

Social Network Analysis Highlights Brief



In August 2023, Keeping Forest conducted a Social Network Analysis to assess the strength and success of our network. This brief highlights a few of the findings from the study.

Purpose: This project aims to understand how organizations work together to advance forest conservation across the Southern United States. Understanding these connections will inform Keeping Forests' strategies going forward and support decision-making of action steps for the network.

Method: 80 organizations were invited to participate, of which 68 responded for a 85% response rate. The survey included questions about respondents' organizations and partnership activities/outcomes across the network.

Summary: Keeping Forests has successfully brought together organizations in a coordinated, mission-driven purpose. Going forward, there is potential to increase the value of the network by engaging in more tangible resource exchange to achieve the mission.

Network Structure

This map shows each organization represented as a circle (node). The lines among the nodes represent all relationships that were reported by respondents.

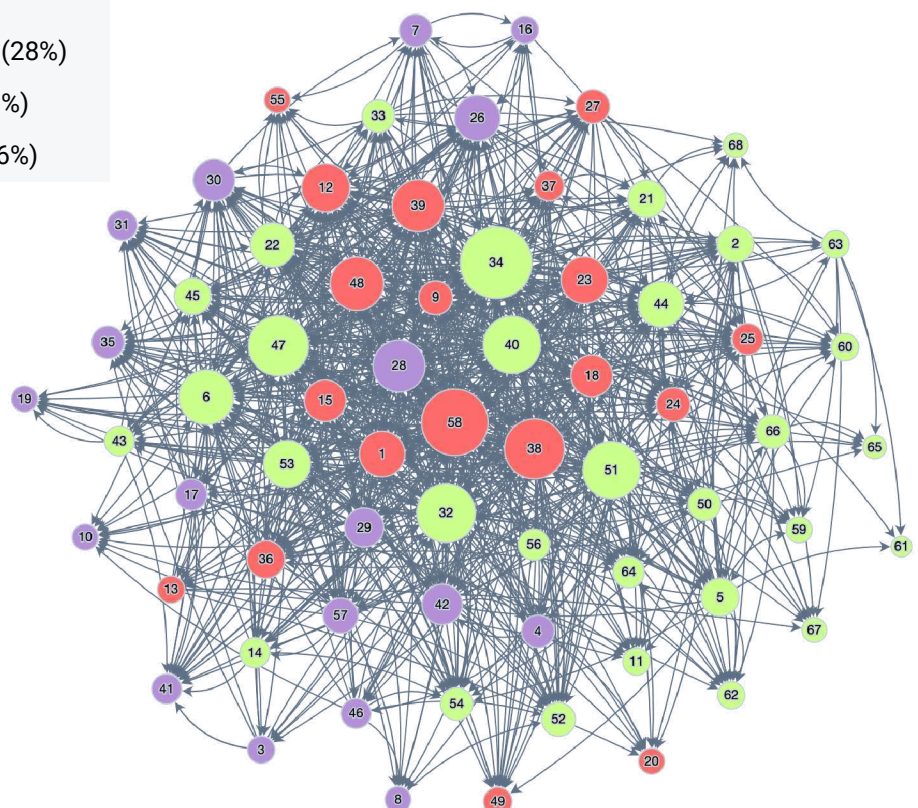
Nodes are colored by sector.

The size of the node shows which organizations have the greatest number of partners.

The node labels, their corresponding organization names, and their organizational types are listed in the Full Network Report.

Sector

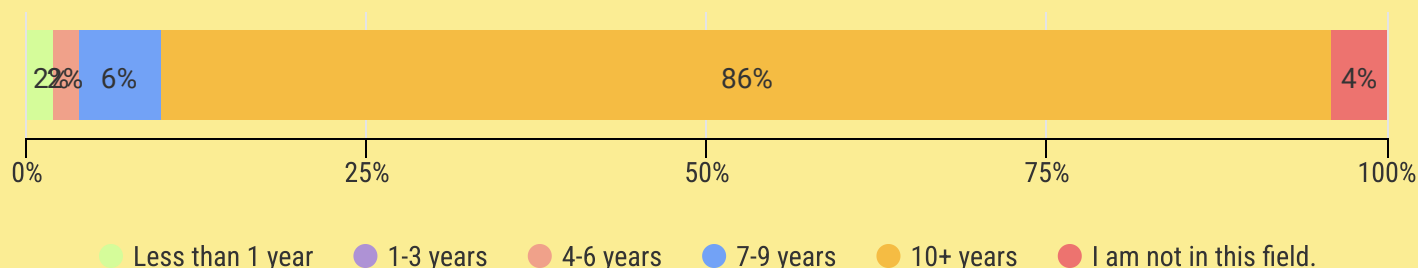
-  Nonprofit (28%)
-  Public (46%)
-  Private (26%)



