

Local labor markets and rural youth aspirations in forest-dependent communities

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In partnership with Appalachian Mountain Club

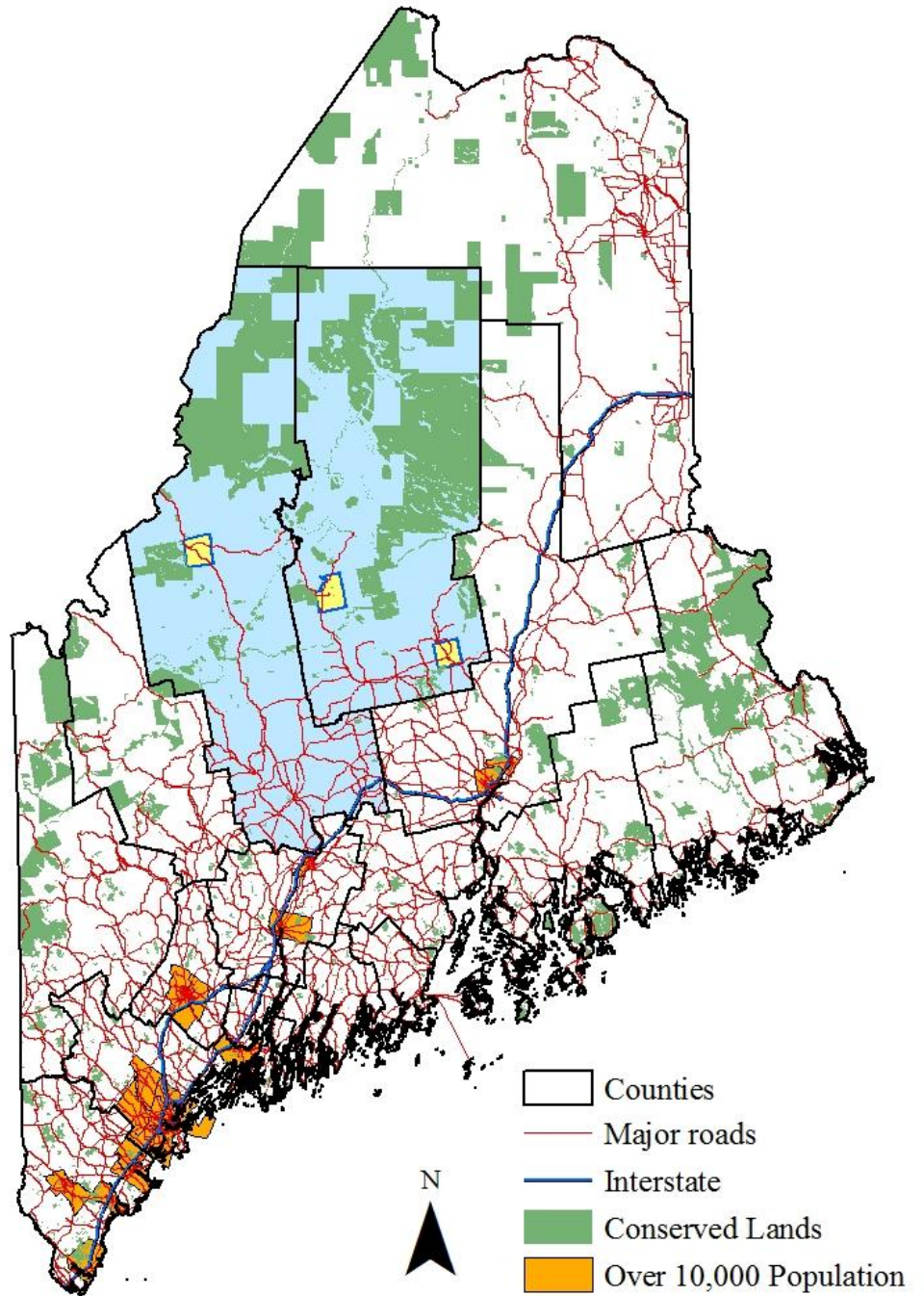


WESTERN FOREST ECONOMISTS ANNUAL MEETING

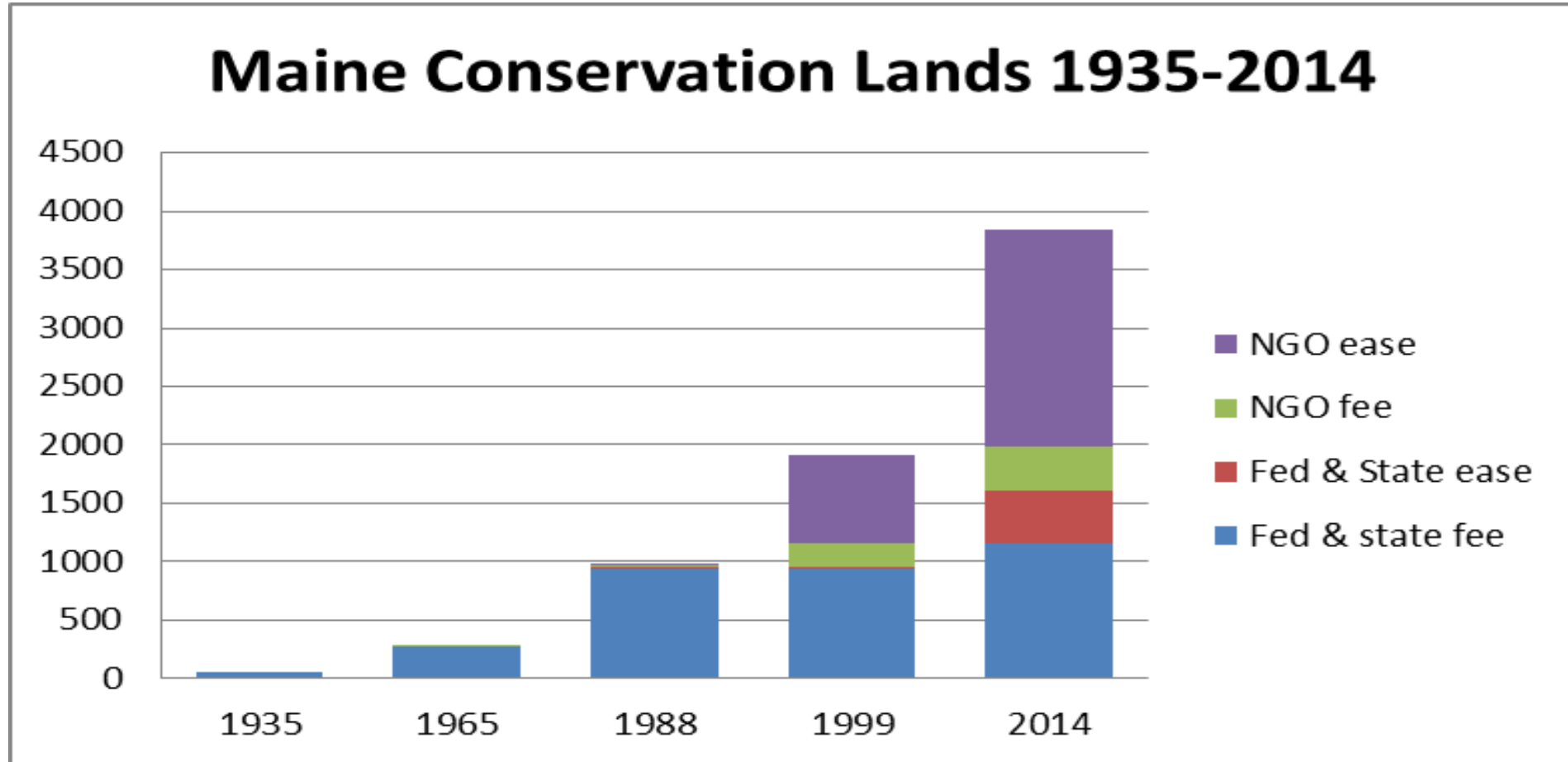
MAY 3-4, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

Overview of Maine

- Similar population density as Oregon
- Very few towns over 10,000 in population
- Very sparsely populated northern forest region
- Large increase in land in conservation status in last 25 years
- Much of that is working forest easements
- 1 in every 20 jobs related to forest products industry

