

Welcome to the 2024 Polk County Local Working Group Meeting



Housekeeping:

1. This meeting is being recorded
2. Silence phone, mute self on zoom
3. Questions for end
4. Break
5. (Optional) brunch and networking at end

Purpose:

- To build and expand partnerships
- Evaluate natural resources
- Collaboratively prioritize and improve identified natural resource concerns

Objectives:

1. Present updates from NRCS and Polk SWCD
2. Small group discussion about natural resource concerns
3. Possible development of a natural resource committee based on feedback



Who are we?

POLK



**Soil & Water
Conservation District**



United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service



Kevin Porter

District Manager
Polk SWCD



Technical assistance and Outreach Grants

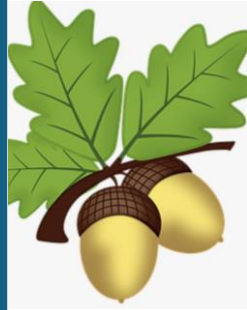
Effective and equitable outreach, conservation education, technical assistance, and land stewardship have never been more important. Through historic federal investments such as the Inflation Reduction Act, NRCS will invest over \$20 billion in working lands conservation over five years.

In order to achieve its climate and conservation goals, NRCS must enroll new and underserved producers into its conservation programs. Conservation Districts, their respective state/territory associations and agencies, Resource Conservation & Development Councils, and Tribal organizations help provide the outreach, education, mentoring and technical assistance that helps farmers, ranchers, and forest stewards make informed decisions on their lands to enhance its sustainability.

NACD and NRCS share the goals of impacting individual producers and communities, as well as equitably increasing civic engagement to strengthen the locally led conservation delivery system.

Individual Impacts:

Increase the number of producers who implement conservation plans and practices



Acknowledge and address historical barriers with the goals of:



introducing new and historically underserved producers to conservation

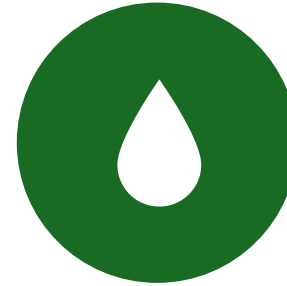
increasing participation in NRCS programs

improving approaches to outreach and technical assistance

Community Impacts:



Improve economic and environmental resilience in rural and urban communities



Address environmental justice issues, such as food security and access, heat equity, and clean water initiatives



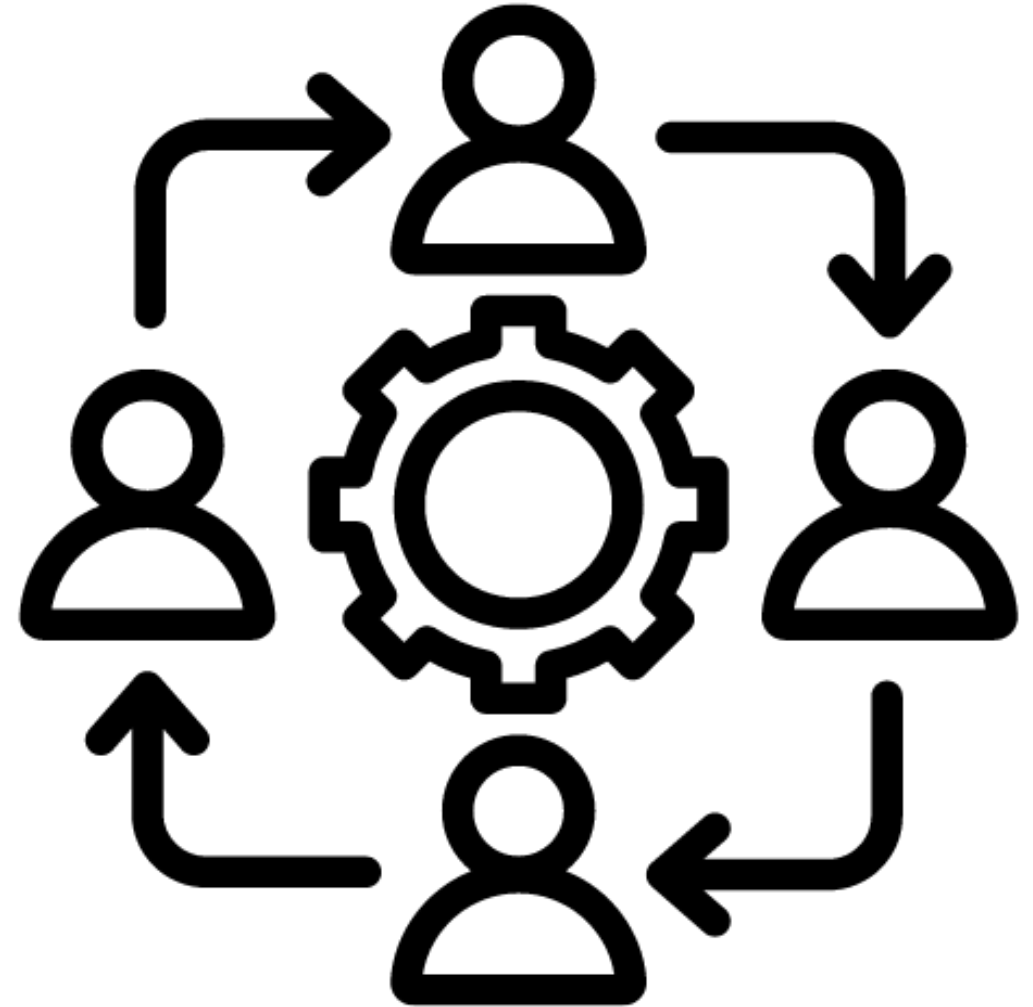
Develop conservationists and leaders within the communities for long-term sustainment of programs and investments



