

Responsive Management



VERMONT RESIDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD PROGRAM PRIORITIES AND ALTERNATIVE FUNDING MECHANISMS FOR THE VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

**Conducted for the
Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife**

**Responsive Management
November 2000**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study was conducted for the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife to ascertain Vermont residents' awareness of and attitudes toward alternative funding mechanisms and program priorities for the Department. In addition, residents' values with regard to Vermont fish and wildlife resources and lands were assessed. The survey was administered by telephone to randomly selected Vermont residents.

Values Associated with Vermont's Fish and Wildlife Resources

- The protection of fish and wildlife resources, habitats, and lands as well as the opportunity to participate in wildlife-related recreation was important to nearly all (97%) of surveyed Vermont residents. The vast majority (77% to 80%) judged these resources and activities to be "very important" to them.
- When read a list of eleven reasons why increasing funding to manage and conserve fish and wildlife in Vermont might be important to them and asked to tell how important using a scale of 1 to 10, respondents' mean responses ranged from 8.2 to 9.0. Top reasons included the importance of managing and conserving fish and wildlife for future generations, the importance of a clean environment to Vermont residents' health, the importance of enjoying fish and wildlife to a healthier and happier life in general, perceived personal responsibility to protect natural resources, and the importance of recreation and fish and wildlife to promoting healthier lifestyles in youth and children.

Attitudes toward Fish and Wildlife Departmental Efficiency and Program Priorities

- The majority of respondents (62%) considered the Department to be efficient while only 3% of respondents considered the Department to be wasteful. However, a large percentage (28%) responded, “Don’t know”.
- With regard to program priorities for the department, the majority of respondents felt that more money should be spent on:
 - 1) managing and protecting endangered species (60% of respondents),
 - 2) educating and informing residents about fish and wildlife (57%),
 - 3) enforcing fish and wildlife laws (54%), and
 - 4) managing department lands, streams, and lakes, increasing access to these areas, and purchasing additional sites (51%).
- Vermont residents were generally supportive of maintaining or increasing the time and money spent on all eight priorities mentioned and there was an increase (in some cases a large increase) in support for each of the priorities since the same question was asked in 1995. Those with the largest increases in overall support (i.e. *much more* or *slightly more* time and money should be spent) between 1995 and 2000 were:
 - 1) protecting and enhancing fish and wildlife habitat (52% increase),
 - 2) managing and protecting endangered and threatened species (43%),
 - 3) managing fisheries to provide recreational fishing opportunities (34%), and
 - 4) educating and informing residents about fish and wildlife (24%).

Support for Alternative Funding Mechanisms

- When asked how they thought the Department was funded, responses primarily favored various types of licenses (hunting 40%, fishing 38%, trapping 23%) and various types of taxes and general state revenues.
- Support for twelve alternative funding mechanisms was assessed. The following were supported by a large majority of residents:
 - 1) Continuing to receive a fixed dollar amount of the Rooms and Meals tax (90% of respondents supported),
 - 2) Receiving general fund dollars for programs and activities – such as managing non-game wildlife, search and rescue, etc. – in which the Department participates but does not receive funding (87%),
 - 3) Redistributing a portion of the current state sales tax so that the Department would receive 1/8 of 1% of the existing sales tax (81%),
 - 4) Receiving a small percentage of the current sales tax on certain outdoor items such as camping gear (73%), and
 - 5) Charging developers a fee for habitat evaluations (73%).
- Increasing the state general sales tax or raising hunting license fees was opposed by the largest percentage of residents; however, each was still supported by a majority.
- A majority of respondents (58%) indicated that they would be much more likely to support increased funding if they knew that the Federal government matches every new dollar brought into the Department with three dollars of Federal money and 26%

said they would be somewhat more likely to support the idea.

Participation in Fish- and Wildlife-Related Activities

- Eighty percent of respondents indicated they had “taken a special interest” in wildlife around their homes; 58% had traveled at least one mile from home for the purpose of observing, photographing or feeding wildlife; 43% had fished; and 28% had hunted in the past two years. The latter is an increase of 6% over 1995 survey results.
- Twenty eight percent of surveyed residents responded that they had donated to the Department within the past two years.

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INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted for the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department to determine Vermont residents' opinions and attitude toward program priorities and alternative funding mechanisms for the Department. Surveyed residents were also questioned with regard to the value of various aspects of fish and wildlife lands and resources to them personally. The survey questionnaire was developed cooperatively between the Department and Responsive Management (RM).

The survey was administered by telephone to randomly selected Vermont residents. Telephones were the preferred medium to conduct this survey since nearly all-potential respondents had access to a phone. The sample was purchased from Survey Sampling, Inc. of Fairfield, Connecticut. A central telephone-polling site at Responsive Management headquarters allowed for rigorous quality control over interviewers and over data collection in general. Facilities were staffed by interviewers with experience conducting computer-assisted telephone interviews on the subjects of natural resources and outdoor recreation for state fish and wildlife agencies and natural resource organizations. In addition, interviewers were trained according to standards established by the Council of American Survey Research Organizations. Professional staff randomly monitored interviewers to evaluate each interviewer's performance.

Professional staff members conducted project briefings with each interviewer prior to his or her beginning work on this project. Interviewers were briefed and instructed on study goals and objectives, type of study, handling of survey questions, interview length, termination points, qualifiers for participation, reading of interviewer instructions, reading of survey, skip patterns, and

probing and clarifying techniques necessary for specific questions on the survey instrument.

Professional staff edited each survey to check for clarity, understanding, completeness, and form.

Interviews were conducted Monday through Friday from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. and on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. A multiple callback design was used to maintain the representativeness of the sample, avoid bias toward people easy to reach by telephone, and provide an equal opportunity for all to participate. Subsequent calls were placed at different times of the day and on different days of the week.

The software used for data collection was Questionnaire Programming Language (QPL) version 4.1 (National Technical Information Services, 1999). QPL is a comprehensive system for computer-assisted telephone interviewing. The survey data were entered into the computer as the interviews were conducted, eliminating possible errors associated with manual data entry after the completion of the interviews.

RESULTS

The response rate was 49%. Throughout this report, most findings are reported at a 95% confidence interval. For the entire sample of Vermont residents, the sampling error is at most plus or minus 3% (n = 1005). This means that if the survey were administered 100 times to different samples that were selected in the same fashion, 95 of the 100 surveys' findings would fall within plus or minus 3% of each other. Percentages in graphed data may not total exactly 100% due to rounding.

Values Associated with Vermont's Fish and Wildlife Resources

Respondents were asked a series of questions on the importance of protecting Vermont fish and wildlife resources and of having the opportunity to participate in outdoor recreation activities.

The vast majority (97% in all cases) of surveyed Vermont residents responded that the protection of habitats and lands and of fish and wildlife resources, as well as having the opportunity to participate in wildlife-related outdoor recreation, was important to them (Q9- Q11). When asked to indicate specifically how important the protection and preservation of ecologically important habitats and lands in Vermont was to them, 77% stated that this was very important, with an additional 20% indicating this was somewhat important (Q9). Only 1% responded that the protection of habitats and lands was "not at all important" to them. Again, when asked to judge the importance of protecting Vermont's fish and wildlife resources, 80% responded that this was very important to them, with an additional 17% choosing "somewhat important" and only 1% in the "not at all important" category (Q10). The same overwhelming majority of surveyed residents indicated that it very important (80%) or somewhat important (17%) to them that people have the opportunity in Vermont to participate in wildlife-related outdoor recreation, such as hunting, fishing and wildlife

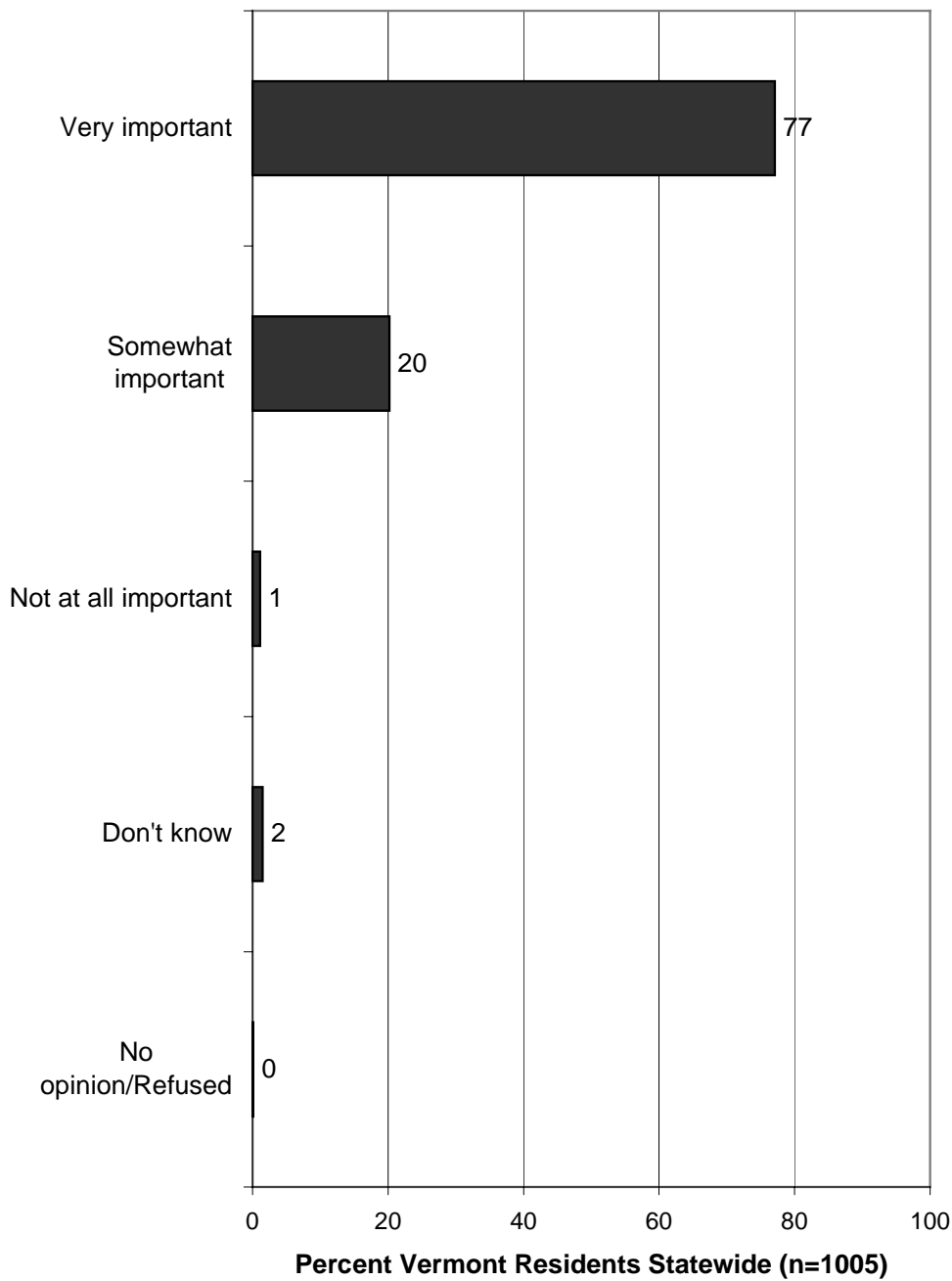
viewing (Q11). Only one percent responded that participation in wildlife-related recreation was not at all important to them.

Respondents were read a list of reasons why increasing funding to manage and conserve fish and wildlife in Vermont might be important to them personally. They were then asked to rate each, on a scale of one to ten, where one is not an important reason and ten is an extremely important reason. The choice and order of statements was randomized and approximately half of all respondents answered each question.

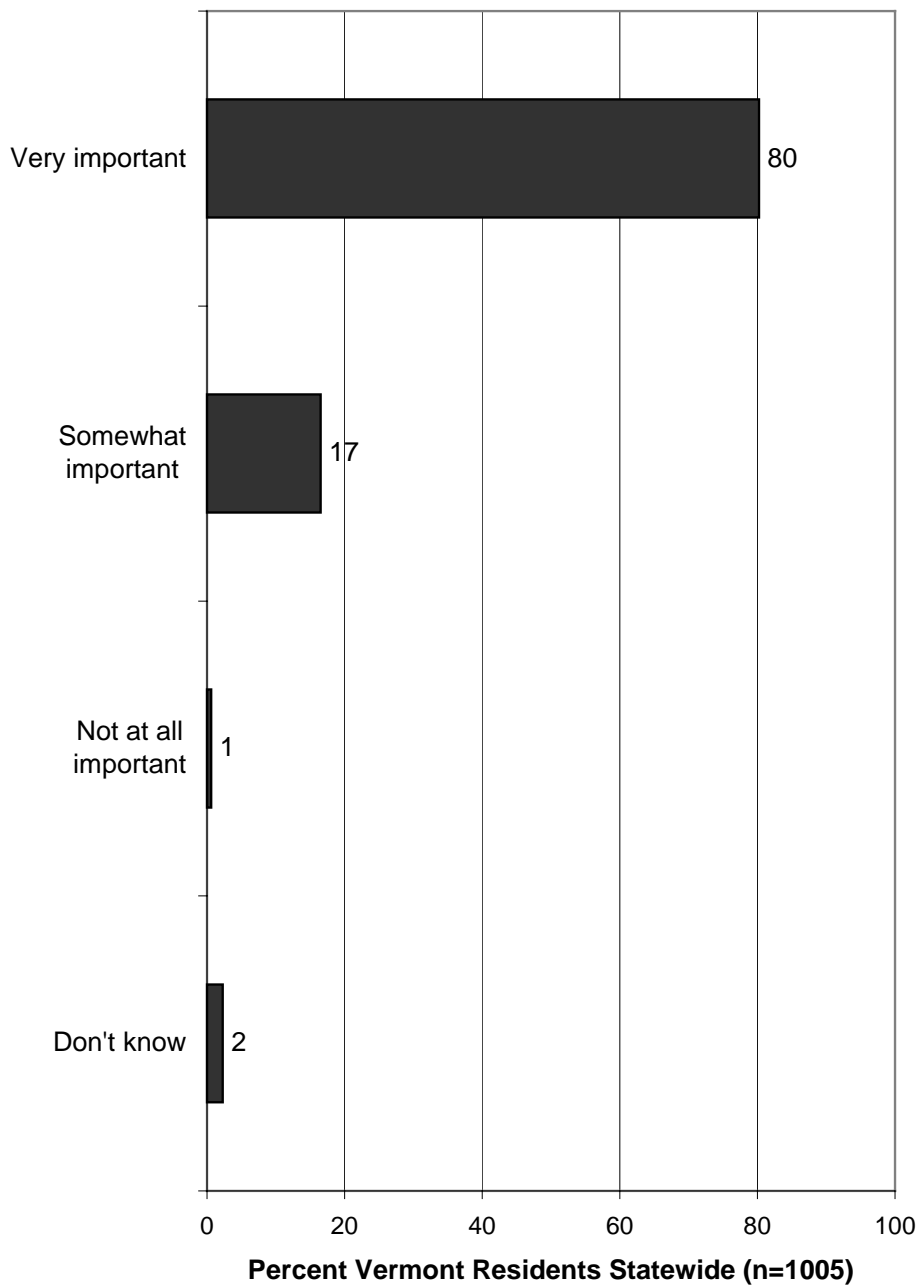
As judged by the mean responses, each of the eleven reasons stated was considered very to extremely important by surveyed residents (Q41-52). Each of the reasons had a mean response of greater than 8.0. Rated slightly more important than the other reasons (mean response value of 9.0) was the statement, "It is important to do what is necessary to manage and conserve our fish and wildlife so that future generations, including our children and grandchildren, will be able to enjoy these things." However, the difference in mean response between this statement and that with the lowest mean response value ("The protection of Vermont's fish and wildlife benefits all Vermont residents.") was only 0.8. Thus, residents clearly valued greatly each of the reasons given for increasing funding to manage and conserve fish and wildlife. These reasons included: (i) the importance of a clean environment for protecting residents' health, (ii) the leading of a happier and healthier life due to enjoyment of outdoor activities and wildlife, (iii) a personal responsibility to protect resources, (iv) the contribution of Vermont's fish and wildlife to its uniqueness, (v) the importance of well managed resources to residents' quality of life and to tourism and the economy, (vi) the need to protect fish and wildlife before they disappear forever, and (vii) the need to be good stewards of the land.

Graphs

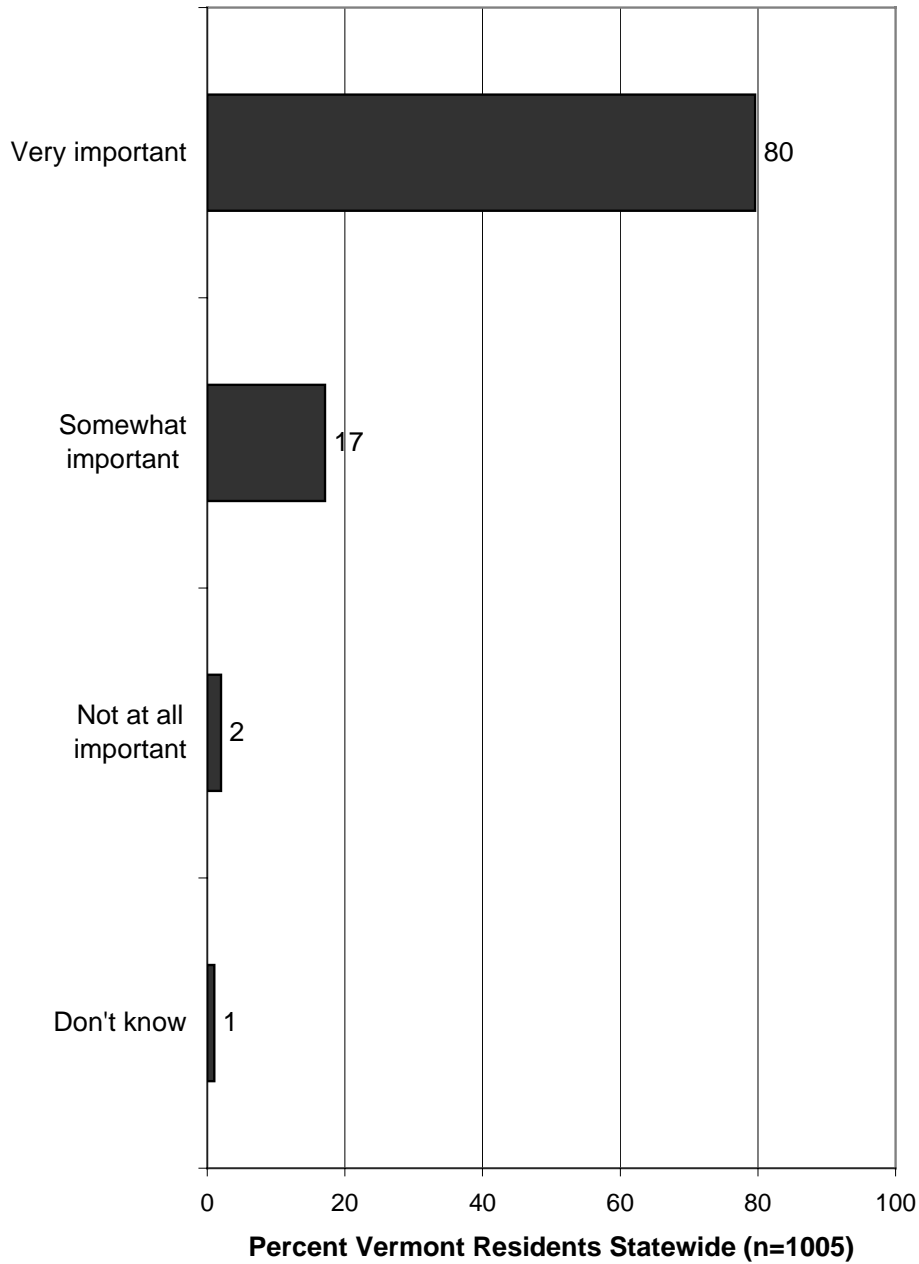
Q9. How important is it to you that ecologically important habitats and lands in Vermont are being protected and preserved?



