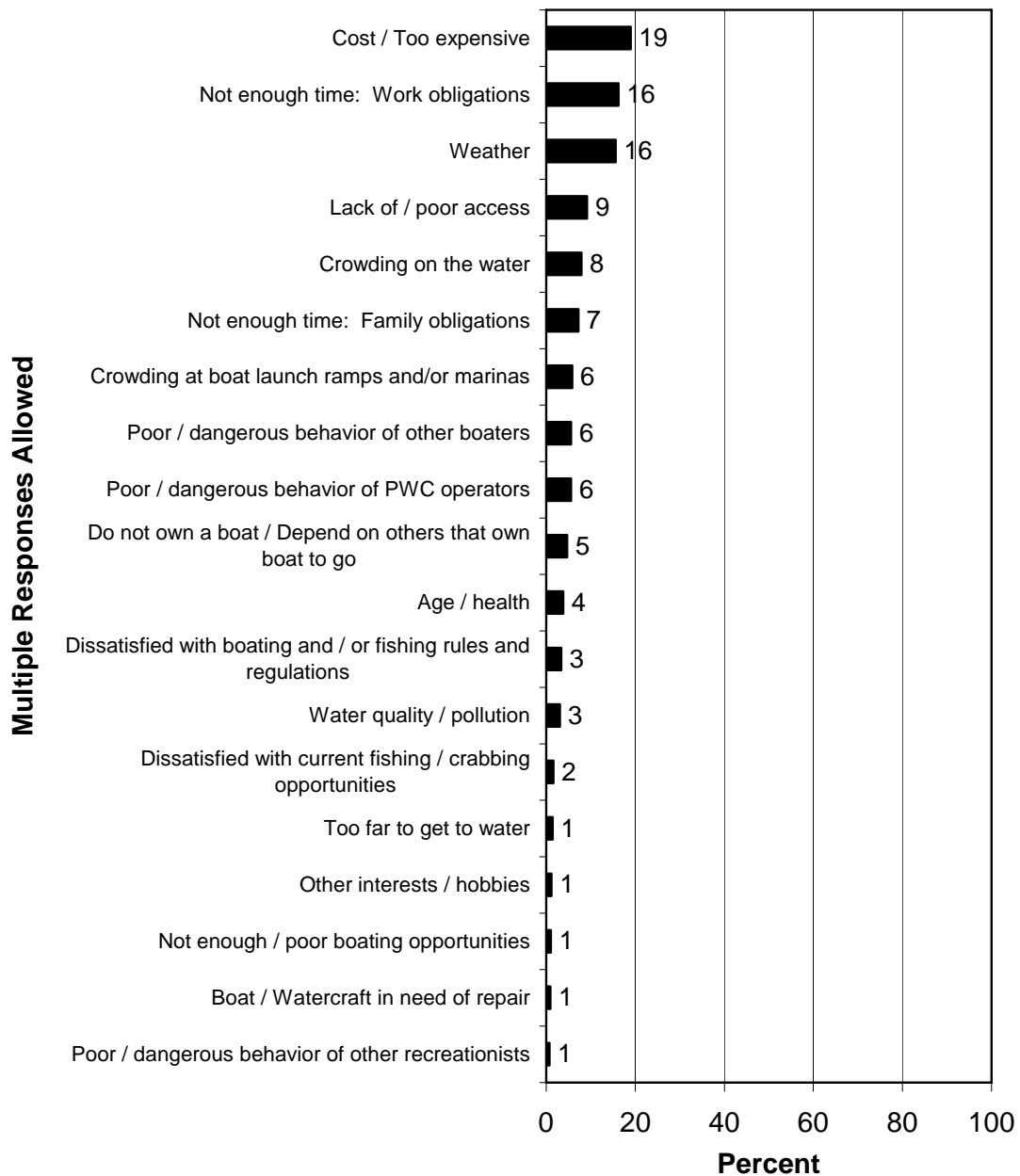
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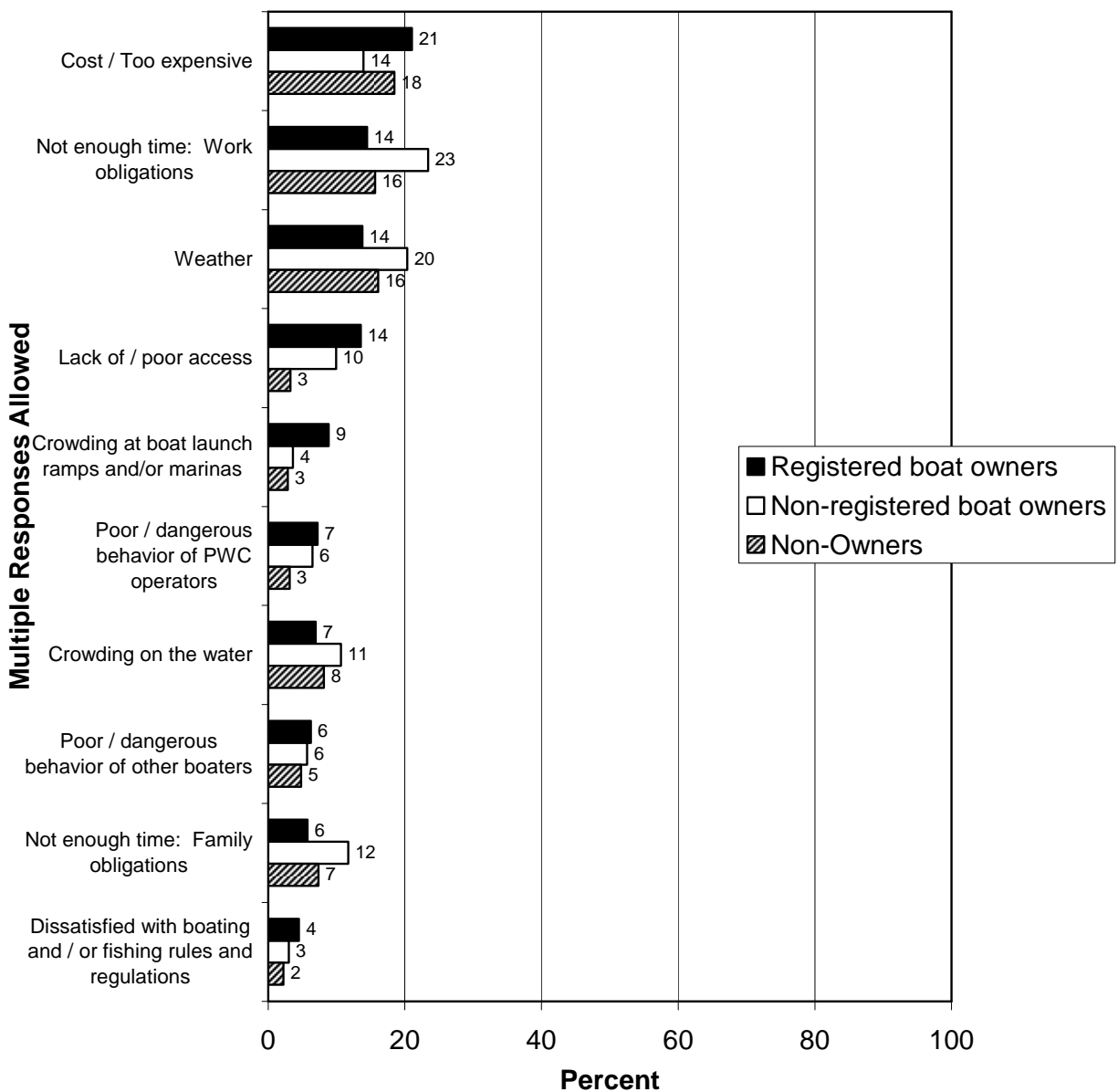


**Q99. What has taken away from your boating satisfaction? (Asked of those who have things that take away from his/her boating satisfaction or caused him/her not to participate in boating as much as he/she would like in Washington.)**

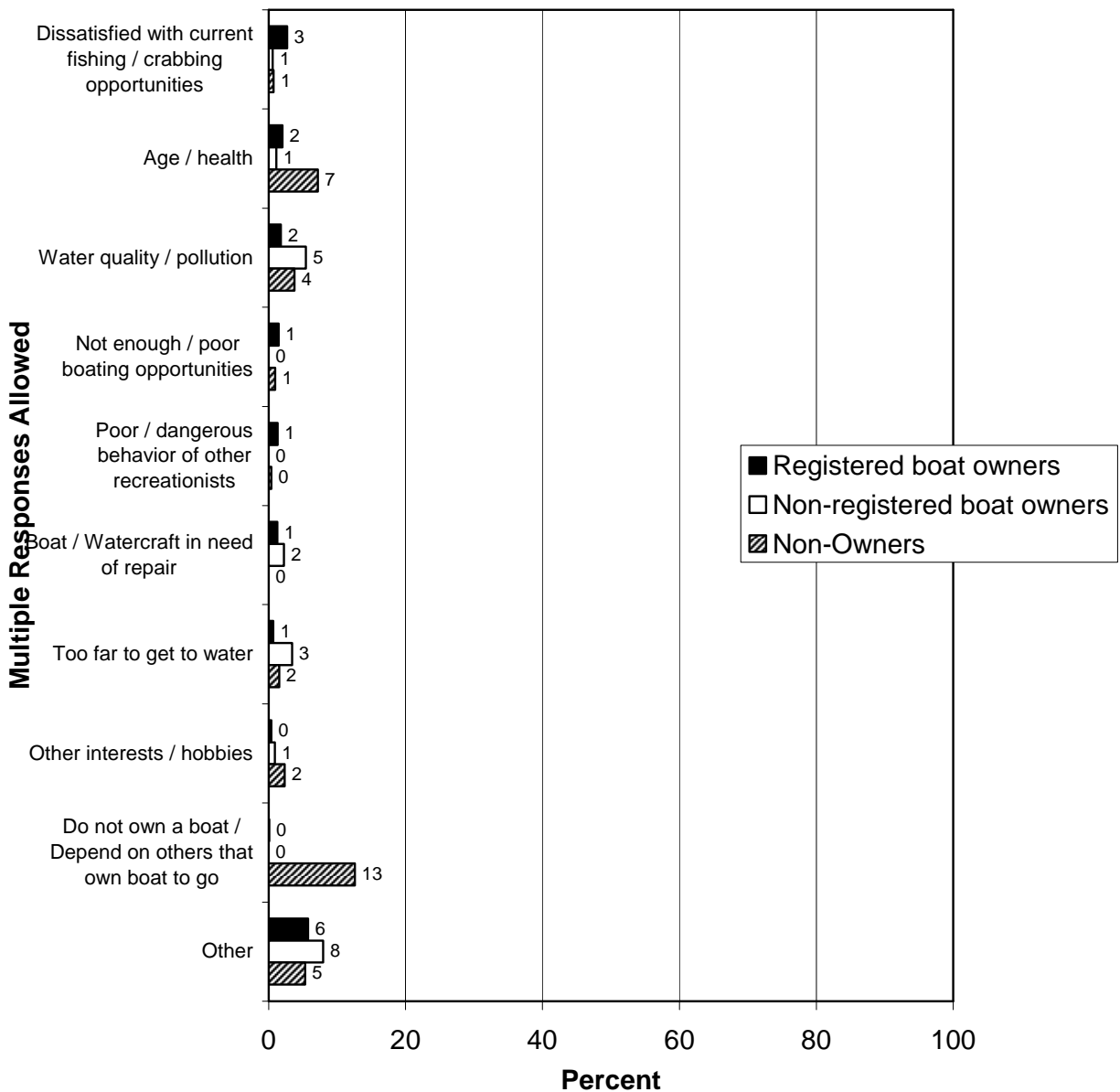




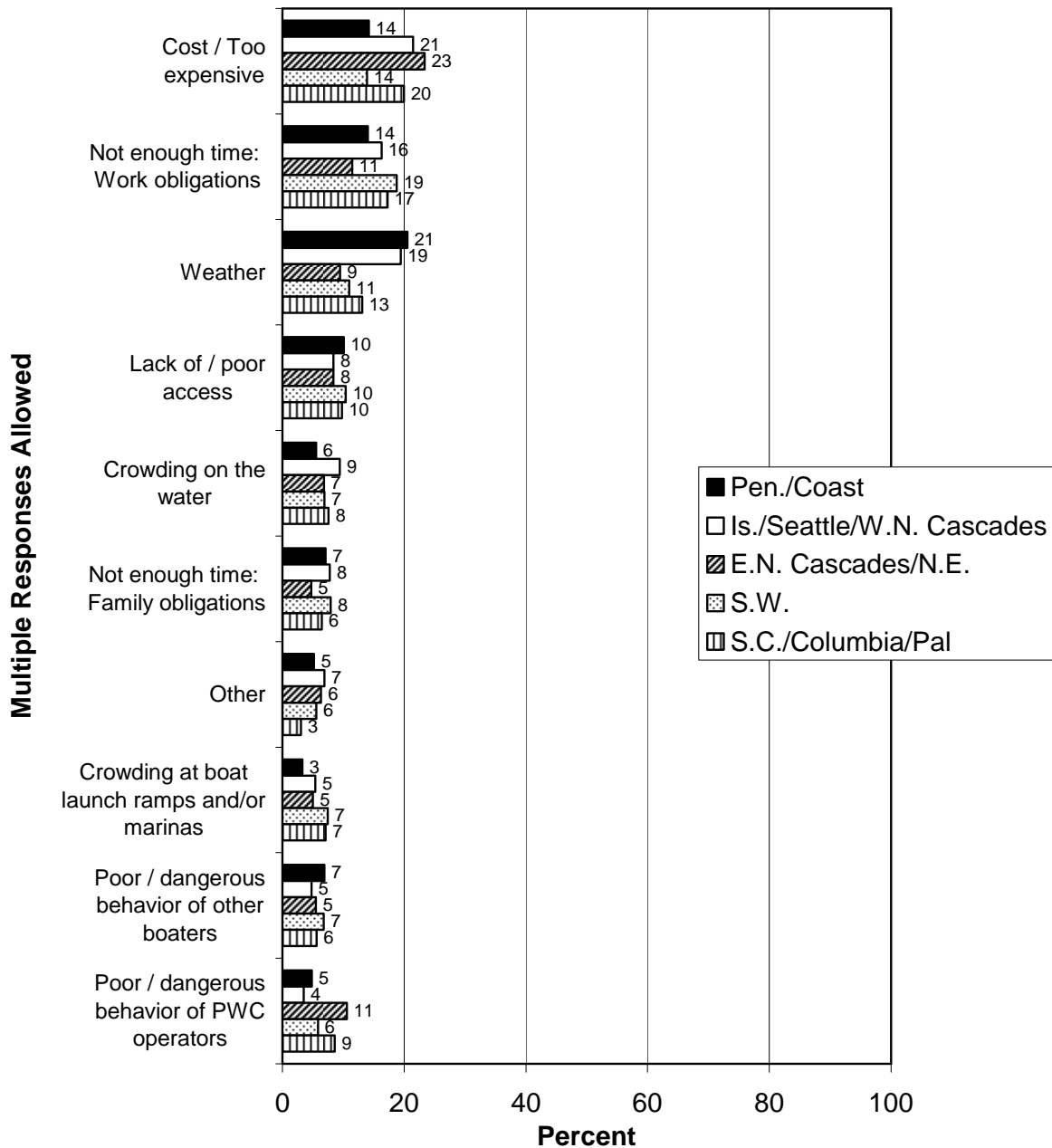
**Q99. What has taken away from your boating satisfaction? (Asked of those who have things that take away from his/her boating satisfaction or caused him/her not to participate in boating as much as he/she would like in Washington.) (Part 1.)**



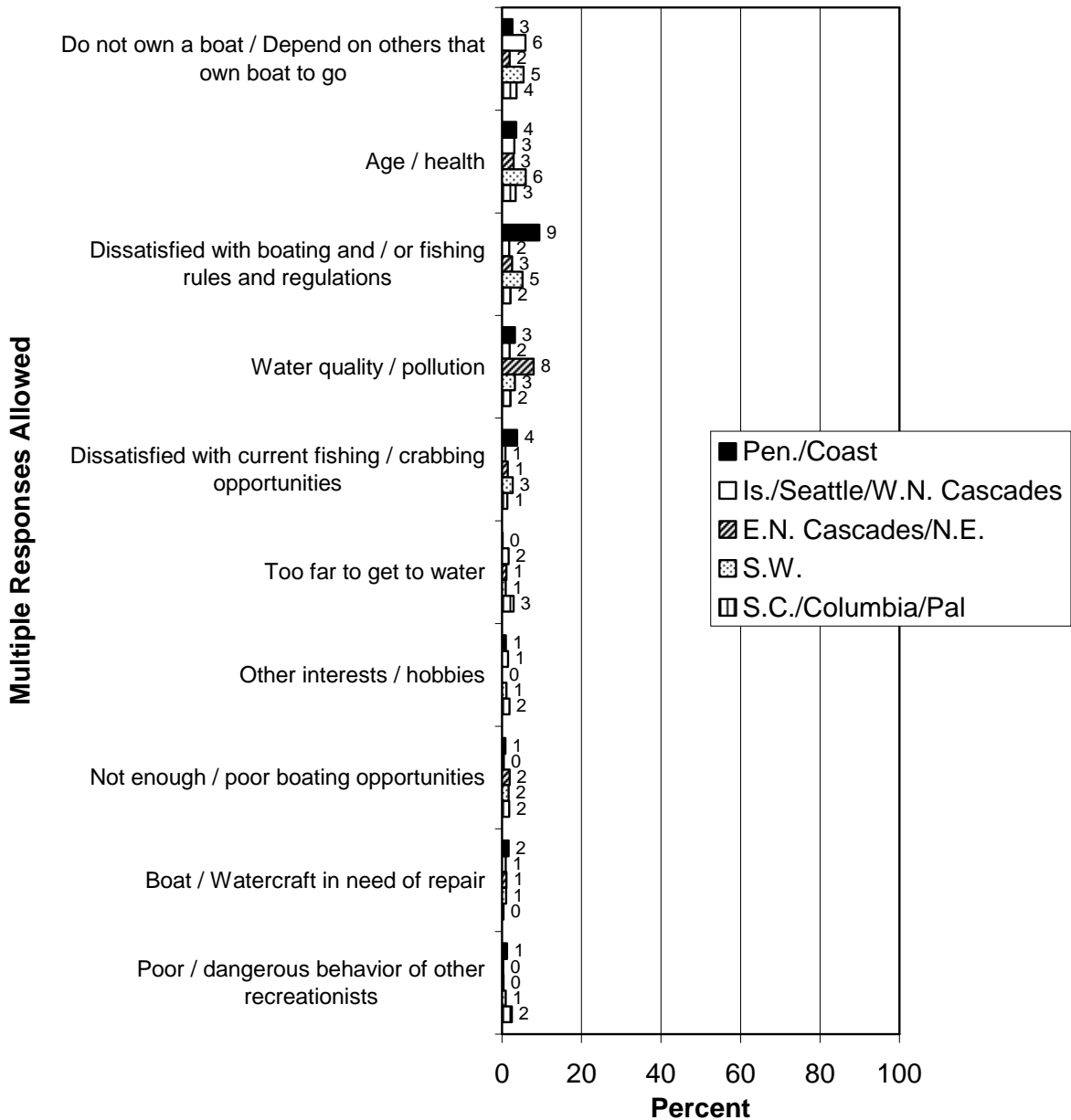
**Q99. What has taken away from your boating satisfaction? (Asked of those who have things that take away from his/her boating satisfaction or caused him/her not to participate in boating as much as he/she would like in Washington.) (Part 2.)**



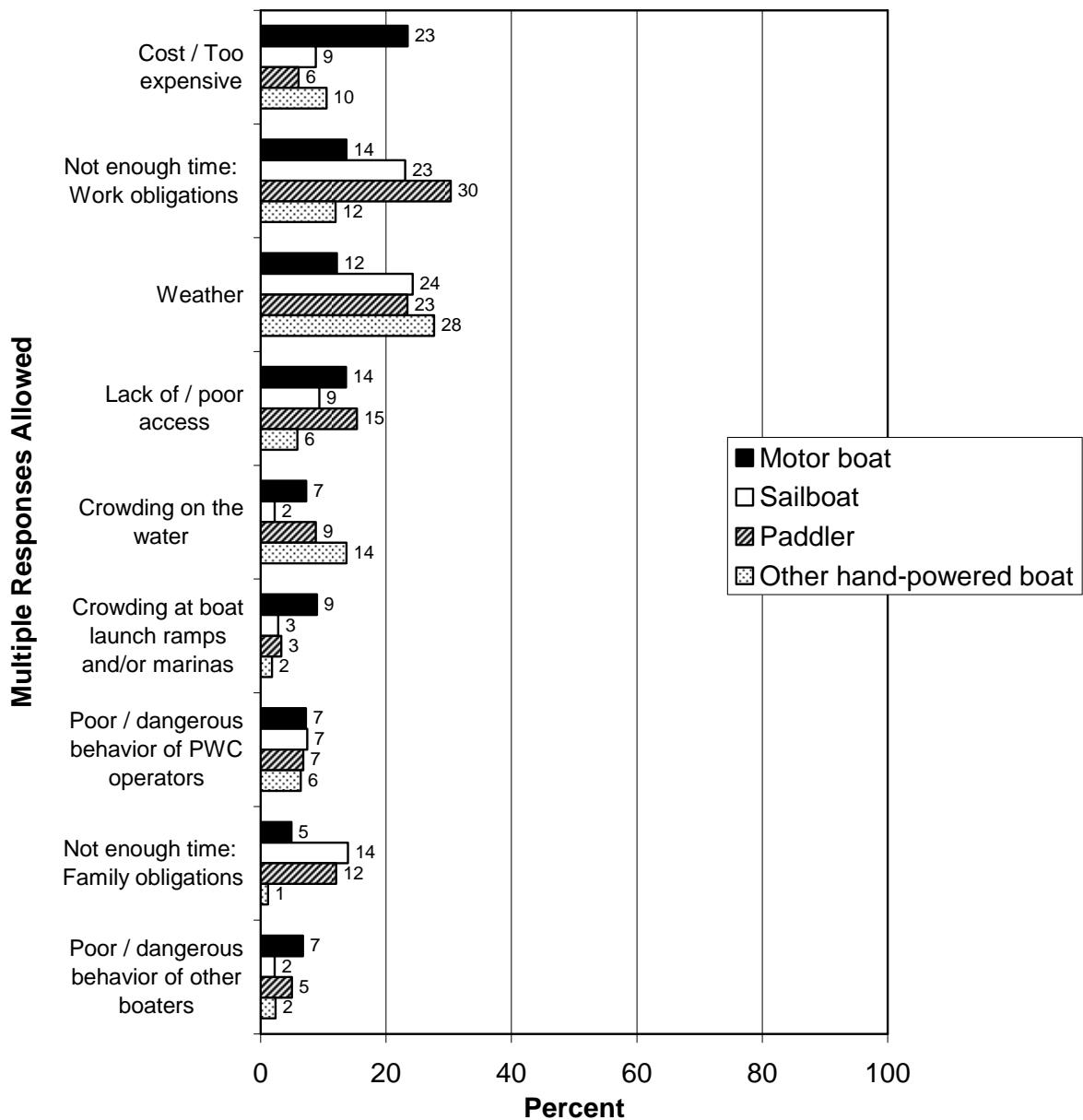
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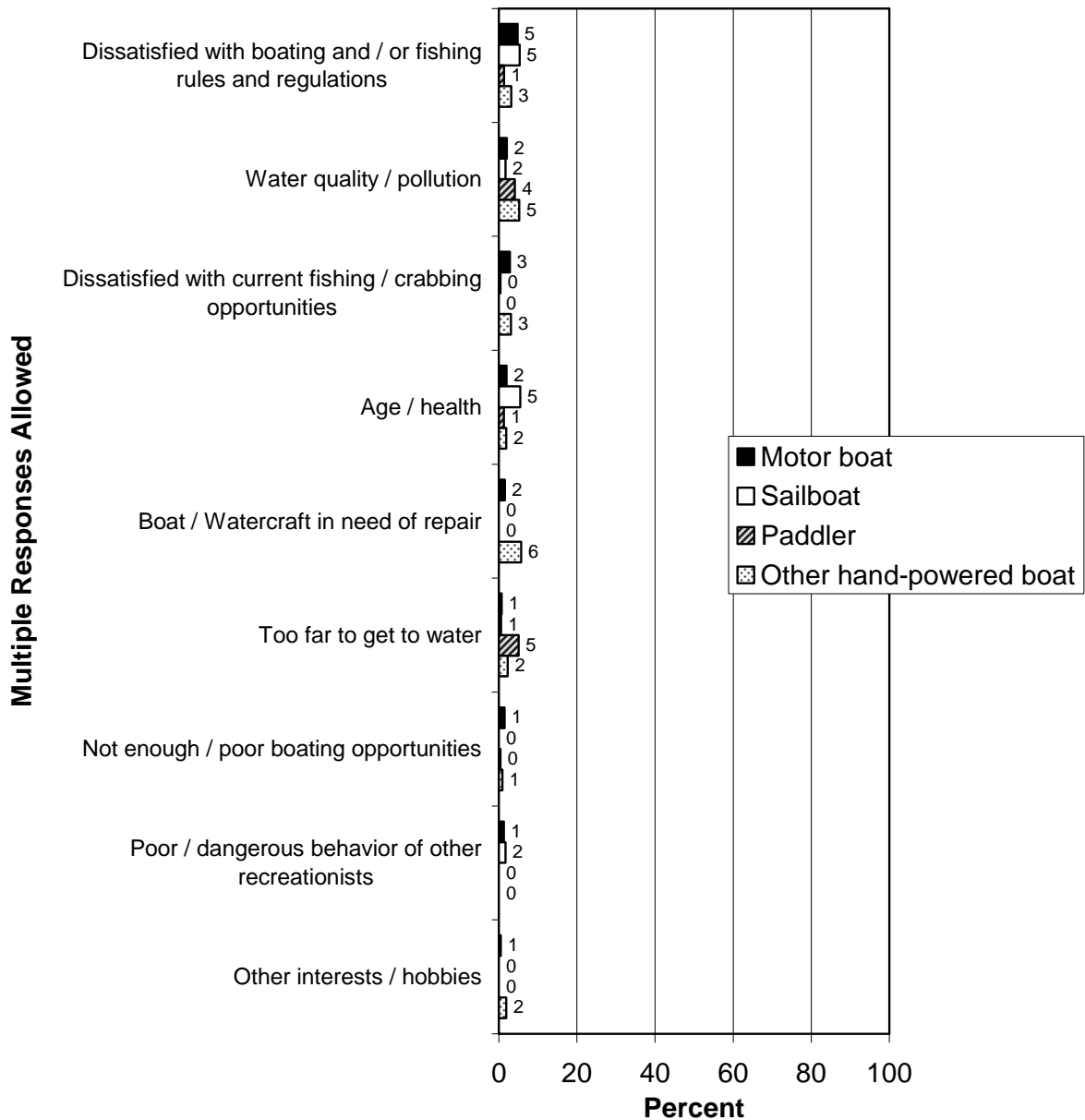
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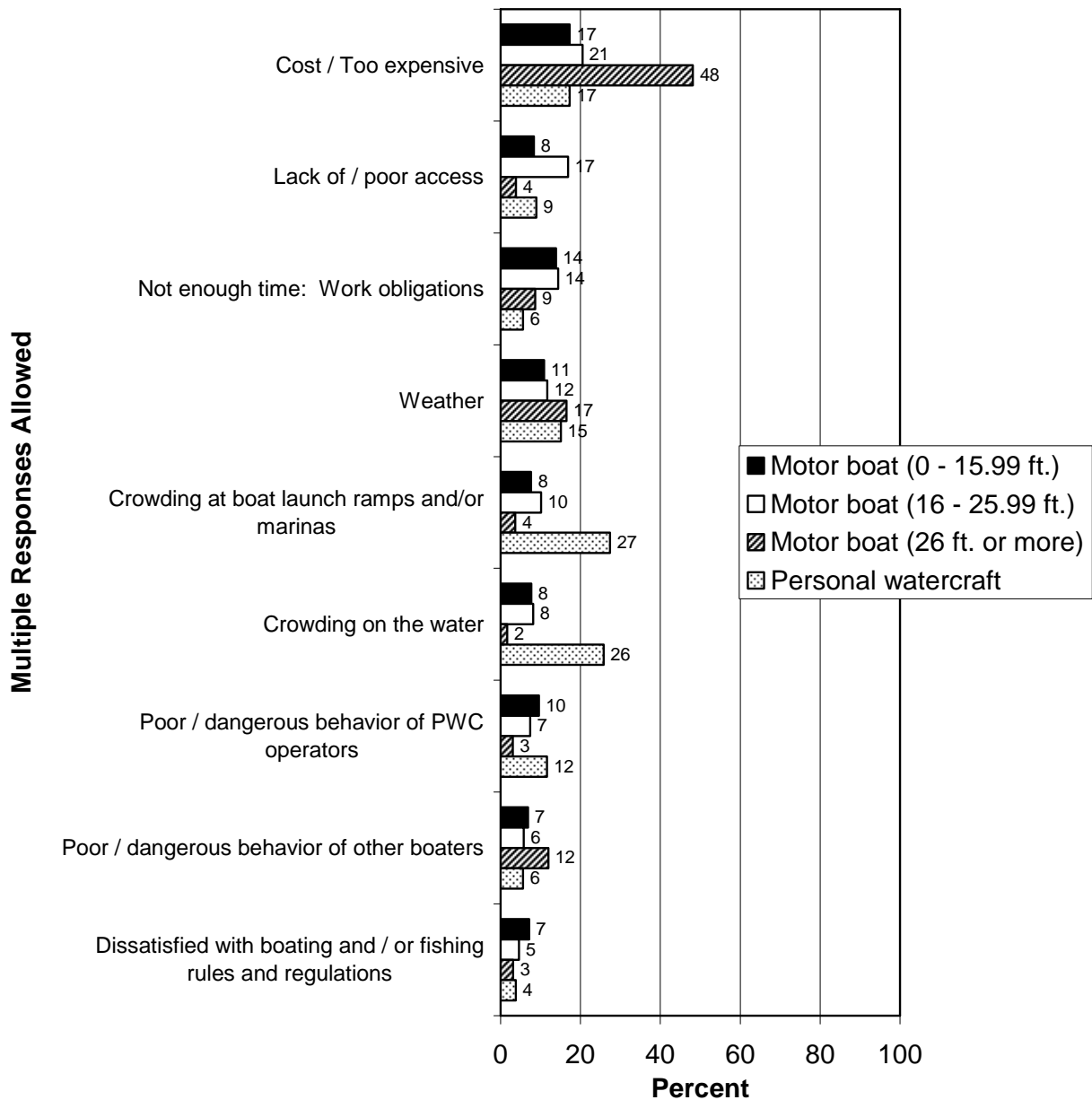
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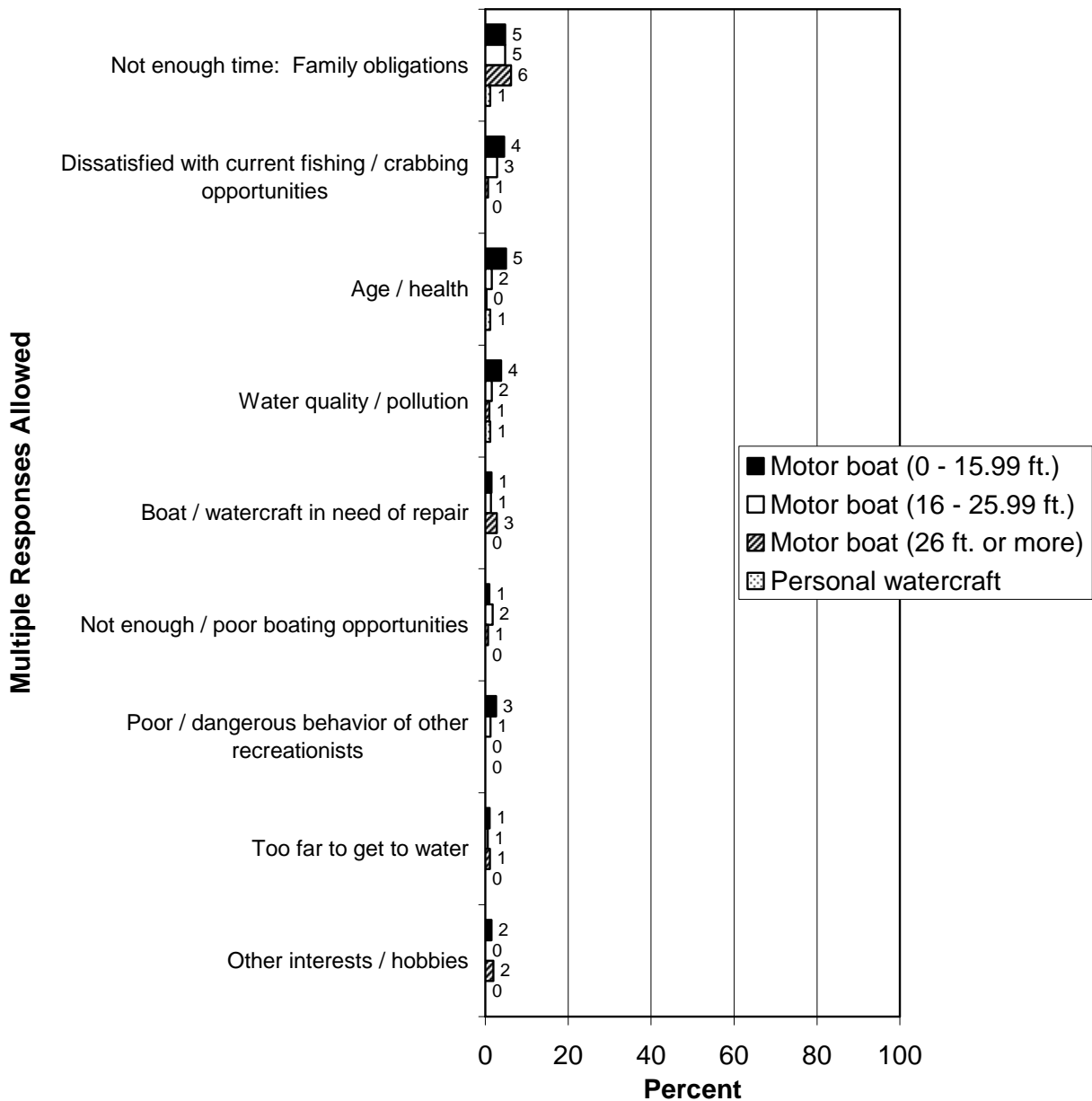
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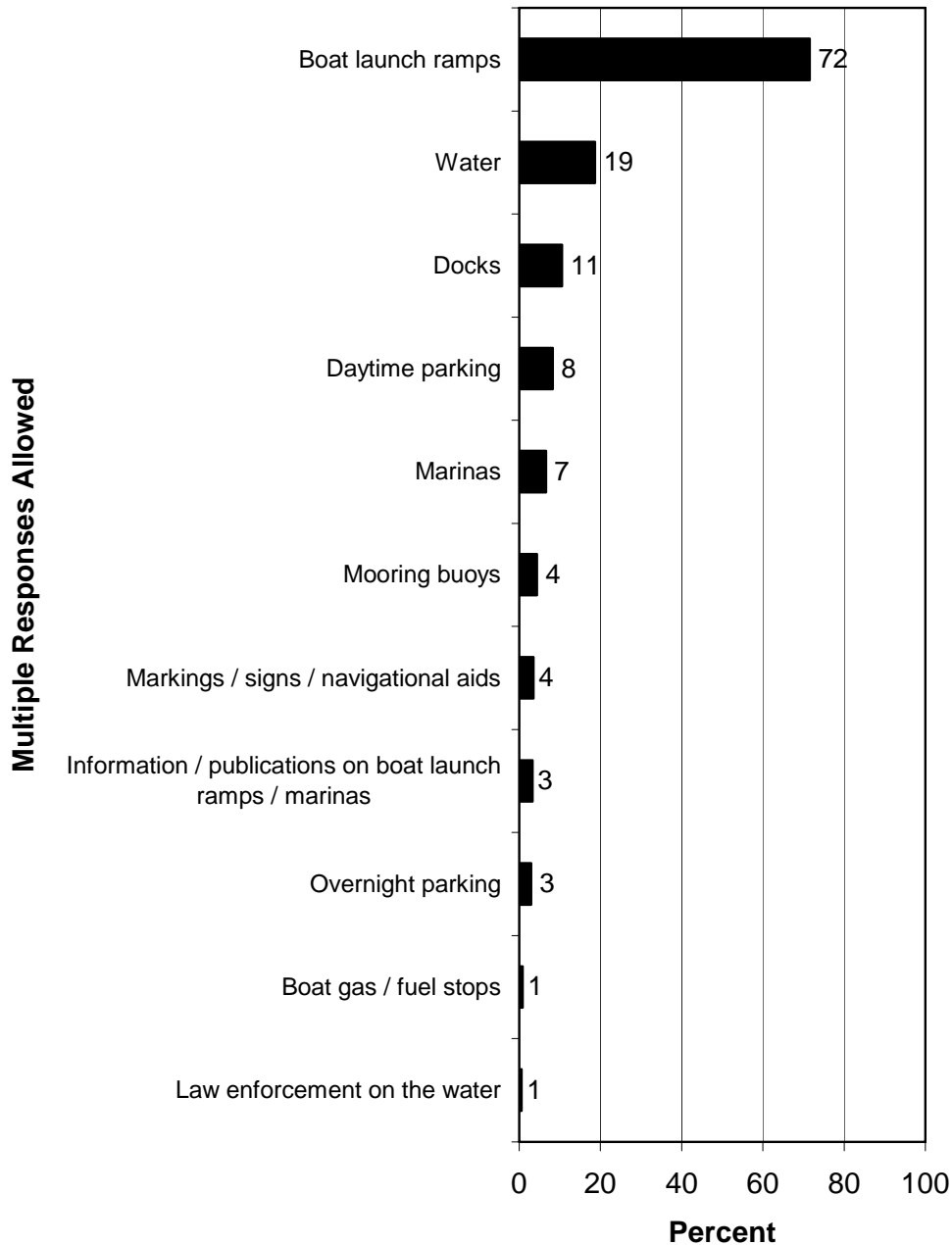


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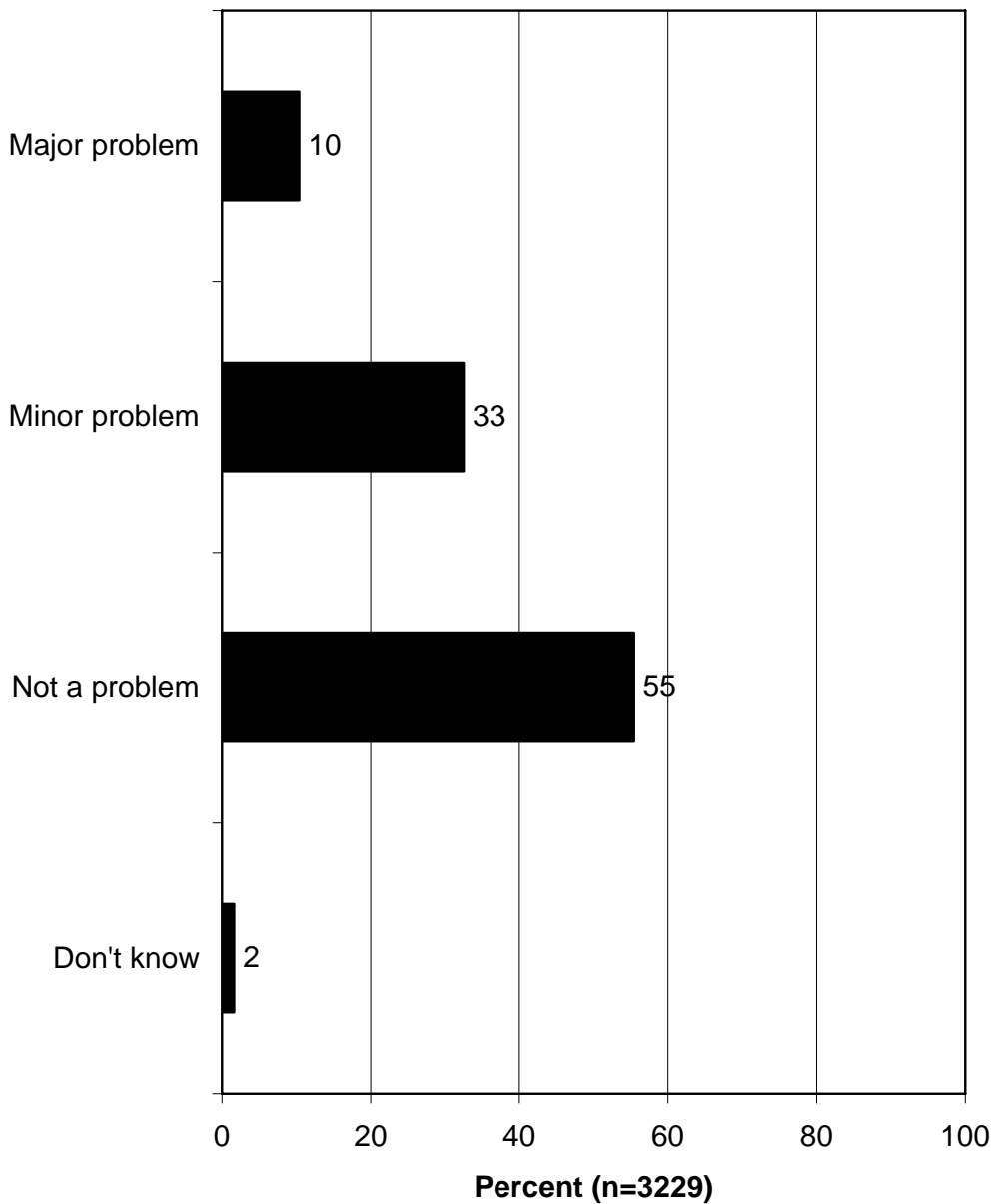




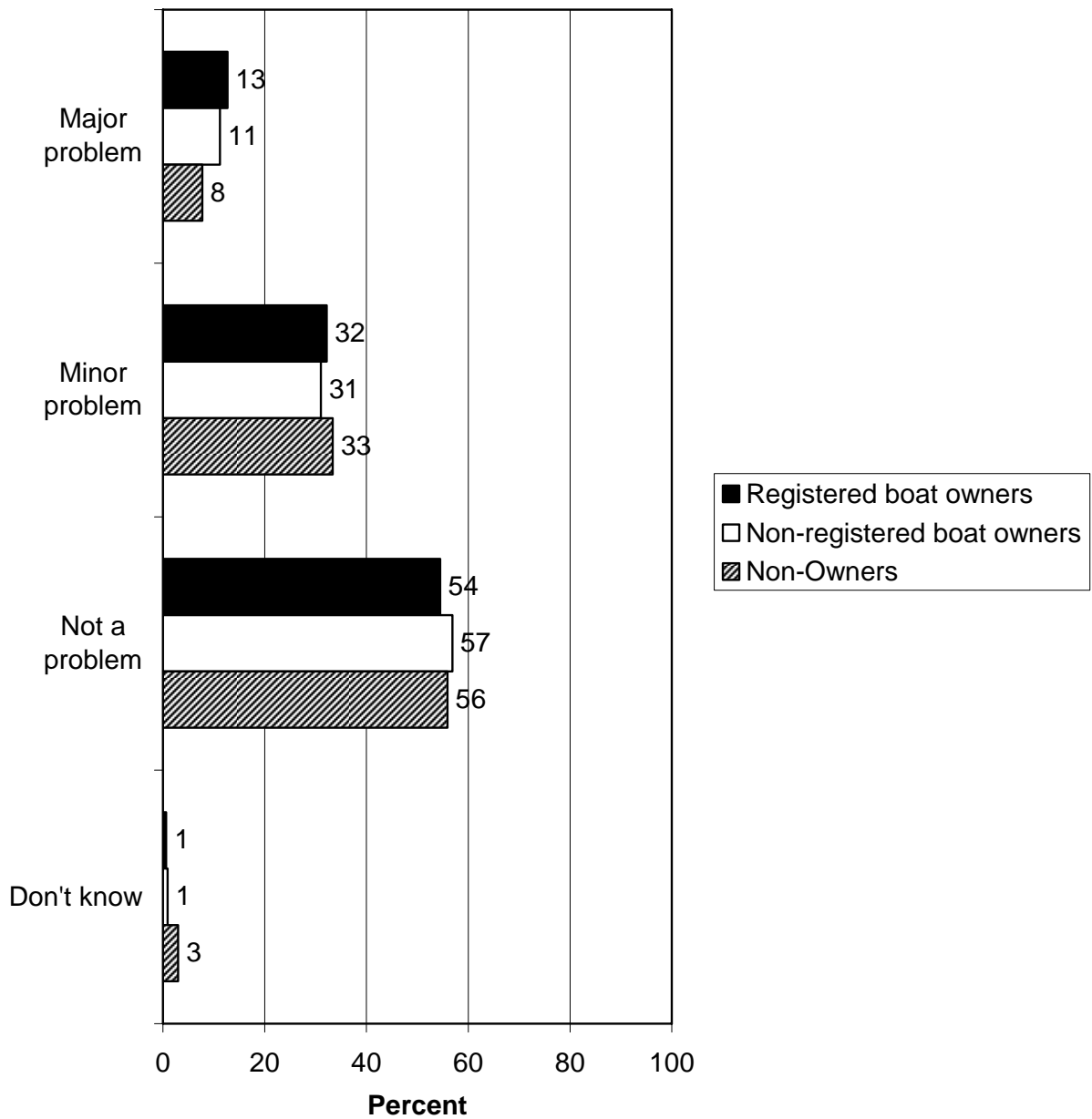
**Q103. Specifically, what did you have poor access to? (Asked of those who indicated that lack of or poor access has taken away from his/her boating satisfaction.)**



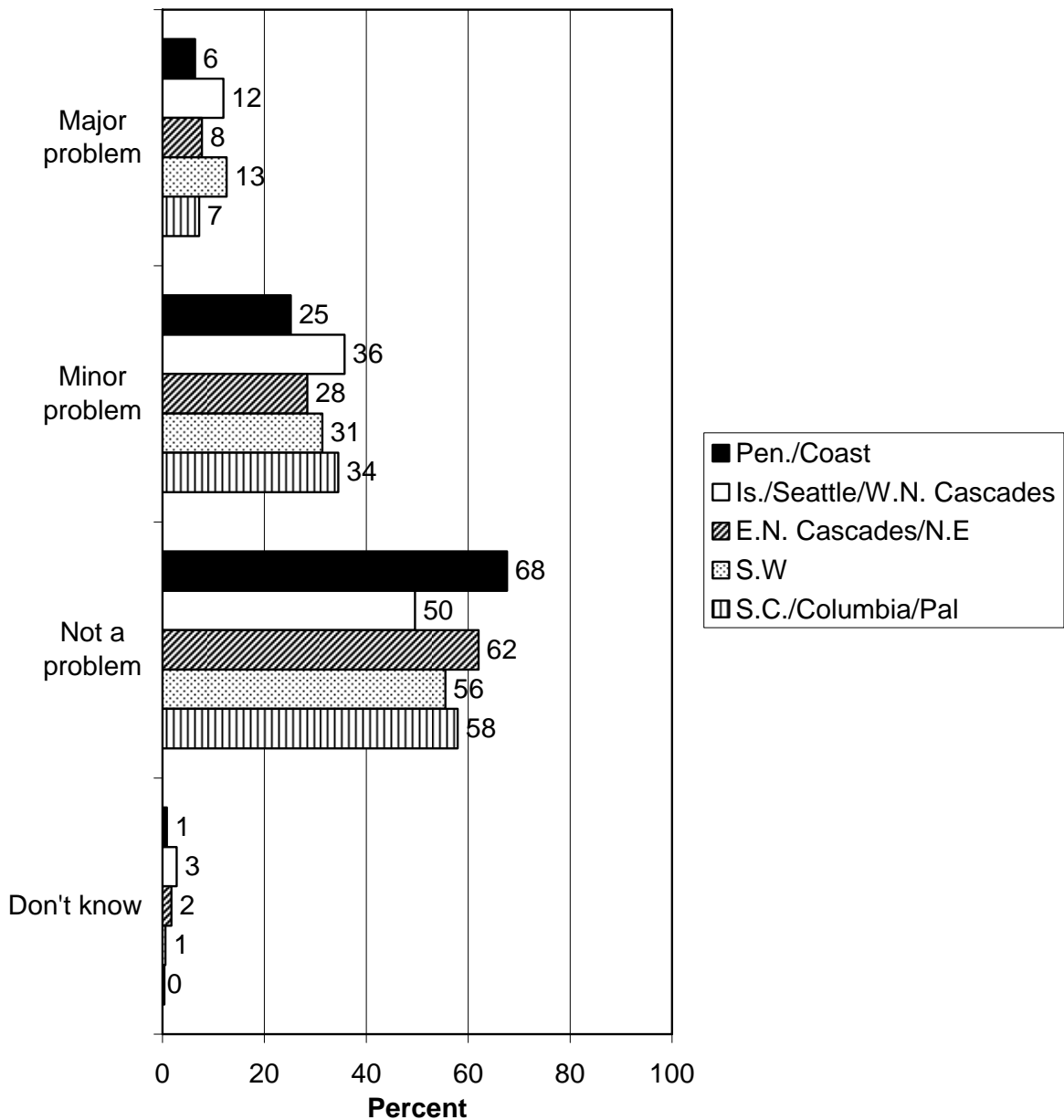
**Q105. Would you say that crowding on the water in the county where you boat most often in Washington is a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem?**



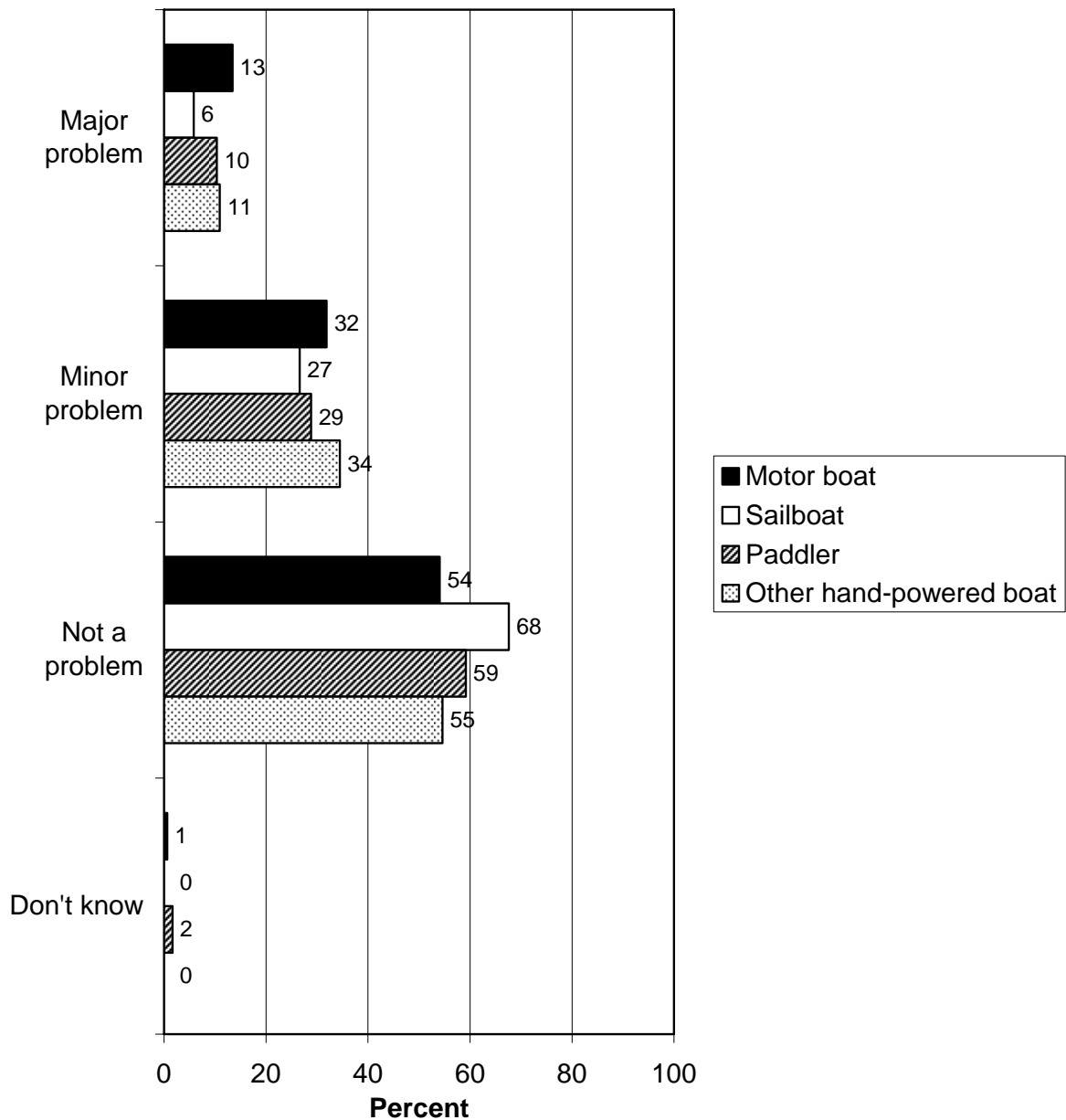
**Q105. Would you say that crowding on the water in the county where you boat most often in Washington is a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem?**



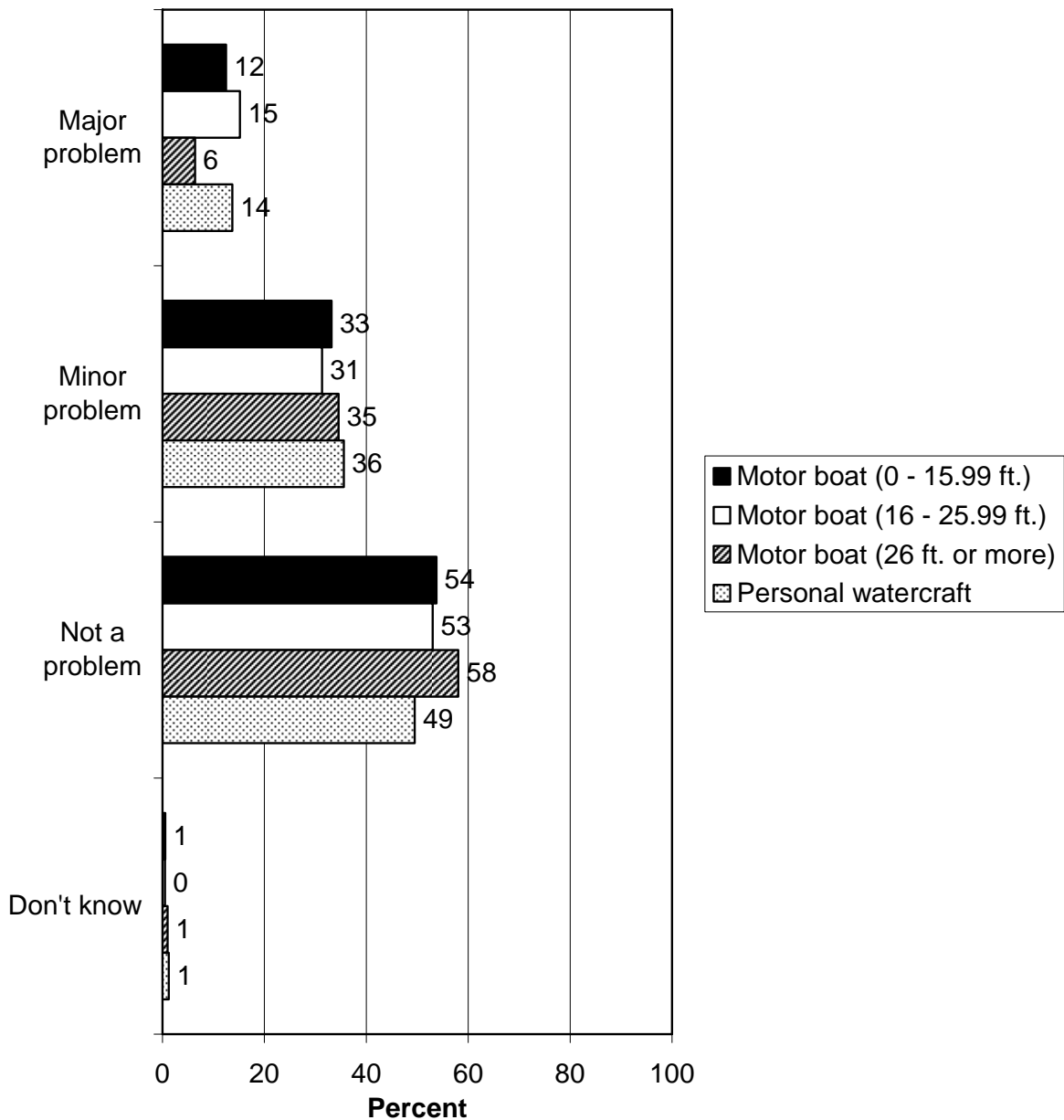
**Q105. Would you say that crowding on the water in the county where you boat most often in Washington is a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem?**



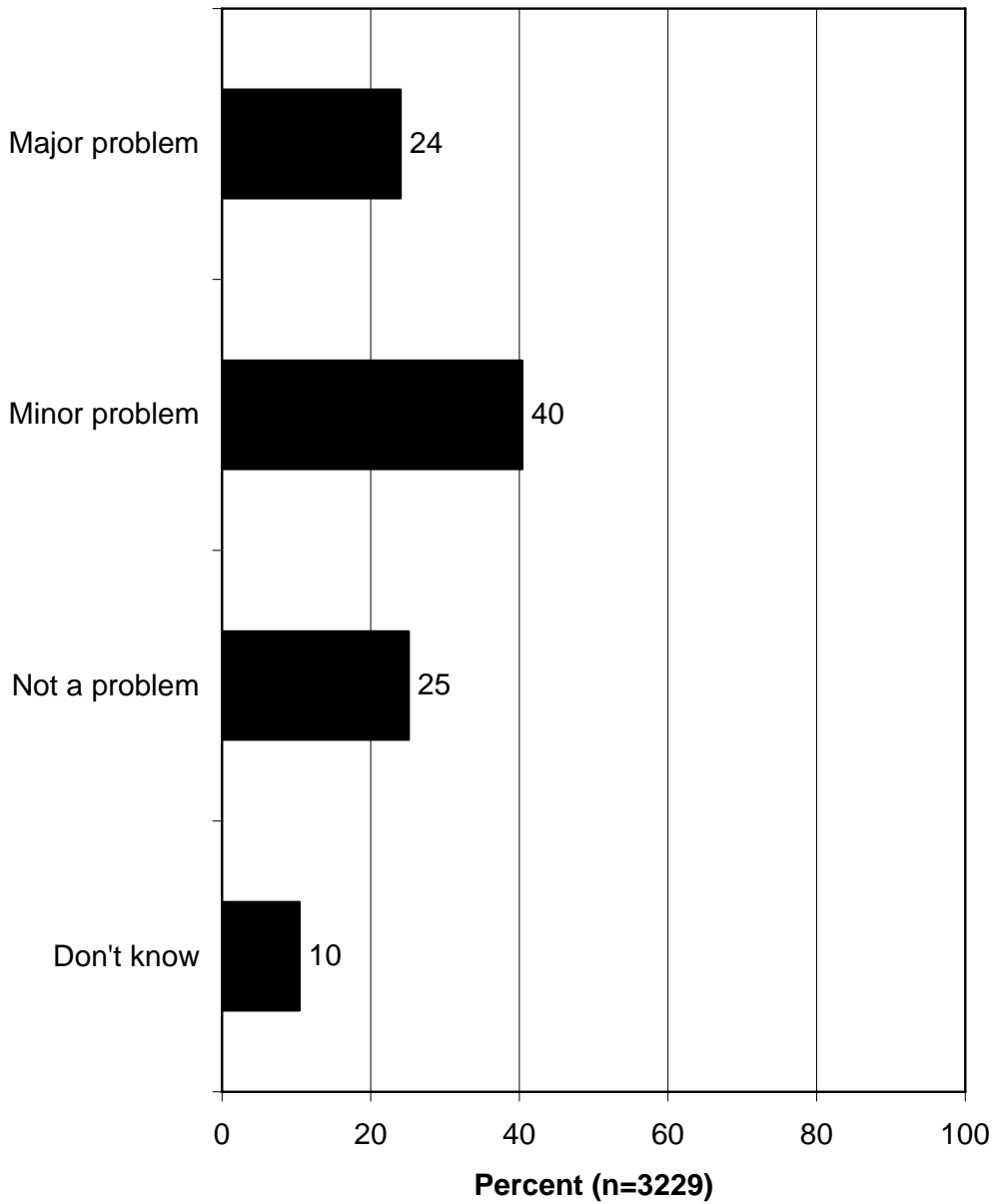
**Q105. Would you say that crowding on the water in the county where you boat most often in Washington is a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem?**



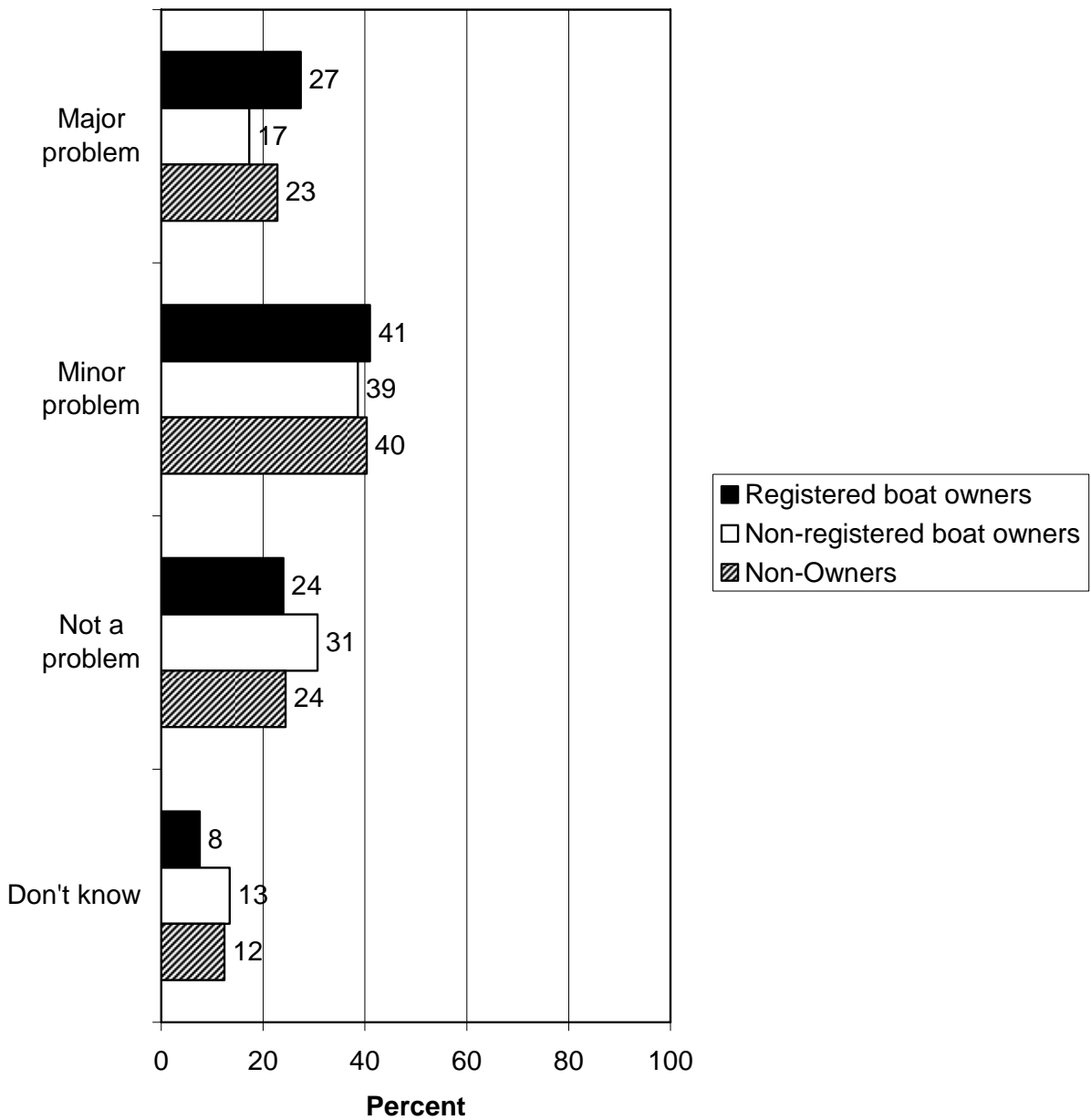
**Q105. Would you say that crowding on the water in the county where you boat most often in Washington is a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem?**



**Q200. Would you say that crowding at boat launch ramps in the county where you boat most often is a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem in Washington?**

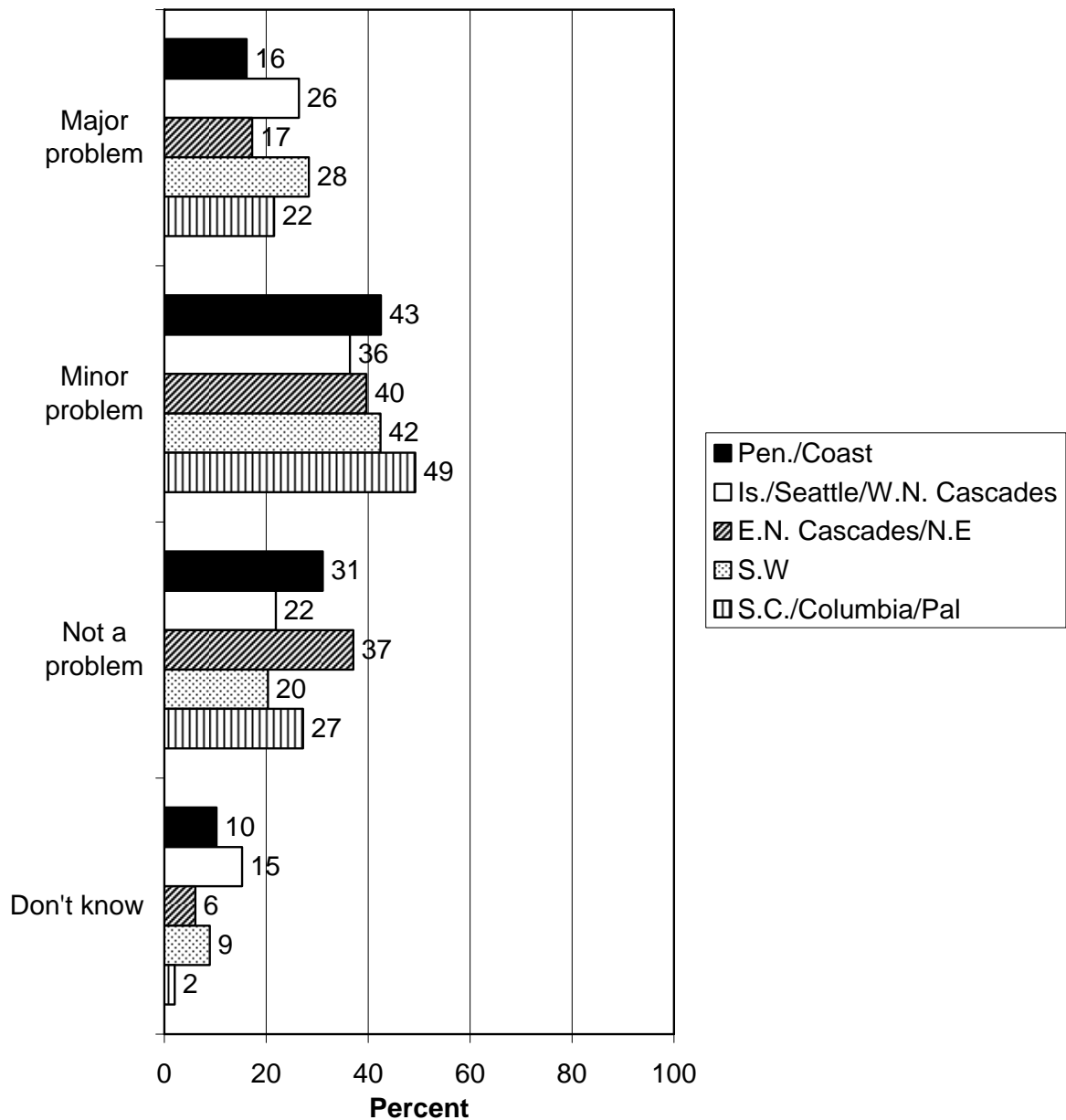


**Q200. Would you say that crowding at boat launch ramps in the county where you boat most often is a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem in Washington?**

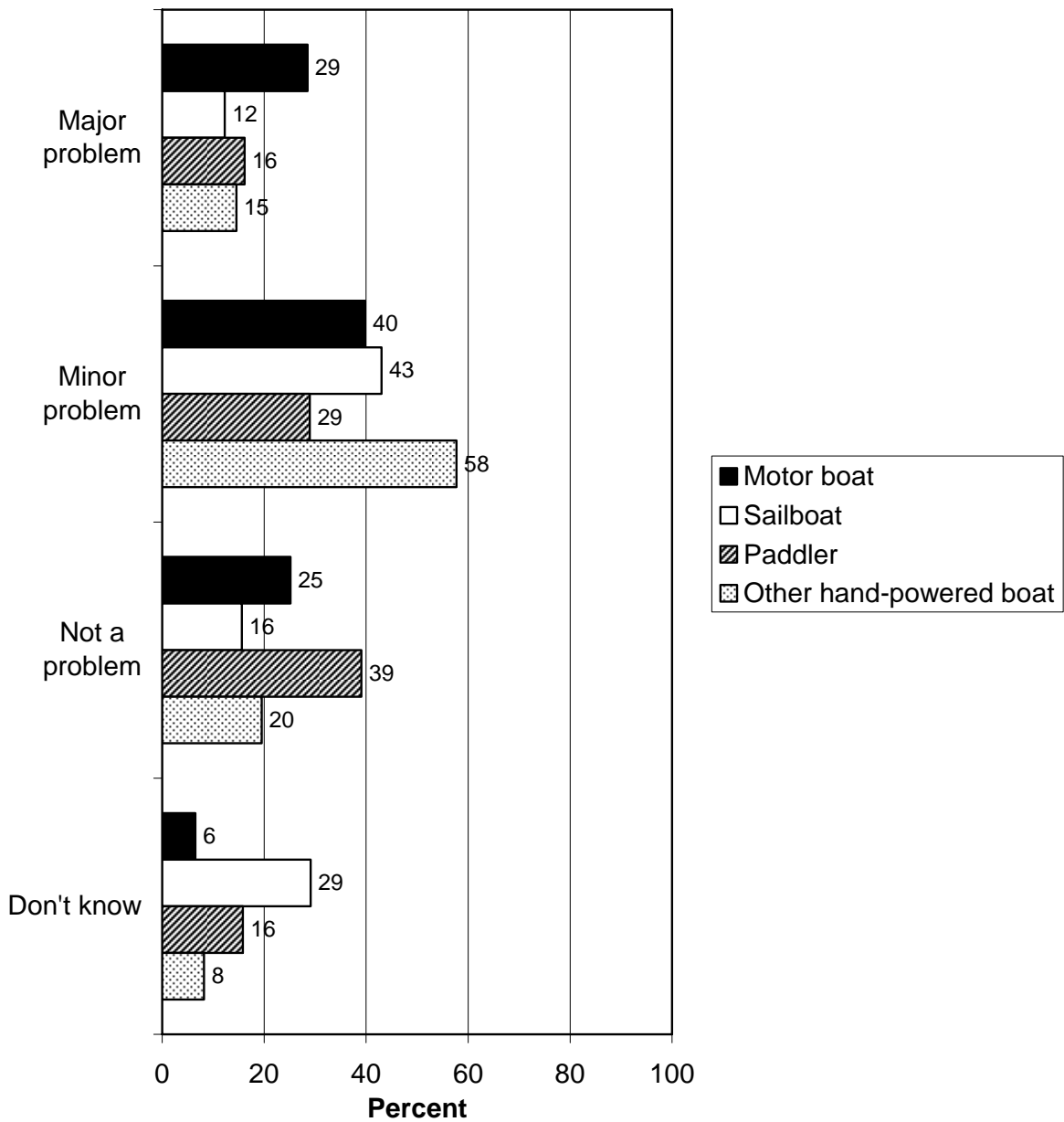




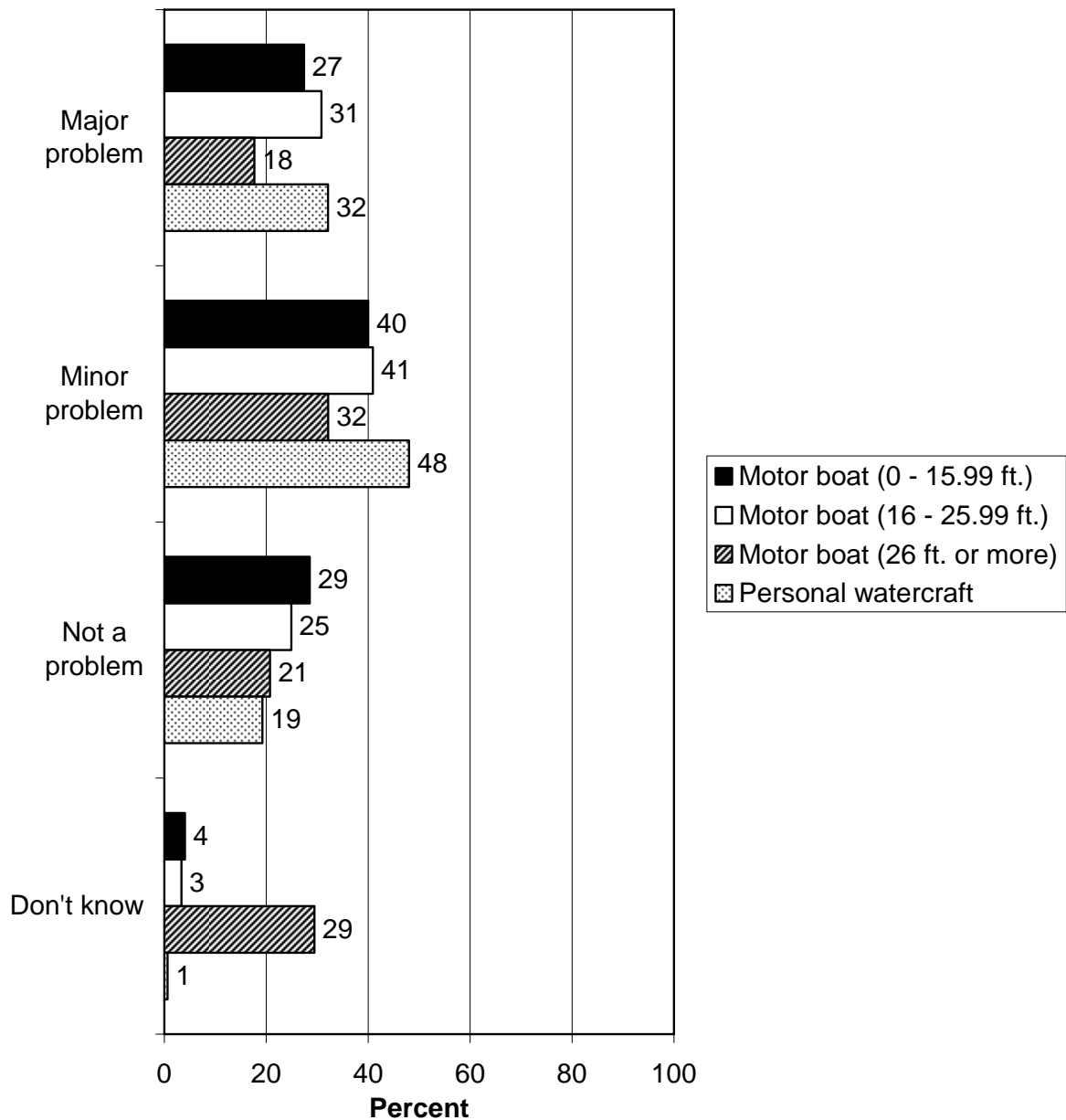
**Q200. Would you say that crowding at boat launch ramps in the county where you boat most often is a major problem, a minor problem, or not a problem in Washington?**



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## RATINGS OF STATE BOATING PROGRAMS, SERVICES, AND FACILITIES

### Ratings of Programs, Facilities, and Services Overall

- The survey asked boaters to say how effective boating programs and services are in Washington at meeting the needs of recreational boaters. The positive news is that the majority of boaters (76%) said the programs and services are effective; however, *somewhat* effective led *very* effective by about 2 to 1. Only 6% said that programs and services are not at all effective.
  - In the crosstabulation by type of boater, registered boat owners were the least likely to say that they do not know. Otherwise, the results are not much different by type of boater.
  - The regional crosstabulation found little difference regarding perceived effectiveness of boating programs and services in meeting the needs of recreational boaters in Washington.
  - There is little difference among the various types of boaters in thinking that boating programs and services in Washington are not at all effective in meeting the needs of recreational boaters (the differences in the thinking that they are very or somewhat effective are mostly the result of differences in the amount saying “Don’t know”).
  - There is little difference among the various size groupings of motor boaters in thinking that boating programs and services in Washington are *not at all effective* in meeting the needs of recreational boaters. In looking at the other side of the question, there are slight differences in the very effective and somewhat effective answers: personal watercraft operators are the most likely to say that programs and services in Washington are effective at meeting the needs of recreational boaters, while Class A motor boaters are the least likely.
  
- Those who said that boating programs and services in Washington are not at all effective were asked to give their reasoning. They most commonly said insufficient law enforcement presence, lack of awareness of the programs among boaters, lack of education requirements for boaters, poor boating access, and poor allocation of boating funding.

- The crosstabulation by type of boat owner found some differences in the results to this question. Non-registered boat owners more often cited lack of awareness of programs, relative to registered boat owners and non-owners.
  - The regional crosstabulation is shown. Insufficient law enforcement presence was cited more often in the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region, compared to the other regions, particularly the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region. Being unaware of programs was higher in the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region and the Peninsula and Coast Region than in the other regions.
  - In the crosstabulation by type of boater, there were some differences. Insufficient law enforcement presence was cited more often by paddlers than by the other groups. Lack of awareness of programs was *least* cited by motor boaters. Poor access was cited by some paddlers and motor boaters; it was not cited by the other two types of boaters. Finally, sailboaters cited the lack of education requirements much more often than did the other types of boaters.
- A substantial percentage of boaters (42%) indicated that there are boating facilities or services in the county in which they boat most often that they would like to see improved. Additionally, 32% of boaters said that there are facilities or services that they would like to see built.
- Registered boat owners were much more likely to say that there are boating facilities or services in the county in which they boat most often that they would like to see improved or to see built, relative to non-registered boat owners and non-owners.
  - There were no marked differences in the regions on whether there are boating facilities or services in the county in which boaters boat most often that they would like to see improved or to see built.
  - In the crosstabulation by type of boater, motor boaters were the most likely to say that there are facilities and services in the county in which they most often boat that they would like to see improved; paddlers were the least likely. Motor boaters were the most likely to say that there are facilities and services in the county in which they most often boat that they would like to see built; paddlers were the least likely.

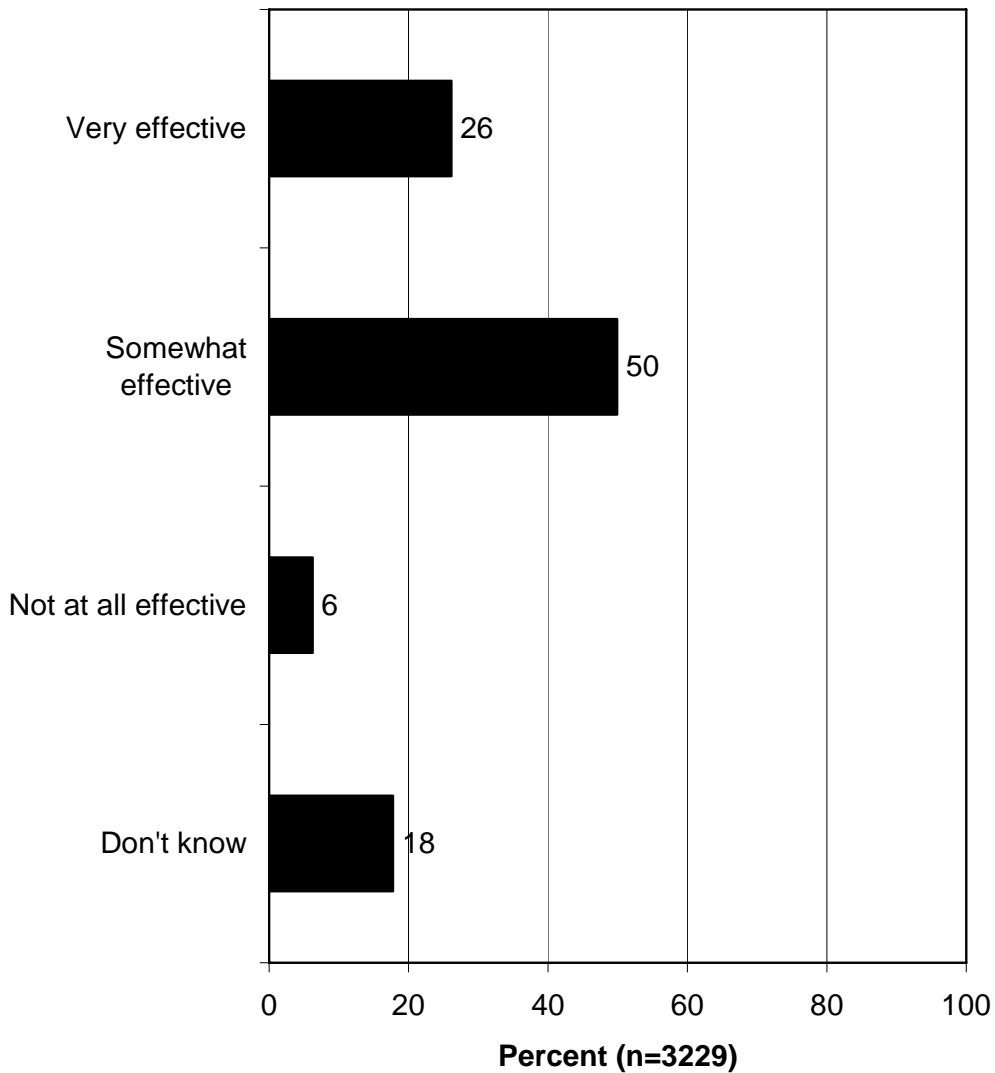
- In the crosstabulation by size of motor boat most commonly used, Class 1 motor boaters (16-25.99 feet in length) were the most likely to say that there are boating facilities or services in the county in which boaters boat most often that they would like to see improved, relative to the other motor boaters.
- In follow-up, those who indicated that there are aspects of facilities or services that need to be improved were asked to name the aspects. Most commonly, they named boat launch ramps, distantly followed by restrooms at boat launch ramps, more public access, mooring buoys or docks, and parking areas at boat launch ramps.
  - There were differences among the three boater types.
    - Boat launch ramps was named more often by registered boat owners than by non-registered boat owners and non-owners.
    - Mooring buoys and docks was named more often by registered boat owners and non-owners than by non-registered boat owners.
    - Restrooms at boat launch ramps was named more often by non-registered boat owners than by registered boat owners and non-owners.
  - There were some differences among the regions.
    - Boat launch ramps was named more often by Southwest Region boaters and Peninsula and Coast Region boaters than boaters from the other regions.
    - Marinas was mentioned more often by Peninsula and Coast Region boaters than by any other region's boaters.
  - There were some differences among the boater types.
    - Boat launch ramps was named more often by motor boaters than by any other type of boater.
    - Restrooms at launch ramps and restrooms at marinas were cited more often by paddlers than by any other type of boater.
    - Mooring buoys and docks was cited more often by sailboaters and motor boaters than by the other two types of boaters.
    - Marinas was cited more often by sailboaters than by any other type of boater.
    - Sanitary pump-outs and courtesy tie-ups were cited by sailboaters more often than by any other type of boater.

- There were some differences in the crosstabulation by motor boat size.
  - Boat launch ramps was named more often by operators of Class A and Class 1 motor boats than by the other groups.
  - Mooring buoys and docks was cited more often by operators of the largest motor boats than by the other groups.
  - Marinas was cited more often by operators of the largest motor boats than by the other groups.
- In follow-up, those who indicated that there are facilities or services that need to be built were asked to name the facilities or services. Most commonly, they named boat launch ramps, distantly followed by mooring buoys or docks, more public access, restrooms at boat launch ramps, marinas, parking areas at boat launch ramps, and camping areas.
  - There were differences among the three boater types.
    - Boat launch ramps was named more often by registered boat owners than by non-registered boat owners and non-owners.
    - Mooring buoys and docks was named more often by non-registered boat owners than by registered boat owners and non-owners.
    - Restrooms at boat launch ramps was named more often by non-registered boat owners than by registered boat owners and non-owners.
    - Camping areas was named by non-registered boat owners and non-owners more often than by registered boat owners.
  - There were regional differences, with the most notable discussed below.
    - Boat launch ramps was named more often by Southwest Region and South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region boaters.
    - Marinas was mentioned more often by Peninsula and Coast Region boaters than by any other boaters.
  - There were some differences among the boater types.
    - Boat launch ramps was named more often by motor boaters than by any other type of boater; sailboaters mentioned boat launch ramps the least.
    - Mooring buoys and docks was cited more often by operators of hand-powered boats than by the other types of boaters.

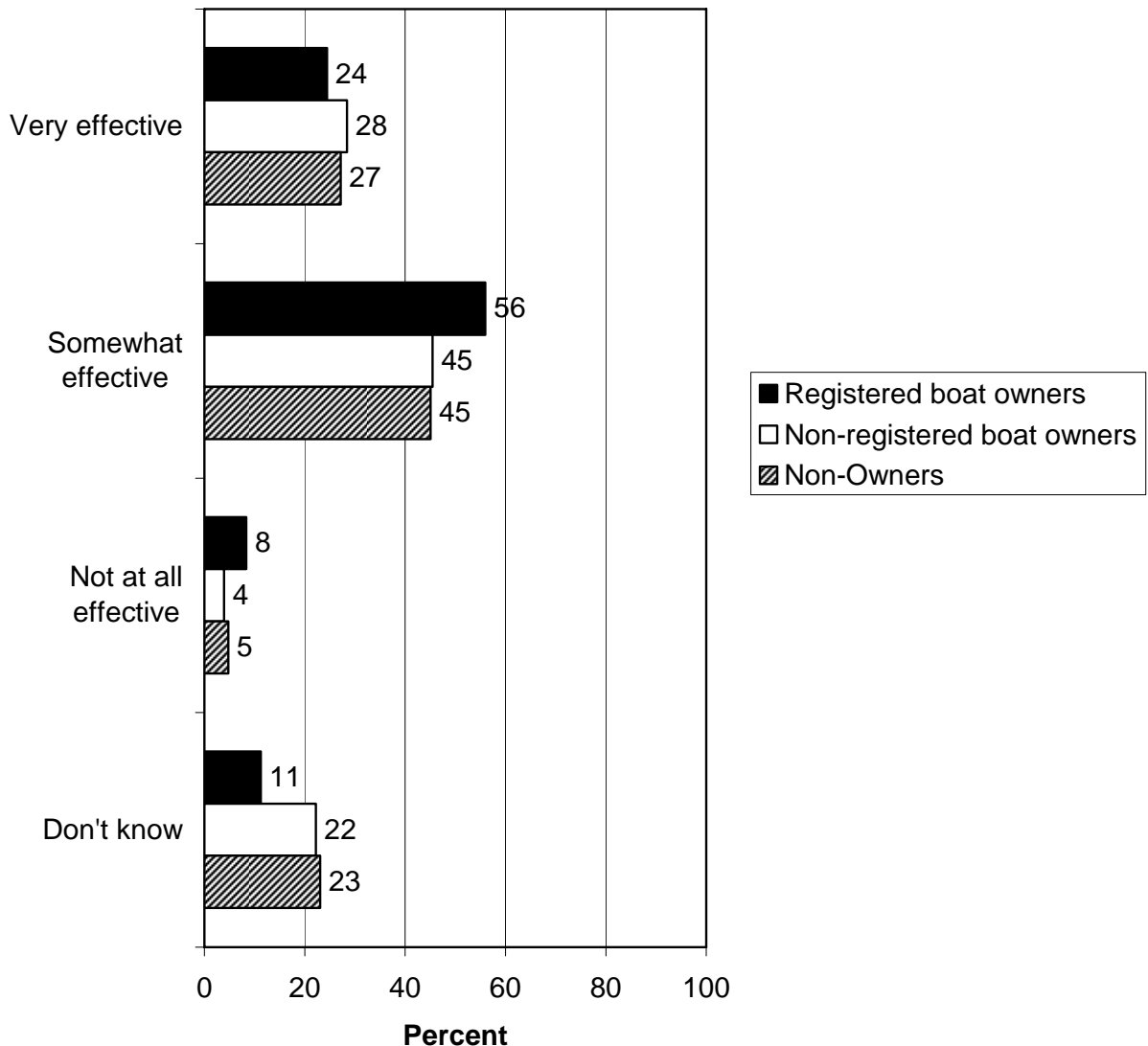
- More public access was cited by paddlers more often than by any other type of boater.
- Restrooms at launch ramps was cited the *least* often by sailboaters relative to the other types of boaters.
- Marinas was cited more often by sailboaters than by any other type of boater.
- Camping areas was cited by paddlers much more often than by any other type of boater.
- Sanitary pump-outs and courtesy tie-ups were cited by sailboaters more often than by any other type of boater.
- There were some differences among groupings by boat size.
  - Boat launch ramps was named the *least* often by operators of the largest motor boats relative to other boaters.
  - Mooring buoys and docks was cited more often by operators of the largest motor boats than by the other boaters.
  - More public access was cited by personal watercraft operators more often than by any other type of boater.
  - Marinas was cited more often by operators of the largest motor boats than by any other type of boater.
  - Sanitary pump-outs was cited by operators of the largest motor boats and by personal watercraft operators more often than by the other types of boaters.



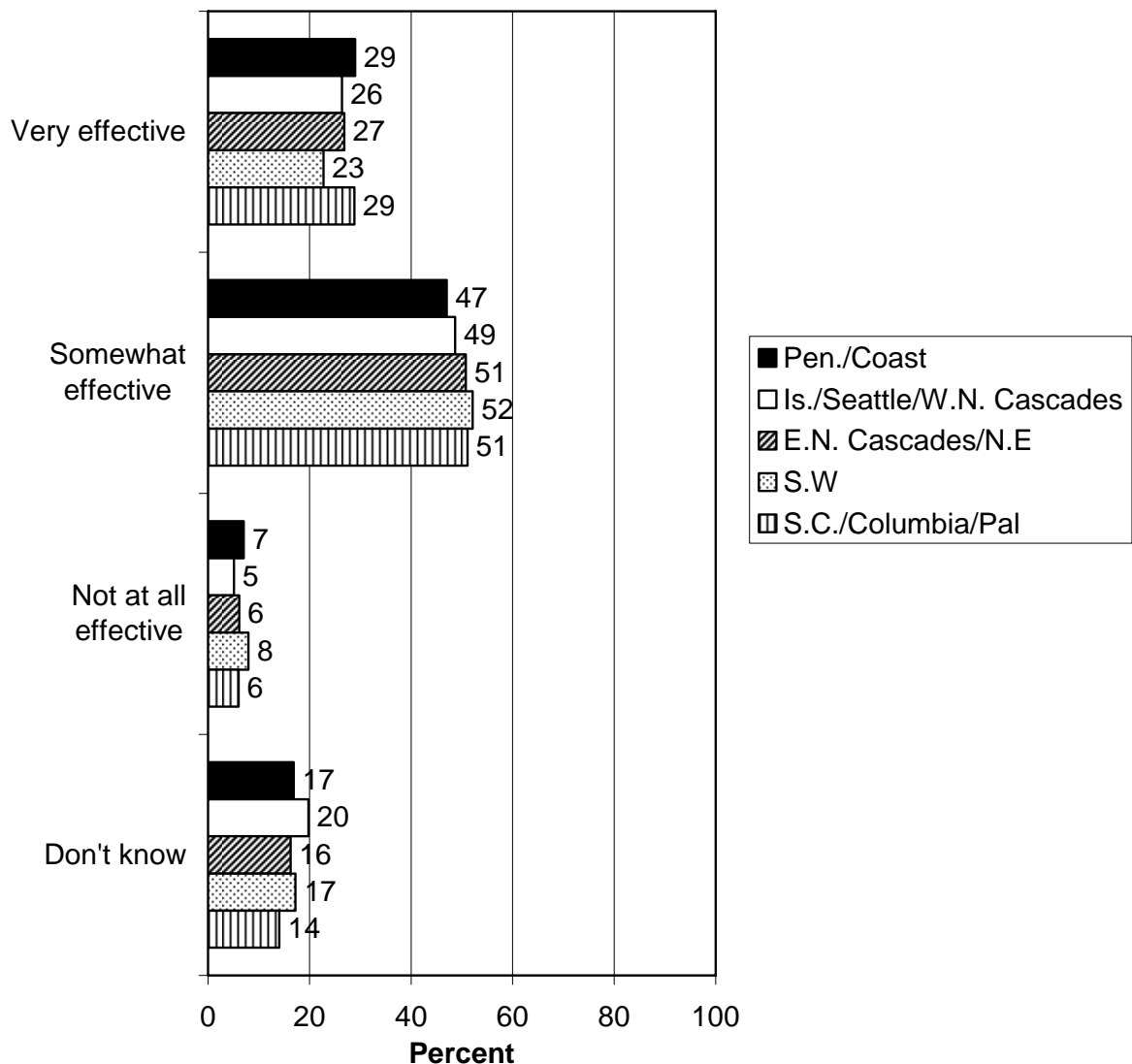
**Q106. Public boating programs and services, such as education, public access, and law enforcement, are administered by various state and local agencies and organizations in Washington. In general, how effective would you say boating programs and services in Washington are at meeting the needs of recreational boaters?**



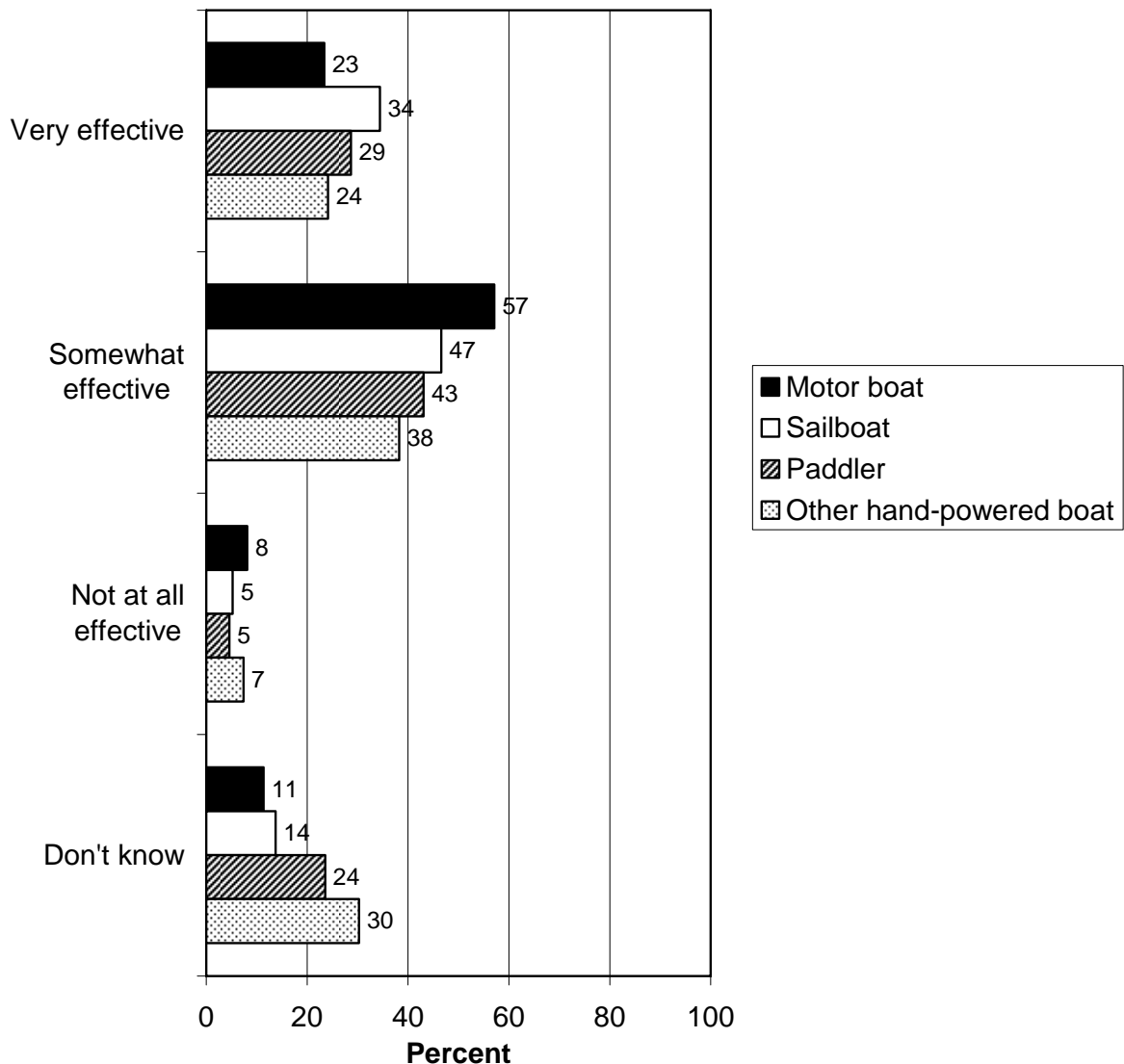
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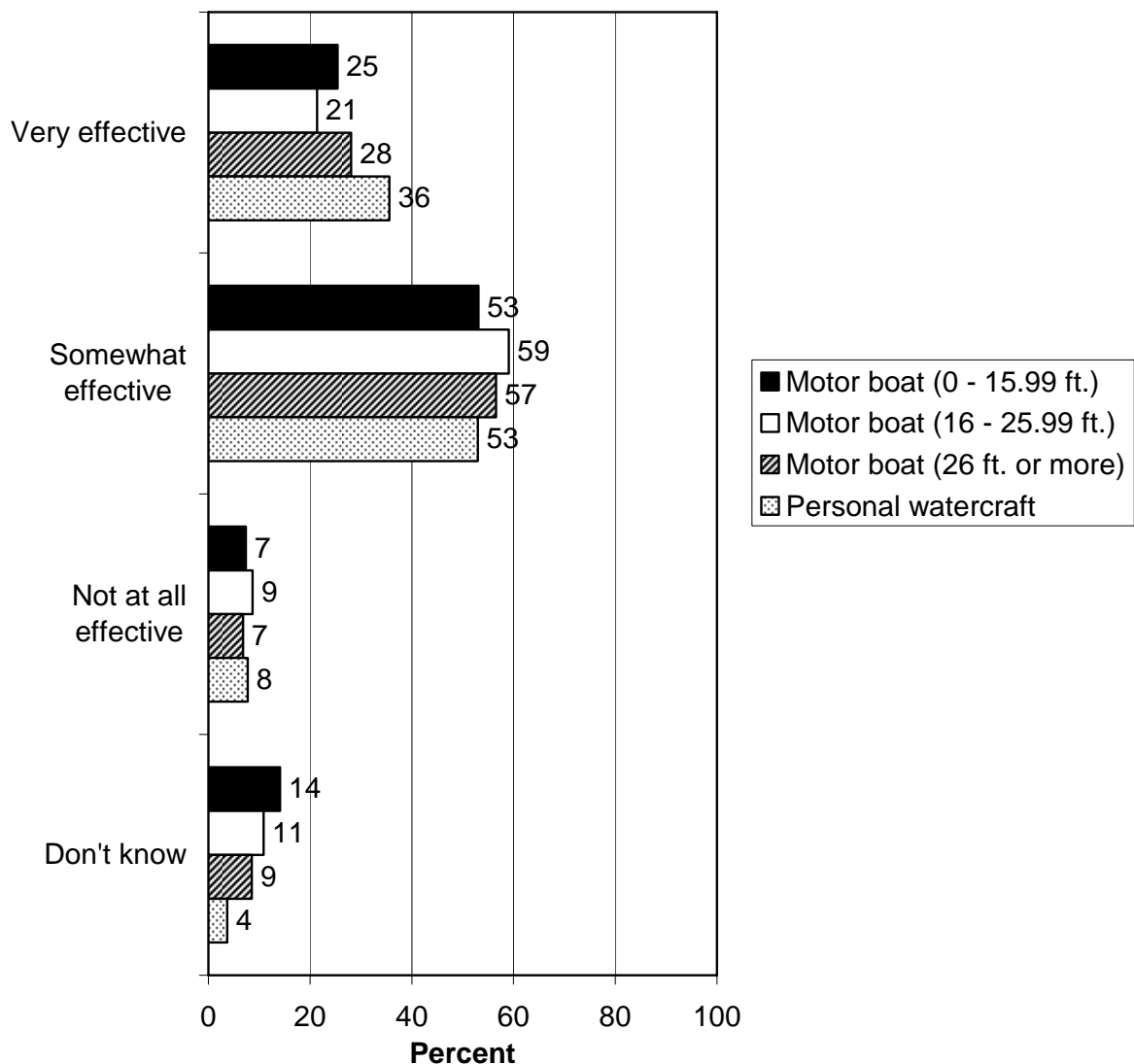
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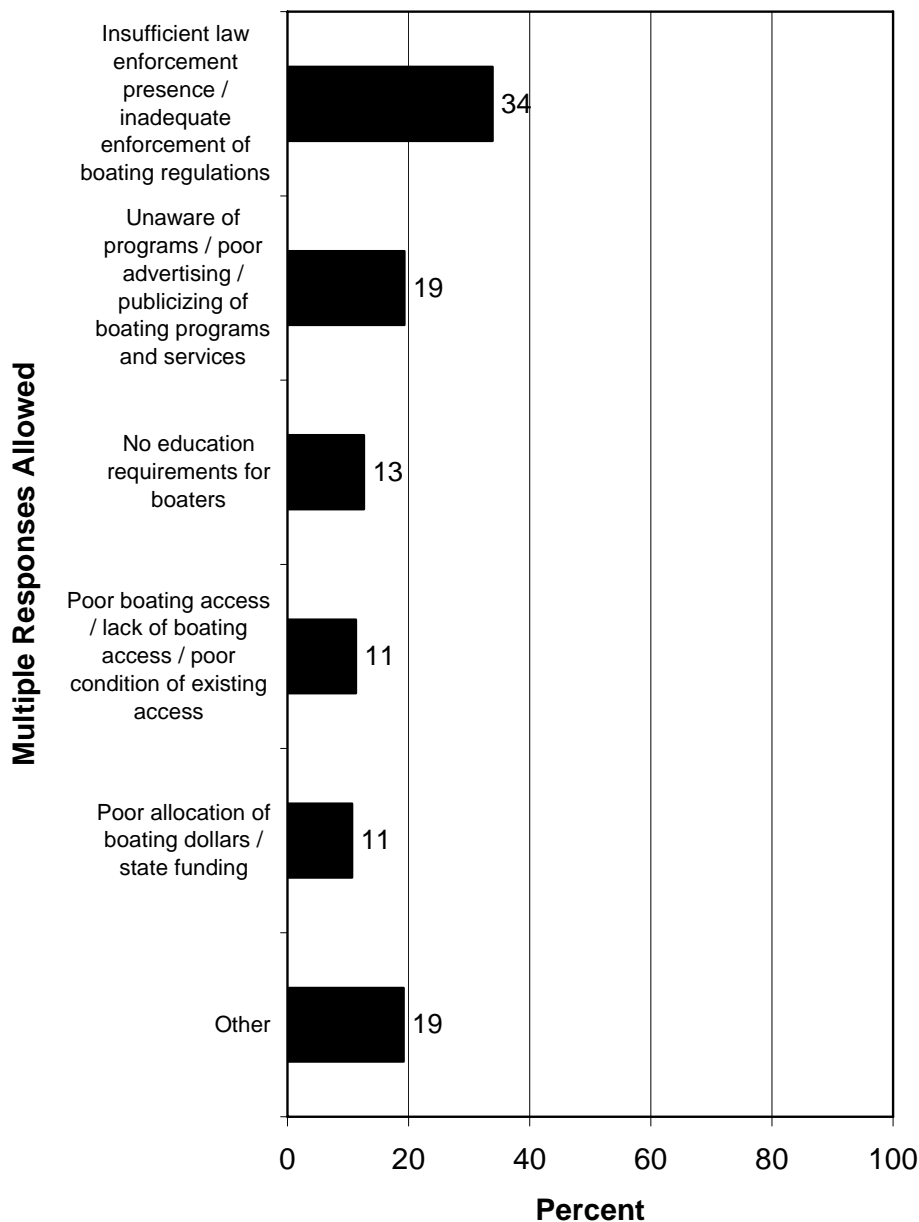
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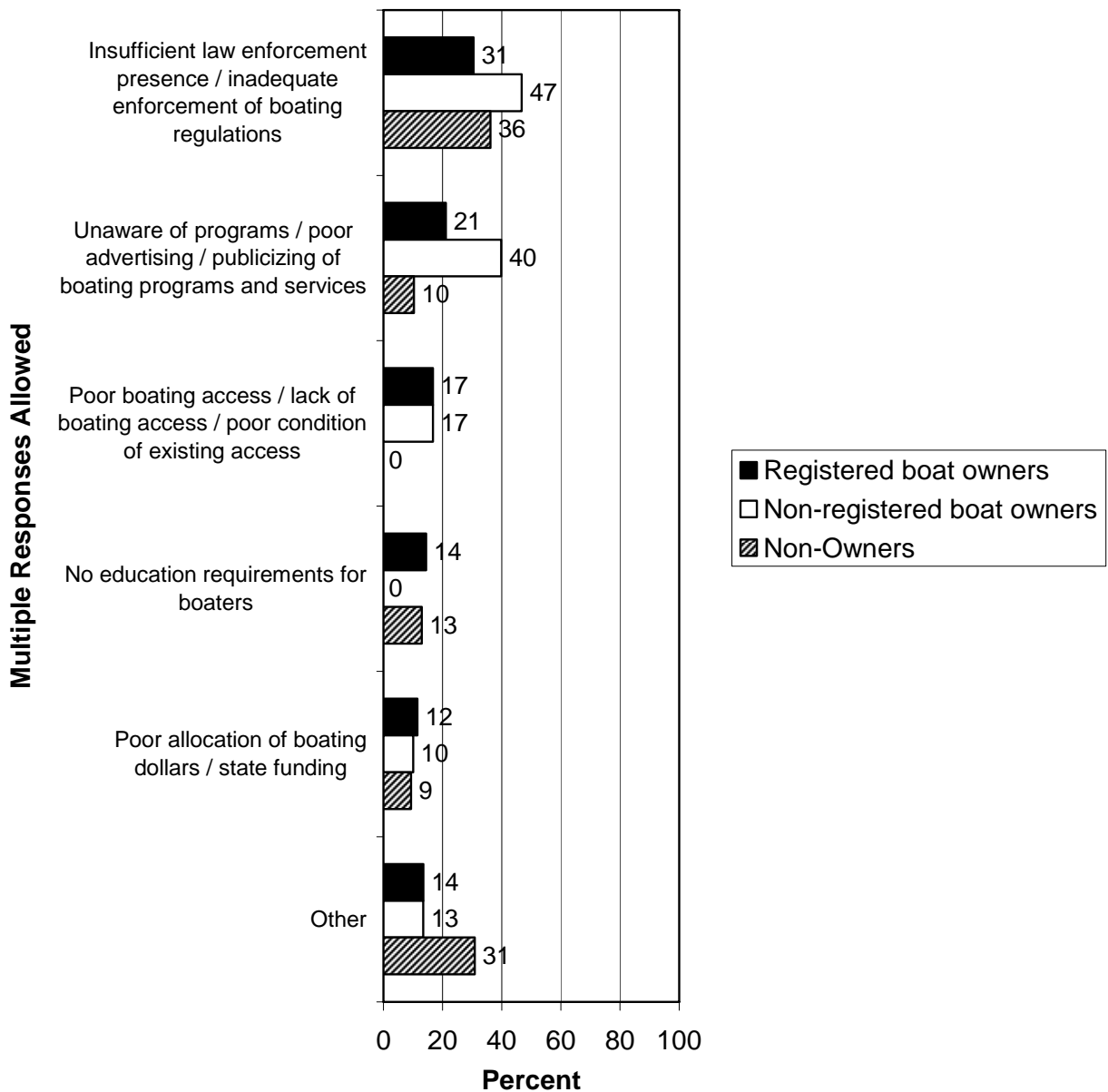
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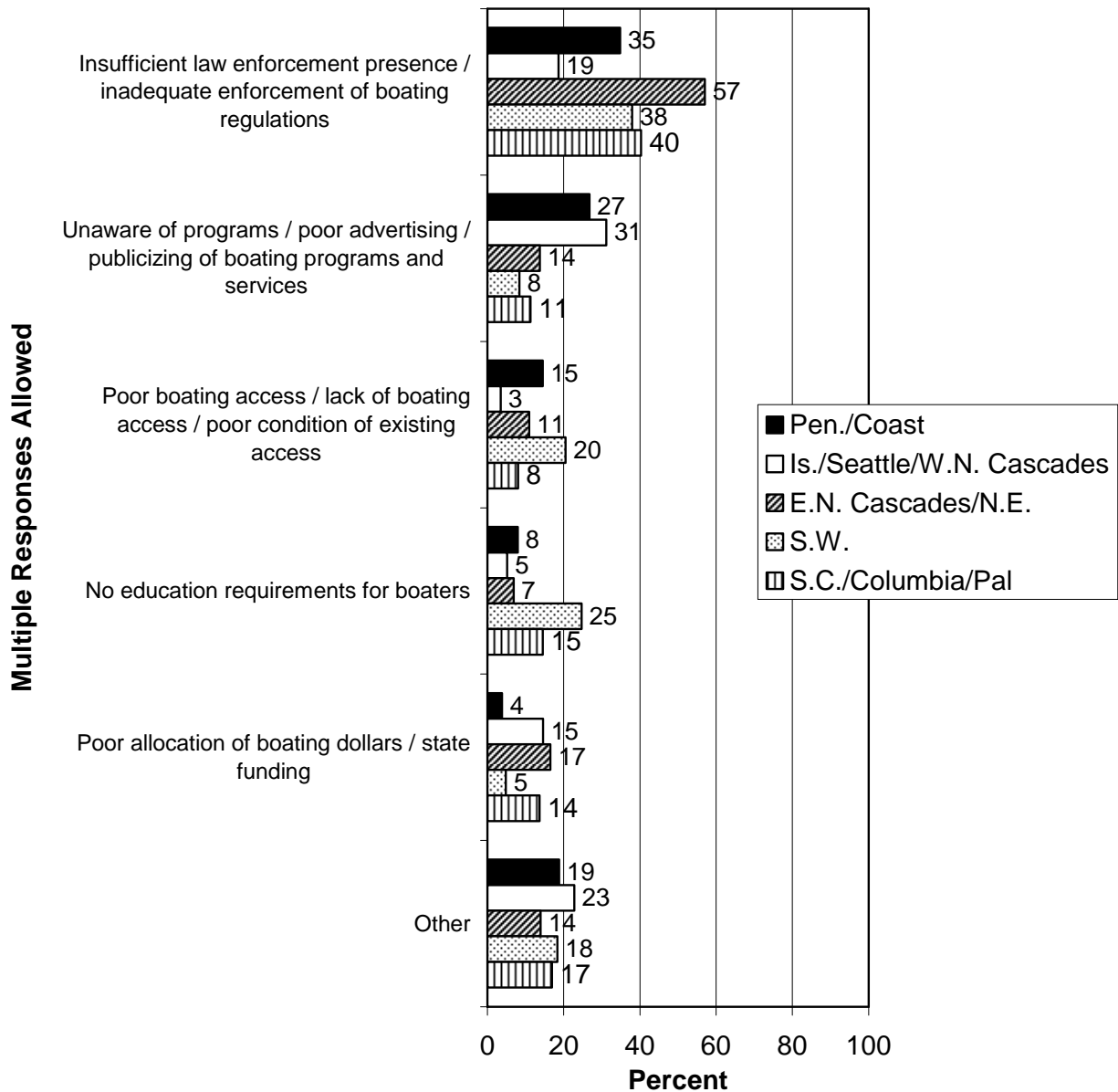
**Q107. What are the main reasons you think boating programs and services in Washington are not at all effective at meeting the needs of recreational boaters? (Asked of those who indicated that boating programs and services in Washington are not at all effective at meeting the needs of recreational boaters.)**



**Q107. What are the main reasons you think boating programs and services in Washington are not at all effective at meeting the needs of recreational boaters?  
(Asked of those who indicated that boating programs and services in Washington are not at all effective at meeting the needs of recreational boaters.)**

