Social and Economic Monitoring for Klamath-Lake Forest Health Partnership

2024 Survey Results

PHOTO *Leigh Ann Vradenburg*

ECOSYSTEM WORKFORCE PROGRAM | Fact Sheet 34 FEBRUARY 2025

The Klamath-Lake Forest Health Partnership (KLFHP) coordinates All-Lands restoration projects in south-central Oregon. KLFHP engages private landowners in voluntary forestland management initiatives by providing information, resources, and funding. In partnership with KLFHP, the Lakeview Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) and the Ecosystem Workforce Program (EWP) developed a monitoring plan to evaluate the ecological, social, and economic effects of All-Lands projects. To assess the social and economic changes experienced by private landowners who engaged in KLFHP projects, EWP developed and distributed a survey to project participants. This fact sheet presents survey results on the social and economic changes experienced by private landowners participating in KLFHP All-Lands projects.

Key Findings from Survey Respondents

Most survey respondents:

- reported that their primary motivation for participating in KLFHP projects was to reduce wildfire risk and improve forest health.
- believed the project they participated in had a positive impact on their land, including decreasing wildfire risk on their property.

Over half of respondents thought that project involvement improved their relationship with land management agencies and local organizations.

Most respondents considered prescribed fire to be an important part of land management. Half of all respondents would be open to having prescribed burning on their land in the future.

Implications for Management

Survey results showed that people are generally pleased with the impact these programs have on their land, both ecologically and in improving their relationships with local agencies and organizations. Although there was mixed agreement about the application of Rx fire on their individual lands, people broadly understood the benefits. The KLFHP could consider focusing their outreach on wildfire risk reduction and forest health benefits of the activities, as well as the vegetation benefits, to align with the key values current participants noted.

Formed in 1993, the Klamath-Lake Forest Health Partnership[1] is a cooperative network of diverse local and regional partners who have come together to address forestland management in Klamath and Lake Counties of south-central Oregon. Partners include private landowners, forestry consultants, conservation groups, local fire districts, and state and federal agencies. KLFHP conducts All-Lands projects in Klamath and Lake County, which engage private landowners in the voluntary opportunity to improve their land through resource inventories, forest health treatment planning, and treatment implementation. Project activity aims to increase ecosystem resiliency, mitigate the threat of high severity wildfire, improve watershed function, improve juniper encroached rangeland and non-industrial mixed forest, and achieve grazing objectives on private lands on a landscape-level scale.

In response to advancing All-Lands restoration, KLFHP developed the All-Lands Social-Economic Monitoring Plan[2] in 2021 in partnership with EWP and Lake County Resources Initiative (LCRI). Monitoring is a central component of the projects because it provides reliable feedback on the effects of management actions and allows managers to refine decisions and project design through adaptive management.

The KLFHP All-Lands Monitoring Plan presents 16 questions designed to assess the effects of KLFHP All-Lands projects. Question 15 asks: *"What are the social and economic changes for private landowners by engaging in All-Lands projects?".* In the spring of 2024, KLFHP and EWP co-designed a survey to answer this question. This fact sheet summarizes the results of the survey.

[1] https://www.klfhp.org/

[2] https://www.fs.usda.gov/restoration/documents/cflrp/KLFHPAllLandsMonitoringPlanOct2021.pdf

Ecosystem Workforce Program

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Approach

In collaboration with KLFHP, EWP developed a set of survey questions to assess social and economic changes experienced for private landowners who engaged in KLFHP projects. The survey specifically focused on changes in economic opportunities, perceptions and acceptance of different restoration approaches, and changes in awareness of prescribed fire. The survey was printed at the University of Oregon and distributed by the Lake County Umbrella Watershed Council to a mailing list comprised of KLFHP project participants. Out of the 300 surveys distributed, EWP received and analyzed 30 responses.

Results

Involvement with KLFHP All-Lands

Figure 1. KLFHP Project Involvement
Part 1 of the survey assessed participants' involvement in KLFHP All-Lands restoration projects. Most (62%) respondents were involved with Lake County All-Lands.