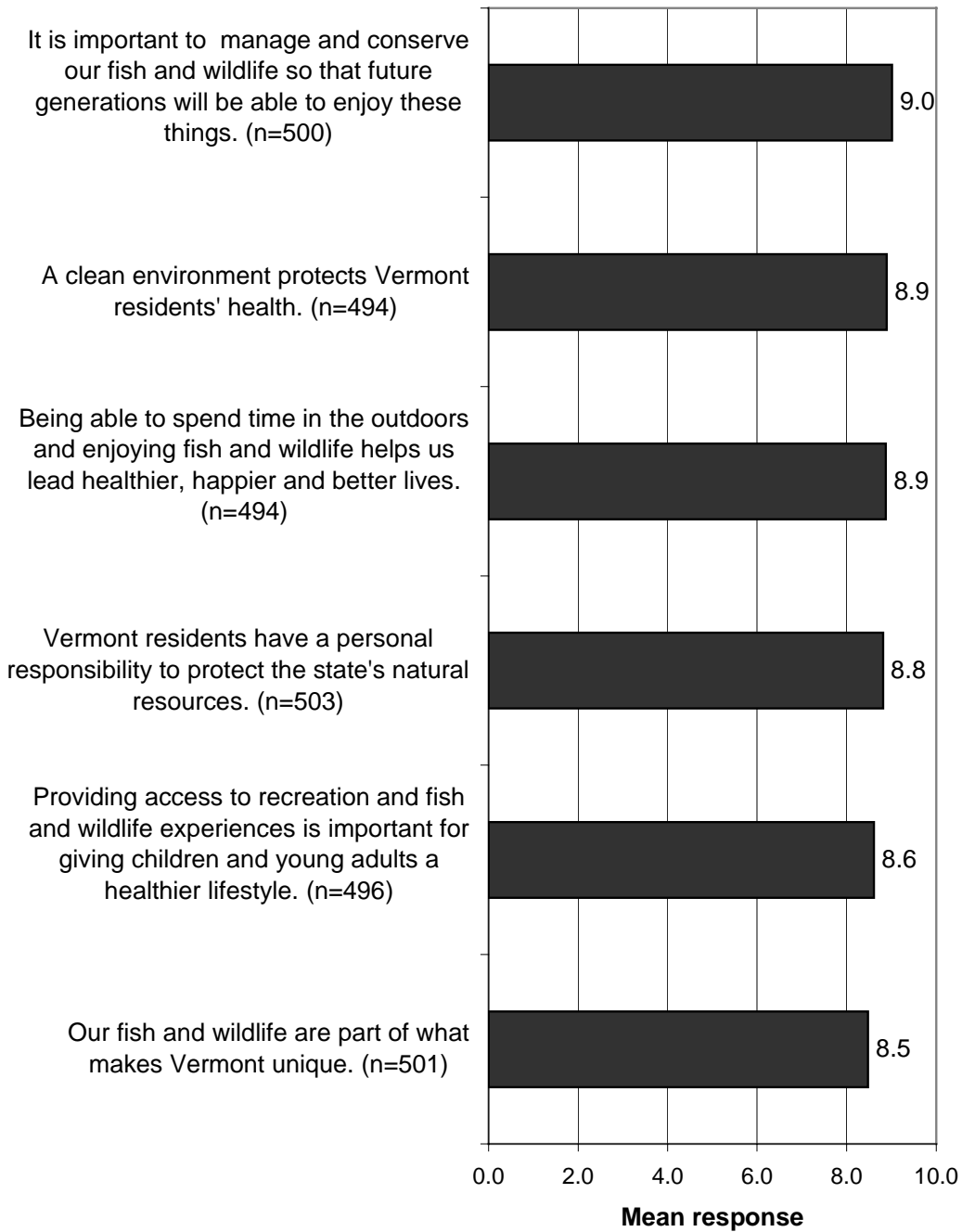
Q10. How important is it to you that Vermont's fish and wildlife resources are safe and well protected?



Q11. How important is it to you that people have the opportunity in Vermont to participate in wildlife-related outdoor recreation, such as hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing?



Q41-52. On a scale of 1 to 10, how important is each of the following to you personally?



Q41-52 (continued). On a scale of 1 to 10, how important is each of the following to you personally?



Attitudes Toward Fish and Wildlife Departmental Efficiency and Program Priorities

Departmental Efficiency

When asked whether, in their opinion, the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department was efficient or wasteful, only 3% of respondents considered the department somewhat or very wasteful (Q8).

Thirty two percent considered the Department “very efficient” while an additional 30% considered it “somewhat efficient”. A large category, however, was “Don’t know” (28%) indicating that a large proportion of feel they have insufficient information to judge the efficiency of the Department.

Program Priorities

Surveyed residents were told, “The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department uses its time, money and personnel to support a variety of programs.” A list of departmental programs was then read to them, with the request that they indicate whether they felt that more, about the same, or less time and money should be spent on each program.

A majority of respondents indicated that they felt that more (*much more* and *slightly more* combined) of the Department’s time and money should be spent on: (i) managing and protecting endangered and threatened species (60%), (ii) educating and informing residents about fish and wildlife (57%), (iii) enforcing fish and wildlife laws (54%), and (iv) managing department lands, streams, and lakes, increasing access to these areas and purchasing additional sites (51%) (Q13-20, part one). The percentage of respondents who felt that *much more* time and money should be spent on these four options was 34%, 30%, 28%, and 24%, respectively (Q13-20, part two). In addition, 23% felt that much more time and money should be spent on managing fisheries to

provide recreational fishing opportunities.

Those who felt that less money should be spent on the presented priorities were, in all cases, a distinct minority. With only one exception, less than 10% of respondents felt that less money (*slightly less* and *much less* combined) should be spent on any of the eight options presented (see Q13 through Q20). The exception was question 19, in which 18% of respondents felt that less money should be devoted to the protection and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat on private lands. For every question but one (question 20), however, the largest response category was “about the same.”

Changes in Attitudes Toward Program Priorities From 1995 to 2000

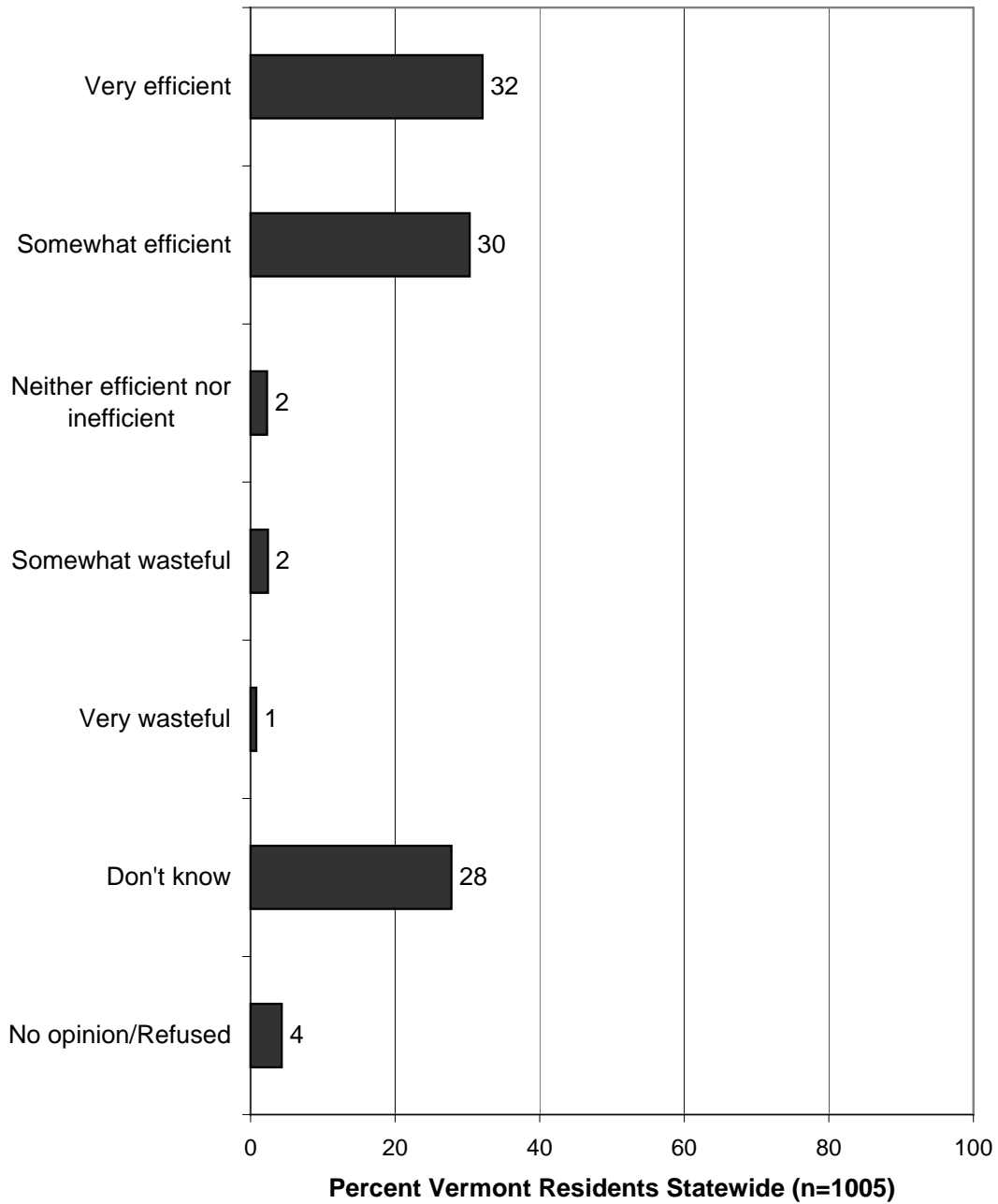
Without exception, more respondents in the current survey supported each of the priorities presented than did so in 1995. Since the 1995 survey there has been an increase in the number of surveyed residents who feel that *much more* and those who feel that *more* (*much more* and *slightly more* combined) time and money should be spent on each option. Although it still received the least support among the eight priorities, “protecting and enhancing fish and wildlife habitat” showed the largest increase (52% increase, given as percentage increase relative to 1995 data) among those who felt that *more* time and money should be spent (Q13-20, part one). Other priorities with large increases among those wishing *more* money be spent were “managing and protecting endangered and threatened species” (43% increase), “managing fisheries to provide recreational fishing opportunities” (34% increase), and “educating and informing residents about fish and wildlife” (24% increase).

Those priorities with the largest increase among those desiring *much more* time and

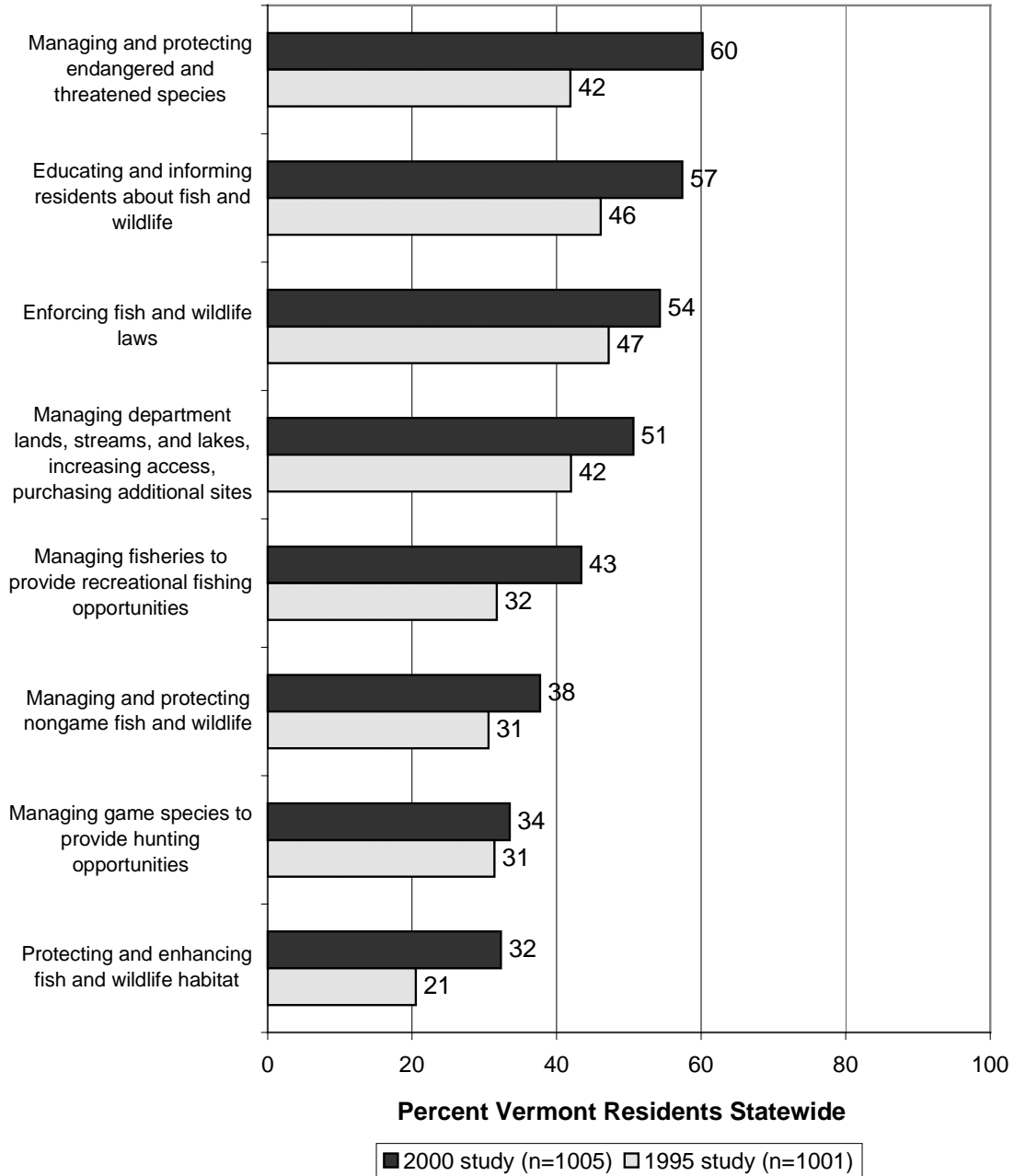
money be spent were “managing fisheries to provide recreational fishing opportunities” (130% increase), “educating and informing residents about fish and wildlife” (100% increase), and “managing and protecting endangered and threatened species (55% increase) (Q13-20, part two). The latter priority was the highest in both surveys among those who felt that *much more* time and money should be spent. For each priority presented, the number of respondents who replied that *about the same* or less (*slightly less* and *much less* combined) time and money should be spent decreased from the 1995 to the 2000 surveys.

Graphs

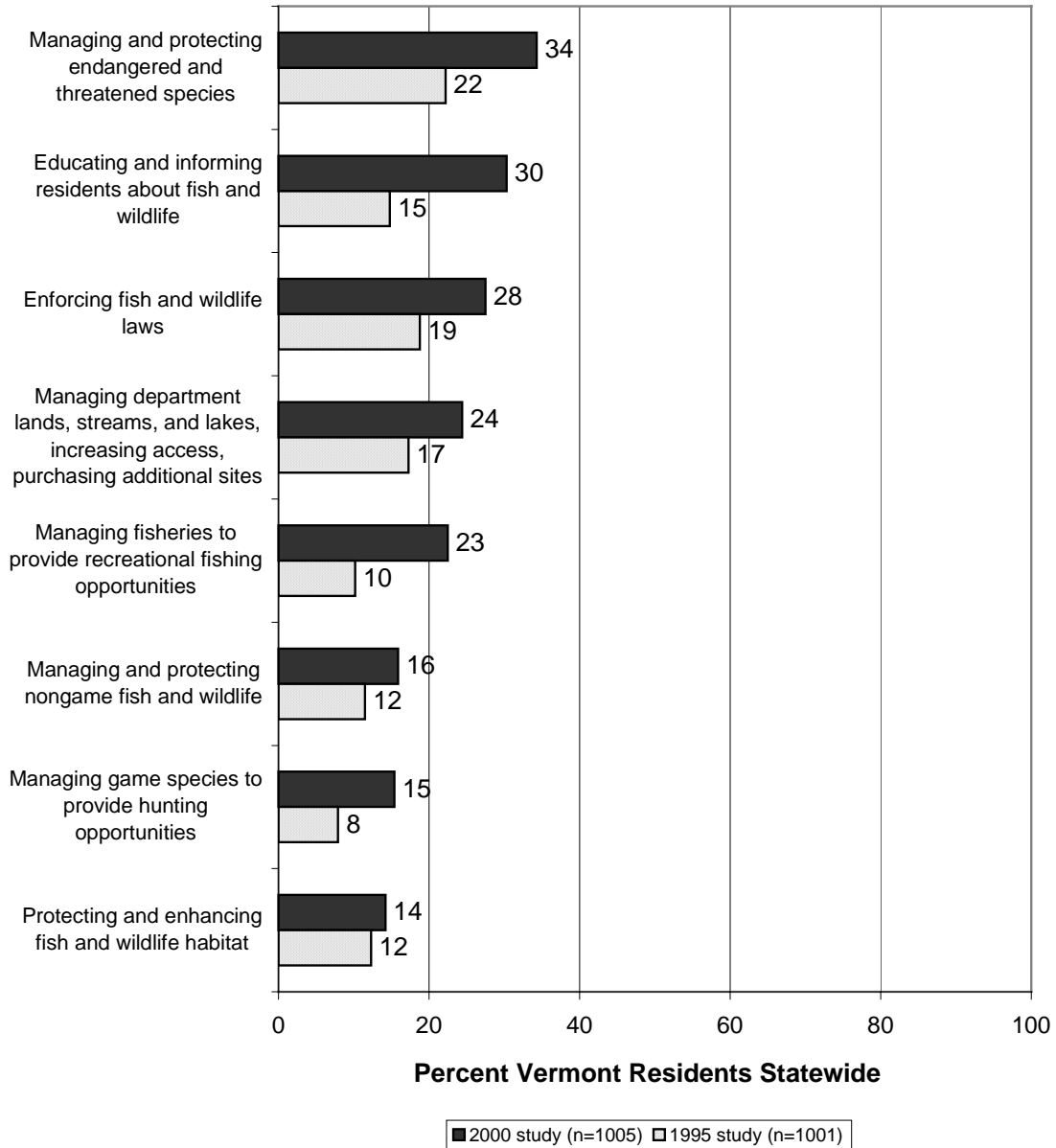
Q8. In your opinion, is the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department efficient or wasteful?