Support and advance tribal conservation goals

Civic Engagement:

- Increase or create new opportunities for civic engagement in conservation
- Increase awareness of the locally led conservation system and how producers' voices can impact community outcomes
- Develop and implement inclusive board succession plans/processes that advance DEIJA and ensure locally led conservation remains a core community value



- Polk County, Oregon has substantial forested lot-sized housing developments and larger urban/suburban residential properties that represent a significant amount of marginally managed timberland.
- We would like to perform Outreach and Technical Assistance to help promote conservation education and forestry management, especially relating to managing urban and suburban forested areas for wildfire resistance.
- Polk County's population has grown 16% since 2010, with substantial housing being built in oak and Doug fir timberlands in the West Salem area, and south and west of Dallas.





Key implementation areas -

- Identify areas with overstocked tree stands and combine those landowners into management groups that can offer contractors and other partners benefits of scale to reduce costs
- Identify and treat areas with high invasive species pressure, with a focus on removing fuel loads for potential fire.

A photograph of a dense forest with tall trees and thick undergrowth. Sunlight filters through the canopy, creating a dappled light effect. The trees are mostly green, with some showing early autumn colors. The overall scene is a healthy, mature forest.

Key implementation areas -

- Assist with conversion to Oak Upland habitat where practical.
- Facilitate community engagement to keep landowners working together for conservation and fire reduction activities into the future.
- Include small commercial timber owners in meetings and outreach

Grant funding budget –

NACD					
TA Grant Proposed Budget Worksheet					
Applicant:		<u>Polk SWCD</u>			
	TA Grant Funding Cycle (such as TA2023):		<u>TA2023</u>		
Total Project Budget (Grant + Match):			\$37,500.00		
Expense Item		NACD Grant Funds	Match Funds Cash	In-Kind Credit Match	Justification (how expenditures contribute to project deliverables)
Salaries and Fringe* (with Contracted labor must be at least 80% of Project Budget) *Fringe includes the employer's share of taxes, social security and any benefits		\$11,250.00	\$11,250.00	\$0.00	Outreach coordinator, other staff time
Contracting		\$5,625.00	\$5,625.00		Contract Forester, Contract Habitat Restoration Consultant, ODF Forestry costs
Travel					
Supplies (total cost of supplies and equipment combined cannot exceed 10% of the project budget)		\$1,100.00	\$1,100.00	\$0.00	Fees, materials and supplies for outreach program and meetings
Equipment (unit cost greater than or equal to \$5,000)		\$775.00	\$775.00		For use on projects or demonstrations



Project success outcomes

- The scope of outreach is largely a population that the SWCD and NRCS has had no prior contact within Polk County.
- The SWCD can assist qualifying landowners in the proposed project with FSA paperwork, if they are interested in further participation in RCPP or other USDA programs.
- Education in a community that has significant in-migration, with property owners who may not be aware of management concerns in the area they live in.
- Community building and resiliency



Evelyn Conrad

District Conservationist
NRCS, Polk County

Climate Smart Ag & Forestry

Adaptation:

