

Public Attitudes Toward Open Space Initiatives in Illinois

**Technical Report
to the
Illinois Department of Natural Resources**

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Executive Summary

The need for open space preservation is urgent, as Illinois ranks 48th nation-wide in open space per capita. A conservative estimate of open space acreage in the state is slightly more than 1 million acres of local, state and federal lands. Open space acreage is unevenly distributed across the state. Based on Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) administrative regions, nearly one-half (44%) of the open space acreage is found in Region 5, the southern part of the state. Open space acreage per capita ranges from a low of .02 in Region 2 to a high of .82 in Region 5. The purpose of this study was to identify the attitudes of state residents toward open space. The information will be useful to the IDNR as it conducts a comprehensive assessment of the availability and needs of open space in Illinois.

A major concern identified in the early stages of the study centered on the meaning of “open space.” Basically, there was concern that “open space” may not mean the same thing to all people. For the study, it was necessary that all respondents interpret “open space” in the same way. Therefore, a pilot study was conducted with a sample of 50 households across the state in November 2001. Several respondents considered agricultural lands as being a type of “open space.” Since open space initiatives generally focus on protecting “public land not in agricultural production,” it was clear that the mailback questionnaire needed to provide explicit guidance regarding the interpretation of “open space” in order to be sure that each respondent was using the same definition. Based upon the pilot study, the following definition for “open space” was developed and explicitly included at the beginning of the mailback questionnaire: **Open space is defined as natural areas, parks and recreation areas, wildlife habitat, and lakes and streams; agricultural lands are not defined as open space in this questionnaire.** The information from the pilot study was also useful in developing other aspects of the mailback questionnaire.

A random sample of 5,000 Illinois households was selected by a sampling firm, Survey Sampling Inc., to participate in the study. Prior to selection, the sample frame was stratified by IDNR Administrative Region, yielding a sample of 1,000 households in each Region. Those selected to participate in the study were mailed a self-administered, mailback questionnaire seeking information about their attitudes and feelings about open space. Data collection took place during February through April 2002. A series of follow-up mailings were used to increase response rate. A total of 1,850 households (38%) responded.

About one-half of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that open space is an important issue in the state of Illinois. When placed in the context of other community issues (e.g., protecting water quality, preventing crime, improving public schools, protecting air quality—all rated important by a large majority of respondents, 80% or more) acquisition of open space was rated important by 41 percent of the respondents, a substantial percentage of the respondents. When asked to rank the identified community issues, acquisition of open space ranked last. These findings are rather mixed.

Acquisition of open space is important to a substantial number of people, however, there are other community issues that are more important. Close examination of the other community issues yields an interesting thought. Many of the community issues rated by respondents are common attributes typically associated with open space areas (e.g., water quality, air quality, natural areas, recreation areas). With the exception of recreation areas, all those mentioned were rated as important by a large majority of respondents (70% or more). Perhaps, the more specific one is in asking about “open space,” the greater the support. By providing a context for “open space” (e.g., “natural areas”) greater support is evident.

Respondents’ reactions to the importance of various types of open space further supports the notion that providing context or specifying the type of open space is important when addressing open space issues. Many types of open spaces (e.g., state parks, community parks, lakes/ponds, natural areas, neighborhood parks, wildlife habitat, stream corridors, forested areas, playgrounds, and walking trails) were all rated by a majority of respondents as highly important. On the other hand, the level of respondent satisfaction with the types of open spaces mentioned was considerably lower. Indicating the importance of various types of open spaces and the dissatisfaction with the current level or condition of many of these types of open spaces. For example, state parks were rated highly important by 64 percent of the respondents, however, a significant lower percent of the respondents (45%) were highly satisfied with state parks.

Many respondents, depending on the level of contribution, indicated a willingness to contribute to a fund that would be used to acquire open space lands. As the amount of the contribution increased, the percentage of respondent support decreased. These contributions ranged from a low of \$2 to a high of \$50. Seventy-eight percent of the respondents would pay \$2 while 34 percent would be willing to pay \$50. There were many factors identified that were related to an individual’s willingness to pay. These included socioeconomic characteristics (age, education, income, and years lived in the community), outdoor recreation participation (average number of activities one participates in and number of visits to open space areas in past 12 months), attitudes that support (acquisition of open space, positive relationship with quality of life, perceived amount of open space in Illinois), and IDNR Region.

Further analysis (logistic regression) was conducted to examine the relationship between respondents’ support for open space preservation and age, education, income, and IDNR Region. Highest level of support for open space acquisition by age was among respondents in the 40-49 age group, support generally decreased with increased age, with the highest opposition found among individuals more than 70 years old. Support for open space acquisition generally increased as education increased. The income range at which individuals are more likely to support open space acquisition is \$40,000 total gross household income and higher. Four of the five IDNR Regions were more likely to support open space acquisition, only respondents in Region 5 were more likely to oppose acquisition of open space lands. The highest likelihood of support for the acquisition of open space was in Region 3.

Almost one-half of the respondents (45%) support the state of Illinois establishing a fund to pay for acquisition of additional open space. As noted above, a substantial number of respondents would be willing to pay from \$2 to \$50 for such a fund. However, it is very clear from other responses that increased taxes in any form (e.g., gasoline, sales, or property taxes) are opposed by a majority of respondents. Many respondents (44%) agreed the state should set aside more money for acquiring open space. Furthermore, 42 percent of the respondents disagreed with the statement the state should not be spending money on acquiring open space. On the other hand, almost one-half of the respondents (49%) agreed local governments should purchase land for outdoor recreation activities.

A majority of respondents (63%) indicated the amount of open space in Illinois was about right, although, one of every three respondents indicated there was not enough open space. On the other hand, only 24 percent of the respondents agreed with the statement there is already an adequate amount of open space in Illinois. One-third of the respondents indicated their community does not have enough open space. Furthermore, a substantial number of respondents agreed with the statements acquiring additional open space is a good idea for my community and additional open space needs to be acquired, 43 and 38 percent, respectively. It is apparent that there is support for acquiring additional open space lands, however, how to pay for those lands is still in question.

Open space is very important to respondents' quality of life. A majority of respondents (57%) indicated that open space is very or extremely important to their quality of life, where as, 71 percent of the respondents disagreed with the statement open space is not important to my quality of life. A majority of respondents also agreed with several other benefits associated with open space including: preserving open space to protect wildlife, if open space is not preserved now it will be lost for future generations, protecting the environment helps the state's economy, and need to acquire open space now before it is lost to development.

Overall, there is substantial support for the acquisition and preservation of open space lands in the state of Illinois. However, this support does differ across the IDNR Administrative Regions. For the most part, these differences occurred between Region 3 and Region 5. Although Region 5 respondents indicated support for open space preservation, their level of support was substantially lower than respondents in Region 3. A plausible explanation for the varying level of support between the two Regions can be attributed to the availability of open space areas in those Regions; Region 3 has the lowest number of open space acres (59,197 acres) and one of the lowest open space acreage per capita (.07 acres per person) while Region 5 has the largest amount of open space acres (462,001 acres) as well as the largest open space acreage per capita (.82 acres per person).

I. Background

In 1999 the Open Land Trust (OLT) Act was established. This Act provided \$160 million over four years for the purchase of open space lands throughout the state. The need for open space preservation is urgent, as Illinois ranks 48th nation-wide in open space per capita. There are more than 1 million acres (1,048,625 acres) of local, state and federal open space lands in the state of Illinois (data provided by Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Illinois Association of Park Districts) (Figure 1). The open space acreage is unevenly distributed across the state. Nearly one-half (44%) of the open space acreage in Illinois is found in Region 5. On the other hand, only 6 percent of the federal and state open space acreage is located in Region 3. Open space acreage per capita ranges from a low of .02 in Region 2 to a high of .82 in Region 5 (Table 1). The overall state average is .08 acres per person.

Figure 1. Open space acreage in Illinois by IDNR Region.

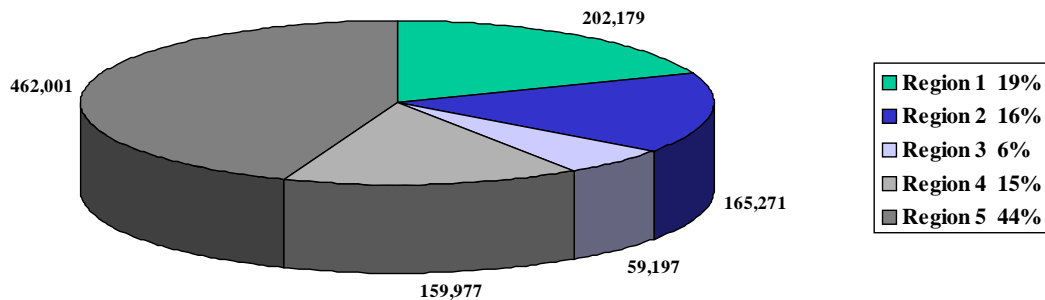


Table 1. Open space acreage and population by IDNR Region.

Region	Region Population 2002 Census	Open Space Acreage	Open Space Acreage Per Capita
1	1,536,157	202,179	0.14
2	8,287,632	165,271	0.02
3	805,406	59,197	0.07
4	1,222,834	159,977	0.13
5	564,264	462,001	0.82
Total	12,416,293	1,048,625	0.08

Note: Open space acreage figures provided by IDNR and IAPD. The figures represent local, state and federal public open space land acreage in the state.

In the first three years of the OLT program, 27,000 acres of diverse natural lands were protected. There is also high demand for various types of activities (e.g., camping, hiking, horseback riding, etc.) dependent on the availability of open space. In addition, people want to live where there is open space that provides scenic views and community character, habitat for wildlife, and recreational opportunities. Several studies have shown that open space is one of the important attributes to the quality of life of individuals and communities. However, OLT is in its last year of funding and there is concern for the future of the program.

In comparison to other states in the Midwest, Illinois ranks far behind in the amount of state owned conservation and recreation acres (Table 2).

Table 2. State-owned conservation and recreation acres owned by Midwestern states.

Midwest State	State-Owned Recreation Acres	Recreation Acres as Percent of State	Acres per 1,000 Population
Michigan	4,472,175	12.3%	450
Minnesota	6,018,000	11.8	1,223
Wisconsin	1,317,525	3.8	246
Ohio	478,876	1.8	42
Indiana	339,068	1.5	56
Illinois	306,187	0.9	25
Iowa	302,552	0.8	103

Note: The data source for this table is a 2002 report by the Wisconsin Joint Legislative Audit Committee titled "An Evaluation: Warren Knowles-Gaylord Nelson Stewardship Program."

II. Purpose

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of Illinois residents' feelings about open space in Illinois. This information will be useful to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) as it conducts a comprehensive assessment of the availability and needs of open space in Illinois.

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To define open space;
2. To determine the value of open space;
3. To identify residents' attitudes about open space; and
4. To examine residents' attitudes toward open space acquisition.

III. Methods

The primary data collection instrument for the study was a mailback questionnaire. Prior to implementing this stage of the study, a pilot study was conducted. The pilot study consisted of brief telephone interviews with a random sample of households in the state of Illinois. The information obtained from the pilot study was used to assist with the development of the mailback questionnaire.

A. Sample

A stratified random sample was used to select study participants. The sample was stratified by the five IDNR Regions (Figure 2). Five thousand fifty individuals were randomly selected to participate in the study, 1,010 from each IDNR Region. Fifty individuals were assigned to the pilot study, 10 individuals from each Region. The remaining 5,000 individuals (1,000 per region) received the mailback questionnaire (Table 3).

Figure 2. Illinois Department of Natural Resources Administrative Regions.

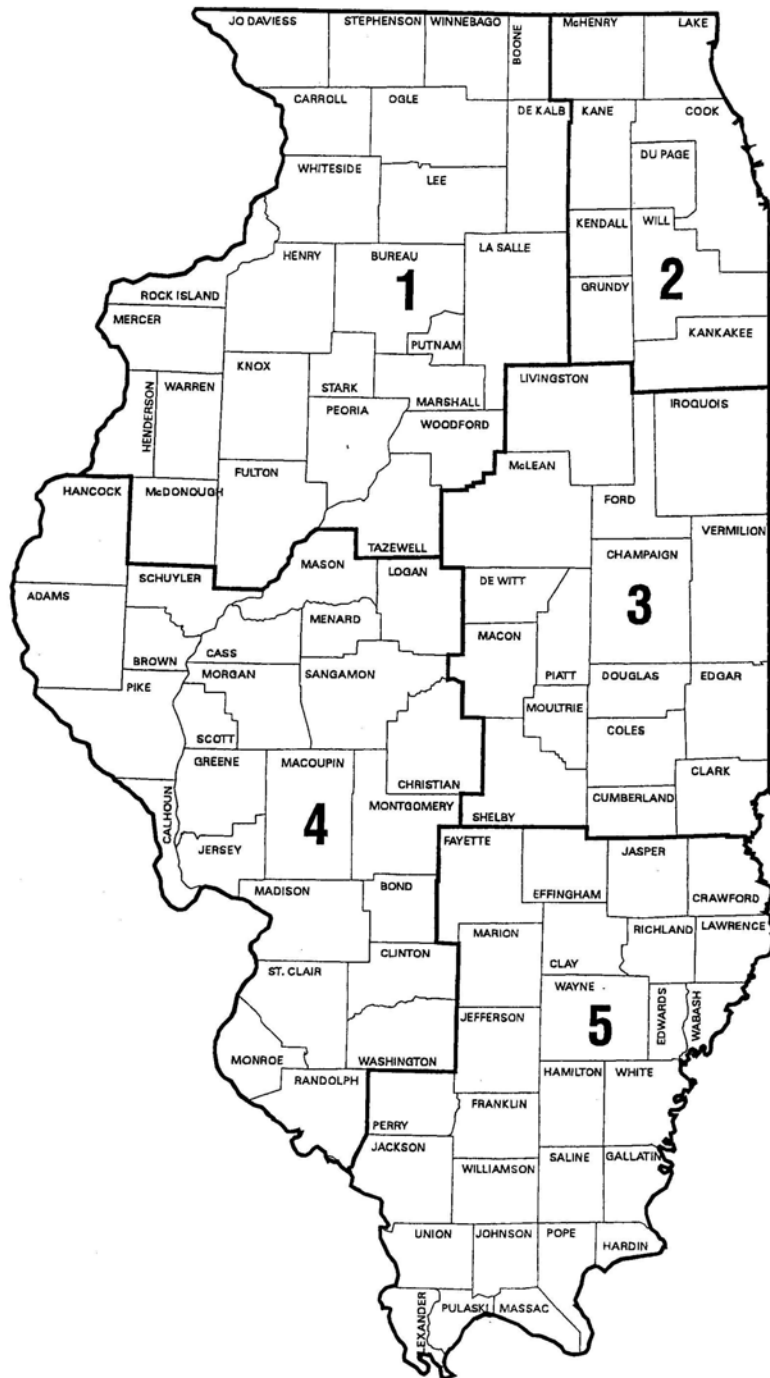


Table 3. Sample by IDNR Region.

Region	Region Population 2002 Census	Sample	
		Pilot Study	Mail Questionnaire
1	1,536,157	10	1000
2	8,287,632	10	1000
3	805,406	10	1000
4	1,222,834	10	1000
5	564,264	10	1000
Total	12,416,293	50	5000

B. Pilot Study

Prior to finalizing the mailback questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted to identify potential problems that could arise during the study. In particular, the meaning of “open space” needed to be consistent and interpreted in the same way by all respondents. During the planning phase of this project, it was not clear if the term “open space” meant the same thing to all people. The pilot study was meant to assess the range of perceptions of “open space” and to identify the language respondents might use when discussing public values for “open space.” A random sample of 50 Illinois citizens was drawn for phone interviews during November 12-15, 2001.

