

Appendix 6.3 Stakeholder/Public Meeting Presentation

Presented on these occasions:

- Public meetings at Hope, Fayetteville, Jonesboro, Lake Village, and Little Rock
- Commission following stakeholder meetings (with science work, peer review and public involvement substantially complete)

Regional Stakeholder Meetings



Why Are We Here?



DESIGNING A FUTURE
for Arkansas Wildlife





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for Arkansas Wildlife







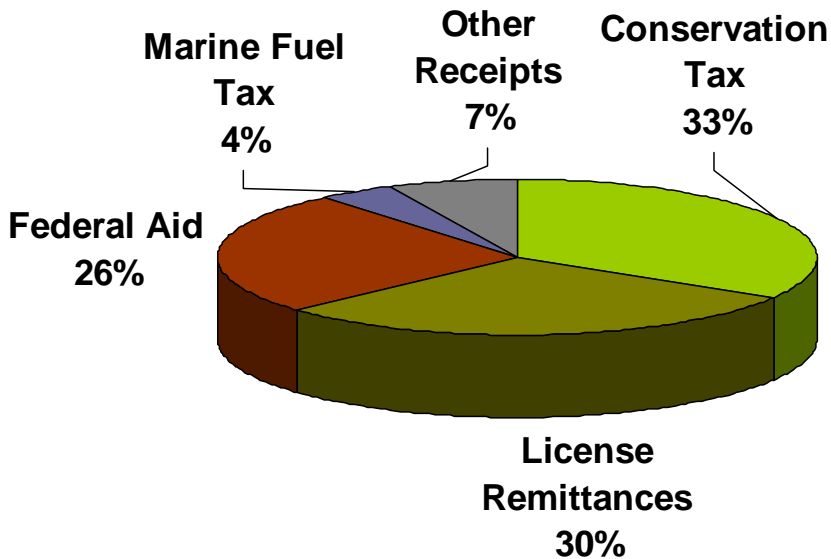
State Wildlife Grants Program

- Congress created the program in 2001
- Federal matching dollars for states to support cost-effective voluntary conservation strategies to prevent wildlife from becoming endangered.
 - 75 federal/25 state match for planning
 - 50 federal/50 state match for implementation
- Federal funds allocated to states based on a formula
- Arkansas has received between \$500K & \$900K annually since 2001
- Federal funds have potential to grow substantially over time

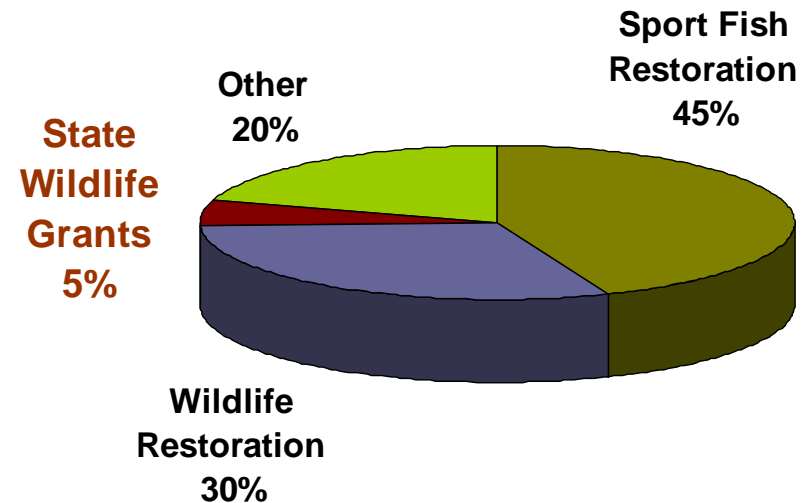


State Wildlife Grants

Small But Significant



Sources of AGFC 2005
Total Revenue



Federal Portion of AGFC
2005 Revenue



Examples of State Wildlife Grants Funded Projects

- ***Statewide Research*** (e.g., bear study, bat monitoring, desert shrew status survey, passerine bird study, quail/pine bluestem research, swamp rabbit ecology, paddlefish survey, Ozark hellbender habitat assessment, alligator population survey, breeding bird atlas survey, Arkansas mammals, new cave invertebrates, Lonoke Crayfish, Rafenesque's Big Eared Bat, cataloging crayfish, Ouachita Creekshell, Swallow Tailed Kite, Swainson's Warblers, Cerulean Warbler, grassland birds)
- ***Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy development*** (e.g., database development, website, species/habitat research, opinion survey, public workshops)
- ***Other*** (e.g., NHC Bird management, Herp Database, Hulsey Hatchery & Craig Hatchery - Watchable Wildlife, Conservation Camps, Nature Mapping - GPS/GIS, Fishes of Arkansas revision, Nature Center Exhibits, publications)



Continued Funding Requires

- States must develop a *Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy* by October 1, 2005
- Strategy must be approved
- Beginning in FY06, funds must be spent on *species of greatest conservation need* consistent with priorities set in strategy