Adapting to Change

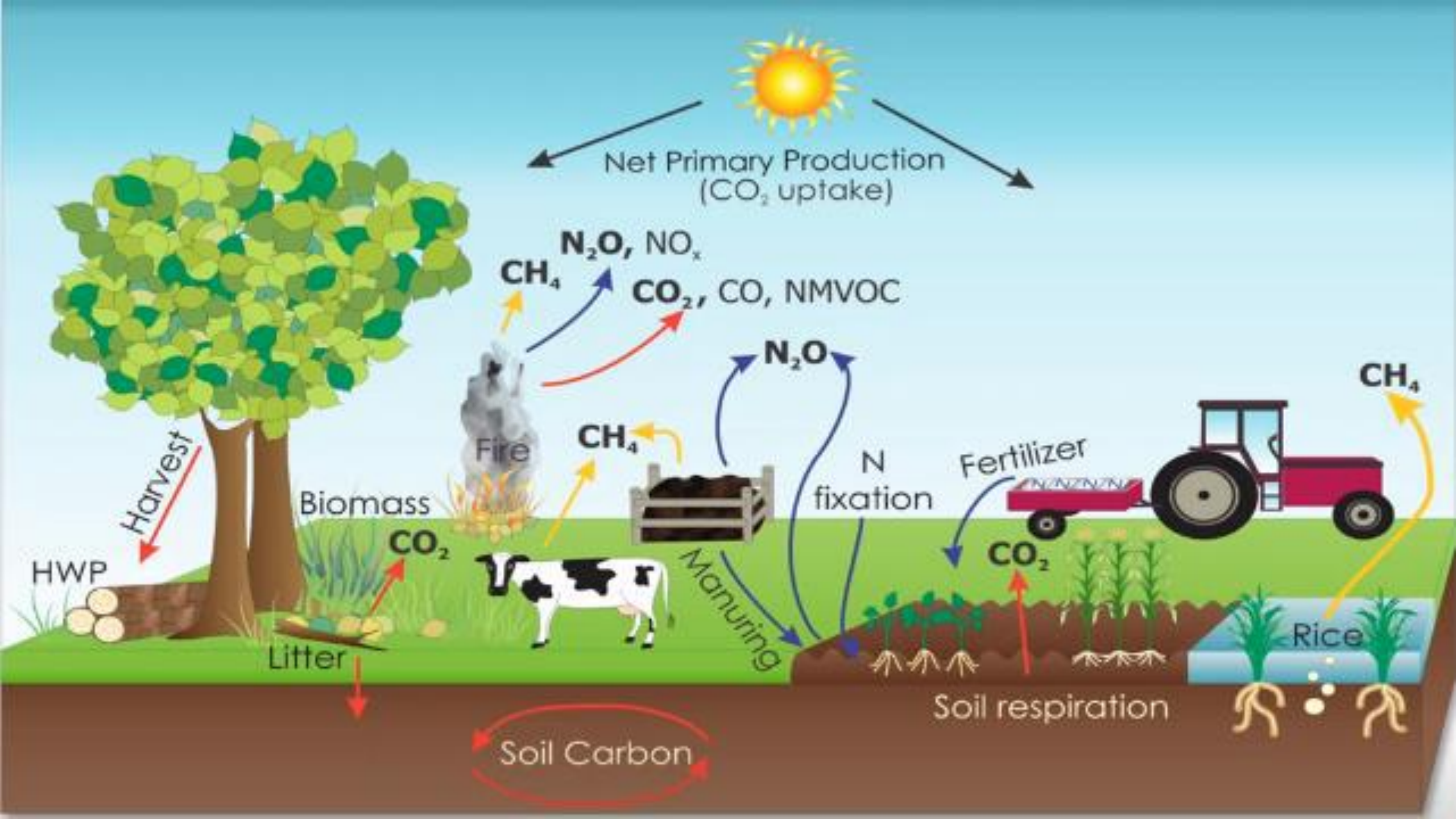
Building Resilience

Mitigating Impacts:

Reducing GHG



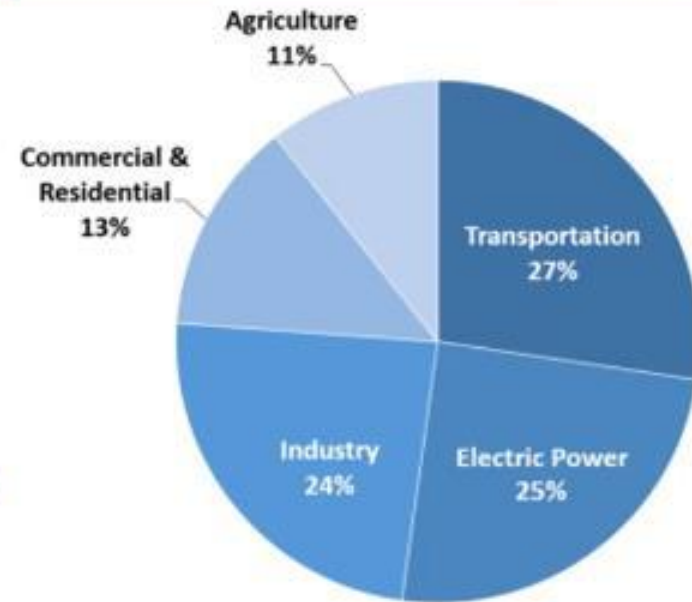
Increase Productivity, Income & Sustainability



Why Agricultural Mitigation?

- 17% of total global GHG emissions in 2018
- 11% of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions in 2020
 - 42% of methane emissions
 - 80% of nitrous oxide emissions
- The U.S. aims to achieve a **50-52% reduction from 2005 levels in economy-wide net GHG pollution in 2030** – this will require all sectors to take actions.

Sources of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions in 2020



Note: All emission estimates from the [Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks: 1990–2020](#).

Natural
Resources
Conservation
Service

nrcs.usda.gov/



NRCS Working Lands Practices... Work!

- as Climate Solutions



Cover crops



Anaerobic digester



Conservation buffers



Conservation tillage



Transition to Riparian Buffer

Conservation Co-Benefits - Soil Health, Atmospheric Carbon, Riparian Health, Sustainability



Transition to Grazing Management

Conservation Co-Benefits - Soil Health, Atmospheric Carbon, Livestock Health, Sustainability



Transition to No-Till/Reduced Till and Residue Management

Conservation Co-Benefits - Soil Health, Atmospheric Carbon, Nitrogen Management, Sustainability



Carbon Sequestration



Windbreak – CPS 380



Perennial Biomass and Soils



USDA employees, Paul Youngstrum and Eric McTaggart, examine a cover crop radish.
NRCS photo by Jody Christiansen.