The phone interviews provided valuable information about people’s use of the term “open space.” There were 16 interviews conducted, with 19 refusals and 15 either answering machines or no one answering the phone. Several interviewees included agricultural lands, such as cornfields or soybean farms, as being a type of “open space.” However when a definition for “open space” was provided by the interviewer, interviewees were able to respond to questions with the adjusted definition. Since open space initiatives generally focus on protecting *public land not in agricultural production* it was clear that the mailback questionnaire needed to provide explicit guidance regarding interpretation of “open space” in order to be sure that each respondent was using the same definition. Based upon the pilot study, the following definition for “open space” was developed and explicitly included in the beginning of the mailback questionnaire: *Open space is defined as natural areas, parks and recreation areas, wildlife habitat, and lakes and streams; agricultural lands are not defined as open space in this questionnaire.*

C. Mailback Questionnaire

An 8-page questionnaire, including the front and back cover, was designed to obtain the following information: (1) respondent characteristics, (2) respondent use of open space, (3) attitudes about community issues, (4) importance and satisfaction of various types of open space, and (5) attitudes about valuing open space (Appendix A). This information was directed toward satisfying the stated objectives of the study.

Data collection took place over a three-month period, beginning in February and concluding in April. The questionnaire was mailed to the 5,000 individuals selected to participate in the study on February 14, 2002. A cover letter and return envelope were included with the questionnaire. Each questionnaire was given a unique identification number. Once the questionnaire was returned, the respondent's name was removed from the mailing list to maintain an up-to-date record of nonrespondents for follow-up mailings. The initial mailing was followed ten days later with a thank you/reminder postcard sent to all individuals. Ten days after the postcard, a second questionnaire, cover letter, and return envelope were mailed to nonrespondents. A second postcard reminder was mailed ten days after the mailing of the second questionnaire to all nonrespondents. The final mailing, a third questionnaire, cover letter, and return envelope were mailed to all nonrespondents on April 4, 2002. Data collection was terminated on April 30, 2002. Once the questionnaires were returned, they were examined for completeness and accuracy prior to entering the data into the computer. The data were then coded and cleaned prior to analysis.

D. Response Rate

Based on the stratified random sample, 1000 individuals in each IDNR Region were mailed a questionnaire totaling an initial sample of 5000 (Table 4). Adjustments to the initial sample yielded a sample of 4816. Of the adjusted total sample size, 1850 questionnaires were returned for an overall response rate of 38 percent. The number of questionnaires returned across the five regions ranged from a high of 412 in Region 1 (43% response rate) to a low of 334 (35% response rate) in Region 3.

Table 4. Response rate by IDNR Region.

Sample Size	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Initial sample size (number of questionnaires sent)	1000	1000	1000	1000	1000	5000
Adjustments to sample size	33	27	40	42	42	184
Adjusted sample size	967	973	960	958	958	4816
Number questionnaires returned	412	394	334	344	366	1850
Response rate	43%	40%	35%	36%	38%	38%

Adjustments to sample size include those questionnaires that were identified as not reaching the appropriate individual for some of the following reasons; individual was deceased, individual moved and left no forwarding address, wrong address, etc.

Response rate was determined by dividing the number of questionnaires returned by the adjusted sample size.

IV. Findings

The purpose of this section is to present the findings of the study. The findings are organized into five sections: (1) Open Space as an Issue in Illinois, (2) Attitudes About Valuing Open Space, (3) Attitudes About the Acquisition of Open Space, (4) Perceptions of the Amount, Quality of Life, and Benefits of Open Space, and (5) Respondent Characteristics. Data were weighted to reflect the population within each of the five IDNR Regions. Frequencies for all questionnaire items can be found in Appendix A.

A. Open Space as an Issue in Illinois

About one out of every two respondents (48%) agreed or strongly agreed that “open space is an important issue in Illinois” compared to 14 percent of the respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement (Figure 3). Respondents differed in their agreement rating across the IDNR Regions. Respondents in Region 3 (52%) were more in agreement “that open space is an important issue in Illinois” than respondents in Region 5 (43%) (Table 5).

Figure 3. Open space as an important issue in Illinois.

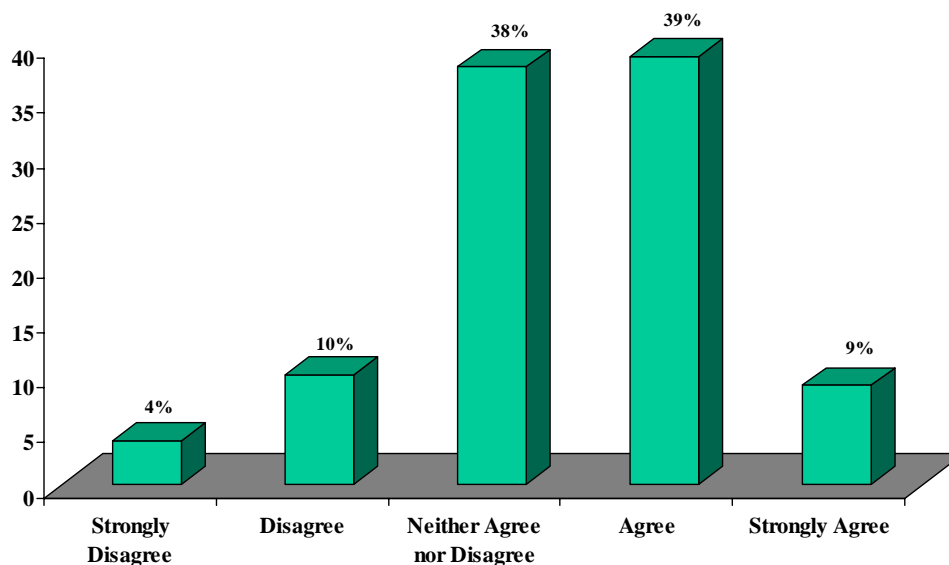


Table 5. Open space as an important issue in Illinois by IDNR Region.

Open Space Important Issue in Illinois	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly disagree	3%	4%	3%	5%	8%	4%
Disagree	12	9	7	12	12	10
Neither agree nor disagree	36	40	38	34	38	38
Agree	39	39	40	38	33	39
Strongly agree	10	8	12	11	10	9
Average *	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.4

Average based on 5-point agreement rating scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. Total column reflects data weighted by population in each region.

* Statistically significant differences among IDNR Regions, analysis of variance, $p \leq .05$.

B. Attitudes About Valuing Open Space

Respondents were asked a variety of questions designed to obtain their feelings about the value of open space lands. These questions were grouped into the following three areas: (1) attitudes about community priorities, (2) importance and satisfaction with types of open space areas, and (3) monetary support for open space.

1. Attitudes About Community Priorities

a. Liked Best. An open-ended question asked respondents what they liked best about their community (Table 6). The most common response was “small town” (35%). Other items mentioned by respondents included people/family (22%), quiet/peaceful (14%), and parks (11%). Public services and convenience were mentioned by about one out of every ten respondents, 11 and 7 percent, respectively. What respondents liked best about their community differed across the IDNR Regions. Parks, public services, and convenience were mentioned about twice as often by respondents in Region 3 compared to the other regions. In addition, about one-half as many respondents in Region 3 (compared to the other regions) mentioned small town as what they liked best in their community.

b. Liked Least. An open-ended question asked respondents what they liked least about their community (Table 6). The most common response was public services, mentioned by 29 percent of the respondents. One of every five respondents mentioned isolation (23%) and planning (19%) as factors they like least about their community. Regional differences were evident in the responses. Region 3 respondents mentioned growth (19%) and planning (28%) much more often than respondents in the other regions. On the other hand, respondents in Region 3 were less likely to mention public services than other respondents. Many more respondents in Region 5 mentioned the community as being “poor” as what they liked least about their community.

Table 6. Attributes of community most liked and disliked by IDNR Region.

Feelings About Community	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Like Best *						
Small town	36%	37%	14%	29%	31%	35%
People/family	19	23	18	22	24	22
Quiet/peaceful	16	13	13	17	20	14
Parks	14	11	18	10	10	11
Public services	8	11	18	8	8	11
Convenience	7	5	20	15	7	7
Like Least *						
Public services	33%	29%	20%	32%	26%	29%
Isolation	21	25	10	17	27	23
Planning	20	18	28	21	17	19
Taxes	6	10	8	7	4	9
Poor	5	7	1	6	17	7
Growth	5	4	19	9	3	6
Crime/drugs	6	4	8	6	4	5
Lack of parks	4	3	6	3	4	3

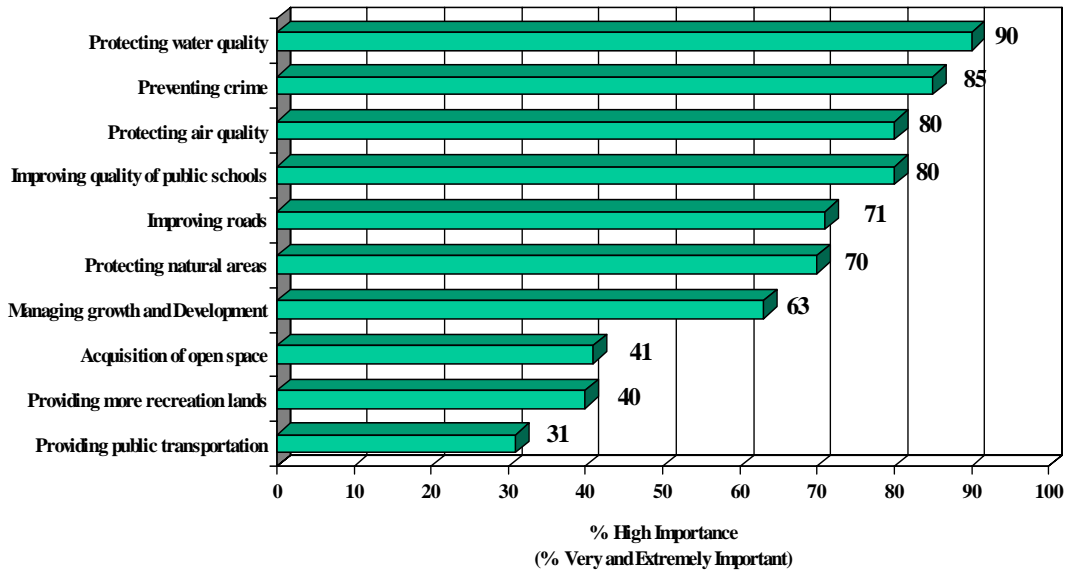
Note: In some instances column totals for each variable may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Total column reflects data weighted by population in each region.

* Statistically significant differences among IDNR Regions, chi-square statistical test, $p \leq .05$.

c. Community Issue Importance Ratings. Respondents were asked to rate the importance of a set of issues described as issues facing many communities throughout the state of Illinois. Each issue was rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from “1=not at all important” to “5=extremely important.”

Issues considered the most important by a majority of respondents (issue rated as either very or extremely important) included protecting water quality (90%), preventing and reducing crime (85%), protecting air quality (80%), improving the quality of public schools (80%), road improvements and maintenance (71%), protecting natural areas (70%), and managing growth and development (63%) (Figure 4). Less than one-half of the respondents rated the issue providing more recreation lands (40%) or acquisition of open space (41%) as very or extremely important. Only one issue, providing convenient public transportation (31%), was less important.

Figure 4. Importance ratings of community issues.



Respondents differed across the IDNR Regions in their importance ratings for several community issues (Table 7). Although, all respondents rated the vast majority of community issues as important, where there is a significant difference in the importance rating among the five regions, Region 3 tended to rate the issue slightly more important than the other 4 regions. Region 3 rated the following issues as more important than the other four regions; protecting air quality, protecting natural areas, managing growth and development, acquisition of open space, providing more recreation lands, and providing public transportation.

Table 7. Importance ratings of community issues by IDNR Region.

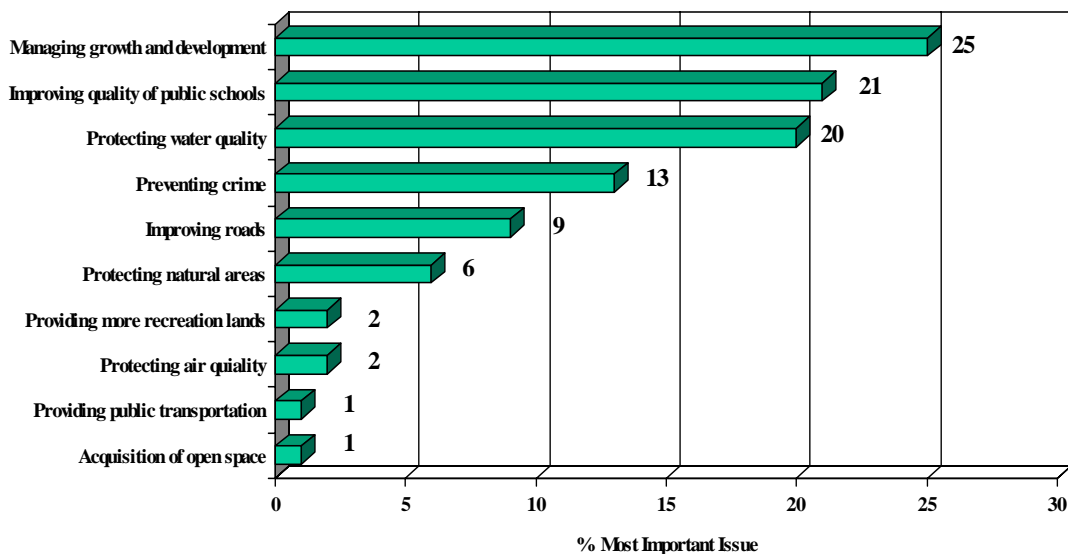
Community Issue	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Protecting Water Quality						
Low importance	3%	3%	2%	2%	3%	3%
High importance	90	90	94	90	93	90
Average	4.4	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.5	4.5
Preventing Crime						
Low importance	3%	4%	2%	4%	2%	4%
High importance	86	84	88	86	88	85
Average *	4.3	4.3	4.5	4.4	4.4	4.3
Protecting Air Quality						
Low importance	5%	5%	3%	6%	7%	5%
High importance	76	80	86	79	79	80
Average *	4.1	4.2	4.4	4.2	4.1	4.2
Improving Quality of Public Schools						
Low importance	6%	6%	9%	7%	6%	6%
High importance	78	81	77	77	78	80
Average	4.4	4.2	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.2
Improving Roads						
Low importance	4%	5%	5%	4%	4%	5%
High importance	71	69	74	76	76	71
Average	3.9	3.9	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
Protecting Natural Areas						
Low importance	9%	12%	8%	10%	13%	11%
High importance	68	70	82	70	68	70
Average *	3.9	3.9	4.2	4.0	3.9	3.9
Managing Growth and Development						
Low importance	13%	10%	6%	10%	16%	10%
High importance	61	63	73	66	56	63
Average *	3.7	3.7	4.0	3.8	3.6	3.7
Acquisition of Open Space						
Low importance	29%	27%	17%	21%	31%	26%
High importance	38	39	55	45	39	41
Average *	3.1	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.1	3.2
Providing More Recreation Lands						
Low importance	26%	24%	19%	25%	28%	24%
High importance	35	40	55	41	40	40
Average *	3.2	3.2	3.5	3.2	3.1	3.2
Providing Public Transportation						
Low importance	37%	39%	27%	34%	37%	38%
High importance	28	31	42	33	28	31
Average *	2.8	2.9	3.2	3.0	2.9	2.9

Importance ratings: a 5-point Likert type scale where 1=not at all important, 2=slightly important, 3=moderately important, 4=very important, and 5=extremely important. Average based on 5-point importance rating scale. For presentation, scale ratings 1 and 2 were combined to yield the “low importance” rating category while ratings 4 and 5 were combined to yield the “high importance” rating category. Total column reflects data weighted by population in each region.

