

HumanDimensions
Research Program

Illinois Natural History Survey
Prairie Research Institute
University of Illinois at
Urbana-Champaign



Federal Aid Project
Number W-112-R-25
Job Number 102.1
Wildlife Restoration
Oct. 1, 2015-Sept. 30, 2016

Wayne Rosenthal, Director
Illinois Department of Natural
Resources

Paul Vehlow
Federal Aid Coordinator

Mark G. Alessi
Acting Chief, Division of
Wildlife Resources

Conservation Reserve Program in Illinois: Investigation of Participants' Motives, Expectations, and Desired Outcomes



Craig A. Miller, Ph.D.
Program Leader and Principal Investigator
Human Dimensions Research Program
Illinois Natural History Survey

Prepared by
Craig A. Miller, Brent D. Williams,
Linda K. Campbell, and Laura A. Schweizer



INHS Technical Report 2017 (17)
January 20, 2017

Key words: Conservation, program, enrollment, wildlife habitat, management practices.

Suggested Citation:

Miller, C.A., Williams, B.D., Campbell, L.K., Schweizer, L.A. 2017. Conservation Reserve Program in Illinois: Investigation of Participants' Motives, Expectations, and Desired Outcomes. Job Completion Report, Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration W-112-R-25. Human Dimensions Research Program Report HR-17-01/INHS Technical Report 2017 (17). Illinois Natural History Survey, Champaign, IL. 36pp.

LIST OF FIGURES, TABLES, AND APPENDICES

	<u>Page</u>
Figure 1..... Percentage of respondents who use their land for crops or livestock	3
Figure 2..... Participation in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).....	4
Figure 3..... Participation in the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).....	5
Figure 4..... Participation in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP).....	5
Figure 5..... Participation in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQUIP)	5
Figure 6..... Participation in the State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement Program (SAFE).....	6
Figure 7..... Participation in the Farmable Wetlands Program (FWP).....	6
Figure 8..... Participation in the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)	6
Figure 9..... Participation in the Source Water Protection Program (SWPP).....	7
Figure 10..... Overall respondent participation in USA and Illinois state conservation programs.....	7
Figure 11..... Conservation practices performed by respondents	9
Figure 12..... Percentage of respondents enrolled in a program who received guidance about their land	10
Figure 13..... Reasons why respondents found assistance helpful or not helpful.....	12
Figure 14..... Species that benefit most from respondents' land management	14
Figure 15..... Percentage of respondents who would continue to engage in conservation practices if they did not receive payment	15
Figure 16..... Amount of total acres a respondent would enroll without payment compared to what they have enrolled now.....	15
Figure 17..... Percentage of respondents interested a workshop to learn more about the benefits of conservation programs.....	18
Figure 18..... Gender of respondents enrolled in CRP	22
Figure 19..... Gender of respondents not enrolled in CRP	22
Figure 20..... Level of responsibility for making decisions regarding the agricultural property owned	22
Figure 21..... Percentage of total net household income that comes from the farm	23
Table 1	3
Table 3	8
Table 4	8
Table 5	11
Table 6	13
Table 7	16
Table 8	17
Table 9	18
Table 10	19
Table 11	20
Table 12	21
Appendix A.. Farming and Wildlife Conservation in Illinois Survey	24
Appendix B.. Cover letter sent with first mailing of the Farming and Wildlife Conservation in Illinois Survey.....	32
Appendix C.. Thank you/reminder postcard sent as follow-up to the mailings	33
Appendix D.. Cover letter sent with second mailing of the Farming and Wildlife Conservation in Illinois Survey	34
Appendix E.. Cover letter sent with third mailing of the Farming and Wildlife Conservation in Illinois Survey	35

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM IN ILLINOIS:
INVESTIGATION OF PARTICIPANTS' MOTIVES,
EXPECTATIONS, AND DESIRED OUTCOMES

JOB COMPLETION REPORT
WILDLIFE HARVEST AND
HUMAN DIMENSIONS RESEARCH PROGRAM

STATE OF ILLINOIS

PROJECT NUMBER: W-112-R-25
STUDY 102
JOB NO. 102.1

Prepared by
Craig A. Miller, Brent D. Williams,
Linda K. Campbell, and Laura A. Schweizer

Craig A. Miller, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator

Illinois Natural History Survey
Champaign, IL
January 20, 2017

Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration
W-112-R-25

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Wayne Rosenthal, Director
Illinois Department of Natural Resources

Mark G. Alessi, Acting Chief
Division of Wildlife Resources

Equal opportunity to participate in programs of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) and those funded by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other agencies is available to all individuals regardless of race, sex, national origin, disability, age, religion or other non-merit factors. If you believe you have been discriminated against, contact the funding source's civil rights office and/or the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, IDNR, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702-1271; 217/785/0067; TTY 217/782/9175.

ABSTRACT

A mail survey of 5,000 Illinois agriculture producers resulted in a 39% response rate. Survey questions focused on conservation program enrollment and wildlife habitat conservation. More than half (56%) of respondents were currently participating or participated in the past in a conservation program. At the time of the survey thirty-four percent of agriculture producers participated in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and 91% were familiar with this program. Native grasses/forbs and wildlife habitat were the most commonly reported conservation practices performed by respondents. The most important reasons among survey respondents for enrolling in a conservation program were to reduce soil erosion, increase wildlife habitat, and improve water quality. The majority of agriculture producers (85%) believed that it is their personal responsibility to help protect wildlife, whereas only 62% believed that farmers as a whole were doing their part to protect wildlife habitat.

OBJECTIVE

To survey Illinois agriculture producers to determine their participation in conservation programs and management practices, as well as their opinions toward land and wildlife habitat conservation.

METHODS

A sample of 5,000 Illinois agriculture producers stratified by enrollment in USDA conservation programs (e.g., Conservation Reserve Program) were randomly selected for a mail survey. During the planting year (2015) of our study, approximately one-third of Illinois producers were enrolled in CRP or other programs, for a total of approximately 25,000 acres

enrolled and 50,000 not enrolled. We used this ratio to select 1,667 producers from the CRP enrolled list 3,333 others not on the list. Survey Sampling International provided names, addresses, and telephone numbers of participants. Each participant was mailed an 8-page mail-back questionnaire (Appendix A) and cover letter (Appendix B) 14 January 2016. Non-respondents were mailed a thank you/reminder postcard (Appendix C) 28 January 2016, a second copy of the questionnaire and cover letter (Appendix D) 15 February 2016, and another thank you/reminder postcard 02 March 2015. Non-respondents received a third copy of the questionnaire and cover letter 24 March 2015 (Appendix E).

RESULTS

Of the initial 5,000 producers on our mailing list, 330 were removed as undeliverable, no longer farming, or other reasons resulting in a usable sample population of 4,670 individuals. We received 1,800 usable questionnaires for a response of 39%.

About Your Farm

The average acres of land owned by respondents was 236.4 acres ($n=1753$). Sixty-one percent reported that they farmed or raised livestock on their land. Seventeen percent had land operated by someone else, 14% leased their land for farming or livestock operations, and 9% did not use their land for farming or raising livestock (Figure 1).

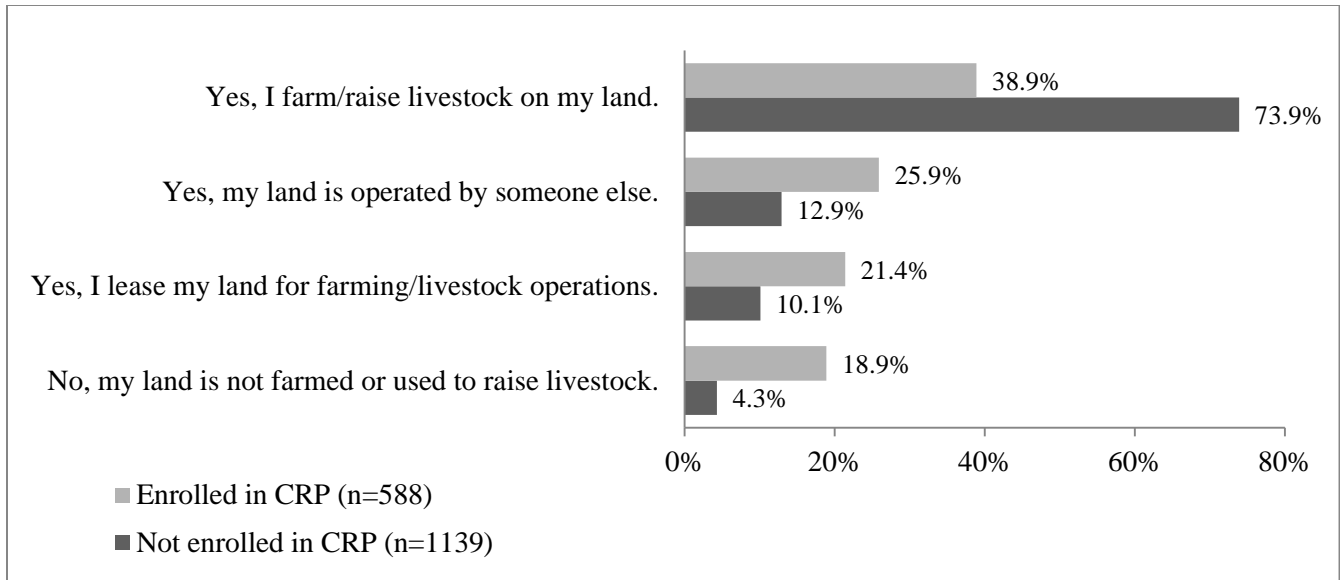


Figure 1. Percentage of respondents who use their land for crops or livestock.

The most common crop in production in 2015 was corn, with an average of 148 acres owned and 294 acres leased by respondents. Soybeans were the next most common crop owned and leased, with 130 and 266 acres planted, respectively (Table 1).

