



SUMMARY: LAND USE 2013 OREGON VALUES & BELIEFS STUDY

Project Background: This memo presents summary points related to land use from the 2013 Oregon Values & Beliefs study. The summary draws from three surveys conducted in April and May 2013. Final sample sizes were 3971 respondents for Survey #1, 1958 for Survey #2, and 1865 for Survey #3. The questionnaires and findings are available at www.oregonvaluesproject.org.

DHM Research and PolicyInteractive Research designed and conducted the surveys using telephone and online formats to aid accessibility and help obtain a representative sample. Enough interviews were completed in five geographic regions (Central, Eastern, Portland Metro, Southern, and Willamette) to permit statistically reliable analysis at the regional level. The research design used quotas and statistical weighting based on the U.S. Census to ensure representativeness within regions by age, gender, and income. The regions were then weighted proportionally by population per the U.S. Census to yield statewide results.

This study stands out from others in that, when asking questions about policy priorities with cost implications, we informed respondents that rating an item as "important" or "desirable" meant willingness to support some increase in taxes or reallocation of funds from other public services. The visual surveys used \$ symbols to emphasize the real-world implications of policy preferences.

Another distinctive feature of the study is that focal topics recur across the three surveys in a variety of question forms and contexts. High-quality research uses this "test-retest" or "triangulation" method to improve confidence in response validity.

This summary of key findings, observations and conclusions reflects the judgment of the research partners and not necessarily the views of the sponsoring organizations.

Findings

1. Items related to land use frequently dominate volunteered responses when Oregonians are asked what they personally value about living in the state. Replies typically include the beauty, nature, the forests and trees, outdoor recreation, and accessibility to the ocean and mountains. (S1.2)
2. Two-thirds of Oregonians (66%) consider **protection of productive farm and forest land from development** very or somewhat important. The question leading to this result made clear that saying **important** implied support for some increase or reallocation in tax dollars to improve these protections (S1.25).
3. In a forced choice between two statements, two-thirds of Oregonians (66%) favor the statement that **new development should occur within existing cities and towns to save farmland and stop sprawl**, with more than one-third (36%) feeling strongly (S1.29). On the other side, one quarter (26%) are more inclined to say that **new development should be allowed to occur outside urban growth boundaries**, with fewer than one in ten (9%) feeling strongly.



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4. Just over one-fourth (26%) of Oregonians feel that a trend where **land use regulations will allow conversion of forests and large farms to small self-reliant homesteads** would be desirable in the next 10 years. About the same number (23%) think this trend is likely to occur in the next 10 years (S2.18).
5. Six in 10 (60%) Oregonians believe that **new population growth will be directed toward existing cities and towns, not into natural areas and farmlands** in the next 10 years. About the same number (58%) think this trend is very or somewhat desirable (S3.17).
6. Presented with a list of actions the government might take in regard to **economic development**, half of Oregonians (50% with 24% feeling strongly) find the idea of **revamping land use laws to permit more development** undesirable, with only twenty-four percent (24% with 7% feeling strongly) finding such an action desirable. Twenty-two percent (22%) say they are neutral (S3.24).

Observations and Conclusions

These findings demonstrate that Oregonians greatly value the contribution land use makes to what they value about living in Oregon. On average, two in three Oregonians feel strongly about protecting existing farmland and forests from development and urban sprawl. They feel that development should be directed to cities and towns, where they anticipate the majority of population growth will occur.