

CA Certified Rangeland Manager (CRM) Survey 2020

Susan Edinger Marshall, Humboldt State University

for CRM Panel

April 20, 2020

Background and Purpose

In a teleconference held on August 22, 2019, the CRM panel proposed to draft and disseminate an on-line survey of current CRMs to better understand:

- Level of CRM activity compared to other work or retirement status
- Geographic area of CRM consulting performed
- Subject area expertise provided to clients
- How Cal-Pac and/or CRM panel can better provide CRM contact information to potential clients and/or other consulting firms – above and beyond mere names and counties.
- How Cal-Pac and/or CRM panel can provide or disseminate professional development opportunities of value to CRMs or potential CRMs.
- Other demographic information

Background and Purpose

The stated purpose of the survey was to:

“...gather information about how California Certified Rangeland Managers (CRMs) are using their certifications in professional work. This information will be shared with the CRM Panel, Cal-Pac SRM Board of Directors and Officers, the Professional Foresters Examining Committee, and the CA Board of Forestry and Fire Protection. We will use this information to improve support for the CRM Program and to promote the art and science of rangeland management as practiced in California. Professionalism and recruitment are central themes in this effort. While we are asking for contact information, we will not disclose information traceable to any individual participating in this survey. We may follow up with questions of clarification. Completion of this survey will take about 15 minutes. Completing this survey will have no impact of your certification or professional standing. We appreciate your willingness to complete the survey by March 27, 2020.”

Survey Development and Response Rate

- Several members of the CRM certification panel and Cal-Pac SRM President Matthew Shapero helped finalize the 30 questions.
- Dan Stapleton, Assistant Executive Office, CA Board of Forestry and Fire Protection, sent a link for the survey (designed on SurveyMonkey software) starting February 28, 2020, followed up by several reminder e-mails. Susan Marshall reached out to several CRMs whose e-mail addresses were out of date.
- The survey was closed on March 31, 2020 and yielded 65 responses.
- Dan Stapleton stated that there are 78 current CRMs, for a survey yield of 83%.

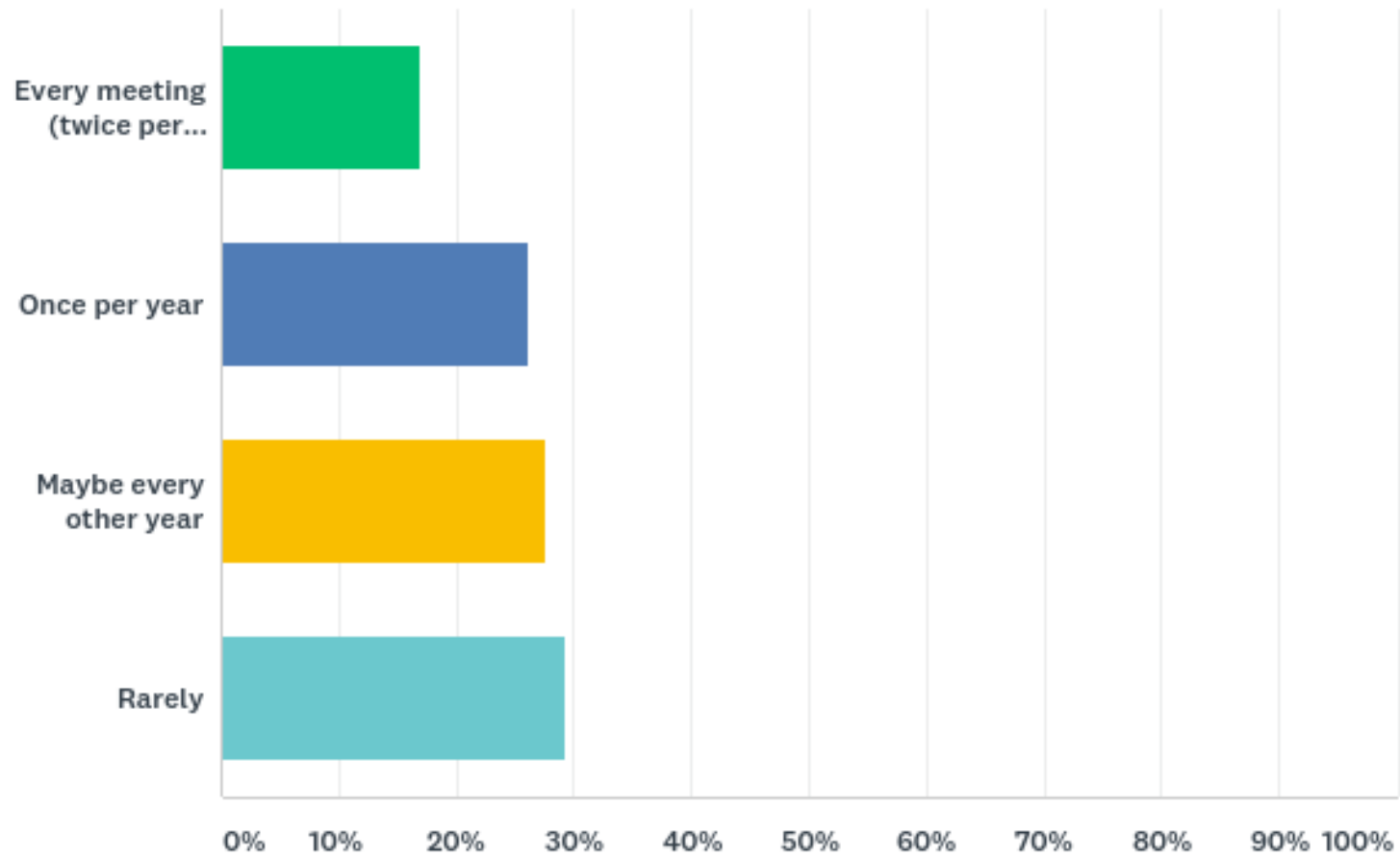
Results

- The complete survey results were shared with Dan Stapleton, CRM panel, and Matthew Shapero (including respondent contact information).
- Highlights are shared in the following slides.

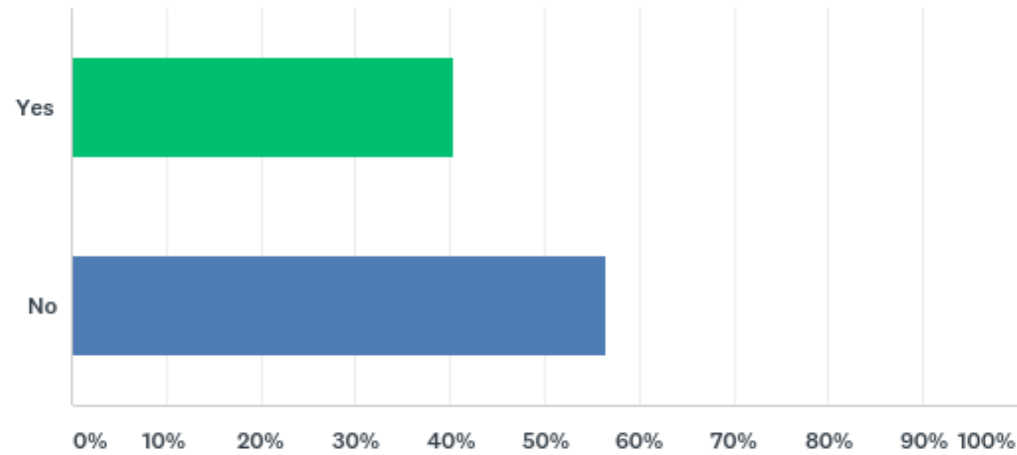
Publicly available URL or e-mail (11)

- www.harveyecology.com
- <https://www.althouseandmeade.com/>
- <https://www.rangelandconservation.com>
- <http://www.tierradata.com/>
- dneal384@att.net
- www.wildlandsinc.com
- koopmannranch@gmail.com
- www.rci-nv.com
- <http://cesanluisobispo.ucanr.edu/>
- Rangelands West Inc.
- www.philipbrownsey.com