EESI Benefits of Cover Crops



Cover Crop – CPS 340

Climate Smart Agricultural & Forestry Funding is Available

EQIP – Reimbursement
CSP- Stewardship

*Improve Resilience to Climate Change
Adapt, Mitigate, Sustain*

Purpose: Reduce GHG Emissions & Improve Soil Aggregate Stability

- Supports vegetative growth and carbon sequestration
- Improves management practices & reduces contributors to GHG.
- Supports transition to sustainable, mitigating agricultural practices.

EQIP General Funding Opportunities 2024:

- **Forest Resiliency in Face of Climate Change**
- **Meadow Restoration in Declining Habitats**
- **Polk County Oak Habitat Restoration**
- **Animal Feeding Operations**
- **Erosion In Orchards**

EQIP Initiative Funding Opportunities 2024:

- **National Initiatives: High Tunnels, Organic /Transition, Energy, Air Quality**
- **Conservation Incentive Contracts – Land mgmt. 5 year.**
- **Conservation Stewardship – Ag & Forest stewardship 5 year**
- **Agricultural Land Easements - Wetlands & Working Ag Lands**
- **Riparian Restoration: –Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program 10-15 yr**

NRCS Funding Opportunities

Website: Oregon NRCS

Search:

“WHAT’S AVAILABLE IN MY COUNTY?”

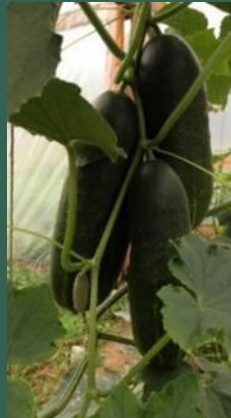
Select POLK County for funding options.



Jesse Warden

Soil Conservationist
NRCS, Polk County

High Tunnels / Organic Transition / Irrigation



High Tunnels / Organic Transition / Irrigation

Primary Resource Concerns Addressed:

High Tunnels:

Degraded plant condition - Plant productivity and health, extend growing season

Organic Transition:

All Resource Concerns – Transition from non-organic production to organic.

Irrigation: EQIP-CIC

Source Water Depletion

High Tunnel Initiative

High Tunnels Resource Concern Addressed:

- Degraded plant condition - Plant productivity and health, extend growing season

Project Description:

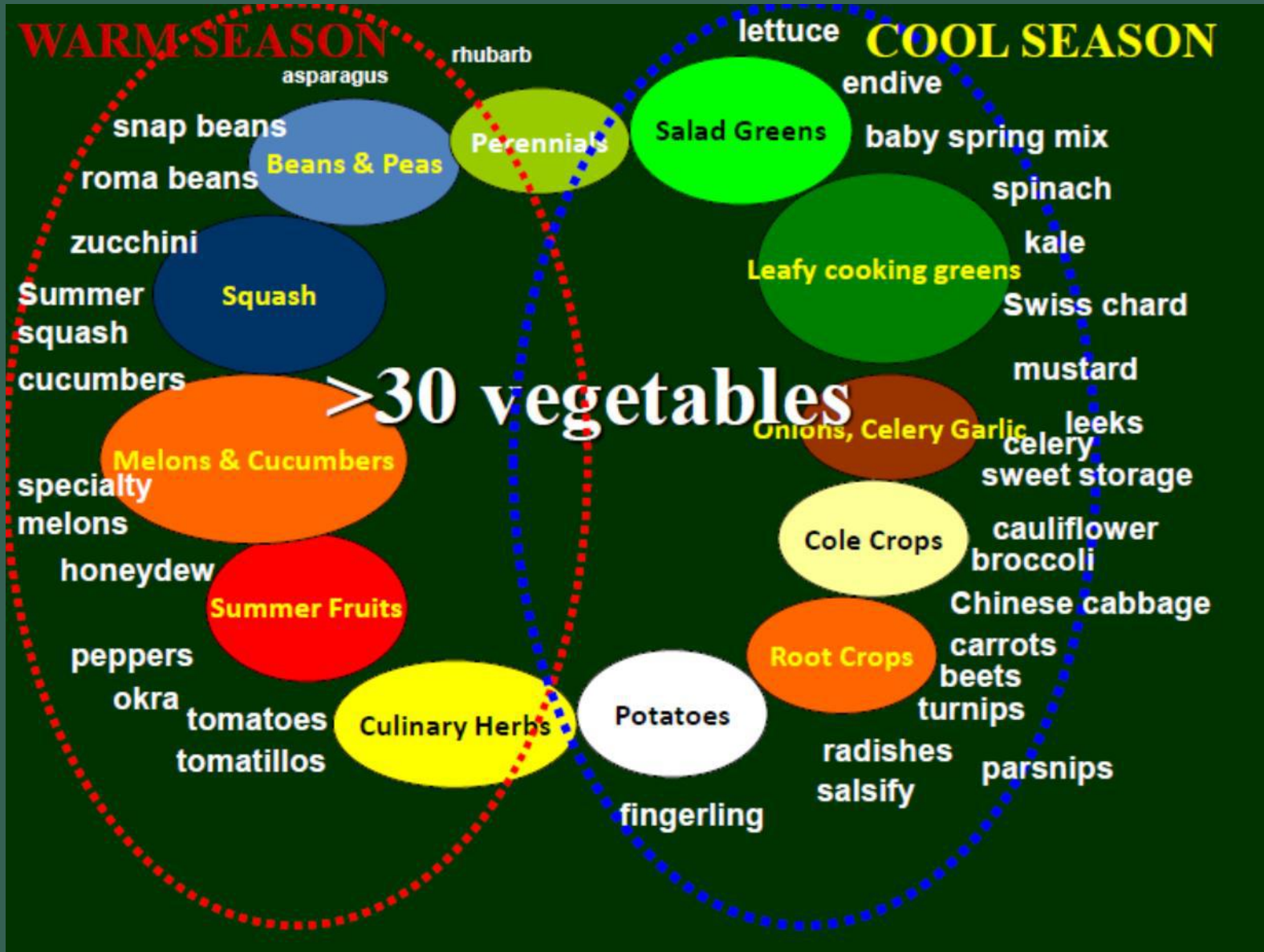
High tunnels protect plants from severe weather and allow farmers to extend their growing seasons – growing earlier into the spring, later into the fall, and sometimes, year-round.

