

SEPTEMBER 2025

Your Lakes, Your Views 2025

Survey report

Study conducted by Earnscliffe Strategies
on behalf of Safe Quiet Lakes



Safe Quiet Lakes

earnscliffestrategies

Image credit: Unsplash

Our approach

Methodology

Earnscliffe conducted a 15-minute online survey with 7,109 lake users. The open survey link was distributed through the Safe Quiet Lakes opt-in email list, lake associations throughout Ontario, and other community outreach.

Timing

The survey was in field from June 16 to July 25, 2025.

Objectives

Respondents were asked about their lake activities including watercraft, perceptions about quality of life and safety on the lake, and views on regulation and enforcement.

Analysis notes

- This report shows research results for the 2025 survey.
- Where applicable, select comparisons to previous surveys are shown.
- Note that respondents were not required to answer all questions.
- To ensure data integrity, all responses were carefully reviewed.



Foreword from Earnscliffe Strategies

Community-based research is a powerful way for organizations to gather essential data to underpin education, communication, advocacy work and conversations with stakeholders. Direct community engagement provides rich insights and builds goodwill with community members by demonstrating the value of their perspectives.

This type of research does not come without its challenges. Successful research programs must balance methodological rigour with real-world feasibility. It is often difficult to entice members of the public to spend time and effort on research activities without an incentive. For a community-based survey, the incentive is reciprocity – individuals contribute their opinions because they believe in the value of the results that come later.

More than **7,100 people** spent an average of **15 minutes each** to complete the 2025 survey. This strong response was driven by diligent outreach by Safe Quiet Lakes and its partners, and it speaks to the importance of these issues to lake users.

**Note that all images in this report depict real lakes in Ontario, courtesy of [Unsplash](#).*

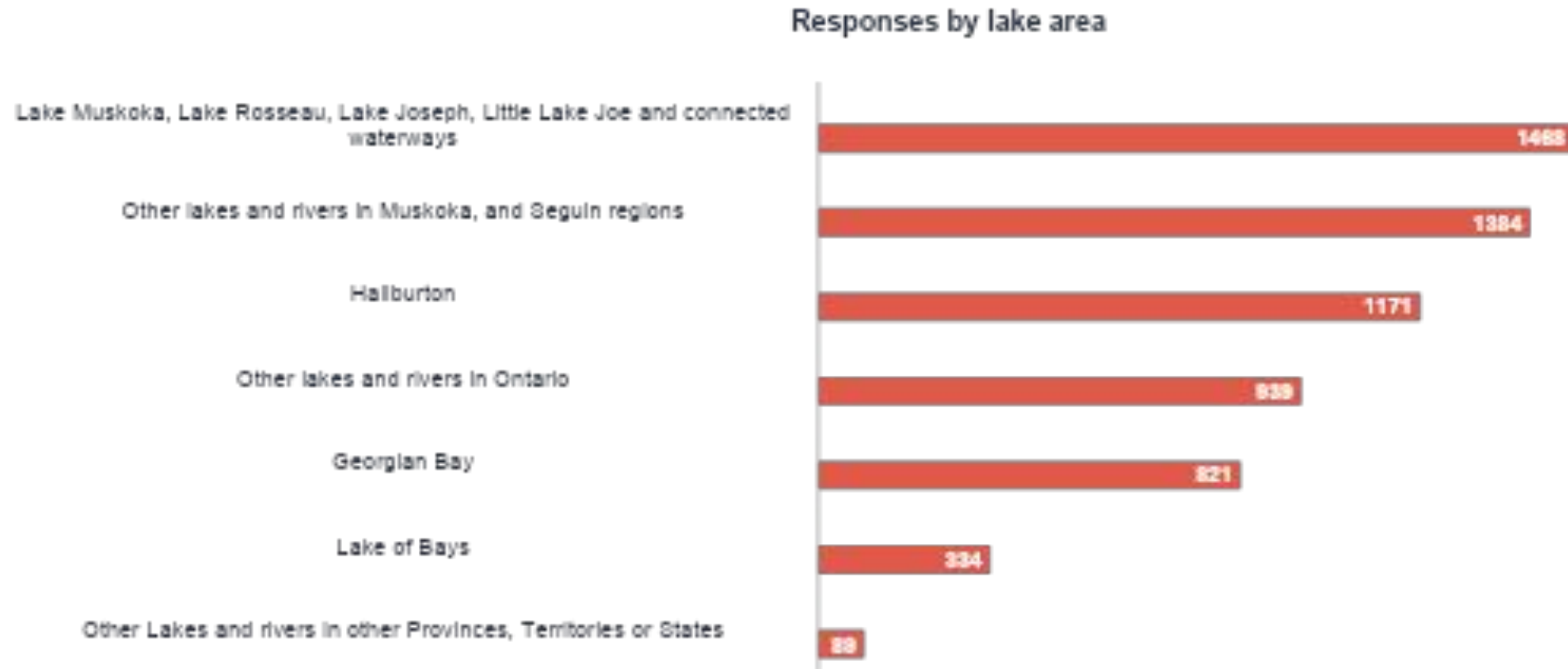
Survey participation and reach

Survey participation and reach

- Response to Your Lake, Your Views increased by 19% compared to 2021, with 7,109 lake users responding to the survey in 2025.
- Coordinated efforts to communicate the survey link widely among lake communities, and expanded outreach to more regions in Ontario, including Haliburton, were important success factors.
- The profile of survey respondents in 2025 is very similar to past survey waves, with the vast majority of responses coming from cottage owners or permanent residents.
- While most respondents are over 65, over two-thirds of them share their lake with younger family members (i.e. under age 24).

Survey responses at a glance

In 2025, 7,109 lake users responded to the Your Lake, Your Views survey in 2025, representing lake communities throughout Ontario and beyond. This marks a 19% increase in response compared to 2021, with growth coming from new outreach to lake users in Haliburton and other regions of Ontario.

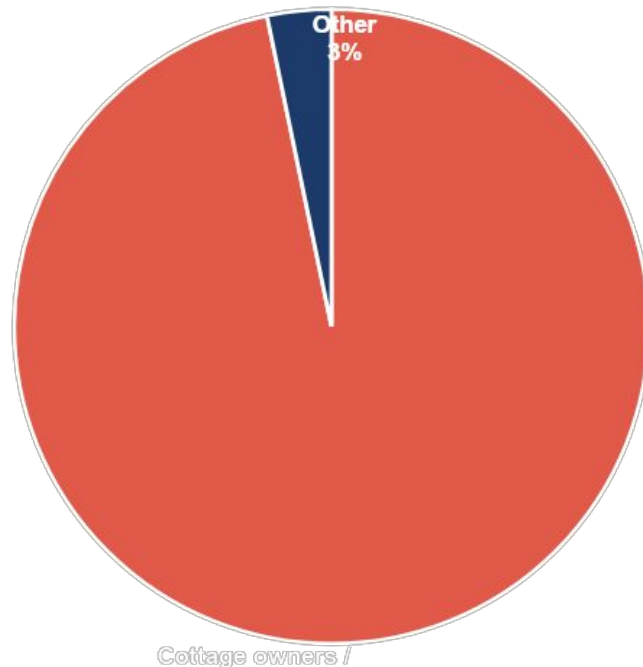


*In which lake or area do you spend the most time on or near the water? All respondents (n=6,206).
Note that 903 respondents chose not to share their lake in the survey.*

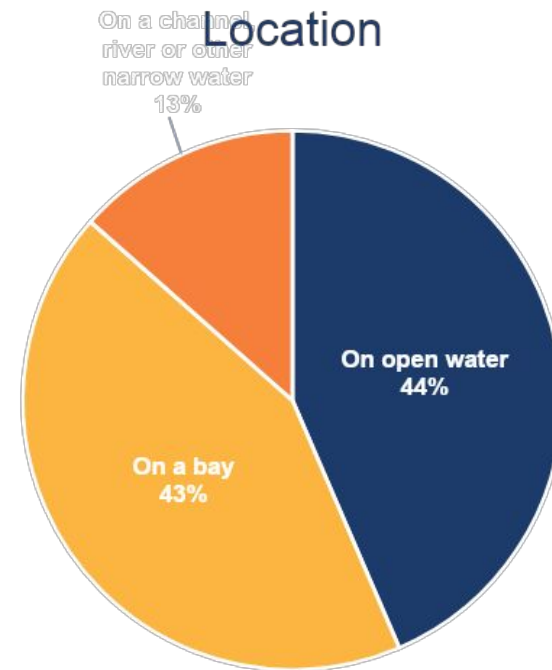
Survey respondents

As in previous years, most survey respondents (97%) are owners of a cottage or resident. The others (3%) comprise a mix of cottage renters, day visitors, campground users, and guests at hotels, inns, or resorts. A majority are located on either open water (44%) or on a bay (43%).

Owners / Renters / Guests



Location



Are you/your family currently...

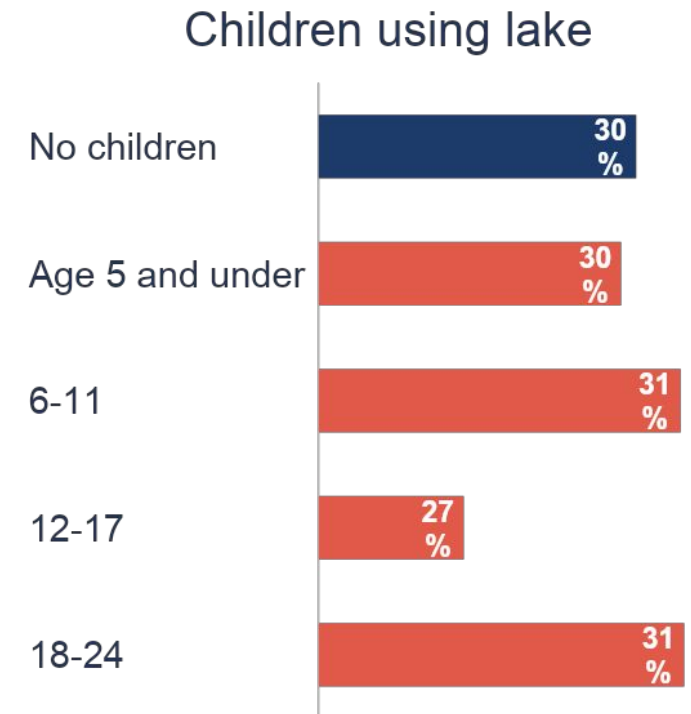
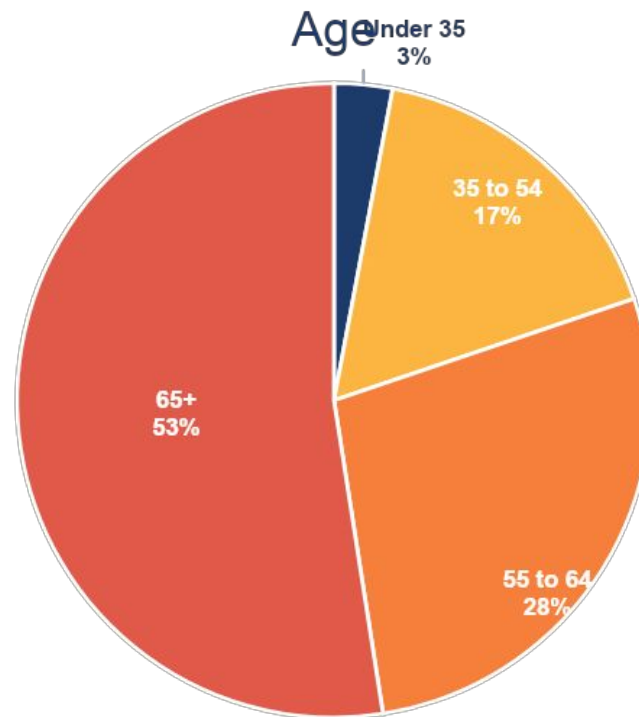
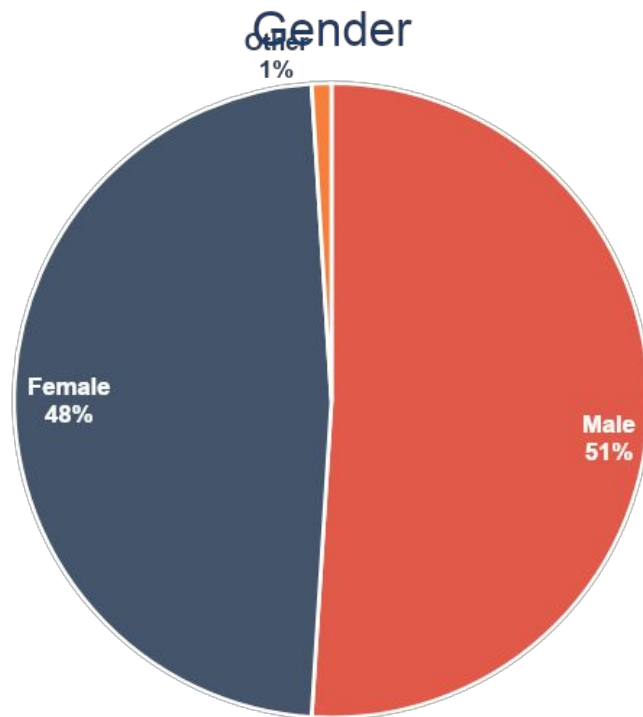
How many years have you been vacationing or living in the region?

Are you located... (All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed)



Survey respondents

Survey respondents are almost equally split between men and women. More than half of respondents are 65 or older, which aligns with the high proportion of owners in the sample. Most respondents regularly share their cottage with the children or young adults in their lives; only 30 percent indicated there are no young people sharing the lake with them.