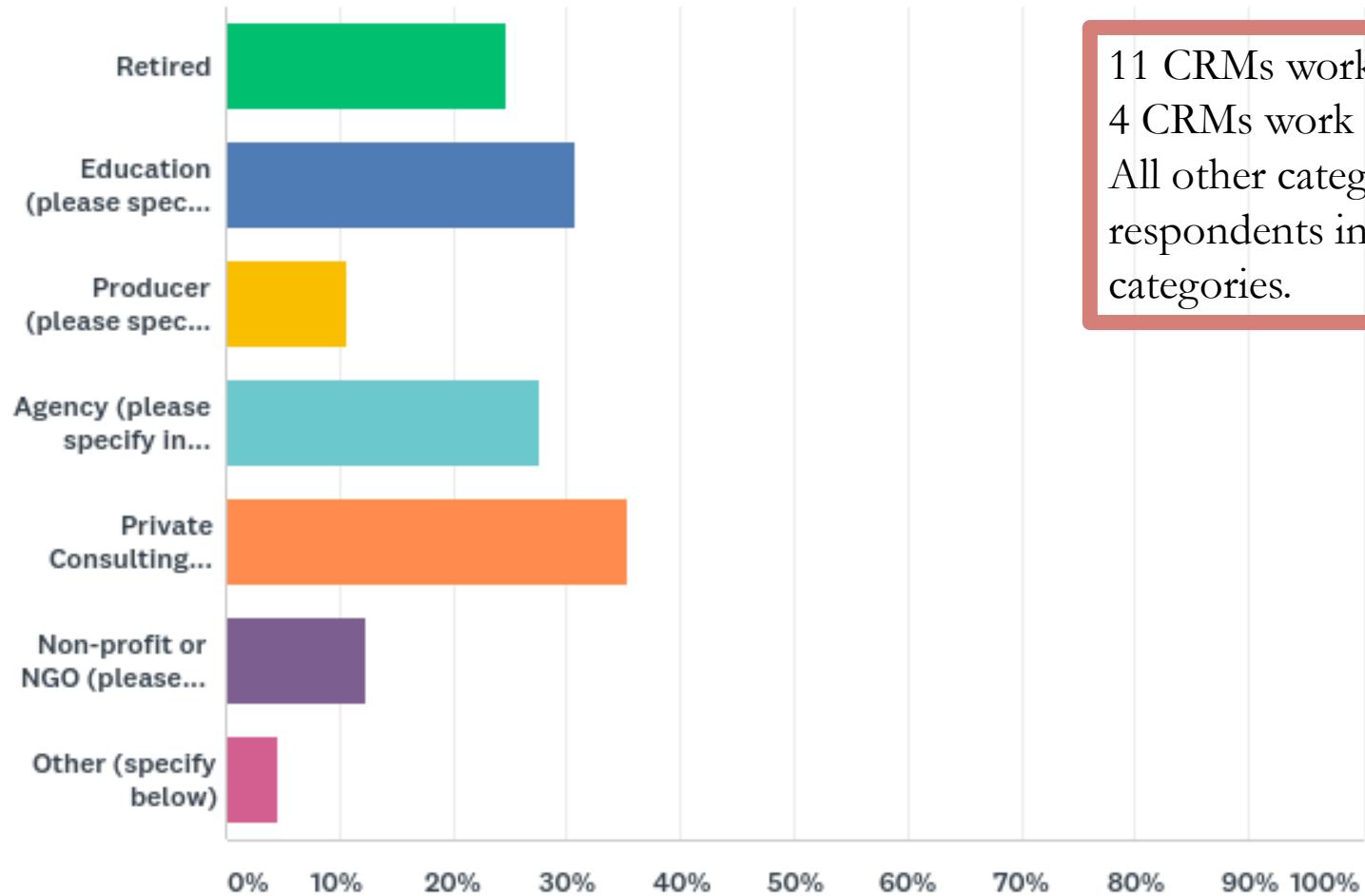
Q4 How often do you participate in Cal-Pac SRM section meetings?



Q5 Is CRM status required for your current paid position? If yes, you may explain in "other."



Q6 For whom do you work? (check all that apply).



11 CRMs work for UCCE
4 CRMs work for NRCS
All other categories include 1 or 2 respondents in a variety of categories.

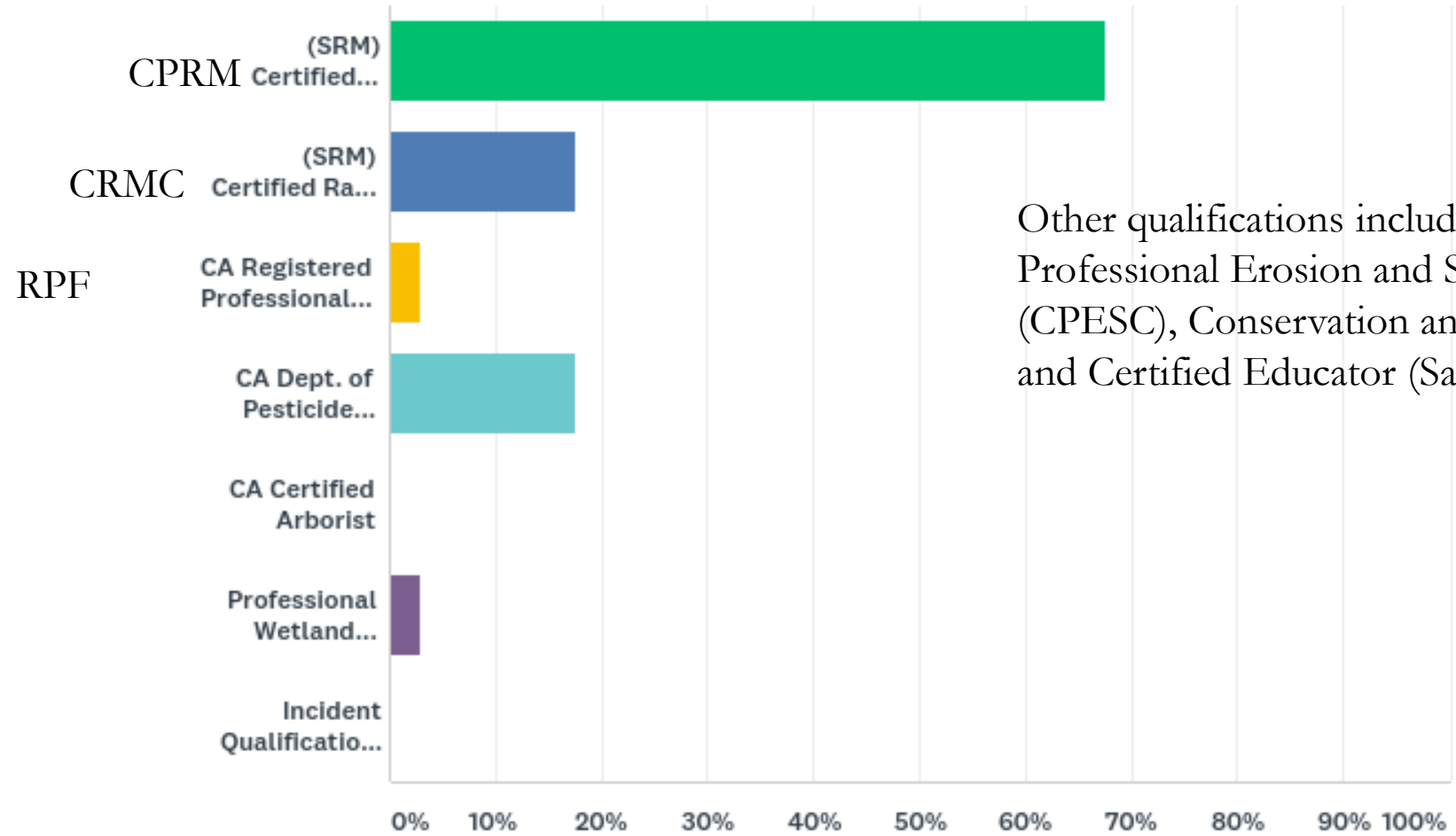
What are your specialties in rangeland management?

