

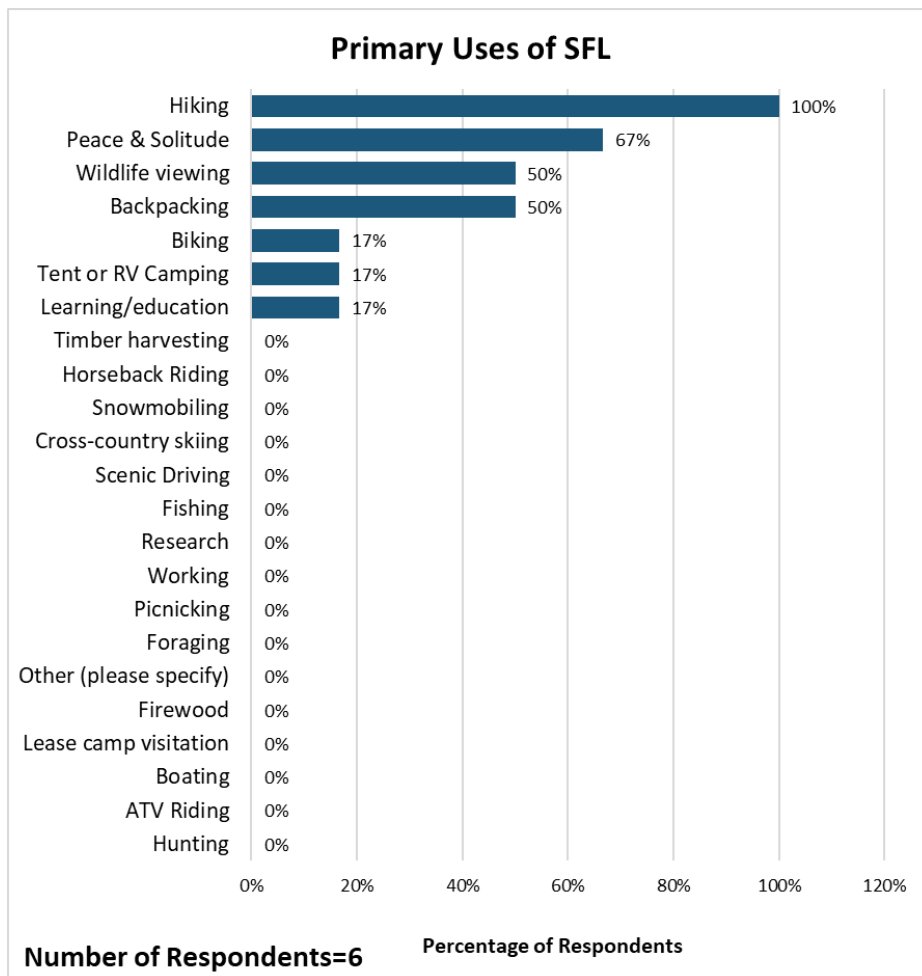
2019 William Penn State Forest Resource Management Plan

Public Survey Data and Response to Public Comments

This document presents public survey data and responses to the public comments received by the Bureau of Forestry (bureau) on the William Penn District State Forest Resource Management Plan (DSFRMP). The public survey data is based on online poll results as well as paper comment forms received during the public comment period on the William Penn DSFRMP. The public comment period was open for two months following the date of the William Penn DSFRMP public meeting, which was held on September 26, 2018. The public survey data is not a statistically valid public poll, but rather the opinions of interested stakeholders that chose to fill out the online or paper survey. The bureau received 6 responses to the survey.

