

Enhancing the Capacity of Small and Medium-Sized Ranch and Forestry Operations to Prosper from Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES)



United States
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Agriculture

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of Food and
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Objectives



1. Identify and analyze factors affecting family forest and ranch owners' adoption of economic diversification strategies involving management for ecosystem services
2. Broaden, accelerate, and deepen the transfer of PES program information to landowners/managers and intermediaries
3. Disseminate results of research and extension efforts to policymakers to inform efforts to improve PES policies

Regional Focus – Interior Northwest




Land Cover

 Conifer Forest

 Rangelands and Pasture

 Other Land Cover (e.g. Crop, Urban)

 Interior NW Boundary

 US Counties

 Case Study Areas

Landowner Survey



- Developed survey instrument with assistance of key PES intermediaries
- 2226 surveys distributed to private landowners in case study areas
 - 835 responses received
 - Response rate = 38%
- Engaged with many landowners interested in PES via phone or email

Conservation practices on forests and rangelands:
Landowner opinions in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana



If you have any comments or questions, please feel free to write, call, or email:

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Thank you in advance. Your help is greatly appreciated!

Instructions:

- Please carefully read each question and make your responses clear.
- Feel free to write in any additional comments or explanations anywhere on the survey.
- All of your answers will be kept completely anonymous.
- Please mail your completed survey back in the prepaid envelope provided.



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Landowner Survey Results



- Majority of landowners engage with *government conservation programs*, primarily Farm Bill programs
- Many landowners *do not* engage in newer, non-govt PES programs
 - Perceived as overly complex
 - Concerns about unintended consequences
- Landowners interested in seeing the following in future PES programs:
 - Tax incentives for conservation
 - Shorter contract durations
 - Protection from regulatory enforcement, legal liabilities and contract failures

Intermediary Interviews



- 122 semi-structured interviews with 140 key intermediaries in the Interior Northwest:
 - Local Government 5
 - State Government 19
 - Federal Government 20
 - Non-Profit NGOs 47
 - For-Profit NGOs 16
 - Academic 4
 - Landowners 9
 - Tribal Entities 2



Interview Data

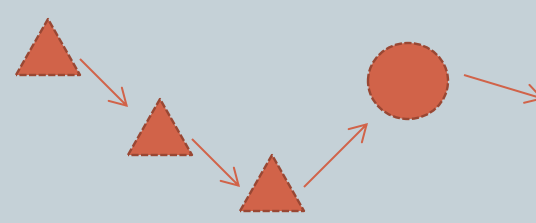
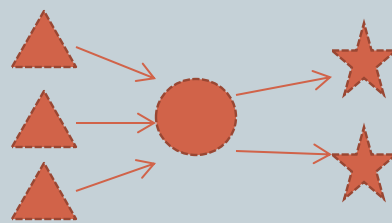
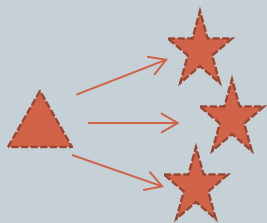


- ~118 hours of interviews transcribed => 2208 pages
- Gross-scale coding for high level themes complete; paper authors working on finer scale coding
- *Local intermediaries*, especially non-profit NGOs and CBOs, key to program development & delivery:
 - “Those partners have to already be embedded within the community. They have to already have trust in their relationships and some infrastructure in order to deliver on the needs of the program.”

High-Level Themes – Paper Topics



- Landowner motivations/concerns re: engaging in PES programs
- NRCS as an agent for landscape scale conservation using PES as a tool
- Innovative conservation easement strategies
- The relationship between PES and certification/niche marketing
- Role of NGOs and government organizations in delivering PES programs to landowners



Outreach and Extension



- **Series of 2-page “fact sheets”**
 - Water leasing in Deschutes Cty, OR funded by water utility customers
 - Montana sawmills, certification schemes, and market access
 - Coordinating landscape scale conservation easements in MT
 - Methow River (WA) salmon habitat restoration through multiple intermediaries and funding sources
 - Groundwater mitigation banking in Kittitas Cty (WA)
 - Catalogue of web-based PES tools
 - Ecosystem Services Learning and Action Network (ESLAN)

Outreach and Extension



- **Creation of Ecosystem Services Learning and Action Network (ESLAN)**
 - Leveraging RVCC Working Lands Working Group
 - Sharing info through multiple venues
 - 2 PES webinars with Willamette Partnership
 - ESLAN website
- **ESLAN and research team developing policy briefs and recommendations**
 - E.g. Farm Bill capacity white paper
 - Outreach to policymakers during RVCC's "Western Week in Washington"



Conclusion



- **Summary of outputs to date**
 - Objective 1 complete
 - Focus now on developing outreach and extension materials; delivering materials to landowners, intermediaries, policy-makers and other researchers; writing papers for journals
- **Anticipated long-term outcomes**
 1. *Increased knowledge – intermediaries & landowners*
 2. *New networks for info sharing*
 3. *New behaviors? Increased engagement in PES?*
 4. *Improved economic, environmental and social conditions for ranchers and family forest owners in rural, resource-dependent communities*

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