The Keeping Forests network has **successfully convened diverse stakeholders** from different sectors, affiliations, and states. Most members have considerable experience in relevant work and familiarity with Keeping Forests' mission and strategies, and they are able and willing to contribute various resources.

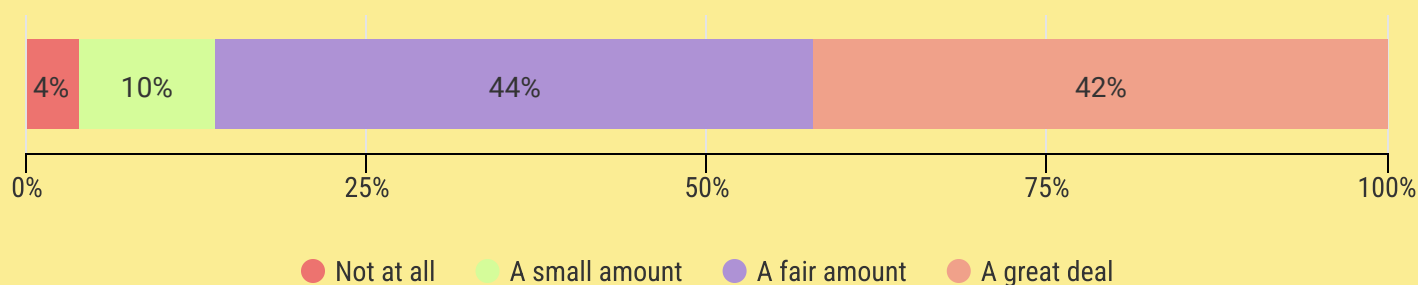
Length of Respondent's Experience in Forestry, Conservation, or other Natural Resources-Related Field

(n = 52 respondents)



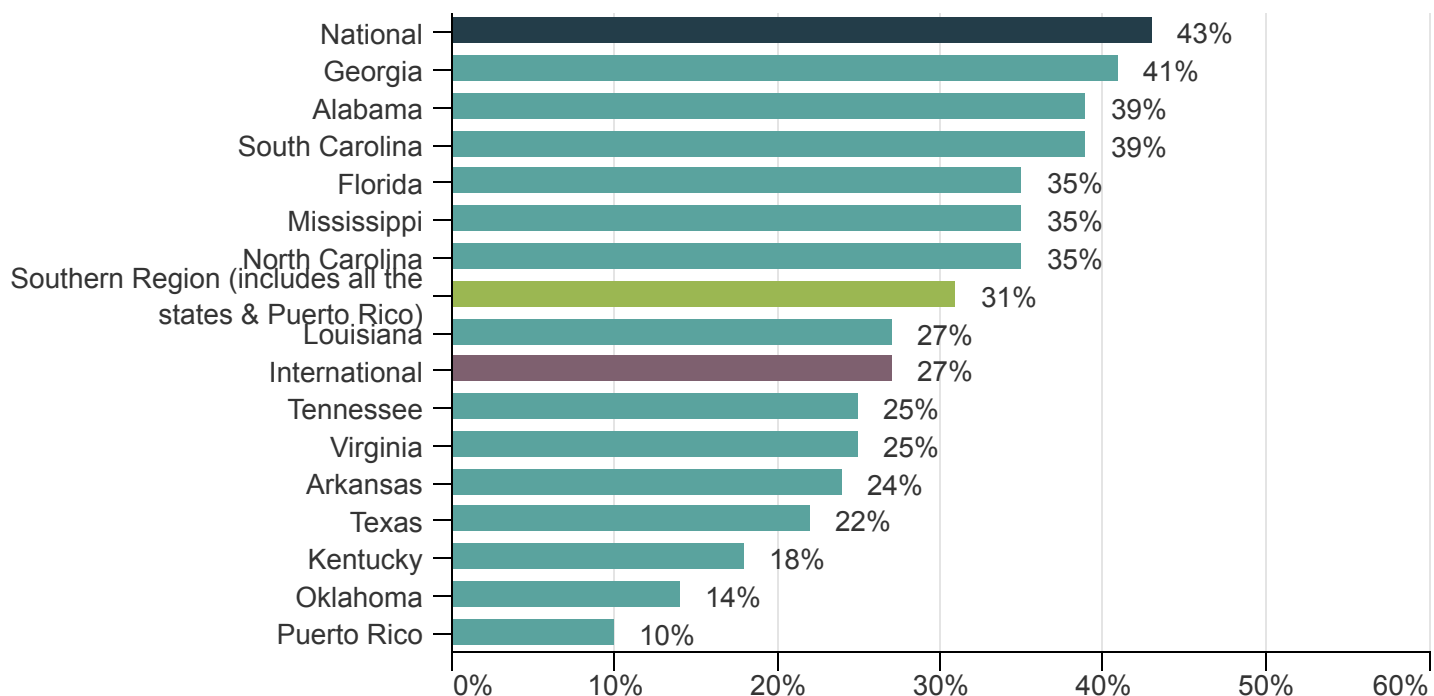
Familiarity with the Mission and Strategies of Keeping Forests