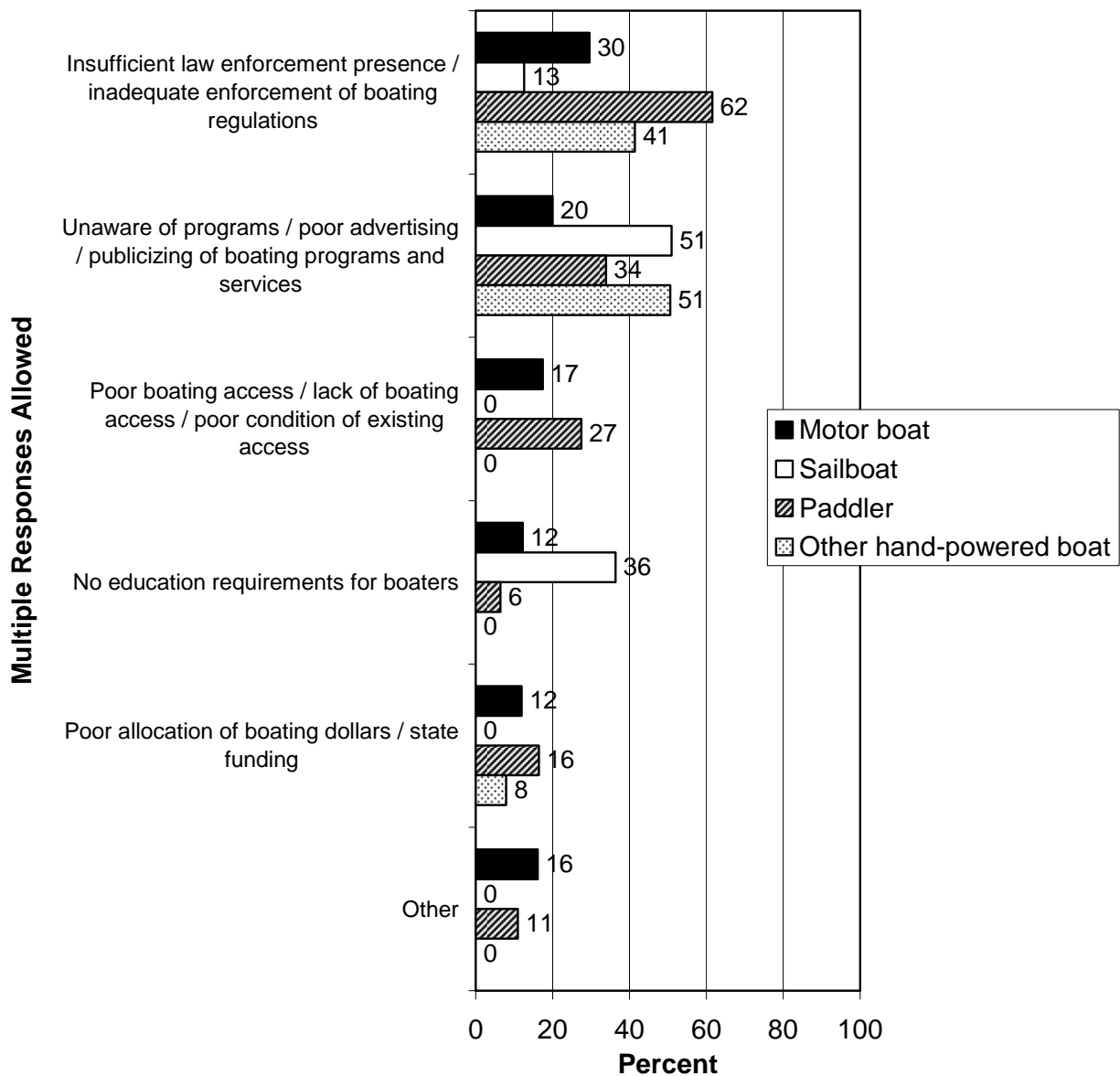


**Q107. What are the main reasons you think boating programs and services in Washington are not at all effective at meeting the needs of recreational boaters?  
(Asked of those who indicated that boating programs and services in Washington are not at all effective at meeting the needs of recreational boaters.)**

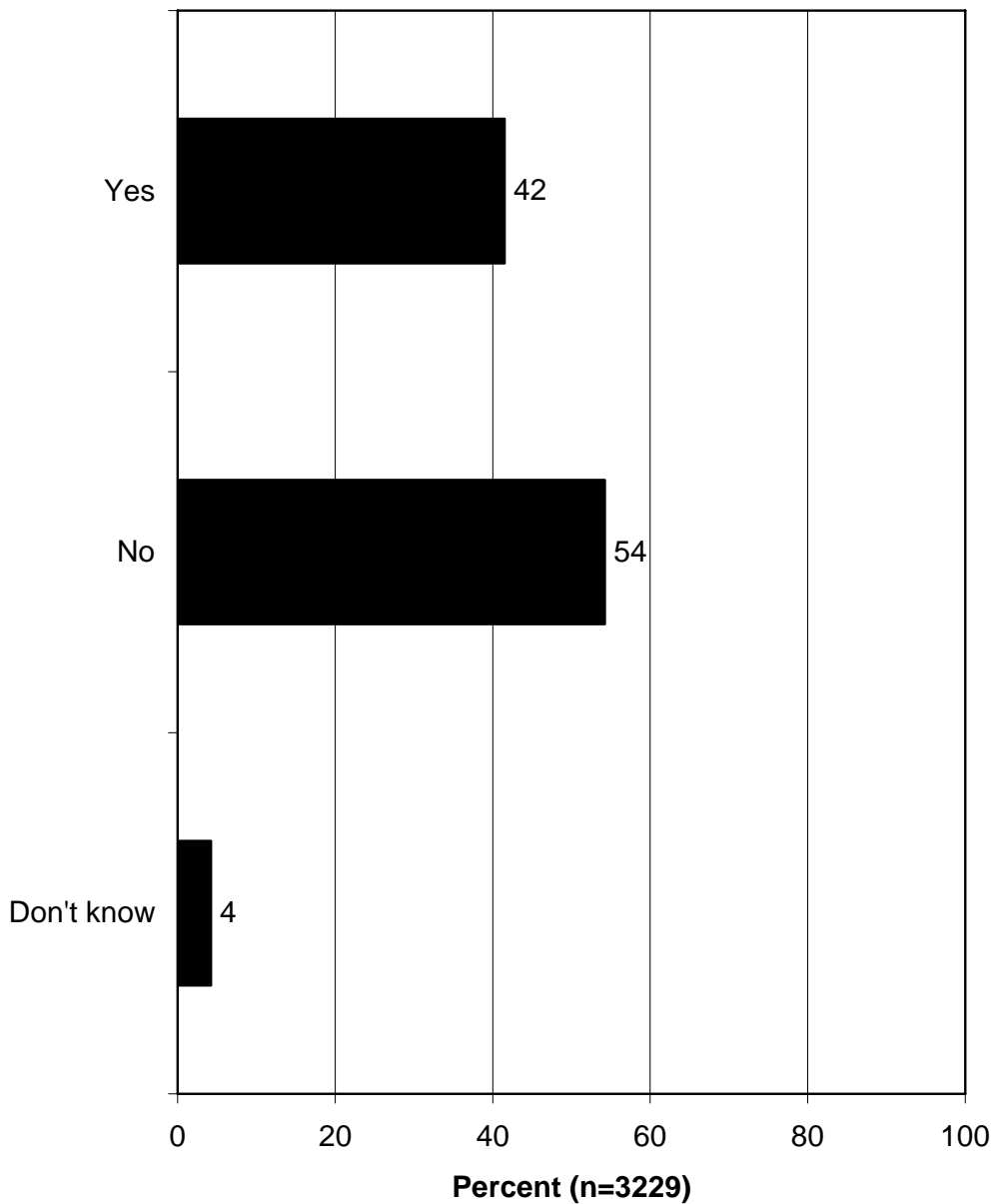




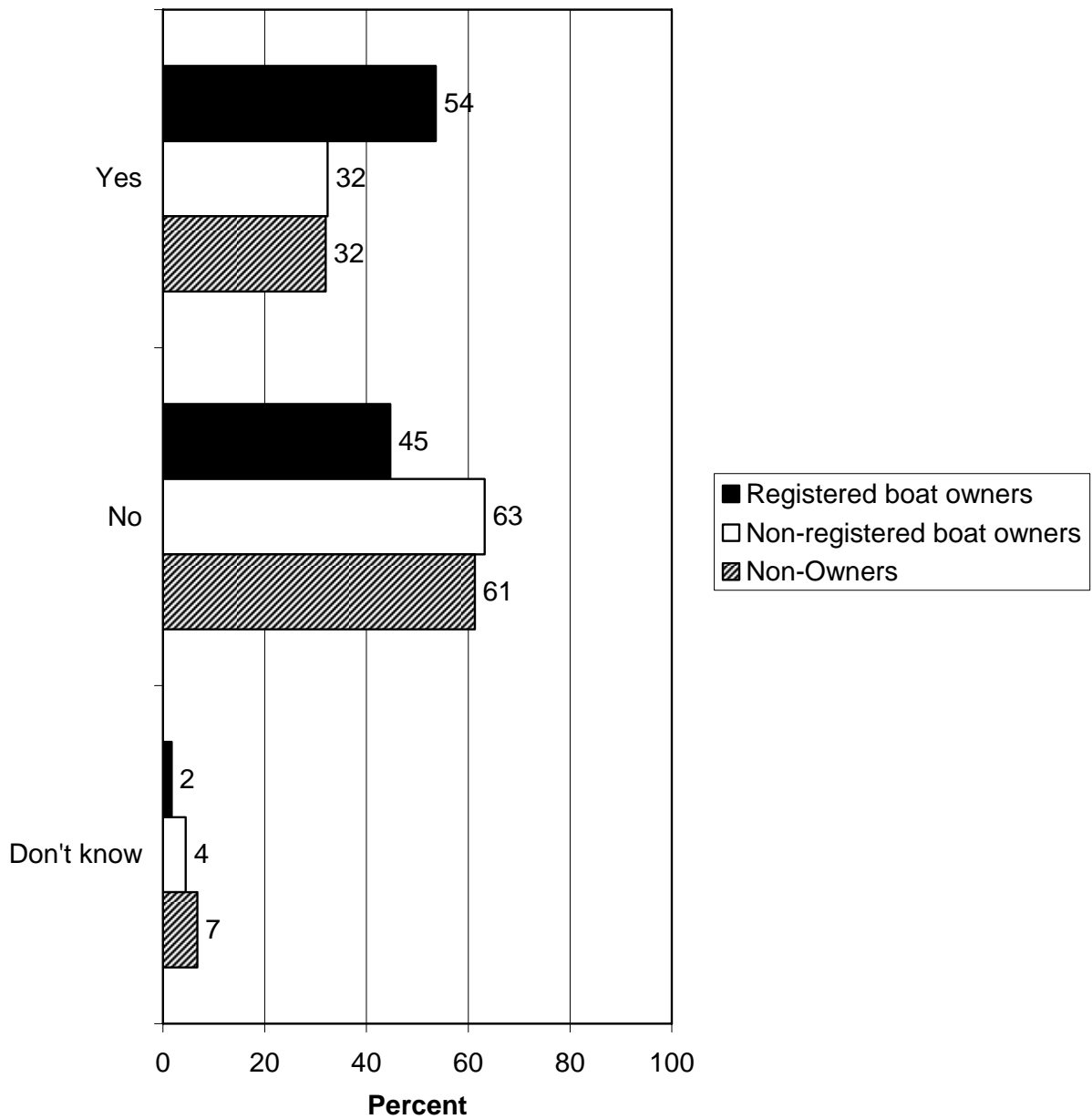
**Q107. What are the main reasons you think boating programs and services in Washington are not at all effective at meeting the needs of recreational boaters?  
(Asked of those who indicated that boating programs and services in Washington are not at all effective at meeting the needs of recreational boaters.)**



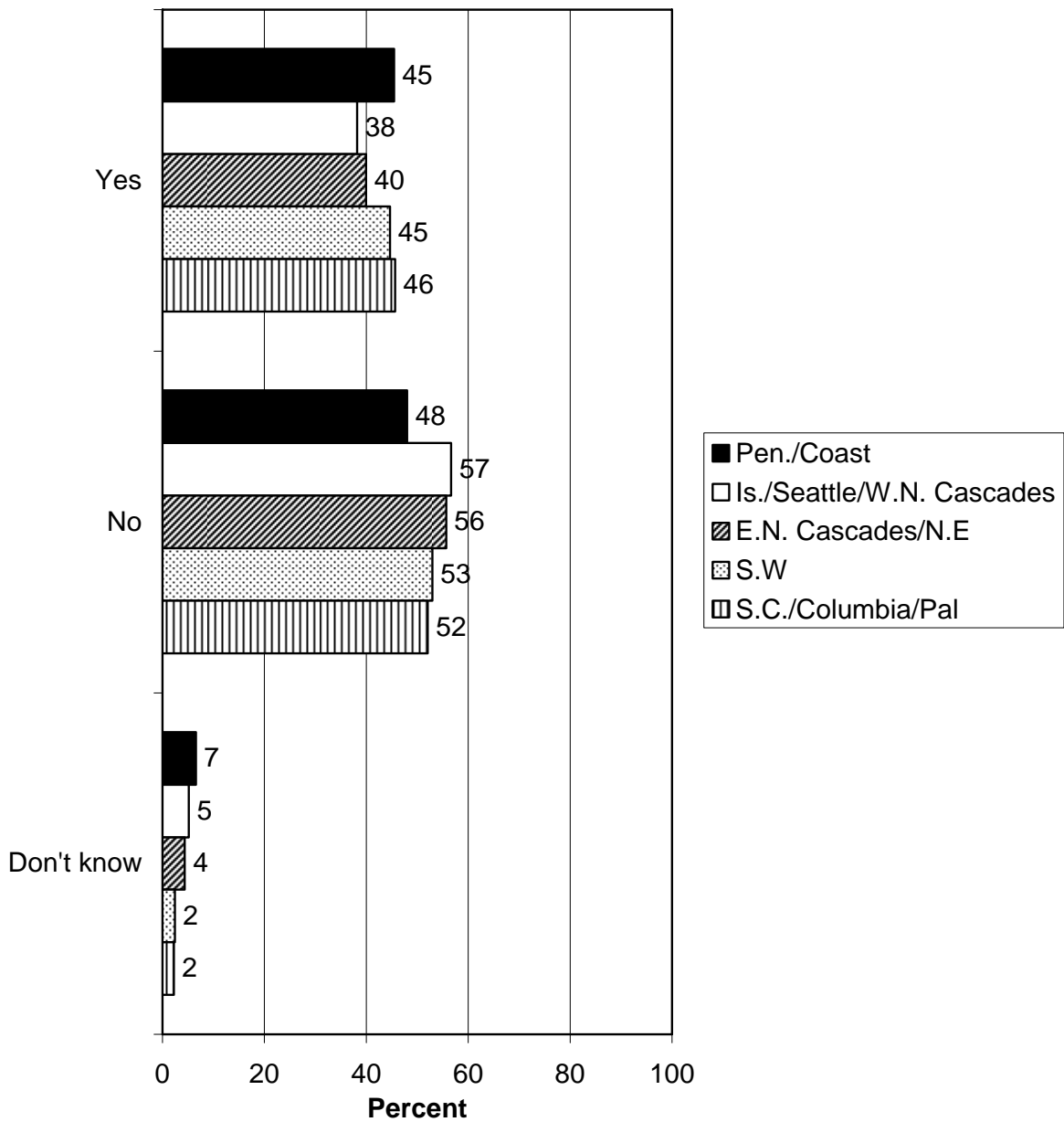
**Q168. Are there any facilities or services in the county in which you boat most often that you would like to see improved?**



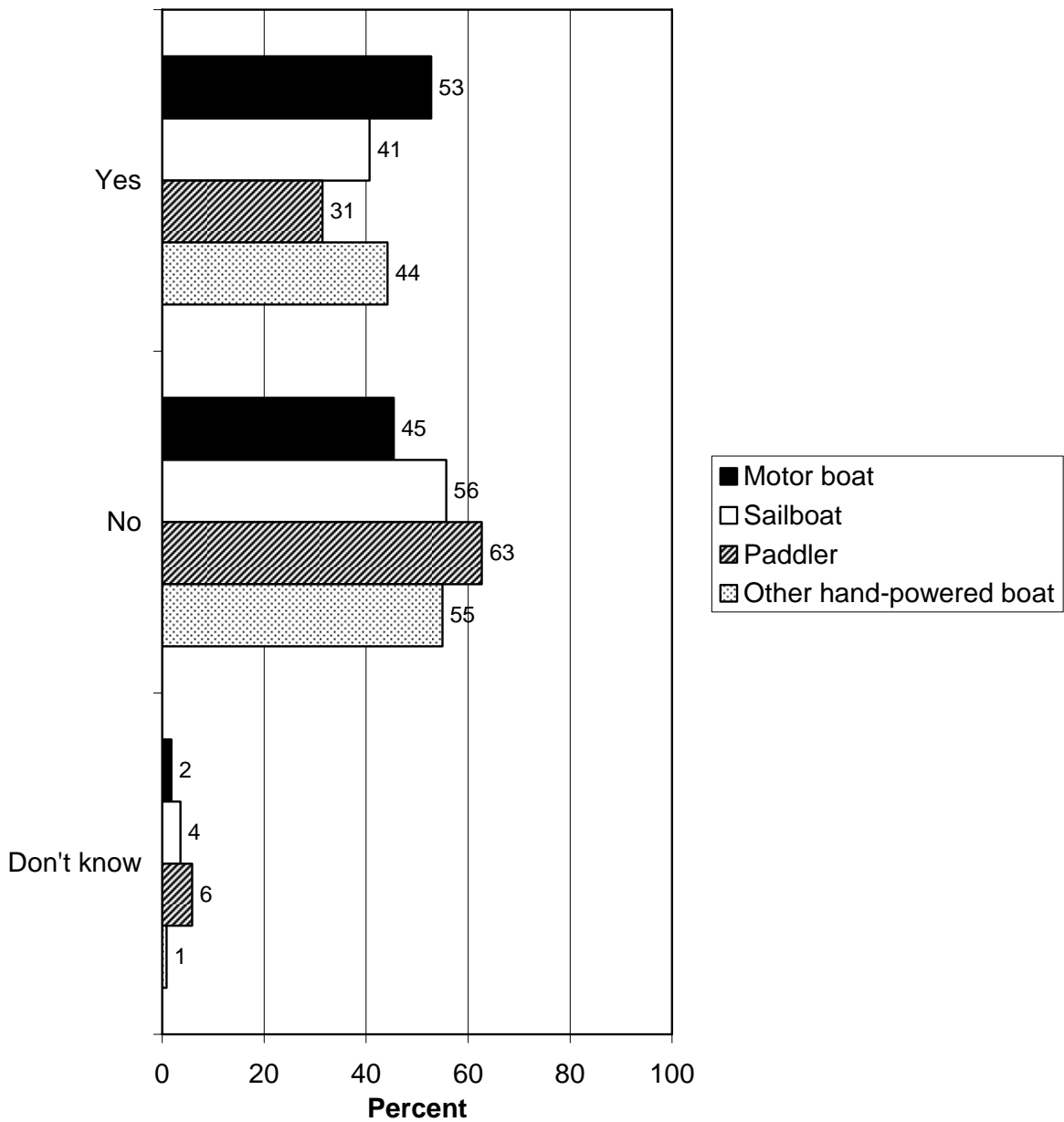
**Q168. Are there any facilities or services in the county in which you boat most often that you would like to see improved?**



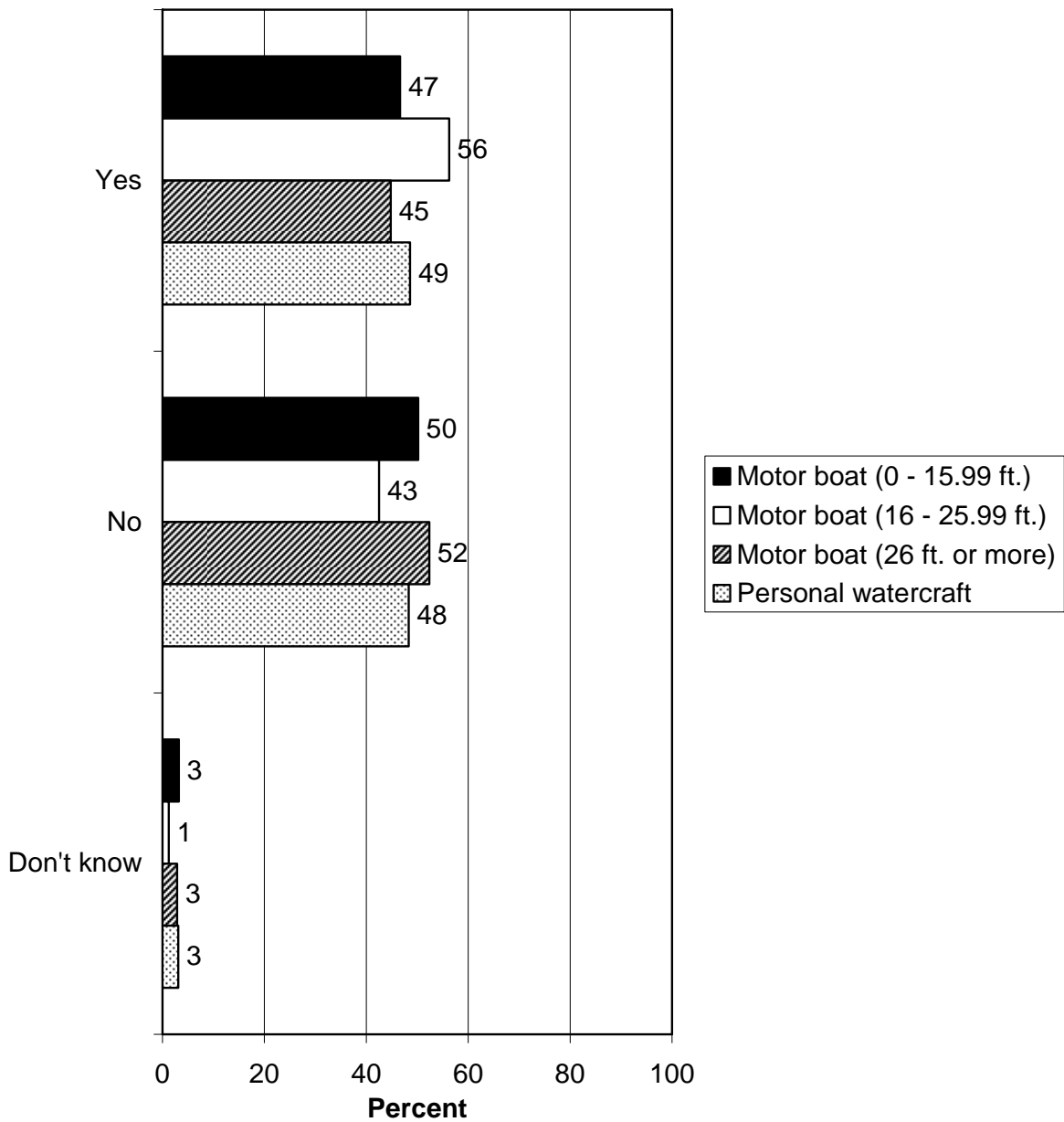
**Q168. Are there any facilities or services in the county in which you boat most often that you would like to see improved?**



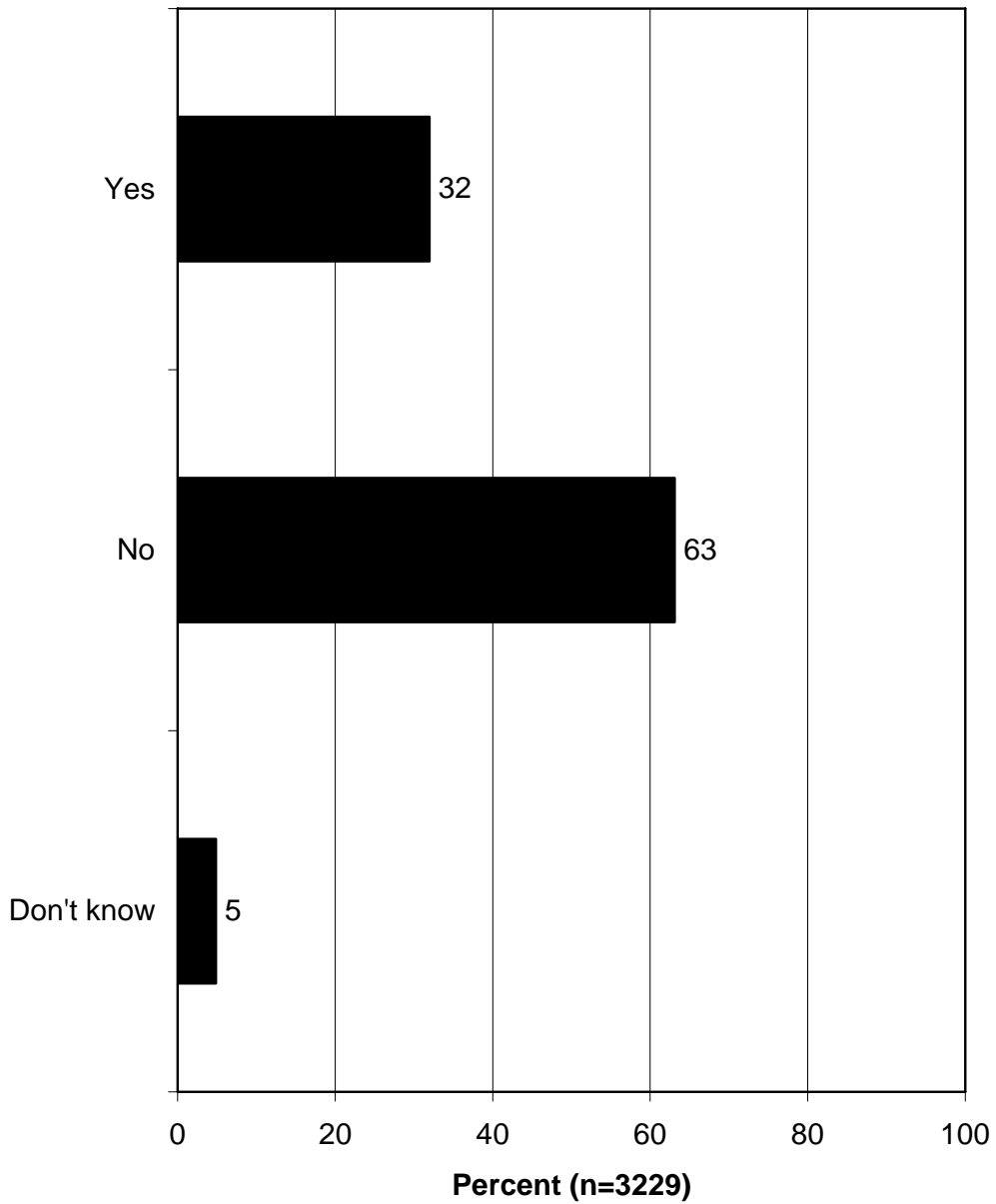
**Q168. Are there any facilities or services in the county in which you boat most often that you would like to see improved?**



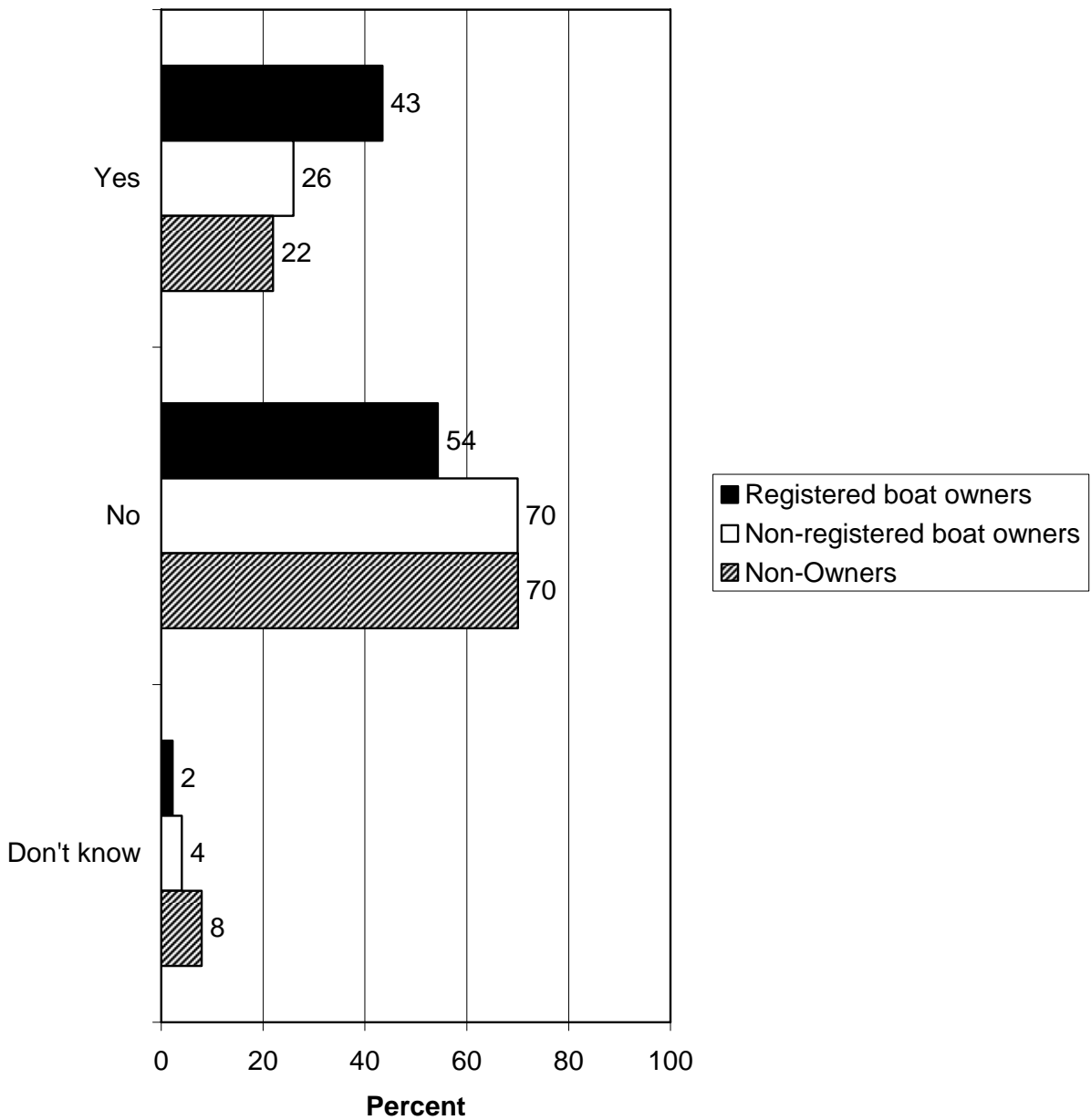
**Q168. Are there any facilities or services in the county in which you boat most often that you would like to see improved?**



**Q191. Are there any facilities or services in the county in which you boat most often that you would like to see built?**

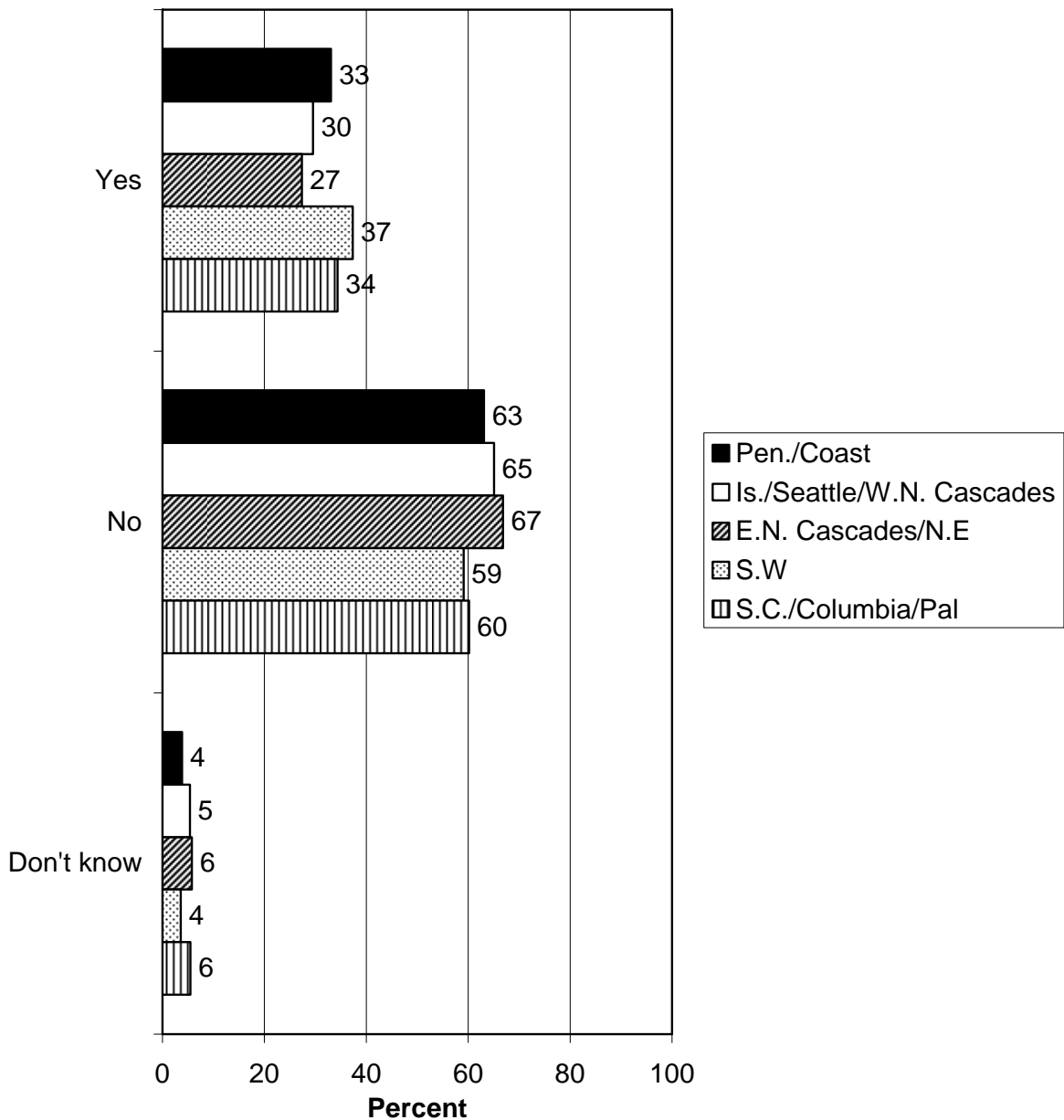


**Q191. Are there any facilities or services in the county in which you boat most often that you would like to see built?**

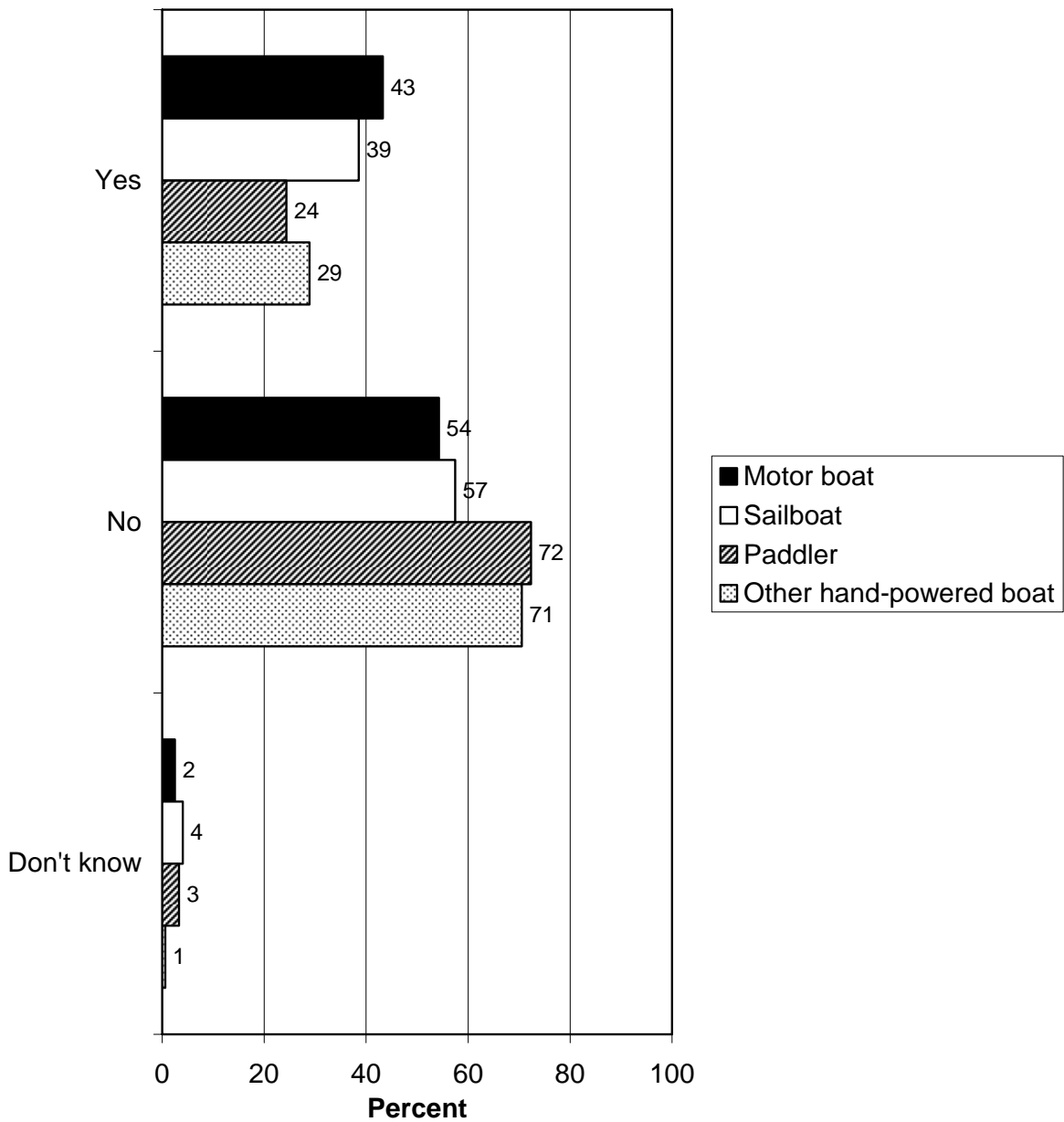




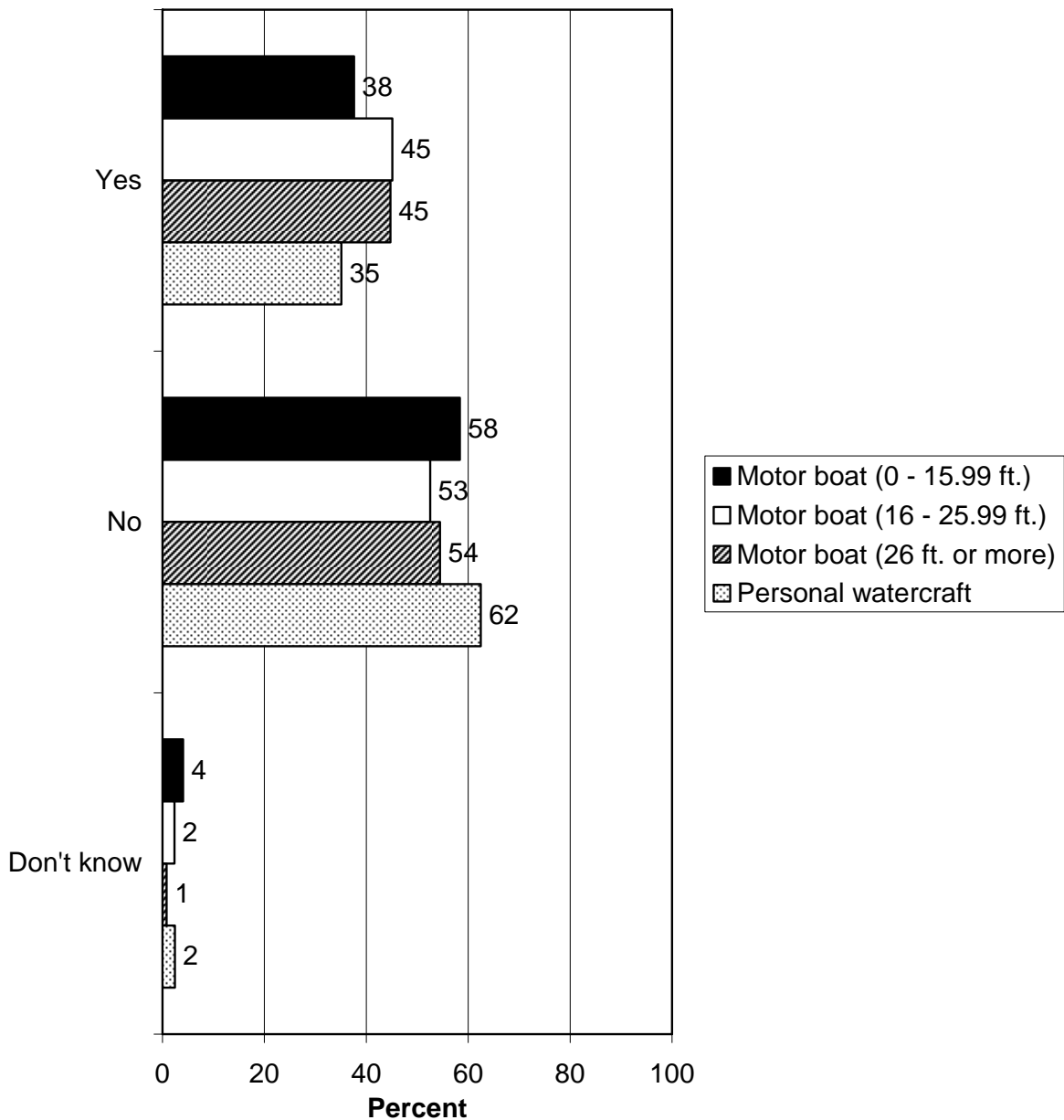
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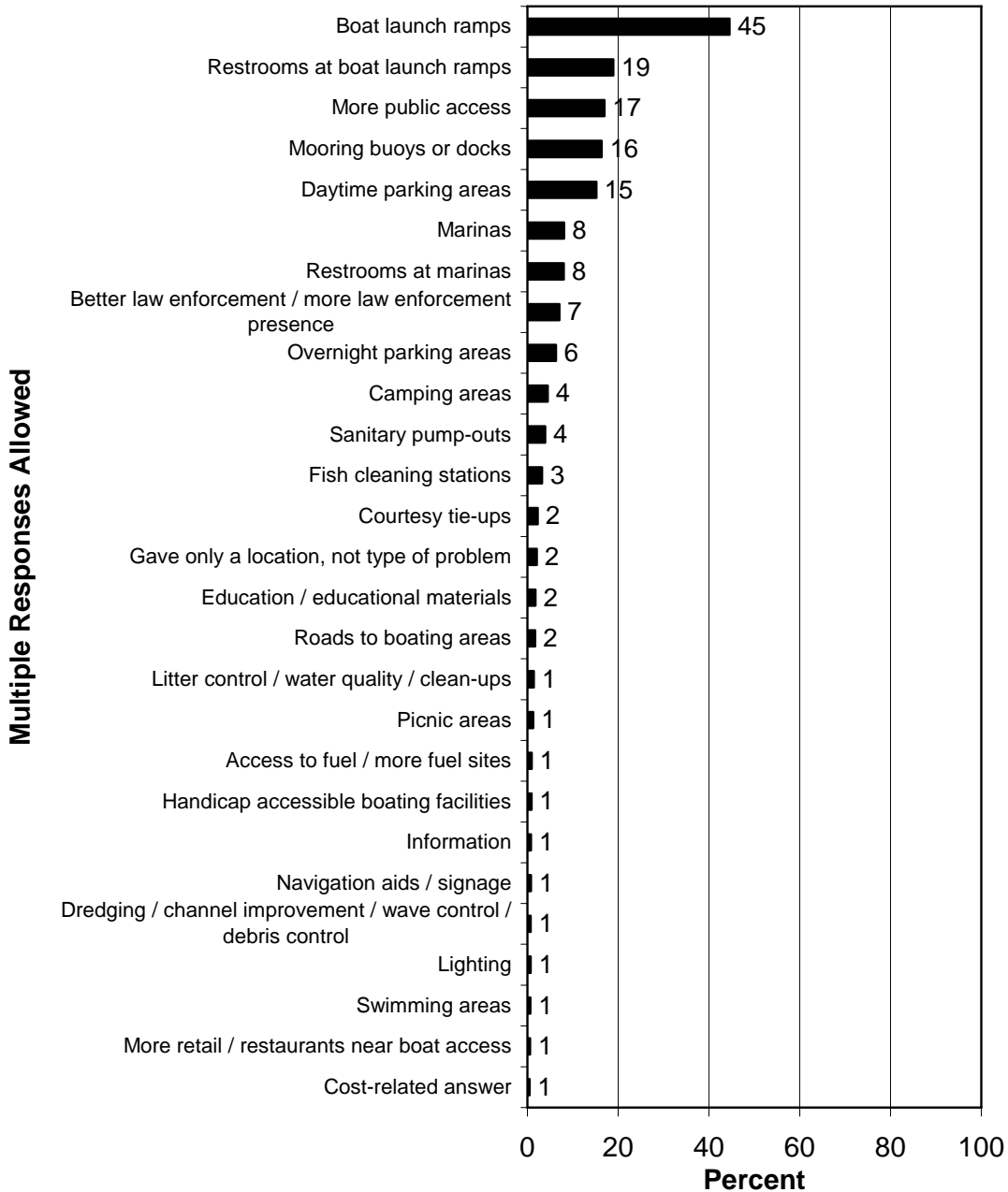
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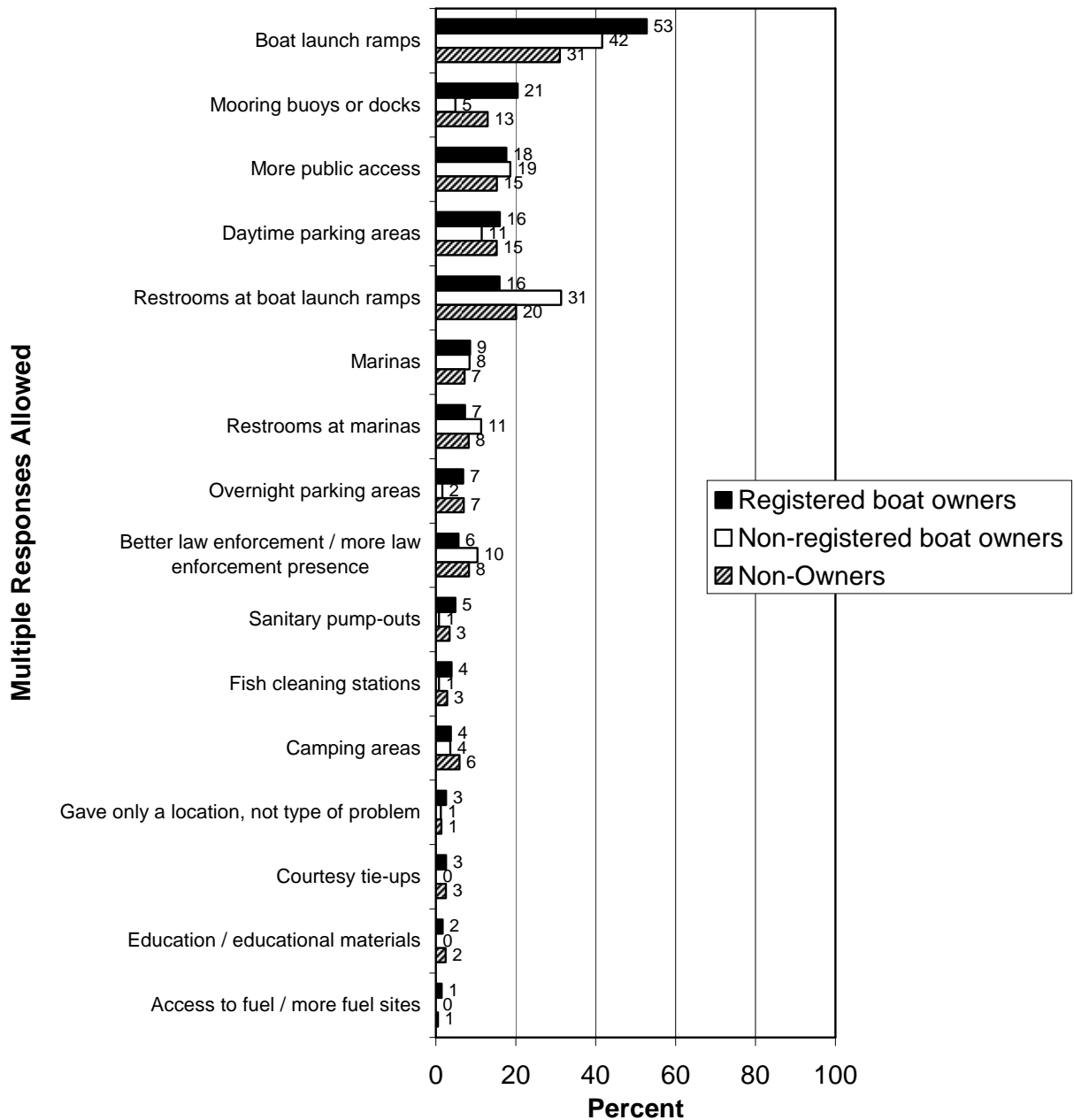
**Q191. Are there any facilities or services in the county in which you boat most often that you would like to see built?**



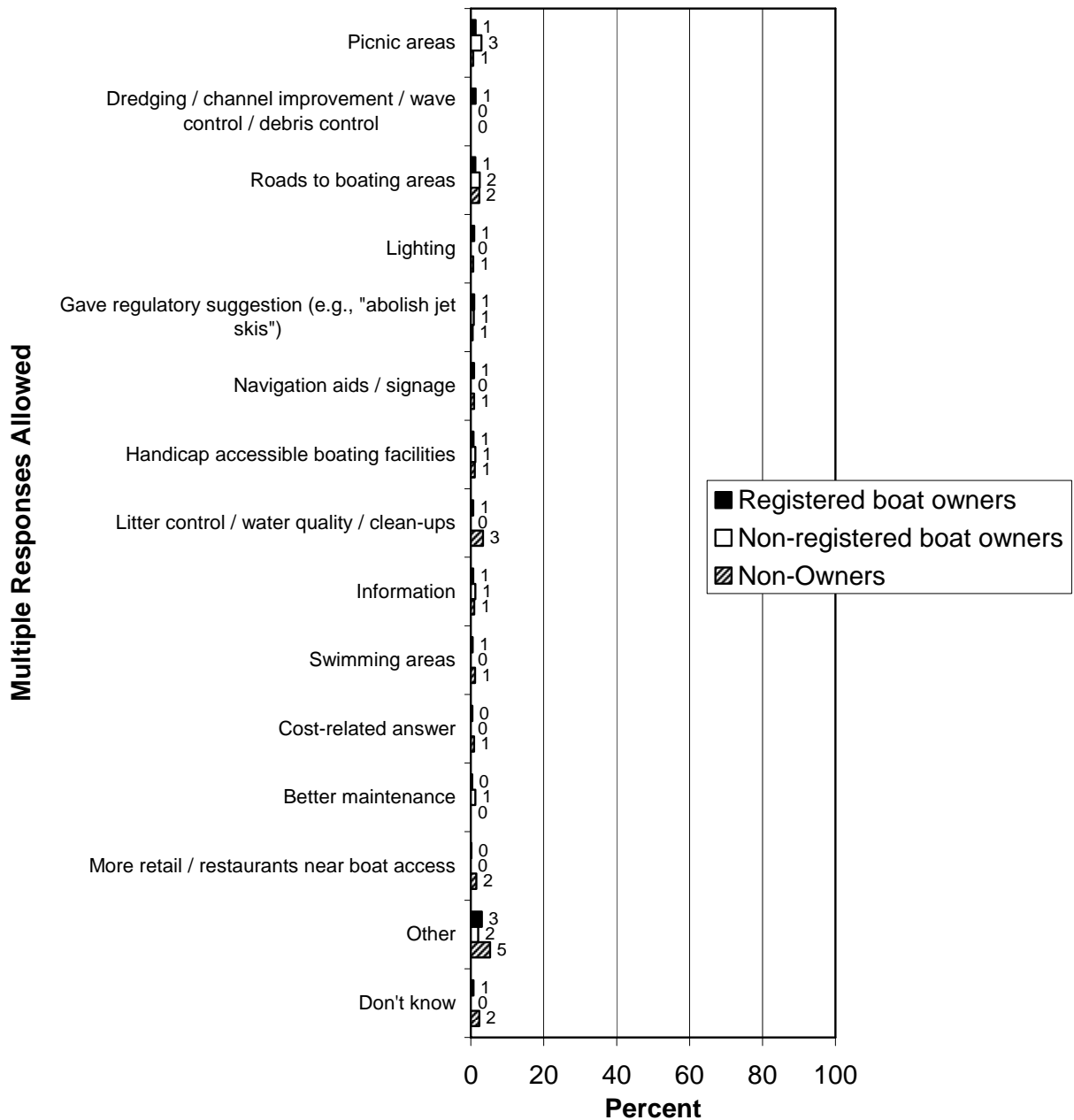
**Q171. What aspects of the facilities or services need to be improved? (Asked of those who would like to see the facilities or services in the county in which he/she boats most often improved.)**



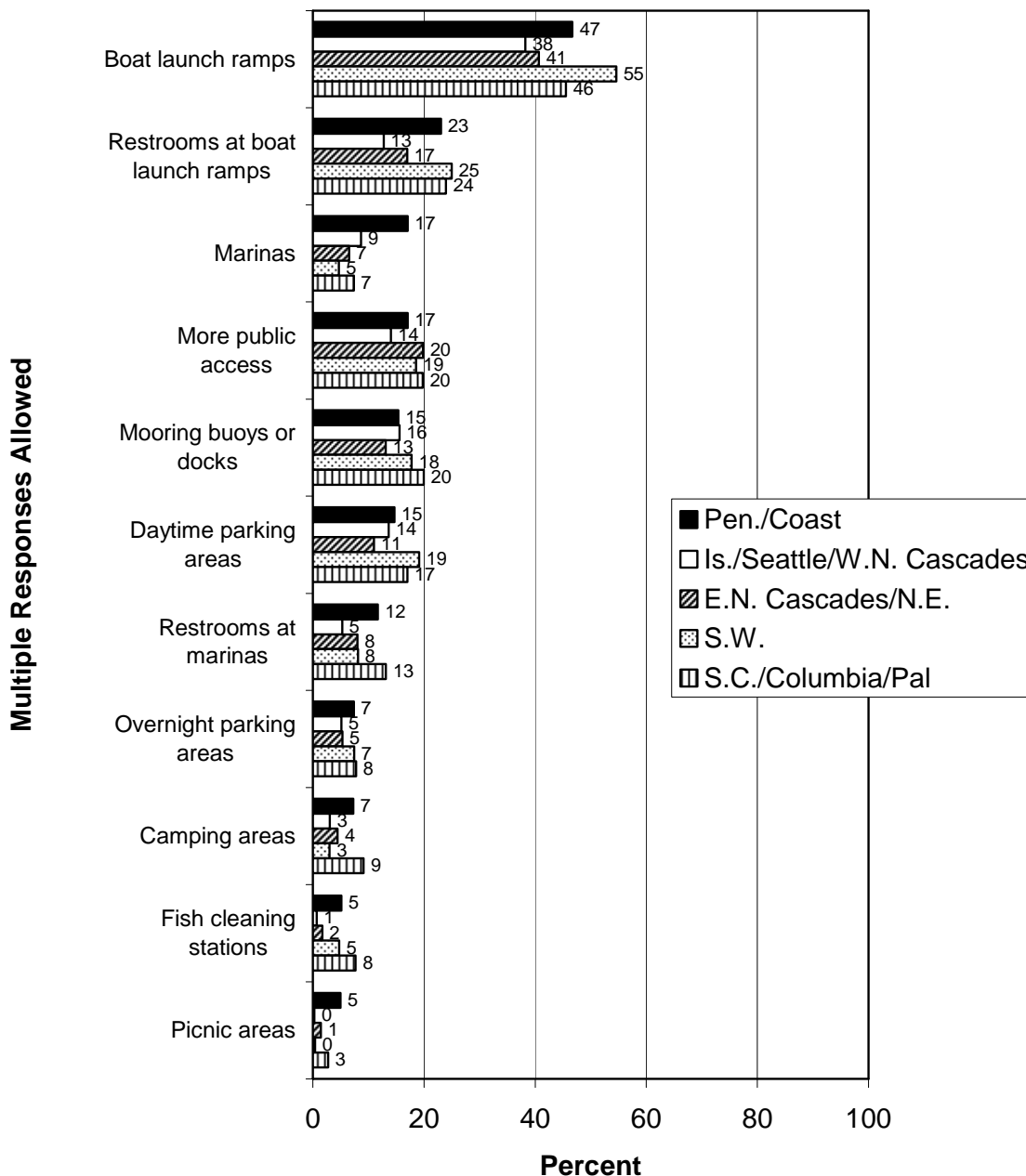
**Q171. What aspects of the facilities or services need to be improved? (Asked of those who would like to see the facilities or services in the county in which he/she boats most often improved.) (Part 1.)**



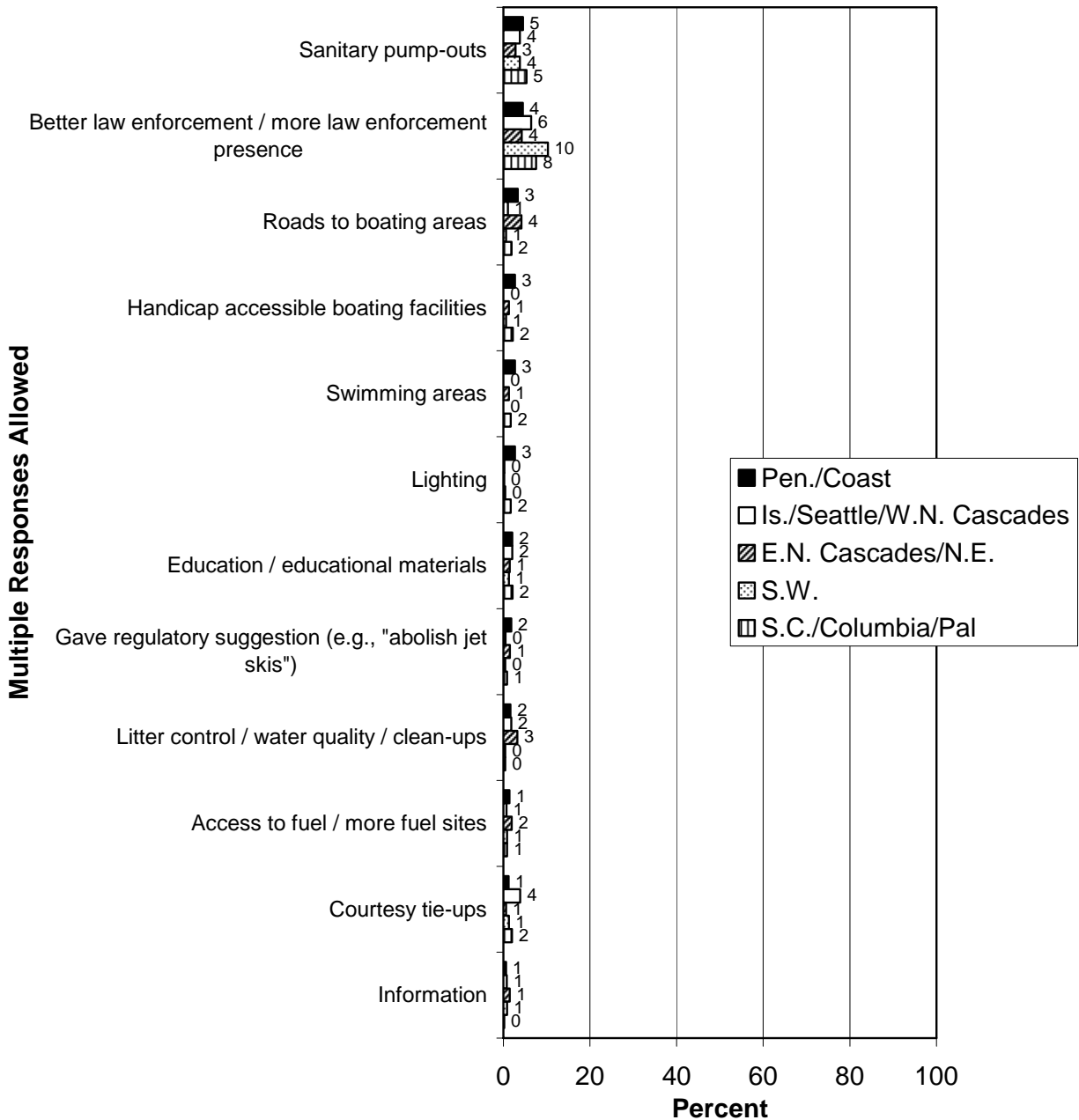
**Q171. What aspects of the facilities or services need to be improved? (Asked of those who would like to see the facilities or services in the county in which he/she boats most often improved.) (Part 2.)**



**Q171. What aspects of the facilities or services need to be improved? (Asked of those who would like to see the facilities or services in the county in which he/she boats most often improved.) (Part 1.)**

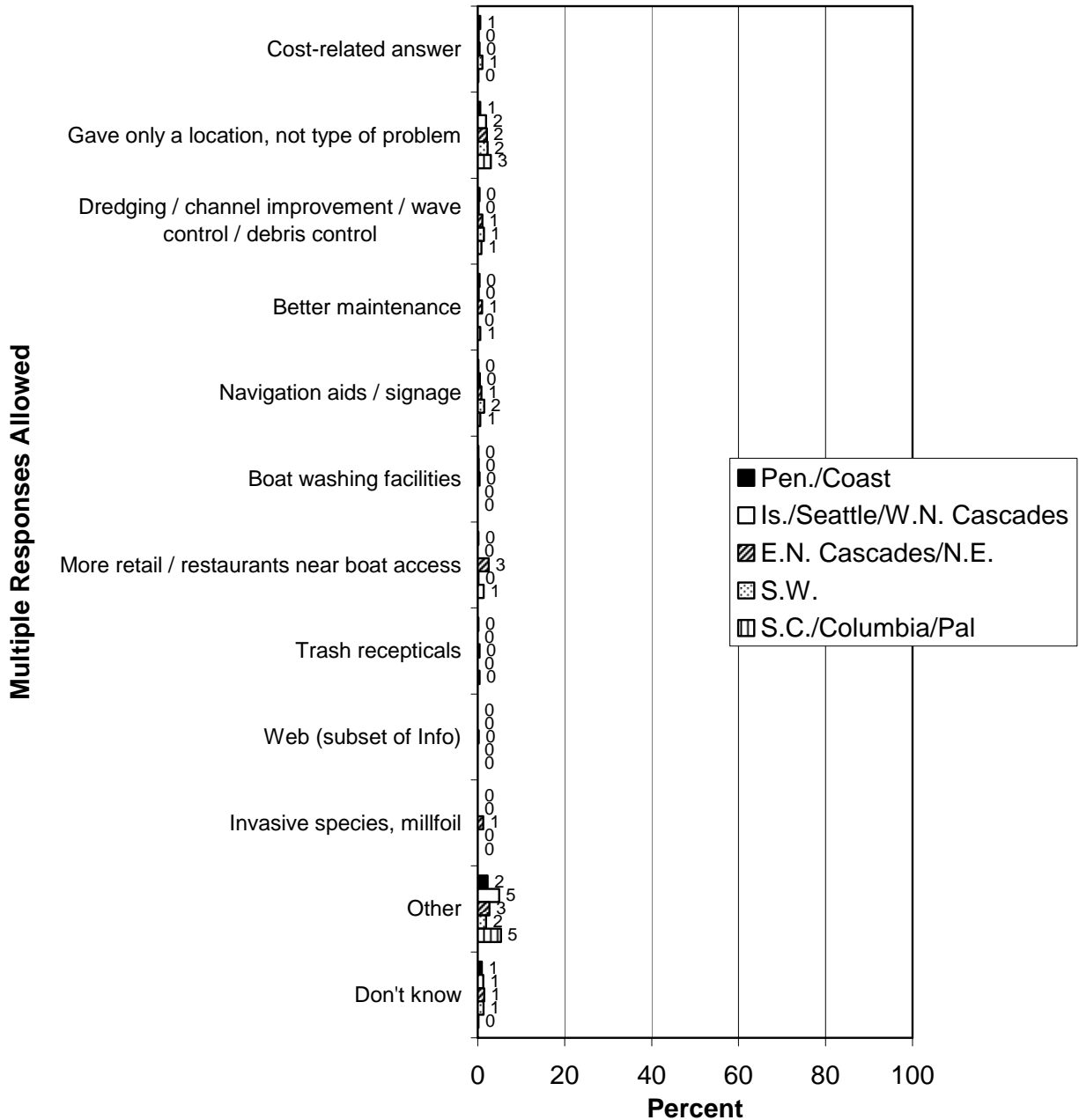


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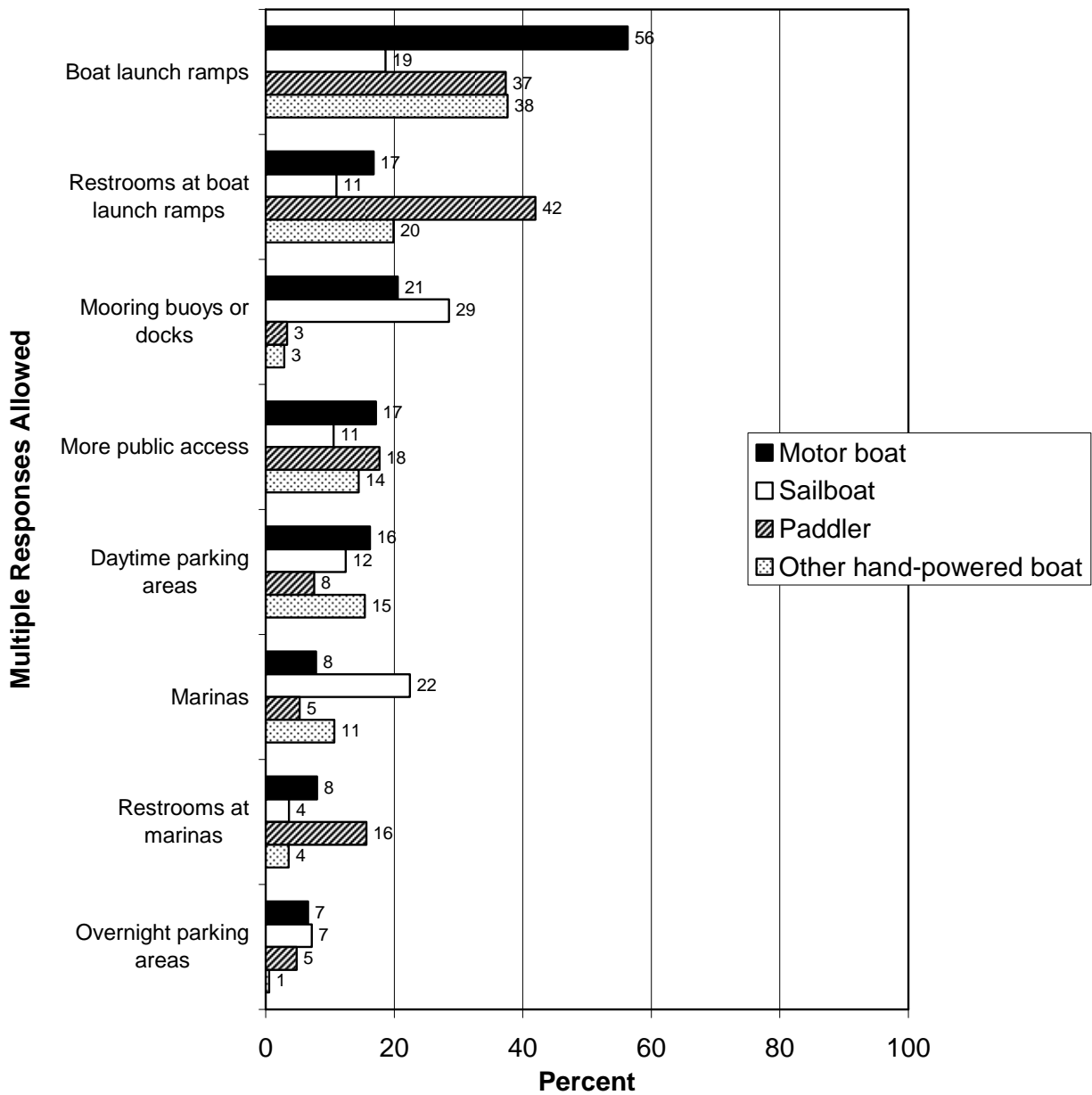




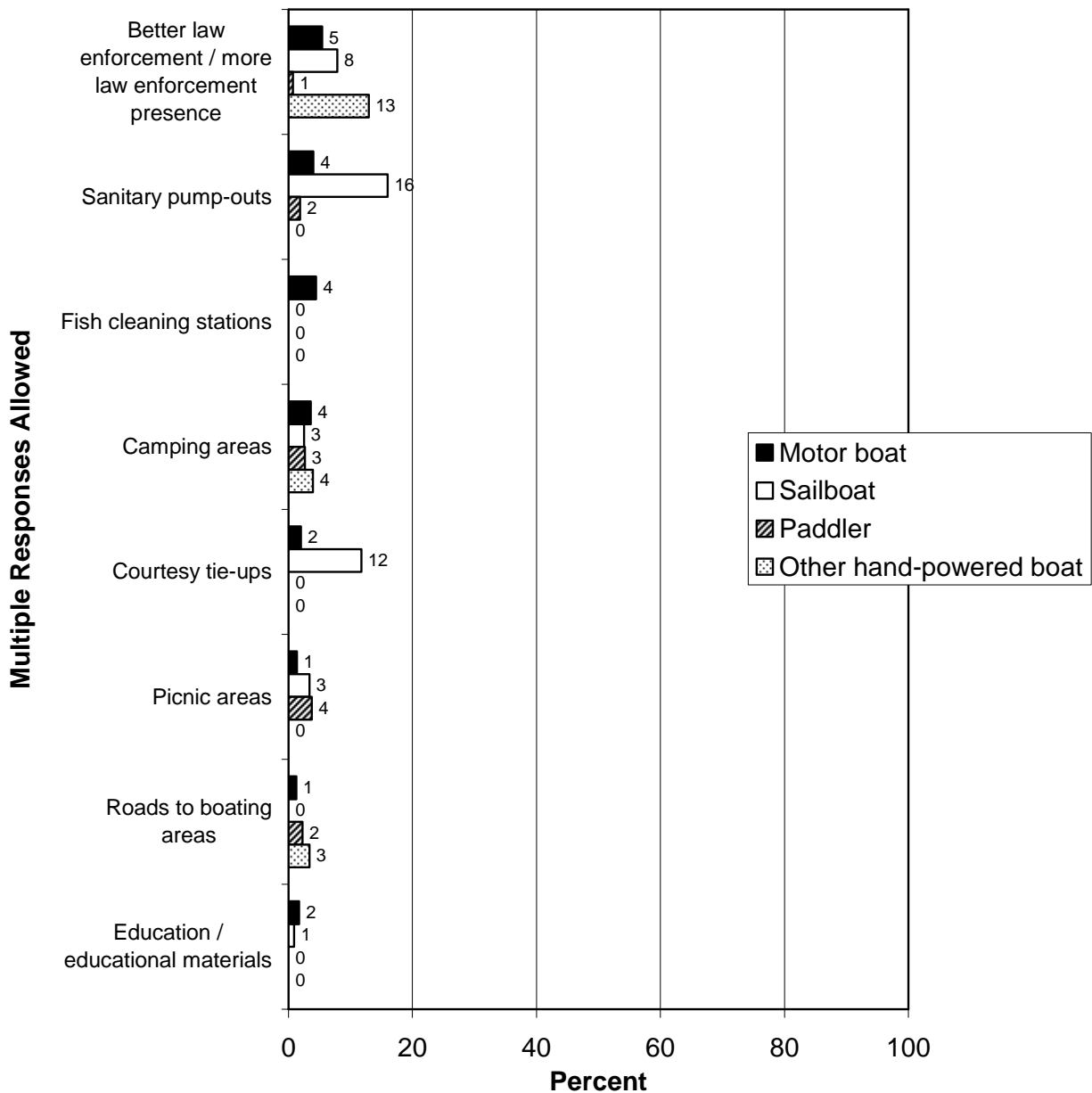
**Q171. What aspects of the facilities or services need to be improved? (Asked of those who would like to see the facilities or services in the county in which he/she boats most often improved.) (Part 3.)**



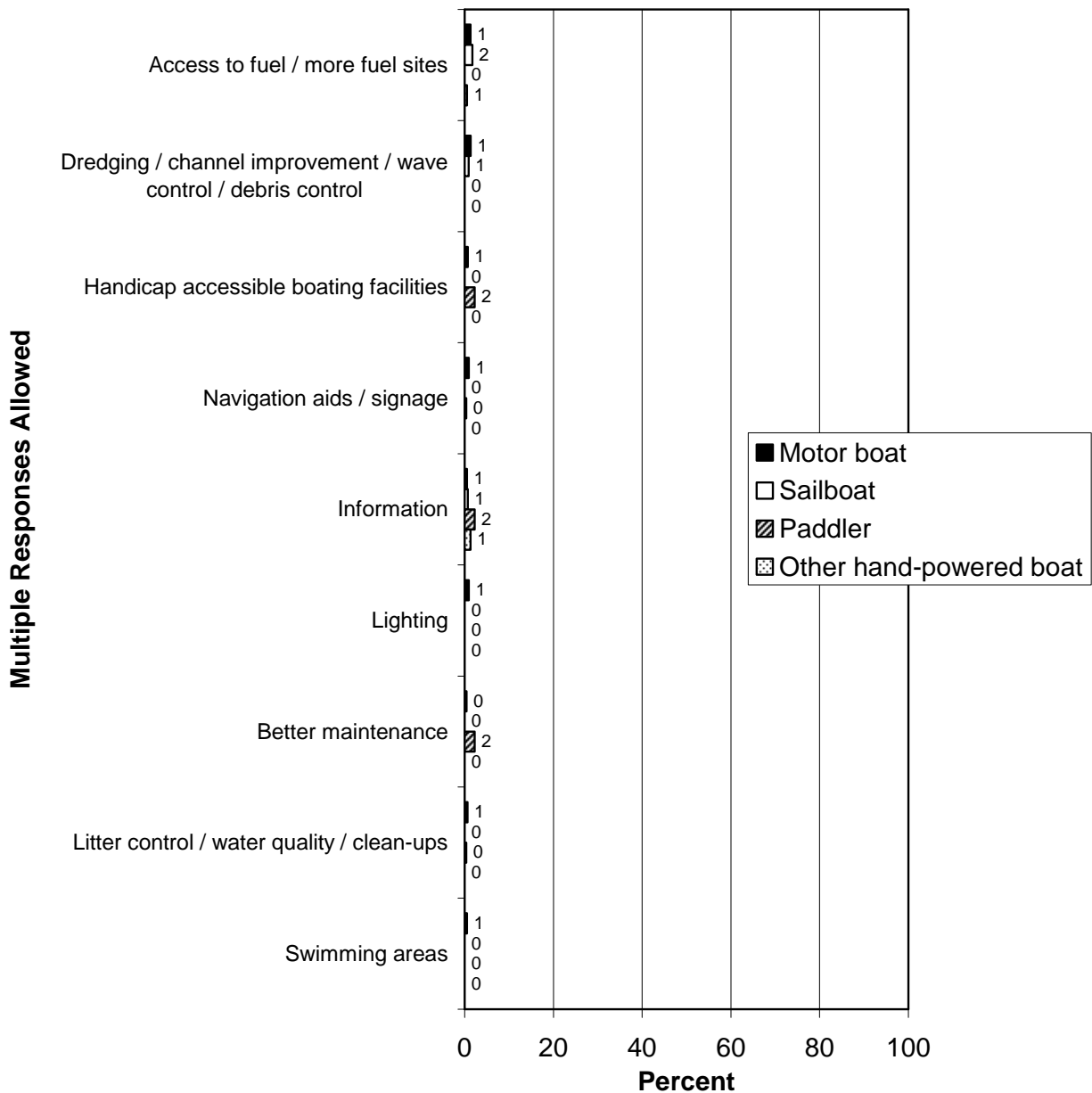
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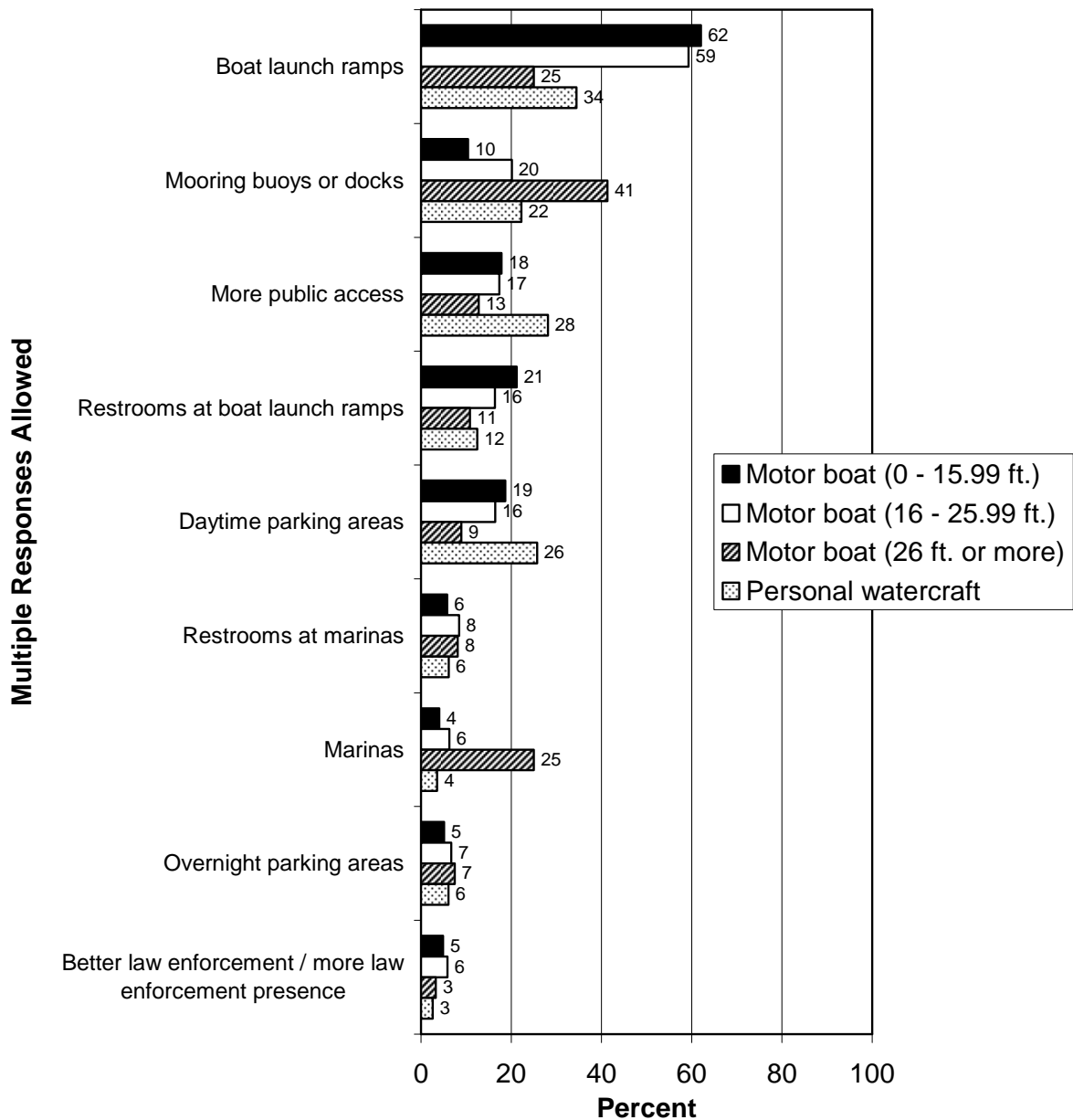
**Q171. What aspects of the facilities or services need to be improved? (Asked of those who would like to see the facilities or services in the county in which he/she boats most often improved.) (Part 2.)**



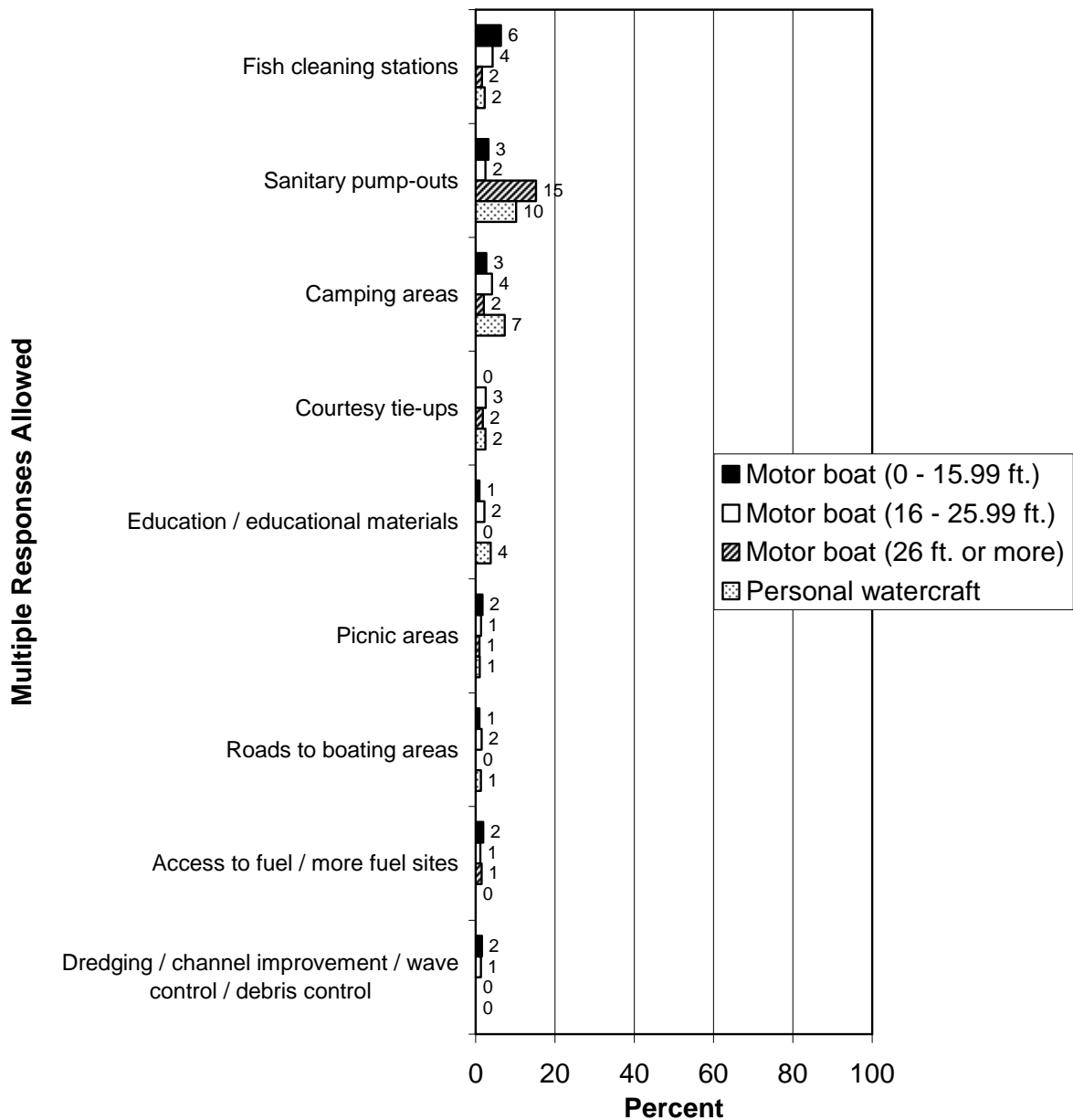
**Q171. What aspects of the facilities or services need to be improved? (Asked of those who would like to see the facilities or services in the county in which he/she boats most often improved.) (Part 3.)**



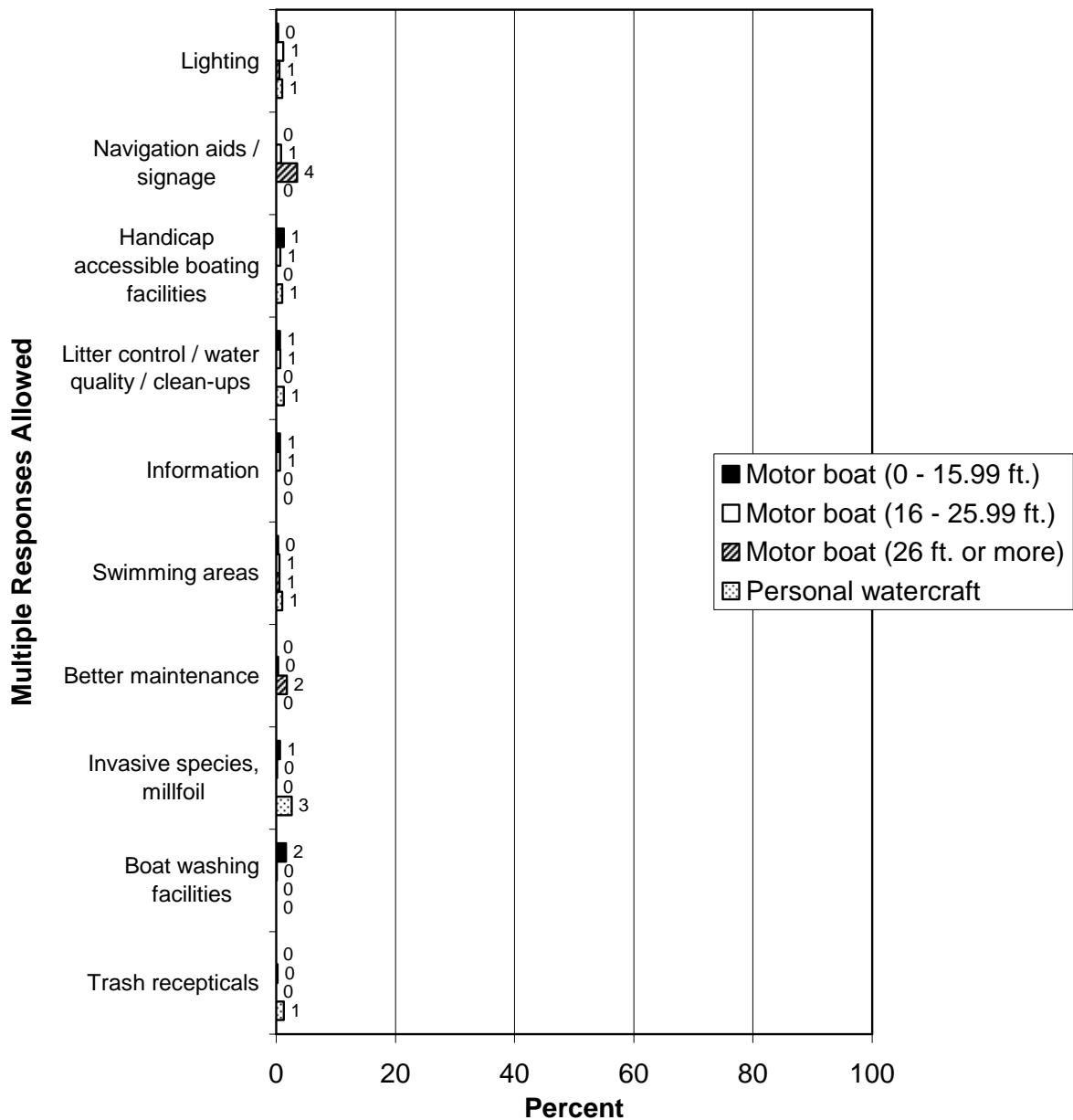
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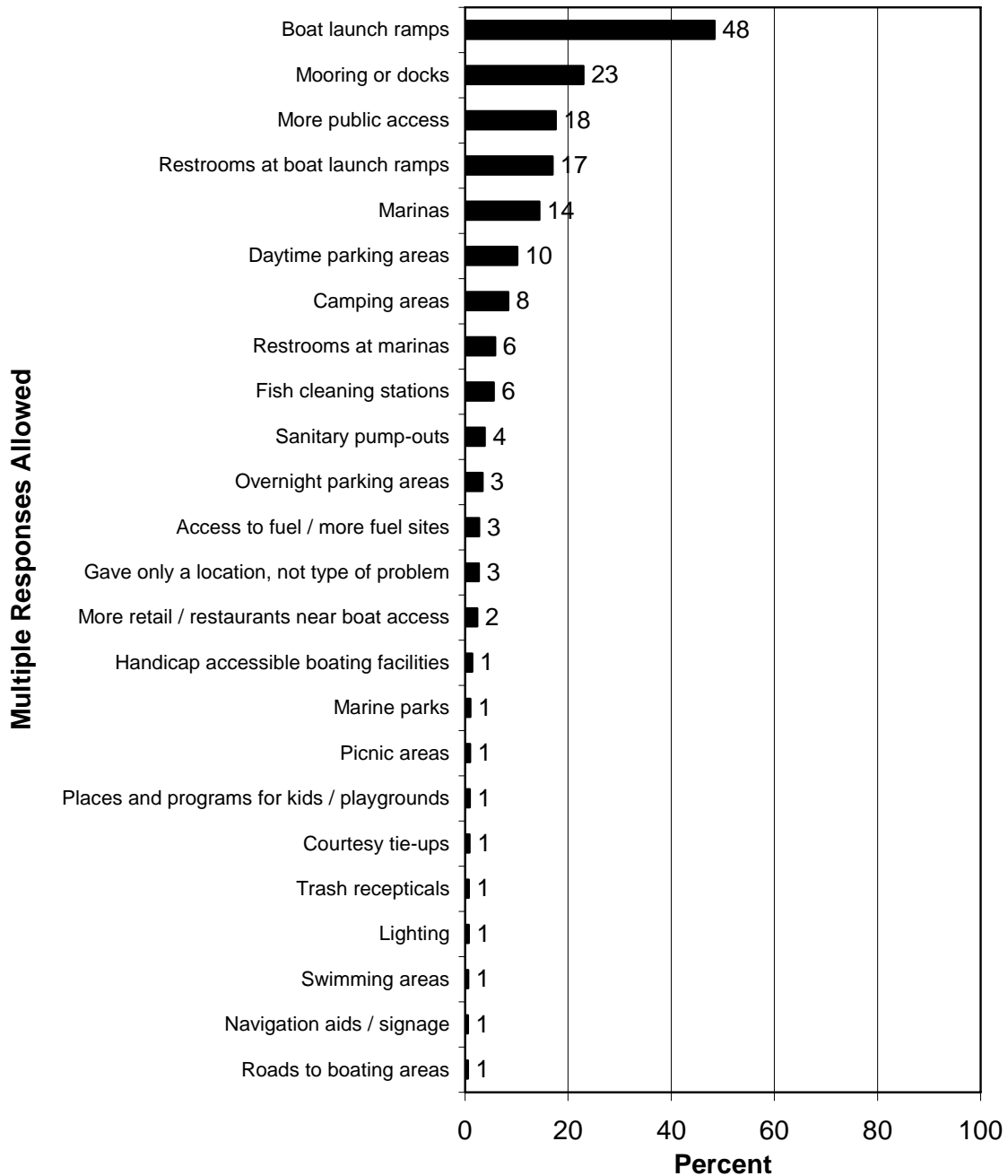
**Q171. What aspects of the facilities or services need to be improved? (Asked of those who would like to see the facilities or services in the county in which he/she boats most often improved.) (Part 2.)**



**Q171. What aspects of the facilities or services need to be improved? (Asked of those who would like to see the facilities or services in the county in which he/she boats most often improved.) (Part 3.)**

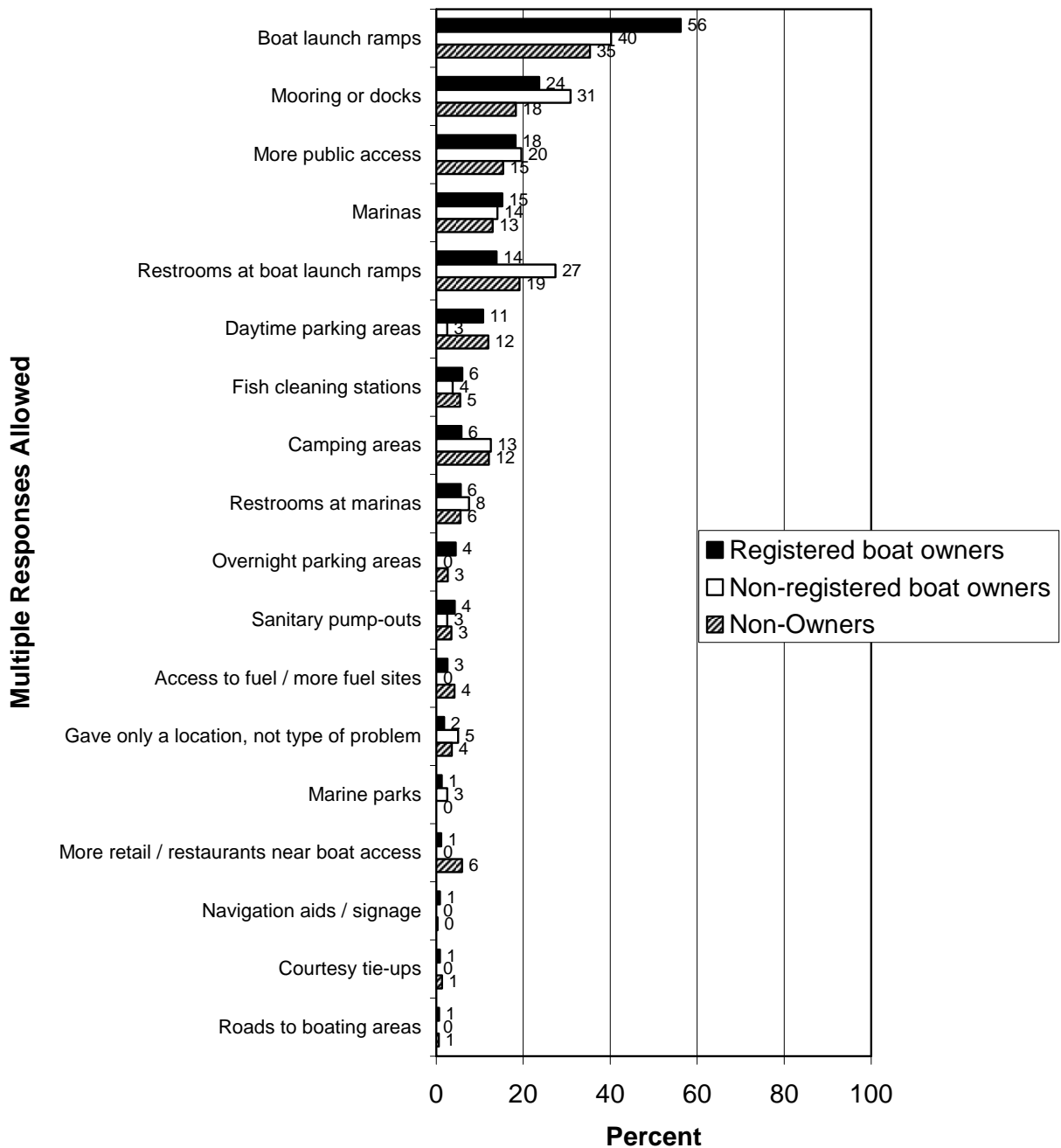


**Q194. What would you like to see built? (Asked of those who would like to see a facility or service in the county in which he/she boats most often built.)**

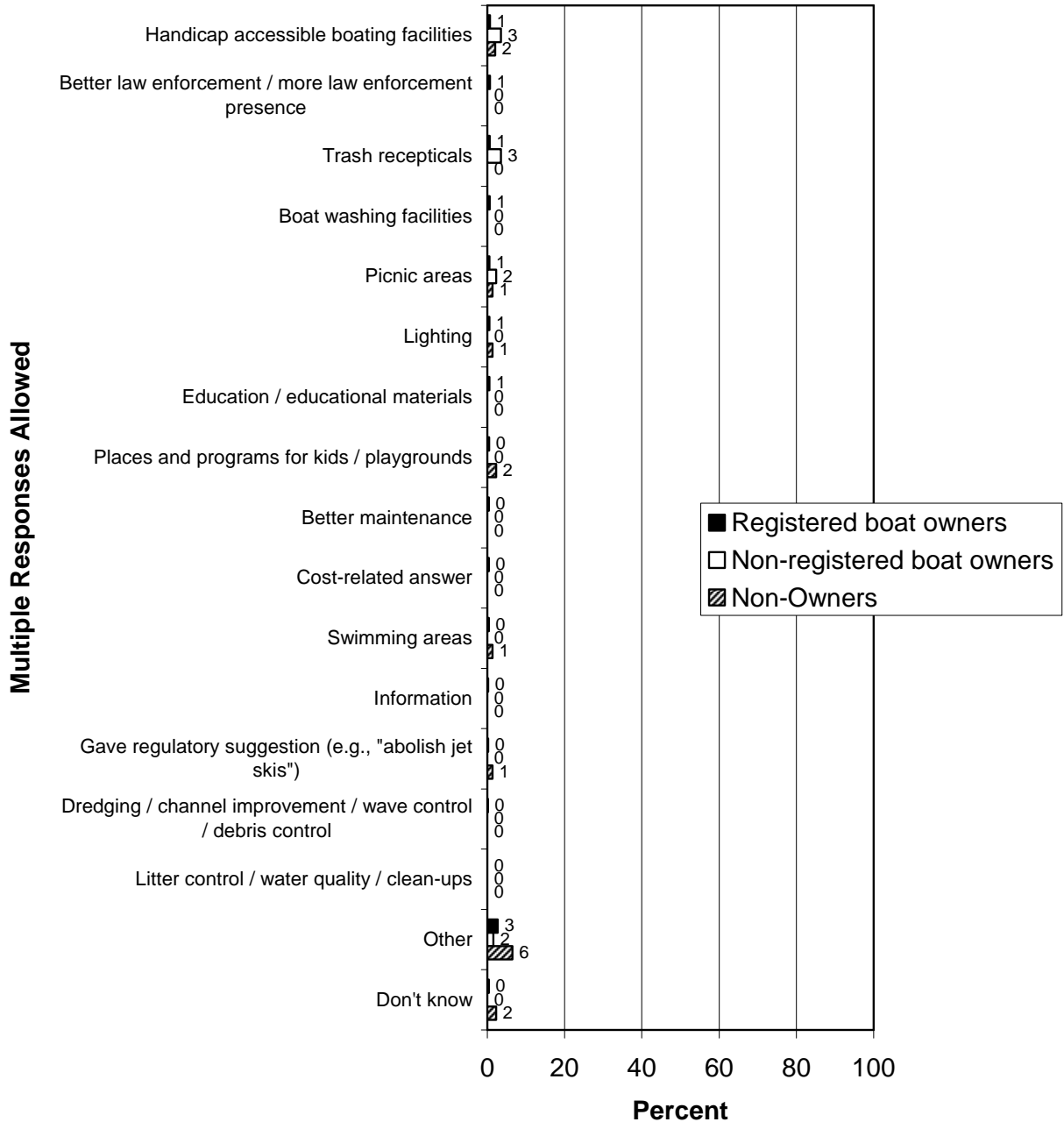




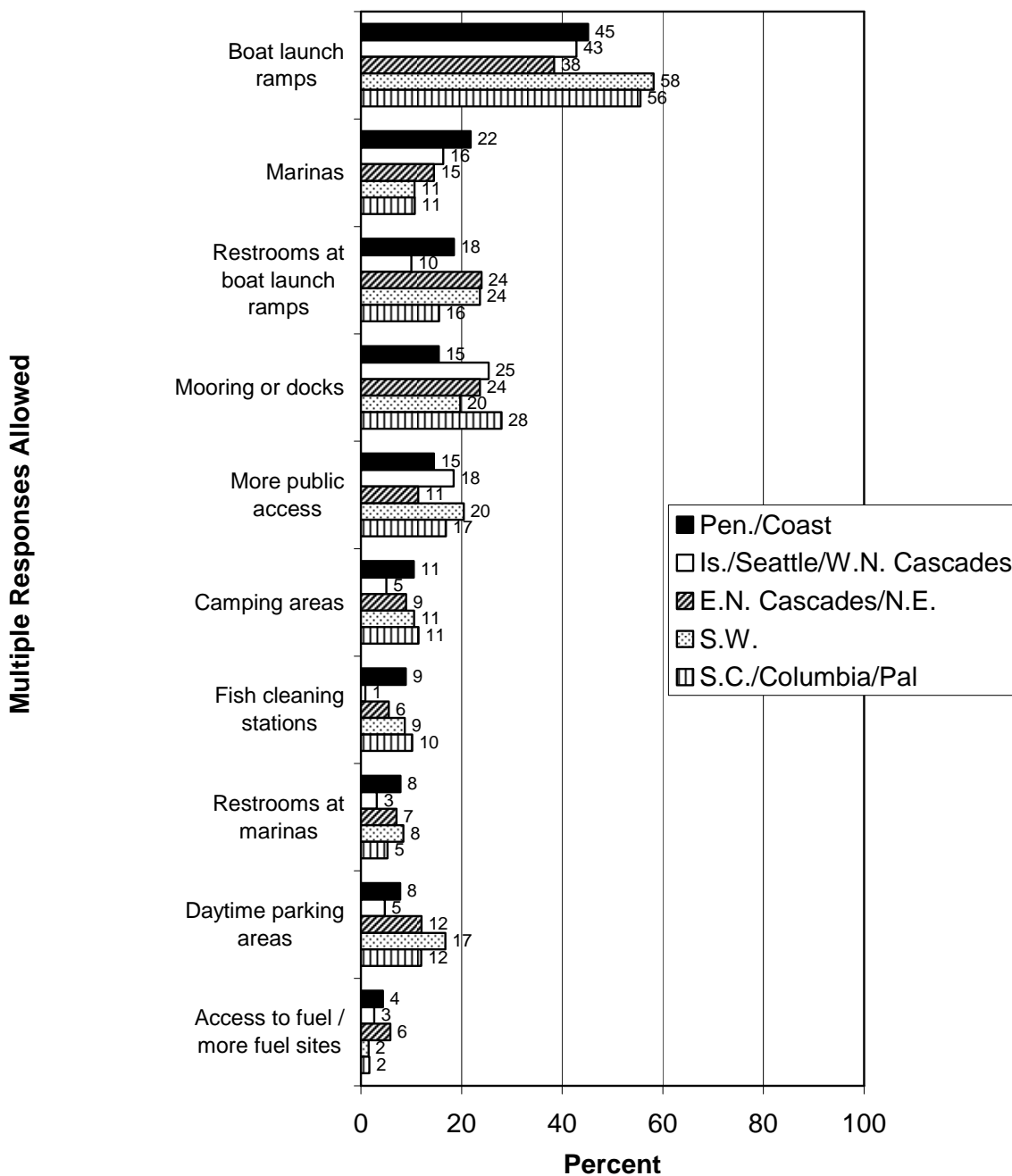
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**(Part 1.)**



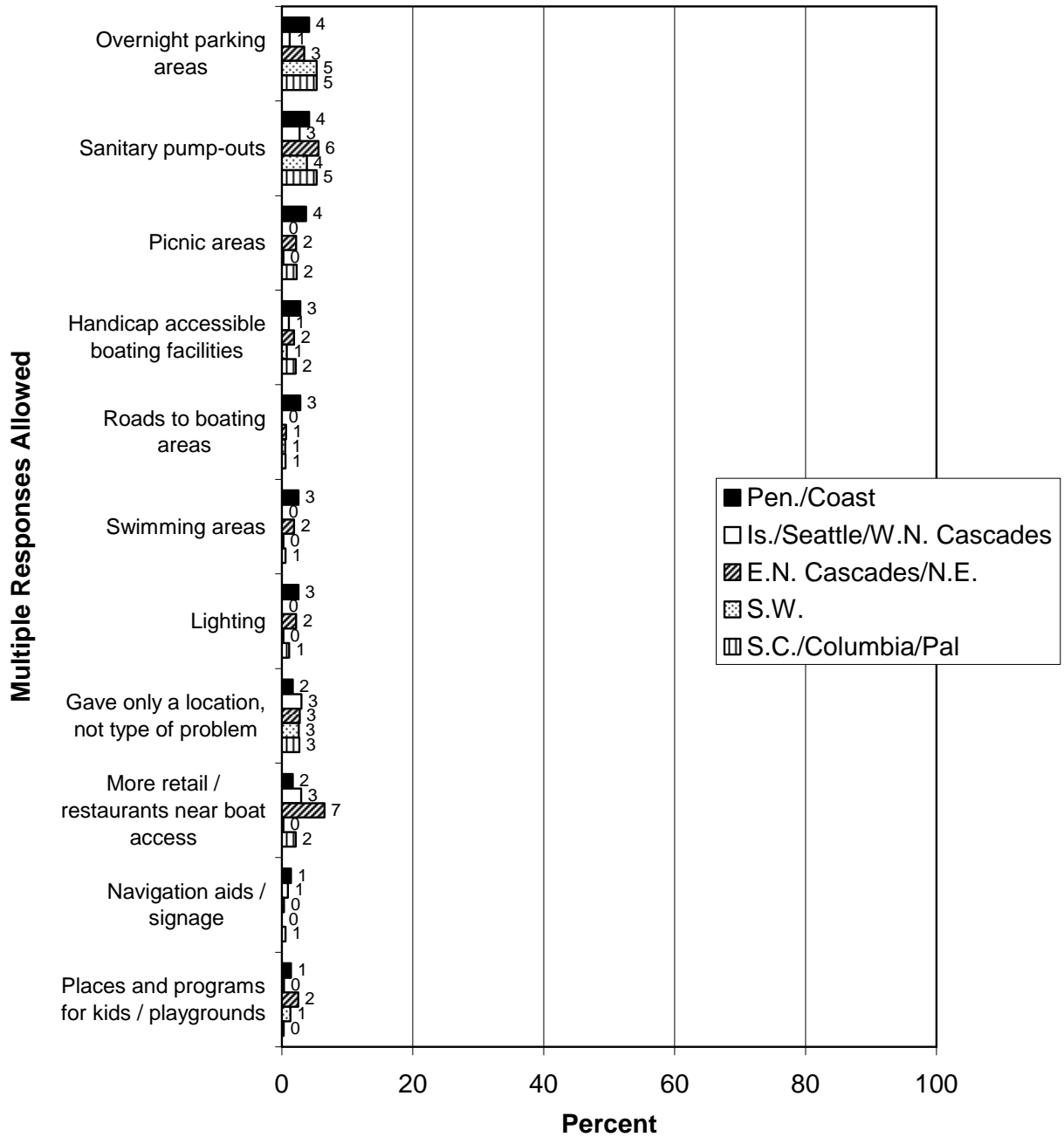
**Q194. What would you like to see built? (Asked of those who would like to see a facility or service in the county in which he/she boats most often built.) (Part 2.)**



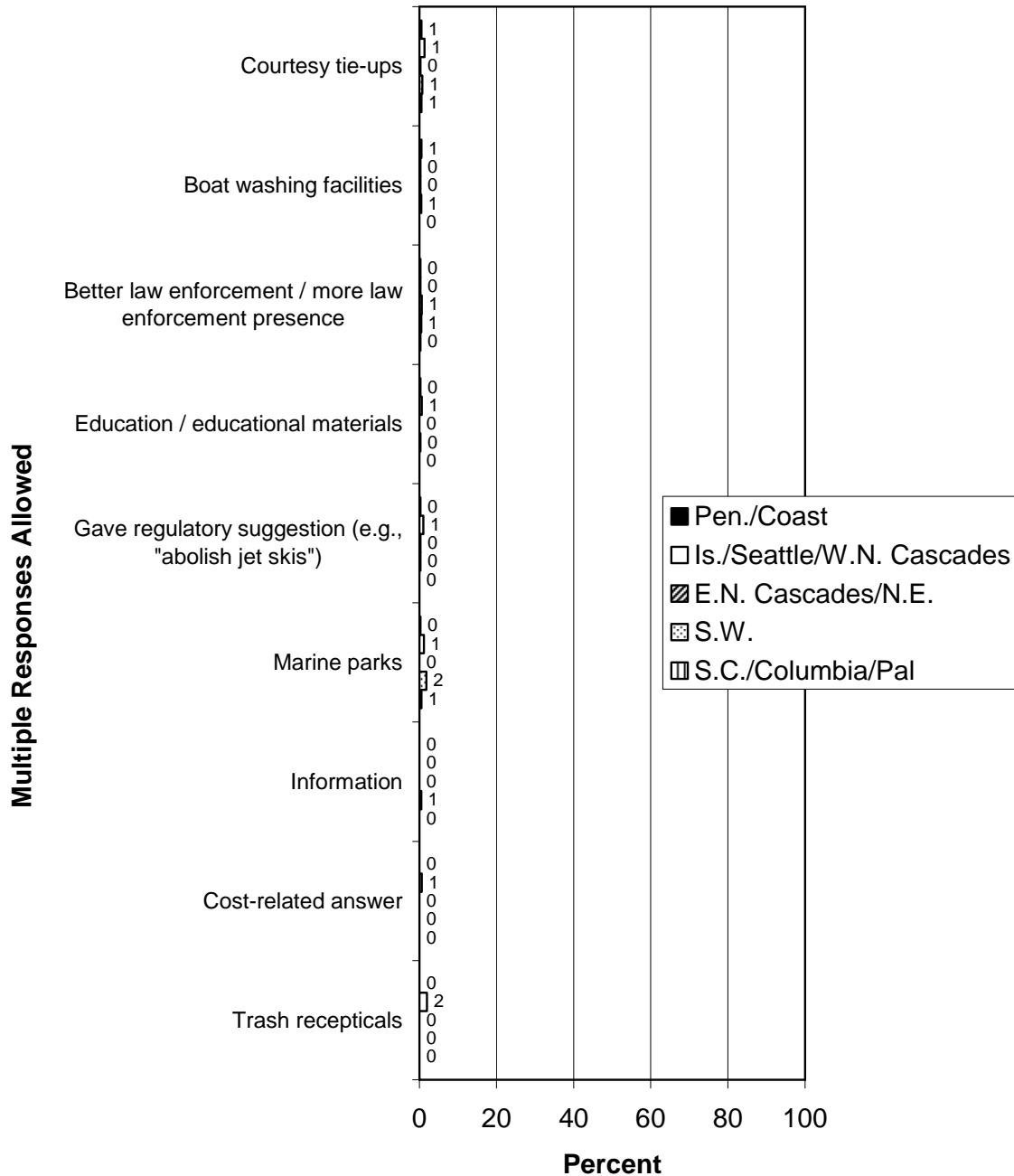
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**(Part 1.)**



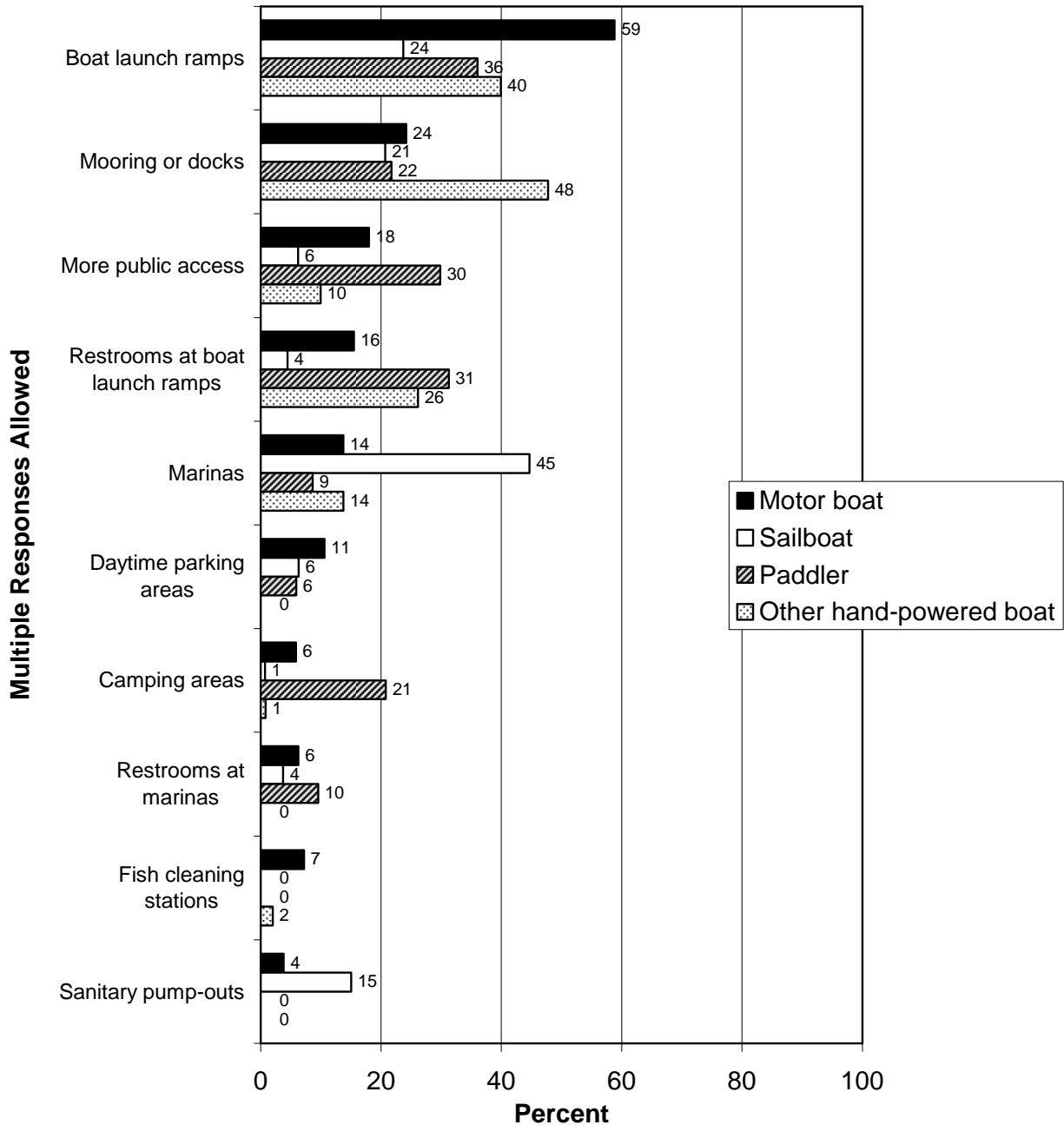
**Q194. What would you like to see built? (Asked of those who would like to see a facility or service in the county in which he/she boats most often built.) (Part 2.)**