Table 1. Mean acres owned and leased in 2015 for those who use their land for crops or livestock (Enrolled in CRP/Not enrolled in CRP)

	<i>n</i>	Acres Owned	<i>n</i>	Acres Leased
Corn	294/745	194/132	209/539	352/277
Soybeans	276/661	170/661	195/513	336/242
Other grains (wheat, oats, sorghum, etc.)	36/130	87/45	28/81	134/84
Hay/alfalfa/clover	67/204	28/30	34/110	42/39
Pasture	79/268	45/47	21/100	63/64
Orchards	5/23	16/16	1/4	5/114
Fallow	24/22	42/29	6/7	93/31
Other	50/113	65/43	8/16	156/110

Conservation Programs and Practices

Thirty-four percent of respondents reported that they were current participants in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) (Table 2; Figure 2). CRP was the most familiar program among respondents; only 9% of respondents were not familiar at all with the program. Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) were the next highest for respondent participation (6% and 5%, respectively) (Table 2; Figure 3, 4). CRP and The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) had the highest percentages of respondents who participated in the past but no longer did so (12.3% and 5.2%, respectively) (Table 2; Figure 2, 5). Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), Farmable Wetlands Program (FWP), State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE), and Source Water Protection Program (SWPP) were the least familiar among respondents; 60-65% reported that they were not at all familiar with these programs (Table 2; Figure 6, 7, 8, 9).

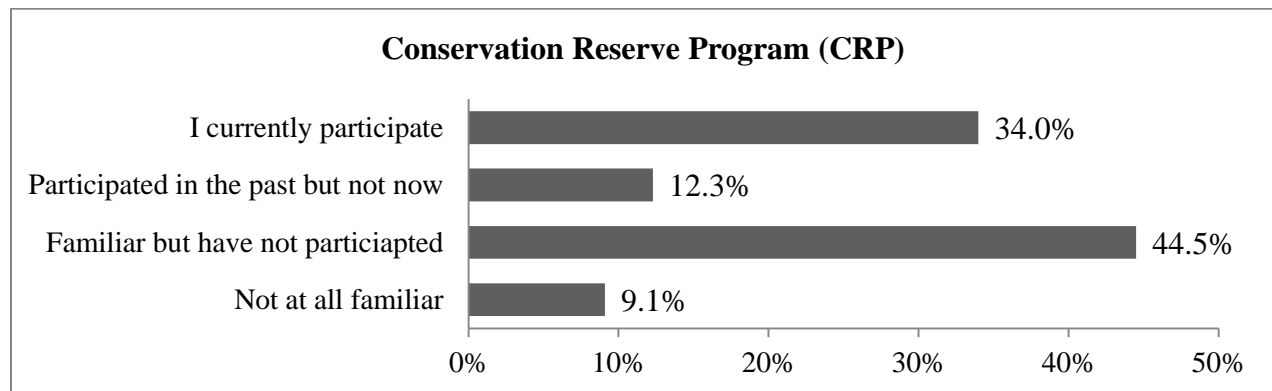


Figure 2. Participation in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) ($n=1727$).

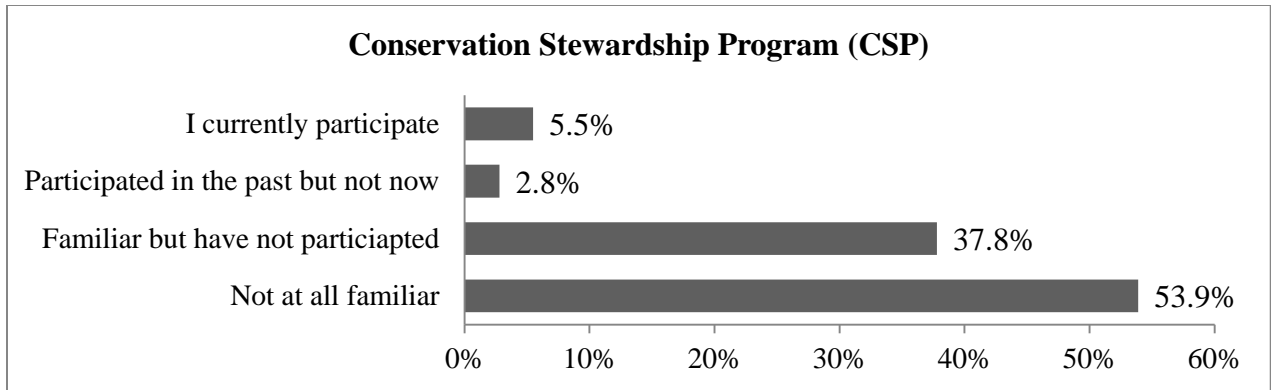


Figure 3. Participation in the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) ($n=1537$).

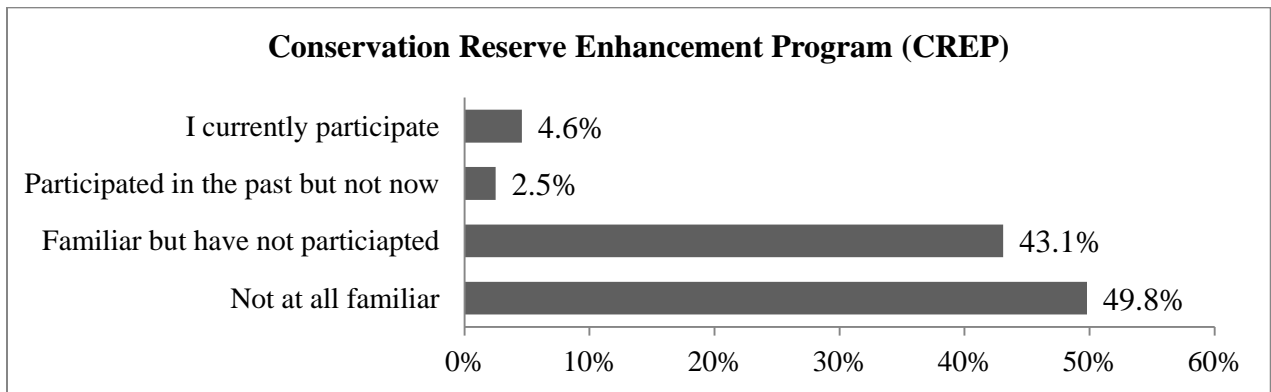


Figure 4. Participation in the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) ($n=1551$).

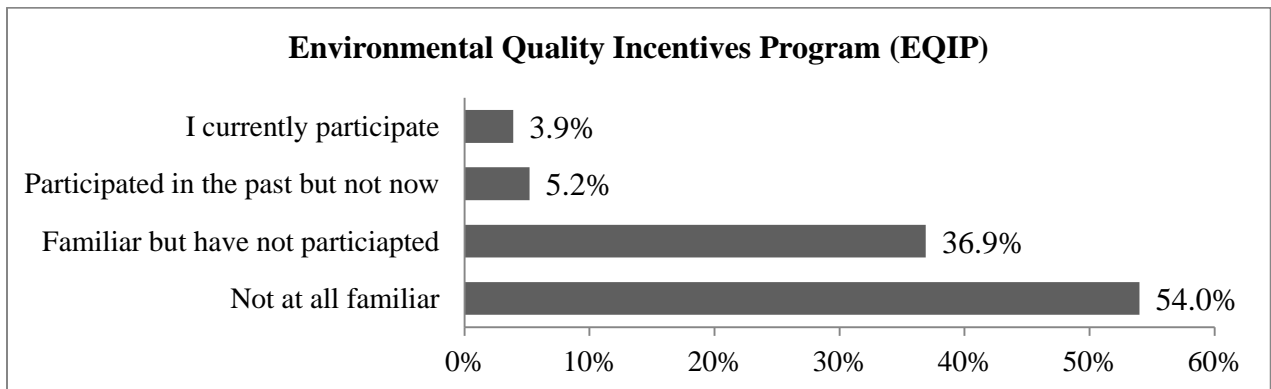


Figure 5. Participation in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) ($n=1538$).

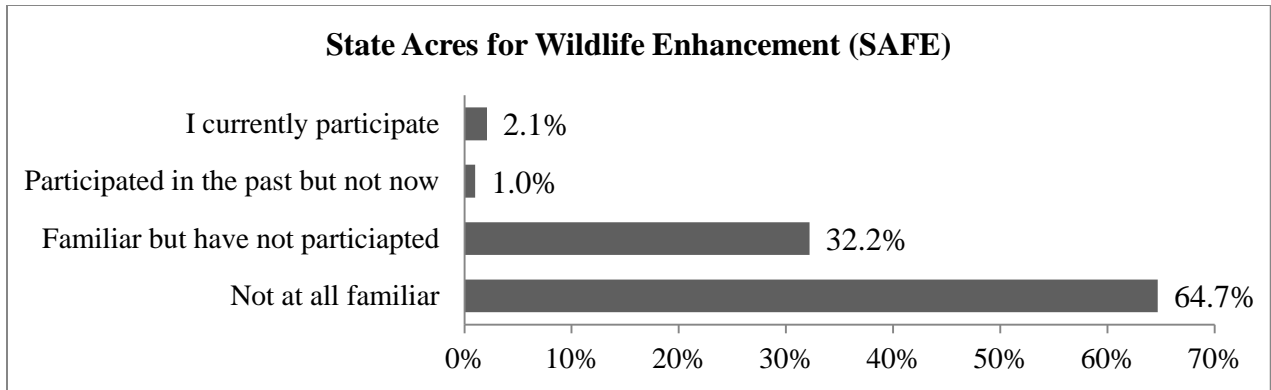


Figure 6. Participation in the State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement Program (SAFE) ($n=1537$).