* Statistically significant differences among IDNR Regions, analysis of variance, $p \leq .05$.

d. Top Community Issue Rankings. Respondents were asked to indicate the top issue that needs to be addressed in their community (based on the list provided above). These results are displayed in Figure 5. Twenty-five percent of the respondents rated managing growth and development as the top issue that needs to be addressed in their community followed closely by improving the quality of public schools (21%). Only 1 percent of the respondents indicated that acquisition of open space was the top issue that needs to be addressed in their community. Slightly more of the respondents (2%) indicated that providing more recreation lands was the top issue.

Figure 5. Most important community issue.



There were regional differences among respondents in the five regions as to the top issue that needs to be addressed in their community (Table 8). Fewer respondents in Regions 1 (13%) and 3 (8%) indicated that water quality was the top issue that needs to be addressed in their community compared to respondents in the other regions. Respondents in Region 1 (25%) were more likely to list the top issue as improving the quality of public schools while respondents in Region 3 (14%) were least likely to list it as the top issue. The percentage of respondents who indicated that preventing and reducing crime was the top issue in their community was lowest in Regions 1 (13%), 2 (13%), and 4 (13%) and highest in Region 3 (23%). Respondents in Region 3 (11%) were most likely to identify protecting natural areas as the top issue compared to the other regions.

Table 8. Most important community issue by IDNR Region.

Most Important Community Issue	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Managing Growth and Development	25%	25%	28%	25%	23%	25%
Improving Quality of Public Schools	25	21	14	21	19	21
Protecting Water Quality	13	23	8	15	19	20
Preventing Crime	13	13	23	13	16	13
Improving Roads	11	8	9	12	12	9
Protecting Natural Areas	6	6	11	5	8	6
Providing More Recreation Lands	3	2	1	3	2	2
Protecting Air Quality	2	1	4	4	1	2
Providing Public Transportation	3	1	1	2	1	1
Acquisition of Open Space	1	<1	1	1	<1	1

Note: In some instances column totals for each variable may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Total column reflects data weighted by population in each region.

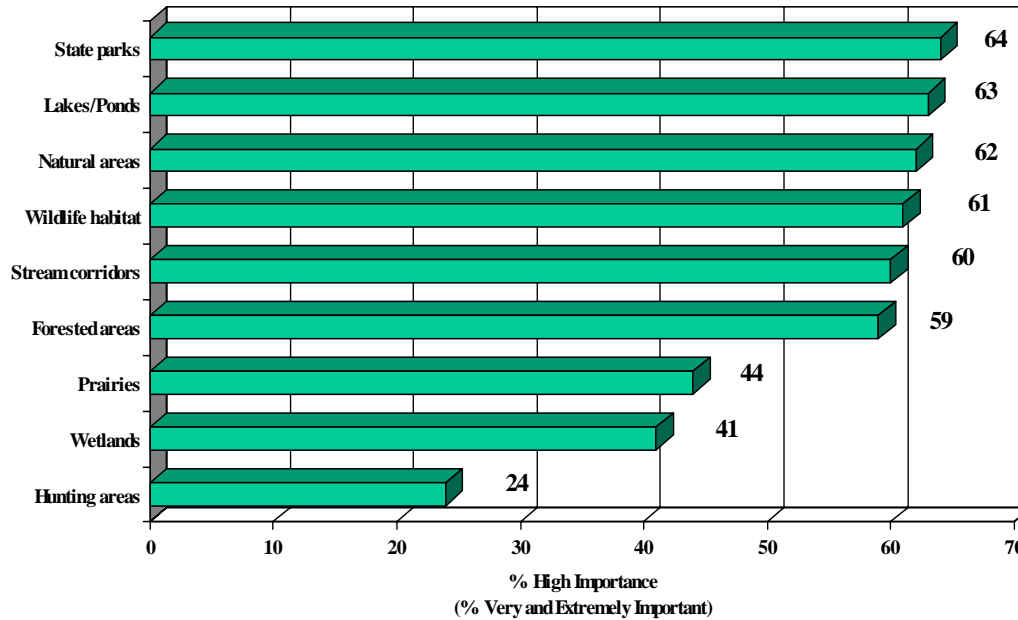
Statistically significant differences among IDNR Regions, chi-square statistical test, $p \leq .05$.

2. Importance and Satisfaction with Types of Open Space Areas

a. Importance of Undeveloped Open Space Areas. Respondents were asked to indicate the importance of nine open space areas that for the most part are generally undeveloped or have little development. Each type of open space was rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from “1=not at all important” to “5=extremely important.”

A majority of respondents rated six of the nine open space types as very or extremely important; state parks (64%), lakes/ponds (63%), natural areas (62%), wildlife habitat (61%), stream corridors (60%), and forested areas (59%), as very or extremely important (Figure 6). Less than one-half of the respondents rated prairies (44%), wetlands (41%), and hunting areas (24%) as very or extremely important.

Figure 6. Importance of undeveloped open spaces.



The respondent importance ratings for many of the open space types differed among the IDNR Regions (Table 9). Respondents in Region 1 rated prairies as less important than respondents in the other regions, 36 percent to overall rating of 44 percent. State parks were rated slightly more important (either very or extremely important) for respondents in Regions 2 (67%) than all regions (64%). Respondents in Region 3 rated forested areas (66%) and natural areas (69%) as more important than the average of the other regions, 59 and 62 percent, respectively. The wetland open space type was rated less important by respondents in Region 5 than the other regions; although, one of every three respondents (36%) in Region 5 rated it as very or extremely important. Hunting areas were rated significantly higher (very or extremely important) by respondents in Region 5 compared to Region 3, 41 and 13 percent, respectively.

Table 9. Importance of undeveloped open spaces by IDNR Region.

Type of Open Space Undeveloped	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Forested Areas						
Low importance	14%	16%	12%	11%	15%	15%
High importance	55	59	66	58	59	59
Average *	3.6	3.6	3.8	3.7	3.7	3.6
Stream Corridors						
Low importance	13%	15%	14%	13%	14%	14%
High importance	60	60	59	62	58	60
Average	3.7	3.6	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.7
Prairies						
Low importance	23%	21%	22%	20%	22%	21%
High importance	36	45	47	45	42	44
Average *	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.3
Wetlands						
Low importance	26%	27%	22%	30%	35%	27%
High importance	39	41	48	40	36	41
Average *	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.0	3.2
Lakes/Ponds						
Low importance	10%	11%	11%	11%	12%	11%
High importance	59	64	65	60	64	63
Average	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.7
Wildlife Habitat						
Low importance	12%	16%	17%	16%	16%	15%
High importance	62	61	60	63	58	61
Average	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.6
State Parks						
Low importance	9%	13%	10%	13%	14%	12%
High importance	58	67	64	62	59	64
Average *	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.7
Natural Areas						
Low importance	13%	12%	8%	13%	16%	12%
High importance	58	63	69	61	57	62
Average *	3.7	3.7	3.9	3.7	3.6	3.7
Hunting Areas						
Low importance	56%	55%	73%	44%	33%	54%
High importance	23	24	13	26	41	24
Average *	2.5	2.5	1.9	2.8	3.1	2.6

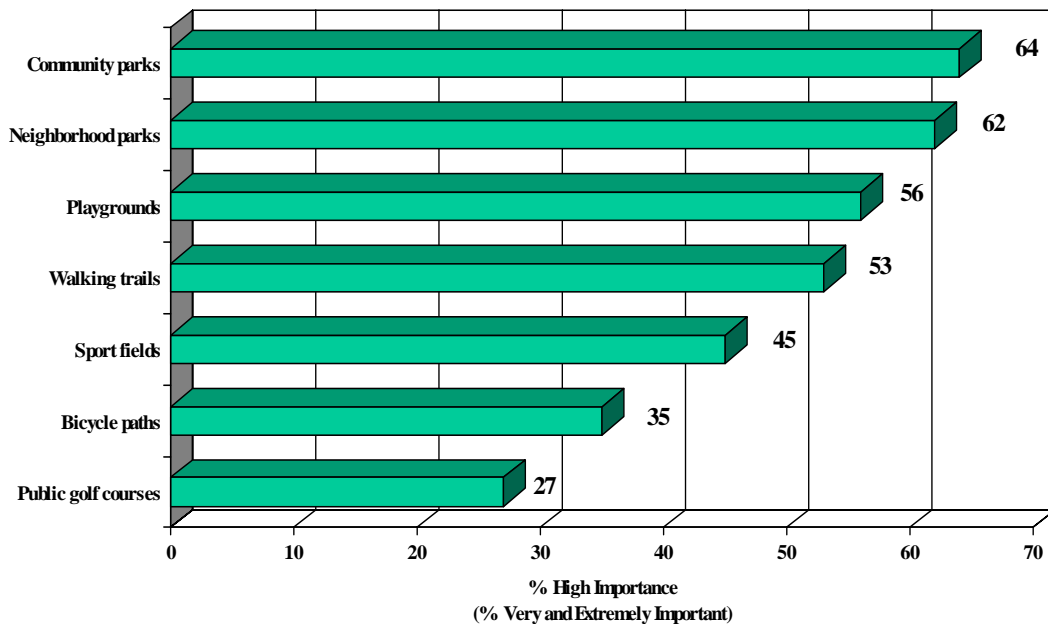
Importance ratings: a 5-point Likert type scale where 1=not at all important, 2=slightly important, 3=moderately important, 4=very important, and 5=extremely important. Average based on 5-point importance rating scale. For presentation, scale ratings 1 and 2 were combined to yield the “low importance” rating category while ratings 4 and 5 were combined to yield the “high importance” rating category. Total column reflects data weighted by population in each region.

* Statistically significant differences among IDNR Regions, analysis of variance, $p \leq .05$.

b. Importance of Developed Open Space Areas. Respondents were asked to indicate the importance of seven open space areas that typically have some development. Each type of open space was rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1=not at all important to 5=extremely important.

For four of the open space types, a majority of respondents rated the types as very or extremely important; community parks (64%), neighborhood parks (62%), playgrounds (56%), and walking trails (53%) (Figure 7). Twenty-seven percent of the respondents rated public golf courses as very or extremely important. Sport fields and bicycle paths were rated as very or extremely important by 45 and 35 percent of the respondents, respectively.

Figure 7. Importance of developed open spaces.



For the most part, regional differences were most pronounced between Regions 3 and 5 (Table 10). A larger percentage of respondents in Region 3 rated bicycle paths (54%), community parks (71%), sport fields (51%), neighborhood parks (71%), and walking trails (67%) as more important than all the other regions. In Region 5, fewer respondents rated bicycle paths (20%), community parks (53%), neighborhood parks (51%), and walking trails (42%) as very or extremely important compared to all the other regions.

Table 10. Importance of developed open spaces by IDNR Region.

Type of Open Space Developed	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Bicycle Paths						
Low importance	33%	35%	19%	31%	48%	34%
High importance	35	34	54	36	20	35
Average *	3.0	2.9	3.5	3.0	2.5	3.0
Community Parks						
Low importance	12%	13%	9%	13%	18%	13%
High importance	57	66	71	54	53	64
Average *	3.6	3.7	3.9	3.6	3.5	3.7
Playgrounds						
Low importance	16%	17%	15%	17%	19%	17%
High importance	49	58	56	50	48	56
Average	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.5
Sport Fields						
Low importance	26%	23%	19%	22%	29%	23%
High importance	43	46	51	43	40	45
Average *	3.2	3.3	3.5	3.3	3.1	3.3
Public Golf Courses						
Low importance	49%	52%	46%	49%	55%	51%
High importance	24	28	29	24	22	27
Average	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.4	2.6
Neighborhood Parks						
Low importance	11%	13%	9%	12%	19%	13%
High importance	54	64	71	55	51	62
Average *	3.6	3.7	3.9	3.6	3.4	3.7
Walking Trails						
Low importance	21%	21%	10%	22%	31%	21%
High importance	49	54	67	49	42	53
Average *	3.4	3.4	3.8	3.4	3.1	3.4

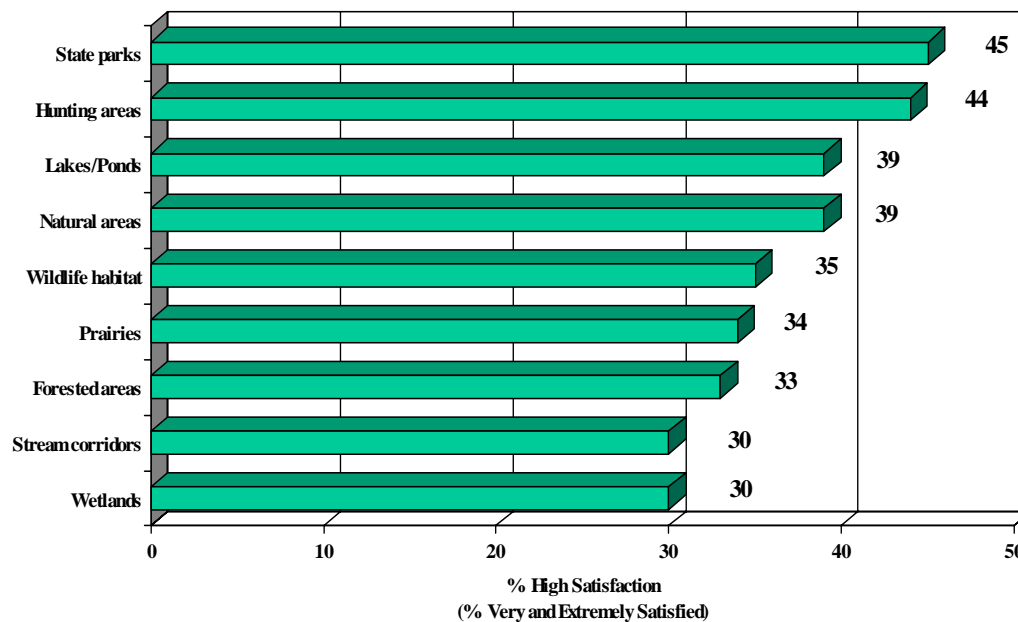
Importance ratings: a 5-point Likert type scale where 1=not at all important, 2=slightly important, 3=moderately important, 4=very important, and 5=extremely important. Average based on 5-point importance rating scale. For presentation, scale ratings 1 and 2 were combined to yield the “low importance” rating category while ratings 4 and 5 were combined to yield the “high importance” rating category. Total column reflects data weighted by population in each region.

* Statistically significant differences among IDNR Regions, analysis of variance, $p \leq .05$.

c. Satisfaction With Undeveloped Open Space Areas. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with different types of undeveloped open space in their community. Each type of open space was rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from “1=not at all satisfied” to “5=extremely satisfied.”

The majority of respondents were not satisfied with any of the nine types of open space in their community (Figure 8). Types of areas receiving the highest respondent satisfaction rating were state parks (45% high satisfaction) and hunting areas (44% high satisfaction). About one of every three individuals was highly satisfied with the remaining seven undeveloped open space areas.

Figure 8. Satisfaction with undeveloped open spaces.