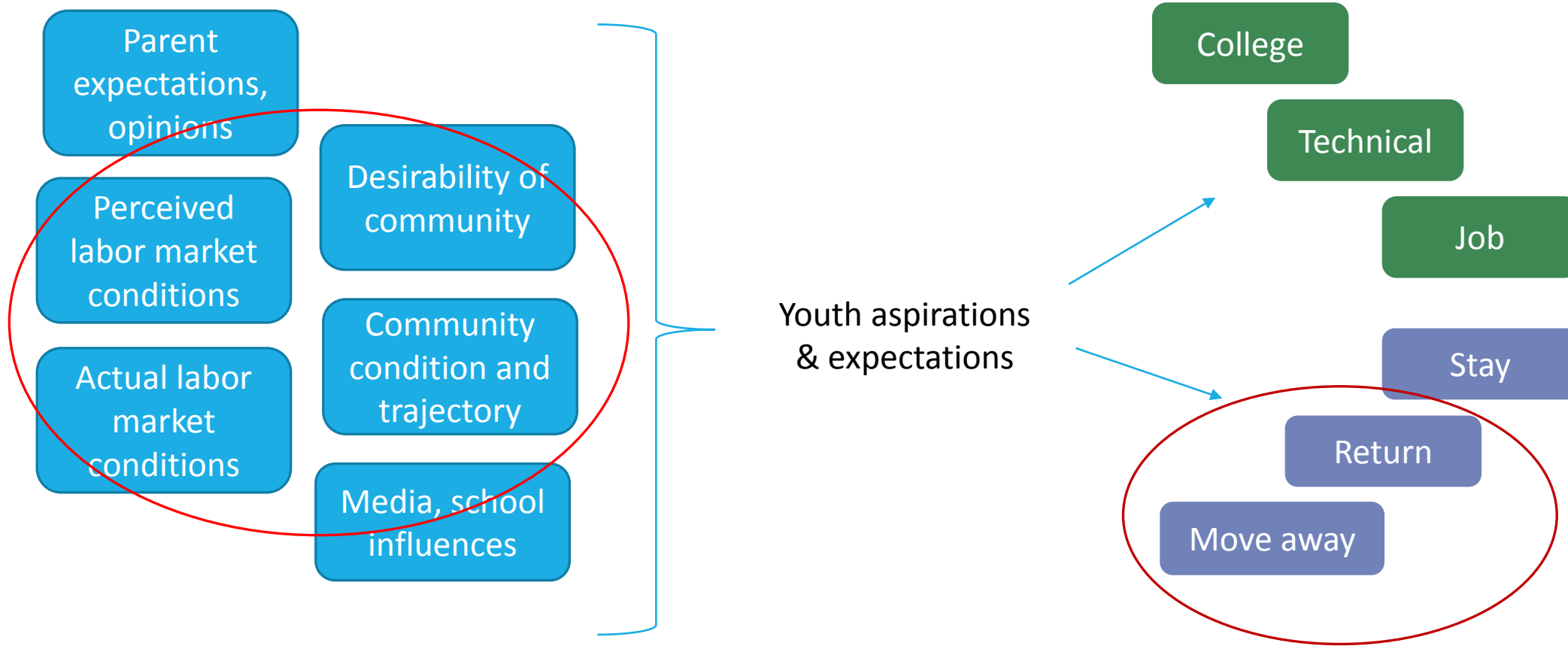


The recent rise of easements

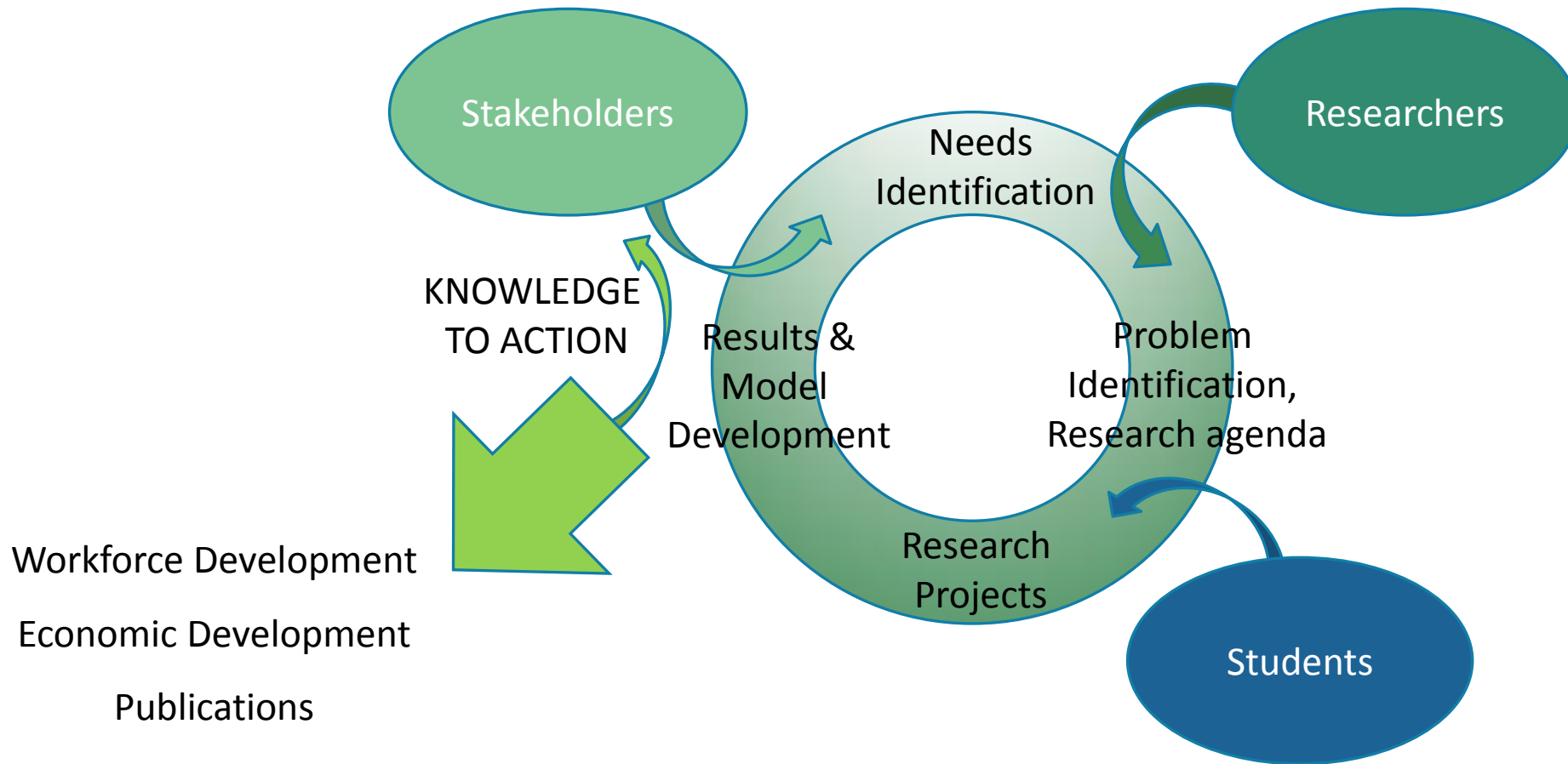




Conceptual model



Why? -> (Research) Knowledge to Action



Study overview

In regions of changing industry and variable reliance on traditional forest products vs tourism/amenity uses...