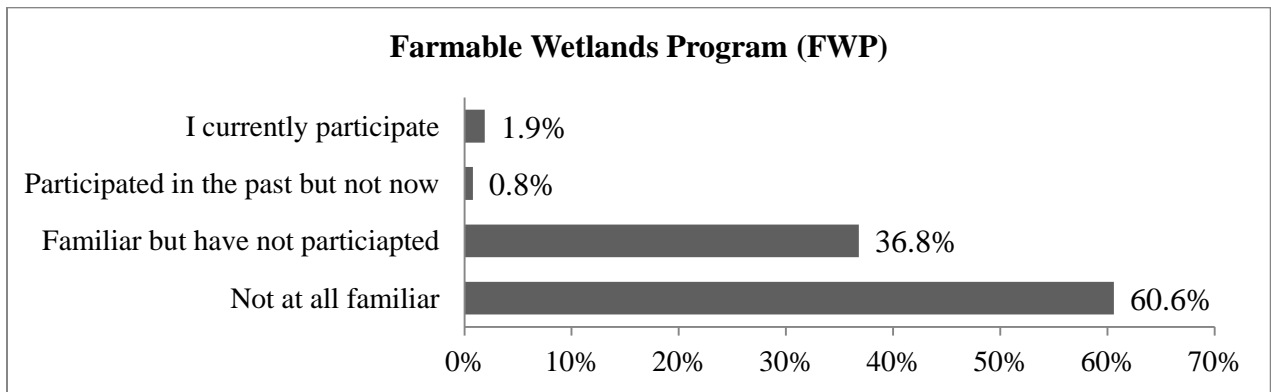


Figure 7. Participation in the Farmable Wetlands Program (FWP) ($n=1529$).

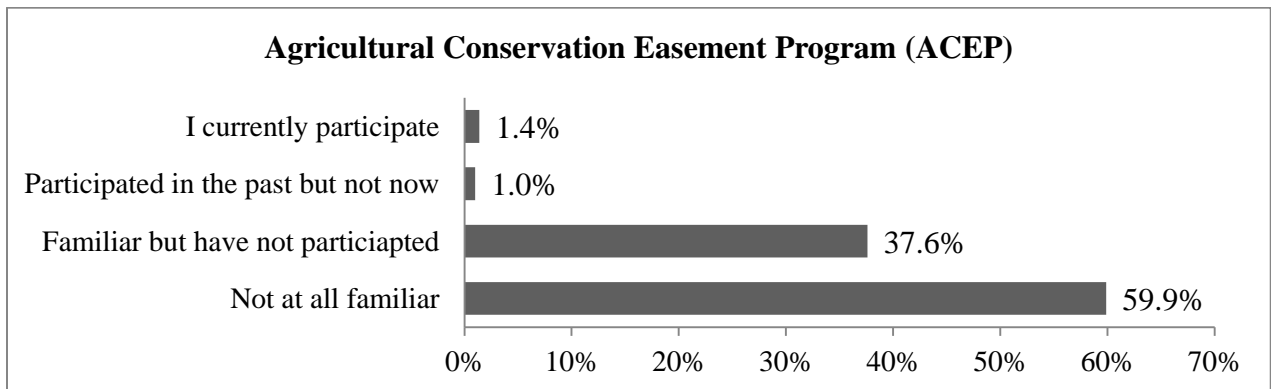


Figure 8. Participation in the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) ($n=1538$).

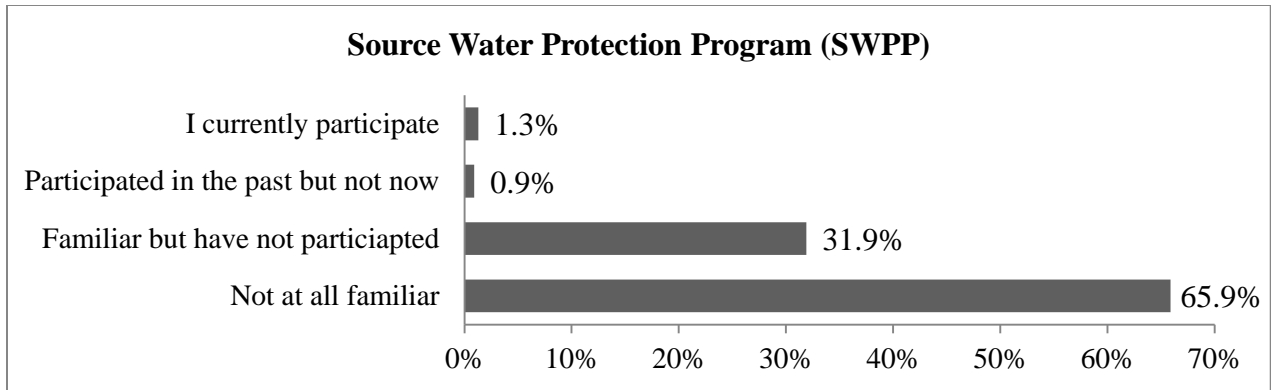


Figure 9. Participation in the Source Water Protection Program (SWPP) ($n=1518$).

When asked about participation in USDA and Illinois state conservation programs, 36% of respondents reported that they currently participated and planned to re-enroll, whereas 44% have never participated in a program (Figure 10). Of the respondents who reported acres enrolled in a specific program, 58%-86% planned to re-enroll in the program (Table 3). Mean acreage respondents had enrolled in CRP was 32 acres, and was by far the most commonly reported program (Table 3). Most common conservation practices performed by respondents included native grasses/forbs planting (19%), wildlife habitat (15%), wildlife food plots (11%), tree planting (11%), and wetland/stream buffers (11%) (Table 4; Figure 11).

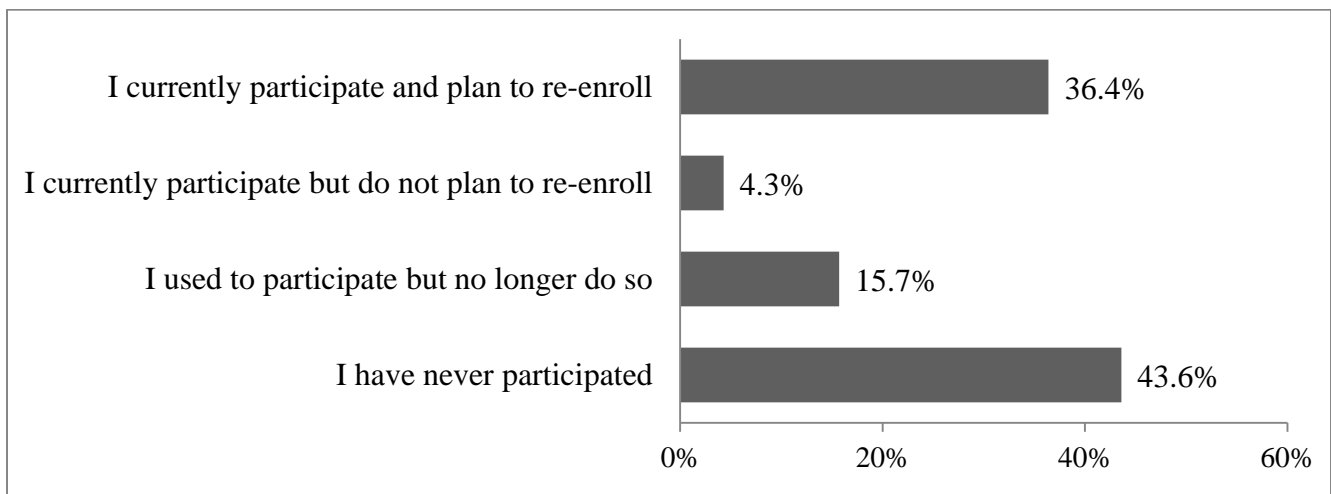


Figure 10. Overall respondent participation in USDA and Illinois state conservation programs ($n=1732$).

Table 3. Mean acres enrolled in the following conservation programs and percentage of respondents who plan on re-enrolling.

	<i>n</i>	Mean Acres Enrolled	Median Acres Enrolled	% Planning on Re-enrolling
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)	537	32	16	88
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	61	616	483	82
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)	43	36	14	67
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)	35	110	60	71
State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE)	24	26	15	71
Farmable Wetlands Program (FWP)	12	28	22	58
Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)	7	68	15	86
Source Water Protection Program (SWPP)	9	199	30	78

Table 4. Conservation practices performed by respondents.

<i>Conservation Practice</i>	Enrolled in CRP (<i>n</i> =588)	Not Enrolled in CRP (<i>n</i> =1139)
	%	%
Native grasses/forbs	51	2
Wildlife habitat	36	4
Wildlife food plot	29	3
Tree planting	29	2
Wetland/stream buffers	27	3
Habitat for upland birds	25	2
Non-native grasses/legumes	16	2
Shallow water for wildlife	10	1
Wildlife habitat corridor	9	1
Other	4	1
Farmable wetlands	4	1
Wetland restoration	4	<1
Rare/declining habitat	1	0

