

State Forest Resource Planning Programs in the Northeastern United States

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State Forest Resource Planning Activities in the Northeast Area

- *Research Funding:*
 - NFRPA (through NE S&PF)
 - University of Minnesota

- *Project Oversight:*
 - NFRPA Steering Committee
 - Connie Carpenter: USDA-Forest Service

Questionnaire on Planning Activities Undertaken by State Forestry Agencies

The University of Minnesota's Department of Forest Resources is assisting the Northeast Forest Resources Planning Association in conducting a study of the types and extent of planning being undertaken by state forestry agencies. To do so, we are asking each state to complete this questionnaire. The questionnaire, which requests information and opinions on forest resource planning activities, should be completed by the person who has lead responsibility for coordinating forest resource planning within your agency. Responses to questions asking for opinions and perceptions should be those of the individual filling out the questionnaire.

For purposes of completing this questionnaire, the term "agency" means the state's administrative unit with lead responsibility for forestry matters in the state (i.e., forestry division). If this unit is part of a larger natural resources organization (e.g., a forestry division within a department of natural resources), the responses provided should describe the forestry unit's planning responsibilities, not those of the state's natural resources agency. Definitions of different types of planning are included at the end of the survey to assist you in completing the questionnaire.

I. Types of Planning the Lead Agency is Responsible for Undertaking

1. Indicate the different types of planning efforts affecting the state's forest resources that your agency has lead responsibility for undertaking. (Check all that apply).
 - _____ Comprehensive statewide forest resource planning (all resources)
 - _____ Planning for the management of state-administered forest lands
 - _____ Planning focused on select topics, issues, or activities
 - _____ Land use planning
 - _____ Operational agency work planning (e.g., annual, biennial)
 - _____ Other _____
2. For each type of planning your agency has lead responsibility for undertaking, indicate the percentage of your agency's total planning effort devoted to each.
 - _____ **8. Total**
 - _____ Comprehensive statewide forest resource planning
 - _____ Planning for the management of state-administered forest lands
 - _____ Planning focused on select topics, issues, or activities
 - _____ Land use planning
 - _____ Operational agency work planning
 - _____ Other forest resource planning

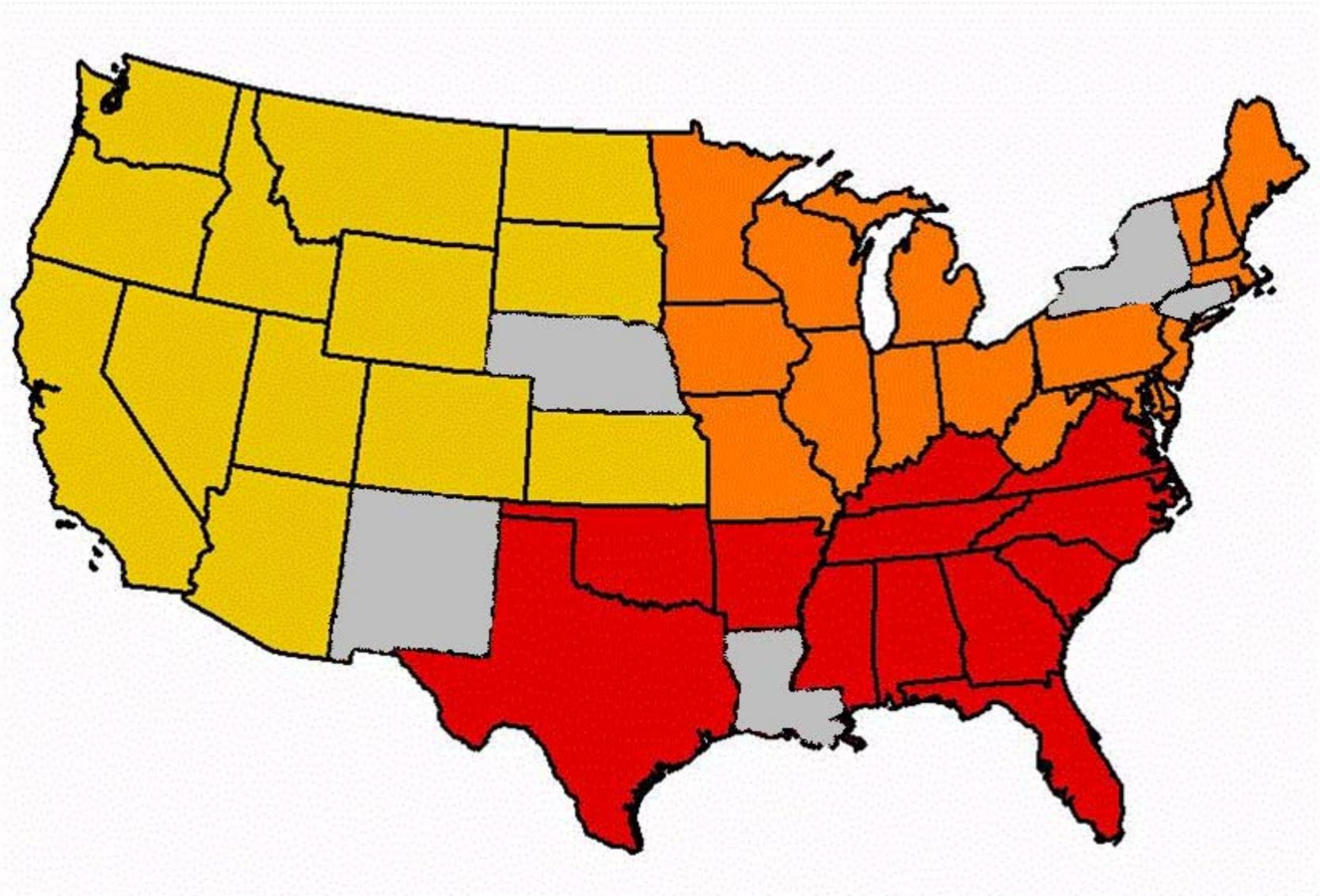
II. Comprehensive Statewide Forest Resource Planning Activities

In this section, we would like you to provide information about your agency's efforts to conduct comprehensive statewide forest resource planning.

3. In what year was the first comprehensive statewide forest resource plan completed? _____
4. How many comprehensive statewide forest resource plans have been prepared since preparation of the original plan? _____
5. In what year was the most recent comprehensive statewide forest resource plan completed (updated)? _____

Survey Administration

- **Survey Review / Pretest: NFRPA Steering Cmte**
- **Study Coverage: Entire U.S.**
- **Survey Recipients:**
 - *Northeast Area*: state forest resource planners
 - *Other states*: planners, state forester, state land management supervisor
- **Questionnaire mailed Spring 2003**
- **Survey administration -- Dillman (2000)**



Survey Response

– Forest Land Area Represented –

	Northeast Region	All States
All Forest Land	92%	93%
State-Administered Forest Land	87%	92%