Satisfaction ratings across the five IDNR Regions were fairly consistent (Table 11). Satisfaction ratings for forested areas and state parks differed slightly across the regions. Respondents in Regions 2 (30%) and 4 (30%) were slightly less satisfied with forested areas while respondents in Regions 1 (40%), 3 (40%), and 5 (42%) were more satisfied. In terms of state parks, respondents in Region 1 (49%) were more satisfied than respondents in Regions 3 (42%) and 4 (40%).

Table 11. Satisfaction with undeveloped open spaces by IDNR Region.

Type of Undeveloped Open Spaces	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Forested Areas						
Low satisfaction	18%	28%	25%	25%	23%	26%
High satisfaction	40	30	40	30	42	33
Average *	3.2	3.0	3.1	3.0	3.2	3.1
Stream Corridors						
Low satisfaction	21%	27%	29%	31%	26%	27%
High satisfaction	35	29	33	29	32	30
Average	3.1	3.0	3.0	2.9	3.1	3.0
Prairies						
Low satisfaction	23%	23%	26%	26%	26%	23%
High satisfaction	33	34	36	31	34	34
Average	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.0	3.1	3.1
Wetlands						
Low satisfaction	23%	29%	28%	30%	25%	28%
High satisfaction	32	29	33	29	36	30
Average	3.1	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.0
Lakes/Ponds						
Low satisfaction	24%	22%	20%	22%	20%	22%
High satisfaction	35	40	40	37	45	39
Average	3.1	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.2
Wildlife Habitat						
Low satisfaction	27%	27%	30%	28%	25%	27%
High satisfaction	34	35	32	33	37	35
Average	3.1	3.1	2.9	3.0	3.1	3.0
State Parks						
Low satisfaction	15%	19%	23%	18%	17%	19%
High satisfaction	49	46	42	40	46	45
Average *	3.4	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.4	3.3
Natural Areas						
Low satisfaction	22%	23%	22%	24%	21%	23%
High satisfaction	42	38	41	36	39	39
Average	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.2
Hunting Areas						
Low satisfaction	22%	21%	25%	23%	24%	22%
High satisfaction	39	45	52	39	41	44
Average	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.3

Satisfaction ratings: a 5-point Likert type scale where 1=not at all satisfied, 2=slightly satisfied, 3=moderately satisfied, 4=very satisfied, and 5=extremely satisfied. Average based on 5-point satisfaction rating scale. For presentation, scale ratings 1 and 2 were combined to yield the “low satisfaction” rating category while ratings 4 and 5 were combined to yield the “high satisfaction” rating category. Total column reflects data weighted by population in each region.

* Statistically significant differences among IDNR Regions, analysis of variance, $p \leq .05$.

d. Satisfaction With Developed Open Space Areas. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with different types of developed open space in their community. Each type of open space was rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1=not at all satisfied to 5=extremely satisfied.

About one-half of the respondents rated their satisfaction as high for public golf courses (56%), sport fields (54%), community parks (50%), neighborhood parks (50%), and playgrounds (47%) (Figure 9). Respondents were most dissatisfied (low level of satisfaction) with bicycle paths and walking trails. Regional differences in respondent satisfaction with various types of developed open space were most evident for Region 5 respondents, who tended to be less satisfied than respondents in other regions (Table 12).

Figure 9. Satisfaction with developed open spaces.

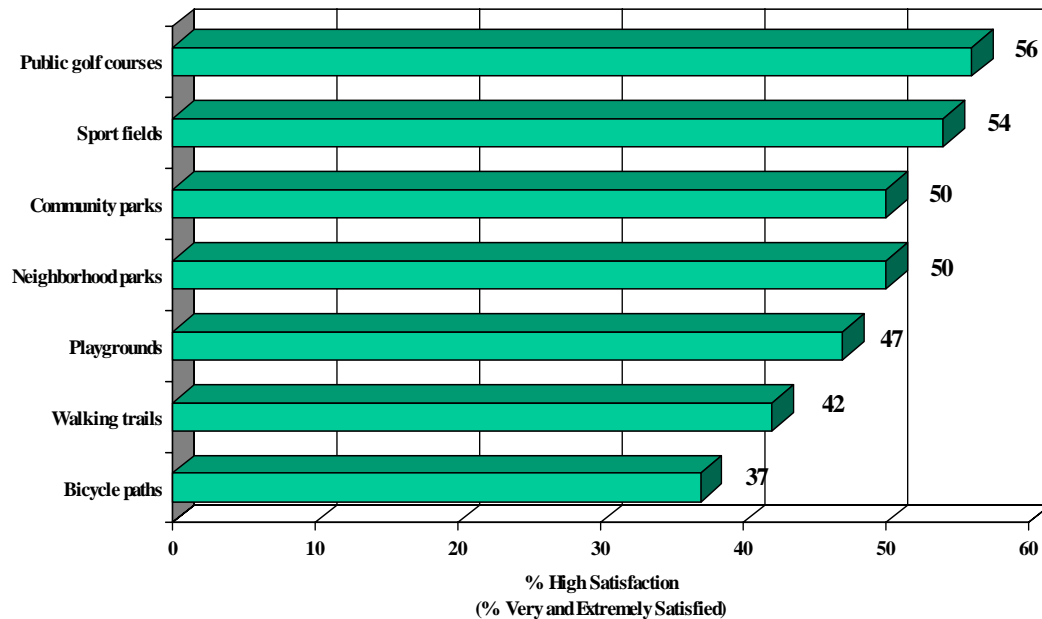


Table 12. Satisfaction with developed open spaces by IDNR Region.

Type of Developed Open Spaces	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Bicycle Paths						
Low satisfaction	24%	28%	24%	33%	37%	28%
High satisfaction	42	36	42	35	32	37
Average *	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.0	2.9	3.0
Community Parks						
Low satisfaction	14%	14%	14%	16%	19%	15%
High satisfaction	46	52	56	46	45	50
Average *	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.3	3.4
Playgrounds						
Low satisfaction	12%	14%	16%	15%	20%	14%
High satisfaction	47	48	56	42	38	47
Average *	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.2	3.4
Sport Fields						
Low satisfaction	12%	10%	16%	14%	17%	11%
High satisfaction	54	55	57	52	48	54
Average *	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.5
Public Golf Courses						
Low satisfaction	12%	13%	20%	15%	17%	13%
High satisfaction	59	55	60	56	52	56
Average	3.7	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.6
Neighborhood Parks						
Low satisfaction	16%	14%	17%	18%	20%	15%
High satisfaction	49	51	51	47	42	50
Average *	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.4
Walking Trails						
Low satisfaction	23%	22%	26%	32%	26%	24%
High satisfaction	43	43	43	34	38	42
Average *	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.0	3.1	3.1

Satisfaction ratings: a 5-point Likert type scale where 1=not at all satisfied, 2=slightly satisfied, 3=moderately satisfied, 4=very satisfied, and 5=extremely satisfied. Average based on 5-point satisfaction rating scale. For presentation, scale ratings 1 and 2 were combined to yield the “low satisfaction” rating category while ratings 4 and 5 were combined to yield the “high satisfaction” rating category. Total column reflects data weighted by population in each region.

* Statistically significant differences among IDNR Regions, analysis of variance, $p \leq .05$.

e. Importance and Satisfaction Comparisons. Respondents’ importance and satisfaction ratings for various types of open space were compared. For the majority of undeveloped types of open space, there is a large discrepancy between the importance ratings and the satisfaction ratings of respondents (Figure 10). Generally, respondents felt many of the types of open spaces are important, however, their level of satisfaction was not quite as high. One can conclude from this comparison that additional efforts are needed to increase the satisfaction level of respondents for those open space types that were identified as important by respondents, in particular, state parks, lakes/ponds, natural areas, wildlife habitat, stream corridors, and forested areas. For the most part,

the comparisons of importance and satisfaction ratings for the developed types of open space areas showed smaller differences than undeveloped types of open spaces (Figure 11). In particular, the importance ratings were significantly higher than satisfaction ratings for community parks, neighborhood parks, playgrounds, and walking trails; indicating, additional efforts may be necessary to increase the satisfaction levels of respondents. These efforts may be the acquisition of new lands or the improvement of existing conditions.

Figure 10. Importance/Satisfaction comparisons of undeveloped open spaces.

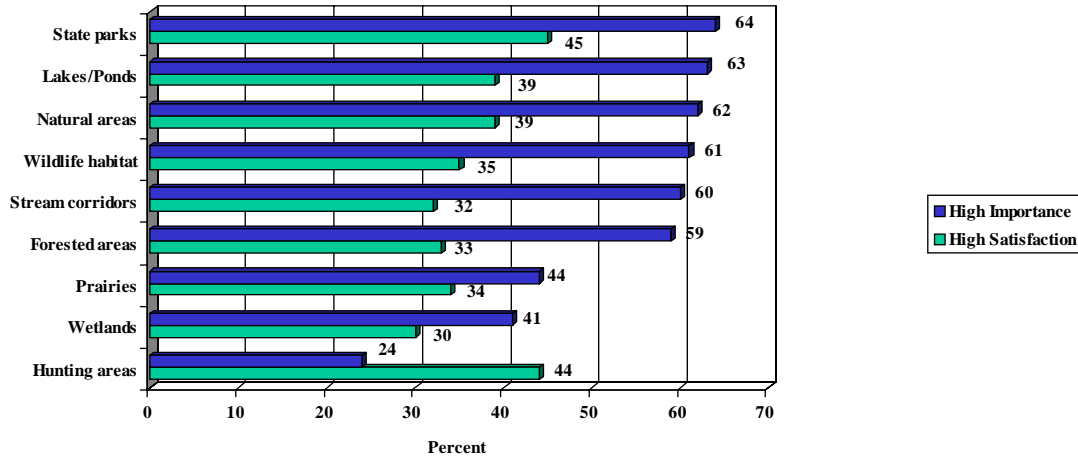
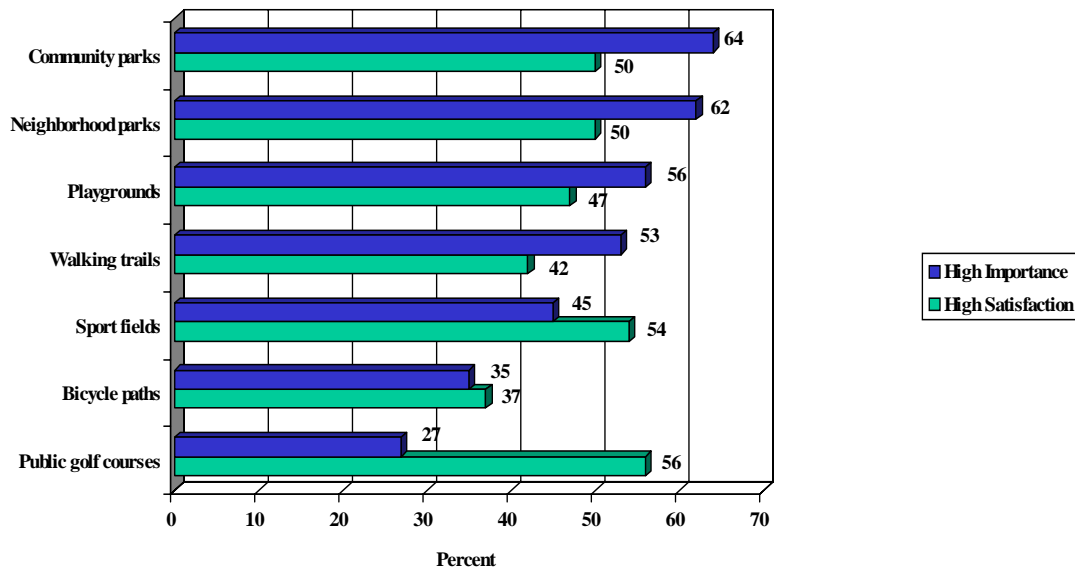


Figure 11. Importance/Satisfaction comparisons of developed open spaces.

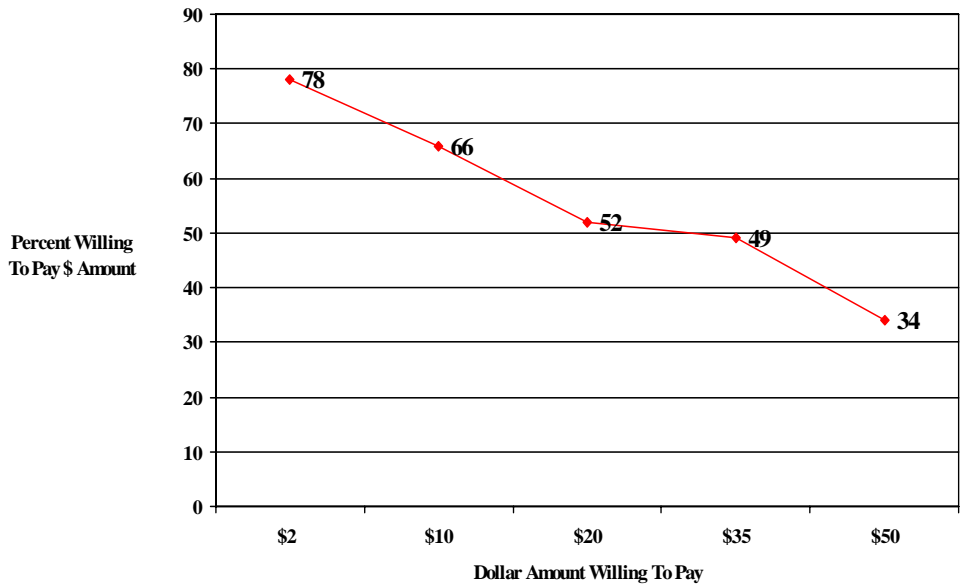


3. Monetary Support for Open Space

a. Willingness to Pay. Respondents were asked to indicate their willingness-to-pay to a fund to acquire a variety of conservation and recreational lands throughout the state of Illinois, ranging from natural areas and wildlife habitat to local and state parks. Within each of the five DNR Regions, respondents were randomly assigned to one of the five willingness to pay groups: \$2, \$10, \$20, \$35, or \$50 group. Respondents were asked, “Would you be willing to contribute _____ to such a fund per year?” The dollar value entered in the blank space corresponded to the particular willingness to pay group assigned to the respondent.

Generally, as the dollar value increased, lack of support decreased (Figure 12). Seventy-eight percent of the respondents indicated they would contribute \$2 per year to a fund to be used for use to acquire a variety of conservation and recreational lands throughout the state of Illinois, ranging from natural areas and wildlife habitat to local and state parks. Sixty-six percent of the respondents would contribute \$10 per year, 52 percent would contribute \$20 per year, 49 percent would contribute \$35 per year, and 34 percent indicated they would be willing to contribute \$50 per year to such a fund.

Figure 12. Support/Opposition of suggestions to pay for acquisition of open space lands.



Support for contributing to a fund to be used to acquire a variety of conservation and recreational lands throughout the state of Illinois, ranging from natural areas and wildlife habitat to local and state parks, differed across the five DNR Regions (Table 13 and Figure 13). Generally, respondents in Region 3 were more likely to support such a fund while respondents in Region 5 were less likely to support such a fund.