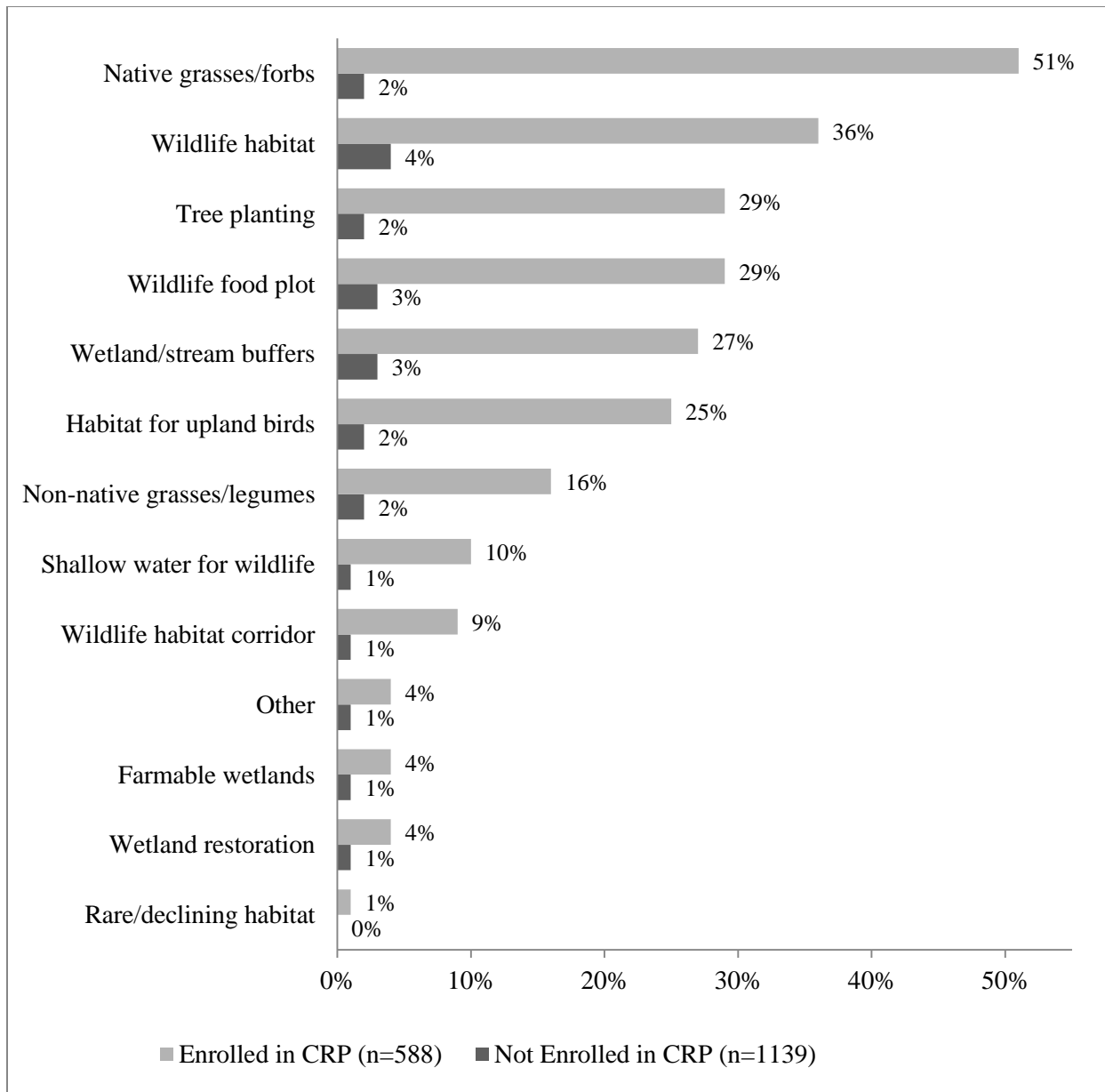


Figure 11. Conservation practices performed by respondents.

Respondents provided information regarding assistance received from various sources. The majority (68%) of those enrolled in a program reported that they received guidance about their land from an individual or organization (Figure 12). The most commonly used sources were the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) (87%) and the County Soil and Water District (80%) (Table 5). Seventy percent of respondents ranked NRCS as very helpful in their assistance,

whereas 57% ranked County Soil and Water District as very helpful (Table 5). Respondents reported the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (9%) and a Crop Advisor (7%) as the least helpful (Table 5). The most common reason why respondents found assistance helpful was that the source helped them enroll in conservation programs (78%) or develop a management plan (47%) (Figure 13). The most common reason why respondents found assistance unhelpful was because they failed to help respondents seek out more information (4%) (Figure 13).

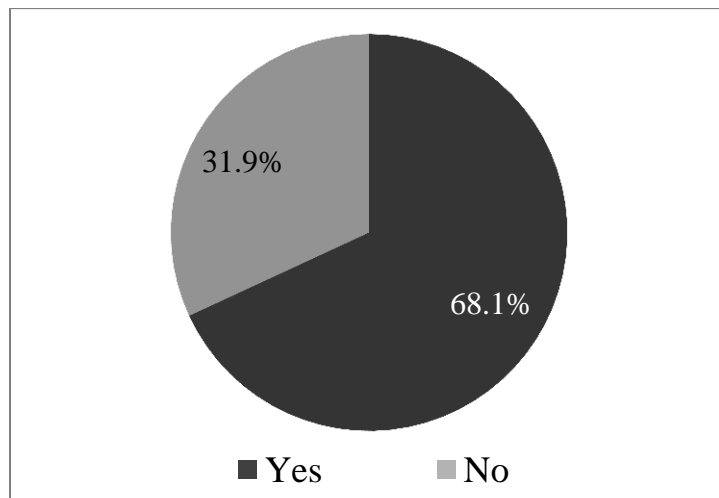


Figure 12. Percentage of respondents enrolled in a program who received guidance about their land from an individual or organization ($n=664$).

Table 5. Reported helpfulness of the assistance received by the following sources.

<i>Source of Assistance</i>	<i>Enrolled in CRP?</i>	<i>n</i>	Not helpful (%)	Somewhat helpful (%)	Moderately helpful (%)	Very helpful (%)	Did not use (%)
Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)	Yes	274	2	2	12	71	13
	No	63	2	6	14	64	14
Illinois Department of Natural Resources	Yes	270	2	3	15	55	25
	No	49	8	10	14	35	33
County Soil and Water District	Yes	262	4	3	14	58	21
	No	51	4	8	14	55	20
USDA (other than NRCS)	Yes	238	5	5	13	42	35
	No	46	4	4	15	35	41
Friends/Family/Neighbors	Yes	219	4	6	20	34	37
	No	43	0	9	16	47	28
Pheasants Forever/Quail Forever	Yes	209	7	9	11	22	52
	No	41	7	0	12	7	73
University Extension	Yes	202	5	8	11	16	59
	No	48	6	15	19	23	38
Crop Advisor	Yes	194	7	3	11	18	61
	No	44	5	9	16	27	43
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Yes	191	9	4	6	9	72
	No	39	8	0	5	8	80

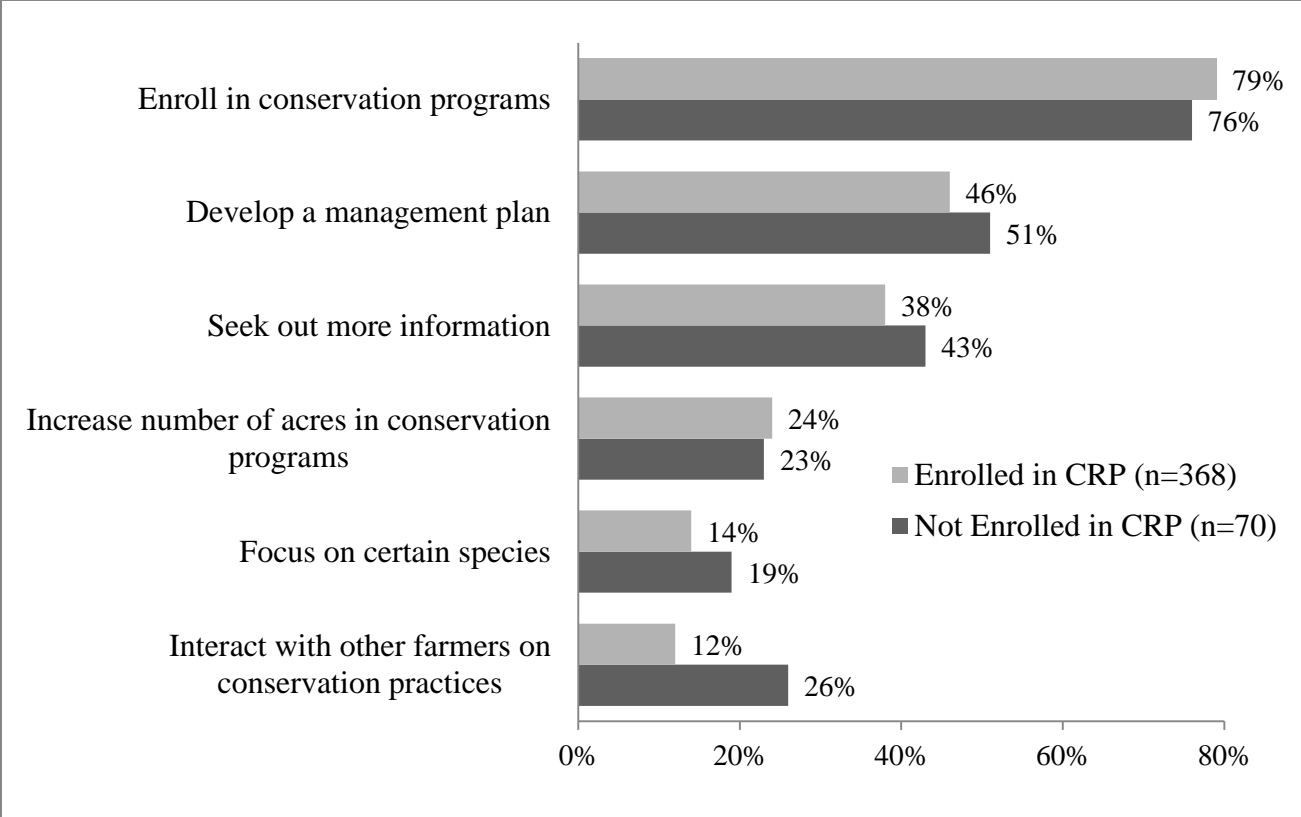


Figure 13. Reasons why respondents found assistance helpful or not helpful.

The reasons for enrolling in conservation programs most frequently rated of highest importance were to reduce soil erosion, increase wildlife habitat, and improve water quality (Table 6). Over sixty percent of respondents reported that reducing soil erosion was extremely important when enrolling in a conservation program. The least important reasons were to increase opportunities for hunting (\bar{X} =4.4) and because their parents or grandparents did it (\bar{X} =2.8) (Table 6). Over 50% of respondents reported that it is not at all important if their parents or grandparents were enrolled in a program (Table 6). Twenty-nine percent of respondents believe that deer was the species that benefits the most from their management, followed by pheasants/quail (24%), wild turkey (20%), and small mammals (19%) (Figure 14).