**Q13-20 Part one . Percent who feel that MORE
(much and slightly more combined) time and
money should be spent on:
(Comparison of 2000 and 1995 data)**

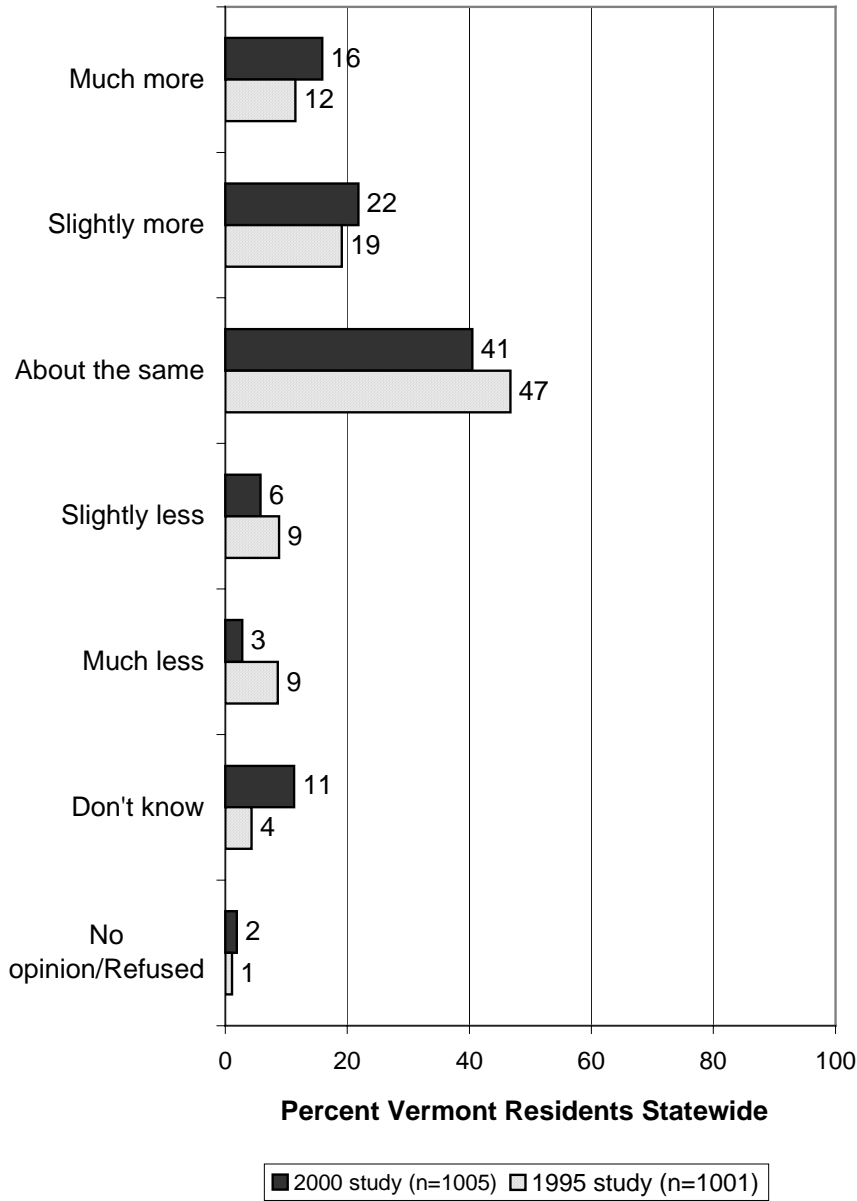


Q13-20 Part two . Percent who feel that MUCH MORE time and money should be spent on:
 (Comparison of 2000 and 1995 data)

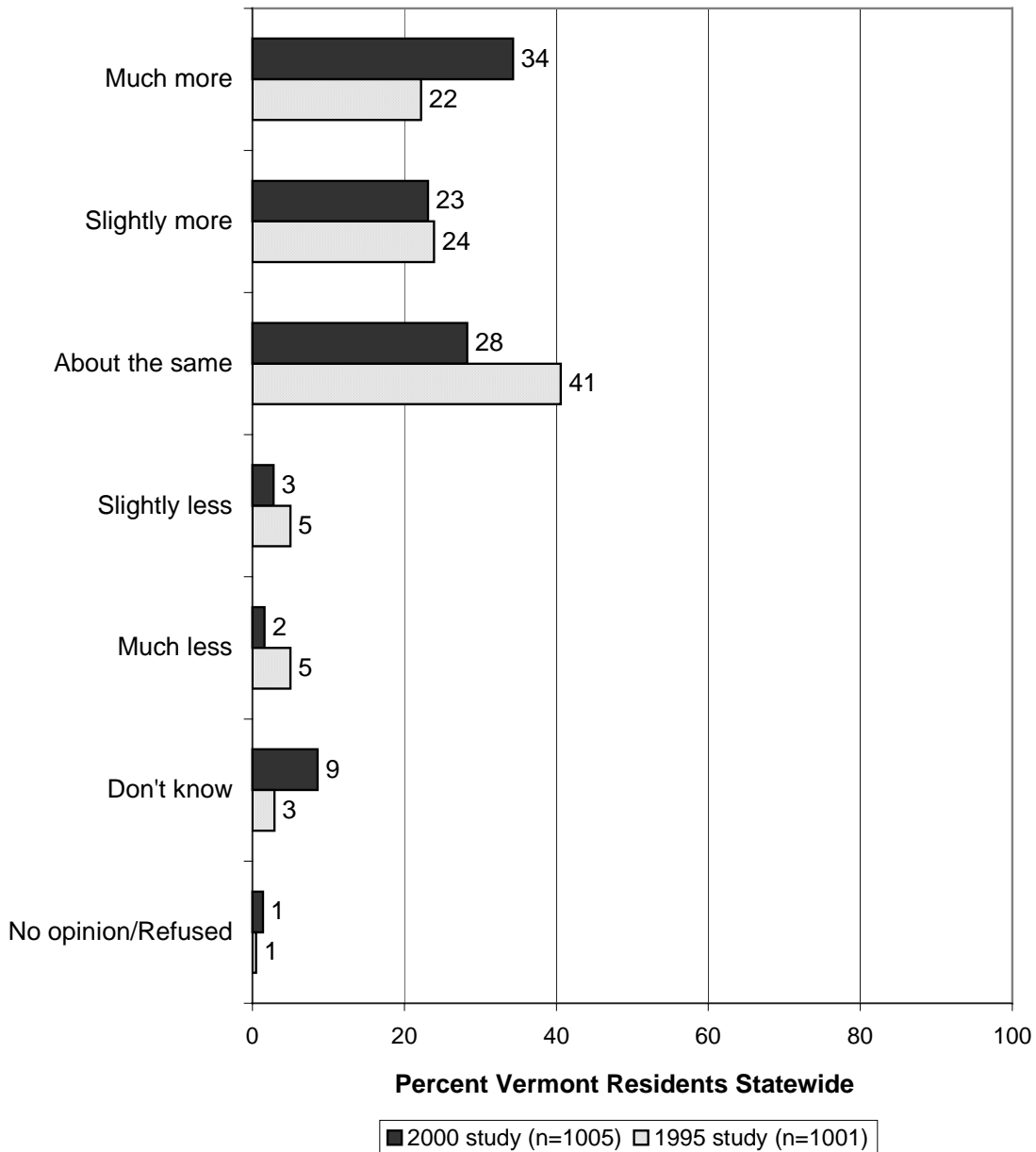


Q13. Do you feel that more, about the same, or less time and money should be spent on managing and protecting Vermont's nongame fish and wildlife?

(Comparison of 2000 and 1995 data)

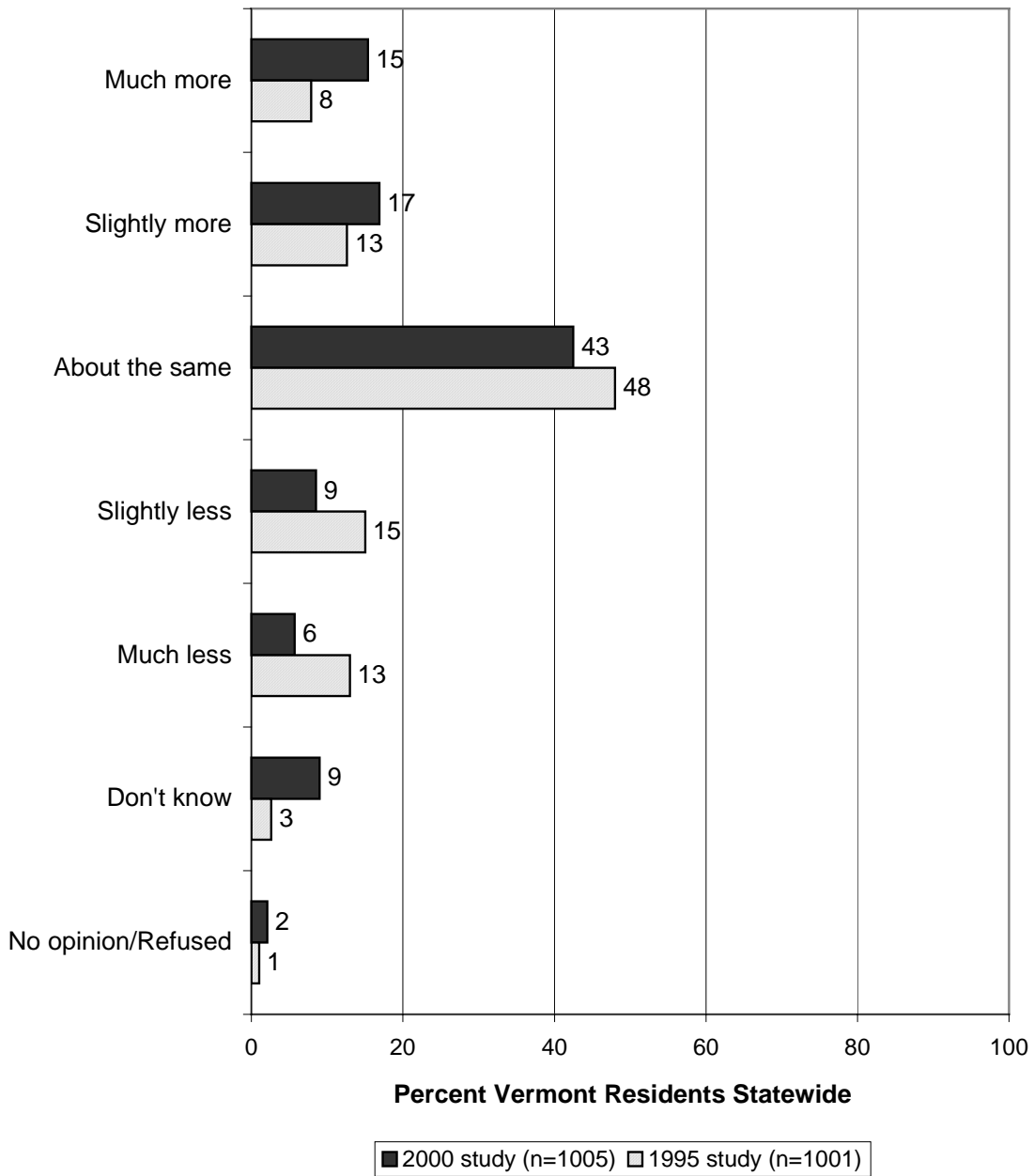


Q14. Do you feel that more, about the same, or less time and money should be spent on managing and protecting Vermont's endangered and threatened species?
 (Comparison of 2000 and 1995 data)



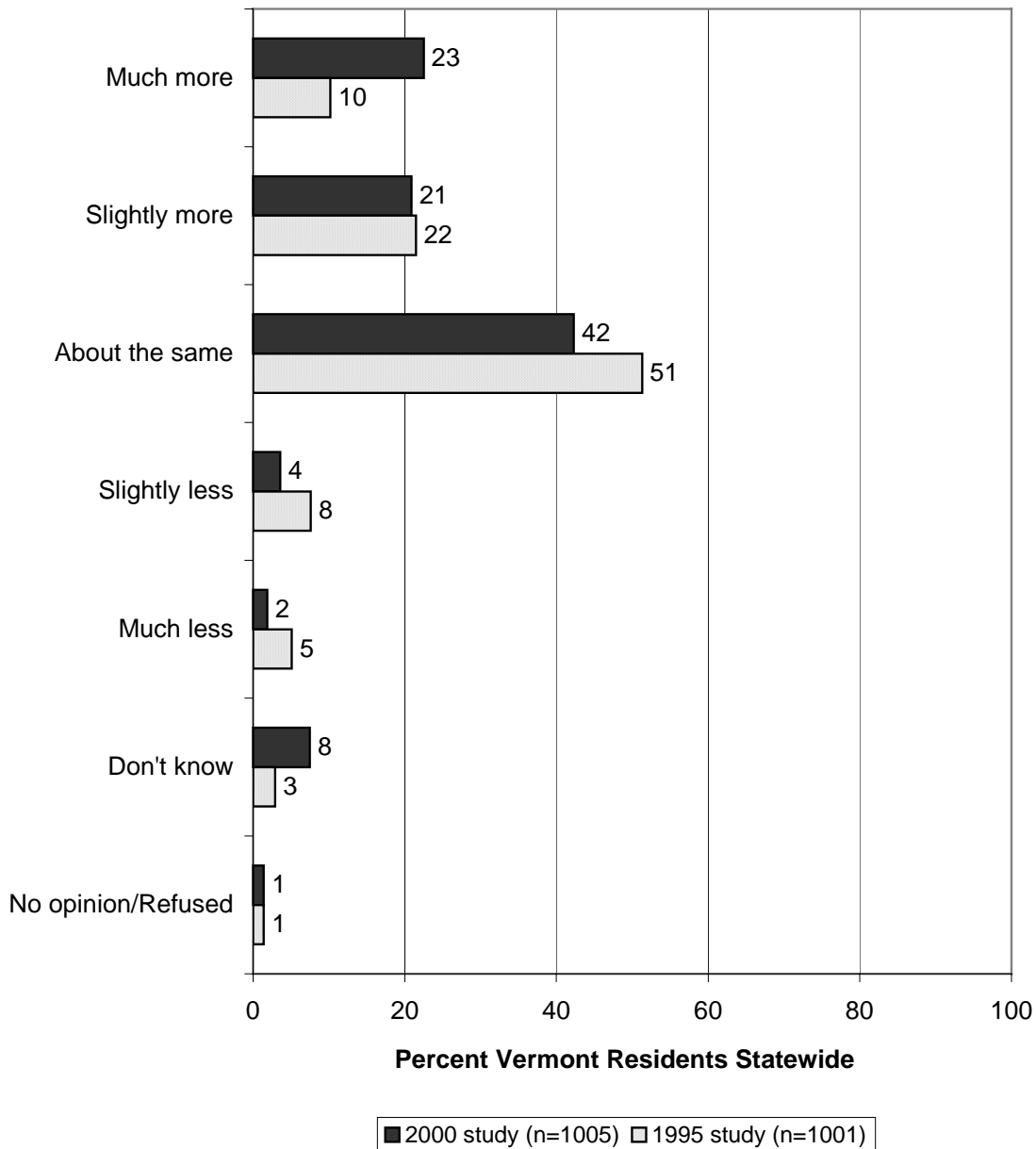
Q15. Do you feel that more, about the same, or less time and money should be spent on managing game species to provide hunting opportunities?

(Comparison of 2000 and 1995 data)



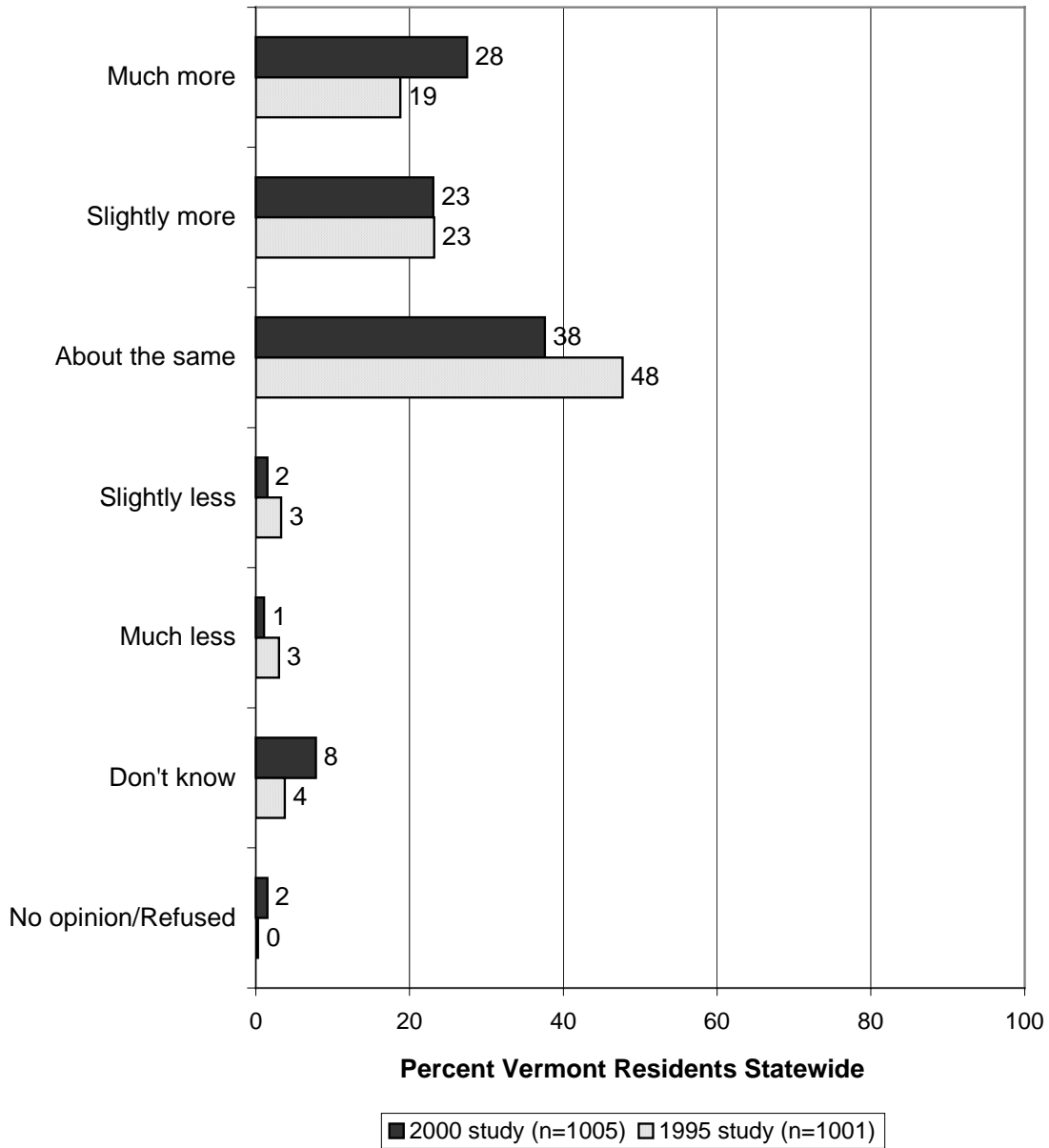
Q16. Do you feel that more, about the same, or less time and money should be spent on managing Vermont's fisheries to provide recreational fishing opportunities?