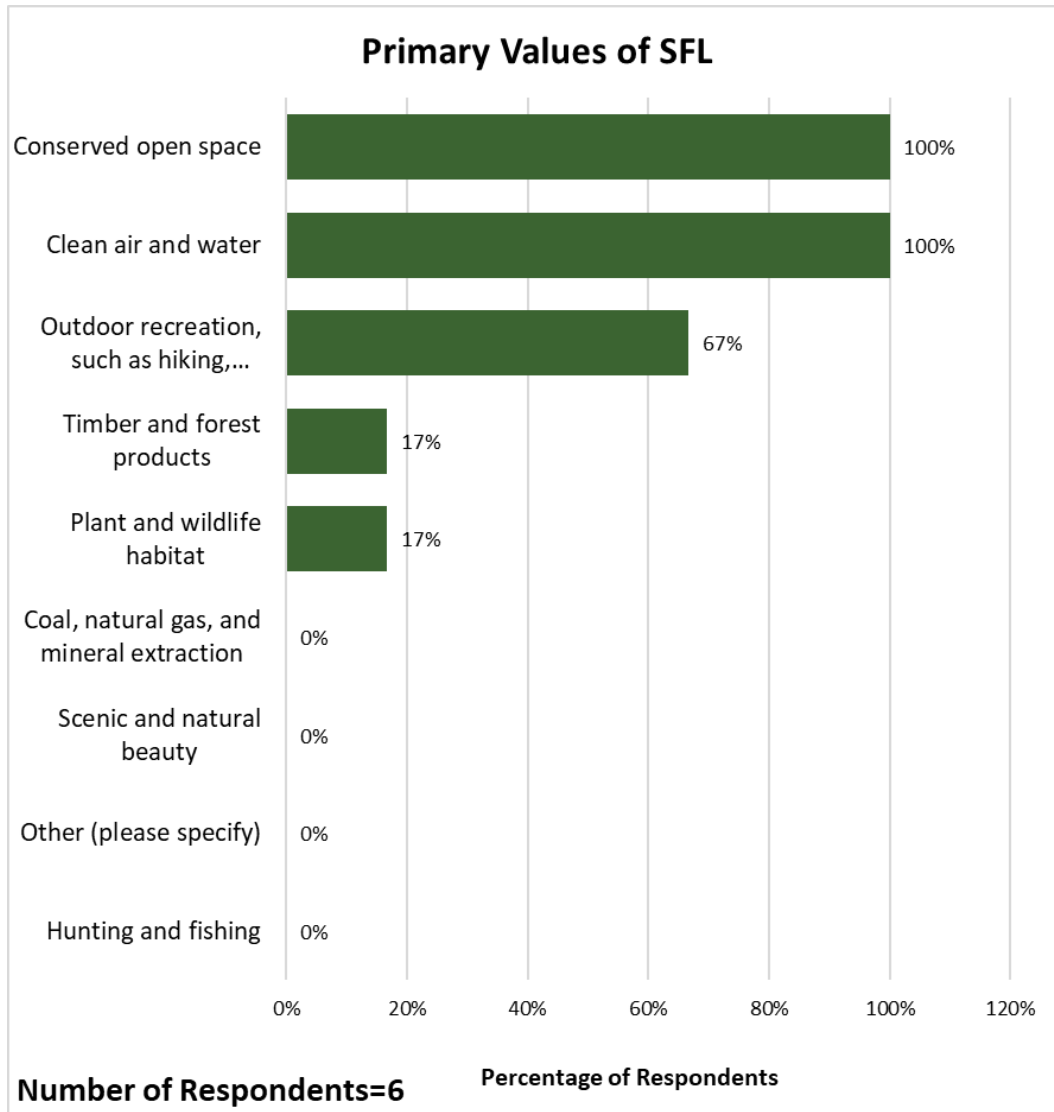
State Forest Uses

In Question 1, survey respondents were asked to check their primary uses of state forest land. The figure below displays the responses from those that took the William Penn DSFRMP survey. It shows that hiking, peace and solitude are by far the two most common uses of state forest land amongst survey respondents.