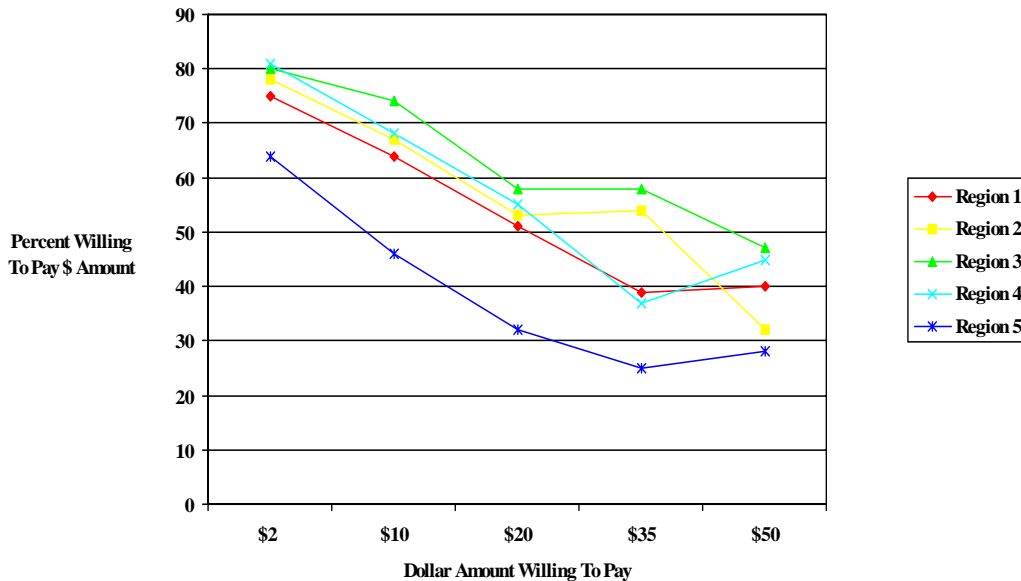
Table 13. Willingness to pay to a fund to acquire open space lands by IDNR Region.

Willingness To Pay	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Willing to pay \$2	75%	78%	80%	81%	64%	78%
Willing to pay \$10 *	64	67	74	68	46	66
Willing to pay \$20 *	51	53	58	55	32	52
Willing to pay \$35 *	39	54	58	37	25	49
Willing to pay \$50	40	32	47	45	28	34

Percentage in each cell represents the percent of respondents indicating they would pay the specific dollar amount. Total column reflects data weighted by population in each region.

* Statistically significant differences among IDNR Regions, chi-square analysis, $p \leq .05$.

Figure 13. Support/Opposition of suggestions to pay for acquisition of open space lands by IDNR Region.



b. Factors Affecting Willingness to Pay. To examine willingness to pay in more detail, several factors thought to affect an individual's willingness to pay (yes or no) to a fund used to acquire a variety of conservation and recreational lands throughout the state of Illinois, ranging from natural areas and wildlife habitat to local and state parks. These factors include socioeconomic information (age, gender, education, income, years lived in community, size of community lived in, and size of community where grew up),

household information (own/rent residence, number of people in household, and number of children in household), outdoor recreation activity participation information (number of activities participated in during past 12 months and number of visits in the past 12 months to open space areas), and attitudes about open space (feelings about acquisition of open space, open space and quality of life, and quantity of open space). This information is summarized in Table 14.

Table 14. Summary Table of Bi-variate relationships with willingness to pay.

Bi-variate Relationship with WTP	Willingness to Pay Amount					Statistical Test
	\$2	\$10	\$20	\$35	\$50	
Age	ND	Young	Young	Young	ND	t-test
Gender	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	Chi-square
Education	High	High	High	High	High	Chi-square
Income	High	High	High	High	High	Chi-square
Years lived in community	ND	Lower	Lower	Lower	Lower	t-test
Size community live	ND	Larger	Larger	ND	ND	Chi-square
Size community grew-up	ND	Larger	Larger	Larger	ND	Chi-square
Own/Rent	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	Chi-square
# in household	ND	More	More	ND	ND	t-test
# children in household	ND	ND	More	ND	More	t-test
Average # of activities	More	More	More	More	More	t-test
Visits past 12 months	More	More	More	More	More	Chi-square
Acquisition open space	Higher	Higher	Higher	Higher	Higher	t-test
Quality of life	Higher	Higher	Higher	Higher	Higher	t-test
Amount of open space	Higher	Higher	Higher	Higher	Higher	t-test
State fund for acquisition	Higher	Higher	Higher	Higher	Higher	t-test

ND: No significant differences ($p \leq .05$) between those willing to pay and those not willing to pay the specified dollar amount.

Many of the variables selected are related to an individuals willingness to pay (yes or no) a specified amount (\$2, \$10, \$20, \$35, or \$50) per year to a fund to acquire open space lands. For example, those respondents willing to pay \$2 to a fund per year have a higher level of education and income, more active in the outdoor areas (participate in more outdoor recreation activities and visit open space areas more frequently), and are generally more positive to open space issues (acquisition, quality of life, and quantity of open space lands) than those respondents not willing to pay the \$2 fee.

c. Logistic Regression. In order to assess support for preservation of open space it was necessary to determine possible demographic parameters that affected attitudes toward open space. A binomial logistic regression model using support (“Yes” = 1, “No” = 0) for open space preservation as the dependent variable was developed to identify demographic variables that were significantly related to attitudes toward open space preservation. The dependent variable, support for open space preservation, was created by identifying those respondents who indicated they would be willing to pay (\$2, \$10, \$20, \$35, or \$50)—the “yes support group.” Those respondents indicating they were not willing to pay comprised the “no support group.” Demographic variables elected for the model were age, income, education, gender, IDNR administrative region of residence, and size of community. Age was collapsed into a categorical variable (20-40 years; 41-49 years; 50-59 years; and = or > 60 years) based on quartile cut-points. Those demographic variables identified through the logistic regression model were incorporated into a logit model to determine cut-points and degree of support for open space preservation. Variables identified in the logistic regression model were then entered individually into a logit model to determine a) odds ratios (expressed as an n:1 ratio) of support for open space acquisition b) the likelihood individuals in an individual demographic group supported or opposed open space acquisition.

The logistic regression model identified income, education, IDNR administrative region of residence, and age as significant variables in support for open space preservation (Table 15). Income was the most significant in explaining support for open space preservation, followed by education, region of residence, and age. Wald estimates represent the probability that an individual would move from opposed to support with one increment change in that particular parameter.

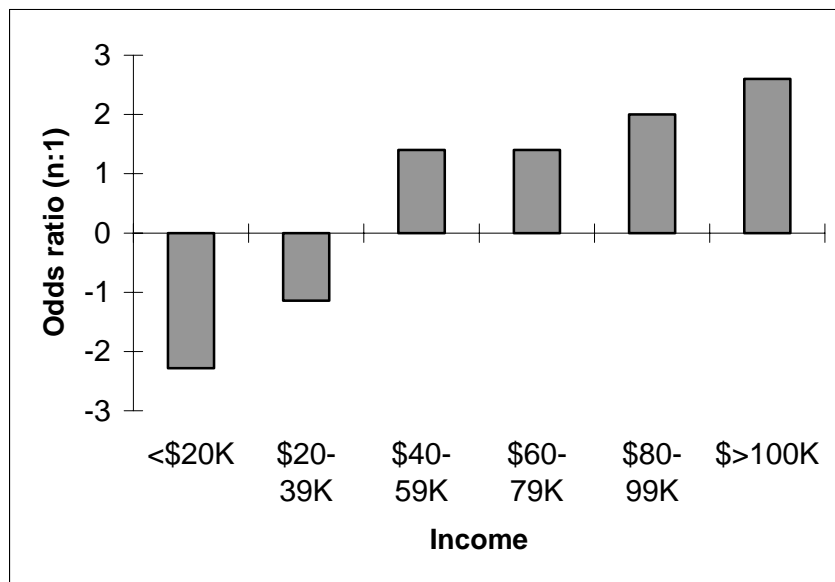
Table 15. Logistic regression model for support for open space preservation.

	Wald	β	<i>p</i>
Goodness-of-fit $\chi^2 = 112.57$, -2 Log likelihood = 2130.82, Prediction = 61.4%, $p < 0.0001$			
Income	33.80	0.231	<0.0001
Education	12.93	0.095	<0.0001
Region	5.90	-0.087	0.015
Age	5.01	-0.007	0.025

Variables not in the equation: gender, size of community

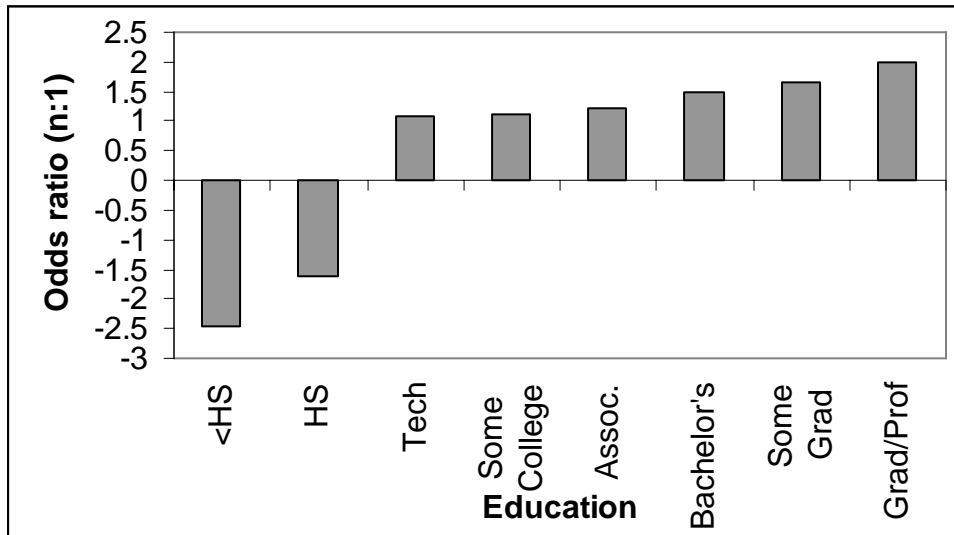
The logit model examining support for open space acquisition by income indicates the income range at which individuals are more likely to support open space acquisition is \$40,000 total gross household income and higher (Figure 14). Below \$40,000 annual income individuals are more likely to oppose open space acquisition. Individuals with household incomes less than \$20,000 are 2.28 times more likely to oppose acquisition than support it. Conversely, individuals with household incomes over \$100,000 were 2.6 times more likely to support acquiring more open space.

Figure 14. Support for open space by income (logit odds).



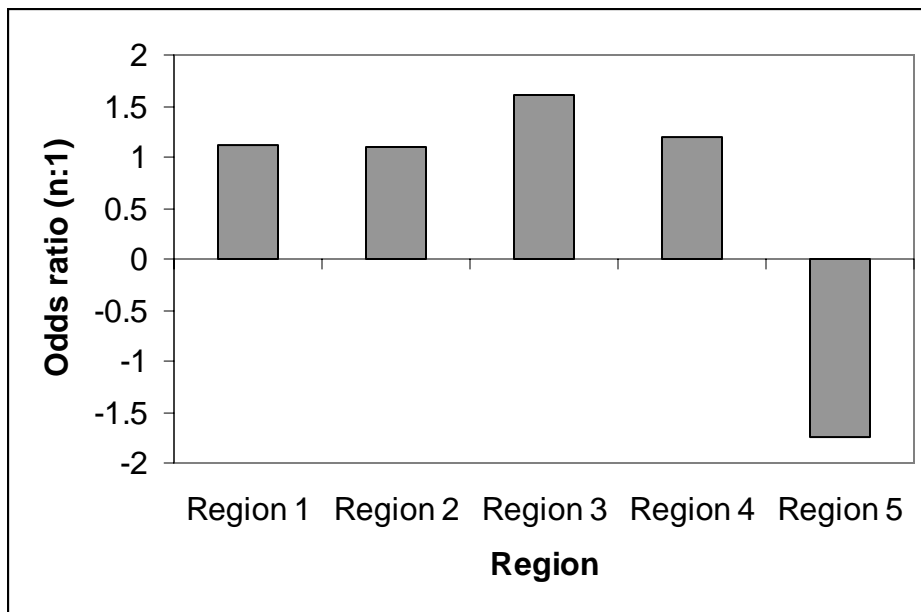
Support for open space acquisition varied by level of education (Figure 15). Individuals with at least a technical school degree or some college were slightly supportive of acquiring more open space (1.09 and 1.11 times more supportive, respectfully) whereas individuals who had completed high school were 1.6 times more likely to oppose open space acquisition, and respondents who had not completed high school were 2.47 times more likely to oppose acquiring more open space in Illinois. Highest support was found among individual with graduate or professional degrees, who were 1.98 times more likely to support than oppose open space acquisition.

Figure 15. Support for open space by education (logit odds).



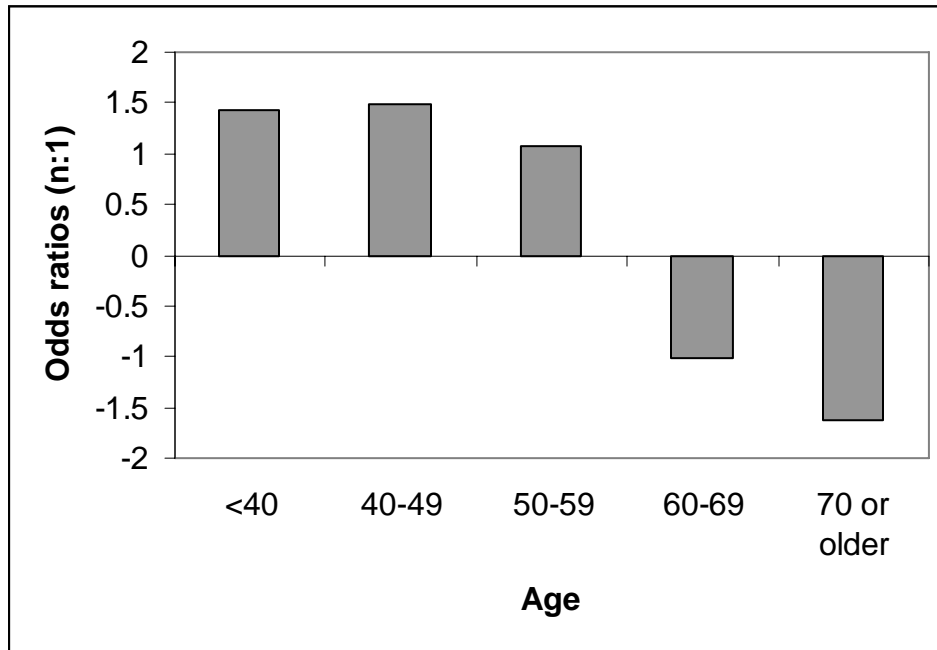
Respondents in four of five IDNR administrative regions were more likely to support open space acquisition (Figure 16). Lowest likelihood of support was in Region 2, where respondents were 1.1 times more likely to support as oppose open space acquisition. Highest likelihood of support was in Region 3, where respondents were 1.61 times more likely to support acquiring new open space. Region 5 was the only region whose residents were most likely to oppose acquisition of open space, by a margin of 1.75:1.

Figure 16. Support for open space by IDNR Administrative Region (logit odds).



Highest level of support for open space acquisition by age was among respondents in the interval of 40-49 years of age, who were 1.48 times more likely to support open space acquisition (Figure 17). Support generally decreased with increase in age, with highest opposition found among individuals more than 70 years old.

Figure 17. Support for open space by age (logit odds).



C. Attitudes About the Acquisition of Open Space

Respondents were asked a variety of questions designed to obtain their feelings about acquiring open space lands. These questions included establishing a state fund for acquiring open space lands, acquisition options (taxes, tax check-off, etc), and their feelings about the acquisition of open space lands.