Vegetation management	85.94%	55
Inventory and mapping of resources	64.06%	41
Wildlife habitat management	57.81%	37
Water quality concerns	57.81%	37
Targeted grazing	56.25%	36
General ranch planning for private sector	53.13%	34
Fuels management	53.13%	34
Monitoring for agency compliance	53.13%	34
Monitoring for conservation easements	51.56%	33
Conservation planning for agency support	51.56%	33
Collaborative management	43.75%	28
Mitigation projects	39.06%	25
Monitoring for threatened or endangered species	34.38%	22
Ranch economics	26.56%	17
Creation of conservation easements	23.44%	15
Planning for prescribed burns	21.88%	14
Geospatial assistance	21.88%	14
Litigation/Expert witness	18.75%	12

Mark up to three top areas that you work in

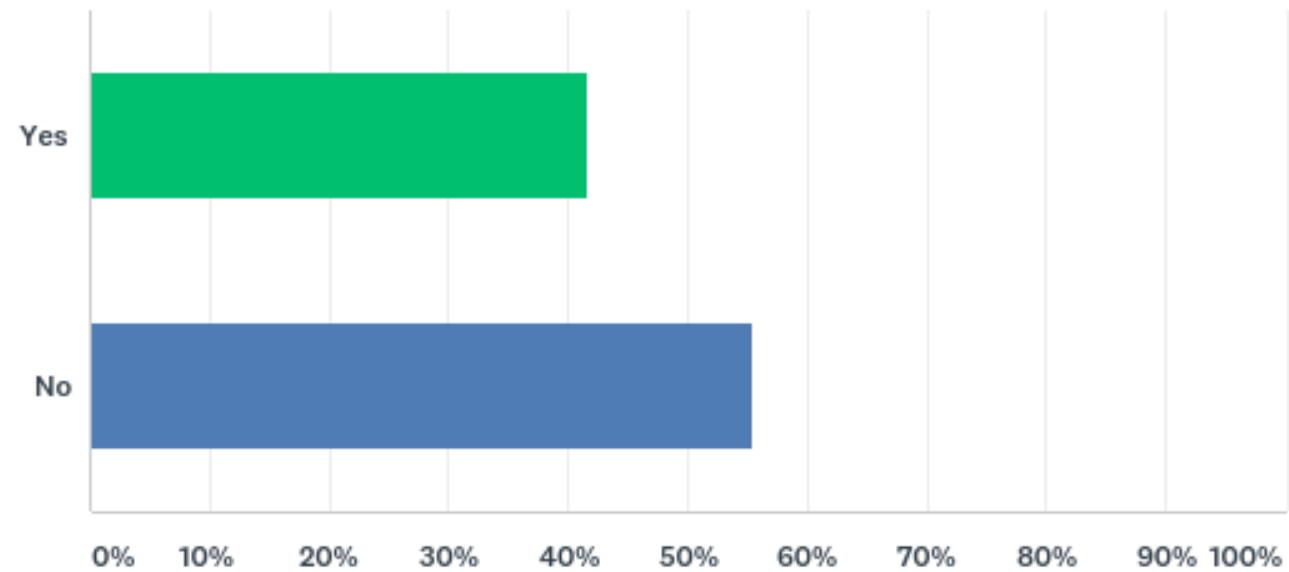
Vegetation management	64.52%	40
General ranch planning for private sector	37.10%	23
Inventory and mapping of resources	30.65%	19
Monitoring for agency compliance	27.42%	17
Targeted grazing for fire or invasive control	20.97%	13
Conservation planning for agency support	20.97%	13
Water quality concerns	19.35%	12
Monitoring for conservation easements	17.74%	11
Monitoring for threatened or endangered species	16.13%	10
Mitigation projects	8.06%	5
Planning for prescribed burns	8.06%	5
Litigation/Expert witness	8.06%	5
Creation of conservation easements	6.45%	4
Ranch economics	6.45%	4
Geospatial assistance	4.84%	3
Other (please specify)		6
habitat restoration, soil science, self-defense for farmers		

Q9 What other licenses or certificates do you have that are related to natural resources management?

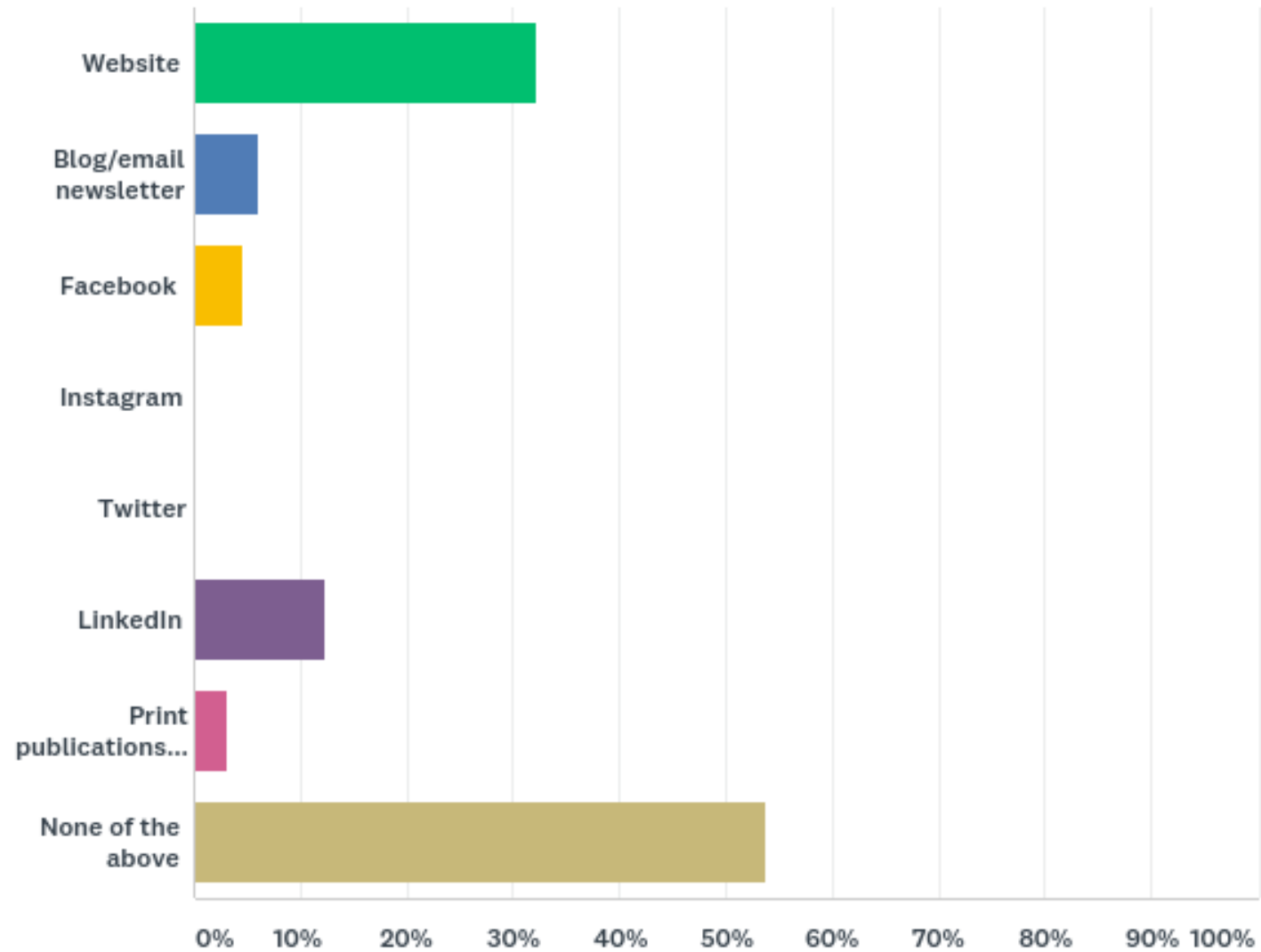


Other qualifications included 3 Certified Professional Erosion and Sediment Control (CPESC), Conservation and Nutrient Planners, and Certified Educator (Savory Institute)