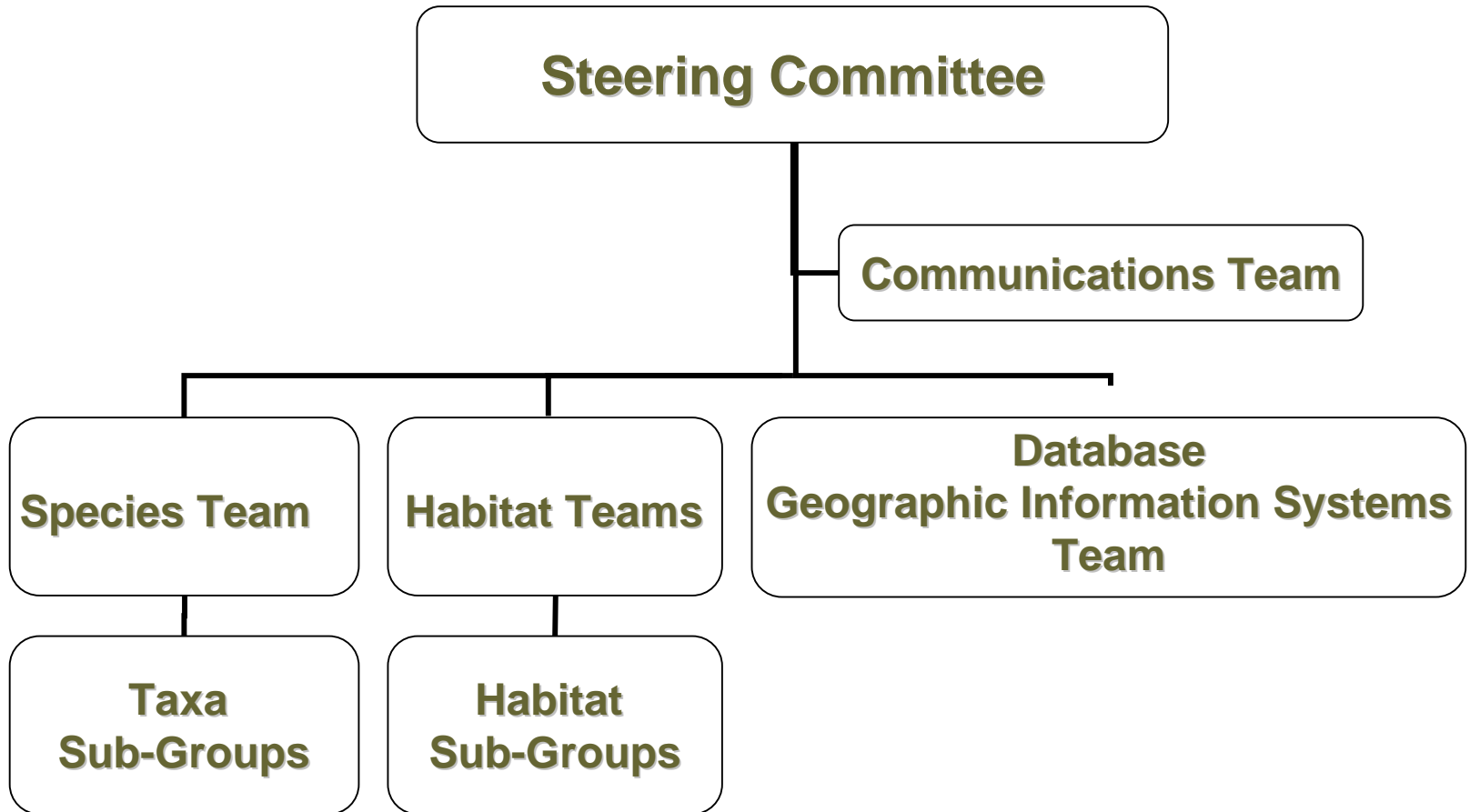


Eight Required Elements For Comprehensive Wildlife Strategy

- Distribution and abundance of *species*
- Locations and relative condition of key *habitats*
- *Problems* affecting species and habitats and priority research
- *Conservation actions* needed
- Plans for *monitoring* species and habitats
- Review and revision *process*
- *Coordination* with federal, state and local land and water agencies
- Broad public *participation*



Who Is Developing The Draft Strategy?



Steering Committee

- Arkansas Game & Fish Commission
 - Steve Filipek (Fisheries)
 - Lucy Moreland (Education)
 - Doyle Shook (Wildlife)
 - Kris Rutherford (Grants Coordinator)
 - John Sunderland (Planning Coordinator)
- Bill Holimon, Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission
- Ken Smith, Audubon Arkansas
- Allan Mueller, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- Lane Patterson, The Nature Conservancy
- Jim Baker, NRCS
- Betty Crump, U.S. Forest Service & Arkansas Academy of Science



Examples of Partners

- Arkansas Game & Fish Commission
- U.S. Forest Service
- Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- Audubon Arkansas
- The Nature Conservancy
- Arkansas Academy of Sciences
- University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture
- Arkansas Department of Parks & Tourism
- U.S. Geological Survey
- USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Multi-Agency Wetlands Planning Team
- Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality
- UALR
- Arkansas State University
- Arkansas Tech
- Arkansas Highway & Transportation Department
- ***Your organization, agency or institution?***



Strategy Vision

“A living, accessible *planning tool* that is both strategic and operational, for leveraging funds, information and effort for species and habitat conservation on public and private lands ... more vision than plan.”

Strategy Goals

- Keep common species common
- Keep additional species off the threatened and endangered lists
- Save the pieces (habitats)
- Increase funding for nongame wildlife
- Build partnerships with private and public entities
- Promote voluntary conservation actions



Species of Greatest Conservation Need?



A King Rail bird is the central focus, standing in a marshy area. The bird has a long, straight bill and is surrounded by dense, green vegetation and small white flowers. To the left, a body of water is visible, and the overall scene is a natural, wetland habitat.

Species of Greatest Conservation Need?

King Rail

Michael J. Budd

Strategy Identifies Species of Greatest Conservation Need

- List determined by each state
- Fauna, not flora
- May include aquatic species and invertebrates
- May include federal and state listed wildlife species
- List carries no legal or regulatory authority except to guide expenditures of State Wildlife Grant funding
- List will change as status or information changes



Species Team

- Work in taxa sub-groups to select *species of greatest conservation need*
- Work with Habitat Team and other partners to assess species viability and habitat conditions in each ecoregion
- Populate the CWCS database
- Coordinate peer review of data



Basis for identifying species of greatest conservation concern

- Global and state rankings
- Population trends
- Integrated bird conservation plans (e.g., Partners In Flight list)
- Other expert opinion (e.g., agency, academic, nonprofit, etc)



Arkansas Species of Greatest Conservation Concern

- 25 amphibians
- 78 birds
- 25 crayfish
- 50 fish
- 64 insects
- 43 invertebrates (other)
- 18 mammals
- 56 mussels
- 14 reptiles