(Comparison of 2000 and 1995 data)



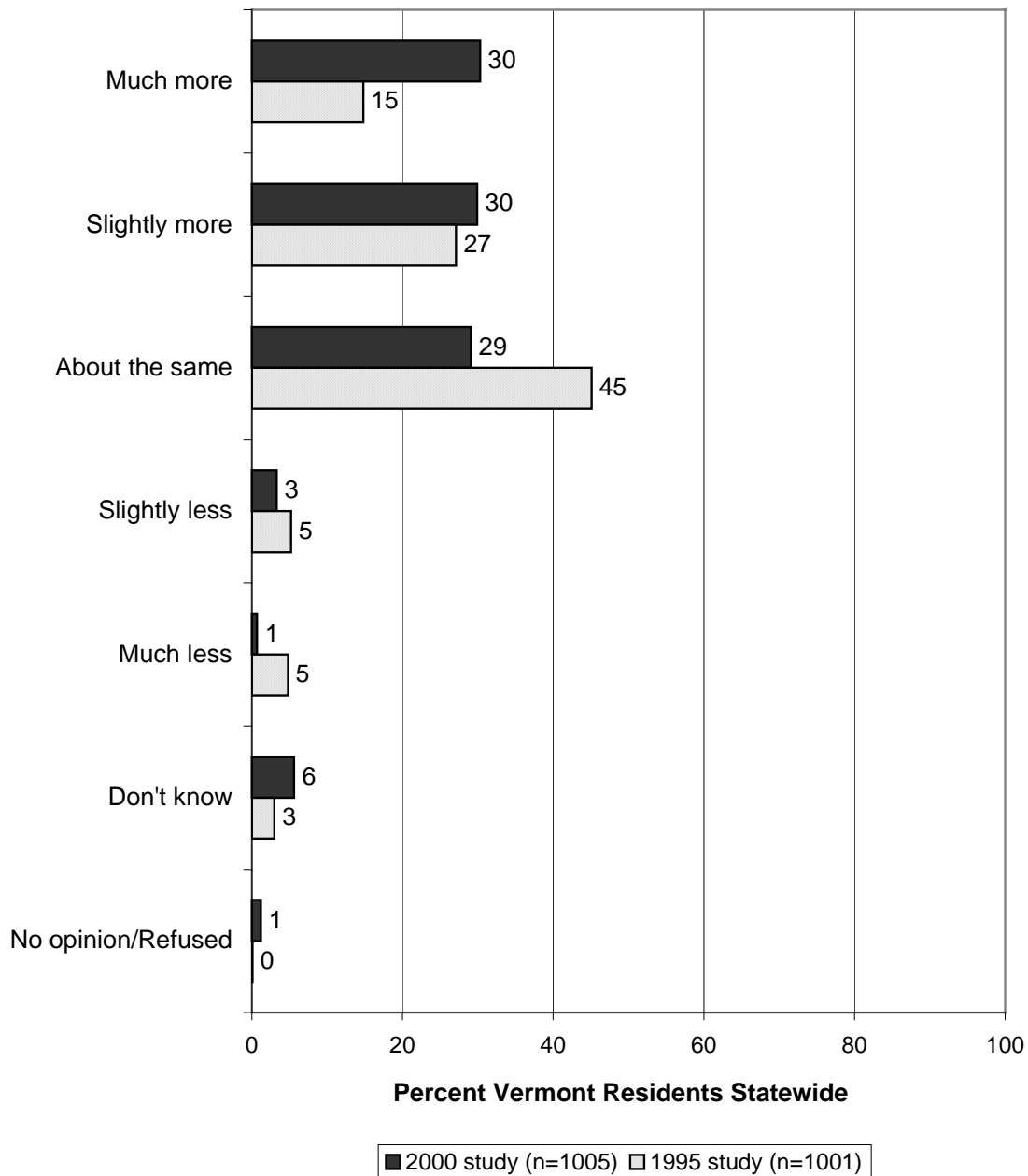
Q17. Do you feel that more, about the same, or less time and money should be spent on enforcing the fish and wildlife laws of Vermont?

(Comparison of 2000 and 1995 data)

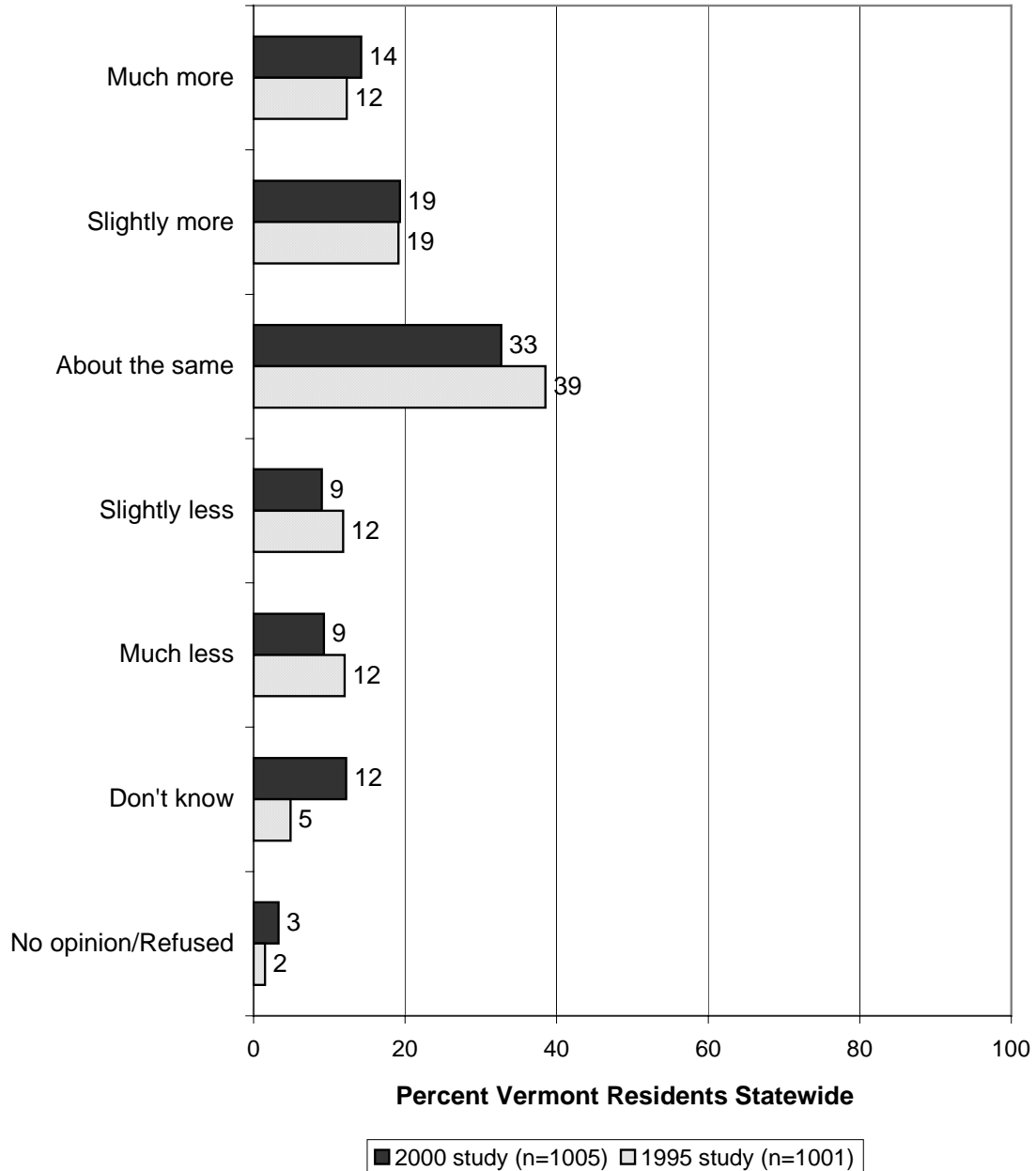


Q18. Do you feel that more, about the same, or less time and money should be spent on educating and informing residents about fish and wildlife in Vermont?

(Comparison of 2000 and 1995 data)

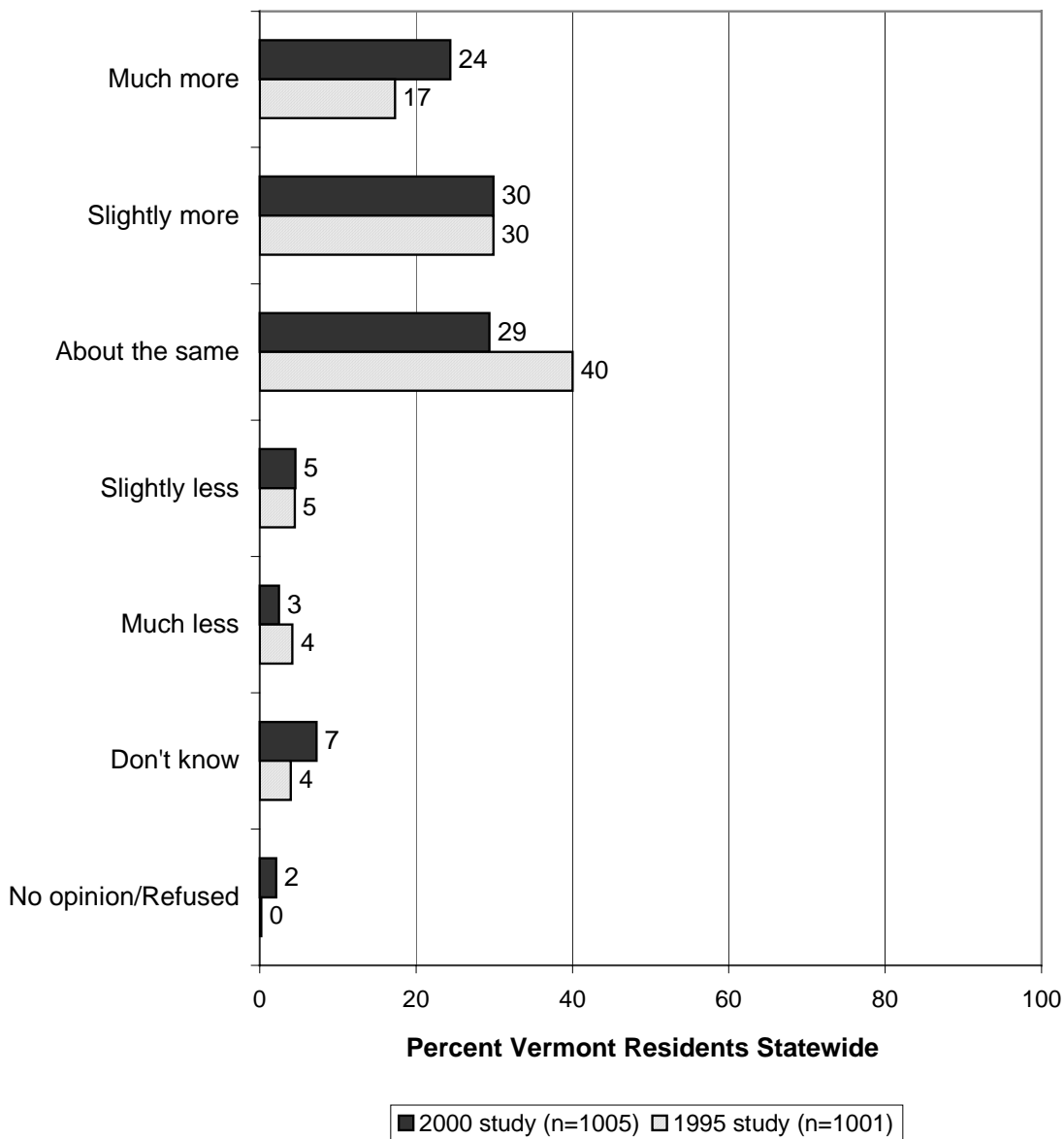


Q19. Do you feel that more, about the same, or less time and money should be spent on protecting and enhancing fish and wildlife habitat on private lands in Vermont?
 (Comparison of 2000 and 1995 data)



Q20. Do you feel that more, about the same, or less time and money should be spent managing Department lands, streams, and lakes, increasing access to these areas as well as the purchase of additional sites?

(Comparison of 2000 and 1995 data)



Awareness of Funding and Attitudes Toward Alternative Funding Mechanisms for the Fish and Wildlife Department

Awareness of Funding

Survey respondents were asked how they think the Fish and Wildlife Department is funded, with multiple responses allowed. Respondents were not read a list; instead, responses were categorized into one or more of nineteen options. Licenses of various sorts were mentioned most often, with 40% choosing hunting, 38% fishing, and 23% trapping licenses (Q6). However, a large proportion (27%) stated they were unsure of the department's funding sources. Taxes and general revenues made up the rest of the funding sources thought by respondents to be significant, including 16% selecting state income tax check-offs, 13% general state revenue, 8% federal income tax, and 13% simply responding "taxes" without a more specific category offered, even after probing.

Alternative Funding Mechanisms

Vermont residents' attitudes toward twelve funding mechanisms were explored. To decrease the burden on respondents, one group of respondents was interviewed on half of the questions and the rest on the remaining half.

Before respondents were interviewed as to whether or not they supported or opposed each of the funding mechanisms, they were informed, "The following questions address a variety of potential funding mechanisms for the Fish and Wildlife Department. Currently, Department funding is not enough to maintain existing programs and services, so Department leaders are considering several different funding sources. But before any decisions are made, the Department wants to know what you think."

All of the proposed funding mechanisms were supported by a majority of surveyed Vermont residents (Q24-36, part one). However, there were, as expected, differences in the levels of support observed for each. In general, redistributions of existing taxes and revenues to the Department, without raising the taxes themselves, were most strongly supported (Q24-36, parts one and two). In addition, the collection of fees from those receiving currently un-reimbursed departmental services such as habitat evaluations for developers and the creation of permit fees for boating access and non-hunting land use received support. Most strongly opposed were those proposed mechanisms that require the raising of taxes or of hunting license fees (Q24-36, parts three and four).

Funding mechanisms which are very acceptable to Vermont residents

- *Continuing to receive a fixed dollar amount of the Rooms and Meals tax.* Residents were told that there would be no increase in the room and meals tax people would pay. Ninety percent of respondents supported this funding mechanism, with most strongly supporting it (64% strongly supported and 26% moderately supported). Only 5% opposed this option.
- *Receiving general fund dollars for programs and activities in which the Department participates but does not receive funding.* Specific examples of such activities were given to survey respondents, such as managing wildlife that is not hunted or fished, search and rescue, rabies and nuisance animal services, and dead animal removal. Eighty seven percent of respondents showed support for this source of funding, with a majority (51%) indicating strong support. Again, only 5% were opposed to this funding mechanism.

- *Redistributing a portion of the current state sales tax so that the Department would receive 1/8 of 1% of the existing sales tax.* Residents were told there would be no increase in the state sales tax. This option was supported by 81% of residents, of which most (51%) again showed strong support. Nine percent opposed this as a source of funding.
- *Receiving a small percentage of the current sales tax on certain outdoor items such as hiking and camping gear, binoculars, and birdseed.* Again, respondents were told there would be no increase in the state sales tax. This funding option was supported by 73% of surveyed residents, with strong support from 46%. Only 12% of respondents opposed this funding source.
- *Charging developers a fee for habitat evaluations.* Seventy three percent supported this option and 47% strongly supported it. Nineteen percent of respondents were opposed to this funding source.

Funding mechanisms which are moderately acceptable to Vermont residents

- *Requiring people who do not own fishing licenses but who use boating access areas owned and managed by the Department to buy an annual "Boating Access Area Permit".* Residents were told that this would be similar in idea and price to a fishing license. This option was supported by 66% of respondents and 38% strongly supported it. It was opposed by 25% of respondents.
- *Raising fishing license fees to expand Department fishing programs.* Fifty nine percent supported this funding mechanism, with 31% indicating strong support. It was opposed by 27% of respondents.
- *Raising fishing license fees to expand Department programs overall.* This option was

supported by 59% of surveyed residents and 29% strongly supported it. Twenty eight percent were opposed to this as a funding mechanism.

- *Requiring people who do not own hunting licenses but who use lands owned or managed by the Department to buy an annual “Wildlife Management Area Conservation Use Permit”.* Surveyed residents were told that this would be similar in idea and price to a hunting license. A majority (55%) supported this option and 27% showed strong support. However, respondents were apparently more polarized on this funding option with 30% opposing it and 21% showing strong opposition (second highest of all the options ranked by those with the strongest opposition from Vermont residents).

Funding mechanisms which are more unacceptable to Vermont residents

Although none of the potential funding mechanisms presented was opposed by a majority of respondents, some of the mechanisms were clearly much less acceptable than others. These include:

- *Increasing the state general sales tax by 1/8 of 1% to expand Department programs.* This option was opposed by 43% of surveyed residents, with 26% strongly opposed. Fifty one percent supported this option
- *Raising hunting license fees to expand Department programs overall.* Thirty five percent of respondents opposed this option and 17% strongly opposed it. It was supported by 53% of residents.
- *Raising hunting license fees to expand hunting programs.* Thirty four percent opposed this funding option and 19% strongly opposed it. Fifty four percent supported this option.

Support for Increasing Funding for the Department Given Federal Matching Funds

Residents were asked whether they would be more or less likely to support the idea of increased funding for the Department if they knew that the Federal government matches every new dollar brought into the Department with three dollars of Federal money. A majority of respondents (58%) indicated that they would be much more likely to support increased funding if they knew this and 26% said they would be somewhat more likely to support the idea (Q53). Very few (7%) indicated that they would be less likely to support increased funding.

Preferred Approach for Raising Hunting and Fishing License Fees

Surveyed residents were informed, “In recent years, income from hunting and fishing licenses has not kept up with inflation”. They were then asked, “If the Department determines that they have to raise hunting and fishing license fees, do you think they should have larger but less frequent fee increases (every 5 to 10 years), smaller increases occurring more often and matching the rate of inflation (every other year), or do you oppose any license fee increase?” Respondents strongly favored a smaller increase more often (61%) (Q37). Seventeen percent opposed any fee increase at all and 14% were in favor of larger but less frequent increases.