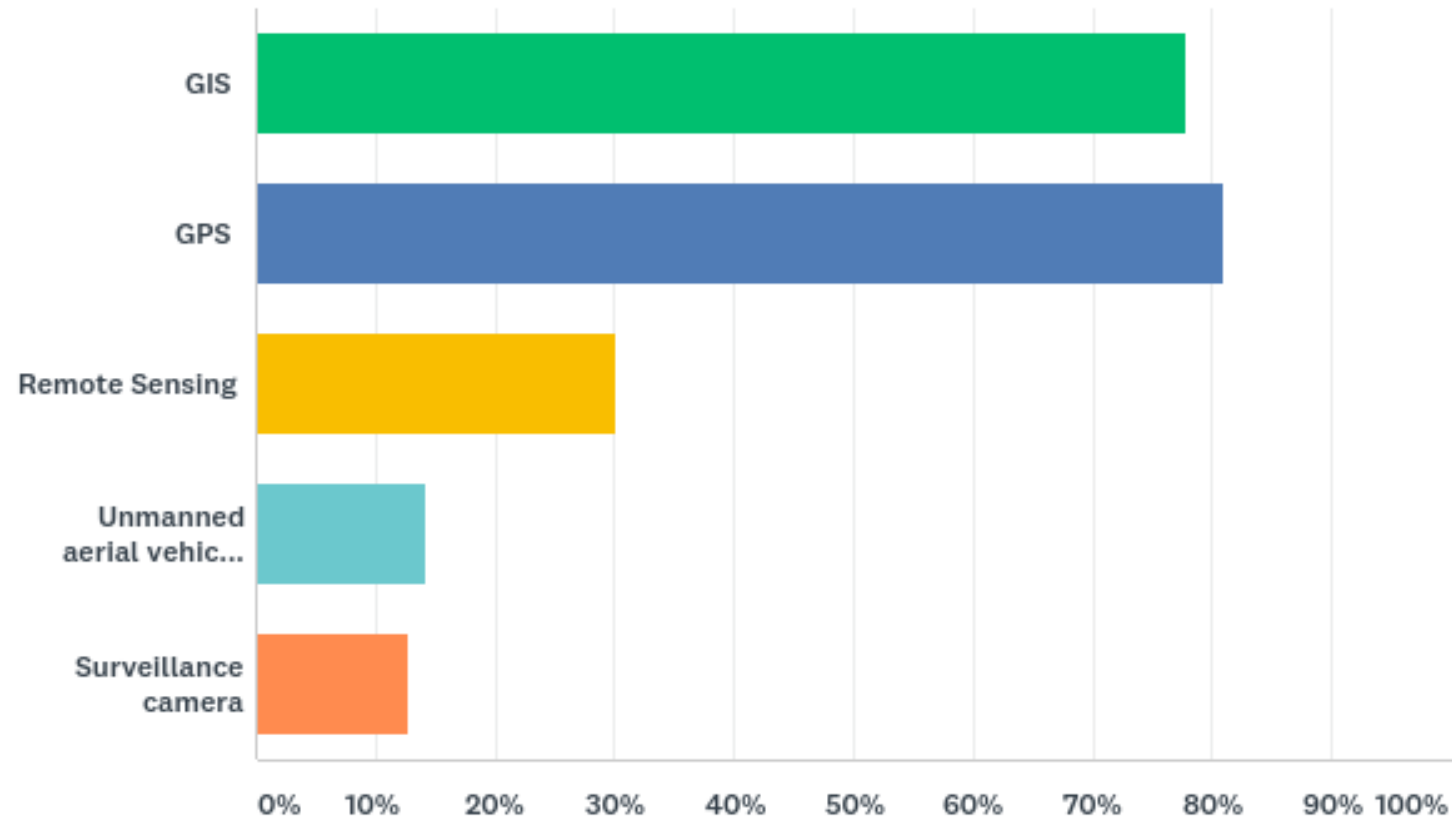
Q10 Is your CRM number on your business card?



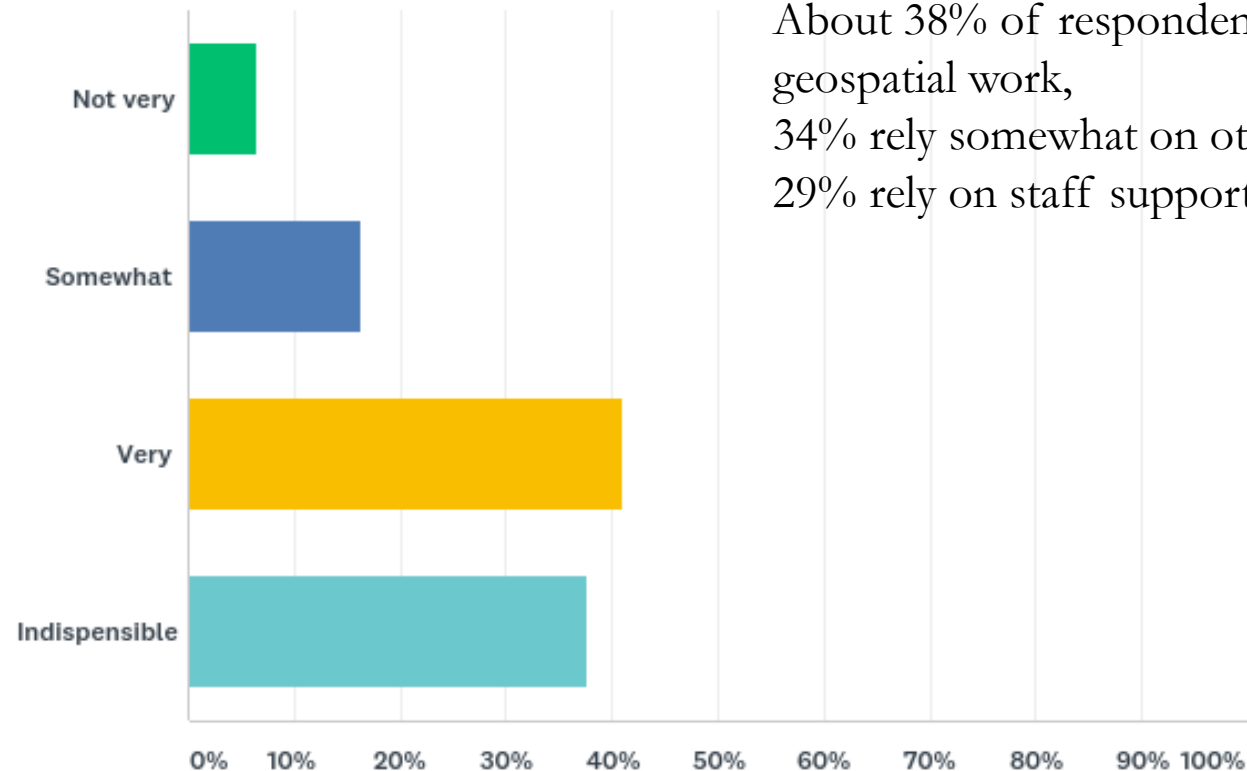
Q11 Where do you advertise your CRM status? (Check all that apply.)



Q12 What geospatial technology applications do you use in your work?