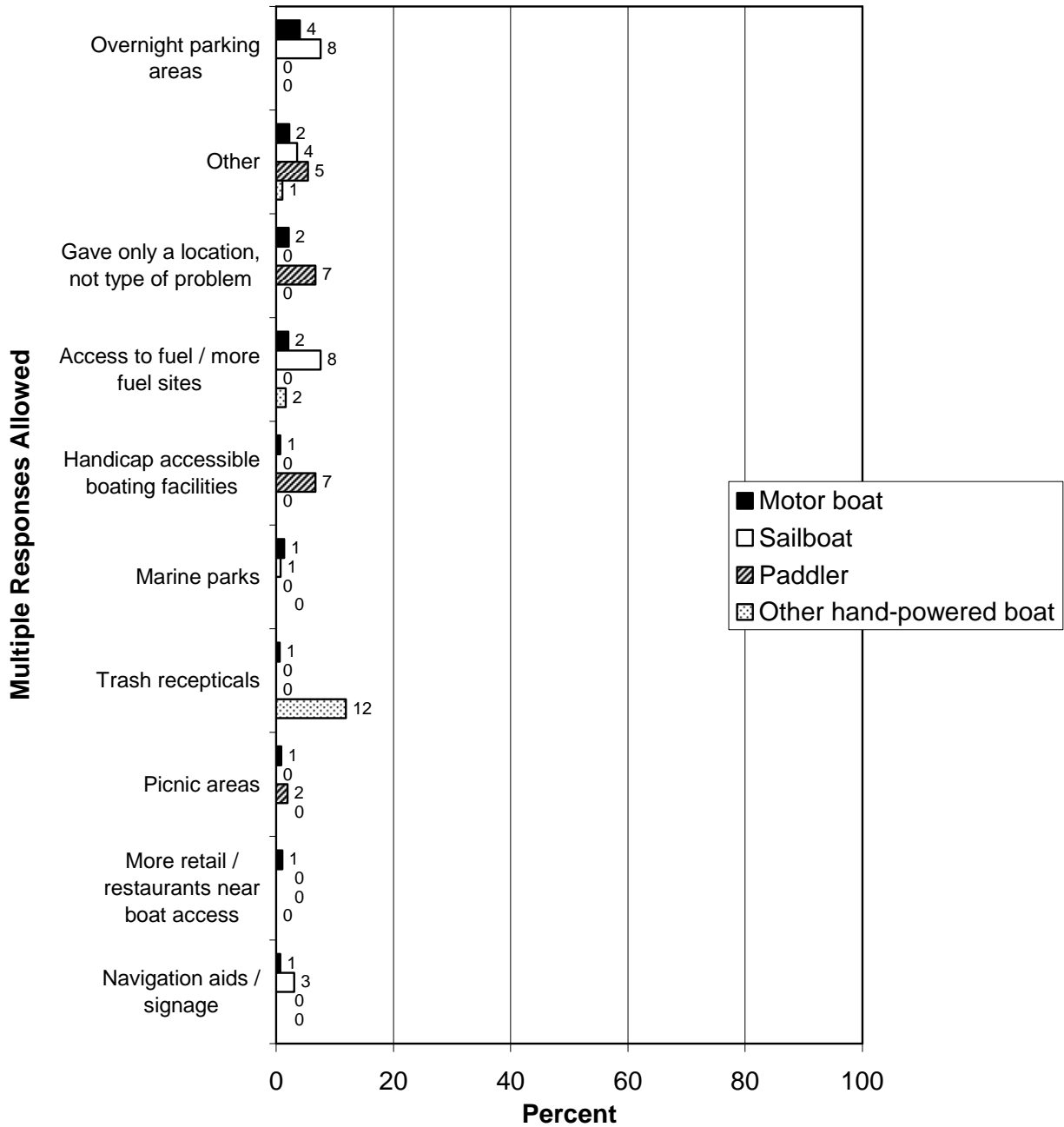
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**(Part 3.)**



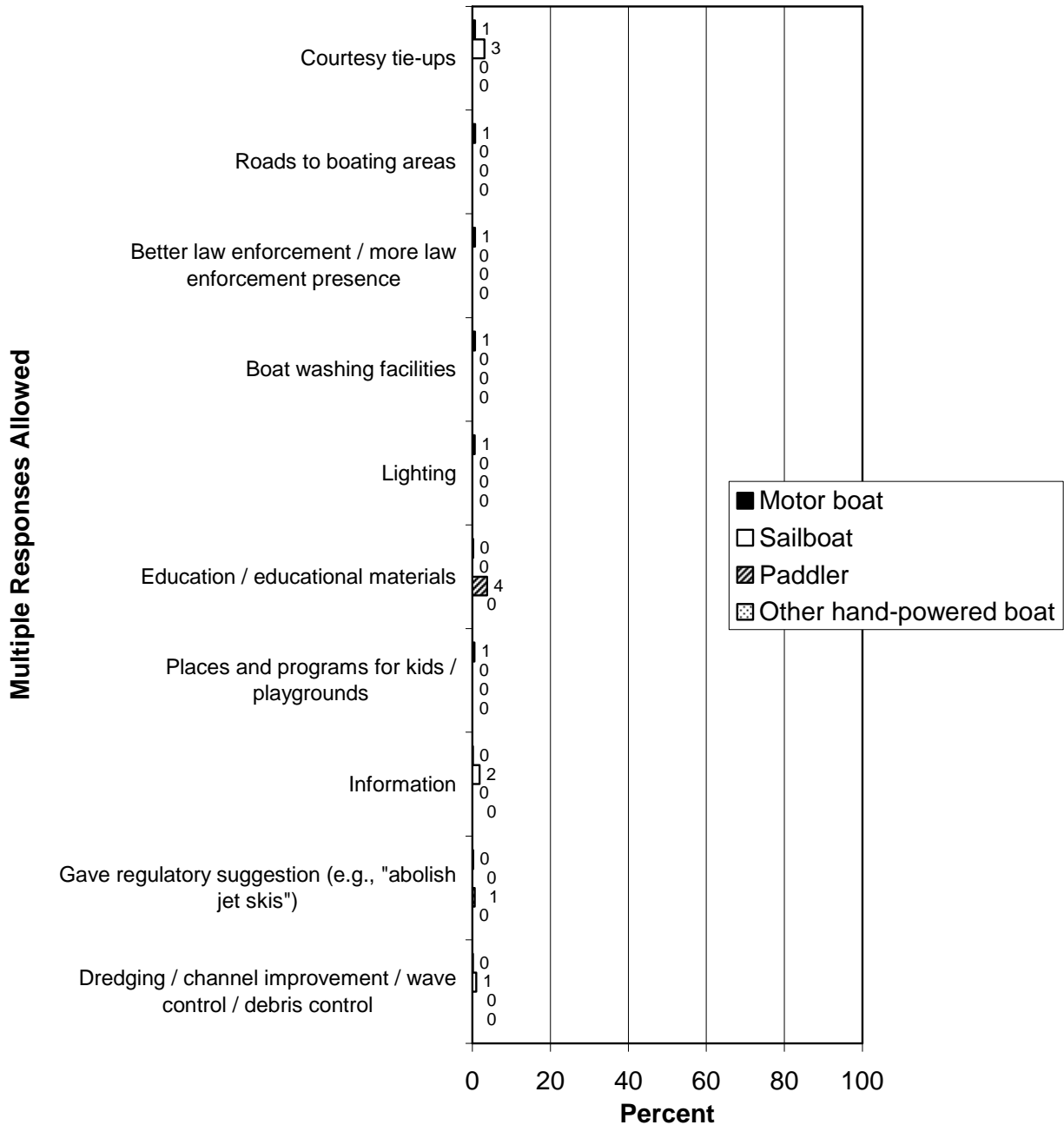
**Q194. What would you like to see built? (Asked of those who would like to see a facility or service in the county in which he/she boats most often built.) (Part 1.)**



**Q194. What would you like to see built? (Asked of those who would like to see a facility or service in the county in which he/she boats most often built.) (Part 2.)**

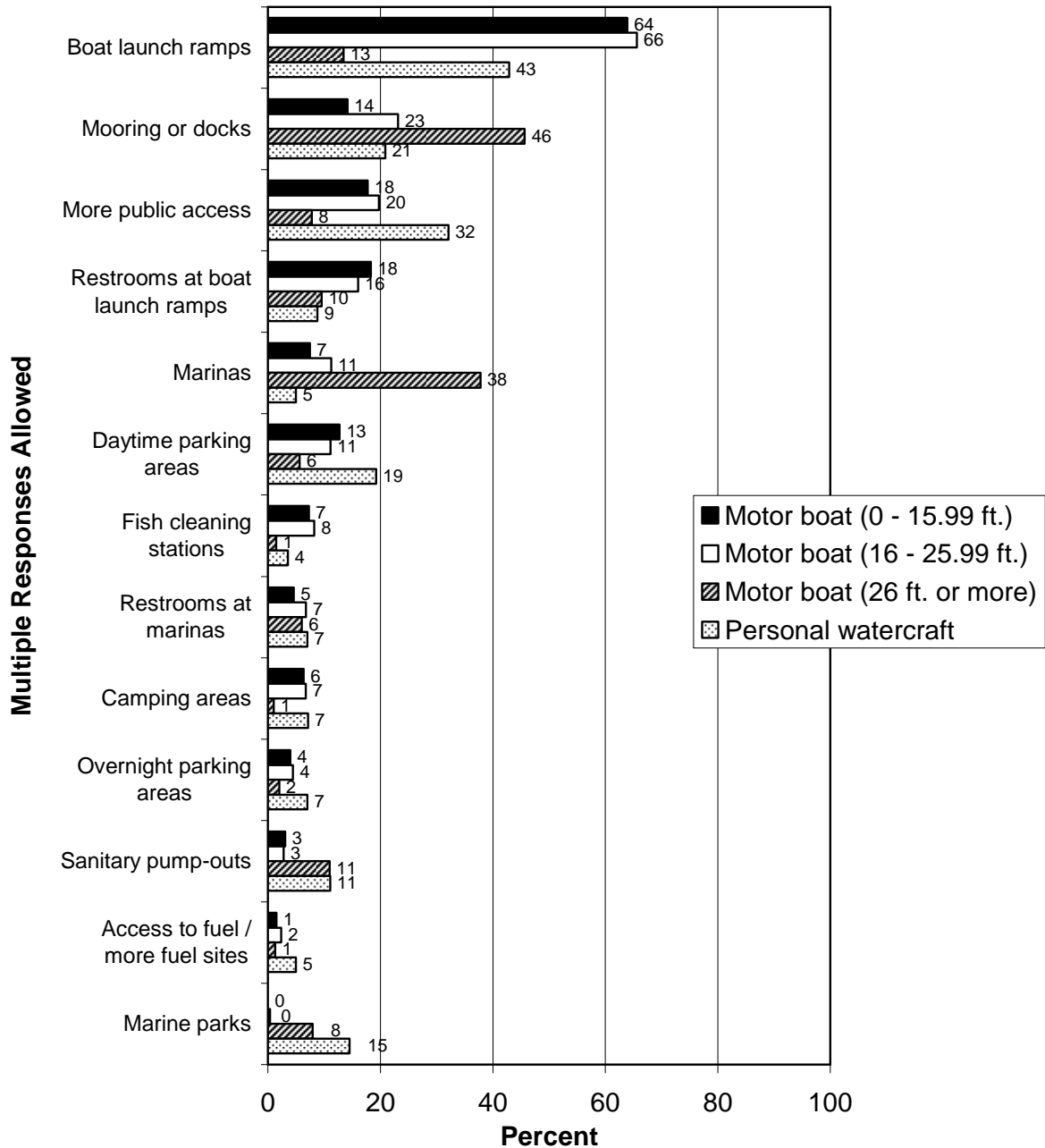


**Q194. What would you like to see built? (Asked of those who would like to see a facility or service in the county in which he/she boats most often built.) (Part 3.)**

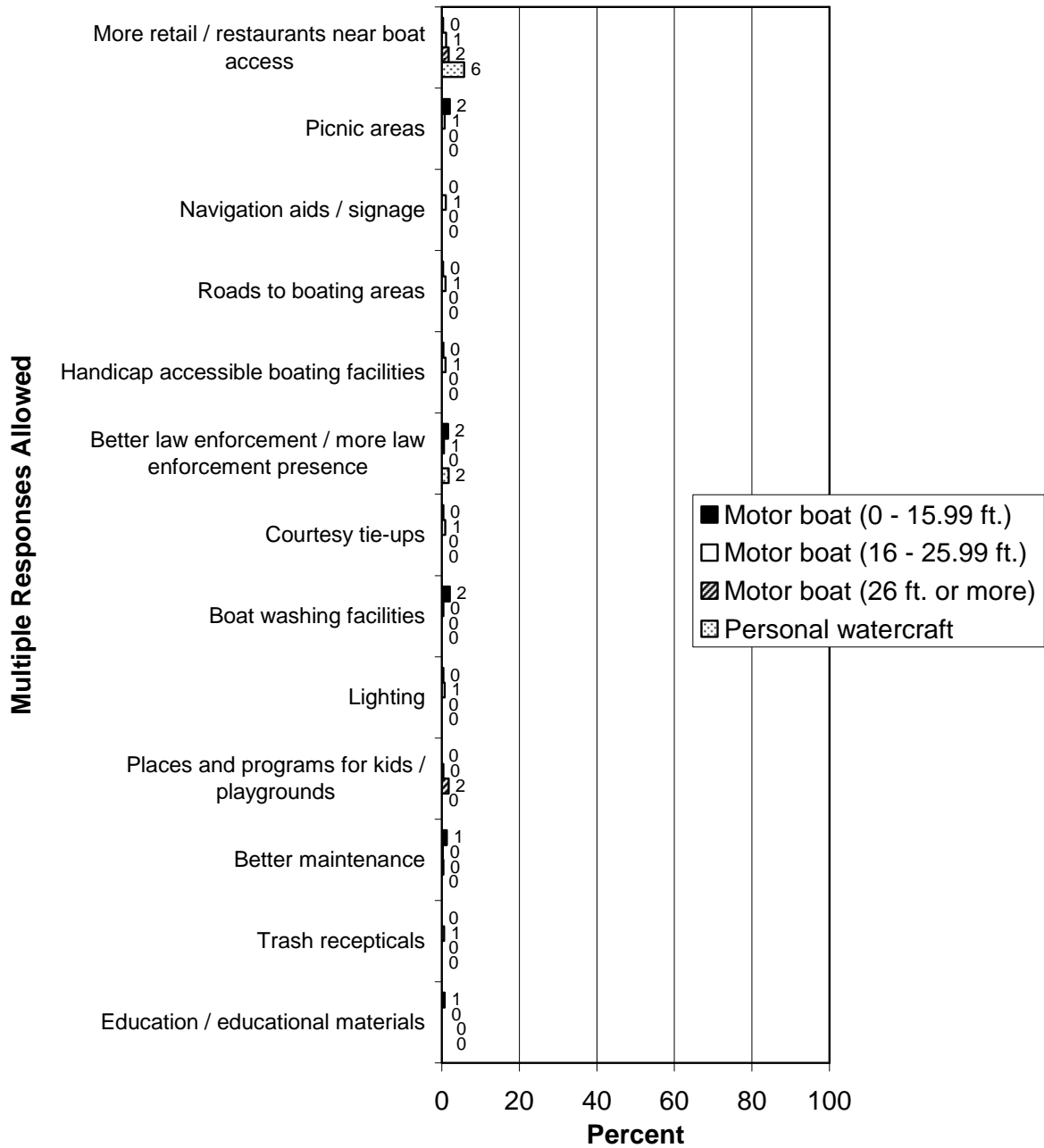




**Q194. What would you like to see built? (Asked of those who would like to see a facility or service in the county in which he/she boats most often built.)**  
**(Part 1.)**



**Q194. What would you like to see built? (Asked of those who would like to see a facility or service in the county in which he/she boats most often built.) (Part 2.)**

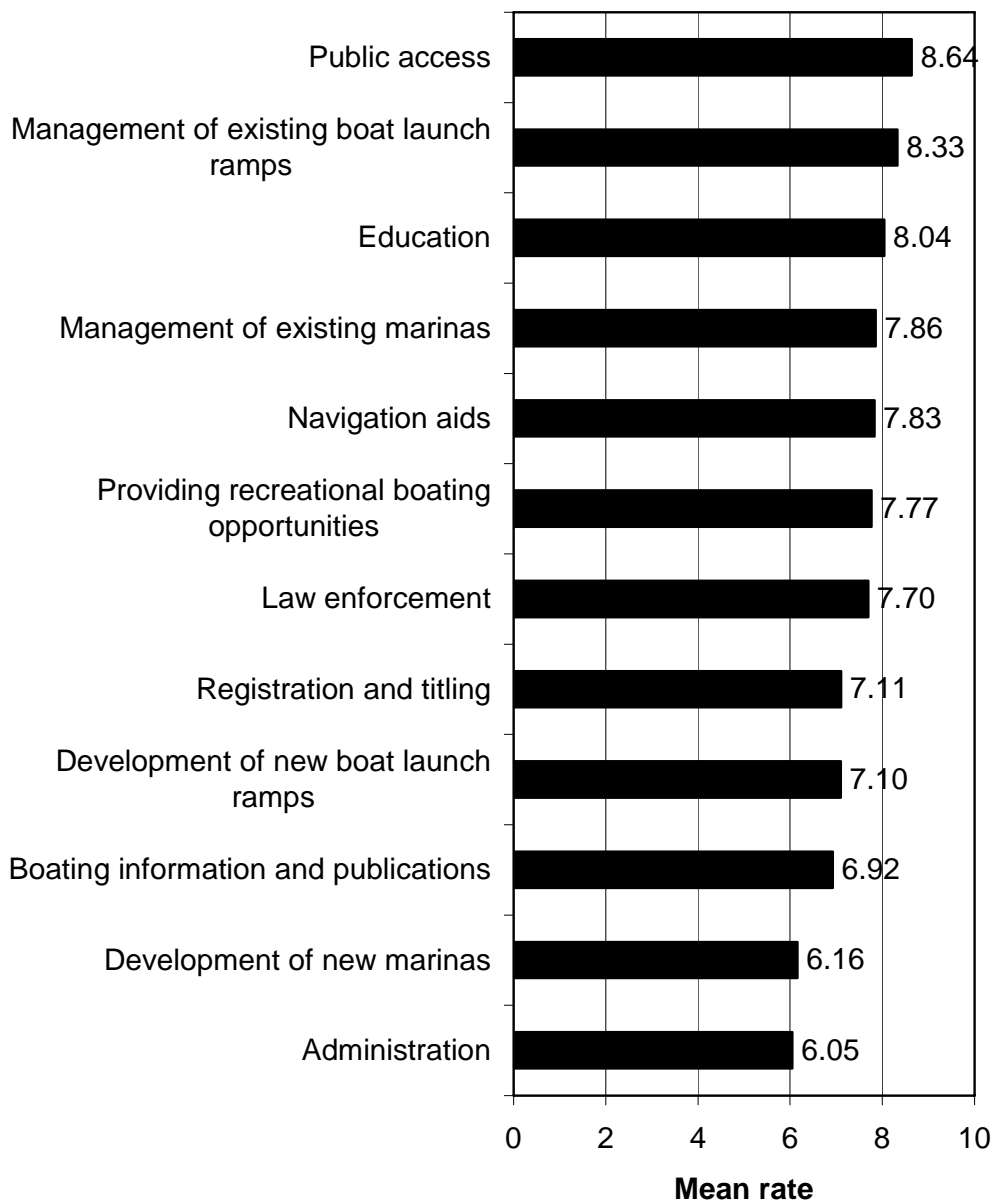


### **Programs, Services, and Facilities: Ratings of Importance, Performance, Amount of Resources Directed Toward Them, and Quality**

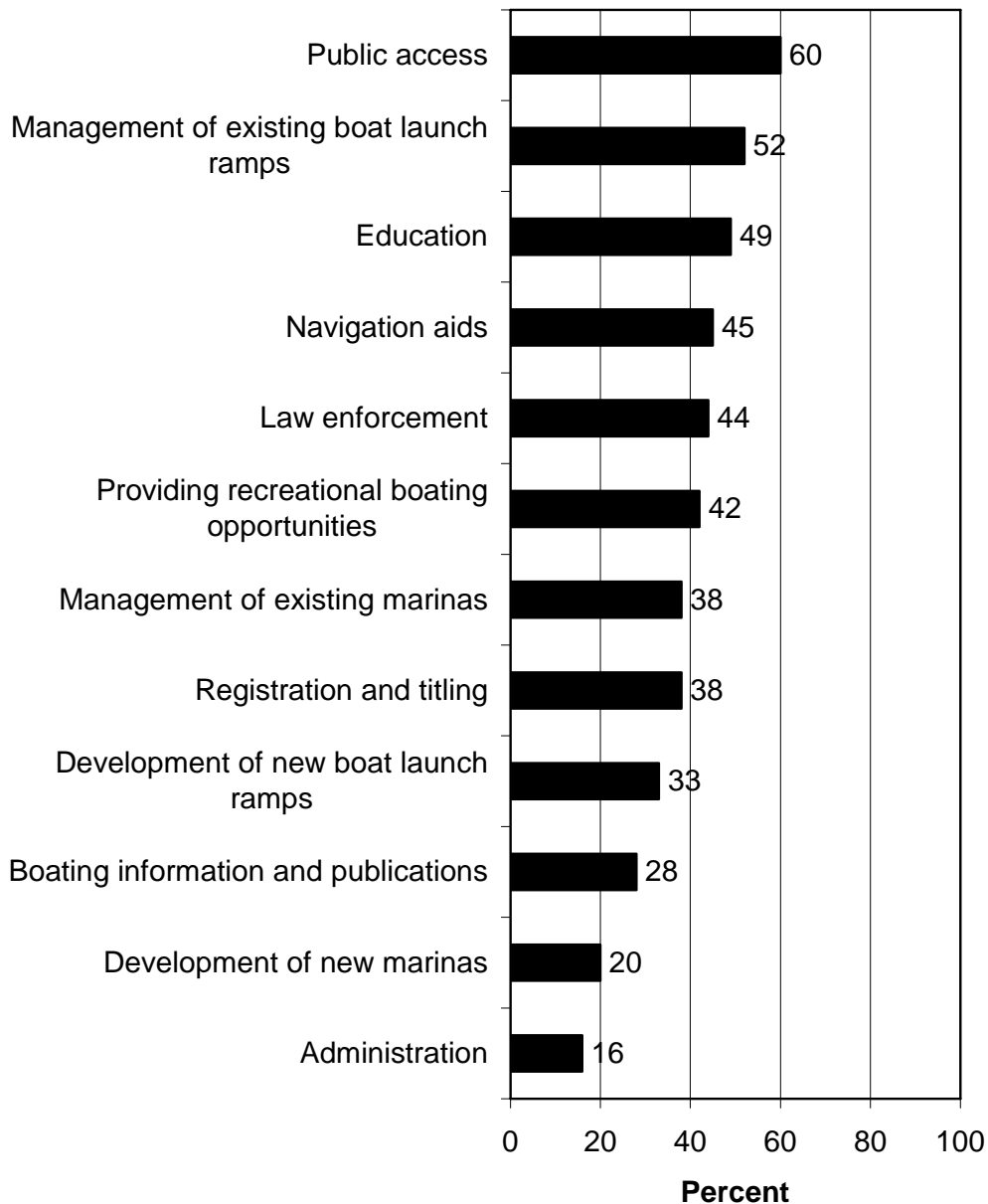
- The survey asked respondents to rate the importance of 12 boating programs and services on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being “not at all important” and 10 being “extremely important” (note that “don’t know” answers were removed from the calculation of means). The results produced a ranking of programs and services, with access issues topping the ranking. Public access was the top answer (mean rating among all boaters of 8.64), closely followed by management of *existing* boat launch ramps in second place (mean of 8.33) and management of *existing* marinas in fourth place (mean of 7.86). Education was also high on the ranking (mean of 8.04), in third place, as was navigation aids (mean of 7.83), in fifth place. Note that development of *new* launch facilities is low on the ranking (development of new boat launch ramps was fourth from the last, and development of new marinas was next to last). The results are also shown of those who gave a rating of 9 or 10, which reiterate the findings above.
- In the crosstabulation by type of respondent, results were similar among the three types, with a couple of important exceptions.
    - Navigation aids were more important to registered boat owners than to non-registered boat owners.
    - Development of new boat launch ramps were more important to registered boat owners than to the other two types of boaters.
  - There were some notable regional differences in the rating of importance of programs and services.
    - Navigation aids were slightly *less* important to boaters of the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region than to boaters from other regions.
    - The development of new boat launch ramps had the highest importance ratings in the Southwest Region and the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region.
  - In the crosstabulations by type of boat used most often, there are marked differences in ratings of importance of various boating programs and services.
    - Motor boaters gave notably higher ratings (relative to the other types of boaters) for development of new boat launch ramps and for registration and titling. Also, they gave high ratings for the importance of navigation aids (along with sailboaters).

- Sailboaters collectively gave a much higher mean rating for navigation aids relative to the other types of boaters.
- Paddlers and those using mostly other hand-powered boats gave *low* importance ratings to navigation aids and development of new marinas. However, law enforcement is important to these two types of boaters, particularly among those using other hand-powered boats.
- In the crosstabulation by size of motor boat, a notable difference occurs regarding navigation aids: motor boaters of large boats—class 2 and class 3 boats—give the highest importance rating to navigation aids. On the other hand, personal watercraft and class A motor boats do *not* rate navigation aids as relatively important. Also note that management of existing marinas is important to large motor boat operators.

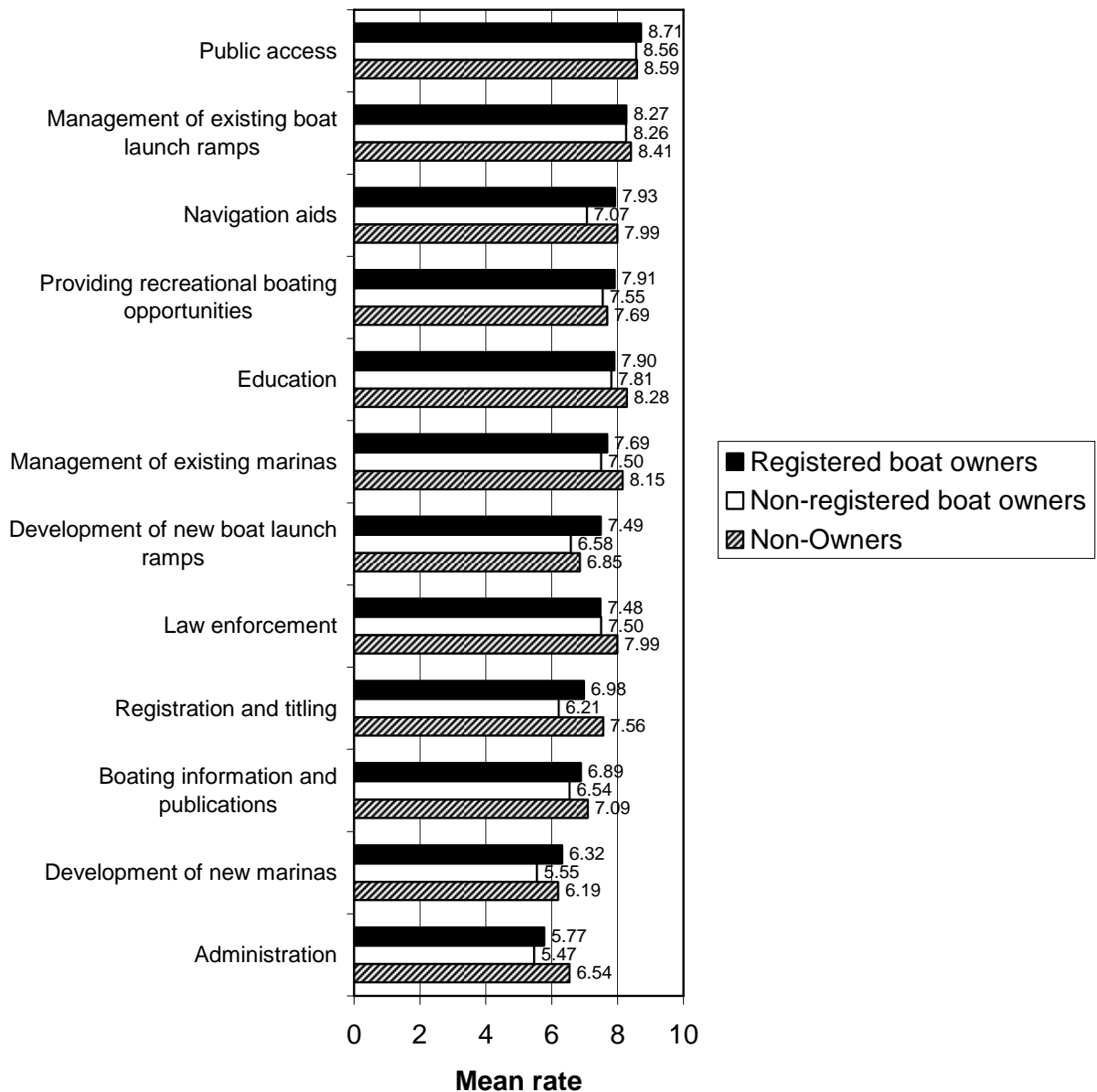
**Q110-121. On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is "not at all important" and 10 is "extremely important," the mean rating of importance for the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**



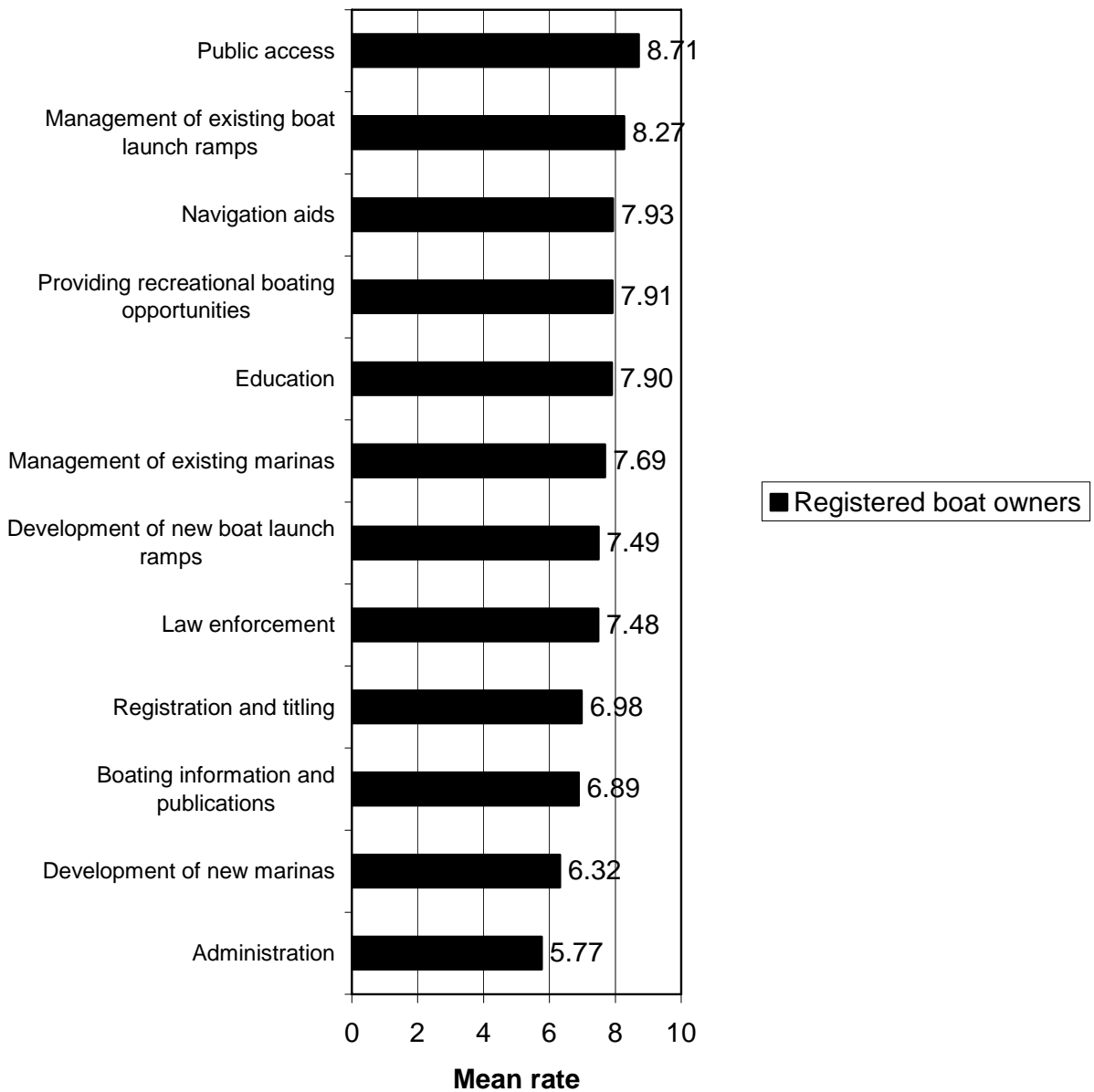
**Q110-121. On a scale of 0 - 10 where 0 is "not at all important" and 10 is "extremely important," those who rated the importance of the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington as a 9 or 10.**



**Q110-121. On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is "not at all important" and 10 is "extremely important," the mean rating of importance for the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**

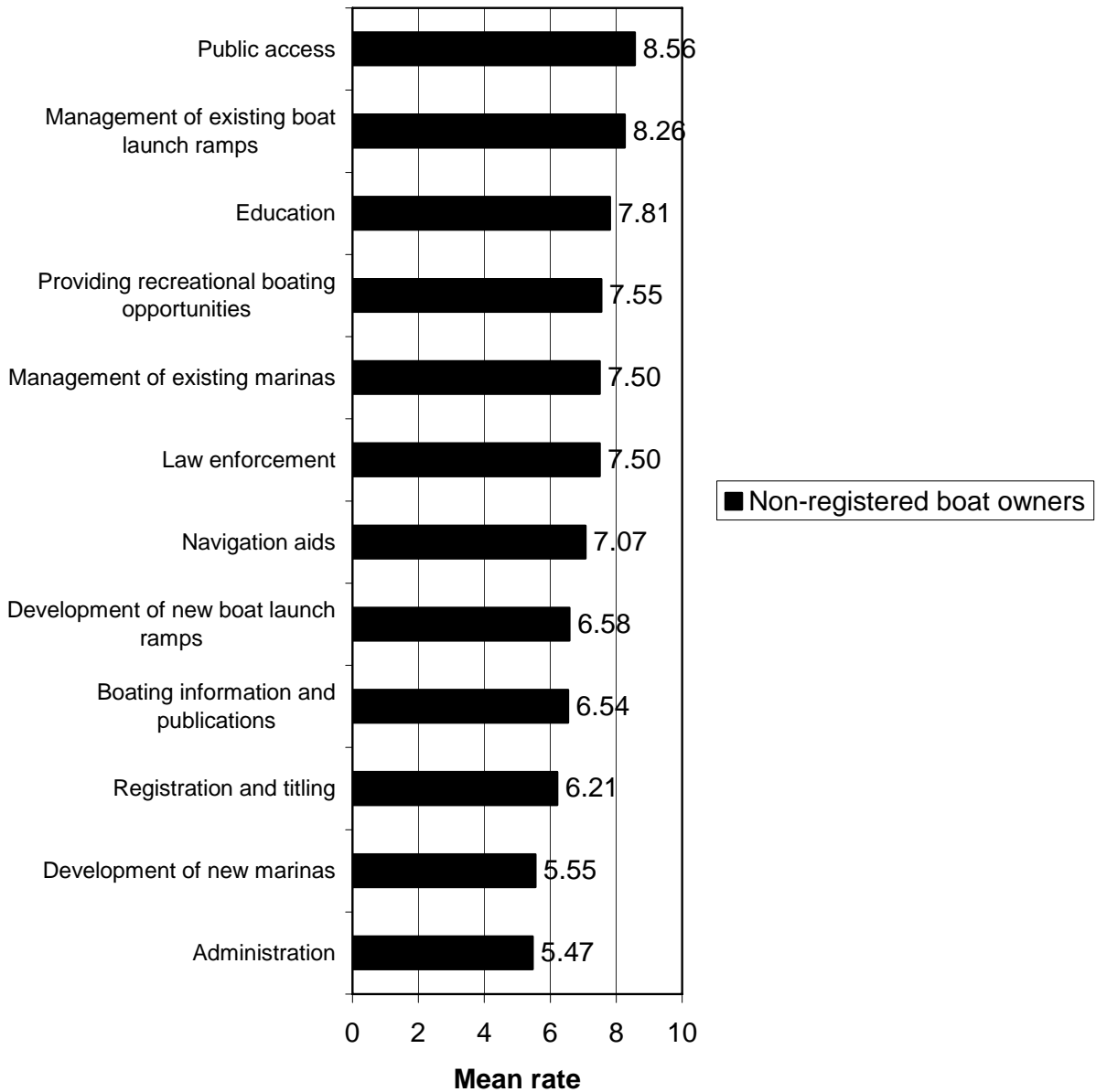


**Q110-121. On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is "not at all important" and 10 is "extremely important," the mean rating of importance for the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**

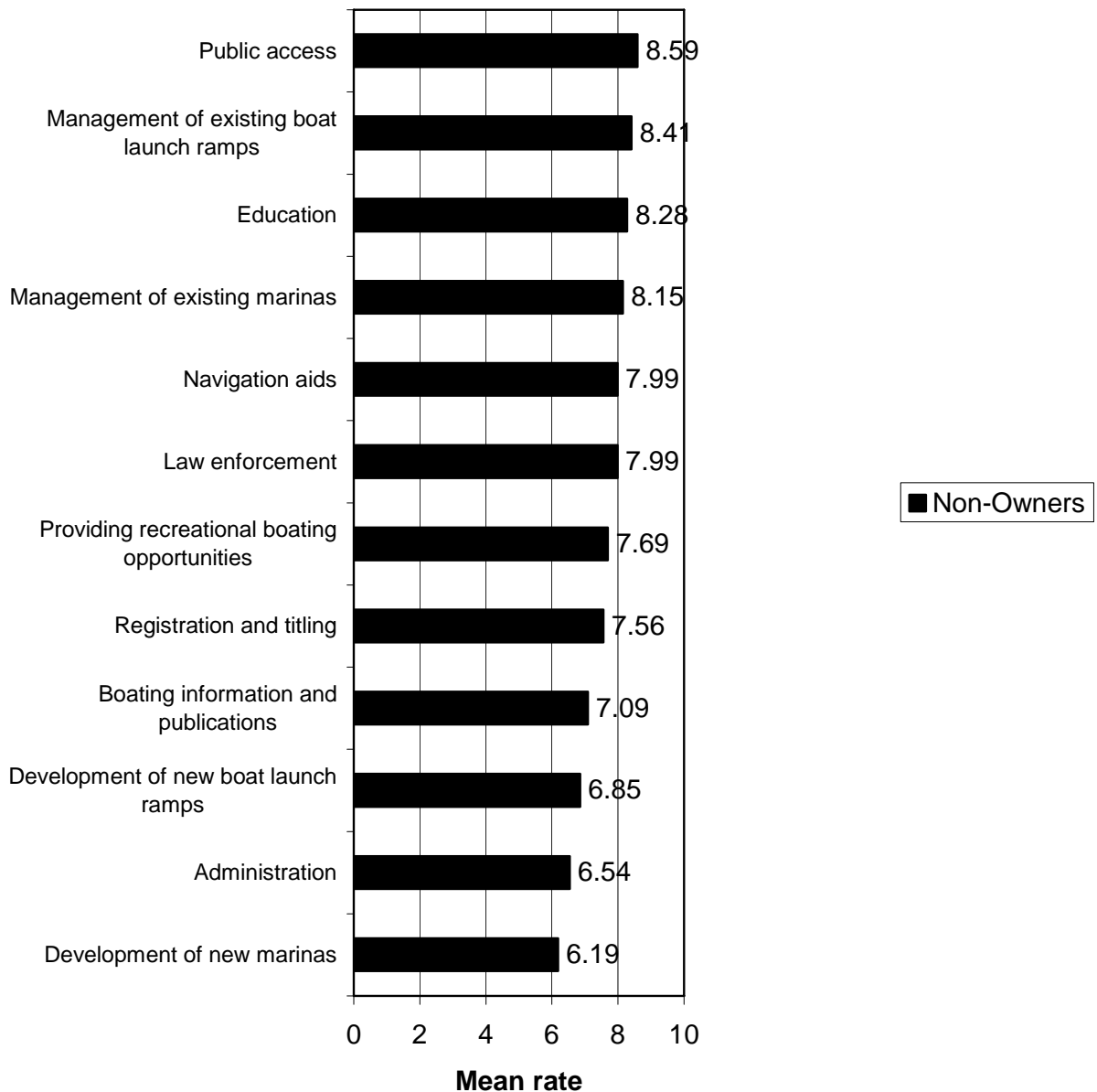




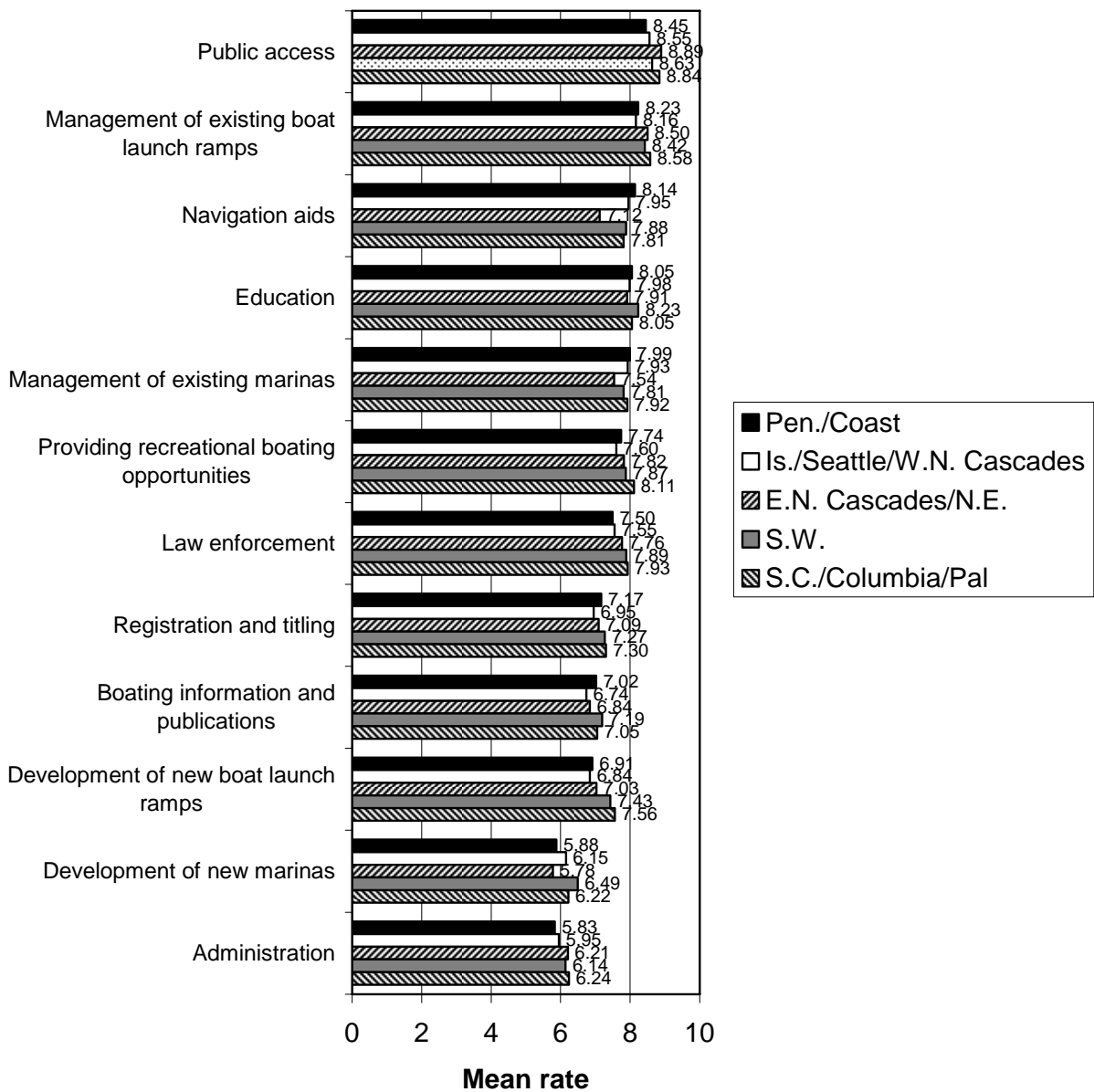
**Q110-121. On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is "not at all important" and 10 is "extremely important," the mean rating of importance for the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**



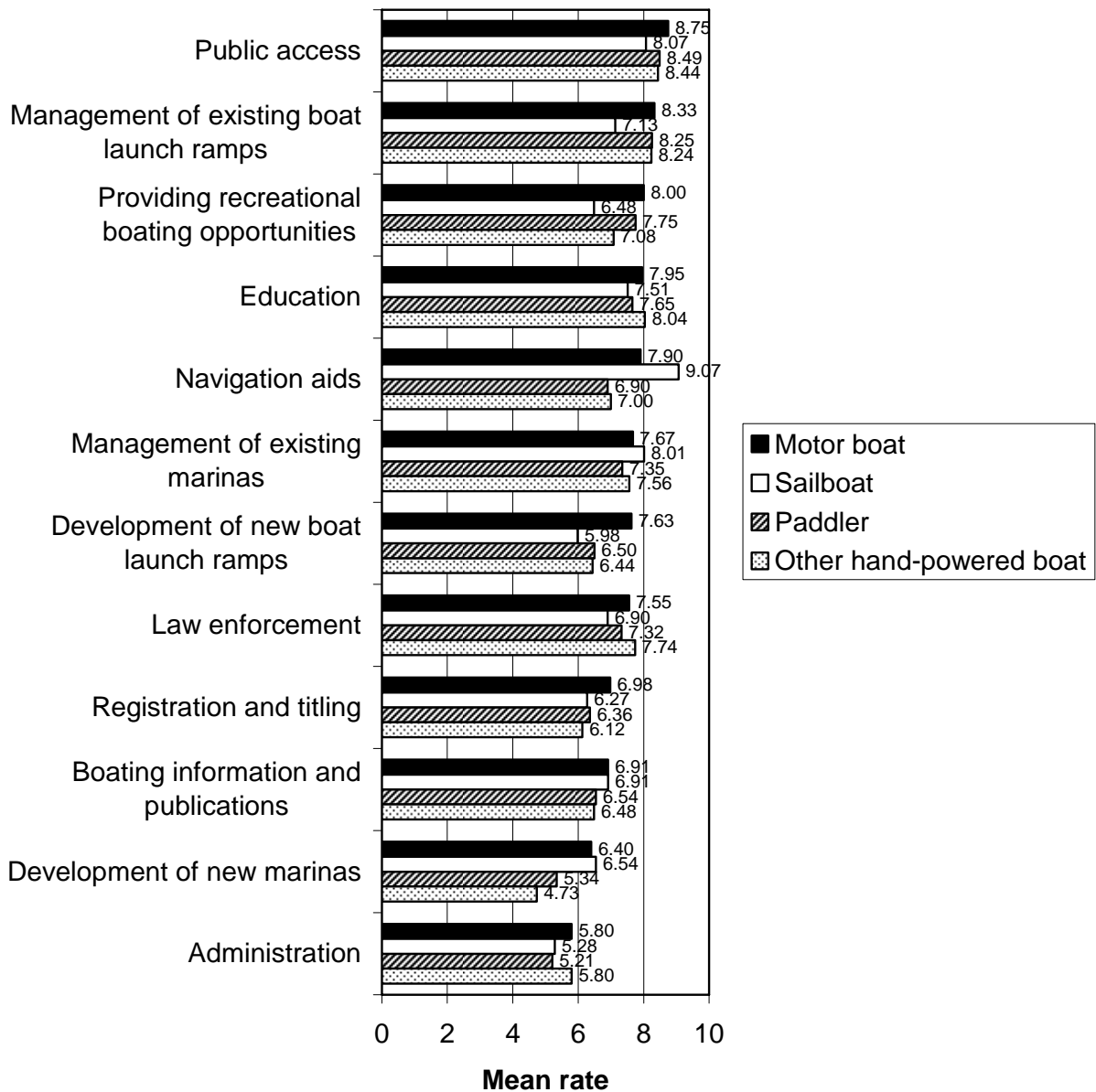
**Q110-121. On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is "not at all important" and 10 is "extremely important," the mean rating of importance for the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**



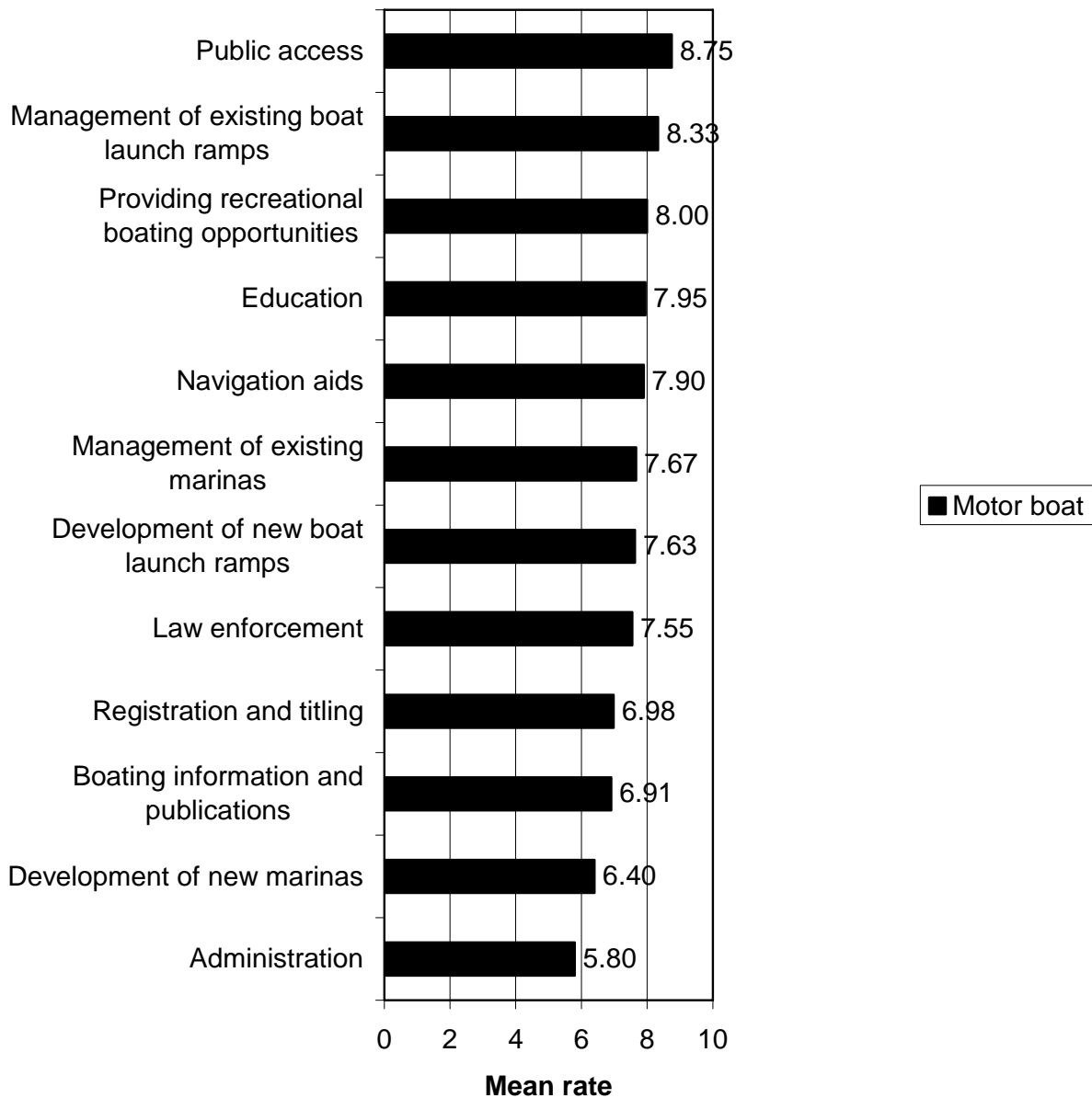
**Q110-121. On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is "not at all important" and 10 is "extremely important," the mean rating of importance for the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**



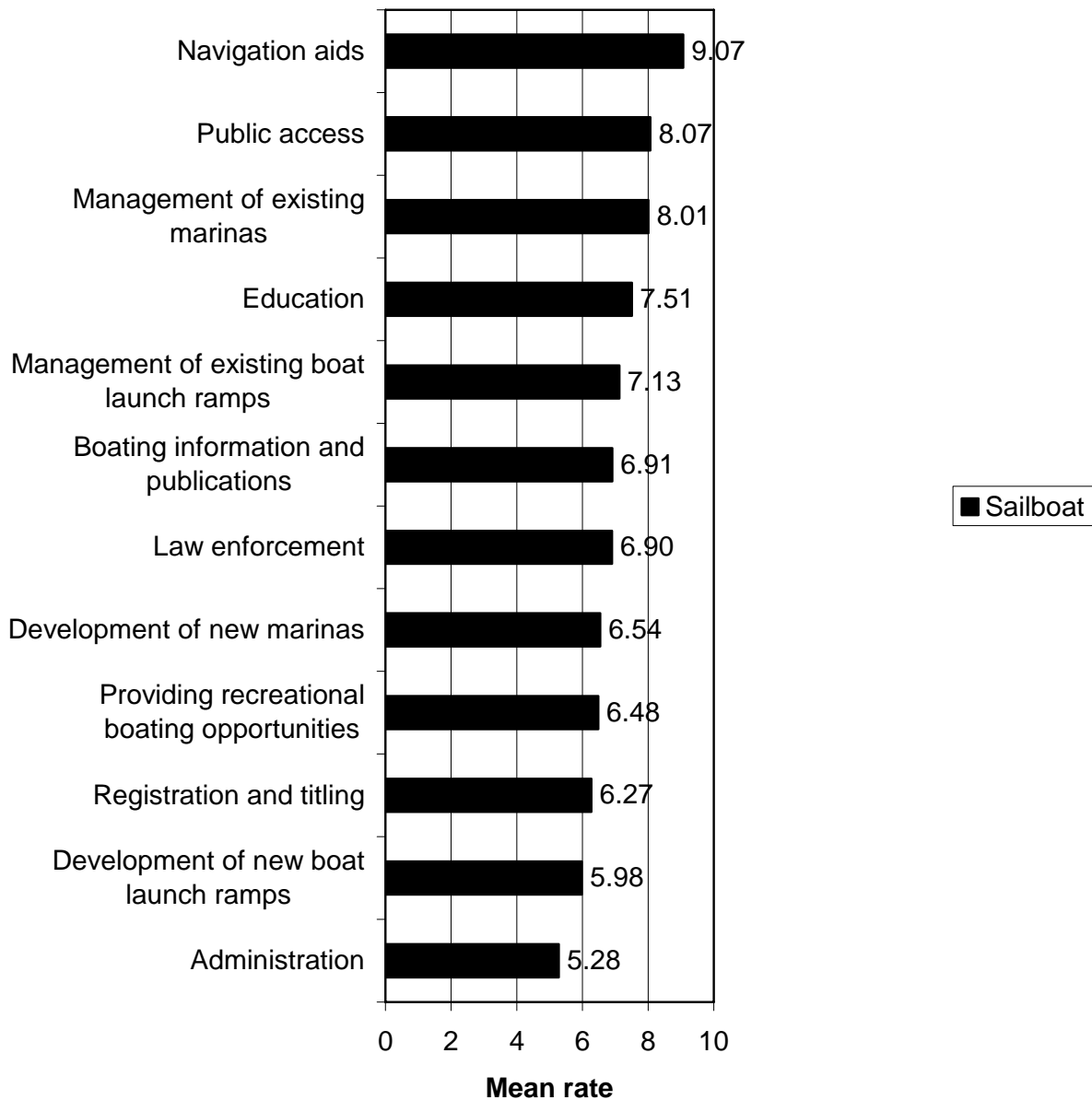
**Q110-121. On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is "not at all important" and 10 is "extremely important," the mean rating of importance for the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**



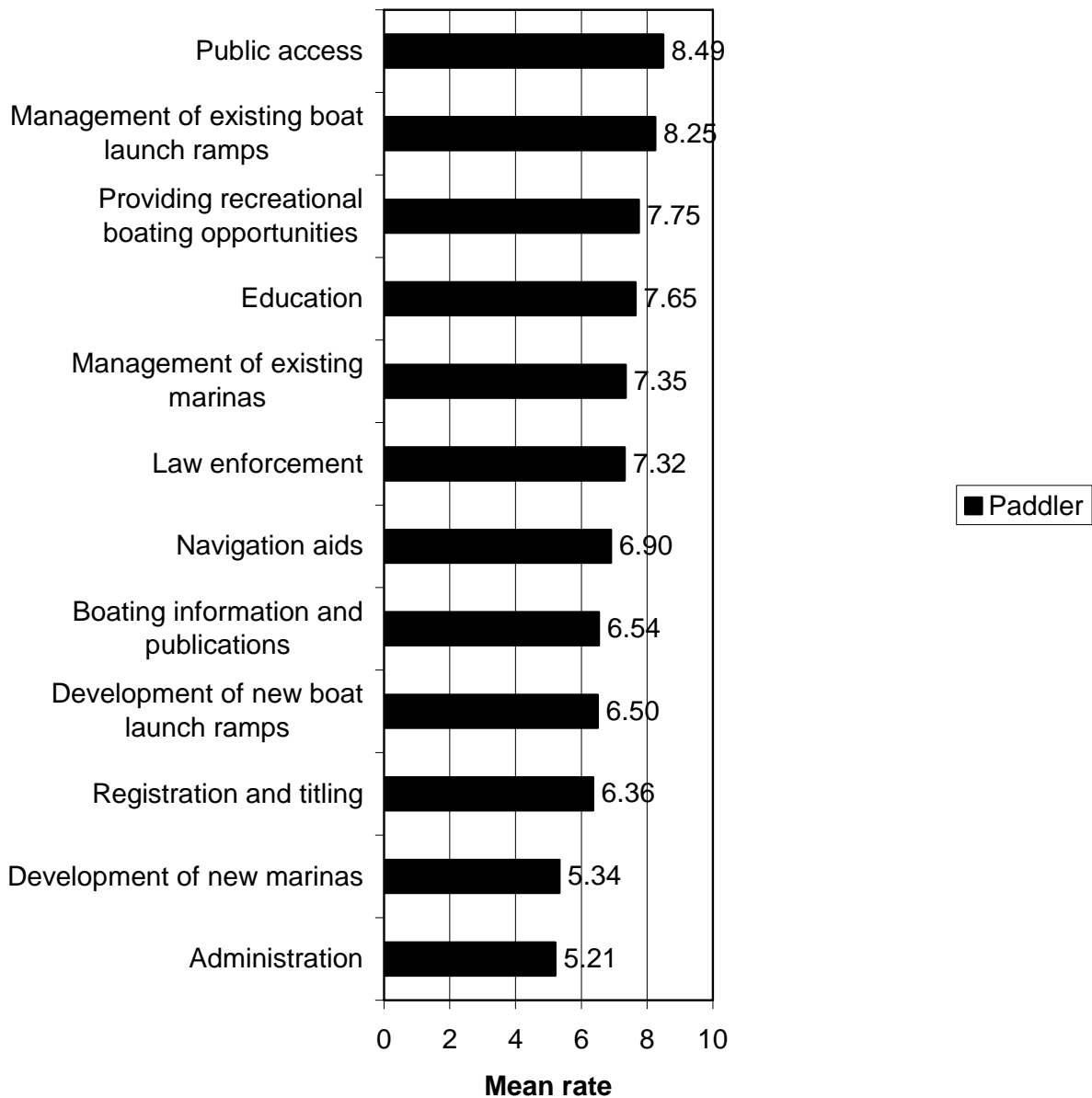
**Q110-121. On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is "not at all important" and 10 is "extremely important," the mean rating of importance for the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**



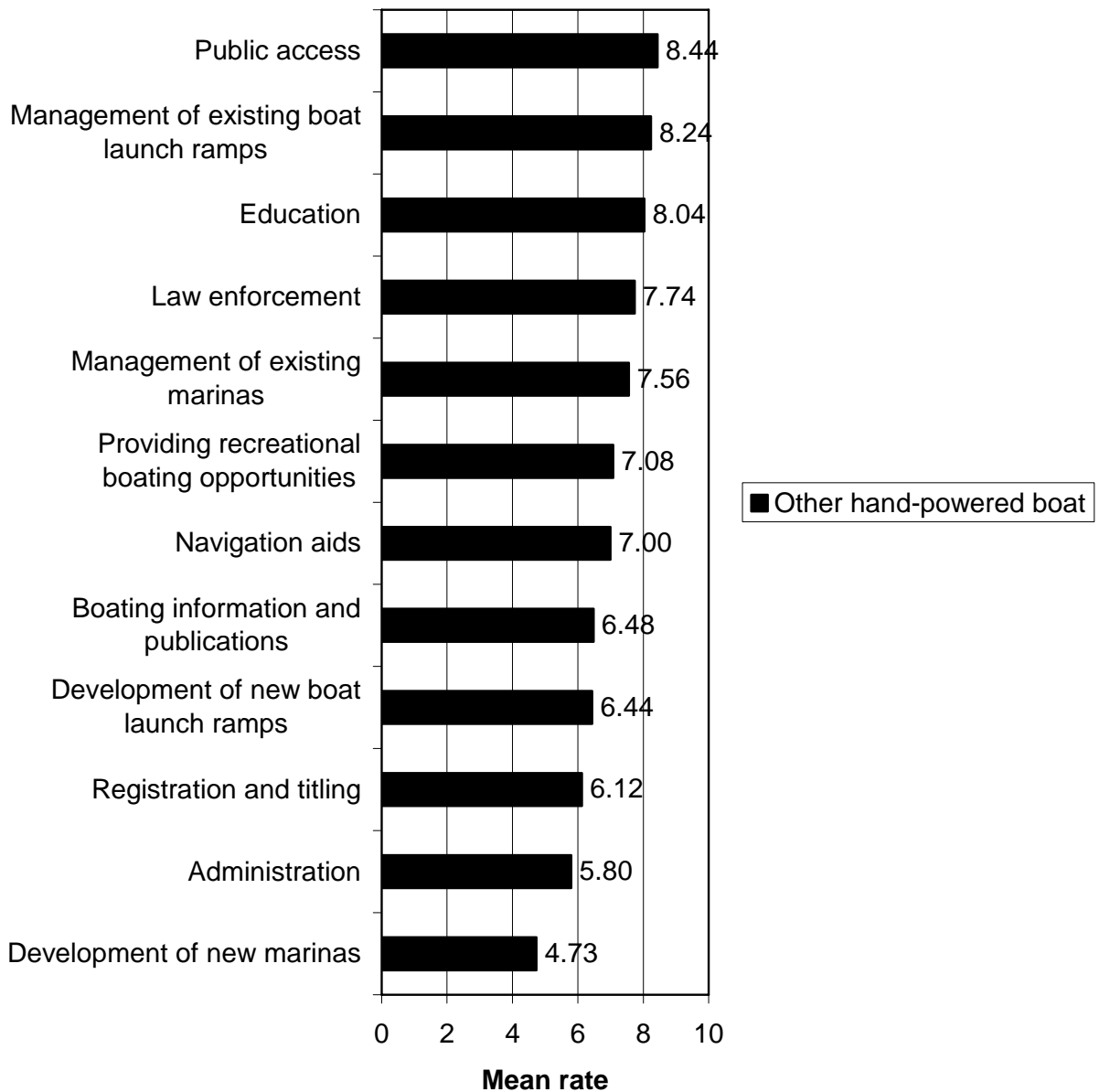
**Q110-121. On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is "not at all important" and 10 is "extremely important," the mean rating of importance for the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**



**Q110-121. On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is "not at all important" and 10 is "extremely important," the mean rating of importance for the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**

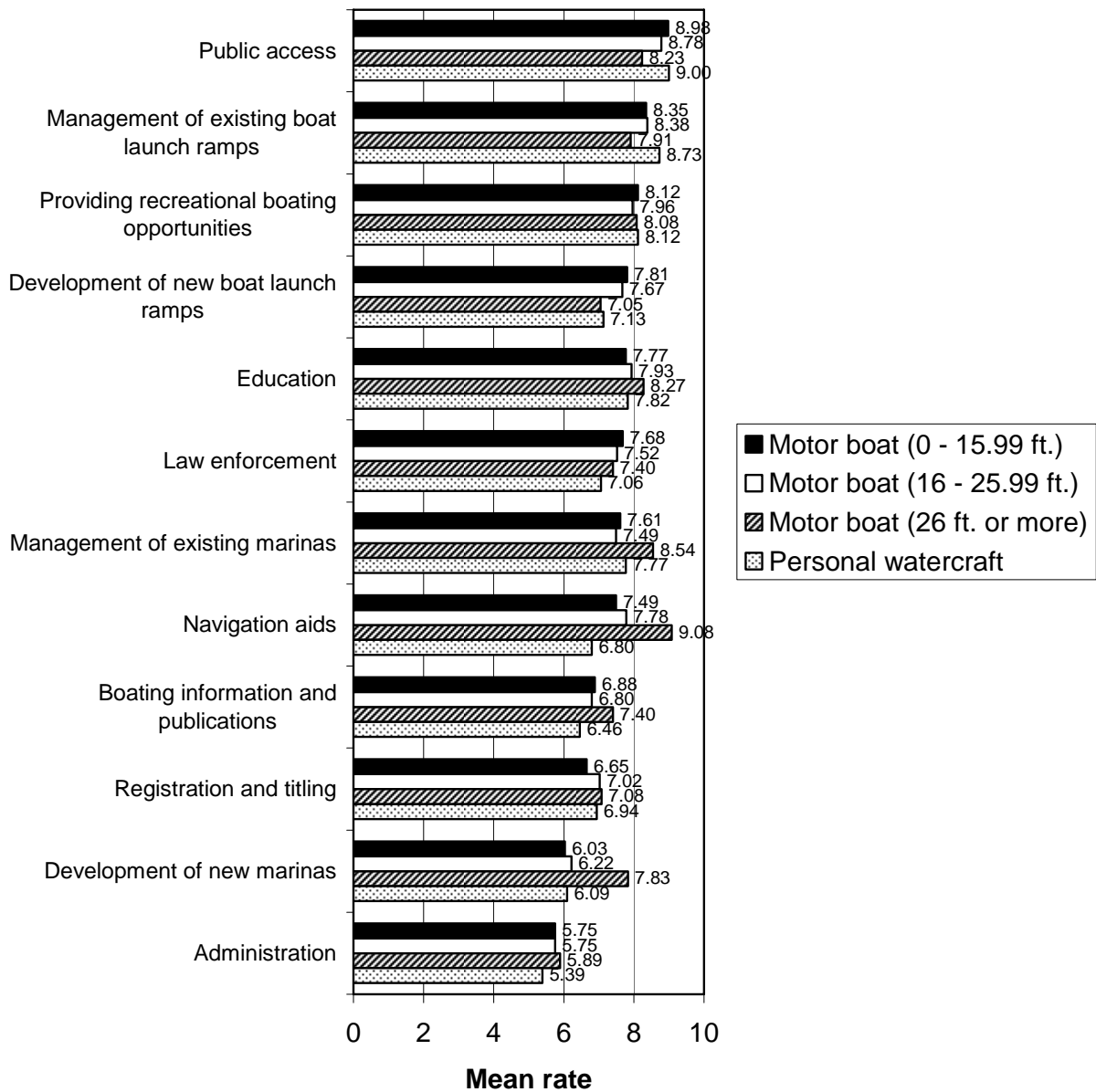


**Q110-121. On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is "not at all important" and 10 is "extremely important," the mean rating of importance for the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**

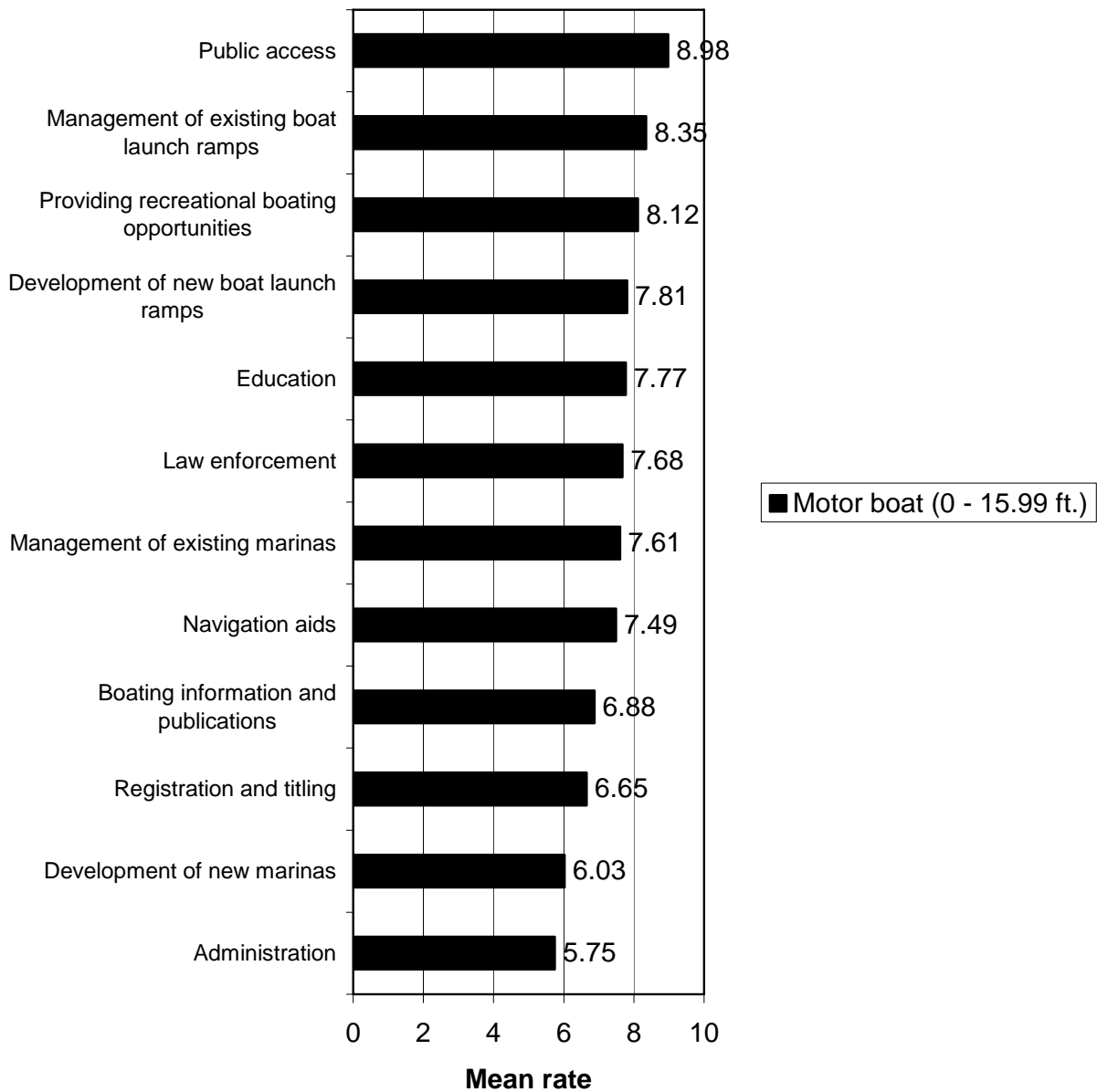




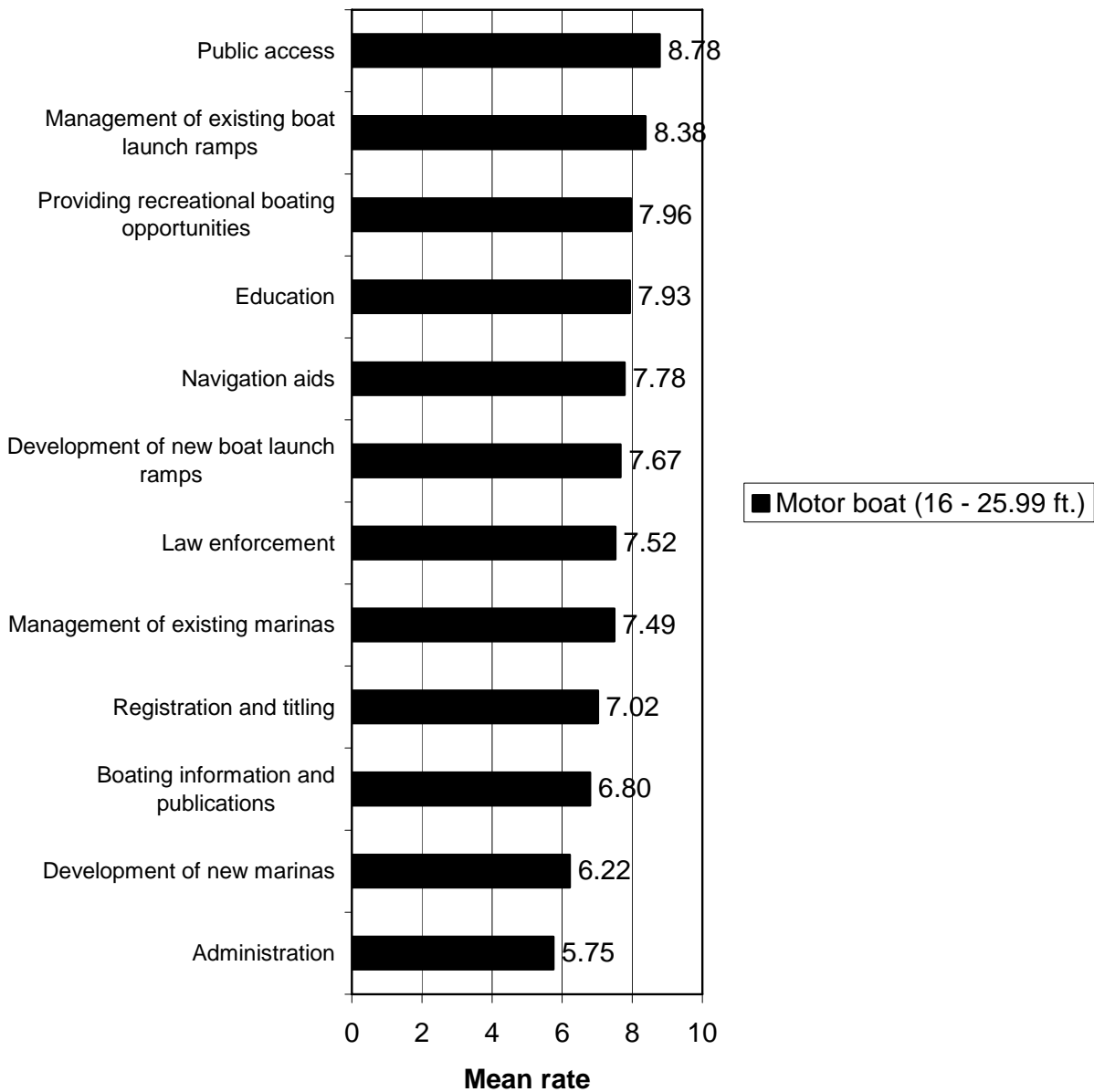
**Q110-121. On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is "not at all important" and 10 is "extremely important," the mean rating of importance for the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**



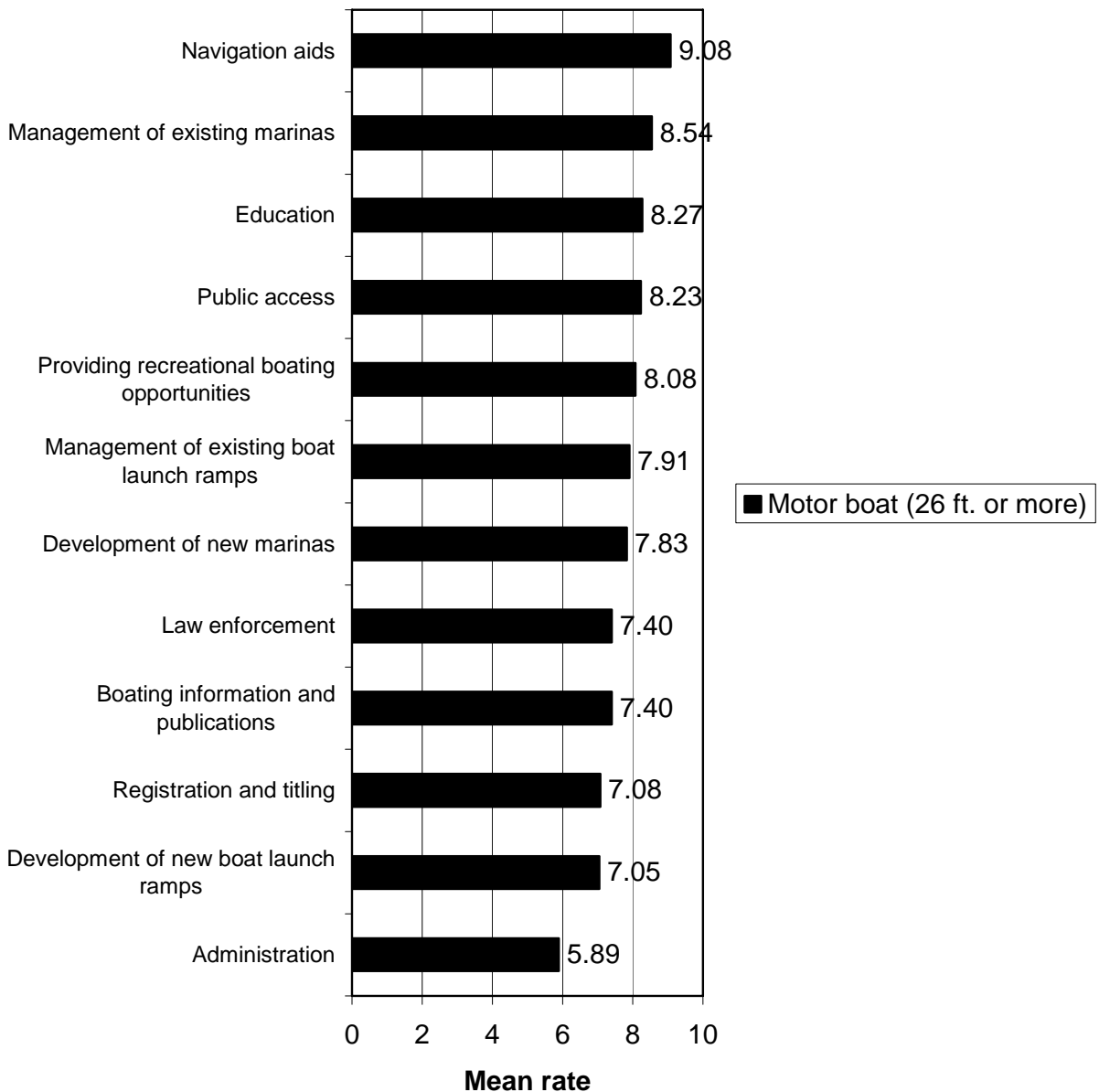
**Q110-121. On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is "not at all important" and 10 is "extremely important," the mean rating of importance for the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**



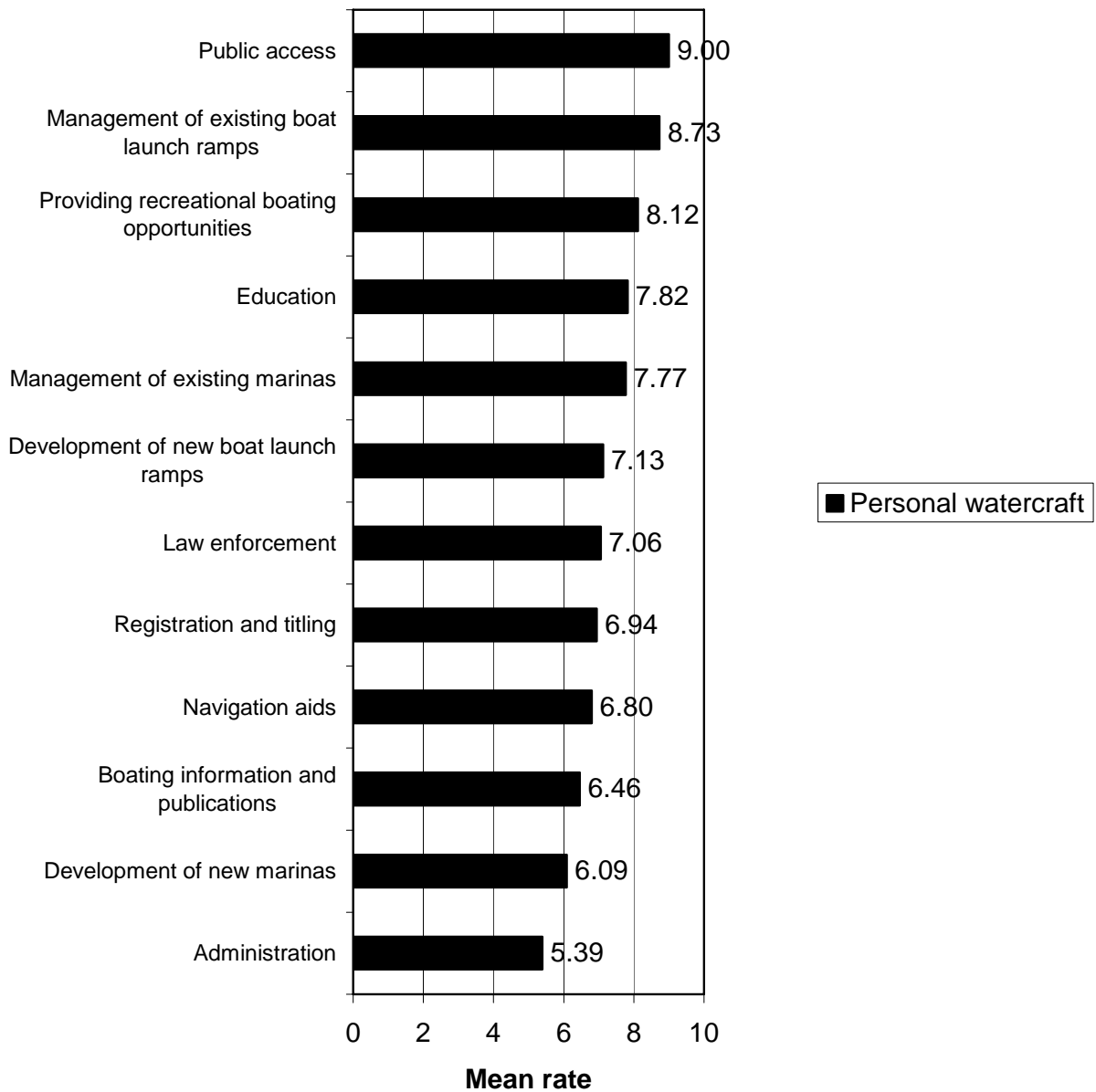
**Q110-121. On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is "not at all important" and 10 is "extremely important," the mean rating of importance for the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**



**Q110-121. On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is "not at all important" and 10 is "extremely important," the mean rating of importance for the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**

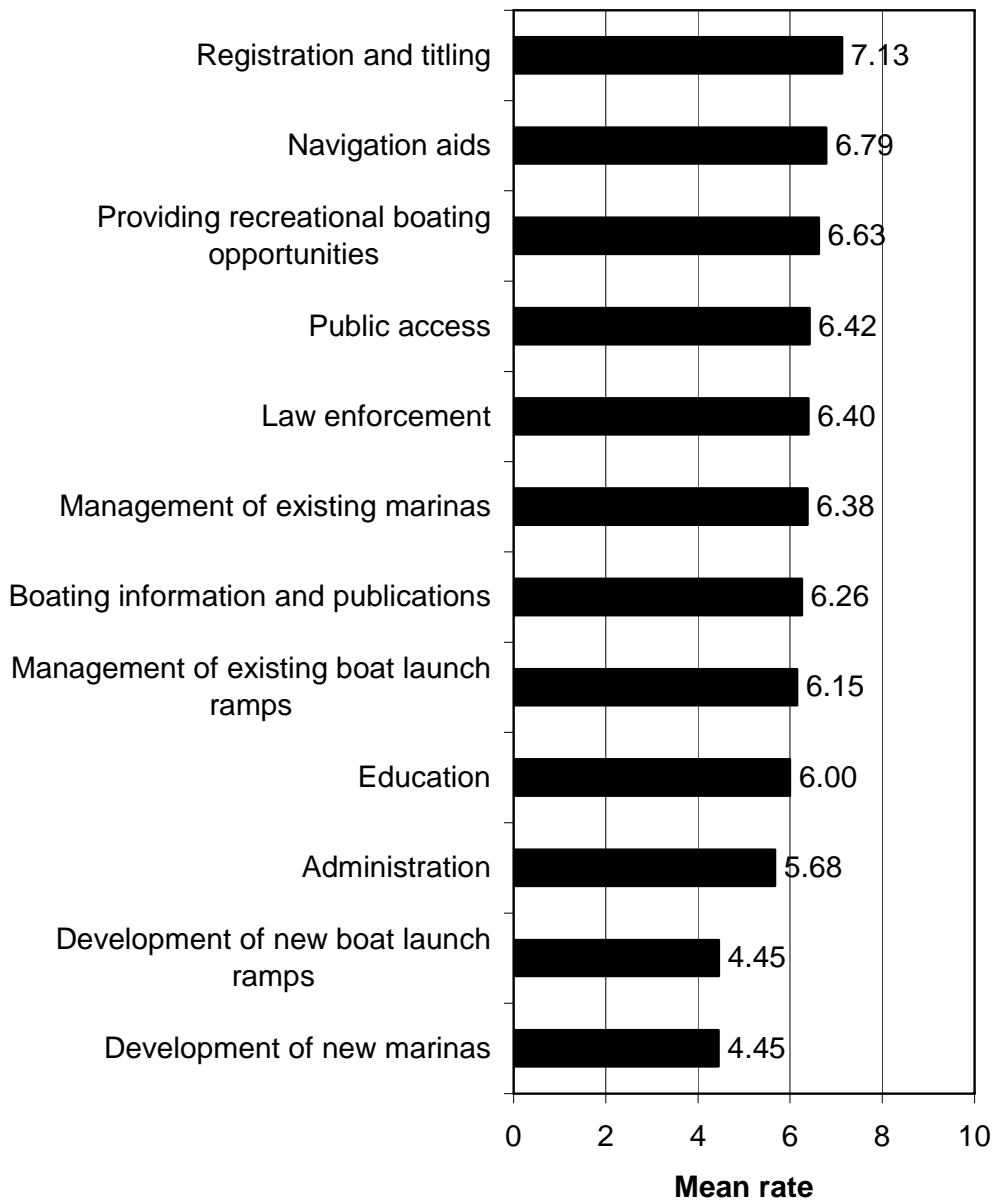


**Q110-121. On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is "not at all important" and 10 is "extremely important," the mean rating of importance for the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**

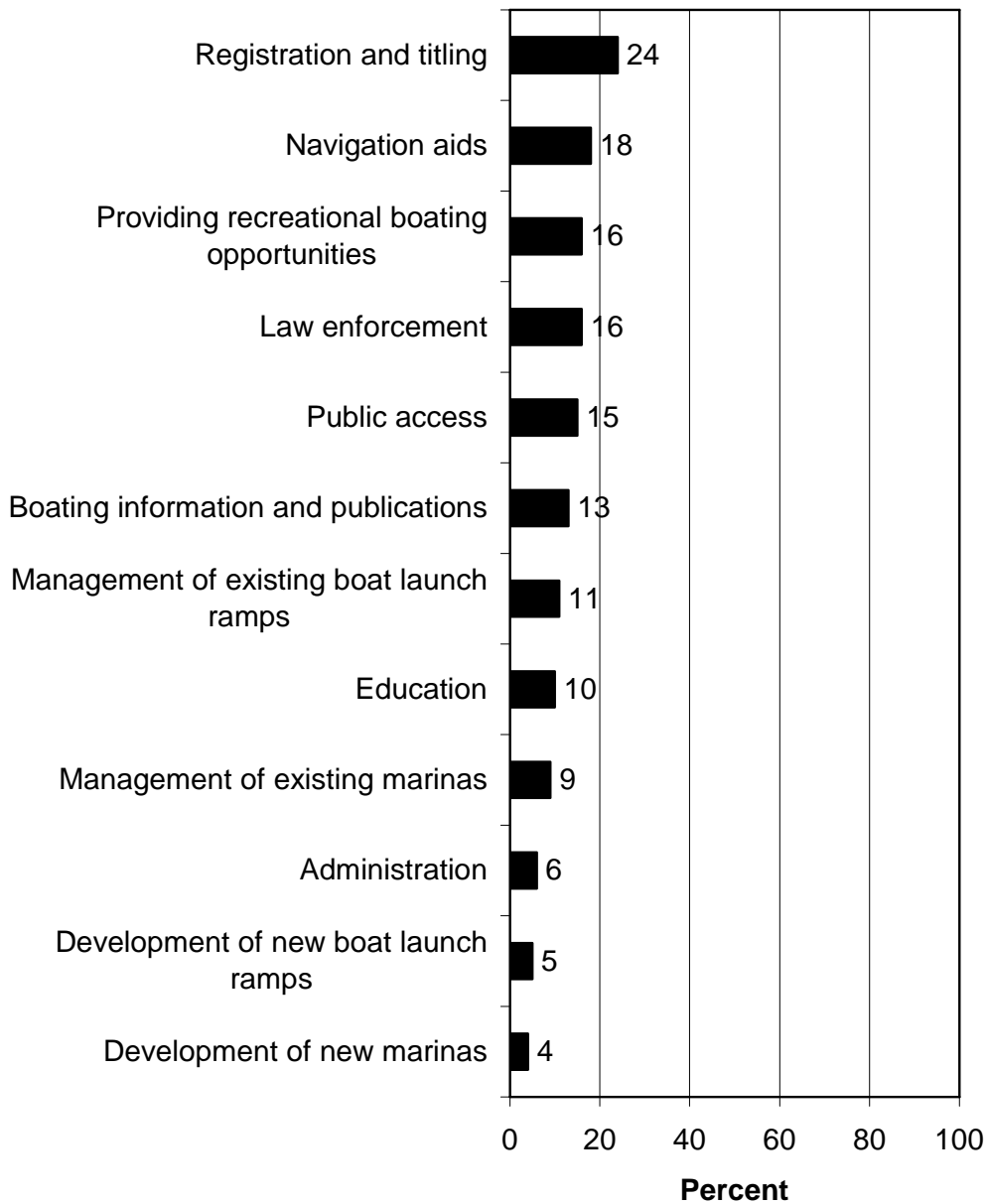


- The survey asked respondents to rate the performance of the same boating programs and services that they rated for importance above (on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 was “a poor performance” and 10 was “an excellent performance”). Access issues were *not* at the top, as they were in importance ratings. This means that the issues thought to be the most important are not thought to be performed at a commensurate level. The top three programs and services were registration and titling (mean of 7.13), navigation aids (6.79), and provision of recreational boating opportunities (6.63). The development of new boat launch ramps and new marinas were the two items at the bottom of the ranking, with a markedly lower mean rating than the other programs and services. The results are also shown of those who gave a rating of 9 or 10 in performance, which reiterate the findings above.
- In the crosstabulation by type of respondent, results were similar among the three types of boaters, with a few marked exceptions.
    - Registered boat owners collectively gave a somewhat *lower* rating of the performance of public access, developing new marinas, and developing new boat launch ramps compared to non-registered owners and non-owners.
  - The most notable difference among the regions in the rating of performance of programs and services concerns navigation aids: boaters from the East Northern Cascades and Northeast gave a lower mean rating for navigation aids relative to boaters of all the other regions.
  - Performance ratings differed by boat type, with the notable differences discussed below.
    - Motor boaters and sailboaters gave higher ratings of the performance of registration and titling than did the other types of boaters.
    - Motor boaters and sailboaters gave higher ratings of the performance of navigation aids than did the other types of boaters.
  - Performance ratings did not differ much according to size of motor boat, with the exception of the higher performance rating for navigation aids among large motor boat operators—the very group that rated them highly important.

**Q124-135. On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is "a poor performance" and 10 is "an excellent performance," the mean rating of performance in the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**

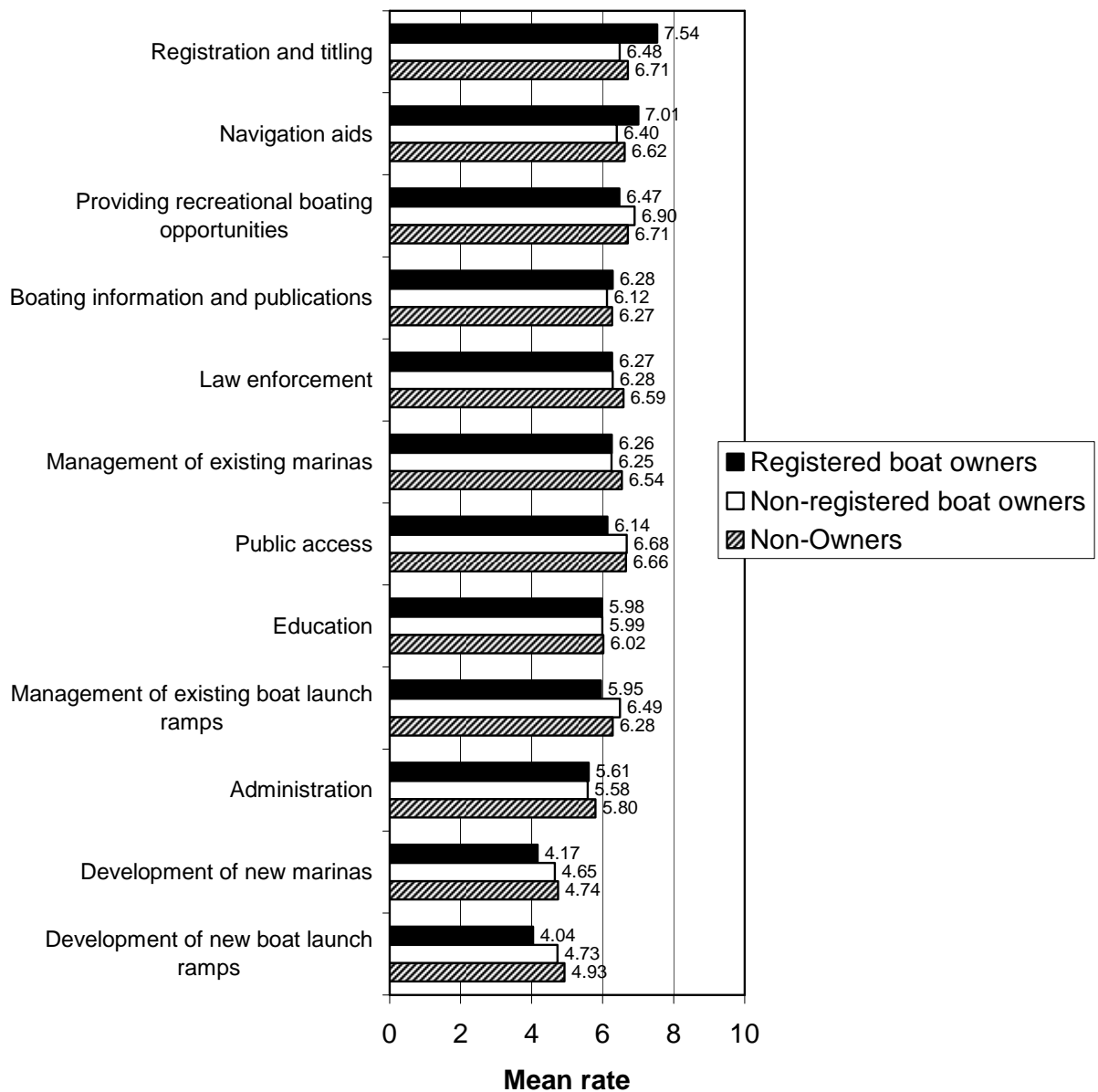


**Q124-135. On a scale of 0 - 10 where 0 is "poor performance" and 10 is "excellent performance," those who rated the performance of the State in the following boating programs and services as a 9 or 10.**

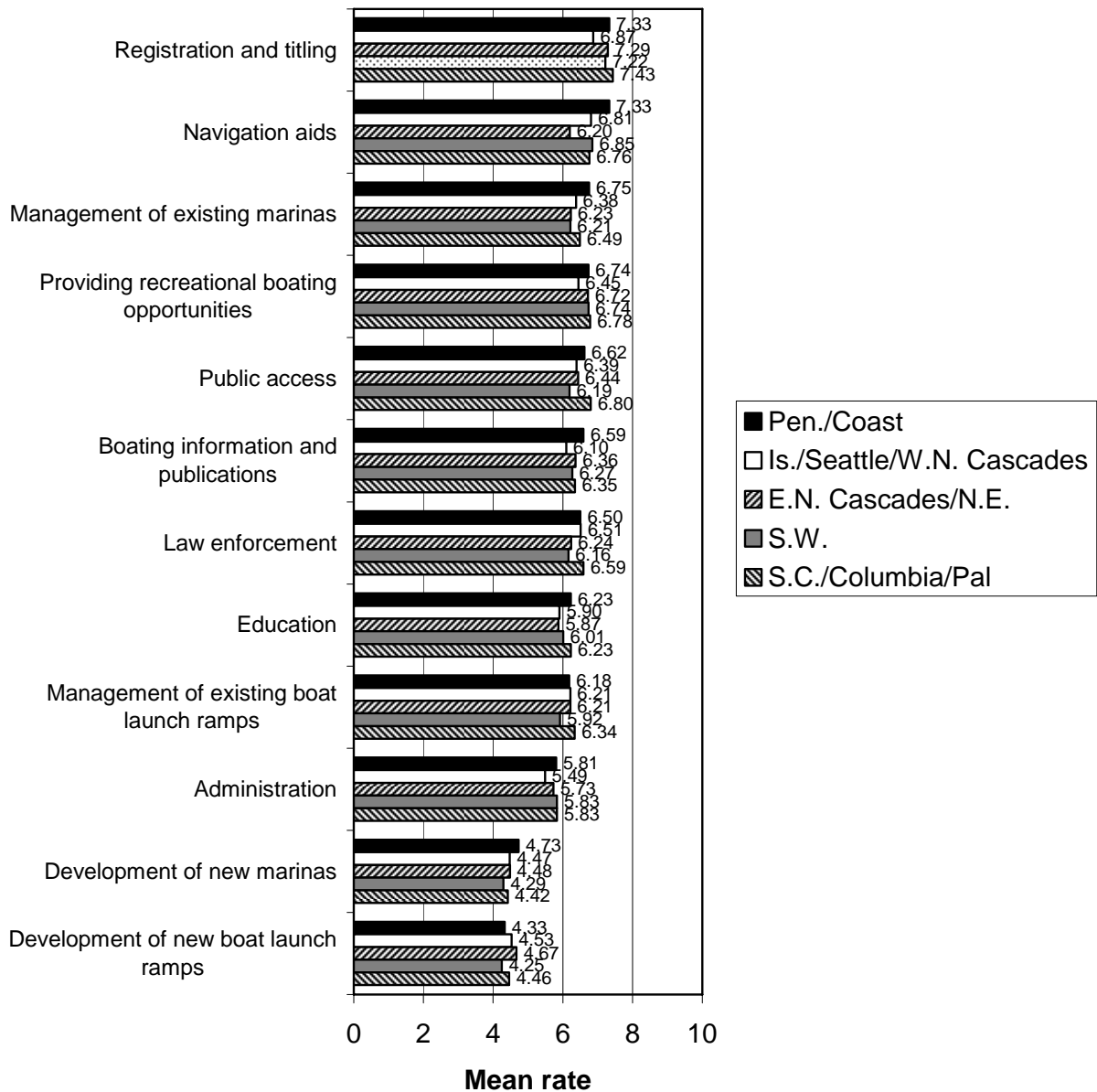




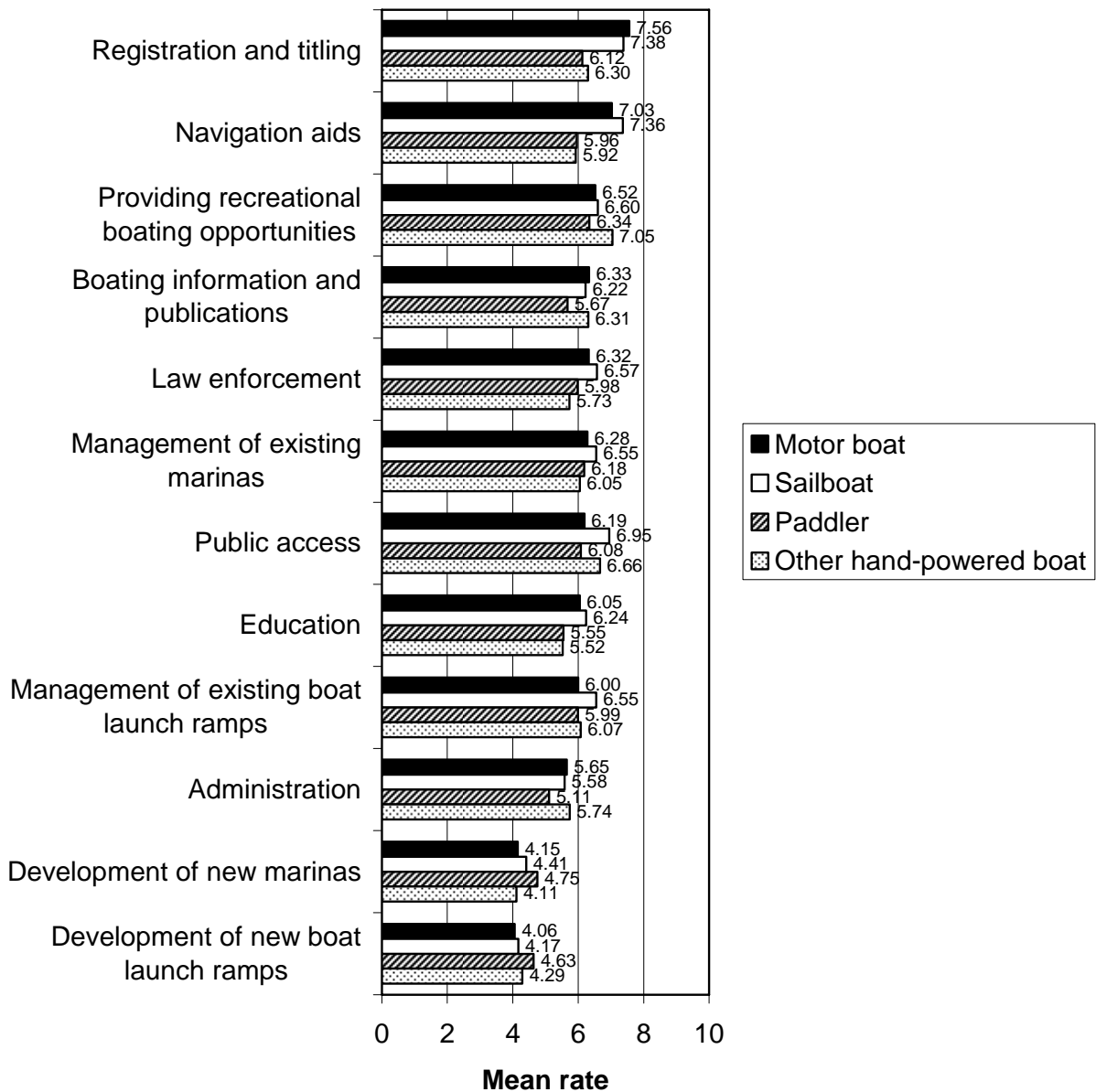
**Q124-135. On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is "a poor performance" and 10 is "an excellent performance," the mean rating of performance in the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**



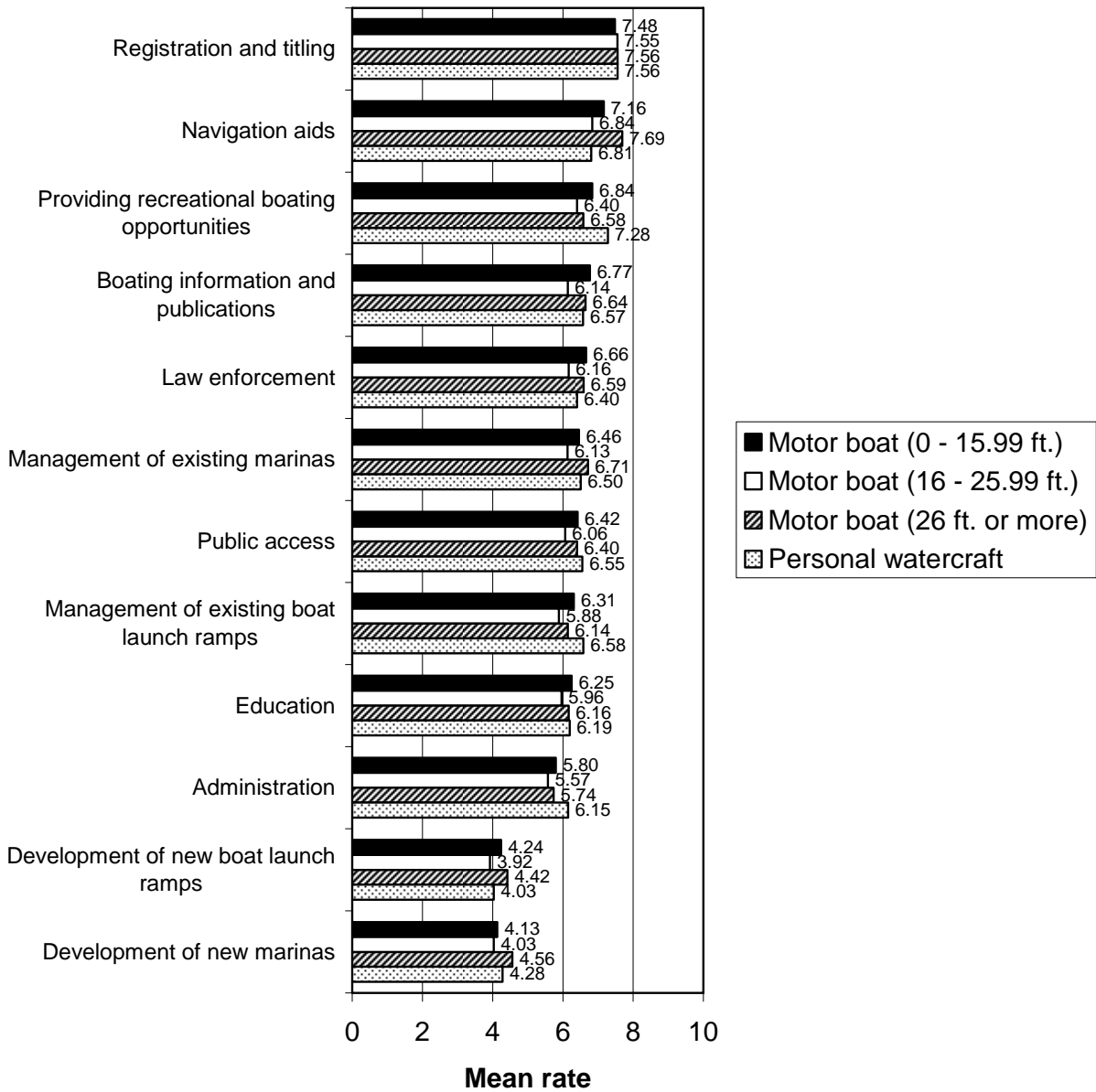
**Q124-135. On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is "a poor performance" and 10 is "an excellent performance," the mean rating of performance in the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**



**Q124-135. On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is "a poor performance" and 10 is "an excellent performance," the mean rating of performance in the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**

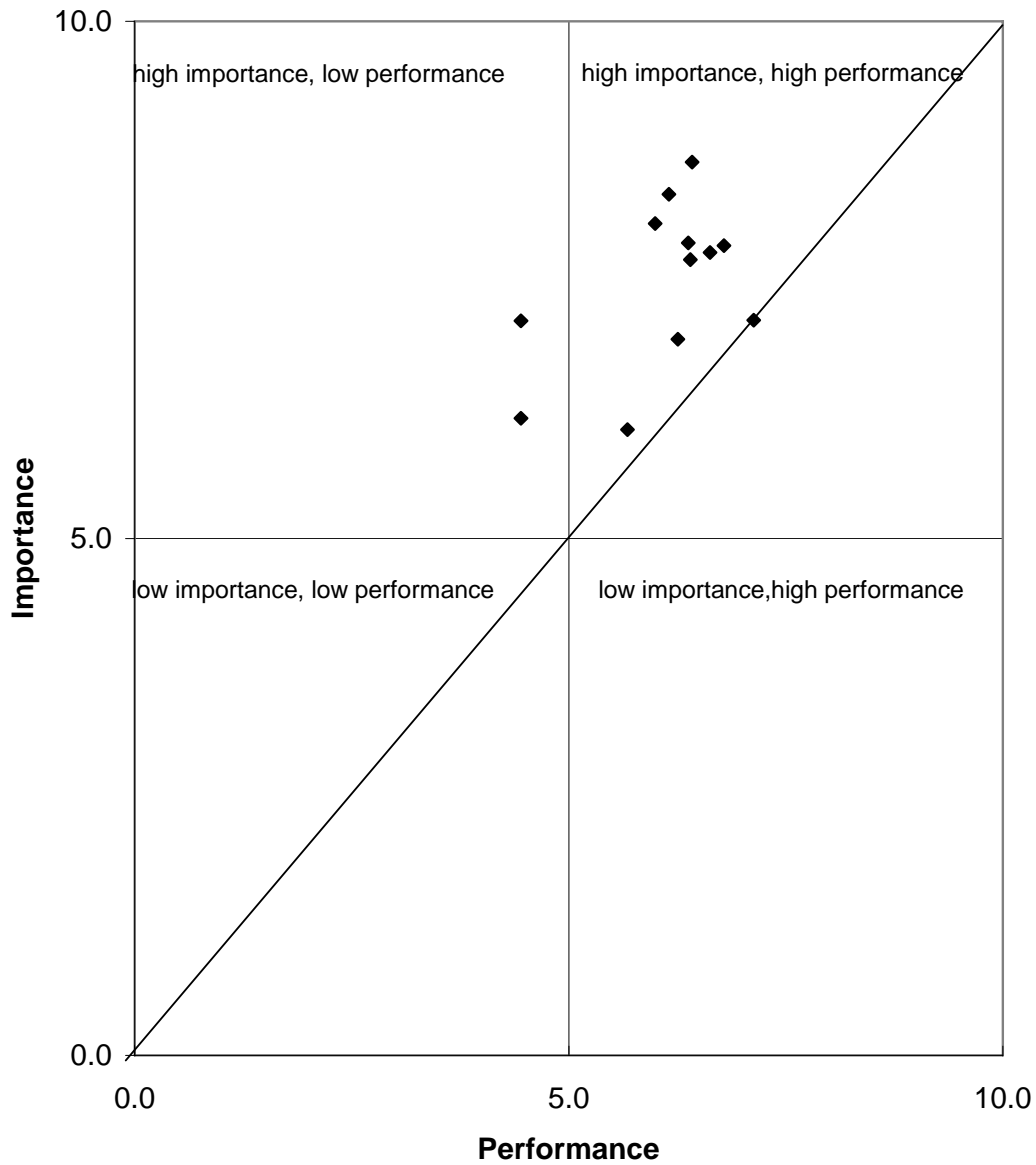


**Q124-135. On a scale of 0 - 10, where 0 is "a poor performance" and 10 is "an excellent performance," the mean rating of performance in the following boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**

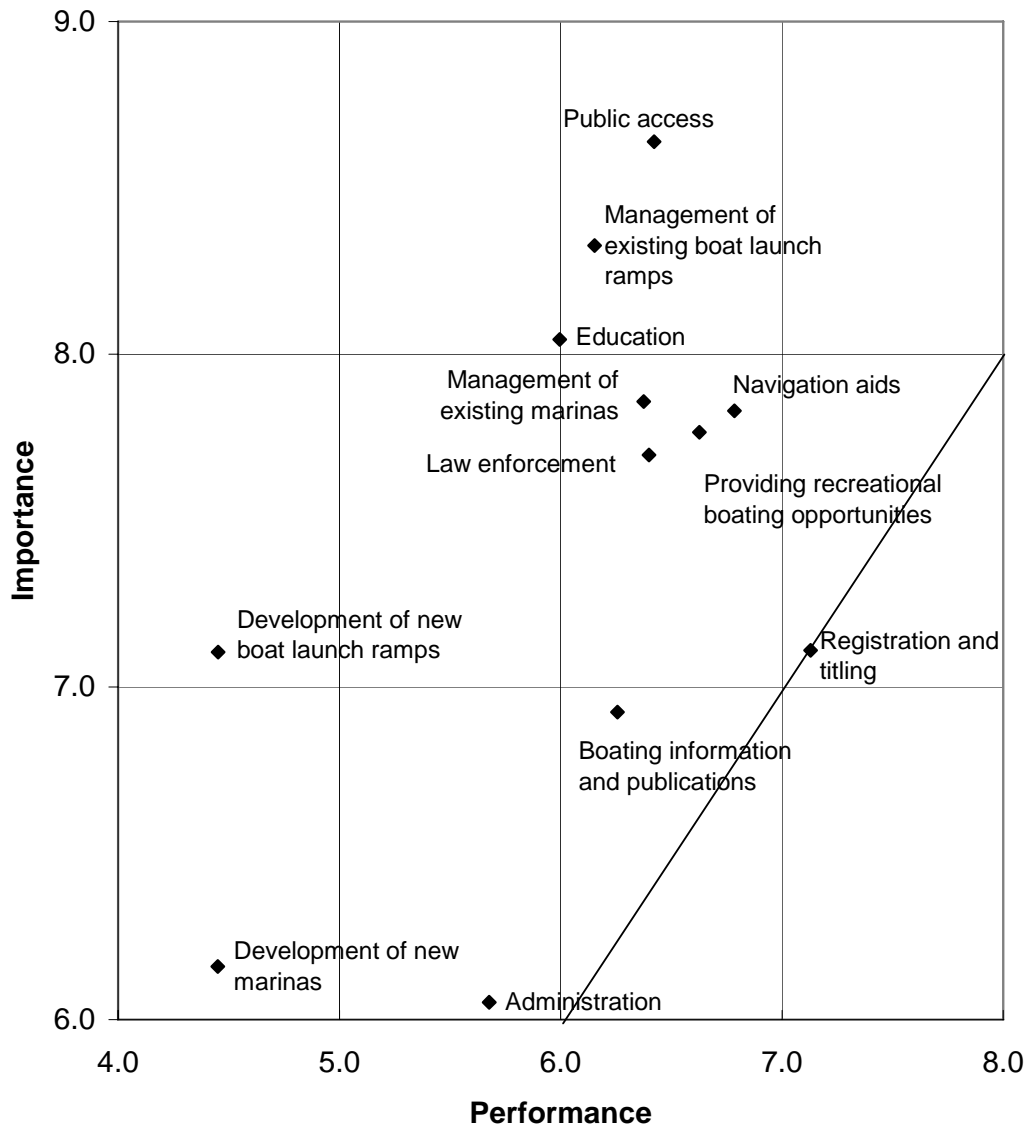


- A scatterplot of the results of the two previous series of questions shows importance ratings as they relate to performance ratings. On one axis is importance; on the other is performance. A diagonal line shows where importance and performance are equal. Ideally, boating management should strive to have all items lie near the line in the upper right quadrant. Items that fall to the left of the line are higher rated in importance than performance, indicating that their performance should be made commensurate with importance ratings. Items that fall to the right of the diagonal line have a performance rating that is higher than their importance rating, suggesting that the item's importance should be emphasized so that boaters better realize its importance.
- Six programs or services have importance ratings that are markedly higher than their performance ratings: development of new marinas, development of new boat launch ramps, management of existing marinas, education, management of existing boat launch ramps, and public access.

**Comparison of ratings of importance and performance of boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.**



### Comparison of ratings of importance and performance of boating programs and services managed and provided in Washington.