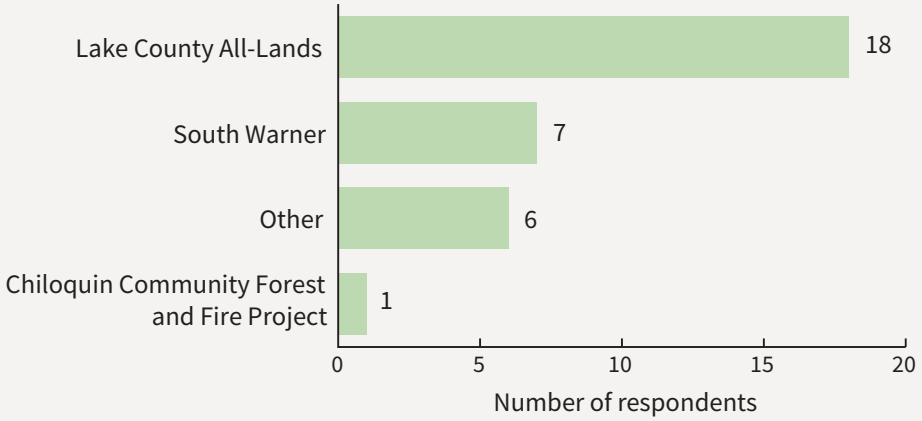


Figure 2. Ownership of acres treated
Most respondents owned approximately 10-100 property acres being treated (38%).

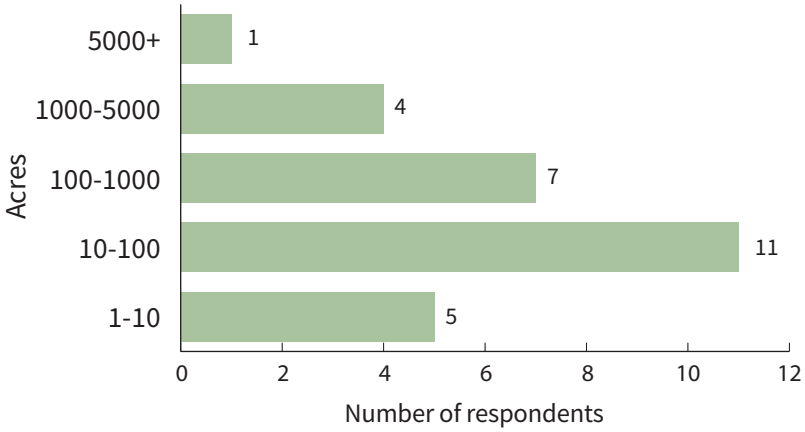


Figure 3. Uses of project lands
Forty-five percent of respondents indicated rangeland and/or family residence as uses for project lands.

**Some respondents selected more than one answer*

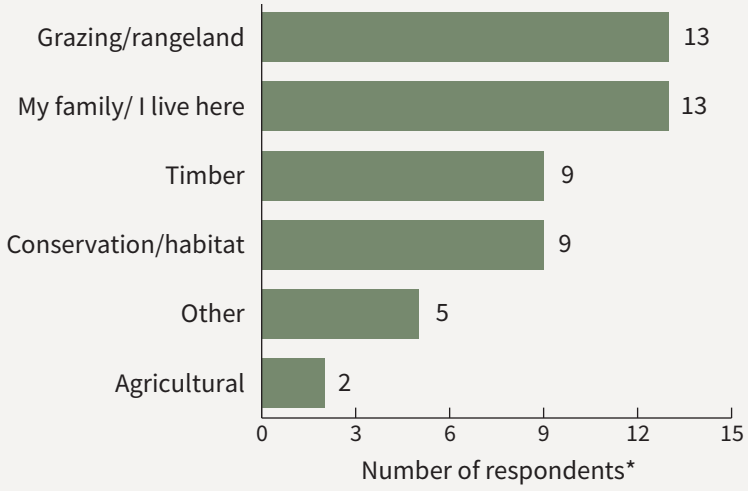


Figure 4. Restoration treatments
The most common restoration treatments were pile burning and juniper encroachment control (59% each), followed by non-commercial thinning (35%) and invasive species control (24%).