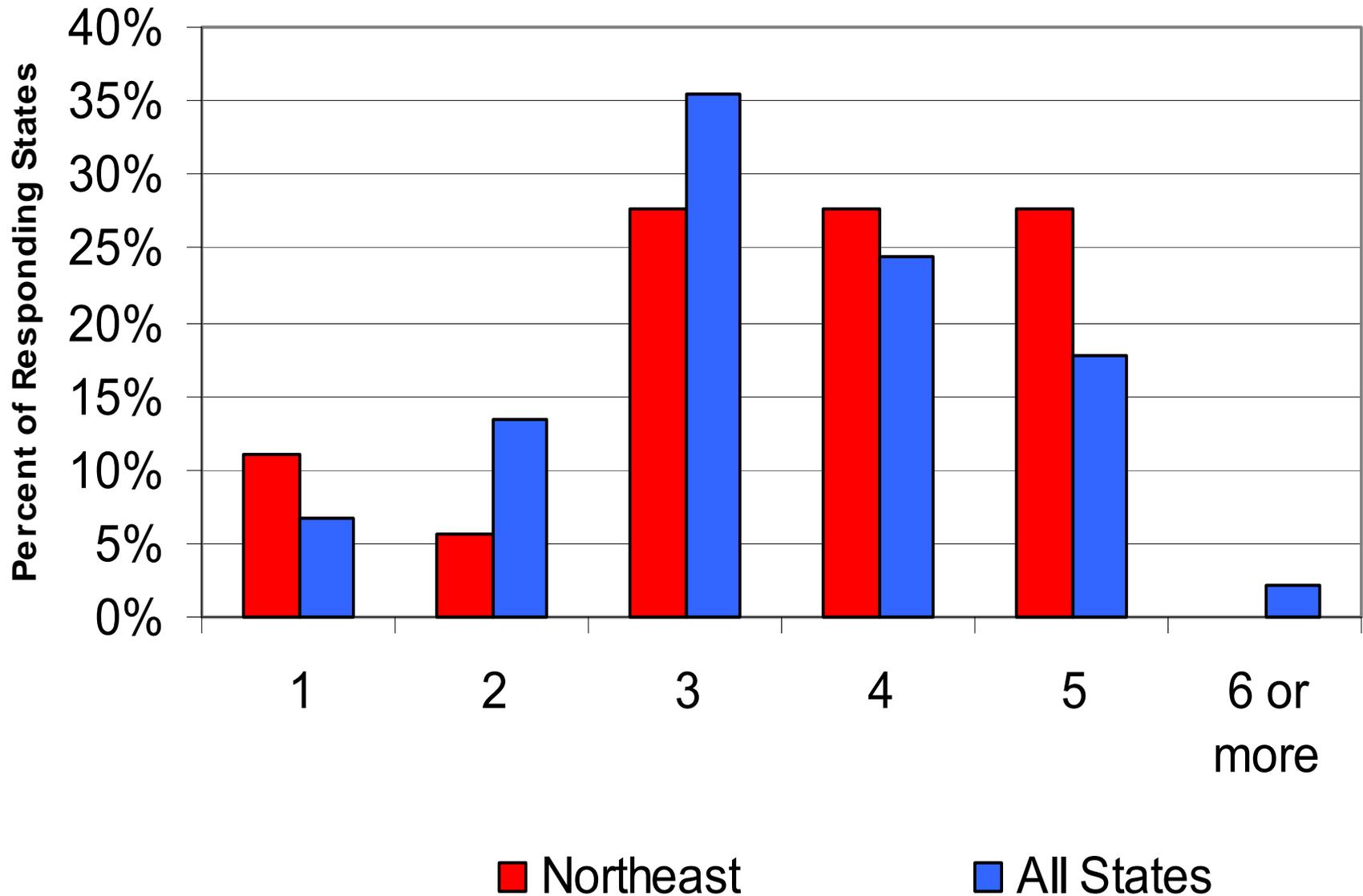
Presentation / Report Focus

- **Focus on state forest resource planning activities in the 20 northeast states.**
- **Where important differences exist, NE results are contrasted with national results.**

Scope and Influence of Planning

In 2003, state forestry agencies averaged 3 - 4 different planning processes they had lead responsibility for undertaking.

Number of Different Planning Activities



Types of Planning Undertaken

- **Planning for the management of state-administered forests (83 percent)**
- **Comprehensive statewide forest resource planning (78 percent)**
- **Issue-specific planning (78 percent)**
- **Agency work planning (72 percent)**
- **Land use planning (28 percent)**

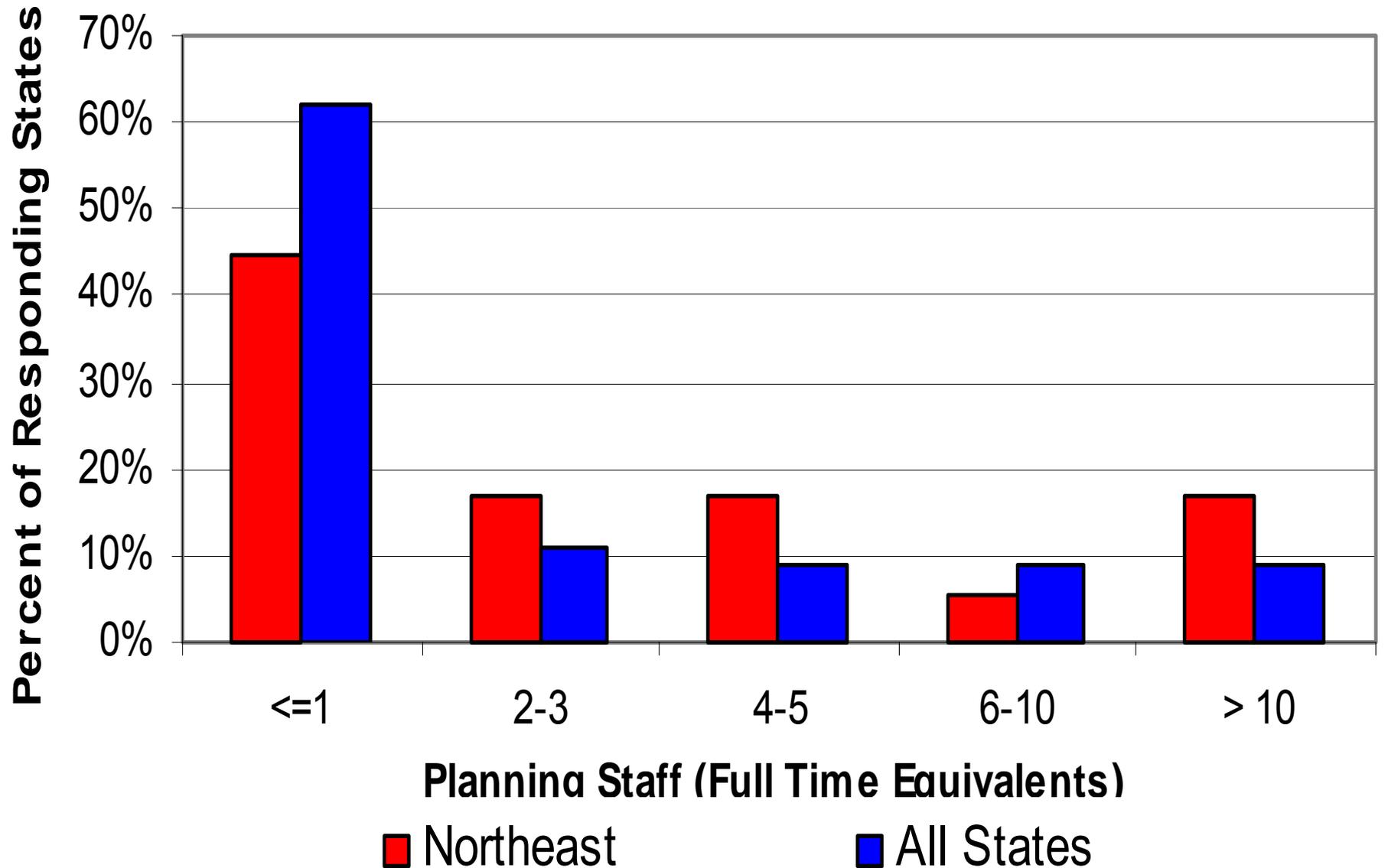
Planning of Other State Agencies

- **Other state agencies can have a substantial impact on the state's forest resources.**
- **State forest resource planners regularly participate in many of these activities.**
- **Other planning efforts with greatest impact:**
 - 1) fish and game**
 - 2) economic development**
 - 3) water and soil resource conservation**

Planning Resources

- **States had an average of 4.4 full time equivalents (FTE) devoted to planning in 2003.**
- **Staff resources were nearly 3 times the level of staff resources available for planning 20 years ago.**
- **Some states had as many as 30 FTEs.**

