



Living Roadway Trust Fund Research Findings

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Lynn Manternach, Ph.D.
President and Brand Arsonist
LManternach@MindFireComm.com
855.646.3347



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Research Objective

The objective of this research is to understand how typical lowans, members of stakeholder groups and legislators view the mission of the Living Roadway Trust Fund (LRTF).

- Who are our target audiences and where do we reach them?
- What messages resonate with them?
- How do we best drive engagement and support as well as perceptions of value in LRTF initiatives?

This research will provide guidance for the Iowa DOT, Iowa Living Roadway Trust Fund, Trees Forever and all partners – both statewide and local – for how to communicate the impact and broad benefits of roadside native plantings.

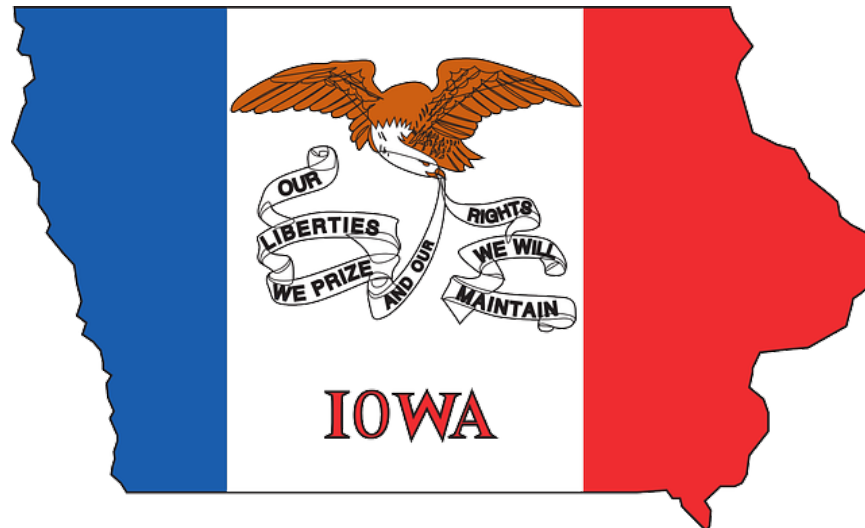


The Research

Three research elements were combined for this research effort:

1. Generalizable and representative online survey of Iowans

- This robust sample of typical Iowans is the core piece for this research effort.
- This data helps us understand how the average Iowan feels about Living Roadways Trust Fund efforts and potential benefits.
- Ultimately, this data will help us determine how to drive awareness and engagement, and how to best position messaging for maximum impact.



The Research

2. Online stakeholder survey

We know there are strong advocates for the mission of LRTF across the state of Iowa. We reached out to members and friends of a variety of Iowa organizations related to the environment, water quality, transportation, agriculture and native plants.

We wanted to understand how the opinions of engaged advocates differ from those of typical Iowans.

- The stakeholder data helps us understand where LRTF efforts are most aligned with the attitudes and perceptions of members of various stakeholder groups.
- This insight helps us understand how to work with stakeholder groups and environmentally-engaged Iowans to drive support for LRTF efforts.



The Research

3. Executive interviews and online survey of Iowa legislators

A better understanding of how Iowa's elected officials view the LRTF and its efforts is important for determining how to position the benefits of LRTF at the legislative level.

Qualitative executive interviews

- Seven 10- to 15-minute telephone interviews were conducted with Iowa Legislators who responded to email requests for an interview.
- A total of 13 legislators were invited to participate. The list of potential interviewees was developed by members of the Project Leadership Team.

Online survey

- 149 Iowa Legislators received an email invitation to participate in the online stakeholder survey. Of those, 21 invitees completed a survey.



Methodology

A survey instrument was developed collaboratively between MindFire Communications and the Project Leadership Team.

Primary input for the survey development came from members of the Project Steering Committee.

The same quantitative online survey instrument was used for the Iowa General Population, Stakeholder and Legislature respondents.

Iowa General Population sample

- The Iowa General Population survey was fielded through Nielsen Opinion Quest to their panel from May 17, 2016 through June 7, 2016.
- Quotas were set to make sure the survey was representative:
 - 50% rural Iowa zip codes (n=304)
 - The rural sample includes 12% farmers (n=70)
 - 50% metro Iowa zip codes (n=306)
- Sample size for the Iowa General Population respondents was n=610, for a margin of error of $\pm 3.97\%$.



Methodology

Stakeholder sample

- The stakeholder survey was fielded online from May 16 to June 20, 2016.
- The survey was sent to representatives of a list of organizations with interests related to those of LRTE. The targeted groups were identified by the Steering Committee and refined by the Project Leadership Team.
- In most cases, a web link for the survey was sent to a stakeholder group representative, and the link was shared with organization members and other networks via emails, social media, message boards and newsletters.
- 839 organization members from 93 Iowa counties responded to the same survey as our sample of typical lowans.
- The stakeholder sample size of 840 provides a margin of error of $\pm 3.38\%$.



Methodology

Legislators

Online Survey

A total of 21 legislators completed our online survey.

- 13 live on a farm or in a rural community.
- 8 live in an urban or suburban setting.

Executive Interviews

Legislators with involvement in relevant committees (Agriculture, Natural Resources, Transportation and Environmental Protection) were identified and prioritized by the Project Leadership Team for inclusion in the qualitative executive interview portion of this research.

The legislative session had adjourned for the summer just prior to research initiation, which likely impacted legislator responsiveness.

Because of the small sample size for both the online survey and executive interviews, this data should be considered directional.

Even with the small sample, the combination of quantitative and qualitative data provides good insight into communication and message prioritization for legislators.



Methodology

All Quantitative Samples

- Data was analyzed using Predictive Analytic Software (PASW).
- All significance testing is done at the .05 level, meaning there is only a 5% chance that results are random.
- Any time the words *significant* or *significance* are bolded and italicized, it means that the results are statistically significant.



Summary of Key Findings



Summary of Key Findings

IOWANS: Which lowans should we target?

Our analysis shows the majority of lowans will be at least somewhat receptive to messages related to the mission of LRTF. There are two sub-segments of lowans who will be most receptive to messages related to the mission of LRTF:

- *Concerned Country Dwellers* (46% of the sample)
 - These highly-engaged lowans tend to live in rural communities and on farms.
 - They take great pride in the appearance of our state, support the LRTF mission, and have high interest in conservation and environmental issues.
- *Discontented Commuters* (39% of the sample of lowans)
 - These lowans are more likely to live in the suburbs and rural communities.
 - This high-income, professional sub-segment of lowans likely spends plenty of time on Iowa roadways commuting to work. They care about environmental and conservation issues, but do not feel a strong sense of pride in the appearance of our state as reflected by the condition of our roadsides.



Summary of Key Findings

IOWANS: Where do our targeted segments align?

Concerned Country Dwellers already have higher perceptions of value in LRTF initiatives, but *Discontented Commuters* will take a bit more convincing.

Luckily, there tend to be many similarities across groups in:

- Initiatives that drive engagement and support
- Priorities for conservation and environmental efforts
- Sources of information (where to spread the word)
- Terminology (what to call it)
- Preference for “The Look” of Iowa roadsides
- Resonant messaging

With target audiences aligned in the above areas, Iowa Living Roadways Trust Fund can concentrate on a singular, focused message that will work with both.



Summary of Key Findings

IOWANS: Initiatives that drive engagement and support

Although both target audiences placed high importance on all types of environmental initiatives, the **loss of habitat critical to bees, butterflies and other pollinators** got the highest ratings for likely support.

- Both *Concerned Country Dwellers* and *Discontented Commuters* feel Iowa is not doing enough to support pollinator habitat.
- LRTF has a great opportunity to increase awareness and support for the overall mission by communicating and demonstrating how LRTF initiatives can increase the presence of habitat critical to bees, butterflies and other pollinators.

Also high in likely support, especially for *Discontented Commuters*, is **compromised water quality** caused by runoff from lawns, fields and roads into streams.

A motivating factor for both targeted segments is *the beauty of Iowa* as viewed from the roadways. Environmental initiatives will get even higher levels of support when people are reminded that they also make our roadsides beautiful to look at.



Summary of Key Findings

IOWANS: Priorities for environmental conservation efforts

Concerned Country Dwellers place ***significantly higher importance*** on all issues. Three specific interests landed at the top of the list:

1. **Efforts to support pollinators, including bees and butterflies** needs to be the number one priority, both in demonstration and communication. It's an issue that is already on the radar for lowans, and helping them understand how LRTF's mission contributes positively to pollinator habitat will raise the awareness and support for LRTF efforts.
2. **Effectively-managed water quality strategies** holds a high level of importance across segments. This is another issue that is increasingly high profile in Iowa. Helping lowans understand how managed roadside prairie plantings and native landscaping can contribute to solutions for this issue will raise awareness and support for LRTF efforts overall.
3. **Conservation of wildlife habitats** is important to lowans, although not quite as important as pollinator support and water quality. Clearly connect the dots to show how LRTF efforts support the conservation of wildlife habitats.



Summary of Key Findings

IOWANS: Sources of information (Where to spread the word)

There was widespread agreement between segments on information sources, particularly the top four.

- The number one source for *Concerned Country Dwellers* and one point away from the top spot for *Discontented Commuters* is **internet searches/websites/social media**.
- Another top-four information source is **word-of-mouth**. In the digital age, word-of-mouth is closely connected to social media.
- The other two top-four information sources were **television and newspaper/magazine**. These are excellent ways to communicate to target audiences; however, TV and print advertising are a much more expensive way to do it.

A strong social media presence will be the best value in getting the word out. It's efficient and cost effective. Connect social efforts to well-curated searchable content that informs and inspires.

If the budget allows, use TV and print to connect to a broader audience in a more high-profile way.



Summary of Key Findings

IOWANS: What do we call this?

All tested terms had similar appeal with both segments; although *Discontented Commuters* were far less enthusiastic about any of the terms presented.

- *Native plant restoration* was the favorite, but not by a wide margin.
- *Integrated roadside vegetation management* was by far most disliked by both audiences.

Native plant restoration works well because of the way it connects the value LRTF's mission provides for future generations to today's most important issues – water quality and pollinator habitat.



Summary of Key Findings

IOWANS: Preference for “The Look”

When considering the look of Iowa roadsides, there’s not a strong preference for lowans overall.

However, there is a strong preference for one option when we focus on our two priority segments, *Concerned Country Dwellers* and *Discontented Commuters*:

Managed roadside prairie plantings and native landscaping (wildflowers and grasses, native trees, wildlife habitats).

This is great news. Prairie plantings and native landscaping support all other missions of LRTF: pollinator and wildlife habitat, water quality management, cost-effective roadside management, preservation for future generations and last but not least – beautification.



Summary of Key Findings

IOWANS: Resonant messaging

The preference for prairie plantings and native landscaping along Iowa's roadways helps support a singular, focused message because of the way it ties together the things most important to target audiences.

- The ways prairie plantings and native landscaping benefit pollinator habitat should be a high priority for targeted communications.
- Demonstrating how LRTF initiatives effectively manage water quality by managing storm water runoff will also draw support.
- Conservation of wildlife habitat is well supported by prairie plantings and native landscaping.
- And always frame communications with the value LRTF initiatives bring to future generations as well as to Iowans today, with beautiful Iowa roadways.



Summary of Key Findings

STAKEHOLDERS

With typical lowans, we are seeking ways to drive awareness and engagement.

With Stakeholders, who are generally more engaged in environmental issues overall, we need to find a way to align individual priorities behind a unified message.

We're looking at two primary things:

- How the Farm/Ag Stakeholder sub-segment aligns or differs from other Stakeholders.
- How Stakeholders overall compare to typical lowans.

While we found differences among Stakeholders with Farm/Ag interests compared to the rest of the sample, the segments do agree on essential aspects:

- Priorities
- Satisfaction with the status quo
- Resonant messaging



Summary of Key Findings

STAKEHOLDERS: Priorities

- Stakeholders place high importance on the tested environmental attributes – substantially higher than typical lowans.
 - Stakeholders were targeted because of their association with organizations related to LRTF issues, so that is not a surprise.
- ***The loss of pollinator habitat*** is a primary concern for Stakeholders, including the Farm/Ag segment.
- ***Water quality*** is also a priority for Stakeholders.

Those in the Farm/Ag segment tended to rate water quality as less important than other Stakeholders.

- Farm/Ag respondents said *effectively-managed water quality strategies, including storm water runoff management*, was a high priority for them.
- But support for addressing *compromised water quality caused by runoff from lawns, fields and roads into streams*, was much lower.

It appears the mention of the *runoff from fields* may be a negative for this segment. Water quality will be an important topic, but be careful about wording that disengages the Farm/Ag segment.



Summary of Key Findings

STAKEHOLDERS: Satisfaction with the Status Quo

- Within the Stakeholder segment, nobody is very happy with what is going on in Iowa today with the list of environmental issues tested.
- With both the Farm/Ag segment and the rest of Stakeholders, pollinator habitat was the top interest and most likely to receive support; yet satisfaction with Iowa's efforts to support pollinator habitat was the lowest overall.
- Satisfaction with the current state of water quality management was not as bad, but still wasn't good enough, especially considering how important it is to Stakeholders.
- Communicating ways LRTF will support these top priorities, helping to fill in the gaps with the current state of Iowa environmental conservation efforts, will present a common mission that both Farm/Ag stakeholders and others can align with. We know these are also top concerns with Iowans overall.



Summary of Key Findings

STAKEHOLDERS: Resonant Messaging

- When it comes to Stakeholders, we need to understand how to talk about the LRTF mission in a way that unifies the concerns of Farm/Ag Stakeholders and other Stakeholders.
- Stakeholders don't need awareness of the issues. They don't need to be engaged. *What they need is to hear how LRTF will champion the specific interests that they already deem vital and actively support.*
- There was *huge* support among both Stakeholder segments for managed prairie plantings and native landscaping (wildflowers and grasses, native trees, wildlife habitat) along roadsides.
 - Call it *Native Plant Restoration*.
 - Demonstration of how LRTF supports Native Plant Restoration along Iowa roadways will draw strong support with Stakeholders.
- Continued support will emerge as Stakeholder communications show how Native Plant Restoration actively supports pollinator habitat and other wildlife habitats, effective water quality management, and preserves native plant species for generations of lowans to come.



Summary of Key Findings

LEGISLATORS

Our online sample of Iowa Legislators differ from typical Iowans in a few ways:

- They place more priority on water quality issues.
- They are less likely than typical Iowans to identify ag land management (controlling erosion and farm chemical runoff) as a top priority.
- Overall, they are less satisfied with Iowa's efforts at environmental conservation than typical Iowans.
 - Legislators who indicate they live on a farm or in a rural community are significantly more satisfied with our state's efforts at environmental conservation than those who live in an urban/suburban setting.
- This sample of legislators sees less value in LRTF efforts when compared to Iowans overall.



Summary of Key Findings

LEGISLATORS

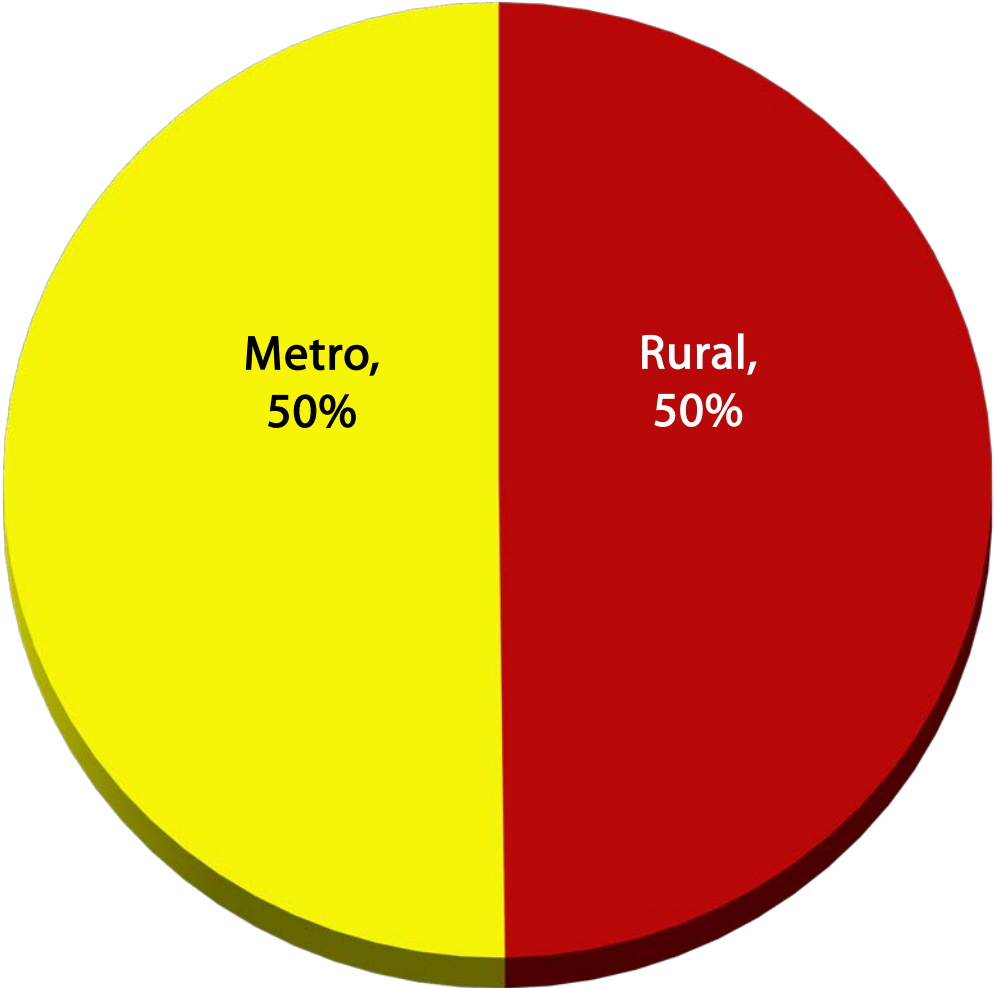
- Overall, legislators indicated they prefer the look of managed roadside planting and native landscaping.
 - However, when we look at the legislator data split according to whether they live in a rural or urban community, we see that those from farm/rural areas are more likely to prefer a mowed and landscaped park-like look for Iowa's roadsides.
- When it comes to the importance of various environmental issues, legislators rate water quality, pollinator support and conservation of wildlife habitats as lower in importance than typical Iowans, while saving taxpayer money is rated higher.
 - Farm/rural legislators rated saving taxpayer money as a higher priority than other legislators.
- Focusing on water quality and how LRTF initiatives are fiscally responsible will help garner support among legislators.



The Sample: Iowans and Stakeholders



Iowans: Zip Code Quotas



Iowa zip codes were segmented into Rural and Metro geographic areas, with a quota set for even representation of each in the sample.

Base: Iowans, n=610



Stakeholders: Organizations Represented

Organization	Frequency	Percent
Trees Forever	531	60%
Iowa Native Plant Society	96	11%
Iowa Prairie Network	48	6%
Iowa Environmental Council	45	5%
Iowa Weed Commissioner's Association	40	5%
Byways of Iowa	36	4%
Legislator Email Link	24	3%
Tallgrass Prairie Center	22	3%
Farm Bureau	14	2%
Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway/Prairie Rivers RC&D	10	1%
Keep Iowa Beautiful	9	1%
Iowa Soybean Association	3	<1%
Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation	1	<1%

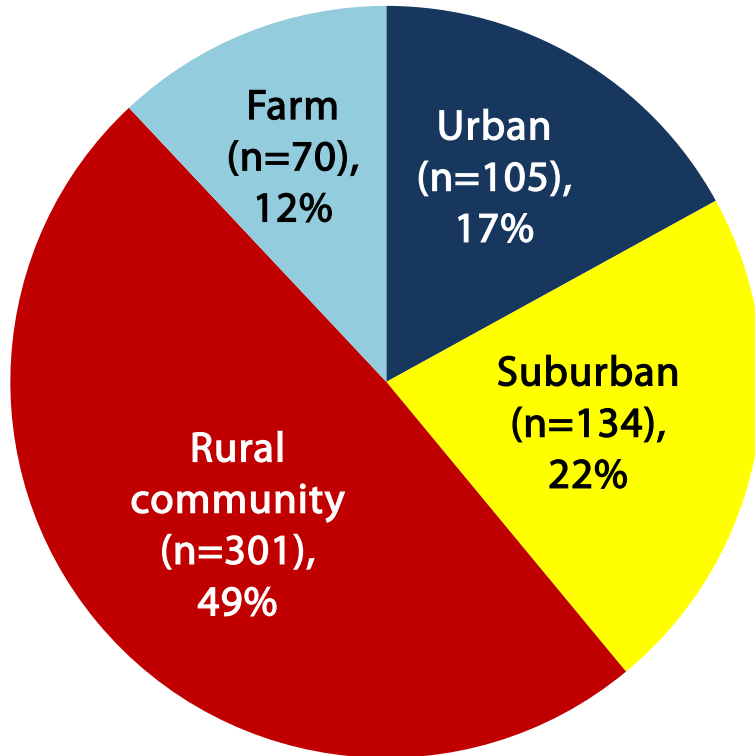
Custom survey URLs were created for each organization that agreed to help share the survey. Because of the viral way organizations shared the survey link, respondents are not necessarily directly associated with the named organization.