Do you identify as...What is your age group? Are there children or young adults sharing the space on the lake with you on a regular basis?
Check all that apply. (All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed)

Life on the lake

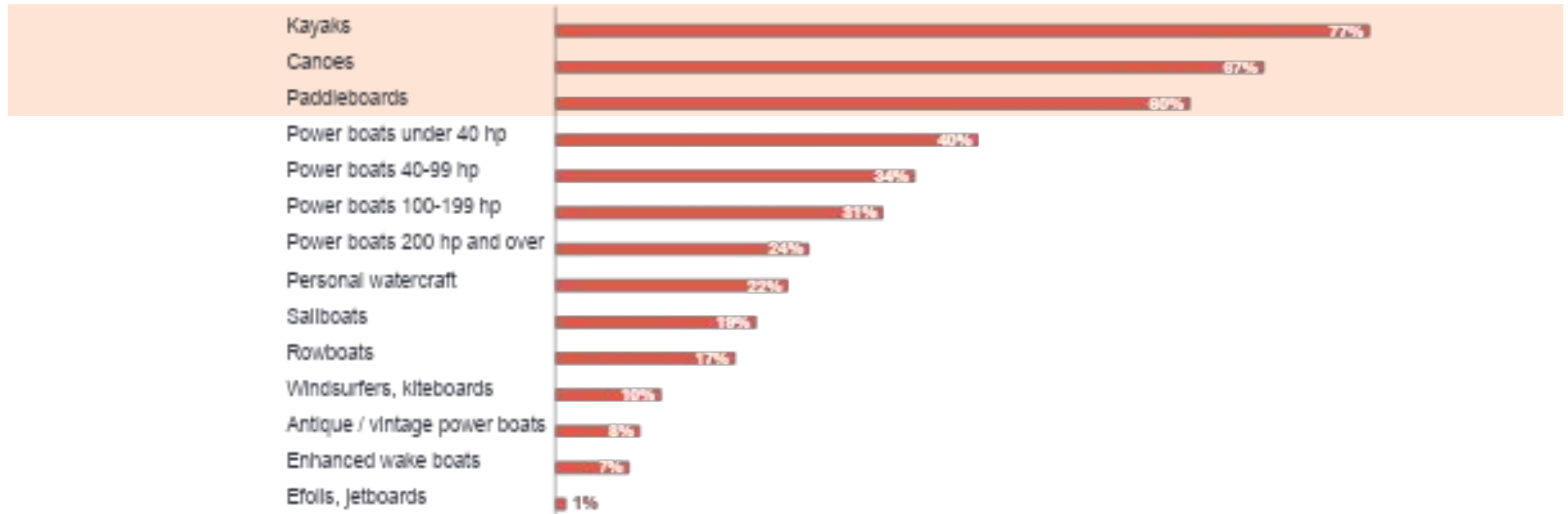
Life on the lake

- Similar to 2021, kayaks, canoes, and paddleboards are the most popular types of watercraft in use this year.
- While canoes are still ranked #2 after kayaks, their popularity has declined since 2021, while use of paddleboards has increased in this time frame.
- On average, families are using about six different watercraft this year, including four human-powered vessels and two motorized vessels per family. Again, this is in line with numbers from 2021.
- Relaxing on the dock, swimming, and simply enjoying nature are the most important activities for lake users; nearly all survey respondents rated these activities as important.
- The ranking of activities by importance (high to low) is nearly identical to 2021.
- Most lake users rate the overall quality of their experience on the lake a 4 or 5 out of 5 (where 5 means “Close to ideal.”)

Watercraft users

Kayaks remain the most popular type of watercraft among survey respondents in 2025, with more than three in four (77%) saying their family will use at least one this year – the same proportion as 2021. Canoes (67%) and paddleboards (60%) are also mentioned by a majority of respondents. Of note, the proportion using canoes has declined since 2021, while the proportion using paddleboards has increased; use of most other boat types has declined or stayed the same. E-foils and jetboards are newer options to keep an eye on in future.

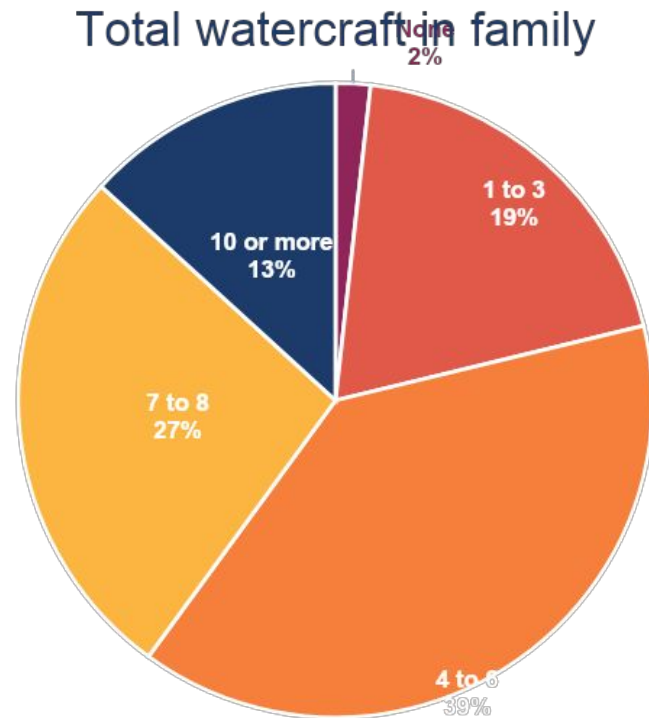
% plan to use at least one this year



Please indicate the number of operational boats that your family will use this year. (All respondents n=7,109)

Watercraft counts

The average number of watercraft in use per respondent (i.e. family) is just over 6 (6.3) which includes 4.2 non-powered and 2.1 powered craft per family. This is very similar to results from the 2021 survey. Only a small percentage of lake users (2%) report that they are not using any watercraft this year; the vast majority (98%) are out on the water in some way.



On average, each family has:



6.3 watercraft in total (98% with at least one)



4.2 non-powered watercraft (94% with at least one)



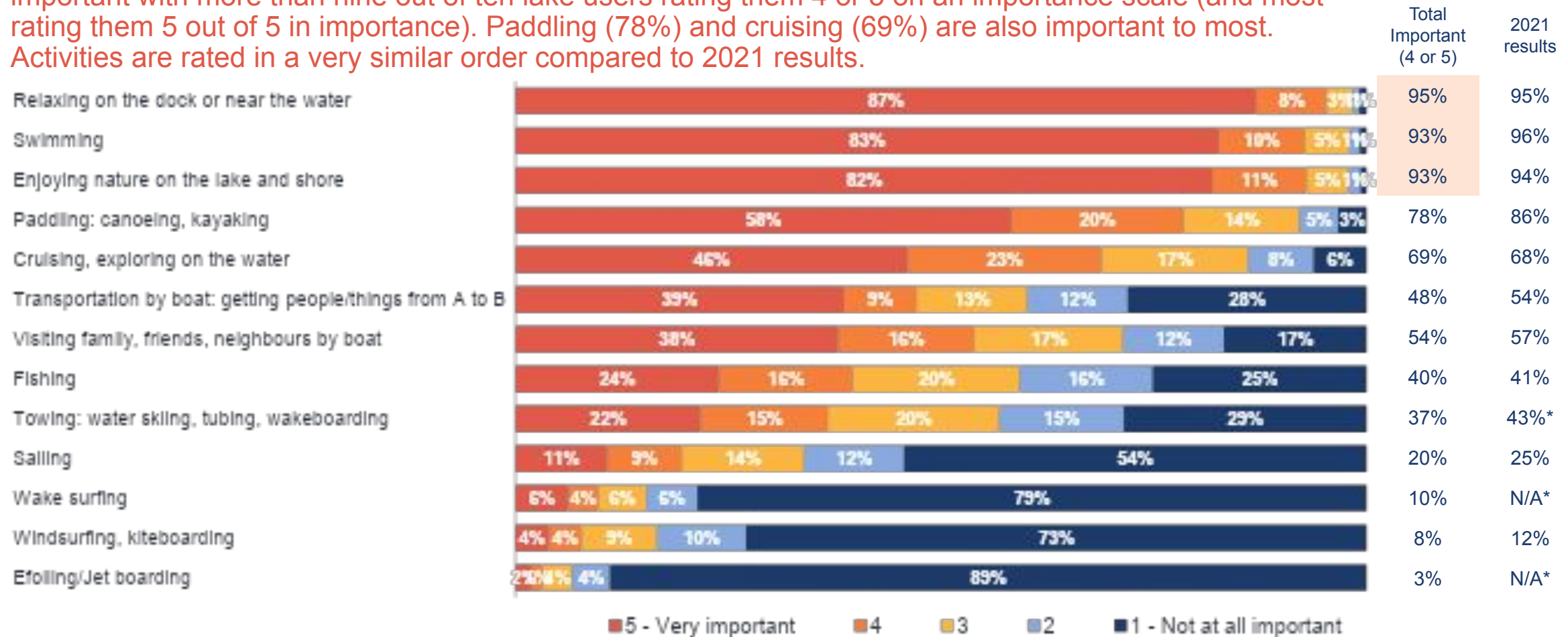
2.1 powered watercraft (88% with at least one)



Please indicate the number of operational boats that your family will use this year. (All respondents n=7,109)

Importance of lake activities

Relaxing on the dock (95%), swimming (93%), and simply enjoying nature (93%) are almost universally important with more than nine out of ten lake users rating them 4 or 5 on an importance scale (and most rating them 5 out of 5 in importance). Paddling (78%) and cruising (69%) are also important to most. Activities are rated in a very similar order compared to 2021 results.

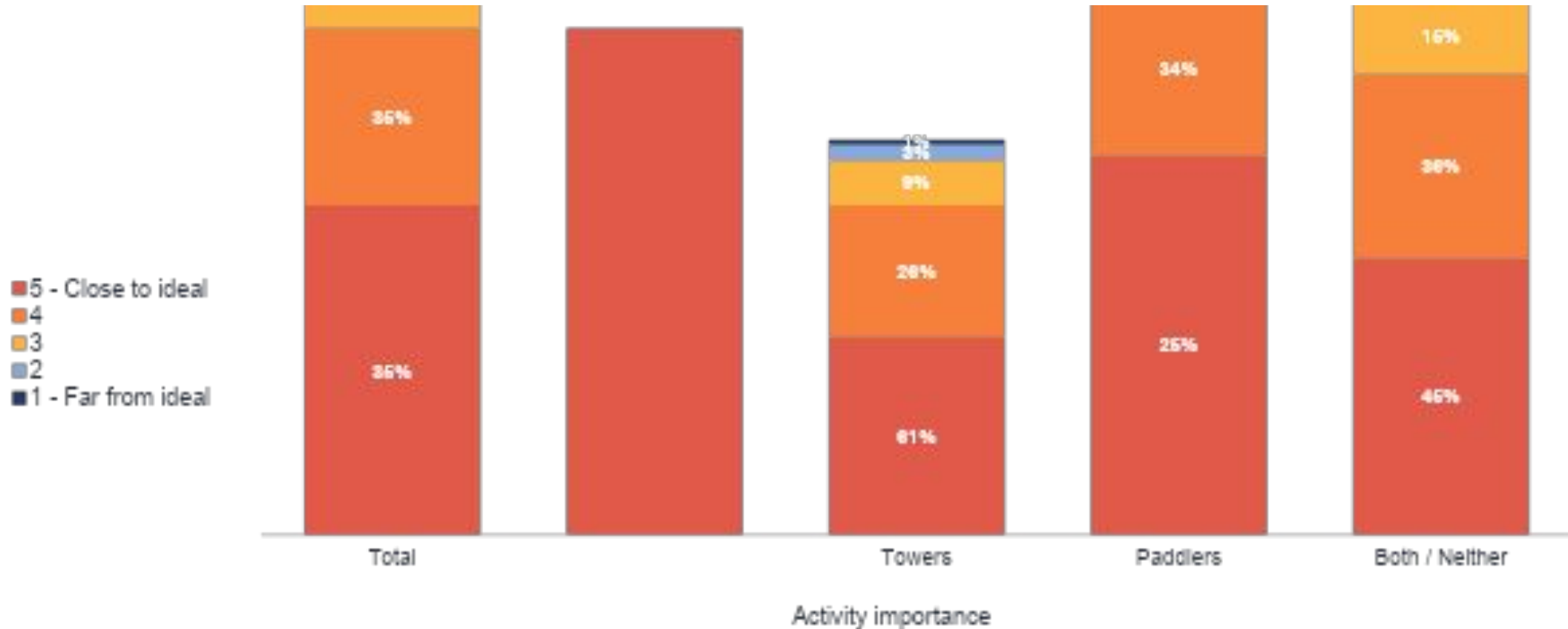


How important are each of these activities to you and your family? (All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed)

*Note that wake surfing was included with other towing activities in 2021 and Efoiling/Jet boarding is a new addition in 2025.

Quality of experience

Using a 5-point scale, most respondents rate their quality of experience on the lake a 4 or 5 (where 5 means “Close to ideal”). Towers* give significantly better ratings to their lake experience compared to paddlers*.



Thinking of all the boating and waterfront activities that you like to do; what quality of experience does your lake or river offer? In a few words, what contributes most to your enjoyment of the lakes? (All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed). *Note that towers are those 7% who see towing activities as important, but not paddling (n=164). Paddlers are those 79% who see paddling activities as important, but not towing (n=2,173).

Life on the lake – in their own words

It is one of the most peaceful places on earth. Want to keep it safe and enjoyable for generations to come.

Being able to engage in a wide variety of activities during the day in a safe environment. This includes using the powerboat in a safe way.

Privacy and quiet, with the ability to cruise safely.

Paddling, swimming and sitting at my waterfront deck. Seeing and hearing loons and their babies.

Being able to spend time with family, enjoying leisurely boat rides, swimming, kayaking and paddle boating.

Life on the lake – in their own words

We love the fun atmosphere of increased boat traffic in our channel in the weekends. We enjoy cruising in our pontoon boat to deep back bays for swimming.

Swimming and non-motorized sports. But I do love a good waterski now and then!

Being able to enjoy both motorized and non-motorized activities and having respectful neighbours.

Connecting with nature. Quiet and stillness.

Enjoying the peace and serenity of sitting on the dock.

Traffic, noise, and safety

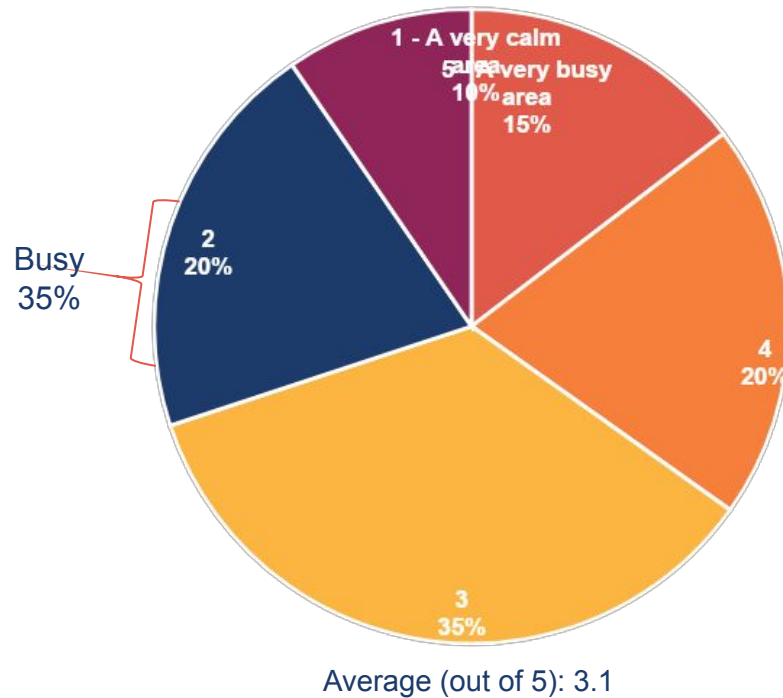
Traffic, noise, and safety

- As has been noted in previous iterations of the survey, negative perceptions of boat traffic, noise, and lake safety understandably correlate with a poorer quality experience on the lake.
- Most lake users think that boat wakes, boat noise, and boat traffic have increased in the past five years, while safety has stagnated or worsened. Results for this set of questions are similar to 2021, pointing to long-term worsening of these issues.
- It is not a surprise that powered craft – both power boats and PWCs – are seen to impact safety on the lake far more than human-powered craft. Across all categories asked in the survey (which includes powered and non-powered craft, along with other safety concerns), perceptions of their impact on safety are higher in 2025 compared to 2021.
- Consistent with 2021, PWCs rate highest as contributors of noise on the lake, followed by modern power boats.
- Considering the impact of boats close to shore, damaging wakes are seen as the issue of greatest concern. This is consistent with results from 2021.