Trends in Support for Specific Funding Mechanisms: Comparisons of 1995 and 2000 survey data

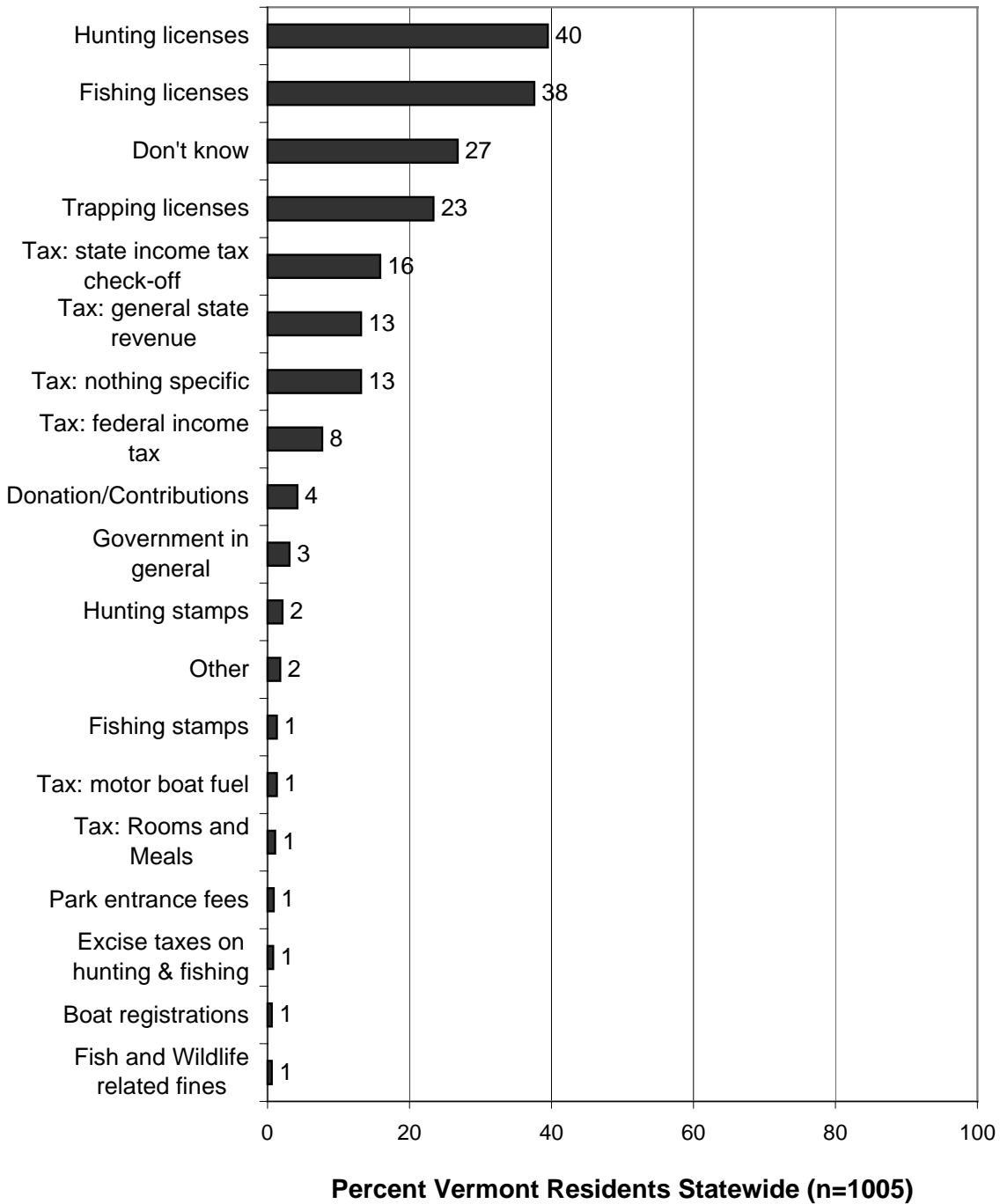
Three of the proposed alternative funding mechanisms presented to respondents in this survey were also presented to Vermont residents in the previous survey of March 1995. All three mechanisms presented were among those listed above as “very acceptable” to residents in the current survey. Support for charging developers a fee for habitat evaluations remained essentially

unchanged from that seen in the earlier survey (73% total support in each survey) (Q29).

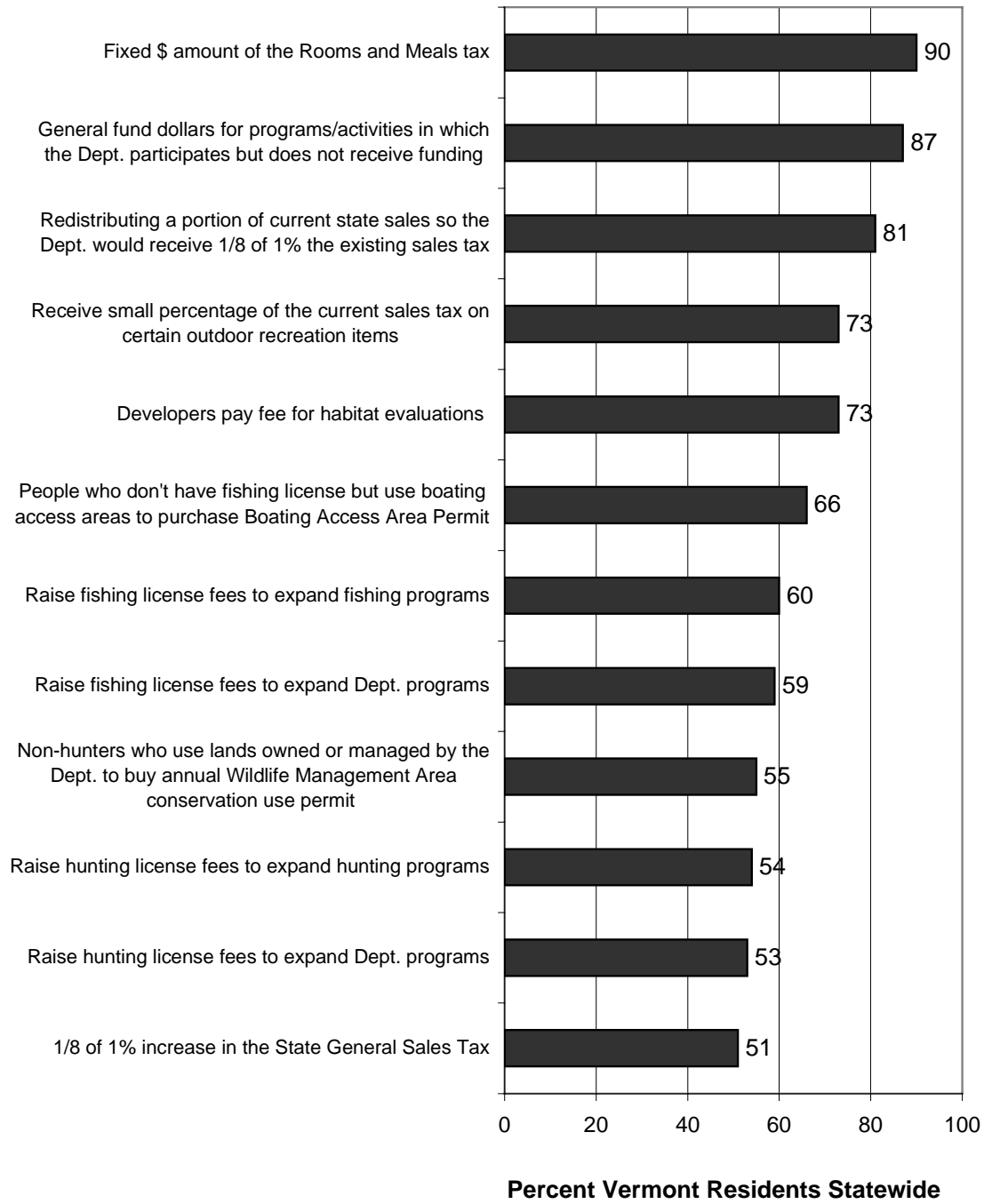
Opposition dropped slightly, from 22% to 19%. However, there was an increase in support for the use of general fund dollars for Departmental programs and activities, from 78% in 1995 to 87% in 2000, mainly due to a rise in those strongly supporting this option (40% in 1995, 51% in 2000) (Q35). At the same time, opposition to this funding mechanism dropped from 16% to only 5%. Even more striking was the rise in those supporting the redistribution of a portion of the current state sales tax to the Department, from 65% support in 1995 to 81% in the current survey. This included nearly a doubling of those who strongly supported this option (26% in 1995, 51% in 2000) and a sharp drop (from 26% to 9%) in those who opposed it (Q36).

Graphs

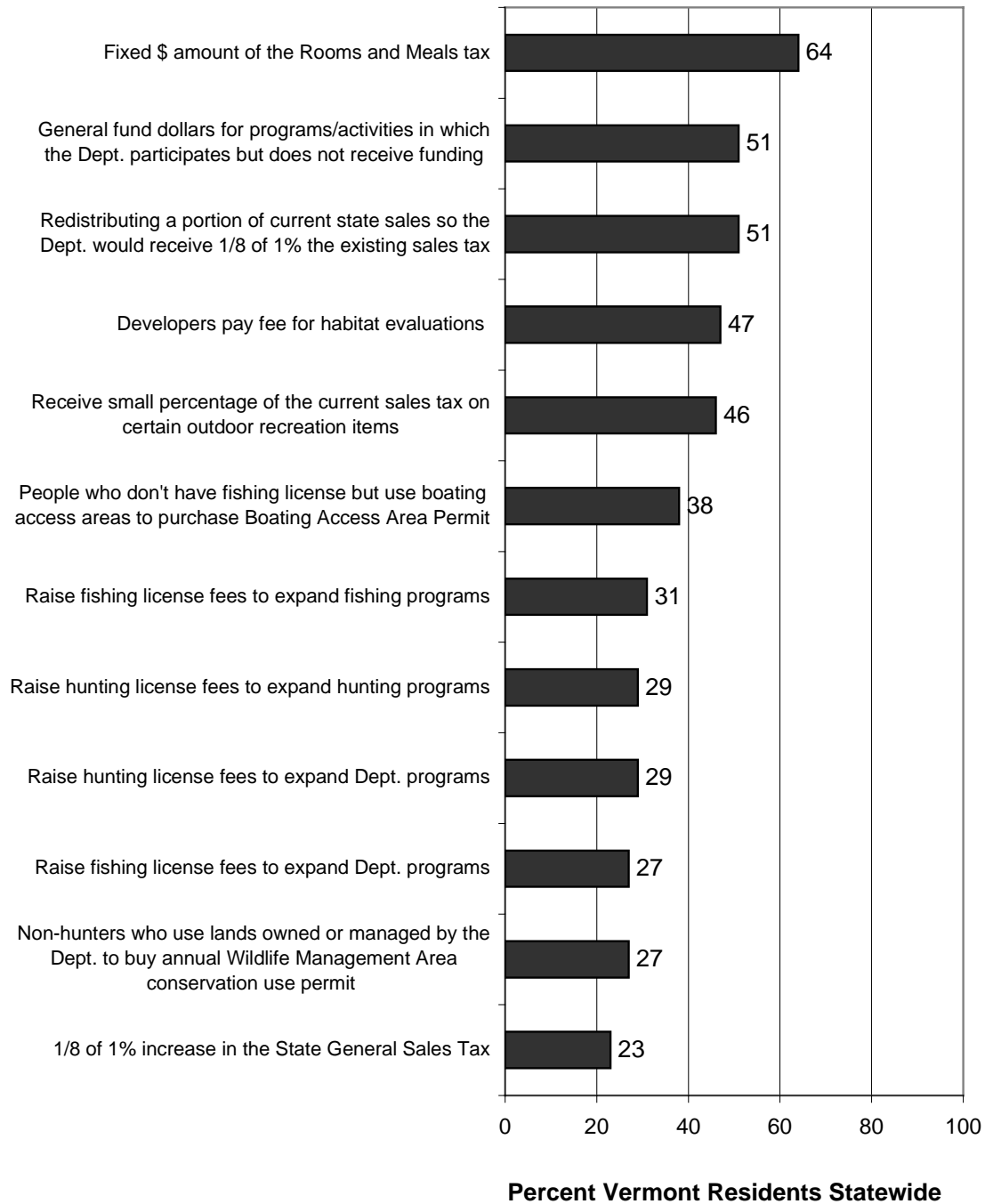
Q6. How do you think the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department is funded?
 (Multiple responses allowed)



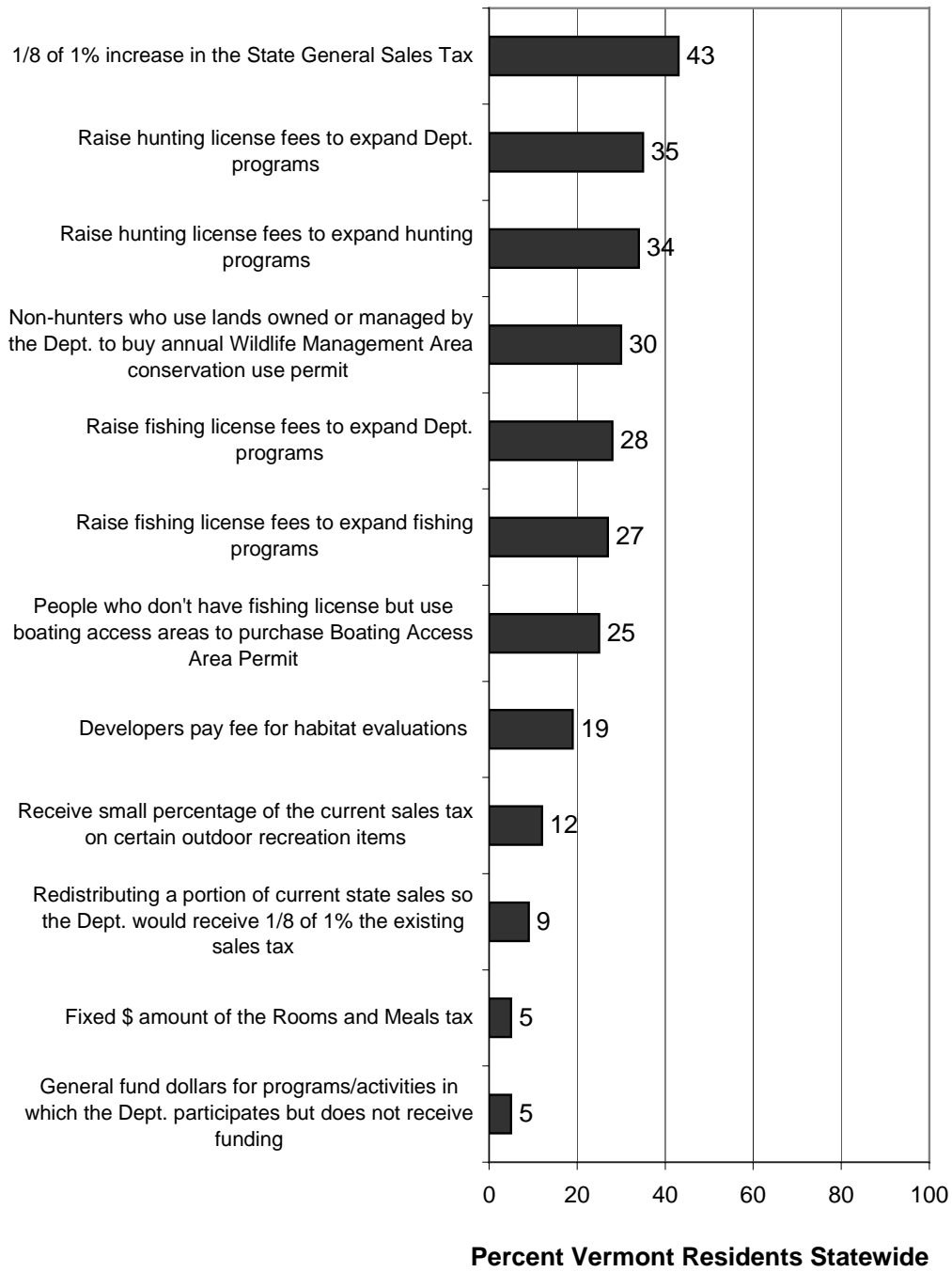
**Q24-36 Part one . Percent who SUPPORT
(strongly and moderately support combined)
each funding option.**



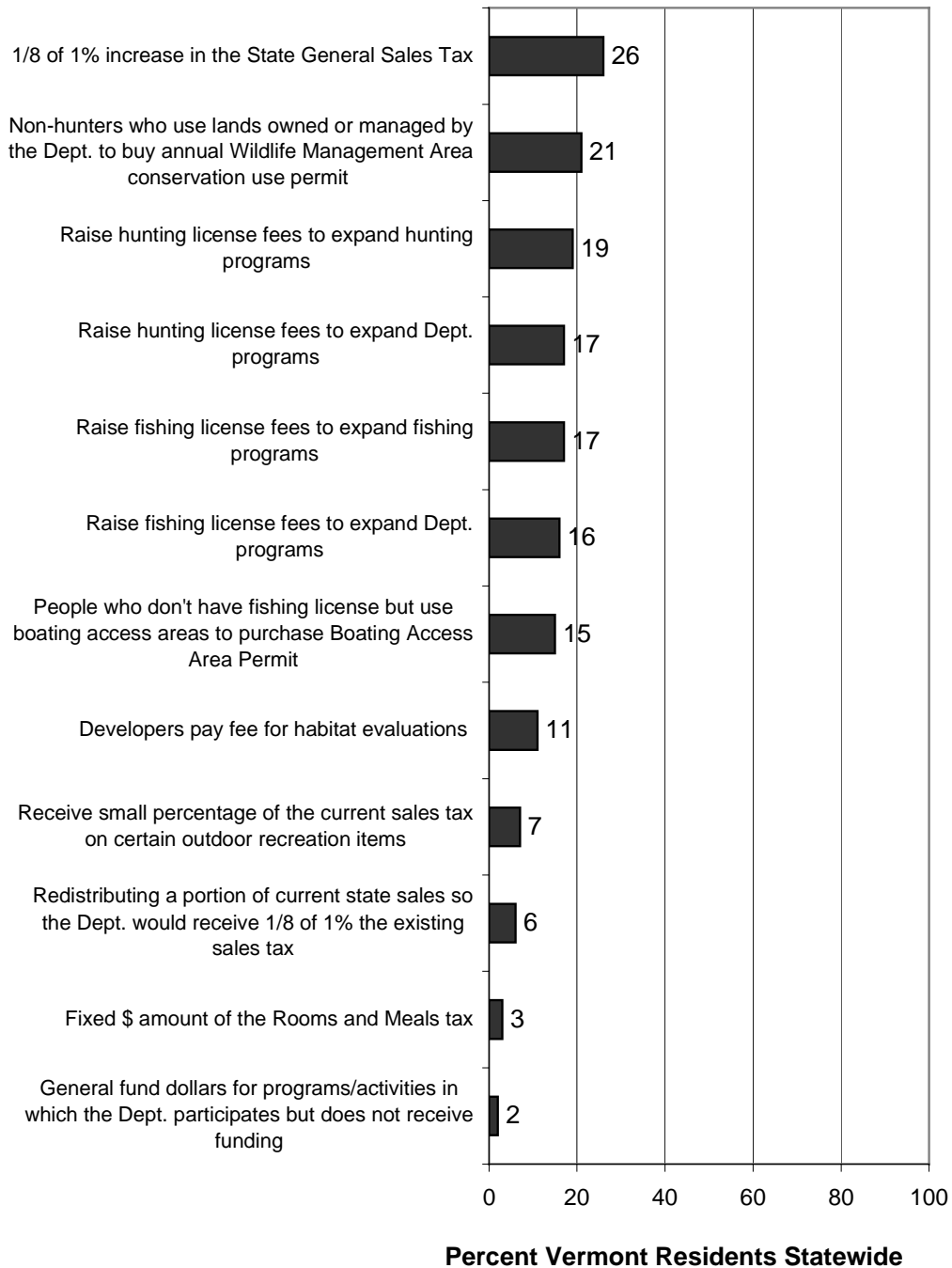
Q24-36 Part two . Percent who STRONGLY SUPPORT each funding option.