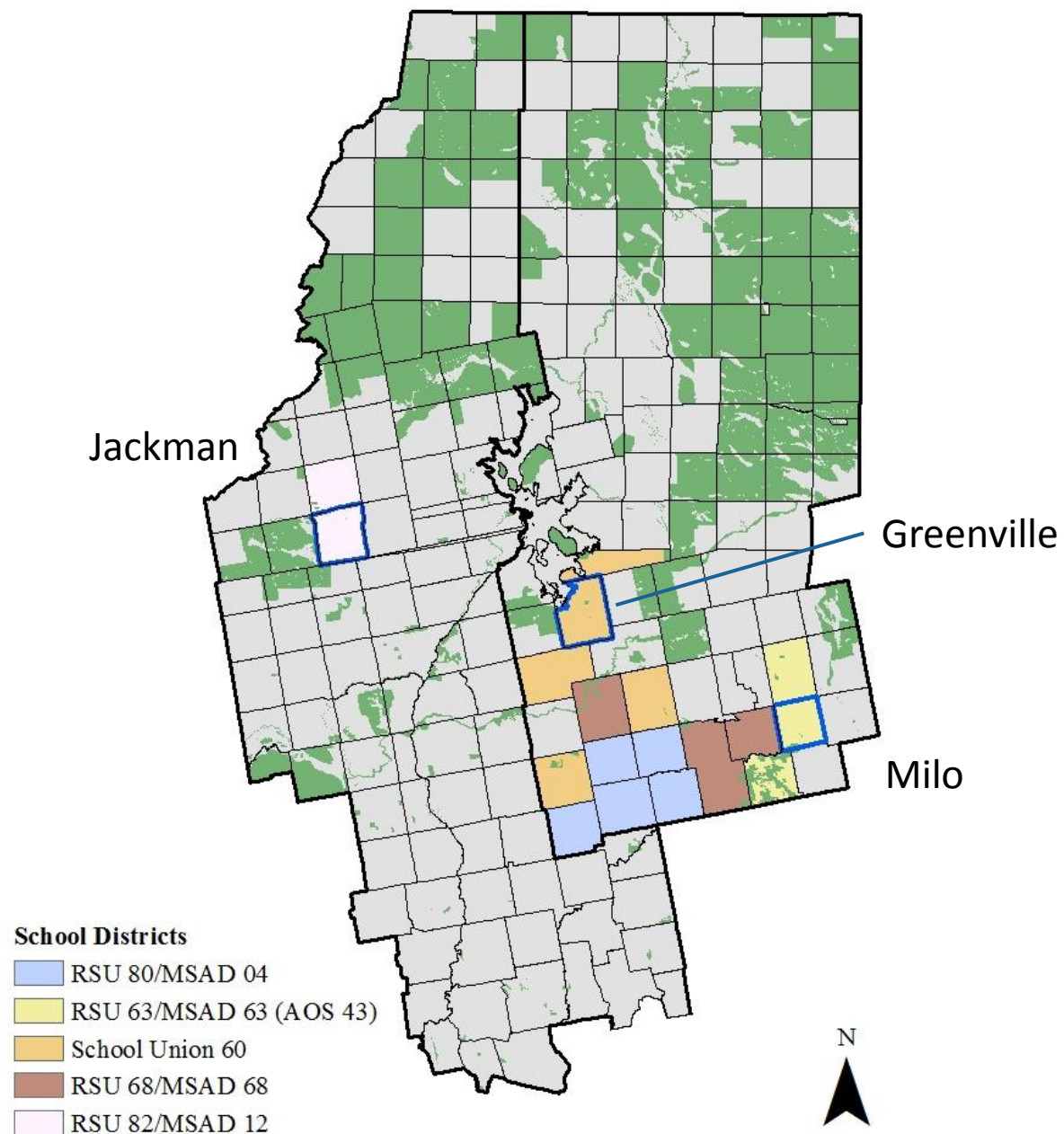
- Do youth perceptions of labor markets (forestry and tourism) match reality?
- What roles for the future do they see for both traditional forestry and tourism/amenity uses?
- Is there a difference in youth goals and aspirations between communities with more traditional uses vs amenity uses?
- Is there a difference in youth perceptions between communities with recent transitions vs more stable industries?

Preliminary data collection this year: 3 of 5 target communities in northern Maine

Study goal: expand to 5+ rural communities in Maine, compare to communities in Oregon, and repeat survey over time to look for change over time

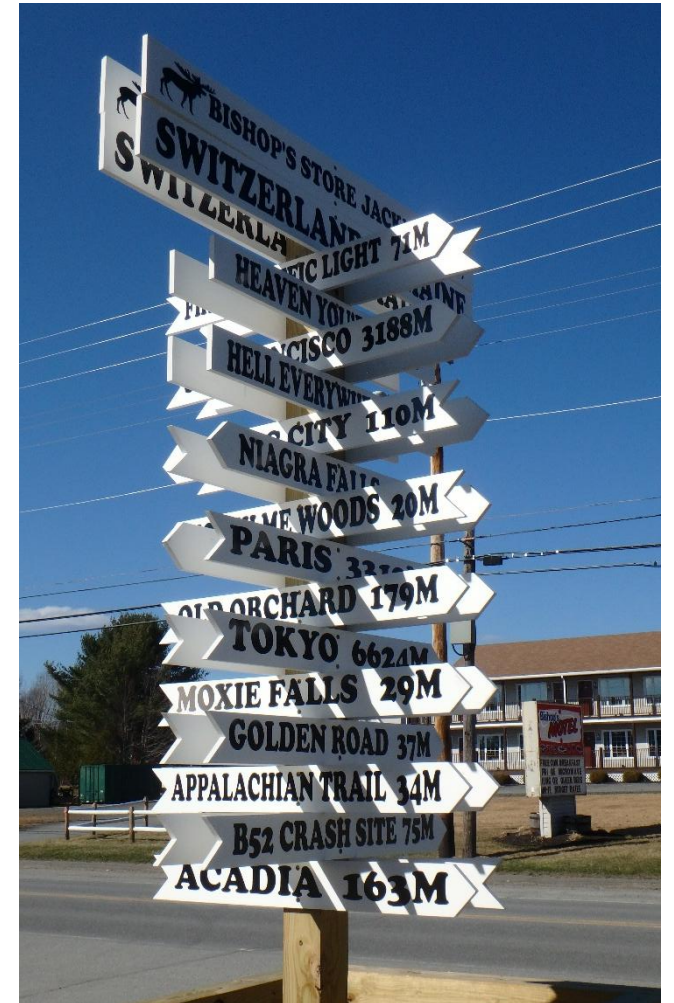
Piscataquis & Somerset Counties

- Five high schools in Piscataquis & Northern Somerset Counties
- The top two counties in the state in terms of proportion of land in conservation:
 - 39% of Piscataquis
 - 31% of Somerset
- Area of significant conservation investment and forest industry activity