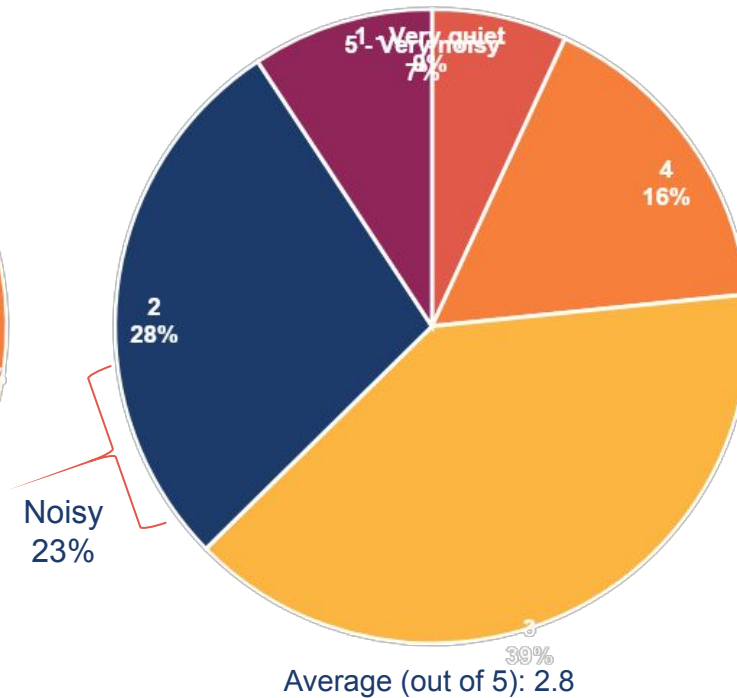
Boat traffic, noise, and safety

Lake users rated the boat traffic, noise, and safety at their lakes using 5-point scales. While 35 percent rated their lake as busy (i.e. 4 or 5 out of 5), just 23 percent felt their lake was noisy. Two in three (66%) rate their lake as being safe.

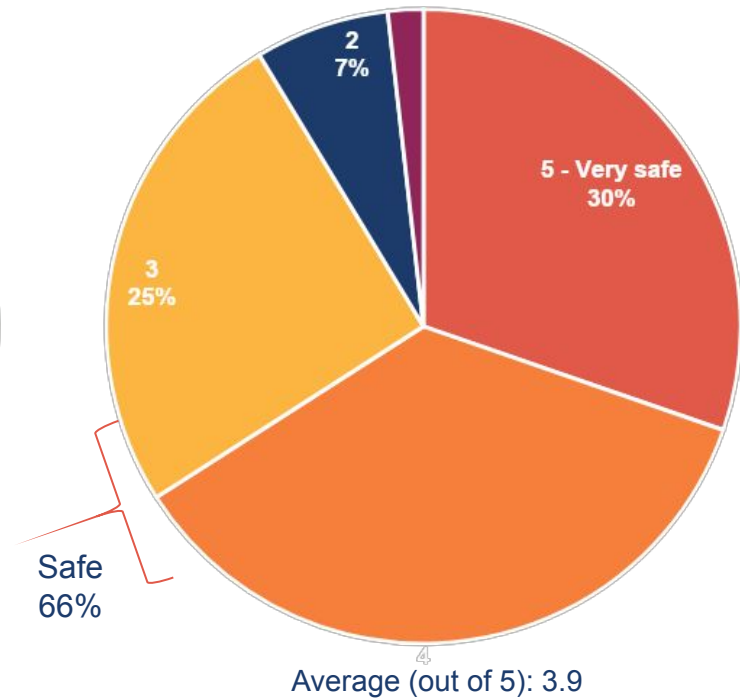
Boat traffic near cottage



Noise level near cottage



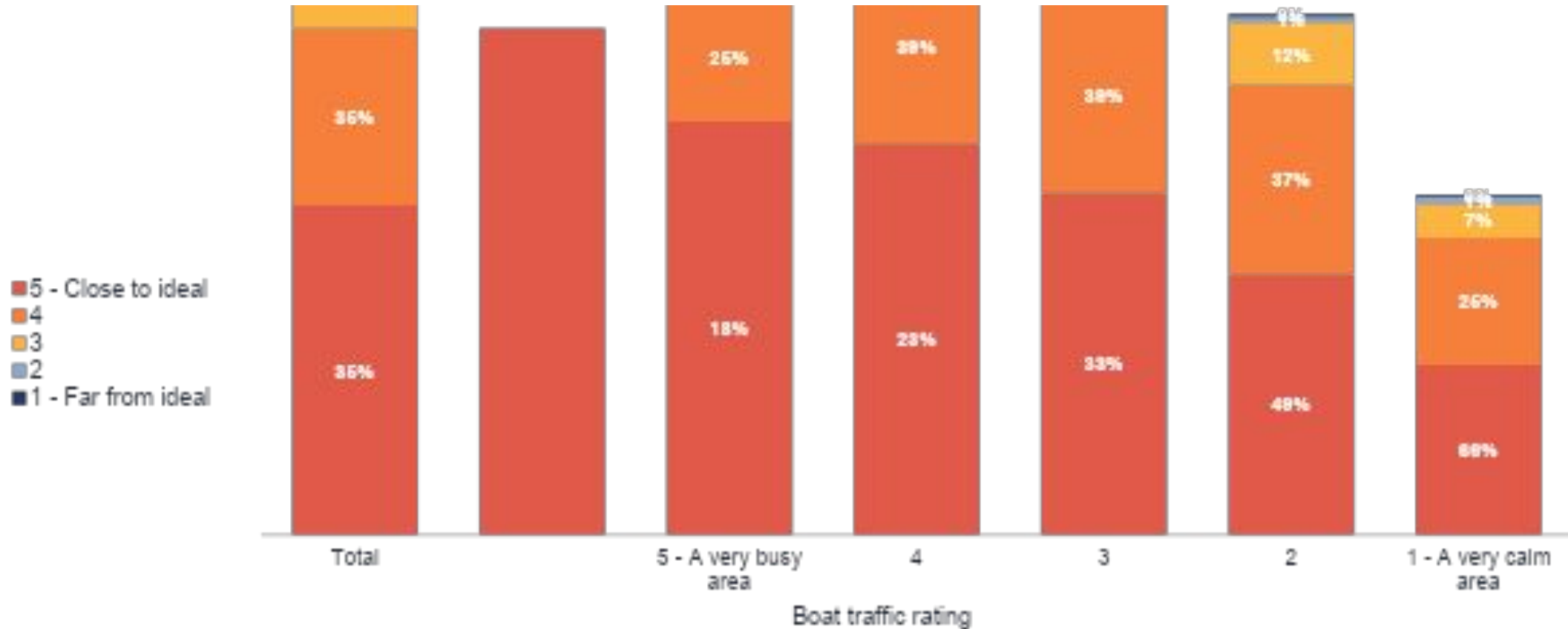
Safety of lake



How would you describe the amount of boat traffic near your cottage, compared to other areas of your region? Rate the overall noise level of the area near your cottage. Rate the overall safety of your lake. (All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed)

Boat traffic – impact on quality of experience

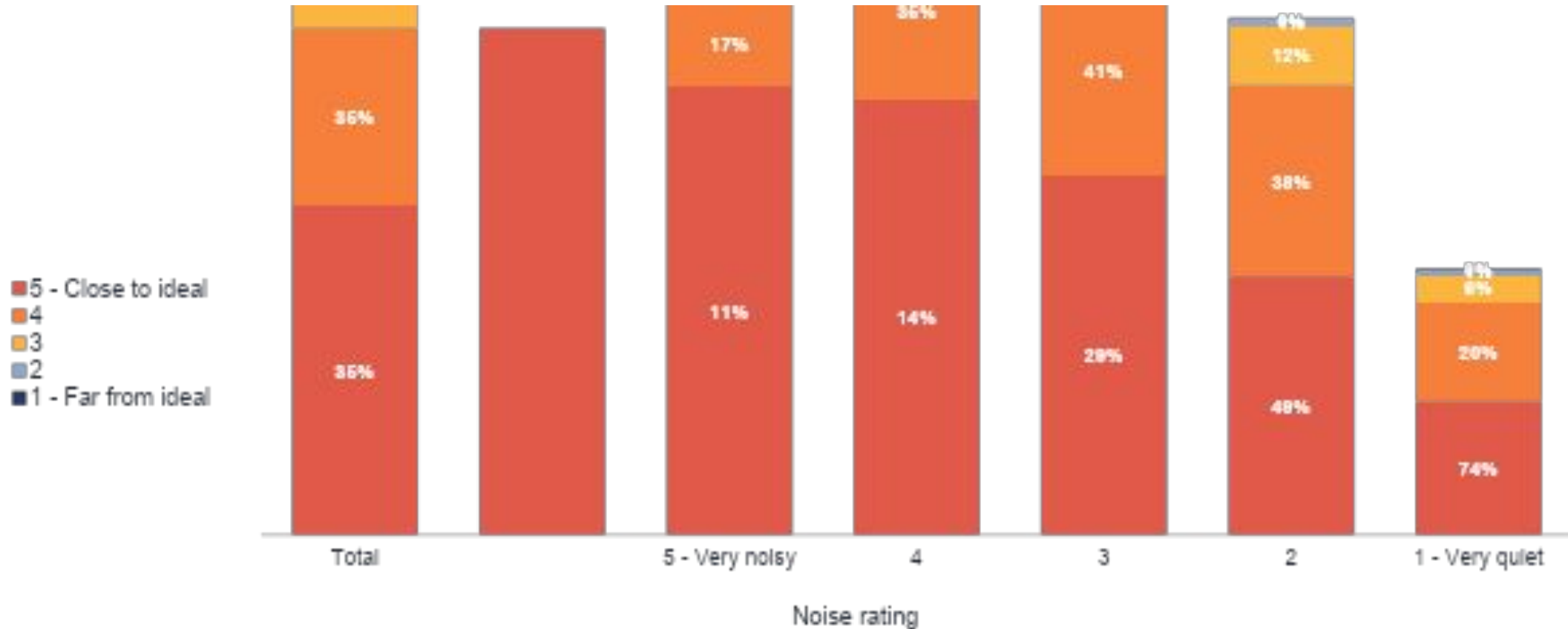
There is a clear correlation between perceptions of boat traffic and the quality of experience on the lake – the busier the traffic, the lower the quality of experience.



Thinking of all the boating and waterfront activities that you like to do; what quality of experience does your lake or river offer? In a few words, what contributes most to your enjoyment of the lakes? (All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed)

Noise – impact on quality of experience

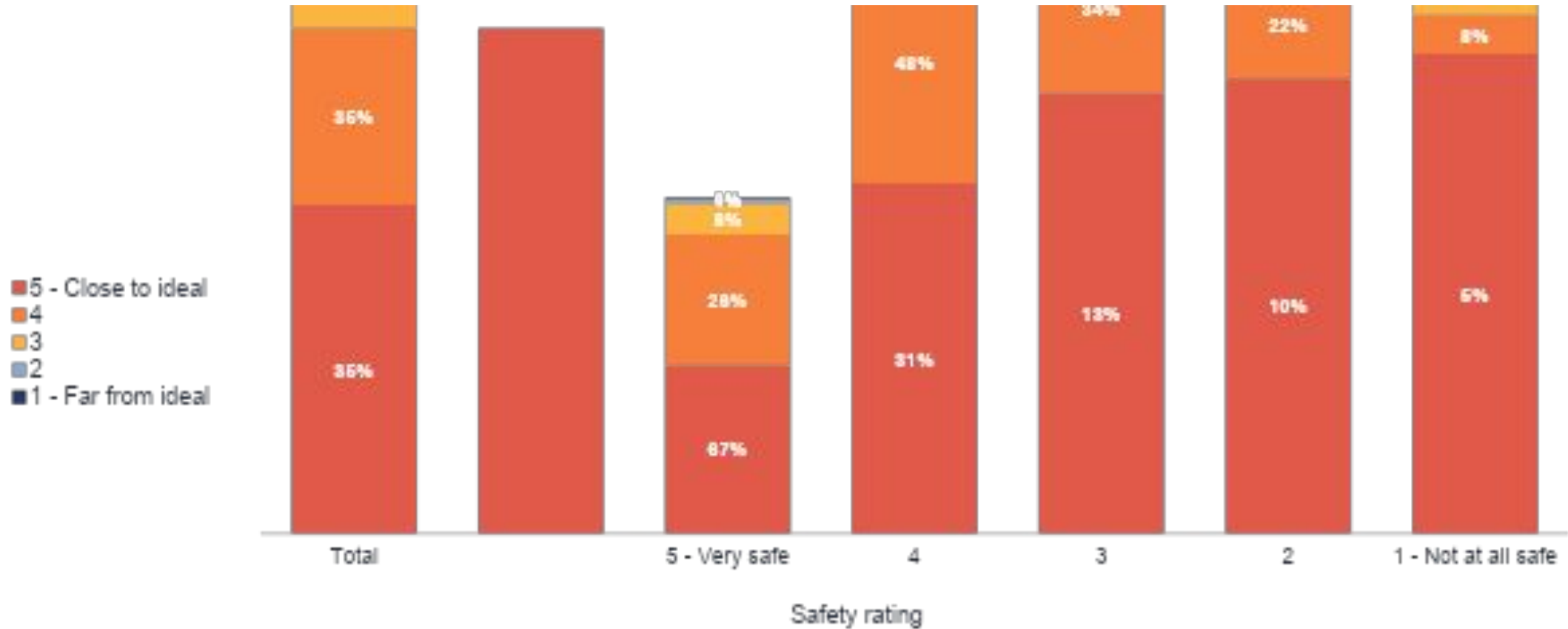
Similarly, the noisier the lake, the lower the quality of experience.