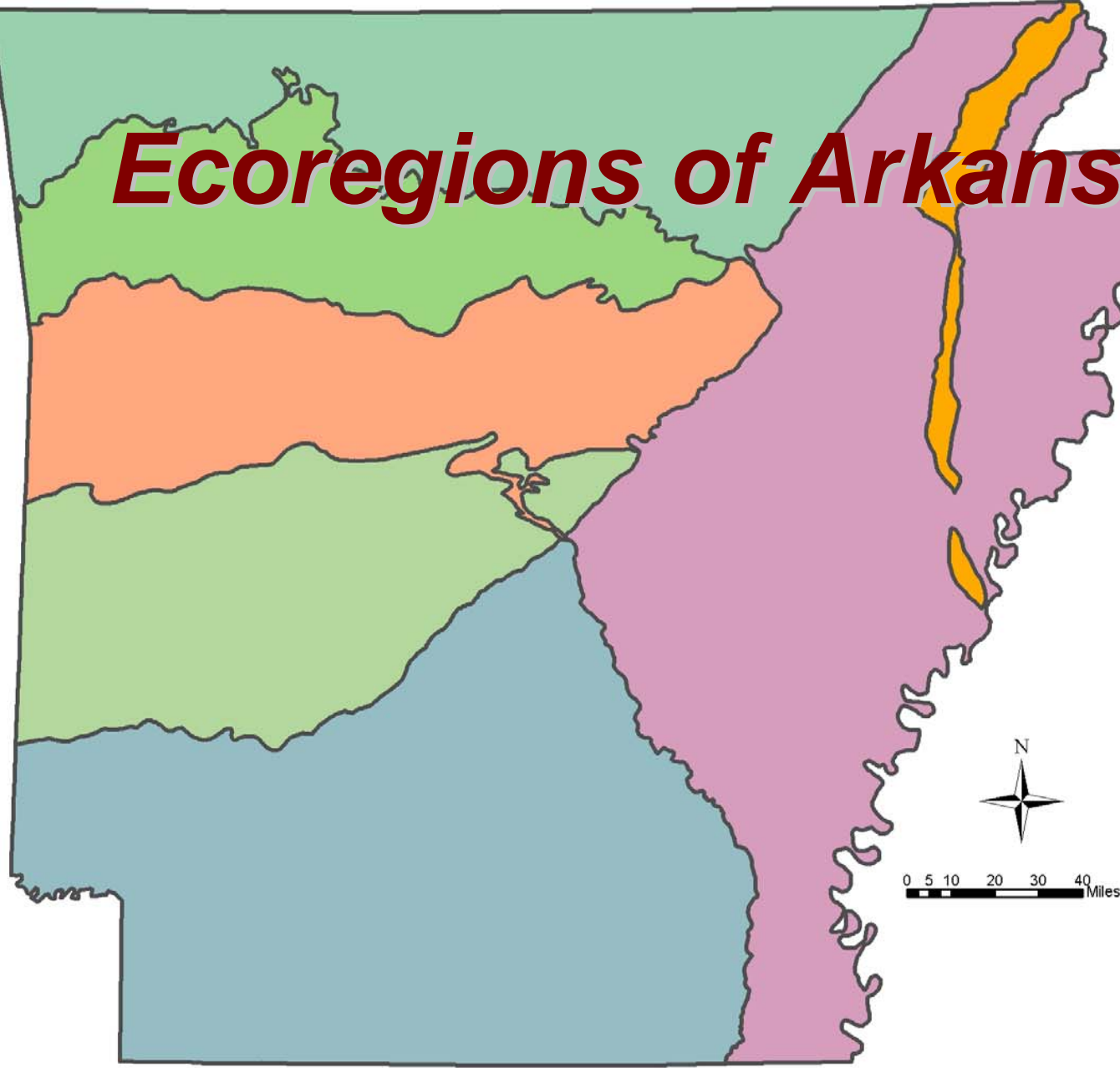
A total of 373 species



Habitat Team

- Determines ecoregion delineation
- Selects land (habitat) classification for terrestrial species
- Determines habitat classification for aquatic species
- Works with Species Team and taxa subgroups to link species to their habitats

Ecoregions of Arkansas



Legend

-  Ozark Highlands
-  Boston Mountains
-  Arkansas Valley
-  Ouachita Mountains
-  South Central Plains
-  Mississippi Alluvial Plain
-  Mississippi Valley Loess Plains



Terrestrial Habitats

- Arkansas Valley Prairie and Woodland
- Caves, Mines & Karst Habitat
- Central Interior Acidic Cliff and Talus
- Central Interior Calcareous Cliff and Talus
- Central Interior Highlands and Appalachian Sinkhole and Depression Pond
- Central Interior Highlands Calcareous Glade and Barrens
- Central Interior Highlands Dry Acidic Glade and Barrens
- Crop Land
- Cultivated Forest
- Lower Mississippi Alluvial Plain Grand Prairie
- Lower Mississippi Flatwoods Woodland and Forest
- Lower Mississippi River Bottomland Depression
- Lower Mississippi River Dune Woodland and Forest
- Lower Mississippi River High Bottomland Forest
- Lower Mississippi River Low Bottomland Forest
- Lower Mississippi River Riparian Forest
- Mississippi River Alluvial Plain Loess Slope Forest
- Mud Flats



Terrestrial Habitats (cont)

- Ouachita Montane Oak Forest
- Ouachita Mountain Forested Seep
- Ouachita Novaculite Glade and Woodland
- Ozark-Ouachita Dry Oak Woodland
- Ozark-Ouachita Dry Mesic Oak Forest
- Ozark-Ouachita Mesic Hardwood Forest
- Ozark-Ouachita Pine/Bluestem Woodland
- Ozark-Ouachita Pine-Oak Forest
- Ozark-Ouachita Pine-Oak Woodland
- Ozark-Ouachita Riparian
- Pasture Land
- Ponds, Lakes, and Water Holes
- South-Central Interior Large Floodplain
- Southeastern Great Plains Tallgrass Prairie
- Urban/Suburban
- West Gulf Coastal Plain Calcareous Prairie
- West Gulf Coastal Plain Dry Pine-Hardwood Flatwoods
- West Gulf Coastal Plain Large River Floodplain Forest
- West Gulf Coastal Plain Mesic Hardwood Forest
- West Gulf Coastal Plain Nepheline Syenite Glade
- West Gulf Coastal Plain Pine-Hardwood Forest
- West Gulf Coastal Plain Red River Floodplain Forest
- West Gulf Coastal Plain Saline Glade
- West Gulf Coastal Plain Sandhill Oak and Shortleaf Pine Forest and Woodland
- West Gulf Coastal Plain Seepage Swamp and Baygall
- West Gulf Coastal Plain Small Stream/River Forest
- West Gulf Coastal Plain Wet Hardwood Flatwoods





Aquatic Habitats

Eco-Basins

- Ouachita Mountains - Ouachita River
- South Central Plains - Ouachita River
- Mississippi River Embayment (Bayou Bartholomew) - Ouachita River
- Ouachita Mountains - Red River
- South Central Plains - Red River
- Boston Mountains - Arkansas River
- Ouachita Mountains - Arkansas River
- Arkansas River Valley - Arkansas River
- Mississippi River Embayment - Arkansas River
- Ozark Highlands - Arkansas River
- Ozark Highlands - White River
- Boston Mountains - White River
- Mississippi River Embayment - White River
- Mississippi River Embayment - St. Francis River
- Mississippi River Embayment (Lake Chicot) - Mississippi River
- Mississippi River Loess Plains - White River
- Mississippi River Loess Plains - St. Francis River

Within Eco-Basins

- Littoral
- Pelagic
- Pool
- Side Channel
- Shoal
- Slough
- Oxbow – connected
- Other
- Riffle
- Run
- Glide
- Cave stream
- Spring run
- Seep
- Groundwater
- Swamp/Wetland
- Oxbow - disconnected



Database/GIS Team

- Develop data protocols
- Oversee design of data infrastructure
- Monitor development of *Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Database*
- Develop Geographic Information Systems (GIS) analysis and mapping capability



Input



Output

- Species information
- Habitat information
- Current species and habitat management plans

Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Database

Standardized Reports

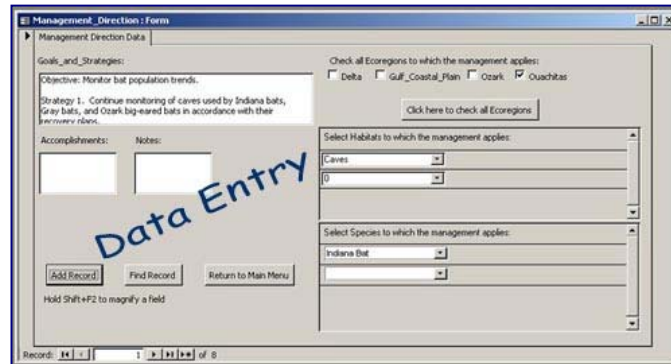
Species distribution & abundance

Habitats & community types

Problems affecting species & habitats

Voluntary conservation actions

Proposed plans for monitoring species & their habitats



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Taxidea taxus

American Badger

Class: Mammalia
 Order: Carnivora
 Family: Mustelidae

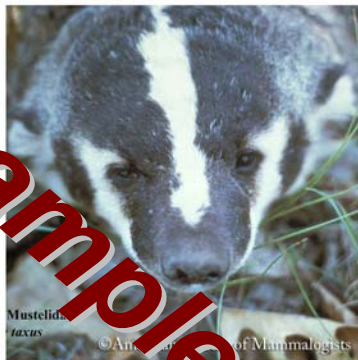
Viability Score: **0.8 out of 10**



Population Trend: Unknown

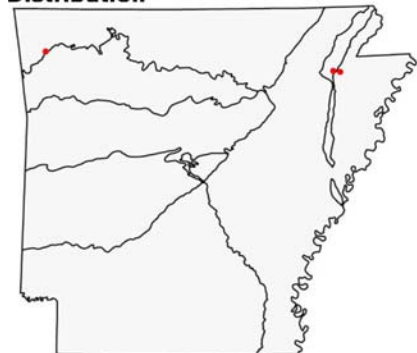
G Rank: G5 – Secure

S Rank: SA – Of accidental occurrence in Arkansas



Mustelid
taxus
 ©Arkansas Society of Mammalogists

Distribution



Occurrence records

Ecoregions in which the species occurs:

- Ozark Highlands
- Mississippi Valley Loess Plains
- Boston Mountains
- Mississippi Alluvial Plain
- Arkansas Valley
- South Central Plains
- Ouachita Mountains

Team

AGFC Mr. Blake Sasse, UALR Dr. Bob Sikes, UAM Dr. Don White, UALR Dr. Gary Heidt, J. D. Wilhide, ASU Dr. Renn Tumilson, ATU Dr. Tom Nupp, ASU Dr. Thomas Risch, USFS Mr. David Saugey, ASU Mr. Stephen Brandenbur

Habitats

Pasture Land
 Crop Land
 Ozark-Ouachita Riparian

Weight

Optimal
 Suitable
 Suitable

Problems Faced

Unknown

Threat:
 Source:

Conservation Actions

More data is needed to determine conservation actions.

Importance: Medium
 Category: Data Gap

Data Gaps/Research Needs

Conduct status survey.

Monitoring Strategies

More information is needed before a monitoring strategy can be developed.

Comments

A heavy-bodied, short-legged mammal with long fore claws, long fur (longest on the sides), and a short bushy tail; upperparts are yellowish gray to reddish brown, with a white middorsal stripe extending from the snout to the neck or shoulders in the north and usually to the rump in the south; black patches are present on the face and cheeks; underparts are buffy, except for the whitish chin, throat, and mid-ventral line. Feet are dark brown to black; head and body length 42-72 cm, tail length 10-15.5 cm, mass 4-12 kg. It is encountered in northern Arkansas. Recent records may indicate that a population has been established in Arkansas.

(Natureserve 2001, Sasse and others 2004, Sealander and Heidt 1990)



Habitat Name Arkansas Valley Prairie and Woodland

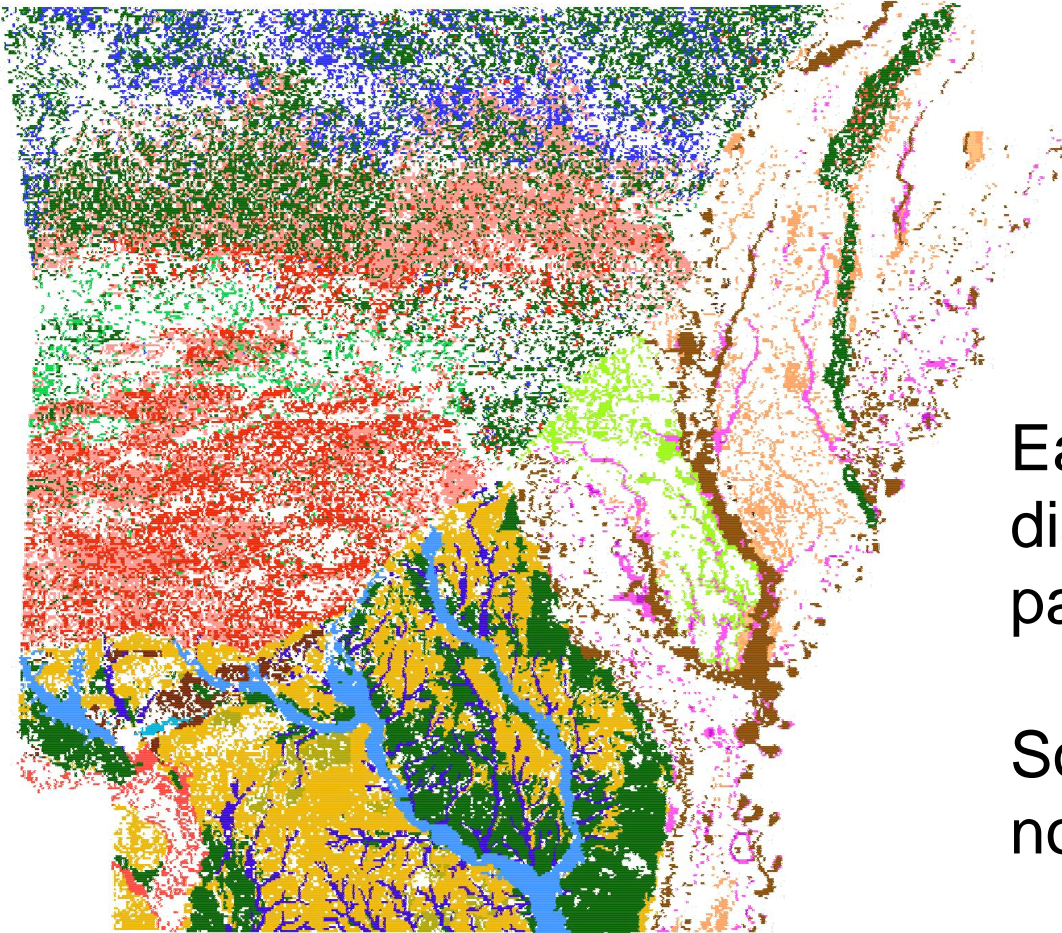


Definition:

This system of prairies and associated woodlands is found in the Arkansas Valley region of Arkansas and adjacent Oklahoma. This region is distinctly bounded by the Boston Mountains to the north and the Ouachita Mountains to the south. The valley is characterized by broad, level to gently rolling uplands derived from shales and is much less rugged and more heavily impacted by Arkansas River erosional processes than the adjacent mountain regions. In addition, the valley receives annual precipitation total of 2-6 inches less than the surrounding regions due to a rainshadow produced by a combination of prevailing western winds and mountain orographic effects. The shale-derived soils associated with the prairies are thin and droughty. The combined effect of droughty soils, reduced precipitation, and prevailing level topography create conditions highly conducive to the ignition and spread of fires. Stands are typically dominated by *Andropogon gerardii*, *Sorghastrum nutans*, *Panicum virgatum* and *Schizachyrium scoparium*. Some extant examples of this system remain, but most are small and isolated. •DISTRIBUTION•Range: Arkansas River Valley region of Arkansas and adjacent Oklahoma.



Example of A GIS Habitat Map



Each color shows the distribution of a particular habitat

Some habitats have not yet been mapped



The Goal To Use GIS To Prioritize Conservation Actions



Communications Team

- Assist in-reach and partner information
- Manage public information and involvement
- Seek public input in partnership with Cooperative Extension Service
 - Regional stakeholder workshops
 - Interactive website at www.WildlifeArkansas.com
- Contract with UALR/Institute of Government for public opinion survey
- Publish strategy in various formats