Planning Staff Resources: 2003

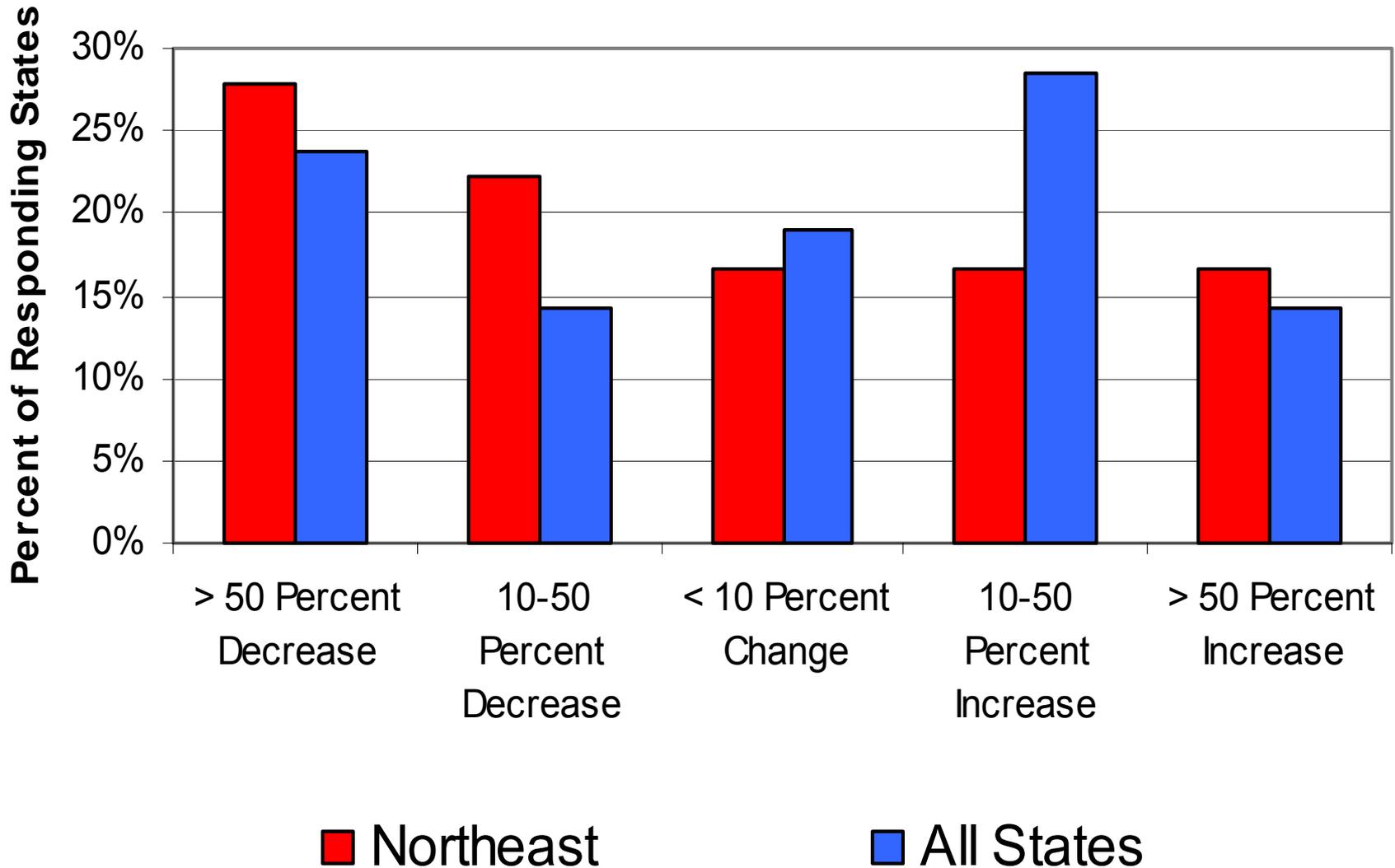


Changes in Planning Resources

- **Half of all states have lost at least 10 percent of the planning capacity over the last decade.**
- **One-third of the state forestry agencies have seen their planning capacity increase by at least 10 percent over this same period**
- **17 percent have staff resources for planning change less than 10 percent.**

Planning Staff Resource Changes

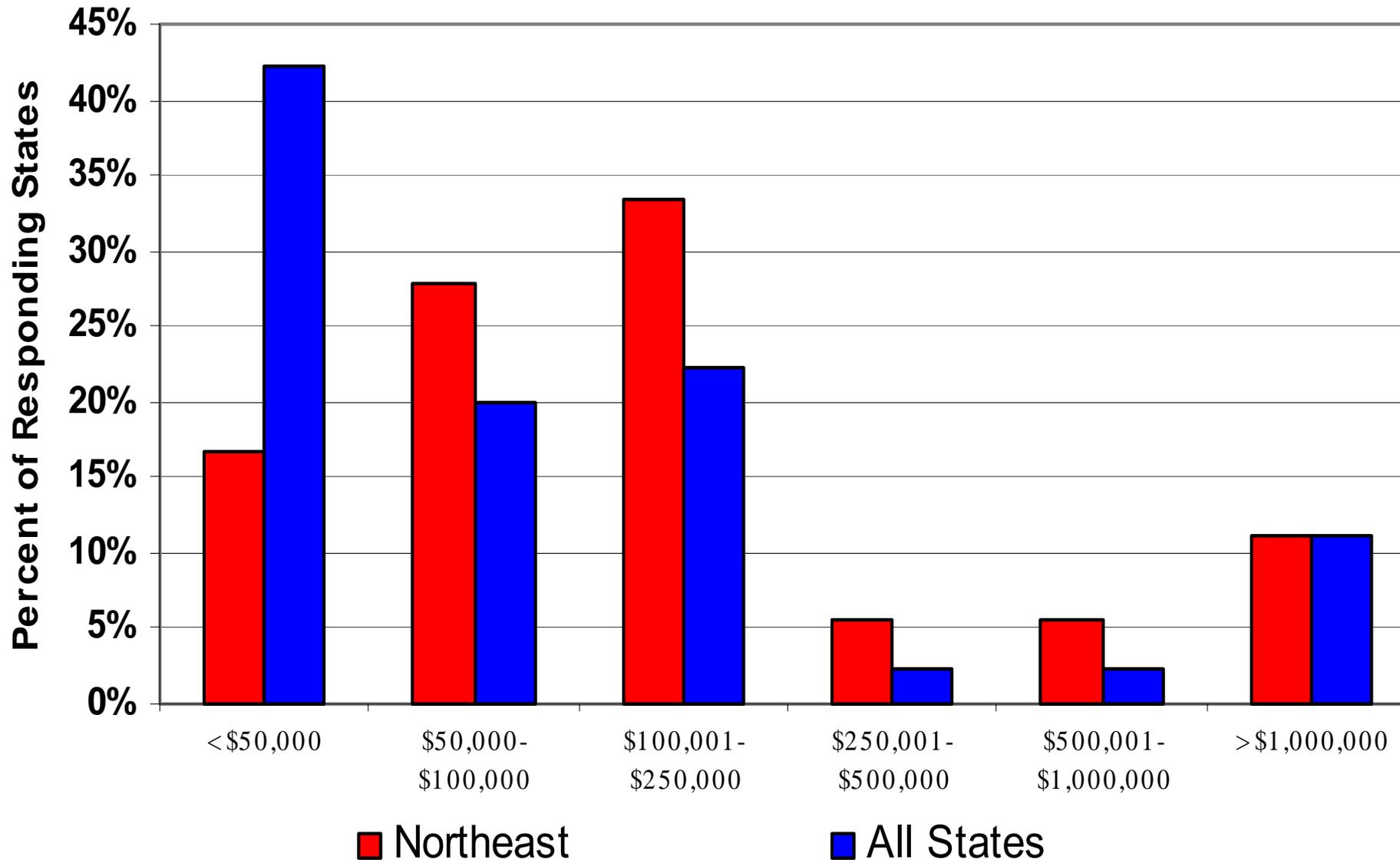
-- Last 10 Years --



Planning Budgets

- **States spent, on average, \$433,000 per year to support state forest resource planning activities in 2003.**
- **This represents greater than a ten-fold increase in planning budgets over those that existed nearly 20 years ago.**
- **The majority of state forestry planning budgets are less than \$250,000 per year.**