**Some respondents selected more than one answer*

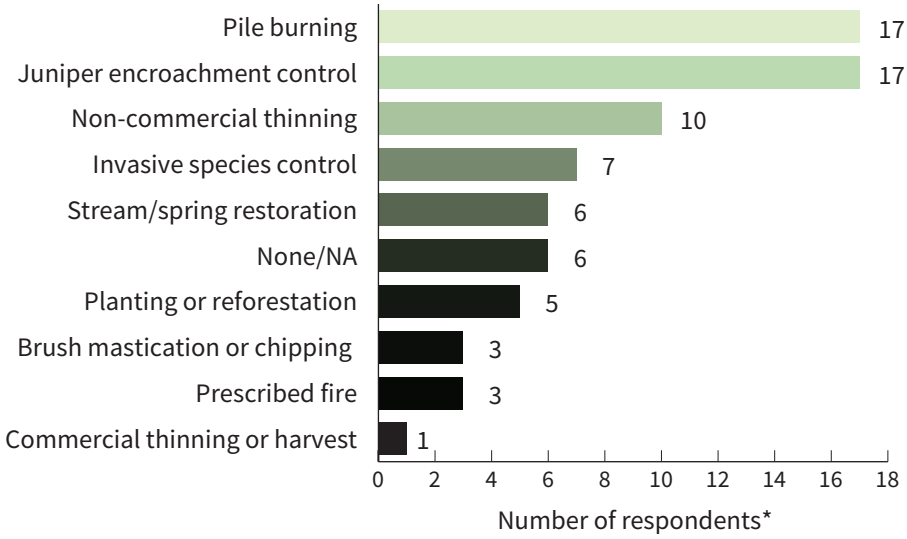


PHOTO *Jade Elhardt*

Results, continued

Figure 5. Primary motivations for participation
The primary motivations for most (72%) respondents' participation in restoration projects included wildfire risk mitigation and forest health improvement.