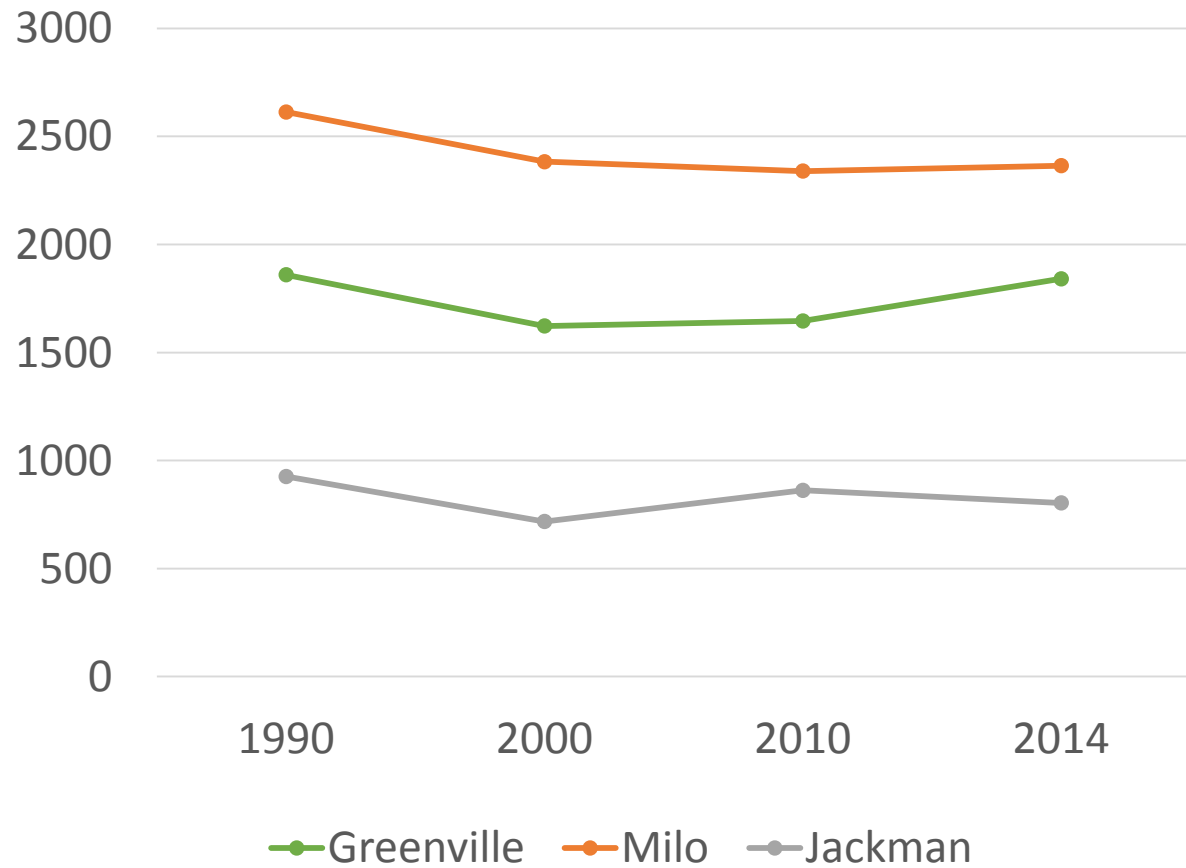




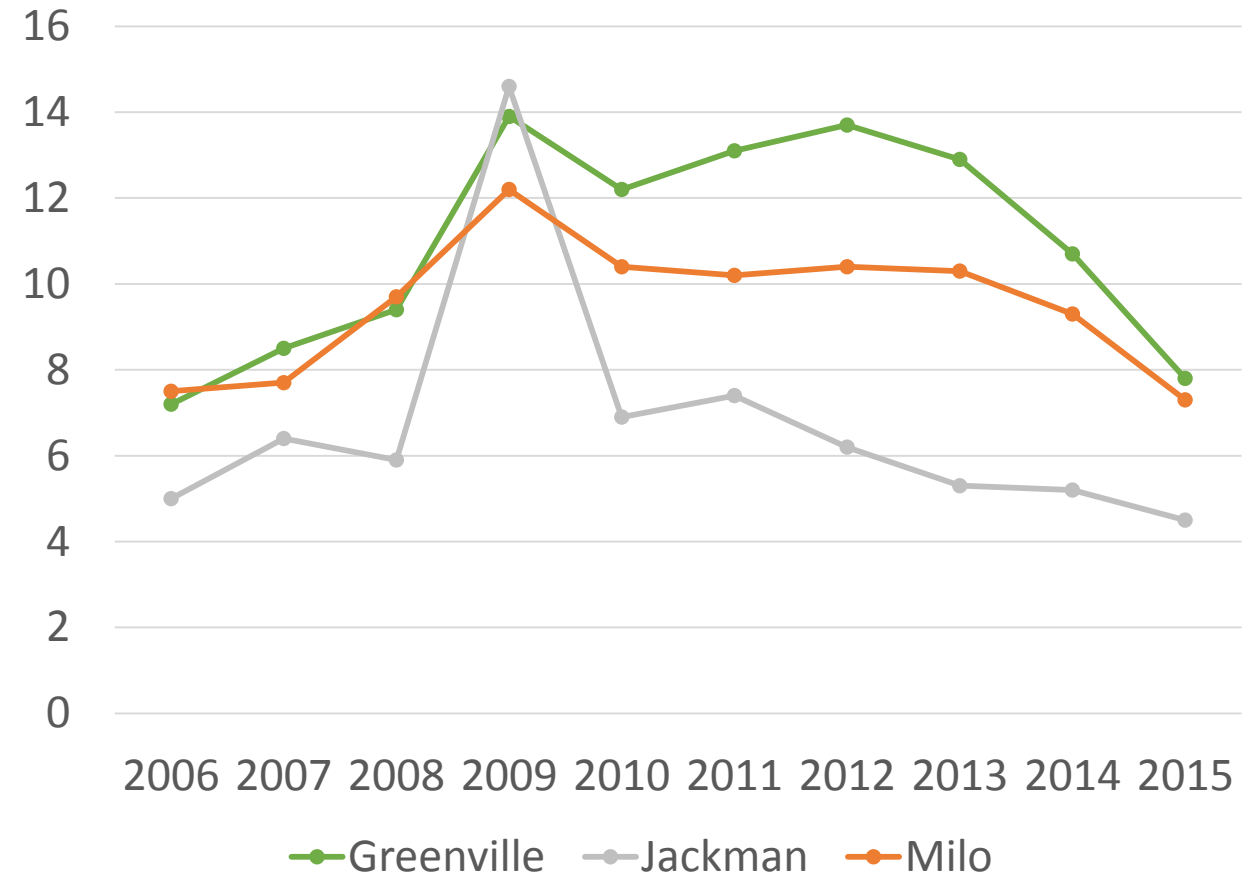




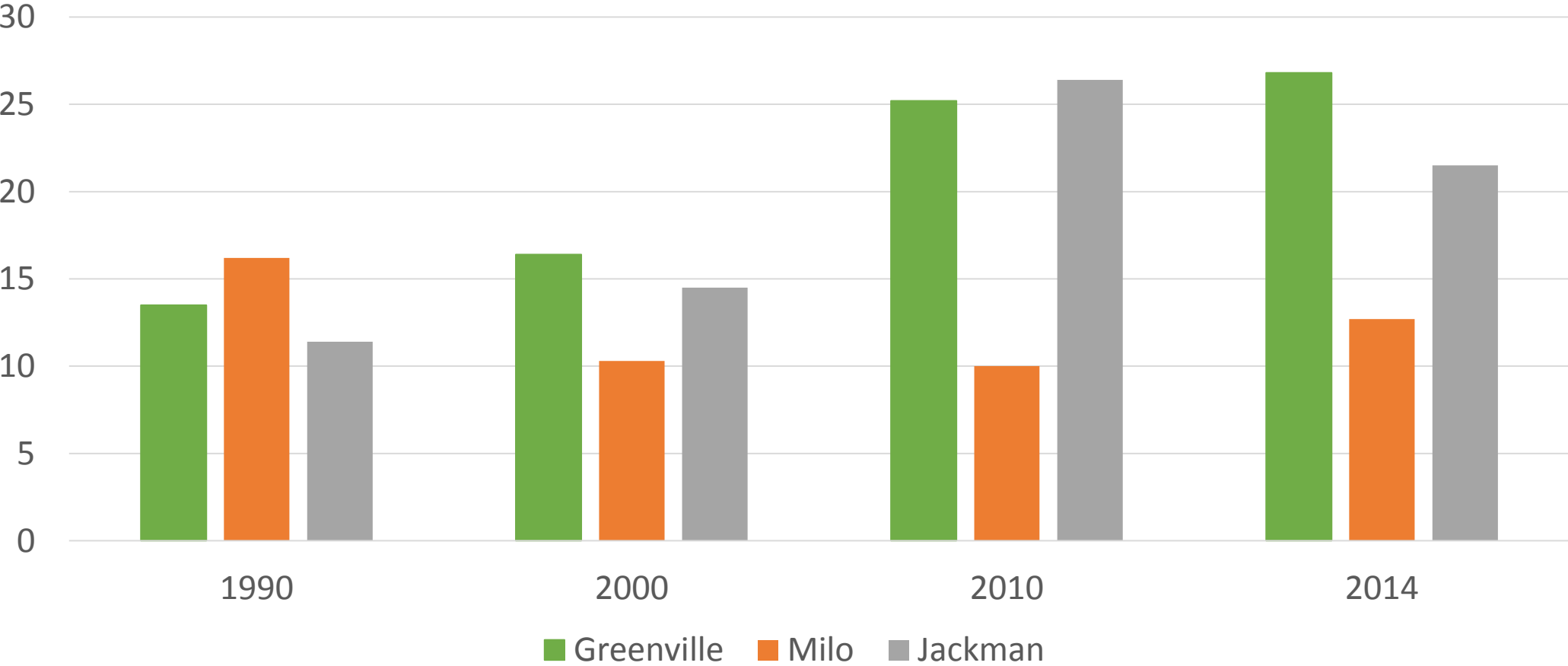
Population over time



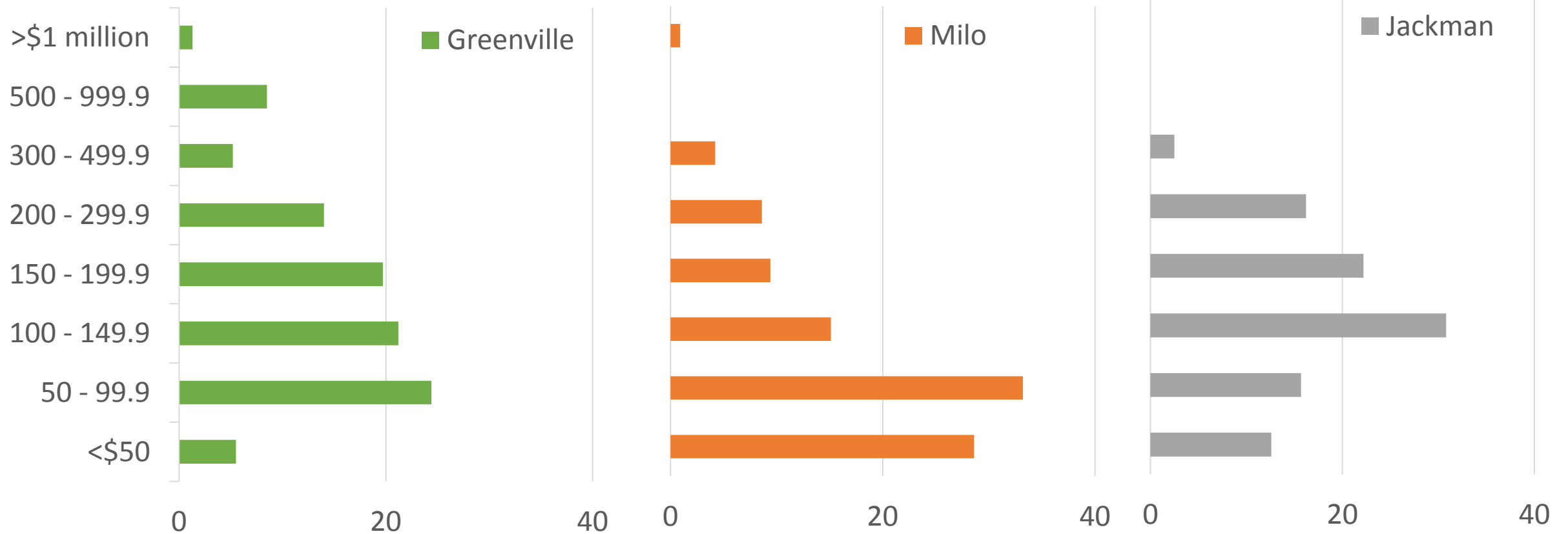
Unemployment rate, %