Planning Budgets: 2003



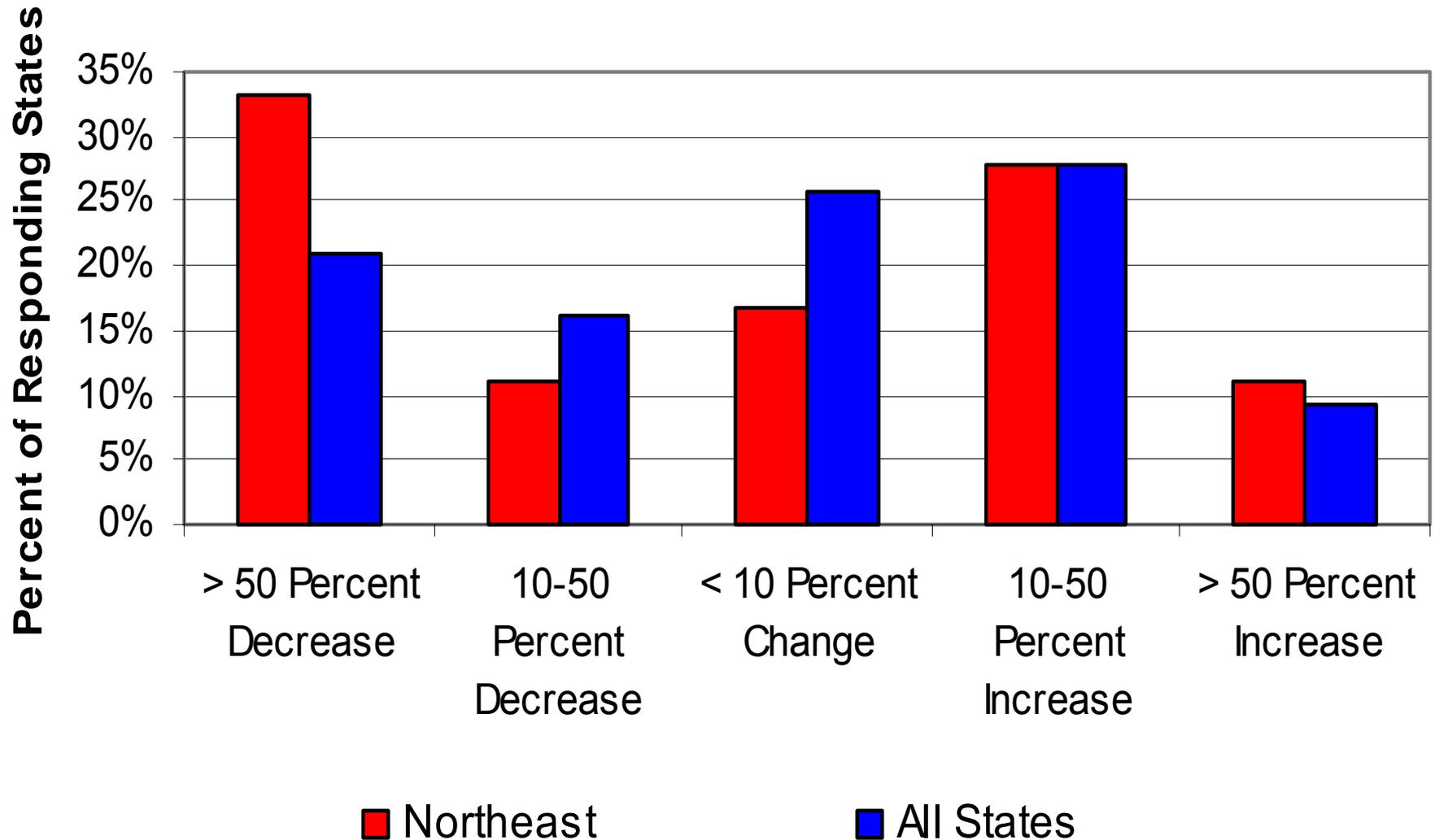
Planning Budget Trends

Over the Past Decade:

- Nearly half (44 percent) of forestry planning budgets have shrunk by at least 10 percent.
- One-third of state planning budgets have declined by more than 50 percent.
- Thirty-nine percent have seen planning budgets increase by at least 10 percent.
- Eleven percent saw their planning budgets increase by more than 50 percent.

Planning Budget Changes

-- Last 10 Years --



Comprehensive Statewide Forest Resource Planning – Defined –

A systematic examination of important trends and strategic issues that considers all forest resources within the state, regardless of ownership.

Comprehensive Statewide Planning

- **The majority of all comprehensive statewide forest resource plans are less than 10 years old.**
- **One-third of the states reported having only a single-generation plan**
- **Some states have prepared as many as 5 comprehensive plans.**

Latest Comp. Plan Prepared

Year Of Most Recent Plan	Northeast Region		All States	
	Freq	%	Freq	%
1980-1984	2	13	4	13
1985-1989	2	13	4	13
1990-1994	3	19	9	29
1995-2000	7	44	9	29
2000-2003	2	13	5	16
Total	16	100	31	100

Number of Comp. Plans Prepared

Number of plans prepared	Northeast Region		All States	
	Freq	%	Freq	%
One	4	33	9	39
Two	3	25	4	17
Three	2	17	5	22
Four	0	N/A	0	N/A
Five or more	3	25	5	22
Total	12	100	23	100

Reasons for Comp. Planning

- **States cited a number of reasons why comprehensive planning is undertaken.**
- **Most common reason: a long-term vision of direction for the management of the state's forest resources can be articulated.**

Comprehensive Plan Format

- Largely issue-driven planning processes.
(3/4 of states follow this format)
- Two-thirds of the states continue to use a plan format that includes separate resource assessment and program plans.

Comprehensive Statewide Planning

-- Economic, Ecological, Social Aspects --

- **Greatest attention: ecological aspects:**
 - **Ecosystem health**
 - **Species diversity**
 - **Wildlife habitat**
- **Moderate attention: Wood products**
- **Least attention:**
 - **Tourism and recreational**
 - **Non-wood products**
 - **Social aspects**

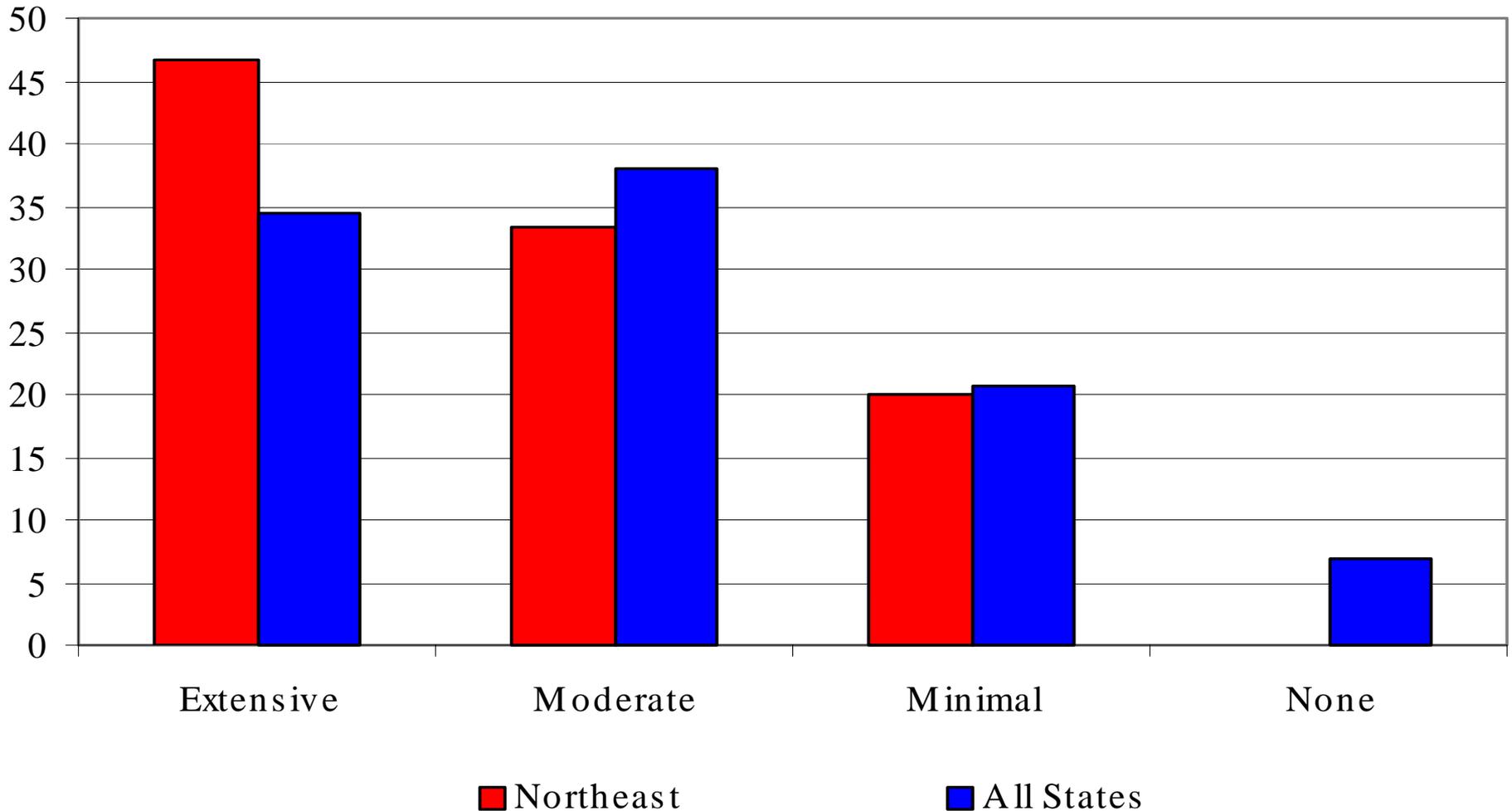
Comp Plans: Consideration of Economic, Ecological, & Social Aspects