1. State Fund for Acquisition

Respondents were asked whether they would support or oppose the State of Illinois establishing a fund to pay for the acquisition of additional open space. Their responses were based on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1=strongly oppose to 5=strongly support.

Nineteen percent of the respondents oppose (strongly oppose or oppose) the state of Illinois establishing a fund to pay for the acquisition of additional open space (Figure 18). On the other hand, about one-half of the respondents (45%) support (support or strongly support).

support) establishing such a fund. A significant percentage of respondents (36%) were uncommitted; that is, they did not support or oppose but maintained more of a neutral position. Respondents in Region 3 were more supportive of establishing the fund than respondents in the other regions (Table 16), 53 percent who support (support or strongly support) compared to an overall average of 45 percent, respectively. On the other hand, respondents in Region 5 (37%) were less supportive of establishing a fund than respondents in the other regions.

Figure 18. Support of state fund for acquisition of open space lands.

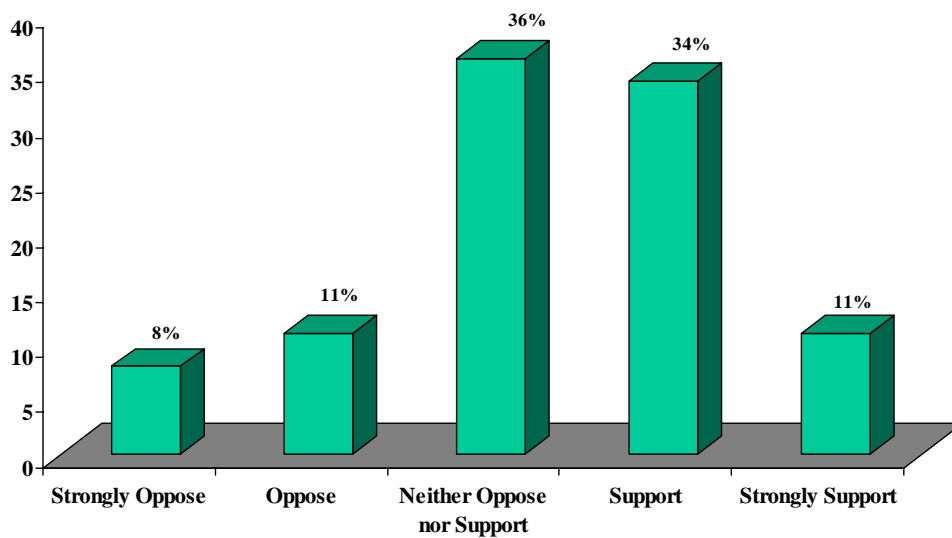


Table 16. Feelings about creating state fund for acquisition of open space by IDNR Region.

State Fund for Acquisition	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly oppose	7%	8%	4%	8%	12%	8%
Oppose	15	11	11	10	15	11
Neither support nor oppose	36	36	31	35	37	36
Support	32	34	34	36	29	34
Strongly support	10	11	19	11	8	11
Average *	3.2	3.3	3.5	3.3	3.1	3.3

Note: In some instances column totals for each region may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Average based on 5-point rating scale ranging from 1=strongly oppose to 5=strongly support. Total column reflects data weighted by population in each region.

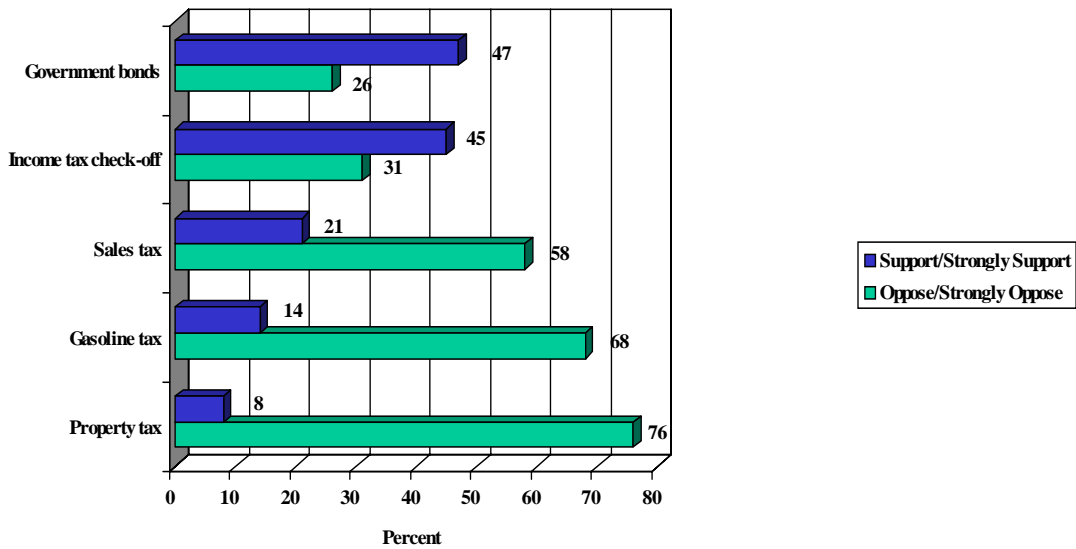
* Statistically significant differences among IDNR Regions, analysis of variance, $p \leq .05$.

2. Acquisition Options

Respondents indicated their support or opposition to five options for the acquisition of open space lands. These options included sales tax, property tax, gasoline tax, income tax return check-off, and government bonds. Respondents rated each option on a 5-point Likert type scale ranging from 1=strongly oppose to 5=strongly support.

A majority of respondents were opposed (opposed or strongly opposed on the rating scale) to using property taxes (76%), gasoline taxes (68%) or sales taxes (58%) for the acquisition of open space lands (Figure 19). Options most supported (support or strongly support) by respondents included income tax check-off and government bonds. Forty-five percent of the respondents supported using an income tax check-off while the option of government bonds was supported by 47 percent of the respondents.

Figure 19. Support/Opposition of suggestions to pay for acquisition of open space lands.



Respondents across the five IDNR Regions were fairly consistent in their level of support or opposition to the five options for acquiring open space lands (Table 17). The primary differences among the regions were attributed to Regions 3 and 5. Respondents in Region 3 were more supportive of using the options of government bonds and gasoline taxes than average. On the other hand, respondents in Region 5 were less supportive of the income tax check-off and government bonds options.

Table 17. Suggestion for best way to pay for acquisition of open space lands by IDNR Region.

Pay Suggestions	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Government bonds						
Oppose	22%	27%	18%	24%	30%	26%
Support	43	48	59	46	37	47
Average *	3.2	3.2	3.5	3.2	2.9	3.2
Income tax check-off						
Oppose	30%	29%	37%	33%	41%	31%
Support	42	47	45	46	33	45
Average *	3.1	3.2	3.0	3.1	2.7	3.1
Sales tax						
Oppose	57%	58%	59%	55%	60%	58%
Support	18	22	23	24	21	21
Average	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.2	2.3
Gasoline tax						
Oppose	67%	68%	60%	65%	69%	68%
Support	12	14	20	15	13	14
Average *	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.2	2.0	2.1
Property tax						
Oppose	74%	75%	75%	77%	81%	76%
Support	8	8	12	7	6	8
Average	1.9	1.8	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.8

Support/oppose ratings: a 5-point Likert type scale where 1=strongly oppose, 2=oppose, 3=neither support nor oppose, 4=support, and 5=strongly support. Average based on 5-point support/oppose rating scale. For presentation, scale ratings 1 and 2 were combined to yield the “oppose” rating category while ratings 4 and 5 were combined to yield the “support” rating category. Total column reflects data weighted by population in each region.

* Statistically significant differences among IDNR Regions, analysis of variance, $p \leq .05$.

3. Feelings About the Acquisition of Open Space Lands

Respondents expressed their opinions (agreement or disagreement) with three statements about the acquisition of open space in Illinois. These statements were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from “1=strongly disagree” to “5=strongly agree”.

Forty-two percent of the respondents disagreed with the statement “the state should not be spending money on acquiring open space” while 26 percent agreed (Table 18). Furthermore, about one-half of the respondents (44%) agreed “the state should set aside more money for acquiring open space” compared to 23 percent who disagreed. Region 3 respondents were more likely to disagree with the statement “the state should not be spending money on acquiring open space” than other respondents and more likely to agree with the statement “the state should set aside more money for acquiring open

space.” A majority of respondents (49%) agreed that “local governments should purchase land for outdoor recreation activities.” A much larger percentage of respondents in Region 3 (64%) were more in agreement with the statement than respondents in other regions.

Table 18. Feelings about the purchase of open space lands by IDNR Region.

Statements	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
The state should not be spending money on acquiring open space						
Disagree	43%	41%	53%	45%	37%	42%
Agree	27	26	18	26	31	26
Average *	2.8	2.8	2.5	2.8	2.9	2.8
Local governments should purchase land for outdoor recreation activities						
Disagree	15%	20%	8%	20%	25%	19%
Agree	53	47	64	48	41	49
Average *	3.4	3.3	3.7	3.3	3.2	3.3
The state should set aside more money for acquiring open space						
Disagree	23%	24%	12%	20%	30%	23%
Agree	43	42	58	49	38	44
Average *	3.2	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.1	3.2

Agreement ratings: a 5-point Likert scale where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree. Average based on 5-point agreement rating scale. For presentation, scale ratings 1 and 2 were combined to yield the “disagree” rating category while ratings 4 and 5 were combined to yield the “agree” rating category. Total column reflects data weighted by population in each region.

* Statistically significant differences among IDNR Regions, analysis of variance, $p \leq .05$.

D. Perceptions of the Amount, Quality of Life, and Benefits of Open Space

Respondents answered several attitude questions pertaining to open space. These statements were grouped into three categories: 1) attitudes about the amount of open space lands, 2) attitudes about open space and quality of life, and 3) attitudes about perceived benefits of open space lands.

1. Perceived Amount of Open Space in Illinois

Respondents were asked to indicate whether there was too much, about the right amount, or not enough open space currently available in Illinois. Only 3 percent of the respondents felt there is too much open space in Illinois (Figure 20). A majority of respondents (63%) felt the amount of open space in Illinois was about right while one out of every three respondents (34%) felt there is not enough open space in Illinois. Respondent ratings differ across the IDNR Regions (Table 19). The primary differences can be attributed to respondents in Regions 3 and 5. A larger percentage of respondents in Region 3 (48%) indicated there is not enough open space in Illinois compared to 28 percent of the respondents in Region 5.

Figure 20. Amount of open space.

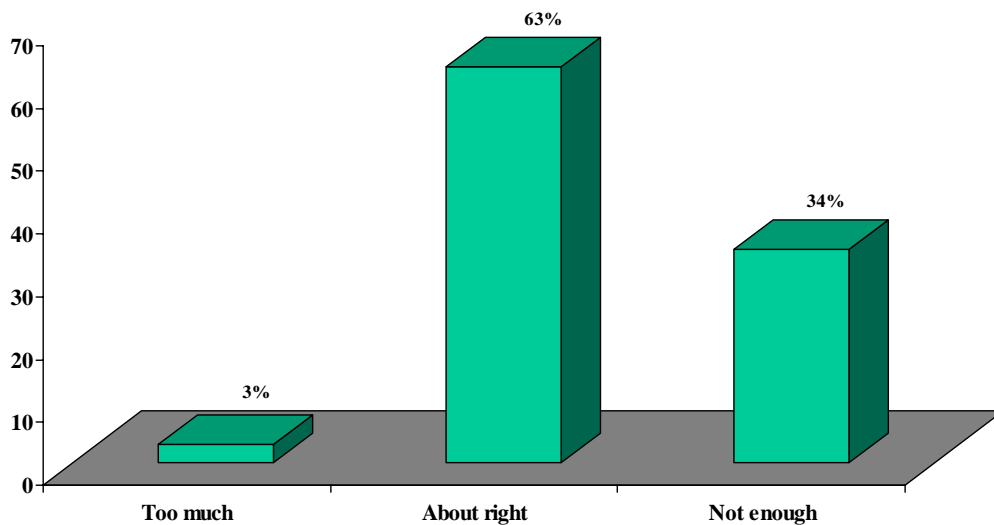


Table 19. Feelings about amount of open space by IDNR Region.

Feelings About Amount of Open Space	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Too much	2%	4%	3%	4%	6%	3%
About right	65	64	50	58	66	63
Not enough	33	32	48	38	28	34

Note: In some instances column totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Total column reflects data weighted by population in each region.

* Statistically significant differences among IDNR Regions, chi-square analysis, $p \leq .05$.

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with four additional questions about the amount of open space. Each statement was rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree (Table 20). Generally, there is support for acquiring additional open space lands. Slightly less than one-half (43%) of the respondents agree “acquiring additional open space is a good idea for my community.” Thirty-eight percent of the respondents agree “additional open space needs to be acquired” and 33 percent agree “my community does not have enough open space.” One of every five respondents (24%) agree “there is already an adequate amount of open space in Illinois.” Respondents in Region 3 were more supportive of acquiring additional open space lands than those respondents in Region 5. In response to the statement, “There is already an adequate amount of open space in Illinois,” respondents in Region 3 expressed a lower level of agreement than respondents in Region 5.

Table 20. Attitudes about amount of open space by IDNR Region.

Statements	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Acquiring additional open space is a good idea for my community						
Disagree	24%	25%	17%	24%	31%	25%
Agree	43	41	57	48	31	43
Average *	3.2	3.2	3.5	3.3	2.9	3.2
My community does not have enough open space						
Disagree	32%	28%	23%	25%	36%	28%
Agree	33	32	46	34	25	33
Average *	3.0	3.1	3.3	3.2	2.9	3.1
Additional open space needs to be acquired						
Disagree	24%	23%	16%	22%	30%	23%
Agree	37	37	51	43	31	38
Average *	3.2	3.1	3.4	3.2	3.0	3.2
There is already an adequate amount of open space in Illinois						
Disagree	36%	34%	42%	40%	30%	35%
Agree	26	24	17	23	30	24
Average *	2.8	2.9	2.6	2.8	2.9	2.8

Agreement ratings: a 5-point Likert scale where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree. Average based on 5-point agreement rating scale. For presentation, scale ratings 1 and 2 were combined to yield the “disagree” rating category while ratings 4 and 5 were combined to yield the “agree” rating category. Total column reflects data weighted by population in each region.

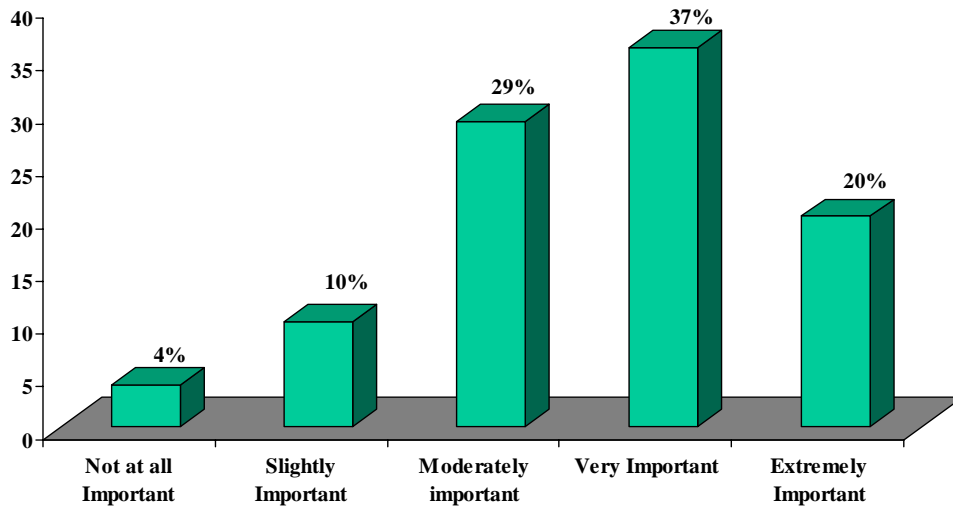
* Statistically significant differences among IDNR Regions, analysis of variance, $p \leq .05$.