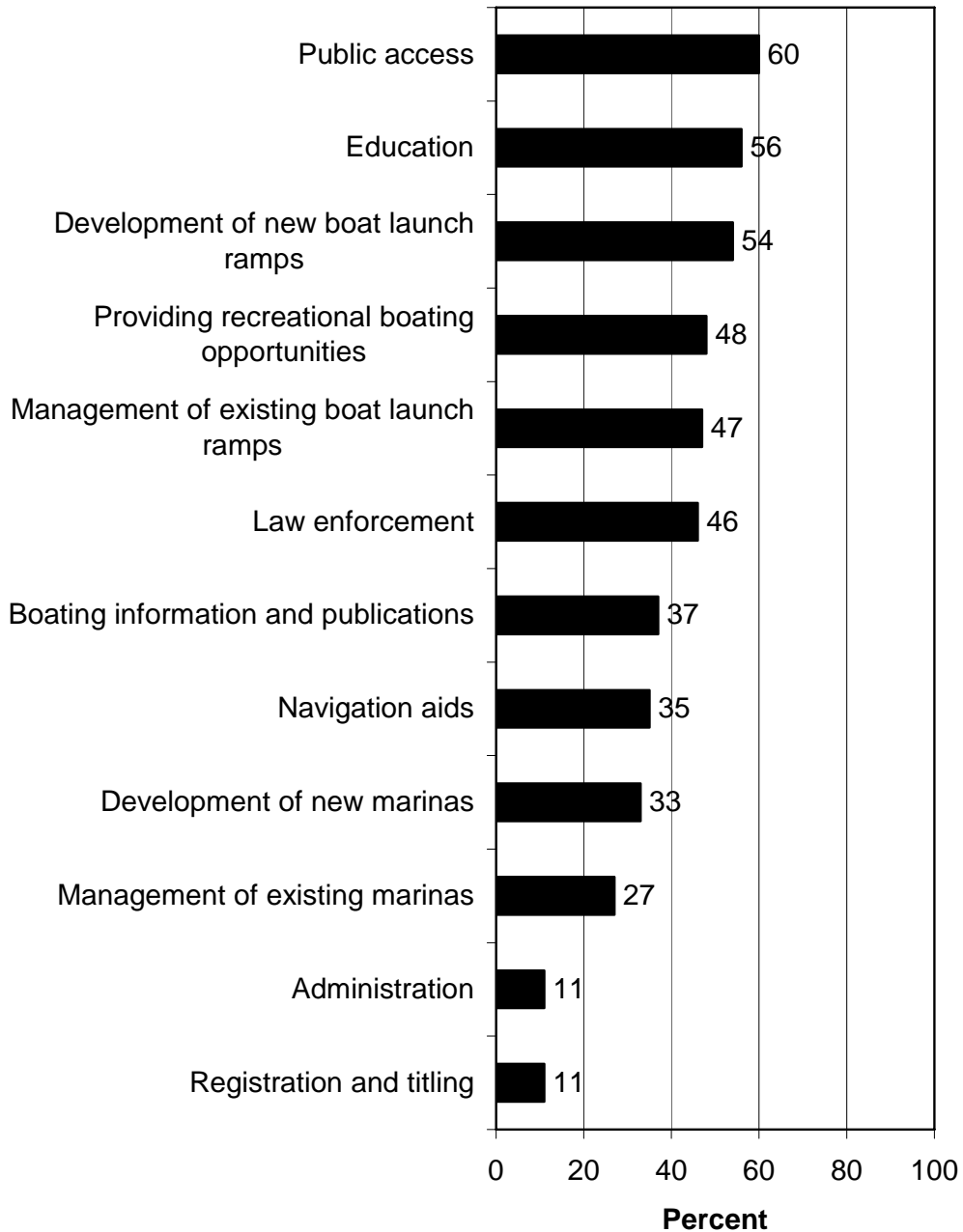


- Again, using the same list of 12 programs and services, respondents were asked if more, the same, or less time and money should be directed towards each program or service. Public access tops the list of items for which respondents said more time and money should be directed (60% of respondents said that more time and money should be directed toward public access), followed closely by education (56%) and development of *new* boat launches (54%)—the only three programs or services with a majority wanting *more* time and money spent on them. Interestingly, both boat launch questions (development of new boat launches and management of existing boat launches) garnered more boaters who want more time and money directed toward them than did the similar questions about marinas. On the bottom of the list were registration and titling, as well as administration.
- There were many marked differences among the three types of boaters regarding the amount of time and money that should be directed toward various boating programs and services.
    - Registered boat owners were more likely than were the other types of boaters to want more time and money spent on development of new boat launch ramps, management of existing boat launch ramps, and development of new marinas.
    - On the other hand, non-owners were more likely than were the other types of boaters to want more time and money spent on law enforcement.
  - There are some regional differences in perceptions of whether more, the same amount, or less time and money should be directed toward various programs and services.
    - Relative to boaters from other regions, those from the Southwest Region and the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region have a greater likelihood to want more time and money directed toward development of new launch ramps and management of existing boat launch ramps.
    - Boaters from the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region are less likely, relative to boaters from other regions, to say that more time and money should be directed toward development of new boat launch ramps, navigation aids, and development of new marinas.
  - Differences emerged in the perception of the amount of time and money that should be directed to programs and services according to boat type.

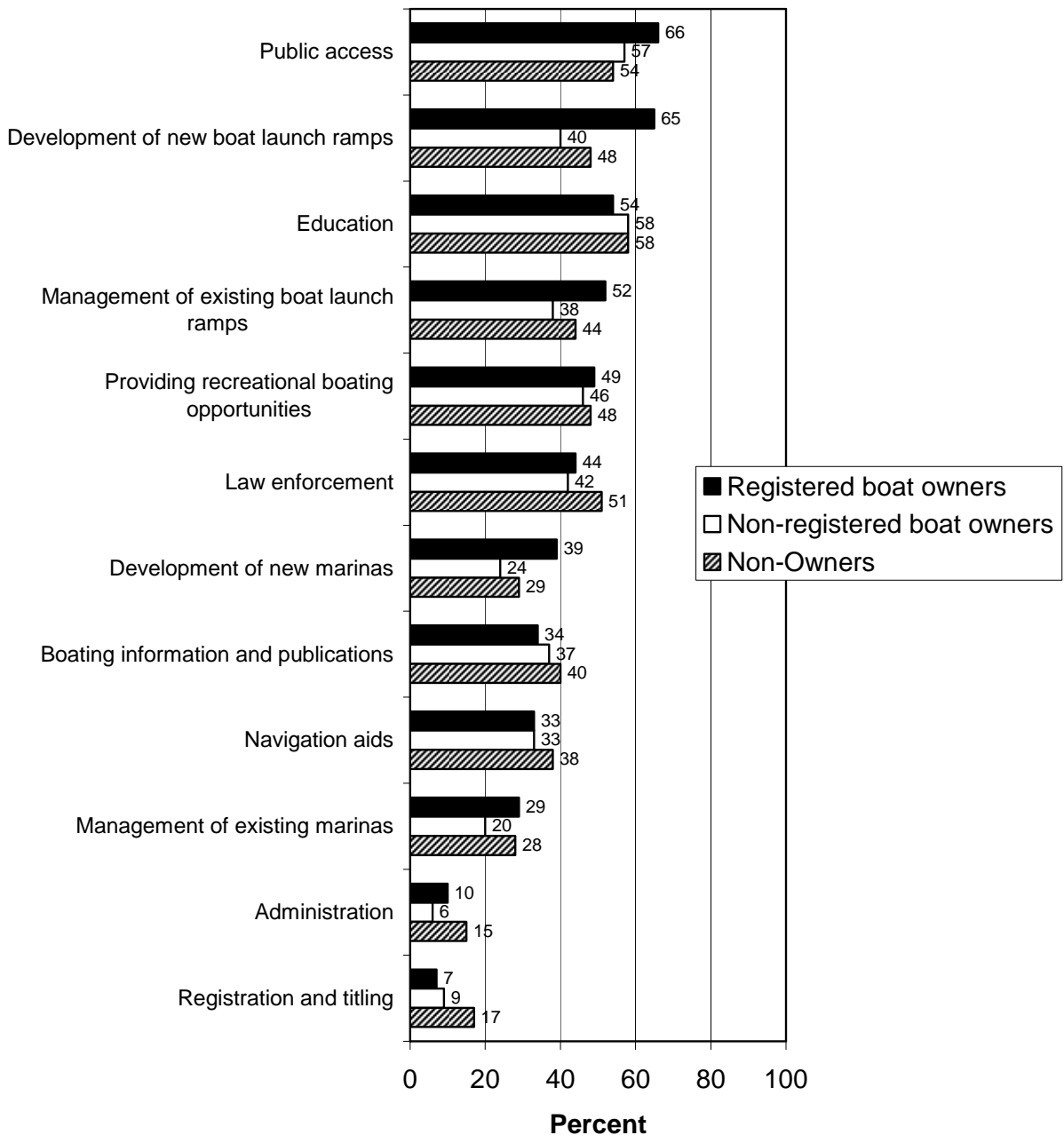


- Motor boaters want public access, launch ramps (both new and maintenance of existing), and education. Motor boaters have the greatest percentage, relative to other boater types, wanting more time and money directed toward development of new boat launch ramps, management of existing boat launch ramps, (with sailboaters) development of new marinas, and (again with sailboaters) management of existing marinas.
- Sailboaters want to see more education, public access, and development of new marinas and launch ramps—the top facilities and services of which they want more.
- Paddlers’ desires include more education and public access especially, and also more boating opportunities.
- Among those operating other hand-powered boats, education and public access lead the list of facilities and services of which they want more. Law enforcement for this group is near the top of the ranking, as well.
- There are some notable differences in the results regarding programs and services to which more time and money should be directed when crosstabulated by the size of the motor boat.
  - Motor boaters of Class 2 and Class 3 have a much higher percentage than operators of Class A, Class 1, and personal watercraft wanting more time and money directed toward the development of new marinas and management of existing marinas. On the other hand, those operators of large motor boats have a lower percentage wanting more effort directed toward public access, development of new boat launch ramps, and management of existing ramps.

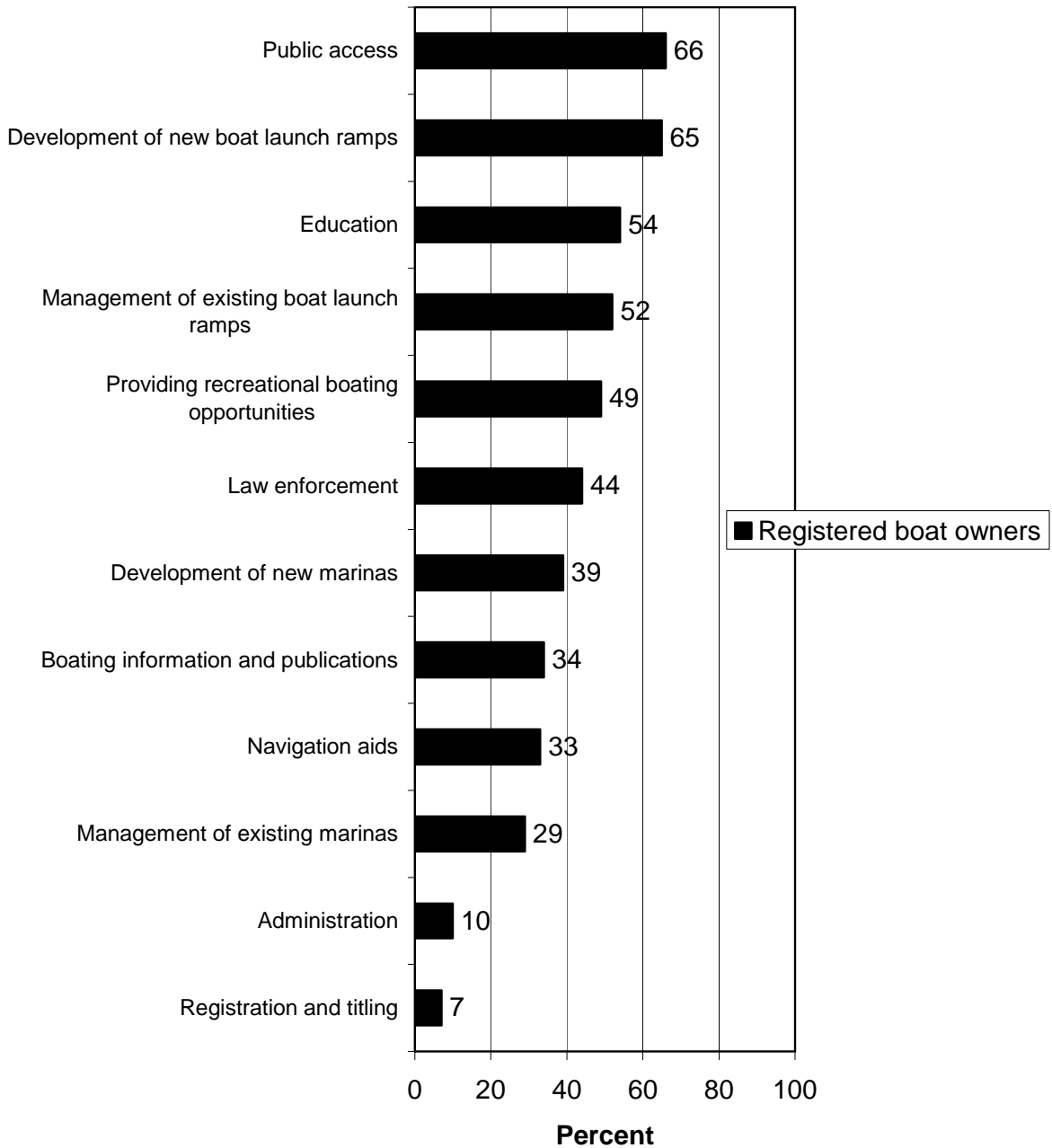
**Q138-149. Percent who indicated that more time and money should be directed toward the following boating programs and services in Washington.**



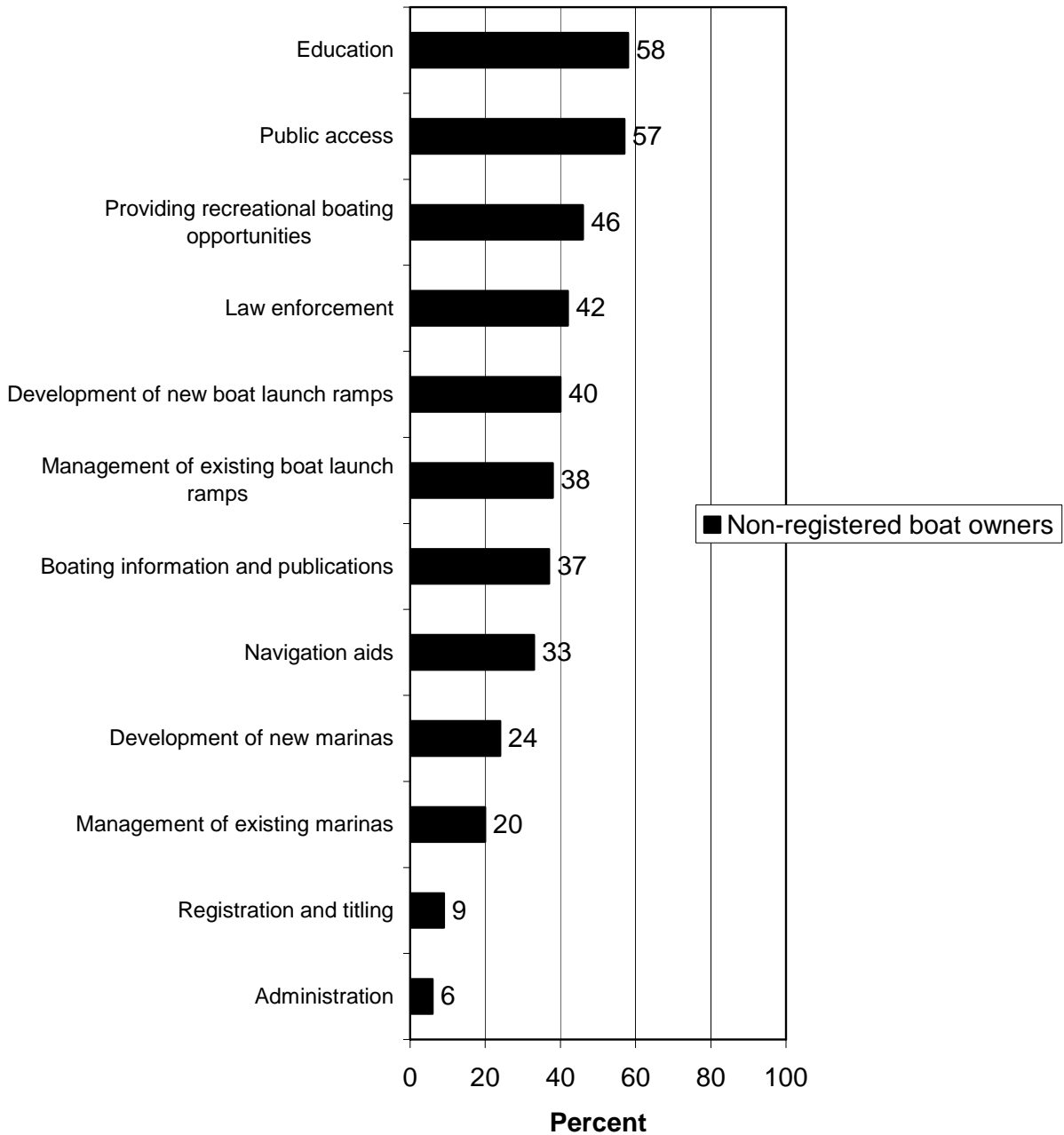
**Q138-149. Percent who indicated that more time and money should be directed toward the following boating programs and services in Washington.**



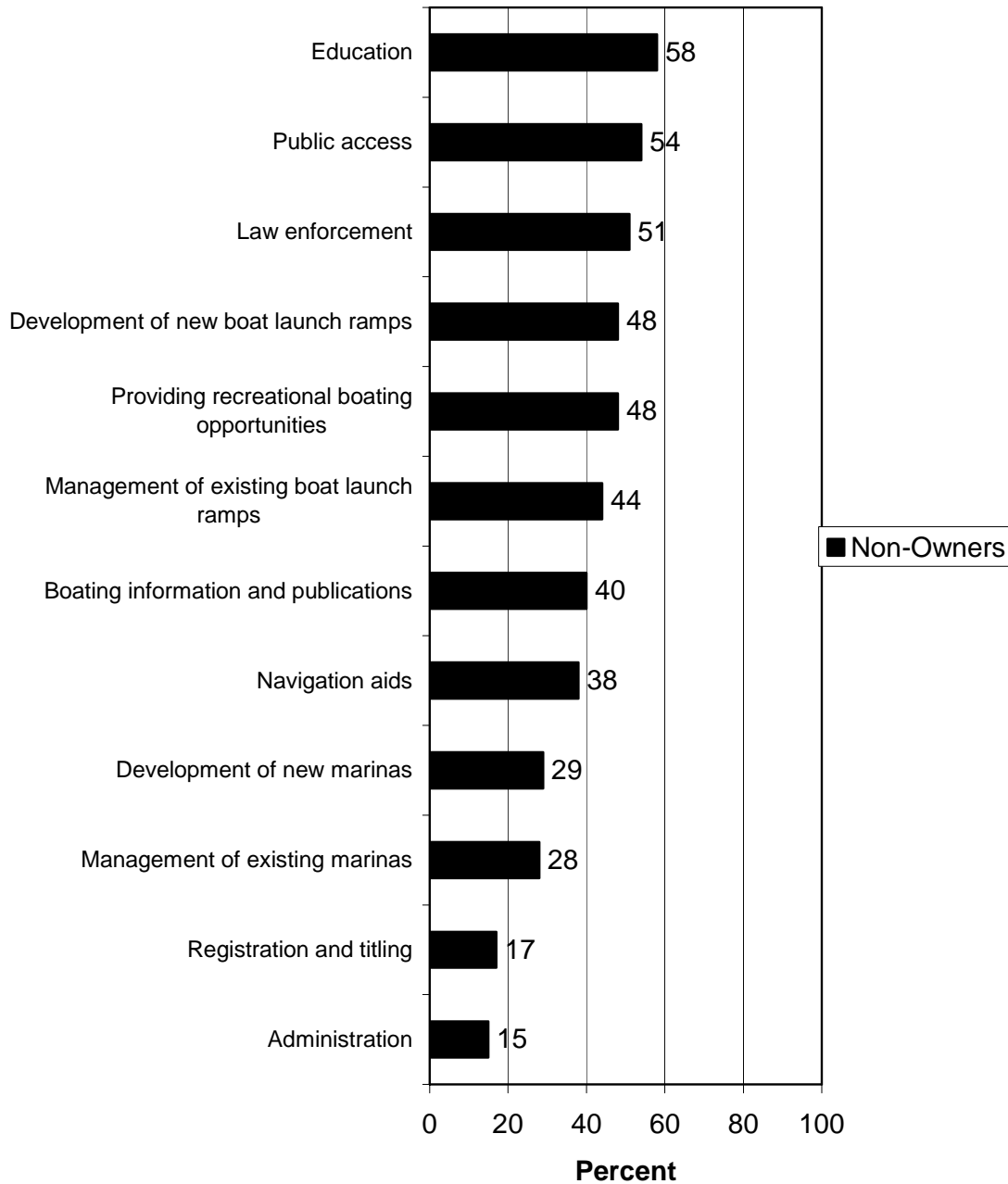
**Q138-149. Percent who indicated that more time and money should be directed toward the following boating programs and services in Washington.**



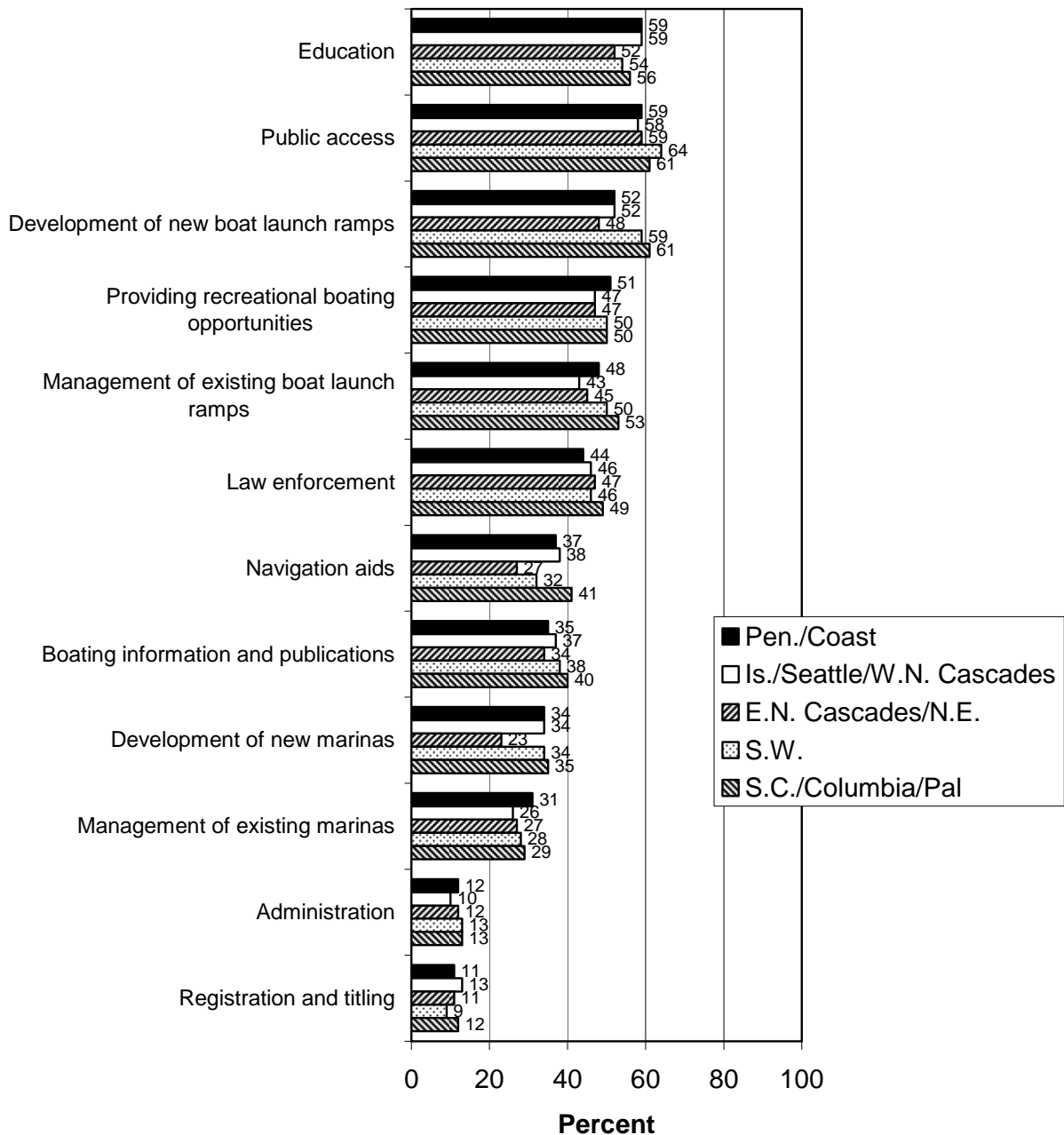
**Q138-149. Percent who indicated that more time and money should be directed toward the following boating programs and services in Washington.**



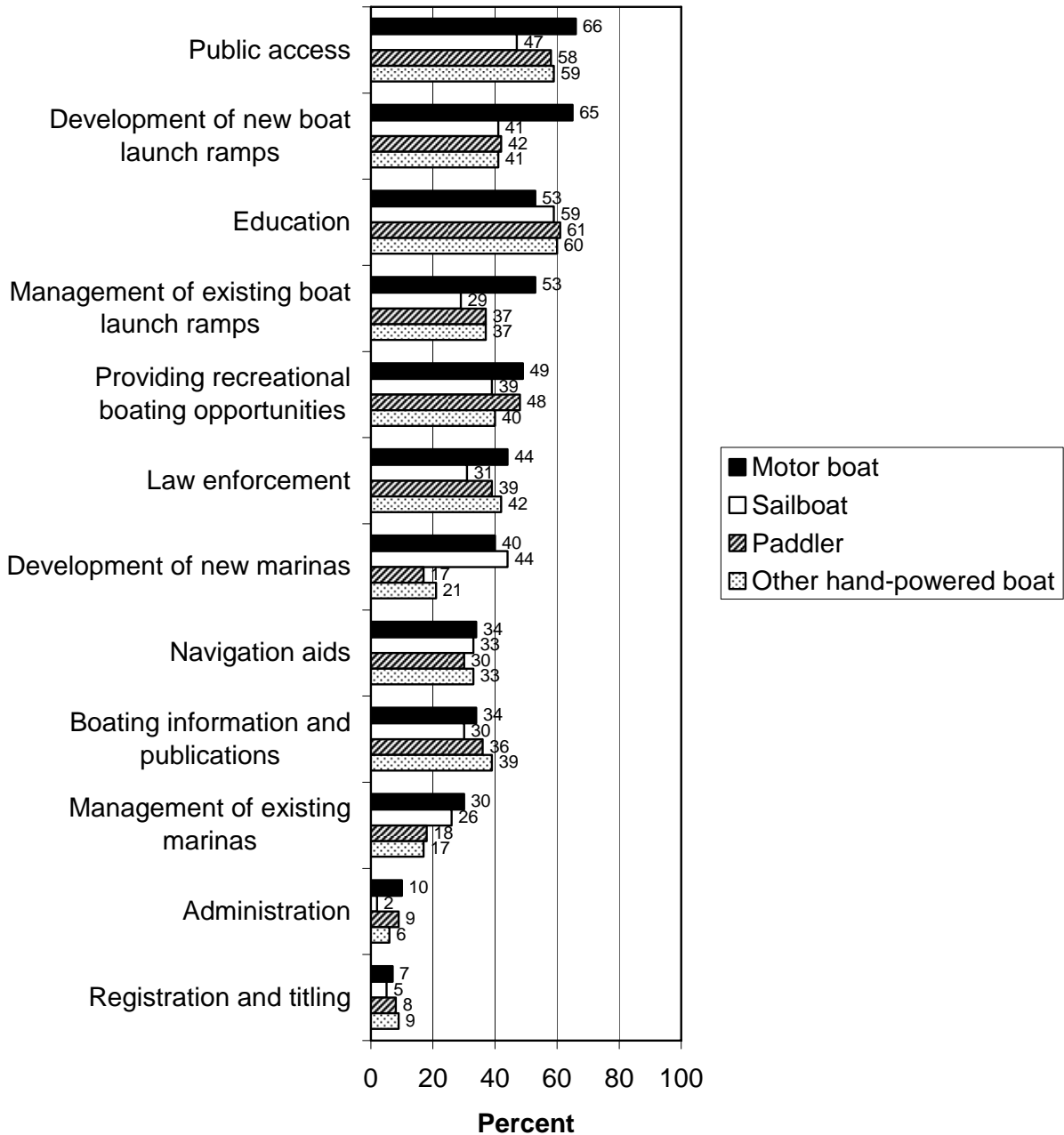
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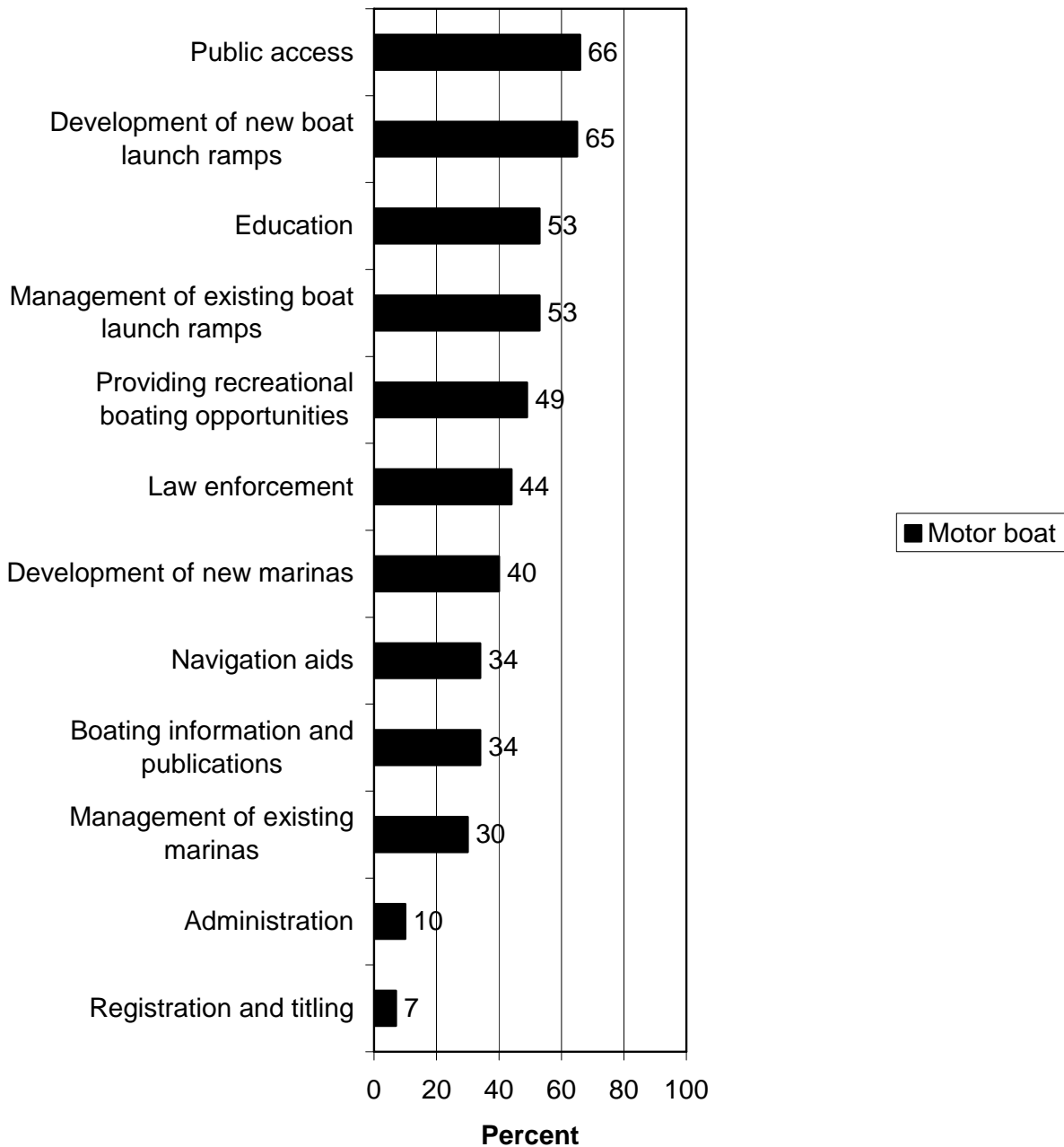


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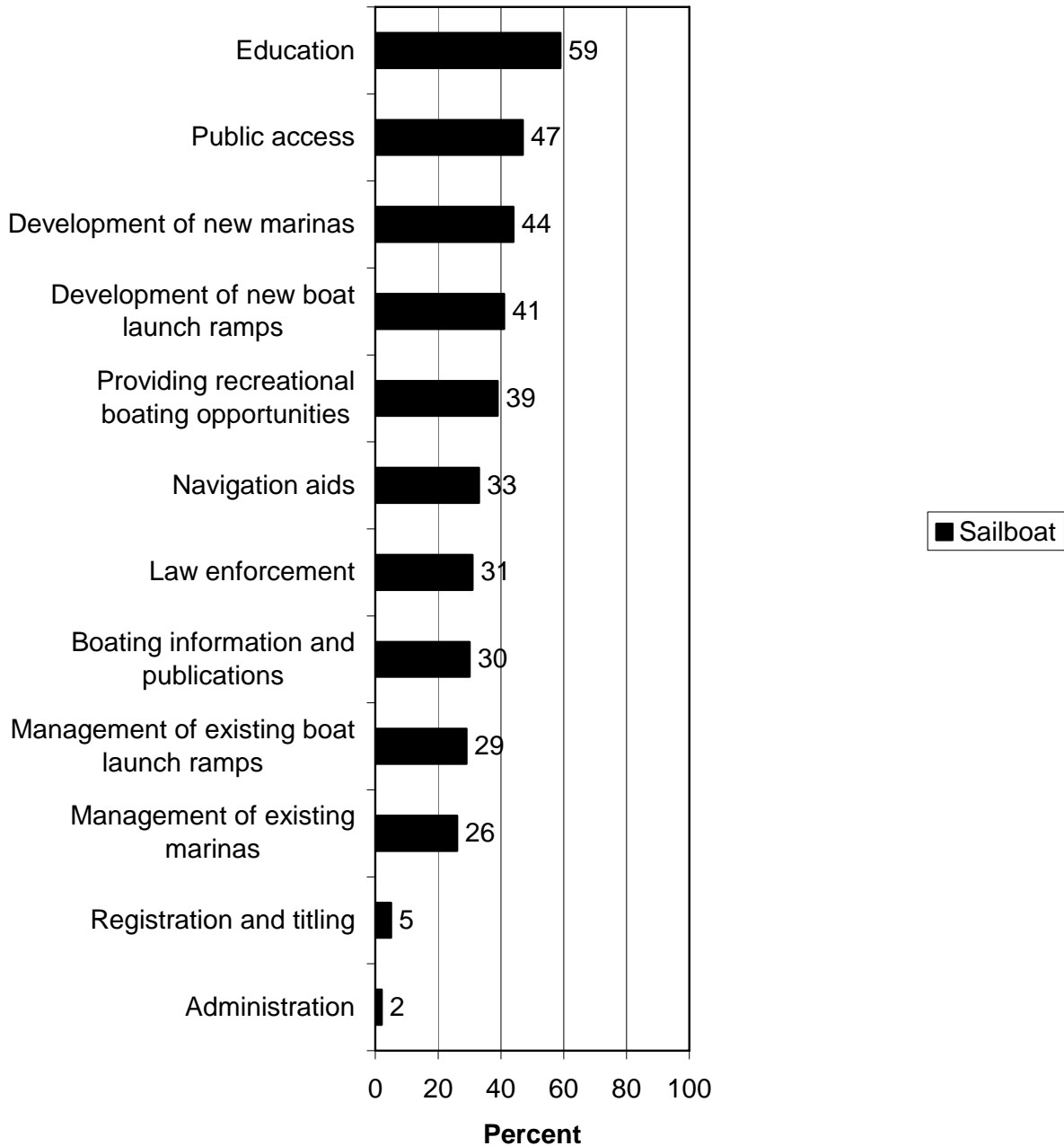




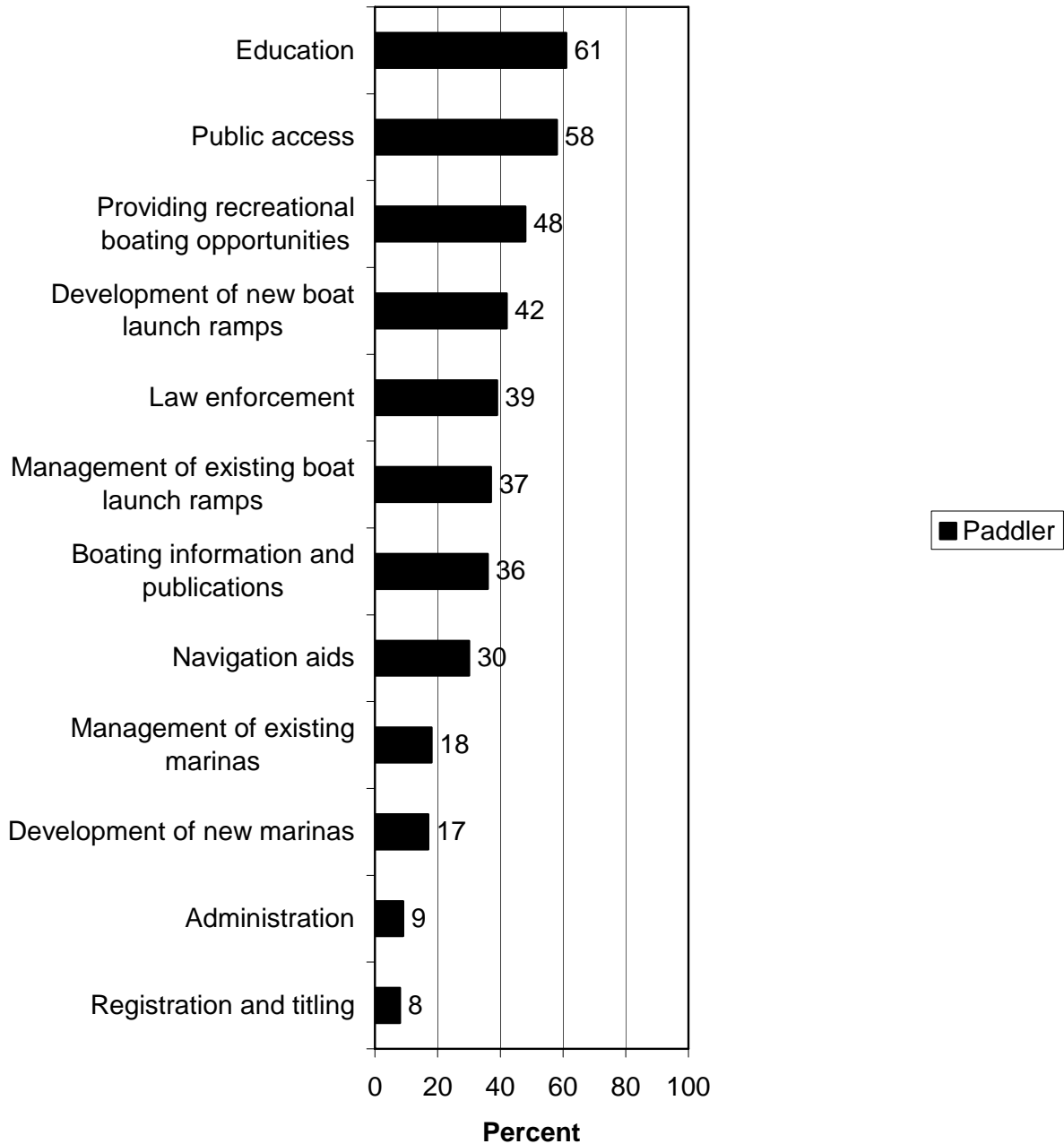
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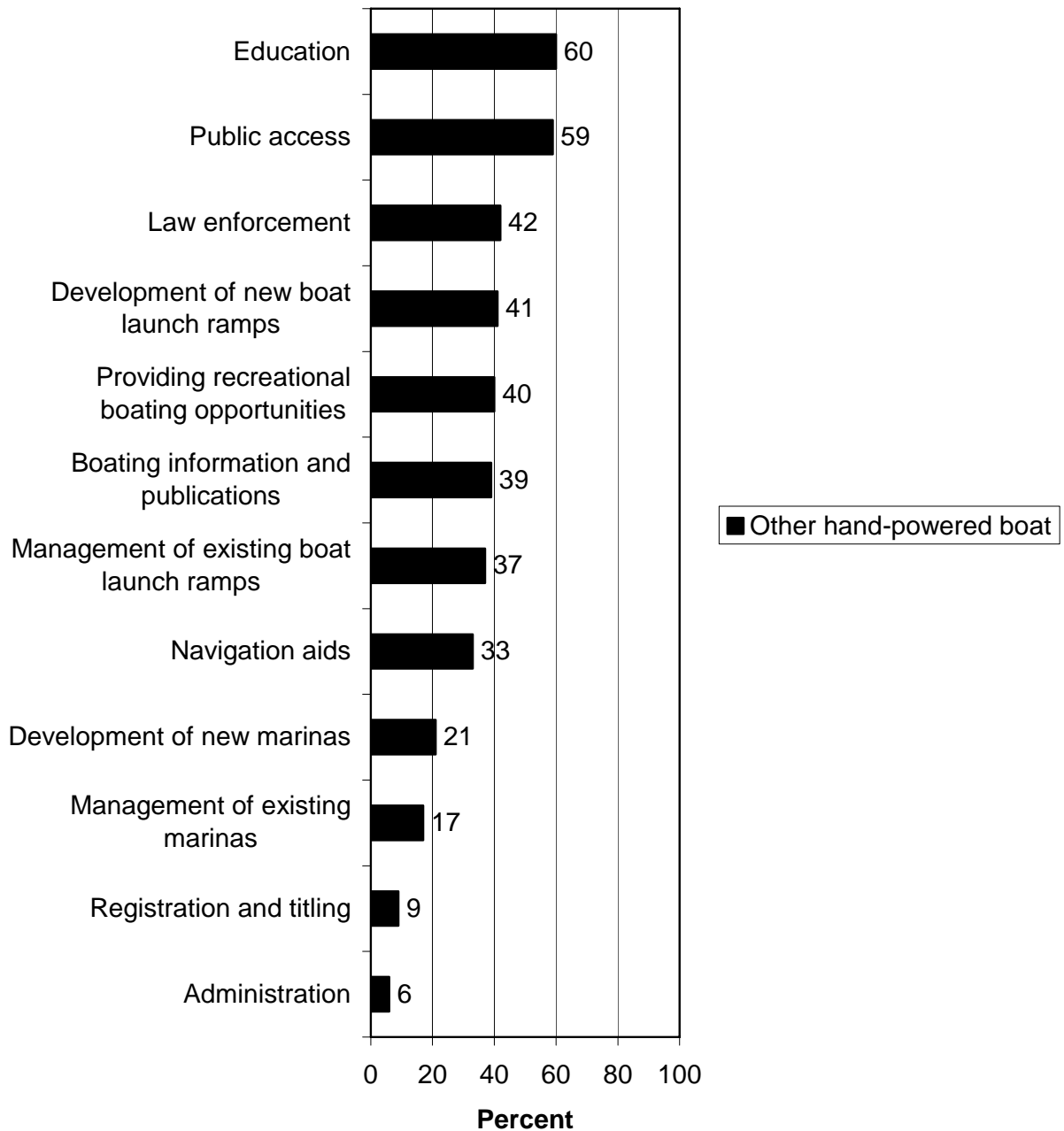
**Q138-149. Percent who indicated that more time and money should be directed toward the following boating programs and services in Washington.**



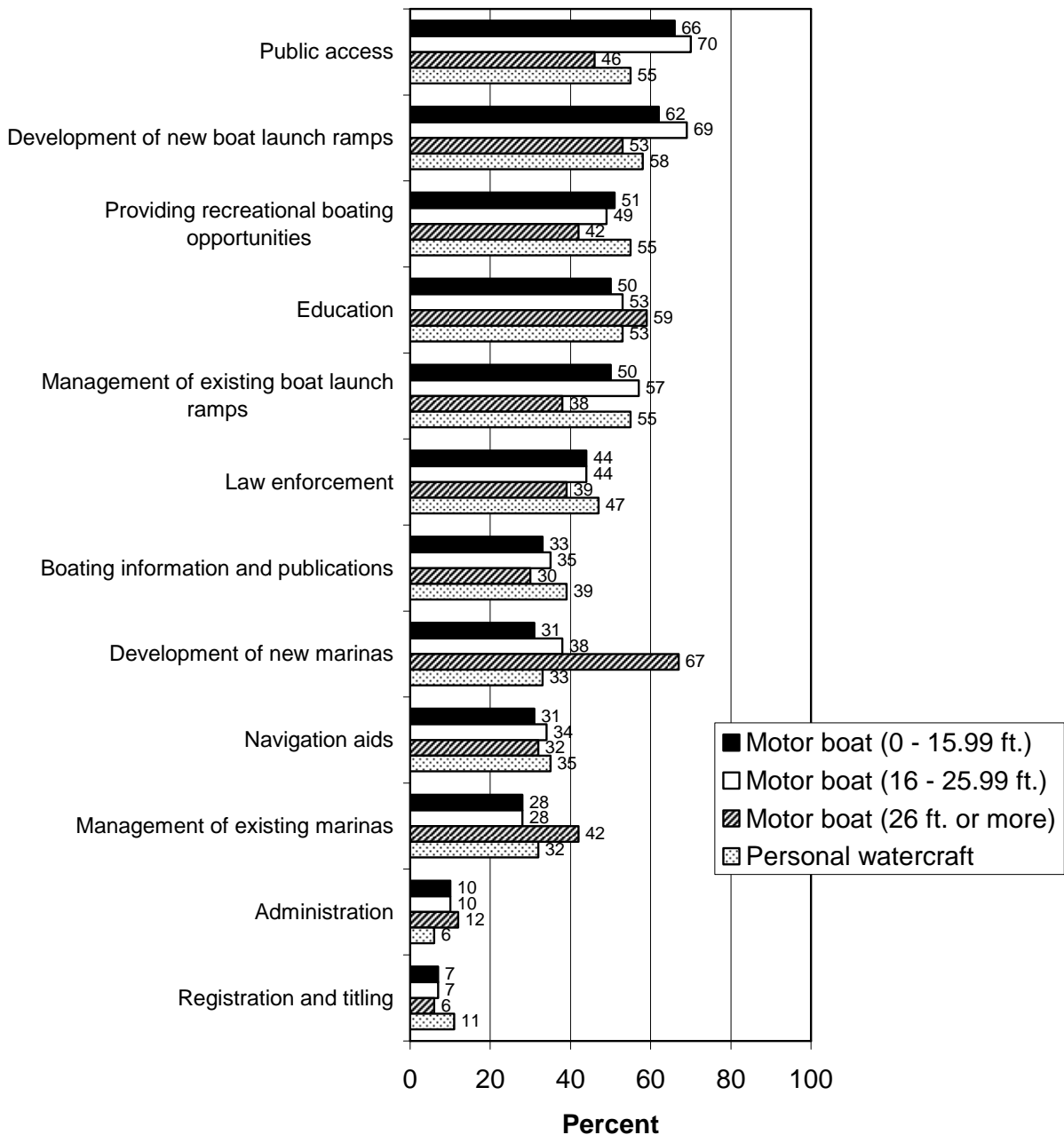
**Q138-149. Percent who indicated that more time and money should be directed toward the following boating programs and services in Washington.**



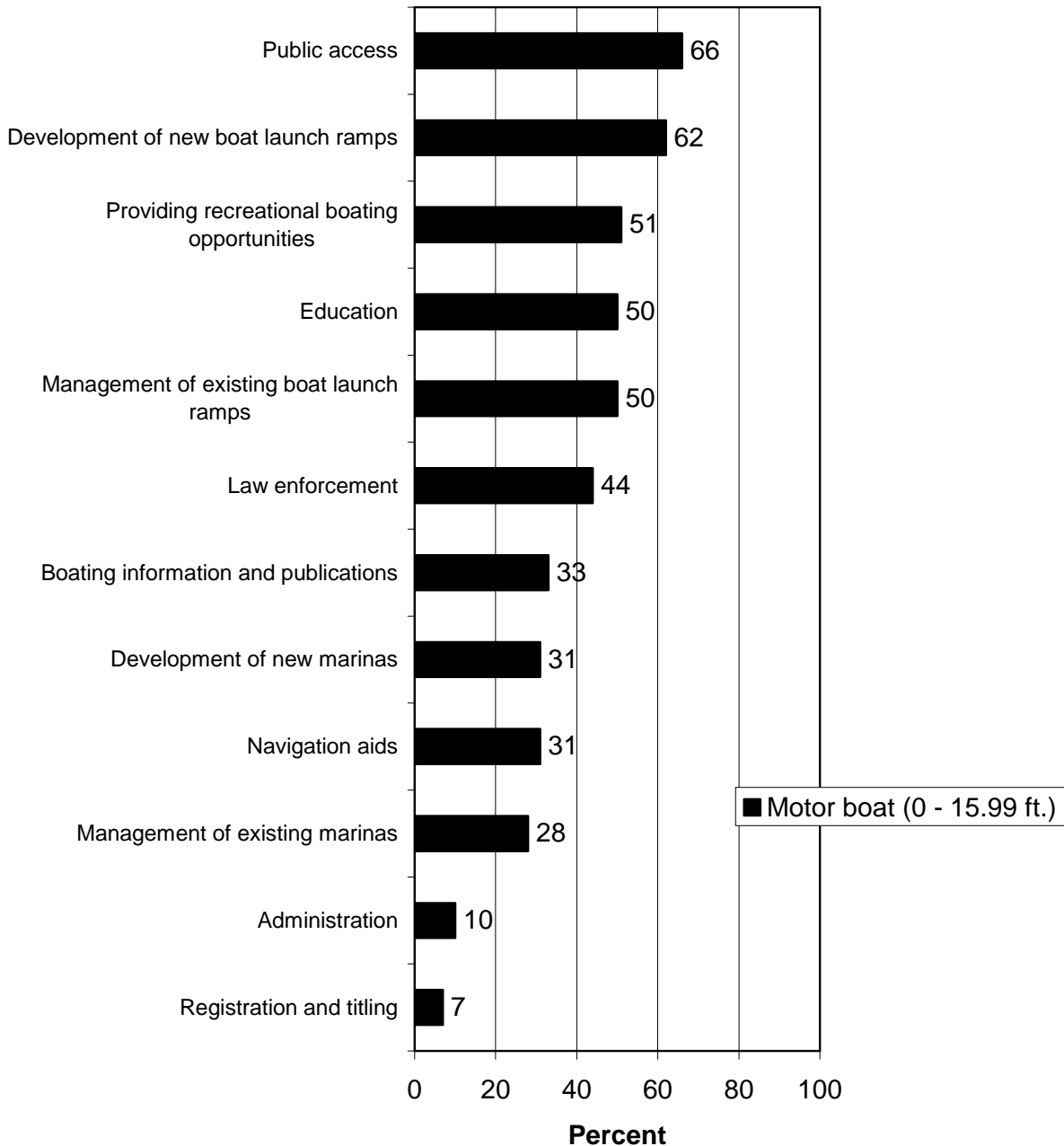
**Q138-149. Percent who indicated that more time and money should be directed toward the following boating programs and services in Washington.**



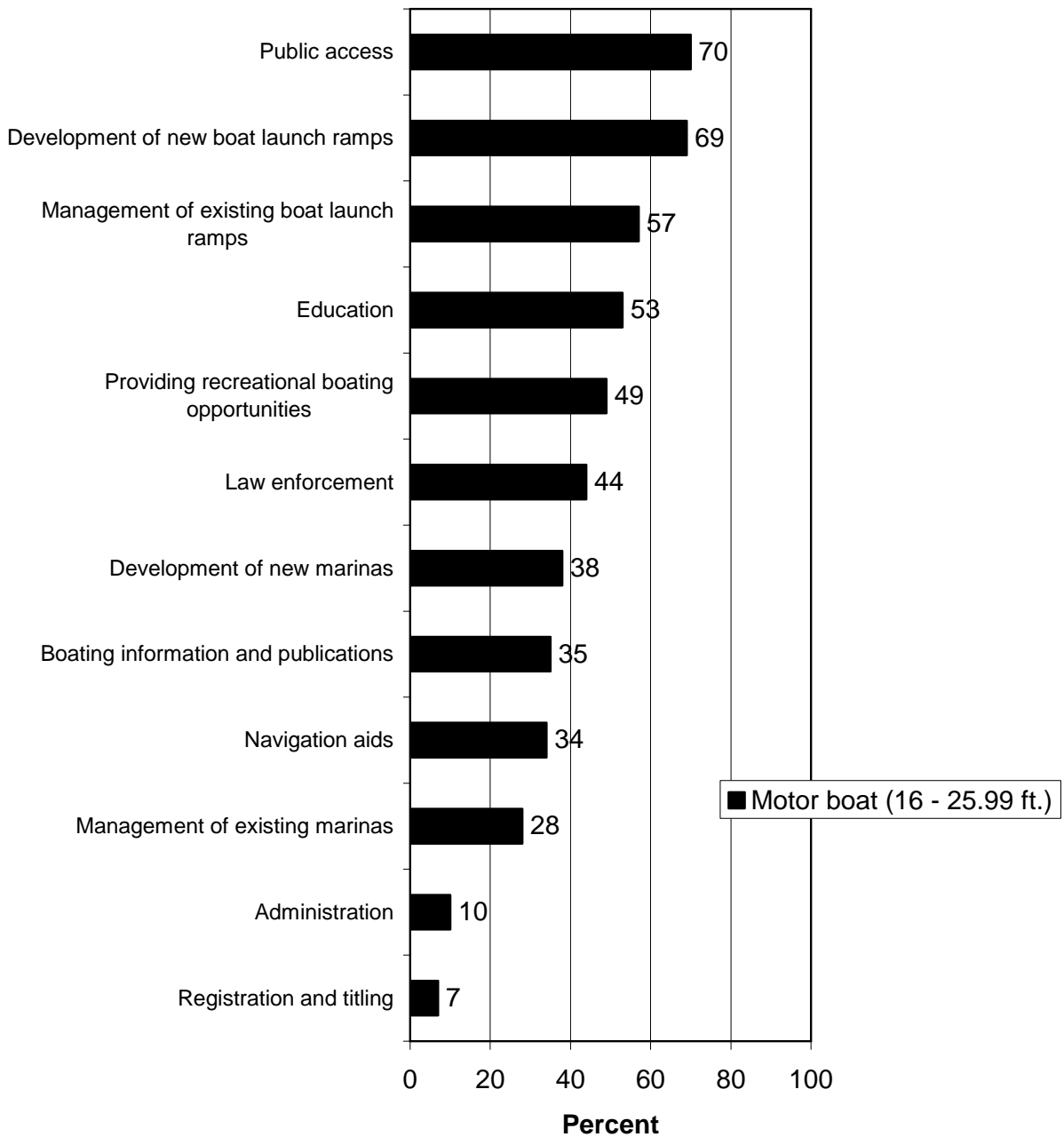
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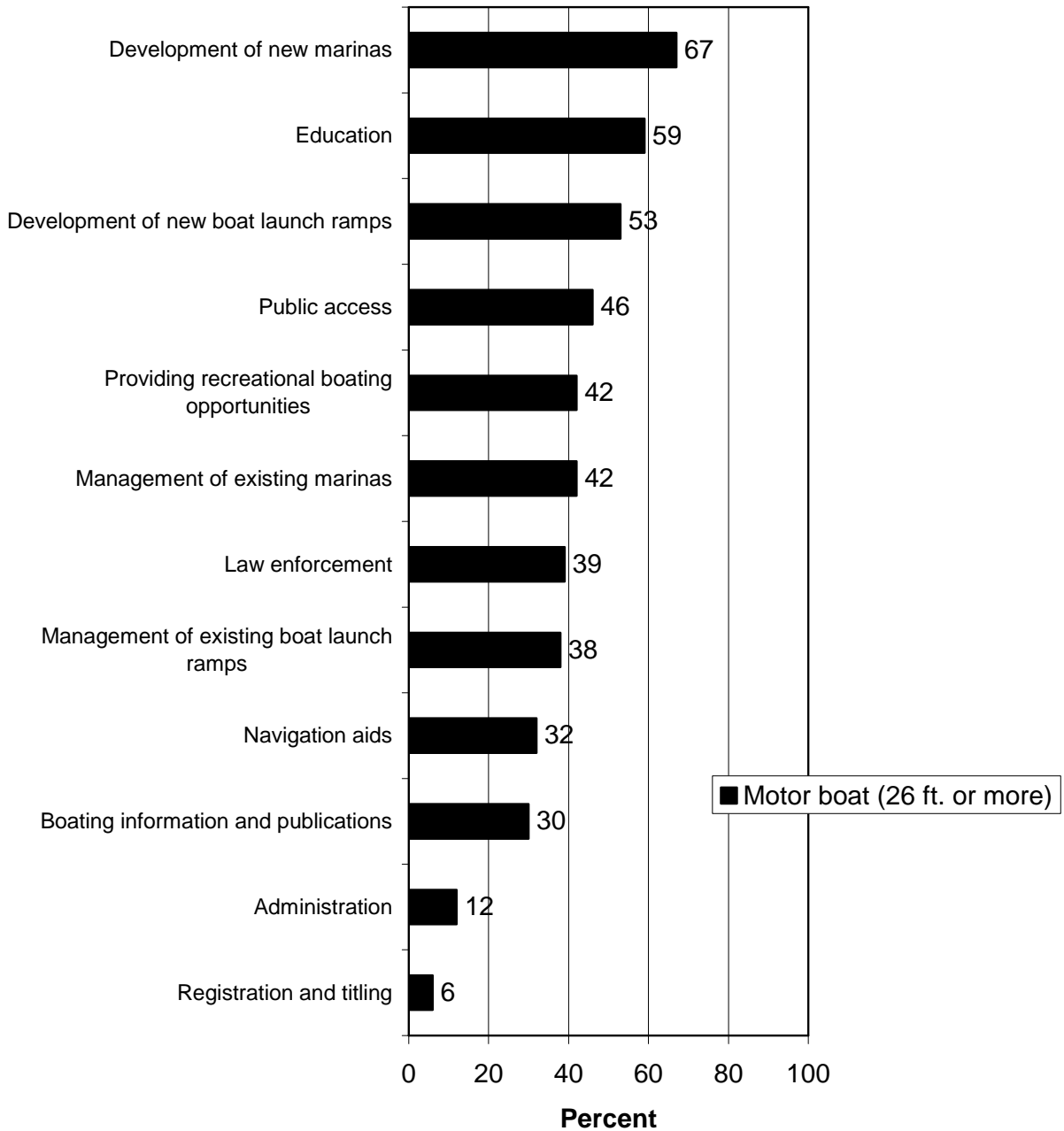
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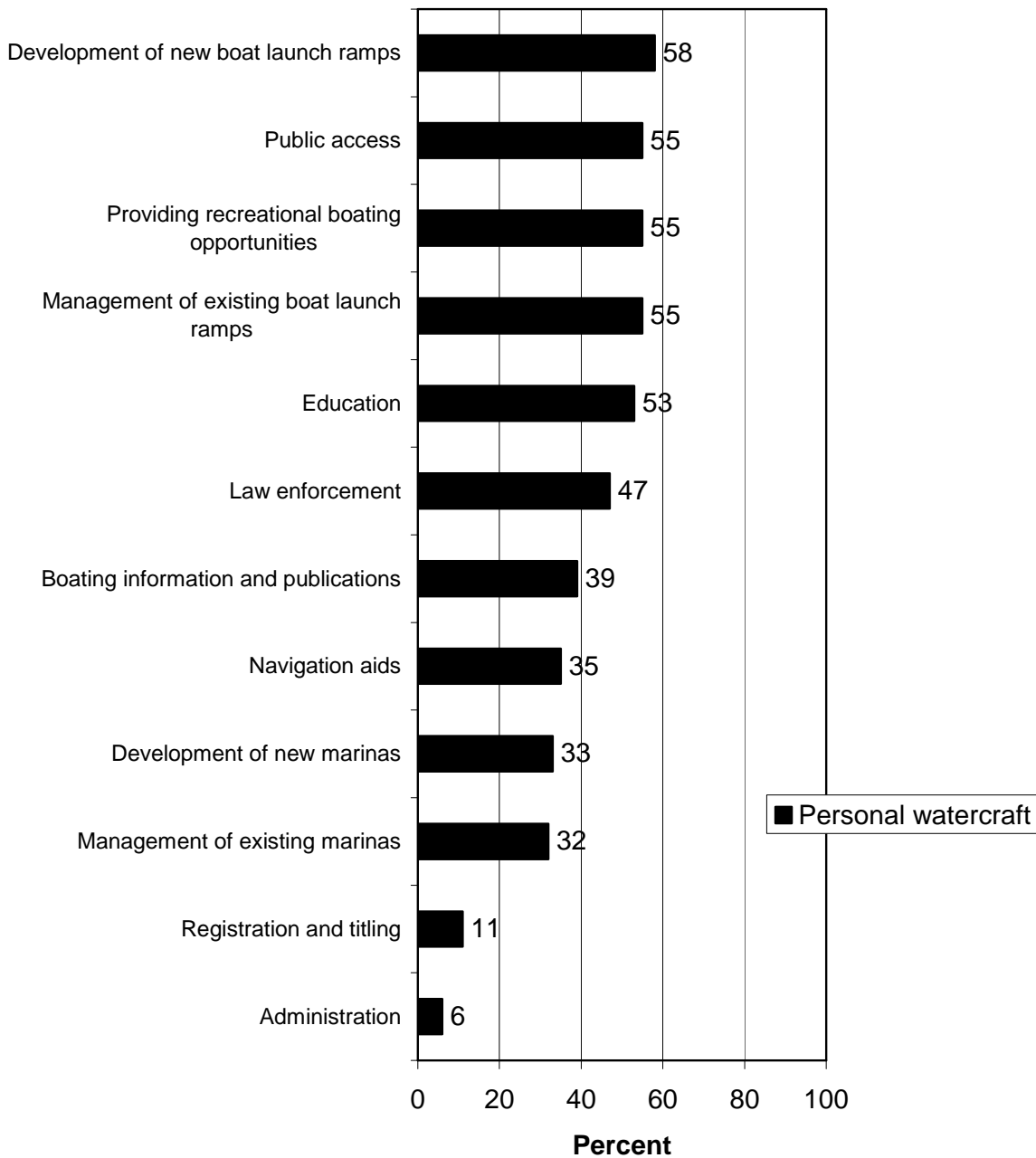


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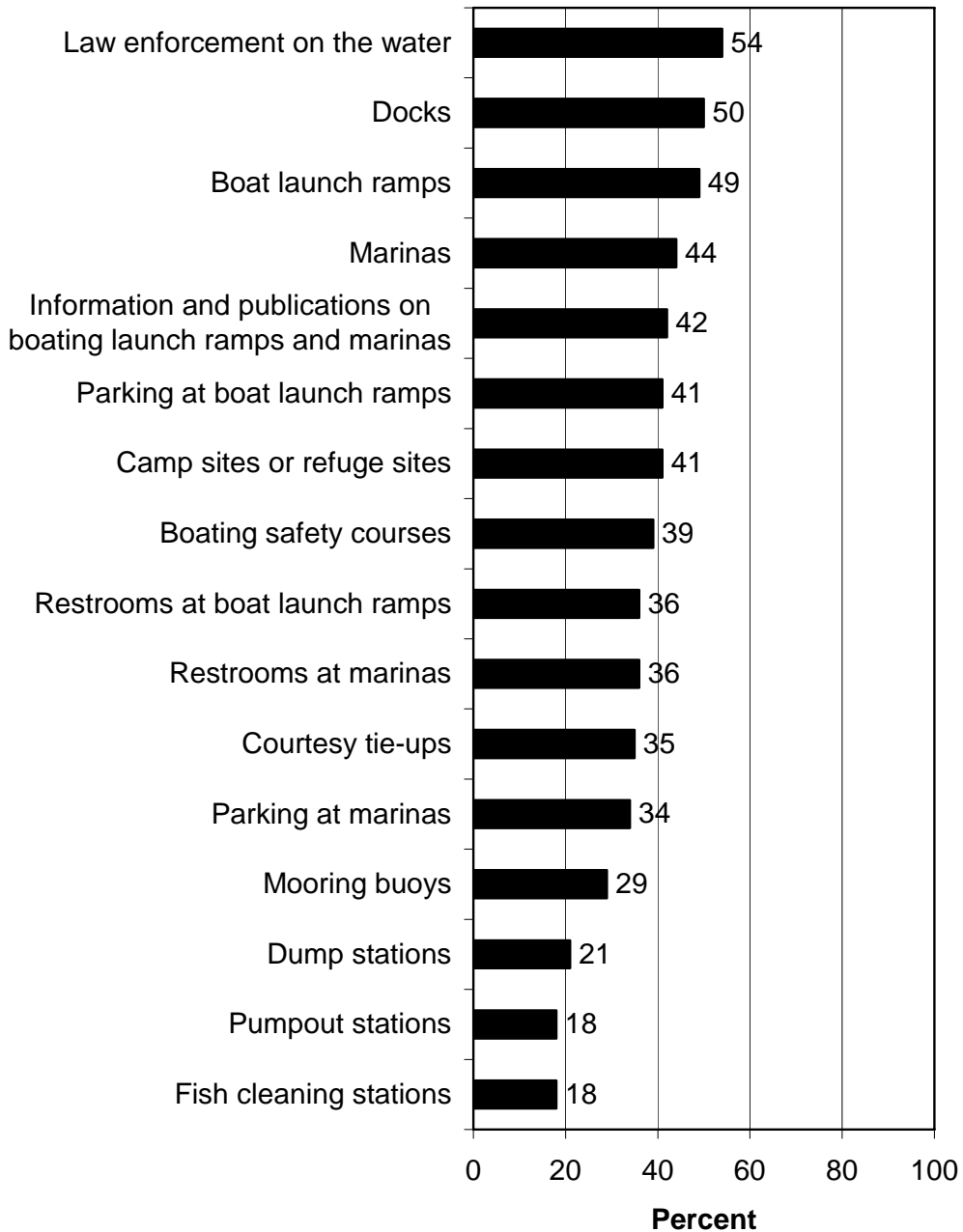
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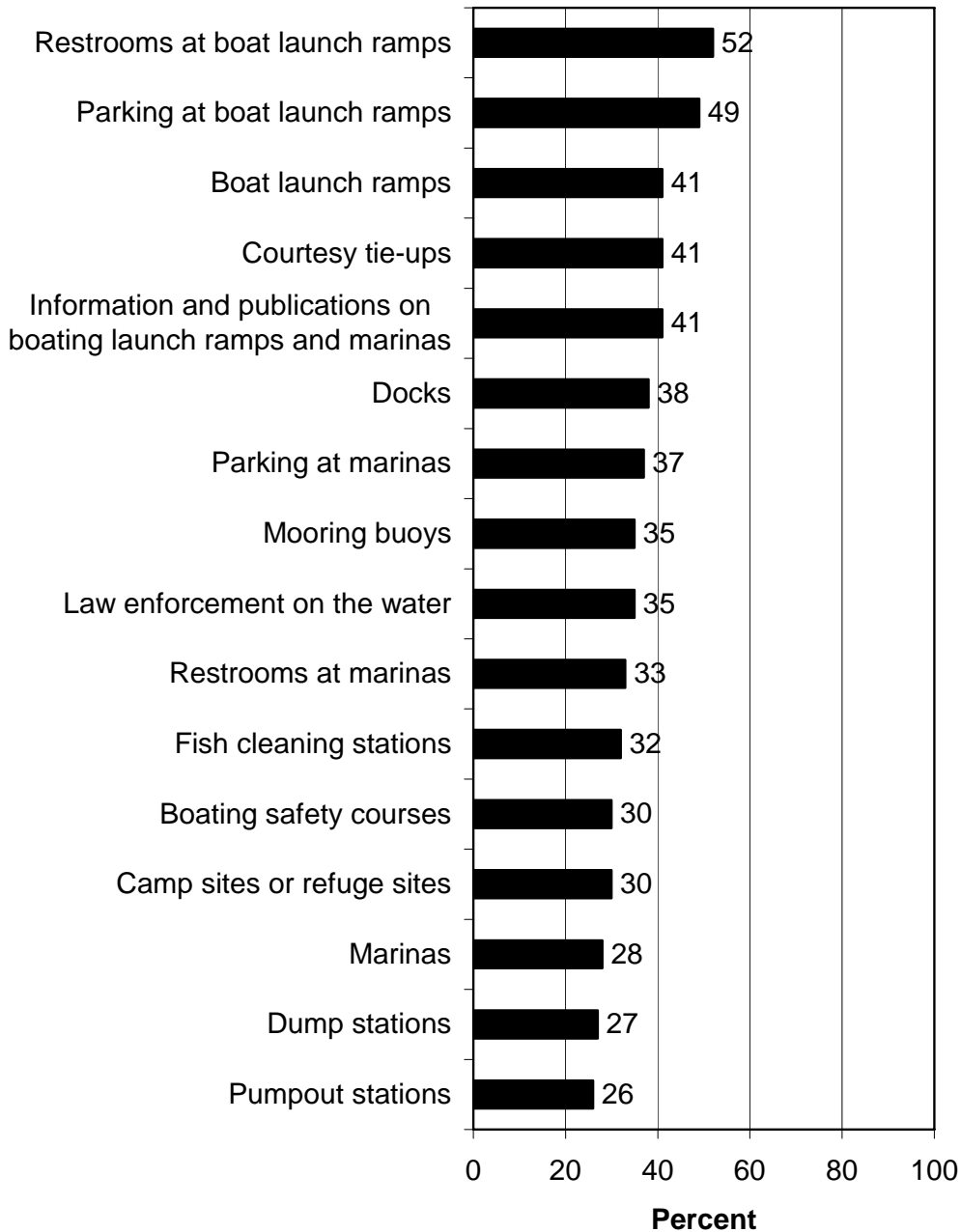
- The survey asked respondents to rate the quality of 16 facilities and services in the county in which they boat most often. In looking at excellent and good ratings—the two highest ratings—three facilities/services stand out with high ratings: law enforcement on the water (54% gave an excellent or good rating), docks (50%), and boat launch ramps (49%). On the other end of the scale, two facilities/services have high percentages rating them fair or poor—the two lowest ratings: restrooms at boat launch ramps (52% gave a fair or poor rating) and parking at boat launch ramps (49%). Note that these show excellent and good ratings combined, as well as fair and poor ratings combined.
- Registered boat owners were more likely than were the other types of boaters to give a poor rating to courtesy tie-ups, fish cleaning stations, mooring buoys, boat launch ramps, pumpout stations, dump stations, and docks. This is likely a reflection of the fact that registered boat owners are more likely to use boats that would have a need for these facilities than are non-registered owners. Note that these show excellent ratings by themselves, and they show poor ratings by themselves.
  - There were regional differences in the results. Only where notable differences occur are the results discussed below. Note that these show excellent and good ratings combined, as well as fair and poor ratings combined.
    - Marinas: The highest excellent or good ratings were in the Peninsula and Coast Region and the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region.
    - Boating safety courses: The highest excellent or good ratings were in the Peninsula and Coast Region and the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region.
    - Boat launch ramps: The highest excellent or good ratings were in the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region and the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region.
    - Camp sites or refuge sites: The highest excellent or good ratings were in the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region and the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region.
    - Parking at boat launch ramps: The highest excellent or good ratings were in the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region and the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region.

- Parking at marinas: The highest excellent or good ratings were in the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region.
- Courtesy tie-ups: The highest excellent or good ratings were in the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region and the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region.
- Restrooms at boat launch ramps: The highest excellent or good ratings were in the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region and the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region.
- There were differences in the results according to the type of primary boat used by respondents. Note that these show excellent ratings by themselves, and they show poor ratings by themselves.
  - In general, sailboaters were more generous than other types of boaters in giving excellent ratings, particularly for law enforcement, boat launch ramps, parking at boat launch ramps, boating safety courses, information and publications on boating launch ramps and marinas, marinas themselves, restrooms at marinas, and parking at marinas.
  - Motor boaters had a high percentage, relative to other boaters, giving a rating of poor for the quality of fish cleaning stations, courtesy tie-ups, mooring buoys, boat launch ramps themselves, pumpout stations, docks, and dump stations.
  - Boaters primarily operating hand-powered boats had a quite high percentage rating restrooms at boat launch ramps as poor.

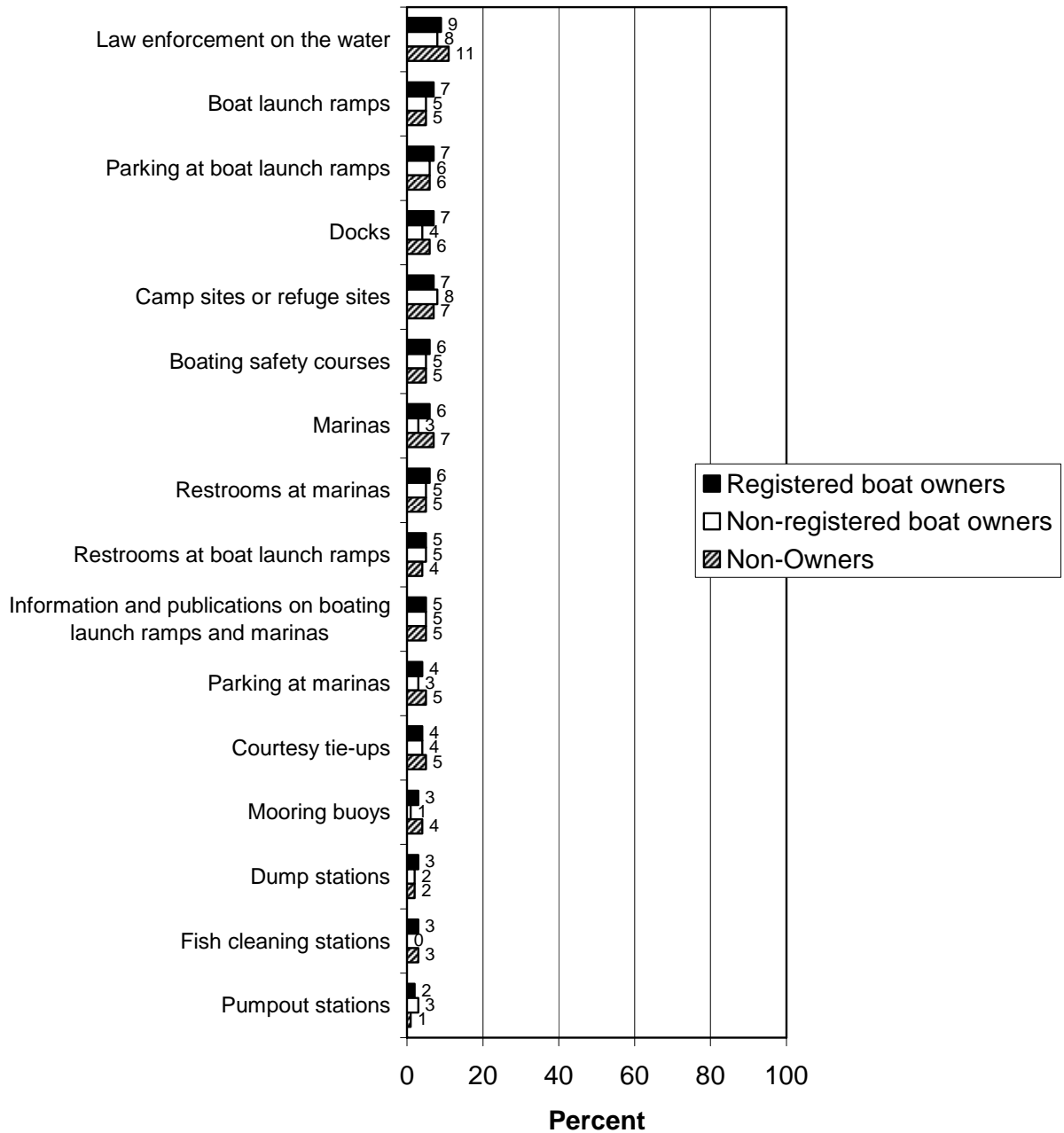
**Q152-167. Percent of those who rated the quality of the following facilities and services in the county in which he/she boats most often in Washington as excellent or good.**



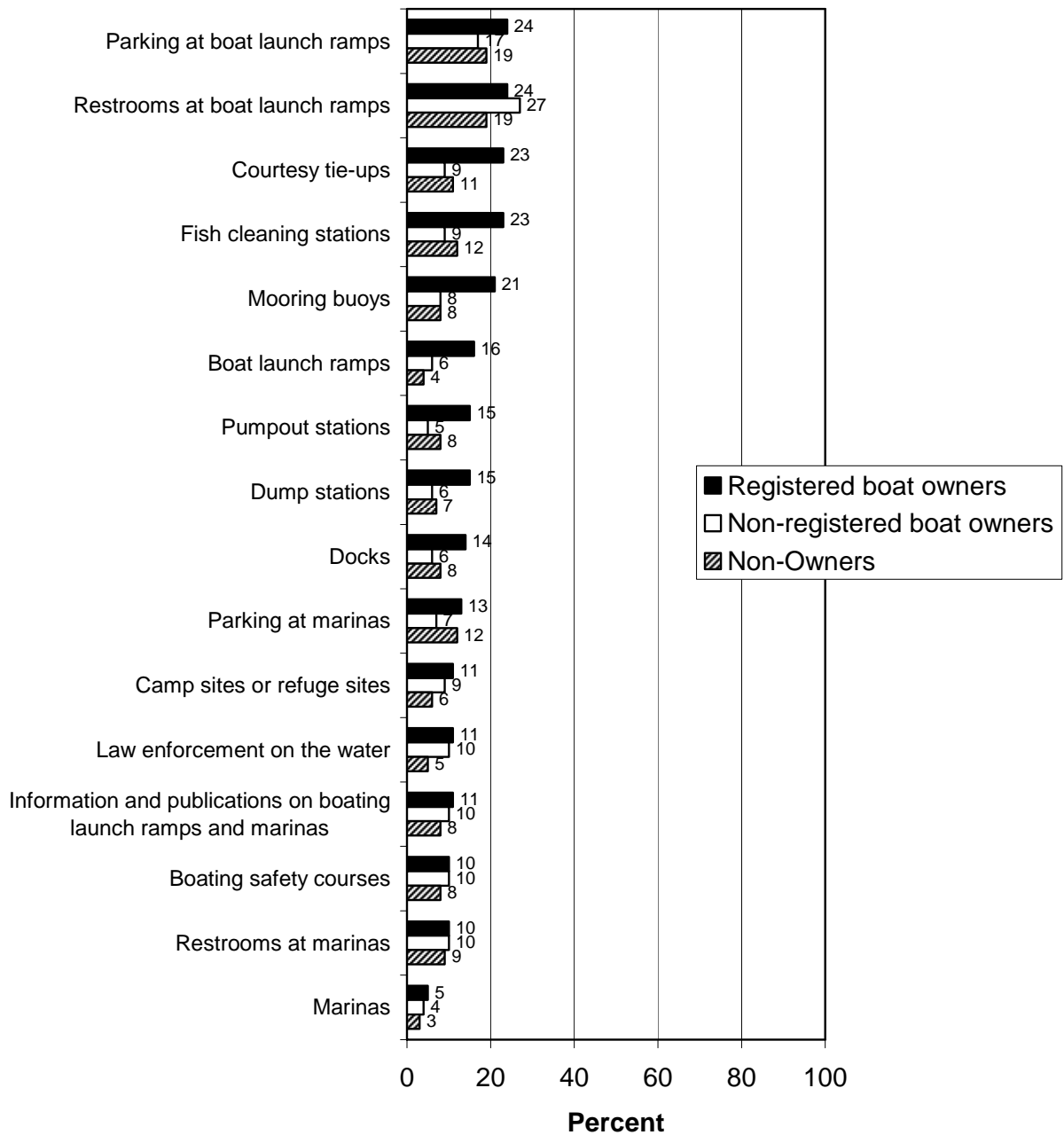
**Q152-167. Percent of those who rated the quality of the following facilities and services in the county in which he/she boats most often in Washington as fair or poor.**



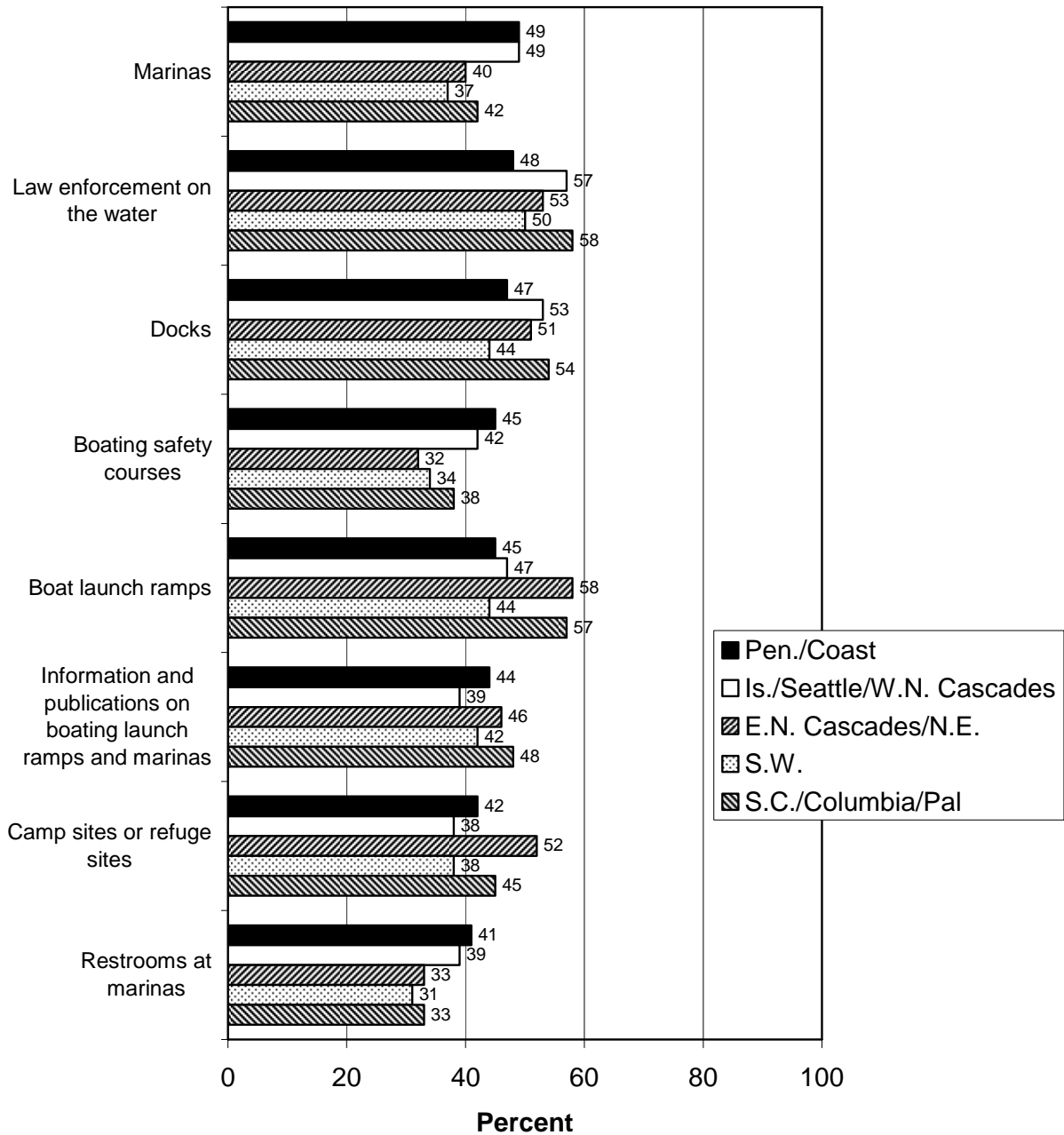
**Q152-167. Percent who rated the quality of the following facilities and services in the county in which he/she boats most often in Washington as excellent.**



**Q152-167. Percent who rated the quality of the following facilities and services in the county in which he/she boats most often in Washington as poor.**

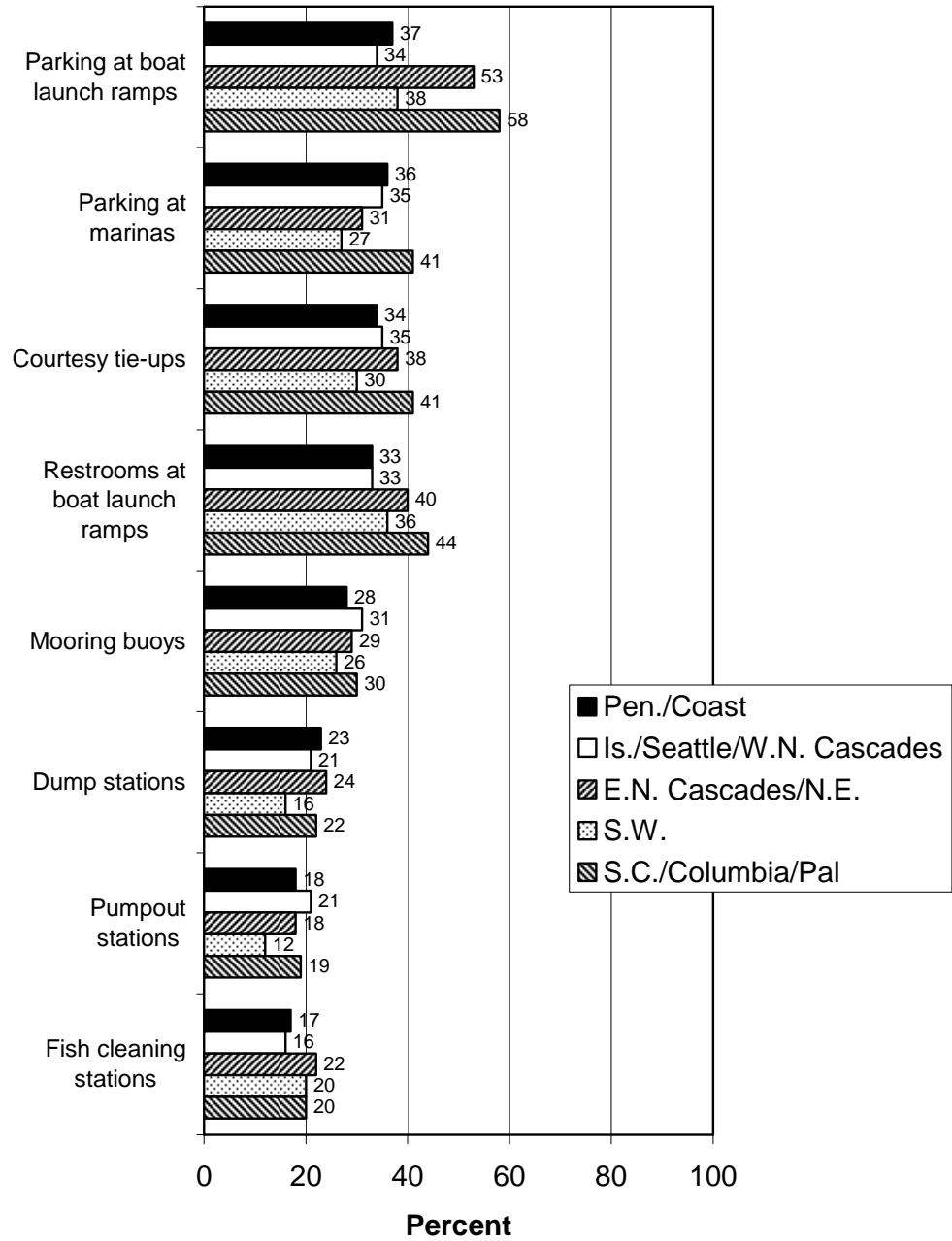


**Q152-167. Percent of those who rated the quality of the following facilities and services in the county in which he/she boats most often in Washington as excellent or good. (Part 1.)**

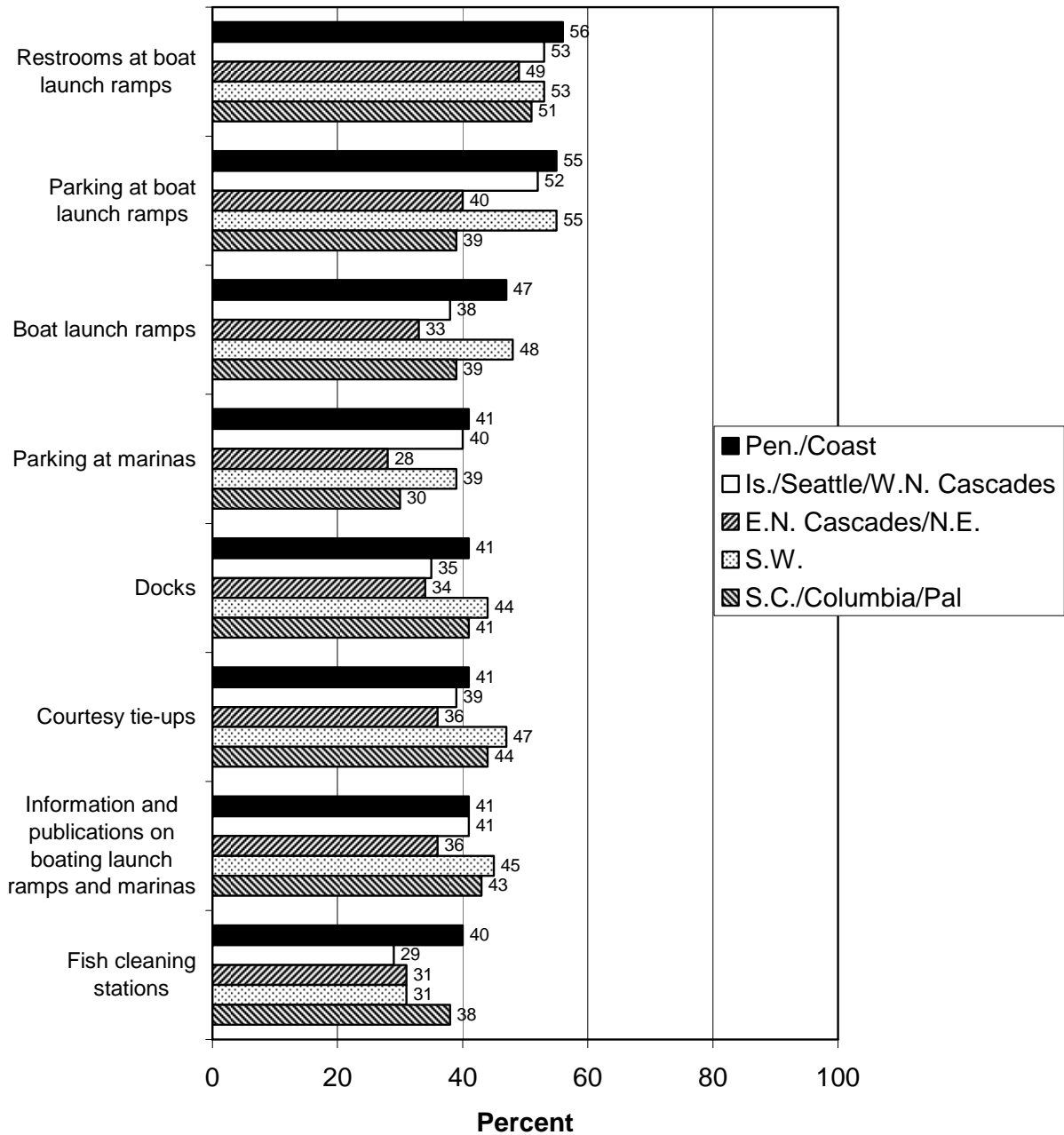




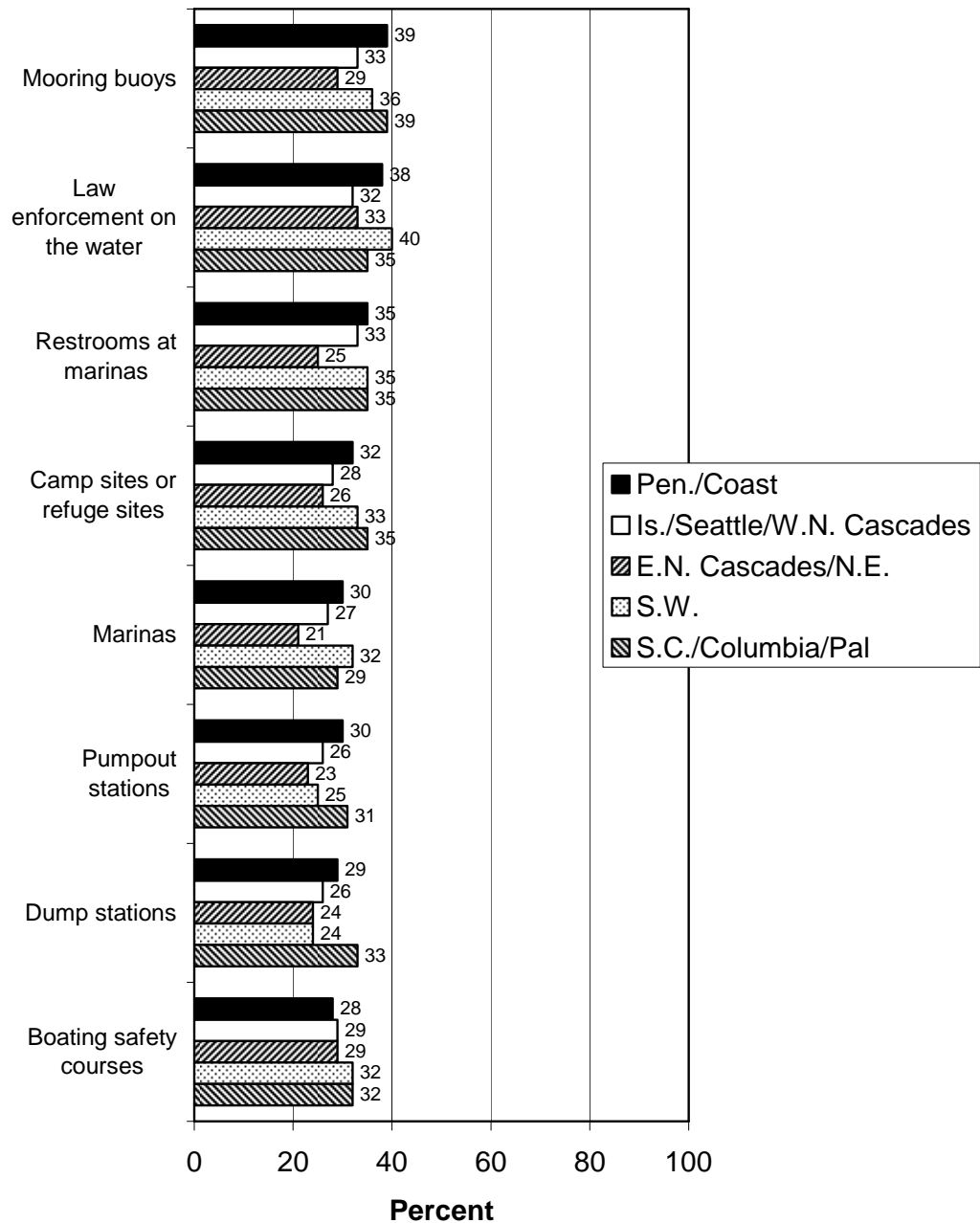
**Q152-167. Percent of those who rated the quality of the following facilities and services in the county in which he/she boats most often in Washington as excellent or good. (Part 2.)**



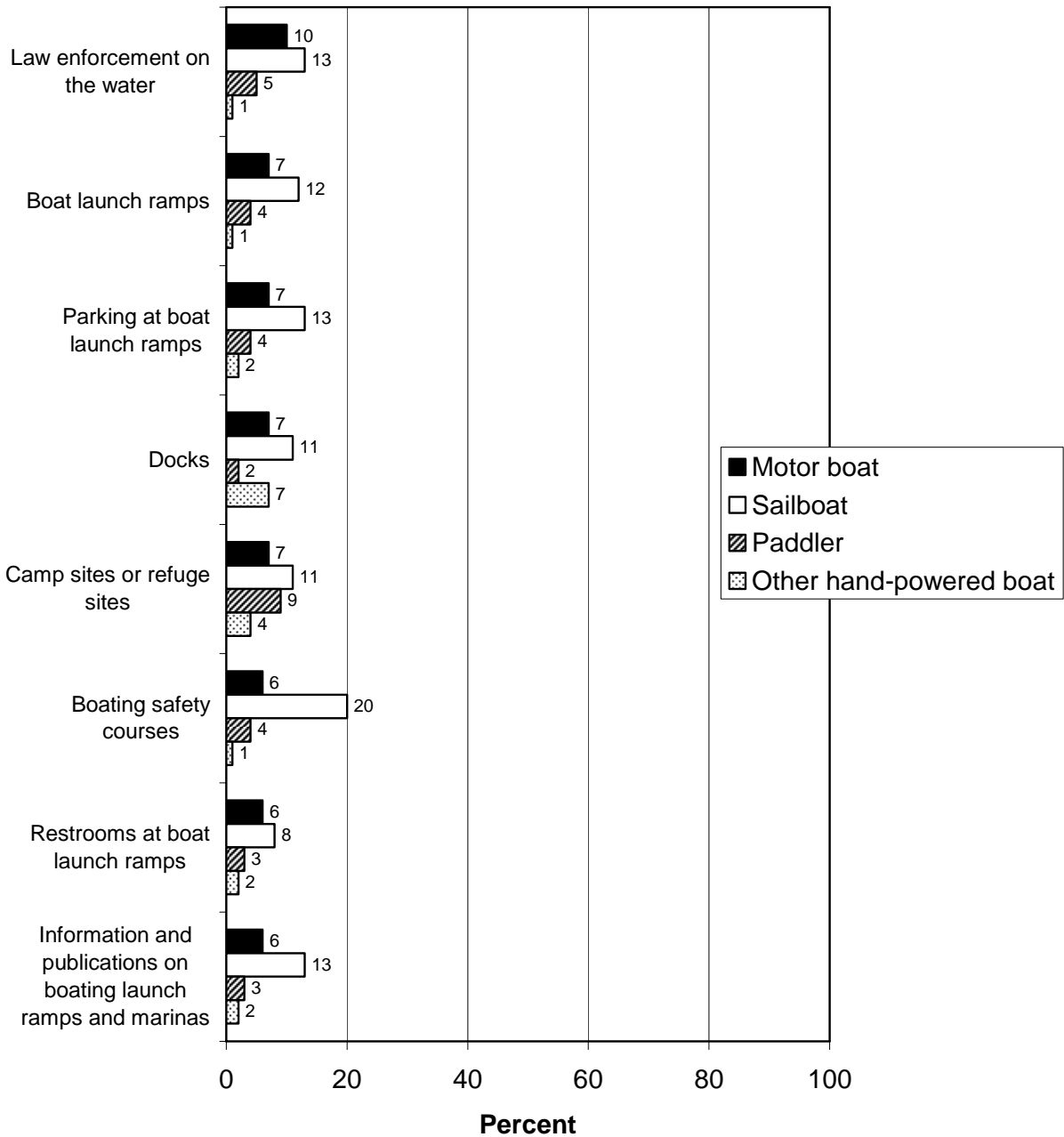
**Q152-167. Percent of those who rated the quality of the following facilities and services in the county in which he/she boats most often in Washington as fair or poor. (Part 1.)**



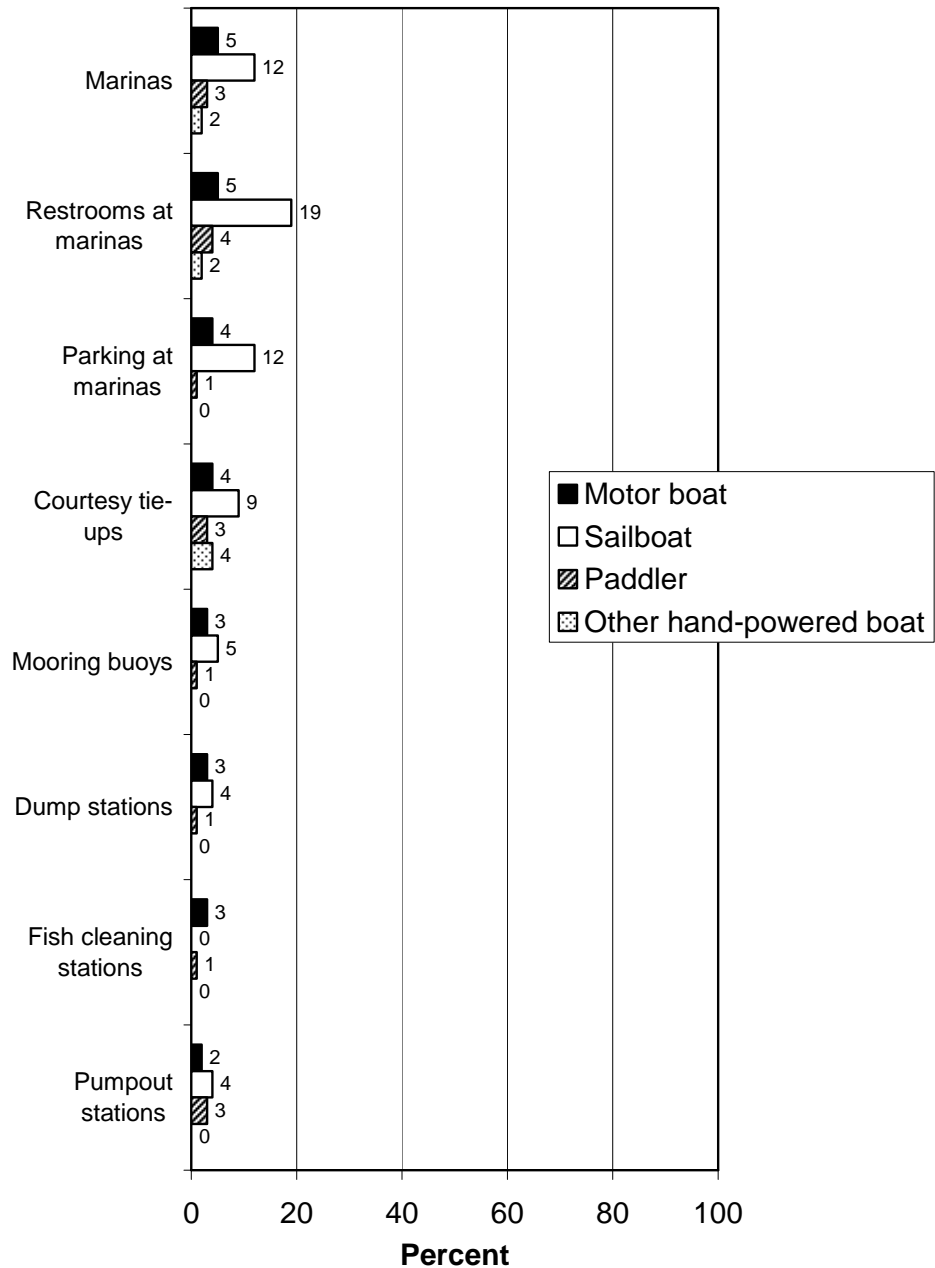
**Q152-167. Percent of those who rated the quality of the following facilities and services in the county in which he/she boats most often in Washington as fair or poor. (Part 2.)**



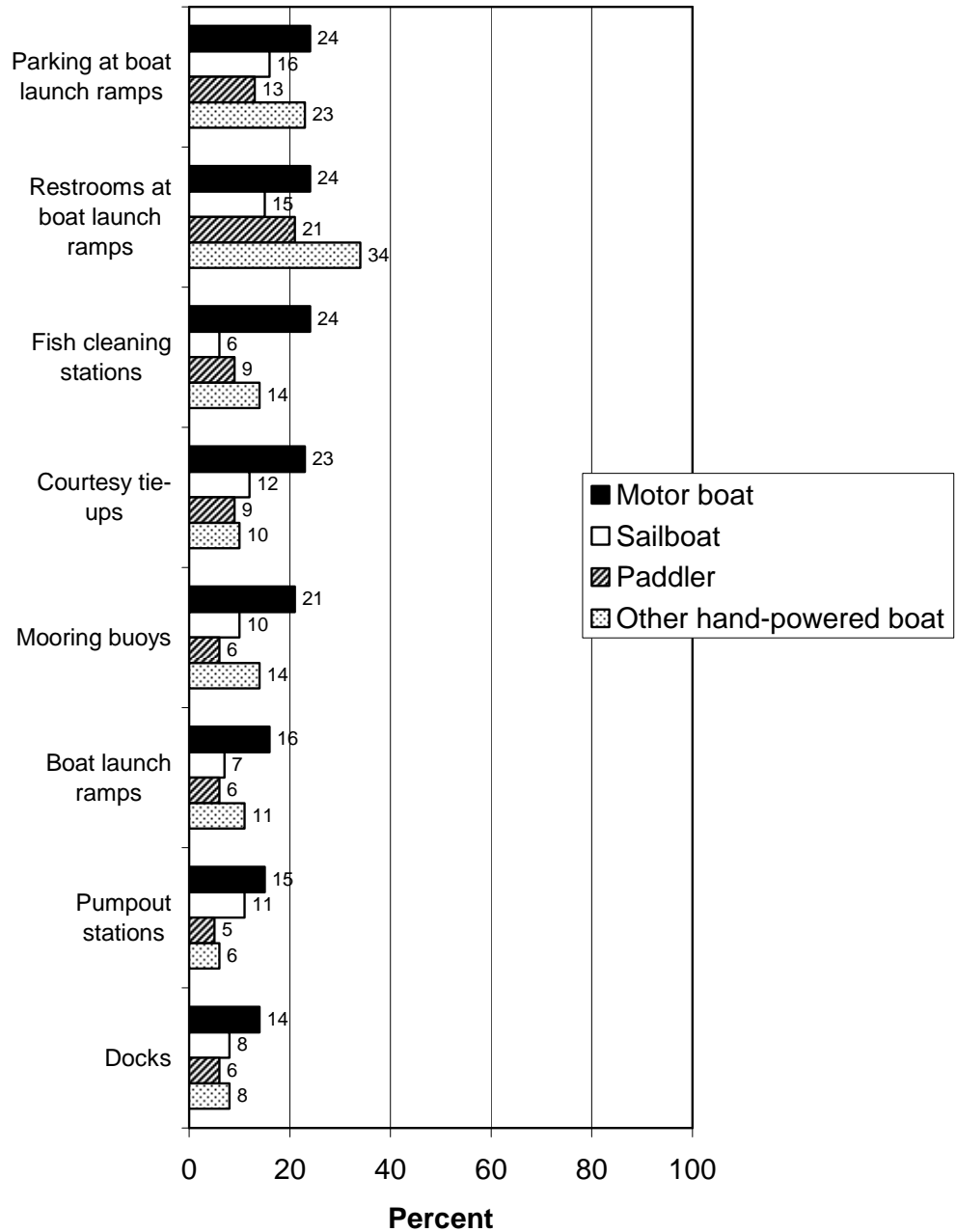
**Q152-167. Percent who rated the quality of the following facilities and services in the county in which he/she boats most often in Washington as excellent. (Part 1.)**



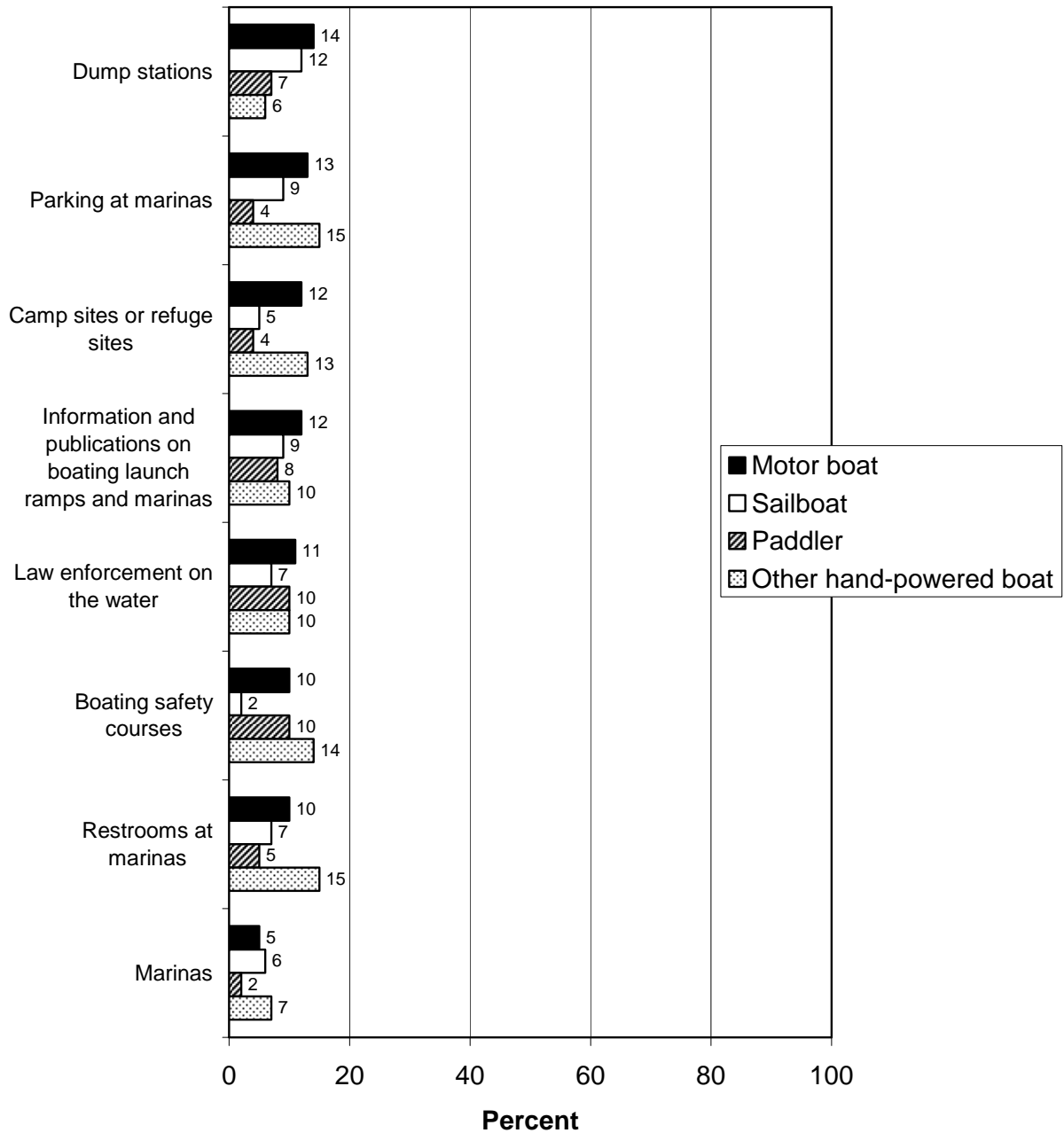
**Q152-167. Percent who rated the quality of the following facilities and services in the county in which he/she boats most often in Washington as excellent. (Part 2.)**



**Q152-167. Percent who rated the quality of the following facilities and services in the county in which he/she boats most often in Washington as poor. (Part 1.)**



**Q152-167. Percent who rated the quality of the following facilities and services in the county in which he/she boats most often in Washington as poor. (Part 2.)**



- The survey asked respondents whether they would like to have more, the same amount, or less of the facilities and services in their county. These are the same 16 facilities and services that respondents previously rated for quality. Seven facilities or services had nearly half or slightly more than half of respondents saying more were needed, with the top five of them used by those who tow their boats from place to place and who do not appear to have their own permanent dock and slip. These top five are parking at boat launch ramps, boat launch ramps themselves, courtesy tie-ups, restrooms at launch ramps, and docks. Note that facilities pertaining to marinas are low on the list, including marinas themselves, restrooms at marinas, and parking at marinas. Also low are pumpout stations and dump stations.
- Relative to other types of boaters, a greater percentage of registered boat owners want to see more boat launch ramps, docks, courtesy tie-ups, parking at boat launch ramps, and mooring buoys. Additionally, non-registered boat owners have a *lower* percentage than the other boater types wanting more courtesy tie-ups, parking at boat launch ramps, mooring buoys, parking at marinas, marinas themselves, and pumpout stations.
  - There were many differences among the regions on this series of questions about whether boaters would like to see more, the same, or less of the various facilities and services. Some of the notable differences are discussed below.
    - Parking at boat launch ramps varied greatly among the regions, with boaters from the Southwest Region having the highest percentage wanting more parking at boat launch ramps.
    - Regarding the boat launch ramps themselves, boaters from the Southwest Region and from the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region had a greater likelihood to want more of them than did boaters from the other regions.
    - Similar to above, boaters from the Southwest Region and from the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region had a greater likelihood to want more docks and more mooring buoys than did boaters from the other regions.
    - Boaters from the Southwest Region and from the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region also wanted more camp sites and refuge sites than did boaters from the other regions.
    - The East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region had the *lowest* percentage, relative to the other regions, of boaters wanting more parking at boat launch ramps, parking at marinas, marinas themselves, and pumpout stations.