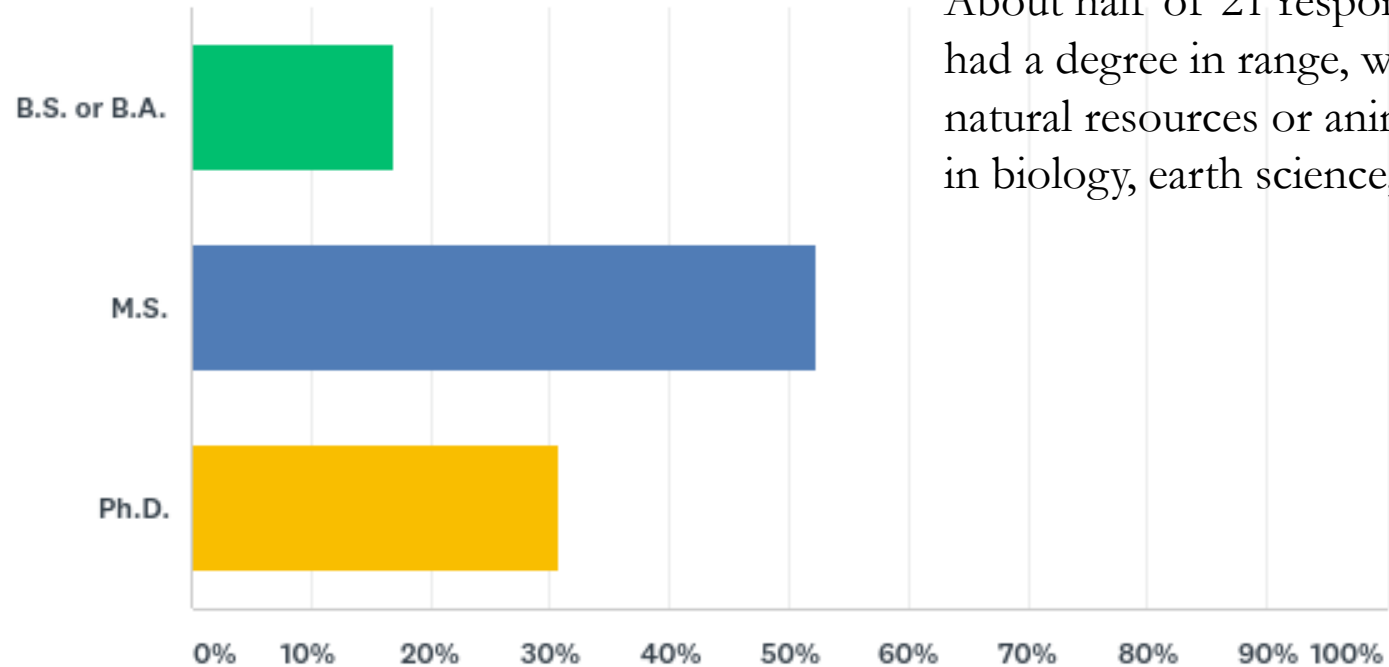


Q13 How critical are this/these geospatial applications for providing a quality product/service?



About 38% of respondents do their own geospatial work, 34% rely somewhat on others, and 29% rely on staff support or subcontractors.

Q15 What is the highest education degree you have attained? Please list the title(s) of your degree(s) in the comment field.



About half of 21 respondents to this question had a degree in range, with 3-4 in more general natural resources or animal science, and singles in biology, earth science, agriculture and wildlife.

Q16 What do you feel are strengths in your education? These strengths may come from formal education, workshops, or other constructive experiences.

workshops experience field soils Practical experience ranch Resource Range grazing
work Practical monitoring applied ecology science
management livestock grazing Rangeland
Formal education experience education vegetation economics
planning knowledge rangeland management field research

Q17 What do you feel are weaknesses in your education? How have you compensated for or addressed these gaps?

job animal science GIS technology try UCCE learn range read geospatial
attended Ranch education studying
training field management weaknesses others
soil compensate topic work Learned job livestock etc

Q18 Where have you studied rangeland management formally?

University of Nevada Reno University of Arizona
Humboldt State University Colorado State University State University
UC Berkeley UC Davis Berkeley range
Cal
University of Idaho Poly Humboldt State

Q19 Which professional mentors were especially important in developing your career? Who were they (e.g. major professor, family member)?

Mel George Rangelands Advisor Ken Tate professor mentor

major professor NRCS

James Bartolome Range Dr faculty Lynn Huntsinger

Q20 What are the biggest challenges in your consulting activities? (e.g. personnel? contracts? lack of information?)

48 respondents

Of these 13 (30%) flat out said they were not working (retired or no time or other job prohibited)

Six said "N/A" which could mean they don't have challenges or they aren't consulting. As many as 40% may not be consulting as CRMs.

Other responses (quoted):

- Lack of enforcement for CRM requirement to conduct rangeland management activities
- Balancing requests with interests and expertise
- Lack of Corporate understanding of grazing services and associated expenses. Finding grazers for contract work.
- Dealing with legal departments of large companies on contracts/payment can be difficult and time consuming. Also, lack of using a CRM on projects where one is needed and seemingly no enforcement of that. Something a little different, but still related is dealing with other consultants, such as when biological consultants showing up on a property one day a year and making a judgement of how a property is the rest of the year and a general lack of understanding of how a cattle operation works.

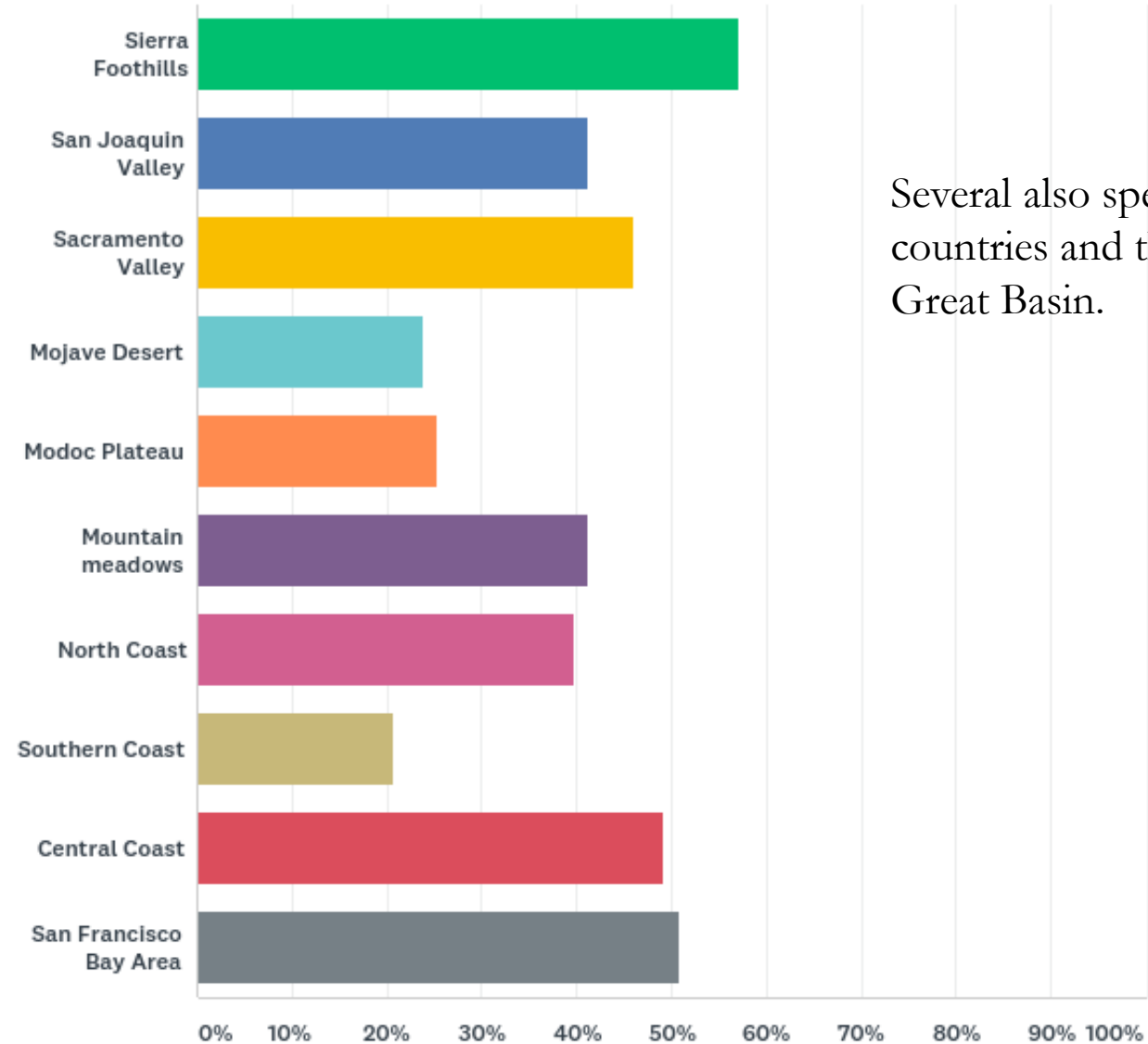
- Finding long-term (multi-year) contracts is the biggest challenge.
- Interest in true collaboration due to the time commitment to build and sustain trust, funding and partner focus on restoration rather than both restoration and on-going management
- Isolation from others in field. Personnel untrained in soils and vegetation compared to wildlife. Coming to profession with cookbook thinking and without analytical and writing skills
- Old paradigms in the profession
- Correcting misconceptions based on a poor information base; much of it produced by unqualified individuals with little Californian experience, and inadequate consideration of realistic goals and objectives.
- Clients often underestimate the appropriate scope of work. Clients often bring us in once other planning has been completed or nearly done, locking the grazing element into difficult situations that could have been avoided.
- Connecting with opportunities and potential clients.