	Northeast Region (n=18)		All States (n=45)	
	Mean ¹	S.D.	Mean ¹	S.D.
<i>Economic considerations:</i>				
Wood products manufacturing	2.0	0.5	2.0	0.7
Recreation and tourism	2.3	0.6	2.4	0.6
Non-wood forest products	2.7	0.8	2.8	0.8
<i>Ecological considerations:</i>				
Ecosystem/ species diversity	1.6	0.6	1.8	0.8
Forest ecosystem health	1.6	0.6	1.7	0.7
Wildlife habitat	1.8	0.6	1.8	0.5
Soil and water resources	2.2	0.7	2.0	0.7
<i>Social considerations:</i>				
Consumption patterns/trends	2.4	0.7	2.4	0.8
Cultural uses and values	2.4	0.8	2.4	0.9
Community stab/quality of life	2.5	0.7	2.4	0.9

Public Input: Comp. Planning

- **Nearly half of the states describe their effort at seeking the public's input as extensive.**
- **Many different public input methods used.**
- **Public meetings and open houses are the most common – 86 percent use this method.**

Public Involvement Sought: Comprehensive Plans



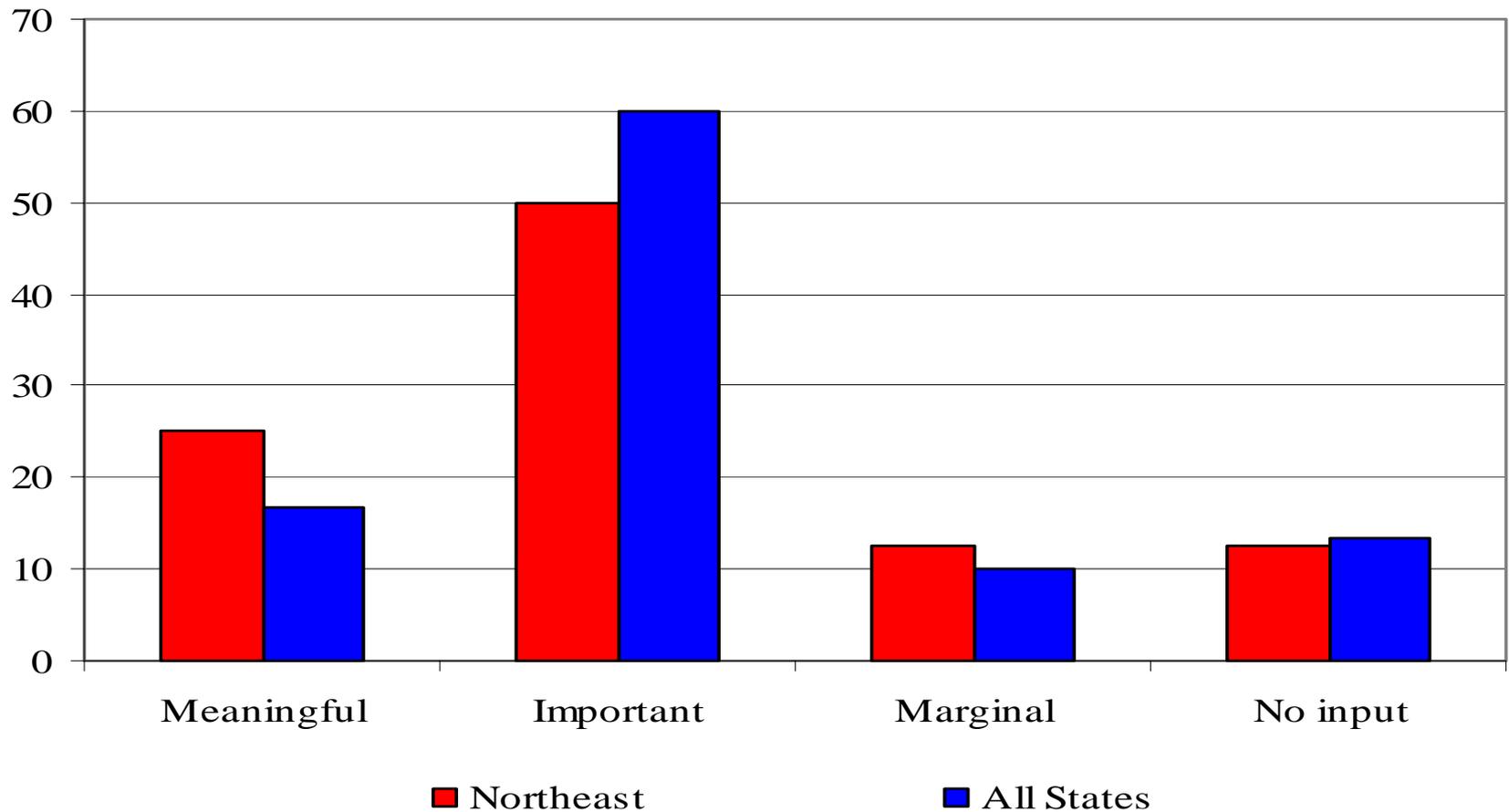
Public Involvement Strategies: Comprehensive Planning

	Northeast Region (n=14)		All States (n=29)	
	Freq	Percent	Freq	Percent
Meetings/open houses	12	86	22	76
Comment period	11	79	20	69
Ongoing public input	8	57	17	59
Mailings	7	50	12	41
Public opinion surveys	7	50	8	28
Web-based input	5	36	8	28
Media campaigns	3	21	4	14
Other	3	21	6	21

Public Input Quality: Comp. Planning

- The quality of input provided is often quite variable.
- States that aggressively sought out the public's involvement in the development of their comprehensive plan often found the quality of the public's input to be quite good.
- Minimal effort often resulted in poor quality input from the public.