Table 6. Reported importance of reasons to enroll in conservation programs.

<i>I enroll because it...</i>	<i>Enrolled in CRP?</i>	<i>n</i>	Not at all Important		Slightly Important		Moderately Important		Extremely Important	
			(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
...reduces soil erosion.	Yes	481	1	0	2	4	12	19	62	
	No	107	2	1	2	4	14	22	56	
...improves water quality.	Yes	444	3	1	4	7	15	21	49	
	No	100	3	3	3	1	14	23	53	
...improves air quality.	Yes	409	7	5	7	10	17	18	35	
	No	98	8	6	10	11	17	17	30	
...increases wildlife habitat.	Yes	487	1	1	4	5	14	20	56	
	No	104	5	3	10	5	26	17	35	
...increases opportunities for me/my family to hunt.	Yes	446	22	6	8	6	14	11	34	
	No	104	26	6	13	10	8	16	22	
...increases wildlife watching opportunities.	Yes	443	10	5	6	8	16	18	36	
	No	102	17	12	10	10	17	15	21	
...changes the scenic quality of my farm.	Yes	422	12	7	10	13	18	15	26	
	No	98	18	10	10	11	15	14	20	
...conserves native prairie.	Yes	432	13	5	10	11	15	16	31	
	No	100	23	14	15	8	12	11	17	
...best financial option for those acres.	Yes	472	5	3	8	12	17	21	35	
	No	105	14	5	6	11	17	20	28	
...my parents or grandparents did it.	Yes	350	51	7	7	11	7	6	10	
	No	89	48	12	8	6	10	6	10	

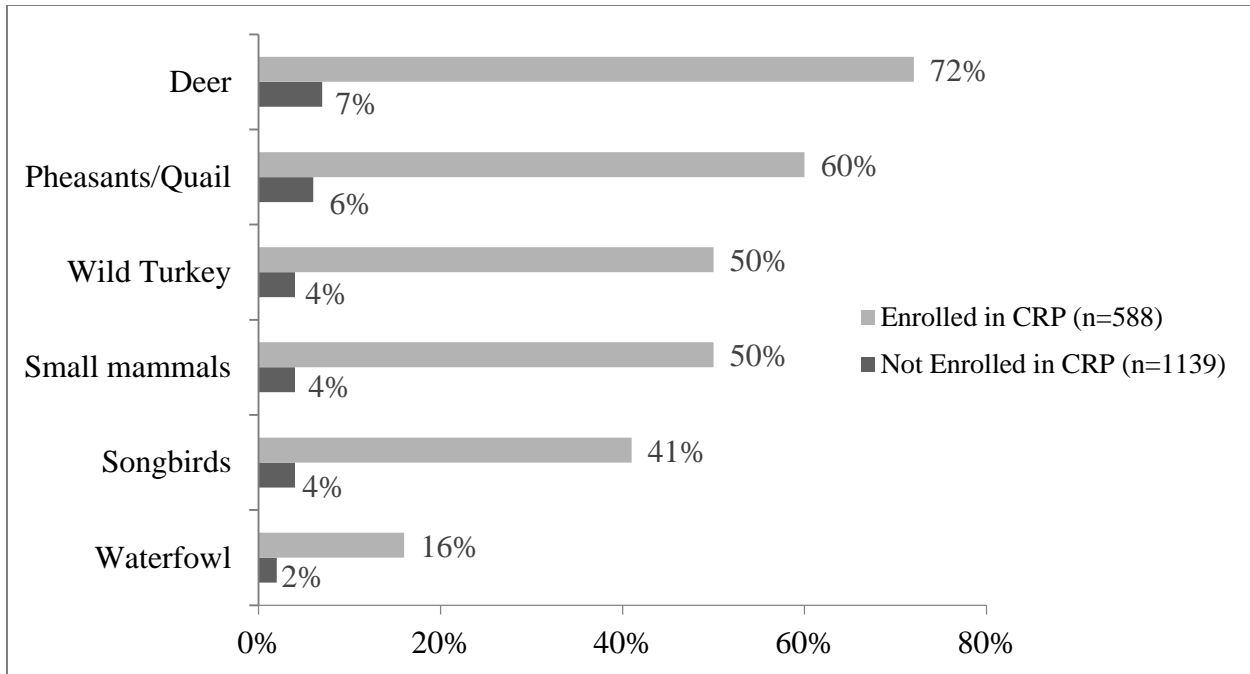


Figure 14. Species that benefit most from respondents' land management.

When asked if they would continue participating in a conservation program if they were not receiving payment, 48% of respondents reported “Probably” or “Definitely Yes” (Figure 15). Twenty-six percent were not sure whether or not they would continue to engage in the conservation practices, and 26% responded that they would probably or definitely not continue (Figure 15). Of those who reported they would continue participation without payment, the majority (67%) would enroll the same amount of acres that they have enrolled now, 18% would enroll less, and 15% would enroll more (Figure 16).

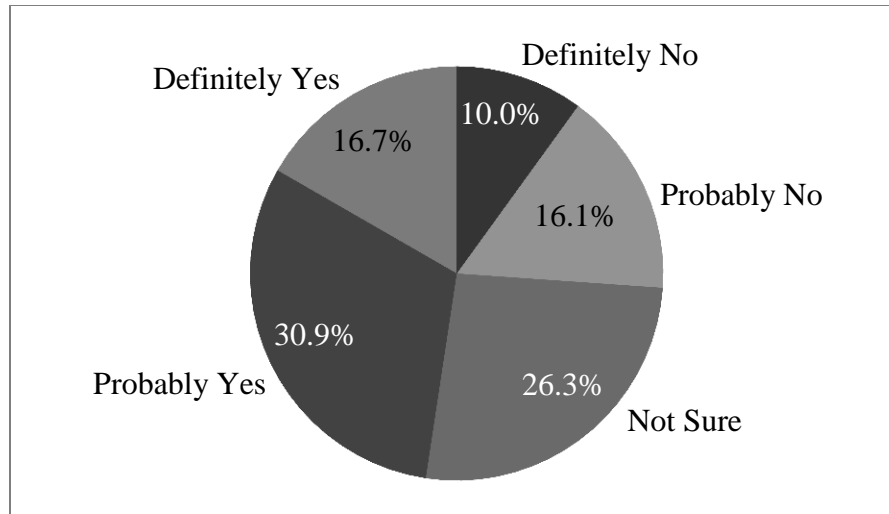


Figure 15. Percentage of respondents who would continue to engage in conservation practices if they did not receive payment ($n=653$).

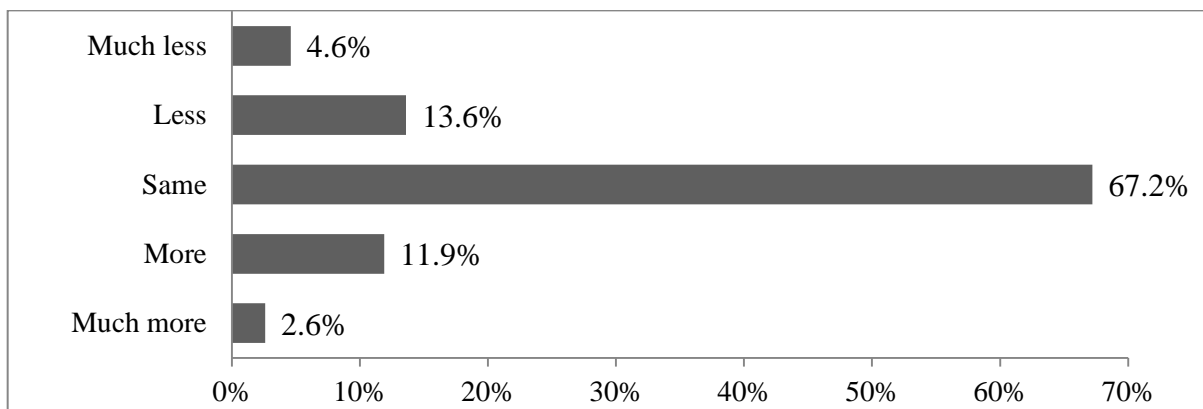


Figure 16. Amount of total acres a respondent would enroll without payment compared to what they have enrolled now (Only includes those who would continue participating in a program without payment) ($n=302$).

The most common reason reported for not participating in conservation programs was that it would decrease options for using their property ($\bar{X}=4.5$ on a 7 point scale) (Table 7). Thirty percent of respondents reported that government control was an extremely important factor when deciding to participate or re-enroll in a program. Conversely, almost 37% of respondents stated “it is not a typical practice in my community” as not an important reason at all for not participating in conservation programs (Table 7).

Table 7. Reasons reported by respondents for not participating in conservation programs.

<i>I do not plan to participate or re-enroll because...</i>	<i>n</i>	Not at all Important		Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Extremely Important		
		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	
...I need to increase my income.	807	25	8	11	10	16	10	19
...it gives the government too much control over what I do.	830	17	6	11	11	14	11	30
...it will decrease options for using my property.	821	16	5	9	12	19	15	24
...the costs to participate are too high.	804	21	11	17	16	17	8	11
...it is too labor intensive.	788	30	15	18	16	11	5	6
...there is not enough time.	784	29	14	17	16	11	7	7
...I put more land into production.	794	25	10	14	15	11	11	15
...compensation is not enough.	800	18	6	10	16	14	13	23
...there is too much paperwork.	803	18	7	11	13	14	13	24
...it is not a typical practice in my community.	740	37	13	12	17	10	7	5

Wildlife Habitat

A majority of survey respondents (85%) believed that it is their personal responsibility to help protect wildlife, whereas only 62% believed that farmers were doing their part to protect wildlife habitat (Table 8). Seventy-eight percent of respondents agreed that their farming practices improve wildlife habitat, whereas 16% neither disagreed nor agreed (Table 8).

Table 8. Respondents' beliefs regarding wildlife habitat.