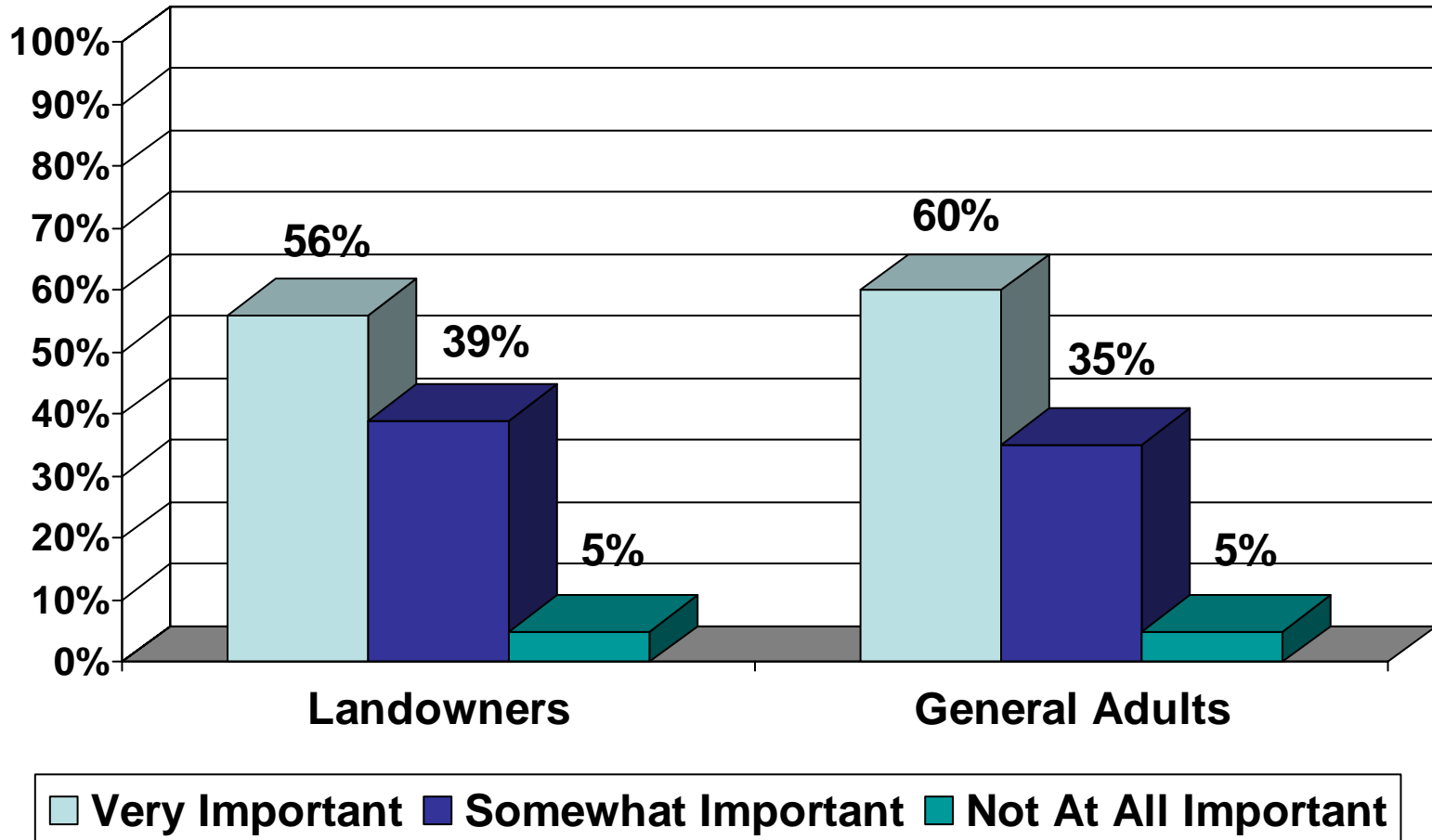


2005 Arkansas Nongame Wildlife Conservation Survey

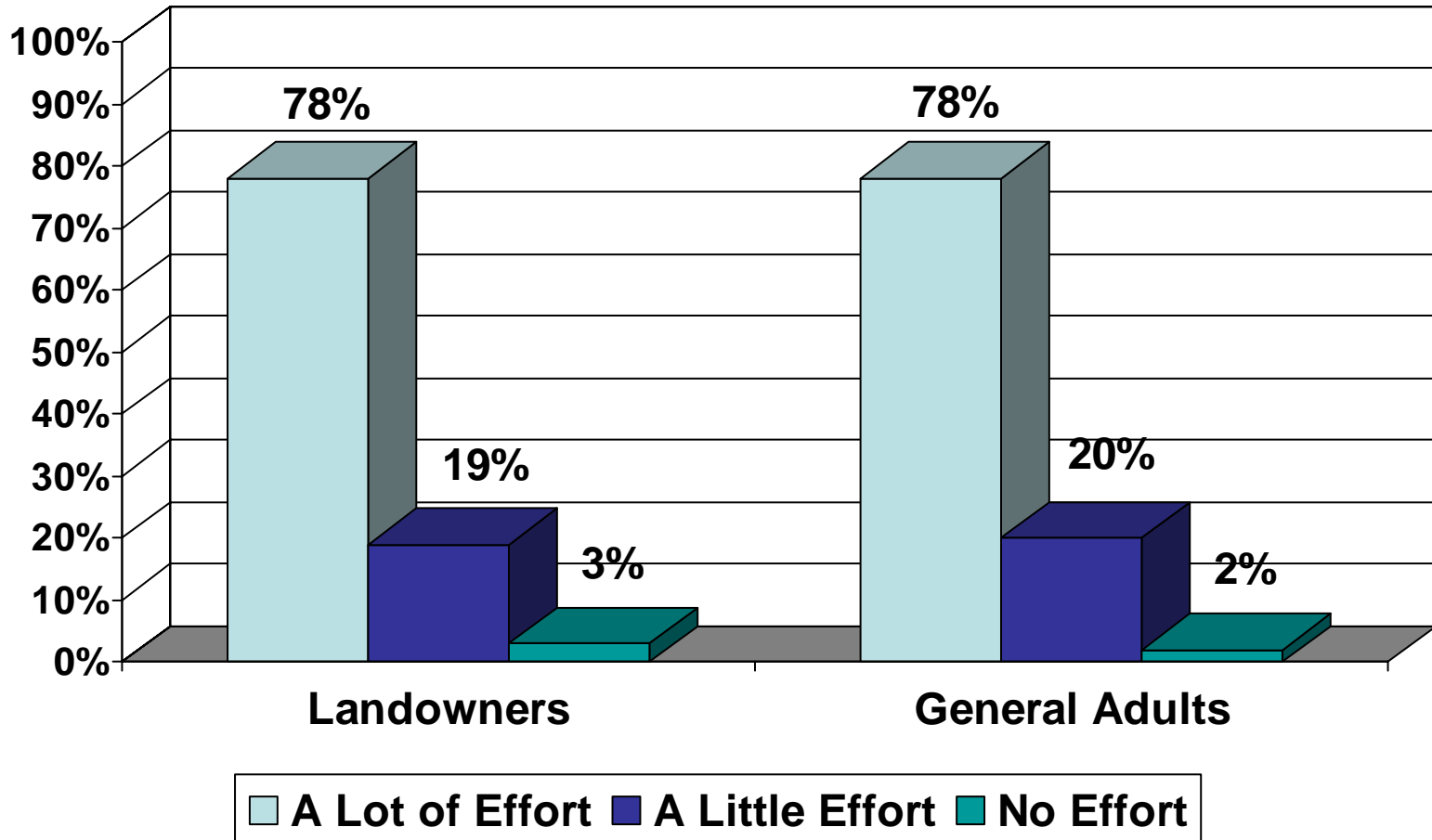
- 800 adult Arkansans surveyed
- Survey conducted by University of Arkansas at Little Rock, Institute of Government survey research group
- Statistically valid for the general population of adults and landowners with more than 5 acres for the state as a whole
- Telephone interviews conducted in April 2005
- For the complete results of this survey, go to <http://www.wildlifearkansas.com/materials/cwcsfinalreport.pdf>



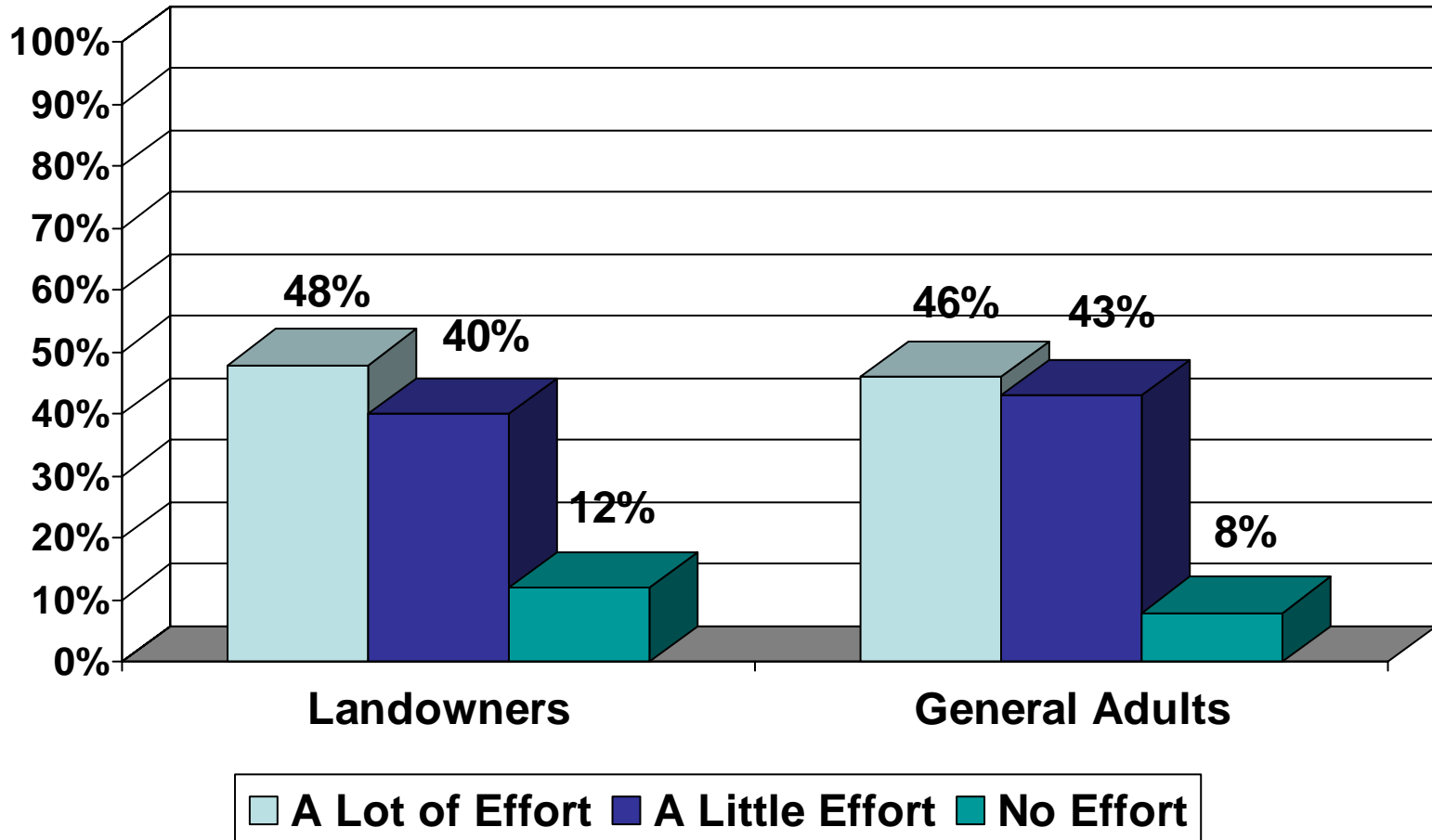
How important is it to you that Arkansas maintain healthy populations of nongame wildlife?



