

Oak Ecosystems Recovery Research Needs

The Morton Arboretum, Chicago Region Trees Initiative, and Chicago Wilderness are working together to bridge the gap between the needs of land managers and the research of local scientists.

To that end, the Chicago Region Trees Initiative sent out a survey to land managers in the region. The CRTI Oak Ecosystem Land Managers Survey yielded responses from 40 land managers in Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, and Indiana.

The average property size managed by the survey participants was 228,315 acres, though property size ranged from 12 to 4,000,000 acres. Although the total acreage of managed sites is high, most of these properties are broken into fragmented parcels of varying sizes, located in urban, rural, suburban, and natural areas. The respondents manage public and private land, though the majority are focused on public lands. Additional information about the respondents and properties is described on the following pages.

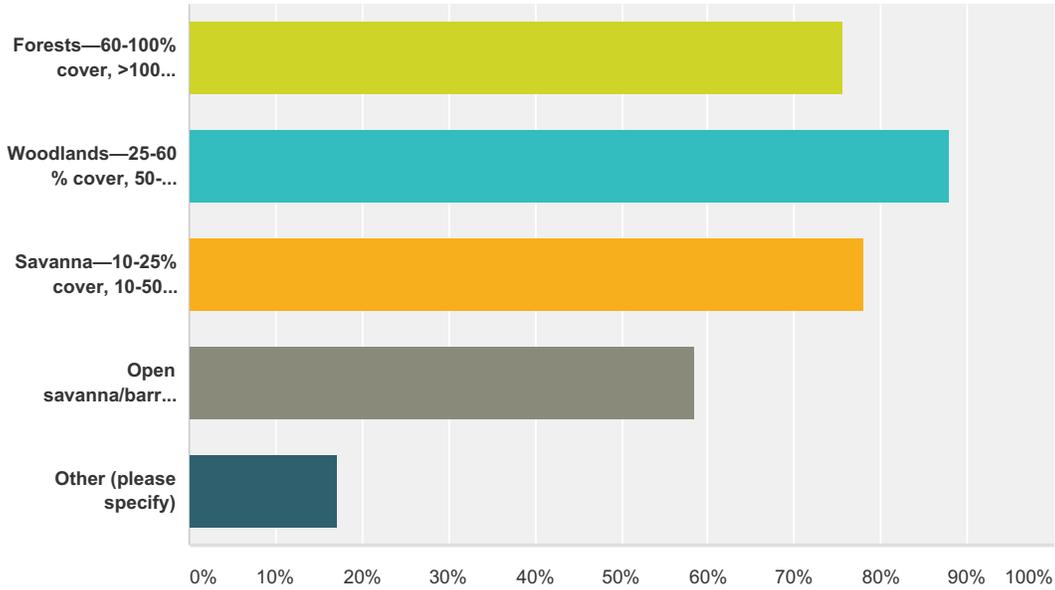
Research Priorities for Oak Ecosystem Land Managers

Following are the top 15 research topics prioritized by the land managers, along with the percent of respondents who are interested in the topic.

1. Best management practices: invasive species management (43.90%)
2. Restoration of degraded sites (39.02%)
3. Best management practices: prescribed burning (36.59%)
4. Best management practices: thinning (36.59%)
5. Best management practices: conservation of high-quality sites (29.27%)
6. Benefits analysis of oaks and related species: biological benefits (carbon sequestration, air filtration, wildlife habitat, etc) (26.83%)
7. Protection of rare species (24.39%)
8. Wildlife: impacts of herbivores on oak regeneration (24.39%)
9. Soil ecology (21.95%)
10. Best management practices: herbivore management (21.95%)
11. Mapping status of oaks (composition, size structure, age structure) in the current regional forest at fine scale. (21.95%)
12. Climate change: management strategies (21.95%)
13. Wildlife: habitat restoration and conservation (21.95%)
14. Invasive species: buckthorn and honeysuckle biomass utilization programs and feasibility studies (19.51%)
15. Invasive species: impacts to natural areas (19.51%)

Q1 Which of the following ecosystem types do you currently manage? Check all that apply. (definitions from Chicago Wilderness Oak Ecosystem Recovery Plan)

