

Cognitive Interview Session Guide

OMB # 0596-0078

Expiration date: to be updated

*NOTE: The format of this screener guide can be used with any question set in the packet for pretesting.

PREPARATION:

- Identify landowners to interview
- Send landowners an envelope with a copy of the survey instrument that will be used during the interview, but instruct them not to open the envelope until the interview ➤
- Arrange a date and time for the interview (allot 1 hour per interview)

CALLING LANDOWNER:

- Interviewer: <NAME> ➤ Observer(s): <NAME(S)>

INTERVIEWER'S SEAT:

- Clock
- Survey Instrument
- Coffee

OBSERVER(S)'S SEAT:

- Survey instrument
- Notepad/pen to take detailed notes

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE TABLE:

- Audio recorder
- Phone

A. OVERVIEW

WELCOME

Good [morning/afternoon/evening]. This is <INTERVIEWER'S NAME> and I will be the interviewer for today's call. And over the next hour, we will be talking about your land in [state] and more precisely, the part of your land that is covered by trees.

AGENDA

During this call, you will be doing a few things:

- Going through the survey question by question; and
- Answering additional questions from me as you go through the survey.

There are no wrong answers. We want to hear your opinions.

MODERATOR INTRODUCTION

I am a researcher from the USDA Forest Service and I am here to interview you and listen to your answers.

I will apologize upfront that at times you may get frustrated with me. During our interview, you can ask me any questions that you want, but it is highly unlikely that I will be allowed to answer them. But after the interview is over, I will be happy to answer any questions that I can.

I have a series of questions that I need to cover, so at times I may need to ask you to wrap-up your thoughts and we'll have to move on.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to say thank you for participating in this interview. We really appreciate you taking time out of your schedule to talk with us today.

DISCLOSURES

I also wanted to let you know that we will be using an audio recorder for today's interview. I am sure you will say many interesting things and we want to make sure we can capture all of it.

These recordings are strictly for research purposes, they will not go beyond the research team. Individual statements will never be attributed to specific individuals, but we may say that landowners in [state] said x.

INTRODUCE OBSERVER(S)

Also on the phone call is <OBSERVERS>. S/he [they] will be observing today's discussion.

GUIDELINES

To help facilitate today's discussion, here are a few guidelines:

- Read each question and all of its answer choices aloud.
- Once you read the question, start to think aloud. Tell us any thoughts you might have about the question, the answer choices, or how you will answer the question.
- Talk in a loud, clear voice
- Remember, there are no wrong answers, we want **your** opinion

- Along the way, we will be asking you questions. For example, we might ask what a certain word means to you, or we might ask you to paraphrase a question in your own words. We might ask why you answered a question in a certain way. We might ask how you arrived at your answer, if the question was easy or hard, or ask you to elaborate on what you were thinking.

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[The rest of the cognitive interviewing time is allotted to going over sections of the survey to see how landowners respond. Below are the possible sections of the National Woodland Owner Survey Long Form available to go through in the focus groups. Sections of the Urban Survey, Corporate Survey, Public Survey, Science Modules, Islands survey, or state-specific questions can also be substituted in the below sections. Choose a subset of the below topics or a subset of the other forms to go over in more detail during the cognitive interview. Interviews will not go beyond the allotted time.]

B. OWNER INTRODUCTION

Before we get started, it would be great if we could hear a little bit about you and the land that you own. Can you tell me:

- Where you own land?
- How many acres of land you own?
- How many of these acres are covered by trees?
- Something special or memorable about the land to you.

C. INSTRUCTIONS AND ACREAGE

Please read the instructions to yourself and let me know when you are done.

[Wait until landowner says they are done].

Did those instructions make sense to you? Was anything confusing?

Please read question 1 and all of the answer choices out loud. As you read thru the question and answer choices, tell me what you are thinking as you answer the question. Let's go on to question 2. Please read the definitions of wooded land to yourself and let me know when you are done.

[Wait until landowner says they are done.]

Did the definition of woodland and rangeland make sense to you?

What do these terms mean to you?

What words do you use to describe your land?

Were you able to easily apply these definitions to your land?

D. OWNERSHIP BASICS

Please read questions [3-8 – do one at a time], and all of the answer choices out loud. As you read through the question and answer choices, tell me what you are thinking as you answer the question.

[For each question, ask:] Was it difficult to answer?

[For each question, ask:] What on here was confusing?

E. REASONS FOR OWNING

What are the main reasons that you own your wooded land?

[Can you tell me more about that?]

[What do you mean by ___?]

[What else?]

Please read question 9 and all of the answer choices out loud. As you read through the question and answer choices, tell me what you are thinking as you answer the question. Was it difficult to answer?

Did we miss any reasons for owning on the list?

F. HISTORY OF WOODED LAND

Please read question 10 and all of the answer choices out loud. As you read through the question and answer choices, tell me what you are thinking as you answer the question. Was it difficult to answer?

What on here was confusing?

Please read question 11 and all of the answer choices out loud. As you read through the question and answer choices, tell me what you are thinking as you answer the question.

G. USES OF WOODED LAND

Please read questions [12-22] and all of the answer choices out loud. As you read through the question and answer choices, tell me what you are thinking as you answer the question.

[For each question, ask:] Was it difficult to answer?

[For each question, ask:] What on here was confusing?

H. Recreation

Please read questions [23-24] and all of the answer choices out loud. As you read through the question and answer choices, tell me what you are thinking as you answer the question.

[For each question, ask:] Was it difficult to answer?

[For each question, ask:] What on here was confusing?

I. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Please read questions [25-28] and all of the answer choices out loud. As you read through the question and answer choices, tell me what you are thinking as you answer the question.

[For each question, ask:] Was it difficult to answer?

[For each question, ask:] What on here was confusing?

J. CONCERNS

Please read question 29 and all of the answer choices out loud. As you read through the question and answer choices, tell me what you are thinking as you answer the question. Was it difficult to answer?

Did we miss any concerns on the list?

K. FUTURE

Please read questions [30-31] and all of the answer choices out loud. As you read through the question and answer choices, tell me what you are thinking as you answer the question.

[For each question, ask:] Was it difficult to answer?

[For each question, ask:] What on here was confusing?

L. DEMOGRAPHICS

Please read questions [32-37] and all of the answer choices out loud. As you read through the question and answer choices, tell me what you are thinking as you answer the question.

[For each question, ask:] Was it difficult to answer?

[For each question, ask:] What on here was confusing?

M. CLOSING

Thank you very much for your time. Before we hang up, do you have any other comments you would like to add?

Thank you and have a good [morning/afternoon/night]!