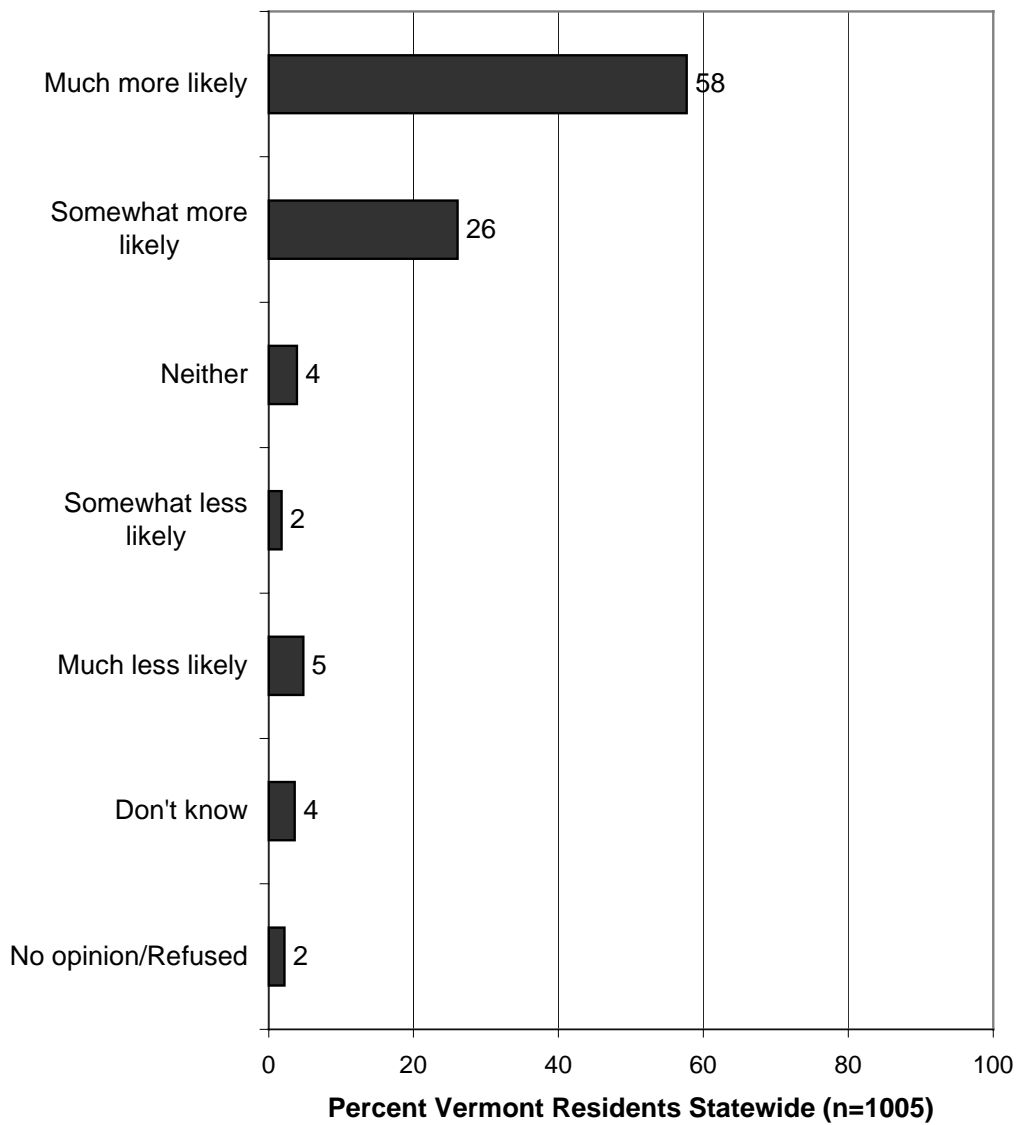
**Q24-36 Part three . Percent who OPPOSE
(strongly and moderately oppose combined)
each funding option.**



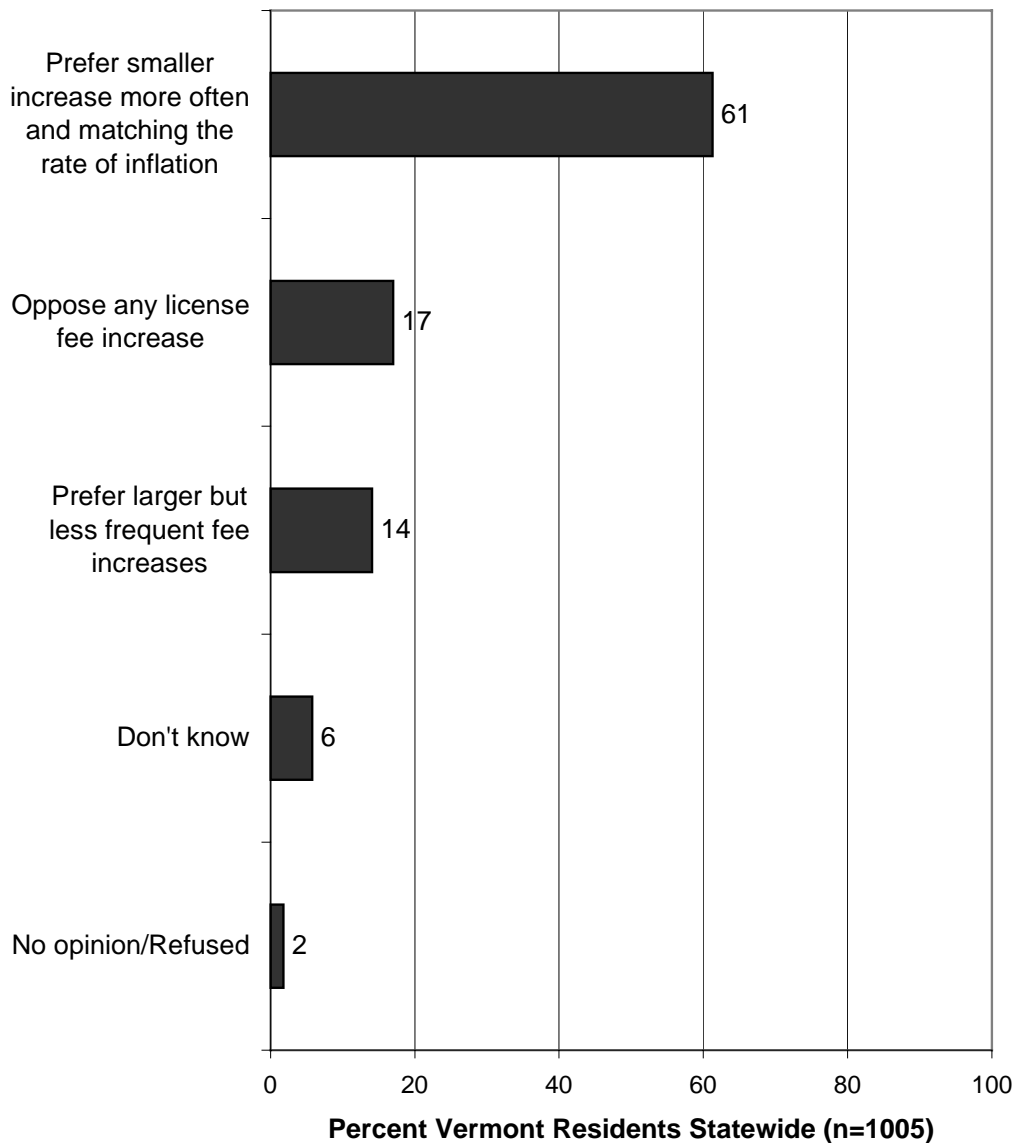
Q24-36 Part four . Percent who STRONGLY OPPOSE each funding option.



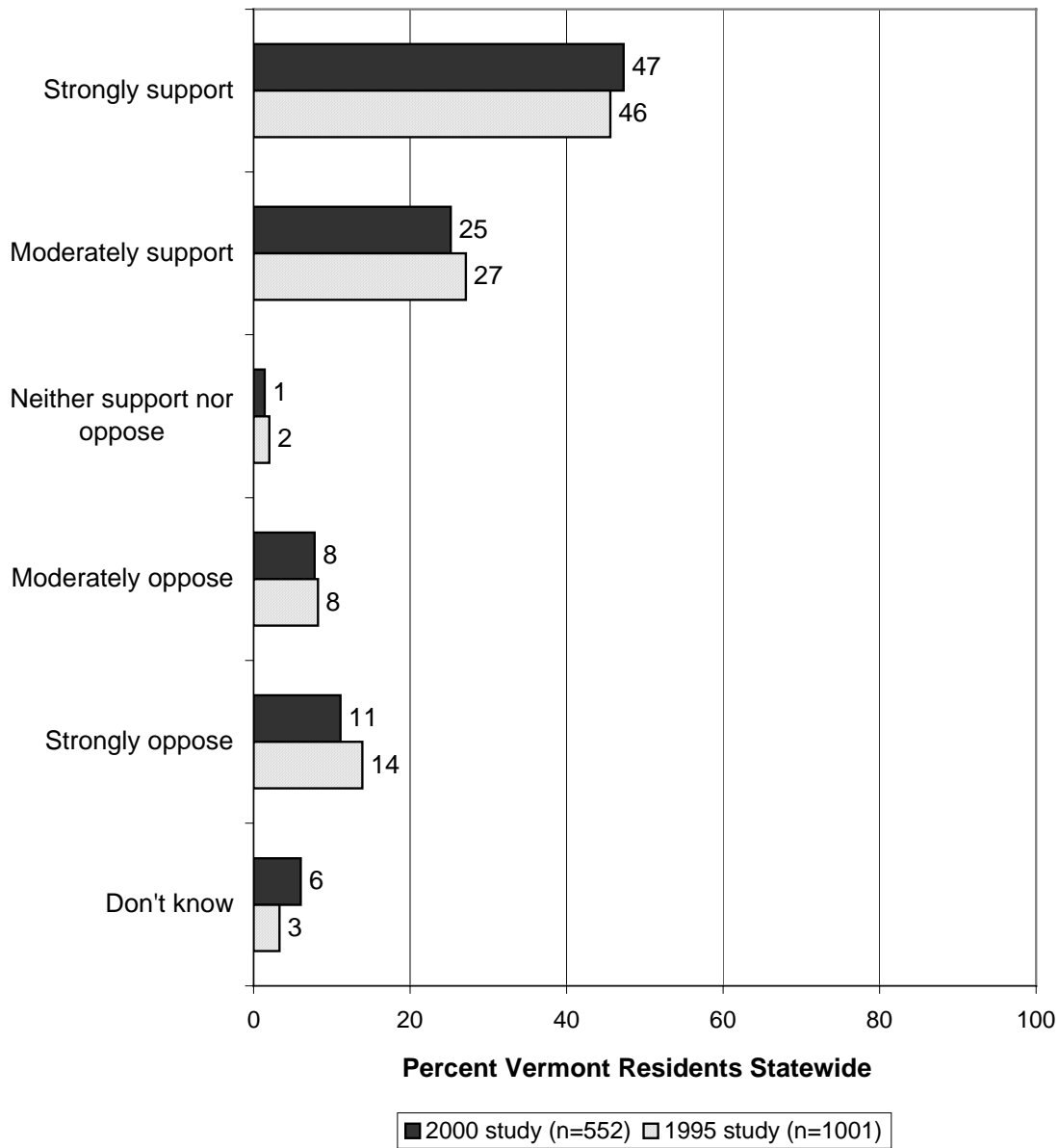
Q53. Would you be more or less likely to support the idea of increased funding for the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department if you knew that the federal government matches every new dollar brought into the Department with 3 dollars of Federal money?



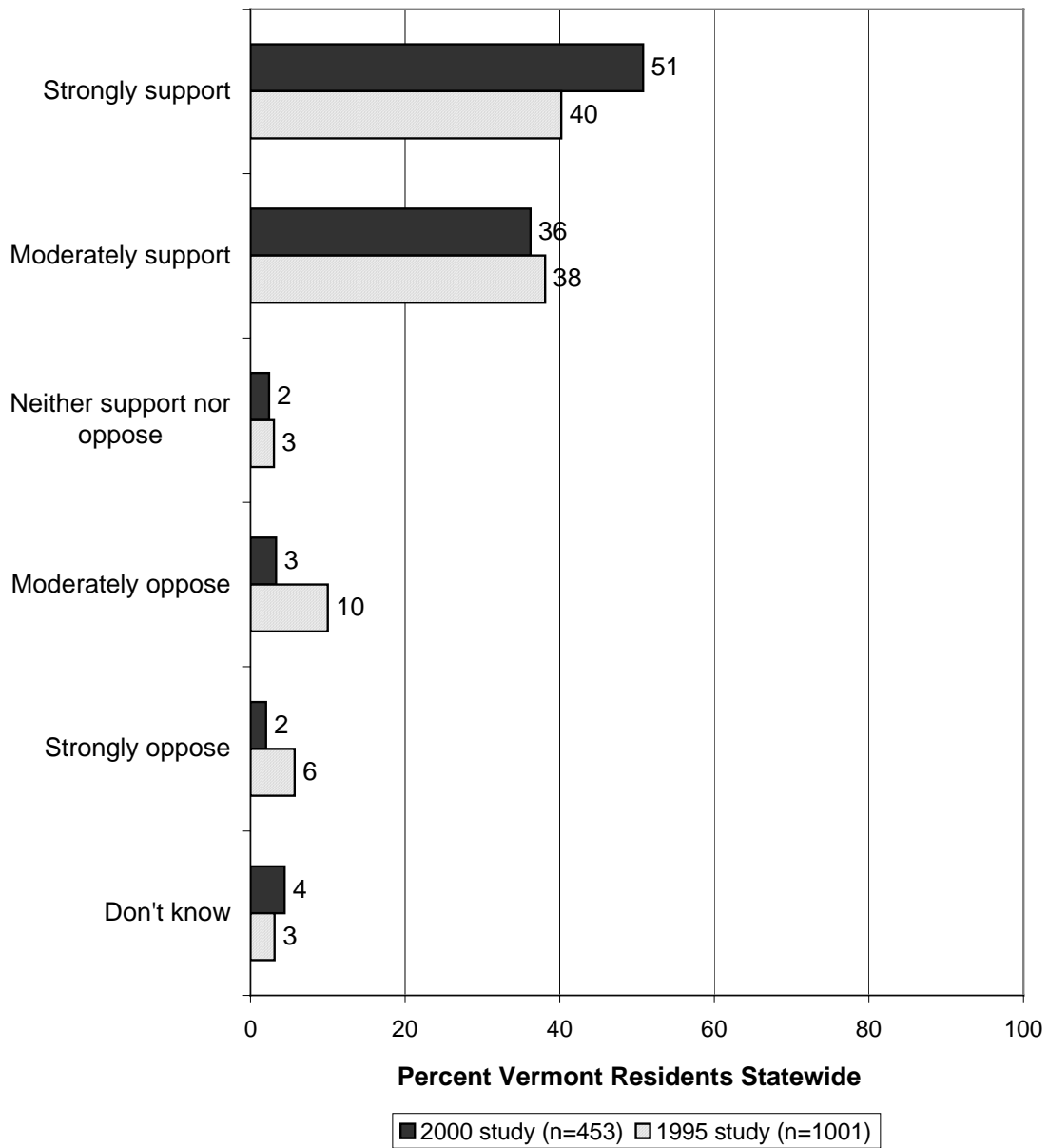
Q37. If the Department determines that they have to raise hunting and fishing license fees, do you think they should have larger but less frequent fee increases, smaller increases occurring more often, or do you oppose any license increase?



Q29. Would you support or oppose charging developers a fee for habitat evaluations to expand Department programs?
(Comparison of 2000 and 1995 data)

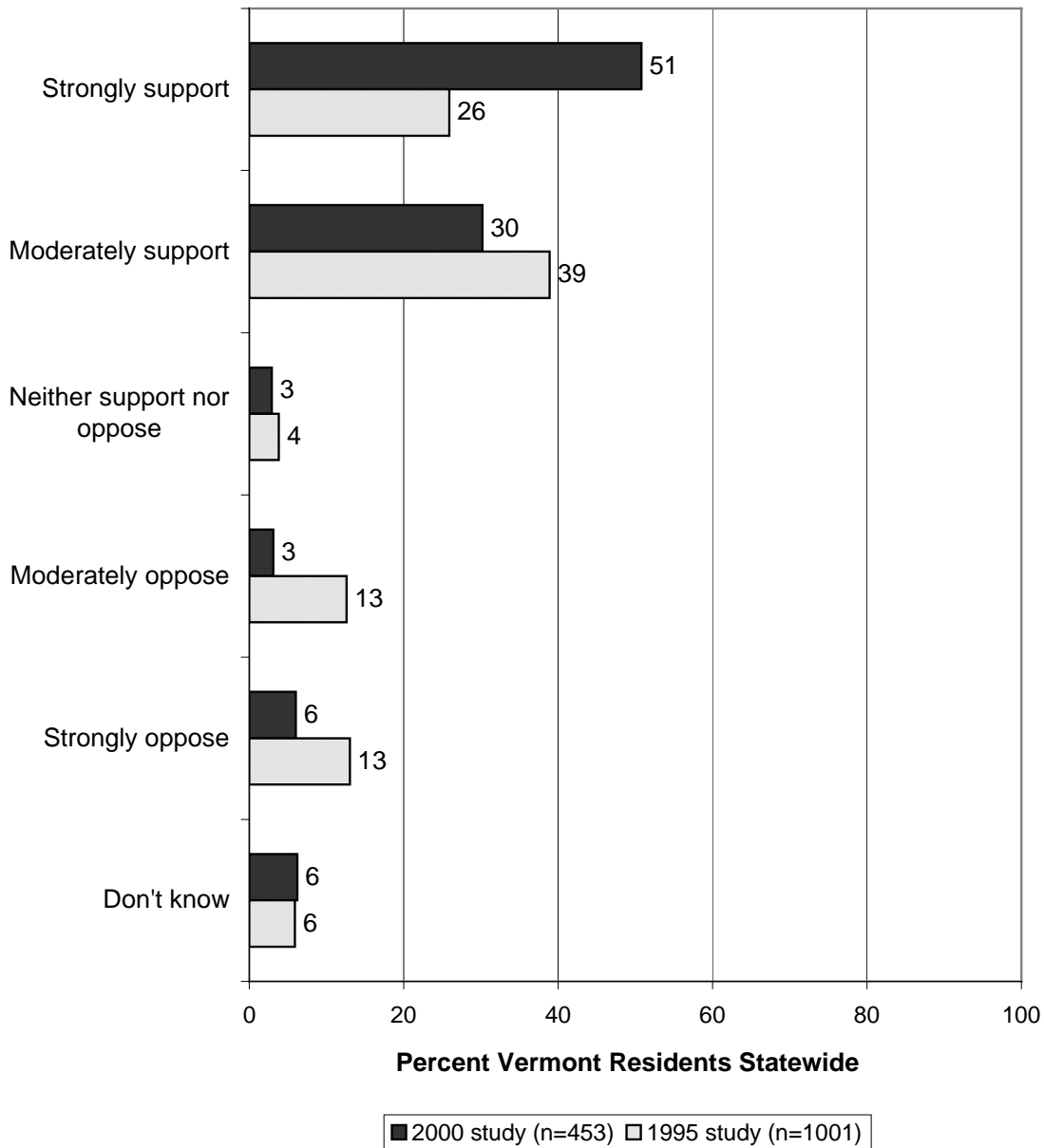


Q35. Would you support or oppose the Department receiving general fund dollars for programs and activities in which it participates but does not receive funding?
(Comparison of 2000 and 1995 data)



Q36. Would you support oppose redistributing a portion of the current state sales tax so the Department would receive 1/8 of 1% of the existing sales tax?