Thinking of all the boating and waterfront activities that you like to do; what quality of experience does your lake or river offer? In a few words, what contributes most to your enjoyment of the lakes? (All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed)

Safety – impact on quality of experience

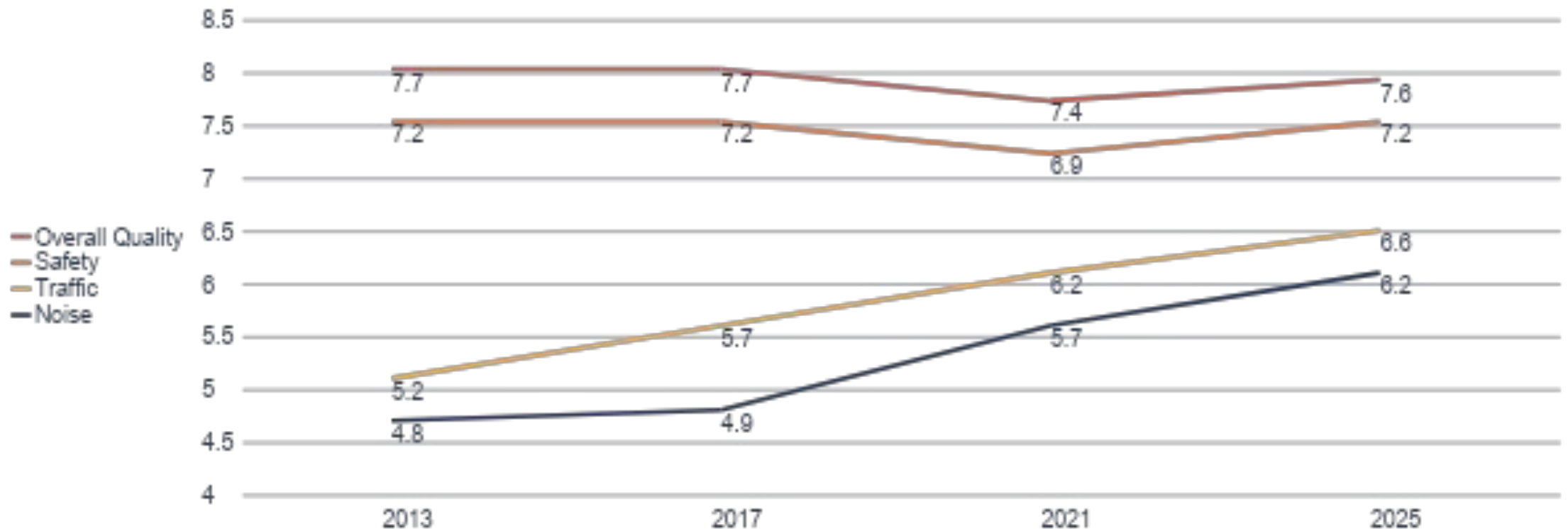
The safer the lake is perceived to be, the higher the quality of experience.



Thinking of all the boating and waterfront activities that you like to do; what quality of experience does your lake or river offer? In a few words, what contributes most to your enjoyment of the lakes? (All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed)

Tracking – Big Muskoka Lakes

Looking at respondents from the Big Muskoka Lakes, for which there is tracking data back to the original survey in 2013, these lake users perceive their lakes to be busier and noisier, continuing a trend that goes back to the beginning of Your Lake, Your Views. Perceptions of quality and safety, which declined in 2021, have rebounded and sit in line with results for 2013 and 2017.



How would you describe the amount of boat traffic near your cottage, compared to other areas of your region? Rate the overall noise level of the area near your cottage. Rate the overall safety of your lake. (Big Muskoka Lake Users n=1,468 with non-responses removed)

Note that scores are scaled to be out of 10 rather than 5.



Change over time

More than two out of three lake users (68%) feel that the impact of boat wakes today is much more or somewhat more than it was 5 years ago. Majorities also note more boat noise (60%) and more boat traffic (61%). Few feel that safety has improved (17%). These ratings are very similar compared to 2021, suggesting that lake users see long-term worsening of these issues.

Much /
Somewhat
more

Impact of boat wakes today



68%

Boat noise today



60%

Boat traffic today



61%

Level of safety today



17%

■ Much more ■ Somewhat more ■ No change ■ Somewhat less ■ Much less

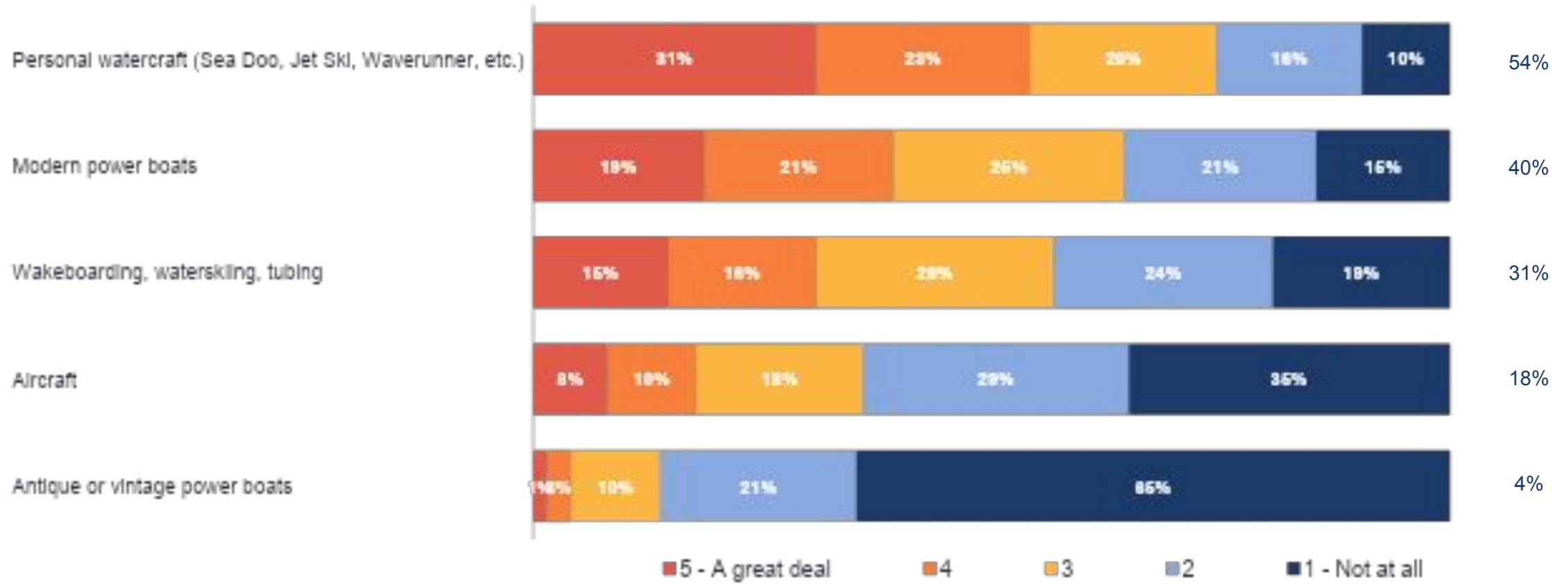


Have you seen any change in the following over the past five years? (All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed)

Impact on noise

Lake users rated various elements for contributing to noise, using a scale where 1 means “not at all” and 5 means “a great deal.” Looking at ratings of 4 or 5 on the scale, more than half see personal watercraft (54%) as major contributors of noise.

Top 2
(4 or 5 out
of 5)

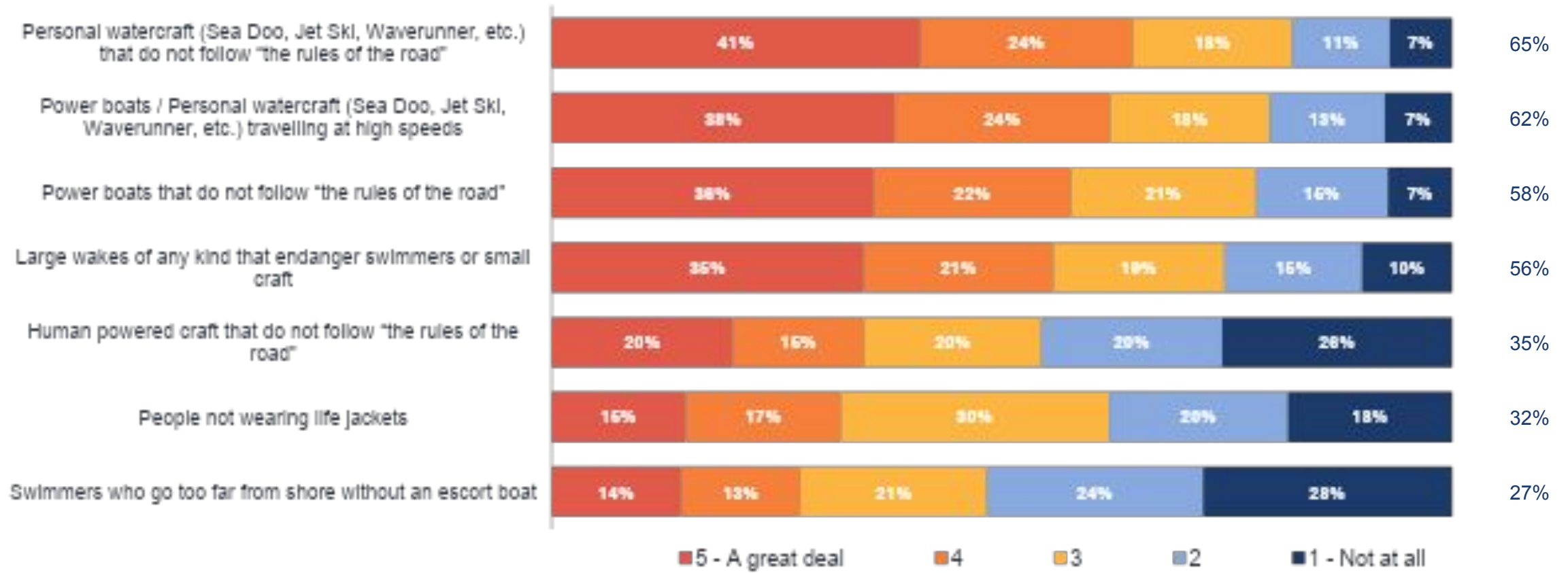


How much do these elements contribute to unwanted noise in your area? (All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed)

Impact on safety

Lake users rated various elements for their impact on safety, using a scale where 1 means “not at all” and 5 means “a great deal.” Personal watercraft not following the rules are seen as having the greatest impact on safety (65%) followed by boats travelling at high speeds (62%), power boats not following the rules (58%), and large wakes (56%). Where comparable to past results, these perceptions have intensified since 2021.

Top 2
(4 or 5 out of 5)

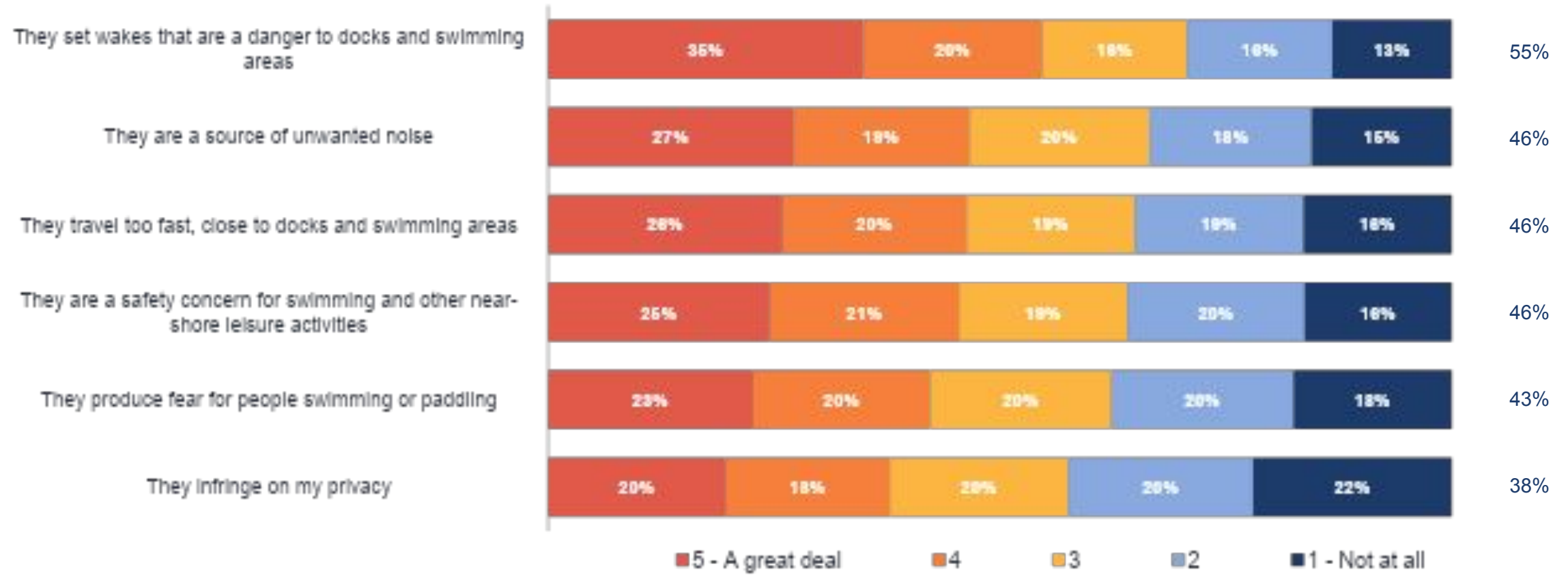


Do these elements affect safety on the water in your area? (All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed)