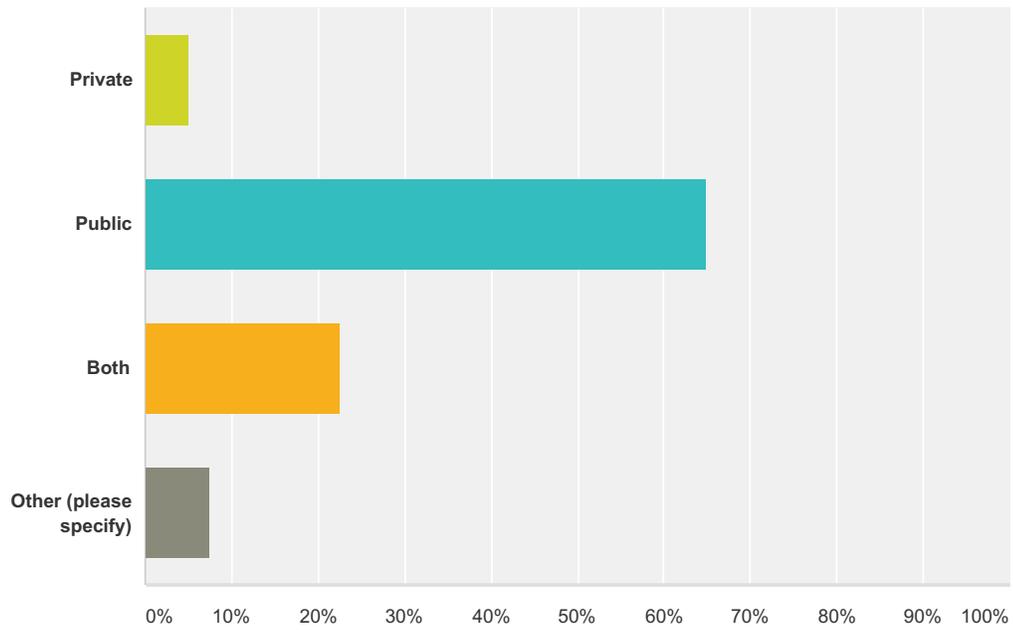
Answered: 41 Skipped: 1



Answer Choices	Responses
Forests—60-100% cover, >100 trees/ha: dense canopy and understory dominated by spring ephemeral forbs.	75.61% 31
Woodlands—25-60% cover, 50-100 trees/ha: intermediate canopy density with a mixture of shrubs, forbs, and grasses in the understory.	87.80% 36
Savanna—10-25% cover, 10-50 trees/ha: open canopy conditions with a mostly grass-dominated understory.	78.05% 32
Open savanna/barrens—>0-10% cover, >0-10 trees/ha: very little canopy, mostly small stunted trees with grassdominated groundlayer.	58.54% 24
Other (please specify)	17.07% 7
Total Respondents: 41	

Q4 Is the land you manage public or private property?

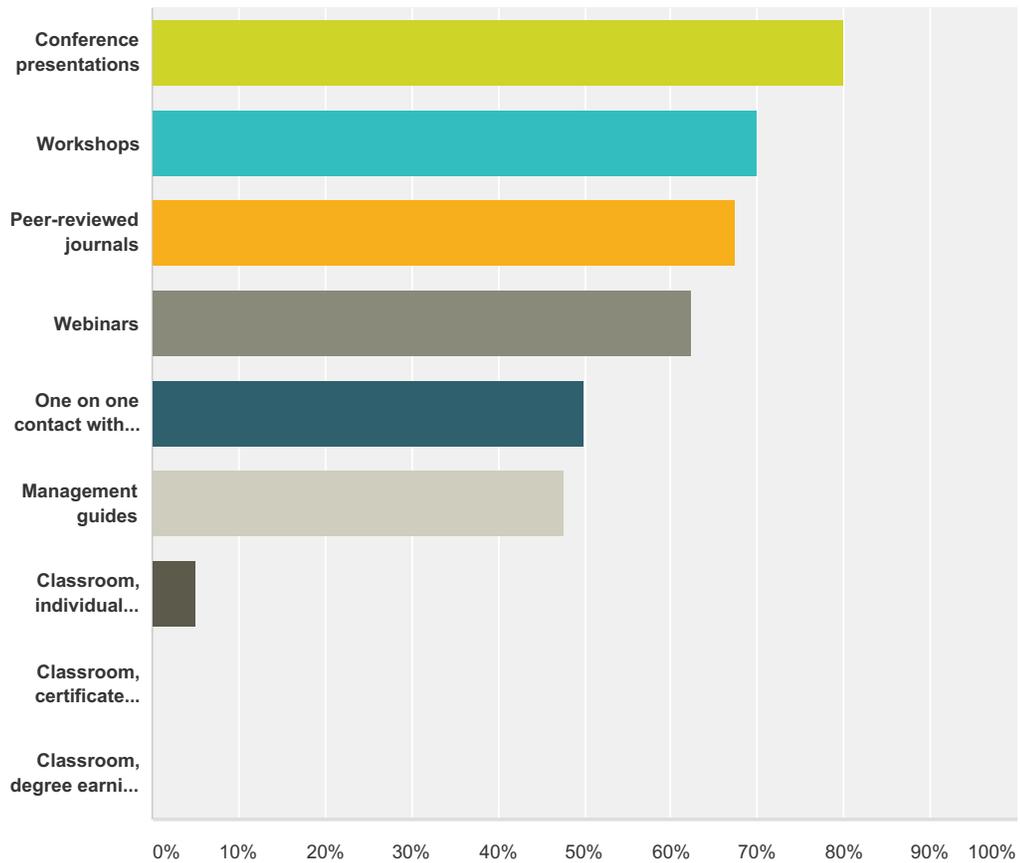
Answered: 40 Skipped: 2



Answer Choices	Responses
Private	5.00% 2
Public	65.00% 26
Both	22.50% 9
Other (please specify)	7.50% 3
Total	40

Q6 How do you access current land management research?

Answered: 40 Skipped: 2



Answer Choices	Responses
Conference presentations	80.00% 32
Workshops	70.00% 28
Peer-reviewed journals	67.50% 27
Webinars	62.50% 25
One on one contact with researchers	50.00% 20
Management guides	47.50% 19
Classroom, individual classes	5.00% 2
Classroom, certificate earning program	0.00% 0
Classroom, degree earning program	0.00% 0
Total Respondents: 40	