High tunnels help farmers provide their communities with healthy local food for much of the year – food that requires less energy and transportation inputs.

Conservation Practice Offered:

High Tunnel System

High Tunnel Systems



Organic Transition

Organic Transition Resource Concerns Addressed:

All Resource Concerns – Transition from non-organic production to organic.

Project Description:

Help organic producers improve their operations or help producers transition to organic using a conservation plan tailored to their needs.

Conservation Practices:

Improving irrigation efficiency;

Developing an Organic System Plan;

Creating pollinator habitat;

Grazing plan and supportive livestock practices;

Nutrient and pest management activities;

Installing a high tunnel system

Establishing buffer zones;

Improving soil health and control erosion;

Enhancing cropping rotations;

Managing cover crops;

Organic Transition

Learn More about Organic Management

Organic Farming Handbook

D. Integral Conservation Activities

- Nutrient Management
- Cover Crops
- Compost
- Crop Rotations
- Tillage & Residue Management
- Integrated Pest Management
- Buffers and Natural Areas
- Grazing Management
- Livestock Living Conditions, Facilities, and Structures



Soil Health and Reducing Tillage in Organic Systems



Some Organic Soil and Weed Mgmt Best Practices



Cover Crops (Use NRCS 340)



Crop Rotation (Use NRCS 328)



Nutrient Management (Use NRCS 590)



Strategic Tillage and Cultivation (Use NRCS 329/345)



EQIP CIC - Irrigation

EQIP-Conservation Incentives Contract Primary Resource Concern: Source Water Depletion

Project Description:

“Steppingstone” for correcting resource issues on specific land units, to achieving sustainable stewardship on an entire operation. Incentive contracts are management focused and now offers conservation evaluation and monitoring activities to help report outcomes of practices.

Conservation Practices Offered:

Soil Health Testing (216)

Cover Crop (340)

Irrigation Pipeline (430)

Sprinkler System (442)

Pumping Plant (533)

Residue and Tillage Management, No Till (329)

Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced Till (345)

Irrigation System, Micro-irrigation (441)

Irrigation Water Management (449)

Structure for Water Control (587)

EQIP CIC - Irrigation





Brandon Steiner

Forester
NRCS, Polk County

Forest Resiliency in the Face of Climate Change



Forest Resiliency in The Face of Climate Change

Primary Resource Concerns Addressed:

- Degraded plant condition - Plant productivity and health
- Air quality emissions - Emissions of greenhouse gases – GHGs

Project Description:

The objective of this CIS is to enhance forest ecosystem resiliency and build upon past efforts of increasing forest structure diversity, while focusing efforts in areas of high priority for the Local Work Group and partners. This strategy will deploy a number of techniques to target the most vulnerable locations to lessen the impacts of disturbances and reduce the potential of catastrophic disturbances, such as the wildfires in 2020.

Forest Resiliency in The Face of Climate Change

Conservation Practices Offered:

- Forest Management Plan (106)
- Forest Management Design and Implementation Activity (165)
- Forest Stand Improvement (666)
- Woody Residue Treatment (384)
- Tree/Shrub Pruning (660)
- Fuel Break (383)
- Brush Management (314)
- Herbaceous Weed Treatment (315)
- Conservation Cover (327)
- Critical Area Planting (342)
- Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
- Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (490)
- Access Road (560)
- Forest Trails and Landings (655)

Pine Forest Management: Before & After



Douglas Fir Forest Management: Before



Douglas Fir Forest Management: After



Oak Woodland Health & Habitat Management



Oak Woodland Health & Habitat Management

Primary Resource Concerns Addressed:

- Degraded plant condition - Plant structure and composition
- Terrestrial habitat - Terrestrial habitat for wildlife and invertebrates

Project Description:

Declining oak and upland conifer habitats with connecting corridors are inadequate in Polk County to provide sufficient forage, shelter and cover for species dependent on these habitat types. Private and tribal lands with overstocked oak woodlands and upland conifer forests deficient of wildlife meadows in the Airlie/Haybeck oak, aligning with partner-identified conservation opportunity areas, priority wildlife connectivity areas and within close proximity to powerline easements located in southern Polk County will be highest priority.