(Comparison of 2000 and 1995 data)



Participation in Fish- and Wildlife-Related Activities

Hunting

Twenty eight percent of survey respondents had hunted within the past two years (Q54).

This represents an increase of 6% over the 1995 survey results.

Fishing

Forty three percent of surveyed residents had fished within the past two years (Q55).

However, there has been virtually no increase in this proportion since the 1995 survey.

Interest in Wildlife Near Home

A large majority (80%) of surveyed residents had taken a special interest in wildlife around their homes in the past two years, including closely observing, feeding, or trying to identify them (Q56). This proportion remained virtually unchanged from the 1995 survey results.

Interest in Wildlife at Least One Mile From Home

A majority (58%) of respondents indicated that they had traveled at least one mile from their homes within the past two years with the primary purpose of observing, photographing, or feeding wildlife (Q57). This represented an increase of 4% over the previous survey.

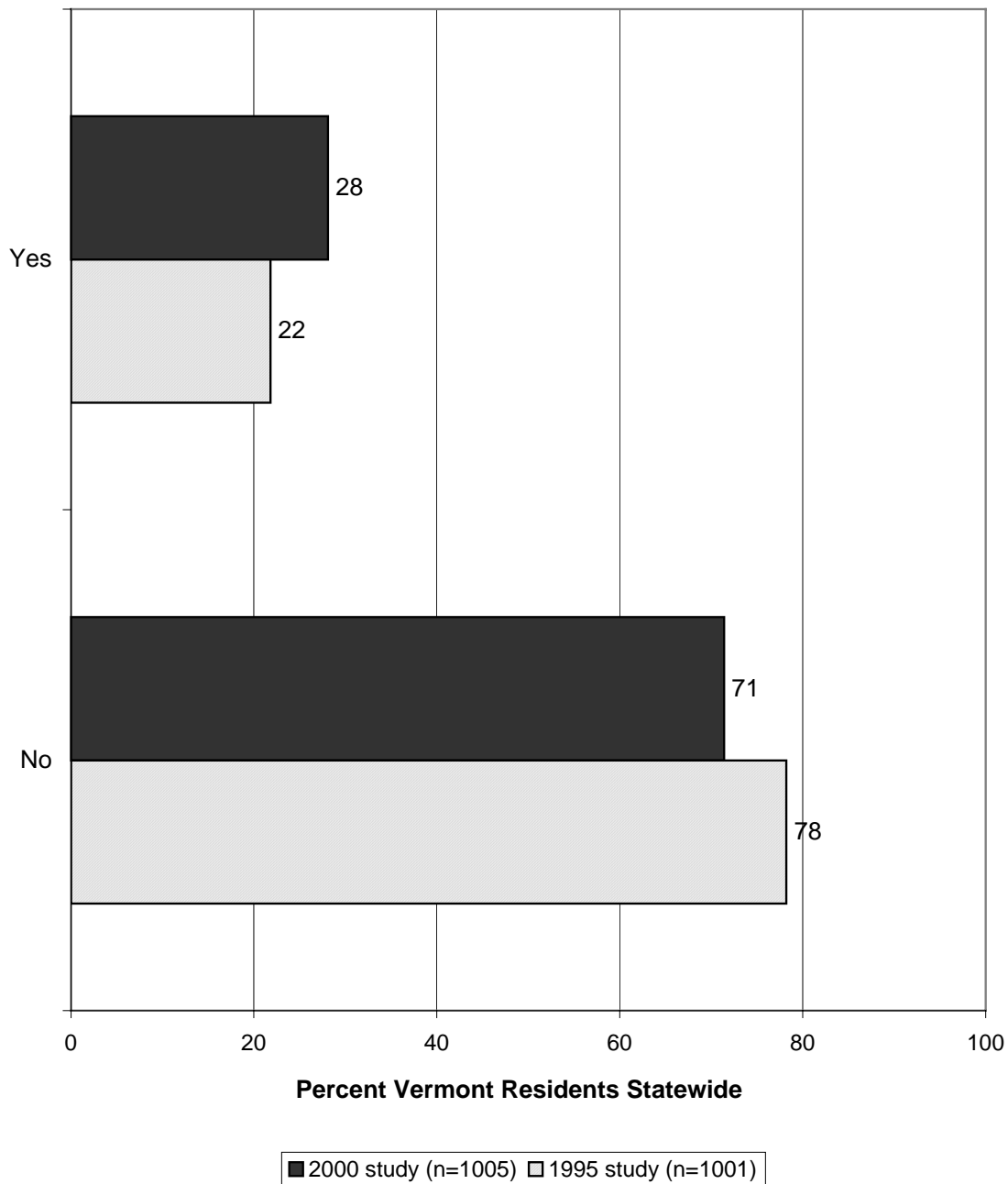
Donation to the Department's Non-game Wildlife Fund

Twenty eight percent of surveyed residents responded that they had donated to the Fish and Wildlife Department's non-game wildlife fund within the past two years while 67% responded that they had not done so and 5% were uncertain (Q58).

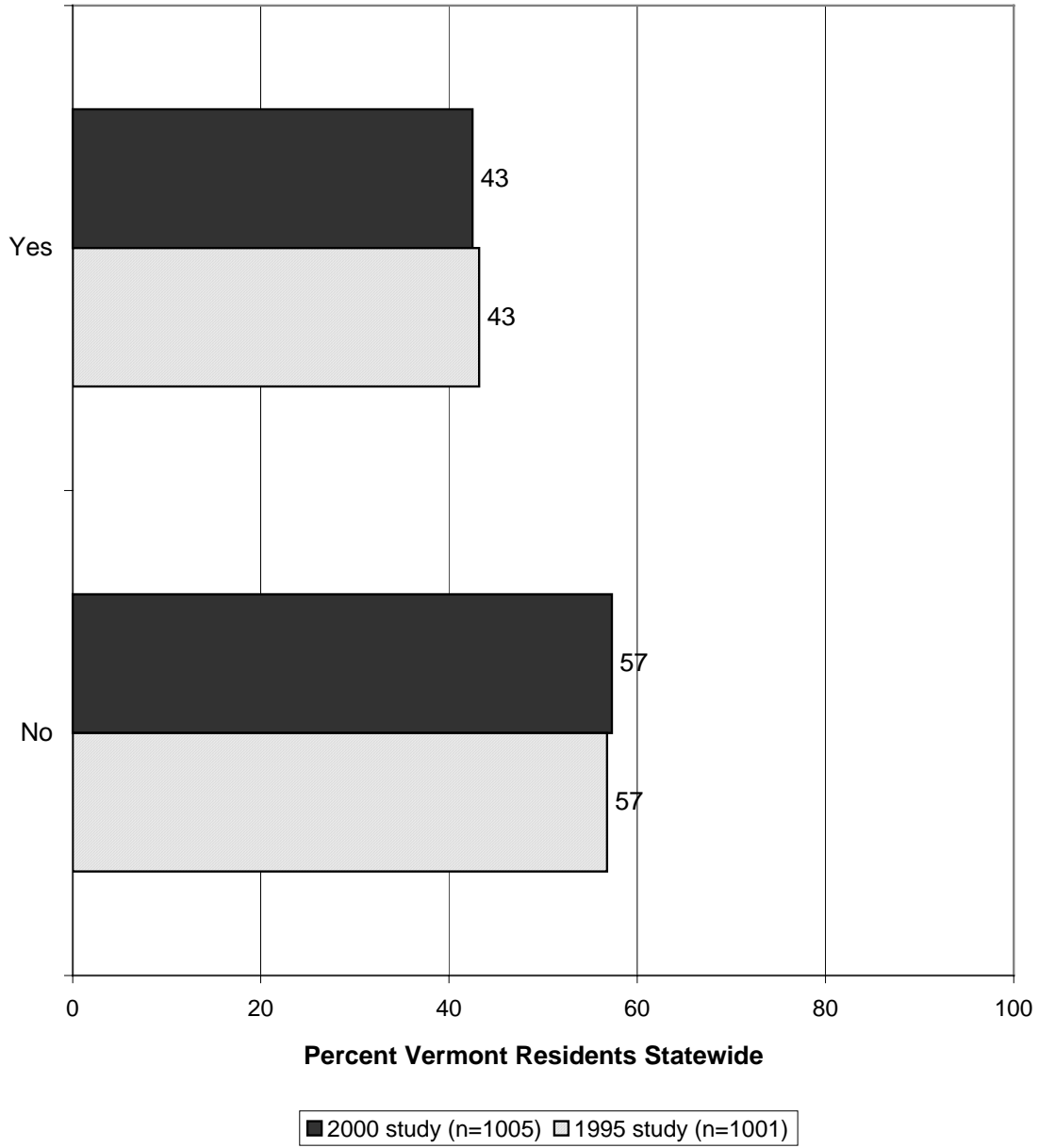
Graphs

Q54. Have you hunted in Vermont in the past 2 years?

(Comparison of 2000 and 1995 data)

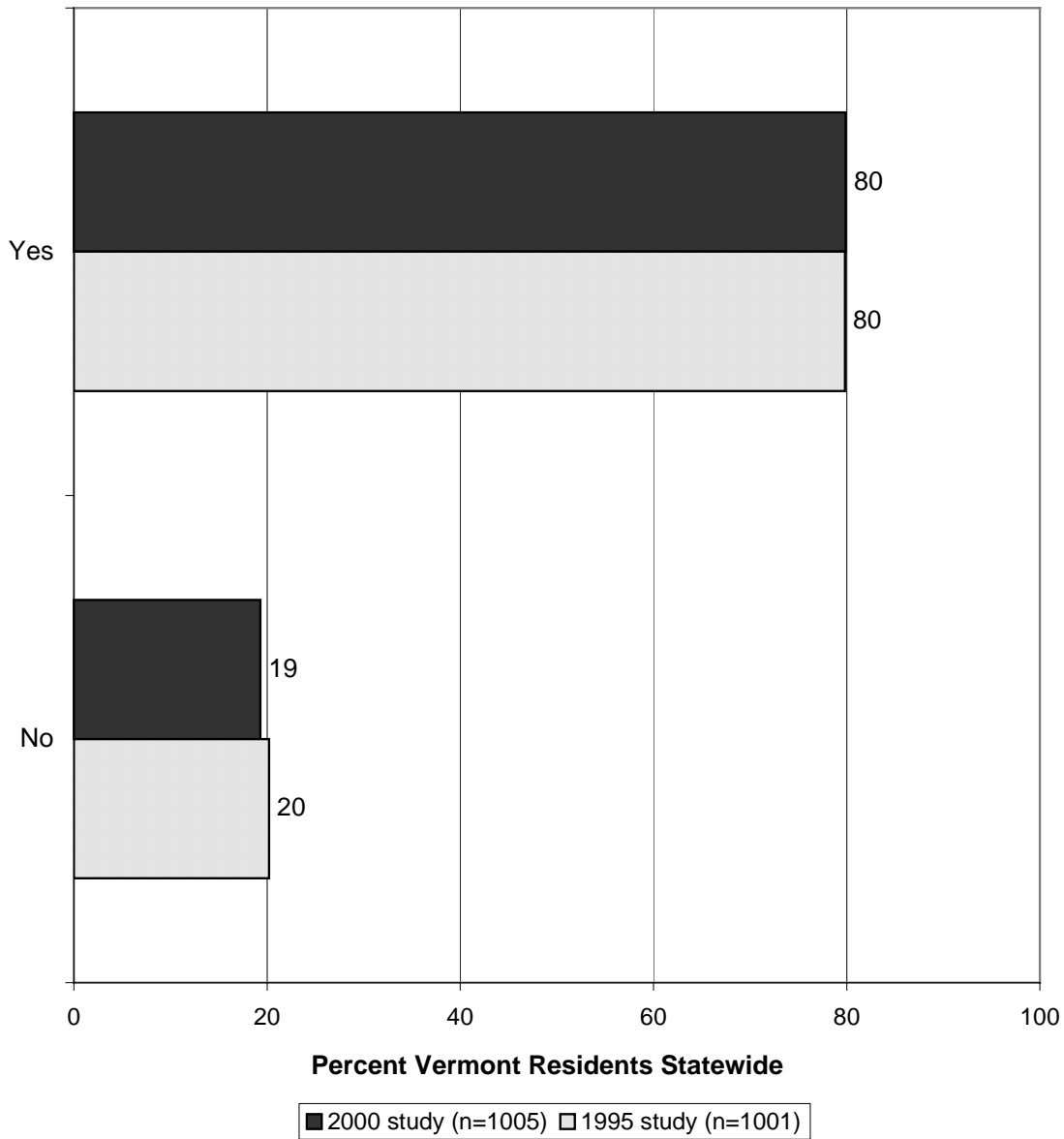


Q55. Have you been fishing in Vermont in the past 2 years?
(Comparison of 2000 and 1995 data)

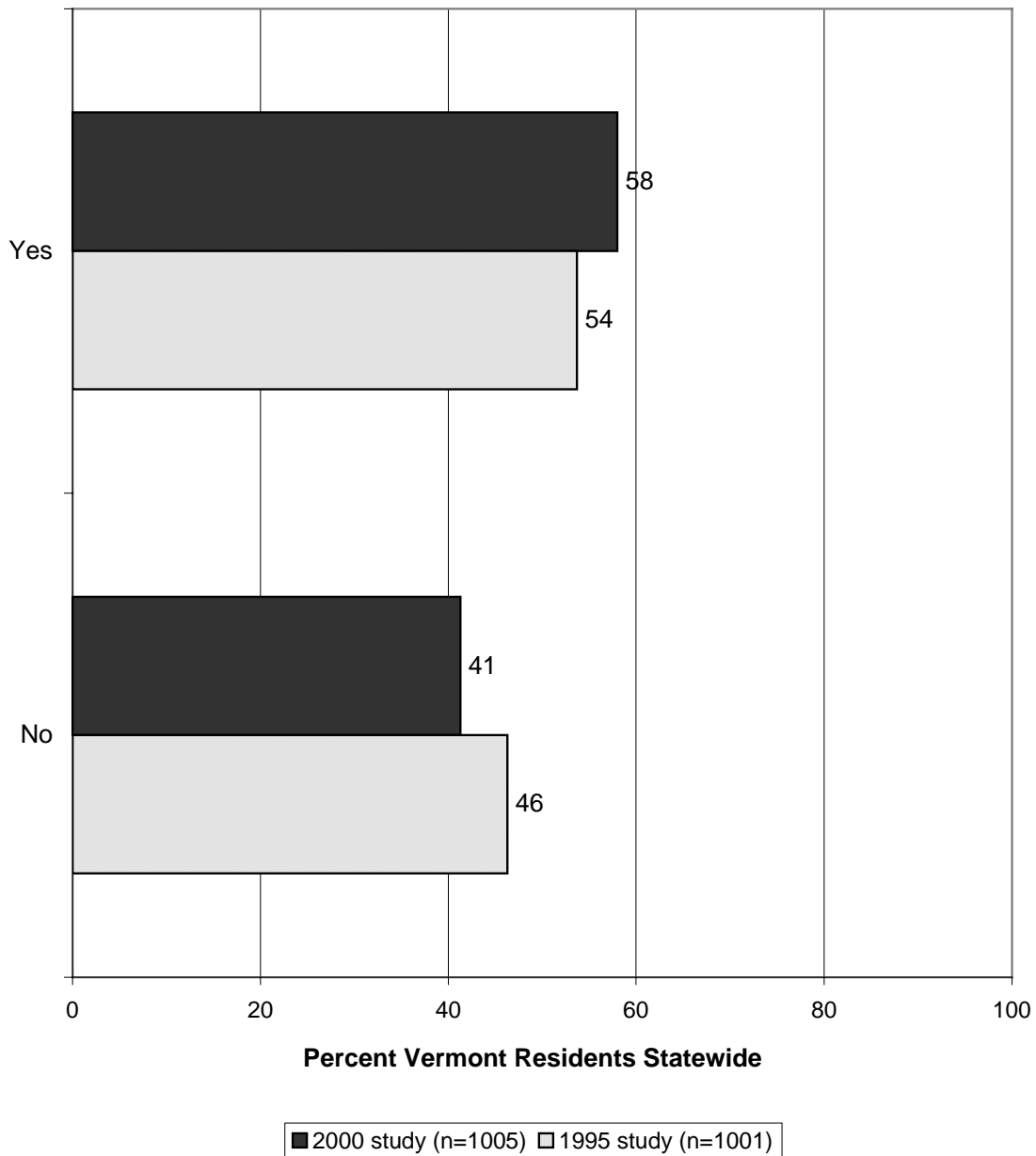


Q56. During the past 2 years, did you take a special interest in wildlife around your home, that is closely observing, feeding, or trying to identify wildlife near your home?