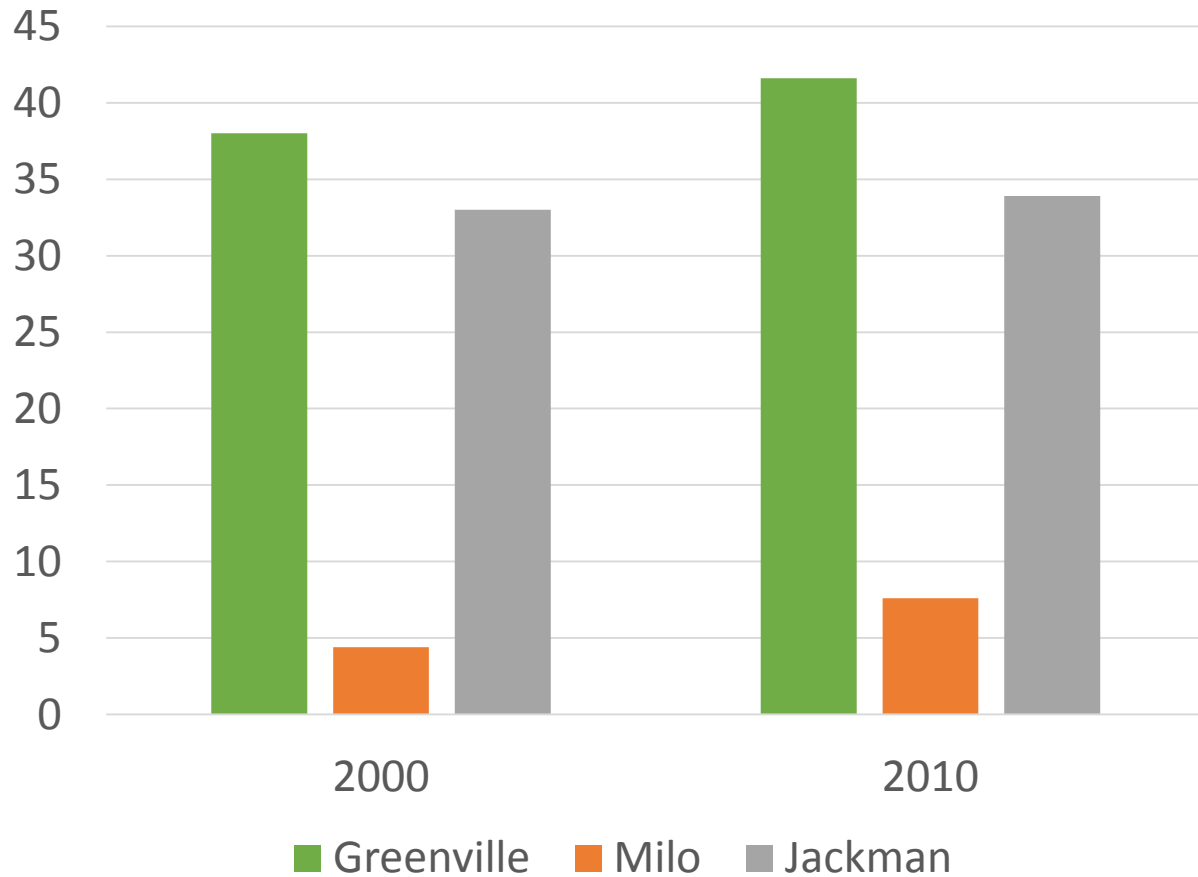
Bachelor's degree attainment



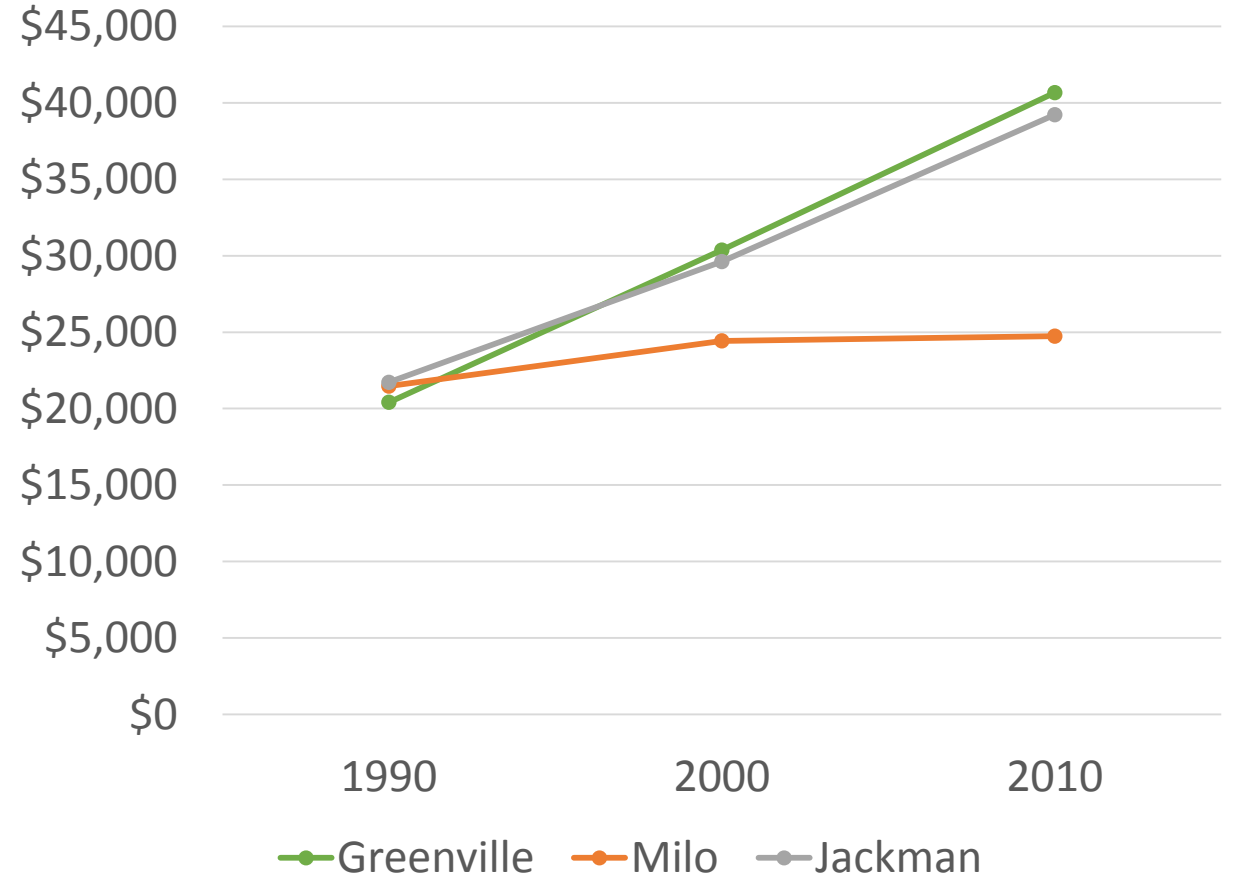
% of housing stock by value, 2010



% of housing, vacant and for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use