	<i>Enrolled in CRP?</i>	<i>n</i>	Strongly Disagree (%)	Moderately Disagree (%)	Slightly Disagree (%)	Neither (%)	Slightly Agree (%)	Moderately Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
Farmers are doing their part to protect wildlife habitat.	Yes	537	11	11	8	10	23	27	10
	No	999	8	8	8	14	24	26	14
It is my personal responsibility to help protect wildlife.	Yes	529	1	1	1	5	19	35	38
	No	993	3	2	2	12	21	35	25
My actions improve wildlife habitat.	Yes	535	<1	<1	1	5	14	34	46
	No	994	2	1	2	16	22	35	22
My farming practices improve wildlife habitat.	Yes	527	1	1	1	10	19	29	39
	No	994	2	1	2	16	22	35	22

When asked whether or not various groups of people would expect them to implement conservation practices, 66% believed it was likely for environmental organizations to expect them to participate (Table 9). The group that respondents believed were mostly unlikely to expect participation was other farmers (23%) (Table 9). About a third of respondents (32%) would be interested in participating in a local workshop to learn more about the benefits of conservation programs in their area (Figure 17).

Table 9. Level of likelihood that these groups would expect the respondent to implement conservation practices.

	<i>Enrolled in CRP?</i>	<i>n</i>	Extremely Unlikely (%)	Moderately Unlikely (%)	Slightly Unlikely (%)	Neutral (%)	Slightly Likely (%)	Moderately Likely (%)	Extremely Likely (%)
My family	Yes	529	4	3	1	21	13	33	24
	No	992	9	6	2	32	16	23	13
Other farmers	Yes	489	10	7	6	37	16	19	6
	No	977	12	7	4	39	19	14	4
Environmental organizations	Yes	489	4	3	1	23	11	25	33
	No	975	7	4	2	22	14	24	29
My neighbors	Yes	495	6	5	5	40	18	18	8
	No	974	10	6	5	42	19	16	4
Government agencies	Yes	503	3	3	2	26	16	29	21
	No	980	8	4	2	25	16	24	20

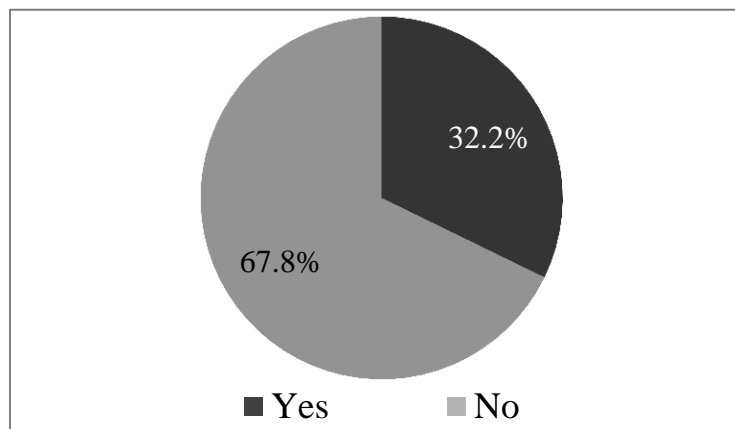


Figure 17. Percentage of respondents interested in participating in a local workshop to learn more about the benefits of conservation programs in their area ($n=1577$).

Survey respondents were asked a series of questions about the effects of conservation practices. Seventy-six percent agreed that conservation practices conserve a working farm for the next generation, and 71% agreed that conservation practices improved their community (Table 10). Twenty-nine percent of respondents disagreed that conservation practices reduced their work load or

minimize taxes (Table 10). Forty-six percent neither agreed nor disagreed that conservation practices would be appreciated by other farmers (Table 10).

Table 10. Level of agreement by respondents on the effects of conservation practices.

<i>Conservation practices to improve soil, air, water, and wildlife habitat quality would...</i>			Strongly Disagree (%)	Moderately Disagree (%)	Slightly Disagree (%)	Neither (%)	Slightly Agree (%)	Moderately Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
<i>Enrolled in CRP</i>	<i>n</i>								
...make me a more effective farmer.	Yes	517	3	3	2	23	22	27	21
	No	978	3	3	4	26	25	25	13
...improve my community.	Yes	516	2	3	1	18	28	26	22
	No	974	3	2	3	24	32	26	11
...imply I receive financial compensation.	Yes	516	5	4	5	31	24	18	13
	No	958	7	4	5	44	22	14	6
...continue my farm's traditional management.	Yes	514	2	2	1	21	27	29	19
	No	969	2	2	3	30	24	27	12
...create opportunities to sell hunting access to my land.	Yes	507	32	9	6	31	10	7	5
	No	968	29	12	9	33	9	6	1
...conserve a working farm for the next generation	Yes	522	2	1	2	15	15	30	35
	No	981	4	2	3	19	19	31	23
...minimize taxes.	Yes	509	12	6	7	39	13	10	12
	No	960	15	9	8	45	9	8	8
...reduce my work load.	Yes	508	10	8	8	37	17	11	8
	No	961	10	9	12	44	14	7	4
...be appreciated by other farmers.	Yes	506	8	7	7	42	19	12	7
	No	962	7	6	8	48	18	10	3
...reduce my operating costs.	Yes	509	8	7	6	37	19	12	11
	No	964	7	8	11	41	18	10	6
...maximize income and provide conservation benefits.	Yes	525	4	4	6	22	22	22	20
	No	966	7	7	10	37	19	14	7

Wildlife Agencies and Organizations

The majority of respondents agreed that the Soil and Water Conservation District manages wildlife and land as they would (53% and 52%, respectively) (Table 11). The agency or organization that respondents disagreed with the most when it comes to the management of wildlife and land was Illinois DNR (24% and 27%, respectively) (Table 11).

Table 11. Level of agreement by respondents on agencies and organizations.

<i>This agency/ organization manages wildlife as I would.</i>			Strongly Disagree (%)	Moderately Disagree (%)	Slightly Disagree (%)	Neither (%)	Slightly Agree (%)	Moderately Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
<i>Enrolled in CRP</i>	<i>n</i>								
Illinois DNR	Yes	501	5	7	9	32	15	22	10
	No	955	8	10	9	41	15	14	4
Pheasants/Quail Forever	Yes	495	2	1	4	37	14	29	13
	No	951	3	4	4	48	15	20	7
NRCS	Yes	484	3	2	4	38	15	26	12
	No	942	3	5	6	52	15	15	5
Soil and Water Conservation District	Yes	518	2	2	4	28	17	30	17
	No	959	4	4	6	39	19	21	7
<i>This agency/ organization manages land as I would.</i>			Strongly Disagree (%)	Moderately Disagree (%)	Slightly Disagree (%)	Neither (%)	Slightly Agree (%)	Moderately Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
<i>Enrolled in CRP</i>	<i>n</i>								
Illinois DNR	Yes	492	6	5	9	39	13	20	8
	No	945	10	10	11	44	11	12	2
Pheasants/Quail Forever	Yes	493	2	3	6	41	14	25	9
	No	943	4	5	7	52	14	14	4
NRCS	Yes	489	4	1	4	40	16	24	12
	No	940	5	6	7	49	15	15	4
Soil and Water Conservation District	Yes	517	3	1	4	29	17	31	16
	No	954	5	6	7	36	19	22	6

Land Management

Over 90% of respondents agreed with the statements “Conserving land is important for future generations” (96%) and “Farmers have an obligation to maintain the land for future generations” (94%) (Table 12). Half of respondents (50%) disagreed with the statement “Needs of people should take priority over land protection”, and 36% disagreed with the statement “Land is primarily for people to use” (Table 12).

Demographic Information

The average age of respondents was 62.3 years old ($n=1739$) and the majority were male (90.6%) (Figure 18, 19). When it comes to making decisions on the farm, 45% reported being the sole-decision-maker and 52% shared the decision-making responsibilities with a spouse or other family member (Figure 20). Thirty-one percent of respondents reported that 76%-100% of their total net household income came from the farm, whereas 20% of respondents reported that their farm provided 0%-10% of their total net household income (Figure 21).

Table 12. Level of agreement by respondents on land management.

	<i>Enrolled in CRP</i>	<i>n</i>	Strongly Disagree (%)	Moderately Disagree (%)	Slightly Disagree (%)	Neither (%)	Slightly Agree (%)	Moderately Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
Lands should be managed to benefit people.	Yes	551	5	9	8	15	24	25	14
	No	1065	6	5	10	18	28	22	13
Needs of people should take priority over land protection.	Yes	544	20	16	19	19	16	7	4
	No	1060	14	14	20	25	17	8	3
Land is primarily for people to use.	Yes	540	14	13	15	17	20	14	7
	No	1053	11	10	13	22	22	16	8
Land has value whether people use it or not.	Yes	556	1	2	3	7	17	27	43
	No	1067	2	2	3	9	21	31	33
Land should be managed so that the environment benefits.	Yes	554	1	<1	1	9	26	35	28
	No	1065	2	1	2	13	31	32	19
I feel an emotional bond with the land.	Yes	556	1	1	1	9	16	26	48
	No	1068	1	1	1	9	15	30	42
Conserving land is important for future generations.	Yes	568	<1	<1	<1	2	7	28	63
	No	1083	1	<1	<1	4	11	32	52
Primary purpose of my land is to provide products useful to people.	Yes	554	4	4	3	15	23	30	20
	No	1078	2	1	2	11	20	35	29
Farmers have the right to use their land as they see fit.	Yes	562	4	3	7	8	24	23	32
	No	1078	2	2	5	7	21	30	33
Farmers have an obligation to consider how their management affects other people.	Yes	556	1	2	3	6	25	32	32
	No	1077	2	2	3	7	25	37	24
Other people have no right to tell private landowners how to manage their land.	Yes	558	10	6	9	10	18	19	29
	No	1079	9	4	7	9	20	23	29
Farmers have an obligation to maintain the land for future generations.	Yes	564	1	1	1	2	11	26	58
	No	1082	1	1	1	3	11	29	53
Private landowner rights outweigh any responsibilities the landowner has to manage land for public benefit.	Yes	548	4	5	10	18	19	19	26
	No	1076	3	4	8	18	19	25	23
The public has a role in deciding how private land is used.	Yes	552	44	17	15	9	10	3	2
	No	1075	47	19	13	10	7	3	2
Conservation is a voluntary choice of the landowner	Yes	564	3	3	5	7	20	27	35
	No	1085	2	3	5	12	24	27	27
Conservation is one of the responsibilities of private landownership.	Yes	566	2	1	1	7	19	29	58
	No	1085	2	1	2	8	23	34	31

