

Improving the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program to Ensure Longevity of Voluntary Conservation Efforts

Document Overview

Beginning on the following page are the survey instrument questions as they will appear to respondents. Below is a summary of the project and comments found within the survey instrument explain the utility of each section.

Summary

The Partners for Fish and Wildlife (Partners) Program of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) delivers fish and wildlife conservation by supporting voluntary habitat restoration through financial and technical assistance to private landowners. The Partners Program was established in 1987 out of the recognition that an estimated 1.5 billion acres of this Nation's land is privately owned and that approximately 75 percent of fish and wildlife species depend on these areas. In order to more effectively and efficiently manage this Program and work more collaboratively with and meet the needs of private landowners, the Service requests Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval of a voluntary survey¹ of individual landowners who worked with the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (Partners Program) in the past.

This information collection seeks to better understand the following:

- satisfaction of past participants with the Partners Program
- past participants' retention of conservation practices
- past participants' conservation behavior as a result of Partners Program participation
- factors that encourage participants to work with the Partners Program,
- how participants' involvement in the Partners Program relates to continued environmental stewardship.

¹ This mail survey will utilize Dillman's 2014 "Tailored Design Method" and results will always be reported in aggregate, never individually.

[WORKING TITLE] YOUR EXPERIENCE WORKING WITH THE US FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
PARTNERS FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE PROGRAM

1. What type of operation(s) do you have on your property? (Check all that apply)
 - Cattle
 - Sheep
 - Other livestock
 - Farming / Agriculture
 - Outfitting (fishing, hunting)
 - Dude Ranch / Agricultural-tourism
 - Oil, Gas, Mineral extraction
 - Timber harvesting
 - Recreation
 - Other(s) (please list): _____
2. About how many acres is your operation? _____ Number of acres
3. About how many years has your family or group owned this property? _____ Number of years
4. Think back to the project listed in the cover letter that was associated with this survey. For each project you may have worked on several individual tasks or practices. Which of the following types of practices did you work on with the Partners Program?
(Check all that apply)
 - Planting
 - Water Management
 - Fencing
 - Stream Modification
 - Grazing Management
 - Farm Management
 - Invasive Species Control
 - Fire Management
 - Vegetation Management
 - Fish/Aquatic Species Passage
5. Of the selections you made above, which ONE PRACTICE was the most important to you?
Write-in: _____

For the rest of this questionnaire please answer each question with the single practice in mind.

1. Did you keep the practice in place after the agreement with the Partners Program expired?
 - Yes
 - No if 'no' skip to question 6

2. About how long past the end of the agreement with the Partners Program **did you keep** the practice in place?

- The practice is still in place
- I removed the practice...
 - Less than a year after
 - A year after
 - 2 years after
 - 3 to 4 years after
 - 5 to 6 years after
 - 7 + years after
- Don't know

3. If the practice is still in place beyond the terms of the agreement, how long **do you intend to keep** the practice in place?

- 1 to 2 years
- 3 to 5 years
- 6 to 15 years
- 16 to 20 years
- More than 20 years
- As long as I own the property

4. What factors would **encourage** you to **remove** the practice?

	Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree
I can increase my income by removing the practice	1	2	3	4	5
The practice is intrusive and gets in the way of my operation	1	2	3	4	5
The practice does not work as it was intended	1	2	3	4	5
I want to reduce government influence on my property	1	2	3	4	5
The practice had negative unintended consequences	1	2	3	4	5

Please explain:

Other(s) (please describe):

5. What factors would **encourage** you to **keep** the practice?

	Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree
I can increase my income by keeping the practice	1	2	3	4	5
The practice enhances my operation (e.g., improves my forage, enhances recreational opportunities and enhances the aesthetics of my property)	1	2	3	4	5
The practice works as intended	1	2	3	4	5
I want to work with the government	1	2	3	4	5
The practice has unintended benefits	1	2	3	4	5

Please explain:

Other(s) (please describe):

6. If you answered No in question 1, why did you NOT keep the practice in place after the agreement with the Partners Program expired? (If you DID keep the practice in place please skip to question 7)

	Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree
I was able to increase my income by removing the practice	1	2	3	4	5
The practice was intrusive and got in the way of my operation	1	2	3	4	5
The practice did not work as it was intended	1	2	3	4	5
I wanted to reduce government influence on my property	1	2	3	4	5
The practice had negative unintended consequences	1	2	3	4	5

Please explain:

Other(s) (please describe):

7. Thinking of the practice you identified in the first section of this survey, to what extent did each of the following influence you to work with the Partners Program on that practice?

	Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree
I wanted to improve my property	1	2	3	4	5
I wanted to leave my land in a good state for my kids and/or grandkids	1	2	3	4	5
I wanted to do conservation on my property	1	2	3	4	5
I was encouraged by my friends, neighbors and/or business associates	1	2	3	4	5
I wanted to increase my income through property improvements from					
Increased forage yield	1	2	3	4	5
Increased hunting lease quality and quantity	1	2	3	4	5
Increased recreation opportunities on my land other than hunting and fishing	1	2	3	4	5
I trusted the Partners Program staff	1	2	3	4	5
I value wildlife and their habitat	1	2	3	4	5
I wanted to establish a relationship with the Partners Program prior to any potential Endangered Species listing decision	1	2	3	4	5
I wanted technical assistance	1	2	3	4	5
I felt a moral obligation to protect wildlife	1	2	3	4	5
Other(s) (please describe):					

8. Overall, how satisfied are you with your experience working with the Partners Program on the identified practice?:

- Extremely dissatisfied
- Slightly dissatisfied
- Neither dissatisfied nor satisfied
- Slightly satisfied
- Extremely satisfied

9. Overall, how satisfied are you with the following aspects of the Partner Program?

	Extremely Dissatisfied	Slightly Dissatisfied	Neither	Slightly Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied
Staff	1	2	3	4	5
Policies	1	2	3	4	5
The terms of the agreement	1	2	3	4	5
Cost-share arrangement	1	2	3	4	5
Technical assistance	1	2	3	4	5
Ability to manage my property under the terms of the agreement	1	2	3	4	5

10. Did your initial experience working with Partners Program encourage you to work on another project with the Partners Program?