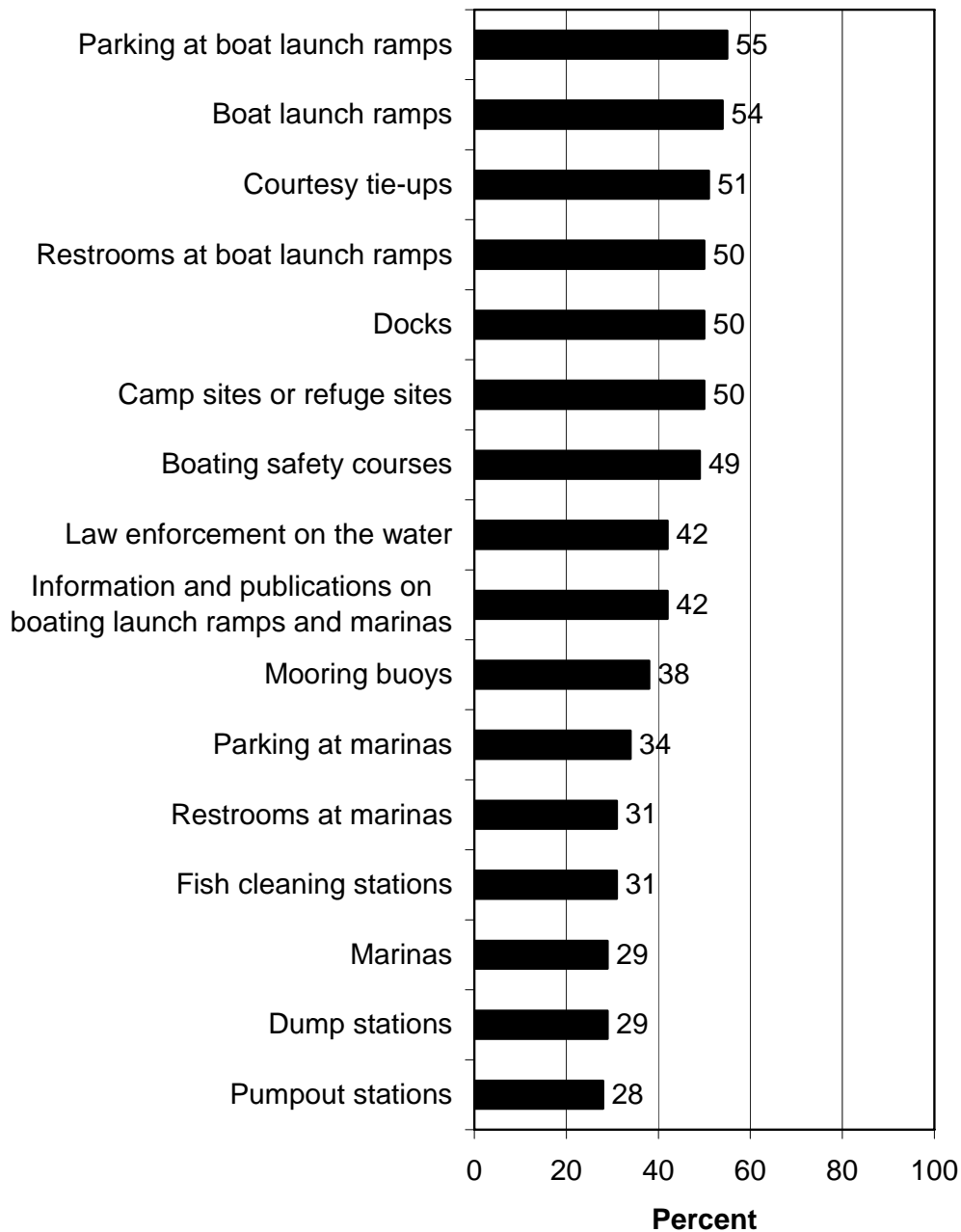


- Boaters from the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region had a *low* percentage wanting more parking at marinas (only boaters from the East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region had a lower demand for more parking at marinas).
- Boaters from the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region had the *lowest* percentage of all the regions wanting more fish cleaning stations.
- The crosstabulation of amount of desired facilities and services by type of boat most often used found major differences between the different types of boaters.
  - Among motor boaters, four facilities/services have a majority wanting more of them: boat launch ramps, docks, parking at boat launch ramps, and courtesy tie-ups. Marinas and associated facilities/services are low on the ranking for motor boaters.
  - Among sailboaters, courtesy tie-ups and mooring buoys top the list of facilities/services of which they want more. Marinas take precedence over boat launch ramps among sailboaters. Education is important to this group, as well, as evidenced by nearly half wanting more boating safety courses in their county (one might conjecture that at least some if not most of this desire for more boating safety courses is for others to take the courses, but the data could not determine this nuance).
  - Among paddlers, more camp sites and refuge sites tops the list, followed by boating safety courses, boat launch ramps and restrooms therein, and information and publications on boat launch ramps and marinas.
  - Among those operating other hand-powered craft, a majority want to see more boat launch ramps, boating safety courses, and restrooms and parking at boat launch ramps.
- There are some marked differences by size of motor boat in the results regarding what boaters want to see more of.
  - Operators of large motor boats (classes 2 and 3) have six facilities or services that top the list: courtesy tie-ups, mooring buoys, pumpout stations, docks, dump stations, and marinas.
  - For operators of smaller motor boats, boat launch ramps and associated facilities top the list, while marinas and their associated facilities are lower down.
- Crosstabulations were run of those 54% who said that they want *more* boat launch ramps in the county in which they boat most often.
  - Those who want more boat launch ramps are about the same as boaters overall regarding the county in which they boat most often and the body of water in which they boat most

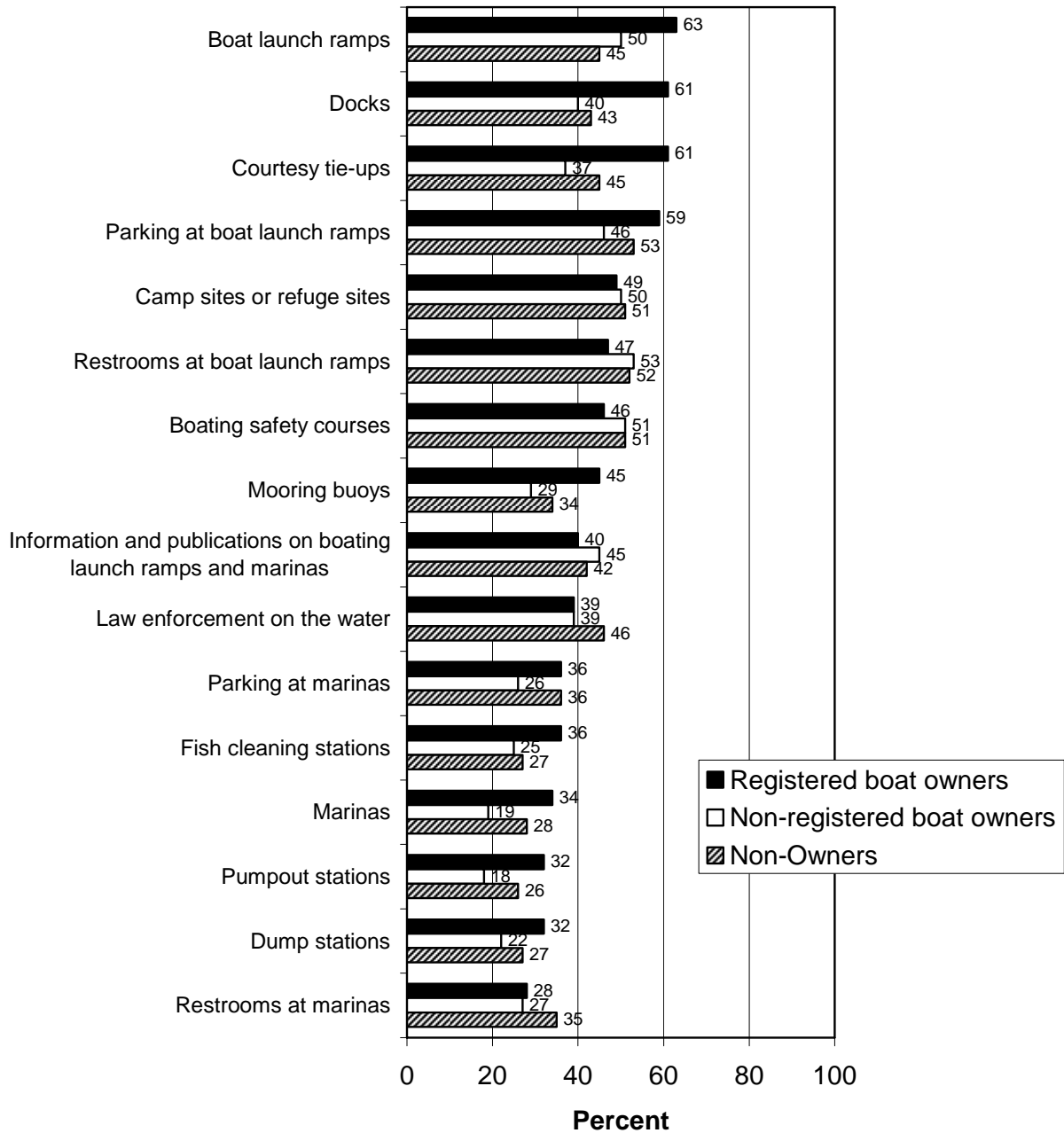
often, suggesting that demand for boat launch ramps is ubiquitous among boaters, regardless of where they boat.

- A crosstabulation was also run of those who want more boat launch ramps by the type of ownership of the boat they use most often. It showed, not surprisingly, that those who own the boat they use most often are slightly more likely to say that they want more boat launch ramps, relative to those whose most-used boat is owned by a friend, is rented, or is chartered.

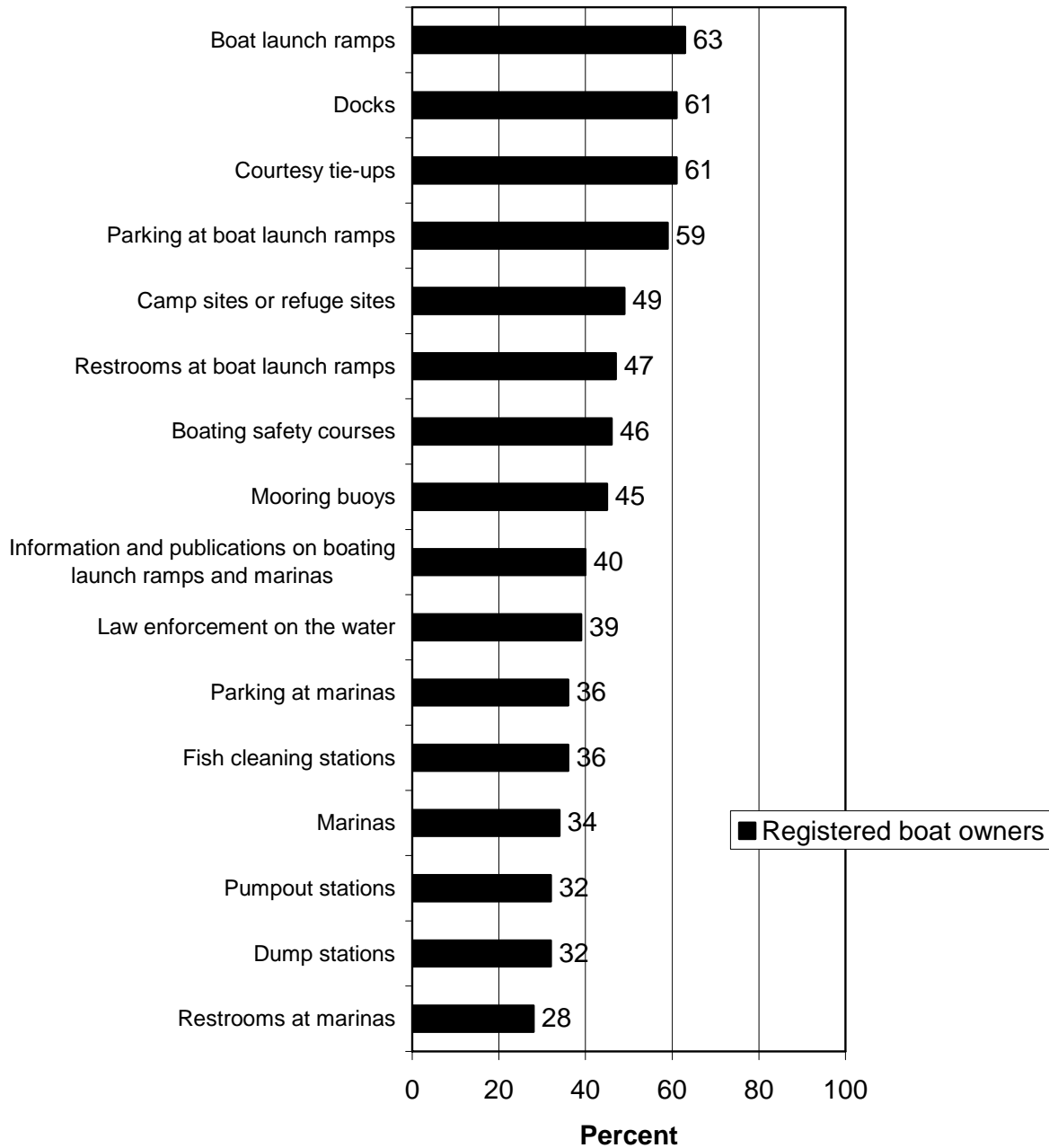
**Q175-190. Percent who indicated that he/she would like to see more of the following facilities and services in the county in which he/she boats most often in Washington.**



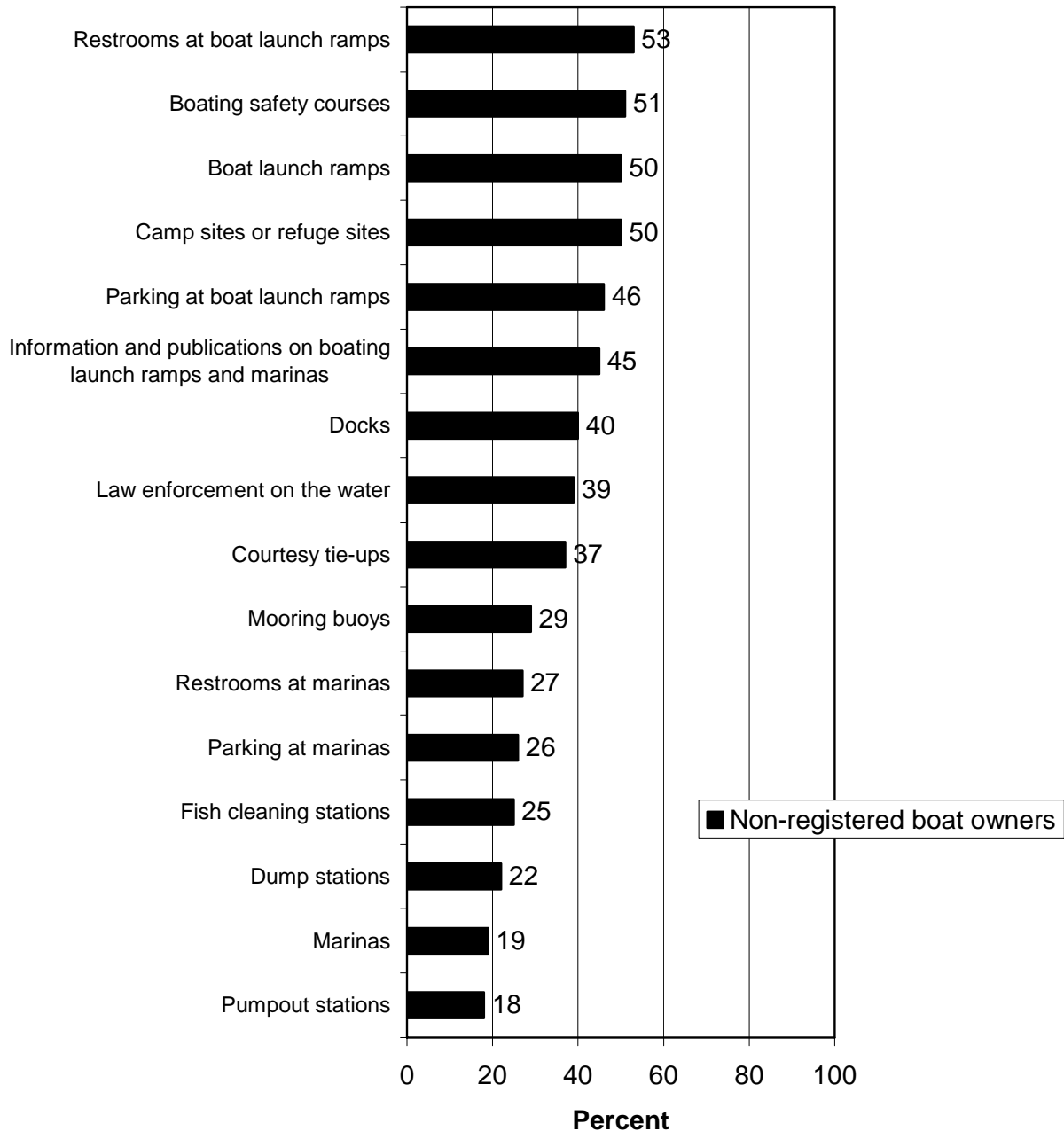
**Q175-190. Percent who indicated that he/she would like to see more of the following facilities and services in the county in which he/she boats most often in Washington.**



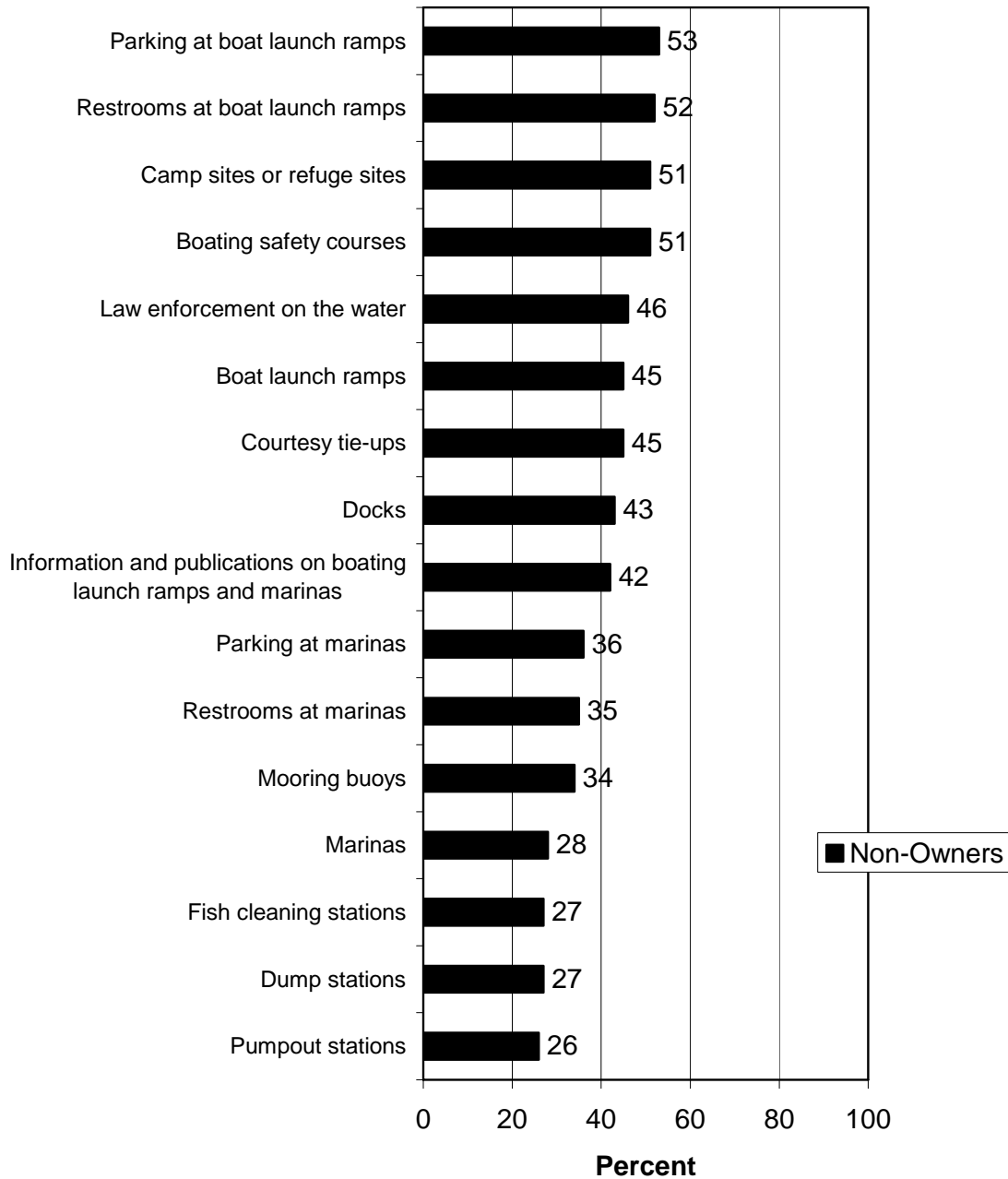
**Q175-190. Percent who indicated that he/she would like to see more of the following facilities and services in the county in which he/she boats most often in Washington.**



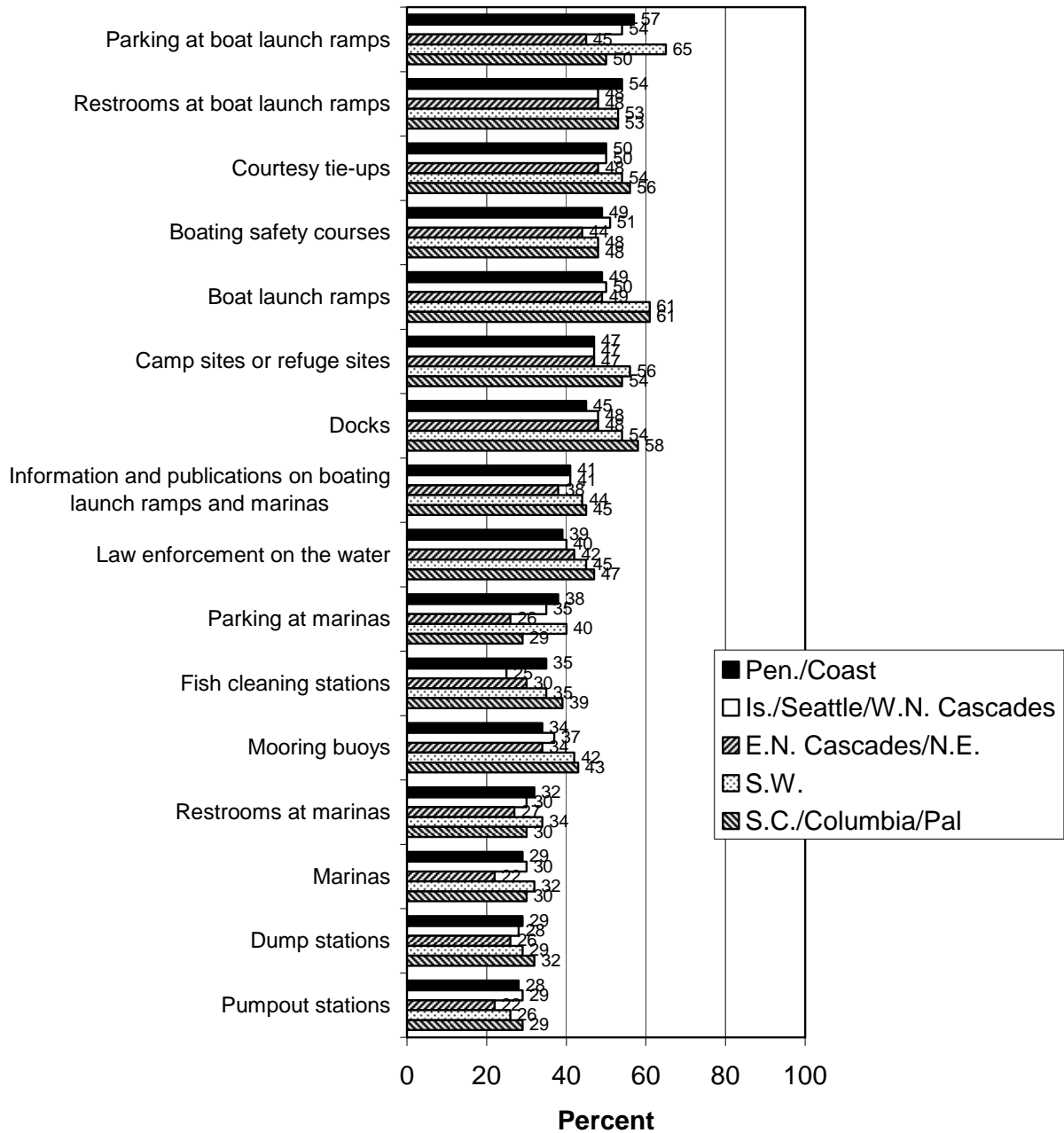
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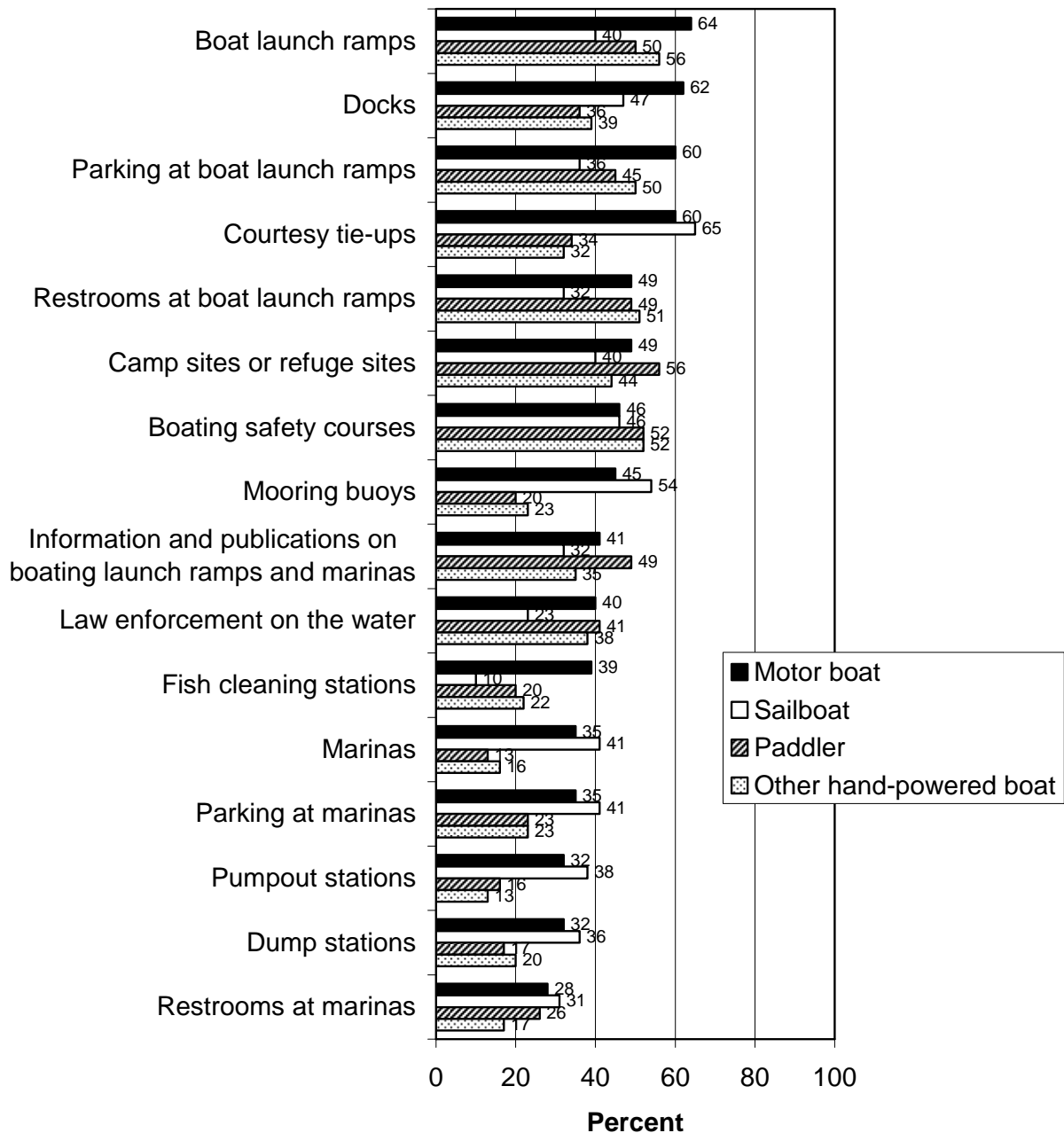


**Q175-190. Percent who indicated that he/she would like to see more of the following facilities and services in the county in which he/she boats most often in Washington.**

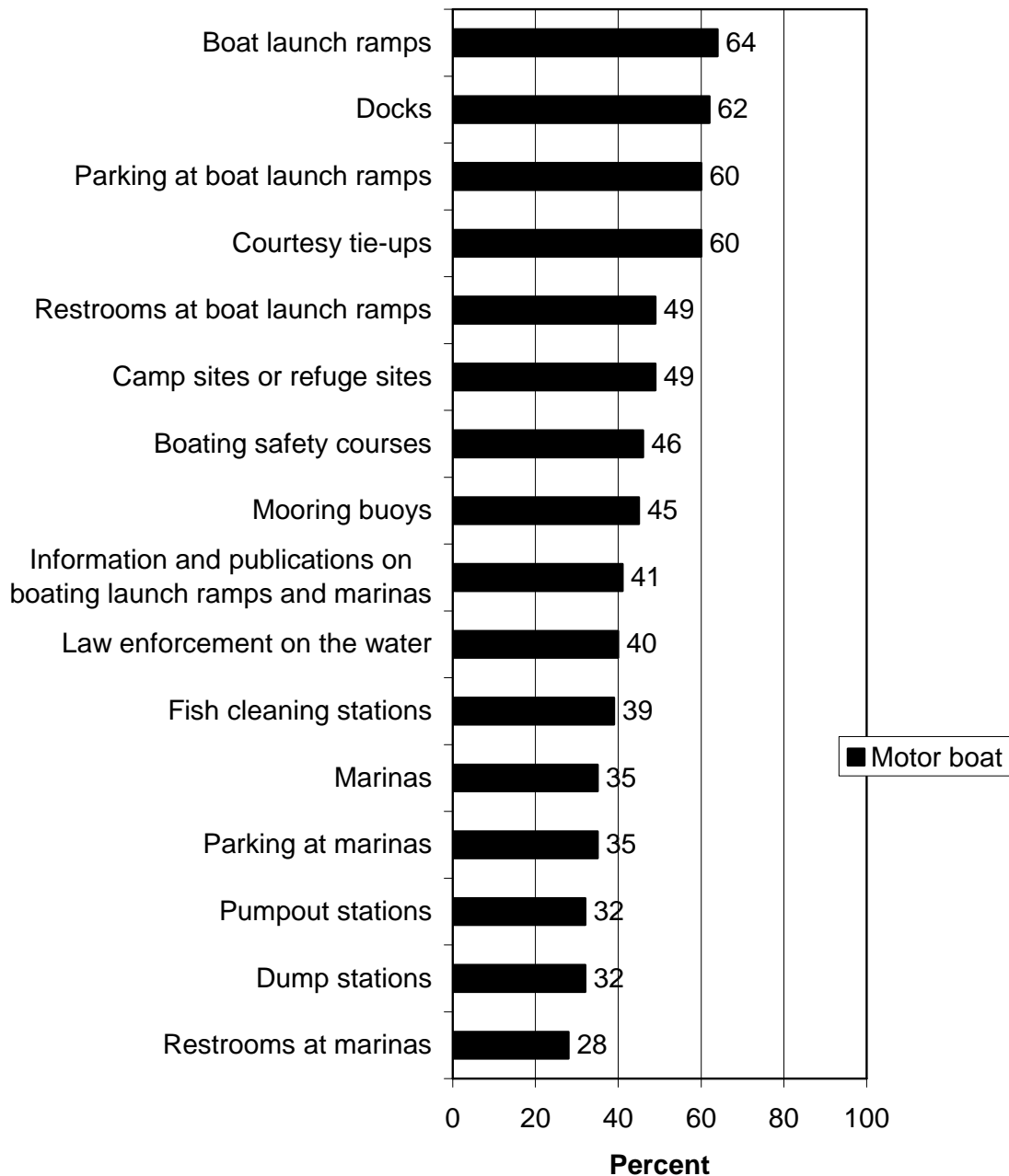




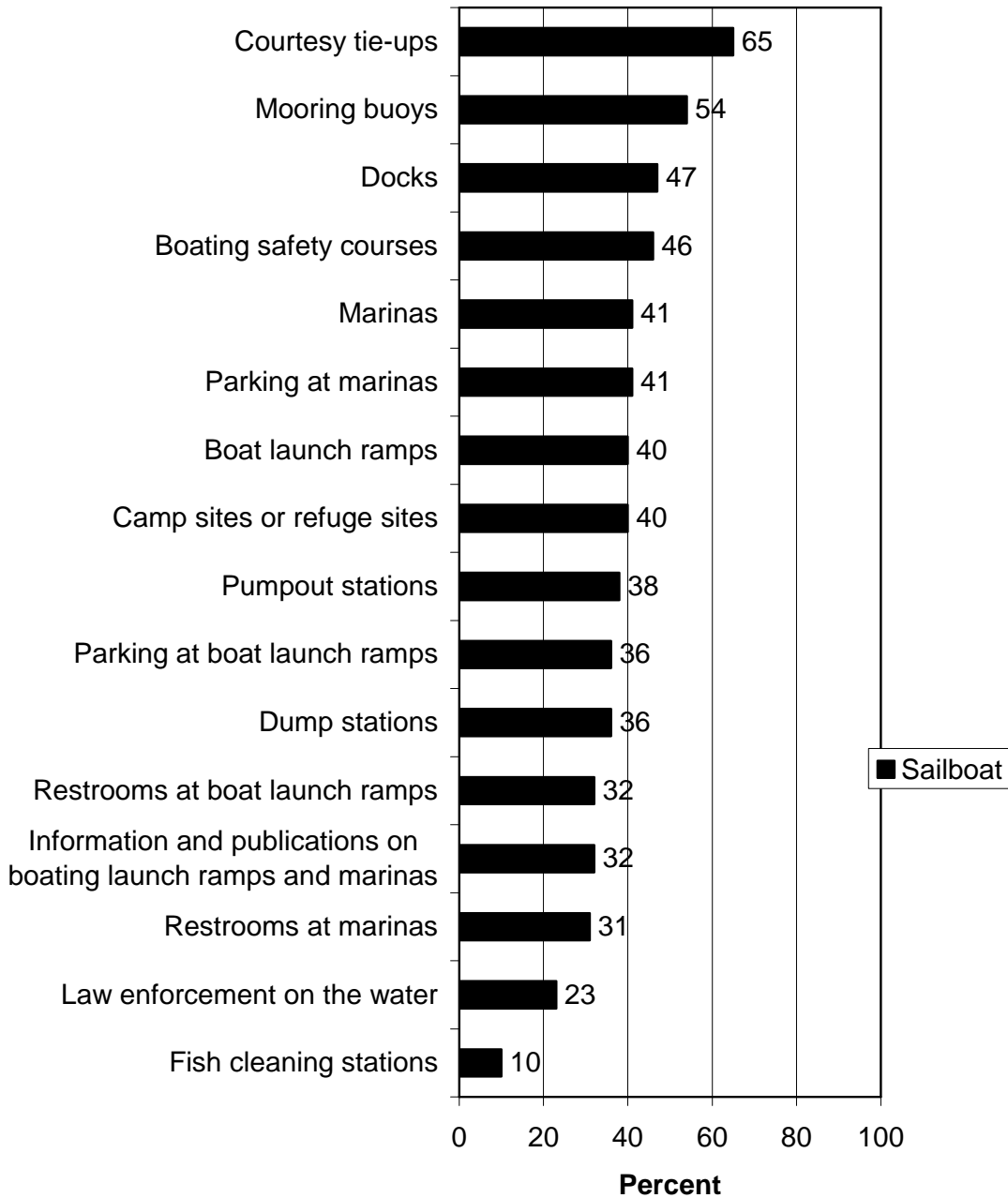
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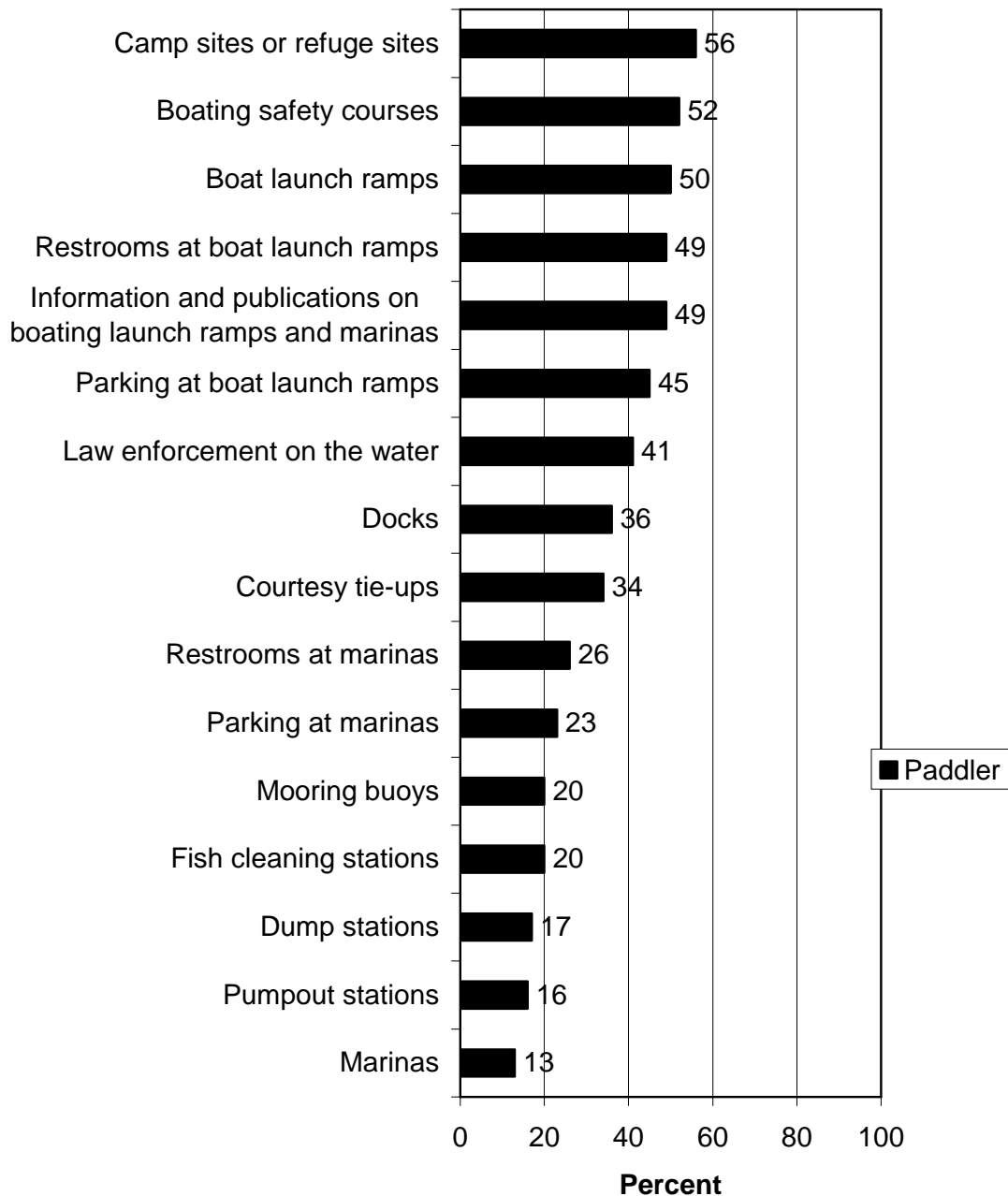
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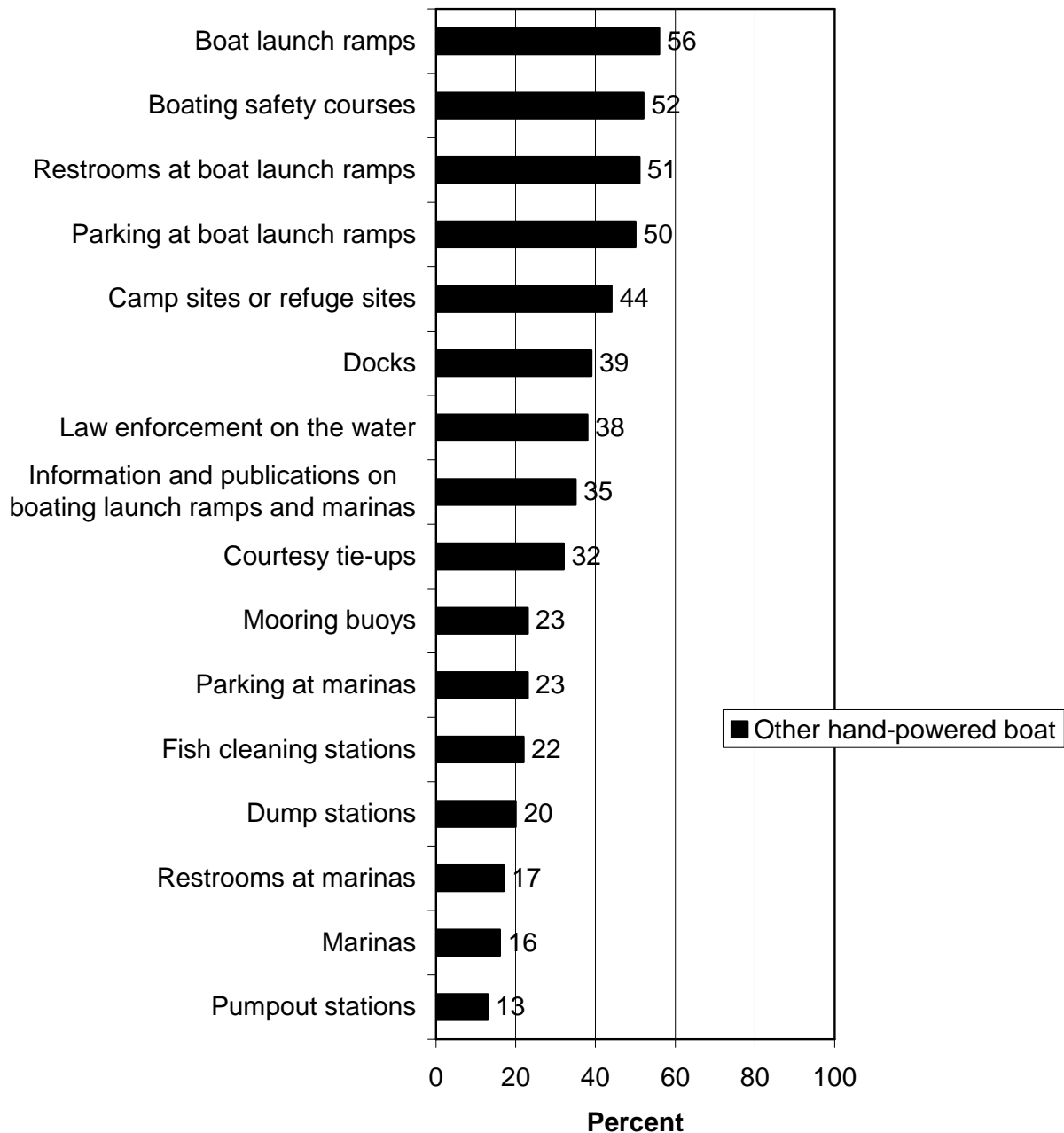
**Q175-190. Percent who indicated that he/she would like to see more of the following facilities and services in the county in which he/she boats most often in Washington.**



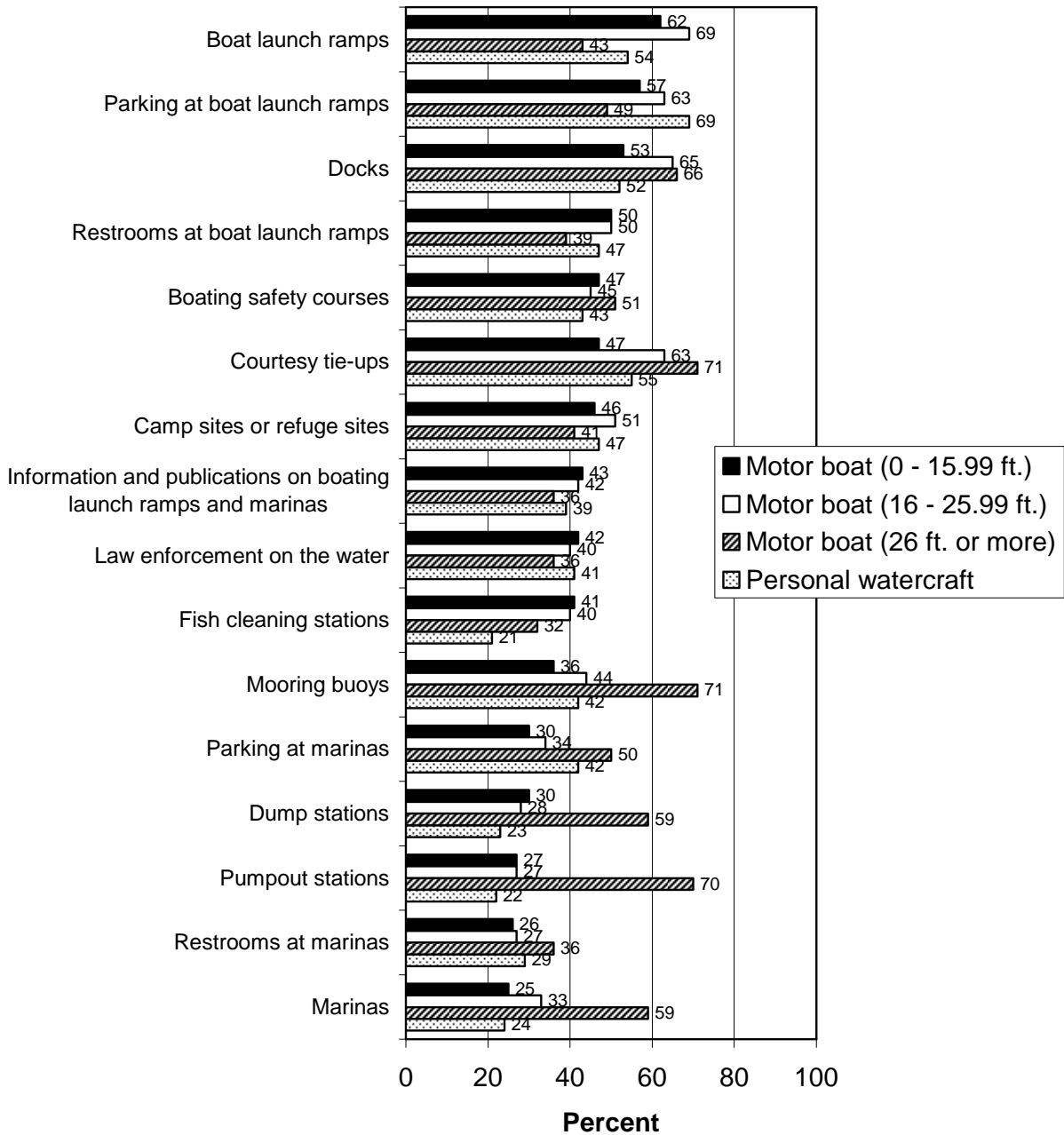
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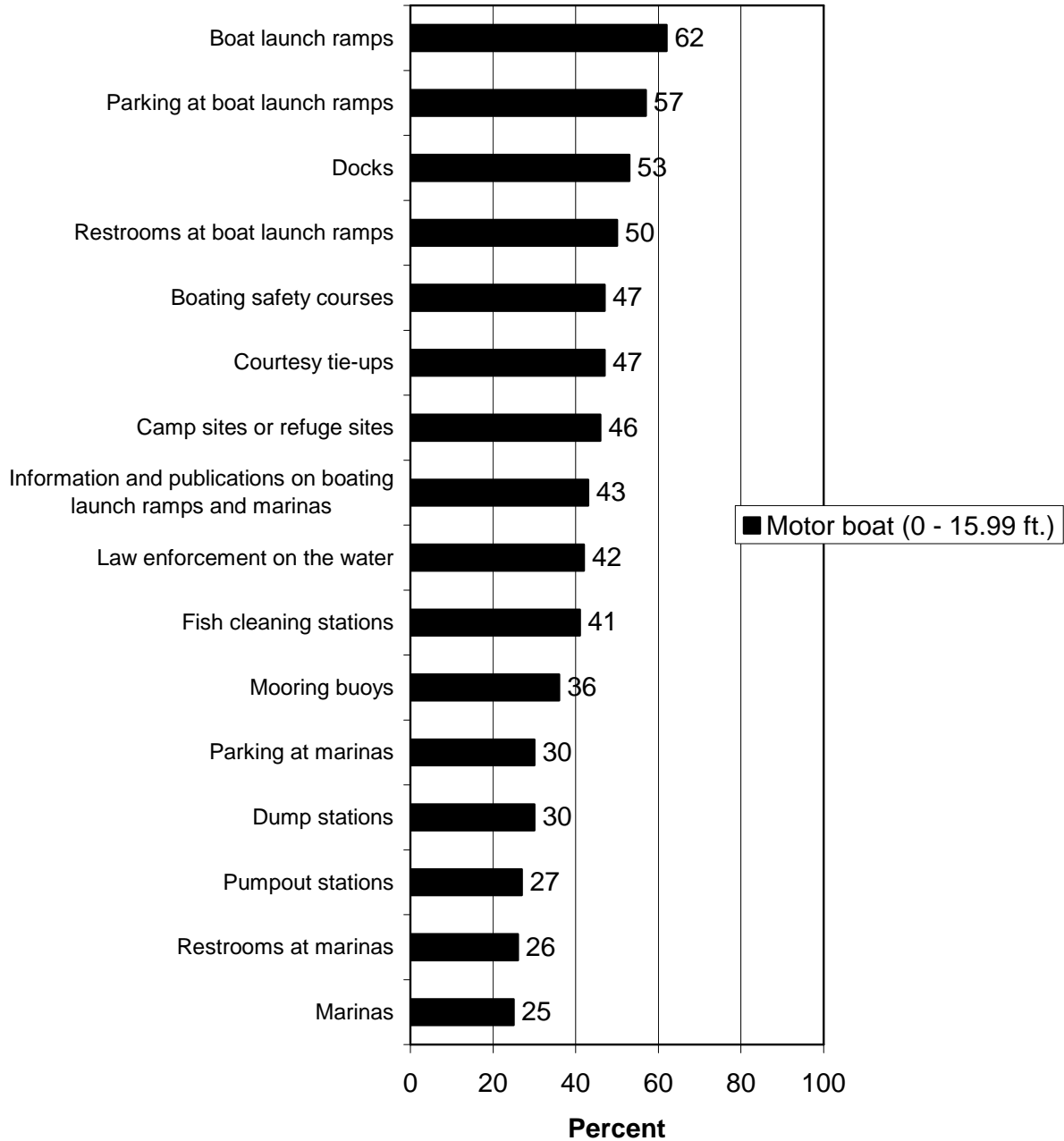
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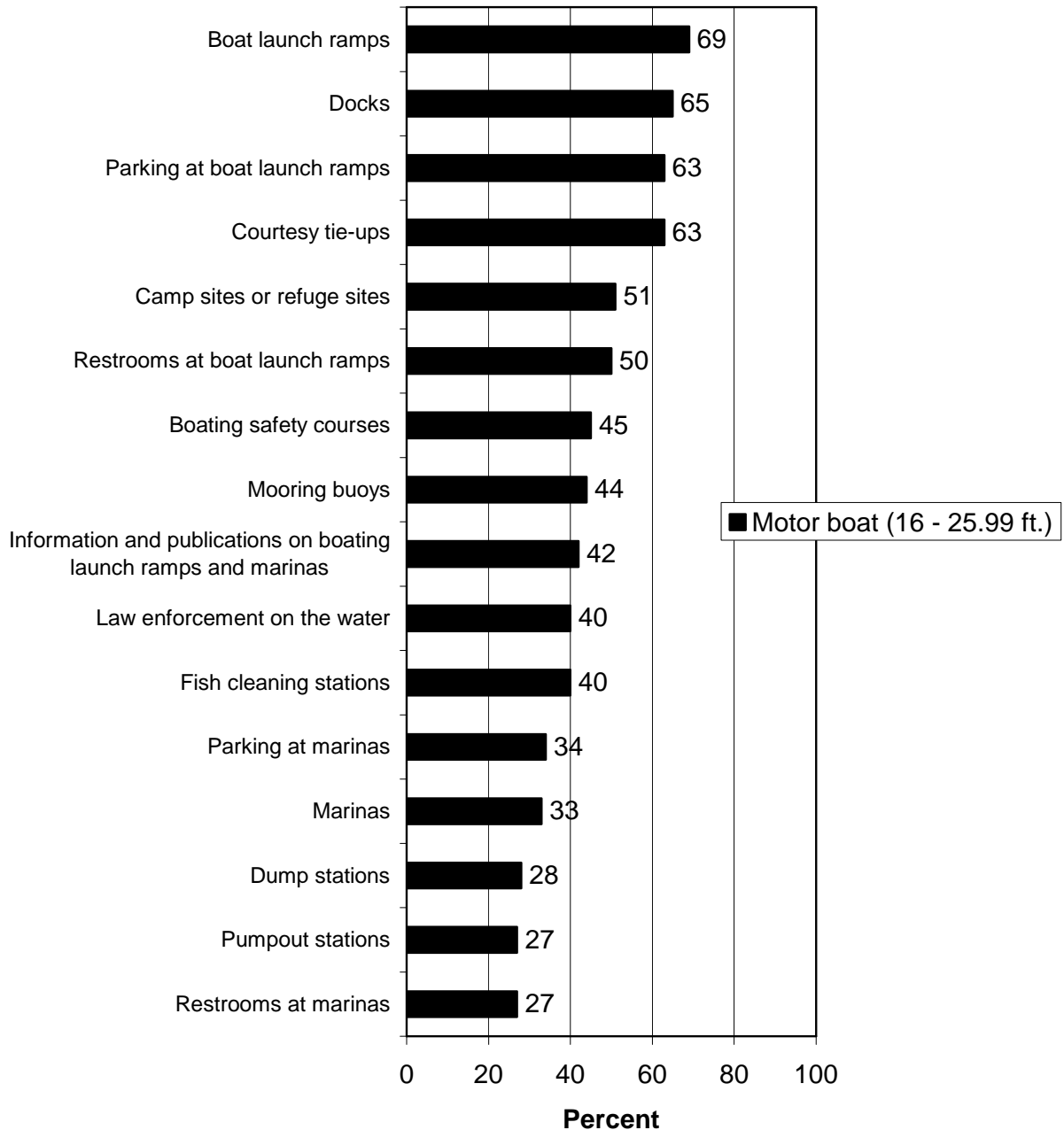
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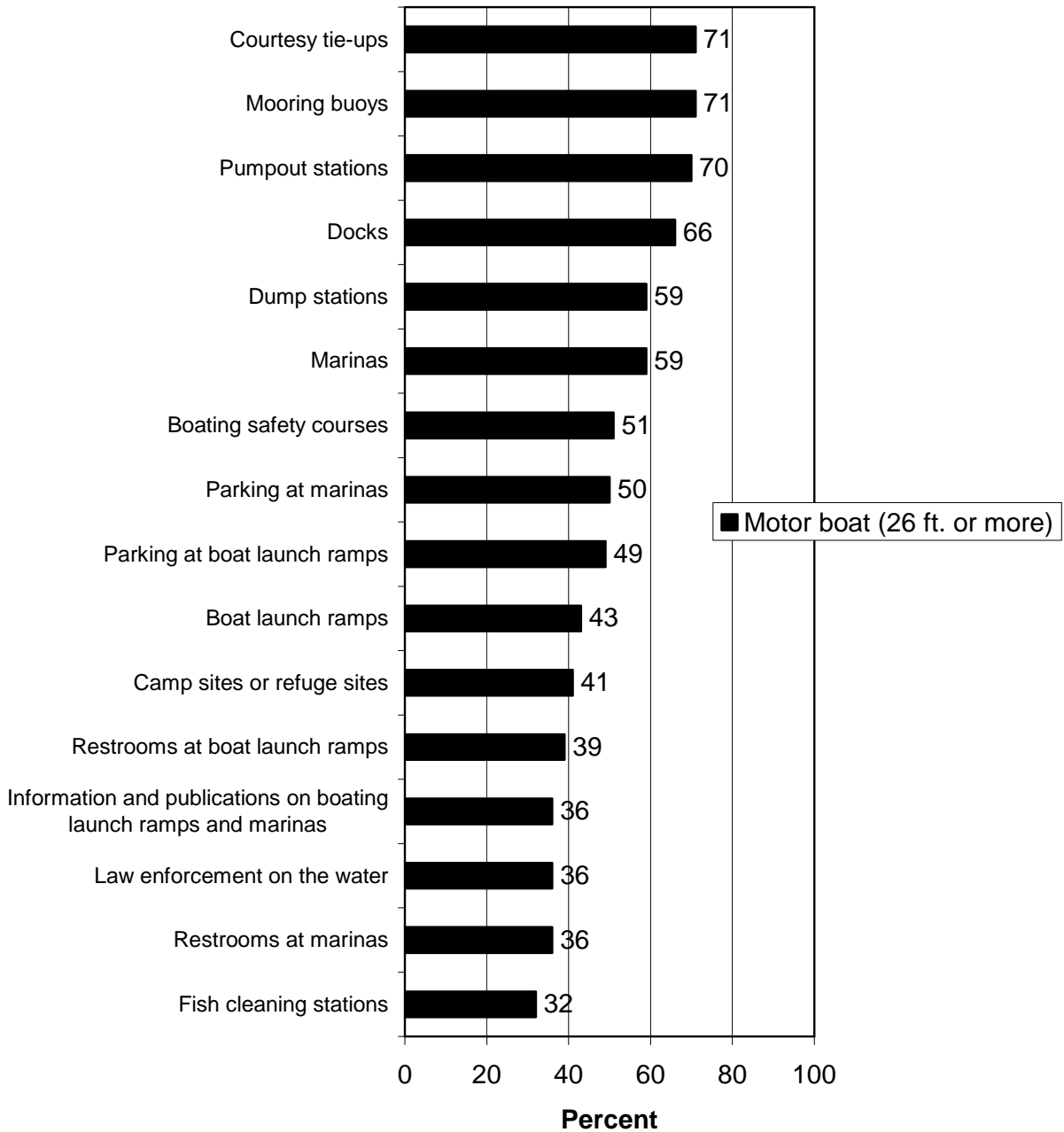


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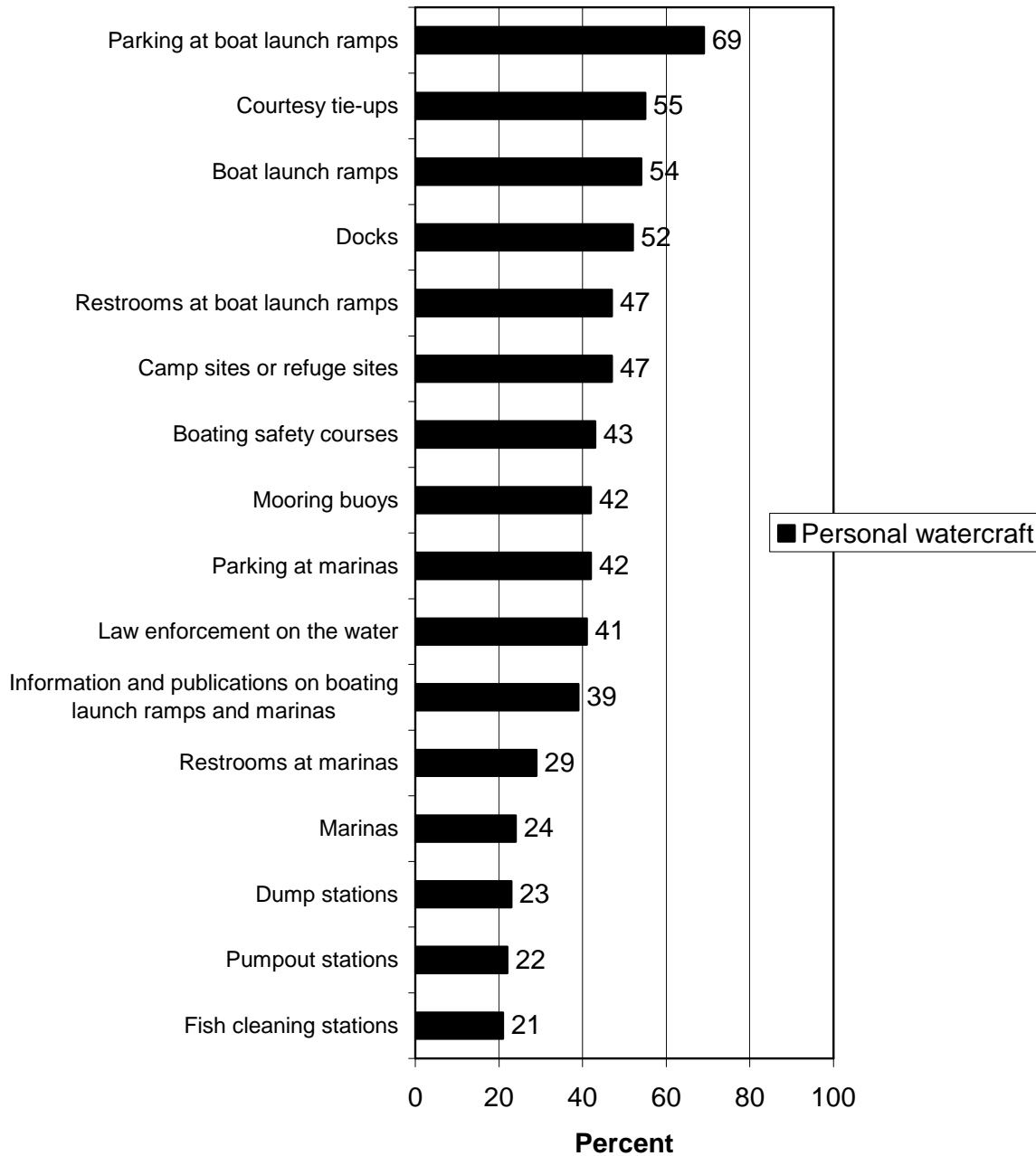




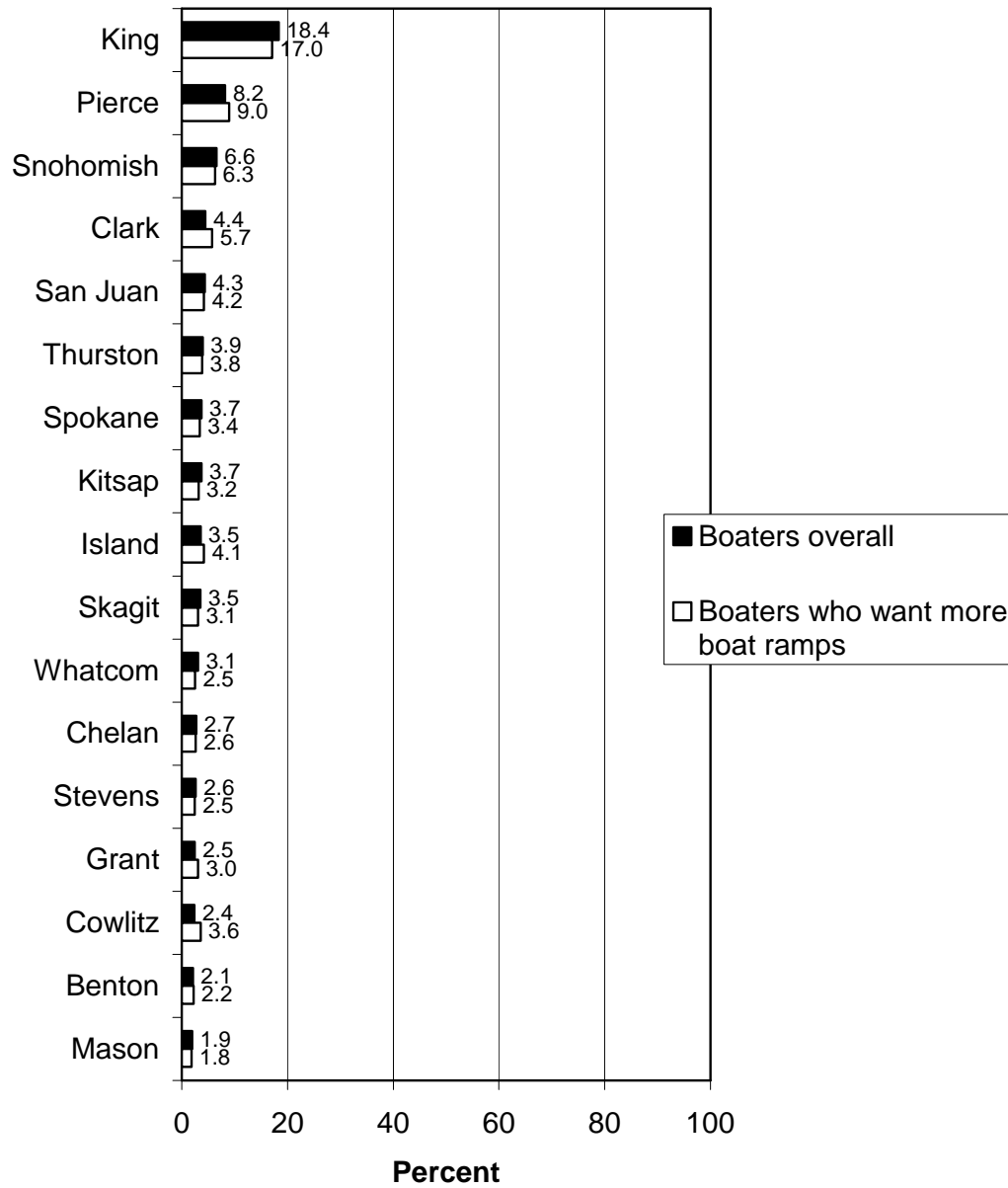
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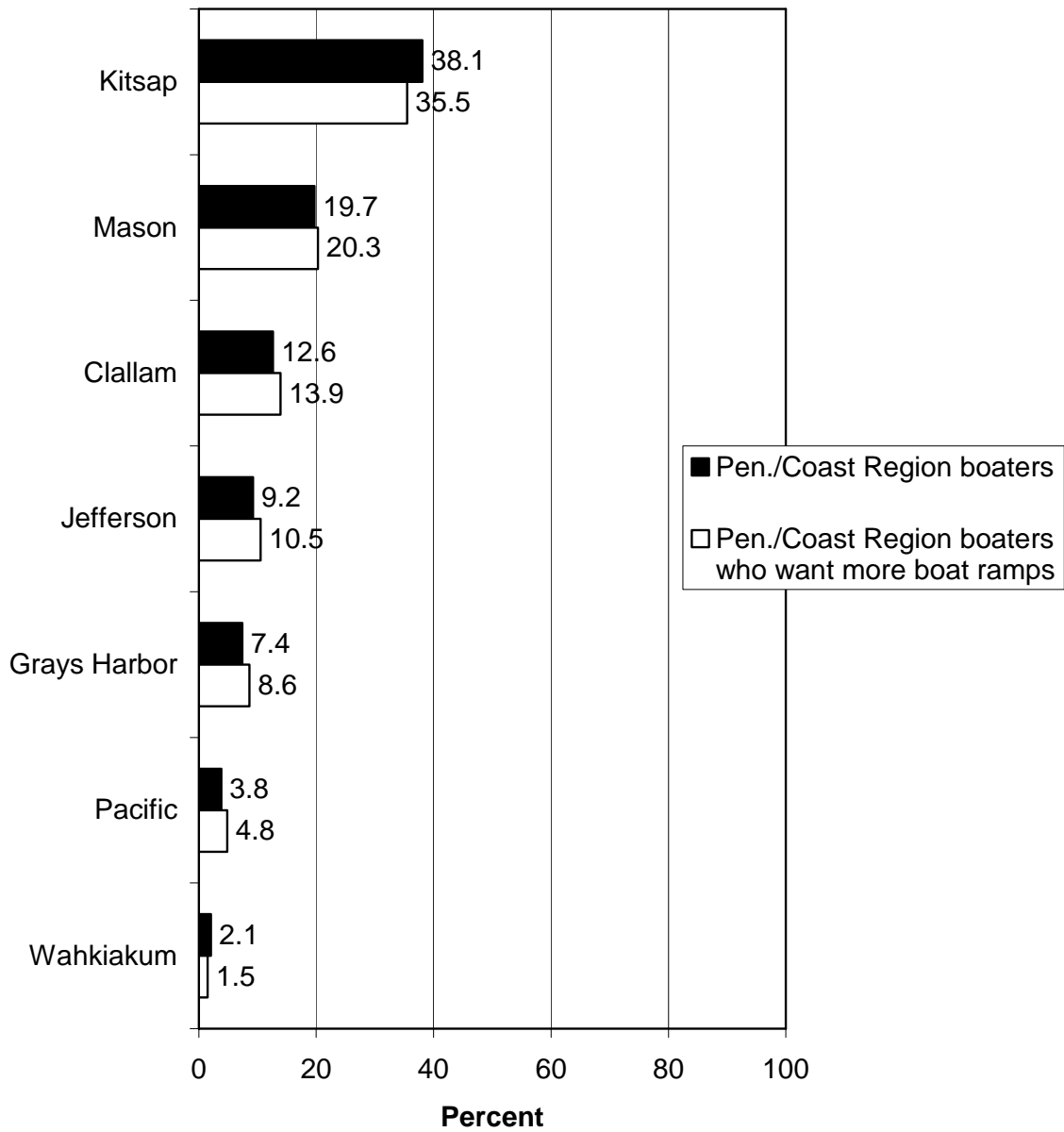
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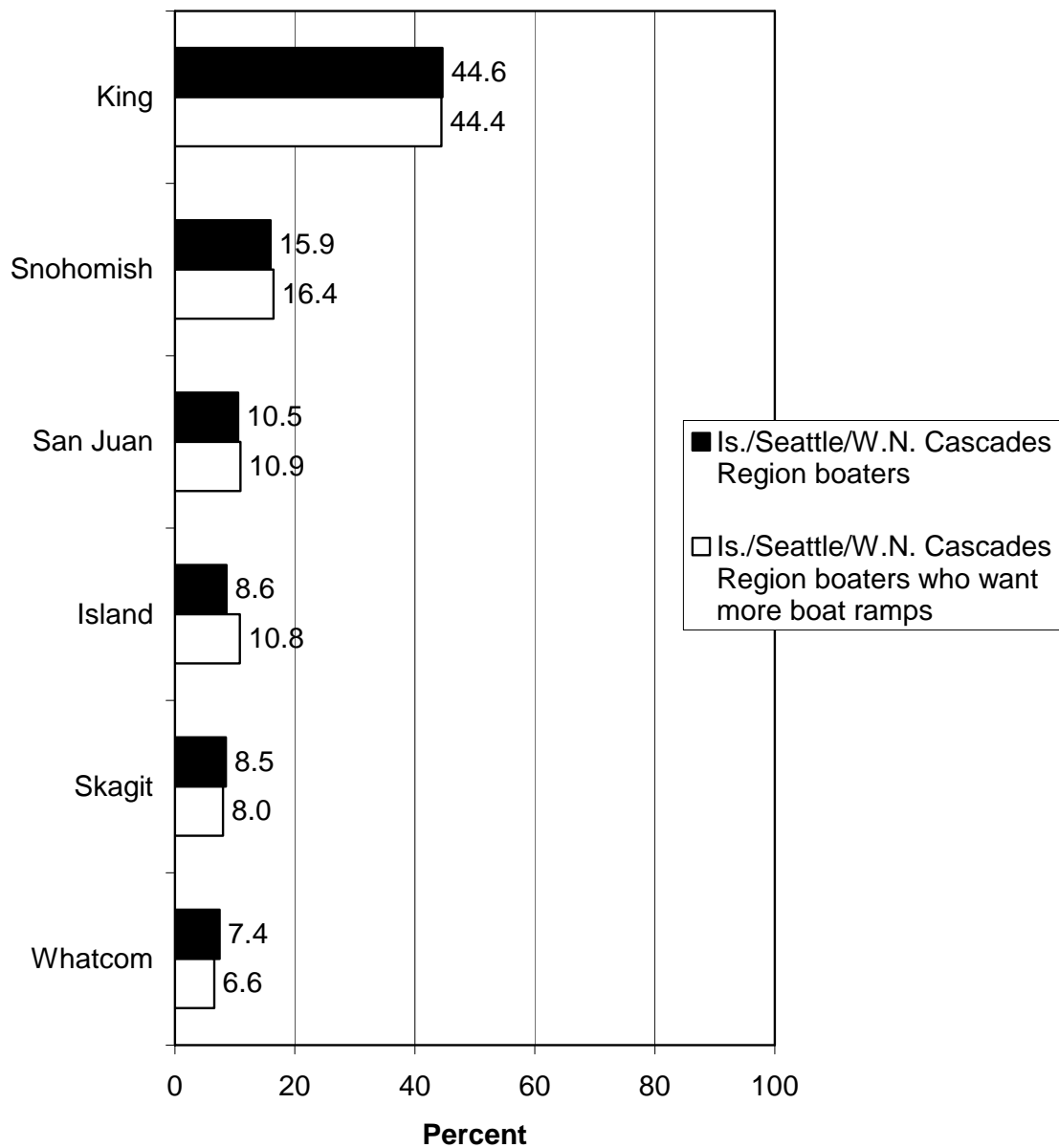
### County in which boated in most often.



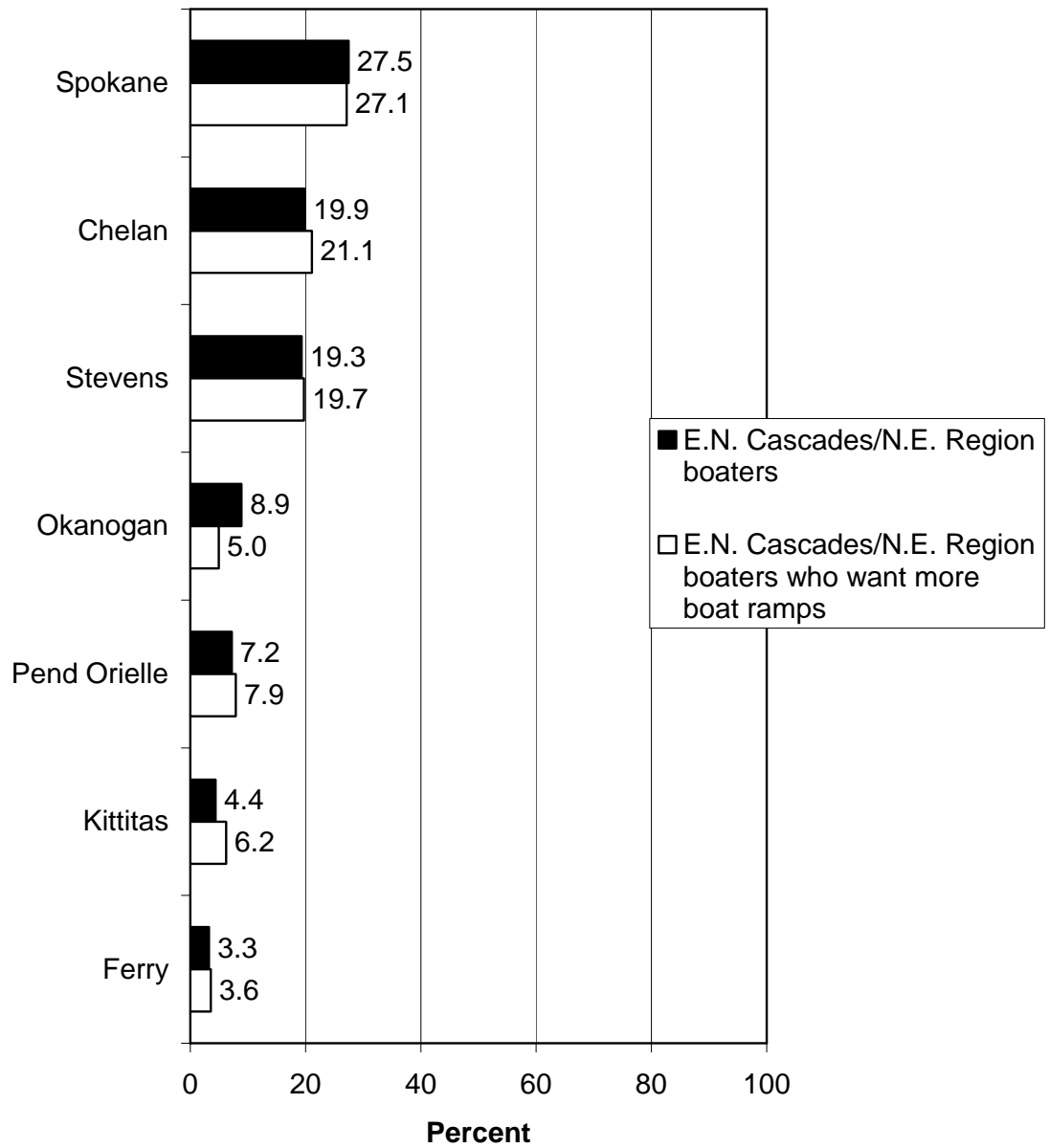
### County boated in most often.



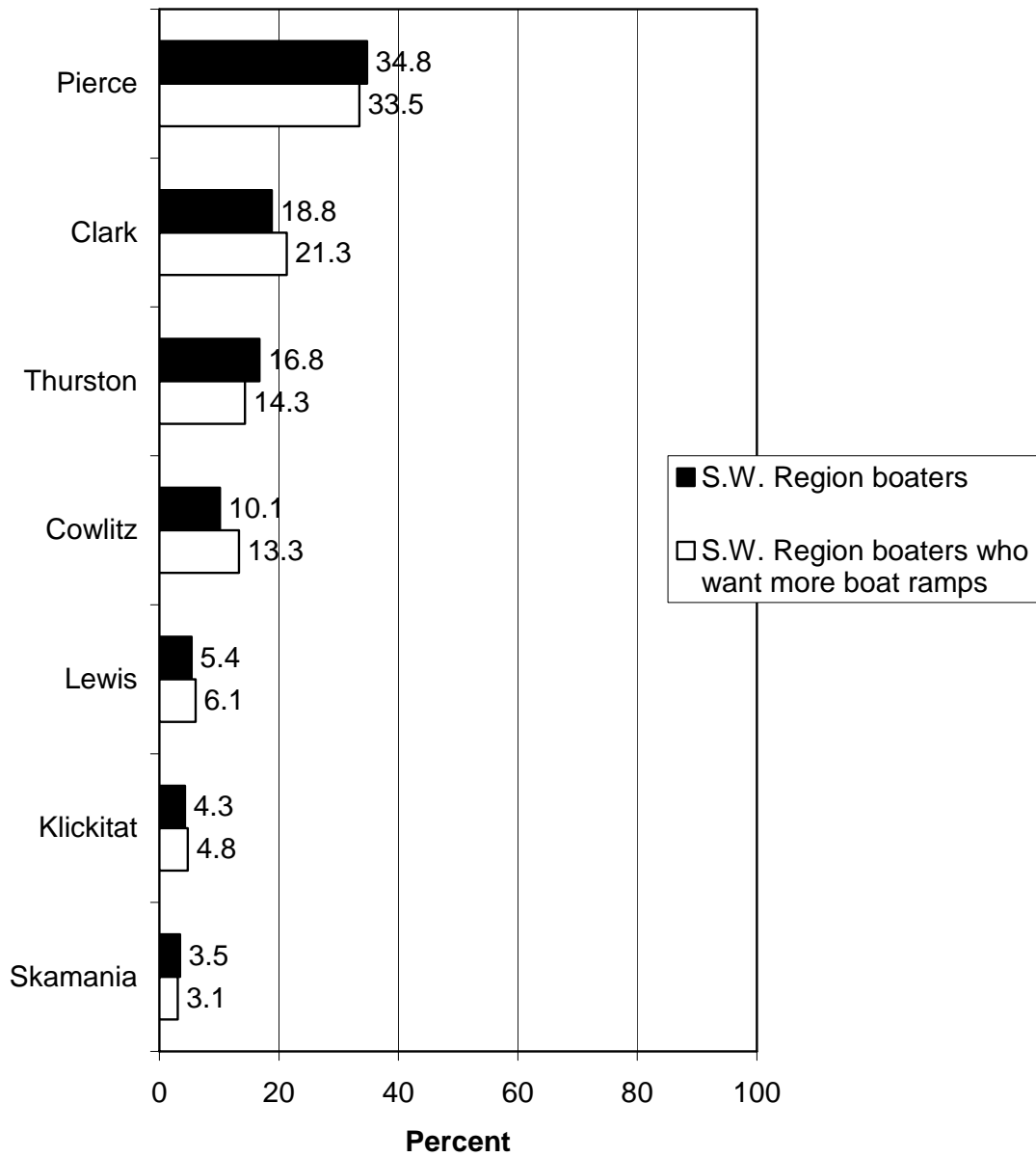
### County boated in most often.



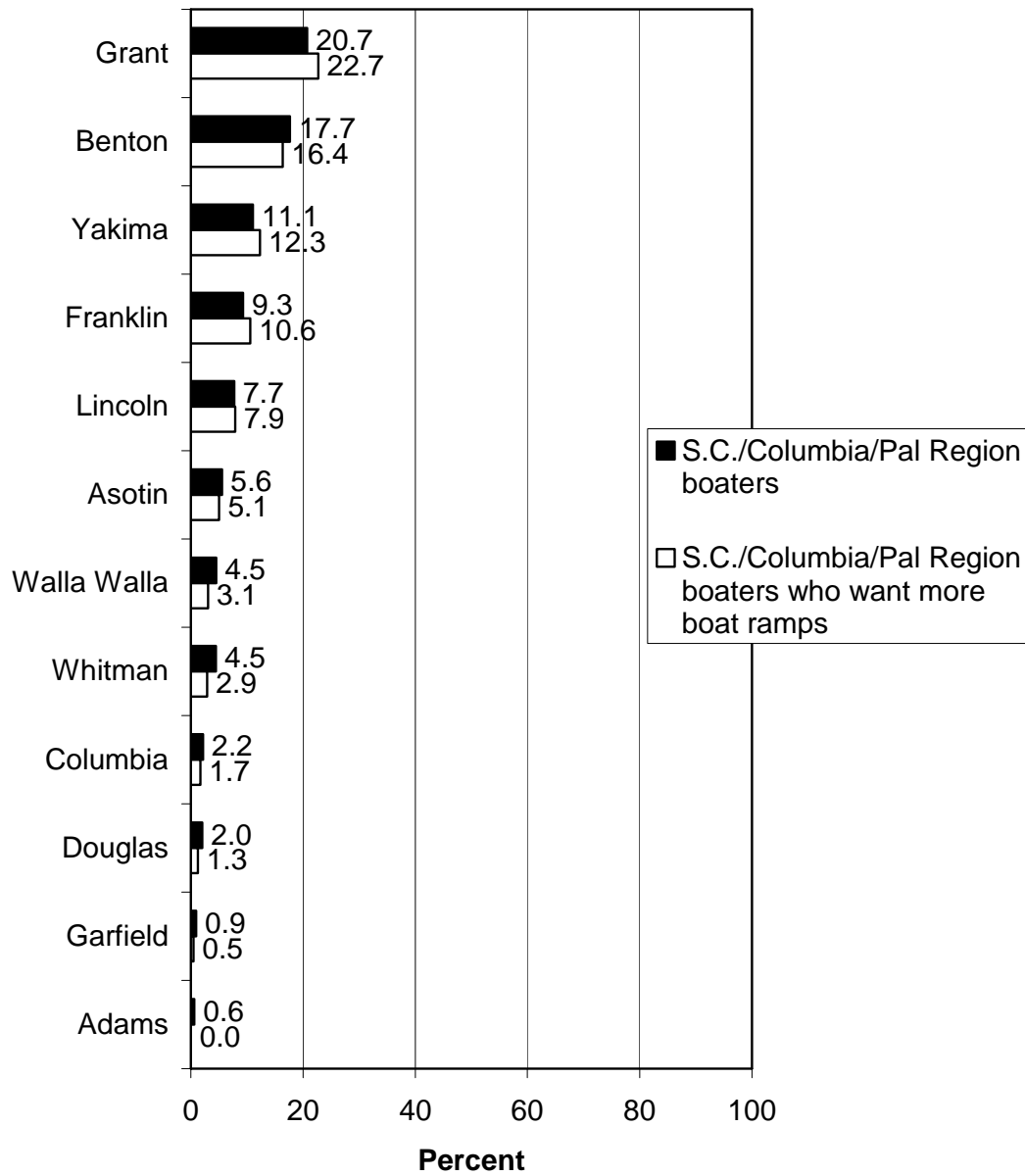
### County boated in most often.



### County boated in most often.

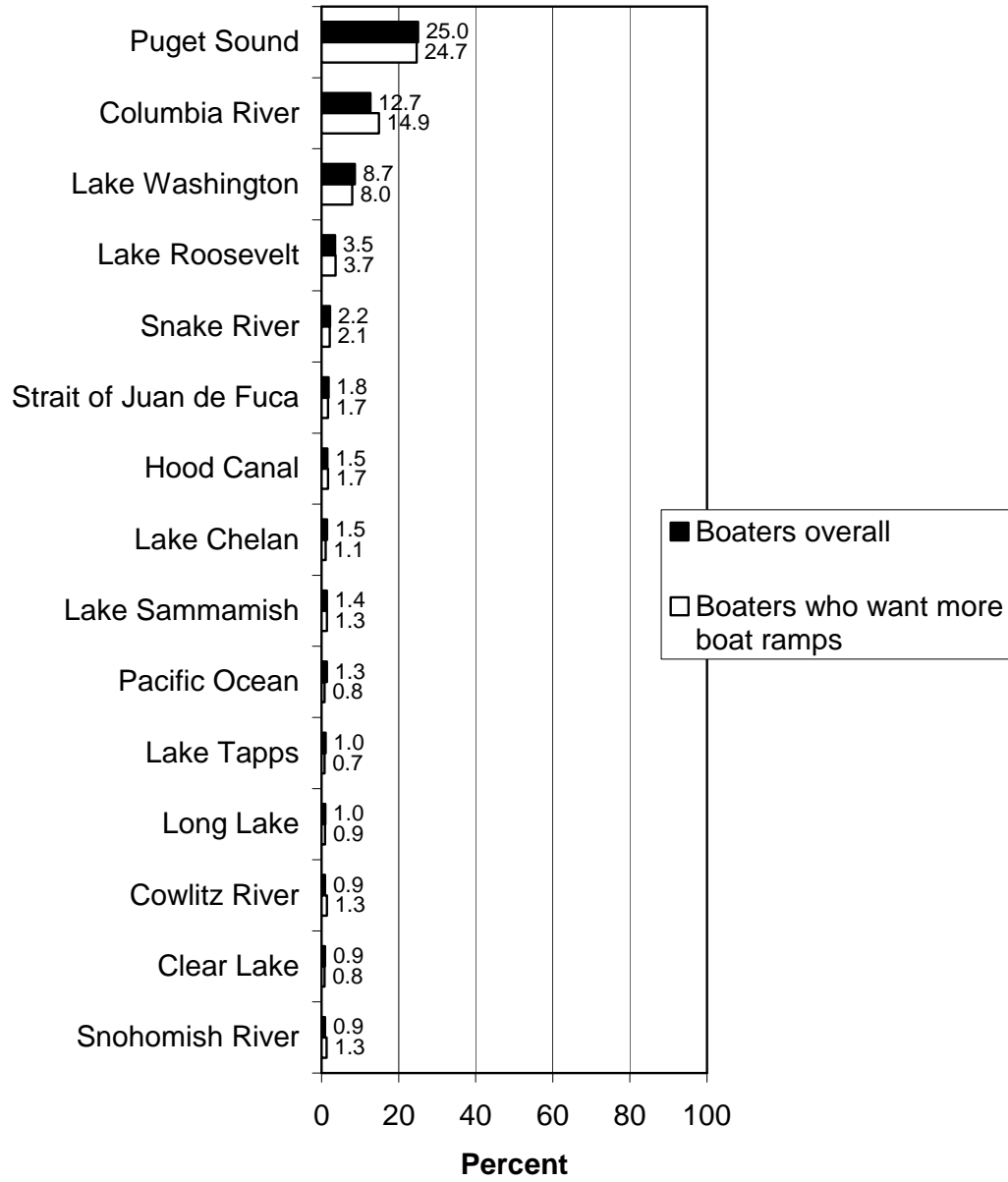


### County boated in most often.

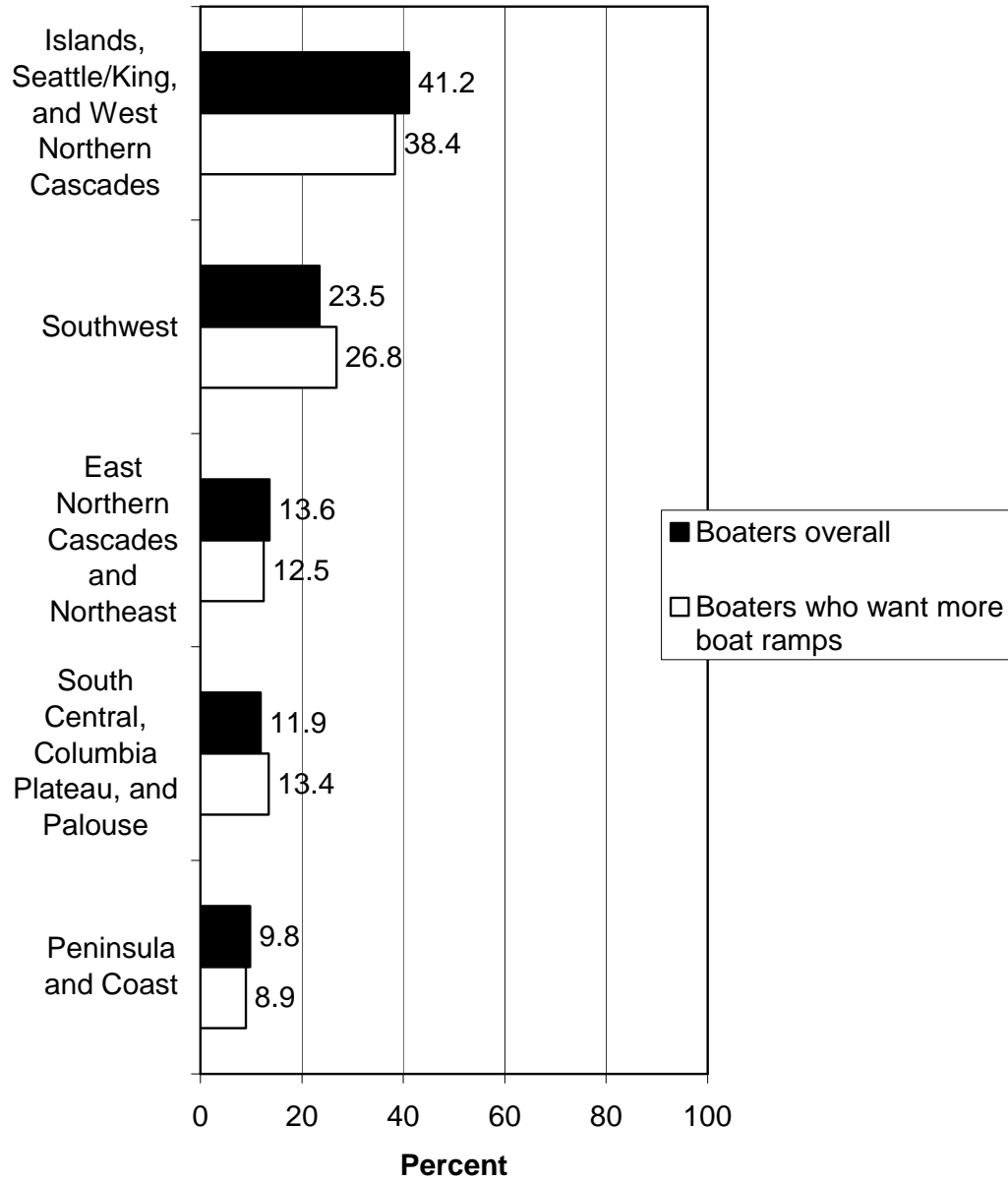




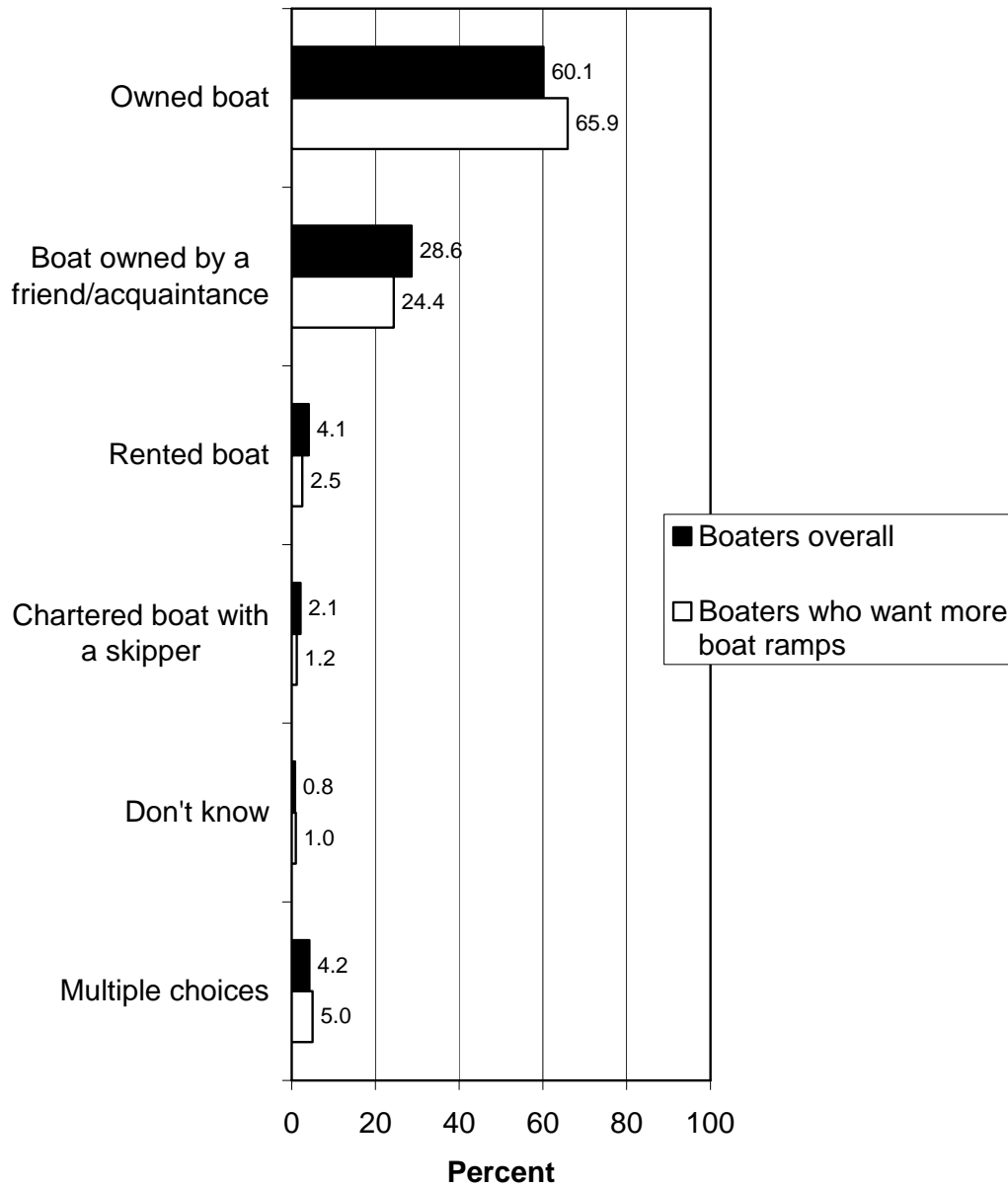
### Body of water in which boated in most often.



### Region in which boated in most often.



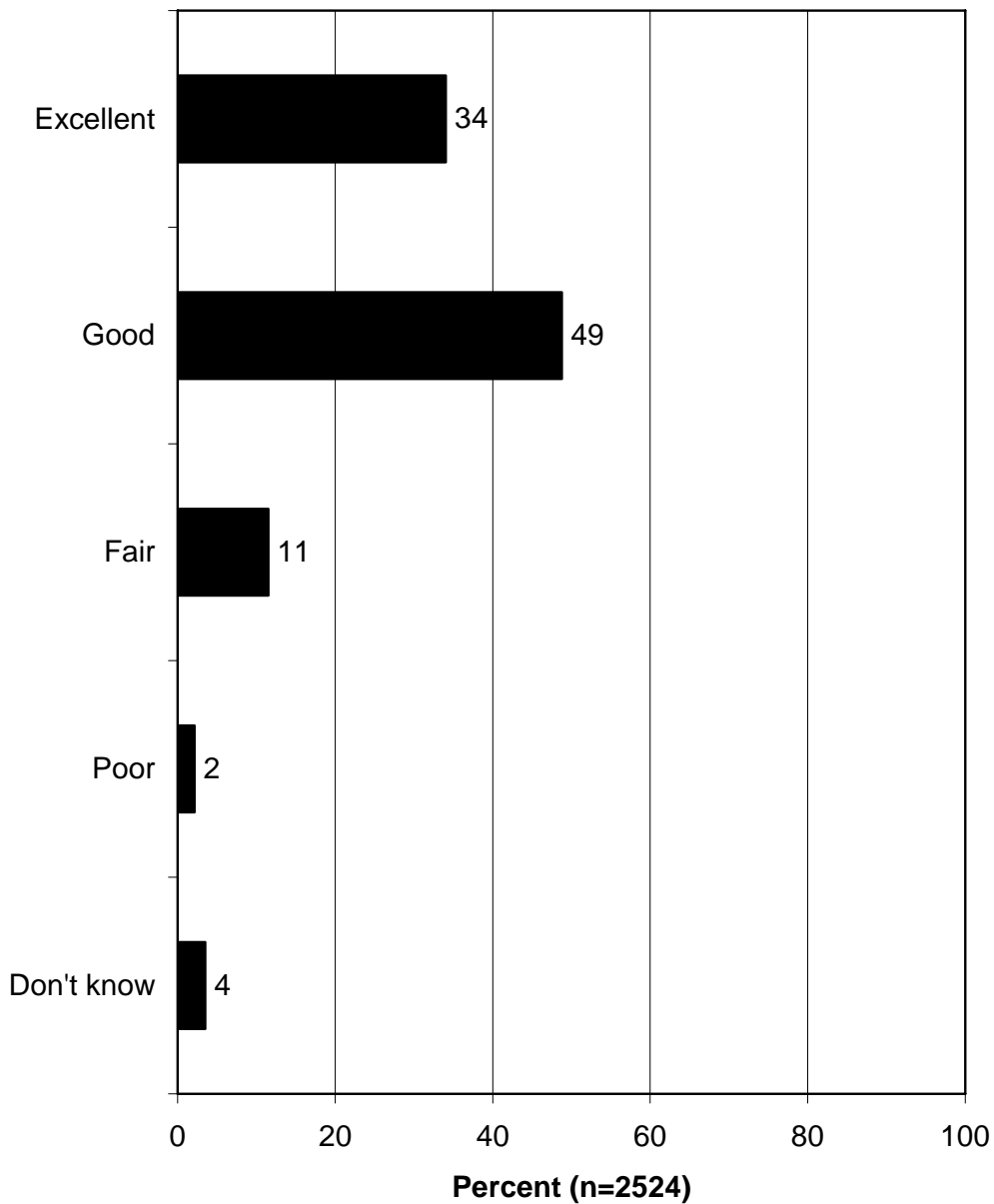
### Type of boat used most often.



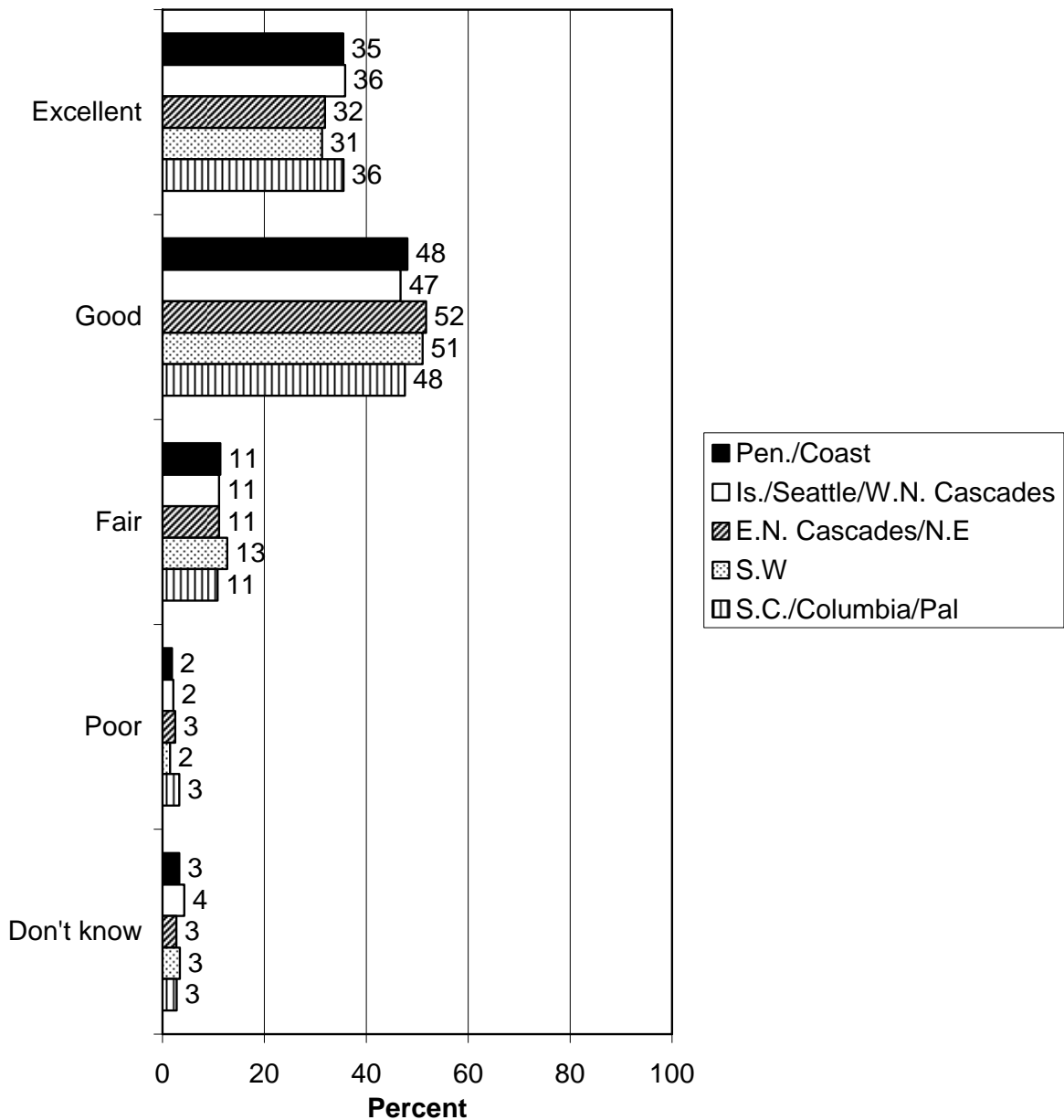
**Registration of Boats**

- Ratings of the process of registering boats in Washington are mostly positive: the overwhelming majority of those who registered a boat in Washington (83%) describe the process as excellent or good, and only 2% rate it as poor.
  - The regional crosstabulation found no marked differences in results on this question.
  - The crosstabulation by type of boater found that those primarily operating hand-powered boats are the most likely to give a fair or poor rating.
  - The crosstabulation by size of motor boat found no marked differences in results on this question.
  
- Boaters who registered a boat were also asked to name any aspects about the registration process that they would like to see improved. A majority (59%) said that nothing needs improvement. Otherwise, the most common complaints were cost (18%) and the timeliness of the registration process (4%)—having multi-year registrations, having registrations of boat and trailer at the same time, or some other aspect of the timing of registrations.
  - The regional crosstabulation found no substantial differences in the results to this question.
  - In the crosstabulation by type of boater, cost was cited more often by sailboaters and motor boaters than by the other types of boaters. Otherwise, the results are not markedly different in this crosstabulation.