Base: Stakeholders, n=840

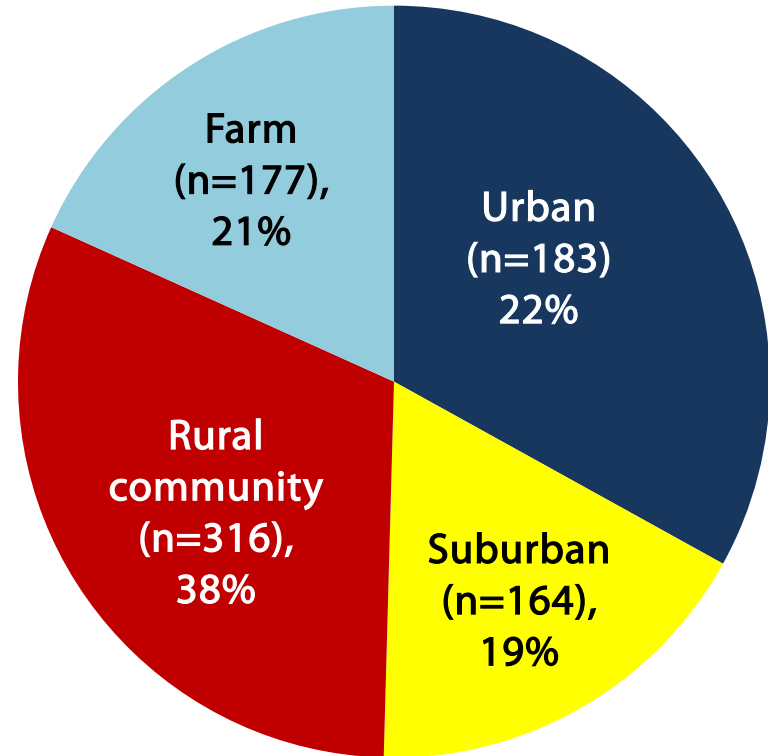


Community Designation

How would you describe the area where you live?



lowans



Stakeholders

Respondents were given four choices and asked to self-identify the area where they live.

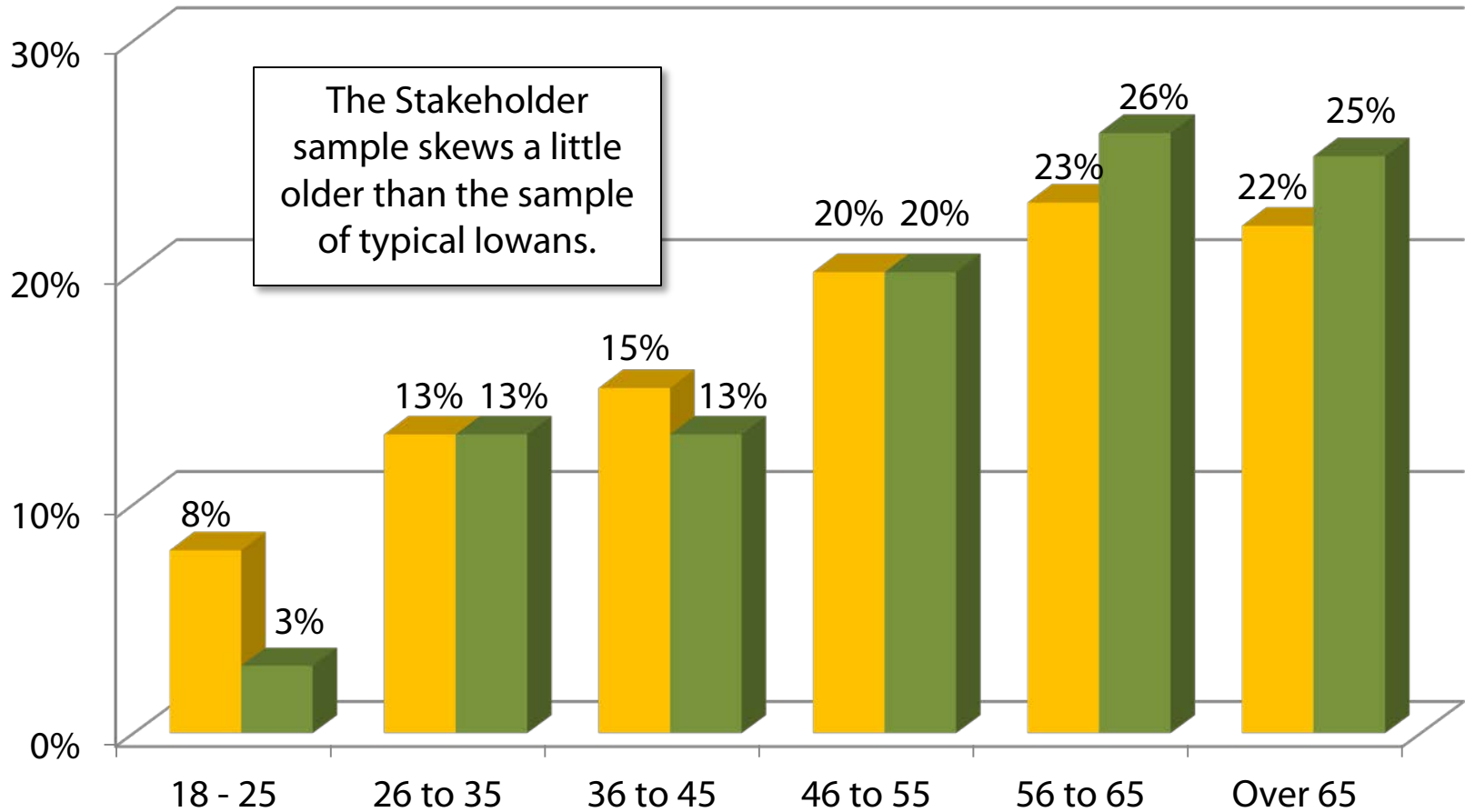
Base: lowans, n=610, Stakeholders, n=840



Respondent Age

What is your age group?

lowans Stakeholders



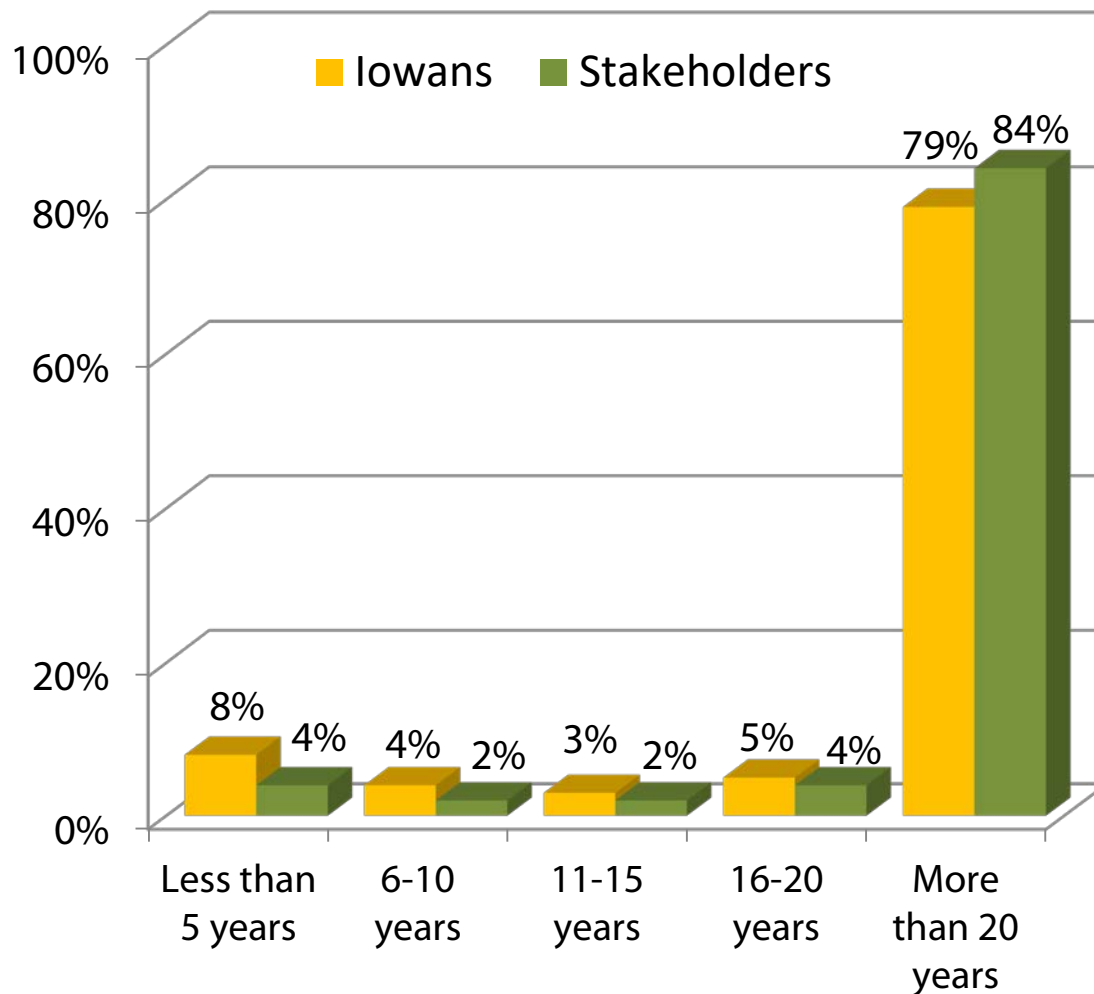
The Stakeholder sample skews a little older than the sample of typical lowans.

Base: lowans, n=610, Stakeholders, n=840



Tenure as an Iowan

How long have you been an Iowa resident?



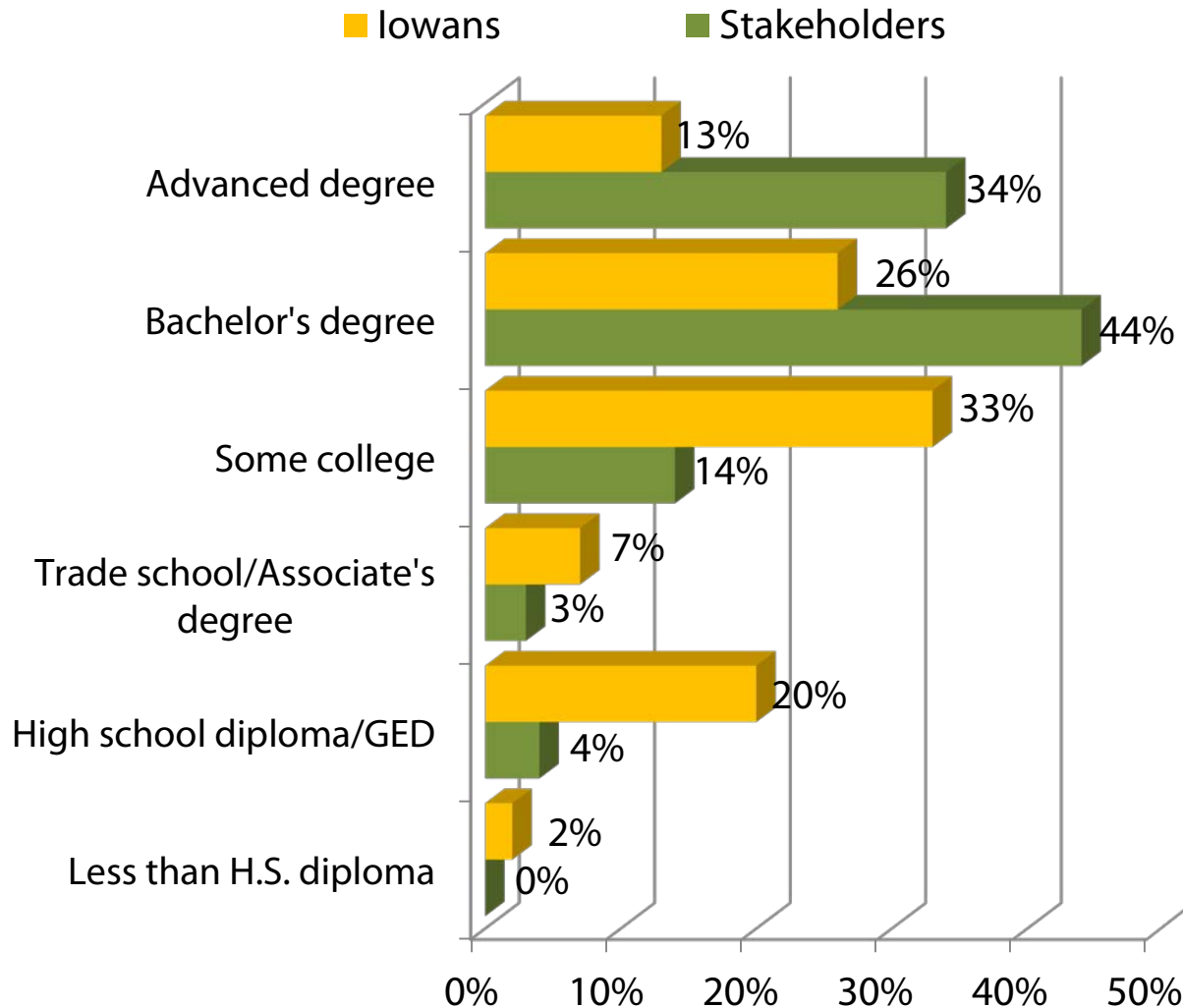
- This sample is skewed toward long-time residents of the state.
- Since this study examines the *values* of respondents, long-time residents are a critical segment to tap for established perceptions.

Base: Iowans, n=610, Stakeholders, n=840



Education

Which of the following represents your educational level?



- 39% of our sample of lowans has a college degree, with those living in urban and suburban areas *significantly more likely* to have Bachelor's or advanced degrees.
- Our Stakeholder sample is highly educated. 78% have Bachelor's or advanced degrees.

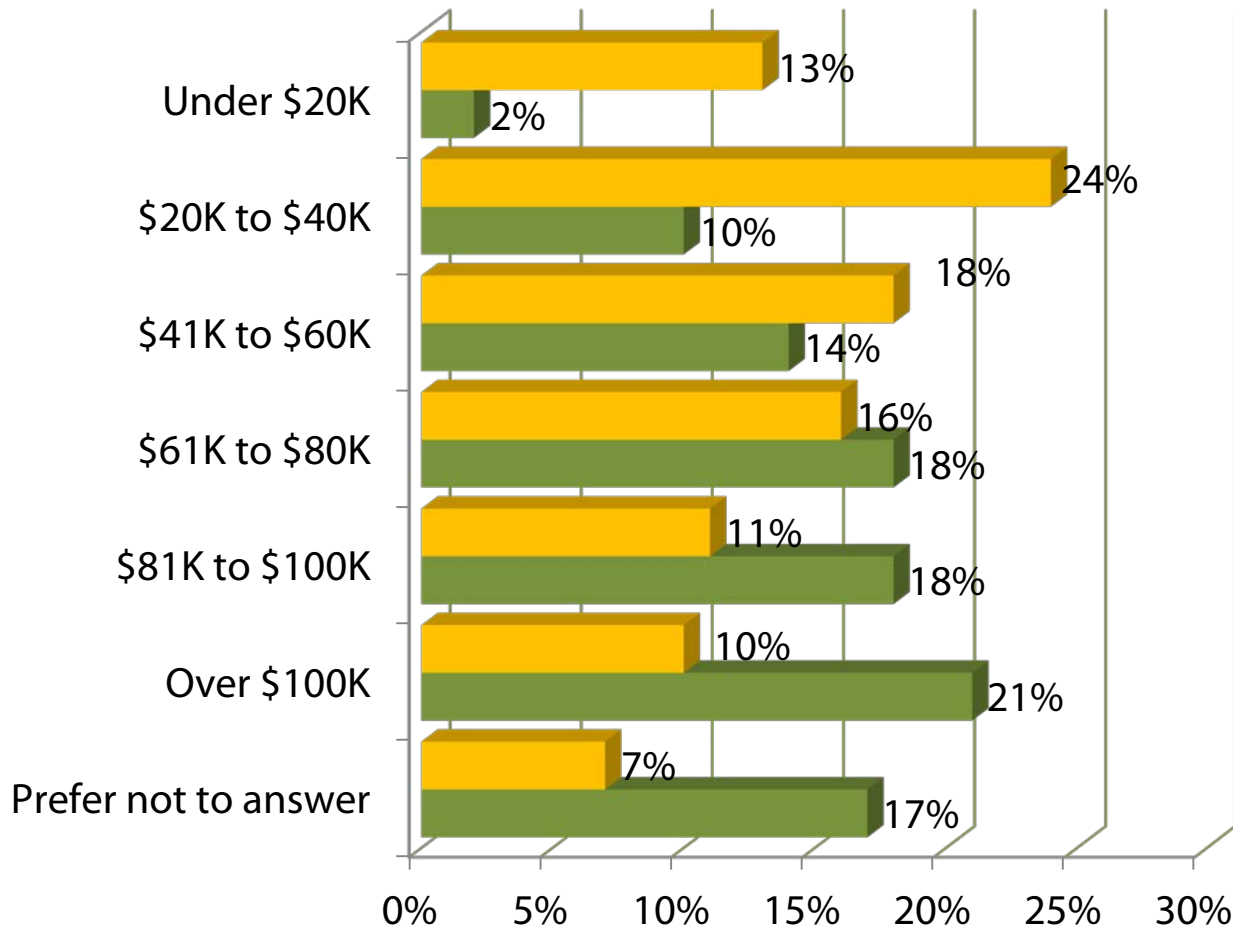
Base: lowans, n=610, Stakeholders, n=840



Income

Which of the following captures your approximate annual household income?

lowans Stakeholders



- lowans from suburban areas had *significantly higher income* than those from other areas.
- Overall, we see incomes are higher among the Stakeholder segment.
- This corresponds to educational levels of respondent segments.

Base: lowans, n=610, Stakeholders, n=840



Job or Profession

What is your job/profession?	lowans	Stakeholders
Retired	23%	27%
Stay-at-home parent/Support person	9%	1%
Education/Training	8%	16%
Health professional	8%	3%
Retail	7%	2%
Business support/Admin./Clerical	6%	6%
Business professional	6%	11%
Service industry	5%	2%
Agriculture-related (Other than farmer)	3%	11%
Craft or trade	3%	3%
Farmer	2%	12%
Community/Social Services	2%	6%
Arts/Design/Entertainment/Media	2%	5%
Transportation	2%	2%
Environment/Conservation	0	29%
Elected official	0	4%

The Stakeholder sample is distinct in a few areas:

- Our largest stakeholder category is environment / conservation, but we did not find any in the Iowa general population sample.
- Stakeholders have a much higher percentage of farmers and those who work in agriculture.
- There are more educators/trainers in the stakeholder sample than in the Iowa general population sample.

(Multiple responses allowed.)

Base: lowans, n=610,
Stakeholders, n=840



Organization Membership

Are you a member of any organization that focuses on the following interest areas?	lowans	Stakeholders
Gardening/Landscaping	8%	29%
Agriculture/Farming	8%	26%
Environmental/Conservation	6%	63%
Outdoor Recreation	5%	34%
Water Quality	5%	30%
Community or Economic Enhancement	4%	24%
State or Local Politics	4%	24%
Native Plants/Seeds	4%	34%
Wildlife/Bird Watching	4%	31%
Forestry/Trees	3%	36%
None	80%	14%

Multiple responses allowed.