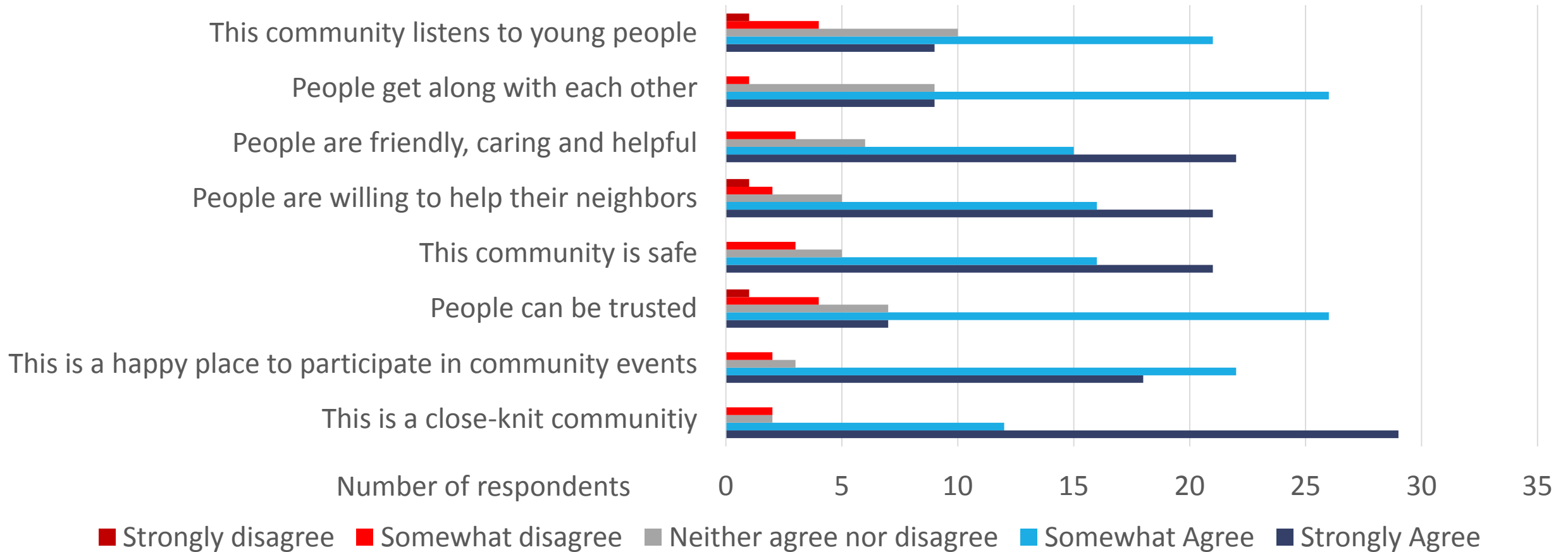


Median household income

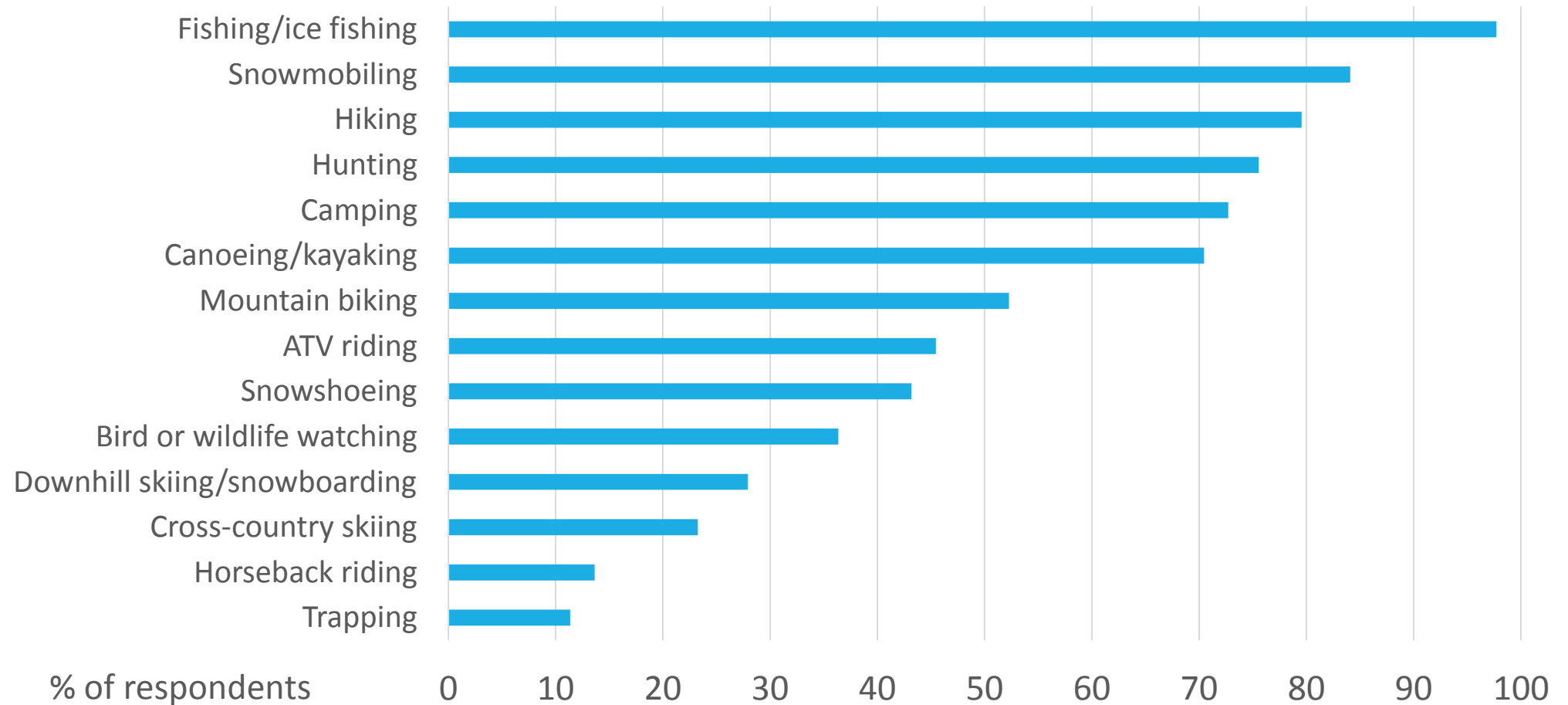


| Greenville Milo Jackman | Industry | | | | Class of Worker | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---|----------------------|----------------------|
| | Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing | Manufacturing | Retail Trade | Arts, Entertainment, Rec Services | Government | Self-Employed |
| | 2000 | 2.11 1.35 2.59 | 0.44 1.88 1.22 | 1.27 0.84 0.84 | 1.78 0.47 1.18 | 1.16 1.28 1.44 |
| 2010 | 1.48 1.47 5.59 | 0.19 1.34 0.94 | 1.91 0.92 0.52 | 1.52 0.58 2.66 | 0.95 0.93 1.54 | 1.61 1.44 0.54 |
| 2014 | 2.74 0.00 4.94 | 0.26 2.16 1.78 | 0.96 0.99 0.92 | 2.04 0.59 0.55 | 0.81 1.0 1.66 | 1.84 1.0 0.89 |