- Yes If yes, please continue
- No If 'no' skip to question 12

11. What factors led you to the decision to work on another project with the Partners Program (Check all that apply)?

- I wanted to improve my property
- I value the outcomes of conservation activities
- I want to have more wildlife on my property
- I enjoy working with Partners Program staff
- I believe Partners Program staff will work with me for the duration of the project
- I wanted protection from the Endangered Species Act
- Other(s) (please describe):

12. Did your initial experience with Partners Program encourage you to work on a conservation project(s) with another conservation organization (e.g., USDA/NRCS-FSA, local or state government, land trusts or non-governmental organizations)?

- Yes If yes, what organization: _____

Please describe the project: _____

- No If no, why did your initial experience working with Partners Program encourage you to NOT work on a conservation project with another conservation organization?
Please explain: _____

13 Did working with the Partners Program to benefit wildlife make you more or less likely to want to continue conservation work on your property (either with the Partners Program or another conservation organization)?

- Less likely
- Neither
- More likely

14. What types of conservation organization(s) are you aware of and are available for you to work with meaning you could potentially partner on a conversation project with? (Circle your responses to both)

	Are you aware of:		Available to work with	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Local government agencies (for example municipal or county)	Yes	No	Yes	No
State government programs (for example State wildlife agency, State Parks)	Yes	No	Yes	No
Federal agencies (for example Farm Service Agency (FSA) that administers the CRP program)	Yes	No	Yes	No
Land Trusts (for example Cattleman's' Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy)	Yes	No	Yes	No
Non Governmental Organizations (for example Ducks Unlimited, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Trout Unlimited)	Yes	No	Yes	No
Other(s) (please describe): _____	Yes	No	Yes	No

15. Would you consider working with any of these organizations in the future?

- Yes If yes, which organizations: _____
- No
- Don't know

16. Other than the Partners Program, have you worked with other conservation organizations (e.g., USDA/NRCS-FSA, local or state government, land trusts or non-governmental organizations)?

- Yes If yes, what organizations:

- No

17 To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements regarding working with the Partners Program?

	Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel that the Partners Program will maintain a relationship with me for the long haul	1	2	3	4	5
I trust the Partners Program staff	1	2	3	4	5
The cost-share arrangement with the Partners Program fits my financial needs	1	2	3	4	5
The Partners Program bureaucracy /paperwork/ red tape is not burdensome	1	2	3	4	5
The Partners Program allows me to still manage my property the way I want to	1	2	3	4	5
The Partners Program places no permanent restrictions on my property	1	2	3	4	5
The Partners Program helps me better prepare for potential endangered species listing decisions	1	2	3	4	5
My family, friends, neighbors and/or business associates work with the Partners Program	1	2	3	4	5
I've worked with the Partners Program in the past and had a good experience	1	2	3	4	5
I needed technical assistance to help plan restoration activities that were beneficial	1	2	3	4	5

to wildlife on my operation

18. Were there any factors that lead you to work with the Partners Program instead of other organizations? Please be as specific as possible.

19. Was there anything about the Partners Program that made you hesitant to want to work with them? Please be as specific as possible.

- Yes If yes, what were those things:

- No
- Don't know

20. In your opinion, how can the Partners Program improve to make itself better for landowners?

21. To what extent do you **disagree** or **agree** with each of the following statements about land ownership by circling the number that matches your response.

	Strongly Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Strongly Agree
Landowners have the right to use their land as they see fit.	1	2	3	4	5
Landowners have an obligation to consider how their management affects other people.	1	2	3	4	5
Other people have no right to tell private landowners how to manage their land.	1	2	3	4	5
Landowners have an obligation to maintain the land for future generations.	1	2	3	4	5
Private landowner rights outweigh any responsibilities the landowner has to manage land for public benefit.	1	2	3	4	5
The public has a role in deciding how	1	2	3	4	5

private land is used.

Conservation is a voluntary choice of the landowner. 1 2 3 4 5

Conservation is one of the responsibilities of private landownership. 1 2 3 4 5

Conservation is a state of harmony between people and land. 1 2 3 4 5

When people see land as a community to which they belong, they may begin to use it with love and respect. 1 2 3 4 5

Land management is right when it tends to preserve the integrity of the land. 1 2 3 4 5

People abuse land because they regard it as a commodity belonging to them. 1 2 3 4 5

Landowners have an obligation to manage the land in the interest of the community. 1 2 3 4 5

A landowner is a custodian of the land. 1 2 3 4 5

Landowners have a responsibility to manage land for private and public benefit. 1 2 3 4 5

The private landowner is a custodian of wildlife. 1 2 3 4 5

22. Are you: ____ Male or ____ Female

23. What is your age? ____ Years old

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: We estimate it will take you 18 minutes to complete the survey, including time to read instructions, gather information, and complete and submit the survey. We will use the information to support voluntary habitat restoration through financial and technical assistance and to better meet the needs of private landowners. Your response is voluntary and results will be anonymous. We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. You may submit comments on any aspect of this information collection to the Information Collection Clearance Officer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 5275 Leesburg Pike, MS: BPHC, Falls Church, VA 22041-3803. Please do not send your survey to this address.