Base: lowans, n=610, Stakeholders, n=840



Information Sources

Where do you get most of your information about causes you are interested in?	lowans	Stakeholders
Internet searches/Websites/Social media	50%	60%
Television	47%	14%
Newspapers/Magazines	46%	47%
Word-of-Mouth	40%	26%
Non-profit Organizations	16%	51%
Nature centers	16%	24%
State agencies (i.e. IDOT, IDNR, etc.)	14%	46%
Education programs/Schools	9%	18%
Professional organizations	6%	28%
Political lobbying groups	2%	5%
Other	3%	8%

Base: lowans, n=610, Stakeholders, n=840

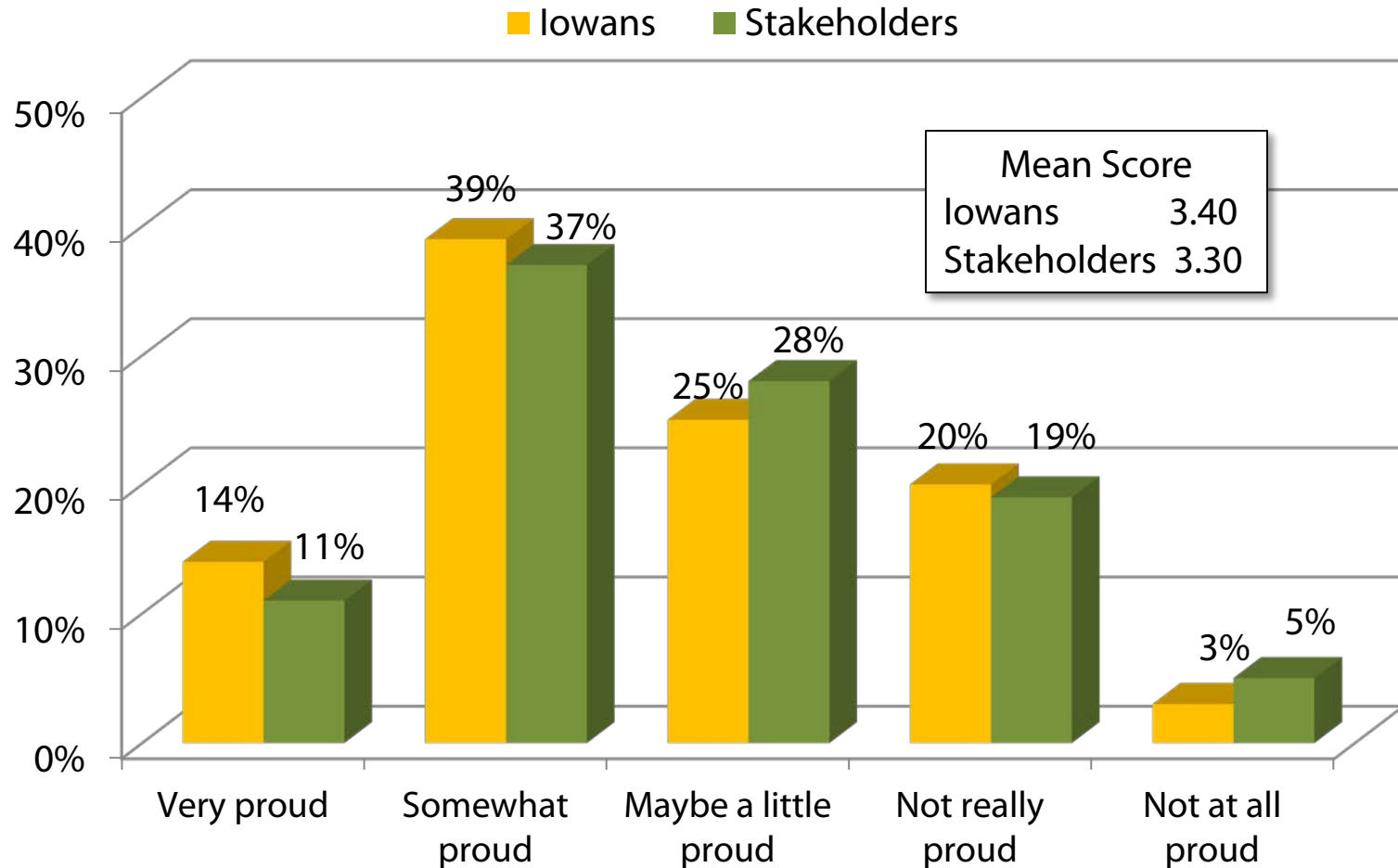


Opinions and Perceptions: Lowans and Stakeholders



Roadside Pride

As an Iowan, does the appearance of our state as reflected by the condition of our roadsides make you proud of our state?

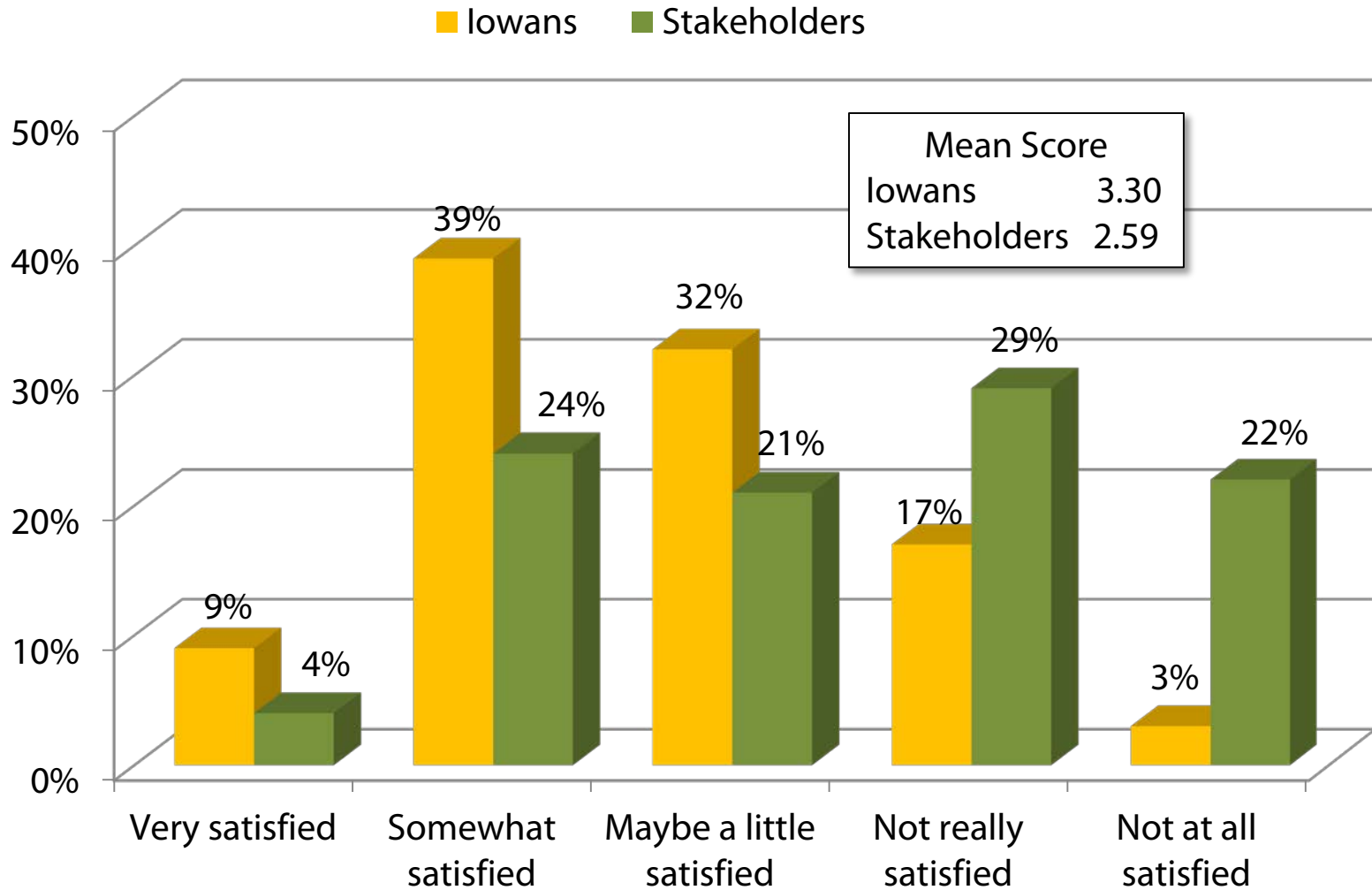


Base: Iowans, n=610, Stakeholders, n=840



Environmental Conservation in Iowa

As an Iowan, are you satisfied with our state's efforts at environmental conservation?



Base: Iowans, n=610, Stakeholders, n=840



The Iowa Living Roadway Trust Fund

The Iowa Living Roadway Trust Fund was established in the late 1980s to provide an alternative to conventional roadside management practices.

One of the primary objectives of the Trust Fund, which is administered by the Iowa Department of Transportation, is to establish diverse stands of native plants along Iowa roadsides. These strong, deep-rooted plant communities adapt to all roadside conditions and provide a variety of services: enhancing rainfall infiltration and filtration; slowing runoff; trapping sediment; reducing erosion; controlling weeds (which saves money) and creating habitat for pollinators, nesting birds and other wildlife.

In your opinion, how much value does the Iowa Living Roadway Trust Fund's efforts to establish diverse native plants along Iowa's roadways provide to:

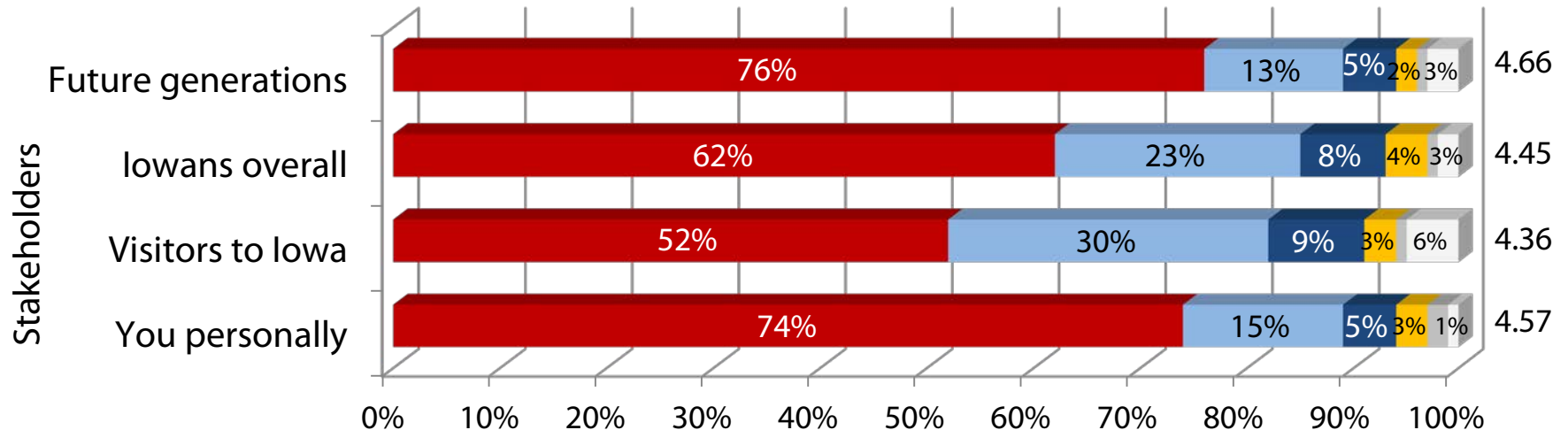
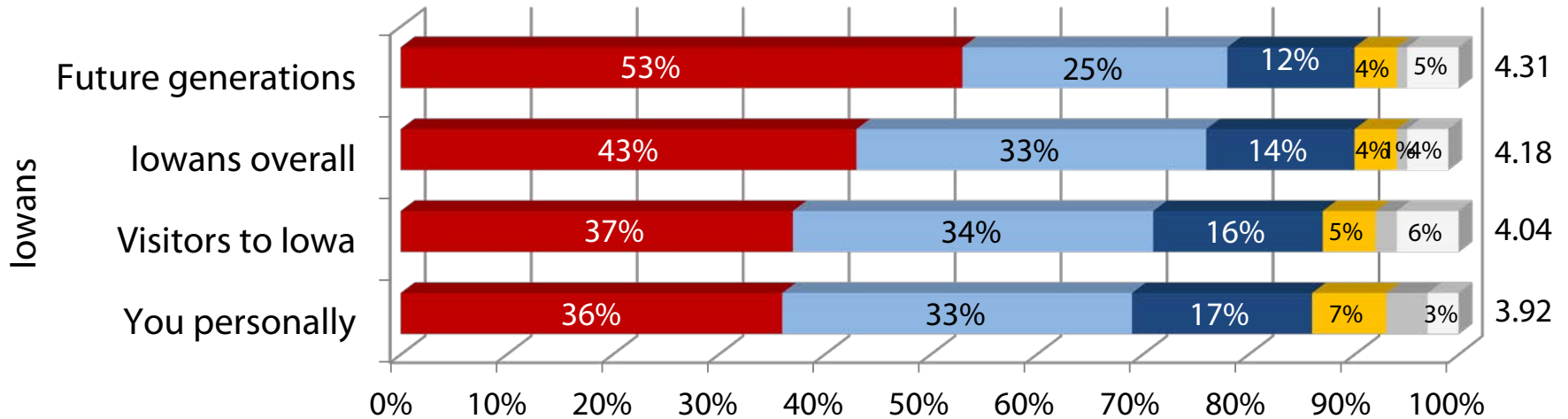
- Future generations?
- Iowans overall?
- Visitors to Iowa?
- You personally?



Value of LRTF

How much value does the Iowa Living Roadway Trust Fund's efforts provide to:

■ A lot of value
 ■ Some value
 ■ Neutral
 ■ Not much value
 ■ No value
 ■ DK

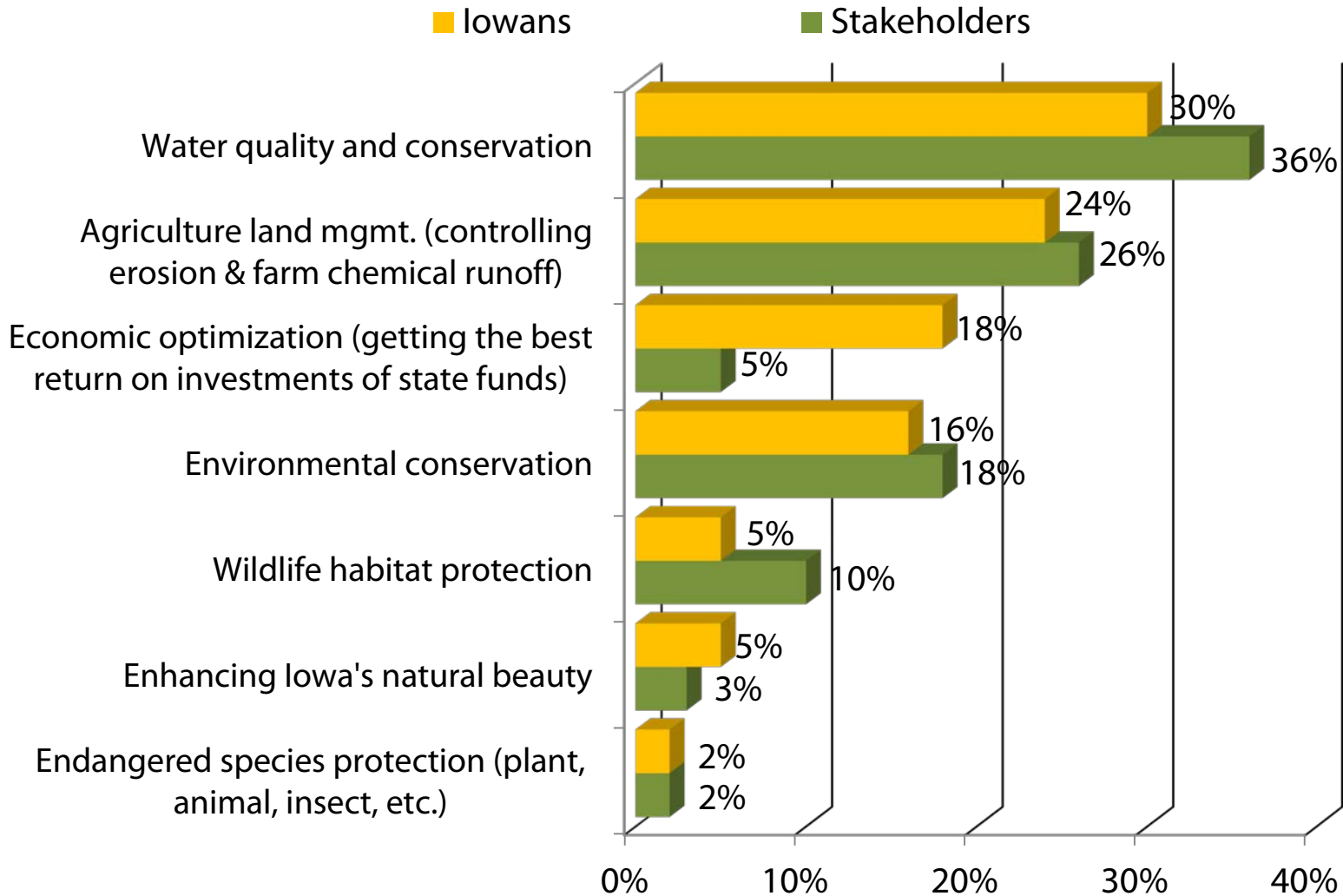


Base: Iowans, n=610, Stakeholders, n=840



Setting Priorities

Which of the following do you think is MOST IMPORTANT for our state to address?



Base: lowans, n=610, Stakeholders, n=840



Personal Priorities

How IMPORTANT is ___ to you personally? (1=Not at all important to 5=Very important)	Iowans		Stakeholders	
	Mean Score	% Very Important	Mean Score	% Very Important
Effectively managed water quality strategies, incl. storm water runoff mgmt.	4.35	52%	4.71	74%
Efforts to support pollinators, including bees and butterflies	4.32	51%	4.73	77%
Conservation of wildlife habitats	4.32	48%	4.69	75%
Saving taxpayer money with smart approaches for roadside weed control	4.21	43%	4.14	41%
Knowing that native plants and habitats will be preserved for future generations	4.18	40%	4.68	75%
Native trees and shrubs along roadways for beauty and storm water mgmt.	4.18	39%	4.51	64%
Restoration of native plant species	4.08	36%	4.61	70%
The beauty of Iowa viewed from the roadways	3.99	29%	4.36	50%

Base: Iowans, n=610, Stakeholders, n=840



Satisfaction Levels

Please rate your personal SATISFACTION with what is currently happening in Iowa. (1=Not at all satisfied to 5=Very satisfied)	Iowans		Stakeholders	
	Mean Score	% Very Satisfied	Mean Score	% Very Satisfied
Effectively managed water quality strategies, including storm water runoff management	3.45	7%	2.33	6%
Efforts to support pollinators, including bees and butterflies	3.56	7%	2.76	5%
Conservation of wildlife habitats	3.70	10%	2.89	6%
Saving taxpayer money with smart approaches for roadside weed control	3.64	6%	2.99	5%
Knowing that native plants and habitats will be preserved for future generations	3.74	9%	2.70	5%
Native trees and shrubs along roadways for beauty and storm water management	3.68	12%	2.84	5%
Restoration of native plant species	3.75	6%	2.81	5%
The beauty of Iowa viewed from the roadways	3.66	12%	3.15	7%

Base: Iowans, n=610, Stakeholders, n=840



Satisfaction vs. Importance: lowans

	Importance		Satisfaction		Mean Gap
	Mean Score	% Very Imp.	Mean Score	% Very Sat.	
Effectively managed water quality strategies, incl. storm water runoff mgmt.	4.36	52%	3.45	7%	0.91
Efforts to support pollinators, including bees and butterflies	4.32	51%	3.56	7%	0.76
Conservation of wildlife habitats	4.32	48%	3.70	10%	0.62
Saving taxpayer money with smart approaches for roadside weed control	4.21	43%	3.64	6%	0.57
Knowing that native plants and habitats will be preserved for future generations	4.18	40%	3.74	9%	0.44
Native trees and shrubs along roadways for beauty and storm water management	4.18	39%	3.68	12%	0.50
Restoration of native plant species	4.08	36%	3.75	6%	0.33
The beauty of Iowa viewed from the roadways	3.99	29%	3.66	12%	0.33

Base: lowans, n=610



Satisfaction vs. Importance: Stakeholders

	Importance		Satisfaction		Mean Gap
	Mean Score	% Very Imp.	Mean Score	% Very Sat.	
Effectively managed water quality strategies, incl. storm water runoff mgmt.	4.71	74%	2.33	3%	2.38
Efforts to support pollinators, including bees and butterflies	4.73	77%	2.76	5%	1.97
Conservation of wildlife habitats	4.69	75%	2.89	6%	1.80
Saving taxpayer money with smart approaches for roadside weed control	4.14	41%	2.99	5%	1.15
Knowing that native plants and habitats will be preserved for future generations	4.68	75%	2.70	5%	1.98
Native trees and shrubs along roadways for beauty and storm water management	4.51	64%	2.84	5%	1.67
Restoration of native plant species	4.61	70%	2.81	5%	1.80
The beauty of Iowa viewed from the roadways	4.36	50%	3.15	7%	1.21

Base: Stakeholders, n=840



Importance and Satisfaction

Gap Analysis

	Mean Gap: Iowans	Mean Gap: Stakeholders
Effectively managed water quality strategies	0.91	2.38
Efforts to support pollinators	0.76	1.97
Conservation of wildlife habitats	0.62	1.80

With the satisfaction ratings, it is important to keep in mind the relative importance. In almost every instance, satisfaction with the current state of things in Iowa does not measure up to the importance attributed to them.