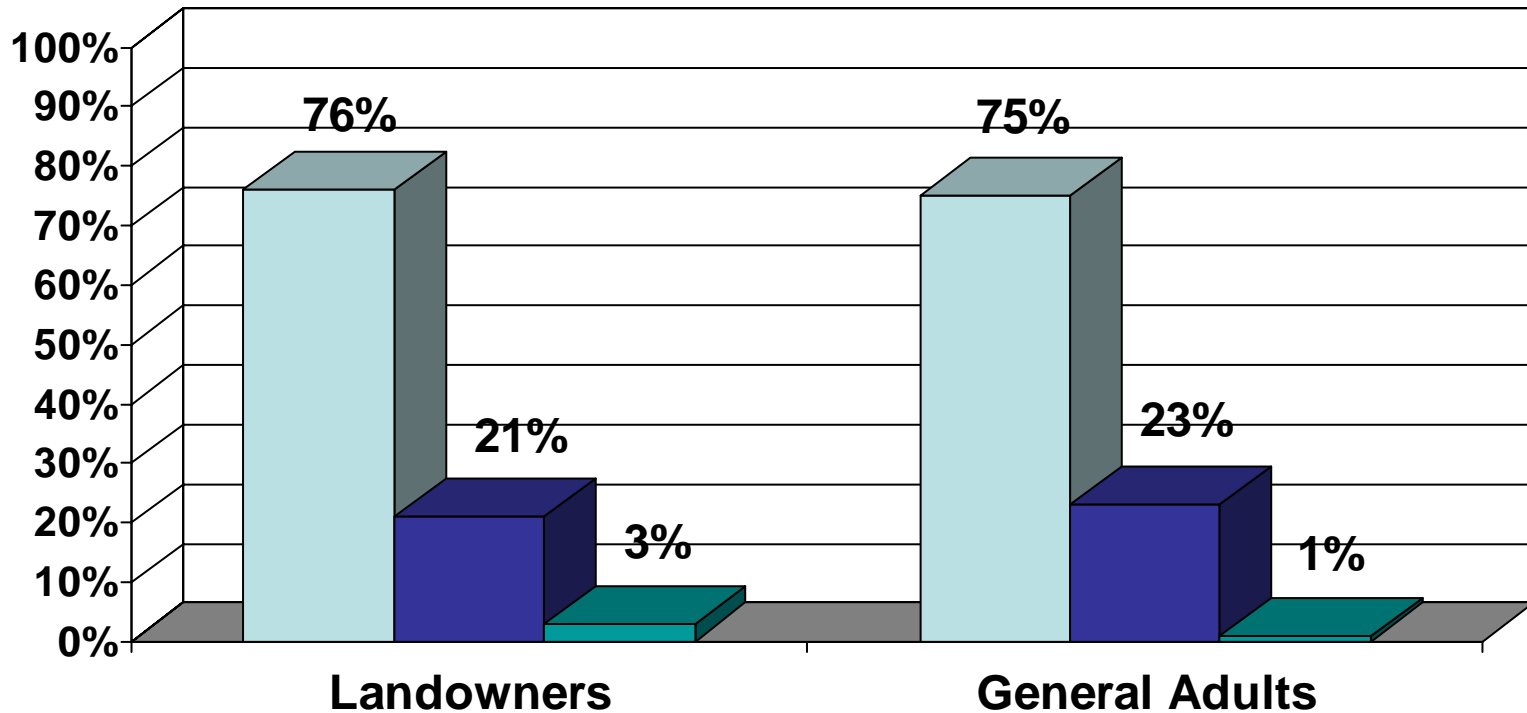
Please tell me if you believe a lot of effort, a little effort or no effort should be made to maintain healthy populations. How about birds such as songbirds and owls?



Please tell me if you believe a lot of effort, a little effort or no effort should be made to maintain healthy populations. How about aquatic species such as crayfish and mussels?



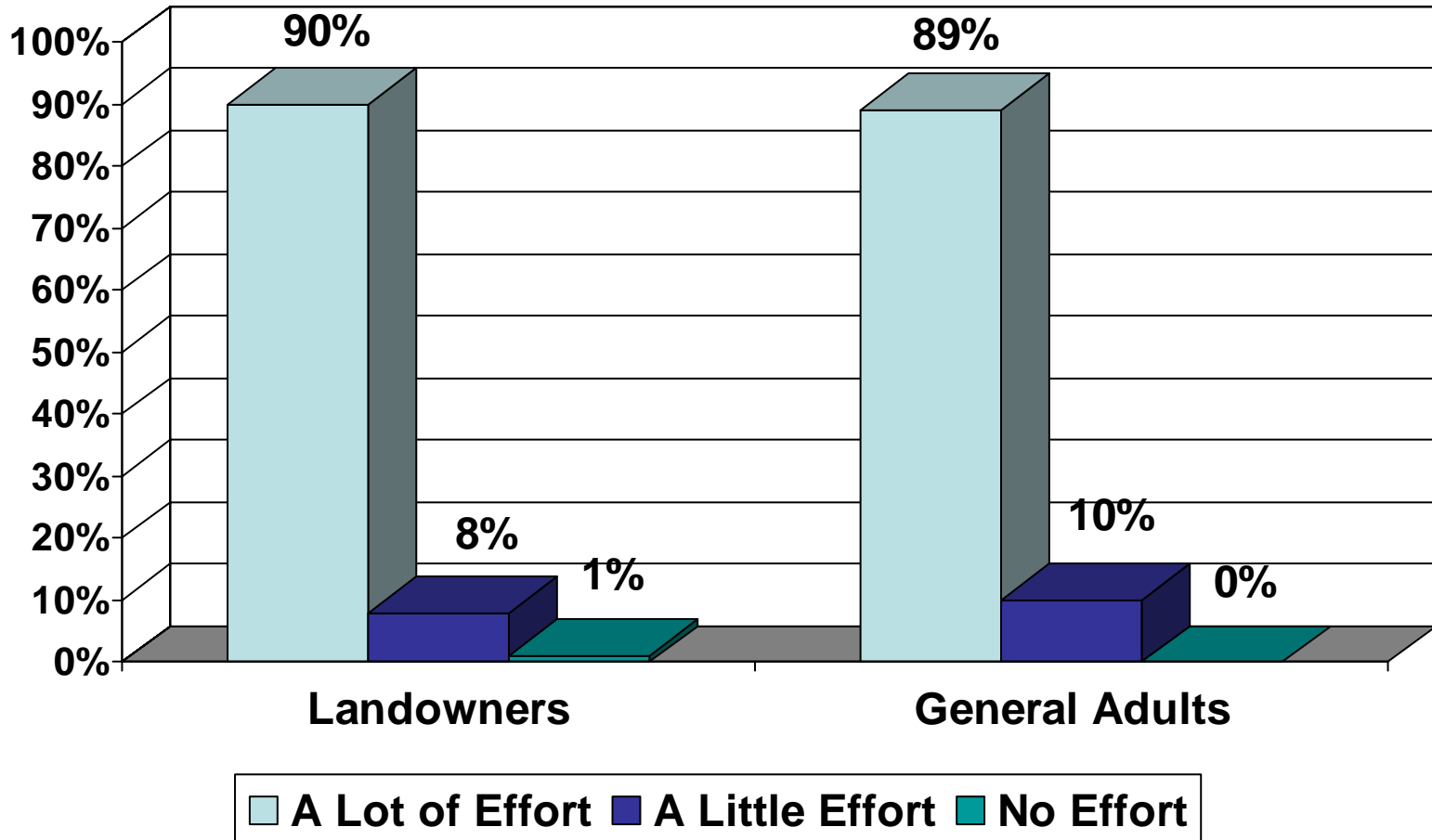
Arkansas has many special places where nongame wildlife live. These places include prairies, caves, forests and free-flowing streams. How important is it to you that Arkansas maintain these places?