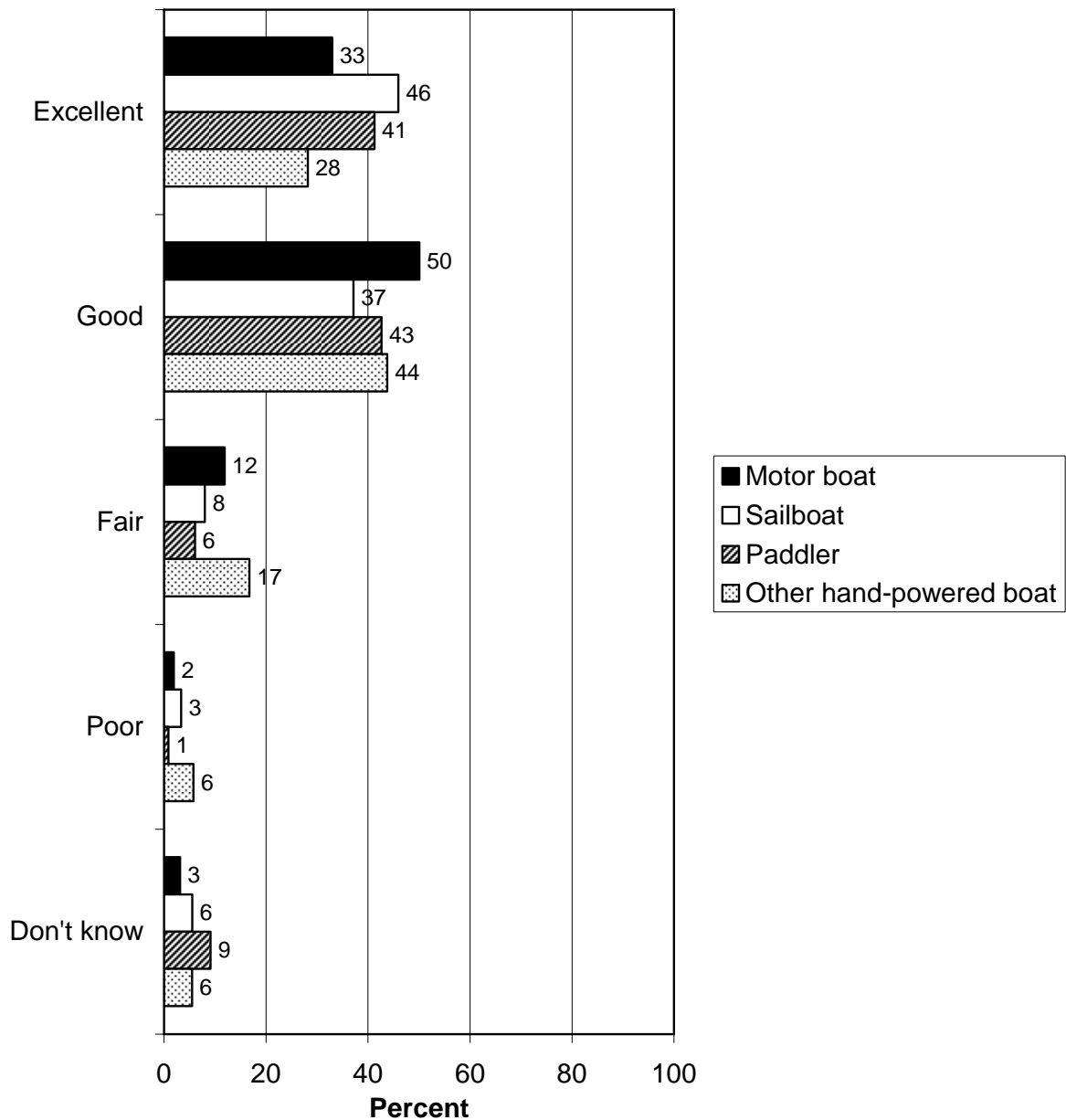
**Q67. Overall, would you describe the process of registering and renewing your boat in Washington as excellent, good, fair, or poor? (Asked of those who own a boat that is registered in Washington.)**



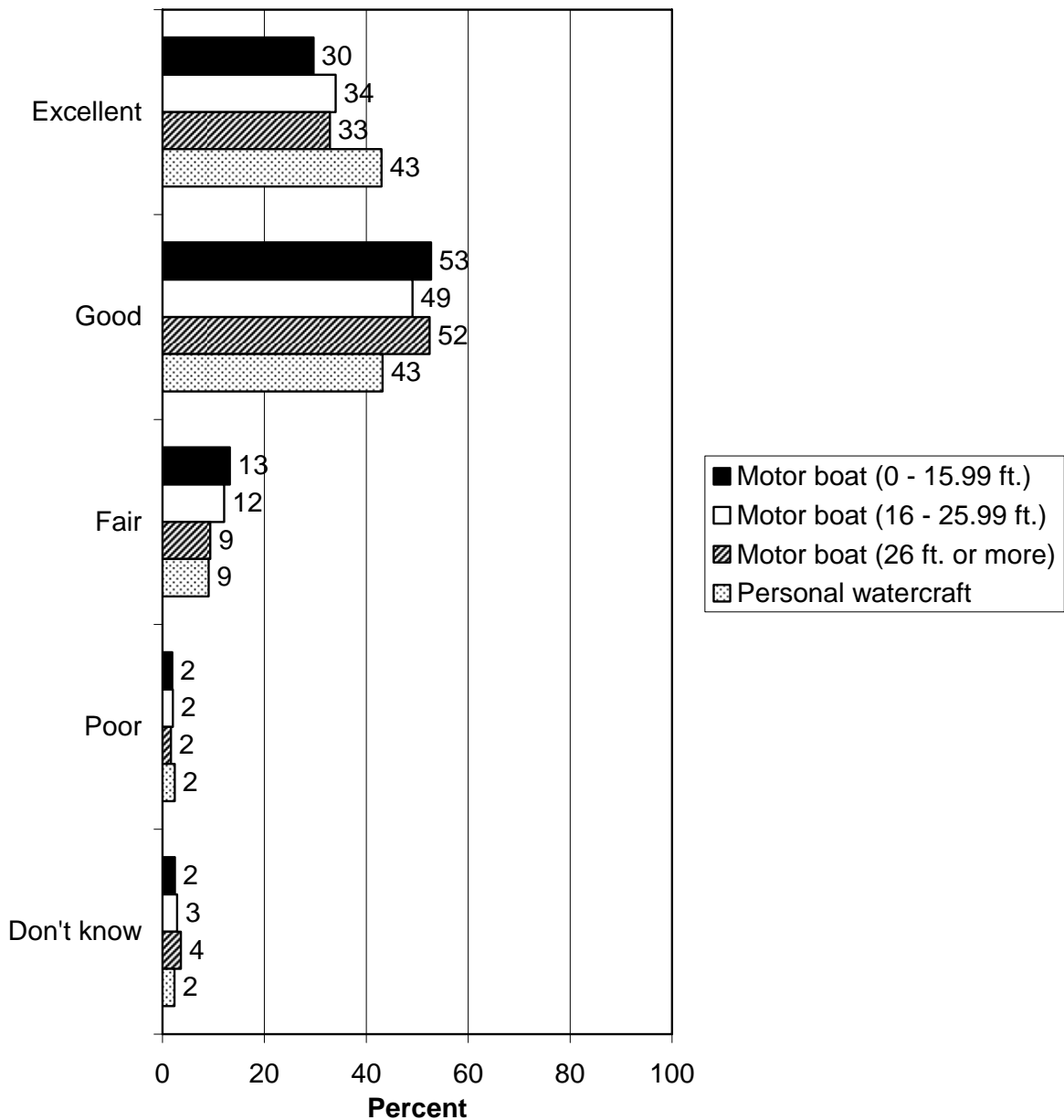
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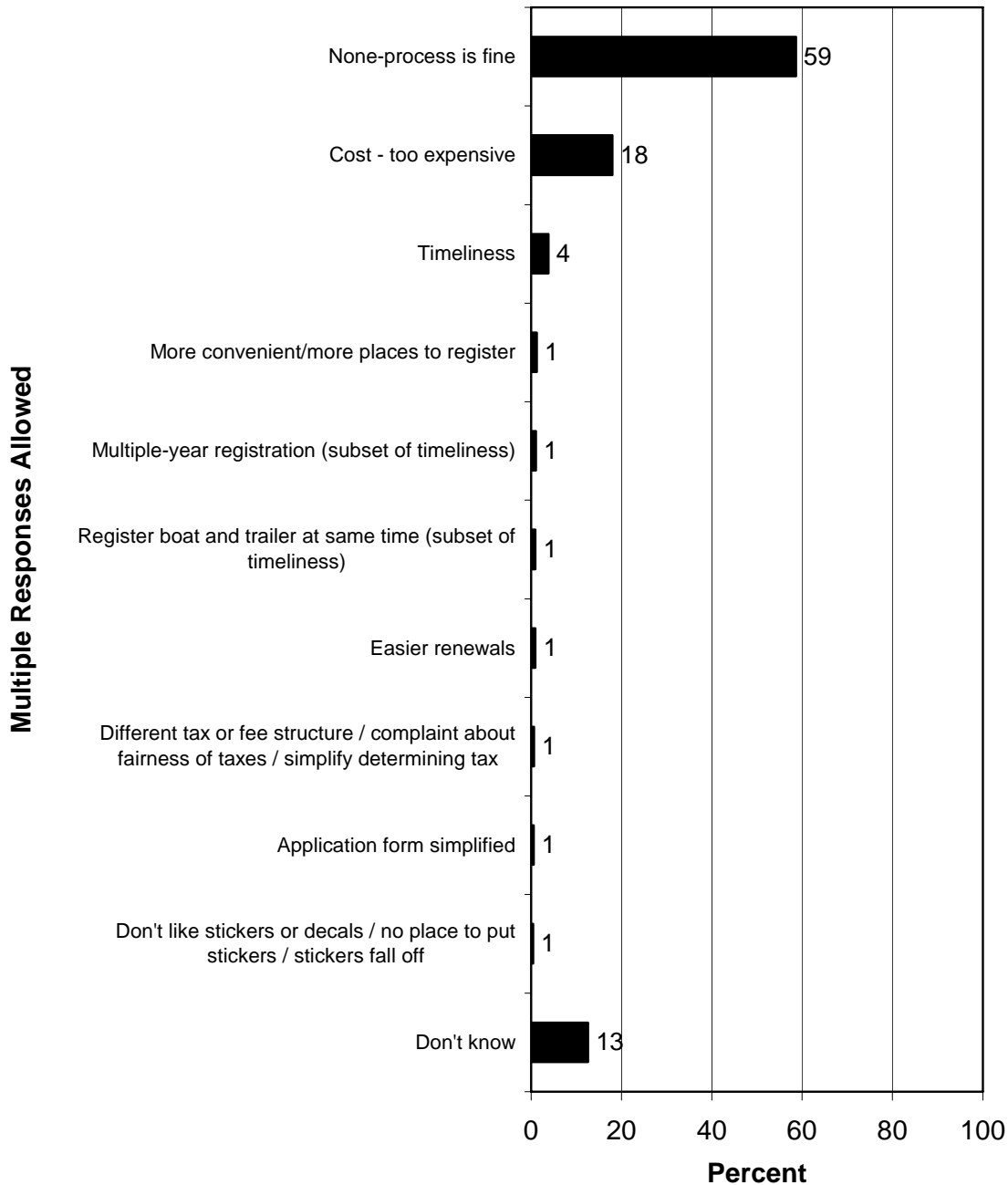


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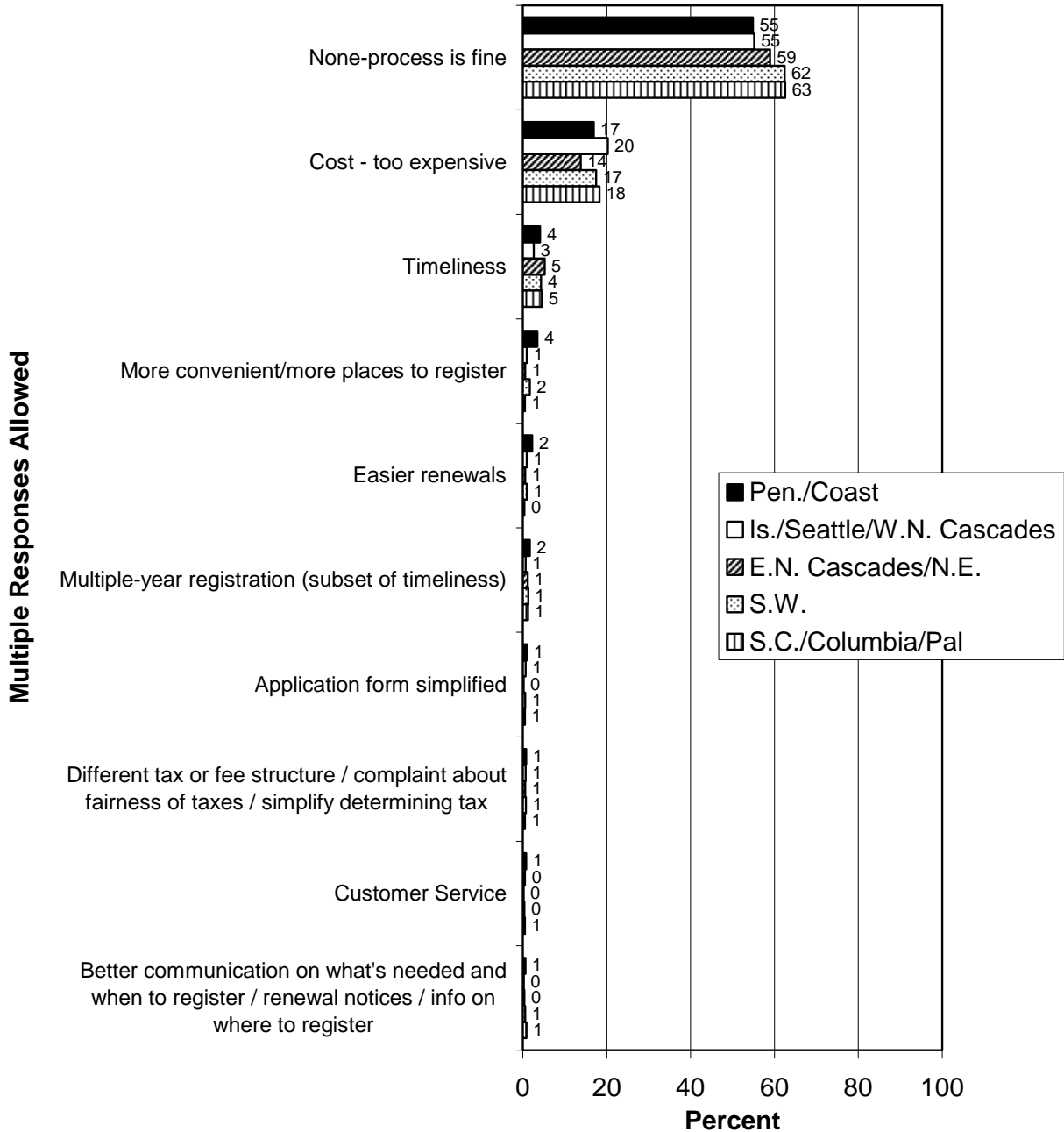




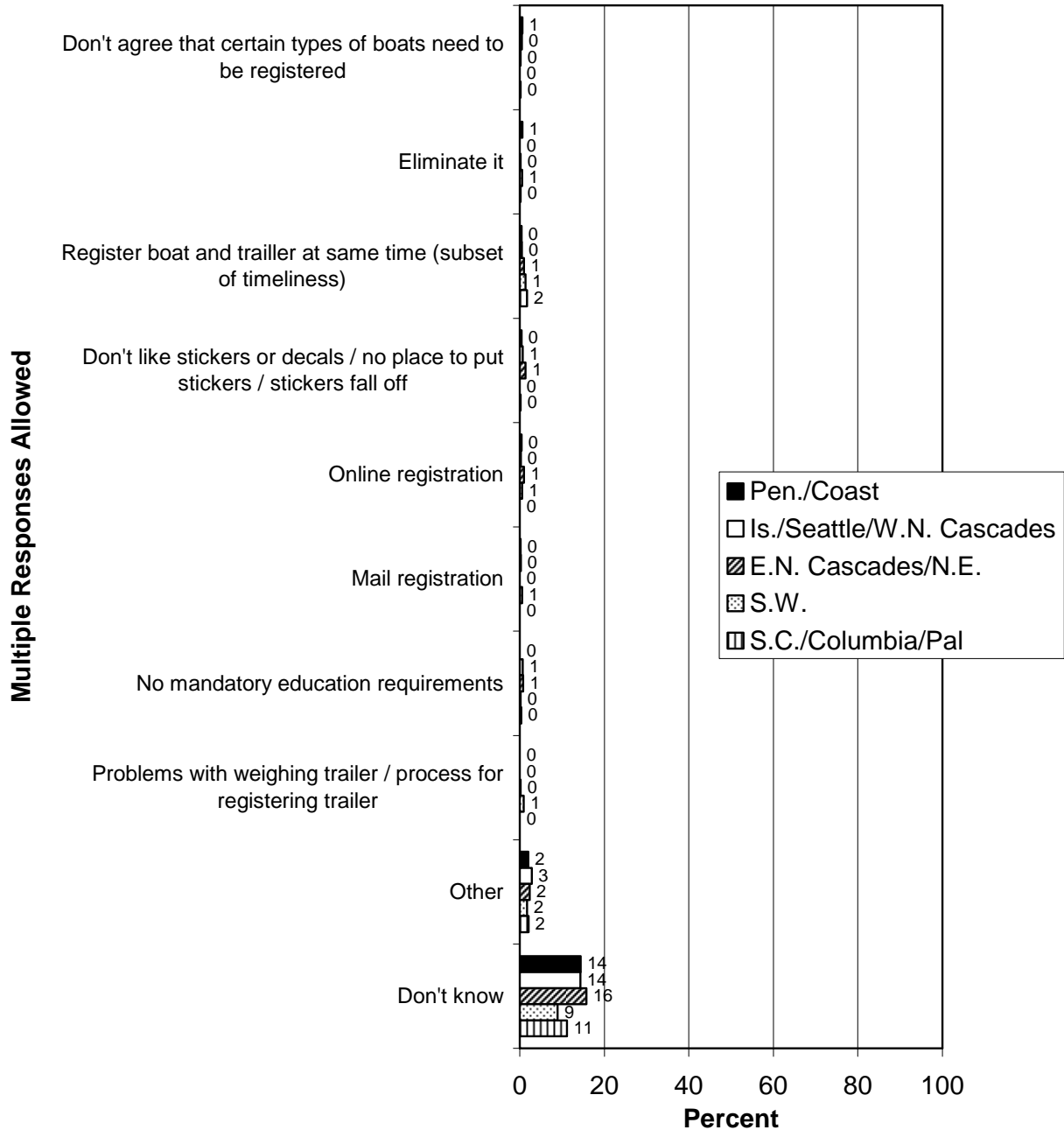
**Q70. What aspects, if any, of the boat registration process would you like to see improved? (Asked of those who own a boat that is registered in Washington.)**



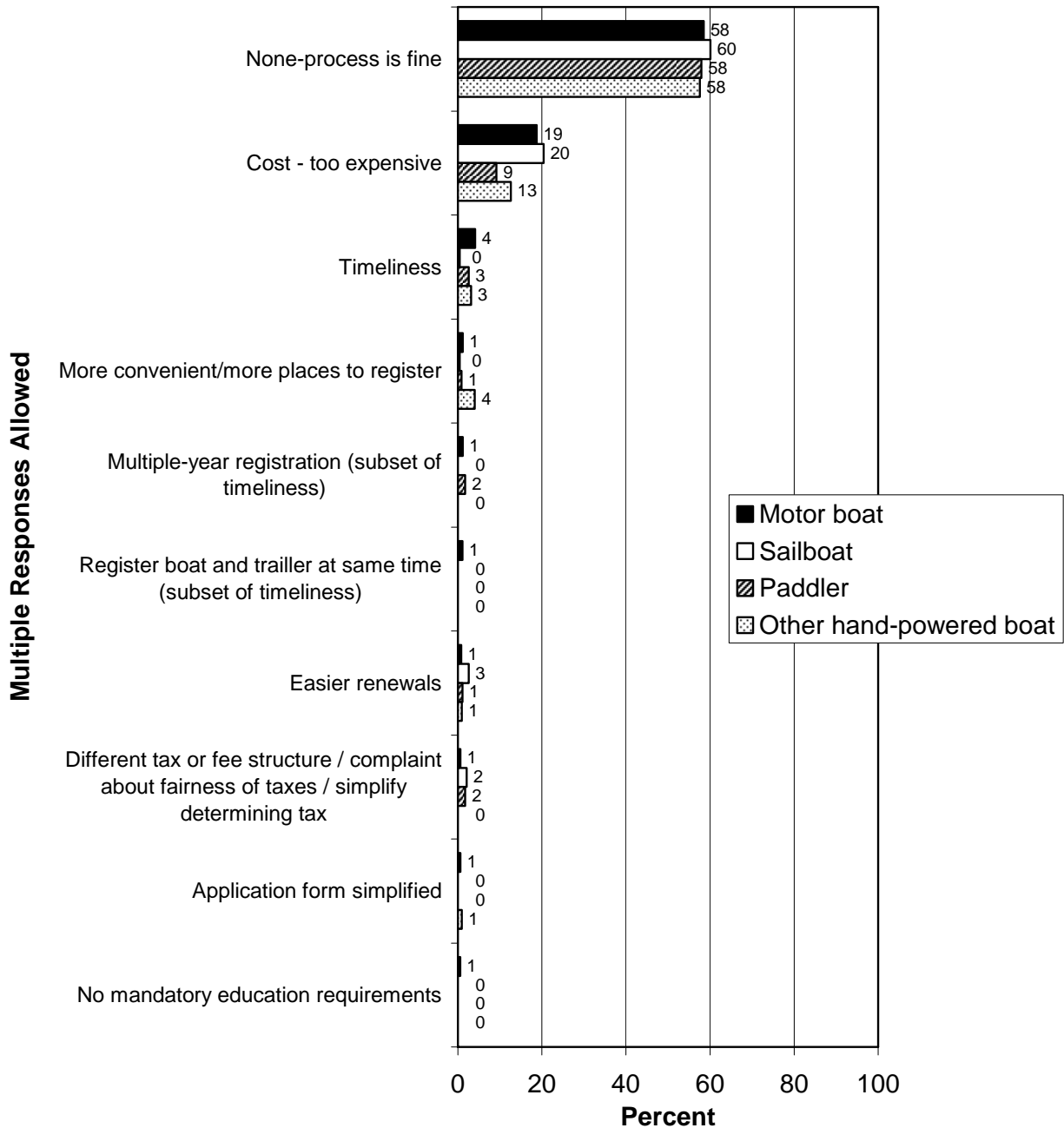
**Q70. What aspects, if any, of the boat registration process would you like to see improved? (Asked of those who own a boat that is registered in Washington.) (Part 1.)**



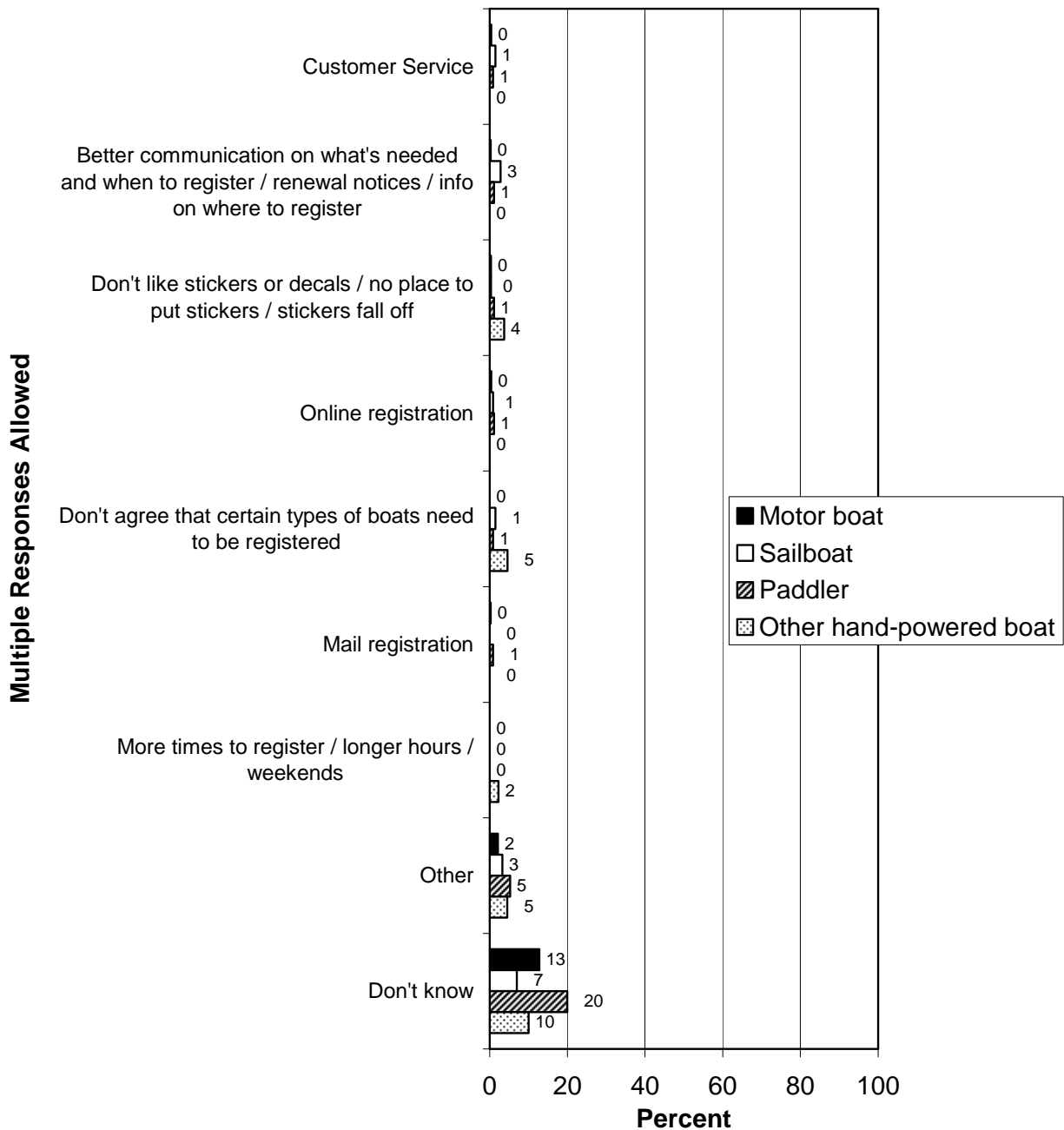
**Q70. What aspects, if any, of the boat registration process would you like to see improved? (Asked of those who own a boat that is registered in Washington.) (Part 2.)**



**Q70. What aspects, if any, of the boat registration process would you like to see improved? (Asked of those who own a boat that is registered in Washington.) (Part 1.)**



**Q70. What aspects, if any, of the boat registration process would you like to see improved? (Asked of those who own a boat that is registered in Washington.) (Part 2.)**



## Access and Crowding

- The survey specifically asked about crowding on the water. A majority of boaters (55%) say crowding is not a problem; however, 43% say that it is a problem, albeit, for most of them, just a minor problem. The survey also asked about crowding at the boat launch ramp where the boater boats most often, and crowding is more of a problem: only 25% say it is not a problem, while 64% say crowding at boat launch ramps is a problem, although most of those say *minor* problem rather than *major* problem. (These graphs are shown in the section of this report titled, “Constraints to Boating.”)
- There is little difference in opinion on crowding on the water among the three types of boaters (registered boat owners, non-registered boat owners, and non-owners). On the other hand, in the question about crowding at boat launch ramps, non-registered boat owners are slightly more likely than are boaters from the other two groups to say that crowding is not a problem at boat launch ramps. (These graphs are shown in the section of this report titled, “Constraints to Boating.”)
  - Regionally, the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region has the highest percentage of boaters saying that crowding on the water is a problem. The Peninsula and Coast Region has the lowest percentage of boaters saying that crowding on the water is a problem. Regarding crowding at boat launch ramps, the Southwest Region and the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region have the highest percentages of boaters saying that crowding at boat launch ramps is a problem. (These graphs are shown in the section of this report titled, “Constraints to Boating.”)
  - Sailboaters are less likely to say that crowding on the water is a problem, compared to the other types of boaters. Regarding crowding at boat launch ramps, motor boaters are the most likely to say it is a *major* problem; paddlers are the most likely to say it is *not* a problem; and sailboaters are the most likely to say that they do not know. (These graphs are shown in the section of this report titled, “Constraints to Boating.”)
  - Perceptions of crowding on the water are about the same among the groups of motor boaters according to size of the motor boat, with Class 2 and 3 motor boaters just slightly less likely to say that crowding on the water is a problem. Regarding crowding at boat launch ramps, Class 2 and 3 motor boaters are the least likely to say crowding at boat launch ramps is a problem (they are the most likely to answer “Don’t know”), while

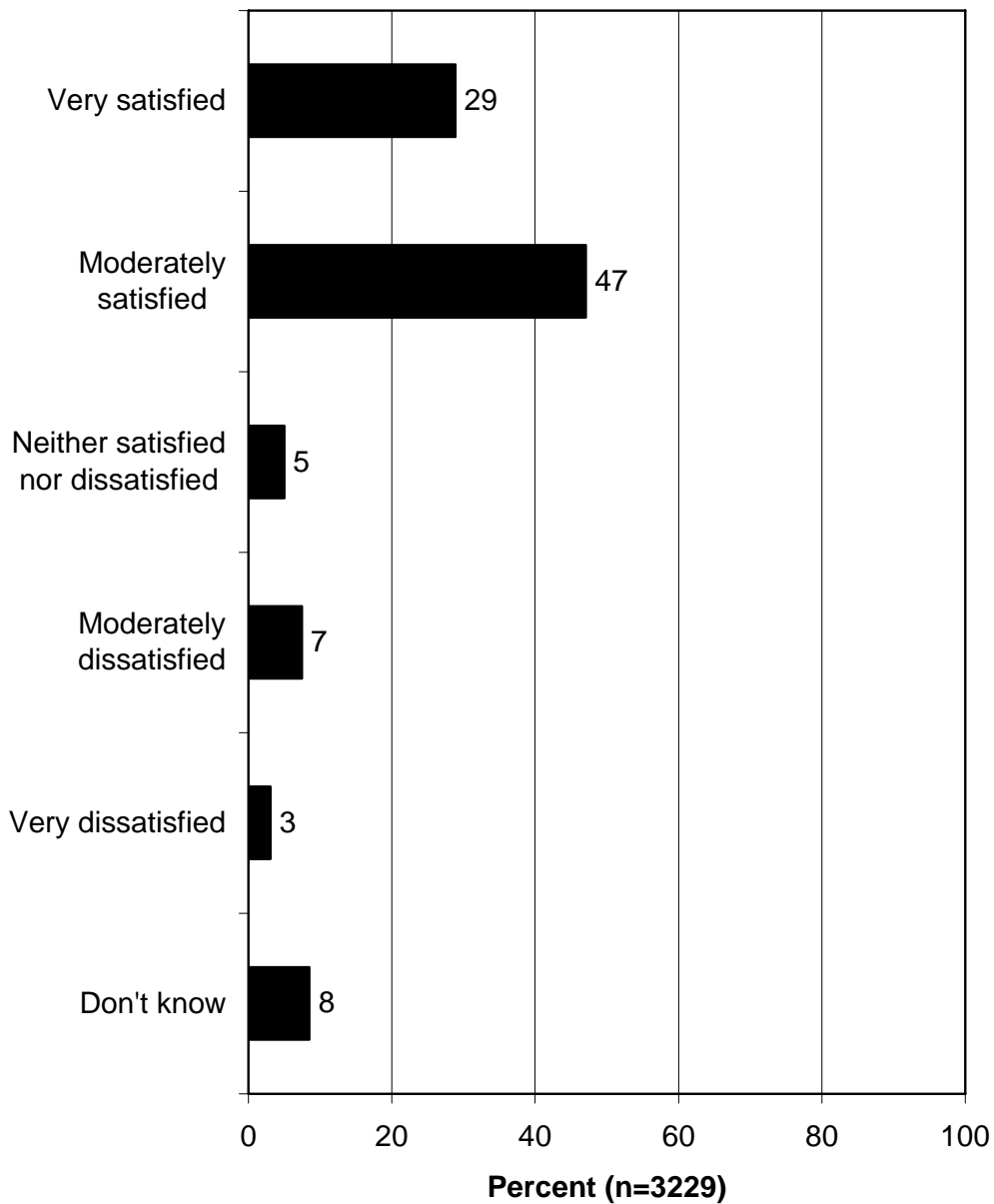
personal watercraft operators are the most likely. (These graphs are shown in the section of this report titled, “Constraints to Boating.”)

- Boaters overall are satisfied with the locations of boat launch ramps in the county in which they boat most often: 76% of them are satisfied (29% *very* satisfied, and 47% *moderately* satisfied). Only 10% expressed dissatisfaction.
  - Satisfaction with locations of boat launch ramps is about the same among registered boat owners, non-registered boat owners, and non-owners.
  - Overall satisfaction with locations of boat launch ramps is about the same among the five regions. Note, however, that Southwest Region boaters are the least likely to be *very* satisfied, while South Central/Columbia Plateau/Palouse Region boaters are the most likely to be *very* satisfied.
  - In the crosstabulation by type of boater, there is little difference in satisfaction with the locations of boat launch ramp sites, with the exception that sailboaters are more likely to say that they do not know.
  - In the crosstabulation by size of motor boat, Class 2 and 3 motor boaters (26 feet or more in length) express the least satisfaction with the locations of boat launch ramps in the county in which they most often boat; personal watercraft operators express the most satisfaction. Note the high percentage of Class 2 and 3 motor boaters who answered “Don’t know.”
  
- Boaters overall are satisfied with the locations of mooring buoys in the county in which they boat most often: 45% of them are satisfied (12% *very* satisfied, and 33% *moderately* satisfied), much more than the percentage who expressed dissatisfaction (12%). Note that the relatively low rate of satisfaction—less than a majority—is because a relatively large percentage (34%) did not know how to rate their satisfaction with mooring buoys or gave a neutral answer.
  - Non-registered boat owners were more likely than registered boat owners or non-owners to answer, “I don’t know,” to the question about satisfaction with the location of mooring buoys.
  - Satisfaction with locations of mooring buoys is about the same among the five regions.

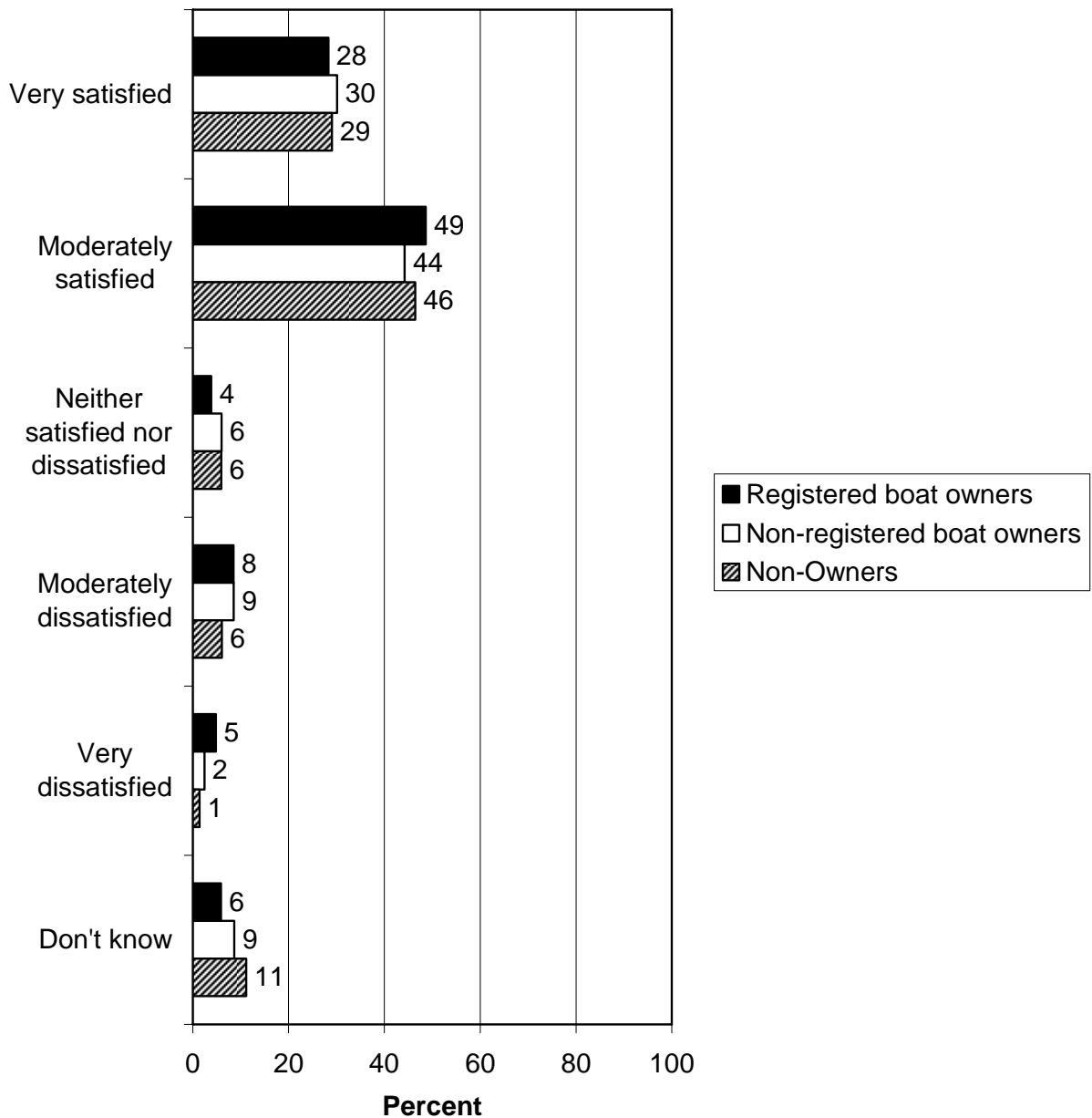
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- The differences found in the crosstabulation by type of boater found that satisfaction with the locations of mooring buoys is highest among sailboaters and lowest among those who most often operate a hand powered boat (other than canoe or kayak). Dissatisfaction, on the other hand, does not vary greatly. Most of the variance in satisfaction is caused by differences in “Don’t know” answers.
  - In the crosstabulation by size of motor boat, Class 2 and 3 motor boaters (26 feet or more in length) express the most satisfaction with the locations of mooring buoys in the county in which they most often boat. However, because a *small* percentage of these Class 2 and 3 motor boaters answered “Don’t know,” they also have the largest percentage who expressed dissatisfaction with the locations of mooring buoys. The next-highest percentage of dissatisfied boaters is among personal watercraft operators.



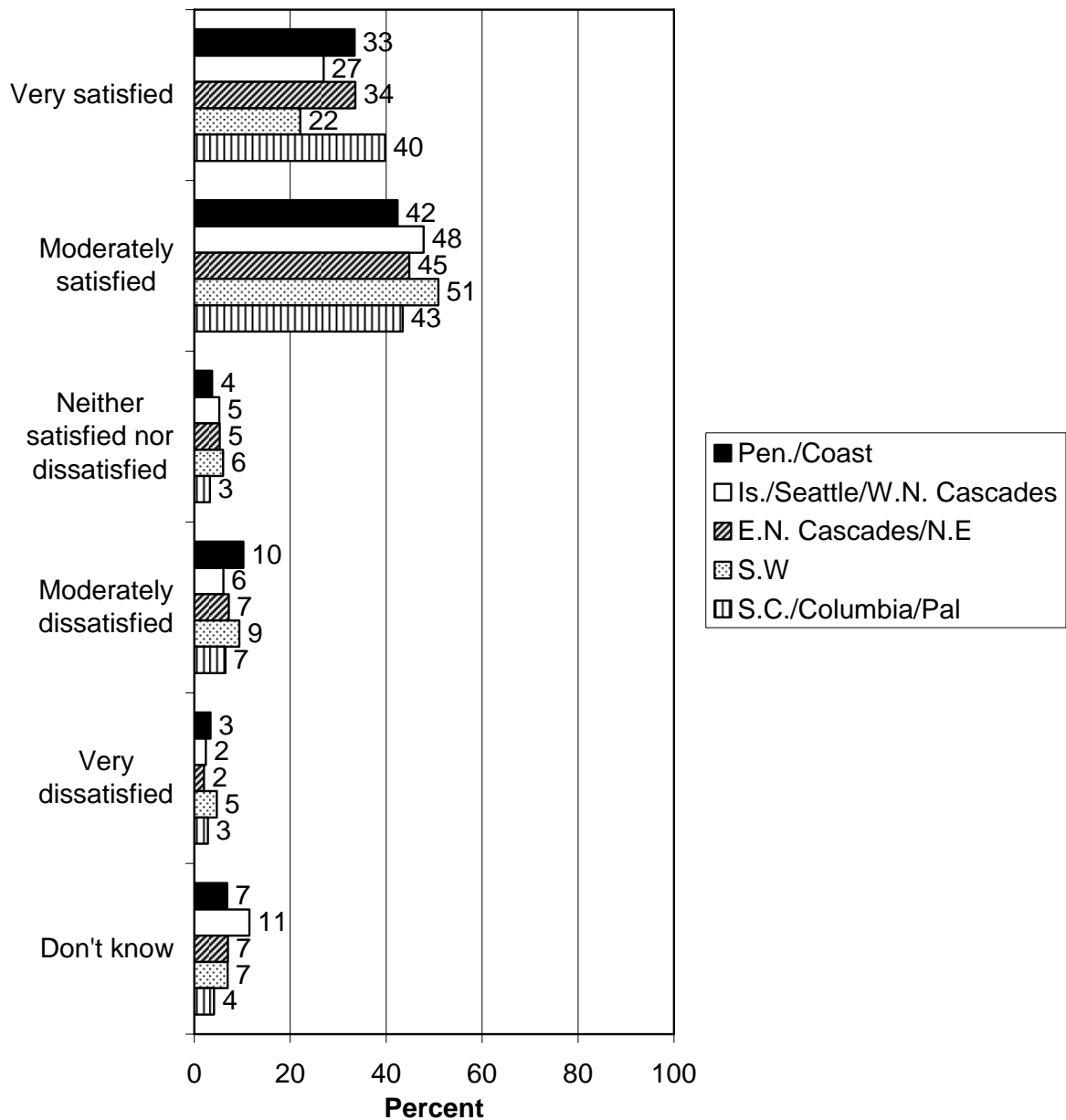
**Q196. How satisfied are you with the locations of boat launch ramp sites in the county in which you boat most often in Washington?**



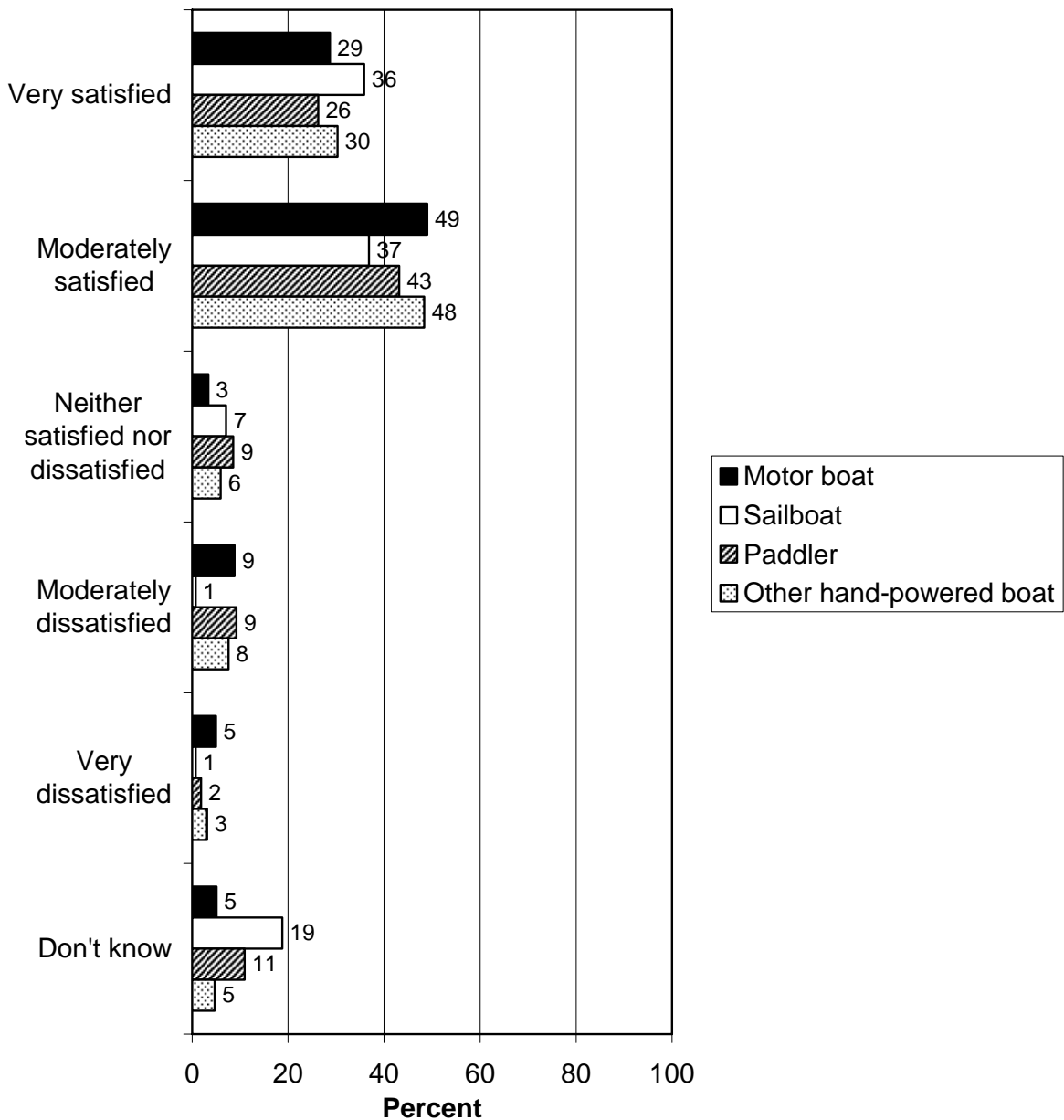
**Q196. How satisfied are you with the locations of boat launch ramp sites in the county in which you boat most often in Washington?**



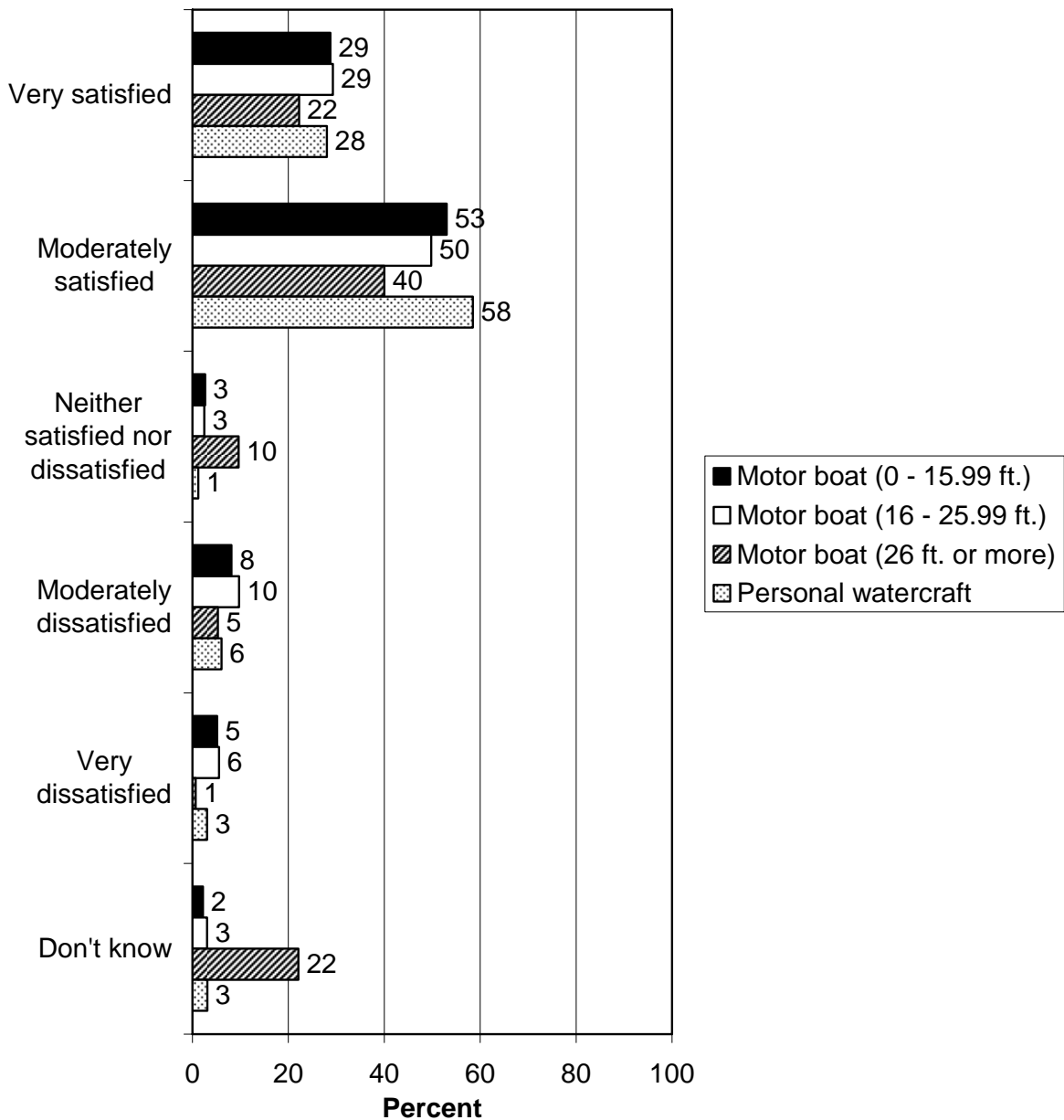
**Q196. How satisfied are you with the locations of boat launch ramp sites in the county in which you boat most often in Washington?**



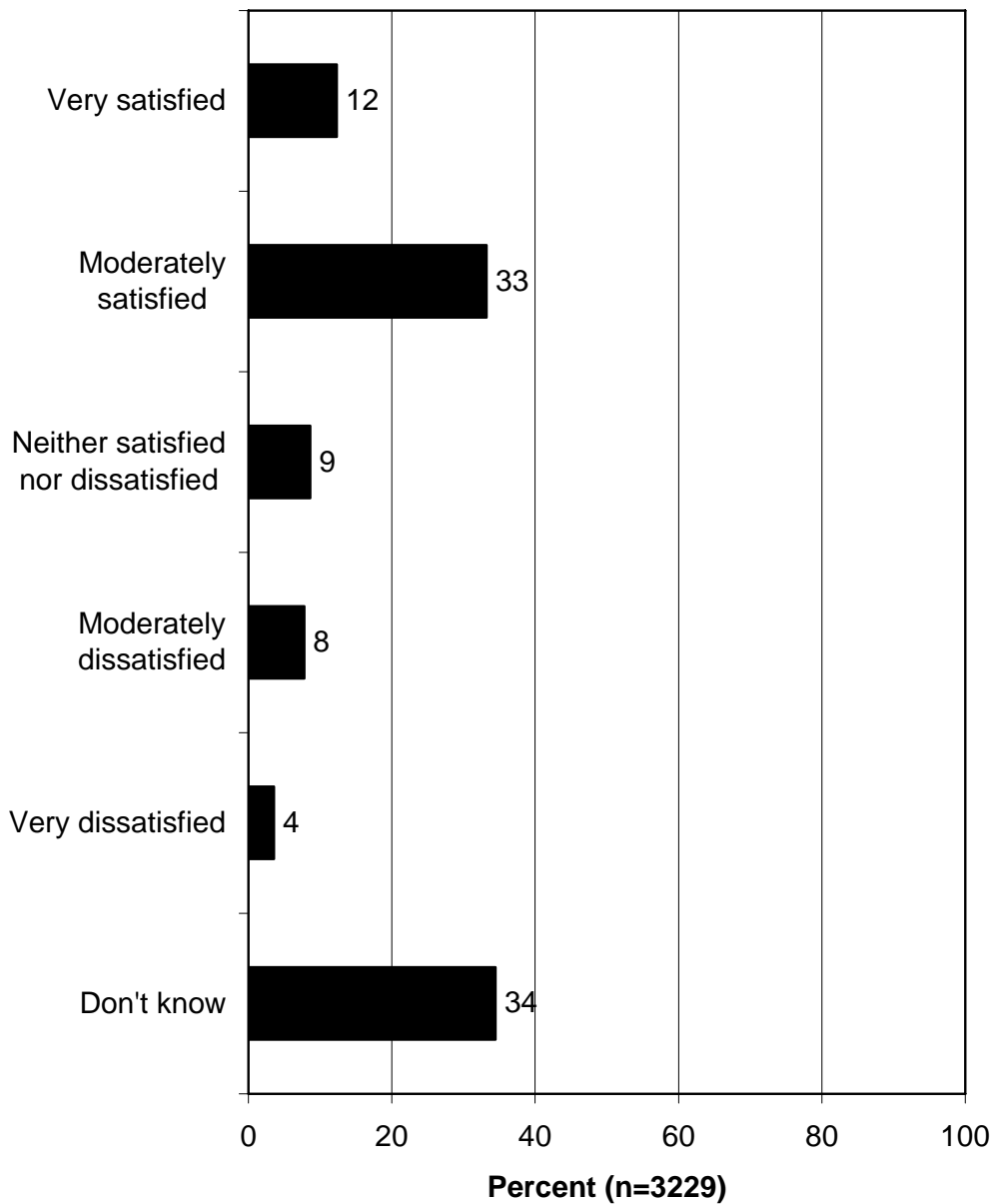
**Q196. How satisfied are you with the locations of boat launch ramp sites in the county in which you boat most often in Washington?**



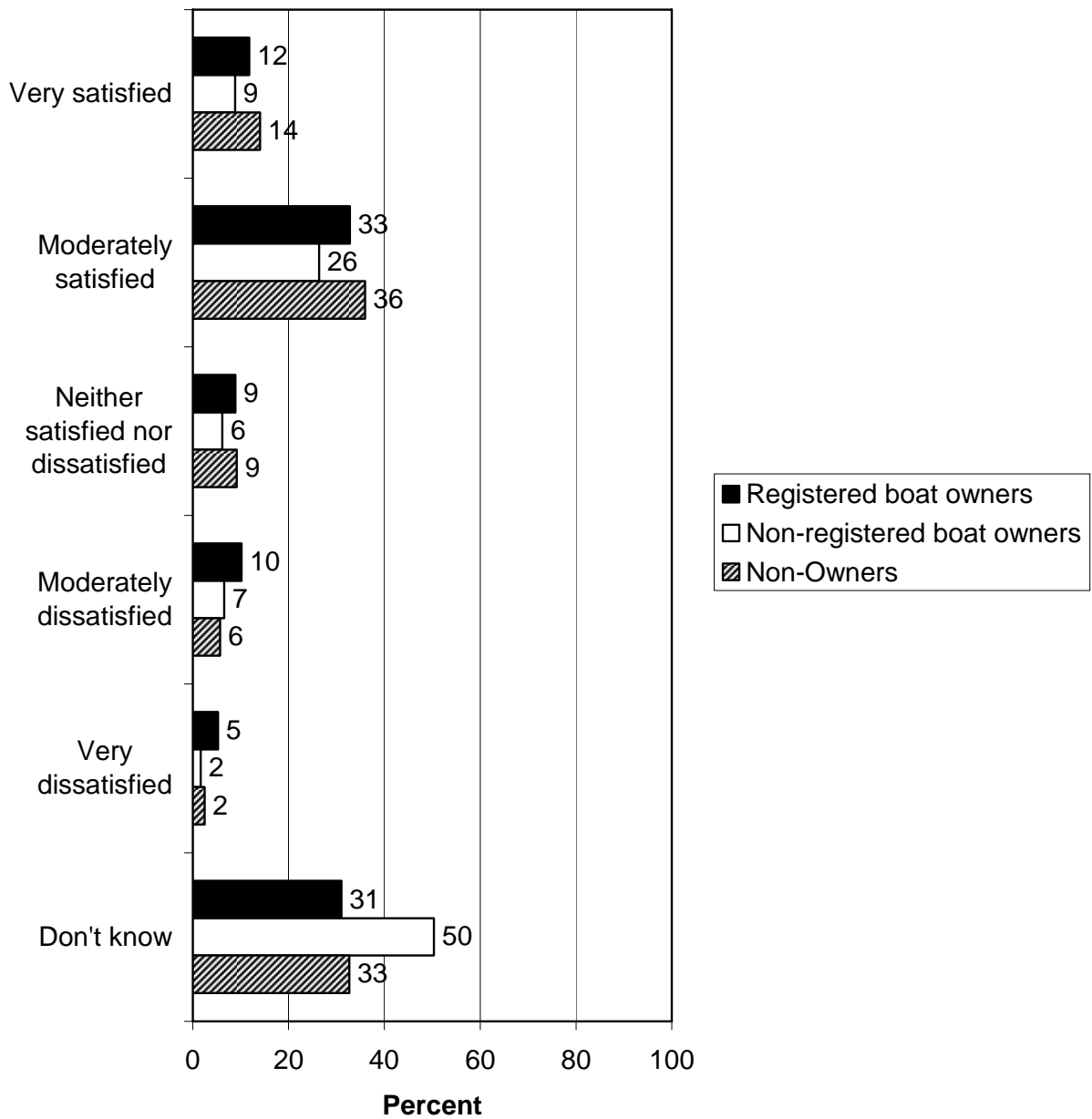
**Q196. How satisfied are you with the locations of boat launch ramp sites in the county in which you boat most often in Washington?**



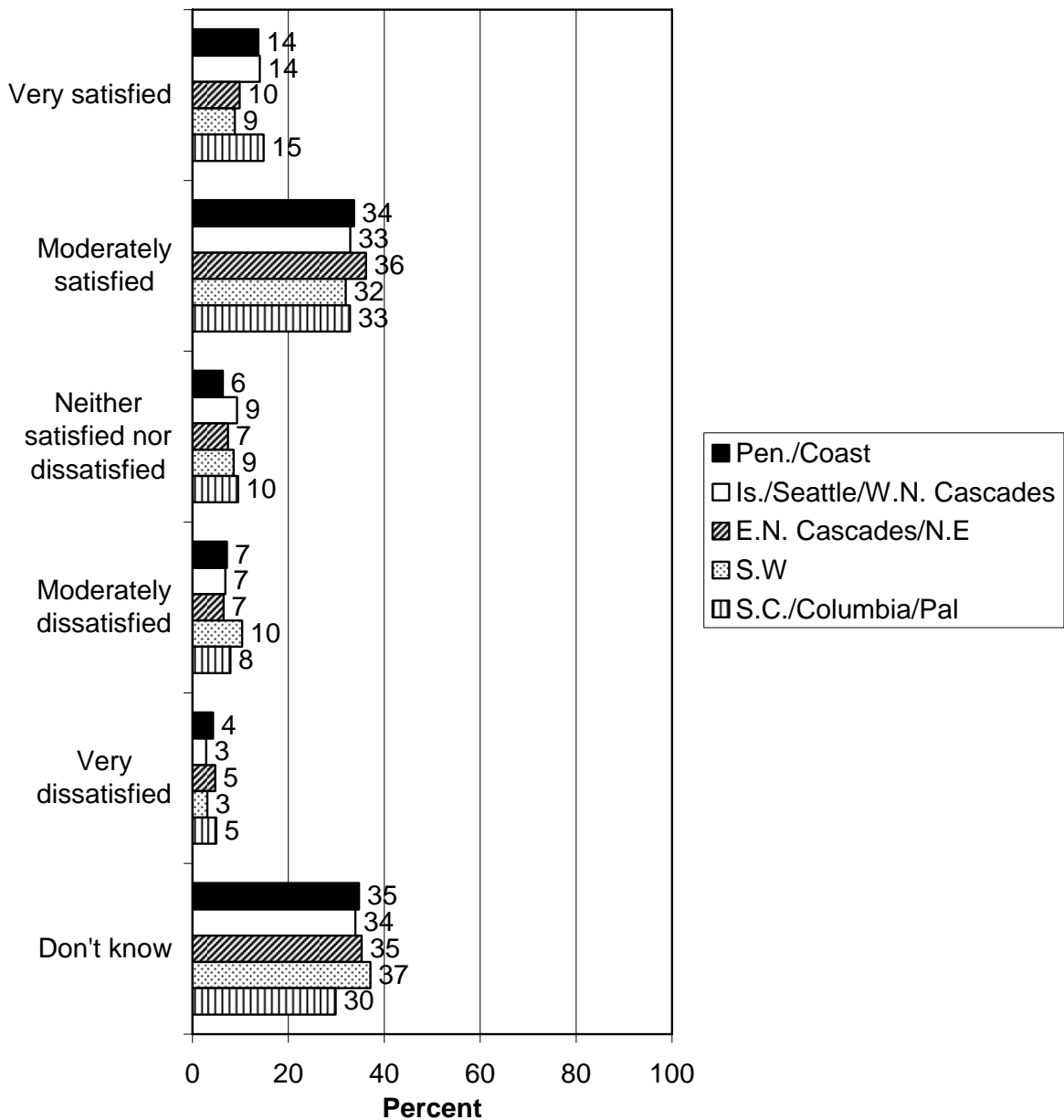
**Q198. How satisfied are you with the locations of mooring buoys in the county in which you boat most often in Washington?**



**Q198. How satisfied are you with the locations of mooring buoys in the county in which you boat most often in Washington?**

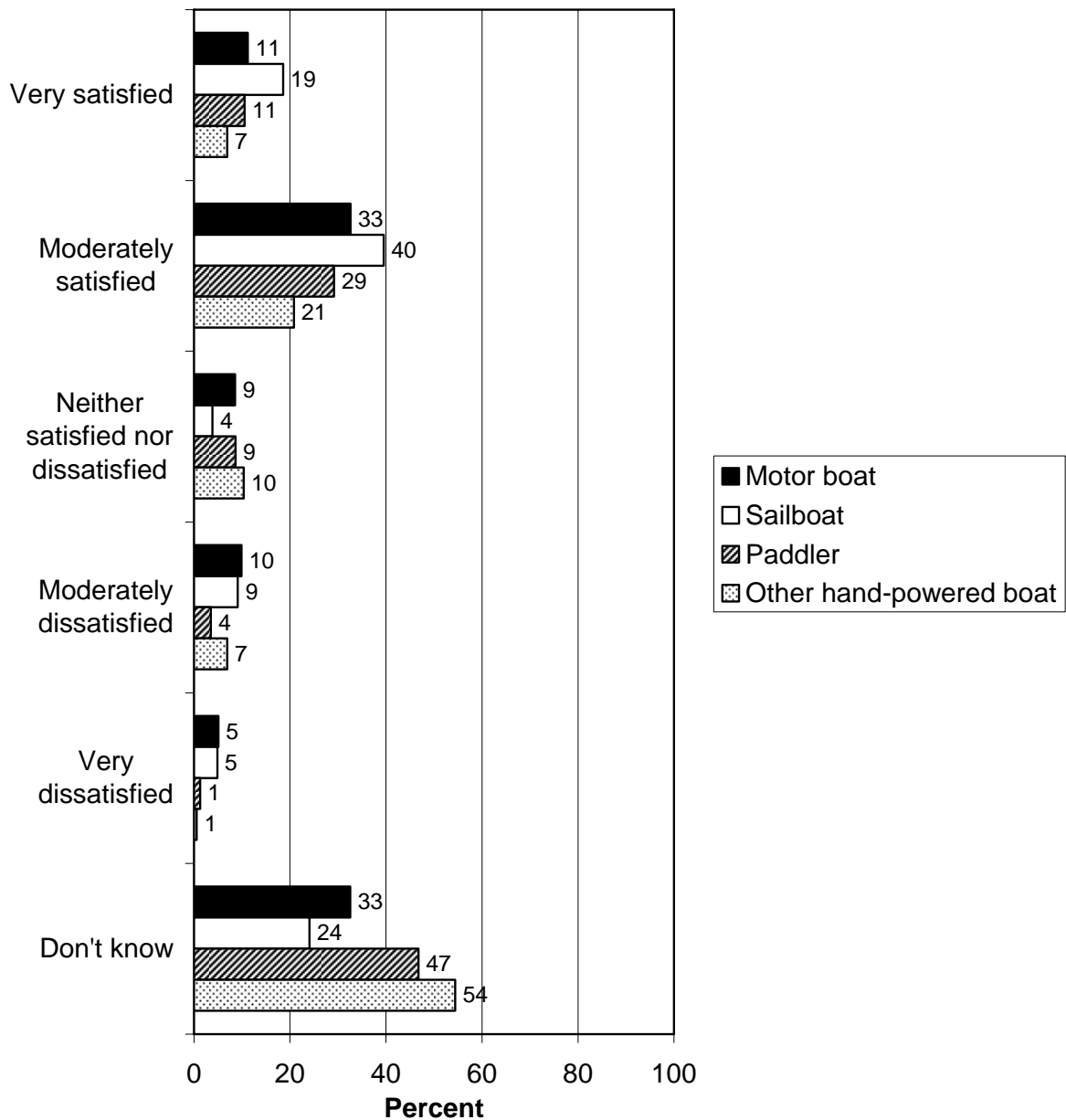


**Q198. How satisfied are you with the locations of mooring buoys in the county in which you boat most often in Washington?**

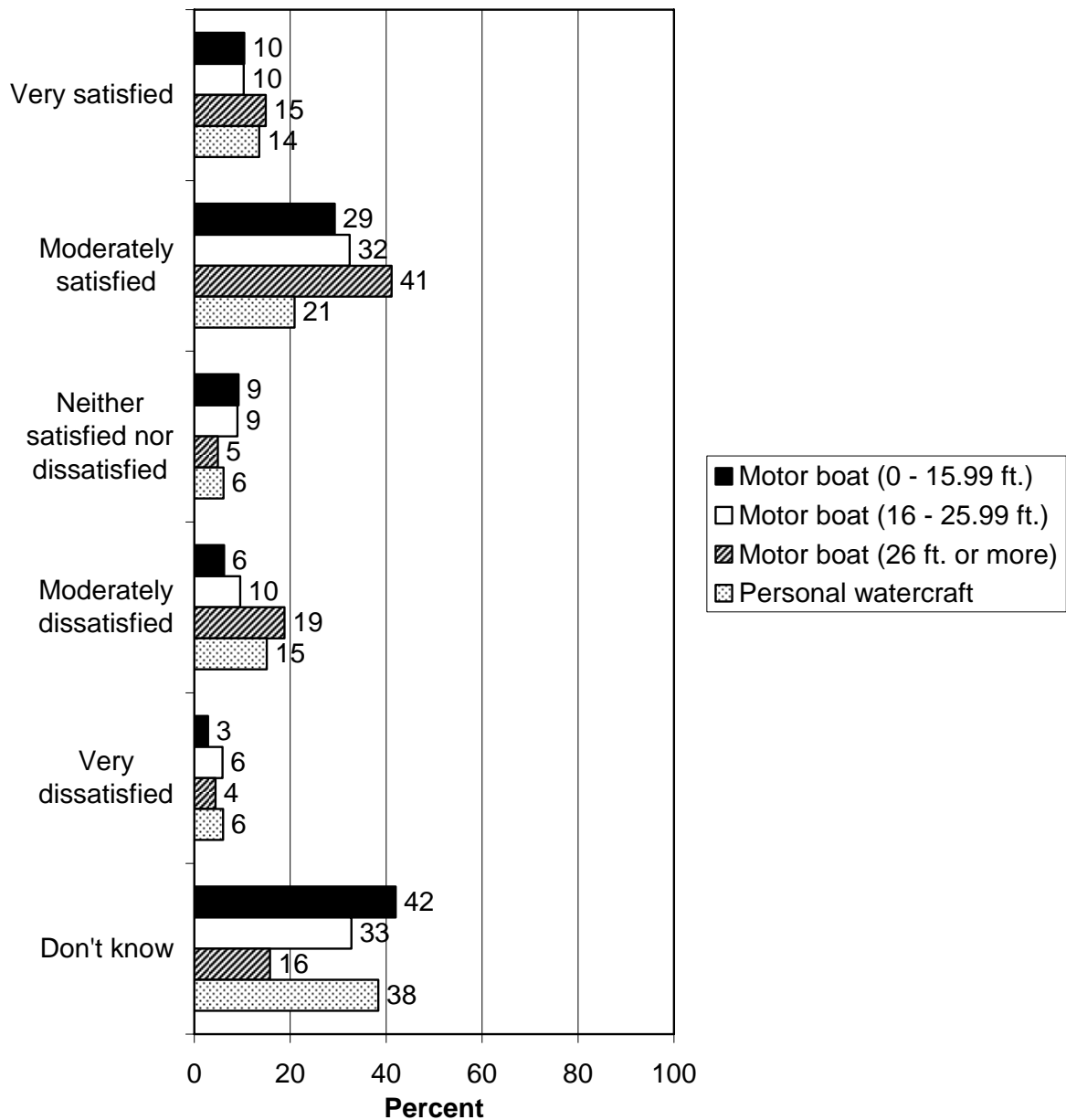




**Q198. How satisfied are you with the locations of mooring buoys in the county in which you boat most often in Washington?**



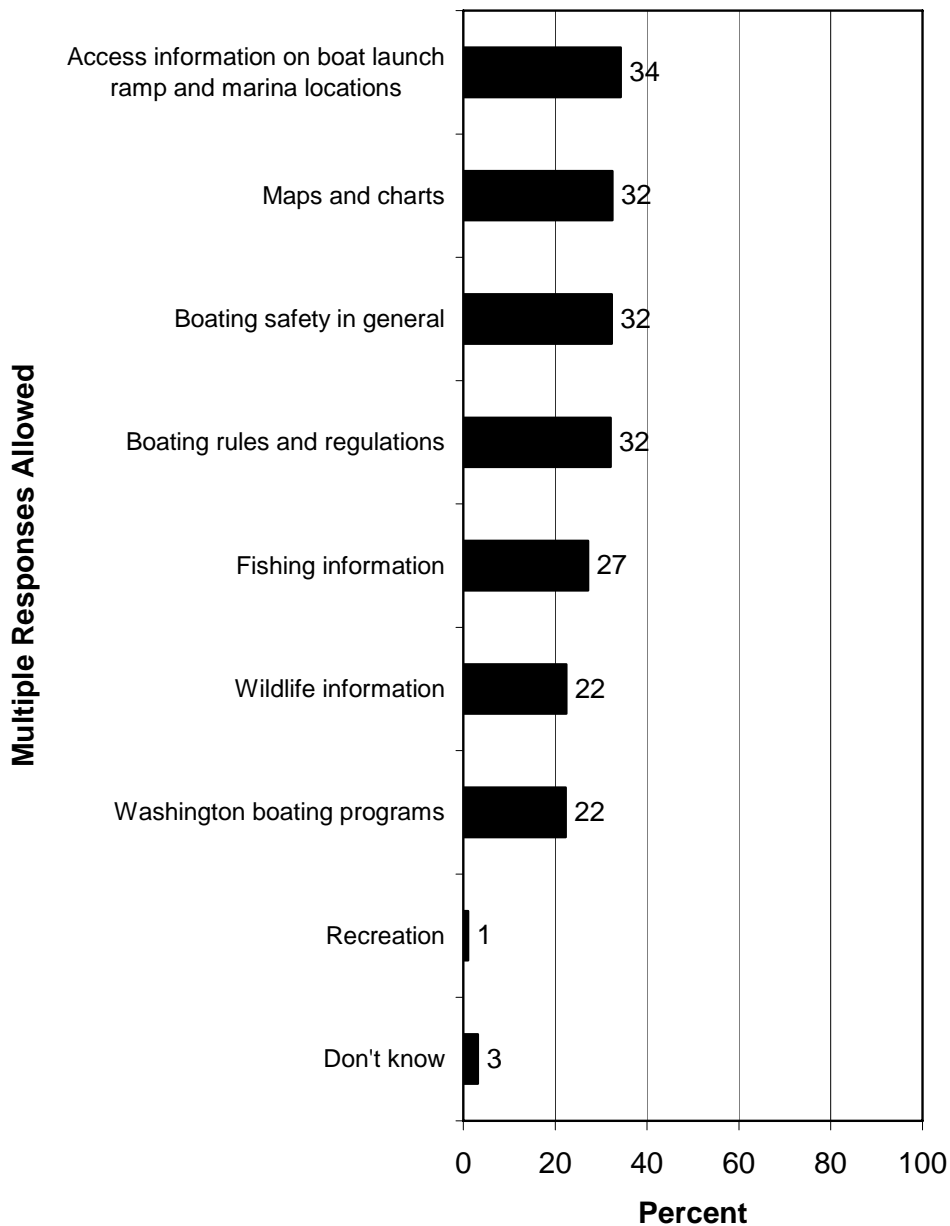
**Q198. How satisfied are you with the locations of mooring buoys in the county in which you boat most often in Washington?**



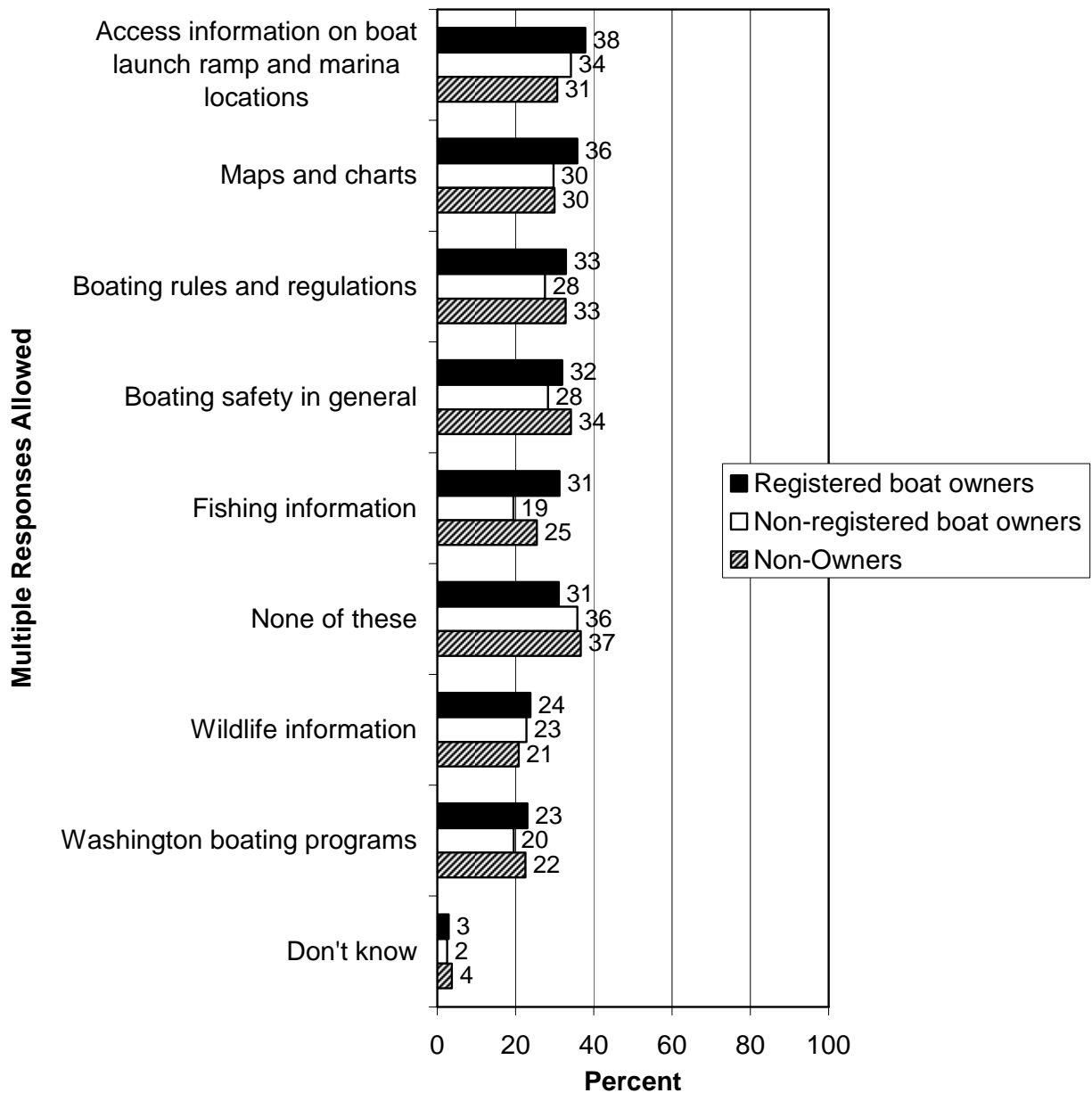
## INFORMATION ABOUT BOATING IN WASHINGTON

- Boaters are most interested in access information on boat launch ramp sites and marina locations, maps and charts, boating safety, boating rules and regulations, fishing information, wildlife information, and State boating programs. In follow-up, boaters most commonly said that their preferred way to receive information on boating would be direct mail or the Internet.
  - There were only slight differences among the three boat owner types regarding the information that they would be interested in receiving. One difference of note is that fishing information is more sought by registered boat owners than by non-registered boat owners. There was little difference in the way that they want to be provided with information, with one exception: non-registered boat owners chose the Internet at the expense of direct mail.
  - The regional crosstabulation is shown. The notable differences are discussed below.
    - Maps and charts received the highest interest in the Southwest Region and the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region.
    - Access information had the most interest in the Southwest Region, compared to the other regions.
    - Fishing information had the most interest in the Southwest Region; it had the least interest in the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region.
    - Wildlife information had the most interest in the Southwest Region; it had the least interest in the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region.
  - The crosstabulation by boater type is shown. The notable differences are discussed below.
    - Maps and charts received the highest interest among sailboaters.
    - Boating rules and regulations had the highest interest among sailboaters and those operating hand-powered boats.
    - Fishing information had the *least* interest among paddlers.
  - The regional crosstabulation regarding the best medium for the provision of information found that the Internet was more commonly named by Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region boaters than by boaters of any other region, particularly the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region.
  - The boater type crosstabulation regarding the best medium found that paddlers were the most receptive to the Internet; motor boaters were the least receptive to the Internet.

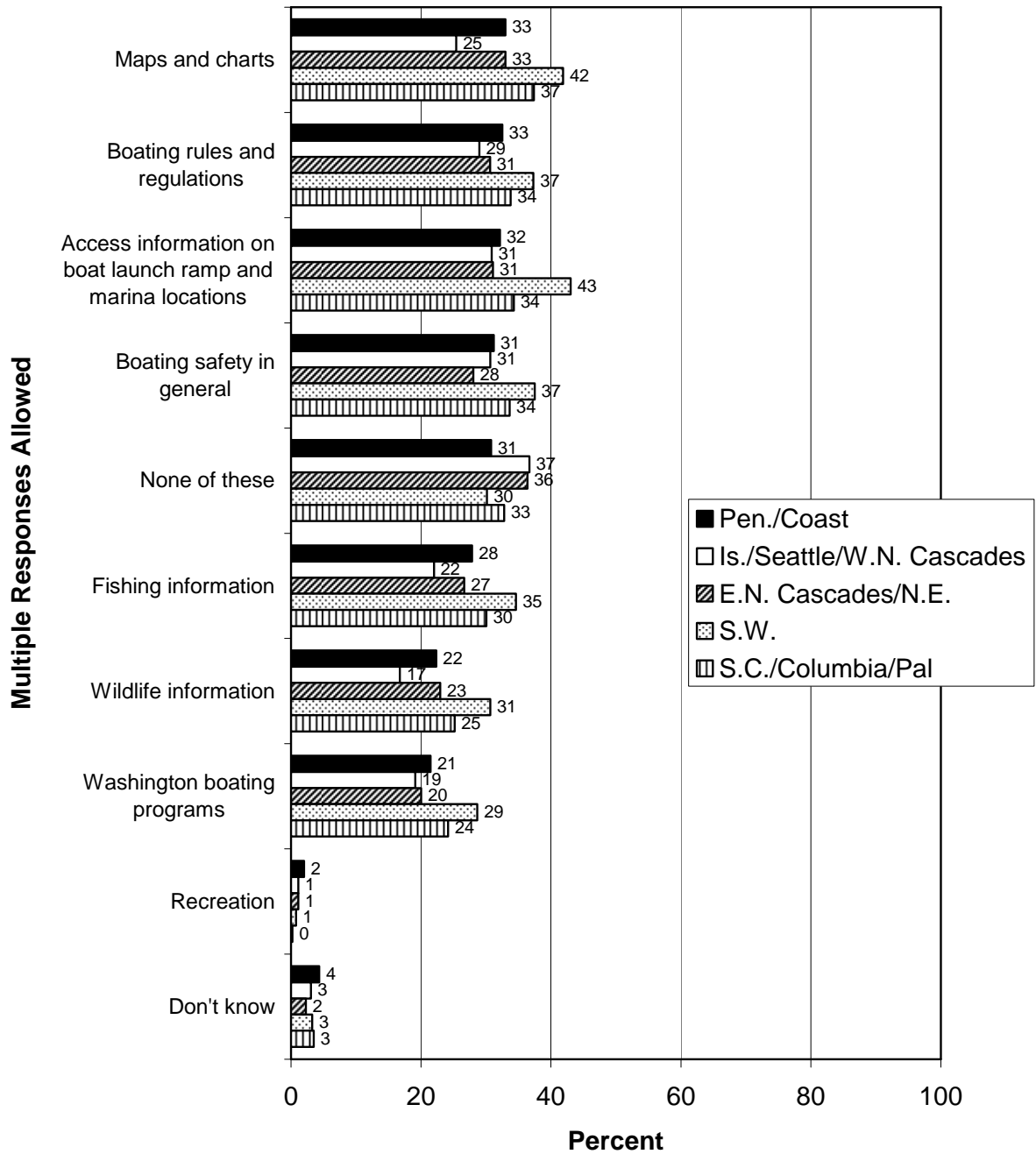
**Q203. What types of information on boating would you be interested in receiving? We are not sending out information at this time; we are simply gauging interest.**



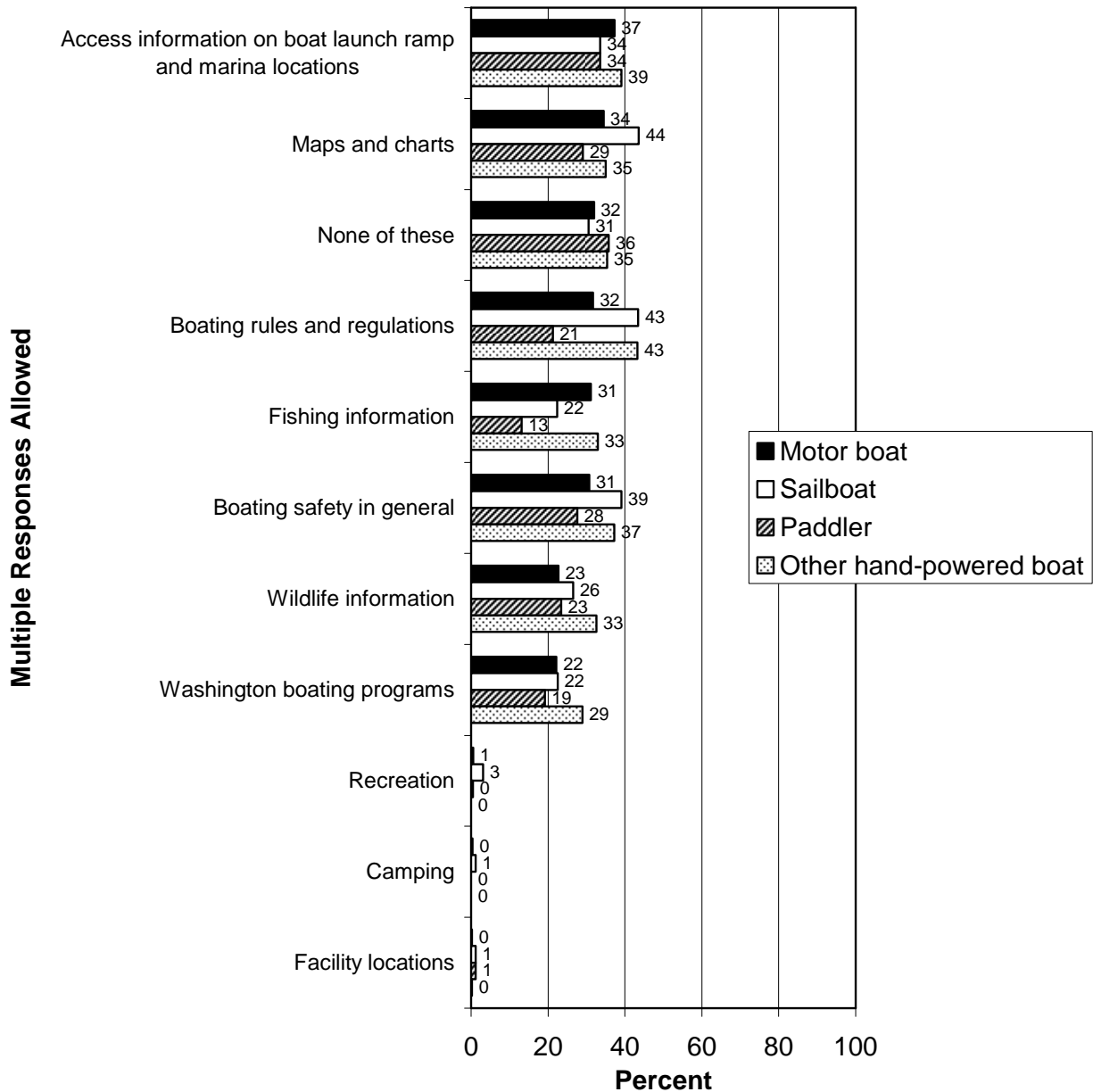
**Q203. What types of information on boating would you be interested in receiving? We are not sending out information at this time; we are simply gauging interest.**



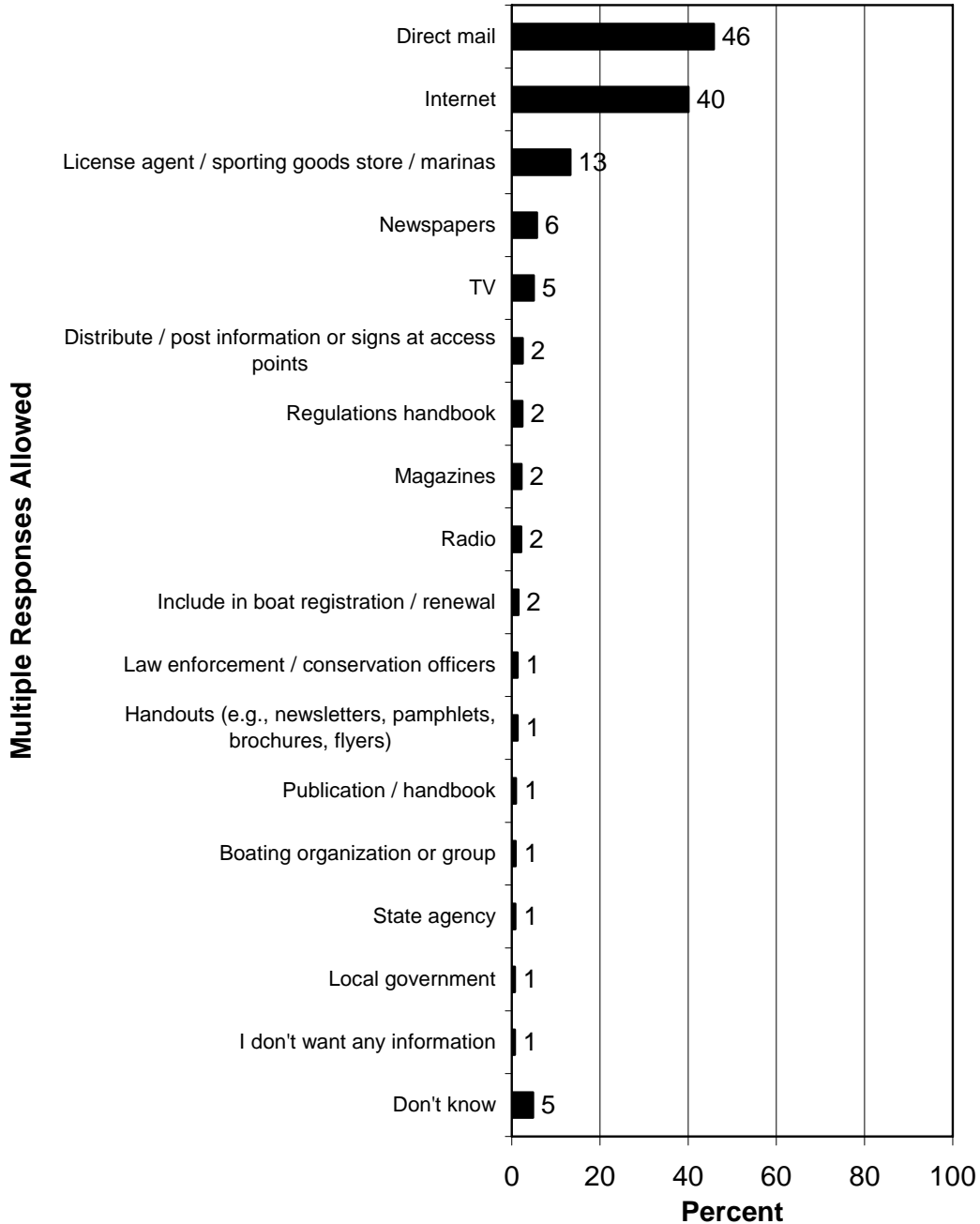
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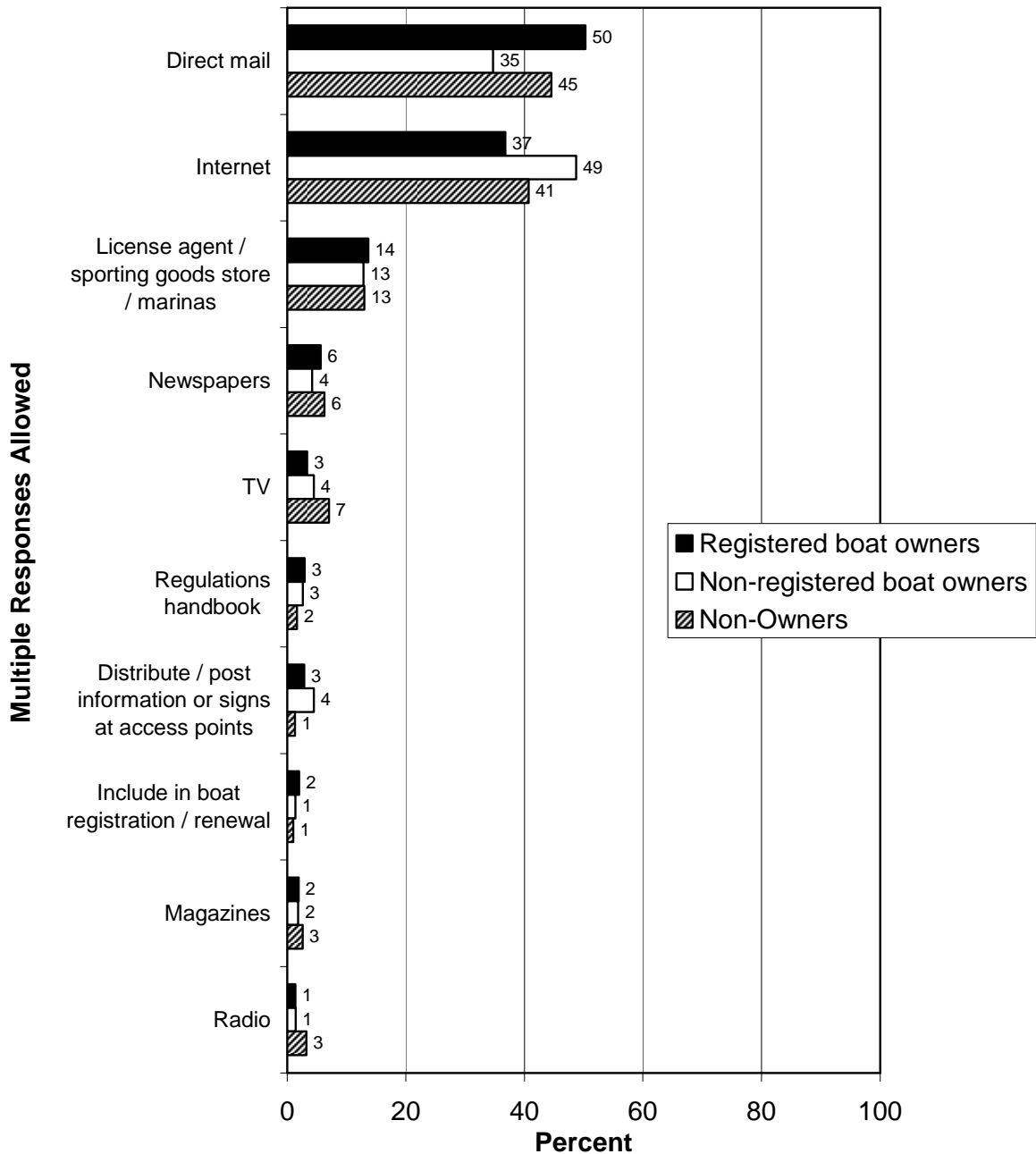


**Q207. What would be the best ways to provide you with information on boating? (Asked of those who indicated interest in receiving information on boating.)**

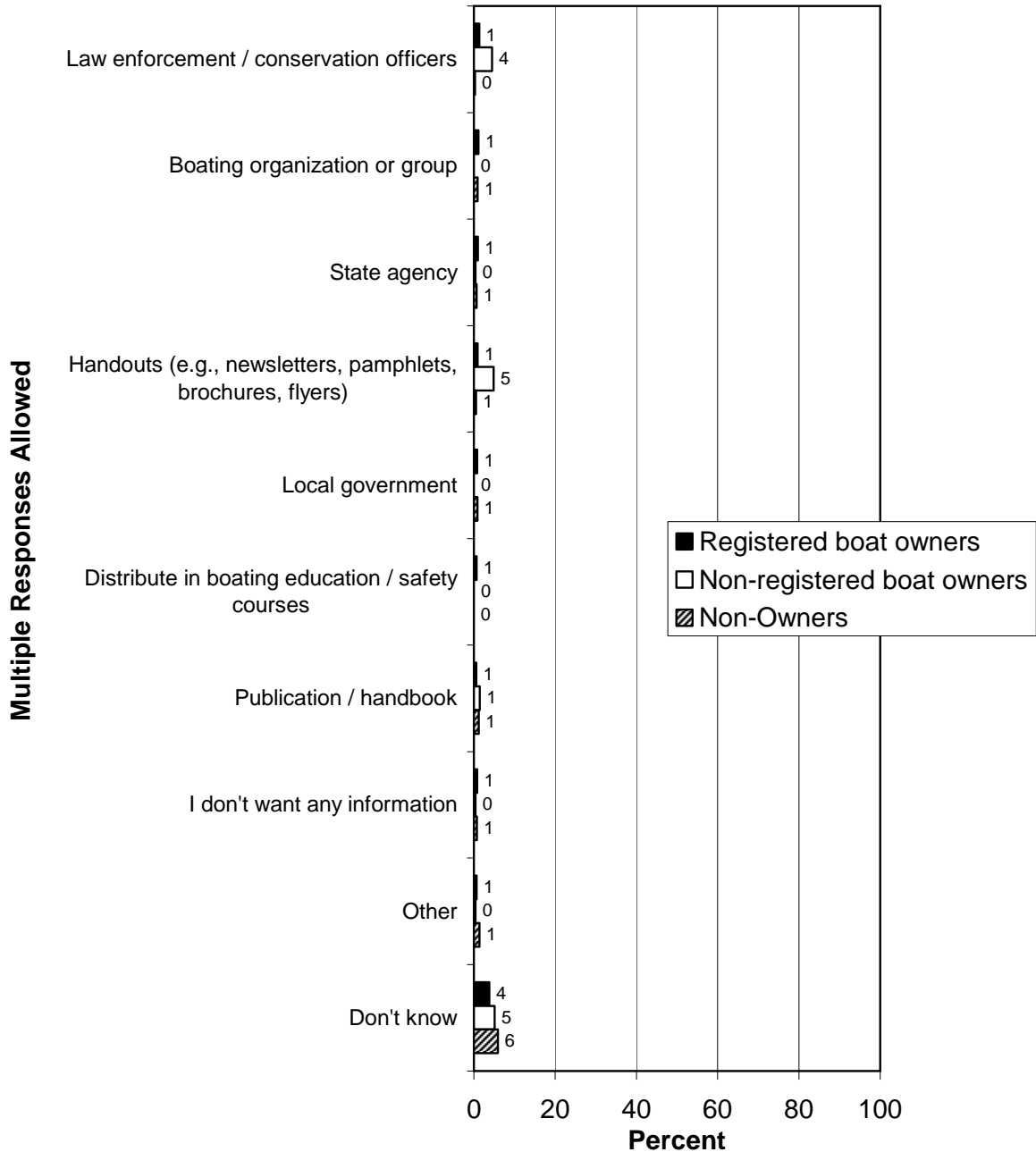




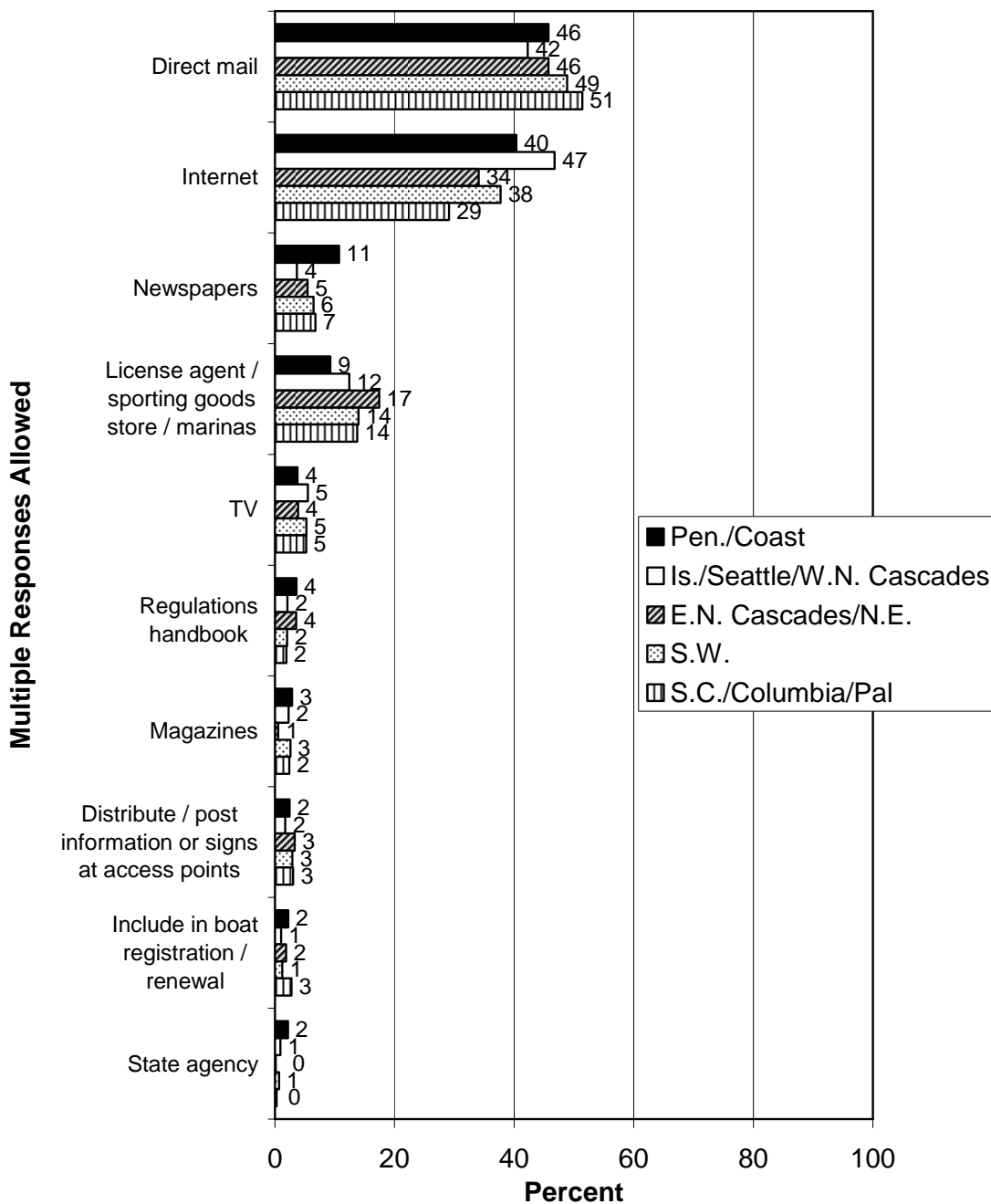
**Q207. What would be the best ways to provide you with information on boating? (Asked of those who indicated interest in receiving information on boating.) (Part 1.)**



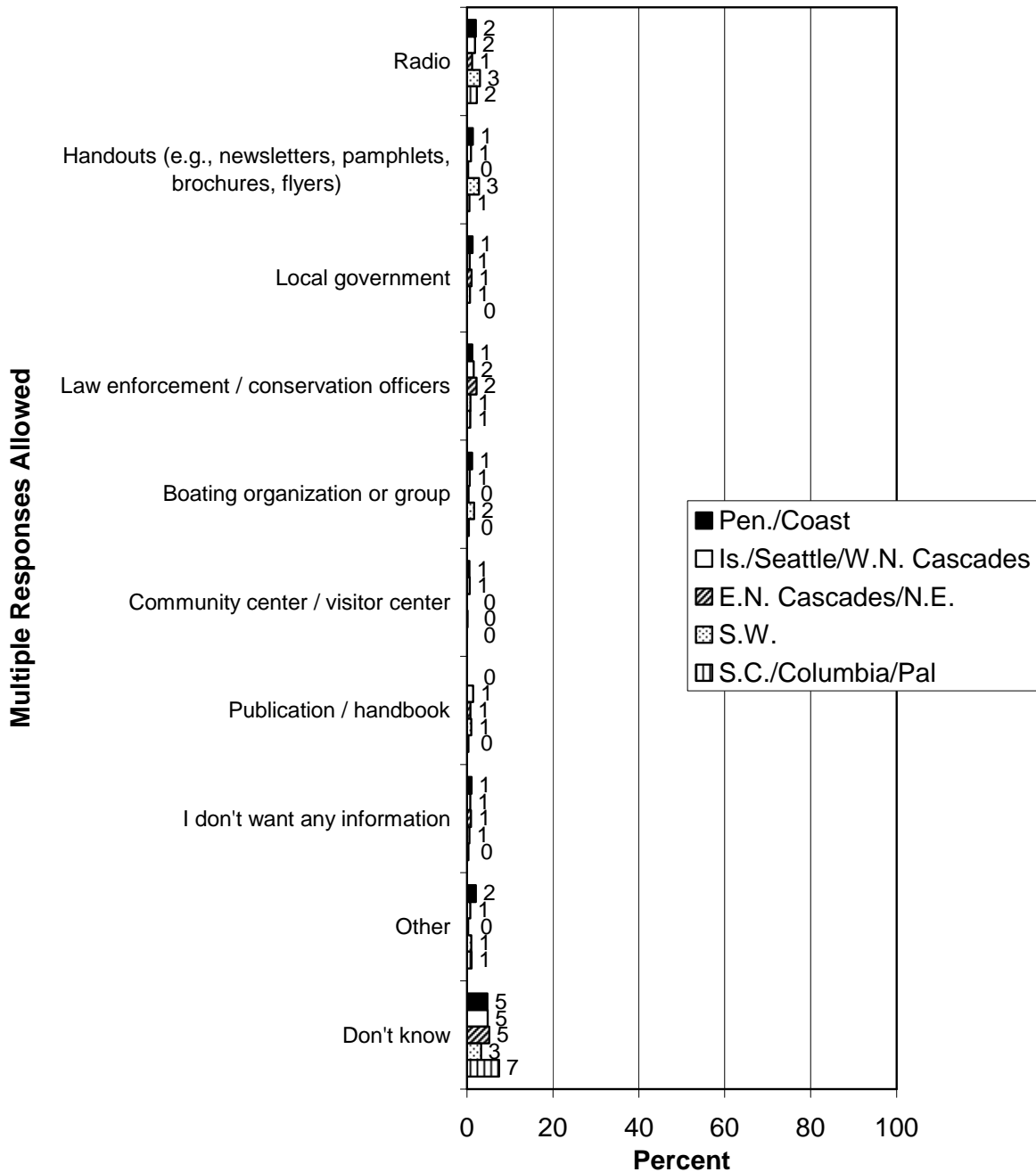
**Q207. What would be the best ways to provide you with information on boating? (Asked of those who indicated interest in receiving information on boating.) (Part 2.)**



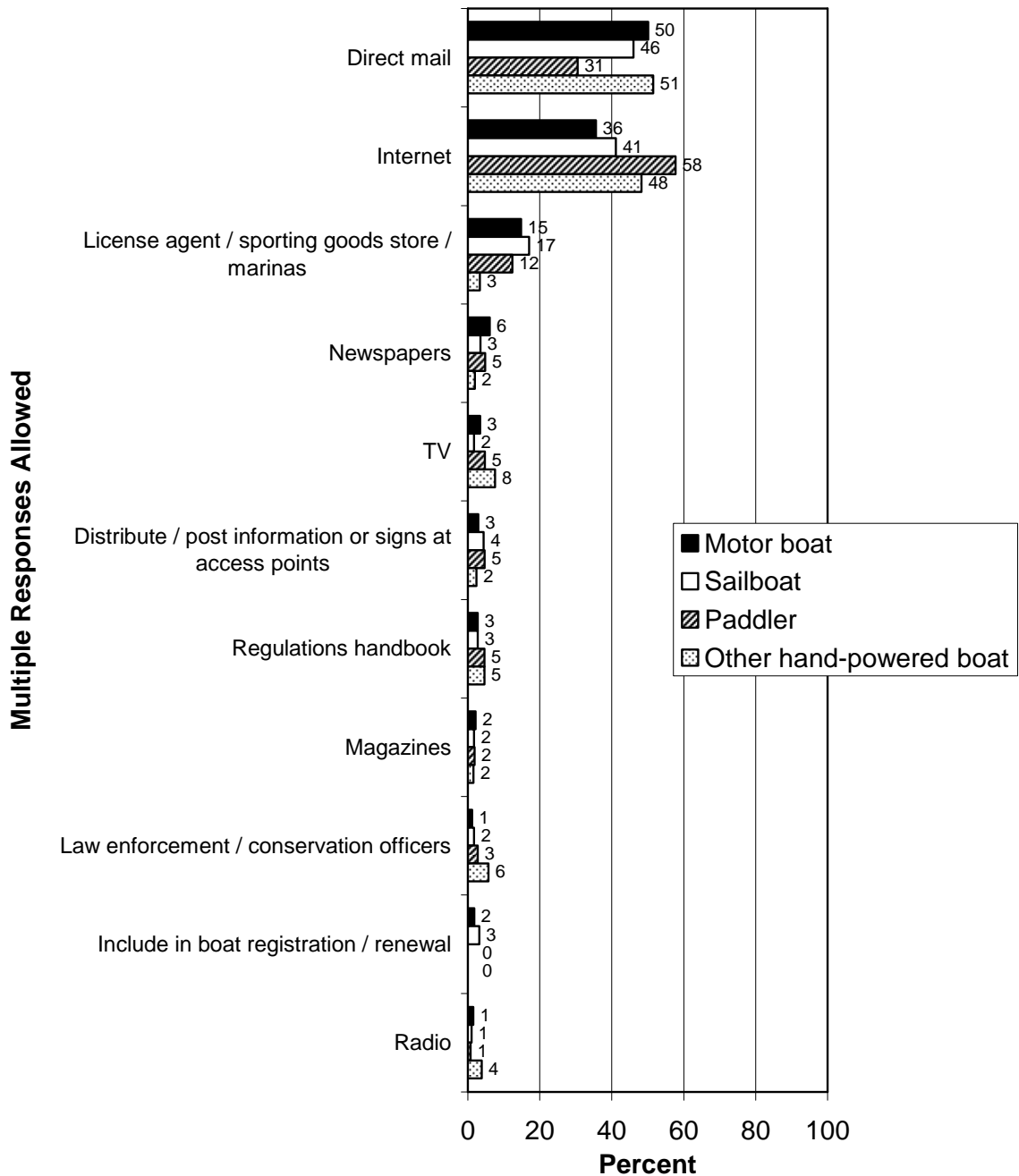
**Q207. What would be the best ways to provide you with information on boating? (Asked of those who indicated interest in receiving information on boating.) (Part 1.)**



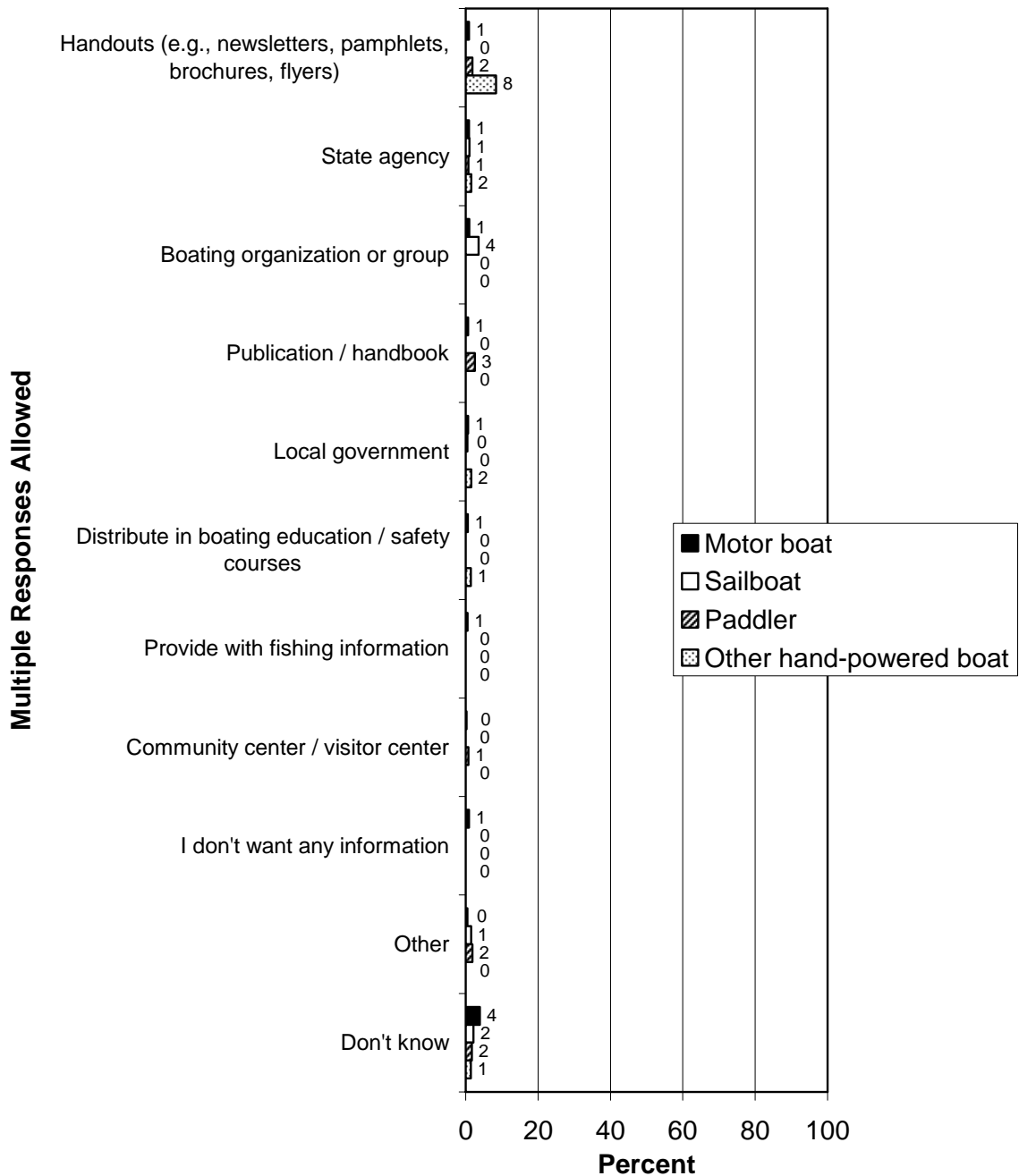
**Q207. What would be the best ways to provide you with information on boating? (Asked of those who indicated interest in receiving information on boating.) (Part 2.)**



**Q207. What would be the best ways to provide you with information on boating? (Asked of those who indicated interest in receiving information on boating.) (Part 1.)**



**Q207. What would be the best ways to provide you with information on boating? (Asked of those who indicated interest in receiving information on boating.) (Part 2.)**



## DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

- About two-thirds (66%) of boaters overall are male, while 34% are female.
  - Registered boat owners are predominantly male, but non-registered boat owners and non-owners are more evenly split regarding gender.
  - Boaters of the Southwest Region and the South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region are slightly more likely to be male, when compared to the other regions.
  - Males predominate among motor boaters and sailboaters, while a more even gender distribution occurs among the other types of boaters.
  - Gender split by size of motor boat is shown as well, with only a small difference—personal watercraft operators having a higher percentage of females than motor boaters of Class A, Class 1, Class 2, and Class 3.
  
- Ages of boaters are shown, with the older age groups—those consisting of boaters 45 years old or older—predominating. The mean age is 50.6 years.
  - Registered boat owners are slightly older, in general, than non-registered boat owners and non-owners, the latter group being the youngest.
  - There are no marked differences in the ages of boaters in the regional crosstabulation.
  - Sailboaters tend to be older than the other three types of boaters. Motor boaters tend to be older than the remaining two types of boaters.
  - Those boaters primarily operating a large motor boat are the oldest of the four size groupings, while personal watercraft operators are the youngest.
  
- The years of residency of boaters is shown; the mean is 35.9 years. Overall, boaters tend to have a fairly long residency in the state.
  - Registered boat owners have slightly longer residency, in general, compared to non-registered boat owners and non-owners.
  - The Peninsula/Coast Region and the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region tend to have boaters with fewer years of residency in Washington State, compared to the other regions.
  - Paddlers tend to have fewer years of residency, compared to the other types of boaters.

- In the crosstabulation by size of motor boat, the years of residency, in general, are the fewest among operators of personal watercraft.
  
- Counties of residency of boaters is shown. King County leads all other counties, followed by Pierce, Snohomish, Spokane, Kitsap, and Clark. The region of residency is shown as well.
  
- The crosstabulation of county of residence by the type of boaters is shown. Note that King, Kitsap, Snohomish, Spokane, and Thurston Counties show marked differences in residency according to type of boater.
  - King County has a high proportion of sailboaters and paddlers, relative to the other boater types.
  - Kitsap County has a high proportion of paddlers, relative to the other boater types.
  - Snohomish County has a high proportion of paddlers and other hand-powered boaters, relative to the other boater types.
  - Spokane County has a high proportion of paddlers, relative to the other boater types.
  - Thurston County has a high proportion of sailboaters, relative to the other boater types.
  - The top counties of residency among motor boaters are King, Pierce, and Spokane.
  - The top counties of residency among sailboaters are King and Thurston.
  - The top counties of residency among paddlers are King, Spokane, Snohomish, and Kitsap.
  - The top counties of residency among other hand-powered boaters are King, Snohomish, and Pierce.
  
- The crosstabulation of county of residence by the size of the motor boat most commonly used is shown. Note that Clark, Island, King, Kitsap, Pierce, San Juan, and Spokane Counties show marked differences in residency according to size of motor boat.
  - Clark County has a high proportion of personal watercraft operators, relative to the other size groupings.
  - Island County has a high proportion of Class 2 and 3 motor boaters, relative to the other size groupings.
  - King County has a high proportion of Class 2 and 3 motor boaters and personal watercraft operators, relative to the other boater types.

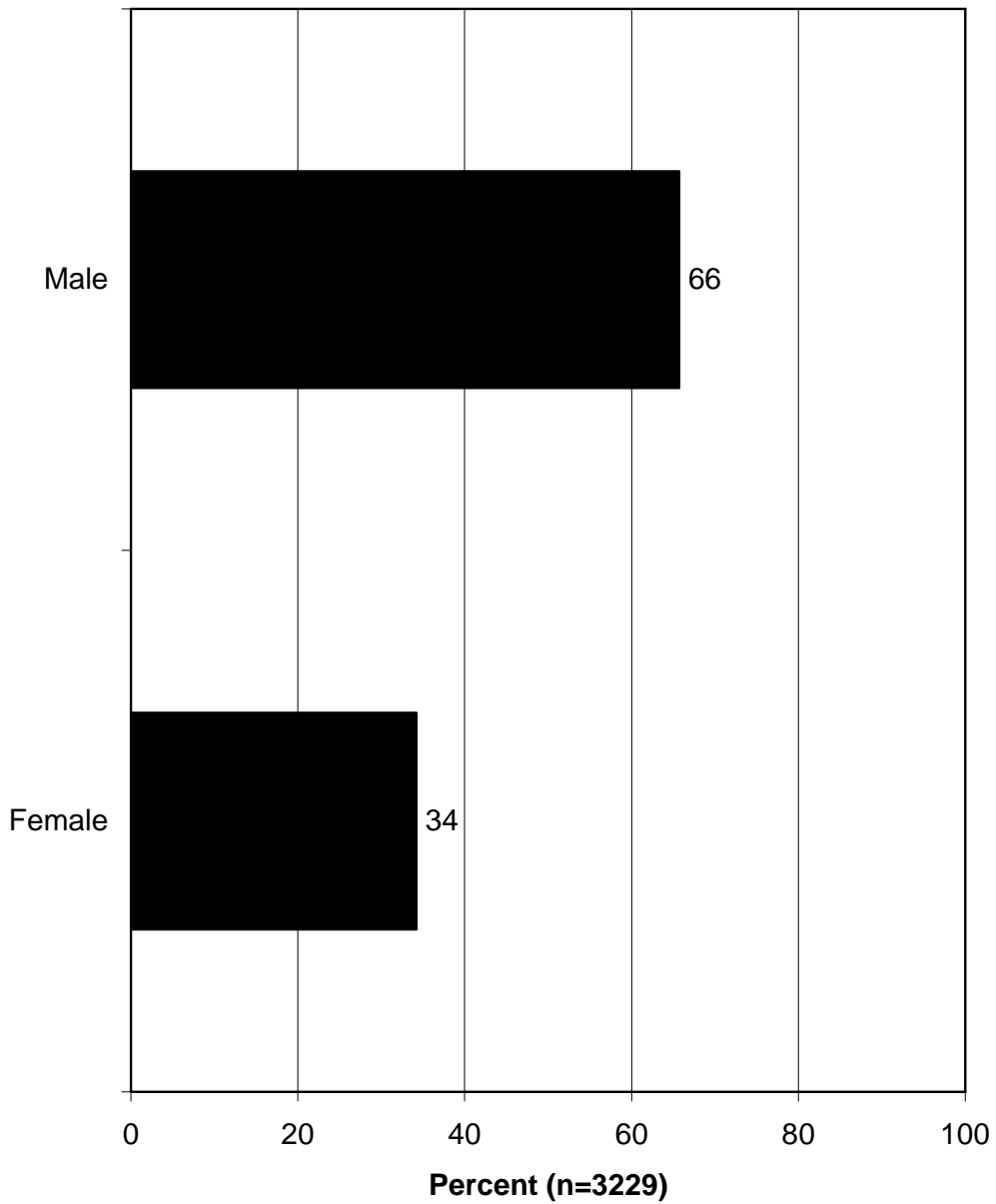


- Kitsap County has a high proportion of Class 2 and 3 motor boaters, relative to the other boater types.
  - Pierce County has a high proportion of Class 2 and 3 motor boaters and personal watercraft operators, relative to the other boater types.
  - San Juan County has a high proportion of Class 2 and 3 motor boaters, relative to the other size groupings.
  - Spokane County has a *low* proportion of Class 2 and 3 motor boaters, relative to the other boater types.
  - The top counties of residency among Class A motor boaters are King, Spokane, and Pierce.
  - The top counties of residency among Class 1 motor boaters are King, Pierce, and Spokane.
  - The top counties of residency among Class 2 and 3 motor boaters are Pierce, King, and Kitsap.
  - The top counties of residency among personal watercraft operators are King, Pierce, Spokane, and Clark.
- The majority of households of boaters (67%) consist of two people. The majority of households of boaters (59%) contain *no* children 17 years of age or younger, while 36% contain at least one child.
- Non-owners, compared to registered boat owners and non-registered boat owners, have smaller households, in general. Additionally, a lower percentage of non-owners, relative to registered boat owners and non-registered boat owners, have children living in their household.
  - Regional crosstabulations found few differences in numbers of people living in the respondents' households. Regarding children living in the household, boaters of the Peninsula and Coast Region are the least likely to have children living in their household, but the difference is not great.
  - The number of people in the respondent's household varies only slightly by boater type, with those who most often operate a hand-powered boat other than canoe or kayak being

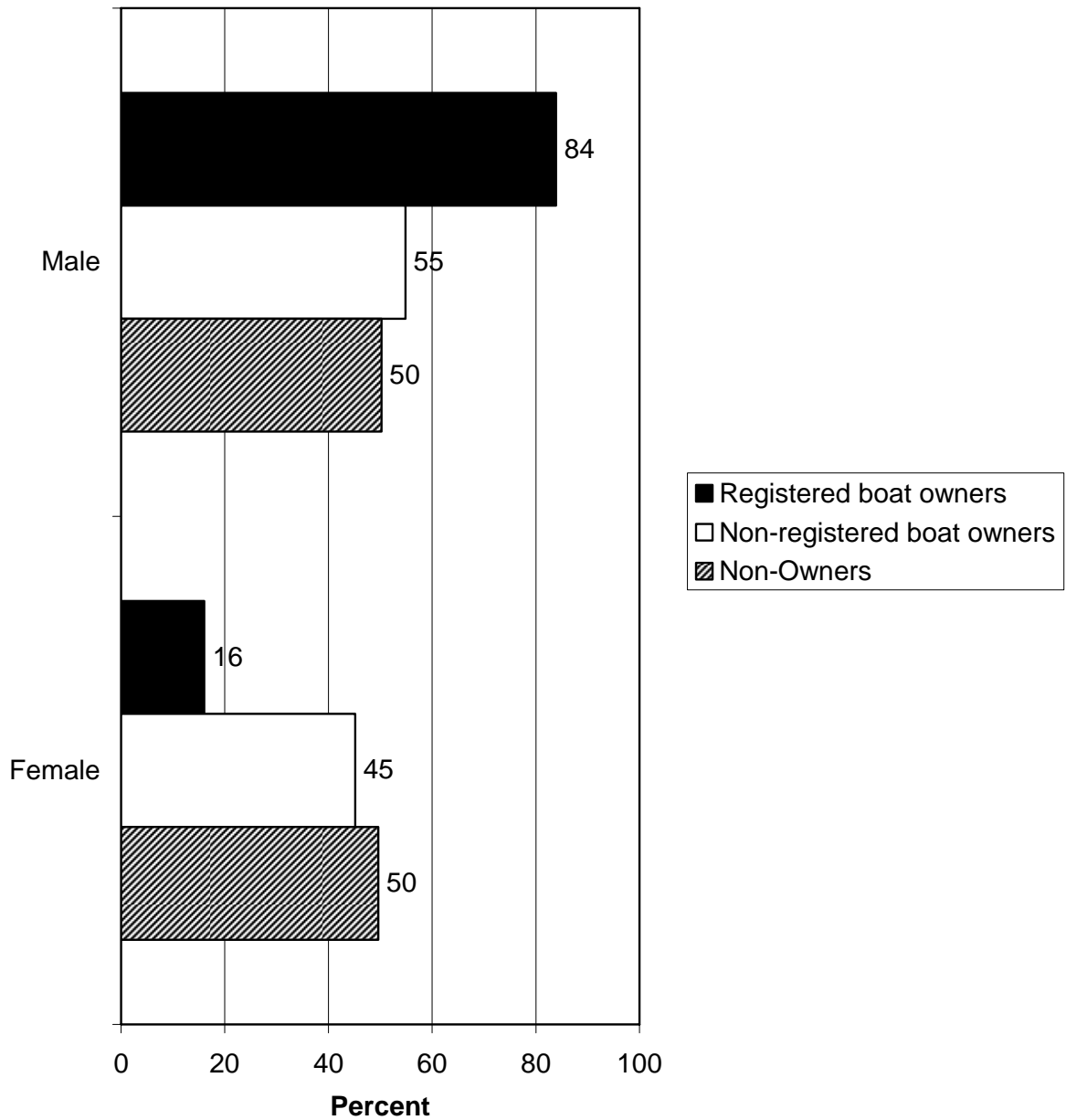
the most likely to live alone. Sailboaters are the least likely to have children living at home.

- The number of people in the respondent's household varies only slightly by size of motor boat. Those who primarily operate a personal watercraft are the most likely to have children living in their household.
- Education levels of boaters overall are shown: 75% have at least some college or trade school coursework, and 44% have a Bachelor's degree (with or without a higher degree also).
- There is no marked difference between the three types of boaters (registered boat owners, non-registered boat owners, and non-owners) with respect to education.
  - Boaters of the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region are much more likely to have at least a Bachelor's degree, compared to the other regions.
  - Sailboaters and paddlers are much more likely to have degrees than are the other types of boaters.
  - Education levels are the highest among personal watercraft operators and those who primarily operate Class 2 and 3 motor boats (26 feet or more in length).
- Incomes of boaters are shown, with 47% having a pre-tax household income of \$50,000 or more.
- There is no marked difference between the three types of boaters (registered boat owners, non-registered boat owners, and non-owners) with respect to income.
  - There are slightly higher incomes in the Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region, compared to the other regions.
  - There is not a great variation in income levels among the various types of boaters.
  - Income is highest among those who primarily operate Class 2 or 3 motor boats.