Impact of boats driving close to shore

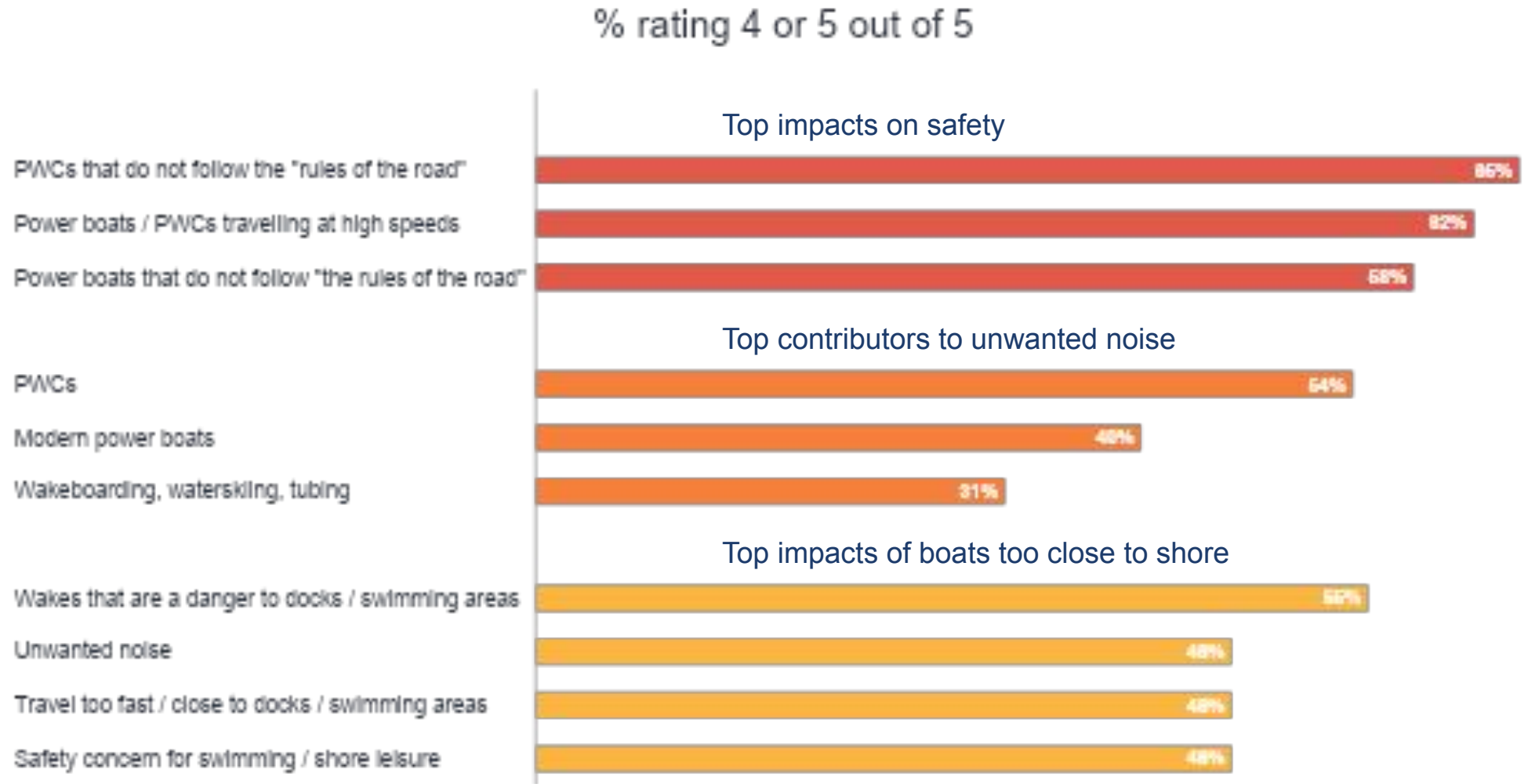
Lake users rated concerns about boats driving close to shore, again using a scale where 1 means “not at all” and 5 means “a great deal.” Wakes are noted to be a major issue by over half of respondents (55% rating this a 4 or 5 out of 5).

Top 2
(4 or 5 out
of 5)



Do boats driving close to shore create any of these problems near you? (All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed)

Summary of top concerns



Do these elements affect safety on the water in your area? How much do these elements contribute to unwanted noise in your area? Do boats driving close to shore create any of these problems near you? (All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed)

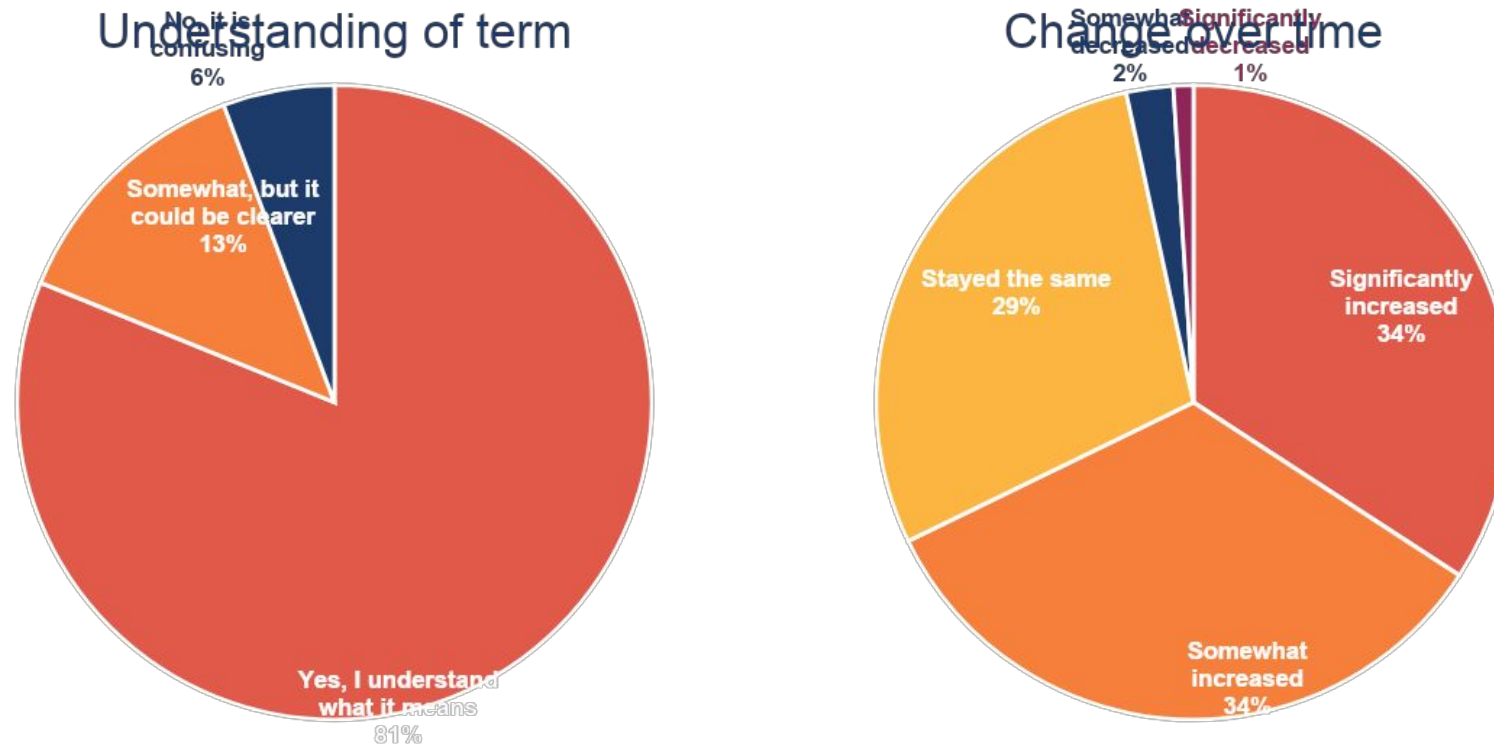
Enhanced boat wakes

Enhanced boat wakes

- Lake users expressed a high degree of concern about enhanced boat wakes both in direct questions, and in their open-ended comments at the end of the survey.
- Most lake users understand what is meant by the term “enhanced wake,” though some feel it could be made more clear.
- There are widespread perceptions among respondents that enhanced wake activity has increased in their area over the past five years.
- Swamping wildlife and shoreline erosion top the list of concerns about enhanced wake impacts, but there is also a high degree of concern about damage to docks, danger to smaller vessels, and danger to swimmers, and a moderate level of concern about disturbed lake sediments.
- Asked to consider a range of potential solutions, lake users were most in favour of keeping enhanced wake activities a designated distance from shore and prohibiting enhanced wakes in certain areas.

Perceptions of enhanced wakes

Most survey respondents (81%) understand what is meant by the term “enhanced wake.” About two in three (68%) say the amount of enhanced wakes in their area has increased either somewhat (34%) or significantly (34%) in the past five years.

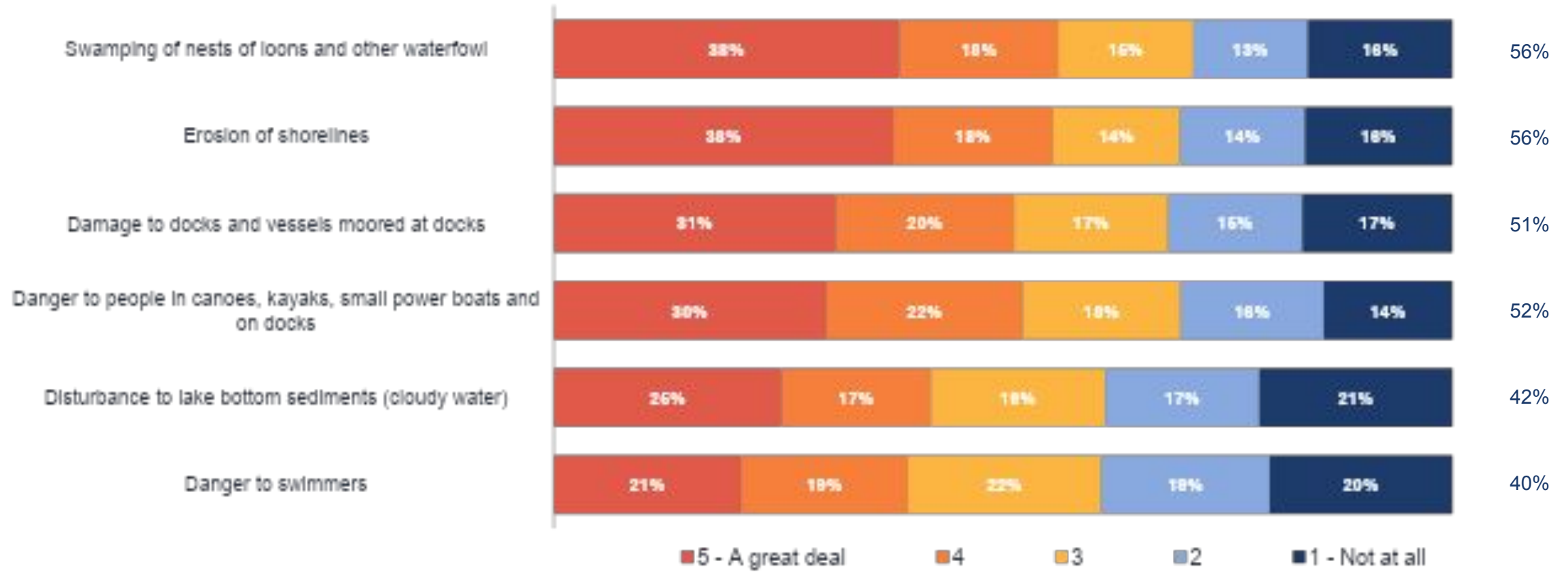


Do you find the term “enhanced wake (EW)” clear and understandable? How would you describe the change in the amount of enhanced wakes in your area over the past five years? (All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed)

Impact of enhanced wakes

Lake users used scale where 1 means “not at all” and 5 means “a great deal” to rate the impact of enhanced wakes. Looking at ratings of 4 or 5, over half of respondents (56%) feel that enhanced wakes contribute to swamping of waterfowl nests, and a similar proportion (56%) feel they contribute to the erosion of shorelines.

Top 2
(4 or 5 out
of 5)

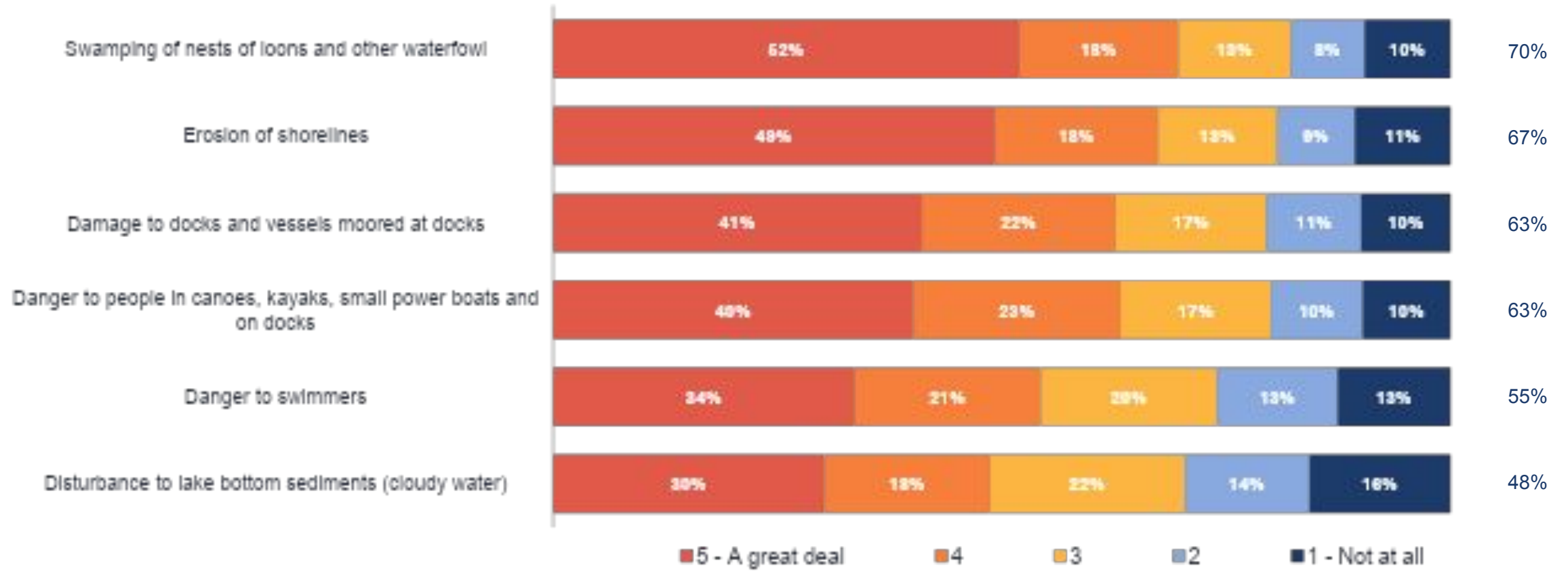


How much do enhanced wakes create or contribute to any of these problems in your area? (All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed)

Concern about enhanced wakes

Lake users used the same scale to rate their concern about enhanced wake impacts. Similar to impact ratings, swamping of waterfowl nests (70%) and erosion of shorelines (67%) have the highest ratings for concern.