2. Perceived Relationship Between Open Space and Quality of Life

Respondents were asked two questions about the relationship between open space and quality of life. Respondents were asked to indicate the importance of open space to their quality of life on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1=not at all important to 5=extremely important. In addition, respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement with the statement “open space is not important to my quality of life.” This statement was rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree.

A majority of respondents (57%) indicated that open space is important (very or extremely important rating) to their quality of life (Figure 21). Four percent of the respondents felt open space was not at all important to their quality of life. The importance of open space to an individual’s quality of life differed across the IDNR Regions, that difference being attributed to respondents in Region 3 (Table 21). Respondents in Region 3 rated the importance of open space to their quality of life significantly higher than respondents in the other regions.

Figure 21. Importance of open space to quality of life.



Nearly two out of every three respondents (61%) disagreed (disagreed or strongly disagreed on the rating scale) with the statement “open space is not important to my quality of life (Figure 22). Respondents in Region 3 tended to disagree (disagree or strongly disagree) that open space is not important to their quality of life more than respondents in Region 2, 73 and 58 percent, respectively (Table 21).

Figure 22. Agreement open space is not important to quality of life.

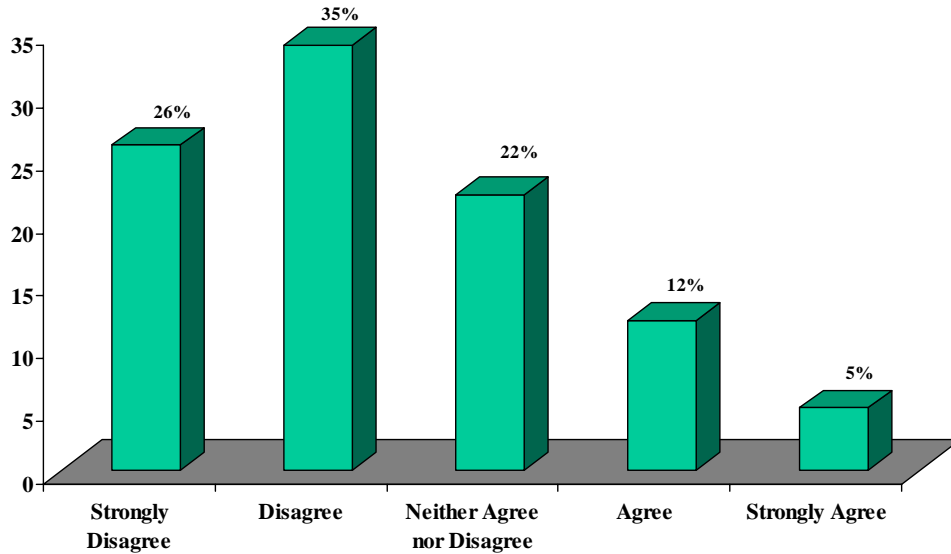


Table 21. Open space and quality of life by IDNR Region.

Quality of Life	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Importance of open space to quality of life						
Not at all important	4%	5%	4%	4%	6%	4%
Slightly important	10	10	9	10	10	10
Moderately important	28	30	20	30	30	29
Very important	41	36	37	35	31	37
Extremely important	17	19	30	21	23	20
Average *	3.6	3.6	3.8	3.6	3.6	3.6
Open space is not important to my quality of life						
Strongly disagree	27%	25%	35%	29%	25%	26%
Disagree	36	33	38	39	34	35
Neither agree nor disagree	20	24	17	18	25	22
Agree	14	13	7	11	11	12
Strongly agree	4	6	3	3	4	5
Average *	2.3	2.4	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4

Note: In some instances column totals for each variable may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Total column reflects data weighted by population in each region.

* Statistically significant differences among IDNR Regions, analysis of variance, $p \leq .05$.

3. Perceived Benefits of Open Space

Respondents expressed their attitudes (agreement or disagreement) with several statements about open space. Respondents rated these statements on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from “1=strongly disagree” to “5=strongly agree.”

A majority, or near majority, of respondents agreed (rated as agreed or strongly agreed) “we need to preserve open space to protect wildlife habitat” (76%), “if we don’t save open space now, it will be lost for future generations” (66%), ‘protecting the environment helps the state’s economy” (65%), “we need to acquire open space now before it is lost to development” (61%), and “open space enhances property values” (60%) (Table 22).

For four of the five statements, respondents differed in their level of agreement across the IDNR Regions. These differences were most pronounced by the ratings of respondents in Regions 3 and 5. In all instances, respondents in Region 3 were more likely to agree with the statement than respondents in Region 5.

Table 22. General feelings about perceived benefits of open space by IDNR Region.

Statements	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
We need to preserve open space to protect wildlife habitat						
Disagree	6%	6%	5%	7%	10%	7%
Agree	75	77	77	72	68	76
Average *	4.0	3.9	4.0	3.9	3.8	3.9
If we don’t save open space now, it will be lost for future generations						
Disagree	12%	11%	9%	11%	16%	11%
Agree	67	67	75	64	57	66
Average *	3.8	3.7	4.0	3.7	3.5	3.8
Protecting the environment helps the state’s economy						
Disagree	9%	8%	9%	9%	12%	8%
Agree	65	65	67	65	60	65
Average	3.7	3.7	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.7
We need to acquire open space now before it is lost to development						
Disagree	15%	14%	10%	13%	20%	14%
Agree	62	61	70	61	48	61
Average *	3.6	3.6	3.9	3.7	3.4	3.6
Open space enhances property values						
Disagree	6%	9%	5%	8%	12%	8%
Agree	64	60	67	59	53	60
Average *	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.7	3.5	3.7

Agreement ratings: a 5-point Likert scale where 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree. Average based on 5-point agreement rating scale. For presentation, scale ratings 1 and 2 were combined to yield the “disagree” rating category while ratings 4 and 5 were combined to yield the “agree” rating category. Total column reflects data weighted by population in each region.

* Statistically significant differences among IDNR Regions, analysis of variance, $p \leq .05$.

E. Respondent Characteristics

1. Socioeconomic Characteristics

Respondents' socioeconomic characteristics are summarized in Table 23. These characteristics include age, gender, ethnicity, education, income, and size of community where respondent grew up.

a. Age. The average age of respondents was 54 years of age. Respondents in Region 3 were slightly younger (53 years of age) than average while Region 5 respondents were slightly older (57 years of age) than average.

b. Gender. Sixty-one percent of the respondents were male compared to 39 percent females. There was no significant difference among the five DNR Regions.

c. Ethnicity. A large majority of respondents' viewed themselves as Caucasian (88%). The next largest ethnic categories were Native American (7%) and African-American (2%). Regional differences were most pronounced within Region 3. In that region, there were significantly more African-American respondents compared to the other four regions. On the other hand, there were fewer Caucasian and Native American respondents compared to the other regions. This was particularly evident in Region 5, where ten percent of the respondents considered themselves Native Americans.

d. Education. Overall, respondents have a moderate level of education. Sixty-nine percent of the respondents have some education beyond the high school level. Furthermore, about one of every three respondents (37%) has at least a bachelor's degree from a four-year college or university. There were significant differences among the IDNR Regions, especially in Region 3 and 5. On average, the level of education of respondents in Region 3 was higher than the other four regions. On the other hand, the level of education of respondents in Region 5 was significantly lower than the other four regions.

e. Income. The majority of respondents (67%) reported a total household income of less than \$60,000. Although, 7 percent of the respondents reported a total household income of \$100,000 or more, respondents in Region 3 reported a higher income than the other four regions while total household income was significantly less in Region 5.

f. Size of Community Where Grew Up. A large majority of respondents were from small towns/cities and rural areas. Twenty-nine percent of the respondents were from a rural farm community. One out of every two respondents either grew up in a small town under 10,000 population (24%) or a small city with a population between 10,000 and 100,000 (28%). Eight percent of the respondents reported growing up in a mid-sized city with a population of 100,000 to 1 million people or a large city with over 1 million people. Respondents in Region 3 were more likely to have grown up in areas with a large population (more urban) while those respondents in Region 5 were more likely to have grown up in areas with smaller populations (more rural).

Table 23. Respondent socioeconomic characteristics by IDNR Region.

Characteristic	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Age (average years) *	54 yrs	54 yrs	53 yrs	55 yrs	57 yrs	54 yrs
Gender						
Male	63%	60%	56%	61%	66%	61%
Female	37	40	44	39	34	39
Ethnicity *						
African-American	2%	1%	8%	2%	1%	2%
Asian-American	1	2	3	1	<1	1
Caucasian	89	88	82	89	86	88
Hispanic	<1	1	2	<1	1	1
Native American	6	7	3	7	10	7
Other	2	2	3	1	2	2
Education *						
Less than High School	4%	4%	5%	7%	9%	5%
High School	24	27	19	24	27	26
Tech/Voc School	7	6	6	5	7	6
Some College	25	19	18	18	18	20
Associate Degree	8	7	8	9	12	7
Bachelor's Degree	14	17	19	15	11	16
Some Grad Study	5	5	6	5	5	5
Grad Deg/Pro School	13	16	29	18	10	16
Income *						
Under \$20,000	13%	14%	8%	12%	19%	13%
\$20,000 - \$39,999	25	30	17	29	35	29
\$40,000 - \$59,999	26	25	21	24	21	25
\$60,000 - \$79,999	18	18	19	14	15	18
\$80,000 - \$99,999	10	7	12	10	4	8
\$100,000 or more	8	5	24	11	6	7
Size Community Grew Up *						
Rural, farm	27%	29%	9%	32%	40%	29%
Rural, non-farm	4	4	4	5	6	4
Small town, under 10,000 people	23	23	17	25	35	24
Small city, 10,000 to 100,000 people	28	29	30	27	13	28
Mid-size city, 100,000 to 1M people	14	7	8	9	4	8
Large city, over 1M people	4	8	31	2	3	8

Note: In some instances column totals for each variable may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Total column reflects data weighted by population for in each region.

* Statistically significant differences among IDNR Regions, analysis of variance or chi-square statistical test, $p \leq .05$.

g. Years Lived in Community. On average, respondents have lived in their present community for a little more than 29 years (Table 24). More than one-half of the respondents (59%) have lived in their present community for more than 20 years. Regarding regional differences, respondents in Region 5 have lived in their community significantly longer than respondents in Region 3, 33 years and 21 years, respectively.

Table 24. Community characteristics by IDNR Region.

Characteristic	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Years Lived In Community						
1 year or less	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%
2 – 5 years	13	10	19	11	10	11
6 – 10 years	12	15	16	11	10	14
11 – 20 years	13	16	20	14	13	15
More than 20 years	60	58	45	64	67	59
Average *	29.6 yrs	30.2 yrs	21.2 yrs	31.7 yrs	33.0 yrs	29.9 yrs

Note: In some instances column totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Total column reflects data weighted by population in each region.

* Statistically significant differences among IDNR Regions, analysis of variance, $p \leq .05$.

h. Size of Community. Almost one-third of the respondents live in small towns under 10,000 population (28%) and 42 percent live in small cities with a population between 10,000 and 100,000 (Table 25). Fifteen percent of the respondents live in rural farm areas. Respondents from Region 5 were more likely to live in smaller communities than those in other regions. On the other hand, respondents in Region 3 tend to live in larger communities than other regions.

Table 25. Size of community by IDNR Region.

Characteristic	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Size of Community						
Rural, farm	14%	15%	3%	12%	28%	15%
Rural, non-farm	5	4	2	4	8	4
Small town, under 10,000 people	26	27	17	34	44	28
Small city, 10,000 to 100,000 people	38	44	54	40	20	42
Mid-sized city, 100,000 to 1M people	17	9	8	11	<1	10
Large city over 1M people	<1	1	15	0	0	1

Note: In some instances column totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Total column reflects data weighted by population in each region.

Statistically significant differences among IDNR Regions, chi-square statistical test, $p \leq .05$.

2. Household Characteristics

Respondents' household characteristics are summarized in Table 26. These characteristics include status of home ownership, number of people in household, and number of children in household.

a. Home Ownership. A large majority of respondents (91%) own their residence. The remaining 9 percent of the respondents rent their residence. There was no difference in this percentage of homeowners across the five DNR Regions.

b. Number in Household. The average respondent household size was 2.5 people. The average number of people per household was slightly higher in Region 3 (2.9 people) than the other four regions.

c. Number of Children in Household. Two out of every three households (66%) reported no children living in the household. On average, there was less than 1 child per household with Region 3 having slightly more children than the other regions.

Table 26. Respondent household characteristics by IDNR Region.

Characteristic	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Home Ownership						
Own	89%	91%	92%	91%	92%	91%
Rent	11	9	8	9	8	9
Number People in Household						
1	19%	21%	16%	24%	18%	20%
2	42	44	34	38	48	42
3	16	15	17	15	16	16
4	15	13	19	17	12	15
5 or more	8	7	14	7	6	8
Average *	2.6	2.4	2.9	2.5	2.4	2.5
Number Children in Household						
0	66%	65%	59%	68%	72%	66%
1	13	16	16	14	14	15
2	15	13	14	13	11	13
3	3	5	8	4	2	4
4	2	1	2	1	1	1
5 or more	1	1	1	1	1	1
Average *	0.6	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.5	0.6

Note: In some instances column totals for each variable may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Total column reflects data weighted by population in each region.

* Statistically significant differences among IDNR Regions, analysis of variance or chi-square statistical test, $p \leq .05$.

3. Outdoor Recreation Participation

Respondent participation in various outdoor recreation activities and use of open space in the past 12 months is summarized in Table 27.

a. Activities Participated in Past 12 Months. Respondents were asked to identify (from a list of 30 outdoor recreation activities) those activities participated in during the previous 12 months. On average, respondents participated in 7 outdoor recreation activities during the previous 12 months. Respondents in Region 1 and 3 had a higher level of participation than respondents in Region 2. In addition, participation across the Regions differed for many of the outdoor recreation activities.

b. Visit Open Space in Past 12 Months. Respondents were asked their use (visitation) to open space areas during the past 12 months. A majority of respondents (58%) visited open space areas often (11 – 25 times) or frequently (25 times or more) during the previous year. Only six percent of the respondents did not visit an open space area during the past year. Respondents in Regions 1 and 3 tended to visit open space areas more often than respondents in Regions 2 and 5.

Table 27. Outdoor recreation participation characteristics by IDNR Regions.