Q21 Are there any topics you would be willing to serve as trainer for?

conservation Ecology monitoring time management Rangeland
grazing species planning assessment
Grazing Management Maybe
Rangeland monitoring Fire plant

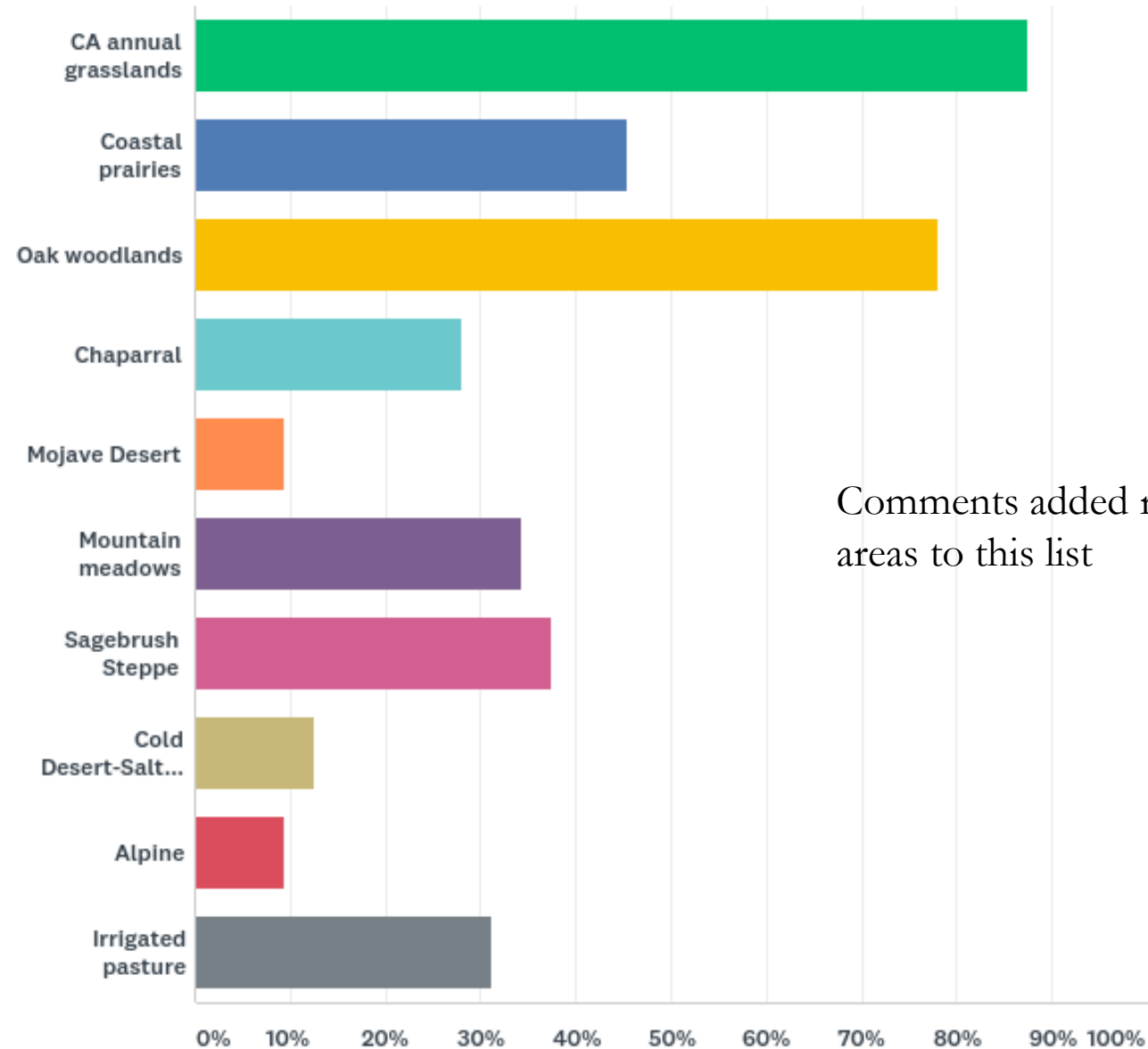
About 30 out of 41 respondents offered topics that they would be interested in, 10 said no or maybe.

Q22 What areas of California (and/or other states or countries) have you worked/consulted in, in the past five years?



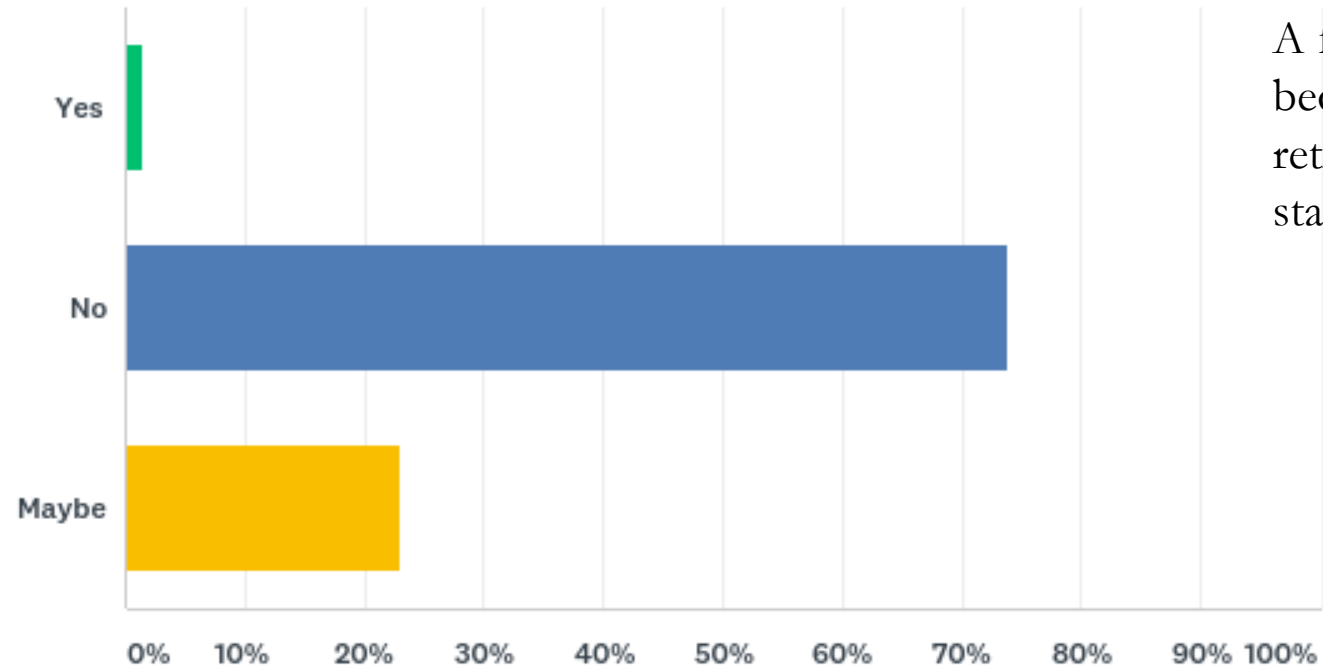
Several also specified other states and countries and the Eastern Sierra and Great Basin.