**Some respondents selected more than one answer*

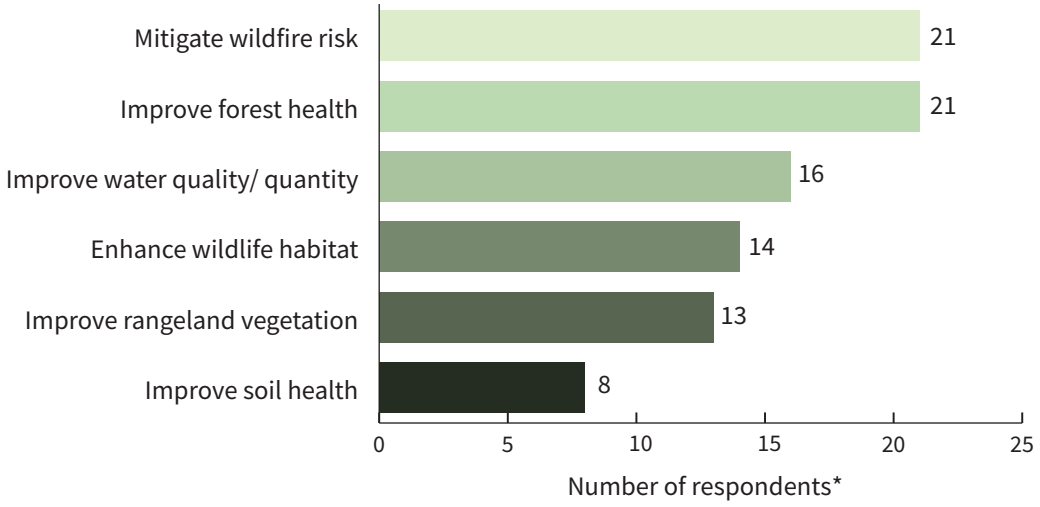
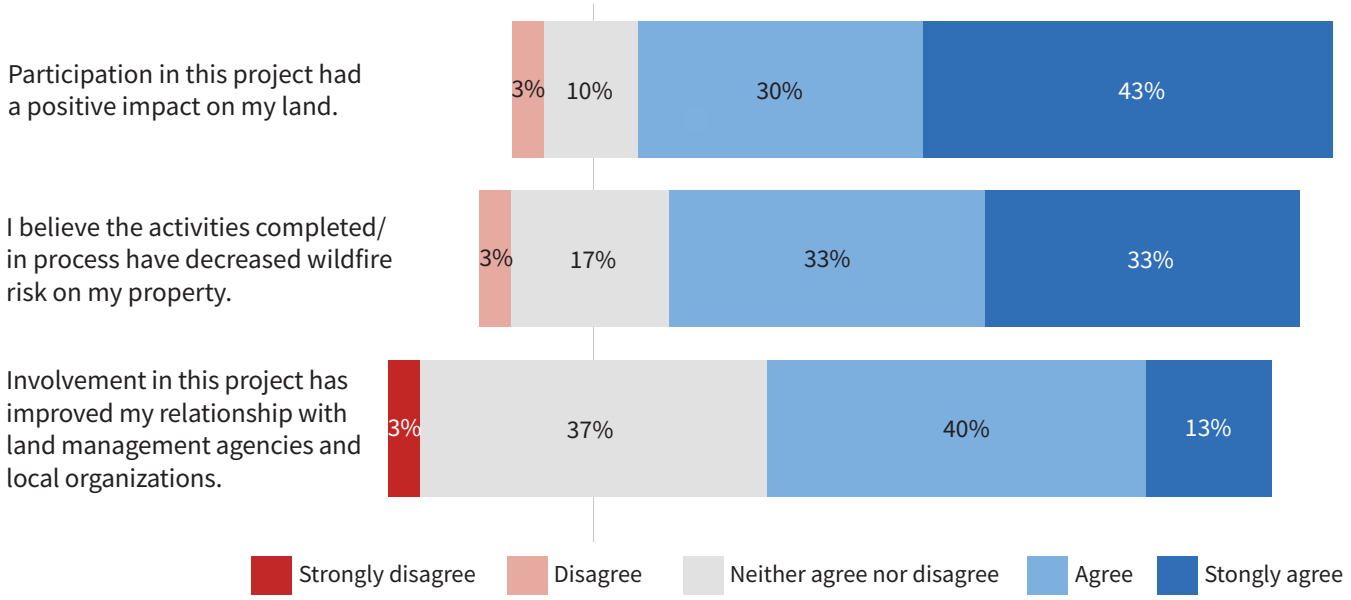



PHOTO *Leigh Ann Vrandenburg*

Project Impacts

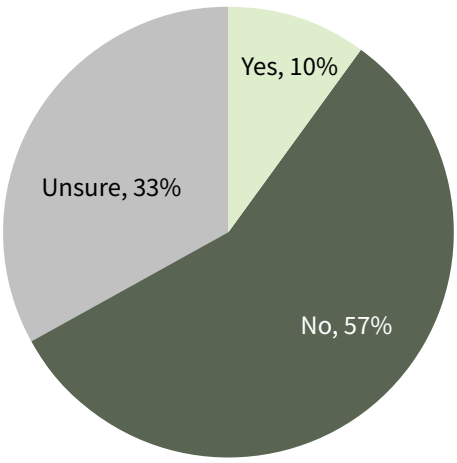
Part 2 of the survey assessed landowners' perceived impacts of All-Lands restoration projects. Many respondents agreed that participation in the restoration project had a positive impact on their land (73%) and that the activities completed or in process have decreased wildfire risk on their property (67%). Most respondents agreed that involvement in the restoration project has improved their relationship with land management agencies (53%), although 37% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed *(Figure 6).*

