



Prime Prospect Segmentation

In addition to the attitudinal segmentation described in the previous section, NWOS respondents were segmented using a multivariate “Prime Prospect” discriminant function analysis.

A Prime Prospect analysis essentially divides respondents into 4 groups that can be profiled by demographic, behavioral, and attitudinal variables available in the dataset. The four groups are:

- Loyals (15% of NWOS respondents): Owners who are currently practicing good land stewardship and show a strong interest in continuing to do so. This segment was identified *a priori* according specific actions and attitudes reported by respondents (defined in detail in the Technical Appendix). They are most likely to own land in the South (48%, particularly South Central, 31%), but a sizable number are in the North as well.
- Prime Prospects (28%): Those not currently practicing good land stewardship but who indicate they would like to and share certain predictive demographic and attitudinal variables with Loyals. They are as likely to be found in the North (48%) as the South (45%).
- Write-offs (13%): Persons not performing the desired behaviors and who have no interest or intention of doing so. This segment was identified *a priori* according specific actions and attitudes reported by respondents (defined in detail in the Technical Appendix). They too are as likely to be found in the North (45%) as the South (46%).
- Potential Defectors (44%): Those currently performing some of the desired behaviors, but who indicate they are losing interest in it or otherwise face obstacles, and share certain predictive demographic and attitudinal variables with Write-offs. Like Prime Prospects and Write-offs, they are as likely to be found in the North (44%) as the South (43%).

The size of each segment is important. We estimate from our analysis that 15% of the population will reliably practice good land stewardship (Loyals) and that 13% will not (Write-offs). When prioritizing communications efforts, relatively little time and resources should be devoted to these segments.



We have also learned that Potential Defectors outnumber Prime Prospects (44% and 28%) and that we might expect to see a decline in good stewardship practices if outreach efforts are not forthcoming and successful.

How to target Prime Prospects and Potential Defectors? As we learned in our attitudinal segmentation, family forest owners have varying reasons for owning their land and different plans for it. Profiling the Prime Prospect segments by the attitudinal segments helps us understand whom to prioritize as our outreach targets and what messaging is appropriate.

	Loyals		Write-offs		Prime Prospects		Potential Defectors	
	Owners	Land	Owners	Land	Owners	Land	Owners	Land
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Woodland Retreat	25	19	31	22	42	32	48	38
Supplemental Income	25	35	8	11	17	25	11	16
Ready to Sell?	19	15	61	67	3	4	27	32
Working the Land	31	31	--	--	38	39	14	14
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

As we can see in the table above, most Prime Prospects fall into the Woodland Retreat (32%) and Working the Land (38%) segments. Potential Defectors are most likely to fall into the Woodland Retreat segment, followed by the Ready to Sell? segment.

	Loyals		Write-offs		Prime Prospects		Potential Defectors	
	Owners	Land	Owners	Land	Owners	Land	Owners	Land
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Woodland Retreat	4	5	4	2	12	9	21	14
Supplemental Income	4	9	1	1	5	7	5	6
Ready to Sell?	3	4	8	6	1	1	12	12
Working the Land	5	8	0	0	11	11	6	5
Total	15	26	13	9	29	28	44	37

Looked at in a more strategic way, in the above table we see that Woodland Retreat owners are most likely to populate the Prime Prospect (12% of owners, 9% of the land) and Potential Defector (21% and 14%, respectively) segments — 33% of all owners and 23% of the land.



Assuming we would want to target both Prime Prospects and Potential Defectors, we might start with messaging that would appeal to Woodland Retreat owners. That is, if the goal is to encourage better, more sustainable land management, the message should be that maintaining privacy, beauty, and natural diversity is best accomplished through knowledgeable stewardship (including certification, easements, cost-share programs, etc.). It also helps keep the land intact and in good health for legacy giving. Commercial motivators, such as harvesting and investment, could be downplayed but not necessarily absent from any such messaging. The next priority would be to target Working the Land owners (17% of owners, 16% of the land), followed by Ready to Sell? owners (12% and 12%, respectively) and then Supplemental Income owners (5% and 5%).

Of course, well-crafted messaging could be effective across attitudinal segments given that they share many of the same demographic, behavioral, and attitudinal characteristics.