Q23 What kinds of rangelands/grazing lands do you feel most proficient in?



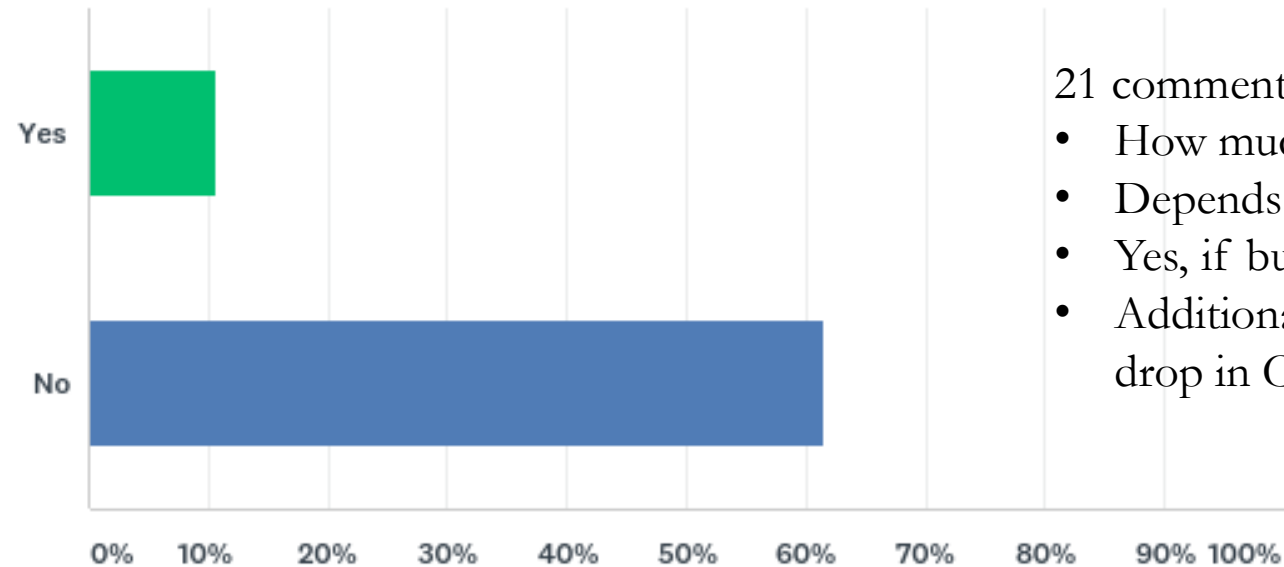
Comments added riparian and wetland areas to this list

Q24 CRM fees are rising to \$125 for two years from the previous \$70. (Paid to the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection) Will you drop your license because of that?



A few folks were unsure because of impending retirement and financial status.

Q25 CalPac is considering adding an additional fee to help support the organization's administration of the CRM program. If CalPac added an additional fee to support this effort (above and beyond the \$125 bi-annually), would you drop your certification?



21 comments:

- How much?
- Depends on what it will be used for.
- Yes, if business revenue justifies it
- Additional fee may be negated by drop in CRMs.

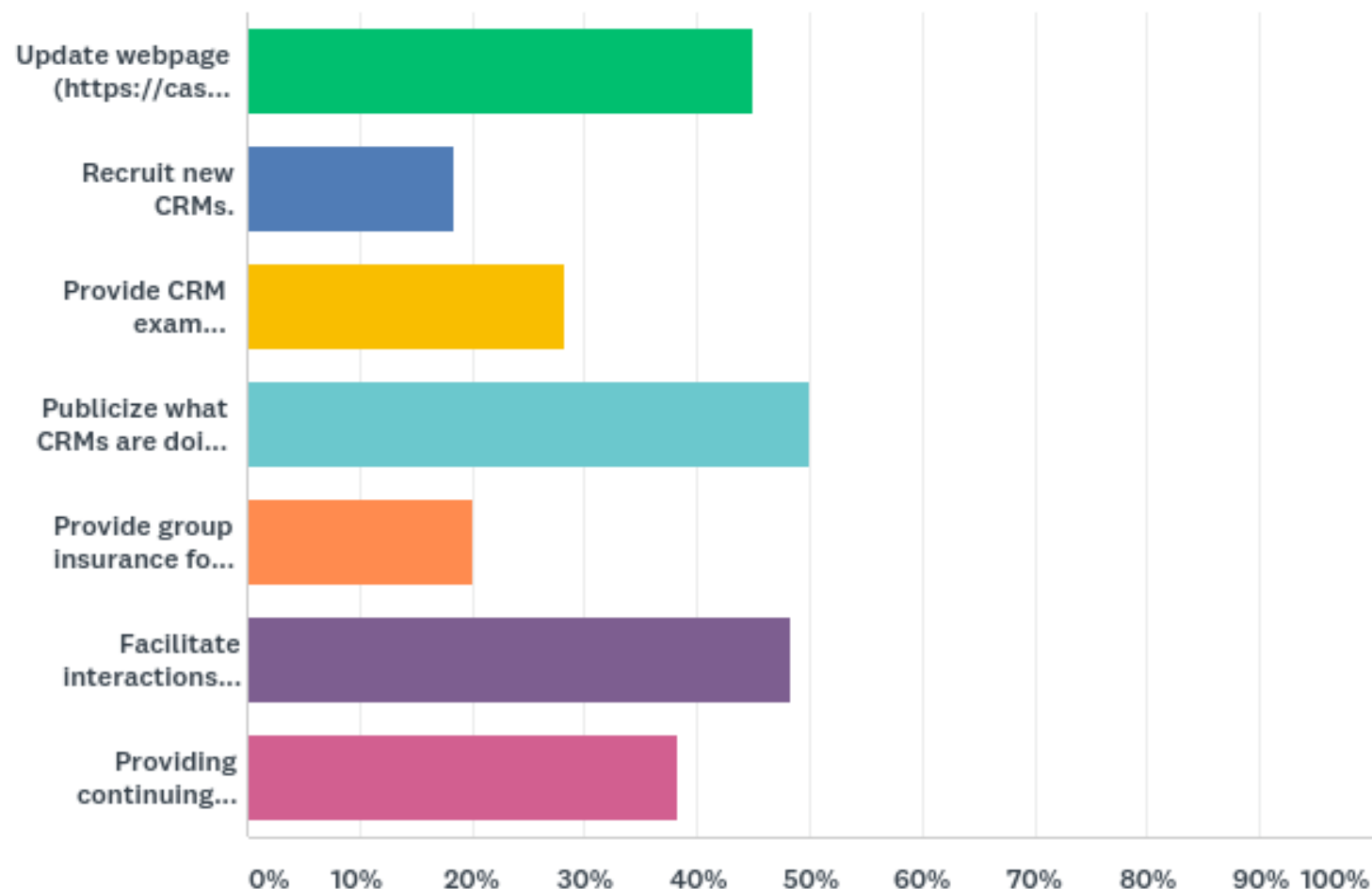
Q26 How much would you be willing to pay annually to help Cal-Pac defray costs for insurance, etc. to support the CRM program?



Other comments:

- Three people think that Cal-Pac shouldn't be involved, CRM is BOF's responsibility, entirely.
- Several wanted more information about how fee would be used.
- One suggested that insurance costs should be divided up by the number of CRMs and charged that way.