(n = 52 respondents)



Geographic Coverage of Organizations' Work

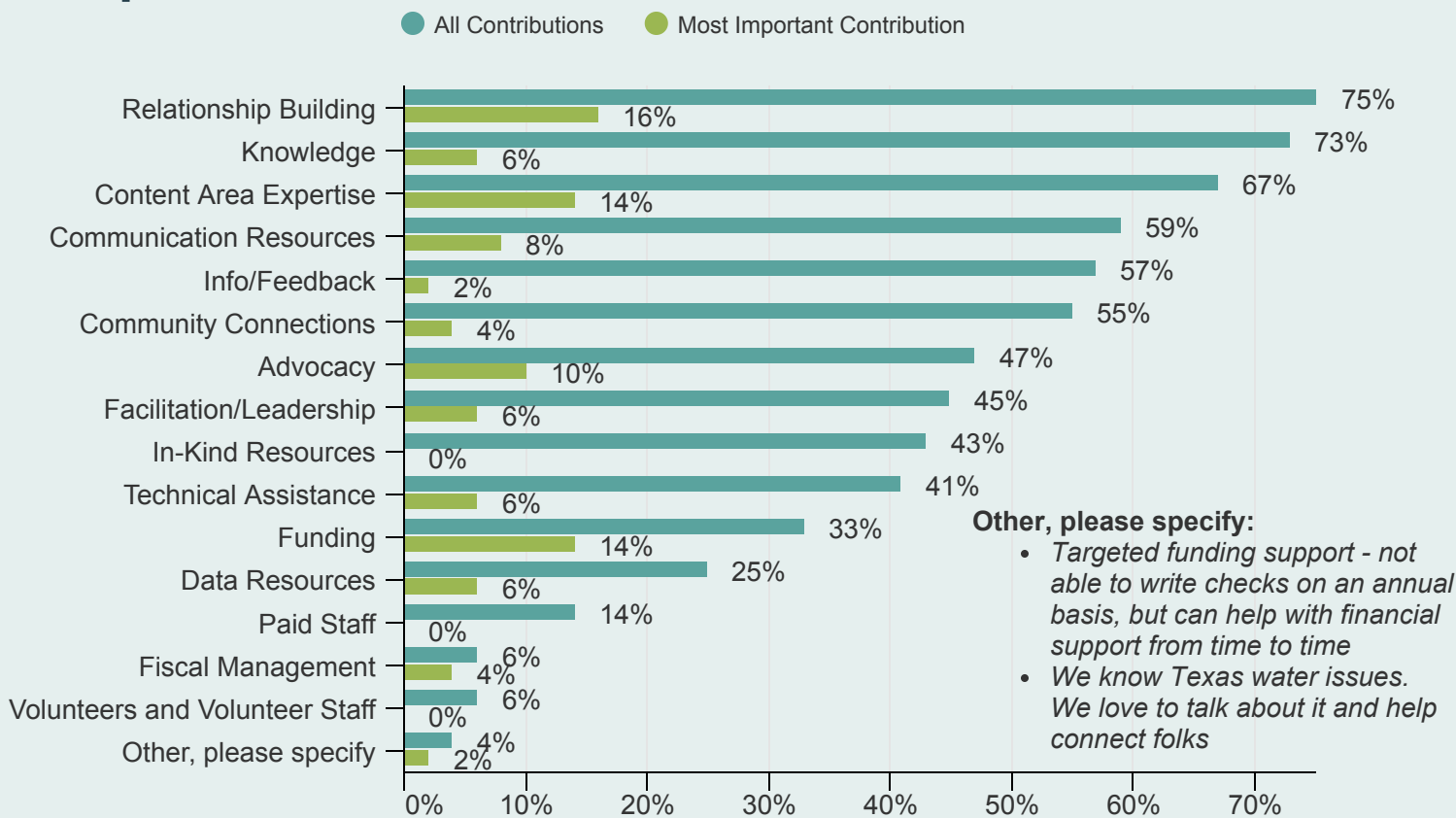
(n = 52 respondents)