Quality of Public Input Received: Comprehensive Planning



Agency Staff Involvement: Comprehensive Planning

- **Comprehensive statewide planning is typically undertaken with significant involvement of the agency's field staff.**
- **Within the agency, wildlife interests were the most engaged.**

Agency Involvement: Comprehensive Planning

1=extensively involved, 2=moderately involved,
3=minimally involved, 4=not involved

	Northeast Region (n=18)		All States (n=45)	
	Mean ¹	S.D.	Mean ¹	S.D.
Wildlife	1.9	0.6	1.8	0.7
Fisheries	2.2	0.8	2.4	0.9
Parks/rec	2.3	0.8	2.4	0.9
Water mgmt	2.4	0.9	2.2	1.0
Ecol Service	2.5	1.1	2.2	1.1
Minerals	2.9	1.1	3.2	0.9

Stakeholder Involvement: Comprehensive Planning

- Fish and game and water and soil resources are state agencies most involved in forest resource planning.**
- Forest Service was the only federal agency engaged in comprehensive plan development.**
- Conservation, environmental, and forest products were the most involved constituent groups.**

Stakeholder Involvement: Comp. Planning

1=extensively involved, 2=moderately involved,
3=minimally involved, 4=not involved

	Northeast Region (n=18)		All States (n=45)	
	Mean ¹	S.D.	Mean ¹	S.D.
Conservation organizations	1.8	0.7	1.8	0.8
Environmental organizations	1.8	0.8	1.9	1.0
Forest products industry	1.9	1.0	1.8	1.0
Forest landowner association	2.0	0.9	1.9	0.9
Timber producers	2.0	0.9	2.0	0.9
Outdoor recreation groups	2.4	0.9	2.6	0.9
Tribal groups	3.4	1.1	3.1	1.1

Updating Comprehensive Plan

- **Nearly 6 of 10 states are currently updating or plan to update their comprehensive statewide plan.**
- **Updates will be completed by 2006.**
- **Of those states not intending to revise their plan, only 1 was because of the plan's adequacy.**
- **A lack of the necessary human and financial resources was the most common reason cited.**

Comprehensive Planning: Year Next Plan is Completed

	Northeast Region (n=14)		All States (n=29)	
Year Of Next Plan	Freq	Percent	Freq	Percent
2003	1	11	4	22
2004	2	22	4	22
2005	2	22	3	17
2006	4	44	6	33
2007 or later	0	N/A	1	6
Total	9	100	18	100

State Land Management Planning – Defined –

**Plans for the management of
forests administered by state
forestry agencies**

- State forests**
- Trust lands**

State Land Management Plans

- **All but 2 states develop a number of geographically-specific plans, usually along administratively-defined boundaries such as state forests.**
- **30 percent define their plans according to ecological borders.**
- **26 percent have a statewide plan that serves as a context for the development of sub-state plans.**

Basis for Defining Boundaries of State Land Management Plans

	Northeast Region (n=18)		All States (n=45)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Administrative boundaries	15	83	35	78
Ecological boundaries	5	27	11	24
Political boundaries	0	N/A	2	4
Other	3	17	8	18

State Land Management Planning – Plan Format –

- States took, on average, 2 - 3 years to prepare a state land management plan.**
- Plans are largely developed around tactical operations such as inventory, timber harvesting, or silvicultural treatments.**

State Land Management Planning

–Scope –

- Economic and ecological conditions are *moderately to extensively* addressed in state land management plans -- more thoroughly than in comprehensive statewide plans.
- Social considerations are minimally addressed in state land management plans (*less so than in comprehensive plans*)

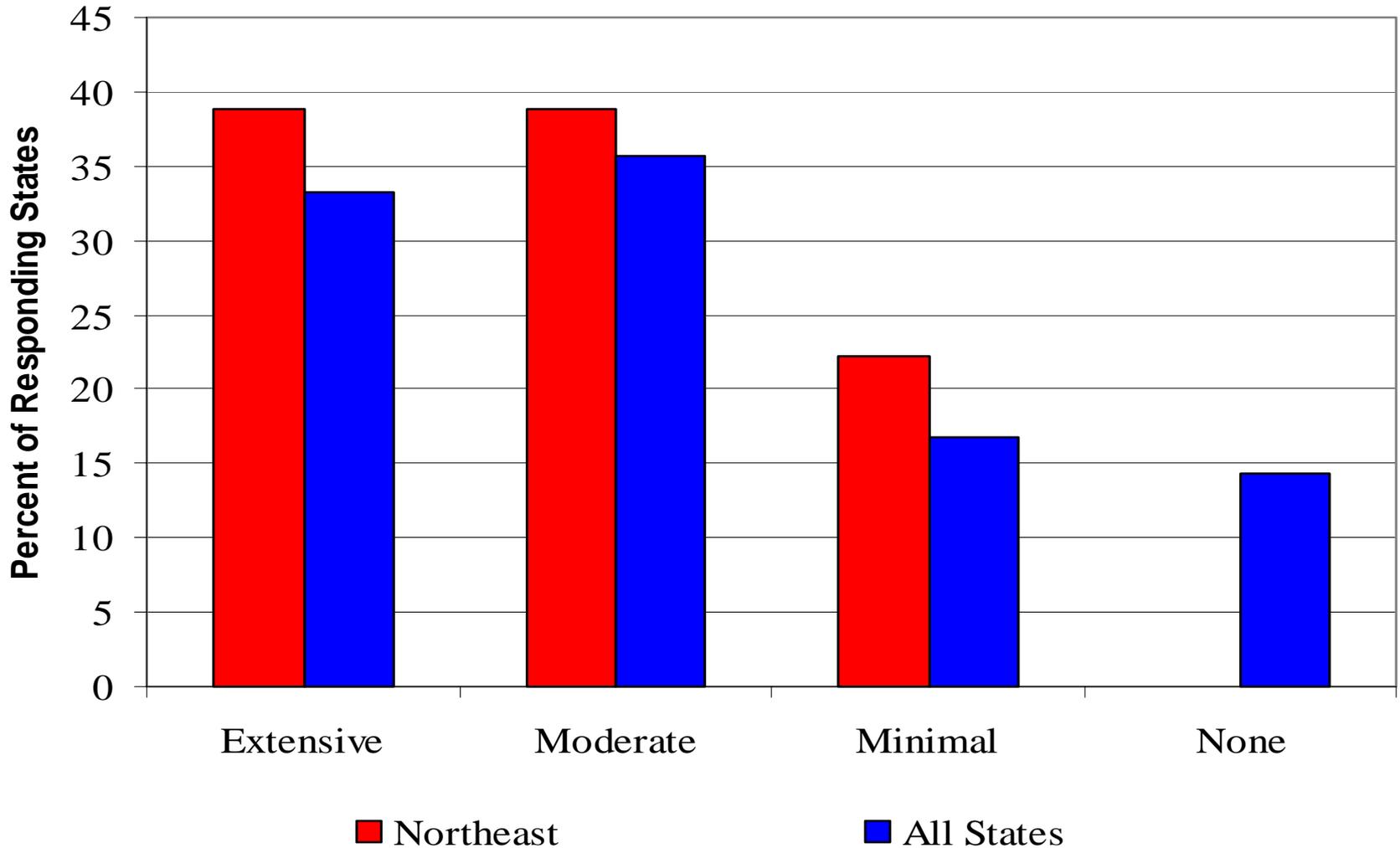
Public Input: State Land Management Planning

- **States often use the same methods for seeking public input in both comprehensive statewide and state land management planning processes.**
- **Formal public review and comment periods are less commonly used as part of state land management planning processes.**