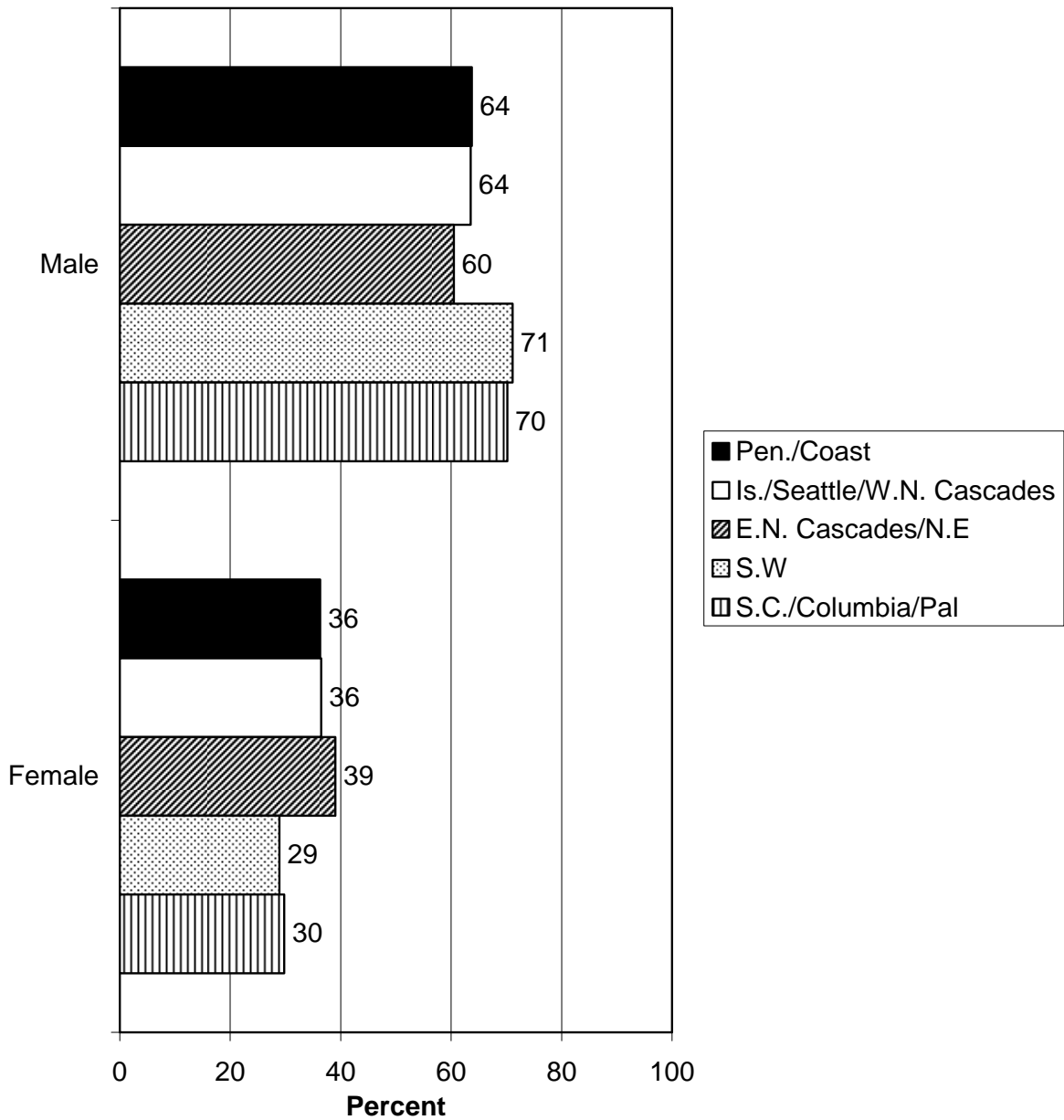
**Q222. Respondent's gender (not asked, but observed by interviewer).**



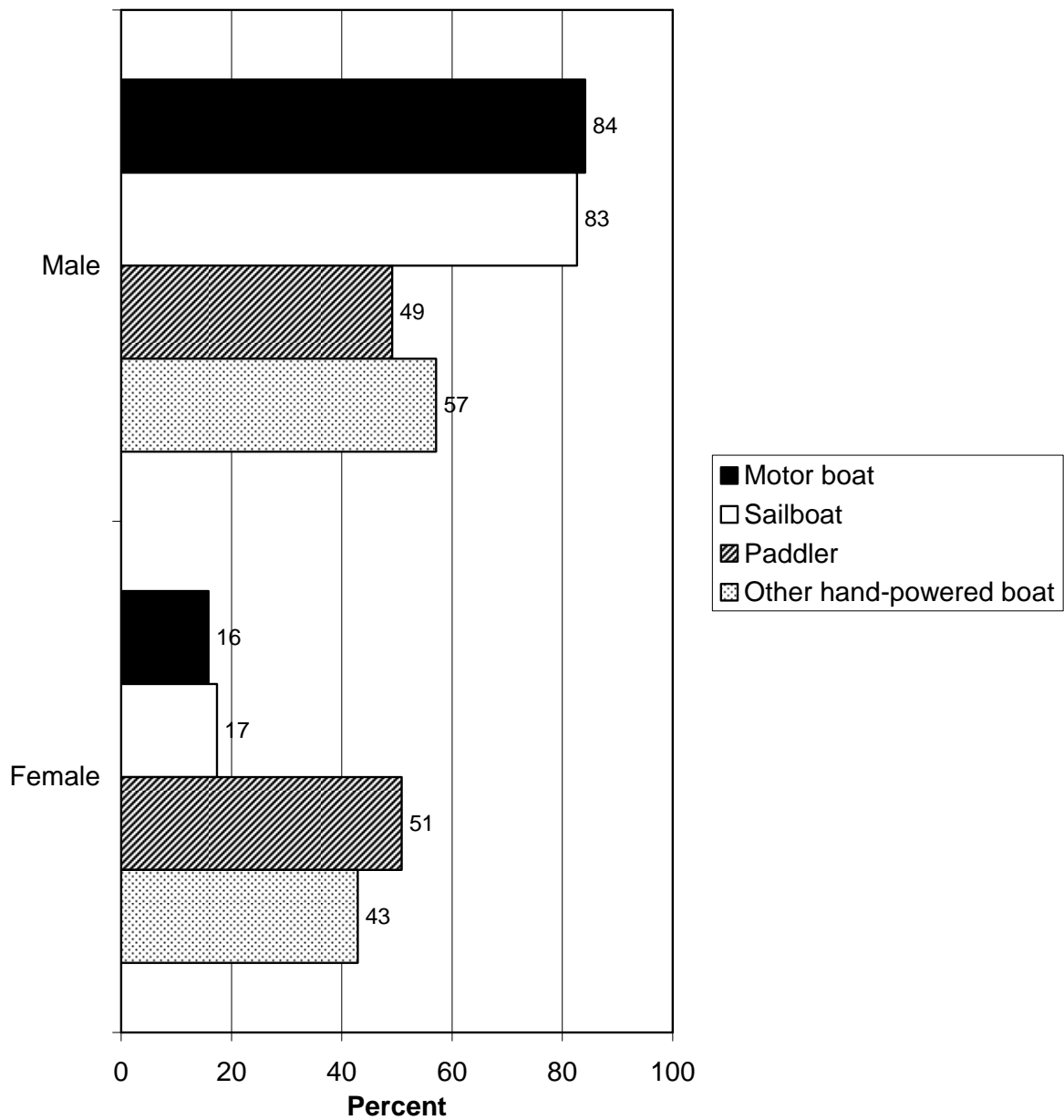
**Q222. Respondent's gender (not asked, but observed by interviewer).**



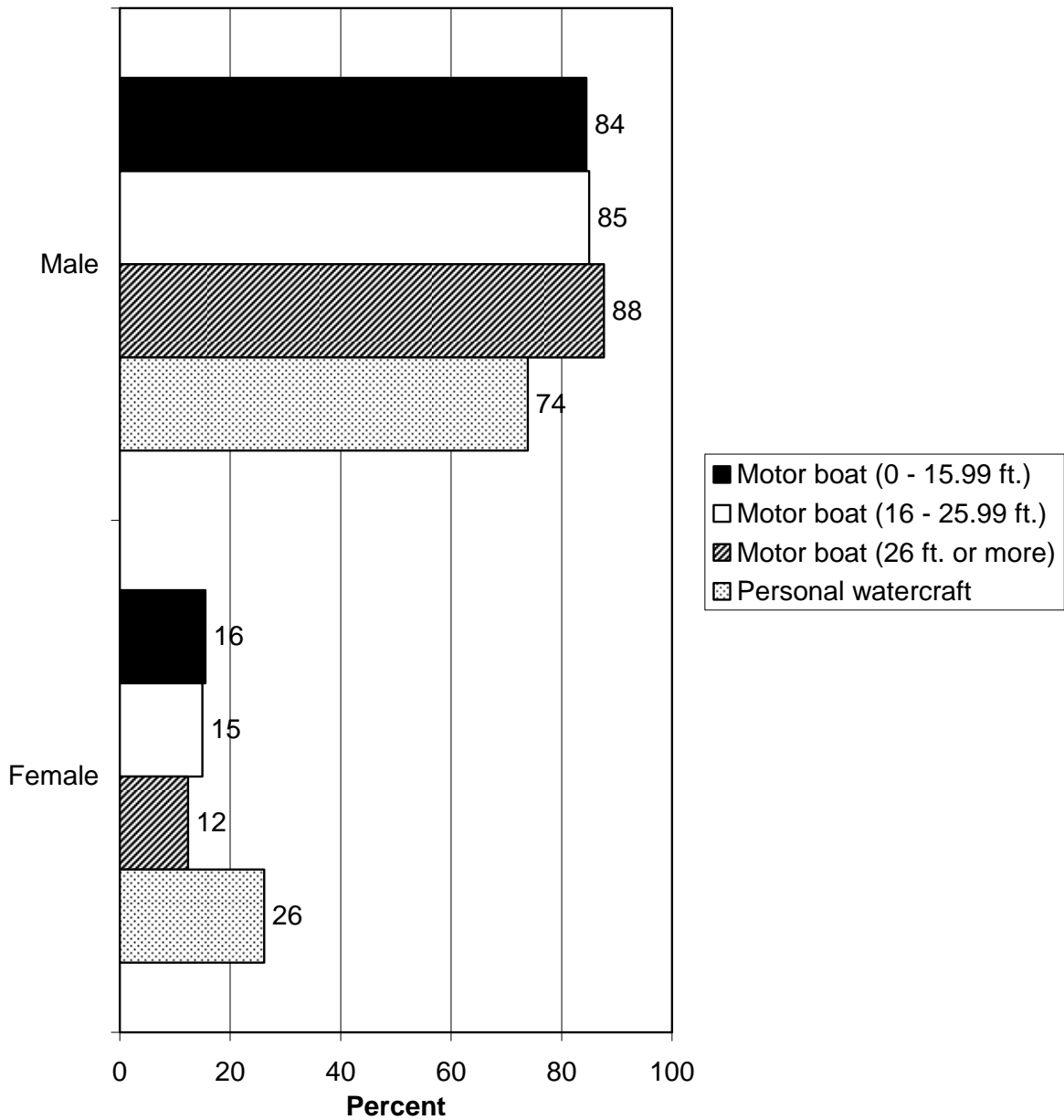
**Q222. Respondent's gender (not asked, but observed by interviewer).**

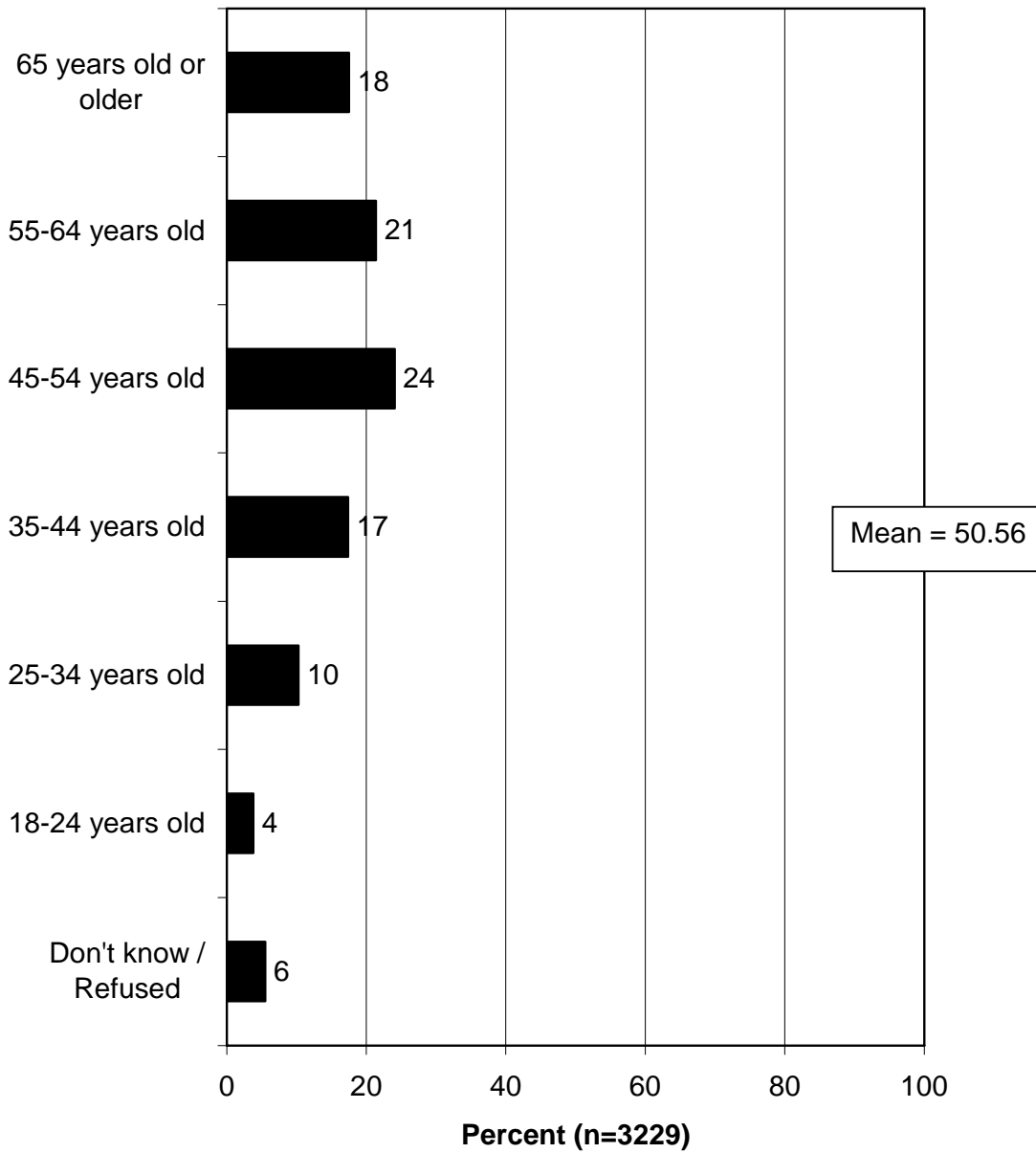


**Q222. Respondent's gender (not asked, but observed by interviewer).**



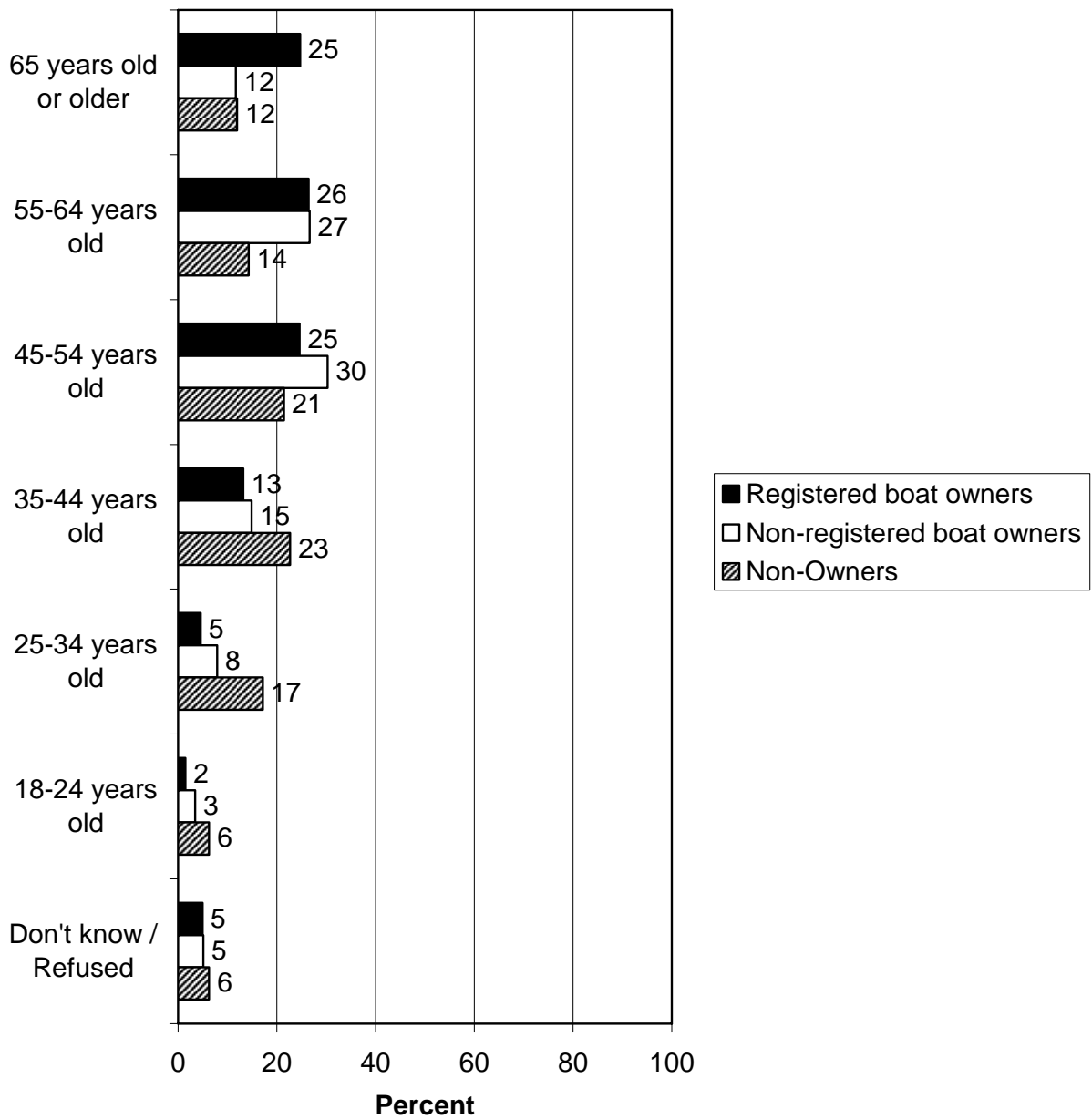
**Q222. Respondent's gender (not asked, but observed by interviewer).**



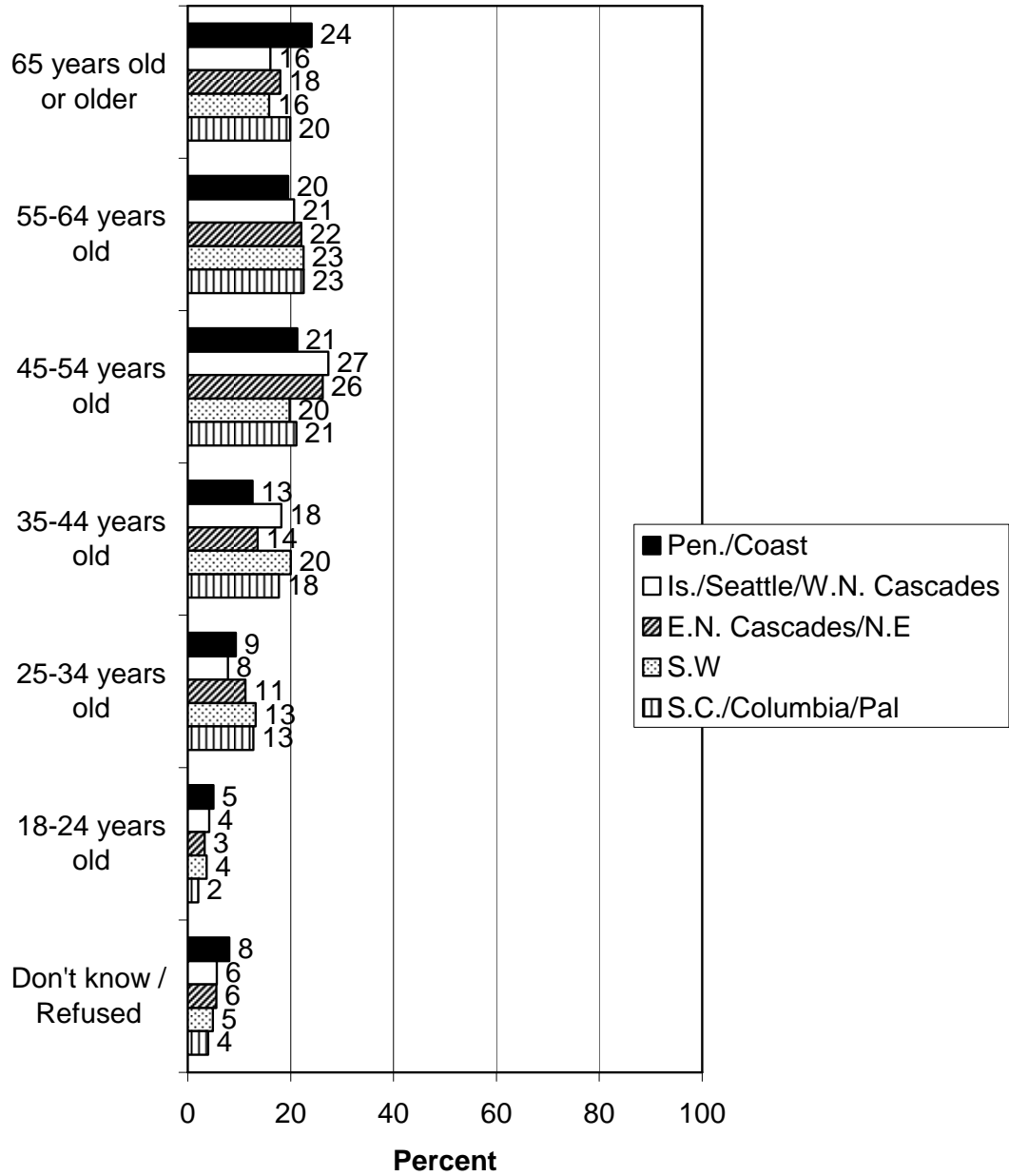
**Q216. Respondent's age.**



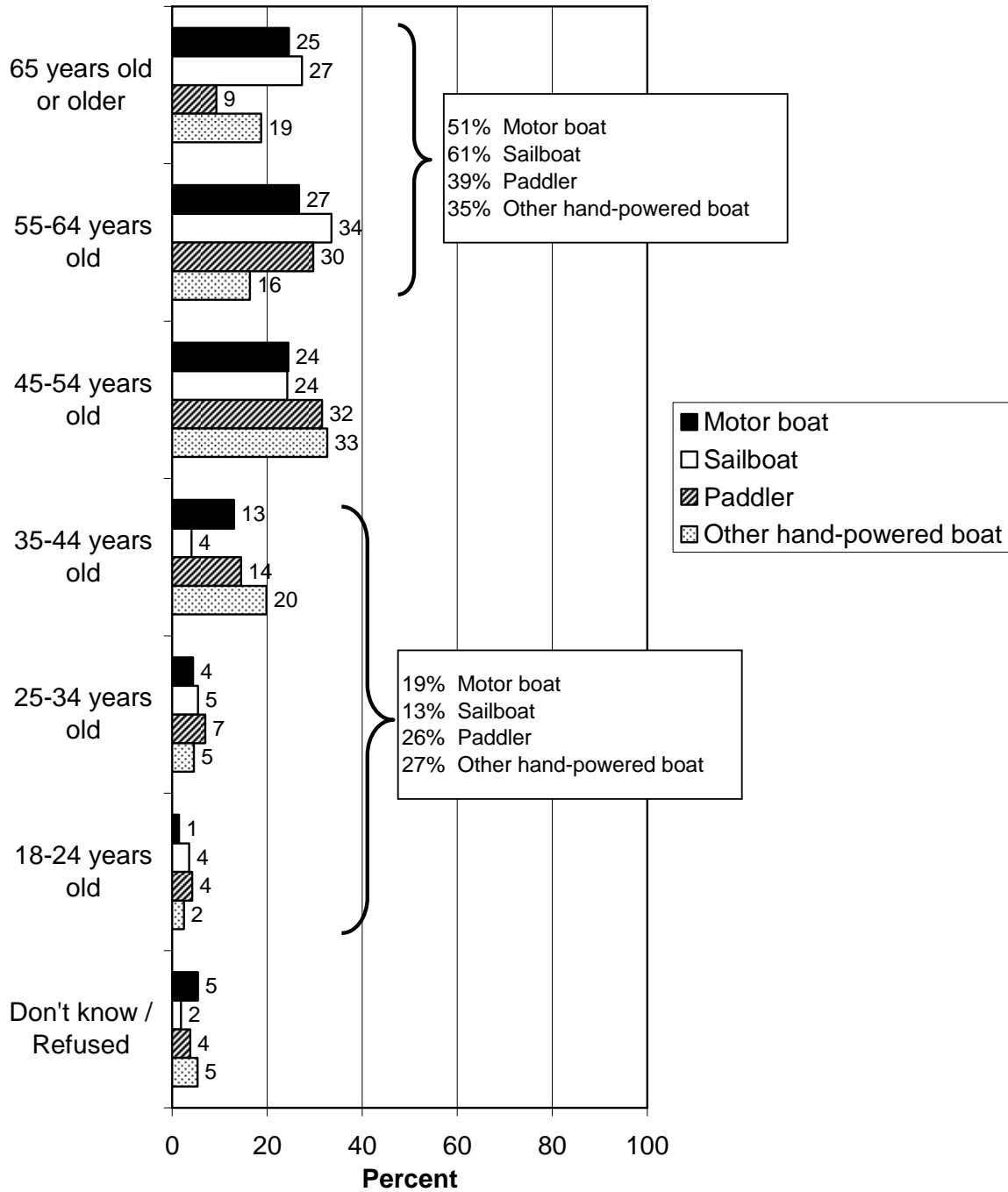
**Q216. Respondent's age.**



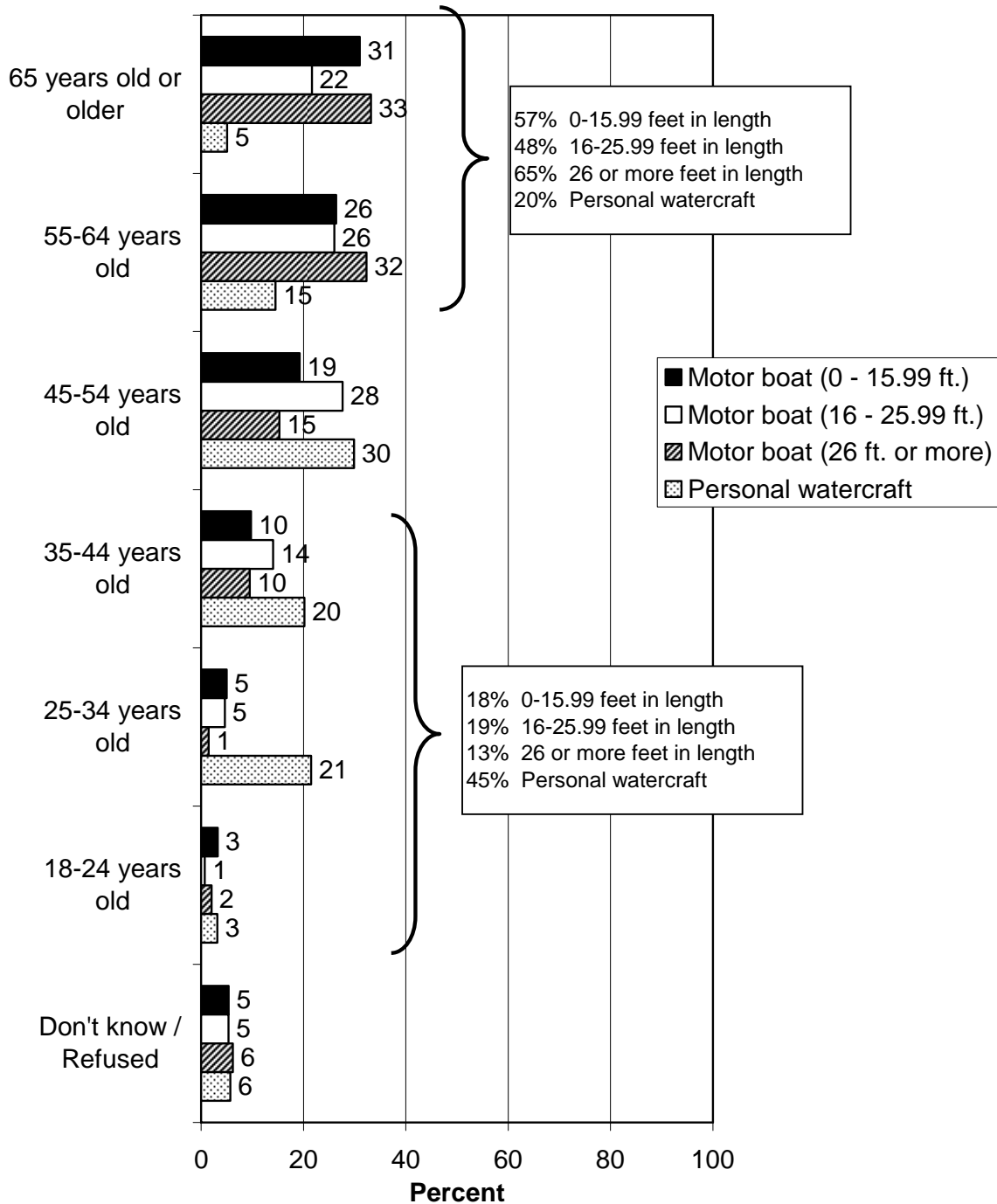
**Q216. Respondent's age.**



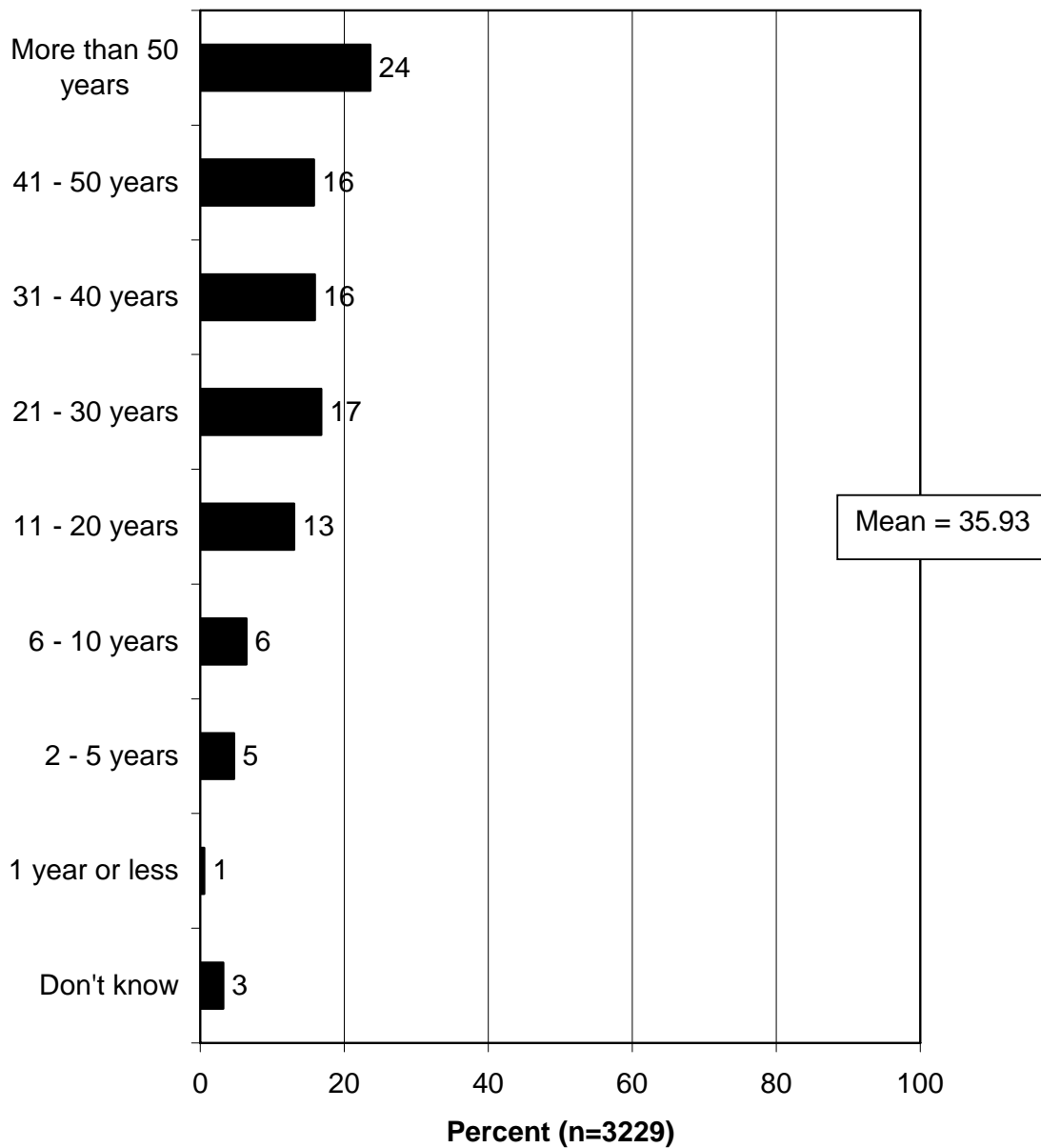
### Q216. Respondent's age.



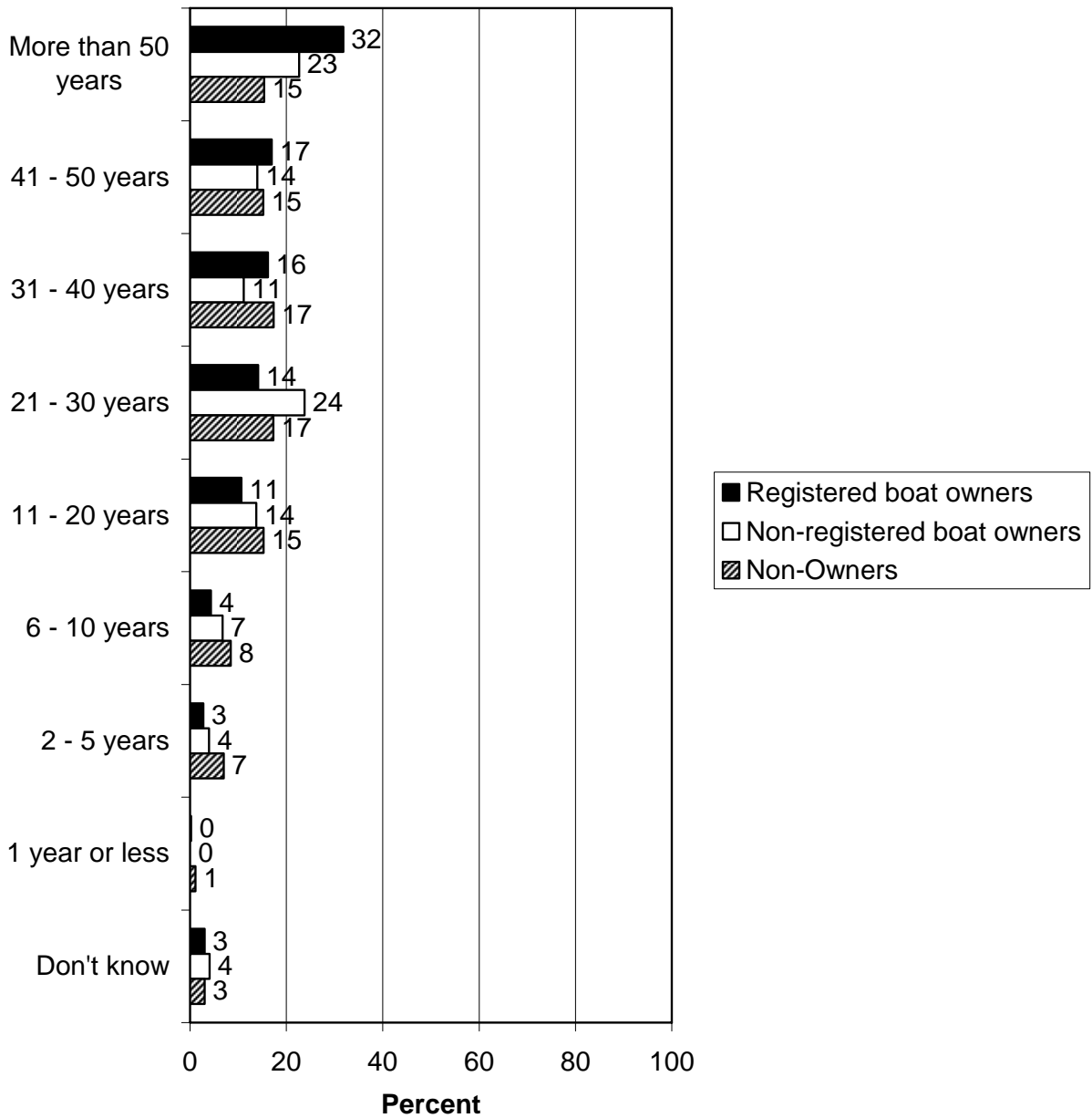
### Q216. Respondent's age.



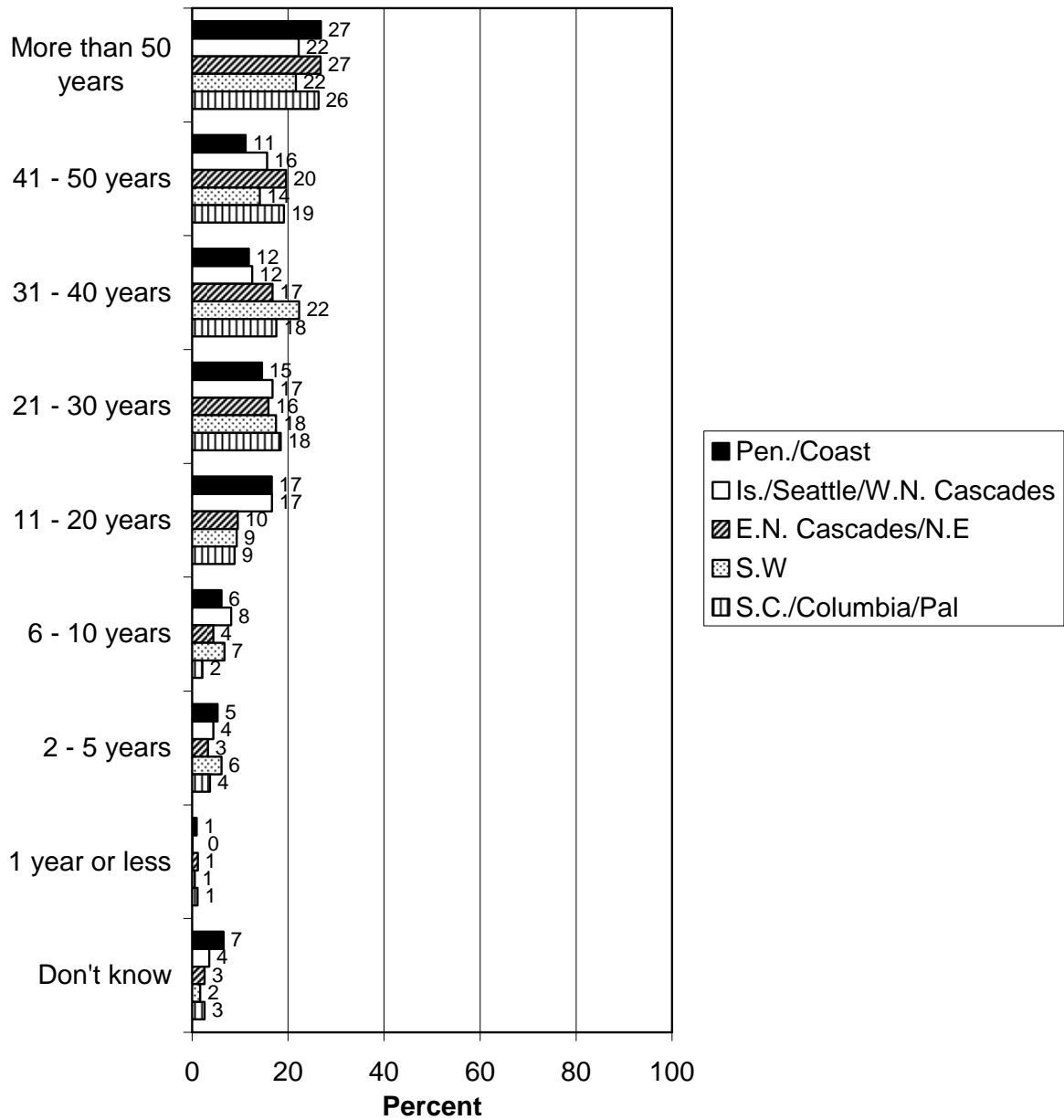
### Q210. How many years have you been a Washington resident?



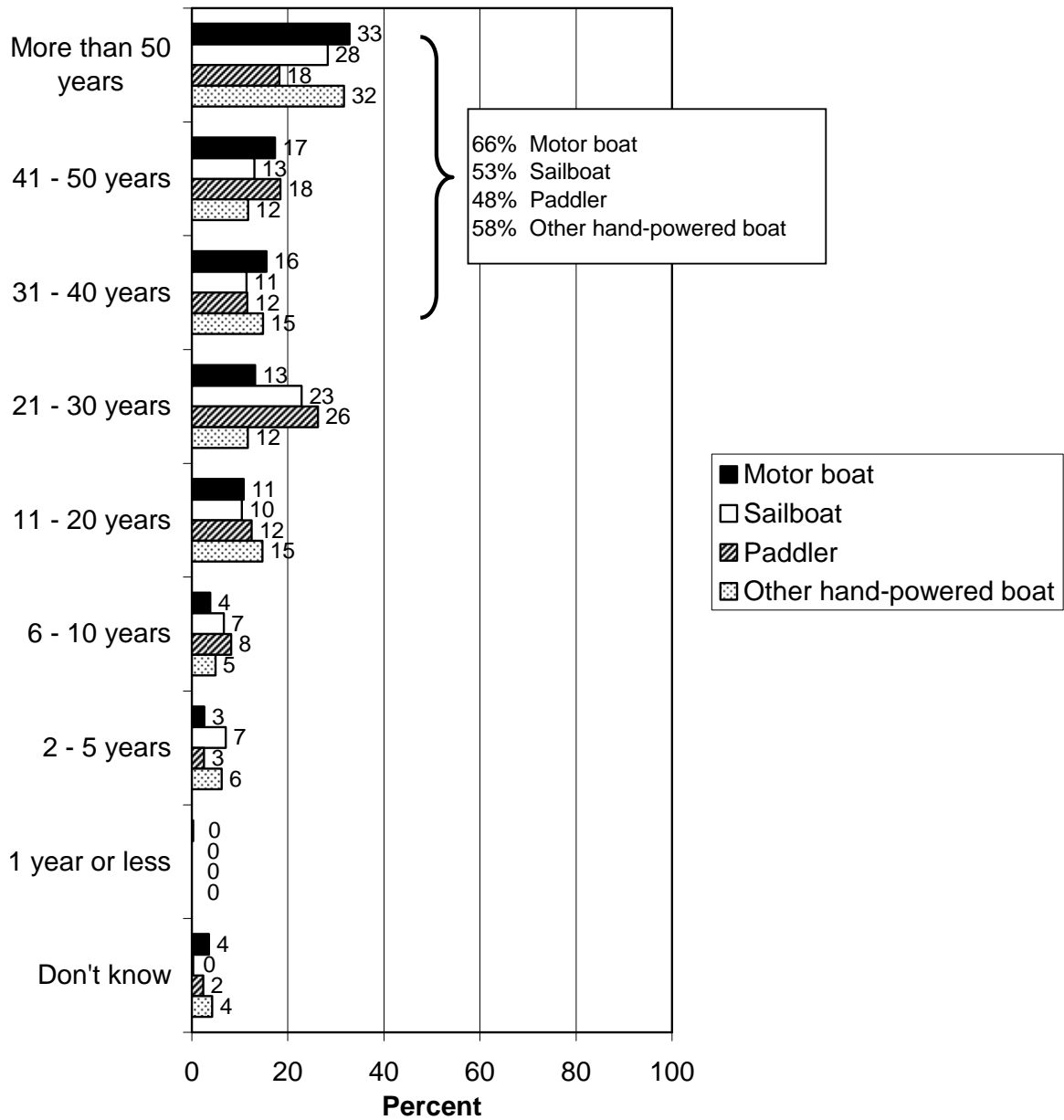
### Q210. How many years have you been a Washington resident?



### Q210. How many years have you been a Washington resident?

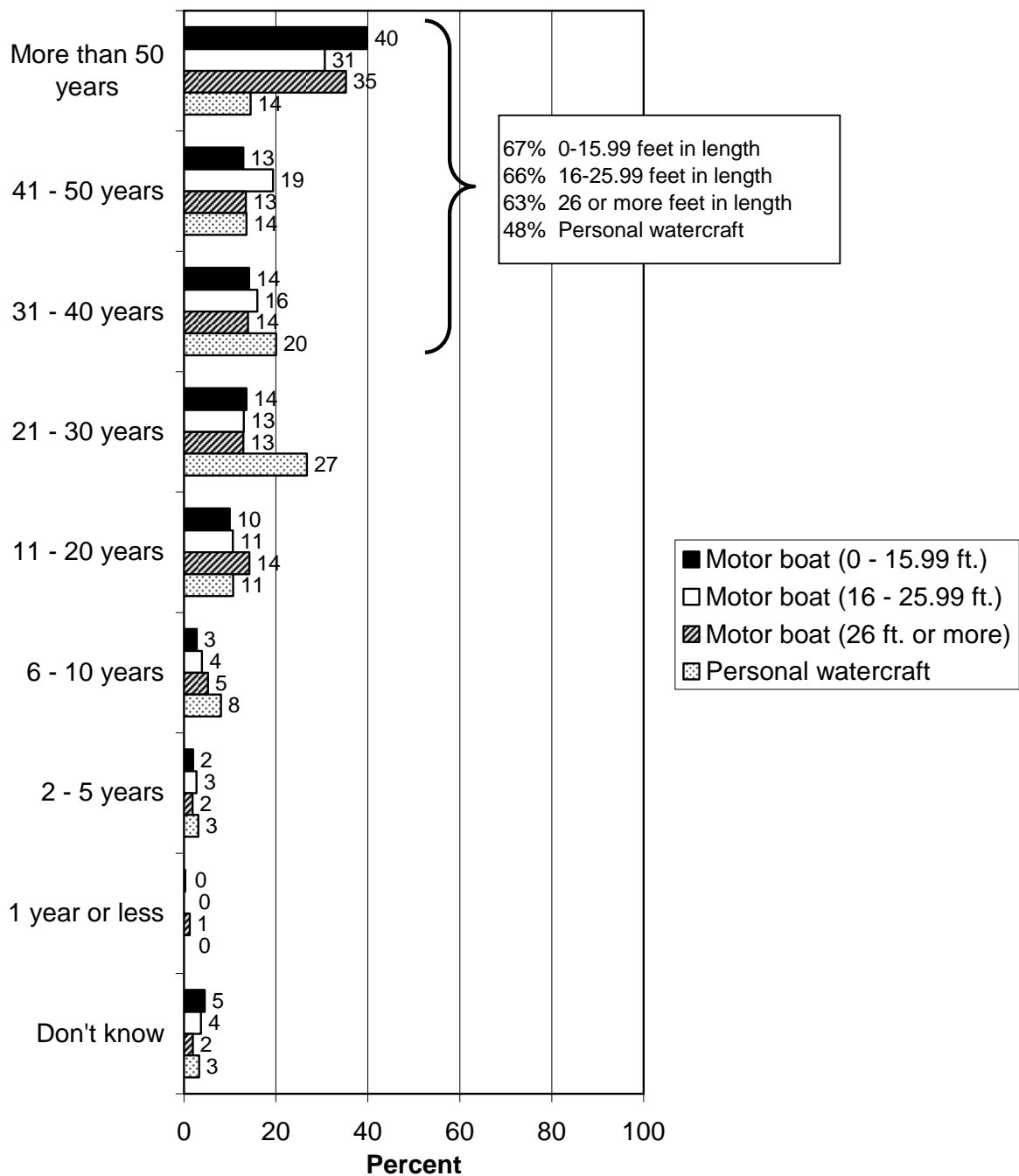


### Q210. How many years have you been a Washington resident?

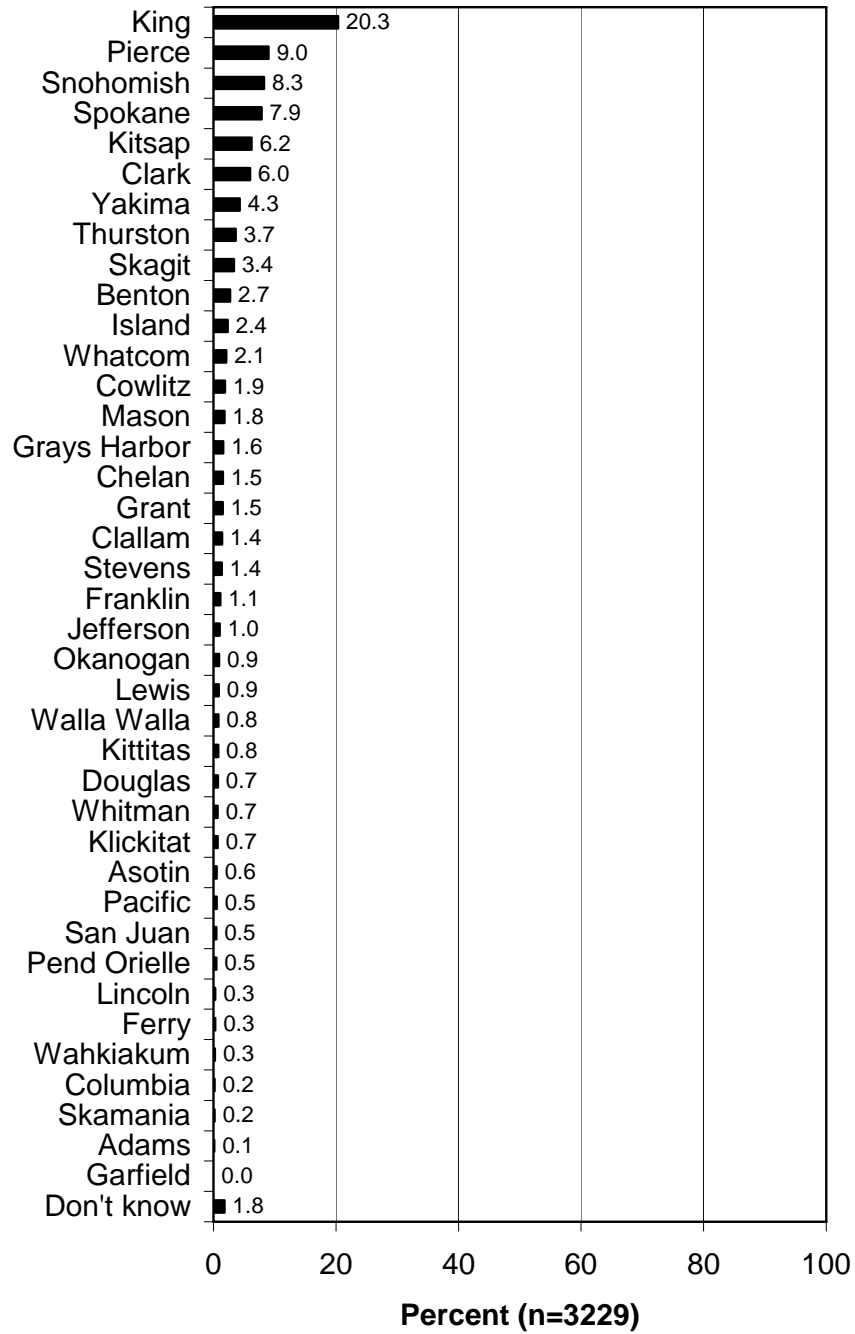




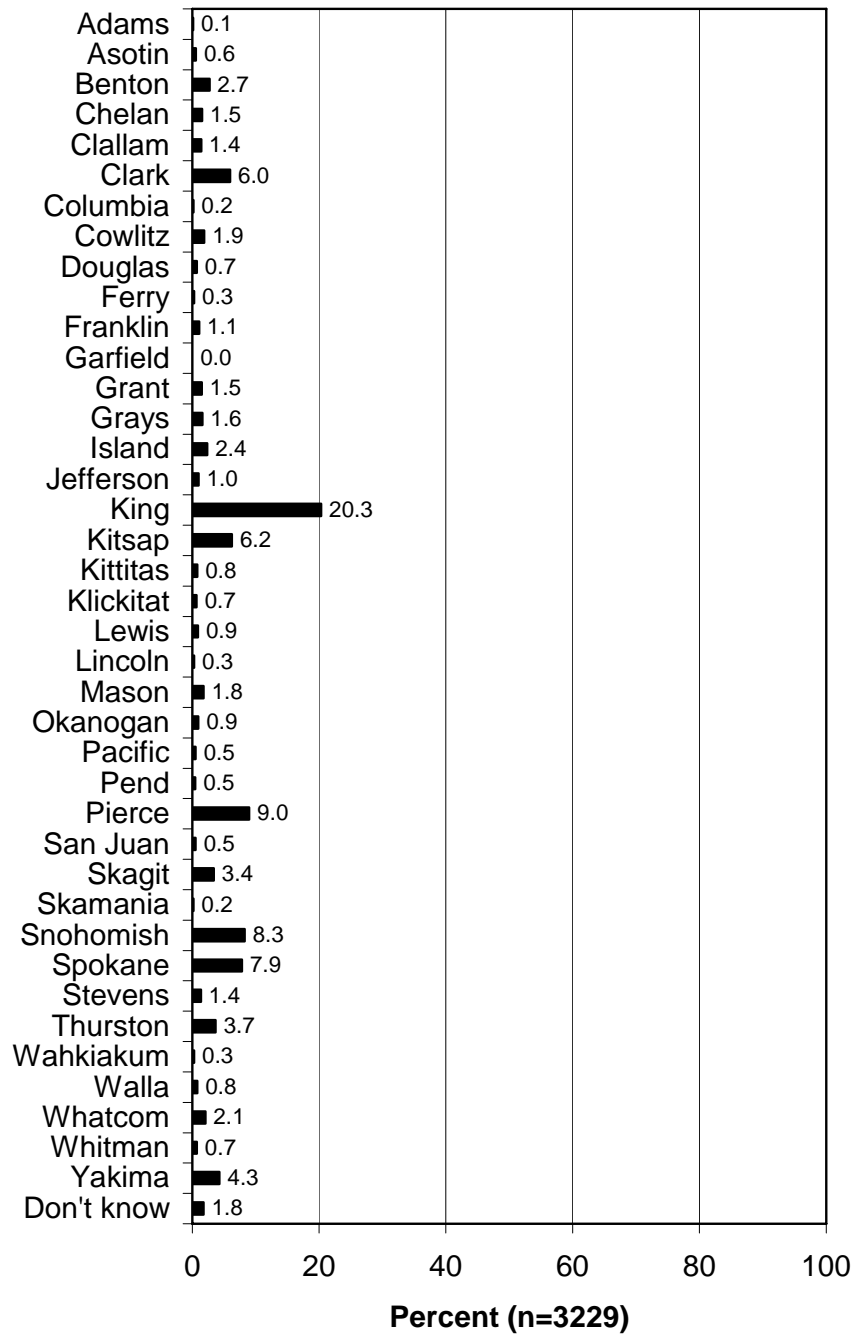
### Q210. How many years have you been a Washington resident?



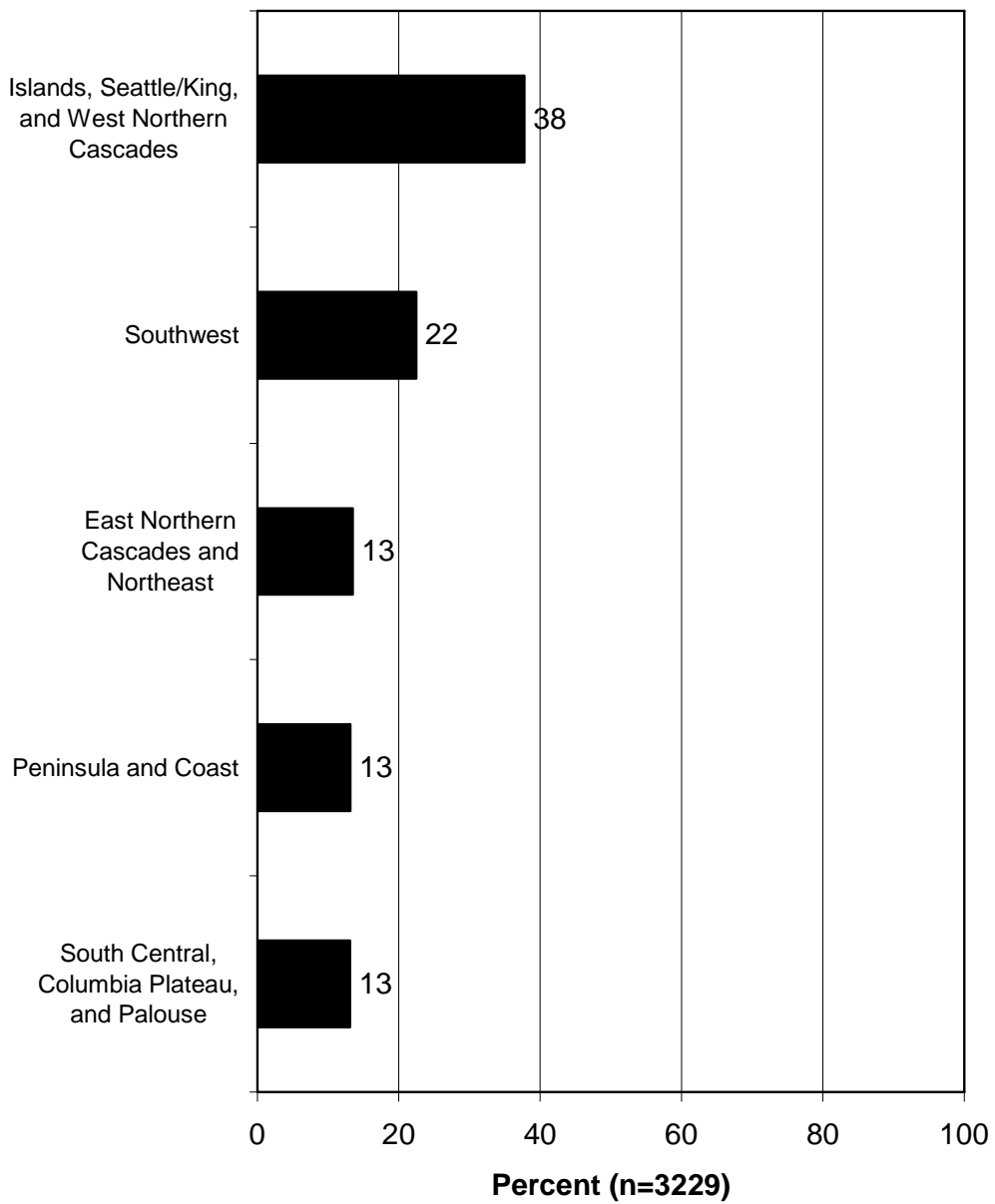
### Q211. In what county do you live?



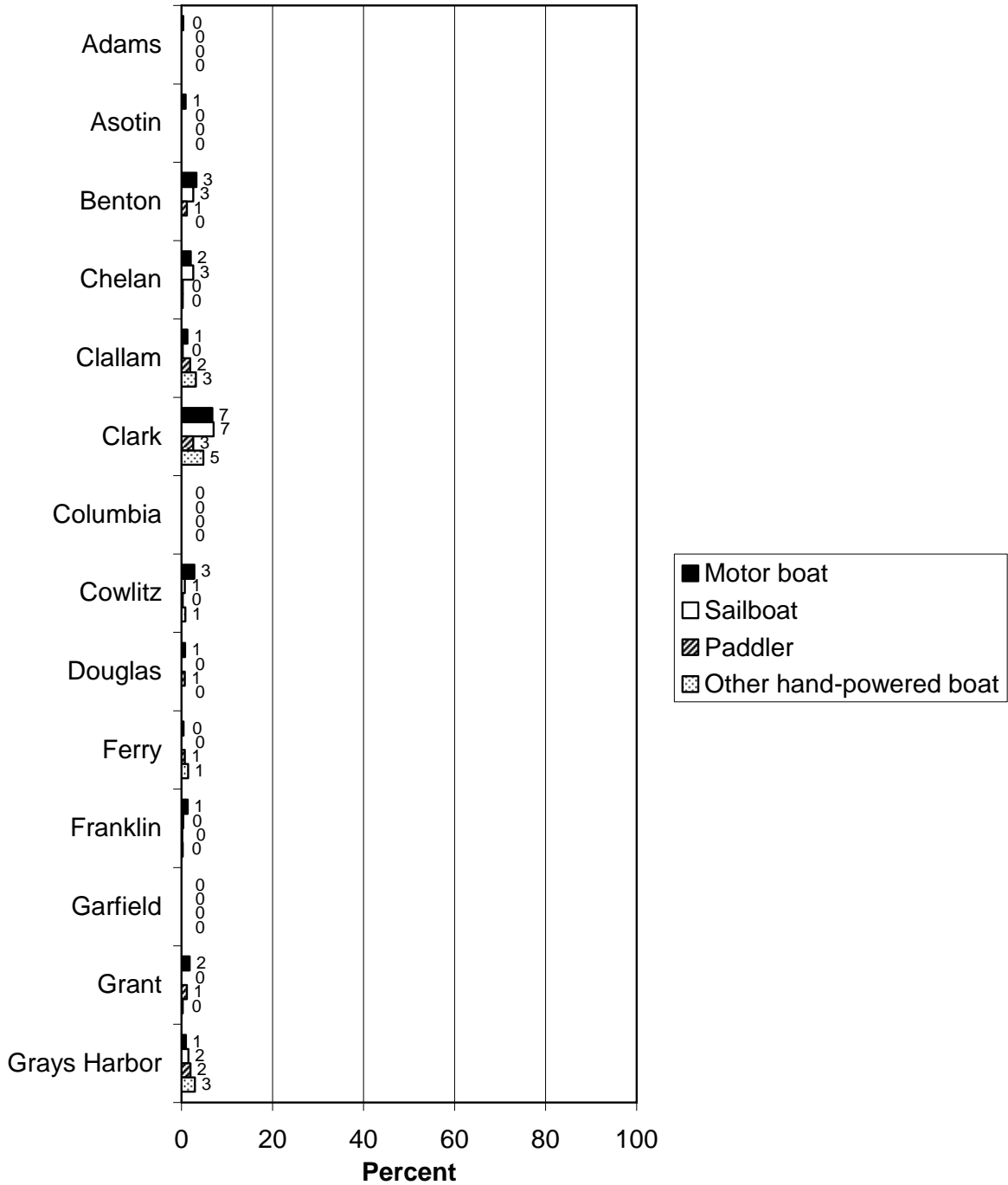
**Q211. In what county do you live? (Listed alphabetically.)**



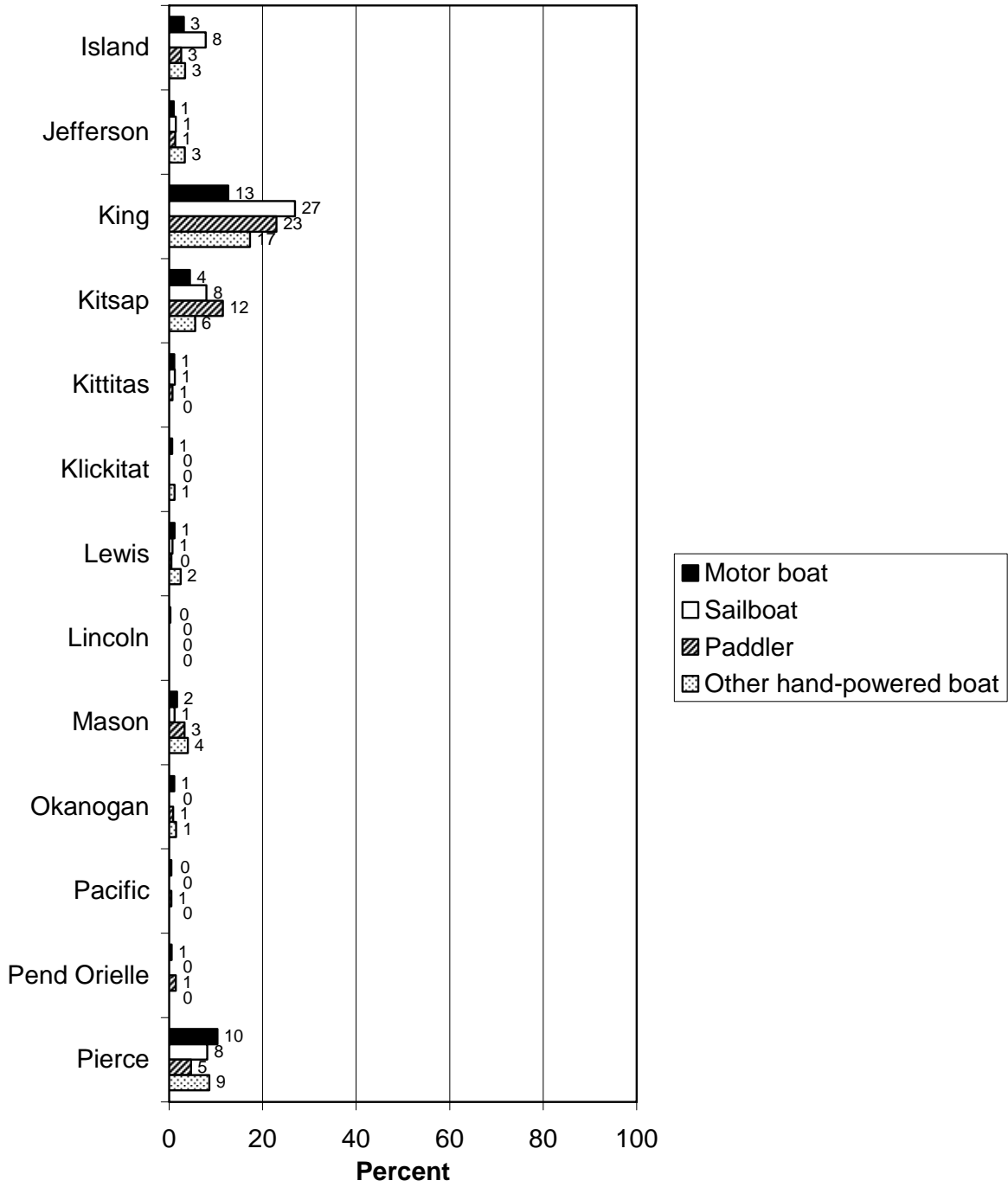
### Washington State region in which respondent lives.



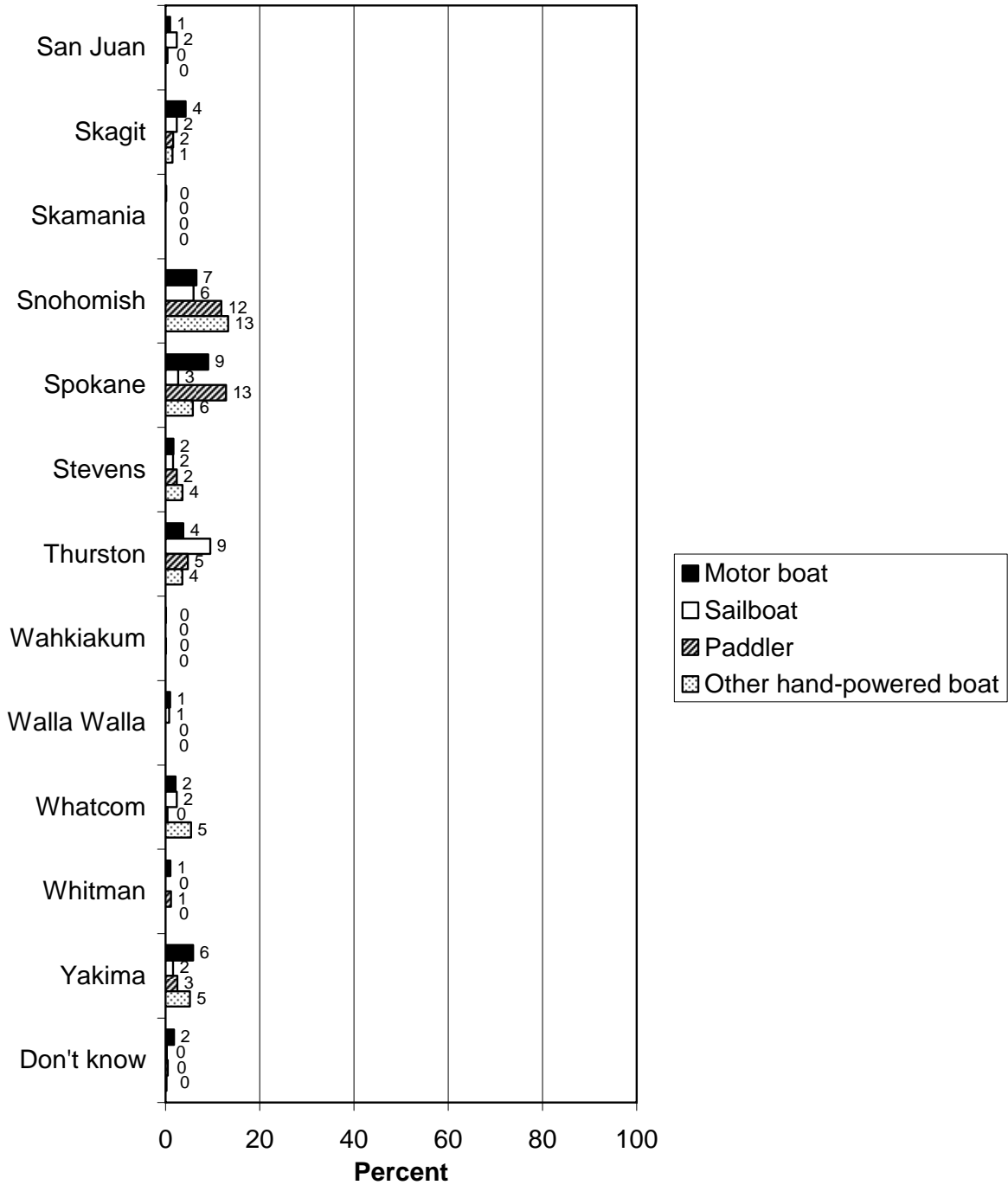
### Q211. In what county do you live? (Part 1.)



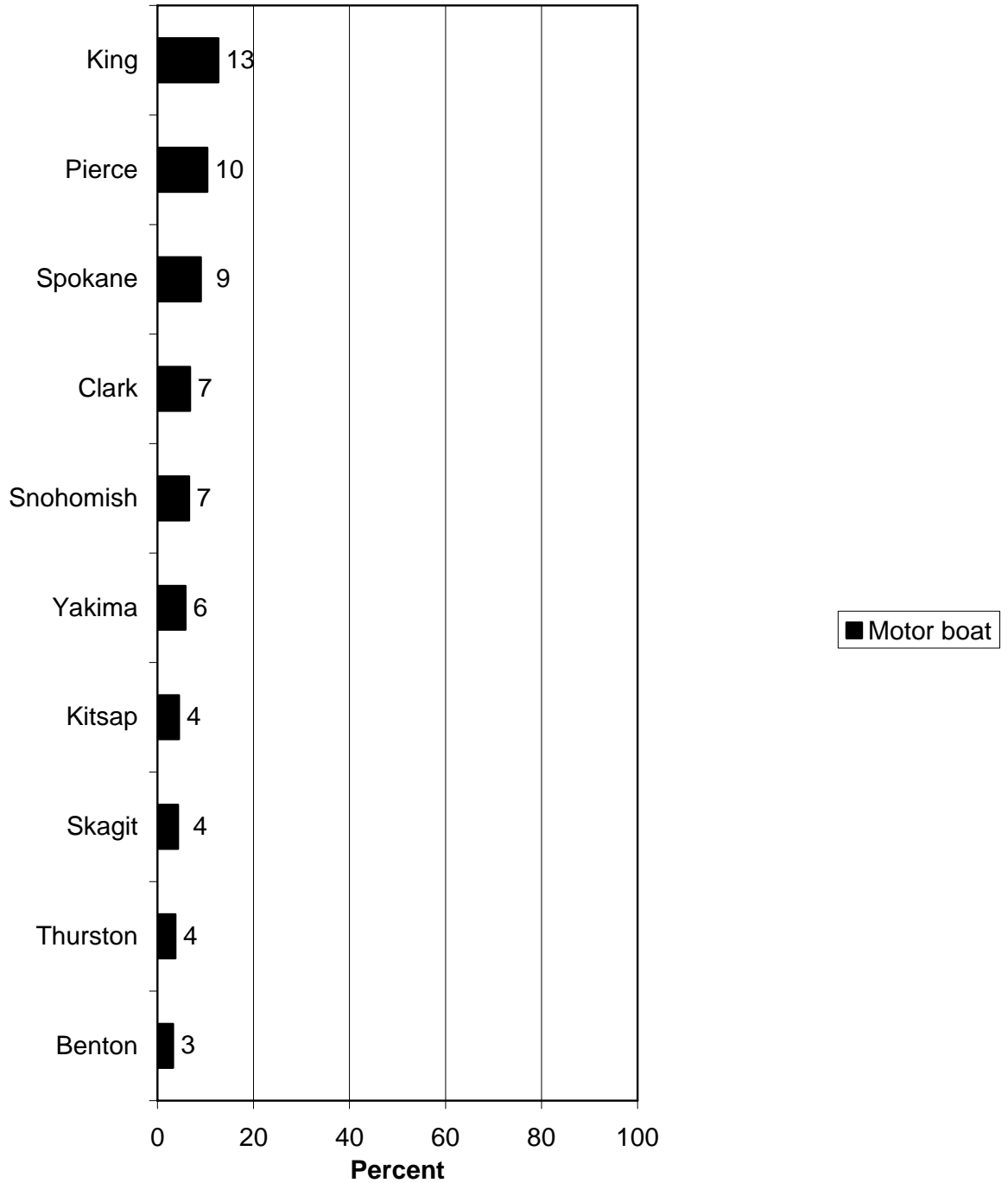
### Q211. In what county do you live? (Part 2.)



**Q211. In what county do you live? (Part 3.)**

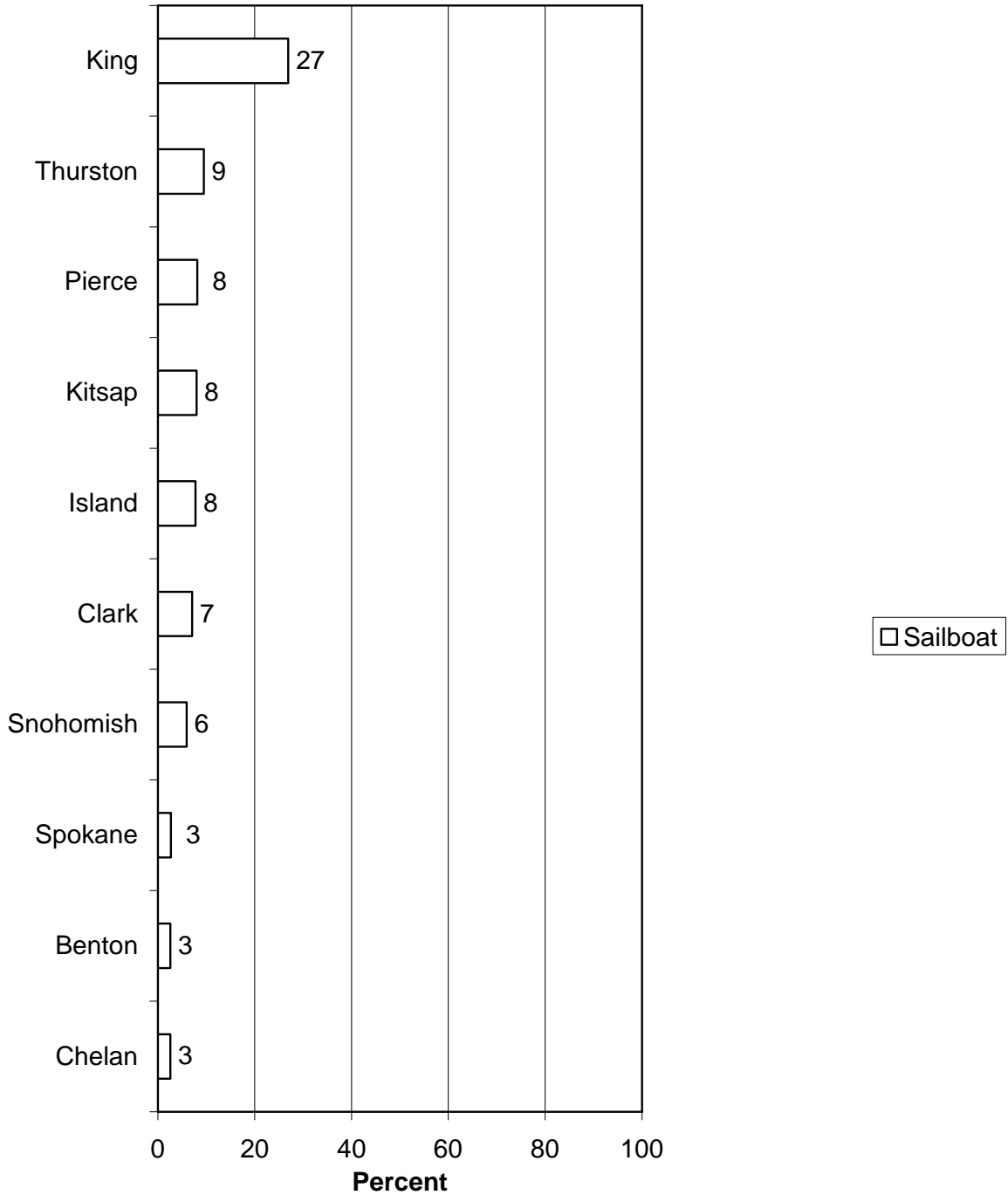


**Q211. In what county do you live? (Shows only top 10 counties.)**

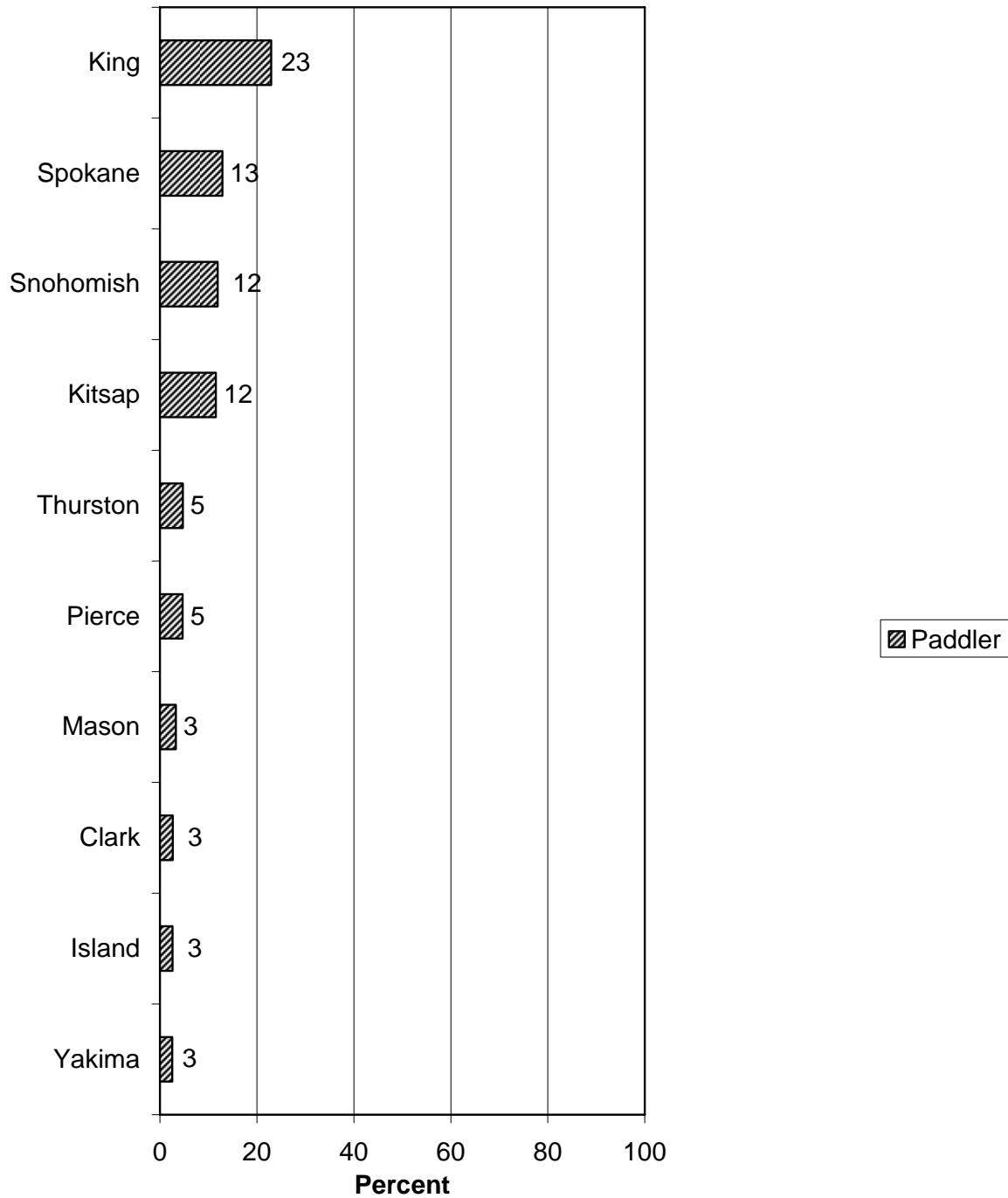




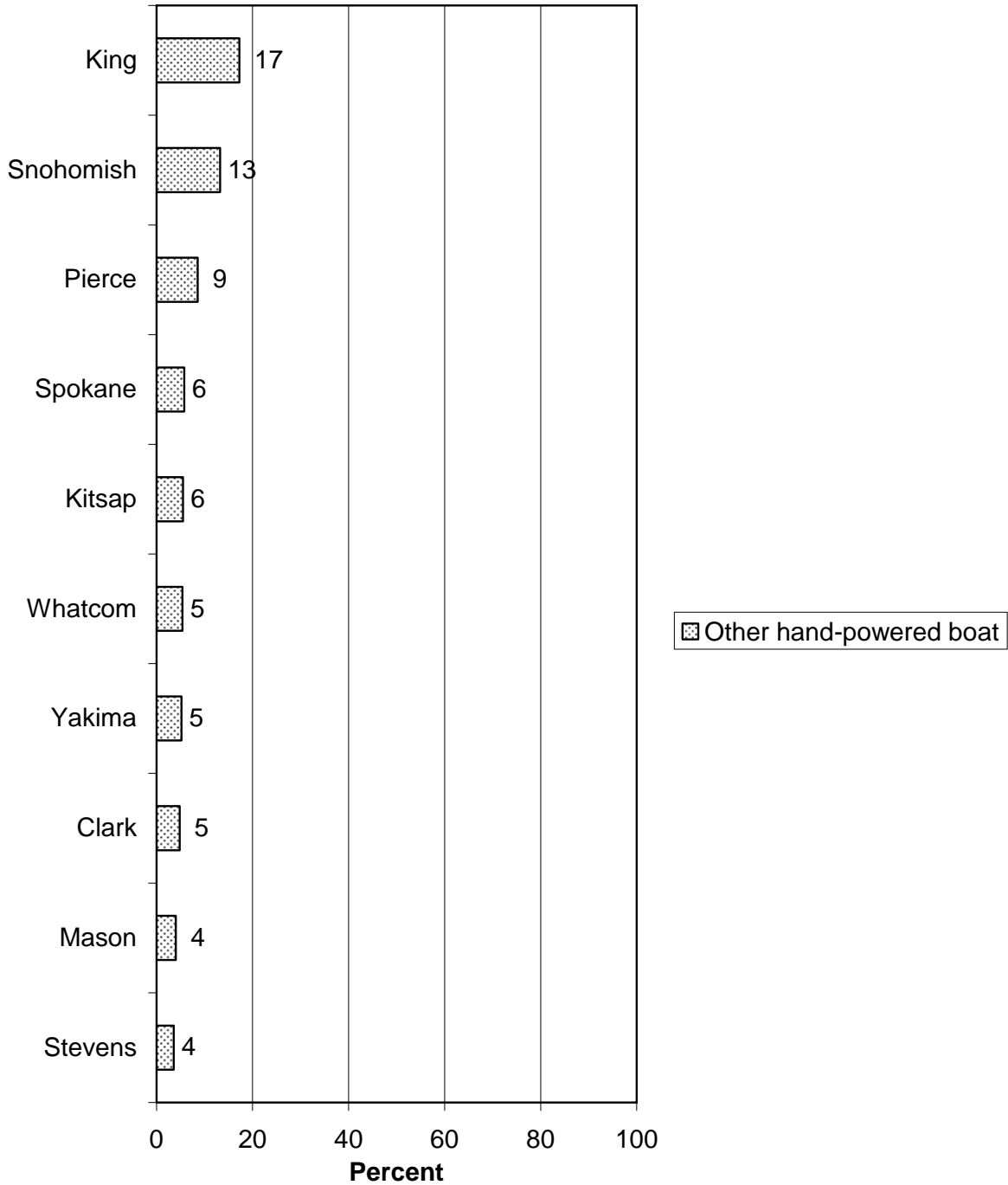
**Q211. In what county do you live? (Shows only top 10 counties.)**



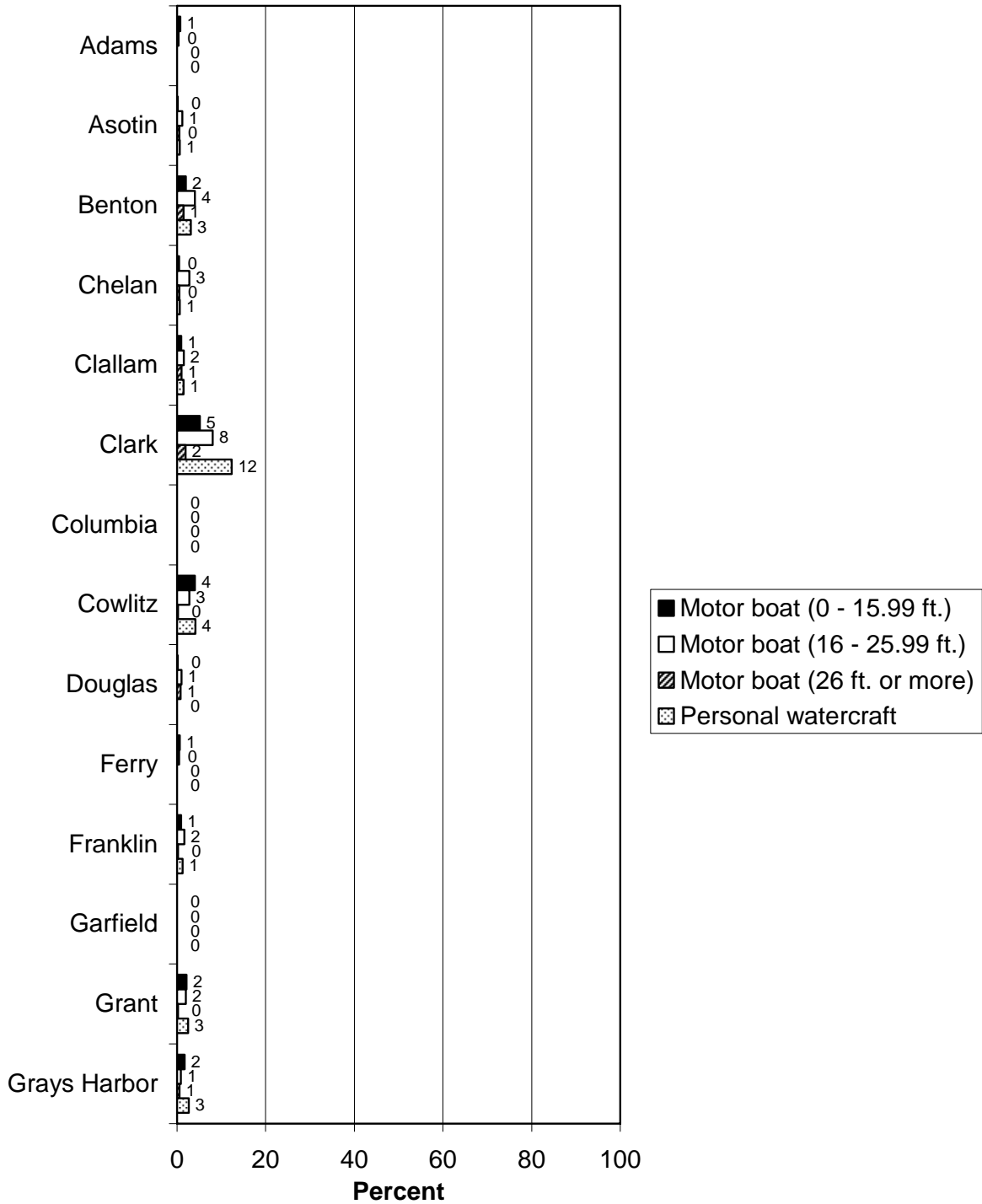
**Q211. In what county do you live? (Shows only top 10 counties.)**



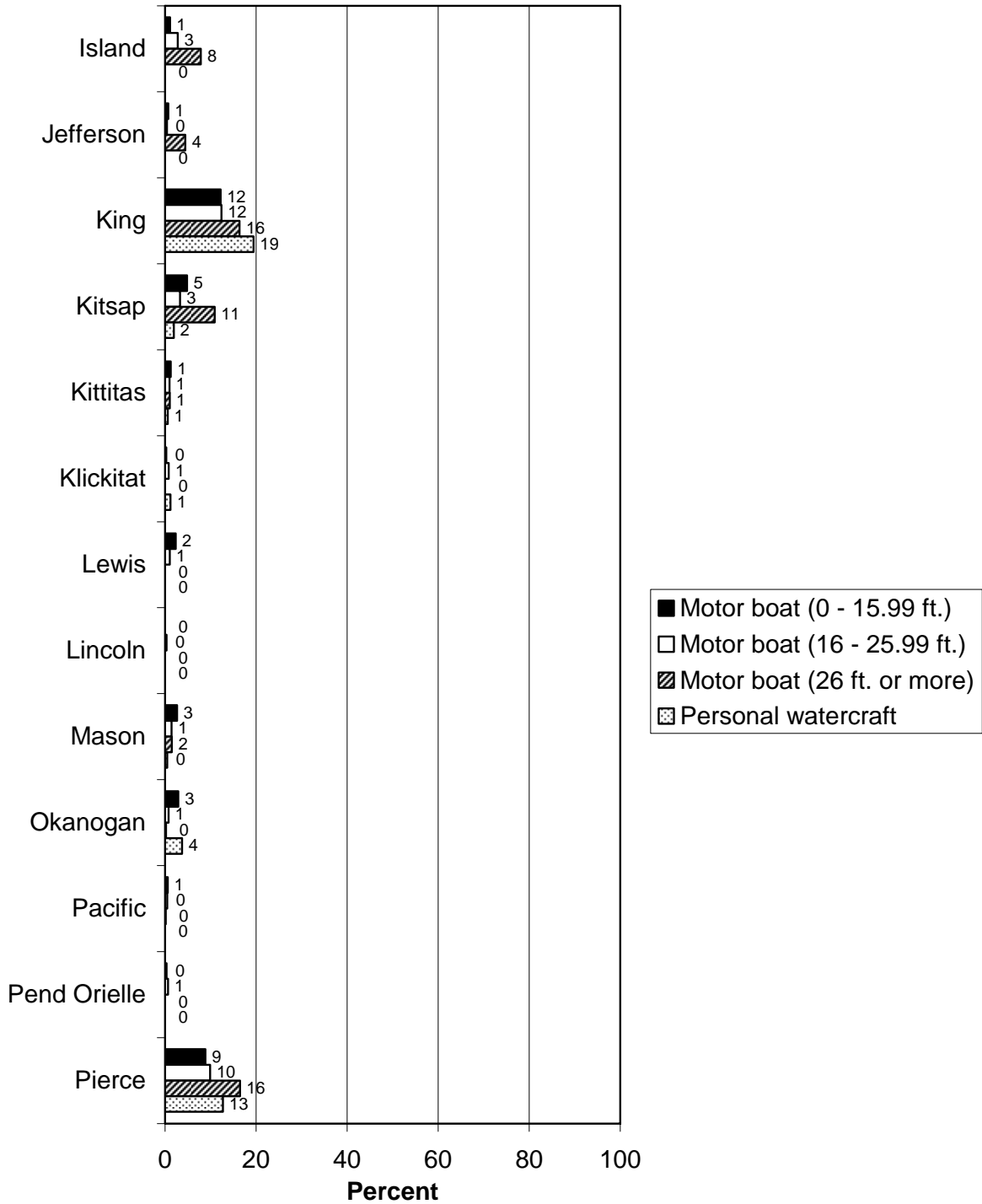
**Q211. In what county do you live? (Shows only top 10 counties.)**



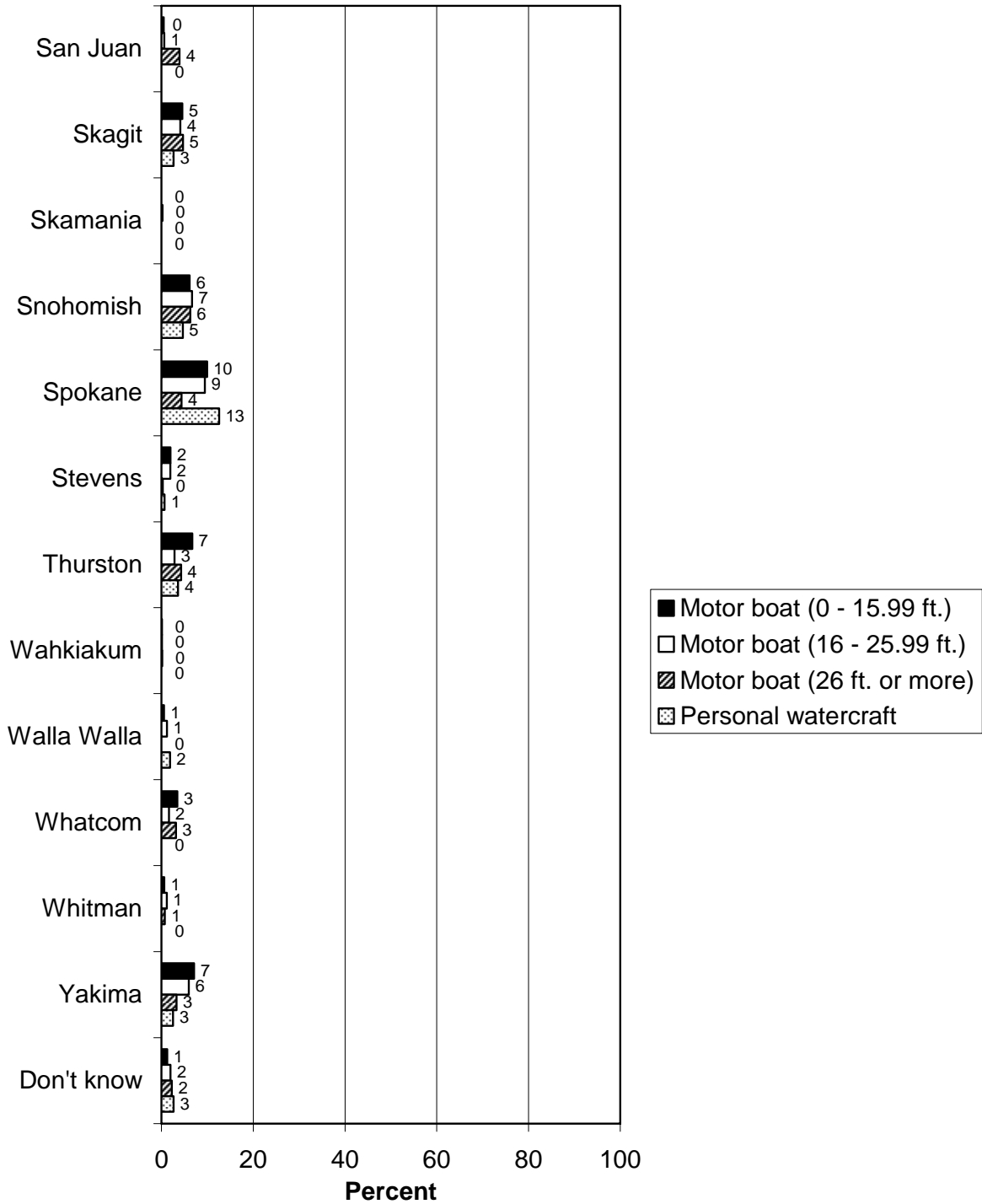
### Q211. In what county do you live? (Part 1.)



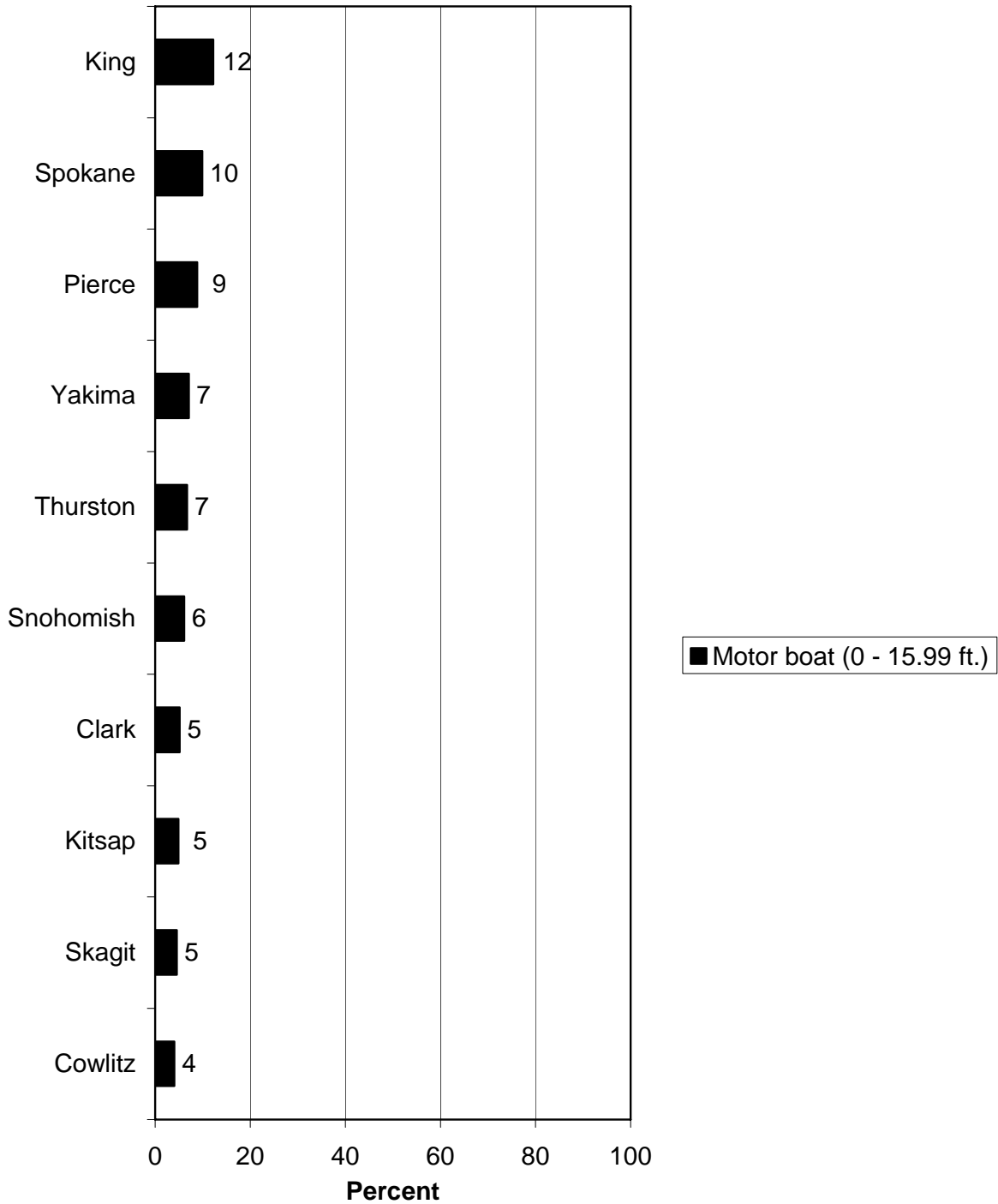
**Q211. In what county do you live? (Part 2.)**



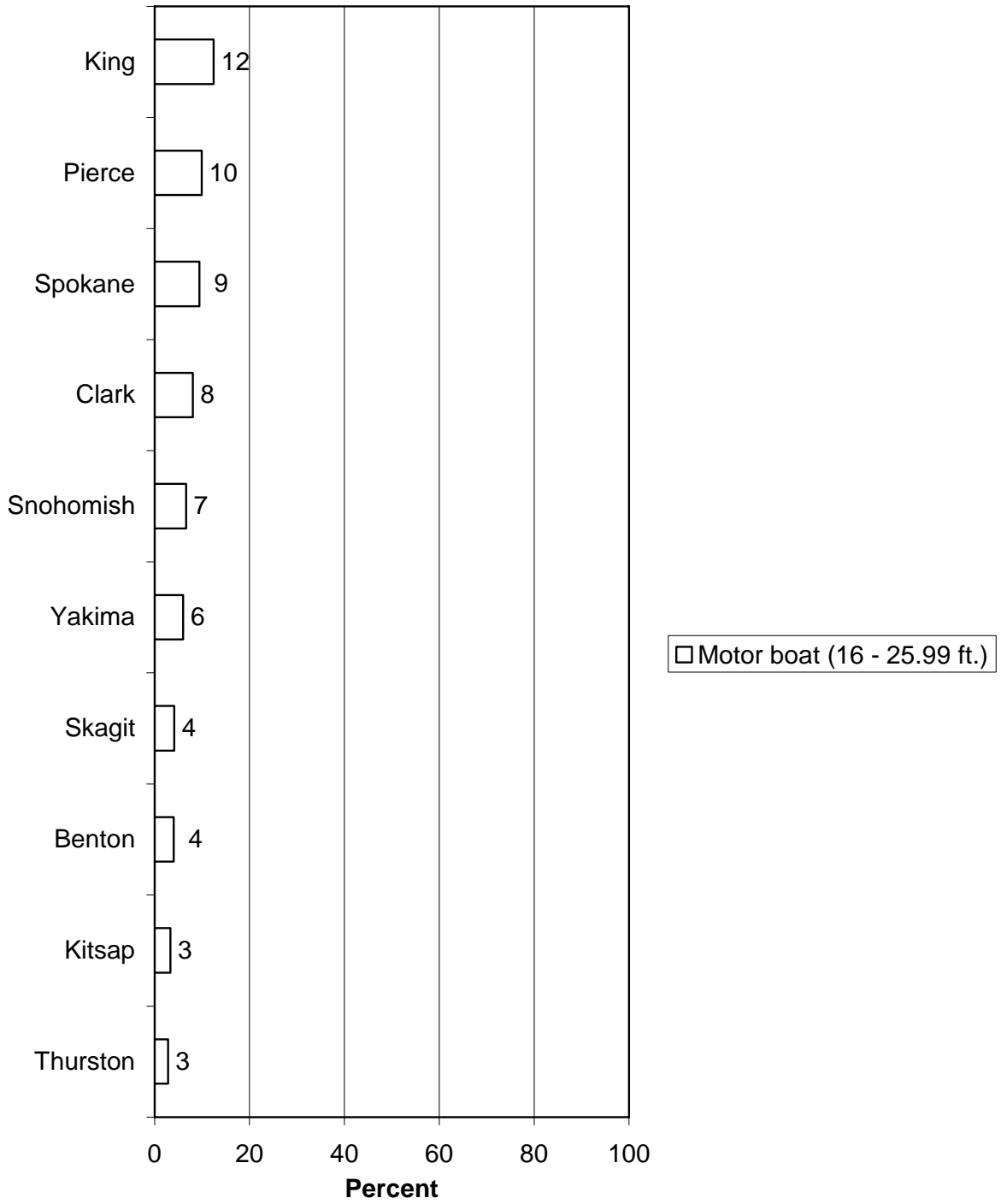
**Q211. In what county do you live? (Part 3.)**



**Q211. In what county do you live? (Shows only top 10 counties.)**

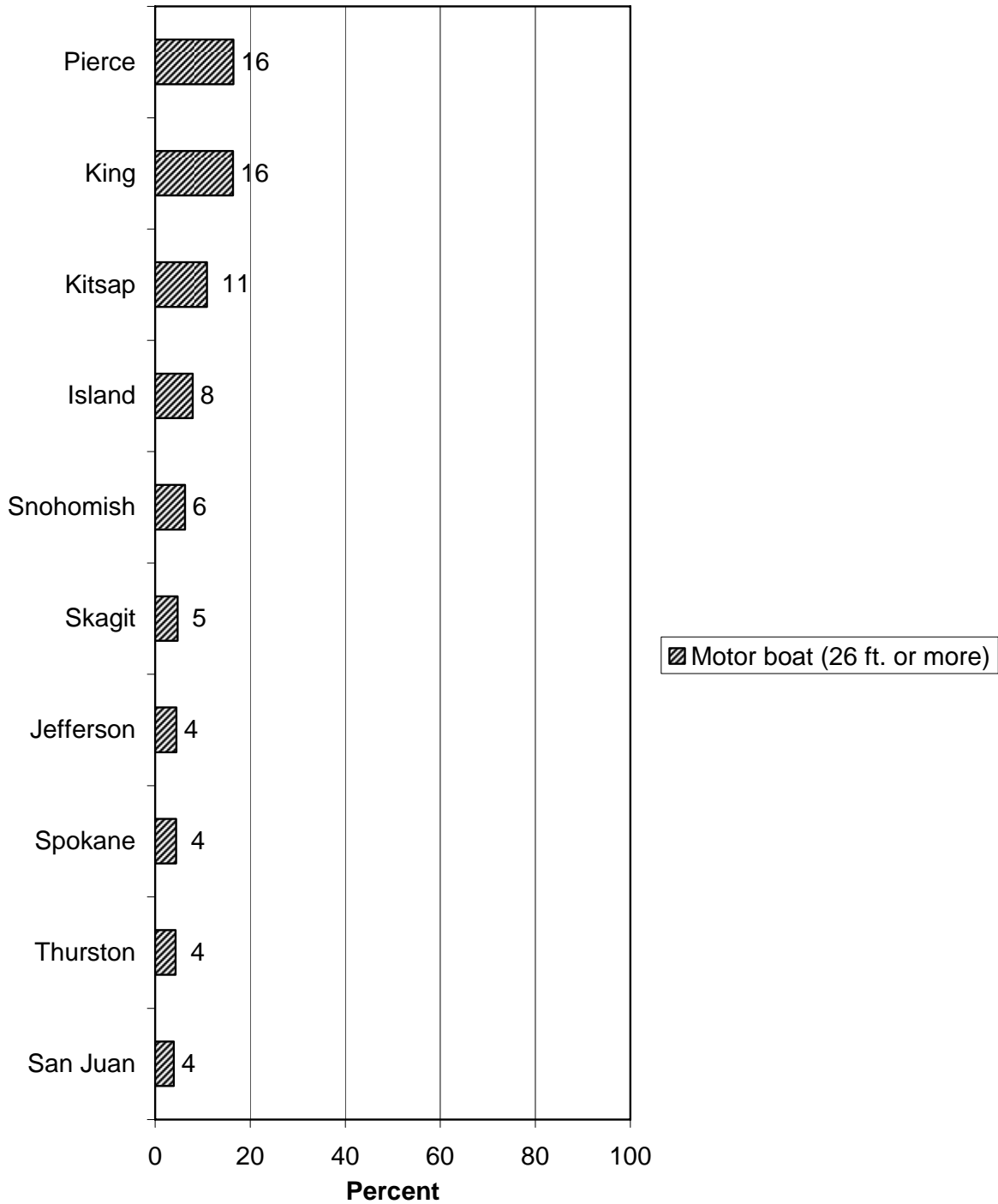


**Q211. In what county do you live? (Shows only top 10 counties.)**

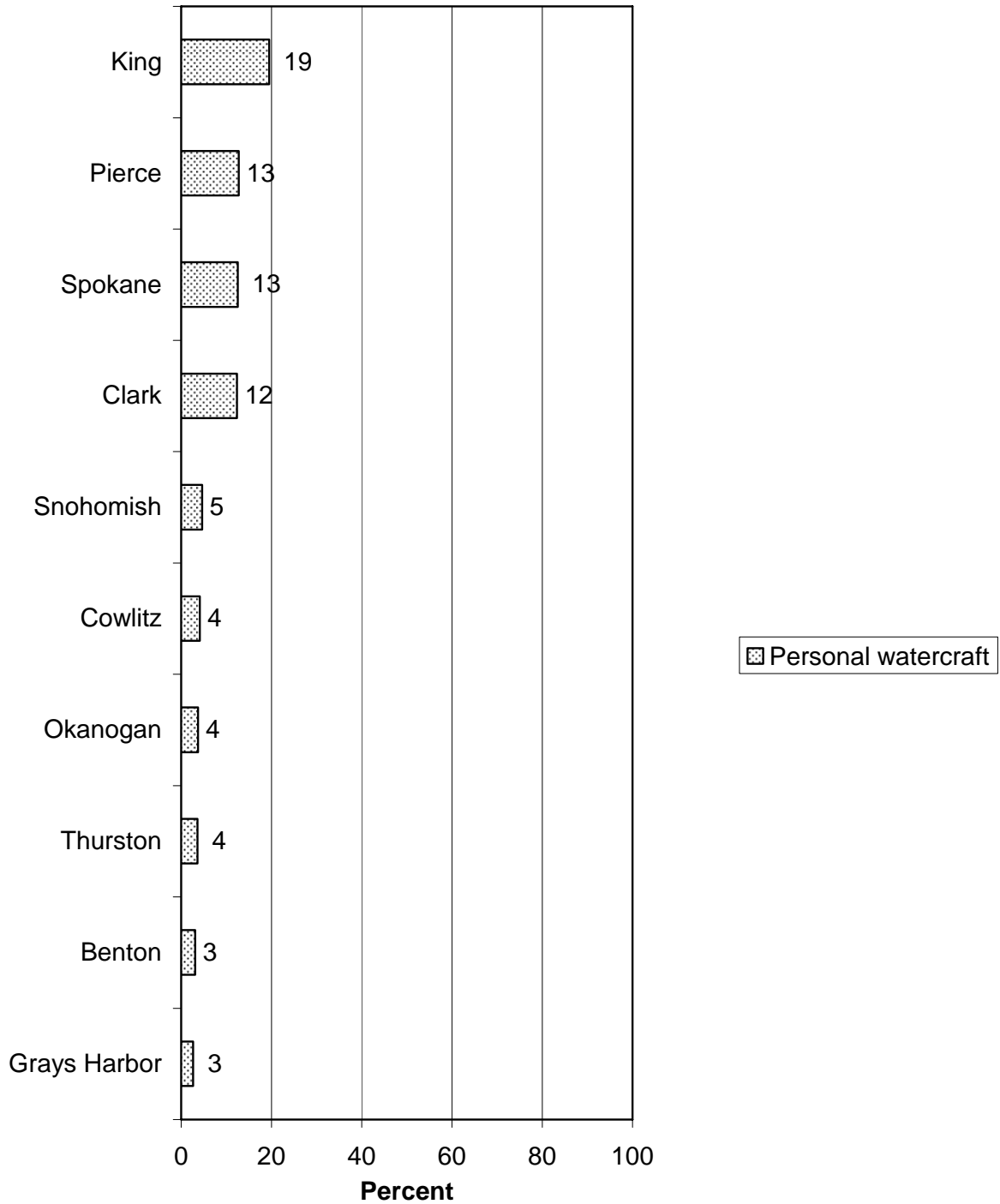




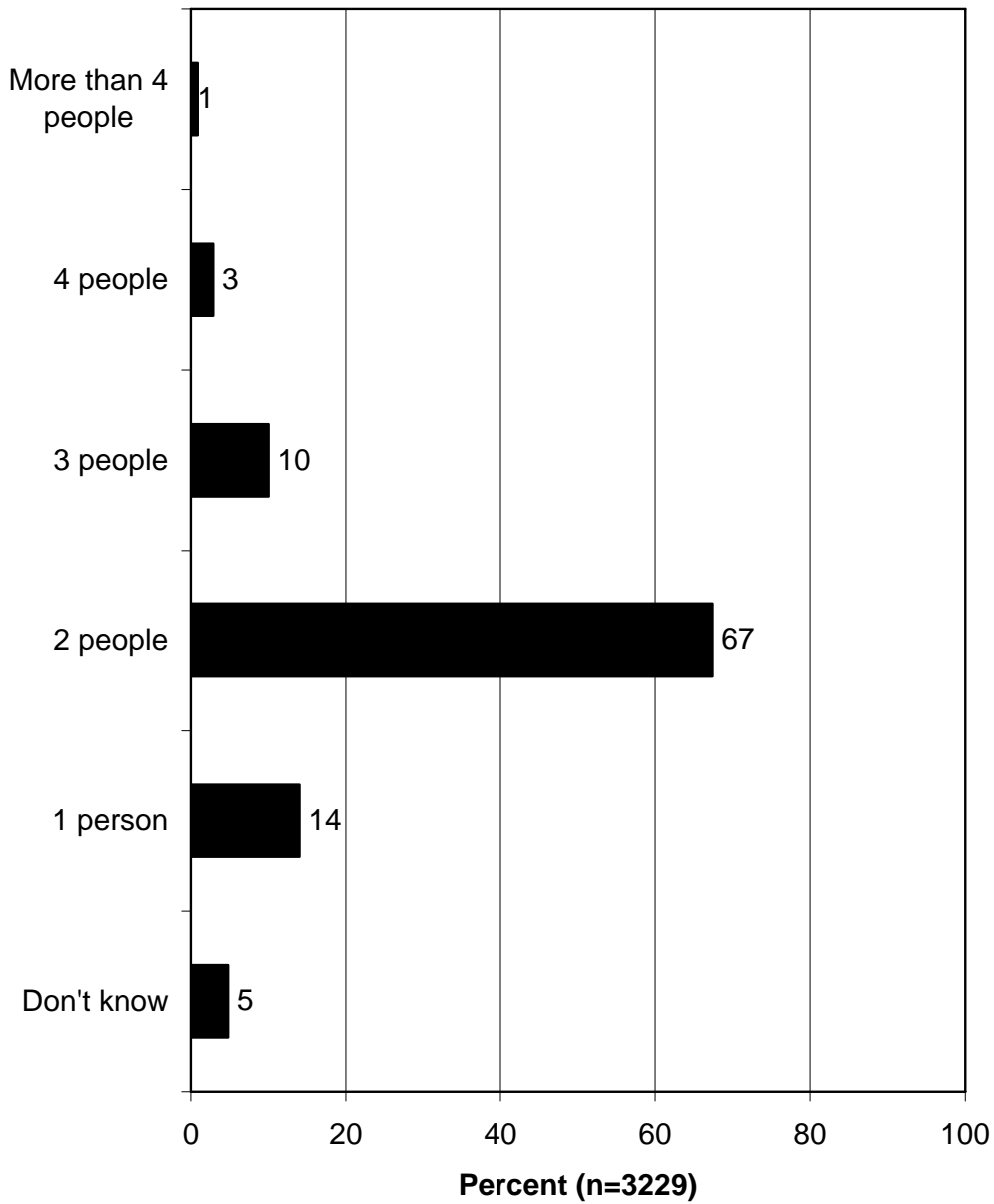
**Q211. In what county do you live? (Shows only top 10 counties.)**