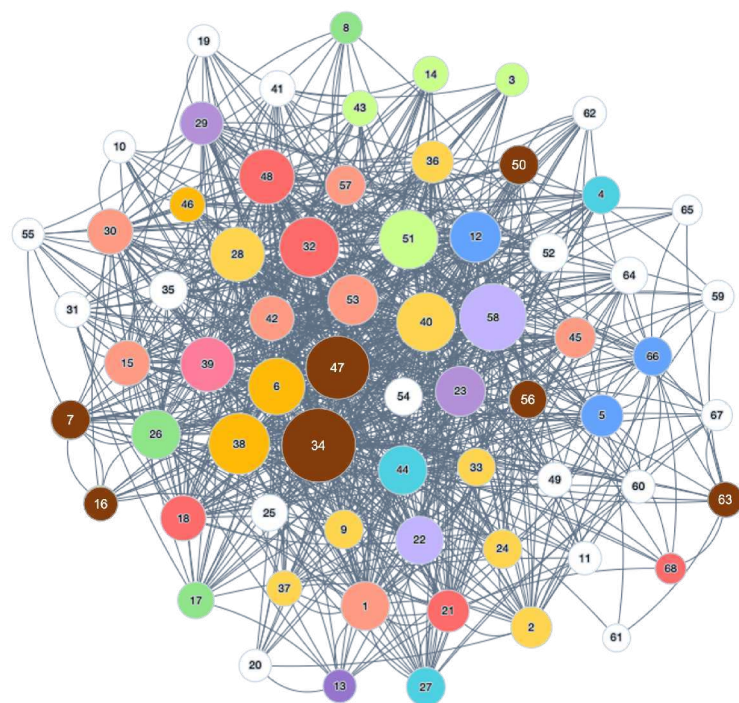
Overall, respondents are the most willing and able to contribute to **relationship building**, **knowledge**, and **content area expertise**. Although **funding** is not a resource commonly reported, it is one of the “most important contributions” by members, along with **relationship building** and **content area expertise**.

Resource Contributions

(n = 51 respondents)



Network Map View of Most Important Contributions



(9) Of the resources you chose, which is the most important contribution your organization provides?