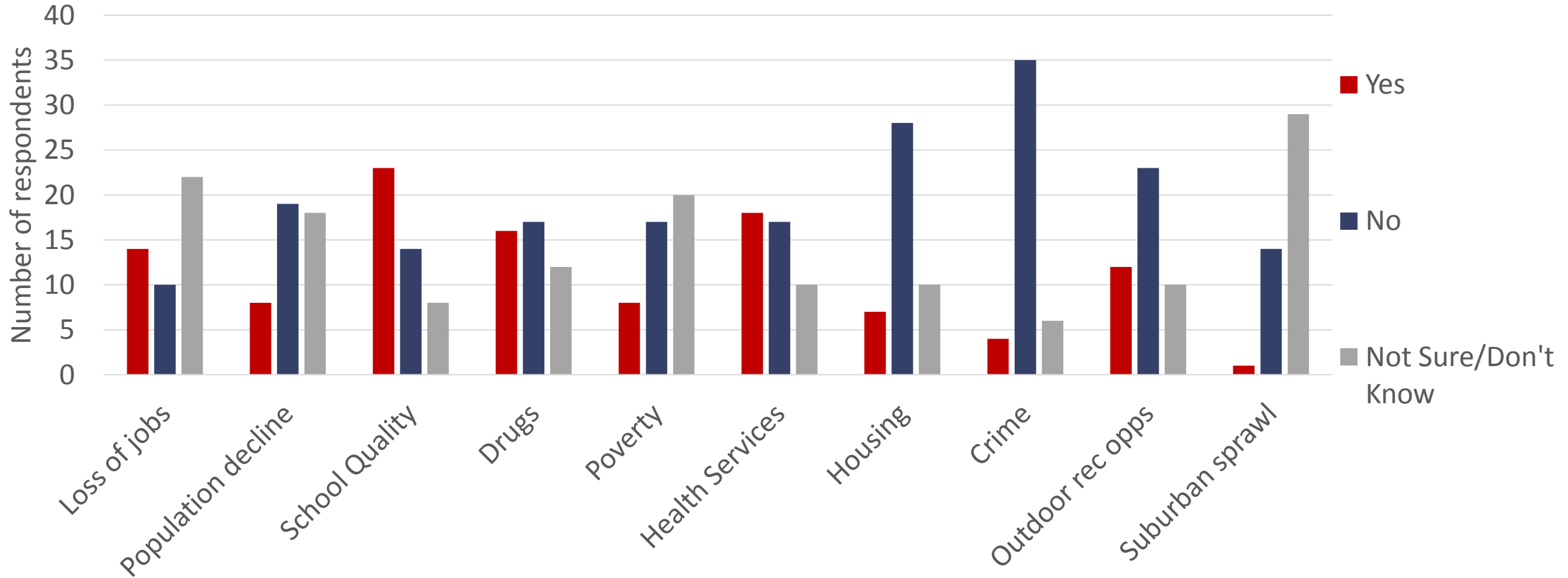
Describe your community...



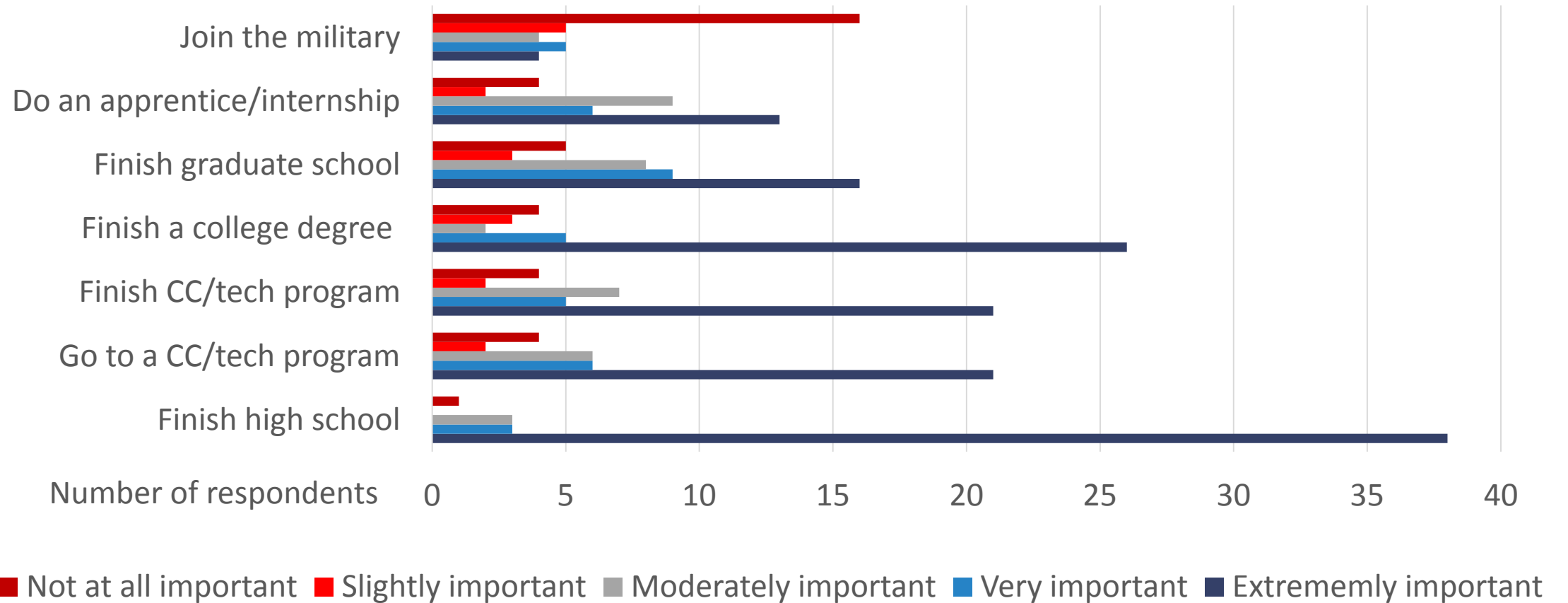
What have you participated in?



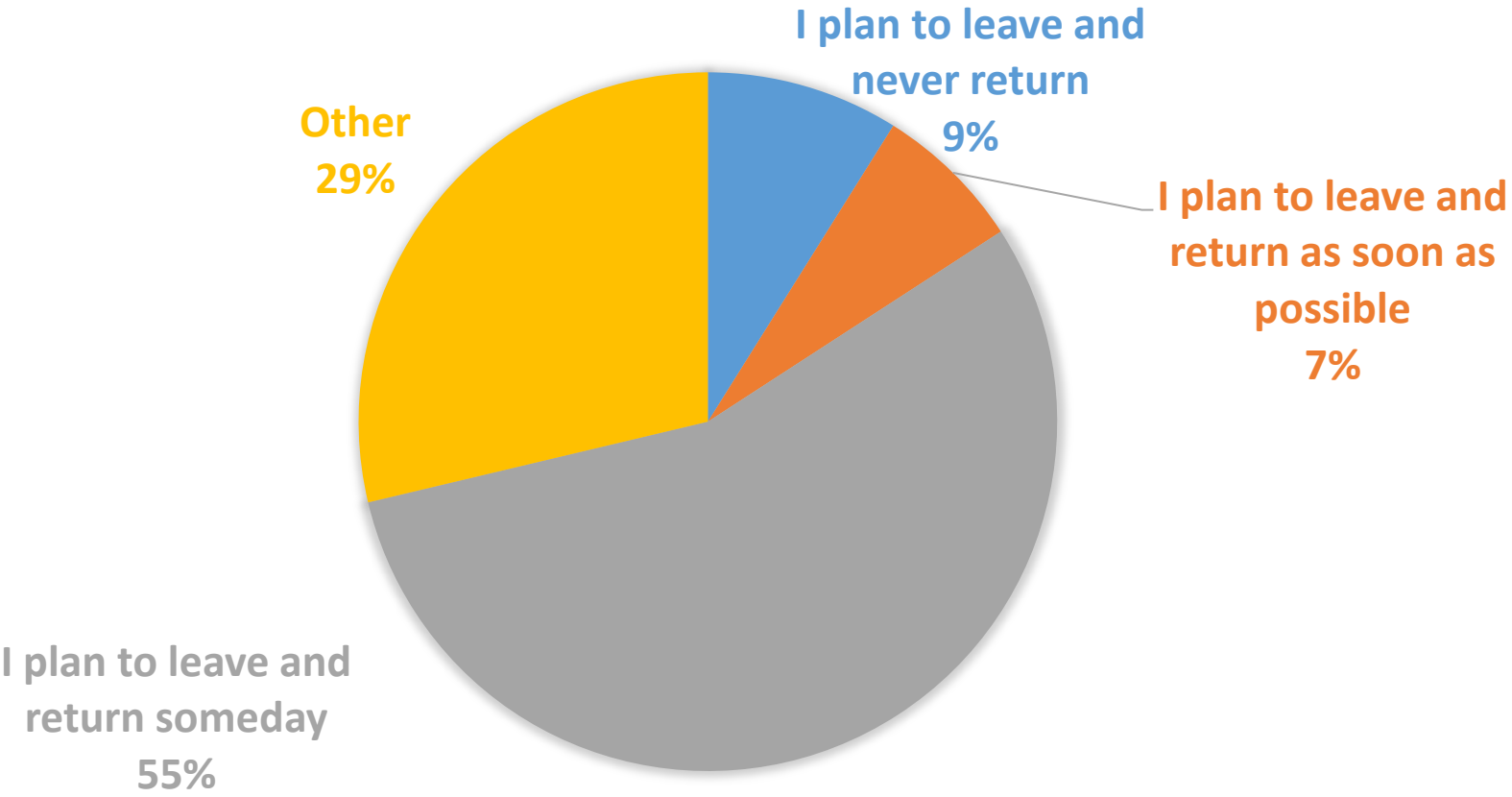
Are these important problems facing your community?