Oak Woodland Health & Habitat Management

Conservation Practices Offered:

- Forest Stand Improvement (666)
- Woody Residue Treatment (384)
- Brush Management (314)
- Herbaceous Weed Control (315)
- Conservation Cover (327)
- Obstruction Removal (500)
- Upland Wildlife Habitat Management (645)
- Structures for Wildlife (649)
- Hedgerow Planting (422)
- Critical Area Planting (342)
- Wildlife Habitat Planting (420)
- Tree/Shrub Site Preparation (490)
- Tree/Shrub Establishment (612)
- Prescribed Grazing (528)

Oak Woodland Health & Habitat Management: Before



Oak Woodland Health & Habitat Management: After



Thank you!

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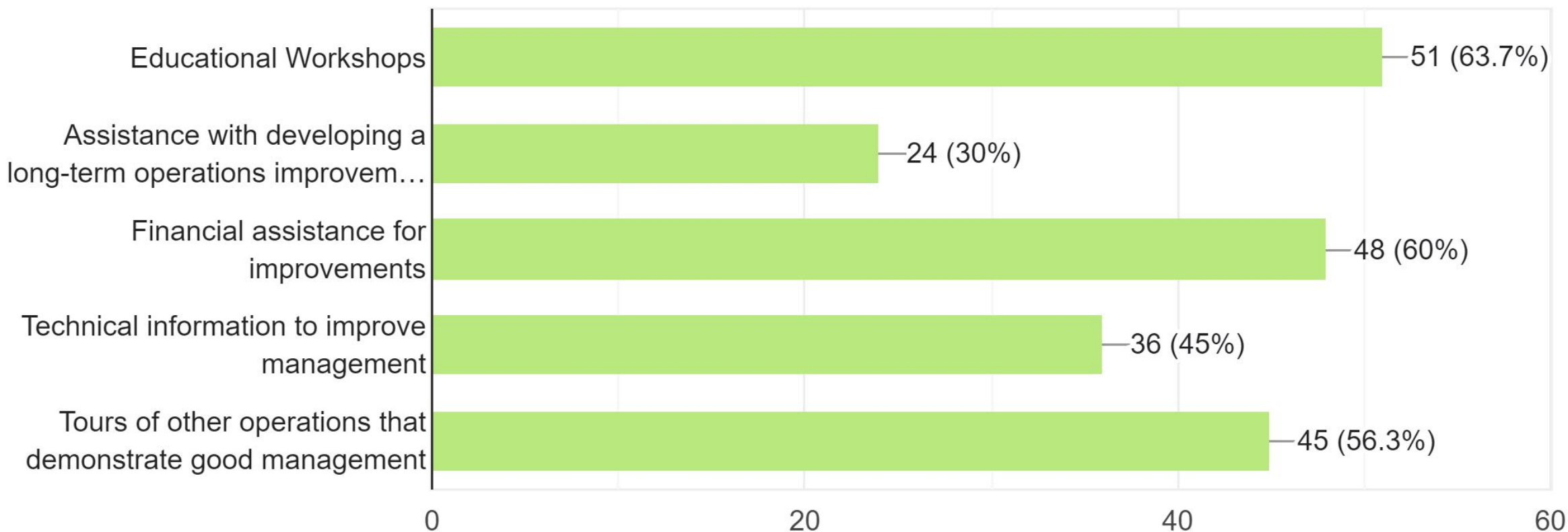
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Polk County Community input
Natural Resource Concerns