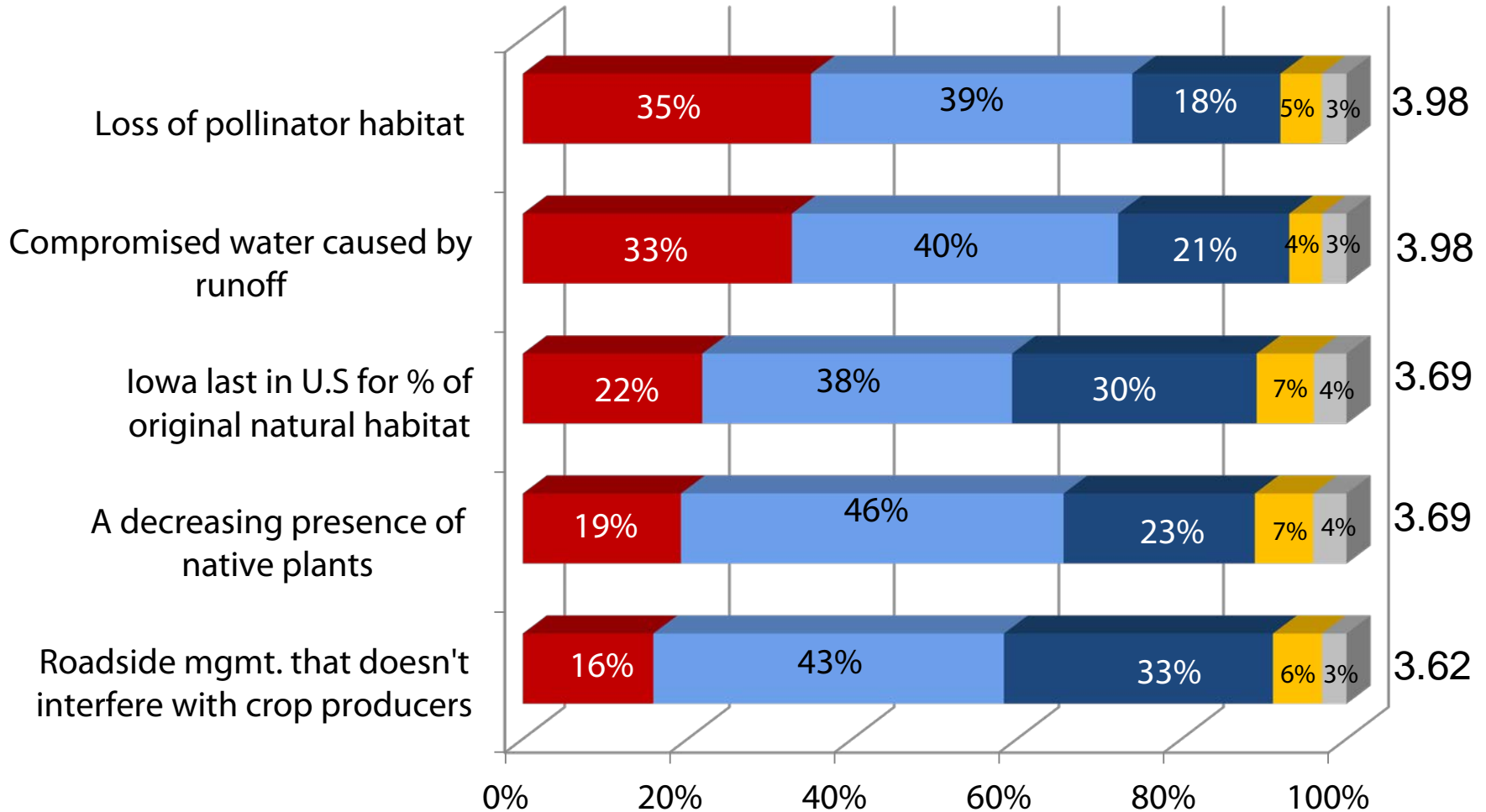
The gaps between importance and satisfaction means for the most important attributes were large for the sample of typical Iowans – and even larger for the stakeholder sample.



Iowans: Likelihood to Support

How likely are you to support efforts to address the following?

■ Very likely
 ■ Likely
 ■ Neutral
 ■ Unlikely
 ■ Very unlikely



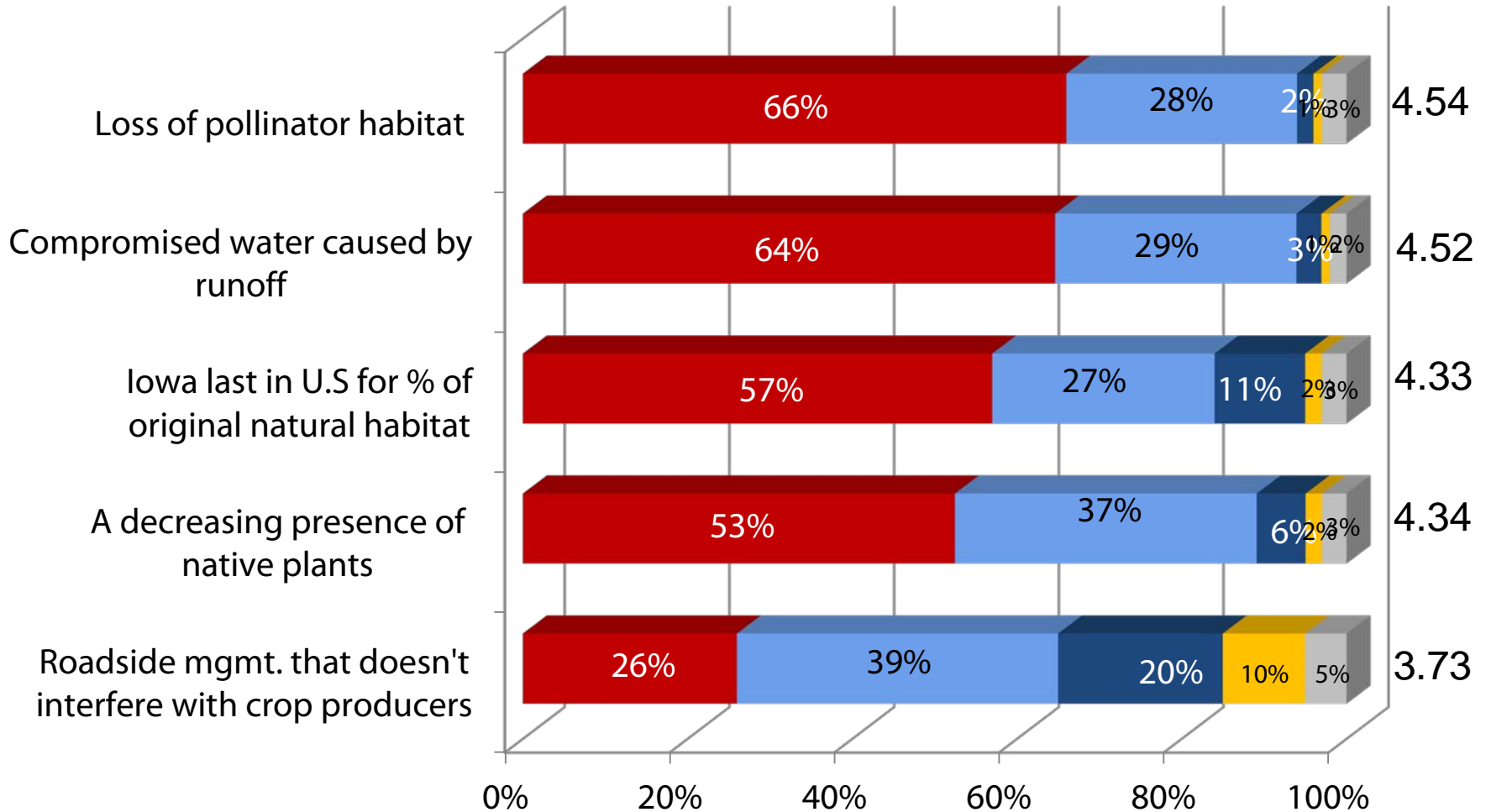
Base: Iowans, n=610



Stakeholders: Likelihood to Support

How likely are you to support efforts to address the following?

■ Very likely
 ■ Likely
 ■ Neutral
 ■ Unlikely
 ■ Very unlikely

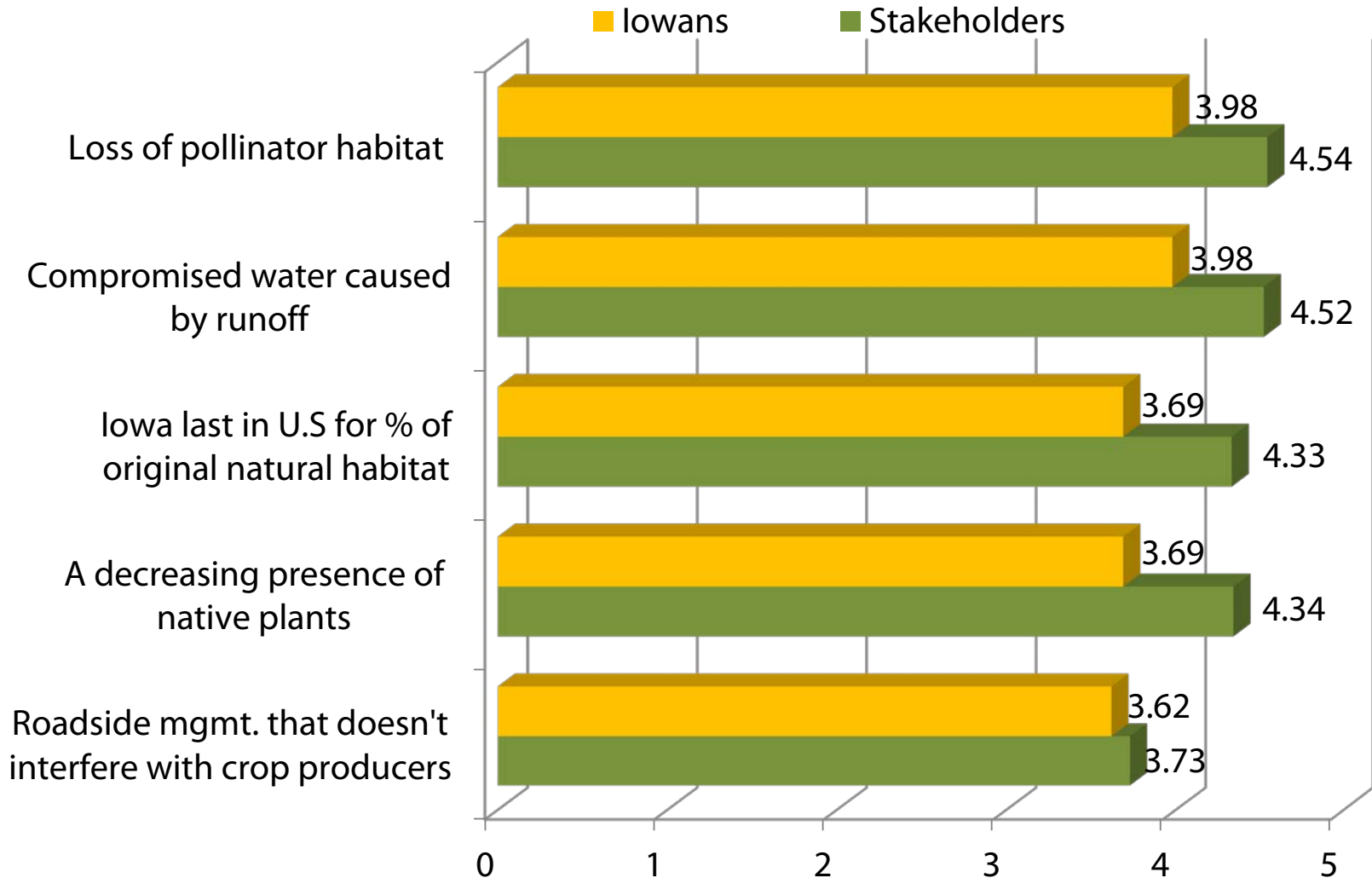


Base: Stakeholders, n=840



Comparison: Likelihood to Support

How likely are you to support efforts to address the following?



Base: lowans, n=610, Stakeholders, n=840



Preferences: The Look

Managed roadside prairie plantings and native landscaping (wildflowers and grasses, native trees, wildlife habitat).



Mowed grass and landscaped roadsides with ornamental flowers and plants – make it look as park-like as possible.



Mow roadsides periodically for safety, but otherwise leave them alone.



Preferences: The Look

Considering *strictly the look* of Iowa roadsides, what are your preferences? Rank the following in order of your personal preference so that your most preferred is ranked 1, and least preferred is ranked 3.

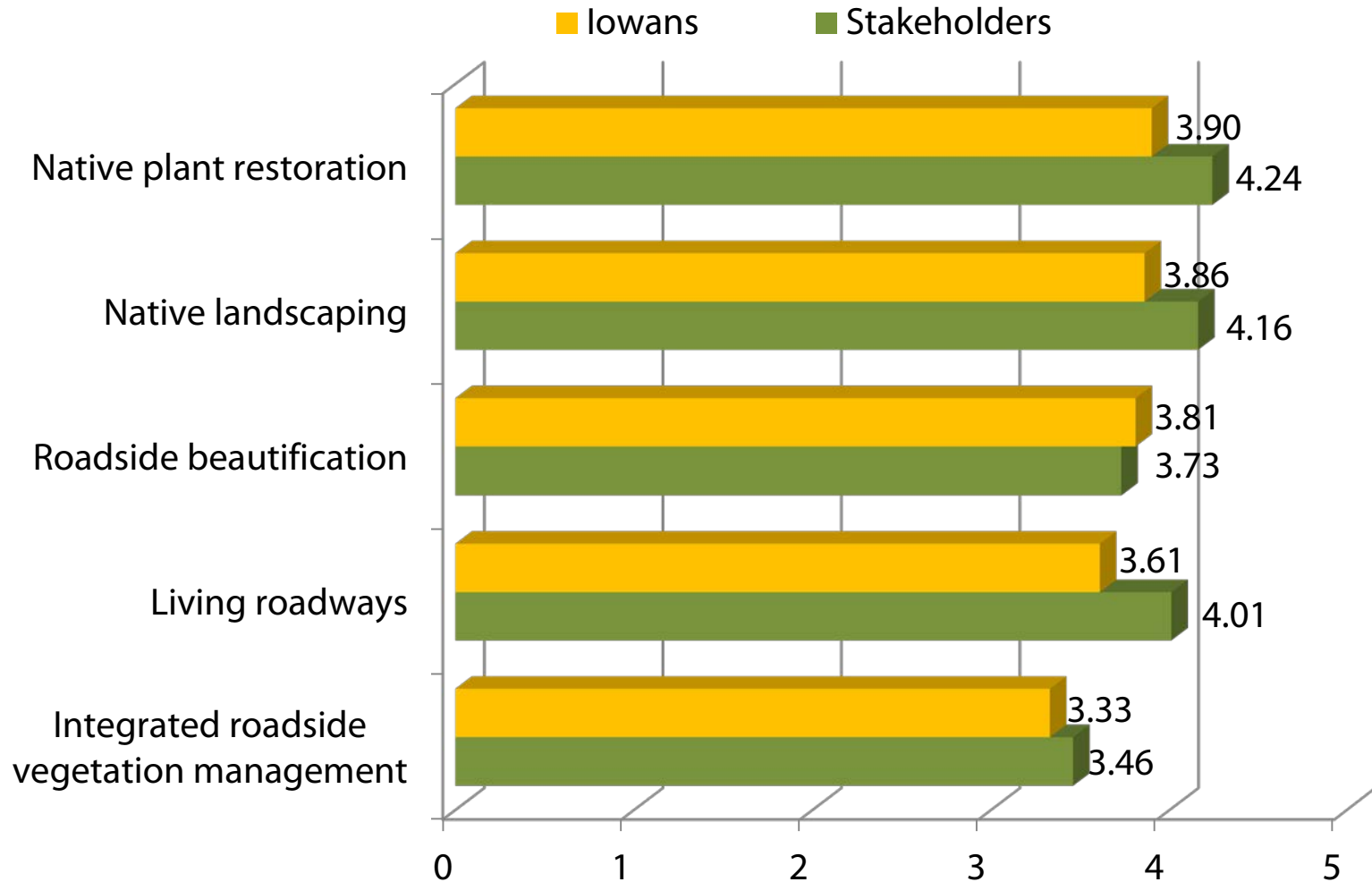
	Ranked 1 st		Ranked 2 nd		Ranked 3 rd	
	lowans	Stakeholders	lowans	Stakeholders	lowans	Stakeholders
Managed roadside prairie plantings and native landscaping.	49%	83%	37%	13%	15%	4%
Mow roadsides periodically for safety, but otherwise leave them alone.	25%	13%	39%	63%	35%	25%
Mowed grass and landscaped roadsides with ornamental flowers and plants – make it look as park-like as possible.	26%	6%	24%	22%	50%	72%

Base: lowans, n=610, Stakeholders, n=840



What Do We Call It?

Following is a list of terms that could be used to describe the management of Iowa's roadside vegetation. For each, indicate its appeal to you personally.



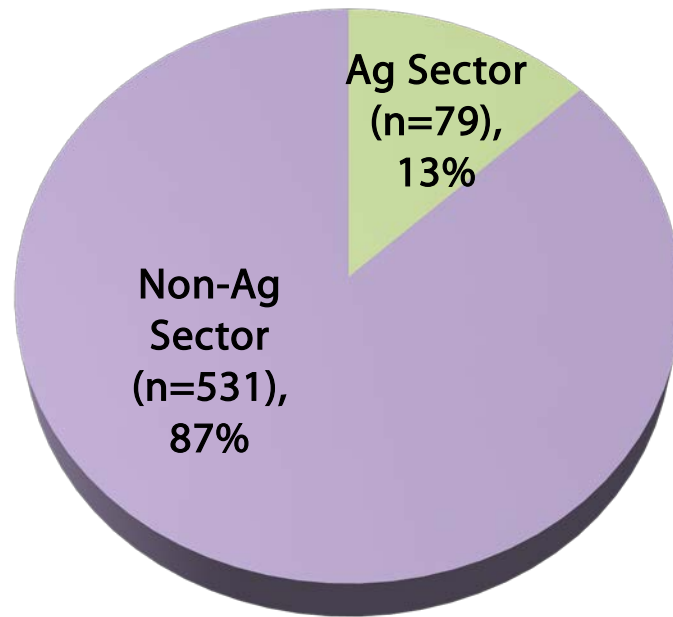
Base: lowans, n=610, Stakeholders, n=840



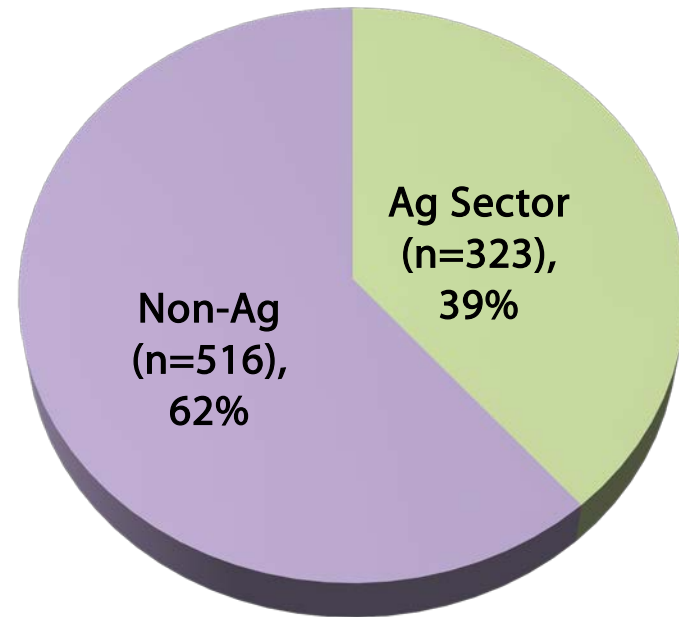
Opinions and Perceptions: Farm/Ag Respondents



Ag Sector



lowans



Stakeholders

For a clearer look at how the perceptions of lowans who live and work in agriculture compared to other lowans, we created an “Ag Sector” sub-group, which includes:

- Respondents who live on a farm; and/or
- Respondents who are farmers or in ag-related fields professionally; and/or
- Respondents who indicated they are a member of a farm or ag-related organization

Base: lowans, n=610, Stakeholders, n=840

Iowans: Ag Sector Perceptions

Our Ag Sector sub-sample is a small percentage of the overall Iowans sample – just 13%.