Figure 6. Landowners perceived impacts



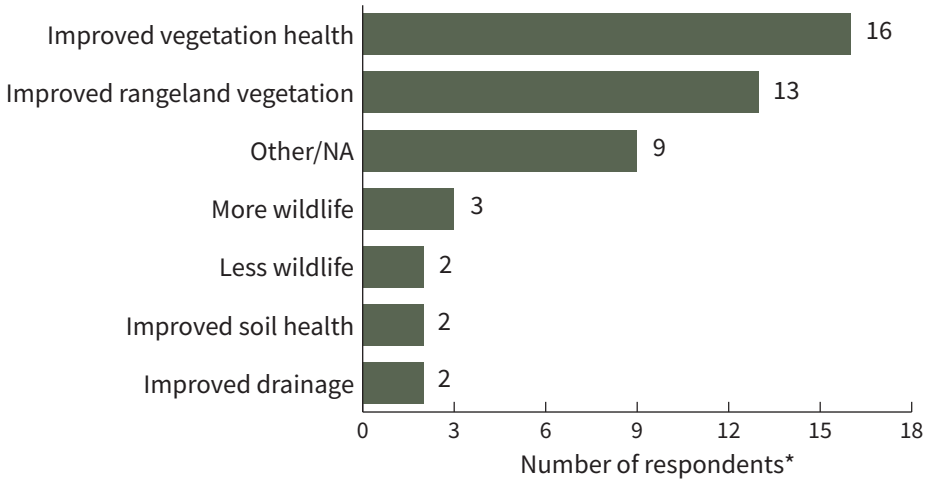
Regarding economic effects, respondents were mostly neutral on whether or not participation in the restoration project brought an economic benefit to their land (47%). Most respondents did not report (57%) or were unsure (33%) that the project brought new opportunities for their land *(Figure 7).*

Figure 7. Economic opportunities responses



The most commonly perceived change in land following treatment was improved vegetation health (55%), followed by improved rangeland vegetation (45%) *(Figure 8).*