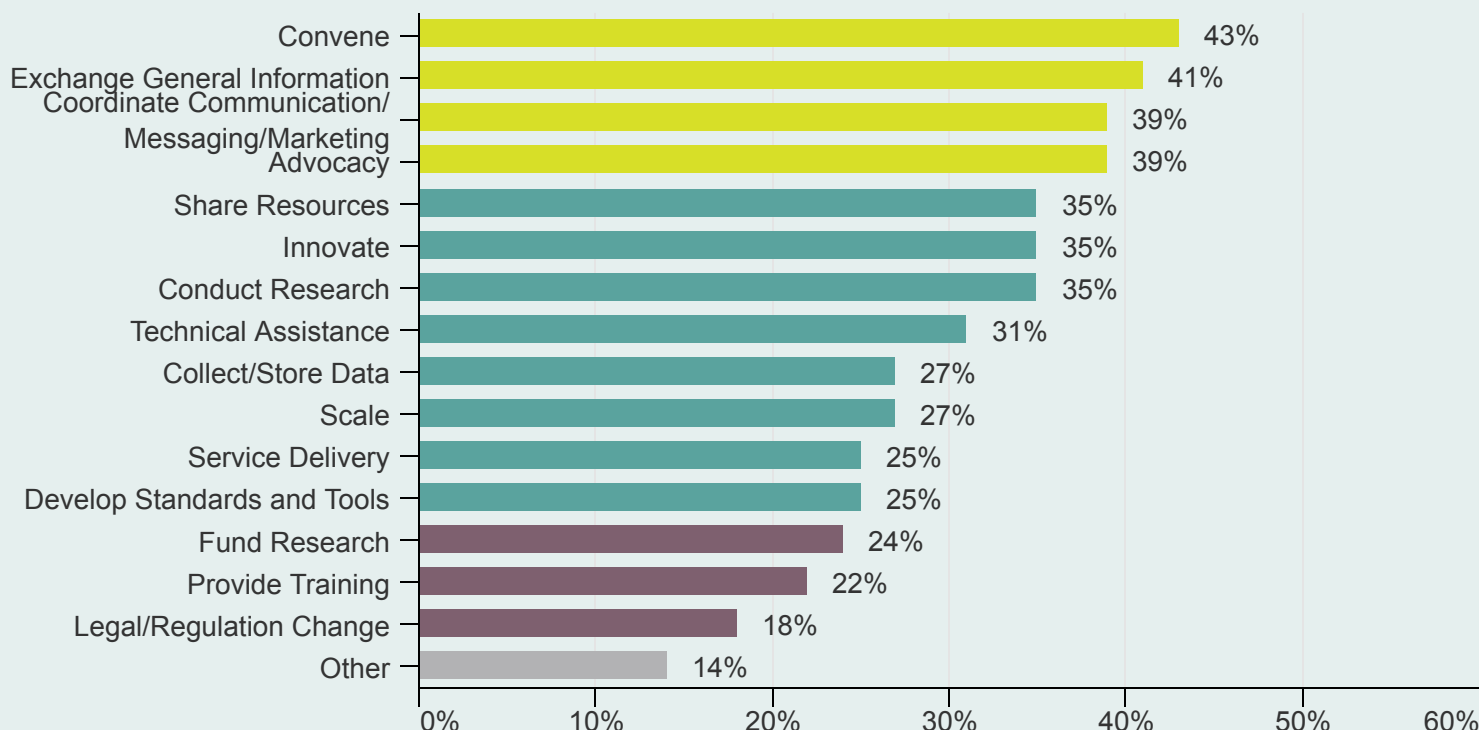
- Advocacy
- Communication Resources (including amplification of Keeping Forests' messages)
- Community Connections
- Content Area Expertise
- Data Resources (including data sets, collection and analysis)
- Facilitation/Leadership
- Fiscal Management (e.g. acting as fiscal agent)
- Funding
- Knowledge
- Info/Feedback
- Relationship Building
- Technical Assistance
- Other, please specify
- No data

The most common partnership activities are **convening** and **exchanging information**, leaving room to allow for more tangible improvement of programs, services, and support.

Most of the outcomes of the network are about **getting to know each other**, **connecting to new partners**, and **building trust**. However, there are not a lot of reported outcomes related to more capacity building, program development, or systems change.