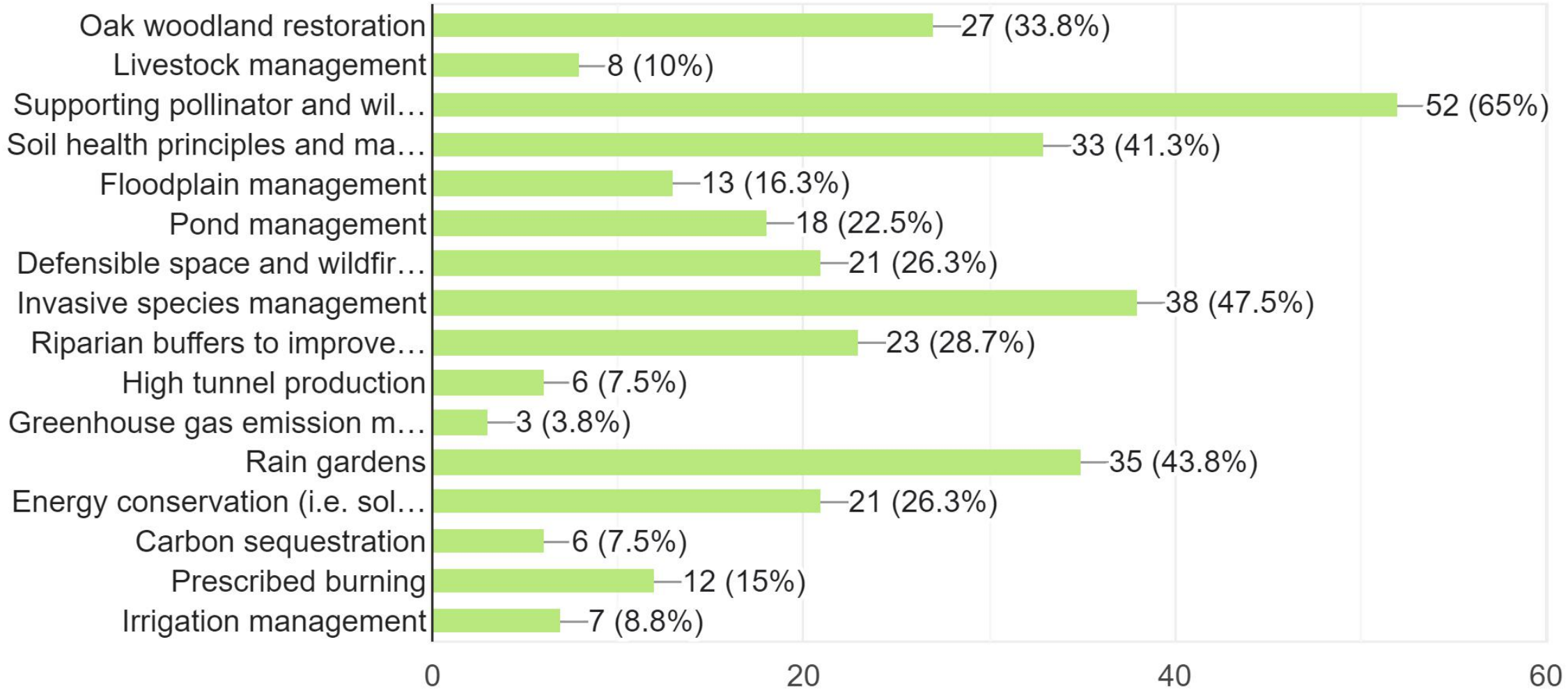
What types of assistance would you like to have to improve the management of your property?

80 responses



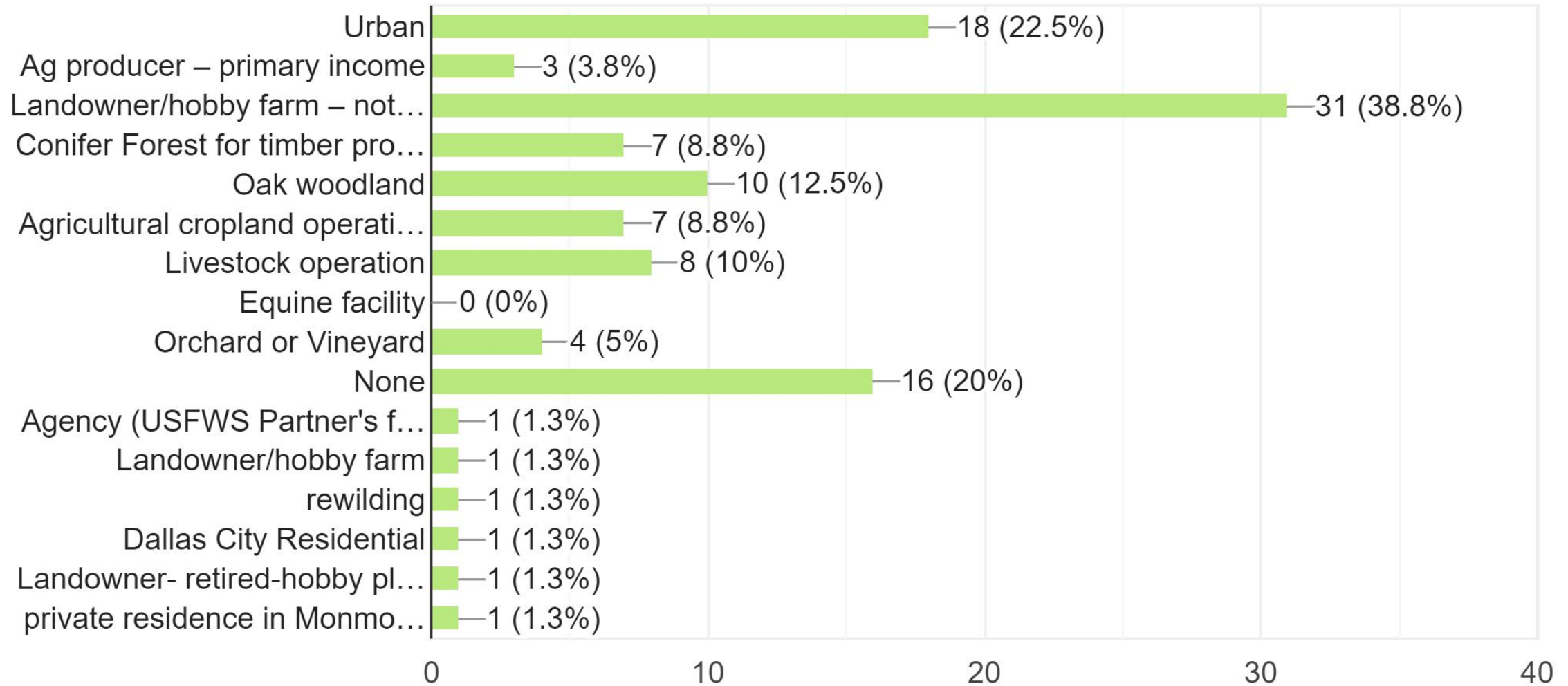
I would be interested in attending these educational workshops:

80 responses

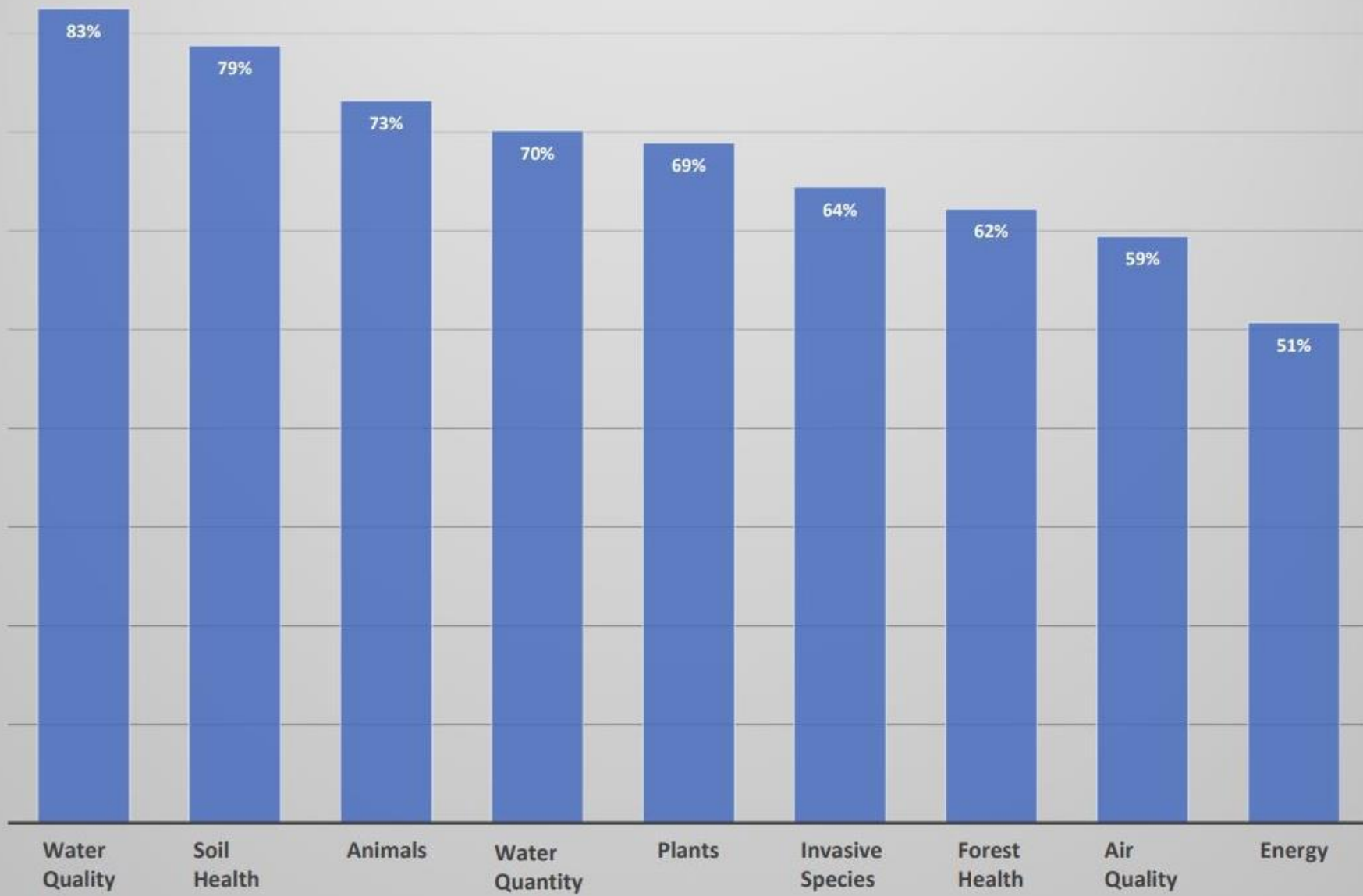


What type of property or agricultural operation do you have?

80 responses



Community Survey



Small Group Discussion - 10:00-11:00

- Choose groups based on your zone
- Facilitator/Group Rep Introduction
- Individual participant introductions
- Assign a note taker
- Discussion:
 - Discuss results of survey – what are we missing?
 - Challenges and/or limitations to address resource concerns or target areas
 - Solutions for resolving this
 - Funding opportunities (and \$ amount) that will help
- Record notes/summary on big post its and put on walls



Questions???

Thank you!

Please:

- Complete feedback form
- Complete demographics form
- Enjoy brunch!