We're not seeing many differences between the perceptions of this sub-sample compared to the overall sample of typical Iowans.

- There were no significant differences between groups when it comes to causes they would likely support.
- Likewise, this sample showed no significant difference in importance of priorities nor satisfaction with the current state of Iowa in conservation and environmental preservation.

However, we do see some differences within the Stakeholder group when we examine differences between those in the ag sector compared to other stakeholders. (See next slides...)



Ag Stakeholders Value LRTF Efforts Less

In your opinion, how much value does the Iowa Living Roadway Trust Fund's efforts to establish diverse native plants along Iowa's roadways provide to:

Beneficiary	Farm/Ag Stakeholders		Other Stakeholders	
	Mean Score	% Very Important	Mean Score	% Very Important
Generations of Iowans to come	4.49	73%	4.55	79%
You personally	4.44	70%	4.57	76%
Iowans Overall	4.23	56%	4.40	65%
Visitors to Iowa	4.12	47%	4.15	55%

Stakeholders in the Farm/Ag sector place *significantly lower value* on LRTF efforts compared to other stakeholders and Iowans overall, but otherwise are fairly aligned.

Base: Stakeholders, n=840



Farm/Ag Stakeholder Support

How likely are you to support efforts to address the following? (1=Not at all likely to 5=Very likely)	Farm/Ag Stakeholders		Other Stakeholders	
	Mean Score	% Very Likely	Mean Score	% Very Likely
The loss of habitat critical to bees, butterflies and other pollinators.	4.50	60%	4.57	70%
Compromised water quality caused by runoff from lawns, fields and roads into streams.	4.47	34%	4.56	69%
Iowa ranks last in the nation for percentage of its remaining original natural habitat.	4.27	56%	4.38	58%
A decreasing presence of native plants which are imp. to the life cycle of other species.	4.31	49%	4.37	55%
Identifying roadside mgmt. approaches that do not interfere with the efforts of Iowa farmers and other crop producers.	3.85	30%	3.65	25%

Farm/Ag stakeholders are *significantly less likely than other stakeholders* to support efforts to address water quality and the loss of pollinator habitat. They are more likely than other stakeholders to support approaches that do not interfere with farmers.

Base: Stakeholders, n=840



Farm/Ag Stakeholders Rely on State Agencies

Where do you get most of your information about causes you are interested in and want to support?	Farm/Ag Stakeholders	Other Stakeholders
Internet searches/Websites/Social media	61%	59%
State agencies (i.e. IDOT, IDNR, IDALS, etc.)	55%	39%
Non-profit organizations	52%	51%
Newspapers/Magazines	49%	45%
Professional organizations	29%	26%
Word-of-mouth	25%	26%
Nature centers	21%	25%
Education programs/Schools	19%	17%
Television	15%	13%
Political lobbying groups	5%	4%
Other	6%	3%

Farm/Ag respondents are far more likely to get information from state agencies than other stakeholders.

Base: Stakeholders, n=840

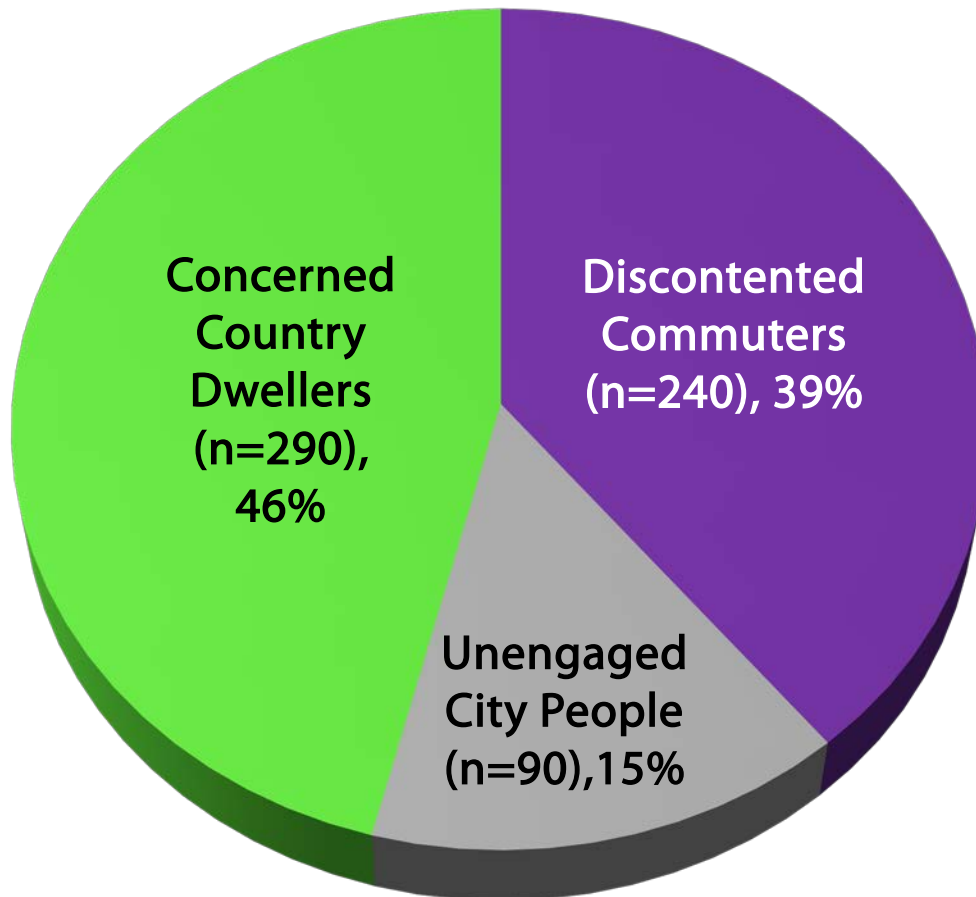


Segmentation: Iowa General Population Personas



Cluster Analysis

Cluster analysis reveals that there are three distinct sub-segments within our sample of lowans:



- When considering both demographics and perceptions, we see three distinct personas emerge within the sample of lowans.
- It will be important to recognize those differences in sub-segments so that programs and messaging can be tuned to resonate with target audiences.
- With these three groups you will see that two will be essential to target while the third is a segment that will provide the smallest – if any – ROI for marketing efforts.

Base: lowans, n=610



Concerned Country Dwellers

Concerned Country Dwellers is the largest segment, and that's a good thing.

These highly-engaged rural community and farm residents:

- Are very proud of the appearance of Iowa and its roadsides.
- Believe the mission of the LRTF holds a lot of value for them personally.
- Care a lot about all types of conservation and environmental concerns.
- Although they are happier with the state of Iowa's conservation efforts than other segments, their satisfaction is only mediocre.
- This group's members are more likely than those in other segments to be a member of an organization associated with agriculture, water quality, environment or outdoor recreation.

Demographic Characteristics:

- Ages 18-49
- \$20K - \$60K annual household income



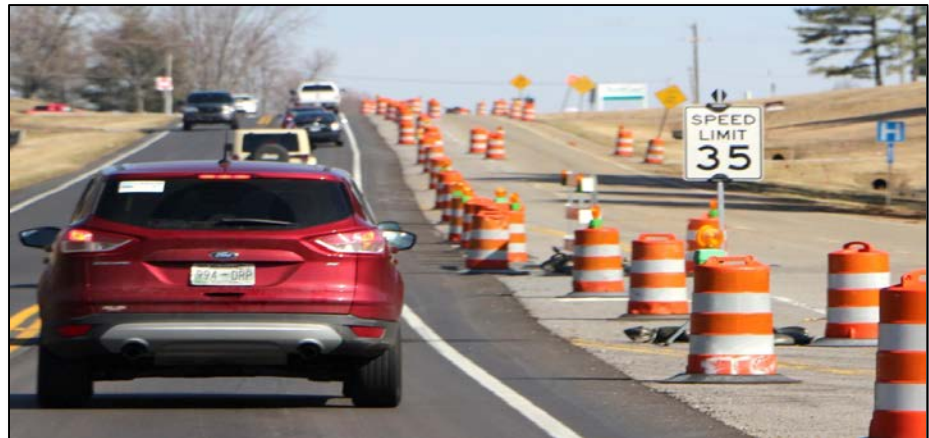
Discontented Commuters

Residing in the suburbs and rural communities, this high-income, professional sub-segment likely spends a lot of time on Iowa roadways commuting to work.

- They have very little pride in the appearance of our state and roadsides.
- They are not very happy with Iowa's conservation efforts.
- Like Concerned Country Dwellers, Discontented Commuters do care about environmental and conservation issues, although not quite as much.
- Discontented Commuters see significantly less value in LRTF initiatives to them personally than other segments.
- This group's members are less likely than those in other segments to be a member of an organization associated with agriculture, water quality, environment or outdoor recreation.

Demographic Characteristics:

- Ages 18-49
- \$61K - \$100+K annual household income



Unengaged City People

This older, lower income segment lives in the city (urban/suburban). Members of this segment are somewhat apathetic about conservation and environmental issues in Iowa.

They don't see much value in LRTF initiatives for them on a personal level, and don't really feel much pride in the appearance of our state as reflected by the condition of our roadsides.

They're not totally unhappy with Iowa's conservation and environmental preservation efforts, but not very satisfied either. Nothing in particular was important to them.

Demographic Characteristics:

- Ages 50 – 65+
- Under \$40K annual household income



Comparing Segments

- With three distinct segments/personas identified, we see that two – Concerned Country Dwellers and Discontented Commuters – are invested personally in the initiatives of the Iowa LRTF, although they have very different perceptions of the value LRTF adds to their lives.
- The third segment, Unengaged City People, is the smallest of the three. When we look at the level of importance this segment places on LRTF-type initiatives, we see that this group is not likely to engage no matter what type of marketing or programming targets them.
- A much better ROI is to focus on Concerned Country Dwellers and Discontented Commuters when it comes to driving awareness and perceptions, and potentially support and engagement. These are the people who care.
- Beyond that, these segments have their differences. So, finding out how to specifically communicate with these two target audiences, identifying differences and commonalities, will be critical.



It's ALL More Important to Country Dwellers

How important are each of the following to you personally? (1=Not at all important to 5=Very important)	Country Dwellers		Discontented Commuters	
	Mean Score	% Very Imp.	Mean Score	% Very Imp.
Effectively managed water quality strategies, including storm water runoff management	4.56	63%	4.49	56%
Efforts to support pollinators, including bees and butterflies	4.57	64%	4.47	55%
Conservation of wildlife habitats	4.57	62%	4.43	46%
Saving taxpayer money with smart approaches for roadside weed control	4.36	50%	4.30	43%
Knowing that native plants and habitats will be preserved for future generations	4.46	53%	4.32	39%
Native trees and shrubs along roadways for beauty and storm water management	4.46	52%	4.34	39%
Restoration of native plant species	4.38	50%	4.22	32%
The beauty of Iowa viewed from the roadways	4.18	38%	4.13	27%

Base:: Iowans: Concerned Country Folks n=290, Discontented Commuters n=240



Levels of Satisfaction are Similarly Mediocre

How satisfied are you with what is currently going on in Iowa? (1=Not at all likely to 5=Very likely)	Country Dwellers		Discontented Commuters	
	Mean Score	% Very Satisfied	Mean Score	% Very Satisfied
Effectively managed water quality strategies, including storm water runoff management	3.40	8%	3.35	13%
Efforts to support pollinators, including bees and butterflies	3.46	8%	3.45	7%
Conservation of wildlife habitats	3.57	12%	3.79	10%
Saving taxpayer money with smart approaches for roadside weed control	3.63	9%	3.62	5%
Knowing that native plants and habitats will be preserved for future generations	3.65	13%	3.69	7%
Native trees and shrubs along roadways for beauty and storm water management	3.54	9%	3.65	12%
Restoration of native plant species	3.62	9%	3.69	4%
The beauty of Iowa viewed from the roadway	3.61	15%	3.62	10%

Base:: Iowans: Concerned Country Folks n=290, Discontented Commuters n=240



Country Dwellers Perceive More LRTF Value

In your opinion, how much value does the Iowa Living Roadway Trust Fund's efforts to establish diverse native plants along Iowa's roadways provide to: (1=No Value to 5=A lot of value)	Country Dwellers		Discontented Commuters	
	Mean Score	% A Lot of Value	Mean Score	% A Lot of Value
Generations of Iowans to come	4.54	65%	4.44	56%
Iowans overall	4.40	55%	4.34	46%
Visitors to Iowa	4.29	48%	4.22	37%
You personally	4.13	46%	4.19	35%

- Both segments see the most value of LRTF initiatives to *Generations of Iowans to come*, and to *Iowans overall*.
- Concerned Country Dwellers see more value across the board.

Base:: Iowans: Concerned Country Folks n=290, Discontented Commuters n=240



Top Support for Pollinators & Water Quality

How likely are you to support efforts to address the following? (1=Not at all likely to 5=Very likely)	Country Dwellers		Discontented Commuters	
	Mean Score	% Very Likely	Mean Score	% Very Likely
The loss of habitat critical to bees, butterflies and other pollinators.	4.23	46%	4.10	36%
Compromised water quality caused by runoff from lawns, fields and roads into streams.	4.17	40%	4.05	34%
A decreasing presence of native plants which are important to the life cycle of other species.	3.91	26%	3.78	18%
Iowa ranks last in the nation for percentage of its remaining original natural habitat.	3.87	29%	3.79	21%
Identifying roadside management approaches that do not interfere with the efforts of Iowa farmers and other crop producers.	3.75	19%	3.69	16%

Base:: Iowans: Concerned Country Folks n=290, Discontented Commuters n=240



Digital Resources Most Often Used

Where do you get most of your information about causes you are interested in?

	Country Dwellers	Discontented Commuters
Internet searches/Websites/Social media	52%	48%
Newspapers/Magazines	47%	49%
Television	47%	43%
Word-of-Mouth	39%	41%
Education programs/Schools	10%	11%
Nature centers	18%	16%
State agencies (i.e. IDOT, IDNR, etc.)	16%	14%
Non-profit Organizations	15%	19%
Professional organizations	3%	10%
Political lobbying groups	1%	3%
Other	3%	3%

The top four channels, highlighted in yellow, will be the best places to reach both target audiences with communications.

Base:: Iowans: Concerned Country Folks n=290, Discontented Commuters n=240



Native Plant Restoration Ranks First

Of the list of terms that could be used to describe the management of Iowa's roadside vegetation, indicate the appeal of each to you personally: (1=No appeal to 5=A lot of appeal)	Country Dwellers		Discontented Commuters	
	Mean Score	% A Lot of Appeal	Mean Score	% A Lot of Appeal
Native plant restoration	4.05	30%	3.98	25%
Native landscaping	4.01	29%	3.92	22%
Roadside beautification	3.85	29%	3.95	21%
Living roadways	3.77	20%	3.66	16%
Integrated roadside vegetation management	3.42	14%	3.37	10%

- No term emerges with dominant appeal for either segment, although “Integrated roadside vegetation management” is commonly least-liked.
- With both segments, “Native plant restoration” ranks first, but it’s really too close to call considering the margin of error.

Base: Iowans: Concerned Country Folks n=290, Discontented Commuters n=240



Preferences: The Look

Managed roadside prairie plantings and native landscaping (wildflowers and grasses, native trees, wildlife habitat).



Mowed grass and landscaped roadsides with ornamental flowers and plants – make it look as park-like as possible.



Mow roadsides periodically for safety, but otherwise leave them alone.



Preferences: The Look

Considering *strictly the look* of Iowa roadsides, what are your preferences?

	Country Dwellers Ranked 1st	Discontented Commuters Ranked 1st	Unengaged City People Ranked 1st
Managed roadside prairie plantings and native landscaping (wildflowers and grasses, native trees, wildlife habitat).	50%*	56%*	30%*
Mow roadsides periodically for safety, but otherwise leave them alone.	25%	26%	28%
Mowed grass and landscaped roadsides with ornamental flowers and plants – make it look as park-like as possible.	35%*	18%*	42%*

*Statistically significant at the 95% confidence level



Advanced Analysis: Achieving Focus and Fine-tuning the Message with Target Audiences



Kano Analysis

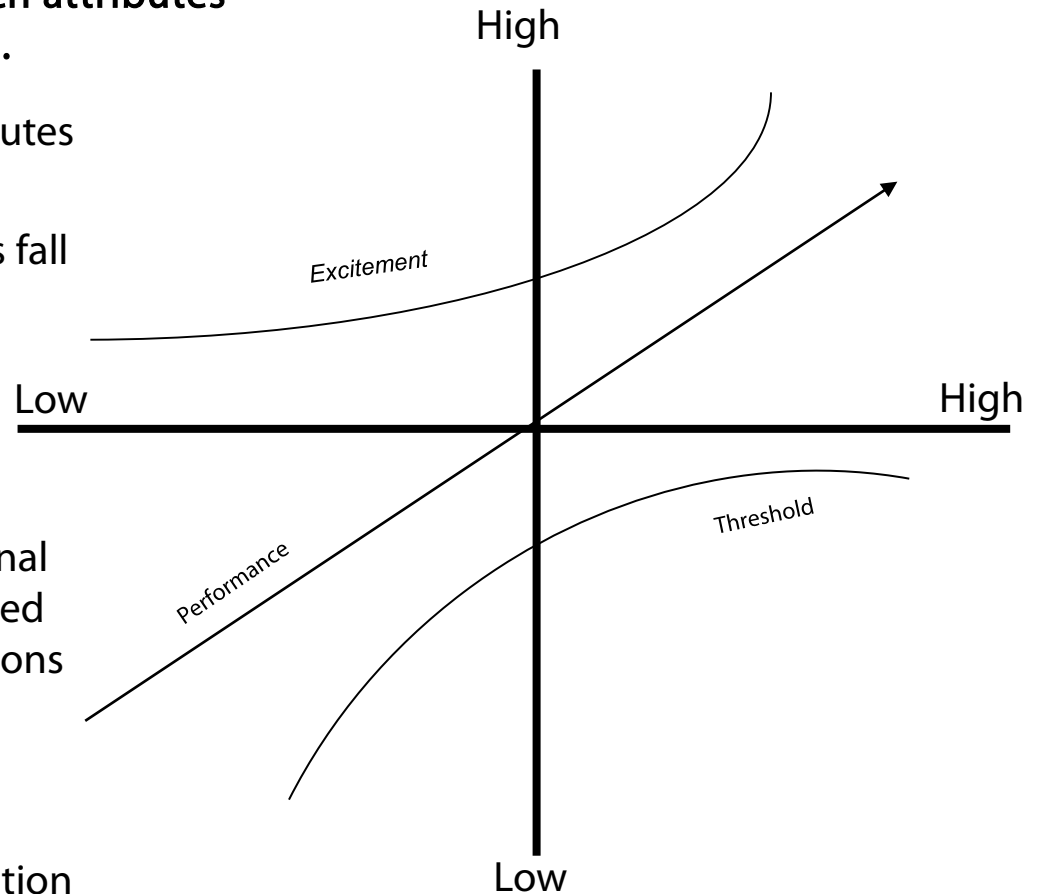
- Kano Model Analysis is a powerful statistical tool that helps us understand how to prioritize messaging.
- We developed a Kano analysis for both primary segments – Concerned Country Dwellers and Discontented Commuters.
- This will guide efforts to prioritize messaging that works well across both segments and customize messaging for individual segments.