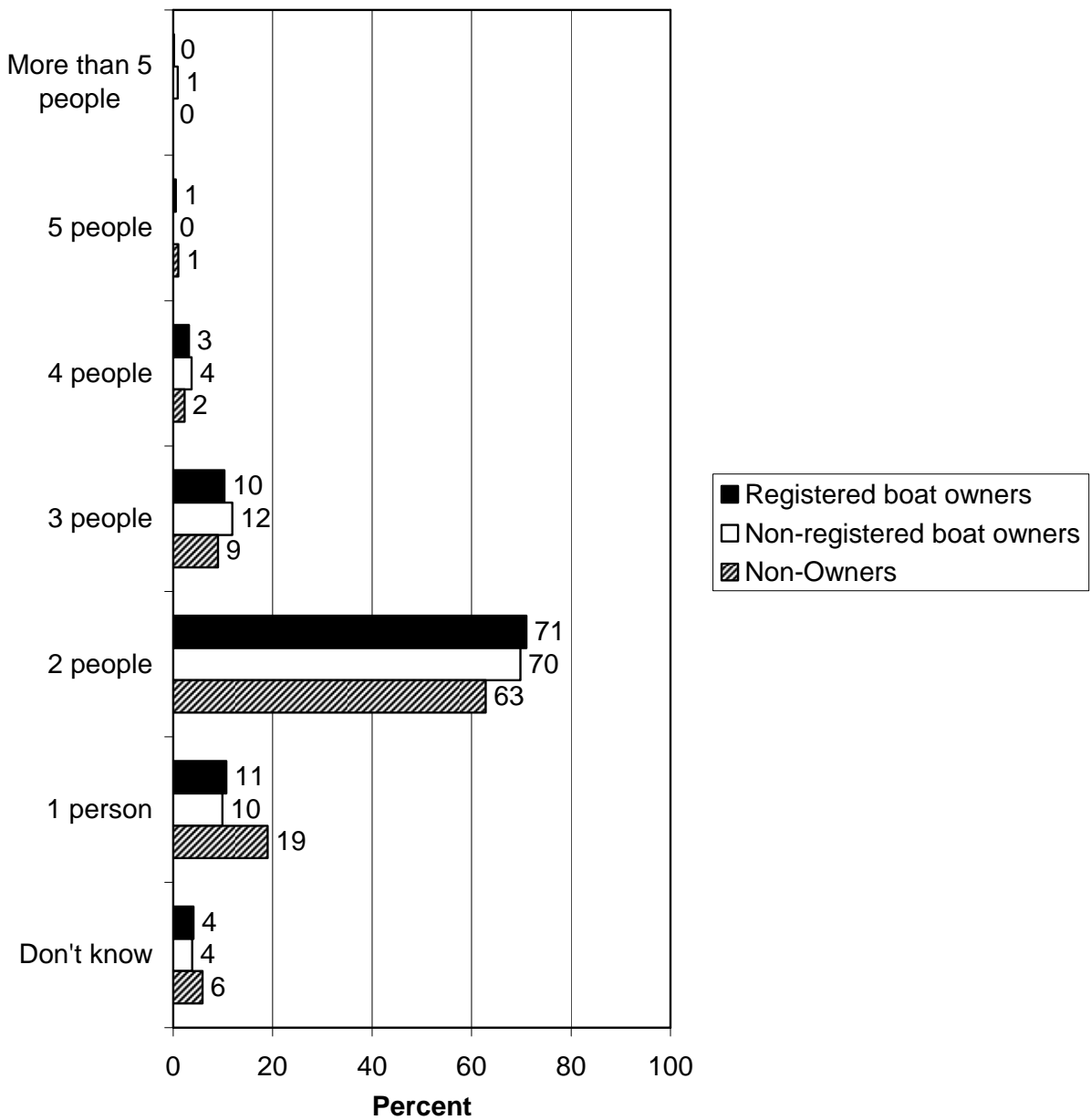
**Q211. In what county do you live? (Shows only top 10 counties.)**



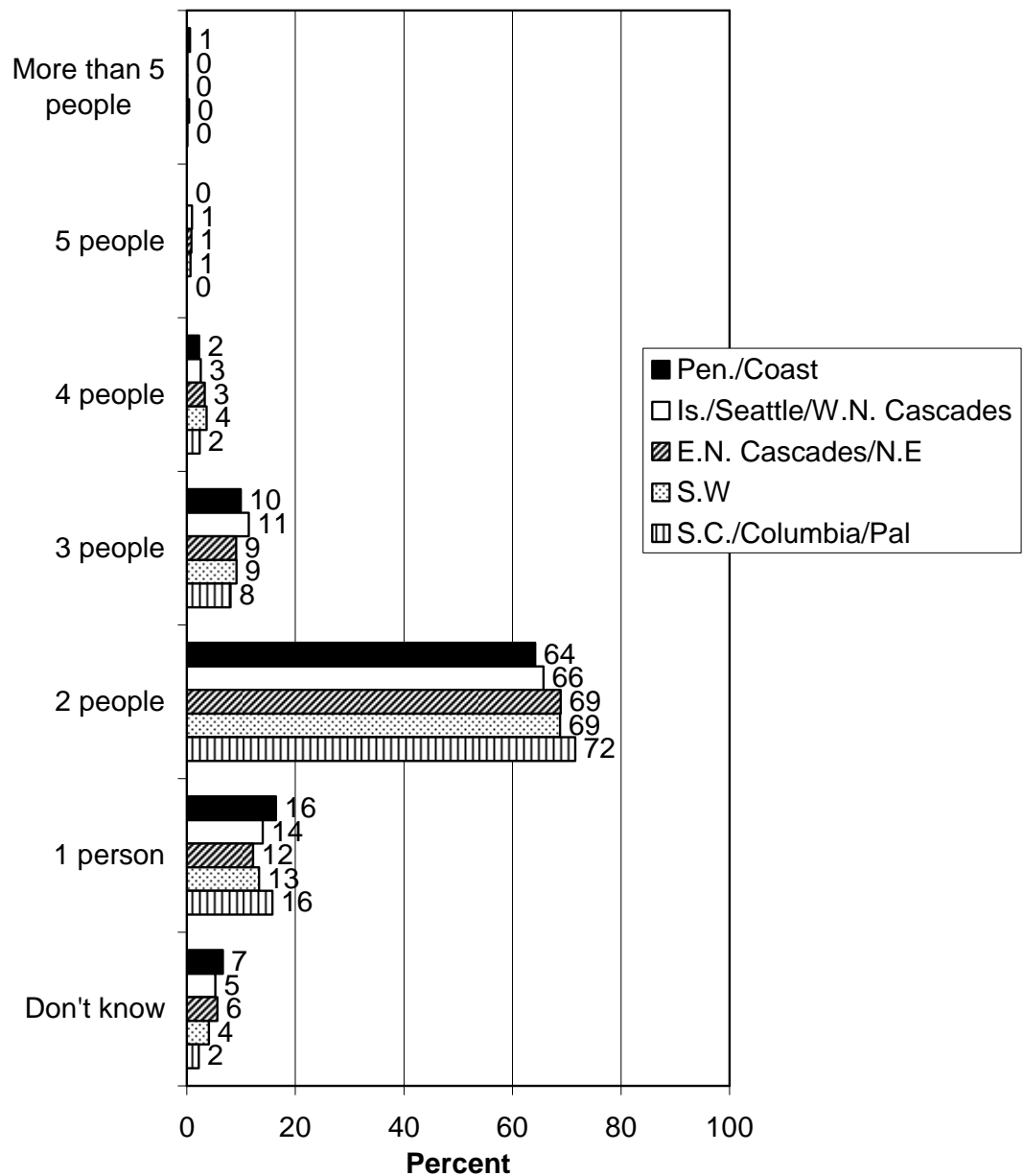
**Q214. Including yourself, how many people age 18 or older do you have living in your household?**



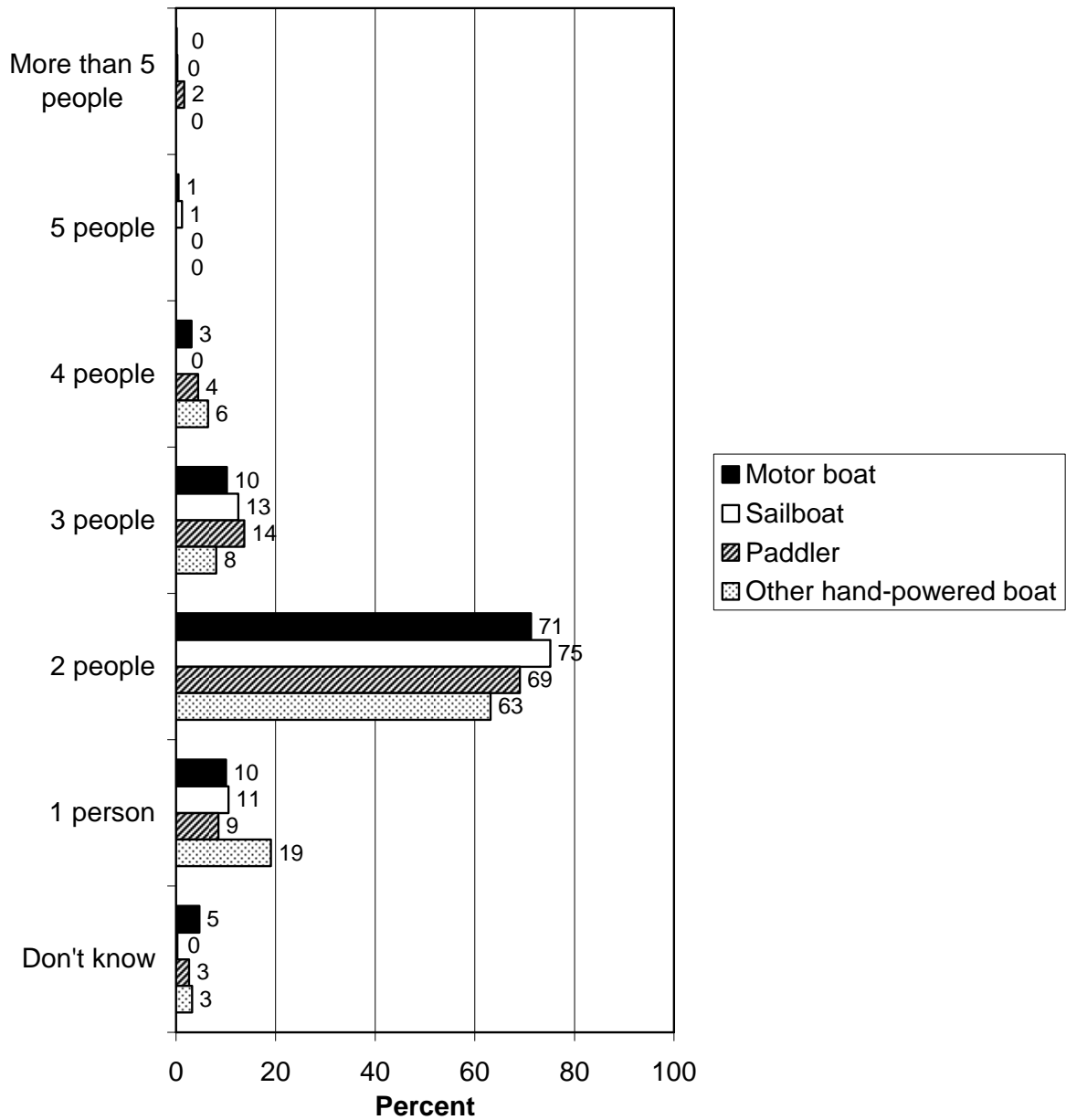
**Q214. Including yourself, how many people age 18 or older do you have living in your household?**



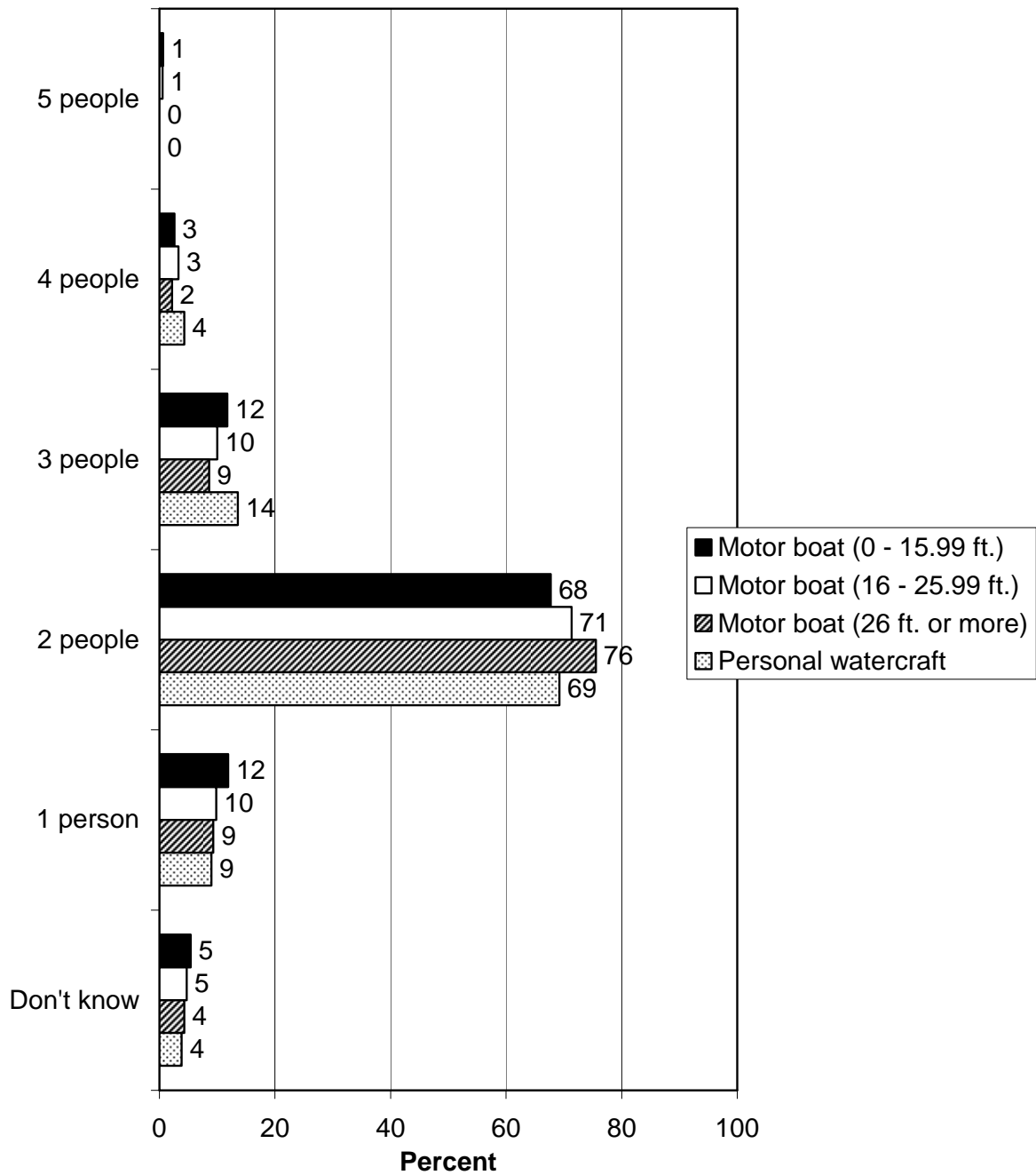
**Q214. Including yourself, how many people age 18 or older do you have living in your household?**



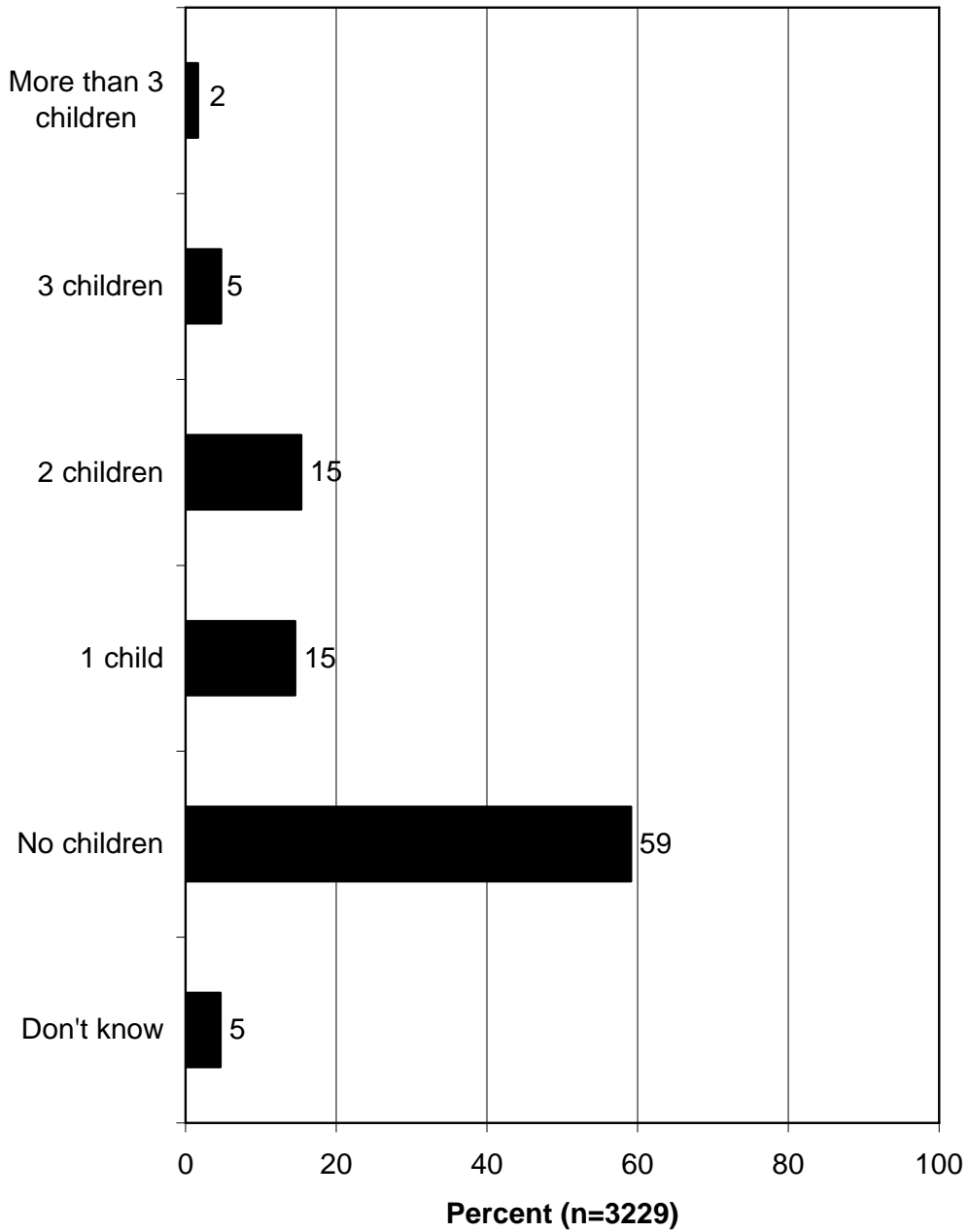
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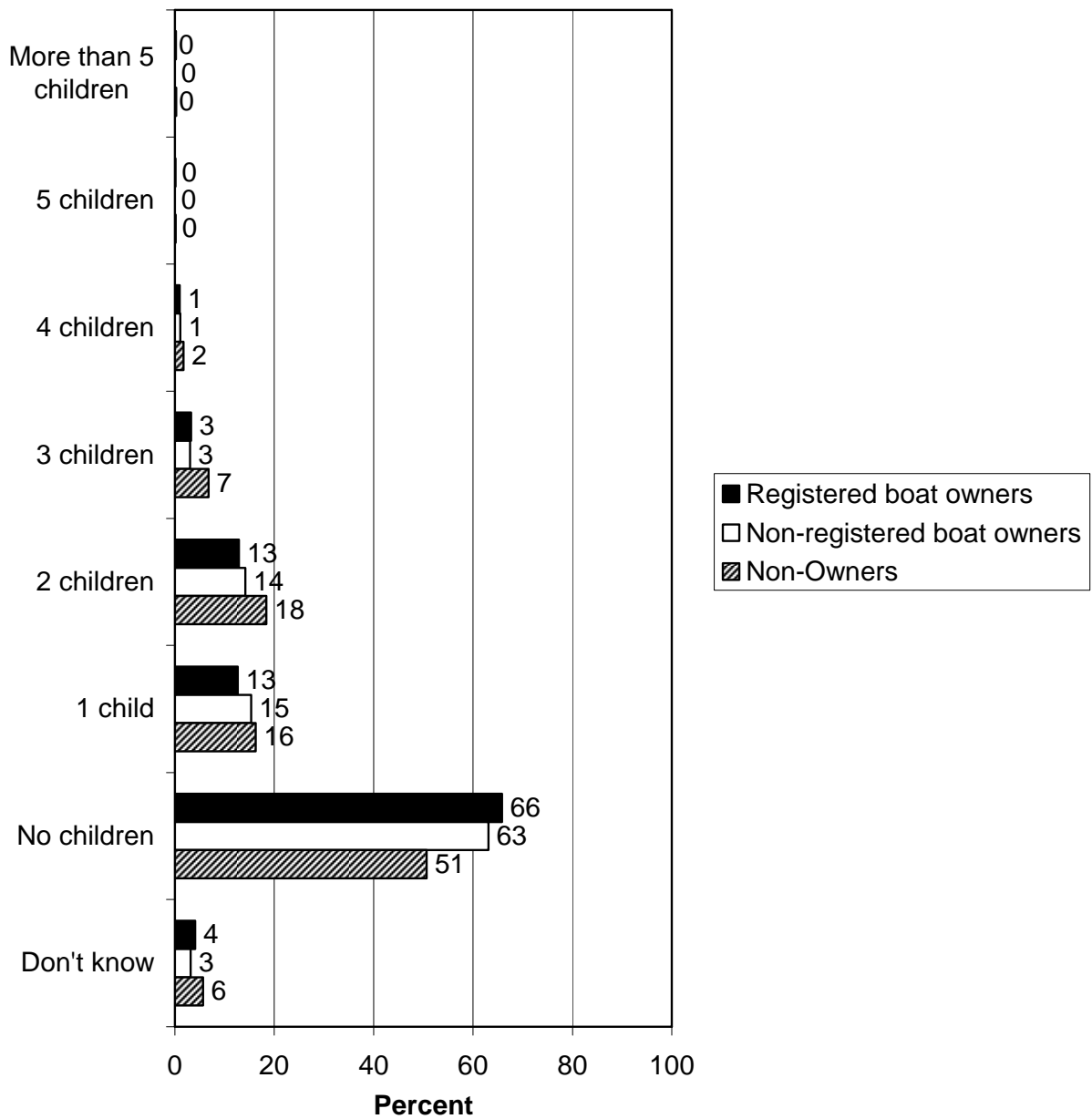


**Q215. How many children, age 17 or younger, do you have living in your household?**

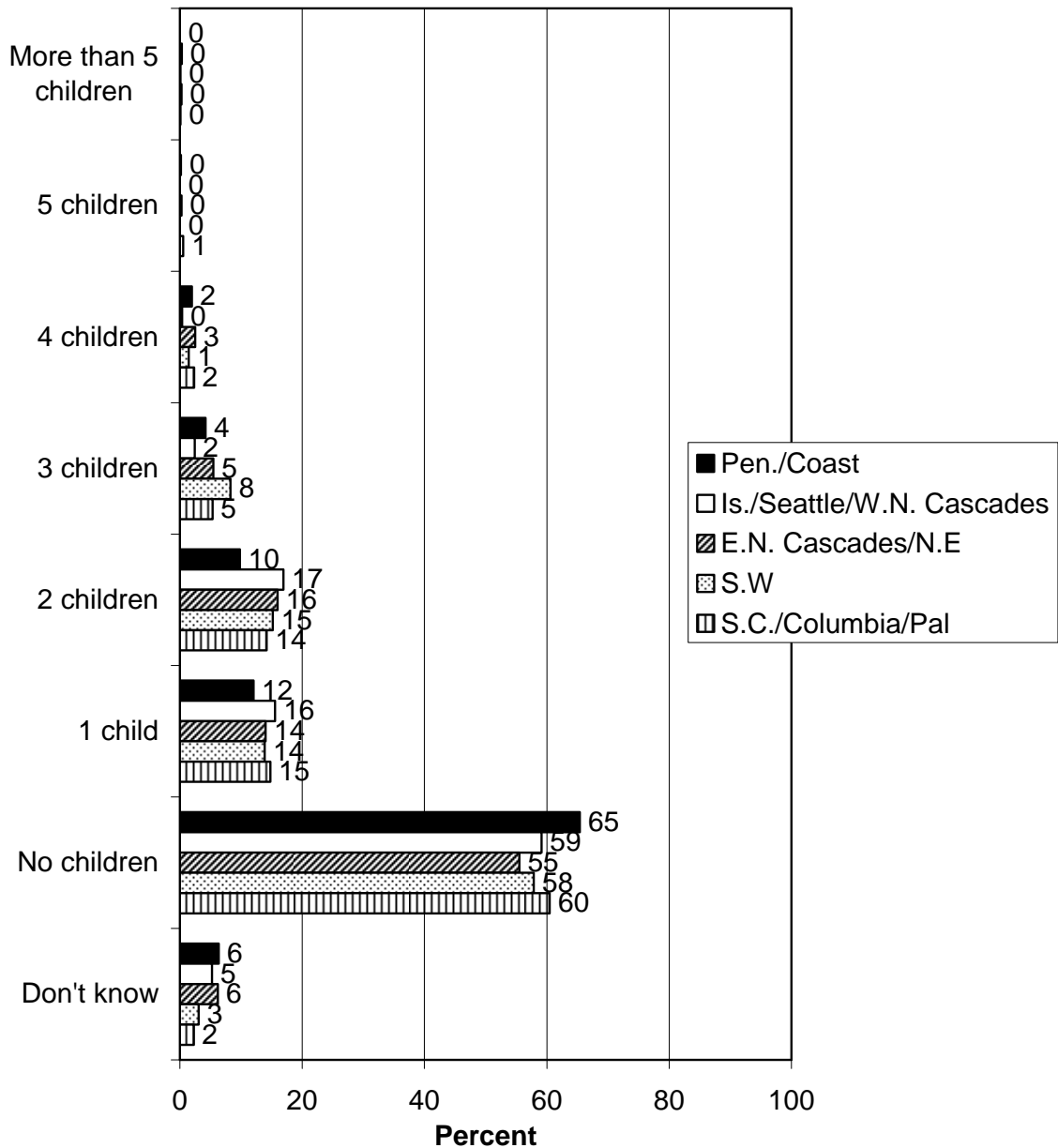




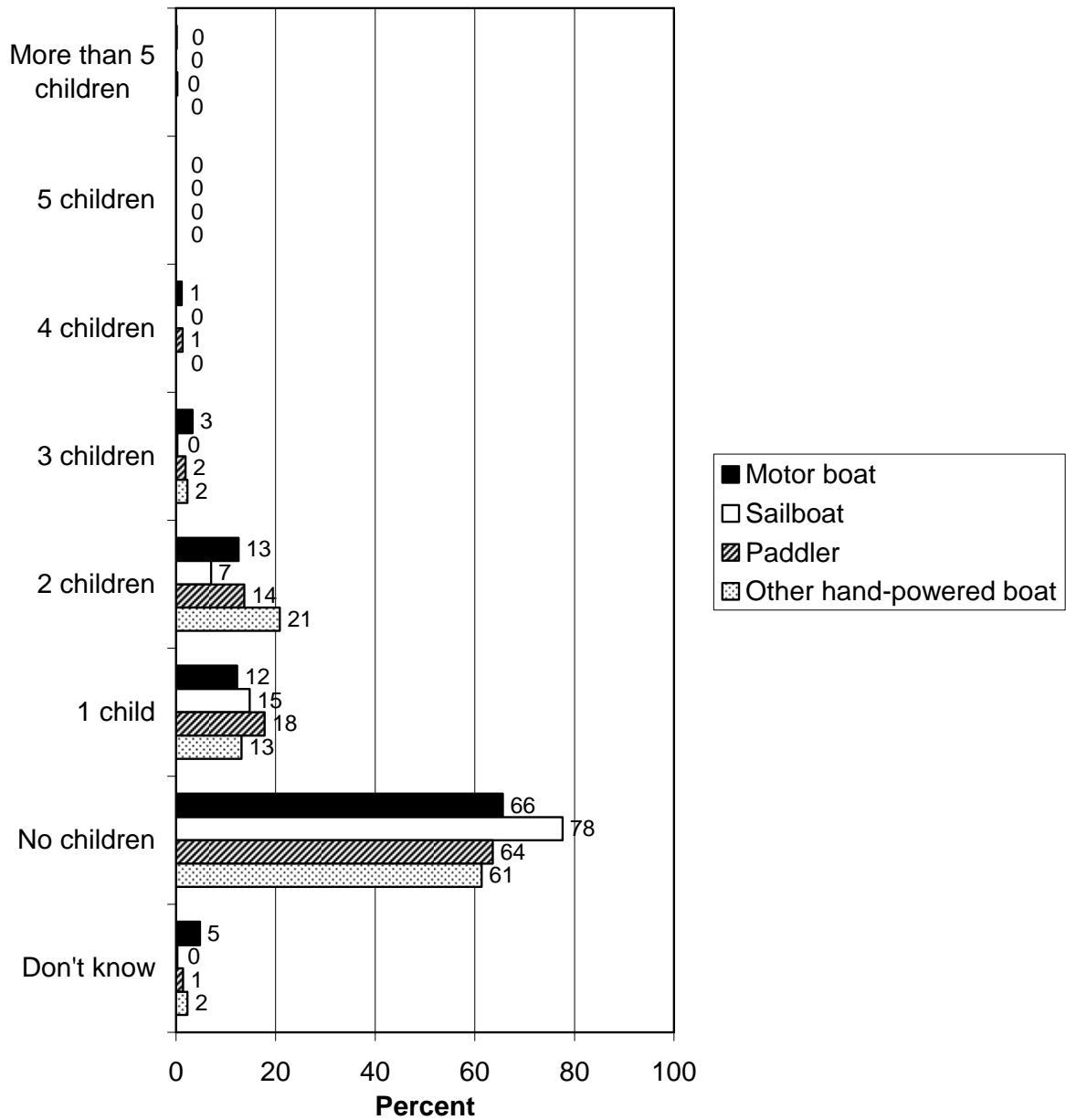
**Q215. How many children, age 17 or younger, do you have living in your household?**



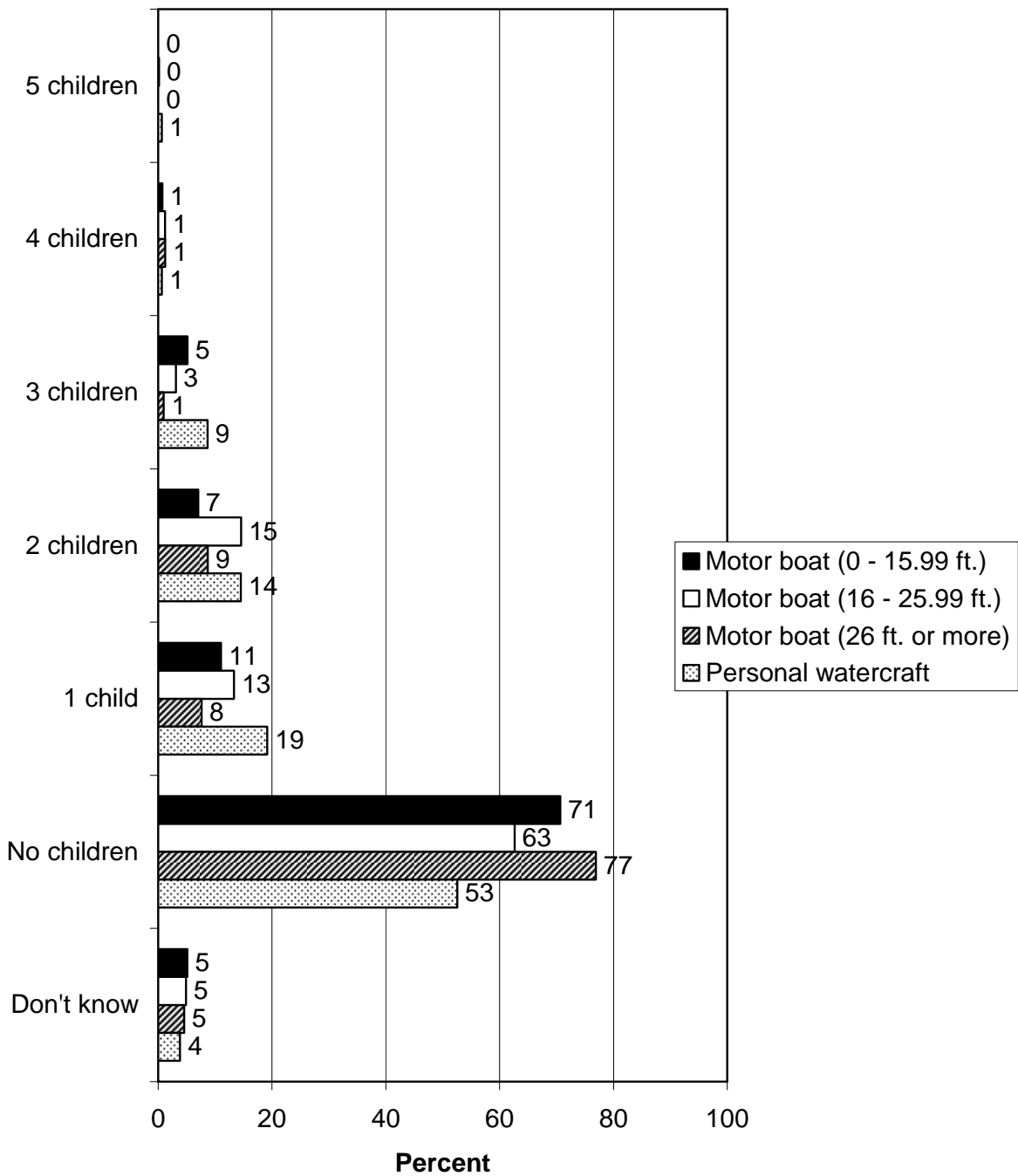
**Q215. How many children, age 17 or younger, do you have living in your household?**



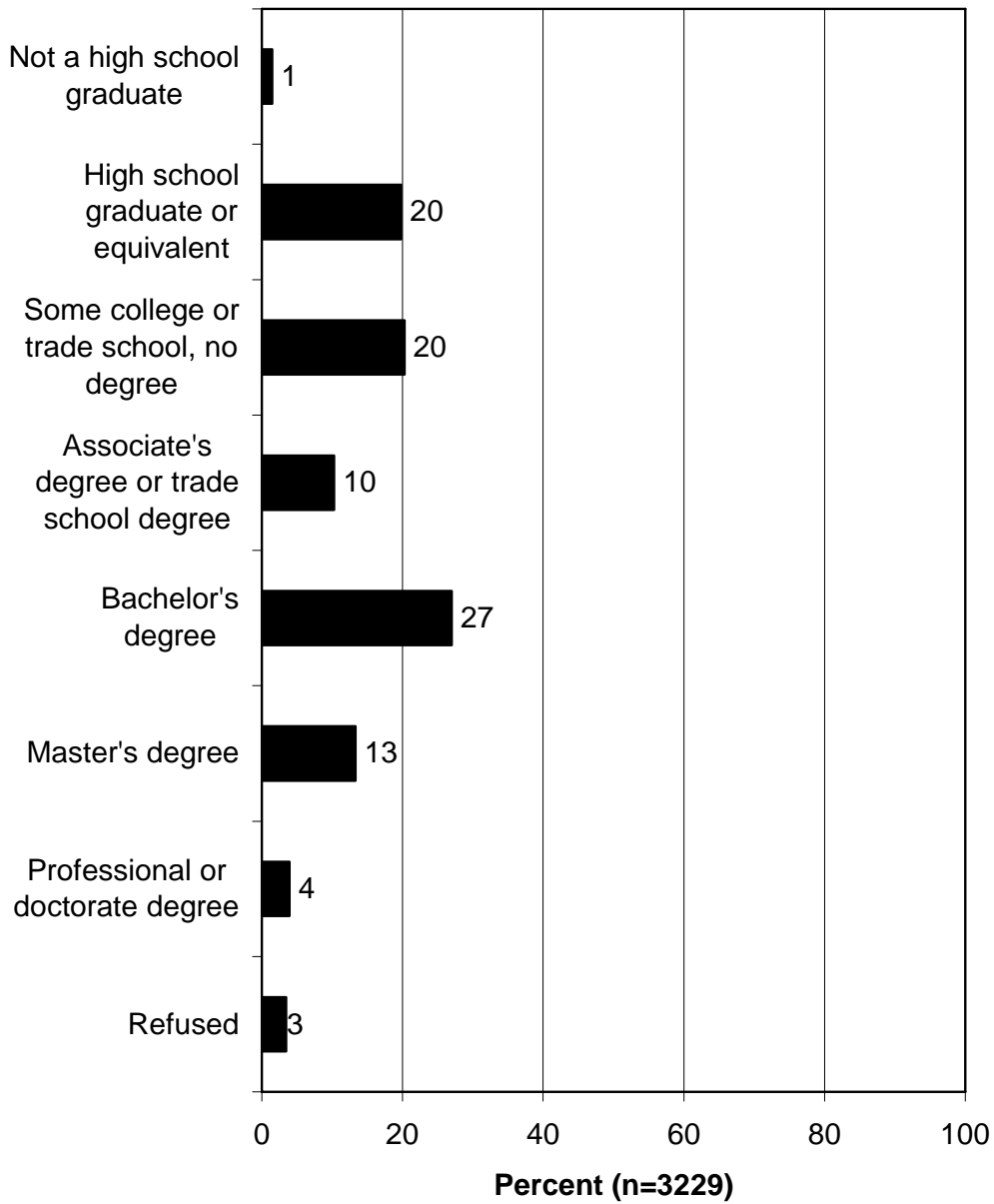
**Q215. How many children, age 17 or younger, do you have living in your household?**



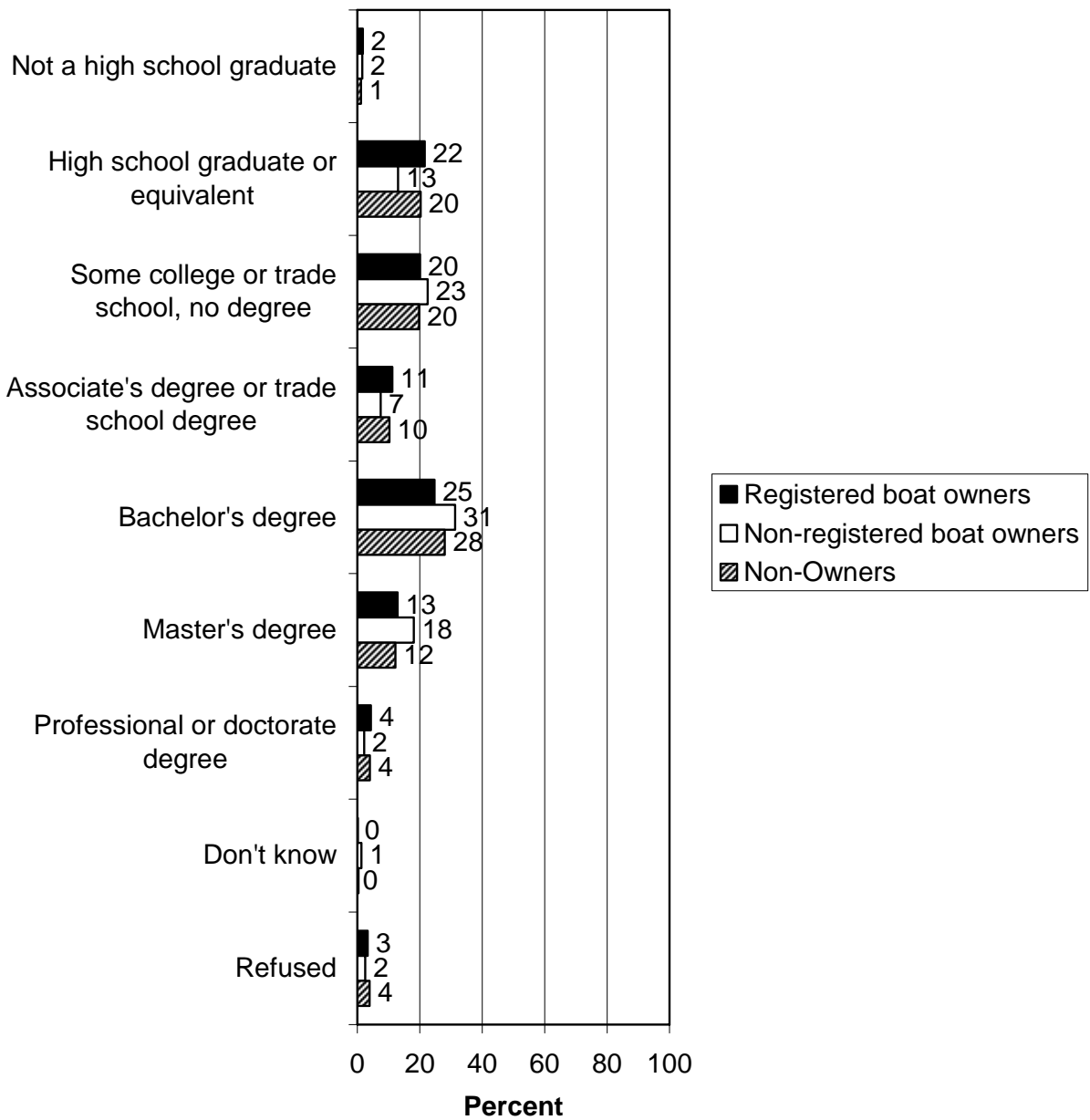
**Q215. How many children, age 17 or younger, do you have living in your household?**



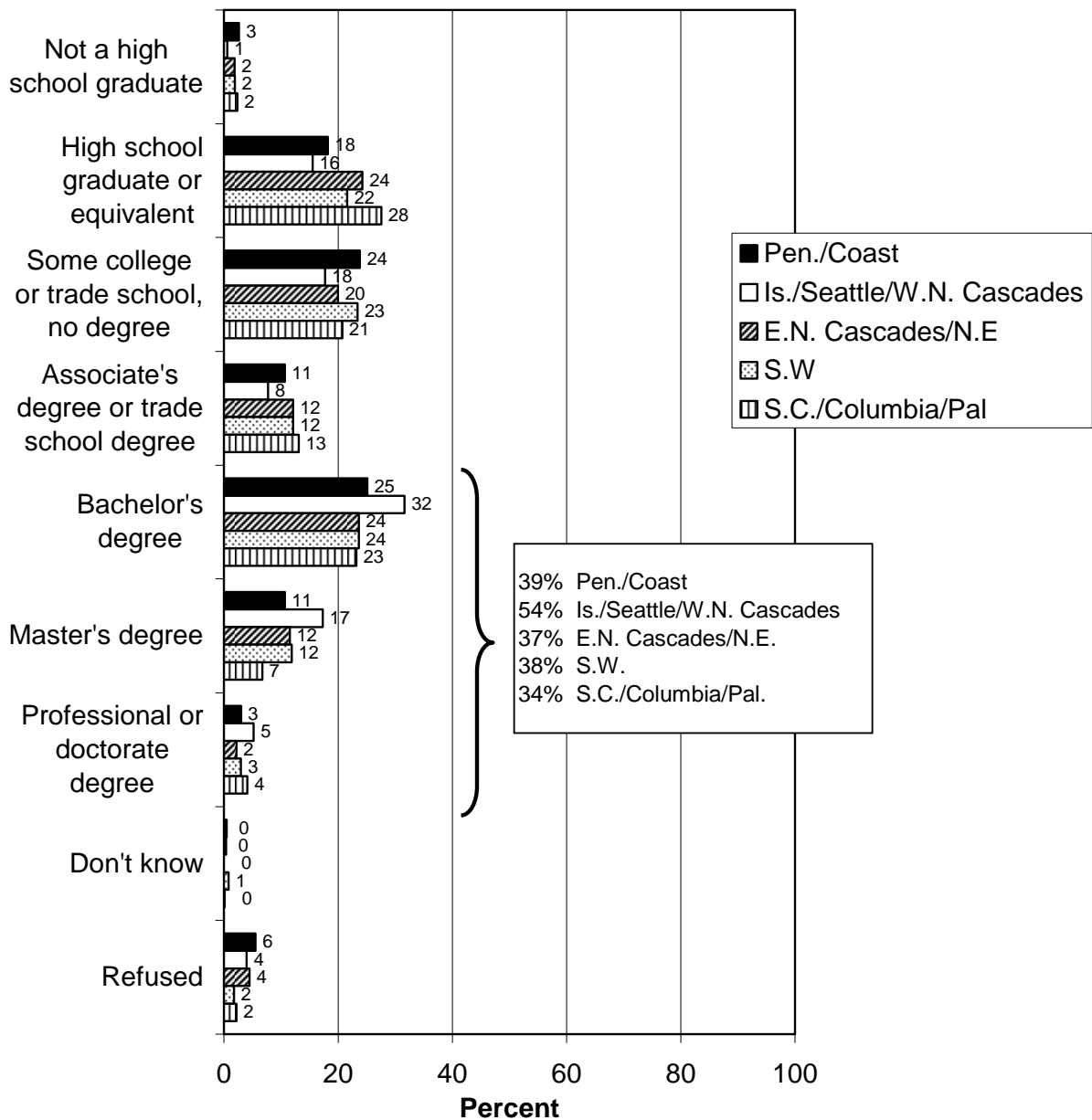
### Q212. What is the highest level of education you have completed?



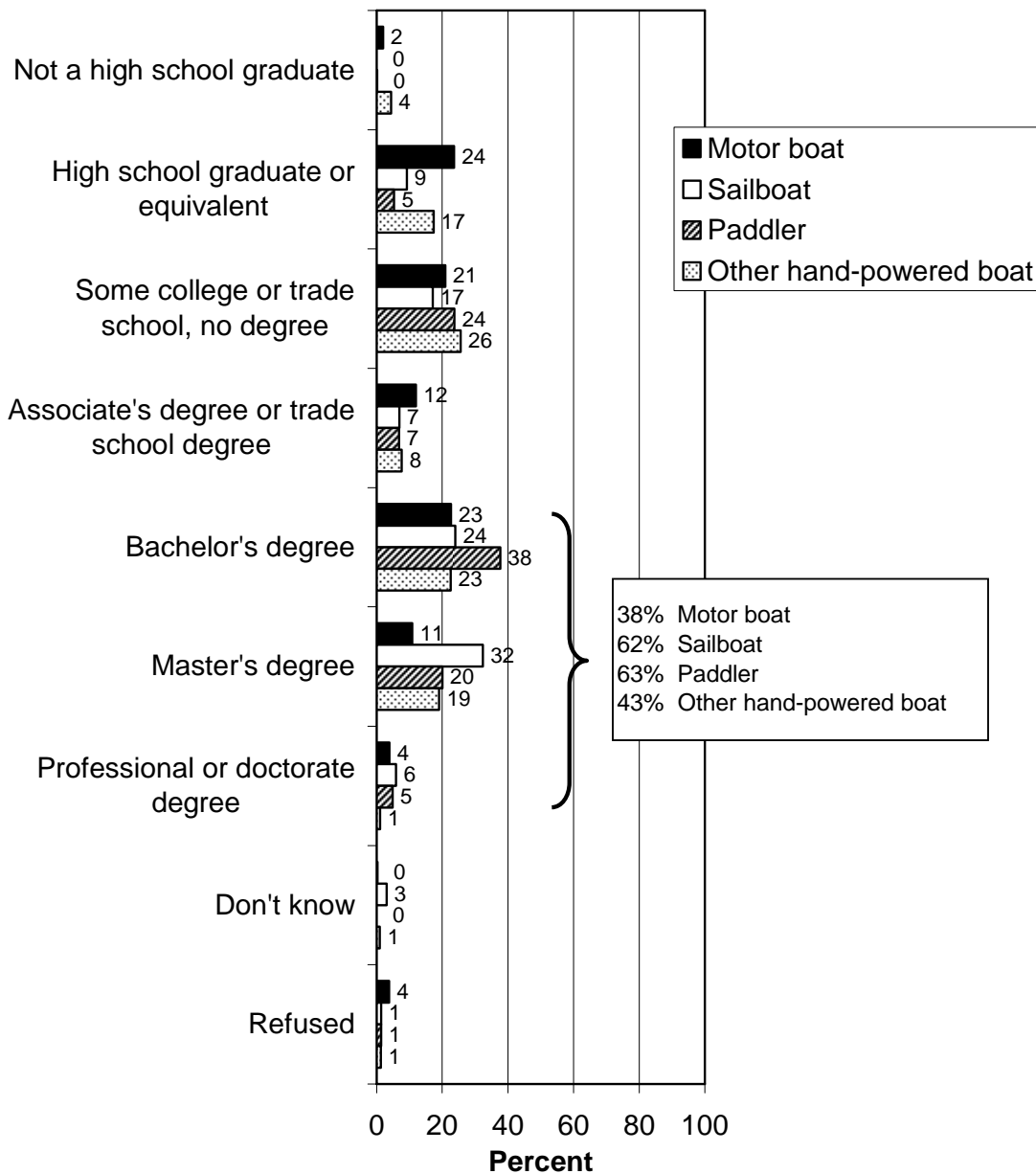
### Q212. What is the highest level of education you have completed?



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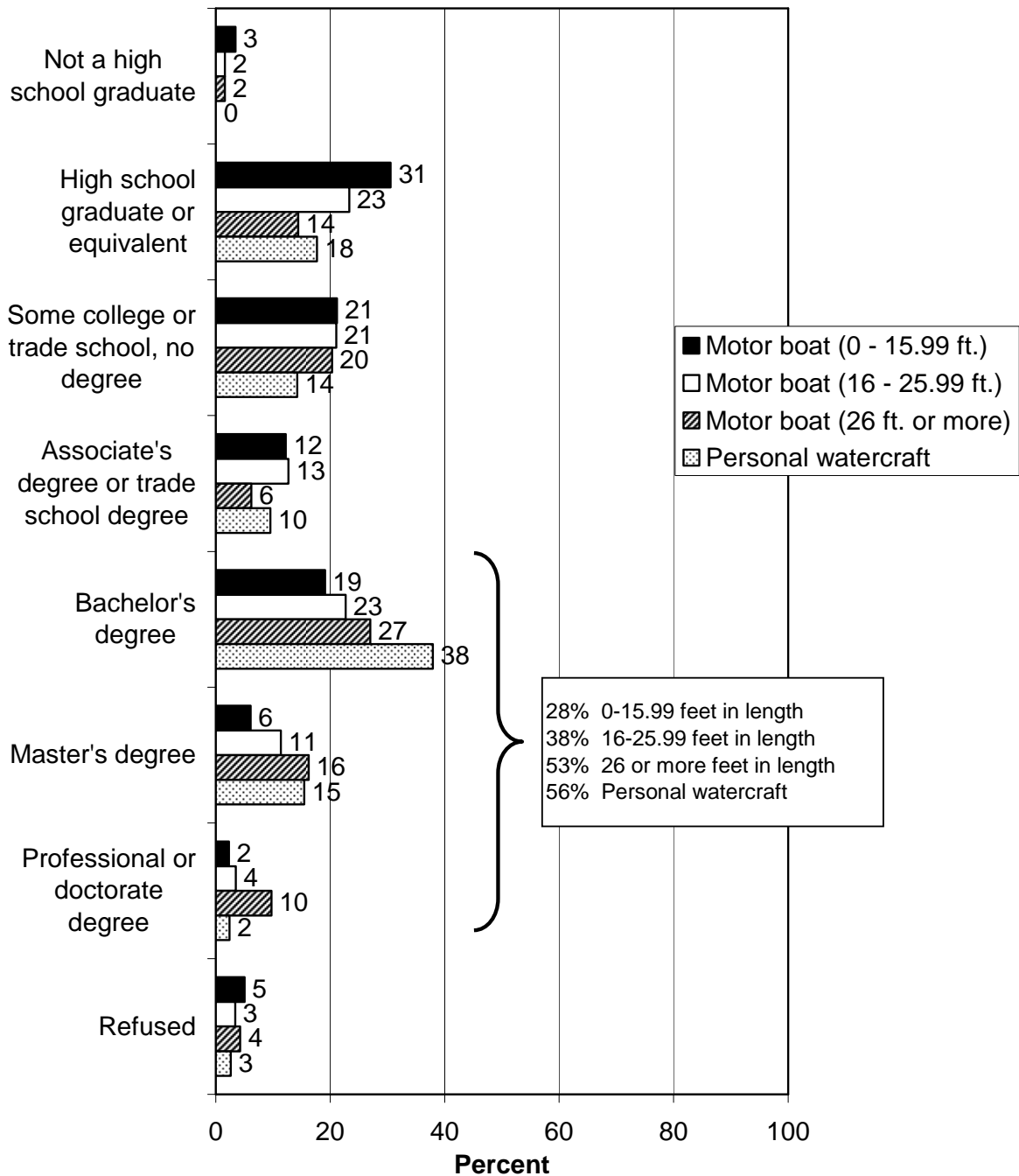


### Q212. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

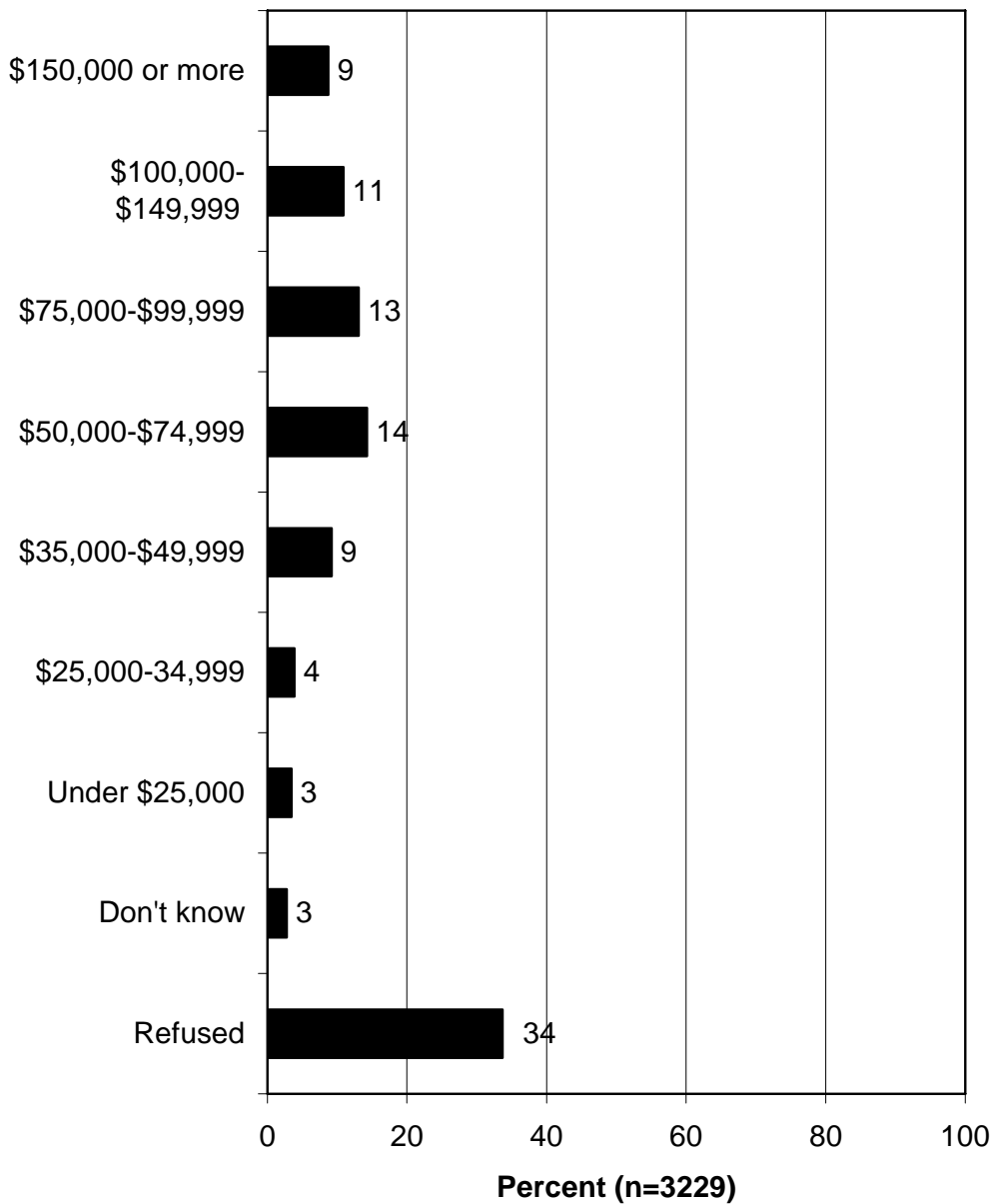




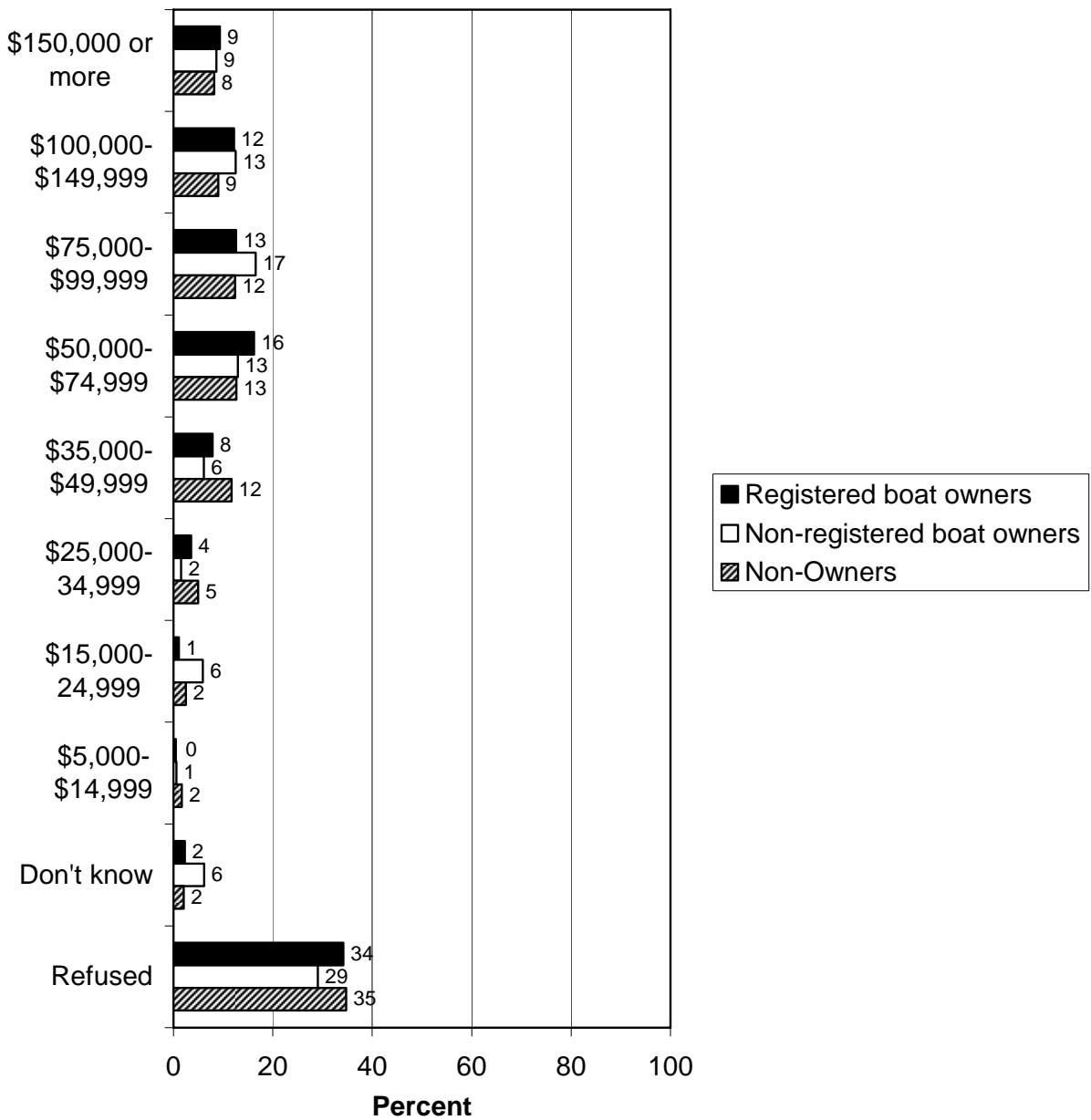
### Q212. What is the highest level of education you have completed?



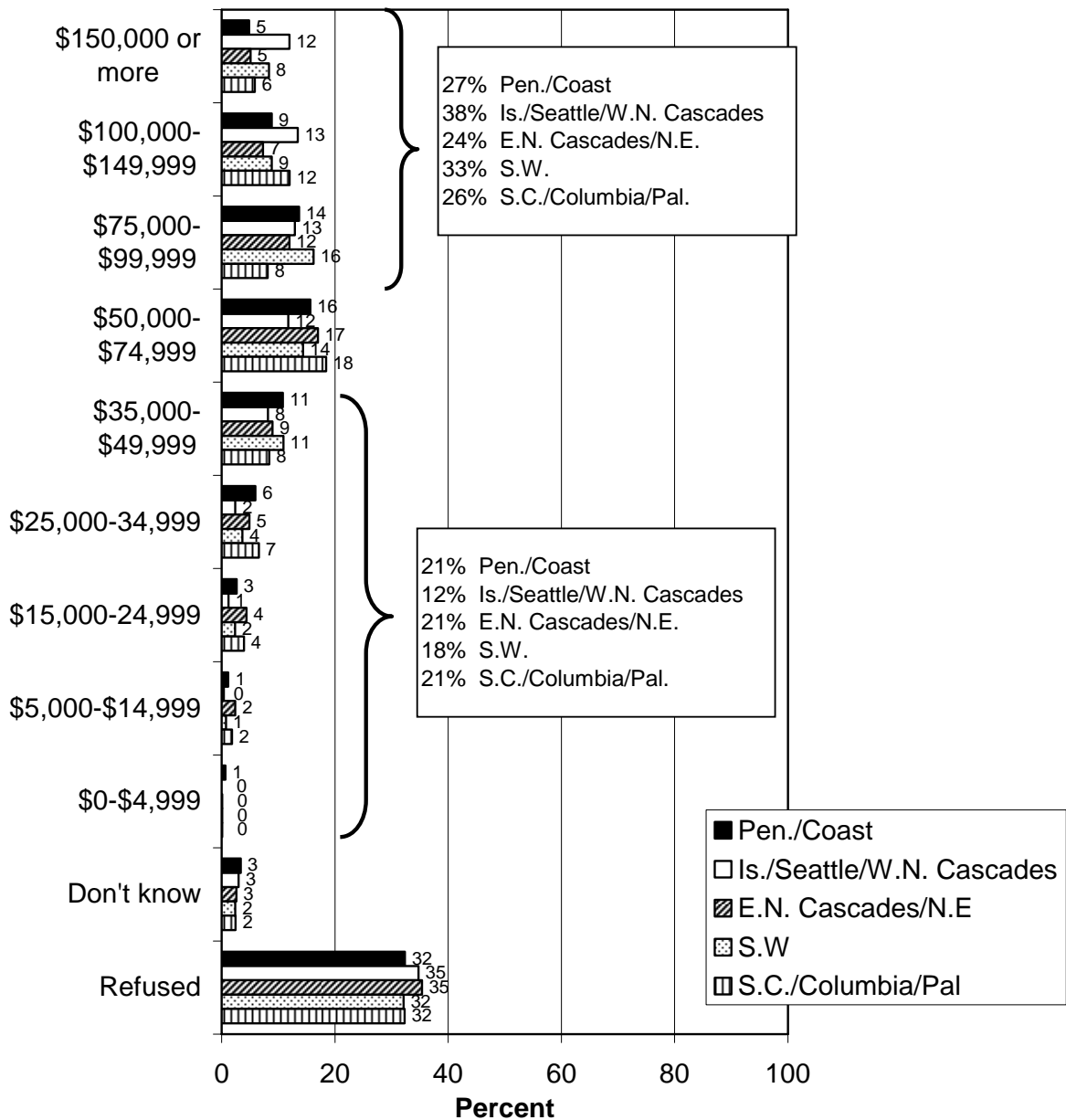
**Q213. Which of these categories best describes your total household income before taxes last year?**



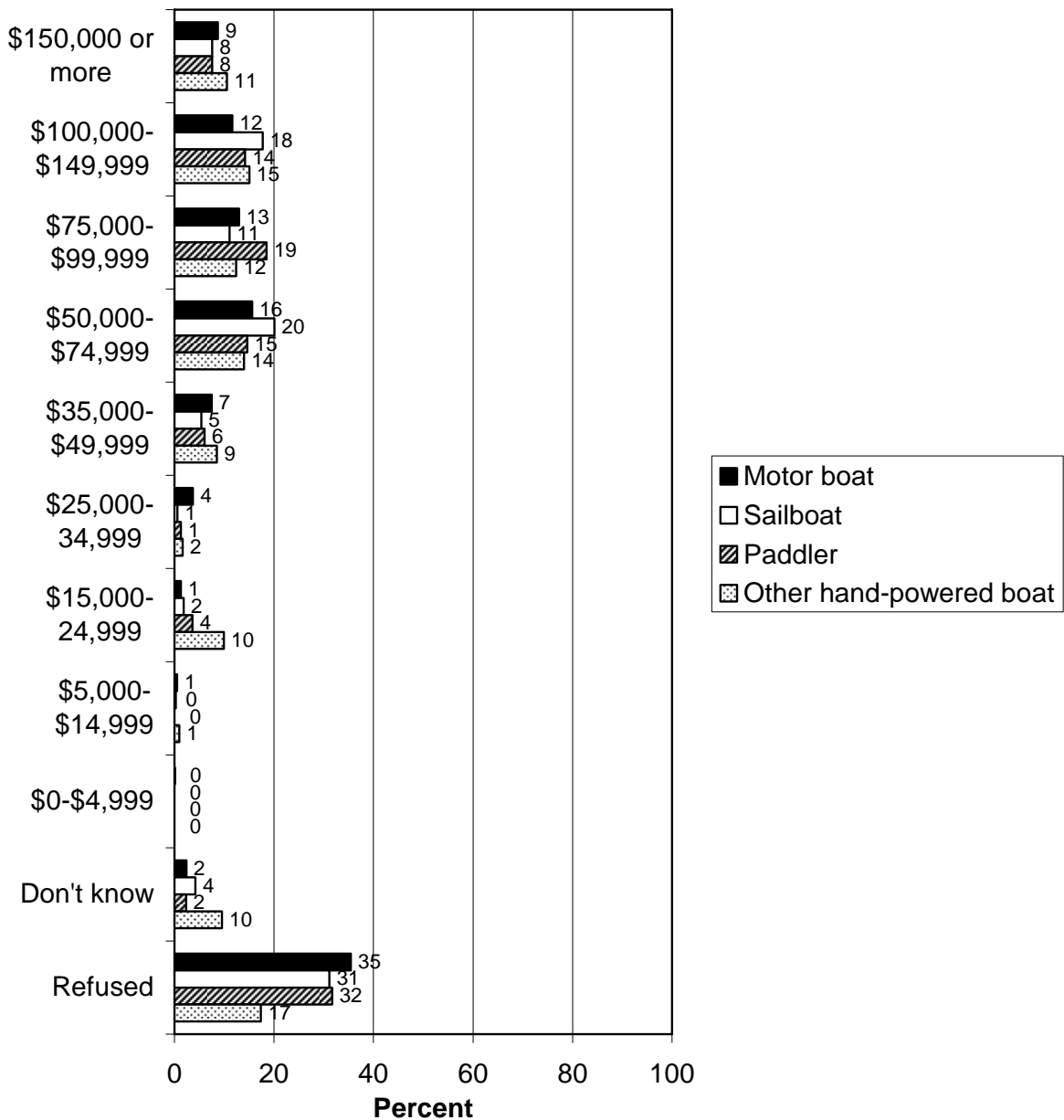
**Q213. Which of these categories best describes your total household income before taxes last year?**



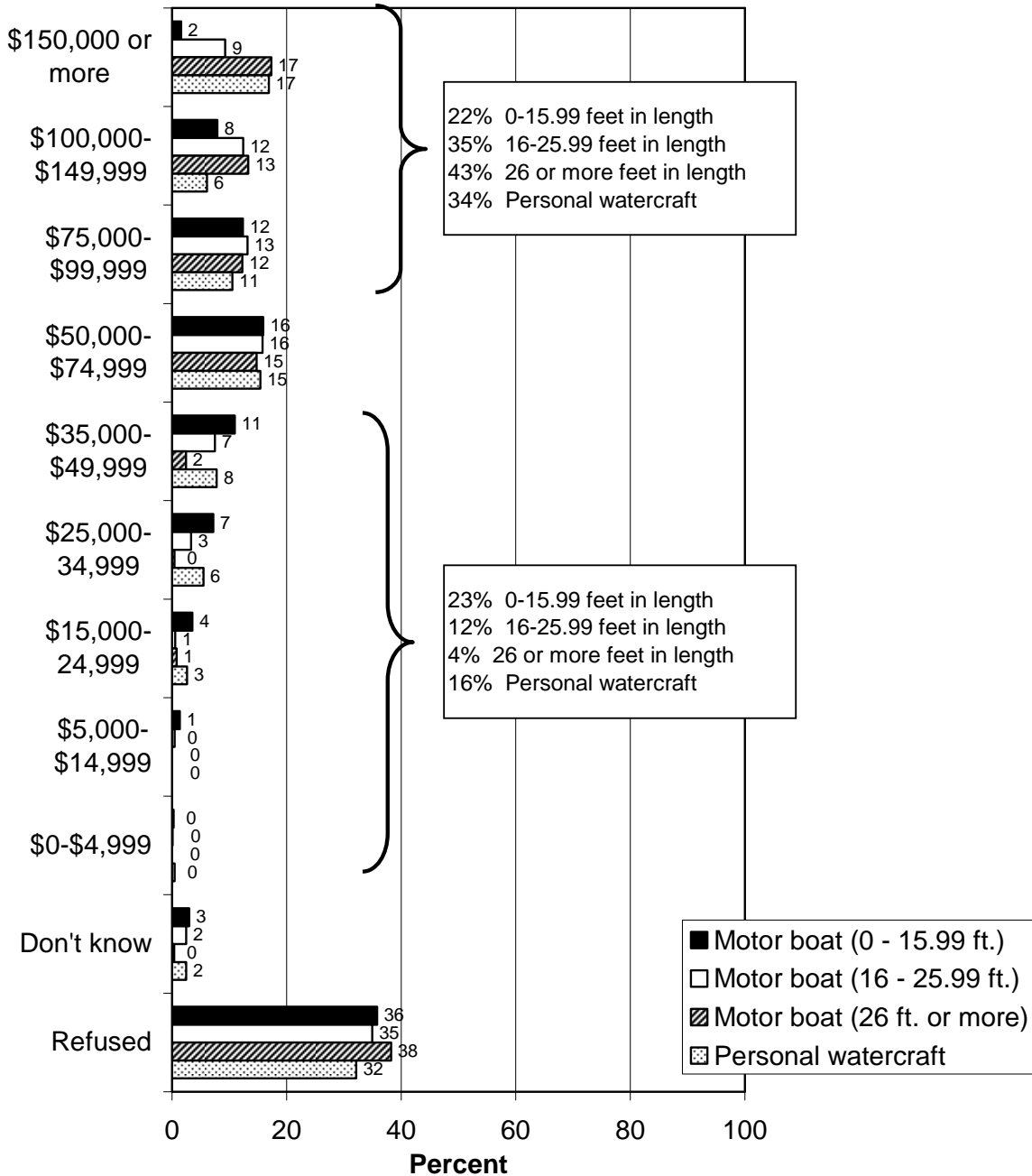
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## **METHODOLOGY**

### **FOCUS GROUP METHODOLOGY**

#### **FOCUS GROUP LOCATIONS AND PURPOSE**

Responsive Management conducted five focus groups of boating services providers for this needs assessment. Focus groups entail an in-depth, structured discussion with a small group of participants (10 to 12) about select subjects. The use of focus groups is an accepted research technique for qualitative explorations of attitudes, opinions, perceptions, motivations, constraints, participation, and behaviors. Focus groups provide researchers with new insights, hypotheses, and understanding through the process of interaction. For the focus groups, boating services providers included operators of sites and facilities open to the general public (such as marina operators), as well as providers of services essential to recreational boating (such as Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission employees and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Section officers).

The focus groups were conducted in four different locations across Washington State in October 2007: two groups in Seattle, one in Vancouver, one in Spokane (the original contract called for two groups in Spokane, but subsequent focus group recruitment efforts revealed that only one group was possible in Spokane), and one in Moses Lake. The focus groups were designed to evaluate the needs of boating services providers in the following areas: site operation, maintenance and renovation needs, development needs (new facilities), law enforcement, boater safety, marine sanitation, and key obstacles and challenges. The focus groups were recorded on audiotape for further analysis.

#### **SAMPLE GROUP ACQUISITION**

A commonly encountered question about qualitative techniques and focus groups is one of sample size, and most qualitative techniques call for small sample sizes. The conclusions rest on face validity and rely on the depth of analysis rather than breadth of analysis. Focus group research, like all qualitative research, sacrifices reliability (i.e., the ability to replicate results) for the sake of increased validity.

**FOCUS GROUP RECRUITING**

Responsive Management coordinated participant recruiting for the focus groups with guidance from the RCO. Specifically, focus group participants were recruited via e-mail using a combination of contact information and lists provided by the RCO. These included law enforcement contacts from the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission; lists of agencies that had received boating grants; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Marine Patrol program lists; the RCO's Boating Facilities Program Advisory Committee; Marine Patrol supervisors and lead officers; and individuals involved with public ports in Washington State.

**FOCUS GROUP MODERATION AND DISCUSSION GUIDE**

The focus group discussions were led by Mark Damian Duda, Executive Director of Responsive Management, and Dr. Steven Bissell, a Responsive Management Research Associate. The moderator for each group kept the discussion within design parameters, without exerting a strong influence on the discussion content, using a discussion guide that allowed for consistency in data collection. The discussion guide consisted of topics identified by stakeholders as being pertinent to the research. In short, the moderators and the discussion guide ensured that the focus groups were non-directive group discussions that exposed spontaneous attitudes of the groups.



## **TELEPHONE SURVEY METHODOLOGY**

For this project, Responsive Management conducted three surveys: a survey of boating services providers, a survey of registered boat owners, and a survey of the general population. Note that the surveys of registered boat owners and the general population used the same survey instrument. Therefore, the study used two survey instruments to obtain data.

### **SURVEY SAMPLES**

The sample of boating services providers consisted of those whose duties pertain in part to boating, such as agency staff, port and marina managers and staff, and civic leaders. This sample was obtained from the RCO and verified by additional on-line research by Responsive Management's researchers.

The sample of registered boat owners—those who had a registered boat in 2006—was obtained from the RCO. The general population sample was randomly chosen from all state households headed by a person aged 18 years old and older; however, anybody at the address could answer the survey (although obviously young children were not surveyed in favor of an adult in the household).

### **SAMPLING MEDIUM, QUESTIONNAIRES, AND INTERVIEWING PROCEDURES**

For the surveys, telephones were selected as the preferred sampling medium because of the universality of telephone ownership. In addition, a central polling site at the Responsive Management office allowed for rigorous quality control over the interviews and data collection. Responsive Management maintains its own in-house telephone interviewing facilities. These facilities are staffed by interviewers with experience conducting computer-assisted telephone interviews on the subjects of natural resources and outdoor recreation. The telephone survey questionnaires were developed cooperatively by Responsive Management and the RCO. Responsive Management conducted pre-tests of the questionnaires and made revisions to them based on the pre-tests.

To ensure the integrity of the telephone survey data, Responsive Management has interviewers who have been trained according to the standards established by the Council of American Survey

Research Organizations. Methods of instruction included lecture and role-playing. The Survey Center Managers and other professional staff conducted project briefings with the interviewers prior to the administration of this survey. Interviewers were instructed on type of study, study goals and objectives, handling of survey questions, interview length, termination points and qualifiers for participation, interviewer instructions within the survey instrument, reading of the survey instrument, skip patterns, and probing and clarifying techniques necessary for specific questions on the survey instrument. The Survey Center Managers and statisticians monitored the data collection, including monitoring of the actual telephone interviews without the interviewers' knowledge, to evaluate the performance of each interviewer and ensure the integrity of the data. After the surveys were obtained by the interviewers, the Survey Center Managers and/or statisticians edited each completed survey to ensure clarity and completeness.

Interviews of the general population and registered boat owners were conducted Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Saturday noon to 5:00 p.m., and Sunday from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., local time. A five-callback design was used to maintain the representativeness of the sample, to avoid bias toward people easy to reach by telephone, and to provide an equal opportunity for all to participate. When a respondent could not be reached on the first call, subsequent calls were placed on different days of the week and at different times of the day. The interviews were conducted in October and November 2007. Responsive Management obtained a total of 1,143 completed interviews among the general population and 2,086 completed interviews of registered boat owners (for a total unweighted sample of 3,229 boaters).

Interviews of boating services providers were conducted Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., local time (as well as other times by appointment) in November. To make them more receptive to being interviewed, these boating services providers were notified via e-mail prior to being called that a survey was underway. These pre-survey contacts helped ensure that the survey had a high response rate. Responsive Management obtained a total of 211 completed interviews of boating services providers. For the interviews of boating services providers, interviewers asked for the primary contact person in the sample; however, if the primary contact was unlisted (i.e., only a business name was on the list), was unavailable, or was no longer with the company, the interviewer requested a manager to complete the survey. Each respondent on

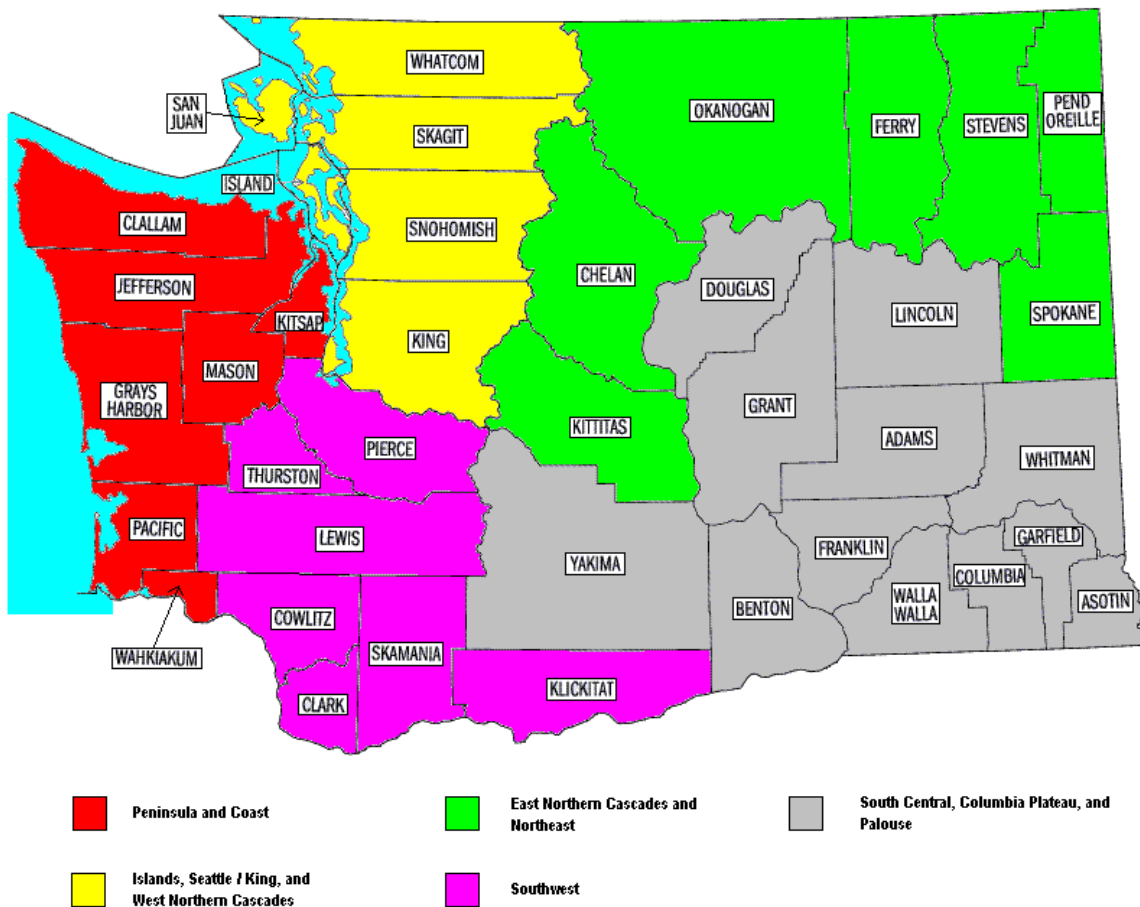
the sample was contacted at least once, but many were contacted several times. Interviewers were instructed *not* to leave messages on answering machines but to continue to call during different times of the day; they were instructed to leave messages *only if* they contacted a person who could relay the message (e.g., an office manager, administrative assistant, secretary). Interviewers obtained alternative numbers, when appropriate, to make contact. Furthermore, interviewers requested a more convenient time to call back if the respondent could not complete the survey at the time of contact. Note that some of these interviews with boating services providers lasted as long as 45 minutes, thereby providing a large amount of data from each boating professional contacted.

The software used for data collection was Questionnaire Programming Language 4.1 (QPL). The survey data were entered into the computer as each interview was being conducted, eliminating manual data entry after the completion of the survey and the concomitant data entry errors that may occur with manual data entry. The survey instrument was programmed so that QPL branched, coded, and substituted phrases in the survey based on previous responses to ensure the integrity and consistency of the data collection. The analysis of data was performed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences software as well as proprietary software developed by Responsive Management.

### **DATA ANALYSES BY BOATER TYPE AND REGION**

The data from the surveys of registered boat owners and the general population were amalgamated into a single data set (hereinafter referred to as the “amalgamated data”). The analysis of these data considered three types of boaters: owners of at least one registered boat (referred to as “Registered Boat Owners”), owners of non-registered boats (referred to as “Non-Registered Boat Owners”), and boat users who do not own a boat, such as those who boated on a friend’s boat (referred to as “Non-Owners”). (Note that in Washington, all boats 16 feet or more in length or with 10 or more horsepower are required to be registered; for boats under those thresholds not used on navigable waters, registration is not required.) In addition, the analysis considered the region in which the boater most often boated, as shown in the listing and map that follows.

- Peninsula and Coast Region (Clallam, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Kitsap, Mason, Pacific, and Wahkiakum Counties) (abbreviated Pen./Coast)
- Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades Region (Island, King, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom Counties) (abbreviated Is./Seattle/W.N.Cascades)
- East Northern Cascades and Northeast Region (Chelan, Ferry, Kittitas, Okanogan, Pend Oreille, Spokane, and Stevens Counties) (abbreviated E.N.Cascades/N.E.)
- Southwest Region (Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Lewis, Pierce, Skamania, and Thurston Counties) (abbreviated S.W.)
- South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse Region (Adams, Asotin, Benton, Columbia, Douglas, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Lincoln, Walla Walla, Whitman, and Yakima Counties) (abbreviated S.C./Columbia/Pal.)



## DATA WEIGHTING

The amalgamated data were weighted so that the proportions of boater types and regions matched the estimated proportions of these types/regions in the state. These estimated proportions were derived from the data in the general population survey by itself. In other words, the general population survey provided data on the percentages of boaters in each region and of each type. The amalgamated data were then weighted to match these proportions. Note that the proportions of registered boaters in the five regions within the registered boater sample was used as a validity check of the data obtained from the general populations survey. The weighting factors are shown in the tabulation that follows.

### Weighting Factors

Region and Type of Boater	Proportion of Region and Boater Type That Actually Exists	Sample	Proportion of Sample	Weighting Factor	Weighted Proportion of Sample
Peninsula and Coast; Registered Boat Owners	4.28%	485	15.02%	0.285165	4.28%
Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades; Registered Boat Owners	15.56%	424	13.13%	1.18494	15.56%
East Northern Cascades and Northeast; Registered Boat Owners	5.94%	517	16.01%	0.371245	5.94%
Southwest; Registered Boat Owners	11.63%	528	16.35%	0.710984	11.63%
South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse; Registered Boat Owners	6.56%	575	17.81%	0.368159	6.56%
Peninsula and Coast; Non-Registered Boat Owners	2.19%	58	1.80%	1.216618	2.19%
Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades; Non-Registered Boat Owners	5.94%	46	1.42%	4.17247	5.94%
East Northern Cascades and Northeast; Non-Registered Boat Owners	2.53%	45	1.39%	1.818979	2.53%
Southwest; Non-Registered Boat Owners	2.88%	31	0.96%	3.004654	2.88%
South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse; Non-Registered Boat Owners	0.70%	15	0.46%	1.505362	0.70%
Peninsula and Coast; Non-Owners	3.32%	119	3.69%	0.90132	3.32%
Islands, Seattle/King, and West Northern Cascades; Non-Owners	19.67%	160	4.96%	3.969216	19.67%
East Northern Cascades and Northeast; Non-Owners	5.16%	74	2.29%	2.250414	5.16%
Southwest; Non-Owners	9.00%	78	2.42%	3.727218	9.00%
South Central, Columbia Plateau, and Palouse; Non-Owners	4.63%	74	2.29%	2.021559	4.63%

## CROSSTABULATION ANALYSES

In addition to the analyses of the amalgamated data statewide, crosstabulations of the amalgamated data were run to determine results of subgroups within the total population of boaters. Four crosstabulations were run on nearly all the data, listed below:

1. Crosstabulation by registration/ownership status: registered boat owners, non-registered boat owners, and non-owners.
2. Crosstabulation by region in which boater most often boats.
3. Crosstabulation by type of boat most often used: motor boats, sailboats, paddlers (i.e., canoes and kayaks), and other hand-powered boats.
4. Crosstabulation by size of motor boat most often used: Under 16 feet (Class A), 16 feet to 25 feet (Class 1), 26 feet or more (Classes 2 and 3), and personal watercraft.

## SAMPLING ERROR

Throughout this report, findings of the telephone surveys of the general population and registered boaters are reported at a 95% confidence interval. For the entire amalgamated sample of boaters, the sampling error is at most plus or minus 1.72 percentage points. Sampling errors were calculated using the formula described below.

### Sampling error equation:

$$B = \left( \sqrt{\frac{\frac{N_p(.25)}{N_s} - .25}{N_p - 1}} \right) (1.96)$$

Where: B = maximum sampling error (as decimal)  
 N<sub>P</sub> = population size (i.e., total number who could be surveyed)  
 N<sub>S</sub> = sample size (i.e., total number of respondents surveyed)

Derived from formula: p. 206 in Dillman, D. A. 2000. *Mail and Internet Surveys*. John Wiley & Sons, NY.

**Note:** This is a simplified version of the formula that calculates the maximum sampling error using a 50:50 split (the most conservative calculation because a 50:50 split would give maximum variation).

## DATA ROUNDING

Note that some results may not sum to exactly 100% because of rounding. Additionally, rounding on the graphs may cause apparent discrepancies of 1 percentage point between the graphs and the reported results of combined responses (e.g., when “strongly support” and “moderately support” are summed to determine the total percentage in support).

## **IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **CONSIDER THIS ASSESSMENT DATA AND BALANCE NEEDS**

This assessment provides a large amount of data regarding the needs of a diverse range of groups involved with recreational boating in Washington. The breadth of this needs assessment necessitates a careful review and evaluation of the data before important decisions are made. From providers of programs and services essential to boating (including the operators of sites and facilities as well as law enforcement personnel representing numerous agencies) to the boaters themselves (including the operators of motorboats, sailboats, paddlers, and personal watercraft, among others), a substantial range of interests is represented in the results of the study. It is recommended that future policies be developed by carefully balancing the needs of the various groups and by focusing on the findings within this report. With this in mind, the data suggest that the following recommendations should be considered, categorized into 11 topic areas.

#### **1. LACK OF FUNDING**

There is a clear, immediate need for additional funding for boating programs and services in Washington. In the survey and focus groups of boating providers, lack of resources for boater safety, access, launch ramps and facilities, law enforcement, and education were the top priorities in meeting the needs of boaters in Washington. In the survey of boaters, large majorities of boaters indicated needs for increased law enforcement and education, as well as for additions and improvements to boating facilities. These included access, launch ramps, parking at launch ramps, and improved docks, restrooms, fish cleaning stations, and other features currently in disrepair. As Washington's population and the number of boaters in the state continue to grow, the lack of resources to meet the demands for boating programs and services will only become more pronounced.

Inadequate funding for boating programs and services in Washington manifests itself in several ways, the first and most important of which is in boating safety. Washington in recent years has ranked in the top tier of states in boating-related fatalities per 100,000 registered boats. In 2006,

there were 96 boating-related accidents and 21 boating-related fatalities in Washington.<sup>7</sup> Additional resources for an improved law enforcement presence as well as the dissemination of safety education (through courses, publications, etc.) will very likely reduce the number of boating-related fatalities.<sup>8</sup> In short, additional funding for boating programs in Washington would save lives.

Inadequate funding of recreational boating programs and services also manifests itself in the economy of the State. It is estimated that recreational boaters contribute nearly \$100 million each year directly to the economy of the State through vessel registration fees, watercraft excise taxes, vessel sales taxes, gas taxes, fishing licenses, grants and assistance from the federal government, and other miscellaneous fees.<sup>9</sup> However, the indirect financial contribution to the State from recreational boating can be understood as a much larger figure after taking into account the “ripple effect” of Washington’s boating industry.<sup>10</sup> It follows that increased funding for recreational boating would only enhance this major economic contribution to the State; indeed, increasing funding support for Washington’s boating programs and services ought to be viewed as an investment in the State’s economy.

Finally, inadequate funding for boating programs and services in Washington reduces the quality of the boating experience for Washington boaters. Another study has estimated that between 350,000 and 400,000 Washington residents of all ages boat for recreation, either owning a boat directly, renting or chartering a boat, or accompanying friends and family on a boat.<sup>11</sup> It would be remiss not to reinvest the funds that are generated from boating back to these constituents, especially when numerous needs for improvements to boating programs and services currently exist among the State’s boaters.

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<sup>7</sup> Source: 2006 U.S. Coast Guard Boating Statistics Report.

<sup>8</sup> Source: *Recreational Boating Safety in Washington: A Report on Methods to Achieve Safer Boating Practices*, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, 2003.

<sup>9</sup> Source: M. Campbell and S. Greaves, Northwest Marine Trade Association.

<sup>10</sup> Southwick Associates’ explanation of multiplier relationships between industries is particularly useful in this context: Once a boater makes a purchase, the retailer buys more merchandise from wholesalers, which buy more from manufacturers, which, in turn, purchase new inputs and supplies. In addition, the salaries and wages paid by these businesses stimulate more benefits: the first purchase creates numerous rounds of purchasing, generating substantial economic benefit to the state. [Source: Southwick Associates]

<sup>11</sup> Beckwith Associates, statewide recreation participation survey, results published in *An Assessment of Outdoor Recreation in Washington State*, IAC, 2002.



## 2. ADDITIONAL AND ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF FUNDING

In order to meet some of the numerous recreational boating needs identified in this assessment, additional funding will be required. It is recommended that a study be undertaken to examine potential funding alternatives, starting with a review of the analysis of tax preferences by the legislative commission that was formed to study tax preferences in Washington State.

Though the issue of alternative funding warrants significant additional examination, the assessment identified—particularly through the focus groups of boating providers—several preliminary possibilities for funding the needs of the State’s boaters. One option is for a larger share of the State’s general fund; with boaters contributing nearly \$100 million to the State annually in taxes and fees, it would seem reasonable for the State to reinvest a greater share of this money with the boating community.

Several issues connected to taxes and user-based fees paid by Washington boaters prevent these from constituting more viable funding sources for recreational boating. For example, boat operators in Washington pay a tax on fuel, the proceeds from which are then placed in the State’s Motor Vehicle Fund. But a cap on the amount returned from this fund to recreational boating means that boating grant money is roughly 40% less than some believe it should be. (As mentioned previously, the issue has been studied by a legislative commission on tax preferences.) In addition, a number of boating providers discussed user-based fees as a possible means of funding programs and services (particularly maintenance of access sites). However, as with the fuel tax, proceeds from user-based fees are not always funneled back into recreational boating. Alternatively, the user fees themselves may not be adequate sources of funding to begin with. (On this point, several boating providers referred to an annual \$10 launch ramp parking fee which was deemed insufficient to cover the costs of necessary access maintenance.)

In the focus groups, a number of boating providers suggested that Washington consider the mandatory registration of all watercraft in the State (the current policy allows boats under 16 feet with less than 10 horsepower that are not used on navigable waters to remain unregistered). According to the US Coast Guard, at least four states (North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, and South Carolina) and the District of Columbia currently require all watercraft to be registered. In

exploring the feasibility of mandatory boat registration, it should be noted that several practical reasons support such a measure. First, based on the results of the survey of Washington boaters, unregistered boats comprise at least one-quarter (25%) of the fleet. Providers noted that unregistered boats utilize many of the same resources as registered boats, including launch ramps, law enforcement services, campsites, and moorage space, as well as many other things. Further, several boating providers referred to the difficulties faced by enforcement personnel charged with investigating the theft of unregistered boats (in which case verifying the theft is virtually impossible). Finally, it should be noted that 44% of boating fatalities in Washington occur in non-powered boats (it is highly likely that such non-powered boats are unregistered).<sup>12</sup>

Requiring the mandatory registration of all watercraft could prove to be an important step in receiving additional funds to meet the growing needs of Washington's boating constituents.

### **3. BOATER SAFETY**

Among providers, boater safety was the top rated program or service, as well as being the top area in which providers would like to direct more time and money. Washington's current boating safety statistics suggest room for improvement: as previously mentioned, the State has recently ranked relatively high in boating fatalities per 100,000 registered boats. In the focus groups, boating providers expressed considerable support for the mandatory boater education legislation enacted in 2005; however, the now-required boater education, a significant step towards improving boating safety, should be viewed as merely a starting point for improving overall boater safety in the State. As previously mentioned, boater safety is to some extent dependent upon funding: with adequate support, agencies in Washington involved in enforcement of boating laws and regulations will be able to provide an enforcement presence sufficient for the consistent performance of safety checks, enforcement of alcohol- and drug-related boating laws, provision of on-site safety information and practical education to boaters, and the continued reduction of boating accidents and fatalities in Washington.

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<sup>12</sup> Source: *Recreational Boating Safety in Washington: A Report on Methods to Achieve Safer Boating Practices*, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, 2003.

#### 4. BOATING ACCESS

Providers and boaters alike consider access to be one of the central needs affecting recreational boating in Washington. The most important issue related to access is the need for additional or improved boat launches: 72% of boaters who indicated that access issues had taken away from their boating satisfaction cited boat launch ramps as the specific reason. Similarly, majorities of boating providers indicated that more time and money should be directed toward public access (70%), including the development of new boat launch ramps (70%) and the management of existing boat launch ramps (55%). Over two-thirds of providers (69%) said they would like to see more boat launch ramps in their areas in Washington.

The data suggest that boaters are generally satisfied with the location of existing boat launches: 76% indicated being satisfied with the location of launch ramps in the counties in which they boat most often. Similarly, boater frustration with crowding on the water is not nearly as pervasive an issue as frustration with crowding at boat launch ramps: 24% of boaters consider crowding at boat launch ramps to be a major problem, compared with just 10% of boaters who consider crowding on the water to be a major problem (among boating providers, 45% believe crowding at boat launch ramps to be a major problem). At the same time, boaters gave poor mean ratings to Washington's management of existing boat launch ramps (6.15 on a scale of 0 to 10) as well as to the development of new boat launch ramps (4.45 on a scale of 0 to 10), suggesting that efforts to improve access limitations at launches have been inadequate.

Exacerbating the issue of overcrowding at launch ramps is a growing need for improvements to parking at launch ramps and access sites (essentially a second aspect of overcrowding). The survey results indicate that inadequate parking is recognized by both providers and boaters as being a major deterrent to boating in Washington: 72% of providers and 55% of boaters would like to see more parking at boat launch ramps (the top rated item of services the groups would like to see more of in their respective areas).

The survey results illustrate the highest priority locations for additional or improved boat launches, with the majority of these corresponding with the counties and bodies of water most frequented by boaters. Again, the implication of these findings suggests that while boaters are

generally satisfied with the locations they choose for boating, their experiences could be greatly improved if the problem of access were to be alleviated. The primary means of doing so would be the development of new access sites or maintenance and/or expansion of existing access sites; both areas are discussed below.

## **5. LAUNCHES AND FACILITY UPKEEP**

As stated above, the improvement of access is by far the most pressing need for Washington boaters. However, the data reflect that both providers and boaters feel strongly that the maintenance of existing access sites and launch ramps is as important a concern as the development of new sites and launch ramps; indeed, management of existing ramps ranked ahead of the development of new launch ramps in the majority of importance ratings in the surveys of both providers as well as boaters.

Upkeep and maintenance extend beyond improvements to the launch ramps themselves. In the survey, boaters indicated that restrooms at boat launch ramps (22%) and parking at launch ramps (21%) are in poor condition, while the top facilities and services cited by providers as being in poor condition in their areas were parking at launch ramps (35%), fishing cleaning stations (26%), restrooms at launch ramps (25%), mooring buoys (24%), pumpout stations (22%), and dump stations (20%). Among the facilities and services boaters would like to see improved in the areas in which they most often boat, launch ramps (45%) top the list, followed by restrooms at launch ramps (19%), mooring buoys or docks (16%), and daytime parking areas (15%).

In the focus groups, providers blamed the RCO's grant process as being partly responsible for the general lack of facility maintenance in Washington. The providers' perceptions were that the RCO's selection of projects for funding favored the development of new sites and launch ramps over facility maintenance; in short, they believe that funds for maintenance of facilities are simply not available from the RCO (see the discussion on providers' perceptions under "RCO Grant Process" below). Although these focus group participants are perhaps demonstrating a lack of understanding about the types of available funding and legislative mandates on how various funds are spent (e.g., funding for capital improvements versus funding for maintenance and operation), the bottom line for them is that they want to see more maintenance funding

available. (Perhaps there is an outreach opportunity here to inform boating service providers of potential sources of maintenance funding.) Again, it cannot be overstated that upkeep, maintenance, and efforts to improve existing access sites and increase their capacity, especially boat launch ramps and their adjoining parking areas, are important means of facilitating access in Washington.

## 6. LAUNCHES AND FACILITY DEVELOPMENT

Whether the needs are satisfied by adding to existing access sites or developing new ones, there are numerous facilities and services that both boaters and providers would like to see more of in their respective areas. Parking at launch ramps (72%) and launch ramps themselves (69%) were the top items providers would like to see more of, followed by docks (63%), pumpout stations (63%), restrooms at launch ramps (62%), courtesy tie-ups (62%), dump stations (58%), mooring buoys (53%), and campsites (52%).

In addition to boat launch ramps (at 48%, by far the top need), boaters would particularly like to see mooring and docks (23%) and restrooms at launch ramps (17%) built in the counties in which they most often boat. Parking at launch ramps (55%) and launch ramps themselves (54%) are the top facilities and services boaters would like to see more of in the counties in which they most often boat; following these, boaters would like to see more courtesy tie-ups (51%), restrooms at boat launch ramps (50%), docks (50%), and campsites (50%).

Note that, in general, the only instance of both providers and boaters ranking the development of new boat launch ramps ahead of the management of existing boat launch ramps was when the two groups were asked about areas in which to direct more time and money: among boaters, 54% said that more time and money should be directed towards new development, compared to 47% in favor of more time and money toward management of existing ramps; similarly, 70% of providers said that more time and money should be directed towards new development, compared to 55% in favor of more time and money toward management of existing ramps. This may be due to the perception, at least among boaters, that maintenance is an assumed part of the boating budget, and that *additional* time and money should be directed at new development; note

that in virtually all other rankings in the two surveys, management of existing boat launch ramps topped the development of new launch ramps in terms of importance.

The data suggest that providers are, to some extent, skeptical about the development of new access and boat launch ramps due to the difficulties in locating and purchasing property in Washington on which to develop water access. Many of the focus group participants cited pressure from homeowners' associations for boaters to avoid private waterfront property, leading to a gradual decline in available public access. According to providers, environmental regulations in Washington constitute a further hindrance to the development of new access sites and ramps. Many providers viewed as frustrating the process of applying for necessary environmental permits and adhering to ecological protocols while developing on the water; it was also noted that boating interests have not consolidated into a lobbying group sufficient to counter environmental interests in opposition to new development. For these reasons, the development of new access facilities and launch ramps should be carefully balanced with the maintenance of existing sites and ramps.

## **7. AGENCY ADMINISTRATION AND COORDINATION OF BOATING IN WASHINGTON**

The Revised Code of Washington directs the State Parks and Recreation Commission to administer the state's boating safety program and gives the Commission primary responsibility in many boating-related efforts, but there are multiple entities administering various aspects of boating and boating-related programs and services in Washington.

- The State Parks and Recreation Commission and all local county sheriff's offices and police departments are charged with the enforcement of boating regulations, boater safety, and numerous environmental mandates, such as those pertaining to the administration of boat sewage pumpout grants and boater environmental education.
- The Department of Fish and Wildlife enforces fishing laws and environmental regulations including those related to invasive species (by legislative mandate). Note that it plays a role in enforcement of boating laws simply because its officers are on the water in the performance of their duties (not mandated, but a role that became necessary simply because a game officer *not* enforcing an apparent boating violation when he is checking

for fishing licenses, for instance, makes the boater perceive that the boating violation is unimportant).

- The Department of Natural Resources manages aquatic lands and invasive species and salmon recovery programs.
- The RCO administers the marine motor fuel tax access grant program and assists in salmon recovery.
- The Department of Ecology provides water quality administration, including personnel to respond to oil spills.
- The Department of Licensing oversees the registration of boats.
- The Department of Revenue is responsible for boat excise taxation.

This multiple-agency involvement may have led to the perception among both providers and various agency employees that boating services and boating programs are fragmented. For instance, state agency employees whose responsibilities include law enforcement on both the land *and* water in Washington stated that enforcement emphasis was often inadequately divided between the two areas—terrestrial and water. It was also acknowledged that the administration of boater safety in the field (such as patrols, safety and PFD checks, the enforcement of laws and regulations) is frequently performed by multiple entities that are not always in adequate communication with one another. Furthermore, there was discussion in the provider focus groups about the lack of consistency in carrying out boating programs and the possibility of consolidating boating programs, and in the provider survey, two-thirds of boating service providers indicated that one state agency or organization, instead of multiple agencies, should be responsible for boating programs and services in the state.

It is interesting to note that, for their part, boaters did not view the administration of boating and boating-related programs by multiple agencies as a major problem. Nonetheless, they have the perception that there could be better coordination. For instance, whether the perception is correct or not, they indicated that the lack of enough access sites and launch ramps is partly a result of poor administrative coordination.

Although better coordination and communication among boating stakeholders has been and is fostered through the State Parks and Recreation Commission's Boating Safety Council, there is still some perception in Washington that boating services are fragmented. There may be need for an *interagency* coordinating body (the Council has no state agency members outside of the State Parks and Recreation Commission—who are non-voting). Certainly, the assessment results suggest that both the *perception* of piecemeal delivery, as well as the actual piecemeal delivery where it exists, be addressed.

It may be that this requires changes to the actual way that some boating services are provided, or it may be that better communication among agency personnel and better communication to providers and boaters would adequately address the problem. (As an example that pertains to this communication problem, see the discussion about a single website in the section later in the text titled "Increase Information and Education Programs.") Nonetheless, because there was feelings among some boaters and many boating services providers that a single agency is needed, it may be that Washington's boating programs could be better served if a multi-agency coordinating body were established consisting of all agencies involved in administering and providing boating services. While governmental responsibilities pertaining to boating are delineated in the Revised Code of Washington (and Washington Administrative Code that sets forth the specific ways the code is administered), the coordination among the agencies involved was seen as a problem among boating stakeholders. A coordinating body, if it helps improve the delivery of services, could become a permanent part of the structure of the administration of boating services in Washington. If, however, coordination problems persist, the suggestion of many boating stakeholders that a "State of Washington Department of Boating" be created could be explored.

## **8. INCREASE LAW ENFORCEMENT PRESENCE AND ENSURE THAT ALL LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS RECEIVE STANDARDIZED TRAINING**

While boater safety and law enforcement had high ratings of importance among providers (with safety being ranked consistently as the top area for importance), majorities of boating providers indicated that more time and money should be directed to them. Further, the majority of all providers (both survey respondents and focus group participants) would like to see an increase in



the law enforcement presence on Washington's waters. As mentioned previously, it is generally accepted that an increased level of law enforcement personnel on the water corresponds with a general decline in boating accidents and fatalities. Among boaters who consider boating programs and services in Washington to be ineffective, the top reason cited (34%) is insufficient law enforcement presence on the water.

The focus groups identified several issues affecting the staffing of enforcement personnel in Washington. Funding was repeatedly cited as an overarching issue, while other participants stated that general understaffing of enforcement personnel frequently led to employees working overtime, thereby reducing their energy levels and overall effectiveness in carrying out enforcement activities. A second issue connected to staffing concerned employees rotating in and out of jobs within agencies or across counties; as an example, it was noted that a county employee well-trained in the environmental issues of one area would not necessarily possess the knowledge required in another area that placed a high emphasis on boating safety patrols.

As a result of the turnover of and transfers within enforcement staffing in many counties, many providers indicated that enforcement officers are not always adequately trained in boating enforcement. While the state's training programs and protocols for boating law enforcement are standardized (for instance, they meet U.S. Coast Guard requirements), many providers expressed the need for coordinated and consistent training of officers in order to maintain a knowledgeable staff equipped to respond to an array of enforcement issues. This appears to be an issue of providing all officers with the *opportunity* to receive training—some are put into enforcement duties before they have had all the training they may wish they had—not with the training programs themselves, which are standardized, despite focus group participants' perceptions to the contrary. In discussions with stakeholders, the researchers found that boating accident investigation is an example of where officers' actually may be, of necessity, put into situations prior to their having received training in investigating boating accidents. Bettering the *opportunities* for law enforcement officers to receive training would be a vital step toward the larger objective of reinforcing boater safety on the waters.

## **9. INCREASE INFORMATION AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

In general, the development of boating information and education programs should be treated as an ongoing process of providing boaters beneficial information, with mandatory boater safety education serving as the beginning. More than half of providers (52%) indicated that more time and money should be spent on the provision of information and publications. It is instructive to remember that boater safety was the top rated issue of importance among providers; in that sense, safety on Washington's waters is likely to improve following the increased exposure of boaters to information on boat operation, the environmental effects of boating, navigation practices, and the regulations governing recreation on the State's waters, as well as information on safety.

By all accounts, the State Parks and Recreation Commission effectively manages the production of informational materials related to boating. However, multiple agencies are involved—whether legislatively mandated to do so or not—in the actual dissemination of boating information. For this reason, it is recommended that boating information be available at various points in the field, including through contact with enforcement personnel. There were two recurring suggestions in the focus groups for a more efficient delivery of boating information. The first was a centralized website, with frequent updates and the ability for agencies to add or edit information as necessary. In discussions with stakeholders, the researchers learned that such a website was discussed, with preliminary designs produced, in Washington in recent years, but that the site did not meet state standards for a “.gov” domain name (the “.gov” part of the domain name is considered essential for the public's perception of credibility). A single, comprehensive state boating website with a “.gov” domain name should again be explored to better serve the public's need for one authoritative and credible source of information on boating in the state, boating regulations, and state boating programs.

The second recurring suggestion in the focus groups was for making a greater amount of boating information available at the sites of recreation, such as at boat ramps and marinas on the water. Safety information, in particular, should be made available in a variety of formats, including pamphlets and handouts (kiosks were cited as a potentially effective method of providing boaters with information—many providers noted that the need for information among boaters is greatest

in the field, and not in a classroom). Agency-sponsored campaigns may target the most important issues in terms of boater needs; the assessment indicated that boaters are most interested in receiving information on ramps and marinas (34%), maps and charts (32%), general safety (32%), boating rules and regulations (32%), fishing (27%), wildlife (22%), and boating programs in Washington (22%).

Information and education efforts should be evaluated periodically through surveys of boater knowledge and evaluated through boating accident statistics.

## **10. RCO GRANT PROCESS**

It is recommended that the RCO use the results of this study to set priorities for the Boating Facilities Program and Boating Activities Program. The information in this report—particularly the data on improvement priorities and the preferred locations for service additions—is presented to assist the RCO in its decision-making and review of proposals.

There is a problem in that boating services providers do not always understand that the RCO is constrained by state law from using capital funds for maintenance. This results in the oversimplified belief among providers that the RCO favors building new facilities over projects designed to perform maintenance, upkeep, or other improvements to existing access sites and launch ramps. As stated above in the discussions on access issues, there is a clear unmet need in Washington for improved boat launch ramps and parking opportunities, as well as numerous other repairs and additions; each of these represents an important means of providing access to Washington's waters. To this end, the data suggest that the maintenance of existing access sites and launch ramps is just as important in working to alleviate crowding issues caused by the overall deficit in access. Additionally, providers need to be better informed about the grant process, the constraints on what can be funded, and where and how maintenance funding can be obtained (if possible) under the current funding processes in the state, including the RCO grant process.

At the same time, many boating providers indicated being uncertain about the RCO's proposal requirements, with some remarking on the complexity of the grant application process. The

larger issue may be that these perceptions represent fundamental gaps in sufficient knowledge of the RCO's grant program. To address some of these concerns, the RCO may wish to consider issuing Requests for Proposals for grant projects in order to better outline the Office's objectives, and to more efficiently publicize project needs with the needs identified in the results of this assessment.

## **11. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES**

In general, boating providers show a greater concern for environmental issues in Washington than do the boaters themselves. This, however, should not detract from the importance of educating both enforcement personnel and boaters on environmental issues before the onset of a crisis (e.g., a zebra mussel outbreak in Washington waters). As previously mentioned, agency responsibilities regarding issues such as invasive species are potentially sketchy, often because multiple steps are required to sufficiently address the issue: the prevention of invasive species depends on both an enforcement and an educational component. Water quality, technically listed as a responsibility of the Department of Ecology, was a major concern among all providers (note that water quality is the top natural resource concern among Americans). In particular, providers voiced concern about the potential for boaters to act indirectly as sources of pollution, such as through fuel spillage, the use of copper bottom painted boats, or by spreading contamination from pumpout and dump stations.

In the survey, a majority of providers (60%) cited marine sanitation as an area of particular importance. In the focus groups, participants named milfoil, stormwater regulations, boat emissions, beach and shoreline erosion, sediment management, and over-fishing as areas to include in environmental training programs for personnel and educational materials for boaters. Finally, note that fishing was the top activity among boaters (53% had fished in the past two years in Washington), thereby demonstrating latent concern among boaters over issues potentially affecting fishing, such as invasive species and water quality.

The data suggest that agencies directly involved in environmental education and information dissemination (the State Parks and Recreation Commission and the Department of Ecology) may wish to increase information and education efforts focusing on the environmental impacts of

boating, including ways for boaters to mitigate their environmental impacts. Issues of particular importance may be evaluated through a communications plan that could also address methods for informing boaters on the issues. If possible, a component for enforcement personnel and marina operators could be included.

## **ABOUT RESPONSIVE MANAGEMENT**

Responsive Management is a nationally recognized public opinion and attitude survey research firm specializing in natural resource and outdoor recreation issues. Its mission is to help natural resource and outdoor recreation agencies and organizations better understand and work with their constituents, customers, and the public.

Utilizing its in-house, full-service, computer-assisted telephone and mail survey center with 45 professional interviewers, Responsive Management has conducted more than 1,000 telephone surveys, mail surveys, personal interviews, and focus groups, as well as numerous marketing and communications plans, need assessments, and program evaluations on natural resource and outdoor recreation issues.

Clients include most of the federal and state natural resource, outdoor recreation, and environmental agencies, and most of the top conservation organizations. Responsive Management also collects attitude and opinion data for many of the nation's top universities, including the University of Southern California, Virginia Tech, Colorado State University, Auburn, Texas Tech, the University of California—Davis, Michigan State University, the University of Florida, North Carolina State University, Penn State, West Virginia University, and others.

Among the wide range of work Responsive Management has completed during the past 20 years are studies on how the general population values natural resources and outdoor recreation, and their opinions on and attitudes toward an array of natural resource-related issues. Responsive Management has conducted dozens of studies of selected groups of outdoor recreationists, including anglers, boaters, hunters, wildlife watchers, birdwatchers, park visitors, historic site visitors, hikers, and campers, as well as selected groups within the general population, such as landowners, farmers, urban and rural residents, women, senior citizens, children, Hispanics, Asians, and African-Americans. Responsive Management has conducted studies on environmental education, endangered species, waterfowl, wetlands, water quality, and the reintroduction of numerous species such as wolves, grizzly bears, the California condor, and the Florida panther.

Responsive Management has conducted research on numerous natural resource ballot initiatives and referenda and helped agencies and organizations find alternative funding and increase their memberships and donations. Responsive Management has conducted major agency and organizational program needs assessments and helped develop more effective programs based upon a solid foundation of fact. Responsive Management has developed websites for natural resource organizations, conducted training workshops on the human dimensions of natural resources, and presented numerous studies each year in presentations and as keynote speakers at major natural resource, outdoor recreation, conservation, and environmental conferences and meetings.

Responsive Management has conducted research on public attitudes toward natural resources and outdoor recreation in almost every state in the United States, as well as in Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Japan. Responsive Management routinely conducts surveys in Spanish and has also conducted surveys and focus groups in Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Vietnamese.

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