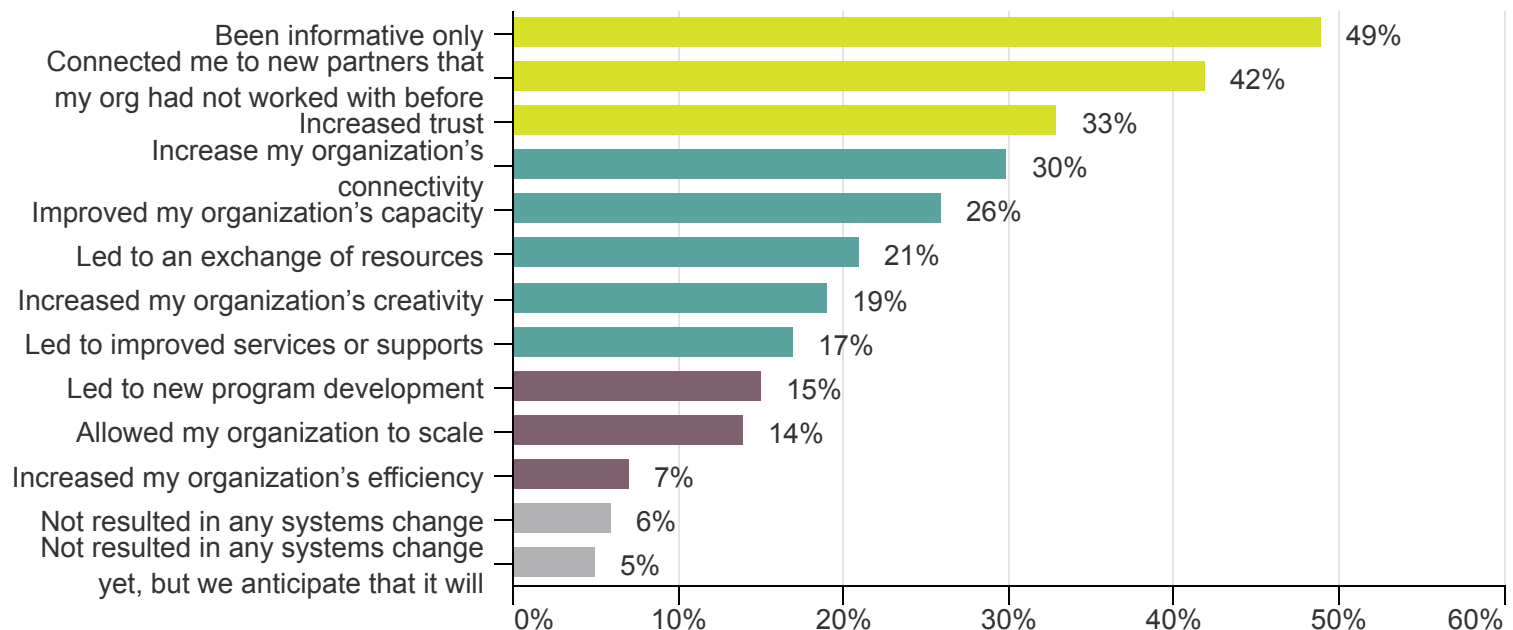
Partnership Activities

(n = 911 relationships)



Outcomes from Partnerships

(n = 893 relationships)



It is a positive result that connections were somewhat distributed across the levels (awareness, communication, coordination, leveraged, and integration/transformation). As the level increases, the cost of the relationship increases as well (i.e., more resources would be needed to maintain the relationship).

Respondents reported high levels of trust in their partners, but the perception of the value of their partnerships was somewhat lower, especially with respect to resource contributions.

Levels of Interaction

(n = 1,001 relationships)



Perceptions of Value and Trust Among Partners

The following charts show the network's average perceptions of partners along three dimensions of value and three dimensions of trust. Survey participants assessed each of their reported relationships on each of the three dimensions of trust/value according to a 4-point scale, with **1 = Not at all**, **2 = A small amount**, **3 = A fair amount**, and **4 = A great deal**. Scores over 3 are considered the most positive. The network has a value score of 2.58 out of 4. The trust score is 3.37 out of 4, which is higher than the value score. Perceptions of value and trust are critical to building a network.

Value Score



Power and Influence



Level of Involvement



Resource Contribution

Trust Score



Partner Reliability



Supports Mission



Open to Discussion