Kano Analysis

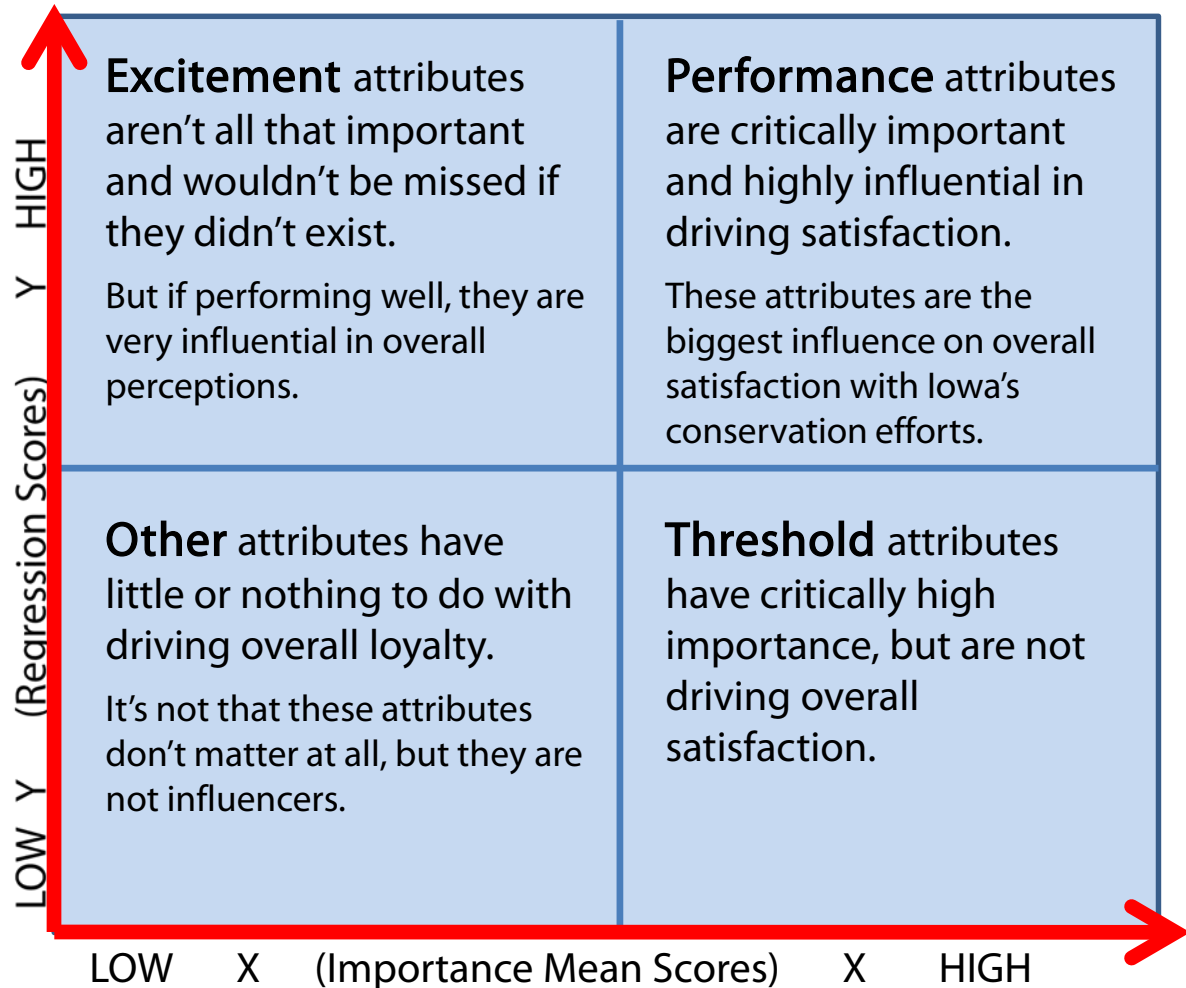
The Kano Model shows us which attributes contribute most to satisfaction.

- The Kano Model divides attributes into four distinct categories.
- To determine where attributes fall within the four quadrants, regression analysis is used to determine the direct importance or impact respondents place on each attribute versus the motivational importance/impact (determined by correlating overall perceptions against individual perception ratings).
- In this analysis we will use the dependent variable of satisfaction with Iowa's efforts at environmental conservation.



Kano Analysis – Understanding the Map

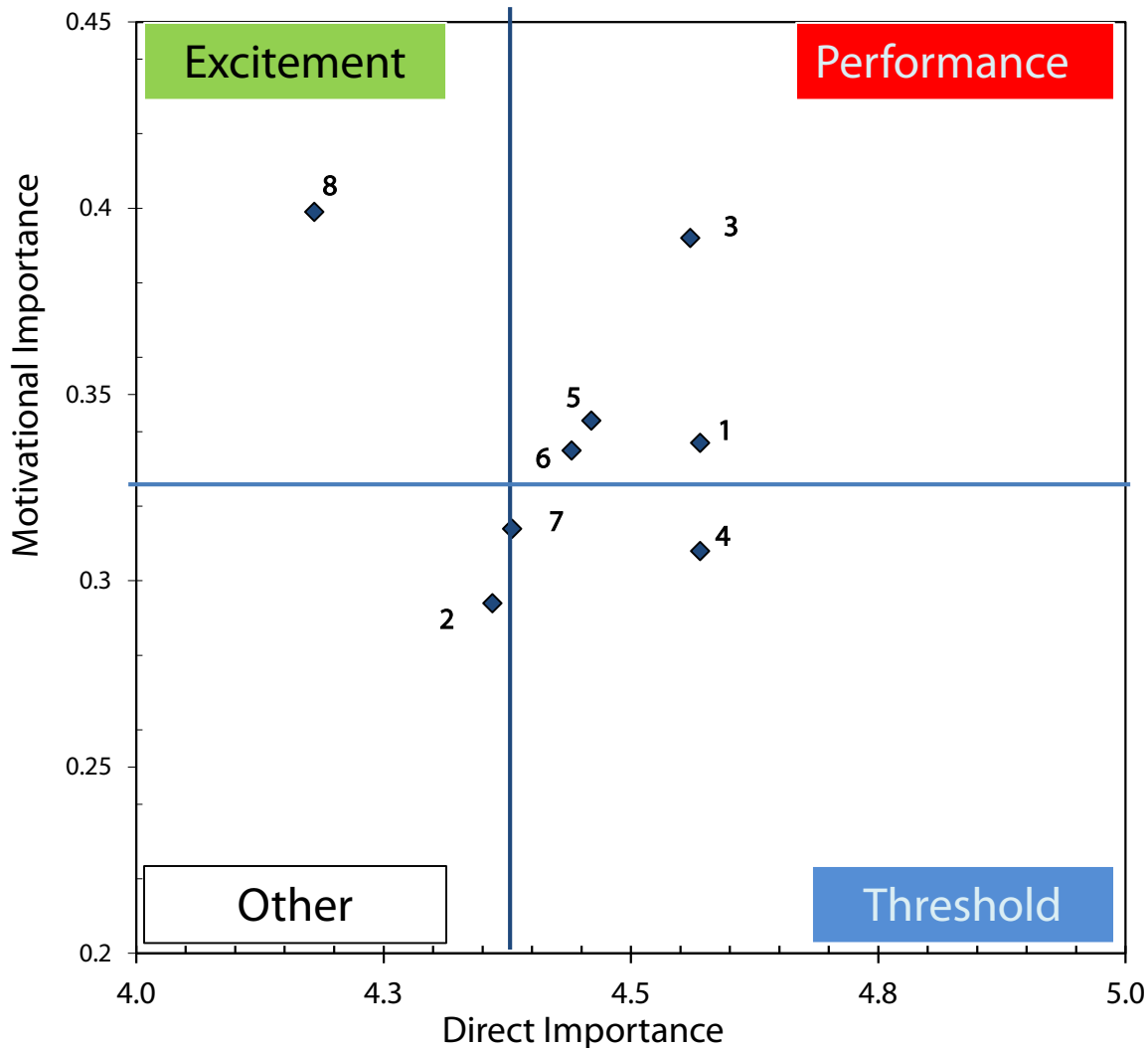
Regression scores (Y-axis) represent the strength of the correlation (Pearson's R-value) between scores for tested attributes and satisfaction with Iowa's environmental conservation efforts.



Importance scores (X-axis) represent the mean importance scores given to individual attributes.



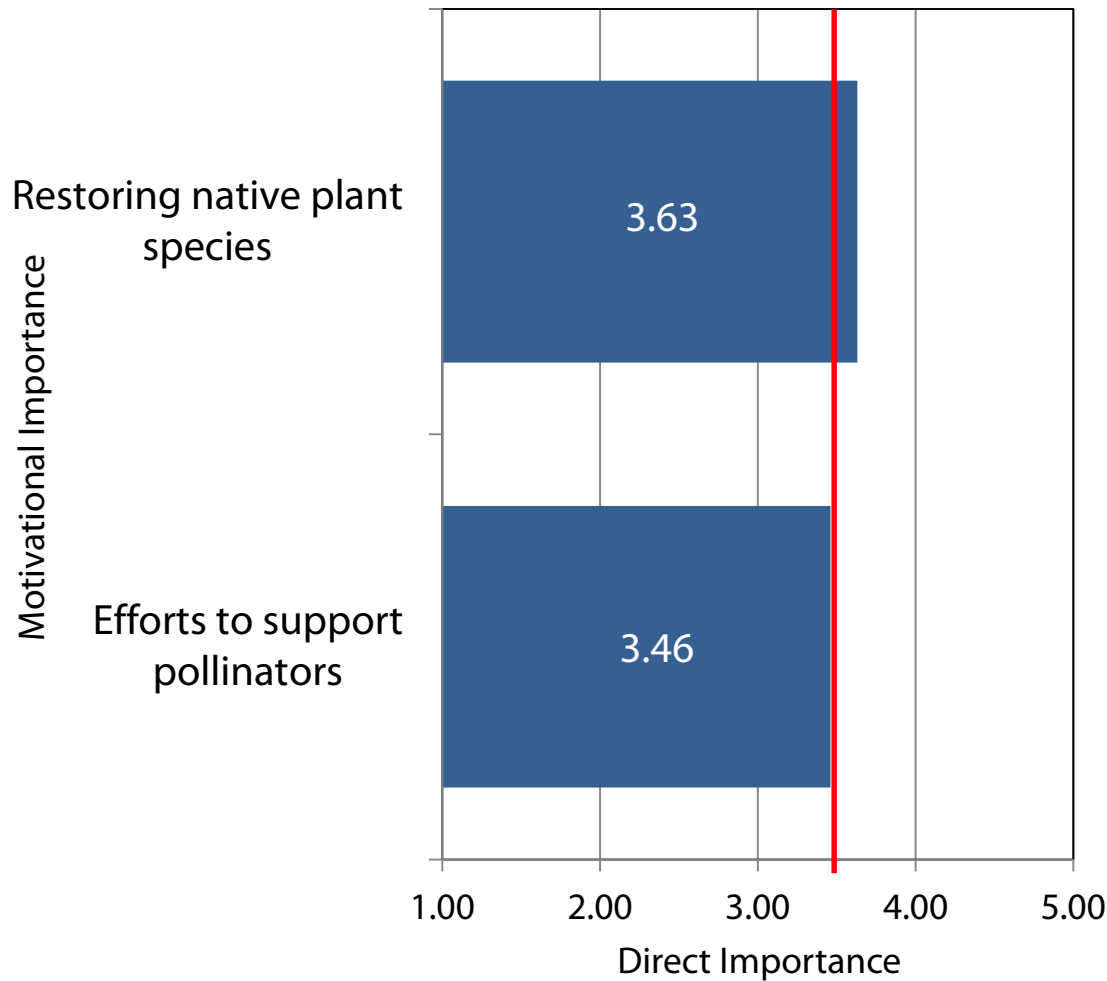
Attribute Mapping: Country Dwellers



1. Conservation of wildlife habitats
2. Saving taxpayer money with smart approaches for roadside weed control
3. Effectively-managed water quality strategies, including storm water runoff mgmt.
4. Efforts to support pollinators, including bees and butterflies
5. Knowing that native plants and habitats will be preserved for generations of lowans to come
6. Native trees and shrubs along roadways for beautification
7. Restoration of native plant species
8. The beauty of Iowa viewed from the roadsides



Threshold Attributes: Country Dwellers

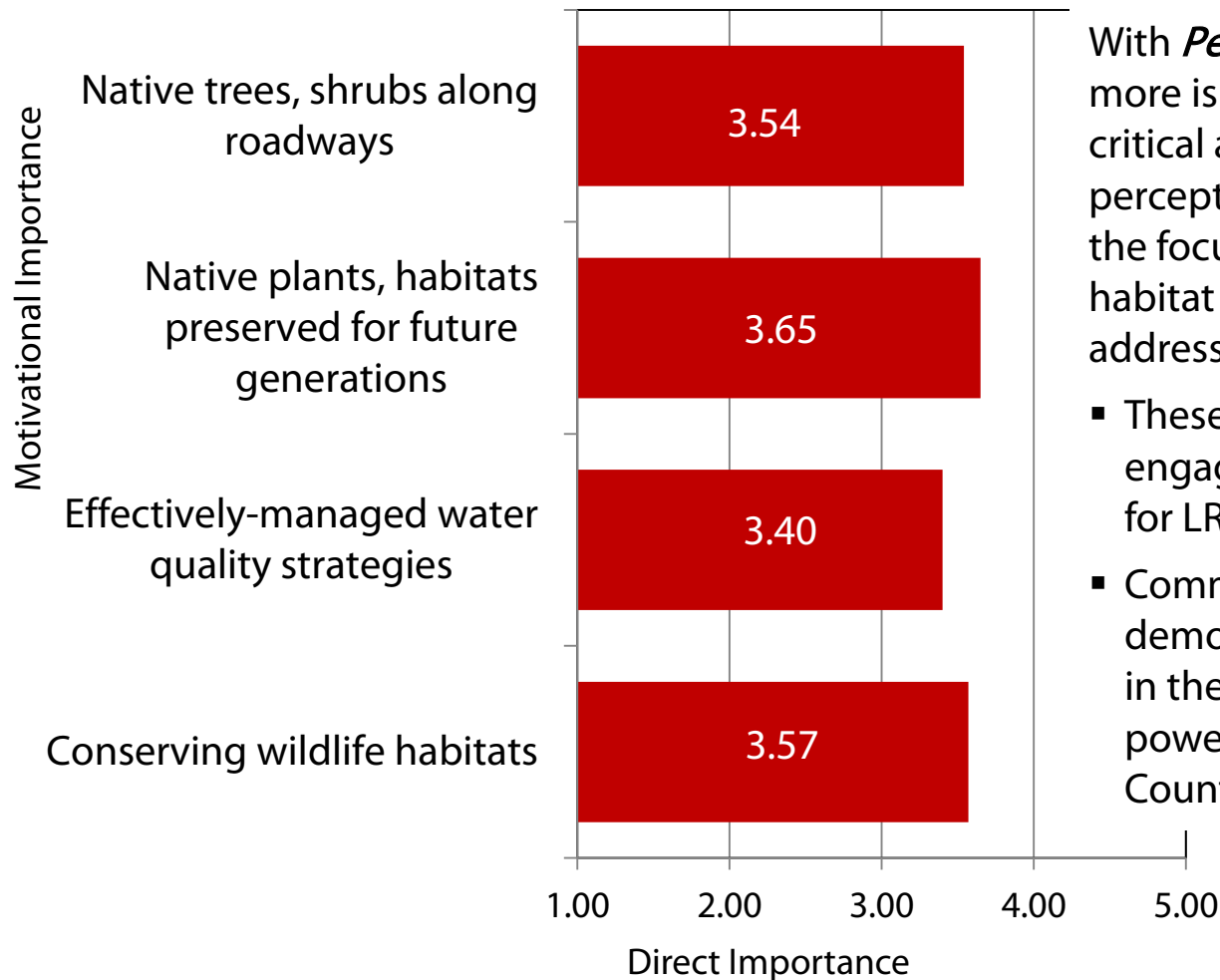


Threshold attributes are “must have” attributes. They must perform adequately – typically at 3.5 – to avoid negatively impacting overall perceptions.

- Restoration of native plant species is doing fine, but efforts to support pollinators is underperforming.
- Addressing this needs to be a high priority. Overall perceptions of LRTF’s value will suffer with this segment if *support for pollinator habitat* is not *strongly demonstrated and communicated*.



Performance Attributes: Country Dwellers



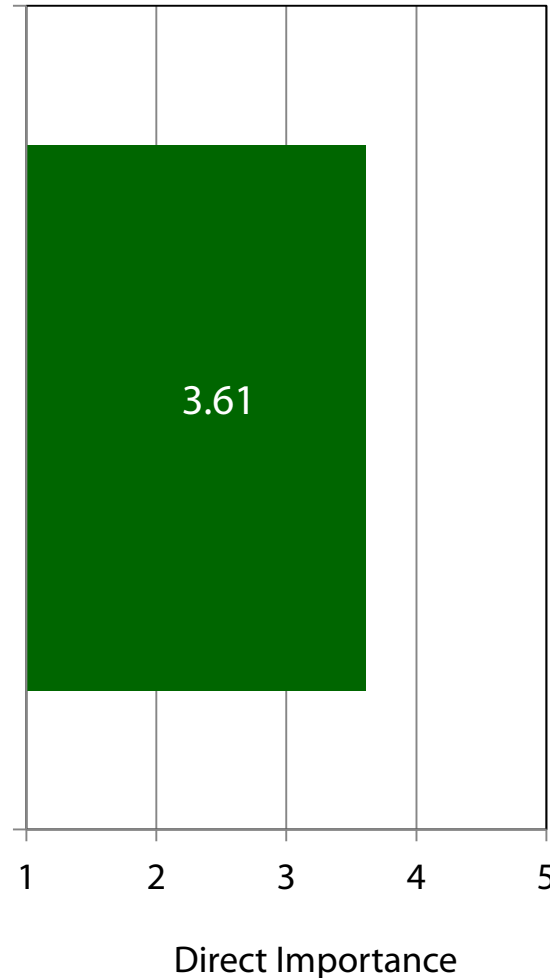
With *Performance attributes*, more is always better. These critical attributes drive overall perceptions, and need to be the focus once pollinator habitat performance is addressed.

- These attributes will drive engagement and support for LRTF efforts.
- Communications that demonstrate LRTF's success in these areas will have powerful resonance with Country Dwellers.



Excitement Attributes: Country Dwellers

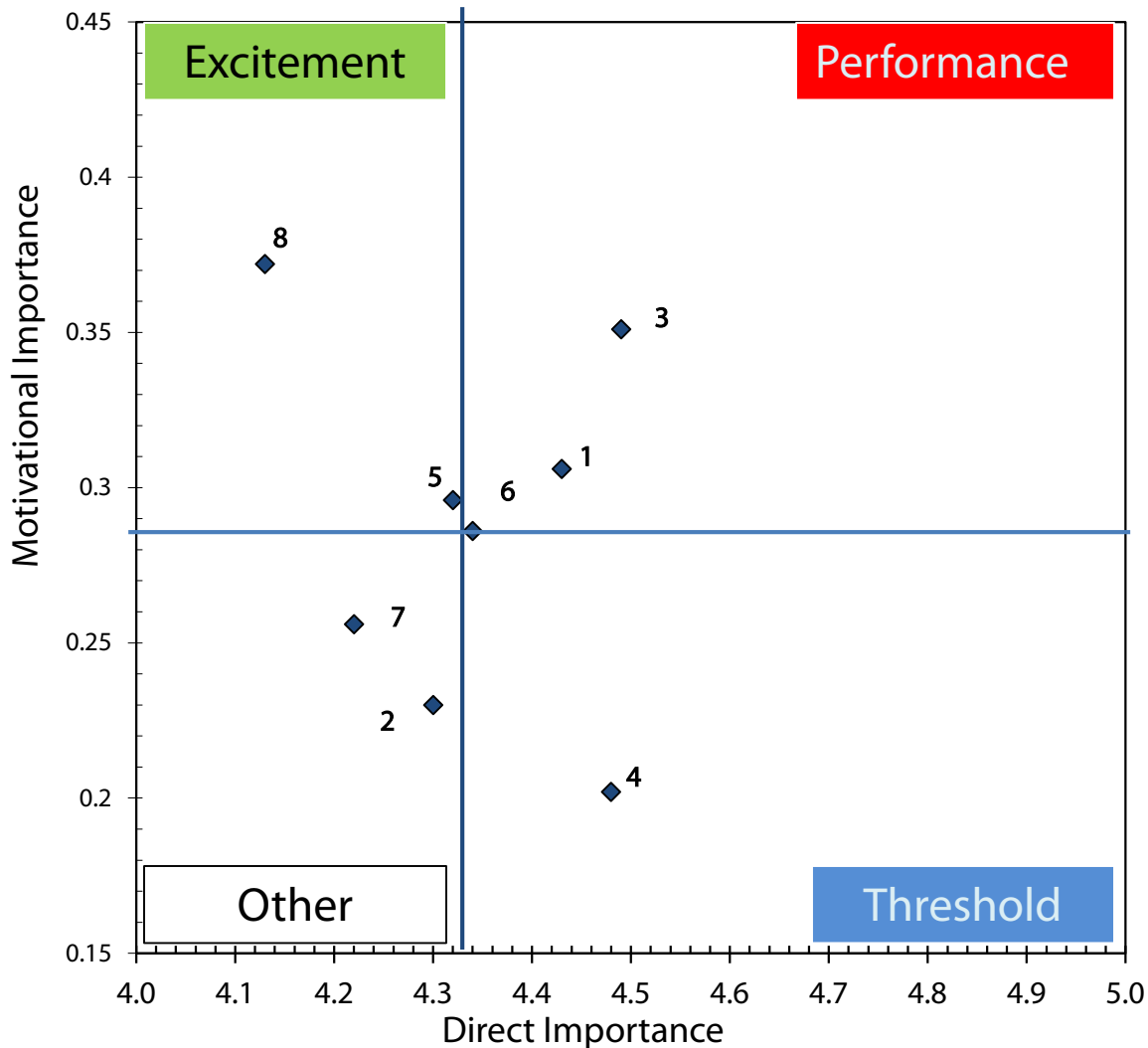
The beauty of Iowa
viewed from roadways



Excitement attributes are things respondents don't necessarily deem highly important, but they can be very influential.