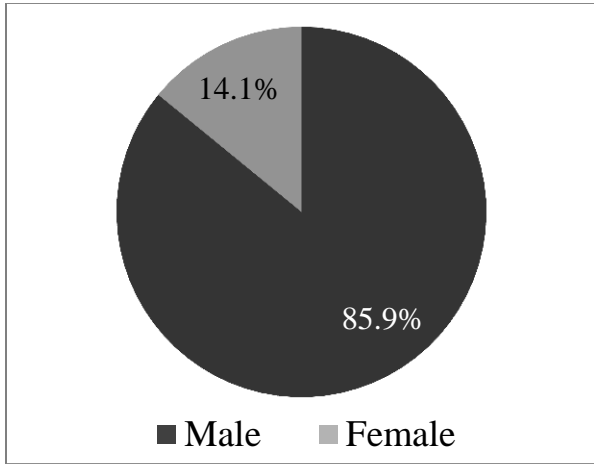


Figure 18. Gender of respondents enrolled in CRP (n=581).

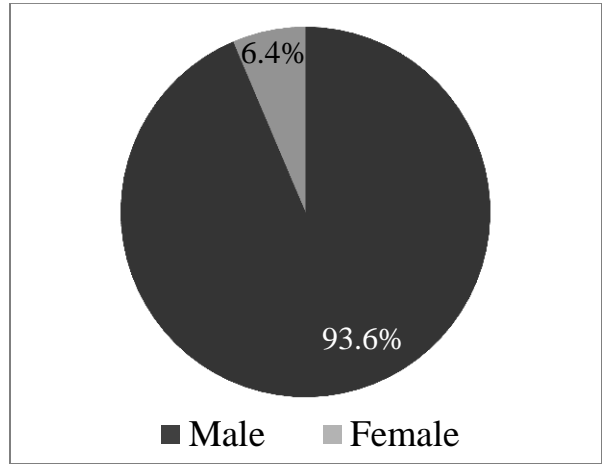


Figure 19. Gender of respondents not enrolled in CRP (n=1130).

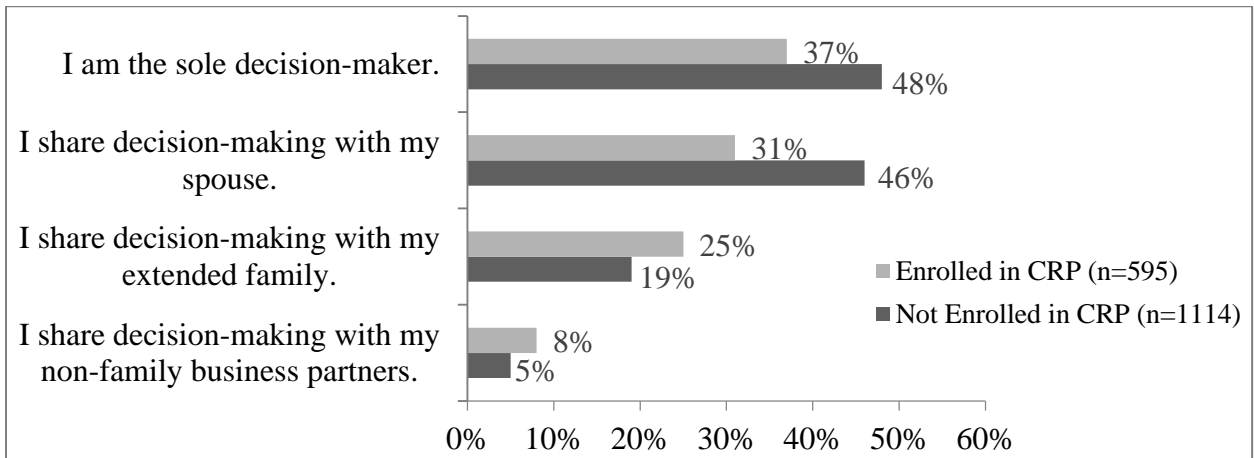


Figure 20. Level of responsibility for making decisions regarding the agricultural property owned.

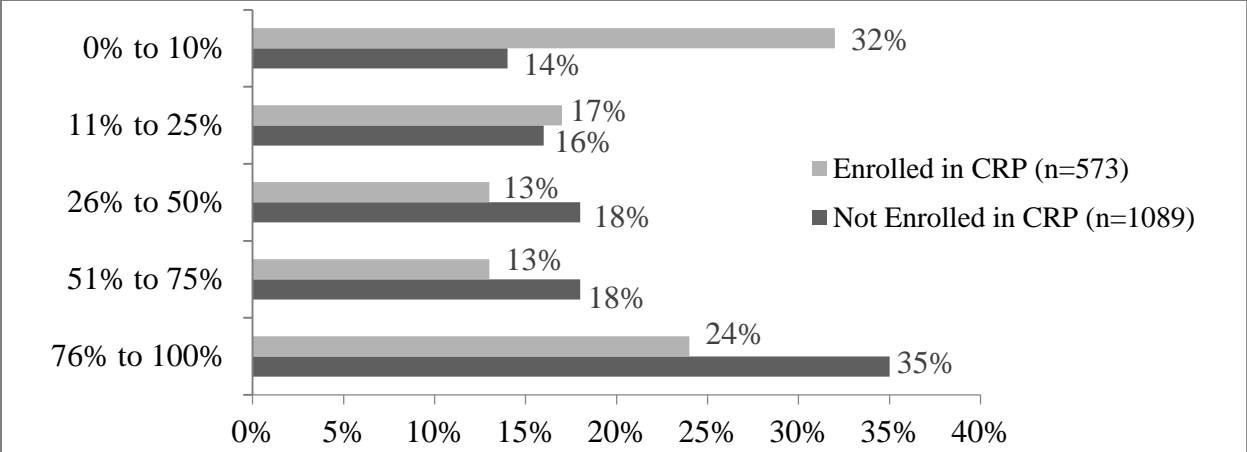


Figure 21. Percentage of total net household income that comes from the farm.

Farming and Wildlife Conservation in Illinois



Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Division of Wildlife Resources
&
The Illinois Natural History Survey



The Department of Natural Resources is requesting disclosure of information that is necessary to accomplish the statutory purpose as outlined under the Illinois Compiled Statutes, The Wildlife Code, Chapter 520. Disclosure of information is voluntary. This study is funded by the federal Wildlife Restoration Fund through your purchase of hunting arms and ammunition.

ALL RESPONSES ARE CONFIDENTIAL
THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!

Postage-paid return envelope provided

We ask the person in your home that makes most of the farming decisions to take 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire. The respondent must be over 18 years old.

Section 1. About Your Farm. Please help us find out more about farm land conservation by completing the questions below.

1. How many acres do you own? _____ Acres
2. Do you use your land for crops or livestock? (Please check all that apply)
 - Yes, I farm/raise livestock on my land
 - Yes, my land is operated by someone else
 - Yes, I lease my land for farming/livestock operations
 - No, my land is not farmed or used to raise livestock (Please go to question 3)

2a. Please give the number of acres that you had in production for the following in 2015.

	Acres Owned	Acres Leased
Corn	_____	_____
Soybeans	_____	_____
Other grains (wheat, oats, sorghum, etc.)	_____	_____
Hay/alfalfa/clover	_____	_____
Pasture	_____	_____
Orchards	_____	_____
Fallow	_____	_____
Other: _____	_____	_____

3. Please state how familiar you are with each of the different conservation programs listed below by circling the number that matches your response.

	Not at All Familiar	Familiar but have not participated	Participated in the past but not now	I currently participate
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)	1	2	3	4
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)	1	2	3	4
Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)	1	2	3	4
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)	1	2	3	4
State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE)	1	2	3	4
Farmable Wetlands Program (FWP)	1	2	3	4
Source Water Protection Program (SWPP)	1	2	3	4
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	1	2	3	4

4. Which of the following best describes your participation in a conservation program? (Please choose **one** response)
 - I currently participate and plan to re-enroll. (Please go to **Section 2**)
 - I currently participate but do not plan to re-enroll. (Please go to **Section 2**)
 - I used to participate but no longer do so. (Please go to **Section 3**)
 - I have never participated. (Please go to **Section 3**)

Section 2. Please ONLY complete this section if you currently participate in a conservation program.

1. Please give the number of acres you **currently** have enrolled in each of the following and the expiration date for each farm conservation program.

	Acres	Expiration Date	I plan on re-enrolling (Check all that apply)
Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)	_____	_____	_____
Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)	_____	_____	_____
Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)	_____	_____	_____
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)	_____	_____	_____
State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE)	_____	_____	_____
Farmable Wetlands Program (FWP)	_____	_____	_____
Source Water Protection Program (SWPP)	_____	_____	_____
Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)	_____	_____	_____

2. Which of the following conservation practices do you have on your land? (Please check all that apply)

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> native grasses/forbs | <input type="checkbox"/> wetland/stream buffers | <input type="checkbox"/> rare/declining habitat |
| <input type="checkbox"/> wildlife food plot | <input type="checkbox"/> wetland restoration | <input type="checkbox"/> tree planting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> wildlife habitat | <input type="checkbox"/> farmable wetlands | <input type="checkbox"/> wildlife habitat corridor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> habitat for upland birds | <input type="checkbox"/> shallow water for wildlife | <input type="checkbox"/> non-native grasses/ legumes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: (Please identify) _____ | | |

3. If you are currently enrolled in any of the programs above, have you ever received guidance about your land from an individual or organization?