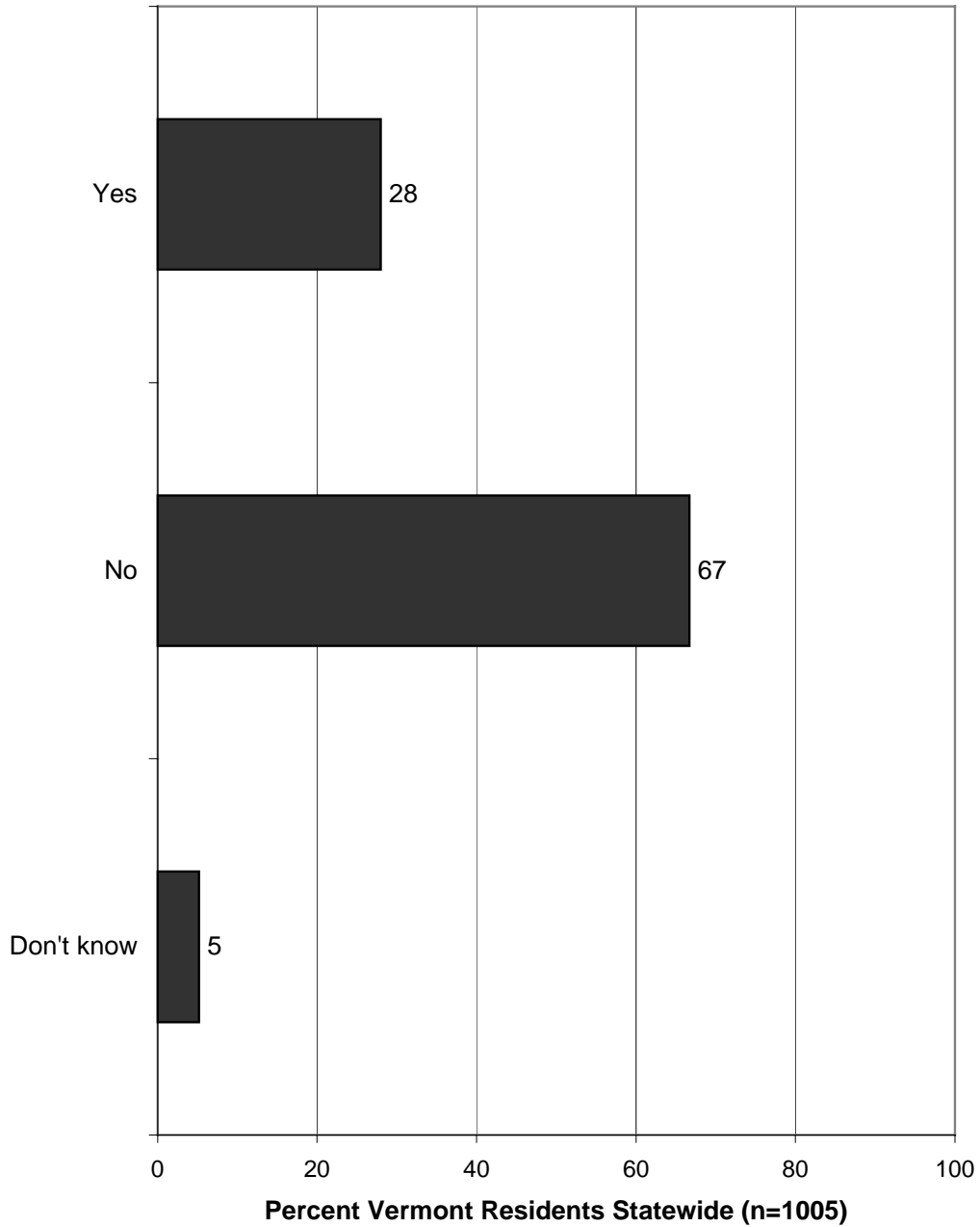
(Comparison of 2000 and 1995 data)



Q57. During the past 2 years, did you take any trips or outings in Vermont at least 1 mile away from your home for the primary purpose of observing, photographing, or feeding wildlife?
(Comparison of 2000 and 1995 data)



Q58. Have you donated to the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department's non-game wildlife fund in the last 2 years?



Demographic Information

Place of Residence

The largest proportion of surveyed residents (43%) resided in small towns, cities, or villages, closely followed by rural areas (38%) (Q60). Relatively fewer resided in medium-sized cities, suburbs, or farms (6%, 7%, and 5% respectively).

Education

Thirty four percent of respondents were high school graduates, while the next highest proportion (24%) were college graduates (Q61). Twenty one percent had attended some college or trade school and 15% had graduate degrees. Only 6% had not received a high school diploma.

Household Income

Half of survey respondents had a total before tax household income between \$20,000 and \$59,999 last year (Q62). Thirteen percent earned less than \$19,999 and 18% earned more than \$60,000 with 5% of respondents earning over \$100,000 in household income.

Age

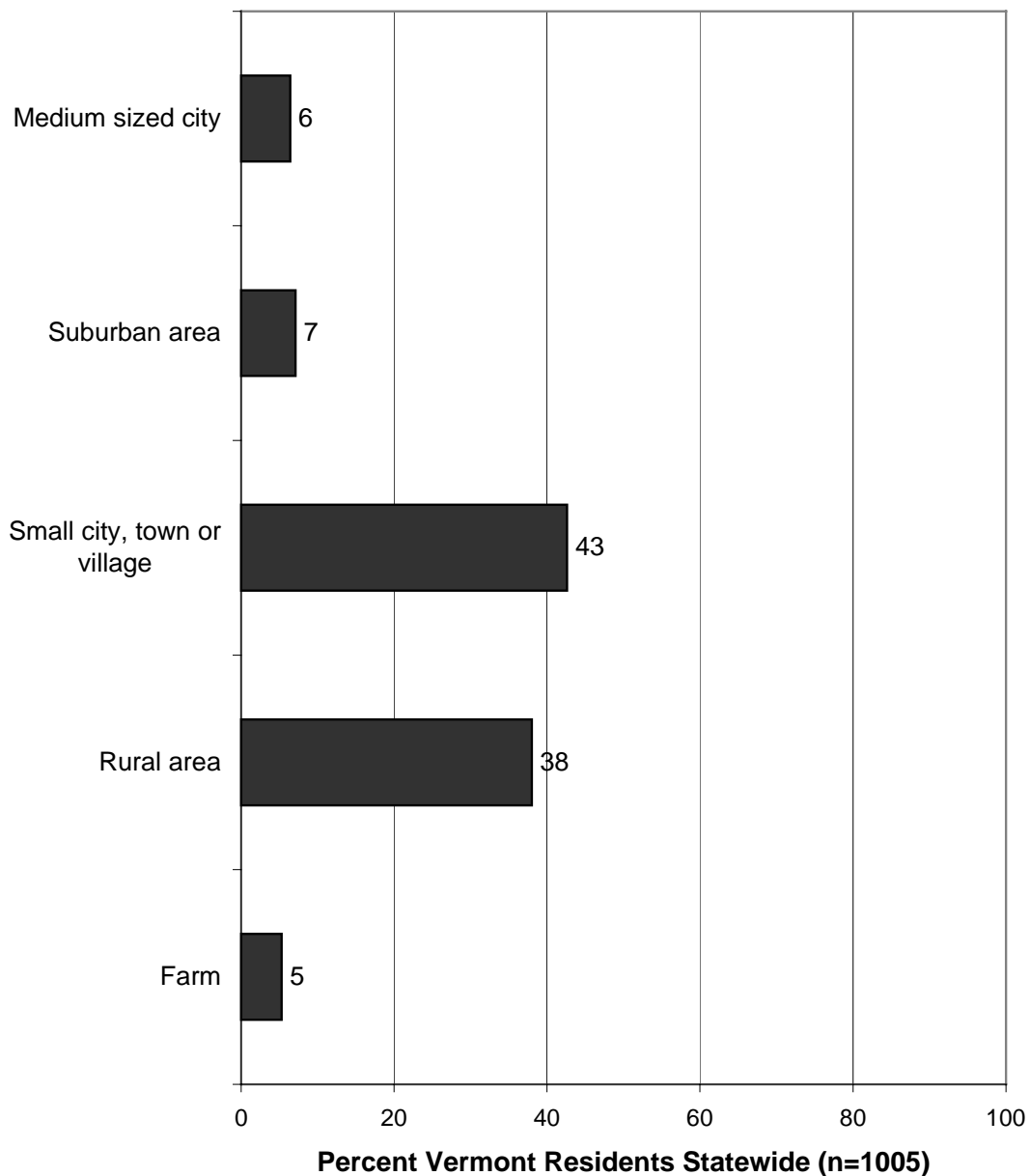
Nearly half of respondents (47%) were between the ages of 35 and 54 while 25% were younger than 35 and 26% older than 54 (Q63).

Gender

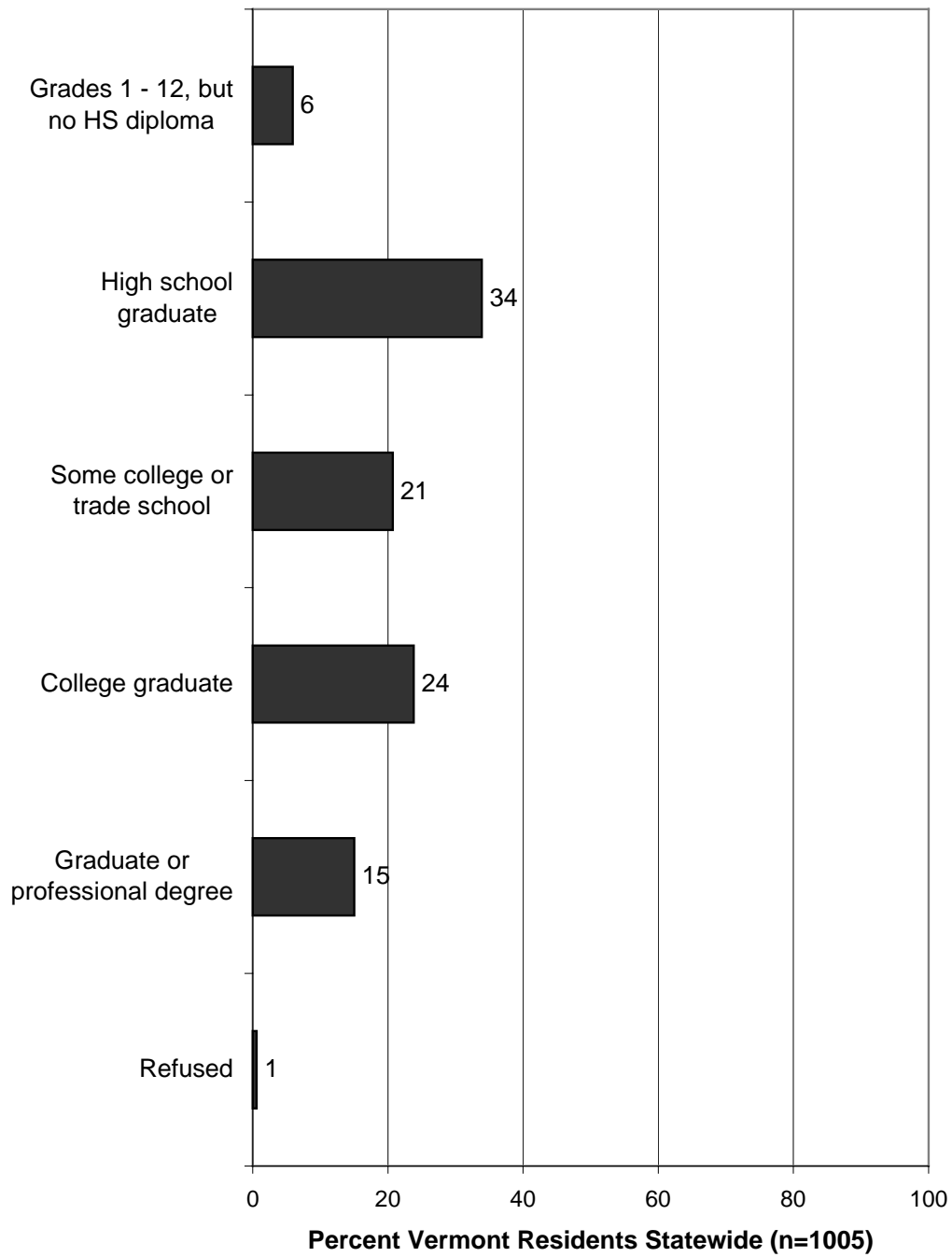
Fifty three percent of respondents were male and 47% female (Q65).

Graphs

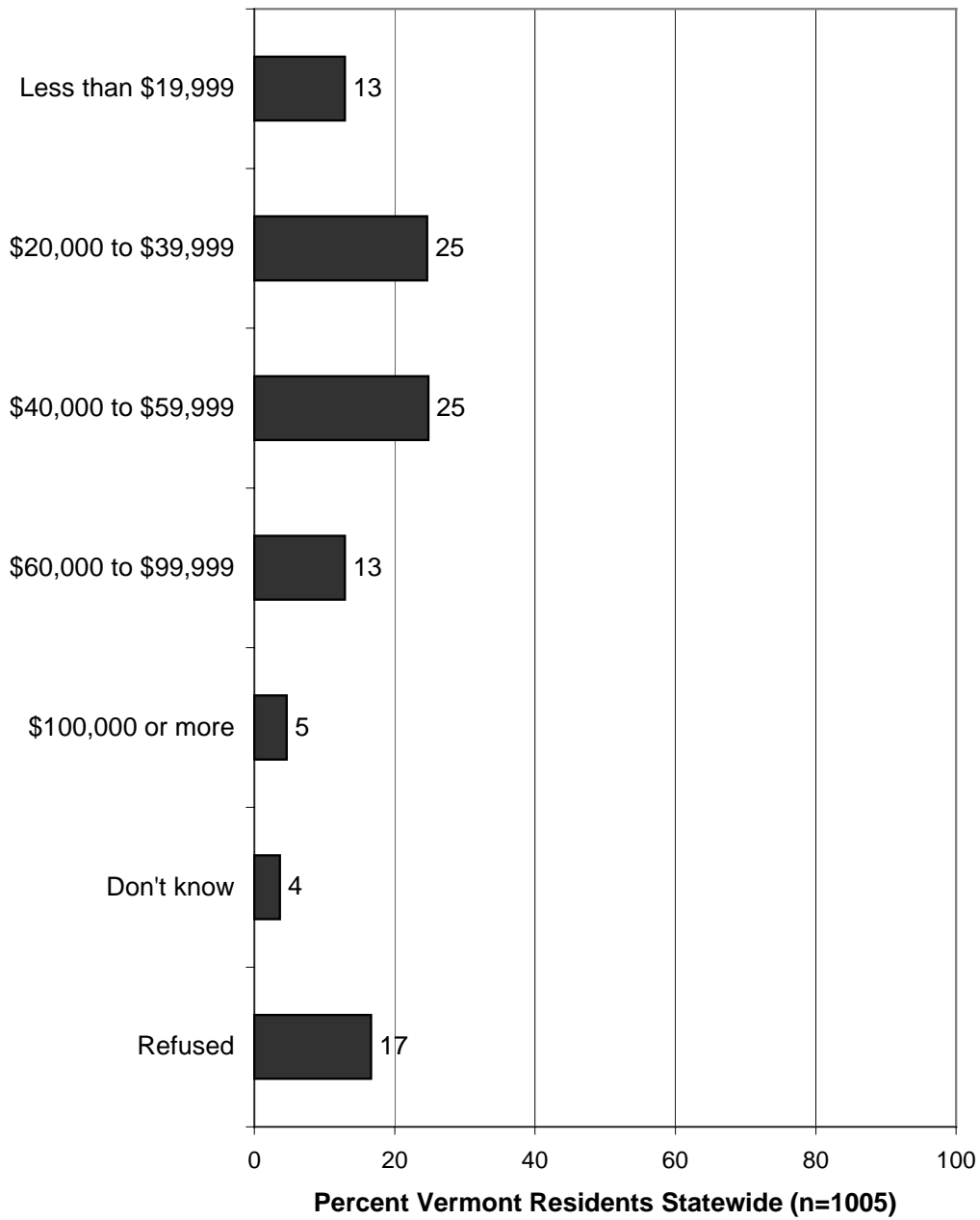
Q60. Do you consider your place of residence to be in a medium sized city, a suburban area, a small city, town or village, a rural area, or a farm?



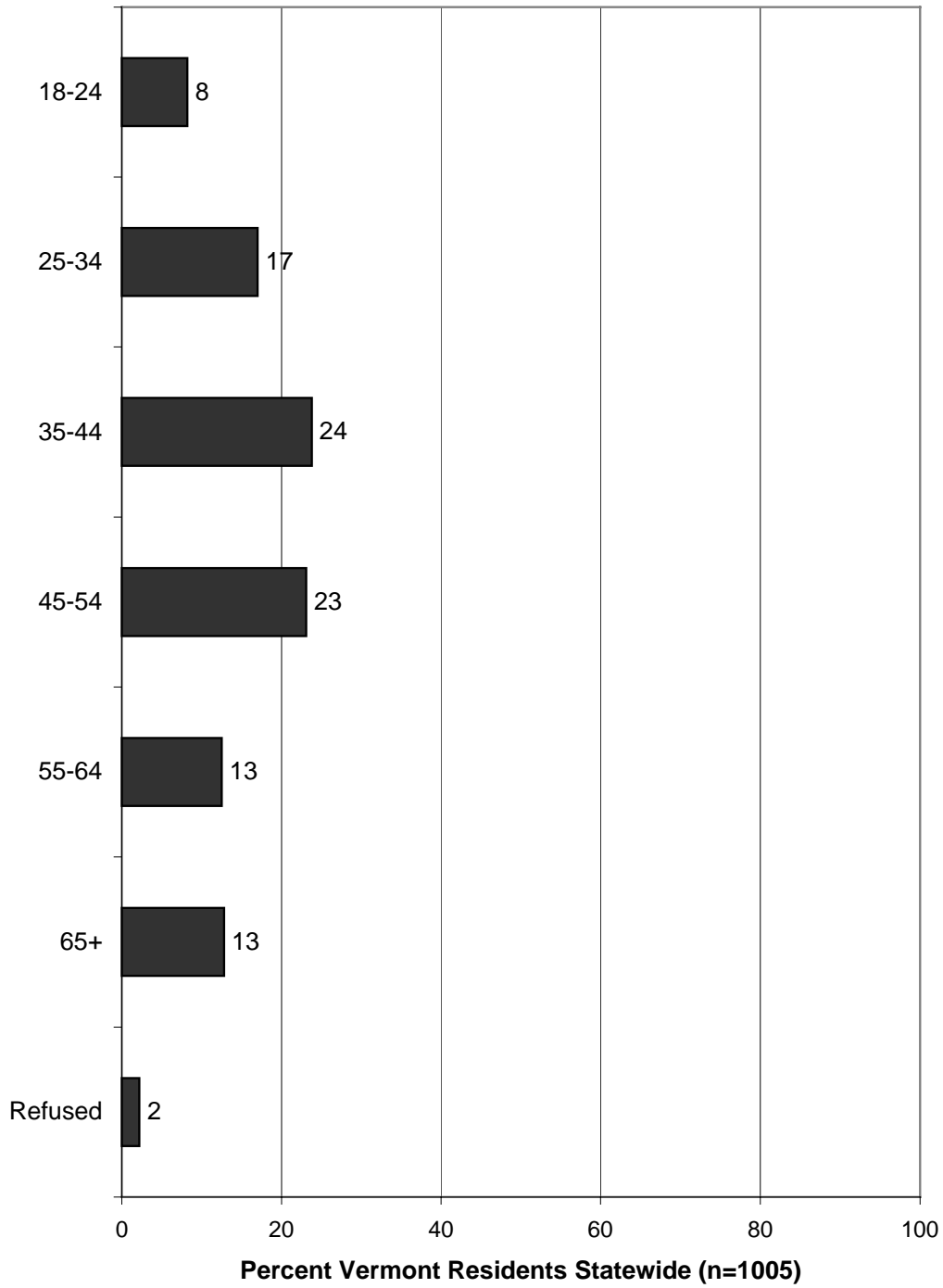
Q61. What is the highest grade level you have completed in school?



Q62. Which of these categories best describes your total household income before taxes last year?



Q63. Age of respondent



Q65. Observed gender of respondent