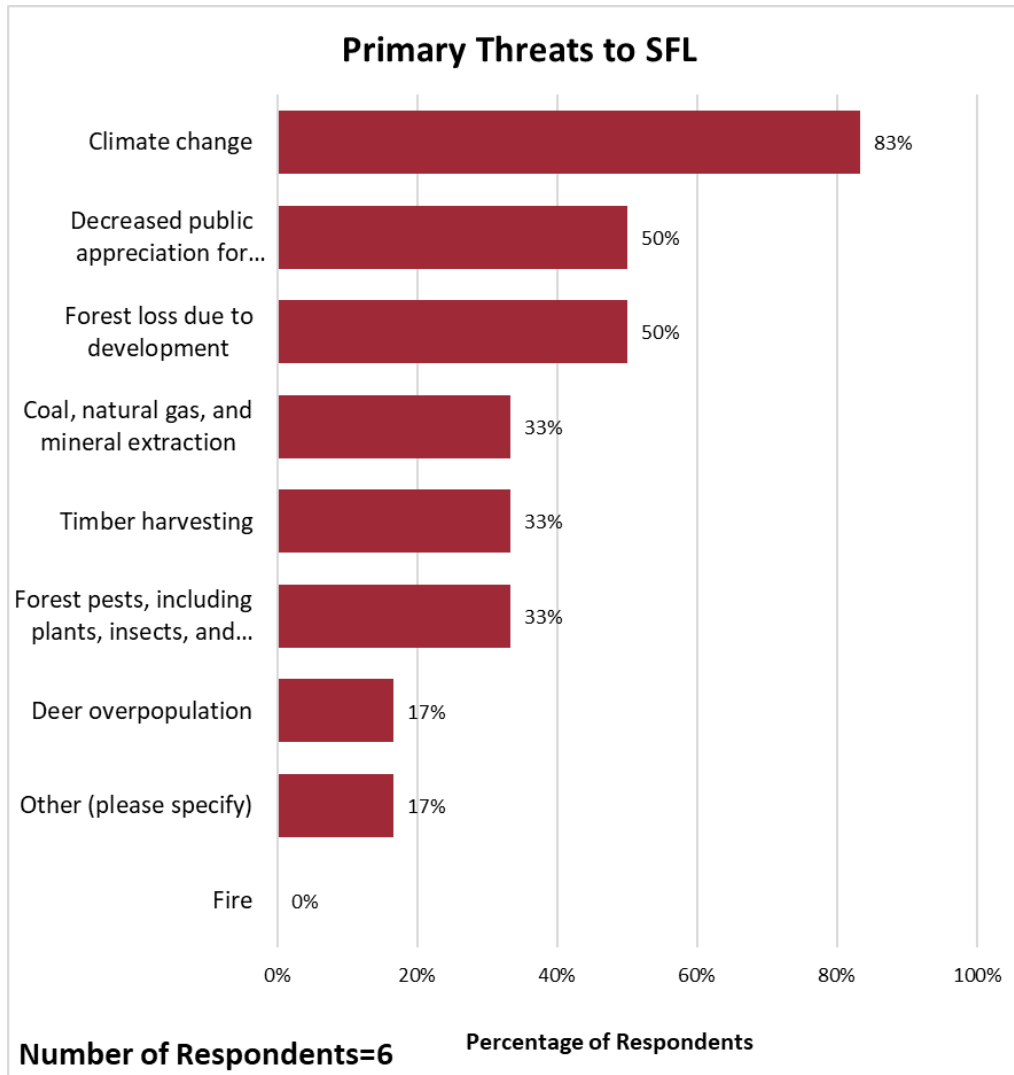
State Forest Values

In Question 2, survey respondents were asked to select the top three values they perceive for William Penn State Forest. The figure below displays the responses from those that took the William Penn DSFRMP survey. It shows that conserved open space is the top-rated value amongst survey respondents. It should be noted other intrinsic values of forest land such as clean air and water are ranked at 100%.



State Forest Threats

In Question 3, survey respondents were asked to select the top three threats they perceive for William Penn State Forest. The figure below displays the responses from those that took the William Penn DSFRMP survey. It shows that climate change and decreased public appreciation are rated as the top threats amongst survey respondents.



As the caretaker of 2.2 million acres of state forest land and the state's primary conservation agency, DCNR has a unique role and responsibility in helping the Commonwealth reduce and adapt to climate change.