- Yes (Please go to question 3a) No (Please go to question 6)

3a. If “Yes,” please rate the assistance you received by circling the number that matches your response.

Source of Assistance	Not Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Moderately Helpful	Very Helpful	Did Not Use
Illinois Department of Natural Resources	1	2	3	4	5
University Extension	1	2	3	4	5
Crop Advisor	1	2	3	4	5
Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)	1	2	3	4	5
USDA (other than NRCS)	1	2	3	4	5
Pheasants Forever/Quail Forever	1	2	3	4	5
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	1	2	3	4	5
County Soil and Water District	1	2	3	4	5
Friends/Family/Neighbors	1	2	3	4	5
Other (Please identify):	1	2	3	4	5

4. If guidance was **helpful**, please give the reasons it was by selecting from the list below. Please select all that apply. Assistance **helped** me...

- enroll in conservation programs develop a management plan focus on certain species
 seek out more information increase the number of acres in conservation programs interact with other farmers on conservation practices
 Other: (Please identify) _____

5. If guidance was **not helpful**, please give the reasons by selecting from the list below. Please select all that apply. Assistance did **not** help me...

- enroll in conservation programs develop a management plan focus on certain species
 seek out more information increase the number of acres in conservation programs interact with other farmers on conservation practices
 Other: (Please identify) _____

6. Please rate the importance to you for enrolling in conservation programs by circling the number that best matches your response.

	Not at all Important		Slightly Important		Moderately Important		Extremely Important
I enroll because it ...							
... reduces soil erosion.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... improves water quality.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... improves air quality.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... increases wildlife habitat.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... increases opportunities for me/my family to hunt.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... increases wildlife watching opportunities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... changes the scenic quality of my farm.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... conserves native prairie.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... best financial option for those acres.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... my parents or grandparents did it.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Other: (Please identify) _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

7. Which of the species listed below benefit most from your management? (Please check all that apply)

- Pheasants/quail Deer Wild Turkey
 Songbirds Small Mammals Waterfowl
 Other: (Please list) _____

8. If you were not receiving payment for participating in the programs listed above or other similar programs, would you continue to engage in the conservation practices?

Definitely No	Probably No	Not Sure	Probably Yes	Definitely Yes
1	2	3	4	5

8a. If "Yes," please circle the amount of acres total you would enroll compared to what you have enrolled now.

Much Less	Less	Same	More	Much More
1	2	3	4	5

Section 3. Please complete this section ONLY if you are not renewing, allowed your contract to expire, or never have enrolled in conservation programs.

1. If you **do not plan on re-enrolling, did not renew or never enrolled** in a conservation program, please explain by circling the number that best matches your response.

I have not or will no longer participate because ...	Not at all Important		Slightly Important		Moderately Important		Extremely Important
... I need to increase my income.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... it gives the government too much control over what I do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... it will decrease options for using my property.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... the costs to participate are too high.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... it is too labor intensive.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... there is not enough time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... I put more land into production.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... compensation is not enough.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... there is too much paperwork.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... it is not typically practiced in my community.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Other: (Please identify)_____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section 4. Land and Wildlife Habitat. Please answer the following statements about wildlife habitat quality.

1. Please state how much you **disagree** or **agree** with each of the following statements about improving wildlife habitat by circling the number that matches your response.

	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
Farmers are doing their part to protect wildlife habitat.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is my personal responsibility to help protect wildlife.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My actions improve wildlife habitat.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My farming practices improve wildlife habitat.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. Please indicate how **likely** it is that the people (or groups of people) listed below would expect you to implement conservation practices.

	Extremely Unlikely	Moderately Unlikely	Slightly Unlikely	Neutral	Slightly Likely	Moderately Likely	Extremely Likely
My family	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Other farmers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Environmental organizations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My neighbors	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Government agencies	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. Would you be interested in participating in a local workshop to learn more about the benefits of Conservation programs in your area?

___ Yes ___ No

4. Please state how much you **disagree** or **agree** with each of the following statements by circling the number that best represents your response.

Conservation practices to improve soil, air, water and wildlife habitat quality would ...	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
... make me a more effective farmer.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... improve my community.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... imply I receive financial compensation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... continue my farm's traditional management.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... create opportunities to sell hunting access to my land.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... conserve a working farm for the next generation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... minimize taxes.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... reduce my work load.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... be appreciated by other farmers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... reduce my operating costs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
... maximize income and provide conservation benefits.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section 5. Wildlife Agencies and Organizations. Please answer the following about your opinions of the agencies and organizations listed below. Please state how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements by circling **ONE NUMBER** for each agency.

Manages wildlife as I would...	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Illinois DNR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pheasants/Quail Forever	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NRCS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Soil and Water Conservation District	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Manages land as I would...	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neutral	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Illinois DNR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Pheasants/Quail Forever	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NRCS	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Soil and Water Conservation District	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section 6. Land Management. Please answer the following questions about land management.

1. Please state how much you **disagree** or **agree** with each of the following statements about people's relationship with land by circling the number that best represents your response.

	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
Lands should be managed to benefit people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Needs of people should take priority over land protection.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Land is primarily for people to use.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Land has value whether people use it or not.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Land should be managed so that the environment benefits.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I feel an emotional bond with the land.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Conserving land is important for future generations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Primary purpose of my land is to provide products useful to people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Farmers have the right to use their land as they see fit.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Farmers have an obligation to consider how their management affects other people.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Other people have no right to tell private landowners how to manage their land.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Farmers have an obligation to maintain the land for future generations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Private landowner rights outweigh any responsibilities the landowner has to manage land for public benefit.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
The public has a role in deciding how private land is used.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Conservation is a voluntary choice of the landowner.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Conservation is one of the responsibilities of private landownership.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section 7. Background Information. The following questions about yourself are important to help understand more about how farmers feel about conservation programs. All responses are kept confidential.

1. Please give your age. _____ Years
2. What is your gender? _____ Male _____ Female
3. For the agricultural property that you own, who has primary responsibility for making decisions?
_____ I am the sole decision-maker
_____ I share decision-making with my spouse
_____ I share decision-making with my extended family
_____ I share decision-making with my non-family business partners
4. Approximately what percentage of your total net household income is from the farm? (Please check one)
_____ 0% to 10% _____ 11% to 25% _____ 26% to 50% _____ 51% to 75% _____ 76% to 100%

Comments:



THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND ASSISTANCE!
Please return this survey in the postage-paid envelope provided.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources receives federal assistance and therefore must comply with federal anti-discrimination laws. In compliance with the Illinois Human Rights Act, the Illinois Constitution, Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act as amended, and the U.S. Constitution, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, or disability. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility, please contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, Department of Natural Resources, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62701-1787, (217) 782-7616 or the Officer of Human Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Appendix B



ILLINOIS NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

Prairie Research Institute
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

January 12, 2016

Dear Illinois Farmer,

You are one of a select group of Illinois farmers chosen to participate in the “Farming and Wildlife Conservation in Illinois” survey. Illinois farmers’ opinions about the present state of wildlife conservation programs will continue to shape our management of wildlife resources in Illinois.

Your input will help us understand agriculture producers’ opinions about wildlife conservation programs, farming practices, and other issues in Illinois. Please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us as soon as possible in the envelope provided. No postage is required, and all responses will be kept strictly confidential.

You may access the results of this and other studies of Illinois residents at <http://www.inhs.illinois.edu/programs/hd/>.

If you have any questions regarding this survey, please call (217) 244-5121.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig A. Miller".

Craig A. Miller
Human Dimensions Research Program



1816 South Oak Street,
Champaign, Illinois 61820 USA

Appendix C

Dear Illinois Farmer,

You have been selected to participate in the Illinois Farming and Wildlife Survey. A survey questionnaire was recently mailed to you. We have not received your completed questionnaire at this time. **If you have returned the questionnaire, we thank you. If you have not filled out and returned the questionnaire, please do so as soon as possible. Your input is very important!** Your name and address will be deleted from our mailing list when your questionnaire is received.

Thank you for your cooperation.



Appendix D



ILLINOIS NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

Prairie Research Institute
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

February 10, 2016

Dear Illinois Farmer,

You are one of a select group of Illinois farmers chosen to participate in the Illinois Farming and Wildlife survey. We recently mailed you a survey questionnaire, "Farming and Wildlife Conservation in Illinois". **If you have not returned your completed questionnaire to us, please do so as soon as possible. We have enclosed another copy of the questionnaire.**

We realize you are busy and appreciate your response. Your input will help us understand public opinion about wildlife conservation issues and Illinois agriculture. Please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed survey questionnaire and return it to us as soon as possible in the envelope provided. No postage is required, and all responses will be kept strictly confidential.

You may access the results of this and other studies of Illinois residents at <http://www.inhs.illinois.edu/programs/hd/>.

If you have any questions regarding this survey, please call (217) 244-5121.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig A. Miller".

Craig A. Miller
Human Dimensions Research Program



1816 South Oak Street,
Champaign, Illinois 61820 USA

Appendix E



ILLINOIS NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

Prairie Research Institute
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

March 15, 2016

Dear Illinois Farmer,

You are one of a select group of Illinois farmers chosen to participate in the Illinois Farming and Wildlife survey. We recently mailed you a survey questionnaire, "Farming and Wildlife Conservation in Illinois". **If you have not returned your completed questionnaire to us, please do so as soon as possible.** We realize you are busy and appreciate your response.

Your input will help us understand public opinion about wildlife conservation issues and Illinois agriculture. Please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed survey questionnaire and return it to us as soon as possible in the envelope provided. No postage is required, and all responses will be kept strictly confidential.

You may access the results of this and other studies of Illinois residents at <http://www.inhs.illinois.edu/programs/hd/>.

If you have any questions regarding this survey, please call (217) 244-5121.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig A. Miller".

Craig A. Miller
Human Dimensions Research Program



1816 South Oak Street,
Champaign, Illinois 61820 USA