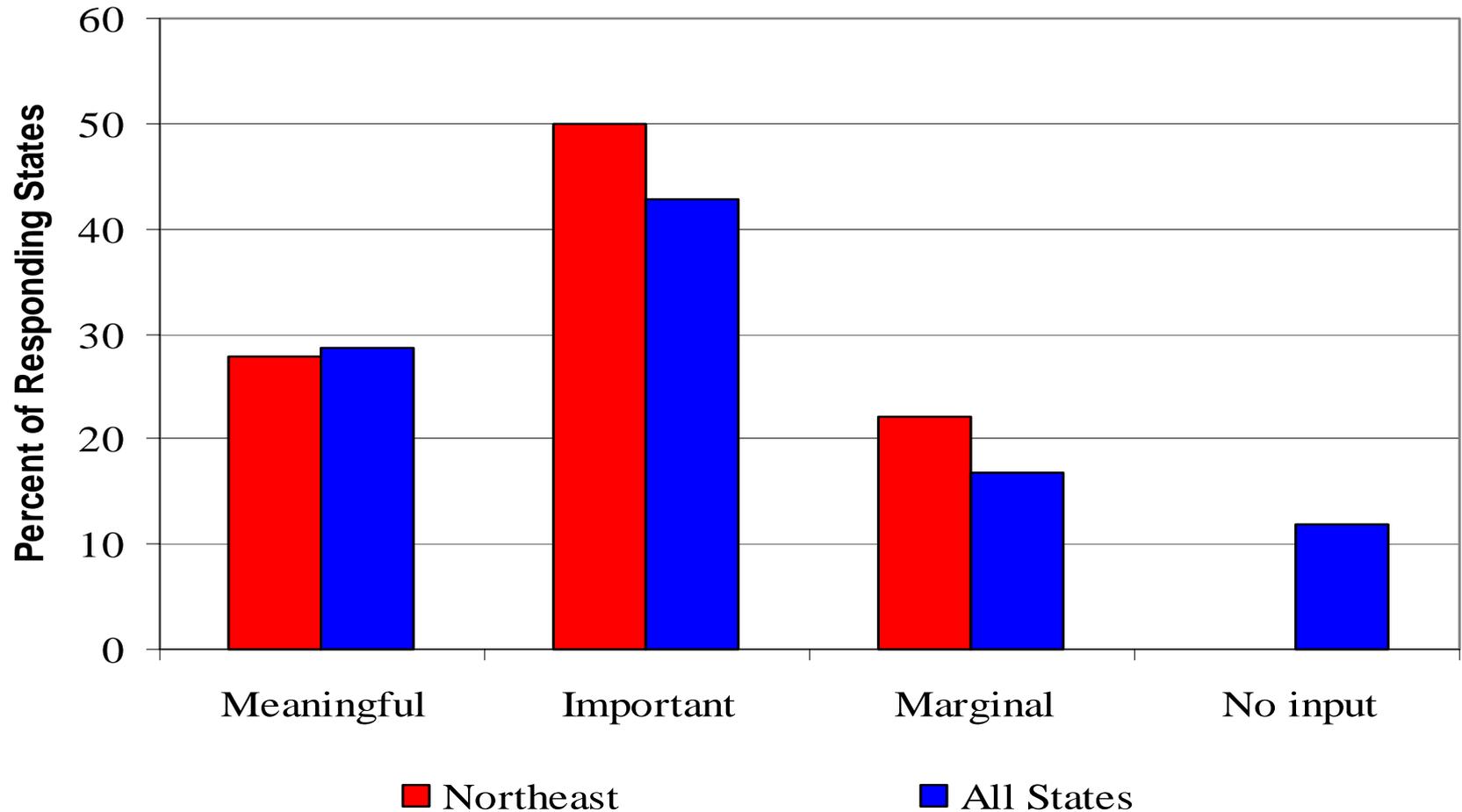
Public Involvement Efforts: State Land Management Planning

- State forestry agency efforts to involve the public in developing state land management plans were very similar to that for comprehensive planning – substantial attempts were made.**
- The return on their investment, as measured by the quality of input, was generally regarded as important.**

Public Involvement Efforts: State Land Management Planning



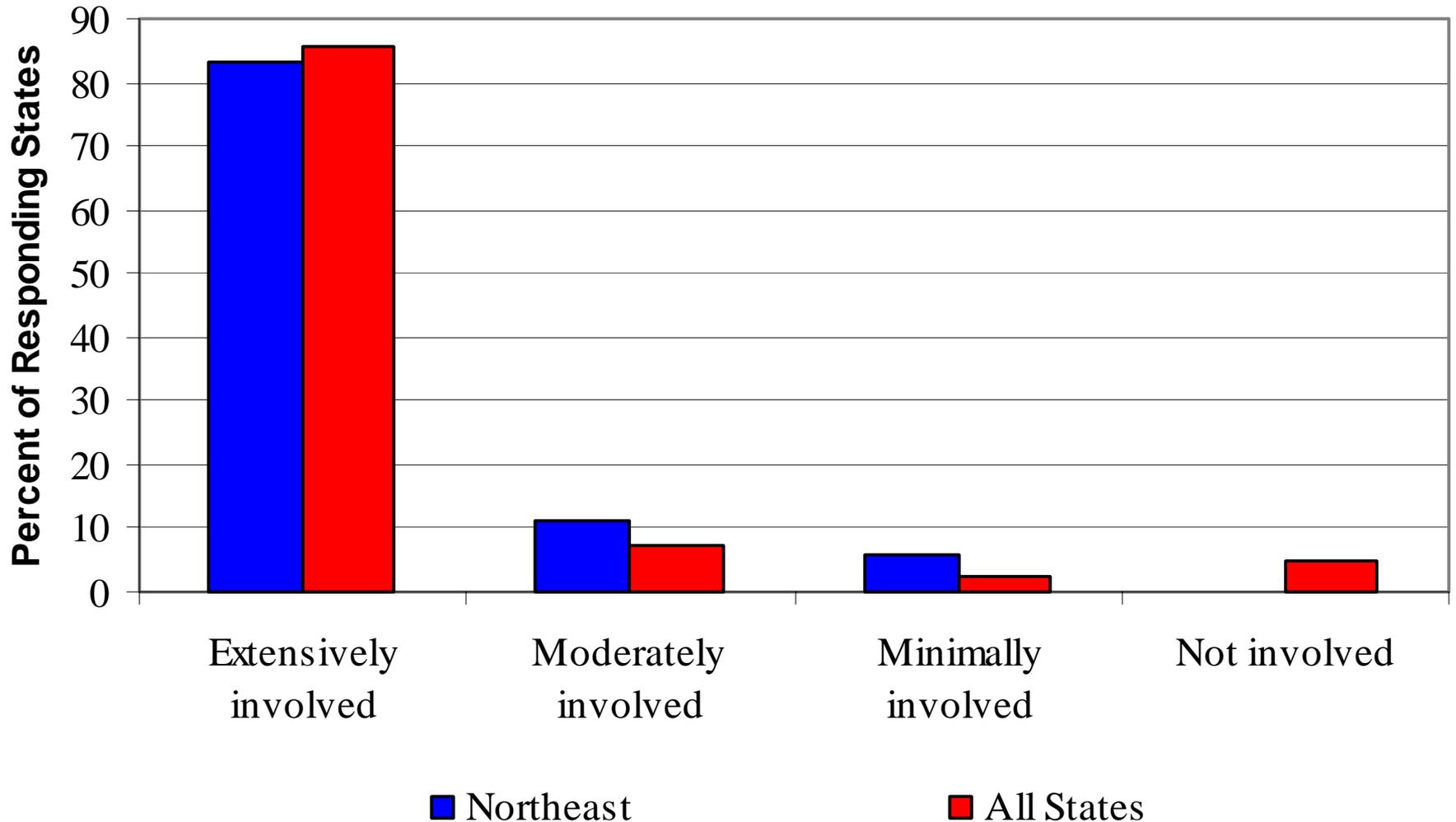
Public Input: State Land Management Planning



Agency Field Staff Involvement: State Forest Land Management Plan

- Agency Field staff were extensively involved in the development of state land management plans**
- Much more so than in comprehensive planning.**

Agency Field Staff Involvement: State Forest Land Management Plan



Stakeholder Involvement: State Land Management Planning

- Wildlife & fisheries had the greatest level of involvement within an agency.**
- All federal agencies (including Forest Service) were minimally involved.**
- Special interest groups were less involved than in comp. statewide plans.**
- Conservation & environmental organizations had the greatest level of involvement.**