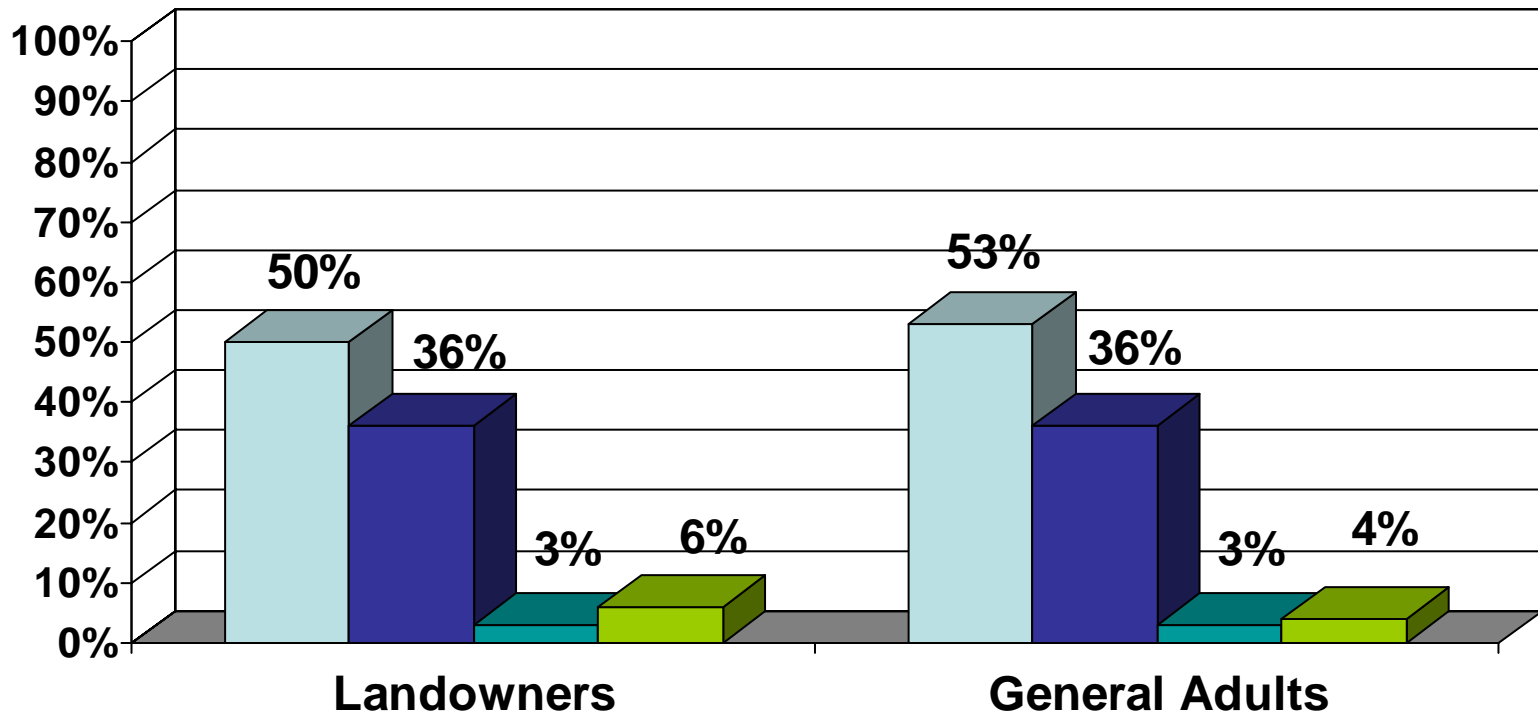
■ Very Important ■ Somewhat Important ■ Not At All Important



Please tell me if you believe a lot of effort, a little effort or no effort should be made to maintain habitats. How about rivers, streams and lakes?



Do you support or oppose the efforts of the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission and its partners to develop an action plan to manage nongame wildlife species with public input?



Strongly Support Somewhat Support
Somewhat Oppose Strongly Oppose



After The Strategy Is Submitted

- An interagency Implementation Committee will be established to provide leadership/oversight
- Use as tool for setting budget and program priorities for State Wildlife Grant funds
- Annual technical review conference
- Promote voluntary conservation actions and creative partnerships to implement strategy



Your Role

- Participate in small group discussions tonight
- Review draft strategy online at www.WildlifeArkansas.com
- Provide input online
- Sign up for strategy updates (as the plan will be posted in sections between now and August)
- Determine what you or your organization can voluntarily do to help implement the strategy
- Complete an online evaluation of this meeting



Asking the RIGHT Questions: A Key to Group Management

- Feedback & Clarification
(Summarize & Paraphrase)

- Debriefing



- Closing (Yes/No)



Small Group Discussion

- Brainstorming, not consensus
- Seeking input, understanding
- Input from small groups will be combined with input from website, technical review and other sources
- Facilitators will keep time, keep group on task, help ensure that all get the opportunity to participate
- Recorders will seek to obtain as a complete a record as possible





Discussion Questions

- What do you think about the list of species of greatest conservation need? Why?
- What conservation practices will be most attractive to private landowners? Why are they attractive?
- What prevents landowners from implementing conservation practices that benefit wildlife? Why?



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Thank You!

- We know your time is valuable
- We hope that your time has been well spent tonight
- We strongly urge you to continue your involvement