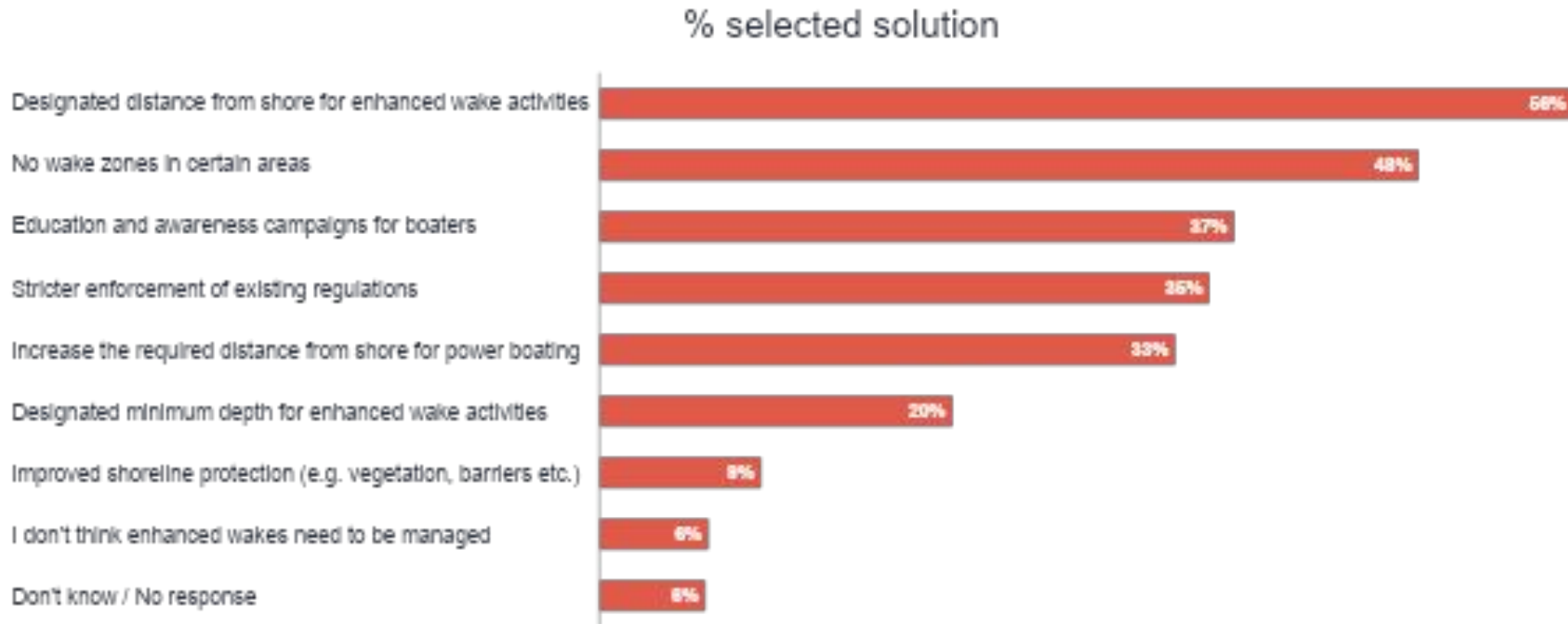
Top 2
(4 or 5 out
of 5)



Which of the following risks or impacts of enhanced wakes concern you the most? (All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed)

Solutions to manage enhanced wakes

Collaborative solutions like keeping enhanced wake activities at a designated distance from shore (56%) and setting no wake zones (48%) are seen as the most effective solutions for managing enhanced wakes. Concerns about enhanced wakes, and potential solutions, discussed frequently in open-ended responses. A small proportion of lake users (6%) feel that no action is required on this issue.



Which of the following solutions do you think would be most effective in managing enhanced wakes? (Select up to three)
(All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed)

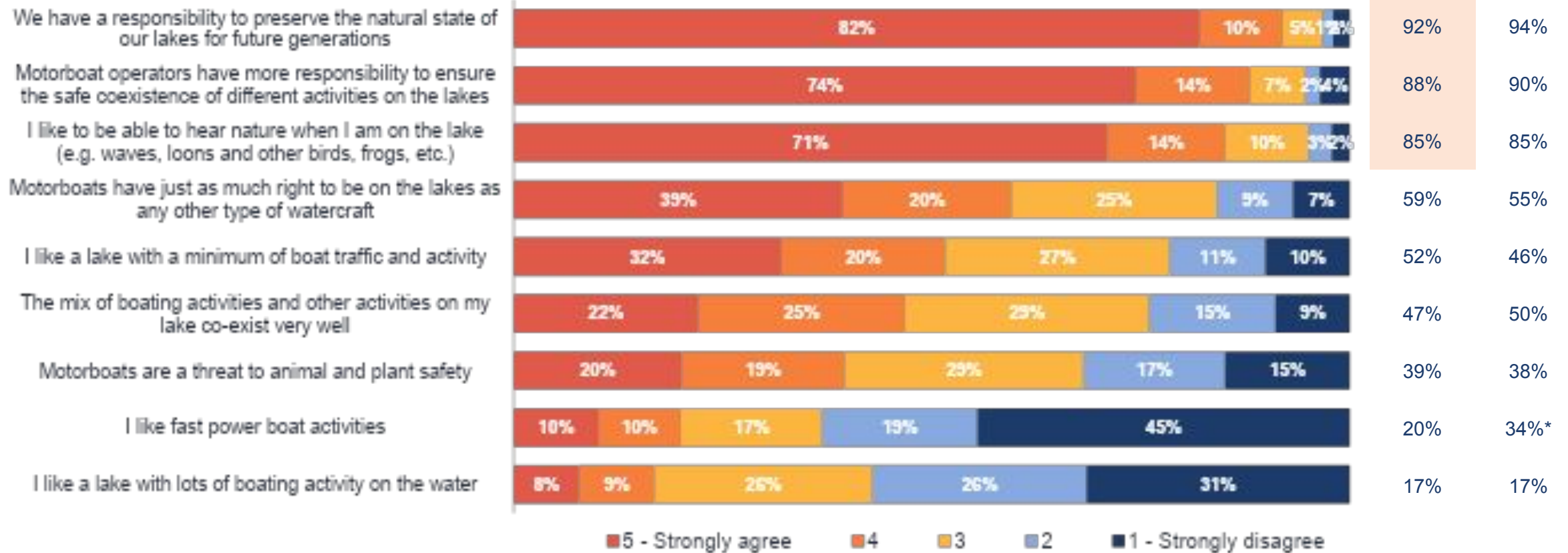
Perspectives

Perspectives

- Beyond their present enjoyment of the lake, survey respondents feel a strong sense of responsibility to preserve the natural state of their lakes for future generations.
- Lake users also widely agree that motorboat operators have more responsibility to ensure safe coexistence of lake activities.
- Agreement with these “responsibility consensus” attitude statements was very similar to 2021, both in the proportions agreeing, and in their relative ranking.
- There is majority support for several proposals suggested in the survey: stronger enforcement of impaired boating laws, no wake surfing zones, no wake zones, stronger enforcement of above water exhaust laws, decibel limits for engines, and increased education / communication.
- Some of these proposals are new to the 2025 survey, but where they are comparable, support has increased since 2021.

Responsibility consensus

Strong majorities agree they have a responsibility to preserve the natural state of lakes for future generations (92%), that motorboat operators have more responsibility to ensure safe coexistence of activities on the lakes (88%), and that they like to hear nature while they are on the lake (85%). Results in 2025 are generally stable compared to 2021.

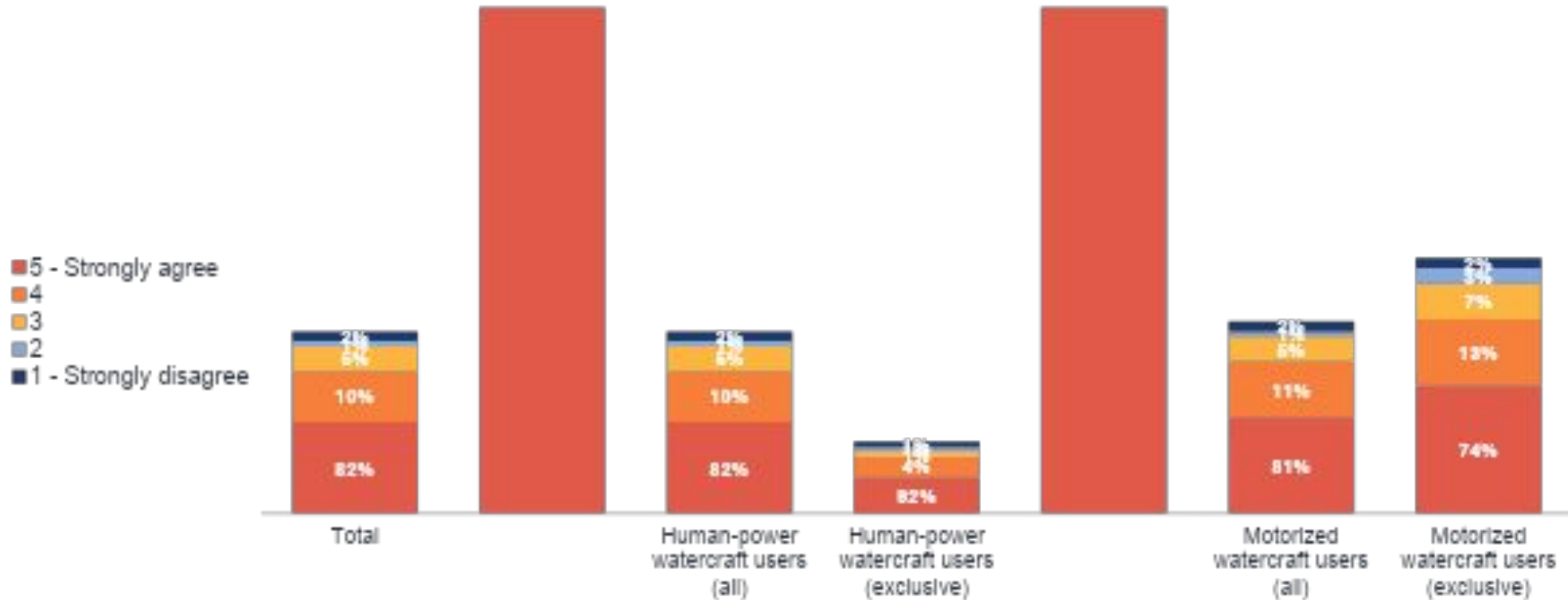


To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed)

*Note that wording for this item changed in 2025.

Responsibility to preserve natural state of lakes

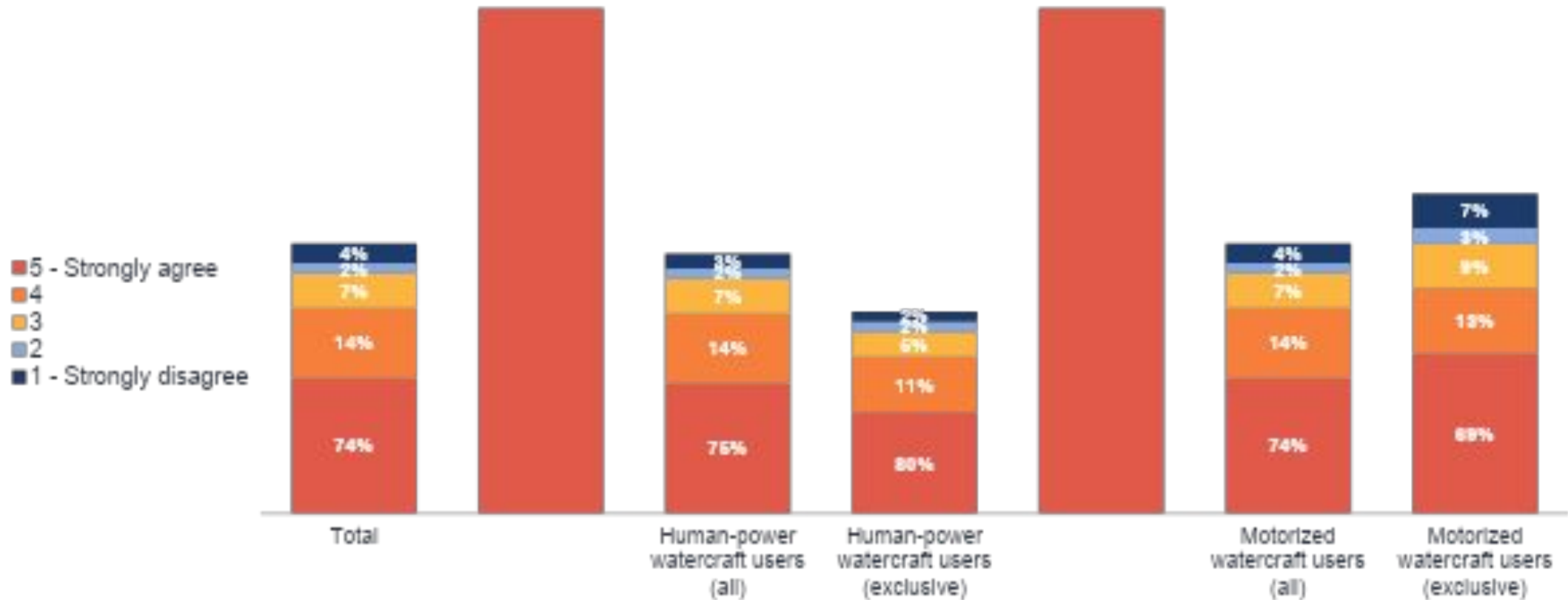
A majority of survey respondents use both human-powered watercraft AND motorized watercraft. Looking at exclusive users, i.e. those who use ONLY one or the other, users of human-powered watercraft feel an even stronger sense of responsibility than those who only use motorized craft.



☐ To what extent do you agree with the following statements? We have a responsibility to preserve the natural state of our lakes for future generations. (All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed)

Motorboat owners' responsibility for safe coexistence

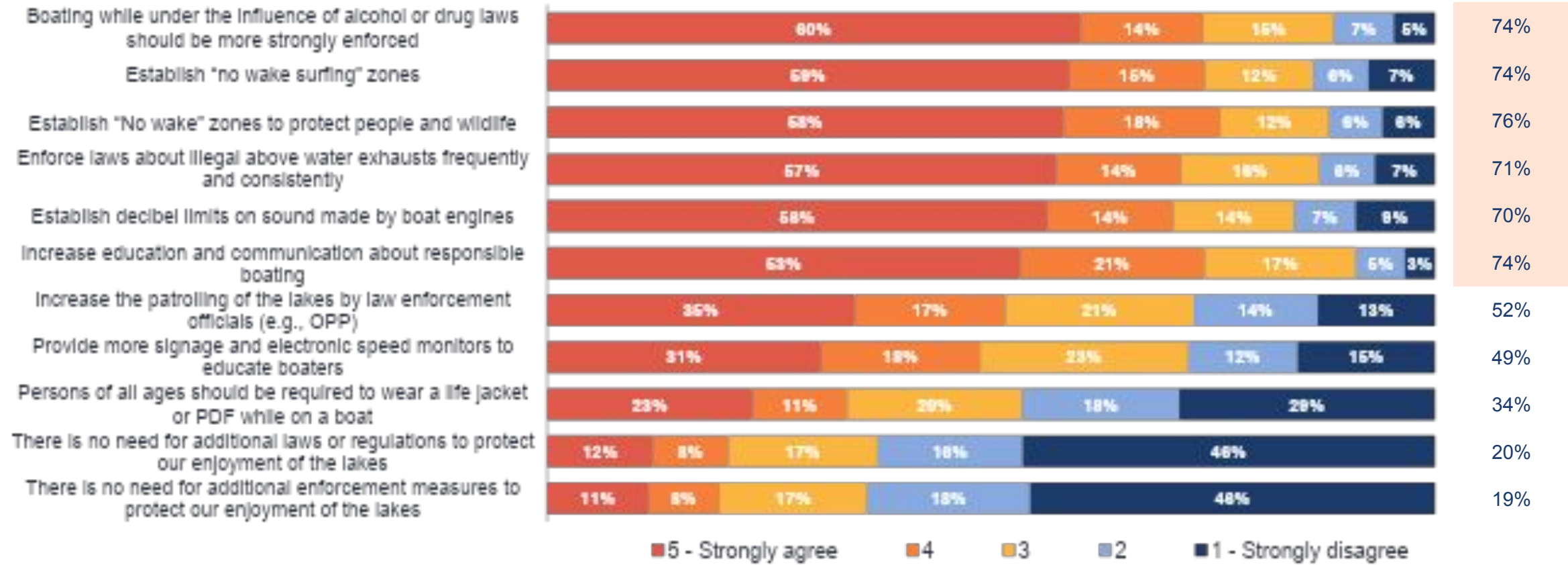
Similarly, those who are exclusively human-powered watercraft users feel more strongly that motorboat users bear more responsibility for safe coexistence.