[DCNR's Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Plan \(PDF\)](#) -- developed with the Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science -- outlines 123 action steps to be undertaken to make the Commonwealth more resilient to potential impacts from a changing climate. During 2017, staff members from across all DCNR's bureaus, including the Bureau of Forestry, participated in a rigorous process to determine and prioritize the department's greatest climate change vulnerabilities and identify strategies to address

them. The resulting plan includes objectives to prepare for and mitigate the risks associated with potential climate impacts to Pennsylvania, including higher temperatures and more extreme weather events, range shifts for wildlife and plant species, and an increase in invasive species.

While climate change presents significant challenges, Bureau of Forestry efforts to address it include:

- Managing our forests to sequester an increasing amount of carbon;
- Adding forested acres to the state forest system to conserve the forests for the climate change mitigation benefits they provide;
- Ensuring that our public lands remain resilient to climate change with sound ecosystem management; and
- Helping private landowners and communities' practice sustainable forest management that is climate change resilient.

The Bureau of Forestry plays an instrumental role in providing credible information about the conditions and status of Pennsylvania's forest resources to industry, academia, other government agencies, conservation organizations, and the general public. The Bureau is actively involved in public outreach on topics ranging from woodlot management to wildfire prevention, invasive species control, and urban tree planting. The Bureau of Forestry also strives to make youth and adults alike, more aware of the many tangible and intangible benefits we receive from our forests and to give them an opportunity to learn more about and experience this valuable natural resource. The Bureau manages the 2.2-million-acre state forest system, with lands in 48 of Pennsylvania's 67 counties, which provides abundant opportunities for people to work and recreate in forests, enhancing their connection with forested lands.

Decreased Public Appreciation

Specific Bureau of Forestry efforts to increase public appreciation for and connection to forests include:

- Project Learning tree, which is an award-winning environmental education program designed for educators working with students from pre-kindergarten to twelfth grade;
- 35 Service Foresters and 2 Environmental Educators providing educational programs for adult and youth;
- 8 Forest Demonstration Areas on state forest land;
- Wildfire prevention Smokey Bear programs;
- Partnering with Penn State Extension, County Conservation Districts, and other partners on education programs and resources;
- A devoted Communication Section within Bureau of Forestry;
- Eco Camp – promotes exploration of natural resource careers for high school students;
- Outdoor Corps - offers paid work experience, job training, and educational opportunities to teens and young adults as they protect and restore public lands;
- Publications such as Common Trees of Pennsylvania and Nature Guides;
- Active participation in the PA Envirothon program;
- Future Farmers of America Forestry Contests; and
- Forest Conservation Award for Scouts.

Regarding forest loss due to development:

All forests, public and private, provide many benefits and services to citizens of Pennsylvania, visitors, and the businesses and industry of the Commonwealth. Pennsylvania forests offer wood products, watershed values, recreation opportunities, plant and wildlife habitat, and a variety of other values. However, as forested lands are fragmented and disappear, so do the benefits they provide. To meet its mission of ensuring the long-term health, viability, and productivity of the Commonwealth's forests, one of the foundational challenges is to keep forests as forests. This aim can be very complex to achieve with the 12 million acres of privately own forest land in Pennsylvania that are receiving ever increasing land use change pressure.

Measures and activities that the Bureau undertakes to address forest loss include:

- 35 Service Foresters stationed throughout the state to provide guidance to private forest landowners;
- Assistance to municipalities with land use planning;
- Partnering with Penn State Center for Private Forests on Forest Landowner Legacy that focuses on forest ownership succession planning;
- Administering the U.S. Forest Service Forest Legacy Program that provides funding for forest acquisitions and easements;
- Development of a working forest easement program;
- Pursuing key forest acquisitions to add to the state forest system;
- Supporting many different conservancies and the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association; and
- Promoting forestry and the knowledge of forests by educating and assisting other government agencies, communities, landowners, forest industry, and the general public in forest stewardship and value of forest resources.