- While Country Dwellers are really supportive of how LRTF's initiatives support environmental conservation, the unexpected delighter is that those roadways look beautiful.

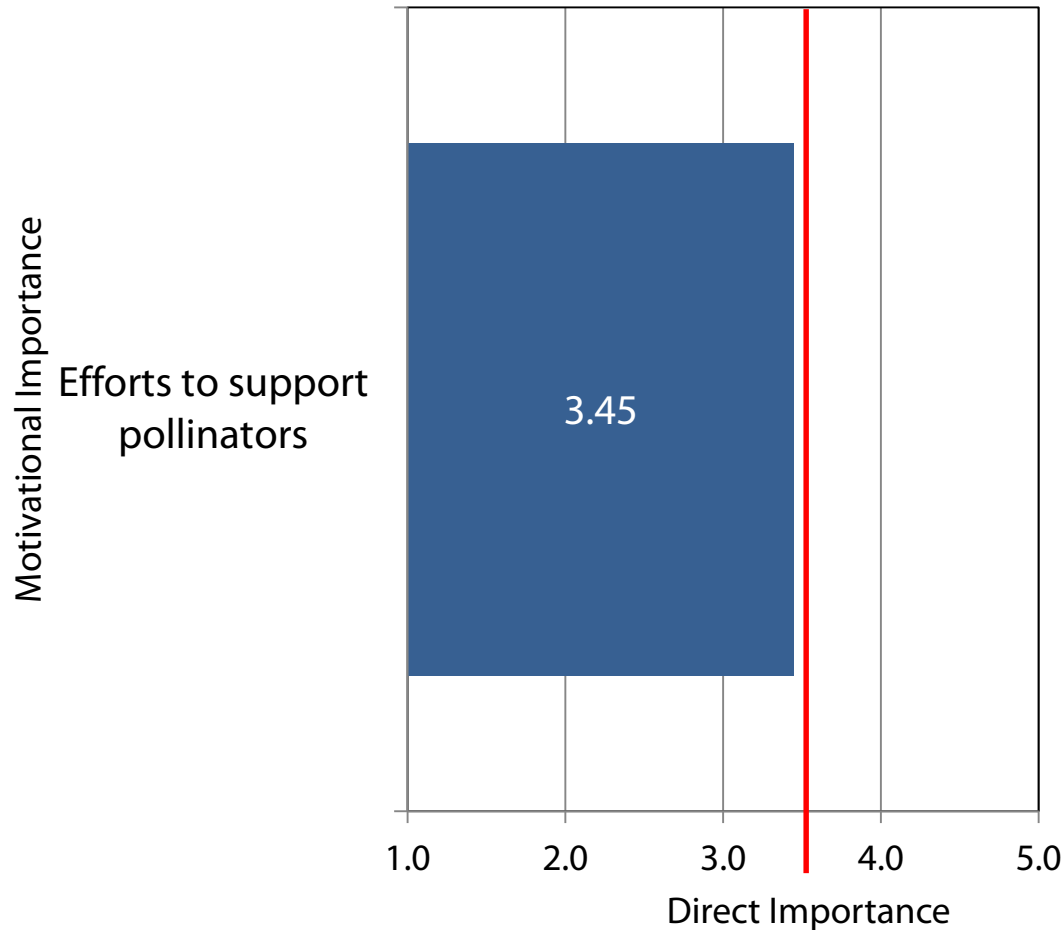
Attribute Mapping: Discontented Commuters



1. Conservation of wildlife habitats
2. Saving taxpayer money with smart approaches for roadside weed control
3. Effectively-managed water quality strategies, including storm water runoff mgmt.
4. Efforts to support pollinators, including bees and butterflies
5. Knowing that native plants and habitats will be preserved for generations of lowans to come
6. Native trees and shrubs along roadways for beautification
7. Restoration of native plant species
8. The beauty of Iowa viewed from the roadsides



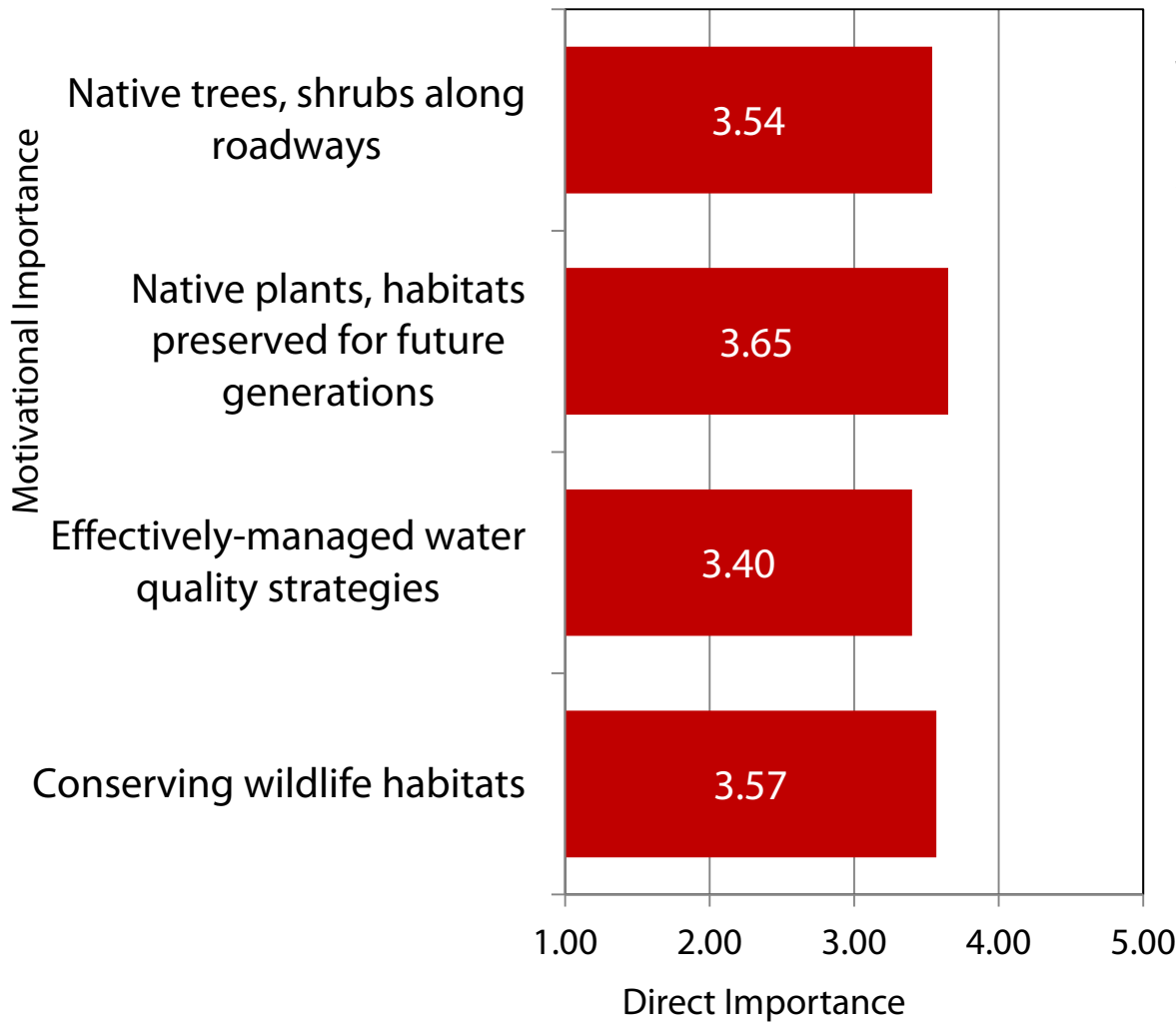
Threshold Attributes: Discontented Commuters



Threshold attributes are “must have” attributes.

- Discontented Commuters have just one threshold attribute – pollinator habitat. Unfortunately, it’s currently performing at a sub-par level. (We saw the same thing with the Concerned Country Dwellers.)
- It is critically necessary to demonstrate – and then communicate – how LRTF’s roadside initiatives provide habitat for bees and butterflies.

Performance Attributes: Discontented Commuters

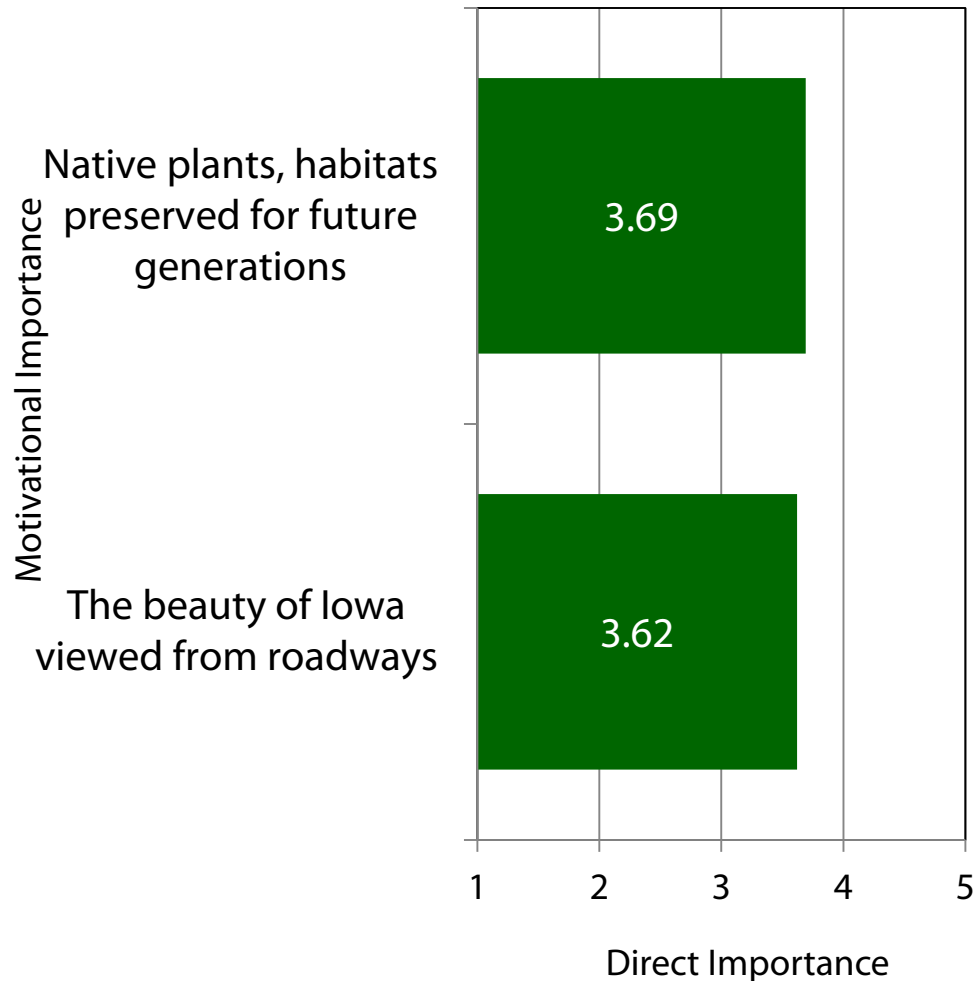


With *Performance attributes*, more is always better.

- These are the attributes that will drive engagement and support.
- Communications that demonstrate LRTF's success in these areas will have powerful resonance with Discontented Commuters.



Excitement Attributes: Discontented Commuters



- Discontented Commuters find the beauty of Iowa viewed from the roadways an unexpected delighter of LRTF efforts. (Same as Country Dwellers.)
- These Iowans are also excited about future generations of Iowans enjoying native plants and habitats.



Legislators

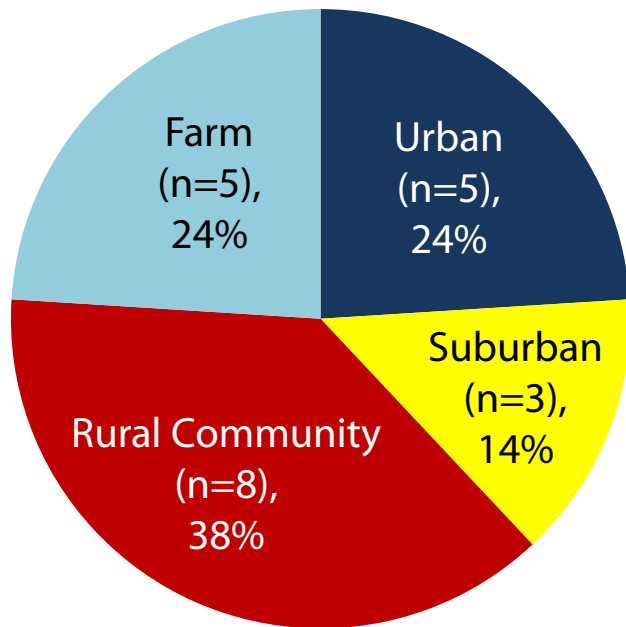


Legislative Online Survey Respondents

Iowa Residency

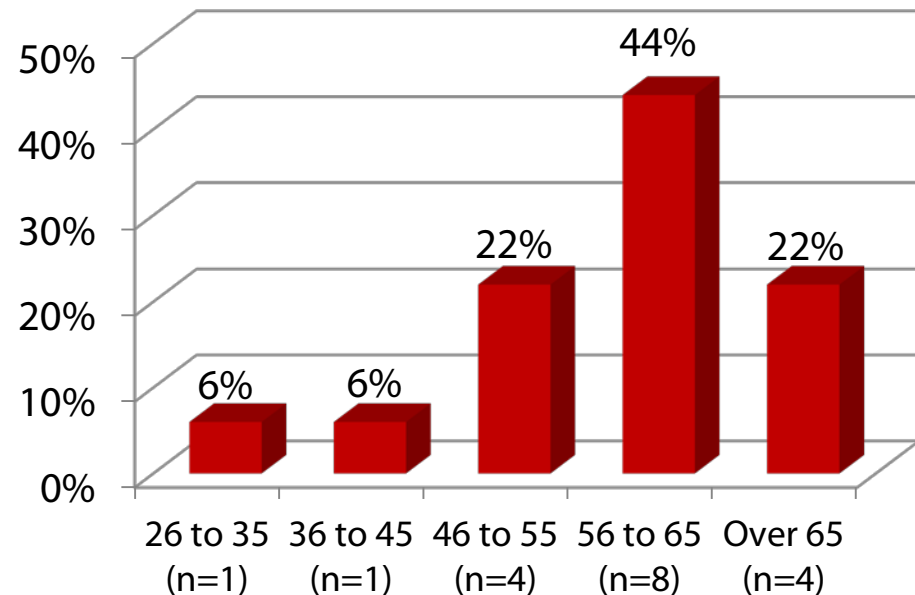
20 of the 21 Legislators have lived in Iowa for more than 20 years. One has lived in Iowa 16 to 20 years.

Community Designation



The community designations for Legislators are very similar to those of Stakeholders.

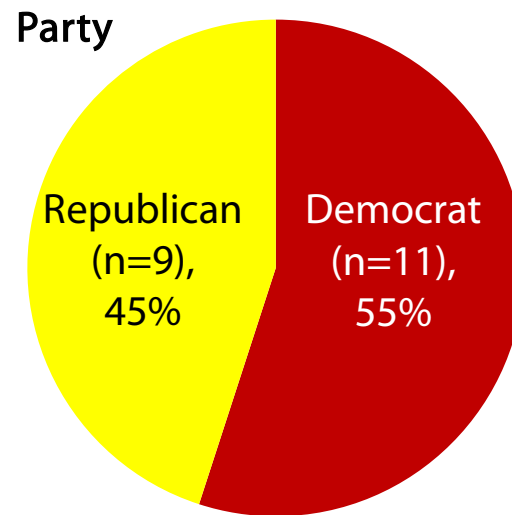
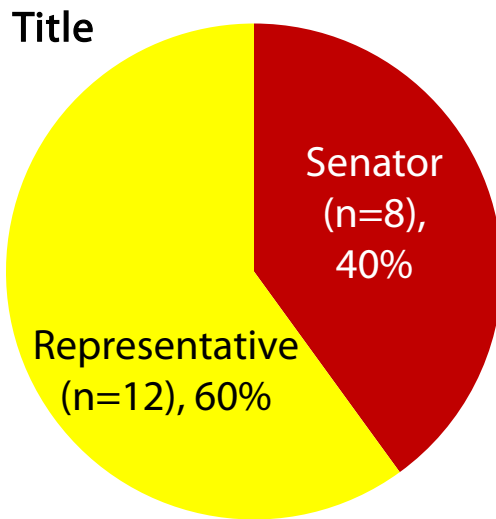
Age



Education All of the Legislator respondents indicated at least some college, making them more similar to the Stakeholder group than the sample of typical Iowans.



Legislative Online Survey Respondents



Relevant Committees	House (n=12)	Senate (n=8)	Total
Agriculture	2	5	7
Appropriations	2	5	7
Natural Resources	2	4	6
Transportation	1	3	4
Environmental Protection	2	1	3
Ag & Natural Resources Appropriations Subcommittee	2	0	2



Legislator Perceptions – Online Survey

Setting Priorities

- This small sample of Legislators places more priority on water quality and economic optimization than do typical lowans.
- They are less likely than typical lowans to identify ag land management (controlling erosion and farm chemical runoff) as a top priority.

Roadside Pride

The appearance of our state as reflected by the condition of our roadsides generates more pride for Legislators than for lowans overall. (Mean scores)

lowans (n=610)	3.40
Stakeholders (n=840)	3.30
Legislators (n=20)	3.76



Legislator Perceptions – Online Survey

Satisfaction with Iowa’s Environmental Conservation Efforts

Legislators align closely with Stakeholders when it comes to satisfaction with Iowa’s efforts at environmental conservation. (Mean scores)

Iowans (n=610)	3.30
Stakeholders (n=840)	2.50
Legislators (n=20)	2.58

Legislators who describe the area where they live as a farm or rural community differ significantly in their satisfaction with our state’s efforts at environmental conservation.

Farm/Rural (n=13)	3.69
Urban/Suburban (n=8)	1.88



Legislator Perceptions – Online Survey

Value of LRTF Efforts

This sample of Legislators sees less value in LRTF efforts across all categories.

In your opinion, how much value does the Iowa Living Roadway Trust Fund's efforts to establish diverse native plants along Iowa's roadways provide to:

Beneficiary	Iowans (n=610)	Stakeholders (n=780)	Legislators (n=20)
Future generations	4.31	4.66	3.95
Iowans overall	4.18	4.45	3.90
Visitors to Iowa	4.04	4.36	3.67
You personally	4.57	4.57	3.95

The perceived value of LRTF efforts is much lower for those from farm/rural communities.

Beneficiary	Farm/Rural (n=13)	Urban/Suburban (n=8)
Future generations	3.38	4.75
Iowans overall	3.38	4.75
Visitors to Iowa	3.15	4.50
You personally	3.38	4.88



Legislator Perceptions – Online Survey

Preferred Look for Iowa Roadsides

Overall, Legislators agree with lowans when it comes to the preferred look.

62% (n=13) selected *managed roadside prairie plantings and native landscaping* as their top choice.

However, 38% (n=8) selected *mowed grass and landscaped roadsides with ornamental flowers and plants – make it look as park-like as possible* as their top choice – a higher percentage than either lowans or Stakeholders.

The Preference for Park-like Roadsides is Driven by Farm/Rural Legislators

Seven of the 8 Legislators who indicated a preference for a park-like setting for Iowa roadsides are from farm/rural communities.



Legislator Perceptions – Online Survey

Likelihood of Support

This sample of Legislators aligns closely with the perceptions of typical Iowans when it comes to their likelihood of support for the environmental concerns tested.