☐ To what extent do you agree with the following statements? Motorboat operators have more responsibility to ensure the safe coexistence of activities on the lake. (All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed)

Views on proposed boating policies

Respondents shared their perspective on eleven proposals for enhancing the boating experience on lakes. There are high levels of agreement on six of these proposals: stronger enforcement of impaired boating laws (74%), no wake surfing zones (74%), no wake zones (76%), stronger enforcement of above water exhaust laws (71%), decibel limits for engines (70%), and increased education / communication (74%).



To what extent do you agree with the following proposals for enhancing the boating experience on your lake?
(All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed)

Tracking opposition to additional laws or regulations

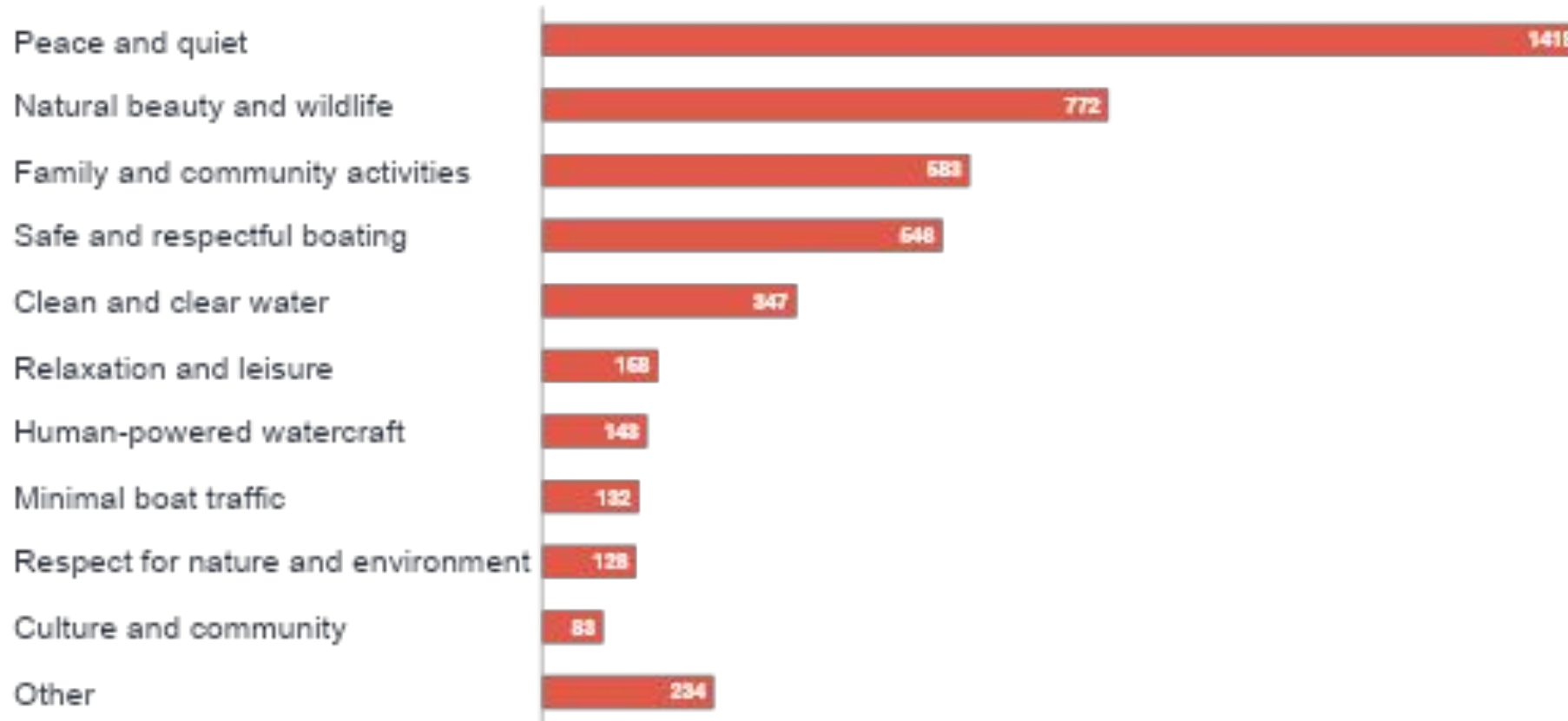
Agreement with the statement: There is no need for additional laws or regulations to protect our enjoyment of the lakes. The percentage agreement has declined from 44% to 20%



To what extent do you agree with the following statement: There is no need for additional laws or regulations to protect our enjoyment of the lake.? (All respondents n=7,109 with non-responses removed)

Enjoyment of the lake

Over 4,500 respondents provided responses to this open-ended question, totalling over 58,500 words. Comments were categorized by major theme; the chart below shows the volume of comments in each theme.



In a few words, what contributes most to your enjoyment of the lakes?
(All respondents with non-responses removed n=4,535)

Peace and quiet – in their own words

Peace and quiet, swimming, sounds of nature. I limit the use of my lake property to shoulder seasons and late August when there are fewer boats.

Peace and quiet. Cottagers who understand noise carries over water and therefore make every effort to manage their noise (boats, people, music).

Peace and quiet in the morning, swimming with my grandkids, being at the cottage after Labour Day.

A peaceful environment that everyone can enjoy without boats driving by blasting music with people yelling and screaming.

It was once upon a time where a quiet cup of coffee on the dock on a Sunday morning was bliss. Unfortunately, its now disturbed... The amount of pollution from the 2 cycle engines, noise and danger to wildlife is insane.

Natural beauty and wildlife – in their own words

Paddling quietly on the lake and seeing the loons and their baby on the back of its parent!

A swim on a summer day. Sitting on the dock enjoying the view and listening/watching for the loons and other wildlife that we coexist with.

Being able to hear and see wildlife - loons, ducks, turtles and birds.

Being able to enjoy the beauty and peace of bring on the water. A feeling of being part of nature when close to the water.

The natural beauty of rocks, trees, birds and wildlife.

Family and friends – in their own words

Being able to spend time with family, enjoying leisurely boat rides, swimming, kayaking and paddle boating.

Enjoying the dock and water activities with family and friends. When guests leave and it becomes quiet and peaceful again!!

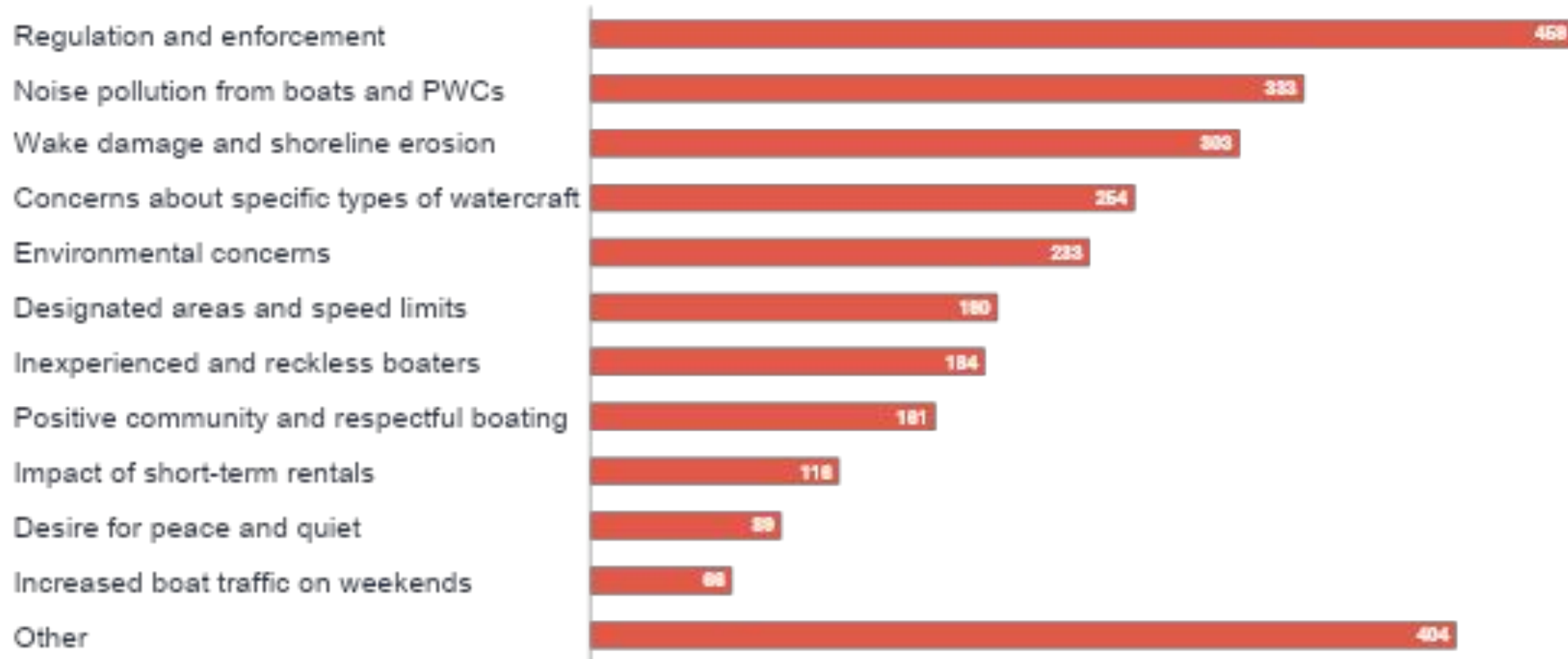
Quiet time on the dock with family.

Enjoying dock, watching wildlife, slow pontoon boat rides, visiting and hosting family and friends on the lake.

Peaceful and fun times dockside with family and friends.

Comments, suggestions, and concerns

Over 2,700 respondents provided responses to this open-ended question, totalling over 100,000 words. Comments were categorized by major theme; the chart below shows the volume of comments in each theme.



Please feel free to add any comments, suggestions or concerns that you may have about life on the lake.
(All respondents with non-responses removed n=2,792)

Regulation and enforcement – in their own words

There's a serious gap in real boating education...
In-class, hands-on courses like those from CanBoat should be the standard.

Boats are speeding and blaring music near our shore. There is never any enforcement in our area.

Motors should be subject to strict limits on size, or banned altogether, on lakes or parts of lakes where they cause damage and unreasonable disruption or safety risks to people and wildlife.

Education programs are far less effective than enforcement of regulations.

Laws and regulations have not kept up with boat sizes, speeds and sports. There are never police in Muskoka and nothing is really enforced.

Noise pollution – in their own words

More than anything else, we must ban the use of loud and speeding power boats... The worst of them feature noise levels and speed that border on obscene.

Speed boats with super loud exhaust. The police are on the lake often but don't do anything about the noise or speed of these boats.

#1 issue for me is loud boats – through hull exhaust, high RPM speed boats and PWCs.

Surfing should be done in the middle of the lake not in bays, they shouldn't be allowed to play loud music, and above water exhaust should not be allowed on our lakes.

The SOUND of the cigar boats is terrible... There are so many now and they travel in packs so the sound is unbearable.

Wake damage and shoreline erosion – in their own words

The dramatic increase in wake surfing has had a very negative impact on shorelines, waterfowl, fish habitat, properties, and enjoyment by swimmers and non-motorized watercraft.

Our part of the lake is narrow and the shoreline is suffering irreparable erosion due to damage by wake boats.

Large loud wakeboard boats making huge waves close to shorelines in shallow/small bays.

We've spent \$3000 to reinforce our shoreline undercut by wakeboats. They've tipped my kayak, washed furniture off dock. The speed limits are of no use protecting our narrow channel.

The wake boats on our lake are always in front of our island and we are losing precious soil.

Concerns about specific watercraft – in their own words

Our biggest concern is personal watercraft speeding next to swimming areas. Perhaps more education? Bigger fines? Is there a stunt driving charge for PWCs like there is for driving cars at excessive speeds?

It is the seadoos that give me the greatest concern. They are typically loud and often in packs and they swerve back and forth to cross waves making it confusing for other boaters.

Newer watercraft designed to produce enhanced wakes and personal watercraft (i.e. jet skis) both significantly degrade lake enjoyment.

My biggest concern is with jet skis and tubers as they stay out for considerable time and travel in random, unpredictable patterns.

Boats move through our lake, yet jet skis buzz incessantly like annoying flies in one spot trying to jump their own wake for thrills. It's very unpleasant for everyone else.