Figure 8. Perceived change in land following treatment

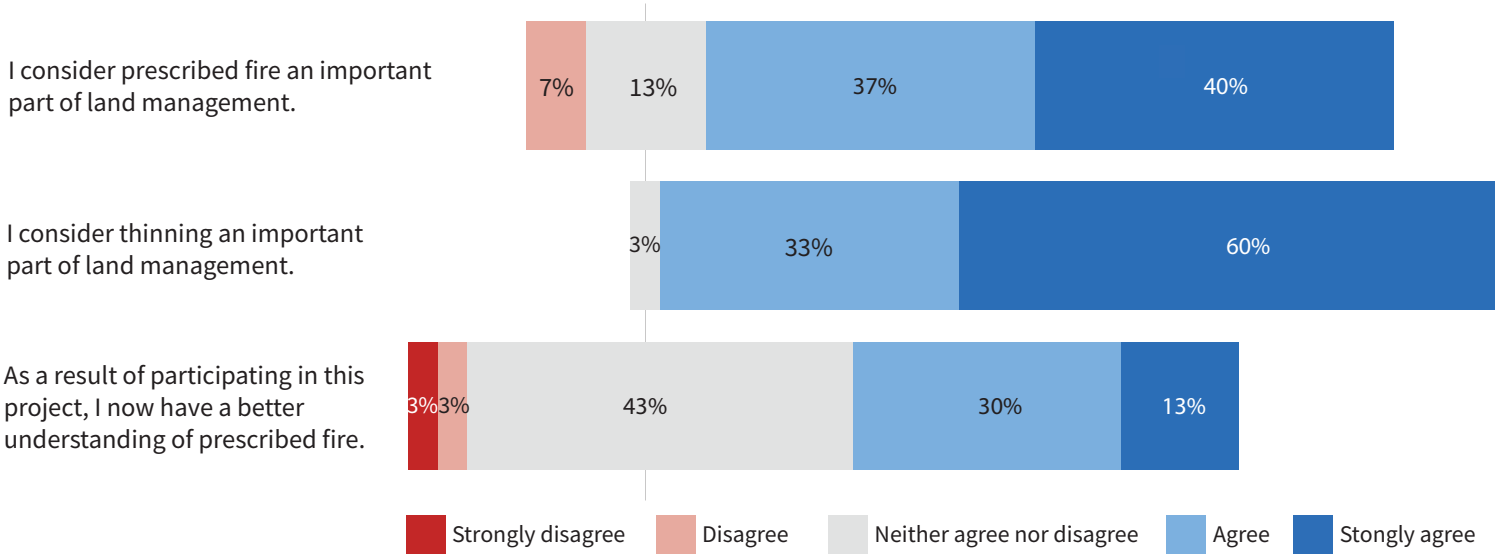


**Some respondents selected more than one answer*

Perceptions of Prescribed Fire and Restoration Activities

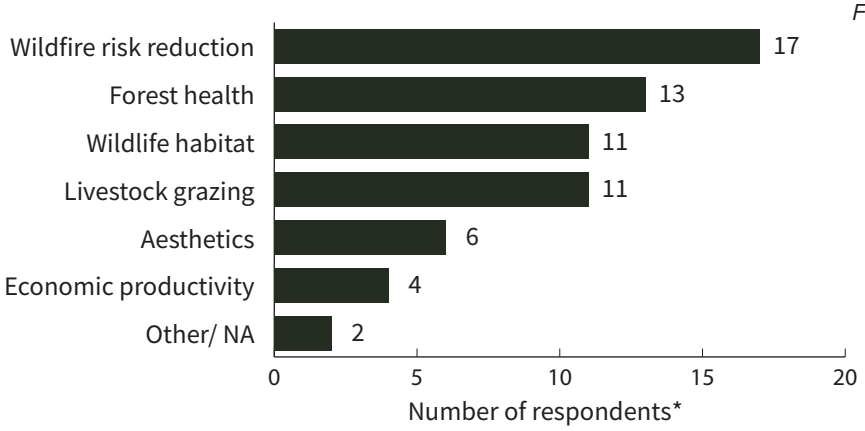
Part 3 of the survey assessed respondents' perceptions of prescribed fire and restoration activities. Most respondents (77%) strongly agreed or agreed that they consider prescribed fire to be an important part of land management. Ninety-three percent of respondents considered thinning to be an important part of land management. Forty-three percent of participants neither agreed nor disagreed that they now have a better understanding of prescribed fire as a result of participating in an All-Lands project *(Figure 9)*.

Figure 9. Perceptions of prescribed fire and restoration activities



The most common value driving land management considerations was wildfire risk reduction (59%), followed by forest health (45%) and wildlife habitat and livestock grazing (38%) *(Figure 10)*.

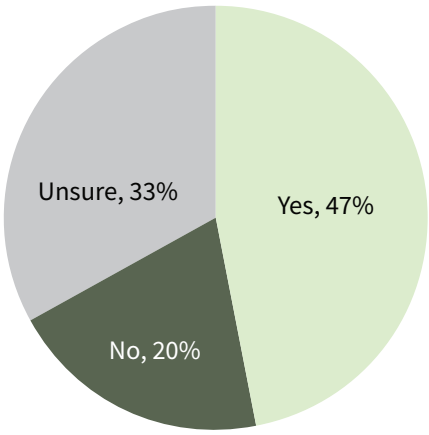
Figure 10. Values driving land management decisions



**Some respondents selected more than one answer*

Nearly half of respondents (47%) would be open to having prescribed burning on their land in the future *(Figure 11)*. The most common reason that participants listed for not wanting prescribed burning on their land was insufficient fuels for burning.

Figure 11. Opinions on prescribed burning in the future



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