Participation	Region					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Activity						
Running/jogging *	25%	23%	35%	24%	18%	24%
Picnicking	56	52	51	45	51	51
Water skiing	7	8	7	7	7	8
Canoeing	12	10	11	13	9	11
Camping	32	27	26	28	33	28
Cross-country skiing *	3	2	6	2	<1	2
Soccer *	8	8	12	10	4	8
Off-road vehicle use *	11	7	5	9	20	8
Observing wildlife *	60	52	49	52	55	53
In-line skating *	8	8	14	4	3	7
Walking *	80	81	87	81	71	81
Fishing *	41	38	32	41	50	39
Motor boating	19	15	16	18	18	16
Backpacking	6	5	9	5	4	5
Golfing *	31	25	37	28	22	27
Softball/baseball *	21	15	21	16	15	16
Bicycling *	38	36	55	34	23	37
Hunting *	15	14	7	19	31	15
Nature photography	17	12	19	16	16	13
Ice-skating *	8	6	11	6	1	6
Driving/sightseeing	69	62	66	65	64	64
Swimming *	41	35	46	36	37	36
Sailing *	3	3	5	2	1	3
Hiking *	36	32	37	26	22	32
Tennis *	8	8	13	9	5	8
Gardening	58	56	58	56	59	56
Horseback riding	7	8	9	10	10	8
Trapping	2	1	0	2	1	1
Mushroom hunting *	21	21	3	27	33	21
Kayaking *	2	1	3	1	1	1
Average # Activities *	7.4	6.7	7.5	6.9	6.8	6.8
Visit Open Space Past 12 Months *						
Never	5%	6%	6%	7%	6%	6%
Seldom (1-10 times)	31	38	30	35	39	36
Often (11-25 times)	37	35	39	40	31	36
Frequently (25 or more times)	27	21	26	19	24	22

Note: In some instances column totals for each variable may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Total column reflects data weighted by population in each region.

* Statistically significant differences among IDNR Regions, analysis of variance or chi-square statistical test, $p \leq .05$.

Appendices

Appendix A: Mailback Questionnaire

Communities and Open Space In Illinois



ALL RESPONSES ARE CONFIDENTIAL

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!

Postage-paid return envelope provided

University of Illinois
Department of Leisure Studies
and the
Illinois Natural History Survey

The Department of Natural Resources is requesting disclosure of information that is necessary to accomplish the statutory purpose as outlined under the Illinois Compiled Statutes, The Wildlife Code, Chapter 520. Disclosure of information is voluntary.

Communities and Open Space in Illinois

This questionnaire asks for viewpoints about your community, open space, and priorities for the state of Illinois. For the purposes of this study, open space is defined as natural areas, parks and recreation areas, wildlife habitat, and lakes and streams; agricultural lands are not defined as open space in this questionnaire.

SECTION 1: Your Community

1. How long have you lived in your present community? (Fill in blank) **Average 30** Years

2. What do you like **best** about your community? (Fill in blank)

See attachment at end of Questionnaire

3. What do you like **least** about your community? (Fill in blank)

See attachment at end of Questionnaire

4. Listed below are several issues facing many communities throughout the state of Illinois. How important is each issue to you? (Circle one number for EACH concern)

Issue	Not At All Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	Extremely Important
Managing growth & new development	3%	7%	27%	39%	24%
Protecting water quality	1	2	7	29	62
Providing more recreation lands	8	16	36	26	14
Improving the quality of public schools	2	4	14	33	46
Road improvements & maintenance	1	4	25	43	28
Protecting air quality	2	3	15	35	45
Acquisition of open space	10	16	33	26	15
Preventing and reducing crime	1	2	12	31	54
Providing convenient public transportation	16	21	31	19	12
Protecting natural areas (forests, wetlands, stream corridors, etc.)	4	7	19	33	37

5. From the list of issues in **Question 4**, what is your top issue that needs to be addressed in your community? (Fill in blank)

See attachment at end of questionnaire

SECTION 2: Importance & Satisfaction With Open Space

1. How **IMPORTANT** to you are each of the following types of open space? (Circle one number for EACH type of open space)

Type of Open Space	Not At All Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	Extremely Important
Forested areas	4%	11%	27%	34%	25%
Stream corridors (land along streams & rivers)	4	10	26	36	24
Prairies	6	15	35	27	17
Hunting areas	29	25	22	12	13
Bicycle paths	17	17	31	23	12
Wetlands	10	17	32	24	17
Community parks	5	8	23	41	23
Lakes/ponds	4	7	26	39	24
Playgrounds	6	11	28	38	17
Sport fields (baseball, soccer fields, etc)	9	14	32	31	14
Public golf courses	31	21	22	17	10
Wildlife habitat	5	10	23	47	14
State parks	5	8	24	41	24
Neighborhood parks	4	9	25	38	24
Natural areas	5	7	26	38	24
Walking trails	9	12	26	33	21

2. How **SATISFIED** are you with the amount of open space currently available in your community? (Circle one number for EACH type of open space).

Type of Open Space	Not At All Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied
Forested areas	11%	15%	41%	24%	8%
Stream corridors (land along streams & rivers)	10	17	43	23	8
Prairies	7	16	43	25	8
Hunting areas	9	13	34	27	17
Bicycle paths	13	15	35	25	12
Wetlands	9	19	42	21	9
Community parks	4	10	35	36	14
Lakes/ponds	8	14	39	29	10
Playgrounds	3	11	39	34	13
Sport fields (baseball, soccer fields, etc)	3	8	35	37	17
Public golf courses	5	9	31	33	23
Wildlife habitat	12	16	38	26	9
State parks	6	12	36	32	13
Neighborhood parks	4	11	36	35	14
Natural areas	6	17	38	29	10
Walking trails	8	15	35	28	14

4. In the past 12 months, how often did you visit the types of open space mentioned above? (Circle one number)

Never	Seldom (1-10 times)	Often (11-25 times)	Frequently (more than 25 times)
6%	35%	36%	22%

5. How important is open space to your quality of life? (Circle one number)

- 4%** Not at all important
- 10** Slightly important
- 29** Moderately important
- 36** Very important
- 20** Extremely important

6. How do you feel about the quantity of open space currently available in Illinois? (Circle one number)

- 3%** There is too much open space in Illinois.
- 63** There is about the right amount of open space in Illinois.
- 34** There is not enough open space in Illinois.

SECTION 3: Open Space Maintenance & Acquisition

1. The state legislature and Governor determine how much money will be used for the acquisition of additional open space. Do you support or oppose the State of Illinois establishing a fund to pay for the acquisition of additional open space? (Circle one number)

- 8%** Strongly oppose
- 11** Oppose
- 36** Neither oppose nor support
- 34** Support
- 11** Strongly support

2. There have been many suggestions on the best way to pay for the acquisition of open space lands. How much do you support or oppose each of the following? (Circle one number for EACH suggestion)

Statement	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither Oppose Nor Support	Support	Strongly Support
Sales Tax	34%	24%	21%	18%	4%
Property Tax	50	25	17	7	1
Gasoline Tax	39	28	18	11	3
Income tax return check-off	19	11	24	30	16
Government bonds	15	11	27	35	13

3. People differ on their willingness to support open space. Suppose there was a fund used to acquire a variety of conservation and recreational lands throughout the state of Illinois—ranging from natural areas and wildlife habitat to local and state parks. Would you be willing to contribute \$???? to such a fund per year?

	\$2	\$10	\$20	\$35	\$50
Yes	78%	66%	52%	49%	34%
No	22	34	48	51	66

Section 4: Your Opinions About Open Space

1. Please give your opinion about open space. (Circle the number that matches your response with each statement).

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Additional open space needs to be acquired.	8%	15%	39%	29%	9%
The state should not be spending money on acquiring open space.	14	28	32	18	8
Acquiring additional open space is a good idea for my community.	8	16	33	33	9
Open space is not important to my quality of life.	26	34	22	12	5
Protecting the environment helps the state's economy.	3	5	27	45	20
<hr/>					
I would vote for a candidate who supports open space.	4	6	40	39	11
We need to acquire open space now before it is lost to development.	5	9	25	41	20
If we don't save open space now, it will be lost for future generations.	4	7	23	43	23
We need to preserve open space to protect wildlife habitat.	3	4	18	50	26
My community does not have enough open space.	7	21	39	24	9
Local governments should purchase land for outdoor recreation activities.	7	12	33	39	9
<hr/>					
The state should set aside more money for acquiring open space.	8	15	34	35	9
There is already an adequate amount of open space in Illinois.	10	26	41	19	5
Open space is an important issue in Illinois.	4	10	39	39	9
Open space enhances property values.	3	6	31	45	16

Section 5: General Household Information

The following information is helpful to describe different groups of households. Your answers will be used for statistical purposes and will not be identified with you personally.

1. Are you: (Circle one number) **61%** Male **39%** Female

2. How old are you? (Fill in blank) **Average age 54** Years old

3. What is your ethnic/cultural group? (Circle one number)
 - 2%** African-American
 - 1** Asian-American
 - 88** Caucasian
 - 1** Hispanic
 - 7** Native American
 - <1** Pacific Islander
 - 2** Other (please specify) _____

4. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (Circle one number)
 - 5%** Less than high school
 - 26** Graduated high school
 - 6** Technical/Vocational school
 - 20** Some college
 - 7** Associate degree (2 years of college)
 - 16** Bachelor's degree
 - 5** Some graduate study
 - 16** Graduate degree or professional school

5. What county do you live in? (Fill in blank)

6. How would you describe the size of your community? (Circle one number)
 - 15%** Rural, farm
 - 4** Rural non-farm
 - 28** Small town, under 10,000 people
 - 42** Small city, 10,000 to 100,000 people
 - 10** Mid-sized city, 100,000 to 1 million people
 - 1** Large city, over 1 million people

7. How would you describe the size of the community where you grew up? (Circle one number)

- 29% Rural, farm
- 4 Rural non-farm
- 24 Small town, under 10,000 people
- 28 Small city, 10,000 to 100,000 people
- 8 Mid-sized city, 100,000 to 1 million people
- 8 Large city, over 1 million people

8. What was your approximate total household income before taxes in 2000? (Circle one number)

- | | | | |
|-----|-------------------|-----|-------------------|
| 13% | Under \$20,000 | 18% | \$60,000-\$79,999 |
| 29 | \$20,000-\$39,999 | 8 | \$80,000-\$99,999 |
| 25 | \$40,000-\$59,999 | 7 | \$100,000 or more |

9. Do you own (or purchasing) or rent your primary residence? (Circle one number)

- | | | | |
|-----|---------------------|----|------|
| 91% | Own (or purchasing) | 9% | Rent |
|-----|---------------------|----|------|

10. How many people (including yourself) currently live in your household? (Fill in blank)

Average 2.5 people People live in household

11. How many children (under the age of 19) currently live in your household? (Fill in blank)

Average <1 Child Number of children under the age of 19 in household

12. People participate in many different types of recreational activities. Check EACH activity you have participated in **during the past 12 months**.

- | | | | | | |
|-----|----------------------|-----|--------------------|-----|---------------------|
| 24% | Running/jogging | 81% | Walking | 64% | Driving/sightseeing |
| 51 | Picnicking | 39 | Fishing | 36 | Swimming |
| 8 | Water skiing | 16 | Motorboating | 3 | Sailing |
| 11 | Canoeing | 5 | Backpacking | 32 | Hiking (on trails) |
| 28 | Camping | 27 | Golfing | 8 | Tennis |
| 2 | Cross-country skiing | 16 | Softball/baseball | 56 | Gardening |
| 8 | Soccer | 37 | Bicycling | 8 | Horseback riding |
| 8 | Off-road vehicle use | 15 | Hunting | 1 | Trapping |
| 53 | Observing wildlife | 13 | Nature photography | 21 | Mushroom hunting |
| 7 | In-line skating | 6 | Ice-skating | 1 | Kayaking |

_____ Other (Please list): _____

Please use the following space for any additional comments you would like to make

Mail the completed survey in the self-addressed envelope

THANKS FOR YOUR HELP AND COOPERATION

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources receives federal assistance and therefore must comply with federal anti-discrimination laws. In compliance with the Illinois Human Rights Act, the Illinois Constitution, Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act as amended, and the U.S. Constitution, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, or disability. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility, please contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, Department of Natural Resources, 524 S. Second St., Springfield, IL 62701-1787, (217) 782-7616 or the officer of Human Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Section 1: Question 2. What do you like **best** about your community?

- 35% small town
- 22 people/family
- 14 quiet/peaceful
- 11 parks
- 11 public services
- 7 convenience

Section 1: Question 3. What do you like **least** about your community?

- 29% public services
- 23 isolation
- 19 planning
- 8 taxes
- 7 poor
- 6 growth
- 5 crime/drugs
- 3 lack of parks

Section 1: Question 5. From the list of issues in Question 4, what do you feel is the top issue that needs to be addressed in your community?

- 25% managing growth and development
- 21 improving the quality of public schools
- 20 protecting water quality
- 13 preventing and reducing crime
- 9 improving roads
- 6 protecting natural areas
- 2 providing more recreation lands
- 2 protecting air quality
- 1 providing public transportation
- 1 acquisition of open space

Appendix B: Cover Letters and Postcard Reminders

Initial Cover Letter

Dear Resident of Illinois:

The University of Illinois is conducting a study to determine your views about your community, open space, and priorities for the state of Illinois. The purpose of the study is to provide information that will assist state and local community planning efforts.

Your household is one of a small number of households we are contacting in the entire state. Therefore, your views and the views of others selected to participate in the study represent the views of citizens for the entire state of Illinois. Please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed questionnaire. Your responses are completely confidential and will not be associated with your name.

When you have completed the questionnaire, place it in the enclosed self-addressed envelope. No postage is needed.

We would like to thank you in advance for taking the time to complete the questionnaire. If you have any comments, please contact Cary McDonald at the University of Illinois (217/333-4410).

Sincerely,

Sincerely,

Sincerely,

Cary McDonald

Craig Miller

Bill Stewart

Second Cover Letter

Dear Resident of Illinois:

About three weeks ago you were mailed a questionnaire that asked for your views about your community, open space, and priorities for the state of Illinois. We have not received your completed questionnaire. Perhaps you mailed it recently and it has not yet reached us. If so, we thank you. If you have not completed your questionnaire, please take a few minutes to complete and return in the envelope provided.

Since we are contacting a limited number of households in the state, your views and others selected to participate in the study represent the views of citizens for the entire state. Your response is very important for making this study a success.

In case you have misplaced the first questionnaire, another one has been enclosed. When you have completed the questionnaire, place it in the enclosed envelope. No postage is needed. If you have questions regarding this questionnaire, please call (217) 244-5817.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

Cary McDonald

Sincerely,

Craig Miller

Sincerely,

Bill Stewart

Third Cover Letter

Dear Resident of Illinois:

You were recently mailed a second questionnaire that asked for your views about your community, open space, and priorities for the state of Illinois. We have not received your completed questionnaire. Perhaps you mailed it recently and it has not yet reached us. If so, we thank you. In case you have misplaced the questionnaire, another one has been enclosed. Please take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire and return it in the envelope provided.

As we are contacting a limited number of households in the state, your views and those of others selected to participate in the study represent the opinions of citizens throughout the state. Your response is very important to provide information to guide how we manage open space in the future.

If you have questions regarding this questionnaire, please call (217) 244-5817.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

Cary McDonald

1st Follow-Up Postcard Reminder

Dear Illinois Resident,

You have been selected to participate in the Communities and Open space Survey. A survey questionnaire was recently mailed to you. We have not received your questionnaire. **If you have returned this questionnaire, we thank you. If you have not returned the questionnaire, please do so as soon as possible. Your input is important!**

Your name and address will be deleted from our mailing list when your questionnaire is received.

Thank you for your cooperation.

2nd Follow-Up Postcard Reminder

Dear Illinois Resident,

You have been selected to participate in the Communities and Open space Survey. A survey questionnaire was recently mailed to you. We have not received your questionnaire. **If you have returned this questionnaire, we thank you. If you have not returned the questionnaire, please do so as soon as possible. Your input is important!**

Your name and address will be deleted from our mailing list when your questionnaire is received.

Thank you for your cooperation.