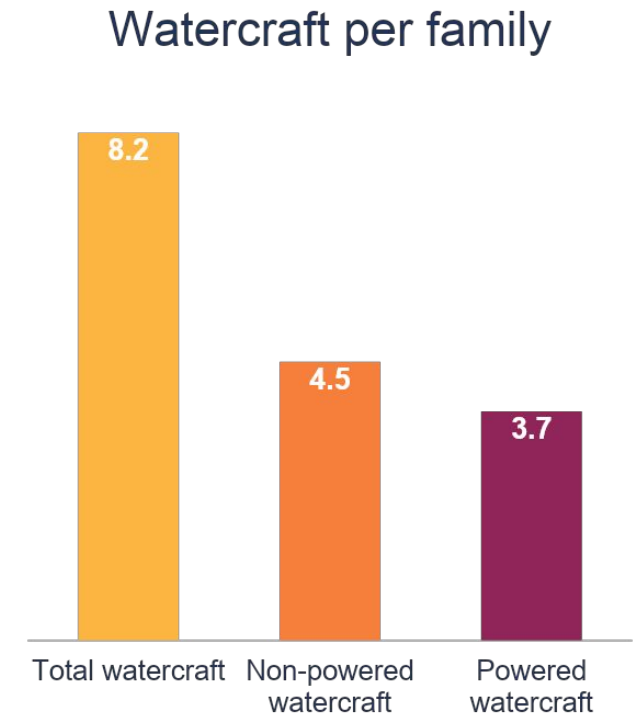
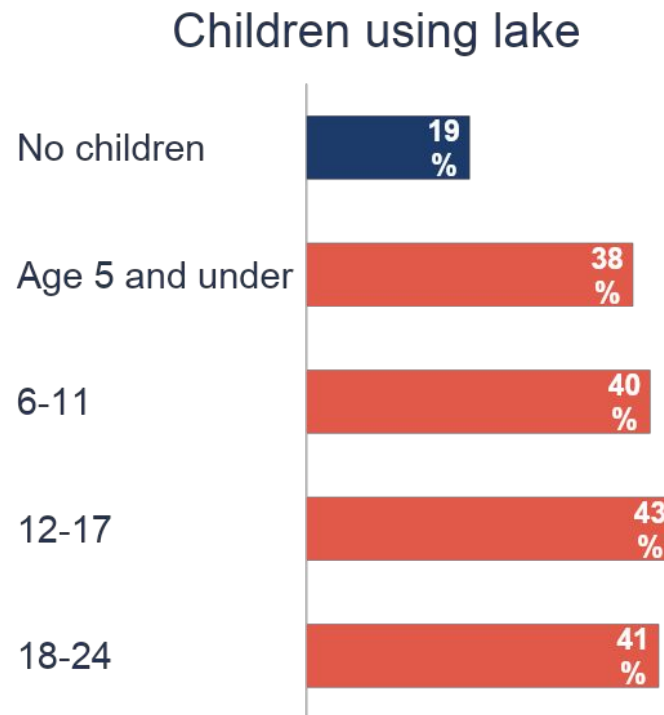
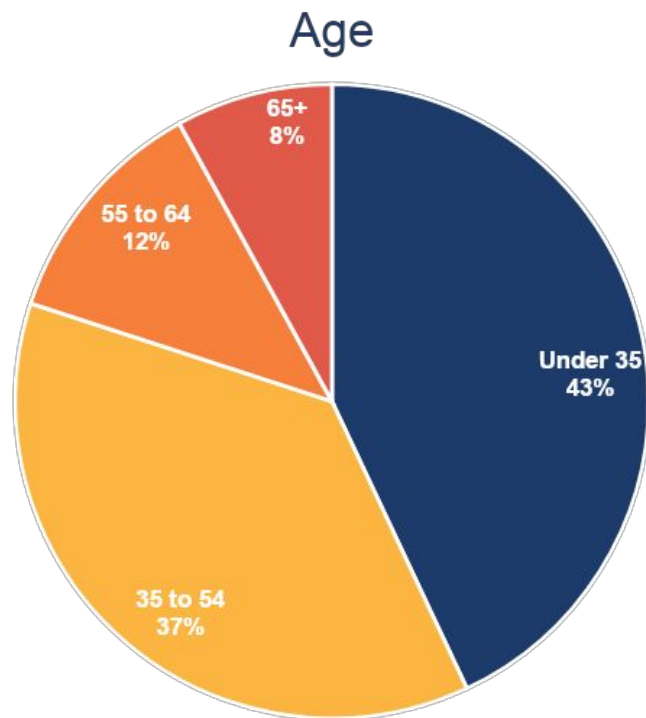
Power boat enthusiasts

Power boat enthusiasts

- A segment of lake users called “power boat enthusiasts” was identified based on two attitude questions. Power boat users agree that they like power boat activities AND they like a lake with lots of boating activity. This segment makes up 10% of respondents in this survey.
- Power boat enthusiasts are quite young, relative to other survey respondents; just 20% of them are older than 55 (compared to 81% in the survey overall).
- They are also more likely to share the lake with young people (81% of power boat enthusiasts, compared to 70% within the survey overall).
- This segment also reports higher use of both powered (3.7 per family, compared to 2.1 overall) and non-powered watercraft (4.5 compared to 4.2 overall).
- Lake users in this segment have very different views when it comes to the impact of boating activity on the lake. They place lower priority on preservation, they minimize the impact of boating on lake ecology and other people, and they are not in favour of measures to reduce the impact of enhanced wake activities.

Power boat enthusiasts - Profile

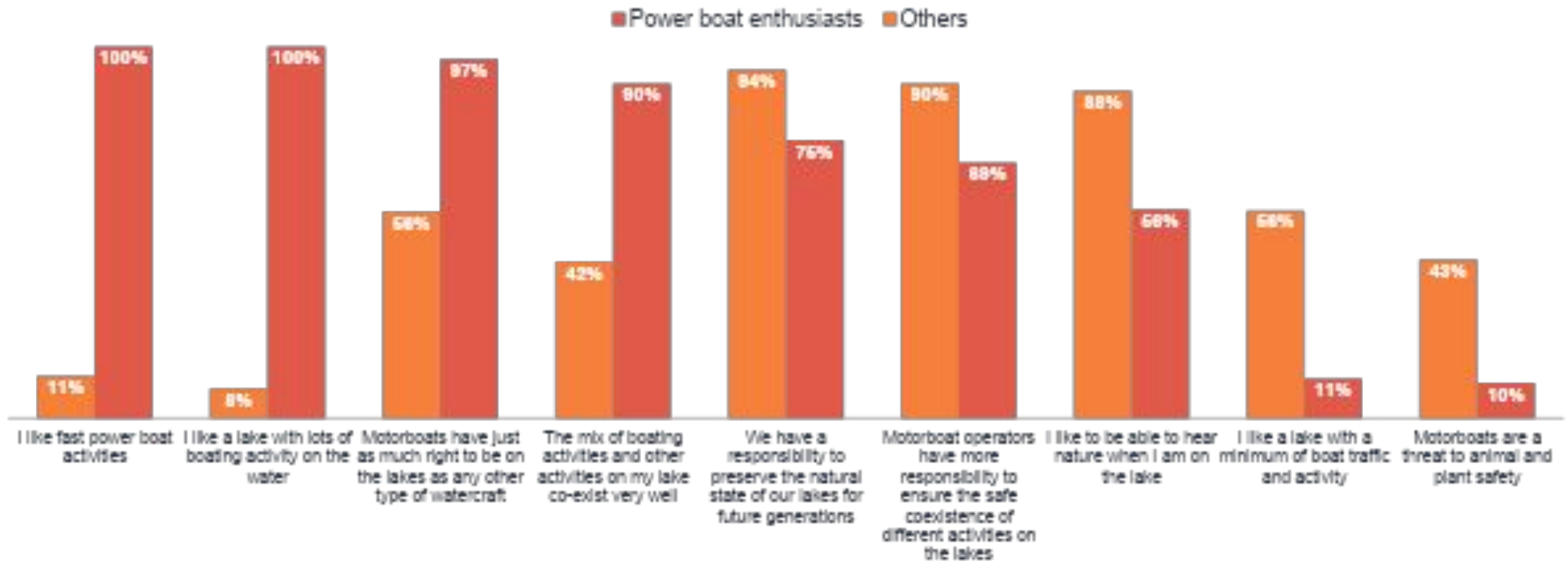
Lake users in this segment are markedly younger, more likely to share the lake with children and youth, and they use more powered and non-powered watercraft than others.



What is your age group? Are there children or young adults sharing the space on the lake with you on a regular basis? Please indicate the number of operational boats that your family will use this year.

Responsibility consensus

Powerboat enthusiasts are those who agree that they like fast power boat activities AND that they like a lake with lots of boating activity. Attitudes within this group, which constitutes 10% of lake users, are markedly different than others; they minimize the impact of boating and feel less responsibility toward lake preservation.

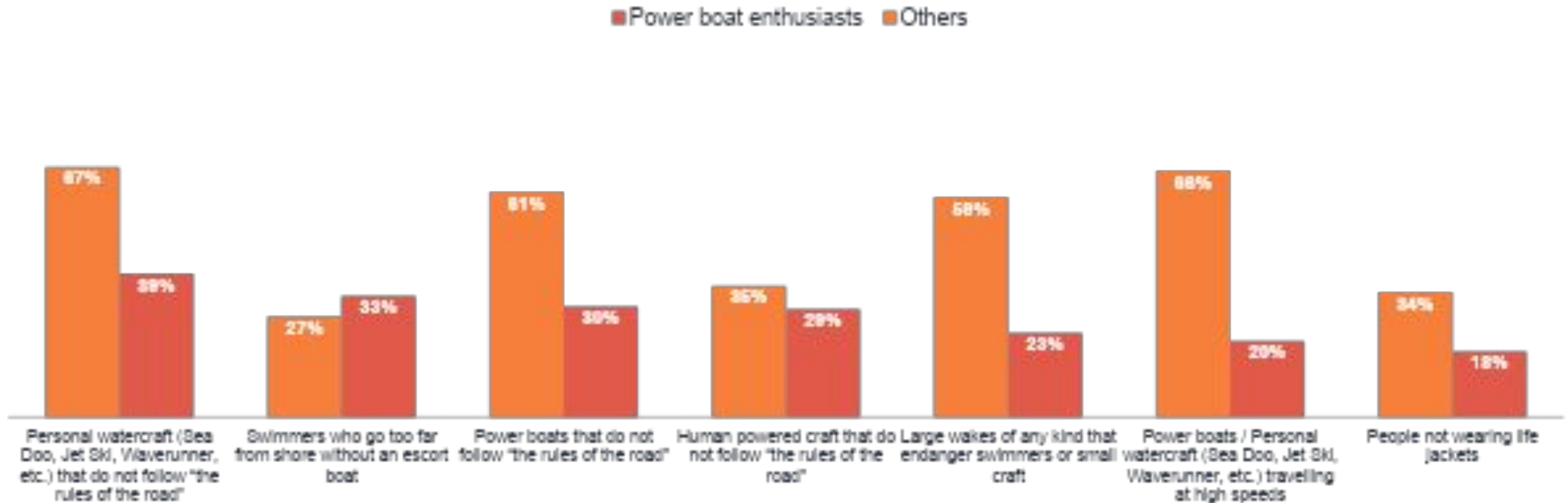


To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (Power boat enthusiasts n=639 with non-responses removed)

*Note that wording for this item changed in 2025.

Impact of elements on safety

Power boat enthusiasts are much less likely than others to agree that PWCs or power boats affect safety on the water; they are notably more likely to say that swimmers far from shore affect safety.

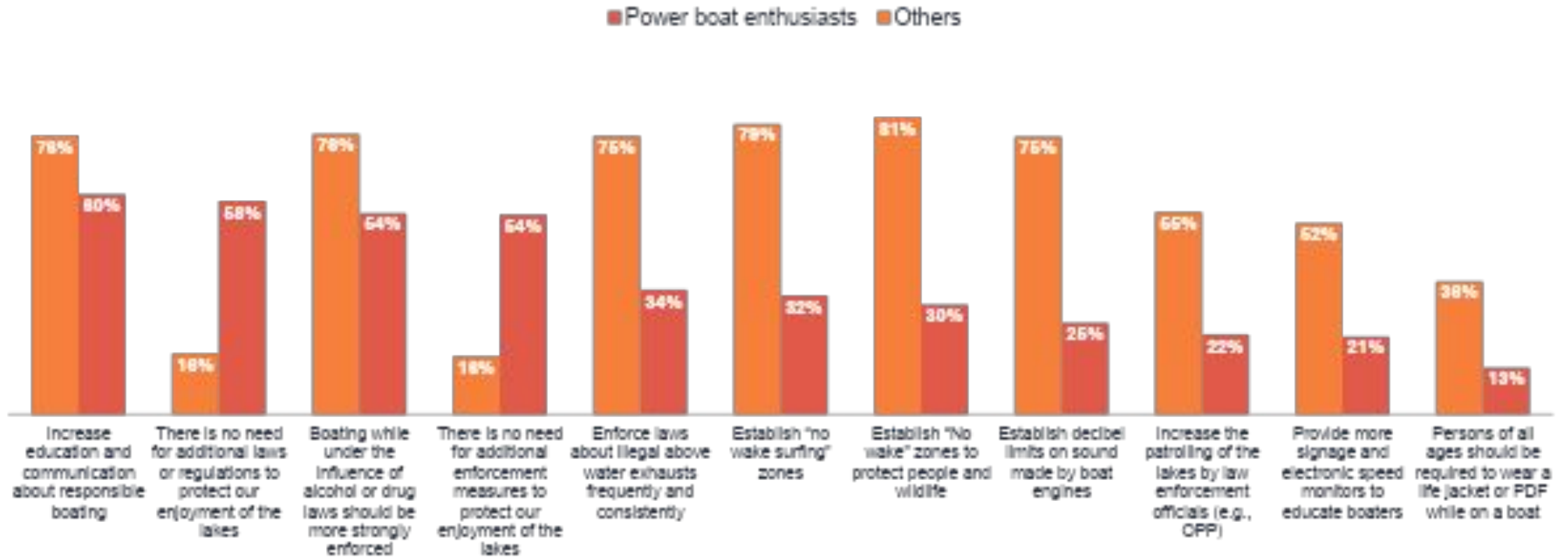


Do these elements affect safety on the water in your area? (Power boat enthusiasts n=639 with non-responses removed)



Solutions to manage enhanced wakes

Power boat enthusiasts have starkly different views toward enhanced wake solutions; most see no need for additional laws and enforcement.



Which of the following solutions do you think would be most effective in managing enhanced wakes? (Select up to three)
(Power boat enthusiasts n=639 with non-responses removed)

Insights

Insights (page 1 of 2)

- The responsibility consensus is a powerful finding and a huge positive for the lake communities to build on. There is strong general agreement on the problems, who is responsible, and majority agreement on many of the solutions.
- There is a strong consensus among 90% of the respondents who do not classify as “power boating enthusiasts” that the lakes are for mixed use (different activities on the water). Mixed use requires respect, adherence to norms, and accommodation of others.
- The 10% of lake users who constitute power boating enthusiasts hold radically different views from the consensus on enforcement, regulation and perception of risk.
- There is broad consistency in the joys and concerns across lakes and regions.
- Wakes are clearly an issue that is growing, and while very few people believe that “do nothing” is the right answer, most are open to collaborative solutions that would allow all types of lake users to continue the activities they enjoy while minimizing conflict.

Insights (page 2 of 2)

- The diversity of off topic responses in the “other” category in the “other comments” question is an indication that people aren’t getting satisfaction through other communication channels on issues like development, lighting, fireworks, aircraft, campfires etc. Nothing to do for SQL.
- There is still strong concern about noise, so people still expect Safe Quiet Lakes to continue advocating and communicating on that issue.
- Renters are considered to be a problem by many commenters and need to be a priority for education.
- In the midst of all the sameness, there is also change. Paddle boarding is now nearly as popular as canoeing, and wake surfing that barely registered in earlier surveys is a top concern. New technologies only represent 1% of boating (foils and jetboards) today but the community needs to stay alert to their growth because there is a delicate usage balance on the lakes.
- The 160,000 words in the comments is about twice the length of the average novel - a resounding indication of the passion respondents feel about the time they spend on the lakes.

For more information about this report, contact:

Allan Gregg
Principal

allan@earnscliffe.ca

Greg Wilkinson
Principal

greg@earnscliffe.ca

Stephanie Enns-Coulter
Senior Consultant

scoulter@earnscliffe.ca