How likely are you to support efforts to address the following? (1=Very unlikely to 5=Very likely)			
	Iowans (n=610)	Stakeholders (n=780)	Legislators (n=20)
Loss of pollinator habitat	3.98	4.54	3.95
Compromised water quality caused by runoff	3.98	4.52	3.95
Iowa last in U.S. for % of original natural habitat	3.69	4.33	3.55
A decreasing percentage of native plants	3.69	4.34	3.65
Roadside management that doesn't interfere with crop producers	3.62	3.73	3.75



Legislator Perceptions – Online Survey

Personal Priorities

This sample of Legislators aligns closely with the perceptions of typical Iowans when it comes to the importance of effectively-managed water quality.

Importance of pollinator support and conservation of wildlife habits is rated lower in importance by Legislators, while saving taxpayer money is rated higher.

As you think about Iowa's environment, how important are each of the following to you personally? (1=Not at all important to 5=Very important)			
	Iowans (n=610)	Stakeholders (n=780)	Legislators (n=20)
Effectively managed water quality strategies, incl. storm water runoff mgmt.	4.35	4.71	4.35
Efforts to support pollinators, including bees and butterflies	4.32	4.73	4.15
Conservation of wildlife habitats	4.32	4.69	4.15
Saving taxpayer money with smart approaches for roadside weed control	4.21	4.14	4.30

Urban/Suburban Legislators rated all options higher except for one: Saving taxpayer money with smart approaches for roadside weed control.



Legislative Executive Interview Respondents

Name	Area/Counties	Metro/ Rural	Relevant Committees
Rep. Brian Best (R, Dist. 12)	Audubon, Carroll, Crawford	R	Natural Resources, Transportation
Sen. Joe Bolkom (D, Dist. 43)	Iowa City area Johnson	M	Natural Resources, Environmental Protection
Sen. Jeff Danielson* (D, Dist. 30)	Cedar Falls/Waterloo Blackhawk	M	Transportation
Rep. Curt Hanson (D, Dist. 82)	Davis, Van Buren, Jefferson	R	Agriculture, Environmental Protection, Natural Resources
Sen. Matt McCoy (D, Dist. 21)	Des Moines area Polk, Warren	M	Transportation
Rep. Scott Ourth* (D, Dist. 26)	Des Moines area Warren	M	Agriculture, Natural Resources,
Rep. Sally Stutsman* (R, Dist. 77)	Johnson	M	Agriculture, Transportation

* Also responded to online survey.



Legislative Executive Interview Results

Awareness

- When asked how familiar Legislators were with the Living Roadway Trust Fund, four said they were vaguely familiar (heard of it, but don't really know anything about it).
 - Of the four vaguely familiar Legislators, two were from rural districts and two from metro districts.
- The other three Legislators were very familiar with LRTF, and all from metro districts.



Legislative Executive Interview Results

What is most important for our future?

Interviewees were read a brief description of the Living Roadway Trust Fund, followed by this open-ended question:

As a legislator, you are juggling a lot of priorities on behalf of Iowans. What aspects of the Iowa Living Roadway Trust Fund do you think are most important for the future of our state?

Water quality was mentioned most frequently, followed by economically-sound roadside maintenance.

Most Important	Frequency
Water quality	6
Economically-sound roadside maintenance	4
Pollinator habitat	3
Beautification	3
Native plants/ prairie restoration	2



What's Most Important?

Water quality (n=6)

- *Water quality is an important issue.*
- *Water quality is an increasingly important area of concern. If our roadways can help address that issue, that's a really good thing.*
- *Water quality is an emerging issue and we need money to address it. We can prevent the erosion of valuable soil by creating buffer strips 10 to 15 feet into the fence row to keep soil in fields instead of running off. It would hold back the soil and the nutrients – lots of opportunity here.*
- *Surface water filter. We sit on the largest freshwater aquifer in the nation. We have an obligation to protect that water source. Biodiverse prairie grass would filter the runoff before that water goes into our ground aquifer. It can prevent soil erosion and can make water cleaner with biodiverse grass filters. It becomes even more important as we try to figure out how to pay for water quality.*
- *We're always looking for ways to cut down on erosion and enhance water quality.*
- *Nutrient reduction strategies. Water quality. It's important. I'm gravely concerned with our diminishing water quality. I'm a huge proponent of ag practices like buffer strips to trap nutrients and prevent runoff. Natural prairie plants look good and serve an essential role in water quality. This component is one of many components that have to be layered in to help improve our water quality.*



What's Most Important?

Economically sound road maintenance (n=4)

- *One thing you didn't mention is that adding native grasses may mean we don't have to plow – it can serve as a living snow fence.*
- *Reduced inputs through chemicals and mowing. The areas along Iowa's roadways make up huge areas of public land. It needs to be more sustainable and economically good for taxpayers. Needs to be good for the environment too in terms of pesticide use, etc.*
- *We can save money if we avoid mowing all that grass. There's a LOT of it. As a taxpayer, I think it's important to support native grasses because they can survive maintenance-free. Ongoing maintenance is important so let's not mow everything. This is not a tree-hugger issue. It's an economic issue. Biodiversity is not the key issue here. Money is.*
- *I hope we can use it (native vegetation) to cut down on maintenance we have to do along Iowa's roads.*



What's Most Important?

Pollinator habitat (n=3)

- *Establishing habitat for pollinators, nesting birds and other wildlife.*
- *The role it plays in creating habitat, especially for butterflies and pollinators.*
- *I am deeply concerned about the pollinator population.*



What's Most Important?

Beautification (n=3)

- *Beautification along Iowa's roadways is very important. Iowa is consistently ranked on rest areas, condition of roads and roadside vegetation. It's the face we put on for the rest of Iowa. It says a lot about our state. Showcasing native plants, creating beautiful and sustainable roadsides is important.*
- *It's also important to tourism and making our roadways attractive.*
- *I like the idea of native vegetation. It's useful and enhances beauty.*



What's Most Important?

Native Plants/Prairie Restoration (n=2)

- *Preservation of our native prairie is so important. It helps us make amends for what we have done to the environment.*
- *Most talk about biodiversity and protecting the environment. It's not compelling to lowans. But it is a benefit. Even within prairie grasses, it's better to have a diverse mix rather than just one. We need to appeal to a sense of history. We are a prairie grass way. It's WHY we have such rich soil. Where we can, we should bring some of that diversity back. It makes for stronger soil. Other than New Jersey, Iowa is the most developed in the country. Less than 1% of land in Iowa is undeveloped. Roads/Right of way is an opportunity. There's a sense of history there.*



Study Results

Challenges

What are the specific challenges you see for the Iowa Living Roadway Trust Fund?

There are two primary challenges, according to the Legislators – and they are very tightly intertwined.

1. We need to help Iowans understand how diverse stands of native plants make a positive impact on our environment.
2. The funding for this effort won't happen at the level it needs to until we can raise awareness.

Challenge	Frequency
Education and awareness	6
Funding and resource availability	5



Challenges

Education

- *Education. Iowans need to understand how Living Roadways help the environment.*
- *For example, I-235 beautification. There was a lot of criticism of plantings along the roadside. A lot of people didn't understand that it's a mandate to invest a portion of the funding on beautification.*
- *Awareness and knowledge (for Iowans as well as legislators).*
- *Education. I served on the Johnson County Board of Supervisors. We tried to do roadside plantings as part of road construction. It's hard to make people understand that it's OK to leave roadways unmowed. I'm married to a farmer, and he thinks unmowed is dangerous.*
- *It's not well known. More promotion is needed. And education. After we passed the fuel tax a year ago, there was more concerns that the funding would go to lots of things besides roads. People need to understand the benefits of programs like this. They need to be educated.*
- *We need to justify the expense with education. We have to help Iowans understand how essential this is for our environment and our future. They need to understand the science of it. Then they can see it as a part of a larger conservation program. We have to get more attention for this issue.*



Challenges

Funding/Resources

- *There are always so many priorities, especially when it comes to the money available. Especially with the gas tax increase this year. It makes people focus on how these funds might be spent.*
- *Resources. Implementing sustainable practices costs money.*
- *This is an economic issue. Need to focus on economic benefits. It's not about butterflies and bees and tree hugging. THIS IS ABOUT SAVING OUR LAND FROM GOING INTO THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA. Some lowans think LRTF is a waste of money. Rights of way are engineered concepts. The ditch is necessary. So what do we do with it? Have to enhance it. 10% of every road project has to have an enhancement aspect. Would like to see more of the enhancement money go to this rather than to a colored bridge or public art project. What if all our money went to enhancement??*
- *Funding.*
- *Lots of people don't understand the value of aesthetics. Some ask why we spend money on flowers along the roadsides. They don't get it. They don't understand the environmental implications. To get it funded we have to get lowans to understand it. We have to have the money to fund it.*



Ranking Priorities

Environmental Issue	#1 Priority	#2 Priority	#3 Priority
A decreasing presence of native plants which are important to the life cycle of other species.	1	--	2
Loss of habitat critical to bees, butterflies and other pollinators .	--	2	3
Compromised water quality caused by runoff from lawns, fields and roads into streams.	5	2	--
Identifying roadside management approaches that do not interfere with the efforts of crop producers.	--	--	1
Iowa ranks last in the nation for percentage of its remaining original natural habitat .	1	3	1

Water quality easily ranks as the top priority among legislators. This is a definite area of agreement with both typical Iowans and Stakeholders.



Perceptions of LRTF Impact on Water Quality

LRTF Impact on Water Quality

Legislators were asked about how they felt LRTF initiatives fit with Iowa's water quality improvement efforts:

Water quality is an especially hot issue in Iowa right now. How do you think the Iowa Living Roadway Trust Fund's efforts to establish diverse stands of native plants along Iowa Roadways fits into the state's overall water quality improvement efforts?

- Five of seven Legislators acknowledged the importance of LRTF efforts to Iowa's overall water quality improvement efforts.
- Two Legislators indicated they do not feel LRTF efforts are especially effective when it comes to water quality, and other approaches should be prioritized.

Impact	Frequency
Important and deserving of support	5
Fits, but not that important	2



Perceptions of LRTF Impact on Water Quality

Important and deserving of support (n=5)

- *There is so much that needs to be done to improve water quality. The Living Roadways are an important part of solving the problem. We need to support and encourage this effort.*
- *We might be able to learn some things from this. If plants help more, we should do it. We need efforts that are visible. Anything we can do to improve water quality and improve the beauty of our roadsides is a good thing.*
- *We have to help people understand the importance of green space buffer zones.*
- *LRTF is important. If you drive across the state on I-80 you only see rolling crop land. Only one thing is capturing the runoff from all that asphalt and farm fields – it's the buffer strips. But they don't do what native prairie planting can do. Native plants have deep roots, they metabolize chemicals, they provide flowering plants, they provide habitat. We need more of it.*
- *Rather than suing ourselves why don't we work together on concepts like this?*



Perceptions of LRTF Impact on Water Quality

Fits, but not that important (n=2)

- *It fits, but it's not an item that's a hot priority. It's an aspect of water quality efforts, but not an important one. If I were to rank water quality efforts from 1 to 10, this would rank lower than 5. Filter strips along streams, for example, would be more important.*
- *Fits in a minor way. People don't think about roadways as a source of pollution.*



Other Comments

- *It is beneficial to lowans but they don't realize the importance. We have to raise the level of knowledge.*
- *Need to re-energize thinking around the massive amount of public lands and how they can be better managed to create opportunities for lowans.*
- *We should do more of this. LRTF should be known across Iowa.*
- *We need to educate lowans.*
- *Water quality is a very visible issue. This is one of the least expensive solutions to water quality issues for Iowa. We need to help people understand that IRVM is one of the least expensive scientifically effective strategies to help address water quality. It can do so much for Iowa. This is of paramount importance. You can count on me as a citizen and legislator to be sure this program remains robust.*



Research-Based Recommendations



Recommendations

Who are our target audiences? (1 of 3)

There are three primary audiences for our messaging about the mission and impact of Living Roadways Trust Fund: *Concerned Country Dwellers*, *Discontented Commuters*, and Stakeholders – in that order of priority.

The most receptive group for LRTF messages are lowans in the *Concerned Country Dwellers* segment.

- Highly engaged in environmental and conservation issues.
- Very proud of the appearance of Iowa as viewed from the roadways.
- More likely to be a member of an organization associated with agriculture, water quality, environment or outdoor recreation.
- More likely to be 18-49 and between \$20k and \$60k annual household income.



Recommendations

Who are our target audiences? (2 of 3)

The next most receptive target for LRTF messages are lowans in the *Discontented Commuters* segment.

- They care about environmental and conservation issues, although they are not nearly as engaged as those in the *Concerned Country Dwellers* segment.
- They are not very satisfied with what is currently happening in Iowa with environmental issues.
- They see significantly less value in LRTF initiatives to them personally compared to those in the Concerned Country Dwellers segment.
 - Because they care about the environment, they are likely to be open to our messaging, but we will need to help them see how this is relevant to their lives.
- *Discontented Commuters* are typically in the same age range as *Concerned Country Dwellers* (18-49), but have higher annual household income of \$61k to \$100k.



Recommendations

Who are our target audiences? (3 of 3)

We also need to connect with **Stakeholders**.

These lowans are interested and engaged in environmental issues and hold membership in organizations focused on issues related to LRTF.

They are generally highly educated, have a higher annual household income than average, and are more likely to live in an urban area than either of our other target audiences.

Our goal with Stakeholders is to connect their existing environmental priorities with the mission of LRTF wherever possible.



Recommendations

Where do we reach our target audiences?

All of our target audiences rely heavily on digital information resources. The top information source for respondents overall is internet search/websites/social media.

For typical lowans, the next most commonly-used information resources for causes they are interested in and want to support include television, newspapers/magazines and word of mouth.

For Stakeholders, top resources include newspaper/magazines, state agencies and non-profit organizations.

We can also connect with Stakeholders through environmentally-focused organizations.



Recommendations

What messages resonate most?

After thoroughly examining the opinions and perceptions of 610 typical lowans and 840 Stakeholders, *it appears that two key messages will have resonance with all target audiences.*

- The message that will get the most attention and draw the widest support is *pollinator habitat conservation/restoration*.
- ***Water quality management*** is of critical importance to lowans, and demonstration of how native plant restoration helps manage storm water runoff should be a primary communication to lowans.
 - Be careful about potential politically-charged wording (references that directly connect compromised water quality to field runoff) that will disengage the Farm/Ag segment.



Recommendations

How do we best drive engagement and support as well as perceptions of value in LRTF initiatives? (1 of 3)

The people who live and work in Iowa, now and for generations to come, are seen as the biggest beneficiaries of LRTF initiatives, and that should be a theme that is woven through communications.

Across the board, managed prairie plantings and native landscaping is what Iowans want to see along their roadsides.

But it's not just about how roadsides look. *It's about Iowa's most pressing environmental issues, and how native plant restoration along our roadways will address them.*



Recommendations

How do we best drive engagement and support as well as perceptions of value in LRTF initiatives? (2 of 3)

Respondents expressed a sincere desire to preserve native plant species *for generations to come*, for whom they see the biggest value of LRTF initiatives.

- This desire to conserve, restore and preserve suggests a strong affinity for Iowa's historic natural environment: prairies and native plants, grasses, shrubs and trees, and abundant habitat for pollinators and wildlife.
- Beyond that, Stakeholders especially understand the importance of Native Plant Restoration to Iowa's future, and generations to come.
- This is an area where it will be beneficial to drive awareness (education) among the general population, and where demonstration will bring even more Stakeholders on board.

Maintaining the link between our Iowa heritage and our children's future is a concept that will engage Iowans and garner support.



Recommendations

How do we best drive engagement and support as well as perceptions of value in LRTF initiatives? (3 of 3)

Legislators

Legislators care what voters think, so we need to educate them about the priorities of lowans. They need to understand how voters support and prioritize these issues.

We also need to meet them where they are to keep LRTF issues moving forward in Iowa. Water quality is already a high priority topic for Legislators.

- Because the importance of water quality is already high with this group, we need to talk about the benefits of native plants along Iowa roadsides within the context of improving water quality.
- More education needs to be done to help Legislators understand how diverse stands of native plants along roadsides can be part of Iowa's plan to improve water quality.

Identifying and communicating the ways LRTF efforts optimize taxpayer money will be helpful as well.



Getting Started



Target Audiences

1. lowans 18 to 49, with a focus on those living in rural areas, rural communities and suburbs.
 - The majority of lowans will be receptive to our message (46% Concerned Country Dwellers + 39% Discontented Commuters).
2. Stakeholders
 - Already engaged; we need to help them drive support for LRTF efforts.
3. Legislators
 - They will see messages targeting typical lowans.
 - Need to target them with messaging focused on their specific concerns as well.



Key Messages

Iowans

Native Plant Restoration for Iowa's Roadsides: *Why It Matters*

1. Supports Pollinators

- Pollinators are best adapted to local, native plants.
- More than a third of our food supply relies on the plants they pollinate.

2. Improves Water Quality

- Native plants have extensive root systems that absorb storm water runoff chemicals that would otherwise enter Iowa's waterways.

3. Improves Iowa for Future Generations

- Roadside native plants are perennial, sustainable, cost-effective and a smart investment for Iowa's future.



Key Messages

Stakeholders

Native Plant Restoration for Iowa's Roadsides: *How You Can Help*

1. Issues related to water quality and pollinators are important to Iowans right now.
 - Share related research statistics with stakeholder groups.
2. This is the perfect time for us to all work together for a better future by raising awareness about the critical benefits of native plant restoration for Iowa's roadsides.
 - Identify specific ways LRTF can partner with stakeholder groups to raise awareness about the benefits of native plant restoration along Iowa roadsides.



Key Messages

Legislators

Native Plant Restoration for Iowa's Roadsides: *Why It Matters*

1. Improves Water Quality

- Native plants have extensive root systems that absorb storm water runoff chemicals that would otherwise enter Iowa's waterways.

2. Fiscally Responsible Approach

- Roadside native plants are perennial, sustainable, cost-effective and a smart investment for Iowa's future.

3. Supports Pollinators

- Pollinators are best adapted to local, native plants.
- More than a third of our food supply relies on the plants they pollinate.

Consider developing an infographic summary of key research statistics to help legislators quickly see how Iowans feel about native plant restoration along Iowa's roadsides. Include a link to the full research findings.



Communication Channels

lowans (1 of 3)

1. Online

- Easily-searched website that is SEO-friendly with easy-to-understand actionable information.
- Social media
 - Develop consumer-friendly blog content for website and social media.
 - Boost social posts for visibility.
 - Create shareable content.
 - Keep the content brief and easy to understand, and link to more in-depth resources.
 - Use imagery as much as possible to engage and educate.
- Consider a targeted and trackable digital ad campaign that raises awareness and pushes to the website for more information.



Communication Channels

lowans (2 of 3)

2. Newspaper/Magazine

- Develop engaging consumer-focused content customized for community newspapers and targeted magazines.
- Use images to help lowans recognize native plantings along roadsides.
- Use illustrations to clearly explain how native plants improve water quality.
- Show how pollinators benefit from roadside native plants.



Communication Channels

Iowans (3 of 3)

3. Roadside Signage

- Help people recognize native prairie plants by developing signage to post near roadside native plantings.
- Consider a series of Burma Shave-style signs along high-traffic areas for attention and effectiveness.

For example:

These roadside native prairie plants
Improve Iowa's water quality
And nurture butterflies & bees
www.TheRoadToABetterIowa.com



Communication Channels

Stakeholders (1 of 2)

1. Indirect

- Stakeholders will encounter communications targeting typical lowans (online, newspaper, magazine, signage, etc.).

2. Direct

- Reach out to stakeholder organizations, especially those who participated in the research study. Share a brief summary of key research findings and encourage them to use the information across their networks to help raise awareness of the need for native plant restoration along Iowa's roadsides.
- Distribute digital communication materials to stakeholder organizations directly and encourage them to share with their networks via their typical communication channels (social, email, newsletter, etc.).
- Look for ways to partner with stakeholder organizations to benefit a common cause.



Communication Channels

Stakeholders (2 of 2)

3. State Agencies and Non-profit Organizations

- Stakeholders indicated they tend to rely on state agencies and non-profit organizations for helpful information.
- Partner with state agencies and appropriate non-profits to develop and distribute informational materials related to roadside native prairie plants and their benefits.



Communication Channels

Legislators

1. Develop digital and print communications specifically for legislators, focused primarily on water quality and the budgetary advantages of native plant restoration for Iowa's roadsides.
2. Prioritize signage for native plantings along roads that are most likely to be used by Iowa's legislators as they head to work in Des Moines.
3. Develop materials for typical Iowans that they can easily share with their legislators to show their support for native plant restoration along Iowa's roadsides.



MindFire