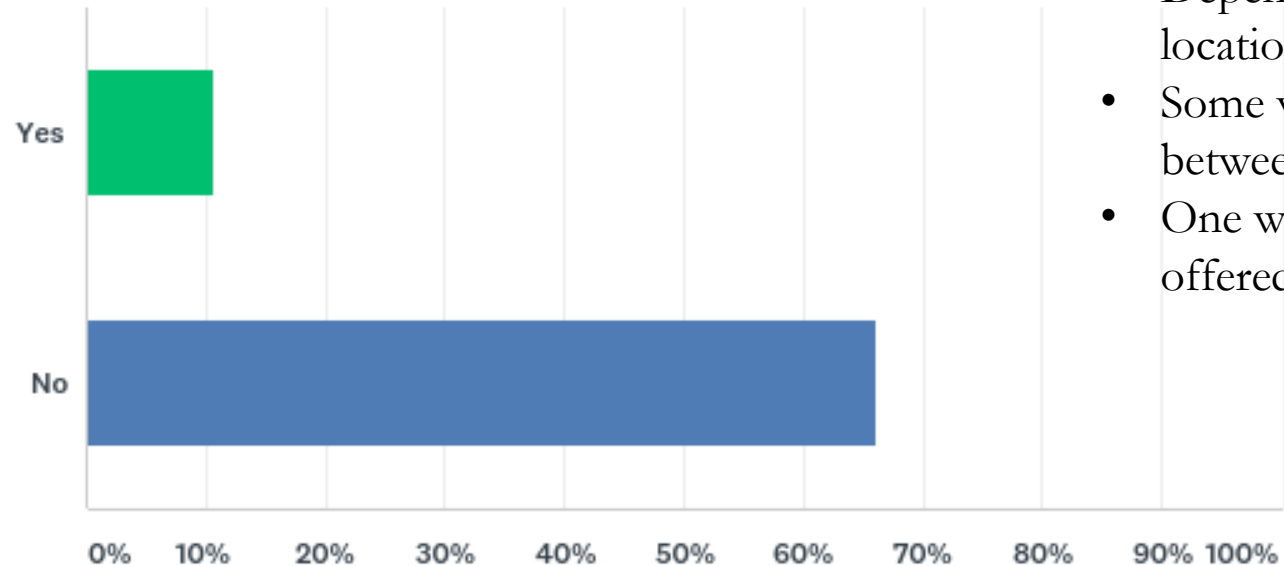
Q27 What are the most important activities for the CRM Panel to undertake in the next 2 years in addition to their normal business of processing applications for CRM or ARM, and developing and grading the CRM exam? (Check your top 3 priorities)



Comments – most important activities for CRM

- We are losing our program at Berkeley. You should try to lobby for these programs with UC and ANR
- The most important thing is actively work to ensure CRM's are being utilized where required by law. There are still many rangeland planning efforts across the state where a CRM should be used and they aren't.
- If CEUs required in future, then CRM panel should facilitate and advertise CEU training opportunities
- Work with RPFs to strengthen standing of CRM to overcome unlicensed practice. Improve the credibility of CRM among agencies especially those required to use it.
- All of these are important. Looking into group insurance might help those concerned about the liability of offering their services outside their paid work for an agency. the web page needs some updating especially if it is the first contact for a person looking for information.
- Work with Calfire to get line qualified CRMs to supervise wireline repair on wildfires. Calfire Foresters use the Forest Practices Act to conduct repair. This does not and should not apply to semi arid Rangelands.
- Work with Calfire to get line qualified CRMs to supervise wireline repair on wildfires. Calfire Foresters use the Forest Practices Act to conduct repair. This does not and should not apply to semi arid Rangelands
- I think the most important thing is outreach to range professionals to let people know they are required to have a CRM on forest rangelands , modify the enforcement regulation in the statutes

Q28 If CEUs were added to CA CRM certification requirements, would you drop your certification?



Lots of ambivalence here...

- Depends on how much, cost, location, topic, etc.
- Some would like it to be reciprocal between CRM and CPRM
- One would drop CRM if Cal-Pac offered the CEUs.

Q29 What should the CRM Panel do to support CRMs over the next 5 to 10 years? Would you pay fees for training or other focused activities to support CRM advancement?

Roughly 3:1 would be willing versus not willing to pay for training or other focused events.

Additional comments from 46 responses (not mentioned already):

- It would also be helpful to develop more networking opportunities between current CRMs.
- Make practical experience/knowledge of ranch management, infrastructure, livestock husbandry, ranch economics, marketing, etc. be a requirement in obtaining a CRM. The program is severely lacking in the area.
- Get professional liability coverage legislation passed by Sacramento so we are similarly protected as are the CA RPFs
- CRMS need to be well trained in supporting rangeland management practices that build climate change resilience into rangelands and rangeland production systems. Yes, if applicable to SRM CPRM certification.
- There are lots of people who are doing the work of a CRM but are not certified. Do more outreach to those folks to let them know they need to get certified and give them a path forward to become certified.
- Better outreach to agencies, RCDs, land trusts, consulting firms, policy makers, and others about the legal requirements for CRM licenses and general benefits of hiring CRMs
- I believe unless the requirement for a CRM can expand to all rangelands, the program has limited effectiveness

Additional comments from 46 responses (not mentioned already):

- Working with CA entities to recognize the value of CRM certification and why they should engage with a CRM for planning and project/program implementation and monitoring. Focus a day of cal-pac meetings on support and facilitation of sharing for CRM's specifically. Consider building structured program support for CRM's to add some consistency to delivery of services providing rangeland partners a clearer understanding and expectation of CRM program and certified individuals.
- Help CRMs understand that all management must be holistic because we assist others with managing complex systems. The profession in general is stuck on management assistance as if we manage complicated systems.
- The CRM panel should work on strategies to better support range education in California colleges and universities to increase the flow of qualified persons into the profession.
- Increase industry knowledge of the benefits of utilizing a CRM for natural resources management. This can be done through academia, UC extension, CRCC, RMAC, RCDs ect.
- Work with RPFs to strengthen the standing of CRM to overcome unlicensed practice. Improve the credibility of CRM among agencies especially those required to use it.
- Increase outreach to recruit new (and younger) members by showing the value of the certification. Offer workshops or mentoring for the test so people are not afraid of it. YES

Q30 Do you have any other comments or suggestions to help us improve the CA CRM program?

- Key will be regulatory driver for certification
- Improve access to contract work. Integrate better into university/extension programs. I don't think Extension generally sees CRMs or private consultants as clients.
- Provide a study guide or some kind of guidance for the test for people who are trying to become certified.
- Act on the results of this survey. Knowledge is power!
- Working to get new CRMs involved in rangeland activities through networking and outreach. Once you get your CRM, you get the welcome letter from the Forestry Board, but nothing else...feels sort of anti-climactic. Maybe a welcome packet, info on who is on the board currently, what their roles are, etc. Basic outreach materials I guess is what I'm getting at, not just a website you have to hunt for all the info. Especially since the website is not terribly informative, hard to navigate, and it would be nice to access my CRM number on a list somewhere, but I couldn't find it.
- Many of the current CRMs have very limited knowledge or practical experience in ranch management, grazing, ranch economics, etc. This is a huge part of what a CRM should be and this needs to be improved! It isn't just about plant ID and monitoring...

- There are only 2 CA schools that support a Masters in Range program. I fear that the institutions and their administration do not value these programs and they will obsolete as retired professor positions are not filled. We need to promote our CA schools that support rangeland science or the future of CRMs will be bleak. California needs its own pool of professionals as our ecosystems are complex and unique, more so than other range ecosystems in the nation or North America. We need Cal-Pac and Board of Forestry to lobby for the survival of these historical programs that have promoted so many of our CRMS.
- Make it easier for a prospective client to find a CRM on the web. Thank you for all your hard work in developing and supporting the CRM program.
- I think that the panel needs to explicitly define the goals and objectives of the CRM program (or at least their role in it), so that its effectiveness can be evaluated. A lot of volunteer time and effort (in addition to costs borne by licensees) is being put into this program by highly respected range professionals and I think it needs to be shown whether this is the best use of their time in advancing range management in the state.
- I would suggest the CRM panel have outreach to NRCS, BLM, USFS, and other agencies. Many NRCS staff are for the most part unaware of the CRM requirements.
- Recognize the essential work of the CRM Panel

Conclusions (SEM)

- CRM panel should digest and discuss these results with Cal-Pac, Cal Board of Forestry, Professional Forester's Licensing Committee (PFLC) and the Range Management Advisory Committee (RMAC).
- CRM panel and Cal-Pac SRM should continue to clarify its role in light of recently finalized state regulations, especially in the process of updating its guidelines for the CRM program.
- Where possible, all efforts should be coordinated with parent society (CPRM/CRMC), universities, agencies, NGOs, and potential clientele.