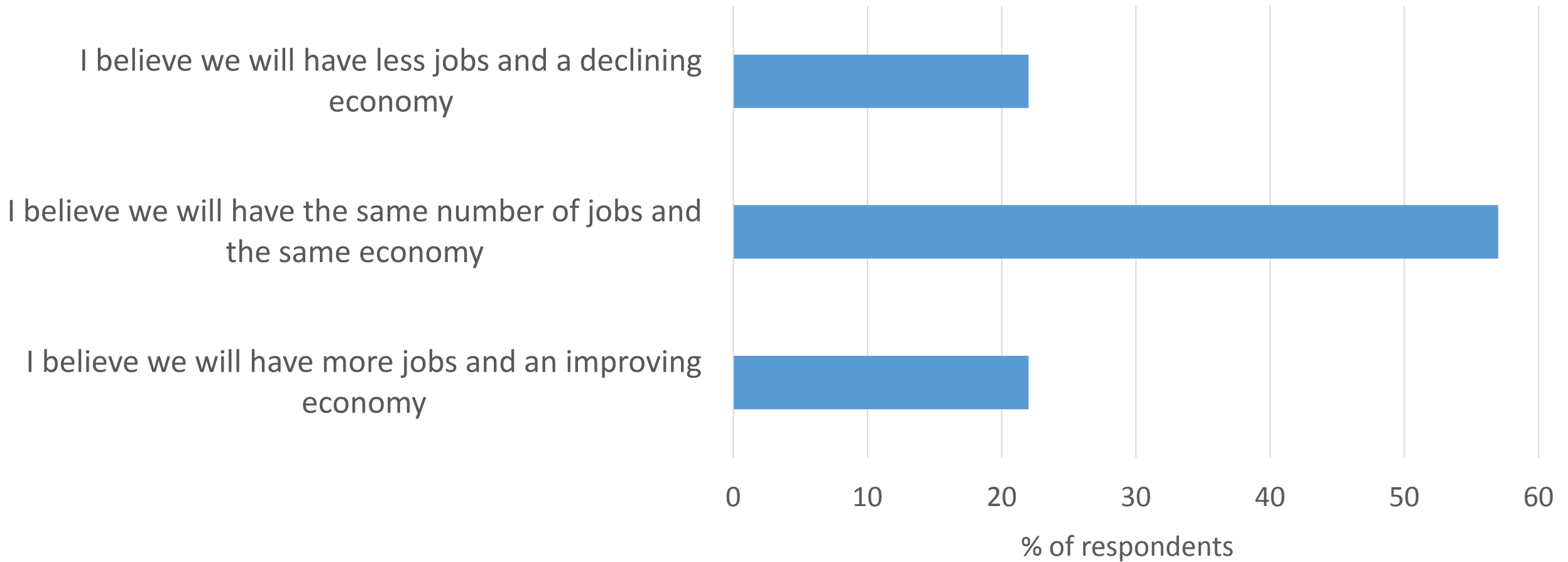
How important is it to you to...



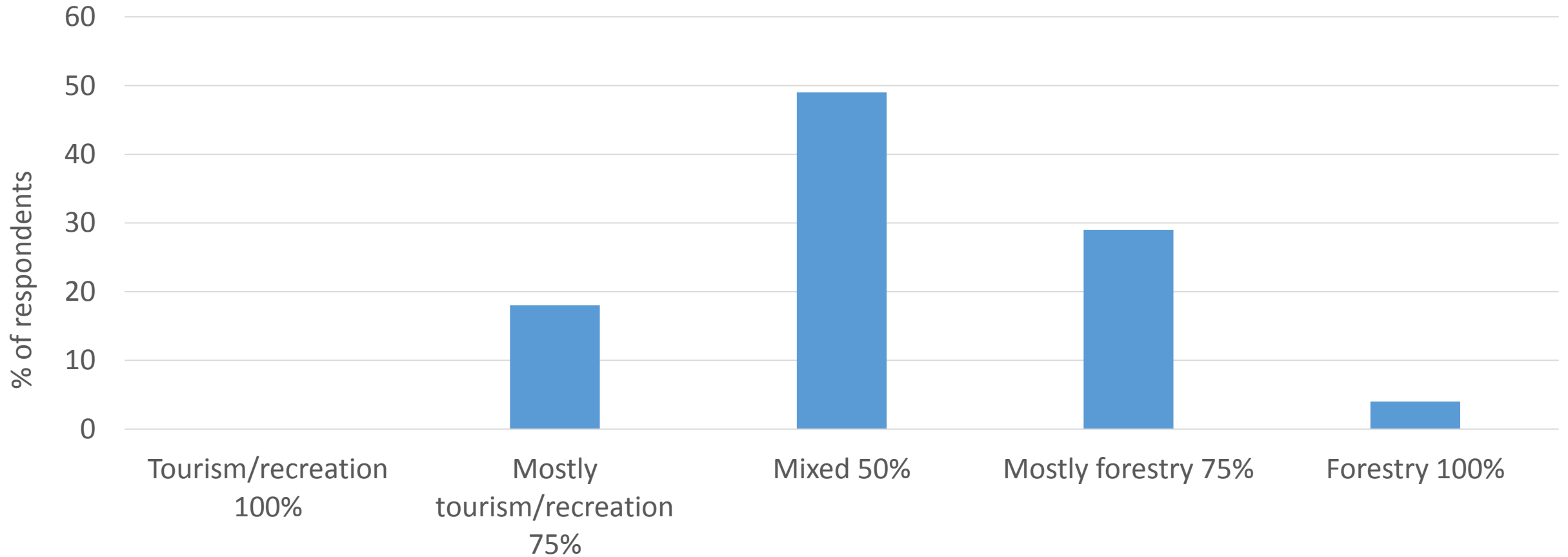
Do you plan to leave this community when you are an adult?



In the future, do you think your community...



What do you feel is the right balance?



What do you like best about your community?

"It's very quiet and there isn't a lot of things that can disturb people."

"the remoteness of the town."

"When something tragic happens, everyone gets together like a big family! We are always there for each other in times of need and people are so caring and giving."

"where it is, its right in the middle of all the activities that I enjoy."

"That it is small/close-knit." (17)

"I don't like much of anything about the community."

"I love to go into the woods and hunt and fish with my family."

"I like that it is in the woods."

What do you like least about your community?

"We are so far away from everything (Walmart, grocery stores)." (4)

"Just about everything."

"If your not born and raised in the town, you're an outsider. Some people will be polite, others will not."

"I don't really like that there are not many job options in Jackman. Many jobs are taken due to older people needing jobs so when it comes to first time employees its hard to find one."

"I dislike that there is no personal privacy."

"There is not that many jobs to choose from."

"Rumors/drama spread quickly."

"It's small, the economy of this town is lower than other places."

“Jackman has a lot to offer for tourism and forestry.”

“The idea of being a guide has been shot down in the past years in Jackman, alone because **there is [sic] so many guides in such a small area.**”

“My dad is a logger and **all I hear is that the logging business is going downhill**, there’s no wood, there hasn’t been good logging weather for a couple years, everyone is trying to get out of logging, businesses like Plum Creek and others aren’t hiring, and **anyone who gets into logging now is crazy** because there’s no future in it.”

“Unless you are entering a career in forestry, tourism, or something our local lumber mill, then it is unlikely that you will get to live in Jackman. **I do wish to live in Jackman because of the wonderful community and scenery**, but my career choice prevents me from doing so.”

Future steps

This is an introduction to current data collection efforts

Next two towns this year will be added in the next few weeks...

Expanded data gathering will allow for comparison between communities (spatially & temporally)

Stakeholders keenly interested in:

- Perceptions of conservation activity, forest industry activity
- Potential to design training/education programs to meet youth needs, especially in trail, forestry careers
- Potential to “sell” communities, or otherwise retain or attract families and youth

Exploring funding opportunities to expand survey to Oregon in partnership with the Ecosystem Workforce Program:

- Area of similar forest products dependence & some struggling rural communities
- Adds public lands influence
- Potential parallel in decline of harvest from public lands in Oregon and rise of easements in Maine

Thank You!

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% of households by income range, 2010