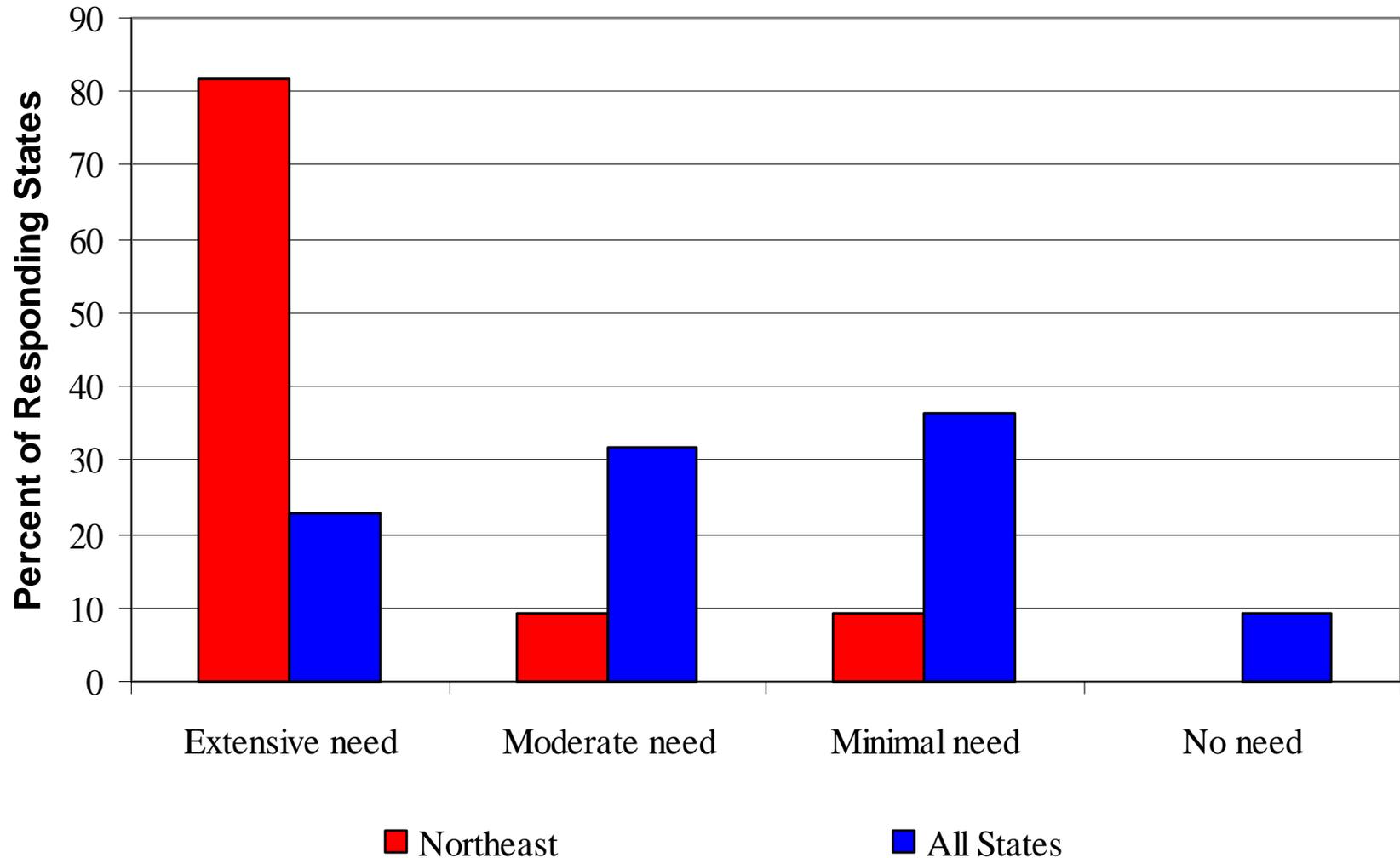
Technology Used in Planning

- Use of technology in planning is common.
- GIS systems were the most important.
- Internet is used for a number of planning purposes -- most common is notifying the public about document availability/upcoming meetings.
- Using the Internet to accept public comments on draft planning documents was least widely used.

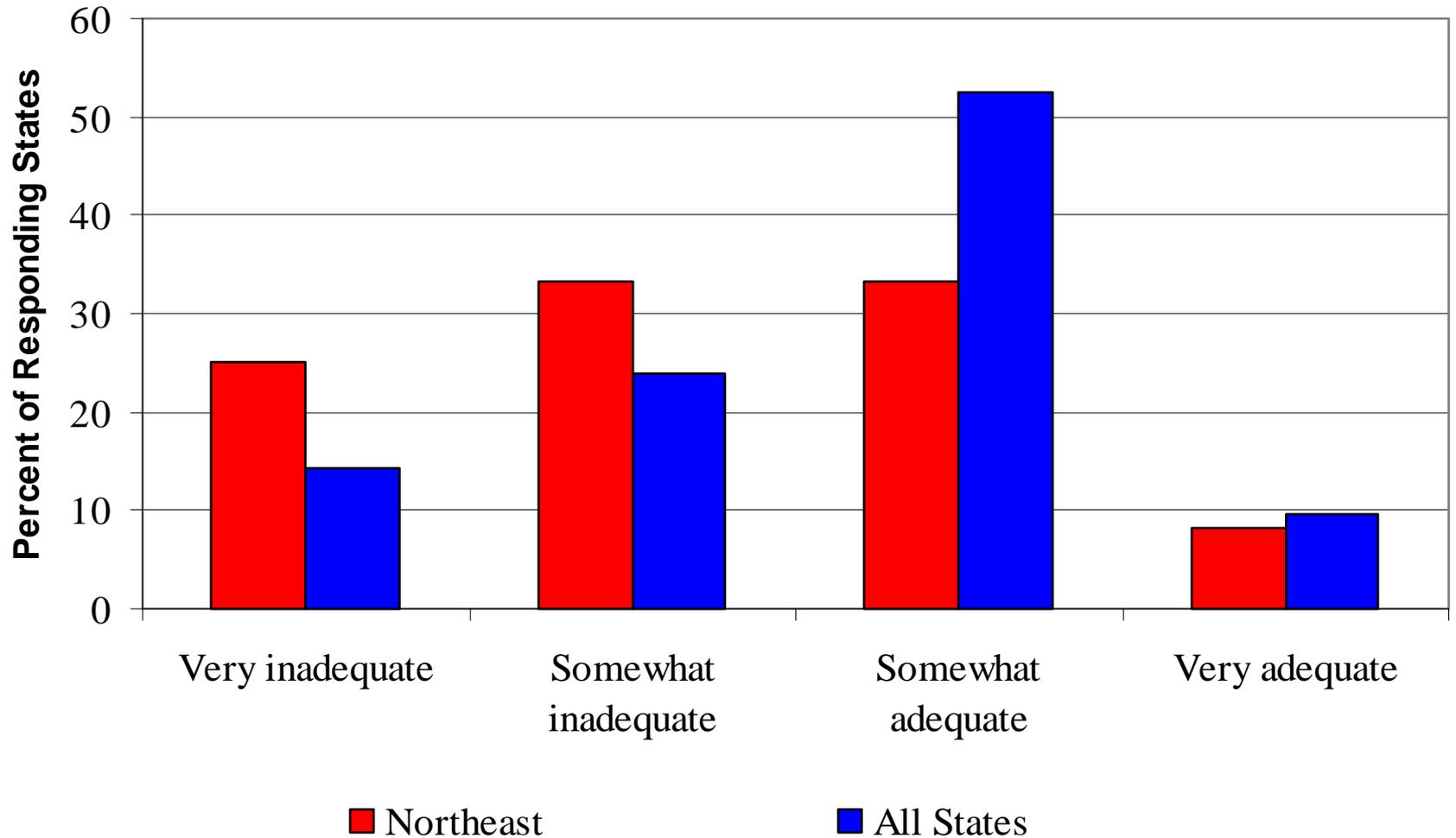
Training Needs

- **Planners identified many training needs.**
- **Conflict management was considered the *greatest*.**
- **Training on meeting facilitation techniques was considered *least* important.**

Need For Forest Service Assistance



Adequacy of Forest Service Assistance Provided



Forest Service Assistance

- **Forest Service assistance best served by:**
 - **Periodically sponsoring conferences to share different planning approaches and experiences.**
 - **Developing guides for integrating federally-mandated program plans.**
- **State forest resource planning considered moderately complementary in implementation of federally-mandated programs.**

Forest Resource Planning Evaluation

- States cited a number of tangible benefits resulting from their state forest resource planning efforts.**
- Most important is a better understanding of forest resource trends and conditions.**
- Planning also helped focus the agency's mission.**

Stakeholder Support for Planning

- **The greatest level of support for forest resource planning exists within the agency (moderate to extensive support)**
 - State forester
 - Agency field staff
- **Governor, private interests, legislature (moderate to minimal)**
- **Least supportive: other state agencies.**

Barriers to More Effective Planning

Most Problematic:

- Lack of staff and financial resources.
- Availability of adequate amount of time.

Influences on Future Planning Direction

- Adequate funding.
- Forest changes through development and conversion.

What's Next

- **Draft report on NE state forest resource planning sent to NFRPA Exec. Cmte for review: next two weeks.**
- **Report finalized and submitted to NFRPA: End of September.**
- **Comments/suggestions welcome!**

Questions???